

Selwyn Image

Born 1938. Businessman, composer and founder of Emmaus UK.
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This biographical essay was compiled in 2021 by Alex Reid, editor of Lives Retold, by extracting, with Selwyn Image's kind permission, sections from a longer personal memoir he wrote for his grandchildren.

1. Early Childhood

Selwyn Image was born on November 13th 1938. His father worked at the Bank of England. At that time, you had to ask your superior's permission to marry. In this instance, his request was granted on condition that as a responsible adult and a "Gentleman of the Bank of England" as the clerks were called, he took out a life insurance policy, so that his wife would be provided for should anything happen to him. He was also expected to buy a house. To make the journey to work easier, they bought a house in Edgware. This is at the end of the Northern underground line, making a direct journey to Bank station.

Selwyn's father, David Gerald Image, was killed in the war in 1940, so he never knew him. The Gerald was in memory of a cousin killed in the first World War.

On Sept 15th 1940 Selwyn's mother received the much feared telegram from the Admiralty saying that her husband had been killed in action in the Atlantic whilst on convoy protection duty. She became a war widow aged 24, with an 18 month child. Both her brothers had also been killed in action in 1940.

Selwyn's mother clearly needed to find work, and he therefore needed to be evacuated. He has clear childhood memories of searchlights in the London night sky, the sound of German bombers and air raid sirens, and the sight of search lights in a flame red sky at night, and later, in 1944, the much feared pop-pop-pop-of flying bombs,

Selwyn was first evacuated, in around 1942, to the Norlands Nanny Training School, in Sevenoaks Kent. His memories are of an idyllically happy time there.

The Norlands site was next to a wood in which there was an anti-aircraft battery, and since it was on the direct flight path to London, the children were often escorted down to the air raid shelters in the grounds in their pyjamas until the raid was over and it was considered safe to return. One night there was a near direct hit nearby from a stray German bomb that meant they all had to be sent back home. As luck would have it, a stray incendiary device had landed on the roof of Selwyn's block of flats in North London on the same night, and although his mother told him that the firemen caused more damage putting it out than the bomb itself, he needed to be sent away again.

This time he was evacuated to Avenbury, in Wiltshire, where he attended a primary school. He remembers that almost every commodity, like sugar, meat, bread, butter/margarine, sweets, as well as clothes, could only be

bought with coupons. Vegetables were not rationed, and everyone was urged to “dig for Victory” i.e. have a vegetable garden.

On a trip home, around Christmas, his right ankle hurt so much that he was unable to put on his shoe. He was diagnosed with osteomyelitis, a bacterial bone infection, for which in 1944, the only treatment was amputation. He was taken to the children’s hospital at Great Ormond Street, where immediate surgery was advised, and his mother asked to sign the consent form. “Will he live” she asked.” Difficult to say”, answered the surgeon; “surgical shock, you see”. “Well, if that’s the case, I’m not going to sign”, said his mother. “Find something else!”

One of the surgeons said. “We’ve got a trial on with this new drug called penicillin. Do you think that might be worth a try”? Although penicillin was at that time in very short supply Selwyn was given a course and recovered fully. He returned home to convalesce, before being driven, one dark evening near his 6th birthday to Belmont School, a preparatory school in Hassocks, Sussex,

2. Schooldays

The regime at Belmont School was harsh, and bullying was a problem. But the teaching and teachers were good. They were constantly changing, either through falling out with the headmaster, or simply because prep school teaching was very much a fill-in job. Of the staff, Selwyn remembers two permanent members: Mr. Tulloch, who taught French and Arthur Whaley, who had won a Military Cross in the First World War, and who taught Latin. Both taught well. One other particularly inspiring teacher taught English.

In 1952 Selwyn sat successfully for a Foundation Scholarship for his father's old school, Dauntseys. He attended the school from 1951 to 1957.



Dauntseys School.

Dauntseys is a very old foundation, dating back to 1542. In the 1920s, a new headmaster, George Olive, sought to transform it into a vigorous new style school and identity, and gathered round him an enthusiastic body of teachers. There was a school farm to teach the science of agriculture, no corporal punishment, wholesome food and changes in the traditional classics centred curriculum that was the norm in private schools of the time. Among other changes, many of them “green” by contemporary standards, he introduced a new school uniform of open neck shirts, short trousers and long socks, all fawn in colour.

Pupils had to choose between arts and science subjects at a very early age - in Selwyn's case at fourteen. This meant that from then on, he ceased to do chemistry, biology, physics and engineering, and focused instead on humanities subjects.

Selwyn is much indebted to two of his teachers at Dauntsey's, who recognised that as an only child without a father, and with a mobile home life led in straightened circumstances, he was lacking in knowledge of and participation in family life. They were his tutor, Bernard Wates, and Glyn Young, one of the Modern Language teachers who was also his friend. They got together to discuss what might be done *ex curriculo* to assist Selwyn in what both saw as a difficult personal time. They opened their homes to him, and encouraged visits, help with bathing and looking after

their young children, work (paid!) in their gardens, and access to their books, piano and life style. Selwyn loved all of this, and maintained contact with them both throughout their lives.

Though subject teaching was generally competent, Glyn Young's enthusiasm and love of French and German literature, and in particular, of German lyric poetry struck a chord which eventually led to Selwyn reading French and German at University. His other great love was choral music and the school choir. Church music featured largely in this. They sang the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis services of Walmisley, Noble, Stanford and Harwood in four weekly rotation, as well as many of the major anthems from Tudor times onwards. Both the music directors of his time had been choral scholars at King's College Cambridge, so skills and high performance standards were not lacking. This choir membership led to a lifelong love of choral singing.

Another feature of school life then was the Combined Cadet Force, which was useful preparation for National Service. In the cadet force, younger teachers, most of whom had done their National Service, were required to rejoin the colours as junior officers. Those who had served in the war kept their substantive rank at the end of hostilities, and in many cases, were reserve officers. They were fortunate, in the Army section to have their own teacher, Capt.(later Lieut. Col.) Glyn Young MC and in charge of the Air Force section, Squadron Leader Norman Creek., MBE, MC, who had served with distinction in both First and Second World wars, as well as having played, in his younger days for England at football (right).



At his mother's suggestion, Selwyn entered the scholarship entrance exam for his father's old college at Cambridge, at the time called Fitzwilliam House, but now, with full collegiate status.

On leaving school, Selwyn attended the RAF Aircrew assessment centre at Hornchurch. However he was rejected on the grounds of his short-sightedness, this being before the days of contact lenses and laser surgery. A month later, he received notice and a rail warrant to present himself to RAF Cardington, near Bedford, having been accepted for National Service in the RAF. This air base was where the first airships were housed in the

early 1900s. , and the huge original hangar built for them is still in use, and visible from the Bedford by-pass.

There he was given a number, (5011698), was issued with kitbags and uniform, toiletries and underwear, and allocated to RAF West Kirby, on the Wirral Peninsula near Liverpool.

3. National Service 1957-1959

At RAF Kirby he undertook eight weeks basic training in drill and military life. The recruits were housed in wooden dormitory huts, around 12 people in each, under the care of a Corporal Drill Instructor, whose boots shone like black stars, whose uniform was immaculate, and whose language and insults on the parade ground were unrepeatable.

They polished their boots till you could see your face in them, made bed packs of their sheets and blankets every morning that had to be rectangles precise to the millimetre if they were not to be torn apart for remaking by our Drill Instructor, polished the lino floor of the billet, blacked the stove in the centre of the hut and cleaned washbasins and lavatories until they too shone. Then off to a good breakfast before collecting World War I 303 rifles and heading off to the parade ground for a morning's drill.

After 5 weeks they were marched to Trade Selection, where a sergeant was responsible for determining what activities they should be trained in and pursue over the next two years. Asked what he would like to do, Selwyn said he would like to train as a Russian linguist. That category was full up, but there were vacancies for Chinese linguists, to which Selwyn was assigned after successfully passing a language aptitude test at RAF Wilmslow.

The language training took place at the RAF Language school in Pucklechurch, near Bristol, where both Russian and Chinese were taught. The language training was an eye opener. The objective, was to get the students from scratch up to the level of the civil service preliminary interpreter's exam - roughly equivalent to "A" level - in one year, with some simple wireless operating skills on top. There were classes from 9 to 5 each day and weekly tests. Promotion and importantly pay depended on passing these tests.

By comparison with language teaching in schools at the time, the RAF was very advanced. Native Chinese instructors, conversation classes, language laboratory practice and every teaching aid known to man, and a few more, were deployed. The atmosphere was at once one of university and crammer, and a camaraderie was created that has lasted a lifetime, with members of this course still meeting annually at the RAF Club in London.

The officers running the course all had active war service and had drifted into Intelligence. The CO (Commanding Officer) was an ex-pilot with a DFC (Distinguished Flying Cross) the ribbon of which was carefully tucked under the label of his jacket so as not to be visible; his second in command was an ex-navigator who was the author, under the pen name of Peter George, of *Dr Strangelove*, a film starring Peter Sellers (below).



Peter Sellers as Dr.Strangelove in the 1964 film of the same name, directed by Stanley Kubrick and based on the novel Red Alert by Peter George.

Having successfully completed the course, Selwyn was posted along with his fellow students to Hong Kong.

They were bundled into an elderly Anson aircraft, a development of the wartime Dakota, operated by a charter company called Airwork. They began the long journey across the globe, with multiple re-fuelling stops. RAF Northolt to Brindisi in Southern Italy; Brindisi to Ancerra in Turkey; Ancerra to to RAF Aden (Yemen); Aden to Karachi, where they overnigheted in the Miniwallah Grand Hotel, contracting a mild bout of food poisoning in the process; thence to Delhi, then Calcutta, Singapore (another overnight) and finally RAF Kai Tak, and their new home, the RAF base of Sai Wan, located at the southern end of the main island.

Their job involved monitoring radio transmissions from the Chinese air force and air traffic control. They worked 8 hour shifts; two morning, two afternoon, two days off, two nights, two days off. Selwyn remembers one Christmas Eve shift, doing a search on VHF frequencies with one receiver, and listening to the Carols from Kings on the World Service of the BBC in the other.

Life after work and on days off was far from dull. They were paid £5 a week, all found, and in 1958 in Hong Kong, this went a long way, with tailor made suits at £15-20, and everything from shoes to shirts, transistor radios (the new and very desirable thing) to cameras, and presents of jewellery and porcelain to send or take home all eminently affordable.

Selwyn also had the good fortune, thanks to an introduction from his BBC godfather to the station manager of Radio Hong Kong, to get paid work

there, with a series of his own on Food, Poetry and Music as well as work as a book and film critic.

At the end of their tour of duty they were flown back to the UK and were discharged from the RAF.

4. University 1959-1962



Fitzwilliam House, opposite the Fitzwilliam Museum, was the home of Fitzwilliam College from 1887 to 1960.

Selwyn's time studying modern languages at Cambridge was busy and happy, with hard work, and active participation in University clubs and societies. He played in the college 2nd eleven hockey team, as well as enjoying squash. Seven members of his RAF Chinese course had also come up, so there was a ready made group of friends as well as new ones to make in his own college, the Modern Languages Faculty and in the various musical, political and acting activities in which he took part.

He was lucky in the means tested fees system, which meant that there was no cost barrier to university education. Because of his family circumstances, he was entitled to a grant that paid both fees and full maintenance.

Selwyn arranged to spend a month in a German family, having used the first Christmas vacation working in the Post Office in Leeds to save some money. In the Post Sorting Office he had met a graduate art student studying at the Royal College of Art and formed a lifelong friendship with who is now regarded as the country's best etcher, Norman Ackroyd is a Professor and Royal Academician with a CBE amongst other professional distinctions and honours.



An etching by Norman Ackroyd. Shiant Garbh Eileen, 2010.

Selwyn's second vacation spent with a German family was formative. An old German grace, “Komm Herr Jesu, Sei Du unser Gast, something that Selwyn subsequently set to music in original and translated form, was said each meal by the elderly but very spry grandmother, with whom he spent an hour talking every morning. He learnt never to cut his potatoes with a knife, and with the family’s 14 year old son and his friend and dog, explored the village and surrounding countryside. There was an old organ in the church that he was able to play, which had a stop which added the sound of sleigh bells to whatever one was playing.



Silver City operated the Bristol freighter service from Bournemouth to Cherbourg.

For the long summer vacation, Selwyn had decided to concentrate on improving his spoken French. Armed with an address in Caen, where a female friend in Cambridge said her grandmother would be glad to put him up, he flew in an old Bristol freighter from Bournemouth to Cherbourg.

After spending time with his old teacher Glyn Young and his family, he proceeded to what turned out to be a very smart address in the centre of Caen that Madeleine had left him. He was greeted at the door by a clearly puzzled old lady. Trying to explain the situation, it turned out that she knew nothing of the matter, but invited him in nonetheless to discuss what to do. On learning more, she said that he had better spend the night there and try and find work and somewhere to stay the following day, suggesting that a useful first port of call might be to visit the local Social Services directorate which was running a holiday camp for young disadvantaged children from the town.

This Selwyn duly did, and met the Director, Jean Meniscus, who asked him if he had any particular skills to contribute. He couldn't think of any, but said that he could do animal noises. "That'll do," said the Director, and Selwyn began a three week job and a lifelong friendship with Jean, his wife and fellow "educateur" Yvonne, and in the fullness of time, their two children, and their family became an important part of his own.

Back at Cambridge, he sang with the college choir and CUMS, the University Choir directed by (Sir) David Willcocks, the Director of Music for Kings College.

One of the performances in CUMS was a stage production of Berlioz' Faust, where there was a musical stage chorus. At the time, there were only two ladies' colleges in Cambridge; all the rest were exclusively male. There is a scene in this opera, in a Bierkellar, where a lot of kissing and drinking takes place. The short and stout instructor, Gabor Cossa, in a former life ballet master of the Hungarian National Ballet, said to a blushing girl from Girton College: "No no no! That is not how you kiss. This is how it is done" and he bent this tall willowy girl over almost entirely backwards to demonstrate how it should be.

There was a cast party after the last performance at Gabor's flat where the revered academic and choirmaster, David Willcocks, played swing music on the piano, with his head upside down on the pedals, and with his hands crossed. Quite a party piece, perhaps a leftover from his army days during the war, in which, like Glyn Young, he had won the Military Cross.

Selwyn also joined an acting society called the Mummers. It put on avant guard plays like Sweeney Agonistes by T.S.Eliot.

His third leisure activity was the University United Nations Association (CUUNA), where Selwyn became the Refugee Secretary, responsible for a scheme whereby colleges were encouraged to adopt a refugee student, sponsor their education and encourage them to eventually come to Cambridge. This involved him in a visit to a Polish refugee camp in Munster, in Germany, where a number of Poles who had been conscripted

during the war for forced labour in Nazi Germany had not wished, post-war, to return to their now Soviet occupied homeland, and became the responsibility of the German authorities in the British Occupation zone. Their warmth and hospitality were overwhelming, and Fitzwilliam “adopted” a young girl whose interests were taken up by one of the college fellows and who eventually did come to Cambridge.

To improve his French and German, Selwyn spent nearly every vacation abroad. The first such visit, in his first year, was to participate in a symposium organised in Berlin by the federal Government on “The problems of a divided Germany”.

The next two long vacations were spent in France; one working as a Companion in the first Emmaus Community, and the other one with the Meniscus family helping with their work with young people in the poorer areas of the city of Caen. He managed to cover some of the costs involved by doing broadcasts on the BBC covering both activities when he got back.

After three years Selwyn emerged with his degree, and the need to earn a living. His godfather, who had been his father’s best friend at University, had worked in the BBC as Director of Staff Training, and was an author and literary academic as well. He reminded Selwyn how poorly paid the BBC was compared to business. So Selwyn went to the University Careers Advisory service for guidance, and visited the “milk run”, where organisations ranging from banks to businesses visited Cambridge each year and set up information booths in the University Arms hotel. Reckitt and Colman (now Reckitt Benckiser) hired him in the autumn of 1962 as a graduate trainee in the controlling part of the conglomerate, Reckitt and Sons, based in Hull.

5. Business Career

Reckitt and Sons.1961-1965

Selwyn had a variety of holiday jobs before entering full time employment . He had washed dishes in a busy Lyons cafeteria in central London, worked as a milkman's assistant in Hampstead, supervised children in a holiday camp in France, been a sales assistant in the major department store in Leeds, spent three months in house clearance with Emmaus France, and been a gravedigger in Worcester Cemetery before marriage and starting work with Reckitt's.

His traineeship started with placement in the firm's market research department , learning how to devise and analyse questionnaires about product likes, dislikes and preferences. After 18 months he was offered a newly created job as Brand Manager in the Marketing Department. This job entails managing the administration and sale of company products, in grand terms, being the Managing Director (but under supervision of course) of a brand or brands. His main brands were Steradent denture cleaner, Nulon hand cream, and Disprin soluble aspirin (right). As part of his training he spent three months on the road as a salesman.



Selwyn had an active social life in Hull. He sang in the Hull Bach Choir, acted in The Hull Garrett players (a group centred on the University) and even played the leading role in Edward Albee's "Zoo Story".

Philip, Scott and Turner 1965-1969

After four years in Hull, Selwyn started looking for new job opportunities. He was keen to get into export marketing and be able to travel, and was offered a job near London as Brand Manager for Sweden for Philips, Scott and Turner, the UK subsidiary of Sterling Winthrop, an American pharmaceutical company. It had, under the dynamic leadership of a new managing director, acquired the reputation of a young go go company, introducing a raft of new products, ranging from aerosol oven cleaners to new-fangled enzyme detergents and baby bubble baths.

After a year Selwyn was promoted to be in charge of Scandinavia, and in another year, was promoted again to become Marketing Manager for Ireland.

On a business flight to Newcastle, Selwyn found himself sitting next to the Managing Partner or the management consultants McKinsey who asked Selwyn if he would be interested in joining the firm. Selwyn gave him his contact details, but thought no more about it. A year later he received a letter from McKinsey asking again if he was interested in joining the firm.

McKinsey and Co. 1970-1973

Five interviews and a full day with a psychologist later, he was offered a job with them as an associate, the bottom of their internal ladder. Then began the hardest working and most stimulating three years of his life.

Despite making huge demands on our time and effort, McKinsey treated all its employees like royalty. This included secretaries and support staff who were simply the best and most efficient there were - it was the Firm's policy, not unlike the Mars Company (of Mars bars fame), to hire only the best and be the best at every level in every area. A small example this was that the switchboard always answered the phone within four rings, and we were expected to do so too. There were compulsory training sessions every alternate Saturday morning, but the biscuits served with the excellent coffee were Chocolate Bath Oliver biscuits brought in from Fortnum and Masons, as was the free lunch offered every Friday, when all those on assignments in the UK were required to spend the day in the office, in the expectation that the 70 or so consultant staff that we were would get to know each other, share experience and discuss any work problems.

There was good sense in this as the consultants were on assignments in every part of Europe and the UK, and there was much practical value in exchanging experience and problems with colleagues.

After a couple of weeks getting to know the London office, the new boys were flown to New York for a week's Initial Training Programme, consisting of lectures on consulting practice and techniques as well as a practical case history based learning assignment where they were given a substantial pile of documents about a company and required, over 5 days, to analyse its problems and propose viable remedies.

Selwyn's first McKinsey consulting assignment was as the junior member of a team hired by the Colman's side of Reckitt and Colman to design a national system of storage depots to minimise delivery costs and maximise effectiveness with their many customers.

His second study was a strategic marketing study for a chain of department stores, including Selfridges, owned by the legendary property developer Charles Clore. Mostly situated in the North and Midlands, Lewis's department stores, not to be confused with John Lewis stores, were all located in prime sites in the centre of cities like Birmingham, Leeds and Liverpool, and had been acquired by Mr Clore for their property

development potential. But Clore was a keen and engaging businessman, and wanted to exploit the full potential of what he would call “my stores”.

Selwyn's next assignment was in Sarajevo in Bosnia Hercegovina - a feasibility study for the establishment of an aluminium plant in Mostar, where there was an old bauxite mine, bauxite being the basic raw material for aluminium. Working in Sarajevo was a new and challenging experience after Western Europe. Power cuts, poor communications, limited supplies despite foreign guest privileges and a totally different operating environment leading to frustrations and delays.



Mostar.

Most weekends, the McKinsey team would hire a car and drive over the mountains on narrow roads with horrendous drops on the side, to Mostar, with its beautiful bridge and old town, Split, Dubrovnik and other towns down the idyllic Adriatic coast. Food was basic but wholesome; grills, and salads washed down with rough local wine and slivovitz - plum brandy - and the scenery, especially in the summer time, was amazingly beautiful and unspoilt. The architecture in Sarajevo was enlivened by the presence of 47 mosques, and regular markets held in the town centre, where local farmers brought their produce and craftsmen and women their rugs, coffee drinking sets and jewellery.

Back in the UK, Selwyn was asked if he would be prepared to move to the Paris office of McKinsey, where his director was going to be posted from the USA, and where he wanted to assemble a team of East European experts. Selwyn and his wife rented out their Clapham house for a year, and

moved to a flat at the top end of the Boulevard Montparnasse, near the centre but on the Left Bank and near the Latin quarter. Too big for the small Edwardian style lift, his extremely heavy piano, bought with his first McKinsey bonus, was lugged six flights of circular stairs.

After some short market assessments, Selwyn was given a marketing assignment aimed at improving the profitability of the national flag carrier, Air France. He soon learnt that a number of executives in Air France regarded themselves as an extension of the diplomatic service rather than members of a commercial organisation. Their mission was to open new links and networks between France and the outside world, with commercial viability a low level of concern or even interest.



The study, which involved much market research on the motivations and preferences of air travellers, went well. But six months into the study differences arose between Selwyn and his engagement manager. And Selwyn decided to move on from McKinsey - who told him he would always be welcome to return. Within a short while, Selwyn came across an advertisement from Unilever, looking for management consultants, for which he successfully applied.

Unilever (1973-1983)

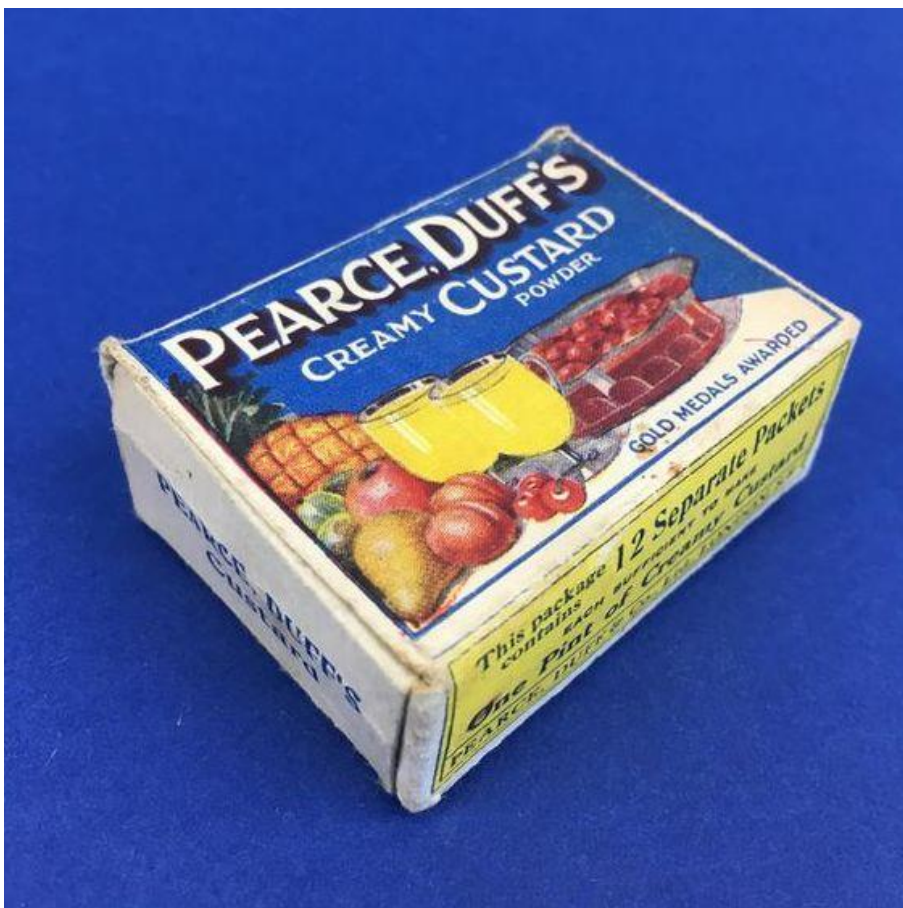
Unilever's consulting division was regarded as the specialist tool box of the Anglo-Dutch conglomerate, so that if a Unilever company had an operating problem of any kind, it could call on specialist help from within the concern. As a result the division embraced a wide range of skills and disciplines.

One study Selwyn was involved with with his French colleagues involved planning routes or "rounds" for the salesmen who sold a range of yoghurts to retailers.

There was more strategic work involved when Selwyn was seconded as personal assistant to the Corporate Development Director of Unilever, who had been charged with organising the acquisition of a major US Company to fill out its hitherto unbalanced international trading portfolio.

He then spent time in India, developing, with a financial colleague, a rescue plan for Unilever's Indian tea company that was threatened with closure.

This in turn led to his spending two years in the tea trade as marketing director of Lipton Exports, helping transform this business threatened with closure, into Unilever's most successful and profitable food business.



After Lipton's, he returned to the consultancy division, with a remit to try and develop external business as well as as internal. With a former McKinsey friend, who ran a small New Ideas and Product Development consultancy, he set up a small joint venture, which led to work with a privately owned company called Pearce Duff, whose main claim to success

was a well known brand of custard powder. There, they developed a new range of bakery and cake decoration products.

Another similar assignment, this time for a Greek pharmaceutical company, led to their introduction of a new range of baby products. The principal product was a baby shampoo, heavily based on Johnson's Baby Shampoo, Thanks to the local Unilever advertising agency, Lintas, this assignment led to work with a major but ailing Greek brewery.

FBC/Schering AG. (1983-5)

FBC was a newish joint venture Agricultural Chemicals Company between Boots and Fisons - both smallish companies with interests in agriculture. It had been set up in Harston, a village on the Southern outskirts of Cambridge. After a year there, during which time Selwyn visited all the main agricultural regions of the US, as well as Australia and Europe, he spent 6 months in Germany as joint General Manager of Schering's Special Foliar Fertiliser Division, where he was responsible for Sales and Marketing.

After 6 months or so in the job, Selwyn had to decide whether to move permanently to Germany, and opted to return to the UK.

Clabir Consultants (1985-1986)

Clabir Consultants arose out of the suggestion by a friend that Selwyn provide the due diligence services he, as the newly appointed Managing Director of Clabir, a small US owned merchant bank set up in Mayfair to make investments and acquisitions, might require.

Cambridge Corporate Consultants (1986-1988)

This was a management consultancy, based in Cambridge, which brought together the consulting activities of Selwyn and Christopher Brocklebank-Fowler, a former Conservative MP in Norfolk who had left the Conservatives to join the Social Democrats and had lost his seat.

Domino Printing Sciences plc. (1988-1990)

In 1988 Selwyn took up a job as Director of Strategic Planning for Domino Printing Sciences - a newly-public high tech company. Domino was a ground breaking company whose owner, at that time principal shareholder and Chairman, had invented an inkjet printing machine that could code and mark products and packaging at production line speed. The implications for this in a whole range of industries needing individual product identification were enormous.

In Domino's case, the product had been created without the input of a design engineer, which meant, in our case, that the product was difficult to

service and not ergonomic. This improved over time, but left Domino at the time vulnerable to a significant American competitor. The job involved travel to Europe, South America and Korea to appoint or visit agents. He also spent 6 months in Chicago, in an unsuccessful attempt to improve the performance of a company that had been acquired by Domino. Due to Domino's financial difficulties redundancies were announced, including that of Selwyn.



A Domino Sciences printer of the 1980s.

Cambridge Venture Management (1990-92)

In 1990 Selwyn was invited to join a partnership with three others, again in the field of helping new ventures. At this time, much of his time was taken up with getting Emmaus off the ground. The two activities were complementary, because the charitable social enterprise venture he was starting opened a lot of commercial doors as he sought donations.

Willett International (1992-1994)

Selwyn's former managing director at Domino invited him to join , as marketing director, his new company Willett International, which was a competitor to Domino based in Corby.

Selwyn travelled to Korea, China (Canton in fact, via a much changed Hong Kong), Greece, Syria, and several countries in South America, once again encouraging and appointing agents, and with some success. France and Germany, where we had sizeable and well run subsidiaries which e also visited.

Fortuitously, in 1994 an acquaintance of Selwyn's he met collecting children from school in Cambridge had just been appointed managing director of a new Securicor subsidiary being set up to develop and expand the company's business and presence in Europe. He needed a marketing director, and Selwyn was appointed at much higher salary Selwyn suggested.

Securicor Europe (1994-6)

The new job involved setting up or growing Securicor's cash transit, guarding and burglar alarm and response business in thirteen European countries. With the exception of two local support staff, the team travelled to their office in Darmstadt, near Frankfurt, on Monday morning and returned to homes in the UK on Friday evening, or went direct to one of our territories, where they held monthly board and review meetings.

Securicor was a curious company at the time, run by men, rather unkindly described by Selwyn's boss as "sergeants", largely because of their preference for English speaking markets, uniformed security guards and cash transit. The team spent time developing new markets in Russia and mainland Europe.

Emmaus was in its early development days, and the possibility of something similar being possible in Russia, where liberalisation was in full swing and government controls lessening, was the subject of frequent discussion between Selwyn and the local manager. One day, the local manager told Selwyn of a friend of his who had recently been responsible in a government department, now closed down, for restoring old monasteries and converting them into museums. He was continuing this work privately in one site near St Petersburg, using homeless and unemployed people workers to continue this work, using the sites as accommodation and providing them with food and shelter as best he could. Would Selwyn mind it if Securicor Russia made a donation of \$5,000 from company funds towards this Emmaus type work? Selwyn agreed.

France was a significant potential growth area. Securicor already had a small company there in Reims, but growth in national awareness was needed. To initiate this, Securicor instituted a Prix de Courage (a courage award) of £5000 for a person who had shown exceptional courage and persistence in addressing a significant health or disability handicap. The first (and in the event, only) prizewinner was a blind tandem racing cyclist who, with a sighted companion (a police inspector) had achieved a silver medal in the Olympic games.

SDI Consultants (1997-2003)

The next six years were to be spent on two significant spells as an interim director, and a number of small-ish assignments and a non-executive

chairmanship of a headhunting company, that took Selwyn to a much changed Singapore on one occasion.

His first interim directorship resulted from a study for the Greenwich Observatory, which, it was proposed by its funders, should be moved from Cambridge to Edinburgh. As is usual for such proposals, time was allowed for a consultation process, and the commission was to create a plan whereby it could survive as a self-financing entity.

This was done, only for the move to be instituted without the report even being read. The expense involved in all of this was considerable, and included Selwyn being hired as interim marketing director to assist the now redundant personnel find alternative employment.

The second major interim appointment turned out to be a one year appointment, extended to two, as Operations Director of the Children's Society. The original purpose of this was to do some heavy and unpleasant work reducing an overblown and poorly performing fund-raising department without losing any donations. There was also a plan to close down 120 charity shops which cost almost as much as they raised.

Selwyn was lucky with the shops. Meeting with their management, he found there were some very capable operators there frustrated by the dead wood surrounding them. A plan was developed to reduce the number of shops, and introduce professional shop managers in the place of volunteers. Within five years the charity shops became a major contributor to the Society's income.

In 2003 Selwyn retired from consultancy, but had plenty to keep him busy - the growth of Emmaus, and his roles as a Justice of the Peace, and as the business representative on the board of the Greater Cambridge Partnership. In the latter role he worked closely with his friend and former client Nigel Brown. Brown was founder of a successful Cambridge financial services company and of the innovative Stradivarius Trust, which acquired top class violins for up and coming musicians like Nigel Kennedy.

6. Emmaus and wider activities



Selwyn Image at the opening of Emmaus Cambridge in 1992.



Emmaus Cambridge in 2020.

Emmaus in the UK (1989 onwards)

The following description of his involvement with Emmaus is the preface which Selwyn Image wrote for the English translation of the history of

Emmaus, 'Emmaus and the Abbé Pierre, An Alternative Model of Enterprise, Charity and Society'.

“When Abbé Pierre set up the first Emmaus Community in 1949, in post-war Paris, he had no idea he was founding either a major social enterprise or an international movement. So far as he was concerned, he was simply responding to a shocking and unacceptable situation and doing what he felt was right and necessary. His experience as priest, resistance hero and parliamentarian had moulded him to fight injustice, and his activist nature was such that it had to be something practical. The level of homelessness and unemployment in the capital was, for him, a scandal that demanded dynamic action.

In this case, and with crucial input from the first twenty homeless and unemployed people he took into his own life and home, he began collecting donations of furniture, clothing and household goods for resale in a large wooden shed erected in what had formerly been the garden. Other collected items, like metal, rags and paper, were bundled and recycled. The aim was to provide a home and living for the “Companions”, as the twenty were called, and to use any proceeds thereafter to help house those worse off than themselves.

This kind of thinking was so much a part of his nature and training, I think, that the originality of creating a charity that WORKED, restoring self-respect to those who had lost it by providing a supportive home and meaningful work, and in the process turning grudging receivers into motivated givers, barely occurred to him. Similarly, when successfully marshalling the entire population of France to address the scandal of homelessness, he seemed to regard the response as normal and to be expected. Injustice was intolerable and had to be fought. Even the name he chose for the first Community - Emmaus - taken from one of his favourite stories in the New Testament, where two disciples regained hope and purpose through an encounter with the risen Christ on the road to a small village called Emmaus, was intrinsic to his character and thinking.

Today, in 2021, the Movement he created is one of the largest NGOs in France, second only in size to the Red Cross. Worldwide, across thirty seven countries , there are some 330 self-supporting Communities and around 450 partnership organisations. Most are non-English speaking.

My first encounter with Emmaus was in 1960, as a Modern Languages student Cambridge. Abbé Pierre was a fervent internationalist who believed that by enabling students to travel and work together, he could do something practical to assist reconciliation in post Second World War Europe. To this end, he sought to use the Emmaus Communities established in Paris to invite university students from around Europe to spend their summer vacation working there alongside Companions.

For three months I salvaged coal from cellars, cleared houses and apartments, tore paper and bundled rags. We were a motley crew. With me were two other students, as well as around twenty French Companions, a Benedictine worker-priest and the Community leader. The Companions came from every walk of life and level of society.

Many were alcoholics, nearly all ex-servicemen, a number had been in prison; one or two were redundant executives fallen on hard times. Nearly all had significant problems or trauma to overcome. We ate well, and were paid two packets of Gauloises cigarettes a week. As the Abbé Pierre himself was always travelling, the administration of our Community (the first as it happens) was handled by the much admired (and equally feared) Lucie Coutaz, a lay Sister and his long-time assistant both in the Resistance and Parliament. He always referred to her as “the co-founder of the Emmaus Movement” and from the little I saw of her and what I read later in her excellent book, “Quarante ans avec l’Abbé Pierre” she was a beacon for him as well as for the integrity of the secular humanitarian Movement he had created.



Lucie Coutaz.

We worked in groups of three: a (not always totally sober) driver and two Companions. Despite occasional lapses, for which poor management was generally responsible, there was a sense of striving and purpose and that what we were doing - no one thought of it then as social enterprise - was both right and a meaningful path to changed lives and renewed purpose.

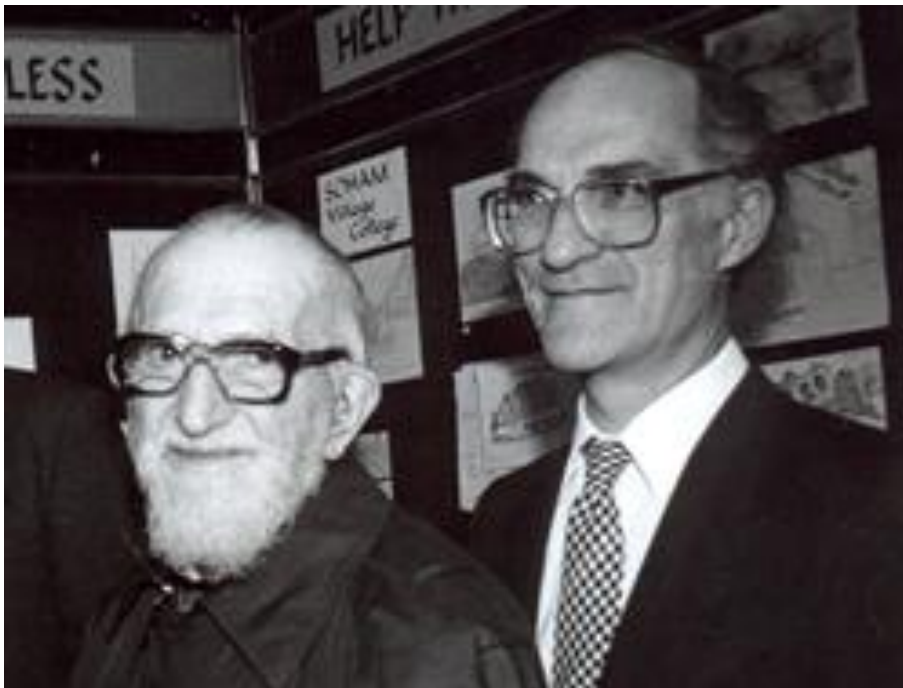
After three months I returned to my studies, speaking a form of French that raised some eyebrows and suppressed smiles at my university oral examination. Thereafter, for the next thirty years, I got on with my career

as an international marketing consultant and forgot about Emmaus.....until late 1989, when homeless people began to appear on the streets of Cambridge. There was no local night shelter then, and I was asked by the founder of a charity set up to address this scandal to try and raise money for one. My business background was in market research, so it was natural for me to meet the people living on the street and in the makeshift camp they had set up by the river, and to ask them what they wanted and how they felt about night shelters.

Not good. Night shelters were dreaded as places where you would be robbed whilst sleeping, if indeed you were able to do so surrounded by sickness, drunkenness and violence.

A few days later, I was talking to a very lucid but angry man in the soup and sandwich shelter we had set up in the base of the city-centre car-park. Every idea I had he shot down in flames. Eventually, I became so frustrated that I asked him what on earth he DID want? His answer changed my life. "I would have thought it obvious to someone of your so-called intelligence", he said, "What I want is somewhere I can do meaningful work, where I feel I belong and where I can get my self-respect back".

His last words took me back those thirty years. I tried to buy time to collect my thoughts and said that he reminded me of a French organisation called Emmaus that did just that, but that I had no idea whether it still existed or not. His next remark put the seal on my fate. "And what the **** are you going to do about it?", he asked. Emmaus UK was born.



Abbé Pierre, left, with Selwyn Image.

The next day, I looked in the Paris phone book in the public library, contacted Abbé Pierre and asked him if he would help. “Of course”, he said, “I have been waiting thirty years for this call.” “Call me when you have found a site, and I will come over and discuss things with you”. And so we set about trying to set up an Emmaus Community in Cambridge.

Abbé Pierre still spoke not a word of English, and most of the local friends and colleagues I was able to involve, scarcely a word of French. But we visited Communities in France, wrote a business plan, and started seeking funds through our networks relying on what we had seen, what we were told by highly sceptical counterparts in France and drawing on our own business and administrative experience.

After ten years as Chair, I resigned. The domestic reasons for this were compelling at the time, but with hindsight, this contributed to an extended period of mis-rule and inappropriate management, with divisions and quarrels within the Movement, regarding growth and development strategy. After what has been called “our teenage years” a new Director with a gift for communication and enabling leadership was appointed, and the Movement happily came together again. I, too, felt the need to get involved again at grass roots level, and became a founder trustee of two new Communities, Leicester and Rutland and Norfolk and Waveney, where I still have the privilege of serving in what, I think, must be the best run Community in the UK. Nothing to do with me, but to first class colleagues, an excellent Chair, and the best Community Director I have encountered.

In 2021, thirty years later, we have thirty Emmaus Communities up and running in the UK, plus a number of active development projects and associate activities. Setting up a new community is a challenge in today’s heavily regulated times. Each requires in the region of £2 million to purchase and adapt suitable living and selling sites and fund until economic self-sufficiency is achievable.

Despite this, Emmaus UK is now the largest, and fastest growing Movement outside France itself, and external research, carried out a few years ago now but still relevant today showed that, taking all start-up and running costs into account, the net social value of the average Community over twenty years is £9.3 million, and that each Companion saved the State over £25,000 a year. That would be substantially greater now that there are some 850 formerly homeless people safely off the streets and some 300 paid staff to support them, the businesses and the Movement. For the business minded, these levels of Return on Investment and saving to the public purse are enough to quicken the pulse of any socially minded venture capitalist. Unfortunately, the need, as we perceive it, to remain independent of government control means a lack of support for what is

arguably a significant tool in the armoury of measures to reduce rough sleeping.

Of course, no venture like this can succeed without the skills and abilities of colleagues and supporters, and we have been lucky in attracting some incredibly able supporters, administrators and donors, on whose behalf I have been awarded a number of honours that should properly be collective.

In 2007, when we had reached 15 Communities, I was honoured with a CBE, and reminded by the Queen that she had followed our growth with interest as the Royal car often passed by the Cambridge Community on their way to Sandringham. In 2013, thanks largely to support from an Emmaus colleague on the Board of the Royal Society of Arts and Commerce, I was awarded their Albert Medal “for tackling homelessness through Social Enterprise”, and made a Life Fellow of the Society (FRSA).



Selwyn Image receiving his Honorary Doctorate from Anglia Ruskin University.

In 2014, Anglia Ruskin followed this up with an honorary Doctorate of Arts, and the real benefit of a feast a year in some attractive location. More relevant, these awards have given me the opportunity to talk to a wider public about Emmaus and the ideals behind it. Finally, in 2016, the French Government made me a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, with a handsome medal and a joyful reception for Emmaus friends and colleagues at the Embassy.

I think it only right to record that without my wife, growth and success would have been slower. For its first five years, she was the first and only (underpaid) member of Emmaus, appointed at the insistence of one of our founder trustees, for whom she had done some outstanding organisational

and fund-raising work during the year of his mayoralty. My first attempt at recruiting her was unsuccessful, with her saying she was not sure she was ready for working in such an organisation as Emmaus. What I did not know was that, after the interview, she took herself to France to see for herself what an Emmaus Community was, liked what she saw, and came back and waited to see if we would ask again. Six months later, after an unsuccessful alternative appointment, I approached her again, again at the insistence of our founder trustee. This time, she accepted and successfully negotiated the meagre salary downwards, saying she had done her sums and could manage on less.

Thereafter, she ran everything from emergency cover for Community leaders needing a break (and once having to deal with a major theft and flight by some Companions during such an event), to preparing Royal visits, managing publicity (where her previous fourteen years in charge of marketing and publicity for the Cambridge Arts Theatre came in handy) and soliciting donations from some of the personalities she had come to know during that time. On a normal day, I would ring at 9.30 to discuss progress and her planned activities. In short, as many have attested, from our President, Terry Waite, to Companions, that the organisation would not have grown and developed as it has without the skilled groundwork she accomplished, and the systems she put in place. Abbé Pierre regarded her as the Lucie Coutaz and co-founder of the English Movement, which says it all."

Cambridgeshire Police Authority (1990-1995)

Shortly after the launch of Emmaus, Selwyn was asked by the Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire City Council if he would join the Police Authority as an Independent member. The Chief Constable had an advisory board comprising representatives of the political parties on the City Council plus one independent representative. After a short introductory programme that Selwyn asked for, accompanying police patrols and the Cambridge divisional commander on their evening work, he was asked to oversee the strategic training course for young up and coming inspectors.

Choirs and Choral Music.

Singing in choirs and later, writing choral music was a constant in Selwyn's life; at school in its church and chamber choir; at University in CUMS (its choral society); in Hull with the Hull Bach Choir ; in London with the Hampstead Choral Society and the London Bach Choir, and on returning to Cambridge, with two church choirs and the Cambridge Philharmonic Society.

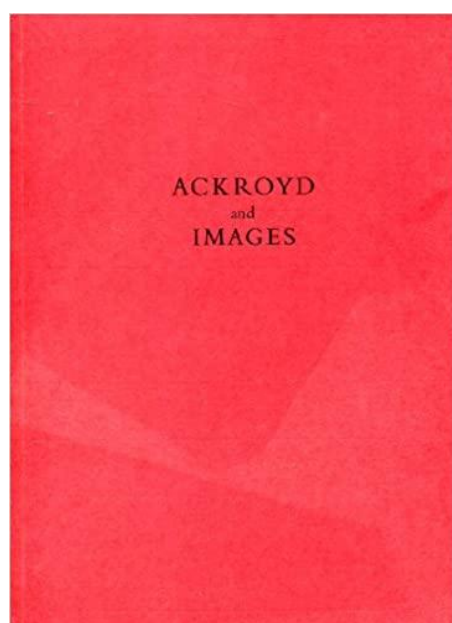
From about 1985 he started to write more and sing less. He was also on the committee of the St John's Choir Association from 2012-2020 for the

maximum period allowed, but remained as a “Friend” both the St Johns and Trinity College Choir.

In 2019 he was asked to be the Vice President, and in 2020 the President of a local choir, Chesterton Choral Society; this has involved writing a carol for them to perform at their Christmas Carol event each year.

In 1985, installed in Cambridge and singing first in the local church choir, and from 1987 in the University Church of Great St Mary’s choir, an artist friend from University days called Norman Ackroyd (now CBE, RA, and on the Academy’s Executive Board) and Selwyn decided to collaborate on a limited edition series of eight etchings of Christmas scenes accompanied by eight carols, with words and music by Selwyn. It was called 'Ackroyd and Images' (right).

The idea of writing carols occurred to Selwyn when he discovered, reading through the published letters of his namesake and ancestor Selwyn Image (1849-1930), that in addition to being a famous artist and founder member of the Arts and Crafts Movement, he also wrote poetry, and for many Christmases would send a verse carol to his friends. The idea occurred to Selwyn to do something similar, but setting a verse to music, and hopefully hear it sung rather than sending a text of uncertain quality to friends unlikely to read music.



This habit has continued over the years and Selwyn assembled those that had not been published into one one volume, with the Church music- mostly for evensong - in another. Some have been published, including the Emmaus Carol published by Faber and recorded by Ely Cathedral.

A couple of settings of poems by Goethe are in a book published by Anglia Ruskin University to celebrate their 25th anniversary as a full University, and a verse rendering of St Paul’s words on Faith, Hope and Charity, have been set by John Rutter.

Justice of the Peace (2000-2010)

In 1999 Selwyn was appointed as a Justice of the Peace, The role of the magistracy in the UK, as JPs work is called, dates back to the late 12th Century. Today, it is responsible for trying all but the most serious of crimes,(around 95%) with the more serious five percent going up to the Crown Court for trial by judge and jury. He spent most of my time as a

Youth Magistrate, work that interested and appealed to him. He often worked alongside her chairmanship by Anne Corsellis of the panel of three magistrates that adjudicate each case. Much of her success was achieved by courtesy and good manners, which had the effect of ensuring compliance and attention from even the most rebellious of youths who came before them.

For example there was in the dock one day a rebellious young man, lounging against the box, chewing gum and generally displaying contempt for the whole proceedings. Youth courts are less formal than adult ones, but even so, they can be pretty formidable. Looking at him kindly from the bench, Anne said: “Young man, I wonder if you could help me. As you can see, I am getting on a bit, and I don’t hear as well as I used to. It’s very important to me that I hear exactly what you have to say, and I am concerned that I may not be able to do so, if you have gum in your mouth. Do you think you could possibly....?”

“Yes miss”, came the reply; the gum was promptly taken out of his mouth, stuck on the ledge in front of him, and the trial proceeded.

Cambridgeshire Community Foundation (2006-7)

In 2006, Selwyn was asked to chair the Cambridge Community Fund. This was a new initiative in Cambridgeshire already operating successfully in other counties. It receives charitable donations mostly from business or professional organisations who wish to remain anonymous or who do not know how best to distribute them, and for a fee of 5%, to cover the costs of a couple of administrators, distributes funds on their behalf to organisations judged worthy.

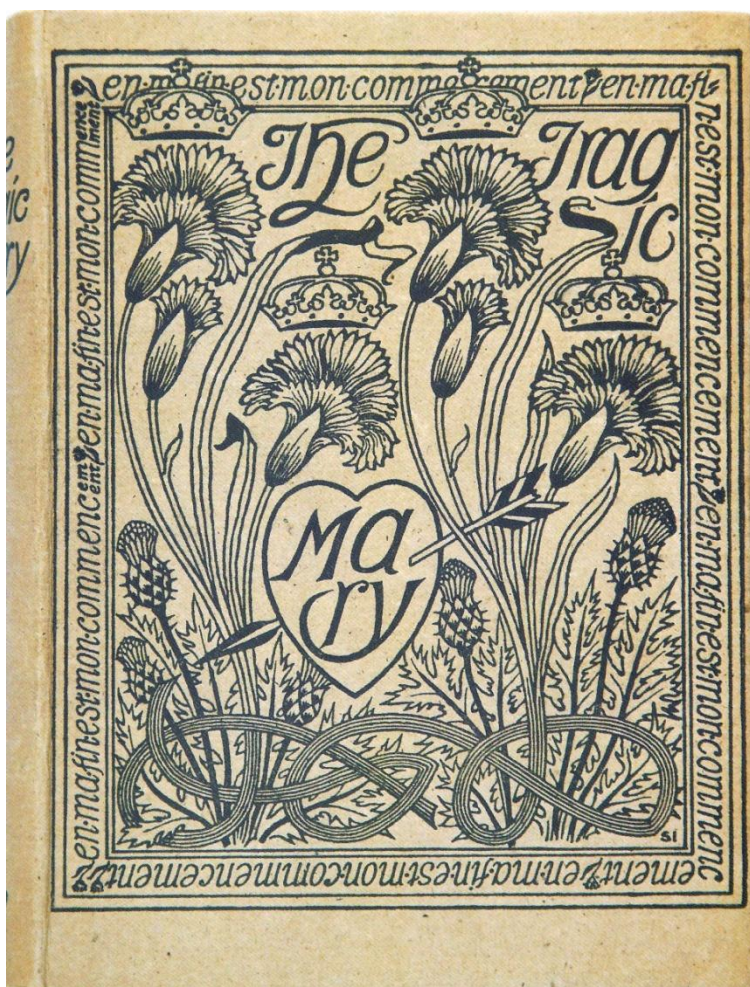
7. Writing

In 1985 Selwyn co-authored a book with his then boss Alan Barrell called 'Executive Networking', which was published by Business Books. At the time, the idea of networking was quite novel; today, with social media it is the norm.

Selwyn also wrote a children's book called 'The Blackbird and the Canary', with illustrations by his friend the Rev. Philip Spence.

He has also written several poems and verse, which he has assembled in a privately printed A6 book. This matches in size a book of poetry by his ancestor and namesake Selwyn Image.

Selwyn Image senior was a stained glass artist, writer and poet who played an important part in the Arts and Crafts movement. He lived from 1849 to 1930.



An example of the work of Selwyn Image senior. A highly complex design, straddling Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau; signed 'SI' lower right. The trade original was bound in beige, paper-covered boards and issued in a glassine wrapper. 600 copies for the limited edition market were issued in vellum.