

Much of the following was written by Ted himself; some comments and links have been added. Ted was too modest to fully express his own experiences and achievements; he could only give hints. Although having benefitted from his advice and wisdom over many years, much more has been discovered about this man from his collection of personal letters and archives bequeathed to Edmonton TS. A brief Theosophical Biography was also added. — Ernest E. Pelletier

Teddie Gerald Davy — Personal Biography

Teddie Gerald Davy, better known as Ted, was born September 6, 1926, in Great Yarmouth a seaside town in Norfolk. Yarmouth, as it was known by the locals, was a major fishing port for hundreds of years depending mainly on the herring fisheries. It is located on the East Coast of England about 140 miles North of London. Today, Yarmouth is a town of about 40,000 people on the mouth of the River Yare, mainly known now as a holiday resort because of its long sandy beaches.

Ted was the youngest of three children, one brother and one sister. Ted's older brother was Herbert Cecil Davy named after his father. Bert or "Bertie" as he was called by the family was 10½ years older than Ted. Ted later wrote this about his brother "So sibling interaction during childhood between Bertie and me was quite limited. Nevertheless, for the first 13 years of my life, he was an important influence, because of age difference almost parental rather than fraternal figure." ["Fond Recollections of My Elder Brother," 4 page document found near Ted's computer.]

Ted often spoke gratefully of his happy childhood in a loving family, a family he described as a bit lower than lower middle class. Thanks to his sister Ena, eight years his senior, he learned to read at a very young age, and until 13, was educated in small private schools. In a 1990 letter to Ted, Ena wrote: "Ted, how ever did you manage to read those long sentences and big words at that age!! It made me realize how I enjoyed teaching you at that age."

War conditions required all schools in his hometown to be evacuated inland in mid-1940. At this point, he had to transfer to the local boys' grammar school which ended up in Retford, a small railway town in Nottinghamshire. This move resulted in a culture shock which he quickly overcame, but made him restless. Accidentally coming across a newspaper article reporting a British government initiative to send children overseas to avoid the war, he pleaded with his parents, now 150 miles away, to put his name in. The motive, needless to say, was not for adventure. Against extraordinary odds, he was one of the chosen, and in September 1940 sailed with some thirty others to Canada. In a letter to Ben Wicks Ted wrote: "I have counted my blessings ever since that my name was among the chosen. Was actually among the very last to go, because while my group was awaiting embarkation in Liverpool that September, the *City of Benares* was sunk with many evacuees aboard. One result of that tragedy was that the scheme was quickly abandoned." [Letter dated Dec. 18, 1987]

His experience *en route* was traumatic. The convoy which included the ship he was on lost five of its ships due to U-Boat attacks during its twelve day voyage to Halifax, NS. He eyewitnessed two of them which were very close; one of them exploded and shot flames hundreds of feet in the air. The scenes remained etched in his memory all his life. They served in one sense as a *rite de passage* for his immediate reaction was to vault into the adult world complaining. He was vocally bitter that no attempt

was made in any of several sinkings to pick up survivors. It was not until some time later he understood why, but in the meantime he was privy to a regrettable aspect of human nature—selfish fear exhibited by some of the adults in charge of his small group, one of them a medical doctor, another a major in a well known social service organization. [He crossed out “Salvation Army”.]



<https://uboat.net/allies/merchants/2476.html>

The Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC) program, *Life and Times*, interviewed Peter C. Newman, a Canadian journalist and author, regarding his autobiography *Here be Dragons* in one of its episodes. Newman reminisced about coming to Canada aboard RMS *Nova Scotia* in September 1940. Ted realized they have been fellow passengers. Following is an excerpt from the letter Ted wrote to Peter Newman in March 2005.

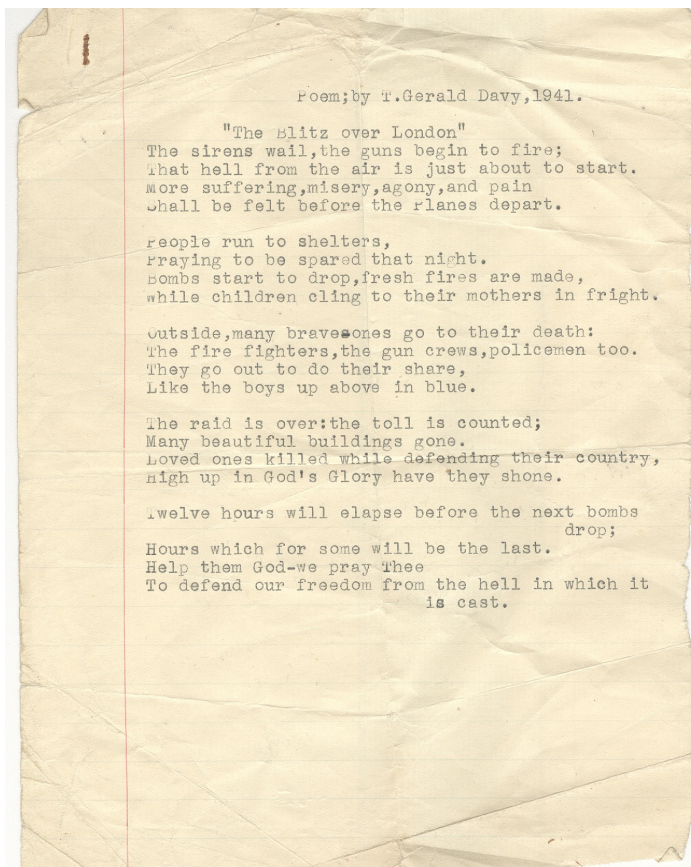
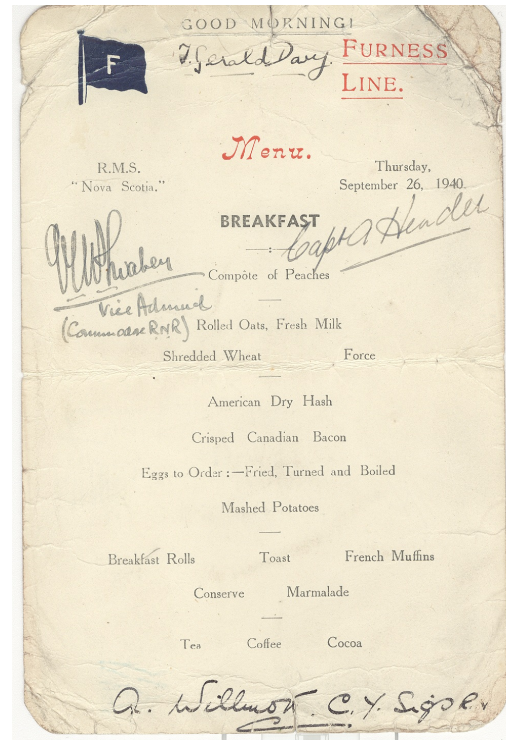
Just turned fourteen, I was one of about 20 children being “evacuated” under the government token sponsorship program. To the best of my knowledge, we were the last such group—the *City of Benares*, carrying a larger number of children was sunk on September 17, which resulted in the government scheme being cancelled.

My memories pretty well match yours. However, although I recall frequent lifeboat drills, I don’t remember ever climbing into the one assigned to us. Regarding the several merchant ships going down close to us, one personal incident remains a clear memory: my extreme anger that we did not attempt to pick up survivors. Among our group’s “chaperones” was a British woman Salvation Army major who seemed incapable of giving me the sort of counselling needed at such a time. In fairness to her, I think her faith was shaken at that point, and in any case she seemed to interpret her function as limited to keeping boys and girls separated. There was also a Canadian medical doctor returning home, and on thinking back, with his training and experience, he should have been able to help me, but didn’t. Ironically, of all the adults around me that day, it took a Leading Seaman, R.N., one of the gunners who manned the antique 6" gun mounted aft, to calm me down, and explain the rationale of convoy rules and practice.

Although I crossed the Atlantic by sea several times subsequently, that trip remains the most vivid of them all in my memory. A souvenir of it has been with me ever since—a now battered looking

Breakfast Menu for Thursday, September 26, 1940, signed by Vice-Admiral Swabey, the Convoy Commodore, Capt. A Hender, and A Willmot, C.Y. Sigs, R.N.

In Halifax, NS, Canada, he was extraordinarily fortunate in being fostered by a caring family. The father, an Anglican curate, was a chaplain in the Royal Canadian Air force, and very superior morally and intellectually to various chaplains he later met with. (Probably on this account, he never rose high in the Anglican hierarchy.) But soon he went overseas, so the English boy saw little of him. The mother was as kind as any could be to a child not her own. In age, he was between their daughter and son. With all, he enjoyed a happy (though not sentimental) relationship. In school, in most subjects he found the English system was two years ahead of the Canadian, but some of the teachers were excellent, so this period of marking time was not entirely wasted, and possibly beneficial. However, boredom was probably a factor in driving him to seek evening work, and he ended up by being an usher in the city's largest cinema six evenings a week. The experience prompted his first career ambition: theatre management, which was never pursued far owing to the prevalent wartime conditions.



In April 1941, his father in England was killed on duty as a special constable in a bombing raid on their station. The painful shock was eased, thanks to being surrounded by really loving people. Time healed, as it always does. Painful as things were, Ted wrote a poem that year to express his emotions.

At the end of 1942, the family he was staying with was about to move to Montreal and could not take him with them. The choice of the Nova Scotia government, his legal guardian, was to assign him to another foster home. His choice, however, was to go back home in England. This of course was very difficult in wartime, but in a two week period of intense effort, he obtained all the necessary permissions, and signed on as a mess boy on a small (3000 ton) Norwegian freighter, so that he could work his way back

to England in January 1943. Modern and fast, the ship was allowed to cross independently, i.e., not in convoy. It was an enjoyable experience despite the wartime and weather conditions.

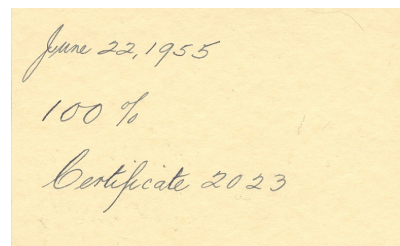
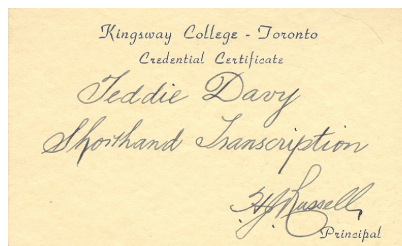
After a few months in England, the call of the sea took hold, and he entered the British Merchant Navy. Assigned to a small (8000 ton) tanker, his trans-Atlantic crossings added up to probably the most miserable six weeks of his life. The contrast between the Norwegian and British ships was incredible, and he couldn't wait to sign off.

His mother was now living in London, where he was sent by the government employment office to the Canadian Military Headquarters to work as a civilian messenger boy. This was August 1943. The following twelve months provided a priceless opportunity to learn about life in general, as he was accepted as an adult by the soldiers he worked with. [crossed out: resulting in his indulging in underage drinking.] All in all, though, it was a valuable year prior to reaching the age when he could join the Royal Navy.

This happened in August 1944, and the following 3½ years were another great learning experience. He used to claim it taught him more about humanity (albeit mostly of the male variety) than any other experience in his whole life. <https://www.theosophycanada.com/files/hms-superb-ted-g-davy.pdf>

Finally discharged, England proved stifling to him. A choice between going either to South Africa or to Canada was given to the latter in March 1948. For three months he worked on an Ontario farm, work for which he was entirely unsuitable, and the call of the sea once again influenced his choice of career, and he signed up for five years with the Royal Canadian Navy. Another positive experience. Ted later claimed that his Naval Service is where he developed leadership qualities

A civilian again in 1953, and a Navy trained electronic technician, he worked for Canadian General Electric Company Limited “installing radar at various sites in Northern Quebec, Labrador and Newfoundland.” One of the achievements noted in his CV was “appointed to a team of experts employed solely in bringing radar installations to peak efficiency before handing over to armed forces.” Realizing this wasn't his forte, although remuneration was good, he wanted something different, initially hoping (without success) to get into technical writing. But he had little to offer otherwise. Now settled in Toronto, he decided to brush up his shorthand, and became one of the last of a dying breed: male secretary in a construction company. This was 1955. He noted in his CV that he was affiliated with the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administration.



In December 1954 occurred the most important event of his life between birth and death: meeting Doris Fare. Until that moment a confirmed bachelor, she transformed his whole outlook, and after a rapid courtship they married in October 1955. To him it was like resuming a close fellowship started lifetimes

past. Her influence on him could hardly be exaggerated, and her encouragement was behind everything he eventually accomplished. In their book collection was a copy of Ted's 1983 Blavatsky Lecture, *The Descent Into Hades* with the following inscription "To my Dear Doris, without whose encouragement and help, this would never have happened! Teddie".

<https://www.theosophycanada.com/files/the-descent-into-hades-ted-g-davy.pdf>

From July 1955 to May 1965 Ted worked with Dufferin Materials and Construction Limited, Toronto, today called Dufferin Construction, A Division of CRH Canada. He indicated in his CV that he was Executive Assistant to the Vice-President of Construction.

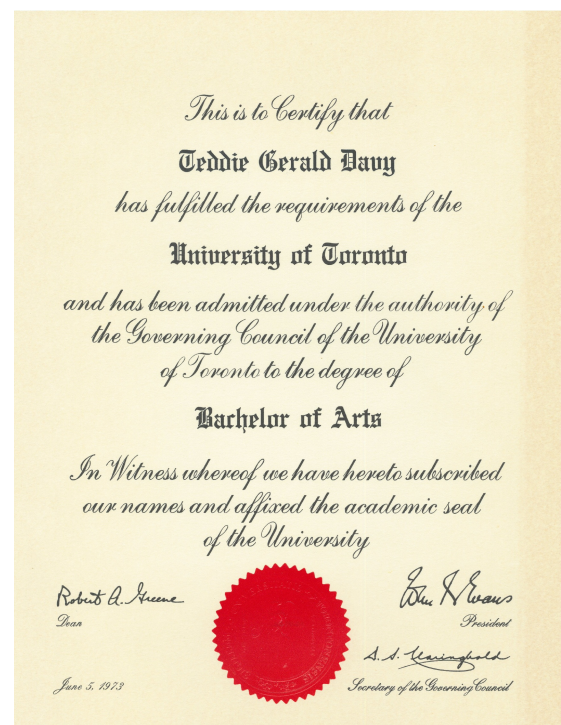
In 1963 he decided to resume his formal education, and for ten years studied (in non-business hours) for his B.A. degree at the University of Toronto.

Ten years in the competitive construction industry had taught him a lot. However, by now concerned with the Buddhist concept of "Right Livelihood" he sought for a long time to find a suitable occupation. In 1965 at some sacrifice, he thought he had found it with the Red Cross, working with teenagers, but soon realized the seemingly ideal organization was very far short of being an ideal vehicle for his aspirations. Ted was with the Red Cross in Toronto from May 1965 to November 1966. [CV]

Eventually in 1966 he obtained a position with a trade association, one in which he did not have to compromise his sense of ethics. Ted detailed in his CV that in November 1966 he was employed with the Ontario Canadian Manufacturers' Association at the head office, initially as Assistant to the Manager, Ontario Division. In August 1969 he became Manager of the Commercial Intelligence Department. His responsibilities included representing members' interests and viewpoints to federal and provincial governments and to the public at large. His special concerns were with Environmental Quality, Financing, Government Incentive Programs, Government Purchasing, Industrial Design, Industrial Research and Development, Standards, and Trade and Commerce. He was the liaison with Federal Ministers, senior officials in Departments of Energy, Mines and Resources; Environment; Industry; Trade and Commerce; Supply and Services; and the Ministry of State for science and Technology. [CV] Despite a few short black periods, it was a perfect occupation for him. It lasted more than nine years.

Ted served on the panel for the 45th Annual Meeting of Canadian Standards Association (CSA) held in Vancouver, June 1972. His credentials were listed on the Program as follows:

Manager Commercial Intelligence Department, Canadian Manufacturers' Association, Toronto, is member of CSA Standards Policy Board, CSA Metric Advisory Committee, and the Canadian National Committee for ISO. Responsible at CMA for standards, research and development,



design and environmental quality. He will contribute substantial background experience of Canada industry.

On July 16th, 1984, the Metric Commission of Canada presented Ted with a Metric Service Award for his contribution to the Metric Conversion in Canada.

In 1975 he accepted an offer from a Calgary based trade association. Ted was the Executive Assistant to Garnet T Page, the Managing Director of the Coal Association of Canada. In a lengthy contribution on “Coal” in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, Page wrote: “On 24 Dec. 1973 the federal government issued letters patent to this new association, with objectives appropriate to a national body representing the coal industry. . .” [*The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 1988, p.363.]

In order to pursue voluntary interests, mostly Theosophical, Ted retired early at the end of 1979.

Theosophical Biography

Ted and Doris worked as an invaluable team when it came to theosophical labor. They met through their common interest in Theosophy and it was always at the forefront of their lives.

In 1961 Dudley W Barr, Editor of *The Canadian Theosophist* since 1947, asked Doris and Ted to eventually take over the role. They had a hand in producing the Mar-April 1961 issue and at this point he named them Associate Editors. He seemed impressed with how well they worked together and dubbed them “Dorited”. A year later they were Editors—a responsibility they held for the next thirty years. The last issue published under their editorship was Vol.72, No.6, Jan-Feb 1992. During their terms, Dudley Barr and then Dorited upheld the spirit and intent of its first editor, Albert ES Smythe. *The Canadian Theosophist* earned a worldwide reputation for its steadfast dedication to original theosophy.

In 1968 Ted was elected General Secretary of The Theosophical Society in Canada, and retained this position until 1986. Combined with the magazine, this was a satisfying avocation, although often tempered with having to put up with disagreeable controversy, which is unfortunately seldom absent in the affairs of the Theosophical Society (Adyar). Sometime during these years, he became an Associate of the United Lodge of Theosophists, and never saw any conflict of allegiance in so doing, but he was never active in the ULT.



Doris and Ted at home — 2000

Ted and Doris were involved with organizing several important North American Theosophical Students’ Conferences. One was held in Niagara Falls in 1969, another in Detroit in 1970, and one in Toronto in 1971. As General Secretary he officially represented the Theosophical Society in Canada at the Centenary

Conference in New York in 1975 which he helped organize. Over the years Ted and Doris hosted and met International Presidents and students, including such notable individuals as John Coats, Radha Burnier, Boris de Zirkoff, Geoffrey Barboroka, Geoffrey Farthing, Dudley Barr, Rex (Reginald) Dutta, Joy Mills, Helen V. Zahara, Virginia Hanson, and Emmett Small.

In 1975 Ted and Doris moved to Calgary, AB where they helped resuscitate the local T.S. Branch. This branch became very active, attracting serious and dedicated students. Ted addressed numerous conferences and events over the years. He was guest lecturer at the Krotona School of Theosophy in Ojai, CA for the Spring Term in 1982 where he did a series of presentations on “The Mysteries”. He also spoke at most Canadian theosophical centres where he delivered well-researched, well-received talks. In 1983 Ted was invited by the Theosophical Society in England to deliver the annual Blavatsky Lecture where he presented “The Descent into Hades.”

In 1982, in connection with his T.S. in Canada office, he was appointed a Trustee of the Lizzie Arthur Russell Theosophical Memorial Trust in Edmonton. He would later write that this responsibility required little time or effort because, especially in later years, “the dedication of co-Trustees efficiently managed a unique and very worthwhile program in the interests of the Theosophical Movement”. However, in connection with the reprinting program of Edmonton Theosophical Society, made possible through funding from LARTM Trust, Ted insisted that he be given the opportunity to index several of the serial magazines and books being reproduced. This was a heavy task to undertake but, efficient as he was, Ted also claimed he rather enjoyed it. Indexes were compiled for *The Lamp*, *The Irish Theosophist*, *The Theosophical Forum (Original Series)*, *The Theosophical Forum (New Series)*, *The Prasnotara*, (vols 1-4), *The Theosophic Isis*, *Transactions of the Scottish Lodge*, *The Canadian Theosophist*, Ernest Wood’s *Q. & A.*, and *Lucifer*. He also compiled a Table of Contents and an Introduction for such reprints as *Theosophical Siftings* and *Transactions of the London Lodge*, among others. He resigned his position in 1991 but unofficially remained as “special advisor and honorary Trustee”.

At the *Works and Influence of H.P. Blavatsky* conference hosted by Edmonton Theosophical Society in July 1998, Ted presented “A Material Body Which Suffocates The Soul”: H.P. Blavatsky’s Attitude to Ritual, which was subsequently published in the *Conference Papers*.

In 2004 a tribute to Ted was published under title: *Keeping the Link Unbroken: Theosophical Studies Presented to Ted G. Davy on His Seventy-fifth Birthday*, edited by Michael Gomes. It includes an impressive bibliography of Ted’s published work to that point as well as a contribution by Doris, “Life With Ted”. Theirs was a loving relationship; he often called her “Darling” when addressing her. They had been married for sixty-two years when Ted died.

Ted, being an avid historian, spent years writing about important aspects of Canadian theosophical history and compiling biographies of individuals influential in the Canadian movement. His book, *Theosophy in Canada: “The Split” and other Studies in Early Canadian Theosophical History and Some Early Canadian Theosophists*, was published by Edmonton TS in 2011. It was very well received and is the only published comprehensive history on the movement in Canada.

For more about Ted's evacuation to Canada, read "Yarmouth Evacuees braved prowling U-boats to reach Canada." <https://www.theosophycanada.com/files/great-yarmouth-mercury.pdf>

Ted Davy passed away at Foothills Medical Centre in Calgary on Sunday November 26th, 2017.
<http://www.mhfh.com/davy-teddie-ted-gerald/>

Doris Davy passed away at Extendicare Cedars Villa in Calgary on Friday February 15th, 2019.
<https://www.mhfh.com/davy-doris-jean-rose-nee-fare/>

A tree has been planted for each of them at Fish Creek Provincial Park in Calgary as a living memory, and their ashes scattered in the Rocky Mountains, per their request.

<https://www.mhfh.com/tree-program/namelists/2018-fish-creek/>

Doris will appear on the name lists plaque for 2019.
