

## **GRAND-P - Some frank and fascinating excerpts from recent letters by SBG's granddaughters, with their kind permission.**

### **From Mrs. Cicely (Image) Briggs, Osteopath:**

" ...I feel that Sabine, for all his magpie-like personality, does not hold any charms for me!! (I never met him, I was four when he died, and I was in India). I admired his wife for putting up with him!! A very emotional man - he was no superman in the confines of his own home. He treated his sons atrociously and ignored many of his daughters. His wife was always at her wits' end for money - he was forever spending his `book' earnings on beautifying the old home. It is a masterpiece, a collection of the work of the local professional trades. He gave them the chance to express their arts in his home. It is a museum almost. But it was at a huge cost for his family, and their welfare was non-existent!

"Grace, his wife, was a saint. One day I would like to write a tribute to her! She told my mother in her old age (not very old, in her 60s, but worn out with sixteen pregnancies and rheumatism) that she never had the chance to enjoy any of her babies, they were whisked away because another was on the way. Awful life!

" ... There is so much nonsense written about SBG!!

"I am trying to raise funds for Lew Trenchard Church, SBG's most treasured and beloved Home Church. We are faced with huge repair bills for tower, roof and what is much more tragic, the screen - which SBG had created and carved by two Victorian ladies in about 1890 - is under attack by death-watch beetle and cannot be saved unless we get the screen down quickly to have it treated. The total sum estimated is somewhere in the region of £75,000.

"The church was the entire recreation by SBG when his Uncle Charles died having been the `slumbering incumbent' for over thirty years (SBG's own quotation!!) SBG then applied to the Bishop of Exeter to have the living of his own church and, as you know, he got it!"

### **And from her cousin, Miss Mollie Priestley, T.D.:**

" ... I do have a few memories of my Grandfather SBG as my two sisters and I, with our nanny and my mother's greyhound Fawn, spent some time at Lew in the early part of the First World War so, as I was born at the end of 1913, I was very young at the time.

"However, he was a somewhat fearsome figure to me as I thought he was GOD.

"Funnily enough, when I returned with my mother after the last war to see Lew and discussed with her my childhood memories there, she told me that she, as a small child, had also thought he was God!

"In spite of that, he did not meet with my approval as he had put my teddy bear on the top of the fountain, which to me seemed higher than Nelson's Column, and my teddy bear was unrecoverable to my indignation and, no doubt, screaming wrath.

" ... trips with my `Grand P' (as we called him) on his parish `rounds' in the dog-cart with me lying on my back in great discomfort looking at the sky, while my sister Diana sat beside him in front. He obviously approved of her but NOT me!"

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