Thank you, Master, for your kind words on my person. The German poet Heinrich Heine, when shown a portrait drawing of himself, wrote on it: 'Eh bien, cet homme, c'est moi', which might be rendered as 'I suppose this man is me'. I feel similarly. My thanks are due to the College for this splendid occasion: a festive event like this does not come about by the wave of a wand. I am most grateful to the manciple and this staff and to the chef and his colleagues. Finally, I wish to express gratitude that members of my family have been able to attennd this function. They have all had some distance to travel to be here, in the case of my son and his wife some very considerable distance indeed.

The early history of my family is bound up with two events which convulsed the religious and political fabric of France and Scotland respectively. This may sound over-dramatic or even presumptuous. Nevertheless, an ancestor of mine, a Huguenot named Jean Paulin, was forced to leave France before or around 1685 after Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes. He joined the French Protestant diaspora in Europe, in this case the borders of Scotland. Four generations later, my great-grandfather, George Paulin, rector of Irvine Royal Academy, sided with the Free Kirk in the great disruption of 1843 that split the Presbyterian church in Scotland. Thus it was that my grandfather, Thomas Paulin, who had trained at the Free Kirk New College in Edinburgh, received a call in 1891 from the Presbyterian Synod of Otago and Southland in New Zealand to the parish of Queenstown, now a well-known tourist resort, then a wild-west mining town.

What had been happening? In 1848, a group of Free Kirk Presbyterians had decided to found a New Jerusalem, a New Edinburgh to be precise, in the new colony of New Zealand. It was the Otago settlement, in the far south of the country, its capital Dunedin, a reminder of Edinburgh, if not of Jerusalem. Within fifteen years, however, Mammon had invaded this new Jerusalem, in the form of a gold rush. Suddenly, Dunedin and the Otago province were inundated by thousands of miners and settlers, many of them Scots, many English and Irish, among them my ancestors on my mother's side. It is through them that I can claim to be a fifth-generation New Zealander, five-eighths Scots, three-eighths English, with a French name. It was part of the great migration from Europe to the New World, for some an escape from religious and legal restrictions, from pauperisation, from the social class system, from the squire and the rector and the laird. For others, it involved mission and ministering to believers and unbelievers alike. Thus I am descended from families who for various reasons left the British Isles for Australia, South Africa, the USA and India, but especially New Zealand.

For a generation, Dunedin was New Zealand's commercial and educational capital, with attendant fine Victorian architecture. The Scots influence was to the fore in the founding in the 1860s of the High School and the University, both of which I was later to attend.

Thus, in the social levelling typical of colonial societies, it came about that my maternal grandfather, a small farmer, was the session clerk to the rural Presbyterian parish where my paternal grandfather was now the minister and that the smallholder's eldest daughter, my mother, married the minister's son. But there were differences between them nevertheless. Farmers' daughters rarely received secondary education, and my mother was no exception. For the rest of her life, this rankled, and it was what spurred her to provide the best for her five children.

My father had received the education that a rural high school could provide and was set to become a teacher. World War One meanwhile supervened. Over 100 years ago, in 1917, he came on a troopship via the then quite new Panama Canal to Liverpool and thence to France. He joined a regiment that had been nearly wiped out twice, once at Gallipoli and once in Flanders. He took part in the second Somme campaign of 1918, and was wounded in November of that year. His diaries and letters home, now deposited in an archive, are an interesting document of the lot of the private soldier in the so-called Great War for Civilisation (as it states on his campaign medals).

He came home now determined to become a farmer. This was not a good decision. Although well-read and possessed of multiple practical skills, he lacked the essentials needed for successful farming: capital, and a head for business. The small farm that he and my mother worked south of Dunedin, where their five children were born, was hit by the Depression after 1929 and never recovered. In 1937, the year of my birth, my father was forced to give up the unequal struggle. A resourceful man, he found casual work, until, in 1939, he acquired an eight-acre property on the Otago Peninsula, working, as he did for the rest of his life, the night shift at the local Cadbury's factory.

The Otago Peninsula is a tongue of steep land between Dunedin, its harbour, and the Pacific Ocean. Its ocean side is marked by cliffs, headlands and wild sandy bays. One promontory had been named by Captain Cook as he sailed past. The views extend from the ocean itself to the foothills of the mountain ranges beyond Dunedin. It is the landscape that I grew up with. It is of this Peninsula that I also have one of my earliest memories. My father, now in his forties, was in home guard uniform, it must have been in 1942, going to defend the Peninsula beaches against a possible Japanese attack. Where were the able-bodied men? They were in North Africa, Mr Churchill having persuaded the New Zealand government to keep its troops there. In the event, it was the Americans, at the Battle of the Coral Sea and subsequently, who removed the threat of invasion.

On this Peninsula, I first went to school, where a sole teacher ministered to 35 kids of all ages and abilities. I cannot have been badly taught. When, in 1946, we moved to Dunedin as my older siblings went to work or study, I found that I had been adequately prepared for a town school with hundreds of children. From all kinds of social backgrounds, we were taught in large classes held together by strict discipline.

Access to secondary school was free. This was one of the many legacies of the first Labour Government of 1935 that had removed fees and other impediments from state high schools. My high school had features familiar to anyone who has grown up in Britain and the British Empire. With its Scottish Baronial architecture, it had some pretensions to a public school, but also elements of a grammar school or a Scots academy. (Its first headmaster or rector, had been a Cambridge man). We were rigorously streamed. One encountered, on the one hand, rote learning, sink-or-swim teaching, compulsory sport, school cadets, and corporal punishment. (Expressed in terms of textbooks it was Durell, Durell and Fawdry, Holmyard, North and Hillard, Carter and Mears, names which may still resonate with those of my generation.) When I left, I declared that I would never, ever, again voluntarily take part in organised team sport, a vow which I have kept. On the other hand, we were taught by some men of humanity and learning who were dedicated to their subjects and the culture these stood for. The grounding I received in English, history and languages was to be crucial for my later

development. In the lower sixth form, my ability in maths being manifestly abysmal, I was allowed to take up German.

All this was, however, not without considerable sacrifice on the part of my parents. We lived in what might be called genteel penury, 'res angusta domi'. But this penurious household did have books. I owe to our battered set of Arthur Mee's *Children's Enyclopaedia* – although politically incorrect beyond belief for today's readers - my first knowledge of the things that have meant so much to me in later life: literature, history, and art. My parents meanwhile scrimped and scraped to make ends meet. My mother loved town life, with its various social and cultural outlets. My father hankered after the farm that was no longer his.

The University of Otago, where I took my BA and MA degrees, was part of a now abolished federal New Zealand university system,. I majored in French and German, with some Latin and History thrown in. The colonial cringe was alive and well. Many of my teachers were New Zealanders who had studied in Britain, or expat Oxbridge graduates, a fact of which they sedulously made us aware. Some few – I mention as an example the historian J.G.A. Pocock – were passing through on their way to higher preferments elsewhere.

I pass lightly over the military training done during my university years, my part in the Cold War, if you wish. I had no great aptitude for the army. But by a bizarre coincidence I found myself a film extra. A Hollywood film, featuring a romance between an American officer and a young New Zealand married woman (set in 1942 while the men were overseas) required shots of soldiers marching to war and returning from it. We recruits were accordingly filmed in the streets of Christchurch, among our number a young medical student named Robin Carrell, later also a Fellow of this College.

If you did well at university, it was expected that you would do postgraduate work overseas, there being then little local culture of graduate studies. With a degree in modern languages without having ever been in the countries where they were spoken, I had no desire to study in Britain. The award of a German government scholarship and the visit of a German professor in 1960 made me decide to attempt a German doctorate, and I found a Doktorvater in Heidelberg who was willing to take on an untried colonial.

I went to a Germany that had largely recovered, externally at least, from the scars of war. But a high proportion of my German fellow-students were fatherless; many had known bombing, evacuation and expulsion. But some of the overseas students, Koreans and Indonesians for instance, had known hardly better, and there were students from the Middle East and Africa who were to experience similar things before the decade was over. I lived in a small student community, where I met my wife.

My years in Germany coincided with the last of the Adenauer era: the past was not yet being discussed too openly. It was also the last afterglow of the university system set up in 1810 by Humboldt and which the year 1968 was effectively to destroy. Despite being aware of its hierarchies and its more than occasional professorial arrogance, I feel privileged to have experienced a university system that once had led the world. I attended as many lectures as I could and also the privileged 'Doktorandenkolloquium': I wish I had had time to hear other Heidelberg professors of the day, Gadamer or Löwith or Mitscherlich or Habermas, Campenhausen or von Rad Supervision as such there was none. One handed in a thesis when one was ready and prepared oneself for the dreaded oral examen rigorosum on any part of one's main and subsidiary subjects.

I had interrupted my studies in 1963-64 to spend a year as a temporary assistant lecturer at the University of Birmingham. Britain in the early 1960s seemed grimy, crummy and run-down after the German 'Wirtschaftswunder'. Yet a year in a good German department, such as Birmingham's was, rather than a career in New Zealand – or not yet – seemed attractive. On completing my doctorate in 1965, I was offered a lectureship at Bristol. It was the beginning of the great expansion of the British university system. I need not compare the cities of Birmingham and Bristol and their universities. Where the Faculty of Arts at Birmingham University was Marxisant, its equivalent at Bristol was more sedate and gowns were worn. Birmingham had an excellent library, Bristol did not. Yet the students at Bristol, many of them, in the brutal phrase of the time, 'Oxbridge rejects', were good and I have never taught many better anywhere.

It was in Bristol that my wife and I settled and where our children were born. It goes without saying thaty my wife's German qualifications counted for nothing in the mid-1960s, all of which changed when we joined the EU. Bristol was a science, engineering and medical university; the humanities, despite individual names, had less of a research profile. I did not hit it off with my head of department (there were doubtless faults on both sides) and was glad, in 1971-72, to spend a year at a new university in Canada, the University of Waterloo. This was a department of Germanic and Slavic languages, and my colleagues were German, Russian, Ukrainian, American, some even Canadian. The area, in south-west Ontario, had been settled by German Mennonites in the early nineteenth century. Some students whom I taught were American Vietnam veterans or even draft-dodgers, a far cry from the middle-class English students who had occupied the administration block at Bristol in the heady days of 1968.

I returned to Bristol, restless and unsettled. In December, 1972, sensing this, a senior colleague of mine handed me an advertisement from The Times. It was for a Lecturer in German at Trinity College, Cambridge. She said: 'You are applying'. I protested that 'they only appoint their own people' or suchlike words. I did, however, apply, and was duly interviewed at Easter, 1973. Waiting for the interview, I walked into the Wren Library. I asked the then sub-librarian, the genial Trevor Kaye, if I might consult the catalogue. I tried the major German authors on whom I had worked and found extraordinary holdings, much of it in first edition, and, as I was to discover later, much of it rare. I decided that I really wanted this job. It may have given me utterance for the interview, and I may have needed it, for among the panel were Ralph Leigh, and Dennis Green, with Gareth Jones as Senior Tutor mediating between these arch-rivals. I was duly elected, and the rest you know.