

Chapter 71 Tricia

My sister, Patricia¹ Jane, was born in Kirkby in Ashfield, at the house in Diamond Avenue, on 15 May 1958. Mum first found out for sure that she was pregnant in December 1957 when Dr Rutter told her that she was having a baby. In February 1958, on a trip to Crowes in Leeds, with dad, grandma and Renie, mum bought a “*carrycot & lots of things for baby*”. However, dad and grandma only bought a pram for Tricia after she was born.²



Tricia approximately three months old

Tricia was born at 10.15 on the 15th, a Thursday. She weighed 6lbs (2.72kg). Mum noted that she had had a hard labour but that Dr Rutter and Nurse Lawson were satisfied with her. Grandma had stayed with her overnight but dad had gone to work³ although he did come home at “*dinner time*”. The next day, mum noted that Dr Rutter wanted mum to feed Tricia herself. Perhaps oddly, mum does not actually mention Tricia again until the 27th when she noted that she bathed Tricia herself. The first time grandad recorded Tricia coming to their house was 24 May, although mum did not record this. Tricia went there frequently with mum and dad over the days and weeks that followed. I think the first time she stayed there overnight was in June 1958 when mum and dad went to the theatre in Nottingham as part of Norwich Union 150 year celebrations. Mum and dad slept there too that night.

Friends and family members came to visit to see Tricia including Renie and Jim; Eva, Olive, Alf and Carole; Auntie Bertha and Uncle Frank; Bert; and Dorothy.

¹ I have always called my sister Tricia so this is how I refer to her here. However, both grandad and mum, when using her name in their diaries, call her Patricia. My parents were both adamant that her name should not be shortened to “*Pat*” and they succeeded. However, “*Tricia*” was allowed and mum used this name in later years. However, dad never did. He always referred to my sisters by their full names – Patricia and Elizabeth. I have never understood why this was so important to him particularly as his full name was Royle but he went by “*Roy*”! I also don’t quite understand why mum and dad gave my sisters long names which would almost certainly be abbreviated! Also, while both mum and grandad called Tricia “*Patricia*” in their diaries they often just denoted her as “*P*”!

² Perhaps because of [superstitions](#) over such matters.

³ The [norm](#) at the time.



Tricia with....

Top left – Auntie Bertha and Uncle Frank

Above – mum

Left – dad and mum

Below left – grandad

Below – grandma

These photos were in an album of grandma's. I am not sure entirely when these were taken but it seems they were in the garden of grandma and grandad's house in Welbeck Street. From other photos that were with them, I guess they were taken when Tricia was about three months old.



Mum and grandma took Tricia to various chapel activities and she also went on various outings. However, in August 1958, mum noted that "*Tricia fed up of going out*". She also visited a variety of friends and family including Auntie Bertha; Renie and Jim; Cyril and Minnie; dad's parents; Marilyn and her family; and Alf and Dorothy Taylor. She went on a family trip to Hastings in August 1959. Both grandma and grandad were involved in looking after Tricia, particularly so that mum and dad could do other things. This included having Tricia at their house and, in grandma's case, going to mum and dad's house. Sometimes when Tricia was sick, grandma slept in with her. Dad also sometimes did the same. The first time I can see recorded that Tricia stayed overnight at grandma and grandad's, without mum and dad, was in March 1959. Tricia was ten months old and mum was sick, so Tricia slept at grandma and grandad's for four consecutive nights. She stayed there at other times, particularly if mum was ill. Two girls/young women particularly visited mum and Tricia. They were Marion Slater, who was 18 when Tricia was born, and Sylvia Bust who was 11. Marion, in particular, babysat for Tricia and took her for walks.



Four generations – Bertha (grandma's mother's sister), mum, Tricia and grandma

In November 1958, mum, dad, grandma and Renie took Tricia to Bullocks⁴ in Hucknall to have photos taken. They may have not been very satisfied with the results as, three days later, they went back to have the photos re-taken. It was almost a month later that they collected the photos. She had more photos taken, again by Bullock in November 1959. As before, they needed to be repeated. They ordered photos in early December 1959.⁵

⁴ There may have been a number of shops by the name Bullocks. Initially, I came across a jewellers and a toy shop. I found a postcard for sale that was by P A Bullock of Hucknall. It seems P A Bullock was a [toy shop](#) at 21 High Street in Hucknall. The [Fig Tree Café](#) is there now. It turns out that Percy Albert Bullock established a [photography business](#) but it latterly became a toy shop run by the family until the 1990s.

⁵ I am not sure what happened to these photos. It is possible that they may have been among photos I passed to Tricia when mum died.

In July 1958, mum bought Tricia a christening dress. Tricia was christened at Bourne chapel on 3 August 1958 by Rev Howells, the then Minister. Bert, grandma's brother, recorded the service and grandad attended. Mum noted that Tricia started solids on 13 August when she was just under three months old. In January 1959, Tricia cut her first tooth and mum cut her hair at the front. They were also able to put Tricia to bed awake from that point and they then moved her cot into the middle bedroom. That month, Tricia said "mama" for the first time and she also waved "tata" to dad when he went to work. In February, mum took Tricia to have her hair cut, perhaps for the first time. In April 1959, Tricia "walked a few steps by herself from Roy to me & from me to Roy at dinner time but she wouldn't do it later". She was just over eleven months old at this point. In June 1959, grandad noted that, "Patricia walked a few yards" but, on the same day, mum noted that, "Patricia walked a long way by herself"! The next day, grandad noted that Tricia "walked by herself a nice piece of the lawn". Mum noted that Tricia stood on the scales when she went to be weighed in June 1959. In May 1959, the family visited Bridlington and mum noted that Tricia loved the sea. However, in June 1959, when they again went to the coast at Saltburn, mum noted that Tricia loved the sand but was not too keen on the sea!

For her first birthday, grandma and grandad bought Tricia a dog on wheels at a cost of £4 10s. Mum noted that she had 33 cards and lots of presents.

On 18 November 1959, mum went to see Dr Rutter and told him that she thought she was having another baby. A week later, she saw Dr Rutter again and he confirmed she was pregnant, due on 30 May 1960. One of the first people she told was Mary Leach, the wife of the new minister. This is the extent of my appearance in the diaries of this period!



Tricia with her dog on wheels that grandma and grandad gave her in 1959

There were also a number of babies born during this period. Adrian Cirket was born in Hastings on 26 October 1956. His parents were Peter and Rita, for whom mum was chief bridesmaid in November 1955.⁶ Peter, Rita, Bert and Doris brought Adrian to visit Kirkby and Mansfield in March 1957. Mum described Adrian as "v nice". Peter and Rita had a second child, Bertie, on 16 December 1958. They brought him to visit Kirkby in July 1959.



Left – mum with Bertie Cirket, July 1959

Right – back row – dad, Adrian, Rita, Peter; front row – grandad, Tricia, grandma

⁶ This makes Adrian mum's first cousin once removed (and my second cousin)

In February 1957, Ron and Barbara Rowe had a baby girl, Sharon. Mum went to see them, in March, when Sharon was about two weeks old. In May, mum and dad became Sharon's godparents.

In January 1959, mum received a letter from Dorothy Taylor (nee Lofthouse) in which she informed mum that she was expecting a baby at the end of July. Two weeks later, mum started to knit the baby a matinee coat. In May, on the Tuesday after Whit Sunday, grandma, grandad, mum, dad and Tricia visited Dorothy and Alf at Baldersby. Two weeks later, mum, dad and Tricia returned to Dorothy's for a week's holiday. Heather Taylor was born on 6 August 1959. Grandma, mum, dad and Tricia visited Dorothy for the day in September, the day after mum's birthday. Grandad noted this in his diary and mum commented "*Heather is grand*".



*Above – Barbara, Sharon and Ron Rowe
Right – Heather Taylor at about three weeks old.*



Mum's and grandad's diaries contain more detailed notes of mum's pregnancy and of mum's and Tricia's health after Tricia was born. In April 1957, mum had spoken to the doctor about having a baby. Two weeks later, she went to see him and he gave her some more tablets. On 9 October 1957, mum noted that Dr Rutter wondered if she was having a baby.⁷ But, on 21 November 1957, mum went to be examined by Dr Rutter. He said he could not feel a baby but he wondered if that was because she was only two months pregnant. He gave her some tablets "*to bring period on*". However, in December 1957, Dr Rutter confirmed that she was pregnant. From January 1958, mum noted that she was receiving orange juice and vitamin tablets from the clinic regularly. She received these throughout her pregnancy. Sometimes, she collected them and sometimes grandma did. In March 1958, Dr Rutter came to see her and told her that her blood pressure was OK. However, in April, her blood pressure was high and she was told to go to bed for a week. Mum interpreted this as being on the settee. During this time, dad was studying for exams, so grandma (Drew) used to visit to cook meals for mum. A week later, Dr Rutter came and said that mum needed a further week in bed. He apparently commented that he thought the baby was the right way up. On 2 May 1958, Dr Rutter came again and advised mum to spend a further week in bed. Two days later, mum was not very well with a temperature. She was visited by both Dr Rutter and Dr Anderson. Apparently, Dr Anderson thought it was "*just a chill*" but they took blood and urine samples to be examined at the hospital. Mum improved and heard that the tests taken had been OK. On 10 May 1958, Dr Rutter advised mum that she might have to have

⁷ [Home pregnancy tests](#) only became available in the 1970s.

the baby in hospital depending on “*how big it is*”. On 12 May, Dr Rutter confirmed that the baby was in the right position. On 13 May, mum had an X-ray and Dr Rutter said that it was good. On the 14th, a nurse came and gave mum an enema, then Dr Rutter punctured her membranes. Mum started having pains in her back around 11.30. Tricia was born on 15th at 10am and weighed 6lbs. Mum described it as a hard labour.

On 16 May, mum was in bed all day as she didn’t have a good night. That day and the next two days, the nurse came twice per day. From the 19th, the nurse came once per day but mum remained in bed. Dr Rutter came on the 21st and said mum could get up within the bedroom. On the 23rd, mum was visited by Nurse Connolly as the regular nurse, Nurse Lawson, was on holiday. Nurse Connolly continued to come daily until the 28th.⁸ At the beginning of June, mum wrote to Dr Rutter to thank him for looking after her. In August, mum saw Dr Rutter for sore nipples.

At the beginning of June 1958, mum noted that Tricia had a “*cold in her eye*”. The following day, mum just noted it as a cold. That was the day the Health Visitor, Miss Tideswell, visited. Mum took Tricia weekly to the clinic to be weighed from 10 June⁹ until October, from when she was weighed around monthly. At the end of June, Dr Rutter gave mum some ointment for Tricia for “*her bottom*”. On 26 June, mum saw Dr Rutter. He said Tricia was “*going on OK*” and she had to return “*when she is 3 months old for vaccination & 4 months for immunisations*”.¹⁰ In August 1958, at three months old, Tricia went onto solids. On 11 September 1958, mum took Tricia to be vaccinated but “*stuff not come*”. They returned a week later and Tricia was vaccinated against smallpox. Mum noted that Tricia’s scab from vaccination came off on 12 October. On the 16th, mum took Tricia to Dr Rutter to be immunised. She cried a lot but mum and dad thought it was her teeth. In December 1958, both mum and dad were under the weather with colds. On the 10th, mum noted that she had been up until 3am with Tricia. The next two days, grandma and grandad had her in the morning so that mum could go to bed. Mum also noted that dad got up with her at 4am. In January 1959, Tricia was vaccinated against polio at Dr Rutter’s. She also cut her first tooth that month. At the end of January 1959, Tricia was “*vaccinated for polio (2nd time) in afternoon*” and “*Roy & I went at night for first jab*”.¹¹ Mum and dad had their second polio injection in February. Tricia had her third polio injection in September 1959.

In March 1959, Tricia was not very well. Dr Rutter came and said she might have influenza or it could be her teeth upsetting her. The following day she was a bit better although mum was not well. The day after, Tricia was sick after dinner and tea so Dr Rutter came again, changed her medicine and said it was flu. Mum slept downstairs with her that night. The following day, mum said that Tricia slept all day either on her knee or grandma’s. She was sick again and grandma slept with her at night. Dr Rutter returned the following day. He confirmed that he still thought it was flu. Tricia then improved but mum was unwell following this. From the 17th to the 19th, Tricia went to stay with grandma and grandad. Dr Rutter said mum had to stay in bed for three days and gave her some medicine for her cough. On 29 April 1959, mum commented that Tricia was sick before going to bed. Two days later, mum was sick after dinner. Mum recovered but a couple of days later dad was unwell. On 21 May, mum was unwell again and went to bed for the day. Tricia was due to stay with grandma and grandad but “*she had a pain somewhere & cried so we took her home in the car. Ethel stayed at Sheila’s all*

⁸ It seems postnatal care was different then than now with more emphasis on rest and support from others

⁹ There is a three week gap from 29 July to 19 August but it may be that mum simply omitted to record Tricia’s weight as the weekly weights resumed after that.

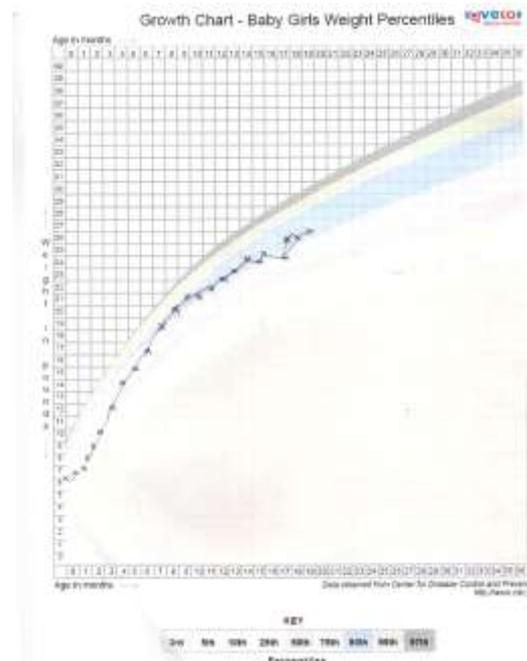
¹⁰ I [think](#) the 3 month vaccination was for smallpox and the 4 months immunisations were for diphtheria and pertussis and potentially polio.

¹¹ I was interested that the polio vaccination was administered by injection and not orally and that mum and dad also received it. [Apparently](#), oral polio vaccination was only introduced in the UK in 1962 and, as part of the roll out of the new polio vaccine in the 1950s, young adults were also vaccinated, not least because most deaths from polio occurred in young adults. This article is interesting and relevant to the current roll out of a COVID vaccine. The rollout was affected by problems of adequate supply, not least because the government would only use British vaccine, and variable demand. While, in general there was strong demand for polio vaccination, there were “*pockets of apathy*”.

night". The following day, both Tricia and mum went to grandma and grandad's. Mum spent the day in bed. She stayed in bed the next day and was visited by Dr Rutter who diagnosed bronchitis. He prescribed oral penicillin and advised that Tricia be kept away from her. So, Tricia went to stay at grandma and grandad's for a few days. By the 24th, mum was starting to feel better. The following day, Dr Rutter came and said that mum could get up after a couple more days. He advised her to have an X-ray, which she had at King's Mill Hospital on 10 June, and to get away for a week. On the 28th, mum went to see Dr Rutter for something for her cough. Two days later, mum, dad and Tricia went to stay with Dorothy for a week. While they were there, both she and Tricia began to feel better. However, in mid-June, Tricia had another cold. In July 1959, mum had another cough. She went to see Dr Rutter about what she described as a cough & cold. A week later, Dr Rutter gave mum "*some medicine to make me sleep & some for my cough*".

In October 1959, mum had another very bad cold. There was some concern in the clinic because Tricia had lost 5 ozs. She was seen by Dr Rutter and mum noted "*he gave her some medicine but it made her sick*". In early November, mum took Tricia back to the doctor and he changed her medicine. In December, Tricia had another cough and cold. Four days before Christmas, Tricia still had a blocked nose. Mum bought some drops from a chemist after phoning Dr Rutter.

In reviewing the diaries in relation to health and illness over this period, I wondered whether mum was beginning to show signs of mental ill-health or stress at this time. There is no explicit mention of this by either mum or grandad in their diaries but this perhaps tells us little as neither were particularly open about such matters. I found it odd that, after mentioning that Tricia had been born, she did not mention her again until 12 days later when she mentioned that she had bathed her herself. From other diary entries, it appears that mum was facing considerable stress and strain but was this any more than might be expected for any new mother? She relied a great deal on grandad, and particularly grandma, for support. It seems the GP recognised a degree of stress and anxiety as he advised her to take a week's holiday and he prescribed her some sleeping tablets. Mum was clearly anxious over Tricia's weight gain, although some of this may have come from clinic staff. But, generally Tricia was gaining weight and when she did lose weight there was an explanation for it, e.g. she had been unwell. Given the anxiety about Tricia's weight, I decided to track her weight on a growth chart. Although weight gain was initially slow, it picked up and she progressed just above the 75th centile. There was a dip at around 18 months when she was referred to the doctor but this picked up by the next reading so perhaps this was an erroneous reading.¹²



Tricia's growth chart compiled by me based on weights recorded in mum's diary

¹² Also see Chapter 78.