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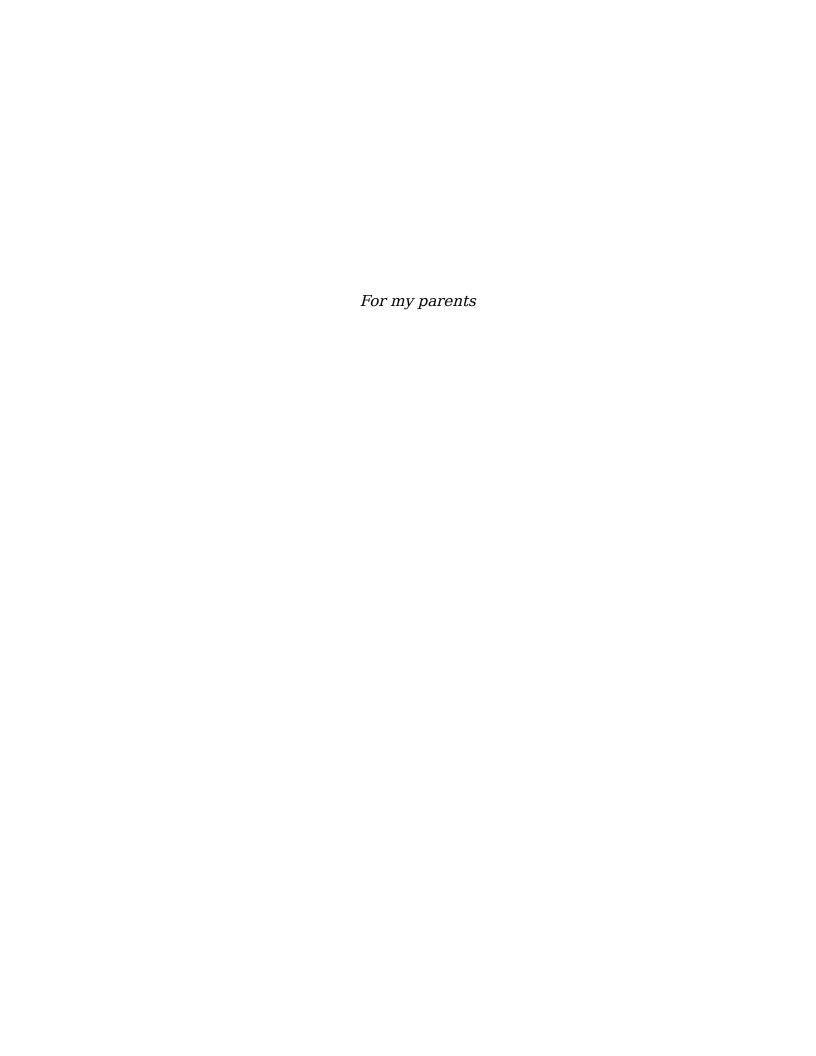
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Introduction

The history of countless places and objects which themselves have no power of memory is never heard, never described or passed on.

W. G. Sebald, Austerlitz

The concept of provenance, wondering where something had been before it got to where it is, first struck me when I started hanging around auction houses. The *Guardian* had accepted my pitch to report from behind the scenes at Sotheby's during their June sales week in 2007, and the experience was dazzling: champagne brunches populated by overt millionaires and covert billionaires; suites of rooms repainted overnight, ready for the next hang; and all that *art*, multimillion-pound paintings that seemed to be unfinished, canvases slashed through, cabinets of handpainted cast-bronze pills sitting on razor-blade shelves. The head of the press department loaded me down with catalogues which described, evaluated and illustrated the art with commentaries as erudite as academic articles and reproductions as hungry as pornographic photo-shoots.

A key component of the account of each artwork was a history of its ownership, which for Impressionist and Modern pieces is vital: no auction house wants to be caught with looted paintings, so they have to track them each step of the way. This sculpture was given by the artist to a

friend, whose heirs sold it to a gallery, which sold it on to a well-known New York collector, who is now selling it so he can acquire more (subtext: expensive divorce). That ugly painting was uncovered in the cellar of a chateau, wrapped in brown paper and wholly unseen, a gift from the artist. And that work? Andy Warhol once glanced at it and made a catty comment. Not only did each step validate the work, it could also make it more valuable: to have a piece kept by the artist and then owned by several famous collectors would enhance its story.

It later occurred to me that while they might not be as expensive as paintings, books could also have a provenance – and I do not just mean those auctionable books, First Folios and Audubon's *Birds of America* and the like. Even the cheap paperbacks forgotten in crevices in second-hand bookstores must have had previous owners, and the books themselves often provide you with the owner's name (or owners' names), unlike paintings. The point was not that a book might have been owned by someone famous, but that it had a story of its own and the hands through which it had passed were themselves deserving of study.

That drove me to my bookshelves, in particular the greatest stock of second-hand books I had – my classics books from university and from the years I spent afterwards tutoring Latin and Greek, ancient texts of Plato and schoolboy guides to Homer – to see if anyone had inscribed their ownership. Off the shelves they all came, a few hundred of them surrounding me on my bedroom floor in crooked, uneven piles, until I wound up with a corpus of around fifty with individuals' or schools' names in them. This book, then, is the story of eleven of those books and the lives of the people who owned them before me.

In writing this book I decided to link these lives with my own, a stem of memoir for the petals and thorns of biography. Some of the connections are made through the books – how its subject bore on my life, or how the book came into my possession or was (mis)used by me – and others through a rhyming, strong or faint, between my life and the owner's. The links are not all meant to be iron; nevertheless, I hope it seems as if both lives have glanced at and shed some illumination on one another.

When I started writing, the first Kindle had not been released. You could access out-of-copyright books on websites like Project Gutenberg and – of particular use to classicists – Perseus, with its texts in the original and their verbose Victorian translations. If you wanted a portable copy, you could print off the entire text, but at this point it was easier just to buy the real thing, and so we came back to books.

Until today, we had always come back to books and their antecedents, the physical objects. These books or scrolls or codices have survived generations, sometimes through care, sometimes through neglect. The ancient citizens of Oxyrhynchus in Egypt dumped their papyri in the communal rubbish tip and the local climate prevented them from mouldering away. Oxford classicists staged a nineteenth-century raid on the tip, and now twenty-first-century technology is allowing us to gaze on the lost works of antique writers. These books have *tales*. This is not to privilege the ancient and obscure, however; every book has a tale through its prolonged or peremptory association with its owner.

A good book in electronic format will still compel a reader, of course, but something is lost when we dematerialise the text – the human connection with the thing itself. This is sentiment, one can object. Yes, it is sentiment, but it is more than that, too – it is making space for the book in your life, appreciating the aesthetic and tactile qualities of print and paper and binding, a physical experience in a number of dimensions. This is not the argument of a fuddy-duddy classicist – as anyone who has seen the alacrity with which I have taken to Twitter would dolefully concede.

Sentiment should not be dismissed as an argument, either. In the first place, people prize all kinds of objects that have emotive connotations. Even the most inane knick-knack that a parent has bought or a lover has given may be kept for far longer than the purchaser intended. What value do we really place on something that doesn't exist, where back-up copies can be downloaded on to a new instantiation? If you are reading this on an e-reader, please do not think I denigrate the medium. Just consider whether this book will be possible in a hundred years.

And so this book has several aims. One is to commemorate and celebrate very specifically the lives of those who have owned my books, from war heroes and poet-priests to actors, teachers and students. The second is to make a stand for the physical object – however tattered or smart, finely produced or cheap – in the era of the digital. You can't sign your name on your Kindle's copy of *Wuthering Heights*, and even if you can pass it on, all you will leave is a digital vestige. My final purpose, which is impossibly

broad, is to make the reader pause and consider their own books and objects and the lives of *their* previous owners – to make them realise that even the lowliest second-hand item carries with it the life and story of another, and that our ownership of it makes us part of that life and story.

Josh Spero April 2015

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I am grateful, first of all, to everyone who spoke to me: both the people who used to own my books, and the family, friends, colleagues and pupils of those who did. This book would, quite obviously, not have been possible without them.

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Finally, thank you most of all to everyone who has funded this book: with your support, the stories carried in my books can finally be told. I hope this book now becomes part of your story.

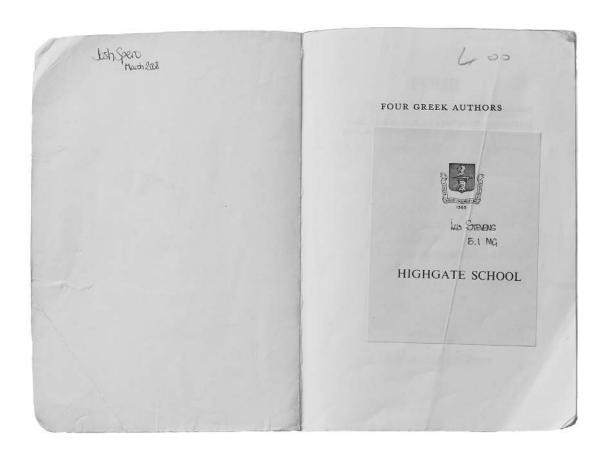


FOUR GREEK AUTHORS

EXTRACTS FROM
HOMER, ANTIPHON, EURIPIDES
AND THUCYDIDES



EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES AND VOCABULARY BY E.C. KENNEDY



Rosh Pinah and University College School (1993-4)

In 1993, I was nine and attending Rosh Pinah, the local Jewish state primary in Edgware, north-west London, a small blue *kippah* skullcap clipped by requirement into my burgeoning Jewfro. Rosh Pinah provided both the benefits and the detriments of a religious education. Set against the deadly lessons in modern Hebrew, Zionist history and Bible stories were the feasts and festivals that occur with great frequency in Judaism. There were Purim parties, commemorating the saving of the Jews as told in the Book of Esther, which everyone attended in costume. I once went with a silver-foil axe and Cornflakes and Weetabix boxes. stuck on to an apron, but my mother got told off because, apparently, coming as a serial killer was inappropriate. Hanukkah had the lighting of the nine-branched menorah to celebrate the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after the Maccabean Revolt. Pesach had the Seder, a long meal with a series of symbolic foodstuffs to tell the story of Exodus - horseradish for the bitterness of the Egyptian bondage, *charoset*, a paste of grated apple, chopped nuts, cinnamon and red wine, for the mortar the Jews used to build Pharaoh's treasuries. One festival – don't ask me

which – involved joyous dancing in circles and trains in the hall to klezmery tunes and Levantine hullabaloo. At a ceremony where parents presented their children with prayer books, then gravely shook their hands, my father high-fived me.

The lessons were deadly, full of fairy stories about biblical heroes. The non-religious classes weren't hard enough to distract me, which meant I was always acting up for attention. In English, a girl and I were allowed to slide through the graded readers to encounter more difficult stories of less familiar places. (Where on earth was 'Connecticut'? How did you even say it?) And though I certainly couldn't vocalise it like this, I could see that most of my school mates were already on the conveyor belt to the Jews' Free School, the nearest religious state secondary, and nothing beyond that I wanted.

With time on my hands and glasses on my nose, I found challenge, or at least change, in books. (This is perhaps the appropriate moment to confess to my parents that I did not actually read *The Lord of the Rings* in a week at the age of seven.) At weekends I would go to Edgware's second-hand bookshop, a musty hole in the wall down the road from the salt-beef bar. Fruit-trays of paperbacks sat on trestle tables outside and I would search out half a dozen Hardy Boys books or *Alfred Hitchcock Mysteries*, tales of three boys who set up a detective agency in a junkyard. I knew Hitchcock as a kids' author (never mind that he never wrote the books) before I had ever seen one of his movies. The Hardy Boys appealed to me because of their adroit deductive skills and dashing abilities and distant Americanness, and because even back then I think I was a little in love with the preppy type of boy.

Whether it was because of my frustrated acting-out – I didn't burn the school down or anything – or because the teachers suggested it as a preventative measure, my parents started looking for a private school for me so I could leave Rosh Pinah a year early. We visited several schools that would accept boys at ten, including the Junior Branch of University College School in Hampstead and City of London School in Blackfriars. What sticks in my mind most from those tours are the ham sandwiches (*treif* – unkosher!) for tea in City's refectory and deciding, following my mother's example, that I liked two sugars in my coffee, even though I wasn't sure I liked coffee. It felt . . grown-up.

I sat the entrance exam for UCS in autumn 1993, refusing to wear my Casio calculator watch in case I was suspected of cheating. One of my essays which was about a murderous clown ended 'And then I woke up' – and I'm fairly sure that in the general knowledge paper I wrote that Edmund Hillary had brought potatoes to Britain. Nevertheless, they called me for interview, and while my mother and I were walking down the gleaming parquet corridor to the headmaster's office she tripped up and landed with a thud. Cue the kindly headmaster, Mr Hubbard, running out of his office. 'Mrs Spero, you must take more water with it,' he said as he helped her up.

The day I got in, my mother stopped smoking. It wasn't from shock but from necessity: the school fees would cost my parents every spare pound and many thousands of unspare pounds over the next decade, and so my mother's

tobacco habit went. One thing that is not obvious about my mother, who is funny and easy-going in society, is her iron will, kept for the most private things – a juggernaut of her own spirit, biological addiction to nicotine be damned, the cigarettes had to go. She put out her desire in a second, as if extinguishing the flame of a guilty match with one sharp breath.

The cigarettes were a symbol, albeit a financially insufficient one, so my mother went out to work. She had worked in retail administration in her twenties and had set up an au pair agency in her thirties, but I don't think she expected to have to take up work again, and certainly not for school fees. First was a job stacking light bulbs in the department store Fenwick's at Brent Cross. Brent Cross used to enchant me, with its vigorous central fountain under a high golden dome inlaid with a spiralling rainbow of glass, as if one of the architects of the shopping centre had been a Turkish sultan who wanted to bestow a touch of the Orient on Hendon. By the time I worked there at John Lewis, the ornate dome had been replaced by one of white metal and clear glass, beloved of the architecture of modern capitalism.

After Fenwick's, mum worked at an NHS doctors' surgery in Mill Hill for eight years under the tyranny of public-sector personalities, and then in 2005 moved to a private GP's practice, which has an elegance and quietness about it. The peace there is occasionally ruffled by the sound of money coughing.

University College School was founded as the feeder school to Jeremy Bentham's University College London, both on

Gower Street in Bloomsbury, and it retained his strong free-thinking streak, while UCL retained his body (or, more correctly, his skeleton and clothes, padded out). As well as his utilitarian interests, Bentham was an enthusiast for the decriminalisation of homosexuality, which legacy was just as important to UCS as that of his liberalism. The liberalism saw UCS, which moved to Hampstead in 1907, become the first non-denominational school in the country – the godless college of Gower Street – and allowed a distinctively backchatty streak to develop in the boys.

The Junior Branch, a later division, is hidden away on Holly Hill in Hampstead. Anyone who has visited what used to be called the Everyman cinema will have caught a glance of the long red-brick building, but otherwise it is unobtrusive, or at least forcibly discreet, behind high walls. Its corridors smelled of porridge and shoe polish and its classrooms were large and cold, sprung from an imposing late Edwardian architecture at odds with Rosh Pinah's suburban housing-estate feel. Break-times were concluded by the ringing of a hand-held bell rather than an electronic buzzer, and the boys played conkers and marbles, which would sound almost too twee to be true, had they not also played pogs, where you attacked small gaudy cardboard discs with a plastic slammer and got to keep those that landed face-up. A break-time occupation for me at Rosh Pinah had been playing kick-chase with the girls - kisschase being far too unchaste, and unappealing. There was no kiss-chase at UCS either.

It was almost as soon as I started at UCS, in September 1994, that I think I acquired my accent. 'Posh Josh' had been my nickname at Rosh Pinah, and I can believe at that age that I was a snob, even if culture for me was an

insatiable diet of those mystery books. During lunch breaks, I had hung around with the dinner ladies, discussing current affairs (had Robert Maxwell thrown himself off his yacht?), a camp ersatz-adult – and not just because I wasn't interested in playing football with the boys and the girls wouldn't always have me. It was the company of grown-ups I sought, as my parents reminded me during an argument many years later – I wanted to sit with the grown-ups at dinner parties and offer whatever flitting opinion I could muster, rather than waste time with the children, who were not interested in how clever I thought I was and the range of topics I attempted to sound off about. (So what's changed, some would say.)

The Junior Branch proved more challenging in class. The lessons were harder and more interesting. There was French instead of Hebrew and dissections in the science lab instead of discussions about how many animals were on the Ark. My art teacher was a Hampstead Garden Suburb hippy who didn't mind us singing slightly naughty songs while we learned about complementary colours, and I had an abrasive Australian saxophone teacher who used to demand I practised my embouchure, a pursing of the lips around the mouthpiece – an expression that has served me well in moments of pique ever since.

But outside class, the challenge was all of the wrong kind. My un-humble attitude to my own academic achievements was hardly enchanting, and I still wanted to talk about the grown-up things I hadn't been able to at Rosh Pinah. It turns out ten-year-olds at private school aren't that interested in the Exchange Rate Mechanism, either. And I felt socially inferior, in two senses. First, I was outside the commune of boys who had been at UCS for

several years already, boys tied by their history – a history of school plays, departed teachers, rugby matches - into a net, tauter the more one pushed at it. I was an arriviste, along with the three other new boys, who were respectively mousey, prickly and oily, and who seemed to find it as difficult to integrate as I did. The second sense was a mild embarrassment at my origins, hardly unique among schoolboys advanced beyond their parents' means, a slight if not negligible consequence of social mobility. I was from a semi in Edgware, a dismal and distant place, whereas the other boys seemed to occupy the golden plots of Hampstead Garden Suburb, where basketball hoops hung over flagstone terraces and a maternal Range Rover lined up next to a paternal Mercedes in the driveway. My dad drove a black cab, which from time to time would be covered in a gaudy livery - the numberless boxes of plasticky muffins that came with the Fabulous Bakin' Boys livery take some forgetting. While I was proud of him for being different from all the lawyerly fathers, he was a curio for my friends.

My isolation drove me to invert the social situation and within weeks I had acquired the Received Pronunciation notes that still slip out as I meet someone for the first time and graciously intone, like a dowager duchess, 'How do you do?' As a defence mechanism, it certainly worked. Added to my unlovable airs, it repelled all the other boys quite successfully for most of the rest of my school career. That isolation is something Leo Stevens entirely understood.

Leo Stevens (born 1981)

In 1981, in Finchley, a north-west London suburb that encompasses the detached in their detached houses as well as smaller, less prosperous ethnic communities, Leo Stevens was born to a Malay-Chinese nurse and an English physiotherapist. With a higher Chinese population than most parts of London, this was hardly unusual. Still, Leo felt uncomfortable: 'I think being Chinese mixed-race is different from being black mixed-race. Chinese people are almost invisible in a way.' Despite this alienation, or perhaps because of the comfort and familiarity of such alienation, it seems to me that Leo's life has been spent in pursuit of invisibility.

Leo first made himself unwillingly visible when he applied to two top private schools for entry at the age of eleven. He was at Summerside, a local state primary, but had never thought about going to Highgate or UCS until a teacher suggested he apply for scholarships there: 'Obviously I wouldn't be able to afford to go otherwise.' He says 'obviously', as if assuming that I assumed he was from a poor family. This defensiveness edging on brusqueness seems typical of him. There is a justifiable degree of

reserve; after all, when a stranger calls and says he has one of your books and would like to talk to you, wariness is natural. But Leo is different: he is not occasionally wary, but generally reticent.

The UCS interview was far from a success, as Leo tells it: 'I never got in. Maybe it was the fact that I wore trainers to the interview and talked of my love for WWF wrestling that did it. I just didn't know what to expect, I hadn't been told.' He was caught in the paradox of anyone wanting to change their scene. There are codes and conventions one has to learn to win entrance to a new scene, yet they cannot be learned until one has entrance, or at least is told by people who have. The lack of the 'right' manners prevents one from ever discovering what the right manners are. Even so, still the defensiveness.

Leo got into Highgate, but never slotted in: 'I wasn't a middle-class person like the rest of them, I didn't fit into the Hampstead-Highgate boys. I wasn't very sporty, I liked listening to what I thought was good music, compared with the general rubbish. I didn't live in Hampstead Garden Suburb. Nobody else's parents were divorced at my school. I did feel like I had a lot less money.' When I asked him by email whether he interacted with UCS boys, who were theoretically - if agnostically - Highgate's local rivals, Leo is emphatic: 'No - I tried not to interact with people at my own school to be honest, and could never be bothered with UCS. A load of posh boys pretending to have some sort of rivalry over who had the worst uniform never bothered me.' If this sounds Bunterishly trivial, it reveals quite how shallow Leo thought his classmates were. But I don't think he ever confronted this, only confirmed it.

Four Greek Authors, a stubby orange paperback with crisp, thick white pages and freshly laid-out Greek text, came into Leo's possession when he was doing Greek GCSE (1995-7). The section he had to study from it was the contest of the bow from *Odyssey* XXI. Odysseus, by now the sole, ragged survivor of his storm-crashed wanderings, has been shown xeinia (hospitality) by the mysterious Phaeacians, who dine and entertain him, then convey him back to Ithaca, the island where he was king. In his two-decade-long absence ten years at Troy, several more dodging the race of the Cyclopes and alluring, semi-divine females - a circle of suitors have been demanding that Odysseus' perspicacious wife Penelope marry them. Her dowry, naturally, is the kingdom. To escape notice, Odysseus in rags hides out with his swineherd and they pass the nights with metaliterature, telling *Odyssey*-like stories. Eventually he returns to the palace, still in rags, where the suitors mock and mistreat him, displaying a clear lack of the *xeinia* due to any guest, let alone the host whose substance they have consumed.

Penelope, her mind directed by the goddess Athene, challenges the suitors: whoever can string Odysseus' bow and fire it clean past twelve axes shall marry her. The suitors fail to string it and mock the beggar for even trying, but when he does it with proprietorial ease, they sense disaster. He shoots the arrow clean past the axes and the chapter ends with the murder of the suitors imminent.

Leo's book had to be returned at the end of his course, but it had captured him: the adventure; the human flavour of the epic drama; the unique language of 'Homer', a name associated with the wandering bards who forged the *Odyssey* over centuries, handing down versions to each

other in an oral tradition. He enjoyed reading the original text rather than an abridged or simplified version, and his enthusiasm was stoked by his teacher, Mr Fotheringham, who guided him through the archaic infelicities of the language. At some point after Leo left, the book was sold by Highgate (or perhaps a student who failed to return it) to the Hellenic Bookservice in north London, a shop where unloved classics books look for new owners, like Battersea Dogs Home without the yapping.

Leo nearly didn't do his A-levels at Highgate. So little did he enjoy being there that he wanted to switch to nearby Woodhouse sixth-form college. Woodhouse, although academically successful, is a world away from Highgate School – perhaps a world closer to what Leo was comfortable with. Half of its students are from ethnic minorities, and it has a thousand students across the two years of A-levels (Highgate has two hundred). It does not date back four centuries, nor is it steeped in the skin-deep mystique of middle-class London. Everything that Leo ostensibly revolted against at Highgate would have been obviated at Woodhouse. But it was Latin, maths, physics and chemistry at Highgate instead.

His mother talked him out of leaving, just as, he says, she persuaded him to study law at university in 1999. At the time, he was unsure. Now, with a certain regret, he says he could have pursued classics or classical civilisations beyond school, and talks of re-reading his school set texts. It was 'the old Chinese thing' of entering a profession that motivated his mother, and there can be few children of immigrants who have not felt the same pressure. Why emigrate if not for your children to have a better – read, richer – life than you did?

He didn't enjoy his course at university either – in fact, he hated it – but people who read law frequently don't. 'It was all very academic, very theoretical. The theory of buying a house is very different from buying a house – then you do it.' Sheffield was another place Leo didn't feel he fitted in, although this time for the opposite reason: 'They thought I was posh!' He was a Londoner among those from the Midlands, and despite his private school background being unwanted, it still served to isolate him.

Leo completed his *de facto* rebellion by not taking the postgraduate course necessary to become a lawyer. Instead, he went into local government in October 2002, unchallenging and stable. Well, not always stable. 'I started off working in the housing benefits department. It wasn't very taxing but the people I worked with were fun. The first summer I was there we went out on strike for four weeks and the union paid our wages. It was four weeks of not going to work and pissing about.' A daily hour on the picket line sufficed for industrial action.

Uninspired by unmotivated and immobile colleagues who had been in their jobs since before he was born, Leo occupied several positions at Camden Council until he left in July 2008. As welfare rights adviser, he told council tenants what they were entitled to; as appeals officer, he made the decisions on entitlements and justified them in tribunals when they were disputed. Leo enjoyed the personal contact and became determined to help right the system in the interests of social justice. He talks with great passion – one of the few times in our conversation – about the pain and discomfort of those who have to survive on little money while they challenge decisions stopping them

from claiming benefits: 'They invest a lot of emotion in it, they probably don't want to have to go up and sit in front of a lawyer and a doctor and explain what's wrong with them. It skewers the whole *Daily Mail* image – "These people are scroungers!" They're not at all.'

Progression meant managing people, not something Leo especially wanted, doubting his gregariousness, so he started studying for the legal practice course at night school in 2006. It was not so much that his love of the law had been rekindled as a realisation that he wanted to change his career path, recognising that 'local government and career prospects don't go well together'. He applied to law firms in 2007 and started at Winckworth Sherwood in autumn 2008. His last year at the council was not easy, his colleagues' initial perception of him as a careerist having morphed into a silent jealousy at his escape from the numbing tendrils that clasped them. Now he works as a senior associate on the real estate desk of law firm Lewis Silkin.

Even in law, for Leo it is a case of so far but no further. While he was still at Winckworth Sherwood, he told me: 'I'm happy doing it at the moment, but I'm not sure I've got the stomach for being a partner, now that I've got a family. I can see a lot more now why people work for local authorities. My family time means far more to me than my work.'

When we met, his family consisted of his wife, whom he has asked me not to name, and baby Harry, born in November 2007. Since then he has had a second child. At the time, Leo was feeling his way around being a father and working

through the issues that his own father had bequeathed to him.

After his parents divorced when he was six, Leo only saw his father for a few hours on Sundays, a dim influence on his childhood who flickered every so often until - one month before he died, suddenly, in 2007 - he cast a clear and unwelcome light. 'We went for dinner and he said he had an announcement. I had a fourteen-year-old halfbrother, who I'd never met.' While it clarified his long absences, why visits to his house were forbidden, it left questions unanswered, questions ultimately rendered unanswerable by his death. His father said he had refrained from telling them because it would have upset Leo's mother, but Leo suspects his stepmother preferred to try and write her husband's first family out of their lives. He met his half-brother once and wrote him a letter to give him his contact details, but he heard nothing back, and does not seem too disturbed by this: 'He's related to me by blood, but I spent eighteen years not knowing him and I don't really like his mother and what she did to my family.'

Leo paints his father as a sixties radical who never quite got over it. As a child, Leo was embarrassed by his father's ponytail and his 'alternative' and 'esoteric' interests, like the anthroposophy books he found when clearing out his father's house. The 'spiritualist mumbo-jumbo' his father indulged in was in sharp contrast to his mother's pragmatism: 'All she was worried about was working and making sure we had enough and could pay the mortgage.' After his father left, his maternal grandmother moved to England from Malaysia to support them, living with (and later close by) her daughter, Leo and his brother for the

many years - for Leo, an admirable and imitable family bond.

His father's legacy has been to inspire Leo to take the opposite path. 'My dad died when my wife was three or four months pregnant and it changed my attitude. I thought, I'm going to be everything he wasn't. That made me work a lot harder, be ambitious, be responsible, provide for the family. You could never rely on him.' There is an emotional incomprehension in Leo's contemplation of what his father did: 'My father left when my brother was six months old. Having had a six-month-old baby, I think it would be the worst thing in the world to walk out on your wife then.'

He and his wife moved to 'glamorous Catford' in south London in 2006, three doors down from his in-laws, and they renovated the house – or, rather, his wife did. He assigns his impracticality to the tendency for his father's DIY efforts to end in breaking and swearing. He picks up the threads of his Greek by reading classical tales to Harry, 'in the hope that he is as interested in them as I am', although when we spoke by email he said that Harry 'was crawling around like a badger who has had too much sugar'.

One of my email questions, an ice-breaker, was about anything memorable that has happened to the previous owner of the book, and Leo said: 'Nothing particularly memorable has happened to me and I don't really have an overweening ambition to be successful or famous. I'm quite happy living a nondescript life with my family, cats and allotment, and so long as I've got enough to pay the bills and have the occasional treat, I'm happy.' What would he