

Edna Bates and Stanley Bates (H.E.'s sister and brother)

Edna Bates (1907-1973) was 2 yrs younger than H.E. There is no clear reference to Edna in any of H.E.'s stories, nor does she appear in his autobiography, but we know from his letters that they stayed in touch and that Edna and her young son, John, stayed with H.E. and his family in Kent after the war until Edna's husband found a home for them. When she was a teenager it was Edna who introduced a pet into the family: '*we have the happiest spaniel in the world to show you, such a dog!*' the 23 year old H.E. wrote to an old schoolfriend. The relationship of man and animals, and people and pets, interested H.E. greatly, which he explored in stories such as *The World is Too Much With Us*, *The Day of the Tortoise*, *The Parrot*, and in the essays for *Animals-All Year Round*.

Stanley Bates (1916-1991) was 11 years younger than H.E. The two boys shared a room until H.E. married. When H.E. left home Stanley enjoyed the same close relationship with his grandfather, George Lucas, as H.E. had done and in 1932 the brothers attempted to re-create those idyllic days by going on a walking holiday together in Hampshire with a horse-drawn caravan. The story *Waiting Room* was written after Stanley was hit by a van whilst walking in Rushden with H.E. when he was only 10 years old.