

From: "[REDACTED]"

To: "ROBERT NEAL, SKELLIG PARTNERS, LP" <[REDACTED]>

Cc: "Lesley Groff" <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: (TEL) Whatever Happened to the Maxwells?

Date: Fri, 11 Mar 2011 22:08:54 +0000

Importance: Normal

Rob,

Resend this to me and lesley.

David

Sent from my Verizon Wireless BlackBerry

-----Original Message-----

From: "ROBERT NEAL, SKELLIG PARTNERS, LP" <[REDACTED]>

Date: 11 Mar 2011 15:18:05

To: <[REDACTED]>

Subject: (TEL) Whatever Happened to the Maxwells?

your pals

+-----+
Whatever Happened to the Maxwells?

2011-03-11 20:16:45.70 GMT

Peter Stanford

March 11 (Telegraph) -- After their father's death, the children of the disgraced publisher closed ranks. Will that same solidarity will save Ghislaine from the taint of scandal?

It was the widow and seven children of Robert Maxwell who were left to face the music following the media mogul's mysterious death on his luxury yacht, the Lady Ghislaine, off the Canaries in 1991. "The fat fraudster", as his daughter-in-law Pandora still refers to him, left the family's reputation in tatters and its coffers empty. There was a £460 million "black hole" in the pension fund of Maxwell's Mirror Group Newspapers, and two of his sons most closely involved in the family firm, Kevin and Ian, stood trial for their part in the fraud.

They were acquitted - though a subsequent Whitehall report concluded Kevin bore a "heavy responsibility" for what had happened - but, 20 years on, the Maxwell name remains mud, with the power to damn by association, even where there are no similarities. When the Serious Fraud Office this week arrested the property tycoons Vincent and Robert Tchenguiz, it was widely noted that they shared a Park Lane office with Kevin Maxwell, now working in the same industry.

But the most spectacular demonstration of the curse of the Maxwell legacy has come in the controversy surrounding the Duke of York's friendship with the American billionaire Jeffrey Epstein, who was convicted in 2008 for soliciting an under-age girl for prostitution. Epstein's close friend - and according to some accounts former partner - is 49-year-old Ghislaine Maxwell, the publisher's youngest child. Debate about her role in the whole imbroglio has caused her to issue a lawyer's letter this week, threatening legal action if unspecified allegations are repeated.

The seven surviving Maxwell siblings (a brother, Michael, died in 1969, at 23, eight years after being seriously injured in a car crash; and a sister, Karine, fell victim to leukaemia at three years old in 1957) are reported to be very close. Shared tragedy sometimes has a way of doing that. "They pull together. They really are this extraordinary family," says Pandora Maxwell, Kevin's wife for 23 years.

But if there was ever a competition to determine who had suffered most at the hands of their overbearing father, several would have a strong claim. The eldest daughter, Anne, now 62, for instance, was apparently told by him when she embarked on a (failed) career on the stage: "What have you and Pope John Paul II got in common? You're both ugly and you're both failed actors." She is now said to be a hypnotherapist in Surrey, practising under another name.

Then there is Philip, 61, who fled to Argentina to escape his father's bullying, and was last heard of living in a small flat in London trying to be a writer. And Ian, 54, is reported by those present at the time to have been mercilessly taunted by his father when he joined the family business and was regularly subjected to unflattering comparisons with his younger brother Kevin.

But Ghislaine was widely acknowledged as Maxwell's favourite - he named his £15 million yacht after her - and his death hit her hard. As well as the emotional pain, there was the loss of the money that had sustained the Maxwell children's paths through top-notch private schools, into Oxford, and, in the case of Ghislaine, into London's fast, rich crowd. "She was very beautiful, very confident, very clever," remembers one friend from those days, "but she could also be quite a piece of work. You didn't want to cross her."

To escape the emerging scandal of her father's crimes, she went to New York - she was pictured boarding Concorde, which outraged those Mirror pensioners who were facing an impoverished retirement - and started all over again on the Manhattan social scene. But that requires money and, according to her mother, Betty Maxwell, it had all gone, leaving the publisher's widow, by her account, dependent on the charity of friends.

Soon after her arrival in New York, Ghislaine Maxwell - who has never married - started to appear on the arm of the immensely wealthy Epstein. Their friendship has proved enduring. She was alongside him on his private jet when he flew in to RAF Markham in 2000 to visit Prince Andrew at Sandringham, and she is there, too, hovering, slightly uneasily, in the background of a by-now familiar photograph of the Queen's second son with his arm around the waist of a 17-year-old, allegedly hired as a masseuse for Epstein.

Is history about to repeat itself? Will Ghislaine again face another ruin because of the frailty of the rich man in her life? In the face of this threat, the fabled family solidarity appears to be kicking in. Her siblings, well-accustomed after 20 years to keeping stum, have closed ranks.

Isabel Maxwell is one of the few who even responds when contacted, though as she runs Maxwell Communications (a name that is one step from her father's prime vehicle, the Maxwell Communications Corporation), her politeness should come as no surprise. "I make it a rule," she replies, en route to a meeting of the Israel Venture Network, an association for "hands-on venture philanthropists" in the US and Israel, "not to participate in this type of general Maxwell family catch up."

Even the usually garrulous Pandora Maxwell - who famously appeared at a window of her Chelsea home in 1992 to shout "p--- off or I'll call the police", only to discover that her unwelcome early-morning callers were members of the constabulary, come to arrest her husband Kevin - is unwilling to talk about Ghislaine's

current crisis. "I always put my foot in it," she demurs, after consulting her former husband, "and I have to think about the effect on my [seven] children."

Robert Maxwell was famously good at covering his tracks - and not just when he was stealing from the company pension fund. He told a different story about his own emergence from the ruins of post-war central Europe every time a reporter asked him. So it is hardly surprising his family has grown so skilled over the past two decades at simply disappearing. Indeed, they are a perpetual reproach to anyone who claims that it is impossible to erase all trace of yourself in the technological age.

Christine Maxwell, for example, is thought to be based in either the United States or France and works as an internet entrepreneur. In a rare 1998 interview about her then-role on the Internet Society Board of Trustees, she recalled her years working in her father's publishing business. "Both of my parents," she said, "had a strong work ethic, which they instilled in me and my brothers and sisters when we were very young. They also communicated a very clear understanding that advantages always come with responsibilities - that there was no such thing as a free ride." Except, presumably, on the backs of Mirror Group pensioners.

And it is that lack of remorse that partly fuels the on-going fascination with the Maxwells, rather as it does with bankers. Only Kevin, once Britain's biggest ever bankrupt, has made reference to the "moral burden...I will bear for the rest of my life" as a result of his father's crimes.

His mother and siblings would probably object that they were not as close to Robert Maxwell's financial dodgy dealings, but they undeniably enjoyed the money and the opportunities it gave them to the full when it was there.

Ultimately, though, guilt-by-association is an unjust burden. It is as absurd as blaming every German alive today for the Second World War. Other celebrated families who have had the same fate - for example, the Astors in the wake of the Profumo Scandal - have successfully managed to cast off the shadow.

Perhaps it is simply too soon for the Maxwells, even now. Or it may be that the damage done to them - and others - by the whole affair goes too deep. But, whatever their vigorous efforts to be forgotten, memories - as Ghislaine Maxwell is currently finding - are long, and forgiveness slow to be conceded.

-0- Mar/11/2011 20:16 GMT