

Editorial

We are sad to record the deaths earlier this year of David Balcom Stimpson and Robin Hickey. Both were keen supporters of the Society. David visited the conference several times travelling on one occasion from his home in New York to deliver a lecture. Robin was an active member of the Society. She served on the committee and was appointed Treasurer from 2016 to 2021. We publish tributes to both members. We are also deeply saddened to learn of the sudden death in June of Jerry Bird. Jerry was for many years responsible for the production of our Journal and Newsletter a task he fulfilled with skill and expertise. Tributes to Jerry are included.

Marcella Henderson-Peal reports on growing interest in JCP in France including an exciting meeting held in Paris in March at the bookshop Halle St. Pierre in Montmartre to showcase new French translations of JCP's work.

Geoffrey Winch presents some of his poems inspired by JCP's descriptions in *Autobiography* of the village of Burpham in Sussex and its environs.

Other Powyses and members of the Powys circle are represented by selections from Peter Redgrove's introduction to TFP's stories (originally published in NL47, November 2002) and an assessment by Patrick Quigley of the life and work of Kenneth Hopkins who was a close friend of the Powys family.

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We reproduce a letter from publisher Max Schuster to JCP, full of insights, about the publication of *Maiden Castle* in 1936 which reveals both his admiration and misgivings concerning the novel. Kim Wheatley discusses the significance of JCP's marginalia, quotations and inscriptions in his edition of *The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*. We also reproduce JCP's dedications inside his copy of American author Thomas Wolfe's novel *Of Time and the River*, presented to him personally by one of Wolfe's close friends.

We reprint two early and contrasting reviews of *A Glastonbury Romance*, previewed in NL108, including the critical comments by the Mayor of Glastonbury which JCP said *tickled* him! We conclude this issue of the Newsletter with a note by Andrew Bailes about a brief and previously unrecorded reference to JCP as a lecturer in Henry Miller's *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare*.

Chris Thomas

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In Memoriam

David Balcom Stimpson

June 27 1946-January 29 2023

David Balcom Stimpson died on 29 January 2023 surrounded by family and friends at the New York Presbyterian hospital in Manhattan. Jacqueline Peltier introduced me to David and presented me with a copy of his book *The Greatest Escape: Adventures in the history of Solitude*. This has a chapter on JCP. I subsequently met David in person when he came to England. He insisted on meeting me at my local pub. I was very impressed by David's evident enthusiasm and his engaging and unacademic approach to JCP. We talked uninterrupted for over three hours about JCP over pints of ale before he returned to his hotel somewhere in central London. I later met him on a second visit to London and again at our conference in Llangollen in 2017 when he gave a lecture on JCP entitled JCP in America – a personal view. On that occasion he and his wife Natalia Nikova kindly transported several of us by car to Corwen. Natalia, however, was clearly unwell. It was, nonetheless, a shock when on his return to New York he informed



David Stimpson

me she had died. In New York David kept up his Powysian interest, alongside his passion for literature, poetry and philosophy. He visited fellow Powysian Michael Seidenberg's secret bookshop in New York. He wrote about the bookshop in a letter to me which we published in NL 90, March 2017. David also published articles about JCP in *la lettre powysienne* Nos 26 and 27. After Natalia David was very happily married to his third wife Celestina Dadzie who is now also a member of the Society.

Chris Thomas (*Hon. Secretary*)

David and I were quite friendly in the early 2010s and we also attended the Llangollen conference in 2015. He was a very nice man. I never met Celestina in person, but I did meet his first wife, Natalia, who was very kind.

Nicholas Birns

I did not know him well enough, but liked his presence at the Llangollen conferences and of course remember well how Jacqueline was fond of him.

Louise de Bruin (*Conference organiser*)

I remember chatting to David who was definitely a staunch Powysian and he will be remembered as such. He enjoyed posting thoughts and remarks on the Facebook groups and I remember him and Celestina happily participating in the Zoom sessions.

I remember when his first wife died, he was devastated but he was the sort of person who marched on through thick and thin. We were happy he had met Celestina who shared his interest. It must be an awful loss and must have hit her hard. I hope she does remain a member of the Powys Society.

Marcella Henderson-Peal

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In Memoriam

Robin Hickey
1941-2023

Robin Hickey died peacefully in her own home on 22 April 2023. Robin was introduced to the Powys Society by her niece Marcella Henderson-Peal, who accompanied her to a Powys Society conference in 2007 which she enjoyed so much she came to every subsequent conference. Robin served as Honorary Treasurer between 2016 and 2021 and afterwards stayed on as a member of the committee and I had



Robin Hickey, May 2014.
Photo by Anna Rosic

the pleasure of liaising with her when I was taking on that role as her successor. I feel especially glad that Robin was on such brilliant form throughout 2022 and that was the year I really got to know her better. Robin shone at the 2022 conference: as we said goodbye I complimented her on her range of mime gestures while reading Katie's poems and we had a laugh and a hug. Then she came to Shirley with her partner David Barnes to celebrate JCP's 150th birthday. Robin's funeral was held on Friday 12th May 2023 at Cheltenham Crematorium followed by a wake. The Powys Society was well represented at her funeral: Robin's niece Marcella, Kate Kavanagh, Shelagh Powys Hancox, and I attended. Most people I spoke to were aware of the Powys Society and Robin's involvement in it. And of course it turns out Robin had a lot of other interests I knew nothing about. That's the way of funerals — you learn so much more about the departed than you ever knew when they were alive. Robin had a very good send off. It was a good day — moving to see her family, tearful, yet also full of affectionate memories and laughter. Condolences to David, and Marcella and to the rest of Robin's family and friends. I came away with a sense of a life well-lived, and hearing her family describe her composure during her final illness — with Robin expressing gratitude for the richness of her life — above all I got a sense of a life well-ended. Goodbye Robin, and thank you.

Paul Cheshire (*Chair*)

Robin was more than an aunt - indeed she was a friend. She delighted in belonging to the Powys Society.

Marcella Henderson-Peal

I would like to send all sympathy at this sad passing. I had a real fondness for Robin over many years.

Timothy Hyman (*President Powys Society*)

I knew Robin from 2008 – she was lively, outspoken and always in good humour.

Pat Quigley

I remember vividly the moment Robin came forward, with great enthusiasm, to fill the role of Treasurer when we appealed for a volunteer at the AGM in 2016. Robin also contributed occasional articles to the Newsletter most recently on William Cowper in NL 102, March 2021.

Chris Thomas (*Hon. Secretary*)

Aside from things Powysian, about which one could always have a good conversation with Robin, she loved to talk to me about her botanical interests. When I first met her she soon discovered that I'd spent my career with Cambridge

University Press and was proud to announce that her late husband Michael Hickey was one of our distinguished authors. Indeed Michael was a botanical illustrator of great renown. For CUP he authored *Common Families of Flowering Plants* (1997) and *The Cambridge Illustrated Glossary of Botanical Terms* (2000), but produced many other books on plant names and drawing techniques. One of Robin's favourite places was the Botanical Garden in Cambridge, where Michael had undertaken horticultural training. A very committed walker, she inevitably knew her flowers, and had in common with John Cowper Powys a knowledge of their names as well as a keen appreciation of their intricate structures and aesthetic forms. The Powys Society has lost a lovely and delicate flower.

Kevin Taylor (*editor The Powys Journal*)

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Marcella Henderson-Peal
Robin Hickey – A Memoir

Robin Petersen was born in 1942 to a mixed-race couple in a fishing village called Saldhana Bay on the West Coast of South Africa. Her father was the Principal of the Church of England primary school. Her mother, a very well organised woman, excelled both in embroidery, sewing and cooking, promptly set to start a Mother's Union and taught the local mothers to sew clothes so that their children would be able to go to school. Robin and her brother Tom were very happy there. They then moved to Cape Town where a bright and studious Robin won a scholarship for Livingstone High School. With apartheid getting worse, Robin's parents and another family they were very close to decided to save up and move to the UK so as to give their children a good education and opportunities. Her father took up a teaching job in Canada and would come back home to England every year till he retired.

After doing very well at Grammar School, Robin went to Salisbury Teachers' college where she took a degree in geology and another in Italian. There, she belonged to a choir and would sing wherever she could and was able to practice playing the organ. Like her mother, she was also an excellent seamstress and knitter, a good cook and had a head for figures and book-keeping.

She met my mother's brother Michael Hickey who was also working for a school in Durrington. He was twelve years older. They got married in 1963 and their first daughter Michèle and then Francine were born. The family later moved to Gloucestershire, in France Lynch.

Robin was a great help to Michael who was also a reputed botanist and botanical artist who specialised in wild flowering plants. She knew all the names of plants, butterflies, birds and stones. She enjoyed hiking holidays in Scotland and Ireland. She retired relatively early and enjoyed many activities, taking her grandchildren to discover wildlife, practicing yoga, square dancing, helping out at the antique

market in Stroud, playing the organ for several churches, gardening and producing her own vegetables.

She was well read and always had a book on the go. When Michael died, I asked her to come with me to the Powys Society conferences after having given her the Wessex novels to read. She was a lovely aunt and we became close friends. At the conferences, though discreet and a little shy, she made lasting friends with many members.

Robin helped out with the bookshop, enjoyed taking part in the Saturday evening readings, and finally took on the position of treasurer. We both thoroughly enjoyed our little road trips chatting all the way to Street or Llangollen, stopping off to visit stately homes and gardens while anticipating with great joy the Conference, lectures, company and Saturday walks.

Last year she was very active during the conference in Street, gave an excellent reading of the poems she had selected. Last October, she was very excited to go to Derbyshire and visit Shirley with a small party of Powysians and David, her doting partner of well over a decade, with whom she shared a lot of hobbies. She had many friends in France Lynch and Stroud and all her former pupils seemed to have fond memories of her.

She is sorely missed by her daughters and family and all those who knew her.

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Tributes Jerry Bird

Jerry Bird, production manager of the *Powys Society Journal and Newsletter*, died suddenly in June 2023.

I feel really in shock as he was such a nice person with whom I have dealt so much in the past.

Louise de Bruin (*Conference organiser*)

Jerry's contribution to the design and production of the Newsletter was important. He was a very likeable man, easy to work with and always willing to make changes.

Chris Thomas (*Newsletter editor*)



*Jerry Bird (c) Convivial
Rabbit Facebook page*

How sad and how sudden. Jerry had been associated with the Powys Society for many years, and was also editor of the folklore magazine *Merry Meet*, and a folk musician, playing with the band **State of Undress**. He was MC of folk nights in two pubs in the Dorchester area: **The Blue Raddle** and **The Convivial**

Rabbit. Jerry was also an ardent conservationist campaigner on behalf of the historic Dorset landscape in which he lived.

Paul Cheshire (*Chair*)

This is a real shock. Very sorry to hear.

Kevin Taylor (*editor, Powys Journal*)

I was shocked and much saddened to learn of the death of Jerry Bird. Jerry and I never met but through my decade as editor of the *Powys Journal* we corresponded over questions of layout and production. He was skilled in the setting of type and remarkably efficient given the range of his activities; he always described himself as freelance, and he was beholden to none. Against our regulated days, his life was a sustained act of defiance. In our concern for the quality of the Journal we found another common cause, in the conservation of Dorchester. Jerry generously kept me informed about the progress of various campaigns, notably in defending the water meadows around Wolfeton House from further encroachment. In Jerry, Dorchester has lost an inspiring figure, highly valued for his appreciation of its history and his sense of the urgency of our acts of remembrance and protest. He will be most widely remembered for his truly popular performances of songs associated with Dorset—notably with William Barnes and Thomas Hardy—that gave fresh meaning and new purpose to that past so precious and precariously around us.

Charles Lock (*associate editor, Powys Journal*)

Very sad indeed. On the few occasions that I met him in Dorchester he seemed a very gentle man, with interesting stories to tell. I was looking forward to renewing my acquaintance with him. Such a shame.

Anna Rosic (*Conference organiser*)

Jerry was very special to me. We shared our lives for a long time.

I hope he is in a better place now and no longer suffering. He always thought so much of the Powys Society and loved being able to work on the Journal and Newsletter.

Dr Tracy Hayes (*English language and literature tutor*)

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Paul Cheshire

To Celebrate the Life of

Stephen Powys Marks (1932-2020) – 28 June 2023

Stephen's memorial day, coming over three years after his death, carried an air of celebration that often feels premature at a funeral, when so soon after

someone's death, the insistence on 'celebration of the life of...' can feel like enforced cheerfulness as an avoidance of the grim realities of death, loss and mourning. The mourning is important and the undoubted loss to Stephen's immediate family has to be acknowledged, but on this day we felt grateful for their work in organising what felt like a wholehearted celebration of his life.



Group photo of Stephen's memorial 28 June 2023

On arrival at Radstock Museum each guest was provided with a lovingly produced programme finished to the kind of detail that Stephen would have been proud of. Instead of staples a golden ribbon tied its pages together, each page with a woodcut by Miriam Macgregor as header and a Powys quotation as aphoristic footer. On making our way upstairs we found recorded music playing, a string quartet in place, and a revolving slide show of the Seven Ages of Stephen: it's a wonderful moment when someone is no longer simply an old person as last seen in the flesh, but an eternal being whose youth and age are all equally present as aspects of their being. This is what a celebration of the life can accomplish.

We quickly learned from Julie Dexter, the editor of *Five Arches*, the Radstock Museum Society's history journal, whose involvement with the Museum began in 1992, that the museum owed its very existence and the development of its building "on time and on budget" to Stephen's tireless work as architect, fundraiser and general motivator. We also had the first mention of Stephen's

Apple Macintosh, acquired and much prized in the early days of desktop publishing. I was glad to learn that — in addition to mastering “typesetting in Original Garamond in PageMaker 4.2 on a Macintosh computer” (as it says in *Powys Journal* Vol II (1992)) — Stephen was also known to shout at his Mac when it proved intractable.

The Society’s own Louise de Bruin was one of the speakers, and gave a vivid account of her work chez Stephen at Kilmersdon on Powys Society publications. A stroll round the garden, work putting the *Powys Journal* together, followed by lunch with Tordis, Stephen’s wife. Hard work always sounds so pleasant when recollected in elegiac tranquillity.

Musical interludes were exquisite. Bach’s D Major orchestral suite arranged for string quartet was a highlight for me and the Haydn and Dvorak quartets showed how versatile the musicians were. It was good to learn of Stephen’s love of music. He played the piano, and his wind-up gramophone with large His Masters Voice style papier maché horn, made such an impression that it sticks in the mind long after it was superseded by an advanced stereo sound system. The event was congenially compered by Nigel Young, Stephen’s brother-in-law, and we also heard from two of his fellow-architects, James Elliott (in person) and Kate Macintosh (read by Dorothy Marks, Stephen’s daughter) who shared their experience of Stephen as conservator and planning inspector, rescuing historic buildings in Westminster from demolition. Antonia Young (Stephen’s sister) gave a warm personal accounts from the family perspective, and Stephen’s children Dorothy and Edward, and his niece Chloe, who had worked so tirelessly to organise the day, made all the guests feel welcome and included.

We then moved on to the Ammerdown Centre, a few miles out into the Somerset countryside, where we had lunch in a rose-filled garden space. The weather was warm but not oppressively sunny, and thus ideal for an outdoor event. A potted sapling pine oak was on display and guests were invited to adorn it with last messages to Stephen before its ceremonious planting. The Powys Society was well-represented. Louise was chosen by the family to emphasise to the assembled guests how important the Powys Society had been to Stephen. Other Society members there, Kate Kavanagh, Shelagh Powys Hancox and I, had a happy lunch chatting to family members, taking particular notice of anyone who had Powys on their name tags.

Goodbye Stephen, and thanks to your family who organised such a wonderful day.

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Edward Marks
A note of thanks

Dear friends, family and colleagues of Stephen,

Thank you so much for joining us to pay tribute to Stephen. Despite the time that had passed, it was so important for our family to come together to remember him, and we are grateful to all of you who were able to be there with us. And to all of us who could not be there, for health and other reasons: we understand that you were there in spirit, and we thank you for all your kind messages.

We were all so moved and grateful to see, and to hear from, so many dear people from so many areas of Stephen's life, gathered together to share stories, remember, and celebrate Stephen. How Stephen was loved and appreciated!

Stephen was passionate about conserving and planting trees, and our family decided to plant a young oak tree in Stephen's honour. This young oak is being cared for by the Ammerdown Centre's gardening team until it is planted on the estate this autumn. This oak will be a beautiful and lasting tribute where family and friends can visit and remember Stephen.

Donations to the Radstock Museum are gratefully received. A sum of over three hundred pounds was received on the day - thank you all.

Once again, heartfelt thanks to you all for making Stephen's Memorial and Celebration such a special occasion.

Best wishes,

Edward, Dorothy, Antonia and Chloe

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Committee Nominations 2023-2024

The following **Honorary Officers** have been nominated and have agreed to stand:

	Nomination	Proposer	Seconder
Chair	Paul Cheshire	Joe Sentance	John Hodgson
Vice-Chair	David Goodway	Sonia Lewis	Chris Michaelides
Acting Treasurer	Paul Cheshire	Anna Rosic	Ray Cox
Secretary	Chris Thomas	Marcel Bradbury	John Hodgson

For **membership of the committee** the following member has been nominated and has agreed to stand:

Nomination	Proposer	Second
Marcel Bradbury	Joe Sentance	Pat Quigley

If these nominations are approved by members at the AGM, the committee, from August 2023, will consist of those above as well as Kate Kavanagh (*Newsletter editor* with Chris Thomas), and Dawn Collins (*social media manager*), who all have one year left to run of their three-year term of service) and Louise de Bruin (*conference organiser*), who has two years left to run of her three-year term of service. Anna Rosic (*conference organiser*) continues to serve as co-opted member; Marcella Henderson-Peal and Nicholas Birns serve as honorary committee members; Kevin Taylor (*e-books and editor of The Powys Journal*) and Charles Lock (*associate editor of The Powys Journal*) serve as ex-officio members of the committee. The membership of Robin Hickey (deceased April 2023) is vacant. Nominations are sought for this position.

Chris Thomas, Hon. Secretary

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Marcella Henderson-Peal
JCP l'enchanteur in Paris

On 19 March 2023 an event took place in Paris to celebrate the work of JCP entitled *John Cowper Powys, l'enchanteur*. The event was held in the conference room underneath the Halles Saint Pierre bookshop/café and the 'art brut' museum building which was previously the market hall of Montmartre.

This Powys event was made possible thanks to Éditions La Baconnière publishers and **Pascal Hecker**, a Powysian enthusiast who manages the bookshop and has organised a series of conferences all through the year using the theme of *Les fabuloseries*, meaning authors and works that are absolutely out of the ordinary and cast a spell on the reader. I was interested to note that philosopher Michel Maffesoli was on the list. Other speakers included seven French Powysians whose names our members may be familiar with. There was an audience of over fifty-five which was thought to be a very satisfactory turnout.



Parisian Powysians from left to right: Marcella Henderson-Peal, Florence Marie, Judith Coppel, Doris Prodiguis, Lakis Prodiguis, Pascal Hecker, Denis Grosdanovitch and Goulven le Brech



JCP in French translations in Paris. Photo Marcella Henderson-Peal

Pascal gave a nicely rounded introduction and described how *Wolf Solent* had left its mark on him.

Judith Coppel, translator of *Psychoanalysis and Morality* and *The Art of Forgetting the Unpleasant*, talked about the things she finds inspiring in JCP's work as well as the experience of translating his writing. Pascal Hecker reports that he has already sold over 140 copies of Judith's translation of *The Art of Forgetting the Unpleasant*!!!

Denis Grozdanovitch, Judith's partner, author of essays about wandering through nature and the pleasures to be found in small things quotes JCP in practically every single book he has written. Denis underlined aspects of JCP's works which he finds thought-provoking.

Denis was instrumental in suggesting to **Lakis Prodiguis**, editor of *L'Atelier du Roman*, a special issue on JCP. Denis also contributed to this issue. Lakis gave a most lively and engaging talk saying that JCP wrote profusely about other authors. He ended saying that the vital illusion and spiritual poetry in JCP's work was more indispensable to men than bread.

Goulven Le Brech gave an illustrated account of the magical influence of Wales and Welsh history and mythology in JCP's writing.

Thierry Gillyboeuf is a professional translator who specialises in Emerson and Thoreau. He is also one of the contributors to the special issue of *L'Atelier du Roman* on JCP (reviewed by KK in NL 105, March 2022). He finds much in common between Thoreau and JCP and is fascinated by JCP's fetishism.

Florence Marie focused on *After my Fashion*, a more urban novel which shows Nelly being revitalised by the city's energy. Florence finds JCP open to novelty - he explores responses to the loss of sensitivity in the new world post WW1.

As most attendees had probably never heard of JCP I put together a slideshow of all the places JCP had lived in and focused on how much these places had had an impact on his imagination.

There is talk of pursuing similar events now that a Powys revival seems to be growing in France. It was also nice to see **Jean-Pascal Ollivry** who hasn't been able to make progress with his translation of *Porius*. Once he has retired (in another two years) he hopes to complete it and have it published.

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Kim Wheatley

Reading Powyses Zoom discussion of Porius

On 27th March 2023, nine members of the Reading Powyses Facebook Group from both sides of the Atlantic met on Zoom for a discussion of *Porius*. (Page numbers below refer to the 2007 Overlook edition.)

Dawn Collins led the discussion, commenting that *Porius* is difficult to read because it has no plot. The novel focuses instead on the interiority of the characters. At the same time, the narrative zooms in on the minutiae of the planet: the exchange of sensations between people and objects, objects themselves, and non-human living things. 'Cavoseniargizing', practised by Porius and Nineue, is a non-religious communion

with the world, but the book is also about competing religions. Dawn drew attention to a passage from the scene in which Euronwy and Morfydd exchange vows in the Gaer chapel, a scene in which the sunset viewed through a hole is a *sea of blood, a sky of blood, an infinite expanse of air composed of blood!* (p. 186). Dawn compared the description to Anish Kapoor's *Marsyas* sculpture.

Porius was first published in an abridged edition in 1951. The unabridged edition of 1994 sparked more scholarly criticism than the 2007 edition, although the latter was more favourably received. The 1994 and 2007 versions restored the text using different editorial principles. It is a pity that neither edition includes textual variants. JCP's account of his characters in *Porius* is in 'The Characters of the Book', published in *Powys Newsletter* 4 (1974-75): 14-21. His draft 'Preface /or anything you like/ to *Porius*' is in *Powys Newsletter* 4 (1974-75): 7-13. Jeremy Hooker's 'Romancing at the Cave-Fire: The Unabridged *Porius*' (*Powys Journal* 4 (1994): 216-231) includes a map of Edeyrnion that JCP drew for his sister Gertrude. W. J. Keith's 'Companion' to *Porius* aids understanding of the book, as does an article by Robert Kunkel and Stephen Powys Marks, 'John Cowper Powys's *Porius*: A Partial Glossary of Proper Names' (*Powys Journal* VIII (1998): 163-188). We of course discussed how to pronounce some of the names, and tried our best not to mangle them!

Porius is set in a specific area of North Wales, but has an international texture. There are frequent references to the origins of the inhabitants elsewhere: the forest people are 'Iberian wanderers from Africa' (p. 21), mixing with the Coranians and survivors of the lost world of Atlantis; the Gwyddyl-Ffichti originated in Scotland; the ruling Brythonic Celts go all the way back to Troy. **Kim Wheatley** commented that the book has a war-time intensity but unsettles expectations in the sense that it is not the kind of historical novel that offers an exciting story. There are sporadic suspenseful mentions of the approach of the Saxons -- and revelations about the Saxons being in league with the forest people and the Modrybedd -- but the action tends to happen offstage, and turning points turn out to be not so decisive after all. *Porius* kills Saxon enemies using a corpse in an offhand manner; the Emperor Arthur appears only in passing; and the trouble at Einion's death feast is merely reported. **Ben Thomson** pointed out that this huge book only gives the impression of an Arthurian epic; JCP deflects the story onto human and non-human details. Nineue, the enchantress who at one point has (non-graphic) sex with *Porius* and who appears at the end on horseback on Mount Snowdon, looms larger than Arthur.

We then turned to the role of Myrddin Wyllt (Merlin) and mentions of Merlin in JCP's other fiction. In *Wolf Solent*, Christie claims descent from Merlin, and in *A Glastonbury Romance*, Owen Evans is writing a life of Merlin. Merlin also appears in *Morwyn*. In *Porius*, Merlin, a reincarnation of the Titan god

Cronos/Saturn, is associated with the projected renewal of a Golden Age. The Henog records time past while Merlin projects himself into the future. Kim drew attention to the passage near the end in which Porius decides that Time is superior to Space, contemplating *the endless recession of Time past and the endless procession of Time future, without which that immortal urge to burst out, to break down, to grow, to act, to commit crime, to rescue the perishing, to unbind Prometheus, to free Cronos from the chains of Zeus, would lack the will to take the initial plunge, make the original start, and thus get into motion at all* (p. 726). Here the liberation of Cronos exemplifies the forward march of cosmic history.

Patrick Quigley brought up the novel's depiction of the landscape around Corwen and the river Dee. The current landscape gives a sense of looking into the past. It would be interesting to read JCP's letters and diaries from the years in which he was writing *Porius*. **Louise de Bruin** said she recently edited a letter from JCP to American writer Evangeline Walton that praises Walton's retelling of the *Mabinogion*, a source for *Porius*. Pat recalled Morine Krissdóttir's interpretation of *Porius* (in *John Cowper Powys and the Magical Quest*) in terms of the stages of alchemy and asked to what extent we find it convincing. The sequence of alchemical colours (black, white, yellow and red) is difficult to discern in the book, given its autumnal colour-palette. *Porius* invites multiple interpretations, large-scale and small-scale. Dawn brought up the mystery of whose dead body is on the trestle near the beginning of the book. It is said to be Llew, the brother of the Derwydd (Druid) but Llew later turns out to be alive. Kim wondered about the age of the giant-girl, Creiddylad. Dawn suggested that the Cewri are hundreds of years old.

Pat raised the question of the characters' resemblance to JCP's own family. Porius is JCP, but the toothless scholar Brochvael also resembles JCP. Morfydd is based on Phyllis Playter, and the athletic Rhun is based on Littleton Powys. A passage about Brochvael thinking of *the artfulness with which Sidonius would introduce into a letter his actual sensations at the moment of writing* (p. 161) may refer to JCP's own method of composition.

Nicholas Birns (who reviewed the 2007 edition in *Hyperion* Volume 5 (2013)) contrasted *Porius* with *War and Peace*: the latter deals with history that would have been well-known and relatively recent for Tolstoy's readers, whereas *Porius* is deliberately set in a period of history about which very little is known. Nick raised the question of the extent to which *Porius* grows and changes over the course of the narrative, given the novel's time span of one week – a self-imposed limitation on JCP's part. This vast book with its evocation of the multiverse is anchored with precise dates. Kim suggested that the protagonist develops in the sense that he comes to terms with death. Dawn suggested that the book is also

rooted in materiality in the sense that it lingers over facial descriptions, which for more recent writers of fiction have become old-fashioned and suspect. Yet we are now in thrall to the hegemony of the visual. JCP is interested in clear visual memories, and in smells – olfactory awareness. Myrddin Wyllt, like Uryen Quirm in *Maiden Castle*, has a distinctive odour.

Dawn wondered how Powys plotted his books. His plots seem improvisational rather than schematic. **Theresa Ciccione** agreed: Powys, with his sensation-based philosophy of life, is more interested in humanity and the animation of nature than in a structured narrative. Pat and Louise also commented on how JCP was more interested in creating an atmosphere and a world than in structuring his story. Ben stressed the difficulty of the book's opening with its confusing names and mingling of real and fantastical. *Porius* invites a slow reading in which one lingers over passages and loses track of what's going on. Theresa emphasised that as an improvisational lecturer, Powys drew on the oral tradition while writing. Pat said Powys can be seen as a modern version of the Druid, relying on oral culture. Yet, Pat reminded us, JCP was also steeped in the European literary tradition, including Homer. According to Dawn, the phrase *tungerong larry ong!* – *enduring until the end* (p. 471) applies to this book and to JCP's own method of writing. JCP also shows a feminine interest in the exploration of feeling, a concern that aligns with the matriarchal sympathies of *Porius*.

In closing, Kim wondered about the significance of the many ash trees in *Porius*. Theresa noted that since ash trees are found across the world, the symbol gestures beyond North Wales. **Tim Waters** noted that the ash tree is sacred in Norse mythology. Louise observed that JCP hated Norse mythology. Ben noted however that JCP would have been aware of Wagner's Ring Cycle, which draws on Norse mythology and the symbol of the ash tree. Theresa asked about JCP's poems. Kim said that some critics think that the best poems JCP wrote are Taliesin's poems in *Porius* and Jason's poems in *Wolf Solent*. (Taliesin's poems are somewhat demystified from Morfydd's point of view when she compares his 'voice' to *the shriek of a bat* (p. 649).) JCP's books of poems are derivative, although *Lucifer* and 'The Ridge' are worth reading.

Dawn proposed that we continue to discuss *Porius* in October 2023.

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Chair's Report 2022-2023

It has been an eventful year for the Powys Society, and in addition to mentioning our own events, I particularly want to celebrate occasions of Powysian outreach to the wider public. **Patrick Quigley** fulfilled a much-

postponed commitment to give a talk in June 2022 on JCP at the Corwen Museum, reminding the present inhabitants of the valley of Edeyrnion about JCP's strong local connections. Summer 2022 was exceptionally hot: Pat's talk had to be held out of doors in the War Memorial Park, and the extreme heat continued when two months later **Neil Lee Atkin** and the loyal Friends of Llewelyn were compelled by the incapacitating temperature to forgo their usual annual Llewelyn Powys Birthday Walk from Chaldon Herring to the coast, in favour of a festive meal at the Sailor's Return. Tribute must be paid to **Chris Gostick** who is retiring from his role as Co-Ordinator of this annual event.

The Society's annual summer conference at Street reunited members for the first time in three years, including the welcome return of **Morine Krissdóttir** to present her edition of the six restored *Wolf Solent* chapters. It quickly felt as though we'd never been away: the several conference notes in NL 107 capture the exuberant mood and the stimulation of the programme. Our thanks to the conference organisers **Louise de Bruin** and **Anna Rosic** who keep this event running so smoothly. With climate change we can no longer regard hot summers as exceptional: the noisy air conditioning, although vital, made the speakers hard to hear, and this has prompted us to arrange microphone and audiovisual equipment for our forthcoming 2023 conference at Llangollen.

JCP's 150th birthday gave occasion for a major BBC Radio 3 Free Thinking programme ably hosted by Matthew Sweet, with three well-known Powysian luminaries, John Gray, Iain Sinclair, and Margaret Drabble, who were joined by Kevan Manwaring, a figure new to most of us, who also gave public lectures on JCP in London and Dorchester. That's the outreach we need. Our own Powys birthday celebration on 8 October at JCP's birthplace, Shirley, was blessed with good (but mercifully clement) weather as can be seen from the blue skies in the website photos of our group enjoying readings from *Autobiography* in the Old Vicarage garden. And most recently **Sonia Lewis** led an excellent discussion on Chapter 4, Hell's Museum from *Weymouth Sands* at the Old Fire Station in Ely. After Sonia's stimulating introduction, the conversation flowed readily on either side of an excellent lunch in those comfortable surroundings that have become such a fixture for Society events.

Meanwhile those of us in the Facebook Reading Powyses group led by **Dawn Collins** continued our zoom discussions on the last of the fictions published in JCP's lifetime, *All or Nothing*. Powys's late work had a mixed reception and we decided to end the series on an undisputed masterpiece and returned to *Porius* for a grand finale. Our thanks to Dawn for hosting and managing this essential online strand of Powysian discussions which allows members from overseas to take part.

There have also been welcome developments in France. **Marcella Henderson-Peal** our official representative of the Powys Society in France spoke alongside several other French Powysians at a public event at Halles St Pierre in Montmartre in March 2023 to celebrate the publication of JCP's *l'art de résister au malheur* translated by Judith Coppel. The Powys Collection has found an excellent home at Exeter University Library. We thank Christine Faunch the Head of Heritage Collections who retired this year, and her successor Caroline Walter Senior Curator, for their work. We could not have wished for more highly motivated and enthusiastic people to put our trust in.

The committee has established a congenial meeting place in London at the Lancaster Gate Hotel. Those of us who attend in person are now fully trained by **Kevin Taylor** who directs the settings of our equipment for hybrid meeting to allow remote attendance on zoom. The committee sadly lost **Robin Hickey** in April, who served us so well. Robin is gratefully commemorated in the current newsletter. As well as thanking the committee for their time and input I acknowledge the work of **Chris Thomas** with **Kate Kavanagh**, who tirelessly produce our Newsletter three times a year to such a high standard. Likewise **Kevin Taylor** has settled in as an ideal editor for the *Powys Journal* – eagle-eyed and enterprising. My thanks to **Marcel Bradbury** for advice and support, and to **Dawn Collins**, for keeping the Powys Society's social media flag flying on Facebook.

Paul Cheshire

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Annual General Meeting 2023

The Annual General Meeting of the Powys Society will be held at 11.00am BST on Sunday 20 August 2023 at the Hand hotel in Llangollen. All paid up members of the Powys Society are welcome to participate in the AGM.

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Agenda

1. Minutes of AGM 2022 as published in Newsletter 107 November 2022, and matters arising
2. Nomination of Honorary Officers & Members of the Powys Society Committee for the year 2023-24
3. Chair's Report as published in Newsletter 109, July 2023
4. Acting Treasurer's Report & presentation of annual accounts for year ended 31 December 2022
5. Hon. Secretary's Report
6. Powys Journal and e-books

7. Powys Society website and JSTOR
8. Social media
9. Date and Venue of conference 2024
10. AOB

Chris Thomas, Hon Secretary

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Powys Society Accounts 2022

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Powys Society

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's qualified statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.


Stephen J Wilson
Upton Wilson Ltd
Chartered Certified Accountants
3 West Street
Leighton Buzzard
Beds LU7 1DA

8th February 2023

The Powys Society
Receipts and Payments Account
Year Ended 31 December 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
RECEIPTS		
Subscriptions	5,268	5,144
Gift Aid	465	-
Conference	7,163	-
Bank Interest	13	1
JSTOR /Proquest	1,601	
E-Book sales	1,434	
Sales of printed books	681	
Books	3,716	5,103
Donations	578	250
	<u>17,203</u>	<u>10,498</u>
PAYMENTS		
Powys Journal	2,973	
Newsletter	3,865	
Printing	6,838	7,608
Conference	6,530	-
JCP150 at Shirley	99	-
Book purchases and selling costs	63	750
E-Book royalties	170	-
Officers / Committee Exes	1,170	1,189
Translation and copying expenses	-	666
Website expenses	466	247
Accountants	120	120
PayPal and bank charges	132	109
Alliance of Literary Societies	15	15
	<u>15,603</u>	<u>10,704</u>
Net Receipts / (Payments)	1,600	(206)
Bank balances b/f	17,119	17,325
Bank balances c/f	<u>18,719</u>	<u>17,119</u>

The notes on page 2 are an integral part of this statement

The Powys Society
Notes to Accounts
Year Ended 31 December 2022

RESERVES POLICY

The Powys Society held bank balances of £18,719, which may be classed as reserves. Out of this the Society judges its normal annual operating costs of £15,603 to be a prudent float to allow the Society to survive drops in subscription income and other unforeseen events arising from the financial risk inherent in the cost of the annual conference.

The remaining cash funds held amounting to £3,116 are being held in reserve to allow for projects that cannot be met by future income alone: these may include print publications, digitisation of Powys material, professional re-design of the website, conference audiovisual equipment, and other projects, at the discretion of the committee..

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Neil Lee-Atkin

Llewelyn Powys birthday walk Sunday 13 August 2023

The Llewelyn Birthday Walk & the annual gathering of the Dandelion Fellowship will take place on Sunday August 13th, meeting at 12 noon at the Sailor's Return in East Chaldon. All welcome. For enquiries & information contact Neil Lee-Atkin at reblee.tom@gmail.com

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A Meeting

Saturday 21 October 2023

Pushkin House, 5A Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2TA

The Drawing Room, ground floor.

At 14.00 to 17.00.

The venue will also be available from 13.00
if participants wish to arrive early.

We will discuss Chapter XXXI (The Little One) and Chapter XXXII (Blodeuwedd) from JCP's novel *Porius* (complete, restored edition, edited by Morine Krissdóttir, Overlook Press, 2007), led by Chris Thomas. For more details of the meeting see NL108, p.3.

Refreshments, tea/coffee, will be available.

The event is free. All are welcome.

If you would like to attend this meeting please notify Hon. Secretary.

Hon. Secretary, Chris Thomas

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New Members

We are pleased to welcome 13 new members to the Powys Society who have joined since the last announcement published in *Newsletter* 108, March 2023. Our new members are located in New York, Bristol, Lincoln (USA), Yeovil, Wellington in New Zealand, Uckfield in East Sussex, Glastonbury, Hampton in Middlesex, Cambridge, Barcelona and Pembury. This brings the current total membership of the Society to **246**, including Honorary members, and allowing for other members who are deceased, or who have either resigned or not renewed their membership.

Chris Thomas, Hon. Secretary

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Powys Society Conference, 2023

The Hand Hotel, Bridge Street, Llangollen, LL20 8PL

Friday 18 August to Sunday 20 August

“Into something rich and strange”

Programme

Friday 18 August

- 16.00 Arrival
- 17.30 Reception and Chair’s welcome (**Paul Cheshire**)
- 18.30 Dinner
- 20.00 **Colin Laker**: “‘We talked of going to Wales and I was elated!’: John Cowper Powys’s complex vision of Wales and Welsh identity”

Saturday 19 August

- 08.00 Breakfast
- 09.30 **Paul Cheshire**: ‘*Rodmoor* and the Quest for ‘what lies beyond life’
- 10.45 Coffee
- 11.15 **Kim Wheatley**: ‘Wordsworthian figures of disability in JCP’
- 13.00 Lunch

Afternoon free – optional visit, using shared transport by member’s cars, to **World’s End** a region situated amid the mountains and limestone cliffs above Llangollen and the inspiration for scenes in *Morwyn* and *Porius*. The tour of **World’s End** may be combined with a visit to **Eliseg’s Pillar** and **Valle Crucis Abbey** both located nearby and both often visited by JCP.

- 19.00 Dinner.
- 20.30 **A celebration of T. F. Powys** with readings by members from *Soliloquies of a Hermit*, TFP’s *Journal* and other early works.

Sunday 20 August

- 08.00-09:30 Breakfast
- 09.30 **Mick Wood**: ‘*An Image of the Whole Round Earth*: Perspective and Scale in the Writing of John Cowper Powys’
- 10.45 Coffee
- 11.00 AGM
- 12.00 **Ben Thomson**: ‘*A Glastonbury Romance* and the long modernist novel’
- 13.00 Lunch
- 15.00 Departure

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In advance of the readings from some of TFP's early works at this year's conference we reprint below edited highlights from Peter Redgrove's excellent introduction to TFP's stories originally published in NL 47, November 2002, pp.36-43. CT

Peter Redgrove's introduction was commissioned by Chatto & Windus in 1984 for a projected re-issue of their 1947 edition of God's Eyes A-Twinkle (edited and originally introduced by Charles Prentice) as part of a relaunch of the Hogarth Press as a paperback list, which failed. KK

Peter Redgrove

The Moods of God: An Introduction to the Stories of T. F. Powys.

I first encountered T. F. Powys' work in *The Evening Standard Book of Strange Stories* (my copy is undated, but it must have been in the 1940s). At that time, not long after the war, 'Strange Stories' merely meant tales with that pang of the unconventional that can range from the odd to the horrific. Powys's *The Two Horns* is not one of his best, though it is still a troubling little tale about an old village Doctor worried that a precious white stuffed sparrow might be stolen. On his honeymoon he buys a couple of immense Swiss horns like blunderbusses which he takes back to use as burglar-alarms. He is disturbed at night by what might be burglary, but it is his wife trying feebly to be unfaithful, whom he trumpets back home for ever with his ferocious horns.

My point is that it is perfectly in order to approach Powys' tales as Strange Stories, or as Horror Stories if you like, or Tales of Terror, or Mystery Stories.... They are also Tales of Romantic Love, of Overbearing Malice, of Pastoral Beauty, and of perhaps the greatest Horror Tale in the World, the Jesus-Murder and the Treachery of God.

I would not like them approached as Religious Tales, unless one were absolutely positive that by religious one could also mean Pagan. Thus, to begin at the end, Brocard Sewell reports that 'When Theodore Powys was dying a friend read to him from the Revelations of Divine Love by Julian of Norwich, and this drew from him one of his most Theodore-like remarks: "I like her. I like that thing she said, God is ground." He had taken it to mean that God was actual ground - EARTH.'

As well as approaching Powys through paradox, by saying for example that his stories are both holy and wicked, malicious and forgiving, lecherous but not prurient, that they concern happiness and horror simultaneously, I think one can

give the flavour of the tales by telling stories about Powys himself, for he lived as he wrote. Many of the terrors of personality which he found in his characters, he found in himself, and much of the paradox too. Part of his writer's working-day was his walks, during which he ruminated creatively. Sylvia Townsend Warner remembered him *coming back from one such walk, but sooner than usual, and looking troubled. "I heard a noise in the hedge. I said to myself. It's only a rat. But then I thought, Who made that rat?"*

In Powys, nothing is so small as to be trivial. Small is beautiful too, and nearly all his tales take place in small villages, in the heart of rustic countryside. F. R. Leavis showed critical acumen in commending Powys: *It does not seem likely that it will ever again be possible for a distinguished mind to be formed, as Mr Powys has been, on the rhythm, sanctioned by nature and time, of rural culture*; but, as so often in Leavis, one wonders where his sense of humour had gone. For small is Moral, as Leavis wants, but it is also holy and horrifying and very, very funny...

There is every kind of serious sin depicted in Powys, with a kind of saintly glee. God's irresponsible error in creating man imperfect, and his appalling repentance now it is too late (as in 'The Only Penitent') is a sin like any other, maybe greater than any other. Perhaps this accounts for the thunderstruck innocence of Powys' clergyman. It is as though the Christian pastoral of Langland's Piers Plowman were revised by the Seven Deadly Sins, or Pilgrim's Progress by the citizens of the City of Destruction. There is one exception; I can recall no cowards in Powys. The good people suffer with fortitude; the bad people are only as wicked as plants in nature that compete for sunlight by strangling each other. Compared to Powys' rustics, Shakespeare's are bumpkins; in Powys they are alight with malice. He seems to say, how can a person live the good life without the joys of innocence or the satisfaction of malice? There is the occasional saint also, like Charlotte Bennett, a magical good fairy type of character (like Hester Dominy in the novella of that name), to be distinguished from a 'goodness' which is only fortitude. The innocent and thunderstruck religious I mentioned above who so frequently appear, innocent and helpless, like Mr. Summerbee in the masterpiece 'The Left Leg', or the possessed mystic James Gillet in the same story, are set against the monumental activist greed of Farmer Mew which is both a sin and a natural force...

If one prefers to approach with a fondness for the Strange Story, one might read first 'Christ in the Cupboard', and then 'The Gong', 'John Pardy and the Waves', 'Darkness and Nathaniel' and 'My Money'. If one is more interested in the kind of paradox that punches a hole through the appearance of things into non-ordinary reality, one might sample 'The Only Penitent', 'Bottle's Path',

‘Jesus’ Walk’, ‘Charlotte Bennett’, ‘The White Paternoster’, ‘Mr Pirn and the Holy Crumb’, and especially ‘The Dog and the Lantern’. If one prefers black comedy, one can start with ‘The Left Leg’, and proceed with ‘Archdeacon Truggin’, ‘When Thou Wast Naked’, ‘The Candle and the Glow worm’, ‘The Golden Gates’. But I think that whichever way one begins, one will end up with the whole, because behind all these different categories is the one thing without a name, which Powys called the Moods of God, which he wrestles with on behalf of us all. Only in awareness of this existential contest with reality and its occasional truces are we likely to come to maturity as individuals or a species, for creation has hardly begun, and, to use religious terminology, God is still moulding humanity out of the clay. *The people of the earth are clay pieces that the moods of God kindle into life* still. To know this as Theodore Powys knew it is to have one’s feet firmly supported by the Ground.

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Geoffrey Winch
‘Arundel, Sussex and Beyond...’

After retiring from full-time employment in 2001, my wife and I moved to Felpham in West Sussex. For the next ten years I worked for the County Council as a part-time Highway Consultant. One of my tasks was defining public highway limits in various villages for digital mapping purposes, and this included Burpham. As a Powys Society member this was, of course, of particular interest, and it fell to me to define the highway limits to the front of Warre House, around the *George and Dragon* – a photograph of which (with sheep) Chris Thomas included in NL 107 – and the Parish Church opposite; and, on another occasion, around the *Black Rabbit* on the opposite bank of the Arun.

Over recent years, Worthing poet, Cherrie Taylor, and I have collaborated by email exchange to create tanka sequences and rengay, occasionally meeting at *Cockburn’s Tea Rooms* in Arundel to review and fine-tune our pieces. As most were subsequently published in established print and online poetry journals, we decided to produce a joint collection titled *Coffee at Cockburn’s* to include these together with a few of our individual poems. Because some had an Arundel focus, we added the tag *Arundel, Sussex and beyond....* Burpham, being located close to Arundel, it was Chris’s *George and Dragon* photograph that prompted me to create a tanka sequence, ‘Burpham Scenes’ based on JCP’s residency there for our collection. This in turn led me on to include my JCP poems ‘Sylphia’ (Brighton, Sussex) and ‘Gift of Isis’ (beyond...) previously published in NLs 73 and 102, together with other Powys references. Also included is a poem about the brigantine *Ebenezer* which delivered coal to Arundel from 1900 until the outbreak of war – it could be that JCP would have often seen this boat.

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Geoffrey Winch
Burpham Scenes

seems unnatural
this mingling of waters
with river and sea fish
and inland seaweed – double-
natured, the sinister Arun

Jack rows upriver
against Arun's tidal pull
ties his boat
at the foot of Burpham hill
before low-tide mud prevails

bleating of sheep
horses stamping, anvils ringing
while sunshine floods the village
George and Dragon's cheerful voices
mingling with the children's

garden-wall to wall
woolly sheep fill the roads
down from the downs
down to the river – sheep-
washing the event of the year

in the churchyard Jack
and Llewelyn with pleasure find
a tombstone to ponder:
a green corner in Sussex
for an old Dorset shepherd

at the *Black Rabbit*
Llewelyn at leisure looks
over the river to Burpham –
one more year and Jack
will be gone to America

Inspirational Sources: JCP's *Autobiography* (1934); Llewelyn's *Green Corners of Dorset* (1939), and *Diary* (1909).

First published in *Coffee at Cockburn's* (Felworth Books, May 2023 – ISBN 978-1-3999-5071-8.) Price £8.50 + p & p. Please email me in the first instance if you would like to acquire a copy: geoffreywinch@gmail.com.

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Patrick Quigley
“the goodness of Kenneth Hopkins...”



The Bookroom at the 2022 Powys Society conference

The Book-room is an essential feature of every Powys Society annual conference. No matter how many publications linked to the Powys family fill our shelves (and there are a lot of them), there is always the chance of acquiring something special. At the 2022 conference in Street the tables were covered with Powys books and Society publications, but one section was different. The stacks of books, journals and pamphlets were the lifework of Kenneth Hopkins poet, teacher, publisher and advocate of the Powys brothers, who died in 1988. They came from his personal library and were inscribed with his signature, donated by his son Edmund to the Powys Society.

It was a melancholy sight to behold Hopkins's huge literary output in one place before being scattered in all directions. There were Grasshopper booklets from his early days as publisher in the 1940s, handsome bound volumes of his literary studies such as *English Poetry* and *The Poets Laureate*, themed poetry anthologies on railways and fishing, film novelettes written under pseudonyms, eight thrillers with colourful covers and the elegant Warren House Press books



Kenneth Hopkins in 1938

and chapbooks he published in the 1970s and 80s. Buried among the books was a Ph.D. thesis by Sonia Tilson on the correspondence between John Cowper Powys and Hopkins which is now in the safekeeping of the Powys Society.

I knew little about Hopkins except that, as a twenty-year-old, he cycled nearly thirty miles from his home in Bournemouth to visit Llewelyn Powys at Chydyok and annoyed the elder writer by trying on his trousers. For decades he was an ardent champion of the Powys family and wrote the seminal study, *The Powys Brothers* (1967), before it was superseded by Richard Graves's *The Brothers Powys*. But that was all in the last century; to me Hopkins was a name from the past. The packed table seemed a last sad hurrah before his reputation disappeared with the dispersal of his publications.

Travel by Ryanair with one small bag meant it was impossible to convey more than a handful of books to Ireland. Perhaps the local conference-goers would be more interested in Hopkins but everyone had issues with too many books and too little shelf space. Like a melancholy ghost the Hopkins table was still packed on Sunday morning. And then Paul Cheshire made the bombshell announcement that the Society had limited storage and encouraged us to take whatever we wanted and distribute via charity shops.

Ryanair, be damned - free books were impossible to resist. In a short time, I acquired a fine hardback of the 1971 reissue of Louis Marlow's *Welsh Ambassadors* with Hopkins's handwritten comments on the margins, a beautifully bound copy of his thriller, *Body Blow*, a pamphlet on Walter de la Mare (again with Hopkins's notes), some Grasshopper Press booklets, two issues of the rare book journal, *Philobiblon* and a number of Warren House publications, including his 1938-9 *Journal*. I was fortunate in that a friend agreed to store most of the material for me.

Over the next few months, I became captivated by the story of Kenneth Hopkins, a fascinating likeable man, self-educated, a lover of literature and book-collecting as well as a pillar of the early Powys Society. He did more than any other editor and writer to publicize and publish the Powyses and their wider circle in up to 20 books and many articles. His most notable contributions were *The Powys Brothers*, a collection of John Cowper's *Poems*, an anthology of Llewelyn's work as well as republishing Gamel Woolsey's poetry and *Advice to a Young Poet* (his exchange of letters with Llewelyn).

Advice to a Young Poet is not another writing manual, but a charming exchange of letters between the brash poet and the elder writer who calls him *my bastard*. Some of Llewelyn's advice from his shed in Chydyok was hilarious, such as the injunction *to wash your underclothes with your own hand*. The book tells how Hopkins met his future wife, Elizabeth, who inspired many of his poems. While

living in London in 1938 (renting a room from Charles Lahr), he took a day trip to Bournemouth. An attractive young woman, Betty Coward, was in the same carriage returning to the city. Hopkins felt constrained by the presence of another traveller and passed her a book with a note suggesting he lead her home. She returned the book without reply, but it was raining at Victoria Station and his offer was accepted, resulting in fifty years of marriage *without a cloud*. Rarely has a book been put to more romantic use. The title, by the way, was Llewelyn's *Rats in the Sacristy*.

Since his death in 1988 Hopkins has faded from view, his books out of print, his name almost forgotten. Paul Roberts was kind enough to send me a copy of his appreciation of Hopkins' life and work in *Papers on Language & Literature* (Summer 1990) There is also a glowing tribute from Glen Cavaliero in the *Powys Society Newsletter* 43. Glen's article was an introduction to the correspondence between John Cowper and Hopkins that was to be published in 1990 but never materialised. He praised Hopkins for his dedication to the Powys family, finding a *directness and tenderness* in letters from John Cowper unlike those he wrote to others *because in them we see him being challenged by his correspondent and not allowed simply to play out his self-protective role, whether with extravagant confidence, as with Henry Miller, or with self-indulgent ease, as with Nicholas Ross*.

Unlike most of the other collections of John Cowper correspondence, both sides were available. Glen continued: *Kenneth Hopkins did not just bestow admiration upon him, he gave him love as well... It is a measure of the enthusiasm and genuine goodness of Kenneth Hopkins's nature that he was able to reach and to reflect the warmth that lay within the 'cold, mysterious, planetary heart' as Llewelyn Powys called it...*

Thanks to social media I made the acquaintance of Sonia Tilson, author of the aforementioned thesis, which she completed in 1974. She emigrated to Canada in 1964 where she has published two novels in her 80s. She remembers Hopkins as *a very likeable man, amusing, self-deprecating and great company* who wrote moving and funny poetry. According to her article on the correspondence in *The Powys Review* 4, Winter/Spring 1978/1979, (also on the Powys Society website), a total of one hundred and eighty-six letters passed between *Uncle John* and his *beautiful young letter-swallower*.

Perhaps it is time to resurrect the plan to publish the Powys-Hopkins correspondence. The appearance of his personal library at the 2022 conference gives us the opportunity for a new appreciation of the life and work of Kenneth Hopkins.

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Chris Thomas

A letter from Max Schuster to JCP

Morine Krissdóttir has kindly shared with the editors of the Newsletter her copy of a letter from publisher Max Lincoln Schuster (1897-1970) to JCP, dated 24 November 1936, about *Maiden Castle* which was first published by Simon and Schuster a few days earlier on 19 November 1936. Max Schuster's letter is reproduced below. Morine informed me that this letter has never been published before in its entirety although Morine says she did quote a key sentence from the letter in her discussion of *Maiden Castle* in *Descents of Memory* (p.325). The letter, which Morine describes as *perceptive*, reveals Schuster's strong feelings of *ardour* and *admiration* for JCP, for *Maiden Castle* as well as some of his other works but recognises JCP's limitations and failure to attract a wide readership.



Max Schuster, 1940

The archive of Max Schuster's papers, which can be found at Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript library in New York, includes 11 folders containing the correspondence between JCP and Simon and Schuster. It would be interesting to examine these folders and determine the scope, extent and content of the letters and identify if there is anything that might shed more light on the publishing history of JCP's major fiction as well as some of his other books. The archive might also include more personal correspondence between JCP and Max Schuster.

Max Schuster was a fervent admirer and champion of JCP's works. Peter Schwedt in his book *Turning the Pages – An Insider's Story of Simon and Schuster* (1984) says that JCP was Schuster's idol. Schuster cared deeply for JCP, and personally helped him with his business affairs and difficult negotiations especially with his agent, Lee Keedick. They shared similar interests in art, literature, philosophy and history. Simon and Schuster, published all of JCP's major fiction and a few non fiction books during the course of a decade between 1929 and 1940. However, Max Schuster was not uncritical of JCP's style and prolix mannerisms demanding he make significant changes and cuts to his novels. New editors later rejected works such as *The Art of Growing Old*, *Dostoevsky*, *Morwyn* and of course *Porius*. But JCP remained faithful to Simon and Schuster calling the firm *consistently friendly* and *my darling publisher*. In his diary for November, 1929, he wrote: *visited Mr Schuster and found him as urbane and soothing to mind as always*. JCP had much to be thankful for in his relationship with Max Schuster and the boost Schuster gave to his literary career.

* * * * *

THE INNER SANCTUM OF SIMON AND SCHUSTER

386 Fourth Avenue New York

November 24, 1936

Dear Sir John,

Supplementing my earlier letter, I read *Maiden Castle* far into the night...I can't find exact words to describe my feeling. As I told you from the outset, quite frankly, the names of the characters and some of the themes frightened me, but your magic was so mighty that logical considerations were soon forgotten. I felt here I was back in the land of *Wolf Solent*, *Weymouth Sands* and *A Glastonbury Romance*. With some crucial differences, and a number of endlessly interesting variations, all these books are of course, your own story. Every poet's novel is his autobiography, but specially so in your case. I have a feeling that some of the critics will point this out in the case of *Maiden Castle* and many of them will doubtless think it is adverse judgment, but for those of us, like myself, who believe that the writer does not live who can write more soul stirring language about the experience of nature and experience of love, this comment is praise indeed.

There are many bestselling and subtle and ravaging themes and moods in this story, but for pages like 255 and 454-455 and for the solitary, unyielding integrity which they represent, we cannot be too thankful.

It is my duty to tell you again that although we will present the book with true admiration and ardour, I do not have high hopes, candidly, of enlisting a large reading public here as we did in the case of *Wolf Solent*, where the element of consolidation and rediscovery ends the story behind the story all the more dramatic.

This letter is dictated in the rush of an unusually busy afternoon of the year, when we are frantically trying to meet the pre-Christmas tumult. I know you will understand and forgive.

With renewed homage, and best wishes to you and Miss Playter, I am,

Yours faithfully

MLS:HL.J

MLS (signed)

John Cowper Powys, Esq
7 Cae Coed, Corwen
Merionethshire
North Wales

* * * * *

News and Notes

From Ray Crozier:

John McGahern, Alain Delahaye and Owen Glendower

While reading Frank Shovlin's monumental edition (Faber and Faber, 2021) of the letters of Irish novelist and dramatist John McGahern (1934-2006) I came across a reference to JCP. It was not a very complimentary reference – *I'm afraid I don't like Powys very much, that large 'genius' gesture* – but the context of his letter of 5 October 1980 to French poet and translator Alain Delahaye (1944-2020) is, I think, of interest. According to Shovlin's footnote (p. 517), Delahaye had mentioned to McGahern in a letter of 13 September that Hachette had asked him to consider a French translation of *Owen Glendower*. He declined the invitation. McGahern had written in the October letter to



John McGahern.
Photo: RTE Stills Library

Delahaye that if he had accepted the invitation he would not have to worry about finding work for some time. Delahaye collaborated closely with McGahern on translations of several of his novels, and visited him in Ireland. Shovlin wrote in his obituary of Delahaye in the *Irish Times*, 21 January 2021, that he made many suggestions which McGahern incorporated in the published texts of his novels. How, I wonder, would he have got on with the text of *Owen Glendower*. Delahaye translated many authors, notably the complete works of Oscar Wilde. He translated Jorge Luis Borges, Cyril Connolly, Roald Dahl, Brian Friel (twelve of his plays including *Translations*), Patricia Highsmith, Muriel Spark, Mark Twain, and John Updike. Also a published poet, he was awarded the honour of Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. I suspect that he would have made an excellent translator of JCP's work.

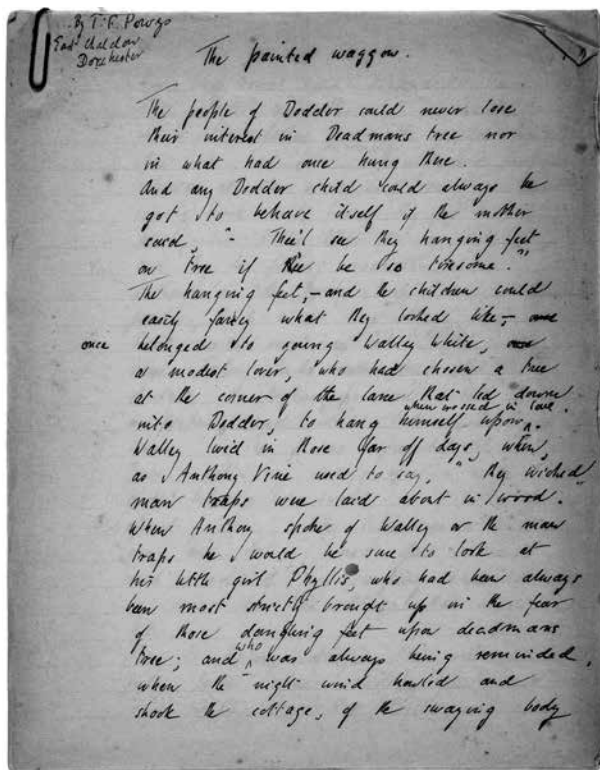
[Ed: *Owen Glendower* has since been translated into French by Patrick Reumaux published in 1996 and reprinted 2017.]

From Chris Thomas:

French translations of the Powyses

As a tribute to Jacqueline Peltier we published in NL105, March 2022, pp.26-27, a list of French translations of works by JCP and TFP made since Jacqueline's original list which appeared in the *Powys Review* in 1989. However, we did not acknowledge Jacqueline's own subsequent comprehensive list of French translations of works by JCP (covering the period 1965-2013), Llewelyn (covering

the period 2008-2012), and TFP (covering the period 2002-2006). This list was published in the penultimate issue of *la lettre powysienne*, No.31, Autumn 2016, pp.48-52. Jacqueline died on 24 July 2019. No doubt Jacqueline would have been very gratified to see the growth of interest in publishing works by the Powyses in France especially the most recent crop of translations.



Mss page of TFP's story **The Painted Waggon** [1925]

Foreign translation rights and JCP

A new contact has been appointed at David Higham Associates who is responsible for the sale of foreign translation rights of JCP's works still in copyright. Anyone interested should contact Giulia Bernabè at: giuliabernbe@davidhighamassociates.co.uk.

Items by TFP and JCP for sale

TFP mss at auction

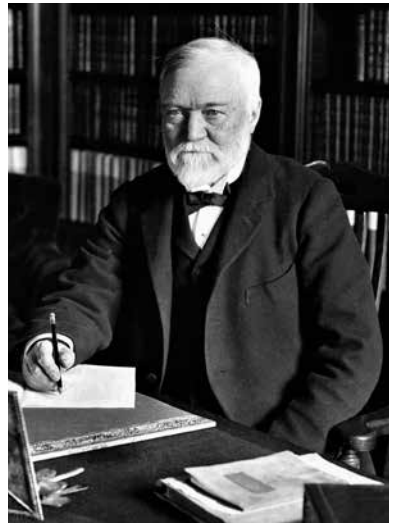
The autograph signed mss (10 pp, browned, unbound, 4to) of a story by TFP called, *The Painted Waggon*, n.d. [1925] was advertised by Forum Auctions in an on-line sale on 30 March 2023, Lot 233. The website of the auctioneer included an illustration of the first page of the mss (reproduced here).

From the library of George F Sims, bookseller

In April the bookseller James Fergusson issued his book catalogue *Miscellany No. 32* in which he lists a number of Powys items for sale from the library of the eminent bookseller George F. Sims (1923-1999) including *Likes and Dislikes – a private anthology compiled by George Sims*, Tragara Press, 1981, which features a contribution by JCP (see *Miscellany 32* catalogue items Nos 355 and 441). JCP lists his personal likes and dislikes: **Likes:** *Being greeted at my window as I lie there on my couch by passing Toddlers. Being questioned by anybody about anything. Seeing the first Dandelions.* **Dislikes:** *People talking about their 'roots'. Television which I dislike the idea of, so much that I've never seen it and shall die without seeing it and Pouring Rain or Heavy Snow or The Game of Cricket or Travelling by Bus or Car or Letting someone else post my letters.* Sims started his private collection of the 'prejudices' of his friends and celebrities in collaboration with his wife in 1958. *Our anthology*, said Sims, *contains over a hundred contributions and all of them are interesting.* In the 1950s Sims acquired some of JCP's early manuscripts and notebooks direct from the author. These were later purchased by NLW, HRC in Texas and Syracuse University. Sims also acquired significant collections of manuscripts of Llewelyn and TFP which he offered for sale in his catalogues. Sims refers to JCP in his memoir *A Life in Catalogues*, 1994. George Sims published a memoir of his relationship with Alyse Gregory in *The Antiquarian Book Monthly Review*, November 1987, later reprinted in the *Powys Journal*, Vol. 2, 1982. *Miscellany No.32* can be accessed on our website under the tab for News. James Fergusson wrote an article about the Powys Society for *The Book Collector's Author Societies* series in 2009.

JCP and Andrew Carnegie

In the report in the *Chicago Examiner*, 15 December 1913 (see Controversy in Chicago in Newsletter 107, November 2022, p.31) the author mentions that JCP was a protégé of industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie and that JCP lectured at the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh under Andrew Carnegie's patronage. I have not found any independent testimony for this information. However, I did find a direct reference to Andrew Carnegie in JCP's book on Keats in which he briefly criticises Carnegie for his mania for work: See *Powys on Keats, Vol.1 of Popular Paganism* by JCP, edited by Cedric Hentschel, Cecil Woolf, 1993, p.75.



Andrew Carnegie

From Patrick Quigley:

Theodora's animals

Julia's article on Theodora's animals (NL 108, page 33) - there was no such mythological hero as "Cu Chlann." His name was Cu Chulainn - the hound of Culann, so called because he killed Culann's ferocious hound and agreed to replace it. The reference shows that Theodora had an interest in Celtic mythology - a very Powysian trait.

Arnold Bennett

There's a new biography of Arnold Bennett: *Lost Icon* by Patrick Donovan, (published by Unicorn, 2022) where the author goes into the relationship between JCP & Dorothy Cheston a connection which has already been detailed in NL 91, July 2017. [Ed: See the review by Margaret Drabble of *Lost Icon* in the *TLS*, 13 May 2022. Margaret Drabble is the author of an earlier biography of Bennett published in 2012.]

Owain Glyndwr Hotel in Corwen

Powys Society members may be interested in the Save the Owain Glyndwr Hotel campaign in Corwen. The community want to retain the hotel and prevent it being taken over by developers. They have launched a fundraising drive offering shares in the hotel starting at £200. JCP tended to prefer the outskirts of Corwen, but mentions the hotel in his letters and Phyllis had her Sunday dinner here for years. There is a Facebook page dedicated to the cause.

* * * * *

Kim Wheatley

JCP's copy of The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley

JCP's copy of Shelley's poems, in the Powys Collection at the University of Exeter, is interesting from both a biographical and literary point of view. The book, entitled **The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley: Reprinted from the early editions, with memoir, explanatory notes, &c.,** is an undated reprint of the edition first published by Frederick Warne & Co. in 1874. The inside cover is inscribed 'Emily Clare from John Cowper Powys 1894 With all memories of love – Montacute.' The front flyleaf has been torn out. A note on an accompanying slip of paper points out that Powys wrote in his **Autobiography**, 'Shelley I had received from the head master as a school prize' (p. 146). The note adds, 'This is probably that copy. The missing free end-paper may have had the original presentation inscription on it from the headmaster'. Emily Clare (d. 1934) was the Powys family nurse and a family friend, who later lived with JCP's sister Katie. Inside the book is a small photograph of a woman using a phone from the late Victorian era, who the catalogue card says is 'perhaps' Emily Clare, although Louise de Bruin, who possesses several photographs and the oil painting of Emily Clare by Gertrude Powys from the 1920s (reproduced in **The Powys Journal** volume 4, p. 213), has confirmed that it

MS quotation in—
Shakespeare on p.
491

Emily Clare
from John Casper
Powers
1894

With all memories
of love—
Montacute

Then let us pray that come it
As come it will, for a 'Nat
That reuse and worth, o'er a 'N
May bear the gaze for a 'Nat—
For a 'Nat and a 'Nat

THE POETICAL WORKS
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.
It comes 'get for a 'Nat
That man to man o'er
the world o'er
Sweet Brothers be
for all that!

Robert Burns

It is sometimes given to
this earth with its burden
of sorrow, sin and failure
to be yet the mother of
an angel child, a creature
from the halls of heaven
wrecked by some mischance
of fate upon the barren
intents of Space and Time;
~~was~~ such a one was
Percy Bysshe Shelley.
His life was one long
service of man and himself
of God -
himself Christian in every
thought ~~and~~ motive and
action, he yet was so
much distressed by the
tyranny and selfishness
of the bigoted and cruel
so many professed Christians
both in respect of their

conduct and their creed, that
he ~~may~~ ^{may} himself the
opponent of Christian teaching
when in reality he was
its truest upholder in a
fastidious soulless and golden
generation -

PREFACE.

The present Edition of Shelley contains all the poems published by the poet himself, and those given to the public after his death by Mrs. Shelley, *ie.* the "Posthumous Poems" and "Collected Works" it therefore comprises all those which have made his name immortal.

To these have been added the verses and ballads from his boyish notebook of "St. Irvyne; or, the Rosicrucians," and the "Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson," a long-winded production, in which he was assisted by his friend Hogg, and which was published during his last term at University College, under the name of John Pitt Rivers.

He believed absolutely in the
Supreme Father of all spirits
in whom we ~~have~~ ^{live} live
and move and have our
being, and he loved poor
wretched creatures and kept
himself unspotted from the world.

36

The front title page (before the main title page) has the first quotation, in JCP's handwriting, this one from the 1795 song 'A Man's a Man for a' That' by Robert Burns, a poem that celebrates social equality. Most likely quoting (as often) from memory, JCP copied the final lines of the poem with a slight misquotation ('May for 'Shall'), adding a final large quotation mark and enlarging the last line for extra emphasis:

Then let us pray that come it may
As come it will, for a' that
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth
May bear the gree for a' that --
For a' that and a' that
Its comin' yet for a' that
That man to man the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for all that!

JCP may have selected the stanza to draw attention to Shelley's egalitarian views as expressed for example in his early poem **Queen Mab** (the first poem in the volume).

Overleaf, the left hand page has two quotations, both in JCP's handwriting, apparently from the same period as the one on the previous page. The first, in Greek, from St. Paul, appears to be 'μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη'. The phrase is taken from the end of St. Paul's well-known line, 'And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; **but the greatest of these is charity**' (1 Corinthians 13:13, King James Version). If the quotations were added to the book with the gift recipient in mind, JCP may have assumed that Emily Clare would recognise the widely known phrase from St. Paul even when quoted in Greek. Years later, in his essay on St. Paul in **The Pleasures of Literature** (1938), JCP would expatiate upon the 'magical power' of 'St. Paul's **agapé**' (p. 233), preferring the older translation 'charity' to the newer translation, 'love'.

The second quotation on this page of the Shelley volume is from John Milton's poem 'On the Morning of Christ's Nativity' (1629) (substituting 'amorous' for 'radiant'):

Yea Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men
Orbed in a rainbow and like glories wearing
Mercy will sit between throned in celestial scene
With amorous feet the tissued clouds down steering
And heaven as at some festival
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall!

This stanza looks forward to the redemptive future promised by the birth of Jesus. Possibly, JCP gave his copy of Shelley to Emily Clare as a Christmas present. The choice of quotations on this page also expresses JCP's idea that Shelley, a self-proclaimed atheist, was a true Christian. JCP thus puts St. Paul and two famous British poets in dialogue with the iconoclastic Shelley, perhaps seeing all four writers as expressing similarly hopeful visions.

The right hand page, the main title page, has the name ‘B. R. Clare Jan: 1935’ in someone else’s handwriting. The book must have been passed on to a relative of Emily’s after her death.

The blank page after that, and the blank spaces around the beginning of the Preface, are taken up with remarks in JCP’s handwriting (in a lighter shade of ink) about Percy Bysshe Shelley. The accompanying note says that the remarks are in an ‘earlier hand.’ JCP writes:

It is sometimes given to this earth with its burden of sorrow sin and failure to be yet the mother of an angel child, a castaway from the halls of heaven wrecked by some mischance of Fate upon this barren island of Space and Time; such a one was Percy Bysshe Shelley. His life was one long service of man and worship of God.

Himself Christian in every thought motive and action, he yet was so much distressed by the tyranny and selfishness, the bigotry and cruelty of so many professed Christians both in respect of their conduct and of their creed, that he imagined himself the opponent of Christ’s teaching when in reality he was its truest upholder in a faithless soulless and godless generation. He believed absolutely in the Supreme Father of all spirits in whom we live and move and have our being, and he loved poor [sic] visited the fatherless and kept himself unspotted from the world.

This idealising account of Shelley reflects the late-Victorian sanctification of the poet in reaction to the demonising of Shelley during his lifetime. Two decades later, JCP would write an enthusiastic essay on Shelley in *Visions and Revisions* (1915) in which he continued to echo the Victorian etherealising of the poet.

Further on in *The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, in the Prefatory Memoir of Shelley, part of a sentence is underlined: ‘His imagination preponderated over judgment and reason.’ A marginal comment, written in pencil in handwriting less flowing than JCP’s adult hand, reads: ‘Actually Sh. was not against reasoness [sic]’. This comment, which might have been made by JCP soon after he first acquired the book, or by a later owner, acknowledges that even the idealistic Shelley was an ‘invaluable thinker’ (as JCP puts it in *Visions and Revisions*, p. 173).

Much later in life, in a letter to his sister Katie, JCP noted family acquaintanceship with ‘*Shelley’s Cousin!*’ and commented, ‘it is exciting to think of this link between us and Percy Bysshe Shelley’ (*Powys to Sea-Eagle*, p. 314). JCP’s late fantasy *You and Me* (1959) refers in passing to the ghost of Shelley. JCP had twice visited the graves of Keats and Shelley in Rome. In letters written towards the end of his life, Powys repeatedly quoted lines from Shelley, ‘O World! O Life! O Time! on whose last steps I climb – *when will return* the glory of your prime? no more! O never more!’ (*Powys to Sea-Eagle*, p. 309).

JCP’s longstanding appreciation of the poet was evidently sparked, and renewed, by his handling of the copy of *The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley* that he owned for a few years in his teens and chose to give away with ‘memories of love’.

* * * * *

Chris Thomas

Of Time and the River and a visitor to Corwen from America

Of Time and The River, A Legend of Man's Hunger in his Youth, the second novel by acclaimed American novelist Thomas Wolfe (1900-1938), was first published in the USA by Charles Scribner's Sons in 1935 and in the UK by Heinemann in 1936. The novel follows the adventures of Wolfe's alter ego, Eugene Gant, from his southern home in North Carolina to Harvard University, New York City, and Europe. Clifton Fadiman (1904-1999), who was the senior editor at Simon and Schuster in the early 1930s, worked on *A Glastonbury Romance*, and travelled to Phudd Bottom to meet JCP, reviewed *Of Time and the River* in *The New Yorker*, 9 March 1935, and said: *For decades we have not had eloquence like his in American writing. At his best he is incomparable. Of Time and the River is a wonderful flashing, gleaming riot of characters, caricatures, metaphors, apostrophes, declamations, tropes, dreams. Mr Wolfe's style is Elizabethan. At its worst it is hyperthyroid and afflicted with elephantiasis.* Fadiman later also reviewed in *The New Yorker* JCP's *Owen Glendower*, in the issue for 25 January 1940, and Wolfe's posthumous novel *The Web and the Rock*, in the issue for 24 June 1939. *Of Time and the River* originally received many glowingly enthusiastic reviews in which Wolfe's book was compared with Rabelais, Sterne, Fielding, Dickens, Dostoevsky, Scott, Joyce and Proust. Some reviewers were critical of Wolfe's ecstatic and expansive style. Malcom Cowley concluded that the best passages appear without logic or pattern.

In a letter dated 20 September 1937 JCP wrote to Louis Wilkinson about *Of Time and the River* and said: *there's another top-notch American Book called 'Of Time & the River' & if you haven't read it turn to the part about Paris & the French! It's by Thomas Wolfe...you ought to allude to it [in lectures] now & again - for it is good.*

One of the first visitors from America to call on JCP at his new home in Corwen, in the late 1930s, was the writer James Stokely (1913-1977). Stokely was a close friend of Thomas Wolfe. Although little known in England, Stokely would later be widely recognised in America as a major Appalachian writer, a poet, and conservationist as well as an environmentalist, an activist for civil rights, and the co-author, with his wife, Wilma Dykeman, of books and articles about the history and culture of the southern states of America such as *Neither Black Nor White*, 1957, *Seeds of Southern Change*, 1962, and *The Border States*, 1968. From a young age Stokely was passionate about becoming a writer and pursuing a career in literature. He met other prominent American writers such

as Carl Sandburg and Robert Frost and corresponded with the Californian poet Robinson Jeffers who was well known to JCP.

Stokely was raised near the Great Smoky mountains on the Tennessee and North Carolina border, not far from Wolfe's home town of Asheville, where Stokely owned property and apple orchards. In Asheville he was introduced to his future wife Wilma Dykeman by Wolfe's elder sister Mable Wolfe Wheaton. Wilma, who already knew Wolfe personally, said she thought Wolfe was the greatest writer of Appalachia and ranked him alongside other leading Appalachian novelists like James Agee and James Still. Briefly, Stokely developed a close relationship with Wolfe, offered him a writing cabin for his private use, gave him lifts in his car, and visited him when Wolfe was living at the Chelsea Hotel in New York. Stokely was an honorary pall bearer at Wolfe's funeral in 1938, alongside book editor, Maxwell Perkins and the playwright and screenwriter, Clifford Odets. After Wolfe's death he arranged his friend's unpublished manuscripts and correspondence, and later helped establish Wolfe's home in Asheville as a national historic site.

For Ron Hall.

This Book, it was given
us by someone who
came to see us from
over there & was a
real friend of T.W., we

Mr. Powys:
I think you will find
here the promise of the
greatest writing ever to come
out of America. Wolfe in his
unsurpassable vigor has all the
humour of Rabelais, the heart
of Dickens, and the mystic
passion of Whitman. In fact,
my friend, you will find here
your Homer.

— James Stokely

both of us have decided
to give you with our
love as a winter work
of it contains. John Cowher Powys
& P. Blanton
Dec 1951

Inscriptions inside JCP's copy of Thomas Wolfe's novel **Of Time and the River**

During his visit to Corwen Stokely presented JCP with a copy of Wolfe's novel *Of Time and the River* which he inscribed. JCP later re-inscribed the book and gave his copy to his friend Ron Hall. These inscriptions read:

Mr Powys:

I think you will find here the promise of the greatest writing ever to come out of America. Wolfe in his insuprable rigor has all the humour of Rabelais, the heart of Dickens, and the mystic passion of Whitman. In fact, my friend, you will find here your Homer.

James Stokely

For Ron Hall

This Book, was given us by someone who came to see us from over there & was a real friend of T.W., we both of us have decided to give you with our love as a writer worthy of its contents...

John Cowper Powys & P. Playter Dec 1951

In his introduction to the Village Press edition of JCP's letters to Henry Miller (1975) Ron Hall referred to both dedications by Stokely and JCP: *I read the moving inscription to him by a close friend of Thomas Wolfe's in Of Time and The River, above John Cowper's words to me.*

JCP and Thomas Wolfe both had a fascination with the vastness of the American landscape as well as a shared love of taking long journeys across America by train. Perhaps JCP also recognised a connection with Wolfe's lyrical and rhapsodic prose style. Both writers were influenced by the works of Melville, Poe, Whitman and Mark Twain.

For details of James Stokely's life see his obituary in the *New York Times*, 22 June 1977, *Appalachian Heritage*, Vol.7, No.1, Winter 1979 (special issue dedicated to Stokely) and Vol.41, No.2, Spring 2013; see also *Thomas Wolfe Comes Home* by Wilma Dykeman and James Stokely, *New York Times*, 15 December 1957. On *Of Time and River* see Wolfe's *The Story of a Novel*, 1936, and for the first reception of Wolfe's book see *Thomas Wolfe Interviewed, 1929-1938*, edited by Aldo P Magi and Richard Walser, 1985.

For Ron Hall see: *Powys Review* No.9, 1981/1982 (Ron Hall's memoir of JCP), *Powys Review* No.17, 1985 (obituary), NL89, November 2016 (JCP's letters to Ron Hall) and

NL 95, November 2018 (on JCP's walking sticks).

I am very grateful to Adrian Leigh for sending me photocopies of the inscriptions by James Stokely and JCP.

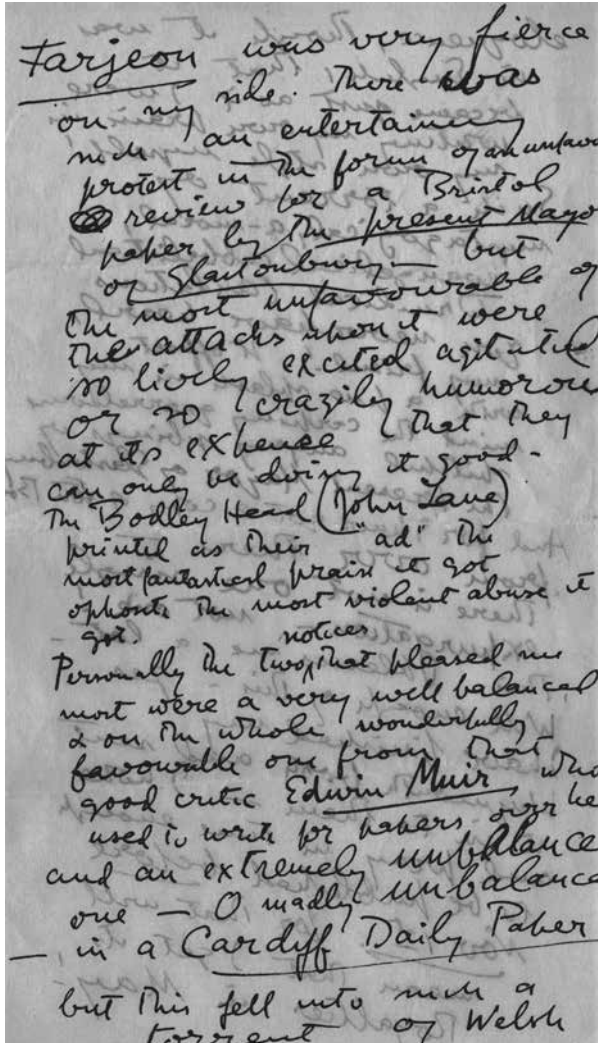
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Chris Thomas

Two contemporary reviews of *A Glastonbury Romance* (2)

We reproduce here two important contemporary reviews of *A Glastonbury Romance*, by H. F. Scott Stokes, the Mayor of Glastonbury, and F. J. Mathias, book reviewer of *The Western Mail*. The reviews were discussed and previewed in NL108, March 2023, pp.43-46. Since publication of the March Newsletter I have found other comments by



Farjeon was very fierce
on my side. There was
made an entertaining
protest in the form of an unfavourable
review for a Bristol
paper by the present Mayor
of Glastonbury - but
the most unfavourable of
the attacks upon it were
so lively excited agitated
or so crazily humorous
at its expense that they
can only be doing it good.
The Bodley Head (John Lane)
printed as their "ad" the
most fantastically untrue
opposite the most violent abuse it
got.
Personally the two notices
most were a very well balanced
and on the whole wonderfully
favourable one from that
good critic Edwin Muir, who
used to write for papers, and he
and an extremely unbalanced
one - O madly unbalanced
- in a Cardiff Daily Paper
but this fell into much of a
torrent of Welsh

Extract of JCP's letter to James Abell about reviews of AGR (a)

eloquence, though it was
in English, that it
became just as if I were
writing my own brain in
my own style myself!
Such a torrent of
mythological, a-moral,
evangelical cabballistical
Primitival (andations,
you never have heard,
my friend! It offset
with a fine splash in my
mind the corking quarrelsome
wretched angry sibilings of
the present Mayor of Staroburg!
And for I have got a copy of the Book
from over there —
There is not one single
expurgation — not one!
This pleases me a lot —
Well enough of this — yes
I have finished my
Waymouth book and sent
it in to them — I hope
and pray in time enough
to be published before
Nov 1st. for that will
mean that I get to
Royalties in May!

Extract of JCP's letter to James Abell about reviews of AGR (b)

JCP on these reviews in a previously unpublished and incomplete letter from JCP to his acquaintance, James Abell in New York (who he mentions in *Autobiography* and in his diaries for 1929 and 1930.)[1] The letter, which should

be dated around late July or August 1933, at exactly the same time JCP was completing *Weymouth Sands*, can be found amongst a small collection of letters to Abell recently donated to the Powys Society archive at Exeter University. JCP writes to Abell about the reviews he has seen of *A Glastonbury Romance* referring, especially, to praise from Eleanor Farjeon [2] in USA (reproduced on the dust jacket of the first UK edition of *AGR*) who JCP describes as *fierce on my side*, the favourable views of Edwin Muir [3] in the UK (*The Listener*), the *unbalanced* admiration of a Cardiff daily newspaper (F. J. Mathias in *The Western Mail*, 18 July 1933) and by contrast the *violent abuse* of others and particularly the *unfavourable attack and entertaining protest* by the *present Mayor of Glastonbury* (in *Time and Tide*, 15 July 1933). JCP describes the reviews like this:

...the most unfavourable of the attacks about it were so lively, excited agitated or so crazily humorous at its expense that they can only be doing it good...Personally the two notices that pleased me most were a very well balanced & on the whole wonderfully favourable one from that good critic Edwin Muir who used to work for papers over here and an extremely unbalanced one – o madly unbalanced - in a Cardiff Daily Paper but this fell into such a torrent of Welsh eloquence though it was in English that it became quite as if I were writing my own praise in my own style myself. Such a torrent of mystagogical, a-moral, evangelical, cabalistical Druidical laudations it offset with a fine splash in my mind the carping, quarrelsome, spiteful, angry jibings of the present Mayor of Glastonbury![4]

Notes

1. I am grateful to Morine Krissdóttir for locating references to James Abell in JCP's diaries and suggesting he probably also refers to Abell in his letters to Phyllis. These references would be worth publishing separately in a future Newsletter alongside transcriptions of JCP's letters to James Abell.
2. Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965), poet, dramatist, novelist, book reviewer, author of children's books and admirer of the writings of Elizabeth Myers.
3. Edwin Muir's review of *A Glastonbury Romance* (not listed in Langridge) was published in *The Listener* on 12 July 1933. The issue of *The Listener* for 26 July 1933 published an exchange of letters (also not listed in Langridge) between Geoffrey West and Edwin Muir about *A Glastonbury Romance* although JCP doesn't say if he read this exchange as well. Edwin Muir's review and his exchange of letters with Geoffrey West deserve to be reprinted. Edwin Muir (1887-1959) was a poet, novelist, literary critic, and co-translator, with his wife of books by Kafka, Herman Broch and Heinrich Mann. In the 1920s Muir regularly contributed to American periodicals and newspapers especially *The Freeman*. Geoffrey West, pseudonym of Geoffrey H Wells (1900-1944?), was a literary critic, bibliographer, book reviewer, novelist and biographer. Geoffrey West reviewed works of the Powyses in the *TLS* in the 1930s. West's review of *The Meaning of Culture* was reprinted in NL 96, March 2019.

4. For the catalogue entry of JCP's letters to James Abell in the Powys Society Collection at Exeter University see: University of Exeter Archives Catalogue: EUL MS 486/1/3.

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Henry Folliot Scott-Stokes
Sensuality in Somerset A review of A Glastonbury Romance
Time and Tide, 15 July 1933

This enormous book of 1,174 pages is priced at 10s.6d, and it is cheap at the price. Cheap and nasty.

Of course I know I am old fashioned, not to say "provincial"; and I freely admit I have read next to nothing since I left school many years ago now. I have had other uses for my eyes. Well, that is just one of the drawbacks of modern life, and nobody suffers but myself. But that same specialisation, which narrows the mind and kills the imagination of the ordinary active man, produces also as his counterpart cloud-cuckoo land artists, out of touch with all reality, who "despite experience as the wisdom of unlettered men," and who by sheer assurance and the ability to express themselves get a hearing for their views out of all proportion to their wisdom or importance. And that is a real misfortune.

The highest flights of imagination must take off somewhere from the ground; and before we consent to go off into the blue, it is reasonable to assure ourselves about the aerodrome. And this machine is stuck in the muck, and will not fly. It is only when those who have imagination and leisure look beyond words to what they stand for that fine writing gives place to literature. Mr Powys's fine writing is very fine; and the further it travels from anything approaching reality the finer it becomes; but that is all. So long as his feet are entangled with the earth, he trips and stumbles at every turn; and what is worse, *he doesn't care*.

Why drag in a lot of details about this and that when you don't really know or care about them? Why drag in a "Mayor," when you don't even know how Mayors are made, or a "Town council," when you have no idea of the powers and duties of a Council? Or, if you must bring them in, why not find out the simplest facts about them first? Why drag in a "Communist foreman," when you don't distinguish for one moment between a foreman and a tramp, and are not even remotely aware that factory foremen are the very last people likely to turn Communist? Why all this inaccurate topography, with its crowning triumph of a River Brute which "flows" (*sic*) north-east to Meare and south-east to Baltonsborough, all in one paragraph? Why a bug hunting parson who goes unconcernedly, and with knowledge, with his son to call on his son's mistress and her husband, talks easily with the lady as man to man, and promptly falls for her? And can anyone believe in a countryman, clown or gentle, who would accept this situation, as Nell's husband does, with the mild remark that provided that his wife won't be stuffy with him, he doesn't mind living *à trois*? No, no, Mr

Powys. It really won't do. We all have our little weaknesses, God knows; but this is Bloomsbury not Somerset.

It was an opinion of Edmund Burke's that "Vice itself lost half its evil by losing all grossness." I always thought that rather unfair to the gross. Gross we are or may be; but it is the sophisticated townies who have "invented and indulged vices unknown to brutes," and unknown to us.

And as for a provincial manufacturer who chuckles at the thought of "cuckolding the communist," and does it – our "captains of industry" are all men the most riddled with respectability and the least lecherous. God knows they have their faults (and so have I), but they are uxorious to a degree. They haven't the imagination to be anything else.

Style, of course, is not my subject; but why must Mr Powys write "a person" when all he means is "one" ("all the intolerable things a person had to put up with")? And he uses "like" like the worst writers of "words for music" do. And why drag in "bonhomie" and the slightly more difficult "oeillade" if you can't even spell them? It doesn't help.

But my main criticism, of course, is, Why drag in Glastonbury at all? And the answer, I suppose, is that Mr Powys is a man with a message. That message is written large in his *Defence of Sensuality* with its triumphant denunciation of "the preposterous claims of the life of action" – a frontal attack, of course, on the whole Christian ethic, which broadcast over the whole of Europe the Semitic axiom that it is only by doing one's work worthily that one can hope for happiness in this world or in the next – a profound truth which had escaped the whole of classical civilisation, and was profoundly foreign to the old pagan glorification of battle and blood and successful lust which it was the work of the early Church to proscribe and supersede in our own pagan ancestors, when it adapted to the uses of piety those old tales which it could not suppress.

Now this is where Mr Powys comes in. With the fury of a Nietzsche or a Swinburne he denounces the intrusion of the pale Galilean and what is, after all and inevitably our common inheritance, whether we repudiate it or not – and in "deep metaphysical malice" links up his outburst with Glastonbury. This is what Hamish Miles (on the dust cover) calls "drawing on the hidden spiritual resources of such places as Glastonbury and Stonehenge." Well, that is all very well for Stonehenge – the stones of which, by the way, one "noble soul" in the book embraces "with extraordinary satisfaction." But then he was like that. He couldn't look at a fish without its calling forth some bawdy image. (Who was it, by the way, who "thought thimbles were phallic symbols"? I'm sure Mr Powys does!) That is all very well for Stonehenge, but Glastonbury is another story. It is the story of a community who served God here for a thousand years, a story the beginnings of which were "lost in the mists of time" when William of

Malmesbury gathered up its fragments eight hundred years ago; a story which ends with one of the wickedest by products of successful lust that ever shamed the name of monarchy.

“What is called monarch” (wrote Tom Paine) “always appears to me a silly, contemptible thing. I compare it to something kept behind a curtain, about which there is a great deal of bustle and fuss, and a wonderful air of seeming solemnity; but when by any accident the curtain happens to be open, and the company see what it is, they burst into laughter.”

Tom Paine may have been much at fault about monarchy, but that is precisely how I feel about these pen-and-ink pundits of adultery. Mr Powys writes easily and well about adultery; but I am hampered by a suspicion that here, too, he is writing by the book, and if ever I journeyed into that far country I should find the men and women who inhabit it as utterly unlike the men and women he describes as the men and women he describes are unlike my friends and enemies in Somerset.

Mr Powys’s punctuation is unaffected.

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F. J. Mathias

Life’s Philosophy of a Religious Pagan

A review of A Glastonbury Romance

Western Mail 18 July 1933

When a sensitive Celt like John Cowper Powys pours into a novel of nearly 1,200 pages the whole of his life’s philosophy a reviewer may as well confess at once that it is impossible for him to cope in a limited space with the overwhelming flood of the author’s thought.

J. C. Powys, the author of *Wolf Solent*, *The Meaning of Culture* and *In Defence of Sensuality*, has romance and literature in his blood. He is the son of a Welsh [*sic*] clergyman whose ancestors were the ancient Princes of Wales; on his mother’s side he is linked with the great poets William Cowper and John Donne. As for himself he is a pantheist, a mystic, and a religious pagan all rolled into one, and also a man of such keen perceptions that he can sense the feelings of a grub on a leaf as well as catch the message of a distant star.

His massive novel cannot be judged by conventional rules. It is a law unto itself, and neither narrow nor insular suggests the analogy of a vast continent in as much as it too has its lofty peaks and verdant plains, its desert wastes and its luxuriant forests.

The scene is Glastonbury, and little wonder, for Glastonbury appeals to a mystical Celt, being the legendary home of saints and heroes. It was here that Joseph of Arimathea founded a noble abbey and his rod blossomed into the sacred thorn: here also, according to Giraldus Cambrensis, lies the tomb of Arthur and Guinivere, where the past speaks in ghostly whispers and men dream of the Holy Grail.

The scope of the work can be conceived when I mention that there are more than 40 principal characters, among them being a mayor, a manufacturer, a vicar, a farmer, a cancer patient, a mad woman, a procuress, and a philosophical anarchist. Lust, love, superstition, religion, politics, pageants, murder, and mythology are a few of its subjects.

It is useless to try to describe these characters, though a bare reference must be made to Owen Evans, the Welsh antiquary, with his sadistic visions and tortured soul, to Will Zoyland, the bastard son of the Marquis of P., and to John Geard, the mayor of Glastonbury.

Geard is a tremendous creation, sensual and spiritual, human and universal, with his roots entangled in his carnal nature and his thoughts drifting upwards to God. Coarse, but never cruel, he is a medicine man and miracle-worker, and after striving in vain to restore the cult of the Grail seeks release in death and returns whence he came. He defies description. Perhaps the incarnation of the forces of nature is as near as we can get to the truth.

But the crowning glory of this book is Mr Powys's treatment of nature. There is nothing like it for virility in modern literature. Doubtless many of his references to stellar vibrations and the direct influence of the sun and the moon are wild and extravagant, but while discounting these we feel that he is breaking down the barriers of the soul and restoring God's own agents to their priestly functions.

Does not the sun warm us and cherish us? Does he not bring joy to the heart and a song to the lips? Is he not a god whom at least we can see?

Moreover, the same moon that banished night's terrors from prehistoric man, that gave courage to the sentinel on the Walls of Troy, still comforts and sustains our weary watchers. Like a tidal wave her light spreads over land and sea and only sin mourns the vanquished darkness.

Mr Powys taps anew these sources of strength that God gives and the Christian forgets. The caressing rain, the cry of a bird, the quivering leaf, and the stalwart tree all have messages that he hears and sees and easily reads. In such wise twilight at Stonehenge becomes a benediction. This is paganism that purifies.

This book, like the universe, contains good and evil, darkness and light, fear and hope. It restores to us our ancient mother from whose womb we sprang and to

whose heart we return. If some writers are called Titans of Literature surely Mr Powys should be of the number.

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Andrew Bailes

A Man on the Lecture Platform

I read with pleasure and interest the letter from Alfred Perlès to Kate Kavanagh, and the discussion of the relationships between Perlès, Henry Miller and John Cowper Powys in Newsletter No. 108. As a long-time informal Miller scholar, I enjoyed reading Perlès' *My Friend Henry Miller*, and was aware of his later life in England. That he should share Miller's love of and respect for JCP came as little surprise.

I recently uncovered another reference of Henry Miller's to JCP, brief and fleeting as it is, which I'd like to add to Chris Thomas' accounting in NL 108. Its interest perhaps lies mainly in Miller's flavoursome description of John Cowper Powys, lecturer, and to it being an account of the time before Powys' major novels had been published and had had their influence upon Miller's literary sensibilities.

In *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare* (1945) - a book I'd waited years to read, and a better book than I had been led to expect it to be, given the uneven reception it seems to own among Miller's readers - Miller opens his proposed American travelogue with a description of his relatively recent return to America from Greece, from which he had been forced to flee to escape the approach of War. In his second chapter, 'Vive Le France!' Miller reminisces about the New York scene he had left for his new life in Europe, and expresses his fears for his responses to the country to which he returns.

Mary Dearborn, in *The Happiest Man Alive*, describes how as a young man Miller had been a keen attendee at lectures and in meeting halls, giving among her examples that "[a]t the Labor Temple on 14th Street he heard W.E.B. DuBois and, later, John Cowper Powys;" it seems likely to me, though, that it is John Cowper Powys of whom Miller is thinking when he casts his mind back to recreate one of his trips to the Labor Temple.

You think of a man on the lecture platform, a monster out of the Theosophical world with the body of a vegetable married to a hippogriff, a quiet fiend who has hypnotized himself sufficiently to walk erect from the wings to the centre of the platform without giving himself away. He is about to speak for three solid hours without a pause, without taking a sip of water, without blinking an eye. He will hoist himself effortlessly to that fixed dragon which hangs in the sky and keeps the sidereal clock wound up despite all talk of divine entropy or cosmic schizophrenia. For three solid hours he will talk in a voice that comes from beyond the grave, the voice of the medium buried in a silver cone under the floor of a cave. At the

end you will be sitting in the park amid dead leaves and silver wrappers, knowing neither more nor less than what you knew before, but quietly happy, like a man who has just conjugated an irregular verb down through the harmonies and the dissonances of the subjunctive mode.



*Dust jacket first edition of **The Air Conditioned Nightmare** by Henry Miller*

The Air Conditioned Nightmare contains some of Miller's best writing, but the overall effect is a bit stymied by its structure - the book rather tails away towards the end. It includes the last of Miller's more hallucinatory non-fiction

and an excellent philosophical character sketch in “The Desert Rat”. The book’s reception may also have suffered a little from bad timing, it was perhaps not the best time to sound as though one were less than enthusiastic about The American Dream.

I joined the Powys Society on a close friend’s advice, it is merely a coincidence that I did so during the pandemic. I couldn’t make it to Street for the Conference last year as other priorities intervened. I hope to be able to make up for that this Summer.

I’m a teacher by trade, for a few years I specialised in the Creative Writing A Level (but that got cancelled). I now work in an Independent Special School near Maidenhead teaching Media Studies. I’ve published many pamphlets and the odd article. My literary high-point would be getting a short story published alongside Iain Sinclair and other London luminaries in a book opposing and recording the impacts of the 2012 Olympic Games. *The Art Of Dissent: Adventures in London’s Olympic State*, co-editors: Hilary Powell and Isaac Marrero-Guillamon, Marshgate Press. I’ve also self-published a novel, *Bad Haiku Book I: The Magic Narrowboat* using the Marshgate Press imprint, but I am more ambivalent about that.

I’m BA University of Wales, Bangor 2000, and MA Goldsmiths College, University of London 2002 in English Literature and Literary Theory respectively. I did my PGCE at the Institute of Education in 2004, where I learned that *One Flew Over The Cuckoo’s Nest* is not an approved text for the study of State Education.

I’m a late convert to JCP, but had known of him through Miller’s encomia for many years before I turned to reading the “19th Century Domestic Novels” I’d imagined and had my socks blown off by *Wolf Solent*. (I read *Maiden Castle* first, as I have inherited a lovely library edition hardback, but that only served as first course.) I guess my favourite novel of all novels is *A Glastonbury Romance*, which I’ve read and re-read, and I’ve spent a long time reading the scholarship around it. My favourite non-fiction JCP at present is *Mortal Strife*, which seems as pertinent and perceptive now as it must have on the outbreak of World War Two.

I’ve written briefly about my treasured copy of Alfred Perles’ *My Friend Henry Miller*. I’m very interested in the meeting between Henry Miller and George Orwell - they’re like the Narziss and Goldmund of my writing personality.

I’ve read Powys’ letters to Miller in the Village Press edition (1975, with introduction by JCP’s friend Ron Hall) - would love to read Miller’s side

of that conversation too! I was really impressed by Miller's letters to Anais Nin (*Literate Passion: Letters of Anais Nin and Henry Miller, 1932-1953*, Mariner Books, 1989), an excellent encouragement to any writer as well as an intriguing companion piece to *Tropic Of Cancer* (1st edition Obelisk Press, 1934). Miller's letters to JCP would have been written long after those. [Ed: The correspondence between JCP and Miller covers the period 1950 to 1962.]

One of the things I like most about Miller is his collegiate nature, pulling together all those disparate writers and promoting their work and careers. For a while a friend and I published *The Misanthropist Magazine*, influenced in part by what Miller tried to do with *The Booster*. We did get to meet John Calder through this work, around the turn of the Millennium, and it gave me great pleasure to see our humble photocopied and stitched product alongside all the Calder Editions in his bookshop at 51 The Cut, Waterloo, London. (Ed: The bookshop was established in 2002).

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Mailing Powys Journal and Newsletter outside UK

This is a message for all our members located outside UK. Members in the EU may have noticed that they have been asked to pay a local tax or duty to receive the *Powys Journal* and *Newsletters*. This is due to changes to EU regulations governing import of books and periodicals and includes inspection of packages by local postal officials. Local duty is not however universally imposed and some deliveries of the *Journal* and *Newsletter* in Europe have been received without any additional charge. We are of course keen to ensure members are not liable for duty. We have therefore mailed this year's *Journal* overseas by a premium service called DDP (Delivery Duty Paid) which means the Society will ultimately cover the cost of any local tax imposed by countries outside the UK. We plan to send all Newsletters with a declaration stating the value of contents below €5 in which case duty should not be imposed on delivery. If overseas members continue to experience difficulties receiving *Journal* and *Newsletter* please notify editors immediately.

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