

Editorial

The past few months have been a busy time, even by the standards of The Powys Society. Not only have many of our members been involved in their own research, as the present issue of the *Newsletter* shows only too clearly, but the officers and the members of our various committees have been very active too.

In the field of publications we have been preparing, in addition to the *Newsletter* and an exceptionally fascinating issue of *The Powys Journal*, a reprint of Francis Powys's essay on his father, *The Quiet Man of Dorset*, which will include a new preface by the author, as well as the first publication of Mary Casey's *Journals*. Both of these titles will be available at the Conference in Cirencester this August and then by post for those members unable to attend.

Then, of course, there has been the Conference itself to arrange. Full details of the programme are given elsewhere in the *Newsletter*, but it is worth pointing out here that, in addition to the usual company of distinguished speakers, there will be an opportunity to listen to a reading of a previously unknown play by John Cowper Powys, which was written in about 1905. I cannot recall a dull Conference, but this seems an event not to be missed and it is still not too late to book!

For those who prefer their readings *in situ* (and on foot), there was the Weymouth Walk, an event which took particularly careful planning and preparation, including the production of a commemorative broadsheet, copies of which will also be available at the Conference for those who were not able to join the event itself.

There is also the Powys Centre in Dorchester, where a vast amount of material has now been deposited. This is now being sorted, catalogued and stored, in such a way that it will provide an invaluable literary resource. In addition to the many generous gifts of books, manuscripts and artefacts which we have recently received, the Society has now purchased a substantial collection of paintings by Gertrude M. Powys from the family of Peter Powys Grey and these will provide a valuable extension to the range of our collection.

The Society has also purchased a large collection of books from the library of Marian Powys, many of which contain inscriptions from members of the family. These will not be added to the collection in the Powys Centre, but will be offered for sale to our members through a catalogue to be published in the November issue of the *Newsletter*.

But are we doing enough? Well, we shall soon know, for the results of our Membership Survey are currently being analysed. Significantly more than a third of our members replied and the results will be announced both at the Conference and in the next *Newsletter*.

And still, as one Committee member put it, 'The garden keeps on growing!'

Paul Roberts

Taking Tea With Nietzsche's Sister John Cowper Powys in Weimar and Saxony

Contrary to the common claim that Nietzsche appeals only to the young and is scrapped by the more mature, John Cowper Powys belonged to the group of Nietzsche's life-long admirers and readers. Thus, at the age of sixty-six, Powys still confesses:

A first encounter with Nietzsche must be always an event in a person's life, the sort of event wherein you recall the place and the occasion. But the curious thing is that the same stir of excitement is repeated after a lapse of years ... I cannot see a volume of Nietzsche in any shelf without opening it, and it is like the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; you cannot open it without feeling, just as you did at first, the old fatal intoxication. (*The Enjoyment of Literature*, 467f.)

As late as 1952, he exclaimed in a letter to Louis Wilkinson:

My world is entirely and absolutely the World of Books, including Nursery Rhymes & Mother Goose and Grimm & all the Romancers from Scott to Dickens & Balzac and Conrad – & a few Devil-Hunters like Dostoevsky & Nietzsche! (*Letters to Louis Wilkinson*, 293)

His early interest in the German philosopher coincides with the first stirrings of British attention to this philosopher in the 1890s. It was through Theodore that he discovered Nietzsche, as he states in *Autobiography* (271, 313), and one of the poems in *Poems 1899* testifies to this involvement.

As Patrick Bridgwater has pointed out, Powys belonged to a phalanx of British writers attracted by Nietzsche such as Yeats, A. R. Orage and John Davidson.¹ From the nineties onwards, 'Nietzsche was very much in the air, both in London and in Dublin and Glasgow' (Bridgwater, 11). The first reviews of his work appeared then and Max Nordau's essay on Nietzsche in his notorious and highly influential bestseller *Degeneration* (1895) stirred public interest and triggered off debates. For Nordau, Nietzsche was the embodiment of decadence (*Entartung*, a term which gained a new dimension with the Nazis and so-called 'entartete Kunst'). In 1896 the first two volumes of the English translation (by A. Tille) of the *Collected Works* appeared, while Havelock Ellis published an important (and still readable) essay on Nietzsche, which set the balance right again: Nietzsche's real significance for Western culture was recognized. After Nietzsche's death in 1900, his influence increased even more. The Fabians studied and discussed him hotly, Shaw fell under his spell, and Chesterton fought him and the race of the supermen that began to sprout in European literature, calling it 'an aristocracy of weak nerves.'² But as Romain Rolland put it, 'Nietzsche dominates even those who fight him' (Bridgwater, 19).³

This is the context in which Powys's interest emerged and was individualised

in his characteristic manner. In his two essays on Nietzsche, Powys rediscovers his own obsessions in Nietzsche, such as a form of mental sadism, but he also draws a very subtle portrait of the philosopher and his thought. It would be most intriguing to study this particular combination of projection and spiritual affinity and the ways in which Powys makes use of Nietzsche in order to define himself. This, however, goes beyond the scope of my paper. Instead, I simply want to zero in on an episode in Powys's life that may shed light on his involvement with Nietzsche. This episode is his visit to Weimar in 1909, which can now be viewed with more clarity since a number of documents have become accessible as a result of the re-unification of Germany.⁴

As readers of Powys's *Autobiography* well know, Powys went to see Nietzsche's sister Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche in Weimar when lecturing in Dresden:

It was during this epoch of my life – the reader must forgive my wretched memory for exact dates – that I was invited, in my rôle of Oxford Extension Lecturer, to give a set of talks on English and American literature at Dresden. Never shall I forget my protracted visits, for I went more than once, to this beautiful eighteenth-century capital of Saxony. (*Autobiography*, 396)

Derek Langridge comments on these lecture-tours:

During his last two summers as an Oxford University Extension lecturer he carried out what the Delegacy described in its annual report as pioneer work in Dresden and Leipzig. It consisted of a course of twelve lectures each year delivered at both towns. In 1908 they were on representative poets and prose writers of the nineteenth century and in 1909 on Shakespeare. Average attendances both years were 300 at Dresden and 200 at Leipzig. (Langridge, 53)

We have been unable to find any trace yet of his lectures at Leipzig, apart from the fact that they were organized by a Dr Gassmeier. The two cycles of lectures had been arranged by the 'Dresdner Gesellschaft für neuere Philologie' under the patronage of Prinz Johann Georg, who seems to have been in the audience together with other 'royal highnesses' equally exposed to John Cowper's 'harangues' (*Autobiography*, 398). This Society had been founded in 1878 and came to an end in 1938 when the Nazis restructured most cultural organizations.⁵ The aim of this Society was to cultivate and promote interest in modern languages and literatures and to improve their teaching at schools. Thus many of its activities were directed to school-teachers and academic teachers, but also to those generally interested in these subjects. New dictionaries were presented, talks were given on French theatre, performances and recitations took place. In 1909/1910, for example, a number of talks centred on the Shakespeare-Bacon question.

Powys appears for the first time between 1 May and 4 June 1908 to lecture on Carlyle, Ruskin, Emerson, Browning, Meredith, Swinburne, Shelley, Keats,

Tennyson, Dickens, Hardy and Kipling. The Society's report quotes Oxford University on these lectures:

The Delegates cordially welcome the prospect of a renewal and extension of this experiment, which they regard as an important development of their work, interesting in itself, and likely to promote friendly relations between the two peoples (Meier, 44).

On 26 October 1908, the Society discussed 'proposals for Mr. Powys's lectures' in 1909. There were plans to accompany the Oxford Lectures by performances of a number of Shakespeare plays. From 20 April to 27 May 1909 Powys stayed in Dresden for the second time. A poster announcing his lectures has survived and is illustrated on the back of this *Newsletter*.

The poster was found in the Nietzsche Archives, Weimar, and it appears that Powys had enclosed it for Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche when announcing his visit. The twelve lectures covered most important plays by Shakespeare. Admission for a single lecture was three Marks, which was quite a sum considering that this equalled a worker's weekly wage. On the other hand, the Society frequently donated substantial sums to charities or to educational institutions. Powys's lectures must have left some impression, since on 15 November 1909 a Dr Besser gave a talk on two collections of poetry by Powys. It is interesting to see that a year later, on 16 April 1910, J. A. R. Marriott came to speak about the work of the University Extension Movement. The Oxford Lectures continued long after this. Thus four lectures were given in 1928 by L. U. Wilkinson, M.A. St John's College, Cambridge, Staff Lecturer to the Delegacy for Extra-Mural Studies, University of Oxford.

Only eight days before arriving in Dresden in 1909, Powys had come back from America with Llewelyn after the latter's failed attempt to settle and make a name for himself there. We get an idea of John's hustled life as we see him shuttling between continents and countries. On 12 April 1909, Llewelyn 'saw the boat train steam away with Jack' and while Llewelyn was lecturing on America to the men's club at Montacute (Elwin, 62f.), John was looked after by the Saxon professors, 'the most charming of learned men', who had arranged his lectures:

They gave me delicious beer-soup in their own homes, they took me for endless excursions into the mountains; once as far as the Bohemian border, where I proudly sent postcards home to Montacute with the imperial Austrian stamps on them (*Autobiography*, 399)

To this day, beer-soup is a Saxon speciality; the Austrian stamps are no longer available across the border. Powys had briefly invaded the territory of the great Austro-Hungarian Empire, Musil's *Kakanien*, Joseph Roth's *Radetzky* and the brave soldier Schwejk's country. Yet Nietzsche begins to make his presence felt in Dresden. Powys is taken to the Opera to hear *Carmen*, which later, on a visit to Seville, will remind him that:

Nietzsche, to revenge himself on Wagner for *Parsifal*, had gone fifteen

times to listen to Bizet's music. I have no doubt that my turning the wall of the Seville tobacco-factory into a symbol of the clash of such vast immemorial ideas, as those represented by *Siegfried* on the one hand and *Parsifal* on the other, was one of the most deeply authentic, deeply felt, and fully realized gestures of my life. (*Autobiography*, 431)

He mentions changing his boarding-house in Dresden:

In my romantic way I had begun by rejecting the obvious *English Pension* and landed myself in a weird room, looking down on the tops of red-flowering chestnut in the older part of the city. My landlady resembled the witch of the Brocken in Faust. Storks might have built in her chimney and there was a smell of something repulsively like mortality itself, in the place where I slept. (*Autobiography*, 396)

He eventually fled to the *English Pension*.⁶

Yet though Powys was in Germany a few times – Heidelberg, Mannheim, the Black Forest, Hamburg, Nürnberg⁷ – he probably would never have visited Nietzsche's sister without the sudden appearance of his cousin Alice Linton (née Shirley) in this Dresden spring of 1909. She seems to have carried him off on the spur of the moment for a holiday to Weimar. In a letter to Wilson Knight, Powys comments on this cousin:

My godmother who was my aunt Philippa, my Father's half-sister, married a learned Oxford Don of Christ Church called Shirley and had two sons and three daughters of whom my cousin *Ralph* and my cousin *Alice* were my inspirers in literature when I was young. (*Powys to Knight*, 77)

It was Alice, too, who had taken him to 'visit Mrs Max Müller, the Editor of the Sacred Books of the East'. (*Letters to Louis Wilkinson*, 323)

So, on Tuesday, 27 April Powys gave his evening lecture on *Richard III* at the Technische Hochschule of Dresden. On Wednesday, Alice and some of her family went with him to Weimar in Thuringia, some 130 miles from Dresden, to stay at Weimar's most renowned hotel, the *Elephant*. It is also one of the oldest and historically most interesting places. It has been a public house since 1511 and an inn for travelling merchants since 1696. Goethe, Schiller, Bach, Liszt and Wagner stopped here. It became most prominent in Goethe's days when visitors to the Weimar sage and poet stayed overnight and it came to be called the 'portico to Weimar's living Walhalla' (Grillparzer). Earlier on, Johann Sebastian Bach lived next door and two of his sons were born there. Thomas Mann gave this hotel a lasting place in literature by incorporating it into his novel, *Lotte in Weimar*. In 1926 another kind of visitor stayed here, Adolf Hitler, when the NSDAP staged its first party conference at Weimar. In the hotel's guest book one can still find his signature 'Adolf Hitler, Schriftsteller [i.e. writer], München.' Hitler's connection with Weimar is notorious. In 1938 he ordered building alterations on the *Elephant*. As an 'admirer' of Nietzsche, he was a frequent visitor to Weimar, where he went to the Nietzsche Archiv and to Schiller's house but tended to avoid

the Goethehaus since he harboured an instinctual reservation against the cosmopolitan writer.

On that morning of Thursday, 29 April 1909, Alice Shirley wrote a letter to Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche on behalf of her cousin John. Alice knew German and the letter is written in fluent, albeit not perfectly correct German. So, as John's mouthpiece she wrote [my translation]:

Dear Madam,

I shall be in Weimar only until tomorrow and would be very pleased if I could see you. I am a great admirer of Mr Nietzsche and have read all his works that have been translated into English and have given lectures on him in America. If it is not inconvenient for you I should like to visit you this afternoon. I do not speak German myself, but my cousin, Mrs Linton, who accompanies me with her daughter and a young (girl) friend, would translate for me. Would you be so kind as to say if this is possible and at what time we could come –

Yours sincerely etc.

John Cowper Powys [his signature]

The answer came soon and it was yes, as we know, and so Powys was to experience a significant little episode, to which he kept referring in later life. Powys also came to Weimar because of his interest in Goethe, however: 'Never, I fancy, has Goethe received such adoration from an introverted Celt as I offered to him then ...' (*Autobiography*, 398)

So on this afternoon, John Cowper Powys set off with Alice and the other women to see the sister of Europe's most influential and most controversial philosopher. Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche had gained the first part of her hyphenated name through her marriage with Bernhard Förster, an inveterate racist and anti-semitic, who was engaged in the 'Utopia-building business', as Ben Macintyre writes in his fascinating book *Forgotten Fatherland: The Search for Elisabeth Nietzsche*. In 1883, Förster had been dismissed from a teaching post for racist agitation and eventually went with Elisabeth and a group of colonists to South America to found his 'Aryan' settlement Nueva Germania. Macintyre has written a thrilling account which intertwines his search for the survivors of this colony in the Paraguayan jungle with German cultural history centred around Nietzsche and his sister. After Förster's suicide and the general decay of the colony, Elisabeth returned to Germany, where, from 1889 onwards, she nursed her mad brother at Naumburg. In 1897 she made a historic move to Weimar. Here she resided in the Villa Silberblick and began to build up the Nietzsche-Archiv (Humboldtstrasse 36).

A well-known intellectual in Weimar then was Rudolf Steiner, later to become the founder of Anthroposophy, who worked in the National Goethe and Schiller Archives as editor of Goethe's scientific writings. In 1896 he was asked to explain to Elisabeth her brother's philosophy but soon gave up in despair:

The private lessons ... taught me this above all: that *Frau Förster-Nietzsche* is a complete laywoman in all that concerns her brother's doctrine ... [She] lacks any sense for fine, and even for crude, logical distinctions; her thinking is void of even the least logical consistency; and she lacks any sense of objectivity She *believes* at every moment what she says. She convinces herself today that something was red yesterday that most assuredly was blue. (quoted in Kaufmann, 4-5)⁸

Nietzsche died on 25 August 1900 and it took Elisabeth less than three years to turn her house into the centre of an international cult. It was redesigned by the Belgian architect Henry van de Velde and today has a distinctly modern flavour. What Nietzsche always had abhorred began to happen now. In *Ecce Homo* he had written:

I have a terrible fear that one day I shall be pronounced 'holy'. I do not want to be a saint, rather a buffoon ... perhaps I am a buffoon. (quoted in MacIntyre, 160)

But when he was buried at Röcken near Leipzig, his friend Peter Gast already intoned 'Hallowed be thy name to all future generations' (*ibid.*).

Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche was very active as an editor of her brother's works and clever in promoting interest for the Archive so that it soon became a monument of national importance, attracting visitors from all over the world. From the Archive in the south of Weimar one could see the northern slopes of the town, which forty years later were to become the territory of a concentration camp: Buchenwald.

A year before Powys's visit a group of German professors actually nominated Elisabeth for the Nobel Prize for Literature (a proposal to be repeated twice). There were also plans for a Nietzsche shrine, temple and stadium – a plan supported by writers such as André Gide, H. G. Wells and d'Annunzio. However, the war thwarted these efforts.

When we try to assess what Powys wrote about the actual visit there doesn't seem to have been an extensive conversation between himself and Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche:

Imagine what I felt when this devoted lady showed me the dead man's books, his editions of those "Great Latins" he so ridiculously overrated, De Maupassant, Merimée and so forth! There was, I remember, a certain modern French idealist among these books, an author I had never heard of; but against some eloquent passage of his, in praise of "the resolute pursuit of the higher truth," Nietzsche had written in pencil in the margin, several times over, the words "in vain" ... "in vain" ... "in vain". (*Autobiography*, 398f.)

From his letter to Wilson Knight (quoted above) we can infer that it was the ladies who did the talking while Powys had the run of Nietzsche's library (*Powys to Knight*, 77). He also noticed 'vols & vols & vols of Pascal' (*Letters to Louis*

Wilkinson, 384; cf. also 311f.). Later on, in *The War and Culture*, Powys stressed Nietzsche's Europeanness and his preference for the Latin and French civilizations set over against Hugo Münsterberg's narrow German nationalism (p. 74).

Powys had to be back in Dresden the next day (Friday, 30 April) when he was lecturing on *Henry IV*. He then wrote a letter in English to Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche to thank her for the afternoon:

Sophienstr. 1/111, Dresden.A.

Dear Frau Forster[sic]-Nietzsche

I cannot help just writing you a line to thank you so very much for your courtesy and kindness to me & my cousins last week – I was very touched and impressed by all I saw; especially by that picture with the beautiful sad eyes looking so far away into the future –

I take the liberty of sending you this sonnet I wrote as I thought of that visit and that picture –

I will put it on the opposite page
with my thanks once more

Yours sincerely

John Cowper Powys

And here is the sonnet:

Titan! Transfixed upon the rim of the world
Beyond our tears! Have these gods done their worst
Doth bolt on bolt of Thunder vainly burst
On thy cold brow? Are the snake-tongues uncurled
In vain, and doth the vulture-beak accurst
Quench in a heart that feels not its vile thirst?
Are the eyes blind whereon those flames are hurled
Or dost thou mock from thine Helena far
These herding kings and their alliance Holy
Waiting, O lost Napoleon of our wills!
The trumpets of thy second avatar
When beyond all our grief and melancholy
Thy great Noon settles down upon the Hills?

J.C.P.

May 1st

1909

Zarathustra's 'great Noon' re-appeared in Powys's poetry, as 'Noon', in his 1917 collection *Mandragora*, but now associated with the time of Pan, the panic noon:

The noon-tide heat lies languid and dim,

We feel the passing of such a god,

And the hushed earth yearning to welcome him. (*Mandragora*, 125)

About three weeks later, on 21 May, Nietzsche's sister framed a reply to Powys, which, however, was not sent off. In this outline of a letter she thanked him for his

'highly-thought and deeply-felt' letter. She also remembered Powys's and his cousin's visit with pleasure and thought that it was a good idea on her part to have made an exception for these visitors by receiving them on such short notice in the Archive. She looked forward to seeing him again some day and hoped that his German would improve as well as her English so that they could converse better next time.

This unsent letter is the conclusion to a brief, but, for Powys, significant encounter. In December of the same year he went to Davos-Platz with Llewelyn via Basle, where he indulged his Nietzschean infatuation to such an extent that he offended Lulu:

The next night, at Basle, John, his head full of Nietzsche, 'displayed so much indifference to an accident that Llewelyn had to one of his teeth – losing it in fact as we stared at the river – that we had quite an angry quarrel.' The diary records: 'Quarrelled with Jack & longed to kick him under the table.' (Elwin, 73)

Powys doesn't seem to have kept up with Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche, nor did he observe her activities from abroad. For through the distorted editions she produced of her brother's work Nietzsche was turned into a nationalist and a proto-Nazi. Mussolini was the first to make use of this allegiance, and Hitler came to visit her several times and posed with the Nietzsche bust. Yet, as Macintyre writes:

In contrast to Mussolini, Hitler almost certainly never read a word that Nietzsche wrote, either now or at any other time. Though he might occasionally style himself a poet-politician, he never mentioned Nietzsche in his writing, and only once, in passing, during his table-talk. (Macintyre, 180)

He also had a shrine built next to the Archive, which was meant to be a mausoleum for the national-socialist philosopher. It was to be inscribed with 'Erected under Adolf Hitler in the fourth year of the Third Reich.' The shrine was never completed because of the war and later became a local radio station.

It is to Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche (whom her brother once called a 'vengeful anti-semitic goose') that we owe the popular image of Nietzsche as the philosopher with the hammer, the worshipper of the Superman and the blond beast. It is interesting to see that Powys – though unaware of the cultural process in Germany – anticipated this cult and defended Nietzsche against both his nationalist admirers and his Anglo-Saxon critics. In *The War and Culture* he quotes Nietzsche's criticism of state worship and concludes:

From these remarks of the great German thinker it will be seen that both the American and English critics who class Nietzsche so thoughtlessly with Treitschke and Bernhardi have hardly so much as looked into his work. Nietzsche, it is true, denounces "Christian morality"; but the modern German military philosopher does not denounce "Christian

morality". He calls in the aid both of God and the higher ethics to support his Pan-German State. There was indeed something that Nietzsche hated more even than Christian morality, and that was this very "Philistine-culture" which modern German arms are seeking to force upon the world. (*The War and Culture*, 56f.)

This kind of balanced view was quite a feat in the midst of war for which some English and Americans actually made Nietzsche responsible. Here Powys is close to another, more discriminating writer, Hart Crane, who wrote in 1918: 'Nietzsche, Zeppelin, and poison-gas go ill together.'

It is also intriguing to see how subtle Powys's understanding of the idea of the Overman/Superman is when he translated *Übermensch* as Nietzsche's *Beyond-Man* – which, to me, seems the best translation so far (*The Enjoyment of Literature*, 457). Nietzsche, in spite of the political uses and abuses he was put to, was for Powys one of the thinkers close to the heart of the universe and he discovered a kinship with the German thinker that was revealed to him in Florence:

The only book I can remember reading during all the weeks I was in Florence was Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo*. High in the hills above Settignano, if my memory does not fail me, the sun-warmed slope lay, where I gave myself up to this nobly-maniacal book and pretended to myself that I too, in my day and hour, would be a proclaimer of planetary secrets. (*Autobiography*, 386)

Elmar Schenkel

Notes

¹ Bridgwater does not mention Theodore's or Llewelyn's interest, nor are they mentioned in any other study on Nietzsche's impact on British literature. Cf. the studies by Thatcher, Humble, Hultsch and Petzold.

² See also his superb essay-story 'How I Found the Superman' in *Alarms and Discursions*, London 1910.

³ Other writers influenced by Nietzsche were D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, Edwin Muir, Herbert Read, James Joyce, Wyndham Lewis; in the U.S.A.: Jack London, Wallace Stevens, Eugene O'Neill, Robinson Jeffers, H. L. Mencken.

⁴ I am indebted to a number of people in this respect: Dr. Roswitha Wollkopf, Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv Weimar, who provided me with documents on Powys's visit to Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche; Sigrid Stein, Sächsische Landesbibliothek Dresden, for information on Powys's visit to Dresden; my research assistant, Brit Wengenmayr, for her investigations, and Frau Ingrid Timpert, Leipzig University, for helping me in deciphering Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche's letter. Last but not least to Tamara Braunstein, Freiburg, for polishing my English.

⁵ For the following pieces of information cf. Konrad Meier, *Die Dresdner Gesellschaft für neuere Philologie 1878 bis 1928, Bericht zur goldenen Jubelfeier*, Dresden 1928 and K. Achtmich, E. Schaefer, *Die Dresdner Gesellschaft ...*, Dresden 1938.

⁶ This may have been at Sophienstrasse 1/III, which was his address given in a letter to Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche dated at the beginning of May 1909. Sophienstrasse is pretty

central and the house belonged, at least in the 1920s, to Herr Otto Boedecke, who was a Bezirksdirektor, a sort of higher civil servant. For an amusing image of Dresden around 1900 cf. Jerome K. Jerome, *Three Men on a Bummel*.

⁷ '... those epochs I spent in Germany in those two successive years were crucial times for me in every respect' (*Autobiography*, 398).

⁸ Steiner wrote one of the earliest books on Nietzsche: *Friedrich Nietzsche: Ein Kämpfer gegen seine Zeit*, Weimar 1895, transl. *Friedrich Nietzsche: Fighter for Freedom*, Englewood, N.J. 1960. It is still one of the best introductions to Nietzsche's thought.

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Subscriptions — see page 48

Letters

Items in the Powys Society Newsletter No. 21 have prompted the following responses. We are always pleased to publish letters from members of the Society and these should be sent to the Editor at the address given on the inside of the front cover.

from Timothy Hyman

I thought this issue of the *Newsletter* really valuable. ... Janet Fouli's article was distinguished; so also, the review by Karl Orend of the Powys/Miller correspondence.

I can't remember whether I ever showed you the enclosed inscription, but I suspect it ought to be in scholarly hands and might be of interest ...

Sunday After The War by Henry Miller, Editions Poetry London, 1945, inscribed:

For the beloved master – John Cowper Powys – from one who was never too prompt in acknowledging his masters!

Henry Miller 4/17/50. Big Sur, California

'Et vive le coq gaulois!'

This was sent to me by Phyllis Playter in 1973.

Timothy Hyman

from Leslie Harrison

My little sermon to the Montacute Ramblers seems to have aroused more interest – and even more emotion – than I had expected; but neither of your correspondents has taken sufficient notice of your warning at the head of the article that it was intended for a different audience from the august circles of the Powys Society. This is why I resisted the idea of publication for so long.

As is obvious, I am not a Powys scholar, and the idea of crossing swords with someone like Peter Foss, who has recently published an erudite study of Llewelyn fills me with alarm. Even my acquaintance with the works of Llewelyn is woefully inadequate – although I hope to do something to remedy my ignorance now that I have recently retired. No, the article was a sermon, and in many ways an inadequate one, although your correspondents have also overlooked the fact that most of it is an appreciation of the writings of Llewelyn and an attempt to introduce him to those who might not have read him.

At least I seem to have got one thing right, for I am pleased that Mr Schrire now concedes that it is 'beyond doubt that Llewelyn Powys chose that quote for his memorial epitaph'. He may not believe, however, that I was far from wanting to claim Llewelyn as a fellow Christian. My exact words were, 'I have a suspicion that all his life the atheism of Llewelyn's intelligence was doing battle with the instinctive faith of his father and mother, which he had learned in the vicarage at Montacute.' This may well be a gross exaggeration, but depth psychology – not to mention the great novelists – has shown that few of us are all of a piece and often there are considerable areas of our personality that do not conform to our overall philosophy of life. Dare I confess that after many years in the ministry and a strong Christian faith, I still have my moments of doubt when faced with some of the inexplicable tragedies of life? But this is not to say that I am about to join the ranks of the Rationalist Society.

Psychologists also lay great emphasis upon the early years of a child's life and many assert that we never fully escape the influences that are brought to bear upon us then. It would be strange indeed if the Montacute vicarage played no part in the subsequent lives of those who spent their most formative years there.

But in fact we find that all three of the writing Powys brothers were deeply religious writers, however far from Christianity they may have travelled in their personal philosophies. Only Llewelyn, however, was driven to mount sustained attacks upon Christianity – and this in itself is a significant fact, for in psycho-analysis it is the things that generate the most emotion that are often clues to the patient's problems. In addition to this, I believe that Llewelyn was a very immature personality, who never attained the wholeness of J.C.P. and T.F., as is evident from the moving drama of Alyse Gregory and Gamel Woolsey.

But I won't develop these thoughts any further or I shall find myself in fresh trouble with Mr Schrire and Mr Foss.

I am grateful for Mr Schrire's recommendation of *The Blind Watchmaker* by Richard Dawkins and am pleased to inform him that I have both this book and *The Selfish Gene* on my shelves. I also watched with considerable admiration Dr Dawkins' lectures at the Royal Institution some two years ago. I have no quarrel with either him or Neo-Darwinism when he sticks to the subject of which he is obviously a master. When he ventures into the field of religion, however, I am reminded of a tone-deaf person writing about music. The religious experience is too profound a part of the human psyche and has played too important a part in the evolution of mankind to be swept away even by a clever biologist.

May I, in my turn, recommend a book for Mr Schrire? *The Perennial Philosophy* by Aldous Huxley made a great impression upon me when it was published many years ago and has been a constant source of inspiration since. It would probably have been disowned by the great T.H., but proves that even a Huxley may occasionally have a good word for religion.

Trusting that these few thought will not even further confuse the issue.

Leslie Harrison

from Elizabeth Lawrence

It was the narrow, Victorian concept of God that Llewelyn rejected, but if God had been defined as Life, Truth, Mind, Intelligence, Love, as 'He' is by many present-day thinkers, Llewelyn would surely not have been called an atheist.

Elizabeth Lawrence

from Charles Lock

Mentions of John Cowper Powys in literary works by other writers are few. It seems therefore worthy of note that Iris Murdoch's *The Green Knight* (1993) has a character who, through the course of the novel, reads *A Glastonbury Romance*. Louise Anderson has the book with her in the opening pages, is found reading it in the middle, and abandons it almost at the end (the end of *The Green Knight*, that is), in favour of *Pride and Prejudice*, 'since she suspected that some of the people she liked might come to grief.' This is of course a suspicion one has of most if not all of Iris Murdoch's characters. The mention serves a certain thematic

purpose far beyond the incidental mentions, drawing the reader's attention to its concern with the Grail, and with the Grail in the form of a fish. The most exciting episode in the novel concerns a dare and a near-grievous fall from a bridge, a nice allusion to Pomparles, the Bridge Perilous: *The Green Knight* is Iris Murdoch's most explicitly Arthurian romance.

Charles Lock

Drawing of T. F. Powys for sale — see page 32

John Redwood Anderson
Friend of John Cowper Powys

John Redwood Anderson (1883–1963) was a poet of distinction whose works are almost unheard of today, some thirty years since his death. This is regrettable and the twenty or so volumes of his philosophical verse that were published between 1912 and 1962, when his last work appeared, certainly deserve much wider appreciation. As it is, Redwood Anderson's poetry does not appear in any of the modern anthologies, nor is he mentioned in any of the standard biographical or literary reference works.

The purpose of this article is to say something of Anderson himself and his connection with John Cowper Powys and others of the Powys circle, and to draw attention to some remarkable items in the Feather gift which, together with the Bissell collection, is currently being catalogued at the Powys Centre. Much remains to be discovered about John Redwood Anderson, but the following brief outline may help provide a background.

Anderson was born in Manchester in 1883. His early years were spent mainly in Switzerland where he was educated privately, and later in Brussels where he studied music under the tutorship of the Belgian poet Émile Verhaeren, to whom Redwood (as he was known to his friends and will often be referred to here) must ultimately have owed much of his own poetical inspiration. Later he became a Headmaster in Hull, where he remained until at least the late 1930s. About 1939, or a little earlier, he began to correspond with John Cowper Powys and later came to know other members of the family. By August 1943 (to judge from John Cowper's diaries currently being edited by Morine Krissdóttir) he had moved to Corwen and lived there, in a house in The Square, until about 1950, making at least weekly visits (every Saturday) to John Cowper. He then went for a time to South Africa, where his brother lived, and on his return to this country continued to make visits to Corwen. About the time John Cowper Powys and Phyllis Playter moved to Blaenau Ffestiniog (April 1955) he and the poet Gwyneth Anderson went to live near Finchingfield in Essex, but still apparently made regular visits to Wales. Though they shared the same surname and Gwyneth was known as

Mrs Redwood Anderson, it is not certain at present whether they were actually formally married. Perusal of the large collection of John Cowper Powys's letters to Anderson held at Colgate University would almost certainly help to refine the chronology of this account of Redwood's various movements from the 1940s onwards. John Redwood Anderson died in late 1963 in his eighty-first year, a few months after John Cowper Powys, his greatest friend, had died and at whose death he had become deeply distressed and thereafter felt no urge to remain alive himself. On the reverse of the photograph reproduced here (J.R.A. at left), showing the two men together, is written in John Cowper's hand: *J. Redwood-Anderson & your old John C. Powys for William Lander of Sandiacre in commemoration & celebration of Bill Lander's visit to his old friend John October 1955.*

Redwood Anderson's personal character is harder to discern today, but Gerard Casey, who first met him at Corwen in the late 1940s (and greatly admired his poetry), recalls that he was a gifted conversationalist with a great capacity to arouse new interests in others with whom he spoke. Despite this he was of an essentially shy and retiring nature, though later, under Gwyneth Anderson's influence, he did become more self-confident and outgoing. He was a true scholar, widely read and with eclectic interests, and always spoke with deep knowledge of the subject under discussion. Undoubtedly the form of his poetry was much influenced by his wide scholarship. To friends interested he frequently gave fine readings of his poems, both those published and others still in manuscript.



Inscribed
for
my friend &
best of
Masters
in
my old age
"self" J Redwood Anderson
his loyal
devoted
Dorothy Power
J. C. Coed
Carmen
June 14
1952

As already noted, many volumes of Anderson's collected verse were published during his lifetime and as the glowing comments reproduced on the dust-wrappers of many of these show, his poems received wide acclaim at the time and were highly praised by many leading critics of the day. Space does not allow all the separate titles and the various publishers to be listed here, but three of the most relevant are *Paris Symphony* (Harrap & Co., 1948), for which John Cowper wrote a foreword); *Pillars to Remembrance* (O.U.P., 1948) which includes poems specifically dedicated to members of the Powys family; and his last published work, *While The Fates Allow* (The Bee and Blackthorn Press, 1962), a collection of poems written for Gwyneth between 1952 and 1961 and dedicated to her. His portrait appears as the frontispiece to the first and last of these volumes, reproduced in the former from a contemporary photograph and in the latter from a line drawing dated 1 March 1959. Many of Redwood Anderson's poems also appeared in serial publications such as *Atlantic Monthly* and *The Poetry Review*. He was on friendly terms with some of the leading poets of the day, including Walter de la Mare and Lascelles Abercrombie. The Bissell collection includes a copy of the *Collected Poems* of Lascelles Abercrombie inscribed by Anderson *To John Cowper Powys, the greatest among the few contemporary writers of English Symphonic Prose, from his friend & admirer John Redwood Anderson January 4th 1940*. Loosely inserted in this volume is an offprint from the journal *English* of 'My Friend is Dead, An Elegy on the Death of Lascelles Abercrombie', written by Anderson in 1939, inscribed to *John and Phyllis with love from Redwood 19. ii. 1944*. There are also copies of Anderson's works inscribed to Gertrude Powys, Littleton Powys and Alyse Gregory in the same collection.

The special interest in Redwood Anderson that inspired this article arose from the remarkable series of eleven copies of John Cowper's own works carrying inscriptions to Redwood that form part of the Feather gift. These are (in order of first publication) *Autobiography*, *Owen Glendower*, *Mortal Strife*, *Obstinate Cymric*, *Rabelais*, *Porius*, *The Inmates*, *In Spite Of*, *The Brazen Head*, *Up and Out* and *Homer and the Aether*. Not all the inscriptions are dated, but span the period from September 1941 (*Owen Glendower*) to March 1959 (*Homer and the Aether*), *Autobiography* (published in 1934) having been given to Redwood on 9 August 1945. Most of the others were given nearer to the time of first publication and *The Brazen Head*, for example, is a pre-publication copy. *Homer and the Aether* (all copies of which carry on page 5 a printed dedication to Redwood Anderson followed by a line in Greek from the Homeric Hymn to Apollo 'And now I will remember you and another song also') was given to Redwood on his birthday, St David's Day, 1 March 1959, having been published on 27 February.

The inscriptions in John Cowper Powys's hand on the front free end-papers of these works are elaborate and very harmoniously spaced. All are in ink, usually black, but some in blue (as is the one illustrated here, from *Porius*), with underlining and the use of capitals that brings out their conversational tone. They

include, as might be expected, many aphorisms and quotations and the inscription in *Homer and the Aether* also has eleven lines in Welsh. While also showing small variations from time to time, John Cowper's hand remains remarkably unchanged over the period of nearly twenty years that the inscriptions cover.

As will be apparent from the wording of the inscription in the copy of *Porius* reproduced here, John Cowper Powys had a very high opinion of Redwood Anderson and many of the other inscriptions are more effusive still. His regard for Redwood and for his poetry is also brought out independently elsewhere, for example in some of John Cowper's published letters. In one to Iorwerth C. Peate, of 19 November 1947, for instance, he writes that Redwood '... reads his own poetry *beautifully* a rare thing with poets.' His Foreword to *Paris Symphony* praises Redwood even more highly and a decade after this, as the printed dedication to *Homer and the Aether* clearly shows, his views had not changed.

Redwood Anderson's poetry ranges without limits from the treatment of sometimes recondite philosophical themes to love poems and elegies of the greatest personal sincerity. Some of the former can be demanding to read, but most of his work is very rewarding and often evocative of time and place, as the following short extract, taken from 'Welcome to Essex' (*While The Fates Allow*, xxiii), conveying as it does such feeling for the flatlands of East Anglia, may help to show:

No more the mountain – but the plain:
where on and on
the long fields stretch, the long roads run;
where the unwearied sight can trace
the still horizons fringed with lace
of trees in their thin April dress
against the sky's huge emptiness.

It is impossible within the limits of a single extract such as this to convey the full range of Redwood's poetry, but it may serve to indicate how worthwhile a wider reading of his works could be and how deserving he is of greater recognition. That much of Redwood's poetry, and in particular his longer epic poems, remained unpublished seems certain. Gwyneth is reported to have said that this unpublished material included some of his best work, but the fate of their collective papers after her own death in the 1970s is unknown. These must also have contained work of her own that deserved notice as well. Sadly, it seems unlikely that this material will have survived, but if any of it has and could be traced, it would be both of the greatest interest in itself and a rich source of further insight into two at present shadowy, but intriguing, members of the Powys circle.

Grateful thanks are due to Gerard Casey, Morine Krissdóttir and Paul Roberts for supplying much helpful information used in the preparation of this article for the *Newsletter*.

Richard Burleigh

T. F. Powys in Japan *Mr Weston's Good Wine and Short Stories*

I am the fortunate owner of two slim volumes of work by T. F. Powys published in Japan. They are educational texts, printed on poor paper which is heavily browned and bound in thin card with red embossed paper covers. They are in neither of the great Feather and Bissell collections which have recently been given to The Powys Society, nor had Peter Riley seen them. Riley, in *A Bibliography of T. F. Powys* (Hastings: R. A. Brimmell, 1967), says, under the entry for *Mr Weston*, under the general heading of 'Other editions': 'JAPANESE EDITION: I have not been able to see this, but I believe it is a bilingual edition, for school use, of a selection of the novel' (see below); the *Short Stories* is not mentioned. Rarities indeed!

Remarkable, too, is their provenance. They actually cost me nothing in 1955 and 1956. They were in the tuppenny bin outside Peter Eaton's bookshop when he was still in a tall Victorian terraced house in Notting Hill Gate, before the shop moved to the smart premises, designed by Rick Mather (now a very eminent architect) in about 1974, in Holland Park Road. Books in the bin were given away if you bought something else: *Mr Weston* came with *A Man at the Zoo* for 6d (old pence, of course). Obviously the name of Powys had not yet registered!

The page size of both is 7" by 5" (the reproductions on pages 20–22 are at 71%, i.e. half the original area, with pages represented by fine lines). *Mr Weston* has x+92 pages, *Short Stories* vi+114. Both have the same familiar photograph of T.F.P. as frontispiece. *Short Stories* is dated March 1953, with Arabic figures, at the end of the shorter of two prefaces in Japanese, while *Mr Weston* is, I am told by Anthony Head,* dated April 1953, written in the old Japanese system: the date says the 28th year of 'Showa', this being the era which began with the accession of Emperor Hirohito [now posthumously called Showa] in 1925. This means that my acquisition was only three or four years after publication. The publishers, Nan'un-Do, Tokyo, still exist.

Mr Weston is 'Edited with Notes by Yoshinobu Mōri', *Short Stories* by M. Tashiro. Anthony Head suggests that the editors were probably academics at universities who specialised in contemporary English literature; these are usually the people publishers draw upon to edit and introduce books of this nature. The market was primarily, though not exclusively, university students, and the text most probably formed part of a larger series of works by various authors; Ichiro Hara did something similar for his students with his editions of J.C.P. In both cases the publication is 'by arrangement with and with full acknowledgment to Messrs. Chatto & Windus'.

* I would like to acknowledge the helpful comments I have received from Anthony Head, a member of the Society and resident in Japan, and the information provided by Margaret Eaton about Rick Mather.



T. F. Powys

T. F. POWYS

SHORT STORIES

Edited with Notes

by

M. Tashiro



TOKYO
NAN'UN DO

T. F. POWYS
MR. WESTON'S GOOD WINE

Edited with Notes

by

Yoshinobu Mōri



TOKYO
NAN'UN-DO

The text of *Mr Weston*, occupying seventy-five small pages, is not, of course, the full text, nor is it bilingual, but it has two prefaces in Japanese and notes in Japanese containing explanations of English words and phrases.

Short Stories has a similar format, but with one preface, and contains the following eight stories: from *The House with the Echo*, 'The White Weather Cock', 'The Two Horns', 'The Painted Wagon'; from *Fables*, 'The Ass and the Rabbit', 'John Told and the Worm', 'Darkness and Nathaniel', 'John Pardy and the Waves'; and 'The Hunted Beast' from *The White Paternoster and Other Stories*.

Anthony thinks the 'other edition' of *Mr Weston* mentioned by Riley must be a reference to an edition published by Kenkyusha in a series of contemporary works by English (British) writers, which included *Pointed Roofs* by Dorothy Richardson, and works by Virginia Woolf, J. B. Priestley, David Garnett, Huxley, Conrad and others, indicating a likely publication date for *Mr Weston* around 1935. He has not seen this edition of *Mr Weston*, but on the assumption that its format is the same as that of the Richardson, which he does possess, it also is not a bilingual edition, but an English text with Japanese annotation and introduction (like my two volumes), again probably for university use. Kenkyusha is still a major publisher, so Anthony hopes to visit both publishers soon. Nothing is known of a bilingual edition, but Kenkyusha's is probably the one Riley means.

Stephen Powys Marks

するかということは、色々議論せられた所であるが、編者は平凡に「神」又は「神の愛」ととりたい。あまり難しく考えることは反って原作者の意図に副わないように思う。

(2) 梗概(原書第1章より第19章まで): Mr. Weston と Michael とは、Ford の車にのり、今や Maidenbridge を出発せんとする。その場を見たものは一団の少年達と、Miss Gipps である。少年の一人は車の後部の荷物をのぞいて見て、何を見たのか驚いてとびだす。Miss Gipps は市長 Mr. Board と結婚したいと思っている。もし、そんな金持と結婚したら、自分の力で貧乏な人を助けられるのにと秘かに思っている女である。さて車は動き出し、Folly Down に向かうが途中、この二人は山の上で一服し、手帳をとり出し、Folly Down の人物について語り合う。(これは著者が読者に対してする人物紹介でもある。)そして車の上に電飾を施すと、その文字は夜空にはっきり、Mr. Weston's Good Wine と読めるのであった。

さて、Folly Down には色々な人物がいる。Rev. Nicholas Grobe は娘の Tamar と一帯に住んでいる。Tamar の母 Alice は娘と共に外出した時、Tamar が線路に落ちたのを見て、これを助けようとして自分は死んだのであった。それ以来、この牧師は神の存在に疑惑をもっている。

Squire Mumby には Martin と John という二人の子があり、牛の売買をする Mr. Kiddle には Ada, Phoebe, Ann という三人の娘がある。Martin と John は不良タイプの男で、村の娘達に対して何をしているか知れたものではない。Ada は Martin に犯されて投身自殺をしてしまった。こういう不品行な行爲をさせるのが何よりの楽しみだというのが、Mrs.

7-8. kindly consult.....house: この点については、新しく出来た商店のどこにでも当って調べて下さい。

9. the goods are going: 商品が賣れている。

11-12. In some.....a lie: 店によっては人の思いつく最もすばらしい虚言を含む言葉が知って嘘になる。(あまり本物のことを言っても、客に信用してもらえぬから、嘘も方便で商人が時に嘘を言うのも已むを得ないことだ。) cf. It was not easy to persuade people you are in earnest, when you offered to sell them for four centuries the spring of health and riches inexhaustible. Stevenson: *The Bottle's Imp*

13. Mr. Weston.....himself: 完全に自主性のある人だ。cf. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves. *Romans*, ii. 14. 嘘だろうが、本道だろうが、何でも思った通り言う性質で人の干渉は受けないということ。

21. you swore by Some One: Martin が 'So it is, by God' といったことを指す。(省略した部分)

27-28. the discussion.....upon: どうやらお話中をお邪魔したと思いますが、そのお話(が終ったら。)

P. 43. 8. custom: 用命, 注文 cf. customer (おとくい)

27. We.....a glass: 一杯つきあってもよい。この as well は飲むのと飲まないのとは同じ程度であると言って、暗に飲みたいことを暗示する気持。

P. 44. 5. after its kind: 動物がそれぞれその種類に應じて持つ。cf. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind; and it was so. *Genesis*, i. 24. of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind. *Genesis*, vi. 20.

16. on hand: 今しかけている(仕事)。

17-18. a curious.....shovel: W 氏にたのまれて、Gunter が Ada の墓を掘りおこしている音。

24. the odour of the grape: これが主題。

An 'Artfully Artless Work': Porius by John Cowper Powys

Review of a new edition, with Foreword, by Wilbur T. Albrecht.

Colgate University Press, 1994. pp 873. ISBN 0 912568 16 x. £44.95

John Cowper Powys was seventy-seven when he finally finished writing *Porius*, the novel he considered 'the chief work of [my] lifetime'. In a sense, he had been writing it in his mind much of his life. His passion for Wales – for its history, its landscape, its literature and mythology – began when he was a young man, although it was not until 1933, when he and his companion Phyllis Playter decided to leave up-state New York and were debating where they might live, that Wales as his future home became a possibility. He writes in his Diary: *

27 August 1933: *We talked of going to Wales* & I was 'elated' as Dr Frink would say. O deary I! How it all came over me that old longing to go to Wales and write something with all those Welsh gods & traditions & magic behind me! That longing which I can recall feeling on *Brighton Beach* & such a longing it was too and I read then everything I could get hold of Welsh Grammars, Dictionary, Poetry, History, but then came Burpham & the Birth of my son & I had to take up a different rôle from that of being an Avatar of Taliessin!

Phyllis had some doubts; other places such as New Mexico, Kenya, Weymouth, even Cannes! were discussed, but it was obvious that John was determined upon Wales.

29 August 1933: I wrote such a long letter to Lulu & Alyse, together, all about our idea of leaving America forever & going to settle in Wales and for me to lay my bones in Wales! But ere that – I have an idea that with that background I shall write the greatest Romance of Modern Times, with the Welsh Legends & Myths to back me up. But [Phyllis] has many reactions now – O so many! ... But I answer to it all – 'I *must* and *will* write that masterpiece about Wales *in* Wales.'

That he was thinking even then of 'the dark ages romance' that was to become *Porius* is clear from the following passage:

16 January 1934: As I stood down by Alders River beyond Spinney on which the Sun shone so strong as it rushed so black and glittery between its snow-banks there came over me another *Inspiration* or rather a powerful Impulse a Magnetic *Imperative* towards my Book about Merlin and Taliessin & Ceridwen & Welsh Mythology.

After a stay of a year in Dorset, they moved to Corwen, Wales in July 1935. Having dreamed so long of the country of his ancestors, of his hero Owen Glendower, of the familiars of the Mabinogion, the style and content of the Diary suggest that rather than centring him, the move initially put him off balance. He was

* From Powys's unpublished Diary. *Selections from the Diary of John Cowper Powys, 1929–1939*, edited by Morine Krissdóttir, will be published by Carcanet Press, Spring 1995.

to John Cowper, he stored in his mind; the ruin of yr Gaer, not far from his house, became in *Porius* the hill-fortress of the House of Cunedda; the woods, paths, rocks he gave names which he later used in the novel; y Wyddfa, the mountain peak upon which Porius's dramatic rescue of Myrddin Wyllt in the final pages of the Romance takes place, from the beginning held a special attraction for him. A Miss Evans came once a week to teach him Welsh. He read all the books he could borrow or buy about the history and the mythology of Wales, but he put his own special interpretation on both – an interpretation which Welsh scholars would no doubt find dubious but which chimed with his own philosophy and personal preoccupations. For example, shortly after he arrived in Corwen Powys encountered an owl in Llangar churchyard. Thereafter he greeted it everyday, identifying it with Blodewedd of the *Mabinogion*. Characteristically, Powys's sympathy with the owl-maiden who, 'like Eve, refused to obey orders', resulted in a deep personal animosity toward Gwydion her creator-punisher. This enmity was transposed to *Porius* where it becomes the *raison d'être* of the conflict, around which much of the action (or inaction) pivots, between the 'good magician' Myrddin and the 'bad magician' the Derwydd – along with the Druid's unlikely accomplice the Christian priest. From thence it expands even further into an ongoing polemic, in various guises, as to whether the world is a multiverse or a universe – Powys's ancient quarrel with himself. As idiosyncratic and factually unjustified as all this may be, the culmination of his interpretation of Blodewedd (and this may be why the reader of Powys so often can be simultaneously irritated and enchanted) is the scene where Merlin turns the owl back into a girl 'beyond all words beautiful' – arguably one of the most exquisite and moving pieces of writing in the entire Powys *oeuvre*.

Financial necessity forced John Cowper to delay beginning the Romance until 1942 and he did not finish it until 1949. The resulting 2,811 hand-written pages [1,859 typescript pages] alarmed publishers, as did its 'Marvels & Wonders'. Only after he had reduced its length by almost one-third, was it finally published by Macdonalds in 1951. Since then Powysians have been waiting with varying degrees of patience for the original *Porius* to appear. At long last we have 'a new edition', published by Colgate University Press, which restores most of the excised text.

The editor, Wilbur Albrecht, carefully explains in his Foreword how he compiled this latest edition. The printer's copy typescript apparently has been lost, so he worked with four sources: the 1951 Macdonald abridged version; the complete holograph which is owned by the University of Texas; a typescript of 1,859 pages corrected in Powys's hand, owned by Colgate University; and a photocopy of Mr E. E. Bissell's typescript of 620 pages. This typescript, also corrected by Powys, is now in the Powys Centre at the Dorchester Museum. The latter was of particular use to Albrecht not only because, as he says, it 'contains additional changes ... [that] indicate a far more thorough, and thoughtful,

editing of the text' than the Colgate typescript but also because 'the Bissell typescript clearly consists of those pages which Powys deleted from *Porius* ... along with those changes and additions which would make the shortened and much altered novel a coherent whole' [p. xii]. Albrecht states that 'a complete edition of *Porius* must be based largely on a combination of the 1951 edition of the novel and the existing 620 pages of the Bissell typescript' [p. xiii].

Professor Albrecht and the Colgate University Press are to be heartily congratulated. Putting the volume together from such varied sources must have been an editor's worst nightmare. The resulting 873 pages are printed and bound in such a way that makes what Powys called a 'great buggerly book' a joy to hold as well as to read. Strongly bound and with pages that lie flat instead of flipping shut as so many modern hardbacks do, with clear type and generous margins, the novel *qua* book is in itself worth the price. I cannot however praise the proof-reading: it makes no sense for an editor to spend years laboriously incorporating Powys's insertions, punctuation and spelling corrections – as they appear in the Bissell transcript – only to introduce innumerable small but intensely irritating typographical errors of his own.

Without venturing onto the minefield of textual editing (and in the case of *Porius* there have been many behind-the-scenes blow-ups) I must point out a rather more serious flaw: this latest edition is still not complete. When I wrote the chapter on 'Porius' for my book *The Magical Quest* I worked from the Colgate typescript and from an uncorrected typescript of 1,542 pages Phyllis Playter had given to Gilbert Turner and which he lent to me. Sadly, I did not, as Turner suggested, photocopy this latter, because there were significant variations between the two typescripts. However, I do have before me, as I write this review, the Bissell typescript. I do not understand why Professor Albrecht has incorporated most *but not by any means all* of Powys's original text.

Beyond doubt we should be grateful for what has been restored. As Joseph Slater pointed out in 'Porius Restauratus' (*The Powys Newsletter* 4, Colgate University Press, 1974–5), when Powys abridged his novel some characters were dropped all together; nuances, complications and emphases were inked out; situations carefully led up to in the original manuscript were slashed, making inexplicable or confusing a number of encounters and events. With this Colgate edition the extent of the excisions is now clear. Whole sentences, paragraphs and chapters have been reinstated. As a scholar who went out on a limb to posit a theory about the alchemical elements in *Porius*, I am pleased and relieved that now chapter 31 'The Little One' is in print – as well as innumerable other shorter passages referring to alchemical symbolism – readers can check for themselves the validity of my thesis.

Albrecht has restored many pages in which Powys developed the character of Porius. As a result, we realize that Porius was intended to be less the man-of-action he appears in the abridged version and more – yes, more like Powys with

his manias, reveries, ecstasies and horrors. Other important passages now back in place make it clear that Powys intended the relationship between Porius and Nineue to be much closer and more complicated than it appears in the Macdonald version where so much is left out that the final impression is of a simple good hero saving a magician from a wicked woman. With the restoration of chapter 28, completely dropped from the abridged edition, we see clearly that the two are bound in double-natured implication, or rather that her burial and his rescue are two sides of the same coin.

In chapter 28, Porius and Nineue are in bed together in Brother John's cell – with Merlin in the next bed. Porius recognizes 'when his embrace of that Persephonean form was in the act of being perfected' that

Nineue herself – ah, she must have known *that* all along! – couldn't really hurt [Myrddin] against his own will. ... The odd thing about it was that it revealed itself – this queer strong link between them – as naturally, and easily, and as completely without shyness, as if they had been disembarking upon a familiar shore every inch of which they had known in former times and known together [p. 707Col (= Colgate edition)].

Above all what we have now regained is Powys's original conception of the novel – a story that 'combines the tricks of story-telling and the old romantic melodramatists with the modern form of psychology. ... It is more "conscious" as you might put it, of being written after Dostoevski and of being contemporary with certain exciting and very modern psychological novelists!' [Letter to Miss Muller, an associate of Powys's literary agent, dated Feb. 16 1949.] He intended to write a book that combined *all* the techniques of the novel form. It was a breath-takingly arrogant undertaking and he almost pulled it off. Certainly it is a good story; certainly it has its melodramatic moments (Powys thought it could be 'turned into good thrilling film business!'). By compressing the time-frame to seven days and expanding the thoughts of his characters to 2,800 pages, he has also created his own version of Dorothy Richardson's 'stream-of-consciousness' technique. Perhaps the most extended example of this is the long scene in the forest clearing where a motley group are standing over Prince Einion, Porius's mortally wounded father, conversing idly or exiting and entrancing like extras in an opera. 'Thought-clouds' from the major actors rise up like smoke from solitary camp-fires. Seldom has Powys made his view of the essential privacy of the individual consciousness more emphatic. For many pages, when Porius is not engaged in conversation with his various bewildered retainers (one could wish that some of Powys's singularly inept dialogue had remained buried), Porius's mind races 'round in its cage' [p. 633Col]. 'His consciousness hovered now like a swift black butterfly, over the purple bruise whose surface was still liable to be specked by minute out-jetting spurts of red blood when a certain idea brushed it with its wings!' [p. 630Col]. As his thoughts drift and veer, he suddenly notices his mother's bare ankle, 'slightly swollen and slightly reddened' and associates it

‘with her seduction by Medrawd’ [p. 640Col]. It is the kind of mind association we recognize as totally bizarre and totally authentic, just as we all know how our consciousness persists in returning to a hurtful thought like a hole in a tooth.

Interestingly, when Powys came to cut the text, it was often these free-association sections he removed. Now back in place in this new edition, it is up to the reader to decide *si le jeu vaut la chandelle*. But in this same scene occurs one of those memorable passages that illustrates what an assured technician and psychologist Powys was when he was writing about childhood and memory. Readers may like to compare the following two versions. The original vignette takes 189 words; the abridged version 178. He saves few words but he *does not leave the passage out*. He never excised something that was of particular importance to himself; we are reminded that John Cowper was never present when a beloved brother died.

Brochvael was now hunched up like a great human toad, as he crouched on the ground beside the prince, with his beardless chin and toothless mouth only a few inches above the other’s beard. Whatever it was they were whispering, they were completely oblivious of [Porius] as he bent over them as they were oblivious of the doctor and the priest and the lady. Names, places, events, occasions, passed like bubbles between them, forming and reforming on the tide of their memories. Encounters with men, with ghosts, with snakes, with wolves, with sorcerers, with madmen, with King Eliseg of the Rocks, with Prince Urien of Rheged – all these came rising up from the dark waters of oblivion, came gathering into form and shape from the shelves and shoals and sand-locked estuaries of more than half a century of forgetfulness. Derelict toys, lost weapons, forgotten games, images of blood and phlegm, of horns and hobby horses, of bottomless ponds and haunted pools, of hollow trees and secret chambers, were recalled in gasps and hinted at in groans, while their days together became something sacred and miraculous and supernatural, something lived in a light that had been lost from the common earth.

[p. 651Col]

Brochvael was crouching low down by the Prince’s head and how lost to everything the brothers were at this moment. Whatever it was they were whispering they were completely oblivious of every other living soul. Names, places, events, occasions, passed like bubbles between them, forming and reforming on the tide of their memories. Encounters with men, with ghosts, with snakes, with wolves, with sorcerers, with madmen, with Prince Urien of Rheged – all these came rising up from the dark waters of oblivion, came gathering into form and shape from the shelves and shoals and sand-locked estuaries of more than half a century of forgetfulness. Derelict toys, lost weapons, forgotten games, images of blood and phlegm, of horns and hobby horses, of bottomless ponds and

haunted pools, of hollow trees and secret chambers, were recalled in gasps and hinted at in groans, while their days together broke like a breaking wave in the death-foam of the one and the salt-drops oozing from the toothless gums of the other to be lost in the sands of oblivion.

[pp. 597-598 Macdonald version]

When I study the Bissell typescript and see the firm crossings-out and Powys's masterly bridging passages scrawled in blue ink, I marvel at his craftsmanship. Despite the examples I have given above, much of what he deleted was not, as he himself said, necessary to the story or the analysis of character. A long section in the restored chapter 'Better Nothing than This' is devoted to the relationship of Brochvael and Drom. In the abridgement, simply by deleting the word 'short-legged' and substituting 'homosexual' to describe Drom, Powys does brutally with one word what several thousand more do not substantially add to. It is true that toward the end of the novel his deletions become more draconian: at this point two whole chapters are omitted; but generally his infallible professional sense of what constitutes a good story makes the abridgement a much tighter, more dramatic piece than the original.

The whole question of whether it is essential to restore John Cowper's novels to their pristine 'completeness' untouched by the publisher's editorial hand is a vexed one and deserves more time and space than this review allows. Who can say, in the absence of a definitive typescript, what is complete? Essential to whom? Is it better to have a shorter novel edited by the author that publishers are willing to keep in print or better to wait for the 'complete' version which takes some editor years to restore, which is very expensive to buy and which is likely to reach relatively few readers?

Suffice to say that Powys himself always made whatever cuts were necessary to get a book published. It is a romantic myth that Powys was devastated by a publisher's demand for severe editing of *A Glastonbury Romance*, *Weymouth Sands*, *Maiden Castle* etc. Of course he complained bitterly to his friends and relatives – we all do – but he was a professional who wrote for a living. He admitted in his diaries that often the deletions were an improvement. But he always set a limit to what he would allow and became adept at what he called 'cutting the cuts.'

Another romantic myth is that the words simply poured out. It took seven years to write *Porius*. That was partly because he had to write other pieces to survive financially, partly because his health was poor in these years, but it was also because he wrote and rewrote. *Porius* went through many versions: a page from the Bissell Gift illustrates one version of the meeting between Rhun and Porius that takes place toward the end of the novel. It bears little resemblance to either the abridged version or the 'complete' one.

The new edition of *Porius* is well worth having, complete or not. Powys probably would have rejected the possibility of any book, any thought, any

experience, any life, being complete. But he was a born 'Henog' – 'that conjurer with words'.

His method was to get these same troublesome words gathered and scattered, sifted and collected, like a flock of sheep by an imaginative sheep-dog ...

Professor Albrecht is to be praised for much, but for nothing more (and that a great deal) than restoring the following paragraph in which Powys sums up a life's work:

But the Henog had disciplined himself for half a century in restraining all emotions ... while he forced those *eidola* we call 'words' to become dumb transparencies through which the lovely and terrible grotesqueries of the reality *beyond* words should be suggested *by* words and seen as he – the dedicated medium between man and man's life on earth – was allowed to see them [p. 812Col].

Morine Krissdóttir

Porius: A Brother's View

The typescript of the following review of Porius by Littleton C. Powys was found among the papers in the Bissell Collection currently being catalogued in Dorchester. Whether it was ever published we do not know. We do know, however, that Littleton wrote to the editor of John O' London's Weekly to complain of the inadequacy of the review of Porius by Sarah Champion, which they had published in the issue of 12 October 1951. The following review is, therefore, published here (probably for the first time) not merely as a curiosity, but as showing Littleton's great admiration for a book for which one might have expected him to feel little sympathy. It will be noted that Littleton somewhat exaggerates the length of the book, since the first edition contained 682 pages and not the 'nearly 800' which he claims.

This Romance of the Dark Ages is a gigantic work of the imagination. The author chanced to come across, near Lake Bala, a solitary stone, on which was inscribed: 'Porius Hic in tumulo jacet. Homo Christianus fuit.' That was sufficient to bring into existence this book of nearly 800 pages, recording events all of which happened in the Valley of the Dee in North Wales during seven days of October (the 18th to the 25th) in the year 499 A.D.

The hero and the heroine, cousins, belong to the Brythonic Princely House of Cunedda who lived in the fortress of Myddyn-y-Gaer, which still looks down on the town of Corwen. We find ourselves in touch with the representatives of the various tribes and peoples from whom is derived the Wales we know today; the Brythons, the Picts and Scots, the Ibernians and the legendary Giants of Snowdonia, the Cewri. Part of Arthur's Court is here, and the Saxons are threatening invasion. There is rivalry among these various tribes, and there is too among the followers of the different forms of religion, Mithraism, Druidism and

Christianity. Of the characters in addition to Porius and Morfydd, the hero and heroine, we have Arthur himself, Modred and Merlin (Myrddin Wyllt) the Magician, whom no-one who reads this book is ever likely to forget, his sister Gwendydd, Ninue (Vivien), the enchantress, and the famous bard Taliessin, now a young man; there are too Princes, Princesses, courtiers, priests, warriors, Saxon chieftains, the forest people with bows and arrows, attendants male and female and pages.

You cannot but be aware already that there will be a difficulty with the Welsh names; however the Publishers have provided a marker, giving the names of all the principal characters, a great help. And if you read this book a second time the difficulty is gone.

Now comes the question, in our materialistic, scientific, rationalistic age is there a place for a book such as this, a book of Pure Romance? Our belief is that there are many, very many, who will say, 'Yes, certainly; we want a book in the reading of which we can lose ourselves and forget the world around us.' And of what should such a book consist?

1. Such exciting episodes, following one after the other, that the reader is loth to put the book down. *They are here.*
2. *The characters* must be made to live. In this book there are all sorts and conditions of human beings and each one lives. *Nothing is concealed*; you know the best of them and *you know the worst.*
3. A fine natural and an interesting historical background. The Valley of the Dee and the Legends of Wales provide them.
4. *Good writing.* About this there is no doubt. In his meticulous descriptions of Nature and of the inmost thoughts of his principal characters Mr Powys excels; and often we are reminded of Thomas Hardy.

And finally there are messages that the pages of this Romance offer to the readers. Here are some quotations:

- a) 'He wants a Golden Age in which men and animals, birds and fishes *will live in Peace.*'
- b) 'Love the world with the soles of your feet, *enjoy and endure.*'
- c) 'Rise to *immortality and intense happiness* Mabsant, Arthur's soldier.'
- d) 'The *use of force* is the *most horrible* of all things.'
- e) 'What the world wants is more common sense, *more kindness*, more indulgence, and *more leaving people alone.*'
- f) 'The Earth lasts, Man lasts, birds and fishes last, but Gods and Governments perish.'
- g) Each solitary individual has the power by *his own free imagination* to create his future.'

We cannot recommend this absorbing Romance too highly.

Littleton C. Powys

The Powys Society Annual Weekend Conference

The Royal College of Agriculture, Cirencester

August 27th–30th, 1994

It is still not too late to book your place at our Annual Conference. Simply write to John Batten, Secretary to the Powys Society, at the address on the inside of the front cover of this *Newsletter*, and further details and a booking form will be sent to you.

Those who have still not made up their minds may find themselves tempted by the programme set out below; but the Conference is not a matter of lectures alone, it is a marvellous time to meet old friends and new, to talk about the Powyses and their books, and even to buy some of those books which have recently been published.

Conference Programme

Saturday, August 27th

Glen Cavaliero

Arrival, Reception and Dinner

The Journals of Mary Casey

Sunday, August 28th

Catherine Lieutenant

John Cowper Powys and François Rabelais

Paul Roberts

Lily, Mag and Jack: The Evidence of the Syracuse Manuscripts

Free Afternoon (Committee Meeting and rehearsal for “The Entermores”)

Oliver and Christopher Wilkinson and Friends

“The Entermores”, a play by John Cowper Powys

Monday, August 29th

Peter Foss

In Praise of Praise: Llewelyn Powys and Ivor Gurney

Ben Jones

Surprised by Frances

Report on the Membership Survey

Auction of Elizabeth Muntz’s study drawing of T.F. Powys

Annual General Meeting

Richard Maxwell

Abridgements: Powys, Naomi Mitchison and Historical Fiction in the Twentieth Century

Tuesday, August 30th

Breakfast and Departure

FOR SALE — *Elizabeth Muntz’s study of T. F. Powys*

As you will see in the programme for the Annual Conference, there will be an auction of a drawing of T. F. Powys by *Elizabeth Muntz*. This drawing was most generously given to the Society by Margaret Eaton three years ago when we made an appeal for help in purchasing a computer for our *Newsletter* editor; we were at

liberty to sell it or retain it. We did not sell it at the time, but now that we have calls on our funds for the Powys Centre, including the purchase of pictures by Gertrude M. Powys which had belonged to Peter Powys Grey (and to his mother, Marian, before him), the present is an opportune time, especially as this year we are not holding our usual Book Sale (we hope to revive it next year).

The most familiar work of Elizabeth Muntz (1894–1977) for Powysians will be the over life-size stone head of T. F. Powys and the memorial to Llewelyn high on the Dorset downs (see *Newsletter* 20, p.18. She was one of the literary and artistic community of East Chaldon, having bought a cottage there in 1929 (there are several references to her in Judith Stinton's *Chaldon Herring, The Powys Circle in a Dorset Village*, 1988). Elizabeth Muntz has written her own recollections of T.F.P. ('T. F. Powys – A Few Recorded Memories', in *Theodore: Essays on T. F. Powys*, St Albert's Press, 1964); these include an account of making the great stone head. She says he was the most interesting subject she ever attempted in portraiture, and that Theodore took tremendous interest in every detail of the procedure, talked continually while keeping the pose, and was a most considerate sitter. She found it immensely interesting drawing him, with well over a dozen drawings from all angles, and it amused him to trace likenesses to other members of the family; he was, she says, tremendously quick to take hold of an idea about something new to him – such as stone carving about which he knew nothing at all.

Our drawing, shown exactly half size on the front of the *Newsletter*, is evidently one of those she made for the stone head; the Dorset County Museum has another one. It is a pencil drawing, boldly drawn, and measures 14 $\frac{3}{8}$ " by 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (37.2 by 27 cm), on rough cream cartridge, perhaps from a sketch pad. As a working document it is not in pristine condition: there are pin holes in the four corners and on two sides, a damp stain in the left margin, slight adhesive damage in the extreme corners, and some darkening under the mount, cut to conceal these minor blemishes. On the rear of the mount is a note by Margaret Eaton recording that this is an original drawing by Elizabeth Muntz and that it was bought from Anthony Rota in May 1984. The drawing has no signature, but there is every reason to accept its authenticity. There is a plain narrow brown varnished wood frame, glazed, 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ " by 15 $\frac{5}{8}$ ", rather scratched.

We hope you will be interested in buying this very interesting drawing relating to the important sculpture of T. F. Powys. We are arranging the auction so that **all** members have a chance: *postal bids* (in £sterling), sent to John Batten so that they reach him by August 24th, will be incorporated in the *auction bidding* at the Conference itself. So, **roll up, roll up**, get out your pens if you can't get to the Conference. We shall notify the successful bidder immediately (please provide a telephone number), but cannot write to all the others. Your postal bid will include the cost of delivery or posting of the drawing itself, but we think the frame and glass do not justify the cost of sending, unless you want to make special arrangements with us.

Remembering Kenneth

I regret to say that I didn't know Kenneth Hopkins well. But after reading Paul French's *Memories of a Friendship in The Powys Society Newsletter* No. 17 (November 1992), I began to gather together my memories of Kenneth.

My lifelong interest in the Powyses was nurtured by the book *Advice To A Young Poet*, published by The Bodley Head in 1949 at four shillings and sixpence. I have discussed this in *Newsletter* No. 18 (April 1993), under the title of *A Powysian Correspondence*.

These letters from Llewelyn Powys to the young poet Kenneth Hopkins started me off on my search for Llewelyn Powys's home in the village of Chaldon Herring in Dorset. Years later, during summer holidays in Lulworth, I 'discovered' in the true sense of the word (I had been searching for years) Chydyok cottage, and thanks to Janet Machen have been able to stay there with my wife Grace, family and friends over the years.

I wrote to Kenneth about Chydyok and he replied on Warren House Press paper:

9 Aug. 83.

Dear Mr Warren,

Thank you for your letter of 3 Aug. I will answer your questions [about Chydyok] as well as I can. Llewelyn's bedroom was upstairs on the north side of the house, looking west; the room opposite was the sitting room, with an open fire and walls lined with books.

I don't know what was in the attic, but my impression is that a narrow stair led up to it out of Llewelyn's room – but you must remember that I have not been in the house for some 45 years! Downstairs was not used much, I think; although the kitchen was there. Llewelyn's large bed filled his room ...

That photograph [of John Cowper Powys] was taken at Chaldon, I think probably at Rats Barn, and no doubt Phyllis Playter was pointing the camera ...

I met Kenneth in Weymouth whilst he was at a Powys Society Conference there, in September 1983. I shall never forget walking into a room stacked full of Warren House Press 'greenbacks' (all his publications seemed to be published with green covers) and meeting him. At my suggestion we walked off to the café at Greenhill (my wife Grace was waiting for us there) and we had tea and yet more tea ... it was a very hot day.

Looking toward White Nose, Kenneth talked about the Powyses and Chydyok. 'The Powys Society have gone to see Chydyok today', he said. He reminisced about his years editing the magazine *Everybody's*, and authors he had known. I quote from my diary for that weekend:

Friday Sept. 2nd '83. To Chaldon. Very windy, grey sky. At Daggers Gate

turned into lane to Chydyok. Fought against the wind, and finally reached Lulworth in force 10 gale! Stayed at Bishops Cottage.

Saturday Sept. 3rd '83. With Grace to Weymouth. Meet Kenneth Hopkins and we have tea at Greenhill. Beautiful day, sea a lovely deep blue ... Later; sat on rocks looking towards Bowleaze and White Nose, saw coastguard cottages clearly.

Another letter from Kenneth:

14 Jan '84

Dear Frank,

I owe you a letter – And How! as a lady once responded when I said that. Well, forgive me. For almost a year I have been hindered in my personal affairs, including the writing of familiar letters, by my wife's ill-health; and although she is better she is not well as I would like her to be, and writing letters is still something to be done as and when ...

I have been out of North Walsham once since last February – apart from visits to hospitals at Norwich and Cambridge, and a couple of short breaks in Hunstanton and Lincoln with my wife. And that once was when I hurried down to Dorchester to give a centenary talk on Llewelyn Powys (who was born there). I have not been to any Powys Soc. meetings – have you? The next is March 30th, and the subject Alyse Gregory, by Rosemary Manning, who knew her well in her last years, and is always a good speaker. I don't know if I can be there, but maybe.

There are all sorts of interesting bits of news about various Powys matters. J.C.P.'s diaries, covering some forty years, are being prepared for publication, and will add up to about the best books he ever wrote, or, anyway, the most revealing ...

After more Powys news, the letter finishes:

The enclosed is a sort of peace offering, and your acceptance will be evidence that you forgive my silence: so, if you don't forgive, you had better send it back!!

My best wishes to you both –

your ever, Kenneth

The 'peace offering' was *The Man Who Built the Pyramids*, by Kenneth Hopkins, failed F.R.I.B.A., published by Warren House Press in 1984. The copy was inscribed 'Frank Warren [drawing of inverted pyramid] from Kenneth Hopkins sunk in the subsoil!'

We kept in touch by telephone and correspondence, several of his letters being on Hotel Algonquin N.Y. and Illinois University notepapers. I once ended a letter to him 'From Warren's House to Warren House!'

Reading recently James Agate's *Ego 5*, I was delighted to read several entries from the young Kenneth to the older James. Private Hopkins writes to the famous drama critic about his *Grasshopper Broadsheets*.

Agate devotes several pages to the 'Delicate Poet', Private Hopkins, and sends him a three and sixpenny postal order for the broadsheets, with an invitation to come and see him sometime.

My last letter from Kenneth was dated 21 January 1985.

Dear Frank,

I reply fairly promptly to your welcome letter, because Betty is having what one may call a bit of a lay down, and won't stir until I take in a cup of tea, maybe after writing this, or maybe in the middle.

Thank you for the pictures [photographs of Chydyok]. I haven't been at Chydyok, I guess, since that cherry tree was a stone in the middle of a cherry. And although I have a photo of [Llewelyn's] memorial stone, it is in black and white and must have been taken thirty years ago or more; this one is much nicer. As for the Sims catalogue [catalogue of books, published by G. F. Sims, spring 1958] returned herewith, no I had not seen it before, and I sort of wish I hadn't now! What treasures could have been had for the expenditure of ten pounds, those few years ago ... The little Nancy Cunard thing which I enclose [*Relève Into Maquis*, The Grasshopper Press, Derby, 1944. Inscribed 'Grace & Frank from Kenneth and (in pencil) Nancy in the shades.'] was published at some absurd figure like fourpence; I have seen it catalogued at ten pounds. (But your copy is free.) I send it because it was lying on my table within easy reach; I had unearthed some copies from a remote corner of the attic to send one to Bob Blackmore, who asked for it about eighteen months ago ... Nancy was a nice person whom I knew briefly at the end of her life, when I was working at *Everybody's*. There were some remarkable women around in the mid-century, like the one I usually call Ananias Nin [Anäis Nin] whom I knew slightly ...

It is impossible to predict my movements this year, for although Betty is not in any way dangerously ill she is too fragile to be left for any length of time. But certainly if you care to make your way here, when the Spring has advanced a bit nearer, we shall be delighted to see you. I wouldn't care to make the journey both ways in a day, but you might (if you can find time) combine a visit here with an exploration of Powys shrines in Norfolk and Suffolk. We don't have spare beds, but you could spend a day with us and go on to Aldeburgh, where there are plenty of hotels at all prices to suit all pockets, and there see where T.F.P. went to school etc. From there you could take in Sweffling, a few miles away, and inspect T.F.P.'s farm and the churchyard in which J.C.P. composed a sonnet. On the way here, i.e. the outward journey, you could go up to Northwold and Yaxham – the Johnson grandfather is buried at Yaxham, and of course Northwold makes the opening chapters of *Glastonbury*.

There are also two houses in the Close at Norwich associated with the

Powyses, and here J.C.P. composed *Lucifer*. At Ingham near here, there is a framed letter hanging in the church; it's from A. R. Powys to say how splendidly the church is looked after by its parishioners! I took A.R.P.'s daughter Isobel there to see it ...

All best to you both

Kenneth

Kenneth died on 1 April 1988, but his books and writings remain. If I were to select one of his books for posterity, it would be *The Powys Brothers: A Biographical Appreciation*. He was one of the most perceptive writers on the Powyses, as this quotation from a lecture to The Powys Society on 28 November 1970, shows:

But Chydyok is the centre in the biography of Llewelyn; he lived there for several years, the busiest of his life as a writer, and in that time he wrote most of his best work.

If Phudd Bottom produced *Glastonbury*, we may give Chydyok the honour of producing *Dorset Essay* and *The Glory of Life* and large parts of *Impassioned Clay* and *Love and Death*. When he went finally (as it turned out) to Switzerland, Llewelyn had every intention of returning to Chydyok if his health was restored: and it was his wish to be buried there. Now, on the cliffs above the house, we may find the great stone monument which sits upon his ashes.* All these brothers came finally to rest in Dorset: Theodore moulders quietly and no doubt with tranquil satisfaction in the churchyard at Mappowder, and John's more restless ashes wash to and fro among the shingle of Chesil Beach.

Frank Warren

* Mr Paul French writes to me that Llewelyn's stone has now been moved to one side of the field. I quote from his letter of 18 January 1993: 'It is difficult, now, to describe exactly the old position. I should say fifteen to twenty yards further west and somewhat more forward.'

A New Catalogue

Readers will be interested to learn that Jonathan Wood, a new member of the Society, has recently published his first catalogue of books for sale. Entitled *Fifty Slim Volumes*, it is a well-produced and detailed list of some very desirable books. Llewelyn Powys is also quoted on the back cover.

Copies of the list may be obtained from: Jonathan Wood, BM Spellbound, London WCIN 3XX.

John Cowper Powys in Rochdale

In issue No. 20 of the *Newsletter* we published Mrs Grace Townsend's recollections of John Cowper Powys's autumn 1907 Oxford University Extension lecture season in Rochdale, together with his own 'Lecturer's Report', which was published in the *Handbook and Calendar of The Rochdale Educational Guild*, a branch of the Workers' Educational Association.

Since then a number of new pieces of information have come to light which not only flesh out the valuable checklist of Powys's lectures provided by Derek Langridge in *John Cowper Powys: A Record of Achievement*, but go some way towards clarifying the mechanics of the organization of such lectures. Set out below is a list of the lectures which Powys delivered in Rochdale, together with the relevant additional information:

1 Autumn 1904 (Syllabus No. 752) "The Waverley Novels"

This course of lectures was advertised in the *Rochdale Observer* of 24 September 1904. It is the only one of the series *not* advertised under the auspices of the Educational Guild, which had only recently been founded. Lectures were delivered fortnightly on Wednesday afternoons at 3pm, on 5 and 19 October, 2, 16 and 30 November and 14 December in the Lecture Theatre of the Rochdale Technical School. The early start and the price of the tickets (1s 9d for a single lecture, 8s 6d for the whole course or 7s if three or more members of the same family attended) perhaps accounted for the low average attendance of thirty.

2 Autumn 1905 (Syllabus No. 697) "Selected Plays of Shakespeare"

This course was advertised in the *Rochdale Observer* of 30 September 1905. Lectures were delivered fortnightly on Monday evenings at 7.45 at the Provident Hall, beginning on 2 October with a lecture on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Tickets were advertised to the public at 1s 6d for the course, with reserved seats at 5s, although members of the Guild paid 1s 3d and 4s respectively.

This course, for which there was an average attendance of 450, alternated with a course on Ruskin by Rev. W. Hudson Shaw (the father of G. Arnold Shaw), one of the leading Extension lecturers of the older generation.

Minutes of a Committee Meeting of the Guild, held on 29 June 1905, record the following:

Correspondence relating to the course of Extension lectures before Christmas was read, and a course of six lectures by Mr J. C. Powys M.A. on Selected Plays of Shakespeare was approved of ... In making arrangements for the lectures it was resolved

- That the time of commencement be 7.45pm
- That 20,000 handbills and 600 window bills be printed
- That the lectures be advertised in the newspapers.

Minutes of a further meeting of the Committee, held on 28 November 1905

reported that '440 course tickets had been sold for the Extension Lectures', that an examination on the Shakespeare course be held and that 'Mr Powys be asked to meet the students and Committee before the last lecture.' It was also proposed that 'Mr A. Wilkinson and the Rev. H. Edmonds be asked to move and second a vote of thanks to Mr Powys after his last lecture.'

Further evidence of the popularity of Powys's lectures in Rochdale can be found in *An Adventure in Working-Class Education* by Albert Mansbridge (Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1920) which reprints (on pages 69-72) 'A Record of The First Year's Work of the Rochdale Educational Guild'. In part, this reads as follows:

The University Extension work itself fully realised the hopes with which the Guild was set on foot. Of the 500 or so in average attendance throughout the session, *a very large proportion were working people*. Quite 200 stayed behind after each formal lecture to ask questions of the lecturer, and to join in discussing points raised during the evening. The lectures were fortnightly and consisted of two courses of six each; one on *Six Selected Plays of Shakespeare*, by Mr. J. C. Powys M.A., and one on *The Life and Teaching of John Ruskin*, by the Rev. W. Hudson Shaw, M.A.

A working man, in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Powys at the close of the last lecture, declared 'The world is bigger for us than it was before.' Mr. Hudson Shaw considers the gathering together of such an audience 'nothing less than a miracle', and says he has been waiting for that kind of audience for twenty years. It is hoped that the University Extension Lectures will maintain their position in the town as the chief voluntary effort towards the education of workpeople, and that an increasing number of literary and discussion classes will arrange their syllabuses to harmonise with the Extension subjects. The importance of this is manifest.

Shakespeare and Ruskin Classes. - For the closer study of Shakespeare and Ruskin classes were held fortnightly, alternately with the lectures, and were attended by between twenty and thirty earnest students. The Chairman of the Education Committee has publicly described this as 'a high form of educational work'.

3 *Autumn 1906 (Syllabus No. 637) "Shakespeare's Historical Plays"*

This course was advertised in the *Rochdale Observer* of 26 September 1906 and was delivered on alternate Mondays at 8pm at the Provident Hall. Free places were available in the gallery at the first lecture, but a ticket for a single lecture would cost 6d (front seats 1s) and for the entire course of six lectures, 1s 6d (front seats 3s). The average attendance at this course was 575.

4 *Autumn 1907 (Syllabus No. 828) "English Novelists"*

This course of twelve lectures was advertised in the *Rochdale Observer* of 14

September 1907. Mrs Townsend recalls the lectures being delivered in the *Pioneer* Hall, but they are advertised as taking place in the *Public* Hall. Perhaps both were mistaken and it was, after all, the Provident Hall. Lectures began at 8pm and the first was given on Monday 7 October. This course alternated with a course on music by the American lecturer T.W. Surette.

The minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 27 June 1907 record the following:

A letter from Mr. Powys was read in which he agreed to omit Disraeli from his course on the 'English Novelists' but said he was unable to substitute Stevenson for Kipling as he had no lecture upon him. It was resolved that the last lecture be devoted to Meredith, Hardy and Kipling.

The average attendance at this course was 600.

5 *Autumn 1908 (Syllabus No. 1040) "Some Nineteenth Century Prose Writers"*

This course was advertised in the *Rochdale Observer* on 19 September 1908. Again, the course was delivered at the Provident Hall at 8pm on Monday evenings, although the dates on my copy of the newspaper are obscured. The price of tickets had not changed since 1905 and the average attendance was 500.

Similar information could, no doubt, be unearthed in many towns and cities throughout England and the picture which emerged would be very similar. It is by chance that the information which I have gathered has related to Rochdale, but fitting too, since it was in Rochdale that the Workers' Educational Association was founded in 1903. The importance of Powys's work for this organization, through the University Extension movement, has yet to be fully realised and it remains a fascinating area for exploration and discovery.

I am grateful to Pamela Godman, Rochdale's Local Studies Officer, for her invaluable help in providing material for these notes.

Paul Roberts

Weymouth Sands walk — souvenir broadsheet

Those who came on the Weymouth Sands walk on June 18th and 19th were able to purchase a **souvenir broadsheet** (A3 size, 11¾" by 16½", printed both sides and folded to A5) on which are reproduced two maps, of Weymouth and Portland, nine old photographs, and a sketch of *The Nothe Fort, Weymouth*, by G. M. Powys done a few years before 1900. These are accompanied by quotations from John Cowper Powys's *Weymouth Sands*.

Copies will be on sale at the Conference, and can also be purchased by post: please send £1, payable to The Powys Society or in stamps (4 x 25p), to:

Stephen Powys Marks, Hamilton's, Kilmersdon, near Bath, Somerset, BA3 5TE.

Katie

There are people who knew Katie Powys (she was christened Philippa but was always known as Katie) much better than I could, and who may therefore have been far more fond of her. Perhaps those who knew her best have loved her too much to talk or write about her. There will always be many opinions about her, and I can just hear her brother, my adoptive father, Theodore Powys saying: 'Everyone is entitled to their own opinions my dear.' And of course he is right – they are. I had personal knowledge of Katie, not as much as I would have liked, but some – more than none. I saw her in the flesh; I could recognise her, even I who find it difficult to recognise people, if I met her in the road today. Yes, even if I met her as she was in her youth, when naturally I never saw her, I would recognise her.

Katie was unique. Her character and mine have certain flaws and strengths in common, but Katie was unique. Eccentric, certainly, although I think she wouldn't seem quite so much so today; yet even today the elemental force of her would be recognised and loved or feared. You couldn't be neutral about Katie – except by keeping out of her way.

Even with the best of good will all round – and without doubt she was greatly loved by all her family – she cannot have had too happy a childhood and her youth must have been agonizing. She certainly was clumsy, her impetuosity and nervousness saw to that, and her extreme sensitivity and doubt of herself made her see this as a much worse fault than it was – also she was surrounded by brothers. Little boys love to tease. It's very rare that they inflict pain deliberately, but they inflict it for all that, and Jack was a great offender in this way – I know, because Theodore told me so. 'Jack's teasing was worse than torture to me', he said, and once told me that teasing was a form of cruelty and an expression of hatred – any teasing; not Jack's in particular – and yet he loved Jack dearly, and Jack loved him as dearly. But Theodore was too sensitive and too uncertain of himself to take lightly whatever was said and retaliate in kind; and Katie was even more so. One thing she was lucky in, even more than I was, although it was an experience we had in common – we were both educated at home, mainly through the medium of good books. I think school is necessary for children who would otherwise have no social contact, and such was my case; but it wasn't Katie's, and I fancy the only thing she missed was not having learned a foreign language. Otherwise, I think the modern writer Gilliam Lindsay expresses it best in her recent book on Flora Thompson, the writer of *Lark Rise to Candleford*. She says, 'Beatrix Potter ... claimed as an asset the fact that she never went to school and had an isolated childhood. People of creative ability who have to educate themselves do so in a highly individual way. They follow no curriculum, read no set books and the result is a fresh and original view of life. As Thoreau wrote, 'What does education do? It makes a straight cut ditch of a free meandering

brook'. 'Katie's mind and thoughts were all her own; no one had shaped them for her. It says much in her parents' favour that they didn't even try to influence her (or, I fancy, any of their other children) in religious matters.

In other youthful things Katie was not so lucky. I don't recollect being told that she was good at any games at all, and games were socially a necessity for youngsters of the Powyses' standing in those days. They all, including Katie, I do seem to remember being told, could skate pretty well, and Katie was a fairly good horsewoman – I doubt much if she would claim to be more; in her day, one had to ride if one wanted to cover distance at more than walking speed, as today one has to drive a car – but she put herself rather out of court by riding astride, which wasn't 'quite done' then. Katie was both practical and independent, the last extremely so. A sidesaddle is heavy and awkward to saddle up with, and so is a long-skirted habit to walk about in; with a cross-saddle she could be saddled up and away within five minutes without troubling any groom. In fact she was an excellent walker, but not only can nobody walk at the speed of a trotting horse, but I fancy she liked the horse's company. However, she didn't hunt, she didn't shoot, she didn't fish, she wasn't much use at the usual tennis or croquet – although I remember being told on separate occasions by both Theodore and Gertrude that in bad weather 'we', that is, the young of the Rectory and the Great House, 'would play at battledore and shuttlecock in the long attic at Montacute House', an experience that I envy them much – and she couldn't dance, so socially she must have been in trouble. Children and teenagers are totally conservative; they are like hens: you put one that's a bit different into a flock, and if you don't watch it the others will peck it to death. Nobody wants to go walking with a girl who has her own opinions and can walk her companion off his feet, nor riding with one who saddles her own horse and rides astride – and probably tells him that his girth is too loose or his curb chain crooked. I know a bit about this myself, so I can feel for the young Katie – and I am probably a worse dancer than she was. We both also share an absolute need for the countryside and its animal occupants; we literally could not exist in a town. Katie loved the wind – and she would run before it with her arms spread out like seagulls' wings – she loved the seagulls too. I've seen her in a very genuinely murderous rage after finding a dead seagull that had been shot by some idiot wanting to show off his shooting accuracy. She had a pretty good eye for stock and was more likely to turn over a sheep 'cast' on its back, or to let the farmer know that one of his outlying bullocks was unwell, than her brother Theodore, who was too much inclined to fear offending the farmer. But Katie feared nothing, except, perhaps, herself. Certainly not hard work. Naturally I never asked her how she came to give up her farm – one doesn't even ask one's closest friend that kind of question – but also I had been told that it had been caused by her ill health; but I have wondered since if the boot were not rather on the other foot and her ill health caused partly by the failure of the farm. To farm successfully takes more than a liking for hard work

and a love of animals. One also needs a certain coldbloodedness and business sense, and Katie was very far from coldblooded. I don't think she would at all have enjoyed sending a favourite cow to market because she wouldn't come in calf or had lost one quarter to mastitis. And of business sense she certainly had none. She was the absolute soul of honour herself, and expected everyone else to be as she was. Also she certainly didn't know more than any other young woman of her standing about the ailments of cattle and horses – Willie was the expert there – and she had one unforgivable weakness. If anything went wrong, she tended to panic. One can afford to panic with the best vet in the West of England living in the next valley, but in Montacute a hundred years ago, if a farmer panicked he (or she) lost the sick animal, a thing that perhaps she could not afford to do. I think also that mentally Katie could not afford to fail, but she certainly did so, and it must have hit her very hard. She had against her as well, alas, the fact that she was a woman in what is still supposed to be a man's world (that of running a farm) and was therefore considered a proper target for any sharp practice. I have no certain knowledge of this and nothing of the sort was ever said to me. I am merely judging by my own experiences in something of the same circumstances many years later. It must have been much worse for Katie.

Also, at that time in her life came an incident that would have considerably upset any good-looking young woman, and must have been the last straw for Katie, who would have known, however much she tried to ignore it, that she was developing into something more than mere good looks. She had a really serious riding accident; it was unnecessary and entirely the rider's fault. Katie, frantically upset about something, and thinking correctly that a good gallop would ease her feelings, fetched her horse and *had* a good gallop. Where she was at fault was that being pretty near home, she couldn't have been unaware that she had headed her horse into a large and well-established rabbit warren. I have wondered if she perhaps knew it perfectly well and actually hoped for a fatal conclusion to that ride. When one is young and emotionally upset it is easy to hope for the freedom of a broken neck, and one doesn't stop to consider the likelihood of mere injury. The horse put his foot in a hole and came down hard and threw Katie headlong, with her foot caught in a stirrup. Whether she lost hold of the rein or had a broken collarbone or what I don't know, but she lost control and something must have been wrong in their relationship, because the horse didn't stop and stand. No, he leapt up and off across that warren like the devil, and only stopped when somebody caught him a good quarter of a mile farther on. Katie's teeth were knocked out and her face badly cut. I was told that her skull was fractured too, and that this was not diagnosed until later. One wonders how much this contributed to her nervous breakdown. By nature highly-strung and over-emotional, Katie would hardly have been helped by a fractured skull, even if it had been diagnosed at once and properly treated. Also, although the cuts on her face healed almost without scarring, the teeth could only be replaced by the sorry

dentures of the time, and the woman doesn't exist who could go through that kind of experience without far more mental scarring than physical.

All this is 'hearsay evidence' and the commonsensical conjectures of a somewhat similar character brought up in a somewhat similar way. I haven't the benefit of Katie's diaries. In fact, until recently I didn't even know she kept them, so I have no means of knowing at what time in her life the visits to Sidmouth began or when she met Stephen Reynolds, whose inability to love her caused her complete breakdown. I would have put it a little later in her life than this accident, for the good reason that I was told that this particular incident was caused by a rather worse than brush-off by someone else, and I doubt that Katie was one to be off with the old love and on with the new quite as rapidly as that. But no matter; my informant may have been incorrect on this point. The real thing is Katie herself in later life, as I knew her.

She was tall and bony and angular; she had the most beautiful clear wind-tanned skin, and greying hair so thick and wavy and silky that it was a crime to wear it, as she did, in an Eton crop. Her eyes, deep-set under thick brows, were that odd brown-grey-green mixture that seems a Powys characteristic – I've seen it nowhere else – and they were large and clear and direct, and sometimes wild. Her voice was a little harsh – Theodore and Littleton, in my opinion, were the ones with really fine voices – and she invariably emphasised it with gestures. When she laughed, she would rub her knees and when she was pleased she rubbed her hands. As a child, I was rather frightened by this, and when I was a young woman its gracelessness annoyed me. All her other movements had without fail the surprising elegance of a half-grown, awkward colt, the awkwardness stemming entirely from an enormous, only half-controlled overplus of energy and an utter lack of patience, mostly directed at herself. She wore breeches of hoddon grey, heavy stockings and shoes, and men's shirts with the jerseys and waistcoats that Gertrude, an excellent knitter, would knit for her – and she pretty nearly never wore anything else. I have seen Katie wearing a skirt, and I've heard her too – her reaction to these impractical, if elegant garments being identical with my own. She didn't wear well-tailored, expensive suits and sports clothes, like poor Valentine Ackland; she simply wore the everyday clothes of an only moderately well-off working farmer. They absolutely suited the life she led, walking for miles on the Downs for sheer enjoyment or working (very hard indeed) in the large vegetable garden that she herself created there at Chydyok. She was an *excellent* gardener, except that she had some small contempt for flowers, as did many practical gardeners of that date, not realising that many flowers are good to eat and quite a few of them supreme as medicine or disinfectant. Chydyok garden is naked chalk, which even herbs don't much approve of. Before it came to its present state of fertility Katie must have dug it many times and fed it many putt-loads of manure. I don't think there was anything she couldn't grow and she had a fruit-cage too, for the soft fruits, which

Gertrude would bottle or make jams and jellies from. Quite apart from the satisfaction it gave Katie, the garden must have saved them pounds. They really needed to buy very little, and as they were not rich at all, this was a great blessing.

Willie Powys held Down Barn Farm, or Rats' Barn as everyone called it, on a life lease from the Weld Estate, for use on his fairly infrequent but very long visits to England. Katie was his caretaker, and twice a week she would put up the bare overnight essentials in her haversack, and tramp away over the Downs to Rats' Barn. She told me once that she enjoyed this more than anything; that she would pretend that it was her own home, all her own, and that happy as she always was to see her brother, when he was there she felt that he had taken away her home, her refuge. I have a suspicion that she did most of her writing there. Its only drawback was that there was no garden. But on the bank opposite the front of the house was a huge and really lovely stand of enormous sloes – I'm not sure they weren't damsons run wild – and in that bank the rats lived in their hundreds. They were really something to watch – rats are most playful creatures, and very inventive – and I fancy Katie found them a most amusing change from gardening. I wouldn't go to Rats' Barn now. I don't like to think how Katie would weep for it, for the ruin it has become. I suppose it is about a mile, or very little more, from Chydyok, not much more than a ten-minute walk – for the Downs were all grassland then – and in those days no one need fear to be attacked in a lonely place, although Katie simply had no fear, and if anyone had attacked her I think he would have rued the day, although she never carried any weapon but that big black stick. I also think that even now no one would attack Katie. The sheer primeval force of her and fragility of her control over it was very easily seen, especially if she were startled or upset, and the man would be foolhardy indeed who didn't retreat as rapidly as possible. I'm not sure that she always went to Rats' Barn on the same day of the week but otherwise her routine never varied – overnight things and food in the haversack (by food I mean bread, butter and such like, anything that couldn't be kept in an airtight, rat-proof tin. The rats weren't supposed to come indoors, but there were always a few who did) and off she would go, about an hour before sunset; she'd arrive, light up the fire on the big flat hearth, light the lamp, put on the kettle for tea. It was a low room, and not that large, and the house is – was – sheltered, so even in winter it would soon be pretty warm. Tea was always tea, a boiled egg and toast or bread and butter. Then, if it was still early she'd read (or write, maybe) for a while before going up to bed in the big four-poster bed from Montacute. At sunrise next morning, she'd be up and washing, almost certainly with ice-cold water from the tap in the yard. I don't think Katie approved of hot-bottles, which do at least provide lukewarm water in the morning. I seem to remember that she thought hot-bottles were 'coddling oneself' – and all the family always washed in cold water at Montacute. Then she'd light up the fire again, boil the kettle and make porridge and tea. Katie couldn't cook at all but to boil an egg and make porridge is within the province of

even the most impractical intellectual, and Katie wasn't that. Merely, she had convinced herself that she was too stupid and unhandy to cook a proper meal. True, she didn't care for the work, but neither did Gertrude and neither do I; and we were, and are, both adequate in our differing ways. After breakfast, if the morning were fine, she'd probably collect sticks for the fire. In those days there was always plenty of dead gorse and thorn lying around, which made excellent firing if brought in and stacked dry. She might write or read or go for a walk. But by noon she would have tidied up, smothered what remained of the fire, packed her gear and set off for Chydyok, listening to the larks and watching the small wildlife in the gorse as she strode along, barely disturbing it. Very rarely was she late for lunch. There was no gentler soul in the world than Katie; she might prefer to spend longer at Rats' Barn, she might think that Gertrude worried unnecessarily and far too much (I believe Gertrude really was too anxious and over protective) but she never would deliberately cause her elder sister to worry. In fact, although what she might do when 'out of herself' might be a different story, Katie in her own true person never knowingly hurt a living creature.

Although, for reasons of economy, the sisters didn't eat much meat, I believe they weren't entirely vegetarian. This didn't prevent Katie from loving all 'animals' and going genuinely berserk at cruelty to them, which I too probably could do. Whether she would say, as Mowgli said, 'we be of one blood, they and I', and say it with belief (as I do) I'm not sure. She was born rather before her time, was Katie. Her father was a Protestant Vicar of Victorian days, and upbringing does tell, if it is kind and good. Certainly, when her mare Josephine died (I don't remember Josephine) she didn't consider ever buying another horse. Perhaps she couldn't afford it; perhaps, after Josephine, she simply couldn't consider another. A dog she never had, save briefly for her father's old sheepdog, who, separated from his master, soon died of a broken heart. I fancy Gertrude was not much of a one for 'animals', although she did keep cats in a rather desultory way, and for a very practical reason: cat equals no mice; no cat equals mice. Possibly Gertrude's lack of liking for them was Katie's reason for living, as I would see it alone. However, she was a great observer of wildlife, in which matter a dog is rather a hindrance than a help, and that may have compensated. She may also have been afraid of losing her temper for some unrelated reason, and taking it out violently on a helpless and innocent companion – such things can happen.

Hounds and hunting Katie hated, but although she did dislike the idea of 'thirty couples of white, black and tan' chasing one fox, it was really the class distinction that she believed the hunt to represent that she hated. I suppose that as youngsters at Montacute all the Powyses saw a deal of poverty and the misery it brings, and that was what gave her this idea that wealth was wrong and that society should be classless. Katie, having seen poverty around her in the villages, felt very strongly about it. She said, and truly believed, that she was a Communist. Of course a really equal state is simply impossible, for men are not born

equal, and if they were it would be unbearably dull. But Katie, influenced I believe also by Stephen Reynolds, didn't think that far – probably couldn't. for there was great poverty in the country as she grew up, and she was truly warm-hearted and felt deeply for other people. It was embarrassing for everyone around her. Her village friends feared the Godlessness of Communism more than poverty, and her family thought that she was disgracing them. But that was Katie. She wanted everyone else to be at least reasonably happy, even if she couldn't be herself, and she honestly thought Communism would make them so.

Only recently have I been told that Katie wrote poetry, and as yet I have not read any of it. But I did know she had written a novel and that, long years ago when we had a copy, I certainly read. I was only a kid and a bit young to appreciate tales of grown-up emotion, but I had already been taught how to criticise written English by Theodore – I was taught this well and thoroughly, and I believe my standard is very high – and my opinion (fifty years ago) was that *Blackthorn Winter* was excellently thought-out and written. I didn't find it interesting, but at ten or so, I wouldn't, would I? It was decidedly more interesting (even to me then) and much better written than any of the other sorry little stories, written at about the same time, which came into the house for Theodore to comment on. It was – and this is probably why it didn't sell better – absolutely realistic and about village people; not a stage-management on paper of puppets of the intelligentsia. I'll get another copy one day.

I don't know that Katie had any ambitions to be literary like her brothers; surely she wrote because she enjoyed writing, not necessarily to make money by it. I rather fancy that her wish was to be a farmer – but, like her brother Theodore, she'd lost the chance. Theodore, of course, had a weak heart ... and Katie, quite apart from her genuinely dangerous lack of self-control, was a woman. That is a drawback in all farming matters unto this day. I do not think that Katie was delighted to be a female; she must have blamed her sex for many of her unhappinesses, and rightly so. Certainly, she did her best to ignore it, which doesn't work, for nobody else will. I don't think she was the only woman in the world to smoke a pipe, nor was she at all a heavy smoker, but it did get her laughed at behind her back, which upset Gertrude. I don't know either how often or for how long she would be off fishing with her fishermen friends in their boat at Sidmouth; but in those days women didn't, they just didn't and that was that. Gertrude, although much less conventional than most, can't have but deplored and sorrowed over Katie's continual ignoring of all conventions. It must have been very hard on Katie, too; these things were her recreation, and why should she give them up simply because she was a woman? What she thought of marriage, whether she wished for it or not, whether marriage or some sort of solid partnership with the right man (if ever he could be found) would have made her happier, or perhaps even actually happy, only Katie ever knew. She must have had opinions, probably strong ones, on this subject, as she said to me once that if she

ever loved a man, she feared she might not be able to bear him a child; and plainly this thought upset her greatly. The Sidmouth episode was many years behind her then. I rather think Stephen Reynolds had become, not the lost lover of her life, but a kind of personal saint.

Thanks to an unfortunate episode while Katie was still mentally ill, which Theodore's wife never either forgot or forgave (I believe she had been very frightened – she was not courageous), Katie did not come often to Beth Car – possibly once a week, but I doubt it – and when we moved to Mappowder she only visited us, very briefly, about once a year. I saw more of her than her invalid brother, Theodore did, because, very occasionally, I stayed for a few days at Chydyok, sometimes making the journey by bus and sometimes on horseback. Neither of us made friends easily and I am not much of a walker, so we didn't talk much or see much of each other. We each had goodwill toward the other, but there was an unbridgeable space between, partly the difference of the generations, partly the violence and passions and sorrows in Katie's life and the feeling, on my part, of being someone else, someone quite detached from these strangers, with no business to be prying into their lives. I couldn't help this, but I paid for it later, as I really would have liked to know Katie – Gertrude also, but particularly Katie – and I just couldn't. I could observe her, and I did, as I hope I have shown, but I couldn't know her – or anyone else. I was in my late thirties when I learned to put aside that feeling and be genuinely involved with other people. Katie, alas, was dead.

There are people to be found who knew Katie very much better than I could, and therefore were far more fond of her. Truthful people, literate people. Perhaps the ones who knew her best loved her too much to write or speak about her; but they could be asked. It would do no harm to try. Katie, who was truth and honour itself, despite the fantasies that, after all, everyone indulges in, would expect and deserve only truth. 'Ye shall know the Truth; and the Truth shall make you free.'

Theodora G. Scutt

Subscriptions

Every year, of course, we know that there are quite a lot of subscriptions to collect from people who have not made their payments. This year there is the added complication of the new rate, which means that some people have paid the amount due for 1993, leaving a small sum still owing. If you owe a part or the whole of your subscription you will find a **reminder slip** in your *Newsletter*.

Please pay promptly: you will not get *The Powys Journal* (Volume IV will be ready for the AGM at the end of August) unless you are paid-up, nor are you entitled to members' prices for other publications.

Treasurer's Report for 1993

The accounts for 1993 are set out on the next two pages; they have been approved by the Society's Auditor, Stephen Allen, and once again show a healthy financial state. With an increased paid-up membership of 281 (254 in 1992) our 1993 subscription income was £3,045, including tax refund on covenants; with subscriptions and tax refunds for earlier years, this came to a high total of £3,299. However, this was actually exceeded by donations of £2,012 (1992, £1,245) and net income from sales of publications of £1,383 (£1,364), together £3,395. Some of the donations were given for specific purposes and are deducted from the relevant items; other income in 1993 came to £5,499 in total, down from last year's figure of £5,803, but if the allocated donations are included, our income exceeds last year's.

The largest part of our expenditure went on our regular publications, *The Powys Journal* and three issues of the *Newsletter*; the cost of providing these to members was £3,080, accounting for 100.9% of 1993 subscription (including tax refund) or 93.2% with arrears and earlier refunds (target 90%). However, there were two exceptional items, the repatriation of the Feather Collection (now in the Dorset County Museum) and our contribution to the exhibition at the Museum; these helped to raise our expenditure to the unprecedented amount of £5,067 (£3,789). Other publications do not show as expenditure; their cost is recorded as an addition to the value of stock in the General Fund, but the total outlay on publications is over £5,400 (£4,270). The value of stock, £4,147, was a high proportion (51%) of our worth at the end of the year, £8,081, leaving us with a cash resource at the end of the year of £3,934 (£4,968). Our Auditor asked me if I felt that the prospect of sales justified the value attributed to stock; as sales in 1993 brought in £2,119, 51% of the value of stock, I am satisfied, but I will look at this point again in the light of sales in 1994.

The increasing list of publications is providing us with a good source of income for further publication work. It is worth noting that the two additional publications in 1993 brought in 33% (*Soliloquies of a Hermit*) and 85% (*The Joy of It*) of their respective costs, while *Driftwood and other poems* (1992) has made 62%, *The English House* (1992) 106%, and the *Powys Checklist* (1991) 148%, since publication up to the end of 1993.

Stephen Powys Marks

Auditor's Report to the Members of The Powys Society

I have audited the financial statements in accordance with approved Auditing Standards. In my opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the charity's affairs at 31st December 1993 and of the surplus for the year then ended and comply with the Companies Act 1985.

J. S. Allen, Chartered Accountant, June 9th 1994.

THE POWYS SOCIETY

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1993

<i>Income</i> ¹		£	£	1992
subscriptions	for 1993 ²	2,980.96		
	tax refund for 1993 ³	<u>64.10</u>	3,045.06	2,780
	for 1992 paid in 1993 (12)	132.00		
	tax refund for 1992 ³	<u>64.10</u>	196.10	
	tax refund for 1991 ³	<u>57.42</u>	3,298.58	
donations ⁴	conference auction sale (donated books)	410.31		
	other	<u>68.10</u>	478.41	1,095
publication sales	stock publications	2,119.20		
(excluding	less cost of publications sold	<u>826.05</u>	1,293.15	
postage)	cassettes of 'Frances and Jack'		35.00	
	Montacute gazebo leaflets & pamphlets	<u>55.15</u>		
	<i>net income</i>	<u>1,383.30</u>	1,383.30	1,364
conference	fees received ⁵	5,627.05		
	expenses	<u>5,450.77</u>		
	<i>surplus</i> (3.13%)	<u>176.28</u>	176.28	92
Francis Feather, reimbursement of expenditure by Society in 1991 (1992)			—	48
interest (gross)			<u>162.18</u>	<u>424</u>
			£ 5,498.75	£ 5,803
<i>Expenditure</i> ¹		£	£	1992
<i>The Powys Journal</i> III (1993), ⁶ cost of 320 members'				
	& complimentary copies ⁷	1,639.27		
	cost of distribution	<u>254.81</u>	1,894.08	1,533
<i>The Powys Journal</i> II (1992), cost of supplying 14 copies to late subscribers			42.26	32
<i>The Powys Review</i> , cost of supplying to late subscribers (1992)			—	25
newsletters (3 in 1992), including distribution ⁷			1,178.55	1,062
<i>Powys Checklist</i> , complimentary copies to new members			15.50	14
bookmark (1992: letterheading and leaflet)			103.40	48
subscription to Alliance of Literary Societies			10.00	10
cassettes for 'Francis and Jack' (1992: including hire of tape recorder)			9.00	49
Feather Collection, expenses of repatriation from Zimbabwe		1,836.71		
	less donation and tax refund	<u>1,333.34</u>	503.37	—
'Writers in a Landscape' exhibition at Dorset County Museum			957.05	—
'The Powys Family at Montacute' pamphlets for Montacute gazebo (1992)			—	360
general publication expenditure (1992)			—	64
lecture hall (1992)			—	20
computer equipment for publication work (1992)			—	300
officers' expenses and committee travel			353.80	<u>272</u>
			5,067.01	3,789
unallocated donations transferred to Wilson Knight benefactors' fund (1992)			—	1,095
excess of income over expenditure			<u>431.74</u>	<u>919</u>
			£ 5,498.75	£ 5,803

Auditor's Report – see foot of previous page.

THE POWYS SOCIETY

STATEMENT OF FUNDS

I General fund	£	£	1992
funds at January 1st 1993		4280.68	3,362
excess of income over expenditure		431.74	919
funds at December 31st 1993		<u>4,712.42</u>	<u>4,281</u>
represented by:			
stock of <i>The Powys Journal</i> , <i>The Powys Review</i> , and books at cost at January 1st 1993	2,680.67		1,632
add cost of purchases and publications, including <i>The Powys Journal</i> III surplus to distribution ⁸	2,335.89		1,672
less cost of publications sold 826.05 <i>The Powys Journal</i> II to late subscribers 28.00 complimentary <i>Checklist</i> to new members <u>15.50</u>		<u>-869.55</u>	<u>-623</u>
value of stock at December 31st 1993 ⁹	<u>4,147.01</u>	4,147.01	2,681
cash at bank at December 31st 1993 ¹⁰		694.06	1,634
sums due to the Society		<u>15.90</u>	<u>143</u>
		4,856.97	4,458
less creditor	14.59		-
subscriptions received in advance (1993, 10; 1992, 16)	<u>129.96</u>	144.55	177
		£ <u>4,712.42</u>	£ <u>4,281</u>
II The Wilson Knight benefactors' fund ¹¹		£	1,991
funds at January 1st 1993		3,368.49	2,273
transfer from General fund, unallocated donations (1992)		<u>—</u>	<u>1,095</u>
funds at December 31st 1993		£ <u>3,368.49</u>	£ <u>3,368</u>
represented by cash in deposit account		£ <u>3,368.49</u>	£ <u>3,368</u>

NOTES

- Cash turnover: total receipts £13,936.16; total payments £14,876.20, of which £2,335.89, relating to the cost of purchases and publications (see note 8), is carried forward in the General Fund. Other adjustments, relating to cost of publications sold etc., subscriptions paid in advance for 1993 and 1994, creditors, and sums owing to the Society, give excess of *Income over Expenditure* for the year of £431.74, all as shown in the accounts.
- This figure is for 281 subscriptions paid, and includes 16 subscriptions paid in advance in 1992 (£176.78).
- Tax reclaimed on covenanted subscriptions paid in 1991, 1992 and 1993 = £185.62.
- Total donations: £478.41 (as listed) unallocated + £1,000 (+ £333.34 tax refund) for expenses incurred in repatriation of Feather Collection + £200 for *The Powys Journal* III = £2,011.75 (1992, £1,245).
- This figure includes £43 booksellers' stall fees and commission.
- Gross cost £2,289.27, less advert income £50 & donation £200 = net cost £2,039.27, less cost of copies taken into stock at run-on cost £400 = £1,639.27 net cost.
- Total net cost of producing and supplying *The Powys Journal* III (£1,894.08) & 3 newsletters (£1,178.55): £3,072.63 = 100.9% of 1993 subscriptions (including tax refunds) or 93.2% of 1993 subscriptions with arrears (incl. tax refunds).
- Undistributed copies of *The Powys Journal* III, £400; *Soliloquies of a Hermit*, £1360.09; *The Joy of It*, £370; *Fables, Dorset Essays, Earth Memories* purchased for resale, £185; photocopying newsletter backnumbers, £20.80; = £2,335.89.
- No value is attached to stock which has not involved cost to the Society.
- Current account £465.29 + deposit account £3,597.26 = £4062.55, less Benefactors' fund £3,368.49 = £694.06.
- Interest has been retained in the General fund.

Stephen Powys Marks, Treasurer

New Publications in 1994

As in previous years, we have the next volume of *The Powys Journal* in preparation. Volume IV, the same size as last year and just as full of good things, will be ready in time for the annual Conference as usual, and will be given out to all members who are fully paid up (*please see the note on page 48 about subscriptions; these can be paid at the Conference*). Paid-up members who do not get their *Journal* at the Conference will receive it by post as soon as possible afterwards.

In addition, we have two more publications in hand; these also will be available at the Conference, and can be ordered in advance for collection there or for later posting. The inserted leaflets will tell you all about them.

One of these, *A Net in Water*, is a selection from the unpublished journals of Mary Casey (1915–1980), the daughter of Lucy, the youngest of the eleven children of the Revd Charles Frances Powys. It covers the period 1963 to the end of 1979, just before her death at the end of January of the next year, and is full of interesting references to Mary's uncles and aunts and other members of the family, her own philosophical and literary reflections, and her observations on nature; it includes a large part of her life in Kenya, near her uncle Will Powys.

A Net in Water has been edited, with extensive notes, by Judith M. Lang and Louise de Bruin. It will be uniform with *Soliloquies of a Hermit*, but is more than twice the size, with 232 pages bound in laminated thin card. Kim Taplin says, 'Mary Casey's *Journals* seem to me to rank alongside Dorothy Wordsworth's, or Hopkins's, or Annie Dillard's *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*.'

The other is a slim booklet of 12 pages in a card cover, in which is reproduced an article which Francis Powys wrote in 1954 for *The Adelphi*, a quarterly literary journal, about his father, T. F. Powys. Our edition of *The Quiet Man of Dorset – T. F. Powys* is prefaced by a short foreword by Francis, specially written for this reprint, and by a note by Morine Krissdóttir.

The typeface for *A Net in Water* is *Plantin*, a design based on late-sixteenth-century type in Germany and named after a famous Antwerp printer; it is the same as that used for the *Newsletter* since No. 20. *A Net in Water* also incorporates some quotations in Greek; several tests were done to ensure that the faces chosen sat happily together. *The Quiet Man of Dorset*, on the other hand, is set in *Spectrum*, which is modern face with a tight italic and figures, designed originally in the 1940s as a bible face by an extremely eminent Dutch type designer, Jan van Krimpen. These two make an interesting contrast, adding to the range used for our publication work.

The price list opposite will be revised in the next *Newsletter* to include the three new publications referred to above. Meanwhile, if you want to order any of those shown, or the broadsheet for the *Weymouth Sands* walk (see page 40), please add the right amount to your orders for *A Net in Water* and *The Quiet Man of Dorset*. Please don't forget to include postage.

Stephen Powys Marks