Editorial

Schools nowadays are thick with policies. Every person, every object and every possible combination of objects and persons is bound to be governed by some kind of policy. Therefore, as a teacher, I was reluctant to answer when someone asked me recently what my 'policy' was with regard to the *Newsletter*. I was inclined to deny that any such thing existed. But, of course, on reflection, it does.

The *Newsletter* editor is quite properly bound by the aims of the Society as expressed in its constitution and the first duty of the *Newsletter* is to promote those aims. Second, of course, it has to keep members as well informed as possible about the Society's activities and other matters which may be of interest to them.

All of that could be done with a much smaller publication, but that, surely, would not satisfy the membership and I know it would not satisfy me. In assembling each issue of the *Newsletter* I try to imagine what sort of material members will find interesting, bearing in mind the huge diversity of our membership and its interests. To some extent it has to be a personal selection, but I do try to follow certain ground-rules, so I suppose I must admit to a policy after all. I try to ensure that there is material referring to each of the most famous brothers in roughly equal share; I try to ensure that other members of the family, especially the sisters, are not neglected and I try to extend our knowledge of the Powys Circle. I do this in two ways: by actively encouraging members of the Society to write for the *Newsletter*, which often involves them in research of one kind or another, and I try to unearth interesting material which has previously been published but is hard to obtain. Sometimes, as with some of the articles in

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ON OTHER PAGES

this issue, the authors will contradict one another, but that is all to the good if what they write is worth reading.

I used to follow another rule: never upset anyone. I gave that up after about three issues when I realised that anything one publishes is bound to upset someone and that, sometimes, it is no bad thing.

Paul Roberts

The Powys Society Annual Conference

Uppingham School, Rutland, 23 – 25 August 1996

Programme

Friday, 23 August

12.00 — 3.00 Committee Meetings
3.30 Registration and tea
5.45 **Reception**
6.30 Dinner
7.40 Welcome and Introductory Remarks
7.45 **Timothy Hyman** *The Quest for the Pictorial Equivalent*

Saturday, 24 August

8.00 Breakfast
9.15 **Paul Roberts** *In Search of Arnold Shaw*
10.30 Coffee
11.00 **Harald Fawkner** *The Manifestation of Affectivity in the Works of John Cowper Powys*
12.45 Lunch
2.00 **Peter Judd** *Letters from Philippa Powys to an American Friend, 1938–1954*
3.15 Tea
4.00 **Free session** or **tour of Uppingham School**
5.15 **Annual General Meeting**
6.30 Dinner
7.45 **Peter Burman** *A. R. Powys: Architect and Conservation Statesman*

Sunday, 25 August

8.00 Breakfast
9.15 **Henning Ahrens** *'A New World, Risen, Stubborn with Beauty, Out of the Heart's Need': Taliessin's Song*
10.30 Coffee
11.00 **John Hodgson** *Chance Groupings: An Anatomy of Ecstasy*
12.45 Lunch and Departure

There will be a BOOK SALE at the Conference, so please bring as many books as you can (preferably with Powys connections) to donate.

Chairman's Report

The Charity Commission requires a report by the Chairman for each calendar year. The following is a summary of the activities of the Society for 1995. The Chairman's Report at the 1996 Annual General Meeting will include an update of events in 1996.

The Annual Conference was held in August at Kingston Maurward and was well attended by many of our U.K. members as well as members from Canada, U.S.A., France, Zimbabwe, Holland, Sweden and Albania. The Annual General Meeting was held during the Conference and the officers and the Committee re-elected by a unanimous vote.

The Committee and the Publications Committee met three times in 1995, which has been a period of consolidation with a number of outstanding projects completed or advanced. The largest on-going project is the readying of the Powys Society Collection housed at the Dorset County Museum. Cataloguing continues slowly but surely with the assistance of Philip Toogood who has now put a large majority of the books on card files. Another volunteer has stepped forward to help with the huge task of making an equally detailed inventory of the manuscript material. The Museum now has its special data-base programme set up and work can begin on transferring our collection onto it.

In connection with the Powys Society Collection, the Advisory Committee on Gifts and Bequests had its annual meeting to discuss the Museum's plans for future housing and preservation of its literary collections as well as work space for visiting scholars. The timing depends on grant money becoming available.

The new Literary Gallery is taking shape and the co-ordinator, Judith Stinton, has reserved generous space for the Powyses and their circle. She has closely liaised with the Chairman and both feel that this gallery will do much to further publicize the Powys family. A new leaflet is being designed by the Society which will be available in the Gallery to the public.

Much of the Committee's time and effort, particularly that of the Treasurer, Stephen Powys Marks, was devoted to revising the constitution with the aim of making the functioning of the Society more accessible to members.

The fifth volume of *The Powys Journal* was published in 1995 and the *Newsletter* continues to go out regularly to members three times a year. Both contain material of the greatest interest to scholar and reader alike.

Other Society activities in 1995 included a Montacute Walk, organized by Eve and John Batten – a two day event enjoyed by many members; and a celebration of Llewelyn's birthday, which included lunch at the famed Sailor's Return and an enjoyable walk along the Dorset cliffs to the Stone.

Morine Krissdóttir

£620 received so far for the Literary Gallery: Will you help us reach our target of £1,000?

The Election of Officers and Committee Members

As members will know, the new arrangements for the election of officers and committee members will not now be in operation until next year. Therefore, we present a slate of candidates this year in our usual fashion, for election at the Annual General Meeting at Uppingham School on Saturday 24 August. We are grateful to those listed below for offering their services to the Society.

Chairman	Morine Krissdóttir
Vice-Chairman	Paul Roberts
Secretary	John Batten
Treasurer	Stephen Powys Marks
Committee	Griffin Beale, Bev Craven, Chris Gostick, Timothy Hyman, John Powys, Judith Stinton, John Williams

My Hermit Brother

[*The following essay was published in* John O' London's Weekly *on 11 December 1953 and forms a companion-piece to the essay by Francis Powys which was published in* Newsletter *No. 27.*]

My brother Theodore died on Friday afternoon, November 27th, at his home at Mappowder, a little village in the very centre of Dorset, far removed from the rush of the world. The end of his good and gentle life was not difficult and he suffered little pain.

He was the third son of the Rev. C. F. Powys, whose first five children were born at Shirley in Derbyshire. Of those five children now only two are left, John Cowper and myself, but we have all now reached an age when, as with an ancient forest tree, first one of the limbs and then another falls naturally to the ground.

It has always interested me that my mother, with an observation of human nature and of her children quite exceptional, summed up Theodore and his probable future very early in life. In a letter to one of her sisters she writes of Theodore, 'The little boy loves going for walks with me, and has begun to go off by himself.' 'To go off by himself' was one of his characteristics through his life.

Very early in life at Dorchester I remember him making a special home for himself among various shrubs, which he called 'Bushes Home'; and when he found himself at Montacute Vicarage in an old-world garden, he was able to make a still more secluded home; in these 'Bushes Homes' he would stay by himself thinking his own thoughts for hours at a time, even missing his meals.

He certainly went 'off on his own' in going to school; he went to Sherborne Preparatory School as his brothers had done, but not with them; he did not go on,

as all the rest of the brothers did, to Sherborne School, but he went to a private school at Aldborough in Suffolk, run by a Mr Wilkinson, whose son (Louis Marlow), the writer, though younger than he, became a great and loyal friend.

We used, of course, to meet in the holidays and I like to think of our fishing expeditions in Norfolk, and in the water of the Parret in Somerset, and of our skating together on the Somerset flats and ponds and climbing one summer day with John to the top of Snowdon.

On leaving school Theodore went to a Suffolk farm, where he might equip himself with knowledge to carry out his ambition to be a farmer. When he was nineteen his father bought him a small farm at Sweffling in Suffolk, and he worked away at it very steadily and happily. I used greatly to enjoy my visits to him in those days.

However, he had always been a great reader and thinker, and now that he was his own master he used to read more than ever, and before long he came to the conclusion that his real calling was that of Letters. So he sold his farm and lost not a penny in the transaction, and set off 'by himself' to find some cottage where he might live unmolested with his books.

He found a little house at Studland in Dorset and was at first very pleased with it, but he soon realised that this small lively seaside holiday resort was not really to his liking; and off he went again searching for the home he wanted. Then it was that he found himself in East Chaldon, a little Dorset village nestling at the foot of its Downs; and it chanced that one of a block of cottages which overlooked the green was empty and he did not hesitate to take it.

And to make things even more perfect he found in that village his life companion. It was there they started their peaceful and happy married life; it was there their two sons were born. Before long they moved into a larger brick-built cottage, standing in a field, surrounded by a little garden, which provided all they wanted and was their home till 1940.

Now he was able to live the life he had planned; working in the garden, reading and writing. He wrote copiously but had no sort of idea how to get his writings published. The first little book which came into my possession was given to me in 1907; it was a very small volume called *An Interpretation of Genesis*.

All this time he and his wife would frequently receive one or other of his brothers or sisters; he would give them a warm welcome, then, when they had gone, continue his writing. Finally it was, as it always was in our literary matters, that his brother John Cowper came to his rescue, and with his help his book, *The Soliloquies of a Hermit*, was published in New York in 1916 and finally in 1918 in this country.

This book had a great influence on more than one writer. The Cornish writer, Jack Clemo, in his *Confessions of a Rebel* says that the two English writers who influenced him were Robert Browning and Theodore F. Powys and it was to the *Soliloquies* that he frequently referred.

The first book that stirred public opinion was *The Left Leg*. I remember a friend of mine, a Consul in Italy, asking me about this book which had made such an impression on the critics, and how proud I felt of my hermit brother. From that date, 1923, onwards the books he had written, many of which had been kept in hiding, took the air again and new ones were written and they went one by one to Chatto and Windus, who published them with regularity, and they won the hearts of many faithful followers.

The late Mr Charles Prentice of the firm was a close friend to Theodore and by far the best study and appreciation of him is to be found in the introduction to *God's Eyes A-Twinkle*, which he wrote. Theodore's books were never best-sellers, but he always had a loyal following especially at Cambridge, where many people found great interest in studying his writing in detail and with infinite care.

Among others who admired him were Mr Ramsay MacDonald and Lord Thomson, and no doubt it was largely due to their influence that he was awarded a Civil Pension, an award that greatly eased his financial position.

I imagine his best-known book is *Mr. Weston's Good Wine*, an allegory dealing with Love which has been very widely read. And shortly afterwards there appeared *Unclay*, an allegory of Death. *Kindness in a Corner* was a book I loved and, of his stories, *The House with the Echo* and *Bottle's Path*; and I thought very highly of his *Fables*, which of all his books perhaps best showed his strange imagination.

I think we may say that as a writer he stands by himself, with an originality of thought entirely his own, with an amazing knowledge of human character, and with a dry humour which was with him always. He took life very seriously; and I think it was because he hated cruelty and insincerity so much, that these unpleasing characteristics appeared so often in his books. So often, indeed, as to make many unwilling to read them (I myself have at times found it difficult), but his purpose was to make their ugliness clear to all.

Llewelyn Powys used to say that Theodore spent all his life in searching for God. And it has always seemed to me that in this search he was successful; for a better, kinder, and more gentle man cannot have existed. And when in 1940 he finally settled in Mappowder, under the shadow of its beautiful little Perpendicular church, there was scarcely an evening that did not find him sitting therein in deep meditation, quite often with his friend the Rector beside him.

His elder son, Theodore, lost his life in Kenya; his second son, Francis, is playing an important part in the literary world as the joint owner of the Powys Bookshop at Hastings; and at home there is their adopted daughter, Susan, to be a help to her mother who watched over her husband with the utmost care from their marriage to his death.

I think a suitable ending to this article is the picture of Theodore which comes in one of my late wife Elizabeth Myers's letters; and his loving kindness is also manifest:

Littleton and I went to Mappowder to see T. F. Powys. He is a beautiful person, so wise, so humorous, so excellently good. I don't wonder that people like Lawrence of Arabia were so fond of him. I love him like anything. Some people hate his books; I enjoy them; there is a reason for every word he writes; even the parts where he describes dreadful cruelty.

He won her heart; and she too won his, for as he was saying 'Good-bye' to me, he whispered: 'Littleton, you must guard her very carefully.'

Littleton Powys

Violet

T. F. Powys always said that he first saw his wife as she was crossing the green at East Chaldon, he having walked over from Studland, where he was then living, to visit someone else. He never described her, but this is what he must have seen: a fairy-like girl with long fine hair so black that it had blue lights in it, a little merry face like a wide rose, eyes like violets, bright and shining, a perfect little figure, and, beneath the long frock, two equally perfect little feet and ankles. I expect the frock was white, or white with bright colours – I can't believe that the young Violet wore the subdued greys and blues and blacks that she wore much later in life, after the death of her eldest son.

She must have been seventeen. They married the next year, on her eighteenth birthday. I can think of more enjoyable birthday presents than an extremely shy and painfully self-conscious bridegroom, but Violet was nowhere near as romantic, and much more practical than T.F.P. She certainly admired him, probably liked him and may even have desired him mildly; the truth is that she was lonely, bored and quite uncomfortable, living as she did with her mother in her stepfather's house. Theodore was 'a good catch' and he came most opportunely. I don't think Violet and her stepfather got on at all well, from what she said at times, so even if he had tried to co-opt her help with the smaller livestock on the farm (which she would have much enjoyed) she would probably have wriggled out of it somehow. The Dairyman family, whose daughter Olive had been Violet's close friend, had recently emigrated. Violet's present suitor was about her own age, so goodness only knew when they would have enough money to marry – in any case, the boy, whose name I have forgotten although I actually met him sixty years later, being only a builder's apprentice would be a downward social step, which was not Violet's intention at all.

Then Theodore Francis Powys arrived in her life, big, good-looking, kind, courteous, very much in love with her, and a gentleman with money in the background. Violet told her unlucky suitor to take himself off, which he did and was never heard of again until some years after Theodore's death, when he arrived

unexpectedly, again proposed and was again refused, ostensibly because Violet on re-marriage would have lost her widow's pension, but in fact for the same reason as before, i.e. Theodore's widow was a small Somebody, Jack Who-zit's wife would have been a large Nobody. Jack Who-zit was a nice chap and I think Violet should have married him. I doubt Theodore ever knew of his existence.

On her next birthday, the 18th of April, Violet and Theodore were married in the East Chaldon church.

Without being in the least intellectual or at all addicted to reading or writing, and certainly with precious little formal education, Violet had a very good brain and considerable power of mind – after all, her father, who died when she was very little, had been a successful solicitor, and her poor little gentle mother came of a good local family. There was not much she couldn't understand and deal with – if she chose. It might well have been a highly successful and very happy marriage; and Theodore's writings might have been as joyous (though much less sententious) as Llewelyn's, had it not been for one or two little matters about which Theodore could not possibly have known.

One was that Violet was strongly money-oriented. This was not her fault; it

Violet Powys, with T. F. Powys (left) and Bernard Price O'Neill, c. *1905*

came of being brought up in households that were not only not very well off, but begrudging – I mean her grandmother's, where the sad little widow returned to live with her lively little daughter – from the remarks that Violet made to me from time to time, I would think that Grandmother Cox must have been a fair old Tartar – and then her stepfather's. Give the girl her due, Violet didn't want money to hoard it; she wanted it to spend, on her friends as well as on herself. She was truly generous and to dispense hospitality or presents gave her very great pleasure; but where money was concerned she had a most dangerous blind spot – she couldn't understand why it didn't flow on for ever, like the brook. She and Theodore always had enough – if carefully handled – but they had not more, and as Violet never learned the careful handling and tended to be less than good company when told that more she could not have, their home was not always one of peace. When Theodore's father died and it became clear that her husband's portion would be less than Violet had expected, she made no secret of her disappointment.

Another thing was Violet herself. In country people there is only too often a deep strain of black possessiveness. Some work hard to control it. Others don't. Violet didn't. That generation of Powyses was unique; all were gifted in one way or another. Violet had no special gift save a small talent for music which she did not much cultivate, and her very considerable beauty which she did not cultivate either, so that in a few years she lost it. Her stepfather's house was not one in which the arts were appreciated, also she had no personal experience of a close-knit family, and that alone would have roused her envy and jealousy. She set out to separate her husband from his family, and to some extent succeeded, as T. F. Powys greatly disliked travelling further than he could go on foot, and as most of his brothers and sisters lived beyond this quite considerable range, he only saw them when they came to see him, which might well have been oftener had they not been so aware of his wife's hostility. Ridiculously, she very much liked Llewelyn, who was the only one to make no secret of his dislike of her.

There was one other little matter. Violet was not much interested in love-making, not because she did not want a large family but through a genuine lack of interest. I know this from her comments in later life, and I can't think that Theodore was made any happier by it.

For the times they lived in, they were not really poor. They rented a thatched cottage in the village (and Violet said the thatch harboured bedbugs. Theodore would retaliate by telling her that on one of his rare visits to London he could see the bedbugs watching him from behind the picture rail) and I believe both their boys were born there. Then Theodore bought Beth Car, just outside the village, a nice plain brick house with a big garden, sunny rooms and its own water supply – two huge underground tanks. The rainwater from the roof ran into one and was finely filtered into the other. It reached the house by means of a hand-pump in the kitchen, and was clean, sweet and soft as silk. They spent most of their lives there,

only leaving it for the Lodge, at Mappowder in the Blackmore Vale, after the beginning of the Second World War.

I think some of their money troubles may have been caused by Violet's not being so well after the boys were born, and needing help in the house; also, Theodore surprisingly, employed a gardener, certainly not full-time, but a day or two a week – and these things mount up. Theodore had some excuse for they bought no vegetables, and he knew absolutely nothing about growing them, although he did work in the garden, cautiously, taking care not to upset the work of the professional.

It was at Beth Car that I entered their lives. Violet adored babies and toddlers, and had always longed for a daughter, so in theory I was the best antidote possible for the shock of her son's appalling death; but in practice this had gone too deep, and I doubt if I was as much as three when she collapsed with acute anaemia. I don't understand human ailments but I do know that Violet always had trouble with her periods (which should have made her more sympathetic to poor Phyllis Playter), and it is my guess that the news of the murder increased this so far as to cause this illness. I could be right, as she wasn't eating properly either, and also there was a natural wish for her own death. Theodore took over the care of me, which I hope helped him a little – he never could grieve openly, but his grief was none the less deep – and continued in it till his stroke occurred when I was about five or six. Violet recovered, slowly and painfully, and set about re-growing her lovely hair that had been cut short while she lay in bed scarcely able to move; she had me to sleep with her in the little front room and Theodore slept in the big front room. I had had my own little room at the back and, although I was too small to mind the change much, I didn't like it. But Violet thought I was 'the best thing since sliced bread', as they say nowadays; she baby-worshipped me and cuddled me and spoilt me rotten, and certainly I did help her recovery. She really loved little children, and I marvel that she only had two.

Then the war came, Theodore had his stroke, and we moved to Mappowder. This at a time when Violet was again ill; she was going through the change of life, and it hit her hard; she should have been in bed for at least some of each day, but one of the wrong things about that date in time was that most physical facts were ignored. Violet moved house, willy nilly. Theodore, very far from recovered, was in bed for some weeks after the journey, and Violet found that now when she really needed help in the house, she could not get it – a thing that had her husband been well he could have warned her of. At Chaldon, with its three or four big downland farms, mostly sheep or beef, there was little but domestic work for the women; but at Mappowder in the Blackmore Vale, with a proliferation of small farms and very few men left at home to run them, the women were needed on the farms. Violet was in real trouble; she had to do the laundry, arrange the furniture, get the meals and keep an eye on me, while looking after a very sick man and being far from well herself. I don't think she ever quite picked up from this. She was a very

small woman, not more than 5 foot if that, and although she would boast of her strength when young, she certainly had it not – who has? – when old. And the Lodge was a much more difficult house to run than Beth Car. Sure, it had mains water on tap, and electricity, and a bath with a table top (permanently inaccessible) in the kitchen; but it had an Elsan most awkwardly placed, instead of the straightforward outside arrangements of Beth Car; it had four rooms to Beth Car's eight, and facing north-east as it does, it is very dark; it was desperately damp, it had no telephone, and the water might be 'mains' and 'on tap' but it was harder than nails and tasted of chlorine. Well might Violet bewail Beth Car night and day!

Although the move *had* been her idea, Theodore had been talked into it, and he could have been talked out of it. What he couldn't be talked into doing, was going back. Not only because the military had commandeered Beth Car, a thing no-one had foreseen, or because he dreaded another move, but because he had fallen in love with the Blackmore Vale, and with Mappowder in particular. I never was over-fond of it and Violet disliked it heartily; but Theodore loved it and was utterly content.

Violet was not a good housekeeper. Not only was she acquisitive and untidy, but she had not the energy any longer to keep even so small a house more than moderately clean and sometimes she wouldn't even cook a meal, although when we had visitors she always made an effort and the food was good. It was Theodore, as soon as he had sufficiently recovered, who took charge of the fires, i.e. the big basket-grate in the living-room, and first the kitchen copper on washdays, and then the 'Ideal Boiler' as the copper was superseded and we had hot water on tap, which should have improved our lives considerably but somehow didn't. As I grew up and wanted to help in the house, Violet's response would be: 'Oh, you're in my way!' until at last I wouldn't help even if asked. She didn't like me much nor I her, she very much disliked teenagers and I don't like being shouted at; the change of life made her desperately bad-tempered and she wouldn't ask for help; as she detested Theodore's doctor and he her (as he did most women), of course she might not have got any. She took a very long time indeed to recover after a fashion, and she took it out most bitterly on us. There weren't many days when she didn't storm at Theodore for some omission of the house that, whether it might be real or imaginary, as we were but tenants he could do nothing about; and she'd rage at me and smack me for anything or nothing. Theodore would get up, put on his coat and go for a longer and slower walk than usual, and I would often go with him, but as he had his own room and was in it for most of the day, and I had no such refuge, the only time I really had any peace was when I was ill, which I often was – and Violet was marvellous when either of us were ill. She was a born nurse.

Unfortunately she went on smacking me until one day I realised that I was bigger and stronger than she was, and I said "Grr!" and grabbing her by her fat

little shoulders, shook her well. I wouldn't have minded being smacked for being naughty, but Violet would smack me because she felt like it, not hard, it's true, but a smack is a smack and very much more unpleasant for being undeserved.

She loved company, and going out. Being of a lively disposition and entirely without outside interests, in the totally literary and very quiet household of her invalid husband she must have been bored to tears. Not all that careful about her dress for everyday, when she did 'go out' or we had company she was always a picture of neatness, well-fitting frock, or 'costume' as a matching coat and skirt used to be called, pretty lacy 'false front' and pearl brooch, dainty little court shoes, a low-crowned, brimmed hat that I wouldn't mind wearing myself and gloves to match. Always very sombre, though; no bright colours. It was a great pity that she never made any real friends in Mappowder, but she'd never found out how; everyone at Chaldon either knew her from childhood or was related to her or her stepfather. At Mappowder she was in a foreign land and the move that was to be her Great Adventure had turned sour. She didn't know how to make the best of a bad job – poor little Violet! – so she turned on us; but when we were ill she really was a ministering angel, and when Theodore had guests, although she usually disliked them heartily (which the occasional one deserved) she always made them welcome and gave them the best meal she could.

Without doubt Violet's life would have been made much happier by a car, and I think she had some idea of how to drive, too; but naturally Theodore didn't want her driving off to Dorchester whenever she felt like it and buying goodness knows how much clothes and china that we didn't need and he would have to pay for, so he always said we couldn't afford one. There was a bus to Dorchester once a week, and sometime she would go in on it and spend the day with her maternal aunts at 7 Cornwall Road. Then they bought a pretty thatched house halfway up Mappowder village street, and Violet very often walked down 'for a cup of tea' and stayed several hours, now and then forgetting to come home and feed us. She must have been very lonely, for she'd little in common with her aunts; they were good women and kind, well-educated for their time, a generation back from Violet, and the eldest was a retired midwife and could talk interestingly of her experiences; but Violet at anything like her best had a sparkle and a liveliness that they were quite without, nor could they understand or entirely approve, which from time to time caused some hearty disagreements that often rebounded on us. I don't think Violet ever wanted a 'hobby', but just then, at the end of the war, it would have been difficult for her to take up anything sensible; she could and did knit, but was not much interested in it; she could sew but had no reason to do so; although mildly interested in practical woodwork she had no shed in which to work, and she did not care for gardening. With her nursing abilities, she would have made a good V.A.D., but the transport was lacking.

Violet loved and was quite fearless with all animals, and had Theodore gone back into farming would have been invaluable. Unfortunately she never had the

chance to keep anything but poultry until after Theodore's death, when she experimented with rabbits, guinea-pigs, proper pigs, donkeys – whatever she could find. It was not good for the income. Cats were her favourites.

While Theodore lived we never had more than four, but alas! after his death they proliferated and at one time there were thirty of them. We really needed three or four to keep the vermin down, but not more, and they became pests themselves. Violet wouldn't have the kittens drowned; she had the most passionate, uncontrollable urge to save and fight for life whenever she could, however damaged it might be. In this age, she might well have been a first-class small-animal vet, or possibly a doctor – she had the brains, when she cared to use them. I think she would have been a vet – she wasn't so keen on nursing humans, unless they were her own, when she'd work herself half to death for them, as she did for Theodore when he was dying. Her everlasting trouble (and ours) was that she was an eminently practical person who had married into an eminently artistic and literary family, and couldn't come to terms with it. It didn't matter a dicky bird, but she thought it did. She had no interest whatsoever in books, when, in the winter evenings, Theodore would read aloud some good classic novel in his slow beautiful voice, Violet would fall asleep – and to do her justice, much later in her life television had almost the same effect. But books, as far as Violet was concerned, were a sort of rival, and she had a real dislike of them. She'd read women's magazines fast enough, but I can never recollect seeing Violet actually reading a book; it was as if, the Powyses being great readers as well as writers, she had said in her increasing jealousy, 'I will be their exact opposite!'

What she thought of Theodore's writing I never knew, but as it was done in pursuit of money she would not have been against it. There was a very old small typewriter in the house, and at one time I believe she had intended to type his manuscripts, but whether she found them 'disgusting' (she certainly never read them when they were in print) or whether she tried to persuade him to alter them and annoyed him, I know not; but she never did type them or even learn to use the machine. Despite of her, we always had a lot of books. 'These books, these filthy books, they harbour the dirt!', one heard at least once a week. 'If I had my way, I'd get rid of the lot of 'em!' And to my horror, not long after Theodore's death she did just that, although at the time we did not need the money and he had loved his books dearly.

Apart from her lack of size and strength, Violet was a fairly good handyman, and could mend small things, change a fuse, etc., and she made no secret of despising the Powys family who (mostly) were not so practical. It was a pity, that, childlike and silly, but in some ways she was childish, and while this annoyed me, it pleased Theodore, who considered it a sign of loveable innocence. I thought it was a sign of refusing to take the trouble to think things out, myself, but I never said so to Theodore.

One great gift Violet did have, as was written once in a song about Marian

Powys Grey, 'Her door was always open and her house was free to all'. True hospitality is a rare gift, and is worth forgiving many shortcomings for.

The last three or four years of her life she spent at Hastings, with her younger son and his family, where she died. I believe she was very happy indeed with them. When, after very many years, I realised how much she had disliked and distrusted me ever since I grew up, I was shocked and very angry, and I find I still have not forgiven her, so perhaps I am not the best person to write about her. I tried to love her, and I never mistrusted her as she did me. We were the poles apart, I dare say that's why she felt as she did. I fear she had a less than happy life, so I must be more forgiving.

Theodora Scutt

T. F. Powys, Susan Powys (Theodora Scutt), Tamar Marks (Antonia Young), Katie Powys (behind), Isobel Powys Marks, Violet Powys, Herbert H. Marks (photograph taken at The Lodge, Mappowder, 1947)

Regional Activities

There has been a small but positive and enthusiastic response to my short piece in the November *Newsletter* asking for help and suggestions for local and regional activities, and as a result I am very optimistic that a number of new initiatives will get underway later this year. The first of these is likely to be a short visit to Shirley and the surrounding area in Derbyshire, where the Revd C. F. Powys was vicar from 1872 to 1879, and where John Cowper, Littleton and Theodore were born. J.C.P. writes particularly interestingly of this period in his *Autobiography*. This visit should make a fitting culmination to the last day of this year's Annual Conference being held in Uppingham from 23 to 25 August. If you are interested in attending either the Conference or the proposed visit to Shirley please let John Batten (tel: 01935 824077) or myself (see below) know as urgently as possible, if you have not already done so, as places for both are likely to be limited.

In addition, we have had a very positive proposal to hold an event for local members in South Wales, which could form the basis for a more regular network of meetings or other events in that area. This is likely to be held in Port Talbot, and details of this first meeting will be in the next *Newsletter*. I am also in the process of planning a weekend visit to Corwen and Blaenau Ffestiniog in North Wales, which will include short presentations and discussions as well as visits to relevant places of Powysian interest. Again, details will be in the next *Newsletter*, but if you would like to contribute to or participate in either of these events do please get in touch with me as soon as possible. This will not commit you to coming, but will give a feel for the potential level of interest and so help with the planning of each event.

A number of members have also indicated that although they live too far away to be able to attend events or activities they would like to have the opportunity to correspond with other members of the Society on matters of mutual interest, so do please drop me a line setting out your areas of particular interest and I will happily put people in touch with one another. Finally, I am always on the look out for new ideas and suggestions for events and activities, so do please keep them coming. I just love having the postman call every day!

My address is: Old School House, George Green Road, George Green, Wexham, Bucks, SL3 6BJ (tel: 01753 578632).

Chris Gostick

A New Editor for The Powys Journal

John Williams, a member of the Committee, has been appointed to take over as Editor of *The Powys Journal*, when Peter Foss completes his second stint of three years as Editor or Joint Editor with the publication of Volume VI this summer. His address is shown below. Charles Lock will continue as Contributing Editor.

Dr J. R. Williams, 12 East Hill, South Darenth, Kent DA4 9AN

'The Sixpenny Strumpet' (T. F. Powys)

The Brynmill Press regrets the rather long delay between the original announcement of its intention to publish a volume bearing this title – consisting of a reprint of Chatto's 1932 volume *The Two Thieves*, with the addition of the previously unpublished novella 'The Sixpenny Strumpet', together with an introduction and notes by Ian Robinson and a textual history by Professor J. Lawrence Mitchell – but wishes to assure those interested that the project is now almost ready for the printer.

The Press will treat orders registered on return-slips issued at the time of publication of *Mock's Curse* as still viable, unless it hears to the contrary. Additional orders, from those who perhaps had no access to return-slips, will of course be welcome.

The Sixpenny Strumpet will be a volume of some 400 pages, costing in the region of £25.

Mr Robinson has noted that the 'new' novella is indeed a marvellous work, marking yet a new emphasis in Powys's *oeuvre*.

The Brynmill Press Ltd, Peckthorpe Cottage, Denton,
near Harleston, Norfolk IP20 0AS.

Letters to the Editor
from James N. Dawson

Anyone who reads, as I have been reading, the Village Press edition of John Cowper Powys's *Suspended Judgments*, must be struck by the energetic enthusiasm with which the author tackles his varied literary subjects.

The book was first published in New York in 1916. It was thus addressed primarily to an American audience and is written in the manner of a series of lectures which often rise to a crescendo of appreciation. One can almost hear a speaking voice. That the assessments date is not surprising after a lapse of eighty years. What is interesting is when J.C.P's interpretation of a particular body of work runs totally contrary to one's own. For me this is the case with the essay on the novels of Henry James.

The Portrait of a Lady, for example, is referred to in passing by Powys as part of James's earlier work which 'lovers of simple story-telling prefer.' In this suspended judgment Henry James is called 'a great déraciné, a passionate pilgrim from the new world making amorous advances towards the old.' James's 'sublimated and apotheosised argot' and 'dainty tricks of speech' are described as a source of particular delight.

I think that these examples of the author's style are more irritating than not. But this is a purely personal view. What is most strange is when Powys writes: 'Perhaps our final estimate of him, what emerges from James's doctrine is the height and depth and breadth of the gulf which separates those who have taste and sensitiveness and those who have not.'

Powys likes to stress the artistic sensibilities of some of James's characters. In the novel I have mentioned, Madame Merle is discovered playing Schubert beautifully. Gilbert Osmond, her conspiratorial partner, trades on his aesthetic reputation. But he is a mean, cruel fortune-hunter and together they are two of the vilest creatures in modern literature.

Henry James is a writer of commanding power, who, at his best can recall Balzac. But the passages which, for Powys, evoke '... long sunny hours under misty trees and interminable conversations upon smooth-cut lawns' often seem to come out of an old-fashioned society novel read in slow motion.

In The Portrait of a Lady, with tragic irony, the well-intentioned generosity of the Touchetts, father and son, to Isabel Archer unwittingly sets her off on her disastrous marriage to Osmond.

The novel, at any rate, ends on a note of slight ambivalence. Another, *The Wings of the Dove*, has a climax of death, guilt and disillusion.

At the end of this century 'the world created by Henry James' does not, for me, conjure up 'some classic Arcadia of psychological beauty'. Not far beneath the surface it looks forward to the world of *The Great Gatsby* or *The Bonfire of the Vanities*.

James N. Dawson

We have also received a letter from Graham Carey, who is extremely interested in tracing the original of a photograph of John Cowper Powys which appeared in *The Sunday Times* of 23 June 1963 over the headline 'The Titan of Blaenau Ffestiniog' to illustrate an article by George Steiner. The photograph, which has been described by Francis Powys as 'probably the best [he had] ever seen', was taken by Aubrey Dewar.

Graham Carey is interested in exploring the possibility of having this photograph reproduced and would welcome any help and any information regarding the whereabouts of the original, or of Aubrey Dewar. Mr Carey can be contacted at 6 Granville Terrace, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 4HW, or by telephone on 01274 568973.

Graham Carey also informs us that he and Clare Bremner will be teaching a weekend school on *A Glastonbury Romance* and John Cowper Powys's philosophy at a venue near Glastonbury, probably on 11–13 October. For further information about this event, please telephone Lynne Prior on 01274 610243 or 01274 616486.

P.R.

Philippa (8.5.1886–11.1.1963)	CFP's half-sister Philippa Shirley (was godmother to John Cowper Powys); Philippa's daughter Mary Philippa
William	MCP's father and brother, both William Cowper Johnson; mother's mother's father, William Tasker
Ernest (3.3.1888–4.10.1978)	CFP's cousin Charles Ernest, son of Theodore Moilliet; cousin once removed William Ernest, grandson of James Moilliet
Lucy	MCP's cousin Lucy Millett, niece of John Barham Johnson's wife Anna Morse; cousin Lucy Rogers, dau. of aunt Mary Theodora WCJ's mother's cousin and sister-in-law Lucy Barham AP's brother James Moilliet's wife Lucy Galton; James Moilliet's daughter Lucy Amelia and grand-daughter Lucy Edith LCP's sister Lucy
Amelia (22.11.1890–7.11.1986)	CFP's mother, AP (died 8 months before Lucy Amelia Powys); AP's mother; CFP's cousin Lucy Amelia, daughter of James Moilliet

Sources

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Henry Staniforth Patteson, by I. K. Patteson (1899): Patteson pedigree, 17th–19th C.

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The "Family Log" of Captain H. M. K. Moilliet, copied by John Lewis Moilliet V [grandson of James Keir Moilliet: see note *a*] (1967), typescript 35 pages photocopied, with coats of arms and extensive pedigrees.

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Letters and Diaries of the Norfolk families of Donne and Johnson, 1766–1917, edited [and selected] by Mary Barham Johnson (1985), photocopied manuscript, 764 pages in 3 volumes, with pedigrees and illustrations.

'"Derbyshire Born, Derbyshire Bred ...", or Why John Cowper Powys was Born at Shirley', by Charles Lock, *The Powys Journal* 1 (1991), 14–26.

Letters and other papers in my possession; brief notice in 'Mary Cowper Johnson', by Stephen Powys Marks, *The Powys Society Newsletter* 24 (1995), 4.

I am grateful to Charles Lock for comments on a draft of this paper, and to Louise de Bruin for some of the more elusive dates of the eleven children.

in Heaven.'§ The next day, October 17th, Amelia writes again: '... I also loved your reason for not calling your boy Littleton, it was just like my own Charley. My father's name was also John (John Lewis). I like the name John Cowper & felt pleased that he would have one of our dearest Mary's names, as well as of her good Father's & Brother's.' It is tantalizing that the reason for *not* calling him Littleton doesn't appear!

It might be expected that a clergyman would use names with religious associations: here are John for the first son, Mary for the first daughter. Theodore, a Moilliet name, means the 'gift of God'. The only intruder without any discernible antecedents among the family names is Llewelyn; it is also the only Welsh name amongst the twenty-one bestowed on the eleven children. However, we do read, in JCP's *Autobiography* (p. 26) that 'My father's eyes used to burn with a fire that was at once secretive and blazing, like the fire in the eyes of a long discrowned king, when he told us how we were descended from the ancient Welsh Princes of Powysland.' Though not attested in any documents, there is enough indication at least to suppose that there could have been a connection with these ancient Welsh Princes; there were two named Llewelyn in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and much earlier a St Llewelyn associated with the area of Wales now called Powys, not far from where the first authenticated Powys ancestors are known to have lived. In an earlier *Newsletter* (April 1992, p. 8) I referred to a much more likely provenance (see the table of names below).

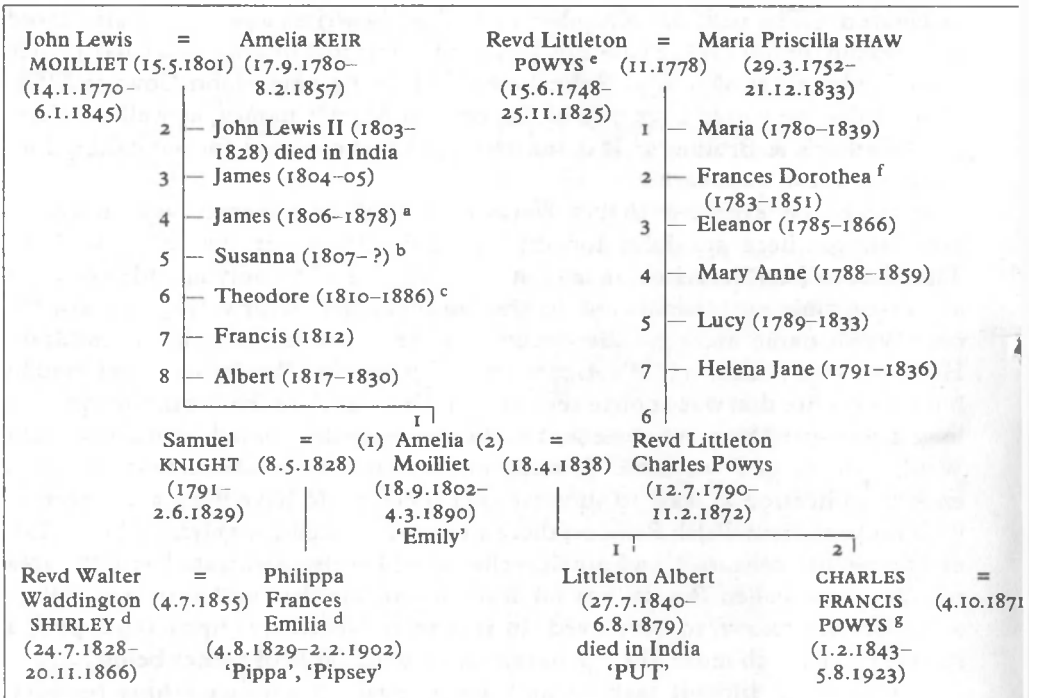
It is a most difficult task to look for special acquaintanceships between members of a family or indeed outsiders which would affect the choice of name, but chance reading or observations can help to show a close relationship. I will give two examples. Emma Sophia Bent (daughter of James Moilliet; see note *a* to pedigree), writing in 1936 some recollections of Littleton Albert Powys whom she had met in about 1851, considered him 'my favourite cousin of all my boy cousins, but we never met again.' She recounts that Littleton Albert once called, when on leave from India, on her father. In my second example, Susanna Smith (née Moilliet; see note *b*) had a grandson Basil Powys Smith, which must indicate some special regard for the Powys family amongst his parents or grandparents.

Stephen Powys Marks

§ *One of CFP's godfathers was Charles Shaw-Lefevre (1794–1888), 1st Viscount Eversley, Speaker of the House of Commons, whose portrait used to hang in the Montacute dining room.*

The following abbreviations are used below for the parents and grandparents of the Montacute family:

CFP	Charles Francis Powys (1843–1923)
LCP	Littleton Charles Powys (1790–1872)
AP	Amelia Powys (née Moilliet, 1802–1890)
MCP	Mary Cowper Powys (née Johnson, 1849–1914)
WCJ	William Cowper Johnson senior (1813–1893)
MJ	Marianne Johnson (née Patteson, 1812–1894)



First occurrences of surnames in the pedigree are shown in capital letters.

MOILLIET

a *James Moilliet* m. 1832 Lucy Galton (1809–48); children: Lucy Amelia (1833–67), Frances Anne Adèle, James Keir Moilliet, John Lewis III, Tertius Galton, Emma Sophia (1844–1940); Emma Sophia m. 1866 William Theodore Bent (d. 1890); their children: Lucy Edith (b. 1867), Rowland Theodore (b. 1868), William Ernest (b. 1874).

b *Susanna Moilliet* 'Susie', m. 1833 Revd Charles Smith (1798–1891); children: Constance (1839–70), Bertha, Herbert, Reginald (b. 1844); Herbert's children include Basil Powys Smith (b. 1878).

c *Theodore Moilliet* m. twice, 4 sons: Theodore Yeatman (1842–64), Charles Ernest (b. 1844), Francis Albert (b. 1848), Charles Townsend (1850–1927).

SHIRLEY

d *Walter & Philippa Shirley* children: Alice (1857–1911, m. 1887 Revd W. R. Linton, Vicar of Shirley, daughter Viola Marion b. 1892), Mary Philippa (b. 1857), William (1859–61), Laeta (b. 1861), Walter Knight (1864–1937, 11th Earl Ferrers 1912, m. 1890 Mary Jane Moone), Ralph (1865–1946).

POWYS

e *Revd Littleton Powys (b. 1748)* his great-great-great-grandfather, Thomas Powys (1617–71) m. Anne Littleton (d. 1655), daughter of Sir Adam Littleton, Chief Justice of N. Wales.

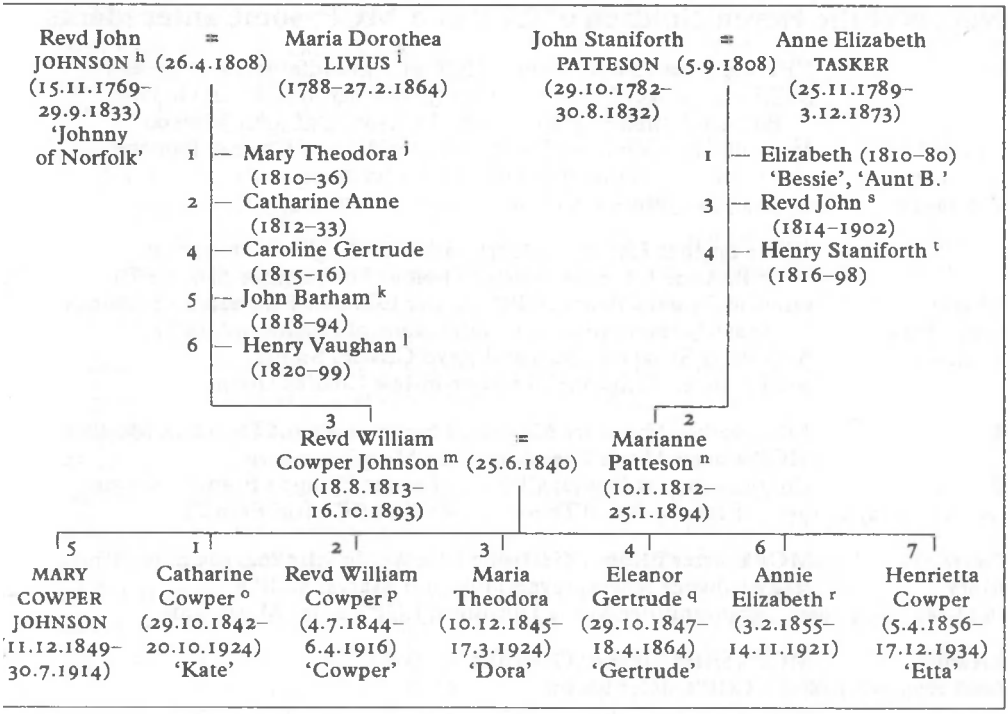
f *Frances Dorothea* m. 1838 Revd W. H. Mann; no children.

g *Charles Francis Powys* at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge 1862–66, MA 1869, ordained 17 March 1867; curate, Bradford Abbas 1867–72; vicar, Shirley 1872–79; curate St Peter's, Dorchester 1879–86; vicar, Montacute 1886–1918.

JOHNSON

h *Revd John Johnson* his father John Johnson of Ludham (1717–85) was first cousin of William Cowper the poet (1731–1800), cared for in his last 5 years by Revd John Johnson.

i *Maria Dorothea Johnson* birth-date 1788 in Eleanor Powys's MS book preferred to 1790



given in *Letters and Diaries*, as she is stated in a letter to be 19 years old in February 1808.

[j] *Mary Theodora Johnson* m. Revd Robert Rogers; daughter Lucy.

[k] *John Barham Johnson* m. 1845 Anna Morse (1817–87); children: Revd Henry Barham Johnson (1848–1917, daughter Mary Barham Johnson, 1895–1996), Hamilton, Emily (1850–1946, m. cousin Cowper: see note *p*), Alice (1855–69), Margaret (1857–1932).

[l] *Henry Vaughan Johnson* m. Hon Cecilia Campbell ('Aunt Cecie'); children: Bertram (b. 1863), Hubert, Edina, Robert (b. 1871).

[m] *Revd William Cowper Johnson (b. 1813)* visited LCP in Stalbridge in 1837. Other connections between the Johnson, Patteson and Powys families are given in 'The Powys Mother' p. 60 (see *Sources* and note *s*).

[n] *Marianne Johnson* her first baby, Mary Elizabeth, was born in March 1841 but died a few weeks later; twins, born prematurely in November 1841, died at birth, amid worries for Marianne's life.

[o] *Catharine Cowper Johnson* m. 1887 second cousin once removed, William Mowbray Donne ('Mowbray', 1833–1908); no children. Mowbray Donne and brother Charles were grandsons of Catharine, sister of Revd John Johnson.

[p] *Revd William Cowper Johnson (b. 1844)* m. 1875 cousin Emily Barham Johnson (note *k*); 6 sons: Father Hamilton (1877–1961), Wilfred (b. 1879), Kenneth (b. 1880), Austin (b. 1882), Maurice (b. 1884), Bernard (b. 1887).

[q] *Eleanor Gertrude* was very close to MCJ and died of TB when the latter was 15, leaving her in a ten-year gap between sisters.

[r] *Annie Elizabeth* m. Revd Cecil Blyth who had cousin Reginald Herbert Blyth; children: Margaret (b. 1886), Ernest William (b. 1888), Arthur Cecil (b. 1890), Reginald (1891–1915).

PATTESON

[s] *Revd John Patteson* was curate to LCP in 1838–40 (? longer); m. Elizabeth Hoare (1814–98); children: James Carlos, Frank, Alice, Caroline, Katharine. Godfather of JCP.

[t] *Henry Staniforth Patteson* m. 1850 Isabella Katharine Partridge; children: Henry (b. 1851), Katharine, Marion, Margaret.

Names of the eleven children of CFP and MCP: some antecedents

John	CFP's gf John Lewis Moilliet [**NB**: gf = grandfather; g- = great-]
	MCP's uncle Revd John Patteson (godfather to JCP); uncle John Barham Johnson; gf Revd John Johnson; g-gf John Johnson
Cowper (8.10.1872–17.6.1963)	Mary COWPER Johnson; MCP's brother William Cowper Johnson ('Cowper'); father William Cowper Johnson; g-gf John Johnson's cousin William Cowper (poet)
Littleton	CFP's brother Littleton Albert; father LCP; gf Littleton; *et al.* (NB. Anne Littleton, wife of Thomas Powys, gggg-gf of CFP)
Charles (25.4.1874–27.9.1955)	CHARLES Francis Powys; CFP's father LCP; CFP's godfather Charles Shaw-Lefevre; cousins Charles, sons of Theodore Moilliet
	AP's sister Susanna's husband Revd Charles Smith
	MCP's sister Catharine's brother-in-law Charles Donne
Theodore	AP's brother Theodore Moilliet; Theodore, son of Theodore Moilliet
	MCP's sister Maria Theodora; aunt Mary Theodora
Francis (20.12.1875–27.11.1953)	Charles FRANCIS Powys; CFP's half-sister Philippa Frances; cousin Francis, son of Theodore Moilliet ('Cousin Frank')
Gertrude	MCP's sister Eleanor Gertrude ('Gertrude', d. 1864, see note *q*))
Mary (6.10.1877–23.4.1952)	MARY Cowper Powys; several Johnson Marys; MCP's grandmother Maria Dorothea; LCP's sister Mary Anne
Eleanor (20.8.1879–19?.4.1893)	MCP's sister Eleanor Gertrude LCP's sister Eleanor
Albert	CFP's brother Littleton Albert (d. 1879)
	AP's brother Albert Moilliet
Reginald (16.7.1881–8.3.1936)	CFP's cousin Revd Reginald Smith, son of AP's sister Susanna Smith (née Moilliet)
	MCP's sister Annie's husband's cousin Reginald Herbert Blyth
Emily	AP called 'Emily'; CFP's half-sister Philippa Frances Emilia
	MCP's cousin Emily Barham Johnson married MCP's brother Cowper and was bridesmaid at MCP's wedding
Marian (27.10.1882–1.3.1972)	MCP's mother Marianne Johnson; cousin Marion, daughter of Marianne Johnson's brother Henry Patteson
Llewelyn (13.8.1884–2.12.1939)	CFP letter to Llewelyn Powys of August 5th 1909 refers to 'death of my friend Llewelyn'. This was Revd David Nicholas Llewelyn, CFP's contemporary at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (BA 1865), Rector of Llansannor, near Cowbridge, S. Wales, 1870–87 (listed in AP's address book); Llewelyn Powys's godfather
Catharine	MCP's eldest sister Catharine Cowper Johnson
	WCJ's sister Catharine Anne; numerous other Johnson Catharines
Edith	CFP's cousin once removed Lucy Edith, grand-daughter of James Moilliet
	MCP's cousin Edith Morse, niece of John Barham Johnson's wife Anna Morse

Philippa (8.5.1886–11.1.1963) CFP's half-sister Philippa Shirley (was godmother to John Cowper Powys); Philippa's daughter Mary Philippa

William MCP's father and brother, both William Cowper Johnson; mother's mother's father, William Tasker

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The Ecstasy of the Unbounded
Exploring Powys Links

Little has been written about Llewelyn Powys outside the Powys circle. When one does read of him he is always portrayed as one of 'The Powys Brothers', very rarely does one come across any mention of Llewelyn's worth as an individual writer deserving of personal evaluation, he being too often cast in the shadow of his elder and more illustrious writing brothers, John Cowper and Theodore Francis Powys.

Of course, these facts are well known by Llewelyn's admirers and have been well documented in the pages of The Powys Society's publications. Nevertheless, at the risk of being accused of 'raking over the coals' I have no hesitation in reiterating the words issued by *Newsletter* editor Paul Roberts when introducing an article on 'Llewelyn's Stone: A Controversy' in issue No. 21 because of their vital importance to this research:

> However, the matter is clearly more than simply one of words carved upon stone. What we have here is an argument about the very nature of Llewelyn Powys and his work (and, since the man, his work and his beliefs are so inextricably bound together in Llewelyn Powys) the question of his stone is the question of his worth.

This question of Llewelyn's worth is certainly intriguing. Most commentaries acknowledge his worth from a purely literary viewpoint and praise is duly given to his rich and unique biographical essays, produced both at the beginning (*Ebony and Ivory*, *Black Laughter*, etc.) and at the end (*Somerset* and *Dorset Essays*, *Swiss Essays*, etc.) of his writing career. In between lies a body of work mainly consisting of autobiographical reminiscence, historical literary essays, a hastily written failed novel and some of the most profoundly beautiful prose ever written in defence of his religion – LIFE!

Kenneth Hopkins observed that 'it is the philosophy which, ultimately, must be the reason why we read Llewelyn Powys at all' and this bold statement holds the key, I believe, to the mystery surrounding Llewelyn Powys's literary genius, and marks him as perhaps the most undervalued of modern-day radical prophets.

Llewelyn was a poet and a rationalist, a rare enough combination, and his choice of ankh as his personal symbol was as precise as the rationalist poet's symbolism always is. In what has been written about him the plain fact that he was first and foremost a rationalist has been largely overlooked, and it is this fact which provides the clue to the 'mystery' of the inscription on his memorial stone and to the somewhat baffling character of his religious beliefs.

Once it is accepted and understood, the mystery vanishes and he is revealed as far more than just a writer of beautiful prose poetry and startling essays, but as seer, visionary and radical prophet.

Despite the differing mediums in which they wrought their respective art,

there are strong aspects of deep religious undertones marking each of the Powys brothers' work and most would agree that this was inevitably a product, or psychological development, of their upbringing and environment. All had the same starting point and early development in a Victorian vicarage towards the end of the nineteenth century and all were thus subjected to the narrow Victorian concept of God from a very early age. All three rejected orthodox Christianity in varying degrees, Theodore least and Llewelyn most of all, whilst John explored and accepted a whole number of religious possibilities.

The view that an understanding of an author's work is greatly enhanced by a knowledge of the circumstances of his life obviously contributes to any perception of his worth or value as a writer and in Llewelyn's case there is no doubt that certain key elements were responsible for his avowed atheism, his impassioned defence of rationalism, and his complete rejection of Christianity and any other of the orthodox man-made religious systems. The discovery of his illness at so young an age, the personal defeat inflicted upon him when his fiancée Marion Linton chose God and the Catholic Church by entering a nunnery and breaking off their engagement, his experiences of life in the raw in Africa – all are contributory psychological factors in Llewelyn's finally formulated viewpoints which he expounds in his greatest work, his philosophy, which marks his true worth as a literary genius.

It was the controversy surrounding Llewelyn's stone and Paul Roberts' comments about his worth which prompted me to research Powys links with the Unitarian religion, for I had long felt that Llewelyn's professed rationalist philosophy bore all the hallmarks of Unitarian Humanism championed by the modern liberals within the movement.

Unitarianism took root and grew from the nonconformity which followed the Great Ejection of clergy who refused to sign the 39 articles of convention contained in the 1658 Act of Uniformity. More than a century later many of the English Presbyterians and the Congregationalists had become Unitarian with the legalising of Unitarianism in 1813.

These early Unitarians professed a belief in the Unity of God and did not accept the Trinity. In the main they were Protestant Dissenters who rejected the virgin birth and transubstantiation, and as new knowledge unveiled new truths they evolved to a rejection of the resurrection of the body and began proclaiming Jesus as 'the greatest human exemplar', but human nevertheless! Some modern-day Unitarians reject the idea of God altogether, and, holding Jesus as an example of human goodness, project a more ethical and less theological view of religion, much in the vein of Llewelyn Powys, a devout atheist!

This was basically my position during my time as a Unitarian minister, and it was whilst at Manchester University training for ministry that I first discovered Llewelyn. I was researching the historical evolution of modern Unitarianism with a particular interest in Humanism and the Nature religions, generally classified

as Pagan, but which held a deep reverence for life and advocated a natural worship of Mother Earth.

I came across *The Pathetic Fallacy* in the college library and became convinced that the author must be a Unitarian. After all, it was a Unitarian College library and all the books related in some way to Unitarianism; most were written by Unitarian scholars; and the book itself exhibited an almost complete reiteration of some modern Unitarian beliefs.

I checked the library lists of well-known Unitarian authors – plenty of the American variety, Thoreau, Emerson and Whitman, and our own Elizabeth Gaskell, Sir Alister Hardy, C. P. Scott (Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*), James Martineau and many others – but no Powys.

Next I checked the back issues of *The Inquirer*, the fortnightly Unitarian newspaper, and found a number of listings for John Cowper Powys. Delving into 30 years of back issues I found half a dozen references to John Cowper Powys in articles written by Revd Muriel Hilton, author of several excellent books and a writer of the calibre of Mary Webb and Elizabeth Myers.

I failed to make any connection at this time because of my lack of knowledge of the Powys family and their circle and it was not until recently, when this current research began that I finally contacted Muriel Hilton, now a retired octogenarian living alone in Hastings.

In the interim I had discovered and explored a connection between the Lindsey Press (now defunct) which was the publishing wing of the Unitarians, and the Rationalist Press Association, which became the publishing wing of the Humanist movement.

The clue lay in a copy of the *Rationalist Annual* of 1937, which contains Llewelyn's expertly written essay 'How I Became And Why I Remain A Rationalist', published by Watts & Co. who also published *The Pathetic Fallacy* in their Thinker's Library edition (No. 22).

Some of the essays contained in the *Rationalist Annual* were written by eminent Unitarian scholars, and advertised on the front page alongside the name of Llewelyn Powys was *A Calendar of Joys* by Muriel Hilton!

Watts & Co. ceased publishing in the early 1950s, selling the imprint to Pitman's but I discovered that the Rationalist Press Association still exists and has its headquarters at Watts House at 88 Islington High Street in London.

The R.P.A. produced *The Freethinker* and currently produces *The Ethical Record* but its flagship publication is *The New Humanist*, which is the official journal of the R.P.A. under the excellent and discerning editorship of Nicholas Walter. Mr Walter kindly obliged me by providing a complete history of the R.P.A. and a historical analysis of its evolving ethos.

I learned that Charles Watts had succeeded his father as head of Watts & Co. and ran the R.P.A. during the time of Llewelyn's association during the 1930s. Charles Watts and Llewelyn Powys were good friends, as were a number of other

leading Rationalists, and Llewelyn was readily accepted by the association as one of their most eloquent and eminent members.

It came as something of a surprise to learn that Llewelyn did not take out membership of the R.P.A. until as late as 1936, shortly before he left for Switzerland, and yet by his own admission he had been a regular reader of *The Freethinker* for a quarter of a century and this Rationalist Press publication carried essays by both Llewelyn and John Cowper Powys.

Muriel Hilton confirmed my impression of Llewelyn's Unitarian Humanism, adding that she had always considered his 'earth philosophy a little too presumptuous in its rationalism for my taste, but finding much sympathy with, and being championed by the modern Unitarian Humanists'.

Married to the Minister of Hastings Unitarian Church, Revd Denbigh Hilton, the young Muriel Hilton ministered to her first congregation at Maidstone during the early days after the second world war and later succeeded her husband at Hastings where she became a frequent visitor to the Powys Bookshop. From here she purchased her collection of Powys books, John Cowper being a favourite author.

She became a writer of some repute, with books on meditation, philosophy and religion, and had a particular gift for poetry and prose essays. She has written a regular column in *The Inquirer* for over half a century, but recently failing eyesight has curtailed her output. Now in her 84th year and with her memory failing, she struggles to recall the events of the forties and early fifties, but remembers her meeting with John Cowper and Littleton Powys in those days long ago!

Muriel Hilton and Elizabeth Myers were friends, both born in the Manchester area in the same year of 1912. Muriel met Littleton when he and Elizabeth married in 1943, and it was through this friendship that she later met John Cowper Powys and was responsible for introducing him to Ichiro Hara, the Japanese Unitarian Professor of English.

Muriel had already reviewed Elizabeth's book *A Well Full of Leaves* for *The Inquirer* in 1944, and later, in 1950, quoted passages from the book in her regular column in the paper. The following year, 1951, witnessed the publication of *The Letters of Elizabeth Myers* by Littleton Powys and this is mentioned in Muriel Hilton's newspaper column in August of that year, where she writes:

> Many readers of *The Inquirer* will have realised that Elizabeth Myers is a writer of special significance to me ... after a quotation from her book in *The Inquirer* a few months ago several people including a Japanese professor of English literature at Tokyo University wrote and asked for some further particulars of the writer and her books.

Thus began Muriel Hilton's correspondence and friendship with Ichiro Hara, a fellow Unitarian. During the course of their correspondence Muriel discovered that they shared a love of John Cowper Powys's work, and when Hara expressed

a desire to correspond with 'an English gentleman of letters' Muriel promised to approach Littleton to see if he would put the suggestion to his eldest brother, which he did, and so began the correspondence and friendship between John Cowper Powys and Professor Ichiro Hara.

Muriel's recollection of meeting John Cowper Powys was vague, but she was sure it had taken place at the Powys Bookshop in Hastings. Ichiro Hara paid her a visit during a trip from Japan in the seventies, when his essays about 'John Cowper Powys and Cosmic Humanism' and 'John Cowper Powys and Eastern Mysticism' had found favour with British Unitarian publishers.

Of Littleton Powys Muriel sighs and warmly commends him as 'an extremely polite and most courteous genteel-man' and still cherishes a copy of his booklet *The Powys Family* inscribed to 'Muriel Hilton, from Littleton Powys. October 21st 1952'.

Llewelyn, whom she admired but never met, had upon him 'the ecstasy of the unbounded' which is the true measure of his worth as both a writer and philosopher. It is a worth not measured in worldly terms, but in terms of its spiritual value, which Muriel Hilton defines as 'The Magic Bonus', never more evident than in the gifts of nature.

Lawrence found it in a nightingale's song and the spread of a peacock's tail; Traherne found it in sunshine on 'immortal wheat'; children find it in the first snowfall of winter; Llewelyn Powys found it in Life itself. It is a childlike enthusiasm to create magic, to 'turn pumpkins into coaches and nothing into everything' and owes much to the human power of imagination. Here is the true worth of Llewelyn Powys, singing in the ether like fresh birdsong on May mornings and creating for us that magic bonus of the invigorating miracle of acute awareness of conscious being, of the here and now reality of our own glorious existence in a magical world!

Llewelyn Powys's final communication from his sick bed in Clavadel on November 21st 1939 was a postcard to his friend John Rowland which read:

> I shall be delighted, my dear John Rowland, to be associated with anything that you write, whether of roguery, poetry, or philosophy. I believe with you that the present desolations will pass and you and your children will live in a better age with simplicity and gaiety. Dust is soft, secret and silent. I am not so well, but have had a happy life for half a century in sunshine. Bless you, Llewelyn Powys.

Matches in the Darkness, a gift from its author, Muriel Hilton, has an opening essay entitled 'The Magic Bonus' in which she writes:

> John Cowper Powys practised the use of his imagination freely upon the events of each separate day. Each separate day. He tried to live afresh every 24 hours. He says he practised a sort of magic by his imagination. He concentrated on the sensations that have given pleasure through the ages 'the mysterious meeting point of animate with inanimate, had too to

do with some secret underlying world of rich magic and strange romance' and in another part of his autobiography he stresses again the incessant struggle we all have to retain our childlike nature. He says: 'How magically sagacious is childhood in its power of arriving at boundless effects through insignificant means. It is a criminal blunder of our maturer years that we do tamely and without frantic and habitual struggles to retain it, allow the ecstasy of the unbounded to slip away out of our lives'.

Llewelyn would have been delighted to have been associated with these sentiments expressed by his brother. We know this because his last postcard to John Rowland says that he would be 'delighted to be associated' with anything by John Rowland and *Matches In The Darkness*, written by Muriel Hilton and published by the Unitarian Lindsey Press in 1970, was designed and edited by John Rowland!

The Powyses tenuous links with Unitarianism are thus and no more, but it is only in piecing together the fragments of past friendships that these links are still traceable. Let us welcome them, retain them, cherish them as a precious gift and nurture our joy in the knowledge of them, and by so doing, never allow the ecstasy of the unbounded to slip away out of our lives.

Neil Lee

Editing for Whom?
A Responsible Reader's Notes on the Complete *Porius*

All dedicated Powys readers now know that Wilbur T. Albrecht's text of the complete *Porius* is, editorially speaking, a disaster area. We have had several authoritative reviews of the edition, most of which naturally expressed gratitude for the volume but also made comments on the typographical and other errors that ranged from polite sorrow to righteous indignation. The most critical, to my knowledge, has been Charles Lock's verdict: 'This text ought not to be circulated among the public. It could do enormous damage to Powys's reputation ... In its present state this is not a book to wish on one's enemies' ('On the New *Porius*', 44). Strong words but, in my view, thoroughly justified.

I enter the debate with much hesitation, since I have little experience of textual editing, and none with Powys material. I do so, however, because I represent a constituency (reasonably numerous, I suspect) which does not fit into Professor Albrecht's simplistic categories of 'casual reader' or 'serious student of Powys' ('Foreword', xiii). I call myself a 'responsible' reader because I submit that I read with a good deal more care than 'casual' implies yet I am not 'serious' in the sense

employed by Albrecht since I am not concerned about the exact reproduction of a chosen copy-text when it is patently in error.

The controversy (even scandal) over the complete *Porius* raises some serious questions about the nature and purpose of scholarly editing. I would like to discuss some of these matters in the following sections, and also to make a plea for further expert commentary on matters of interest and concern to 'responsible' readers who do not have access to holograph or typescripts and are badly in need of clear information on certain matters, especially those pertaining to Welsh language and culture.

1 Editing J.C.P.

In his 'Foreword' Albrecht comments with obvious accuracy on J.C.P.'s writing methods: '... he was notoriously casual about the editing of his work once he had committed it to the publisher' (x–xi). After getting the manuscript typed professionally, J.C.P. 'would then correct the typescript, often with little care, and send it to the publisher, readily acquiescing to whatever corrections or changes his publisher might demand. "He was always grateful for suggested amendments," Malcolm Elwin tells us ...' (xi). A little later, Albrecht acknowledges that J.C.P. was 'notorious for the vagaries and inconsistencies of his handling of punctuation and orthography" (xiii).

It is therefore evident that J.C.P. was unconcerned about the finer details of preparing and presenting a finished text. Indeed, he made his position unabashedly clear in one of his letters to Iorwerth C. Peate: 'I am ... a lecturer, a story-teller, preacher & speaker (even an orator!) first, & a writer secondly and therefore not being an artist I don't worry over punctuation or even syntax' (*Letters*, 72). In other words, he was prepared to leave such matters to his publishers' copy-editors. Since the texts of his earlier books, though by no means error-free, are in a decidedly better state than that of *Porius*, it is reasonable to assume that he received such help from most of his publishers, who seem to have applied 'house-rules' and smoothed out obvious inconsistencies. (To take a trivial instance, we find 'prehistoric' in *Owen Glendower* but 'pre-historic' in *Obstinate Cymric*, while both forms appear indiscriminately in *Porius*.). Whether J.C.P. got much help from Macdonald for the 1951 edition of *Porius* is not clear. If he did, I suspect it was minimal; at all events, Albrecht offers no opinion on the matter.

But the obvious and important conclusion to be drawn from the evidence is that J.C.P. was not a writer like the later James Joyce, for whom every letter of every word, however unconventional, is of potential importance, nor does he resemble, say, Gerard Manley Hopkins, who employed idiosyncratic punctuation in the interest of pace and emphasis. Surely an editor of *Porius* – especially one who once claimed that he was preparing 'essentially a reader's edition' ('Editing *Porius*', 9) – should not adhere slavishly to the readings of an admittedly

imperfect copy-text but should apply the normal copy-editing services that may not have been forthcoming in 1951, and were certainly not provided for the pages containing the now-restored cuts.

2 Editorial Principles in the Complete Porius

After describing the available holograph and typescripts, Albrecht explains their hierarchy of reliability and his resultant choice of preferred texts in specific circumstances. This in itself does not concern me here. What is significant is his application of these principles, and his paragraph on this subject needs to be quoted in full:

> John Cowper Powys is notorious for the vagaries and inconsistencies of his handling of punctuation and orthography; and, except in those instances where he has clearly not caught typographical errors in the process of correcting and editing the typescript, the present edition reflects his practice in these matters in all of its wonderful variety. For the casual reader of *Porius* this should not prove a distraction, and the serious student of Powys will appreciate the opportunity for approaching the text in a form as close as possible to the corrected typescript. ('Foreword',xiii)

This statement requires detailed scrutiny.

First, what begins as 'vagaries and inconsistencies' which many readers would regard as general sloppiness is suddenly transformed into 'wonderful variety' which apparently deserves preservation. As a responsible reader, I do find such errors and inconsistencies distracting, and at times (as I shall show later) decidedly confusing. Furthermore, one has to be brutally direct and assert that the 'serious student of Powys' will in fact find this text of no use whatsoever for the simple reason that it cannot be trusted. There is abundant evidence (some of which I shall be citing later) to indicate that the text is riddled with typographical errors and downright mistakes, and it is therefore impossible, without consulting the originals, to tell which readings have typescript authority and which have not.

If I understand Albrecht correctly, he seems to be saying that his edition follows the most reliable (or should one say the least unreliable?) version regardless of whether that version is demonstrably confused or ungrammatical or otherwise in error. Even if we grant the fact that his reproduction of his preferred version is often faulty, we should ask ourselves what serves J.C.P. best – a version that corrects his errors of haste or carelessness in the interests of a clean and clear text ('reader-friendly', as they say nowadays) or one that attempts (with whatever degree of accuracy) to preserve an authorial draft known to be full of errors and inconsistencies.

Given the nature of the situation, some difficulties are inescapable. Perhaps the most obvious, which Albrecht described as 'minor' ('Foreword', xiii) though it seems major to me, is the case of Rhun's spear in Ch. 29 which incongruously

becomes a sword in Ch. 33. There is nothing to be done about that. (One thinks of the occasions in J.C.P.'s beloved Homer and Proust where characters die on one page only to appear active and healthy a little later.) But matters of punctuation, spelling, and the inconsistent employment of alternative verbal forms belong in a different category. What purpose is served by adhering to demonstrable and readily corrected mistakes?

I shall now turn to some specific instances that should make my concerns clearer.

3 'It's' versus 'Its', etc.

Perhaps the most obvious grammatical oddity in the text is the continual and pointless veering between 'it's' and 'its' when the former is correct (I ignore, of course, the legitimate genitive 'its'). According to my count, which makes no claims to be exhaustive, there are well over 150 examples of the incorrect against just over 100 of the correct form. Doubtless J.C.P. frequently missed out the apostrophe in the excitement of writing, and 'Mrs. Meech's TypeWriting Bureau in Dorchester' ('Foreword', xi) apparently didn't take it upon itself to insert them. No useful purpose is achieved by retaining these errors, but the matter is more complicated than that. The most startling instance (startling because of the close juxtaposition) occurs in Rhun's speech, 'Its only – it's only this ...' (44). But a little later Neb ap Digon remarks: 'And you see its like this; when a person knows everything its the same as if he knows nothing' (73). In this case, the 1951 edition is grammatically correct (68). If this reading is not Albrecht's error, it means that he has deliberately re-inserted a J.C.P. slip because it appeared in the text that his editorial principles indicate he should follow. This is just one of the many such instances. I can only say that this procedure seems to me perverse and ridiculous. (To cite a similar instance, where the 1951 version correctly prints 'cocoons' (230), Albrecht presumably miscorrects to 'cacoons' (231). It is difficult to believe that so obvious a misspelling would be a typographical error in a 'scholarly' edition.) What has happened, one wonders, to Albrecht's promise of 'essentially a reader's edition'? Does he seriously think that the preservation of a casual sloppiness is preferable to a carefully corrected emendation providing what J.C.P. obviously intended?

Punctuation is a trickier matter, since it is more impressionistic, less cut-and-dried. J.C.P. tended, it would seem, to punctuate very lightly, and there are numerous instances of places where commas would normally be expected but are absent. At times, their presence would ease the reader in the course of negotiating a long and elaborate sentence. Once again, the 1951 version frequently contains plainly desirable punctuation which Albrecht omits. It looks as if a lot of trouble has been taken to produce a textually exact text for such non-essentials, while glaring mistakes (to be discussed in the next section) occur in important areas such as proper names. In addition, some bizarre insertions of punctuation in

Albrecht's text are logically impossible as well as practically inhibiting, and are presumably the result of typographical error.

It would be only too easy to add to this list of anomalies. Hyphens are a recurrent problem: thus Lot-el-Azziz and his 'ram's-horn' not uncommonly lack at least one hyphen.

Capitalisation is another disputed area, verbs often end in '-ize' or '-ise' indiscriminately, and phrases originally in italics suddenly appear in roman type within quotation marks for no apparent reason. Many of these details are, to be sure, unimportant so far as the sense is concerned (though capitals or the absence of them can sometimes be significant).

Personally, I was distracted when encountering 'O mother, mother! Oh, deep, sweet, mysterious, treacherous mother!' (313). Can there be a subtle distinction between 'O' and 'Oh'? Surely not.

4 Welsh Names and Allusions

Grammatical errors and solecisms, then, can be irritating but are hardly ever confusing. The situation changes when J.C.P. employs Welsh words with which many (most?) of his readers will be unfamiliar. I should, however, digress briefly here to note that names derived from other languages are extraordinarily uncertain in this text. Some of these must be laid at J.C.P.'s door; thus present-day Auverne appears here as 'Arverna' (xviii), 'Averne' (36), and 'Arverne' (62) – all of them also present in the 1951 version. Not only do we find the indiscriminate use of variant versions – 'Virgil' and 'Vergil,' for instance – for which J.C.P. is again presumably responsible, though the editor might well have regularised, but a number of 'howlers' (e.g., 'Anastastius' (167), 'Igantius' (735), and presumably 'Lybia' (39; 'Libya'? 'Lydia'?)) which are most likely to be typographical errors. When more widely known languages are garbled, what are the chances for Welsh?

Some examples need not concern us unduly. Thus 'Uther-Pendragon' (8), 'Uther Pendragon' (102), 'Uthyr Pendragon' (176) and 'Uthyr Pen Dragon' (845) all obviously allude to the same person. The discrepancies are annoying, but no one will be deceived. However, the following instances are more troubling: 'Caer-Gwynt' (25), 'Caergwynt' (33), 'Caer Gwynt' (134), 'Caerwynt' (272), 'Caer-Wynt' (694); or 'Caer-Leon' (25), 'Caer Leon' (78), 'Caer-Lleon' (668). I assume that each version is interchangeable with another within its set, but it is just possible that this is not the case. Here, if one is unfamiliar with Welsh language and geography, one can be genuinely puzzled. And what are editors for if they bring confusion rather than clarity to such matters?

I get the definite impression that no one with special expertise in Welsh was consulted in the preparation of this edition. On the opening page we encounter the name 'Ederyrn' (3). In the 1951 version, this appears as 'Edeyrn' (1), and one needs little Welsh aptitude to know that the latter is correct. Later 'Edeyrnion' (a

place) occurs where 'Edeyrn' (a personal name) is obviously intended (125). I suppose it is just possible that J.C.P. is in error (if so, Albrecht is once more preferring an incorrect version to a correct one), but it is far more likely that they are typographical errors, the result of ignorance of Welsh combined with poor proof-reading. Other examples could be cited, including 'Moel y Faman' (11) instead of 'Famau.'

An additional problem arises with the words 'gawr' and 'gawres' – or 'cawr' and 'cawres' – which, one gathers, signify 'giant' and 'giantess' respectively. The former usage occurs in the prefatory list of 'Character of the Novel' (xxii). The 1951 version seems consistent in using the former, but, especially in the chapter entitled 'The Cewri'. Albrecht favours the latter. Yet 'Rhitta Gawr' is always retained, and elsewhere the usage varies. And what, if any, is the connection between 'Gawr' or 'Cawr' and 'Cewri'? I admit puzzlement again, and am frustrated when the editor offers no help – indeed, confuses me still further. Once more I ask: what are editors for?

5 *A Final Word*

I write all this not merely to substantiate an obvious editorial mess, but to raise more basic questions. Should the needs of readers take precedence over the supposed integrity of a text when the author is known to ignore the niceties? Should common-sense be consulted even if this leads to the bending of strict (over-rigid?) bibliographical principle? Is it in the ultimate interest of authors for their works to be reproduced exactly as they wrote them, warts and all? Is a faithful but confused text preferable to an amended but clear and readable one? Should editors do more than produce what are hardly more than facsimiles of drafts adapted for print? Textual scholars, of course, debate such matters among themselves, but isn't it time that they considered 'responsible' readers, those of us who want authoritative but reader-oriented texts that make the great works of the past more rather than less accessible?

W. J. Keith

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1 Waterloo, Blaenau Ffestiniog

I was much intrigued by Michael Skaife d'Ingerthorpe's account in the last *Newsletter* of his interest in and visit to John Cowper Powys's last home in the slate-mining town of Blaenau Ffestiniog. So, being on business in North Wales in April this year, just after reading the article, I made my own pilgrimage, travelling over Crimea Pass from Llandudno by road and back *under* the slate mountain by train, past Pont Rufeiniog (Roman Bridge) station, within 6 miles of Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon). Remote Blaenau is served not by one railway, which survived the Beeching cuts, but two, using the same station in the middle of the town: the former British Rail route from Llandudno Junction on the line to Bangor and Holyhead, and the privately run narrow-gauge Ffestiniog Railway from Porthmadog on the west coast. Blaenau now looks like a centre for holiday makers, with guided tours of the mines and quarries.

I am glad to say that the tablet to J.C.P. and Phyllis Playter, referred to by

1 Waterloo, Blaenau Ffestiniog, April 22nd 1996

Michael with some concern, is still in place. As my photograph shows, the house has been treated with a bit too much 'care', but at least it *is* in good condition and it retains its old Welsh slate roof: I am not so sure that I like the rainwater head as a flower box or the carriage lamp over the tablet!

The tablet is of slate with a wooden frame. The inscription, with nicely carved letters, reads as follows:

JOHN COWPER POWYS
Author and poet
1872 — 1963
lived here for the
last nine years of
his life with
Phyllis Playter
his faithful companion
for over forty years.

Stephen Powys Marks

Porius, *a Partial Glossary: a Correction*

In Robert Kunkel's glossary of the Welsh names in *Porius*, published in the last *Newsletter*, Bran Bendigeit is said to be 'a euphemized Brythonic god'. This should have been 'euhemerized', which regrettably got changed in the editorial process, because 'euhemerized' is not in the latest edition of the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, which, in spite of its name, is quite comprehensive.

'Euhemerism' is, however, defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the big one, as 'the method of mythological interpretation which regards myths as traditional accounts of real incidents in human history'. Euhemerus, a Sicilian (*c.* 316 BC) was the author of a book in which he maintained that the deities of Hellenic mythology were deified men and women. To 'euhemerize' is to subject to euhemeristic interpretation. How many readers can honestly claim to be acquainted with Mr Euhemerus?

Apologies to Robert Kunkel. **S.P.M.**

Correction to Newsletter *24*

In the footnote on page 6 of *Newsletter* 24 (article on 'Mary Cowper Johnson'), Henry, not Hamilton, should be shown as the father of Mary Barham Johnson (see note *k* in article on page 21 of this *Newsletter*).

Subscriptions

Reminders are being sent out with this *Newsletter* to those who have not paid this year's subscription. **Please pay now**; we **need** your subscriptions and failure to pay will mean that you will not receive Volume VI of *The Powys Journal.*

Treasurer's Report for 1995

The accounts for 1995, on the next two pages, have been approved by the Society's Auditor, Stephen Allen, to whom I am grateful once more for his advice and his work. Our paid-up membership has again increased, to 295 (1994, 289); 143 subscriptions were paid by standing order. Our subscription income of £4,424, which includes tax refund on covenants and 1994 subscriptions paid in this year, exceeds last year's (£4,183); this represents 54% of a much increased income of £8,208 (£6,648). Net income from sales of our own publications brought in a lower figure of £884 (£1,458), but this was greatly outweighed by the proceeds from the sale of Grey Powys Books which had been purchased in the previous year (£1,357). Donations, including books for the book sale and a painting by Timothy Hyman, brought in £1,077 (£621).

As in previous years a large part of our expenditure went on our regular publications, *The Powys Journal* and three numbers of the *Newsletter*; the net cost of providing these, including distribution, was £4,183 (£3,577), a large part of the increase being due to the very substantial increase in the cost of paper during 1994–95. This represents 95.6% of our subscription income, exceeding our target of 90%. Our total expenditure on publication work, including copies of the *Journal* added to stock, the *Powys Journal Index*, and the *Index to JCP's Letters to Llewelyn*, but excluding postage costs, was in the region of £4,200. The largest other item of expenditure (£1,872) was on the restoration of pictures by G. M. Powys which had been bought in 1994. The value of stock dating from before 1995 has again been written down; the effect of this is that while we had a comfortable excess of income over expenditure (£442; 1994, £579) there was a paper loss which has been carried into the Statement of Funds. Our net worth at the end of the year, including the Wilson Knight benefactors' fund, was £7,249 (£7,623), of which £2,657 (£3,267) was represented by the value of stock.

Although there was a drop in our net worth, this was due to writing down our stock, and in fact there was an increase in our cash resources of some £230 since the end of the previous year. In my view, the Society finished 1995 in good financial health.

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 1995 and of the surplus for the year then ended and comply with the Companies Acts 1985. *J. S. Allen, Chartered Accountant, 14th June 1996*

THE POWYS SOCIETY

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1995

Income [1]			£	£	*1994*
subscriptions	for 1995 (295) [2]		4,123.84		
	tax refund due for 1995 [3]		171.51		
	for 1994 paid in 1995 (8)		129.00	4,424.35	*4,183*
donations [4]	conference book sale (donated books)		349.85		
	proceeds of sale of donated picture		650.00		
	other		76.80	1,076.65	*621*
publication sales	stock publications	1,031.71			
(excluding	*less* cost of publications sold	267.85	763.86		
postage)	commission on sales		80.16		
	Montacute gazebo sales & tape (£5)		39.80		
	net income		883.82	883.82	*1,458*
conference	fees received		5,076.70		
	expenses		4,860.65		
	surplus (4.25%)		216.05	216.05	*178*
Grey Powys Books, sales in 1995 (excluding postage) [5]				1,356.96	*75*
interest (gross)				250.21	*133*
				£ 8,208.04	£ *6,648*

Expenditure [1]			£	£	*1994*
The Powys Journal V (1995),[6] cost of 314 members',					
	complimentary and copyright copies [7]		2,210.15		
	cost of distribution		367.49	2,577.64	*2,177*
The Powys Journal III & IV, cost of supplying 9 copies to late subscribers				28.24	*24*
newsletters (3 in 1995), including distribution [7]				1,605.14	*1,400*
Powys Checklist, complimentary copies to new members				8.25	*17*
restoration of G. M. Powys pictures (1994: purchase)				1,871.86	*1,278*
G. M. Powys exhibition				796.71	–
Powys Collection at Dorset County Museum (shelving etc.)				25.00	*274*
stationery and photocopying (including mailing bags)				213.70	*229*
tape recorder repair (1994: recording equipment)				36.61	*47*
computer repair				42.00	–
advert in TLS (1994: questionnaire expenses)				114.36	*72*
general publication expenditure				40.53	*29*
card and flowers for 100th birthday of Mary Barham Johnson				27.18	–
overestimate in 1994 accounts of tax refund due for 1994				8.99	–
bank charge				1.50	–
officers' expenses and committee travel				368.32	*522*
				7,766.03	*6,069*
excess of income over expenditure		442.01		442.01	*579*
writing down of stock [8]		–816.82		£ 8,208.04	£ *6,648*
excess of income *less* writing down *carried to Statement of Funds*		–374.81			

Auditor's report – see previous page

THE POWYS SOCIETY

STATEMENT OF FUNDS

I *General fund* [9]	£	£	*1994*
funds at January 1st 1995		4,254.92	*4,712*
excess of income over expenditure *less* writing down		-374.81	*-457*
funds at December 31st 1995		3,880.11	*4,255*
represented by:			
stock of *The Powys Journal, The Powys Review,*			
and books at cost at January 1st 1995	3,267.29		*4,147*
add cost of purchases and publications, including			
The Powys Journal IV surplus to distribution [10]	500.54		*533*
less cost of publications sold 267.85			
The Powys Journal III/IV to late subscribers 17.50			
complimentary *Checklist* to new members 8.25			
writing down of stock [8] 816.82	-1,110.42		*-1,413*
value of stock at December 31st 1995 [11]	2,657.41	2,657.41	*3,267*
cash at bank at December 31st 1995 [12]		1,002.64	*1,133*
sums due to the Society, including tax refunds due for 1994 & 1995		329.66	*185*
		3,989.71	*4,585*
less subscriptions received in advance (7; 1994, 14, and creditors)		-109.60	*-330*
		£ 3,880.11	£ *4,255*

II *The Wilson Knight benefactors' fund* [9, 13]	£	*1,994*
funds at January 1st 1995	3,368.49	*3,368*
transfers to/from General fund		
funds at December 31st 1995	£ 3,368.49	£ *3,368*
represented by cash in deposit account	£ 3,368.49	£ *3,368*

NOTES

1 Cash turnover: total receipts, £14,528.69; total payments, £14,658.69, of which £500.54, relating to the cost of purchases and publications (*see* note 10), is carried forward in the General Fund. Other adjustments, relating to cost of publications sold etc., subscriptions paid in advance for 1996, and sums owing to the Society, give excess of *Income* over *Expenditure* for the year (before writing down of stock) of £442.01, all as shown in the accounts.

2 This figure comprises 281 (154 by standing order) paid in 1995 (£3,930.60) and 14 paid in advance in 1994 (£193.24).

3 Tax on covenanted subscriptions paid in 1995 will be reclaimed in 1996.

4 Total donations: £1,076.65 (as listed) unallocated + donation of cost of *Powys Journal Index*, £89.50 (*see* Note to note 10) + donation for *The Powys Journal* V, £200 (*see* note 6) = £1,366.15 (1994, £1,311).

5 All costs of acquisition were paid in 1994.

6 Gross cost £2,840.15, *less* advertisement fee £50 and donation £200 = net cost £2,590.15, *less* cost of copies taken into stock at run-on cost £380 = £2210.15.

7 Total net cost of producing and supplying *The Powys Journal* V (£2,577.64) & 3 newletters (£1,635.14 *less* £30 fee for insert = £1,605.14): £4,182.78 = 94.5% of 1995 subscriptions, including arrears for 1994 and tax refund due for 1995.

8 This is arrived at by writing down the value of stock at January 1st 1995 by 25%; new stock in 1995 is not affected.

9 General fund £3,880.11 + Benefactors' fund £3,368.49 = Society's net worth at December 31st 1995 £7,248.60 (1994: £7,488).

10 Undistributed copies of *The Powys Journal* V, £380; *Index* to JCP/LP Letters £113.47; *Death's Other Kingdom* (Woolsey), £7.07; = £500.54. (Note: cost of *Powys Journal Index*, £89.50, not included as covered by donation.)

11 No value is attached to stock which has not involved cost to the Society.

12 Current account £222.19 + deposit account £4,148.94 = £4,371.13, *less* Benefactors' fund £3,368.49 = £1,002.64.

13 Interest has been retained in the General fund.

Stephen Powys Marks, Treasurer

The Society's New Publications for 1996

The Society announces three new publications, either ready or in preparation, in addition to the annual volume of *The Powys Journal*.

The most important of these is *The Dorset Year,* an annotated and illustrated edition of the 1934–35 Diary of John Cowper Powys. The response to the leaflet sent out in the last *Newsletter* has emboldened your Committee to proceed with what is certainly the Society's most ambitious publishing project; the Committee hopes it will satisfy those who press us to do something substantial. Publication is planned for next year's Conference; order forms will be sent out to members of the Society in the January *Newsletter* and to other societies at the same time.

A new edition of Alan Howe's *Powys Checklist and Readers' Guide* has been prepared. It contains not only corrections (necessary as they were), but also a substantial amount of new material: books published since 1991; books by two more Powys authors, Alyse Gregory (wife of Llewelyn Powys) and Elizabeth Myers (second wife of Littleton Powys); and a listing of the issues of the *five* journals which have been devoted to Powys studies. The new edition is uniform with our other booklets, with 28 pages as before in spite of the extra material.

The third book is *A biographical sketch of Arnold Shaw*, whose name will be only vaguely, if at all, familiar to many people. He was, however, a crucial figure in the development of John Cowper Powys's writing and lecturing career in America. Paul Roberts begins his study thus:

> Writing in 1933, John Cowper Powys claimed that Arnold Shaw had exercised a greater influence over his life than 'almost any other person' and he devoted many pages of his *Autobiography* to 'his most perfect of stage managers'. Shaw had, after all, been his lecture manager for more than ten years as well as the publisher of eight of his books ...

John Cowper Powys himself says 'It was on this ship [the *Ivernia* in December 1904] that I met for the first time, met as a complete stranger, my life-long friend and bosom-crony, Mr G. Arnold Shaw.' So there should be no doubting the great interest to us of the material now gathered by Paul Roberts. This booklet, of 44 pages, is also uniform with our other booklets. As Paul Roberts is lecturing at the Conference on Arnold Shaw, this publication is particularly well-timed.

Available now

(see the enclosed leaflet, with special offer, or buy them at the Conference)

Powys Checklist and Readers' Guide, by Alan Howe, 2nd edition, 28 pages
ISBN 1 874559 16 3, £4.50, **£3 to members**, p&p extra

The Ideal Ringmaster, A Biographical Sketch of Geoffrey Arnold Shaw (1884–1937), by Paul Roberts, 44 pages, with portrait
ISBN 1 874559 17 1, £4.50, **£3 to members**, p&p extra