A **meeting** has been arranged for Saturday 21st November 2009 at the Friends' Meeting House, Hampstead, London (*for details contact John Hodgson*).

Editorial

Letters begin and end this *Newsletter*. Peter Powys Grey, then in his middle years, writes lovingly from New York to his cousin Mary Casey in Mappowder. And a kind great-uncle writes encouragingly to a young achiever in the art of printing. In between we have JCP under suspicion in California in 1918, with some intriguing research into his early friend, guru and protégé, whose portrait (*à la* Long John Silver) adorns our cover. We have thoughts on labyrinths, and on Sufism. Two random (but complete) days from the wartime Diary of 1942 show JCP's life comparatively uneventful on the home front, but at a time when Russia was both in his head as he began his Dostoievsky, and dominating the news with the siege of Stalingrad – sharing space, as ever, with prayer rituals, significant neckties and walking sticks, and the sun and moon. Glen Cavaliero read his poems at our meeting in June at Little Gidding, and we also discussed JCP's poetic output, some later examples of which are on pages 12 and 49, and on the back cover. No TFP this time but the Lady Ottoline mim-saga is developing.

With thanks to all contributors, whose powers of research connective, collective and explorative, never cease to amaze. An apology: our last NL's back cover ('Powysland'), brought to light from the archives of the *Dorset Daily Echo*, ought to have been credited to Peter Foss, foremost among Powys researchers and archivists.

ON OTHER PAGES

Chairman's Report 2008–2009

In 2008, The Powys Society held its annual Conference at the Bishop Otter Campus of Chichester University for the second time, from 29th to 31st August. Our president Glen Cavaliero spoke on 'That Goblin Race' – a phrase from Sylvia Townsend Warner's diary, and evoked the continuing appeal and mystique of the Powys family. Arjen Mulder from Amsterdam, who had been prevented by family illness from speaking at Llangollen the previous year, in a talk entitled 'Becoming John Cowper Powys', discussed John Cowper's extended literary apprenticeship in the novels before *Wolf Solent*. David Goodway's talk entitled 'John Cowper Powys, Emma Goldman and Anarchy' emphasized the seriousness of John Cowper's commitment to the libertarian left, and Bill Keith travelled from Toronto to present his talk on 'John Cowper Powys and "Other Dimensions" – the Evidence of His Fiction'. On the Saturday evening, Chris Wilkinson produced an entertainment based on the diaries and letters of the Powys and Wilkinson families, entitled 'The Bride Who Pays the Organist', which dramatized the complex relationships of John Cowper and Llewelyn Powys and Frances Gregg from the year 1912. Timothy Hyman led a discussion after the AGM on the usefulness of literary biography to readers of fiction. On the Saturday afternoon, walkers crossed the South Downs to the village of Burpham, and Geoffrey Winch kindly organized a coastal walk through Felpham, with its associations with William Blake.

The Society thanks Louise de Bruin and Anna Pawelko for their hard work in organizing this particularly welcoming and enjoyable Conference. The Society has long been looking for an affordable conference venue in the West Country, and I am pleased to report that in 2010 we will be holding our Conference, from 20th to 22nd August, at the Wessex Hotel at Street near Glastonbury, within sight of the Tor.

The Society also held meetings in the course of the year: in London, Dorchester, and Little Gidding. On 29th November, we discussed John Cowper Powys's essay, 'My Philosophy Up to Date As Influenced by Living in Wales', from *Obstinate Cymric,* at the Friends Meeting House in Hampstead. On 9th May we held our annual Powys Day at the Dorset County Museum: Tony Fincham, Chairman of the Hardy Society, spoke on Hardy and Weymouth, and we hope to cultivate the friendly ties we have established with the Hardy Society. Judith Stinton also spoke about her book, *Weymouth and Mr. Punch*, and we discussed Chapter XIII, 'Punch and Judy', of *Weymouth Sands*. We also followed one of John Cowper's favourite walks through the Frome meadows. On 20th June, we met at Little Gidding, where Glen Cavaliero read a selection of his poems, many associated with the Powyses, but also revealing deeper imaginative correspondences with the writing of the Powys family. The Society would like to thank Sonia Lewis for organizing this especially atmospheric day. A committee meeting planned for Little Gidding did not take place owing to transport difficulties, but those present sensibly discussed John Cowper Powys's poetry instead.

Frank Kibblewhite's website has greatly enhanced the public profile of the Society. Frank has been tireless in expanding and updating the site and in dealing with the steady stream of enquiries that are addressed to him as webmaster. The site now includes a selection of *Newsletter* articles available online, and a greatly expanded list of external links. A Paypal facility has made it possible to order Society publications and pay subscriptions online. The catalogue of the Society's collection at the Dorset County Museum is now almost entirely online, and this has greatly improved the visibility of the collection and also the number of enquiries addressed to Michael Kowalewski, the collection's curator. Despite family commitments, Michael has always found it possible to answer these enquiries and to be present at the collection to show it to an increased number of visitors. The Society has bought a scanner and photocopier for the use of researchers.

The Society extends its warm thanks to Stephen Musgrave, the son of Llewelyn Powys's friend Clifford Musgrave, for his generous gift of family letters, photographs, and memorabilia relating to Llewelyn Powys and Alyse Gregory, including a beautifully carved African walking stick, a gift from Llewelyn to his father, which has joined John Cowper's knotty cudgel in our collection. Jacqueline Peltier has also kindly presented the collection with a complete set of *la lettre powysienne*.

Richard Maxwell has edited Volume XIX of *The Powys Journal*, with the assistance of Charles Lock as reviews editor. This issue of the *Journal* has an increased number of pages, reflecting Richard's zeal in identifying and encouraging contributors, and has also blossomed into colour. This volume is expected to be ready in time for our conference in Llangollen on 21st to 23rd August. *The Powys Journal* was this year featured in the 'Learned Journals' section of *The Times Literary Supplement* (31st October 2008).

Kate Kavanagh has again produced three newsletters of continuing richness and vitality. Stephen Powys Marks has designed and produced both the *Journal* and the issues of the *Newsletter* with his characteristic dedication and eye to detail.

The committee met in Timothy Hyman's home in London in October and March, and a further meeting is planned for Llangollen in August. Our new secretary Chris Thomas has brought verve and enthusiasm to his first year as Secretary, and Michael French has expressed his willingness to continue his invaluable work as Treasurer. Michael has also been of particular assistance to the Society in storing the Society's publications in his home in Yorkshire and dealing with sales, and also managing the book sale at the annual Conference.

John Powys completes his mandate as committee member this year and I would like to thank him for his many years of commitment to the Society, of which he is an honorary member. Among his acts of kindnesses to the Society was, in 1994, to allow us to publish free of charge the writings of John Cowper Powys, to which he holds the copyright, for a period of twenty years, and as he leaves the committee I would like to recall this generous gesture and express again the Society's gratitude to him.

As the Society prepares for its Llangollen Conference, I would like also to thank

the many members of the Society who have encouraged and assisted me in my role as chairman, and wish all members, whether they are able to attend Society events or not, continued pleasure in their membership and their reading of the works of the Powys family.

To the Reader

Fortune hath smiled, who never smiled before;
I must not taunt her – she's a woman still;
But these my verses when I live no more,
They will.

There are some jealous of another's powers,
And some are pleased if some one else succeeds,
One such did come and took away my flowers
Or weeds.

He bound them up in leaves as here you see;
Strewed them abroad, which I could never do;
So if they're common, please blame him, not Me –
Adieu.

Alfred de Kantzow

See 'Looking for Mr de Kantzow', page 40.

AGM 2009

The Annual General Meeting of The Powys Society will be held at The Hand Hotel, Llangollen at 11.00 am on Sunday 23rd August 2009. All members of The Powys Society are invited to attend the AGM whether or not they are attending the Annual Conference.

AGENDA

1 Minutes of the 2008 AGM – included in the November 2008 *Newsletter.*
2 Matters arising.
3 Nomination of officers and members of the Committee 2009–2010.
4 Report of the Hon.Secretary.
5 Report of the Hon.Treasurer and Audited Accounts published in the July 2009 *Newsletter.*
6 Chairman's Report as published in the July 2009 *Newsletter.*
7 Date and location of the 2010 Conference.
8 AOB.

The Powys Society Annual Conference 2009
The Hand Hotel, Llangollen
Friday 21st August to Sunday 23rd August

'RAVISHING LIMBO'

Programme

Friday 21st

16.00 Arrivals
17.30 Informal reception; welcome by **Chairman**
18.30 Dinner
20.00 **Tim Blanchard: 'I *must* have some tea': Drink, drugs and defiance in the novels of John Cowper Powys**

Saturday 22nd

08.00 Breakfast
09.30 **Harald Fawkner: '*Wolf Solent* and the Death of Doctrinal Sensualism'**
followed by coffee
11.00 **Angelika Reichmann: 'Dostoievsky and John Cowper Powys – Influence without Anxiety?'** and **Charles Lock: 'Dostoievsky as Revelation: on John Cowper Powys and Rowan Williams'**
12.45 Lunch
Afternoon: guided walks round Mynydd-y-Gaer or Valle Crucis
18.00 **Theodora Gay Scutt in conversation with Ian Robinson**
19.00 Dinner
20.00 **Reading of scenes from John Cowper Powys's stage adaptation of Dostoievsky's 'The Idiot'**

Sunday 23rd

08.00 Breakfast
09.30 **Janet Fouli: 'The Eternal Feminine: John Cowper Powys. Dorothy Richardson, and the two silent spouses ... and Frances'**
followed by coffee
11.00 **AGM** followed by a **Powys Quiz** and the **auction** of a watercolour painting by **Will Powys**
13.00 Lunch
15.00 End of conference and departure in afternoon

Committee Nominations 2009–2010

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

	Nomination	*Proposer*	*Seconder*
Chairman	**John Hodgson**	Chris Thomas	Timothy Hyman
Vice- Chairman	**Timothy Hyman**	John Hodgson	Anthony Head
Hon. Secretary	**Chris Thomas**	John Hodgson	John Dunn
Hon . Treasurer	**Michael French**	John Hodgson	Kate Kavanagh

The following Committee members have been nominated by Society members and have agreed to stand:

Nomination	*Proposer*	*Seconder*
Kate Kavanagh	Chris Thomas	Chris Wilkinson
Tim Blanchard	John Hodgson	Chris Thomas

If approved the Committee from August 2009 will therefore consist of:
Tim Blanchard, John Dunn, Kate Kavanagh (*Newsletter* editor), **Michael Kowalewski** (Curator of the Powys Society collection at the Dorset County Museum), **Stephen Powys Marks** (Publications Manager), **Anna Pawelko** (Joint Conference Manager).

A seventh committee place is open for nomination.

Powys Society Annual Conference 2010
Wessex Hotel, Street, Somerset, Friday 21st – Sunday 23nd August

Call for Papers

The 2010 Powys Society Conference will be held in Street in Somerset, two miles from Glastonbury and within view of Glastonbury Tor. As in previous years, the Conference will appeal to all readers John Cowper Powys, T. F. Powys, and Llewelyn Powys and their circle.

There will be a number of invited speakers, but we are also inviting shorter talks from Powys scholars and readers.

Proposals for talks, which may be about any aspect of the Powyses, should be submitted in the shape of a 250-word abstract, addressed to:

John Hodgson,
Chairman, The Powys Society
66 Kynaston Road, London N16 0ED

The submissions will be considered by the Committee of The Powys Society. The closing date is 1st December 2009.

Hon. Treasurer's Report for 2008

The accounts for 2008 are set out on the following two pages: they have been approved by the Society's Honorary Auditor, Mr Stephen Allen, and once again the Society is most grateful to him for his work and advice on behalf of the Society. I am pleased to be able to report that, if it is the wish of the Annual General Meeting in August, Mr Allen is willing to continue as auditor for another year.

The paid-up membership for 2008 was 266, a slight increase from the 262 in 2007. This small increase is encouraging, but it is still vital that all members do all within their power to sustain this increase by encouraging those interested in the work of members of the Powys family to join the Society.

After taking into account the tax refund under the Gift Aid Scheme of £815 (£888 in 2007), our total subscription income in 2008 was £6,253 or 89% of our total income of £7,047 (65% in 2007). The increased percentage in 2008 reflects the reduction in income from donations and from legacies etc. and the significant difference in the financial outcome of the Conference in 2008 as compared to 2007. (The 2008 Conference at the University of Chichester made, as budgeted, a small loss of £491 as compared to the £1,091 surplus at Llangollen in 2007).

As in previous years, the largest part of our expenditure was on our two regular publications, *The Powys Journal* and the three issues of the Society's *Newsletter*. In 2008, the net cost of producing the *Journal* and *Newsletters*, including distribution, was £3,128. (This figure is not directly comparable to the 2007 figure of £3,457 as a more consistent presentation of the valuation of publications taken into stock has been adopted in the 2008 accounts).

Three very successful Day Schools were held in 2008 (Dorchester, Ely and Hampstead) but these were largely 'self supporting' due to contributions from the participants. At the June 2008 Committee meeting, it was agreed that in order to encourage members to attend these Day Schools the Society would, in future, cover the costs of hiring the venue for the meeting: consequently the 2008 accounts include the costs for two such meetings. Administrative costs of £109 were incurred in 2008 (£512 in 2007). The reduction in 2008 largely reflects the work of Frank Kibblewhite as the Society's webmaster and we are most grateful to him for taking on this onerous task and for his excellent work on the Society's web-site.

After taking into account movements in the value of the publication stock, the accounts show an excess of income over expenditure of £2,633 (2007: £4,317) and an increase in Society's net worth on 31st December 2008 to £20,702 (2006: £18,069). The Committee is working on a number of initiatives to raise the profile of the Society but would still welcome suggestions from members as to how they would like to see the Society use with these funds.

Michael J. French

THE POWYS SOCIETY

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2008

INCOME [1]		£	£	£	*2007*
Subscriptions	Brought forward from 2007 (10 members)	213			
	For 2008 (257 members)	5,225			
	Tax refund under Gift Aid	815	**6,253**		*6,113*
Donations	Conference book sales	153			
	Other	56	**209**		*1,419*
Publication Sales	Stock publications, *less* postage	465			
	Cecil Woolf book sales, *less* cost	59	**524**		*321*
Conference	Registration Fees	5,503			
	less Payment to University of Chichester	(5,541)			
	less Other payments	(453)	**(491)**		*1,091*
Other	Bank interest		**552**		*474*
	TOTAL		**7,047**		*9,418*

EXPENDITURE [1]					
Powys Journal xviii	Cost of printing	1,181		*1,427*	
	Cost of distribution	368		425	
	less copies taken into stock [2]	(120)	**1,429**		*1,852*
Powys Newsletters	Printing costs, Nos 63, 64 & 65	1,290		*1,298*	
	Cost of distribution	484		*307*	
	less payments for insertion of flyers	(75)	**1,699**		*1,605*
2008 publications [2]	Cost of printing	228			
	Cost of distribution	60			
	less sales	(146)			
	less copies taken into stock	(104)	**38**		—
Day schools	Hampstead, Novermber 2008	54			
	Non-returnable deposit forLittle Gidding, June 2009	50	**104**		*312*
Administrative	Web-site hosting and maintenance	94		*306*	
Costs	Alliance of Literary Societies	15		*15*	
	Collection at Dorset County Museum	—	**109**	*201*	*522*
Expenses	Officers' expenses	178		*218*	
	Travel to Committee meetings	347	**525**	*294*	*512*
	TOTAL		**3,904**		*4,803*

EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	**3,143**		*4,615*
DECREASE (INCREASE) IN VALUE OF PUBLICATION STOCKS [2]	**(510)**		298
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE (taking stock movements into account)	**2,633**		*4317*

THE POWYS SOCIETY

STATEMENT OF FUNDS AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2008

GENERAL FUND [3]	£	£	*2007*
Funds at 1st January 2008		**3,069**	*3,752*
Excess of income over expenditure		**2,633**	*4,317*
Transfer to Wilson Knight Benefactors Fund		**—**	*(5,000)*
Funds at 31st December 2008		**5,702**	*3,069*
Represented by:			
Stock of *The Powys Journal* and books [2]		**784**	*1,070*
Cash at Bank 31st Decembert 2008 [4]	5,190		
Less subscriptions received in advance [5]	(272)	**4,918**	*1,999*
		5,702	*3,069*
THE WILSON KNIGHT BENEFACTORS FUND [6]			
Funds at 1st January 2008		**15,000**	*10,000*
Transfer from General Fund		**—**	*5,000*
Funds at 31st December 2008		**15,000**	*15,000*
Represented by			
Cash at bank		**15,000**	*15,000*

NOTES

1 Cash turnover in 2008: total receipts, £13,733; total payments, £10,794. After adjustments, relating to the cost of new publications stocked, existing publications sold, writing down of stock and subscriptions received in advance, the excess of income over expenditure was £2,633. (2007: £4,317)

2		£
	The value of stock at 1st January 2008	1,070
	increase through taking into stock 37 copies of *The Powys Journal* xviii (2008) @ £3.25 per copy	120
	increase through taking into stock 45 copies of *Aspects of JCP's Owen Glendower* (2008) @ £2.30 per copy	104
	decrease through sale of existing stock and straight-line depreciation of remaining stock	(510)
	Value of stock at 31st December 2008	£784

3 **Society's net worth at 31st December 2008 was £20,702 (General Fund £5,702; Wilson Knight Benefactors Fund £15,000)** (at 31st December 2007, net worth was £18,069).

4 General Fund cash at bank at 31st December 2008: £5,190.(Community Account £202, Savings Account £274; Instant Access Saver account £19,714, *less* WKB Fund £15,000).

5 Subscriptions received in advance: from 2005 accounts; £19 [one subscription for 2009]; from 2006 accounts £19 [one subscripton for 2009]; from 2008 accounts £234 [ten subscriptions for 2009].

6 All interest has been retained in the General Fund.

Michael J. French, Hon. Treasurer

AUDITOR'S REPORT TO 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 2008 and of the surplus for the year then ended and comply with the Companies Act 1985.

J. S. Allen (Chartered Accountant), 21st May 2009

Powys Day in Dorchester 9th May 2009

Fine weather in springtime Dorset – a peak experience.

Twenty or so met in the Dorset County Museum including several Hardy Society members (more would have come if invited more clearly) for our morning talk by Tony Fincham, the present Chairman of the Hardy Society (founded 1968), on Thomas Hardy's connections with Weymouth.

Weymouth for Hardy was a place of light and sophistication, seen against the sombre depths of Egdon Heath. First mentioned in his diary of 1868, describing a woman on the steamer to Lulworth Cove, many of his early love poems are set there, as well as scenes in the novels ('Summer' in *Under the Greenwood Tree* – Eustacia yearning for the town in *Return of the Native* – fears of Napoleon's invasions in *The Trumpet Major* and *The Dynasts* – Portland as setting for *The Well-Beloved*). Hardy celebrated Weymouth's two faces – as a fashionable town and also a port, gateway to the Continent, bringing both romance and tragedy in times of war.

In later life Hardy visited Weymouth frequently from Max Gate with his second wife, overseeing the stage versions of his books. The drinking song from *The Dynasts* is ritually chanted by the Hardy Society on Weymouth beach ....

Discussion followed the talk, considering Weymouth as a special place in JCP's young life and a more complex and – arguably – less benign place in *Weymouth Sands*; but still, as for Hardy, with elements of romance, possible love and transience.

JCP's novel led on to Judith Stinton's talk in the afternoon. Her book *Weymouth and Mr. Punch*, which includes a chapter on *Weymouth Sands*, with its *leitmotiv* of Punch's violent soul-threatening cries, and its characters that show elements of the *commedia dell'arte* personages from which the Punch and Judy shows derive (Dr Girodel as the tricksy Doctor – Cattistock as the miser Pantaleone – Rodney Loder as wistful Pierrot). She herself shares the affection for Weymouth (it has 'good bone structure'), having spent many days with her daughter on the sands, and researched the town's associations: with King George III – John Meade Faulkner and the typhoid epidemic – Marie Stopes residing appropriately in a lighthouse – along with Llewelyn's depictions of Weymouth in the past, and her own extensive knowledge of the world of Punch and Judy past and present.

KK

Little Gidding, 20th June 2009

An exceptionally fine and happy day for a dozen enjoyers of poetry – thanks to Sonia Lewis who organised the event – and despite mishaps on the car-hire front causing our Chairman to spend several hours exercising patience, waiting for the AA and Europcar at St Neots. It was a great pleasure (and now rare, since he can so seldom

get to the Conferences) to see our President Glen Cavaliero – albeit temporarily one-armed.

The morning was dedicated to the poems of JCP, agreeing that although he was not born to be a poet, and overlooking his earlier Victorian-romantic stage-props, an authentic voice does break through (often with a hint of comedy, often when he abandons traditional rhyme-schemes): also he grows on you. We each read poems that appealed to us, among them *The Ship* ('I made a ship of my cruelty …'), *The Garden* ('Where the wet fields stretch away, away …' and *The Shoes* (' "I have a pair of new shoes. They are nice …" ') from *Mandragora*, 1917 – the Hardy-like *William Corby* ('I drive my cows to Corby…'), the *Erlkönig*-like *Lubberlu* ('Green were her eyes …') and '*The* Disaster' ('Without rudder, without sail …') from *Samphire*, 1922 – and *Occurrence* ('On each day of our human trance …') and *Two together* ('Mad are we she and I!') from Kenneth Hopkins's *Horned Poppies* (Warren Houe Press, 1984), together with the verses printed here (on pages 12 and 49 and on the back cover – those included in *Horned Poppies* marked with an asterisk, others from MSS in NLW).

The three professional poets among us (Glen Cavaliero, Penelope Shuttle and P. J. Kavanagh) gave us their views on JCP's poems and also read one of their own.

In the afternoon Glen read a selection of his own deeply felt, thoughtful, observant and entertaining poems, from his succession of books – from *Ancient People*, 1973 – the title poem dedicated to Phyllis Playter – to *The Justice of the Night*, 2007). He connected them with the Powyses through landscapes (often wild, Glen being a hill-walker), friendship, and personalities (Mary Casey as 'Elf Woman', also in *Ancient People* – 'her blinding cool/ question mark'); and a love of specific places and ancient things that the Powyses shared.

KK

Visit to the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth,
29th June 2009

Four Committee members made an enjoyable visit to Aberystwyth – the elegantly curved seafront looking wonderful in the heatwave. After a tour of the imposing art-deco-classical library on its commanding hill, we met Geraint Phillips, the archive's JCP expert and compiler of the ever-growing catalogue (material used in Morine Krissdóttir's *Descents of Memory* has recently been added).

Various treasures were brought out – the typescript of the discarded ending ('disfigurement of Gerda') chapters of *Wolf Solent*, the handwritten final pages of *Glastonbury* (mysteriously surviving from the MS supposed lost at sea), a neatly written early unpublished novel, the far from neat MS of 'The Ridge' (two clear lines per page in a forest of deletions – and yes, it does end with a row of dots …) We are indeed lucky to have such a knowledgeable curator of this unique and remarkable archive.

Two poems by JCP

So and So

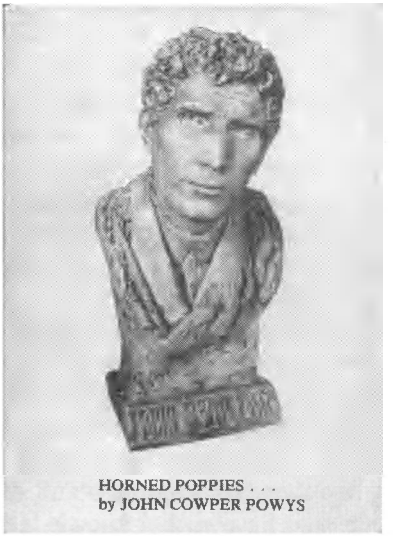
My soul crumbles,
Bit by bit,
Like a castle of sand,
Sucked by the tide,
Like a loaf of bread
Eaten by rats,
Like a garment of fur
Riddled by moths,
And bit by bit
It sinks into the deep hole
Down at the bottom of the world.
And the lost toys
And the broken shells
And the hearts of embryoes
And the dreams of childless women
Stir faintly
Like the dust of an empty house
As my soul sinks into its place,
As, bit by bit,
Morsel by morsel,
Shred by shred,
My soul crumbles and sinks into its place.
And meanwhile, far off, one by one,
On the wet banks of the meadows of Dorset,
On the wet banks of the rivers of Dorset,
The yellow primroses come out.

Ivan Karamazov ⋆

Listen, oh God, did you hear me ask
To be made as I am made?
I could have chosen a prettier mask
For your charming masquerade!

And all this poisonous malice-stuff
That ferments and seethes in me
I could have chosen a heart so tough
'Twould have hugged the whole thing with glee!

Purge me with Hyssop! Let me go
While there's still some dew upon lawn and thicket!
I bow to the Showman; I loathe the Show;
And humbly and dumbly return the ticket!



HORNED POPPIES . . .
by JOHN COWPER POWYS

Obituary

Hilary Henderson (*née* Scott-Maxwell), 18 May 1914 – 2 May 2009

For Hilary the 'née Scott-Maxwell' was most important and at conferences she always insisted that it was put on her name badge – her mother Florida was a close friend of Alyse Gregory. Because of this friendship Hilary came to know various members of the Powys family and in particular TF, Llewellyn and Bertie, regarding them as kindly uncles. She recollected that when walking with one of the brothers heads turned but that when walking with two or more people seemed to stop in their tracks – 'they looked so wonderful' she added.

She was particularly fond of TF as she thought he was so kind to her as a young child. JCP she remembered as being more formidable.

Hilary became a physiotherapist and Alyse checked with her about 'how not to make a mess' of her suicide and consequently saving others from unnecessary distress. Hilary found this both sensible and straightforward – a characteristic of hers.

In her later years when I knew her Hilary seemed to vary from 'I am uncertain whether it is a sad thing or a solace to be past change' to 'it is the unexpected, the unknowable, the divine irrationality of life that saves us' (from *The Measure of my Days*, by Florida Scott-Maxwell: Penguin, ISBN 0-14-005164-3).

I am fortunate to say she was my friend.

Sonia Lewis

News and Notes

A meeting is planned for **Saturday 21st November** at the Friends' Meeting House, **Hampstead** – subject and speaker to be confirmed. Contact John Hodgson for details.

* * * *

Tony Head reports that **three Powys Heritage booklets** are in progress and may with luck be ready by August. They are 'a long meditative essay on JCP by Christiane Poussier, a piece on TFP and his publishers at Chatto by Michael Caines (*see below*), and *Theodore's Favourite Bookseller: The Story of Charles Lahr*, by Chris Gostick.'

* * * *

The **Sundial Press** is hoping to have the first ever paperback editions of *Hester Craddock* (the hardback having sold out and several dozen more inquiries for it received) and *King Log and Lady Lea* (also by **Alyse Gregory**) published sometime July/August, so they may also be available at the Conference.

* * * *

Collection Update Since the donation from Stephen Musgrave mentioned in the

last *Newsletter* (and in our Chairman's Report), the Collection has received from Jacqueline Peltier a set of the *lettre powysienne*, which she is adding to as this excellent bilingual journal is published; and from James Youle a first edition of *Welsh Ambassadors* by Louis Marlow, which has pasted into the cover some original reviews from 1936. The new Director of the DCM has arrived and the Officers hope to meet him in the autumn.

* * * *

Neil Lee hopes for a bumper turn-out to celebrate **Llewelyn's birthday** on August 13th (12 noon at *The Sailor's Return*). This year marks the 125th anniversary of Llewelyn's birth and the 70th anniversary of his death.

It seems that access to Chydyok is now sadly lost to our members. We all owe the late Janet Pollock a massive debt of gratitude for allowing many of us over the years an opportunity to experience the special charm and character of the place – and the chance to store up golden memories of happy times spent at Chydyok, which we will never forget.

* * * *

Tony Glynn who has long been interested in the life and works of **Elizabeth Myers** seeks information as to who owns the rights to her short stories. He is active in screenwriting and acting with Southport Moviemakers, a society well respected in the amateur film-making world, now over 50 years old and the recipient of many awards in this country and overseas. 'For a long time, I have been thinking of turning at least a couple of Elizabeth Myers' short stories into film scripts but would not venture into production without being clear as to the situation concerning rights. Southport Moviemakers have a skilled technical crew and a pool of good actors. I am sure we could do justice to the talents of Elizabeth Myers, who was herself a keen film fan.' Anyone able to clarify the rights situation, please contact Tony Glynn at Penthouse 2, Sandown Court, Albert Road, Southport, Merseyside PR9 0HF (phone 01704 514507).

* * * *

la lettre powysienne Spring 09 number, varied and wide-ranging as usual, contains an account from the *Guardian* archive of the somewhat macabre burial of **Thomas Hardy's heart** at Stinsford, with JCP's Ode to Hardy (1896: 'man's last hope beneath a soulless sky/To live for Love, and for Love's sake to die') – a long evocation of the **Sussex Downs** from JCP's unpublished 'Work Without a Name' – **W. J. Keith** on JCP's 1955 introduction to *Glastonbury* – an essay by Jorg Therstappen (theologian from Strasbourg) around '**the slaughter-house at Ramsgard**' – **Patricia Dawson** on JCP's inspiration for her paintings and sculpture –**Anthony Head** on 'JCP, Melville and Murray' (the latter a Harvard psychologist and Melville scholar) – 'Instead of a Review' (of *Descents of Memory*) by **Angelika Reichman,** who is a speaker at our forthcoming conference – and a prose-poem on Trees by **Gunnar Lundin**.

* * * *

The recent biography of **Ralph** ('Twould ring the bells of Heaven') **Hodgson** (1871–

1962, author of 'The Muse and the Mastiff') has an amusing reference to JCP – Hodgson spent time as a draughtsman for magazines like *Ally Sloper*, whose slender bathing belles so fascinated the seeker after sylphs.

* * * *

Michael Caines chose **T. F. Powys** for his 'Recommendation' in *The Reader* (University of Liverpool, no 34, midsummer 09, p.106.) 'Morbid, generally forgotten and by his own admission, keen on monotony—yes, T. F. Powys is exactly the kind of writer one can recommend wholeheartedly ... There is such joy in T. F. Powys's prose that this isn't half as gloomy as it sounds. And that is just one of his excellent oddities.' Michael Caines works for the TLS, has a book on David Garrick, and edited an anthology of plays by eighteenth-century women. Like not a few TF admirers, he has little time for JCP.

* * * *

A recent leading article in the TLS was on JCP's favorite, **Norah Lofts** (see *NL* 56).

* * * *

The newsletter of the Alliance of Literary Societies (President: Aeronwy Thomas) has taken on a new lease of life, with reports of conferences in Dublin and a European meeting of literary organisations in Berlin (funding by the German government – and others in Europe – is 'staggering'). There are an increasing number of interactive literary websites, such as 'LibraryThing, an open collaborative project with an enormous bibliographic database'. A conference was held in Leeds on 'Lithouses' and Cult-Tourism. 'GLAM' (Group for Literary Archives and Manuscripts) has members from over 50 institutions. The ALS lists notices of societies' events and anniversary celebrations (inducing the kind of vertigo some suffer from in large bookshops). But this is something we should keep abreast of ...

* * * *

The autumn literary lectures at **St Peter's Church, Dorchester** hope to replace the discontinued annual series held in the DCM. Three Thursday lectures will be held at 6.30 pm on **1st, 15th and 22nd October 2009**, followed by refreshments. 'In October there will be talks on the two great names of Dorset literature, and on one of the largest (if not the largest) literary families in this country. Hardy, Barnes and the Powys family are linked by their connections with St Peter's church: Hardy was employed by the firm of architects who undertook the refurbishments of the building in the 1850s, Barnes was churchwarden there before he took Holy Orders, and the Reverend Charles Powys, father of that amazing family, was curate at St Peter's in the 1880s.' Dr David Grylls will speak on 'Hardy and Religion' on Thursday 1st October; Dr Alan Chedzoy will speak about William Barnes on Thursday 15th October; and **Dr Morine Krissdóttir will talk about 'The Powys family in Dorchester' on Thursday 22nd October**. Tickets, price £5.00 per lecture, will be on sale from mid-September at St Peter's Church, or may be requested by email to iillm@waitrose.com (please quote 'Tickets'), by phoning 01305 263757, or by post (enclosing sae and cheque) to 'Tickets', 8 Alexandra Road, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 2LZ.

'The Greatest Novelist in the World'

Dostoievsky (as JCP spells him) being a theme of our Conference, it has been interesting to compare JCP's view of him in his 1946 book with the recent book by Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury. JCP's welcome 'pot-boiler', started straight after *The Art of Growing Old* (see Diary, page 47 – how did he take so long to find *that* obvious title?) was written in the dark days of WW2, when the first hints of the tide turning, in Africa and in Russia itself, were filtering through ('surely Stalin & his Russians have SAVED us & the world from Hitler!' – *Diary*, 26th January 1943). There seems to have been some revision before the book was published four years later, taking into account the war's end and new threats of despotic power-politics, with stubborn hope and faith in survival for 'the individual soul, in this "real reality" of life': that is, the *power* of the soul, versus chance and fate. Both Powys and Williams acknowledge Dostoievsky's exceptional stature as a conveyor of reality in words, both see an extra dimension in his characters which develop often unexpectedly as the story goes on (Powys calls him a 'medium'), both see the characters quite apart from their social context. Williams (who uses words like 'discourse' and 'other' in a way *just* intelligible to the uninitiated) sees the characters, appropriately, *sub specie aeternitatis*, in moral terms of self-scrutiny, dialogue, responsability, 'open exchange', 'the enterprise of growth', 'creative freedom'. Powys, who when young was clearly enthralled by *The Idiot* as most people are, preferred *The Possessed (Devils, Demons)*; for Williams the *summum* is *Karamazov*, with Alyosha and Father Zosima as the key characters. **KK**

New York to Mappowder
Peter Powys Grey to Mary and Gerard Casey, 1968–79

Peter Grey, born in 1922, was the son of Marian Powys, John Cowper Powys's younger sister, who had settled in New York City in 1913 and became a great specialist on lace. He was very close to his cousin Mary (1915–80), Lucy's daughter married to Gerard Casey. Peter received an excellent education at the Phillips Exeter Academy, and then at Harvard. There he studied under F. O. Matthiessen (1902–50), pioneer of American Studies, who was to become his mentor, and remained an inspiring presence throughout Peter's life.*

Peter's first employment had been as special assistant to the President of American Express. At the time these letters were written, he had moved to the New York Chamber of Commerce, where he initiated a program for gardens in the vacant lots of Manhattan, a project in which he was active as both a gardener and an administrator. He was also one of the founders of the New York branch of the Samaritans.

*He married twice, and twice divorced. Two children were born to his first wife Barbara Tyler, Christopher and Katherine. He also looked after the children of his second wife Tilly Tompkins, especially her son Norman.** He took his own life in October 1992.*

* *See* The Powys Journal *XVII (2007): 'Emily Marian Powys: A Declaration of Independence' by J. Peltier.*
** *See* The Powys Newsletter *37, 7–9. 'Peter Powys Greys: A Memoir', by Dorothy Davis.*

Seven Letters

[1]

Monday, July 15 1968

Dearest Mary and Gerard,

Not one but three splendid letters am I attempting to answer tonight: your two recent ones, plus a marvelous one written by Mary back in March, still unanswered by me ... But how lovely of you both to write so quickly and tell me of Katey's arrival[1] from your point of view, giving me that so clear and gentle picture of her and Rose[2] together when you first saw them, both in the checked Bean jackets, Martin[3] beset by ants. Somehow that picture alone makes the trip for me so well worth while. For Kate to have such an adventure by herself at this time I think is most important and lovely: both a splendid initiation into the possibilities and practicalities of travel and also the best possible opportunity to learn and dwell in this so-strong family knot which binds us with such basic kindness when so much else fails. Kenya itself, yes—but these other threads so potent.

Mary's last letter I read at the finest possible moment, though I much, much wished that you both could be transported there: sitting on a rock, looking over a lake in Central Park in the middle of New York City where I'd met Tilly[4] for a Henry IV Part One performance, which they give free to the first big lot of people coming for tickets at an outdoor theater, right against this rock and lake. A most satisfactory development in our dreary old town (and all in all an excellent performance by all): first lining up or rather sitting on the grass with the most conglomerate group of people imaginable, all of them very friendly (students, visiting Iranians, black nationalists, intellectual West Side Jews, elegant establishmentarians with wicker picnic baskets, some Indians with bright saris, a voluble French family, many hippies with guitars and flowers, several very, very old couples, families with infants, a large sprinkling of actors, etc. etc. ...) then we having a bottle of cold wine, sandwiches and fruit while reading your letter and watching an old man fly a kite over the little lake ... All in all a most civilized routine, tho' planes overhead sometimes obliterate entire speeches.

Was delighted that both the Iliad and the sea urchins made such a hit. The Iliad[5] does so belong with you, Gerard, tho' I say that somehow sadly, hoping against hope

that the time may still come in my fragmented, huggered life when I can go back to Greek and get to the point of reading the greatest of them. The urchins are such an odd combination of static and kinetic—those classically delicate and precise shells and then the dipsydoodle spines on top. In the water just under the low tide ripples they look almost menacing, tendrils sweeping the water above and beyond the spines, barely moving in a kind of majestic unhaste. Also quite painful to walk on, I'm told. A relic, anyway, of a most intently meaningful and strong two weeks which I spent alone, sent off by Tilly, in a well fitted out cabin on a bay in Maine—which is a great resource to me, as Kate can tell you, and something I shall come back and back to. One supremely clear morning I got up at five and took a small mail boat out two and a half hours to a remote island called Matinicus,[6] porpoises often lobbing out of the water, seals gathering on rocks at one fjord-like side of the spruce-covered island, hundreds of wild duck followed by new-hatched ducklings on the water, lobster pots piled in the little harbor and fishbait smell rank and funky in the air. The week after next I am taking Tilly out there in hopes of perhaps finding some old farmhouse which might be for sale. Startled three pheasants in one long field beside the beach. Also met a companionly young teacher, who told me he'd spent an entire year out there on sabbatical three years ago, writing, chopping wood and watching the seasons and the sea birds. To my NewYork attuned mind this seems a luxury beyond all wishing. Still I have an odd feeling it will happen.

As Kate indicated to you, I have gone obsessive on rocks and have all sorts around the house, smooth and rough, lyric and Olympian. You understand well the hypnotic pleasure of spending three hours on a remote beach, picking up anthologies of rocks and carting them back to the car. One three-hundred pounder, ribbed and furrowed like a Venus wise man, I longed to get back to the garden here, but after three days of complex engineering managed to move only about twenty feet and abandoned on its proper beach. Several more I did get home. One beside me here on the desk has been twice riven, criss-crossed by two splits, yet with final strength holds together perfectly. Flat green granity. How held together? Bless it, for internal tensal rightness.

Don't know whether this will amuse or interest, but got trammelled (but pleasantly) last month into a bit of the old Powys lit'rary relic hassle. A fairly young, odd looking, substantially despairing Londoner, Giles Wordsworth, arrived, totally hooked on to the Powys family and half hoping without any real hope (disarmingly frank and honest on this) to do a book on Uncle John,[7] who had spent his childhood in East Chaldon and depended deeply on Gertrude in place of his mother who was fairly ambiguous as to which sex she favored, had met almost all the family, spent last summer in Alyse's half of Chydyok[8] and was working as a kind of night editor on the Daily Mirror. He reminded me quite accurately of three poor lost Bohemian relics I had met in Patchin Place during the war, all of whom had changed their entire way of life after becoming mesmerized by John, and didn't quite know what to do with themselves since he had moved to Wales. Giles visited Tilly and me for two weekends, hunted through three New York State air-conditioned panelled libraries for the

quantity of Powys letters which they apparently boast (think of Katie's[9] letters in an air-conditioned, panelled library!!!!! — Gawd!) and then went back to the Daily Mirror. Apparently hunting for a kind of Powys cabbala, which one doubts exists. I rather liked him: spiderish, brutally sardonic about himself, patent outsider, pressured by all of the pressures of money making with inadequate resources. Great grand nephew of William.[10] Then two weeks after he left I got a long letter from Francis,[11] warning me on no account to have anything to do with "a certain journalist called Wordsworth"[12] who might turn up, insidiously charming and out for money, wanting to do a book on John. No jibing description and reality. Which letter immediately triggered an all-out outsider-Amurrican identification with Giles in me, causing me to write a pretty heated, probably stupid letter to Francis, pointing out that Giles would be exactly the sort Uncle John would most quickly befriend and champion—a letter which I think I now regret. Anyway two days later I wrote an amendment and somewhat apology. God knows, literary executionership is an impossible task and God bless, etc. Certainly I couldn't do it. Yet somehow the assumption that I would agree passively to the premise that all outsiders, scoundrels and ruffians must be kept out of the sheep pen sort of riled me. Whose scoundrel? Guess I do feel a sort of perverse responsibility for these far-out types who have become half drowned in the Powys honey pots. Does this make any sense? Perhaps you know more of the story than I? Giles had visited your mother[13] in Mappowder only days before arriving in NYC. Of course he meant a great deal to MPG[14] and I left them together for hour after hour ... Donno if I'll ever hear from Francis. Dammit, one feels so far away from all this in NYC. But it's all sort of amusing. Yet also tantalizing and somehow incomplete. The wild and unexpungable deceased. I resent the card cataloguing tendency. And the reverent Powys Society. And the ever more gentlemanly smell of it all. "Nyetchevo" as the Russians would say. Or, put more locally, "Don't let it bug you, baby." But it sort of does.

Bless you both ...

Peter

1 Katey: Katherine Pagerey-Grey, b.1954. Peter and Barbara Tyler's daughter, had been invited to Kenya, where Mary had seen them.

2 Rose Dyer, daughter of William Ernest Powys, Mary Casey's uncle.

3 Martin, third son of Tony and Rose Dyer.

4 Tilly (Matilda) Tompkins, second wife of Peter Grey.

5 That copy of the Iliad was the first one ever owned by John Cowper. He used it at Sherborne.

6 Matinicus, a small island linked by ferry steamer to Rockland, Maine.

7 John Cowper Powys.

8 Alyse Gregory, wife of Llewelyn Powys, lived in Chydyok, near East Chaldon, Dorset.

9 Katie: as Philippa Powys was known to her family. 10 The poet William Wordsworth.

11 Francis Powys, the son of Theodore Powys.

12 Giles Wordsworth was much loved by all the Powys sisters. According to Timothy Hyman, Phyllis Playter too found him the most exciting man she had ever met, apart from JCP.

13 Lucy Powys. 14 Marian Powys Grey.

[II]

November 6, 1968[15]

Dear Mary,

Well, here we are on a foreboding, rainy November night, just saddled with Nixon[16] for the next four years and a wild wind outside blowing the maple leaves all of a which-way ... Suppose we'll survive, but sometimes the velocity, the mindlessness, the frangibility of all tends to get to one a bit. Against mindlessness, thought of you and Gerard, deciding to write and answer so late, late, your good letter of 20.IX.68.

Most of all, I want to know about Gerard and how he is faring.[17] I think we all go through certain inexplicable periods of one type of faiblesse or another, but that by no means takes away their alarming character. Particularly with two such demanding responsibilities of land as you have—and love—it is not easy to take such periods with equanimity. I've never really understood your farm in Ireland[18]—pictured it would be better—and would love to hear from you of where it is and how the land lies and what you plan to do with it. Such a thing—to have land in Ireland! I do envy you that. Just now Chris[19] is back from his adventure around the Pacific and is apparently determined to learn of farming and combine this with the creation of some sort of "commune" to which he can bring friends and defend them from the rigors of a hostile world. You would both like him immensely and understand him to the root. (Just now he has read Milton, Bhagavadgita, Tibetan Book of the Dead and St. Matthew; has been vegetarian for almost six months; works at Lamont Geological Observatory, where he is about to be a "Master Machinist" (which totally awes me).

You will be amused by what appears at the moment to be my "bag" (a new, somewhat sardonic hippie word, which I rather like, denoting a faintly arbitrary enthusiasm, taken up in defiance of the implacable gods). I seem to be Chairman, God forbid, of the Backyards Gardens Committee of the Parks Association of New York, and spend most of my free time plotting how to get manure, mulch, fertilizer and spring bulbs into a collection of City-owned lots which have been turned over to block associations and community organisations in the five boroughs of NYC to turn into gardens. Have come into touch with an amazing Mrs Powell, who knows more about gardening in NYC than anyone and does superbly well on the three in her control. Very black, very intense and wonderfully knowledgeable about everything from aphid control to clematis. Mother[20] is donating a Norway Spruce to one garden in the Puerto Rican barrio on the East Side and will be invited with me to what should prove quite a beautiful tree lighting and carolling party just before Christmas for the community. Am also transplanting iris, phlox and rose campion from her garden and mine for them. Their guiding spirit, Mrs Carmen Lavigne, has become a strong friend and is a quite incredible example of steadfastness and resolve; she asked the Parks Department for top soil to put into this lot which she'd rented from the City and was curtly turned down. Then she took 40 of her ladies and all their children

and quietly sat in the corridors of the Park. Dept. headquarters for many hours until they totally capitulated and sent 15 truckloads of top soil up to her garden, which is now leveled off and waiting for plants. Introduced her to Mrs Powell: a thundering success. Perhaps by next spring I can send you photos of the result. At any rate our plan is to make this a "demonstration garden", to which representatives from a number of neighborhood groups and block associations can come next spring for a series of talks by Mrs P. on how you turn a bulldozed lot into a going garden. It's all quite wonderful, if I can keep holding it together. Have no experience in this sort of thing and find this first sergeant-Peter-the-Hermit role perplexing and only intermittently functional.

Too late—and too much talk. Poor Katey meanwhile languishing during the week at least in NYC, caught by this damnable school strike, of which you may have read. Tilly taking a terrifying number of courses at Columbia, including one on African history. Mother fine, though memory very feeble. The neighbors, however, do splendidly in taking care of her. I drop in nightly and she seems all in all extraordinary happy. She has the Florida book[21] (which makes her snort a good deal, Mother being Mother—do you remember the incident of the flying buttresses?) and which I shall borrow in due course.

Much love to you both !!!!!!!!!!!!

Peter

15 On Nov. 11, Mary Casey wrote in her Diary, *A Net in Water:* "I had a fine letter from Peter to read while I made bread, alone in the house."

16 Richard Nixon, elected President of the United States in 1968, re-elected in 1972. Resigned in 1974.

17 Gerard Casey in those years was suffering from severe encephalitis.

18 Since it was not certain after Indepence if the white Kenyan farmers would be ousted, Gerard Casey had bought a small farm in Ireland which he later sold.

19 Christopher: son of Peter and Barbara Tyler, known as "Ty".

20 Marian Powys Grey, Peter's mother, lived at Snedens Landings, on the Hudson River near New York City.

21 *The Measure of my Days* (1968), by the American-born author and psychologist Florida Scott Maxwell (1883–1979). She was a friend of Alyse Gregory. (Her daughter Hilary Henderson, a Powys Society member, died recently: see *Obituary* on page 13.)

[III]

Sunday night, Dec 1 [*postmarked 1968*]

Dear Mary,

Yes, fun it is—and there's more than I can possibly say in the next few hours in answer to yours of last Tuesday, which I received tonight after putting Katey onto the bus to NYC and making MPG's fire[22] and watering all the plants back here.

What a heartbreaking imbroglio that Irish situation of your land is—I am grateful for your detailed explanation of all the problems and delights of Listarkin and only wish to god that I could be the caretaker in question ... though I chance the guess

that the mass and church bit would have me up in arms shortly, quite as much as does Rockland County split-level[23] (a typical form of apparently desirable new housing, now become a symbol of WHAT WE DON'T LIKE) respectability and fear. Back in '48, Ireland struck me as the most foreign country in which I'd ever been, including Japan, Austria and various others. Could now include Russia and Kenya. Perhaps an incipient, brooding cruelty, hanging just below the surface of Yeats, Maud Gonne, Kitty O'Shea and all the redoubtable magic. Probably that's unfair. Yet you and Gerard do seem to be plagued with the most persistently unfair forms of expropriation. I could hardly imagine two less appropriate symbols of Cecil Rhodes' Hemphire. The place sounds lovely and I only wish you two were ensconced there and we could come to visit and walk over all that gorse. But Mappowder better. Unless Mr. Wilson[24] has designs of expropriation there against you. I once had a boss who told me in dead seriousness: "Peter, never trust a man who smokes a pipe!" Have been pondering on that sentence inconclusively ever since. One could imagine an horrific nightmare in which Mr. Wilson arrives in Mappowder in a Long Black rolls-royce, accusing Mary of being the Real Author of the G. A. Henty books[25], which have done so much to traduce British Youth, and away in a puff of sober Labour pipe smoke would go Mappowder, too. Then you would join Chris and Eveline Arnold in a British Columbia commune, along with Dr. Smith[26] (whom I certainly do remember, since he attended my Wedding Breakfast at Chydyok with his atavistic small daughter, who threw rice at us in intent, deadly fashion, as though it was napalm.) At least in that way the four root languages of the world would survive the Apocalypse: Our Lord doth move in mysterious ways His Wonders to perform. [27]There just could be something to that bit about men who smoke pipes. As I remember it, his convictions ran to Christian Science, which was odd for an M.D. I would like to knock on the door of his hut in the middle of Egdon Heath, tho' hopefully without a broken leg. Doubt he smokes a pipe.

Well, the news here is that Katey's and my visit to Windsor Mountain School[28] in Lenox, Massachusetts, yesterday was a resounding success and she is already accepted there for next fall on the basis of what she said there and a letter from an old friend of mine, Nell Townsend, also a friend of Isobel, who fortunately is a trustee of the school. Katey delighted and more excited than I can say. The atmosphere there very liberal, very relaxed, full of involvement with the present: trips to the Living Theater in New York, ongoing connection with the Pittsfield, Mass. ghetto, 15% foreign students, including some from Kenya, a student council with the sole power of dismissing anyone from the school, five plays produced per year, almost all the kids going on to college, coed, much long hair (which grudgingly I've come to accept as a legitimate symbol of post-Apocalypse reorientation), frank discussion with kids there of the initial fascination and ultimately deadly boredom of drugs, several horses to be exercised, controlled messiness prevalent, classes ranging in size from 15 students to three, much focus on individual growth and responsability and a general feeling among the students we talked to that "you could get out of the school whatever you

put into it, with few limits." We both left ecstatically happy to spend the night with Tilly's stepbrother in a lovely old Vermont house, only marred by the slippery postage stamp coverlet under which I tried to sleep tonight. Satin, too. Ehhhr. Elbows and ankles coming out, dreams of perennial malprotection ... against pipe-smoking, wiser enemies. And a long drive down crowded, bumper-to-bumper turnpikes today.

But en route to Lenox, having extra time, I plucked up my courage and after various wrong turnings found JCP's and Phyllis' lovely little house at Phudd Bottom, Philmont, where now lives a paranoid old lady who thinks any and all visitors are there to murder her—at least according to the neighbors. God how well I remembered the place, and what intense and contradictory and all-in-all lovely emanations it produced for me! Due to the old lady's convictions, we veered off quickly and stopped in at the neighbor's house, Farmer Krick and his wife,[29] to whom JCP dedicated his "Art of Happiness". A really lovely welcome from dear people, who were so truly glad to see me. He told me of John pressing his forehead to the mailbox whenever he mailed a letter, in prayer for the recipient. And, when they were almost completely penniless, mailing a money order for $300 to some unknown man in a Birmingham Hospital, who had written that he was destitute, to some (natural) fury on Phyllis' part. He remembered me aged 9. I shall write Phyllis of this.

So much besides in your letter needs lengthy answer, which I do hope to do—but tonight that damned satin thing has underminded [*sic*] me and I have to get to a decent bed as quick as I can. Had to write, however, in answer to an immensely exciting letter, which I shall show to Chris tomorrow night when I visit his house to have his vegetarian dinner cooked for his pre-Apocalypse Father, who doesn't know too much.

Much love and affection to Gerard, Aunt Lucy and du
Peter

22 Marian Powys Grey, according to a friend, was "a natural gardener".

23 Rockland: west of the Hudson River, 12 miles north-northwest of New York City, the southernmost county of the New York Metropolitan Area. The name comes from an early description of the area given by settlers. It is now suburban in nature, with a considerable amount of scenic parkland.

24 Harold Wilson, Labour Party Prime Minister, 1964-1971, and 1974-6, made much of his north-countryman pipe-smoking image.

25 G. A. Henty (1832-1902), a very popular author of imperialistic historical fiction, known to every schoolboy. His children's novels typically revolved around a boy or young man living in troubled times.

26 Dr. Charles Smith, a friend of Theodore Powys and of Gerard and Mary Casey. Peter and "Ty" were married at East Chaldon in 1948.

27 A well-known hymn by the Powys's ancestor William Cowper: "God moves in a mysterious way,/ His wonders to perform;/ He plants his footsteps in the sea,/And rides upon the storm."

28 A progressive New England boarding school founded by Max and Gertrud Bondy who had fled Nazi Germany. The School's motto was "adjust, don't conform". It closed in 1975.

29 Farmer Krick: probably the younger Kricks, Albert and Dora, who married in 1933 and figure much in JCP's Diaries. An appeal for a money loan came from James Hanley, who knew JCP and Phyllis only from letters but became their friend and introduction to North Wales. *The Art of Happiness* was published in 1935, after the return to England.

[IV]

May 27 [Postmarked 1969]

Dear, dear Gerard & Mary,

No proper paper but here goes in the dead of night a letter far too late but filled with so much love for you both.

Gerard's correspondence with Chris fills me with so much pleasure as to be hard to vocalize. I had the desire to quietly disappear for a period of weeks while it became properly initiated—and perhaps that can explain the delay in this—or partly. The other part has been a strenuous, if often immensely satisfying period of planting in my gardens—of which more later. I can say nothing of your offer to Chris, Gerard—beyond all saying, and I hope he takes it up after a proper period of working on Francy's farm and living in his typee. That he sent Mark's letter to you was a lovely gesture, and that he has switched from Sanskrit to Greek (with my old Grammar) good news indeed. He seemed to understand you well indeed and the thought that you may be together—perhaps even later this summer—is a source of the greatest excitement to me. But we shall see. I do respect the boy (young man!) much and watch his private progress with much identification. The road not taken—his. The keys to—given. You would both love him much—as you do now.

Tomorrow morning I take great plates of red and white Cascade petunias into NYC for a class in the evening on how to plant and keep window boxes. I find an almost sensual excitement in bringing car loads of plants into NYC— yes, Mary, I do have that damnable vice of people involvement—a diffuse and often vitiating luxury. Part of me longs to retreat, part of me remaining the obdurate Boy Scout leader.

A lovely time with Katey last evening—her 15th birthday. For four years she has asked me on this date to take her through Central Park in a horse carriage—which we did yesterday on a clear crystalline afternoon, ending later at a good French restaurant where she had her first snails and we drank a bottle of wine together. A sort of rite of passage, both of us surprised at her being fifteen. [...]

Blessings to you both!

Peter

Do give Aunt Lucy my love and thanks for the wonderful Demerara, which I had this morning on oatmeal!

All well with MPG + her vegetable garden newly planted.

[V]

October 1 [1969]

A gleaming day, with the maples in our avenue (we have an avenue of maples yet, planted some hundred years ago by a farmer named Bradley, who lived in this house) quickchanging at the edges as tho' fired by a sly pyromaniac.

Dearest coz:

Your letter of Sept. 28, so astonishingly received in TWO days (there's something slightly giddy about that), vortexing between apple madness, Powys lore and the occasional awful twinges of what is, manages to touch exactly what I feel just now and brought me to know again how lithesome and most important to me our writing each other is. Had it not been for that hotshot trip to Kenya, etc. etc... and bless truly these apparent accidents!

Queer how Phyllis has dropped completely out of my correspondence. Wrote her several times, got no answer, felt rebuffed, did not go on. Yet I would like to get back into it. Do you think she has a preference for non-correspondence.... or does it relate to the probably over intense love-hate relationship which John and I had with each other???? "Still and all he was awful fond of me. A king of whistlers.[30] I'm sure he squirted juice in his eyes to make them flash for flightening [*sic*] me." A mixed-up quote that. Maybe I love to him as many as much around... Speaking of that, I was descended upon by a Mrs. Fernandez[31] recently (or did I tell 'ee already?), who wants to interpret JCP for her Sorbonne thesis in terms of the Continental know-vel. Mann's Bildungsroman and contrapuntal symbolisms as demonstrated in Wolf Solent. I do her ill: actually a nice gal but aww golly. So much, much less there than they are willing to admit—and only then does the dear size of the mountain appear: the defiance expressed through montebankry, through as you say in your letter: "what seems total irrationality and disconnectedness", defending the stony core (beyond convictions) of what they knew against outside experience to be true. Mother talking back of the rectory last night, "And out there, beyond the field the walnut tree." So planted and rooted was that walnut tree. So much, so intense, so innate, so unanthropocentric a walnut tree—as against, for example, the winey symbolism of, say, Malraux's "Walnut Trees of Altenberg",[32] where the walnut trees become linked (beautifully) with Pascal, Montaigne, Nietzsche and a certain winter of European civilization. No, Mrs. F., I think you are on the wrong track, baby... and would we could turn you around to follow the gentle road of that ineffably simple walnut tree. I suppose through a lucky set of chances they were given to sense clearly beyond themselves—without implacable accompaniment of intellectuality, or guilt, or possessive pride. Rather than investing stone or newt with frissons of symbolic overtone, maybe JCP uses, overuses, misuses all those frissons so beloved of the mystics and scholars in order to make the reader finally "give up all that" and sense the stone or newt separate from anything but itself, zen-ishly. Finally, after all the incredible box of tricks, the awesome clown show, there it is. I can hear him saying it: "There it is. Don't you see, there it is." The pursuing scholars (Mack Sennett cops) way back down the road meanwhile, tangled in gaudy masses of jettisoned symbolic fancies. All of which may not be fair to anyone, but is still, I stubbornly maintain, the right general track to follow.

Meanwhile I am burning my bloody candle at both ends, trying to cope with a suddenly febrile, overactive Chamber, o'erwhelmed by NYC's problems and chatter-

ing profusely, as well as with the gardens, threatened law suits against my dog, Iago (whom we have had to send off to a faraway farm), general decay in a number of quarters and (most awfully) a lack of friends with whom I can talk as the heart wills. Rush around too much, smoke too much, drink too much and nerves dithering. General sense of the whole pile of blocks teetering eerily, Daddy na wha Taddy autobe,[33] and an infantile, constantly reassuring fantasy of spending 12 months on Criehaven[34] with a rock and a newt. Like the man says: "Home! My people were not their sort beyond there so far as I can." Or again: "And I am lothing their little warm tricks. And lothing their mean cosy turns. And all the greedy gushes out through their small souls. And all the lazy leaks down over their brash bodies." Trapped in a banana factory. Immersed in the destructive element (—and its all your fault, old hot shot Joseph Conrad baby!). Soooooo ooooooo. After that bleat against an unconscionable fate, guess the order of the day is to go off to bed so as to fight annudder day. Still want that twelve months—irrationally and immodestly.

Know, my dear, you don't too much detest such bleatings. Need to slap it out on the old oaken board. There it is: flop! You spread yours on your side and I'll spread mine on mine. Can't get the stinksome inkerman[35] out of me head tonight.

But, my dear, you said a thing in your letter that I'm glad you had the courage to say—and how I wish I could have been side to side with you when you said it. Feel more close to you than the word manages. As old JCP would put it, my eidolon[36] is within your room.

Meanwhile much love to your Mother, Will, Phyllis, Isobel, Francis and all ...
Peter.

30 king of whistlers: expression taken from *Finnegans Wake* (Book IV, last chapter), by "the man" James Joyce, as other word-play in this letter.

31 Diane Fernandez, later Diane de Margerie, writer, essayist, translated *Ducdame* into French and wrote many articles on John Cowper Powys in different French reviews, such as 'nrf' and 'Les Lettres Nouvelles'.

32 André Malraux, *Les Noyers de l'Altenburg*, Gallimard, 1943.

33 Suggested meaning: "Daddy's not what Taddy ought to be" (i.e "not himself"). African idiom.

34 "Criehaven": officially known as Ragged Island, 20 miles out to sea, off the Maine coast. Peter had bought a small piece of land on this island.

35 'stinkersome inkerman' = 'Shem the Penman' in James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (Book I, chapt. VII) – word-play on ink, the essential element of any book.

36 *Eidolon* (Greek): an unsubstantial image. A favourite JCP word.

[VI]

Saturday March 7 [*Postmarked 1970*]

Dear, dear Mary—

What an awfully long time since my last letter to you—and what splendid, unanswered letters I've received from you in the interim.

I guess it's not been exactly an easy time for us—between my hard-to-face

recognition that the financial realities of our position (two mortgages + two children in private school) made any thought of "dropping out" for theological seminary quite out of the question—and a number of developments at the Chamber of Commerce which tend to make my job far from easy—and various ominous financial situations becoming steadily more apparent. The present load of work at my job is such as to make it difficult to enjoy completing what one can complete, while a new leadership "team" is composed of men it is difficult to admire.

After that abject bleat to the heavens, let's add that spring is showing faint signs of manifestation and with spring will come much of virtue. I look forward to working on my gardens in New York greatly as well as to preparations for holiday on our island.

Mother is fine in health and spirit, though her loss of memory increases. The neighbors do much for her and I try to do as much as they—though there is much I should be doing to stop the progressive decay of the house, which is not possible due in part to her fairly intense dislike of such efforts and in part to my lack of available time and energy. [37]

Certainly the New York City realities are corrosive to the extreme and I've long gotten over my adolescent brave quoting of Joseph Conrad about immersing in the destructive element. Christ is largely hidden from us and any Jeremiah would have a field day pointing out the only-too-evident signs of some form of Apocalypse in the future stars. Among the most terrifying signs is the increasing use of drugs—particularly hard drugs—among the young. Our paucity of viable value systems on which these children can build is truly and deeply frightening.

We have found a most compatible Anglican church in the middle of Manhattan's Theater district and now go there every Sunday en famille with Tilly's mother. They are experimenting with new and old forms of liturgy—which sometimes are most extraordinarily satisfying. A racially and socially polyglot congregation, with many young hippies, theological students, actors, dancers and slum workers. One becomes very fond of most of them—so at least we are finding an ecclesiastical home.

Katey much enjoys her correspondence with you and says it means much to her.

Love, love, greatest love to Gerard and to you.

Peter

37 See Mary Casey, *A Net in Water*, March 18, 1970: "This is a brave letter written in a good spirit, and honest. He says Marian's memory is still more gone: so grievous for him when he goes to her at the end of his day in New York—and her old Dutch wood house, falling into decay, that she so loved, her home for so long."

[VII]

August 28, '79

(A great rushing rain has just cleansed my courtyard - and my spirit - on this, a hot and humid morning.)

Dear Coz:

This is a sort of P.S. to my letter of yesterday, spurred by yours received yesterday morning just after I mailed a 'blue'[38] to you — and in the sudden discovery that I had no more blues left in my drawer. But it gives me a chance to forward to you and your Mother a dear and historic other 'blue' (now gray), writ to Mother from the three sisters together at Chydyok on April 24, 1949, together celebrating Aunt Lucy's return from Kenya. I've made a copy of it for myself and want the original to be with you. Came upon it among some old papers a few days ago and so relished their pleasure at that lovely reunion at Chydyok now so many years ago.

Yes, my dear, you were so right in so gently but firmly chiding me for having ignored a good and dear letter from Charles Lock, requesting an appointment. Glad to report I have now repaired the ignoring by writing him in hopes that we can get together late in September. A prime reason for postponing writing to Mr. Lock is that he's heard that I have a typescript of The Idiot, a fact which I've preferred irresponsibly to ignore these many years. The fact is that the typescript, I'm sure, not complete, but rather certain pages retyped by MPG — a carbon copy done on very poor second sheets, now falling apart and as fragile as the Dead Sea Scrolls. In fact I haven't dared to read them at any length and with any thoroughness, fearing that they would crumble to nothingness. So have been putting my head in the sand, as I am so wont to do. But with Mr. Lock, we can look at these pages together and arrange to make copies of them, even if the originals evaporate in the process.

As to your query, I do instinctively like and relate to Andy Young,[39] however impossible he may be as a traditional diplomat. He has a way of pointing out the Emperor's lack of clothes and has done us much good, I think, in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa. (In theory, I feel very close to Israel, but in fact find myself increasingly impatient with their righteousness.) Somehow I think he'll be center stage for quite some time to come. He married two dear friends of mine about a year ago and they speak very well concerning his disarming self-mockery and innate integrity. Carter's such another matter: so endemically and Americanly naive and earnest, without a hint of self-mockery or basic humility. The Young crisis may turn out to be his ultimate undoing, threatening the loss of both his Jewish and black constituencies at once. I voted for him, but would like to see Kennedy make a try next year — and would happily vote for him despite all the sins of his prior years. What in turn do you think of our proper Mrs. Thatcher?

Bless you, dear love ...

Peter

38 blue: (?) aerogramme letter.

39 Andy Young: the controversial clergyman appointed by President Carter to the United Nations. Kennedy: i.e. Edward Kennedy, a possible Democrat candidate.

With thanks to Louise de Bruin, Jacqueline Peltier, and Charles Lock.

For Peter

then springing through the door
for him always open
for the boy who called over
the ship's rails after farewell
'Up Above'
through the door held open
thirty years by that word
by the vision of youth
the man came
and from that meeting
glance connaissance embrace
until the too swift parting
the stronghold of arms
of full understanding
'Dear One'
at every and often meeting
of eyes the same the same the same
as before the ravaged generation
of life years

for he too broke
with his own hands amphoras
of love poured forth for all
love stored in their deeps
the passion only those know
who seek Him in the depths
drawing from broken jars
springs of living water --
was known in that reflection
of soul within soul
in the duplicate stars
community of mystery

26.7.67
Mary Casey

(*From* The Clear Shadow (*1992*)).
Some copies of A Net in Water *by Mary Casey are now available from The Powys Society.*)

Peter Powys Grey with his son and daughter-in-law.

EXECUTIVE DIVISION
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BRANCH
In replying refer to

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
WASHINGTON.

MAY 22 1918
10110-267
159
DEPARTMENT

May 15, 1918.

From: Military Intelligence - Plant Protection.

To: Chief, Military Intelligence Branch, Executive Division.

Subject: I. W. W. Anarchists, Coast.

1. Our Los Angeles Agent reports that Saxe Cummings is a recent arrival from New York. He is a brother of Stella Cummings, who is assisting in the publication of the "Mother Earth Bulletin", and says that Stella Cummings is to visit Emma Goldman sometime this month at the Jefferson City prison. He also states that there is to be an alliance between Germany and Japan for the purpose of settling affairs in Russia to the satisfaction of these Governments, and that this alliance is already at work in Mexico for the purpose of holding that country in line for future use in gaining a foothold on this continent for purposes of further conquest.

2. Agent also learned that Bee Shawstack and her recent paramour, known as Freeman, had been living in Antelope Valley, near Victorville. Freeman's right name is Huber and he is supposed to be the son of a wealthy woman in the East. Bee Shawstack is reported as having been the mistress of Haywood, President of the I.W.W., who came here from New York about eight months ago andhas been in hiding on this Coast ever since. Agents of the Department of Justice had been looking this couple up, but they had left just before the Agents had arrived at the cabin.

3. Freeman, or Shepherd, as he is also known, and Bee Shawstack, have gone to live at Hermosa Beach.

4. John Cowper Powys, a noted English radical is now lecturing here and the radicals are flocking heavy him. He is not pro-German but his lectures will do the cause of Democracy no good because of his attitude toward all governments and the encouragement he gives his hearers as to what changes must come after the war is over; in fact he stimulates them in the belief that a revolution must take place in order to right the many wrongs the people suffer.

5. This for your information.

Edmund Leigh

EDMUND LEIGH
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE
PLANT PROTECTION

7/16

John Cowper Powys in Los Angeles, 1918
A Recently Discovered Document

A photocopy of this report (shown opposite) of May 1918, from the Papers of Military Intelligence, US National Archives, College Park, Maryland, has been passed to me by Barry Pateman, Associate Editor, The Emma Goldman Papers, University of California at Berkeley. Some Powysians will be delighted to read Edmund Leigh's confirmation of what they will see as Powys's inherent political radicalism, although most will probably be appalled. Others, including myself, will be sceptical that his lectures were likely to provoke his audiences to revolutionary action, and suspect the informant of exaggeration.

After the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia in the October Revolution of 1917 Powys was to become a Communist fellow-traveller, calling himself in *Autobiography* (1934) a 'Parlour Bolshevik'. His memory of the end of the First World War in November 1918 (when he was in New York) was:

> On this Armistice night ... I must confess to feeling a fiercer and more fermenting surge of malicious hatred for my well-to-do bourgeois compeers than I have ever felt before or since. The sight of such patriots, none of whom had probably even smelt from afar the fumes of the 'burning crater', was one of those sights...that gave me a further jerk along the hard and narrow road that leadeth to Communism.[1]

The Complex Vision, his metaphysical tour-de-force of 1920, has tacked on a concluding (and extremely unconvincing) chapter, 'The Idea of Communism'.

Los Angeles in 1918, Morine Krissdóttir remarks, was a 'boom town...with an artistic and intellectual milieu fuelled by a steady influx of actors, writers, set designers and potential movie stars', and Powys's lectures there, 'as always, attracted the bohemian element', who 'flocked' to them (Leigh and Krissdóttir use the same verb). Remuneration, however, was very poor, with his being 'reduced to accepting the most rotten lectures at 25 dollars a time', in contrast to a normal $100 fee. Powys was invited to the parties of the 'Southern Californian coterie of [his] literary admirers and would-be-poets',[2] to which belonged the photographer Edward Weston and Tina Modotti, also to become a major photographer when living with Weston a few years later in Mexico City. Modotti's partner in LA was Roubaix de l'Abrie Richey, an artist and poet who died of smallpox in 1922, Powys contributing an introduction to *The Book of Robo*, a memorial collection of his writings edited by Modotti.

Before arriving in Los Angeles, though, Powys had been giving lectures in San Francisco during April, supporting the war, praising the French as 'representing the truest form of culture', while lambasting Germany as 'a state-worshipping vulture' (views similar to those he had expressed in 1914 in *The War and Culture*) – and rousing a conference of teachers to 'a condition bordering that of frenzy'.[3] The same month he heard his brother Bertie had been made a prisoner-of-war by the Germans, leading him to comment:

> No, no, things are getting a bit too crucial with these spiked helmets so near the Wessex lanes. I cannot, I really cannot, eat ice-creams and drink grape-juice in California while these barbarians overrun the earth.[4]

In consequence he attempted to enlist in the British Army in New York on 29 May – the age of conscription having being raised that month from 41 to 50 – was rejected when a tubercular scar was revealed, sailed in June to England, where he again volunteered and was again refused, and then lectured for the British government's Bureau of War Aims until returning to the United States in the autumn.

These actions are far removed from the 'revolutionary defeatism' advocated – and practised – by the Bolsheviks. Yet the following glimpse of a series of lectures which Powys delivered in San Francisco in the summer of 1919 probably conveys the subversive fervour he had aroused in Los Angeles the previous year:

> To hear his lecture on Bolshevism the ballroom of the St. Francis Hotel was crowded with the richest and most fashionable residents of the city. Clad in décolleté gowns of silk and satin, and gorgeous with jewels, the dilettante women of San Francisco awaited the platitudes with which they are usually fed. But when John Cowper Powys, clad in his Oxford gown, strode on the platform, tall, dark, burning eyed and fiery tongued, and proceeded to lash them with the Truth, they received a shock from which they have probably never recovered to this day. Tossing 'common sense' to the winds, he talked of the things that were in his heart: of Russia, the war, the oppressed, of the man who had but recently become a convict in a federal penitentiary.[5]

This prisoner was Eugene V. Debs, five times presidential candidate of the Socialist Party of America and currently serving a twenty-year sentence imposed after the Armistice for a speech encouraging opposition to the war effort....

It is appropriate that Emma Goldman and her family happen to be mentioned in Leigh's report. She and Powys had met several years earlier, probably in 1915, and become friends; and he was a speaker in April 1916 at a dinner given for Goldman at the Brevoort Hotel, New York, the evening before her trial for lecturing on birth control, when she chose fifteen days in prison rather than pay a fine. When the USA entered the war twelve months later she concentrated on anti-war agitation and opposing the introduction of conscription. As a result she was sentenced in June 1917 to two years' imprisonment, which she served in the Jefferson City penitentiary, Missouri, with the recommendation of deportation on its expiry. Thus she found herself in January 1920 back in her native Russian where, initially an enthusiast for the Revolution, she rapidly came in conflict with the Bolsheviks' despotic appetites, fleeing to Latvia before the close of 1921. She then lived principally in France but, in Britain in 1936 and wishing to make money from lecturing, she wrote for advice to Powys, recently settled in North Wales. It was this renewed contact with Goldman – and the ensuing Spanish Revolution and Civil War – which were responsible for terminating Powys's commitment to Communism.

Back in the 1880s Goldman had followed her half-sister Lena in emigrating to the USA. In Rochester, NY, Lena had married Samuel Cominsky and their daughter

Stella was to be exceedingly close to her aunt. When Goldman's monthly *Mother Earth* was suppressed in August 1917 – after eleven years' publication – Stella was co-editor of a *Mother Earth Bulletin* (until it was also prohibited in May 1918). Stella Cominsky married an actor, Teddy Ballantine, and their son Ian played an prominent part in development of paperback publication in the USA, opening Penguin Books' first office there in 1939, helping to launch Bantam Books and in 1952 founding his own Ballantine Books, a pioneer in fantasy fiction.

Stella's brother Saxe Commins (1892–1958), who anglicized his surname, had an even more impressive literary career. At the time of Leigh's report he was an extremely reluctant dentist, but he was able to make a remarkable career change when in 1929 he became an editor, from 1933 for Random House, where he was editor-in-chief for many years, working with, among others, Eugene O'Neill – who, an acolyte of Goldman and her circle as a young man, had originally recommended her nephew to his publisher, Horace Liveright – Sinclair Lewis, Robinson Jeffers, Isak Dinesen, W. H. Auden and William Faulkner. He had mostly enjoyed a warm relationship with his aunt (she treated Stella and him as if the children she never had), written for and worked on *Mother Earth*, and helped with the writing of and acted as agent for her autobiography, *Living My Life* (1931); but thereafter they grew apart as he came to support Stalinist Russia, and she is unmentioned in the engrossing memoir and selection of his correspondence by his wife.[6] Yet in 1918 Saxe Commins was acting as an informant for Military Intelligence, Edmund Leigh noting on 30th March that his agents were 'in close touch' with him: 'He is an anarchist, but is patriotic, not desiring to hamper the Government while it is at war'.

As for Commins's reported views in May 1918, Japan was an ally in the First World War of Britain, France, the USA and, until its withdrawal in March 1918, Russia. But for several weeks after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk of 3 March a German victory seemed possible, in the event of which Imperial Germany, as well as Japan (which had previously humbled Tsarist Russia in the war of 1904–5), would have had to confront the problem of a neighbouring Soviet Russia. Japan indeed was to intervene with the other Allied Powers in the Russian Civil War, sending the largest military contingent and withdrawing belatedly from Siberia in 1922 – and Germany before her defeat had similarly become involved in the Baltic lands and Ukraine. Commins's other contention, however, is puzzling. Mexico was still engulfed in its own revolution (1910–20), in the course of which progressing from being a plaything of its difficult neighbour north of the border to – for at least two decades - a fiercely independent state, conscious of its revolutionary origins.

Finally, the 'Coast' is, of course the west, or Pacific, coast of the United States. And 'Big Bill' Haywood was an inspirational leader of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) or 'Wobblies', the formidable trade-union organization founded in 1905, whose industrial unionism was the US variant of revolutionary syndicalism and within which there was a major anarchist faction.

David Goodway

NOTES

1 John Cowper Powys, *Autobiography* (London: Macdonald, 1967 edn.), 542, 598.

2 Morine Krissdóttir, *Descents of Memory: The Life of John Cowper Powys* (New York, Woodstock and London: Overlook Duckworth, 2007), 154–5.

3 *Ibid.*, 443 n.64.

4 Malcolm Elwin (ed.), *Letters of John Cowper Powys to His Brother Llewelyn* (London: Village Press, 2 vols., 1975), I, 252.

5 Ruth Le Prade (ed.), *Debs and the Poets* (Pasadena, CA: Upton Sinclair, 1920), 64. Also *see Powys Society Newsletter* 48, 'Debs and the Poets'.

6 Dorothy Commins, *What Is an Editor? Saxe Commins at Work* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1978). For Goldman's family, see also Alice Wexler, *Emma Goldman: An Intimate Life* (London: Virago, 1984), esp. 39–40, 255, 289. Also see David Goodway's *Letters of JCP and Emma Goldman* (London: Cecil Woolf, 2008).

Labyrinths

Colin Thomas *seeks a way through mazes classical, biographical and psychological*

Oh these deceits are strong almost as life.
Last night I dreamed I was in the labyrinth.
And woke far on. I did not know the place. [1]

The epilogue of Morine's biography of JCP left a skein of uncertain gloom, which has led to me pondering on the nature of mazes. Daedalus, the first architect, built an underground labyrinth at Knossos for Minos, King of Krete. But the story begins earlier when Minos prayed that a bull might be sent from the sea so that he could sacrifice to Poseidon. The creature duly appeared, but was so beautiful he decided to keep it for himself. Minos' wife, Pasiphae, loved it also, coupled with it, and gave birth to the Minotaur, half bull and half man. To hide this creature away, Minos had it incarcerated in the labyrinth. The structure existed therefore prior to the beast. Can we see this labyrinth as a secret hide-away for the king? Was it a prison for the King's enemies? Did it have some religious purpose? It had a route from its centre to the outside we must remember. Did the beast ever try to escape? Was the beast so overcome with self-loathing that there in the dark he would never want to see himself? He was fed on the young of Athens. There in the structured might of the maze he was under control – a hideous guilty secret of a wife's longing for the unnatural.

Mazes therefore are ancient creations. Now mazes are drawn to tease people's minds. As creations the journey to their centre can bring trouble and confusion, even fear. They bring about frustration in the impatient; relief when the centre is attained and we can escape back out into reality again. Near York there was a maze of Maize. Not stone but thick stems reaching high dominate the travellers. Children squeal and

parents holding them tight panic within as they pass the entry point to go into the unknown region which lies ahead. We defy our fears of uncertain outcomes to explore. Identities vanish at the blind end. Every pathway seems anonymous. We must go forward. A trap seems forever set. Out in the known world again, excitement and satisfaction can be expressed with an icecream!

If there is no centre, no way out or in, what is this plaything then? It is like a folly. If there is no way out then the creature is a prisoner. If there is no way in then the maze, and its inhabitant, are cut off from society. What purpose is it serving as part of the human condition then? The Minotaur, born of a woman's fecund nature, is a mystery to itself and a myth to those who know of its existence. Within he feeds and sleeps in his animal part; and dreams and imagines in his mortal aspect, perhaps feeling the walls for outlines, or scraping the ground with the bones of the dead. He lives a drear existence without stimulation and time, and with an identity uncertainly shaped and yet wanting to be strong.

Am I given to understand that Peter had encountered some of these experiences in his relationship with John Cowper? Is this what I am meant to understand in those final pages of Morine's biography? Of course all this is metaphor and speculation. Peter must indeed have suffered frustration and some confusion when presented with John's drawn mazes. To be shut within, to have no exit, means to break a rule about mazes, which must have entrances and ways out. It is the journey to the right and left of the passages that make for achievement as much as the arrival at the centre, or a step out into the sunlight. But, further, that earliest of labyrinths is prison to a monster. The classical is always a potent force. To be shut up in the labyrinth is to be confined with the unknown, the primordial, and the creature that eats human flesh. There in the friendless darkness, uncomforted, amongst ways that lead nowhere, or to an abyss unseen, distantly echoing, who knows what may lurk to capture the vulnerable, lonely child?

The child brought into the world, loved, taken forth into all the forms of experience, encouraged into expectancy and future worth, teased by all the labyrinths of knowledge, exposed to the vibrant mazes of sensibility and intuition, taken forwards into self-hood and the tasks of desire and relationship – to find them ashes as an end approaches and memory strengthens, which throws forth joy as well as pain, longing and rejection – is a journey we will all make no matter who we have touched with our lives. We build our own mazes, or have them built for us whether in intellect or by our hands. We remain at the centre of what we are, but often we cannot reach it to relate there. We peer into the shadowy passageways because we wonder whether the light behind us is enough for our understanding. Or we gaze out from a darkness which brings comfort as well as boredom. Peter was very ill and clearly wanting an end to his struggle towards his life's many changes of direction. He was anxious to offer his life's writing to Morine. They were a substitute for his entering the maze and they represented the centrality of his existence.

We must not forget Theseus in our pursuit of metaphors. Son of Athens and slayer

of monsters, he defeated the Amazons in battle and carried off Queen Antiope. He fought the Centaurs and abducted Helen from Sparta. He spent time in Hades until released by Heracles. His retirement on Skyros ended in him being murdered by Lycomedes. Of course, with Ariadne's gift of a ball of string, he entered the labyrinth at Knossos and slew the Minotaur to ensure no more Athenian young would be eaten. Later he abandoned Ariadne on Naxos, who in return became loved of Dionysios who made her into a constellation So many possibilities are there for resonances about the human journey here. Such a lace entanglement of wanting to be and not to be! If captive within the labyrinth of being, what unfulfilled dreams? If shut out from the gateway to the experiences, what visions borne on the crest of a mind, and then swept away because the magic words could not be found to turn the key in the lock.

Morine refers to Pentheos. Euripides describes his end in the Bakhai. He resists the coming of the new god Dionysios and pays the ultimate price – torn to pieces by drink-driven women who think he is a wild beast. Phantoms brought into being become living creatures and threats to the vulnerable and the newly believing. The gods have almighty power over the susceptibilities of mortals. We can burn in the act of creation, and we can be made puppets by an excess of vigilant arrogance. If the way is dark within the maze we need guidance. If we are in the light, we need shadows to remind ourselves of our own mortality, and to temper our leaps of thought.

As parents we will much for our children. We hope to give them a love of the world. Trust is all. Without trust children are cast adnft. If the labyrinth is a symbol, a construct for human existence – whether closed or opened, it must be one our sensibilities can respond to, learn from, and one to be recreated if the design left us is not suitable for our residency.

Vico, in his *New Science* writes:[2] 'By its nature, the human mind is indeterminate; hence when man is sunk in ignorance, he makes himself the measure of the universe.' This is a restatement of the Socratic first stance on the way to understanding and knowledge. If the maze can represent ignorance and self awareness then our escape from it, or tread into its confines, entreats our means on the road to life and experience. In living we encounter both the shadowy and the bright with a mind, in a world, that is indeed indeterminate. Mazes should tease but not confine. There must always be an entrance and an exit which should be the same. Mazes should reflect the needs of mind and life. To use the passages of the maze is to begin, whether from a centre or at an open door; is to match intuition, reason, intellect, sensibilities, to the tasks ahead, and to see the string unwinding behind you from your hand, not as a lifeline, but as a pathway that you yourself are making.

1 From 'The Labyrinth' by Edwin Muir (London: Faber and Faber, 1979).

2 G. Vico: *New Science* (Penguin Classics translated by David Marsh: *Elements* section two, p.120).

Powys and Sufism

No one reading either the fictions or philosophical works of John Cowper Powys would deny that he is a mystical writer. His sense of the super-physical dimensions of existence, his sensitivity to altered states of consciousness, his passion for magical and ecstatic states, his addressing himself at key moments to the First Cause are all testimony to this. Most of his heroes – Wolf Solent, Dud Noman, John Crow, Porius – with their mythologies, rituals, raptures, revelations and passionate quests, are mystics. In his philosophical works, such as *In Defence of Sensuality*, in which he writes of 'deep sweet contemplative rapture, which is the cosmic secret', he also propounds a mystical, anti-materialistic vision of life.

However, no one can also deny that he was a very strange kind of mystic. There is no devotion to a personal God, his relations to the twin-natured First Cause being distinctly ambiguous, no respect for the pieties of morality or orthodoxy, no suppression of sexuality, instead a veneration of earth and the elements. Above all, if by mystic we mean a state of self-dissolution in the Absolute or some kind of oceanic feeling, he fights it with all his might. If he is a mystic, it is a deeply pagan one, unimpressed with the totalitarian unity of the higher religions. In *Autobiography* Powys describes his mysticism as 'a quiet animistic waiting' and in the final essay of *Obstinate Cymric* he denies absolutely the Absolute and all its works and writes of a sensationalist hedonism and the kindness inherent in ordinariness – a position quite at odds with mystical and heroic panorama of faiths he was invoking in all his works, especially *Porius*.

Nevertheless, there is one school of mystical theology which could combine Powys's mystical and individualist sides, which is the Sufi philosophers. I do not know if John Cowper Powys was acquainted with Muslim thought or Sufi ideas but I rather doubt it. Superficially, the fierce monotheism of Islam offers the maximum contrast to the sensualist, multiversalist, egotist Powys. Despite that, so much of Powys's imaginative world chimes in with certain themes of Arabic and Persian theology. The principal points of coincidence are the belief in the reality of the Imaginal world, a world where the forms of imagination are not products of a subjective desire but an entry into an angelic realm; and the indissoluble reality of the soul, which is for Powys the creator and destroyer of all worlds (*Psychonalysis and Morality*).

Powys's evocation of the Imaginal world, which is so richly explored in his works, seems to parallel the Muslim gnostic scheme rather exactly as it is explained in Henry Corbin's expositions of the thoughts of various Islamic mystics, described in a series of books dealing with such figures as the Andalusian Ibn Arabi (1165–1240) and the Persian Suhrwardi (1155–93). Although Powys showed no interest in Islam as such, he definitely did display an interest in Spain, home of Arabi, and in Persia – as in the role of the Mithras cult in *Porius*. Persia was the source of many ideas taken over by Islam – such as holy war (*cf.* Wolf Solent's 'mythology'), the mysticism of light, and

the activity of angelic beings. For example the **Zoroastrian** heavenly beings, ***fravatis***, were transposed into the angels of Islam. In *Obstinate Cymric*, Powys makes much of being an 'original' Welshman, and for him that means of North African, specifically Berber, origin. Ibn Arabi, the Andalusian, was of Berber heritage on his mother's side. All coincidence of course.

In English letters, Powys is peculiar in the originality of his world and the way the psychic and spiritual world is presented as integrally woven into the fabric of his story. Powys is to the best of my knowledge the only novelist who creates an enchanted world of magical influences, psychic atmospheres, and intermediate beings neither human nor animal, and makes this enchanted world the substance of his story as much as Homer does with his gods and goddesses. While this move is not unknown in modern poetry (Rilke writes of angels) it is I think unique to Powys in the novel – apart from fantasies in which one is not required to assent to the reality of the fantastic world, as in Tolkien ('boring', according to Powys).

One of the main concepts evolved by certain schools of Islamic mysticism was that of the *Barzakh* (literally, isthmus) or intermediate stage: a visionary world of imagination which as explained by Henry Corbin, the West's main interpreter of Islamic mysticism, seems very akin to JCP. In *Wolf Solent* we are introduced straight away to the hero's 'mythology', a kind of cosmic battle of good and evil conducted entirely in the psyche of the unique ichthyosaurus ego. There are parallels here with the Mazdean world of the battle of light and dark, which underpins its revision by such Islamic thinkers as Suhrawardi.

The soul in the *Barzakh* is able to take on animal and vegetal forms in accordance with its striving for the intelligible, and one is reminded of Wolf's capacity to identify himself with all the forms of life in a transformative vision. In his book *Mazdaean Earth, Ismaili Gnosis*, Corbin links Islamic thinkers to a revival of archetypal visions coming from the Mazdaean or Zoroastrian past, in much the same way as Powys links the pagan world to the Christian world of the Glastonbury cult. Glastonbury Tor itself is like the world mountain, the gateway linking heaven and earth in Mazdaean myth.

Another name for this intermediate realm of angels is *Malakut* – literally 'the Kingdom'. Is it fortuitous that one of Wolf's female angels is called Christie Malakite? Coincidence or not (Malakuth is also used in the Hebrew Kabbalah which Powys may have known) Powys's females act as *fravartis*, the angelic initiators in both Mazdean and Islamic mysticism into the Imaginal realm. In *Wolf Solent*, Christie and Gerda function as two halves of the angel of the soul, union with which constitutes blessedness in the Sufi tradition. Gerda represents the elemental spirit, symbolised by the bird, and Christie the intellectual, supersensible world. It is Wolf's misplaying of his relations with these two emblems of the angel of the soul which kills his 'mythology' or connection with the imaginal and symbolic or 'intermediate' world itself.

The Intermediate world is peopled by angelic intelligences, according to Sufism.

And here is Powys: '... our souls are actually able to touch in the darkness that surrounds us the souls of superhuman beings. and the vision of such superhuman beings is the "eternal vision" wherein the mystery of love is consummated ...' (*Complex Vision*, 120). Powys's extraterrestrials are not allegories nor creatures of whimsy but felt apprehensions of the realm that has been called by Henry Corbin 'Creative Imagination'.

Powys would be more sympathetic to Islamic mysticism, because in contrast to Buddhism – or at least Buddhism as Powys understands it, he excepts Tibetan Buddhism – the Muslims accept the reality of the soul, which is Powys's absolute *leit-motif*. In *Psychoanalysis and Morality*, Powys says that the mine-shafts of the personality remain individual and do not lose themselves as Oriental mysticism implies, in any over-soul or world consciousness. But this is precisely the position of the 'Oriental mystics' – that the soul is indeed the unfathomable centre and its identity is unsurpassable. Sufism also accepts the existence of jinns and sprites, in the way that Powys painfully dragged from his own soul in the whole process of increasing personal magnetism, by cultivating the soul's power to enter an all-embracing spiritualised dimension, peopled by actual presences, not abstractions.

The Muslim thinkers link prophecy, in contrast to philosophy, with the Imaginative faculty. JCP's 'philosophical' works, including *The Complex Vision*, are not so much philosophical as teaching sessions in which the writer functions as a kind of prophet; and of course his electrifying, vatic lectures have often been described. Powys's projection of himself as a magus or prophet passed over into his novels, which are theophanies of the power of imagination itself as a real presence and part of an invisible universe into which the initiated may tap. And if we Powysians treat him in some way as a *pir* – a Sufi holy man – that is not alien to what he was trying to project.

In the final analysis, for Sufis and Powys alike, Mind is the one reality. 'The creator and destroyer of life is nothing less than mind itself, mind and the imagination.' says Powys (*Psychoanalysis and Morality*, 28).

However, it is not "all one, man" as we used to say. There are profound differences and I would not minimise them. Powys gives us the choice of goodness or malice, the yea or nay, All or Nothing. The Sufis teach that death in God, *fana*, is a release and a fulfilment by which we enter into divine Existence. Dying to self, the boundaries of Being are infinitely expanded. Powys holds on to his ichthyosaurus ego. Powys leads us to the threshold of the unitive vision, but the Sufis step beyond. On the other hand, Powys's command of our human state of flesh and blood, sinew and nerves is without parallel in any tradition.

Michael Kowalewski

Chris Thomas: Looking for Mr de Kantzow

'*myself a grey ruin forlorn …*'

The description by John Cowper Powys, in *Autobiography*, of his relationship with the aging aristocrat and poet, Alfred de Kantzow, is very well known.[1] What is perhaps less well known are the basic facts of his life, family background and the contemporary critical reception of the books that Powys worked so hard to get published.[2] Yet de Kantzow was a formative presence in Powys's early years after leaving Cambridge just when he was trying to establish himself as a writer and lecturer. Powys was immediately impressed by de Kantzow's work as well as by his personality. In some notes for a projected preface to de Kantzow's poems Powys praised his: 'strange associations of old romance', his 'philosophical envisaging of human fate' and 'tragic intensity'. He especially admired his technical innovations and the way he had 'worked out for himself a new poetic form that takes the shape of twelve lined sonnets each composed of three verses …'[3]

For Powys de Kantzow was the living embodiment of a great creative artist, underappreciated, neglected and poorly treated by the literary establishment. So great was his respect for de Kantzow he even admitted that he acted toward him more 'like a devoted young woman than like a fellow poet.'[4]

An early unpublished poem by Powys, addressed to de Kantzow, gives us a sense of his extraordinary belief in his hero's magical power over nature and ability to create imaginary landscapes of the mind and soul: *Thou who hast made the burning sun take breath,/ And stalk a living god among the hills,/Thou who hast clothed the naked bones of death,/ And made dry deserts run with glittering rills …*[5]

Powys was impressed by de Kantzow's daring flights of imagination but found his transcendental visions of a Godless universe and a desolate cosmos hard to take. Perhaps this helps to explain the otherwise enigmatic image in the frontispiece to de Kantzow's *Ultima Verba*. Is this some sort of private Powysian joke? Is Powys referring to his own work and playing the parrot to de Kantzow's eagle whose 'eyes like burning coal' stare back as though challenging his world view? *Back to your perch; these lonely heights/ were not for parrots made;/ I would not leave my Eagle flights/ to learn to be afraid.*[6]

It's possible however that, despite Powys's philosophical reservations, de Kantzow's speculations about the nature of the universe found their way into Part Six of *Lucifer* and Powys's description of the realm of chaos, night and the abysmal depths of 'the vast and wandering waste of air'. Powys's Miltonic epic was written in 1905 just at the time when he was also preparing *Noctis Susurri* for publication. These cosmic things, thought Powys, much later, 'have an interest for the imagination'.[7]

That this assessment of de Kantzow and close involvement with his poetry and personality was not confined to Powys's early self is attested by a letter he wrote to two of his correspondents in 1958 in which he called him 'a very original poet' declaring that he still often repeated lines of his 'oracles'.[8]

The impact of de Kantzow had as much to do with the magnetic affinity that seemed to link the two men together in an abhorrence of 'stifling creeds', and dislike of social convention as it did with what Powys later called 'the sweet virtue of youth and hero worship'.[9] Powys saw reflected in de Kantzow an aspect of himself. De Kantzow's sense of hopelessness and romantic despair seemed to mirror his own shifting moods of Saturnian melancholy. Perhaps Powys sensed in de Kantzow a kindred spirit and someone with whom he could share his doubts about the respectable world of his parents and his conventional upper-middle-class Victorian upbringing. De Kantzow on the other hand, however hard he tried to hide his 'desolate eccentricities' from his high born relatives, never quite abandoned his aristocratic affiliations, voiced his dislike to Powys of the 'rabble' and proudly displayed the title of Baron St George in the pages of Kelly's Brighton street directory from 1910.

In *Autobiography* Powys provides many tantalising clues about de Kantzow's life, beliefs and attitudes, but then stops his account just when we want him to go on, so engaging is the colourful portrait he produces of an unusual human being.

So who exactly was Powys's ' great gentleman' and 'poetical guru of Portslade'?

Biographical notes on de Kantzow usually begin by explaining that he was an impoverished Polish nobleman. In fact there is little evidence to connect him directly with Poland. Alfred's father and grandfather would in fact have thought of themselves as Swedish by birth and certainly would have spoken Swedish.

Alfred de Kantzow was born on 8th December 1827 in Lisbon and baptised on 26th January 1828 at All Souls Church in the parish of St Marylebone in London.[10] He was the second son in a family of eight children which included Edvard (1826–1905), Herbert Phillip (1829–1915), Walter Sydney (1831–1927), Rosette Juliette (1832–1903), Charles Adolphus (1836–1927), Florence Lucy (1836?–?), and Henry Ives (1837–95).[11]

Alfred's father was the Chevalier Charles Adolphus de Kantzow (1789–1867), 'his Swedish Majesty's minister at Lisbon'.[12] His mother, Emma Bosanquet (1796–1871), was the daughter of an independent banker and descendent of an immigrant French family. She married the Chevalier in 1825.[13] Alfred's grandfather, Johan Albert de Kantzow (1760–1825), came to Lisbon in the 1780s, from Sweden where the family had been long resident (they may in fact have originated in Poland, northern Germany or Pomerania in the distant past where the family name can be traced) to take over the running of the Swedish consulate.[14] The consulate in Lisbon remained under the management of the Kantzows for most of the nineteenth century.

Johan Albert was subsequently appointed Swedish Minister to the Portugese court in exile in Brazil in 1808, where the royal family and entire machinery of government, amounting to some 10,000 people, found a safe haven away from the invading forces of Napoleon's Grand Armée.[15] He was appointed Swedish Minister to the United States in 1812[16] where he remained until 1817, returning to Sweden the

same year. He died in 1825 having been awarded the titles of Knight of the Order of the North Star and Marechal de la Cour.[17] Meanwhile Alfred's father was formally appointed to the role of Consul in Lisbon in 1816.[18] These were dangerous, difficult and violent times and when a dynastic struggle broke out between Dom Pedro and Dom Miguel,[19] the two sons of Dom Joao, the King of Portugal, in 1826, the Kantzows were forced to flee to England. The Chevalier did not return to Portugal to take up his post again until 1833.[20]

Alfred received a traditional 'classical and mathematical' education in England at the school of 'Mr Andrew and Mr Jones' in Wanstead.[21] Interestingly, only a decade earlier Poe received a similar education at a school in Stoke Newington which like Wanstead was still, before the advent of the railways, a quiet rural village on the outskirts of London. Poe incorporated a description of his time at Stoke Newington in his story 'William Wilson'. Perhaps Alfred noticed similarities with his own school in the description of the surroundings and buildings familiar to Poe. In their 'eternal assignations' Powys and de Kantzow may in fact have discussed Poe, for in *Autobiography* Powys says that it was at this time whilst he was living in Southwick, during one of his vacations, after a visit to Thomas Hardy, that he fell under the influence of Poe and especially 'Ulalume' 'in the direction of the romantically bizarre'.[22] Strangely, de Kantzow had family associations with another of Powys's heroes, Longfellow, for his uncle, also named Johan Albert de Kantzow, provided banking facilities for the American writer when Longfellow visited Sweden in 1835.[23]

Alfred's chances of finding preferment alongside his father in the diplomatic corps were limited. He could however choose a career in the army as a gentleman cadet in the army of the East India Company. He embarked for India in mid-1845 and, after a long sea journey lasting some five months, arrived in Madras in December where he was assigned to his regiment with the rank of Ensign.[24] He was later posted to stations at Berhampoor, folowed by Russell Kondah in 1846 and 1847, Cuttack in 1848, Midnapore in 1849 and Nagode in 1850.[25] These places are all situated in the north-east of India in the region of Orissa on the Bay of Bengal.[26]

India had a profound effect on de Kantzow's creativity. It gave him images and ideas for poetry that remained with him into old age: *Soft laden billows, gathering all their might/ On ghostly sands, hoarsely their anthem pour –/ the glamour of this wondrous Eastern night/Will never pass – will haunt me evermore.*[27]

Powys must have listened with fascinated concentration to de Kantzow's stories of his travels in India to the Himalayas and the fabled Coromandel coast, of great rivers like the Jumna and the Ganges, of holy places and sacred cities, and his description of burning skies and the eternal heat, of strange trees, of dattura, coconut forests, deodars and casuarinas all glittering in a bright iridescent light. How he must have been intrigued by his description of Oriental religious figures, and his discovery of the great Sun Temple at Konarek with its strange Tantric images and sculptures of the gods Shiva, Devi, and Krishna all half buried in the sand: *Images lie prostrate on the ground – dejected sculptures of the gods that were.*[28] Perhaps Powys responded with

stories of his own 'rich bearded uncle' who had also served in the Indian army and died in India in 1879. Perhaps de Kantzow's stories quickened his interest in theosophy and Buddhism. Perhaps too these stories stimulated his taste for the occult, the bizarre, and unusual.

In 1850 de Kantzow was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant whilst serving at Nagode.[29] In *Autobiography* Powys also mentions the illness and sunstroke de Kantzow suffered which led to his retirement from the army. This occurred in 1852, for the East India Register records that he entered the invalid establishment on 20 April 1852 and returned to England from Calcutta on furlough. De Kantzow recorded the event in one of his poems: *In Eastern climes, in India's blazing noon, I lapsed to breathless langours day by day ...*[30] De Kantzow never fully recovered from his illness and officially retired from the East India Company in February 1855. The contrast with India could not have been more pronounced when he returned to London. He found lodgings in Poland Street, where Blake once had a studio during his Swedenborg period.

Alfred married Mary Marie Farmer on 1st March 1854.[31] During the next ten years the de Kantzows moved from one address to another in London, occupying lodgings in George Street, Fitzroy Street, Percy Street and finally Margaret Street just behind Oxford Street. He settled into a quiet domestic routine raising a family. Children were born in 1855 (Lucy Alicia),1857 (Julius Winyett),1861 (Herbert who died in infancy), and 1863 (Frances Ada).[32] These were years when he also seriously pursued his ambition of a literary career. He called himself 'author' on the birth certificate of his son Julius. This certainly coincides with the publication in contemporary newspapers of some of his poems.[33] Perhaps lack of more substantial success and public recognition contributed to de Kantzow's Baudelairean sense of *guignon* and low self esteem.

London also probably had a deleterious effect on de Kantzow's health. He took refuge from the fog, mephitic gloom, and *uproar of unresting London*[34] by moving to the south coast where another daughter, Minnie, was born. In 1868 we find him living at 13 Wyndham Street in Brighton, opposite the pebble beach and esplanade. The change of circumstances must have vitalised his spirit and creative powers: *I gazed upon the illimitable sea, And bowed myself before its sovereign face.*[35] He may have been helped to move away from London and acquire property of his own by a legacy from the Chevalier. His father died in 1867.[36] Perhaps he was also helped by his mother, who when she died in 1871 made provision for him in her will despite her own limited means.[37]

By 1870 de Kantzow had moved further west along the coast to Portslade where another daughter, Marguerite Cecilia, was born in 1870, and a son, Hugh, his last child, in 1877.[38] De Kantzow occupied addresses in Carlton Terrace, Portslade at Nos 13, 8 and finally No 11, 'Clive Villa'.[39]

Portslade, with its proximity to the downs and wheat fields that still reached as far as the sea, gave de Kantzow the freedom to wander at will – *my sandals worn, my*

garments travel stained. We may imagine him seeking out lonely little downland villages and their bosky churchyards, letting the coastal hinterland and the arcadian landscape of woodland and weald become the inspiration for poetry. He walked as far as Poynings (Powys mentions in *Autobiography* a poem, now lost which de Kantzow had written called 'A Walk to Poynings'), he explored Devil's Dyke, climbed Newtimber Hill, and stared down, transfixed, at the sunny nymphean glades of Silva Anderida: *I am overwhelmed – my soul is filled with awe.*[40]

Nature restored him to health. Perhaps he watched the buzzards wheel in the sky, and the gulls descend on the sea, and listened to the sound of stonechats, lapwing and snipe, or watched owls and bats appear from under the eaves of the farmers' barns. He read widely, choosing religious texts and philosophical works by Hume, Hegel, Comte and Herbert Spencer.[41] Perhaps he rested on his rambles amidst the sweet smelling grassy herbs and read to himself from his favourite poets. He might have delayed his return home and lingered in the dimly lit and smoky interiors of the local taverns and pot houses like 'The Stag's Head' or 'The George Inn', rolled gold leaf tobacco and drunk from tankards of Dudney's famous South Down pale ale whilst he reflected on the vocation of the poet: *Poetry is a sword of lightning ever unsheathed, which consumes the scabbard that would contain it.*[42]

When Powys first met him, in 1894, de Kantzow was aged 65. He seemed older to Powys who thought he was in his seventies. The two men set out from Portslade and Southwick *afoot and light hearted* feeling *the efflux of the soul. ... Now it flows into us, we are rightly charged.*[43] Together they launched into vigorous debates about literature and ideas as they tramped over the downs, across open fields and along dusty chalk lined paths bordered with brightly coloured *visionary flowers*[44] penetrating *unknown modes of being.* Their words like *ashes and sparks*[45] inspired each other. The subjects Powys covered in his public lectures spilled over into their discussions. They introduced each other to new writers. In later years Powys remembered that it was de Kantzow who had first introduced him to Chesterton.[46]

But perhaps the recognition de Kantzow now received from Powys and his friends[47] came too late to make any difference to him. He had struggled too long: *My songs were begotten in sorrow.* What could he hope for now? He did however acknowledge Powys's magnanimous gesture and thanked him for his help in 'To The Reader'. He went further in the encomium to *Noctis Susurri* and invoked Powys's 'genius' as if he was a tutelary deity.

In fact when the books which he had so longed for appeared, the reviews he received were mostly favourable.[48] *The Scotsman* found de Kantzow to be a 'scholarly poet ...',[49] *The Westminster Review* commented: '*Ultima Verba* are the poems of a thoughtful ... man'.[50] *The Times Literary Supplement* praised de Kantzow's 'terse and nervous little poems ... Are these really his "ultima verba"? We should welcome more from one who has no small gifts of thought and expression.'[51] What emerges from a reading of the poems today is the image of a poet at a distance from his contemporaries. He has none of the hothouse atmosphere of the poets of the nineties although he

shares with them some of their favourite themes and preoccupations. Nor is there much of the post-Victorian optimism of the Edwardians in his work. He leans more towards the 'modernism' of 'Christabel' and 'Kubla Khan', or the old-fashioned verse of the late eighteenth century. No wonder then that, notwithstanding Powys's praise he remained a minor figure quickly eclipsed by more celebrated Georgians, Imagists and other early-twentieth-century modernists. De Kantzow's themes are easily identified: evocations of cosmic space; memories of India: *the land of the coral-girt strand,/ Where the sun shines aloft in a glare*;[52] pantheism; a Goethean view of nature: *He found in Nature the Magician's hand – wondered and prayed*;[53] the conflict between science and religion, the oppression of religious creeds and dogmas; dark visions of humanity; mutability, fear of nothingness and mortality, love and friendship, and the poet's own self image: *I move among ruins, am tearful,/ Myself a grey ruin forlorn.*[54]

Powys says that he began to lose touch with de Kantzow when his health became worse and his son 'who was always kind to him' took him to live with him in London. This must have been around 1911, for the census records him living in Brentford where his son had moved shortly before he married in 1912. De Kantzow probably moved to London permanently around 1917 when his son acquired a house in the Brixton Road, as the street directories no longer record entries for him at Carlton Terrace.

Alfred de Kantzow died of chronic bronchitis and exhaustion on 30th March 1919, aged 92, at the house of his son at 213 Brixton Road, South London.[55] An inquest was held on the circumstances of his death but the outcomes are unknown for the records have been lost. Nor is it known if he was cremated or where he is buried. Powys may however have received information about Alfred's last days from his daughter Lucy; he told Frances Gregg in June 1935 that he had just received a letter from her although he didn't reveal the contents.[56] (Lucy herself died a few years afterwards in 1940, at a nursing home in Orpington.)[57] However, the shadow of the memory of Alfred de Kantzow lingers still in the family plot that lies in the little churchyard of St Leonards, Aldrington, overlooking Carlton Terrace, where his wife Mary, his son Hugh and his wife Lilith, and his grandson, Barron ('Barry'), are all interred.

NOTES

1 Powys, *Autobiography*, 1934, 232–7. See also *PSN* 44 (November 2001), Sidelights (1): What's In a Name? by Susan Rands. 2 *Ultima Verba* (T. Fisher Unwin, 1902); *Noctis Susurri*(Sherrat and Hughes, 1906). De Kantzow's books are now available on the internet in a 'flip' book format enabling the reader to turn the pages electronically online. See: http://www.archive.org/details/ultimaverbaoodekaiala and http://www.archive.org/detailsnoctissusurrisigoodek. *UltimaVerba* has also been reprinted by the print on demand publisher Kessinger. 3 National Library of Wales, NLW 236. 4 *Autobiography*, 259. 5 Powys, 'To Alfred de Kantzow', Powys Society Collection, DCM. 6 Powys, 'The Parrot and the Eagle'. 7 Powys, *Diary 1930*, 113. 8 Powys, Letter to John and Paulette Goddard, Powys Society Collection, DCM. 9 Powys, *Letters to Sea Eagle, the Letters of John Cowper Powys to Philippa Powys* (1996), 100. 10 Parish Records, All Souls, Marylebone (London Metropolitan Archives); Alfred de

Kantzow, Cadet Papers, HEIC, Oriental and India Office Collection, British Library, London. **11** Sources: Parish Records (London Metropolitan Archives), BMD Index (www.ancestrylibrary.com), UK Census collection (www.ancestry.com), www.1911census.co.uk, International Genealogical Index (www.familysearch.org). Will of Lucy Alicia Baroness de Kantzow, National Archives. **12** *A Genealogical and Heraldic Dictionary of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain and Ireland for 1850* by John B. Burke, Esq. **13** *The Gentleman's Magazine*, July, 1825: 'Marriage at All Souls and afterwards at the Swedish Minister's Chapel, Chevalier de Kantzow, Swedish and Norwegian Chargé d'Affaires at Lisbon, to Emma, dau. of late William Bosanquet, Esq'. **14** Leos Müller, Consuls, Corsairs and Commerce. Uppsala, (2004). **15** Patrick Wilcken, *Empire Adrift, The Portugese Court in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1821* (2004). **16** 'Mr Kantzow, late chargé d'affaires from Sweden to the court of Portugal and at the Brazils is named envoy to the U. States of America', *Mercantile Advertiser*, 17 July 1812. See also *The Federal Republican*, 3 November 1813, *The City Gazette*, 25 April, 1817; Theodore Lyman, *The Diplomacy of the United States* (1826); Brynjolf Jakob Hovde, *Diplomatic Relations of the United States with Sweden and Norway*, 1814-1905 (1921); *An American Aristocracy, southern planters in antebellum Philadelphia* by Daniel Kilbride, (2006). **17** *Gentleman's Magazine*, July 1825. **18** *The Times*, 9 April 1816. **19** Neil Macaulay, *Dom Pedro, The Struggle for Liberty in Brazil and Portugal, 1708-1834*, (1986). **20** *The Times*, 27 August 1833. **21** Alfred de Kantzow, Cadet Papers, HEIC, Oriental and India Office Collection, British Library, London. **22** *Autobiography*, 228. **23** *Diary of Clara Crowninshield, A European Tour with Longfellow*, 1835-1836, ed. by Andrew Hilen, (1956). **24** Alfred de Kantzow, Cadet Papers and Service Record, HEIC, Oriental and India Collection, British Library. De Kantzow's brothers followed a similar career route. Herbert entered the Royal Navy and rose to the rank of Captain and Admiral (Admiralty: Officer's Service Records, National Archives), Walter also joined the Royal Navy and retired with the rank of Captain (Admiralty: Officer's Service Records. National Archives), Henry joined the Royal Militia as an Adjutant and Captain and Charles Adolphus joined the East India Company retiring, in the 1888, with the rank of Colonel after 33 years in India. Walter's career in the Royal Navy was recognised by *The Times* in 1926 which published a story about 'longest living sailors' (*The Times*, 28 January 1926). *The Times* also published obituaries of Walter (24 February 1927) and Charles Adolphus (22 January 1927). Alfred's brother Charles Adolphus lived in Brighton, in Queens Road, during the period that Powys knew Alfred de Kantzow, writing his memoirs and describing his role in the Indian Mutiny as a young officer. 'I am one of the very few still surviving officers of that dreadful time.' Perhaps Powys visited him with Alfred. Charles Adolphus had a very successful career in India as a soldier and a civil administrator. His exploits, which sound like something out of G.A.Henty, were covered widely by the British newspapers in 1857 and 1858. Dubbed with the sobriquet of 'beau sabreur' by *The Pioneer*, for the wounds he received to his face in hand to hand fighting during the Mutiny, his bravery was publicly recognised by Queen Victoria as well as Canning, the Governor General of India. See: Kantzow papers, Oriental and India Office Collection, British Library, London, Cadet Papers; Service Record and 'Record of the Services of Colonel C A de Kantzow in India during the years 1853-1888' (privately printed, The Caxton Press). **25** The East India Register and Army List, London (1846-1850) **26** For a modern traveller's account of the region see *A Goddess in the Stones* by Norman Lewis. **27** Kantzow, 'Night and Moon on the Coromandel Coast'. **28** Kantzow, 'The Shoomadoo Pagoda'. **29** Alfred de Kantzow, Service Record; The East India Register, (1850). **30** Kantzow, 'Time is a Noiseless File'. **31** Parish Register, St.James, Westminster (London Metropolitan Archives). **32** BMDindex. **33** Kantzow, 'New Years Eve', *Morning Chronicle* 31 December 1857; Kantzow, 'The Prize Ring', *The Era*, 15 April 1860. **34** De Quincey, Postscript to *On Murder Considered As One Of The Fine Arts*. **35** Kantzow, 'The Sea'. **36** *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 14 September, 1867: 'Kantzow, Baron St George de, for many years accredited from the Swedish government to the court of Lisbon at Kissengen, Bavaria, aged 78, 9th inst'. **37** Will of Emma Bosanquet Baroness of St. George, (Principal Registry of the Family Division). **38** BMD Index. **39** Street Directories of Brighton, Hove and District (Kelly, Pike, Towner and the Post Office Directory for Sussex). **40** Kantzow, 'The Last words of Rabelais'. **41** Kantzow, 'The Indian Prince'. **42** Shelley, 'A Defence of Poetry'. **43** Whitman, 'Song of the Open Road'. **44** Shelley, 'The Question'. It is surprising that Powys and de Kantzow never seem to have met W H Hudson, author of Nature in

Downland,(1900), who was walking in exactly the same places at exactly the same time, studying the flora and fauna of the South Downs **45** Shelley, 'Ode to the West Wind'. **46** Powys, *Diary 1931*, 172. **47** Louis Wilkinson referred to him in his novel The Buffoon: 'Our greatest living poet is in Twickenham.... We call him 'the old man'. The Rhadamanthus of the circle!' Powys absorbed de Kantzow into his own imaginary world, and transformed him into Mr Wotznak in his unpublished fiction. See: Works Without Names, Parts 1 and 2, Powys Review Nos 22 and 23, 1988 & 1989. He also made him the subject of his lectures. See: Derek Langridge, A Record of Achievement, and Paul Roberts: John Cowper Powys and the Cambridge Summer Meetings, Powys Journal, volume XIII, 2003. **48** *The Cambridge Review*, June 17, 1903; *The Bookman*, November 1902. **49** The Scotsman, 25 February 1907. In recent years attempts have also been made to revive his reputaion by Kenneth Hopkins (English Poetry, A Short History, 1962) and by Bernard Jones (Country Life, 27 October 1983) **50** *The Westminster Review*, November 1902. **51** *Times Literary Supplement*, 12 September 1902. **52** Kantzow, 'To Laura in India'. **53** Kantzow, 'In Memoriam. Walter Williams' **54** Kantzow, 'The End of Life'. **55** BMD Index. **56** Powys, *Letters of John Cowper Powys and Frances Gregg*, 1996, 28-29. **57** BMD Index; Will of Lucy de Kantzow (Principal Registry of the Family Division).

Two Wartime Days
JCP: Diary

Tuesday 10th November 1942

Americans will advance thro' Tunisia towards Tripoli to take the invaders in the rear!

Begin DOSTOIEVSKY

Stalingrad holds firm, & the Caucasus drives them back! Great anger among the Italians at being deserted by the Germans in Libya and Egypt –

The T.T. plants Pertrushka's Oak by the old Stump in Mur-y-Congl [?] near the T.T.'s American Oak that has those Red Leaves.

Vichy is thoroughly upset by the events in Africa. Weygand's movements are obscure: so are the movements of Laval! Admiral Cunningham appointed to chief sea-command off Africa. & a great Naval fight with the Vichy Navy reported. But Algiers is in the hands of the Americans. Non Nobis! D.V. Touch Wood! Non Nobis! O great Jehovah stretch forth thy hand upon the enemies of thy chosen People the Jews!

Post
The T.T. posts Last chapter of Old Age. "Old Age & Death"?

Women's conscription, or, anyway, Registration, raised to 50s! & the T.T. wonders: what of American citizens?

I begin my Dostoievsky

I write to Gwyn Jones refusing to go to Aberystwyth in March.

A letter from Old Littleton alluding to Ethel & the Hogarths – these latter are enemies!

Possible April lectures in Bridgend and Swansea.

A Splendid Big PARCEL of Books from LONDON LIBRARY

up at 6.15 shut gate Hug Old say Πολλα Pierrot Tie & Plum Stick from Chydyok.
I go to Crown Wood beyond Llanerch for two Bundles of Sticks.
The Day is Warm & Cloudy & Windless.

A very very Sad letter from old Huw Menai. What a shame & what a cruel life! Damn!

N.B. I must be less of a Pharisee in my PRAYERS I must pray in Secret.

Sunday Nov 22 1942

DARLAN's crafty phizz dominate[s] Comedie Francaise

Private Brill is killed in the Desert a great Mural Artist aged 22 the enemy saved his murals.

8th Army & 1st Army are now as far distant as London from Warzaw

I see SNOWDON: two peaks of Wyddfa

The HARDEST FROSTYET

White Frost Pictures on Windows of Hills, rocks, paths, ferns, trees, in Frost-Marks!
No Wind at all
Sunshine at last!

Both the Sun & the Moon!

"O Sun! O Moon! ye Dual Agents, say:
What is this world betwixt ye that ye share???
Adam & Eve & fearful Night & day
Ah! why so glistening in the Speechless Air?? ["]

or "Why so speechless in the Glistering Air ???"

Alfred De KANTZOW
[*misquoted from 'The Moon' in* Ultima Verba. *See* Autobiography, *232–7*]

up at 6.16 Shut Drive Gate saw the Full Moon yellow as an Orange!!! descending over the RugWoods! Saw it thro' our oak tree reflected in the Dee! Took up Coffee & called the T.T. Hugged the Very Old Said Πολλα γουναφαι νεκυωι over all DEAD!

left back gate at 7.20 Went as far as Gwyliw yn Farw & over I came up after kissing Little Emily or [?]-ried Stone up & up

up & up, up & up by hill & valley [?] I say up out of forest by by by the DROVE of the Dwarf Ginesta I like going up that Drove!

I wear my Sunday Coat Sunday American high Boots & Sunday cane No.9. Laurel Tie 24

My HEEL has been tender of late & these BOOTS of LEATHER eased it!

Back at 9.20

J.C.P. to P.P.
(and see back cover)

November 29th 1954
To the T.T. who here doth speak!

"Don't talk of Birthdays to me now
While I hear nothing but the row
Of cardboard boxes being tied
And books and papers squeezed inside
And all the Poets in the World
Want all their bloody ballads furled
Into some special trunk or box
So when the Mail is on the Rocks
Or riding in a Bandit's Car,
They will be sure that safe they are!
Don't talk of Birthdays till the Crack
Of Doom is on our very track!
Give me a Glass of good neat Sack
And thou shalt be of Hearts my Jack! "

February 14 1958

I don't want whiskey: I don't want wine:
I don't want even the Moon to shine:
To hell with HELLISH and damn DIVINE
With a cup of sugar to pour in
I care nothing for Virtue, nothing for Sin!
As long as I've got the Tiny Thin
To be my Valentine.

Sunday November 29, 1959 *

Not write a sonnet for you? Sure I will!
For without you beside me all is nil.
How can I see you near me and be still?
When you were born by Christ it was to fill
An emptiness I've felt since little Clare
Sat on my knee at Montacute when all
The rooks around the Abbey made their call
And Mr. Phelips made me hold his gun
And let the wild geese fly and foxes run
While Dostoievsky's Idiot filled the air.
O lucky Jack! That now with you to do
All that my failing wits can think of doing
Though I act barking dog or cat that's mewing
I am with you and that is all I care.

For Phyllis Playter from John Cowper Powys

Two Letters
JCP to his great-nephew Stephen Powys Marks, 1958

1 Waterloo
Blaenau-Ffestiniog
Merionethshire
North Wales

Friday Sept 19th 1958

My dear Stephen

I am simply thrilled by this real piece of first-rate printing from your own private Printing Press. What a good choice as a subject ! And this Saint Benet Church Paul's Wharf thus treated shows clearly that you are not only [*page* 2] a born Art-Printer but a born Architect !

I am delighted to possess "for keeps" as the girls say this little book about this little Church with its architectural and antiquarian history told so clearly in such plain unwavering words.

My dear Stephen I do indeed congratulate you on what you are doing.

Just think of a church on this site being mentioned in the year IIII !! That does have an exciting almost fairy-tale sound about it !

Well my dear Stephen I am so proud of you & that's the truth—O I wish your grandfather my brother the Architect could see this little book !

[*in margin*] Love from us both

Always your faithful old John Cowper Powys

[*in margin of first page*] This is the 1st time in my life I've ever seen a book freshly printed like this in the old style & it makes me think of Erasmus and Rabelais and Pico della Mirandola !

1 Waterloo
Blaenau
[nd]

My dear Stephen

I do so like what you sent me **printed** on your **private** press. I think its wonderful to have got so far as you have in printing. I love to read about early printers especially those in **Venice** and I love to think how my favourite of all writers the great **Rabelais**—and I am so proud to have learnt that my book on him lies in a little collection in his home near the little river Vienne in France—was one of the first of all Proof-readers in the printing-house at Lyons in France and when he was exhausted with thik little job he used to go into the Hospital next door being a Doctor of Medicine & help cure the patients

[*page 2*] I always associate Printing with Sir Thomas More from whom the Poet Donne was descended and from whom I found somewhere in an old history our

Powys family is descended and I also associate it with Erasmus who was one of the first to be enthusiastic about the art of printing. You see in the old days the monks used [to] make their books by handwriting and drawing so that when **Caxton** and the rest started printing books out of the way people had their first chance of educating themselves.

Shakespeare was obviously very dependent on print and he makes one of his characters talk somewhere about **Gargantua,** Rabelais' favourite giant though I dont think he invented his names though he may have invented Gargantua's father's name Grangousier and his son's name Pantagruel.

But I do love to think of your Printing—No better craft at Xmas Time !

always your old J C Powys

SAINT BENET PAUL'S WHARF

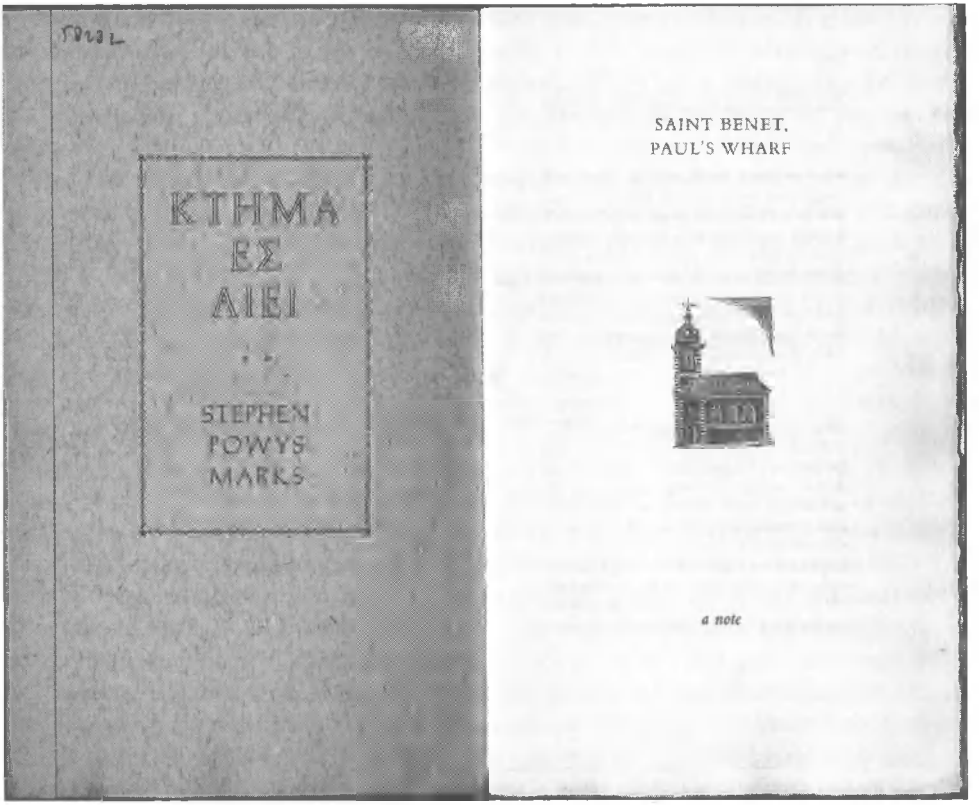
When I was studying architecture at the Bartlett School in London, a major exercise which all students had to carry out was to meaure and draw a building. With two fellow students I measured the delightful small Wren church of St Benet Paul's Wharf in the heart of the City of London; it was then in use as the Welsh Guild Church.

We borrowed long ladders from an obliging nearby builder, and were lucky that the church had itself had to put up a full-height scaffold inside one corner; we climbed perilously out onto the tower cornice from one of its cupola windows, reaching with long bamboos to take our measurements. No insurance of course! It is difficult to imagine, more than fifty years later, that we would have got permission now to do any of this, certainly not to climb wherever we fancied without any safety precautions.

We did our survey in September 1956 in consistently fine weather, and then we each prepared our separate reports and sets of drawings; mine were completed by October 1957, and copies made by the National Monuments Record. Then in summer 1958, with a newly purchased and the smallest available Adana printing press, I printed my report as a little twelve-page booklet on dampened hand-made paper. Overleaf you see the title-page and inside front cover printed with a typographical book-plate of my own making with small fonts of type which I had ordered and which had been prepared for me to collect on a wandering continental journey home via typefounders in Frankfurt and Haarlem.

This then is the booklet about which Uncle Jack enthused so volubly. I made fifteen copies, and sent out most of them in September, and I had the first letter from JCP very promptly; the second must have been written on someone, perhaps Phyllis, spotting the booklet and JCP forgetting that he had already sent me a letter – evidently around Christmas time.

The little picture of St Benet is the only wood-engraving I have ever made, but as a



medium, wood-engraving has continued to appeal to me, especially in fine books.

The font of lead type I bought to use on the Adana was *Bembo*, a great favourite of many leading book-designers, and came from Mouldtype, one of the main typefounders, not Adana. The upper book-plate font is *Dubbele Augustijn Open Kapitalen* from Enschedé en Zonen in Haarlem, with both Greek and Roman characters, while the lower one is *Michelangelo* from Stempel in Frankfurt (related to *Palatino*, by the same designer, Hermann Zapf); these had had to be planed down from continental type height to English.

The Greek phrase (in Attic dialect) ΚΤΗΜΑ ΕΣ ΑΙΕΙ, means 'a possession for ever'; it was used by Thucydides of his own *History of the Peloponnesian War*, and I found it had been used by other owners of books. It appealed to me.

So that is the history of the booklet which prompted such effusions from my great-uncle. I learned a huge amount from my own practical experience of using real lead type in a real printing machine, even on such a small scale, and have carried over the understanding and interest into the digital and electronic age.

Stephen Powys Marks