Editorial

The *Newsletter* continues its winding way with much pleasure (and useful employment) to its aged Editor, who is not currently thinking of bowing out, but increasingly dependent on contributions and support. These above all from Stephen Marks as printing manager and our Secretary Chris Thomas, maestro of internet search; and from our helpful and kind Committee.

Sad news this time is the passing of David Gervais, whose well- and widely-furnished mind and firm views took the Powyses both seriously and sympathetically, anchoring them in traditions of Englishness and literature.

It was also sad to learn of the loss of Chris Woodhead, that force for good in the world of education. He talked on how *Wolf Solent* had influenced him (memorably, on Wolf rescuing fallen leaves) at the 2002 Conference in Glastonbury.

A committee meeting in Exeter on 10th June marked a new era, with much of the Powys material formerly at the DCM now housed in the archive ('Commons') library of Exeter University, where Christine Faunch, Head of Heritage Collections, conducted us (past an exhibition of vintage film material) to the underground storeroom with its grey sliding stacks holding the familiar boxes and timeworn books. The well-designed red-brick library, with other university buildings, is on a leafy hilltop park, in walking distance from the station below. The train journey itself, in mid-June, was a *Wolf Solent*-like tour of England at its most engaging, green and gold with buttercup fields, dark full-leaved copses and glimpses of willow-lined canals, with the Westbury White Horse presiding.

ON OTHER PAGES

Among subjects discussed at the meeting was the proposal, for reasons of economy, to have two rather than three Newsletters a year – probably in April and October. This will be considered for next year.

No 85 includes a range of contributions on disparate subjects, from an Irish activist to a New England composer to Mary Magdalene. We see the young Katie flying her pigeons, in extracts from her diary in 1903–4. A new selection of Llewelyn's essays by Anthony Head, with forward by John Gray, and woodcuts by Gertrude Powys, revives the title *Earth Memories.* Essays and woodcuts are delightful in themselves, but the lack of attributions and mis-placings of the illustrations provokes a stern championing by Stephen Marks of his great-aunt, together with a useful sorting and indexing of the various LIP essay collections.

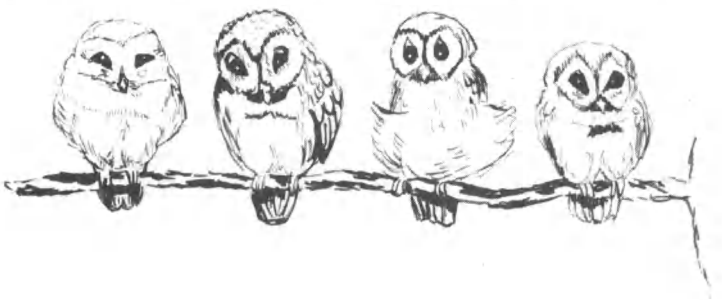
AGM 2015

The Annual General Meeting of the Powys Society will be held at the **Hand Hotel, Bridge Street, Llangollen, at 11.00am, on Sunday 23 August 2015**. All members of The Powys Society are welcome to attend and participate in the AGM whether or not they are attending the conference.

AGENDA

1 Minutes of AGM 2014 as published in *Newsletter 83*, November 2014, and matters arising.
2 Nomination of Honorary Officers and Members of the Powys Society Committee for 2015–2016.
3 Hon. Treasurer's Report and presentation of annual accounts for year ended 31 December 2014.
4 Collection Liaison Manager's Report.
5 Hon. Secretary's Report.
6 Chairman's Report as published in *Newsletter 85*, July 2015.
7 Date and venue of conference 2016.
8 A O B

Chris Thomas, Hon Secretary



from an early Llewelyn sketchbook

Chairman's Report, 2014-15

In the year that has passed since The Powys Society collections were transferred, all your Committee have felt a heavy responsibility lifting – able once again to focus on our real purpose: our shared enjoyment in reading and discussing the books, and exploring the lives, of these fascinating writers. The 2014 conference at Sherborne was buoyant and relaxed, while the more informal meetings – in London, focusing on *Obstinate Cymric*, at Montacute on *Wood and Stone*,and at Dorchester on the Wordsworth/Powys affinities – all delivered intensely enjoyable occasions. (Each has been separately reviewed in the *Newsletter*.) Finally, in June, the Committee met at Exeter University Library, and were taken around the newly-installed Powys shelving and archive by Christine Faunch. As with all new moves, there was some sense of rediscovery, and I think several of us resolved to give time to delving there independently over the coming years. On the Society's publications front, Peter Foss's rich edition of Llewelyn Powys's 1910 Diary, *The Conqueror Worm*, is a real achievement; and the 1911 Diary is now in preparation. Harold Fawkner's monograph on *Maiden Castle, John Cowper Powys and the Elements*, should be available at the Llangollen Conference in August; as will the 2015 *Powys Journal*, soon to be fully digitalised for online publication. Our own website has been renewed. We have twelve new members – including new enthusiasts from France, Bosnia, and USA; but several losses too, including one of our most active contributors, Dr David Gervais, whose Obituary appears below.

All in all, this has been a very positive year, with a genuine sense of our pulling together, through the various tribulations and crises that are the real-life context for each of the difficult and time-consuming outcomes too smoothly listed above. Rather than name each of you once again, I hope it is acceptable just to issue a heartfelt general thanks on behalf of the Society to those who have given so much over these past months.

Timothy Hyman

Jeff Kwintner & David Gervais at the Conference at Sherborne School in 2004.

Committee Nominations 2015–2016

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

	Nomination	*Proposer*	*Seconder*
Chairman	**Timothy Hyman**	Peter Lazare	Chris Thomas
Vice-Chairman	**David Goodway**	Chris Thomas	Frank Kibblewhite
Treasurer	**Anna Rosic**	Louise de Bruin	Jacqueline Peltier
Secretary	**Chris Thomas**	Chris Wilkinson	Tony Head

For the Committee the following have been nominated and have agreed to stand:

Nomination	*Proposer*	*Seconder*
Kate Kavanagh (*Newsletter editor*)	Anna Rosic	Shelagh P-Hancox
Dawn Collins	Anna Rosic	Kate Kavanagh

If these nominations are approved by members at the **AGM**, the Committee, from August 2015, will consist of those named above as well as **Louise de Bruin** (Publications Manager and Conference Organiser) who has one year to run of her three-year term of office, **Michael Kowalewski** (Collection Liaison Officer), **Shelagh Powys-Hancox**, and **John Hodgson,** who all have two years to run of their three-year term of office. **Charles Lock** (editor of the *Powys Journal*) serves as *ex-officio* member.

There is **one vacancy** on the Committee to commence **August 2015**, due to resignation of **John Dunn** earlier this year. Members are invited to submit nominations for this vacancy at the **AGM**.

Members of the Committee have resolved to appoint **Jacqueline Peltier** to Honorary membership of the Powys Society Committee. Jacqueline currently serves as the Society's official representative in France.

All paid-up members of the Society are also invited to submit nominations for service on the Committee to commence **August 2016,** at any time during the course of the forthcoming year. The deadline for submission of submissions is **1 June 2016**.

Chris Thomas, Hon. Secretary

Works by Timothy Hyman from his 'A Year at Maggie's', at the Royal Academy of Art.

The Powys Society Conference, 2015

The Hand Hotel, Llangollen
Friday 21st to Sunday 23rd August

'Signs & Wonders'

PROGRAMME

Friday 21st August

16.00 Arrival
17.30 Reception
18.30 Dinner
20.00 **Chris Thomas: 'Buried Treasure: JCP's sources and the creation of *Wolf Solent*'**

Saturday 22nd August

08.00 Breakfast
09.30 **John Gray: 'Three Powyses on religion: John Cowper, Llewelyn and Theodore on belief and non-belief'**
10.30 Coffee
11.15 **Nicholas Birns**: **'Powys's Radical Medievalism: *Porius* and *Owen Glendower*'**
13.00 Lunch
Afternoon free: optional visit to Corwen and guided walk to places associated with Owen Glendower and Porius
19.00 Dinner
20.30 An evening of readings, by Society members, of favourite passages from works of the Powys family followed by open discussion with participants. The event will be chaired by **Timothy Hyman**.

Sunday 23rd August

08.00 Breakfast
09.30 **Robert Caserio: '*Unclay*'s Version of Pastoral: T. F. Powys's Place in Regional-Political Writing in 1930s Britain'**
11.00 **AGM**
12.00 **Kathy Roscoe**: **'Wisdom for the 21st Century: the Life-Philosophy of John Cowper Powys'.** The talk will be followed by discussion with members on JCP's philosophical books.
13.00 Lunch
15.00 Departure

For details of speakers and presentations please see *Newsletter* 84, pages 7–10.

Chris Thomas

Treasurer's Report

The Powys Society accounts for 2014 are set out below: they have been approved by the Society's Honorary Auditor, Jane Roberts of Hills and Burgess Accountants, Leighton Buzzard, and the Society is again most grateful for her work and advice on behalf of the Society. The paid-up membership for 2014 was 254, which is 7 less than in 2013. The Excess of Expenditure over Income is due to the cost of transferring the Powys Collection from Dorchester to Exeter.

THE POWYS SOCIETY

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

		£	£
INCOME			
Subscriptions		5623.31	
Less Refunds		44.00	5579.31
Donations Conference Book Sales		423.00	423.00
Publication Sales		607.43	
Less cost of Printing		571.91	34.52
Conference	Registration fees	7171.65	
	Less Payment to Sherborne Hotel	6115.00	
	Less Refunds	140.00	
	Less Expenses	334.30	582.35
Bank Interest & Goodwill		43.98	
Less Bank Charges		32.05	11.93
Gift Aid Refund		955.21	955.21
			7588.32
EXPENDITURE			
Powys Journal xxiv	Cost of Printing	2374.94	2374.94
Powys Newsletters 81 – 83	Printing	1730.36	
	Postage	923.53	2653.89
Day Schools	Dorchester	180.00	180.00
Alliance of Literary Societies		15.00	15.00
Expenses	Officers Expenses	1292.36	
	Committee Expenses	204.60	1496.96
Payment to National Library of Wales			
Re Henry Miller Letters		115.92	115.92
Payment to Barnes, Hampton & Littlewood			
Re Valuation of Powys Collection		600.00	600.00
Payment to Crown Fine Art			
Re Transfer of Powys Collection to Exeter		3822.00	3822.00
Miscellaneous		20.00	20.00
Payment to Hills and Burgess, Accountants		120.00	120.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			11398.71
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME			3810.39

STATEMENT OF FUNDS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2014

Cash at bank 31st December 2014 **16,124.84**

Community Account £606.97, Instant Saver £2,299.32, Business Saver £13,218.25

Cash turnover in 2014: Total receipts £14825.58 Total payments £18636.97

Anna Rosic, Hon. Treasurer

‡ *OBITUARY* ‡

Remembering David Gervais (1943–2015)

***The President writes*:**
In David Gervais the Society has lost a warm-hearted presence at its conferences, and a man whose critical outlook and practise made him an ideal interpreter of the Powys brothers' writings. He believed in the power of the imagination, and when you talked with him he seemed to be speaking out of an ongoing interior dialogue and would draw you into sharing it; he was no mere dry academician and believed in and expounded the livingness of literature in a manner congruous with the outlook of John Cowper, Theodore and Llewelyn. We have been fortunate indeed to have enjoyed his presence among us and will miss him greatly.

Glen Cavaliero

from Chris Thomas, with thanks to Marie-Marthe Gervais
David Gervais died suddenly, of pneumonia, in May, whilst on holiday in Italy. He was cremated at Ascoli Piceno, a historic town on the Adriatic coast, situated below the Appennines near the border with Umbria and famous for its beautiful Renaissance piazza and medieval churches.

David had been a member of The Powys Society since the mid 1990s. At the beginning of his monograph, *John Cowper Powys, T S Eliot and French Literature* (Cecil Woolf, 2004), he said that he first encountered the work of JCP early in his life, when he attended a seminar on *Wolf Solent* conducted by J. J. Mayoux* at the Sorbonne, in the 1960s. He also said that the seminar taught him a lesson – that non-native readers of Powys have the clear advantage of seeing things in Powys's novels that native English readers may miss.

David Gervais in Italy, 2015

David goes on to make pertinent points about JCP's work, especially about the influence of Proust on *Owen Glendower.* He refers to JCP's blind spots in his knowledge of French literature (Racine), as well as his reservations (Flaubert). He also reminds us of JCP's cosmopolitan range of criticism and his freedom from any kind of academic discipline, including his ideas about the nature and role of the literary critic. This seems to me characteristic of David's whole approach to art and literature – he embraced a multi-disciplinary, liberal and humanistic view of the arts and literature, informed by the view, in the tradition of Goethe, that the best criticism can increase and enhance our appreciation of life and of individual works of art.

*

David had a fine sense of critical discernment and a highly sophisticated critical judgement that revealed itself in discussions at Powys Society conferences and regional meetings, as in his reviews and articles for the Society's publications. He brought with him a sense of broad culture, a great love of French literature and of modern poetry. He was not afraid to cross boundaries and relished the opportunities for freedom he found as a disinterested literary critic, distinct from his role as a teacher of English literature. He set out the theoretical foundations for these views in an important article, '*English' and Criticism*, published in the *Cambridge Quarterly* in 2005: in this he said that once freed from academic obligations: '*one can cross national boundaries without needing a visa issued by a university*' – the words of a vivacious critic, at ease discussing English and French literature as well as aspects of other European literature, art, music or philosophy.

David was generous and always willing to engage in debate on a variety of subjects. I had personal experience of this when at one of our conferences in Llangollen I came down before breakfast for an early morning walk and found David, whom I had not met before, sitting quietly in an armchair in the reception area, reading Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* (in the English Penguin edition). We soon fell into a deep conversation and were quickly swapping stories about our favourite writers. Even at that early hour in the morning David overflowed with what George Steiner terms '*the incandescence of intellectual and poetic activity*'.

David was a fervent admirer and keen champion of the writings of the Powyses and especially of the work of JCP and TFP, whose books he explicated with clarity and great insight. He was an active member of The Powys Society: having joined in 1997, he served on the Committee from 2002 to 2008 and was Vice-Chairman from 2004 to 2007. He presented talks at the 1998 conference in Kingston Maurward, Dorchester, on '*The Religious Comedy of T. F. Powys*' **, and at the 2004 conference at Sherborne School on JCP and French literature. Last year, at the Conference in Sherborne, David presented a talk on TFP and gave a reading of selections from TFP's story 'God'. He conducted several 'seminars' at regional meetings, and contributed articles and reviews to *The Powys Journal*, the *Powys Society Newsletter* and to Jacqueline Peltier's *la lettre powysienne.****

David was highly regarded as a public speaker and often presented talks to

symposia and conferences. At the T. S. Eliot conference, '*Time Present and Time Future: T. S. Eliot and our Turning World*', organised by the Institute of United States Studies at the University of London in 1996, he delivered a talk on '*Eliot's Shakespeare and Eliot's Dante*'; at a conference on '*Ted Hughes and the Classics*'. organised by the School of History and Classics at the University of Edinburgh in 2005, he spoke on '*Ted Hughes, Racine and Euripides*'. He was very disappointed not to have been able, for reasons of ill health, to speak at the first conference devoted to the poetry of the Cornish poet, Jack Clemo, at Wheal Martyn in 2013.

David was the author of *Flaubert and Henry James* (1978) which he dedicated to his wife, Marie-Marthe, whom he also mentions, poignantly, in the acknowledgements: '*I do not know how to put into acknowledger's prose what I owe to my wife, who for a long time, has been saddled with the burden of an author's company and yet managed to encourage him.*' He was also the author of *Literary Englands, Versions of 'Englishness' in modern writing* (1993), in which he discusses the influence of the idea of 'Englishness' on the work of Edward Thomas, E. M. Forster, D. H. Lawrence, F. R. Leavis, T. S. Eliot, Evelyn Waugh, George Orwell, Philip Larkin, John Betjeman and Geoffrey Hill. He includes some comments on JCP and TFP, but these writers are largely omitted from the analysis, not only for reasons of space, but also because, as he said, TFP's way of imagining England didn't fit in with the rest of the book; also, surprisingly, because he did not feel able to do JCP full justice.**** He contributed a chapter '*From Balzac to Proust: English Novelists and Foreign Novels*' to the 12-volume *Oxford History of the Novel in English*, edited by Patrick Parinder and A. Gasioreek.

David had a long and successful academic career teaching English and Comparative Literature. He obtained a Major Scholarship in English and an Exhibition in History at Clare College, Cambridge in 1961. He decided to study English and graduated in 1965.with an MA. In his first year at Cambridge David attended the seminars of F. R. Leavis, but decided to stop going when he became frustrated by Leavis's refusal to include some writers in his course ('*We do not read Spenser any more*', Leavis apparently announced to the students one day). Later, however, David recognised the important influence of Leavis on his own work and wrote a tribute to him for the special Leavis edition of the *Cambridge Quarterly* (XXV, 4, 1996), sharing space with other well known critics such as L. C. Knights and David Holbrook. He said of Leavis:

> *this frail, wiry man who brought an almost unearthly intensity to poems he must have read a hundred times, and seven or eight of us listening to him in tense silence, as if our lives depended on it ... His eyes seemed to penetrate right through us ... Years later what strikes me is that ... a seminar could be such a powerful and dangerous experience ...Leavis ... brought a unique intensity to teaching ... He cared passionately that his students should think clearly and rightly.*

The influence of Leavis's brand of literary criticism can be detected in *Literary Englands*. Recently David participated in the F. R. Leavis conference, at the Univer-

sity of York, Humanities Research Centre in 2010, where he presented a talk on Leavis and French Literature.*****

After graduating from Cambridge, David studied at the University of Toronto where he was a Teaching Fellow from 1965 to 1966. He was then employed by Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, educational publishers, in1966–67. In 1967–68, he attended the Institut d'Anglais, La Sorbonne, Paris, as an *auditeur libre*. He obtained a Research Studentship at the Department of English, University of Edinburgh, and held a teaching post there from 1968 to 1970. In 1970–71 he was employed as a Temporary Lecturer at the University of Edinburgh. He obtained his Ph.D from Edinburgh University with a comparative study of the work of Flaubert and Henry James. For many years he was associated with the University of Reading where, from 1971, he was a lecturer in English. In 1973 he helped found the modern M.A. course on Literature and the Visual Arts at Reading. He was also Visiting Fellow and later Honorary Fellow in English at Reading University and was appointed Quatercentenary Visiting Fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge in 1996. His lecturing commitments at Reading centered on Dickens, Lawrence, Henry James and American Literature. Two areas which he taught and developed on his own were 'Evaluative Criticism' and a comparative course on the French and English novel in the 19th century which he developed in conjunction with the Department of French Studies.

During his career David contributed many articles and review essays to a number of periodicals but especially to the *Cambridge Quarterly* (his earliest contributions date from 1968), where from 1981 until his death he was also a co-editor; to *PN Review*, *Dickens Studies Annual*, *English*, *Italian Studies*, *Notes and Queries*, *The Turner Newsletter*, *Word and Image* and many others. He contributed over 20 articles and reviews to *PN Review* from 2001 to 2010, on a wide range of subjects including Milton and Modern Poetry, French and English Poets, Myth, the Comic Muse, Edgar Allen Poe, Edward Thomas, Thomas Hardy, Shakespeare in a European Context, Ted Hughes, the poetry of the novel, Racine, Geoffrey Hill and a study of the paintings of our Chairman, Timothy Hyman (*PN Review*, 164, 2005). A quick scan of his contributions to the *Cambridge Quarterly* reveals a vertiginous mix of topics, all written with a profound sense of passion, love and great knowledge, covering reviews of art exhibitions such as Ruskin (1983), Egon Schiele (1990/1991), Rembrandt (1991), Constable (1993), Sargent's portraits (2000), the International Arts and Crafts show at the V&A (2005), and Ivon Hitchens (2007); as well as exhibitions of Monet, Cézanne, Stanley Spencer, Bonnard and the opening of the new Turner Gallery at the Tate in 1991. David's other contributions to the *Cambridge Quarterly* included articles about metapoetics, aspects of the history of the novel, the role and function of the literary critic, the teaching of English, Delacroix, the art critics Peter Fuller and John Berger, Wordsworth, de Quincey, Tragedy, TFP, Adrian Stokes, Henry James, T. S. Eliot, and Kenneth Clark.

David had a strong interest in the visual arts: among his particular areas of study in

this field were: Turner and Ruskin, and French art from David to Courbet, Cézanne and late Braque. His other great literary interest was the poetry of Edward Thomas. He was an active member of the Edward Thomas Fellowship, and was due to speak this June at the Dymock Poets weekend. The church at Steep where Edward Thomas lived was chosen for David's memorial service on 9th July.

He will be greatly missed by many members of The Powys Society.

NOTES

** Jean-Jacques Mayoux was Professor of English literature at the Sorbonne from 1951 until his retirement. He produced studies, in French, of Wyndham Lewis, Joyce, Mario Praz, D. H. Lawrence and also wrote a history of English painting from Hogarth to the Pre Raphaelites. The English edition, published in 1975, includes a Preface by Sir Anthony Blunt. An essay by Professor Mayoux on* Wolf Solent *was published in* Critique, *May 1968 and in* Granit, *November 1973.*

Jacqueline Peltier adds: Professor Jean-Jacques Mayoux (1901–87) was a major figure in the Department of English Studies at la Sorbonne. He was a specialist in Conrad (whom he translated), Melville, and Henry James. The importance of Powys hadn't escaped him and in 1981 he wrote a whole chapter on Wolf Solent *(Vivants Piliers II, Sous de Vastes Portiques). David was very fortunate to have him as his tutor.* [JP] (*See also an additional note by Marcella Henderson-Peal, in* News and Notes.)

*** this was mentioned by P. J. Kavanagh in his review of the 1999 Conference published in his column 'Bywords' in the TLS, 3 September, 1999.*

**** notably on 'JCP and Rabelais' in issue No 7, Spring 2004.*

****** Modern Language Review *called it 'a judicious and timely book … excellently produced', and* The Review of English Studies, *'a penetrating survey of nineteenth century pastoral versions of England'. The book was also reviewed by the* Zeitschrift fur Englische Philologie *and by John Bayley in the TLS who argued with many of David's propositions.*

****** The conference and David's talk were reviewed in the TLS (19 November 2010), by P.J. Carnehan.*

from Michael Caines

I met David Gervais only a few times, at two recent Powys Society conferences and at the 2010 Leavis conference at the University of York. Naturally, we spoke of Theodore Francis Powys, that magic name. Or rather: those were the circumstances in which I talked about TFP; David could hold forth magnificently on any number of writers, making apposite connections between them and persuasive observations about why they were worth reading. Didn't I know Racine's *Andromaque*? Or the earthier, vernacular pleasures of George Sturt's *Change in the Village*? Surely I'd read … but no. I hadn't.

These conversations were not especially lengthy, because they took place over coffee or something stronger, in the middle of the busy intervals when conference delegates try to catch up with one another; David was tellingly in demand. Yet he made sure that TFP was not forgotten at the Leavis conference, while more predictable names received their shares of the attention. For all the time Leavis devoted to T. S. Eliot or Milton, why couldn't he write something substantial about TFP? He certainly went on using passages from Theodore's works in his teaching. Had Leavis's enthusiasm waned? Or was there some insurmountable difficulty, some way in which this Powys (whom Leavis had apparently visited during his honeymoon in the late

1920s) did not fit neatly into a *Scrutiny*-friendly pattern?

Before and after we met, David made an incalculable difference to me by writing unfailingly encouraging letters, intense with the same enthusiasm for literature. He was convinced work remained to be done on TFP in particular. Indeed, his study *Literary Englands* is deeply important for the study of the Powyses, since it provides a critical context for both TFP's village-wide vision of the world and the wider-travelling writings of his brothers. Sturt is in it, but so are Edward Thomas, John Betjeman and Geoffrey Hill. It must count as one of his triumphs to have written such a fine piece of critical work.

At the end of last summer's Powys Society conference in Sherborne, happy to have heard his lecture in praise of TFP's short stories, we shook hands among a few other stragglers, and I left him at the steps of the hotel. He had been deep in conversation about books, of course. In his honour, may the conversations long continue.

Obituary: Michelle Tran Van Khai

from Marcella Henderson-Peal and Jacqueline Peltier

Michelle Tran Van Khai, one of John Cowper Powys's devoted French translators, sadly passed away on May 22nd.

In 1964 she happened to read *Wolf Solent* and was fascinated by John Cowper's extraordinary way of stringing words together. She was one of Michel Gresset's students at the Sorbonne, as was her peer Diane de Margerie and some years later Jacqueline Peltier. Michelle became senior lecturer in translation studies at Paris7 Diderot University. She translated extensively great authors such as Victor Segalen and psychoanalytical works, but also literature for young readers such as Kevin Crossley-Holland's *Arthur Trilogy* which would have struck a familiar Celtic chord, for Michelle, in spite of her exotic name, was born at the extreme point of Brittany, the land of mists and wild seas.

Encouraged by Michel Gresset, she went to see Phyllis Playter who gave her a warm welcome and presented Michelle with her own copy of *Wolf Solent* given her by John Cowper with the inscription 'until death do us part'. We owe her the flawless translation into French of *In Defence of Sensuality* (*L'Apologie des Sens*, J. J. Pauvert, 1975) which was prefaced by Diane de Margerie. She also translated *The Mountains of the Moon* (*Les Montagnes de la lune*, Ed. Minerve, 1991). During her conversations with Marcella, she told her she was sorry not to have had the pleasure of translating *Wood and Stone* and *Ducdame*. Owing to her fragile health, she was only once able to attend the Powys Conference. That was at Weymouth in 1983, when Jacqueline met her for the first time.

Michelle was one of these rare beings who seem to live in a world of their own, a world of music and poetry. But she could also show extreme empathy with others. It has been a great privilege to have had the happiness of knowing her.

Michael Kowaleski

The Art of Happiness *for our time*

On 20th April 2015, the well-known author Charles Beauclerk gave a talk on John Cowper Powys's *The Art of Happiness* (1935), in the Digby Hall in Sherborne – a most appropriate location, just yards from JCP's Sherborne School where Beauclerk was also educated and the dwelling of Selena Gault from *Wolf Solent*.

In his opening, Charles Beauclerk declined to call himself an authority on Powys – his principal work is on the authorship of Shakespeare – but had read JCP in University and found his an 'authentic voice'. In contrast to today's political fundamentalism, Powys stressed the inner and solitary life as the key to happiness. Beauclerk pursued the etymology of happiness in words for luck and happenstance. Powys felt that happiness was a legitimate and indeed only legitimate goal and all other goals that subordinated happiness to a by-product of something else were off the mark. Our selves were all we had and therefore happiness should be our conscious aim.

Because happiness was of the mind it was the one thing we had control over and where the thought by itself could bring about its goal. 'We can force ourselves to be happy,' says Powys. Happiness then was the process of an alchemy of the soul.

Beauclerk described the genesis of the book in a request by publishers Simon & Schuster for another of the kind of self-help manual American audiences loved. When he wrote *The Art of Happiness* in 1935 Powys was still remembered on the US lecture circuit for his mediumistic performances and re-enactments of authors, which had been wildly popular in the States; a book like *Art* was a dropping of the masks of others to don his own mask.

Beauclerk showed photos of JCP, his family and Phudd Bottom to give background to his talk, which was very much aimed at an audience (of about 40) mostly innocent of Powys except as a local celebrity, rather than as Powysites. From there Beauclerk moved through the five chapters of the book, ('The Root of the Matter', 'Let Conscience Speak', 'Woman with Man', 'Man with Woman' and 'Works and Days') bringing out main Powysian moments and strands: namely, the Ichthian Leap, Decarnation, Panergy and Happiness in Spite of. These were the Powysian mental tricks to escape the 'devil's trinity' of Misery, Apathy and Worry which were the temptations when faced with the cosmic scale of suffering.

The Ichthyan Leap (from the Greek word for fish) is a leap out of identity and beyond evil into a state of detachment. Powys links this to the Wordsworthian 'pleasure there is in life itself' as opposed to any pleasure in a particular situation.

The de-carnation is a similar mental act of projection to beyond thesubstratum in an act of pure consciousness.

The Panergic Act is described by Powys as 'an emphatic gathering-up before your mind of those little-great compensating pleasures which make your existence bear-

able.' Beauclerk calls it a heroic gesture of forcing yourself to be happy by concentration on Elemental Nature.

The next section was a turning to what many would regard as the most eccentric and controversial chapters, about Man and Woman (capitalised platonically by Powys himself). It is clear that many of these views derived from JCP's relation with Phyllis Playter, which Beauclerk filled in. Beauclerk describes how for Powys the feminine essence is a kind of devouring python and Man must tolerate this and yet put himself beyond its reach.

Finally, in the chapter 'Works and Days' (recalling Hesiod's poem) Powys seeks a secular substitute for religious awe in his personal cult of consciousness, cosmic awe and ritual as a medium for the eternal and a return to the Sacred Fount.

Beauclerk feels that JCP's philosophy is most akin to Buddhism. In this he is absolutely correct, as JCP's Ichthian Leap and De-carnation bear an extraordinary resemblance to forms of Tibetan Buddhist Yoga of which he could only have caught glimpses through the works of Evans-Wentz, whose translation of the 'Tibetan Book of the Dead' had appeared in 1929. The other dimension beyond death, the leap itself, the panergic concentration of mind, the mind as creator of its own sorrows, and the obsession about freedom from cruelty, self and suffering are deeply akin to at least the Himalayan style of Buddhism.

Charles Beauclerk concluded by commending the originality and appropriateness of JCP's *Art of Happiness* to our politically-driven age that has lost its cosmic bearings.

An essay on the 'Ichthyan Leap' by the Argentine poet Rafael Squirru is in Newsletter *56.*

Susan Rands

Montacute and *Wood and Stone*

On 25 April, a beautiful day of this very sudden spring (seasons and nature play a large part in the book), about a dozen of us met at the King's Arms in Montacute to discuss JCP's first published novel *Wood and Stone*. In a sense we were in the heart of Powys land, for only a narrow lane separates the pub from St Catherine's church which Charles Powys served for so many years and where he and his wife are buried. On the other hand we were in forbidden territory because the vicar's children were not expected to visit pubs, especially not in their own village where they might do a disservice to their father's calling. The date was well chosen, being a hundred years bar a few months since the publication of *Wood and Stone* by Arnold Shaw in New York.

It is not clear when the novel was begun. JCP had been referring to 'his novel' in letters since 1910 but this may have been a different one. On 6 July 1913 he writes to

LlP from Burpham, 'I must try to write my story – it pleases me in my head', but a week later he tells him, 'I have tried over and over with this story but I can not get the right vein.' In a sense he never get did get the 'right vein' for the tone of the novel is so mixed, ranging from the highly philosphical tone of the Preface to the near musical-comedy happy ending. Our Chairman was reminded of *The Wizard of Oz*.

A year later JCP is with his parents at Seaton, and writes to LlP to ask him to look for and send if he can find them two notebooks which he thinks he has left behind, 'one called Diplomacy, and one called Lust .... I shan't be able to start on this book happily till I have those missing volumes.' Lust definitely, and diplomacy, at least of the domestic kind, are indeed prominent themes.

JCP seems to have written some of the novel at Burpham that summer; according to a letter to his sister Katie, his wife Margaret suggested the title. Is there perhaps something of Margaret in the character of Vennie Seldom, drawn mainly from Marion Linton who rejected LlP for a nunnery? Back in the States JCP tells LlP that he is 'speeding away at writing and taking great pleasure in it.' Some of this speed and pleasure is palpable in *Wood and Stone*; the story, much more prominent than in other JCP novels, moves at a great rate; one actually turns the page to learn what will happen. Will the socialist vicar, Clavering, find it impossible to resist *femme fatale* Gladys, will the coarse farmer Goring rape Lacrima, Gladys's longsuffering companion? What will be the outcome of the quarrymen's rebellion ?

Michael Kowalewski pointed out that the background of *Wood and Stone* , where a newly rich man buys or marries into a stately home and large estate, and manages it to the disadvantage of many of the inhabitants, is still topical, as he knows from what has happened to the Melbury estate where he lives. The discussion was most knowledgeably conducted by Chris Thomas, who compared *Wood and Stone* with the work of other novelists of JCP's generation, and of ours. On the whole we were not well enough informed to do justice to the scope of this; enthusiasts as we are we have no doubt that JCP outshines them all!

Most of the characters of *Wood and Stone* derive from real people: the stonemasons James and Luke Andersen from John Cowper and Llewelyn, the eccentric Quincunx from Theodore, Taxater from William Williams, 'the Catholic', Vennie Seldom most plainly from Marion Linton but her diplomacy possibly from Margaret; Lacrima, as Tim Hyman told us, from an Italian girl whom JCP knew. In the early stages of writing the novel JCP was suffering greatly from his frustrated love for Frances Gregg, and many of the characters in *Wood and Stone* are likewise suffering from unhappy love. From whom does Gladys derive? I suspect partly from Frances and partly from Clare Phelips of Montacute House, though there may well have been tantalising actresses observed by JCP in Chicago at this time. Gladys's taunting of Clavering is one of the most vivid scenes in the book, the other being Luke's happy trip to Weymouth.

Gladys who was so cruel to Lacrima gets her come-uppance. She falls for Luke, the irresistable Adonis who discards her, leaving her pregnant so that she has to

marry despised Clavering to hide her shame. Her parents, who had relished the prospect of the rich American painter Danegelis as a son-in-law, get the poor priest who is highly critical of them. No happy prospect for any of them! But it amuses Luke to think that his child might inherit the Nevilton/ Montacute estate. Meanwhile tearful Lacrima, thanks to the generosity of Danegelis brought into action by the diplomacy of a determined Vennie, has a good chance of happiness.

The service at the King's Arms was somewhat slow and uncertain so we migrated to the cafe of Montacute House where it was prompt, and afterwards went our separate ways, some to look at the great house, some to explore Montacute in relation to *Wood and Stone* (the topography of the village also plays a considerable part). Three of us, with the help of a 1930 OS map, went in search of the site of the railway station demolished in 1984. At the bottom of the vicarage orchards is a gate opening into a lane which turns sharply right. At that point a grassy track leads off the lane, straight down to the brook then up a steep slope to the road. The road is where the railway track used to run, and the grassy track joined it where the station had been. On the other side of the track was the stationmaster's house; whether it was there in JCP's day is yet to be established, but the likelihood is that it was, and if so we were looking at the house where JCP imagined the Andersen brothers to have lodged.

The station was only a few hundred yards from the gate of the vicarage orchard. For the young Powyses, an escape to the wider world was literally on their back doorstep. How many times and with what feelings of hope and sorrow they must have walked that way.

Ian Mulder writes enthusiastically on Wood and Stone *in la lettre powysienne 2, autumn 2002; also Janet Fouli, in* The Powys Journal *XV, 2005.*

Montacute Station as it was, shewing the stationmaster's house, May 1964, just before closure of the line Taunton to Yeovil. (from Somerset Stations, *by Mike Oakley, 2011)*

Chris Thomas

'*Hushed and expectant solitudes*'
(Wood and Stone, *Chapter* X)

A close reading of *Wood and Stone* reveals some interesting details, such as the connection between the novel, Montacute and JCP's love of Italy. In his beautifully evocative little book, full of Edwardian period charm, *Rambles About Florence,* published by Methuen in 1908, the author, Edward Hutton, says that there are at least 16 places in Tuscany with the name *Montacuto* – the popularity of the name due to the many steep-sided conical hills in the region. One of these places lies to the north-east of Florence, on the way to the little borgo of Settignano; another lies to the south of Florence in the suburb of Galluzzo, covered in silver and green olive trees and dark cypresses, and capped by the famous Certosa di Val d'Ema, a Carthusian monastery founded in 1341.

JCP may well have visited these places when he travelled to Florence with Gertrude in the autumn of 1909; according to Kenneth Hopkins, he may already have been planning a novel that had Montacute for its background *. He could have read about Montacuto hill and the Certosa in his Baedeker, or in the travel writing of Stendhal, or in Lilian Whiting's book, *The Florence of Landor,* published in 1906; Ruskin's *Mornings in Florence* also briefly mentions them. (Interestingly, Le Corbusier, the pioneer of modern architecture, visited Montacuto and the Certosa in 1907 – they inspired some of his revolutionary ideas about the design of living spaces.)

JCP tells us in *Autobiography* that he used to read Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo*: 'high in the hills above Settignano'. He was entranced by the sensuous appeal of Italy especially the countryside around Florence. He loved the fragrance of Scotch firs and Japanese anemones that filled the vicarage garden at Montacute but he also loved what he called 'the rustic Gods' of Italy and the earthy fragrance of umbrella pines, wild herbs, anemones and violets outside Florence. In *Autobiography* he says he loved 'the feeling of the rose-scented, garlic-scented, grapeskin-scented sunshine, filtered through me like some precious unguent, fragrant as balsam'**.

JCP had already been to Rome in 1896, went on to visit Venice in 1909, and returned to Venice again in 1912 with Louis and Llewelyn. His love of Italy is reflected in *Wood and Stone* in several references to Italian painters (Raphael, Leonardo, Veronese and 'Venetian colourists')*** and also in the character of Lacrima Traffio, 'the luckless child of the 'Apennines', who talks about Italy's cities, 'its sea coasts, its monasteries, its churches'. She 'longs for olives and vineyards' and feels nostalgia for 'olives and warm hill-sides' and 'the rocky paths of the Apennine range'. James Andersen says: 'I often think of Italy, I think I should be at home in Italy. I love everything I hear of it.'

The sacred hill of Montacuto in the Val d'Ema, outside Florence, could easily be reached, in 1909, by tram, and may well have prompted JCP to think of the holy hill of St Michael in Montacute, identified by William of Malmesbury as *Mons Acutus* in *The Antiquities of Glastonbury,* as well as the legend of the discovery there of the fragment of a miraculous cross, the Holy Rood of Waltham, mentioned at the beginning of *Wood and Stone*. Hills of course play a central role in *Wood and Stone* – Leo's Hill (Ham Hill), Nevilton Mount (St Michael's Hill), Glastonbury Tor, the Mendips and the Quantocks. Some of the most important scenes in the novel take place on Leo's Hill where 'the lives and destinies of the people of Nevilton have come to gravitate' and which suggests 'the fatal force of Inanimate Objects over human

destiny'. In Chapter VIII, 'The Mythology of Sacrifice', the priest Hugh Clavering climbs 'the woody solitudes of Nevilton Hill', accompanied by 'the delicious smell of new mown grass' and 'the heavy perfume of the great white blooms of the elder bushes', all the time brooding deeply on his personal dilemma, until he encounters a thin Thyrsis-shaped tower, which he thinks of as 'heathen'. (Prospect Tower, a folly, was built by Edward Phelips in 1760 over the site of an earlier chapel). From here he looks down over 'the flat elm-fringed meadows of the great mid-Somerset plain [which] stretched softly away, till they lost themselves in a purple mist'. Today this view over the Somerset levels, as far as the Mendips, can still be seen from the same spot, and St Michael's Hill is still dominated by woodland trees and an abundance of ground plants: ash, sycamore, oak, hazel and beech trees mingle with hawthorn, dogwood, iris, black bryony, hart's tongue and a variety of ferns.

Cemeteries and churchyards also play an important part in the setting and action of *Wood and Stone*. Not far from Montacute, on the outskirts of Odcombe, at the end of an overgrown track in the middle of a field, there is a strange and mysterious place, enclosed by high stone walls covered in ivy. A notice hanging precariously from the old rusty iron gate announces that this is 'Five Ashes burial ground' and a key may be obtained from the Baptist church in South Street in Yeovil. This is in fact the nonconformist cemetery of Montacute, which appears in *Wood and Stone* under the name of Seven Ashes (although, observes JCP, there are now only three ash trees). There was a long tradition of nonconformity in Montacute, where many of the villagers were either Baptists, Unitarians, or Methodists. Nonconformists are mentioned in *Wood and Stone* as contributing to dissension in the ranks of the Establishment. There is a moving description of the burial of the youngest daughter of the 18th-century poet of Montacute, Thomas Shoel, in one of Llewelyn's *Somerset Essays*. But JCP, typically, is more interested in a pile of ancient stones near the entrance to the cemetery which has a pagan, evil and sinister significance in *Wood and Stone*.

JCP locates Seven Ashes near the house of Maurice Quincunx, 'an amiable anarchist', in Park Lane. The name of Mr Quincunx suggests a source in Thomas Browne's *Garden of Cyrus*, but JCP may also have known the results of the investigations of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society which concluded, in 1913, that the place was 'so called from the fact of five pollard ash trees set in a quincunx having been planted at the crossroads'.

St Catherine's churchyard, as depicted at the beginning of *Wood and Stone*, also seems to possess a dark, melancholy, and sinister atmosphere: 'All human cemeteries smell of forlorn mortality ... to be buried is to be sucked in, drawn down, devoured, absorbed'. JCP must have remembered how, in 1914, he and Katie had stood in front of their mother's coffin and open grave, then quickly retreated and run back together to the terrace walk of the vicarage. 'The vicarage terrace was a place of extraordinary quiet and peace', says JCP in *Wood and Stone*.

Nevilton is, of course, recognisably Montacute. Wandering around Montacute I became increasingly aware of the accuracy of JCP's descriptions of local places: 'the formal town-like compactness of enclosed cottage gardens'; Priory Farm, the old vicarage, 'the slender tower of St Catherine's church, rising calm and still into the hot June sky', and the Elizabethan house, 'embosomed in gracious trees and Italianated gardens'. The imagined names in *Wood and Stone* seemed to merge into real places. Camel's Leap, Badgers Bottom, Wild Pine Ridge, and Nevil's Gully no doubt have real origins. Dead Man's Lane and Root Thatch Lane are good descriptions of the real Hollow Lane and probably also of Wellhouse Lane. I walked slowly down the steep descent of Wellhouse Lane in the late afternoon. There were pink campions and white thorn blossom all along the roadside. The sky had darkened and the clouds

thickened. The wind was blowing from the south west carrying spots of rain which had been driven over the Polden Hills to reach this corner of Somerset: 'a spot loved by the west wind and by the rains brought by the west wind'. There was a somnolent buzzing of bees around the trunks of the trees, and in the branches above a gentle murmuring of wood pigeons and calling rooks. I could see buzzards flying over St Michael's hill. This same early-springlike growth of buds and abundant vegetation must have inspired JCP's description of Lacrima Traffio's response to the flora and fauna of a Nevilton lane: 'The heavy luxuriant landscape dragged her earthwards and clogged the wings of her spirit.'

*

Our discussion of *Wood and Stone* began with its literary context. The novel was first published in the USA in 1915, in the same year as *Victory* by Conrad, *The Rainbow* by D. H. Lawrence and *The Good Soldier* by Ford Madox Ford. Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* had been published in 1914. Lawrence's frank and open representation of male and female sexuality makes JCP's characters look coy and old fashioned. Ford Madox Ford experimented with time and narrative whilst JCP's descriptive writing self-consciously looks back to nineteenth-century precedents. These examples of what we have come to think of as literary modernism have little in common with the world of *Wood and Stone*, which has a closer affinity with other romantic, rural, and regional novels of the period, or with the provincial settings of George Eliot. In the Preface to *Wood and Stone* JCP criticises the young writers of the modern novel and declares his intention to return to the 'old ample ironic style'. He was thinking of Hardy. 'Among all modern English authors the only one who brings with him an atmosphere of a large mellow, leisurely, humanists of the past – of the true classics – is Mr Thomas Hardy.' JCP's novel is, of course, 'a humble salutation' dedicated to Hardy, to whom he pays a tribute at the end of the Preface (*'Mr Hardy cannot be imitated'*), and whom he introduces into the narrative of the novel.**** He gave a copy of his novel to Hardy, who, JCP said, did read it and passed his copy to his friend Lady Ilchester, on the occasion of her visit to Max Gate in May 1918.

In the short essay, 'My first Publication', JCP recalled that he experienced certain 'moral tensions' whilst he wrote the novel, worrying whether he should 'enjoy vicariously the wickedness of his wicked characters' and referring to his early obsession with the novels of Thomas Hardy. That's not to say JCP was impervious to the influence of modernism – he refers to both Matisse and Picasso ***** having the ability 'to liberate the imagination'. Ralph Dangelis, described as 'an impassioned and desperate pursuer of new experiences', and 'an obdurate and impenetrable egoist', is a sympathetic portrait of a modern artist, 'whose masterly and audacious work was just then coming into vogue', suggesting a reference to avant-garde artists of the early 20th century. ******There is also discussion in the novel about new liberal and modern approaches to Roman Catholic theology.

Although *Wood and Stone* was well received by its contemporary readers, JCP was unhappy with the result. He may even have had some sympathy with the judgement of Louis Wilkinson, who in *Blasphemy and Religion* compared it unfavourably with TFP's *Soliloquy of a Hermit*, accusing JCP of insincerity, 'breaking into a spiritual sweat', having no 'valid experience' and writing a book that is just 'sounding brass and tinkling cymbal'. Many years later, in a letter to Huw Menai, JCP confessed that he thought *Wood and Stone* was very weak indeed and that it was not until he wrote *Wolf Solent* and *A Glastonbury Romance* that he really found his role as a novelist. He described himself as a 'one sided volcano' who was more powerful as a lecturer than as a novelist******. Perhaps this had to do with his failure to leave behind his early

attempts at writing. In *Wood and Stone* there are frequent classical allusions harking back to his poem 'To Montacute' in *Odes and Other Poems* (1896), and he remained obsessed with early themes: the role of priests ('How my mind used to run on priests'), and the persistence of other characters – Mr Taxater, the theologian, 'apologist of the Papacy' and opponent of Protestant Puritanism in the novel, comes straight out of Cousin Taxater in the 'interminable romance' which JCP composed whilst still living at Court House. Nor perhaps was he surprised when he presented a copy of the published novel to his father who seemed baffled and responded 'You don't seem to be getting on very well John.'

Nonetheless, when read today *Wood and Stone* still has some enjoyable and very impressive aspects. All the characters are vividly drawn and their conflicts and inter-relationships conveyed very effectively. Kenneth Hopkins said of *Wood and Stone*, in *The Powys Brothers*, that here: 'may be found the original of the worldly and dedicated industrialist, the capitalist enemy ... here too are the solitaries, the eccentrics, the weak clergymen, the extremist politicians who crowd the pages of the later novels.' Notably, JCP uses imagery to advance his subject matter and create atmosphere, particularly in the sense he produces of overwhelming abundance in nature: 'a sea of foliage and a tidal wave of suffocating fertility', 'outpouring of the earth's sap', 'the flowing sap of the year's exuberance'; a sense of downward earth-pulling movement: 'a sinister heathen influence pulling him earthward', a feeling of tranquil silence: 'hushed stillness', and 'the pregnant stillness of trees' which is perfectly evoked at the beginning of Chapter X , 'The Orchard'.

There are other very Powysian (or Keatsian) observations that persist in his later work – 'cool rooted leafy plants', 'oozy sap', "oozy stalks of moist adhesive tendrils'. Also characteristic of later work are the frequent references in *Wood and Stone*, to 'planetary influences', 'occult harmonies', 'telepathic vibrations', 'spiritual powers', 'the secret of life' and invisible 'watchers' reminiscent of Hardy's 'watchers from an overworld' in *The Dynasts* and the Watchers of ancient Enochian tradition, as well as suggesting the Watchers in Frederick Bligh Bond's *The Gate of Remembrance* (1918) and *The Hill of Vision* (1919); and, of course, the cosmic Watchers in *A Glastonbury Romance*.

JCP's view of Montacute, as it emerges in *Wood and Stone*, clearly differs from Llewelyn's more romantic and cheerful memories. For JCP the influence of Poe is paramount, especially in the description of Auber Lake, its resident madwoman, and suggestion of prehistoric devil worship. JCP senses something depressing, claustrophobic, and treacherous about Montacute which arises from the dampness, rank vegetation and the soft heavy and clinging earth itself. All the pleasant things he observes – 'What enchantments were all around him' – are overshadowed by the sinister, dark, earth floor. This probably explains why James Andersen expostulates 'I have always hated Nevilton and every aspect of it. I think I hate these overgrown gardens most of all. These English vicarages are dreadful places... How morbid they are. All these Nevilton places, however luxuriant, seem to me to smell of death.' The different points of view are reflected in JCP's description of the two brothers: Luke Andersen (Llewelyn) 'like a Greek God', James Anderson (JCP) 'morose and sinister'.suggesting 'the image of some gloomy idol carved on the wall of an Assyrian temple'. In later life JCP's memories of Montacute were fonder and more nostalgic, as he noted in *Autobiography* and in his diary for 1937 after revisiting his childhood home; also in a dream he experienced whilst at Phudd Bottom, recorded in his diary in 1930 and 1931: '... at Montacute always walking, and walking, and seeing the trees floating against blue vapour.'

In the Preface to *Wood and Stone* JCP makes great claims for his novel and the theme he

deals with of the struggle between power, materialism, exploitation and love, with its reference to the influence of the ideas of Nietzsche, but he never seems quite to carry this off. The plot of anarchists and socialists to rebel against authority and the Establishment is unconvincing and doesn't have the desired effect. On the other hand the introduction of ideas about chaos and a chance-filled universe are suggestive of his future work, as are his references to the novel as a panorama of life reflected in the mirror of art.

*

At the end of our day in Montacute Susan Rands led us to the original location of Montacute Railway Station, now long since demolished, although, as Susan pointed out, the stationmaster's house still survives. The railway line has been replaced by the busy modern main road, the A3088, into Yeovil. It is still possible, however, to imagine the place where JCP once greeted Thomas Hardy on his visit to Montacute in 1896. A contemporary guide book, *The Tourist's Guide to Somersetshire, Rail and Road* by R. N. Worth, published in 1885 (the same year the Powys family moved to Montacute) remarks laconically: 'The tourist who does not stop at Montacute station can have a passing glance, en route between Martock and Yeovil, as the train sweeps by, first of Hamdon Hill and then of Montacute itself ... The country is pretty enough of itself for sufficient inducement, and the trains may or may not save time.'

NOTES

* '*... this first novel might have had its roots in John's serious illness of 1909, when Llewelyn so urgently counselled him to give up lecturing and become a writer.*' (The Powys Brothers, *Kenneth Hopkins, 1967.)*

In My First Publication *(Mark Twain Quarterly, Vol. IX, No. 2, 1952, reprinted in* la lettre powysienne, *No. 18, Autumn, 2009), JCP says that 'I was actually writing* [Wood and Stone] *before the 1914 war broke out and when both my parents were still alive.'*

'I hate this silly novel ... It is silly so far ... I can see my weakness and ponderous pomposity, it annoys me', [from a letter to Frances Gregg, January 1914].

** *JCP would surely have admired two of D. H. Lawrence's essays about the Tuscan landscape (although he is unlikely to have read them): 'The Nightingale', written in 1926 at the Villa Mirenda in Scandicci near Florence, and especially 'Flowery Tuscany' written in 1927 (both published in* Phoenix, *1936). In 'Flowery Tuscany' D. H. Lawrence writes: 'Each country has its own flowers, that shine out especially there. In England it is daisies and buttercups, hawthorn and cowslip...the Mediterranean has narcissus and anemone, myrtle and asphodel and grape hyacinth.' [For JCP on D. H. Lawrence see* The Powys Review *16, 1985; for a comparative study of D. H. Lawrence and JCP see the article by Glen Cavaliero entitled: 'Phoenix and Serpent' in* The Powys Review *2, Winter, 1977.*]

*** *See* Autobiography *for JCP's knowledge of Italian art; also letters from JCP to Louis Wilkinson sent from Florence and Venice in 1909, about his love of Italian painters, included in* Welsh Ambassadors.

**** '*I like Thomas Hardy's books. Do you know Thomas Hardy?' says James Andersen to Lacrima Traffio. At the end of the novel, on a visit to Weymouth, Luke Andersen 'recalled the opening chapters of* The Well Beloved, *that curiously characteristic fantasy sketch of the great Wessex novelist...' Hardy's last completed novel was* Jude the Obscure, *published in 1895.*

***** *JCP was in New York in January and part of February 1915 (he embarked on a lecture tour of Canada from 23 February to 29 March 1915). He returned to England on 17th April on the SS St. Louis, arriving in Liverpool on 25th April. He remained in England for the summer, completing* Wood and Stone *at Burpham. Whilst he was in New York he would have had a good opportunity to visit the exhibition of paintings, etchings, drawings, lithographs, and sculpture by Matisse at the Montross Gallery, at 550 Fifth Avenue, the first comprehensive one-man show of Matisse's works in the USA, which took place from 20th January to 27th February 1915. The catalogue of the exhibition included a preface by Mathew Stewart Prichard (1865-1936), follower of Bergson's philosophy and an exponent of Byzantine art, who was also a close friend of Matisse. Prichard had been a colleague*

of the wealthy American art collector, E. P. 'Ned' Warren, between 1892 and 1902, in Lewes in England and was acquainted with JCP who used to visit Warren in the 1890s. Prichard later transferred to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (1902-1907) where he was Secretary and Assistant Director. He then moved to Paris in 1908 where he met Matisse with whom he shared an enthusiasm for Byzantine and Islamic art and the philosophy of Henri Bergson. When JCP says in Wood and Stone *that Matisse has the ability to 'liberate the imagination' he may have been reflecting Prichard's words in the preface to the exhibition catalogue: 'Matisse frees me in the widest sense ...'*

****** *Dangelis is probably based on JCP's American painter friends in Chicago, Raymond Johnson (1891–1992), art director of Maurice Browne's Little Theatre, and B.J.O. Nordfeldt (1878–1955) who allowed Browne to rehearse his actors in his large artist's studio.*

******* *'But you see till I wrote* Wolf Solent *at 50 I really hadn't written anything good.* Ducdame *and* Wood and Stone *aren't anything very wonderful. But my lectures were good all the while! I was like a volcanic hill with only one crater and that on one side – the side to the West, the side of speech – and when I wrote things like* Ducdame *and* Wood and Stone *they were slow, meandering, winding, tricklings from little springs on the other side. 'Twas in* Wolf *and much more in* Glastonbury *that a real crater appeared on this other side of the hill such as could answer to the Crater of Lecturing on the first original side that quaked, rocked & poured forth!'*
[*JCP, letter to Huw Menai, 24 May 1939, in* The Powys Review, *Nos 27&28, 1992/1993*]

JCP and Wordsworth

Dorchester Meeting, 20th June 2015

The Dorset County Museum is always a Powys 'home' – as a university library will take a long time to be – pleasantly old-fashioned and atmospheric; the Powyses sort well with dinosaur fossils. But for how long? We hear rumours of an enomous lottery grant, and 'modernisation', dreaded word ... Let us enjoy the grandfatherly charm of the Library before it turns into a Macdonalds.

The midsummer meeting, on 20th June, dealing with Powys (J.C.) and Wordsworth, was a happy one, with about a half-dozen each of members and visitors. Paul Cheshire is notably a Coleridge man but also an explorer of the wilder shores of English Romanticism. The starting-point of his talk was JCP's professed claiming of Wordsworth – in *Autobiography* and several essays – as his *grand master*, despite (also perhaps because of) their differences, and despite Wordsworth's notorious falling-off in later life into respectability and unreadableness.

The two shared a love of solitude and walking, of narrow but deep experiences, and a quiet life. The dead were alive for them; they constructed their own mythologies; they were able to enter states of concentration and psycho-sensuous energy. They empathised and identified with Nature – mineral , vegetal and animal (possibly in that order) and with weather in all its forms.

Where women were concerned WW was (perhaps) more 'normal', but both esteemed non-erotic women – spinsters, sisters, mothers, misfits, young girls. Whether the erotic also entered here is debatable. The life-like small children in Wordsworth are famous. His 'Lucy' is a kind of angel, or muse. The death of children

was always with him. Powys, who lost his own dearest sister while still a child, would visit the graves of unknown young girl children. Not many actual children feature as characters in his novels – memorable are a tomboyish girl in *Glastonbury*, and Lovie in *Maiden Castle*, aged three, modelled on 'Susie' (Theodora) Powys. We should remember that young children are physically beautiful, and often exude a kind of wisdom, 'trailing clouds of glory' – also the alienation for segregated men of long-skirted, corseted older girls.

PC covered JCP's affinity with Jung, rather than Freud, and his prefiguring of the 'Age of Aquarius' alternative world-views –Gaia, neo-paganism. A prime difference was (perhaps) between Powys's 'multiverse' (ultimate paganism) and Wordsworth's identifying Nature with God, as a unity. 'Perhaps' – because these angles could be spokes on a wheel.

Kate Kavanagh

We were very pleased to welcome novelist and writer, Lindsay Clarke (author of *The Chymical Wedding* and *The Gist: a celebration of the imagination* [2012]) who was accompanied by his wife Phoebe Clare who is a ceramics artist. Lindsay is a good champion of JCP. Last year he gave us a fine review of Jacqueline Peltier's edition of the *Powys/Miller letters* (see NL 83, November 2014). In our discussion Lindsay referred to JCP's sympathy with Wordsworth's vision of life and said he shared with Wordsworth an ability to '*see into the life of things*' ('Tintern Abbey'), a tendency, Lindsay said, which goes beyond JCP's own testimony and desire '*to endow the inanimate with life*' (*Autobiography*). I thought of John Crow in *A Glastonbury Romance* who senses '*the vast, dreamy life-stirrings of the soul of the earth*'. I thought also of Coleridge who refers to '*animated nature*' in 'The Aeolian Harp' and defines nature as '*a living thing that acts upon the mind*' in 'This Lime Tree Bower. My Prison' [first version].

In the afternoon, after a leisurely lunch, we visited the north side of Dorchester to see the little stream, a tributary of the Frome, the millpond and the picturesque setting of Hangman's Cottage, where we were impressed by the vigorous growth, in the garden, of colourful flowering plants. We followed the narrow, grassy, path to the Blue Bridge, next to the park like field which JCP called 'Her Immortality', after Hardy's poem, and which slopes down to the willows and alder bank beside the shallow waters of the Cerne. Here we paused for a while and looked for '*the pinnacles of St. Peters, the spire of All Souls, the magnificent tower of Fordington*', mentioned in *Maiden Castle*. We continued our conversation about JCP and Wordsworth staring fixedly into the crystal clear river which here flows fast over a bed of pebbles and floating green weeds. This hidden spot is so restful and peaceful its no wonder, we thought, that JCP chose this location in Dorchester for his daily walk with 'the Old' to Henning's Gate, Muddy Lane, Pigeon House farm, Badger's Copse, the Quatrain, Coker's Frome farm and the Quincunx.

Chris Thomas

JCP on Wordsworth

(from The Pleasures of Literature, *1938)*

It goes deeply against the grain with me to listen to glib aspersions upon what is called the "optimism" of Wordsworth. However much you may sympathize with attacks upon his tedious old-fashioned piety, it would seem that a man who regarded suffering as a deeper and more perdurable thing than pleasure is a somewhat grim and austere optimist. You might as well call Dante an optimist! I do not know any writer except Hardy who indicates more tenaciously and with a sterner hand what you might call the "bend-sinister" of the boughs of the tree of life, and the contortion of rigid endurance that binds animate and inanimate together, in the long travail of the world.

For good or evil Wordsworth regarded the business of being a poet as something very different from the composition of "pretty pieces of paganism." He set out to convey in poetry a philosophy of human happiness that was of necessity a philosophy of human endurance; and he deliberately based it upon the senses. From the senses came all those overtones and undertones that transported him so constantly to that region, to that dimension rather, where we feel the presence of the Something else, the "Something far more deeply interfused" that lies "too deep for tears," too deep for words, too deep for reason. [pp348-9]

... [T]he abiding subject of Wordsworth's poetry is the most difficult of all subjects, as well as the most important; for it is nothing less than an attempt to put into words those obscure feelings of half-physical, half-mystic happiness that come to all of us in ordinary life, and come from quite casual impressions, and yet when they come sweep us away into strange vistas of unearthly exultation.

And the miracle is that whenever he does succeed in catching these vague, subtle, fleeting feelings, his language takes on a magical directness, an un-accommodating austerity, a simplicity like that of polished pebbles under moonlit water. What we must remember is that the same honesty, the same grave realism, the same absence of the affected or the artificial, that accounts for his grandest poetical effects, also accounts for those things in his work that strike the un-Wordsworthian mind as dull, puerile, ridiculous, grotesque, and idiotic. What really confronts us in Wordsworth is a strong, hard, self-centred, unsociable temperament that has the power of responding to the inanimate and the elemental as if it were itself tough as a gnarled tree, hard as a weather-beaten stone, majestic in its inhuman aloofness as the motions of dawn and noon and night ...

We need no unusual cleverness, no particular gift of taste, no especial luck in our chance-given abode, no favour from the gods in our fate-chosen companions, no exceptional power of mind or spirit, to saturate ourselves in Wordsworth's way of life. Surrounded by dullness, we can touch the eternal. Surrounded by the commonplace, we can feel the infinite. All that we need is a certain stoical self-centredness, a certain aloofness from the world, a certain sacred stupidity, a certain consecrated and crafty

detachment from the lively interests of the hour, and a tendency, I might almost say, to share the sub-humanity of rocks and stones and trees, to watch the grass growing till we grow with it, the wayside stones waiting till we wait with them, to walk with the morning as with a companion, with the night as with a friend, to catch the pathos of the human generations from the rain on the roof, and the burden of the mystery that rounds it all from the wind that voyages past the threshold. [pp351–2]

News and Notes

from Giles Dawson

My sisters and I are planning one more show of **Patricia's work**, in Oxford at the end of October. Please would anyone interested contact Giles at
< gilesvdawson@gmail.com >

* * * *

Roly Tree welcomes Powys Society visitors and requests for renting **1 Waterloo**, JCP's last home. < info@1waterloocottage.co.uk >

* * * *

from John Hodgson

The Leipzig University Press has published a book by Claudia Lainka *Analysing Masculinities: Konstruktionen von Männlichkeit bei D. H. Lawrence und John Cowper Powys*. The book discusses the **gender roles** in *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love*, *Wolf Solent*, and *Weymouth Sands*, from a perspective of Lacanian psychoanalysis and gender studies.

(*JH will review ths book in* The Powys Journal.)

* * * *

from Michael Caines

'Literary Sensation, Lover, Libertine, Family Man': this is how the writer **David Garnett** is described on the back cover of Sarah Knights's biography, *Bloomsbury's Outsider*, which was published by Bloomsbury Reader in May this year. Less sensationally, Garnett could count many writers among his friends. Powys Society members might be pleased to see that TFP and Violet are present here, as are contemporaries such as T. E. Lawrence, Sylvia Townsend Warner, TFP's publisher Charles Prentice and the sculptor Stephen Tomlin (who is, with Garnett and STW, the third dedicatee of *The Left Leg*). There is also, of course, plenty of information about the sadly curtailed life of Garnett's first wife Rachel (R. A. Garnett, née Marshall), whose woodcuts so effectively beautify a couple of TFP's novels, and *The Sailor's Return*, the novel set in 'Maiden Barrow' – 'closely based', as Knights says, 'on East Chaldon'.

* * * *

from Max Peltier

A recent *London Review of Books* has a review of a biography by James Dempsey, *The Tortured Life of* ***Scofield Thayer*** (the 1920s patron of writers, editor and owner of

The Dial, and friend of Alyse Gregory). The reviewer (Anne Diebel) refers two or three times to Alyse, although she never indicates that Alyse was for a while editor of *The Dial.*

* * * *

Gerald Brenan's *A Life of One's Own* overlaps at several points with the Powyses; for Stephen Marks the first volume with its account of **WWI experiences** ties in with those of A. R. Powys, Stephen's grandfather. Two letters to his brother Llewelyn from ARP at the front were printed in NL30.

* * * *

from Marcella Henderson-Peal

An additional note to the David Gervais obituary: **Jean Jacques Mayoux** worked for the UN and the Società Cultura Europea. He was a close friend of Michel Gresset, Professor Emeritus of American Literature at the Charles V University Denis Diderot, whose articles on JCP appeared in the special JCP issue of *Granit* in November 1973 and who visited JCP in 1962. J. J. Mayoux's seminars were also attended by, amongst many others, **Diane de Margerie**, the future translator of *Ducdame* (*Givre et Sang*, 1973).

* * * *

Timothy Hyman's 'A Year with Maggie's' – his account in drawings and diary of his time with the 'Maggie's' centres of support for cancer sufferers – is published by the Royal Academy of Arts @ £16.95. It describes the life of the centres, and their buildings by distinguished architects, but even more is a record of what it feels like being with the people there.

* * * *

from Stephen Powys Marks

I noticed in Katie's letter of January 18th 1904 (page 30) to her future sister-in-law's **Magazine**. This was the 'Victoria', a manuscript gathering cirrculated round the families. I have two complete numbers and wrote about it in *Newsletter* 31.

* * * *

from Dr Dougal Hare (University of Manchester)

I'm e-mailing to inform you of a very brief mention of JCP in the current edition (FT325) of ***Fortean Times***. They have been running a series entitled 'The First Forteans',which has covered a number of topics including the birth of British science-fiction fandom and publishing in the 1930–40s, with mention of Olaf Stapleton, Eric Frank Russell and Arthur C. Clarke, as well as the history of studies of anomalous phenomena and parapsychology in Britain in the mid–20th century. In part 12, entitled 'Strange bedfellows', there is the following sentence in relation to evidently chaotic archives of now defunct 'The Fortean Society Magazine': 'Still, there we see novelist John Cowper Powys among the founders of the Fortean Society (FS) and psychical researchers Harry Price and Raymond Cass among the members'. Alas, that is the only mention of JCP in the article. As a life-long reader of JCP and of Charles Fort, this is the first time I've ever seen the two of them juxtaposed in print.

There are several mentions of Charles Fort and his Society in JCP's diaries in the early 1930s, in connection with the novelist Theodore Dreiser.

★ ★ ★ ★

Stephen Powys Marks found in his *Complete Yoga Book* by James Hewitt (copy dated 1990) a chapter on the '**Yoga of Sex**', in sub-heading *Karezza* (p 512), this reference to **John Cowper Powys**.

> The sublimation of sexuality for purposes of spiritual illumination by sleepimg chastely with virgins was castigated by St Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. A more tolerant account is that by John Cowper Powys in his novel *Weymouth Sands*; in this the eccentrc mystic Sylvanus Cobbold sleeps chastely with young girls.

★ ★ ★ ★

Patchin Place, No 6, back garden.

I've managed several times to look at **Patchin Place** in New York, and looking at photographs of Powyses sitting outside there, wondered whether as well as the shared courtyard with the ailanthus trees, the houses also had back 'yards'. It isn't easy to catch a person entering the houses (it is now an enclave of psychotherapists) but this year I achieved entry to No 6 (next to JCP's) and saw that there is indeed a back garden (see inadequate photo). **KK**

★ ★ ★ ★

from Kevin Taylor, King's Lynn

Thank you for presenting the Powys brothers' reflections on *Genesis* in *Newsletter* 84. I believe the quote JCP uses to evoke Rebekah is from the fifth stanza of **Matthew Arnold's** poem 'The Future' (1852).

Arnold – his poems, at least – figures largely in JCP's mental furniture – the essay on him is one of the most substantial in The Pleasures of Literature. *His long poem, beginning* 'A wanderer is man from his birth. / He was born in a ship / On the breast of the river of Time ..." *proceeds to*

Who can see the green earth any more
As she was by the sources of Time?
Who imagines her fields as they lay
In the sunshine, unworn by the plough?
Who thinks as they thought,
The tribes who then roamed on her breast,
Her vigorous, primitive sons?

What girl
Now reads in her bosom as clear
As Rebekah read. when she sate
At eve by the palm-shaded well
Who guards in her breast
As deep, as pellucid a spring
Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure?

A Brief Selection
from the Early Diaries (1903–4)
of Catharine Edith Philippa Powys

Louise de Bruin writes:
Catharine Edith Philippa Powys (Katie) started to keep a diary in September 1903 when she was seventeen. By then she had already written the best part of her first story 'The Polar Family' inspired by her life in the Montacute vicarage. Her early diaries, although not a prime example of careful writing, give a wonderfully vivid picture of her life at Montacute in the years when her older brothers had left the family home, but were still regularly returning for holidays. In contrast with the writings of those of her brothers who would describe their life in Montacute years later with hindsight, Katie catches life almost in its immediacy; only separated by paper and pen and a few hours. That, and her spontaneity and enthusiasm, her passionate eye for all manifestations of nature, her warmth and her loving heart and her interests in a wide variety of things, make her early diaries unique and so very different from the pocket diary for 1894 kept by her much more introvert and burdened-by-duties sister Gertrude when she was seventeen. A few typical 1894 entries by Gertrude read:

Tuesday 9 January 1894. Jack went to London. Did lessons. Went for a walk with Tom [Littleton] round Scotch firs. Dinner. Went to Mary Rugg. Lessons. Tea. Lessons. Danced, played cards with Bertie. Supper. Hot bottle extra hot. Wet foggy day. – Goodnight.

Wednesday 11 April. Lessons. Took books to Library. Went a walk down Galpin lane. Dinner. Went to organ practice. Lessons. Played with Lulu. Tea. Lessons. Supper. Father went to Bath in morning. Jack had lunch at Montacute House. Tom in afternoon played golf at Brympton.

Or:

Wednesday 24 October 1894. Practice. Breakfast. Painted. Dinner. Mothers' Meeting. Lessons. Sang. Worked. Drew. Supper. My hat came but did not meet with approval. I myself very much admire it.

Compare these with the following extracts from Katie's 1903–4 diaries in which we can already recognize the unique writer of Blackthorn Winter *and* Sorrel Barn *that she would become.*

September 10th Thursday. Drove May to Yeovil to buy Mother's birthday present which is a very pretty Y-shaped vase. While May bought it I drove down to the boundary between Somerset and Dorset or rather to the Yeo, from where I flew St Michael and St George [*her pigeons*]. In the afternoon Willie and I went down and had a walk beside the Parrett. While we were walking along its bank it began to drench. We went on the Norton's bridge, got into the Rd. and through Stoke. It poured the whole way and the wind was so rough that Willie's umbrella was blown

inside out. We changed and had tea. I felt cold so we all went and sat around the Drawing-room fire and read books. I read in Mother's armchair a book by Dickens. May was on the sofa. The wind blew and blew and blew. I by degrees fell asleep and was dreaming when I suddenly was woken up by a great bang. The Wind had blown a pane of glass or as Father says, 'a bough broke the glass'. I went to bed early and the wind blew so hard that I felt the whole house must fall.

November 21st Saturday My cold I suppose is better because I went out in the afternoon. May and I went a walk. We started with Father & Theodore up Wood House lane, we went alone down Nancy Cooper's lane till we turned down past High Wood up that lane which on a July evening so many years ago I traversed with my nurse Emily Clare, Bertie Willie Lucy & the goat cart. On we went round Battlefield prow where on that same July evening my eldest brother met us & bore Lucy away. On we go May & I down over Batemoor passing the Abbey by which on that same July evening most excellent Kate had met us & had helped to pull us along. So home May & I come, where on that same July evening we had seen Miss Beales watching at the window & into hot baths & warm beds we were put. Why was all this hurry & worry on this July evening so many years ago. Why? It was because we had to celebrate brother Bertie's birthday & had gone to High Wood & there while in the middle of a picnic we had been exposed to a thunderstorm & to very heavy thunder & rain, so no wonder there was such a hurry & worry to get us all home again.

December 19th Saturday Went to Miss Sparkes. In the afternoon St George Gertrude Lulu and Lucy and I started for Berely and the floods. Halfway to Tintinhull St George left for home. We went on down down to Berely. We watched the farmer on his 'Old Grey' ride away from us round the field. We went on down down to Berely. We went on past the farm and down to the flood, by which side we walked and climbed over barbed-wired bridges and walls to look at the flood further down. Then Lulu swung on a white gate whose posts were all rotten. He went sailing across the flood on this gate so nicely till this was followed by such a bang and suck and splash and such a jerk which sent him nearly into the middle of the water. We met the Berely farmer on our way home. I fed his 'Old Grey' with Oil cake.

December 25th Friday Xmas Day. Was woken by the carols. Then at half past six pulled at my stockings and found 'A Children's Friend', a pair of gloves and sugar biscuits and an orange. At breakfast cards were given. After breakfast I helped Gertrude bed-making and went to the Post with Tom and Theodore. [...] Came in late for church and sat in Susan Hawkins's seat. Came home and found a very nice farming book from Mr. & Mrs. Phelips and scissors from Mrs. Phelips Sr and a card from Clare. Eat our Christmas dinner of Turkey & Plumpudding. Then we opened Aunt Dora's box gathered round the Drawing-room fire in a crowd. I had a jolly brooch. Then with some we went round Ham Hill round Tintern Abbey and down Batemoor. The last piece from Tintern Abbey I walked with Bertie. After tea and church we went to

the Christmas tree. I had some nice presents off it, the chief one a condenser [*for her microscope*] from Father costing 12/6. Had supper and went to bed.

December 26th Saturday In the morning made beds went down to the Station with Littleton, dug in my garden. Mabel came when I had gone down to the village. Went to meet Jack but did not get beyond the lamp post there before I got a telegram that said he was not coming till 6 so as Bobby was in the cart I drove him to Stoke and back which was rather nice, he went very well. Excellent Bobby, I gave him his first mangel today. Came back and read to Mother 'Two Years Ago'. After tea we went and sat round the Schoolroom fire shut in by Screens. There Jack found us.

December 28th Monday Went for a drive with Theodore, we went along the Roman Rd. Then in the afternoon went with Theodore round Wood House along the Scotch Firs [...] Then the Volentia tea began, the food, the speeches, the health drinking, the songs, the cheering & the hooting: it was fun. We afterwards had the fireworks, then the Catharine Wheels, the Rockets, the Squibs, the crackers, the cannons, the noises and the fights.

January 16th [1904] Saturday W.W. fine save for a heavy hailstorm at 3 in the afternoon. In the morning I went to Kate to have a thorn out. I nursed my godchild and then went home round by the Bridlepath. Then Willie and I made our way to Lufton running a good part of the way. Each of the traps there had caught a mole. Mr. Corpe came and we had a few words. After dinner we started to drive so to fly the pigeons from Kingston; but at Ilchester we were caught in such a hailstorm with a clap of thunder that made Bobby jump a mile. The hail simply stung, the sun shone through it all and so there came a rainbow. Never before have I known such a storm. We came home and found that Fanny had been. I then read to Mother and after tea my agri [*book about farming*] in Bertie's room by his fire. I then again read to Mother till I went to bed.

January 18th Monday W.W. fine though cloudy mild. Read to Bertie the story at the beginning of this book [*The Polar Family*] for I am thinking of sending it through Bertie to Dorothy's Magazine. It was eleven when I finished it so I thought there was time for a walk and so went one. Up Wood House lane and on to Pitt Plain. There I saw a weasel run across a few yards in front of me into a nut wood faggot. I gently kicked it for fear it should call a lot more of them and so pounce on me as once happened in a book which was said to be true. The weasel only poked its head out and disappeared again, then peered out once more and afterwards refused to go so I gingerly kicked the faggot right over, then it ran out to a bramble bush. Then I kicked the bramble bush and it ran into the hedge so I passed on and went down by High Wood. From there I thought I saw some calves in Pitt Wood so across I went first making a bad shot going into a field with some very wild looking animals so I had to go back several steps and I felt the creatures in the wood had perhaps gone so I hurried down the right field over a fallen down mossy trunk across a rickety plank

and Raticombe. Yes, I was right. There were 12 of them, so I looked at them and thought ... . In the afternoon I caught the pigeons and John [*the groom*] told me Bobby was lame for he had fallen down in the loose box. I let him out in the yard and thought I could go with him all the same. We harnessed him and led him round. Bertie got in the cart, but John said I must now tell Father. I told Father and out he came and in I got. We started. 'Stop! You must not go. The horse is too bad. Just walk him round the lamp post and bring him in.' When turning into the gate all were standing and looking as if we were some great people. I went right to the yard and flew the pigeons. Then Bertie May Willie and myself went to Stoke for crackers as we couldn't go to Yeovil. We tried all shops and at last got them at Southcombe's. We returned, I telling Bertie about my farm. Four it was and at four Beryl Winnie Phyllis and Dick were coming so I got ready quickly. They all came in one carriage. We played squails. Eat tea and retired to the Schoolroom. Where we played Nebuchadnezzar with interest, some very good acting came in. At 8 we had supper and soon said 'Good-bye'.

January 27th Wednesday Wind S.W. Rain rain. So I just went to Kate and in the afternoon I watched and helped Bertie building a tower and a bridge with Bob's [*Theodore's*] bricks. The tower was very top heavy and very high. It first stood on 8 pillars then Bertie took away 4 and still it stood in a most wonderful way. Then we made a bridge across a gap in the table, the sides weighing down the middle, 2 fell down and it was a crack when the whole came down. After tea we all before Willie left assembled in the Schoolroom and sang 'There is a tavern in the Town' and other songs. It was very nice.

January 28th Thursday W.S.W., fine and windy. Lucy and I went to Stoke and when we came back we went to look at the little lambs in Loresal. It amused us very much. After dinner I went again with Mother though she was the whole time afraid she was trespassing so I could hardly get her to walk round the field at all. The sheep and lambs allowed us to go very close to them.

February 4th Thursday W.SW. rain but yet fine the greater part. In the morning I went a walk and saw a lovely rainbow, and in the afternoon I went with Father round Lufton. 'There by the lanes and back by the Rd', so said Father. We walked along side by side and when Father saw the new house he said 'Wise men built houses and fools dwell in them'. We came back by the Park which in some parts is flooded. In the evening I translated French and wrote my diary.

February 13th Saturday W.W. [...] went around the Scotch Firs, backward, with Father. We talked about my pursuits after May and I told Father how much I wanted to [*learn to*] ride. Father said he would see and told me how he had once jumped a gate and his hat had blown off, how his iron grey [*horse*] would stop when he fell off and how I must remember to get away from my horse if I fell so not to be dragged.

March 4th Friday fine cold cloudy. In the morning went to the Post. In the afternoon

I drove May to Yeovil for a lecture. On our way back everyone we met seemed an advertisement for clothes and good health. When we drove up to the door who should welcome us but Theodore.

March 15th Tuesday W. SW. cloudy and sunny. After lessons at half past 12 we drove, Lucy & I to Norton. The horse went well. We reached the Edwards and John drove home so he could meet Lulu at Yeovil in the afternoon. Mrs Edwards received us very kindly and we soon sat down to dinner, which was a very good and substantial meal. After dinner Lucy went up to the Baby. I stayed with Mrs. Edward in the drawing room. Then Mr. Edward called me to look at his microscope which I did. We looked at drops of water, fly's eyes and other things. We chatted a little more in the drawing room, then after tea Margaret and Eric showed me the pigeons and they are very fine — very much like St George. We soon left and went over the hill down Batemoor. At the Abbey Lulu with Father arrived, which was a great joy. We then one and all turned and walked round the Scotch Firs and we found out soon that Willie had been home, rather a disappointment we had missed him.

March 16th Wednesday W.E. frost sunny. In the morning after lessons I took Theodore to be measured and we came back by the Park. In the afternoon Lucy and I at 3 started on our walk. We went straight through the village up to Ham Hill. When we had gone to the end of Ham Hill & back we were going down the road as circumstances ordained it. Two horses we saw in the far distance coming towards us. We at first thought they were Edgar and Perry who we always expect to meet but they turned out to be 2 very dull people. It might have been Lord Portman and his young sister but I could not say. In the evening Lulu May & I went to the Post and round by the Park much the same way as I went with Theodore in the morning.

April 8th Friday Trotted to Penn Mill to meet Jack at 10 to 11. He came and we had a lovely drive home though Bobby went very slowly. In the afternoon we had the recital. Jack when I was playing my march made me laugh so that I absolutely could not play. Jack read lovely pieces from Matthew Arnold to me. We then went down to meet Evelyn. Jack afterwards walked with me up and down the terrace walk and we had a very nice talk. [...] Mr. Hodder then arrived coming to see Father. As Father was engaged we took him in to the Drawing-room till Father was ready. He told Gertrude he had missed her and always did when she was away.

April 10th Sunday [Easter] Bright morning fine day. Wind West. I first wrote my diary. I then went and woke Lulu up. I turned and saw that the dormice's door was open and I looked and saw no mice, oh my fright. I fled after Littleton to know whether he had them, but no he had not. I ran back pulled up all the boxes in the square looked in the linen closet saw nothing, then I went wit Lily again to the window sill we pulled open the curtains and down fell Willie's favourite, the oldest. I was glad, very glad. At breakfast Tom suggested it [*the other one*] might be in his bed, for he said he heard them make a great noise in his room. Lulu said he had heard them run and jump off

the window sill at twelve when he was in bed. I hunted Littleton's room after breakfast. I soon had to go to Sunday School. I went feeling very vexed at the loss of those mice, hardly thinking I would see them again, though I thought in all likelihood of one having hidden in Littleton's bed. I taught Annie Montacute's class. It was very nice teaching them, they were very sweet, in particular Vicky Adams and Lily Blake. They were so interested in Joseph when I told them about him. I sat with them in Church. When I came home I was told as Lily and Mary drew back Littleton's mattress that the wildest dormouse ran across. Lily caught it and put it in the box. I read a little to Mother after dinner then Evelyn & I went for a walk to Horse's Cover, we sat on the swinging bough of the oak tree just outside the famous wood & in Radicombe. We then saw Mabel and Tom pass on to Pitt Wood. We then went into the Wood too and met Jack & Lulu who said they had met the other two. The Wood was a wonderful sight with the primroses and anemones. We came home by the Roman Road. I went to Church and when I was writing my diary, Lucy came saying they did not know whether they had found a dormouse or a housemouse. I ran up the stairs 3 steps at a time and arrived at the box, there to see Gertrude & Lulu and a dark little dormouse. I am glad. It is said to have bitten Lulu. It was found on the Schoolroom curtain.

John Hodgson, Chris Thomas and Shelagh Powys-Hancox at Exeter Station, on a visit to the new home of the Society's collection at Exeter University, 2015.

Amélie Derome

A Joyful Vision : On translating *Homer and the Aether*

As a young French humanities student, I had a keen appetite for books which unveiled a peculiar kind of being in the world. I would circle through Cortazar's paravisions, Rimbaud's illuminations and Joyce's epiphanies, on a quest for a clue to what it was that I felt when in certain specific circumstances. Roger Gilbert-Lecomte, the French avant-garde poet who founded the magazine *Le Grand Jeu* in 1928, persuaded me that the wind, 'the first thing that ever moved' could bring 'premonitions of a time earlier than motion'. Henry Miller helped me to nurture the 'extra sense, which enables one to participate and at the same time to observe one's participation'. A year ago, Marc-Edouard Nabe, author of *Au régal des vermines*, who also wrote the preface to the translation of JCP's *Dostoievsky*, hinted that I might find what I was looking for in John Cowper Powys's books. Drifting through the first pages of *A Glastonbury Romance*, I knew I had reached the terminus of my literary journey. Powys's *The Complex Vision* completed this newfound knowledge and gave me precious guidelines for my philosophy of life and my way of enjoying literature.

When I enrolled for a literary translation course in Aix-Marseille Université, I had to choose a book to translate into French – and instantly rushed to Powys's bibliography. *Homer and the Aether* seemed the perfect choice, at the intersection of classic and modernist literature. At a time when Latin and Greek are threatened in France because of a new government decree, I deemed it a significant pick. Powys was 'anxious to persuade' 'youthful readers' to discover Homer, and I hope my translation may renew his wish, even if in the smallest possible way.

Another purpose was to foster Powys's reception in France under the angle of his theory of literary criticism. The Aether, who has 'the power of reading the inmost responses of every form and shape', indeed appears as the scriptural embodiment of Powys's dithyrambic analysis, a joyful vision which might delight French students.

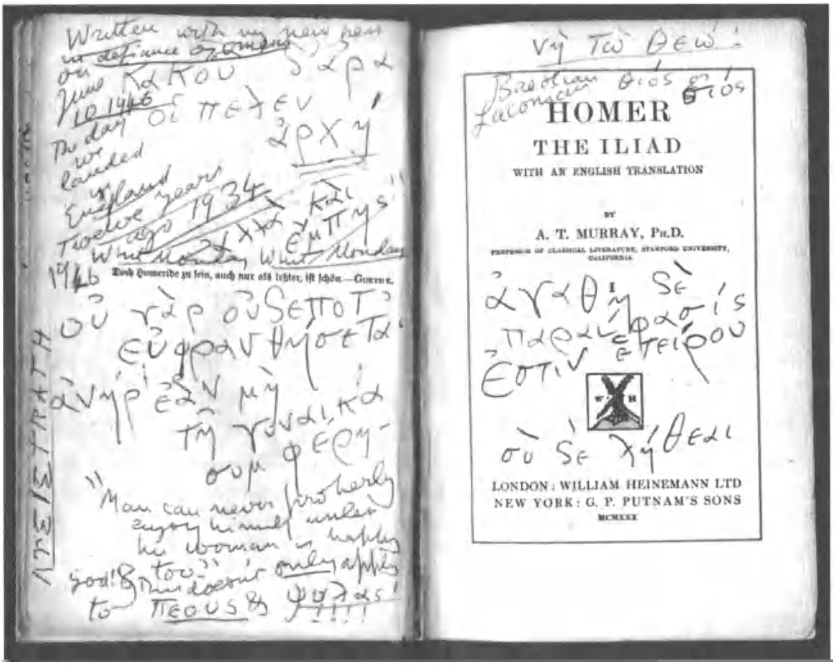
As a 'walking commentary' on Homer's *Iliad*, based on A.T. Murray's translation, *Homer and the Aether* appeared as an exciting translation challenge. The work's polyphony, in which the Aether's commentaries mingle with Powys's rewriting of a literal translation from Greek, required unlimited attention. My work could only begin after I had skimmed through its pages looking for quotes from the *Iliad* ... I therefore centred my research on the profusion of intermingled voices. Quotes from the *Iliad* had to keep both their strangeness and intimacy, while their constant echo of Powys's own writing had to be preserved.

My work led me to draw parallels between British and Greek writers. The French hellenist Paul Mazon, who wrote an acclaimed translation of *The Iliad* in 1938, underlines that 'the gods of the Iliad are only noble in the sense that the poet remembers that some of them embody the great forces of nature'. One cannot help but recall the influence of the Sun in *A Glastonbury Romance*. When Achilles regrets

life and deplores his afterlife in the meadows of asphodel, a remembrance of Powys's own desire 'to stay dead' springs to mind. Yet the most pleasing analogy might be the one arising from Hephaestus's dwelling. The vivacious gold handmaids and lively shield attain true beauty under Powys's hand, and serve as the starting point for a commentary upon the personality and consciousness of matter.

My translation finally opened another research avenue. A perhaps neglected hypotext of *Homer and the Aether* might be Shakespeare's plays. Powys indeed refers to Hector as a 'sweet warman', a Shakespearian epithet from *Troilus and Cressida*. In his preface, Powys insists upon Homer being especially close to the British mind and their love for ancient ballads. Finally, the stress which is laid upon duality through twin couples (Achilles/Patroclus, Achilles/Hector) may hint at a Shakespearian reference.

I have currently translated three chapters for my thesis, and have submitted them to a French publisher, in hope that the whole book might be accepted. Having thoroughly enjoyed this difficult task, I plan to study and translate *Atlantis* for my next master's thesis.



Homer, The Iliad, Loeb Classics Library, 1924, reprinted 1930.
Extensively annotated by John Cowper Powys on four openimgs including this title-page spread, given to my mother with long letter dated April 22nd 1959 (SPM).
This page shews one of JCP's favourite Homeric phrases, ἄλλα καὶ ἔμπης.

W.J. Keith

JCP and Mary Magdalene

Jane Lahr's *Searching for Mary Magdalene* (New York: Welcome Press, 2006) is an expensive, lavishly illustrated art-book which aims to provide a comprehensive listing of literary and artistic items devoted to 'Mary Magdalene' or 'Mary of Magdala". One of these items, it is gratifying to report, is JCP's 'The New Magdalene' (p.179) that appeared in *Wolf's Bane* in 1916. It is one of his characteristically vague poems, and at the same time one that alludes to various aspects of the Magdalene story as it exists in popular form. His assumptions and interpretations therefore deserve to be considered in relation to what is often described as the Magdalene controversy.

Scholars are generally agreed that the New Testament gospels were edited and censored not long after they were written. In the texts as they have come down to us, Mary Magdalene appears suddenly without any explanation of who she is or what her position was in the groups centred upon Jesus. She plays a notable role in the days between Good Friday and Easter Sunday, but then disappears from the record as suddenly as she came. However, various apocryphal texts dating from the third and fourth centuries reflect much earlier, orally transmitted material from within a generation of the Crucifixion. In these she is a prominent figure with considerable influence among the male apostles and disciples, and is acknowledged to be the one to whom Jesus entrusted the most profound of his teachings.

There is evidence to suggest that Jesus attracted numerous female admirers, but we are told little or nothing about them. The circumstance was played down by the anti-female elements that became increasingly active within the rapidly expanding hierarchy of the Christian Church as it emerged from Judaism. Such churchmen believed all sex to be sinful, and blamed all women for Eve's act of leading Adam astray as recounted in the third chapter of Genesis.

So much for orthodox scholarship. But in some sensationalist circles she is not uncommonly presented as one with whom Jesus was intimate and as the disciple whom he loved. Most famously, she appears in Dan Brown's widely read novel, *The Da Vinci Code*, which borrowed (as well as distorted) material from a wide range of non-fiction speculative writings by a few serious scholars and a large number of dubious 'amateurs'. There Jesus is said to have often kissed her, presumably on the mouth. Some extremists postulate their marriage and even see Jesus and Mary Magdalene as the parents of one or more children. These possibilities postdate JCP's poem for the most part, and he was almost certainly unaware of them, but 'The New Magdalene' contains various references that belong to what is now generally regarded as Magdalene myths. These I shall consider forthwith.

There are a number of Marys mentioned even in the gospels as we now have them. The most obvious are the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus; Mary Magdalene; and Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha and Lazarus. Others also occur, though it is difficult to

decide whether many of these are the same person appearing in slightly different versions in different gospels. In addition, later than the gospels is Mary of Egypt, generally presented as a penitent ex-prostitute. She later became confused with Mary Magdalene because the story in Mark (16:9) of Jesus casting out seven devils from Mary was interpreted literally (i.e., medically) rather than spiritually or imaginatively.

And this is where we can focus on JCP's poem, which is for the most part not so much about the Mary Magdalene of the gospels as about what we know of Mary of Egypt. I propose here to quote the poem stanza by stanza interspersed with explanatory comment.

She turns her with sick heart
From the crowd with the burning eyes.

'Her' is a grammatically unnecessary flourish. The crowd refers to those who look upon her with hatred and rejection.

She flees to the woods apart
Where the old world's shadow lies.

More usually, she flees to a desert, but both forest and desert are places where the solitary can live alone and undisturbed, and such flight is most conspicuous in Mary of Egypt's story..

And there in the leafy gloom
With her white face hid in her hair,

Both saints wear their hair long so that it can cover their nakedness, and here Mary of Bethany is brought in to complicate matters still further; see John 8:1-12, where, after washing Jesus' feet, she dries them with her own hair. This is said to take place in the house of the Pharisee.

She moans the unpitied doom
Of the flesh that's born too fair.

This best fits the penitent Mary of Egypt again.

Softly with amorous tread
From the dark doth a Satyr creep
And standing close to her head
Watches the wanton weep.

Here problems begin. In a fairly extensive search of the vast Mary Magdalene literature, I have found no mention of a satyr (which suggests a Classical origin), nor do I know of any further reference in JCP himself. If it is not JCP's sheer invention, where does this originate?

Like the mask of a thousand years
The lust in him drops away,
And big immortal tears
Make a grave for it in the clay.

In the last line quoted, 'it' means the Satyr's lust.

And gently on bended knees

He worships the wanton there,
Pouring old heathen litanies
Into her drooping hair.

Both 'worships' and 'litanies' introduce a religious aspect, while 'heathen' would seem to imply a non-Judaic-Christian element, perhaps referring back to 'Classical' again.

The concluding lines bring the poem to an enigmatic conclusion:

And the heart of the old world then
Flings forth its ancient balm,
And the burning eyes of men
Can work her no further harm.

The 'old world' is teasingly ambiguous. In the second stanza of the poem, it means merely that the world is old; but here, JCP is probably alluding simultaneously to the fact that *Wolf's Bane* was published by G. Arnold Shaw in New York. As for 'balm', it is presumably being used in its most generalized sense as anything that soothes or heals.

This is as far as my researches have been able to go. I hope that some readers may be in a position to go further in explicating JCP's poem and placing it in the larger context of Mary Magdalene studies.

Raymond Cox

Charles Ives (1874–1954): a contemporary

A piano recital by Anthony Green, reported in the last *Newsletter*, featured a transcription of his 'A John Cowper Powys Symphony'. It also included music by Charles Ives, a contemporary of JCP. This important, but unconventional, composer, whose home town was Danbury, Connecticut, is some fifty miles from JCP's Phudd Bottom, near Philmont, NY. There are no musical associations. Powys was not musical and was tone deaf. However, there are other resemblances.

As representatives of their respective arts both were independent and unorthodox. Both had mystical feelings and aspired towards a universality that often resulted in their creations being merged with more mundane aspects. For instance, the microcosmic world of nature, flowers, insects, etc. was combined, for Powys, with a feeling for the greater cosmic world, his 'multiverse', With Ives, his music, which reflected the everyday life of people around him, was mingled with transcendent feelings and the ideas of the Transcendentalists, represented by such as Emerson and Thoreau (titles of two movements in a major work, the Concord piano sonata) where unity in creation was important, and belief in divine messages, as well as close links to the Romantics and the mystic Swedenborg.

Ives's grandfather had been a keen follower of Emerson's ideas of self-reliance, the will to maintain independent ideas in the face of adversity and a belief in people's innate goodness. Emerson characterised such belief as modern Idealism, owing much to the idealistic aspira-

tions of Goethe, Wordsworth, etc. Titles of Ives's works, such as 'From the Steeples' and the 'Mountains and Universe Symphony', (with descriptive movement titles: ... formation of the Waters and Mountains; Earth and the Firmament ...; ... the rise of all to the Spiritual), reveal the nature of Ives's own aspirations. Yet the world of localised life around him was significant. There is the often-quoted story of two village bands passing each other in the street, playing different tunes, and creating a glorious cacophony of sound which Ives would realise on paper.

His 'Three Places in New England', one of his most performed works, is typical. Here he describes scenes from the Revolutionary War, including a children's holiday at Putnam's Camp, Redding, containing his characteristic compendium of snippets of tunes. Even the 'British Grenadiers' is there (a tune curiously popular with American soldiers!). Elsewhere, a mood of nostalgia and the calm hush at the close, describing a misty river, are redolent of mystic enfolding. Ives's music was not mainstream, but gloriously entertaining, his tunes often culled and concocted from hymns, college songs, marches, Stephen Foster songs, etc.

When Ives entered Yale he was already an accomplished organist and skilled composer of band music, anthems and songs. He came from a family with a philosophical tradition, but then for over twenty years he led a double life of insurance man in New York and composer at night and weekends. His music was mostly written during the first two decades of the century. Quarter tones (imitating his father) and numerous other musical ideas amazingly pre-dated by a decade the Serialism of Schoenberg and others in Europe. However, his music was not performed for many years, an extreme example being his Second Symphony, composed in 1901 but not performed until 1951.

In Ives's music the simple and the complex exist together. The concept of 'universal mind', of unity in diversity, is close to JCP's conceptions. The Third Symphony looks back to fervent gospel hymns at camp meetings in Ives's youth. The Fourth, perhaps his greatest work, has two movements based on hymns, another is a pandemonic battle of contending snatches of hymns, marches and folk tunes, and the last a mystical stream of diaphanous textures which evanesce out of hearing, closing what has been a vast meditation. The Unanswered Question is a short philosophical meditation on 'the perennial question of existence'. There are numerous short works including 'The Fourth of July' and 'Hallowe'en', impressions of childhood memories. The richest body of vocal music in America is represented by the 114 songs, with an extraordinary range of styles and texts.

JCP's companion, Phyllis Playter, was keenly musical, but it is doubtful if she would have been present at any of the few concerts which featured Ives's music in New York City in the '20s and '30s. She may have heard of him and other contemporary American composers who championed Ives. What is more certain is that Ives himself would have had no problem with the first page of *A Glastonbury Romance*, where

> ... there occurred within a causal radius of Brendan railway station and yet beyond the deepest pools of emptiness between the uttermost stellar systems one of those infinitesimal ripples in the creative silence of the First Cause ... .

Patrick Quigley

The Sage of Corwen and 'White of White'

When JCP moved to Corwen in 1936 he was a major literary figure, having published a succession of books with a distinctive philosophical aspect. Many people identified with his unconventional views and individual philosophy and wrote seeking advice and guidance. Most correspondents wrote in deferential terms, but one was less polite – Captain James R. White DSO, son of Field Marshall White, the 'Hero of Ladysmith', from Whitehall, County Antrim, whom Powys referred to as 'White of White'.

Powys wrote in his diary of 21 March 1942 of having received 'a letter from White of White in anger accusing me of being lazy, "superior"; false and smug; like all the English! And saying he was angry with me & felt contempt for my character & would like to kick me in the BALLS.'

Despite the occasional violent language, which JCP seems to have relished, the indications are that the sage of Corwen and the Christian anarchist were rather fond of each other. Powys referred to White in a diary entry of 6 October 1942 as one of his two 'most exciting correspondents'.

White ('JRW' to his relatives) and JCP became correspondents in the mid-1930s. White supported the Anarchists in the Spanish Civil War and wrote a pamphlet, *The Meaning of Anarchy*, on the struggle between Spanish Anarchists and Stalinists. He concluded that Communism under Stalin had become a system opposed to human liberation. This was similar to the political beliefs of JCP who wrote in an article, 'The Real and the Ideal' in 1938:

> These Spanish Anarchists are prepared to defend the individual liberty of the working-man, not only against the insidious oppression of capitalism and the shameless hypnotism of Fascism, but against *any kind of Dictatorship,* even the kind in which Russian Communism has resulted.

White spoke at a public meeting on Spain with JCP's long-term correspondent, the anarchist Emma Goldman; also in Holborn in January 1937 [*see p. 62 of Powys/Goldman* letters] and possibly came to know of Powys through her. Unfortunately the letters between JRW and JCP are lost and we have only glimpses of the relationship. It was believed for years that White's family destroyed his papers but his biographer, Leo Keohane, believes the papers including the letters from JCP may be mouldering in a solicitor's files.

White was looking for assistance with a book on his philosophy, a successor to his autobiography, *Misfit*, published in 1930. The draft was described by Phyllis as comparable to Dostoevsky and Gogol. This manuscript is also lost, but Keohane believes it is misfiled in the British National Archives. Powys wrote in his diary of 17 November 1941:

> I confined myself to posting my letter to old 'White of White' that War-Sex-Macro-

> Micro of White-hall (County Antrim) who either 'kicked' (or wanted to kick) 'the ARSE' of Lawrence of 'Sons and Lovers' and I expect if he ever gets displeased with me will 'Kick my arse' too! But who got that Greatest Prig ... Lawrence of Arabia to 'midwife' his first book called 'Misfit' and is now getting me to 'midwife' his second book containing bolder prophetic utterances ... I gave up my walk yesterday afternoon and only posted my Letter to Mr White about his book of Revelation.

Powys seems to have relished White's threatening tone in the way he emphasized the 'rude' words for his diary entries. However there must have been a lot more to the correspondence as abuse becomes repetitive and White was not a boor, although he could be violent and was reported to have punched D. H. Lawrence in reaction to the writer's unflattering portrait of him in the novel *Aaron's Rod*.

White's niece, Patricia Napier, was a patient in a tuberculosis sanatorium in Wales during the war where she was visited by Powys who wrote to her about her uncle's book:

> I've never read a more honest book, for on my life, I don't believe there is a more honest book ... I mean a book in which a man or woman talks of themselves and tries to explain themselves! Well I envy you the thrill – and everyone else who gets it later in print, the thrill of reading this finale to Part 3 for the first time. For it certainly holds you.

As he grew older White's interest in religion became more intense as he sought meaning in a Christianity beyond Papal supremacy or Protestant élitism. He was also aware that his time was limited. JCP noted in his diary of 10 January 1945 of hearing from White that he had 'a malignant growth in his prostrate and is being cured by pills made of female hormones'. He further noted on 19 March:

> White of White has cancer of the Prostrate Gland. White of White believes that his revelation from God will cure it.

Whatever the revelation it did not stop the cancer and JCP noted his correspondent's pain and fear on 22 December 1945. He wrote on 29 December of:

> A Tragic letter from White of White saying that half a bottle of whiskey made his Cancer of the Prostrate [*sic*] worse and he was due for that operation where you 'excrete' through tubes on your front bowels. He asks my advice about suicide ... on principle I defend suicide, but I would be too cowardly to kill myself.

White died in a Belfast nursing home on Sunday, 3 February 1946 and JCP recorded the death in a journal entry of 7–9 February:

> DEATH OF White of White may he rise to Immortality and Intense Happiness. O it is such a relief to me that he is out of it and I can only say may he be clear of the 'Bad Macro' and its Holy Terrors! He died on Candlemas. A letter from Mrs White of White has been answered by me – Aye! Aye! But she says he smoked a CIGARETTE half an hour before he Died. May he rise from Death!!!! I shall tell my son to say a MASS for him.

I have been unable to glean any further information on the correspondence from White's biographer, Leo Keohane. Dr Morine Krissdóttir provided Keohane with

the above diary extracts but she has no further references. It is fascinating to think there is a cache of JCP letters waiting to be discovered and we can learn what lies behind the puzzling term 'War-Sex-Macro-Micro ofWhitehall'.

The author wishes to thank The Powys Society for permission and Dr Morine Krissdóttir and Leo Keohane for assistance and quotations from the diaries and letters of John Cowper Powys. The full title of the biography is: Captain Jack White: Imperialism, Anarchism & the Irish Citizen Army *by Leo Keohane, Merrion Press, Kildare, 2014.*

Review 1

John Hodgson : Gnostics and Cyborgs

John Gray, *The Soul of the Marionette, A Short Enquiry into Human Freedom*
London: Allen Lane, 2015, ISBN 978-1-846-14449-3. £17.99

'Thank you for choosing British Airways' says the steward as you land at Heathrow, and does not your heart sink, as you reflect that this kind of choice had very little to do with your journey at all, and that British Airways is foisting onto you a kind of false freedom that means very little to you? And it is not only in the flattened landscape of consumerism that freedom of choice might not be all that it is cracked up to be. If, as Christianity teaches, true freedom lies in obeying God's will, might believers not yearn for a freedom *from* choice?

In *Straw Dogs*, John Gray argued that many secular assumptions about the modern world, and its faith in science and progress, are in fact 'spilt religion'. The supposedly rationalist values of the Enlightenment and the millenarian hopes of Marxism are merely a re-enactment of the drama of Christian salvation, with its metaphysical underpinning removed so that it is supported by – nothing at all. Humankind, argues Gray, has still not faced up to its lonely insignificance in the cosmos.

In his new book, Gray finds that ancient heresies are also cropping up in modern disguises, foremost among them Gnosticism. The Gnostics believed that the material world was created not by the true God but by a lesser, malign or incompetent deity, a demiurge. There are traces of this in the cosmology of *A Glastonbury Romance*, with its dual-natured first cause. But Gray here discusses T. F. Powys, in whose God he finds 'a demiurge baffled and saddened by his one creation'. This is Mr. Weston, a 'self-annihilating God' who goes up in smoke after asking his assistant Michael to drop a burning match into the petrol tank of his car; or Tinker Jar, who seeks the forgiveness for the suffering of world in *The Only Penitent*.

But, as Gray notes, this is Gnosticism without gnosis, without the prospect of

salvation from the natural world that the ancient Gnostics sought in knowledge and wisdom. Gray looks back to the 'forgotten visionaries' of Gnosticism, who believed that knowledge will bring at least adepts to awareness of the true God, and finds a version of Gnosticism underlying the modern cult of scientific progress and rationality, with its attendant hopes that humankind will come to transcend the present bounds of human nature.

Gray invokes a whole series of writers and philosophers to illustrate this tradition. Many of these are forgotten visionaries themselves, often with troubled or tragic lives. There is the Polish-Jewish writer and artist Bruno Schulz, for whom humanity, and indeed all material creation, is itself imbued with the creative capacity. There is the Italian poet Giacomo Leopardi, for whom a civilized life required the 'conscious cultivation of illusions' to cope with the meaningless mechanical universe that science had discovered. There is the psychedelic science fiction of Philip K. Dick. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* has proved prophetic, and Gray evokes the dazzling array of scientific achievements, the cyborgs and androids and robots that are transforming human life – but only in certain aspects. Mary Shelley recognised that a being created by human hands could only be 'a monstrous creation of human pride'. It follows that knowledge will become the liberating force that the modern scientific world-view may fondly imagine. It will bring the usual mixture of novel moral benefits and fresh moral horrors, because 'the Fall is not an event at the beginning of history but the intrinsic condition of self-conscious beings'. Freedom, perhaps, lies in accepting these limitations.

Gray's wide-ranging book is a fascinating exploration of what at first look like literary and theological by-ways, which turn out to illustrate astonishing fallacies in conventional philosophical thought.

Review 2

John Gray : Conspicuous Consumption

The Conqueror Worm: Llewelyn Powys – A Consumptive's Diary, 1910
Edited by Peter J. Foss
The Powys Society, 179pp, ISBN 978-1-874559-48-1, £10

The youngest of three brothers who became highly distinctive writers in the early decades of the last century, Llewelyn Powys is today the least read. This is surprising, since in some ways he is now the most resonant. At the present time religion and atheism contend in much the same way they did nearly a century ago when Powys first began to publish on the subject, and now as then his approach to this conflict is refreshingly unorthodox. Like his brothers (there were eleven siblings in total),

Llewelyn rejected the Christianity of his father, a Somerset parson whom they all loved and revered. But while John Cowper Powys ended up in a Montaigne-like scepticism and Theodore Powys settled into an earthy acceptance of mystery and mortality, Llewelyn became a passionate opponent of religion – a latter-day Lucretius who railed against otherworldly faith as an illusion that spoilt the joy of life. Unlike our more pedestrian atheists, he also recognised the human value of religion, seeing it as a poetic response to the encounter with death that was his own most formative experience.

In November 1909, at the age of twenty-five, Llewelyn discovered he had consumption:

> The shock of discovering myself to be really ill had the strangest effect on me. I became like one drunken with wine. A torrent of words flowed from my mouth. I acted as if death were not the end of every child born into the world, but an event which for some mysterious reason had been reserved for me alone. I felt nothing but pride in finding myself laid by the heels so neatly. I liked to get what sensation I could out of it; and yet, deep in my heart, I refused to realise how grave my sickness was. I liked to talk about dying, but I had no mind to die. I liked to rail against God, but I had no mind that He should hear me ... My head had been completely turned, and I chittered at Death like a little grey squirrel who is up a fir tree out of harm's way.

This passage comes from Powys's *Skin for Skin* (1925), an unsparing and yet often lyrical memoir of his encounter with the pulmonary tuberculosis from which he would suffer for the rest of his life. When writing the memoir, Powys mined a diary he kept during his year in a sanatorium at Clavadel near Davos in Switzerland, and it is this journal, meticulously edited and annotated so the reader can catch the significance of its many literary allusions, that the Powys scholar Peter Foss has given us.

With an immediacy the exquisitely written memoir cannot match, the diary reveals how this high-spirited young Edwardian reacted to the onset of a disease that, before the advent of antibiotic treatment, was commonly regarded as a death sentence. Powys lived on for thirty years, dying only in December 1939 as a result of a perforated ulcer. During all of this time he fought ceaselessly against the disease without sacrificing what he regarded as life's supreme pleasures. For him the sanatorium was not only a place where death was always near, but a sexual playground where the morality in which he had been reared could be shaken off and forgotten.

On Sunday 10 July 1910, Powys suffered a haemorrhage. At this point the diary entries come to a stop with the word BLOOD, which is itself written in blood. When the entries are resumed, over a month later, they record Powys continuing in erotic encounters with fellow patients by whom he risked being reinfected and dallying with a girl he met on one of his no less perilous mountain walks. Amid these interludes and bouts of fever and coughing, Powys fortified himself with readings from Andrew Marvell and Thomas Hardy, Pater and Maupassant, Nietzsche and Wilde. This rich intellectual fare nourished the philosophy that was emerging in him

– a starkly uncompromising version of hedonism, which unlike that of Lucretius was willing to risk peace of mind, even life itself, in the pursuit of heightened sensation.

In all of Powys's writings – the two books of impressions of Africa he wrote after travelling there for his health and spending five years in the bush as a sheep farmer, his accounts of his travels in Palestine, America and the Caribbean, the dozens of short articles and essays celebrating the landscape and life of Dorset, where he later settled, and the 'imaginary autobiography' *Love and Death*, completed a year before he died – he presents life as a gift of chance, which can only be fully appreciated once any belief that it has intrinsic meaning or purpose has been left behind. Accepting that his illness was incurable, he knew that the pursuit of pleasure would never be without pain. As Philip Larkin wrote, Llewelyn Powys is 'one of the few writers who teach endurance of life as well as its enjoyment'.

In a richly illuminating introduction, Foss situates Powys's diary in an early 20th-century literature of the tuberculous experience of which Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* (1924) is the best-known example. To my mind the vignettes in Powys's diary are more vividly memorable than Mann's set pieces: Powys's fellow patient 'the philosophic Hungarian' Dr Szende, author of a book on Napoleon, lying dying in bed reading Schopenhauer while 'inhaling some white powder and smoking an enormous cigar'; the aftermath of the death of 'the pachydermatous German', when 'four figures tip-toed along the white corridors and down the marble staircase, bearing on their shoulders a long and heavy burden' to be taken to 'the Dead house in Davos'; Powys on a twilit balcony shrinking from a lover, a 'beautiful white-limbed vampire' with whom he had recklessly frolicked; or talking with his closest friend in the sanatorium, an English 'scholar and gentleman' called Wilbraham, whose conventional pieties Powys mercilessly mocked. At times the atmosphere recorded in the diary is so heavily sexualised that Foss comments, 'One can almost smell the semen on the page.' At others the mood is one of pathos, as when Powys writes of the girl from Cornwall who yearned for nothing more than the companionship of her dogs.

An unfinished story written in 1912–13 that Foss includes at the end of The Conqueror Worm makes clear the lesson Powys took from his illness. The experience did not make him more prudent or in any conventional sense more moral. Instead it strengthened his resolve to enjoy life 'without restrictions'. 'If God restored me', Powys wrote, 'I thought I would live more eagerly, more wickedly than ever and with far more craft.' Recording a bold and original mind seeking and finding delight in life while facing the prospect of imminent death, this must surely be one of the most remarkable diaries that has been published in many years.

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For more information and to order, see the notice in Newsletter *84, page 12, and the back cover.*

Review 3 : Stephen Powys Marks

Earth Memories, by Llewelyn Powys, with Foreword by Anthony Head, and Introduction by John Gray
Toller Fratrum, Dorset: Little Toller Books, 2015, 176 pp, £12
ISBN 978-1-908213-22-8
one of 26 volumes in publisher's Nature Classics Library

Just received, a new volume headed 'EARTH MEMORIES/ LLEWELYN POWYS/ Introduced by John Gray' (*my reference* 'New EM'). One ought to be able to welcome any new publication of work by the Powys brothers, but my welcome for this volume is heavily qualified for several reasons. First of them I suppose is the cavalier treatment of Gertrude Powys and her engravings. She contributed 24 to the book as published in 1934 (*see page* 51); some of the engravings might have slight connection to the subject, but in the great majority the subject of the image is fairly or very obviously related to the subject of the essay it accompanies. Likewise, most of the 14 engraving in *Rats in the Sacristy* are related to its 14 essays.

Of these 24 only 17 have been used, one of *Irises* as an enlarged frontispiece, and six of the others have been attached to different essays, not all of them occurring in the original work published by The Bodley Head ('BH EM').

Equally serious is the radically changed contents without a hint in the title that this is a new version, only explained in a handful of words in the editor's Preface. I could happily accept this hefty change, but this should have been made obvious with a subtitle such as 'A new selection'. *Earth Memories* is such a good generic title that it can happily embrace quite a lot of Llewelyn Powys's essay-writing.

From my chart on page 51 you will see that of the original 23 essays, 11, less than half, are printed in this new version, to which have been added 22 from other sources. These sources are not stated, though the colophon refers to the familiar *Somerset Essays* and *Dorset Essays*; I reckon that 6 essays come from each of these, but these and any other sources are not acknowledged anywhere (unlike the full references given in Foss's 2003 collection, *Wessex Memories*). It is a great shame that the example of the exemplary referencing in this editor's earlier selection *The Struggle for Life* has not been followed. A black mark.

These other sources are: 2 from *A Baker's Dozen*; 5 originating from Foss's *Wessex Memories* but with 3 changed titles; 1 from Hopkins's *Selections*; 'A West Countryman's Return' from *The Powys Journal* VII, written in 1919, first printed in *The Countryman* in 1956, submitted to the magazine by Alyse herself; this essay, one of the most important, is quite suitably paired by the long view of the Dorset cliffs (New EM, 33).

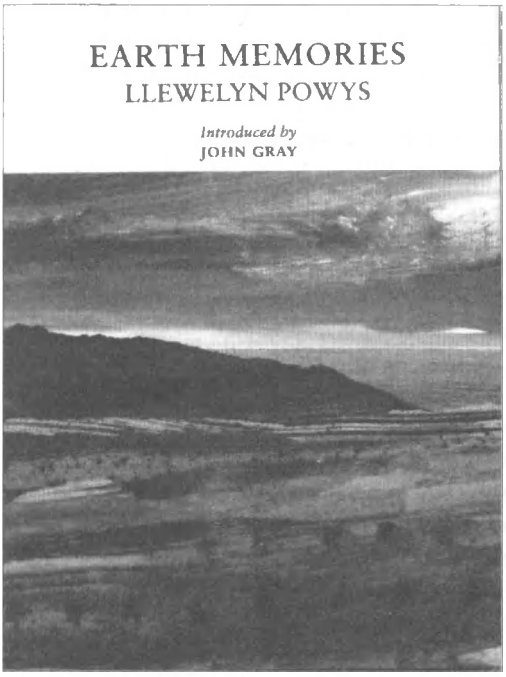
'Signs of the Times' was the final essay to track down. It is a very poignant reflection on the dire state of agriculture between the Wars. Foss (*Bibliography* E190) gives the manuscript title 'Firelighters for Sale'; the essay is sparked off when

Llewelyn enters a village shop which has seen much better days and now was offering sad bundles of home-made firelighters. It is a good essay to include, but what prompted its crass pairing with one of the best and most significant engravings, that of 'Stalbridge Cross and Rectory' with original printed caption removed?

Let me continue with the engravings.

The very last essay in *Earth Memories* (BH and in the New York and Redcliffe reprints) is 'Out of the Past'. In BH EM (page 231) it is printed with Gertrude's fine engraving of Stalbridge, but there is even a caption (rare in this book) which tells you that it is of 'Stalbridge Cross and Rectory' (*see back cover*). The essay is one of the most affecting of any in this or other illustrated books of essays, with Llewelyn's memories of a visit to Stalbridge decades after he had last known it. These memories include the touching account of his father going missing from the house he had retired to in Weymouth and eventually being found wandering in Stalbridge.

The whole essay is a tale of recollections, for example meeting aged villagers who remembered Llewelyn's grandfather the Revd Littleton Charles Powys, the Rector. '*In the annals of my own family it is the Dorset village of Stalbridge which has held our imagination in fee.*' Of all the essays in this book the text and image are the most intimately connected, and yet the image, caption erased, is dropped in at page 143 of New EM, treated it seems just to decorate a different essay, 'Signs of the Times'. 'Signs of the Times' is a fair reflection on the dire state of agriculture in the depressed thirties which I have read of elsewhere of course (such as in Adrian Bell's *Men and the Fields*, another volume in the Little Toller Nature Classics Library), but this has nothing to do with Llewelyn's profound feeling for Stalbridge so touchingly expressed in this essay, so obviously about what Stalbridge meant to him. What is to tell anyone that this is a special essay without the signal of the visible and named engraving? As it is now, the engraving is just a pretty unexplained picture. This essay is possibly the most important, *if accompanied by Gertrude Powys's engraving.*



How can an editor be so carelessly insensitive? This is not the only case of a reassigned engraving losing its context. Not quite so bad, but still inexcusable, is the engraving of a farm back-yard, chained dog and kennel, originally at the head of 'A House of Correction'. The house of correction is the kennel with its

chained-up dog; the essay is about this situation, but the essay it heads in the new version (New EM, 209) is an account of a day in 1899 when Llewelyn and Will were bundled off to Weymouth because of Will's whooping cough, absolutely nothing to do with farm yards or dogs or kennels.

The title page tells us that the book is 'Illustrated by Gertrude Mary Powys'. Who is this lady? There is nothing in this book to explain her importance or significance or relationship to the author, nothing about her art, nothing … . Another black mark

I am hardly in a position to assess the accuracy of the copies or transcriptions, but when I was trying to find out where 'Somerset Names' came from, I tracked it to the collection of essays, *Wessex Memories*, edited by Peter Foss in 2003. There it has a different name 'South Somerset Names'. The new version contains a clutch of typos and omitted paragraph divisions (New EM, 126–7). On page 159 of the same there are several verses by Wordsworth. These come from BH EM page 46, where they are shewn as 2 6-line verses, with every third line indented to echo the rhyming scheme; in New EM these are printed as three verses without any indents, making nonsense of the original layout. I wonder if this is a regular problem with new collections, but with this instance it does not inspire confidence that the text of any of the other essays is accurate. Another black mark.

The publishers have gone to someone who has done a great deal of good work on Powys, but I am sorry to say I think that on this occasion the result is a shoddy piece of work. Maybe the publisher must take some of the blame: I wrote to Adrian Cooper of Little Toller about my serious concerns, and had a reply which got me nowhere; he asked me to look at the wider context, but this is not a good reason to publish this work in the way described by me: potental new readers who will know little of Powys must also be properly treated.

Here is the full list of essays, a nice collection to have in one book.

A Struggle for Life — A West Countryman's Return — The Sea! The Sea! The Sea! —Bats Head — A Visit by Moonlight — Cliff Foxes — The Partridge — Exmoor — Guests of Grace — Stinsford Churchyard — The Owl and a Swallow — The Blind Cow — A Butterfly Secret — A Grave in Dorset — Montacute House — The River Yeo — Hedgehogs — The Memory of One Day — A Locust Memory — A Pond —Gay Leopards — Herring Gulls —Witcombe Bottom — Somerset Names — Pitt Pond —West Bottom — Out of the Past — Signs of the Times — A Foolish Razorbill — The First Fall of Snow — On the Other Side of the Quantocks — Dartmoor — Natural Worship

In spite of my misgivings I am ready to suggest that you might purchase this work for its particular collection of essays, most in books or magazines not now available, and for its useful Foreword and Introduction, but please be aware that its title is misleading; indeed I think publishing it simply as *Earth Memories* is little short of a confidence trick.

Stephen Powys Marks

The essays of Llewelyn Powys: recent collections in context

In *Newsletter* 30 (April 1997) Michael Skaife-d'Ingerthorpe analysed the 81 essays contained in 7 collections published up to that date, 3 pre-war books and 4 post-war ones comprising new selections: ‡

Dorset Essays (Bodley Head, 1935, 31 essays, photos) 'DE' [Michael's references]
Somerset Essays (Bodley Head, 1937, 37, photos), 'SE'
A Baker's Dozen (Trovillion, 1939; Bodley Head, 1941, 13 + drawings by GMP) 'BD'
A Selection from his Writings, ed. Kenneth Hopkins (Macdonald, 1952, 4) 'LSW'
Somerset and Dorset Essays (Macdonald, 1957, 19+21 out of 68, photos) 'S&D'
Dorset Essays (Redcliffe, 1983, 33, photos) 'DE2'
Scenes from a Somerset Childhood (Redcliffe, 1986, 15, photos) 'SSC'

This analysis did not include pre-war *Earth Memories* with its 23 essays and 24 engravings by Gertrude Powys (Bodley Head, 1934), 'BH EM', nor other original volumes containing essays, including: *Ebony and Ivory* (1923, 23), *Thirteen Worthies* (1923, 13), *Black Laughter* (1924, 26); *Damnable Opinions* (1935, 15), *Rats in the Sacristy* (1937, 14 + 14 engravings by Gertrude Powys, mostly related in some way), and *Swiss Essays* (1947, 21, photos). There have been two unillustrated re-issues of *Earth Memories*: in New York with 18 extra essays selected from the 31 in *Dorset Essays* (W.W. Norton, 1938), and a straight reprint by Redcliffe Press in 1983.

Peter Foss's great *Bibliography* was published in 2007. His research enabled him to prepare a volume *Wessex Memories* with 24 previously **uncollected** 'Country Essays', with sources and illustrated with scraperboard drawings by Peter (The Powys Society, 2003). Publication of the *Bibliography* opened the way for three unillustrated collections from Sundial Press: *Durdle Door to Dartmoor* (2007), *Still Blue Beauty* (2008) (these two with 26 essays both subtitled 'Wessex Essays') and *Christmas Lore and Legend* (2010), 14 'Yuletide Essays', only the last one fully referenced. Also in 2010 Oneworld Classics published *A Struggle for Life* with 28 essays, an interesting selection fully referenced, also without illustration. If my arithmetic is right these four collections from Sundial and Oneworld, have virtually no duplication, and present 92 different essays, together a good selection to be published in quick succession. *Christmas Lore* contains references and *A Struggle for Life* has an exemplary full listing of text-sources. The two 'Wessex Essays' volumes were selected and arranged by Anthony Head and Frank Kibblewhite, *Christmas Lore* has a Foreword by Head, and *A Struggle for Life* was edited with an Introduction also by Head.

According to the Editor of *A Struggle*, half the essays have not been reprinted for over seventy years, if at all, and one published here for the first time, selected from well over 600 essays, stories, articles and reviews in dozens of periodicals and journals. The wide range of books in which they were first printed includes *Swiss Essays*, published posthumously in 1947.

‡ I can supply a scanned copy of Michael's article: < stephen.marks22@btinternet.com >

A Struggle for Life was reviewed in *The Powys Journal* XXI (2011), 221–3, and by John Hodgson in the Society's *Newsletter* 73 (July 2011), 40–41. These two reviews are very far apart in their appraisals and to me illustrate well the problem of estimating the standing of Llewelyn Powys. Please look them out and read them. I occasionally wonder if admiration becomes uncritical adulation (not in Hodgson's case, of course); certainly I have considerable trouble with two highly praised books: *The Cradle of God*, which is often gratuitously offensive and occasionally anti-semitic; and *Love and Death* which is aptly described by Gerald Brenan as a 'cloyingly romantic novel', with about half way through a sorry pastiche of the 'Song of Solomon'. I was prompted to read, to the very end, these two works after feeling challenged after reading Neil Lee's draft essay *The Man behind the Myth* (review by Kate Kavanagh in *Newsletter* 84, 17–19).

The *Journal* review is by Charles Kaye. He says that, though familiar with TFP and JCP, he had not previously been aware of Llewelyn Powys's 'prodigious' output, so was able to approach the work without any preconceptions. He is decidedly lukewarm on the overall merit of these essays as 'classics': '*an interesting selection though it includes too much minor work whose reprinting the scholar or devotee may value, but which hold little interest or appeal for potential new readers: these were never "classics"*', but there is plenty that Kaye likes, including the 13-page Introduction, and particularly praises the opening and closing essays, the title essay 'A Struggle for Life', and 'Reflections of a Dying Man', the same pair that John Hodgson also singled out for commendation.

At the end of this volume printed in 2010, Oneworld Classics' aims are set out: '*to publish mainstream and less-known European classics ...*', followed by a list of 140 works of generally recognised classics of European literature, *A Struggle for Life* itself being no 140. Oneworld Classics was taken over by Alma Classics, whose 203 titles as shewn on their current website do not include this work. I suspect that Alma Classics must have taken the same view of its 'classic' status as Charles Kaye, which is a pity. Those who have not got a copy of this good collection can obtain one of the many on offer through Amazon, as I have just done.

The situation has now radically changed with the issue in 2015 of another volume entitled simply *Earth Memories* (Little Toller Books), 'New EM'; this is also edited by Anthony Head. With 33 essays it ranges well outside the original selection for the Bodley Head *Earth Memories*, encroaching to some extent on ground covered by Skaife-d'Ingerthorpe, as explained in my Review. I think there are only six pieces in this collection which had appeared in *A Struggle for Life*, but in these six collections there is much more duplication; it means that 120 different essays have been published in the last decade, by the Society, Sundial, Oneworld and Little Toller, quite a pleasing situation.

Unlike all the other recent publications of Powys's essays the new *Earth Memories* has sewn binding, so at least, whatever you or I think of the book, it is likely to outlast most of the others. It was for reasons of durability that our own *Powys Journal*, after the first few issues, has had sewn binding.

Earth Memories as first published in 1934 by The Bodley Head

Underlined essays and engravings are included in the new version change of essay shewn thus [2015, … …]. The missing engravings, slightly reduced, are shewn on the next page.

page	*essay*	*wood engraving (SPM descriptions)*
3	A Struggle for Life	Pine clad mountain valley
27	The Partridge	Partridges on nest
37	On the Other Side of the Quantocks	Quantock hills
51	A Pond	Pond scene
59	The Shambles Fog-horn	Sea by night [very dark]
67	The Yellow Iris	Irises [2015, frontispiece]
75	Natural Happiness	Head of Akhenaton
87	Unicorn Legends	Unicorn in woodland
95	A Grave in Dorset	Dorset bay with high cliffs
103	God	Boats by inlet [2015, The Sea! The Sea! The Sea!]
111	A Moon Circus	Moonlit circus in village setting (Belley)
123	When the Unicorn "Cons" the Waters	Range of Dorset cliffs from the Sea [2015, A West Countryman's Return]
131	A Locust Message	A bleak hilly landscape
139	The Genius of Peter Breughel	Seated peasant girl
151	Natural Worship	Windswept tree [with monogram GMP]
161	A Butterfly Secret	Butterflies on flower stems
169	The Blind Cow	Blind Cow Rock
177	An Owl and a Swallow	Barn with damaged roof
185	Merton Wood's Luncheon	Hedgehogs [2015, Hedgehogs]
195	An Ancient French House	House beyond rural scene
209	A House of Correction	Farm back-yard and dog kennel [2015, The Memory of One Day]
219	Of Egoism	Corpus Christi, Cambridge
	Out of the Past	
231		Stalbridge Cross and Rectory [2015, Signs of the Times]
239	[tailpiece]	Ploughing under the Sun [2015, Out of the Past]

Earth Memories — The omitted engravings

To complete the record here are scans from the book of the 7 of Gertrude Powys's set of 24 engravings which are not reproduced in the new version of *Earth Memories* just published. Their locations and the essays they originally accompanied are shewn on the previous page. Most of the original wood blocks measured 3 inches by 2 inches, with images shewn here reduced to about 75%.

AKHENATON

Earth Memories (1934) pages

	111
59	
	139
75	
	195
87	
	219

52

Previous Collections of this Century

Wessex Memories, Country Essays (128 pp, The Powys Society, 2003, ***all uncollected***)

Green Corners of Dorset — The Parson of Broadwindsor — Gypsies at Weymouth Market — Betty Cooper — The Swannery Bell at Abbotsbury — Dorset Ovens — Lodmoor — The Wordsworths in Dorset — Birds of a Winter Garden — The Chesil Beach — One of a Thousand [1]*— A Downland Burden* [2]*— Recollections of Thomas Hardy — Hedgehogs —Chainey Bottom — Worked Flints — Guests of Grace — Robert Herrick — South Somerset Names* [3] *— Hedgecock Memories — Montacute Mills — Two Country Writers — Christmas in Dorset — True Happiness*

Durdle Door to Dartmoor, Wessex Essays (160 pp, Sundial Press, 2007)

The Durdle Door — The White Nose — A Bronze Age Valley — Bats Head — The Fossil Forest — The Castle Park at East Lulworth — St Aldhelm's Head — Studland — Corfe Castle —Herring Gulls — Stalbridge Rectory — The River Yeo — Cerne Abbas — Stinsford Churchyard — The Grave of William Barnes — Weymouth Harbour — Portland — A Famous Wreck — Hardy's Monument — The Swannery Bell at Abbotsbury — Lyme Regis — Montacute House — Ham Hill —On the Other Side of the Quantocks — Exmoor — Dartmoor

Still Blue Beauty, Wessex Essays (176 pp, Sundial Press, 2008)

The Sea! The Sea! The Sea! — Lodmoor — The White Horse — The Memory of One Day — A Stonehenge in Miniature † *— The Father of Dorset* † *— A Pond — High Chaldon — A Royal Rebel — Somerset Names* † [3] *— Montacute Hill — The Village Shop — The Wordsworths in Dorset — The World is New!*† *— A Visit by Moonlight* † [2] *— Shaftesbury: Champion of the Poor — A Wish for Freedom* † *— Athelney: In the Steps of King Arthur* † *— Wookey Hole — Green Corners of Dorset — Recollections of Thomas Hardy — A Foolish Razorbill* † [1] *— A Richer Treasure* † *— Weymouth Memories* †*— The Shambles Fog-Horn — Dorchester Lives 7*†

Christmas Lore and Legend, Yuletide Essays (96 pp, Sundial Press, 2010)

The First Fall of Snow — The Spirit of the Season — A Childhood Christmas — The First Christmas Tree — Merry is the Word * — Mistletoe and Fir* — The Month of December * — A Christmas Mystery* — Charity and Christmas Ballads* — Town and Country* — Our Merry Ancestors* — Evergreens and Corn Sheaves* — Ships and Stockings* — The Wassail Bowl and New Year Customs**

A Struggle for Life, Selected Essays (230 pp, Oneworld Classics, 2010)

A Struggle for Life — A Leopard by Lake Elmenteita — Some African Birds — In Africa the Dark — Kiboko — A Defence of Cowardice — When I Consider Thy Heavens — Banks and Bank Clerks — Thomas Bewick — Laurence Sterne — Christian Fingers — Of Tall Ships — An Ancient French House — Out of the Past — Thr Epicurean Vision — The Partridge — A Pond — Natural Worship — An Owl and a Swallow — Bats Head — Cliff Foxes — Barbarians — A Blackamoor! A Blackamoor! — Weymouth in the Year of the Three Eights — The Aebi Wood — Ernst Ludwig Kirchner — A Soul Window — Reflections of a Dying Man

† *These essays have been given new names in* Still Blue Beauty. *Names of essays marked* [1][2][3] *have been changed from their earlier appearance in* Wessex Memories. * *The 11 asterisked titles in* Christmas Lore *also have new names; see book for original names and sourcces – two-thirds were previously uncollected.*

Recent Llewelyn Powys essay collections

Headings indicate the following books:

BH EM	1934 *Earth Memories* (Bodley Head) ‡
WM	*Wessex Memories* (Powys Society, 2003, with sources) x
DDD	*Durdle Door to Dartmoor* (Sundial, 2007) a
SBB	*Still Blue Beauty* (Sundial, 2008) b
Yule	*Christmas Lore and Legend* (Sundial, 2010, with sources) y
Struggle	*A Struggle for Life* (Oneworld Classics, 2010, with sources) x
New EM	2015 *Earth Memories* (Little Toller) t

	BH EM	WM	DDD	SBB †	Yule *	Struggle	New EM
The Aebi Wood						x	
In Africa the Dark						x	
Some African Birds						x	
An Ancient French House	‡					x	
Athelney – In the Steps of King Arthur				b [Athelney, SE]			
A Blackamoor! A Blackamoor!						x	
Banks and Bank Clerks						x	
Barbarians						x	
Bats Head			a			x	t
Betty Cooper		x					
Birds of a Winter Garden		x					
The Blind Cow	‡						t
A Bronze Age Valleya							
A Butterfly Secret	‡						t
The Castle Park at East Lulworth			a				
Cerne Abbas			a				
Chainey Bottom		x					
Charity and Christmas Ballads					y [uncollected]		
The Chesil Beach		x					
A Childhood Christmas					y [A Somerset Chritmas, BD]		
Cliff Foxes						x	t
Christian Fingers						x	
Christmas in Dorset		x					
A Christmas Mystery					y [uncollected]		
Corfe Castle			a				
Dartmoor			a				t
A Defence of Cowardice						x	
Dorchester Lives				b [Dorchester Characters, DE]			
Dorset Ovens		x					
A Downland Burden [2]		x					
Durdle Door			a				
The Epicurean Vision						x	
Ernst Ludwig Kirchner						x	
Evergreens and Corn Sheaves					y [uncollected]		
Exmoor			a				t

† * *Many names changed from the originals —see notes on previous page.*

	BH EM	WM	DDD	SBB †	Yule *	Struggle	New EM
A Famous Wreck			a				
The Father of Dorset				b [St Ealdhelm, SE]			
The First Christmas Tree					y [uncollected]		
The First Fall of Snow					y [Hopkins]		t
A Foolish Razorbill [1]				b			t
The Fossil Forest			a				
Gay Leopards							t
A Grave in Dorset	‡						t
The Grave of William Barnes			a				
Green Corners of Dorset				b			
Guests of Grace		x					t
Gypsies at Weymouth Market		x					
Ham Hill			a				
Hardy's Monument			a				
Hedgecock Memories		x					
Hedgehogs		x					t
Herring Gulls			a				t
High Chaldon				b			
Kiboko						x	
Laurence Sterne						x	
A Leopard at Lake Elmenteit			a			x	
A Locust Memory	‡						t
Lodmoor		x		b			
Lyme Regis		x	a				
The Memory of one Day				b			t
Merry is the Word					y [uncollected]		
Mistletoe and Fir					y [uncollected]		
Montacute Hill				b			
Montacute House			a				t
Montacute Mills		x					
The Month of December					y [The Twelve Months]		
Natural Worship	‡					x	t
The Parson of Broadwindsor		x					
One of a Thousand [1]		x					
On the Other Side of the Quantocks	‡		a				t
Our Merry Ancestors					y [uncollected]		
Out of the Past	‡					x	t
An Owl and a Swallow	‡					x	t
The Partridge	‡					x	t
Pitt Pond							t
A Pond	‡			b		x	t
Portland			a				
Recollections of Thomas Hardy		x		b			
Reflections of a Dying Man						x	
A Richer Treasure				b [Fair Wild Flowers of Spring, uncoll.]			
The River Yeo			a				t
Robert Herrick		x					

	BH EM	WM	DDD	SBB †	Yule *	Struggle	New EM
A Royal Rebel				b [uncollected]			
St Aldhelm's Head			a				
The Sea! The Sea! The Sea!				b			t
Shaftesbury – Champion of the Poor				b [uncollected]			
The Shambles Fog-Horn	‡			b			
Ships and Stockings					y [uncollected]		
Signs of the Times							t
Somerset Names [3]				b			t
A Soul Window						x	
South Somerst Names [3]		x					
The Spirit of the Season					y [uncollected]		
Stalbridge Rectory			a				
Stinsford Churchyard			a				t
Stonehenge in Miniature				b [Poxwell Stone Circle, DE]			
A Struggle for Life	‡					x	t
Studland			a				
The Swannery Bell at Abbotsbury		x	a				
Of Tall Ships						x	
Town and Country					y [uncollected]		
True Happiness		x					
Two Country Writers		x					
The Village Shop				b			
Thomas Bewick						x	
A Visit by Moonlight [2]				b			t
The Wassail Bowl and New Year Customs					y [New Year 1934, DE, & BD]		
A West Countryman's Return							t
West Bottom							t
Weymouth Harbour			a				
Weymouth in the Year of the Three Eights						x	
Weymouth Memories				b [Childhood Memories, BD]			
When I Consider Thy Heaven						x	
The White Horse				b			
The White Nose			a				
A Wish for Freedom				b [A House of Correction, EM]			
Witcombe Bottom							t
Wookey Hole				b			
The Wordsworths in Dorset		x		b			
Worked Flints		x					
The World is New!				b [Inland, uncollceted]			
TOTALS		24	26	26	14	28	33

There are 123 names of essays, but three have been renamed as shewn by the bracketted figures [1], [2] and [3], reducing the total of essays to 120. This table shews 151 essays of which five are printed in 3 collections, including the three with bracketted figures, and 25 in two collections. The four collections issued in 2007–2010 (DDD, SBB, Yule, Struggle) contain 92 different essays with only two printed in more than one collection.