

Centenary Fever

There is much disagreement about where the academic study of English Literature began. A more northerly university glories on its website in being 'proud to house the oldest department of English Literature in the world, having first offered courses on "rhetoric and belles lettres" nearly 250 years ago'. One might politely wonder whether rhetoric and belles lettres are the undisputed Head of the Nile as far as the study of English Literature is concerned, and certainly the kind of English degree that was inaugurated in Cambridge aimed at something very different from the belles-lettres tradition. There are undoubtedly other claimants for the title of being first into the now jostling and well-rutted field of English Literature, and Raymond Williams may be right to proclaim that Cambridge was in fact 'one of the last British universities to make any proper provision for English studies'. Yet the kind of English that began to be taught at Cambridge may be thought to have a particularly potent cultural historical significance.

Whatever Cambridge English may be taken to mean, we have elected to celebrate the centenary of its beginning in 2019. It has to be admitted that there is a certain element of *fiat* in the choosing of this date, for there are others that might have been chosen. The first Professorship of English, the King Edward VII Chair, still regally existent and equally regally incumbent by David Trotter, was established as early as 1910. The English Tripos was first assembled in 1916, with two parts 'English Literature: Modern and Medieval' and 'Early Literature and History', though these were designed to be combined with a part from another Tripos. 1919 was the date at which English began to be taught as a complete and independent Tripos, even

if some of its most influential graduates and teachers would continue to come to it from other subjects. I.A. Richards, who was recruited to teach the new Tripos in 1919, brought a background in Moral Sciences, encompassing a mixture of philosophy and psychology; F.R. Leavis came to English from History and William Empson from Mathematics, while the Tragedy paper was intended to provide a transition into English for students who had done a part 1 in Classics. The first examinations in English Literature, which were taken in 1921, included the invitation to 'write short notes' on dramatists like Calderon, Voltaire, Kotzebue and Chekhov. Were we to hold off our centenary until 2026, we could please purists who would prefer to celebrate the establishment of a Tripos from which 'Early Literature and History', often known simply as 'Anglo-Saxon', had taken its leave, and in which signature exercises in 'practical criticism' appeared for the first time. But a centenary celebration in 2019 will allow us rather more amicably to celebrate the homecoming of Anglo-Saxon, with the establishment in 1969 under Dorothy Whitelock of the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, as part of the Faculty of English.

The beginnings of English at Cambridge were predictably fissile. One opponent of the establishment of the King Edward VII chair opined loftily that setting up a post specifically to encourage the study of English Literature 'on literary and critical rather than philological and linguistic lines', would be bound to mean that it would be 'simply a Professorship of English Literature dating from the beginning of the latter half of the nineteenth century, and the effect of that would be that it would be a Professorship of English fiction, and that of a light and comic character'. The proposal to establish

English studies at Oxford in the 1880s had been opposed on the similar grounds that it would simply encourage 'a lot of smart chatter about Shelley'. Perhaps the characteristic note of strenuous earnestness in Cambridge English is sustained by the determination to repugn such charges. With the sempiternal Tragedy paper still going strong, long in years, yet light and lissom still, nobody could ever accuse Cambridge English of lacking either historical reach or high seriousness. I will continue to hint at intervals that a special paper on Comedy could be just as serious an undertaking, but am prepared for these intimations to be taken as evidence of just the kind of light-mindedness against which Cambridge English has always been sternly on its guard. If Cambridge English has sometimes thought of itself as more worldly than other subjects in Cambridge, it may be in part because it proved attractive to the many students who returned to study from the First World War, most of them, as Basil Willey wrote, 'swift to distinguish the genuine from the counterfeit, fruitful study from sterile pedantry' and keen 'to avoid mere gossip, metaphysical vapourings and woolly mysticism'. Cambridge English, like a certain strain of Cambridge philosophy, has liked to conceive of itself as a fundamentally clear-eyed endeavour, aimed at piercing rather than propagating intellectual fog. Perhaps this is because climate and cognition have been intertwined for so long in Cambridge. Erasmus in 1511 wrote of the horrors of what was known as fen-fever, which he put down to the disgusting effluvia rising from the rushes with which floors were carpeted in these parts, which served as a kind of human cat-litter and were changed only once a year (whether they needed to be or not, to revive the venerable quip). Robert Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, was more

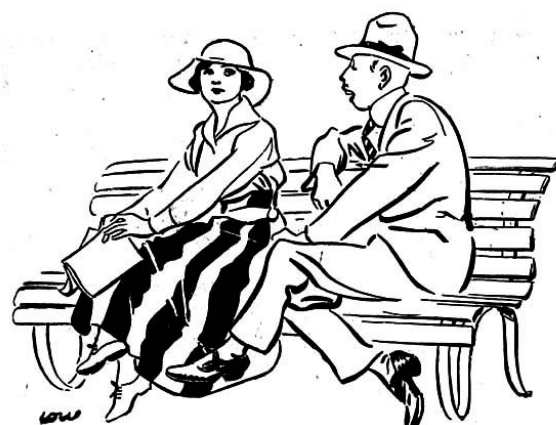
Contents

Centenary Fever Steven Connor	1
The Catch Mark Wormold	3
Below-Stairs Angela Leighton	5
Early Adopters Libby Tilley	5
Who Printed What? Hazel Wilkinson	6
Research and Radio Clare Walker Gore	7
Beckett at Kings Peter de Bolla	8
The Belcher Kasia Boddy	10
F.R. Leavis: A Homecoming Chris Joyce	12
Read Any Good Books Lately? Faculty Recommendations	13
The Pepys Library Jane Hughes	14
Faculty People Ewan Jones	15
Adrian Poole Hannah Doyle	16
The Cambridge Henry James Linda Bree	19
Your Say	20
What.Where.When.	20

If you have any comments or suggestions, or if you know of anyone who might like to receive this newsletter and is not on our mailing list, please contact:

Kasia Boddy
Newsletter Editor
Faculty of English
9 West Road
Cambridge CB3 9DP

Or email:
newsletter@english.cam.ac.uk



THE LITERARY GUIDE.
CHAPPIE: "Ah, I was gain' to tell you about a rather funny sort of—er—book, by some Johnny, about one thing and another—forget the name of it—but—er—p'raps you've read it?"

David Low, 'The Literary Guide', *The Bulletin*, 17 February 1921

positive, suggesting that East Anglia was a good location for a university, since the damp and clinging atmosphere would reinforce the retentive powers of the memory.

Arthur Quiller-Couch, the second King Edward VII Professor, was clear that this was to be a degree not just in English Literature but in 'English', aiming to 'turn out men provided with some useful principles for statesmanship, the better journalism, and some knowledge of what Englishmen have thought from time to time'. Ah yes, men. It is said that Quiller-Couch, always known as Q, and not, as far as I know, because he was ever recruited by MI5, would always begin his lectures by arranging his papers and calling his audience to order with the word: 'Gentlemen' – bizarrely enough, since his audience was predominantly and indeed, in certain periods, almost exclusively composed of women. Although women were not permitted to enrol for Cambridge BA degrees in English (or anything else) until 1948, it is nevertheless true, as Stefan Collini has observed, that 'the growth of English as an academic subject in the twentieth century was closely bound up with the increased educational opportunities for women'. For some considerable time, women have outnumbered men at undergraduate level by two to one, even though it is frustrating to see that those proportions are not maintained at graduate level and beyond.

We are currently planning a series of events to mark our centenary. Some

of these events will give us a chance to look back at the colourful, sometimes combustible, history of Cambridge English. We hope that alumni and ex-colleagues will wish to share with us their memories and experiences of studying and teaching English in Cambridge, and may also want to suggest to us ways in which we might mark the centenary and build beyond it. For we will also be looking forward. The expansion of undergraduate studies has produced a growing demand for graduate degrees and the English Faculty, along with the University in general, is ambitious about developing its MPhil and PhD numbers. In order to assist this, we would like to establish a number of Centenary Studentships. One might reckon that Cambridge English has been as influential for the ways in which it has been criticised and resisted, often by its own alumni (Williams, McLuhan, Eagleton, MacCabe), as for what it has inaugurated or secured. We want the students who are able to come to study here to continue this tradition of critical transformation. Most particularly, we would like 2019 to mark a new and richly productive beginning in our relations with our alumni. We would be delighted for you to get in touch and let us know your ideas for how that might be achieved.

Steven Connor

Chair of the Faculty
Grace 2 Professor of English and
Fellow of Peterhouse

The Catch

In 2010, Pembroke College hosted an international conference on Ted Hughes. As Pembroke's Director of Studies in English, I brought local knowledge to the conference organizing committee. I had of course grown up with Hughes's poetry at school, though had avoided him on exam syllabuses; 'The Thought-Fox' still padded and 'Pike' still lurked somewhere in my head, casting dark shadows. I'd refreshed my memory in 2001 when choosing the poems to feature in some beautiful stained glass windows devoted to Hughes's work we had commissioned for our College library. Among the poems I chose was 'That Morning', a transcendent and appropriately luminous celebration of the 'creatures of light' Hughes and his son Nicholas caught, and for a moment became, fishing in an Alaskan river teeming with salmon in 1980. I also knew of the marvellous, vivid letters Hughes had written to his elder brother Gerald from his final year as an undergraduate at Pembroke in 1953-4; extracts had since appeared in Christopher Reid's edition of Hughes' *Selected Letters* in 2007. But still I felt out of my depth.

Amongst the speakers was Jonathan Bate, who presented the first instalment of the research published the weekend I write as *Ted Hughes: The Unauthorised Life*. He spoke of the revelatory potential of a major archive of papers acquired by the British Library from Ted's widow Carol two years earlier and just made available to the public. It was already clear that Bate regarded its principal value as enabling a richer and fuller understanding of what his biography insists is 'the central fact' of Hughes' life and work: the death of his first wife Sylvia Plath in 1963, after less than seven years of marriage, and the way that her haunting of Ted shaped the subsequent arc of his writing, from the mythic *Crow* (1970) to the elegiac *Birthday Letters* (1998), on which Ted had been working, manuscripts in the British Library revealed, for decades. So powerful, so seductive, was that story that other less obviously literary material needed to be set aside.

Among these papers, I couldn't help but notice, were his fishing diaries. I had known Hughes had fished; as one literary editor told me, 'Everyone knows Ted liked fishing.' But listening hard to the various critical perspectives on Hughes' life and



Ted Hughes fishing in 1987. Photograph by Dermot Wilson

art, I was still struck by how cursory, almost dismissive, the references to fish and fishing were. As someone who'd fished since a boy, that felt wrong. I sensed an opportunity.

In the next months I snatched odd days in the British Library, to read these fishing diaries for myself. Most fishing diaries taste like smoked carp: grey, insipid, dry. But these lines sang: vivid, private narratives, often poetic, sometimes becoming verse, of trips with his son Nicholas, the Irish painter Barrie Cooke, which eclipsed most of the fishing writing I read for sheer informed thoughtfulness about the ethics as well as the equipment of fishing, as well as about the environmental crisis enveloping the rivers and lakes he loved. They were full of friends, too, names which hadn't featured much if at all in conventional literary critical readings of Hughes's poems, or indeed in any of the biographies. I found fishing letters, fishing postcards to the novelist Graham Swift, whose essay about 'Fishing with Ted', written and published within months of Hughes's death, had moved me. One letter, to his fishing friend the photographer Peter Keen, Hughes' partner on a lavishly illustrated collection *River*, first published in 1983, included a hand-drawn map of where to park to fish the Torridge. I proposed, rather cheekily, an essay on Hughes' fishing, for the conference volume.

And then I was given the chance to

write that essay in what turned out to be a glorious week on the banks of the Tamar in March 2012. I re-read *River*. It was a revelation to read it within driving range of the waters that flowed through it. I met one of Hughes' fishing friends, Ian Cook, who told me: 'Fishing was half Ted's life'. He showed me a stretch of the Exe where they'd fished, and then – because I made it clear I fished too – some of Ted's fishing lures with strange biro markings added to the standard latex, with curious 'whiskers' of knotted nylon still attached to their eye.

I drove back through North Devon countryside bathed in sunshine. I found myself at what I thought was a familiar cross-roads, turned right, parked at the Celtic cross Hughes had marked for Peter Keen; and discovered, talking to the farmer who owned the land by the Torridge, that, yes, the 'Charlie' mentioned in a poem about pollution in '1984, on the Tarka Trail', was the bailiff who still lived in the village; that, yes, there had been a corn farmer called 'Peter'. Here was Stump Pool, about which I'd read a poem the day before, and here Island Run where, I knew from the diaries, Hughes had had an epic battle with a salmon that got away. That had been in May 1983, and he had written of the marvellous sense of standing, casting, making contact, in the exact spot where a post-war celebrant of the famous Torridge fishery Lemon Gray had been pictured thirty-three years earlier, in

its heyday. In September 1993, he took Graham Swift and David Profumo to that same pool, and explained its currents and taking places. His name for the pool? 'Concrete'. The remains of a bridge Grey had constructed, and lost to a flood, in the 1950s, now provided salmon with stations, or 'lies', they occupied in their journey upstream to spawn. And from where they might be tempted to take a lure.

In the years since 2012, I've been hooked too. With *River* my companion, I've been fishing in Hughes' footsteps. Thanks to the generosity, first of Ted's widow Carol, then of the dozen of his fishing friends, 'specialist acquaintances' as he called them, I've been lucky enough to meet, I've been making a number of journeys west and north from Cambridge, to Hampshire, Devon, Ireland and Scotland into the poems, in *River* and throughout his corpus, that Hughes drew from the thousands of hours he spent fishing. And like him, I have 'waded, deepening', 'After Moonless Midnight', in search of Torridge sea-trout. I've caught my first salmon, on the Mole and on Lewis and in Connemara, in pools where he fished, and using flies he favoured. I've walked at dawn beside the upper Taw and the middle Torridge. I've drifted on Irish loughs, and, like him, failed to catch trout, during the intoxicating epiphany of dancing mayflies. And I've used these experiences to help me understand the origin and impetus, in places and in friendships as various as the fishing cultures he moved between, of magnificent poems that, amid the sheer copiousness of Hughes's corpus, literary criticism has so far barely touched. 'The Great Irish Pike', 'The Mayfly', 'Saint's Island', 'Be a Dry-Fly Purist', 'Stealing Trout on a May Morning', 'The Rival'.

These poems prove the essential connection, throughout his life, between fishing and Hughes's creative imagination. Fishing was his means of 'Learning to Think', as he explained to school children in the sixties in *Poetry in the Making*. And 'a man who cannot fish' was cognitively impoverished: whether an interviewer or acquaintance was 'a fisherman', I discovered, was a question he liked to ask them, visibly disappointed if they failed that test. Only fishermen, he wrote, really understood why Christ was figured as a fish.

He never grew out of this belief. His theory of the poetic self, as he applied it to one of his literary heroes T.S. Eliot in 1987, could be seen like 'a fish lying beneath a turbulent, swift but clear current — from a certain angle, at a certain light', an insight he had developed a couple of months earlier, staring into the depths of the river Dart with the fisherman's essential tools, polaroid sunglasses, which take the glare off water and allow you to see fish beneath. Their perspective, that clarity, had enabled him to devise an unconventional technique to catch a salmon. Many of his poems benefit from being read through polaroids. So, he thought, did Shakespeare: 'Everything depends on acquiring the essential polaroids that enable one to see through the surface glitter of the plot into the depth of the mythic plane.' When, in a damning review for the *Times* of *Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being* (1992) — the English Faculty library is still without a copy — Eric Griffiths quoted this with derision, Hughes's reaction to a critic who did not understand his vision or its source was immediate. He cut the sentence completely for the book's American edition.

Fishing was far more than just a hobby, a recreation. It was, as Auden said of poetry, 'a way of happening'. It was certainly not, as Bate suggests in his own pursuit of Hughes's masculinity, a substitute for other sexual 'follies'; and his claim that 'fishing could stand in for sex in Ted's later years' confirms him as 'a man who cannot fish'. Melvyn Bragg comes closer to the truth: fishing was, he writes, 'the longest and most constant of his love affairs.' But how long was it? Hughes began fishing, in the Rochdale canal, at the age of five; its water, he recalled in a poem forty years later, was his 'Paradise', and he was still fishing, in Scotland, weeks before his death.

Fishing was Hughes's way of making contact not just with nature but also with himself, and with aspects of his masculinity and spirituality that varied according to the species he pursued and the company he kept. Pike the predator; salmon the wanderer, always returning to spawn in its home waters; the sea-trout, shiest of fish by day, a tiger by night, that embodied a spiritual super-consciousness to which Hughes aspired. Poems originating from particular friendships, and from the beautiful, often remote

places I have visited these past years, catch these insights in forms of expression for which the binaries of the 'mythic' and the 'elegiac' invoked to explain the arc of his poetic career fall short. Instead, these poems keep drawing directly on, staring into, what he called, in 'The Bear', real fish-holding water's 'sliding concrete.' The finest of his poems about sea-trout, 'Strangers', written in 1980, attributes to them the 'bliss' and 'samadhi' that, ten years later, a long letter about the growth of his own religious beliefs credits with the wildness of all animal life, to which human subjectivity could approach only intermittently.

Hughes got closer to their condition, and for longer, than any writer I have ever read. So intense was his concentration, not just on the particular species of fish he was hunting but on the water they swam in, and shared with their prey or other predators — mayflies, dragonflies, kingfishers, cormorants, otters — that he reported losing the power to form words altogether for several hours after his return, exhilarated, refreshed, from the river. His diaries were one place where words came back, and heavily worked draft poems helped draw language up from these deep pre-verbal experiences: I began to see why, in *Poetry in the Making*, he had referred to 'Pike', poem as well as fish, as 'one of my prize catches'. He worked hard for them, on them. The early draft of his poem 'Go Fishing', now in Pembroke's own library, part of a wonderful and unusual collection of Hughes manuscripts, original art work, first editions and fishing tackle we have assembled since 2012, reveals the sheer intensity of thought that went into a poem which, in its final form, settles on an urgent imperative. Acting on that imperative, pursuing a form of genuinely practical criticism, has not just transformed my view of Hughes's work. It has become, in a phrase he used in his poem 'The Dark River', 'the prize of a lifetime.'

Mark Wormald

Mark's book *The Catch: Fishing for Ted Hughes* will be published by Little Toller Books in 2017.

Below-Stairs

Houseroom for things you forget or try to imagine:
a saw, two planks of plywood, jam jar of nails,
the shredded fibres of a doormat returning to hair,
a coal scuttle, pair of breathless bellows—
implements in their places – for love, for sorrow,
and something immeasurably near, nudging the hardware.

It's where you put things, see? Out of sight, on hold.
They wait, unredeemed, unclaimed for decades or more
where a windless chronic air lags and corrodes.
Is it in there, still? that ancient, reflex scare?
a dream of hiding, trapped under infinite stairs,
bolthole for never quite knowing no-one's there

except oneself, fooled in childhood fears?—
unless, even so (yird-hunger rooting for the cold
where last we found them, stored among signs and wonders,
holed among rusty tools, wincy spiders . . .)
somehow we'd know, in that indoor earthy closeness,
a sudden glory: their answering, lonely faces.

Childhood's pit of dares, daredevil's den,
cache of keeps and losses, teases, thrills—
a creep of outdoor damp in the flaking walls,
a broken concrete floor caking to soil.
Open the door a crack and you smell it still,
below-stairs air, too near, too close to home.

Angela Leighton

'Below-Stairs' is included in Angela's new volume, *Spills*, to be published by Carcanet in February 2016. It first appeared in *The New Yorker*, 5 Jan. 2015, p.24.

Early adopters

Library staff have been busy introducing new workshops designed to encourage students to learn good study habits and skills right at the beginning of their degree and to give them greater confidence in tackling their first year at Cambridge. Specifically we are focusing on getting them used to the relentless time pressures of Cambridge, opening up opportunities to make better use of their time; our 'How to read 10 books in an hour' session three weeks into Michaelmas Term has been especially well-received by students and supervisors alike. Faculty academics and supervisors are now teaching with Library staff and the combination (if I say so myself) is working exceptionally well.

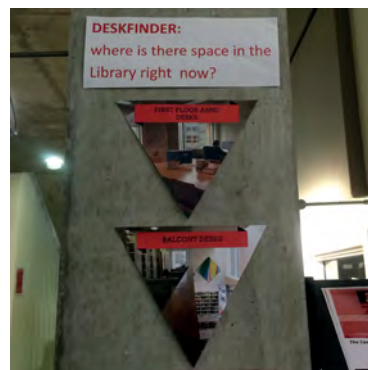
There are always new services being introduced at EFL and we're endeavouring to make use of student technology. So, last year we rolled out our text and collect service, using the library texting service for students to reserve books first thing in the morning to collect later. It will be no surprise if I say that the early adopters of this service are often from the outlier colleges and just for a change we feel that we are providing a service for the super-organised!

As part of a wider library service initiative, 'Futurelib', we are now currently trialling another innovative service 'Spacefinder': <https://spacefinder.lib.cam.ac.uk/>. Once again EFL was an early adopter of this idea with our very own local 'deskfinder' system in place last year. It proved to be extremely popular with the students. We're looking forward to being part of the bigger Spacefinder project this year.

We are keen to add value where we can in the Library Service and aim to help students to find the necessary resources and study space as quickly and efficiently as possible – as the new service 'bed in' this year we can reflect and evaluate and tweak – as we frequently do – to make sure that what we do does in fact fit in with what our student body needs.

Libby Tilley

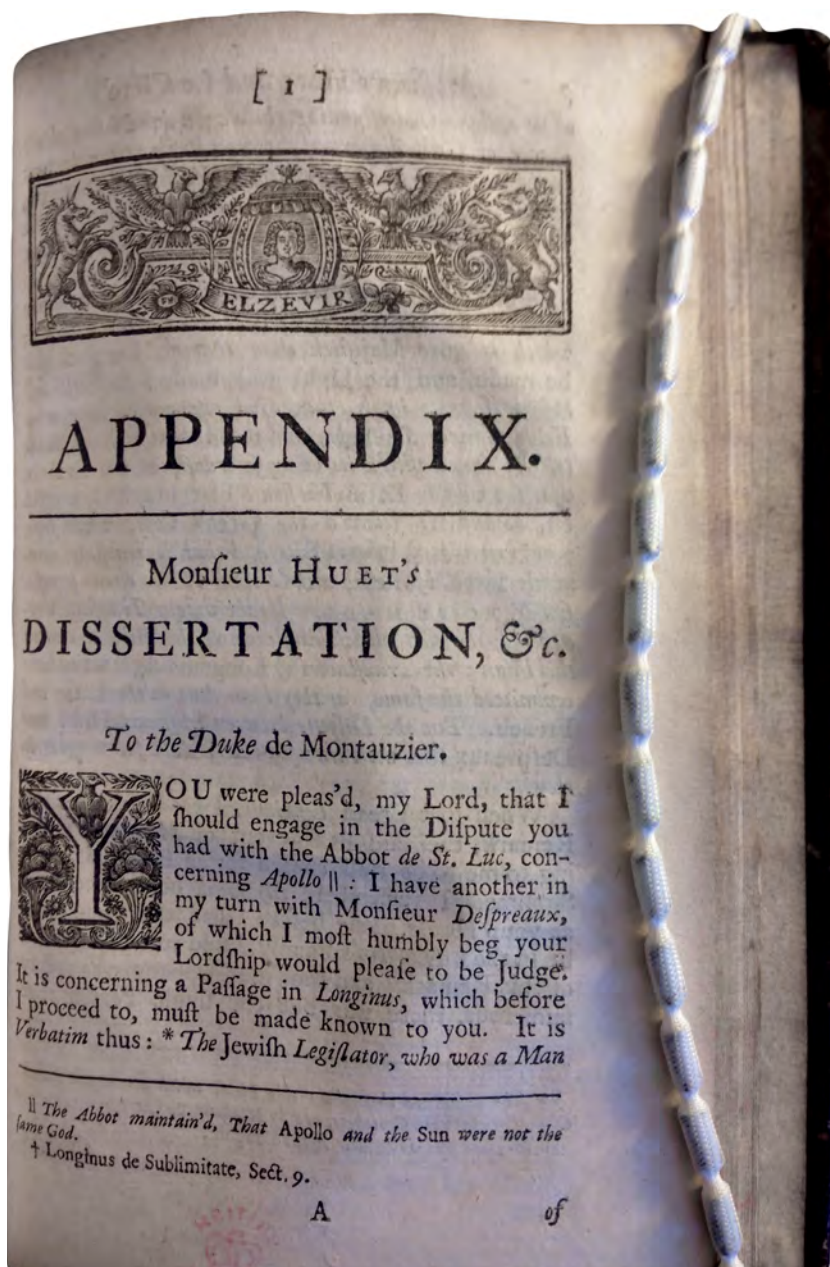
Faculty Librarian



Who Printed What?

On Christmas Eve 1724 an eighteen-year-old Benjamin Franklin arrived in London following a grueling Atlantic voyage. Franklin's adolescence had been a turbulent one: he had illegally absconded from an apprenticeship to his brother in Boston, and fled to Philadelphia where he found work in the one of the city's newly opened printing houses. Franklin was unimpressed by the quality of printing in Philadelphia, so he was easily persuaded by Governor William Keith to travel to London to acquire a printing press of his own, in order to open a rival business on his return to America. Keith had promised to supply Franklin with letters of introduction and credit, but on his arrival in London Franklin found no letters, and learned that the Governor was notoriously unreliable. Suddenly destitute, and with no prospect of preferment, Franklin abandoned his plan of buying a press and instead took a job as a compositor, first in the printing house of Samuel Palmer, near Smithfield, and then with John Watts near Drury Lane. Franklin worked in London for eighteen months, and considered staying and opening a swimming school (aquatic sports being one of his many interests). In his autobiography Franklin painted a vivid picture of life in eighteenth-century printing houses, describing his colleagues as 'great Guzzlers of Beer'. Franklin earned himself the nickname 'the Water American' for his abstemiousness, a familiarity he tolerated happily since he was making a tidy profit from lending money at interest to colleagues who were in debt to the ale house. Franklin's sobriety, he claimed, allowed him to complete more work for the press than any of his colleagues. Frustratingly for Franklin's biographers though, he never recorded what he printed during his eighteen months in London, despite tantalisingly claiming that he read the books that passed through his hands.

In 2014 an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fellowship enabled me to follow the trail of Benjamin Franklin's London printing to the Library Company of Philadelphia, which was founded by Franklin in 1730s. During the first year of my Research Fellowship at Fitzwilliam I used the research I had



A book printed at Samuel Palmer's press, with an ornament paying tribute to the Dutch printer Elzevir.

undertaken in Philadelphia to write an article for the *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, in which I identify 41 books that were printed at Palmer's and Watts's during Franklin's tenure. For the first time it is possible to speculate about what the young Franklin read during his first visit to England. The titles include an introduction to classical

literature, the natural philosophy of Robert Boyle, editions of the *Spectator*, pamphlets on religious morality, and a tract advocating dietary temperance. All of these slot neatly into known facts about Franklin's interests and his intellectual development. Other items on the list have suggested new avenues for research. For instance, it seems that Samuel Palmer was the printer to

a network of expatriate Philadelphian Quakers that included Franklin's former employer. This connection may explain why Franklin was able to find work in London so quickly when his friend James Ralph, who travelled with him from Philadelphia, struggled for months to find employment. Identifying the books printed on John Watts's premises during Franklin's stay has thrown up the surprising possibility that Franklin actually collaborated on the composition of a swashbuckling shipwreck narrative, which includes one of the earliest known descriptions of the city of Philadelphia. I am now producing a critical edition of this shipwreck narrative, *The Voyage of Richard Castelman*, in which I explore the Franklin connection at length. The edition is under contract with the New York publisher AMS Press.

My work on Franklin highlights the purpose of my longer term research project. This concerns the identification of unknown printers during the hand press period, and the applications of bibliographical research for literary and historical studies. During the hand press period, printers only occasionally put their name to the products of their presses. Of the 41 items printed during Franklin's residency, only seven were previously known to have been printed at Palmer's or Watts's. The remaining identifications were made on the evidence of printers' ornaments, the wood- or metal-cut blocks that were used to decorate printed books. Some ornaments were cast, but those that were cut by hand are unique, and they normally remained at one printing house for many years, allowing them to function as bibliographical fingerprints. Put simply, if the printer of 'Book A' is unknown, but it contains ornaments that also appear in 'Book B', the printer of which is known (because s/he is named on the title page, or left documentary evidence showing that they printed the book), it is likely that books A and B were produced by the same printer. Printers' ornaments have been used by bibliographers to identify unknown printers for decades. However, there were hundreds of ornaments in use in London alone in any given year: keeping track of their locations is a difficult task, and tracking down a specific ornament

is enormously time consuming. The process has been facilitated greatly by large-scale digitisation projects like *Early English Books Online*, *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*, and Google Books, but no function exists to enable ornaments to be digitally 'searched for': when in pursuit of an ornament, it is quicker to trawl through a PDF document than a book, but not by much. Hence the need for a database of ornaments that can be searched by image, by printer, or by descriptive terms (whether an ornament depicts, for example, an eagle, a cherub, a globe, a sunburst, etc.). In November 2014 Gale-Cengage, the publishers of *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*, announced a new initiative to make their whole database of 26 million page images available to research organisations on hard drives, for large scale data mining projects. This data was recently acquired by the Cambridge, and I will be using it in consultation with computer vision engineers to produce a database of printers' ornaments. The initial stages of this project are being funded by the Bibliographical Society's Katherine F. Pantzer Jr Research Fellowship.

This is a large-scale project that will take some time to complete, but once the database of ornaments is published online a host of new research questions will present themselves. It will be possible to undertake studies of the work of individual printers with greater speed and thoroughness than ever before. The example of Franklin's London printing demonstrates why it is useful and interesting to know what was printed where. This is not only true of the notable alumni of printing houses. My study of Franklin was the first stage in a book-length project on John Watts's printing house, from its establishment in Wild Court, Holborn in 1718 to its final years in the 1780s. Identification of the books printed there during these decades will tell a complex story that concerns the foundation of literary studies. Watts and his successors were the principal printers to the Tonsons, the family of publishers whom Keith Walker credited as the 'inventors' of English literature. The Tonsons and Watts bought the copyrights to Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton in the early

eighteenth century, and became the publishers to Addison, Dryden, Prior, Pope, Vanbrugh, and many others. With Dryden, they pioneered the first use of subscription publication for a work written in English (Dryden's translation of Virgil in 1697), and printed Nicholas Rowe's 1709 edition of Shakespeare, which legitimised the use of prefaces, notes, and other critical aides for vernacular, rather than classical, authors. Watts led the fashion for pocket-sized duodecimo editions of English classics, which brought Spenser, Milton *et al.* out of the private library and into the coffee house. The importance of these developments to the establishment of literary studies cannot be underestimated. Watts and the Tonsons remained at the forefront of scholarly publications well into the 1750s. Because of the problem of printer anonymity, Watts's role in the foundation of our discipline has never been seriously addressed, but a database of printers' ornaments will allow his output to be assessed for the first time. Like many high-end eighteenth-century books, Watts's publications are works of art in themselves. In addition to their utility as bibliographical evidence, ornaments are worthy of extended study. They have been largely absent from histories of graphic design and illustration, and several questions about their roles in the reading experience have never received satisfactory answers: do ornaments act as markers of genre? Do they signal a work's prestige? Did printers use ornaments as 'logos' that their customers would recognise and interpret? Modern scholarly editions, however accurate and comprehensive, have almost always erased the decorative features of early printed books. Digital technology is often seen as the enemy of print, but in the case of printers' ornaments it has the capacity to recover a neglected feature of the page, and to provide the key to a range of research questions in English literature and beyond.

Hazel Wilkinson

Junior Research Fellow, Fitzwilliam College

Research and Radio

My interest in an extraordinary Irishman called Arthur Macmurrrough Kavanagh was sparked by a chance remark made by my PhD supervisor, Alison Hennegan. We were discussing my work on Dinah Mulock Craik's little-known novel *A Noble Life* (1866), which tells the story of a disabled nobleman who devotes his life to good works on his estate in the Scottish Highlands. Alison mentioned that she thought there was a real aristocrat living at around the time the novel was published, who might have inspired Craik's fictional creation – but he wasn't Scottish, he was Irish, and rather than being paraplegic, he had been limbless. I was intrigued. Several unsuccessful Google searches later, I was coming to the conclusion that no such person had existed. Then I happened upon the right combination of phrases, and a Wikipedia article revealed that the Right Honourable Arthur Macmurrrough Kavanagh, born without arms and legs, had indeed been a philanthropic landlord in mid-Victorian Ireland. More than that, he had been an MP, travelled the world, and made a name for himself as a hunter and daredevil rider. Moreover, there was a biography written by his cousin, Sarah Steele, languishing in the Rare Books room for someone to discover.

The more I learned about Arthur Kavanagh, the more incredible his life seemed. He was a fourth son, never expected to inherit – or indeed to do anything much, born as he was with stumps for arms and legs, unable to walk, to follow his brothers to school, or to keep up the family tradition for younger sons and join the navy. Yet he went on to live an outrageously eventful and adventurous life. The travels which his biographer laconically describes as having 'been to him...an education and discipline during the years which other young fellows spend at college' consisted of an extraordinarily dangerous attempt to ride overland from Scandinavia to India via Russia and Persia, during which his brother and tutor died, and which terminated in his taking a position as a dispatch-rider for the Indian army. A crack shot, an exceptional rider, and a keen huntsman, Arthur Kavanagh could not be more unlike the fictional character I thought he might have inspired. Disabled men in Victorian novels – including *A Noble Life* – tend to be morally inspiring but moribund figures, passively shut out from public life, and most definitely outside the marriage



Susan Hampshire as Madeline Neroni in the 1982 BBC adaptation of *Barchester Towers*

plot. Arthur Kavanagh, on the other hand, married a distant cousin, and they had seven children.

His first biographer clearly found the gulf between what men like him were *supposed* to do and what he actually did extremely difficult to bridge; Steele's biography erases Arthur's physicality to an amazing extent, contriving to refer to his physical difference only once or twice in the course of hundreds of pages. I was captivated by the idea that in the written lives of men like Arthur Kavanagh, the contradictions between how disabled people were imagined and how they actually lived would be drawn out. Excitedly musing on the possibilities for further research, I decided that I had found my next project. In the years since, I have been collecting material for what I've come to think of 'the post-PhD project' on biographies and autobiographies of disabled people in the nineteenth century. Arthur Kavanagh has been joined by two more disabled Victorians who left fascinating 'lives' behind them: the blind MP Henry Fawcett, and the deaf

political economist, novelist and journalist Harriet Martineau.

Although I had my thesis to be getting on with, the possibilities of my next project bubbled away at the back of my mind, and when the BBC advertised the opportunity for early career researchers to make a radio programme as part of their annual 'New Generation Thinkers' competition, I immediately thought of Arthur Kavanagh. I applied to the scheme just a few days before it closed. The news that I had been shortlisted came when I was deep in the throes of writing up my PhD, and I was inclined to regard the prospect of a finalists' workshop in London simply as a welcome distraction from my imminent submission deadline. But a few weeks later, having pitched my proposal to a team of producers, I learned that I was one of the lucky ones, and in July – now awaiting my viva, and again glad to be distracted – I found myself at Broadcasting House once more, this time to record a short piece for Radio 3's 'Free Thinking'.

Deciding to save Arthur and his

‘Something out there where’: Samuel Beckett in dialogue with King’s College Chapel

biography for the longer piece I would be recording in November, I had chosen to talk about *Barchester Towers* and its fabulous femme fatale invalid, Madeline Neroni. My producer had worked with me beforehand to simplify my script, encouraging me to use shorter sentences and to drop jargon words I had hardly noticed I was using. This turned out to be easy part. I soon discovered that making a recording for the radio is significantly more difficult than giving a paper at a conference, principally because there is no audience from which to gauge a reaction. At first, I felt terribly self-conscious speaking to an empty studio, as the microphone picked up the rustle of my script, and I had to start again every time I hesitated or background noise interfered. A few takes in, however, I was beginning to feel more confident; speaking slowly enough for the radio turns out to be more a matter of practice than anything else, and – reassuring discovery! – even professionals record several takes for pre-recorded pieces. By the time I got round to recording a question-and-answer session with the presenter, I was enjoying myself, and even managed to forget about my forthcoming viva while nosying round the Radio 3 studios.

Several months later (and with my viva behind me), I’m now looking forward to recording a short lecture in front of a live audience at the Free Thinking Festival in Gateshead in November, which will later be broadcast as a Radio 3 ‘Essay’. I’m keeping my fingers crossed that the audience will be as interested in Arthur Kavanagh as I am. However the next recording goes, the whole experience has been great fun, and given me a fascinating insight into how radio programmes are made. I hope to gain a similar insight into the documentary-making process when we make a short film about my work – although it remains to be seen whether I will be successful in persuading the BBC that it is essential to take me to Ireland to film on location!

Clare Walker Gore

Clare has recently completed a PhD on disability in the nineteenth-century novel. You can listen to her broadcast on *Barchester Towers*: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b060zmjs>

From November 2nd until November 6th King’s College Chapel hosted a remarkable multi-media event centred on the projections of photographs taken by the renowned theatre photographer John Haynes. John was the photographer at the Royal Court in London during the heyday of the great Beckett productions of, among others, *Not I*, *Footfalls*, and *That Time* which opened with the actors Billie Whitelaw and Patrick Magee in the principal parts. John also took some of the iconic portraits of Beckett himself.

The event was curated by Peter de Bolla and Christopher Prendergast (Emeritus Professor of French) and its aim was to create a dialogue between the photographs, Beckett’s work and the spaces of the King’s College Chapel. Stone, space, light, wood, and glass were set in conversation with very large scale projections of photographs within the interior of the building. At the same time a complex audio environment of treated sounds, created by Peter de Bolla, provided a soundscape including among other things birdsong, ringing bells, snatches of Beckett’s writing, the voice of James Joyce, the music of Schubert, the King’s College choir, and the sound of footsteps marching along the length of the chapel. Prompted by this complex multi-media environment, the audience was both invited and encouraged to speculate on how and why Beckett’s humorous and stoic vision of humanity provides us with resources for thinking about – understanding – what it is to be human. Placed within the context of the magnificent architecture of the chapel, John Haynes’s photographs and the newly commissioned work by the British artist David Ward also set in motion varied and trenchant dialogues with Beckett’s world.

The event lasted one hour, ordered through nine sections, each signalled by the sound of bell, echoing the nine steps that feature in *Footfalls* – once again making reference to Beckett’s foregrounding of the spaces and conventions of the standard theatrical performance. Light also features very strongly in Beckett’s drama – often it almost seems to torment the characters we see on stage, prompting them into performance and speech. In ‘*Something out there where*’ light falls onto the many surfaces of the Chapel, casting shadow and illuminating textures that are rarely, if ever, perceived under normal daylight conditions. At one point in the event total darkness enfolds the audience as the contemporary composer and pianist John Tilbury performs



a segment of his work based on Beckett’s late text *Stirrings Still*. At another multiple projections of an extract from Michael Roth’s video work based on another Beckett late text, *Imagination Dead Imagine*, fill the entire ante-chapel with sound and image, text and voice.

As the ninth segment comes to its close the text of Beckett’s remarkable and remarkably moving poem *St Lô* is both heard, read by current King’s undergraduate Olivia Bowman, and seen on the west end of the building. This poem, perhaps supremely in Beckett’s poetic writing, captures the sense of resilience we find everywhere in his writing. In the face of great odds and the destructive cruelty that man is capable of, the words of *St Lô* resonate as the audience leaves the chapel into the cold November air of the college front court.

Peter de Bolla

Peter’s book *The Architecture of Concepts: The Historical Formation of Human Rights* (2014) won the 2015 Robert Lowry Patten Award, awarded by the journal *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* for the most outstanding recent contribution to British literary studies of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century.

The Belcher

‘when you dressing, you dressing’
Sam Selvon,
The Lonely Londoners

‘Clothes are powerful things’, observed George Orwell, as he donned his tramp’s costume of ‘a coat, once dark brown, a pair of black dungaree trousers, a scarf and a cloth cap’ in *Down and Out in Paris and London*: ‘It gives one a very strange feeling to be wearing such clothes.’

The ability of clothes to evoke everything from status to mood is what makes them so useful to writers. What would Dickens’s Dolly Varden be without her ‘cherry-coloured ribbons’? Can we imagine a Jean Rhys heroine who doesn’t long for ‘a new black dress’? In short, as Jeeves tells Bertie Wooster, ‘there is no time, sir, at which ties do not matter’.

This was equally, or perhaps especially, true in Regency London, when ‘neckclothiana’ was all the range and satirical poems were addressed to

Neckcloths, a fruitful and important theme,
Some God assist us, while we try our powers
Of inspiration; may we catch a gleam,
While we arrange Cravats
synoptic’lly!

A particular favourite was named for the prize fighter Jem Belcher, widely considered to be ‘a monster, a perfect ruffian’. In his 1805 ‘Defence of Boxing’, and attack on ‘effiminacy’, Cobbett offered a corrective. There was, William Cobbett insisted, ‘scarcely a female Saint, perhaps, who would not, in her way to the conventicle, or even during the snuffling there to be heard, take a peep at him from beneath her hood. Can as much be said by any one of those noblemen and gentlemen who have been spending the best years of their lives in dancing by night and playing cricket by day?’

And yet for all that Belcher exposed himself ‘voluntarily to so much danger’, he remained (in Pierce Egan’s phrase) ‘genteel and remarkably placid in his behaviour’. Moreover, he was a full-fledged dandy, with a ‘prepossessing appearance’. Belcher’s immaculate dark clothes (much in the manner of Beau Brummell) were set off by a spotted neckcloth, usually tied in ‘horse collar’ or ‘mail coach’ style, as described by *Neckclothiana*:



Benjamin Marshall, *Jem Belcher and his dog Trusty* (1803), Tate

The Mail Coach or Waterfall, is made by tying it with a single knot, and then bringing one of the ends over, so as completely to hide the knot, and spreading it out, and turning it down in the waistcoat. The neck-cloth ought to be very large to make this Tie properly – It is worn by all stage-coachmen, guards, the swells of the fancy, and ruffians. To be quite the thing, there should be no starch, or at least very *little* in it –

The Horse Collar has become, from some unaccountable reason, very

universal. I can only attribute it to the inability of its wearers to make any other. It is certainly the worst and most vulgar, and I should not have given it a place in these pages were it not for the purpose of cautioning my readers, from ever wearing it – It has the appearance of a great half-moon, or horse collar – I sincerely hope it will soon be dropped entirely *nam super omnes vitandum est*.

Soon every dandy sported a ‘belcher’; and it could even, on occasion, prove useful. After the Battle of Waterloo,



Unknown artist, *Jem Belcher*, (c. 1800), National Portrait Gallery

Captain Gronow used his to stop up a musket-ball hole in his shako then filled it with water to give to the wounded.

But like all fashions, the belcher quickly lost its cachet – and that’s when writers of historical novels became interested. Bill Sikes, the dandyish villain of Dickens’s *Oliver Twist* (1837-9), wears ‘a dirty belcher handkerchief round his neck, with the long frayed ends of which, he smeared the foam from the beer as he spoke’, while Dick Swiveller’s fantasy of life as a convict, in *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841), involves a leg iron ‘restrained from chafing . . . [his] ankle by a twisted

belcher handkerchief.’ The eponymous hero of Thackeray’s *Barry Lyndon* (1844) complains that he can no longer tell the difference between ‘my lord and his groom’ since ‘every man has the same coachman-like look in his belcher and caped coat’. But that was precisely the point. Jem Belcher had worn a scarf to look smart; his followers, by contrast, were cheerfully slumming.

Class cross-dressing did not appeal to Victorian tastes, except, for some, nostalgically. As early as 1839, a writer in the *Quarterly Review* was crediting the ‘new-born power of steam’ for

NECKCLOTHITANIA



Pub^d by T. F. Stockdale. 42, Pall Mall. 1st Sept^r 1818.

George Cruickshank’s illustrations for the frontispiece of *Neckclothitania or Tietania, being an essay on Starchers, by One of the Cloth* (1818).

civilising, or standardising, behaviour and dress. Although the railway companies kept passengers in their separate class compartments, he noted, the train had become a place where the nation could ‘see without flattery, its own faults clearly reflected in its neighbour’s mirror’. The result, he thought, was an ‘immense improvement’ in manners ranging from a decline in ‘hard-drinking’ and ‘bull-baits’ to the passing of the Belcher. It was no longer quite right for gentlemen ‘to dress, nod, spit and meet each other like stage-coach-men’. Or, indeed, like prize-fighters.

Kasia Boddy

F. R. Leavis: A Homecoming

The Leavis Conference at Downing College (24th-25th September) saw the formal opening of a new Leavis Room in honour of the distinguished literary critic and former Fellow. The room is used on a daily basis for supervisions, and contains a small archival display about Leavis, including a number of letters to former students which are held in the college archive. Honorary Fellow Howard Jacobson performed the opening ceremony.

Jacobson said he had bought *Revaluation* when he was 17 on the recommendation of his school teacher. He had been struck by its dedication: To Downing College. 'How wonderful that place must be, I thought, to merit a dedication. I imagined a New Atlantis, and vowed to go there if they'd take me.' They did take him and he sat at the feet of that 'most passionate of teachers – generous and enlightened, dignified and splendid', Frank Raymond Leavis.

'The loyalty Leavis felt to the college, to the *idea* of the college, and to us Downing men wasn't illusory,' Jacobson said, 'And we were bound in loyalty to him. I'd be surprised if there are any of us who don't remember his seminars with fondness and gratitude - yes, but with something more as well. To say he inspired us doesn't do full justice to the experience: on the best mornings he illuminated us. For years, Downing and Leavis were synonymous. "Ah, you read English at Downing!" people would say, as though that explained everything. Often they said it with awe. At other times with horror. To some, the sight of a person who'd read English at Downing was what a cross and a clove of garlic was to a vampire. "Pope has had bad luck," Leavis wrote. Leavis too has had bad luck. Stuff happened at Downing. There was a commotion in the wind. Frights, changes, horrors. And in the wider world, the way Leavis read became no longer the way to read. More and more the horrified outnumbered the awed. His work was derided, his reputation declined. There was a generation of students that hadn't heard of him. But, as David Ellis says in his fine *Memoirs of a Leavisite*, yesterday's terms of abuse become today's badges of honour. People who didn't live through any of the Leavis controversies are finding him for themselves. Whether



Professor Geoffrey Grimmatt, Master of Downing, with Howard Jacobson.

the teaching of English will ever again be what Leavis wanted it to be – and he himself made it – I doubt. But some of the awe is returning. "Ah, you went to Downing, did you? What was it like?" Now we have a Leavis Society, and Downing College is once again mindful, and proud, of its distinguished association with Leavis.'

The conference itself, on 'Leavis and Eliot as Literary and Cultural Critics', organised in conjunction with the T. S. Eliot Society (UK), drew a large audience, including senior students from Leavis's old school, the Perse. Speakers included Roger Scruton, Stefan Collini, David Ellis, Michael Bell, Jeremy Tambling, Jim McCue, Paul Standish (giving the British Wittgenstein Society Lecture) and Michael Aeschliman. Their topics ranged widely: Leavis's notes in the analysis of poetry and his commentaries on Eliot's later poems; his affinities with the later Wittgenstein in their conceptions of language; 'Eliot, Leavis and History' and the 'dissociation of sensibility'; 'Eliot's Modernism'; comparisons with Eliot and C. S. Lewis in their religious outlooks and their stance against scientism; 'Leavis, Eliot and Dante'. Jim

McCue spoke on the new edition of Eliot's *Collected Poems* (co-edited with Christopher Ricks) during a session that included recordings of Eliot and Leavis reading some of the poems.

The conference also heard several excellent papers given by Chinese scholars, part of a developing connection with China fostered by the Leavis Society and taken forward in 2011 by the *Cambridge Quarterly* colloquium on 'Cambridge English and China'. As a result of this work, a major international conference will be held next year at Tsinghua University in Beijing, 'Leavis beyond Cambridge': 15-17 September 2016.

Chris Joyce

For further details, please contact Dr Chris Joyce: chris.joyce.1969@pem.cam.ac.uk or the organiser, Li Cao: licaoc@mail.tsinghua.edu.cn. Li Cao is Professor of English and Director of the Centre for the Study of European and American Literatures at Tsinghua University and the author of the forthcoming book, *Cambridge Critics: Their Influence and Significance in China*. The Leavis Society website is at: <http://leavissociety.com>.

Read Any Good Books Lately?

Members of the English Faculty recommend books, and other things, that they've recently enjoyed.

In the spirit of rediscovering picture books, I've been dipping these last few weeks into Tom Lubbock's *Great Works: 50 Paintings Explored*, a treasury of prose vignettes that first appeared in the *Independent*. Lubbock, who died in January 2011, had an eye for startling analogies, and while his flights of fancy frequently spiral into absurdity, they bear re-reading. Who else would think to pair a still life by Francisco de Zurbarán with the glass of milk from Hitchcock's *Suspicion*? The film director has never looked more like a renaissance man.

Edward Allen

Junior Research Fellow at Jesus College

I have to confess that, up until last Spring, I'd remained stuck for many years in a pretty jaundiced view of *Romeo and Juliet*. While I admired the virtuosic achievements of Shakespeare's dramatic verse, it seemed a very long time since I'd actually felt moved by a performance of the play itself. But, in April 2015, I was lucky enough to see a stunning new production in one of my favourite small theatres, the Tobacco Factory in Bristol, directed by Polina Kalinina. In this intimate theatrical space one could not help but be assailed by the ferocity of the production's uncompromisingly-staged gang violence. Any prejudices I might have had about this being a piece whose emotional appeal could only touch the young were utterly dispelled. As a parent of young teenagers, this production led me palpably to experience the tragic force of the abuses visited upon the young by their elders be they domineering parents or thoughtless confidants. Above all the brilliant performances of Daisy Whalley as Juliet and Paapa Essiedu as Romeo conjured a heart-wrenching sense of near-children embarking on an exciting game and finding themselves unwontedly plunged into an inescapable nightmare.

Hero Chalmers

Fellow of Fitzwilliam College and Director of Studies of English (Part 1)

I paid two visits, once to view and once to sketch, Tate Britain's recent re-appraisal of Barbara Hepworth's work. The exhibition focused on her contribution not just the well-



Image, second from top: Paapa Essiedu and Daisy Whalley in *Romeo and Juliet* Photo: Craig Fuller

documented St Ives School but also to the international modernist movement of the 1930s onwards. A room dedicated to Hepworth's intimate and fruitful creative relationship with Ben Nicholson was a highlight. My favourite works, however, were the fabulous carved half-ton logs of Kenyan guarea in which she explored the opening up of sculpture by creating forms within forms, their interiors painted modernist white and sometimes strung with cord, whilst the patina of the exteriors were like burnished conkers or a well-worn polished antique leather sofa covered in hairline cracks. The Tate have also taken the opportunity of displaying upstairs

a fine selection of work by her fellow contemporary sculptors such as Henry Moore, Lynn Chadwick and Reg Butler as well as St Ives painters such as Peter Lanyon, Bryan Wynter and Wilhemina Barns Graham.

Geoff Shipp

Senior Library Assistant at the English Faculty Library

My recommendation isn't a book, film or play, but a blog: BLDGBLOG, or Buildingblog as it's also known. Its ostensible subjects are architecture, landscape, urbanism, futurism and technology, but a better sense of its strangeness and range might be gained from the titles of a few recent posts: 'Typographic Forests and Other Translations', 'Horse Skull Disco', 'Culinary Air Pollution' and 'Gyrosopolis'. Founded by Geoff Manaugh a decade ago, it's become a widely read, hugely influential site. It used to be the home-page on my browser – but then too many mornings when I should have been writing or administering, I spent reading Manaugh instead, so now I only open it up when I know I've got an hour to spend in its fascinating labyrinths.

Robert Macfarlane

Senior Lecturer in Post WW-II Writing in English and Fellow of Emmanuel College

The centenary celebrations of the Great War have delivered a bumper bonus package in the shape of the first ever scholarly edition of Edmund Blunden's remarkable memoir of life in the trenches, *Undertones of War* (1928). At £30, the new Oxford University Press edition is good value. The editor, John Greening, has assembled a wealth of fascinating additional material, and some powerfully evocative illustrations. Blunden's great gift, as a soldier and a memoirist, as a survivor, as a self-confessed lucky fellow, was simply to keep going. An incurable optimism suffuses the descriptions of the horrors of war, without in any way diminishing their starkness.

David Trotter

King Edward VII Professor of English

News from The Pepys Library and Historic Collections



THE PEPYS LIBRARY AND THE HISTORIC COLLECTIONS OF MAGDALENE COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE



Pepys's Library, as famous in his own day as it is now, was bequeathed by Cambridge alumnus Samuel Pepys to Magdalene, the college he had attended in the 1650s. It finally arrived in 1724 to be housed in a handsome new building. A remarkable collection of some 3000 items, the Library includes medieval manuscripts and early printed books by Caxton and Wynkyn de Worde; a naval collection, reflecting Pepys's role as Secretary to the Admiralty; works by Pepys's contemporaries and members of the Royal Society, including Newton's *Principia Mathematica*; and an unrivalled array of ephemera - ballads, letters, playbills and invitations.

Alongside the Pepys Library, Magdalene has an impressive historic collection, housed in the beautiful Old Library rooms. Evolving from a series of major benefactions to the College across nearly 500 years, combined with the books routinely acquired for the use of students and scholars in the past, the Old Library contains medieval manuscripts, incunabula, prints and papers, as well as the ancient records of the College.

Jane Hughes

[Fellow in English at Magdalene College and Pepys Librarian](#)

[In *The Pepys Library and the Historic Collections of Magdalene College Cambridge* \(Scala Press\), Jane recounts the history and development of the collections and celebrates some of the highlights in extended descriptions and with specially commissioned photography.](#)

Faculty Research Online

While the time-honoured traditions of research collaboration via seminars, conferences and coffee-fuelled conversation continue to flourish, the Faculty is also increasingly exploring ways of bringing people and ideas together online. Visit the newly designed Research Page and find out what's happening at the Centre for Material Texts or in the research groups for American Literature, Contemporaries,

Eighteenth-Century and Romantic Studies, Literature-Technology-Media, Medieval Studies, Nineteenth-Century Studies and Renaissance Studies.

The Research Page also houses particular research projects: Spencer Online, The Biblioteca Hernandina and the Early Modern Book World, Crossroads of Knowledge, the Centre for John Clare Studies (featured in the 2014 edition of *9 West Road*) and Raphael Lyne's blog 'What

Literature Knows About Your Brain', a series of regular posts discussing connections between literary criticism and cognitive science. 'It's focused on how new ideas in psychology can help us think differently about literature,' Raphael says, 'but also on how literature is full of experiments and hypotheses about the human mind, and we need to tell scientists about these.'

www.english.cam.ac.uk/research

Faculty People

Professor Adrian Poole retired from the Faculty in September. Hannah Doyle, who has just completed the MPhil in American Literature and whose dissertation was supervised by Adrian, discusses his career below.

As we were going to press, the death of Lisa Jardine was announced. The author of many books and a true public intellectual, Professor Jardine is an alumna of Newnham College. After taking Part 1 Mathematics, she switched to English for Part 2 and went on to complete a PhD on 'Francis Bacon: Discovery and the Art of Discourse' (published by CUP in 1974). Jean Gooder, who taught her at Newnham, remembers her as 'a powerhouse of energy', 'an extraordinary intellect' and 'amazingly warm'.

Happier news includes the appointment to the Faculty of Ewan Jones as Lecturer in Nineteenth-Century Literature and of Nicolette Zeeman as Professor of Medieval and Renaissance Literature.

To find out what other members of the Faculty have been doing this year, see www.english.cam.ac.uk/people

EWAN JONES

Lecturer in Nineteenth-Century Literature
Fellow of Downing College and Director of Studies (Part II)

Having first come to Cambridge in 2000 as an undergraduate at King's College, I was very happy to join the Faculty in October, and to be able to give something back to an institution that has so shaped my own patterns of thought. Upon completing my undergraduate degree, I worked as a journalist for four years, before the urge to return became too strong to resist; I subsequently completed my MPhil and PhD, again at King's, before joining Trinity Hall as Thole Research Fellow. Somewhere in all this, I published my first monograph, *Coleridge's Philosophy of Poetic Form* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

I'm presently working on three very different (yet to my mind importantly interconnected) projects. The first takes the form of a second monograph, provisionally entitled *The Turn of Rhythm*. In it I want to claim firstly, that the concept of rhythm is surprisingly peripheral at the turn of the nineteenth century; and secondly, that its striking subsequent rise to prominence is to a large extent facilitated by the practice and theorisation of poetry. I aim to chart a number of concrete historical instances



One of Tennyson's manuscripts

where verse rhythm impinges upon discourses as varied as speech therapy, idealist philosophy and the science of thermodynamics, which all then further develop what they understand by rhythm in particular ways. One of my large motivations in so doing is to combine a

minute attention to literary detail (which has historically characterised so much of the finest work in English at Cambridge) with larger questions that relate to concept formation and disciplinary history.

The second project upon which I'm presently engaged is The Concept Lab, an

interdisciplinary undertaking based at the Centre for Digital Knowledge at CRASSH. The Concept Lab brings together historians, literature scholars and cognitive scientists from both sides of the Atlantic, in order to develop and manipulate computational resources that enable new ways of reading the ever-growing digital archive. Using large datasets such as Eighteenth-Century Collections Online (ECCO), we intend to demonstrate the ways in which concepts emerge, mutate, constellate and decay across history – by ‘concept’ we don’t simply mean individual words, but rather the complex cognitive structures in which lexical items are embedded. One of the most rewarding elements of my involvement in this project has been the opportunity to familiarise myself with a number of fields (ranging from corpus linguistics to the digital humanities more generally) that are very remote from my own disciplinary training, and which are presently undergoing rapid and exciting change.

Finally, I’m also working on a long-term project to digitise a significant proportion of manuscript materials relating to Alfred Lord Tennyson. Those archival holdings are presently dispersed across a range of institutions, which include the Tennyson Research Centre in Lincoln, the Wren Library, and several major libraries in the US. The first goal for this project is, therefore, to make high-quality digitisations readily available in one central platform: in this case, the Cambridge Digital Library, which produces amazingly high-quality scans. But Tennyson’s manuscripts also enable scholars to reconsider the possibilities of the digital repository more broadly, and in particular the prospective links between literature and other media, such as visual art and music. The Moxon edition of Tennyson’s *Poems* (1857), with its woodcut illustrations by several prominent pre-Raphaelite artists, offers but one instance of the interpenetration of literary and visual art; very many of Tennyson’s lyric poems were, moreover, subject to musical adaptations of various kinds, from the immensely popular Victorian parlour songs to the settings for piano composed by the poet’s own wife, Emily. Insofar as there is access to Tennyson’s compositional process, however, it tends to isolate the literary work from these other relevant artforms. I hope to present Tennyson’s manuscripts in a manner that enables users to grasp their complex material nature (many of the notebooks feature illustrations and artfully torn pages),

and to toggle between various drafts of a poem and its subsequent musical settings.

It would be remiss of me to wax lyrical about my research interests without saying just how much I’m also looking forward to providing Faculty teaching in the coming years. None of the work that I’ve described above could have taken its current form without the unique possibilities of the Cambridge supervision system, which I’ve been lucky enough to experience both as student and teacher. I’m very excited to commence lecturing, and to attempt to communicate my passion for nineteenth-century literature (and much besides). I retain the conviction that the forms of attention that English at Cambridge encourages are as relevant today as they have ever been.

Adrian Poole



Though Adrian Poole will continue at Trinity College as Admission Tutor, his work for the English Faculty is done. Many see this as the loss of ‘one of *the* great teachers’ of English: a ‘Faculty without Adrian Poole can scarcely be imagined,’ Simon James (Durham) lamented in a recent email.

Having arrived at Trinity in 1967 on a Classics Scholarship, he never planned to remain in Cambridge this long, only proceeding as the way opened, with Cambridge refusing to let go of him. But perhaps it matters little where a person spent his career when he has ventured so far in his thought. Appointed Professor in 2005, he also held a series of challenging

administrative roles, including Chair of the Faculty and Chair of the School of Arts and Humanities.

Poole speaks of his own background with reticence. Few know that he comes from a highly acclaimed musical family (‘of whom I am the least musical’). His mother, Hester Dickson, is a prominent pianist and teacher, honoured last year with an MBE. His father, a lawyer, died when he was only four; his father’s father, Major-General Leo Poole, was director of pathology in the War Office under Churchill. Unearthed as ‘one of the most delicate secrets of the Second World War’ in a 1980 article in *The Guardian*, Major Poole’s decision to divert scarce supplies of penicillin to soldiers suffering from gonorrhoea in North Africa proved crucial for the successful invasion of Sicily. ‘And therefore my grandfather won the war!’ he laughed.

‘An hwat’s hrang wi’ buohnie Scootland?’ he called across a coach full of giddy students returning from their trip to Stratford, remembers Juliet Dusinberre, in response to a student’s quip. A Scotsman (with ‘a great Scots accent,’ she adds), Poole hails from Edinburgh, but left, aged seven, for schooling in England, including Rugby, where he excelled in Classics. He studied music for a year at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto before arriving at Cambridge. An ardent reader as a child, Poole ‘*really* discovered reading when I was about 15 or 16... a Johnny-come-lately,’ when a very good teacher got him to read Proust.

At Cambridge, after deciding to leave Classics (‘too philological at the time’), he flirted with Philosophy before settling on English. He smiles to remember that his tutor, incredulous, asked him ‘Why do you want to read a third-rate subject like English?’ By the end of his formative undergraduate years, having read at a furious pace to ‘play catch up’ with his peers in English, it was clear how much his talents rested in literary analysis. He was drawn to the period between 1880 and 1920, though for reasons still enigmatic to him. ‘People tend to speak of it as a transition, between the High Victorian and the Modernist eras. I think that’s an unfortunate way of thinking about it.’ He began postgraduate study in 1970. Compelled by the literary handling of difficult political and social issues at the turn of the century, he chose to study George Gissing from a lecturer’s recommendation. His dissertation *Gissing in Context*, expanded for Macmillan, was published in



As Worcester, Adrian here struggles to control the wayward Hotspur, played by Steve Watts, in a 1976 production of *I Henry IV*.

1975, only a year after he finished his Ph.D.

Poole took up a teaching Fellowship at Trinity in 1975 and a University Lectureship three years later. His strong background in the Classics made him an ideal lecturer for the Tragedy Paper, a hallmark of English at Cambridge that is associated with some of its most famous teachers, figures he has taught beside and watched parade through the Faculty. ‘We have heard the chimes at midnight,’ a friend remembers his saying when they were students of Tony Tanner. He was introduced at a conference in Italy as a leading member of ‘la Scuola di Raymond

Williams’; Williams advised his Ph.D. and ushered him into his first job as a Research Fellow at Jesus College in 1974.

Adrian has weathered the critical spats that have inevitably erupted over the years. Recalling ‘the MacCabe Affair’, he chuckled that some of his (more senior) colleagues at Trinity have asked him, ‘How is English? Still squabbling amongst yourselves?’ But he believes those debates over theory raised necessary questions about the direction the study of English is taking; ‘they should be debated, but not with that kind of animosity.’

His close friend, Stefan Collini, admires the way in which Poole is ‘unobtrusively interdisciplinary’ in maintaining so ‘high a quality of work across many fields and genres, fields far apart.’ He has written extensively on nineteenth-century novelists such as George Eliot, Hardy, James and Kipling. His other publications include *Tragedy: a Very Short Introduction*, books on Greek and Shakespearean tragedy, *The Oxford Book of Classical Verse in Translation* (as co-editor), and *The Cambridge Companion to English Novelists* (as editor and author of its chapter on Stevenson).

‘*Acte sans Paroles* has Adrian Poole moving slowly but beautifully through a strange predicament—life perhaps?—with his tormentors, and their props, visible on stage,’ reads a *Varsity* review from November 1967. One of his early passions was (and remains) the theatre. He played a convincing Lady Macbeth at Rugby, and spent fervent hours during his first year at Cambridge in student theatre, though he left in time to re-double attention on his studies. But Tim Cribb remembers fondly a production of *1 Henry IV* from 1976 (see photo). ‘The rebels were an academically distinguished bunch,’ Cribb recalls, ‘with the future Professor of Philosophy, Hugh Mellor, leading the Welsh, and the future Professor of Scottish Literature [Alan Riach (Glasgow)] leading the Scots.’ The play, he adds, was ‘excellent training for future attempts to steer the Faculty Board.’ No fewer than five of the company eventually became professors, Poole says, including Charles Read (Maths, Leeds) and David Richards (English, Stirling). One of his students, who went on to write for *Vogue*, slit his throat in that production. ‘People disappear and then reappear, still recognizable. Their life stories...’ he paused: ‘It’s a rather Jamesian interest they inspire.’

The skills carefully cultivated on the stage account in part for Adrian’s well-known gifts as a lecturer. ‘He is gently collusive with the audience,’ Collini says, and others have commented on his irradiating warmth, and the cadences of voice and nimble shifts in tone that can conjure gravity and levity from one moment to the next. He memorably lit up a lecture on ‘Shakespeare and Identity’ for the Darwin Lecture Series with a Google Image search of ‘Adrian Poole’ (there are more than a few females named Adrian Poole). And James Lello recalls his concluding one Tragedy lecture with a resounding ‘And

there lies Hegel slain!

He is sensitive to the challenge of an audience. Perhaps the most difficult lecture he gave was the *Colloque bicentenaire de l'École Normale Supérieure* in Paris, delivered in French. He remembers getting a little carried away when things were going well, and 'some devil in me' inspired him to make a joke about the historian Jacques Le Goff, which met with uncomprehending French stares.

Teaching poses the same kind of challenge for him: 'Teaching always involves interaction and winning, at some level, the trust of the person you're talking to.' His gifted students have been nothing less than a lifeline for him over the years, and many have ready anecdotes of their time with him. 'Has any young (and I was very young) Ph.D. student ever had a warmer, wiser and more generous supervisor than Adrian Poole?' Simon James wrote in his email. Lello appreciates that 'Adrian [is] often Socratic in the best sense—bringing me to realize my own mistakes, rather than pointing them out explicitly.' When Rebekah Scott (Nottingham) first met Poole to discuss her M.Phil. thesis on Jamesian complexity, 'His first question to me was: "Have you read *all*?"', a paraphrase, I failed to recall, of James's character Maisie's ambition to one day know "All". "But that's such a capacious word!" I protested. "Yes," he smiled. "And not a particularly complex one." 'Michiel Heyns (Stellenbosch), one of Poole's first students, wrote that 'Adrian represents the very best of what Cambridge has to offer: world-class research, yes, but above all an unselfish and unstinting dedication to teaching as the prime duty and pleasure of the Cambridge academic.'

'I would say, heretical as it would be, that teaching has been primary to me and research and writing have been an off-shoot—a welcome off-shoot—of teaching.' This may surprise a little, because the amount of research so far completed is formidable: Poole has authored more than ten books; edited a further ten scholarly editions on wide-ranging topics; delivered some twenty invited lectures across the world. He is one of the general editors of the Cambridge Edition of James's complete works, the first volumes of which are just beginning to be published. 'We are addressing James's work very, very closely in the context of its original production and reception,' says Linda Bree, Senior Commissioning Editor in the Humanities at Cambridge University Press. (More

on the Edition follows this article. – Ed.) Adrian himself is working on *The Princess Casamassima* which, Bree says, offers one of the most difficult editing projects posed by James's novels.

This research marks a return to the work of his Ph.D. years when he was labouring over Gissing but pining to work on a greater author like James: scholarship rooted in the interaction between writing and its historical context. 'I seem to be particularly interested in transmission, but no one word will do'—he is famously careful with his words—or "reception" studies.' He is attracted to 'work less than completely sure of itself', work he senses is self-conscious of its imperfections. His retirement will allow him to siphon more time to this research. He revels in a comment his long-time colleague Gillian Beer made, that one can have 'a *rapturous* relation to one's work.' Wrapping his hands together to emphasize the word, he explained that he now protects the early morning hours for solitary labour, before the day sets in. 'When you've got your nose to the grindstone, dealing with day-to-day problems, you're constantly in crisis mode in Cambridge.'

And there will be more time too for thought on large and sometimes grave questions. Adrian views the future of universities and the humanities with mingled optimism and fear. He has condemned the onset of REF and a business culture of accountability that make no provision for teaching, writing for this newsletter in 2011 when Chair of the Faculty, 'I have become particularly allergic to the vacuous phrase "going forward", particularly in a climate where we are resisting pressure to go backward down a dark alley with a firing squad at the end of it.' His speech for l'École Normale Supérieure in 1994, *Réinventer Oxbridge*, was prescient, as he sees what is provided for students at Cambridge 'in real time' become increasingly coveted, increasingly precious. The role of the humanities *must* be seen 'in widening perspectives... what the world will be like in ten, twenty years' time.'

Poole can seem an intimidating figure, but acquaintance reveals his kindness, a feeling that he would trust you on a firm handshake alone. 'He's so damn responsible,' a colleague summed him up for me. In July, after allowing me to interview him, I watched him potter about his corner office that overlooks Trinity's Great Court in search of articles hidden among his books, before admitting that it becomes increasingly

difficult to keep track of the years. 'Time is so... hurried,' he said.

Adrian's role as Trinity's Admissions Tutor marks another return and the strange circularity of his career. He wrote, in 1987, that the 'menace and promise of tragedy lie in this recognition of the sheer potentiality of all the selves we might be.' When pressed on other paths he could have pursued, he conceded diplomacy might have been a good fit. Not that his many senior administrative roles haven't demanded diplomatic tact when liaising between different branches of the university. One incident taught him just how crucial is right timing: when working as the Chair of Arts and Humanities in 2000, the Vice Chancellor took him aside and asked, 'Do you really need this building?' referring to the Faculty's long-time plea for renovations. He responded unhesitatingly and affirmatively. That moment helped secure an initial £4 million from the University, though he is quick to stress the role of others in achieving the eventual funding.

It is an impressive feat alone to summon undergraduates to a 9 am lecture near the end of Easter term, but the room was filled this past May as he delivered his final lecture. Speaking on *Coriolanus*, he concluded before a hushed audience,

Quite where this leaves an audience looking at Martius it is hard to say. 'I was mov'd withal,' says Aufidius grudgingly. And that perhaps is as good a note as any on which to leave the world of Shakespeare's Roman plays. We have been mov'd withal, not just to pity and fear, but to a richer range of responses than Aristotle ever imagined, including intense reflection, horror and—perhaps above all—astonishment: not just astonishment at the world of the play but at the imagination of the artist who created it.

He gathered his papers as cheers and applause mounted, pausing to make a gentle bow, before quietly leaving the hall.

Hannah Doyle

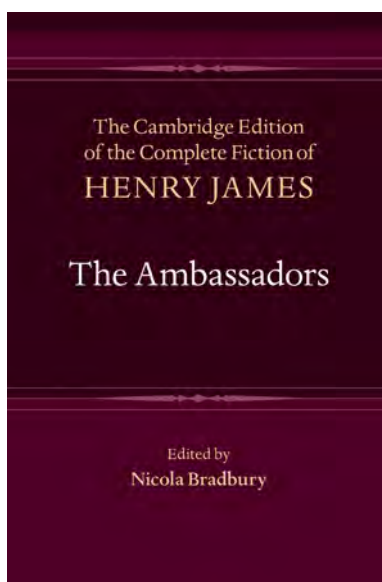
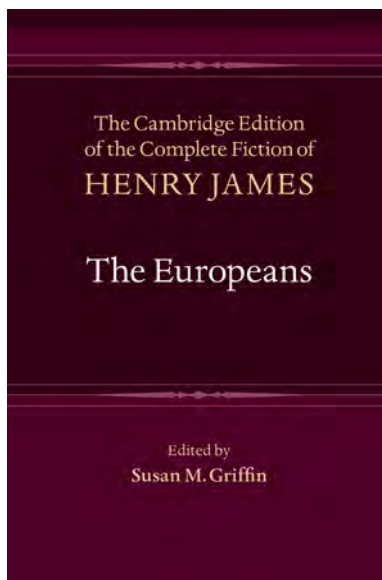
Hannah was recently awarded a Distinction in the MPhil in American Literature. Her dissertation was on 'Suffering in Late James'.

The Cambridge Henry James

The word 'Cambridge' in the Cambridge edition of the fiction of the great Anglo-American writer Henry James (1843-1916) has a double resonance: not only is the edition published by Cambridge University Press, but two of its General Editors, Adrian Poole and Tamara Follini, are members of the Cambridge Faculty of English. Fittingly too, given Henry James's personal circumstances and prevalent fictional themes, Adrian and Tamara represent between them the old world and the new, since Adrian hails from Edinburgh and the Scottish borders (and is distantly but proudly related to James's good friend Robert Louis Stevenson) and Tamara was born and brought up in New York.

The old-world-and-new theme is carried through the General Editorial team generally, where Adrian and Tamara are joined by Philip Horne at UCL and Michael Anesko at Penn State. The four have been working together on this major project since 2007, when the parameters for the edition were established, volume editors chosen, and editorial principles developed. Long intense discussion has taken place over the years about all sorts of issues of which the true significance is apparent only to the scholarly editor: how to present textual variants in a way which is both understandable and economical of space? how far to reproduce the original features of the copytext and how far to standardise (would it be Chap. or Chapter? 2 or II? Book or book?); how to decide what might be a deliberately unusual spelling and what might be an outright error? which French or Italian words and phrases could an educated but global audience reasonably be expected to understand without annotation?

And then there was the question of how to prepare guidelines for volume editors which would be helpful from the outset without being too daunting, and how to adjust them in the light of experience of working on the texts, without requiring everyone to start from scratch on material they thought they had finished. There has never been a scholarly edition of Henry James's work, so much information had to be discovered and collected about the original circumstances of the creation and publication of the works, and detailed analysis of the various different versions which exist of many of the texts: serial editions on both sides of the Atlantic; book editions on both sides of the Atlantic; and of course the landmark New York



edition of 1907-9, for which James took the opportunity to undertake some very extensive revisions long after the original publication of the material, and to offer lengthy prefaces explaining (and sometimes obscuring) the circumstances of composition.

A major challenge through all this continues to be how to weave a huge amount of knowledge and expertise together in a highly collaborative way – more than thirty James scholars are actively involved in the project – while keeping the focus firmly on the aims of the edition, which are to place James in his own time and trace his creative development. Already this work is proving to be a springboard for a renewal of scholarly interest in James and his writings.

Scholarly editions are always long-term projects and until now everything

has been preparatory work, but in late September 2015 – to everyone's great excitement – the first two volumes in the edition were finally published, looking very elegant in their burgundy and gold jackets. Coincidentally, they are one of the shortest and one of the longest texts in the edition. In the early novella *The Europeans*, edited by Susan Griffin of Louisville University, James reverses his usual theme of Americans travelling to Europe by having his European characters confronting a traditional American community; while *The Ambassadors*, edited by Nicola Bradbury of the University of Reading, is the first – and some would say the finest – of James's late novels.

From this beginning the volumes will come thick and fast: the next to publish will be *The Portrait of a Lady* which will be out in good time for a major Henry James conference in Boston in June 2016; and shortly after that we should see the Faculty represented again through Jean Chothia's edition of *The Outcry*, James's last completed novel which he developed from the script of his own failed stage play of the same name. Adrian and Tamara are both editing volumes themselves – *The Princess Casamassima* and *The Wings of the Dove* respectively – and we hope to see both in print before too long. When complete the edition will occupy at least 34 volumes of novels and short stories, a formidable undertaking indeed. And it is cheering to note that other work by James is coming to Cambridge alongside the edition, notably two volumes of his critical writing on theatre and art, which has been edited by independent scholar Peter Collister, due for publication mid-2016.

It is a pleasant thought that from now on, thanks to Adrian, Tamara, Jean and the Press, Henry James will be associated with Cambridge UK as well as Cambridge Mass.

Linda Bree

Senior Commissioning Editor in the Humanities,
Cambridge University Press

The Europeans ed. Susan M. Griffin £59.99 / \$100

The Ambassadors ed. Nicola Bradbury £84.00 / \$150

CUP are kindly offering English alumni 20% off these books. Get your discount by using the URL www.cambridge.org/henryjames15 or by using the offer code JAMES at checkout. The offer holds until the end of February 2016.

Your Say

Howard Erskine-Hill

Robert MacFarlane's obituary piece brings many of Howard Erskine-Hill's qualities vividly back to mind. Howard, as he allowed us supervision pupils to call him, was indeed unshowily generous with his ideas - and also with a glass of sherry. He made no social distinctions, which impressed me as a grammar school boy from the Six Counties. He stood with us, and we appraised the tools and techniques of the Augustans as apprentices alongside a master.

I assumed he was one of the quieter dons in the Faculty until, when things were at their rowdiest in 1980-81, he stood up at the back of a crowded meeting and spoke with immense courage and clarity, moving the argument beyond personalities and points of view, saying how he above all regretted the harm that was being done to the institution.

I used to see him out running on the towpath of an afternoon, considerably further out of town than you might have suspected of a man in his mid-forties in a heavy sweatshirt, making good speed, with an energetic little dog at his heels, too.

But, at the end, Robert MacFarlane writes, 'I could not help him with his unhappiness (as no one could help him)', and winds up after this aporia. Was Howard unhappy? Oh, he was undecieved, unimpressed with the whole insubstantial pageant; there was a downbeat intonation in his speaking voice. But a man who has seen clearly into things (and enjoyed fresh air and the company of a little dog) unhappy? One who helped so many others unhelped? That's unsettling; one final thing for us to think about, perhaps, with respect to Howard.

Ian Lyttle (Emmanuel 1978)

Helena Shire

Do any of you remember her? Were you perhaps supervised by her?

Before she died, Dr Shire said 'I want my books to be read'. When I inherited them I gave Robinson College, the English Faculty Library, and Aberdeen and Warsaw Universities their choice of her books. Now I would like to offer one of her books to each of her students.

If you would like one, please email me telling me about yourself, when you knew Dr Shire and your special interests in English or Scottish literature so I can find something you would enjoy.

Alisoun Gardner-Medwin (née Shire) alisoungm@gmail.com

Corrections

Faith Johnson wrote to say that 'Anne Barton was a graduate of Bryn Mawr College, not of Vassar, as stated by Valerie Grove in *Your Say*. As her former student and a Bryn Mawr alumna myself, I feel this error needs correcting. Furthermore, I strongly suspect that she would have agreed with me about this.'

Alexis Lykiad matriculated in 1958, not, as was stated, 1957.

The word 'college' after Peterhouse was, of course, redundant. Apologies also for misspelling Professor John Stevens and St Catharine's College.

What. Where. When.

The Faculty has hosted a wide variety of events in the last year, and recordings of some of them can be found online.

The next Graeme Storey Lecture will take place on May 2nd 2016. Lydia Davis will speak.

For up-to-date information on that and on other events of interest, in the Faculty and beyond, look at our website and calendar: www.english.cam.ac.uk/events.

To find out what Faculty members are contributing to the University's annual Festival of Ideas, see www.festivalofideas.cam.ac.uk.



The Cambridge Literary Festival has occasional events through the year. The Spring Festival will take place in April 2016. Find out more at: www.cambridgeliteraryfestival.com.

The Festival has generously offered a 10% discount on all events to English alumni. Quote the code 'CLF+CAMENGAL' when booking online at www.cambridgeliteraryfestival.com or by telephone (01223 300085), or at the ADC Theatre box office.