



The Persephone Biannually

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*Photographs taken from Ordinary Citizens: The Victims of Stalin
by David King Francis Bootle Publishers 2003 photographs from
the Memorial Society, Moscow, The David King Collection,
Moscow and Reinhard Schultz, Berlin (full details p. 4).*



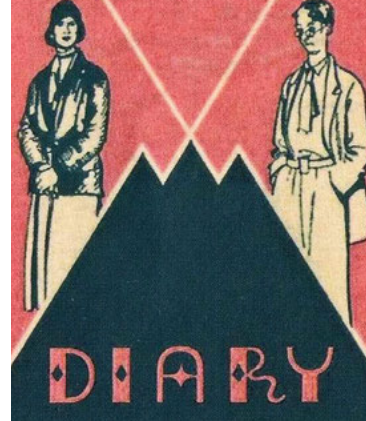
OUR BOOKS FOR SPRING/SUMMER 2014

The first Persephone book for 2014 is a great classic of domestic literature. It initially appeared in weekly instalments in *Time and Tide*, the feminist weekly. Some might find it an oxymoron that a book is both domestic and feminist. But this is the central remit of Persephone Books and one of the reasons why *Diary of a Provincial Lady* (1930) is a quintessential title for us; and why, although there are other editions in print (EM Delafield has just gone out of copyright), we felt we wanted it to join our list. We also wanted it to join the earlier *Consequences*, Persephone Book No. 13, the 1919 novel EM Delafield considered her favourite but which is infinitely bleaker; its satire muted by sadness. Finally: we knew our wonderful German printer, GGP, would make an excellent job out of reproducing Arthur Watts's original illustrations; most previous editions have ignored these, but we feel they are a crucial part of the fun.

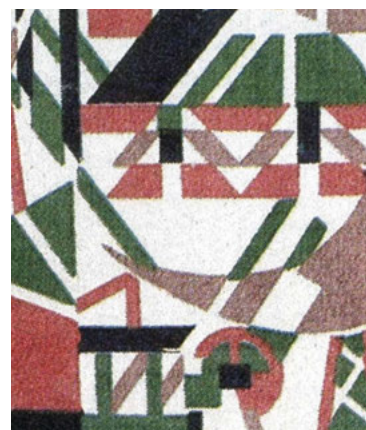
For the *Diary*, which chronicles the day-to-day life of a wife and mother living in the country, is above all fun, in fact it is one of the funniest books ever written. And yet the humour is of a particular, Mr Pooter-ish type: an

earlier EM Delafield novel had on its frontispiece a quote from *The Diary of a Nobody*: 'I left the room with silent dignity, but caught my foot in the mat.' As the Afterword to the *Diary* observes: 'Self-deprecation of this kind is a particularly English occupation, one which foreigners find rather hard to understand. From *Emma* through *Cranford*, to *The Diary of a Nobody*, EF Benson's Lucia books, *1066 and All That* and *Mrs Miniver*, to name but a few of the links in the chain, they are all books in which the English laugh at their own peculiarities. They are also books which make light of the potentially grave and which subtly transform tragedy into pathos and pathos into humour.' This is why the trivial is so often bracketed with the serious, as in the opening entry: 'November 7th 1929: Lady B stays to tea. We talk some more about bulbs, the Dutch School of Painting, Our Vicar's Wife, sciatica, and *All Quiet on the Western Front*.'

In 1931 the *New York Herald Tribune* praised the *Diary* as 'a delicious book, a triumph of art and wit: EM Delafield is writing of a group and setting peculiarly English. What she has done is to extract from them the universals, the pure essence of comedy. She



The endpaper for Diary of a Provincial Lady is taken from the jacket for the 1931 American Harper & Brothers edition



The endpaper for Into the Whirlwind is 'Five Year Plan in Four Years', a 1930 Russian textile by an unknown designer.



The endpaper for Wilfred and Eileen is Maud, a 1913 textile by Vanessa Bell manufactured in Maromme, France

arouses the emotion of recognition in anyone who has ever risen from hard earned repose morning after morning to face the terrible trifles of the day.' While *The (London) Times* wrote that EM Delafield (seen here on the right in a previously unpublished photograph) 'had an almost uncanny gift for converting the small and familiar dullnesses of everyday life into laughter.' India Knight once told her readers that she had 're-read for the nth time EM Delafield's

dry, caustic *Diary of a Provincial Lady* and howled with laughter.' And Jilly Cooper wrote perceptively in the *Guardian*: 'Gradually one realises that, despite the short sentences and the simplicity and unpretentiousness of the prose and subject matter, here is a very subtle and deliberate talent at work, naturally satirical, with a marvellous ear for dialogue and an unerringly accurate social sense.'



Although eighty years on we continue to cope with many of the same 'terrible trifles of the day', some things have dated, for example the reliance on cook and 'mademoiselle'; nor can the Provincial Lady abandon her extremely irritating husband because the cruel constraints of the divorce laws meant that if she had walked out she would have ended up like the poor woman in Dorothy Whipple's 'Wednesday'. Instead, what she does is see the funny side: 'After Mary has gone, Robert looks at me and suddenly remarks: "Now *that's* what I call an attractive woman." Am gratified at his appreciation of talented friend, but should like to be a little clearer regarding significance of emphasis on the word *that*. Robert, however, says no more, and opportunity is lost as Ethel comes in to say Cook is sorry she's run right out of milk but if I will come to the store-cupboard she thinks there's a tin of Ideal, and she'll make do with that.'

Twenty-five years ago, in the spring of 1989, a play was put on at Moscow's Sovremennik



Drawing by Arthur Watts opposite p.85 of Diary of a Provincial Lady

The four women on the cover of this *Biannually* are Tamara Litsinkaya b. 1910, student, arrested 8 February 1937, shot 25 August; Alisa Venglosh b. 1887 Frankfurt, actress, arrested 22 July 1936,

shot 16 August 1937; Emilya Skimhevich b. 1902 Warsaw, actress, arrested 19 January 1937, shot 22 August; Lydia Mikhailovna b. 1888 Ukraine, accountant, arrested 26 April 1937, shot 27 September.



*A 1924 poster by Alexander Samokhvalov which portrays Lenin as the master of ceremonies of hydro-electricity. The message reads: 'Soviets and Electrification – This is the Foundation of the New World.' Taken from David King, *Red Star Over Russia: a visual history of the Soviet Union from 1917 to the death of Stalin* Tate Publishing 2008*

Theatre. It was based on *Into the Whirlwind* (1967), now Persephone Book No. 106, Eugenia Ginzburg's memoir of Stalin's Terror. In the foyer of the theatre was a golden statue of the man himself. And, writes Sir Rodric Braithwaite, former ambassador to Moscow and author of the new Persephone Afterword: 'Through loudspeakers the Leader was commanding the Soviet people to vote in the election which he had just called. It was as if we were still on the eve of the Great Purge which had started in 1937.'

The play was about Eugenia Ginzburg's arrest, her interrogation and the first two years of her imprisonment. 'As the scenes succeeded one another, most of the audience was in a state of stunned silence, frozen in grief.' But, as we are told by the authors of *500 Great Books by Women*, who also refer to the stage version in their description of *Into the Whirlwind*, 'when the curtain came down an emotional audience rose up and applauded for twenty-four minutes. The tragedy of an entire nation had finally been dramatised in one woman's poignant account.'

A teacher and Communist Party activist, Eugenia Ginzburg was married to the mayor of Kazan. In the book, as in the 2009 film starring Emily Watson, the perfectly 'normal', bourgeois, seemingly stable nature of her life is heartrendingly portrayed. But when a university colleague is arrested

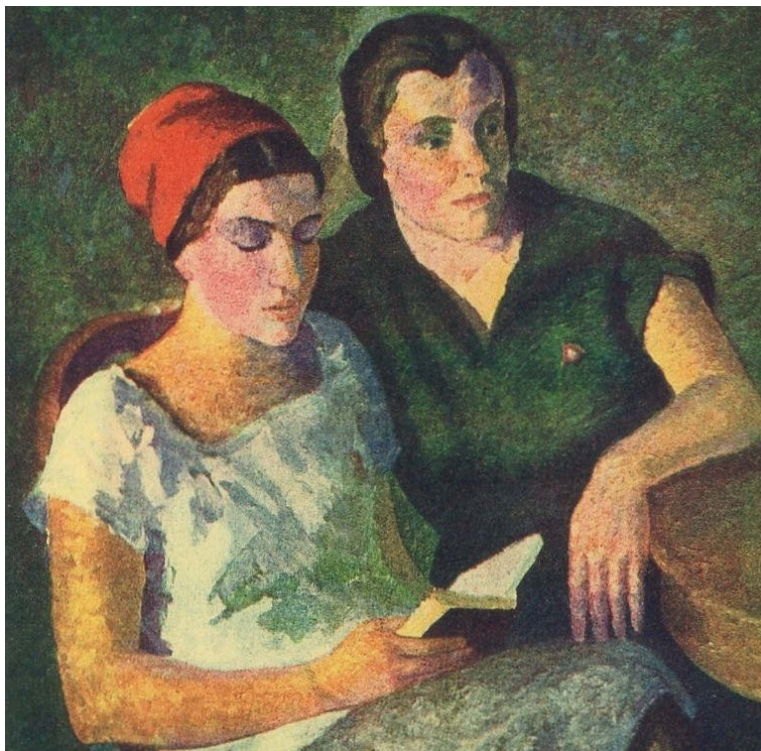
for alleged Trotskyist activities, the 30 year-old Eugenia is charged with not having denounced him. Soon she is expelled from the Party and interrogated; however, unlike the four women on the cover of this *Biannually*, in 1937 she was imprisoned – the year they were all shot. Later she was sent to Kolyma, an enormous complex of labour camps in the Russian Far East. She always hoped to write about her experiences one day and seems to have had total recall. She started to write after her release in 1955. A typescript of *Into the Whirlwind* was circulated in Russia and published in the West in 1967. A second volume *Within the Whirlwind* came out in English in 1981.

In the most beautiful prose (the translators were Paul Stevenson and the renowned Manya Harari, who translated *Dr Zhivago*) Eugenia Ginzburg records her shock at being arrested, the unremitting cruelty of the ‘authorities’ and the agony of being in custody, forced labour and exile. She describes friends who helped orphaned children, prison guards who could be kind but were mostly cruel, reciting poetry in the freight cars for the other women crammed in with her (reminding us of Etty Hillesum, whose last postcard said ‘we left the camp singing’), felling trees at fifty degrees below zero. And yet through all this suffering she gained a deep insight into what it means to be

human. It is impossible not to cry when reading this book – which means it is not for the faint-hearted – yet it is not merely a historical document: the dialogue is lifelike and everything is portrayed with extraordinary realism.

Into the Whirlwind should have a place next to other classics such as Akhmatova’s *Requiem* and Nadezhda Mandelstam’s *Hope against Hope*. And, as Barbara Evans Clements has written in her recent *A History of Women in Russia*, these three writers ‘did not participate directly in the dissident movement, but their works played an important part in the building criticism of the Soviet system. The quality of their writing also places them among the major authors of twentieth century Russian literature.’

In 1967 *The Times* called *Into the Whirlwind* a ‘moving and very great record’ and a reviewer in the *Economist* wrote: ‘Here we have an intelligent eye-witness’s account of the most terrible period of Soviet history. Eugenia Ginzburg owed her survival to her strong constitution, her youth, and her extraordinarily rich inner intellectual life. She kept her sanity in the rat-infested, cold and filthy punishment cell by reciting poetry to herself, day and night. Her warmhearted interest in other people, her discerning eye, and the beauty of the language make this book a monument to the memory of the thousands of victims who perished in those decades when the gods of revolution were athirst.’



'Young Communists', a painting by Sergei Bogdanov from Krasnaya Niva March 1928 p. 172 Red Star Over Russia by David King



'I like to think of you as brown and tall,/As strong and living as you used to be,/In khaki tunic, Sam Browne belt and all,/ And standing there laughing down at me.' Marian Allen *'The Wind on the Downs'* 1918. Picture of Major Adrian Drewe d.1917 © NT

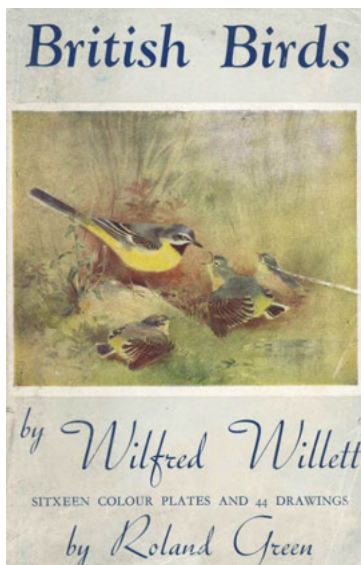
Yet the gods seem to have been thirsty throughout much of the twentieth century. The third Persephone book for the spring commemorates the outbreak of WW1, a war which profoundly affected many Persephone books and many Persephone authors. Indeed, our very first title in 1999 was about WW1 (*William – an Englishman*). Now we are republishing a novel about the war that first came out in 1976 but has not been in print since 1981 (when there was a new edition to tie in with the four-part television adaptation).

W*ilfred and Eileen* is by Jonathan Smith, author of several novels (*Summer in February*) and non-fiction books (*The Learning Game*). For many years he taught English at Tonbridge School and one day the young Anthony Seldon (now the Master of Wellington and the biographer of Tony Blair) told him the story of his grandparents Wilfred and Eileen Willett. Jonathan Smith's first novel a few years later was based on their lives.

Wilfred Willett was 22 in 1912 when, at a May Ball at Trinity College, Cambridge, he met Eileen Stenhouse. The couple fell in love but because of parental opposition on both sides they married in secret. Eileen continued to live at home in Kensington and Wilfred continued his medical studies at the London Hospital. The scenes before the outbreak of war are beautifully described with a

Forsterian touch (reminding the reader that Forster too was at Tonbridge and Cambridge). The approach of war is evoked with great simplicity, eschewing all clichés: 'It would not be quite true to say that the war rumours had not filtered into Wilfred's mind but he had certainly not been infected by the mounting hysteria of late July.'

Wilfred joins up, is shot in the head, and rescued, indeed brought back to life, through the efforts of his wife and his colleagues at the hospital. The nature of his wounds meant that he could not return to the army or to medicine, so he and Eileen went to live in a cottage in Kent and started a family. Wilfred wrote many books about flowers and birds and, bizarrely, most Persephone readers will think, became a passionate Communist and used to try and sell the *Daily Worker* to weary commuters returning home to Tunbridge Wells. Nor was the Willetts' life



The Prince of Wales at the Duchess of Sutherland Hospital at Calais during a visit by the King and Queen 14 June 1917 from Working for Victory: Images of Women in the First World War by Diana Condell and Jean Liddiard Routledge 1987 p.29.

without personal difficulties. As Jonathan Smith says in his new Persephone Afterword, 'Eileen saw Wilfred through his depressions. And his rages': like so many 'survivors' of the war, it went on taking its toll for the rest of their lives.

However, this 'delightful novel' (Margaret Drabble) focuses on the years 1913-15 – the happy love affair, the outbreak of war, the coming back from France, the brush with death, the beginning of a new life in deepest Kent. It is a charming, poignant book which manages to write about harrowing matters without being in itself harrowing. In the *Observer* Anthony Thwaite wrote: 'What makes it oddly

moving is its straightforwardness, its acceptance of those now lost aspirations and decencies.' And Kitty our proof reader could not believe that it was not written at the time, echoing the 1976 *Financial Times* reviewer who said that it recaptured the spirit of WW1 'with such curious conviction that I almost felt I had come across some lost document of the time.' Kitty wrote: 'Wilfred and Eileen are so real that it is hard to believe the author never met them, or even lived through that time.' She especially admired 'the way in which Jonathan Smith somehow makes what could have been such a sad story into such an uplifting one. I do feel the better for reading it.'

WILLIAM, JULIAN & WILFRED

It is ironic that the three Persephone books about the First World War all have men's names in their titles: *William (-an Englishman)*, *Julian (Grenfell)* and *Wilfred (and Eileen)*. Or perhaps it is not ironic. After all men fight wars, men decide to have them, therefore they might

as well lend their names to books about them; women are simply left filling in for them at home, even if they then spend their days filling machine gun belts with ammunition (cf. the photograph opposite). Which is why, as Vera Brittain wrote in *Testament of Youth*, 'women get all

the dreariness of war, and none of its exhilaration' and Rose Macaulay wrote in her poem 'Many Sisters to Many Brothers': 'Oh, it's you that have the luck, out there in blood and muck:/But for me ... a war is poor fun.'

Yet, despite their titles, all three books are on the Persephone list because they describe the war in part from the woman's point of view: William only abandons his pacifist ideals after his new wife Griselda dies in Belgium; Julian Grenfell's life is completely under the sway of his mother Ettie Desborough; and Wilfred, horribly wounded, is rescued from France, indeed rescued from death, by his wife Eileen: Griselda, Ettie and Eileen are as important a part of these three books as the male protagonists.

Nevertheless, when the National Portrait Gallery was deciding what to include in its recent exhibition *The Great War in Portraits*, the curators chose only three portraits of women: photographs of Edith Cavell, the ambulance driver Elsie Knocker and Mata Hari. Yet they could have used any number of fascinating photographs (cf. opposite and p.7).

The very first Persephone book in 1999 was *William - an Englishman* (1919) by Cecily Hamilton. It is a novel written in



A Royal Army Medical Corps Stretcher-Bearer Fully Equipped by Gilbert Rogers 1919
© IWM/PCF/BBC

France, in a tent within sound of gunfire, about a clerk and a suffragette who marry in July 1914 and go for their honeymoon to the Belgian Ardennes. One day they hear thunder coming up the valley.

William held up a finger and Griselda asked 'What is it?' 'Guns,' he said. 'Canon – don't you hear them?'

She did, a soft, not unpleasing thud repeated again and again and coming down the breeze from the northward.

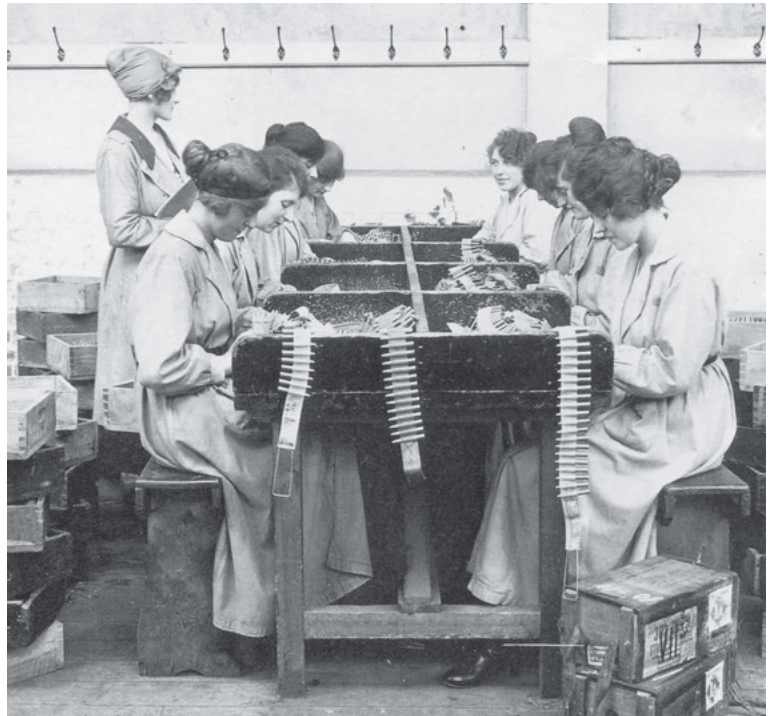
'It must be manoeuvres,' he explained. 'That's what those soldiers are doing. I expect it's what they call the autumn manoeuvres.'

'Playing at murder,' Griselda commented, producing the orthodox sigh. She had heard the phrase used by a pacifist orator in the Park and considered it apt and telling. 'Ah, if only women had a say in national affairs.'

It is in fact gunfire and when they emerge from their cottage and investigate, they are greeted by horror: Griselda is raped and dies and William, having been a devout pacifist, joins up, his comfortable naivety entirely destroyed. His longheld assumptions about 'inevitable progress' have collapsed too. In the same way **Julian Grenfell**, the biography of the soldier-poet and the subject of Persephone Book No. 11, was an innocent, even though his was the innocence of the traditional soldier. The theme of **Julian Grenfell** is that upper-class young men went to war joyfully because they had been bred in the ethos of Queen

Victoria's imperial Britain and encouraged by their mothers to play at soldiers on the nursery carpet and then, as men, to play soldiers in real life. 'The pattern for men was not to ask questions,' writes Nicholas Mosley in the book, 'not to think, but to make jokes and to do one's duty: if this was not too difficult, it was perhaps because it was part of men's duty to fight and kill. It was like this in law, in politics, in business; with thought disencouraged, furious instincts were satisfied by ritual... For thousands of years young Englishmen had been brought up to think that war was proper – a way by which a man could "prove" himself, by which a nation could exercise itself and maintain fitness.'

And now we are publishing **Wilfred and Eileen** based on the real life Willetts. One of the reasons it is an important book is because the longterm effects of the war are so heartrendingly implied. As Anthony Seldon, the real Wilfred and Eileen's grandson, wrote in an article in the *Telegraph* about Wilfred: 'The long shadow of the Great War affected not only world history but also that of countless individuals. The loss of the 900,000 British servicemen and the far greater numbers who, like Wilfred, were hurt in mind or body, has left wounds that are still open. The war might have ended 100 years ago. But for many people in Britain today, it is still far from over.'



Munition workers filling machine gun ammunition belts in the inspection buildings at the Park Royal Factory north-west London (1918) Working for Victory p112.

PLATS DU JOUR PATIENCE GRAY

The first chapter of Rachel Cooke's *My Brilliant Career: Ten Extraordinary Women of the Fifties*, published last year, from which these paragraphs are taken, is devoted to Patience Gray.

Perhaps because she is still so famous, people often assume that Elizabeth David was the Fifties' best-selling food writer. In fact that accolade must go to her vastly less well-known but equally talented peer Patience Gray and her 1957 book, *Plats du Jour* (now Persephone Book No. 70), some 100,000 copies of which were sold before the decade was out. It is said that ED and PG met just once, in 1961, but they were too similar for each to have taken the other for a kindred spirit. Both came from the upper middle classes, growing up in large Jacobean manor houses in Sussex where legendarily bad nursery food was cooked by cooks and served by maids, and both were famously beautiful and intelligent. Compared to most British women their age they were well travelled and in possession of complicated bohemian private lives.

Both women were extremely clear-sighted about what it was that they wanted their books to do. Controlling, you might say. You see this in their prose (bracing), in their recipes (sophisticated, unapologetic) and even in the illustrators they chose starting out (John Minton in the case of ED,

and David Gentleman in the case of PG: neo-romantics the pair of them). ED was first into print but PG beat her to it when it came to French cuisine bourgeoisie. *French Provincial Cooking* was published some four years after the chic but unprecedentedly user-friendly *Plats du Jour*.

PG set up a research partnership with the artist Primrose Boyd and in 1953 the two women began work on a cookbook. PG was scrupulous about testing its recipes: it made her furious when PB failed to do this, and she would often end up dismissing her co-writer's dishes once she'd tried them herself. (It was ultimately Patience who ended up writing and editing the main body of the book.) Then there was the shopping involved. Ingredients had to be hunted down. It's a cliché of food writing to note that in the Fifties olive oil could only be purchased at a chemist. What people tend to forget is that the same was also true of – for instance – Tidman's Sea Salt, an item most people used for bathing but which Patience recommended for seasoning fish and meat.

Plats du Jour, which would become the best-selling cookbook of the Fifties, was finally published by Penguin in 1957. David Gentleman was its illustrator, and he gave it the adorable cover [now the Persephone endpaper] which was

(and still is) so much a part of its appeal. It was an instant success, selling fifty thousand copies in its first ten months. It isn't difficult to work out why. Of course people liked the recipes, which were pleasingly straightforward and which came not only from France but from Spain and Italy too (the book seemed to be doing the work of several volumes twice its size, and at the bargain price of just 3s 6d). *Moussaka*, *ratatouille*, *moules marinières*: these things were easy to make, and delicious to boot. But it was also, in its own quiet way, an extremely fashionable book, and it made those who bought it feel modern. It was written for people like its author, who ate in their kitchen (or, if they didn't, wanted to), and who owned smart new cookware from Denmark that could be brought from oven to table ('armed with this utensil, it would be possible to produce most of the recipes in this book'). These readers preferred courgettes to marrows and fresh fish to tinned, and they sometimes – oh, the decadence – drank wine with dinner *in the middle of the week*. (FN: For me, *Plats du Jour* feels more like a book of the Seventies than the Fifties, especially when you reach the chapter on funghi, which seems to have been written for Good Life types who combine 'an experimental approach to cooking with an interest in natural history.') The tone of *Plats du Jour* was sophisticated, but it was rarely bossy and it was never severe.

OUR BLOGGERS WRITE

‘There is much that can irk the modern day reader within the pages of *The Squire*: the petty worries that fill her otherwise leisurely days are a far cry from the all consuming demands of modern motherhood. However, this shouldn’t detract from the essential power of the novel, which is in its beautiful and sensitive exploration of the emotional and physical connection between mothers and their children.’ Book Snob

‘*The Two Mrs Abbotts* is as full of charm as you’d expect. This is a comedy of manners with moments of melodrama and farce, and much genial observation; it’s a warm-hearted story in which nothing of particular moment happens, but what does transpire is enough to keep the reader happily turning the pages. You know where you are with a novel where a note explaining that the writer has run away is left on a pincushion.’ Cornflower Books

‘Obviously I *loved* *Miss Buncle’s Book* – clever, funny, enjoyable and yes, probably cozy and comforting; but in the best way, written with an intelligence and a love of story-telling. The relationship between Barbara and the rest of the villagers is beautifully portrayed, and the developing friendship with Mr Abbott is also delicately handled. Yet there is a lot here about bullying,

snobbishness, tolerance or the lack of it, and a rather chilling portrayal of how some nasty characters can step right over the line when their pomposity has been punctured.’

KaggsyBookish Ramblings

‘Enid Bagnold’s writing in *The Squire* is beautiful and full of power. Sometimes it is haunting. The novel’s strength lies in her writing and characters, as well as the way in which she portrays relationships so well, particularly between the young siblings: an incredibly perceptive author.’ Book Hugger

‘A page-turning rags-to-riches story, made unique and completely convincing by its strong dose of realism. But what made *High Wages* so much fun for me was some of the themes running quietly in the background. Jane has a budding social and political awareness. Also there is a striking awareness of the power of marketing and the problem of shopping as a way of compensating for what is lacking in one’s life.’ Furrowed Middlebrow

‘I don’t just think that *Good Evening, Mrs Craven* is a brilliant short story collection, I would go as far as to say this is a collection of mini-masterpieces. Mollie Panter-Downes can bring a character to life in just a mere sentence or two and the brevity of her tales and how much they

make your mind create is quite astounding. She is unquestionably a master of prose, in a single sentence she can deliver and say so much.’ Simon Savidge

‘The characters which DE Stevenson has created are all interesting and unpredictable, and there is not a dull person amongst them. It is rather refreshing to read a novel which veers off in unexpected directions as *The Two Mrs Abbotts* does.’ TheLiterarySisters

‘There is so much detail in *The Squire* that you feel almost claustrophobic within the pages. This is surely intentional, to mirror the building pressure the squire of the title must be feeling in the final days of her pregnancy when she wants everything to be just so. What struck me as particularly interesting is the way the novel approaches the intricacies of household management between the wars.’ Madam J-Mo

‘*The Home-Maker* is a classic that deserves to be rediscovered and praised to the rafters like *Stoner*. I can’t believe it was written in 1924, when it is something you could imagine Facebook’s Sheryl Sandberg citing in *Lean In*. A wonderful novel about the joy of finding your place in life, and the importance of having the courage to keep looking for it.’ Emily Books

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1. **William – an Englishman** by Cicely Hamilton Prize-winning 1919 novel about the effect of WW1 on a socialist clerk and a suffragette. Preface: Nicola Beauman
2. **Mariana** by Monica Dickens This funny, romantic first novel, which came out in 1940, describes a young girl's life in the 1930s. Preface: Harriet Lane
3. **Someone at a Distance** by Dorothy Whipple 'A very good novel indeed' (*Spectator*) about the destruction of a formerly happy 1950s marriage. Preface: Nina Bawden, R4 'Book at Bedtime' 2008
4. **Fidelity** by Susan Glaspell 1915 novel by a Pulitzer-winning writer brilliantly describing the long-term consequences of a girl in Iowa running off with a married man. Preface: Laura Godwin
5. **An Interrupted Life** by Ety Hillesum From 1941–43 a woman in Amsterdam, 'the Anne Frank for grown-ups', wrote diaries and letters: they are among the great documents of our time. Preface: Eva Hoffman
6. **The Victorian Chaise-longue** by Marghanita Laski A 'little jewel of horror': 'Melly' lies on a chaise-longue in the 1950s and wakes as 'Milly' eighty years before. Preface: PD James
7. **The Home-Maker** by Dorothy Canfield Fisher Ahead of its time 'remarkable and brave 1924 novel about being a house-husband' (Carol Shields). Preface: Karen Knox
8. **Good Evening, Mrs Craven: the Wartime Stories of Mollie Panter-Downes** Superbly written short stories, first published in *The New Yorker* from 1938–44. Five of them were read on R4 twice, and on R7. Preface: Gregory LeStage Also available as a Persephone audiobook (unabridged) read by Lucy Scott
9. **Few Eggs and No Oranges** by Vere Hodgson A 600-page diary, written from 1940–45 in Notting Hill Gate, full of acute observation, wit and humanity. Preface: Jenny Hartley
10. **Good Things in England** by Florence White 'One of the great English cookbooks, full of delightful, delicious recipes that actually work.' Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall
11. **Julian Grenfell** by Nicholas Mosley A biography of the First World War poet, and of his mother Ettie Desborough. Preface: the author
12. **It's Hard to be Hip over Thirty and Other Tragedies of Married Life** by Judith Viorst Funny, weary and wise 1960s poems about marriage, children and reality. Preface: the author
13. **Consequences** by EM Delafield By the author of *The Diary of a Provincial Lady*, this 1919 novel is about a girl entering a convent after she fails to marry. Preface: Nicola Beauman
14. **Farewell Leicester Square** by Betty Miller Novel (by Jonathan Miller's mother) about a Jewish film-director and 'the discreet discrimination of the bourgeoisie' (*Guardian*). Preface: Jane Miller
15. **Tell It to a Stranger** by Elizabeth Berridge Funny, observant and bleak 1947 short stories, twice in the *Evening Standard* bestseller list. Preface: AN Wilson
16. **Saplings** by Noel Streatfeild A novel by the well-known author of *Ballet Shoes*, about the destruction of a family during WW2; a R4 ten-part serial. Afterword: Jeremy Holmes
17. **Marjory Fleming** by Oriol Malet A deeply empathetic novel about the real life of the Scottish child prodigy who lived from 1803–11; published in France; was a play on Radio Scotland.
18. **Every Eye** by Isobel English An unusual 1956 novel about a girl travelling to Spain, highly praised by Muriel Spark: a R4 'Afternoon Play' in 2004. Preface: Neville Braybrooke
19. **They Knew Mr Knight** by Dorothy Whipple An absorbing 1934 novel about a man driven to committing fraud and what happens to him and his family; a 1943 film. Afterwords: Terence Handley MacMath and Christopher Beauman
20. **A Woman's Place** by Ruth Adam A survey of women's lives from 1900–75, very readably written by a novelist-historian: an overview full of insights. Preface: Yvonne Roberts
21. **Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day** by Winifred Watson A delightful 1938 novel about a governess and a night-club singer. Read on R4 by Maureen Lipman; now a film with Frances McDormand and Amy Adams. Preface: Henrietta Twycross-Martin. Also available as an unabridged Persephone audiobook read by Frances McDormand
22. **Consider the Years** by Virginia Graham Sharp, funny, evocative WW2 poems by Joyce Grenfell's closest friend and collaborator. Preface: Anne Harvey
23. **Reuben Sachs** by Amy Levy A fierce 1880s satire on the London Jewish community by 'the Jewish Jane Austen' who was a friend of Oscar Wilde. Preface: Julia Neuberger
24. **Family Roundabout** by Richmal Crompton By the *William* books author; 1948 family saga contrasting two matriarchs and their very different children. Preface: Juliet Aykroyd
25. **The Montana Stories** by Katherine Mansfield Collects together the short stories written during the author's last year; with a detailed publisher's note and the contemporary illustrations. Five were read on R4 in 2002.
26. **Brook Evans** by Susan Glaspell A very unusual novel, written in the same year as *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, about the enduring effect of a love affair on three generations of a family.

- 27. The Children who Lived in a Barn** by Eleanor Graham A 1938 classic about five children fending for themselves; starring the unforgettable hay-box. Preface: Jacqueline Wilson
- 28. Little Boy Lost** by Marghanita Laski Novel about a father's search for his son in France in late 1945, chosen by the *Guardian's* Nicholas Lezard as his 2001 Paperback Choice. A 'Book at Bedtime' on R4 read by Jamie Glover. Afterword: Anne Sebba
- 29. The Making of a Marchioness** by Frances Hodgson Burnett A very entertaining 1901 novel about the ensuing melodrama after a governess marries a Marquis. A R4 Classic Serial in 2007. Preface: Isabel Raphael, Afterword: Gretchen Gerzina. Also available as a Persephone audiobook (unabridged) read by Lucy Scott
- 30. Kitchen Essays** by Agnes Jekyll Witty and useful essays about cooking, with recipes, published in *The Times* and reprinted as a book in 1922. 'One of the best reads outside Elizabeth David' wrote gastropoda.com
- 31. A House in the Country** by Jocelyn Playfair An unusual and very interesting 1944 novel about a group of people living in the country during WW2. Preface: Ruth Gorb
- 32. The Carlyles at Home** by Thea Holme A 1965 mixture of biography and social history which very entertainingly describes Thomas and Jane Carlyle's life in Chelsea.
- 33. The Far Cry** by Emma Smith A beautifully written 1949 novel about a young girl's passage to India: a great Persephone favourite. R4 'Book at Bedtime' in 2004. Preface: author
- 34. Minnie's Room:** The Peacetime Stories of Mollie Panter-Downes 1947–1965: Second volume of short stories first published in *The New Yorker*, previously unknown in the UK.
- 35. Greenery Street** by Denis Mackail A delightful, very funny 1925 novel about a young couple's first year of married life in a (real) street in Chelsea. Preface: Rebecca Cohen
- 36. Lettice Delmer** by Susan Miles A unique 1920s novel in verse describing a girl's stormy adolescence and path to redemption; much admired by TS Eliot. A novel in verse sounds unappealing – but we highly recommend this book.
- 37. The Runaway** by Elizabeth Anna Hart A Victorian novel for children and grown-ups, illustrated by Gwen Raverat. 'There never was a happier book' (*Country Life*, 1936). Afterwords: Anne Harvey, Frances Spalding
- 38. Cheerful Weather for the Wedding** by Julia Strachey A funny and quirky 1932 novella by a niece of Lytton Strachey, praised by Virginia Woolf. Preface: Frances Partridge. Also available as an unabridged Persephone audiobook read by Miriam Margolyes
- 39. Manja** by Anna Gmeyner A 1938 German novel, newly translated, about five children conceived on the same night in 1920, and their lives until the Nazi takeover. Preface: Eva Ibbotson (the author's daughter)
- 40. The Priory** by Dorothy Whipple A much-loved 1939 novel about a family, upstairs and downstairs, living in a large country house. 'Warm, witty and realistic' (Hatchards). Preface: David Conville
- 41. Hostages to Fortune** by Elizabeth Cambridge 'Deals with domesticity without being in the least bit cosy' (Harriet Lane, *Observer*): a remarkable fictional portrait of a doctor's family in rural Oxfordshire in the 1920s.
- 42. The Blank Wall** by Elisabeth Sanxay Holding 'The top suspense writer of them all' (Chandler). A 1947 thriller about a mother shielding her daughter from a blackmailer. Filmed as *The Reckless Moment* (1949) and *The Deep End* (2001); a R4 serial in 2006.
- 43. The Wise Virgins** by Leonard Woolf This wise and witty 1914 novel contrasts the bohemian Virginia and Vanessa with Gwen, the girl next door in 'Richstead' (Putney). Preface: Lyndall Gordon
- 44. Tea with Mr Rochester** by Frances Towers Magical, unsettling 1949 stories, a surprise favourite, that are unusually beautifully written; read on R4 in 2003 and 2006. Preface: Frances Thomas
- 45. Good Food on the Aga** by Ambrose Heath A 1933 cookery book written for Aga owners which can be used by anyone; with numerous illustrations by Edward Bawden
- 46. Miss Ranskill Comes Home** by Barbara Euphan Todd An unsparing, wry 1946 novel: Miss Ranskill is shipwrecked and returns to a completely changed wartime England. Preface: Wendy Pollard
- 47. The New House** by Lettice Cooper 1936 portrayal of the day a family moves into a new house, and the resulting adjustments and tensions. Preface: Jilly Cooper
- 48. The Casino** by Margaret Bonham Short stories by a 1940s writer with a unique voice and dark sense of humour; they were read on BBC Radio 4 in 2004 and 2005. Preface: Cary Bazalgette
- 49. Bricks and Mortar** by Helen Ashton An excellent 1932 novel by a very popular pre- and post-war writer, chronicling the life of a hard-working, kindly London architect and his wife over thirty-five years.
- 50. The World that was Ours** by Hilda Bernstein An extraordinary memoir that reads like a novel of the events before and after the 1964 Rivonia Trial. Mandela was given a life sentence but the Bernsteins escaped to England. Preface and Afterword: the author
- 51. Operation Heartbreak** by Duff Cooper A soldier misses going to war – until the end of his life. 'The novel I enjoyed more than any other in the immediate post-war years' (Nina Bawden). Afterword: Max Arthur
- 52. The Village** by Marghanita Laski This 1952 comedy of manners describes post-war readjustments in village life when love ignores the class barrier. Afterword: Juliet Gardiner
- 53. Lady Rose and Mrs Memmary** by Ruby Ferguson A 1937 novel about Lady Rose, who inherits a great house,

marries well – and then meets the love of her life on a park bench. A great favourite of the Queen Mother. Preface: Candia McWilliam

54. They Can't Ration These by **Vicomte de Mauduit** A 1940 cookery book about 'food for free', full of excellent (and now timely) recipes.

55. Flush by **Virginia Woolf** A light-hearted but surprisingly feminist 1933 'life' of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's spaniel, 'a little masterpiece of comedy' (*TLS*). A 'Book at Bedtime' on BBC R4. Preface: Sally Beaman

56. They Were Sisters by **Dorothy Whipple** A 1943 novel by this wonderful writer, contrasting three different marriages. Preface: Celia Brayfield

57. The Hopkins Manuscript by **RC Sherriff** What might happen if the moon crashed into the earth in 1946: a 1939 novel 'written' by a delightful anti-hero, 'Mr Hopkins'. Preface: Michael Moorcock, Afterword: George Gamow

58. Hetty Dorval by **Ethel Wilson** First novel (1947) set in the beautiful landscape of British Columbia; a young girl is befriended by a beautiful and selfish 'Menace' – but is she? Afterword: Northrop Frye

59. There Were No Windows by **Norah Hoult** A touching and funny novel, written in 1944, about an elderly woman with memory loss living in Kensington during the Blitz. Afterword: Julia Briggs

60. Doreen by **Barbara Noble** A 1946 novel about a child who is evacuated to the country during the war. Her mother regrets it; the family that takes her in wants to keep her. Preface: Jessica Mann

61. A London Child of the 1870s by **Molly Hughes** A classic memoir, written in 1934, about an 'ordinary, suburban Victorian family' in Islington, a great favourite with all ages. Preface: Adam Gopnik

62. How to Run Your Home Without Help by **Kay Smallshaw** A 1949 manual for the newly servantless housewife full of advice that is

historically interesting, useful nowadays and, as well, unintentionally funny. Preface: Christina Hardyment

63. Princes in the Land by **Joanna Cannan** A novel published in 1938 about a daughter of the aristocracy who marries an Oxford don; her three children fail to turn out as she had anticipated.

64. The Woman Novelist and Other Stories by **Diana Gardner** Short stories written in the late 1930s and early 1940s that are witty, sharp and with an unusual undertone. Preface: Claire Gardner

65. Alas, Poor Lady by **Rachel Ferguson** A 1937 novel, polemical but intensely readable, about the unthinking cruelty with which Victorian parents gave birth to daughters without anticipating any future for them apart from marriage.

66. Gardener's Nightcap by **Muriel Stuart** A 1938 pot pourri: a huge variety of miniature essays on gardening – such as Dark Ladies (fritillary), Better Gooseberries, Phlox Failure – which will be enjoyed by all gardeners, keen or lukewarm.

67. The Fortnight in September by **RC Sherriff** Another novel by the author of *Journey's End*, and of *The Hopkins Manuscript*, Persephone Book No. 57, about a family on holiday in Bognor in 1931; a quiet masterpiece.

68. The Expendable Man by **Dorothy B Hughes** A 1963 thriller about a young doctor in Arizona which encapsulates the social, racial and moral tensions of the time. By the author of *In a Lonely Place*. Afterword: Dominic Power

69. Journal of Katherine Mansfield The husband of the great short story writer (cf. *The Montana Stories*, Persephone Book No. 25) assembled this journal from unposted letters, scraps of writing etc: a unique portrait.

70. Plats du Jour by **Patience Gray and Primrose Boyd** A 1957 cookery book which was a bestseller at the time and a pioneering work for British cooks. The line drawings and the endpapers are by David Gentleman.

71. The Shuttle by **Frances Hodgson Burnett** A 1907 page-turner about Rosalie Vanderpoel, an American heiress who marries an English aristocrat, whose beautiful and enterprising sister Bettina sets out to rescue her. Preface: Anne Sebba

72. House-Bound by **Winifred Peck** This 1942 novel describes an Edinburgh woman deciding, radically, to run her house without help and do her own cooking; the war is in the background and foreground. Afterword: Penelope Fitzgerald

73. The Young Pretenders by **Edith Henrietta Fowler** An 1895 novel for adults and children about Babs, who lives with her uncle and aunt and has not yet learnt to dissemble. Preface: Charlotte Mitchell

74. The Closed Door and Other Stories by **Dorothy Whipple** Ten short stories drawn from the three collections (now extremely hard to find) that Dorothy Whipple published during her lifetime. Five of them were read on BBC R4 in 2007 and recently on R4 Extra.

75. On the Other Side: Letters to my Children from Germany 1940–46 by **Mathilde Wolff-Mönckeberg**. Written in Hamburg but never sent, these letters provide a crucial counterpoint to *Few Eggs and No Oranges*. Preface: Ruth Evans

76. The Crowded Street by **Winifred Holtby** A 1924 novel about Muriel's attempts to escape from small-town Yorkshire, and her rescue by Delia, alias Vera Brittain. Preface: Marion Shaw

77. Daddy's Gone A-Hunting by **Penelope Mortimer** This 1958 novel is about the 'captive wives' of the pre-war women's liberation era, bored and lonely in suburbia. Preface: Valerie Grove

78. A Very Great Profession: The Woman's Novel 1914–39 by **Nicola Beauman** A mixture of literary criticism and historical evocation, first published in 1983, about the women writers of the inter-war period.

79. Round About a Pound a Week by Maud Pember Reeves A study of working-class life in Lambeth in the early C20th that is witty, readable, poignant and fascinating – and relevant nowadays. Preface: Polly Toynbee

80. The Country Housewife's Book by Lucy H Yates A useful 1934 book, suggested to us by the owner of a working farm, on topics such as the storeroom and larder, using garden produce, and game.

81. Miss Buncle's Book by DE Stevenson A woman writes a novel, as 'John Smith', about the village she lives in. A delightful and funny 1934 book by an author whose work sold in millions. Preface: Aline Templeton

82. Amours de Voyage by Arthur Hugh Clough A novel in verse, set in Rome in 1849, funny and beautiful and profound, and extraordinarily modern in tone. Preface: Julian Barnes

83. Making Conversation by Christine Longford. An amusing, unusual 1931 novel about a girl growing up which is in the vein of *Cold Comfort Farm* and *Persephone Book No. 38 Cheerful Weather for the Wedding*. Preface: Rachel Billington

84. A New System of Domestic Cookery by Mrs Rundell The 1816 facsimile edition of an 1806 cookbook which is long, detailed and fascinating. Preface: Janet Morgan

85. High Wages by Dorothy Whipple Another novel by Persephone's bestselling writer about a girl setting up a dress shop just before the First World War. Preface: Jane Brocket

86. To Bed with Grand Music by Marghanita Laski A couple are separated by the war. She is serially unfaithful, a quite new take on 'women in wartime'. Preface: Juliet Gardiner

87. Dimanche and Other Stories by Irène Némirovsky Ten short stories by the author of *Suite Française*, written between 1934 and 1942. 'Luminous, extraordinary, stunning' was the verdict of reviewers.

88. Still Missing by Beth Gutcheon A 1981 novel about a woman whose six year-old son sets off on his own for

school and does not return. But his mother never gives up hope...

89. The Mystery of Mrs Blencarrow by Mrs Oliphant Two 1880s novellas about women shockingly, and secretly, abandoned by their husbands, that were favourites of Penelope Fitzgerald. Afterword: Merryn Williams

90. The Winds of Heaven by Monica Dickens This 1955 novel by the author of *Mariana* is about a widow with three rather unsympathetic daughters who eventually finds happiness. Afterword: AS Byatt

91. Miss Buncle Married by DE Stevenson A hugely enjoyable sequel to *Miss Buncle's Book* (No. 81): Miss Buncle marries and moves to a new village. Afterword: Fiona Bevan

92. Midsummer Night in the Workhouse by Diana Athill 'Funny, engaging and unexpected' (*Paris Review*): 1950s stories by the editor and memoir writer. Preface: the author, who also reads six of the stories as a *Persephone* audiobook.

93. The Sack of Bath by Adam Fergusson A 1973 polemic, with numerous black and white photographs, raging at the destruction of Bath's C18th artisan terraced housing. Preface: the author

94. No Surrender by Constance Maud A fascinating 1911 suffragette novel about a mill girl and her aristocratic friend. Preface: Lydia Felgett

95. Greenbanks by Dorothy Whipple A 1932 novel by our most popular author about a family and, in particular, a grandmother and her granddaughter. Afterword: Charles Lock

96. Dinners for Beginners by Rachel and Margaret Ryan A 1934 cookery book for the novice cook telling her everything in exacting and rather punishing detail: eye-opening and useful.

97. Harriet by Elizabeth Jenkins A brilliant but disquieting 1934 novel about the 1877 murder of Harriet Staunton. Afterword: Rachel Cooke

98. A Writer's Diary by Virginia Woolf Extracts from the diaries, covering the years 1918–41, selected

by Leonard Woolf in 1953 in order to show his late wife in the act of writing. Preface: Lyndall Gordon

99. Patience by John Coates A hilarious 1953 novel about a 'happily married' Catholic mother of three in St John's Wood who falls 'improperly in love'. Preface: Maureen Lipman

100. The Persephone Book of Short Stories Thirty stories to celebrate our 100th book: ten by Persephone authors, ten from the last decade's *Biannuals* and ten that are newly reprinted.

101. Heat Lightning by Helen Hull A young married woman spends a sultry and revelatory week with her family in small-town Michigan; a 1932 Book-of-the-Month Club Selection. Preface: Patricia McClelland Miller

102. The Exiles Return by Elisabeth de Waal A novel, written in the late 1950s but never published, about five exiles returning to Vienna after the war: a meditation on 'going back' and a love story. Preface: Edmund de Waal

103. The Squire by Enid Bagnold A woman gives birth to her fifth child: a rare, if not the only, novel (written in 1938) about the process of birth. Preface: Anne Sebba

104. The Two Mrs Abbotts by DE Stevenson The third 'Miss Buncle' book, published 1943, is about Barbara Abbott, as she now is, and the 'young' Mrs Abbott, keeping the home fires burning in Wandlebury during WWII.

105. Diary of a Provincial Lady by EM Delafield One of the funniest books ever written: a 1930 novel, written as a diary, about everyday family life. Afterword: Nicola Beauman

106. Into the Whirlwind by Eugenia Ginzburg A Russian woman is arrested in 1937 and sent to the Gulag. Filmed as *Within the Whirlwind* with Emily Watson. Afterword: Rodric Braithwaite

107. Wilfred and Eileen by Jonathan Smith A 1976 novel, based on fact, set in the years 1913–15. Wilfred is wounded in France and rescued by his wife. A four part television serial in 1981. Afterword: the author

'A LITTLE EPISODE' BY KATHERINE MANSFIELD

The one charm of the past is that it is past. But women never know when the curtain has fallen. Lord Henry in *Dorian Gray*

Yvonne moved slowly up the long, brilliantly lit Concert Hall. She bowed slightly to several acquaintances, faintly conscious of the men's admiring glances and the women's air of eager familiarity.

Suddenly she felt a slight pull at her skirt, and, looking down, saw Mrs Mason, a stout, moustached woman in an aggressively *décolleté* dress, smiling and holding out her hand.

'Good evening, Mrs Mason,' said Yvonne, smiling also, and pressing the hand gently.

'Good evening, Lady Mandeville... All alone? I hope that your husband's not seedy?'

'He's a little afraid that he's catching a cold in the head,' Yvonne replied, 'so thought it better to stay by the fire and nurse himself.'

'O very wise, very wise indeed,' said Mrs Mason, ruffling the lace on her bosom until she had all the appearance of a pigeon, 'sickness is so very prevalent just now.'

'Yes, wretchedly so,' answered Yvonne.

'My Ethel has had a frightful nose cold and now it's gone to her chest with a horrid loose cough. Of course she makes a

great fuss but I know the secret of all these things – good strong mustard plasters.'

'Is that so,' said Yvonne. She glanced at Mrs Mason's stout red arms and shivered slightly.

'I hope you're not catching anything,' continued Mrs. Mason – 'you're looking a little puffy about the eyes, my dear.'

She turned to a small pale woman seated beside her, whose paleness was accentuated by a great cluster of scarlet geraniums and maidenhair fern which crept up her left shoulder ... 'May I introduce my friend Mrs Wood –'

'How do you do?' said Yvonne, and moved to her seat.

'What a distinguished looking woman,' said Mrs. Wood, 'such grace, Amelia – she looks like a Du Maurier picture, doesn't she?'

'O yes, a dear little girl,' said Mrs Mason, fanning herself vigorously. 'I knew her husband before they were married – a very good, practical fellow. Don't you know about her?'

'No, nothing except that she is Lady Mandeville. Please tell me about her?'

'O she is a niece of Dr and Mrs Parratt – you know – those nice, quiet, thoughtful Church of England people in Bellevue Avenue – This girl was the daughter of Oswald Parratt – a younger brother and a complete failure. They tried him in everything – and at last he left all

his family – went to Paris and took to Art.'

Mrs. Wood murmured a little exclamation – which might have been horror or pity or sympathy.

'Then,' said Mrs. Mason, pulling up her long gloves, and carefully smoothing out the creases, 'he married some little obscure weed,' her voice was full of withering contempt, 'who died when this girl – Yvonne – was born. They say the Father never recovered from that – and the child was brought up helter skelter in a dreadful way, until when she was seventeen her Father died. You remember Dr. and Mrs Parratt were abroad at the time, so they rescued Yvonne – who hadn't a penny – and brought her to Manchester.'

'Just like them,' murmured Mrs Wood, softly.

'Yes. The child – at least she was half woman then – didn't even know the Catechism – had no clothes and smoked cigarettes ... It was a positive reformation. They changed her absolutely – and, as she was pretty, Geoffrey Mandeville fell in love with her and married her. Of course, as I told her, it was a mere fluke – the most wonderful good fortune. She, indeed, was perfectly dazed at the whole affair.'

'And has it been a success?'

'Turning out very well.'

'Have they any children?'

'No, not yet – but I should

think they would, certainly – they can easily afford it, and Geoffrey is just that sort of man – good and earnest and very thorough...'

Mrs. Wood glanced curiously at Yvonne – she leant back in her chair, her pale delicate face in repose wore a strangely listless expression – her fair, shining hair was arranged in fashionable puffs and curls. She wore a long black velvet kimono coat and looked the very embodiment of elegant languor.

And the girl was thinking –
'I am a damned fool to come here – I can't think why I did, and it would have been so easy to get out of it. But it was too great a temptation ... I wonder if he'll be the same – I wonder if he'll notice me – I shall certainly not dream of going to see him afterwards...'

A man came on to the platform to open the piano – Yvonne stirred slightly in her seat – and opened and shut her hands convulsively.

A moment later Jacques Saint Pierre was bowing before the audience.

She did not look up until he had seated himself at the piano – then ... he had not changed – the same slim figure – the same profusion of black hair brushed straight back from his face – the pouting, eager mouth, the beautiful expressive Musician hands.

A sudden wave of colour flooded her face – as he began to play.

Recollections – exquisite bitter sweet memories began to flock past her – a motley – sad,

fascinating troupe. She closed her eyes ... Back again in her Father's rooms – Jacques at the piano – Emil, half lying across the table – Jean by the fire – sketching them all ... She, sitting huddled up by her Father – his arm round her, cheek to cheek, heart to heart.

A thunderous, deafening burst of applause followed the *Appassionata*. The sharp, hard sound seemed to hurt her

physically – seemed to fall upon her bruised, trembling soul – like brutal blows.

Seized by an ungovernable impulse she rose and swiftly passed out of the hall.

'Please direct me to the Artists' Room,' she said.

The man looked at her enquiringly.

'Monsieur does not care to see –'

'I am a personal friend of



'Still Life with Fruit' by Sir Cedric Morris sold November 2013 by Messum's whereabouts unknown.

Monsieur Saint Pierre. It is by appointment.'

The man bowed. They passed down a narrow stone passage – through swing doors – 'second door to the right,' said the attendant and left her there.

Yvonne stood still a moment – she felt half suffocated – her heart seemed to be thudding – loudly and dully.

Then she suddenly ran forward and knocked at the door.

'Entrez,' said a voice.

She opened the door and stood, tremulous, tears trembling on her lashes, on the threshold.

Jacques was standing before a little fire – smoking a cigarette. He looked up, inquiringly – and then, seeing her – ran forward and took her two hands –

'Yvonne – Yvonne.'

'Jacques – Jacques.'

She was half laughing, half crying, inexpressibly, intoxicatingly beautiful ... the little charming chrysalis of studio days had become this fascinating Society butterfly – and to her – this dear, affectionate boy had become ideal man – ideal musician – the symbol of all her happy life – her Paris days.

'O,' she said, impulsively – childishly. 'I have been so miserable –'

She felt she must tell him everything – confide in him – ask his advice – win his sympathy – she felt she must hear again that curious caressing tone of his voice ... 'O Jacques.'

He drew forward a chair.

'Tenez,' he said, 'I must go and play again – wait here – nobody will come near you – Here are

some cigarettes and you must talk to me afterwards –'

'O yes – yes,' she cried.

He left her, closing the door.

Yvonne took a cigarette – lit it with a shadowy smile on her face – Very faintly she could hear the sound of the piano – If only they could see her now – all those fat, stolid Philistines – that idiot husband.

When Jacques came back she looked like an adorable child caught mischief-making – the man caught his breath sharply – He was excited by the music – and his hands trembled perceptibly – He did not wish to hear a long, burdensome confession – he wanted to hold this woman and kiss her. Some tremendous passion seemed to be shaking him.

'Well, tell me everything,' he said, leaning against the mantelpiece and looking into the fire.

Yvonne got up and stood beside him. She spoke very rapidly – in a low, even voice.

'It's only this Jacques. When I came from Paris here, O, I really thought I should have died – Jacques, I longed to die. I cried every night – but they had me in hand – they tortured me with everything. It went on for weeks – and until at last I had made up my mind that whatever happened – I should leave them. But I hadn't a penny – not even enough to pay postage stamps with – and no education – I couldn't teach – or sew – or anything...'

She put her hand on his sleeve – 'They crushed all my ideals – all my hopes – they made me

think of Paris – as Hell, the fools – and Father the Arch Fiend. Bon Dieu – I was friendless – homeless – helpless – Then Lord Mandeville came – and engaged himself to me – yes, that's the way to put it – and we've been married nine months.'

The man turned sharply – he was breathing hard.

'Ah! it is true,' said Yvonne – he thought he had never seen anyone so pale – 'and – think – here I am. I thought – once I married, I would be freer – but I'm *caged*. This great heavy brute who whistles "Little Mary" out of tune the whole day long – and who doesn't know a picture from a whisky advertisement. He's my husband – Pity me,' she cried.

Like a child she looked at him and he suddenly caught her in his arms. She felt as though she had left the world altogether. He seemed to give her just that support she had been needing – Jacques bent down and whispered – 'Stay here until the Concert is over – and then I will walk home with you – Be a good girl and promise me.'

She assented – and he placed her back in the chair. She never moved again – never looked up – or stirred – until he stood before her in his long coat and soft hat. 'Come along,' he said.

Out in the cold lighted streets they began talking again. He had drawn her arm through his and kept pressing her hand. Each time he did so a tremor ran through her – it was as though she held her life in her hand – and he crushed it – so.

'Is there nowhere where we can talk?' he said. Yvonne thought a moment – then she suddenly laughed.

'Well, there's my house – it's a little gardener's cottage not far from the gate – hidden by trees from the road and the house – There are just two rooms that I have furnished for myself – and Geoffrey has never been inside the door – we'll go there.'

It was almost disappointing – Yvonne could feel unhappy no longer – she could no longer realise what had made her so wretched – Nothing on earth seemed to matter – except that she was alive and loving, and tremendously excited.

'Jacques,' she said – 'you have all the air of the Great Life round you – you are making me feel again all the adorable irresponsibility of everything.'

He laughed shortly. It was making him half mad to walk thus – crushing her hand.

They passed through the wide iron gates.

Yvonne led the way – down an overgrown path – and into a little tree fringed space – There the house stood – a desolate place – she stooped down and groped for the key under the doormat.

'Enter,' she said, 'and give me some matches.'

They walked into a small square room – Yvonne lit four candles on the mantelpiece.

'How do you like it?' she said, joyously.

He looked round – here were all her Paris treasures – her Father's pictures – little odd familiar pieces of drapery – a

charcoal sketch of himself at the piano and then he turned and looked at Yvonne – Her fair shining hair glowed in the candle light – her mouth was scarlet – her eyes, curiously bright – She was still wrapped in her long cloak.

Never before had Yvonne needed so much love in her life. Primitive woman she felt – with primitive impulses – primitive needs – all conventions – all scruples were thrown to the four winds.

Jacques flung off his coat.

Then he came forward – She could not look at him – but stood – suddenly silent.

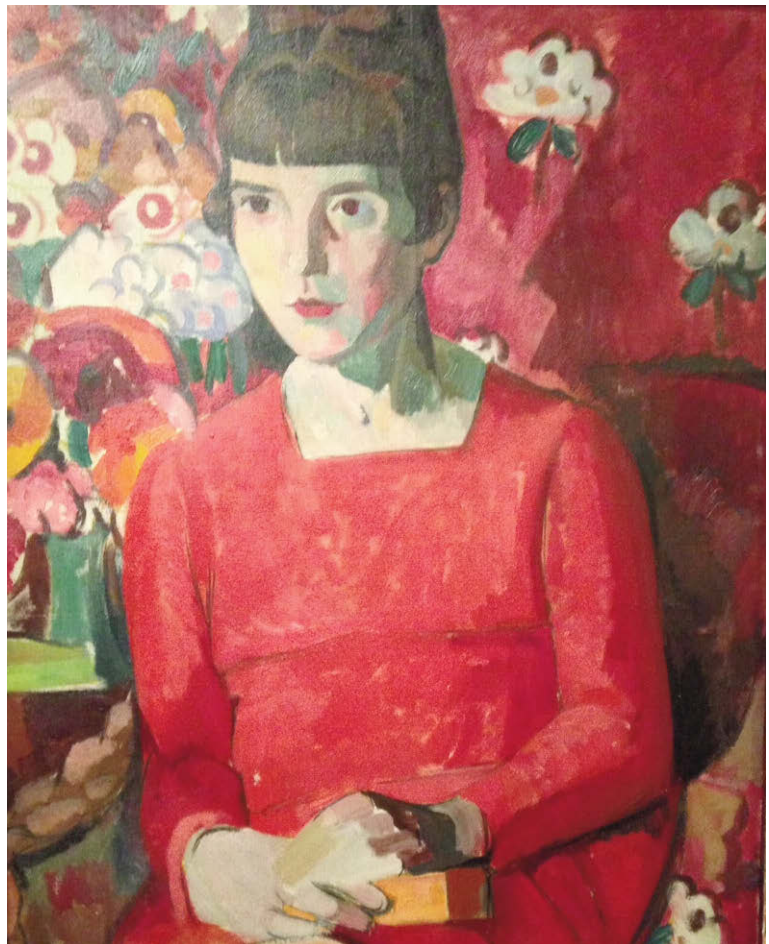
'Here,' he said, 'let me help you off with this,' and caught hold of her cloak.

'Thank you,' she murmured – suddenly and absurdly glad that her dress was beautiful. Then he caught hold of her – kissed her – roughly – repeatedly.

'Let me go,' she said, 'let me go,' yet lay passive in his arms.

'Yvonne – Yvonne – look at me.'

She put her arms round his



*Anne Estelle Rice painted **Portrait of Katherine Mansfield** in Cornwall in 1918. The painting now hangs in the Te Papa Museum, Wellington, New Zealand*

neck, and held up her face.

'O, you are killing me,' she moaned.

Yvonne – dishevelled – flushed – entered the hall of her home –

Lord Mandeville came out of the library.

'Hallo, what's up – what's the matter,' he said. 'Have you had an accident – where's the carriage?'

'I walked,' said Yvonne, 'and the wind has blown me about.'

'You've cut your lip, or something,' said Lord Mandeville, 'there's some blood on your chin.'

'It's nothing,' Yvonne answered.

She slowly mounted the stairs – then looked back over her shoulder – 'I'm going to bed.'

'O, alright, hurry up – I'm coming, too. Don't you want anything to eat?'

'No, thank you.'

When she reached her room she turned on all the lights. There was a large bright fire burning in the grate – the curtains were drawn and the room felt hot – stifling.

She ran to the glass – threw off her cloak and looked at herself, critically.

'O, I have lived – I have lived,' she cried – 'And I shall see Jacques tomorrow of course – something beautiful and stupendous is going to happen – O, I am alive again – at last!'

She threw off her clothes, hastily, brushed out her long hair, and then suddenly looked at the wide, empty bed. A feeling of

intolerable disgust came over her. By Lord Mandeville's pillow she saw a large bottle of Eucalyptus and two clean handkerchiefs.

From below in the hall she heard the sound of bolts being drawn – then the electric light switched off ...



Designed by C Lovat Fraser for the Curwen Press 1923, taken from David McKitterick A New Specimen Book of Curwen Pattern Papers 1987

She sprang into bed – and suddenly, instinctively with a little childish gesture – she put one arm over her face – as though to hide something hideous and

dreadful – as her husband's heavy ponderous footsteps sounded on the stairs...

About the same time Jacques Saint Pierre sat in his rooms at the Hotel Manchester – writing a letter –

'To-night – think of it – I saw Yvonne – she is quite a little Society lady – and I assure you – no longer one of us – But she bores me – she has the inevitable feminine passion for trying to relight fires that have long since been ashes – Take care, little one, that you do not – like wise. I hear her husband is very wealthy – and – what they call here – a "howling bore".'

Adieu – chérie – I shall be with you in two days – if I manage to avoid the charming Yvonne – There is the penalty, you see, for being so fascinating.

Jacques Saint Pierre.'

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This short story, thought to have been written in 1909, was unpublished until last year, when it was discovered in the ADAM International Review Archive at King's College, London by Chris Mourant, and reprinted by the Edinburgh University Press in The Edinburgh Edition of the Collected Fiction of Katherine Mansfield, It conveys Katherine Mansfield's bitterness and disillusion after the musician Garnet Trowell (Jacques) abandoned her when she became pregnant, and after she herself left her new husband George Bowden (Mandeville): she had married him for reasons of propriety but found him too dull to live with for even a day.

ELIZABETH JANE HOWARD

Elizabeth Jane Howard, who died on 2 January 2014 aged 90, was a novelist who might have been outstanding, but for her turbulent emotional life. With a good education and better luck with men, she could have written one exceptional novel. As it was, she brought pleasure to thousands of readers, yet it is hard to point to any one of her novels and say, this one, yes, this is a top-class book. She was neither 'literary', nor a consistent bestseller, nevertheless the four Cazalet books she wrote in the 1990s did extremely well.

Her strengths were her subtle and intelligent voice and readability, which she once said should be a novel's first aim. She focused on a corner of English life with which her readers could easily identify, was good at place and setting and detail, and tended to use consistent types, such as the dull, retired Army officer (kindly or criminal), the confident man of the world, and the passive young girl.

The Long View (1956) began: 'This, then, was the situation. Eight people were to dine that evening in the house at Campden Hill Square. Mrs Fleming had arranged the party (it was the kind of unoriginal thought expected of her, and she sank obediently to the occasion) to celebrate her son's engagement to June Stoker . . . [who] would be introduced to a

company which had otherwise long ceased to discover anything about themselves likely to increase either their animation or their intimacy.' This is a very typical passage, in its Middle England setting, its excellent turn of phrase, its story-telling quality – and its bleakness.

Jane Howard's first husband was the naturalist Peter Scott, son of Captain Scott and 14 years older than her, whom she married in the spring of 1942 when she was 19. Her only child, a daughter, Nicola, was born the following February. She abandoned the marriage in 1947 ('happily without bitterness' on either side, Scott would write) and also her child, something which appalls most women but about which she was only mildly regretful. She visited her daughter 'regularly, but I was not a good mother': one senses that it is largely to the daughter's credit that their later relationship flourished.

There were many other lovers – 'every time I fell in love with anyone, they used to make me a reading list but I never caught up with it because I was in love with someone else,' she once said. Her affair with Kingsley Amis began in 1962 when he spoke at the Cheltenham Festival of which she was, that year, artistic director. They moved in together the next year and married in 1965, eventually

settling in a large house called Lemmons, near Barnet in Hertfordshire. Here she cooked, gardened, tried to be a good stepmother, kept house for her brother and invalid mother, and had numerous long-term guests. After the marriage crumbled she went to live in a basement in Camden Town and in 1990 moved to Bungay in Suffolk, to a beautiful old house on a river. Here she lived with her beloved Cavalier King Charles spaniel Darcy, keeping her hair long and wearing leggings long after most women of a certain age have given both up, symbols of a new self-confidence, helped by psychoanalysis. Proud that she always earned her own living, she tried to write 300 words every day. Apart from her novels, she wrote articles, television scripts, book reviews, gardening columns and, with Fay Maschler, a very good cookery book. A preoccupation in her work was that of responsibility towards others and, although a 'bolter', she developed a great sense of loyalty and devotion to her daughter, four grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and was a firm friend to many. 'The most important things in life cannot be taught,' she once remarked. 'But life is so organised that you get the hang of things just when you're on the way out. It seems frightfully unfair.'

Obituary by Nicola Beauman in the Independent 3 January 2014

‘THE RATHER DIFFICULT CASE OF MR K*A*P*L*A*N’

In the third week of the new term, Mr Parkhill was forced to the conclusion that Mr Kaplan’s case was rather difficult. Mr Kaplan first came to his special attention, out of the thirty-odd adults in the beginners’ grade of the American Night Preparatory School for Adults (‘English – Americanization – Civics – Preparation for Naturalization’), through an exercise the class had submitted. The exercise was entitled ‘Fifteen Common Nouns and Their Plural Forms.’ Mr Parkhill came to one paper which included the following:

House ... makes ... house
Dog ... “ ... dogies
Library ... “ ... Public library
Cat ... “ ... Katz

Mr Parkhill read this over several times, very thoughtfully. He decided that here was a student who might, unchecked, develop into a ‘problem case’. It was clearly a case that called for special attention. He turned the page over and read the name. It was printed in large, firm letters with red crayon. Each letter was outlined in blue. Between every two letters was a star, carefully drawn, in green. The multi-coloured whole spelled, unmistakably, H*Y*M*A*N K*A*P*L*A*N.

This Mr Kaplan was in his forties, a plump, red-faced

gentleman, with wavy blond hair, two fountain pens in his outer pocket, and a perpetual smile. It was a strange smile, Mr Parkhill remarked: vague, bland, and consistent in its monotony. The thing that emphasized it for Mr Parkhill was that it never seemed to leave the face of Mr Kaplan, even during Recitation and Speech period. This disturbed Mr Parkhill considerably, because Mr Kaplan was particularly bad in Recitation and Speech.

Mr Parkhill decided he had not applied himself as conscientiously as he might to Mr Kaplan’s case. That very night he called on Mr Kaplan first.

‘Won’t you take advantage of Recitation and Speech practice, Mr Kaplan?’ he asked, with an encouraging smile.

Mr Kaplan smiled back and answered promptly, ‘Vell, I’ll tell abot Prazidents United States. Fife Prazidents United States is Abram Lincohen, he vas freeink de neegers; Hodding, Coolitch, Judge Vashington, an’ Benjamin Frenklin.’

Further encouragement revealed that in Mr Kaplan’s literary Valhalla the ‘most famous tree American wriders’ were Jeck Laundon, Valt Viterman, and the author of ‘Hawk L. Barry-Feen,’ one Mock-tvain. Mr Kaplan took pains to point out that he did not mention Relfvaldo Amerson because ‘He is a poyet, an’ I’m

talkink abot wriders.’

Mr Parkhill diagnosed the case as one of ‘inability to distinguish between “a” and “e”.’ He concluded that Mr Kaplan *would* need special attention. He was, frankly, a little disturbed.

Mr Kaplan’s English showed no improvement during the next hard weeks. The originality of his spelling and pronunciation, however, flourished – like a sturdy flower in the good, rich earth. A man to whom ‘Katz’ is the plural of ‘cat’ soon soars into higher and more ambitious endeavor. As a one-paragraph ‘Exercise in Composition’ Mr Kaplan submitted:

When people is meating on the boulevard, on going away one is saying, ‘I am glad I mat you,’ and the other is giving answer, ‘Mutual.’

Mr Parkhill felt that perhaps Mr Kaplan had overreached himself, and should be confined to the simpler exercises.

Mr Kaplan was an earnest student. He worked hard, knit his brows regularly (albeit with that smile), did all his homework, and never missed a class. Only once did Mr Parkhill feel that Mr Kaplan might, perhaps, be a little more *serious* about his work. That was when he asked Mr Kaplan to ‘give a noun’.

‘Door,’ said Mr Kaplan, smiling.

It seemed to Mr Parkhill that

'door' had been given only a moment earlier, by Miss Mitnick.

'Y-es,' said Mr Parkhill. 'Er – and another noun?'

'Another door,' Mr Kaplan replied promptly.

Mr Parkhill put him down as a doubtful 'C'. Everything pointed to the fact that Mr Kaplan might have to be kept on an extra three months before he was ready for promotion to Composition, Grammar, and Civics, with Miss Higby.

One night Mrs. Moskowitz read a sentence, from 'English for Beginners,' in which 'the vast deserts of America' were referred to. Mr Parkhill soon discovered that poor Mrs. Moskowitz did not know the meaning of 'vast.'

'Who can tell us the meaning of "vast"?' asked Mr Parkhill lightly.

Mr Kaplan's hand shot up, volunteering wisdom. He was all proud grins. Mr Parkhill, in the rashness of the moment, nodded to him.

Mr Kaplan rose, radiant with joy. "'Vast.'" It's commink fromm *diraction*. Ve have four diractions: de naut, de sot, de heast, and de vast.'

Mr Parkhill shook his head. 'Er – that is 'west,' Mr Kaplan.' He wrote 'VAST' and 'WEST' on the blackboard. To the class he added, tolerantly, that Mr Kaplan was apparently thinking of 'west,' whereas it was 'vast' which was under discussion.

This seemed to bring a great light into Mr Kaplan's inner world. 'So is "vast" vat you eskink?'

Mr Parkhill admitted that it

was 'vast' for which he was asking.

'Aha!' cried Mr Kaplan. 'You minn "*vast*", not' – with scorn – "vast".'

'Yes,' said Mr Parkhill, faintly.

'Hau Kay!' said Mr Kaplan, essaying the vernacular. 'Ven I'm buyink a suit clothes, I'm gattink de cawt, de pents, an' de vast!'

Stunned, Mr Parkhill shook his head, very sadly. 'I'm afraid that you've used still another word, Mr Kaplan.'

Oddly enough, this seemed to give Mr Kaplan great pleasure.

Several nights later Mr Kaplan took advantage of Open Questions period. This ten-minute period was Mr Parkhill's special innovation in the American Night Preparat-ory School for Adults. It was devoted to answering any questions which the students might care to raise about any difficulties which they might have encountered during the course of their adventures with the language. Mr Parkhill enjoyed Open Questions. He liked to clear up *practical* problems. He felt he was being ever so much more constructive that way. Miss Higby had once told him that he was a born Open Questions teacher.

'Plizz, Mr Pockheel,' asked Mr Kaplan as soon as the period opened. 'Vat's de minnk fromm –' It sounded, in Mr Kaplan's rendition, like 'a big department'.

"A big department", Mr Kaplan?' asked Mr Parkhill, to make sure.

'Yassir!' Mr Kaplan's smile was beauteous to behold. 'In de stritt, ven I'm valkink, I'm hearink like

"I big de pottment".'

It was definitely a pedagogical opportunity.

'Well, class,' Mr Parkhill began. 'I'm sure that you have all –'

He told them that they had all probably done some shopping in the large downtown stores. (Mr Kaplan nodded.) In these large stores, he said, if they wanted to buy a pair of shoes, for example, they went to a special *part* of the store, where only shoes were sold – a *shoe* department. (Mr Kaplan nodded.) If they wanted a table, they went to a different part of the store, where *tables* were sold. (Mr Kaplan nodded.) If they wanted to buy, say, a goldfish, they went to still another part of the store, where goldfish ... (Mr Kaplan frowned; it was clear that Mr Kaplan had never bought a goldfish.)

'Well, then,' Mr Parkhill summed up hastily, 'each article is sold in a different *place*. These different and special places are called *departments*.' He printed 'D-E-P-A-R-T-M-E-N-T' on the board in large, clear capitals. 'And a *big* department, Mr Kaplan, is merely such a department which is large – *big*!'

He put the chalk down and wiped his fingers.

'Is that clear now, class?' he asked, with a little smile. (It was rather an ingenious explanation, he thought; it might be worth repeating to Miss Higby during the recess.)

It was clear. There were thirty nods of approval. But Mr Kaplan looked uncertain. It was obvious that Mr Kaplan, a man who would not compromise with

truth, did *not* find it clear.

'Isn't that clear *now*, Mr Kaplan?' asked Mr Parkhill anxiously.

Mr Kaplan pursed his lips in thought. 'It's a *fine* haxplination, Titcher,' he said generously, 'but I don' unnstand vy I'm hearink de voids de vay I do. Simms to me it's used in annodder minnick.'

'There's really only one meaning for "a big department".' Mr Parkhill was definitely worried by this time. 'If that's the phrase you mean.'

Mr Kaplan nodded gravely. 'Oh, dat's de phrase – ufcawss! It sonds like dat – or maybe a leetle more like "I big de pottment".'

Mr Parkhill took up the chalk. ('I big department' was obviously a case of Mr Kaplan's own

curious audition.) He repeated the explanation carefully, this time embellishing the illustrations with a shirt department, a victrola section, and 'a separate part of the store where, for example, you buy canaries, or other birds.'

Mr Kaplan sat entranced. He followed it all politely, even the part about 'canaries, or other birds.' He smiled throughout with consummate reassurance.

Mr Parkhill was relieved, assuming, in his folly, that Mr Kaplan's smiles were a testimony to his exposition. But when he had finished, Mr Kaplan shook his head once more, this time with a new and superior firmness.

'Is the explanation still not clear?' Mr Parkhill was genuinely

concerned by this time.

'Is de haxplination clear!' cried Mr Kaplan with enthusiasm. 'Ha! I should live so! Soitinly! Clear like *gold*! So clear! An' netcheral too! But Mr Pockheel –'

'Go on, Mr Kaplan,' said Mr Parkhill, studying the white dust on his fingers. There was, after all, nothing more to be done.

'Vell! I tink it's more like 'I big de pottment".'

'Go on, Mr Kaplan, go on.'
(*Domine, dirige nos.*)

Mr Kaplan rose. His smile was broad, luminous, transcendent; his manner was regal.

'I'm hearink it in de stritt. Somtimes I'm stendink in de stritt, talkink to a frand, or mine wife, mine brodder – or maybe only stendink. An' somvun is pessink around me. An' by hexident he's givink me a bump, you know, a *poosh*! Vell, he says, "Axcuse me!" no? But somtimes, an' dis is vat I minn, he's sayink, "I big de pottment!"'

Mr Parkhill studied the picture of 'Abram Lincohen' on the back wall, as if reluctant to face reality. He wondered whether he could reconcile it with his conscience if he were to promote Mr Kaplan to Composition, Grammar, and Civics – at once. Another three months of Recitation and Speech might, after all, be nothing but a waste of Mr Kaplan's valuable time.

The first Hyman Kaplan story was published in The New Yorker in 1937 and The Education of Hyman Kaplan by Leonard Q Ross (Leo Rosten's pseudonym) later that year.

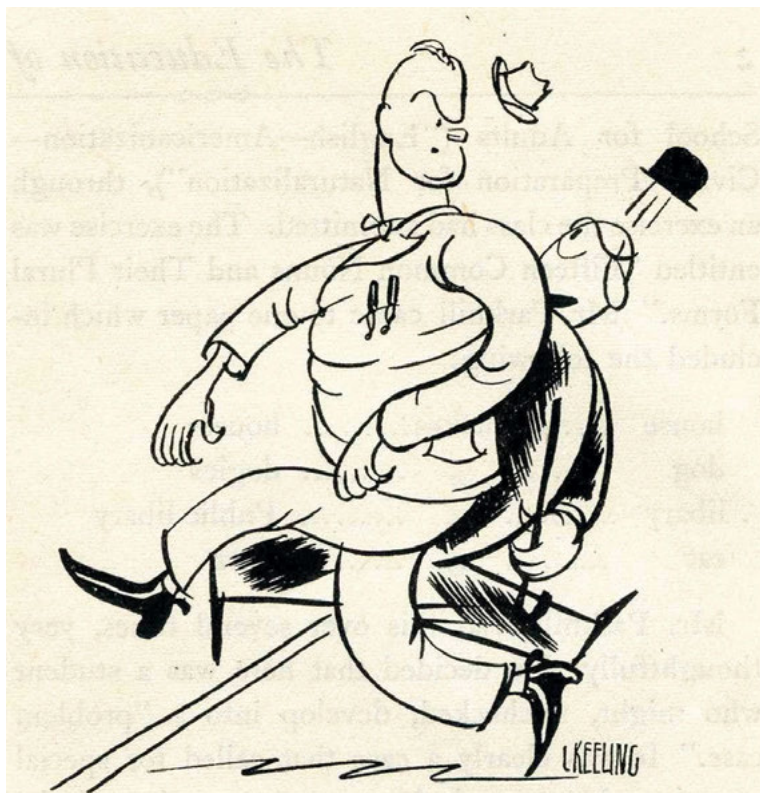


Illustration by C Keeling in The Education of Hyman Kaplan

FOUR COPYRIGHT HOLDERS

Last year saw the death of some of Persephone's most stalwart supporters – four distinguished men who were also copyright holders. Every time the owner is the family (rather than a detached, corporate agent which is the case with half our books) the relationship has been delightful. The range is vast: the owner of the *Lettice Delmer* copyright receives only infrequent cheques but is nevertheless kind and interested; and the family which has actually made quite significant sums from *Miss Pettigrew* over nearly fifteen years is hugely supportive, helping us in the shop, taking us out to dinner once a year, negotiating the musical rights (!) and generally being part of the adventure.

Professor John Playfair, a leading professor of immunology, was born in 1931, the son of Major-General Ian Playfair and Jocelyn (née Malan), the novelist and author of *A House in the Country*. He read medicine at Cambridge, qualified as a doctor at King's, London and spent most of his working life as an immunologist at the Middlesex Hospital, where he researched tropical diseases including malaria. During the early 1960s he wrote several novels, and he published three textbooks, the last *Living with Germs* (2004). Later he also wrote crime novels (soon to be e-books), played the clarinet and

collected rare instruments, and painted and drew. In 1959 he married Line (sharing her lifelong devotion to her native Corsica); they had two daughters.

Leo Cooper, the publisher and husband to Jilly, b. 1934 in Yorkshire, left Radley with more sporting colours than exam results; but after national service in Kenya, his Aunt Lettice (author of *The New House*) helped him to find a job at Longman's. After a brief first marriage (and a daughter), he and Jilly were married in 1961. He worked at André Deutsch and Hamish Hamilton and in 1968 he set up his own firm publishing military history. 'Were it not for Leo, the list of those "which have no memorial" would be far longer. Too nice a man to have made a successful soldier himself, Leo thought that those who had been at the sharp end deserved to have their say' (*Guardian*). His memoirs came out in 2005. He and Jilly were parents of a son and a daughter.

Sir Michael Jenkins, the diplomat, b. 1936, was the son of the Byzantine scholar Romilly Jenkins and his Swiss-Belgian wife Céline. He went to the same school, St Christopher, Letchworth, as his aunt Elizabeth Jenkins (author of *Harriet*) and like her he went to Cambridge. He then joined the Foreign Office and was posted in turn to

Paris, Bonn, Moscow, the European Commission in Brussels (1973–85), Washington and the Netherlands, where he was Ambassador from 1988–93. He then became director, later vice-chairman of the city bank Kleinwort Benson. In 1992 he wrote the much-admired *A House in Flanders* (in print with Slightly Foxed), lived in Chelsea (he was Commissioner of the Royal Hospital) and was married to Maxine Jenkins with whom he had a son and a daughter.

Colonel Kay Coates, of the Parachute Regiment, b. 1936, was brought up in Holland (his mother Sonja was Dutch) but lived with relations in South Africa throughout the war. He came back in 1946, first to Ewhurst and then to the house in Argyle Road, Kensington where his father John Coates wrote all his plays and novels (including *Patience*). He went to Eastbourne College and then Sandhurst, joined the Anglian Regiment and was seconded to the Parachute Regiment. After postings to Canada, Germany and Northern Ireland, he was Commanding Officer of the 3rd Battalion The Parachute Regiment from 1978–80. In England he and his wife Suzie lived on Gold Hill, Farnham with their son (who died tragically in 1983 when he was 20) and their daughter who as Ceci Jenkinson is an accomplished writer of children's books.

REVIEWS OF EXILES (USA)

‘**T**he *Exiles Return* has an immediacy that makes Elisabeth de Waal’s readers feel the experiences of its characters in a visceral way. De Waal renders her characters’ inner lives with tremendous nuance. Any story that takes place amid major historical events runs the risk of what you might call, the Titanic effect. But for the most part, the novel manages to sidestep that problem. With its publication we are allowed to hear a voice that has not only endured but, by the subtlety and fervour of its free expression, triumphed.’ *The New York Times*

‘**P**ostwar Vienna emerges in Elisabeth de Waal’s always insightful worldview as a rotten if sometimes still magnificent ruin. All the returnees have family ties to Vienna. Professor Adler is the most burdened by memory: “The quality of that voice, of that accent, soft and yet rough, ingratiating and slightly vulgar, sensible to the ear as a certain kind of stone is to the touch.” What a multitude of conflicting reactions de Waal manages to pack into these few, exquisitely rendered words. *The Exiles Return* is all the more impressive because de Waal felt that her lack of audience had to do with the quality of her work: “I lack the common touch ... I distill too much.” No, she does not! That fine distillation, that capturing of essence, is her glory. *The Exiles Return* succeeds magnificently

on its own uncompromising terms as a work of fiction.’ *San Francisco Gate*

‘**I**n this cityscape turned metaphor the new order has yet to emerge. In Carol Reed’s classic film *The Third Man* this disorientation is captured in



compositions of shadows and strange angles, and in a story of desperation and moral corruption. In *The Exiles Return* the city’s corruption is manifested in subtler ways, as it distorts the manners and values of those who come into contact with it. Each character is borrowed, more or less wholesale, from the classic novels the author loved. Resi is Isabel Archer from *Portrait of a Lady* and Kanakis is the Baron de Charlus in *In Search of Lost Time*. This is not, perhaps, a new story, but it is told with sharpness and authenticity.’ *The New Republic*

‘**T**here is a distinctly *fin de siècle* feel to this novel about Viennese exiles coming back to their native city in the mid-1950s. It captures the atmosphere of post-World War II Vienna, with its crumbling buildings, decaying aristocracy, mercantile fervor and ideological denial. But its restrained prose style and preoccupation with the gap between public morality and private behaviour evoke even more strongly the novels of Henry James, Thomas Hardy, Gustave Flaubert, Leo Tolstoy and other nineteenth-century masters.’ *The Chicago Tribune*

‘**Q**uestions of power and *savoir-vivre* suffuse the plot, whether those issues play out through money, morality or a final bit of melodrama, assembled in an unusual tableau – evocative and altogether memorable. Edmund de Waal notes that *The Exiles Return* was first published in the UK in 2013 “in the week of the 75th anniversary of the Anschluss, the cataclysmic, convulsive act when Austria allowed Hitler to enter unopposed into Vienna.” Introducing the novel at the Austrian Cultural Institute in London, he recalls, “was not a melancholic occasion. It was a powerful affirmation of how stories can survive and find audiences.”’ *Washington Post*

AND ANOTHER THING

We are setting up a **Persephone Prize** for the best 2–3000 word essay on a subject connected with Persephone Books: on one of our authors or one of our novels, on a group of linked books (eg. mothers and children, the Second World War), or on a theme (eg. domesticity) or a focus (eg. the canon, neglected women writers). Full details of the £1000 prize will be sent out at the beginning of May. The winner will be asked to read the first page of their piece at a party for Persephone readers in March 2015. It will be published in the April 2015 ***Biannually***. The judges will be Charlie Lee-Potter, Charlotte Mitchell, Jane Brocket, Jenny Hartley and Nicola Beauman.

There is a new Persephone bag: it is grey (of course) with our logo and address on both sides and it is a different design from the current bag in that it is heavy-duty cotton and easier to sling over one's shoulder. The inside is lined in ***The Winds of Heaven*** fabric (but in grey and white not pink). The bags, which are £10, are made by Re-Wrap, a women's co-operative in Mysore in India and are made using ethically sourced cotton and environmentally safe dying and printing processes.

Curious Arts Festival takes place from **Friday 18th to Sunday 20th July** at Pylewell

Park, Lymington in the New Forest and Persephone Books is one of the sponsors. Among the writers who will be there are Lady Antonia Fraser, Rachel Joyce, Deborah Levy, MJ Hyland and Claudia Renton; there will be bibliotherapy, films, ghost stories, donkey rides, live music, a cricket match, and ***Tea with Persephone Books*** on the Saturday afternoon. Weekend tickets are £100 and day tickets £45, but there is a discount for Persephone readers who book before May 15th (put in the code PBCurious on the Curious Arts website). The very keen can camp for two nights (in rather luxurious tents) or there is always a Bed-and-Breakfast.

This year we are closing the shop for the week of August

11th – while the Persephone office goes to Cornwall, to Trebetherick where John Betjeman used to stay. Do let us know if you can visit and are able to join us for a cup of tea on the beach.

The October books are ***The Happy Tree*** by Rosalind Toynbee, a 1927 novel about the effect of the First World War on those left behind; ***The Country Life Cookery Book*** with illustrations by Eric Ravilious; and ***Because of the Lockwoods***, a 1949 novel by Dorothy Whipple (the eighth title by her we publish). We shall also be bringing out ***The Persephone 110: a Diary for 2015*** containing every single one of our endpapers and the opening sentence of each book.



Burne-Jones's house, North End House, Rottingdean on the left; later on, when Enid Bagnold and her husband lived there, the three houses were combined into one and became known as North End House. They are now separated again.

© Mary Evans Picture Library

EVENTS

The first event this spring is a Persephone **Lunch from 12.30–2.30** on **Tuesday May 20th** at which **Jonathan Smith** will talk about his novel **Wilfred and Eileen**, Persephone Book No.107.

On **Wednesday June 4th** there will be a Persephone **Tea** in a house on the Green in Rottingdean (cf. previous page). This was the setting for **The Squire**, Persephone book No. 103. The owners of Prospect Cottage and North End House (formerly combined, with Aubrey Cottage, into one house) have kindly said we can arrive at 3 to be shown round, and then there will be a cream tea at Hillside next door. We hope to gather beforehand for an informal lunch on the beach and a visit to the local museum's exhibition about Enid Bagnold.

On **Monday June 16th** at **Pushkin House**, the home of Russian culture in London, 5A Bloomsbury Square WC1, Sir Rodric Braithwaite, who wrote the Persephone Afterword to **Into the Whirlwind**, and Professor Catherine Merridale, an expert on C20th Russian history, will be in conversation about Eugenia Ginzburg. The event, organised by Pushkin House, is from 7–9 and includes a glass of wine.

On **Wednesday June 25th** we shall show the superb but very rarely-shown 2009 film of **Within the Whirlwind** at the

British Film Institute 21 Stephen Street W1; it stars Emily Watson, who is brilliant and unforgettable. The **BFI** now has a branch of **Benugo's** upstairs, where we shall have a sandwich lunch at 1 pm. The film will then be shown downstairs at 2 pm.



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And on **Wednesday July 9th** we shall show the 1981 four-part (2 hour long) television serial of Jonathan Smith's novel **Wilfred and Eileen** starring Judi Bowker and Christopher Guard, again at the **BFI** in Stephen Street with a **Benugo's** lunch upstairs at 1 pm and the film downstairs at 2 pm.

The first **Curious Arts Festival** takes place at Pylewell Park from **Friday July 18th until Sunday 20th**. On **Saturday 19th** there will be a Cream Tea and Talk about the first fifteen years of Persephone Books. Our books will be for sale courtesy of the Lutyens & Rubinstein Bookshop.

On **Wednesday September 24th** the NADFAS lecturer and Pevsner biographer Susie Harries will give a **Lunchtime Lecture** with slides at the shop. Her subject will be **The Architecture of Bloomsbury**. The talk, at 12.30, will be in two halves with a salad lunch halfway through.

On **Wednesday October 8th** there will be another event at **Carlyle's House** in Chelsea. We shall meet at 5 for a tour of the house, and over a glass of madeira, sitting in Carlyle's attic, have an informal bookgroup about **The Carlyles at Home**, Persephone Book no. 32.

On **Wednesday October 15th** Lynne Hatwell, aka dovegreyreader, will talk at a Persephone **Lunch** on the theme of mothers and children in Persephone books, covering titles such as **Saplings**, **Family Roundabout** and **Princes in the Land**.

Each event costs £20; that is apart from the one on June 16th which costs £7. To book any event please phone the shop.

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If we have failed to acknowledge something that appears in the Persephone Biannually, please let us know.

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