



# The Persephone Biannually

**N° 16 Autumn/Winter 2014–15**  
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**[www.persephonebooks.co.uk](http://www.persephonebooks.co.uk)**

*Detail from a portrait of Nina Hammett painted by Roger Fry (1866–1934) in 1917. She is seen wearing a dress designed by Vanessa Bell and made at the Omega Workshop © the Stanley and Audrey Burton Gallery, University of Leeds. The cushion on the right is the material called 'Maud' used for Wilfred and Eileen.*



# OUR BOOKS FOR AUTUMN/WINTER 2014–15

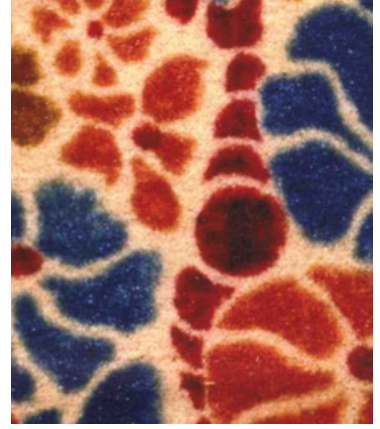
Persephone Book No.108, *The Happy Tree* (1926) by Rosalind Murray, begins with the death of a young man during the war, flashes back to his happy childhood shared with the young woman who is the narrator, and then describes how the war – inevitably – took them unawares, destroyed their happiness and has left her, the young woman, emotionally maimed. In one sense it does not sound very entertaining. But the quality of the writing is extraordinary and it tells the reader as much about the after-shock of the war as, say, *Testament of Youth*.

Unlike *Wilfred and Eileen*, which focuses on the years 1913–15 and does not show the aftermath, *The Happy Tree* is focused on what happens when the war has ended. This is why quoting the closing lines of the book, here and on the bookmark, does not ‘give the plot away’:

*And this is all that has happened. It does not seem very much. It does not seem worth writing about. I was happy when I was a child, and I married the wrong person, and some one I loved dearly was killed in the war . . . that is all. And all those things must be true of thousands of people.*

A contemporary reviewer wrote about *The Happy Tree*, having quoted these lines: ‘Well, they are “true of thousands of people”, but most women of forty cannot sit down and see how life has taken them and shaped their plans into others and ignored their hopes for beautiful things that never happen. Most women, too, the thousands who might have written this story, cannot take disappointment and ugly houses and imperfect husbands and change such elements of life into a spiritual experience that is beautiful, and something that is not a sordid string of complaints. Clarity and proportion, rare words to apply to the new fiction. *The Happy Tree* stands almost alone.’

As Charlotte Mitchell writes in her new Persephone Preface: the novel ‘tells the story of Helen Woodruffe, who grows up partly in her grandmother’s London house in Campden Hill Square and partly with some cousins, the Laurier family, who live on a country estate called Yearsly. There, sometimes under a special “Happy Tree”, she passes an idyllic childhood with Guy and Hugo Laurier. Helen is more or less in love with Hugo, but since he doesn’t seem to want her she



*Taken from a printed woollen plush designed by TF Firth & Sons in 1926 © V & A Images*



*Taken from an early 1930s design for a screen-printed textile by Josef Hillerbrand for Morton Sundour © V & A Images*



*Taken from 'Chestnut', a 1949 screen-printed cotton Mary Bryan designed for Edintaken from a printed woollen plush*



drifts into marriage with one of his Oxford contemporaries, Walter Sebright, who comes from a hard-working middle-class family not in sympathy with the Lauriers or with the gentry's attitude to life. When the First World War comes Walter is judged medically unfit to fight, but Guy and Hugo go to war; only Guy returns.'

People occasionally ask how we find our books and we are often stumped. But in this case there was a specific recommendation: we discovered Rosalind Murray's novel because a Persephone reader was intrigued by a mention of her in Virginia Woolf's *Diary* and started looking for her books. Then we read that EM Forster called her first novel *The Leading Note* (1910) one of the 'two best novels I have come across in the past year' (the other was Felix Wedgwood's *Shadow of a Titan*). Sadly, the only place we could discover anything about Rosalind Murray (1890–1967) was in William McNeill's biography of her husband. Here it transpired that she was the daughter of the classical scholar Gilbert Murray and of Lady Mary Howard and was only in her early '20s when her first three novels were published; by the time *The Happy Tree* came out she was married to the historian Arnold Toynbee and was the mother of three small boys. It is a pity that her husband's biographer is, in

Charlotte Mitchell's words, 'markedly unsympathetic to Rosalind, accusing her among other things of being snobbish, imperious, badly-dressed and responsible for her husband's not fighting in the war. *The Happy Tree*, her own analysis of her chances and her choices, offers the possibility of a more nuanced view, and records the impact of the war on a generation of women torn between an old world which had been destroyed and a new world whose rules they had not yet learned.'

Our proof-reader Kitty wrote: 'I found the book remarkable on all sorts of different levels. The way people felt in the lead-up to the beginning of the war was very real – the initial disbelief and then their gradual acceptance of the inevitability of it. The descriptions of Yearsly and the changes to it during and after the war, insights into pre-war Oxford undergraduate life, descriptions of walks through London, and details of wartime living – all



*'Portrait of Tirzah Garwood' by Phyllis Dodd 1929 taken from Long Live Great Bardfield p.102 (cf. p.17)*

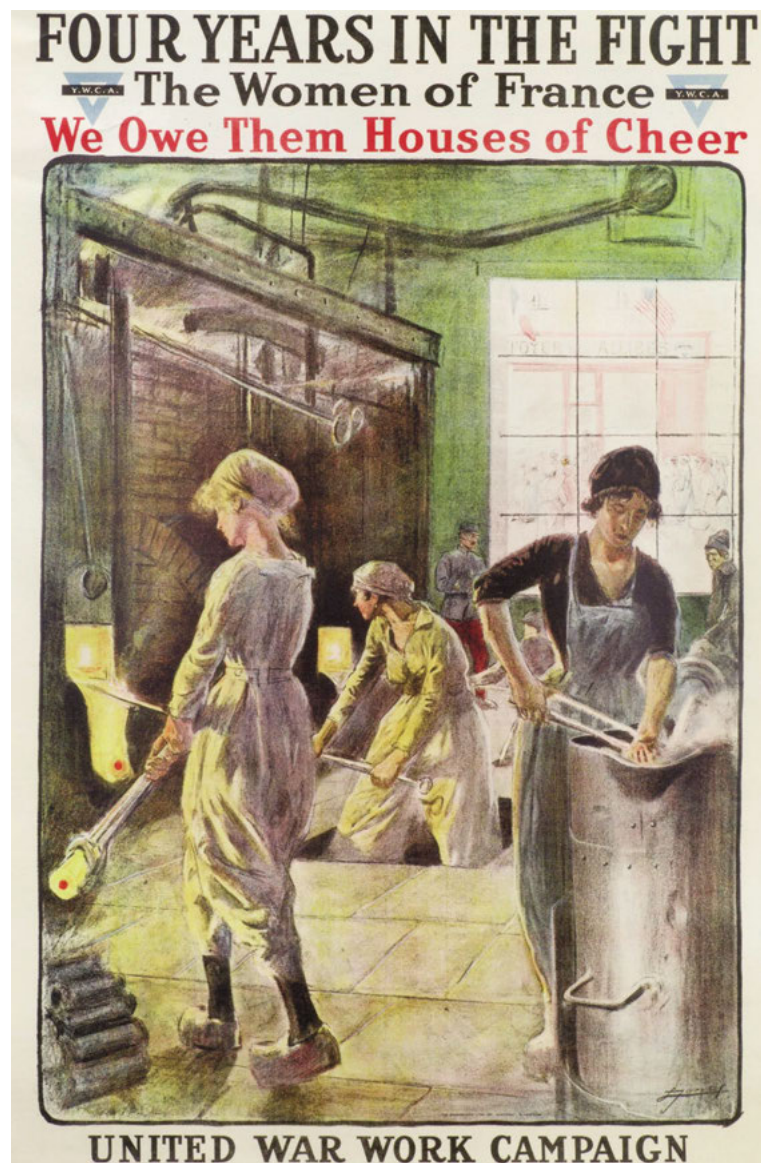
these were fascinating. But what has made the greatest impression on me is the beautifully conveyed feelings of nostalgia and homesickness for the happiness and security of the past.'

And in 1926 LP Hartley wrote about *The Happy Tree*: 'One cannot help liking the book: one cannot help admiring its

phenomenal freedom from vulgarity, its disdain of worldly lures, its fastidious avoidance of second-rate consolations. It is marked by dignity and distinction and the indescribable grace of a rare spirit.' We are confident that Persephone readers will agree with him: this is a unique and unforgettable book about the war.

'Its fastidious avoidance of second-rate consolations' is a phrase that could be applied to our second book this autumn. *The Country Life Cookery Book* was written by Ambrose Heath in 1937 and illustrated by Eric Ravilious. It is an excellent cookery book, set out in twelve chapters, one for each month of the year, with some extra sections on 'A Few River Fish', 'Herbs in the Kitchen' and 'A Calendar of Home-Grown Vegetables'. This last is especially useful for Persephone readers who grow their own vegetables or have an organic box delivered as it is a quick way of looking up what should be in season. And naturally the recipes are seasonal too. As Simon Hopkinson, the well-known chef and cookery writer, says in his new Preface: 'Seasonal is simply how it was. Those of my parents' generation, as well as that of Mr Heath, knew nothing else other than, say, the purchase of a pound of leeks from the greengrocer in winter, followed by no leeks at all, all summer long.' And, he continues, 'seasonal cookery writing is all the rage, now, but this was not always so. Nobody worth their salt would now dream of giving a recipe for asparagus in November, yet it was seen as the height of sophistication to be served the same vegetable imported from California in smart London restaurants throughout the 1970s.'

Something else that Simon Hopkinson admires is the Englishness of *The Country Life Cookery Book*. Ambrose Heath's

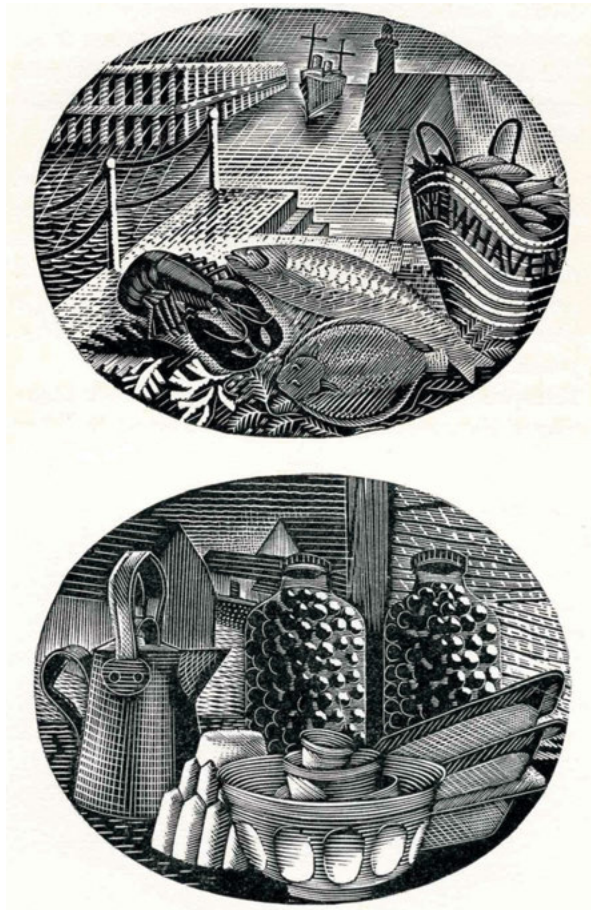


A 1918 lithograph



voice was ‘entirely that of a home-grown enthusiast. An intellect and ingenuity, thrift and humour, good taste and provenance, together with a charming indifference to a majority of precise measurements or timings, quite delight this present day reader. I would give anything to be allowed to compose recipes this way, this day, for a cookery book – and to have the beautiful engravings of Eric Ravilious as decoration throughout just as a wistful reverie.’ For, indeed, the other reason for reprinting this book, apart from the usefulness of the recipes, is that it has delightful Eric Ravilious wood engravings (two, those for February and October, are reproduced opposite) with which most people will be unfamiliar (this cookery book has never been reprinted before and secondhand copies are fiendishly expensive). We are delighted to have had a collaboration with *Country Life* magazine and to be able to republish this unique book both for its readers and for ours at an affordable price.

The third Persephone book for Autumn/Winter 2014–15 is our seventh novel by our bestselling writer Dorothy Whipple – *Because of the Lockwoods* was published in 1949 and was her penultimate book. (And we only have one more novel to republish – *Young Anne* – and a second volume of short stories, to be called *Every Good Deed and Other Stories*.) The novelist Harriet Evans has written a polemical preface to *Because of*

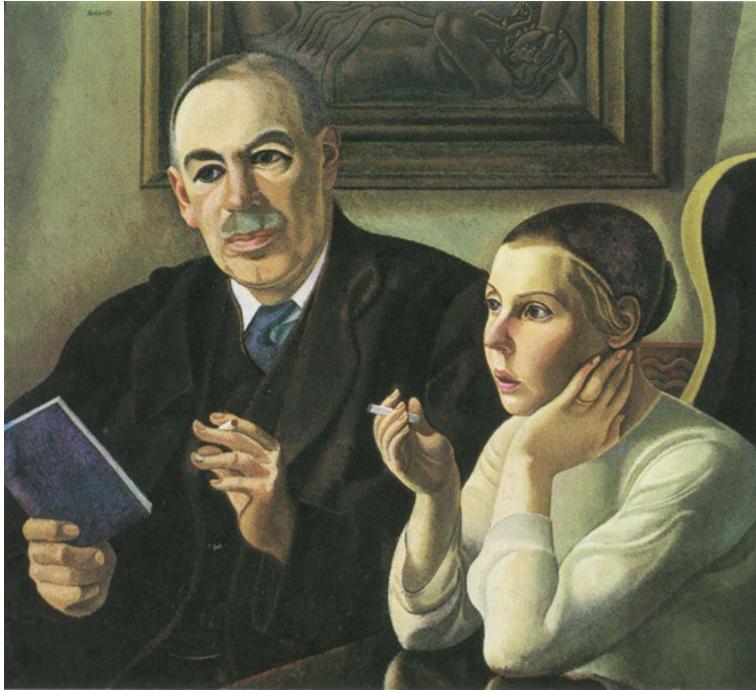


*the Lockwoods* from which we are pleased to quote at length.

If, like me, you are one of the thousands of readers who discovered Dorothy Whipple through Persephone’s reissues, you know well that feeling of resigned bewilderment suffusing the sigh of satisfaction you utter after finishing one of her novels. Why isn’t she better known? Why is she not acclaimed more widely, when so many of her less talented contemporaries are still in print?

For the case does need to be made for Dorothy Whipple’s entry into the pantheon of great British novelists of the twentieth

century. Not just because she can so deftly spin a cocoon of a story around you, swiftly rendering you transfixed (the art of which is severely, crucially underestimated by reviewers and readers alike) but because she wrote books quite unlike any others, for all their seeming “ordinariness”. One might say the time is long overdue for a Barbara Pym type rehabilitation. I am as ambitious [for this to happen] to Dorothy Whipple. Her scope is larger, her own ambition grander, the results hugely satisfying, often thrilling. For me, she is more substantial a writer than someone like Pym or Elizabeth Taylor (both of whose novels I nevertheless adore) in



*'Maynard and Lydia Keynes' by William Roberts 1932 © NPG p.86 Paper Darts: The Letters of Virginia Woolf by Frances Spalding (who curated and wrote the excellent catalogue accompanying the Virginia Woolf exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery). NB. there is a flourishing William Roberts Society of which Persephone is a member.*

not merely that aforementioned ambition, but in her control of material and characters, her eye for detail and most importantly, the mirror she holds up to twentieth-century England, showing good and bad, light and dark and, crucially, the lives of normal people, where she makes the ordinary extraordinary. To me, it seems obvious. However, the obstacles in Dorothy Whipple's way are not insignificant.

**T**he titles of her novels are not especially memorable; and I wonder if the name Whipple doesn't help the cause; added to which, the worlds about which Whipple wrote so perceptively and engagingly were always firmly rooted in her own life and

interests and surroundings, and so we arrive at what is for me the central issue. The world of literary London, for want of a better expression, is today perhaps more sexist and snobbish (especially geographically snobbish), almost unbelievably, than it was when she was writing and the cultural tide of opinion is, these days, against her. Another reason why Whipple has been disregarded by the literary mainstream is that we still live in a sexist world and, in addition, one where appreciation of writing from the North of England is undervalued. And she had no similar contemporaries to share the burden: Barbara Pym was anointed by men (and went to Oxford). Dodie Smith escaped

the North and became a glamorous girl-about-town playwright in London, living it up in Marylebone and California and playing with the boys (Huxley, Isherwood *et al*). Du Maurier was a law unto herself. Dorothy Sayers dressed like a man, behaved like a man, and wrote detective fiction. Elizabeth Taylor and Elizabeth Jane Howard, both authors of traditionally Home Counties stories about the upper-middle class, were both accepted into that world but patronised by it.

**D**orothy Whipple is, when one breaks it down, an intensely moral writer. But it is one of her greatest strengths that morality never appears to drive the plot: always character. She never preaches, merely lets us think she is observing and conveying information. There is something about the clarity of expression and calm curiosity of Whipple's prose which is hugely pleasing. She never employs excess to drive her point home but uses each word carefully and simply.

**T**hen there is the readability factor: perhaps that is what mostly damages her reputation, the fact that she is so damned unputdownable. The thinking is the same as it has been for years: shouldn't real literature be hard to read? The treatment of the Hunter family by the affluent Lockwoods in *Because of the Lockwoods* rouses one to rage and a deep sense of hopelessness. You are desperate to read on, to know that good, as personified by the



heroine, Thea, and her family will prevail; that the world is not as dark as Whipple shows us it can be so often.

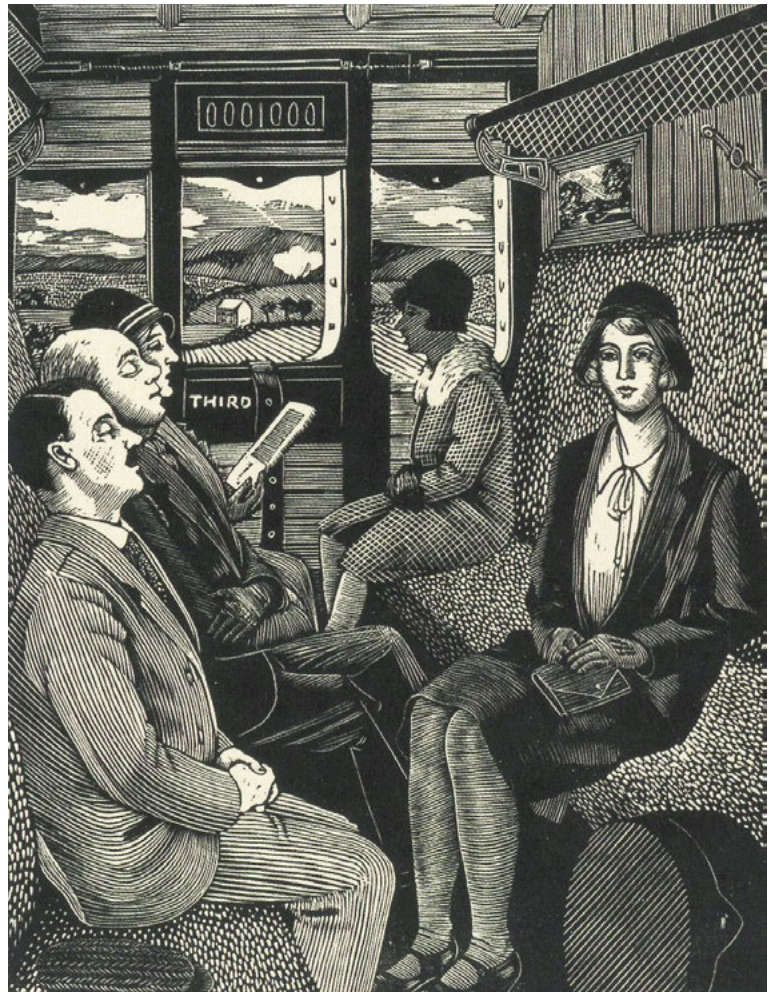
‘**B**ecause of the *Lockwoods* is one of my favourites of her novels. The story is deceptively simple: the entanglement of two families in a northern town called Aldworth. One, the Lockwoods, wealthy and powerful, in a position to patronise and help the second family, the poor Hunters, who have been left fatherless with a weak, ineffectual mother. Though the thudding heart of the story draws the reader inexorably along, hoping for the meek to conquer the strong, it is a surprising book in many ways, not least for its subversive portrayal of family – the children are often the adults, the parents the untrustworthy, unwise ones, and Whipple makes it clear that what we call today the nuclear family is not the answer to happiness.’

The *Chicago Tribune*’s Edward Wagenknecht wrote: ‘This is the best new novel I have read in many a day. It has the two qualities which matter most in fiction – relentless truth and never failing compassion. *Because of the Lockwoods* is written by a woman, and it deals largely with women and their concerns. But if you think that, for this reason, its appeal will be limited largely to women readers, you will be wrong.’

And Harriet Evans continues: ‘What may be most satisfying about the book is how the climax is reached as a result of character.

For what at first seem like insignificant actions taken over tiny things grow over time: it is the butterfly effect, flapping gently at first and then hard and fast through the story so that by the end good truly has triumphed. Both small-town, small-minded prejudices and the Lockwoods are banished, and the Hunters, if they choose to, will emerge triumphant. I am not entirely sure the final scene is the most successful conclusion, but the journey there has been so...

satisfying, that I can forgive her. As Sir John Murray wrote to Dorothy Whipple, after reading *They Were Sisters*: ‘You have a wonderful power of taking quite ordinary people in quite unromantic surroundings, in their normal ways of life and making them live and press themselves on your readers’ minds in a way that really grips.’ But, Harriet Evans concludes, ‘it is more than that: it is twentieth-century British fiction at its very best. See you on the barricades.’



*‘Train Journey’ from a set of ten engravings called ‘The Relations’ which Titzah Garwood did in 1929 for the Curwen Press p.85 Long Live Great Bardfield (cf. p.17).*

# OUR BLOGGERS WRITE

‘**A** *House in the Country* is the Persephone book I have enjoyed the most. From the opening chapter I was intrigued. It focuses on a submarine attack on a ship. And then we jump to Brede Manor and meet some of the characters who live there. The main character, Cressida, is an engaging and refreshing person who can see that war signifies a huge change in the role of women.’ Lindy Lit

‘I was rather amazed at how much I enjoyed this astonishing memoir. In *Into the Whirlwind* Eugenia Ginzburg comes across as a brave, intelligent woman, whose life was destroyed by Stalin, and yet who found the strength within herself not only to survive, but survive well, and to go on and write about her experiences.’ Heaven Ali

‘From the very first page, her account is fascinating. It is astonishing to think that this entire book was memorised, which is such an incredible feat. *Into the Whirlwind* is such a brave book to have written and an important book, and one which should be read by everyone.’ Nudge

‘The gentle humour in *Diary of a Provincial Lady* is compulsive, endearing and identifiable. This new edition is an absolute delight – it contains the original line drawings by

Arthur Watts, and the endpapers are the covers from the 1930 edition.’ MadamJ-Mo

‘**T**he *Blank Wall* involves blackmail, small-time thuggery, black marketeers, racial prejudice, diverse people failed by the justice system, an unlikely (and sexually pure) passion, the yacht club set and social snobbery, multiple deceptions all around, and brutal death. Definitely not a “cozy”! A deeply disturbing story in multiple ways. If you are into domestic noir – or even if you aren’t but are willing to take a chance on something rather dark – read it.’ Leaves and Pages

‘I loved the way *Diary of a Provincial Lady* seemed to capture her thoughts almost as she thought them. And I loved that it was witty and funny in the friendliest of ways. But there is much more here than humour. A certain generation, a certain class, and a way of life that would very soon be gone, is captured beautifully.’ Fleur Fisher

‘**W**ilfred and Eileen is a lovely novel with the added interest of being based on truth. The story is simply told, with a great economy of style. It’s short and spans only a couple of years but there’s so much experience contained within this short time frame.’ I Prefer Reading

‘**D**iary of a *Provincial Lady* could very well be classified as chick lit; each entry could just as easily be a blog post. Just one lady, describing her day to another; while we may live in different times and places, we can laugh at that which we recognise. Needless to say, it’s a charming book.’ The Bibliophile’s Adventures Club

‘Eugenia Ginzburg’s incredibly moving and unflinchingly honest memoir *Into the Whirlwind* should be required reading by every schoolchild. Her retelling of her experiences deeply affected me, and left me determined to find out more about this period of history. Don’t let this one pass you by; it’s truly compelling reading.’ Book Snob

‘**T**he *Squire* is a curious title. It jars our class-consciousness, being more associated with the beery form of address, as in “Same again Squire?” Enid Bagnold challenges the idea that marriage is a woman’s destiny. She suggests that maternity is just as much a satisfaction and a domain for women.’ Book Word

‘The concept is like a blend of the television show *Quantum Leap* and the movie *The Matrix*. *The Victorian Chaise-Longue* is a brilliantly original and dark tale. It’s stated at one point that “sin changes, you



know, like fashion.” I love the way Laski plays so confidently with time in the narrative, she is reaching more for an artfully articulated social message than a sci-fi adventure here.’ Lonesome Reader

“You shall have children, whom you shall make princes in the land...” Joanna Cannan carefully delineates a mother’s every endeavour on behalf of her family in *Princes in the Land*. Meanwhile the children do what they are supposed to do and live their own lives. Surely one of the most searingly honest and powerful observations about the realities of being a mother it is possible to make.’ Dovegreyreader

“*The Making of a Marchioness* gives us an insight into the way of marriage procedures in the Victorian age. No marrying for love if a woman is beyond her first youth. I see the story’s failings but applaud Burnett for daring to stray from an all-too-sweet Cinderella story and introduce a dark element.’ A Tale of Three Cities

“*Bricks and Mortar* follows the fortunes of a family across more than three decades. What sets this lovely novel a little apart is that the main point of view in the novel is that of a man and that his career as an architect lies at the centre of the whole story. His daughter Stacy really is the star of the show, and

I wouldn’t have minded much more of her. Heaven Ali

“*On the Other Side* is one of the most exciting and original offerings in the Persephone catalogue: Germans had been suffering under Hitler since 1933 but now, in addition to the fear and paranoia that had become commonplace for most citizens under the Nazis, there was the added horror of Allied bombings. As sympathetic as I found Mathilde Wolff-Mönckeberg, it was her descriptions of these bombings and the resulting chaos that made this book so unique and memorable.’ The Captive Reader



*After the Blitz* by Hilda Davis c. 1940 for sale at Sim Fine Art

# E-BOOKS/ THE 2015 DIARY

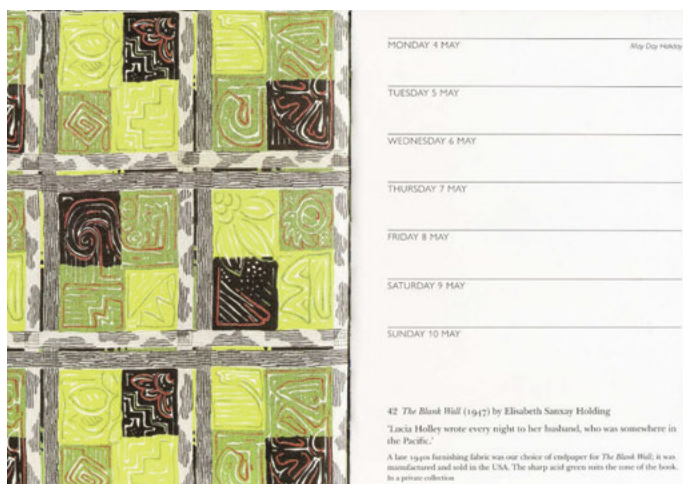
We now have twenty e-books and are about to have five more (including *The Home-Maker*). We know that our readers like the beauty of our books, and they like to feel a book in their hands; nevertheless we feel it is important to offer some of our titles electronically – partly for readers abroad who do not want to pay the cost of postage, partly because an e-reader is so much lighter to carry than a book, partly because we would look old-fashioned if we eschewed e-books entirely.

But do we like them? Well, we do not dislike them. However, we are beginning to realise that one reads an e-book differently from a ‘proper’ book. This theory took shape when a daughter said “you have read *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves*

haven’t you, could I borrow it?” The title rang a bell but all details had completely vanished. A bit of googling and *voilà* – it was the book on the same theme as the book I had loved as a child, *The Ape in Our House* (1951) by Catherine Hayes. So I emailed my daughter: I have read it, but on my iPad, so can’t lend it to you (annoyingly). Then, trying to remember the book, a theory began to form: that we remember things less well if we have read them electronically. This has recently been confirmed in two separate studies. First, fifty graduates read the same short story by Elizabeth George in paperback and on an e-reader. Result: the e-book readers scored much lower on questions about when events in the story occurred. They also performed almost twice as poorly when

asked to arrange fourteen plot points in the correct sequence. Secondly, some 15 year-olds were asked to read in both formats. Result: those who had read on screen understood less than those who read on paper; in addition, those who read on paper became more deeply involved with the story than those who read it on the e-reader.

It seems that the perceptible, direct, tactile experience of paper gives a mental map of the entire text. The brain has an easier task when one can touch as well as see: especially with a longer text, one needs to be able to leaf back and forth in order to review and comprehend relationships and contexts. Intuitively and through research we now see that we shouldn’t get rid of paper yet – far from it.



The *Persephone Diary* for 2015, which is £12, or £6 if bought with two other books, has all our 110 endpapers, a week to a page, several pages for notes, a list of bank holidays and religious festivals, the first sentence of every book, and details of each endpaper. It has the same format as our ‘normal’ grey books and because it is stitched it too lies flat like the grey ‘dispersion bound’ books. However, the high quality paper means the diary is quite heavy – more appropriate to leave on one’s desk perhaps than to carry about.



# KAY SMALLSHAW DISCOVERED

**H***ow to Run Your Home Without Help* was published without our being able to trace the copyright holder. The original publisher was no longer in business and sources such as authors' directories and *Who was Who* were of no help. Even letters to all the Smallshaws listed by BT produced nothing. *Good Housekeeping* magazine produced nothing either. In the end we went ahead and published the book and hoped the copyright owner would appear eventually.

**S**ince 2005 our edition of the book has been widely read and often cited in histories of housework and of the 1950s, but nobody has ever volunteered any

more information about the author or her family. Recently, however, we were updating the website and we had another go at solving the mystery of Kay Smallshaw. Thanks to the miraculous impact of digitisation for genealogical research, we were able to find her. The London electoral roll for 1939, available at [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), listed a Kathleen Mary Smallshaw at 17 Doughty Street (round the corner from our shop). This fairly uncommon name made it possible to pin her down in the register of births and also to find her in the 1910 census return. The record of her marriage gave us her married name, which in turn led to the

register of deaths and to the wills index. The wills between 1857 and the present day are kept in the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand. When hers emerged, it was just what we were looking for – full of detail and human interest, with a long list of personal and charitable bequests. It also, vitally, gave us the name of her niece, executrix, and principal legatee. We were able to find her address and pay her the accumulated royalties. She produced some photographs of her aunt and filled in the details in the story of Kay Smallshaw (1905–1996); these are now up on our website and will be on the flap of *How to Run Your Home without Help* when we reprint.



# THE PERSEPHONE 110

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 Beuman
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 effect of a girl in Iowa running off with a married man. Preface: Laura Godwin
5. **An Interrupted Life** by Etty 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** Short stories first published in *The New Yorker* from 1938–44. Five of them were twice read on R4, and on R7. Preface: Gregory LeStage **An unabridged Persephone audiobook 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: 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: author
13. **Consequences** by EM Delafield By the author of *Diary of a Provincial Lady*, this 1919 novel is about a girl entering a convent after she fails to marry. Preface: Nicola Beuman
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, bleak 1947 short stories, twice an *Evening Standard* bestseller. 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 A 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 Beuman
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 nightclub singer. Read on R4 by Maureen Lipman; now a film with Frances McDormand and Amy Adams. Preface: Henrietta Twycross-Martin. **A 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', praised by 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 All the short stories written during the author's last year; with a detailed editorial note and the contemporary illustrations. Five were read on R4 in 2002.
26. **Brook Evans** by Susan Glaspell An unusual novel written in 1928, 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, the *Guardian's* Nicholas Lezard's Paperback Choice, R4 'Book at Bedtime' read by Jamie Glover. Afterword: Anne Sebba
- 29. The Making of a Marchioness by Frances Hodgson Burnett** A very entertaining 1901 novel about the melodrama when a governess marries a Marquis; a R4 Classic Serial. Preface: Isabel Raphael, Afterword: Gretchen Gerzina. **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 describing 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.
- 37. The Runaway by Elizabeth Anna Hart** A Victorian novel for children and grown-ups, republished in 1936 with Gwen Raverat wood engravings. Afterwords: Anne Harvey, Frances Spalding
- 38. Cheerful Weather for the Wedding by Julia Strachey** A funny, sardonic 1932 novella by a niece of Lytton Strachey, praised by Virginia Woolf. Preface: Frances Partridge. **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 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 illustrations by Edward Bawden
- 46. Miss Ranskill Comes Home by Barbara Euphan Todd** A wry 1946 novel: Miss Ranskill is shipwrecked and gets back to a 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** 1940s short stories with a unique voice and dark sense of humour; they were read on BBC R4 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** A 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** 1940 cookery book about 'food for free', full of excellent (and fashionable) 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 Beauman
- 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** A 1939 novel about what might happen if the moon crashed into the earth in 1946 'written' by 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 1944 novel, 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 1934 memoir 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 1938 novel about a daughter of the aristocracy who marries an Oxford don; her three children fail to turn out as she hoped.

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

**65. *Alas, Poor Lady* by Rachel Ferguson** Polemical but intensely readable 1937 novel 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: miniature essays on gardening – such as *Dark Ladies* (frittillary), *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 an American heiress married to an English aristocrat, whose beautiful and enterprising sister 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 5 year-old 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** Short stories drawn from the three collections published during Dorothy

Whipple's lifetime. Five stories were read on BBC R4 and 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** 1958 novel about the 'captive wives' of the pre-women's lib 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 on topics such as the storeroom and larder, 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 1816 facsimile edition of an 1806 cookbook: 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 Bunclie Married** by DE Stevenson A hugely enjoyable sequel to *Miss Bunclie's Book* (No. 81): Miss Bunclie 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: author, who also reads six of the stories as a Persephone Audiobook.

**93. The Sack of Bath** by Adam Ferguson A 1973 polemic, with many

black and white photographs, raging at the destruction of Bath's C18th artisan terraced housing. Preface: author

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

**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, ten by 'our' authors, ten from the last decade's *Biannuals* and ten that are newly reprinted. A Persephone bestseller.

**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 novel (written in 1938) about the process of birth. Preface: Anne Sebba

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

**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

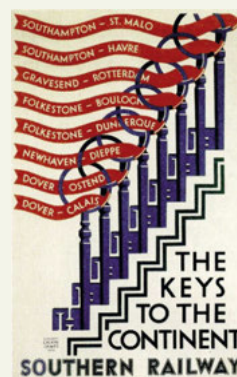
**106. Into the Whirlwind** by Eugenia Ginzburg A Russian woman is arrested in 1937 and sent to the Gulag. Filmed as *Within the Whirlwind* with Emily Watson. Afterword: Rodric Braithwaite

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

**108. The Happy Tree** by Rosalind Murray A 1926 novel about the long-term and devastating effect of WW1 on the young, in particular on a young woman living in London during the war years. Preface: Charlotte Mitchell

**109. The Country Life Cookery Book** by Ambrose Heath This 1937 cookbook, organised by month (and thus by excellent seasonal recipes) was illustrated by Eric Ravilious. Preface: Simon Hopkinson.

**110. Because of the Lockwoods** by Dorothy Whipple Her 1949 novel: the Hunters are patronised by the wealthy Lockwoods; as she grows up Thea Hunter begins to question their integrity. Preface: Harriet Evans



# KARIN HELLSTEDT

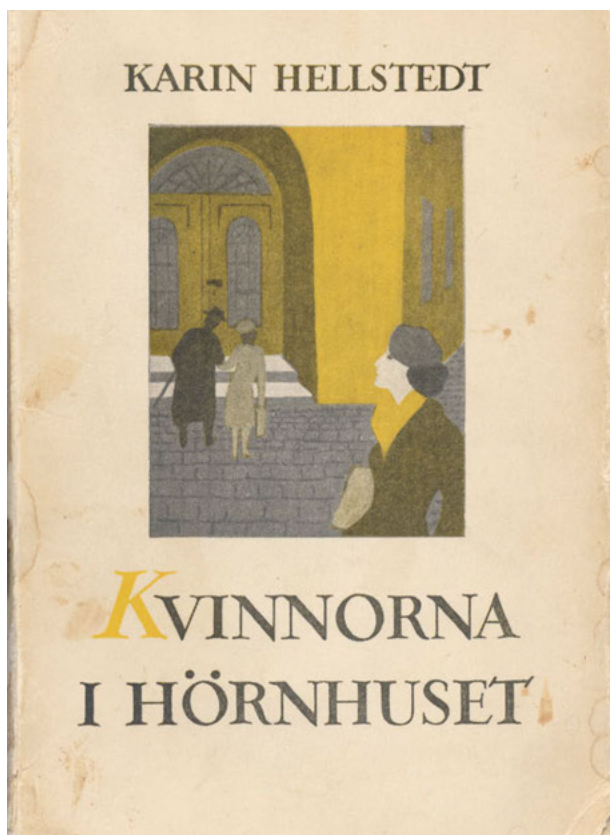
Born in 1901, Karin Hellstedt grew up in Stockholm in a comfortable bourgeois home. Both her parents spoilt her rotten with money and foreign travels. It was her beauty that was praised, her achievements (she was an accomplished pianist) were 'nice'. But she wanted something more. She would write. So she learnt to type and as she was chic she eased her way into fashion journalism and, during the 1940s, had an occasional column in a leading national broadsheet. In the 1950s she published three novels and two collections of short stories, the first of these being *Kvinnorna i Hörnhuset* or *The Women in the House on the Corner* (1952), twelve short stories linked by the same house (in reality 5 Banérgatan in Stockholm where the Hellstedt family lived from 1941 onwards) and its twelve flats. 'Mrs Miller' (opposite) comes from this collection. It is a bleak and disturbing story but deeply feminist in the unspoken way it continually raises the question: who decides who is mad? It brings home to us that Virginia Woolf might so easily have ended up in a similar British asylum – and perhaps it was her husband Leonard who saved her from this fate.

The reviewers of Karin's novels and stories praised her acerbic wit and also her compassion and insight into the human condition, especially that

of women; given different circumstances one could imagine her writing a 1950s *Hedda Gabler*. Not unexpectedly her writing, forgotten in Sweden nowadays, was maybe too close to home for the comfort of her rather strait-laced diplomat husband Svante Hellstedt.

Close personal tragedies had affected Karin's 'weak nerves' as her illness was then called. Her depression, anxiety and panic attacks became more frequent and in the 1960s she 'disappeared' into the Big Red Psychiatric Hospital complex called Beckomberga in a

Stockholm suburb. Here she made herself a life. She had her own day room where she listened to music on the radio, read books in many languages, and adored her doctor with whom she could have intelligent conversations. She would fend off other patients with a rolled-up newspaper and a loud hiss. She refused to go outdoors. She was in a sense the Queen of the Ward – she knew all the staff past and present and felt superior to the other poor souls. She died in 1984. Ten years later the red brick hospital closed down and is now promoted as 'desirable luxury dwellings'.



# 'MRS MILLER'

On the dot of six o'clock Sister Gunhild puts the key in the front door of the Women's Pavilion. Then she takes out the key and turns the lock from the inside, having closed the door with a bang – there is no reason to observe silence at this time of day. For the sick, the day has already begun, with temperature taking, bodily care and injections. Sister Gunhild is a decisive woman who expresses some of her powerful nature in her movements and action. The night nurse meets her with the log in the changing room. 'Anything in particular?' Sister Gunhild asks, tying the nurse's bonnet under her chin with firm twists. After that she goes up to the mirror for a quick inspection. The full, blue skirt rustles around her ankles. She moves fast and determinedly in her black sister shoes.

'Nothing in particular,' Night Sister replies, and starts loosening her uniform. 'Eight on Trouble started moaning at around four so I gave her an injection. At eleven she'd had her two phenemal as usual. Last night, that is. On Calm, One had a weeping attack towards the morning, that is the third night in a row so I suppose it would be better to move her to Trouble. She has wet through several sanitary towels and had new ones. It's what I always say, the menopauses are the most troublesome. Oh yes, that reminds me, Four on Calm who

is having isophen treatment fell out of bed and hit her head. She complains of pains, so I suppose that means a visit to surgery today. Well, otherwise they've got what they should have on Calm: insulin on One and Seven, isophen on Four and Five.'

'Good.' Sister Gunhild smiles and smooths down her apron with big, firm, ruddy hands. 'I'll be off to Trouble then to prepare the ones having electric shocks. Bye bye, so long, Sister Elsa!'

Sister Gunhild, who is sometimes in a good mood in the morning, hums as she walks down the corridor. Her heels click gaily on the linoleum carpet, her skirts rustle. The murmurs and moanings of the anxious 'creatures' penetrate through the doors, but she doesn't hear them. She hears just as little as someone living by the shore hears the roar of the sea and the waves' monotonous rattle against the sandy bottom.

'Red will benefit the nerves, my child,' Mrs Miller says, picking up some brick-red balls of yarn and spreading them out on top of Seven's bed. The wool is almost the same colour as the blanket. Maybe that is why most things tend towards shades of red here, Seven thinks. The houses, the brick walls round the hospital, the walls in the rooms, blankets, curtains. I will hate red for the whole of my life, she thinks. That is to say, the little time I have left. For as soon as I

am discharged, I will surely manage...

'Anyway, there is nothing as good as some rreally superr handicraft when one is a bit down,' Mrs Miller continues, rolling the r's to emphasize how good it is. 'So now we'll get on with knitting and soon we'll be so fit and well, so fit! Look what an interesting pattern for a sweater I've found! It's one of my own. I found it at home in my drawer.'

Mrs Miller opens her threadbare black handbag and rattles through keys, receipts, half-emptied sweet bags and more. Finally she fishes out a greasy piece of paper, which she triumphantly hands over to Seven, who glances quickly at the picture of the sweater lady and then puts the pattern description down on the blanket as far away from her as possible.

Mrs Miller goes off to the cupboard where the patient keeps her clothes. She takes out underwear, stockings, dress and outdoor clothes, which she lines up on the lower bedstead.

'Now we are going to get up and get dressed for a stroll, my dear Mrs Dahlberg! I am going out to the kitchen in the meantime to see what nice things they have for lunch.'

Mrs Miller closes the door, stops outside for a moment, and listens. There are no sounds from in there, which indicates that the patient has got up to get dressed. No, well, it is the usual.



Sister Gunhild passes with the medicine tray and gives Mrs Miller a light nudge in her back.

'So how are we doing in there?'

'Oh so much better, so much better! There's been progress every day since I came. It's just that initiative is still lacking a bit. But when I think of how she was the first day...'

Mrs Miller is keen to call attention to the good influence she has on nerve-patients. She is a private nurse with long experience behind her. She has professional ambition. She knows the art of sorting out nerve-patients, she certainly does. But she doesn't take on just any old patient. She doesn't take on any difficult depressions. God preserve us from anxious patients who need to be force-fed, where you hardly dare to turn your back on them. She wants gently depressed, mildly melancholic patients, who suffer calmly and sensibly. Recently she was over in the States visiting relations, and took a position as companion-carer with a weak-nerved American lady rolling in money. At Mrs White's it was all wine for dinner, footmen, cruises. Nevertheless, Mrs Miller wasn't happy and it was a strenuous position.

She had in fact been retired for quite some time now, but sometimes she accepted a place for a short while. So that when the hospital rang and wanted her for Seven, she accepted – after ascertaining that the patient was calm and from a good family. She wants to deal with people with good manners.

With *hoi polloi* there will only be trouble with paying and similar difficulties. She is a widow in her sixties and thinks it's good to earn some extra money now and then.

'Yes. I might have known that I, Sister Lilly, would be the one to get that little creep in some order,' Mrs Miller chuckled mildly, self-satisfiedly.

For her all the sick are 'little creeps'. Backward, simple-minded individuals. She is healthy, and therefore she is superior. Sometimes she grabs cultivated, middle-aged patients under the chin and says briskly:

'Well, how is the little creep today then? I should think it will

soon be time to be up and running riot!

Seven is sitting on the edge of the bed with one stocking in her hand. She hates the strolls with Mrs Miller in the park. To get up and get dressed is an almost insuperable effort for her. She is tired to death. She looks out through the small window-panes, which can't be opened: the room is aired through a long, thin shutter above the window. Outside the autumn is grey. A flock of jackdaws are flying jabbering from tree to tree. Black, disgusting. They remind her of her own thoughts, forever circling around her like dark,



*Tirzah Garwood, drawing of three ladies in the village hall with Coronation flags 1937 p. 195 'Long Live Great Bardfield'; the autobiography of Tirzah Garwood 1906–43 edited by Anne Ullman, a superb book that someone (us?) must reprint one day.*

persistent birds. Soon Mrs Miller will be back and nag her to get dressed; finally she will take garment after garment and force them on her. We must not be careless with the little walks, they are so good, so good! Nobody understands her! Nobody understands how she feels! Finally Mrs Miller herself puts on an overcoat, they walk down the stairs and Mrs Miller gets out the key with which she unlocks the front door, which is always kept locked.

In the park they do the usual round between the walls. It is over in a quarter of an hour, twenty minutes at most. But before they get to the path they pass numerous buildings. All red and with the same exteriors.

'There are fifty-two different wards and room for over three thousand mentally-ill and some hundred nerve patients,' Mrs Miller told her once. 'And they are all worse off than little Mrs Dahlberg, think of that! Just think that she is on the ward for calm nerve patients and be happy about that!'

Sometimes when they pass Storm Ward the screams of the violent patients can be heard through the red walls.

'Well well, my goodness, some of them were a little bit animated in there,' Mrs Miller said once and laughed.

They pass the high wire-netting enclosures where men in striped hospital clothes with silly grins on their faces nod and wave; or stand listlessly absorbed in themselves or conduct a quarrel with some imagined

enemy. Within other enclosures shapeless women and pale shadowy creatures are being walked around. They gesticulate, sing nonsense songs or rattle off monotonous rigmaroles. Once she saw how a woman keeping watch picked up a leather cap which had fallen on the ground and pressed it onto one of the patient's heads. The cap ended up straight up and down and pushed the ears out to the sides. Miller had difficulty not laughing at the sight. But I'm not an idiot, I'm not an idiot, the patient kept saying. No no, Miller chuckled, she is not an idiot and that is why she is here!

When they pass the pavilion for the nerve-sick men, they sometimes see one of the patients on his way in or out. Most of them keep their heads and eyes fixed on the ground. Whether through apathy or weariness or a painful feeling of shame it is not easy to say. Because it is a disgrace to have to be in this hospital, most of the sick who have their judgment intact feel ashamed: there are people who mention appendicitis and stomach ulcers with respect, but will lower their voices in embarrassment when these illnesses are brought up in conversation. They can hardly pronounce the name of the hospital without jokey allusions and furtive wisecracks. No, there is no regard for this kind of suffering.

'Many famous men have lived here,' Mrs Miller says. 'Actors, authors, artists. Creative people with imagination...'

It is the weak, vulnerable and easily influenced who come here. People with imagination... The simple brains, the boring and sententious, escape. And they contribute the best anecdotes. Here or there somebody might want to appear enlightened and without prejudice and strike a different and freer tone of voice, but they will often be subject to ridicule.

When the weather is nice they meet many people on the walking path. One man walks eight steps forwards and three steps backwards. Regular as clockwork. (Compulsive neurosis, Miller says; once had a patient who washed her hands exactly eighteen times every quarter of an hour, that was some splashing.) A woman, pale, in a strange hat with a grey veil, is always standing by the same bush, spreading her arms and seemingly trying to persuade the bush of something. Seven thinks that the sight of the sick and confused is painful, she can't get used to it.

Pooh, it's nothing horrible, Mrs Miller thinks. Anyway, many have only themselves to blame! It's not really just the sweet little lambs of God who come here. Drink and drugs, late nights with bad women, are those the angels of the earth indeed?

Behind a wood-stack on the walk's most deserted part there was once a doctor in a white coat who held his arms tightly around a young nurse. They kissed tenderly while the wind tore their hair and the leaves danced around their feet. Standing there

and kissing in broad daylight, they must be crazy, Miller muttered to herself....

Seven drops the stocking and huddles in bed. She is incapable of getting dressed. From the bed she can see the jackdaws flying back and forth in jabbering flocks. And now her heart starts thumping hard with irregular beats. Panic seizes her, without any obvious reason. It's always lying in wait somewhere. One doesn't know where it will come from. Her heart rushes off at a tremendous speed, then it seems to stop, then it rushes further, even more violently. She wants to scream and call for help, but clenches her teeth. Once, when the panic got hold of her, she screamed and afterwards she heard the nurses say something about 'moving down to Trouble'. She lies stretched out on the bed, trying to breathe calmly and not think. But the visions and the voices force themselves on her... In the nursery the light is off. Strange shapes emerge from the corners..... Ingegerd, have you said your evening prayers?... yes mamma...You have prayed to God to make you more obedient and nicer, I hope! Otherwise we must send you away! ... Oh mamma, mamma, don't send me away! Dear God, please make it so that they don't send me away... mamma, dear, darling mamma, can the light be on just for a little while longer... What childish fuss is this, when one goes to sleep the lamp has got to be switched off. Quiet now,

otherwise we shall send you away... Ingegerd, it is sad, but I have to inform your parents that you have been drawing on your desk again... Ingegerd, you are going down to matron this afternoon... oh, such cold grey eyes... Ingegerd, it is a very serious matter which has been brought to light... I feel ill, I feel dizzy, I vomit and faint...The room rotates, rotates...There, there, Mrs Dahlberg, you can have more children, miscarriage happens to many, you don't need to lose courage... the white coat of the doctor is painfully white, ouch, my eyes hurt, my stomach hurts... no, no crying, no crying... Mrs Miller will come soon, I must lead her astray... I'll lead them all astray...

It is the afternoon, the rain is still coming down steadily. Mrs Miller takes her cardigan and puts it over her shoulders. She is huddled in a chair and leafing through today's paper. Seven is lying on top of the bed resting.

'Good God, why is it always raining!' Mrs Miller lowers the paper and removes her glasses, as if that would make it easier to look through the window. Seven follows her glance. Rain, rain... And then it will be a bit of sleet, and then a couple of days of blinding sunshine with a cold, mean wind. Then rain again. What was the point....

'But we managed our lovely walk, anyway, before it started to rain.'

Mrs Miller puts her glasses back on her nose, dives down behind the paper and yawns.

Soon it will be time for her to go home. Her working day lasts from nine to six. How long will she be able to go on? Age claims its due of course. She is getting a bit too old to work. All the same, this present patient is ideal. Easily managed, quiet, in control. No whining, no dwelling on her own sufferings. Mrs Miller simply can't manage to listen to that kind of thing any more. She thinks about Mrs White. Well, the salary was welcome, good in many ways, but my God, how troublesome Mrs White had been! Mrs Miller suddenly feels a warm sympathy for Seven. She wants to say something nice and encouraging, but what?

Sobbing and loud voices can be heard from the corridor. No doubt that is Mrs Hedström who is shouting and crying; at the same time they can hear Sister Gunhild's admonishing voice.

'But he *promised* to come! I *must* get to talk to him! Why, he promised! Arne, Arne! He must come, he must! Why, he promised! Arne...'

The desperate voice dies away. Seven is lying there with her heart beating. Mrs Miller has let go of her paper and listens intently. After a while the door opens slightly and Sister Gunhild comes in.

'This is sad with Mrs Hedström, I hope she didn't disturb you? Her husband didn't come during visiting hours and she became fretful'.

'Oh indeed, well I suppose she has to move down?' Mrs Miller looks queringly at Sister



Gunhild.

'I'll say! Up here we don't want any trouble, we don't. Here we only want nice and obedient little girls!'

She nods with a knowing look at Seven and gives her some jokey slaps on the soles of her feet before she rustles out.

Mrs Miller sighs, adjusts her glasses and goes on turning over the pages of the newspaper. Suddenly she seems to have seen something of interest. She brings the paper closer and reads attentively. After a while she says in a low voice, 'that would never have happened if she had been in my care!'

She looks at Seven in the hope that the woman will ask what it is that should never have happened. However she does not and Mrs Miller says: 'Listen to this! It's about a gas incident which recently took place in Denmark. A divorced thirty-year-old woman had been discharged as recovered and well from a hospital for nervous ailments but three days later they find her poisoned by gas at her home. She got up in the night and turned on the gas taps and was sitting there dead at the table when the police, notified by the neighbours, broke in. And now I want to say – yes, without

boasting about myself in any way – if I had looked after this woman when she was ill it would never have happened. Why? Because it's so immensely important for the nerve-sick to have an understanding, intelligent person around them, someone who has the patience to listen to them. With whom they know they can talk things over. She hadn't had that and that is why things happened as they did. She can't have been well when she was discharged. But people just don't understand that kind of thing'.

Turned on the gas taps... Of course that's the best way! Why

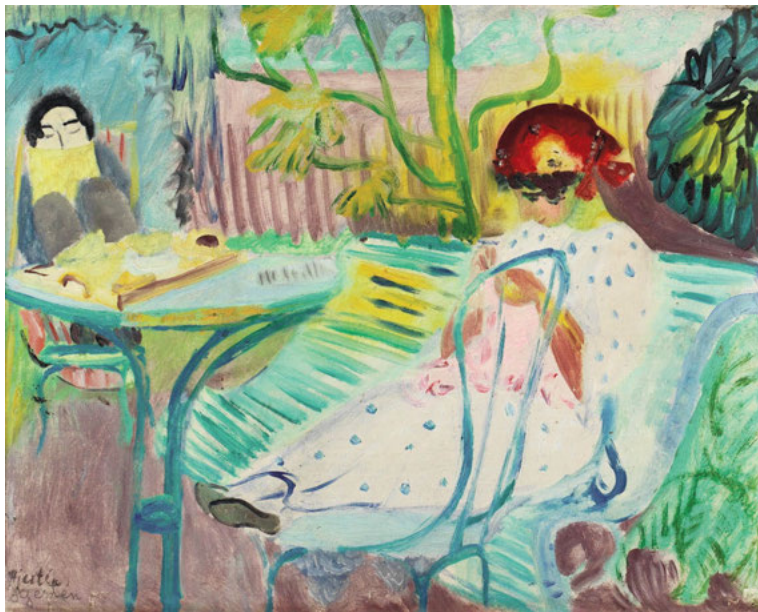


*'Hospital Train' 1941 by Evelyn Dunbar © Imperial War Museum,  
one of four colour plates used to illustrate Dermot Morrah's 'The British Red Cross' 1944*

hadn't she thought of that before? You sit for a while and breathe and then everything becomes hazy and confusing, like when you are given an anaesthetic. All of a sudden you are gone from everything. Forever...

'Yes, to be sure, not everybody understands the weak-nerved, do they! But I know how to deal with them! Dr Derkert said once that anyone who had Sister Lilly as a companion would get well whether she wanted to or not. But that, of course, is a special talent. Not everybody can have the same aptitude for the profession and Sister Gunhild just said...

'I think it's stopped raining,' Sister Gunhild says holding out her hand searchingly in the air. 'So I'll walk home. Why, we need a bit of air too.'



*'In the Garden, Fontenay-aux-Roses' 1920 by the Swedish modernist painter Sigrid Hjertén (1885–1948). She was a patient at Beckomberga during the last fifteen years of her life.*

Mrs Miller squints up towards the dusky sky. Yes, it really has stopped raining. The hospital park lies dark and empty in front of them, where they are standing on the steps to the Women's Pavilion. The bare and knotty branches of the trees can hardly be made out in the dark. They melt together with the leaden sky and the racing, heavy clouds. The park is sparsely lit by electrical arc-lamps, but in the red buildings there are lights in most of the windows. Mrs Miller and Sister Gunhild go down the steps chatting and out through the park.

'Oh well, another day over,' Mrs Miller says, simply to have something to say. 'The days go so quickly.'

'Yes, how time flies. Soon we shall have to start thinking about Christmas.'

'Ugh, Christmas!' Mrs Miller stops and shakes the big black umbrella that she keeps folded in one hand. She looks towards the Women's Pavilion, which lies there in the dusk with the lit-up windows like bright, twinkling eyes in a big, black face. Sister Gunhild also stops.

'Actually it is a very beautiful house,' Mrs Miller murmurs. 'It reminds me of something – I don't quite know what – yes, a royal pleasure pavilion. Pleasure pavilions are mostly white, but this one is red. A red pleasure pavilion.'

'Certainly it is very handsome,' Sister Gunhild admits. 'A really handsome little pleasure pavilion for potty princesses.'

She thinks it's rather a good joke and gives Mrs Miller a quick glance to see how she reacts. Mrs Miller feels the glance and giggles cringingly. She has respect for Sister Gunhild even though this woman is so much younger. But she doesn't like her.

'Yes, it certainly is a pity that there are so many difficulties and anxieties behind such a handsome facade,' she says. 'A real pity!'

They go through the big entry gates and find themselves on the other side of the wall. Sister Gunhild nudges Mrs Miller.

'Pull yourself together, I can see that Sister Lilly gets a bit sentimental at this time of the evening. Now, I've got to hurry and get to the cake shop before it closes. I'm having some girls round for coffee tonight.'

Mrs Miller tries to walk at the same pace as Sister Gunhild. She

is out of breath and wonders how she can get away without being rude.

'It has been nice having your company, but I'm off in the other direction. To the tram stop over there.'

'Ah well, all right, bye-bye then.'

'Bye.'

On the tram she thinks about Sister Gunhild's words. Potty princesses...ugh, it sounded coarse. She gets off and walks slowly towards the house on the corner where she lives. In front of her there is a plump woman wearing a jaunty hat and tight-fitting coat. Her walk is a bit unsteady, one might almost suspect that she had had a few glasses too many. Now she goes in through the door. Mrs Miller recognises the fat person who lives in the flat above hers. Mrs. Mrs ... yes, whatever was she called? Mrs Miller finds it difficult remembering names. In fact, on the whole her memory isn't all that good these days. Old, fat women shouldn't make a fright of themselves like that... and really she seemed a bit drunk. Well, well, fate apportions her favours unevenly. Some may go to bars and cocktail parties, others toil as private nurses at hospitals for nervous ailments.

Mrs Miller potters around her two-room flat. She has dinner at the hospital, so she doesn't need to cook. But there are so many other things that need doing. She hasn't hoovered or polished the floors for a long time. Sighing, she gets the vacuum

cleaner out and goes over her only carpet. She polishes the floor in 'the big room' and wipes away the dust from the furniture and wall panels. Then she sits down and takes a breather.

The telephone rings. Who can it be calling so late?

Sister Elsa's voice sounds agitated when Mrs Miller answers.

'Hallo, Sister Lilly, this is Sister Elsa. I have to tell you that your patient in Seven has escaped. Nobody here understands how it can have happened. You have your key, don't you?'

Mrs Miller goes rigid with fright. It takes a while before she can reply.

'The key... I'm sure I have my key! Just for safety's sake I will have a look. One moment, Sister Elsa!'

With trembling fingers she searches her bag. The key is not there! She feels faint and has to sit down. Wait... wait... the key... wait, she unlocked the front door when she left at six... no, that is not true, Sister Gunhild did, she opened for both of them... did she have her handbag with her when she went for dinner in the staff's dining room... no, oh God, oh God, she definitely thinks not! It was probably left in Seven's room.

Calm... calm... She sits confused and terrified, unable to get up and go to the telephone. She breaks out in a cold sweat on her palms. Finally she collects herself a bit, goes to the telephone and picks up the receiver. She sways slightly where she stands.

'Sister Elsa, hallo... yes, I am sorry I kept you... yes, the key is in my handbag.'

'The whole thing is a mystery, it is going to be a hell of a business! When I came into her room she was gone and then when we had looked everywhere we found the front door unlocked. Nobody had seen her make off. We have called her home, but she wasn't there either.'

Mrs Miller finds it difficult to breathe. Her heart beats so violently that she thinks that Sister Elsa must hear it.

'Well, I suppose it will all be cleared up!' Sister Elsa has regained her assured nurse's voice. 'I'll ring you tomorrow morning and give you more news. The police have been notified and there will be a police message on the wireless. Yes, good night, good night, don't let it worry you and sleep well!'

Mrs Miller lets go of the receiver and sinks down on the nearest chair. She sits there for a long while and stares in front of her with empty eyes. Then she suddenly puts her hands in front of her face.

'And I who had got Seven in such good shape,' she murmurs and some heavy tears fall into her hands.

*This translation of one of Karin Hellstedt's short stories from 'Kvinnorna i Hörnhuset' is by the author's daughter Christina Burton © The Karin Hellstedt Estate. It is published here for the first time since it appeared in 1952.*



# HISTORICAL FICTION

*This piece was first written (but not published) twenty years ago. Its resuscitation was sparked by our republication of Wilfred and Eileen, Persephone Book No. 107 by Jonathan Smith.*

In 1995 the critic Bill Buford was a dissenting voice about Pat Barker's WW1 novel *The Ghost Road*. He said that she had 'milked' other writers who had written about the war themselves and had written her books as though the twentieth century had not happened.

But there is another objection: that the dead have become fictional characters.

Of course we are used to this in historical fiction: Napoleon is a character in *War and Peace*, Beau Brummel in Georgette Heyer. And hundreds of films have been made about real people without anyone minding too much.

But why is it disquieting if real people are turned into characters in novels? Is it because in the past this has only been done in historical novels i.e. genre fiction which does not 'count'? Or is it somehow acceptable if the novel is set far back in history or is about a 'minor' character? So why does one feel regretful sympathy for Barker's Dr Rivers who has now had a whole trilogy written about him but cannot answer back: no, it was not like that, not like that at all?

These thoughts were prompted by *Summer in February* by Jonathan Smith [now a Persephone

author] which is about the suicide of the painter Alfred Munnings' wife in the last days of peace before WW1 began.

The reader accepts, because Jonathan Smith read Munnings' diaries and interviewed surviving members of the family, that he has described what really happened; we should not be concerned that he has done so through the medium of fiction rather than non-fiction. And Jonathan Smith would say that he has written imaginative evocation, a version of the truth, and that he is as entitled to do this as Shakespeare was to write a version of the story of Macbeth.

Nevertheless, this does not quite address the question of whether the novel should stick to imaginary characters and biography should stick to real ones or whether it should always be possible to blur the categories in favour of creativity.

In general the historian Ben Pimlott was right when he said that whereas 'in the novel, the author builds castles in the air; in biography, the author can use only the building blocks of reality'. Perhaps it is all to do with integrity: personal involvement on the part of the biographer is fine as long as it is done openly and one knows what the author thinks – otherwise the biography can so easily become what Pimlott calls 'a school report'. A short, personal, unconventional biography – like Nicholas Mosley's *Julian*

*Grenfell*, Persephone Book No. 11, or the life of Nelly Ternan by Claire Tomalin – that is another matter.

But although novelists are also conscious of conventions, in their case there are fewer: indeed one of the few remaining is that direct quotation, the kind of thing that is footnoted in biography, is not woven into the fabric of fiction. And Pat Barker has declared herself aware of the importance of integrity when she stated that 'though I know I'm walking a moral tightrope, I'm very careful to be accurate. I don't change facts.'

Well of course no biographers of integrity change facts. What they can do is reinterpret them, speculate about them, look at them from another angle. And this is what novelists do too. But because they are writing fiction, they are somehow allowed freer rein, as are film-makers.

And why would most of us be quite proud to see our lives described in non-fiction yet find a novel based on our life rather distasteful? Perhaps the answer lies in the status of the person being written about. If they are iconic figures – Napoleon or Marilyn Monroe or Munnings – then they have had to accept that they have achieved their status by being public figures, by becoming public property: they are fair game. But if someone has remained a private figure should they have to endure being written about against

their will, especially in a novel.

In a biography the real person cannot be reinvented as an imagined one; in this respect non-fiction has more integrity. In a novel the author creates a fictional character which supersedes the real-life one: the real person is destroyed and the imagined character put in its place.

In the case of an iconic figure the novelist creates his own character by reinterpreting him; but because he is fair game, he will also have been reinvented by so many other novelists, biographers and journalists that no one version will take precedence over another.

It is not the same when a novelist *loosely* bases his own fictional character on a real person. This is because the 'real' person, the genuine innerness of the person, can remain still un sullied. Somerset Maugham, for example, is known to have based the central character of *Cakes and Ale* on Hugh Walpole, but because Maugham took many liberties with the truth in order to create a good read, and because he never asserted that he was writing about Walpole even though most readers knew he was, the essential Walpole can remain intact.

Yet this is entirely different from being Dr Rivers, who has

now become forever personified as a character in a novel. Biographical method may have constraints but, in the end, it has integrity. The integrity of fiction is the opposite – you cannot assume anything is true. The portrayal of both Wilfred and Eileen is realistic and fascinating and it seems to us that a delicate balancing act has been achieved: Jonathan Smith has written a superb novel which is based on truth. But ultimately we must never forget that we have got to know both the characters through the prism of the author's imagination. What he has written is, after all, 'only a novel'.



*Barrage Balloons at Sea 1940 by Eric Ravilious (we sell a card of this painting in the shop).*



# QUINCE JAM



2005 painting by Vincent Yorke

We always have a bowl of quinces in the shop in the autumn. One year these were painted for us by Vincent Yorke and we often prop his painting against the bowl of fruit (more paintings can be found at [vincentyorke.co.uk](http://vincentyorke.co.uk) and even a print of a quince which would look glorious on a kitchen wall). And now we know precisely how to make quince jam: the writer Ann Baer, author of the excellent novel *Down the Common*, who recently celebrated her 100th birthday, has compiled (and beautifully handwritten) a cookery book, which was lent to us by her granddaughter. It is interesting and useful and charming and although alas we cannot publish it ourselves, we are sure it will eventually be published because there is so much useful information within its pages. But will handwriting like this vanish for ever now that screens are ubiquitous? We so hope not.

Quince jam. If in October you can buy real quinces - and don't be misled by the large, pale yellow, blemish-free fruit sold in super markets coming from Turkey or the Mediterranean - they look good and taste of nothing. Find or grow or get given English quinces, knobly, spotted, coarse-shaped but smelling wonderful - peel them, grate them coarsely, stew in a little water till soft then add sugar and boil. You will get a divine honey mixture, in a light coral colour to a deep garnet-red (depending perhaps on the ripeness of the fruit, always with a marvellous unique taste.



# AND ANOTHER THING

**T**he *Home-Maker* has been reprinted as the eleventh Persephone Classic: we have an ambition: to turn it into a bestseller to rival *Stoner* (the novel about a depressed American academic that did so well recently). If any Persephone reader would like to write about *The Home-Maker* on their blog, please ask us for a free copy. And of course we would be thrilled if anyone who has read it tweeted at: #homemakerbook .

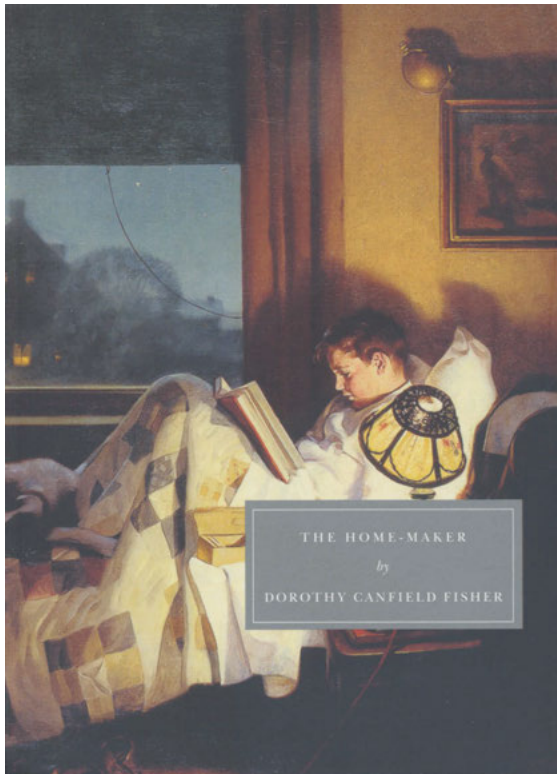
**T**he *Persephone Catalogue* is now 120 pages and we do not send it with the *Biannually* any more (except to new readers). But please telephone, email or write if

you would like one and of course we shall be very pleased to send it, free of charge.

**T**he photograph of a young woman on this page is taken from a larger picture of a group of students at Newnham College, Cambridge in 1880. The name attributed to her is Louisa Plant. However, the group photo would have included Amy Levy and surely this is exactly what she would have looked like when she was 18 or 19? Her biographer Christine Pullen has discovered that by coincidence (because Amy Levy died when she was only 27) Louisa Plant also died in mysterious circumstances when

she was 24. Does anyone know anything about Louisa and whether or not this is her? And if it is not her, could this be a new and touching photo of Amy?

**N**ext Spring's books will be a third book by Mollie Panter-Downes, author of *Good Evening*, *Mrs Craven*, Persephone Book No. 8 and *Minnie's Room*, Persephone Book No. 34: *London War Notes* consists of short non-fiction pieces about WW2 written for *The New Yorker* and first collected in one volume in 1972. And *Vain Shadow* by Jane Hervey is a very funny and unusual 1963 black comedy. The Prefaces are by David Kynaston and Celia Robertson.



# EVENTS

The first event this winter is the *Country Living Fair* at the Agricultural Hall in Islington from **12th–16th November**. We launched at *Country Living* in 1999 and this will be the fifth time we have been there. We shall by then have 110 books and because it is so unwieldy to carry boxes of books into the hall we shall again have one copy of every book for people to look at and then send them post free that day or the next. Since for visitors to the Fair all the books will be £10 instead of £12, and since postage will be free, that will be quite a saving on the normal price of £12 plus £2 postage.

On **Wednesday 19th November** from 4.30–6.30pm in the shop there will be a short talk accompanying the showing of the 1945 film of *They Knew Mr Knight*. A cup of tea (in our new vintage cups and saucers) and a slice of cake will be served beforehand and a glass of wine halfway through.

On **Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th November** from 10–4 we shall be at the *Christmas Fair at Great Dixter* near Rye. If any Persephone readers in the Rye/Winchelsea area would like to get together for a book group at 6 o'clock on the 29th please let us know. We would suggest discussing the newly-published *The Happy Tree* by Rosalind Murray.

Victor de Waal will talk about his mother Elisabeth de Waal, who wrote *The Exiles Return*, Persephone Book No. 102, on **Tuesday 2nd December** which is the day she was born 115 years ago. This is a *Teatime event* from 4.30–6.00pm: tea and cake and madeira will be served.



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Our annual Christmas *Open Day* will be on **Tuesday 9th December** from 10am–8pm. Gift-wrapping will be free both for the tissue paper and for the new paper from Cambridge Imprint. Claerwen James from the latter will be present; and Jane Brocket will be selling her new books.

On **Wednesday 14th January** at a *Lunch* from 12.30–2.30pm there will be a talk with illustrations (now that we have a projector) about the *Persephone Post* which has appeared every weekday for five and a half years.

Two Persephone girls have now done PhDs on 'our' authors, Clara Jones on Virginia Woolf and Lydia Felgett on Betty Millet. They will talk about their subjects at a *Lunch* on **Wednesday February 4th** from 12.30–2.30.

On **Thursday 12th February** the novelist Harriet Evans, who wrote the Preface, will talk about *Because of the Lockwood* at a *Lunch*; or rather she will storm the barricades (cf. p. 7).

On **Wednesday 11th March** there will be a party at which the winner of the first *Persephone Prize* (due date for entries 31st October) will be presented with their prize and asked to read some paragraphs from their prizewinning entry. The party will be at *Pushkin House* 5a Bloomsbury Square WC1A 2TA from 6.30–8.30pm. Admission is free but please ring to put your name on the list.

All events are £20 apart from the Open Day and the Prize Party which are free. To book for an event please telephone the office – although there is no need to book for the Open Day.

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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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