



The Persephone Biannually

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Self-Portrait by Evelyn Dunbar (1906–60) oil on canvas © Christopher Campbell-Howes. Signed 'ED 1958', painted in the artist's studio at Staple Farm near Wye, Kent, this was her last self-portrait.



OUR BOOKS FOR AUTUMN/WINTER 2015–16

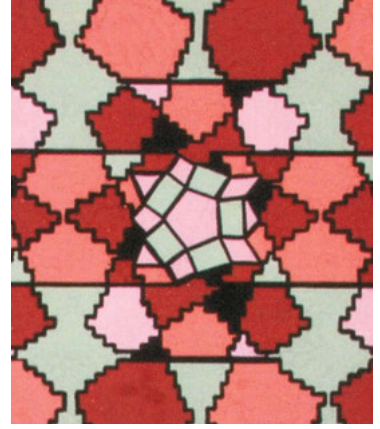
Houses, architecture, living space, where the domestic happens: this is a strong theme at Persephone Books and RC Sherriff's *Greengates* (1936), Persephone Book No. 113, is one of the novels that sums it up. The plot is timeless and simple: a man retires from his job but finds that never were truer words said than 'for better, for worse but not for lunch'. His boredom, his wife's (suppressed and confused) dismay at the quiet orderliness of her life being destroyed, their growing tension with each other, is beautifully and kindly described. Then one day they do something they used to do more often – leave St John's Wood and go out into the countryside for the day. And that walk changes their lives forever: they see a house for sale, decide to move there, and the nub of the book is a description of their leaving London, the move, and the new life they create for themselves.

Juliet Gardiner, the social historian, has written an incisive preface in which she sets *Greengates* in context. This is what she says: 'The novel is ostensibly about a house built in the 1930s, about how and why a retired couple come to buy it, and how it changed their lives. Its subject

matter holds up a mirror to the social and cultural preoccupations of the decade: the desire for a home of one's own, the slow seepage of an attendant form of modernism into a profoundly traditional society, the nuances of class, status and taste. It also addresses the urgent question of the changing nature of the countryside, with the fall in land values and the concomitant encroachment of the town, and the urbanisation of England.'

RC Sherriff excels at writing about everyday life and ordinariness. In *Journey's End* his compassion for Mr Everyman was famously displayed, and this was so also in *The Hopkins Manuscript*, PB No. 57, about an ordinary man whose main interest is his garden who is then caught up in impending catastrophe (and cf. p. 27 of this *Biannually*); and, too, in *The Fortnight in September* (PB No. 67), one of our best-sellers, about the Stevens family going on their annual holiday to Bognor, their one chance each year to escape the stifling routine of normal life which is so crucial for all of them.

Thus, in a sense, *Greengates* is a sequel to *The Fortnight in September*, with the great

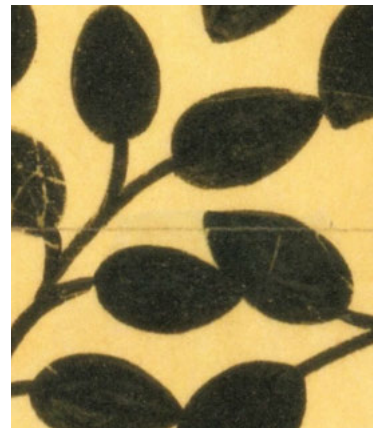


The design for a 1935 floor linoleum used for Greengates (1936)

© MODA/Mary Evans Picture Library.



Taken from the original 1937 dust jacket for Gardeners' Choice; it came in three colourways – pink, orange and green.



A textile designed for l'Atelier Offner in Lyon 1939–42; it is curiously like a Sonia Delaunay design.

difference that the Baldwins have no children. In *Fortnight*, when Mr Stevens retires, his children's lives, and possibly their children's lives, will become an important part of his daily existence; *Greengates* is much more focused on the couple, on coupledness: their happiness when Mr Stevens is in the City every day for lunch, their difficulty at adjusting to both of them being at home all day; and then their realisation that they could move out of London and have a new, interesting life – together.

The other fascination of the book is the architectural one: it is full of details about houses and furniture and cooking stoves and heating methods and generally how middle-class life was lived in the 1930s. Juliet Gardiner adds: 'In his quietly wry, true to life and frequently rather moving novel Sherriff excelled as the acute miniaturist and profound observer of human foibles and frailties that readers will recall from *The Fortnight in September*. When this was published in 1931 its author was

described as a worthy successor to Charles Dickens and it established his reputation as a sharp and perceptive chronicler of lives that, despite their undramatic domestic banalities, often reveal greater truths than might initially appear.'

We can safely say that anyone who has enjoyed *The Fortnight in September*, *How to Run Your Home Without Help* or *They Knew Mr Knight* (to pick, a little randomly, three books which cover similar themes) will very much enjoy reading *Greengates*.

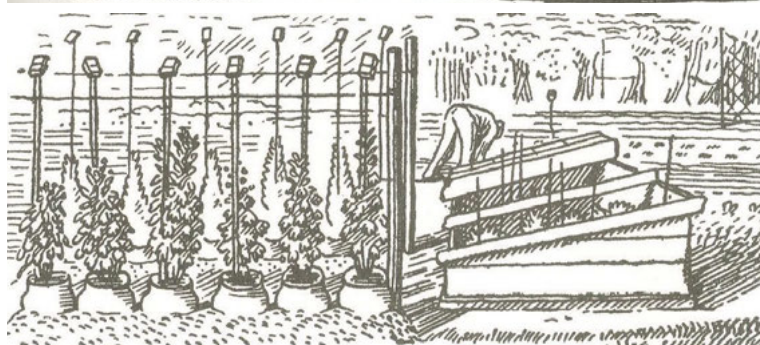
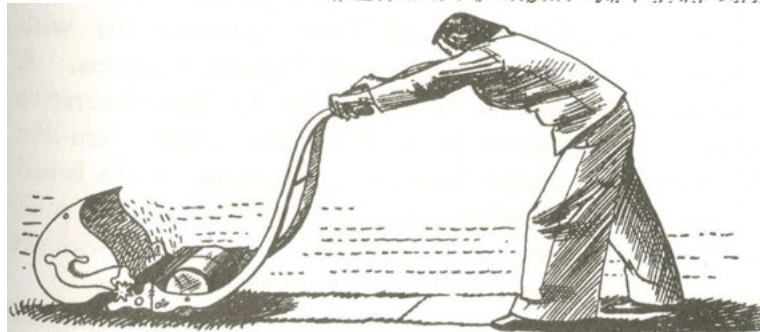
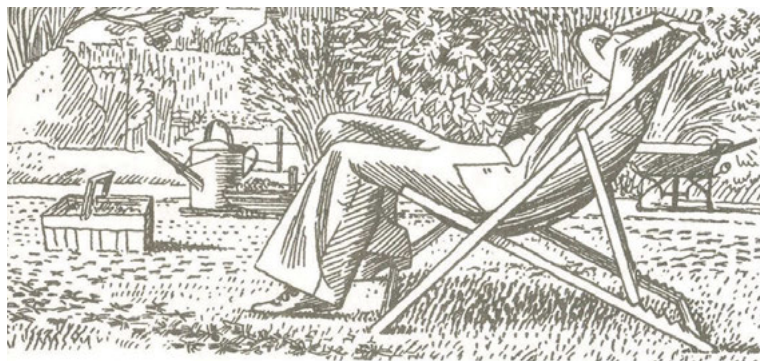


Poster by Charles Payne 1929 printed by the Baynard Press; poster by James McIntosh Patrick 1938 printed by Waterlow & Sons.

Gardeners' Choice is the second gardening book we publish. The first is Persephone Book No. 66 *Gardener's Nightcap* by Muriel Stuart – and we apologise for any confusion the similarity of titles may cause. Both books were originally in black and white and both are published in facsimile; also each one is idiosyncratic and informative; and would be an excellent present for any gardener.

The authors of *Gardeners' Choice* had first collaborated

on a mural at a school in Brockley and in 1936 were asked to write 'a really new book' about gardening. Cyril (always called Charles) Mahoney had taught Evelyn Dunbar at the Royal College of Art and she was asked by him to work at Brockley. When they did the book together it did not occur to either of them to sign their drawings, with the result that we have no idea apart from intuitive appraisal who drew what. In the same way we do not know if the text is Charles's or Evelyn's.



The writing is quite serious and is for the truly dedicated gardener – there are detailed descriptions of the plants that the two devoted gardeners would ideally choose to grow. But the main delight of the book are the drawings – black and white illustrations that have never been reproduced since their first publication in 1937. The reason for reissuing it now is that two years ago a cache of 500 of Evelyn Dunbar drawings and paintings were discovered in a house in Kent: someone had brought a Dunbar work to the Antiques Roadshow and seeing it had prompted the owner of the archive to get it down from the attic. An exhibition at the Pallant Gallery in Chichester is the result (it runs from October until February 14th '16). In addition, we are having a small selling exhibition in the shop of some of the Evelyn Dunbar drawings that are not on display at the Pallant.

This *Biannually* reproduces half a dozen of the drawings from *Gardeners' Choice* (three here and three on p. 26): in the book they are page size and there are forty of them. Although there was an exhibition of Evelyn Dunbar's work a few years ago, Gill Clarke published a biography, and specialist dealers like Liss Llewellyn Fine Art and Sim Fine Art have been promoting her work, this exhibition at the Pallant (and the excellent catalogue, available in Chichester or from us), and *Gardeners' Choice*, reveal Evelyn Dunbar as an artist who should still be far better known.

Our third book for this Autumn/Winter has been translated from the French by Francine Yorke (who also writes the Persephone Forum every month). It was originally published in 1957 as *Ceux qui ne dormaient pas* but we felt that the title (which has overtones of turning a blind eye, looking away) did not translate well as Those who did not Sleep and chose a new title, *Maman, What Are We Called Now?* This was the question nine year-old Sylvie asked her mother in a crowded station one day during the war. But why was this such an

important if not disastrous thing to ask? It was because she and her mother were Jewish, living under assumed names and with forged papers, and therefore if anyone had overheard her hesitation about her real name they would have been immediately suspicious.

Sylvie's father, André Amar, was arrested in July 1944 and for the next five weeks, until, miraculously, he came home, his wife Jacqueline (who wrote under the name Mesnil-Amar) kept a diary about her everyday life in Paris, as well as looking back at

their life before the war and at being in hiding over the previous four years. This is a moving and extraordinarily immediate description of life in France during the Occupation and of life in Paris during the Germans' hasty departure. The writing is in some ways very like that in *Few Eggs and No Oranges*, PB No. 9: raw, unaffected, telling it as it was about the reality of living in a country at war.

The book is also extremely interesting about being Jewish. The Amars felt completely French. Like Irène Némirovsky



Paris, August 1944 © Mary Evans Picture Library

and like so many thousands of other French Jews they could not imagine that their countrymen, as they thought of them, would turn against them. But it is alas true that thousands of French men and women collaborated with the Germans in sending Jews to their death. And so Jacqueline wrote meditatively in her diary about the blindness and arrogance of upper middle-class Paris life in Passy and the Seizième when the men had secure jobs and the children were looked after by an English governess; and no one in the Jewish bourgeoisie could imagine that very soon it would be their fellow citizens who would turn against them.

However, the strongest *leitmotif* in the book is that of children – not just Sylvie, the Amars' daughter, but her French contemporaries (many of whom perished) and her contemporaries in Europe. Hence we have used several 1943 photographs by the great American photographer Thérèse Bonney (1894–1978) in the book (four of which are reproduced on p. 24 of this *Biannually*). And we see *Maman, What Are We called Now?* as being in some ways a companion piece to that great Persephone favourite, Marghanita Laski's *Little Boy Lost*, PB No. 28: the second part of the book, the non-fiction essays written in 1945–6, asks many uncomfortable questions, the gist of which is – what was going to happen to Europe's children? What was going to happen to the little boy lost?

These crucial questions are addressed by Caroline Moorehead in her Persephone Preface. She writes about Jacqueline: 'Looking back over her life, she felt a mixture of regret and contempt for the way that the Jewish families she had grown up among had believed so passionately in their own assimilation, had been so willing to adopt the customs and ape the behaviour of the Catholic and Protestant French, and had thus failed to see how profound the differences were between them, "by reason of suffering and

blood". They had felt so good and so safe in this "golden age", even after the advent of Hitler.' Caroline Moorehead continues: 'But nothing made her angrier than the fate of Europe's children. They became for her the symbol of European culture and humanity in disarray.' And as Jacqueline asks, and concludes: 'What do our children really know about our fear? So close to it and yet so removed, often they seem to leave us, to abandon the adult world in which time moves on, to live in their own eternal present': a profound observation.



WOMEN AGAINST THE VOTE

Last year the streets of Shoreditch, and even the House of Parliament, saw the filming of *Suffragette*, which stars Carey Mulligan as Maud Watts, a laundress caught up as a combatant and victim in the violent struggle for the vote in 1912. It was in late 1911 that Constance Maud published *No Surrender*, Persephone Book No. 94, which celebrates a very similar and often shocking story centred on Jenny Clegg, a Lancashire mill-girl, 'a passionate account, full of enthralling detail and political fervour... polemical but not without complexity' (Lydia Fellgett – Introduction).

We need the story of brave, feisty women taking on a reactionary male establishment but we also need the complexity. Many of the most influential opponents of women's suffrage were eminent women. Anti-suffragists included best-selling women writers such as Charlotte M Yonge, Marie Corelli, and Ouida, as well as dynamic figures such as Octavia Hill (founder of the National Trust), Elizabeth Wordsworth (founding principal of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford), and Gertrude Bell (who reshaped the Middle East). Two of the most interesting examples were Mary Ward (Mrs Humphrey Ward, bestselling author of *Robert Elsmere*, above right) who was a consistent anti-suffragist, and Beatrice Webb, the social reformer, who was an anti-

suffragist in her youth but changed her mind (see Julia Bush *Women Against the Vote* 2007). But why did they oppose the Vote?

Many thinking women in the later Victorian era saw Parliament as an alien male debating club, consumed in meaningless party politics and dominated by male topics such as the Empire, Ireland, the Army, and Free Trade. Meanwhile, women were carving out a new role for themselves in philanth-



ropy in their local communities; they were better equipped to do something useful about the welfare of the poor and the sick. And they were educating themselves to an increasingly advanced level in single sex colleges at Cambridge and Oxford. Women had a distinctive role which they would lose at their peril, and at the peril of society, too.

Mary Ward was at the heart of the campaign for the first women's colleges at Oxford: 'My friends and I were all on fire for

women's education,' and she became the first volunteer secretary of the new Somerville College in 1879. When she moved to London she ploughed the royalties from her novels into establishing a 'settlement' in Bloomsbury to provide religious and cultural enrichment to the London poor. Soon she moved on to practical social service, especially for the needs of working-class children. She pioneered the first school for disabled children, and then set up a network of children's play-schemes; this was the model then adopted by the London County Council, and by 1912 a million London children were benefiting from these schemes. The Mary Ward Centre in Queen Square (round the corner from our shop) is still going strong.

In 1889 Mary Ward co-initiated the 'Appeal Against Women's Suffrage', which set out the case against the Vote and was signed by 104 prominent women (including Virginia Woolf's mother and aunt). Joining 'the turmoil of active political life' would impair women's 'special mission' – in the family, in education and in the community. In any case, there was a lack of 'serious and general demand' for the suffrage.

Two decades after the 'Appeal', pressure for the suffrage had built up; as a counter, a Women's National Anti-Suffrage League was launched in 1908, and it was

Mary Ward who introduced its Manifesto. Controversially, she added her own thoughts on the need for a national Women's Council of female local government representatives. The idea of a separate 'women's chamber' had been put forward by Ethel Harrison, who in *The Freedom of Women* proposed a 'Diet of Women' outside the 'Imperial Parliament'. Caroline Stephen, Virginia Woolf's aunt, developed the idea of a 'third house' elected by women only: 'For the first time we should hear a really feminine voice in national affairs – a voice that we must remember the Suffrage can never give.'

Over the same period, Beatrice Webb (née Potter)

changed her mind. She signed the 1889 'Appeal' because she disliked the 'rough and tumble' of parliamentary party politics and – based on her social work – thought the priorities for women should be economic, getting rid of sweated labour in the East End, rather than getting the Vote. However, by 1906 she believed that social problems increasingly required state action, and this meant that women should share control of national as well as local government.

Of course, much of the anti-suffragist polemic was rather cruder than this. In Constance Maud's *No Surrender* the young Lady Thistlewaite asserts that the vote would be 'the

greatest misfortune that could happen to women as a whole... It would be the death of chivalry, no one can deny that! If women encroach on men's rights and try to make out that they are men's equals you can't expect men to go on showing them the consideration and politeness that they show to the true womanly woman who looks up to them and acknowledges they are the superiors.'

But it is also true that over nearly a hundred years of the Vote achieving an adequate voice for women in a male-dominated parliament has not been easy. Would a Diet of Women have achieved more?



Suffragettes 1914 (each woman has been photographed on two different occasions, probably by the police) © Mary Evans Picture Library

‘THE CASUALTY LIST’: SHORT STORY BY WINIFRED HOLTBY

Mrs Lancing came into her drawing-room and added another silk poppy to the bunch growing annually in the cloisonné vase. Another Armistice Day’s duty done; another Two Minutes’ Silence observed at the Memorial Service in the Parish Church which the dear Rector always held. He had lost one of his own boys in 1917. It was very sad.

It was all very sad. The war had been terrible, terrible. Going to see *Journey’s End* with Margaret last month had brought it all back to her. She had been thinking about that play all through the service; about poor young Stanhope, drinking like that, and the funny servant; but most of all about that queer, tense, terrifying yet exciting call, ‘Stretcher-bearer! Stretcher-bearer!’ in the last act. It had a curious effect upon her; as though it almost, but not quite, released the secret of a hidden fear.

Well, she was tired now. Those new patent-leather shoes were not really comfortable. It had been a relief to get into slippers again. Thank goodness there was still half an hour before lunchtime in which she could rest and look at *The Times*. Arthur had left it on the sofa as usual. He had not looked very well that morning; but then, who could look well every morning

when you were eighty-two? Why, she hadn’t felt any too well herself, and she was nearly nine years younger. She sat down in the big arm-chair and stretched out her feet towards the dancing fire.

Of course, it wasn’t as if she had had boys herself. With Arthur too old really, even to be a special constable, and the girls doing a little light secretarial and orderly work at the local hospital, she had never been able to feel that she was really in the war. She had done her bit, rolled bandages, and knitted socks, and served on the Refugees Committee, and rationed her own household so sternly that two of her best maids left; but that had not been quite the same thing. And she had always hated to feel out of anything – of the best set in the town, or the Hospital Ball, or the craze for roller-skating – or even the war. She had read the Casualty List every morning carefully, and written sympathetic, admiring notes to those other women whose husbands and sons were among the wounded or the fallen; but she could not sometimes help wishing that her own situation was a little more heroic. Those Wonderful Mothers Who Gave Their Sons held an immense moral advantage over the ordinary women who only coped

with a sugar shortage and the servant problem and the regulations about darkening windows. When Nellie Goodson’s only son was killed, she had felt almost envious, of the boy for his Glorious End, of the mother for her honourable grief. Her sin had always been to covet honour.

During the ten years following the war, she had nearly forgotten this strange feeling of envy, just as she had forgotten the taste of lentil cutlets and the fuss about meat cards. There had been so much to think about, Margaret’s wedding to her smart young Deryck, and Celia’s wedding to Dr Studdley. Funny she could never think of him as Eric – always as Dr Studdley – and the grandchildren, and the new bathroom, and Arthur’s operation, and putting in Central Heating and her own neuritis. Life had been very full and complicated and busy, for Arthur’s business had not done so badly during the war, and though of course he had retired, he still drew dividends.

It was a pity that she had never been able to persuade him to settle anything on the girls. That night she stayed with Margaret to go to *Journey’s End* she remembered the girl, already in her becoming blue theatre frock, setting the grapefruit glasses on

the polished table – for she was always up to date although she kept only a day-woman – and sighing, ‘If only we had a little capital.’ If Deryck had had a little capital, perhaps they would have felt that they could afford a baby. These modern ways were all wrong, thought Mrs Lancing. And yet, when she remembered Celia and her four, and another coming, and the untidiness of the Studdleys’ little house, with one meal always on top of the next, she could not reproach Margaret. It seemed a pity, perhaps, that young people needed money, while old people always had it.

Of course she had paid for the theatre seats and taxis and everything. She had not really wanted to see *Journey’s End*, but everyone had been talking about it, and she felt so silly when she said she had only listened in on Arthur’s wireless. She really liked a nice, amusing play, something you could laugh over, with a little love story and pretty frocks. Still, Margaret had seemed quite glad to take her, and it had been a change from hurrying back after visiting poor Nancy.

Once a month since Nancy’s second stroke, Mrs Lancing had gone up to town to see her sister. She was astonished at the difference that Nancy’s illness made to her. The sisters had never been deeply devoted to each other, and for many years their relationship had been one of mutual tolerance and

irritation. Yet ever since Mrs Lancing had seen Nancy lying in bed, between the chintz curtains covered with hollyhocks, her poor mouth twisted and her speech all thick and blurred, she had been afraid. The weeks passed, and a sudden ringing of the telephone had only meant that the butcher could not send the kidneys in time for dinner, or that the Burketts wanted a fourth for bridge; but still Mrs Lancing was afraid. They said that the third stroke was always fatal, and Mrs Lancing did not want her sister to die. For when she had gone there would be no one left to share those memories of her childhood which grew more vivid with each passing year. There was no one else who remembered the hollow at the roots of the weeping ash-tree, that had made a beautiful kitchen range whenever they had played at Keeping House. No one else remembered poor Miss Wardle, the governess, who had lost the third finger of her left hand and spoke with a lisp. And no one else remembered that exciting night when the wheel came off the brougham driving home from the Hilaries, and they had to walk in their party slippers through the snow.

Even Rita Washburn, naughty little Rita who came over from the Rectory to do lessons with them, was dead now. Only two months ago Mrs Lancing had covered the blue front of her black dress with a scarf, before she set off to Golders Green Cemetery for Rita’s funeral.

Perhaps it would be as well to ask Madame Challette to make her next dress with two detachable fronts, one black, and one coloured. For in these days one never knew. Every time Mrs Lancing picked up *The Times* she looked down the Deaths’ Column with apprehension. She never knew who might go next. Why, there were hardly any of the old Bromley people left. That was the worst of being the baby of a set. Everyone else seemed to grow old so soon. Mrs Lancing did not feel old at all, only sometimes she got a little tired, and always nowadays she was conscious of that lurking fear.

She picked up *The Times* and held it between her and the fire. Well, there was one comfort, she would never see Nancy’s death there, as she had seen their father’s, because she was on holiday in Scotland with Arthur and they had not known where to find her. She had made arrangements with Nancy’s household now to telephone to her at once if anything happened, because she knew so well how, in the confusion of death, important things were neglected.

She knew so well. She had become quite expert recently in the technicalities of sudden illness, death and funerals. There had been her mother, her elder brother Henry, cousin Jane, and her great friend, Millie Waynwright. Millie’s children had both been abroad when it happened, and she had had to arrange everything. Somehow it

was just like Millie to give everyone as much trouble as possible. Dear, wayward, lovely, petulant Millie, a spoiled pretty woman to the end, her white hair waved and shingled, her neck tied up with pale mauve tulle, and fresh flowers brought by her husband every day. But she had never really got over Roddie's death. He had been killed accidentally by a bomb exploding in England, and somehow that was really worse than if it had happened in France.

Mrs Lancing picked up *The Times* and looked at the Deaths' Column on the front page. 'Adair, Bayley, Blaynes, Brintock, Carless.' Frederick Carless – now, would that be Daisy's husband? – 75 – why, not so much older than she was. Mrs Lancing had begun to count her friends' ages eagerly, finding comfort in her own comparative youth. 'Davies, Dean, Dikes.' It was a heavy list today. There must have been an offensive.

How absurd. She was thinking of it as though it were a casualty list; but this was peacetime. The war had been over for more than ten years. It was Armistice Day, the day on which the nation thought proudly of its glorious dead.

'They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn;
At the going down of the sun
and in the morning,

We will remember them.'

We who are left grow old, thought Mrs Lancing. The years condemn us. We fall in a war with Time which knows no armistice. This column in *The Times* is the Casualty List.

She looked up at the scarlet silk poppies in the vase. In Flanders fields the poppies grow, because the young men died, so the Rector had said only an hour ago, in order that the world might be a better place for those who stayed behind. But the old who died because the years condemned them, was there no honour in them going? Of course, they had to pass on some time, and leave the world to the young. Mrs Lancing thought of Margaret, and her sigh, 'if only we had a little capital!' breathed without malice and without intention. She did not mean to hint anything to her mother, but of course she knew that when her parents went, there would be £12,000 each for her and Celia. The old must pass on. The young must inherit.

The shadow of death darkened the world when one was over seventy; yet save for one fear it was not unfriendly; it was not dishonourable. It was just part of life. Only she had not liked the look of Arthur's face that morning and she did wish that his heart was stronger.

The sudden opening of the drawing-room door roused her. She sat up and saw the

scared, white face of the young parlourmaid.

'Oh please, 'm, will you come? The master's had a fainting attack or something in the smoking-room.'

Arthur's heart. Of course. It had to come.

As though with her bodily ears, Mrs Lancing heard ringing through the house the queer, exciting, alarming, sinister cry of 'Stretcher-bearer, Stretcher-bearer!'

She knew that this was the fear she had not dared to face, that this was the hour she had awaited with unspoken terror. Yet now that it had come, she was unshaken.

She rose quietly from her chair, placed *The Times* again upon the sofa, said to Ethel, 'Very well. I'll come at once. Please telephone Dr Burleigh.' And with a steady step walked to the door.

She was not out of it this time. This was her war, and she had learned how to behave.

Taken from *Truth is Not Sober*, a 1934 collection of short stories by Winifred Holtby



THE PERSEPHONE 115

--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 **Also a Persephone Classic**

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' **Also a Persephone Classic**

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' ninety years before. Preface: PD James

7. **The Home-Maker by Dorothy Canfield Fisher** An ahead-of-its-time 'remarkable and brave 1924 novel about being a house-husband' (Carol Shields). Preface: Karen Knox **Also a Persephone Classic**

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. Also a Persephone Classic

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*, PB No. 105, 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, 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 **Also a Persephone Classic**

17. **Marjory Fleming by Oriol Malet** A deeply empathetic novel about the real life of the Scottish child prodigy who lived from 1803–11; translated into French; a play on BBC 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 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. **A Persephone audiobook read by Frances McDormand. Also a Persephone Classic**

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 author of the *William* books, a 1948 family saga about 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. Also a **Persephone Classic**

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. Also a **Persephone Classic**

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. Also a **Persephone Classic**

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'. 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. A film with Felicity Jones. Also a **Persephone Classic**.

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 have been read several times on BBC R4. 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 **Also a Persephone Classic**

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 superb 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 the lovely 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 Hardymont

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 (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 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.

- 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 counter-point to *Few Eggs and No Oranges*, PB No. 9, 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 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: author, who also reads six of the stories as a Persephone Audiobook.
- 93. The Sack of Bath** by Adam Fergusson 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 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 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 Buncle' 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 Ravillious. 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

111. *London War Notes* by Mollie Panter-Downes These extraordinary 'Letters from London', describing everyday life in WW2, were written for *The New Yorker* and then collected in one volume in 1971. Preface: David Kynaston

112. *Vain Shadow* by Jane Hervey A Waugh-ish black comedy written in the 1950s but not published until 1963 about the days after the death of a patriarch in a large country house and the effect on his family. Preface: Celia Robertson

113. *Greengates* by RC Sherriff A 1936 novel about retirement: Mr Baldwin realises the truth of 'for better for worse but not for lunch' but finds a new life by moving to 'metroland'. Preface: Juliet Gardiner

114. *Gardeners' Choice* by Evelyn Dunbar and Charles Mahoney Two artist friends collaborated over the text and drawings (of which there are forty) of this rare and delightful 1937 gardening book. Preface: Edward Bawden, Afterword: Christopher Campbell-Howes

115. *Maman, What Are We Called Now?* by Jacqueline Mesnil-Amar The author's husband was arrested and disappeared in July 1944; for the next six weeks his wife kept a diary which is an unparalleled description of the last days of the Occupation in Paris as they actually happened. Photographs: Thérèse Bonney. Preface: Caroline Moorehead



'Tulips in a Staffordshire Jug' Dora Carrington 1921

THE NEW DOMESTIC NOVEL

Jane Shilling wrote this for Prospect magazine in August this year as part of a longer piece about novels by Knausgaard and Ferrante.

‘Sad people who do not know what they want in life,’ Leo Tolstoy observed on reading Ivan Turgenev’s *On The Eve*, ‘should not write novels.’ But without melancholy and confusion, where would fiction be? No literary genre is more haunted by self-doubt than the novel – but only the novel affronts the minutiae of existence with such subversive particularity. If the heroic and sublime are the stuff of drama and poetry, fiction seeks transcendence in the quotidian.

Yet this project – at once modest and disturbing – has always attracted hostility, both from critics, who have accused the novel of everything from immorality to insignificance and, perversely, from novelists themselves. From Tolstoy’s jibe at Turgenev to Will Self’s lofty characterisation of Joanna Trollope as ‘a lower middle-brow novelist who has just enough sophistication to convince her readership that they are getting an upper middle-brow product,’ the intellectually superior love to anathematise domestic fiction as the opium of the reading classes.

In her 1920s essay on modern fiction, Virginia Woolf compared the development of the novel with that of technology

– the one a steady, coherent advance; the other a looping, digressive journey. ‘It is doubtful,’ she wrote, ‘whether in the course of the centuries, though we have learnt much about making machines, we have learnt anything about making literature. We do not come to write better; all that we can be said to do is keep moving....’

No fictional genre more eloquently exemplifies this circular tendency than the domestic novel. Marginalised, neglected and patronised, the fiction of small incidents and family life is regularly rediscovered – often with exclamations of astonishment at its quiet excellence from the same people who were once disposed to ignore or dismiss it. The exhilaration of rediscovery is invariably accompanied by a tendency to regard the new-found *oeuvre* as though it were a species of literary unicorn: unique and without precedent rather than a creative reinvention of a genre whose subversions are no less devastating for taking place among the shopping baskets and coffee cups of domestic life.

A certain species of literary novelist – clever, speculative, well versed in literary theory – inclines to the opinion that fiction becomes more serious the further it travels from home. Yet from George Eliot to Jane Gardam, there is no shortage of

evidence to refute this view. And now there is a new trend for contemporary writers to reimagine the domestic novel – to show how the power to unsettle and disturb can be contained within the most ordinary of surroundings. They deliver a conclusive rebuttal to the view that the domestic arena is no place for the life of the mind.

Critics of domestic fiction suspect it of complacency, of a lack of ambition, a tendency to celebrate and affirm – rather than challenge or disturb – the *milieu* that it describes. The savage indignation that once animated the fictions of Margaret Drabble and Doris Lessing had dwindled – so the argument goes – to the tepid cosiness of the Aga Saga. Great convulsions in the history of humanity seem to demand an equally momentous fictional response – the American novel continues its struggle to address the events of 9/11. Yet as the structures of society become more inchoate and overwhelming, a new generation of modern novelists finds fresh meaning not in public events but in the drama of individual lives. More interested in character than plot, intensely preoccupied with fictional being, rather than doing, these writers affront the melancholy disorder of existence with discomfiting intensity.’

OUR BLOGGERS WRITE

‘*Vain Shadow* is so engaging. The omniscient perspective has been marvellously utilised, as have the stream-of-consciousness thoughts of each character, which unfold simultaneously alongside the action. Rather than just an overseer, it feels as though the reader is an intrinsic being within the family; we are brought into the thick of conversations, and bouts of important decision-making. Jane Hervey is an incredibly perceptive author. Sharp, surprising and so well written, this is a most fitting addition to the Persephone list.’ Nudge

‘A fascinating book of reportage which we can read with the benefit of hindsight, *London War Notes* is an immensely readable book which I read quickly, never getting bogged down in facts and figures, but seeing the human war that was being waged on the home front. The style is friendly but truthful, well written especially when considering its immediacy and heavy propaganda role. It would definitely be of interest to anyone who wants to find out about the Second World War from a first hand view, a woman’s view, and yet it’s an entertaining read.’ Northern Reader

‘*The Home-Maker* is a story about people. About life. About the interactions between family members when life isn’t so

perfect even though from the outside all appears to be perfection. I read this book quickly and found myself touched in so many ways. It is a book about how sometimes the hand we are dealt in life is not what we should actually be doing. Sometimes the woman is just not the home-maker. And that’s okay. There are not too many books today that could ever match up to the mastery Dorothy Canfield Fisher has created in such a small novel.’ Kate’s Bookshelf

‘*Miss Ranskill Comes Home* is a marvellous book, which should not be taken lightly. It is easy to read, but to see it as some sort of social comedy ignores the fierce anti-war message contained in the book. This is a wonderful, eccentric, unusual, devastatingly clear-sighted novel, and one in which small-minded women do not come out smelling of roses. It’s funny, touching, and I highly recommend it.’ Yarnstorm Press

‘There’s something about *Vain Shadow* that reminds me of Evelyn Waugh’s *Scoop*. While Waugh elegantly satirised the jobbing journalists chasing a story, and caught their eccentricities and quirks down to a sharp point, Hervey does something similar... except with the subject of death. The book is weirdly compelling. It’s hard to explain why a novel about the

sombre subject of death should be so invigorating, but perhaps it is because the preface by Celia Robertson explains so well how the miseries induced on Mrs Winthrop and Joanna by their cruel husbands echoes so closely the romantic misfortunes of Hervey herself. It makes *Vain Shadow* a convincing and compelling read.’ Madam J-Mo

‘*The Closed Door and Other Stories* was a wonderful read. It can be charming, it can be heart-rending. Whipple’s writing probably didn’t win her any awards for stylistic flourish during her lifetime, but her approach feels dependable and substantial. There’s wit in Whipple’s writing too. The stories deal exclusively with the home and the hearth. Those adrenaline-inclined and those who sneer at “middle-class problems” should best stay away.’ A Reader of Literature

‘The extraordinary writing Mollie Panter-Downes demonstrates in her fiction (her perfect novel *One Fine Day*, for instance) is equally on show in *London War Notes*. She offers facts and relates the comments of others, but she also calmly speaks of heroism and bravado, looks at humour and flippancy with an amused eye, and can be brought to moving heights of admiration. The column she writes in response to D-Day is astonishing. And, lest you think

London War Notes is unremittingly bleak or wearily emotional, I should emphasise that Mollie Panter-Downes is often very amusing and wry. This isn't a book to speed-read, but to luxuriate in, and pace out. I can't imagine a more useful, entertaining, moving, and thorough guide to the war, beautifully finding a middle path between objectivity and subjectivity. Thank goodness for Persephone reprinting this gem.' Shiny New Books

'It is testament to Helen Hull's skill as a writer, that in *Heat Lightning* she can explore so much of how human beings live together in the very simple story of a week in the life of one family. Here there is conflict, greed and selfishness, family secrets, betrayals and new beginnings. Hull's thoughtful narrative allows the reader to enter into the minds of these people, we particularly feel Amy's bewilderment over her marriage, as she struggles to understand what has happened to her and husband Geoffrey. This is an excellent novel although its scope is domestic; there is astute intelligence here, fine writing and quiet drama.' Heaven Ali

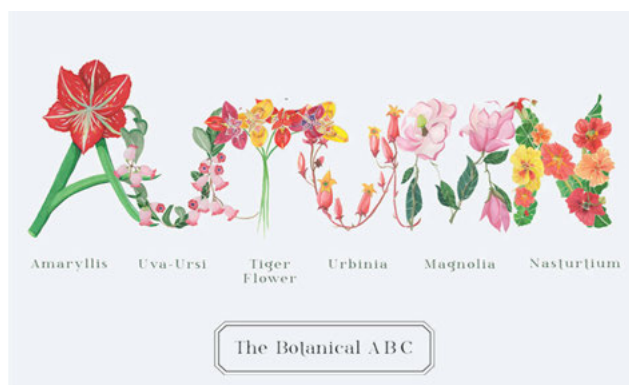
'*The Wise Virgins* is a very interesting book which, while falling into a common Persephone Books theme of the suburban domestic and the plight of the unmarried daughter, also goes on, as so many of their books do, to look at wider societal changes and the

fates of those who push against convention in whatever way, for however long. The style is interesting, with a certain amount of shifting perspective and stream of consciousness and a fair bit of meta-fictional authorial intervention as well, when he exhorts the reader to imagine the next few minutes for themselves or adds "a few more words" to flesh out a character. This makes for an attractive and engaging read.' LibroFullTime

'Mollie Panter-Downes is a wonderful writer; she is coolly intelligent, and is never one to get flustered. One immediately receives the impression that she was one of those incredibly collected and strong women, who always tried to make the best of any given situation. Each of her observations is of value, and never does she under- or overstate anything. She is particularly fabulous at reasserting her own position, and that of her country, against the war at large. *London War Notes* is a wonderful and all-encompassing read. As far as

journalism – and particularly wartime journalism from the perspective of somebody who was surviving on the Home Front – goes, *London War Notes* is at the very pinnacle.' Nudge

'*Vain Shadow* is a carefully wrought tapestry of a novel in which the characters are expertly dissected with a writer's scalpel and Jane Hervey manages to interlace moments of profound feeling and comedy. It's done so fondly that you feel as though she is laughing with the characters rather than at them – she doesn't pull her punches in revealing their flaws, but neither does she make them hateful. I very much enjoyed this honest, warts-and-all depiction of a complicated family and the way they cope with their loss. For a novel which emanates from a death, it is full of life, and hope – occasionally stifled, but never extinguished – and I would certainly recommend it as being yet another beautifully constructed treasure in the Persephone collection.' Shiny New Books



The Botanical ABC, drawn by Lavinia Thomas, accepts commissions for flower paintings – go to thebotanicalabc.co.uk

‘THE GREEN HEART’: SHORT STORY BY JANE MCCLURE

Julian sat quite still in the darkness of his mother’s closet, his legs pulled up tight against his corduroy pants, his high forehead pressed upon his knee bones, large as apples in a Christmas stocking. Above him, his mother’s dresses hung silently from their wooden hangers, blue silk beside black crêpe, sweet-smelling as his evening bath, still, without the quick movements of her legs to rustle the taffeta or her soft breathing to break the pleated bodices. On the high shelf above his head were her hats, carefully covered with white paper, deep in their striped boxes. He liked his mother’s hats: he liked the one with the flowers growing out of the straw brim.

Opening the door of the closet he found that his sister Vicky’s screams had stopped. Julian was sorry; he liked to hear his sister scream, and he had not minded the sight of her bouncing down the flight of marble steps like a beach ball, her long silken curls – brushed so carefully across his mother’s fingers – flopping about her head in disarray. It was quiet now except for the angry footsteps of the nurse rushing about the house. ‘Julian!’ He heard his name, shrill against his ears, like the sound from a whistle. ‘Julian!’

Julian did not answer. Leaning back he inspected the row of shoes before him: goshes caked

with mud from yesterday’s rain, pink slippers of rabbit fur which his mother always wore for breakfast, tennis sneakers beside alligator pumps, high evening shoes, gold, the colour of his sister’s hair, low oxfords with crêpe soles. He removed one of the oxfords from the rack and slowly began to unlace it. She had worn it the day she had taken him to the doctor’s, and as he looked at the small leather toe, he remembered it tapping against the office rug, tapping, impatiently.

‘He simply won’t eat a thing, doctor,’ she was saying, as Julian noticed her shoes, side by side now, heel against heel, just below her chair. ‘Oh, we’ve tried everything – I can assure you – forcing, bribes, but – stand up straight, Julian,’ and her hand was firm against his rounded back.

‘Suppose we have a look.’ Placing a hand under his chin the doctor lifted up his face. The doctor’s hand felt smooth and smelled of soap. Looking down, Julian could see from the corner of his eyes one brown shoe, raised now as his mother crossed her legs.

‘... you can see he’s nothing but a scarecrow.’ When his mother had taken off his shirt the doctor tapped his chest and his back with a small metal disc.

‘Nothing to worry about Mrs

Evans.’

‘But Julian’s almost five now –’ Julian wasn’t listening. He was wondering what a scarecrow was. Scarecrow, he said to himself. Scarecrow.

‘Julian!’ His name. Louder this time. Just outside the door. Replacing the shoe in the rack, Julian stood up and moved to the corner of the closet, stretching his arms wide around the waist of his mother’s chiffon dress which, at his touch, fell in a heap to the floor.

‘There you are, you wicked boy,’ the red-faced nurse said as Julian squinted at the rush of light when the door opened. He felt her calloused fingers pinch his ear as she led him into the hall. He stood on his toes, but she only raised her arm a little higher. ‘How dare you touch your little sister! How dare you! She could have been killed. Why, a whole flight of steps! Now, get in there,’ she commanded, pushing him ahead of her into his room. ‘Do you know what they do to little boys like you? Do you know? They send them away from home. You – with your sullen face – they’ll send you away. You’re a dangerous boy.’ She stormed out locking the door behind her.

Dangerous. The street with the black honking cars was dangerous. The high open window. The

kitchen matches. Julian did not know how he could be dangerous. He knew he was not a car, a window, a flaming match.

In the small upstairs bedroom cluttered with bright new and mostly unused toys – the red wagon with the real siren on the side, the cobbler’s bench, blocks of every description with which he could build trains and high buildings if he’d cared to – Julian circled round and around like a dog chasing its tail. He was a tall boy – indeed he knew himself to be as tall as the garden hedge which enclosed their house – and spindly, with eyes that narrowed themselves suspiciously against the glare of his world, opening to their full brown splendour only in the presence of his mother, a trim well-groomed woman in her middle thirties.

Now standing by the window he looked out beyond the hedge to where the road lay winding like a discarded skip rope in the grass, half-hoping to see his mother’s car rumbling through the dust as it approached the house.

It had always seemed to Julian that his mother was very far away, farther away than the pigeons that sat in the church tower and scattered when the clock chimed. Sometimes he would see her from the window on her way to work, a scarf blowing about her throat; sometimes he would listen to her at night, and rising from his bed, would creep quietly in his

pyjamas to the head of the stairs where he could hear her voice coming to him from behind the closed parlour doors, high and light, like the sounds which came from his music box. There were times, Julian remembered, when she was close to him, bending to give him a good night kiss, so close that he could rub his cheek against her perfumed sleeve, but, even then, his mother had seemed farther away than ever; for Julian had come to know his mother had two faces, one for himself and the other for his sister Vicky, and it was the second face, the one reserved so often for her, that he sought out and only rarely compelled. Had he done something very wrong, a long time ago, he wondered, gazing down at the yellow blooming garden flowers, something which had hurt his mother, something he could never, no matter how hard he tried, undo?

‘With Julian – my God! – it was dreadful,’ his mother had said that Sunday as she sat on the sunny terrace pouring tea from the good silver service. Julian separated the branches of the forsythia in time to catch her frown.

‘... absolutely dreadful... Sugar or cream, Phyllis? ... Strange,’ she continued, handing the cup to the woman called Phyllis, ‘with Vicky, an hour and a half – I almost didn’t get to the hospital in time – but with Julian –’

‘Well, the first child –’
‘Even so,’ his mother interrupted, pausing for a

moment to stir the streaming tea, ‘thirty-six hours is a very long time. When it was over I turned my face to the wall... I didn’t want to see the child.’ She shuddered as she recalled it.

‘... Such a beautiful baby.’

‘Vicky?’ Mrs. Evans smiled a proud smile.

‘She has your eyes – yes, and around the mouth too... the same expression.’

‘Perhaps,’ Mrs Evans said modestly. ‘Julian, on the other hand, has always been just like his father... Another cup?’

Julian released the branches and walked away. Just like his father. Was there something wrong with that too? He thought there was. He could tell from the tone in which it was said.

The flowers of the forsythia were darker now as the sun withdrew its beams, and, glancing across the lawn, Julian could see his mother’s car parked in the driveway. And he had been there all the while, waiting at the window, and had not seen her come after all.

When Julian discovered that the small connecting door into his sister’s room had been left unlocked, he went in and stood for a moment beside the blackboard watching the afternoon shadows stretch themselves in string-bean shapes along the floor, pointing out the poodle upon the rocker, the clown smiling from the shelf. Taking a piece of coloured chalk, he scribbled on a slate, then, moving, made a circle on the picture of Old King Cole, a

square upon the window pane, and finally drew a long wavering line which passed first over the heads of the dolls in the corner, then below the ticking clock, coming to a stop before the crib where he printed his name in large, uneven letters. Julian. Except for the N. He could never make the N.

Although the crib had been repainted and although he could see, almost as proof of possession, his sister's pale pink dress laid across the foot, freshly pressed, with a white ribbon dipping in and out of the collar, he knew that the crib belonged to him, for he had slept in it once, before Vicky had come to the house, before he had become a big boy. When he had seen the strange men painting it, he had thought they were doing it for him. For Julian. For his birthday perhaps, for a party where he would sit at the top of a long table wearing a paper hat, as he had done before, listening to his friends singing as he leaned to blow out the candles flickering above the icing. Was it not a present his mother brought with her that day, wrapped in a blanket as she approached him? But when the flaps of the cover opened, he could see that it was not a present. Small as a doll though. But red in the face. With a mouth that screamed and often dribbled. 'This is your baby sister, Julian.'

And yet, there had been something special about her from the first, Julian recalled, for the people had come all day long – the grown-ups – bringing

wrapped gifts of toys and strange bottles, lacey bibs, a sweater, small bonnets which settled low over her ball-like head, and finally, a great new carriage, where she could sit in the mornings on her way to the park, her small fingers clenching the embroidered coverlet, gathering smiles from the passers-by while Julian walked resentfully at her side. When she took a step, his mother clapped for joy. For a word, she was hugged. Julian did not know why. She could not eat her supper without spilling. She could not dress herself and button up all the buttons. Or tie her shoes. She could not write her name in large letters.

With a feeling that he was being watched, Julian spun around, but it was only one of the dolls, the big one that could walk and talk. Placing the doll under his arm he went to the window, and bending over, dropped it down through the tree tops, watching it fall on heavy roots below. He drew in his hand suddenly. Had someone slapped it? Or had it only been the curtain, white-fluttering above the ledge?

And why didn't they come for him? Weren't they going to give him supper, he wondered, as he opened the door slightly, but his hand trembled on the knob as he remembered another day outside the study.

'I tell you, Drew,' his mother had said, glancing over her shoulder to satisfy herself that it was the wind which had pushed the study door ajar, 'there's

something a little bit peculiar about Julian – the way he creeps about the house, following me like a shadow.'

'Nonsense,' said his father filling his pipe.

'I wish it were. Why I found him hiding behind the drapes in the living-room the other day ... I was all alone, reading, when I saw his feet sticking out below the curtain. There was no mistaking Julian's feet.'

His father removed his pipe to laugh.

'I asked him what he was doing there when he had a whole roomful of toys upstairs, and do you know, Drew, he just wouldn't answer ... Not a word ... Just looked up at me with those large pained eyes.' Through the crack in the door Julian watched her lean closer to his father. 'Drew, do you suppose' – she hesitated before speaking again – 'well, I don't quite know how to put this, but he's not at all like the other boys his age... not at all... Why, Phyllis' –

'Oh, stop it, stop it. You're just mothering him too much. What that boy needs,' his father announced rising impatiently from his armchair, 'is some kind of camp life... away in the woods.'

Julian slammed the bedroom door. Away, away. Send little boys like you away. Julian looked about for help, but the clown smiled widely with unconcern, its back against the wall, its stuffed legs dangling from the shelf. Bad boy, bad boy. But the poodle lay still across the rocking chair, its woollen chin upon its paws,

asleep. Wicked, wicked, wicked, wicked, chided the clock, pointing a black finger at him as he lay on the crib, his thumb pushing desperately against the roof of his mouth. Away, away. While Old King Cole roared with laughter, his hand pressed against his round belly, his ear distracted by the music of the fiddles. And how away? Julian shivered. Like the laundry? In a pillowcase with a list pinned to the cloth? Or in a cardboard box, wrapped in thick twine and stamped with a paper stamp?

There was a wet pink haze before his eyes, and as his tears withdrew he could see from where he lay that it was his sister's dress. Julian sat up quickly and rubbed his eyes. He climbed down to the dark floor and took off his shirt and corduroys. In the small dresser where the nurse kept Vicky's things he found a pair of socks almost the same colour as the dress. He sat down and pulled them on. Too short. But he left them with the heels bulging under his arches.

In another drawer he found a pair of shoes. In another, pants with a lace border. He found a soft ribbon and he clipped it to his hair just to the left of the part.

With hurried steps he returned to the bed. Raising his arms he pushed them through the puffed sleeves, and holding his breath, he pulled the dress across his chest. Too tight. He left it unbuttoned, but tied the sash once about his waist.

He put his hand to his face and wondered if it were still sullen. He did not know much about himself,

but he knew that his face was sullen, that his ears were too big, and that he had shoulders that should be pulled back, and fingers that were not to be put into his mouth, and that he had feet. He glanced down, pleased that his feet appeared smaller now, cramped as they were into the black slippers.

He had to take the shoes off when he came to the stairway, and he held them in his hands by the straps. In the downstairs hall he stopped for a moment to turn his head in the direction of the kitchen where he could see his sister Vicky eating her supper, a bib about her neck, her short legs swinging below her.

When Julian entered the living-room his mother's back was towards him while the smoke from her cigarette hovered above her like a summer cloud. Beside her arm-chair was a small table, and beside that, a standing lamp. From time to time Julian could see his mother's slender arm reach out towards the china tray to flick away the cigarette ash. Taking one step forward he found himself within the perimeter of the bright lamplight.

Suspended from the wall as if he were some huge oil canvas, Julian saw himself in the mirror, an image in pink, framed by a blond wood frame. The light flooded about him, giving a shine to the black leather slippers, accentuating the whiteness of his legs below the billowing skirt, one placed behind the other as if he were about to curtsy, and carrying the colour of the dress to his neck,

to his lips, red now as if touched by a painter's wet brush, to his cheeks which flushed deeply beneath his freckles.

In his hair lay the ribbon, as lightly poised upon a curl as a butterfly upon a leaf.

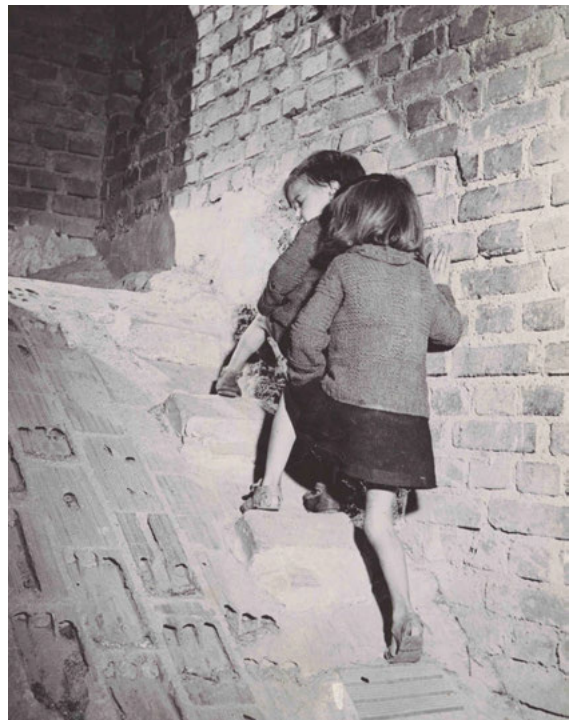
He knew that in a moment everything would be all right. That in a moment he would be nestling against her, no longer a scarecrow and dangerous; instead, beautiful, sweet as Vicky was sweet. That she would take his head between her warm hands, and, glancing down at him with love in her eyes, find him formed in her own image, feature for feature. That she would kiss his closed eyelids. Sing to him. That she would perhaps take her brush to stroke his hair about her fingers or straighten the collar of his dress. In a moment. Surely.

Julian tugged at his mother's skirt, twisting his lips into a coy, almost triumphant smile.

From *The Sandwiches Are Waiting and Other Stories* by Jane McClure (1924 NYC – 2004 Ohio) Collins 1955, this story first appeared in *Housewife* magazine.



THÉRÈSE BONNEY: 1943



LASKI ON MARCHIONESS

In 1967 *The Making of a Marchioness*, now PB No. 29, was reissued by the Doughty Library with a preface by Marghanita Laski. She wrote: ‘The year 1901 when it was first published was about the middle of the golden era of the late Victorian and early Edwardian popular novel, and pre-eminently the subject of these novels was class; this has always been the principal subject of English fiction but in this particular period we see it at its most unashamed. The assumption on which it was based was the unquestioned glamour of aristocracy and royalty and the unquestioned wish of all simple people to attain it, a subject particularly suited to FHB’s tastes and talents and one that she herself had helped to establish.

‘Except for her masterpiece *The Secret Garden*, the theme of all her successful books was entry into the upper classes and, in particular, the contrast between peculiarly English and peculiarly American virtues and vices, the themes that absorbed her friend Henry James; indeed some of her later novels, such as *T. Tembarom* and *The Shuttle* (PB No. 71) can fairly be called poor man’s James. But her best novel for adults was *The Making of a Marchioness*. She herself called the book ‘a dear thing’ and she was right. But apart from its charm and deft storytelling, it is, far more than FHB could have

realised, a cruel revelation of the nature of Edwardian society. She knew, of course, as an American that this society had faults. Their castigation and often correction by nobler transatlantic cousins was her most usual theme.

‘At the country-house party Emily Fox-Seton is not the only possible new wife for the widowed Marquis. Lady Agatha Slade aged 19 knows her duty. No one doubts that she should, if she could, catch him. Her happy ending turns out to be a richer and younger suitor. Emily’s is the Marquis. “I am not a marrying man but I must marry,” he says to her when proposing, and he gives her ‘really a very nice look’. Emily, the decayed gentlewoman, has been saved from the genteel bed-sitting-room.

‘Although it is good at the level she intended, that of the fairy story diluted with unromantic realism, the novel is, in today’s light, more interesting than she could have known it would become, for she could never have supposed its realism to be as harsh as we now perceive it to be’ concluded Marghanita Laski.

But Marghanita Laski can’t have been very pleased when she was roundly criticised for seeming not to understand the subtleties of what FHB was doing: a year later Dr John

Goode of the University of Reading wrote in the journal *Victorian Studies* that Marghanita Laski was ‘offensively taking credit for something which is perfectly explicit in the text and completely under control (far more than the word “cruel” would suggest). FHB describes the social world of the novel in terms which indicate a sharply ironic poise. The language is carefully organised around certain key society-words which gather up complex ironic connotations – the most important are “nice” and “kind”. “Nice”, for example, which occurs more than sixty times in a short novel, is used about objects and people. But “nice” really means exploitable: “Her name is Emily Fox-Seton,” her ladyship answered, “and she’s a nice creature”. Emily is an anachronism (“she was rather early Victorian and touchingly respectable”) and her innocence is “fatuous”.

‘The end of the novel is sentimental because FHB gives way to nostalgia: the past with its “romantic marriages” is allowed to assert its power over the present. However, at no time does the author relax the incisive persistent ironising of the present world. To suggest that she was unconscious of her “revelation of the nature of Edwardian society” is to fail to take account of the novel’s language.’

GARDENERS' CHOICE



*Charles Mahoney drawn by Evelyn Dunbar (unsigned, but when one of the authors of *Gardeners' Choice* is in the drawing there can be no doubt that the artist was Evelyn Dunbar).*



Angelica p. 23



*'Pansies and Violas', a 1946 oil on canvas (not in *Gardeners' Choice* but on display at Chichester), a rare still life by Evelyn Dunbar.*



Polyanthus p. 145

ASTERIODS & THE HOPKINS MS

Earlier this year Professor Martin Rees, the Astronomer Royal (and former President of the Royal Society) wrote: ‘Suppose astronomers had tracked an asteroid, and calculated that it would hit the Earth in 2080, 65 years from now – not with certainty, but with say 10% probability. Would we relax, saying that this is a problem we can put on one side for fifty years – as people will then be much richer, and it may turn out that it misses the Earth anyway? I do not think we would. There would surely be a consensus that we should start straight away and do our damndest to find ways to deflect it, or mitigate its effects.’

Martin Rees was using the analogy of an asteroid to convey the danger of potential climate catastrophe. This uncannily echoed the piece in the *Persephone Quarterly* exactly ten years ago, ‘Is the Earth Finished?’ announcing RC Sherriff’s 1939 novel *The Hopkins Manuscript*. We wrote then that the novel ‘is a catastrophe novel about the moon crashing into the world. It starts in May 1945 with a meeting of scientists who are among the first to learn the terrible fate awaiting the planet. In February 2005 a group of scientists convened by the British government met in Exeter to discuss the latest findings about climate change. ‘It was the inevitability of what was going to happen, I think, that for

the first time struck us with real force,’ wrote the *Independent’s* Michael McCarthy in *The Tablet*. ‘Whatever flapping, floundering efforts humankind eventually makes to stop it all, the great ice sheets will melt, the sea will turn acid, the land will burn.’

We published this a few weeks before the 2005 Gleneagles G7 summit when the British government put Climate Change on the summit agenda. Over the next four years in Britain we saw the Stern report on the economics of climate change, and parliament passed the 2008 Climate Change Act with all-party agreement. But in December 2009 the Copenhagen UN summit, which had been planned to set up a new international agreement on climate change, collapsed in chaos with the US and China offering little or no change, and European governments marginalised. Since then carbon emissions have kept growing, above all in China.

Meanwhile, the scientific consensus has continued to darken. We know more about the serious risks of heat stress on people, on the risks climate change poses for crop production, the risks of water stress, of drought and of flooding, the risk of sea level rise for coastal cities, and the danger of large-scale abrupt and irreversible change. In June the Lancet Commission on Climate Change and Health

stated: ‘The effects of climate change are being felt today, and future projections represent an unacceptably high and potentially catastrophic risk to human health.’ So, if little or nothing is done, there is no secret about the two alternative futures we are likely to bequeath to our children and grandchildren: either gradual climate change, with the more tropical countries suffering the severest disruption first, or something much worse – Martin Rees’s asteroid-like impact, an abrupt and irreversible change at some unknown date in the future.

Now, this coming December, there will be a new UN meeting in Paris, planned once again to achieve an international agreement based on national targets for reducing carbon emissions. Many countries will will the end, but will they will the means? – weaning their societies gradually off fossil fuels – addressing the addiction to cheap carbon-rich power – redirecting their economies towards ‘green growth’? Readers of *The Hopkins Manuscript* will not be too optimistic. Of course, Sherriff’s novel, published in 1939, was a metaphor for the tragic and almost inevitable countdown to WW2. But in 2015 its disillusioned picture of humankind’s ‘flapping, floundering efforts’ to avert catastrophe should be haunting anyone who cares about the outcome of the UN summit in Paris this December.

EVENTS

On **Tuesday November 17th** at **4pm** in the shop we shall serve tea and cucumber sandwiches and show the film of *Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day*; it will start with the filmed interview with Winifred Watson's son Keith Pickering, who hopes to be there.

On **Tuesday November 24th** **Joslin Fiennes** will talk at a **Lunch in the shop from 12.30–2.30** about her book *The Origins of English Surnames*, focusing in particular on Persephone authors e.g. Whipple and Playfair.

We shall be at glorious **Great Dixter, TN31 6PH** on **Saturday November 28th and Sunday 29th**, selling our books beside the fire at the **Christmas Fair** (for £10 instead of £12).

On **Tuesday December 1st** Sylvie Jessua-Amar, the daughter of Jacqueline Mesnil-Amar, will come over from Paris to talk at a **Lunch in the shop from 12.30–2.30** about her mother and her wartime diary *Maman, What Are We Called Now?*

On Thursday **December 3rd** **Christopher Campbell-Howes**, author of the Afterword to *Gardeners' Choice* by Charles Mahoney and Evelyn Dunbar, will talk in the shop at a **Tea from 4–6** about his ancestor Evelyn Dunbar and the book; and about the exhibition at the Pallant which runs until February 14th.

We shall be at the **Selvedge Christmas Fair** in Chelsea Old Town Hall on Thursday **December 3rd** and **Friday December 4th**. Our books will be for sale for £10 instead of £12.

The annual Persephone **Open Day** (when books are gift-



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wrapped free of charge, mince pies and mulled wine are served) is on **Wednesday December 9th from 10 am to 8 pm**. Jane Brocket and Claerwen James will be there.

The 1964 film of *The Pumpkin Eater*, which is based on the book by Penelope Mortimer,

author of Persephone Book No. 77 *Daddy's Gone A-Hunting*, will be shown on **Thursday January 21st at 4 o'clock**; a cream tea will be served.

On **Tuesday February 2nd** at **6pm** Susan Stein will return to the UK to give a repeat performance of her extraordinary one-woman show about *Etty Hillesum* cf. www.ettyplay.org

On **Wednesday February 24th** Persephone will be giving a talk at the **Blewbury WI, OX11 9QB** about Barbara Euphan Todd, author of *Miss Ranskill Comes Home*, PB No. 46, who lived in the village.

On **Sunday February 28th** at **6.30** Leonard Woolf's *The Wise Virgins*, PB No. 43, will be discussed by Anne Sebba, Lyndall Gordon and Victoria Glendinning at a Jewish Book Week event at **King's Place, London, N1 9AG**.

On **Thursday March 10th** from 3–5 there will be a cream tea at **Hancox, TN33 ONX**, the subject of *Hancox: A House and a Family* by Charlotte Moore, who will show us around and talk about her novels, including *Milicent's Book* about her ancestor.

All events cost £20 apart from the **Blewbury event** which is free and the **Jewish Book Week event** which should be booked through **JBW**.

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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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