



The Persephone Biannually

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Tel: +44 20 7242 9292
www.persephonebooks.co.uk

*Tirzah Garwood, author of *Long Live Great Bardfield*,
painted in 1944 by Duffy Ayres (b. 1915 and still living
in Bloomsbury today).*



OUR BOOKS FOR AUTUMN/WINTER 2016–17

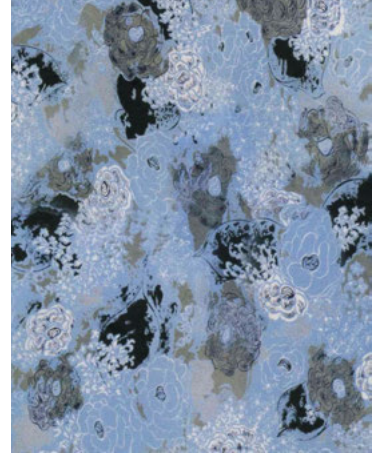
Our first title for this autumn is a second volume of short stories by Dorothy Whipple, which includes a novella which was originally published in 1944 in a separate volume (and became available last year in a pirated edition courtesy of Gyan Books in Delhi – good luck to anyone trying to stop them!). Persephone Book No.118 consists of *Every Good Deed* and nine short stories, the same number of stories as in Persephone Book No.74, Dorothy Whipple's *The Closed Door and Other Stories*.

There are other similarities between the two volumes: both use a dress fabric as the endpaper, and both dresses are in the Persephone Books collection and are sometimes displayed in the shop window (on a dress-maker's dummy). The blue fabric with a black squiggly pattern on the *Every Good Deed* dress is now in the shop window and will be there until it is time to put up the Christmas tree. Also, the two titles have the same decorative rule; and neither has a preface – short stories stand on their own.

But the most important similarity is that both *The Closed Door* and *Every Good Deed* show Dorothy Whipple at

her best. Yet, as we all know, her work, although beloved by Persephone readers, is (still) ignored by the world at large. 'Country Cousin', who writes our (excellent) monthly Forum, pinpointed a reason why this is so: writing about *High Wages*, she said: 'There is an intimacy in her writing, so that one feels at times less a reader than a friend with whom she shares amusing details, almost whispering in our ear, confident that we will appreciate them as she does.' But, Country Cousin adds, 'the humour is never laboured. Nor does she hector, but leaves us to deduce her message.'

This is the point about reading Dorothy Whipple: there is an intimacy in her writing. But naturally this intimacy does not appeal to everyone. We feel that it appeals to people who like Elizabeth Taylor and yet this is not always the case: we have a friend who adores Elizabeth Taylor but cannot love Dorothy Whipple (yes, there are people). And the comparison with Elizabeth Taylor is especially interesting for this issue of the *Persephone Biannually* because in it we publish the second Dorothy Whipple story which Elizabeth Taylor obviously read when she



A 1950s dress fabric of unknown origin: the dress is on display in the shop window



A decorative paper design in engravers ink red by Tirzah Garwood, undated.



A 1906 roller-printed cotton sateen by Steiner & Co © V & A

came to write *Mrs Palfrey at the Claremont* (cf. p.27 of this Biannually).

One cannot but suspect that the younger novelist learnt a great deal from Dorothy Whipple. Take the short story in *Every Good Deed and Other Stories* called 'Boarding House' (written in about 1940, just when Elizabeth Taylor was beginning her career as a writer). It is about a rather deplorable woman called Mrs Moore who ruins things for everyone else when she arrives at a small hotel – because she is bored and lonely. "It's cutlet for cutlet," she thought bitterly. "I can't entertain, so no one entertains me now. To think that I should have to come to a place like this. After the life," she thought, "I've lived." The last sentence is pure Elizabeth Taylor. A lesser writer would have put: "After the life I've lived," she thought.' Why it is funnier and so much more expressive to put 'she thought' in the middle of the sentence is a mystery; but it makes all the difference. And why 'It's cutlet for cutlet' is funny is also a mystery, but it certainly is.

The blogger Book Snob read *Every Good Deed* (on its own) a couple of years ago and found it had the same 'finely honed style' as the novel which would soon follow, *Someone at a Distance*, Persephone Book No.3. 'Compared to her longer novels it lacks none of their meat, excellent characterisation or emotional engagement; despite its brevity, it expertly weaves a world so

engrossing I didn't want to leave it behind when I closed the pages.' And, she continues, 'it's the usual Whipple fare; a moral tale of a lovely home life; of good people destroyed by a wicked outsider; but despite the familiar subject and message of goodness and redemption, it is not a hackneyed or saccharine story in any way. It was uplifting, in showing the essential goodness of the human heart, and how love can heal all wounds.'

Some of the most memorable comments about Dorothy Whipple were written by the novelist Harriet Evans. She said in her Preface to *Because of the Lockwoods* (wishing its author was in the pantheon of great C20th British novelists) that one reason

she isn't is that although she depicts 'solid, normal lives'; the 'cultural tide of opinion is, these days, against her.' She says that Whipple is an 'intensely moral writer' and that 'there is something about the clarity of expression and calm curiosity of her prose which is hugely pleasing. She never employs excess to drive her point home but uses each word carefully and simply.' Finally, 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 world at large may think so; Persephone readers know better.



Phyllis Pearsall (1906–95) is best known as the creator of the London A-Z. Her wartime drawings (including 'Sewing for Victory' above) were published in Women at War in 1990; some of the original drawings will be in the Sim Fine Arts 'Holding the Line: Women at War' exhibition at 54 Shepherd Market London W1 from November 14th–20th and then at Persephone Books in the New Year.

The young woman (painted by her friend Duffy Ayres in 1944) who is on the front of this *Biannually* is Tirzah Garwood (1908–51). When she was 18 she went to Eastbourne School of Art and here she was taught by Eric Ravilious (1903–42). Over the next four years she did many wood engravings and these were widely praised and several were displayed by the Society of Wood Engravers. Alas, after she and Eric were married in 1930, a large part of her time was spent

on domestic chores: on settling in to a flat in Kensington, then in Hammersmith, and on moving to Great Bardfield in Essex, and then to another house nearby. In 1935 she had the first of her three children. In 1942 – the year she was operated on for breast cancer – she wrote her autobiography (in the evening, after the children were in bed); later that year Eric was killed, yet by the early spring of the next year she finished revising what now has the title *Long Live Great*

Bardfield: The Autobiography of Tirzah Garwood.

In the last years of Tirzah's life, when she re-married very happily, she concentrated on collage and on painting and never did wood engraving again. This is why a history of the medium by Joanna Selbourne laments that 'Tirzah's work was favourably reviewed at the time but has since been unjustifiably neglected' (how many times has that phrase been used in this *Biannually* over seventeen years – fifty? A hundred?). Tirzah's style is defined as: 'a personal one consisting of large rectangular scenes dominated by figures, with background details multifariously patterned: undulating waves, speckled pebbles, stripy wallpapers and curtains, and stippled carpets. She shared with Ravilious a wry sense of humour and an enjoyment in satirising domestic life and the social scene' (there are four of her wood engravings on p. 11 of this *Biannually*).

Tirzah had an eye for oddities in her subjects which Robert Harling, in *The Wood Engravings of Tirzah Ravilious* published in 1987, thought were 'like herself, unpredictable, delightful, mildly dotty'. He said: 'The manifold talents of Tirzah as wood engraver, artist and designer (especially of exquisite marbled papers) were well-known to her friends, but have been virtually extinguished by the steadily growing fame of Ravilious's achievements. Tirzah was content



Tirzah and Eric Ravilious painting the mural decoration for the tea room at the Midland Bay Hotel, Morecambe 1933

for this to be so, for she was uncommonly and genuinely modest and a devoted wife and mother, but as far as her work was concerned, she certainly lost out.'

Now, finally, things are changing. In October Tirzah is going into the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (she will be the 60,000th entry and there may be an item about her on *Woman's Hour*); in May next year she will feature in an exhibition at the Towner Gallery to be called *Ravilious and Co: The Pattern of Friendship* (and there will be several Tirzah paintings which have been in a suitcase since her death); and this autumn we are very proud to be publishing her beautifully written autobiography, previously only available in a

limited edition costing £250, as a Persephone book.

Tirzah began her autobiography (which we now publish with thirty family photographs and wood engravings) in March 1942. 'I hope, dear reader, that you may be one of my descendants,' she wrote, 'but as I write a German aeroplane has circled round above my head taking photographs of the damage that yesterday's raiders have done, reminding me that there is no certainty of our survival. If you are not one of my descendants then all I ask of you is that you love the country as I do, and when you come into a room, discreetly observe its pictures and its furnishings, and sympathise with painters and craftsmen.'

Seventy years after she finished writing her daughter Anne Ullmann and granddaughters Sarah and Martha starting editing and re-typing the manuscript (using Tirzah's diaries to fill in gaps). Undoubtedly, as Anne observes in the Preface, 'the writing down was therapeutic, it enabled her to stand back and look at her life and helped her at a time of adversity to sort out a way forward.' She concludes: 'Time and the honesty of Tirzah's words have made this an immensely important document and it is a valuable primary record of a woman who was at the centre of an important group of artists, and who was herself a very good artist in her own right.' (Tirzah's own words, and her wood engravings, are p.10-11 of this *Biannually*.)



Horses and Trains oil painting by Tirzah Garwood 1944

Persephone Book No.120 is a novel that was published anonymously in 1956, which contributed to its *succès de scandale*: its author's name was not revealed for thirty years. **Madame Solario** by Gladys Huntington (1887–1959), set at Cadenabbia on Lake Como in September 1906, evokes the leisure of the pre-1914 world and the sensuous delights of Italy: the chestnut woods, the shuttered villas, the garden paths encroached by oleanders: 'the

almost excessive beauty of the winding lake surrounded by mountains, the shores gemmed with golden-yellow villages and classical villas standing among cypress trees.' When the mysterious Natalia Solario arrives at the Belle Vue Hotel, there are disquieting rumours about her past life and about her excessively close relationship to her brother.

In 1986 the writer of the Afterword to our edition, Alison Adburgham, published a long

piece about the book in *The Times*: 'In August 1956 the *New York Times* carried a three-column book review beginning: "The author of this extraordinary novel has chosen to remain anonymous. Curious, the mind invents fantastic impossibilities: Henry James crossed with Ivy Compton-Burnett rendered by EM Forster? Whatever the source, the controlling hand is strong, highly skilled and very sure...major theme is reinforced by echoing minor theme to the creation of a harmonious if disquieting whole."

Some reviews of MADAME SOLARIO

"So far as I am concerned, however, the author of *Madame Solario* can sign future books as he or she pleases, provided only they appear. This is indeed an extraordinary novel. Sense of period, sense of place, nuances of dress, the outward signs and inner differences of national character—all are subtly and vividly conveyed; above all, the sense of spiritual tarnishment, and the efforts—from ridiculous to heart-breaking—we will make to disregard its presence in the beloved. The unknown author's literary ancestors appear to me to be Thomas Mann and Henry James, though the ponderous solemnity of Mann is missing, and James would never have permitted the abrupt changes of viewpoint which occur twice in this unusual and distinguished piece of work."

TOM HOPKINSON, *The Observer*

"I have read no novel for years which announces its own distinction with such an air, demanding to be judged by the highest standards... I read on in willing, fascinated, hypnotised submission."

MICHAEL SWAN, *Sunday Times*

"Whoever is responsible for *Madame Solario*, she—or possibly he—is a storyteller of unusual gifts."

PETER QUENNELL, *Daily Mail*

"It is indeed an-outstanding work of fiction, something of a *tour de force* in its recapturing of the volatile spirit of period and place."

DANIEL GEORGE, *Spectator*

'When the book was published in October of that year some tried to interpret it as a modern rendering of a classical myth, others as the inside story of a *cause célèbre*. The reviewer in *The Listener* said: "Everyone seems concerned to prove *Madame Solario* either purist Jamesian diamond or common Ouidian paste." *The Bookman* called it "a major work of art... one is in the hands of a master" and the *Observer* "an extraordinary novel" and "an unusual and distinguished piece of work." But the *Illustrated London News* was snidely damning: "If one can imagine Miss Daphne du Maurier writing a story in the style of Henry James, this might be the result." [Although of course some might say we Persephone readers might be more inclined to read Daphne du Maurier than Henry James...]

'Comparison with Henry James persisted. Certainly the setting in an Italian hotel, the

Edwardian period, the cosmopolitan society, are all Jamesian; but not the lucid style. Elizabeth Bowen is a more likely influence, with her power to make known what needs to be known without being told. In *Madame Solario* character is revealed in a single gesture, by a sentence of greeting or a dismissive glance, by the movement of a gloved hand to adjust a veil. The intimation of incest emerges from the imperceptible to the barely perceptible, to the blindingly perceived.'

Alison Adburgham continued: "The first two chapters of *Madame Solario* were written and abandoned long before the Second World War. Then, in the early 1950s, Gladys Huntington wrote two short stories for *The New Yorker* and through their success was encouraged to continue on from those early chapters. So the germination period was at least twenty years – and the seed could have been sown even earlier. There is a

phrase in the novel about detail that "sometimes impresses itself on the eye, and on the memory for years"; and the evocation of European society before the First World War rings very true. So I am going to imagine the young Gladys staying with her American parents at the Belle Vue Hotel, Cadenabbia in 1906 – the setting and date she gave the novel. She would have been 19 then, an impressionable age to be exposed to the "almost excessive beauty" of Lake Como. Maybe she went by launch to a ball at the Villa d'Este, as in the novel, and on those idyllic picnic parties across the lake.

She will have observed the hotel guests in their exclusive groupings – "The hotel was a forcing house for situations ... Every shade of behaviour in public had significance, so that the choice of a seat could constitute a victory or a reverse, and a few words aside change the complexion of half the day." And

the fashions then in vogue: "So much clothing and embellishment turned each woman into a sort of shrine, and where there is a shrine there is a cult. The social atmosphere of that epoch was particularly loaded with femininity." Perhaps there was one young woman, "her face somehow baffling in its beauty", about whom there was a whisper of scandal. "There are people like 'faults', who are a weakness in the fabric of society; there is disturbance and disaster wherever they are" she wrote in the book. Stored in her memory, all this could have become, many years later, the sensuous scenario for the drama of Natalia Solario and her brother Eugene.'

M*adame Solario* was filmed in France in 2012; it was included in Laurence Cossé's *A Novel Bookstore* as one of the best novels ever; and it was the subject of a book called *Qui a écrit Madame Solario?* (A mystery like that of Elena Ferrante nowadays).



OUR REVIEWERS WRITE

‘In *The Godwits Fly* Robin Hyde uses the birds as a symbol of the longing many New Zealanders felt – at least in her day – for England, the place they still thought of as home. Hyde, whose real name was Iris Wilkinson, was unknown to me, though in New Zealand she is, it seems, now considered a major writer. It was her story to which I was drawn first. *The Godwits Fly*, her autobiographical fifth novel, began its life as a therapeutic exercise while she was living in the grounds of Auckland mental hospital. In her lifetime, it was published in England, to which she finally travelled in 1938, but never in New Zealand. Now back in print courtesy of Persephone (and with a helpful preface by Ann Thwaite), it is a gorgeous read: indulgent in parts, painful in others. It tells the story of a girl called Eliza Hannay (Wilkinson, thinly disguised) in 1930s Wellington. An aspiring poet, she is strong-willed, plucky and brimful of passions she does not wholly understand; things, the reader gathers, are unlikely to end well for her in a world that prizes respectability. But though I liked Eliza a lot, it was Hyde’s writing that bewitched me. Lush and unconventional – I want to use the word “jungly” – it is a world in itself. Here are abandoned houses like baby octopi turned inside out by fishermen; small children the colour of crayfish; dried flowers that resemble bony calligraphy.

It’s all very powerfully odd.’
Rachel Cooke *The Observer*

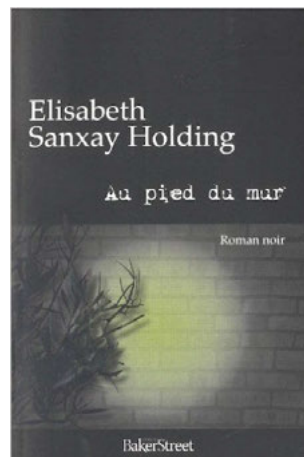
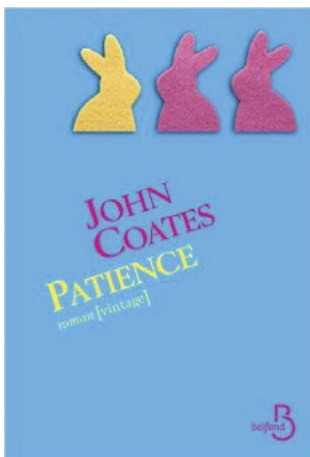
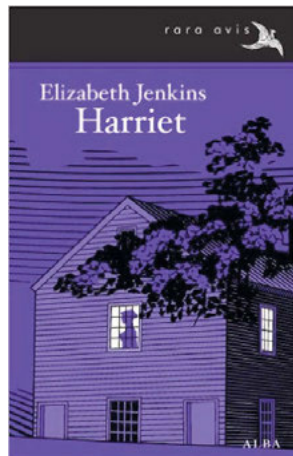
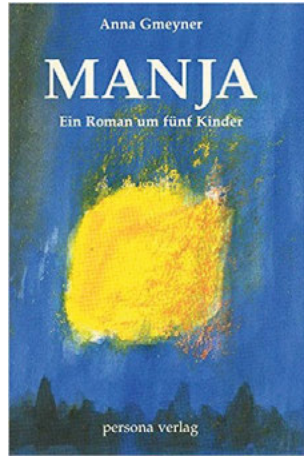
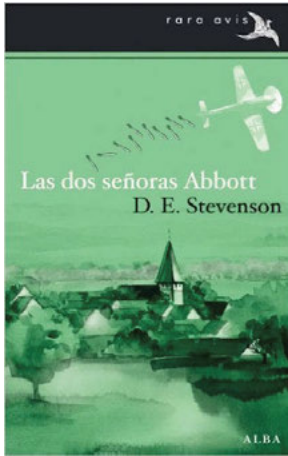
‘Amber Reeves has aged much better than HG Wells, her sometime lover and the father of one of her children. His skirt-chasing and fondness for eugenics may have made him literature’s creepy uncle, but she sits very comfortably in 2016. Reeves was a force to be reckoned with. After chucking Wells (for a much nicer barrister), she campaigned fiercely for the improvement of women’s lot and wrote eight polemics – none of which, until this year, was easy to get hold of. Luckily, Persephone Books, which shines a light on neglected women writers from the 20th century, has just reprinted her second novel. First published in 1914, four years before (some) women got the vote, *A Lady and Her Husband* is unashamedly political – when it came out, *The Spectator* sniffed that it was full of passages ‘which might have appeared in the most advanced Socialistic newspaper over the signature of a militant suffragette’. Political it may be, but this is no clunking treatise on industrial relations. It turned out, to my surprise, to be a page-turner as witty and spiky as I imagine its author to have been – think Erica Jong in a hobble skirt.’ Emma Hughes *Country Life*

‘The ‘uncompromising’ and ‘brilliant’ Cambridge graduate Amber Reeves wrote this

beautifully written, pioneering feminist novel in 1914. It explores the compromises women make to keep their men and how they can effectively challenge them. Reeves’s middle-aged heroine, Mary Heyham, finds herself at a loose end after her daughters marry. She becomes involved in her wealthy husband’s chain of tea shops, and decides to improve conditions for the underpaid waitresses – to her husband’s horror. This entertaining book is particularly topical right now with our government’s recent introduction of the new National Living Wage.’
Rebecca Wallersteiner *The Lady*

‘This funny, lyrical and autobiographical novel tells the story of Eliza, growing up in a troubled, working-class family in early 20th century Wellington. *The Godwits Fly* paints a fascinating picture of the period, detailing what people ate, read and talked about (the Boer War), the clothes they wore and their longing for ‘the old country’. Like a human godwit (a long-legged wading bird), Eliza yearns to make ‘the long migration’ north, back to a largely idealised world of country cottages, ‘primroses’ and ‘robins in the snow’. Hyde’s writing fell out of fashion and was rediscovered in the 1970s – she is now considered one of New Zealand’s greatest writers. The style is sometimes more akin to poetry than fiction. Enchanting.’
RW *The Lady*

SOME OF OUR BOOKS IN TRANSLATION



LONG LIVE GREAT BARDFIELD

‘When I left school and became a full-time student at the Art School, I was most awfully happy. I quickly made friends with the other girl students and it was lovely to be able to draw and paint all day and to be actually encouraged to do this. I first met Eric Ravilious when he came as a teacher of design to the Art School at Eastbourne. He had a smart double-breasted suit and shy, diffident manners not unlike those of a curate and, with my family training behind me, I quickly spotted that he wasn’t quite a gentleman’ (p.95).

‘At first I resented his dislike of fairies and other conventional story book characters such as cute little rabbits, which I associated with book illustration. When I complained about his taste in subjects at home, my family approved of my dislike, but an artist friend of my father’s warmly argued that Ravilious was right and said I was jolly lucky to have someone like that to teach me. I nearly burst into tears but saw that he was right’ (p.96).

‘Through being introduced to the Curwen Press by Eric, the BBC started giving me work: wonderful, wonderful evening when I was asked to do my first job, I danced round the room with joy. I earned enough money not to feel that I was costing my parents any more than if I had been at home’ (p.109).

‘For our honeymoon, we went to the Lizard in Cornwall. We didn’t really want to go away very much but in the same way that we had obliged my family by doing the conventional thing and marrying in a church, we meekly went on honeymoon. The journey didn’t start very well, our seats were booked in a carriage with a funeral party of three people in black, one of whom shrank away in terror from Charles and said that she didn’t like dogs (p.173).



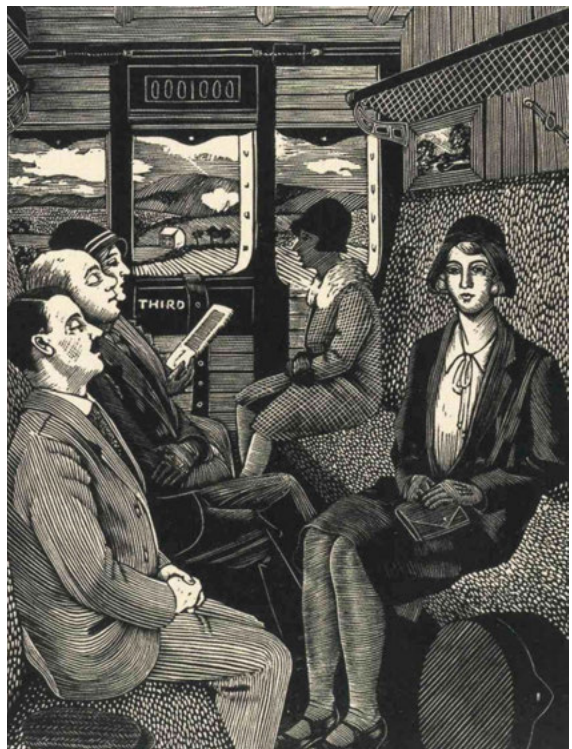
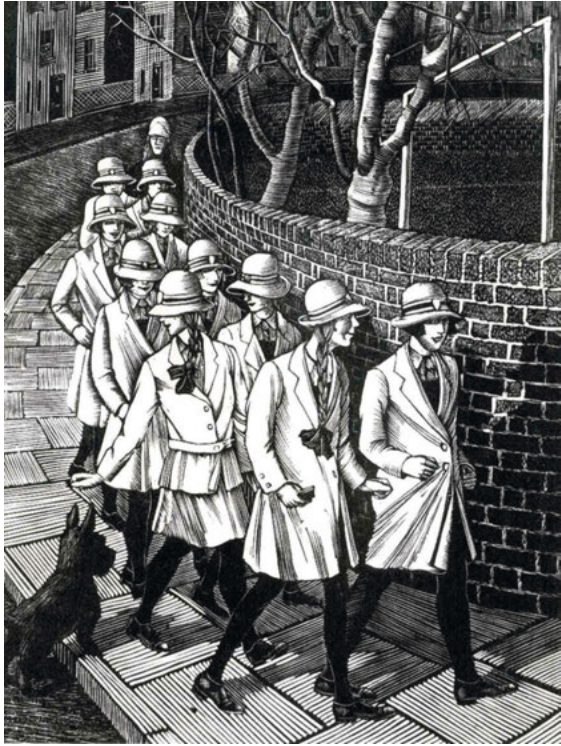
‘Evenings at the Rothensteins’ were rather an ordeal from my point of view. I didn’t mind if I was left alone so that I could watch people but Mrs Rothenstein was always introducing one to new people just when you had broken the ice with your latest neighbour. I’m happiest really with one or two people, and don’t like talking parties’ (p.178).

‘In this flat we eliminated most of the marks of my mother’s

taste which had dominated our flat in Kensington. We both worked away at various jobs. Eric was illustrating *Twelfth Night* for the Golden Cockerel Press and I helped him cut away white backgrounds and take prints, and I made chair covers and cushions. Mrs Ainger said: “Well there’s one good thing about you, you’re always doing something” (p.196).

‘Being in love with Diana had changed Eric’s way of painting and instead of his dry, careful drawing he did a series of more boldly coloured pictures painted freely with quite wet watercolour. At first I hadn’t minded his loving her but when it stopped him being able to make love to me I began to be hurt. I realised that something had changed in our relationship to one another which would never be restored. We never told other people about this. I had a great aversion to being pitied and also it seemed to me bad-mannered to worry other people with private miseries’ (p.252).

‘I was allowed to leave the hospital about a week before Eric was due to go to Iceland and he arrived on a lovely morning to fetch me away. I was still losing a little blood when I got home and started looking after the house and children again. He said, “Shall I not go to Iceland?” I knew that he desperately wanted to go and so I said: “No, I shall be alright” (p. 433).



THE PERSEPHONE 120

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 Beaman
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**
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 Beaman
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 1946 film. Afterwords: Terence Handley MacMath and Christopher Beaman
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 *William*, a 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. 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 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 (fritillary), Better Gooseberries, Phlox Failure – which will be enjoyed by all gardeners.

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 Buncl'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 Buncl Married by DE Stevenson A hugely enjoyable sequel to *Miss Buncl's Book* (No. 81): Miss Buncl 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 Fellgett

95. Greenbanks by Dorothy Whipple A 1932 novel by our most popular author about a family and, in particular, a grandmother and her grand-daughter. 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 hilariously 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 Buncl' 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. Illustrated by Arthur Watts. 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

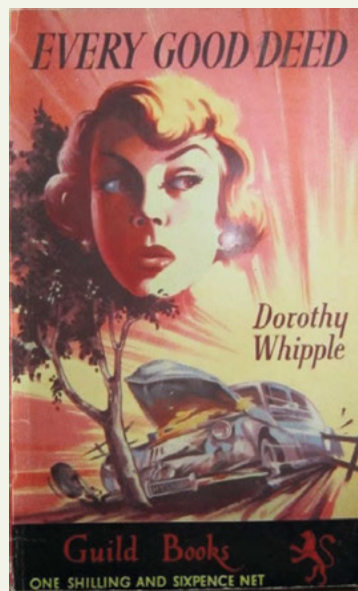
108. The Happy Tree by Rosalind Murray A 1926 novel about the long-term and devastating effect of WW1 on the young, in particular on a young woman living in London during the war years. Preface: Charlotte Mitchell

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

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

116. A Lady and Her Husband by Amber Reeves A 1914 novel about a woman who comes to realise that the waitresses in her husband's chain of tea shops are underpaid – and tries to do something about it. Preface: Samantha Ellis

117. The Godwits Fly by Robin Hyde A semi-autobiographical lyrically written 1938 novel by the major New Zealand writer, who published ten books in ten years and died in London in August 1939 when she was 33. Preface: Ann Thwaite

118. Every Good Deed and Other Stories by Dorothy Whipple A 1944 novella and nine short stories written between 1931 and 1961 which display the author's 'wonderful power of taking quite ordinary people in quite unromantic surroundings and making them live.'

119. Long Live Great Bardfield: The Autobiography of Tirzah Garwood. This touching, funny and perceptive memoir first came out in a limited edition in 2012. Our version has many wood engravings and photographs (including one of Tirzah's husband Eric Ravilious). Preface: Anne Ullmann

120. Madame Solario by Gladys Huntington Published anonymously, in 1956, this superb novel in the Henry James and Edith Wharton tradition is set on Lake Como in 1906. Its incestuous undertones made it a *succès de scandale*. Afterword: Alison Adburgham

'PRIVATE HOTEL' A STORY BY DOROTHY WHIPPLE

At breakfast in the private hotel, old Mrs Brasher announced to the dining room at large that her nephew was coming to see her.

'My nephew's coming this afternoon,' she said, putting his letter back into its envelope. 'Yes. By car. I expect he'll take me out for a drive.'

She looked round at the residents in triumph. They were always having people to see them. Now she was being visited. Roland hadn't been for so long they must have thought he was never coming again. Mrs Brasher had thought so too.

But he was coming. He had vindicated himself and reinstated her as one who was as much cared for and thought of as the rest of them. Mrs Brasher sat exultantly at her table against the wall, waiting for her breakfast to be brought.

She was like an old gipsy, with her hair coming down though it had only just been put up, and her clothes looking as though she had slept in them. But there was something of an old lion about her too, some majesty not quite departed. It came perhaps of her having once been on the operatic stage, though so long ago that no one but Mrs Brasher remembered it.

The residents weren't taking enough notice of Mrs Brasher's announcement. Eileen Ward, for instance, was reading her paper

quite unmoved. Eileen Ward was the only young woman in the place. Mrs Brasher liked young people and was always trying to engage Eileen's attention; without success. The girl barely glanced Mrs Brasher's way; on principle. She couldn't be bothered, she told herself. She wasn't going to be 'involved'. Outside the hotel she was taken up with her work by day and with parties and other amusements in the evening. When she came in to meals she wanted peace, she wanted to read. Also she wasn't so sophisticated as she liked to appear. She was really rather shy and shrank from being drawn into the conversations Mrs Brasher carried on in a ringing voice across the hotel dining room. Mrs Brasher, in Eileen Ward's opinion, was always showing-off and should not be encouraged.

So, receiving no encouragement from pretty Miss Ward, Mrs Brasher leaned over her table and prodded Mrs Trebbit in the back.

'My nephew's coming today,' she said.

'So is my son,' said Mrs Trebbit over her shoulder.

Why mention it? thought Mrs Brasher. It was nothing new. He was always coming, together with other sons, daughters and grandchildren. Mrs Trebbit had actually nine of these last and

continually made a nuisance of herself showing their photographs.

'I've seen them,' Mrs Brasher would say, shutting her eyes at the snapshots thrust upon her.

'You can't have. They only came this morning,' Mrs Trebbit would say.

'When you've seen one, you've seen them all. What difference is there in the children whether they're sitting on the steps or the swing or wherever else they sit?'

There is no doubt that Mrs Brasher was often disagreeable.

'Oh don't hang behind me like that,' she would say irritably on the stairs. 'You know I'm slow. It only annoys me to feel you're waiting for me.'

'I don't need help,' she would say, refusing outstretched hands when she was getting up from a chair. 'I can manage.'

She was old, lonely, a widow and almost crippled with rheumatism. She was also bored with her company. Except for young Eileen Ward, the residents were tame people with no life in them, no fire. They were so everlastingly polite, always bidding one another good morning, good night, making enquiries about health and sleep, remarking upon the weather. Their voices were kept at such a genteel level you could hardly hear what they were saying: not that that was much loss, in Mrs Brasher's opinion.

Sitting at table, in between courses, Mrs Brasher, who had no inhibitions about speaking up and out, would sometimes lecture them.

'I saw you on the Promenade, Mrs Repton. No wonder the bus didn't stop for you. You made such a timid little pass at it. Why didn't you *command* it to stop?' roared Mrs Brasher. 'Like this.' She flung up her arm as if she were hailing Caesar, and knocked her water jug over.

Grace, the waitress had to come and mop up and give her a clean tablecloth.

'I'm sorry, Grace,' said Mrs Brasher fretfully. She hated to look foolish in front of the others.

'It's all right, Madam,' said Grace. 'Accidents will happen.'

'It was sheer clumsiness,' said Mrs Brasher. 'In the old days, I was never clumsy.'

'Never mind,' said Grace soothingly. 'Everybody spills water sometimes.'

'You're a good girl, Grace,' said Mrs Brasher. 'You know I've left you this ruby brooch in my will, don't you?'

'It's very kind of you, Madam,'

said Grace, casting an apprehensive glance at it where it pinned Mrs Brasher's cardigan together. Blood-red, clutched in a fierce claw setting, Grace didn't fancy it in the least.

'I shan't be in to tea, Grace,' said Mrs Brasher happily when her breakfast arrived. 'My nephew's coming.'

'Oh, isn't that nice for you? Madam?' said Grace. 'Is it the one who usually comes?'

'Yes, The one in the BBC,' said Mrs Brasher as though she had others, which she hadn't.

Roland was her only relative, all she had left and she valued him for several reasons. For one thing, he was a piece of background. He was proof to the other residents that she didn't exist in a vacuum, but had family ties as well as they. For another thing, he was now her sole link with the outside world. Ordinarily, she could only get, unaided, as far as the Promenade and sit and look at the sea, or with great difficulty to a shop now and then. But when Roland came, he whisked her miles away in his car. She went about and life flowed again.

Also he was in the BBC and Mrs Brasher felt that made her important. No one else had BBC connections. It gave Mrs Brasher, or so she considered, control of the programmes to be seen on television in the lounge. She behaved as one in authority, because of Roland. When the programmes were good, she took the credit. When bad, she apologised. She didn't disclose the fact, she didn't really know,



Auguste Rodin. *Danseuse cambodgienne au bras droit levé*. 1906

that Roland was in the engineering department and had no more to do with the programmes than she had.

Although she would never have admitted it, Roland himself was rather unsatisfactory as a relative. He was off-hand. He didn't come half often enough and he hardly ever wrote to her. Mrs Brasher had to make him out as much more attentive than he really was.

He had not provided himself with a wife and children either, which was remiss of him. Mrs Brasher would have liked to be visited by a large family to equal Mrs Trebbit's brood. But Roland remained obstinately single.

At luncheon, Mrs Brasher electrified the dining room by appearing in a new hat. It was a long time since she had had anything new, but that morning she had shuffled painfully to the shops to buy this hat to go out with Roland in. It was a vivid orange-red and clashed with the crimson lipstick she had put on. She wore a crumpled purple-checked suit and had her gloves and bag ready so that she would not have to climb the stairs again.

Mrs Trebbit tripped in to luncheon in pale grey, her hair fresh from the hairdresser's.

'Well, we're both ready for our visitors,' she said brightly. 'I wonder who'll come first – your nephew or my son?'

Mrs Brasher considered Mrs Trebbit's remarks commonplace in the extreme and usually ignored them. But today it pleased her to be in the same

category as her neighbour. She felt she had something in common with Mrs Trebbit.

Strange, but when Roland was coming she felt quite reconciled to these people.

'You remember, Grace?' she said. 'That I shan't be in to tea?'

'Yes, Madam, you told me,' said Grace.

Mrs Brasher knew, but couldn't deny herself the pleasure of saying it again.

When she had finished her lunch, she stood up to collect the eyes of the residents.

'Goodbye,' she said, with her best stage smile.

'Is he here?' said Mrs Trebbit, turning in surprise.

'Not yet,' said Mrs Brasher, frowning down at her. Then she leaned over to say: 'But he soon will be. And I'm going to sit at the top of the front steps to wait for him.'

If she didn't get there first, that's where Mrs Trebbit would be.

Mrs Brasher drew herself to her full height to make her exit.

'Goodbye everybody,' she said benevolently. 'Goodbye.'

'Goodbye,' they said in normal voices from their tables where they were occupied with suet pudding and syrup sauce.

Eileen Ward said nothing. Her eyebrows faintly raised in protest, she continued to read as she ate.

Mrs Brasher had hardly established herself in the small iron chair at the top of the hotel steps than a car drew up and children burst out of it like peas from an over-ripe pod. They

rushed into the hotel and in a moment rushed out again, bearing Mrs Trebbit with them.

'I've beaten you, Mrs Brasher,' she called from the midst of her grandchildren. 'Bye-bye.'

'Goodbye,' said Mrs Brasher, corrective but gracious.

What did it matter that Mrs Trebbit had got away first? Roland would soon be here.

By and by Eileen Ward, with a non-committal murmur, ran down the steps on her way back to her office, but as it was the habit of the other residents to rest in their rooms until almost teatime, no one else came out.

Mrs Brasher sat on, waiting for Roland, her red hat vivid as a geranium in the wide, white, sunlit scene.

* * *

The residents had finished their soup when Mrs Brasher hobbled into dinner that night, still wearing the red hat and purple-checked suit.

'I hadn't time to change,' she announced before sitting down.

'Well?' said Mrs Trebbit, turning with undiminished brightness in spite of the grandchildren. 'Did you have a nice afternoon?'

'Thank you, yes,' said Mrs Brasher.

'Where did you go?' asked Mrs Trebbit.

Mrs Brasher was engaged in retrieving her napkin from under the table. The hotel napkins were as slippery on a lap as wet fish on a slab. Mrs Brasher groped for quite some time, but Mrs Trebbit was not put off.

'I said where did you go?' she repeated, thrusting her face under the pink-shaded lamp on Mrs Brasher's table.

'If you will give me time,' said Mrs Brasher, 'I will tell you. We went to Stillcombe. We went to tea at Annette's Patisserie.'

'Why, we went to Stillcombe and we went to Annette's too,' cried Mrs Trebbit. 'But we didn't see you.'

'From which you can only conclude,' said Mrs Brasher with dignity, 'that we were not there at the same time.'

'Did you have her wonderful pineapple cake?' babbled Mrs Trebbit. 'She'd made that today. Did you have some?'

'No,' said Mrs Brasher, and added: 'We had Bath buns. Roland is very fond of Bath buns.'

'Oh, we asked for Bath buns,' cried Mrs Trebbit. 'But she said it wasn't the day for them. She said she hadn't made any.'

'We had Bath buns,' said Mrs Brasher firmly.

Grace arrived with soup. 'Did you enjoy yourself, Madam?'

'I did, thank you, Grace. But I'm tired. It was rather a long afternoon.'

'Which way did you come back?' asked the tireless but tiring Mrs Trebbit, whipping round again.

'We came back by St. Martin's, Temhow and Hesworth,' said Mrs Brasher cringingly, taking up her soup spoon and looking Mrs Trebbit quellingly in the eye.

'And then I suppose your nephew put you down here and went back to London,' chirruped

Mrs Trebbit. 'Pity he couldn't come in to dinner. But perhaps he hadn't time?'

'He hadn't time,' said Mrs Brasher.

At last Grace brought Mrs Trebbit's roast lamb and she had to turn round and get on with it. Silence fell, broken only by the discreet sound of knives and forks on plates, of water being poured into glasses, of the subdued rattle of Grace's starched apron as she moved about the tables.

Suddenly the dining room doors flew open, flapping wildly behind a young man who hurried forward, talking as he came.

'Aunt Emily,' he cried, 'I'm terribly sorry about this. I couldn't get here this afternoon. The car broke down – miles from a garage or a telephone. I worked on it for hours and got it going and then if it didn't break down again near Wiston Moor. I couldn't let you know. Sheer bad luck for both of us. How are you? Can you give me dinner before I start back for London?'

Mrs Brasher had risen slowly to her feet. She stood, her knuckles white on the table. She was conscious of Mrs Trebbit's startled upward look, of Grace transfixed with the vegetables, of the shocked faces of the residents.

After all she had done to keep them from knowing, after the hours in the furthest shelter on the Promenade, with the cold creeping into her bones, into her very heart, after the lies, the silly lies, which she who had been

what she had once been, should never have stooped to – to be found out after all!

She stood there. It was like being forced to take a curtain after a discreditable performance. She was exposed, belittled before them all.

Her nephew was staring in amazement. Why did she look like this, just because he hadn't turned up in the afternoon? It was incredible. After all the trouble he'd taken to get here, he told himself, he actually wasn't welcome. All right. He'd be darned if he'd come all this way again in a hurry.

'Oh, Aunt Emily,' he protested with a laugh, 'I'm sorry to have disappointed you this afternoon. But after all – better late than never, surely?'

'Not this time, Roland,' said Mrs Brasher grimly, and lowering herself into her chair, she waved him into the one Grace had brought for him.

Eileen Ward, having finished dinner, got up, but instead of taking her usual short cut out of the dining room, she went round by Mrs Brasher's table and, pausing there until the old woman raised her eyes, she gave her a warm, shy smile.

© The Estate of Dorothy Whipple

TEA BY ALAN MACFARLANE

In the last *Biannually* we had a page about Lyons Tea Shops. Here is a page about the drink itself, from the excellent *Green Gold: The Empire of Tea (2003)* by the Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at Cambridge.

‘Before the arrival of tea, if a middle-class family, and particularly the women, wanted to entertain other families or individual friends in the private space of their own home, all that could be offered were alcoholic drinks. Now, at last, there was a calming infusion drink, which could be served with a degree of elaborate ceremonial. Taking tea together became the occasion for signifying friendship, hospitality, a communion of closeness through things and actions. It was, in particular, the way in which middle-class women could escape the loneliness of their homes by inviting in others.’

‘These sociable meetings were often just occasions for display, gossip and friendship. But they could also give women the arena within which to develop co-ordinated action. It does not seem far-fetched to suggest that many of the notable achievements of the great women of C19th England, many of them known to be avid tea drinkers, owed a fair bit to communal tea drinking. The successful actions of women in widening democracy, in setting up social and charitable concerns, in organis-

ing mission work and literary endeavours, was partly made possible by meeting over tea.

‘The rise of women in the private world was also linked to tea. The tea party was the one occasion where they were mistress. Furthermore, it altered the relations of the age groups. The nursery tea was the time when parents, especially mothers, and children who were looked after by servants could meet. Similarly, the generations and the genders were brought together on festive occasions such as birthday tea parties or Christmas tea.

‘It was not just the upper and middle classes whose daily lives were shaped by tea, for tea drinking spread right through

the population and also played a notable part in the growth of modern British economy and society. The ‘tea break’ made life more bearable, and became the central social ceremony during the long hours of drudgery in factory, small workshop, office or mine. Fortified by the caffeine and the sugar, relaxed and reinvigorated by the drink and the exchange of banter and information, the workers could return to the relentless task and do things that would have been beyond endurance without tea.

‘It is intriguing to speculate on the effect this might have had on the national character. From aggressive, belligerent, and meat-and-beer sort of people, did the British become gentler, less volatile?’



Adrian Allinson (1890–1959) untitled painting in a private collection

A SUFFRAGETTE MEMOIR

Laugh a Defiance by Mary Richardson was reviewed by the historian Eileen Roberts in John O'London's Weekly in April 1953, just before the Coronation. It evokes the world of Constance Maud's *No Surrender*, Persephone Book No.94.

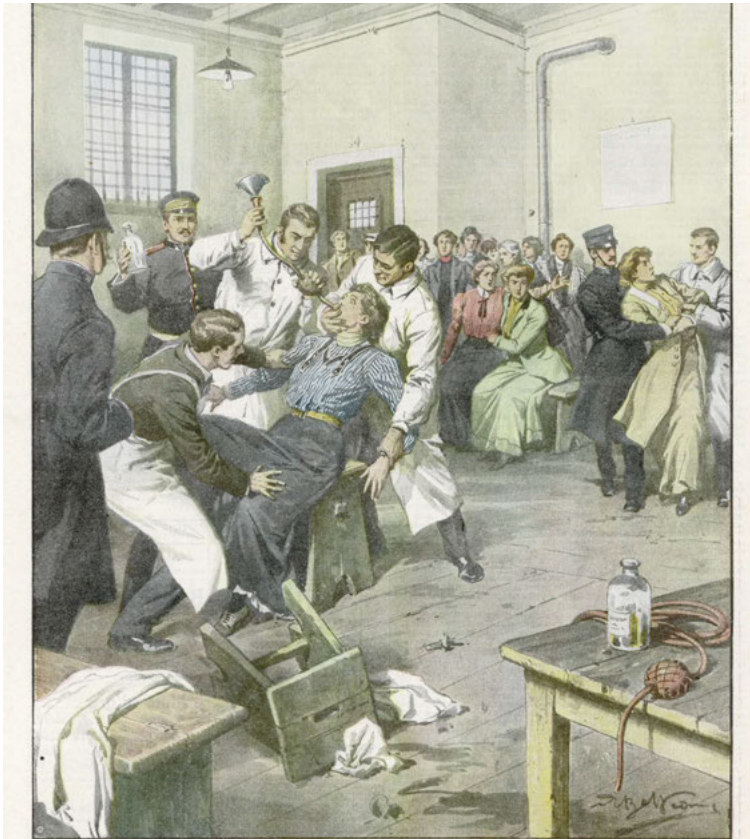
Britain is shaking out its Bermine, brushing up its protocol, dusting off its Crowns in preparation for one of those gilded spectacles we stage so well, to the envy of the world. Strange it was, then, to go back forty odd years to a time when gently-bred 'irksome, brawling scolds' – or so

they seemed to the men of the time, a little too complacent in their bland assumption of superiority, before they were startled out of it.

This book was my bridge over the years to the days of the Militant Suffragettes, and the title is an apt one for the spirit, half crusading, half devil-may-care, but always wholly sincere that inspired their outrageous goings-on. The book is dedicated, naturally enough, to the main battering-rams against the wall of resistance to women's suffrage,

though most of their physiques were anything but impressive in terms of flesh and bone. But in all of them burned a fierce flame of that fanaticism without which no cause worthy of the name can scorch the public conscience into unwilling awareness.

Perhaps it was Mary Richardson's early Canadian childhood in a timber town that conditioned her for the incredible rough and tumble of her Suffragette days, for it was there she learned to jump logs as they rolled and pitched in the turbulent waters at the river's mouth.



Femminismo eroicomico: lo sciopero della fame delle suffragiste inglesi interrotto con la loro nutrizione forzata in prigione.

(Disegno di A. Belltrina).

But she had been smoothed off in Paris and Bloomsbury, when she was literally jostled into the Women's Suffrage Movement, after her pity-inspired defence of Mrs. Pankhurst's son in Kingsway. She hardly had time to realise that the delicate-looking barrow-boy was waving a pamphlet printed with 'Votes for Women' before she was carried along by the crowd to the very heart of the matter in Clement's Inn. Next, she was facing plump, pretty Christabel Pankhurst and answering 'Yes!' to 'Have you come to help us?'

Let's look at the headliners, those wild women, as they planned their campaign over tea and farthing buns. Stout, cheery, Scot Flora Drummond, 'the General', who rode on a white charger at the head of their most

spectacular procession; Annie Kenney (below right), the emotional Lancashire mill-girl with the spellbinder technique (cf. *No Surrender*); Emily Davidson, whose self-immolation under the King's horse at the Derby rocked and racked the world; Lady Constance Lytton, frail, aristocratic, with the heart of a lion; Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence, the practical idealist. And Mrs. Pankhurst (below left) with her magnetic charm, 'a dainty person with small hands and feet, an intelligent face with a firm chin... in her, the gentlest of natures was coupled with a fiery spirit; and she was a great speaker... she used to take up her lorgnettes and wag them at her audience.'

It was to show how much of 'an ass' the Law was – or rather, how blindingly unfair to sentence a Suffragette to the same detention for window-breaking (even Liberty's plate glass) as a man for criminally assaulting a child – and to pierce the public's indifference to Mrs. Pankhurst's slow destruction by drawing a parallel in that same public's sense of outrage at the destroying of a financially valuable object, that 'Polly Dick' slashed the Rokeby Venus in the National Gallery.

Yes, that gay little *nom de guerre* belonged to Mary Richardson, now placid and elderly in her Cambridgeshire cottage, who did it all by herself with her hatchet. Vandalism they said then and they would say now. 'Polly Dick' writes in an astonishingly modern idiom.

There is almost, in parts, a 'feast in the dorm' touch. You feel her youth, her uncertainty, her sick panic before some of her 'jobs'; her steady devotion to the Cause, that never faltered through her Holloway hunger strikes, her bruising in the frequent *mêlées*, the degrading forcible feeding she endured. But poor Polly Dick! 'Forcible feeding, in some strange way, disintegrated me, soul and body. And yet afterwards I became conscious of an influence, almost of a presence, beside me which gave me consolation and sympathy. I believe this was more than a mere fancy.'

The Suffragette Movement, in full flood, often reads like cloak and dagger fiction, *Charley's Aunt* or the pranks of Ronald Searle devil-girls. There are *agents-provocateurs*, gate-crashing of Foreign Office shindigs and Buck House receptions; perfect ladies bashing other ladies over the head with fans and parasols right under a Bishop's nose; a cunning attack on Westminster's vulnerable river flank by an

armada of little purple and white and green-flagged boats. Bread rolls in the sedate Holborn Restaurant flying through the air, thrown by lurching business men, all chivalry gone, in some crazy body-line bowling.

Told like this, it has a custard-pie touch, but there was a sad tale of kickings and bruising and desperately broken health. Something got into our Government, our Police, and our ordinary British man that was foreign to our national character, something frighteningly brutal. Somewhere, somehow, on both sides, a sense of proportion was lost.

The sheer physical difficulties attendant on those women's exploits makes me gasp. Those trailing skirts, those corsets, those *perched* hats – how did they do it? The roof-top scramble, the quick getaway? Throughout this saga of Suffrage there shines an ingeniousness showing that 40 years have not dimmed the bright spirit of Polly Dick. She had the 'iron in the blood that whets resolve'.



OUR BLOGGERS WRITE

‘There are few greater literary treats than the bi-annual publication of a few new books from Persephone Books in London. And the re-issue of *A Lady and Her Husband* is no disappointment. In it we follow middle-aged and privileged wife Mary Heyham who, when her youngest daughter announces her engagement, is given a gentle job with the family’s thriving tea shop business to help occupy her time. This opens her eyes to her own culpability in the mistreatment of the waitresses and she vies to do all she can to turn things around. Inevitably, this ties in with her waking up to the state of her own marriage and treatment within it. One recurring factor in the novel is the way that Mary’s suffocating and tedious husband repeatedly belittles her opinions, plays down her intellect, stifles her views, ages her, and tries to remind her that she is weak, sickly and infirm (she is not). I felt truly incensed on her behalf. This is a fascinating story, however, I would have liked to learn more about the young women who worked in the tea shops who were among the most intriguing and curious and I’m now led to wonder if there are more novels that delve into the early 20th Century phenomenon of tea shops as a new and acceptable space for women in public (women who had previously been denied unchaperoned public places).’ Madam J-Mo Writes

‘*Someone at a Distance* was a breath-taking read. I loved Ellen’s transformation from being happily consumed in the daily tasks of running the house to an independent woman brave enough to take life by the horns. Whipple is a genius at drawing the reader to subtle references to the short sightedness of Ellen and the manipulative mind of Louise. As a reader, I loved being part of Ellen’s decisions and the way she builds her life back after being struck by a violent breach of trust. I loved the way the novel ended too. A similar ending penned by another writer would have had me raising my eyebrows. But this book was just so perfect. Hats off to Whipple’s masterful writing that engages the reader in an emotional turmoil throughout the read.’ The Book Satchel

‘The latest release from Persephone, whose classic fiction I adore, is unlike any other I have read from their catalogue so far. The entire time I was reading *The Godwits Fly* I felt as if I were in the midst of a dream with lots of sounds and imaginings, some vivid and some out-of-focus. And the dialogue was sparse and poetic, sometimes difficult to understand. For those who love poetry, *The Godwits Fly* is a must-read. This book serves as a stark reminder that growing up female in the mid-twentieth century was a struggle.’ The Bookbinder’s Daughter

‘*The Victorian Chaise Longue* is a wonderfully simple yet profoundly disturbing piece of nightmare fiction, depicting one of the ultimate terrors, all the while presenting us with a stark history lesson: the stifled life of an intelligent working class woman. Like *The Yellow Wallpaper*, Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s novella about a woman’s mental breakdown, it uses a simple, uncomplicated style which serves to sharpen the tension like sandpaper. Like Perkins Gilman’s lead character, we see in Melanie /Millie a woman’s intelligence repressed and, when she fights back, labelled as ‘mad’. It is even more than a story about the horrors inflicted on women: without a trace of polemic, it is also saying: ‘Don’t romanticise the past – it may well come back to bite you!’ This is a latecomer to my collection of great supernatural tales and ranks alongside the best.’ Words and Pictures

‘The title *Someone At a Distance* deals with the idea that a person’s negative actions and thoughts can have a far-reaching consequence on the lives of people far removed from them. It is like a ripple effect. A strong undercurrent of ill-will may wreak havoc on the hitherto peaceful lives of people on distant shores. This is a beautiful book. I read it in one breath. It was virtually unputdownable. Whipple’s storytelling is superlative. The psychological tension

she develops in taut situations can be felt acutely. When Ellen grieves in the aftermath of her husband's desertion, we grieve along with her. We feel and comprehend her every emotion. On the opposite side of the spectrum we despise Louise's every movement and intention. And we hope and pray for some kind of justice. Whipple manipulates our emotional wellbeing during the reading of the novel to good effect and delivers yet another stellar story.' Bag Full of Books

'*The Godwits Fly* is intense, and seriously compelling. It's about loneliness, isolation and ever-burgeoning life. The title refers to bird migration, and to the social and cultural expectations of the time that all young New Zealanders of education and ambition would naturally expect to sail to England, which was 'home'. For those without the money, but still with the desperate need to be where they ought to be, the godwits' flight was a passionate, thwarted desire. Robin Hyde was the name of the author's dead baby son, which colours the novel. The story is haunted with babies and the constant fear of babies arriving, the shame and scandal of babies who ought not to be there, or the babies who die but whose existence was enough to damn their mothers. Finishing the book left me with a picture of dreaming young women and men looking at the evening view of the hills and the bush in the 1920s. Older women rage indoors, absent men drink

heavily in the dark. There is so much frustration and needless unhappiness, leavened by fleeting, unforgettable beauty.' Kate Macdonald

'An invigorating combination of proto-feminist socialism and Edwardian concern for properly steeped tea, *A Lady and Her Husband* returns to print tastefully embroidered with satire and with just the right amount of lace about its bloomers. The novel speaks to current global concerns regarding the relationship between poverty and feminism. Its cheeky, determined tone feels almost conspiratorial. What initially shows potential as a teashop muckraker tones down from its early scenes of consumptive girls in swampy dish rooms to depict drier disputes between Mary and her entrepreneurial husband. The working women's troubled lives, which inspire Mary's change of perspective and her determination to become involved in the world beyond her parlour, only flicker at the novel's peripheries. The modern reader might take issue with the novel for this absence, even so, it offers much to the lover of feminist history, providing opportunities to discuss the privileges as well as the challenges of budding feminists. And, in presenting the varied political positions of parents and children, it delves into generational differences, showing the ways that progressive movements depend on inter-generational commun-

ication. Mary Heyham's daughters, Laura and Rosemary, portray two versions of the next generation of feminists — those women educated enough to question and protest the position left to them by society, yet still expected to tamp down their suffragist flames with the wet blanket of an early marriage and all-consuming infant. *Downton Abbey* aficionados might find themselves feeling a twinge of Sybil nostalgia in young Rosemary's ardent care for changing the world. For all its social didacticism, *A Lady and Her Husband* constructs memorable and endearing characters whose choices matter to the reader beyond the moral examples they provide. It refuses to take itself too seriously and delights in humorous collisions of the political and the intimate. It is an engaging read and an excellent addition to pre-war feminist studies.' Emma Schneider in Full Stop

'*Harriet* is based on the true story of a notorious criminal case involving a woman called Harriet Staunton, a tale of unimaginable cruelty and neglect. Elizabeth Jenkins spins it into a domestic horror, telling the tale of the fictional Harriet Richardson who is wooed by the opportunistic Lewis and slowly finds herself locked in an abusive and exploitative relationship with extremely dark consequences. The 'marriage plot' formula persists to this day but novels, such as *Middlemarch*, *Far From the Madding Crowd* and

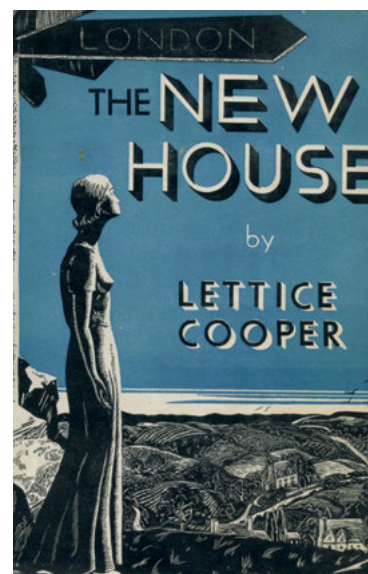
The Tenant of Wildfell Hall offered alternative, and subversive, looks beyond the initial bliss of matrimony promised elsewhere by *Jane Eyre* or *Pride and Prejudice*. It is this category that **Harriet** slides into, bringing with it a biting critique of the late C19th social and legal systems that forced women to marry and ensured their husbands took control of their property and wealth. Harriet's social confinement is still well within the realms of legality by Victorian standards. It is only later in the novel, when that confinement becomes physical, that the true horror of her situation is revealed. Out of this situation, Jenkins crafts a slow-burning domestic nightmare without ever going into any graphic detail. In fact, any hints towards Harriet's abuse are dropped into the text with little to no fanfare. The first time you realise that she has been subject to physical violence is when she is offered a hat with a small veil to cover a bruise around her eye. Nor is her starvation examined in any great detail. It simply becomes a process that the family and their servant adhere to. As the Afterword by Rachel Cooke points out, there's the implication of sexual assault and, given that Harriet has trouble understanding the world around her, the connotations just keep getting darker. That almost indifferent approach to Harriet's suffering gives the novel a truly chilling edge that persists right through to the last page. As it is based on a true story, the lack of

sentimentality works well, simply allowing that "almost unbelievable callousness and cruelty" to speak for itself.

Harriet is perhaps one of the most masterful explorations of the darker side of humanity that I have read; though the truth of the situation renders it horrible already, Jenkins manages to wring that into something so much worse by illustrating the plausibility of it all. She also never loses sight of Harriet at the heart of her tale, a woman victimised not only by those people around her who are supposed to care for her, but a social system that renders her powerless and refuses to understand her.' Film and Other Assorted Buffery

Miss Pettigrew is an utterly delightful and absurdly affectionate fairy-tale. It tells of how the mousey and over-looked Miss Pettigrew through a clerical mishap at her employment agency meets nightclub entertainer Delysia LaFosse and over the course of a single day has her life utterly transformed. It's nonsense, of course, but it's beautiful nonsense. I was reminded slightly of the Grossmiths' *The Diary of a Nobody* which like *Miss Pettigrew* is a supremely compassionate novel. Nobody here is truly wicked, even Nick who's the closest to a villain the book has is just vain and self-centred rather than actually being bad. *Miss Pettigrew* is an old-fashioned champagne glass of a novel. It's deceptively light, effervescent

and packs a surprising punch. It's always pretty obvious what's going to happen, and yet I wanted to see it happen all the same because Watson had me caring about all of them. It's a book for when you're feeling a bit down and need a lift, or if you're emerging from something terribly dark or serious and need a breath of heady air. It's lovely, and that's not a word I get to use of many of the books I tend to read. I'll end by noting that this was my first Persephone Books title and I was hugely impressed by the sheer quality of the book. It's nicely bound, sits well in the hand, the paper's high quality and the spine doesn't crack when you hold the book open. It's peppered with period illustrations from the original text which are quite adorable and it even comes with its own bookmark. Extraordinary.' Pechorin's Journal



FINALLY

In this *Biannually* we publish the second story that Elizabeth Taylor had clearly read when she came to write *Mrs Palfrey at the Claremont* (1971). The first appeared in *Biannually* No.10 (and is available on our website, scroll down on the Home Page and on the right-hand side click on Archive). That story is called 'Last Laugh' and begins: 'It was astonishing to find anyone so obviously well off as Mrs Wilmot at the Claremont, one of the modest private hotels in which London abounds.' What we wrote then was that the story was a curiosity since Elizabeth Taylor had obviously read it but where and how? The same applies to the second story, 'Private Hotel'. It must undoubtedly have been read by Elizabeth Taylor. But where did she read it? And why did she feel justified in drawing on someone else's work in this way? Or was it entirely unconscious? It's a mystery which we hope someone will one day elucidate. (The first thing to find out is whether either of the Whipple stories were ever published. Fingers crossed that a Persephone reader/researcher will find out one day.)

The *Persephone Book Group* is on the first Wednesday of the month at 6.30 in the shop, it costs £10 and madeira, and bread and cheese, are served. New members are always welcome. On **November 2nd** Lydia will lead a discussion about

Farewell, Leicester Square, on December 7th Nicola will lead a discussion about *Tell It to a Stranger*, and on January 11th (not January 4th) Meg will lead a discussion about *Saplings*, and so on throughout 2017.

This winter we are introducing something new: *The Persephone Box Set*. We shall supply six Persephone books, either wrapped or unwrapped (as specified by the purchaser) in a chic brown box with our logo stamped on it. There will be ten different *Box Sets*: An Introduction to Persephone Books, Six Wartime Novels, Six Feminist Books, Six Books for Men, Six North American Books, Six European Novels, Six Bloomsbury Books, Six Books for the Newlywed, Six Books for the New Mother and Six Books for the Keen Cook. The titles will be specified on the website (or do telephone us) and is a convenient and speedy way to buy six books as a gift (in a selection curated by us).

The wood engravings by Tirzah Garwood (on p.11) are (clockwise from top left) 'The Daughter or The Crocodile', 'The Wife', 'The Train Journey' and 'The Sisters'; they all date from 1929 and all appear in *Long Live Great Bardfield*.

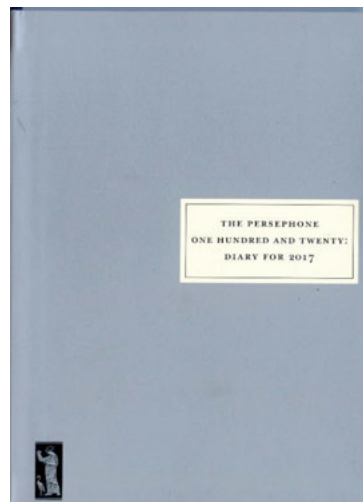
Next year there will be an exhibition at the Towner Gallery in Eastbourne which will

include work by Tirzah Garwood. It runs from May to September and after that goes to Sheffield and Compton Verney.

The *Persephone Catalogue* has a page about all 120 of our books. It is free and please just ask for a copy if you would like to be sent one; we send it automatically to people in the UK who are new to our mailing-list, otherwise please request it.

The *Persephone Diary for 2017* is available for £18 (including VAT). It has a week to a page, the endpaper of all our books, details of the fabrics, the first sentence of each book, and useful holidays and dates.

Our books next Spring are Theodor Fontane's German classic *Effi Briest* in an excellent 1962 translation by Walter Wallich and a Canadian best-seller *Earth and High Heaven* (1945) by Gwethalyn Graham.



EVENTS

The first events this autumn are on **Saturday October 22nd** and **Sunday October 23rd** at 4pm as part of the Bloomsbury Festival: both days there is a free cream tea in the shop, and Lydia will give a short talk about our books. No booking is necessary.

York's Big City Read is kindly celebrating our books at a 'literary supper' on **Thursday November 10th** at 6.30: Nicola will talk at the Rowntree Park Reading Café about Persephone's WW1 novels. The £25 cost includes supper and wine. Please phone 01904 552828 to book.

There will be a lunch on **Wednesday November 16th** from 12.30–2.30 at which Harriet Evans, who wrote the wonderful preface to *Because of the Lockwoods*, will be 'in conversation' with Lydia about our most beloved author Dorothy Whipple.

We shall show the 2012 film, (in French with subtitles) of *Madame Solario* on **Wednesday November 23rd**. There will be a cream tea at 4, the film is at 4.30 and afterwards there will be a glass of madeira and a discussion.

Anne Ullmann will be 'in conversation' with Nicola about her mother Tirzah Garwood and her father Eric Ravilious at a **Lunch** in the shop from 12.30–2.30 on **Tuesday November 29th**.

Our **Christmas Open Day**, when mulled wine and mince pies are served and all books are gift-wrapped free of charge, is from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on **Thursday December 1st**; the shops in the street will also be open late for the **Lamb's Conduit Street Christmas Party**.



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On **Tuesday January 24th** we shall show the 1946 film of *They Knew Mr Knight*. A cream tea will be served at 4, the film is at 4.30, and at 6 there will be madeira and a discussion.

On **Thursday February 9th** at a **Lunch** from 12.30–2.30 Dr

Nikki Frater will give an illustrated talk about *Rex Whistler*, the subject both of her PhD and an excellent website curated by her.

On **Friday March 3rd** we shall have a trip to Great Bardfield where Eric Ravilious and Tirzah Garwood lived. We shall meet at 1 for lunch at The Vine, then walk round Great Bardfield and then re-assemble for a cup of tea at the excellent local bookshop Between the Lines which stocks Persephone books. The best way to get to Great Bardfield is by train to Braintree and then there is a bus which takes half an hour or we shall organise a taxi. (We have chosen a Friday because some of you might want to stay at the very nice Bucks House.) Nb. in early June we shall have a Persephone visit to the Towner in Eastbourne and in September a visit to the Fry Gallery in Saffron Walden.

On **Friday April 28th** at 6pm Rugby School is hosting a street party as part of its 450th anniversary events celebrating the bequest of Lawrence Sheriff (1510–67), 'purveyor of spices to Queen Elizabeth 1st' who owned extensive property in Bloomsbury and made provision in his will for the income from Lambs Conduit to endow Rugby School.

All the events, apart from those that are free, cost £25: please ring the shop to book.

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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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TEL: 020 7242 9292

www.persephonebooks.co.uk sales@persephonebooks.co.uk