Season’s Greetings
and a
Prosperous New Year
**A Letter from the Editor**

There are two events, which dominate this issue: Christmas and the 8th Anthony Powell Conference in Venice.

The Christmas Quiz supplement, lovingly prepared by our dedicated team of brain torturers, is full of seasonal surprises and prizes. The Venice conference was also lovingly prepared by the dedicated Taylor team and associates. It also was full of surprises as the reports on the Conference reveal. The whole event was a great success and a brilliant example of what a group of engaged enthusiasts can achieve for themselves with encouragement and direction.

In the previous issue I asked you to release your inner Widmerpools. Many thanks for all your contributions. Please do not feel snubbed or humiliated, as Widmerpool and Trapnel often must have felt, if you cannot see your contribution in this issue. Pressures of space have forced us to defer publication of some excellent pieces, which all our readers can look forward to savouring in the next couple of issues. Some contributions were so scholarly as to merit an appearance in *Secret Harmonies*. One or two were so scurrilous that they induced defamation palpitations.

Nevertheless KEEP THEM COMING!!

With season’s greetings and best wishes for 2015 to you all!

Stephen Walker
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**From the Secretary’s Desk**

Putting this *Newsletter* together for the printer I am astonished not just at how much is packed into it but how much the Society is doing at the moment. But then autumn always is a busy time for the Society with the AGM, Annual Lecture (sadly cancelled at the last minute), London pub meet and AP Birthday lunches in London and New York.

This year we have also had what was clearly an outstanding weekend in Venice. How I wish I could have been there, but for once family obligations had to take precedence – it isn’t every day your mother celebrates her 99th birthday!

And speaking of celebrations, let us not forget that 1 December would have been the Powells’ 80th wedding anniversary. To mark this I have written a short history of All Saints, Ennismore Gardens, Knightsbridge – now the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of the Dormition of the Mother of God and All Saints – where AP and Lady Violet Pakenham were married.

As you will see, Stephen is beginning to have his wicked way with the *Newsletter* and introducing some new features and subtle changes of design and organisation. We are also experimenting with printing on a different paper. Do you like it? Please tell us what you think.

It remains only for me wish everyone a **Peaceful Christmas**

and a **Prosperous New Year**
Of the many possible topics which the 54 attendees at the 8th Anthony Powell Conference might have imagined they would be discussing, David Beckham’s underpants was not one of them. But that is what they did in the final session at the Cini Foundation on San Giorgio on Saturday 11 October 2014.

It was an unexpected end to a triumphant occasion. Whether the discussion was prompted by Lisa Colletta’s explanation of the difference between being nude and being naked or the Scandinavian inspired feminist reinterpretation of Temporary Kings or a lust for levity after a day and a half of intense Powellian archaeology was not clear.

What was clear was the success of the whole event. From the mingling at Florian’s on the Thursday night through the five lectures, one Prosecco reception and a conference dinner plus a bonus trip to Vicenza, the expertise and efficiency of the speakers and organisers were radiantly obvious.

Elwin Taylor explained in his opening remarks that while failure is always an orphan, success has many parents. The paternity suits will rumble on and DNA testing may be necessary to decide whose signatures appear on the birth certificate. Elwin and his wife Susan will definitely appear. They organised the whole event and took immense pains to make sure that it was a success. Between them they made six reconnaissance trips to Venice. They took care of the smallest detail including a sophisticated and immensely helpful colour coding reminder system for menu choices at the Do Forni restaurant on Friday night.

As they generously acknowledge they could not have done it without valuable contributions, advice and hard work from other people. Keith Marshall looked after the London end. Jeff Manley provided a backup talk and organised the trip to the Villa Valmarana in Vicenza referred to in TK (p 43). John Roe, apart from chairing the conference in his customary suave masterly way, also used his considerable local contacts to arrange a visit to the RAI headquarters at the Palazzo Labia with the help of Adriana Arban and Anna Crovato.

Elwin and Susan persuaded other members of their family including Malcolm Price and Susannah Taylor to help with the Delegates Book and the Registration formalities. Food is always important at conferences and with the invaluable help of Cannaregio residents Chris and Anna Wayman, Susan was able to make

Delegates assemble in the Sala Borges

Photo Nick Birns
excellent arrangements with the Do Forni restaurant and Rosa Salva, caterers since 1879, for the breakfasts, refreshments and reception. Finally the Society’s thanks must go to the Cini foundation for their generous support and to the Master of Campus, Massimo Busetto, whose calm, friendly, multi-lingual helpfulness ensured a stress free stay.

Apart from good food, good accommodation and good company there were also good talks. Jonathan Black got the conference of to a flying start with an entertaining and insightful exploration of AP and the rackety world of the British inter-war avant garde. He demonstrated that AP was a more prescient and engaged observer of the art world than one might have thought. Nicholas Birns followed with a typically erudite and enthusiastic explanation of AP’s relationship with Americans. He revealed that half of AP’s readership was American and that he was an assiduous and prompt correspondent with those admirers who wrote to him. This included Nick’s mother. He also pointed out that American reviewers and critics gave AP a kinder reception than English ones. Why this might be is no doubt a subject for another talk.

After lunch John Roe provided privileged access to the world of TK by taking us to the Palazzo Labia to see the Tiepolo wall and ceiling frescoes on which AP based the viewing of the Tiepolo painting of Candaules and Gyges in the Bragadin palazzo by the Widmerpools, Gwinnett, Glober and Brightman at the 1958 writers’ conference. This set off Pamela’s betrayal of Widmerpool leading to both their deaths.

On Saturday morning the attendees, still digesting the culinary delights of linguine with lobster sauce, Grant Marnier soufflé, tiramisu, baked shin of veal, Mont Blanc and beef fillet in Barolo wine sauce were called upon to digest the cerebral delights of Dr Peter Kislinger fluently and swiftly taking us through the application of narratology to Dance via perspectivism, mise-en-abyme, parti pris and fragmatism. Without pausing for breath or coffee we plunged on with Prof. Lisa Colletta asking the question: is Venice in literature an image of death or vitality and joy? She pointed out via Thomas Mann and Henry James that although film has reduced the influence of literary culture, Venice, as the most written about city in literature, lives on. Marinetti may have called for the canals to be filled in with the rubble of past pallazzi but now the Venetians spend money on dredging to keep them open for tourists and celebrities.

Which brings us back to David Beckham’s underpants. What would AP have made of this? Given his description of Pamela looking up at Tiepolo’s ceiling as we all did on the Friday afternoon

White trousers, thin as gauze, stretched skin-tight across elegantly compact small haunches, challengingy exhibited yet neatly formed.

The answer is: quite a lot.

Is that a call for a follow up conference I hear?
Reuters; Venice; 13 October 2014

After the Clooney wedding and the film festival, Venice played host at the weekend to a gathering concerned more with literature than glitz: the annual conference of the Anthony Powell Society.

One of the most subtle of English novelists, Powell created an intricate comedy of manners that skewers socialites and bohemians alike as their lives unfold and interlock over the course of a 12-volume *A Dance to the Music of Time*.

“Like the famous advert for the *News of the World*”, said delegate Neville Keery. “All human life is there”.

Venice is the setting for the second-last novel in the sequence, *Temporary Kings*, and the city locale allowed for conference delegates – a mixture of academics and enthusiasts – to visit places in the book and touch on Powell’s own experience at a cultural conference there, which he incorporated into the novel.

Directions to Tokenhouse’s lodgings are given in *Temporary Kings ... if you follow them you would certainly end up in a canal*

Sometimes it was hard to disentangle the two. Powell in 1958 attended a European Cultural Society gathering at the Giorgio Cini Foundation on the Venetian island of San Giorgio, which was where the Powell Society also met.

“It’s extraordinary that Powell went to a literary conference in Venice and then wrote a novel about it and now we are at conference in the same place discussing it”, said film-maker Helen Fitzwilliam, one of the delegates.

Powell, however, did not usually go to writers’ conferences, said Professor Lisa Colletta of the American University of Rome. But the attractions of Venice were too strong to be denied and “that is probably why we are here too”.

Other parallels abounded. In *Temporary Kings*, Powell’s fictional conference delegates are reluctantly granted access to the Palazzo Bragadin on the Grand Canal,
where they admire a magnificent Tiepolo ceiling.

Powell Society delegates were allowed into the building too, after three years of negotiations. It is actually the Palazzo Labia, owned by the Italian broadcasting corporation RAI and closed to the public.

If anyone took a photograph inside the Tiepolo ballroom, warned Professor John Roe, the whole group would be summarily marched out of the door. No one did.

Of course Powell plays with reality here. The Tiepolo frescoes of Anthony and Cleopatra in the real ballroom are replaced in the book by a ceiling depicting the myth of Gyges and Candaules, in which a king secretly displays the charms of his naked wife to his lieutenant.

The rather risqué subject fitted the plot of the novel but was not likely to be found on a real Tiepolo ceiling, said Roe.

There were other links with the book elsewhere in the city. In the footsteps of the novel’s characters, delegates met for drinks at Florian’s cafe in St Mark’s Square.

It was not an experience for the financially faint-hearted as the already stiff price of the drinks increases sharply when the orchestra is playing.

“I consulted my bank manager and he recommended we move to a cheaper establishment”, one delegate said.

Other locations from the novel were not so easy to find. Former publisher Dan Tokenhouse, a character who has come to Venice to pursue a career painting angry socialist-realist canvasses such as “Four Priests Rigging a Miracle”, lives in a more obscure part of town.

“Directions to Tokenhouse’s lodgings are given in Temporary Kings”, Elwin Taylor, a Powell Society officer and a driving force behind the conference, told delegates. “But if you try to follow them you would certainly end up in a canal”. ■
Excursion to the Villa Valmarana at Vicenza

By Yvonne Cocking

There was a cool breeze as we waited for an early vaporetto from San Giorgio to Ferrovia, but the day promised to be as warm and sunny later as it had been on the previous days.

Jeff Manley had offered to lead an excursion to the Villa Valmarana in Vicenza, on the Italian mainland about 44 miles from Venice, and 11 more members of the tour were pleased to join him.

An efficient queueing system at the railway station ensured us only a short wait to purchase a joint ticket, leaving time for coffee and a snack before boarding the train for the 45 minute journey, which started by passing over the Ponte della Libertà to Mestre, the mainland business and residential part of Venice. (In Temporary Kings, it was here that Daniel Tokenhouse attempted “some plein air studies” of a manufactory, narrowly escaping a charge of industrial espionage.)

The Villa, attributed to Andrea Palladio, is some distance outside Vicenza, so we engaged 3 taxis to take us there. The Tiepolo frescoes, chief object of our visit, are in two buildings – the Palazzina (1669), where the Valmarana family still live, and the Foresteria, or Guest House (1720).

The main attraction in the Palazzina is the fresco The Sacrifice of Iphigenia, the composition of which, in TK, Russell Gwinnett compared with the Candaules and Gyges fresco in the Palazzo Bragadin, and the fictional Iphigenia by Veronese at
Dogdene. Tiepolo’s other themes here are taken from the works of Virgil, Ariosto and Tasso. He completed them all in four months.

The Mars and Venus frescoes mentioned in TK by Dr Brightman as reminiscent of the frescoes in the Palazzo Labia, are in the Foresteria, where, with the exception of one room, all is the work of Tiepolo’s son, Giandomenico, who abandoned classical themes in favour of rustic, genre scenes, for example his Chinese and Peasants’ rooms.

Some of the party rested in the pretty gardens of the Villa which offered welcome shade from the midday sun, while others walked to La Rotunda, designed by Palladio in the 1560s, a cube-shaped building topped by a central dome. Unhappily the lavishly decorated interior was not open for inspection.

Our next call was at the Teatro Olimpico, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This was Palladio’s final work, though he died before its completion in 1585. The scenery on stage (not Palladio’s design) shows long streets receding in the distance giving a remarkable three-dimensional effect.

Thence to lunch, six of us to a pleasant small restaurant where we doubled the number of patrons, and ate a delicious meal, the litre fiaschi of wine being replenished with gratifying regularity. One of our group was brave enough to end his meal with cod-flavoured ice cream.

The short walk to the station took us through a large square occupied by a huge bustling street market, an opportunity to watch the town’s residents at leisure.

Our thanks are due to Jeff for arranging this enjoyable excursion.

Tiepolo’s magnificent Iphigenia frescoes at Villa Valmarana
On 1 December 1934 Lady Violet Georgiana Pakenham was married to Anthony Dymoke Powell by Reverend H Maurice Relton DD at the Anglican church of All Saints Ennismore Gardens – just a few hundred yards from the Pakenhams’ London house at 12 Rutland Gate (not number 14 as I had previously understood).

So to mark the Powells’ 80th wedding anniversary it seemed appropriate to write something about the Anglican church of All Saints, Ennismore Gardens … or the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of the Dormition of the Mother of God and All Saints as it now is.

Although not an old church by English standards, All Saints (as I shall refer to it) is none the less rather interesting. Back in the 1830s the area of the Kingston House estate between the southern edge of Hyde Park and the Brompton Road was being sold off and developed. The existing parish church was Holy Trinity, Brompton, which although quite close geographically was not directly accessible from Kensington Gore. Consequently in 1835 the Church Building Commissioners made a grant towards the development of a new church, although a site was not agreed until 1845 when Lord Listowel consented to sell the requisite plot of land.

By 1846 the architect Lewis Vulliamy had produced plans for the church – not the expected Gothic edifice but one in the then briefly fashionable Lombardic style. But like most English church building projects, funding was never secure and building could not begin until 1848, and then only on a slimmed down design. The original plan was for a basilica style church complete with campanile; but because of the cost the campanile was not built and the west end, facing the cul-de-sac in which the church stands, was not what we see today. Additionally the interior decoration was somewhat sparse and bleak, the iron support columns being polished to resemble marble and the bleakness relieved only by the apse roof which was painted blue with gold stars. Nonetheless the building was completed and the church consecrated in July 1849.

But again, as with so many English church building projects, that was not the end of the development. In 1860 RL Roumieu built the campanile, to Vulliamy’s original modified design with a single west-facing clock face. Then in 1872 a new eight-day
clock mechanism was installed and clock faces with gilded copper dials added to the previously blank sides – with the original (west) slate face being gilded.

In 1884 the new and energetic incumbent, the Revd Ravenscroft Stewart, set about enlarging and modernising the church. Stewart had CH Townsend draw up plans for three major upgrades: reordering the east end to create a raised chancel, with choir seats, in the easternmost bay of the nave; a complete rebuilding of the west end some 10 feet further forward, to compensate for the loss of space at the east end of the nave; and the building of two new vestries at the NE and NW corners which were to be linked by an ambulatory. Building work started in July 1885 with only around half the required money available, so the remodelling of the west end was postponed and the vestries never built.

To form the chancel Townsend created a raised platform in the easternmost bay of the nave and built up the floor of the apse to make the sanctuary. At the same time the nave floor was re-laid with wooden blocks and the backs of the galleries raised to improve sight-lines. Several new fittings were also included, of which the carved oak altar front of angels in niches is the only one which remains in place.

The rebuilding of the west end finally went ahead in 1891-2, although again in a modified form – the proposed semi-circular baptistery being abandoned in favour of the design we see today based on the 12th century façade of St Zeno Maggiore in Verona.

Meanwhile the interior was also being redesigned to improve the bleak decoration. The semi-dome of the apse was painted with a Christ in Majesty by Thomas R Spence and was almost immediately repainted by the Arts & Crafts designer George Heywood Sumner who also lined the apse with alabaster. More importantly Sumner decorated the nave walls, clerestory, nave arcade and chancel arch with sgraffito panels including scriptural scenes and saints.

Images of the interior of the Anglican All Saints are rare, so we must judge what it would have been like from this view of an empty, and unusually well lit, church in its current Russian Orthodox incarnation.
Apart from the installation of an organ, this is much how the church would have been at the time of the Powells’ marriage. And indeed it is much as it would remain until 1955 when the church was decommissioned following the merger of the parish with that of Holy Trinity on Prince Consort Road.

Following its closure All Saints was first leased, and then the freehold sold, to the Russian Orthodox Church – but not before many of the fixtures and fittings had been removed; knowledge of their whereabouts now being lost.

The church became the cathedral of the Bishop of the Russian Orthodox Diocese of Sourozh, the Russian Orthodox diocese for Great Britain and Ireland. It was re-consecrated as the Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God and All Saints.

As befits a Russian Orthodox Church the pews have been removed (unless infirm, everyone stands!) and an iconostasis installed at the eastern end. The Royal Gates in the centre of this screen are those rescued from the old Czarist embassy chapel in Welbeck Street following the 1917 revolution. The icons of the screen were painted (or “written” depending on your point of view) by pupils of the Russian iconographer Leonid Ouspensky.

Today, while it is dimly lit, the church glitters with the gold of the screen, the chandeliers, the silver framed icons in the nave and aisles, and the Church Slavonic chants of the priests and choir.

Since around 2005 the Russian Orthodox hierarchy in London has undergone quite a deal of turmoil, with priestly defections, name-calling, meddling from Moscow and even a dispute (finally settled by the High Court in favour of the Moscow Patriarchate) over the ownership of the church itself. As a consequence, and very sadly, it is not normally possible to get into the church unless attending worship, and even then outsiders tend to be looked at suspiciously as possible spies – some years ago, when we popped in for 10 minutes during Sunday morning mass, I felt distinctly uncomfortable. Despite his profession to be “non croyant” I like to think that Powell himself, while perhaps sad that the church is no longer Anglican, would have been pleased that All Saints found an alternative ecclesiastical use. And he may have had a few moments amusement over the recent machinations given the Communist leanings of Tokenhouse, Widmerpool et al. – and indeed given Widmerpool’s ability for somewhat underhand dealings with others.

In her recent book [1], Suzette Field (who has a day job as a professional party organizer in London) selects parties from works of fiction that she deems to have been the “40 greatest”. In each case, she applies the same criteria for discussion (not necessarily in the same order): (1) The Invitation; (2) The Host; (3) The Venue; (4) The Guest List; (5) The Dress Code; (6) The Food and Drink; (7) The Conversation; (8) The Entertainment; (9) The Outcome; and (10) The Legacy. This doesn’t work in every case because in some instances information for a particular criterion is missing from the source. But when sufficient information is available, the party descriptions can work very well. The weakest entries are those from ancient works such as the Bible or historic Greek, Latin, Japanese and Old Norse/Icelandic texts. The better ones are those from works such as The Great Gatsby, The Master and Margarita, The Line of Beauty and Vanity Fair where the party is central to the story. And the best of all, at least in my opinion, is the one from The Bonfire of the Vanities, where it seems as if she manages to summarize that whole novel in this one, often hilarious party scene. It’s almost as if she had been one of the guests.

Oddly missing is a description of one of the many parties from AP’s Dance novels. According to Stephen Holden [2] this was not due to an oversight, as Field told him that Powell was among the authors suggested to her for inclusion; but there were just so many parties proposed that there wasn’t room for any by AP. Also, how would one decide which of AP’s parties to include? An obvious choice would be the “Night of the Three Parties” in BM, as was suggested by DJ Taylor when interviewed about the book. He would have included the Huntercombe’s ball and Mrs Andriades’ party because of the juxtaposition of upper class and Bohemian social events [3]. “The Party of the Seven Deadly Sins” in KO and the “Fission Launch Party” in BDFR would have to be on my short list. But for purposes of simplicity and to offer a brief facsimile of what an entry for an AP party might have looked like, I have selected a party that might not appear to be so obvious.

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A Party in Pimlico

LOCATION: PIMLICO, LONDON SW1
HOSTESS: AUDREY MACLINTICK
DATE: AUTUMN 1936

From Casanova’s Chinese Restaurant (1960) by Anthony Powell

The Invitation

This was an impromptu gathering, so no formal invitation was extended. In fact, the hostess at first seemed to discourage the two guests’ entry. She and her husband were known to one of the two guests who effectively invited himself and his companion.

The Hostess

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[1] Suzette Field, A Curious Invitation: The Forty Greatest Parties in Fiction. (In the UK edition, the subtitle was The Forty Greatest Parties in Literature.)


Audrey Maclintick was the wife of the music critic, Maclintick, whose first name is never used. She greeted her guests with an air of formidable discontent with life ... She was a small dark woman with a touch of the gypsy about her, this last possibly suggested by sallow skin and large bright eyes. Her black hair was worn in a fringe. Some might have found her attractive but while the narrator, Nick Jenkins, was not among them, he was not blind to the fact that she might be capable of causing trouble where men were concerned.

**The Venue**
The Maclinticks' flat was located in Pimlico, a vast region of stucco streets and squares upon which doom seemed to have fallen. [The guests] proceeded from haunts of seedy, grudging gentility into an area of increasingly unsavoury complexion ... The house, when we found it, turned out to be a small, infinitely decayed two-story dwelling that had seen better days; now threatened by a row of shops advancing from one end of the street and a fearful slum crowding up from the other.

Audrey conducted her guests into the sitting-room in which a purposeful banality of style had been observed; only a glass-fronted bookcase full of composers' biographies and works of musical reference giving some indication of Maclintick's profession.

Audrey described the house as a “pig-sty” and professed that she would rather live in Putney and have a little garden to tend, but her husband will live nowhere but Pimlico where she can’t even have a window box.

**The Guest List**
The uninvited guests are Hugh Moreland, a composer and conductor, and his friend Nick Jenkins, a novelist, who is the first-person narrator of the story. Also present, in addition to these two and the Maclinticks, is another musician, known as Carolo, who comes from the North of England and whose real name is Wilson. He has recently become the basement lodger in the Maclinticks’ flat. Maclintick seems rather annoyed by Carolo, but Audrey defends him against her husband’s complaints and becomes uncharacteristically cheerful in his presence. Except for Audrey, who is introduced in this scene, the other guests were known to each other and to the reader prior to their arrival at the party.

The character of Moreland is based on composer and conductor Constant Lambert, whose musical career closely resembled that of Moreland. The narrator Jenkins is based on the author, Anthony Powell. He is more of an observer of the action he describes than a mover. Powell and Lambert were close friends in real life. Maclintick’s character appears to have been based to some extent on composer and music journalist Peter Warlock (aka. Philip Heseltine). He actually lived in Chelsea, next to Pimlico. Whether he had a companion such as Audrey or a lodger such as Carolo would seem unlikely, although, like Maclintick, he suffered from depressions and committed suicide by gassing himself in his flat.
The Dress Code
Since the guests were not expecting a party, their clothes are not particularly described. Audrey, however, complains at one point about her husband’s disinterest in his appearance and his unwillingness to accept her advice that he buy himself a new suit.

The Food and Drink
Shortly after their arrival, Maclintick offered the guests an unidentified drink from a corked bottle. This was almost surely the Irish whiskey of which he was said elsewhere to be so fond. After drinks, Maclintick invites the guests to remain for dinner, which he warns them may consist of cold beef and pickles. Audrey corrects him to announce that the menu will be cold mutton and beetroot, and adds that the beetroot is fresh, not pickled. Maclintick offers to go to a neighbourhood pub to secure some beer, asking whether the guests prefer bitter or mild-and–bitter. That question is never resolved, and Maclintick set off for a pub down the street, taking with him a large, badly chipped china jug to hold the beer.

Upon his return, they descend into the basement where they join Carolo. There in a room next to the kitchen, a table was laid. We settled ourselves round it. Maclintick filled some tumblers; Audrey began to carve the mutton. Carolo was immediately manifest. Although, architecturally speaking, divided into separate parts, the Maclinticks’ dining room was not a large one, the table taking up most of one end.

After Maclintick departs for a second round of beer, Audrey admonishes Moreland not “to take all the cheese”, so that must have been an additional course. In Maclintick’s absence, Carolo takes up his place at the table, looking wearily at the residue of the joint, the remains of which were not specially tempting.

Upon Maclintick’s return, Carolo is poured out a glass [and] he drank a deep draught of the beer with apparent gratification.

To say that a good time was had by all would not be entirely in keeping with the story, but the meal is described with unusual vividness and is among Powell’s most memorable for all that.

The Conversation
Powell was an expert at narrating dialogue and in this scene he doesn’t disappoint. Maclintick and Moreland soon take up a discussion of music, focusing for the most part on that of the Spanish composer Chabrier but overlaid with more technical matters such as pitch and rhythm. Jenkins lacks any formal knowledge of music and was excluded by his ignorance from their discussions. In these circumstances, he found Mrs Maclintick thrown on [his] hands. In her latest mood she turned out to have a side no less tense than her temper displayed upon arrival, but more loquacious.

After a bit, the discussion about Chabrier’s music morphs into politics. The primary subject is the Spanish Civil War, raging at that time. Maclintick and Audrey take the opportunity to place themselves on opposite sides and distill the topic down to right versus left. This then brings the table talk back to music as they take up the question about how Russian musicians have fared under Communism. Powell manages, as he does so often, to bring into a wholly domestic scene a reflection of historic events occurring in the background. In his series of twelve novels, of which this one is number five, he leaves a record of what it was like to live in England in the period between WWI and 1971.

The Entertainment
Most of the entertainment is provided by the bickering between the Maclinticks that Moreland claims to have been more than
usually acrimonious on this occasion. But it being a gathering of musicians, when the party joins Carolo in the basement, he is sitting at one end of the room with his violin, “his face to the wall, engrossed with a pile of music … scratching away in the corner”. He is apparently playing while composing a work in progress that Maclintick has previously pronounced he will never finish.

The Outcome

The Maclinticks appear later in the novel at another party, arriving separately and continuing to engage in their matrimonial rows. This party is in celebration of the premier performance of a symphony by Moreland. Towards the end of the novel, the narrator learns that Audrey has run off with Carolo, leaving Maclintick alone and distraught. A few days later, his suicide is announced in the press. In a later novel that takes place during the war, Jenkins finds that Moreland and Audrey have moved in together. This becomes a lasting relationship that continues until Moreland’s death in the penultimate novel in the series.

The Legacy

There is never a shortage of parties in Powell’s novels, as they provide a key narrative device for his bringing together a large number of characters in a format that enables the narrator to witness and comment on their lives and move the action forward. In this novel alone, there are five other “parties”, if one includes in that definition social gatherings in pubs such as The Onion Cellar in The Tin Drum. Spread out over twelve novels in the sequence entitled Dance to the Music of Time, Powell probably did more for party giving than any other 20th century novelist (although Marcel Proust would be a close competitor for this title). Powell’s parties extend from a luncheon party at his parents’ house in Hampshire on the day of Archduke

Franz Ferdinand’s assassination in 1914 to a chance gathering in a London art gallery exhibiting the paintings of Edgar Deacon in Autumn 1971.

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It is greatly to be hoped that, if Field’s book is sufficiently successful, she will include an example of a Powell party in a second volume (Even Curiouser Invitations). Or even better, perhaps she will organize a London party on the theme of one in a Powell novel and extend an invitation to the members of the Society (at a reasonable entry fee, of course). ■
I had first come across *Dance to the Music of Time* when reading in the summer of 1977 for the Bar examinations. London that year sweltered in a heat haze that suffused the buildings and the roads. My rooms in Shepherd’s Bush provided some refuge but each day I made the tiresome trek down the Uxbridge Road to Gray’s Inn where I sat immersed in the grey, dull, dusty tomes recording years of arid pontifications of long dead or living judges on episodes universally characterised by one or other (or both) of the lawyer’s daily diet – greed and misery.

Light fiction beckoned. Marc Boxer’s illustrations on the cover of the paper back editions were entrancing. Not merely, or even at all, because of their sure and subtle drafting but because they brought to mind images of him and his lovely wife, the delicious Anna Ford, engaged in hot, pounding acts of love, their bodies slick with the sweat of satiated, or soon to be satiated, lust, her milky white thighs wrapped round his back … This I admit was the only reason I bought them.

But the contents were a surprise. These were works into which one could dive with abandon. Not at that time possessing the opiate of a television I soon learned that their linguistic style and grace, pellucid prose and gripping tale of social mores, their unremitting addictive triviality were nearly as satisfying as *Coronation Street*. Replete with a cast of characters as depressingly realistic and engaging in their own subtle way as Ena Sharples, Len Fairclough and Minnie Caldwell each book was weighty enough to provide adequate reading material for each bus ride from Shepherd’s Bush to Holborn and back. Indeed my addiction proved a constant drain on my resources as I was compelled some days to spend as much as 70p on Powell, a not inconsiderable sum in 1977.

I raced through them ever eager for more of the compulsive episodes, ever eager to learn, again, for the eleventh or twelfth time, what had happened in the earlier volumes, ever eager to appreciate the heights of implausibility sketched by Powell. Regrettably they were soon finished – indeed if the traffic was running smoothly quite often by the time one reached Holland Park on the outward journey. Ever since I have kept a special place for them in my heart and in my library. The £4.20 I spent on them would now nearly buy me a pint of Guinness but it is simply impossible now for me even to give them away. They remain high up on the top-most shelf in my library in almost pristine condition with the bus tickets of 1977 interlacing their leaves. What X Trapnell, Widmerpool, or Charles Stringham would make of this is beyond my speculation.
Robin Bynoe

I was a bookish and sensitive child. I always had my head in a book, but my parents had to keep an eye on those that I had my head in, because some of them, given my sensitivity, made me poorly. Our copy of *The House at Pooh Corner*, for instance, was as redacted as a reply to a Freedom of Information request, and *Eric, or Little by Little*, didn’t get beyond the first chapter. Proust and H Rider Haggard were out of the question.

What could I read without provoking my neurasthenia? Something bracing, it seemed, but not excessively so.

A vivid and unusually specific dream came to my rescue. A Trelawnian demiurge appeared. “Behold the dance to the music of time by Anthony Powell pronounced Pole”, he announced. Twelve figures, bearing a volume each, passed before me, like the unborn kings of Scotland in *Macbeth* (one of the few scenes in that disturbing play that survived into the bowdlerised edition in my nursery).

I took my pocket-money to WH Smith, a shop which then sold books.

“A Dance to the Music of Time by Anthony Powell pronounced Pole”, I said. “Please.”

“Blimey”, said the man, rummaging among papers. “The ledger says no”, he said eventually. “No dances, neither Powell nor Pole.”

“Volume one”, I said, rerunning my dream in my mind’s eye, “is *A Question of Upbringing.*”

“Tell a lie”, said the man, re-rummaging. “*Question of Upbringing, A.* Just out. But no dancing.”

Decades later I bought *Hearing Secret Harmonies*. I had wondered since my dream what that would be about. My copy of *A Question of Upbringing* had become a valuable modern first, so I sold it; though still bookish I was no longer sensitive: I still skip the second half of *The Soldier’s Art* though.

Tell Us What You Think

*Newsletter* is evolving – as it should. While we can’t make all the changes we would like – colour is still much too expensive – there are a few changes in this issue.

There’s a new “Letter from the Editor” on page 2, with the Society information moving to inside the back cover. This has forced the reformat of the “Society Merchandise” pages. And we have printed this issue on a different paper in the hope that it will give better image reproduction. The paper, especially, is an experiment and we would like you to tell us if you think it works. Is it worth an extra 10% on the cost of producing *Newsletter*?

Please tell us what you think by dropping a note to either the Editor, editor@anthonypowell.org or the Hon. Secretary, secretary@anthonypowell.org.
NE USA Group
Anthony Powell Birthday Lunch
Friday 19 December 2014
Grolier Club
New York
To include the presentation of the Lady Molly Award.
For further details and invitations please contact Ed Bock
eabock@earthlink.net.

London Quarterly Pub Meets
Saturday 7 February 2015
Saturday 9 May 2015
Saturday 1 August 2015
Saturday 7 November 2015
The Audley
41-43 Mount Street, London W1
1230 to 1530 hrs
Good beer, good pub food and informal conversation in a Victorian pub AP would have known. Why not bring something AP-related to interest us?
Non-members always welcome.
Further details from the Hon. Secretary (address inside back cover).

Hon. Secretary’s New Year Brunch
Saturday 17 January 2015
1000 to 1200 hrs
Patisserie Valerie
215 Brompton Road, London SW3
(almost opposite Brompton Oratory)
Join the Hon. Secretary for brunch and chat to liven up the dull days of January. And follow it with a visit to the V&A or the Harrod’s Sale!
This is a pay on the day event but please tell the Hon. Secretary (address inside back cover) if you intend to come so we can ensure we have booked a large enough table.
Non-members welcome.

2016 Conference
Anthony Powell, Shakespeare and Other Literary Influences
Provisional Dates
Friday 8 and Saturday 9 April 2016
Venue
King’s Manor, York
King’s Manor, part of the University of York, is a glorious medieval house in the centre of one of the jewel cities of the UK and very close to York Minster.
Travel to York couldn’t be easier with trans-continental flights to Manchester and a direct train connection, or a regular fast train service from central London.
We are still building the plans, so keep watching this space for more details. And start saving your pennies!
Please join us at 
easyfundraising.org.uk/anthonypowellsociety/ 
It’s so simple and it won’t cost you a penny
Welcome to New Members
We extend a warm welcome to the following new members:
Jeff Howe, Uckfield
Robert Noel, London
Berry Ritchie, Richmond on Thames

Subscriptions
Subscriptions are due annually on 1 April (for rates see back page). Reminders are sent during March to those whose membership is about to expire.

Anyone whose membership is expired will be removed from the membership list at the end of June.

As we will be using email wherever possible, please keep a look-out for emails from the Society.

Subscriptions should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, address inside back cover.

Contributions to the Newsletter and journal Secret Harmonies are always welcome and should be sent to:
Newsletter & Journal Editor,
Anthony Powell Society
76 Ennismore Avenue
Greenford, UB6 0JW, UK
ditor@anthonypowell.org

We are always especially grateful for reports or notices of Powell-related events and relevant photographs.

Local Group Contacts

London Group
Area: London & SE England
Contact: Keith Marshall
Email: kcm@cix.co.uk

New York & NE USA Group
Area: New York & NE USA
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Great Lakes Group
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Area: Sweden & Finland
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Toronto Group
Area: Toronto, Canada
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Please contact the Hon. Secretary if you wish to make contact with a group and don’t have email. If you wish to start a local group the Hon. Secretary can advise on the number of members in your area.

Newsletter Copy Deadlines

Newsletter #58, Spring 2015
Copy Deadline: 13 February 2015
Publication Date: 6 March 2015

Newsletter #59, Summer 2015
Copy Deadline: 15 May 2015
Publication Date: 5 June 2015
The Society’s 2014 AGM took place, as is now traditional, at St James’s Church, Piccadilly, on Saturday 25 October.

A good turnout of members was welcomed by Chairman Tony Robinson. The minutes of the 2013 AGM were unanimously accepted and signed by Tony.

The Hon. Secretary presented the Annual Report for the year 2013-2014. Significant events had included another increase in membership (now standing at just over 300, with good take-up of the “5 years for the price of 4” membership offer); the unfortunate loss of two Trustees due to illness; the outstandingly successful 2013 Conference at Eton; the 7th Annual Lecture (on “Anthony Powell and Sculpture” by Alastair Laing); the donation of the Nancy Cutbirth Small Archive to the Society and the continuing success of the Newsletter.

Presenting the Accounts the Hon. Treasurer reported a surplus of £4200 for the year, largely due to revenue streams, such as donations, which cannot be relied on. Subscriptions do not need to increase this year. The Annual Report and Accounts were unanimously accepted.

Trustees Jeff Manley and John Roe had come to the end of their terms in office; they had agreed to stand again and were re-elected. Stephen Holden and Paul Nutley having had to stand down during the year, Robin Bynoe and Graham Page were elected as new Trustees.

Questions from members concerned the increase in membership; the cost of the proposed green plaque on AP’s birthplace; and insurance of the Society’s holdings.

Despite rising postage and printing costs, and low interest rates on savings, the Society has had a very steadily successful year. A vote of thanks was recorded to Keith and all the Trustees for their work in achieving this. A second vote of thanks was recorded to Elwin Taylor and his team for the hugely successful Venice Conference.

After a short break for refreshments, the afternoon concluded with an absorbing and lavishly illustrated talk on “Architecture in Dance” by Trustee Harry Mount (author of, inter alia, A Lust for Windowsills: a lover’s guide to British buildings from portcullis to pebbledash).

Full minutes of the AGM will be printed in the next Newsletter and Harry Mount’s talk should appear in a future edition of Secret Harmonies.

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**More for the Archive**

We are delighted that the Society Archive has received another handsome gift: over 750 complete newspapers, mostly issues of Daily Telegraph and TLS from the 1970s and 1980s, which contain reviews by AP. These are the gift of member Pat Chambers, to whom we say a heartfelt thank you!

As with the other Archive materials we are working slowly to index this material which will hopefully become a valuable research resource.

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**AGM Report**

*By Noreen Marshall*
A smaller than usual band of intrepid Powellateers met on Saturday 1 November at the Audley for the traditional London pub meet. Why so few? Although a cool November day the weather wasn’t inclement; and the date had been moved to avoid the possible travel problems with the Lord Mayor’s Show (always on the second Saturday in November). So the only likely obstruction was the occasional vintage car doing warm-up laps for the London to Brighton run the following day.

A small gathering perhaps, but nevertheless some brilliant discussion – interspersed as always with the Audley’s eclectic and slightly unusual selection of real ales. The food was good, if fairly run of the mill pub fare; and none the worse for that when done well.

Discussion ranged far and wide ... Timothy Spall’s characterisation of the eponymous painter in the film *Turner*. Garden gnomes. Unusual musical instruments: the baryton (like a bass viol but with extra dorsal drone-like strings; Haydn wrote copiously for the instrument at the behest of Prince Esterhazy) and the tenoroon (a higher pitched bassoon). King Harold, Waltham Abbey and Theobalds Palace – my childhood stamping ground. Temple Bar – before its restoration to Paternoster Square also near my childhood home. The Russian Orthodox church in London. Tin openers. The detective novels of Edmund Crispin and Margery Allingham. And the delightful churches on Romney Marsh.

AP of course got a look in with talk about the forthcoming Annual Lecture, Birthday Lunch, the next conference in York in 2016 – and the possibilities of a summer charabanc outing. Rye in East Sussex seemed a popular choice for such an outing as AP’s friends Gerald Reitlinger and painter Ed Burra both lived close by. Rye is also a very literary place – think Mapp & Lucia; Henry James; EF Benson and Conrad Aiken; not to mention John Ryan of *Pugwash* fame or Spike Milligan – as well as home to many artists including Paul Nash. It has bookshops, teashops, pubs and lots of history too!

I had taken along a copy of the Powells’ marriage certificate which is interesting for the witnesses: Frank Pakenham (Lord Longford) and ME Jersey (Lady V’s elder brother and grandmother respectively, both her parents being already dead) as well as both AP’s parents.

Not to be outdone Noreen had taken her copy of Powell’s first book, *Barnard Letters* (Duckworth, 1928), the edited correspondence of the Barnard family over 50 years in the late-18th/early-19th centuries. It isn’t riveting reading but part of the AP opus which is not generally known.

A jolly time was had by all!

Present were John Blaxter, Robin Bynoe, Jill Chalmers, Geraint Dearman, Keith & Noreen Marshall, Gerald Parsons, Rob Tresman.
COMPARE THE MARXISTS
1 : Daniel Tokenhouse

by ‘Maisky’

You meditate along the correct political lines, the picture almost paints itself.

Daniel Tokenhouse, whom we meet in Temporary Kings, is a good character with which to begin a comparison of the Marxists (or Leftists) in Dance since he is, to all appearances, the genuine article. Unlike, say, some of the Hyde Park Hunger Marchers, his Marxist creed is integral to who he is as a person. He lives for his art and each of his paintings is ‘an act of socialism’.

So who is Tokenhouse and where does he come from? He is introduced as Nick Jenkins’s first boss, at a publishing house specialising in art books, and shares some attributes with Thomas Balston (junior partner of Gerald Duckworth & Co.) who stood in the same relationship to Anthony Powell. Balston is introduced in chapter 1 of Messengers of Day as

Tall, thin, black-moustached, jet black hair standing up on end [he] gave expression to a mass of nervous tensions. He moved with a jerky precipitancy, never closing a door without slamming it. [Messengers 9]

Tokenhouse is not dissimilar in terms of the physical impression he makes, with the remnants of a toothbrush moustache, his hair en brosse and severely trimmed. Like Balston, he had the means to buy his way into publishing, a profession in which both appear to have had a genuine interest. Markedly, their respective sexual proclivities, if any, remain undisclosed down the decades; they share a chilly and rather uncommon self-sufficiency.

When we first meet Tokenhouse (1958), his asceticism – and military thoroughness – endure as defining characteristics, but in other respects his personal development has been punctuated by crises and epiphanies. An army friend of Captain Jenkins, his politics were for a long time confined to ‘desultory grumblings somewhat resembling those of Uncle Giles’. Then, after showing increasing signs of nervous strain, he announces his retirement from publishing around March 1938, to devote himself full-time to painting. His political conversion takes place about the same time as this unforeseen breach. Six months later, Tokenhouse and Jenkins’s father quarrel violently over the Munich Agreement, never to speak again.

The Soviet Union had attempted to form an anti-Nazi coalition in the run-up to the Sudetenland crisis and the Communist Party line was staunchly against appeasement. The signing of the Nazi-Soviet (Molotov-Ribbentrop) Pact on 23 August 1939 therefore required creedal
contortions that were painful even for the more laid back sort of fellow traveller. Tokenhouse suffers a complete nervous breakdown in the wake of the Pact and retires to a sanatorium, emerging only when Germany invades Russia and some semblance of the natural order is restored.

When Jenkins meets him ‘buying socks’, he is looking forward to leaving a Britain under the heel of Attlee’s ‘near-fascist’ government. Venice presents itself as an acceptable refuge for him and his conscience now that Mussolini has been ‘strung up’. Judging by his reaction to Dr Zhivago (1957), Tokenhouse takes a dim view of the so-called ‘Khrushchev Thaw’. The novel presents, so he says, the point of view of the aristocratic former classes. It is calculated to ‘still the self-reproach’ of the exiled rich

who have chosen to dissociate themselves from the great developments taking place in their country.

In the classificatory system of ‘Books’ Bagshaw, Tokenhouse would no doubt count as ‘unreconstructed’ in his response to the political currents of the times.

What of Tokenhouse’s artistic metamorphosis? In his pre-War period, Nick discerned the influence of the Camden Town Group (heyday 1911-14) on his landscapes. By the time he renews their acquaintance, Tokenhouse’s style has changed out of recognition in a way that Nick struggles to classify, save that they remind him of frescos. His first attempt is ‘neo-primitivism’, which can denote either a sub-school of the Russian avant garde (which peaked around the same time as Camden) or any sporadic resurgence of primitivism with no particular locality implied. After some polite but admittedly ‘insipid’ observations from Nick, they fall to talking about a sequence of studies, ‘Four Priests Rigging a Miracle’. Then he makes a faux pas.

“The browns, greys and blacks seem to create an effective recession.”

“Ah, you have misunderstood me … I am no longer interested in purely technical [formalistic] achievements as correct recession, so called, or making a kind of pattern.”

To digress briefly, recession means any device in a painting suggesting depth, such as foreshortening, tonal contrasts, perspective or receding planes of colours. Nick frequently resorts to the term ‘recession’ as a narrator (describing the aqueous interior of Mr Deacon’s shop, General Conyers at his cello as if in a Dutch painting etc.). It also scarcely needs labouring that patterns are crucial to the structure of Dance.

Tokenhouse gives a lengthy account of his retreat from formalism. It all began when he took a bus ride to Mestre (terrestrial Venice) to paint a hydro-electric installation. He is arrested on suspicion of industrial espionage and while cooling his heels resolves to purge himself of Impressionist errors. This marks the beginning of his transitional period of Political Symbolism. Dissatisfied with the results, he decides that a new ideological content is what is called for and espouses Socialist Realism, conceived as the honest depiction of social injustice.

After this onslaught, it is time to visit the Biennale, where the two chance upon Ada Leintwardine and Louis Glober, now a Hollywood mogul but once a publisher, whom Tokenhouse remembers vividly. To prove it, he regales him with the outlandish saga of the Cubist blocks. Glober remembers nothing, but recognises
Belkin (‘a man of the soundest views in his own country’), to whom he once sold a picture entitled ‘Any Complaints’. He makes his second sale, a shipwreck scene, to Louis Glober, in an atmosphere of conviviality that is just crying out to be interrupted by Widmerpool. Blundering into the party in search of Belkin, whose Godot-like non-appearance presages his downfall, Widmerpool does not disappoint.

Secondly and as hinted earlier, we can read Nick as making a self-deprecating point about his own aesthetics. Tokenhouse, a future-oriented man with a mission, serves as a contrast and maybe a reproach to effete intellectuals like Nick, preoccupied with formalistic notions like recession and the making of patterns.

Thirdly, Tokenhouse’s character is an interesting intersection of military and monastic qualities. Alfred de Vigny’s conception of the soldier as ‘monk of war’ (discussed in *The Valley of Bones*) resided specifically in the soldier’s submission to irksome garrison duties, but the puritanism engendered by army life is a theme which clearly continued to interest Powell.

This leads at last to Tokenhouse’s austere singularity, the impression of ‘being utterly cut off from the rest of the world’. For a Marxist, he is not exactly a poster boy for collectivist values. But then, like Charles Stringham, he has courageously fought his way back from a crippling breakdown and both these quiet heroes bear a heavy burden with their heads held high.

I have learnt to be self-supporting. It is the only way. No good thinking about the past. The future is what matters. ■
BOOK REVIEW

Jean Findlay
Chasing Lost Time: The Life of CK Scott Moncrieff
Chatto & Windus, £25

Reviewed by Michael Barber

One of the most numinous episodes in *Dance* occurs when Jenkins belatedly realises that the quaint Norman seaside town in which he has just spent his first night abroad since the outbreak of war is Cabourg, Proust’s Balbec:

*It all came back, like the tea-soaked madeleine itself, in a torrent of memory …*

For Powell and the pre-war Art-Smart world to which he had belonged Proust was as addictive as their favourite cocktail. As Cyril Connolly admitted: ‘I was intoxicated for several years’. And while there were some whose French was good enough to read *A la recherche* in the original, most relied on the English translation by CK Scott Moncrieff (1889-1930), the subject of this fascinating, if at times rather solemn, biography by his great-great-niece, Jean Findlay.

Like Proust, who corrected proofs on his deathbed, Scott Moncrieff was always battling the clock. Healthy and handsome when young, he emerged from the Great War, in which he won a ‘good’ MC, with a game leg, chronic trench fever, eczema and minus several teeth (trench warfare did not encourage dental hygiene). Within a dozen years he would die of stomach cancer, having not only introduced English-speaking readers to Proust, but also to another Modern Master, Pirandello. Only Constance Garnett, the translator of Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Chekov, has an equivalent legacy.

Scotch by birth and itinerant by choice, Scott Moncrieff spent his latter years in Italy, where his work as a translator and journalist provided plausible cover for the clandestine intelligence gathering he did for SIS. Jean Findlay is, I believe, the first person to reveal that Scott Moncrieff was a spook. He doesn’t feature in Keith Jeffrey’s history of MI6, where you will also search in vain for any evidence that as early as the 1920’s Britain felt threatened by Fascist Italy’s threat to British interests in the Mediterranean and the Arabian Gulf.
Since Scott Moncrieff’s file was shredded in 1932 we’ll never know the extent of his spying activities, but it was not without its risks. In 1928 his cousin, a King’s Messenger, was beaten up in Milan by Fascist thugs.

But in one respect at least Italy was a safe haven for Scott Moncrieff. Unlike the British, Italians took a relaxed view of homosexuality, so together with Reggie Turner, Norman Douglas and other notorious expat ‘inverts’ (to borrow a euphemism current then) he could cruise without much fear of prosecution, though he couldn’t avoid blackmail and clap. Mrs Findlay, the mother of three boys, is commendably frank about her great-great-uncle’s sexual tastes, though she seems unaware that by ‘nepotism’, his recreational entry in *Who’s Who*, he meant more than simply paying his nephews’ and nieces’ school fees.

Scott Moncrieff’s translation of *A la recherche* was idiosyncratic. In order to make Proust intelligible to English readers he sacrificed accuracy to interpretation in a way some purists deplored, and it is certainly true that there are several howlers. For instance when Swann, cross-examining Odette about her lesbian past, demands ‘*Il y a combien de temps*?’, Scott Moncrieff writes ‘How many times?’ instead of ‘How long ago?’ On the other hand it was not only inspired but also, in terms of usage, unprecedented, to translate ‘*ce “chichi” voulu*’ as ‘this deliberate camping’.

Before he settled in Italy Scott Moncrieff was part of a queer coterie that included Christopher Millard, the bookish pederast who found the young AP ‘a great temptation’. Millard, more of a ‘gent’ than his *Dance* projection, Mr Deacon, but also, if Mrs Findlay is to be believed, a good deal naughtier, lived and worked in a garden shack that sounds like the equally dilapidated prefab in which Alan Ross’s *London Magazine* came to rest. Another member of this set was Sir Edward Marsh, the fastidious old neuter who tidied up the prose of Churchill and Maugham. Whenever Scott Moncrieff had a problem with Proust Sir Eddie was the first person he consulted.

Both Scott Moncrieff and Sir Eddie delighted in innuendo. We shall never know if they chortled over this couplet, but it seems an appropriate way to sign off:

*I am the ghost of Marcel Proust,
Never been laid, but often goosed!*

Poussin's drawings were nearly always made as preparatory studies for paintings. In this impressive example of his draughtsmanship strong shadows and rhythmic contours complement the vigorous movement of the figures. The central dancers are intended to personify poverty, labour, wealth and pleasure, alluding to fortune and the cycle of life. Father Time accompanies them on the lyre, while two putti play with an hour glass and blow bubbles, both symbols of life's brevity. This is the only known drawing for the painting in the Wallace Collection, London which was commissioned by Cardinal Giulio Rospigliosi (later Pope Clement IX), who dictated its subject.

Pen, brown ink and wash on paper; traces of squaring on black chalk.
© National Galleries of Scotland.

Something in the physical attitudes of the men themselves as they turned from the fire, suddenly suggested Poussin's scene in which the Seasons, hand in hand and facing outward, tread in rhythm to the notes of the lyre that the winged and naked greybeard plays. The image of Time brought thoughts of mortality: of human beings, facing outward like the Seasons, moving hand in hand in intricate measure: stepping slowly, methodically, sometimes a trifle awkwardly, in evolutions that take recognisable shape: or breaking into seemingly meaningless gyrations, while partners disappear only to reappear again, once more giving pattern to the spectacle: unable to control the melody, unable, perhaps, to control the steps of the dance.  [QU]
Letter to the Editor

The Kim Newman Connection

From Mr Allan Lloyd

I have just found quite an obscure reference to the Dance books, but some background might be useful first. When I am not reading Powell my main interest is in modern literary science fiction and fantasy, especially authors like Gene Wolfe, John Crowley, Christopher Priest and M John Harrison. One of my more guilty pleasures is the work of Kim Newman.

Kim might be familiar to British television viewers as a film critic. He reviews for the intellectual Sight and Sound and the more down-market Empire magazine. He is a distinctive figure with long hair and drooping moustache, and he always wears Edwardian clothing, often with matching cape, hat and walking stick. On anyone else it would look affected, but Kim just looks like a time-warped GK Chesterton. He has an encyclopaedic knowledge of popular culture, especially old horror films and 1960s and 1970s television series, as well as old pulp fiction books.

He writes novels and shorter works, mostly in the alternative history genre, where some change has altered the flow of history in some way. His most popular work is probably the Anno Dracula series in which he supposes that Dracula was not killed by Van Helsing and his helpers but defeated them and then settled in England, where he married the recently widowed Queen Victoria. The scope for using imagined and real characters is enormous, and Newman uses it in a series of books set around Jack the Ripper, then the First World War (with Biggles and Co. up against a vampiric Red Barron), then to the 1950s in Italy with references to Fellini films, Italian horror films and appearances for a lightly disguised James Bond and Patricia Highsmith’s Tom Ripley. The next book is about Andy Warhol, who actually could be a vampire just by his appearance.

The books are great fun, even if they are sometimes overwhelmed by obscure references.

The Powell connection comes in a story set in 1968, where one of the characters is reading books set in alternative versions of their reality. She is reading the Dance books, and gets to At Lady Molly’s before she realises that the genius of the author is that he has imagined a whole consistent world without any vampires!

It does make me wonder which of the Dance characters would choose to become vampires if in Newman’s world. (The choice is optional and mostly voluntary.) Widmerpool would obviously choose to “turn”, as would Magnus Donners and Pamela, but I am very suspicious of that Nick Jenkins fellow who always hangs around the periphery in a most suspicious manner.

I hope some people may be tempted to try Newman’s books. They can be slightly graphic sometimes, but really are great fun. If the idea of cow’s blood being delivered in tetrahedral packs with the morning milk, with gold top containing much more expensive virgin’s blood, appeals to your sense of humour then the books may be for you.
Under the title “The Etonian peer who became an assistant to a Mexican commie” (Spectator, 18 October 2014) John Preston reviews Selina Hastings’ biography of her father: The Red Earl: The Extraordinary Life of the 16th Earl of Huntingdon. His opening gambit is:

The lefty hereditary peer has few equals as a figure of fun, in life or literature. The late Tony Benn comes inevitably to mind here, as does the Earl of Warminster – ‘Erry’ – in Anthony Powell’s A Dance to the Music of Time.

Spotted by the Hon. Secretary.

The Society’s former Chairman and Trustee Christine Berberich has a new book out. The Bloomsbury Introduction to Popular Fiction, edited by Christine Berberich is published by Bloomsbury Academic (ISBN 9781441172013).

Guiding readers through key writers and genres, historical contexts and major theoretical approaches, this is a comprehensive introduction to the study of popular fiction. Charting the rise of commercial fiction from the 19th century to today, The Bloomsbury Introduction to Popular Fiction includes introductory surveys, written by leading scholars, on a wide range of popular genres from science fiction to children’s literature.

Member Eddie Hathaway reports a Powellian crossword clue in the i (the “junior” version of the Independent). On 26 September this intriguing clue appeared:

Books disco with Timothy Edwards DJ? (1, 5, 2, 3, 5, 2, 4)

The answer is, of course, A Dance to the Music of Time, and Eddie says that his wife solved it only by reference to pre-existing letters. Hardly surprising as the setter’s logic continues to baffle us.
Member Christine Apperley draws our attention to two splendidly waspish Powell references in *The Diaries of Kenneth Tynan*.

9 July 1973
*Have been reading* Temporary Kings, the latest in Anthony Powell’s mystifyingly revered sequence of novels. Perhaps significantly, the longest quote on the dustjacket comes from something published by the University of Manitoba Press: Powell is a natural for thesis-seekers. Whenever I read him, especially in the late books, I’m amazed that a writer so grammatically insecure, so prolific in blurred, circuitous sentences, should be held up for admiration as a stylist. The impression left by the series is of a man recording, with bland satisfaction, the depredations made by time and sexual and social climbing on his closest friends. This latest book, virtually without action of any kind, is boring gossip raised to the level of – gossip. He is the Jennifer of Quality Lit.

And again …

13 September 1975
*Dominic Elwes’ funeral: high mass at Arundel Cathedral, followed by motorcade to Protestant graveyard at Amberley …*
The weather is balmy, warmly autumnal. Hugh Millais points out how appropriate it is that Dom’s death should coincide with the publication of the last volume of Anthony Powell’s Dance to the Music of Time. With Dom’s passing, one especially spirited variation of the social gavotte will never be danced again. I weep, as usual, and pointlessly sprinkle holy water over the coffin.

Kenneth Tynan (1927–1980)
Pamela Hansford Johnson: Her Life, Works and Times by Wendy Pollard was reviewed by Hilary Spurling in the Spectator of 20 September 2014 with the inevitable reference to Powell:

She [PHJ] hailed his [CP Snow] next novel as a masterpiece, and was as shocked as he was by the disobligeing view taken elsewhere of what Anthony Powell in the TLS called ‘painstaking and reliable account of university life’. By this time Snow himself reckoned he could hold his own with Flaubert and Turgenev, if not yet level with Tolstoy or Dostoenvsky.

Spotted by Stephen Eggins.

Stephen Eggins spots another Powell reference in the Spectator of 20 September. Writing under the title “Keep the Booker British, Americans don’t need the cachet of our most prestigious literary prize – but we do” Matthew Walther observes:

British and American novelists responded differently to the advent of what used to be called ‘High Modernism’. When British writers read Ulysses, they reacted either like Evelyn Waugh, who dismissed it as ‘gibberish’, or like Anthony Powell, who saw it as a curiosity and compared it to The Anatomy of Melancholy. Americans, on the other hand, tended to see the book as a challenge, even as a new paradigm.
More Powell references from book reviews, this time from DJ Taylor reviewing *Modernity Britain: Book Two, A Shake of the Dice 1959-62* by David Kynaston in *The Oldie*, October 2014. He begins:

*There is an odd moment in Anthony Powell’s late 1980s journals in which the ever-hospitable diarist and his wife find themselves entertaining a young woman to tea at The Chantry, near Frome in Somerset. Powell, always alert to idiosyncrasy and noting the visitor’s rather self-conscious little-girl-lost voice, diagnoses a throwback to a previous generation: a girl from his lost 1920s youth; 'not of today'.*

Spotted by Martin Caine.

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Charles Saatchi is quoted in the *London Evening Standard* on Philippe Halsman’s celebrated motion photograph ‘Dali Atomicus’:

*His wife Gala suited his strange lifestyle perfectly. She met Dali in Spain having ended a three-way relationship with Max Ernst and her then husband Paul Eluard, both artists.*

*Gala's strong sex drive meant she had many affairs during her marriage to Dali, which he possibly encouraged given his practice of candaulism: a penchant for showing his naked partner to others for their voyeuristic pleasure.*

*Shades of Widmerpudlian pleasures in Venice?*

Spotted by Julian Allason.
SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

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