A Peaceful Christmas and a Prosperous New Year to all members & friends of the Society

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CHRISTMAS SPECIAL
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From the Secretary’s Desk

I’m always surprised how little mention there is of Christmas in Dance, and for that matter in Powell’s Journals and memoirs. Although the Journals do record Christmas every year it is always in the seemingly low-key terms of “Drinks in the morning. V gave me a blue-striped shirt. Lunched at The Stables; enjoyable party; very tiring.”

Should we really be surprised? No, probably not. In the days of Powell’s youth, and the period of Dance, Christmas was not the commercial circus it is today – that didn’t really start to take off until the early ’70s, when Powell was completing Dance.

So why was Christmas apparently so low-key? Well it is hardly surprising when one considers the depredations of two World Wars, plus the Depression of the ’20s and ’30s, and their after-effects – none of which fully worked its way out for the British system until the 1960s.

Even then the ingrained dislike of Christmas remained firmly embedded in the psyche of many who lived through the first half of the 20th-century. To this day my parents, now well into their 80s, dislike Christmas. So little wonder General Conyers, in At Lady Molly’s, says:

I spent Christmas Day cleaning out the kennels … Went to Early Service. Then I got into my oldest clothes and had a thorough go at them. Had luncheon late and a good sleep after. Read a book all the evening. One of the best Christmas Days I’ve ever had.

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Registered Charity No. 1096873

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Afternoon Men - Revisited

by Mike Jay

It is difficult to read Powell's first novel (published in 1931 when the author was 26) without thinking continually of Dance. The author's style although nascent is already clearly stated. There is the blitz of characters, mainly from the art world and its milieu. There is the circularity of life; as this novel starts and ends with preparations for yet another party. There is the slender plot, Atwater's less than heroic philandering through a summer. There are the frequent sporting references reminiscent of the early Dance volumes. There are the occasional well-turned phrases, eg. “the aura of journalism's lower slopes hung round him [Fotheringham] like a vapour”.

However, there is much too much clipped and seemingly inane conversation from the giddy-headed protagonists. Most importantly however, there is the rippling comedy and there is always a taxi when required.

We are given the first sighting of the Powell set pieces. We have the drunken London parties, Mrs Race's dinner party complete with bad Balkan liqueur, a country house holiday, and an interesting visit to a boxing evening.

We see the contrast between the drifting, purposeless, promiscuous young bohemians and the sadness beneath the surface of their apparently privileged lives. We see Fotheringham and Nunnery desperate for friendship and company while most others appear unfeeling. In the boldest scene, the artist Pringle half-heartedly attempts suicide while his 'mistress' of the moment has casual sex with Atwater. But while Powell considers the male psychology through several aspects he does not yet attempt a similar feat with his female characters. Too many of the players lack solidity and remain sketches.

There are frequent slightly disturbing references to Jews. Considering this was published in 1931 I assume it was within common speech to refer to Jews even in Britain as a matter of course. Susan, the object of Atwater's desire, runs off to America with Verelst, a Jewish art collector. Susan's father says, “I don't dislike him because he's a Jew, one can't dismiss whole races at a time”. The other politically incorrect moment concerns Powell's handling of the maid at the rented country house. Her prudish family are concerned at the morals exhibited by the artist’s friends, but they are brutally bought off by a small salary increase. I enjoyed the occasional arcane word such as “banting” (slimming) or “we might go to a talkie” Nosworth suggests to Atwater.

This is a comic, not satirical novel, no matter how deceptively slight, with a serious aim of portraying human behaviour without comment. As such it succeeds and serves to propel Powell and us in a direction we all know was to develop considerably. It must also have been somewhat racy for the period.
Robert Byron: A Biography
by James Knox

Reviewed by Stephen Holden

In his 1980 book Abroad Powell’s friend Paul Fussell says of Robert Byron’s most famous travel book, “It’s distinction tempts one to overpraise but perhaps it may not be going to far to say that what Ulysses is to the novel between the wars and what The Waste Land is to poetry, The Road to Oxiana is to the travel book.” Although he had little financial success from his books while he was alive, Byron went on to become a major influence on many of the travel writers who succeeded him, such as Patrick Leigh Fermor, Bruce Chatwin and Colin Thubron.

Like many of his contemporary travel writers (Evelyn Waugh and Peter Fleming, for instance) Byron relied heavily on irony and satire to poke fun at the countries he visited and at himself. Yet unlike many of his contemporaries he also brought to his books a passionate, intense and erudite approach to the cultures and art (particularly the architecture) of the places he travelled through. It was, for example, partly a suspicion that the similar architectures of monasteries in Greece and Tibet were linked that took him from Mount Athos to Lhasa. And then his passion for and championing of Byzantine and Islamic art are what led him to Central Asia and his most important books.

Byron never particularly minded people mistaking him for a descendant of the poet, and indeed his family name smoothed the way in many of his travels around the Greek monasteries. But, in fact he was no relation to the poet, coming from a background often short of money (his father was a civil engineer) although on the fringes of the lower upper class. Indeed, it was only through Byron’s own academic prowess and because his grandfather paid his fees that he ever went to Eton, which was where he met many friends that were to influence him socially and aesthetically for the rest of his short life.

It was at Eton that he first met Anthony Powell, although they moved in different circles to begin with. As James Knox says,

Although in another house, Anthony Powell an acutely observant boy, became
a connoisseur of the rum cast of characters in Mr Robeson’s [Byron’s house] establishment. His favourite was John Spencer, the model for the schoolboy Peter Templer in *A Question of Upbringing*.

Powell only mentions Spencer in passing as being a part-model for Templer yet Knox goes further in his identification:

Spencer, son of a smart London stockbroker, was a close friend of Robert’s and the two ended up messing together … Spencer was a dandy, a rule-breaker and, though not averse to sleeping with other boys, a womaniser, famous with the junior ranks [at Eton] for having an affair with a shop assistant from Windsor. His looks were accurately caught by Powell in his portrait of Templer, in which he detailed the fixed expression of his eyes and his ‘large pointed ears … like those attributed to satyrs.’

It was at Eton that Byron acquired not only the artistic enthusiasms that were to characterise him for the rest of his life, but also the aggressive desire to shock with support for the unconventional. As Powell puts it, even at that time Byron carried in him something of the genuine 19th century Englishman … the eccentricity, curiosity, ill temper, determination to stop at absolutely nothing.

Powell and Byron got to know each other better when in 1922 Brian Howard founded the Eton Society of Arts (written about at some length by Powell in *Infants of the Spring*). The nucleus of this society consisted of Brian Howard, Harold Acton, his brother William Acton, Henry Yorke, Powell, and Alan Clutton-Brock, son of *The Times* art critic.

Byron followed many of his Eton friends to Oxford, where he also encountered other kindred spirits such as Evelyn Waugh. He was a member of the notorious Hypocrites Club (one of whose mottos was “Gentlemen may prance but not dance”) and seems to have spent much of his time at Oxford in trouble with the authorities for bad behaviour, often drunken. Yet he managed to turn the outrageous *Brideshead Revisited* campness of the Hypocrites/Harold Acton world into something that built solidly on the kitsch spirit of the Oxford aesthete. He was one of the first to embrace the cult of Victoriana, trying to mount an exhibition of Victoriana at Oxford, and decorating his rooms with hideous examples of still lifes of poultry and glass domes sheltering wax fruits. His fondness for Victoriana was helped by his likeness to Queen Victoria, and he would often imitate her, with the aid of a white napkin as a bonnet.

While at Oxford Powell told Knox he saw Byron with a group of older men, “a group of homosexual stockbrokers”, in Byron’s phrase, who had arrived in Oxford to see Hugh Lygon (a part-model for Sebastian Flyte in *Brideshead Revisited*). Powell made the mistake of passing on the news as gossip. Byron was furious and forced Powell to retract. Long after the event Powel explained:

> He thought there might be a real (police) row if the truth got round … It all seemed
to me to be a great joke, but to someone like Robert who was congenitally homosexual, not at all.

He had become interested in Byzantine art in 1923 when on a trip to Ravenna, and in 1925 took an extended motor tour through Europe to Athens. This trip produced his first travel book, *Europe in the Looking-Glass* (1926), and his brief visit to Mount Athos was to inspire him to make a longer visit after he left Oxford. Through his friendship with Powell, he was contracted by Duckworth’s (for whom Powell was working) to produce an art history book, that later became *The Birth of Western Painting* (1930). Duckworth’s paid his expenses to travel to Mount Athos, with his friend David Talbot Rice and Gavin Henderson, to photograph and survey the frescoes there. They travelled in some style, as Knox records their mules and ponies being loaded for the trip up the mountains to the monasteries, with “saddlebags, made specially by Fortnum & Mason for Gavin [Henderson], packed with glass jars of chicken in aspic, as well as a hatbox, a box containing a siphon and sparklets, a kitbag and a dispatch case.”

The trip to Athos also produced one of Byron’s best travel books, *The Station* in 1928, also published by Duckworth’s. Years later, in *Infants of the Spring*, Powell reassessed the book, admiring many of “the splendid images and literary parallels” but accusing Byron, in his “obsessive repugnance for cliché”, of overwriting and obscure language.

Another contemporary reviewer mentioned Byron’s “self-conscious facetiousness which is the bane of so many writers of such books,” a criticism that still holds true of many travel books of that era.

Byron had apparently always found Powell “very boring” while they were at Eton and Oxford. Once in London, according to Knox, his view begins to change.

Dining with Powell one night, he observed his [Powell’s] anguish, ‘almost suicidal’, as he told Powell’s close friend Henry Yorke, ‘at the prospect of impending social cataclysms, which might compel him to spend the rest of his life among people who referred to their ‘maters’ and ‘guvnors’. Unbeknown to Robert, or any of Powell’s high-brow friends, he was currently enduring a spell as a probationer with the Territorial Army which gave him a chilling glimpse into the ‘golf-and-bridge world.’ Powell’s neurosis made him more interesting to Robert. ‘I think he is becoming much nicer,’ he pronounced.

His passion for Byzantine art then took Byron to the USSR in 1931-1932, where his appraisal of the Stalinist state was at odds with those of most writers of the time. He detested its “banal ideology” and its obsession with class (“worse than England”), adding,

> Nothing could be more sinister than this regime based from top to bottom on a system of spying. No more shall I be deceived by English intellectuals who come on conducted tours.

The year before he had travelled via India to Tibet (to compare monastic architecture) and the two journeys resulted in a rather hybrid book, *First Russia, Then Tibet* in 1933.
While in India Byron had seen photographs of some medieval brick tomb-towers in Persia, and this, together with his interest in the links between Byzantine and Islamic art and architecture, took him and his travelling companion Christopher Sykes on an eleven month tour of Persia and Afghanistan. By all accounts, though brave and prepared to put up with considerable discomfort, Byron was not an easy travelling companion. Sykes’ recollections of Byron’s dealings with customs men, hotel concierges etc. often end with a phrase such as, “not for the first time in my life with him, I made peace with an angered crowd.” This trip produced Byron’s masterpiece, The Road to Oxiana (1937). The book was written in diary form, a method that enabled Byron to intersperse the daily (comic incidents as well as vivid descriptions of landscape and architecture) with his own mini-essays on art and culture. As Fussell says:

He had now mastered the travel book. He had now learned to make essayistic points seem to emerge empirically from material data intimately experienced.

The architectural beauty of Persia and Afghanistan is now almost a given, yet it should be noted that at the time Byron’s praise would have been seen as an affront to the conventional values.

In the 1930s Byron’s finances were so low he was forced to take a PR job with a petroleum company. He became a pioneer conservationist of Georgian London, helping save Carlton House Terrace, for instance, from the developers. He became a fervent anti-Nazi, though he was friends with Unity Mitford and even accompanied her to Nuremberg where she gushed about her “beautiful Stormies” (stormtroopers). His angry insistence from the start that Hitler would have to be fought and that appeasement was a disgrace, alienated many friends and acquaintances, declaring:

I am going to have Warmonger put on my passport. These people are so grotesque, if we go to war it will be like fighting an enormous zoo.

Byron was killed in World War II en route to Egypt, aged only 35, when his ship was torpedoed off Cape Wrath. Yet he had packed a good deal in to those 35 years. He is now acknowledged as possibly the foremost travel writer of his age; he was at the forefront of the rediscovery of Byzantine civilisation; he was a pioneer conservationist; and he stood up against Fascism and appeasement long before others saw the danger.

James Knox has made good use of the Byron family archive, and produced a thorough and well-researched biography that throws much light on the eclectic, complex, original and prickly Byron.

Knox quotes a story that Powell would have enjoyed. A monk at a monastery at Docheiariou summons Byron and his companions for lunch:

‘But first watch,’ he said, before calling: ‘Frankfort! Frankfort!’ Whereupon a large black cat walked obediently up, put its head between its front legs, and turned somersaults for their entertainment.

Robert Byron: A Biography by James Knox is published by John Murray at £25 (hardback) or £10.99 (paperback).
John Aubrey and Seventeenth-Century Christmas

By Noreen Marshall

‘If ever I had been good for anything,’ he wrote, ‘it would have been a painter. I could fancy a thing so strongly and have so clear an idea of it’. It was this powerful visual imagination which dominated his writing.

It sounds almost like someone describing AP – but it’s actually Powell writing about John Aubrey (1626-1697). Despite the glories of A Dance to the Music of Time, the wit and wisdom of the literary criticism, and the sheer individuality of the Journals, I always regret that Powell didn’t write more books like John Aubrey and his Friends. If you’ve never tried this example of Powell as biographer, don’t be put off by the fact that it’s History, or that Aubrey was an antiquarian. Dry-as-dust it is not, especially as AP takes a warm interest in his subject, and Aubrey was (like Powell?) a gossip at heart.

Powell began work on the book in the period just before the start of World War II. If you ever wonder what sustained him through some of the longeurs of life in the Army, this book was evidently a factor. A certain amount of work on it was possible even in wartime, although the greater part of the actual writing was done after he had left the Army. The book was dedicated to Malcolm Muggeridge (acknowledged with Graham Greene as among those who “made valuable comments after seeing the manuscript”), and published by Heinemann in 1948. Although not common on the second-hand market, it is nothing like as rare (or costly) as AP’s other historical work Barnard Letters 1778-1824 (Duckworth, 1928).

John Aubrey was one of the seventeenth century antiquarians who pioneered the recording of old knowledge and rituals, including much which was already only a memory. A formative influence on him may well have been the suppression of many of these customs in mid-seventeenth century England, under the Commonwealth regime which followed the defeat and execution of Charles I. Laws were passed during this time which forbade the keeping of Christmas (or Christ-tide as the reformers of his day preferred to call it) as a holiday at all, and made it illegal to eat mince pies on Christmas Day, among other things. Similar rulings were also made by contemporary legislative bodies in New England, even down to the Assembly of Connecticut specifically forbidding the making of mince pies, for example. The American laws were not abolished until the early nineteenth century, and the English legislation never has been, which must make these some of the most frequently broken laws in existence.

One may wonder what on earth there was about the humble mince pie to excite such wrath, but the early seventeenth
century mince pie was a rather different affair from those of today. The pies were larger and the filling was a luxuriously spiced mixture of meat and fruit in more or less equal quantities – ideal temptation to the Deadly Sin of Gluttony, and no doubt on down the slippery slope to the other six. Worst of all in the protestant reformers’ eyes, these Christmas pies retained their pre-Reformation appearance: the lid of the pie was finished with the image of a swaddled baby cut out in pastry to represent the Christ Child. Hilary Spurling gives an early seventeenth century recipe for this type of mince pie in Elinor Fettiplace’s Receipt Book: Elizabethan Country House Cooking (Viking Salamander, 1986) and comments that although it is possible to add a small amount of meat to a present-day mince pie filling without doing more than enrich the taste, the full-blown version alters the balance of flavour entirely, making them more like an alternative to sausage rolls than any kind of sweet treat. By the late seventeenth century the Receipt Book of Mrs Ann Blencowe gives a recipe for a pie filling which sounds more familiar. Minced ox tongue, beef suet, raisins, apples, lemon and orange rind and ground spices are mixed with sherry, salt, sugar, sliced candied lemon and orange peel, currants, and lemon juice. Whatever the filling, mince pie devotees may like to observe the old custom of eating twelve mince pies over the twelve days of Christmas to ensure good luck through the following twelve months.

In Aubrey’s day it was not just Christmas Day which was important, but the whole Twelve Days of Christmas, culminating in Twelfth Night when the Lord of Misrule presided over an evening of topsy-turvy revelry, with the normal rules and ranks being overthrown. Another of the customs belonging to this season is the wassailing of fruit trees, particularly apple trees, to ensure a good crop in the following year. Wassailing the fruit orchards at Fordwich in Kent in 1585 is probably the first written record of the ritual, whose name derives from the early English greeting “Waes hal” (be healthy), although in some places it carried the more graphic name of ‘howling’. Since it involves the outlay of what you wish to get back in return, it is probably of pagan origin. In Aubrey’s words, those taking part:

Go with their wassel bowl into the orchard and go about the trees to bless them, and put a piece of toast upon the roots, in order to do it.

Cider from the wassail bowl was also poured on the roots of the trees, or the best tree in a larger orchard, and the participants drank the trees’ health. The local wassail rhyme would be sung or chanted, and the ceremony concluded with as much noise as could be contrived by firing guns, banging on metal bowls, etc. to frighten away evil spirits.

Old apple-tree we wassail thee
And hoping thou wilt bear
Hats full, caps full
Three-bushel bags full
And a little heap under the stairs!

Like Powell, Aubrey studied at Oxford. He was a member of Trinity College, but left to resolve problems with his inheritance when his father died, and never took his degree. Of the University he notes

Here in the halls were the mummings, cob-loaf-stealing, and a great number of old Christmas plays performed.
The mumming plays and Christmas plays were often based on the legends of St George and St Nicholas respectively, and were popular throughout England. Aubrey doubtless also knew of the custom which belongs particularly to Queen’s College, Oxford, and which was already old in the seventeenth century: the serving at a feast in the main hall of a cooked boar’s head, garlanded with evergreens. It was carried in to the accompaniment of The Boar’s Head Carol, first printed in 1521 by Wynkyn de Worde.

\[\textit{Caput apri defero, reddens laudes Domino.}
The boar’s head in hand bear I,
Bedecked with bays and rosemary,
And I pray you, my masters, be merry,
\textit{Quot estis in convivio.}\]

Within the context of Christmas, evergreens are symbolic of eternal life for Christians, following on from the pagan love of such reminders of the renewal of life in the coldest, darkest days. Aubrey makes a number of notes on trees which were remarked on as bearing new growth at Christmas:

In the New Forest, within the trenches of the castle of Molwood [a Roman camp] is an old oake, which is a pollard and short. It putteth forth young leaves on Christmas day, for about a week at that time of the yeare. Old Mr. Hastings, of Woodlands, was wont to send a basket full of them every yeare to King Charles I. I have seen of them severall Christmasses brought to my father … Mr. Anthony Hinton, one of the officers of the Earle of Pembroke, did inoculate, not long before the late civill warres (ten yeares or more), a bud of Glastonbury Thorne, on a thorne at his farmhouse at Wilton, which blossomes at Christmas as the other did. My mother has had branches of them for a flower-pott several Christmasses, which I have seen. Elias Ashmole, Esq., in his notes upon "Theatrum Chymicum", saies that in the churchyard at Glastonbury grew a wallnutt tree that did putt out young leaves at Christmas, as doth the king’s oake in the New Forest. In Parham Parke, in Suffolk (Mr. Boutele's), is a pretty ancient thorne that blossomes like that at Glastonbury; the people flock thither to see it on Christmas-day.

Our own Christmas is derived from the Victorian version of the season, which was at least in part the nostalgic vision of the writer Charles Dickens, and promoted in his books. But it was the work of men like Aubrey which formed the basis of knowledge on which the later antiquarians were able to build, and which enabled Dickens and his contemporaries to feel that although they lived in a modern age, they were consciously returning to what they knew of the best of Christmas Past.

In contrast to his scholarly researches and his Fellowship of the Royal Society, Aubrey had a remarkably complicated personal life, with a contentious betrothal to Joan Sumner, financial problems, multiple lawsuits, (relating to both the betrothal and his estates) and a difficult relationship with his friend and fellow antiquarian Anthony Wood, and Powell makes some characteristically wry comments on much of this.

But to conclude with AP on JA:

Although chiefly remembered in connexion with antiquarian research and biographical memoir, there are few persons of whom it would be more true to say that they were interested in everything. Mathematics, painting, music, natural science, horticulture, heraldry, folklore, astrology, occult phenomena were all subjects – with a hundred others – that he was ever prepared to discuss.
Dance and Painting – A Christmas Quiz

Set by Mr Blackhead

The questions and answers all concern painters and paintings (real or imagined) mentioned in A Dance to the Music of Time.

1. What does Jenkins tell Pennistone is his favourite picture?
2. The Socialist Realist painters Gaponenko, Svarogh and Toidze are featured in which character’s Fission article, Integral Foundations of a Fresh Approach to Art for the Masses?
3. Whose painting, Entry of Christ into Brussels, is re-enacted by Jenkins’ party of military attachés in 1944?
4. Who resembles the homely apes in Rousseau’s Tropiques?
5. What is the name of the reproduction sculpture bought by Mr Deacon from Norman Chandler in the Mortimer a week before the former’s fatal accident?
6. Of what genre is the collection of painting picked up over the years for practically nothing by Bob Duport and sold off in 1971?
7. Which painting by Landseer hangs in the Ufford’s lounge?
8. Whose paintings include Clergyman Eating an Apple and Merville, December 1st 1914?
9. Which painter does St John Clarke think is a plage?
10. In whose flat hangs the reproduction entitled The Omnipresent that depicts three robed figures on the edge of a precipice?
11. General Conyers owns a picture by which painter (“The scene was a guard room in the Low Countries”)?
12. What is the fate of Veronese’s Iphigenia, bought by one of Chips Lovell’s Sleaford ancestors?
13. A bust of whom (by Sir William Reid Dick) stands on the stairs at the War Office (his “cold and angry eyes, surveying with the deepest disapproval all who came that way”)?
14. Whose pictures include Any Complaints? and Four Priests Rigging a Miracle?
15. A caricature by Spy of which character hangs in the billiards room at Thrubworth (“this high-spirited peer in frock and top-hat”)?
16. Dicky Umfraville says of his failed marriage with Anne Stepney, “She was always tremendously keen on her painting. I fell rather short on that score too. Can’t tell a Sargent from a ‘Snaffles’.” What two genres is ‘Snaffles’ most famous for painting?
17. Which picture (by Henry Holiday), always to be found on the walls of boarding houses, is not without appeal for Maclintick?
18. Jean Duport recalls the woman smoking a hookah in which picture by which painter?
19. Moreland resembles which character in Bronzino’s An Allegory with Venus and Cupid that hangs in the National Gallery?
20. Which two women in Jenkins’ life resemble characters in Goya paintings?
Local Group News

London Meeting

*by Stephen Holden*

The 6 November London meeting was held at the Audley, a large Victorian pub round the corner from the US embassy in Grosvenor Square in London’s Mayfair district. It is a pub that has obviously gone upmarket, since it used to be called the Bricklayers’ Arms – the name by which Powell would almost certainly have known the pub, as it is only a few minutes walk from Shepherd Market and Hill Street.


As usual the conversation ranged over many subjects, some Powell-related, some not. At my end of the table we talked about Simon Raven’s *Arms for Oblivion* sequence, and compared it to *Dance*. I mentioned I was reading Richard Usborne’s *Clubland Heroes* (about the works of ‘Sapper’, John Buchan and Dornford Yates), at which Elwin Taylor – in a fine Powellian coincidence – delved into his bag and produced a book called *The Bulldog Drummond Encyclopaedia*.

At the other end of the table newcomers Linda & Jessica Treen and Martin Hunt were deep in conversation with several of our stalwarts about matters entirely Powellian. Elsewhere the conversation turned again to English music, primed by our being close to the Grosvenor Chapel and Prue Raper having brought along the Order of Service for Powell’s Memorial Service, at which she sang.

For the next meeting, on 12 February, members are invited to bring something from their Powell collections to show us.

More London Group Meetings

The members of the Society’s London group have decided they should have four, rather than three, pub meets a year. This means some rescheduling; the meetings will now be on the second Saturday of February, May, August and November. This is about the optimum timing to avoid public holiday weekends, Easter and Christmas, but unfortunately we can’t avoid the August holiday period.

These meetings will be at The Audley, 41-43 Mount Street, London, W1 from 1230 to 1530 hrs. The Audley has excellent beer and food and is in the heart of Mayfair very close to Shepherd Market (Powell’s one-time home), Hill Street and the Grosvenor Chapel. It is a pub which Powell would almost certainly have known and which retains many of its original Victorian features: the ceiling, chandeliers and much of the woodwork.

The London Group meeting dates for 2005 are: 12 February, 14 May, 13 August and 12 November.
Anthony Powell Society Newsletter #17

Centenary Corner

Anthony Powell
Centenary Conference
is to be held on
Friday 2 & Saturday 3
December 2005
at
The Wallace Collection
London, W1

Anthony Powell

Centenary Conference
Keeping up the momentum towards the Centenary Conference, we have since the last Newsletter released the “Call for Papers”. Copies have been sent to every Society member and to everyone on our mailing list. The essential text from the “Call for Papers” is included on page 16.

If anyone can distribute further copies of the “Call for Papers” – to friends and acquaintances, through a local bookshop, writer’s circle, local library, etc. – then please contact the Hon. Secretary.

In addition, if any member has useful contacts to whom we should mail conference information, then please send the names and addresses to the Hon. Secretary, for addition to the Society’s mailing list. The more people we mail the more likely we are to succeed.

The other conference news is that Dr George Lilley has joined the Organising Committee. As most will know, George brings with him a wealth of Powell knowledge, as well as his editorial skills and academic contacts.

Further details of the Centenary Conference will, of course, be announced in the fullness of time. Meanwhile we are also working on the traditional pre-conference dinner and a number of other possible events.

Meanwhile anyone who wishes to book a provisional place at the conference or who wishes to make an initial payment towards their delegate fee may also do so by contacting the Hon. Secretary.

Powell Centenary Exhibition
The Wallace Collection’s exhibitions team are currently in the process of arranging the loan of objects for the exhibition and work will start shortly on the detailed exhibition design. The exhibition is scheduled for mid-October 2005 to early-January 2006.

Other Events
Not so much concrete news here, although there are many possible events under discussion in the background as well as the regular Society meetings. We do know that a small exhibition is planned for the Cambridge University Library during 2005, and there may also be an exhibition in New York.

The full diary of centenary events, as we know them, is on pages 14-15 of this Newsletter and on the Society website.
The events listed here are those which we know about. Please contact the Hon. Secretary if you know of other Anthony Powell related events happening during 2005.

The information given is, to the best of our knowledge, correct at the time of publication but the Society takes no responsibility for the accuracy of such information. You are advised to check event details before travelling.

**Saturday 4 December 2004**  
**Anthony Powell 99th Birthday Lunch**  
Zia Teresa, 6 Hans Road, London, SW3  
1200 hrs
Celebrate Powell's 99th birthday at this long-established Italian restaurant next door to Harrod's. Open to members & non-members. Prior booking essential. Further details from Hon. Secretary.

**Saturday 12 February 2005**  
**London Group Pub Meet**  
The Audley, 41-43 Mount Street, London, W1  
1230 to 1530 hrs
Topic: Bring something from your Powell collection to show us.
Regular quarterly London Group meeting. Join us for good beer, good food, good company and Powell chat in a Victorian pub which AP would have known. Members & non-members welcome. Further details from Hon. Secretary.

**Saturday 4 April 2005**  
**Great Lakes Group Meeting**  
Details as for 12 February. Topic tba.

**Saturday 14 May 2005**  
**London Group Pub Meet**  
Details as for 12 February. Topic tba.

**Saturday 18 June 2005 (tbc)**  
**Mid-Summer Luncheon**  
Date & details to be confirmed; venue will be London. Open to members & non-members. Prior booking essential. Further details, when available, from Hon. Secretary.

**Saturday 13 August 2005**  
**London Group Meeting**  
Details as for 12 February. Topic tba.
October 2005 to January 2006
Anthony Powell Exhibition
Venue: The Wallace Collection, Manchester Square, London, W1U 3BN
Major retrospective exhibition of Powell's life and works. For details, opening hours, etc. see the Wallace Collection website www.wallacecollection.org or call +44 20 7563 9500.

Saturday 22 October 2005
Anthony Powell Society AGM
Time: 1400 hrs.
Members only. Venue tba. Further details from Hon. Secretary.

Saturday 12 November 2005
London Group Pub Meet
Details as for 12 February. Topic tba.

Thursday 1 December 2005
Pre-Conference Dinner
Details to be announced. Prior booking essential. Further details, when available, from Conference Office or conference pages of the website.

Friday 2 & Saturday 3 December 2005
Anthony Powell Centenary Conference
The Wallace Collection, Manchester Square, London, W1
Open to members & non-members on payment of the delegate fee. Further details, when available, from Conference Office or conference pages of the website.

Sunday 4 December 2005
Post Conference Social Walks & Lunch
A leisurely, guided, Sunday morning walk around parts of Powell's London and ending at a pub for lunch. Details to be arranged. Open to members & non-members. Further details, when available, from Conference Office or conference pages of the website.

Wednesday 21 December 2005
Anthony Powell Birthday Party
Celebrate Powell's actual 100th birthday. Open to members & non-members. Prior booking essential. Further details, when available, from Hon. Secretary.

Tuesday 27 to Friday 30 December 2005
MLA Convention
Washington, DC, USA
America's largest literary conference which it is hoped will include a session on Anthony Powell. Further details from Nick Birns (nicbirns@aol.com).

date to be announced
Anthony Powell Exhibition
Grolier Club, New York, USA
Further details from Bill Warren (wwarren@deweyballantine.com or +1 212 259 8000) or Nick Birns (nicbirns@aol.com).

date to be announced
Anthony Powell Exhibition
University Library, University of Cambridge, UK
Further details, when available, from Hon. Secretary.
Anthony Powell Centenary Conference
Summary Call for Papers

The Anthony Powell Society is pleased to announce the third international conference dedicated to the life and times of Anthony Dymoke Powell, which will be held at The Wallace Collection, London, on Friday 2 and Saturday 3 December 2005.

2005 is an important year for the Society, and for Powell’s friends and admirers, as it marks the centenary of Powell’s birth. To celebrate this in style, the conference is being held in conjunction with The Wallace Collection, home of Poussin’s painting A Dance to the Music of Time from which Powell’s magnum opus takes its title. The Wallace are also organising a major Powell Centenary Exhibition to coincide with the conference.

The aim of this international conference is to provide a forum for the discussion of Powell, his life and works. The Society hopes to attract both Powell aficionados and newcomers to his work. Papers that deal with Powell’s friendships with, or influence on, his contemporaries such as Evelyn Waugh, Henry Green (also a 2005 centenarian), Graham Greene, George Orwell or composer Constant Lambert (another celebrating his centenary in 2005) will be especially welcome.

Papers and discussions during the conference might include, but are by no means limited to:

- the influence of London on Powell’s writing
- the London social scene in Powell’s time
- Powell’s literary friendships
- Powell and biography
- the importance of the publishing industry to Powell and his friends
- the influence of art on Powell and his literary contemporaries

Prospective speakers are invited to submit for review abstracts of not more than 300 words for 20-minute papers. Submissions, which may be made electronically, must arrive with the Hon. Secretary (address on page 2) by 31 January 2005. Papers which have been rejected for previous Anthony Powell Conferences will not be reconsidered.

Authors will be advised in April 2005 whether their abstracts have been accepted. Completed papers will be required by 28 October 2005 to ensure their inclusion in the Conference and the Proceedings.

Papers will be accepted on the basis that authors pay the appropriate delegate fee and attend the conference.

Abstracts of the accepted papers will be issued to delegates at the conference. The conference proceedings, including the full text of presented papers, will be published after the event and will be sent to all participants.
Society News & Notices

Automatic Subscription Payments
A Reminder

The Society can accept recurring credit card transactions. So providing you give written authorisation we will automatically debit your annual subscription from your credit card – so you don’t have to remember!

We have to have specific, written authorisation for this; the wording appears on the membership form on the back page of this Newsletter. And we still have to write to those with recurring transactions each year to ensure you are informed of the amount you will be debited (currently £20); this will be done in March.

Those wishing to take advantage of this facility may do so by returning the membership form on the back page (photocopies are OK). Alternatively you may wait until you receive your next subscription reminder.

Local Groups

East Coast USA Group
Area: NY & CT area, USA
Contact: Leatrice Fountain
Email: leatricefountain@aol.com

Great Lakes Group
Area: Chicago area, USA
Contact: Stephen Pyskoty-Olle
Email: widmerpool@hotmail.com

Swedish Group
Area: Sweden
Contact: Regina Rehbinder
Email: reginarehbinder@hotmail.com

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

Please contact the Hon. Secretary if you wish to make contact with a group and don’t have email.

Newsletter Copy Deadlines

The deadlines for receipt of articles and advertisements for forthcoming issues of the Newsletter are:

Issue 18, Spring 2005
Copy Deadline: 11 February 2005
Publication Date: 4 March 2005

Issue 19, Summer 2005
Copy Deadline: 13 May 2005
Publication Date: 3 June 2005
Christmas Prize Competition

For this year’s Christmas competition contestants are asked to suggest alternative titles for novels from _Dance_ as if they had been written by a famous person and not by Powell.

For instance:

_A Byers Market: The Death of Railtrack_ by Tony Blair

_A Question of Upbringing_ by George W Bush

_In Lady Molly_ by William J Clinton

Maximum 6 entries per person

The prize is a year’s gold membership of the Society

Send your entries, name, address to:

Christmas 2004 Competition
Anthony Powell Society
76 Ennismore Avenue, Greenford
Middlesex, UB6 0JW, UK
Fax: +44 (0)20 8864 6109
Email: comp@anthonypowell.org.uk

to arrive by noon on 31 January 2005

The winning entry will be the one which most amuses the Hon. Secretary. The winner will be announced in the Spring 2005 Newsletter

**STOP PRESS … STOP PRESS**

**Hon. Secretary Certified**

As many will know the Hon. Secretary, Keith Marshall, earns a living working as a Project Manager for IBM United Kingdom Ltd, who are a major corporate sponsor in the UK – partly through their _on demand community_ programme which makes small grants for local community projects and encourages employees to do voluntary work.

On 26 November Keith attended a lunch, hosted by IBM’s UK CEO Larry Hirst at their South Bank location in London, to celebrate the _on demand community_ programme’s first birthday.

Having logged over 400 hours of charitable give-back to the Society this year, Keith was among those presented with a certificate for their achievement. “I was surprised, but naturally I’m delighted,” Keith said, “although I feel slightly embarrassed at being recognised for something I do because I enjoy it. I am saddened, though, that the Society’s work is not eligible for grants from IBM’s scheme; but I hope we may change that.”

**Contributions to the Newsletter are always welcome and should be sent to:**

_Newsletter_ Editor, Stephen Holden,
Anthony Powell Society
76 Ennismore Avenue
Greenford, Middlesex, UB6 0JW, UK

Fax: +44 (0)20 8864 6109
Email: editor@anthonypowell.org.uk
From Michael Henle
On a completely different topic, I have always been struck by the advice Widmerpool gives Nick in *A Question of Upbringing*: “when a man’s self-esteem has been injured he is to be commiserated with – not blamed”. I am struck because here Widmerpool shows himself capable of sympathy for other people. In other words, Widmerpool is being un-Widmerpudlian.

On one hand this is terrific because it makes Widmerpool a somewhat less one-dimensional figure. On the other hand it jars because, as far as I remember, it is the ONLY time that Widmerpool is un-Widmerpudlian. Am I right about that? Any other reactions to this paragraph?

From Nick Hay
Fascinating question which for me crystallised some doubts I sometimes have about the way Widmerpool is portrayed or seen here – though I accept that the Widmerpool of the prize is to some extent a caricature of Powell’s Widmerpool – however is it possible that this does a disservice to the depth of Powell’s imagination? The point I would wish to make is that there is a temptation to view Widmerpool too exclusively through Jenkins’ eyes. Widmerpool has his own terms, and leaving aside the issue of the value of those terms or of the world of the will, and to succeed in those terms he must be successful with the people he encounters. This may involve obsequy on the one hand and bullying on the other (as I think the terms of the Prize describe?) but I do not think it is limited to those appalling qualities. For instance in the case to which the statement Michael Henle cites relates, Örn and Lundquist, I do not think either can be applied. Widmerpool is perceptive of the problem and he is successful in resolving it, where Nick failed both to analyse the problem, but much more significantly to resolve it. Widmerpool’s motive may be selfish but it is noteworthy that this is not immediately apparent – “Widmerpool though the sole author of this reconciliation, received little or no credit for his achievement” – but he has of course gained, in his own terms, power as a result of his mediation. The point I am trying to make is that it does not do, and I do not think Powell intended us, to underestimate Widmerpool, nor to imply or indicate that his exercise of power could never be beneficial and was often certainly memorable. Rather than the obvious example of putting Stringham to bed I recall a slight reference in *Temporary Kings* where Jenkins re-encounters Cheeseman, the latter comments ...

when a man’s self-esteem has been injured he is to be commiserated with – not blamed

Funny meeting you, Mr Jenkins. I don’t remember your face at all at that Div. HQ. The officer I recall is the DAAG, Major Widmerpool. He made quite an
impression on me. Very efficient, I should say. A really good officer.

Now as readers we are very aware that Cheeseman is referring to a period in which Widmerpool was committing one of his most unpleasant actions in ‘getting rid’ of Stringham and thereby albeit unintentionally sending him to a horrific death. But Powell by giving us Cheeseman’s (who we have no reason to see as other than a thoroughly decent human being) view should also make us remember that Widmerpool cannot be viewed in a simple way – and incidentally that Jenkins could be a very unmemorable person. The world of both narrator and reader is subtly challenged. None of this is intended as any sort of defence of Widmerpool but it is a defence of the genius and depth of Powell’s portrait of him, which I think is sometimes in danger of being overlooked.

My apologies, Michael, for using your post and question to indulge a hobby-horse.

From Peter Kislinger
No need to apologize (not even rhetorically, Nick) – neither are you riding your hobby-horse. On the contrary, this – your – reading is central to what I have always seen as Powell’s achievement and intention: subtly undermining a reader’s expectation, pulling the rug from under (us) readers who are used to relying on somebody else’s judgement (in a novel: a “reliable narrator”) or rather who expect from reading to get certainties they (we) are denied in everyday life. Though we are dependent on what Jenkins saw, we are not dependent on his (ie. the experiencing self’s and at times – and these are even more subtle still – the narrator’s) judgments. Incidentally, this is why ineradicable phrases such as “author’s alter ego”, “Jenkins is a foil for ...” are so misleading. Why then call it a novel?

From Andrew Clarke
Cheeseman’s point of view is that of an accountant born and bred – a man who has transferred his waistcoat from his city suit to his army uniform, a man single-minded enough to commit the unpardonable sin of talking business at a regimental dinner (“it will save a letter”). A mentality that probably served him in good stead when it came to surviving Changi. Just the sort of man to admire Widmerpool’s show of brisk efficiency and getting things done, without seeing – or wanting to see – anything deeper.

How efficient Widmerpool was as a DAAG has been the subject of previous discussion on this list, and informed opinion suggested that the man was a generator of work as much as anything else, although effective nonetheless (the Case of the Embezzling Warrant Officer comes to mind).

The original observation re Widmerpool’s commiseration is an interesting one: “when a man’s self-esteem has been injured, he is to be commiserated with – not blamed”. This is of course Jenkins’ (non) judgement. Why then call it a novel?

1. Do we have any examples of Widmerpool extending commiseration to other people whose self-esteem has been injured, or is he only considering injuries to his own?
2. Is the statement generally valid? If a big fish in a small pond, blinded by his sense of his own importance, is painfully but beneficially deflated, how much do we – or should we – commiserate?
3. Is our empathy for the much-humbled Widmerpool affected by our prior knowledge of his masochism?

From Colin Donald
Me too, it seems to me to prove Powell’s point that he had not really decided what to do with Widmerpool when he started out writing the novels (he claimed not to have intended Widmerpool would be the anti-hero). The Widmerpool we know and love doesn’t ‘do’ philosophy of this Johnsonian sort, closest he gets are remarks like how everyone finds their level in the army, which are in entirely different register. There are other parts of *A Question of Upbringing* that are similarly false leads, I think, but none spring to mind at the moment!

From John Gould
This discussion of Widmerpool’s more sympathetic sides recalls the initial reaction of my high school class several years ago when they began their study of *Dance*. At first they were very much on his side. His position as outcast at school touched them (most students having intimate knowledge of being on the outside of something). And they were hard pressed to see the harm in him, his interference in the Ackworth matter notwithstanding. They felt sorry for him, even as they were amused by Barbara Goring’s sugar shenanigans. It wasn’t until somewhere in the third volume that his ambition and egotism began to wear thin. Until then, they thought my attitude towards him (which I couldn’t conceal) unfair. The remark about commiserating with someone who has been aggrieved comes early, in *A Question of Upbringing*, and I’m sure it contributed to their sympathy for him.

From Michael Henle
I expect many readers feel sympathy for Widmerpool at least a few times during *Dance*. I speak for myself, as well as some of the students I’ve taught. Opportunities for sympathy occur throughout the series. The humiliations, for example, continually occur. One particularly poignant one is at the end of *Books Do Furnish a Room* when Nick encounters Widmerpool at Eton where Widmerpool has accompanied Pamela who visits alone a student she knows. We can guess the purpose of her visit, and it is only too likely that Widmerpool knows it as well. Then there are the few moments when Widmerpool seems almost to realize the futility of his strivings with the will. One occurs in *A Buyer’s Market* when after having sugar poured over him Widmerpool says, “One gets very tired of these dances”. The moment when Widmerpool is most pathetic, of course, is in *Hearing Secret Harmonies* when he begs Scorp for release.

From Joan Williams
Lady Violet gives an interestingly nuanced assessment of Widmerpool in *The Departure Platform*. She speaks about him in connection with the publication of *At Lady Molly’s*:

Jane Austen is far kinder to people in ‘trade’ than Powell
Elizabeth Bowen … referred to ‘the spoor of Widmerpool’ who by this volume of the novel does indeed appear as a truffle hound rooting his way through the social undergrowth. There is a touch of tragedy in his grotesque idea that he could marry a brassy widow accustomed to living in the South of France.

**From Jim Scott**
If I remember correctly, there are several other passages in *The Soldier’s Art* suggesting that Jenkins viewed Widmerpool as a quite competent (albeit not at all likeable) officer.

**From Andrew Clarke**
There’s no doubt that Widmerpool is a capable fellow: he makes only one notable gaffe in the entire work, and that’s those traffic circuits. Not his fault, but as Jenkins realises, it happens to the best of us in the army, so we should learn to grin and bear it. But Widmerpool doesn’t: he bears the grudge and takes his revenge when he’s in a position to do so.

Lunching with Widmerpool at his club is evidently not a pleasant experience. But somebody proposed Widmerpool for that club and the committee accepted his candidature. And it wasn’t the kind of club that normally caters for Widmerpools – an aristocratic if raffish reputation for high stakes is mentioned. This ain’t the Brewer Country Club he’s managed to get into, folks, or anything like it.

And Jenkins makes the point that Widmerpool has become a perfectly acceptable city gent as far as the Peter Templers of this world are concerned. Truscott feels there’s a place for him in the new legal/political branch and cuts his own throat by getting him there.

All the same, there’s a suspicion that the people that admire Widmerpool are not quite of the first rank. Jane Austen is far kinder to people in ‘trade’ than Powell is.

**From Nick Birns**
I tend to think the Cheeseman incident, and earlier incidents of praise of Widmerpool, are often a kind of dramatic irony – the audience, us, ‘knows’ Widmerpool is awful and, partially prompted by Jenkins’s own stance, we are clamouring for characters like Cheeseman and others who think Widmerpool competent and dedicated to say, “Oh, he’s so awful,” because we know that, or think that, but Powell frustrates us, and whets our appetite for Widmerpool’s eventual destruction, by not having all the characters in the fictive world think that of Widmerpool at all.

Widmerpool is indeed a competent officer in wartime and, importantly, Widmerpool is not stupid (unlike, say, Brent). But one can be an assiduous officer and a reasonably intelligent man without being moral, and Widmerpool, as presented through Jenkins’ narrative, is simply not moral.

**From B Douglas Russell**
I see Widmerpool as a string being dangled by Powell and the readers as the cat. While Colin Donald may be right, and I hope he is as it’s far more interesting, that Powell wasn’t settled on the role or the hideousness that Widmerpool would play or display at the off, it was clear that he would go from light gray to eventual black and white at least in Powell’s mind as the story unfolded.
Isn’t it possible that Powell intended for readers to feel an initial sympathy (if not empathy) for Widmerpool: a natural response by people coming in on a scene without knowing anything about the people involved? Perhaps Powell himself did? It’s a natural response. Where one goes from there is the interesting and revealing bit. Powell as a person didn’t seem to have any problem differentiating for himself what he saw as black and white and what as gray.

I think it intrigued Powell to see what the cats did with the string whether the string is Widmerpool, Ted Jeavons, Quiggin, Scorp, Pamela, Jenkins, et al. What’s left out is often as important as what was included. Regarding Widmerpool, couldn’t Powell have known, as both time and the novels progressed, much of the western public’s predilection toward the inane practice of moral equivalence? Couldn’t he have taken a sort of black, satirical delight in the idea that certain of his audience would fight their impulse to see Widmerpool for what he is and, because of their ingrained bias, try to redeem him even after having read the corpus? Mightn’t that also be a message?

Some cats are cleverer than others. Some cats see the string, know who is dangling it and play along for the fun of it; some cats see the string, have no idea from where it originates, are perplexed by it, but nevertheless play along with it; some cats see the string and are mesmerized by it; some cats see the string and are frightened of it; some cats see the string and would rather lick themselves or deal with a hairball.
Letters to the Editor

From Keith Marshall

I have just acquired copies of *The Welch Regiment Officers' Association Directory* for the years 1948 and 1958 as I thought they may contain the odd Powell snippet.

In 1948 Powell's father is listed amongst the 8 Powells who were members but not Powell himself:


In 1958 both Powell and his father are listed along with three other Powells:


But not a Gwatkin, Gwinnett, Bithel, Biggs, Widmerpool, Liddament, Kedward, Popkiss, Breeze or Pumphrey in sight. Just six Jenkins in 1948 and five in 1958.

Curiously both lists contain Captain DA Ionides who is about the only foreign-sounding name I've spotted.

Both books are 36 pages of 16mo (i.e. pocketbook sized), and about 25-30 names/page in small type. I wonder how many of these 1000+ men Powell actually met?

From Noreen Marshall

A footnote to Keith's comment about Captain DA Ionides, listed in *The Welch Regiment Officers' Association Directory* for the years 1948 and 1958: only sort of foreign. He was almost certainly a member of the Greek merchant and merchant banking family who settled in the UK early in the 19th century, adopted the name Ionides for use here, and were major art collectors (as in the Ionides Collection at the V&A) and were patrons of GF Watts among other painters.

I'm wondering if the Captain is Dionysos Alexander (‘Denis’) Ionides (1912-1978), and great-great-grandson of Constantine Ionides (the one who decided to come here to live) – but don't know of any military service on his part, although other contemporary members of the family were in the Royal Welch Fusiliers, for example, so it's not that unlikely.

In typical Powell fashion, another member of the Ionides family lived in Rutland Gate, and looking down lists of surnames on the Web, I came across a Le Bas ...
From An Un-named Correspondent

If anyone here had anything to do with the questions on Powell for the Medical Mastermind competition here in Ireland (in which "the novels of Anthony Powell" was my specialist subject), you may be glad to hear I won the heat.

Um, check out question 12. As the MC said it I thought, “No, that can't be,” but then thought, “well, what else can it be?” I guess any qualms I have at it are mollified by the fact that recognising what they thought the answer was would itself test one's Anthony Powell knowledge … Also, I won by four points, so it wasn't like it made a difference to the outcome!

Anyhow, here goes – I've a feeling most of you will find this easy; remember I had only two minutes with bright lights bearing down!

1. The title of Powell's twelve-volume novel *A Dance to The Music of Time* was derived from an allegorical painting by which Baroque era painter?

2. The well known Fitzrovian writer and critic Julian MacIaren-Ross was the model for which character from the Dance volumes?

3. In which Dance volume does Pamela throw one of Trapnel's manuscripts into Regents Park Canal?

4. In which year was *Afternoon Men*, Powell's first novel, published?

5. In the 1997 Channel 4 adaptation of *Dance*, which actor played the part of St John Clarke?

6. Under which title was Powell's third novel, *From a View to a Death*, published in the United States?

7. In *From A View to a Death*, which fetish does Major Fosdick become increasingly less circumspect in concealing?

8. Which of the Dance novels begins with the line “The smell of Venice suffused the night, lacustrine essences richly distilled”?

9. What is the occupation of Lushington, central character in Powell's second novel, *Venusberg*?

10. At the end of the party scene in *Casanova's Chinese Restaurant*, who informs Amy Foxe that the quatrefoil cup is a forgery?

11. Dicky Umfraville remains true to form by appearing for the last time at the wedding in *Hearing Secret Harmonies* suffering from what?

12. Which Powell novel was adapted as a feature film directed by Terry Gilliam?

13. In the famous seven deadly sins tableau in *The Kindly Ones*, which deadly sin is enacted by Jenkins?


15. The title of the seventh Dance volume, *The Valley of Bones*, comes from which Old Testament book?

16. Which Dance character writes a biography of Trapnel entitled *Death's Head Swordsman*?
From Julian Allason


After a disastrous first marriage, Evelyn married Laura Herbert in 1937. The novelist Anthony Powell reckoned that, ‘Laura was extremely dim, to put it mildly’, although her grandson [Alexander] loyally insists that she had hidden depths.

Might this opinion, if widely known, not account for Auberon's feverish dislike of Powell? It seems more probable than his alleged conviction that Powell had kept Evelyn out of the *Dictionary of National Biography, Debretts, the Beano annual, or some such.*

According to Preston the book has an entertaining account of Auberon's school career, in which he showed “little aptitude at anything except lying and arson” while at Downside, “much of which he apparently burnt down”. More hidden depths, no doubt.

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The Quotable Powell

Class distinction, however, is quite at the mercy of sexual attraction which irreverently cuts across, rather than confines itself to, the limits of class. The succession of sex partners for any given character ... links both ends of the social scale, creating a network of relationships so complete as to provide a kind of unity for the novel. Again, Jenkins provides a ready illustration. Before he finally marries aristocratic Isobel Tolland, he has had an extended affair with middle-class Jean Templer and a brief coupling with the little Leftist whore, Gypsy Jones. Gypsy lives with Mr Deacon, who has known Jenkins’ parents; she has secured the price of an abortion from Widmerpool and been had by Quiggin. Jean Templer, once married to Bob Duport, has been involved with her sister’s auto-racing husband, Jimmy Stripling, and with some unidentified member of Sir Magnus Donners’ inner circle. Her brother, Peter, has married a toothpaste-ad model who leaves him for Quiggin, deserting Quiggin for Erridge, Jenkins’ brother-in-law. Stripling, after his marriage to Babs Templer and his affair with Jean, has taken up with fortune-telling Myra Erdleigh, a friend of Jenkins’ Uncle Giles. Bob Duport, after leaving Jean Templer, is involved with Lady Bijou Ardglass who has also moved in Sir Magnus’ circle. Another former mistress of Sir Magnus’, previously married to Carolo, who runs off with Maclintick’s wife, married Jenkins’ friend Moreland. Moreland later becomes involved with Jenkins’ sister-in-law Priscilla Tolland. It goes on and on – a public health official’s nightmare – until each of Powell’s “brief lives” is linked.

Society Merchandise

**Oxford Conference Proceedings**
The collected papers from the 2003 conference at Balliol College, Oxford.
**Price:** £7.50 (post free to all members)

**Eton Conference Proceedings**
Limited edition of 250 numbered copies each signed by the Society’s Patron.
**Price:** £15 (post free to all members)

**Oxford Conference Delegates Book**
As given to delegates at the conference.
**Price:** £1.50 (postage rate C)

**The Master and The Congressman**
A 40 page monograph by John Monagan describing his meetings with Anthony Powell. A small treasure for all collectors of Powelliana.
**Price:** £5 (post free to all members)

**BBC Dramatisation of Dance**
Available to members only.
**Single CD. Price:** £2.50 + Donation: £7.50 minimum (Total £10; post free)
**26 CDs. Price:** £20 + Donation: £40 minimum (Total £60; post free)

**Audio Tapes of Dance**
Copies of the following audio tapes of Simon Callow reading (abridged) volumes of *Dance*:
- *A Question of Upbringing*
- *The Kindly Ones*
- *The Valley of Bones*
- *The Soldier’s Art*
**Price:** £2.50 each (postage rate C)

**Society Postcard**
B&W postcard of Powell with his cat Trelawney. Picture on page 17.
**Price:** £1.75 for 5 (postage rate B)

**Wallace Collection Postcard**
**Price:** £2 for 5 (postage rate B)

**Wallace Collection Poster**
The Wallace Collection’s 48.5 x 67.5 cm (half life-size) poster of Poussin’s *A Dance to the Music of Time*. Mailed in a poster tube. Picture on page 26.
**Price:** £5.75 (postage rate D)

**Society Bookmarks**
**Price:** £1 for 5 (postage rate A)

**Newsletter Back Issues**
Back numbers of *Newsletter* issues 1, 6 and 8 to 16 are still available.
**Price:** 50p per copy (postage rate B)

**Postage.** All Society merchandise is post free to members in the UK. Regrettably we have to ask overseas members to contribute to airmail postage using the following rates:
Non-members will be charged postage & packing at cost.

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Gold and Founder members of the Society receive a 10% discount on the cost of all merchandise (but not on postage charges).

**Ordering.** Post, phone or fax your order to the Hon. Secretary at the address on page 2. Payment by cheque (UK funds drawn on a UK bank), credit card (Visa or Mastercard) or cash.
# Membership Form

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Subscriptions are due on 1 April annually. If joining on or after 1 January, membership includes following full subscription year.

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| Postcode/Zip: |
| Country: |
| Email: |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of years membership being paid:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / more (please state):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Payment Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total amount payable:</th>
<th>£ ______</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(No. of years x membership rate)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- I enclose a sterling cheque drawn on a UK bank. Please make cheques payable to The Anthony Powell Society.
- Please debit my Visa / MasterCard

*I authorize you, until further notice, to charge my Visa / MasterCard account for the sum of £ ______ on, or immediately after 1 April each year. I will advise you in writing immediately the card becomes lost or stolen, if I close the account or I wish to cancel this authority. **

| Card No.: |
| Valid from: | Expires: |
| Name & address of cardholder (if different from above): |

* I am a UK taxpayer and I want all donations I’ve made since 6 April 2000 and all donations in the future to be Gift Aid until I notify you otherwise. **

I agree to the Society holding my information on computer.

| Signed: |
| Date: |

** Delete if not applicable.

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Please send the completed form and payment to:

** Hon. Secretary, Anthony Powell Society  
76 Ennismore Avenue, Greenford, Middlesex, UB6 0JW, UK  
Phone: +44 (0)20 8864 4095  
Fax: +44 (0)20 8864 6109