Opening Lines – Christmas Quiz

Set by Mr Blackhead

Identify these books, all of which were published in the same year as works by Anthony Powell, from their openings.

1. 1928 [The Barnard Letters ed by Powell]: Mr Sniggs, the Junior Dean, and Mr Postlethwaite, the Domestic Bursar, sat alone in Mr Sniggs’ room overlooking the garden quad at Scone College. From the rooms of Sir Alastair Digby-Vane-Trumpington, two staircases away, came a confused roaring and breaking of glass.

2. 1931 [Afternoon Men]: Green dice rolled across the green table, struck the rim together, and bounced back. One stopped short holding six white spots in two equal rows uppermost. The other tumbled out to the center of the table and came to rest with a single spot on top. Ned Beaumont grunted softly …

3. 1932 [Venusberg]: A squat grey building of only thirty-four stories. Over the main entrance the words, CENTRAL LONDON HATCHERY AND CONDITIONING CENTRE, and, in a shield, the World State’s motto, COMMUNITY, IDENTITY, STABILITY.

4. 1933 [From a View to a Death]: Cigars had burned low, and we were beginning to sample the disillusionment that usually afflicts old school friends who have met again as men and found themselves with less in common than they had believed they had.

5. 1934 [Caledonia, A Fragment]: On the pleasant shore of the French Riviera, about half way between Marseilles and the Italian border, stands a large, proud, rose-colored hotel. Deferential palms cool its flushed facade, and before it stretches a short dazzling beach. Lately it has become a summer resort of notable and fashionable people; a decade ago it was almost deserted after its English clientele went north in April.

6. 1936 [Agents and Patients]: S_____ O_____ was not beautiful, but men seldom realized it when caught by her charm as the Tarleton twins were.

7. 1939 [What’s Become of Waring]: It was about eleven o’clock in the morning, mid-October, with the sun not shining and a look of hard wet rain in the clearness of the foothills. I was wearing my powder-blue suit, with dark blue shirt, tie and display handkerchief, black brogues, black wool socks with dark blue clocks on them. I was neat, clean, shaved and sober, and I didn’t care who knew it. I was everything the well-dressed private detective ought to be. I was calling on four million dollars.

8. 1948 [John Aubrey and his Friends]: There is a lovely road that runs from Ixopo into the hills.
9. 1951 [A Question of Upbringing]: This is the story – the long and true story – of one ocean, two ships and about a hundred and fifty men. It is a long story because it deals with a long, and brutal battle, the worst of any war.

10. 1952 [A Buyer’s Market]: ‘Where’s Papa going with that ax?’ said Fern to her mother as they were setting the table for breakfast.

11. 1955 [The Acceptance World]: After dinner I sat and waited for Pyle in my room over the rue Catinat; he had said, ‘I’ll be with you at latest by ten,’ and when midnight struck I couldn’t stay quiet any longer and went down into the street.

12. 1957 [At Lady Molly’s]: The sea is high again today, with a thrilling flush of wind. In the midst of winter you can feel the inventions of Spring. A sky of hot nude pearl until midday, crickets in sheltered places, and now the wind unpacking the great planes, ransacking the great planes …

13. 1960 [Casanova’s Chinese Restaurant]: When he was nearly thirteen, my brother Jem got his arm badly broken at the elbow.

14. 1962 [The Kindly Ones]: When I was very young and the urge to be somewhere else was on me, I was assured by mature people that maturity would cure this itch. When years described me as mature, the remedy prescribed was middle age. In middle age I was assured that greater age would calm my fever and now that I am fifty-eight perhaps senility will do the job. Nothing has worked.

15. 1964 [The Valley of Bones]: Then there was the bad weather. It would come in one day when the fall was over. We would have to shut the windows in the night against the rain and the cold wind would strip the leaves from the trees in the Place Contrescarpe.

16. 1966 [The Soldier’s Art]: They say when trouble comes close ranks, and so the white people did. But we were not in their ranks.

17. 1968 [The Military Philosophers]: At half-past six on a Friday evening in January, Lincoln International Airport, Illinois, was functioning, though with difficulty.

18. 1971 [Books Do Furnish a Room]: It was only a two-day crossing from Piraeus to Alexandria, but as soon as I saw the dingy little Greek steamer I felt I ought to have made other arrangements.

19. 1973 [Temporary Kings]: My name is Charles Highway, though you wouldn’t think it to look at me.

20. 1975 [Hearing Secret Harmonies]: Now it is the autumn again; the people are all coming back. The recess of summer is over, when holidays are taken, newspapers shrink, history itself seems momentarily to falter and stop.

21. 1983 [O, How the Wheel Becomes It!]: In the remote border town of Q., which when seen from the air resembles nothing so much as an ill-proportioned dumb-bell, there once lived three lovely, and loving sisters.

22. 1986 [The Fisher King]: ‘If you want my opinion’, said Gewen Cellan-Davies, ‘the old boy’s a terrifically distinguished citizen of Wales. Or at any rate what passes for one these days.’

The answers will be printed in the next Newsletter.
General Knowledge Quiz: Britain of the 1920s & 1930s

1. Who was Prime Minister on 1 January 1920?
2. What did Allen Lane do in 1935?
3. What did Sellar & Yeatman complete in 1930?
4. Which ship was launched on 26 September 1934?
5. What did Edith Sitwell first declaim in June 1923?
6. Which engine set the definitive steam traction speed record of 125mph on 3 June 1938?
7. What was Anthony Powell’s first published book? What year was it published?
8. Who wrote Language, Truth and Logic and when was it published?
9. Winston Churchill’s Budget speech of 28 April 1925 announced the return of what?
10. A London cultural landmark which was opened on 1 May 1932 has a large sculpture of Prospero & Ariel by Eric Gill over the entrance. What is it?
11. Who first played football (soccer) for England in September 1934?
12. What first met on 11 February 1920 at St James’s Palace?
13. Evelyn Waugh’s A Handful of Dust was published in 1934. From where did he take the title?
14. What happened on 10 December 1936?
15. What did Alexander Fleming discover at St Mary’s Hospital, Paddington in 1928?
16. Mr Norris Changes Trains. Who wrote it and when was it published?
17. Where was the soccer Cup Final held for the first time in April 1923?
18. Which artist was born on 9 July 1937?
19. What opened at Skegness, Lincolnshire in June 1936?
20. What first happened on Christmas Day 1932?
21. Commercial brand names were just as important in the 1920s and 30s as they are now. What would you have done with:
   a. Courgette?
   b. Vedonis?
   c. Thermogene?
   d. Kolynos?
   e. Bayko?
22. Which British ballet, based on a popular game, was premiered in Paris on 15 June 1937?
23. Which 1935 Alfred Hitchcock film had the taglines “Fated to be Mated with the One Man She Hated” and “Handcuffed to the girl who double-crossed him”?
24. For what, precisely, were the following firms in the news in these years?
   a. 1922: Reville and Rossiter?
   b. 1923: Handley Seymour?
   c. 1937: Mainbocher?
25. Which old soldier died on 29 January 1928?
26. Who was Prime Minister on 31 December 1939?

The answers will be printed in the next Newsletter.
Christmas 2005 Crossword
_Set by Major Pennistone_

Across
1. Sail Irma about fast letters. (8)  
5. Daintrey ordered a soakaway. (6)  
10. Young mistress cuts. (5)  
11. Late Levi orders article reduction. (9)  
12. Hearing check brought dog round to the Treasury. (9)  
13. Stay and weld fifty. (5)  
14. Do sing about happenings. (6)  
15. Odo needs south-eastern air holes. (7)  
18. Fence support returned uncooked after the engagement. (4-3)  
20. Ann Good-Hope pointlessly becomes edible. (6)  
22. Drier goes about on a horse. (5)  
24. Novel Helsinki. (9)  
25. I time Anna to become lifeless. (9)  
26. “A veg and I” at noon. (5)  
27. Lob GER over to Louis. (6)  
28. (8)

Down
1. Scarlet heard a sacred river before a Tolland. (6)  
2. Orc’s troop to get their winter vegetables. (4,5)  
3. Make Dean Ireland wait to see Mrs Quiggin. (3,12)  
4. Measures beneath the waves. (7)  
6. Diane Devon ordered pints for an MIL officer. (5,10)  
7. Double anger about backward territorials. (5)  
8. Unnecessarily concealed in haystack with steamship. (8)  
9. Colonel or self mix? (6)  
16. Usually deleted. (9)  
17. Boot adornment caught fish for dance study. (8)  
19. A lever used to show all. (6)  
20. Long ace oddly set together. (7)  
21. Organise pointed stage to go with patients. (6)  
23. Foreigner accepts right Devon castle. (5)

The solution will be printed in the next Newsletter.