The Anthony Powell Society
Newsletter
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7th Biennial Anthony Powell Conference
Friday 27 to Sunday 29 September 2013
Eton College, Eton, Windsor, Berkshire
Invited Speakers: DJ Taylor, Peter Berthoud, Patric Dickinson
Recital: Paul Guinery  Celebratory Address: Lord Gowrie

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An evening walk in the footsteps of X Trapnel
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NOW BOOKING
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From the Secretary’s Desk

The death of a member is always an occasion for sadness and reflection, especially given that in such a small Society almost everyone is personally known, if only through emails, to me as well as a smaller or larger band of other members. But it is especially hard to lose so long-standing and so well-liked a member as Lt-Col. Peter Taylor.

Peter had been a stalwart of the Society since its early days and, until his health began to fail a couple of years ago, a regular at the London pub meets. Peter’s bearing spoke of his life as a career soldier although his quiet manner, interest in conversation and literary enthusiasms were signs of a life outside the Army.

Everyone he met spoke of Peter with kindness and appreciation for he was universally agreed to be one of life’s true gentlemen. I, together with the Hon. Archivist, was privileged to attend Peter’s funeral – a celebration of his life – in Camberley on 26 April. I, and I know many others, will remember Peter with great fondness.

Although Peter Taylor had not been to a pub meet for a good couple of years, it still seems strange for him not to be there, as it is equally strange not to see Victor Spouge whose death we reported in the last Newsletter. What will be even odder will be their absence from this Autumn’s conference.

Yes, conference bookings are now open. Eton College are being most hospitable and it promises to be another great weekend, so please book your place!

If you are coming to the conference and can help out on the day, please get in touch as I need some volunteers.

The Anthony Powell Society

Registered Charity No. 1096873

The Anthony Powell Society is a charitable literary society devoted to the life and works of the English author Anthony Dymoke Powell, 1905-2000.

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Anthony Powell and MI(L): The BARON Mystery

By Nigel West

John Powell has raised some fascinating issues relating to the role of MI(L) during the war, and the possibility that one of the organisations to which it was closely connected, was actually a source of information for the Soviets.

The existence of a spy codenamed BARON in London in 1940 only became known publicly in 1996, following the declassification of the VENONA decrypts. This was a collection of 2,200 individual messages, often fragmentary, which were translated over a period of thirty-seven years. However, judging from their serial numbers, this was only a small proportion of the total number of Soviet communications, amounting to just under half of the NKVD’s New York-Moscow circuit in 1944, 15% of the 1943 traffic (about 200 out of 1,300), and only 23 of the estimated 1,300 telegrams sent in 1942, which represents only 1.8% of the total. As for the Naval GRU, half was recovered from the 1943 Washington-Moscow channel, but none for any other year. In 1940, for instance, the New York GRU is calculated to have sent 992 messages to Moscow, with 335 from the NKVD. In other words, the 2,200 texts are but a tiny proportion of the Soviet traffic, but for our purposes some of the most interesting are those exchanged by the GRU in London and Moscow between March 1940 and August 1941 concerning the spy codenamed BARON. His true identity remains a mystery, so MI5 molehunters examined the clues in the messages linked to him for nearly forty years.

One, dated 3 April 1941 from Moscow addressed to the London rezidentura, indicates that BARON’s data has been confirmed by an Enigma intercept. Far from suggesting that BARON himself was handling Enigma decrypts, which would be routine for an analyst or cryptographer at Bletchley Park, there is a strong suggestion of ‘this delicate source’s possible connection to Military Intelligence’.

In reply to your telegram No. 3075

This information originates solely from BARON, its provenance seems to be well known to you, the intercept bearing the designation ENIGMA. The information about the intention of the SAUSAGE-DEALERS [Germans] [13 groups unrecovered] on our part. What [4 groups unrecovered]. It is well known that [5 groups unrecovered], but [5 groups unrecovered] the government of the COLONY [Britain] and this delicate source’s possible connection with Military Intelligence here we can take it that his information is fully deserving of attention and therefore I consider that it would be a profound error to take his [13 groups unrecovered] BARON’s facts prove that [4 groups unrecovered] the COLONISTS [British] [6 groups unrecovered], that [5 groups unrecovered] [57 groups unrecoverable]

Naturally this text had a chilling effect on the GCHQ cryptanalysts who worked on it, for at the time the word “Enigma” remained highly classified, and the context made clear that either BARON himself or his source had direct access to Enigma material at Bletchley Park. The implications of such a well-placed spy
deep inside GCHQ, as early as April 1941, were considered potentially devastating for the organisation, and cast a shadow over the work of MI(L).

Most of the other BARON decrypts referred to recent railway movements in Czechoslovakia, but on 17 May 1941 Ivan Sklyarov, the GRU rezident at the Soviet embassy in London codenamed BRION, reported that BARON had held a meeting with DICK in London.

To ADMINISTRATION. 17 May
DICK had a meeting with
BARON. 1. On the subject of
handing over to us intercept
[1 group unrecovered], BARON
[16 groups unrecovered]
declared that your answer to
this question would determine
all future work with him. As
a matter of urgency send
instructions by 19th May. 3.
On the question of the
reserve line of communication
we suggest in a fortnight’s
time [36 groups unrecovered]
[57 groups unrecoverable]

On 12 August 1941, in the penultimate message of the ten, which was very fragmented, Sklyarov referred to another spy, NOBILITY, as organizing BARON’s “very onerous task”. NOBILITY was later confirmed to be the Hon. Ivor Montagu, Lord Swaythling’s black sheep younger son who was a lifelong member of the Communist Party of Great Britain and during the war had been the Daily Worker’s war correspondent. According to other VENONA texts, NOBILITY had led a network of exceptionally valuable and highly-placed GRU agents in London known as “the X Group”. The fact that BARON was linked to NOBILITY served to enhance his status as a spy.

On the basis of the somewhat slim VENONA evidence, MI5 was confident that BARON was someone with Czech military intelligence connections who somehow gained access to Enigma decrypts and, most importantly, knew what they were. Actually, a large proportion of the intelligence reporting that circulated around Whitehall and the British military intelligence machine, principally enemy order-of-battle assessments, were derived from, or at least contained, SIGINT material, although the true nature of the source was always heavily disguised.

Bletchley Park’s breakthrough, generically known as ULTRA, developed from breaks into German Abwehr military intelligence wireless signals in early 1940 and in September 1940 gave the Air Ministry glimpses into the Luftwaffe’s deployment across occupied Europe. Gradually, some Kriegsmarine and Wehrmacht machine cipher systems succumbed to the Anglo-American cryptanalysts and the product became a crucial part of the overall Allied intelligence jigsaw puzzle. There were other components, such as aerial reconnaissance and human sources, which included information from liaison services, but SIGINT became the dominant contributor because of its intrinsic accuracy and reliability. It was, however, very vulnerable, for the slightest change in transmitting procedures, or a minor improvement in the security measures, might have terminated the source. Thus, the realization that a GRU agent had penetrated Bletchley Park at a time prior to the BARBAROSSA invasion of the Soviet Union, when Hitler was still being supported by Stalin, meant the entire investment in ULTRA had been placed in jeopardy.

The ULTRA secret was so tightly-held that nobody apart the Director of Military Intelligence, Francis Davidson, later Jack Sinclair, and some of the War Office’s analytical staff at MI3, were fully indoctrinated into the source. MI(L)’s role
was to act as a link between the Allied military attachés in London, all of them intelligence officers representing their individual government’s military intelligence organisations. Other departments within the War Office’s Directorate of Military Operations supervised the more routine elements of the inter-Allied relationship, such as deployment, staff conferences, billeting, etc. and maintained contact with the various integrated Allied commands, principally the Poles, Norwegians, Czechs, Free French and Dutch.

Although the British authorities were unaware at the time of the Soviet penetration of Czech military intelligence, its chief in London, Colonel Frantisek Moravec, had reported that he had been approached for information by his NKVD counterpart, Colonel Ivan Chichaev. This connection, between the declared senior NKVD officer in London, and Moravec, prompted General Pavel Sudoplatov, then the NKVD’s director of counter-intelligence to claim in his memoirs released in 1994, that Moravec had been a long-term Soviet agent. Whether true or not, there is no NKVB traffic from the London rezidentura to clarify the allegation.

suitable candidates to be pitched by intermediaries. Unfortunately, the Anglo-American cryptographers who continued to work on the VENONA project until 1979 were unable to break out any further GRU traffic from London, but the fact that the last message relating to BARON was dated August 1941 did not imply he had ceased his activities. On the contrary, his series of ten texts merely demonstrated his existence, and it was presumed, as would be proved with so many other spies identified in the VENONA programme, that he had persisted in his chosen clandestine career, certainly beyond May 1943 when John Powell notes that his father first began dealing with the Czechs. A lengthy investigation identified Karel Sedlacek as the most likely suspect, and he had been engaged in espionage soon after the war, having been implicated in a Soviet spy-ring in Switzerland in 1947.

In conclusion, it may have been thought by some that MI(L) was an insignificant backwater of the War Office bureaucracy, far removed from the cut-and thrust world of espionage but, however much the participants tended to play down their involvement, there was plenty of skullduggery just under the surface, and more than enough to engage a novelist.
TOP SECRET

USSR

From: LONDON
To: MOSCOW
No: 2246
12th Aug. 41

To DIRECTOR.

On 11th August B.J. [i] reported the following:

1. PO... [b]
   [48 groups unrecovered]

   Communications and transport severe damage was inflicted in Germany. In
   WESTPHALIA [ii], the end of May 1941, the conduct of
   public affairs was unsettled [c].

   [48 groups unrecovered]

   training [d] NOBILITY [ZLT'] [iii] so that [B% he can organise] B.JON's
   very onerous task.

   [56 groups unrecoverable]

No. 404

BRION [iv]

---

Notes: [a] It has now been established that, although this message was

   enciphered on 11th August, it was actually transmitted on
   12th August.

   [b] The beginning of a word spelt out in Cyrillic.

   - 1 -

   (cont. overleaf)
Illustrated, previous page and this: The VENONA message from Ivan Sklyarov to Moscow dated 12 August 1941. The unrecovered, or unrecoverable groups, were parts of the message which defeated the Anglo-American cryptanalysts, leaving the molehunters to guess from the context on what was likely to be in the gaps. Despite its fragmentary nature, the content reveals a link between NOBILITY and BARON.

The footnotes have been added by GCHQ analysts to assist the interpretation by counter-intelligence personnel. During the declassification process in 1996 some redaction took place, such as the suspected identity of BARON.
A little behind schedule, I have completed my reading of February’s *Dance* book, *A Buyer’s Market*, aided by the easier reading of my recently purchased omnibus volume. I hadn’t actually appreciated how I was struggling with my reading simply because my vintage Penguin has small type and is physically a bit frail so I had to be careful how I handled it. However, the new volumes with the bigger type and flexible binding will be much easier to handle.

Anyway – to business. *BM* is the second book in the sequence and as well as featuring many of the characters from the first volume, it also introduces several new ones. One of the most important is the painter Mr Deacon, who is introduced in the opening pages, and has quite an influence on the action. There is also his female colleague Gypsy Jones plus a variety of people from princes and gentry to musical performers. We also are treated to the return of Templer, Stringham and Widmerpool, as well as Nick’s first love, Jean. Much of the action takes place in a long sequence set over one night in the late 1920s, where Nick attends a debs ball and then a more down-market party where he and his fellows are taken by Stringham, whom they encounter at a late night coffee stall. Over the summer Nick falls out of love with Barbara Goring, visits the country, has an amorous encounter with Gypsy and meets an artist called Barnby, who it seems will be important in future volumes. The book ends as it has begun, with Mr Deacon.

The first thing to say about this book is that the prose is just lovely, something I’m really appreciating with Powell’s writing. He is the master of introducing a lot of characters without being overwhelming and he captures in almost Proustian detail the mood of a debs ball down to the minutiae. His way of telling a story is to focus on one event or a series of events and by capturing a series of snapshots in a life he can reveal so much more than a simple sequential narrative – his skill lies in using this technique to portray an era and the changes taking place.

In some ways, it is pointless actually trying to describe what these books are about because they are simply about life. We see the ebb and flow of human relationships and Powell teases us with hints of things to come. A sentence will suddenly cause you to stop short, as the depth of Powell’s understanding and insight into life and humans hits you.

*The illusion that egoists will be pleased, or flattered, by interest taken in their habits persists throughout life; whereas, in fact, persons like Widmerpool, in complete subjection to the ego, are, by the nature of that infirmity, prevented from supposing that the minds of others could possibly be occupied by any subject far distant from the egoist’s own affairs.*
Even in the quietest forms of life the untoward is rarely far from the surface.

There is a strong contrast between the two different parties which occupy the bulk of the narrative: one a much more conventional gathering, where many of the participants are on the marriage market; and the other showing society on the cusp of change, reflecting the influence of the Bright Young Things and the questioning of this particular way of life:

... for a moment, the terrible suspicion even suggested itself that, night after night, he danced his life away through the ballrooms of London in the unshakable conviction that the whole thing was a sham.

The writing is always discreet and subtle – sometimes actually too subtle so that you have to read a section several times to be sure it means what you think it does. I am thinking in particular of the scene near the end where Nick “sleeps with” Gypsy, which is couched in terms that are so vague as to make you wonder whether you are in fact reading too much into it! This may seem more exaggerated because we are so used in modern literature to having everything spelled out for us, but I think I would have preferred Powell to give away a little more here than he does. And Nick is still surprisingly reticent about his own affairs – very detached and reserved. He portrays himself as a somewhat naïve observer, whereas he hints very strongly at Stringham’s dissolute nature:

It was, indeed, clear to me that strangeness was what Stringham now expected, indeed demanded from life: a need already become hard to satisfy.

There is also plenty of Powell’s dry wit on show:

If certain individuals fall in love from motives of convenience, they can be contrasted with plenty of others in whom passion seems principally aroused by the intensity of administrative difficulties in procuring its satisfaction.

And the reappearances of Widmerpool are hilarious – poor Nick is obviously to be haunted by the man, and his turning up unexpectedly in the dungeon is enough to shock anyone! Alas, Nick is destined to dine with Widmerpool and his mother, not an occasion I would have relished!

But what struck me most, looking back on this book, is that it is actually very much about love in all its shapes and forms. Nick begins the book by thinking he is in love with Barbara Goring but then realises he is not; he then relives his attraction to Jean Templer and ends up sleeping with Gypsy. Mr Deacon’s amorous motivations are unclear; many people are pursuing Baby Wentworth; Widmerpool is also in love with Barbara but then also sleeps with Gypsy (and if I decipher Powell’s oblique prose correctly, is responsible for pregnancy and an abortion); Stringham ends up marrying Peggy Stepney, possibly in an attempt to rescue himself from a life of sin; Gypsy is a victim of love, presumably looking for something or someone to care for her, and trusting too many people. Nick often seems a little remote, but there are plenty of deeply felt emotions there which we might miss as readers because he expresses himself somewhat dispassionately:

Such emotions, sudden bursts of sexual jealousy that pursue us through life, sometimes with the
smallest justification that memory or affection might provide, are like wounds, unknown and quiescent, that suddenly break out to give pain, or at least irritation, at a later season of the year, or in an unfamiliar climate.

and:

At that stage of life all sorts of things were going on round about that only later took on any meaning or pattern. Thus some people enjoyed distinctly public love affairs, often quickly forgotten, while others fell in love without anyone, perhaps even including the object of their love, knowing or caring anything about these covert affections. Only years later, if at all, could the consequences of such bottled-up emotions sometimes be estimated: more often, of course, they remained entirely unknown.

Oddly enough, the more I think about Powell’s writing, the more his technique (certainly not his subject matter!) reminds me of the way Solzhenitsyn told his story in In the First Circle. Both focus tightly on a particular event, or series of events, over a short time period, but within this framework expand their story to tell the tales of the people in the middle of the action, and also hint at characters who will appear in the future (“that came later” or “Barnby told me later” etc.). It’s a very effective way to present a story, and the more I get to know Powell’s characters, the keener I am to follow them on their journey through life – roll on this month’s book!

First published at http://kaggsysbookishramblings.wordpress.com/2013/03/08/recent-reads-a-buyers-market-by-anthony-powell/ on 8 March 2013 and reprinted with kind permission.
This is the third volume in my monthly read of AP’s *Dance to the Music of Time* sequence and with this book I feel that I’ve really hit my stride with Powell! The title refers to a type of financial trading, but Powell applies the phrase to life – more of which later.

The book’s opening chapter has Nick Jenkins visiting the elusive Uncle Giles at his slightly seedy hotel. Uncle Giles seems rather friendly with a fellow guest Mrs Erdleigh, who is something of a fortune-teller. Our next setting is the Ritz, where Nick is due to meet Mark Members but instead bumps into his old crony Peter Templer and ends up dining with him and his wife Mona, and also his old love Jean Templer (now Duport). Members does not show, but instead sends another old acquaintance, Quiggin – he and Members have been rivals for the position as secretary to St John Clarke, a somewhat out of fashion novelist. Nick is invited back to the Templers’ house for the weekend, where he rather suddenly begins an affair with Jean, which continues throughout the rest of the book. Also invited to the house party are Quiggin, Mrs Erdleigh and Jimmy Stripling, yet another old acquaintance. A rather surreal séance is held using a device called a planchette but the weekend disintegrates with the news that Clarke is ill and the rapid departure of Quiggin for London.

Events move on and the next set piece has Nick coming across a workers’ demonstration in which the unlikely figure of Clarke is taking part, pushed along in a wheelchair by Quiggin and Mona Templer. The affair with Jean continues and they come across the wonderfully named Umfraville, who Nick has heard of in the past and whose presence will also impact on the complex relationships of his circle. The book ends with Jenkins, along with Templer, Stringham and Widmerpool, attending an Old Boys dinner at the Ritz hosted by their old housemaster Le Bas. Needless to say, all does not go well – Stringham is late and drunk, Nick picks up more gossip about his circle and Widmerpool makes a dreadful, unexpected speech which is only halted when Le Bas collapses with a stroke. Stringham is so wasted that Nick and Widmerpool (I can’t bring myself to call him Kenneth!) have to take him home in a taxi and put him to bed. The book ends with Nick visiting Jean, although whether their affair will continue is not clear, as her husband is returning from abroad, perhaps a slightly reformed character?

This simplistic summary does not of course do justice to the richness and complexity of the narrative and the apparent ease with which Powell weaves all the strands of Jenkins’ life together. The prose is again beautiful and you can’t help but admire his deftness of touch as he handles the various elements of his plot. There are old characters and new, some making fleeting appearances or just being mentioned, and some taking a larger part in affairs, and Powell’s hand never falters as he manages them all expertly, controlling the dance.

*Pausing, with a slight gesture of exhaustion that seemed to imply arduous travel over many miles of arid desert or snow waste (according*
to whether the climate within or without the hotel was accepted as prevailing), he looked around the room; gazing as if in amazement at the fountain, the nymph, the palms in their pots of Chinese design; then turning his eyes to the chandeliers and the glass of the roof. His bearing was at once furtive, resentful, sagacious, and full of a kind of confidence in his own powers. He seemed to be surveying the tables as if searching for someone, at the same time unable to believe his eyes, while he did so, at the luxuriance of the oasis in which he found himself. He carried no hat, but retained the belted leather overcoat upon which a few drops of moisture could be seen glistening as he advanced farther into the room, an indication that snow or sleet had begun to fall outside. This black leather garment gave a somewhat official air to his appearance, obscurely suggesting a Wellsian man of the future, heirarchic in rank. Signs of damp could also be seen in patches on his sparse fair hair, a thatch failing to roof in completely the dry, yellowish skin of his scalp.

This young man, although already hard to think of as really young on account of the maturity of his expression, was JG Quiggin.

Thus Powell brilliantly introduces one of the main players in this particular volume by describing his incongruous arrival at the Ritz. So much is revealed by this one extract – the change in the social order, the conflict between old and new beliefs and systems, the hint of the political upheavals to come. We are in the 1930s, a tumultuous decade, where life is changing and it seems that the old order is well and truly on the way out. Nick straddles these various worlds and observes the polarised political differences, watching artists adopting different positions in an attempt to keep up to date; we are shown the extremes, from the young Italian following the Fascists to the far left in the form of Quiggin and co. So many characters flit in and out of the dance – Templer and Stringham plus Le Bas and Sillery; fairly briefly but memorably Widmerpool; Anne and Peggy Stepney; Baby Wentworth; many just by a mention; and most remarkably the novelist St John Clarke (based on John Galsworthy, I believe) who, although he is an important character in the story, we never actually meet. The representation of political and social
change is not always dealt with head on, but subtly so it is all the more effective. And Powell is the master of the sudden surprises of life: the discovery of that unlikely couple, Mona and Quiggin on a workers’ march is brilliantly done, and also represents the strange nature of life and the fragmented times in which this novel is set. He’s also a wonderful observer of how pivotal some moments in life can be, eg. the dinner where he once again meets Jean:

Afterwards, that dinner at the Grill seemed to partake of the nature of a ritual feast, a rite from which the four of us emerged to take up new positions in the formal dance with which human life is concerned. At the time, its charm seemed to reside in a difference from the usual run of things. Certainly the chief attraction of the projected visit would be absence of all previous plan. But, in a sense, nothing in life is planned – or everything is – because in the dance every step is ultimately the corollary of the step dance, the consequence of being the kind of person one chances to be.

The Acceptance World is definitely the book where this series starts to really shine for me. Much as I loved the first two books, I struggled in places with the density of the prose and the obliqueness of what Nick was telling us. Powell seems to have gained a little clarity in this book – the writing is still gorgeous and I hope some of the quotes I’ve pulled out will illustrate this – but without sacrificing anything in the quality of what he’s written, Powell somehow manages to make things more transparent, easier to grasp. Things gelled for me while reading AW in a way they hadn’t quite done so in the first two novels. Maybe this is because of the slightly harder edge of the world Powell is writing about, with the intrusion of politics and the societal changes around him. There is still humour – Widmerpool is always good for a laugh, let’s face it – and Nick still has a wry, dry way of expressing himself – but it feels more like we are being narrated to by a real person in AW and less of a cipher.

There is also more about love and Jean (Templer) Duport takes centre stage as Nick’s first love returning for an affair, so that we can see him actually involved with another person – though once again there is that slight detachment:

There is always a real and an imaginary person you are in love with; sometimes you love one best, sometimes the other. At that moment it was the real one I loved.

Although their affair appears to continue over a period we only see glimpses of it, and indeed of Jean’s life. There are absences from the story – Jean’s daughter barely gets a mention which is perhaps indicative of a world where children were palmed off on nannies and governesses, or simply because she is not allowed into Nick’s sphere at all. There is the sense that Jean gives herself to Nick in compartments and keeps most of her life separate from him; and with the imminent return of her husband, the reader is left wondering if there is a future for them.

I ended this book eager to simply jump into the next one and carry on living these characters’ lives with them, but I’m going to pace myself. Powell’s books are too good to be rushed and I feel you need to give yourself time for your impressions to keep forming and for the book to settle in your brain. Fiction of this quality is, alas,
sadly lacking in modern times and I’m very glad I’ve embarked on my monthly read of this great work.

When, in describing Widmerpool’s new employment, Templer had spoken of ‘the Acceptance World’, I had been struck by the phrase. Even as a technical definition, it seemed to suggest what we are all doing; not only in business, but in love, art, religion, philosophy, politics, in fact all human activities. The Acceptance World was the world in which the essential element – happiness, for example – is drawn, as it were, from an engagement to meet a bill. Sometimes the goods are delivered, even a small profit made; sometimes the goods are not delivered, and disaster follows; sometimes the goods are delivered, but the value of the currency is changed. Besides, in another sense, the whole world is the Acceptance World as one approaches thirty; at least some illusions discarded. The mere fact of still existing as a human being proved that.

BOOK REVIEW

Michael Barber

Brief Lives: Evelyn Waugh
Hesperus; 2013

Reviewed by Keith Marshall

When Michael Barber first told me he had a biography of Evelyn Waugh being published, my first reaction was “Why?”. Why do we need another biography of Waugh?

But then when I got a copy I realised this isn’t really a biography but more a dozen or so quick sketches of the man, for what Hesperus are doing is creating a series of “short, authoritative biographies of the greatest figures in literary history; written by experts in their fields to appeal to general readers and academics alike”.

Given that this is the aim, then Barber and Hesperus have largely succeeded. This is a short work which is well and amusingly written, while remaining interesting, light, accessible and, I found, quite hard to put down.

Yes, the book lacks detail – but what does one really expect in 120 pages? However, although I am no expert on Waugh, it did seem to encapsulate the essence of the man and his life: idiosyncratic, snob, arriviste, poseur, spendthrift, drunk, intransigent bore and grumpy old man (even when quite young); but also both an excellent novelist (I’ll except Brideshead Revisited which is really only Elizabeth Goudge on steroids) and often highly amusing.

As a bonus, at least for me, Anthony Powell gets quite a few mentions. Powell and Waugh, although in some ways rival writers, were friends and admired each others’ work – both publicly and privately – often writing to say how much they had enjoyed the other’s latest volume. Waugh always wanted to live to see Powell complete Dance, but sadly he died halfway through. Wouldn’t it have been interesting to have heard his views on the second half of Dance? How the war trilogy compared with his Sword of Honour? And what would he have made of the denouements of Temporary Kings and Hearing Secret Harmonies?

As Anthony Powell so often did I shall conclude this review with two gripes. While understanding that publishers need to keep costs down, such awful cheap paper is horrid to handle and isn’t going to stand the rigours of time; I would be happy to pay an extra 50p to £1 on the price of a book if it meant more aesthetically pleasing paper.

Finally I deplore the lack of an index. I know this is a short work, but any non-fiction book without an index becomes unusable as a reference source. And that, to my mind, is inexcusable in an environment where we must do everything we can to encourage the use of books as a resource. Again I have to lay the blame on cost-cutting publishers, rather than the authors, most of whom I suspect would (privately, at least) agree.

Overall an excellent introduction to the man and an enjoyable read.
In the Footsteps of X Trapnel
An Evening Meander through Maida Vale
Tuesday 9 July 2013
Meet at
Prince Alfred Pub, Formosa Street, London W9
1800 for 1830 hrs
Join Ivan Hutnik for an evening stroll along the banks of the Maida Vale canal through Little Venice, tracing some of the wartime haunts of Julian Maclaren-Ross, model for X Trapnel. The area provides the setting in Books Do Furnish a Room for Trapnel’s affair with Pamela Flitton and the precipitate destruction of his manuscript of Profiles in String.
The Prince Alfred pub, located a couple of hundred yards from Warwick Avenue tube station, is an unspoilt Victorian public house which is probably much as it was at the time BDFR is set.
The walk will last about 1 hour, after which we will return to the Prince Alfred. For those who wish to dine there, the pub advertises a two-course set menu for £12, as well as the usual à la carte menu and Young’s beer.
No need to book, just turn up on the night – but if you wish to dine please let us know so we can book a group table.
No charge, but donations in the Hon. Secretary's top hat appreciated. Non-members welcome. Contact Ivan Hutnik, ivanhutnik@gmail.com, or the Hon. Secretary for more details.

Annual General Meeting 2013
Notice is hereby given that the 13th Annual General Meeting of the Anthony Powell Society will be held on Saturday 19 October 2013 at 1400 hrs in the Conference Room of St James’s Church, Piccadilly, London W1
The formal AGM business will be followed by refreshments and a talk by Georgia Powell on the life and work of Lady Violet Powell
Members only at the formal AGM; all welcome for the talk at about 1500 hrs
Nominations for the three Trustee posts which become vacant this year (by rotation) must reach the Hon. Secretary by Friday 9 August 2013. Candidates must be proposed by two members, indicate their willingness to stand and provide a short biographical statement. Nominations will be accepted by email, post or fax.
The elected Trustees must not be barred from being trustees under English law and a majority of the Trustees must be ordinarily resident in England and Wales.
Motions for discussion at the AGM must also reach the Hon. Secretary by Friday 9 August 2013. They must be clearly worded, proposed by at least two members and contain a statement in support of the motion which will be published to members.
The AGM agenda and voting papers will be included with the Autumn Newsletter in early September. Proxy votes must reach the Hon. Secretary by Monday 14 October 2013.
**Dates for Your Diary**

**London Quarterly Pub Meets**
- **Saturday 10 August 2013**
- **Saturday 2 November 2013**
  - The Audley, 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

**7th Biennial Anthony Powell Conference 2013**

**Anthony Powell in the 20s & 30s**
- **Friday 27 to Sunday 29 September 2013**
  - Eton College
  - Eton, Windsor, UK

We are delighted to announce that the 7th Biennial Conference is to be held at Eton College, Powell’s *alma mater*

**Outline Programme**

- **Plenary Sessions**: Friday afternoon and Saturday
- **Reception & Recital**: Friday evening
- **Dinner**: Saturday evening
- **Historic House Tour**: Sunday morning

The plenary sessions will include three invited keynote speakers – DJ Taylor, Peter Berthoud and Patric Dickinson – an address from Society President Lord Gowrie, and nine delegate papers.

A champagne reception and recital by Paul Guinery is planned for the Friday evening and a conference dinner for the Saturday evening. On Sunday morning there is an opportunity to visit the Tudor-period Dorney Court. There will also be opportunities to visit the Eton College Library and tour the College.

During Saturday’s plenary sessions there will also be a “Bring and Buy” Book Sale.

Booking is now open. Full details in the enclosed Booking Leaflet, on the Society’s website, or contact the Hon. Secretary.

**Annual General Meeting**
- **Saturday 19 October 2013, 1400 hrs**
  - St James’s Church
  - Piccadilly, London W1
  - The formal AGM business will be followed by refreshments and a talk by Georgia Powell on the life and work of Lady Violet Powell
  - Full details opposite

**Annual Anthony Powell Lecture**
- **Friday 6 December 2013, 1830 hrs**
  - The Wallace Collection
  - Manchester Square, London W1
  - Speaker and full details to be confirmed

**Anthony Powell Birthday Lunch**
- **Saturday 7 December 2013**
  - 1200 for 1230 hrs
  - Central London venue and full details to be confirmed
Society Notices

Welcome to New Members
We would like to extend a warm welcome to the following who have joined the Society in recent months:

Julian Fowler, Charleston, USA
Christopher Garnett, Andover
Karen Langley, Ipswich
Bob Mabon, London
Huw Morgan-Owen, Chepstow

Local Group Contacts

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

**NY & NE USA Group**
Area: New York & NE USA
Contacts: Nick Birns
Email: nicbirns@aol.com

**Great Lakes Group**
Area: Chicago area, USA
Contact: Joanne Edmonds
Email: jedmonds@bsu.edu

**Nordic Group**
Area: Sweden & Finland
Contact: Regina Rehbinder
Email: reginarehbinder@hotmail.com

**Toronto Group**
Area: Toronto, Canada
Contact: Joan Williams
Email: jwilliamsto@hotmail.com

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.

Subscriptions
Members are reminded that subscriptions are due annually on 1st April and that rates remain unchanged this year (see back page). Reminder letters and emails 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.

Printed reminders are a drain on our resources as they cost, on average, over £1 each. Consequently we will be using email wherever possible, so please keep a look-out for emails from the Society.

Subscriptions and membership enquiries should be sent to the Hon. Secretary at:

**Anthony Powell Society Memberships**
76 Ennismore Avenue, Greenford, UB6 0JW, UK
Email: membership@anthonypowell.org
Phone: +44 (0) 20 8864 4095
Fax: +44 (0) 20 8020 1483

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
Fax: +44 (0)20 8020 1483
Email: editor@anthonypowell.org
What are the English like? Worse answers might be given than “Read Aubrey’s Brief Lives and you will see”.

[Anthony Powell; John Aubrey and His Friends]

**Society Notices**

**Why Not Advertise Here?***

**Display Advert Rates**

- Full Page: £30
- ½ page or full column: £20
- ¼ page (½ column): £12
- B&W artwork only

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**Flyer Inserts**

- £30 per A4 sheet
- £15 per A5 sheet
- plus printing costs

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**Small Ads**

- Free to Society members
- Others 10p/word, minimum £3

***

**Births, Deaths & Marriages**

- Free to Society members
- Others 25p/word, minimum £5

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With unexpectedly delicate movements of the hands, the Field-Marshal began to explain what had been happening. We were in an area... immemorially campaigned over. In fact the map was no less than a great slice of history. As the eye travelled northward, it fell on Zutphen, where Sir Philip Sidney had stopped a bullet in that charge against the Albanian cavalry. One wondered why Albanians should be involved in this part of the world at such a time. Presumably they were some auxiliary unit of the Spanish Command, similar to those exotic corps of which one heard rumours in the current war... The thought of Sidney, a sympathetic figure, distracted attention from the Field-Marshal’s talk. One felt him essentially the kind of soldier Vigny had in mind when writing of the man who, like a monk, submitted himself to the military way of life, because he thought it right, rather than because it appealed to him.

[The Military Philosophers]

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Anthony Powell Society Newsletter #51

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Field-Marshall Montgomery
Lieutenant-Colonel Peter Taylor

Lt-Col. Peter Taylor, who has died aged 92, was an early member of the Anthony Powell Society. He attended the inaugural conference at Eton in 2001, as well as the Oxford and both the London conferences. For many years he was a regular attendee at the society’s London pub-meets and AGMs, where he enjoyed mixing with fellow Dance enthusiasts, and contributing to both Dance and non-Dance related discussions. In an article for the newsletter (issue 41, Winter 2010), he told of how he came across A Buyer’s Market while serving in Malaya in 1955, and was immediately hooked. Thereafter he read the subsequent volumes as they came out. His expressed hope that the author would survive long enough to deliver to Widmerpool a suitable comeuppance was amply fulfilled. And in the debate that swirls around Hearing Secret Harmonies, he was very much in the camp of those who find it a satisfying conclusion to the series.

Lt-Col. Taylor was born in Madrid in 1920 and commissioned into the West Yorkshire Regiment in 1939. He served in the second Chindit expedition behind Japanese lines in Burma in 1944 and was mentioned in despatches. He served subsequently in Austria, Malaya, Aden, Gibraltar and Germany. There were also postings in Lancashire, and a period in London as military liaison officer with MI6. In 1963-65 he commanded his amalgamated regiment (Prince of Wales’s Own Regiment of Yorkshire) in Berlin. In all he served in the army for 36 years. As a result he well understood the nature of Widmerpool’s duties as DAAG, and was always happy to explain this and other technical aspects of the three wartime volumes.

A sociable and gregarious man, Lt-Col. Taylor was marked out by an interest in other people, which was perhaps the foundation for his enjoyment of Dance. In London he gravitated to St James’s Square, where his presence at the Naval and Military Club and the Army and Navy Club was balanced by membership of the London Library. After his radio play The Second Chance was broadcast on the BBC in 1959 the demands of his career prevented further literary activity beyond extensive reading. Apart from Powell his tastes were wide, and he only partially satisfied Forster’s contention that in old age we revert to the familiar favourites of childhood. The last book he completed was Capital Punishment by Robert Wilson. On his bedside table when he died were The Bird of Dawning by John Masefield and Swann’s Way by Proust.
Local Group News

London Spring Pub Meet

By Noreen Marshall

The London & SE England Group met on a somewhat damp Saturday (11 May) at its customary venue of The Audley, on the corner of Mount Street and South Audley Street in the heart of London’s Mayfair*.

The assembled company were delighted to welcome Ron Wiber, visiting from Australia. It transpired that Ron’s mother was a Powell (and also pronounced “Pole”) and he had a good number of older relatives who had been at Eton. This naturally led to talk about the upcoming biennial conference (see page 17). Eton was the setting for the Society’s very first conference in 2001 and is an event venue much requested by the Society’s membership. This year’s Conference (the Society’s seventh) will include one and a half days of plenary sessions, a champagne reception with a recital by Paul Guinery of the popular music of the 1920s and 30s, a dinner and a visit to the nearby Tudor manor house, Dorney Court (illustrated on page 14).

Tribute was paid, and a toast drunk, to long-standing member Lt-Col. Peter Taylor, an enthusiastic supporter of these gatherings, who died on 10 April, aged 92 (obituary opposite). His funeral took place at St Michael’s Church, Camberley on a showery but Spring-like Friday 26 April – and a very fine send-off it was too – at which the Society was represented by the Hon. Secretary and the Hon. Archivist.

There was a good deal of discussion of the next Society event: a summer evening walk in the footsteps of X Trapnel: through Maida Vale, around Little Venice and along the canal where Profiles in String meets its watery end (details on page 16).

For once the pub’s “Big Ben Burger” was a more popular choice for lunch than the fish and chips. Food was a fairly popular topic of conversation too: food rationing in WWII Britain – a recent topic on the APLIST, particularly with regard to bananas and gin-and-orange – food allergies and a surprisingly nostalgic enthusiasm for Heinz’s Sandwich Spread all got a look-in.

Other topics of conversation included MI5, Stella Gibbons, booking hotels using Trip Advisor (www.tripadvisor.co.uk), feedback to Amazon regarding purchases, private versus state education, and the near-impossibility of finding a job in the fine arts sector.


* The Hon. Secretary is mulling over the possibility of adding at least one other central London pub to the venues for pub meets and events and would welcome appropriate suggestions. ■
Beyond St James’s clubland, where the two-piece Savile Row suit tailored by the likes of Huntsman and Anderson & Shepherd has undergone little change in half a century, the overcoat is perhaps the item of attire least altered in style since Jenkins’ schooldays. So one might hazard some deductions as to the nature of Master Kenneth’s sartorial solecism.

The logical starting point is to consider what form the right sort of overcoat might take. The style considered correct for London then and now is double-breasted in navy wool with modest padding of the shoulder, a discernible waist, though sufficiently loosely cut to accommodate a double breasted coat (jacket) beneath and four-course lunch at the Travellers’ club. A tailor would settle the length just below the knee, though for reasons lost in the mists of the Midlands higher echelons of the aristocracy often had the hem cut lower, the Duke of Manchester attracting the gibe in White’s that he had borrowed his coachman’s coat. The implicit insult was the implication that His Grace was reversing a trend, continuous since the edicts of Beau Brummel, for servants to be clothed in the style of their master’s grandfather. Hence Jeeves’s attire.

The reason for the notable consistency in overcoating may be traced to the annual Cavalry Memorial Service when the old comrades march in the navy overcoat with bowler hat and shouldered umbrella (furled even in rain showers). They may be wearing mufti but the effect is uniform. Much the same would apply to the Brigade of Guards, whose subalterns were traditionally advised not to wear brown shoes east of the Cherry Blossom roundabout on the Great West Road (it was assumed they would not be hunting or shooting in Essex). The eternally diving Jantzen girl could have served as a useful reminder to change.

Black velvet collars and lapel tabs were, and at GHQ still are, considered the province of the more louche formations with City connections, notably the Honorable Artillery Company and underwriting members of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers. As Chips Lovell remarks, “It’s a tailor’s war”. County regiments and some of the more raffish corps might wear the second alternative, a coat of coarse light brown wool on which dark brown velvet lapels were just about permissible off-duty, but not further adornment such as contrasting pocket flaps or Bavarian buttons. This style, still worn by members of the (now emasculated) Jockey Club when attending provincial race meetings, is more usually seen on estate agents. It has to be a candidate for Widmerpool’s style choice, if indeed it was his. My racing investment would, however, be on his mother as decision maker, after consultation with someone with similar tastes to Uncle Giles.

Another style sometimes seen in the Home Counties, and in lesser ski resorts, is the Loden, a green Tyrolean coat or cape of wool. Whilst waterproof the accompanying pork pie hat with pheasant feather would have invited ridicule. It can, I think, be dismissed as a candidate on account of Germanic associations that would have been unpopular at the period in question. One can also rule out the

The Wrong Sort of Overcoat

by Julian Allason
camelhair coat popularised by Arthur Daley in *Minder*. It had yet to be invented by, it is thought, a masonic outfitter in Droitwich. Anthony Wedgewood-Benn was seen wearing one after renouncing his title as Earl of Stansgate. It was suggested that doorkkeepers at the House of Lords would not have stood for it.

Powell may have been having a tease with his “wrong sort” of overcoat but sartorial solecisms mattered among schoolboys of the period. There is, it seems, something elemental about outward attire that inspires powerful reactions. The Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson’s affectation of a Gannex mackintosh, made from a textured form of nylon, attracted widespread scorn in the 1960s. It hardly helped that the garment was also adopted by Mao Zedong and Nikita Khrushchev, or that its promoter, Joseph Kagan, was imprisoned for theft following his controversial elevation to the House of Lords in the notorious “Lavender List” affair.

Sartorial criticism has not been confined to doyens of the Left. The sighting of Harold Macmillan in an Inverness Cape provided cartoonists with convincing evidence that the Conservative Prime Minister was a throwback to the Edwardian era. Its loose half-cape kept shoulders dry in soft Highland weather while leaving the arms free to raise a shotgun to track the highest flying covey. It was not, however, a garment to be seen in off the grouse moor, and hardly egalitarian. Like its partner, the Deerstalker, the period associations with Sherlock Holmes were considered unhelpful by party managers. What Dr Watson described as his friend’s “ear-flapped travelling cap” had by the early 1960s acquired the smack of fancy dress.

This, I think, offers a clue to the nature of Widmerpool’s misjudgement that fits
Powell’s narrative. What Kenneth is really guilty of in his contemporaries’ eyes is of trying too hard, a cardinal sin in an ambience in which the social heights commanded by Pop (Eton’s self-elective club of prefects) were characterised by effortless ease, social adroitness and perhaps a degree of sporting prowess. Pop is not mentioned by name in *A Question of Upbringing* but its influence is felt. With his customary skill the author avoids the risk of his novel becoming dated by leaving it to the reader to picture the wrongness of the overcoat. Even today there might be a risk of the estate agent coat ending up adorning the guy on Eton’s November the 5th bonfire.

Not long before the Victory Service ... Prasad’s Embassy gave a party on their National Day. It was a bigger affair than usual on account of the advent of Peace, primarily a civilian gathering, though a strong military element was included among the guests. The huge saloons, built at the turn of the century, were done up in sage green, the style of decoration displaying a nostalgic leaning towards Art Nouveau, a period always sympathetic to Asian taste. Gauthier de Graef, ethnically confused, had been anxious to know whether there were eunuchs in the ladies’ apartments above the rooms where we were being entertained.

*[The Military Philosophers]*
A single oil lamp threw a circle of dim light round the dining table of the farm parlour where we ate, leaving the rest of the room in heavy shadow, dramatising by its glow the central figures of the company present. Were they a group of conspirators – something like the Gunpowder Plot – depicted in the cross-hatchings of an old engraved illustration? It was not exactly that. At the same time the hard lights and shades gave the circle of heads an odd, mysterious unity. The faces of the two colonels, bird and beast, added a note deliberately grotesque, surrealistic, possibly indicating a satirical meaning on the part of the artist, a political cartoonist perhaps. The colonels were placed on either side of General Liddament, who sat at the head of the table, deep in thought. His thin, clean-shaven, ascetic features, those of a schoolmaster or priest – also a touch of Sir Magnus Donners – were yellowish in complexion. Perhaps that tawny colour clarified the imagery, for now it became plain. Here was Pharaoh, carved in the niche of a shrine between two tutelary deities, who shielded him from human approach. All was manifest. Colonel Hogbourne-Johnson and Colonel Pedlar were animal-headed gods of Ancient Egypt. Colonel Hogbourne-Johnson was, of course, Horus, one of those sculptured representations in which the Lord of the Morning Sun resembles an owl rather than a falcon; a bad-tempered owl at that. Colonel Pedlar’s dog’s muzzle, on the other hand, was a milder than normal version of the jackal-faced Anubis, whose dominion over Tombs and the Dead did indeed fall within A&Q’s province. Some of the others round about were less easy to place in the Egyptian pantheon. In fact, one came finally to the conclusion, none of them were gods at all, mere bondsmen of the temple. For example, Cocksidge, officer responsible for Intelligence duties, with his pale eager elderly-little-boy expression – although on the edge of thirty – was certainly the lowest of slaves, dusting only exterior, less sacred precincts of the shrine, cleaning out with his hands the priest’s latrine, if such existed on the temple premises. Next to Cocksidge sat Greening, the General’s ADC, pink cheeked, fair haired, good-natured, about twenty years old, probably an alien captive awaiting sacrifice on the altar of this anthropomorphic trinity. Before anyone else could be satisfactorily identified, Colonel Pedlar spoke ...

[The Soldier’s Art]
Once more the Society gets a mention on the À la blaque weblog (http://alablaque.wordpress.com, 2 March 2013), largely due to our note in the last Newsletter.

You’re in The Anthony Powell Society Newsletter, I said to Amy. They’ve quoted the bit where I compared you with Jean Templar … Amy was having one of her obtuse days and I had to remind her about this blog … and then give her an outline of the plot of A Dance to the Music of Time … she listened with politeness rather than interest and then went to the crux of the matter.

Who told Anthony Powell about me?

Anthony Powell died, I said, some years ago, but his Society lives on. It is in rude health. The Earl of Gowrie often contributes to its deliberations.

Grey Gowrie! shouted Amy, familiarly I thought. The man who wrote about Carel Weight! …

Curiously I have been thinking about Powell recently. I bought and read a first edition of his book about John Aubrey … The focus is relentless and half his text is quoted directly from Aubrey and other Seventeenth Century writers, so that it is not always easy to follow what is going on. Maybe it is no accident that the Anthony Powell Society Newsletter digresses from Dance to the stand-alone novels, the memoirs and the Journals … but rarely ventures into the world of John Aubrey.
... Cuttings ... Cuttings ... Cuttings ... Cuttings ... Cuttings ...

**Country Life** on 20 March 2013 had an interview with Owen Paterson, UK Secretary of State for Department of Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). His choice of favourite book?

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A Dance to the Music of Time – *Anthony Powell* got the cycle thing so right. You do keep meeting the same people: the Defra lawyer, Charles Allen, was a friend at prep school.

Spotted by Jonathan Kooperstein. ■

On St George’s Day, 23 April 2013, on-line communal encyclopaedia Wikipedia chose to feature Kenneth Widmerpool in its Daily Article:

*Kenneth Widmerpool* is a fictional character in Anthony Powell’s novel sequence *A Dance to the Music of Time*, a 12-volume account of upper-class and bohemian life in Britain between 1920 and 1970. Widmerpool is the antithesis of the sequence’s narrator-hero Nicholas Jenkins.

Initially presented as a comic, even pathetic figure, he becomes increasingly formidable, powerful and ultimately sinister as the novels progress, his only sphere of failure being his relationships with women.

Widmerpool’s defining characteristics are lack of culture, small-mindedness and a capacity for intrigue; he is able to achieve his positions of dominance through dogged industry and self-belief. Thus he represents the meritocratic middle class’s challenge to the declining power of the “establishment”, revealed to have few defences against such an assault.

Among suggested real-life models have been Edward Heath, the British Prime Minister 1970–74, and Reginald Manningham-Buller, who was Britain’s Attorney General in the 1950s; Powell gave little encouragement to such theorising. The novel sequence ends with Widmerpool’s death, in bizarre circumstances arising from his involvement with a New Age-type cult.

Here is Richard Davenport-Hines reviewing John Smart’s *Tarantula’s Web: John Hayward, TS Eliot and their Circle* in the Literary Review of May 2013:

*Hayward’s Sunday evening salon in his flat in Bina Gardens was the resort of discriminating literary Londoners as well as foreign visitors as varied as the Marx Brothers and Paul Valéry, who told Cyril Connolly: ‘Je n’oublierai jamais Bina Gardens’. Hayward prospered as a journeyman reviewer, but failed to complete his novel Beechingstoke, a satire of prewar London of a type that was perfected by Anthony Powell in *The Acceptance World* and At Lady Molly’s.*

Spotted by Ivan Hutnik. ■
... Cuttings ... Cuttings ... Cuttings ... Cuttings ... Cuttings ...

Here is James Wolcott writing in *Vanity Fair* of 10 April 2013:

Students of twentieth century British literature need no reminding ... that the poet Philip Larkin and [novelist] Kingsley Amis were both besotted by the erotic hauteur of prime minister Margaret Thatcher, who died this week ... Sculpted out of cold cream and coiffed to beat the band, Thatcher was a dose of Viagra to these two neo-classical colloquialists ...

Less noted is that a third literary elder of stature also fell under Mrs T.’s spell, though with a scrim of critical detachment, as befitted his finicky temperament.

I speak of Anthony Powell, the author of the still-too-little-acknowledged comic masterpieces *Afternoon Men* and *From a View to a Death* and more famously for the twelve-volume novel cycle *A Dance to the Music of Time*, which bequeathed us perhaps the greatest bitch in English literature, Pamela Widmerpool ...

In the first volume of his Journals ... Powell recounts a fancy-do dinner at 10 Downing Street where he is seated on one side of Thatcher, VS Naipaul on the other.

I continue to find Mrs Thatcher very attractive physically. Her overhanging eyelids, hooded eyes, are the only suggestion of mystery (a characteristic I like in women, while totally accepting Wilde’s view of them as Sphinxes without a secret). Her general appearance seems to justify Mitterand’s alleged comment that she has the eyes of Caligula and the lips of Marilyn Monroe; the latter a film star I never, in fact, thought particularly attractive. Mrs Thatcher has a fair skin; hair-do of incredible perfection, rather a dumpy figure, the last seeming to add a sense of down-to-earthiness that is appropriate and not unattractive in its way. She was wearing a black dress, the collar rolled up behind her neck, some sort of gold pattern on it. On her right hand was a large Victorian ring, dark red, in an elaborate gold setting. She only likes talking of public affairs, which I never find easy to discuss in a serious manner ... Mrs T. is reputed to have no humour. I suspect she recognizes a joke more than she is credited with, if probably jokes of a limited kind, confined to those who know her well.

David Pryce-Jones told me Fitzroy Maclean reported himself being present when Mrs Thatcher was on an official visit to Jugoslavia as a member of the Opposition. There had been a dinner before meeting Tito, at which a superlatively good-looking Jug of about thirty five had rested his hand on her knee. Mrs T allowed this to remain throughout one course. At the next course his hand began to move up. She took it in both of her own hands, removed it, and said: ‘Perhaps one day. Not now’. When she met Tito on this same jaunt he was in a bad temper, having just got rid of his third or fourth wife. He told Mrs Thatcher that women should not meddle in politics. She replied: ‘I am politics’.
Mandrake, in the Daily Telegraph on 28 March 2013 reports that Anthony Powell’s old haunt, the Old War Office building, is to be sold off by the government.

The building, some 270,000 square feet of neo-baroque space comprising 1000 rooms over 7 floors, is hoped to raise around £100m for the public coffers.

As well as Powell, other notable former inhabitants include Winston Churchill, Lord Kitchener, Lloyd George and TE Lawrence.

Apparently the sale is a result of the Defence Secretary, Philip Hammond being beguiled by the £60m raised last year from the sale of Admiralty Arch.

Spotted by Christine Apperley.

Writing under the title “Novels of the Literary Life” DJ Taylor in Wall Street Journal of 15 February 2013 includes BDFR amongst his choice of five:

Set in wintry, postwar London, the 10th installment of Powell’s monumental roman-fleuve, A Dance to the Music of Time, gets most of its mileage from the establishment of a magazine called Fission, whose editorial atmosphere is not a million miles distant from the celebrated real-life literary monthly Horizon, edited by Powell’s friend Cyril Connolly. Full of coruscatingly funny literary jokes, with its title deriving from the moment when one of its characters looks up from his seduction of a woman on a billiard table in her husband’s library to remark, “Well, books do furnish a room”, the book centres on the novelist X Trapnel. A saturnine, pill-popping, down-at-heel dandy, inspired by the Soho bar-propper Julian Maclaren-Ross, Trapnel is the author of Camel Ride to the Tomb – the title is supposed to encapsulate his philosophy of life – and an unpublished masterpiece, Profiles in String, whose solitary copy is thrown into the Regent’s Park Canal by his vengeful mistress.

■

The Old War Office in London’s Whitehall
Society Merchandise

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Jeff Manley et al.; Dance Music. A 150-page guide to the musical references in Dance; compiled in the style of Spurling’s Handbook. UK: £7, Overseas: £10.50


Writing about Anthony Powell. The talks given at the 2004 AGM by George Lilley, Michael Barber and Nick Birns; introduced by Christine Berberich. UK: £4, Overseas: £7


OTHER PUBLICATIONS


Anthony Powell, Caledonia, A Fragment. The 2011 Greville Press reprint of this rare Powell spoof. Now publicly available in its own right for the first time. UK: £8, Overseas: £10.50

John Gould; Dance Class. American High School student essays from John’s two teachings of Dance at Philips Academy. Many fresh and perceptive insights. UK: £12, Overseas: £17

Michael Bakewell, Fitzrovia: London’s Bohemia. Published in the National Portrait Gallery “Character Sketches” series. Snapshot biographies of Fitzrovian characters including Powell and many of his friends. UK: £5.50, Overseas: £9.50

AUDIO

BBC Radio Dramatisation of Dance. Originally broadcast on BBC Radio 4 between 1979-82. 26 one-hour episodes. Single CD containing 26 MP3 files. For copyright reasons available to Society members only. UK & Overseas: £10 (£5 + minimum £5 Donation)

JOURNAL & NEWSLETTER

Secret Harmonies: Journal of the Anthony Powell Society. Back numbers of issues 1 to 4/5 available. UK: £5.50, Overseas: £9 each

Newsletter Centenary Issue. 120-page celebratory Centenary Newsletter (issue 21; December 2005). UK: £5.50, Overseas: £9
POSTCARDS & POSTERS

**Society Postcard.** B&W postcard of Powell with his cat Trelawney. Pack of 5. Picture below.  **UK: £2, Overseas: £3.50**

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**Wallace Collection Poussin Poster.** The Wallace Collection’s ½-life-size poster of Poussin’s *A Dance to the Music of Time*. Sent in a poster tube. Picture below.  **UK & Overseas: £11**

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The prices shown are the Society members’ prices as of May 2013 and are inclusive of postage and packing. Please note the different UK and overseas prices which reflect the additional cost of overseas postage. **Non-members will be charged the appropriate member’s price shown plus postage & packing at cost.**

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### Member Information

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<th>UK</th>
<th>Overseas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Members</td>
<td>£22</td>
<td>£28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Members</td>
<td>£33</td>
<td>£39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Members</td>
<td>£13</td>
<td>£19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>£100 minimum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- □ Buy 5 years membership for the price of 4 (any grade)

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

**Full Name:**

**Address:**

**Postcode/Zip:**

**Country:**

**Email:**

Gift membership is also available; please contact us for details.

### Payment Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of years membership being paid:</th>
<th>1 / 2 / 3 / 5 years for price of 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total amount payable:</strong></td>
<td>£ ______</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(No. of years x membership rate)

- □ I enclose a sterling cheque drawn on a UK bank. Please make cheques payable to *The Anthony Powell Society*.

- □ Please debit my Visa / MasterCard

  - Card No.: 
  - Card Expiry: 
  - 3-Digit Security Code:

  (Please give name & address of cardholder if different from the above.)

**GIFT AID** (delete if not applicable)

*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. You must pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year that is at least equal to the amount of tax that the Society will reclaim on your donations for that tax year.*

By completing this form I agree to the Society holding my information on computer.

**Signed:**

**Date:**

Please send the completed form and payment to:

**Anthony Powell Society Memberships, 76 Ennismore Avenue, Greenford, UB6 0JW, UK**

Phone: +44 (0) 20 8864 4095   Fax: +44 (0) 20 8020 1483

Email: membership@anthonypowell.org