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A Letter from the Editor

With sadness I report the demise of the Widmerpool Award. As previously reported several members had suggested that it be revived and enthusiastic nominations were received.

But the Trustees have, by a majority decision, abolished the award. They fear that it could bring the Society into disrepute, and cause anguish to the winners. As a small consolation we publish a poetic tribute to the great man on page 29.

The Trustees have confirmed that they will review their decision if a credible case is put forward. Readers are invited to let me have their views.

Thank you to all our contributors. We have excellent pieces in this issue and for the next one. There is an encouraging blend of established and new contributors.

We welcome unsolicited ideas and pieces. At the May Pub Meet several sparkling ideas were generated (see page 22) such as:
- AP and extraordinary rendition
- Sport in Dance
- AP and the North.

If you have an idea please just do it and send it in. By way of guidance:
- All contributions should be sent to the Editor (Stephen Walker). By all means copy them to the Publisher (Keith Marshall) but to avoid confusion please do not send them only to Keith.
- Articles should not exceed 5 pages (2000/2500 words) and must not have footnotes.

Have a good Summer’s reading and writing.

Stephen Walker
editor@anthonypowell.org

From the Secretary’s Desk

It’s all happening!
First rights go to the progress we are now making towards the commemorative plaque on Powell’s birthplace, 44 Ashley Gardens, London SW1. Although this is not yet a done deal, we very much hope that we will see the plaque installed before the end of this year.

Secondly, our upcoming events. As is now traditional, Ivan Hutnik has put together a Saturday stroll round Powell’s London for the end of June. In a new departure, the Editor (moonlighting as Social Secretary) and I have put together a day out in the picturesque Cinque Port of Rye – a place famed for its artists and writers, including some of AP’s friends. This is something of an experiment; if it is successful we will look at similar days out, maybe once a year, to other places of possible Powellian interest.

The third thing I would like to highlight is that we have agreed to extend the deadline for submitting paper proposals for the York Conference next Easter. You now have until 30 September to get that proposal to us.

Some of you have grumbled about the mugshot of yours truly which formerly appeared at the head of this column. So now you’ll see something different. And yes, that small solemn boy is me, aged about five.

Finally, a small apology. This issue of Newsletter is late going to press, and so will be late arriving with you. This is in part because my mother died in late May after a fall; she was 99, alert and active until her last 10 days. For a small, quiet lady she has left a big hole!

Keith Marshall
secretary@anthonypowell.org
Anthony Powell considered the equestrian statue of King Charles I which stands at the top of Whitehall to be “aesthetically pleasing, the winner” amongst London’s statues. Struan Bates looks at the remarkable history of the statue.

Ignored by passing traffic and lion-clambering tourists, Hubert Le Sueur’s Charles I bronze stares blankly down Whitehall to his place of execution.

The French sculptor’s 1633 piece has been in the same position since 1676, surviving well over 300 years of tinkering transport planners, pesky pigeons and plinth pimping.

Remarkable, as but for the actions of one man it would have never have survived the Interregnum.

The statue sits on an irregular traffic island to the south of the square, before the sharper-than-expected incline down into Whitehall. In the picture below you can make out the National Gallery at the north edge of the square, with St Martin-in-the-Fields church to the north-east and the Strand to the right of the sculpture.

Charles is cast in a demi-suit of armour, with a scarf tied across his chest. His left hand holds the reins of the horse, while in his right he holds a baton, à la Van Dyck’s
equestrian portrait. Le Sueur was asked to produce the statue by Richard Weston, Lord High Treasurer to the King since 1628, in 1630. He commissioned Le Sueur to cast:

... a Horsse in Brasse bigger then a greate Horsse by a foot, and the figure of his Maj King Charles proportionable full six foot, Which the afore saide Hubert le sueur is to performe with all the skill and Workmanship as leith in his powoer ...

Le Sueur’s fee was paid in instalments:
- £50 on signing the contract
- £100 more after completing the model within three months
- £200 when the model was ready to be cast in copper
- £150 when cast
- £100 on delivery of the statue to Weston’s garden in Roehampton.

The total sum of £600 would be worth around £90,000 in 2014 values.

A metal plate under the left forefoot dates the completed work at 1633, but it was never delivered to Weston (by then the Earl of Portland), who died in 1635. It had not been erected by the breakout of the English Civil War and during the conflict was stored in the crypt of St Paul’s.

In 1655 it was sold by parliament to John Rivett, a Holborn brazier, with the request that he break it up. Evidently hiding Royalist sympathies (or with one eye on his pension), Rivett produced some scraps of brass to prove he had done as instructed, while hiding the statue (which can’t have been the easiest of tasks).

At the Restoration it was ‘discovered’ by Jerome Weston, Second Earl of Portland, Richard Weston’s eldest surviving son. Still in Rivett’s possession, and the brazier unwilling to give it up, Weston complained to the House of Lords, who decreed on the 19 July 1660:

That the said John Rivett shall permit and suffer the Sheriff of London to serve a Replevin upon the said Statue and Horse of Brass, that are now in his Custody.

The statue was bought by Charles II and an order given “the effigies of the old King to be brought to Charing Cross and a place made for it”. A ledger exists for 1676 detailing all the works carried out to put the statue on its pedestal, amounting to £689 – more than the fee originally paid to Le Sueur. It was placed on the site of the Eleanor Cross, which was destroyed by parliament in 1647.

The pedestal has been replaced and repaired a number of times over the intervening centuries, and the current one is severely weather-worn, with the Stuart coat of arms to the rear being almost unrecognisable.

Intrigue surrounding the statue did not end with Mr Rivett, however. In 1810 The Gentlemen’s Magazine (Vol. 1, p 377) reported that:

The sword, buckles and straps, fell from the equestrian statue of King Charles the First at Charing Cross. They were picked up by a porter of the name of Moxam, at the Golden Cross, and deposited in the care of Mr Eyre, trunk-maker, who has apprised the Board of Green Cloth of the circumstance.

In the spirit of Mr Rivett, the trunk-maker also refused to give up his piece of the statue, and kept hold of it until given a receipt from the Office of Works.
The sword was finally stolen for good in 1844 during Queen Victoria’s visit to open the Royal Exchange, and had not been replaced when the statue was photographically recorded in the 1930s.

The statue was removed during the war for safety, and a new sword and Order of the Garter added in 1946. Further details on its care and maintenance can be found in the National Archives ‘Your Archives’ website, in the entry for Le Sueur.

The Palace of Whitehall from which the king ruled is long gone, with only the Banqueting House and its magnificent Rubens ceiling which he commissioned, surviving. In his The Sale of the Late King’s Goods (2006) Jerry Brotton notes that, for all

*the most public artwork associated with the king was neither commissioned by him or displayed until nearly thirty years after his death.*

Symbolically, the erection of the statue by his son was more a celebration of the monarchy’s restoration than a vindication of his father, a sentiment running through Edmund Waller’s poem On the Statue of King Charles I at Charing Cross, in the Year 1674:

> That the First Charles does here in triumph ride,
> See his son reign where he a martyr died,
> And people pay that rev’rence as they pass,
> (Which then he wanted!) to the sacred brass,
> Is not the effect of gratitude alone,
> To which we owe the statue and the stone;
> But Heaven this lasting monument has wrought,
> That mortals may eternally be taught
> Rebellion, though successful, is but vain,
> And kings so kill’d rise conquerors again.
> This truth the royal image does proclaim,
> Loud as the trumpet of surviving Fame.

The ‘martyrdom’ is commemorated each year in a wreath laying ceremony at the statue on 30 January, the date of the king’s execution.


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In *The Novels of Anthony Powell* (1976), James Tucker remarks drily that ‘there are times when one fears that every male character resembles Uncle Giles’. In St John Clarke’s case, however, the numerous parallels with Uncle Giles can help to shed light on the comic appeal of them both.

First, both characters are chronically unreliable in matters of business. St John Clarke’s non-delivery of his introduction to *The Art of Horace Isbister* is a running joke motivating much of the action in *The Acceptance World*. As Mrs Erdleigh foretells at the Ufford:

> A small matter in your business ... is going to cause inconvenience. It has to do with an elderly man – and two young ones connected with him. [AW, 15]

Nick’s firm has been waiting for this introduction for at least a year at the start of the novel. He has heard that the writer has been going to parties in Bloomsbury with his secretary, Mark Members. He has also given one of Nick’s novels a decent review in a New York paper. This is all part of a larger design, explains Barnby: St John Clarke has been converted to modernism. Given that Isbister’s portraits show ‘an almost aggressive disregard’ for modernity, his boyhood friend can no longer be seen to endorse them. ‘You’ll never see that introduction now.’

In the wake of Isbister’s death the following year, Jenkins sets up a meeting with Members at the Ritz, to confront him about the lack of progress. Quiggin turns up instead and announces himself as the new secretary. St John Clarke may yet write the introduction, he says pompously, but will want to approach Isbister’s art from ‘a different angle’ – which just happens to coincide with Quiggin’s own doctrinal line.

The scene is now set for the second point of comparison with Uncle Giles (a bit of a radical, as we recall), one that Tucker analyses in some depth. The sacking of Members is, he says, a ‘symptom – or part cause’ of St John Clarke’s conversion to Marxism [Tucker, 142]. In a lapse from customary understatement, Jenkins goes so
far as to describe it as ‘a landmark in the general disintegration of society in its traditional form’ – clear evidence of St John Clarke’s symbolic role in AW.

Tucker picks up the theme in his analysis of *The Kindly Ones* and in almost identical language. Giles and St John Clarke fall short of accepted values. Through them, he argues, Powell is making a moral point that those who ‘dodge out of their proper position in [society] both a sign and a cause of further disintegration’ [Tucker, 159].

This equivocal language – sign and cause – invites a question. Is St John Clarke an agent or a patient? Does any critical reflection accompany his late-flowering modernism/Marxism or is he just the semi-senile dupe of the latest secretary to elbow his way into the job?

Nick ascribes his participation in the Hyde Park Hunger March to Quiggin’s domination and his consequent enrolment into the herd of authors, dons and clergymen jostling for space on platforms of a ‘Leftish’ sort. Every few minutes, St John Clarke obediently joins in on cue:

*brandish[ing] in his hand a rolled-up copy of one of the ‘weeklies’, as he yell[s] the appropriate slogan in a high excited voice.* [AW, 129]

We learn later, however, that Quiggin ingratiates himself with people by a mixture of flattery and bullying and thus forms ambiguous, possibly symbiotic, relationships with his sponsors. Symbiosis would certainly seem to capture St John Clarke’s relationship with the marchers:

*With his long white locks, he made an effective figure, no doubt popular with the organisers and legitimately gratifying to himself.* [AW, 130]

As to critical reflection, there is reliable evidence that St John Clarke has made more than a token intellectual effort. He consults Lenin’s speeches on his own initiative and even writes an article on Socialist Realism, commended more than twenty years after his death by a dedicated practitioner of that school.

If Tucker is right – and he claims to be wary of symbolist readings [187] – then, as an object of Powell’s censure, St John Clarke must have a pretty shrewd idea of the direction he is taking.

Their discontent with their ‘allocated places’ also sounds in a niggling social envy. Uncle Giles maintained that

*all material advancement in the world was the result of influence, a mysterious attribute with which he invested … every human being on earth except himself.* [QU, 66]

St John Clarke’s strident social ambition may be a typical reflex of his humble background. He is fond of referring to his early struggles as ‘a country lad made good’ – though, to his chagrin, not nearly as good as Isbister.

*Isbister was beloved of the gods, Mark … RA before he was forty-five – Gold Medallist of the Paris Salon – Diploma of Honour at the International Exhibition at Amsterdam – Commander of the Papal Order of Pius IX – refused a knighthood.* [CCR, 190]

All St John Clarke has to show for his life are a few dreary country house parties and not even the Nobel Prize. Those whom the gods despise they first force to play croquet with Lord Lonsdale.

Lastly, of course, both exit the stage with a gesture of testamentary perversity: Uncle
Giles leaves his estate to Mrs Erdleigh, while St John Clarke confounds everybody by making Erridge his heir, much to the disgruntlement of Quiggin, on grounds of financial jealousy and the erstwhile patron-protegé relationship with Erridge, ‘complicated by Mona’s elopement’. Much later, however, St John Clarke’s royalties are diverted to the publishing house of Quiggin & Craggs, via the Warminster Trust.

St John Clarke’s appearance at the lunch party in Hyde Park Gardens provides evidence for a second, albeit looser, comparison – with Widmerpool. Jenkins assigns the pair of them to ‘that category of persons at once absurd and threatening’. Before his arrival, Lady Warminster describes him as ‘rather an old humbug’. Coincidentally, Matilda Donners jokes that Widmerpool should have portrayed ‘Humbug’ as the eighth deadly sin when he turned up at Stourwater that afternoon before the War.

We have had earlier intimations of St John Clarke’s posturing and fickleness but these barely prepare us for the abrupt lurches within the histrionic repertoire that he displays when he eventually arrives. What Nick first notices is his high, rich, breathless, mincing voice, like that of an experienced actor trying to get the best of a minor part in Restoration comedy. [CCR, 78]

Having established some common ground as a fellow writer with his hostess and, more gingerly, with Nick, St John Clarke bemoans the creative torpor into which he has sunk. Sometimes, he says, he tries to add a paragraph to his memoirs only to be distracted by confabulations of sparrows or clouds scudding over the Serpentine.

No sparrow on any roof was ever lonely
As I am, nor any animal untamed.
Doesn’t Petrarch say that somewhere? [CCR, 83]

Too late, he realises that he is indulging in an ‘outdated, even decadent state of mind, inconsistent with [his] political regeneration’ and clumsily tries to extricate himself by boasting that he is too preoccupied with high-minded causes to make any headway with his memoirs. The conversation broadens into an exchange of views about the international scene including the Spanish Civil War. St John Clarke proclaims that people like himself look forward to a social revolution in a country that has remained feudal for far too long, as Nick says,
almost benignly, as if the war in Spain was being carried on just to please him personally. [CCR, 95]

As lunch draws to a close, Jenkins observes St John Clarke sliding into his Man of Letters pose, talking to Blanche Tolland about Dickens, in ‘a rich sonorous voice quite unlike the almost falsetto social diction he had employed on arrival’. What to make of this? It is almost reminiscent of Auden’s witticism in The Age of Anxiety: the sane know that they are acting; the mad do not.

The third and last comparison is external to Dance and therefore necessarily speculative, but it is based on the tightly knit triangular relationship between St John Clarke, Quiggin and Erridge, which is sealed one afternoon in a bookshop on the Charing Cross Road.

When Nick observes him on the Hunger March, he notes that Quiggin’s skull is cropped like a convict’s, as if he has intentionally tried to make himself look like a character from Dostoevsky. Quiggin in turn later observes [CCR] that ‘Alf is rather like Prince Myshkin in The Idiot’. Could St John Clarke also have a Dostoevskian counterpart?

Once we step back and recall that Powell based St John Clarke on a writer he rather despised, John Galsworthy, the question pretty much answers itself, but it is worth collecting the clues that he has scattered along the way.

We have an ex-novelist, willing to go to any lengths to meet people of higher social standing. He has an unshakeable belief in his own great talent, a love of literary allusion and the smug conviction that events are laid on for his benefit. He has a dual significance in the novel: he is closely modelled on a real historical character and symbolises an intellectual trend (or bandwagon), of whose destructive potential he is only dimly aware.

I am speaking, of course, of Karmazinov in The Devils, Dostoevsky’s lampoon of Turgenev. In the episode entitled The Fete, Karmazinov gives a public reading of Merci, his farewell to literature (apparently not his first). It is an abomination, in which

Some wood nymph squeaked in the bushes; Gluck played the violin among the reeds.

[Dostoyevsky, The Devils, 500]

The historian EH Carr wrote in his Dostoyevsky 1821-1881:

Karmazinov … is depicted as a sympathiser, out of vanity rather than conviction, with the nihilists. The very name Karmazinov suggested the Russian form of the French word cramoisi; it is as if an English novelist had labelled friends of the Reds ‘Mr Pink’.

The narrator of The Devils explains how Karmazinov relentlessly turns the spotlight on his own emotions. He describes a shipwreck with the sole object of self-display – focus not on the drowned woman with the dead child in her arms, but rather on him and how he was unable to bear the sight! As Dostoevsky’s biographer Joseph Frank framed it, everything in Karmazinov’s writing expresses his own existential anguish. Now back to the lunch party:

His [SJC's] face insistently suggested a self-applauding interior activity, a desire to let everyone know about his own ‘mental strife’. [CCR, 79]

Sounds familiar, doesn’t it? ■
Capel-Dunn’s machinations revealed

Early in 1943 AP was transferred to the Cabinet Office which was a promotion in career terms. This was arranged by Colonel Dennis Capel-Dunn. He was to be one of Capel-Dunn’s assistants servicing a group of committees which produced

a continuous flow of ‘papers’ devoted to every conceivable aspect of how the war was, or might be, waged. [Faces, 157]

Finding himself incompatible with the job and its requirements my father moved back to MIL, where luckily there was a vacancy, after about nine weeks ‘without regret’ despite having to take a demotion from Major to Captain.

In his MI6 History Keith Jeffery in a chapter entitled “Post War Planning” describes the intense manoeuvring that began in the first half of 1943 between the Foreign Office, MI5, SIS and SOE about the problem of intelligence organisation post war. Capel-Dunn was in the thick of these discussions which began in April 1943 the very moment when AP was working in the Cabinet Office with Capel-Dunn. In May 1943 Geoffrey Vickers at the Ministry of Economic Warfare suggested that a special department could be set up after the war to collate economic intelligence. Denis Capel-Dunn, says Jeffery, counselled caution, writing:

Among the many lessons I have learned during the past 2½ years one has been how unsatisfactory it is for small, or indeed large, independent organisations, to grow up with indeterminate responsibility eg. SOE, the Security Executive, with all its ramifications … [The] future of economic intelligence cannot possibly be considered apart from the future of the intelligence organisation as a whole. [MI6 History, 597]

In August 1945 when decisions had to be made about all aspects of intelligence with the war nearly over, there were two papers which broadly embodied different conceptions of how SIS might fit in to the wider government framework.

Keith Jeffery summarises the two papers as follows.

The JIC [Joint Intelligence Sub Committee] paper reflected the operational, technical and scientific priorities of the armed services, which, moreover, dominated the intelligence requirements in wartime. By contrast the Bland conclusions embodied the longer term, more political needs of the Foreign Office which tended to be more apparent in peacetime … SIS was under continual pressure to integrate its organisation and activities with the military machine. [MI6 History, 615]

Jeffery argues that the Cavendish-Bentinck and Capel-Dunn paper represented an attempt at the highest level once victory was in sight, to ensure that the peace time organisation of “the Intelligence Machine” largely matched the wartime needs of the service departments. The attempt failed in part due to superior Whitehall foot work
by the Foreign Office as opposed to the service ministries. He goes on to suggest that there is a profound British uneasiness with military and potentially militarised organisations which the Bland committee hinted at in the concern their report expressed about public suspicions that “something like a Gestapo” might have been operating in Britain. For the British people and its government part of the price of winning the war was the ostentatious rejection of those very military values and strengths which had made victory possible. Although SIS embodied many military qualities and served the needs of the armed forces it was more likely to survive and flourish in the post war world as a civilian organisation under the accommodating supervision of the Foreign Office.

The fact that my father crossed the path, albeit briefly, of Dennis Capel-Dunn in early 1943 when the latter was beginning a power play in committees which eventually, in 1945, came unstuck for the potent reasons which Keith Jeffery gives, seems worth noting in the overall context of AP’s years in MIL.

After his brief period at the Cabinet Office my father was given MIL duties with the Czechs and the Belgians in 1943. Colonel Josef Kalla (later Brigadier-General), the doyen of the military attachés in London, had been at the Czech legation (later embassy) for several years before WW2. In 1939 he had armed his staff against a possible takeover by German-orientated Government that was installed in March 1939. AP found Kalla particularly sympathetic. In common with other officers in MIL he had served in WW1 but he had been on the other side in the Imperial Royal Austro-Hungarian Army and the air arm.

In 1940 the Czech Intelligence service now based in London enabled SIS to receive important details about German preparations for an invasion from Paul Thummel ‘A54’ a well-placed Abwehr officer who was being run by Colonel Frantisek Moravec, Czech Intelligence head. Thummel’s reports came via Switzerland; 14 in all between April and December 1940 giving details about German capabilities and intentions. Major Desmond Morton was coordinating these reports for Churchill including information from contacts all along the coast of France about German installations soon after the fall of France.

The handling of SIS intelligence changed dramatically on the resignation of Neville Chamberlain on 10 May 1940. It took a month or two for the delicate process of how to distribute intelligence obtained from secret sources to be sorted out to Churchill’s satisfaction. The MI6 History describes an incident in cabinet in August 1940 when Secretary of State Anthony Eden complained that he was getting “no information from France” and Churchill received a report from his personal representative with General Charles de Gaulle (who had escaped to England in 1940 the Czech Intelligence service now based in London enabled SIS to receive important details about German preparations for an invasion from Paul Thummel ‘A54’ a well-placed Abwehr officer who was being run by Colonel Frantisek Moravec, Czech Intelligence head. Thummel’s reports came via Switzerland; 14 in all between April and December 1940 giving details about German capabilities and intentions. Major Desmond Morton was coordinating these reports for Churchill including information from contacts all along the coast of France about German installations soon after the fall of France.

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June 1940), General Spears, of a visit to France of a free French agent which had been organised by SIS. Churchill was furious. He felt that there was a conspiracy to keep these reports from him. Thereafter Colonel Menzies was directed to send all raw intelligence to Churchill while also sending SIS reports to Major Morton. Menzies recalled afterwards that from now on a small red box to which only he and the PM had keys, was deposited on the latter’s bed each morning within which were all relevant reports and intercepts obtained by GC&CS over the previous 24 hours. The *MI6 History* describes a note by Eric Seal, Churchill’s Principal Private Secretary, which

> more prosaically recorded that the daily boxes from “C” were to be put on the Prime Minister’s desk and left for him to re-lock. The boxes were marked “only to be opened by the Prime minister in person”. This marking … is not mere camouflage and is to be taken seriously.  

[*MI6 History*, 348]

However precisely they were supplied, in time these boxes contained material from Britain’s most valuable Ultra intelligence source – the German Enigma decrypts.

The fall of Denmark and Norway in 1940, and the expulsion of the British from Finland in 1941 meant that by the beginning of 1942 Sweden had become a hive of SIS activity. The prime objective in the North German and Baltic region was for more intelligence: naval, army and air force.

In April 1942 the Swedes arrested the Czech head agent run from the UK with three members of his network. The Swedes discovered coding materials and telegram records indicating subversive activity plans with SOE including germ warfare.

In *Faces* AP gives an introductory description of MIL in which he says:

> MIL was very decidedly not involved in any activities of the Secret Service (MI6), nor Special Operations Executive (SOE). When, very rarely, administrative dealings with these organisations were in question (for example, transfer of Allied personnel for secret duties) negotiations were kept to a stringent minimum, so that liaison relations with Allies should be recognised as existing only in the sphere of open dealing.  

[*Faces*, 132]

I do remember my father explaining to me about SOE and also about the coded messages sent out on public radio to the resistance. He said that he had been on business to the office of SOE on one occasion.
In late 1941 AP, being on probation at MIL, would have been assigned to odd jobs involving the Allies and neutrals. Since being called up in December 1939 he had spent over a year with the Welch Regiment as a Lieutenant with a platoon of soldiers and then at Divisional Headquarters in Northern Ireland until he was ordered to attend a Politico-Military Course (PMC) at Cambridge. AP writes about the PMC course saying:

[it] did credit to British self-assurance as to the eventual outcome of the war. At that moment victory did not seem very probable. Germany, having overrun Europe, would soon feel strong enough to attack the Soviet Union, her own ally in the devastation of Poland.

[Faces, 112]

AP received orders to attend the PMC in January 1941 at a moment when The Daily Telegraph was carrying headlines such as “10,000 Incendiaries Rained On London: 8 Wren Churches Burnt: Guildhall a Shell” (31 December 1940).

This began a process of selection in the area of Military Intelligence. After a false start when he was turned down for a post liaising with the Free French, he joined MIL.

An illustration of how signals information influenced the day to day affairs of this section of the War Office is described in The Military Philosophers when Nick Jenkins is summoned by the bell from one of the teleprinters, he being on night duty. A key piece of news is coming through about groups from the Polish Army crossing the Russian border into Iran indicating an evacuation of units held by the Russians. The narrator refers to this event as being some six weeks after the Fall of Singapore (15 February 1942). The Daily Telegraph edition on 16 February 1942, as well as carrying Churchill’s broadcast about Singapore as the top story also has a report on skirmishes between Russian and German troops 300 miles west of Moscow on the old Polish border. At the foot of this report on the back page of this issue there is a short paragraph under the heading ‘Poles in Russia’, which says that the Polish army in Russia is not yet ready for action, adding that the Polish force will consist of 6-8 divisions under General Anders and was presently stationed in South-East Russia. A detail in the paragraph is that GB had sent enough uniforms and a part of the men’s equipment was on the way – even in the wastes of Siberia it was still a tailors’ war.

(To be concluded) ■

Winston Churchill

Correction

Part I of this article, Newsletter #58, says “the Nazis would not invade Russia until August 1941”, whereas in fact they invaded Russia on 22 June 1941. Our apologies for the error and our thanks to those who pointed it out.
as night follows day, it was inevitable that I fell in love with him. Or perhaps, with hindsight it was not so much love as a longing for excitement and escape from a husband whom even the king himself could not abide.

As that awful one-time fiancé of Mildred’s once pompously remarked, Dogdene has a very romantic history. Picture the backdrop: magnificent turrets absorbing golden evening sunlight and casting long, deep purple shadows across the lawns; mix in the delicate scent of roses wafting over from the walled garden; top this with the sweet song of the nightingale that lived under the east wing gable, and the result was inevitable. Dicky first had me in that arbour beyond the ancient willow tree under which tea was served in the summer. I could see into John’s study window from where I lay, ravished, exhausted, exposed and euphoric, but I knew that he wouldn’t have cared, even if he had bothered to look out.

All that summer, I lived for Dicky’s visits and on ever more outlandish pretexts, I would excuse myself from the house party for assignations in the gardens. If it rained we would meet in the folly on the hill. I had to mend more than one dress myself to hide the evidence of our liaisons.

You look shocked! Don’t be. Nick didn’t tell you because he never knew. No one ever did. If I failed in fidelity I was at least discreet. John may have been important in government and could perfectly judge the effect of an interest rate...
I loved the chaos, the variety, the ever-changing cast. I suspect that sowed the seeds for how I ran my Kensington house in later years – I know how many people puzzled at the entropy that was endemic there.

I first met Ted during those days. I liked him but there was nothing in the nature of a grande passion. We rubbed along pretty well for the weeks that he was recuperating with shrapnel in his belly, probably because he was wholly different from John, but when he left I soon forgot about him. Others took his place in the sick beds. For me, the war finished too soon and I was in danger of sinking back into that grey, lifeless existence that had blighted my days before – but John contracted Spanish flu in early ’19 and, thankfully, died. Well, I say ‘Spanish flu’ but really it was an excess of the opium he had brought back from the war but of course the Sleafords weren’t going to let that particular cat out of their highly secretive and still fashionable bag.

rise, but he knew as much about a young girl’s heart as about the internal combustion engine. Even so, I was his wife and in time I should have begun to feel a little guilt at my betrayal – had I not, quite by chance one afternoon, discovered that far from surrounding himself with grey liberals, they had in fact all the while been rather pink. In many ways I was relieved. Being a trophy bride seemed to give a legitimacy to my own dalliance.

We carried on like that for several years. Oh, I know Dicky had other girls – a man like that always will – but it was enough for me to have an intermittent slice of him: it somehow made Dogdene more bearable. Outwardly I lived a privileged life – we entertained royalty and the setting was generally thought beautiful. But, and don’t be shocked again here please, it was frankly a relief when the war came. Dogdene was transformed. It became a military hospital and I one of its nurses. Rather than the lilly-livered legions of limp liberals, now squads of brave young men, all with different stories littered its halls. I busied myself with my work and loved the chaos, the variety, the ever-changing cast. I suspect that sowed the seeds for how I ran my Kensington house in later years – I know how many people puzzled at the entropy that was endemic there.

I first met Ted during those days. I liked him but there was nothing in the nature of a grande passion. We rubbed along pretty well for the weeks that he was recuperating with shrapnel in his belly, probably because he was wholly different from John, but when he left I soon forgot about him. Others took his place in the sick beds. For me, the war finished too soon and I was in danger of sinking back into that grey, lifeless existence that had blighted my days before – but John contracted Spanish flu in early ’19 and, thankfully, died. Well, I say ‘Spanish flu’ but really it was an excess of the opium he had brought back from the war but of course the Sleafords weren’t going to let that particular cat out of their highly secretive and still fashionable bag.
Don’t look so shocked! You have no idea how dull, yet also how self-absorbed he was. Sometimes, even now, I wake at night in a cold sweat and see that awful Isbister painting of him staring down at me dressed in his Garter robes. That smug expression is worse than any ghost.

The Sleafords are none too generous in terms of allowances to their widows but for a while I had a decent one and decided that, before it was cut, I should buy a car to ensure some independence. There were moves afoot to oust me from Dogdene, then still my home, by my equally dull brother-in-law, Geoffrey. So in that summer I attended the motor show and was touring some of the smaller, more affordable models when whom should I spy bent over the bonnet of an Austin Twenty polishing vigorously – but Ted!

We wandered down nostalgia lane, compared wars and ended the evening by dining in a highly disreputable Italian restaurant off the Gloucester Road. The relief of not having to slum it in all that Dogdene finery was immense and knowing I should never again have to host the dull, effete political creatures that had always surrounded John was sufficient to kindle a romance. Within six months, Ted had proposed and we settled down to our new chaotic life in Kensington. Of course, he was not Dicky but he mixed a fabulous cocktail and, the occasional pub crawl aside, I could control him. Bit of a shock to find that he and Mildred had had a fling but I suppose, you never can tell.

Similarly, I bet you’d never guessed all that about me: an adulteress from the word go and a merry widow to boot!

Ah, I’ll never forget Dicky at Dogdene.

Just don’t tell Frederica.

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### Bonham’s Sale, 24 June
#### Books from Powell’s Library

An important collection of presentation copies inscribed to Anthony Powell by Evelyn Waugh, George Orwell, Dylan Thomas, and others, with some related manuscript material, and miscellaneous books reflecting Powell’s literary friendships and interests.

These are included in Bonham’s “Fine Books and Manuscripts” sale, on 24 June, at their London Knightsbridge saleroom. The catalogue is online and viewable at [www.bonhams.com/22714](http://www.bonhams.com/22714). The relevant lots are 299-342.

For further enquiries please contact Matthew Haley on 020 7393 3817 or matthew.haley@bonhams.com.

Thanks to Tristram Powell and Patric Dickinson for the information.

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### Christie’s Sale, 10 June
#### Books from the Library of the Late Anthony Hobson

The sale includes copies of much of Powell’s fiction and some other works, all inscribed by the author to Anthony Hobson.


Thanks to Giles Elgood for the information.
Powell crept up on me unawares. He had recommended himself as a contemporary of Waugh’s with whom he shared an amusingly acerbic world-view – Weltanschauung, as my wife insists. Or so I was told as an undergraduate. By the time I discovered my mistake – most of the way through A Question of Upbringing – I was beguiled, hooked by a writer of very different qualities to his friend.

Waugh painted with broad brush-strokes in primary colours alone, a Gilray, Hogarth, Grosz or Scarfe. In Powell’s palette the tones seemed more muted. He was a nuanced, subtle, allusive and shimmering impressionist: a Monet, Manet or a Sisley. Of comparable background, education and not dissimilar experiences of life, Powell and Waugh wrote of the same mid-twentieth century upper middle-class English milieu, on terms as familiar as possible with the aristocracy. Powell, though, seemed to my young self a man of catholic rather than Catholic sympathies: charitable, good-humoured, and largely at ease with the world. Waugh, notoriously, was not. It showed. Moreover, in the sheer scale of the achievement, I felt that the Dance trumped Waugh. From the unimpeachable perspective of the British intelligentsia, Powell offered less of a series of – admittedly dazzling – caricatures than a whole gallery of portraits from the country’s pre-and post-war years. It could hardly be bettered.

Revisiting Powell – not for the first time – thirty-five years after our first encounter, I felt much the same. He never challenges the luminescence of individual novels like Scoop, Brideshead, Pinfold or – in my book – Helena; nor does he approach the standard of Waugh’s translucent prose. Yet the pre-war novels are jeux d’esprit in their own right, the memoirs intrigue as the other side of the Dance’s looking-glass, and the sequence as a whole is much greater than the sum of its parts. Powell outdoes Waugh in his ambition, his scope, his humanity, his compassion, and in his sense of the many parts we are all obliged to play in our time.

And without Powell, I thought, how else would I have heard of Weltanschauung? Or indeed Proust?

So much though I love Brideshead, re-reading the sequence has resolved a conundrum. I now know that when Kirsty asks about my luxury item on the desert island, I shall be obliged to plump for A Dance to the Music of Time.

Jim Ring’s Erskine Childers (1996) was the winner of the Marsh Prize; We Come Unseen (2001) the Mountbatten. Storming the Eagle’s Nest, about the Alps in the Second World War, is his latest book. It is a sequel to How the English Made the Alps (2000). His alternative history trilogy is in its second trimester, and he is a director of the country’s leading literary quarterly, Slightly Foxed.
Dates for Your Diary

**Summer Saturday Stroll**  
Further Meanderings in the Footsteps of Milly Andriadis and Charles Stringham  
**Saturday 27 June 2015**  
**1030 for 1100 hrs**  
Meet:  
**Petty France exit of St James’s Park tube station**  
(opposite the main station entrance)  
The route, a largely green one this year, will encompass St James's Park, Green Park, and hopefully Hyde Park to rest in the shadow of the Achilles statue. The walk will be roughly two miles.  
As last year, we will end at Shepherd Market, for lunch at Da Corradi, the now well-known family-run Italian restaurant. Lunch is booked for 1300 hrs.  
No need to book for the walk, but if you wish to join the lunch party please let us know so we can book a large enough group table.  
There is no charge for the walk itself (although donations in the Hon. Secretary’s top hat will be welcome) and lunch will be pay on the day.  
Non-members will be welcome.  
For further details and booking please contact Ivan Hutnik, ivanhutnik@gmail.com, or the Hon. Secretary.

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

**2016 Conference**  
**Anthony Powell, Shakespeare and Other Literary Influences**  
**Friday 8 to Sunday 10 April 2016**  
**King’s Manor, York**  
King’s Manor, part of the University of York, is a glorious medieval house in the centre of one of the jewel cities of the UK and very close to York Minster. Travel to York couldn’t be easier with trans-continental flights to Manchester and a direct train connection, or a regular fast train service from central London. York has abundant accommodation to suit all pockets.  
The revised “Call for Papers” (and early information) is included with this Newsletter.  
Note that we have extended the date for the submission of papers.  
So how about submitting a paper? More details as they become available.
Dates for Your Diary

Rye Explorer

Join us for a day exploring this picturesque medieval Cinque Port

**Saturday 5 September 2015**

Meet: Rye Heritage Centre; 1030 hrs prompt

Cost: £35 per head, payable in advance

Rye is a delightful small town with history going back before 1066. It has many literary and artistic connections: the Bensons, Henry James, John Ryan (of Pugwash fame), painter Paul Nash, Spike Milligan, diarist Samuel Jeake and many more.

AP would almost certainly have known Rye, if perhaps not well. Powell’s friend the artist Ed Burra lived at Playden, just outside Rye, and Gerald Reitlinger lived a little further off.

The day will consist of:

1030 Meet at Rye Heritage Centre for a short introduction to the town followed by a guided walk led by one of the Heritage Centre team.

1230 Cold buffet lunch at the Ypres Castle Inn.

1400 Free time to explore the town; museum; medieval castle; medieval church; potteries; secondhand bookshop etc.

1600 Cream Tea at the George Hotel in the High Street.

The ticket price covers the walk, lunch (but not drinks), cream tea and service charges.

**The group will be strictly limited to 20 people and places will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis.** We expect the day to be very popular, so please ask to reserve a place before sending payment. If the day is oversubscribed we will keep a stand-by list.

**Please note: Rye is not suitable for those with mobility difficulties.**

Many of the medieval streets are narrow and cobbled; almost everything is on a steep hill; and there is a stepped path to the pub for lunch. Sorry, fact of life!

Due to the nature of the town, please wear sensible walking shoes. Bring a waterproof and/or umbrella as the walk will take place regardless of the weather. And don’t forget your camera!

If possible, please come to Rye by public transport. Although there is parking around the edges of the town it is always very busy; there is no parking in the medieval centre of the town.

Cancellations before midday Monday 17 August will be refunded less a £5 cancellation charge. No refunds for places cancelled after midday Monday 17 August.

And before you ask, yes we will provide a town plan and London train times with your booking confirmation.

Bookings and further information from the Hon. Secretary.
Welcome to New Members
We extend a warm welcome to the following new members:
- Robert Dangel, Florida, USA
- Marshall Hall, Twickenham
- Melissa Hubner, Connecticut, USA
- Tom Miller, Guernsey
- George Warren, London

Condolences
We regret that in recent months we have learnt of the deaths of the following members:
- Robin Nicholson
- Dr CB ‘Kit’ Wynn Parry
We send our condolences to their friends and families.

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

Please help us to keep costs down by renewing promptly
Anyone whose membership is expired will be removed from the membership list at the end of June.
To keep costs down we will be using email wherever possible, so please look-out for emails from the Society.
Subscriptions should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, at the usual address.

Local Group Contacts

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

New York & NE USA Group
Area: New York & NE USA
Contact: Nick Birns
Email: nicholas.birns@gmail.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.

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
editor@anthonypowell.org

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

Members will recall that for some years we have been planning a commemorative plaque to Anthony Powell – and that having been turned down for an English Heritage “Blue Plaque” we have applied to the City of Westminster for a “Green Plaque” on AP’s birthplace in Ashley Gardens. Thanks to the generosity of members we already have the money for the plaque.

We are delighted that this is now coming to fruition. Assuming that the powers who own Ashley Gardens approve (and why wouldn’t they?!) we hope to unveil the plaque later this year.

We are still working to agree a design which is acceptable to the Society Trustees, the Powell family and the City of Westminster. Then we must fix a date for the unveiling, persuade someone to cut the ribbon and organize a reception.

We very much hope the plaque will be unveiled by Simon Russell Beale, but his acting commitments may scupper this. And we are hoping to hold a Powellian “champagne and canapés” reception at the nearby Rubens Hotel – London HQ of the Polish Allies in WWII and thus somewhere AP would have known well.

As well as inviting the usual dignitaries we are planning to make some tickets for the reception available to members.

But we have a lot to do, and there is a lot of water to flow down the Thames, before we get there. So watch for an announcement in the next Newsletter.

Keith Marshall

Archive Addition

We have another acquisition for the Society Archive: a Xeroxed copy of AP’s corrected typescript of Hearing Secret Harmonies, sent by him to the artist James Broom-Lynne who created the dustjackets of the first editions of Dance. The copy was discovered serendipitously amongst the effects of Broom-Lynne’s widow after her death. Our thanks to the Broom-Lynne family for so kindly presenting it.

James Broom-Lynne (1916-1995) was a novelist and playwright as well as a prolific designer and illustrator. His daughter Victoria remembered his working on these dustjackets and explained that he had come up with an improvised implement to achieve their unique look. She added

He did not value his own work greatly, and would remove his covers from the complimentary first editions he received before putting them on our bookshelves. What a mistake that was!

For more on James Broom-Lynne see www.broom-lynne.com/Home.htm.

Noreen Marshall

Newsletter Copy Deadlines

Newsletter #60, Autumn 2015
Copy Deadline: 10 August 2015
Publication Date: 4 September 2015

Newsletter #61, Winter 2015
Copy Deadline: 11 November 2015
Publication Date: 4 December 2015
Anthony Powell Society Newsletter #59

Local Group News

London May Pub Meet

By Stephen Walker

May’s Pub Meet at the Audley took place on VE-Day. AP recorded in *Faces in My Time* that:

*On the night of VE-Day – festival of Allied victory in Europe, 8-9 May, 1945, a two-day holiday – as we listened to the singing in the pub across the way from our house in Chester Gate, Violet remarked that I was probably the only person in England at that moment lying in bed reading the Cambridge History of English Literature. [Faces, 181]*

A varied group of Powellians occupied the reserved bay window table and tucked into the Audley’s Pub Grub, of which more later, and chatted animatedly and learnedly about a diverse range of topics. In keeping with AP’s taste for celebrating national outpourings of emotion by reading about literature there were discussions about possible subjects for articles, talks etc.

The General Election inspired discussion about

- Neologisms v clichés. What would AP have thought of the flood, not to say tsunami, of these used in the media in recent weeks. An example proffered was ‘extraordinary rendition’. Would AP have approved the concept but deplored the term?
- Sport in *Dance*? AP was not an aficionado of any sport or game, including Scrabble. Tennis, golf and croquet, apart from cricket and cross country running are mentioned – but what else? And why? What does it signify? Widmerpool is described as keeping his briefcase under his arm as he tries to play croquet.
- AP and the North, particularly Scotland. Did AP know where it is? In *Dance* he writes about Wales and Ireland; but Scotland? The election has added an extra piquancy to the North British Question. Ironically AP was described in the *Financial Times Magazine* 21/22 February 2015 as “a high-brow Mancunian who said that he felt a journey to London was an exercise in condescension”. AP certainly knew about London and condescension but did he know about Manchester?

The demise of the Widmerpool Award was discussed. Long-standing members who were in favour of the award put their view to two trustees in measured and good-natured terms: pointing out that AP in his *Journals* had not been slow to be disagreeable about people. And he clearly wrote them for publication so he knew that upset might be caused.

Talk was not just about *Dance*. Memories of the Midlands were exchanged with Guy Robinson demonstrating that he has an alternative career as a mimic. Possible future social gatherings in Gin Distilleries and Rye were keenly examined. So was the inside of the legendary Audley fish and chips once eagerly sampled by the Obama daughters. The examiners were seeking evidence of either cod or beer batter. Something has changed in the kitchens of the Audley and not for the better. Watch this space.
As previously announced in the Newsletter, the next Anthony Powell conference will be held in York on 8-10 April 2016, in cooperation with the English Department of the University of York. The topic of the conference is “Anthony Powell: Shakespeare and other Literary Influences”.

Shakespeare is embedded deeply in Powell’s imagination, as the four separate titles of his Memoirs testify, each being a quotation from a Shakespearean play. We are paying homage to Shakespeare in this conference because 2016 is the quatercentenary of his death. However, in order not to be too restrictive, we are admitting other influences as well. The University’s English Department is happy to play a leading role, and the keynote speaker will be one of its professors, John Bowen, a distinguished Dickensian scholar and a great admirer of Powell’s work. Nick Birns, well known to society members, will also be a plenary speaker.

The conference venue will be the historic King’s Manor (leased to the University by the city council), a beautiful late medieval building, which got its name in the early sixteenth century when the crown acquired it following the dissolution of the monasteries. It had previously served as the Abbot’s house for the nearby St Mary’s Abbey, the impressive ruins of which stand in the Museum Gardens. Charles I stayed here in 1633 and 1639 and held court in the Manor when forced to leave London in 1642, shortly before the outbreak of the Civil War. His coat of arms stands above the main doorway.

Anthony Powell’s personal connection with York is admittedly negligible. His memoirs do not record a visit to the city, although he may have passed through on a troop train during the War. However we are fortunate in having our own connections with the university, and the city is a beautiful one, easily accessible from London on a fast East Coast train. International airports are Leeds/Bradford and Manchester, which latter runs a train directly to the city.

York has an interesting network of streets bearing strong traces of medieval character; the principal ones are Stonegate, Petergate, and the Shambles. Further great attractions are the city walls and the Minster, with its soaring ceilings and magnificent windows. The city is famous for its ecclesiastical stained glass. When York surrendered to the Parliamentarian Army in 1644, General Fairfax, a son of the city, restrained the Puritan zealots among his troops from smashing any glass; as a result York has the greatest amount of surviving early-period church glass of any town in the country. For example, at All Saints, North Street you will find the celebrated, medieval Prick of Conscience window.
Apart from the Great East Window (currently under restoration), the Minster has the famous grisaille-patterned Five Sisters Window, which Dorothy L Sayers in her novel *Clouds of Witness* famously misidentified as the Seven Sisters! This is not a mistake that Emily Brightman would have made.

Still on an illustrative theme, we may mention that York is the home of William Etty, painter of the subject of Gyges and Candaules, a story that Powell made memorable use of in *Temporary Kings*. Difficult as it is to believe, Powell declared himself unaware of Etty’s version of the legend until after he had produced his own, but he took a keen interest in the work once he knew of it. The painting now hangs in Tate Britain but the city art gallery has many Etty’s, mostly female nudes, some of which may be compared with his depiction of the queen in the Gyges painting.

Castle Howard is nearby. This is the house of the cadet branch of the Earls of Carlisle, and displays the architectural genius of Sir John Vanbrugh and Nicholas Hawksmoor. The house was the setting for the television adaptation of *Brideshead Revisited*, by Anthony Powell’s friend Evelyn Waugh, so we can fairly claim that the location does have a Powell connection after all. You can get there by local bus, which winds its way through lovely countryside; however, the Society will most probably lay on a coach for a visit on the Sunday.

York has a number of very good second-hand/antiquarian bookshops, all close to the centre of the city. The principal ones are Spelmans on Micklegate, Minster Gate Books (located by looking down the street of Stonegate from the south door of the Minster), and Fossgate Books. Of special interest to Powell lovers is Stone Trough Books, in Walmgate. The proprietor is George Ramsden (an AP Society member) who did us all a great service by publishing Lady Violet Powell’s fourth volume of memoirs, *A Stone in the Shade*. Now that really is a connection.

Being a tourist town, York is well supplied with places to stay and eat, all at various price levels. Later in the year we will put out a list of recommendations. The conference dinner will be held in the historic, fifteenth-century Merchant Taylors’ Hall, the site of one of the city’s prominent guilds.
ANNUAL LECTURE REVIEW

Stephen Lloyd
The Curious Case of Casanova’s Chinese Restaurant: Constant Lambert and his friendship with Anthony Powell

Reviewed by Stephen Eggins

The annual AP lecture has become a regular winter fixture. We have had some marvellous talks over the years – Grey Gowrie, David Kynaston, AN Wilson, Tariq Ali, James Knox, Vernon Bogdanor all did the Society proud.

Stephen Lloyd’s recent rearranged lecture ‘The Curious Case of Casanova’s Chinese Restaurant: Constant Lambert and his friendship with Anthony Powell’ was well up to this stellar standard.

Lloyd is a music writer, critic and pundit, whose recent books are William Walton: Muse of Fire and his masterwork, Constant Lambert: Beyond the Rio Grande. He is a very agreeable, mild, academic not your hustling, bustling sharp-elbowed, self-publicist more familiar to many of us and could be characterised as an amiable Maclintick!

AP supposedly derided the guessing game of “who’s who in Dance”. Indeed Hilary Spurling’s Poweller, whilst admirable in many regards, falls short, in my opinion, by giving little help with this pleasant parlour game. But, I think that we can all agree that Hugh Moreland is a character sketch of, and a tribute by, AP to his great friend. A hymn to Constant!

Moreland is the most sympathetic character in the entire Dance sequence and I suspect that this is no accident. Nick Jenkins’s great boyhood friend was Charles Stringham, another extremely sympathetic character. When Stringham drifts out of Nick’s life he is replaced by Hugh Moreland. Casanova’s Chinese Restaurant is Moreland’s book.

Lloyd introduced his talk with a tour d’horizon of the Fitzrovia pubs and their intellectual, musical and artistic denizens, which might well have included both AP and CL.

In the more austere days that AP was writing about, congregating in the pub was much more acceptable to people, who nowadays would not be seen dead in such a location.

Lloyd continued his introduction to the novel with a marvellous disquisition on the Kashmiri Love Song:

Pale hands I love beside the Shalimar
Where are you now?
Who lies beneath your spell?

Lloyd believes that this is one artist (AP) cooing to another artist (Lambert), his great friend, who had been dead for 10 years by the time the novel appeared.

We then had a very interesting introduction to Lambert himself – unsurprisingly CL’s background was boho and mouvemente.

What is it about artists? Why can they never have a conventional background and be the loving offspring of two solicitors or accountants?!

Not unnaturally, as Lloyd is the foremost expert on Constant Lambert, his biographical sketch of the composer is fascinating.
I rashly hazarded a comment to Hilary Spurling (currently writing the ‘big one’ on AP with much source material) that Constant Lambert and Hugh Moreland share a pronounced degree of unfulfilment. Hilary’s reply was telling. She said that English ballet would never have achieved the heights that it has without the influence of Constant Lambert.

AP and Lambert first met in 1927 when AP was on his three-year apprenticeship with the publishing firm of Duckworth. Constant’s Romeo and Juliet was enjoying its second run of performances in London with the Ballets Russes, and Constant had made his first public appearance as reciter of Façade, but was then known for little else. AP was then living in Tavistock Square and Constant not too far away in a flat in High Holborn.

It was soon after their first meeting that AP suggested to Constant that he might contribute something of a musical nature to a series of essays by young writers that Duckworth were contemplating. Nothing came of the series, but a firm friendship was cemented. From the start they got on well.

Although, on his own admission, AP lacked a musical sensibility, it was their shared interest in books and pictorial art that brought them together, even if their individual tastes sometimes differed.

Both happened to be cat lovers, but it was Constant’s unstuffy, unconventional attitudes that so appealed to AP, especially when injected with a Rabelaisian wit. He came, AP later wrote, ‘as a refreshing draught after Oxford self-consciousness about the arts’.

AP was particularly struck by the ease with which Constant could expound freely upon the three arts without any of the snobbery or affectation he observed in many of his contemporaries. As Constant was a voracious reader, they were never short of topics for conversation, whether the familiar or more often the obscure.
The following June, to consecrate their friendship they held a joint house-warming at AP’s flat. From then on they met quite frequently, in pubs, at parties, at eating places like Castano’s Italian restaurant in Greek Street and the Eiffel Tower, or they would just go for walks.

AP found Constant to be a great walker despite his lameness, and they went on some quite long walks together, not just in London for one Christmas they roamed the streets of Paris.

Lloyd did a great job comparing and contrasting the characters of Lambert and Moreland. Not only highlighting the similarities but also some of their marked differences. Indeed, Lloyd concluded that Moreland had little of Lambert’s brilliance and seems to have inherited more of his weaknesses than his strengths.

The talk had some wonderful audio excerpts and illustrations, including the celebrated portrait of Lambert by Kit Wood.

Your reviewer has to declare an interest as I was a great friend of Constant’s son Kit, during his decline and fall. He had been booted out of The Who by then and the house in Knightsbridge, the Rolls, the Palazzo in Venice and the money had all gone. But he still retained his quirkiness, exuberance and brilliance. Not unlike his father.

As I say it was a wonderful talk and you can indulge yourself by purchasing Lloyd’s excellent biography or wait for the lecture’s publication in Secret Harmonies.

Stephen Lloyd’s Constant Lambert: Beyond The Rio Grande is published by the Boydell Press at £45.

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Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 15th Annual General Meeting of the Anthony Powell Society will be held on Saturday 24 October 2015 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 Bohemian Exhibits: Anthony Powell and the ‘rackety’ world of the British inter-war avant garde by Dr Jonathan Black (this is a opportunity to hear a reprise of Jonathan’s talk at the 2014 Venice Conference)

Members only at the formal AGM; all welcome for the talk at about 1500 hrs

Nominations for two Trustee posts which are vacant this year must reach the Hon. Secretary by Monday 10 August 2015. 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 Monday 10 August 2015. 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 19 October 2015.
An exhibition of the works of interwar painter Eric Ravilious (1903-1942) is on at the Dulwich Picture Gallery in South London. It covers paintings from his early period to his death in WWII. Ravilious is at his best in watercolour landscapes of the English countryside and coast. Many of these, particularly in his middle period, are reminiscent of those by his contemporaries Ed Burra and Paul Nash.

The paintings are displayed by subject matter rather than chronology. But one can see the artist’s development through the paintings on display. His style reached its peak in the period 1937-39. Perhaps the best and most well known example is the landscape showing a white chalk horse on a green hillside with a train passing in the distance. The same scene is then depicted in another painting in which the horse is viewed from inside the train. For some reason these two paintings are hung in separate rooms, but each is so memorable that the viewer inevitably puts them together.

Unfortunately just at the apex of his productivity, Ravilious joined the Royal Navy in WWII and began painting to order for his new employers. He had no facility at portraiture but some of his paintings of military interiors are of interest. There are also a series of paintings of beds in various military and civilian settings that are hung together and produce a rather chilling effect through their starkness. But his real strength was in his landscapes, and there was not much call for those from the Navy. His wartime death is reminiscent of Barnby’s demise.

Although AP wrote extensively of the painters of his lifetime and much of that work is collected in his final volume of articles and reviews, he does not seem to mention Ravilious. This may be due to the fact that Ravilious’s work was not much recognized in his lifetime. In any event, his works seem to be of the type of which AP would have approved, at least when they are seen together, as at this exhibition. There are several paintings in the displays depicting the area around Rye near where Ravilious lived as a child in Eastbourne. Those intending to participate in the Society’s visit to Rye in September may want to view the exhibit in advance.

The Dulwich Picture Gallery is in the grounds of Dulwich College and can be reached on the Southeastern Railway service from Victoria Station; it is about a 10-15 minute journey. It may also be reached by connection from Brixton underground station on the Northern Line and various bus routes. The gallery is a 15 minute walk from West Dulwich railway station and is well sign-posted.

The display rooms are small and a weekend visit (such as I made) is best avoided if at all possible. The rooms were very crowded and stuffy on a late Saturday afternoon.

The exhibition runs until 31 August. Admmission: £12.50 (£11.50 for seniors; £7.50 concessions). Opening Hours: Tue-Fri, 10-5; Sat & Sun, 11-5. Closed Monday. ■
Blogging Dance

In a new feature Guy Robinson writes about rereading Powell’s Magnum Opus

1. Dance Steps

In meeting with other AP members I am often put to shame for many reasons – the most significant being in how many times I have read Dance (ie. once).

It was a very pleasurable experience and I believe pleasurable experiences ought to be repeated as often as possible especially as one gets on in life.

However, this needs to be planned. Reading Dance takes (me) a long time – the first occasion took about a decade as I’m always reading other things.

I’m aiming to re-start Dance once I’ve finished off a couple of other multi-volume projects. The first being the final book of the Balkan Trilogy by Olivia Manning – Friends and Heroes. I started the trilogy about five years ago and as my mother told me never to keep a lady waiting I should really get on with it.

I also need to call last orders on Patrick Hamiltons’s saga of London’s pub scene between the wars Twenty Thousand Streets under the Sky. Plains of Cement is the last to be tackled – I really would like to find out what sort of drink a Black and Splash is.

Hamilton’s sequence does remind me a lot of AP’s portrayal of X Trapnel and pals as featured in Books Do Furnish a Room although Streets is set a decade or so earlier and the characters don’t have any literary ambitions (indeed most of them don’t have any ambitions at all beyond paying for the next round.)

So I hope that once I’ve done with these two I can re-visit Dance. Lest readers think I’m too Anglophone I’m also conscious of Monsieur Balzac coming up on the outside rail with at least some of La Comedie Humaine. Although AP was an admirer I fear that once I go down that road I’m lost.

Wish me luck.

Homage to Ken

By Lindsay Bagshaw

A misfit called Ken Widmerpool
Wore a funny old coat whilst at school,
With ambition imbued,
He still died in the nude,
Maybe feeling a bit of a fool.
Pyjamas

The origin of the word “pyjamas” (or “pajamas” to our American friends) is Hindoo. Nevertheless it is incumbent on Englishmen to wear them as night attire.

Where do I acquire pyjamas? When ordering further tweeds say nonchalantly to your tailor: ‘Oh, and a dozen of pyjamas too please’. Your tailor will not expect to be paid but M&S would.

How are they worn? The top part is a shirt not a jacket. It should be tucked into the trousers and on no account buttoned to the neck.

Are the trousers to be secured by elastic or cord? If cord, there is a risk of denouement, as it slips. Be honest whether this is desirable.

Are they compulsory in all weathers? In India the top may be dispensed with in the hot season if one is required to stay on the Plain. This dispensation is unnecessary however in the milder climes of Home.

Are there alternatives to pyjamas? The nightshirt, proposed by some as an alternative, is for pansies and Frenchmen. Mrs E (some of you know her) once presented me with a voluminous silk object decorated on the front with an image of what she called ‘Taurus Rising’. She urged that if I wore it in bed it would focus my manly powers. Manners Makyth Man but Amor Vincit Omnia, so I wear it when she visits. Mind you, it comes off again pretty sharply.

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The publication this March of Ruth Scurr’s biography *John Aubrey: My Own Life* brought the usual plethora of reviews – mostly very favourable – and many references to Powell’s biography *John Aubrey and His Friends*.

Peter Conrad (*Guardian*, 15 March) explains Scurr’s method:

> Convinced that he deserves a biography, Scurr has coaxed Aubrey to compose his own: her book is an artful anthology of his diary entries, filled out with explanatory pastiches written by Scurr herself. Even so, Aubrey is upstaged by his curios or by his showier acquaintances. His single venture abroad, a trip to France, is left blank because Scurr lacks sources from which to reconstruct it, and his amatory upsets and financial woes are also glossed over. Anthony Powell, who edited *Brief Lives* in the 1940s, saw Aubrey as an embryonic novelist, and paid tribute to his speculative gossip in *A Dance to the Music of Time*. Scurr, however, is a historian with academic scruples, and she hinders her genre-bending enterprise by refusing to make things up.

Hilary Spurling, writing in the *Spectator* of 14 March, comments:

> [Aubrey] seemed half-cracked as often as not to less empirical 17th-century contemporaries, and for most of the next 200 years posterity forgot him. His astonishing renaissance in the last century owed much to two novelists: Anthony Powell, who published a biography, followed by a selection of *Aubrey’s Brief Lives* in 1949, and John Fowles, who brought out his Monumanta Britannica for the first time in 1980. By this time Aubrey had captivated the public on both sides of the Atlantic on stage and screen in a magical performance by Roy Dotrice, who played him as a quavery old codger, doddering about in an interior as chaotically crowded as his own mind.

Stuart Kelly (*TLS*, 25 February) observes:

> As Scurr notes, the title of Anthony Powell’s biography, *John Aubrey and His Friends* (1948), attests to one difficulty in writing his Life, which is that he is all too easily overshadowed by his acquaintances – Thomas Hobbes, Robert Hooke, Samuel Cooper, Elias Ashmole – whose achievements were more tangible.

Finally Scurr herself (*Guardian*, 28 February) comments:

> So how to turn the tables and write a biography of England’s first great biographer? In the preface to his 1948 biography of Aubrey, Anthony Powell wrote: “Humility is a rare quality. Those who possess it sometimes encounter neglect in life and run some risk of oblivion after death; but in the end history grinds exceeding small”. Aubrey, though modest and self-deprecating, had an exceptional sense of his own existence as part of history.

Spotted by, *inter alia*, James Tucker, Stephen Eggins and Jeff Manley.
This year is the bicentenary of General Liddament’s favourite author: Anthony Trollope.

To celebrate the Guardian (11 April) asked a selection of (mostly) writers to choose their favourite Trollope novel. In writing about his choice Cousin Henry, Ferdy Mount comments:

Trollope’s special excellence is in conveying mixed, unstable characters such as most of us are. By comparison, the great fictional monsters like Casaubon and Widmerpool seem one-dimensional.

A few days later on 19 April the Sunday Telegraph ran an article by Neil Hegarty describing a new edition of The Duke’s Children which restores a massive cut to Trollope’s original. Hegarty points up the similarity between Trollope and other writers such as Powell:

We first glimpse Plantagenet Palliser as a minor character in The Small House at Allington. His elevation to a central position in the Palliser books is one reason why Trollope’s novels continue to delight today. There are perhaps few aspects more pleasurable to a reader than to have characters appear, disappear and reappear through a writer’s career, their lives made endlessly available to our scrutiny. Trollope’s satisfying trick has been repeated in later years by writers as diverse as Anthony Powell, Stephen King and Barbara Pym – and his portrait is all the more satisfying because the duke is developed gradually through a sequence of six novels, each one hefty in the Trollope style.

Spotted by Jeff Manley.

Member Joan Williams unearthed the following about Michael Luke in Sofka Zinovieff’s The Mad Boy, Lord Berners, My Grandmother and Me:

His black wartime witticism “It’s awfully chic to be killed” was used by Anthony Powell in A Dance to the Music of Time.

Eric Ravilious, wood engraving. Although not a watercolour landscape, hopefully it gives some idea of the style of Ravilious’ landscapes (which would not reproduce well here.)
Modigliani – A Unique Voice  
Estorick Collection  
of Modern Italian Art  

Society members in or near London might be interested in this exhibition of Modigliani’s works and see what was so special about Stringham’s Modigliani. As the gallery’s blurb says:

*One of the acknowledged superstars of twentieth-century art, Amedeo Modigliani (1884-1920) is also the best known and most loved of all modern Italian painters. Working at the epicentre of avant-garde experimentation in Paris between 1906 and 1920, he developed an artistic vision that was entirely his own. This new exhibition is the first to be devoted to the artist at the Estorick Collection, and focuses on his works on paper, showing the spiritual and stylistic development of his portrayal of the human face and form. Modigliani’s humanistic vision of timeless beauty drew on a wide range of influences, embracing Etruscan, Egyptian, Greek, African, Asian and early Italian Renaissance imagery. Taking those elements that accorded with his own character and vision, he created a remarkable body of work that sidestepped Fauvism, Cubism and the many other artistic movements of the day. This exhibition includes several works from the collection of Modigliani’s close friend Paul Alexandre – one of his few early patrons – along with pieces from other private collections, including that of Eric Estorick. The majority are rarely seen drawings dating from the early years of Modigliani’s career, providing a fascinating and revealing insight into the artist’s distillation of a style unmistakable for its purity, simplicity and grace.  


Francis Phillips in the Catholic Herald (23 February) writes about Clive James’s Cultural Amnesia, including:

*A similar weakness is evident in his chapter on Evelyn Waugh. James starts out by stating Waugh was “the supreme writer of English prose in the 20th century”. Many would agree with that assessment. Then the rest of the essay descends into a discussion about the grammatical errors in the prose of the writer Anthony Powell, which merely informs us how knowledgeable James is about dangling modifiers rather than helping readers to appreciate why Waugh occupies classic status. ■*
Here is George RR Martin on *The Game of Thrones and Fantasy Fiction* (Guardian, 3 April):

> And thus, too, the extraordinary length of most fantasy novels (which are often sequences). *A Song of Ice and Fire* dwarfs anything managed by Marcel Proust or Anthony Powell. Does a fan also have time for Robert Jordan’s 14-volume fantasy sequence *The Wheel of Time*? *And Stephen R Donaldson’s 10-book Chronicles of Thomas Covenant*? Yes, of course. Copiousness is the desired effect. We are being taken to whole new worlds, and the books and the readers have to stretch to this.

Spotted by Bill Denton.

DJ Taylor in the *Spectator* (23 May) reviews *Barbara Pym: A Passionate Force* by Ann Allestree. Pym was a novelist admired by AP and Taylor cites AP's assessment of her writing in the review:

> As Anthony Powell put it, you have to get the hang of her personality and the limited range of characters, who become very funny once properly understood.

Not mentioned by Taylor (although it may be covered in the book itself) is the fact that Pym was a keen Powell fan and once composed a guide to the characters in *Dance* (which was not intended for publication and seems to have been lost).

Spotted by Jeff Manley.

Writing in the *Spectator* (28 March) about James Bond films, Damian Thompson opines:

> [Bond] is a snob – a ‘tremendous snob’, in fact, to quote Sean Connery’s description of Ian Fleming, who was initially horrified that his hero was being played by a former Edinburgh milkman.

This isn’t to say that most Etonians are snobs, but those who are tend to be very good at it. One thinks of Anthony Powell, whose merciless anatomy of English society in *A Dance to the Music of Time* is rooted in his obsession with genealogy – *Etonian Shinto* at its most intense. Another OE ancestor-worshipper was James Lees-Milne, whose diaries burst with delight at his friendship with David Somerset, now Duke of Beaufort, and his ‘heavenly’ wife Lady Caroline, daughter of the Marquess of Bath. Fleming knew the couple, too, and it’s no accident that, when escaping by train from Moscow in *From Russia, With Love* (1957), James Bond and his lover Tatiana used the cover names ‘David and Caroline Somerset’.

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

Writing about Anthony Powell
Talks given at the 2004 AGM by George Lilley, Michael Barber and Nick Birns; introduced by Christine Berberich.
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Fourth & final volume of Lady Violet’s autobiography covering mostly the 1960s. Includes many of Lady Violet’s coloured travel sketches. Hardback. UK: £24.50, Overseas: £29

Edited by John Saumarez Smith & Jonathan Kooperstein; 2011.
Fascinating letters between Powell and his friend and first American publisher Robert Vanderbilt.
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Anthony Powell, Caledonia, A Fragment
The 2011 Greville Press reprint of this rare Powell spoof. UK: £8, Overseas: £10.50

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