# CONTENTS

Closing Scene at the Barnabas Henderson Gallery, **David Mabb** 4  
A Commentary on *A Dance to the Music of Time*, **Anthony Wigram** 14  
Organising the Society’s Conference, **Keith Marshall** 19  
Uncle Giles’ Corner: Uncle Giles on the Heat 22  
Review: *Enemies Within*, **Michael Barber** 24  
Letters to the Editor 27  
My First Time, **Guy Robinson** 30  
The Master’s Voice 31  
Pub Meet London 4 August 33  
Stringham at a Loose End…in Belgravia and Mayfair 34  
Saugatuck Ducks and AP’s Curry Recipe 37  
Dates for Your Diary 39  
Society News and Notes 40
EDITOR’S LETTER

You will sense an elegiac tone in this issue. Keith Marshall provides his valedictory Secretary’s letter and also a piece on organizing the Society’s conferences. Both are tinged with sadness at the passing of an era and with hope and encouragement for the future. On behalf of all members past, present and future, thank you Keith for all that you have done for the Society. Without you we would not be able to enjoy the Society at all.

Looking forward, two new members, David Mabb and Anthony Wigram provide our two lead pieces. One is a Chancery barrister and the other an artist which demonstrates the diverse appeal of both AP and the Society.

Michael Barber reviews Richard Davenport-Hines’ new book on the Cambridge spies. One of whom, Donald Maclean, AP met several time at the home of Lees Mayall and described as “ghastly beyond words”.

Guy Robinson tells us about reading Dance for the first time and the lifelong impression that it made.

Uncle Giles advises on how to cope with heat and Stephen Eggins selects an extract about Lord Huntercombe for The Master’s Voice.

The Society’s active social scene is recorded in Ivan Hutnik’s account of the annual walk - this time in the mind-melting July heat, for which we all extend our admiration and gratitude, in Nick Birns’ account of the Curry Lunch and your editor’s of the August Pub meet. All demonstrating what a convivial organization the Society is. The AP birthday lunch is on Saturday 8 December. We are returning to an old favourite, The Queen’s Head and Artichoke in Albany Street.

The other date for your diary is the AGM on Saturday 20 October when your Secretary will be handing over the reins to Paul Milliken. A truly momentous occasion in the Society’s history. Be there or be square.

Stephen Walker
FROM THE SECRETARY’S DESK

And It’s Goodbye from Him …

This is my last ever column as Secretary, and my term as a Society trustee expires at this year’s AGM. Much has happened in the last those 18 years, and it has mostly been fun.

But let’s not kid ourselves: it’s been hard work too. When we started the Society I decided that we would both be and look professional. People often say they don’t know how I do what I do. Over the years I have learnt to moderate perfectionism in favour of getting the job done – but still done well and with attention to detail.

But 18 years is a long time; longer than is good for any organisation; and longer than is good for any individual. I’m conscious my more conservative approach – so necessary in the early days – is maybe not the best approach now. New blood and new ideas are needed; the Society needs to be refreshed and refocussed if it isn’t to stagnate. I’m not the right person to do that.

So the time has come for me to step aside, although I will be continuing as Membership Secretary in the short term while we find the right person to take it over. That will help smooth some of the handovers too.

I know everyone wants me to continue as a Trustee, but I’m not going to. I want the new team to have free rein to do things their way, without feeling I’m looking over their shoulder or being a wet blanket. I will still be around, I will still be able to join trustee meetings if required, and I’ll be available to the new team if needed.

I also know this is going to be hard. Hard for Paul, John, Ivan and June to pick up much of what I’ve done hitherto. And hard for me not being the hub of Society activity – I shall be retiring all over again, and we know how hard that can be. The new team are eminently capable, and have some good ideas for taking the Society onward into a new era. Onward to the stars!
CLOSING SCENE IN THE BARNABAS HENDERSON GALLERY

David Mabb

Introduction

Reflecting on last year’s reading, I was struck by the contribution of the closing scene, in the gallery, to the overall structure and pattern. As minds linger on ‘Anthony Powell and the Visual Arts’, I offer some thoughts.

Jean Templer is there, with Bob Duport and Polly (and Norman Chandler). Henderson describes her as looking ‘like one of those sad Goya duchesses’.¹

Later, Bithel arrives with a not immediately intelligible account of the death of Widmerpool.

Apart from Nick and Isobel, Jean and Widmerpool are the only really important characters to survive to the final stages of the novel.

The examples of the visual arts that make a showing in the scene comprise the subjects of the two exhibitions – Deacons and Victorian seascapes – and the Modigliani drawing that Bithel ‘rescued’² and brings with him.

Those three elements, in the final chapter of Volume 12, are connected, by elaborate threads in the fabric of the novel, to the three boys first met messing together at school in the first chapter of Volume 1; and so to the worlds, artistic, commercial, and society, with which they are, or become, associated. (Other terms to describe those worlds might be bohemian, material and smart. Along those lines, for example, Peter Templer is described as ‘dislik[ing] anything that could be labelled “bohemian,” as much as anything with claims to be “smart.”’³ and ‘innately opposed to the romantic approach’⁴.)

Principal characters

Jean requires little detailed comment. She appears first when Nick visits the Templer house by the sea in Volume 1, her ‘appearance given the effect of a
much simplified …. arrangement of lines and planes, such as might be found in an Old Master drawing …. depicting some young and virginal saint.

She reappears at Stourwater (on Nick’s first visit), married to Bob Duport and brought there by Baby Wentworth ‘to play for her side’; then again, importantly, Duport having ‘gone abroad, leaving a trail of girlfriends and bad debts behind him’, at the Templers’ wedding anniversary dinner at the Ritz, during the rest of the weekend at the Templers’ house near Maidenhead and through the remainder of Volume 3. Later, Nick thought of ‘that grave, gothic beauty that once [he] had loved so much’.

After Widmerpool ‘fix[ed] up a job’ for Duport, Jean went with him to South America, ‘parting infinitely painful’ for Nick. Later, Duport tells Nick that was to enable her to continue an affair with Jimmy Brent.

More than a decade later, following the Victory Day Service, Nick meets her as Madame Flores; looking ‘incredibly elegant’. Then, Nick and Isobel are invited to drinks by Colonel and Madame Flores, she ‘rather superb in what was called ‘The New Look’’. They are about to return to South America, Flores having been given a command with ‘political implications’.

In the closing scene, a further 25 years on, widowed and reunited to some extent with Duport, Jean says: ‘Do you remember the pictures in the dining-room, Nick? Peter’s Maidenhead house was where we met.’ That strikes me as charged; notwithstanding, perhaps the more so because of, the earlier comment: ‘There could have been no doubt in the mind of an onlooker – Henderson, say, or Chuck – that Jean and I had met before. That was about the best you could say for past love. In fact Jean’s former husband, whom I had never much liked, was appreciably less distant than she.’

She is referred to in all volumes in which she does not appear, apart from 8.

Widmerpool requires no detailed comment. Like Nick, who speaks for himself, he appears in all 12 volumes.

Jean’s former husband, Bob Duport, is not a really important character, However, it is worth adding that he too first appears in Volume 1: sitting in Charles Stringham’s college room with Templer and Brent (business friends, all three ‘working in the City’) when Stringham and Nick return from Sillery’s tea-party. Later, Nick spends two separate evenings with him: first, when Nick is staying by the sea at the Bellevue ‘to oversee [Giles’] cremation’, they go to ‘the
bar of the Royal; later, in Brussels, where Nick is assisting Lieutenant-Colonel Finn in conducting the Allied military attaches, they go to ‘the big brasserie on the corner’ and then to ‘a café’. According to Brent, ‘You wouldn’t believe what [Bob] knows about art and all that.’

Deacons

The connection here is to Nick. He becomes associated with the artistic or bohemian world. (That is in addition to the personal world of the Tolland family, who offer a mixture of the smart and the bohemian.)

Nick first met Mr. Deacon as a child when his father was stationed near Brighton; then at the Louvre, after ‘that unfortunate incident in Battersea Park had led to Mr. Deacon’s prolonged residence abroad’, when Nick’s father was working at the Peace Conference. His paintings, displaying a ‘decided weakness of drawing’, dealt in ‘Greek and Roman episodes’.

The first one Nick ever saw, Boyhood of Cyrus, signed ‘E. Bosworth Deacon’, assumed importance because, hanging in the hall of the Walpole-Wilsons’ house in Eaton Square, it was a ‘symbol of the probable physical proximity of Barbara Goring’. That was for the period of a little more than a year (from June one year to the first few weeks of the Long Vacation in the next) during which the ‘affair’ with Barbara lasted.

Deacon is important to the plot. Returning home from the Huntercombes’ dance, Nick and Widmerpool encounter him together with Gypsy Jones in Grosvenor Place. Calling at Deacon's shop at ‘the end of August or beginning of September’ in pursuit of his suggestion of ‘looking [him] up’, Nick meets Ralph Barnby. Then, one evening a few weeks later, having arranged to meet Barnby at The Mortimer on their way to the cinema, Nick meets Hugh Moreland.

On that same evening a young friend of Deacon, who turns out when he arrives to be Chandler, is to bring a (bronze) reproduction of the statue Truth Unveiled by Time for Deacon to consider buying. The arrangement provides an immediate opportunity to give Moreland a good line: ‘We don’t want anything in the nature of Youth, rather than Truth, being unveiled by Time. Can we trust you, Edgar?’
His birthday party, a week later, introduces or reintroduces various denizens of the artistic world: Mona (a model, and friend of Gypsy), Howard Craggs, J.G. Quiggin, Mark Members. Afterwards he suffered an ultimately fatal accident on the stairs at a ‘shady’ club, The Bronze Monkey.

Deacon died on the day of Stringham’s wedding, in the second week of October. It is following the funeral that Nick returns with Barnby to the flat above Deacon’s shop; and then, after Mrs. Wentworth telephones, is left alone to encounter Gypsy, dressed as Eve, in the shop.

By the later stages of Deacon’s life, his ‘few patrons had all faded away’. At the time of the evening in The Mortimer, ‘it was …. many years since he had set brush to canvas’.

Something over 15 years later, shortly after the War, Nick sees ‘four Deacons knocked down for a few pounds in a shabby saleroom between Euston Road and Camden Town’.

One of the two exhibitions in the closing scene is the Bosworth Deacon Centenary Exhibition. It is ‘a stupendous rescue job from the Valley of Lost Things’. (With the idea of underlining that Deacon and his work had faded from view, there is some interplay with Henderson, who declines to accept Nick’s account that Bosworth was simply Edgar Deacon’s middle name; though the signature ‘E. Bosworth Deacon’ raises a question about the realism of Henderson’s position.) Among the many Deacons in the exhibition is Boyhood of Cyrus, which sold ‘within an hour of the show opening’.

Chandler, who is directing Polly Duport in a Strindberg play, says: ‘Nick, so you’ve come to see Edgar’s pictures? Who’d ever have thought it? Do you remember when I sold him that statuette called Truth Unveiled by Time? Barney and Chuck ought to have that on show here too. I wonder where it is now?’

What we know about that is rather limited. Deacon had not paid for it when he died, so Chandler ‘nipped round to the shop and took the thing away again’. He may have held on to it for a while; because, by the time of Mrs. Foxe’s party for Moreland’s symphony seven or eight years later, it is standing in her house (where Chandler now ‘runs the whole of our [sc. Buster’s and Mrs. Foxe’s] lives’).
Victorian seascapes

The other exhibition in the closing scene is of Victorian seascapes. ‘Here too, as with the Deacons, an exciting revival had taken place of a type of painting long out of fashion with yesterday’s art critics.’41 The connection in this case is to Templer. His association is with the commercial or material world. His father and uncle had made their money ‘in cement’; and the latter ‘– for public services somewhat vaguely specified - had accepted a baronetcy at the hands of Lloyd George’.42 In turn Templer goes into the City, from school.

Nick says of him a few years later, at the time of the anniversary dinner at the Ritz (where Nick meets Jean again and agrees to go down to the Templers’ house near Maidenhead): ‘He liked his friends to be rich and engrossed in whatever business occupied them. They had to be serious about money, though relatively dissipated in their private lives; to possess no social ambitions whatever, though at the same time to be disfigured by no grave social defects. The women had to be good-looking, the men tolerably proficient at golf and bridge, without making a fetish of those pastimes.’43 He displays no artistic interests.

On Nick’s second visit to Stourwater, in September 1938, Templer provides a commercial world link among the artistic.44

When Nick visits the Templer house by the sea, a portrait by Horace Isbister R.A. of Templer’s father, ‘tackled in a style of decidedly painful realism’, hangs in the hall.45 No other paintings are mentioned at the time.

However later, in Volume 3, we are told that some ‘very indifferent nineteenth-century seascapes’ had hung in the dining room of that house by the sea. That is when Nick is at the house near Maidenhead. The same paintings are now hanging in the ‘large room of nebulous character where most of the life of the household was carried on …. as if put up hurriedly when the place was first occupied. No doubt that was exactly what had happened to them. In the Templers’ house by the sea they had hung in the dining-room.’46

Mona soon leaves Templer for Quiggin47; and the Maidenhead house is sold48. After Templer marries Betty (Taylor? Porter?) they live at Sunningdale.49 In the War (after first working at Economic Warfare) he dies on a secret operation.50 At none of those stages is anything said about the ‘very indifferent …. seascapes’.

8
The blog *picturesinpowell* suggests that they contributed to the exhibition: see the post ‘Indifferent Seascapes’ (8th March 2014) and, in “The Duport Collection” (21st March 2017), the comment ‘Of course, Jenkins had seen these paintings years before and disdained them.’ Similarly *Invitation to the Dance*, under the heading ‘DUPORT, Robert, collection of Victorian seascapes’, treats the ‘very indifferent nineteenth-century seascapes’ at Maidenhead as belonging to Duport and so contributing to the exhibition. This would certainly match most closely the pattern with the restoration of the Deacon paintings.

However, notwithstanding the ‘exciting revival …. of a type of painting long out of fashion’, I have wondered whether the author extended the notion of Lost Things Restored so far as those ‘very indifferent …. seascapes’ formerly owned by Templer’s father. Henderson says that ‘Far the best of the Victorian marine painters show come from the Duport Collection. He’s decided to sell now that the going’s good.’51 The collection of paintings sounds considerably better than ‘very indifferent’; although Duport ‘picked them up at one time or another for practically nothing’52. It is true, though, that Henderson does not say in terms that the Duport Collection is uniformly good. So, might the ‘very indifferent …. seascapes’ constitute a part of it?

Templer had looked after Duport’s pictures at Maidenhead. Duport says: ‘Do you remember, Jean, how your brother, Peter, used to grumble about looking after my pictures for me, when I was in low water, and hadn’t anywhere to put them. He hung them in the dining-room of that house he had at Maidenhead. He’d no pictures of his own to speak of – except that terrible Isbister of his old man – so I can’t see what he was grousing at.’53 Then, Jean asks: ‘Do you remember the pictures in the dining room, Nick? Peter’s Maidenhead house was where we met.’54

However, from Duport’s second sentence there, and Jean’s question, the Duport pictures were in the Maidenhead dining room; while the ‘very indifferent’ ones, previously in the dining room of the house by the sea, were in the ‘large room of nebulous character where most of the life of the household was carried on’, which was certainly not the dining room.55 Those slightly awkward sentences from Duport, underlined by Jean, appear to suggest that the author distinguished between the ‘very indifferent nineteenth-century seascapes’, formerly owned by Templer’s father, and Duport’s pictures.

It seems less likely that he simply confused the ‘large room of nebulous character’ at Maidenhead and the dining room there. The only seascapes said, in
Volume 3, to have been in the former had come from the Templer house by the sea. If they had been the ones that Templer was looking after for Duport, Duport’s entire collection at that time would have come from the Templer house. That would have represented a rather limited acquisition over the previous four or five years, during the early part of which Duport ‘was not short of money’; and neither Duport nor Jean gives any indication that Duport’s pictures at Maidenhead had reached him from her, and Peter’s, childhood home.

Against that, Duport says that Templer had ‘no pictures of his own to speak of – except that terrible Isbister of his old man’. However, perhaps he treats the ‘very indifferent … seascapes’ as nothing to speak of.

Nick doesn’t help much, though he too refers to the Maidenhead dining room. He has simply ‘a vague memory of sea pictures hung rather askew, on Templer’s dining room wall. Rather a job lot they had seemed to me that weekend.’ However, as he continues, ‘Even if other things had not been on my mind – that soft laugh of Jean’s – Victorian seascapes would have made no great appeal.’

The Modigliani

The connection here is to Stringham. He is initially associated with the society or smart world: his mother (Mrs. Foxe) ‘was considered quite an heiress when she first appeared in London’ from South Africa, her first marriage was to Lord Warrington and her ‘social activities’ are ‘unrelenting’. Encountering Nick and the others (Deacon, Gypsy, Widmerpool) at the coffee stall by Hyde Park Corner, Stringham takes them to Mrs. Andriadis’ party (at the Duports’ house in Hill Street). Although ‘immediate impressions …. were not …. greatly different from those conveyed on first arrival at Belgrave Square [sc. the Huntercombes’], ‘on the whole, Mrs. Andriadis’ guests belonged to a generation older than that attending the dance and the ‘frivolity’ was ‘infused with an undercurrent of extreme coolness …. far more intimidating that anything normally to be met with at Walpole-Wilsons’, Huntercombes’, or, indeed, anywhere else of “that sort.” Reflecting afterwards, Nick was ‘more than half aware that such latitudes are entered by a door through which there is, in a sense, no return’.

On Nick’s first visit to Stourwater, a month or two later in September, Stringham provides a smart world link. Others from Mrs. Andriadis’ party
are there too: Prince Theodoric, Mrs. Wentworth, Bill Truscott, Donners himself.

The Modigliani does not appear at the start. In Stringham’s room at school there are ‘two late eighteenth-century coloured prints of racehorses (Trimalchio and The Pharisee, with blue-chinned jockeys); and a ‘large, and distinctly florid’ photograph of his mother hangs over the fireplace, with a snapshot of his father stuck in the corner of the frame.64 (The photograph features in Mark Boxer’s drawing on the cover of Volume 1.) Then, in Stringham’s sitting room in college, Duport examines ‘The Pharisee’s rider, in one of the pictures that had followed Stringham to this room’.65

At the end of the evening of the Old Boy Dinner for members of Le Bas’ house, Nick and Widmerpool help Stringham to his flat in West Halkin Street. Inside, Nick is ‘immediately reminded of his room at school. There were the eighteenth-century prints of the racehorses, Trimalchio and The Pharisee; the same large, rather florid photograph of his mother: a snapshot of his father still stuck in the corner of its frame’. However, there are additions too; and among these is ‘a drawing by Modigliani’.

That drawing has an eventful journey over the following near 40 years.

Stringham was captured in Singapore and didn’t survive, dying in a POW camp.67 He ‘left a will bequeathing all he had’ to Pamela Flitton68, his niece. That included the Modigliani.

When she leaves the Widmerpools’ flat with X Trapnel, she takes with her the Modigliani and some photographs of herself.69 When Nick goes to the flat near the Canal to talk to X and deliver Paper Wine for review, ‘The pictures consist. of a couple of large photographs of Pamela herself, taken by well-known photographers, and, over the mantelpiece, the Modigliani drawing.’70

After the row with X about his new book, Profiles in String, she leaves; taking her clothes and suitcases, the Modigliani and her own photographs; and throwing the manuscript in the Canal.71 She returns to Widmerpool.72

In due, or rather undue, course, she too dies.73 Flavia Wisebite (Stringham’s sister and Pamela’s mother) tells Nick that Pamela ‘never made a will, of course, so Widmerpool must have got whatever there was. The Modigliani drawing. Pam loved that …. I suppose that awful Widmerpool sold it.”74
In fact, he didn’t. In the closing scene, Henderson tells Nick that he still hears of Scorp Murtlock and Widmerpool. ‘Somebody I knew there comes to see me on the quiet if he’s in London. There’s a thing I’m still interested in they’ve got in the house.’ These turn out to be references to Bithel and to the Modigliani.

After Duport, Jean, Polly, Chandler have left the gallery, Nick goes down to Henderson’s office to hear more. Henderson adds: ‘There’s a particular thing Widmerpool’s got that I hope one of these days to get out of him. That’s why I keep in touch with Bith.’

Then Bithel arrives ‘in a state of extreme intoxication …. clutching a brown-paper parcel’. Widmerpool has died (while out running – harking back to his schoolboy runs in the first chapter of Volume 1) and Murtlock was intending to have his belongings ritually burned. ‘You know there was hardly anything, Barnabas, except the picture you told me to try to get hold of, if ever Scorp, in one of his destructive moods, insisted on throwing it out. You said it was between the cupboard and the wall, bring it along, if you’ve half a chance. It looks like a rough scribble to me, but I’m sure it’s the one you said. I hope it’s the right picture and you’ll make me a nice bakshee for bringing it along. I got it off the fire without Scorp seeing, just as he was going to set everything alight with the ritual torch. I stuffed it away somewhere, and here it is.’

‘[Henderson] held the Modigliani drawing up in front of him. The glass of the frame was cracked in several places; the elongated nude no worse than a little crumpled. It had been executed with a few strokes running diagonally across the paper. The marvellous economy of line would help in making it hard to identify – if anybody bothered – as more than a Modigliani drawing of its own particular period. It was signed. In any case, no one was likely to worry. It had hung in Stringham’s London flat in the early days; then passed to Stringham’s niece, Pamela Flitton; on Pamela’s demise, to her husband, Widmerpool. Pictures had never been Widmerpool’s strong point. For some reason he must have clung on to this one. It was odd that he had never sold it.’

Conclusion

It could be suggested that this weaving of threads in the closing scene is rather too contrived. One might propose in modest response that, judging at least from my own readings of the novel during which I had failed fully to appreciate this aspect of the structure, the exercise is reasonably, and agreeably, subtle. Nevertheless, once it is appreciated (however long that takes), the question remains whether it satisfies.
References are to volumes and chapters, followed by the pages in the Fontana paperbacks (with the full page Mark Boxer drawings).
A COMMENTARY ON DANCE TO THE MUSIC OF TIME

Anthony Wigram

Like many others I started to read this great novel at university after the first few books had been published, then had to wait impatiently as AP squeezed out the rest of the story. The twelve books took 25 years to produce; an extraordinary feat of concentration and dedication by AP, with no loss of quality or momentum.

However for the reader it was difficult to remember what had gone on, and therefore to understand what was going on, because even though each novel stands up on its own, after prolonged gaps it was difficult to grasp a central theme if there was one.

Fifty-three years later one lucky day the time had come to reread A Dance to the Music of Time and I did so with growing amazement, enjoyment, appreciation, and respect. It is a complex tapestry of a book so this short essay is my attempt to explain to myself what it is about and maybe to encourage a few friends to give me their ideas.

The problem is that there seems to be no plot; just a series of events connected by the presence of the narrator Nick Jenkins, by chance information received from third parties, or by the force of the will of the characters and possibly by unseen cosmic powers.

Many people see Dance as pure comedy and say they laughed out loud while reading it; and it is true that AP insisted on having Osbert Lancaster to illustrate the Penguin paperback edition. It is also true that there are some extremely funny scenes as when Stripling is caught by Farebrother parading down the corridor and about to replace Farebrother’s top hat with a chamber pot. Later in the same book Farebrother destroys three of Stripling’s collars in the collar turning machine in which he has invested. But this is not a comedy. Nearly all
the major characters die young and often in violent deaths and are judged to be complete failures in their lives by their contemporaries.

Stringham is the most charming school boy and man but becomes a hopeless alcoholic, and dies in a Japanese prisoner of war camp. He is the narrator’s greatest friend. Moreland the composer, also a great friend, dies young and forgotten, living with the appalling Audrey Maclintick. Maclintick himself, the music critic, commits suicide, as does the beautiful but impossible Pamela Flitton. X Trapnel, whose first novel *Camel Ride to the Tomb* is a huge success, dies very young of a heart attack after a drunken pub party, and after the manuscript of his unpublished novel *Profiles in String* has been thrown into the canal by Pamela Flitton – who then leaves him. Ralph Barnby, the potentially brilliant painter and successful womaniser, is killed in a plane crash during the war, and his major painting in the Donners Brebner building is destroyed in the Blitz. Molly Jeavons, one of the few kind hearted people, is also killed when her house is hit by a single bomb dropped by a lone bomber. Peter Templar is murdered in Egypt, on Widmerpool’s instruction, according to Pamela Flitton. St John Clarke is a failure and his novels are ridiculed. Quiggin and Craggs go bankrupt. Edgar Deacon is held up as a joke as a painter, and gives up painting to sell antiques although ironically he is “rediscovered” long after his death.

A few minor characters like Odo Stevens, Louis Glober, Stanley Jeavons, and Umfraville seem to get away with it but the whole novel is coloured by the Sisyphean travails of Kenneth Widmerpool. From the first few pages to the last Widmerpool is the butt of unremitting sadistic mishaps. He is a joke at school because he wears the “wrong” sort of overcoat and is publicly humiliated when Budd, the captain of cricket, throws a banana which accidentally hits him in the face. He gets covered in sugar by Barbara Goring when the top comes off a sugar shaker as she attempts to stop him forcing her to dance with him. He knocks over a flower pot in his pathetic little car at Stourwater Castle. He is bamboozled into paying for Gypsy Jones’s abortion. He is rejected as a lover and fiancé by Mildred Haycock, and when being appointed Chancellor of a University is covered by paint thrown by the Quiggin twins. Some people may consider this funny; and his constant rudeness, his arrogance, his slyness, his pomposity, his greed, his lust for power are designed to make us feel he deserves what he gets – but it’s rather like getting pleasure out of seeing someone suffer in the stocks. Later on his fetish for sexual humiliation ripens in the shape of Pamela Flitton, the most beautiful and sexually available woman anyone has ever met, who gratifies his desire for humiliation by exposing his plotting, scheming, and underhand methods in public.
But in spite of everything he is in life terms a success and a winner. He displaces the great Bill Truscott in the Donners Brebner organisation. In the Army he becomes a full Colonel and Chairman of an important cabinet committee. He becomes an MP, is elevated to the House of Lords, and is a university Chancellor. He always works extremely hard over long periods, and early on shows an ability to arbitrate by settling a row over a tennis match between Orn and Lundquist at Madame Leroy’s French language establishment. And of course he marries the most beautiful girl in England. Widmerpool is held up as a grotesque character, a sort of ugly clown, but he is too awful to be funny, too awful even to arouse our pity, and prominent though he is, he is partially hidden by the jostling and elbowing of other figures.

The women are paraded before us in an array of determined promiscuity. The sad, unhappy, beautiful Pamela Flitton is the ultimate nymphomaniac who according to X Trapnel goes stiff when making love and never achieves any pleasure. Close behind her come Jean Templer, Mona Quiggin, Gypsy Jones, Mrs Foxe, Anne Stepney, Mildred Haycock, Matilda Wilson, Audrey Maclintick, and various waitresses and barmaids who regard sex as a natural part of the feminine armoury.

Love is mentioned only as a prelude to disaster. Poor Captain Gwatkin falls in love with a barmaid and finds her making love on a stone bench to his own Corporal. He loses touch and his military career is ruined. X Trapnel falls in love with Pamela and this leads to the destruction of his second novel, as already mentioned, and directly to his early death. Nick Jenkins’ love for Jean Templer ends when she deserts him, and he later finds out that during their affair she was having a simultaneous relationship with Jimmy Brent who Nick had always considered distinctly inferior.

In every book there are a number of truly great set piece scenes where the circumstances and the clash of characters seem to be larger than life. I have picked out a few of these but there are many more:

- The collar turning scene in Templer’s father’s house.
- The car crash in the rain in Templer’s new car with Duport, Brent and two girls they have picked up.
- The Huntercombes’ dance when Widmerpool has sugar poured over him.
- The planchette scene at Templer’s house.
NEWSLETTER 72

- The dinner at Thrubworth showing how Erridge lives, Smith the sulky butler and his refusal to admit there was still a magnum of 1906 champagne.
- The seven deadly sins at Stourwater Castle.
- Erridge’s funeral when Pamela is sick in a large Chinese vase.
- Trapnel’s flat in the back of Paddington, and threatening Widmerpool with his swordstick.
- Trapnel finds his manuscript in the canal and throws his swordstick into the canal.
- The Tiepolo ceiling in Venice explained by Professor Brightman.
- The scene in the street after Odo Stevens’s party.
- General Conyers covers the naked maid Billson.
- Doctor Trelawney gets locked in the bathroom at Albert’s seaside hotel.
- Bithel saves the Modigliani.

There are many, many more. Paired with this is AP’s extraordinary ability to observe and in a few words describe a gesture or a flicker of an eyelid betraying emotion which reveals an entire character. For example: “Norah threw her cigarette into the fireplace in a manner to express despair at all human behaviour, her own family’s in particular” or again, “Canon Fenneau’s mouth went a little tight … at the mention of his Bishop, the eyes taking on a harder, less misty surface”.

There is still one major subject to consider and that is the significance of the supernatural. Mrs Erdleigh, Doctor Trelawney and Scorpio Murtlock are evidence to the fact that AP did not necessarily not believe in certain cosmic forces. Mrs Erdleigh tells fortunes with unerring accuracy. Firstly, that of Nicholas Jenkins and later of Pamela Flitton. Doctor Trelawney’s strange sect attracts no lesser follower than General Conyers who is able to reply to his greeting “The Essence of the All is the Godhead of the True” with the reply “The Vision of Visions Heals the Blindness of Sight”. This greeting and response are taken up by Scorpio Murtlock’s group, whose watchword is “Harmony”, and Murtlock himself shows mystic powers when he is able to fall into a trancelike state and tell Farmer Gauntlet where to find his lost dog in a countryside where he had never been.

Then there is the Planchette episode which is left unexplained, and subsequently un-referred to, when the players get quotations, which none of them had ever known about, from Karl Marx in neat handwriting. This is left by AP in the air
without resolution or further mention and we are left either to believe or to forget. Jenkins is one of the Planchette players, denies pushing the pencil, and says it was not possible to write in a neat clear script upside down; the other two players had never heard of Karl Marx.

It is also worth pointing out that the final book is entitled *Hearing Secret Harmonies* and as already stated Scorpio’s sect’s watchword is “Harmony”. A number of serious people are sect members, including Fiona Tolland and Henderson – the art dealer who became very successful with his own West End Gallery, exhumed Edgar Deacon, and sends Bithel – a hopeless alcoholic and drop out – to save Stringham’s Modigliani drawing which has gravitated through Pamela Flitton to Widmerpool. Bithel saves the drawing from being burned with Widmerpool’s other effects by Scorpio Murtlock.

What conclusions, if any, can be drawn? The last page of the book is devoted to a long quotation from Robert Burton’s *Anatomy of Melancholy* which Nick Jenkins has been studying and writing about for a few years. The quotation is about 200 words long and consists only of a list of events “meteors, comets, spectrums … edicts, petitions, lawsuits … laughs, weeps, &c.” all taken out of any context. So it looks as though Powell is saying there is no context, no plot, just a series of random events punctuated by clashes of will, desire and character. There is no such thing as truth except in the salutation “The Essence of the All is the Godhead of the True” – a phrase in which I have been unable to find any meaning whatsoever.

At one point Trapnel says “Life becomes more and more like an examination where you have to guess the questions as well as the answers. I’d long decided there are no answers. I’m beginning to suspect there aren’t really any questions either, none at least of any consequence, even the old perennial, whether or not to stay alive”.

Before giving up on finding any sort of moral compass let us consider the narrator himself, Nick Jenkins. He is a decent, honourable, modest, and kind individual. He has a gift for friendship. He is a gentleman who has a quiet, but apparently successful, marriage and a couple of children. He does not seem to be an outstanding success as an author but he is able to send his son to Eton, has always been willing to be called out to help his friends in almost any circumstances, and to listen to their problems – even Widmerpool’s. Is this the secret to a happy life?
I’m sometimes asked – as our esteemed Editor did recently – what it is really like to organise the conference. I actually find that quite hard to answer as it is not a piece of introspection in which I normally indulge, because in a way it is another job which has to be done and very much what I’m used to doing. TL;DR. It’s fun and it’s scary.

I’m not one of the great and the good, nor a corporate high flyer, and definitely not clubbable – I never was and never will be. But because of the Society, I’ve been places and met people I would never have dreamed a dull, plodding grammar school boy could. It’s taken me to a number of London clubs, Eton College, several Oxford colleges, Washington DC, and lots of other interesting places. It’s introduced me to some prominent authors, peers of the realm, and many very interesting people. It’s made me wear a suit and tie far more than I otherwise would, and to regularly feel out of my depth socially.

So what is organising the conference really like? Well of course I’m going to say it is easy and it’s fun – after all one doesn’t want to deter others from having the confidence to take it on once I stand down in a few weeks’ time. But let’s be a little realistic shall we? It isn’t as easy as falling off a log. It is more like that graceful swan gliding cross the lake: you, the delegates, don’t see all the frantic paddling going on underneath the water!

Nevertheless organising the conference is not especially difficult, and is well within the grasp of anyone who has survived years of corporate madness, or organising teenagers on school trips abroad. It requires the ability to organise things, to look ahead, and not to panic! Maybe most of all it requires attention to detail, for that is what makes the swan look so serene: all the feathers are in place.

Of course it takes time – elapsed time as well as man-hours. I remember being asked, in the early years of the Society, whether we couldn’t have a conference every year, and not every two years. My answer was simple: are you going to
organise it? Yes, it would be possible to organise a conference every year, but it would need someone dedicated to doing it, not someone who is able to volunteer a handful of hours a week. It can be done: we got our very first conference, at Eton in 2001, organised from a standing start, in nine months – but, oh boy!, was it hard work.

In reality organising the conference starts around two years ahead of the date. We have fallen into a pattern of having conferences 2½ years apart, alternating between near Easter and early September. That seems to fit our capacity to do the work involved and be able to raise sufficient speakers, and delegates, for a two day conference. Why Easter and early September? Well first of all there are no really ideal times. We have to juggle the availability of all members, most of whom are from the UK and USA. Easter and early September seem to best fit around holiday seasons and academic terms (both university and school) for those in the UK and the USA, as well as the availability of desirable (UK) conference venues.

With luck there will be two of you working on the conference. One person who can open discussions with the venue, who knows people, and who can approach academics, the great, and the good about giving invited keynote talks or papers. They will be the Conference Chair and front the event.

The other person is working behind the scenes doing the overall organisation, nailing down the contract and costs with the venue, pricing, presenting to the Trustees, writing flyers and the delegates book, taking bookings, and masterminding on the day. This is what I did and what someone will have to take over. None of it is hard providing you have a clear head. And anyone taking over running the conferences will have all my materials, complete for every conference, back to 2001 – it isn’t quite as simple as turning the handle on the sausage machine, but it almost is!

There may well be a few meetings, early on between you and your Chair. There may also be early meetings with the “event organiser” at whatever venue is chosen. So you get to visit interesting places like Oxford colleges, the Society of Antiquaries, and major museums, and get a glimpse behind the scenes. But a lot of the work will be done by email and on the phone, from the comfort of your own desk.

You’ll work out a plan, find a suitable venue, think of a conference theme ... and then the Trustees will come along with all sorts of other good (and not
infrequently unworkable) bright ideas. You have to humour the Trustees and look at their ideas before rejecting (or sometimes accepting!) them. After all, you’ll probably want the Trustees to commit a certain amount of Society funding to subsidise the conference.

Then when you start working out the delegate prices, you will have the horrors. Nothing is cheap. We have to live in the real, all too commercial, world. Don’t forget all the overheads, like printing and postage. And VAT! Many prices are quoted excluding VAT. We have an educational remit. Does the venue also have an educational remit? If so, you may get VAT relief on (some part of) the venue’s invoices. If not, don’t forget the VAT – and any service charges – they’re very expensive if overlooked and you’ll only do it once! In fact you’ll start having horrors when you see the cost of venues. One national museum’s charges start at £9000 a day just for room hire. One day of that, for 50 delegates, adds £180 to the delegate price. Somehow I don’t think so!

Conference work tends to come in bubbles, increasing in size as the day approaches. There’s an initial bubble to find the venue, agree the date, get outline pricing approved and start approaching guest speakers. There’s a small bubble to issue the Call for Papers. Another when the proposals for papers are received, evaluated, final pricing agreed, and booking forms printed. Bookings tend to be a small continual stream, with a bit of a cascade at the beginning and the end. And then there is a big bubble of work starting with creating the delegates’ book and joining instructions, finishing with the conference itself. Afterwards there are bills to pay and the proceedings to publish.

The conference itself is a time of continual stress and adrenaline. Speakers and delegates are mostly relaxed, interested, interesting, and amusing; they enjoy networking. As a whole Society members are a friendly bunch, especially if you put food and drink in front of them, and allow them to chat. But during the conference someone will throw you a curve ball: a lost suitcase, missing slides, an unexpected audio-visual requirement. And, of course, the delegates who are hard of hearing are the ones who will insist on sitting at the back of the auditorium and complaining that they can’t hear!

Of course, however well you plan, things will go wrong – it’s the nature of the world. Guest speakers will die a month before the conference, or fall ill the day before, or just not turn up. People will decide at the last minute they can’t come to the dinner after all, leaving you holding several spare tickets. The auditorium
will be too hot, or too noisy, or even both! I’ve had to learn to allow all this to wash over me and not panic. Sometimes the problems are fixable; sometimes there is nothing you can do, although it is always good to have a fall-back plan – never let anyone tell you that contingency planning is not time well spent.

When we started the Society, in June 2000, with the initial aim of organising what became the Eton 2001 conference, I knew almost none of this – although my background in project management meant I had some idea of how to organise things. So for the first three conferences we were helped by Sue, one of my friends, who is a professional conference/events organiser and who we paid (albeit at generous “mates rates”). After three conferences working with her I had learnt enough of the job, and had “template” materials, to go it alone. 2018 at Merton College, Oxford will be our tenth conference, and to a greater or lesser extent, I’ve had a hand in them all.

So what have I learnt over the years? Here are a few things which stand out:

• There is never one right answer
• Everything is more expensive than you think
• Don’t forget the VAT and service charges
• A conference desk, with someone (not you) to run it, is essential
• You can’t please everyone: someone will be upset that you didn’t accept their paper, and someone will think the whole event was rubbish
• You’re doing well to break even financially
• But above all, attention to detail is essential for a good outcome and a graceful swan.

Yes, it’s scary, but it is also fun and you get a great sense of achievement when it all comes off.
Uncle Giles on the Heat

Mrs East (I am back lodging with her, thank God) told me that ‘feedback’ was important. She then explained what this meant. ‘You can’t just launch the fruits of a lifetime’s experience into the void,’ she said. ‘You have to engage with your readers.’ So I sauntered down one of those Pub Lunches; do it in person. This was not a success. Normally one expects to meet the usual delightful old chaps, correctly dressed and sympathetic, if occasionally rather full of themselves; a selection of the fairer sex equally delightful, knowing their place. One of them, however, took me to task.

‘I hate the way you mansplain to us with your column,’ she said.

‘Mm?’

I was not at my most fluent, being unfamiliar with the word.

‘Mansplaining.’ What all men do. You, a white, middle class male, arrogantly pontificating to us on what to do and telling us what we already know.’

There were a number of possible responses to this. I am not *homo politicus*, so I took my time; considered them silently to myself, sipping on my ale. One is that pontificating is what the Ed demands of me – not to the point of paying me, but he makes his demands very clear. Secondly my experience of being arrogantly informed of things I already know is that the informant is – if you take superior officers out of the equation – at least as often a woman as a man. It is what Mrs East calls ‘gender neutral.’ Of course, a lifetime’s exposure to Mrs Eardley may have tipped the balance.
Having considered, I spoke. ‘Calm down, dear. It’s probably the heat.’

She spat a few more syllables. I thought at the time that it was inarticulate rage but looking back it may have been more jargon. She got up and left. Her plate of food was only half finished, and I considered it wrong to let the chips go to waste.

Yes, the unaccustomed heat: not of course unaccustomed to an old soldier who earned his stripes on the burning plains of the Transvaal, but the cause of irritation, understandably, in London. Here, at the risk of ‘mansplaining’, ha ha, are some tips.

1 As explained in an earlier piece, shorts may be worn, not in public of course, but around the house - where, moreover, socks may be dispensed with.
2 If you can’t stand the heat, stay in the kitchen.
3 Tweeding remains compulsory when you are out. You will appreciate it all the more for being able to take it off at the appropriate time. There is no pleasure to match that of discarding a soggy tie.
4 And if you can’t keep a civil tongue in your head, stay indoors.

**BOOK REVIEW: ENEMIES WITHIN**

*Michael Barber*

*Enemies Within: Communism, the Cambridge Spies and the Making of Modern Britain*

Richard Davenport-Hines

William Collins £25

‘Breathes there a man with soul so dead/He was not, in the Thirties, Red?’

Once upon a time there was nothing ironic about this parody of Sir Walter Scott. Hitler was on the warpath. Stalin’s crimes had yet to be exposed. And the liberal intelligentsia was full of fellow travellers, some of whom are depicted in *Dance*. A case in point is Tomsitt, the large, fair, scruffy young man cramming
for the Foreign Office despite lacking the social graces traditionally associated with a diplomatic career. Though we only catch a glimpse or two of him I've always associated Tomsitt with the equally large, fair and scruffy Donald Maclean, to whom AP was introduced by his friend Adrian Daintrey, who described him as ‘more or less a Communist’.

Maclean is one of the ‘enemies within’ examined by Richard Davenport-Hines in this long, detailed and engrossing study, the burden of which is at once audacious, provocative and topical. D-H (as I shall call him) insists that the greatest damage done by the Cambridge spies was not to the defence of the realm but the governance of Britain. In their wake came a ‘moral panic’ that hastened the decline of deference, debased terms like ‘elite’ and ‘Establishment’, and by boosting populism, paved the way for Brexit. To underline the consequences of this he quotes an entry from AP’s Notebook: ‘The intellectual arrogance of clever people, intolerable though it often is, is nothing to the intellectual arrogance of ignorant people.’

D-H is no fan of writers like le Carré who popularised ‘mole-hunting’ and tarred SIS and the KGB with the same brush. But he directs most of his bile at the Press, contrasting the gentlemanly conduct of the security services with the vituperation of hacks like Chapman Pincher, likened by the historian E.P.Thompson to ‘a kind of official urinal’ in which the powers that be ‘stand patiently leaking in the public interest’. But you don’t have to be in favour of ‘Gestapo tactics’ to feel that the old boy net was a little too even-handed in the case of people like Philby, who had blood on his hands, or Guy Burgess, whose indiscretions disguised his enormous value to the Soviets.

The novelist Simon Raven, who was at Cambridge when Burgess defected and was pally with the dons who doted on him, said his flight certainly shook them but they weren’t going to show it. ‘So what they did was make jokes about how dirty Guy was, how homosexual he was and, in the end, how unsatisfactory he was … “But oh my dear, wasn’t he charming!”’ Raven also recalled how the same people used to urge him to be “more like Ant Blunt. He had a lot of fun like you, but he worked hard, he behaved nicely, and unlike you he was a good
socialist. *Be more like Blunt,*” they said. So when Blunt was exposed I sent them all postcards saying, “Thank God I wasn’t more like Blunt!”

Late in life Blunt said spying was like ‘a game of Cowboys and Indians’, a simile that would have dumbfounded his paranoid Soviet controllers, ‘reared’, as D-H puts it, ‘in a culture of torture, purges and execution.’ They doubted the Cambridge spies’ good faith and suspected that as undergraduates they had been planted in Left Wing circles by British intelligence, for surely MI5 and SIS would not employ real Communists? Consequently, says D-H, ‘Moscow’s analysts mistook intelligence of unparalleled quality received from London as cunning misdirection by British intelligence.’ But *some* of this material must have been utilised. So intent is D-H on exonerating our security service that I think the reader may overlook how much damage the Cambridge spies caused.

In fairness I should point out that D-H reminds us that until the Cold War there was no positive vetting in America either, and that consequently their security apparatus was as porous as ours, something else we tend to overlook. It’s also worth recalling, as Lord Annan did in *Our Age,* that Bletchley Park, the most successful intelligence source of any nation during the war, was inviolate, despite its nucleus being recruited from the same slightly suspect circles as the Cambridge spies.

D-H is not a one-track historian and some of the delights of this book are to be found in the hinterland. For instance he says that Stalin had a typically brutal solution to the Abdication crisis: liquidate Mrs Simpson. And he quotes Churchill’s advice to Archie Clark Kerr, Our Man in Moscow: ‘I don’t mind kissing Stalin’s bum, but I’m damned if I’ll lick his arse.’ Clark Kerr, incidentally, is one of the many characters identified by D-H as lovers of Harold Nicolson; they included Burgess, with whom Nicolson was said to have enjoyed ‘vanilla sex’ (as opposed to tutti frutti?). There is also an aside about a patent cure for hangovers and upset stomachs called Bromo, said by Chips Lovell to be sometimes missing from the downstairs loo at his aunt, Lady Molly’s. I’ve always assumed that this was a lapse on AP’s part, and that what he really meant was Bronco, the hard, shiny loo paper I recall as a boy. The fact that there really was a product called Bromo, which I hadn’t realised, seems to confirm that AP mixed them up.

But what of D-H’s thesis? Well, I think the ‘*dégringolade*’ that he deplores was an inevitable consequence of those large, impersonal and destructive forces that shaped the calamitous 20th century. It’s true that after the Great War concerted
efforts were made in Britain to restore the status quo, so that Cyril Connolly, recalling the 1920’s, said that ‘to be accepted by the upper class, then in possession of money, authority and even glamour, was a natural ambition.’ But once it became apparent that inherited privilege - or as people now say, entitlement - was no guarantee of ability, let alone integrity, deference was doomed. Indeed in his book ‘An English Affair’ (2013) D-H said that it never recovered from the Profumo affair.

But you can respect people without deferring to them and I think D-H is correct to deprecate ‘a version of democracy that elevates opinion above knowledge.’ I wonder, though, how he explains the fact that a majority of Daily Telegraph readers, who I’m sure would hate to be described as ‘populists’, apparently voted Leave?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Clive Jenkins
Jeff Manley’s review of Barbara Cooke, Evelyn Waugh’s Oxford (NL 71) is very good but he missed [p. 24], probably because he is American, a solecism Barbara Cooke made even though she is not American: namely Waugh never had a job at a public school, remote or otherwise, but at two or more prep schools in succession.

Public schools – the preferred term is now ‘independents’, which sounds less elitist – are senior secondary schools with a 13–18 age, sometimes 11–18 intake. Although they charge fees and the housemasters used to charge for board and lodging, often making a fair bit, they are not in essence private businesses. Most have a foundation or endowment theoretically enabling them to keep going regardless. Hence the annual ceremonies and flummery to honour their noble, centuries dead, founder.

Preparatory schools on the other hand are exactly that: feeders for public schools with a 7–13 age intake. They were then and often still are private venture businesses. In the youthful time of Waugh and AP, they were a good way of making money: the proprietor/headmaster just needed some sort of degree, his assistants often had one, or claimed to, but need not have: (see Captain Grimes in Decline and Fall), and startup/maintenance costs were laughably low compared with today’s. Minimal if any official enforcement of
standards left them to the free-market choice of parents who were often ignorant or uncaring: “never did me any harm”. As a result some of them were in the 1920s appalling: hence Waugh's nightmarish Llanabba Castle. The distinction between ‘private school’, as prep schools were interchangeably termed, and public school was second nature to the Waugh/Powell social bracket. And such is the galloping pace of change in matters the British elite hold dear, it still is among their equivalents today.

The structure remains unchanged in essence: the Dragon and Summerfields here in Oxford are both institutions independent of any senior secondary school. Summerfields is a well-known feeder for Eton; but that's a different matter. Some senior schools have opted for vertical integration and engrossed adjacent prep schools or, as Magdalen College School has done, created a prep department thereby offering youngsters the dubious advantage of spending the years 7 to 18 under the same umbrella. But again this is not the same thing as conflating prep and public schools – and back in the 1920s such one-stop shops were rare.

To have landed a job in a public school Waugh would have had to have had not only a degree – which technically he did not have – but a better one than he did have if you ignored the technicalities. A talented athlete predominantly appointed as a sportsmaster might have got away with such a university record, but for that role Waugh was extremely unfitted.

Conversely, it seems not only to have been easy to get a job as a prep school master at that time, but hard to avoid doing so: Waugh is joined by Betjeman, Auden (dangerously – he of course had an affair with at least one of the boys); and, at the Dragon, C. Day Lewis, who was remarkably heterosexual for that 1930s Auden connection. You worked in a prep school if you had been to Oxbridge and were on your uppers, and then you got out of it as soon as you could.

**From Stephen Lloyd**
Following the printing of my talk on Constant Lambert and Hugh Moreland (Casanova's Chinese Restaurant, April 2015) in Secret Harmonies No 8 Spring 2018, and the reviews of Hilary Spurling's absorbing new biography of Anthony Powell in Newsletter 69, I hope Ms Spurling will not mind my correcting three statements in her biography concerning Lambert.
NEWSLETTER 72

On page 105 we are told that Lambert was 'born in Russia, son of an Australian painter working in St Petersburg', and, on the following page, that he claimed to be 'the only francophil English composer from St Petersburg who worked on the Trans-Siberian railway'. I think the different generations of Lamberts have been confused.

Constant's grandfather, George Washington Lambert, born in Baltimore, was involved in the construction of the first railways in Russia. He developed a serious heart trouble for which he and his (second) wife came to London to seek medical advice. With their children left in Russia and his wife expecting a fourth, she returned hastily to St Petersburg for the birth of Constant's father, George Washington Thomas Lambert. Left in London, her husband died soon, aged only 40. Constant's father, with his family, left Russia when he was about 3, moving first to Germany, and then to Australia with the prospects of a better life-style. It was in Australia that Constant's father grew up as an artist, marrying a fellow Australian and moving to England where Constant was born, in Fulham. (His elder brother, the sculptor Maurice, was born in Paris during the Lamberts' brief study stay there.) Constant's father was an Australian war artist in the Middle East during the Great War, contracting malaria. In 1921 he returned to Australia, leaving behind his family and establishing himself as an artist of considerable talent. His wife sailed out to see him, but she returned home alone and his two sons never saw their father again. Constant Lambert never went to Russia, but the one fact above that is true about him is that he was certainly a Francophile. I might also add that it was his fellow composer William Walton, rather than Lambert, who had been a protégé of Osbert Sitwell (p.104).

There is one other statement that puzzles me, that Lambert 'had a repertoire of false noses, fake beards and alternative personalities picked up from a magic shop on Shaftesbury Avenue' (p. 106). I wonder whether there is some confusion here with Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock) who was known as a prankster and, when living in Kent, once came up to London to buy a collection of masks, false noses and beards for some of his friends (including Constant Lambert and Nina Hamnett) to play tricks on a religious local lady to whom Heseltine had taken objection. Anthony Powell probably only met Heseltine on a few occasions and found him 'agreeable and highly entertaining, though never without a sense, as with many persons of at times malignant temper, that things might suddenly go badly wrong'. As indeed they did: he took his own life in 1930.
MY FIRST TIME

Guy Robinson

I had a couple of false starts with AP. I was an avid admirer of Evelyn Waugh’s novels and must have heard AP mentioned in association somehow. I became more aware when reading extracts from Anthony Burgess’s Ninety-Nine Novels: The Best in English since 1939 of which Dance was one. This also put me on to other authors who became favourites-Including Olivia Manning and Flann O’Brien.

I didn’t get round to actually reading any of Dance until the early 90’s and had moved to London. I began with A Question of Upbringing (Mark Boxer cover). It was OK - as a non-public schoolboy I found some of it difficult to empathize with. I went to a redbrick university in the 80’s which was riddled with class divisions and my early attitude to Question of Upbringing was a hangover from that. Widmerpool I felt sorry for initially and I found Templer especially smug and irritating. The treatment of Le Bas in Braddock-alias-Thorne re-awakened my guilty conscience about our treatment at my own school of a hapless French teacher who bore a keen resemblance to the unfortunate housemaster. What I did like were the characters of Uncle Giles and Stringham and I was keen on the obvious implication that people were going to re-appear in the later novels.

A couple of years later and I re-read Question of Upbringing, enjoyed it better and then went on to Buyer’s Market - far more my cup of tea. Particularly the party sequences - at that time (before the change in licencing laws) I myself had trailed about London in the early hours looking for late night drinking venues in the company of characters similar to Barnby, Stringham and Gypsy Jones.

In the late 90’s after seeing bits of the TV version I finally embarked on and completed the whole of Dance. I’ve been a fan ever since. Each re-reading and discussion with the Society has heightened the experience.

Still haven’t read any Proust though….
I was still reflecting on the eccentricity of Stringham's behaviour when brought suddenly within the orbit of Lord Huntercombe, who was moving around the room in a leisurely way, examining the pictures and ornaments there. He had just taken up Truth Unveiled by Time, removed his spectacles, and closely examined the group's base. He now replaced the cast on its console table, at the same time smiling wryly in my direction and shaking his head, as if to imply that such worthless bric-à-brac should not be allowed to detain great connoisseurs like ourselves. Smethyck (a museum official, whom I had known as an undergraduate) had introduced us not long before at an exhibition of seventeenth-century pictures and furniture Smethyck himself had helped to organise, to which Lord Huntercombe had lent some of his collection.

"Have you seen your friend Smethyck lately?" asked Lord Huntercombe, still smiling.

"Not since we talked about picture-cleaning at that exhibition."

"Before the exhibition opened," said Lord Huntercombe, "Smethyck showed himself anxious to point out that Prince Rupert Conversing with a Herald was painted by Dobson, rather than than Van Dyke. Fortunately I had long ago come to the same conclusion and had recently caused its label to be altered. I was even able to carry the war into Smethyck's country by enquiring whether he felt absolutely confident of the authenticity of that supposed portrait of Judge Jeffreys, attributed to Lely, on loan from his own gallery. What nice china there is in this house. It looks to me as if there were some Vienna porcelain mixed up with the Meissen in this cabinet. I believe Warrington knew something of china. That was why Kitchener liked him. You know, I think I shall have to inspect these a little more thoroughly."

Lord Huntercombe tried the door of the cabinet. Although the key turned, the door refused to open. He steadied the top of the cabinet with his hand, then tried again. Still the door remained firmly closed. Lord Huntercombe shook his head. He brought out a small penknife from his pocket, opened the shorter blade, and inserted this in the crevice.

"How is Erridge?" he asked.

He spoke with that note almost of yearning in his voice, which peers are inclined to employ in speaking of other peers, especially of those younger than themselves of whom they disapprove.

"He's still in Spain."
"I hope he will try to persuade his friends not to burn all the churches," said Lord Huntercombe, without looking up, as he moved the blade of the knife gently backwards and forwards.

He had crouched on his haunches to facilitate the operation, and in this position gave the impression of an old craftsman practising a trade at which he was immensely skilled, his extreme neatness and the quick movement of his fingers adding to this illusion. However, these efforts remained ineffective. The door refused to open. I had some idea of trying to find Isobel to arrange a meeting between herself and Stringham. However, I was still watching Lord Huntercombe's exertions, when Chandler now reappeared.

"Nick," he said, "come and talk to Amy."

"Just hold this cabinet steady for a moment, both of you," said Lord Huntercombe. "There... It's coming. That's done it. Thank you very much."

POETIC DANCE


Throughout AP’s Dance there are numerous references to poetry. Here for the first time, they are catalogued in order, the original sources analysed, and commentary given on the relevance of each piece. A feast of poetry is revealed, spanning nearly a thousand years of verse, and including over fifty poets, both famous and the more obscure. Bernard Stacey is a member of the Society. His previous work War Dance (published by the Society), catalogued the military references in the war novels.

Your Publisher recommends: ‘Poetic Dance is a tour-de-force and a jolly good read.
Extreme heat makes people behave in extreme ways. Even members of our cool and collected Society are affected. You only had to observe the select group sheltering from the Mayfair inferno in the Audley. Sartorial standards melted. Just one tie and a mere three jackets were on display. And, wait for it. One senior mature member was in shorts. Shorts? What would AP or indeed Uncle Giles have said? I think that we should be told.

If shorts are not extreme enough, take a look at these two new haircuts.

Geraint’s devotion to the ever-popular Kebabcut is well known. But what about your Secretary’s barnet? There is no truth in the scurrilous suggestion that his legendary desire to avoid wasting money (essential when running a literary society) led him to ask the apprentice gardener who cuts his hedge to try her hand at hair. I repeat, there is no truth in it.

The Audley continues to innovate, not always successfully. A large TV screen has been installed. On Saturday the thrilling climax to the first test between England and India was on. AP’s lack of interest in sport was reflected in the reaction of the lunching members. Only your Editor displayed any engagement in this epic victory by England in their 1000th Test. What would Uncle Giles have said? I think that we should be told.

The menu evolves. Fish and chips remain supreme. High calorie fried food predominates. No obviously healthy options are offered. Whitebait was over-
plump and lacking crispness and crunch. Nachos lost their individuality in a congealed solid morass under guacamole and sour cream. Fingers had to be supplemented by knives and forks for this classic sharing and dipping dish. Far from unpleasant but not the finest London can offer.

The Audley’s setting and staff were as agreeable as ever, making the question of whether or not to carry on with the Pub Meets easy to resolve. An overwhelming Yes! As was the answer to whether or not the Secretary’s New Year Brunch and the London AP Birthday Lunch should be continued.

Copies of the Society’s new publication Poetic Dance by Bernard Stacey were eagerly purchased. Treat yourself; it’s an excellent read.

Come to the Pub Meets if you have time. Don’t worry that you won’t know any one. The company is always welcoming and congenial: the conversation and badinage fun and instructive. And you have the chance to discuss and influence matters relevant to the Society as officers and trustees attend.

STRINGHAM AT A LOOSE END...IN BELGRAVIA AND MAYFAIR

Ivan Hutnik

A little less than a dozen of us gathered outside Knightsbridge underground station on the morning of 7th July to take part in the annual Summer Saturday Stroll, braving the heat of Britain’s hottest summer since 1976. This year’s walk set out to follow the meanderings of Stringham through Belgravia and Mayfair. However, with temperatures forecast to reach over 30 degrees Celsius during the day (for our American readers, this translates as most untypically hot for an English summer’s day), the organizers decided to make a last-minute decision to substantially reduce the length of the walk. This was to avoid the potentially negative effects the heat might have on our strollers’ stamina.

Flagged off by Keith Marshall, the ragged column headed south from Harrods along Sloane Street before cutting through the back streets to reach the less congested spaces of Lowndes Square and West Halkin Street. Stopping in the latter place to gaze up at possible location of Stringham’s flat, John Blaxter read us the relevant passage from The Acceptance World, in which Jenkins and
Widmerpool put the drunken Stringham to bed, Widmerpool very much in charge after Le Bas’ stroke at the Old Boys’ dinner at the Ritz.

While on West Halkin Street, our guide Ivan Hutnik pointed out Mosimann’s private dining club, reputedly one of the world’s most prestigious, having hosted many heads of state, royalty and celebrities. Prior to its present role, this rather beautiful building was formerly a Presbyterian church and then later a spiritualist meeting place. Could it have once have contained the friends of Mrs Erdleigh within its portals? During our perusal of its façade, it became apparent that one of our party, Robin Bynoe, had once dined at Mosimann’s, although, somewhat appropriately in the context, he claimed to be a little vague about his memories of said event.

Robin also drew our attention to the fact that Stringham appeared to have moved several times in London. Was this the same flat where Jenkins had lived with his mother, or where Stringham had shared married life with Peggy Stepney? Apparently not, as on the occasion of putting Stringham to bed, Jenkins had said to Widmerpool that he had not been there previously.

From West Halkin Street it is just a short walk to Belgrave Square. Here we admired the statue of the 1st Marquess of Westminster (1767-1845), the ancestor of the present Duke of Westminster, often reported as Britain’s richest son. The 1st Marquess was responsible for developing the family’s fortune and, in particular, for extending the family’s London estates in Belgravia to the west of Buckingham Palace.

Standing under the shade of a tree next to the statue of Robert Grosvenor, recalling Widmerpool’s discovery of the transient nature of love, we speculated on the exact location of the Huntercombes’ ball in Belgrave Square. The present Embassy of Argentina makes one likely candidate. Peter Brunning wondered where the other party might have been located, the one that Jenkins overheard from the Huntercombes.

Rather than read the very well-known passage about Widmerpool’s encounter with the sugar castor, Geraint Dearman read us the section from A Buyer’s Market where the guests make their first appearance at the ball, drawing up in
all their finery, their arrival being announced by the butler, who proceeds to thoroughly mispronounce Widmerpool’s name.

We continued our way along Grosvenor Crescent towards Grosvenor Place. Braving the unsavory aromas of the underpass, we crossed to the green island of the Wellington Arch. Gazing upward, it is clear that Jenkins’ description of the sculptures on top of the triumphal arch cannot be bettered: “. . . across the summit of which, like a vast paper-weight or capital ornament of an Empire clock, the Quadriga’s horses, against a sky of indigo and silver, pranced desperately towards the abyss.” The Quadriga is an emblem of triumph, with Victory depicted as a woman driving the horses. In classical mythology, Apollo drives his Quadriga across the heavens, delivering daylight and dispersing the night.

Graham Page read us the passage from *A Buyer’s Market* in which Jenkins and Widmerpool, having left the Huntercombes’ ball following the sugar castor incident, ran into Mr Deacon and Gypsy Jones at the tea stall near Hyde Park Corner. This prompted discussion of how different the place was between the wars, with significant night-time activity, as shown in pictures and photographs of that period.

The conversation meandered back to the Arch. Geraint brought our attention to the low door in its side and the small room behind it, which had until then gone largely unnoticed, quizzing us on whether knew its original purpose. Today it acts as a kiosk to sell tourist memorabilia. Discussion between John and Geraint quickly established that it was previously a police station, reputedly England’s smallest. David Bomford contributed the information that the space on top of the arch had once been available for parties, the access to which is gained from a staircase within the kiosk. Judging from the height of the door, the policemen must have all been rather short in stature. Whether or not they ever partied on the roof was not examined.

We continued our stroll under most welcome shade in Green Park. Winding our way across Piccadilly, we entered a long narrow alley still begrimed with Victorian soot. Shepherd Market was the destination of this truncated stroll,
much of the planned walk through Mayfair being left to another day. Here we were joined once more by Keith Marshall, as well as by Prue Raper. *Da Coradi* supplied us with a very satisfactory luncheon and lubrication for extended conversation.

**Saugatuck Ducks and AP’s Curry Recipe**

*Nick Birns*


Guests included: me and my wife Isabella, Jonathan Kooperstein, Eileen and Eric, Annabel Davis-Goff, Edwin Bock, John Gould, and Gerald Ruderman. For my wife, Eileen graciously prepared a vegetarian variant which, before his highly publicized denunciation of AP, I would have said might be apt for Sir Vidia Naipaul, for whom AP prepared a vegetarian version of his curry recipe when Naipaul visited the Chantry. Some of the vestiges of the meal were shared with some ducks from the Saugatuck River, perhaps distant kindred of those sighted at the beginning of *Hearing Secret Harmonies.*

Discussion was lively and vigorous, and included such topics as, what book of Powell’s to teach in a survey course (Annabel suggested *Afternoon Men*, which I definitely want to try out), how we physically conceived of Moreland (we generally agreed James Fleet’s rendition of the character in the TV adaptation was pretty close to the mark). On the subject of actors, several agreed that their
opinion of Hugh Grant’s dramatic talents had been raised by his portrayal of Jeremy Thorpe in *A Very English Scandal*. I recommended Michael Bloch’s biography of Thorpe. Eileen discussed the book collection at the Cosmopolitan Club, originally bequeathed by Cornelia Otis Skinner (an American contemporary, more or less, of Powell’s). John Gould recapitulated his series of emails to the APList on his recent rereading of the entire *Dance* sequence. Jon is settling well in Long Beach, California, where his wife Jane is rector of an Episcopal parish. The merits and demerits of Ford Madox Ford as a novelist (Annabel held pretty much to AP’s severe opinion, whereas I felt a bit more generous because I had recently taught Ford), and, further afield, the theological causes of the Reformation and whether the gap between Protestant and Catholic conceptions of faith and works had been ameliorated. I reassured Jonathan that there was indeed such a thing as a Scottish Episcopal Church; he had feared its mention in a recent book some sort of disastrous typo or the figment of an overzealous imagination. Ed Bock reported on the new Tappan Zee bridge, which Isabella and I also experienced for the first time in our return. Ed is planning another of his ingenious plays for the Grolier Club lunch in December in which I will apparently play the role of a judge. Ed had brought a book of Thornton Wilder’s plays and we discussed the degree to which Wilder did not share a generational and stylistic affinity with Powell. The Kaufmans and I will be at Oxford in September: the rest will be there in spirit.

**i** Friday 10 August

Michael Palin, actor and writer, when asked ‘Which fictional character most resembles you?’, replied ‘Nicholas Jenkins, the narrator of Anthony Powell’s *A Dance to the Music of Time*, because I always see myself as an observer. Jenkins is the narrator around whom a lot of more bizarre characters turn and I suppose there’s something of that in me.’

**From the APList**

Dates for your Diary

Watch this space for 2019 dates!

Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 18th Annual General Meeting of the Anthony Powell Society will be held on Saturday 20 October at 14:00 in the Conference Room of St. James’s Church, Piccadilly, London W1.

The formal business of the AGM will be followed at 15:00 by a ‘Pub Quiz’ for teams of up to four (£1 entry per person). Quizmaster: Stephen Holden.

The AGM Agenda and voting papers are included with this Newsletter. Proxy votes must reach the Hon. Secretary by 12 noon (UK time) on Wednesday 17 October 2018.

London Group 2018 Pub Meet

The next meet is on Saturday 3 November The Audley, Mount Street, London W1. 12.30 to 15.30.

A pint, a pie and informal conversation in a Victorian pub that AP would have known. Why not bring something AP related to interest us? Non-members always welcome. No need to book but further details from the Hon. Secretary secretary@anthonypowell.org.

AP Birthday Lunch

Saturday 8 December 12.30

This year we are returning to the Queen’s Head and Artichoke, 30-32 Albany Street, Regent’s Park, London NW1 4EA.

Please book soonest with Stephen Walker Townshend25@gmail.com 07770875681
Subscriptions

Subscriptions were due on 1 April and reminders have been sent out to everyone needing to renew. Thank you to those who have already renewed; if you have not done so, please let us have payment soonest.

Where we have your email address, we will use it to send your reminder as it is quicker and a lot cheaper. Others will receive their reminder by post.

Subscription rates are:
- Individual: UK £22, Overseas £28
- Joint: UK £33, Overseas £39
- Student: UK £13, Overseas £19

Why not save time and money with our “5 years for the price of 4” membership offer?

Valid for all grades of membership.

Subscriptions should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, at the usual address.

Please help us to keep costs down by renewing promptly.

Membership Updates

New Members

We extend a warm welcome to the following new and returning members:
- Graeme Cannon, Glasgow
- David Ford, Louth
- John McElroy, Truro
- Giles Spackman, Oxford
- Nicholas Woolf, Santa Barbara, USA

Local Group Contacts

London Group
Area: London & SE England
Contact: Keith Marshall
kcm@cix.co.uk
NEWSLETTER 72

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

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

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

German Group
Area: Germany
Contact: Theo Langheid
theo@langheid.de

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.

SOCIETY MERCHANDISE

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

York 2016 Conference Proceedings
UK: £8; Overseas: £14

Venice 2014 Conference Proceedings (including recordings of the papers on a CD) UK: £11; Overseas £16

Eton 2013 Conference Proceedings
UK: £8; Overseas: £14

London 2011 Conference Proceedings
UK: £8; Overseas: £14

Centenary 2005 Conference Proceedings
UK: £11, Overseas: £17

Oxford 2003 Conference Proceedings
UK: £7; Overseas: £13

Eton 2001 Conference Proceedings
UK: £7; Overseas: £10

Anthony Powell on Wine. Six pieces by AP and one by Violet Powell on the pleasures of food and drink, ed. Robin Bynoe. UK: £17; Overseas £23

Bernard Stacey, War Dance, a glossary of the military terms and references in the War trilogy novels
UK: £10; Overseas £14
Bernard Stacey, *Poetic Dance*, a glossary of the poetry references in *Dance*
UK: £10; Overseas £14

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: £13

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

*The Master and The Congressman*
40-page monograph by John Monagan describing his meetings with Powell.
**UK: £4; Overseas: £7**

Other Publications

Violet Powell; *A Stone in the Shade*
Fourth & final volume of Lady Violet’s autobiography covering mostly the 1960s. Includes many of Lady Violet’s coloured travel sketches. Hardback.
UK: £24; Overseas: £32

Anthony Powell, *Caledonia, A Fragment*
The 2011 Greville Press reprint of this rare Powell spoof. **UK: £8; Overseas: £11**

John Gould; *Dance Class*
American High School student essays from John’s two teachings of *Dance* at Philips Academy. **UK: £12; Overseas: £18**

**Paperback: UK £9; Overseas £13**
**Hardback: UK £18; Overseas £24**

Journal

Secret Harmonies: *Journal of the Anthony Powell Society*
Back numbers of issues 1, 2, 3 & 6/7 are available. **UK: £6; Overseas: £9 each**

Audio
NEWSLETTER 71

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: £12 (£6 + £6 donation)**

**SHOPPING BAG**
*Society Shopping/Tote Bag*
Sturdy 10oz cotton bag approx. 38cm square with 10cm gusset. Each bag has *A Buyer’s Market* and Ada Leintwardine book cover designs.
**UK: £8; Overseas £10** (If you want multiples please email us for a postage quote)

**POSTCARDS**

**Powell Ancestral Lands Postcards**
Set of four colour postcards from photos by John Blaxter of the Powell ancestral lands on the Welsh borders. **UK: £3; Overseas: £5**

**Wallace Collection Poussin Postcard**
The Wallace Collection’s postcard of Poussin’s *A Dance to the Music of Time*. Pack of 5.
**UK: £3; Overseas: £6**

**Society Postcard**
B&W postcard of Powell with his cat Trelawney. Pack of 5. **UK: £3; Overseas: £5**

**ORDERING**
The prices shown are the current members’ prices (revised June 2017) and are inclusive of postage and packing, hence the different UK and overseas prices. **Non-members will be charged the UK member’s price shown plus postage & packing at cost.**
Please send your order to:
**Anthony Powell Society Merchandise,**
**48 Cecil Road, London, E13 0LR, UK**
*Email: merchandise@anthonypowell.org*
Payment by UK cheque, Mastercard, Visa or PayPal (to *secretary@anthonypowell.org*). You may also order through the Society’s online shop at [www.anthonypowell.org](http://www.anthonypowell.org).
Anthony Powell Society  
Registered Charity No. 1096873  
Membership Form

Please tick below the membership required:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Rates</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Overseas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>[ ] £22</td>
<td>[ ] £28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint*</td>
<td>[ ] £33</td>
<td>[ ] £39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student**</td>
<td>[ ] £13</td>
<td>[ ] £19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Any two persons at the same address.
** Please send a copy of your student card.

[ ] Buy 5 years membership for the price of 4 (any grade)

Gift membership & standing order payment also available. Subscriptions are due on 1 April; if joining on or after 1 January membership includes following subscription year.

Name:
Address:

Postcode:  
Country:

E-mail:

[ ] I enclose a sterling cheque drawn on a UK bank for £ and payable to Anthony Powell Society.

[ ] Please debit my Visa/MasterCard with £

Card No.:
Expires:  
CVC:  

[Delete if not required.] 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 (6 April one year to 5 April the next) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that the Society will reclaim on your donations for that tax year.

[ ] I agree to the Society holding my contact details on computer and using them to provide me with member benefits.

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  
Email: membership@anthonypowell.org