



NEWSLETTER

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Housman Hall's Stylish New Houses

A ceremony to mark the opening of Bromsgrove School's two new sixth form boarding houses and the complete refurbishment Housman Hall itself was held on 29th November.

Bromsgrove District Council was represented by Janice Boswell, the Society by Vice Chairman Robin Shaw, and former pupils, current and former staff and friends of the School were included in a gathering of over 80 guests. The Headmaster, Peter Clague, welcomed all to the newly refurbished House and Head Girl Emily Collie, who won the Housman Society Poetry Speaking Cup in 2013, read

a Housman poem. After lunch guests were shown round the House, the newly built bedroom wings and landscaped grounds.

The ownership of Perry Hall in its early days was complicated and for a detailed account readers should turn to Julian Hunt's article in *HSJ* 35. Records show that there was a house on the site in 1752 and that it was purchased by John Adams in 1819. In 1860 (the year after A.E.H. was born) the Housman Family took up residence in Perry Hall but moved out to The Clock House in 1873 before returning in 1877. The house ceased being a private residence in 1956 when it became a hotel, and among several owners during that period was Ind Coope, who in 1969 added a new wing of bedrooms, which have been demolished in the current refurbishment. The name was changed to Housman Hall in 2006 when Bromsgrove School bought it for use as a sixth form boarding house.

The occasion was a memorable one as these adapted notes from Robin Shaw testify. The experience started in the car park when the setting of the new buildings in the landscape was most impressive, giving a new spacious campus that was most unexpected. The Perry Hall that older members of the Society will remember is scarcely recognisable. Everything is finished to the highest standard and the new blocks are pleasantly traditional in style and



blend in very well. The students' rooms are wonderful – like little hotel rooms with en suites, smart wooden wardrobes and desks fitted into niches and bookshelves – each one different and cosy. We were amazed to find in the grounds the feeling of a big open campus with the church in the background and you become quite unaware of the Kidderminster Road being so close.

The meal was excellent with an orange and beetroot starter, a huge portion of duck, cabbage and a square of duchesse potato – all elegantly arranged on a plate with a swirl of sweet sauce. The meal concluded with a nice little sweet in a glass – mousse, jelly and chocolate.



Peter Clague said a few words referring to A.E.H. and Emily Collie read *Last Poems* XII, 'The laws of god, the laws of man'. Conversation was difficult during the meal as the noise level was so high! Peter Clague was very welcoming and talked about his time in New Zealand and his move here. I emphasised that the school had always been very good to Society and he said he would be happy for us to use their facilities in the future. A.E.H.'s turtle shell still features prominently and there is a framed manuscript autograph by Housman on a wall. The two new boarding houses are appropriately named Wenlock and Bredon.



The 'tidied up' ruined wall

‘Till Ludlow tower shall fall...’

Accident and Emergency provision in Ludlow is currently under threat. High-tech facilities, it is proposed, will be concentrated in Telford.

For people living in south Shropshire and Powys, this would involve complicated and expensive travel. A very vigorous “Save our A and E” campaign group has been formed in Ludlow and local resident Ian Barge wrote the parody printed below in support of this admirable initiative. As he points out Housman is the instrument, not the object of the satire.

When I came last to Ludlow
In search of A and E,
(Five jars of ale, one rusty nail:
A red, infected knee)

A lass with raven tresses
And cherry blossom hands,
Like nectar, drew my throbbing pain.
And wound my cotton bands.

I asked her when I should return
That she should change my dressing;
For ne’er before had I beheld
A nurse ... so prepossessing.

To my surprise, with sobs and sighs,
My nightingale shrieked: “Never!
This is my last ... my final shift ...
My ultimate endeavour!

By Telford’s meads the Trust’s in trouble;
What tissue lies th’accountants weave!
They’ve squandered corn and red the stubble;
Watch Wrekin squirm and heave.

Let Shropshire lads and lasses rise!
Oh, sir, take up our cause.
Or when you next to Ludlow come:
Dark wards and padlocked doors.”

“Oh, never fear. We’ll fight, my dear,
For Justice-under-Clee.
For tell me, what would Housman do
Without his A and E?”

Under the title “Till Ludlow tower shall fall” Ian Barge will be expanding on recent threats to Ludlow’s way of life at the Society’s Ludlow Commemoration on 30th April. After the ceremony at St Laurence’s his talk will take place at the Charlton Arms, which is delightfully situated by Ludford Bridge. Lunch will follow in the restaurant which has an unbeatable position overlooking the river. We do hope you will be able to join us!

One that Kept his Word The World of A.E. Housman

Iain Burnside, the Ludlow English Song Weekend’s Artistic Director, has achieved quite a coup in luring Alex Jennings to participate in an evening devoted entirely to Housman.



Alex Jennings is one of Britain’s foremost actors whose recent roles have included playing Voltaire and Doctor Panglos in Bernstein’s *Candide* at English National Opera and Benjamin Britten in *The Habit of Art*. From 2011 to 2014, he played Alan Cowdrey QC in the BBC One legal drama *Silk* and from 2014, he played the role of

Willy Wonka in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

At Ludlow he will be reading from Housman’s letters and poetry as a link to settings by both well known and rarely performed composers. He will be sharing the programme with three singers, who will be accompanied by Iain Burnside.

The programme includes settings by Butterworth, Ireland, Moeran, and Somervell, as well as *Zodiack*, a commissioned work by Judith Bingham. One of the most interesting rarities in the programme is Janet Hamilton’s setting of ‘With rue my heart is laden’, as she was originally thought to have been the first woman to set Housman – that honour now goes to a previously unknown American, Ora Agatha Johnson. Janet Hamilton’s first two Housman settings date from 1917 and the well known sporano of the day, Muriel Foster, sang them at a Wigmore Hall recital the next year. During the war she worked on air-rigging construction in Chatham Dockyard, before falling ill to appendicitis. At the end of the war, while she was working in a Red Cross canteen, Gervase Elwes included her songs in a recital at the Queen’s Hall and recorded them for Columbia.

The star recital will be given on the Friday 29 May in St Laurence’s by everyone’s favourite baritone Roderick Williams, and in a programme containing Vaughan Williams’ *Four Last Songs* and Finzi’s Hardy cycle *Before and After Summer* a large audience can be expected. One of the many exciting features of the weekend is the appearance of Birmingham Conservatoire’s high profile Chamber Choir under their conductor, Paul Spicer.

The Housman concert is on Saturday 30 May 2015 at 8.00pm and the singers taking part are Marcus Farnsworth (baritone), Anna Huntley (mezzo) and Alex Sprague (tenor). The event is promoted by Finzi Friends and a leaflet is included in this mailing. Tickets (£25 & £20) from Ludlow Assembly Rooms Box Office 01584 878141.

From the Secretary's Desk

In the last Newsletter I made two appeals to the membership, both of which fell upon stony ground. The first related to the 'Paris Slip of Paper', the essentials of which I outlined in the Newsletter, a problem upon which I have mused for many years. Now, I readily accept that I may give greater importance to this matter than it really deserves and although I carefully phrased my request for any scraps of information or ideas or observations none were forthcoming. Now this may be because no-one had any worthwhile observations to put forward and in subsequent conversations with a couple of members their response did support this view.

The Paris Slip of Paper

What I was not to know when I issued my call for help in this matter was that the 2014 Journal would supply a most interesting article on this very topic by Jeffrey Scott and while I do not accept all his contentions I do like his suggestion that the numbers 3, 9 and 10 may refer to Paris arrondissements. Now this kind of conjecture is just the sort of thing that I was appealing for and his idea is totally new and one which has never been previously suggested. But I disagree with Mr Scott when he considers that the solution to the meaning of the numbers does not really matter, where, to my mind, this is the absolute crux of the matter. Now I appreciate that I might be over-thinking this, but, for the life of me, I can't see why Housman would enter the figure zero in the column rather than supply a dash or leave the space vacant. I can only think that the figure zero is supplied for a reason, but none of the suggestions made by interested parties over the last thirty-five years have managed to crack the code. Perhaps Mr Scott's article will prompt others to add their thoughts to the debate and we may arrive at a plausible solution to the significance of these numbers. Or, maybe we have reached the point where, having looked the problem full in the face, we move on.

Newsletter Volunteer Still Needed

The second appeal related to trying to find a volunteer with the necessary computer skills to lend a hand in setting future issues of the Newsletter. The first half-dozen newsletters appeared between 1973 and 1979 and were basic typed sheets which were periodically produced and sent out to the membership. Since the Newsletter was revived in 1998 it has been in its current format and has been produced by Chairman Jim Page on a very old programme which is irretrievably locked into an old computer which is now kept only for the purpose of producing the Newsletter. It is obviously a dangerous tactic to think that this vintage computer will go on for ever and we do need to think to the future. With Jim now wishing to lighten his work load and with the rest of the committee being computer illiterates and with no-one wishing to revert to the typed sheets of yesteryear the appeal went out for assistance in this task. Andrew Maund, the Newsletter Editor, will continue to collate all the material for the Newsletter and the volunteer's task is just the setting of this material in

readiness for onward transmission to the printer. It is a very necessary and rewarding job which requires a short period of work by a competent operative a couple of times a year. The Society will be pleased to supply the new software as required and we are hoping that there is someone with the necessary expertise willing to take on this vital task.

I am sure that elsewhere in this Newsletter there will be reference to the retirement of Robin Shaw from the Committee and I do not wish to duplicate what is written elsewhere but I would like to add my personal tribute to a man who has been a stalwart of the Society for so many years. I first met Robin nearly twenty years ago, in 1996, the Centenary year of *A Shropshire Lad*, and he had nearly ten years of service under his belt back then. He has been an ever-present on the Committee for over twenty-five years, and more than that, he has been a doer not a talker. He will be sorely missed.

On financial matters I am informed by our Treasurer, Max Hunt, that there are still a number of members paying the old subscription rates to our old bank, which is causing a bit of a problem. Please get in touch with me if you require an updated Standing Order form to be sent to you or if you have any doubts in this regard.

And, finally, I would like to mention that in the Book Exchange pages there is a listing of ex-library Housman books at give-away prices. Do have a look.

I may be contacted on <info@housman-society.co.uk> or any of the contact points given on the Book Exchange pages.



This illustration for ASL XL by Patrick Procktor is from the 1986 Folio Edition of A Shropshire Lad - see the article on page 9

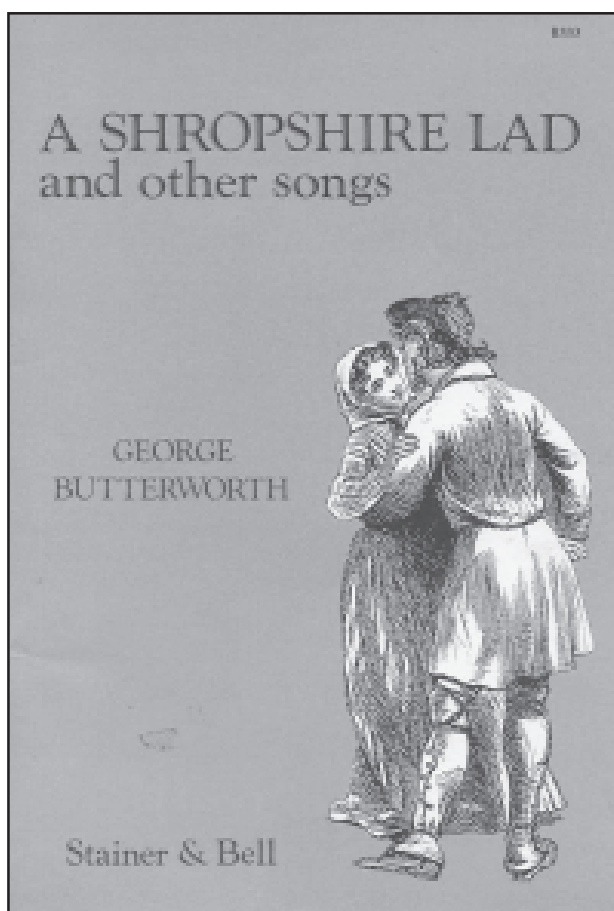
Thoughtful New Biography of Butterworth

Writing in Trinity College Oxford Report for 2013-14 Nick Salaman reviews a biography of George Butterworth, which, although published in 2012, seems to have gained little critical attention.

I once asked the great and learned Raymond Leppard (who kindly wrote the music for some TV commercials I had scripted for Bowyers *The Posh Sausage*) what period of music he most enjoyed, 'The Elizabethans,' he replied. I asked him why. 'They are so smooth.'

George Butterworth is not smooth. He belongs to an era of music when composers seem (I am merely amateur) more intent on self-expression than on giving pleasure. For that reason, I am kept at some distance by Butterworth's musical language except when he lets his beloved folk-songs in. He had advantages, as we read from Anthony Murphy's thoughtful and informative biography. He was clever, shy and even diffident. It was said of him: 'Few men can have been worse at making an acquaintance and better at making friends'. He was of medium height, good-looking. He wore a moustache. He was inclined to winter chills. In due course, he went to Eton, a matter of advantage then as now, and the friends he made there stayed with him all his life. Strangely, he missed out on the usual hallmark of the place - the Eton sheen of confidence, even though he must have drunk deep of the pitcher of patriotism and manliness poured out by the titanic headmaster, the ominously named Dr Warre.

Some of his Eton friends were musicians themselves, others were lovers of music like the three Barrington-Kennett brothers, at whose country house Butterworth was to become a frequent visitor. Oxford too provided useful contacts. Butterworth read Greats at Trinity, and met people like Hubert Parry and Hugh Allen, Professor of Music, also Reginald Tiddy, English Fellow at Trinity, already an enthusiast of the folk play and the morris dance. Butterworth became a leading light in the Oxford Musical Society. After leaving university with a third class degree, he worked for a while as assistant music critic on *The Times*, but he became disillusioned with journalism and took a job as assistant music master at Radley. He was there for a year, conveniently near Oxford and Boars Hill where Cecil Sharp, with his Folk Music Movement, had a coterie of followers including Reggie Tiddy and even Vaughan Williams - ten years older than Butterworth, and



another Etonian. Schoolmastering, however, was not for him. But what to do about money? Butterworth's father was wealthy but he wanted his son to pursue a career. Butterworth agonised - and decided, perhaps at his mother's instigation - to devote himself to full-time composition, but even so there was a problem.

'The modern malady of love is nerves...' wrote the contemporary poet Arthur Symonds, and it seems to me that 'nerves' affected this composer, for creation is a kind of love. He was creatively stifled by self-criticism, and he had difficulty writing music. It was perhaps to escape from his own high standards that drew him back to folk music and to Cecil Sharp with his teams of dancers touring the country. Butterworth described himself now, not as a composer, but as a 'dancer'. As one might expect, he was a

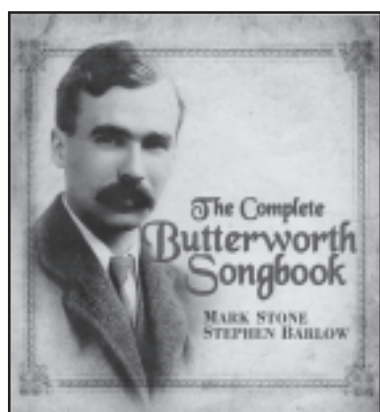
stickler for the scholarship of the dance. He and Vaughan Williams and others spent much time in the field, hunting down folk tunes and dances.

It seems to us now slightly comical, like twitching. Each composer had his favourite area. Vaughan Williams liked Somerset, Butterworth preferred Sussex. On one occasion, Butterworth hurried down to a work-house to talk to some old songbird, and found a Miss Dorothy Marshall already there! Worse still, she was a colleague of Sharp's arch-enemy, the delightful Mary Neal, who believed that the morris should be entertaining. Butterworth made his feelings abundantly clear.

He was generally shy with women. He preferred the company of men, as many did at the time; a preference that often had no sexual undertones whatever. Men went to reading parties together; they walked in the mountains, smoked pipes and drank beer. It was this affinity that led him towards the poems of A.E. Housman and to set *A Shropshire Lad* to music. Later, he composed the longer rhapsody *A Shropshire Lad*. These, along with a couple of English Idylls and the much-admired *Banks of Green Willow*, represent the main corpus of his work currently in the repertoire today. In those balmy days pre-1914, they provoked if not a splash, at least a wave of interest.

Up to this point, Butterworth was a character in embryo, a knight in search of an errand, a man perhaps haunted by the future; and if Mr Murphy's biography had ended here, I would have been disappointed. But all at once something happened which projected the hesitant young composer into something quite other.

That event was the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo, and the subsequent war. Like others of his age and class, educated to be leaders, Butterworth enlisted soon after war was declared. All at once he knew what he had to do. Soon he and so many of his friends who had enlisted with him, like Reginald Tiddy, were fighting a war in circumstances of nerve-sapping discomfort and sudden and unimaginable terror – a war in which he excelled as a leader in the Durham Light Infantry, at one with his men who were mostly Durham miners, never composing a note of music or telling his colleagues of his pre-war fame. He finally won the Military Cross for his exploits in the field – and in due course died, like Tiddy, along with two thirds of the friends who had joined up at around the same time, including all three of the Barrington-Kennett brothers.



Cover for Mark Stone's CD of all Butterworth's songs

a fitting cadenza for a composer-in-waiting who became one of the bravest to suffer in that huge killing-machine, that Moloch, known as the Great War.

Anthony Murphy has done us fine service in telling how this musical chrysalis tumbled into a hero, leaving music behind. He even tells us of a contemporary friend's suggestion that Butterworth, had he lived, might not have composed another note. The paths of glory lead but to the grave, but the music Butterfield has left us – in its diffident, premonitory, sensitive way – lives on to tell us about the man he was before he became a soldier. And indeed it seems to us now to have a wider context than that, and to speak for all who died in that war before each one of them could become 'the person who might have been'.

Banks of Green Willow: the Life and Times of George Butterworth by Anthony Murphy. Cappella Archive, 2012 (ISBN: 978-1902918570)

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I read in the *Daily Telegraph* that Butterworth's *A Shropshire Lad: Rhapsody* was chosen among other well-known classical pieces to be played at a concert and ceremony for the great and the good of participating nations on 4 August 2014. It was held at St Symphorien Cemetery near Mons, where both allied and German soldiers lie buried. It seemed to me

Housman's Plinth

by John Burman

They've moved poor Housman's plinth to lay a walk-way.
They shifted him regardless of expense.
The Council chap explains that the statue still remains
To mollify some local residents.

Now Housman spent his lifetime speaking Latin,
An ancient language thought to be extinct.
But its words in many ways
Disapproval oft conveys;
Vituperation pretty well succinct!

So, *audacium immanem*¹ perhaps he'd say,
Or should a dog pee, *O foetorem latrinae*.²
And *Qui sudor et quam males rusticus*³
As Bromsgrovians queue to board an *Omnibus*.

But his ire would be directed, I'll be bound
To the architect – if some such could be found,
Who dared to place our poet – what a shock;
On a tasteless, faceless, wretched concrete block!

So *curris, stupes, satagis vervex*⁴
*Tu urbanus vero scurra architect!*⁵
What a bovver, what palaver, what a fuss.
It's enough to make you *sic in omnibus*!⁶

Translations

1. Monstrous audacity.
2. Smell of latrine.
3. What sweat and stink of rustics.
4. Running back and forth sheepshead.
5. You true town idiot.
6. All in this way.

Editor's Note: Mr Burman will be pleased to know that the Bromsgrove District Council assures us that by the time the Bromsgrove Commemoration comes on 26th March the concrete plinth will be covered on all four sides with stone cladding inscribed with details of the statue's origins and two Housman poems.



Why Read Housman?

Darrell Sutton concludes his series of articles by looking at the Classical Papers

Appreciations of the poetry of A.E. Housman are numerous. The praises are of another kind when one turns to the subject of Housman's scholarship. At the time it was issued, J. Diggle's and F.R.D. Goodyear's (1936-1987) three-volume publication of Housman's Classical Papers supplied readers with material of distinction. That gesture accrued to them the debt of many persons. Scanning editions of collected papers may be an avocation for scores of people, but for scholars and students in select academic disciplines they depend on these types of compilations for much help. Whatever the eccentricity of their author, individuality as a rule does not prohibit the disclosure of genius; but if the subject matter proves too complex, reading it will not be an agreeable activity.



To state the obvious, many persons find Housman's investigations to be impenetrable. Readers of this newsletter perhaps will agree. In advance of his 23rd birthday he had assembled for himself powerful technical equipment for the criticism of texts.¹ His articles are manifestly specialized; even so, one can find means of access. Housman was, however, opposed to a 'collected works' edition of any of his classical papers. Why he held this attitude so tenaciously is anyone's guess.² The long-standing tradition of issuing volumes of *Kleine Schriften* near the end of a scholar's career is no longer a unique venture. The precedent is firmly established in most fields of research.

Delving into the contents of collected works in order to probe an author's strengths, or his or her evolving positions, is now a lifelong specialist occupation. There may be a downside for laymen, particularly for those who strive to learn from Housman: there is the proliferation of so many controlled studies. Productions of this sort may sanction the narrow specialism which delimits some readers' ability to express approval of e.g. Gilbert Highet's (1906-1978) *Poets in a Landscape* (1957). To dispute this scorn a very wide reading list must be selfishly imposed on one's self.

In theory, editors of texts and fragments, i.e. textual critics of the highest standard, should not be guided by method, but by individual genius. However, when one's ingenuity lags far behind the critical methods condemned it is better to be straight-jacketed by a system than to be left to insane individualism. Housman's articles indeed are models of excellence. Countless remarks have been extracted from them:

most by classicists whose area of expertise requires interaction with his many conjectures; but some are cited by misdirected literary critics, and some are quoted by textual critics of the Bible whose editorial conservatism ensures that they often misjudge his logic.

The general impression derived is that the corpus of Housman's Classical Papers (*HCP*) usually is not comprehended. Taken as a whole, his three volumes constitute an encyclopedia, a veritable information bank of shrewd criticisms. Housman was not intellectually disorganized. He quickly reacted to perceived errors, whether or not those faults were embedded in an author's

character or merely inserted into the text.

Detecting errors in a text, that brand of fastidious science, made considerable progress in his day. Much may be ascertained from reading Housman. So a new group of readers must make new inquiries. In what follows, a few answers are offered in response to the question which obtrudes itself on readers presently:

What Can Readers Learn from Reading His Classical Papers?

1. *One may learn that Housman's papers are well wrought, providing numerous explanations and renderings of Greek and Latin verses: all of them concise. Extraneous words are absent.*

The productions of his pen evince his modes of thought when working from primary sources. One specimen may be called to the reader's attention. In *HCP* I, p.85 he renders the Greek words from Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. 1481-2:

"verily a great and vengeful demon is he of whom thou speakest in these parables."

'Vengeful demon': images of a ruthless being materialize in the reader's mind when deliberation is given to the matter. Aeschylus' portrayal percolates into the English language. In writing, brevity is a blessing when graphic thoughts are tendered so in print. Recovering the context of that statement could be one of the reader's endless joys of discovery.

Doubtless other examples may be adduced. Since his articles are aimed at a smaller professional audience, sometimes the historical features of ancient Roman times are obscured by textual discussions. The vitality of his engagements with the text proves difficult to resist. His arguments are forceful.

And while it may be the norm of some writers today, Housman did not employ modern, technical, foreign-language terms to bolster his argument or to enhance the profile of his papers. His style was exact and austere.

See *HCP* II #102: 'Notes on Persius', a poet whose terms are not the easiest to grasp. This paper is a useful design of 'how to frame an argument' and of 'how not to frame an argument.' Again, the discussion is business-like. One should not expect the writing of it, or of any of Housman's papers to flaunt or echo the literary tones of T.B. Macaulay (1800-1859). Concision was the benchmark with Housman, and with his aid Persius the poet is made to speak new words, probably words wholly foreign to the original texts.

2. *If one is interested in the peculiarities of the history of scholars and classical scholarship you can learn from Housman's opinions of other reputable classicists.*

Reading his evaluations of scholars is an absorbing venture. Sensitive souls were offended by his words, but his appraisals promoted the highest standards. A carping spirit may or may not have affected his judgment, except his pages are littered with strongly held verdicts. His contact with the writings of deceased critics from previous generations, i.e., J.J. Scaliger (1540-1609) to J.N. Madvig (1804-1886), and a host of others, often displays the right tone and proportion, and reveal the professionalism of a critic with an acute and keen mind, giving particular attention both to minor and major details.

Few would doubt his ability to deploy his knowledge in the service of the history of scholarship: accurately assessing the value of scholars' publications. Readers, nonetheless, should not be astonished that Housman might not have expressed approval of H.T. Peck's (1856-1914) volume *A History of Classical Philology* (1911), or that he could not have brought himself to heap lavish praise on U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff's (1848-1931) *Geschichte der Philologie* (1921).³ The reason for this is not because of the volumes' insignificance, but on account of his disposition and biases – visible in his classical papers – against the general principles of scholarship employed by American and German classicists. French, Dutch and Italian classicists fared little better.

He did not have the charity to overlook scholars' shortcomings. Stubbornness intruded into his thoughts when he criticized the work of Wallace Lindsay (1858-1937) and J.P. Postgate (1853-1926), etc. Other eminent scholars he wounded through his disagreeable attacks on their publications. And though complaints were issued to him and to the proper editorial authorities, they went unheeded. He believed scholars should be responsible for opinions they publically espouse. His low view of German philological method was not shared by all his peers on the continent. Yet it is illustrated quite often by acerbic statements on the overall value he placed on certain person's techniques and conclusions: e.g., cf. *Ovidiana*, p.926: of Isidor Hilberg (1852-1919), Housman derisively writes:

"If Mr Hilberg means to learn prosody from the spelling of MSS, it will teach him terrible things".

Ibid., p.936,

"Better critics than Mr Ehwald have before now proposed alterations just as false and needless, because they have not rightly conceived the nature and observed the usage of the Latin possessive pronoun".

Rudolf Ehwald (1847-1927) was not faultless; but 100 years later it remains hard to undo his proposals from Housman's meddlesome value-judgments. To gain a clearer conception of Housman's critical intellect in this sphere – but this time narrowly focused on English scholarship, see *HCP* III, #122, Housman's review of Ingram Bywater's posthumously published lecture in the year 1919: *Four Centuries of Greek Learning in England*.⁴ He disputes certain points raised by Bywater and delivers verdicts to the contrary, the least of which concern estimations of the minds and work of select English figures. None of these valuations could be worked out apart from reading his articles.

3. *Intertextuality: from the reading of Housman's papers you can learn that he readily discerned the interplay of poetic authors; but he delighted too in grammatical debate.*

For those persons who find studies in metre and prosody to be vexatious, wrongly discarding them, some gain still may be had through comparative researches. Housman's inspections spread over a wide range of ancient texts. There are numerous instances of these examinations, though in this forum they cannot be outlined. But note: in *HCP* II, #40, 'Lucretiana' he does see a close connection between Virgil [*Georg.* II 478] and Lucretius [*DRN* V 751] at one place, stating

"Virgil will sometimes imitate two passages of Lucretius in a single passage..." (p. 423).

On the other hand, disjunctions in syntactical affinities are briefly addressed in 'Elucidations of Latin Poets {II}'. Therein (p.521), following his critical remarks on C.G. Heyne (1729-1812), of whom it is written

"if he had been properly trained would have become a really great scholar",

He discusses Heyne's unrealistic genitive uses of the word *fallax*. One of the commonest expressions of poetic interplay is found in grammatical representations. Various turns of phrase, if they do not depict adaptation, may unveil an author's acquaintance with oral or literary versions of a composition. Again, for those who savour such things, there is much to learn.

4. *By reading Housman's classical papers one may learn specific details about ancient Greco-Roman practices.*

Now I should venture to cite some personal experiences, which are based on activities of an ecclesiastic whose explorations necessitate qualified interests in Housman's classical work. New Testament texts, principally the *Acts of*

the *Apostles* and the Pauline letters, cover wide swaths of customs and mores that encompass the Mediterranean Sea. Proper studies of ancient Greek and Roman literature provide unusual access into the ancient worlds of Early, Late, and Imperial Roman Republic, and as a sidebar offer unique insights into perspectives on mystery religions, other pagan convictions, and views on the Judaism of the Second Temple period.

Utilized properly, Housman's lively pieces enable a student to see broad varieties of linguistic nuance. These nuances yield new, original ideas for understanding certain contexts of the era of Paul the Apostle. Case in point: I remember once, while acting as a devotional leader for a small group who were on a biblical study-tour in the Middle East, we stopped at a site where a large Roman mosaic was housed, upon which was portrayed an ancient Roman dinner party. The appropriate plaque was nearby to provide information. The data must not have been enough. Later in the evening a series of questions were posed to me from the eager visitors to the Land.

Tour directors in the Middle East, although acquainted with Semitic cultures, usually are in a state of flux regarding Hellenic custom; Roman inscriptions lie further outside their intellectual domain. We had an excellent guide. Fortunately I was able to help. Just a little knowledge of modern, critical researches on antique mosaics, combined with Housman's succinct but subtle work on Petronius' (27AD-66AD) *Satyricon*, provided useful insight on the role of servants/slaves at Roman drinking parties. Everyone has gaps in their knowledge. It is always nice to know how to fill up some of them. Knowledge of Petronius' texts may prove enlightening in several ways, e.g., a reader of *HCP* well might muster the strength to debate whether the final supper of Jesus and his disciples was conducted in typical Jewish fashion, or – if one may infer otherwise from the language of the biblical text – if it occurred in the form of a Roman *cena*?⁵ Surely Leonardo da Vinci's (1452-1519) 15th century classic painting, *The Last Supper*, is incorrect!

I had a similar experience over 20 years ago while visiting historical sites within Cairo's city limits. An Egyptologist accompanied me. He was infinitely wiser than his young companion, but he was at a loss for words when the discussions turned from studies of Pharaonic Egypt to queries of Hesiod's myths and Herodotus' varied descriptions. Housman makes limited use of both Hesiod and Herodotus (e.g., *HCP* I, pp.114-115) in his classical papers; but the Arab professor deplored comparative issues, and cared little for the Greeks or for that peculiar branch of learning nowadays treating aspects of 'the ancient gaze' or 'the ancients' view of the other'. Fortunately Nicolas Grimal's new volume, *A History of Ancient Egypt* (1992), had arrived safely to my desk in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Thus were the conversations between the two of us enriched.

To return to biblical matters, one could go further and collect information about ancient gladiators: see Housman's piece *An African Inscription*.⁶ Even if the advance in knowledge is

small, it would be of assistance to any student of Pauline perspectives for interpreting the wider meanings of Paul's statement:

"... I have fought with beasts at Ephesus."⁷

New venues of research await anyone with a bit of industry and zeal. Avenues of interest will lead any and all readers down sundry pathways. So 'What Can Readers Learn from Reading Housman's *Classical Papers*?' - several answers have been given. That vast sea of criticism awaits one thing, the willingness of eager persons to dive right into it. Whether one turns to the classical papers because of curiosity or because of the need for some points of reference, each page is capable of stamping a deep and lasting impress on the reader.

In comparison to the day in which Housman lived the number of textual critics in today's classical arena has swelled. Numerous critics now exhibit *saeva indignatio* through their printed materials (these are persons who display deficiency in any irenic constitution). Such folk are angry citizens of the academic world, snarling about many things. Until Housman came along, there had been only a handful of English persons in the history of classical scholarship so indignant, so disproportionately gifted. Surely he would believe things are much improved today.

NOTES

1. In his review of A. Y. Campbell's (1885-1958) *The Agamemnon of Aeschylus*, Eduard Fraenkel (1888-1970) made this remark concerning the conjectures of Housman on the *Agamemnon*: "all of them belong to the *opus iuvenile* of that great scholar." See *The Classical Review*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (May 1937), 59-64. No doubt Fraenkel would not have had the temerity to publish that statement while Housman lived. Some modern-day assessments of Housman's early work on Greek and Latin passages materialized in view of Fraenkel's 1937 opinion, and his text-critical evaluations are depreciated hitherto on account of his youth. No one disputes that some emendations were incorrect; although it has yet to be suitably demonstrated by latter-day advocates of Fraenkel's thesis that Housman's genius was any less precise or pronounced at that stage of his text-critical development.
2. Speculation of diverse types appeared after his decease. E.g., D.S. Robertson suggested that Housman's refusal may have stemmed from a desire to keep his 'less mature writings' from further circulation, cf. *The Classical Review*, Vol. 50, (Sep., 1936), 113-115.
3. This book was translated from the German by Alan Harris, and published in English as *History of Classical Scholarship* in 1983: edited, introduced and annotated by Sir Hugh Lloyd-Jones (1922-2009). This book is an excellent addition to any classical scholar's library. However, it would be beneficial to read it with W.M. Calder, III's review of it at-hand, cf., *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 104, No. 1 (Spr., 1983), 108-111.
4. This was an inaugural lecture given before the University of Oxford March 8, 1894. Its twenty pages were later published by Clarendon press in 1919; only to be reviewed by Housman the next year in *CR* (34) 1920, pp., 110-111, republished in *HCP* III, 1004-1006.
5. A few years ago, classicist William Harris (1926-2009) and I worked on these ideas in a short informal piece entitled "*The Last Supper: Some Problems of Interpretation*." This article contains a number of useful cultural insights and is available at: community.middlebury.edu/~harris/last.supper.html.
6. See *HCP* III, 1127-1129.
7. See *1 Corinthians* 15.32.

New Folio Society edition of *A Shropshire Lad* reviewed

Peter Sisley writes: The image in my head as I sit down to fulfil my promise to write a review of the latest publication of *A Shropshire Lad* is of a sketch from *Not the Nine-o-Clock News* from twenty or thirty years ago. One of the cast, Mel Smith I think, was delivering his script from his newsreader's desk, looking into the camera with that half-superior, half-disinterested look that television newsreaders seem to possess when, from the side of the screen, he was handed a piece of paper. His eyes dropped momentarily to assess the contents and then, most professionally, he continued, "Here is a late racing result. The 1954 Derby was won by 'Never Say Die'. And thus my dilemma; what is there new to say about a text that has been in the public domain since Victorian times or the illustrations which first drew admiration 75 years ago?



Press in 1997 and Collector's Library in 2012.

The new Folio Society edition is bound in quarter cloth with paper sides bearing reproductions of two of the woodcuts and has patterned endpapers and comes with a slip-case. It is set in Baskerville type, which has been used to good effect by previous publishers, and overall is a very pleasing piece of printing. The form of the book follows the Harrap format except in two regards, the first of which is that the contents page has been dispensed with which is, I think, a pity. The second variance, which I consider a great mistake, relates to their treatment of the few poems in the book containing a longer line length where they have amended the standard line-setting as determined by Housman in the 1896 first edition. In the examples I give below I shall compare the treatment of the new FS edition with that of the

Now it was back in 1986 that the Folio Society first published Housman's most famous book of poetry and, in my opinion, it was a woeful attempt which was ruined by inappropriate illustrations and miserable settings of the poems on the page. Four line verses were often split in half at the foot of a page and eight line verses constantly suffered a 5:3 split over succeeding pages, which is ugly on the eye and ruins the rhythm of the poem. And the setting of individual poems defied logic; for example *ASL LXI* 'Hughley Steeple' covers four pages; on the first page is printed two-and-a-half verses of the poem, on the second is an illustration, the third page is blank and the fourth page houses the remaining half verse of the poem followed by an 80% page void. It is a truly weird arrangement and Patrick Procktor's illustrations, in my judgement, merit the same description and are totally unsuitable for the text. I recalled Housman's words when he rejected similarly inappropriate illustrations by Claud Lovat Fraser, "The trouble with book-illustrators, as with composers who set poems to music, is not merely that they are wrapped up in their own art and their precious selves, and regard the author merely as a peg to hang things on, but that they seem to have less than the ordinary allowance of sense and feeling".

In their new edition the Folio Society are on much safer ground with their chosen illustrations as they are using Agnes Miller Parker's wood engravings which are so well known and well loved. These illustrations first graced *A Shropshire Lad* in the George Harrap edition of 1940 and continued through many Harrap printings into the 1980's. More recently they have been used by Silent Books in 1995, Primrose Hill

Harrap printing.

In *ASL XXIII* [The lads in their hundreds] Harrap print four balanced verses of eight lines which, with the concluding illustration, nicely cover two pages. FS, however, print the four verses of the poem on five, six, six and five lines, move the illustration to the middle of the poem and thus finish with a void of over half-a-page. Similarly, on *ASL XXXIV* 'The New Mistress', Harrap print the poem as four verses of eight lines plus the concluding illustration neatly filling two pages whereas FS print four verses of four, four, four and six lines, with the illustration placed centrally and again a void of over half-a-page. A similar story occurs with *ASL XLVIII* [Be still, my soul, be still;] with FS printing unbalanced lines, a central illustration and a void of over half-a-page. The problem that FS have created for themselves is caused because the page and font size used is not sufficient to allow them to print the text on a single line, but rather than confront the problem and find a solution they have pressed on to arrive at this most unsatisfactory result. And, of course, Harrap had already solved the problem for them, and it is just on these three poems that they have fiddled with a winning formula. Housman's poetry is beautifully balanced and it is quite disappointing for them to destroy the visual balance of the page in this fashion. The Folio Society who have otherwise produced a delightful little book with beautiful and trusted illustrations have, I feel, scored an own-goal by this unnecessary tinkering. I believe that the ugly but apposite

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‘Ale, man, ale’s the stuff....’

Wood’s ASL Winner

First brewed in 1996 to celebrate the centenary of the publication of *A Shropshire Lad*, this 4.5% premium bitter was an instant hit. The ale is now Wood’s best seller and its well rounded malty flavour is evocative of the county and a bucolic lifestyle.



The firm’s website says that ‘Pale, Crystal and Chocolate malts combine to give a sweetish draught followed by a subtle bitterness and fruity overtones from the infusion of traditional Fuggles and Goldings hops from the neighbouring hop fields of Herefordshire and Worcestershire. In these days of golden style ales this well rounded chestnut coloured beer harks back to an earlier age’.

Wood’s Brewery is in Wistanstow and their hops come from Shropshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire, three counties which produce more than half of the hops grown in the UK.

continued from page 9

modern phrase that covers this situation is –‘if it ain’t bust don’t fix it’.

The book is available to non-members of the Folio Society at £24.95 which is a pretty whopping price compared, say, to the £7.95 asked by the Collector’s Library for their equally pleasing edition containing the same text and the same illustrations together with a wonderful seventeen-page introduction by Housman Society Journal Editor, Dr David Butterfield. [I declare an interest]. However, as an incentive to new subscribers, the book may be obtained free of charge from the Folio Society, full details of which are given on their website <www.foliosociety.com>.

Miscellanea

● **Lucilla Spillane Honoured.** On 19 February there will be a reading from Lucilla Spillane’s poetry anthology *Another Seeing and other Poems* (reviewed in the February 2014 edition of the Newsletter), at the request of Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta, at the San Anton Palace.

The readings will be in English and Maltese and will include her translated work *Lemba Ohra u poeziji obrajn*. The poems will be read by members of the cast of the film *Simshab*, directed by Rebecca Cremona with musical interludes by violinist Xandrija accompanied by Alexander Manche.

● Performances of **Butterworth’s *A Shropshire Lad Rhapsody*** have been frequent during the commemoration of the centenary of the First World War. Notable among these have been those by the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra in Birmingham University’s new Bramall Hall and by Chetham’s Symphony Orchestra at the Royal Northern College of Music.

● Bonhams offered Housman’s manuscript draft of ‘**Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries**’, a sheet torn from one of the notebooks recently for sale (for the fourth time) at a First World War Centenary Sale. As Peter Sisley remarks, “while it is very desirable to a Housman enthusiast it is a very modest thin little sheet of paper. Back in 2004 it was sold in the Brett-Smith sale at Sothebys for about £5,500. In 2011 it was purchased by Roy Davids for £12,640 who last year offered it for sale via Bonhams at an estimate of £20,000 - £25,000. Unsurprisingly it was withdrawn, having failed to reach the reserve price.

● We are sad to record the deaths of two giants in the literary world who have both given memorable contributions at Society events. **John Bayley** gave the 1993 Housman Lecture - *Surprises in the Shropshire Lad* – in the Birmingham and Midland Institute on 8th November and afterwards we had an engaging meal in the Midland Hotel at which his wife, Iris Murdoch, was delighted to find her favourite dessert on the menu - Bakewell Tart. With great magnanimity **Seamus Heaney** agreed to a poetry reading, entitled *Under Uricon*, at the *Shropshire Lad* Centenary Weekend of Literature in Ludlow in July 1996 and predictably his event was for many the highlight of a weekend that was filled with high profile events..

● It is a happy chance that this year’s Commemoration of A.E.H.’s Birthday on 26th March marks, almost to the day, the **30th anniversary of the unveiling of the statue** in Bromsgrove’s High Street, as this occasion will see the unveiling of the relocated statue which has been carried out as part of the District Council’s plans to regenerate the High Street.

● Francis Brett Young’s *The Ballad of St Kenelm* has been set to music by Andrew Downes and performances are scheduled for Hagley (22 April), Winchcombe (22 May) and Bewdley (11 October). Tickets from 0121 421 6657.

Laurence Housman Letters come to Bromsgrove

The 150th anniversary of Laurence Housman's birth is an appropriate time to reproduce this front page news from the Bromsgrove Messenger of 1st June 1979. The reprint comes from John Pugh's scrapbooks, which his son, Edward, has recently generously donated to the Society.

HUNDREDS of valuable letters by a famous Bromsgrove playwright have been saved at the eleventh hour - to be preserved in the town. The Laurence Housman letters were about to be burned by their 84-year-old owner when they were saved by Mr Gilbert Turner, from Gwynedd, North Wales, who returned them to Bromsgrove.

The find has "absolutely delighted" solicitor Mr John Pugh, Chairman of the Bromsgrove Housman Society. "They are of great literary value to Bromsgrove in particular," he said. But the true worth of the letters will not be revealed until Housman experts have examined them at the town library where they will be added to the library's collection of the playwright's famous brother - Bromsgrove born poet A. E. Housman. In the letters, Laurence Housman writes about family friends, pacifism, poetry and the origin of the universe to his life-long friend Reginald Reynolds. Besides several hundred letters the collection also contains accompanying photographs and sketches of the Housman family.



Photo Caption: Chairman of the Housman Society Mr John Pugh, Mr Martin Lakeman and area librarian Miss Betty Barley, sifting through the large quantity of Laurence Housman letters.

PROLIFIC YEARS

"They will be of value to students of Housman and of the pacifist movement," said area librarian Miss Betty Barley. Spanning the years 1927-58, the letters include Laurence Housman's most prolific years in the 1920s and 30s as a playwright in the Victorian era. Housman wrote one letter to Reynolds shortly before he visited India in 1929 to meet Mahatma Gandhi, the renowned rebel against British rule. Housman writes: "Give Gandhi my sort of love. Can you help him to be patient with the English mind? It is always slow and a little stupid in discovering that what the law or custom has made legal is wrong." Born at Perry Hall, Bromsgrove in 1865, Laurence Housman was "a rebel against the establishment and had his own ideas of how life should be lived," according to Mr Pugh. Until his death at

the age of 93 Laurence Housman was also a personal friend of famous actress Dame Sybil Thorndyke.

Land of Lost Content at King's Place

Built in 2008 as offices for *The Guardian*, thanks to the philanthropic property developer, Peter Millican, King's Place is also a cultural centre for the arts, housed in an imaginatively designed building near Kings Cross station. As part of a literary festival held there over the second weekend in October there was a 'Land of Lost Content' evening which had a sub-title 'A Celebration of the work of A.E. Housman'.

Written and directed by Malcolm McKee this was a well thought out presentation which ranged much wider than Housman's life and works, for by including writings by Kipling and popular songs from the First World War the evening had a wide resonance. The performers, Jan Hartley, Sunny

Ormonde, David Timson and Malcolm McKee himself, were seasoned professionals from the Shakespeare Revue Company, and even if in well known songs by composers such as Butterworth and Peel they may not have had singing voices to match those we are used to hearing in this repertoire, their understanding of the idiom and mood of each song ensured maximum emotional impact.

Housman's poetry was beautifully read and his comic verse went down particularly well with an audience obviously unfamiliar with much of A.E.H.'s work - and David Timson's rendering of 'The Oyster' was a particular highlight.

The Housman Society Book Exchange

As we have rather more books than usual to advertise this time I will keep my preliminary remarks to a minimum but I must draw your attention to the set of first edition Manilius as advertised last time which failed to find a buyer. The consignor has agreed to list them again this time after which they will be disposed of in the general antiquarian market. They are in need of rebinding but are offered at a price that allows this to be a commercially viable option. I have obtained a quotation from Ludlow Bookbinders for the set to be rebound in leather with gilt edgings and titling at a cost of £400 which would give the purchaser a superb set of Housman's rarest title at a fraction of the cost expected in the retail market, if indeed such a set could be found. I would be happy to supervise this process free of charge if required by the purchaser.

At the other end of the financial spectrum I would direct your gaze to the section of ex-library Housman titles which are the rump of those advertised in the September Newsletter. I have given minimum descriptions and they are in standard ex-library or ex-reference library condition and are available at £4 each or three for £10.

Finally I will restate that the Society has a large quantity of lower-value books which because of space restrictions are never advertised. Please email me if you have a specific requirement for any book.

As always the items offered for sale on these pages are on a first-come, first-served basis irrespective of the means of contact used. All enquiries, please, to Peter Sisley at Ladywood Cottage, Baveney Wood, Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire DY14 8HZ on telephone number 01299 841361 or facsimile 01299 841582 or e-mail at sisley.ladywood@talk21.com

SALES LIST - FEBRUARY 2015

Postage and Packing are additional to the prices quoted.

ALLSOPP (Jane). THE LAND OF LOST CONTENT. Shropshire Books, Shrewsbury, 1995. 8vo. 104 pages. A description of the Shropshire landscape and villages which inspired Housman's poetry. Beautifully written and delightfully illustrated. Photographic covers. Fine. £10

BELL (Alan) [editor]. FIFTEEN LETTERS TO WALTER ASHBURNER. The Tragara Press, Edinburgh, 1976. First edition. 8vo. 24 pages. Blue paper wrappers. Ashburner was an academic lawyer, a Professor of Jurisprudence at Oxford, a book collector and, like Housman, a gourmet. These letters were not featured in Maas. Number 73 of 125 copies. In fine condition. £60

CARTER (John), SPARROW (John) and WHITE (William). A.E. HOUSMAN – A BIBLIOGRAPHY. St. Paul's Bibliographies, Godalming, 1982. 8vo. 94 pages. An updated, revised and considerably enlarged version of the 1952 first edition. Fine £20

CLEMENS (Cyril) [editor]. THE MARK TWAIN QUARTERLY. A.E. HOUSMAN MEMORIAL NUMBER. 4to. 24pp. Grey paper covers. The International Mark Twain Society, St Louis, Missouri, 1936. This edition is devoted to Housman, a Vice-President of the Society. A scarce publication. Paper covers browned to edges, internally fine. £35

GOW (A.S.F.) A.E. Housman – A SKETCH. Cambridge University Press. 1936. First Edition. 8vo. 137 pages. Green cloth in the dust jacket. A delightful sketch of Housman by a fellow professor, together with a comprehensive list of his writings and indexes to his classical papers. Very good. £20

GRAVES (Richard Perceval). A.E. HOUSMAN ; THE SCHOLAR-POET. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London. 1979. First Edition, 304 pages. The first comprehensive biography. Fine. £15

HABER (Tom Burns). THIRTY HOUSMAN LETTERS TO WITTER BYNNER. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1957. First edition. 8vo. Preface plus 36 pages. Beautiful decorative boards. Bynner was Poetry Editor of *McClures Magazine* which published extracts from *A Shropshire Lad* in the early years of the 20th Century. One of 700 copies. Fine in the original glassine wrapper. £45

HAWKINS (Maude M.). A.E. HOUSMAN: MAN BEHIND A MASK. Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1958. First edition (not published in the U.K.). 292 pages. The author's writing style and tendency to assumption has resulted in this book being regarded as an unreliable biography but Hawkins did spend much time with Laurence Housman in the book's preparation. Very good in a very good dust jacket. £20

HOUSMAN (A.E.). M. MANILLII ASTRONOMICON. Five Volumes. Grant Richards, London, 1903, Grant Richards Limited, London, 1912, 1916, and 1920, The Richards Press Limited, London, 1930. 8vo. First editions. Volume One has Housman's 75 page preface followed by 103 pages of text and index. Volume Two (31) 123pp, Volume Three (28) 72pp, Volume Four (17) 130pp, Volume Five (46) 99pp. These books are internally very good but require rebinding (see my introductory remarks). £425 as is or £825 rebound in leather

HOUSMAN (A.E.). A SHROPSHIRE LAD. Mitchell Kennerley, New York, 1914. 32mo. Red cloth, top edge gilt. Printed in England and furnished with a cancel title page. A clean fresh copy. Very rare. Very good indeed. £50

HOUSMAN (A.E.). D. IVNII IVVENALIS SATVRAE. Cambridge University Press, 1938. Third edition. 146 pages. Red cloth. Contains the preface to the 1905 edition together with the preface of the corrected edition. Previous owner's signature to endpaper and letter to him loosely laid in. Missing the dust jacket. Very good. £45

HOUSMAN (A.E.). A SHROPSHIRE LAD. George Harrap, London, 1940. Proof Copy. 8vo. 99pp. With the evocative wood engravings by Agnes Miller Parker. Brown paper covers endorsed 'Advance Proof Copy. Unrevised and Confidential'. An interesting and unusual survivor. £40

HOUSMAN (A.E.). A SHROPSHIRE LAD. George Harrap, London, 1940. 8vo. 99 pages. Brown cloth with the scarce the dust jacket. The first edition with the delightful woodcuts by Agnes Miller Parker. Very rare in this condition.

Very good in similar dust jacket. £50

HOUSMAN (A.E.). A SHROPSHIRE LAD. The Tern Press, Market Drayton, 1990. 4to. Unpaginated. Green cloth covers. A beautiful limited edition of 225 copies with wood engravings by Nicholas Parry of the Press. Fine, with the bookplates of P.B. Morris. £75.

HOUSMAN (A.E.). A SHROPSHIRE LAD. The Chantry Press, Leominster, 1991. 8vo. Unpaginated. Quarter leather. With an introduction by Norman Page and illustrations by Alison Dunworth. Number 17 of 50 copies. Fine but for the book-plate of Housman collector P.B.Morris. £50.

HOUSMAN (Laurence). ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN'S "DE AMICITIA". The Little Rabbit Book Company, London, 1976. First edition. 8vo. 39pp. Laurence Housman's account of one aspect of his brother's life, written soon after Alfred's death and deposited at the British Museum in 1942, with the injunction that it remained sealed for twenty-five years. First published in Encounter Magazine in 1967, this unauthorised volume remains the only edition of the text in book form. A beautifully produced publication. One of 200 numbered copies. In fine condition.

together with

HOUSMAN (Laurence) [contributes]. ENCOUNTER MAGAZINE. VOLUME XXIX No.4. Continental Publishers, London, 1967. 8vo. 96pp. Paper covers. On pages 33-41 is printed for the first time *A.E. Housman's 'De Amicitia'*, annotated by John Carter. Very good indeed. £85 the pair

HOUSMAN SOCIETY JOURNALS. A FULL SET. 1974 – 2014. The Society is pleased to offer a full set of Journals to the membership at a fraction of the cost that would be charged on the open market. Forty issues. The condition varies from Very Good to Mint. £180

HOUSMAN SOCIETY JOURNAL VOLUME 1. 1974. Turner and Devereux, London. 56 pages. Contributors include Andrew Gow, Norman Marlow, Enoch Powell and L.P. Wilkinson. The first edition. Very good. £20

HOUSMAN SOCIETY JOURNAL VOLUME 2. 1975. Turner and Devereux, London. 63 pages. Contributors include Benjamin Fisher IV, G.B.A. Fletcher, Henry Maas and F.C. Horwood. Very good. £20

HOUSMAN SOCIETY JOURNAL VOLUMES 3 and 4. The British Housman Society. Very good. £10 each

HOUSMAN SOCIETY JOURNAL VOLUMES 5 and 6. The British Housman Society. Very good. £5 each

JEBB (Keith). A.E. HOUSMAN. Seren Books, Bridgend, 1992. First edition. 8vo. 147 pages. Green cloth in dust jacket. The most recent biography of Housman. Fine in a similar dust jacket. £15

NAIDITCH (P.G.). A.E. HOUSMAN AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE. THE ELECTION OF 1892. E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1988. First edition. 261 pages. Soft covers. A monumental work. Essential reading and now very scarce. A fine copy. £60

NAIDITCH (P.G.). PROBLEMS IN THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF A.E. HOUSMAN. Krown & Spellman, Beverly Hills, 1995. First edition. 8vo. 244 pages. Blue cloth. No dust jacket – as issued. Seventy notes, articles and reviews

on Housman. In mint condition. £35

PLATT (Arthur). NINE ESSAYS. Cambridge at the University Press, 1927. First edition. 220 pages. Red cloth. Housman not only supplied the seven page preface but also managed the progress of the book through the press. Very good indeed, missing the dust jacket as usual. Bookplate. £35

RICHARDS (Grant). HOUSMAN 1897-1936. Oxford University Press, London, 1942. First edition, second impression. 8vo. 493 pages. In addition to Richard's reminiscences there is an excellent set of appendices by other hands. Very good in similar dust jacket. £20

RICKS (Christopher). A.E. HOUSMAN. COLLECTED POEMS AND SELECTED PROSE. Allen Lane, London, 1988. First edition. 8vo. 528 pages. Black cloth with dust jacket. Near fine but for the bookplates of Peter Morris. £20

ROBERTSON (Stephen). THE SHROPSHIRE RACKET. Sheed and Ward, London, 1937. First edition. 12mo. 76 pages. Brown cloth. Housman parodies, illustrated by Thomas Derrick. Very good condition in similar dust jacket. £25

SKUTSCH (Otto). ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN 1859 – 1936. The University of London, The Athlone Press, 1960. First edition. 14pp. Blue paper wrappers. The text of an address delivered at University College to celebrate the anniversary of Housman's birth. Library cancellation stamp on cover, otherwise very good. £15

SYMONS (Katharine). MEMORIES OF A.E. HOUSMAN. Grant Mellhuish, Bath, 1936. 8 pages. Paper covers. Pamphlet written by Housman's sister extracted from the magazine of King Edward's School. Bath. Contains the first appearance of seven of Housman's comic verses. Staples rusted as usual otherwise very good. £20

WATSON (George L.). A.E. HOUSMAN – A DIVIDED LIFE. Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1957. First edition. 235 pages. The first attempt at a comprehensive biography. Near fine in a very good dust jacket. £25

WITHERS (Percy). A BURIED LIFE. Jonathan Cape, London, 1940. First edition. 8vo. 133 pages. Blue cloth missing the dust jacket. Withers first met Housman in 1917 at Cambridge and this book is a record of their association over the next twenty years. This book, rare in its own right, contains a manuscript dedication by the author. Very good. £60

ZEITLIN & VER BRUGGE. A.E. HOUSMAN. WINTER CATALOGUE 1983. Zeitlin & Ver Brugge, Los Angeles, 1983. 4to. Unpaginated. Card covers. This catalogue of 203 items is packed with interest for Housman enthusiasts. Very good indeed. £20

Ex-Library Books £4 each or 3 for £10

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| • Carter & Sparrow | An Annotated Hand-List |
| • Carter & Scott | Catalogue of an Exhibition |
| • Chambers | Man's Unconquerable Mind |
| • Gow | A.E. Housman – A Sketch |
| • Haber | The Manuscript Poems of A.E. Housman |
| • Housman (A.E.) | The Confines of Criticism |
| • Housman (A.E.) | More Poems |

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Robin Shaw, a stalwart of the Society, retires after 28 years service

Jim Page, whose chairmanship only just exceeds Robin Shaw's 28 years on the committee, reflects on his value to the Society.

When I found myself thrust into being Chairman of the Society in 1987 I asked a number of friends and acquaintances if they would join me in trying to rejuvenate a Society that I saw as being too concerned with social activity, with not enough attention being paid to A.E.H.'s scholarship and poetry.

Robin Shaw was one of the first to be asked and initially he said he would join us for three years. However after the three years had passed we both conveniently forget that clause and he has remained with us for twenty-eight years! One cannot overestimate his contribution for its commitment, value and variety, and the illustrations that adorn the rest of this page show his creative talent. Robin told us in this Newsletter three years ago where his inspiration comes from and if you have your Newsletters neatly filed, do go back to the February 2012 issue and re-read his article.

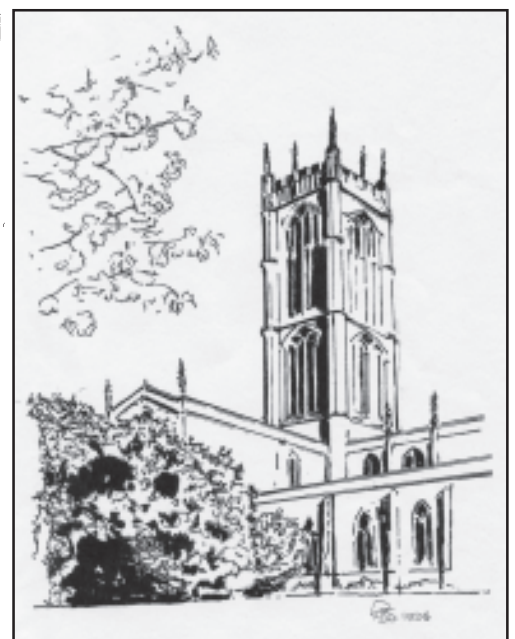
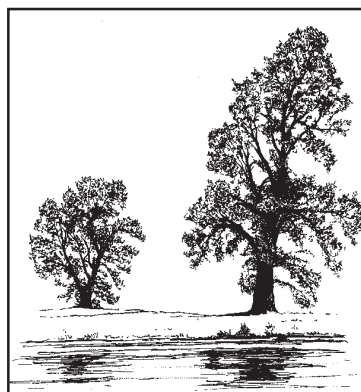
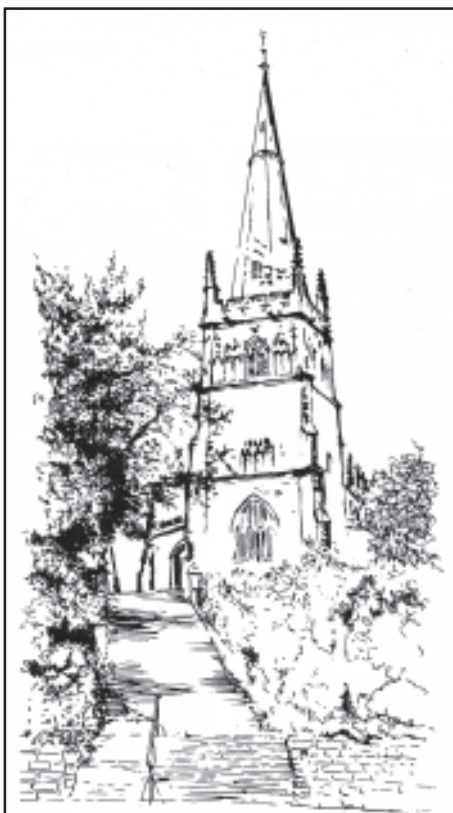
When Robin took on the role of Treasurer the Society's annual expenditure was less than £1,000 and in his thirteen years in



the post he was responsible for a five-fold increase in our assets. He was on the sub-committee which drove the 1996 celebrations for the centenary of the publication of *A Shropshire Lad* and as well as making a vital contribution there he found time to carry out the research for his invaluable and original book *Housman's Places*.

He followed this with the beautifully produced *Three Bromsgrove Poets*, where, as in *Housman's Places* and *Housman and Heine* his stylish line drawings added immeasurably to the quality of both books. He was one of the team who fulfilled requests from organisations

of all kinds for talks and was active in selling our books and cards. The partnership with his wife Kate is a very creative one as between them they have been responsible for initiating many of the best projects that the Society has undertaken. *The Name and Nature of Poetry* lecture, the Poetry Competition, the afore-mentioned books and the revival of the Newsletter spring to mind.



A.E.H. and Willa Cather

"The Selected Letters of Willa Cather" has recently been published by Knopf and below is an extract from a review by Benjamin Lytal published in the London Review of Books.

Her American readership is like Robert Frost's: read by every American schoolchild, both have to be rescued from the flag-wavers with strenuous reminders of their 'dark' seriousness and formal excellence. In Cather's case, there is also the rich and bedeviling problem of how to frame her very pointed belief in heroism: is it feminist, populist, elitist, silly, tragic?

Maybe Cather thought she owed it to her fans to keep her image clean and simple. Her letters show her to be, like everyone else, less than heroic, and Cather was herself the type of reader who liked to put her favourite authors on a pedestal. As a young woman she had called on A.E. Housman and been so disappointed by the visit that she burst into tears. 'He is the most and grey and embittered individual I know', she wrote to her colleague Viola Roseboro a year later. Badgered late in life to tell the story of the encounter, she always put it off. Perhaps she decided that a writer's personality, if it's unattractive, shouldn't impinge on his reputation.

Selected Letters of Willa Cather Ed. Andrew Jewell and Janis Stout. 978 0 307 959300.

A Shropshire Idyll DVD from Thomas Trotter on the Organ of St Laurence's, Ludlow

Thomas Trotter, one of the best known organists in the country, presents a programme of music to mark the 250th anniversary of the organ in St Laurence's Church, Ludlow. The DVD features a performance video of the programme. In extra features Thomas Trotter talks about the music he performs on the recording, and Shaun Ward, Director of Music at St Laurence's Church, gives a tour of the organ. Works by Handel, William Boyce, Elgar, SS Wesley, Michael Nyman and William Walton's stirring *Crown Imperial March* feature. The recital has been very well received with one reviewer saying:

"The playing is predictably splendid, with Trotter's magnificent technique and control not just audible but visible in this case. He survives the unforgiving camera with alacrity, performing immaculately with no music. This is a DVD which should be in the collection of every serious student, player or lover of the organ."

REGDVD0023 from Regent Records selling at £20.00.

Anthony Holden to give the Hay Lecture



Anthony Holden's book, co-edited with his son Ben, *Poems that Make Grown Men Cry*, created a minor publishing sensation, selling very well and creating much media interest. After a Foreword in which he quotes A.E. Housman's *Name and Nature of Poetry Lecture* it was natural for the Society to consider him a candidate for the Hay lecture. We are delighted that father and son have both accepted.

This is the relevant extract from the Foreword:

"In 2007, reviewing A. E. Housman's letters for the London Review of Books, Kermode had discussed the controversy caused in Cambridge in 1933 by a Housman lecture entitled 'On the Name and Nature of Poetry'. After recalling the brouhaha provoked at the time by Housman's emphasis on the emotional power of poetry, with F. R. Leavis saying it would 'take years to remedy the damage the lecture must have inflicted on his students', Frank continued — with, he told me, our recurrently lachrymose conversation very much in mind:

What everybody remembers best are the passages about the emotional aspects of poetry. Housman included a number of surprisingly personal comments on this topic. Milton's 'Nymphs and shepherds, dance no more', he said, can 'draw tears . . . to the eyes of more readers than one.' And tears are only one symptom. A line of poetry can make his beard bristle as he shaves, or cause a shiver down his spine, or 'a constriction of the throat' as well as 'a precipitation of water to the eyes'. For so reticent a man it was a surprising performance. It possibly upset his health, and he came to regard the date of the lecture, May 1933, as an ominous moment in his life.

Housman and Hardy have emerged as two of the most tear-provoking poets in this collection — to which I was urged to return, in the wake of Frank's death, by my son Ben. With three entries each, they are equalled by Philip Larkin and bested only by W. H. Auden, with five. So four of us supposedly buttoned-up Brits top the charts of almost one hundred poems from eighteen countries, a dozen of them written by women, chosen by men of more than twenty nationalities ranging in age from early twenties to late eighties. Five pairs of contributors happen to have chosen the same poem, for intriguingly different reasons."

Details of the event are on page 16.

Forthcoming Events

Tuesday 3 March 2015, 7.30pm

80 New Road, Bromsgrove B60 2LA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The meeting will be followed by wine and refreshments. The evening concludes with a talk from Elizabeth Oakley on Laurence Housman's relationship with his more famous brother.

Please indicate on the enclosed form,

or e-mail <jimpage@btinternet.com>, if you intend coming.

Tuesday 24 March 2015, 4.45-6.30pm

Artrix, Slideslow Drive (off A38), Bromsgrove B60 1AX

SCHOOLS POETRY SPEAKING COMPETITION FINALS

Competing pupils from Bromsgrove's schools will speak a poem by A.E. Housman and another of their own choice. There are categories for Sixth Formers, Seniors and for the Middle School age group. The winner of the Housman Cup will read at the Bromsgrove Commemoration on 26 March. Support from members and participants' families is welcome.

Free entry.

Thursday 26 March 2015, 12.30pm

By the Statue in Bromsgrove High Street

A.E.H. BIRTHDAY COMMEMORATION

The annual ceremony by the statue will be followed by a buffet lunch in the Council House, by kind invitation of the Chairman of Bromsgrove District Council, Councillor Ruck. The Guest of the Day will be Peter Clague, the new Headmaster of Bromsgrove School. *Please indicate on the enclosed form if you intend coming.*

Thursday 30 April 2015, 11.00am

St Laurence's, Ludlow

LUDLOW COMMEMORATION

The ceremony by the plaque on the north wall will be followed by coffee in St Laurence's. Lunch will be held in the Charlton Arms, preceded at 12 noon by a talk *Till Ludlow tower shall fall* by Ludlow resident Ian Barge - see item on page 2. *Please indicate on the form if you are coming. A confirmation of timings etc will be sent nearer the day.*

Tuesday 26 May 2015, 5.30pm

The Hay Festival of Literature

THE HOUSMAN LECTURE

The Name and Nature of Poetry

Anthony Holden, with readings by Ben Holden

'Poems that Make Grown Men Cry', co-edited by his son Ben, created a minor publishing sensation and we are delighted that they have agreed to give this year's lecture. *Complimentary tickets are available to members who request them on the form.*

Saturday 30 May 2015, 8.00pm

Ludlow English Song Weekend

Ludlow Assembly Rooms

ONE THAT KEPT HIS WORD

The World of A.E. Housman

Alex Jennings reads Housman in a programme given as part

of Finzi Friends' Ludlow English Song Weekend. Iain Burnside's programme includes settings by Butterworth, Ireland, Moeran, and Somervell, as well as a commissioned work by Judith Bingham. *Tickets (£25 & £20) from Ludlow Assembly Rooms Box Office 01584 878141.*

Tuesday 7 July 2015

Lecture Theatre, Bromsgrove School,

PEACE and WAR in the HOUSMAN FAMILY

Julian Hunt, Elizabeth Oakley and Andrew Maund will give presentations as part of Bromsgrove Summer School in the morning and there will be a visit to Housman Hall in the afternoon. Details of booking available from Bromsgrove Society's website.

Saturday 6 July 2015 6.00pm

Court Barn, Chipping Campden

TRADITION and MODERNITY

Elizabeth Oakley surveys the shared values and activities that so closely connected Laurence Housman, Edward Carpenter and CR Ashbee. *Tickets from 01386 841951.*

Saturday 18 July 2015

Street, Somerset - various venues

LAURENCE HOUSMAN - 150th Celebration

A day of celebration in conjunction with the Street Society which will include the unveiling of a blue plaque on Laurence's home, Longmeadow, a visit to Street library and talks on Laurence Housman's diverse interests and his time in Street. Further details will be available nearer the time. *Please fill in the form for these to be sent to you.*

Book Exchange Library Books

continued from page 13

- Housman (A.E.) Introductory Lecture
- Housman (A.E.) The Name and Nature of Poetry
- Housman (A.E.) A Morning with the Royal Family
- Housman (Laurence) The Unexpected Years
- Housman (Laurence) My Brother, A.E. Housman
- Mass The Letters of A.E. Housman
- Marlow. A.E. Housman: Scholar and Poet
- Richards Housman 1897-1936
- Richards Author Hunting
- Ricks A.E. Housman: A Collection of Critical Essays
- Scott-Kilvert A.E. Housman
- Simpson (Ed). Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association
- Skutsch Alfred Edward Housman
- Symons Alfred Edward Housman (trade edition)
- Watson A.E. Housman: A Divided Life
- Wilson The Triple Thinkers

Published by The Housman Society, 80 New Road, Bromsgrove. The next Newsletter will be circulated in September 2015 and contributions should be sent to the Editor at the address given on page 1 by 1st September 2015.