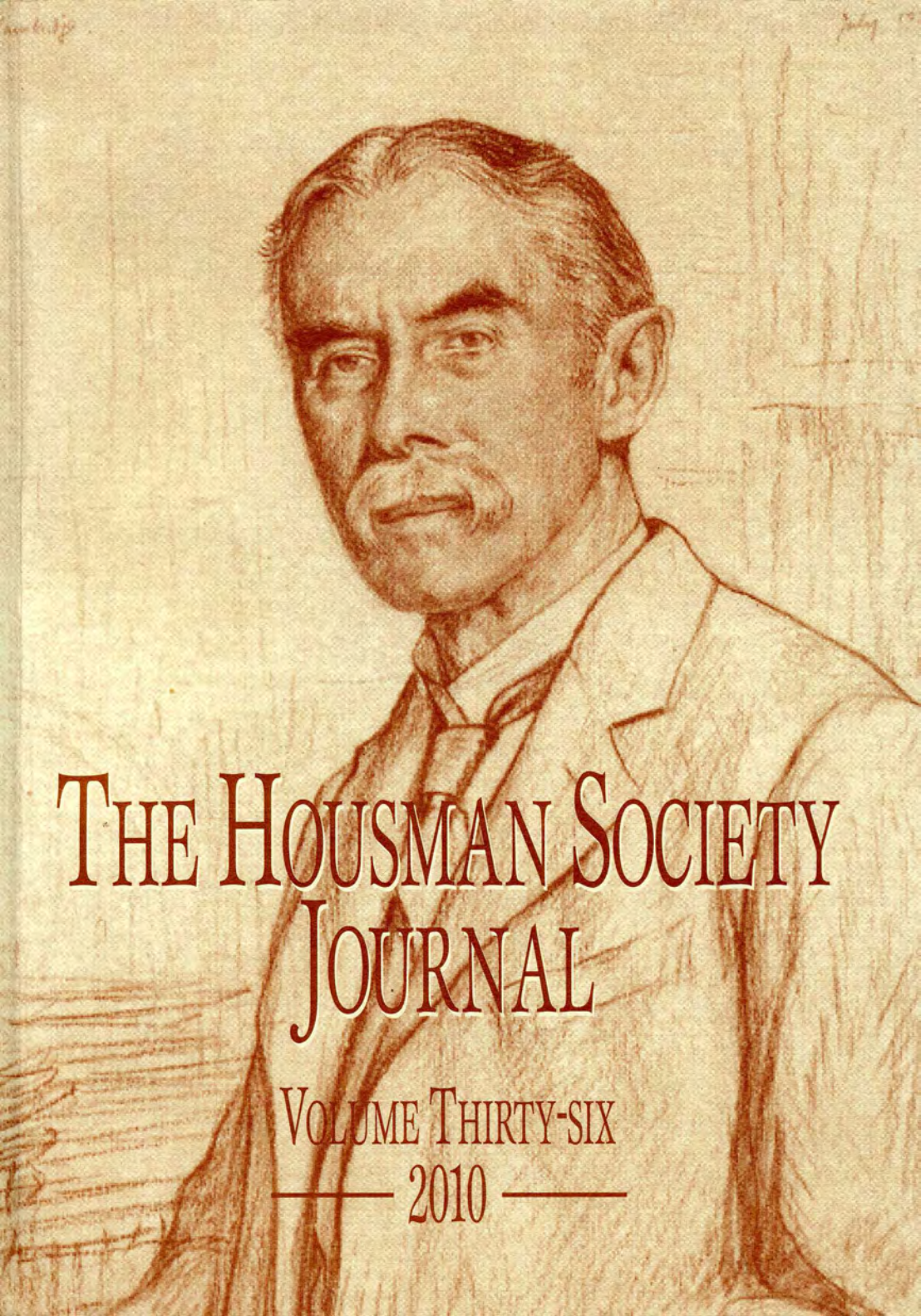

The Housman Society Journal

Volume Thirty-six

2010

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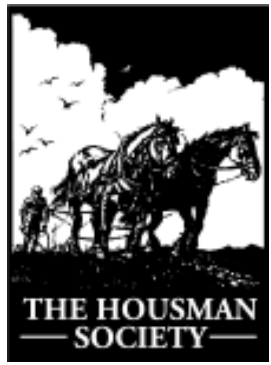
Editor: David Butterfield



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The Housman Society

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Editorial

The *Housman Society Journal* serves as an annual reminder of the sheer variety of topics that the multifaceted life and work of A.E. Housman can provoke. This issue, the 36th, is no exception, and its contributions range through the diverse fields of Housman's poetry, his classical scholarship (in print, in private and in public), his family history, and the etymology of Shropshire topology; even a fictional piece of biography here finds its way into the fold. The fact that this volume is larger than most shows that interest in the man still thrives.

It is a great privilege and pleasure for me to take up the editorship of *HSJ* with this issue. For the last decade Jeremy Bourne tilled the rudder to great effect, and the journal was regularly filled with stimulating and wide-ranging articles. After the fourth transferral of editorship since the founding of *HSJ*, I very much aim to continue in the wake of my predecessors by providing as rich a spread of interesting and original contributions to the study of matters relating, directly or indirectly, to the life and work of A.E. Housman. It may well be that certain areas of Housman studies currently require more detailed study than others, and the career development of A.E.H. from Oxford to London to Cambridge still has ample scope for serious investigation. It is hoped that readers of *HSJ* will persist in submitting their own varied contributions in order that the journal can continue to support its core aim of advancing Housman studies.

David Butterfield
Christ's College, Cambridge

Chairman's Notes

One of the most significant developments since our last Journal must have been the publication of Andrew Jackson's *A Fine View of the Show* in which Moses Jackson's grandson gives a commentary on the letters which his uncle Hector wrote from the Western Front. The letters themselves barely mention the horrors of war and one wonders at how such an educated young man could survive those terrible experiences and yet not convey any of the emotions he must have felt. Part of the reason may be due to the requirements of the censor, who would have frowned on any information getting home about the grim realities of war and the ghastly waste of life. Hector Jackson may also have been trying to protect his mother – strangely enough Moses, his father, is never included in the greeting – but as the letters to his brothers are also written in similar mode, it is likely that the requirements of the censor were predominant. Andrew Jackson's full commentary is, however, very illuminating, and by including the Housman story, the book becomes highly significant. Who could have imagined that there would ever be any new material on such a key area of Housman's life? I was first alerted to the book by Paul Naiditch and it was he who, by a typical piece of P.G.N. detective work, suggested an address in San Diego where the Jackson family might live. My resulting letter to that address found its target and a warm reply from Andrew Jackson (the youngest son of A.E.H.'s godson Gerald) by e-mail set in train a correspondence which has proved endlessly fascinating. His absorbing article later in these pages will put readers who do not receive the Society's Newsletter up to date, and there is also a review by Colin Leach of his book.

Newsletter readers have also been put up to date with the productions of Tom Stoppard's *The Invention of Love* at both Oxford and Cambridge. The coincidence that both these student productions fell in the same week was pretty amazing. For those of you who did not see either I can tell you that both were excellent, and being part of a youthful Saturday night Oxford audience that was so receptive that they roared with spontaneous laughter at even the Latin jokes was, in the words of Tom Stoppard, "an unprecedented experience". This was something that never happened in either London or New York.

One might have feared that at this year's Annual General Meeting the Treasurer would have been the harbinger of bad news, but Max Hunt, who has now been in office for five years, has guided us through the current troubled financial times with surprising success. We invested heavily in celebrating A.E.H.'s 150 anniversary, yet in spite of that and the stock market's plunge the

drop in our overall worth was surprisingly small. So we still have excellent reserves and this enables us to carry out projects with the knowledge that we have a sound financial base.

After the AGM we were treated to a talk by David Butterfield, who is now the Editor of this Journal. His subject was 'Housman from a Classicist's Perspective' and he began with a personal account of his first encounter with Housman at Lancaster Royal Grammar School in the 1990s. However it was not until university that he realised the importance of A.E.H. the classicist. He acknowledged that most Society members were interested in Housman because of his poetry, but it was A.E.H.'s contribution to classical scholarship that initially interested him. The main part of his talk was devoted to telling us about Lucretius and his research upon him. It was a fascinating talk and as Linda Hart so neatly concluded her report in the Newsletter, "David had, in one fell swoop, gone from being an unknown outsider to an admired and approachable insider".

The Commemoration of Housman's birthday in Bromsgrove marked the 25th anniversary of the unveiling of the statue in the High Street. It was the turn of Bromsgrove School to host the lunch, so it was appropriate to have Deputy Head, Philip Bowen, as our guest. In spite of the usual unkind weather his remarks were well received and his reading of three poems fully appreciated. The school's catering staff provided an excellent sit-down lunch where there was opportunity for friendly intercourse between the 50 or so guests. The event concluded with the winner of our Schools Poetry Reading Competition, Elizabeth Harris from North Bromsgrove High School, reciting the two poems with which she won the competition in November. Her non-Housman poem (Spike Milligan's *ABC*) went down particularly well, as with her clear delivery and acute sense of timing she epitomised the skills of reading aloud.

This year's Poetry Reading Competition has expanded to include Bromsgrove's Middle schools, which, in the Bromsgrove area, covers the ages of 8 to 13. As I write the event is a few weeks off but it sounds as if we shall have some lively competition in all sections. The Housman Cup, given in memory of Raymond Grove by his family, and originally awarded to the winner of our National Poetry Competition, has languished unawarded since the demise of that competition, so we have decided to award the cup (a replica of the one the students at UCL gave A.E.H. when he moved on to Cambridge in 1911) to the best overall reader.

The Rector of St Laurence's, Ludlow, Brian Curnew, who has been a good friend to the Society for the fifteen years, moved to Saints Peter and Paul in

Headcorn, Kent last November so this year's Commemoration was led by Reverend Prebendary Derrik Jenkyns. He is one of our disappointingly few members who live in Ludlow and his thoughtful and sympathetic approach to A.E.H.'s beliefs resulted in a ceremony that seemed just right for the occasion. It was followed by a talk from Linda Hart entitled "Sophie Becker: Housman's Dark Lady", in which she speculated on the possibility of the teenage A.E.H. becoming infatuated with the intelligent and much older Sophie. Her talk was delivered with passion and clarity and the persistence of her research yielded many new discoveries. All may not have agreed with her conclusions but the breadth and depth of her quotations, the persuasiveness of her factual evidence and her logical reasoning were indeed impressive.

The *Name and Nature of Poetry* lecture at Hay this year was given by Richard Perceval Graves, who, having been an Editor of this Journal in its earliest days, can be counted as one of the Society's oldest friends. Richard's own upbringing had been immersed in poetry, and in writing biographies of Housman, Richard Hughes, John Cowper Powys and his uncle Robert Graves his credentials for giving the lecture were admirable. Its nine parts appear from the next page onwards, but only those who were there will be able to imagine the dynamic manner in which it was delivered.

It was a real coup for the Society to have had an event in Poets' House in New York at the end of October and this came about through the initiative of Robin and Kate Shaw, whose daughter Tamsin is Professor of Politics and Philosophy at the Remarque Intstitute at New York University. With both Christopher Ricks and Archie Burnett taking part the event's success was guaranteed and a distinguished gathering of about forty people enjoyed scholarly talks from both speakers. A full report of the event will apear in the next Newsletter.

Many literary societies have difficulty in recruiting new members to take the place of those who have been pillars of their establishments for many years. We seem to be fortunate in that our committee is stable and full of people who show a breadth of knowledge, initiative and drive that is the envy of many organisations. So once more they have my thanks and we can but hope that the enduring interest in the Housman family enables us to continue to thrive as a Society. Perhaps with a new Journal Editor, whose first edition is so impressive, and who is considerably less than half the age of most of the rest of the committee, the omens are good!

Jim Page

The Housman Lecture

The Name and Nature of Poetry

by

Richard Perceval Graves

Delivered at the Hay Festival of Literature on 1st June 2010

1. A.E. Housman in 1933

The work of very few poets survives the time in which it was written. The work of the scholar-poet A.E. Housman is still read some three quarters of a century after his death. It is therefore fitting that once a year we should meet here at Hay-on-Wye, to take part in one of the great literary festivals of the western world, and, thanks to the Housman Society, whose patronage I gratefully acknowledge, to celebrate Housman's memory in a lecture entitled *The Name and Nature of Poetry.* This takes as its source and inspiration a highly popular and highly controversial lecture of the same name delivered by Housman to a packed Senate House in Cambridge back in the spring of 1933.

As our starting-point let us remember what Housman said and why it was both so popular and so controversial.

During his lecture, he declared that the peculiar function of poetry was not to transmit thought but to transfuse emotion. The name of poetry, he said, has been given to a great deal of literature which was excellent in its own way, but which had no spark of genuine poetry in it. For 'Poetry', he said, 'is not the thing said but a way of saying it'. Quoting Milton's 'Nymphs and shepherds, dance no more', he asked rhetorically:

> What is it that can draw tears, as I know it can, to the eyes of more readers than one? What in the world is there to cry about? Why have the mere words the physical effect of pathos when the sense of the passage is blithe and gay? I can only say, because they are poetry, and find their way to something in man which is obscure and latent, something older than the present organisation of his nature, like the patches of fen which still linger here and there in the drained lands of Cambridgeshire.

Trying to define poetry in another way, Housman told his audience that it was more physical than intellectual, and that he could recognise it by the symptoms which were provoked in him.

> Experience has taught me, when I am shaving of a morning, to keep watch over my thoughts, because, if a line of poetry strays into my memory, my skin bristles so that the razor ceases to act. This particular symptom is accompanied by a shiver down the spine; there is another which consists in a constriction of the throat and a precipitation of water to the eyes; and there is a third which I can only describe by borrowing a phrase from one of Keats's last letters, where he says, speaking of Fanny Brawne, 'everything that reminds me of her goes through me like a spear'. The seat of this sensation is the pit of the stomach.

The lecture was highly popular because many people took Housman's brilliant and subjective appreciation of the nature of poetry as the confirmation of their own existing prejudices against the modern verse of the twenties and thirties. The same factor made it highly controversial. F.R. Leavis, the influential critic and champion of the new poetry, believed that Housman's emphasis on poetry as something more physical than intellectual was a direct attack upon his own extremely intellectual approach to literary criticism. Alfred Housman wrote to his brother Laurence on this subject, telling him with what sounds to me like grim satisfaction: 'The leader of our doctrinaire teachers of youth is reported to say that it will take more than twelve years to undo the harm I have done in an hour.'

In fact, Leavis and others had to some extent misinterpreted what Housman was saying. As Alfred wrote in another letter to his brother: 'I did not say that poetry was better for having no meaning, only that it can best be detected so.'

2. Predecessors and Credentials

More than thirty years ago I wrote a biography of A.E. Housman which John Carey very kindly said was 'bound to become the standard life' – and which, incidentally, thanks to the magic of digital media is now once again available on Faber Finds. I mention this in the spirit of the great Dr. Johnson who once said so memorably : 'The man who writes, and not for money, is a blockhead'. But what other credentials do I have for presuming to follow in the footsteps not only of Housman himself but also of the distinguished list of my predecessors at Hay-on-Wye?

Predecessors who include not only the John Carey just mentioned, but also such notables as Lord Gowrie, Peter Porter, Germaine Greer, Colin Dexter, Archie Burnett, and Lavinia Greenlaw, a significant number of them well-known beyond the groves of Academe.

Aristotle wrote in his *Politics* that an educated man should learn just

enough about playing music to be able to appreciate the playing of professional musicians;

> In the first place, it is necessary for them to practise, that they may be judges of the art: for which reason this should be done when they are young; but when they are grown older the practical part may be dropped; while they will still continue judges of what is excellent in the art, and take a proper pleasure therein, from the knowledge they acquired of it in their youth. (tr. W. Ellis)

This suggests to me that in order to have an opinion of any value on the subject of the *Name and Nature of Poetry*, one had better have written at least a few lines oneself.

That I have certainly done. Which should come as no surprise to those who know the history of my family. My late Uncle Charles, a prolific author who was a friend of Bing Crosby and danced with Marlene Dietrich, once speculated that if our common ancestor, and incidentally one of Queen Victoria's favourite preachers, the Protestant Bishop of Limerick, had both refrained from writing himself and had had no children it would have spared the lives of a great many trees.

From earliest childhood I was immersed in rhyme and rhythm, I started writing verses at eight or earlier and throughout my schooldays whenever I had any very strong feelings to express they went straight into verse.

Like many poets, my first publications were in school magazines where doubtless they deserve to remain; and during my adult life, I have had an occasional poem published here and there, and besides writing the biography of A.E. Housman, I have written the biographies of three other poets. Two of them minor: Richard Hughes, a poet far better known as the author of *A High Wind in Jamaica* and *The Fox in the Attic*; and John Cowper Powys, a minor poet whose novel *A Glastonbury Romance* is declared by Margaret Drabble to be 'the great novel of the twentieth century'; and the third, my late Uncle Robert, about whose ideas on the nature of poetry I shall be speaking at some length.

3. The Name of Poetry

As to the name of poetry. I recently asked my old friend the author Timothy O'Sullivan for his views on the subject and he replied in characteristically acerbic fashion:

> The *name* of poetry has become a BAD one. The Lit-Crit priesthood (a type essentially unemployable) has become far too powerful in its evaluation and presentation. Their methods appear to be informed by painting-by-numbers. They chatter at one another in a closed argot, rather like social workers ….. squabbling about their parameters. Participants seem to include a disturbing number of practising poets. They, and poetry, need to be liberated.

The question is, of course, how do we define poetry, and countless definitions exist. Probably the one most familiar to us is that of William Wordsworth in his Preface to his Lyrical Ballads of 1802, when he wrote:

> I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till by a species of reaction the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind.

'Emotion recollected in tranquillity'. My English teacher at Charterhouse, the inspirational P.D.R. Gardiner, preferred the definition given by Wordsworth's friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who declared: "I wish our clever young poets would remember my homely definitions of prose and poetry; that is, prose = words in their best order; poetry = best words in the best order."[1]

Both those enduring definitions were given to us by men who were themselves poets, and who would once have been called men of taste and discrimination. There was a time when to be called discriminating was a compliment. Now it is more likely to be an insult, because the word discrimination, with which it is most closely associated, is more commonly used in the court-room than elsewhere, in connection with a whole host of activities as a result of which the plaintiff hopes to be substantially remunerated.

So any definition of the name of poetry must depend upon a discrimination now wholly unfashionable. How did this come about? Let me tell you a story which I believe has some bearing on the case.

Some forty years ago I was staying with my first wife in a small hotel in the village of Deya in the north-western corner of the island of Majorca. At the same hotel was another young man and his wife. He had a job at a major London gallery, so for the sake of argument let's call him Tate. One evening the four of us were sitting out late at night in the open-air restaurant, drinking Cuba Libres, looking up in wonder as a full moon rode over the mountains, and occasionally lapsing into a conversation about the nature of art. I took the traditional view,

which was that the artist had a vision that he wished to communicate, and that one could judge the extent of his success by the response of the generality of discriminating onlookers to his work.

"No! No!" cried out Tate, disgusted by my old-fashioned ideas.

"How then would you define an artist?" I enquired.

"An artist is anyone who says that he is an artist".

"All right then," I said, "So if I say I am an artist, I am an artist?"

"Correct", said he, somewhat mollified.

Almost everyone else in the hotel had gone to bed, so I was able to proceed to a practical demonstration which I hoped would leave Tate confessing that in the morn he would be rising a sadder and a wiser man. Tipping a nearby table on its side, I piled five or six chairs all over it in an utterly haphazard fashion. "And since I say that I am an artist, this arrangement that I have just created is a work of art?"

"Indeed it is", he confirmed with great satisfaction.

There was of course no more to be said, though I dreamed for a while of all the ludicrous things one might be able to do as a self-proclaimed artist – things like wrapping up landscapes or pickling sheep or turning lights on and off – and I have sometimes regretted not having at that moment decided to follow a self-publicizing artistic career based on Tate's resolute lack of discrimination.

This lack of proper discrimination when applied to poetry has had curious results.

It's worth remembering, by the way, that nine-tenths of whatever is most acclaimed in one generation is condemned in the next and utterly forgotten in the one after. If you don't believe me, then look at the lists of authors whose triumphs are recorded in the end-pages of late nineteenth century novels.

A single example from a still earlier century: James Thomson, now known if at all as the author of Rule Britannia, a work which in itself would have been quite forgotten had it not been set to music and were it not sung every year at The Last Night of the Proms.

But who now reads James Thomson's *The Seasons*, of which I have in my hand an edition dating from 1794. Before reading you an extract from *Summer*,

one of the most popular poems of the eighteenth century, I had better give you some background. Damon is in love with Musidora, but she has not responded to his advances. One hot summer's day, Damon accidentally sees Musidora take off her clothes and bathe naked in a stream:

> But, desperate youth,
> How durst thou risque the soul-distracting view;
> As from her naked limbs, of glowing white,
> Harmonious swell'd by Nature's finest hand,
> In folds loose-floating fell the fainter lawn;
> And fair-expos'd she stood, shrunk from herself,
> With fancy blushing, at the doubtful breeze
> Alarm'd, and starting like the fearful fawn?

Oh, dear!

Criticism has a moral quality – and in criticism, as in morality, things can go badly wrong when you abandon absolute values, and everything becomes relative.

Theodore Dalrymple, that great analyst and critic of contemporary moral and cultural degeneracy, quotes tellingly from the Inaugural Address delivered on 2 January 1769 at the recently founded Royal Academy of Arts by Sir Joshua Reynolds:

> But young men have not only this frivolous ambition of being thought masters of execution, inciting them on the one hand, but also their natural sloth tempting them on the other. They are terrified at the prospect before them, of the toil required to attain exactness. The impetuosity of youth is disgusted at the slow approaches of a regular siege, and desires, from mere impatience of labour, to take the citadel by storm. They wish to find some shorter path to excellence, and hope to obtain the reward of eminence by other means, than those which the indispensible rules of art have prescribed.

To what, then, can we give the Name of Poetry? Al`l true poetry has an enduring quality, so that even if undervalued in its own time, it should speak to us directly across the years.

One example: the Great War ended on 11 November 1918 only eight days after the death of a 25-year-old soldier-poet who was then virtually unknown. Only a handful of his poems had been published in obscure periodicals. And yet now second-lieutenant Wilfred Owen, MC is widely recognised as the great English war poet of his day, and when I am lecturing to a sixth-form audience,

whatever the intervening difficulties, when I reach Wilfred Owen I am on safe ground as he still speaks to them clearly, simply directly and most movingly in poems like *Anthem for Doomed Youth*:

> What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
> Only the monstrous anger of the guns
> Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
> Can patter out their hasty orisons
> No mockeries for them from prayers or bells
> Not any voice of mourning save the choirs, –
> The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
> And bugles calling for them from sad shires.
> What candles may be held to speed them all?
> Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
> Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
> The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
> Their flowers the tenderness of silent minds,
> And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Owen's great gifts were first recognised by his fellow-poets Sassoon and Graves, and another general rule is that true poets will always be recognised by other true poets, as James Elroy Flecker knew when he wrote his wonderful:

> To the Poet a Thousand Years Hence
>
> I who am dead a thousand years,
> And wrote this sweet archaic song,
> Send you my words for messengers
> The way I shall not pass along.
>
> I care not if you bridge the seas,
> Or ride secure the cruel sky,
> Or build consummate palaces
> Of metal or of masonry.
>
> But have you wine and music still,
> And statues and a bright-eyed love,
> And foolish thoughts of good and ill,
> And prayers to them who sit above?
>
> How shall we conquer? Like a wind
> That falls at eve our fancies blow,
> And old Maeonides the blind
> Said it three thousand years ago,

O friend unseen, unborn, unknown,
Student of our sweet English tongue,
Read out my words at night, alone:
I was a poet, I was young.

Since I can never see your face,
And never shake you by the hand,
I send my soul through time and space
To greet you. You will understand.

4. Some Modern Poets

It would be irrational to have an inherent prejudice against modern poetry. Why? Because all poetry must be modern before it can become timeless.

When I was a boy the Faber Books of Modern Verse and of 20th century Verse, were my constant companions. It was in one that I first encountered Eliot and his *Journey Of The Magi.*

A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.'
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.

And in the other that I found Ted Hughes's *Thrushes*, beginning:

Terrifying are the attent sleek thrushes on the lawn,
More coiled steel than living – a poised
Dark deadly eye, those delicate legs
Triggered to stirrings beyond sense – with a start, a bounce, a stab
Overtake the instant and drag out some writhing thing.
No indolent procrastinations and no yawning stares,
No sighs or head-scratchings. Nothing but bounce and stab
And a ravening second.

Of my own near-contemporaries, I am interested in the work of one or two, though I sometimes wonder whether some of them wouldn't be happier as brilliant short-story-writers than as poets. Listen to the end of Michael Donaghy's *Black Ice and Rain:*

> Thank you, my friend, for showing me your things –
> you have exquisite taste – but let's rejoin your guests
> who must by now be wondering where you've gone.

At any rate, I give whole-hearted admiration only to Peter Reading. Here are some lines from his 'Lucretian'[2], one of his lighter poems:

> When a man is afflicted by Venus
> he soon surrenders his sanity.
> If he nurtures the amative urge,
> daily his lunacy deepens.
> His only cure is diversion
> from the single cause of his madness:
> he must cultivate many cathartic
> promiscuous petty liaisons
> and random ejaculations –
> otherwise, aimless, bewildered,
> he neglects his professional duties,
> his reputation is ruined,
> his strength is sapped and his living
> is ruled by the whim of a woman
> who soon wastes his wealth on perfumes,
> geegaws from Babylon, Sicyon,
> raiments from Malta and Cos,
> then flutters her eyes at some other
> gullible hapless twerp.
> (a loose translation of Lucretius *De Rerum Natura* 4. 1117-40)

Of the younger poets, the work of Don Paterson has its weak moments on the page but sounds wonderful when read aloud:

> I'll tell you, if you really want to know:
> remember that day you lost two years ago
> at the rockpool where you sat and played the jeweler
> with all those stones you'd stolen from the shore?
> Most of them went dark and nothing more,

but sometimes one would blink the secret color
it had locked up somewhere in its stony sleep.
This is how you knew the ones to keep.

And then there is Greta Stoddart, whom I met at Hawthornden Castle. Friendship makes me very much biased in her favour, so to avoid accusations of prejudice I simply commend her to your attention.

5. Poets, Poetry and Verse

Another general rule is that poets are born not made, and if you are not a poet, ten thousand poetry writing-courses won't turn you into one, though they may do a useful job in repairing the deficiencies of your earlier education.

Judgment remains subjective. I write poetry, you call it verse, she thinks it's doggerel. And deciding on what deserves the name of poetry is all the more difficult because of the existence of an indeterminate area between verse and poetry inhabited by poets like John Betjeman.

Another general rule: verse can be written to order, while poetry cannot.

As it happens, I very much suspect any poet who cannot write verse – it suggests that he or she is extremely weak in areas such as metre and rhythm where any true poet is likely to be extremely strong.

One must certainly respect any poet asked to be Poet Laureate who declines on the ground that he does not want to waste his time on writing verses to celebrate public occasions. But those who accept the Laureateship and are fine poets like Tennyson or Masefield or Carol Ann Duffy have no difficulty in writing highly acceptable verses when required. If ever we come across those like Alfred Austin who prove incapable of doing so: remember his immortal words on the illness of Edward VII:

Across the wires the electric message came:
He is no better, he is much the same

Then we must I fear draw our own conclusions.

6. Early Poetic Education

The Sixth Part of this lecture began life as a self-indulgent ramble through the favourites of my childhood. I started with nursery rhymes:

Goosey goosey gander,
Whither shall I wander?
Upstairs and downstairs
And in my lady's chamber.

I moved on to Struwwelpeter, and: 'The Dreadful Story of Harriet and the Matches':

And when the good cats sat beside
The smoking ashes, how they cried!
"Me-ow, me-oo, me-ow, me-oo,
What will Mamma and Nursy do?"
Their tears ran down their cheeks so fast,
They made a little pond at last.

Then came Robert Louis Stevenson's 'Child's Garden of Verses', with its 'Windy Nights':

Whenever the moon and stars are set,
Whenever the wind is high,
All night long in the dark and wet,
A man goes riding by.
Late in the night when the fires are out,
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

I intended to remind you that at school we were compelled to learn poems by heart, and our minds were stocked for life with wonderful treasures such as Blake's:

Tyger, tyger burning bright
In the forests of the night
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

Or Byron's:

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea
Where the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Or Coleridge's:

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree
Where Alph the sacred river ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

Or De La Mare's:

> "Is there anybody there?" said the Traveller,
> Knocking on the moonlit door;
> And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
> Of the forest's ferny floor;
> And a bird flew up out of the turret,
> Above the Traveller's head:
> And he smote upon the door again a second time;
> "Is there anybody there?" he said.

Or Chesterton's Lepanto:

> White founts falling in the courts of the sun,
> And the Soldan of Byzantium is smiling as they run;
> There is laughter like the fountains in that face of all men feared,
> It stirs the forest darkness, the darkness of his beard,
> It curls the blood-red crescent, the crescent of his lips,
> For the inmost sea of all the earth is shaken with his ships.

I was even going to beg any English teachers here present to do their best to reintroduce the learning of poetry by heart – to restore to a new generation of children a great gift of which so many of them have been very cruelly deprived.

And for any parents or grandparents in the audience, I had a useful tip for those moments when you have an overtired child who won't sleep. From personal experience I intended to prescribe the lulling rhythm of Tennyson's *The Lotos Eaters:*

> There is sweet music here that softer falls
> Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
> Or night-dews on still waters between walls
> Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
> Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
> Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;

'I confidently predict', I was going to say, ' that by the time you reach the peroration you can declaim as loudly as you please –

> Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
> Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;
> O, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

By this time your children, your grandchildren, have not only been introduced to an unexpected world of great beauty and mystery, but they will be sleeping as deeply and peacefully as though their souls have temporarily migrated to that distant island of Tennyson's dreams.

Fortunately I scrapped that entire section of my lecture, so we can move on to:

7. Religion and Poetry

Religion and Poetry have much in common. Those living must be reconciled to a life which will always have in it sorrow, sickness, separation and death. We all seek answers to those questions posed by Tennyson:

> Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
> And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
> While all things else have rest from weariness?
> .....
> Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

Aristotle reminds us that when we hear music or poetry 'our very soul is altered'; and Housman once stated that the great purpose of his poetry was that:

> I will friend you, if I may,
> In the dark and cloudy day

When in 1962 the poet James Reeves edited a volume of Georgian poetry, he wrote in his introduction of the virtues that seemed to have deserted modern poetry: natural simplicity, emotional warmth and moral innocence and he added: 'The Modern poet is obliged to be tortured. If he is not, he is suspect.'

Poetry at its best celebrates eternal values: beauty, truth, honour, love – the high ideals of our inheritance. Poetry gives us mysterious glimpses of that world beyond the world experienced on a daily basis by those who are deeply religious, by mystics, by true believers, that world glimpsed in the poetic novels of C.S. Lewis's Narnia series, or in the works of William Morris such as *The Wood Beyond the World* or *The Well at the World's End*.

It is a world against which many close their minds: how we should pity them, in the same way as we should pity those who believe that the Crusades or wicked priests or the devastation caused by earthquakes are sufficient reasons for disbelief in anything other than a strictly material world.

A few perhaps somewhat elliptical highlights: Here is Swinburne on love from his Prelude to *Tristram and Iseult*:

> Love, that is first and last of all things made,
> The light that has the living world for shade,
> The spirit that for temporal veil has on
> The souls of all men woven in unison,
> One fiery raiment with all lives inwrought
> And lights of sunny and starry deed and thought,
> And alway through new act and passion new
> Shines the divine same body and beauty through,
> ……
> Love, that for very life shall not be sold,
> Nor bought nor bound with iron nor with gold;
> So strong that heaven, could love bid heaven farewell,
> Would turn to fruitless and unflowering hell;
> So sweet that hell, to hell could love be given,
> Would turn to splendid and sonorous heaven;

Here is Tennyson in his *Morte D'Arthur* on the power of prayer:

> And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
> "The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
> And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
> Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
> I have lived my life, and that which I have done
> May He within Himself make pure! but thou,
> If thou shouldst never see my face again,
> Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
> Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
> Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
> For what are men better than sheep or goats
> That nourish a blind life within the brain,
> If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
> Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
> For so the whole round earth is every way
> Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

Tennyson again, on heroism in our sixties and seventies:

Death closes all; but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
…..
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

8. Robert Graves and the Nature of Poetry

The year is 1943, and we're in the presence of 48-year old poet Robert Graves who has been deeply religious all his life. He has long recognised what has always been understood by the great Christian mystics, and is now also recognised by the great physicists, that the Universe is a much stranger place than it seems; and that the obvious material world, known directly through the five senses, is only a small part of a reality perhaps more spiritual than material, and certainly so complex that it can never be fully understood.

Within this complex reality there appear to be numerous forces both creative and destructive; and when, in an attempt to place themselves in a proper relationship with the universe, men assign to those forces the names of gods and goddesses (or even a single three-person-ed God who encourages His followers to renounce the Devil and all his works), then the names may be only names; but (just as a rose by any other name would smell as sweet) the forces are real forces, and just as real for a believer in Mithras or Pallas Athene as they are for a believer in the Christian God.

'By their fruits ye shall know them' runs the Christian injunction familiar to Graves since childhood. His primary consideration, therefore, as he examined the various religious cults of the ancient world was the actual effect of a particular belief upon its adherents; and as he writes his novel *The Golden Fleece* it becomes

clear that he himself favours the cult of the Triple Goddess, sometimes known as the White Goddess, who says of herself:

> I am the Triple Mother of Life, the mistress of all elements, the original Being, the Sovereign of Light and Darkness, the Queen of the Dead, to whom no God is not subject. I rule the starry skies, the boisterous green seas, the many-coloured earth with all its peoples, the dark subterrene caves. I have names innumerable. In Phrygia I am Cybele; in Phoenicia, Ashtaroth; in Egypt, Isis; in Cyprus, the Cyprian Queen; in Sicily, Proserpina; in Crete, Rhea; in Athens, Pallas and Athena; among the pious Hypoboreans, Samothea; Anu among their dusky serfs. Others name me Diana, Agdistis, Marianaë, Dindymene, Hera, Juno, Musa, Hecate.

It is she, outraged by the re-dedication of her shrine at Pelion to Zeus, who encourages Phrixus to steal from it the great ram's fleece (fringed with locks of gold wire, and therefore known as the Golden Fleece) which has been placed there to aid Zeus with his rain-making. And later, when Phrixus (having taken the fleece to Colchis) has died and been left unburied, it is the White Goddess who promises to help Jason to recapture the Fleece – provided he ensures that Phrixus is properly interred.

Graves firmly believes (as he writes *The Golden Fleece*), that the White Goddess is not only a convenient description for a particular creative force, but also (provided that she has worshippers) a living reality. For Graves also believes that, just as a scientist's expectations are said to determine to some extent the outcome of his experiments, so our conscious beliefs can act upon the substance of the universe and shape it. Therefore he makes the White Goddess herself explain that 'the power of a Goddess is circumscribed by the condition of her worshippers..'

This rediscovery (as he saw it) of an ancient religion was intoxicating; and in the summer of 1943, when Graves was trying to concentrate on drawing 'four large and highly complicated maps of the Argo voyage' he found himself becoming obsessed by an altogether new perspective on the history of poetry.

Explaining this to a friend, Robert told him that he had been thinking about poetry:

> and finding that all the poems that one thinks of as most poetic in the romantic style are all intricately concerned with primitive moon-worship. This sounds crazy, and I fear for my sanity, but it *is* so. Of course, Apollo originally pinched Parnassus and Pegasus from the Moon Goddess. And the Muse, whom poets habitually address, was the Moon originally

in a certain aspect.

This was the first time that Graves had directly associated the White Goddess of Pelion or Triple Goddess with the Muse or source of poetic inspiration; though his belief in such a magical source was of long duration.

The new revelation towards which Robert Graves was making his way, in a state of enormous spiritual and intellectual excitement, would provide him with the moral and religious and poetic synthesis for which he had been groping for much of his adult life. In the meantime he was obsessed by everything connected with the moon.

When Graves was once again making serious headway with his maps, he could not get out of his head some lines from the last letter of his friend the poet Alun Lewis, in which Lewis had written of his dedication to 'the *single* poetic theme of Life and Death'. And then Graves was seized by 'a sudden overwhelming obsession', which took the form (as he later recalled)

> of an unsolicited enlightenment on a subject which had meant little enough to me. I stopped marking across my big Admiralty chart of the Black Sea the course taken (the mythographers said) by the *Argo* from the Bosphorus to Baku and back. Instead, I began speculating on a mysterious 'Battle of the Trees', fought in pre-historic Britain, and my mind ran at such a furious rate all night, as well as all the next day, that it was difficult for my pen to keep pace with it.

The result was that within only two months (by 12 June 1944) Graves had drafted and revised a seventy-thousand-word book which he called *The Roebuck in the Thicket.*

In it, he discovers ancient secrets of the Goddess-cults, such as names concealed in tree-alphabets; and he introduces his readers to the White Goddess as famously celebrated in Apuleius's *Golden Ass,* where she is invoked by the miserable Lucius, and replies (under her 'true name' of Queen Isis):

> Behold, Lucius, I am come; thy weeping and prayer hath moved me to succour thee. I am she that is the natural mother of all things, mistress and governess of all the elements, the initial progeny of worlds, chief of the powers divine, queen of all that are in Hell, the principal of them that dwell in Heaven... At my will the planets of the sky, the wholesome winds of the seas, and the lamentable silences of hell be disposed..

'Behold', she concludes, 'I am present to favour and aid thee; leave off thy weeping and lamentation, put away all thy sorrow, for behold the healthful day which is ordained by my providence.'

While Graves looked for a Publisher for *The Roebuck in the Thicket*, he continued to gather fresh material; with the result that his principal work from June 1945 to January 1946 was a comprehensive re-writing of the entire book.

In his new chapters for *The Roebuck in the Thicket*, the White Goddess of Pelion was firmly identified with the Triple Muse. He had already told the story (from the *Romance of Taliesin*) of Caridwen, seeing her as one of the aspects of the Triple Muse. For it was Caridwen who had:

> boiled up a cauldron of inspiration and knowledge, which had to be kept on the simmer for a year and a day. Season by season, she added to the brew magical herbs gathered in their correct planetary hours. While she gathered the herbs she put little Gwion.. to stir the cauldron. Towards the end of the year three burning drops flew out and fell on little Gwion's finger. He thrust it into his mouth and at once understood the nature and meaning of all things past, present and future, and thus saw the need of guarding against the wiles of Caridwen who was determined on killing him as soon as his work was completed.

As he ran away, he used his new powers to change his appearance; but when in his final metamorphosis he became a grain of wheat, she became a black hen and swallowed him. The result was that 'when she returned to her own shape she found herself pregnant of Gwion and nine months later bore him as a child'. She then placed him in a leather bag and threw him into the sea, from which he was rescued by Prince Elphin, who renamed him 'Taliesin' – the name by which he was known when he became a famous poet.

Now, referring to the 'Romance of Pwyll, Prince of Dyfed', one of the tales of the *Mabinogion*, Graves tells of Rhiannon, who once took the form of a white mare, and who is clearly a Muse-goddess, 'for the Sirens that appear in the *Triads*, and also in the *Romance of Branwen*, singing with wonderful sweetness are called 'The Birds of Rhiannon'. To this discovery, Graves adds a history of the Greek Muses, pointing out that:

> The Triple Muse, or the Three Muses, or the Ninefold Muse, or Caridwen, or whatever else one may care to call her, is originally the Great Goddess in her poetic or incantatory character. She has a son who is also her lover and victim, the Star-son, or Demon of the Waxing Year, He alternates in her favour with his tanist Typhon, the Serpent of Wisdom, the Demon of the Waning Year, his darker self.

The true muse-obsessed poet is therefore the man who is first the son, then the lover, and finally the victim of his muse, (so that one of the truest muse poems is Keats's *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, which many of you will know and love:

‘O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge is wither’d from the lake,
And no birds sing

‘O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel’s granary is full,
And the harvest’s done.

‘I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.’

‘I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful - a faery’s child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look’d at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan

I set her on my pacing steed
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sideways would she lean, and sing
A faery’s song

She found me roots of relish sweet
And honey wild and manna dew
And sure in language strange she said,
“I love thee true!”

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sigh’d full sore;
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dreamed - Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dream’d
On the cold hill’s side

‘I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cried - “La belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!”

‘I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hill’s side.

‘And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither’d from the lake,
And no birds sing.’

It is with the victory of Apollo over the Triple Goddess, says Graves, that poetry becomes academic and decays’; and the Apollonian is a versifier whose work has no lasting value.

Graves’s mind continued to race down unfamiliar paths; but at last, by 28 January 1946, he was ready to send what he hoped was the completed work to T.S.Eliot. And since his set of ideas about the relationship between the poet and his Muse had gradually developed into the core of the book, Graves had decided to change its title from *The Roebuck in the Thicket* to *The White Goddess*; and he then felt inspired to write what (in this revised version) remains one of his most memorable poems:

In Dedication

All saints revile her, and all sober men
Ruled by the God Apollo’s golden mean –
In scorn of which I sailed to find her
In distant regions likeliest to hold her
Whom I desired above all things to know,
Sister of the mirage and echo.

It was a virtue not to stay,
To go my headstrong and heroic way
Seeking her out at the volcano’s head,
Among pack ice, or where the track had faded

Beyond the cavern of the seven sleepers:
Whose broad high brow was white as any leper's,
Whose eyes were blue, with rowan-berry lips,
With hair curled honey-coloured to white hips.
Green sap of Spring in the young wood a-stir
Will celebrate the Mountain Mother,
And every song-bird shout awhile for her;
But I am gifted, even in November
Rawest of seasons, with so huge a sense
Of her nakedly worn magnificence
I forget cruelty and past betrayal,
Careless of where the next bright bolt may fall.

While working on *The White Goddess*, he had become increasingly convinced that in turning (as it were) from the worship of the Triple Goddess to that of Zeus, in replacing feminine with masculine control, society had made a disastrous mistake. To worship the Goddess was to keep in natural balance with one's surroundings. To worship a male God, on the other hand, was to unleash a terrible destructive power upon the world, in the form of the 'restless and arbitrary male will'. Before publication of *The White Goddess*, Graves would add several paragraphs in which he described how the western world had 'come to be governed by the unholy triumvirate of Pluto god of wealth, Apollo god of science and Mercury god of thieves.'

Eventually, he believed, there would be a return 'to some practical form of Goddess worship.' But he warned that:

> the longer the change is delayed, and therefore the more exhausted by man's irreligious improvidence the natural resources of the soil and sea become, the less placid and merciful will be the five-fold mask that the Goddess ultimately assumes, and the narrower the scope of action that she grants to any god whom she chooses to take as her consort in godhead.

By the start of April 1947 he had at last completed work on *The White Goddess* galley proofs; and he forwarded them to Eliot with a handsome apology for having added some 15,000 words to the text, including a final chapter, 'War in Heaven', in which he had dealt 'more particularly' with 'the Sacred King as the Moon-goddess's divine victim; holding that every Muse-poet must, in a sense, die for the Goddess whom he adores, just as the King died.' He had also written this memorable definition of 'the main theme of poetry' which was 'properly', he declared,

> the relations of man and woman, rather than those of man and man, as the Apollonian Classicists would have it. The true poet who goes to the tavern and pays the appropriate silver tribute to Blodeuwedd goes over the river to his death. As in the story of Llew Llaw: 'All their discourse that night was concerning the affection and love that they felt one for the other and which in no longer space than one evening had arisen.' This paradise lasts only from May Day to St. John's Eve. Then the plot is hatched and the poisoned dart flies; and the poet knows that it must be so. For him there is no other woman but Cerridwen and he desires one thing above all else in the world: her love. As Blodeuwedd, she will gladly give him her love, but at only one price: his life. She will exact payment punctually and bloodily. Other women, other goddesses, are kinder-seeming. They sell their love at a reasonable rate - sometimes a man may even have it for the asking. But not Cerridwen: for with her love goes wisdom. And however bitterly and grossly the poet may rail against her in the hour of his humiliation – Catullus is the most familiar instance – he has been party to his own betrayal and has no just cause for complaint.
>
> Cerridwen abides. Poetry began in the matriarchal age, and derives its magic from the moon, not from the sun. No poet can hope to understand the nature of poetry unless he has had a vision of the Naked King crucified to the lopped oak, and watched the dancers, red-eyed from the acrid smoke of their sacrificial fires, stamping out the measure of the dance, their bodies bent uncouthly forward, with a monotonous chant of: 'Kill! kill! kill!' and 'Blood! blood! blood!'

Publication of *The White Goddess* (in May 1948 in England, and a few months later in the U.S.A.) brought mixed reviews. The reaction of the B.B.C. producer Rayner Heppenstall was typical. After reading a set of page-proofs back in March, he had told Graves frankly that *The White Goddess* was 'not an easy book in its present form. I have alternated between thinking it the definitive poet's Bible and thinking it preposterous'; and many other reviewers were equally baffled.

At the same time, Graves was subconsciously tiring of the domesticity which he sensed was inimical to his poetic genius. In the final chapter of a new novel, *Watch the North Wind Rise* he makes his hero cry out:

> 'Blow, North wind, blow! Blow away security; lift the ancient roofs from their beams; tear the rotten boughs from the alders, oaks and quinces;'

And his wish to blow away his own security became much stronger when in May 1950 Robert and Beryl were finally married.

As usual when two people marry after living together for many years), the wedding affected them more strongly than they had expected. Everything was

so much more secure and settled: which did not suit Robert at all.

However at the time of the full moon in November, that 'rawest of seasons' in which Graves had set 'In Dedication' a beautiful seventeen-year-old American girl called Judith Bledsoe arrived on the island of Majorca; and suddenly 'the next bright bolt' of which he had written in his poem was about to fall.

Judith Bledsoe was a tall, slender, graceful girl with reddish-brown hair, magical grey-green eyes, a provocative mouth and a smile of searing warmth. On the day that she first met Robert Graves, she was wearing a long skirt embroidered with bands of yellow, red and turquoise (like a Russian gypsy skirt), a conch belt round her waist, and turquoise bracelets on her wrists. At their meeting, as Robert later recalled,

> a shock passed between her and me of the sort usually explained in pseudo-philosophic terms as 'we must have met in a previous incarnation.'

This moment of recognition was not unexpected. By the summer of 1950, Graves both desired and dreaded the arrival of a new poetic Muse. 'The Ghost in the Clock' is eloquent of this:

About midnight my heart began
To trip again and knock.
The tattered ghost of a tall man
Looked fierce at me as in he ran,
But fiercer at the clock.

It was, he swore, a long, long while
Until he had had the luck
To die and make his domicile
On some un-geographic isle
Where no hour ever struck.

'But now, you worst of clocks,' said he,
'Delayer of all love,
In vengeance I've recrossed the sea
To jerk at your machinery
And give your hands a shove.'

So impotently he groped and peered
That his whole body shook!
I could not laugh at him; I feared
This was no ghost but my own weird,
And closer dared not look.

Back in 1929, when he had first moved to Deyá with Laura Riding, Graves had rejoiced in living in a timeless land that he named 'Somewhere Nowhere'; but then he had been living with his muse, so there had been nothing to impede the flow of his poetry. Now he had a wife again, no longer a muse, and this (as his weird or other self fully recognised) spelled his creative death as a poet. But now the ticking of the clock had begun again. Judith had arrived on the scene; and in her he recognised the source of poetic inspiration for which he yearned; and from now on there would be a succession of young women, muses, White Goddesses, who enriched his poetry but caused enormous difficulties in his private life.

And the importance of *The White Goddess?* Critics have declared that the anthropology is wrong, that the sociology is wrong, that nearly everything in it is wrong. However those weaknesses are irrelevant. Graves is telling us, as no-one ever has done before, what it is to be a romantic poet . And curiously enough, romantic love, far from being (as I once believed) a construct of a certain stage of western civilisation, appears to be universal, and therefore a part of human nature. He is also telling us much about the nature of poetry – and that is why *The White Goddess* will endure.

9. A.E. Housman in 2010

We began with Housman in 1933, and since this lecture is in Housman's honour I should like to conclude with a word on Housman in 2010. What can we say today of Housman's standing in the literary world, when he has always stood so high in the estimation of writers from Rupert Brooke and E.M. Forster through to Patrick White and Philip Larkin – what can we say of his standing in the literary world when he stands so high in the affections of many of us here present in this lecture-hall?

For if ever there was a man who was truly inspired, it was Alfred Housman. Poetry welled up in him, poetry of mood and emotion, both powerfully heightened by the classical restraint of the verse-forms which he used. In the history of literature, he is important as a respected poet of his day, as the poet of the Boer War, and as the author of a number of haunting lyrics which have survived the era in which they were written. He is a fine poet of nostalgia, of sorrow, of the bitterness of life, of the sustaining power of nature, of the strength of the human spirit and of the courage to endure.

It was personally tragic for Housman that as the direct result of an ill-

starred love that he never again allowed himself to be truly vulnerable. To respond to emotional pain by determining never again to suffer, seems logical enough at moments when life is particularly cruel; but can only mean, emotionally, a kind of living death. What does it say in Job? 'Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward'.

And yet, fortunately for us, fortunately for anyone in trouble who can read English (or one of the numerous other languages into which Housman's poems have been translated), a portion of his grief was transmuted into a number of enduring poems: some of them in *A Shropshire Lad*, but rather more perhaps, in his 1922 volume *Last Poems.*

One example: Last Poems XL, quoted approvingly by Siegfried Sassoon in his Bristol lecture *On Poetry* in 1939 as a paradigm in its intensity and musicality of the lyric genre. 'The tone of voice', he declared, 'is as natural as ordinary speech, yet it is utterance lit and transfigured from

Last Poems XL

Tell me not here, it needs not saying,
    What tune the enchantress plays
In aftermaths of soft September
    Or under blanching mays,
For she and I were long acquainted
    And I knew all her ways.

On russet floors, by waters idle,
    The pine lets fall its cone;
The cuckoo shouts all day at nothing
    In leafy dells alone;
And traveller's joy beguiles in autumn
    Hearts that have lost their own.

On acres of the seeded grasses
    The changing burnish heaves;
Or marshalled under moons of harvest
    Stand still all night the sheaves;
Or beeches strip in storms for winter
    And stain the wind with leaves.

Possess, as I possessed a season,
    The countries I resign,
Where over elmy plains the highway
    Would mount the hills and shine,

And full of shade the pillared forest
    Would murmur and be mine.

For nature, heartless, witless nature,
    Will neither care nor know
What stranger's feet may find the meadow
    And trespass there and go,
Nor ask amid the dews of morning
    If they are mine or no.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you, *The Name and Nature of Poetry*!

NOTES

1. Henry N. Coleridge (ed.), *Specimens of the Table Talk of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (London, 1835); Vol 1 p.76 (dated 12 July 1827).

2. Peter Reading, *Collected Poems* 2: *Poems* 1985-1996 (Tarset, 1996) p.289.

A Pivotal Friendship

by

Andrew Jackson[1]

Introduction

In A.E. Housman's declining years, his brother, Laurence, asked him about a photograph that hung above the fireplace in his room at Cambridge. A.E.H. replied in a 'strangely moved voice', "That was my friend Jackson, the man who had more influence on my life than anybody else." Yet surprisingly little is published about his friend Moses Jackson and virtually no new information on him has come to light in recent years[2]. Last year, however, a previously unpublished private collection of letters between A.E.H., Moses Jackson and Moses' son, Gerald Jackson, who was A.E.H.'s godson and the author's father, was partly released. The collection had been preserved by the Jackson family. Included in the collection were the personal diary of Moses for the period 1907 to 1910 and letters covering the period 1911 to 1935. Notably the last two letters between A.E.H. and Moses were exchanged as the latter lay dying of cancer in a Vancouver hospital.

This article summarises the relationship between A.E.H. and Moses Jackson, discusses Moses' influence on A.E.H. and describes how the Jackson collection survived, largely unknown to the outside world. Portions of this paper are adapted from articles published in the Housman Society Newsletters of March and September 2010 and in my book *A Fine View of the Show: Letters from the Western Front* (London, 2009).

A Pivotal Friendship

Moses John Jackson was born in 1858, eldest of twelve children (five boys and seven girls[3]) born to his parents. His father was principal of the small Vale Academy in Ramsgate, England. Moses proved to be an above average student with a talent for the sciences. He entered the University College of London at the age of 17, where he was awarded the Neil Arnott Medal in Experimental Physics. Moses excelled in academics, athletics and rugby. Two years after entering university he was offered a scholarship to St John's College at Oxford, which he

took up in 1877. There he continued to show himself to be a well-rounded individual with unshakeable principles, a strong academic ability, especially in physics, and a natural ability in a variety of sports, including athletics and rowing.

In his third year at Oxford, Moses was assigned a room on the same staircase as A.E.H. and Alfred W. Pollard. Moses and A.E.H. initially had little in common. Moses was described by E.W. Watson as "a vigorous rowing man, quite unliterary and outspoken in his want of any such interest". Moses' semblance of being unliterary appears to have been a façade, put on in the presence of his literature friends, as A.E.H. much admired Moses' command of the English language. Pollard described Moses as "a delightful science scholar".

In contrast to Moses, A.E.H., the Classics student, was quiet, retiring, bookish and uninterested in sport. Despite their different personalities and interests, A.E.H. and Moses shared an enjoyment of long country walks, and even in his last letter to A.E.H. from his deathbed in Vancouver, Moses reminisced fondly about these walking outings together. As A.E.H. got to know Moses he became attracted to the latter's charisma, his straightforward character, kind heart and clear thinking; the three young students developed a strong friendship.[3] Pollard describes how, in the evenings, he retired downstairs to study, leaving A.E.H. and Moses in deep conversation which lasted late into the night. He said that Moses had no need to study as he was "an absolutely safe first in science". This may have been an exaggeration as my father used to quote Moses as saying that one should always read up on material prior to a lecture to help with understanding, and then reread one's notes the following evening. One of Moses' students in later years reported how "he [Moses] was not in a hurry to pass his examinations as he believed in thorough grinding. In every class, he would simply listen to the professor's lectures in the first year, take notes in the second year and appear and pass his examination in the third year." Perhaps Moses worked harder than it appeared to Pollard.

In 1881 Moses sailed through his final examinations, achieving a First Class Science Pass. A.E.H., scornful of many of his lecturers, in emotional upheaval over his father's recent stroke and possibly overconfident and influenced by Moses' apparent nonchalance to study, did not put in the required preparation for the Greats and failed his B.A. in Classics dismally.

After finishing at Oxford, Moses moved to London, putting his degree to work as examiner of electrical specifications at the London Patent Office, a position he held for the next six years. He also began part-time studies for a doctorate back at the University of London.[4] A year after Moses moved to London and while he was still occupied with his part time studies, A.E.H. joined him at the

Patent Office in London as a low-paid clerk. A.E.H. lodged with Moses and the latter's younger brother, Adalbert, who was studying at the University of London, in rooms in Talbot Road, Bayswater.

Over the next three years, A.E.H.'s feelings for Moses deepened from close friendship to one-sided adoration. Moses, however, remained uninterested in anything but a strong friendship. In early 1885, A.E.H. realised that his love would never be reciprocated and, with a broken heart, he left his shared lodgings later that year. Although he had begun writing poetry even before Oxford, for the following ten years A.E.H. fervently channeled his personal turmoil during this period into writing, penning the bulk of the poems that were later to be published as *A Shropshire Lad*.

Moses and A.E.H. remained friends, but from then on, Moses "kept him at a greater emotional distance, treating him with kindness and consideration, but making it clear that their relationship would not advance in the direction that Alfred longed for".[5] Moses also found new accommodation.[6] His landlord was a retired coachman, Philip Kingston, whose daughter, Rosa, was university educated. In May 1885 Rosa had married a young man named John Chambers but he died just nine months later, soon after Moses had taken up residence.

Moses and the recently widowed Rosa soon fell in love but Moses felt that his job at the Patent Office was not sufficiently well paid to support marriage. He therefore applied for a teaching position with the Colonial Service in India, a position that had better prospects of promotion; he was offered a post as principal of the new Dayaram Jethmal Sind Science College in Karachi. He accepted the offer and, at the end of 1887, Moses bade farewell to both Rosa and A.E.H.. A.E.H.'s biographers refer to the parting of A.E.H. and Moses as "stiff", with Moses asking A.E.H. to forget him. A.E.H.'s feeling of devastating personal loss was reflected in later forlorn poems.[7]

> He would not stay for me; and who can wonder?
> He would not stay for me to stand and gaze.
> I shook his hand and tore my heart in sunder
> And went with half my life about my ways.

And again:[8]

> Shake hands, we shall never be friends, give over;
> I only vex you the more I try.
> All's wrong that ever I've done or said,
> And nought to help it in this dull head:
> Shake hands, here's luck, goodbye.

But if you come to a road where danger
Or guilt or anguish or shame's to share,
Be good to the lad that loves you true
And the soul that was born to die for you,
And whistle and I'll be there.

Moses arrived in Karachi and threw himself into his new profession as a teacher like his father. Over the next twenty years, he built up the college from two small back-street bungalows to a well-regarded national institution with several hundred students. Today the college still operates and counts judges, a Speaker of the Indian Legislative Assembly and government ministers amongst its alumni. One alumnus, Dr Mohanlal Sonpar, reminisced, giving vignettes of Moses' unpretentious but typically Victorian character:[9]

> "…Dr. Jackson concealed a simple kindly heart under a rough and austere[10] exterior... [he] generally wore clothes made of white drill or 'zeen'. His necktie was also made of white washable cloth. He did not mind wearing clothes that were mended or patched. He rode a bicycle and did not bother about the show of a four wheeler. I have had the experience of many colleges but I never saw a principal with even half his simple tastes.
>
> The outstanding feature of his character that struck everyone was his love of discipline. He would not allow even a pencil to fall down during his lecture. It would therefore be no exaggeration to say that Discipline was synonymous with Dr. Jackson.
>
> When as a schoolboy I came to Karachi in 1901, I wished to see the college. It was closed on the day I visited it. It was closed for the students and professors, but not for Dr. Jackson. I saw him standing in the Chemical Laboratory, working away with the sleeves of his shirt tucked up and a towel on his shoulder. My first impression of him, therefore, was that to him work was worship. Later on as a college student, I learnt that he did not believe in genius as such. He believed that hard work made geniuses of men. He was a fine example of it – a self made genius."

For two years after arriving in India, Moses maintained a long-distance romance with Rosa, but towards the end of 1889, he returned to England on two months' leave to marry his fiancée.

In spite of their earlier "stiff farewell", Moses paid A.E.H. a surprise visit at the Patent Office soon after his return but did not mention his imminent marriage, perhaps to avoid upsetting his friend. Moses and Rosa were married on 9 December at St Saviour's Church in Paddington. A.E.H. only found out

about the marriage after Moses had returned to India with his new bride. A.E.H.'s diary contains a single heart-rending entry: "Tuesday Jan: 7 – I heard he was married." A.E.H. later wrote about Moses' marriage:

> So the groomsman quits your side
> And the bridegroom seeks the bride:
> Friend and comrade yield you over
> To her that hardly loves you more.[11]

Although A.E.H. was bitterly disappointed that their close friendship had been torn apart, he and Moses began to patch up their friendship. From entries in Moses' India diary, in which mail received and sent was meticulously recorded, they exchanged letters once or twice a year but these letters were unfortunately not preserved.

Moses and Rosa had four sons: Rupert (born 1890), Hector (1892), Oscar (1895), and Gerald (1900). Moses invited Housman to become Gerald's godfather, a role he accepted in spite of his atheism and one he fulfilled with loyalty and generosity until he died. Karachi was an unhealthy place to bring up young children and once they reached the age of five, Moses and Rosa's sons were sent to Branksome School in Godalming, Surrey. Moses returned to England on leave in 1894/5, 1897/8 and 1905/6 and then spent some time there in 1909, touring universities throughout England to study their laboratories and science equipment. He and A.E.H. saw each other on several occasions during these visits. In fact in 1898, A.E.H. attempted to secure a position for Moses at University College School: he got into the shortlist of four but was ultimately unsuccesful. At the end of one visit in 1906, Rosa settled in Godalming to provide a stable home for her schoolboy sons. Rupert nad Oscar moved up from Branksome to Oundle and Hector to Charterhouse. Moses and Rosa reverted to their loving, but long-distance relationship. Paternal influence on the boys was mostly through weekly, or more frequent, letters but Moses did not let distance soften his disciplinary control over his sons – "Hector badly reported on... must be severely treated" he recorded in one diary entry. In another entry written on Moses' return alone to India in 1909, we glimpse his underlying kindly nature through the severe Victorian exterior:

> "9 June. Rosie largely packing on the 9th. Dear little girl, said she had not spent the day as she had intended.
>
> 10 June. Rosie's 47th birthday, God bless her. We got up early. Goodbye to Hector and Gerald in the front garden. Alice and Lily, domestics. Drove to station. Carriage to ourselves to Guildford. Cab from Waterloo.

> Housman met us at Charing Cross. Goodbye. Kissed Rosie, lifting her veil. She stood looking on platform. Cold foggy day."

In late 1907 Moses had a disagreement with the board of directors at the D.J. Sind College over two students whom he believed had cheated during their exams. Moses felt that the board failed to support him as principal and, in the words of his past student, Dr Sonpar:

> "He was a man of principle. When persons and principles stood in opposition he was no respecter of persons; but he would go to any length to save his principles. When disagreement occurred between the Board of the College and himself, he did not care to bow to the Board, but bent his knee before the alter of his principles. He quietly resigned the post and severed connection with the institution which he had reared with his own hands."

This illustrates well Moses' black-and-white view of the world.

In December 1907 Moses left D.J. Sind College and moved from Karachi to Baroda (now called Vadodara) 450 miles east of Karachi where the ruler, Maharaja Sayajirao III, had offered Moses the position of Principal of the Baroda College of Science. This institution fell under the auspices of the Faculty of Science at the University of Bombay. In 1908, less than a year after becoming principal, Moses set out a plan to transform the college into a completely autonomous university; this vision was supported by the Maharaja, but the following year the university commission rejected the idea, saying that the state could not afford the luxury of academic independence.

In 1910, after only three years in Baroda but more than twenty years in India, frustrated by the bureaucrats' lack of vision for the future and disillusioned with political trends in India, Moses retired from the Indian Civil Service and turned his back on the subcontinent, sailing from Bombay on 7 April, 1910.

Back in England, Moses rejoined Rosa and their sons in their Godalming house and travelled extensively in England, visiting numerous institutions whilst looking at possible positions. He applied for at least two of these, one as professor of physics at London University, the other as director of education to the Borough of Bradford. A.E.H., who had recently taken up the Kennedy Chair of Latin at Cambridge, wrote a letter of referral in support of Moses' application to the Borough of Bradford:[12]

> 1 Yarborough Villas
> Woodridings
> Pinner
> 6 Feb. 1911

It is more than thirty years since Dr M.J. Jackson and I were undergraduates together and during the whole of that time I have held his character and intellect in the highest admiration; indeed there is no one to whose example I owe so much. His mind is eminently practical and his long tenure in the office of Principal of the Sind College at Karachi has given him an intimate acquaintance with the work of education and administration. I think him excellently qualified both by gifts and by experience, for the Directorship of Education at Bradford.

A.E. Housman

Moses did not take up either post. He had no desire to return to India, where political unrest was increasing, and he cast about for a new challenge elsewhere in the British Empire, searching for control over his own destiny, unbeholden to a fickle board of governors or petty bureaucrats.

At that time, western Canada was still a new frontier, hungry for skilled and well-educated settlers. After failing to find a suitable position in England, at the age of 52, Moses decided to emigrate to British Columbia and take up farming. A.E.H. was horrified that Moses, having returned to England so recently, was going to bury himself in the backwoods of Canada.

Moses travelled to British Columbia in the spring of 1911 and identified a secluded piece of land, near the fledgling settlement of Aldergrove.[13] In June of that year, A.E.H. wrote a letter to Moses.[14]

1 Yarborough Villas
Woodridings
Pinner
12 June 1911

My Dear Mo,

I hear from Godalming that you have fixed on an estate of 160 acres, but I do not know where precisely, nor what the main crops are to be. I got your long and instructive letter while I was at Cambridge, where the term is now over, so that I am back here until October. I had no official duties to perform, but I gave them an inaugural lecture, which they wanted me to print, but I did not.[15] Pollard came to hear it. Everyone is very amiable, but dinners, calls, garden parties, the climate and the hot weather made me rather tired.

It never rains but it pours, so they have made me an honorary fellow of St John's. I went there for a dinner about six weeks ago, and met, of the undergraduates of our time, Roberts and Mitcheson. Watson

had married a wife, and therefore he could not come. She is, or was, a Miss Gamlyn (I think), cousin of a man who is secretary of some Society or Association at Oxford.

I do not want to make investments on my own account in the wild-cat colony you now inhabit, where you have to put *Angleterre* on your letters to get them to England; but if you happen to want extra capital you might just as well have it from me and prevent it from eating its head off in a current account at a bank.

I am going to Godalming for the coronation. Rupert came to breakfast with me once at Cambridge. When he accepted my invitation to "brekkers", I formed the gloomiest anticipations, and expected to find him deeply sunk in undergraduatism; but he seemed really quite simple and unspoilt.

Yours very truly,

A.E. Housman.

Moses accepted A.E.H.'s unsolicited offer of a loan, and purchased the land with a view to turning it into a dairy farm; he named it Applegarth. He planned to clear hayfields for winter fodder and plant an apple orchard and vegetable garden for the family's consumption. The creek through his property provided water, as well as salmon and trout. All in all, Moses felt he had the raw materials with which to build something reminiscent of A.E.H.'s idyllic picture of rural life in *A Shropshire Lad*.

In reality life on Applegarth was anything but bucolic for the Jackson family with only a cramped and primitive wooden house that lacked electricity. Water had to be drawn from a well and carving fields from the thick woods involved backbreaking labour. Moses, however, apparently revelled in his new lifestyle, applying his scientific and engineering skills to building the farm and business, whilst tutoring home-schooled Oscar and Gerald. However, in 1913, eighteen months after Moses had bought the farm, the western world slipped into recession and the market for his milk weakened. The following year a severe drought caused crops and wells to fail, and then the First World War erupted in Europe. Hector and Oscar volunteered for the Canadian Expeditionary Force and were sent to the Western Front. Rupert, who had just finished medical training at Cambridge, also served in France.

As the war ground on, Moses struggled increasingly to keep the farm going with only the help of seventeen-year-old Gerald. The price of fertilizer and other commodities soared, whilst labour became impossible to hire. Moses was trapped in a vicious downward spiral where everything seemed to conspire

against him. The stress of the failing farm and the constant fear for the safety of their sons in France took a psychological and physical toll on the parents. They kept largely to themselves, with Moses preferring to remain "where he couldn't see his neighbour's smoke."[16]

Against the odds, all three of Moses' serving sons survived the war.[17] Hector and Oscar returned to Vancouver within a year of the Armistice and both enrolled at the University of British Columbia. But four months after returning, Hector was knocked off his bicycle and killed by a drunken taxi driver in Vancouver. Moses never fully recovered from the shock of Hector's pointless death; this, the stress of the failing farm and financial worries took their toll. By early 1922 Moses began to succumb to stomach cancer.

A.E.H., hearing of his old friend's decline, hurried to compile his long-awaited volume, *Last Poems*, writing a number of new poems and improving on some written years earlier. Several of the poems in the volume referred obliquely to his love for Moses, although some of the more heartfelt ones were not included and only saw print after both Moses' and A.E.H.'s deaths. A.E.H. desperately wanted to finish the collection of verse so Moses could read it and comment before he died. In the introduction to the volume, A.E.H. wrote:

> I publish these poems, few though they are, because it is not likely that I shall ever be impelled to write much more. I can no longer expect to be revisited by the continuous excitement under which in the early months of 1895 I wrote the greater part of my first book, nor indeed could I well sustain it if it came; and it is best that what I have written should be printed while I am here to see it through the press and control its spelling and punctuation.

A.E.H. managed to complete the book just in time and a copy arrived at Applegarth in early November 1922. In that copy, A.E.H. hand wrote a dedication to Moses and an artificially lighthearted letter:

> My Dear Mo,
>
> I have been putting off writing so as to be able to send you this precious book, published to-day. The cheerful and exhilarating tone of my verse is so notorious that I feel sure it will do you more good than the doctors; though you do not know, and there are no means of driving the knowledge into your thick head, what a bloody good poet I am. In order to intimidate you and repress your insolence I am enclosing the review and leader which the Times devoted to the subject . . . Of this new book there were printed 4000 copies for a first edition, which were all ordered by the booksellers before publication, so there is already a 2nd edition in the

press. It is now 11 o'clock in the morning, and I hear that the Cambridge shops are sold out. Please to realize therefore, with fear and respect, that I am an eminent bloke; though I would much rather have followed you around the world and blacked your boots... The eminent poet would willingly have exchanged his fame and position for the chance of following his correspondent, in the humblest capacity, to the farthest corners of the earth.

A few days after receiving the book, Moses left Applegarth for the last time; he was admitted to the Vancouver General Hospital in failing health. On 23 November, using a blunt pencil, he began a farewell letter to A.E.H. from his hospital bed. In spite of his advanced illness, he remained an astute and boisterous critic, not hesitating to impale his friend with barbs similar to those that A.E.H. frequently used on Moses and others.[18]

Bed 4, Ward T,
General Hospital,
Vancouver, B.C.
23 Nov., 1922

My dear old Hous,

I got your letter and your egregious poems at home about a fortnight ago. I thought of heaping sarcasms on your brain products, as usual, but some of the pieces are good enough to redeem the rest. The *Times* critique was good, and its selections sensible, but the *Observer*, which the faithful Ward[19] sent me, was still better. I hoped to see the *Spectator*, but it has not been sent along. The *Morning Post* is about the only other paper to count. The old woman's *D. Telegraph* and the screamingly radical press, with bosh-writers like that A.G. Gardiner, don't count.[20]

You certainly know how to end the book. But who is going to labour at collecting your Juvenilia from the "Round Table" & elsewhere, and to exploit acute inaccuracies about them in the not far distant future?[21] That thing that you published in some aesthetic magazine seems to me, in its disregard of all politeness towards possibilities in the unknown future, seems to me to contain nearly half the philosophy of your two books. You will be surprised at my remembering them so nearly, if I am not quite word-perfect.

Ave atque Vale

Goodnight. Ensured release,
Imperishable peace,
Have these for yours
While earth's foundations stand

And sky and sea and land
And Heaven endures.
When Earth's foundations flee
Nor sky, nor land, nor sea
At all is found
Content you, let them burn,
It is not your concern.
Sleep on, sleep sound!

It wants the poet to punctuate it. It deserved a place in the Shropshire Lad! It was the condensation of so much meaning into a few words – furiously unorthodox though it might be, that struck me.

Your 'Mercenary Army' bit is as skilful as anything in the book. It was a good deal quoted out here during the War.

Here is the 30th. No haggis, No whiskey. No nuthink.

The great Ward informs me that your sales had gone up to 17,000 at the time of writing. Your "Tis little luck that I have had" can have no reference personal to the poet.

I have also seen your portrait in 'Punch'. Ridiculous as it may appear, there is just a faint indication of the shape of your head, and just a hint of an expression that I have seen on your mug once in a way. I suppose your boots are supposed to harmonise with the bucolic heroes you often immortalise, sleeping off their beer in lovely muck.

1 Dec. I am going on fairly well in this hospital, but I will come out of it pretty soon now, well or ill, and finances won't run to these expenses. It is funny to be "land-poor", with severe depression in agricultural values. I have practically all that I originally paid £3,000 for in cash – land and stock etc. with lots of improvements, yet cannot sell or even borrow £200 from a bank. The boys all hang together well, but it is an outrage for an older generation to weaken the younger.

We shan't go on at Applegarth as hitherto. The missus dislikes it. I dislike anything else. I will sell the whole or part, or put on a temporary mortgage or something. What I want is a partner, honest and fond of farming. We could easily make the place produce more than it has ever done. There must be lots who would do, if only I knew them.

Land sells worse now than ever. Most of the returned soldiers have gone out of their little lots, and relinquished their land to Govt., with the results that we land-owners have Govt. as dealers in ahead of us. Doubtless land will get up again in time, and then everyone will tumble in to buy. The correct thing to do is to wait, if one can. If I were a capitalist

I would buy now. The disgusting thing is the way I have let you and Ward down.[23] I will return what I can when anything comes in, but things shape up for my dying a hopeless bankrupt. Probably the sooner the better as I shall never return to my old self, and at the moment am just a burden to everybody. I apologise in dust and ashes.

I haven't your last letter here, but remember an extraordinary exhibition about blacking boots! My most presentable boots are brown, requiring no blacking, Larry old chap.[24] At home I wear boots of canvas & rubber composition, known as snagproof, as your choice is for an absolute sinecure. But it would be fine to see you here, though no chance of the old amenities. No 15-mile walks to a good pub to consume old ribs of beef 10" thick, pickled walnuts, and a quart of bitter, with a good tub of cream, & rich cheese to finish. None of that in this beastly land, with their infernal prohibition.[25]

G.W. Ellis stayed with us for some time a year ago.[26] He had farmed in Alberta. He is rather a slacker, but well up in St. John's recollections, so we could talk about many things.

Oscar, Bachelor of Applied Science, is now assaying in the big smelter at Trail, B.C. Gerald ran a motor boat up the coast as an Assistant Fire Ranger for the Forest Dept. in the Summer Vacation. He did so well that they promise him a better job for next summer, but he thinks he will go as a "mucker" or labourer in the Britannia Mine, just for experience.[27] He is going strong at the Univ. That institution has grown wonderfully.

I have seen the *Spectator* review of your emanations. The second paragraph seems to the point, some others less so. The last part of this musical thing from the *Sunday Times* seems largely rot. I did not see the review by Gosse the week before. If you read all the commentaries you must be pretty busy.

I hope your publisher will shoo the Americans off. While lying on my back here I have been exasperated to see how they publish well-known English books, curtailed with only a Yankee publisher's name on the title page, and make their ignorant readers think the author is a Yank. I dislike the arrogant brutes.

Gerald will be up presently & will post this. So here is to continued luck. Printing "Jones of Jesus", "Tennyson in the Moated Grange" etc.[28] may bring you in a fresh fortune at the right time. "First Poems".[29]

Goodbye.

Yours very truly

M.J.J. *[sic]* Jackson

It took over a month for A.E.H. to receive the letter in Cambridge. He later painstakingly traced the weakly penciled sections of Moses' letter in ink, faithfully reproducing each letter so as not to lose the handwriting of his lifelong friend. A.E.H. was horrified by Moses' rapid decline and financial circumstances, and replied almost immediately:[30]

Trinity College
Cambridge
4 Jan. 1923

My Dear Mo,

I got your letter on New Year's Day. As you threaten to leave the hospital well or ill, I suppose I had better direct this to Applegarth, though I understand it is empty now, rather than to bed 4. I was sorry to hear that Mrs Jackson had had a sort of breakdown. Gerald writes to me sometimes, and so does Oscar, which is very good of him, linked as we are by no baptismal ties. They both seem to be doing famously.

I never was more astounded at anything than at your reproducing my contribution to *Waifs and Strays*. I remember your reading it at Miss Patchett's, and how nervous I felt. If I had known you would recollect it 42 years afterward, my emotions would have been too much for me.

On the copies of the new book already sold in England there will be due to me royalties of about £500. As I cannot be bothered with investments, this will go to swell my already swollen balance at the bank unless you will relieve me of it. Why not rise superior to the natural disagreeableness of your character and behave nicely for once in a way to a fellow who thinks more of you than anything in the world? You are largely responsible for my writing poetry and you ought to take the consequences.

The American edition, which is to be as like the English as possible, was published on Dec. 1 and sold out in four days, but I don't know how many copies it consisted of. I am to have £300 from it in any case, and higher royalties than in England after 3000 copies have been sold.

A female third cousin of mine, whom I have never seen, has burst forth into song on this occasion and sent her poem to my brother. It describes how the devil paid a call in Cambridge on a friend of his (that is me), and explained that as the Rev. Robert Housman (that is my great-grandfather, known as 'the Lancaster evangelist') had saved some souls, he (the devil) wanted me to destroy an equivalent number; and I wrote my poems to oblige him; the result being that the name of Housman is 'tarnished for evermore'. That name, she fondly fancies, had hitherto stood for everything noble; which is news to me, and shows that the poor dear does not know as much about her grandfather as I do. Among

other things, he invented a new religion and held forth in a chapel of his own, which he finally emptied by a sermon in which he described Potiphar's wife as an ill-used woman and Joseph as a cold-blooded young fool.

I was in Oxford about a month ago, and saw Watson, very sleek and sleepy. The most noticeable change in the place since our time is that the trees in front of Magdalen school are gone, so that the façade of Magdalen chapel looks right down the High as far as Univ., and the effect is more stately if less rural. The trees in front of St John's are much diminished, and the Broad Walk in Christ Church Meadows is a thing of the past. Our lime avenue at Trinity, now 200 years old, will soon follow it.

Millington of Bromsgrove, who partly educated me, died the other day at 82. He had been suffering (or rather not suffering) from senile decay. Aphasia and loss of memory are probably the stages by which I shall approach my end.

Yours very truly,

A.E. Housman.

Moses stated aim to leave the hospital soon, "well or ill," did not transpire and two weeks later, on January 14, 1923, aged 64, he succumbed to the stomach cancer. A.E.H.'s letter was still making its laborious way across the Atlantic, and Moses never had a chance to read it.

So ended a remarkable, but unbalanced, friendship. A.E.H. must have been shattered at the final extinction of his dream, and yet Moses' death obviously also released him from some of his mental anguish. In a strange way, although he almost idolized Moses, at the same time he appeared to have a protective paternalistic feeling for him. When he heard of Moses' death, A.E.H. wrote to Pollard:

Trinity College
Cambridge
Jan 17 1923

My dear Pollard,

Jackson died peacefully on Sunday night in hospital at Vancouver, where he had gone to be treated for anaemia, with which he had been ailing for some years. I had a letter from him on New Year's Day, which he ended by saying "goodbye". Now I can die myself: I could not have borne to leave him behind me in a world where anything might happen to him.

Yours sincerely,

A.E. Housman

A.E.H. may well have been thinking of words in *Last Poems* that he had penned to memorialise Moses' marriage:[31]

All is quiet, no alarms;
Nothing fear of nightly harms.
Safe you sleep on guarded ground,
And in silent circle round
The thoughts of friends keep watch and ward,
Harnessed angels, hand on sword.

This verse was probably written soon after Moses' death.[32]

Now to her lap the incestuous earth
The son she bore has ta'en.
And other sons she brings to birth
But not my friend again.

Influence of Moses Jackson on A.E.H.

A.E.H.'s comment that Moses Jackson had more influence on his life than anybody else's was a bold statement, but probably not an exaggeration.

We can draw a reasonably clear picture of Moses Jackson, not only from published literature and materials in the Jackson collection, but also from my father, Gerald Jackson, who appears to have inherited some of Moses' personality and views. Moses' writings so frequently reveal similarities that I have little trouble in drawing a mental image of the man, even though he died 30 years before I was born.

Moses was above average in looks and appears to have had an attractive, easy-going (unlike my father, who seldom seemed fully relaxed in company) and charismatic but unpretentious character. His diary entries reveal a scrupulous honesty with himself, his friends and all he dealt with. He used his intellect to think issues through and come to well-reasoned and logical conclusions. On reaching a conclusion, he was forthright in voicing his opinion and would then stick to his views no matter what resistance he met. He was typical of the Victorian English gentleman scientist, believing strongly that science held the answers to the advancement of mankind, but that a sound knowledge of classics was required to shape a well-rounded individual. He also strongly believed that academic exercise needed to be balanced by vigorous physical exercise. Although

apparently not generally light-hearted, he had a dry sense of humour that he applied mercilessly on friend and foe alike. He appears to have been loyal to his friends and family and, in spite of a rather brusque outer shell, he had a kindly heart – here I can see my father perfectly reflected.

Many of these characteristics were shared by the middle-aged and elderly Housman and one wonders how many of them were inborn and how many influenced by his friendship with Moses. Considering A.E.H.'s sexual inclination, one wonders whether Moses' good looks, intellect and 'single-hearted' character made A.E.H. believe that he would never find an equal partner in a heterosexual relationship? Obviously the 'nature versus nurture' debate means that one can never be entirely sure that A.E.H. would not have been homosexual, even if he had not met Moses. After all, his brother Laurence was homosexual. However, it seems likely that A.E.H.'s close friendship with the charismatic Moses may well have cemented any natural inclination.

A.E.H.'s failure in the Greats at Oxford is partially attributed by several authors to his neglect of study before the exams, by whiling away his evenings chatting with Moses. Had A.E.H. passed his exams, his life would have taken a different path. He would not have followed Moses to the London Patent Office, and this in turn would probably have avoided the same depth of emotional turmoil that forged him into a truly great poet. Although A.E.H. had dabbled in poetry in his youth and while at Oxford, the bulk of *A Shropshire Lad* was written in the dark years after Moses left for India, but especially in early 1895, at a time when Moses was back in England on leave for the birth of his third son, Oscar. A.E.H. stated clearly that Moses was "largely responsible for my writing poetry" and the foreword to *Last Poems* suggests the seminal effect of his relationship with Moses in inspiring *A Shropshire Lad*. Indeed, it was Moses' impending death that triggered the publication of *Last Poems*.

A.E.H.'s failure in his final exams, while Moses appeared to sail through effortlessly with a First Class pass, must have embedded a crushing feeling of inferiority and inadequacy in A.E.H. Is it possible that A.E.H. spent the next forty years, until Moses' death, trying to prove his intellectual ability, not to himself, but to Moses? The unyielding drive that resulted in him becoming the pre-eminent Classicist in the English-speaking world and garnering lasting acclaim for his poetry may well have been the direct result of a desperate urge to prove his worth to Moses.

A.E.H. reached the summit of classical scholarship through his unmatched ability to dissect Classic verse, to put forward possible hypotheses as to the poet's original intended meaning, to present evidence in a structured manner to

establish the facts, and then to present his textual revisions as a logical and inescapable conclusion. Could this almost scientific methodology have been the result of long evenings spent chatting around the fireplace with Moses, in Oxford and London, with Moses denigrating literary studies in comparison to the logical, objective approach of science?

A word that is frequently used to describe A.E.H.'s academic work is 'uncompromising', and one wonders whether some of Moses' clarity of thought, decisiveness and firm principles had not rubbed off on A.E.H. over the years. A.E.H. was known for his dry, acerbic wit and scathing comments about fools or sloppy research or writing. The jocular but no-nonsense tone of Moses' final letter captures how the two friends conversed. Did Moses learn these characteristics from A.E.H. or *vice versa*? Could Moses' scathing, if tongue-in-cheek, comments about the inferiority of literature compared with the sciences, and his black-and-white binary view of right and wrong, as exemplified by his resignation in Karachi on a question of principle, have influenced A.E.H.'s intolerance of differing views of other classical scholars?

Much of their relationship can never be more than speculation, but we can be sure that A.E.H., with his penetratingly clear thought and precise expression, did not state that Moses Jackson was the man who had more influence on his life than anybody else without complete conviction this was so. Without his friendship with Moses Jackson, the study of the Classics and the history of English poetry would probably have been very different.

Appendix: The Jackson Family Collection

The letters and diary in the Jackson Family collection have had a tortuous journey since Moses Jackson died in 1923. About a year after Moses' death, his widow, Rosa, left British Columbia, where she had never felt fully settled, to join Rupert, in Hartlepool, County Durham. It is presumed that she kept the letters from A.E.H.. In 1926 Oscar and Gerald, having finished their studies at the University of British Columbia, moved to Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) to work on the copper mines. A.E.H. and Gerald kept up regular correspondence, and A.E.H. frequently showed flashes of his dry, if somewhat condescending, sense of humour: "...your earlier letter which you speak of did not find its way to me. I expect it was eaten by a lion, as you may have been by this time,"[33] and "I hope you will keep well and not fall out of your aeroplane on to geological objects, however attractive."[34] All his letters to Gerald, he ended with "Your affectionate godfather, A.E. Housman".

Gerald returned to Britain after three years of geological mapping in Northern Rhodesia to complete his D.Sc. in geology at Imperial College in London. A.E.H. and Gerald continued to correspond regularly throughout Gerald's studies with Gerald even spending a term at Trinity College where A.E.H. kept a godfatherly eye on him. In spite of Gerald's protestations, A.E.H. continued to offer assistance with tuition fees, saying in a letter, "If you could have any idea of what my feeling for your father was and still is you would not grudge me the pleasure."[35]

Gerald completed his D.Sc. during the height of the Great Depression and he found himself overqualified and unemployed. In a career switch as radical as his father's, Gerald began medical studies at St Thomas's Hospital in London in 1932.

When A.E.H. died in April 1936 Gerald had only three years left of his medical studies; he attended A.E.H.'s funeral service in the chapel at Cambridge. Faithful to the end in the role given him by Moses, A.E.H. left Gerald a sum in his will which assisted Gerald in completing his medical degree and internship in 1939, just before the outbreak of the Second World War.

Rosa died only five months after A.E.H., in September 1936 whilst visiting Oscar, who had moved to Johannesburg, South Africa. A.E.H.'s letters to Moses were passed on to Gerald, as his godson, while Moses' India diary was preserved by Rupert. Moses' final letter to A.E.H. was found by Laurence Housman while going through A.E.H.'s possessions after the latter's death, and was also sent to Gerald.

Gerald served as Medical Officer with the Irish Guards during the Second World War, based in England and Belgium. In the last year of the war he married Mary Honor Martin, a Junior Commander working for Lord Louis Mountbatten in Combined Operations. After the end of the war, Gerald and Honor left grey post-War Britain, taking the collection of letters and a number of A.E.H.'s books with them. Gerald set up a medical practice in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), where he and Honor, as she was known, had three sons, Brian, Martin and me.

The family letters were stored in a cabin trunk in our house in Salisbury until Gerald died in 1978 at the height of the Rhodesian Civil War. After his death, Honor kept the letters, but by the mid-1990s, the situation in Zimbabwe – as Rhodesia had become – was deteriorating and Honor took many of the family papers, including A.E.H.'s letters, to the United States where Martin had settled, for safekeeping, saying that Gerald had wished his sons to do as they saw fit

with the letters and books. Honor continued to live in Harare until her death in 1998. The letters remained in Martin's possession in Austin, Texas, until earlier this year when the three brothers agreed to put the letters between A.E.H. and Moses, three of A.E.H.'s letters to Gerald and most of the books up for auction. They were sold by Sotheby's (New York) on 18 June, 2010 to unknown buyer(s). The remaining letters from A.E.H. to Gerald remain with Gerald's sons.

NOTES

1. Andrew Jackson is the youngest son of Gerald Jackson, and grandson of Moses Jackson.

2. Much the most important contribution was that of P.G. Naiditch, 'Notes on the Life of M.J. Jackson', *HSJ* 12 (1986), pp. 93-114 (= id., *Problems in the Life and Writings of A.E. Housman* (Beverly Hills, 1995), pp. 132-44); the contribution of R.B. Todd, 'M.J. Jackson in British Columbia, *HSJ* 27 (2001), pp. 107-10, contains little that is new.

3. Moses' eldest sister was named as Zoub in Naiditch (1986). As Naiditch correctly surmises, this was a nickname, her real name being Elizabeth Muirhead Jackson.

4. He was awarded a D.Sc. in Physics in 1883.

5. Graves, *ibid*.

6. In Blomfield Road, nearer the Patent Office than his earlier accommodation. Graves, *ibid*, wrongly references this accommodation as being in Bloomfield Street.

7. L. Housman (ed.), *A.E.H., Poems* (London, 1937), VII.

8. *More Poems*, 30.

9. Prof. L.H. Ajwani (ed.), *An Account of the Golden Jubilee of the Dayaram Jethmal Sind College, Karachi 17-23 January 1937* (XXX, 1939).

10. It is interesting to note that 'austere' is a word frequently applied to A.E.H. in his later years.

11. "Epithalamium", *Last Poems* XXIV.

12. Letter from the Jackson family collection.

13. To the southeast of the intersection of 24th Avenue and 256th Street. The farm is still in existence and unsubdivided.

14. Letter from the Jackson family collection.

15. The highly regarded and much-quoted inaugural lecture was finally published by Cambridge University Press in 1969, long after A.E.H.'s death.

16. *The Place Between* (Aldergrove Heritage Society, 1997), p. 153.

17. Hector was awarded the Military Cross and Rupert the Military Cross and the Croix de Guerre.

18. Letter from the Jackson family collection.

19. A mutual friend and solicitor in London.

20. A.G. Gardiner was the liberal editor of the *Daily News* from 1902-19.

21. *Ye Rounde Table* was an undergraduate magazine that A.E.H. had helped found at Oxford as a student.

22. A.E.H. wrote the poem as a belated farewell to his mother.

23. Referring to the unrepaid loans A.E.H. and Ward had made for the initial purchase of Applegarth.

24. This sentence could alternatively be read as: 'My most presentable boots are brown, requiring no blacking. Lazy old chap.' The uncertainty arises from Moses' weak handwriting (this portion of the letter originally in ink).

25. British Columbia along with most of the rest of Canada, banned the sale and consumption of alcohol in late 1917. In 1920 British Columbia became the first Canadian province to repeal prohibition laws, but it required that alcohol be sold through government outlets.

26. A fellow student at Oxford.

27. Gerald was studying geology. Britannia was a copper mine, twenty-five miles north of Vancouver.

28. Poems written by A.E.H. in his early years.

29. A.E.H. never did publish the volume of early poetry as suggested by Moses. However, within a year of A.E.H.'s death in 1936, and with A.E.H.'s prior approval, his brother Laurence published much of this early work in the volume *More Poems.*

30. From the Jackson family collection.

31. "Epithalamium", *Last Poems* XXIV.

32. L. Housman (ed.), *A.E.H. Poems*, *VIII*.

33. Letter dated 17 December, 1926.

34. Letter dated 19 May, 1927.

35. Letter dated 6 January, 1931.

Housman in the Highlands: A Poet's Argyllshire Holiday

by

Sir Nicholas Goodison

The primeval countryside of the highlands of Scotland has been a source of inspiration to many poets and artists. The scenery of Western Argyll, where ancient hills rise abruptly from vast glens and long-fingered lochs can hardly fail to inspire any but the meanest spirit. If the silent lesson in geomorphology with which the hills and valleys can enthral the onlooker is not enough, surely the vastness of it all, the ever-changing light, the clarity of the air after a rain-storm, or the dramas of human history which have been played against this most astonishing backdrop must touch a nerve.

The peninsula of Morvern is typically beautiful and steeped in historical associations. For this is MacDonald country. The Lord of the Isles owned Ardtornish castle, the ruins of which stand on a rocky point on the Sound of Mull, in the 14th century, and Sir Walter Scott laid the opening scene of his poem *The Lord of the Isles* there. In 1745 the clansmen of Morvern were among the first to gather in support of the young pretender when he landed a few miles to the north. In the 19th century the Duke of Sutherland's agent, the notorious Patrick Sellar, came to live in the attractive 18th-century house above the castle; and the peninsula is pock-marked with the remains of small settlements deserted during the period of the clearances and the growth of the sheep farms and sporting estates.

A.E. Housman came to Morvern in the late summer of 1931. He was then 72. One might expect, as I am sure his host did, that he would be affected by the place's great beauty and moving history. His host was his friend Owen Smith, who had bought the Ardtornish estate in the previous year. He was a successful businessman, his principal occupation being the Chairmanship of Hay's Wharf, and he knew A.E.H. at Trinity, Cambridge, where he was an undergraduate from 1889 to 1892. He had served as a London member of the College's Finance Committee in 1920-6 and he delighted in maintaining his ties with the College, as indeed he did with all his relations and friends.

Being a keen fisherman and deer-stalker, he had bought Ardtornish as a sporting estate at which to pass the summer holidays. It covered a large area, mostly moorland, but with a very beautiful coastline, two rivers, several hill

lochs, two ruined castles, many cottages and a monstrous 75-roomed house with three towers, at the head of Loch Aline, which had been built in 1888-92 at prodigious expense.

The situation of the house was, and is, of extraordinary beauty; the windows of its main rooms facing the tree-girt loch and the hills of Mull, and the house nestling among its trees like a fantastic castle in some gothic fairy tale. The new owner was determined that his relations and friends should share it with him, and for several years entertained them each summer during the sporting season.

Housman arrived by the steamer from Oban on August 20. His arrival is chronicled in the host's diary: "Thursday 20th August. I caught a 12lb salmon in the Big Pool. Somehow or other he got the gut round his gills and turned up on his side after about five minutes. Housman came."

He found himself one of a large party in the house. Including Housman, there were 17 guests, nearly all of whom were related to Hugh Smith or to his wife either directly or by marriage. Among them were Sydney Buxton, the Liberal politician and Governor-General of South Africa in 1914-20; his wife Mildred (Owen Smith's elder sister); their son-in-law Charles Fitzroy, later tenth Duke of Grafton; Richmond Palmer, then Governor of the Gambia, who had married a relation of Mrs Smith; and the bankers Eustace Abel Smith (Mrs Smith's father) and Olaf Hambro, who had married another relation.

Palmer, who was an "immensely distant relation" (see Burnett, *Letters*, II p. 257) of Housman's and who had called on him several times in Cambridge, appears to have been his only previous acquaintance among this closely-knit group of relations and friends who had come to see Smith's new estate. It is easy to imagine why, when the painter Henry Tonks came to dinner, he found Housman "shy and constrained". He was standing, according to Tonk's biographer Joseph Hone, "very precisely dressed... in a group of sporting men and women who had not yet changed". And Tonks's efforts to extract conversation from him during the evening did little to remove the constraint.

Tonks, who had retired from the Slade Professorship of Fine Arts in London in the previous year, was then 69. His letters to Smith show that he was a frequent visitor to his house in London and that besides making drawings of Smith's children he gave advice on the purchase of paintings and on the family's transactions with other artists. In 1929 for example he thought it "might be an interesting experiment to let [Rodney] Burn do a portrait of Mrs Smith", observing that it would not be "a repetition of the thousand vulgar products of the day". In

1931 he did his best to resolve a dispute between Thomas Monnington and Smith's brother over a portrait. And in 1931 he sold his own picture, *The Picnic*, to Smith for £300, an event which gave him the greatest pleasure because it was a picture into which he had put a supreme effort and which he was delighted to see bought by a friend. "Now I know that it gives pleasure", he wrote in a letter, "I am a different man".

In August he came to stay in one of the cottages on the estate at the invitation of his patron. They caught the overnight train for Oban together and went from Oban by motorboat to Ardtornish, where both *The Picnic* and Burn's picture can still be seen today. Tonks looked forward to the visit with keen anticipation because he knew that Housman, whom he admired profoundly, would be staying in the "big house". The two men had known each other slightly when Housman had been Professor of Latin at London, and in 1930 Housman had written to him on the occasion of his departure from the Slade, congratulating him on his successful tenure of the chair and wishing him a contented and happy retirement.

Housman seems to have spent most of his holiday walking. After the note of his arrival on August 20 there is no further mention of him in his host's diary until his departure eight days later when, in equally laconic style, Smith wrote: "Friday 28th August... Very hot again: did very little. Housman went away." It was hot weather during most of his visit.

It was not his temperament to share in the available sporting activities - fishing and grouse-shooting - and it is not clear whether or not he accompanied them on the two expeditions which Smith recorded in his diary. These were to Ardtornish castle and, on the day before Housman's departure, to Loch Moidart on the north side of the peninsula of Ardnamurchan.

Housman spent some time with Tonks, clearly finding his company more congenial than that of the other guests, and went for several walks with him, dressed always, according to Alethea Buxton, as a "completely town person" in dark clothes, elastic-sided boots, a trilby hat and a blue silk scarf. He also watched the artist painting, and discussed his work with him.

Reading Housman's letter to his hostess after his visit one might suppose that he was an Englishman who saw Scotland with new eyes. "After a very calm voyage to Oban", he wrote, "and a train journey in which the evening light on the hills at the top of Loch Awe was about the most beautiful I ever saw, I am safe home again, and congratulate myself on having made my first acquaintance with Scotland under your auspices..." (Burnett, *Letters*, II p. 256). But this was a letter

of thanks. It was no guide to his true opinions. He told his sister afterwards that although "an artist there whom I knew was... much delighted, especially with the atmospheric conditions and haziness", he himself found the scenery "exactly what I had supposed it would be, and quite good of course, though not my favourite sort".

In a more telling letter to Percy Withers (Burnett, *Letters*, II p. 270) he described his holiday with the succinctness for which his prose is distinguished: "... in August I went to Scotland for the first time in my life and was rewarded by finding the only fine weather of my summer. It was Artornish (in Scott's *Lord of the Isles*, now spelt Ardtornish) on the Sound of Mull; the landscape exactly as I had imagined it. I enjoyed walking about among the red-deer and so forth, but ten days exhausted the neighbourhood and I shall not go again."

NOTES

1. Reprinted from *Country Life* 154 (25 Oct. 1973), pp. 1274, 1276, with the permission of Sir Nicholas and the Editor of *Country Life*.

APPENDIX

Three unpublished letters from A.E. Housman to Mr and Mrs Owen Hugh Smith

1. To Mrs Owen Hugh Smith

Trinity College
Cambridge
29 July 1931

Dear Mrs Hugh Smith,

After a very calm voyage to Oban and a train journey in which the evening light on the hills at the top of Loch Awe was about the most beautiful I ever saw, I am safe home again, and congratulate myself on having made my first acquaintance with Scotland under your auspices.

Please make my apologies to Mr and Mrs Palmer for not having taken a proper farewell of them, and believe me sincerely yours,

A.E. Housman

The Ruins of Ardtornish Castle

Ardtornish House

2. To Mr Owen Hugh Smith:

Trinity College
Cambridge
16 October 1931

My dear Hugh Smith,

Your offer, however dishonest, is generous; but I think you should come forward like a man and a deerstalker and present the haunch yourself. I already annually present a turtle, and if I add the antlered monarch of the glen to the mailed monster of the deep I shall be thought guilty of ostentation and profusion or even indifference to the wounds of my bleeding country; for the late Vice Chancellor on laying down his office exhorted us to eat less.

Yours sincerely,

A.E. Housman

3. To Mr Owen Hugh Smith:

As from Trinity College
Cambridge
1 July 1935

My dear Hugh Smith,

It is kind of you to condole with me and to send me flowers which, faint but pursuing, have not yet overtaken me in my recent changes of address. I am supposed to be recuperating in a succession of country spots in the houses of friends and relations.

We have shared a great loss in Vesey; but his end was just as one would have wished it to be.

Yours very truly,

A.E. Housman

A. E. Housman's Last Will and Testament

Transcribed, and annotated

by

P. G. Naiditch

THIS IS THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT of me ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN[1, 2] of Trinity College in the University of Cambridge Kennedy Professor of Latin in the said University.

1. I HEREBY revoke all testamentary dispositions heretofore made by me.

2. I APPOINT BARCLAYS BANK LIMITED (hereafter called "the Bank")[3] Executor and Trustee of this my Will and I declare as follows: -

The Bank may act by its proper officer or officers and employ and pay any agent or agents to transact any business required to be done hereunder and shall be allowed and paid all charges and expenses incurred by it.

The Bank shall be entitled to remuneration (including the customary share of brokerage) in accordance with the Banks scales of fees or remuneration in force at the date of my death such remuneration to be free from duties and deductions and to be paid or retained out of the capital or income of my estate or the appropriate part or parts thereof.

The Bank may act as Banker and transact any banking or allied business on behalf of or in connection with my Estate or the trusts hereof upon the same terms as would for the time being be made with an ordinary customer in the usual course of business and without being liable to account for any profit made thereby.

3. I BEQUEATH to my godson GERALD CHRISTOPHER ARDEN JACKSON[4] of 97 Clifton Avenue West Hartlepool Mining Geologist the sum of THREE HUNDRED POUNDS and I DIRECT that any debt which may be owing from my said godson to myself at the date of my death shall be forgiven him and he shall not be required to bring the same into hotchpot both gifts to be free of duty.

4. I BEQUEATH the sum of TWENTY POUNDS free of duty to my man servant GEORGE PENNY.[5]

5. I GIVE AND BEQUEATH free of duty unto the Family Dining Club[6] in the

University of Cambridge aforesaid for the use of those persons who at the date of my death are members thereof all the wine in my cellar and I direct that the receipt of the Secretary for the time being of the said Family Dining Club shall be a sufficient discharge in respect of this bequest.

6. I BEQUEATH all my books and manuscripts[7] to my brother LAURENCE HOUSMAN[8] of Longmeadow, Street, Somerset.

7. I DIRECT my said brother Laurence Housman to destroy all [p. 2:] my prose manuscript writing[9] in whatever language and I permit him but do not enjoin him to select from my verse manuscript writing and to publish any poems which appear to him to be completed and to be not inferior in quality to the average of my published poems and I DIRECT him to destroy all other poems and fragments of verse.[10]

8. I GIVE AND BEQUEATH all my copyrights unto the Bank upon trust for the last survivor of my brothers and sisters absolutely and in the meantime and until there shall be one survivor only upon equally between such of my brothers and sisters are alive at the respective dates on which such royalties are resolved by the Bank.

9. I GIVE DEVISE AND BEQUEATH all the rest and residue of my real and personal estate whatsoever and wheresoever unto the Bank UPON TRUST to sell call in and convert into money the same or such part thereof as shall not consist of money and out of the proceeds of such sale calling in and conversion to pay my funeral and testamentary expenses and debts and the legacies bequeathed hereby or by any codicil hereto and to hold the residue thereof upon trust to divide the same equally between such of my brothers and sisters as shall survive me.

10. I DIRECT that if my sister Katharine Elizabeth Symons[11] shall die in my lifetime the Bank shall hold the share of my said sister Katharine Elizabeth Symons upon trust to divide the same equally between the children of the said Katharine Elizabeth Symons who attain the age of twenty one years PROVIDED that if any such child shall die in my lifetime leaving issue living at my death such issue shall take the share (equally between them if more than one) which his her or their parent would have taken if he or she has survived me.

11. LASTLY I expressly desire and wish my desire to be made as widely known as possible that none of my writings which have appeared in periodical publications shall be collected and reprinted in any shape or form and I expressly forbid the Bank to allow the reprinting of any such articles the copyright of

which is vested in myself.

IN WITNESS whereof I have hereunto set my hand this [manuscript:] seventeenth [end ms.] day of [ms.] November [end ms.] One thousand nine hundred and thirty two. [signed:] A. E. Housman.

[to left of signature] SIGNED by the said ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN as and for his last Will in the presence of us both who in his presence at his request and in the presence of each other have hereunto subscribed out names as witnesses. [Ms.] A. H. Wild Solicitor | Cambridge. | D. Hayward | His Clerk [end ms.][12, 13]

NOTES

1. Copyright © 2010 The estate of A.E. Housman. Reprinted by permission of the Society of Authors as the literary representative of the estate.

2. The best introductions remain A.S.F. Gow's *A. E. Housman: a Sketch*, Cambridge 1936 (corrected impression, 1936); and Norman Page's *A. E. Housman: a Critical Biography*, London 1983 (corr. 1985).

3. For Barclay's, see, most conveniently, Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barclays).

4. For Gerald Arden Christopher Jackson (1900-1978), see now Andrew Jackson, *A Fine View of the Show: Letters from the Western Front*, [s.l.: Lulu,] 2009, index (esp. pp. 251-55).

5. Mr Richard Perceval Graves rightly cites this will for the information on George Penny (*A. E. Housman: the Scholar-Poet*, London 1979 = Oxford 1981, p. 251); George L. Watson interviewed Penny (*A. E. Housman: a Divided Life*, London 1957, p. 14).

6. For the club, see S. C. Roberts, *The Family: The History of a Dining Club*, Cambridge 1963; Housman was elected to membership in the Family in May 1919 (*ibid*. p. 21). For the Arcades, to which A.E.H. had also belonged, see Naiditch, *A. E. Housman at University College, London*, Leiden 1988 p. 59 n. 22-4.

7. Naiditch, **'**The Extant Portion of the Library of A. E. Housman': 'I. Greek Literature' *HSJ* 28, 2002, pp. 53-69; II. 'Latin Literature' *ibid*. 29, 2003, pp. 108-151; 'III. Classical Antiquity' *ibid*. 30, 2004, pp. 142-157; 'IV. Non-Classical Materials' *ibid*. 31, 2005, pp. 154-180; 'Part V. Indexes' *ibid*. 32, 2006, pp. 103-17. Housman's books were valued by W. Heffer & Son Ltd—for a fee of £5.14.0—at only £170.0.0, no duty (Schedule III. Testamentary and Executorship Fees and Expenses [Eton College, Windsor, John Carter's A.E. Housman box]).

8. For Laurence Housman (1865-1959), see most conveniently Elizabeth Oakley's *Inseparable Siblings: a Portrait of Clemence & Laurence Housman*, Studley: Brewin Books, 2009.

9. Many of Housman's manuscript notebooks survive. With regard to the 29 notebooks of classical lectures, A.S.F. Gow persuaded Housman to allow his ms. classical lectures to survive, and Gow told Laurence of that permission; the result was the survival of the lectures. For the lectures, see David Butterfield, 'Housman's Cambridge Lectures' *HSJ* 35, 2009, pp. 122-48.

10. Laurence, however intent on doing the right thing, bungled his assignment: see e.g. Archie Burnett, *The Poetry of A. E. Housman*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997, pp. xvii-xlii.

11. For Katharine Elizabeth (Housman) Symons (1862-1945), see [N. V. H. Symons] in John Pugh, *Bromsgrove and the Ho*usmans, Bromsgrove 1974, pp. lxiii sq. and separately published index. For her name, 'Katharine / Katherine', see Naiditch, *Additional Problems in the Life and Writings of A. E. Housman*, Los Angeles: Sam: Johnson's, 2005, p. 155.

12. A.E.H.'s solicitors were Messrs [J. E.] Few & [A. H.] Wild, Sidney House, 22-24 Sidney Street, Cambridge (*The Letters of A. E. Housman* ed. Archie Burnett, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007, II p. 314).

13. The will is preserved in National Archives, Kew, Richmond, Surrey.

Vir in uoluendis lexicis satis diligens: A.E. Housman and the Thesaurus Linguae Latinae[1]

by

Tom Keeline

On the entry for *aelurus* in the TLL:

> Everyone can figure to himself the mild inward glow of pleasure and pride which the author of this unlucky article felt while he was writing it; and the peace of mind with which he said to himself, when he went to bed that night, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." This is the felicity of the house of bondage, and of the soul which is so fast in prison that it cannot get forth; which commands no outlook upon the past or the future, but believes that the fashion of the present, unlike all fashions heretofore, will endure perpetually, and that its own flimsy tabernacle of second-hand opinions is a habitation for everlasting. And not content with believing these improbable things it despises those who do not believe them, and displays to the world that stiff and self-righteous arrogance of the unthinking man which ages ago provoked this sentence from Solomon: "the sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason."[2]

The casual reader of Housman's caustic remarks in print on the *ergastulum Monacense* and its lexicographical *Sklavenarbeit* might be forgiven for thinking that Housman detested the TLL and thought its work altogether worthless. An unending stream of vituperation directed at the great German dictionary seems to flow through the pages of his editions and classical papers, swelling into a torrent of rhetorical flourish in the 1911 Cambridge Inaugural Lecture quoted above, but never drying up. Despite this consistent façade, however, the true story of Housman's relationship with the TLL is much more complex: he was in fact an avid user of the Thesaurus as a book and carried on amicable personal relationships with the Thesaurus as an institution; he was, despite all public appearances to the contrary, hardly a *contemptor Thesauri*.

In his published writings Housman's frequent mentions of the TLL are to be certain almost invariably critical. This criticism takes many forms, and a brief catalogue will suffice to refresh the scholar's memory and to enlighten the

uninitiated. There is in the first instance constant carping at incorrect references, omissions, and inaccurate definitions, typically with a rhetorical pose of surprise that such a mistake could ever have been made.[3] There is also the familiar class of remarks that deploy Housman's well-known rhetoric of truth and falsehood: in one of its entries, for example, the TLL allegedly "deceives its readers" and by a misleading citation "conceals the truth about the text".[4] Often the barbs seem almost off-handed: "a column and a half of the *thes. ling. Lat.*, chosen at random, will generally contain a good many errors, and this specimen is no exception to the rule,"[5] or "I turn to the thesaurus linguae Latinae, though with no high hopes of enlightenment on a point of meter,"[6] or "thesaurus ling. Lat., diuersa ut solet confundens, *eqs*."[7] With such comments Housman gives the impression that the TLL is shot through with errors large and small, and indeed that error is its normal state. Occasionally the scorn will even ascend to the heights of Helicon and drink from the Pierian stream, like the comment *ad* MANIL. 3, 371, "quos locos si quis in thes. ling. Lat. quaesierit, inueniet ille quidem, inuenit enim Cadmus Penthea et Aeetes Apsyrtum, uerum a Gudemanno distractos dispersosque et omnibus alienissimis immixtos."[8] By contrast, out of Housman's 120-odd published mentions of the Thesaurus that I am aware of,[9] I count only four cases of unalloyed approbation,[10] a handful of neutral remarks,[11] and some nine instances of a neutral remark paired with a correction or criticism.[12] In the light of such an overwhelming preponderance of negative comment, is it any wonder that most have accepted without question the notion that Housman saw the TLL merely as an object for scorn and derision?

It is only when we turn to the unpublished evidence that the picture begins to change. The first surprise is that Housman instructed his publishers to send several of his books published after 1920 to the Thesaurus,[13] a support of the TLL *qua* institution which one would hardly have expected after reading his remarks on Juvenal's lost cat. It is indeed all the more surprising for the simple reason that it was by no means common for English scholars to send their publications to the Thesaurus.[14] These gifts were gratefully received, although the *Mitarbeiter* in Munich admittedly felt the sting of some of the insults: the books are full of marginalia documenting their reactions to Housman's poisoned pen.[15] The Thesaurus, in turn, sent gracious thank-you notes to Housman which he valued enough to retain.[16] The note in return for the Lucan, for example, runs as follows:

> Viro doctissimo A. E. Housman
> thesaurenses salutem

Munus adest gratum: Thesauri scrinia gaudent,
Lucanum nobis editor ipse dedit
Sentibus evolsis purgatum mente sagaci.
Nos tibi gratantes, muneris auctor, habe.[17]

This same poem has been inscribed on the title page of the TLL copy of the book, along with the note "Donum editoris | 1926."[18] (A later hand has underlined *editoris* and added an exclamation point!)

The Thesaurus was eager to do more than write thank-you notes, and in 1920 they invited Housman to visit the archives in Munich at his convenience and promised to help him take full advantage of their treasures.[19] Housman never took them up on their offer, but there can be no doubt that it was sincerely meant. The Thesaurus did eventually have a chance to reciprocate with a gift of its own, sending Housman a copy of Eduard Wölfflin's *Ausgewählte Schriften*.[20] It was then Housman's turn to express his gratitude, which he did in a heretofore unpublished letter:[21]

> Benigne et liberaliter oblato dono ornatus auctoribus muneris ex animo gratias ago idemque egregii uiri Woelfflini scripta electiora utili consilio denuo in lucem protracta unoque in conspectu posita editoribus gratulor.[22]
>
> A. E. Housman.
> coll. Trin. Cantabr.
> an. 1935 mens. Febr. die XVIII

This friendly exchange of books and letters (to say nothing of offers of hospitality!) ill comports with the notion that Housman despised the Thesaurus: he seems instead genuinely concerned to help the TLL advance the cause of Latin scholarship.

Housman also exchanged letters, offprints, and books with some of the leading scholars working at the Thesaurus, men such as Wilhelm Heraeus[23] and Friedrich Vollmer.[24] Vollmer holds a special place in this connection, for he was the first *Generalredaktor* at the Thesaurus and he also had a long-standing relationship with Housman – long-standing but by no means always fraught with friendly feelings; Housman once indeed remarked that in Vollmer's 1898 edition of Statius "the criticism of Latin poetry touched its nadir".[25] This is not mere rodomontade, for Housman's own copy of the edition is full of especially scathing marginal annotations, where in addition to repeated comments like "ugh"[26] and "liar"[27] he also refers to Vollmer as a "blunderer" and an "ignorant ass", unusually harsh remarks applied to only a few other scholars.[28] Before his

1907 edition of Horace, Vollmer was singled out for some of Housman's harshest printed invective as well,[29] but after reviewing that edition,[30] or perhaps after they began exchanging letters, Housman noticeably softened his tone. In 1907 he was prepared to grant that Vollmer had become "a considerable scholar", but "hardly yet a critic".[31] Writing in 1930, several years after Vollmer's death, Housman not only again referred to Vollmer as "a considerable scholar", but even went so far as to award the title that he had earlier so expressly denied: "even something of a critic."[32]

For his part Vollmer seems to have been eager to embrace the olive branch Housman extended in the Horace review: in 1908-9 he offered Housman collations of manuscripts containing the *Culex*, sent Housman at least one offprint, and had Housman examine a manuscript for him in the British Museum. Housman complied with Vollmer's request and replied to his letters in courteous tones, even praising Vollmer's industriousness as "admirable and amazing".[33] Vollmer in turn mentioned Housman's labours on his behalf in his edition of the *Appendix Vergiliana*.[34] The two continued an amicable correspondence and exchange of scholarly materials throughout the next decade: Housman would seem to have sent Vollmer offprints of his articles 'Greek Nouns in Latin Poetry from Lucretius to Juvenal' and 'ΑΙΟΣ and ΕΙΟΣ in Latin Poetry',[35] and a later letter from Vollmer documents that Housman sent him a copy of *Manilius III* as well.[36] Throughout the years of their correspondence, Vollmer was in Munich and active to greater and lesser degrees in *Thesaurusarbeit*.[37] While in the absence of further documentation it can remain only speculative, it is very tempting to believe that it was their friendly *Briefwechsel* that led Housman to closer contacts with Thesaurus *Mitarbeiter* and eventually with the institution itself.

There is a further important aspect of Housman's relationship with the TLL that must not be overlooked, namely Housman's own use of the Thesaurus. The first thing that should be clear from the foregoing account of Housman's comments on the TLL is that he had an intimate acquaintance with the work in all its particulars; he was, like Bentley before him, a *uir in uoluendis lexicis satis diligens*.[38] This is not in and of itself surprising, because the Thesaurus is a singularly useful reference work for the editor and commentator, and it is thus only logical that Housman would have made full use of it. We must realize, however, that the picture we get in print is fundamentally unbalanced, for it was rarely Housman's practice to note when his parallels derive from the pages of a lexicon, and as a result we are privy only to his disagreements. Nevertheless, each negative remark betrays a close and careful reading of an article, and behind each such remark lie concealed the countless columns that he must have read with profit: nobody spends 35 years turning the pages of a work as demanding

as the Thesaurus just to find points of contention to mention in footnotes.

Furthermore, while most scholars today are content to consult the Thesaurus in the reference section of a well-stocked university library, Housman was himself a subscriber and owned every fascicle published in his lifetime, as well as all available ancillary materials like Vollmer's abortive *Epitome* (an abridged version of the lexicon). He also owned the full run of Wölfflin's *Archiv für lateinische Lexikographie*, whose subtitle proclaimed it as *Vorarbeit zu einem Thesaurus linguae latinae*. All this bears clear witness to the value that he must have placed in the work. Today Housman's copy of the Thesaurus is in the hands of Paul Naiditch, who kindly informs me that "the marks and marginalia, though scattered, number in the hundreds. They are not peculiarly harsh, and indeed I should call them, on the whole, forbearing."[39] We have seen how damning Housman can be in his annotations when he so desires, and so this comparative mildness stands in stark contrast to his public reproof and can fairly be taken as a better representation of his true feelings.[40] In a sample taken from the beginning of volume I, for example, most of the annotations consist of underlines and vertical rules in the margins, with occasional references and a smattering of exclamation points; if we exclude the exclamation points, as Naiditch remarks, "none of the sharp comments especially associated with A.E.H. appear."[41]

That is not to imply that they are completely absent. Theodor Bögel, for example, whose memoirs about his time at the TLL provide a unique window into the institution's early workings,[42] comes in for harsh treatment, being called a "liar" at *ThLL* II p. 1037, 41, and receiving an "ugh" at *ThLL* V 1 p. 1148, 65. But to return again to the celebrated case of *aelurus*, where we might expect to find strong language, we instead are confronted only with a vertical line in the margin and the phrase "no Juvenal!" (*ThLL* I p. 966, 17-21); the name of the unfortunate article's author is then underlined: Vollmer. One can reasonably assume that Housman first read this article when preparing his Juvenal edition and was indeed taken aback by the omission, and it is not hard to imagine what he must have thought when he saw that name, but there was nevertheless no violent reaction. In private the Thesaurus does not seem to have aroused Housman's particular ire.

The marginal comments also reveal that Housman continued to read and annotate articles through the years, which again is not surprising given the nature of the work: as with most readers of dictionaries, Housman would have consulted the lexicon on an as-needed basis. Thus we find annotations in the preface to volume I which probably date to when he first acquired it, the annotations to *aelurus* which were likely made before the Juvenal edition (and

certainly before the 1911 Cambridge Inaugural), and a reference at *ThLL* I p. 13, 37 to an article in the *Berliner philologische Wochenschrift* from 1917.[43] This sustained use over time is mirrored in his publications, where we find the first scattered mentions in *Manilius I* and an ever-increasing density of reference toward the tail end of the *Classical Papers* and especially in *Manilius V* (together with its addenda).[44] The simplest reason for the increase in citation frequency is that as the TLL progressed through the alphabet it became ever more useful, but it is probably also the case that Housman became increasingly familiar with its strengths and weaknesses as well. A careful study of Housman's Thesaurus marginalia as correlated with his publications could reveal more detail about how he read and used the TLL.[45]

So we have seen the two sides of Housman's engagement with the Thesaurus Linguae Latinae. On the one hand there is the damning and very public criticism; on the other there is his manifest material support for the Thesaurus, the friendly exchanges of letters with the institution and its workers, and his own constant and careful use of the lexicon, which he himself owned and annotated. Can these two sides be reconciled? I think at some level the answer is "yes". Housman was never in the business of handing out gold stars for jobs well done; after all, "accuracy is a duty, not a virtue."[46] Thus he observes of himself that he has "spent most of [his] time in finding faults, because finding faults, if they are real and not imaginary, is the most useful sort of criticism".[47] These two statements can be taken to explain nearly all of what he wrote on the Thesaurus in print; for where it was right it needed no praise, and where he felt it was wrong, he considered himself to be furthering the progress of scholarship by correcting it.[48] This also explains why his few charitable remarks about the Thesaurus occur in the context of correcting other scholars' mistakes.[49] Likewise he must have thought of himself as helping the cause of *Wissenschaft* by sending his books to the TLL. So far, then, the public and private faces can be seen as complementary manifestations of one underlying mission to "set back the frontiers of darkness".[50]

But the nagging question still remains, just why was he so harsh in print, particularly when he actually held the object of his criticism in some esteem? It seems certain that something about the Thesaurus in particular led to his pose of public outrage. Some reasons can be dismissed out of hand; for example, Housman certainly held no animus against German scholarship, even if he perhaps distrusted the model of the *Großbetrieb der Wissenschaft*.[51] A part of his reaction may indeed have been occasioned by the contrast between the authoritative appearance of the lexicon – column after column densely packed with myriad typefaces, abbreviations, and citations, all clad in austere Latin and issuing forth

under the auspices of the major German academies – and its occasional missteps. Housman took particular umbrage when those who should have known better went astray. Nevertheless, even this cannot be the whole explanation; for the Thesaurus, as Housman must have known, has never claimed to be authoritative: an article in the TLL represents the considered thoughts of its author and editors, but it is a well-known principle that any given article could be written in a number of different ways. This is indeed one of the reasons that articles are signed, lest they look as if they had been dictated from the heavens to the scribe on the mount. The Thesaurus puts the material on record and offers a possible arrangement, but it is up to the user to decide what to do next. We must still search for other reasons.

The most cogent explanation has been offered, perhaps not surprisingly, by Shackleton Bailey, who once wrote that Housman's seeming animosity towards the Thesaurus may have "had partly to do with a feeling that such compilations help lazy scholars to conceal their lack of reading".[52] This suggestion squares well with Housman's beliefs and practices, but it is still not the whole story. In general, as is well known, Housman believed that "a scholar who means to build himself a monument must spend much of his life in acquiring knowledge which for its own sake is not worth having and in reading books which do not in themselves deserve to be read".[53] This is to say that although Housman made use of reference works, they always remained ancillary tools; his scholarship was instead founded on knowledge gained through a laborious and lifelong course of careful reading combined with critical judgment. The Thesaurus in many ways offered a shortcut to his hard-won knowledge, which he naturally would have resented, and he was at great pains to insist that it could never be a shortcut to his critical judgment. The mistaken notion that it could, that any reference work or "method" could be a substitute for an innate critical acumen and a feeling for truth honed by years of toil, was what provoked his particular outrage. Since people seemed especially eager to make this mistake about the Thesaurus, Housman took an especially firm public stand in order to set straight such arrant folly.[54]

Once, in an excess of enthusiasm, W.M. Lindsay remarked that because of the TLL Latin scholarship was becoming easy and that with comparable progress in palaeography soon textual emendation would be easy too;[55] Housman replied with programmatic force that "no advance in palaeography will ever make textual emendation easy, because textual emendation depends much less on palaeography than on several other things, the chief of which is the textual emendator; and for a like reason Latin scholarship will never be made easy by

any dictionary."[56] The Thesaurus Linguae Latinae had its place, which Housman recognized and valued, but it its place was to help the critic exercise his judgment, not to replace it, and he bristled at any suggestion to the contrary.

NOTES

1. I should like to thank everyone at the Thesaurus Linguae Latinae, where I worked as a *Mitarbeiter* for two very pleasant months this past summer, especially Silvia Clavadetscher, Manfred Flieger, and Michael Hillen. David Butterfield and Paul Naiditch were kind enough to provide me with their invaluable help as I was writing this paper. I should also like particularly to acknowledge my many pleasant and beneficial conversations with Simon Malloch.

2. Words first delivered in the Cambridge Inaugural of 1911 and subsequently repeated in the corrected reprint of the Juvenal edition (Cambridge, 1931), lvi. The true story behind the *aelurus* entry in the TLL is not quite as Housman would make it out to be: in point of fact *aeluros* had been duly noted as a variant reading on the Juvenal passage (15, 7), but an error in counting resulted in its being missed when the material was being reproduced for lemmatization. For details see P. Flury, 'Vom Tintenfaß zum Computer', in D. Krömer (ed.), *Wie die Blätter am Baum, so wechseln die Wörter: 100 Jahre Thesaurus linguae Latinae* (Stuttgart-Leipzig, 1995), 49.

3. In the Latin notes typically signalled by an adverb or adjective: *ridicule*, *ioculari errore*, *miro errore*, *falsissima sententia… et absurdissima*, *inepte*, *male*, *mire*, etc. Cf. n. 9 below *passim*.

4. F.R.D. Goodyear and J. Diggle (edd.), *The Classical Papers of A. E. Housman* (3 vols, Cambridge, 1972), 860. Subsequently I shall refer to *Classical Papers* as *CP*; likewise I shall refer to the *Manilius* (5 vola, London, 1903-1930), Juvenal (London, 1905), and Lucan (Oxford, 1926) editions simply by the standard TLL abbreviations of their respective authors (viz. MANIL., IVV., LVCAN.) with line or page number. Furthermore, Burnett (2007) = A. Burnett, ed., *The Letters of A.E. Housman* (2 vols, Oxford, 2007); Naiditch (1988) = P.G. Naiditch, *A.E. Housman at University College: The Election of 1892* (Leiden-New York, 1988); Naiditch (2005) = P.G. Naiditch, *Additional Problems in the Life and Writings of A.E. Housman* (Los Angeles, 2005); Gow (1936) = A.S.F. Gow, *A.E. Housman: A Sketch* (Cambridge, 1936).

5. *CP* 1052 n. 1.

6. *CP* 954.

7. LVCAN. 1, 458.

8. Sometimes the comments instead descend to the depths of plain meanness, e.g.

MANIL. 5, 229 “locos a Bickelio thes. ling. Lat. II p. 601 55 sq. huc relatos… adeat qui ridere uolet”.

9. The compilation of these citations was greatly facilitated by David Butterfield and Paul Naiditch, who shared with me their own personal indices of Housman’s writings. I have subsequently augmented their lists by my own efforts as well. Housman’s published mentions of the TLL that I know of are as follows: *CP* 646, 700, 725, 728, 820, 846 (*bis*), 847, 860, 863, 891, 893 (*bis*), 894 (*bis*), 895, 952, 953-4, 957, 958, 990, 991, 1052 n. 1, 1076 n. 1, 1085, 1104, 1105, 1107, 1116 n. 1, 1118 (cf. Housman’s lecture notes on this same point: Univ. Lib. Camb. add. 6874 section IX [P.G. Naiditch *per litteras* 9 August 2010]), 1120 n. 2, 1141, 1142, 1144, 1152, 1154 and n. 1, 1159, 1171, 1177, 1178 n. 1, 1181, 1182, 1189, 1193, 1198, 1199, 1203, 1208, 1210, 1225 n. 1, 1229, 1235, 1236 (*bis*), 1244; IVV. lv-lvi (in Cambridge, 1931 ed.); 15, 90; LVCAN. 1, 458. 1, 555. 2, 250. 3, 101. 3, 188. 3, 531. 4, 726. 4, 796. 6, 754. 6, 797. 7, 768. 9, 64. 10, 63. 10, 478; MANIL. 1 xlviii; 1, 233. 1, 245. 2, 571. 2, 582. 2, 756. 2, 757. 2, 825. 3, 38. 3, 114. 3, 458. 3, 468. 3, 597. 3, 630. 4, 122. 4, 323-327. 4, 400. 4, 470. 4, 659. 4, 687. 4, 884. 5, 25. 5, 77. 5, 162. 5, 180. 5, 202. 5, 221. 5, 229. 5, 266. 5, 273-275. 5, 318. 5, 333. 5, 353. 5, 404. 5, 490. 5, 498. 5, 549. 5, 552. 5, 568. 5, 633. 5, 665. 5, 710. 5, 726. 5, 733. MANIL. addenda 1, 199. 1, 246. 1, 251. 1, 460. 1, 825. 2, 658. 2, 663. 2, 837. 4, 314.

10. Unqualified praise: LVCAN. 6, 754 “errata quorum plena est Neuii uol. I pagina 668 ed. 3 uitauit thesaurus ling. Lat. II p. 711 39-46”; MANIL. 4, 659 “*Alpinas* qui primus accepit Bentleius *arces* perperam interpretatus est collato Hor. carm. IV 14 11… recte Kempfius thes. ling. Lat. II p. 741 hunc uersum composuit cum Vergilianis georg. I 240… et IV 461”; 5, 490 “recte thes. ling. Lat. VI p. 977 68, tacent enim interpretes”; 5, 665 “*nouas acies*, nouum discrimen. recte thes. ling. Lat. I p. 412 78: Manilii interpretes noua thynnorum agmina adnatantia intellegere iam facile mihi credetur.” It is significant that all these instances of praise occur in the context of correcting others’ mistakes. Cf. nn. 11 and 12 below along with p. 69.

11. Neutral remarks: *CP* 820, 846 (*bis*), 1107, 1142, 1144, 1152, 1159, 1189, 1244; LVCAN. 3, 101. Again, these remarks often occur when Housman is correcting someone else. Cf. n. 10 above and n. 12 below.

12. Neutral remarks paired with criticisms: *CP* 863, 990 with 991, 1154 with n. 1, 1236; MANIL. 5, 25; 5, 273-275; 5, 318; 5, 549; MANIL. addenda 2, 837. See too the criticism mixed with praise at MANIL. 5, 498. Yet again, the majority of these remarks are paired with corrections of other scholars’ mistakes. Cf. nn. 10 and 11 above.

13. *Manilius IV*, for example, presumably in the letter of 20 Sept. 1920 implied by Burnett (2007) vol. 1, p. 452; for *Manilius V* see Burnett (2007) vol. 2, 218. I am not aware of any letters connected with gift copies of the Lucan.

14. In thanking Housman the Thesaurus remarks that they wish more scholars would show Housman's generosity ("Laeti accepimus librum tuum et gratias tibi agimus, vir humanissime, pro liberalitate tua, qua utinam plures utantur!" [TCC with adv. c 20.23]).

15. For the most part these reactions consist of underlines and exclamation marks (as a small sample, see for example in Housman's Juvenal underlining of "employing slave-labour" p. lv, "ergastulum at Munich," "theirs not to reason why," "the mental habits of a slave," etc. p. lvi; in his Lucan *ad* 9, 64 underlining of "quod unum est ex multis nec leuibus sub illa uoce [*sc.* bene] erratis" followed by (!), *ad* 3, 531 "quo sensu *abiete* Petr. 89 34 positum esse Woelfflinii error est thes. ling. Lat. I p 94 6," etc.). Sometimes the reactions could be more explicit: in the note to LVCAN. 1, 458 the TLL comes in for criticism; in the next note (*ad* 460 461) Housman parenthetically remarks "nisi fallor," to which someone has written in the margin "falleris"; in the Juvenal at the top of p. lvi we find written, in English, "Mr. Housman has, now and then, all appearances of a spoiled brat." The *Mitarbeiter* are not without a sense of humor, however: on the title page of the Lucan next to the famous EDITORVM IN VSVM EDIDIT one finds Fraenkel's "emendation" E<RV>DITORVM listed with a reference to the relevant page of the *Gnomon* review (532) as well as "sed v. p. 257 ad 9, 64," where "haec non editorum sed lexicographorum in usum adnoto" is marked. Of the 14 mentions of the Thesaurus in the Lucan edition that are known to me, eight are in some way noted in the TLL copy. It should be mentioned that many of the books at the Thesaurus are heavily annotated and indeed the marginalia of great scholars past remain one of its enduring ancillary treasures.

16. They are now housed at Trinity College Library: TCC with adv. c 20.23 (13 November 1920), TCC adv. c 20. 25 (28 January 1926), TCC with adv. c 20.30 (15 December 1930). Draft copies are also to be found in the correspondence archive of the TLL in Munich filed in the pertinent yearly correspondence binder under the letter H. It should be noted that it seems not to have been Housman's practice to retain correspondence from German scholars (a skim of Naiditch's correspondence census yields precious few such letters), so this is further evidence that he held the Thesaurus in some regard.

17. TCC adv. c 20. 25 (28 January 1926). "The Thesaurists send their greetings to A.E. Housman, a most learned scholar: A pleasing gift is at hand; the bookshelves of the Thesaurus rejoice; the editor himself has given us a Lucan free from rough spots, purged by a sagacious mind. Know, giver of the gift, that we thank you." (On this somewhat dubious use of *grator* see *ThLL* VI 2 p. 2243, 80 sqq.)

18. In fact the last line of the quatrain in the book reads: "Thesaurum gratum muneris auctor habet." There is a piquant irony in the Thesaurus sending Housman a poem with the phrase "muneris auctor", for in 1919 Housman had referred to the TLL's discussion of the phrase and criticized its handling of a related collocation (*CP* 990-1. It was also however the appropriate phrase for the context; see too Housman's own letter on p. 66.)

19. "Neque vero verbis tantum, sed etiam opera et factis beneficium tuum remunerari cupimus. Gratiae in hunc modum referendae aptissime nobis facultatem dederis, si thesauri nostri scrinia adieris, quandocumque tibi e re visum fuerit. Quae inde in tuum usum depromi proferunt, libentissime tecum communicabimus neque ullum omnino officium detractabimus, quo te studiumque tuum in Manilio positum adiuvare licebit" (TCC with adv. c 20.23 [13 November 1920]).

20. E. Wölfflin, *Ausgewählte Schriften* (Leipzig, 1933).

21. At the TLL correspondence archive in Munich filed in Binder 1934 II under the letter H. The letter is written in pencil on a postcard, postmarked Cambridge, 6 pm, 18 Feb. 1935. It is addressed in pen to Thesaurus Linguae Latinae, Maximilianeum, München 8, Germany.

22. "I offer my sincere thanks to those who kindly and generously bestowed this gift upon me, and I congratulate the editors as well, who have usefully re-issued the choicer publications of Wölfflin, an exceptional man, and grouped them together between two covers."

23. Three letters from Heraeus survive in Trinity College, Cambridge, with adv. C 20.14, adv. C 20.30 and adv. C 20.31.

24. The letters to Fraenkel (Burnett (2007), vol. 1, 627-8, vol. 2, 447-8) are long after the period of his activity at the TLL.

25. *CP* 771.

26. At least 34 times! Naiditch (2005), 181.

27. Naiditch (2005), 178.

28. Naiditch (2005), 130. Cf. too e.g. Burnett (2007), vol. 1, 113 on the Statius edition.

29 A sample of these comments can predictably be found in Housman's article on 'The *Siluae* of Statius' (*CP* 637-55), but cf. too e.g. MANIL. 1, xlviii and 1, 233, where criticism of Vollmer is paired with criticism of the Thesaurus.

30. *CP* 771.

31. *CP* 771.

32. *CP* 1170.

33. Burnett (2007), vol. 1, 226. See too pp. 231, 235.

34. F. Vollmer, *Poetae Latini Minores* (Leipzig, 1909), vol. 1, 5 "mihi descripsit (*sc.* codicem Harleianum) A.E. Housman." Cf. Naiditch (1988), 138 (where "Vollmer thanked him" is perhaps not quite accurate).

35. *CP* 817-39 (from 1910), 887-902 (from 1914). The offprints are now to be found at the TLL library in Munich, each inscribed "with the writer's compliments".

Beneath this inscription to the 'Greek Nouns in Latin Poetry' article is written "Fr. Vollmer" in another hand; as a result I find it highly likely that both offprints were originally sent to Vollmer and subsequently given to the TLL. It is however perhaps just possible that Housman was already sending material directly to the TLL itself.

36. TCC with adv. c 20. 40 (26 July 1920).

37. Although he officially stepped down as *Generalredaktor* in 1905, he continued to act as a *Fahnenleser* and served from 1908 as the president of the *Komission der Träger-Akademien.* With the outbreak of World War I he returned to active service writing articles right up until his death in 1923. The most thorough biography of Vollmer is the obituary in Bursian's *Jahresbericht*: B. Rubenbauer, 'Friedrich Vollmer', *Biographisches Jahrbuch für Altertumskunde* 202 (1924) 68-103; for his activity at the TLL see especially pp. 79-83. For slightly less hagiographic comments on Vollmer see D. Krömer and M. Flieger (edd.), *Thesaurus-Geschichten: Beiträge zu einer Historia Thesauri linguae Latinae von Theodor Bögel* (Stuttgart-Leipzig, 1996) Namensregister *sub nomine*. (Vollmer indeed expressly mentions his "Sorge für den Thesaurus" to Housman in his letter of 1920; see n. 36 above.)

38. Alsop's infamous description of Richard Bentley in the first sentence of the preface to his edition of Aesop (Oxford, 1698), n.p.; quoted more accessibly by e.g. J.H. Monk, *Life of Richard Bentley* (London, 1833, 2nd ed.), vol. 1, 96. It need hardly be said that in the case of both Bentley and Housman this description omits much more than it includes.

39. P.G. Naiditch *per litteras* 9 August 2010.

40. Cf. Gow (1936), 28.

41. P.G. Naiditch *per litteras* 9 August 2010.

42. See n. 37 above.

43. On the use of "partitive *ab*" (p. 572). Note that this publication would be of particular interest to Housman because of its discussion of *ab* at MANIL. 1, 589 (a passage not cited in the Thesaurus article).

44. See n. 9 above.

45. It could offer cases, for example, where he has drawn constructive parallels or explanations from the Thesaurus without any special fanfare.

46. Addenda to MANIL. 1, xxii ll. 27 sqq.

47. *CP* 531.

48. In this connection it should be observed that the leading English-language Latin lexicon of the day, *Lewis and Short*, is rarely mentioned, although it was well known to have numerous problems. It perhaps did not lay claim to sufficient

scholarly ambition to engage Housman's serious attention.

49. See nn. 10, 11, and 12 above.

50. Words spoken in his 1892 introductory lecture at University College London; see the Cambridge edition (1937), 35.

51. On Housman and German scholarship see Gow (1936), 29-30, where Housman's letter to Phillimore (Burnett (2007) vol. 1, 422) is rightly quoted. The evidence is easily multiplied.

52. D.R. Shackleton Bailey, 'A. E. Housman as a Classical Scholar', in his *Selected Classical Papers* (Ann Arbor, 1997), 320.

53. *CP* 1272.

54. Cf. the comparable case of Housman's remarks on "method" throughout his writings.

55. W.M. Lindsay, 'Ancient Notae' and Latin Texts', *Classical Quarterly* 11 (1917), 41.

56. *CP* 954. With his typical rhetorical pique Housman adds "much less by such a dictionary as this".

‘My father’s family was Lancashire’

The Housmans of Lune Bank in the nineteenth century

by

Clive Jenkins

Part I

The core source for the ‘continuing’ Lancaster Housmans is the *Housman History* compiled by one of the last of them, William Bradshaw Housman (1879–1955). Its first part gives the family background and, as soon as sources permit, a detailed genealogy from 1500 to the date of printing (1913); the second a series of picturesque anecdotes about eighteenth/nineteenth-century Housmans and their connections; the third family disasters.

As the *History* has only indirect background relevance for the ‘Bromsgrovians’, it usually gets short shrift: Professor Page does not mention the Lancastrian background at all.[1] Mr Graves very summarily establishes it with a reference to the Revd Robert Housman (1759–1838), great-grandfather of the poet, drawn from the biography of him by his nephew/son-in-law Robert Fletcher Housman, ignoring the *History*.[2] Mr Watson (Chapter 1, pp. 17–27) uses both sources for a comparatively extended, readable, and usually accurate sketch of Lancaster and Lune Bank.[3] Nevertheless, he too soon leaves the Revd Robert behind in the north, dismissing the continuing Lune Bank Housmans in an aside whose glaring inaccuracy testifies to his not even having glanced at them;[4] and follows Robert’s son Thomas (1795–1870) south to the familiar territory of Worcestershire. Mr Graves adds Thomas’s brother William (1793–?). With both writers, the Lancastrians abruptly give way to Worcestrians: Brettells, Holdens, Vernons to a lesser extent, with (great)-uncle John Adams as the pivot between Lancaster, Leicester, and Bromsgrove. And Perry Hall and the Clock House occlude Lune Bank. This neglect is understandable: the focus is on A.E.H. (himself dismissive of his Lancashire origins, although his sister Kate was not), so they seem essentially irrelevant.

Mr Pugh, given his title *Bromsgrove and the Housmans*, should have done likewise; but, fortunately for the present purpose, his sense of relevance is defective. Hence many readers of this article will have encountered the *History*, otherwise virtually inaccessible, through him: he incorporates it wholesale, draws also on the *Life* of the Revd Robert, and on papers then – perhaps still – in the

possession of the Symons family.[5] So *Bromsgrove and the Housmans* gives paradoxically the fullest accessible information hitherto on Lancaster and the Housmans, and I am very much indebted to it. Unfortunately Mr Pugh's sense of structure is also defective: his Chapter 2, 'The Earliest Housmans' (pp. 12–27), does not deal with them, purveying instead information on eighteenth and nineteenth century individuals. His Chapter 3 (pp. 28–33) follows the Revd Robert's untrustworthy son, William, down south in the 1810s; Chapter 4 (pp. 34–58), mistitled 'Robert – The Young Enigma', reverts back to Lancashire, and by implication to around 1780, to the troubled youth of William's father, Robert. But it starts with the sixteenth-century Housmans (at last), who should have got an honourable mention in Chapter 2, and from p. 46 leaves behind Revd Robert, young or old, in favour of his children, grandchildren, and *their* collaterals, and ends with the death of Robert's nephew/son-in-law/hagiographer Robert Fletcher Housman in 1872. This is about eighty years since Robert had been young, enigma or otherwise, and thirty-four years after his own death. Chapter 5, entitled 'Robert in All His Glory' (pp. 59–77) in the main does what it says on the label and deals with the ministry of the Revd Robert, distilling the *Life*; but it is odd to find this after the section about the biographer's death. In this chapter the marriages of Robert's children are listed on p. 75, although given Mr Pugh's general arrangements one would expect to find them in Chapter 4. But the crucial marriage of daughter Agnes to her first cousin, Robert Fletcher Housman, the heir of Lune Bank, is omitted from this round-up.

This is compounded by Mr Pugh's book lacking both index and footnotes, doubtless precluded by cost. But the lack sometimes makes the source of his statements unclear: indeed whether they are firmly source-based at all or are speculative. The book repays the effort of tackling it, but an effort is necessary, and I hope my guide will help.

My own purpose is to provide more coherent notices on the Lune Bank Housmans. But, although I am indebted to Mr Pugh, I have not simply plagiarized his work under the pretext of tidying up. I have gone back to the *Life* and the *History*, added further sources, extended, and given my own interpretation and selection. And 'selection' is right: an array of sources for these Lancastrians, notably their own writings, I have been forced to leave unexplored, making this article, alongside Mr Pugh's contribution, simply a ground-breaker.

The Background

From 1618 to 1898 the Housmans lived in a 'picturesque house' at Skerton, just

outside Lancaster, which was originally called, perhaps punningly, Housman House, and renamed Lune Bank in the early eighteenth century.[6] Towards 1800 one of the first literary Housmans describes a setting largely unchanged for centuries:

> … falling into the vale of Lune, and passing through Horton and Skerton, to Lancaster. The latter part of this ride is very fine, leading us through a pleasant country, and having an elevated ridge of hills rising from the opposite wooded banks of the Lune. The grounds about the neat village of Horton, and from thence to Lancaster, are fertile and beautiful; and between these villages we cross the canal at the end of a noble aqueduct, which here stretches across the river Lune in five arches.
>
> SKERTON consists of one long narrow street of neat, well-built houses, extending along the northern banks of the river to the new bridge. Opposite the higher end there is a considerable salmon fishery, belonging to the Earl of LONDSDALE.[7]

So a very attractive and fertile valley whose river teamed with fish, wooded hills rising above; yet within such an easy walk of the town and its amenities that no separate church was thought necessary for Skerton until the early nineteenth century.[8] It was in the parish of St Mary's, Lancaster where generations of Housmans, and presumably their neighbours, had to 'process'.[9] More earthily, sometimes perishable or breakable farm produce, and beer could quickly be conveyed for sale: easy also to bring home urban, perhaps given the port exotically foreign, goods bought with the profits. The town, however, was too small to engulf this rural periphery: even in 1800 it numbered 10,000 at most.[10] Hence, for the last, gentrified, generations of Housmans, Lune Bank would have served as a delightful, very conveniently situated, rural retreat.

The seventeenth-century Housmans, however, were yeomen, an appellation much romanticised through the ages, not least by the poet of the family, but which properly, if broadly, denoted prosperous farmers. As the rural middle class in what was up to the nineteenth century an overwhelmingly rural society, they were at the heart of most aspects of provincial life. The term was loosely extended to those in other businesses of equivalent standing, like brewing.[11] The three successive eighteenth-century heads of the Housman family were brewers/maltsters (although, like most people, they probably continued with some farming as well). This was a good trade to be in: practically everybody felt it not only a pleasure, but a duty, to drink beer, as water was often polluted, and tea, coffee, and chocolate were luxuries. Complementarily, transport difficulties impeded the concentration of brewing in conglomerates in 'Burton built on Trent' or elsewhere. Beer had to be produced on the spot by businesses which, though

ipso facto smallish, could count on practically all the locals as customers.

This prosperity is documented for Robert, the last eighteenth-century head of the Housmans (late 1720s–1800). His sister, Mary, married well: to John Preston, a possible 'gentleman', and his three brothers appear prosperous too. John (died 1793) was an alderman, then mayor of Lancaster in 1787, and a West India merchant. The second, Thomas, 'commanded a ship which sailed to the West Indies in 1755 from Lancaster'. The third, Miles, was a mercer, and was afterwards in the Lancaster Customs, whether this post signals failure in the private enterprise or simply rampant eighteenth-century pluralism. On balance, however, these Housman brothers had not only diversified in enterprise, but diversified in two cases across the ocean. If not quite gentry themselves, like their brother-in-law was alleged to be, they seem solidly prosperous business middle class.

Robert and his wife Agnes (née Gunson) both died in 1800, which, though sad in itself, at least clarifies the chronology. Their children were Robert, John, William, Alice, and Mary, the latter two known as 'The Stars of the North'.[12]

The Children of Robert the Brewer

A. William Housman (1767/68–1839)[13]

William has been set up facilely as a worldly contrast to his overpoweringly devout eldest brother, Robert.[14] Although not a 'great' man, he merits some attention in his own right, out of Robert's shadow. For one thing, he is the first of the three nineteenth-century male heads of household at Lune Bank. However, he enters the *History* as a romantic adolescent of 'about 15' in 1782–4. He took to sloping off from the stately, father-led family processions of a Sunday to the Church of St Mary in Lancaster for nothing naughtier than attendance at neighbouring Halton Church, where his 13-year-old sweetheart, Sarah Fletcher, was to be found among *her* father's congregation. Robert ordered him to desist and to rejoin the family devotions at St Mary's; William stubbornly refused, declaring that he would rather go to sea than submit to this paternal 'tyranny'. Father Robert challenged him on this at four the following morning, and although William had not been entirely in earnest, his pride would not let him retract. And off to sea, from the Lancaster docks, on a West Indiaman, his father immediately despatched him. William prospered over the next fifteen years in Dominica. Initially securing a niche in a trading house, he became a flourishing merchant with two partners, returning occasionally to see his parents, although relations with his

father remained edgy. On the death of both parents in 1800, William returned permanently and took over Lune Bank, leaving his partners to run the West Indian side of things. Hearing from a barber, a calling with members as garrulous then as now, that Miss Fletcher of Halton Hall was still unmarried, he rushed off and resumed his courtship successfully: a happy marriage ever after.[15]

This tale does not ring too true. Solid Robert Housman's objection to his devout eldest son and namesake's clerical vocation was purportedly grounded on many clergy not piling up sufficient treasure on earth.[16] In his own 'realistic' hard-bitten way, he was a concerned father. Thus he seems unlikely to have thrown out his youngest son to be 'bound as a common sailor' who 'had to work his passage out to the West Indies'. This was close to constructive manslaughter: William, a gently reared teenager, could simply have perished in short order in an alien environment through direct murder, manslaughter, accident, disease, or starvation. If he avoided death, ill-treatment, degradation, and a life of near destitution could have been his lot. From 'common sailor' lad to prosperous merchant was the reverse of a foregone conclusion.

And all this was because of calf-love for girl who, equally from Robert's material and religious standpoints, seems the reverse of unsuitable (as indeed it was eventually proved). *Her* father was a cleric who *had* united God and Mammon: well beneficed thanks to his wealthy childless uncle-in-law, William Bradshaw, with whom the Fletcher family lived in Halton Hall and who had adopted Sarah's brother as his heir.[17] Indeed the Fletchers could have considered the Housmans a cut below them; but Robert would hardly have exiled his son beyond the ocean because of that.

These two sons of Robert were both self-willed, as was their father. But, if Robert junior was too introverted and unworldly for his father's taste, William comes across as worldly and robust, not unsuited to the High Seas, exotic hot climes, and making money. There may well have been clashes between father and son, but these are likely to have been compounded with the ongoing question of what to do with the boy, rather than precipitating a knee-jerk, potentially lethal, 'answer' to it on the spur of an angry moment. The family involvement in Lancaster's flourishing West Indian trade dated from 1755 at the latest, with William's Uncle Thomas, and Uncle John was certainly a flourishing 'West Indian', still flourishing at the time his nephew was sent out in his wake. Inferentially, just as Robert had thought it best to apprentice Robert junior to a surgeon, there was already a plan afoot to apprentice William to his uncle (or uncles) or to one of their connections. He may indeed have worked his passage out, but he would also have been kept an eye on; and once disembarked, slotted into a merchant house as pre-arranged.

The quarrel over William's defection to Halton and to Sarah may have precipitated the decision on this plan rather than precipitating the plan itself. Could one just throw someone on a ship with no notice, even in the 1780s? Both highly respectable families might have feared that the romance would bear highly premature fruits. The freedom which certain children of the broad elite enjoyed in the eighteenth century and into the early nineteenth (especially the boys) is eerily reminiscent of the present day rather than of the regimentation to which they were subjected in the later nineteenth century, which persisted in boarding schools well into the 1960s.[18] And William was turning into a stroppy teenager threatening to convert freedom into licence.

William succeeded his parents at Lune Bank. This might imply some parental or at least paternal doubts about the Revd Robert, the eldest son and back in Lancaster since 1795, and of the middle son, John, who presumably was based in Lancaster all the time. However, this is not so likely as Robert had recently (1799) bought land and built a house, 'Acrelands', near and perhaps to keep an eye on his ailing parents. William's grandson, also William, stated around 1890 that the earlier William had come 'into possession of the family property *by purchase*'.[19] This seems a rather odd way to acquire your parents' house, and it implies that William simply bought out his siblings, or at least his brothers. Robert might have needed the cash and John was a bachelor in poor health who, if ensconced elsewhere, might not have wanted to move, especially to such a large family property. Alternately, John as a bachelor with all his siblings gone from 1785 may simply have lived in Lune Bank all along. In which case William could have moved back in with him and taken over when he died in 1802.In the early 1800s William sold a house in Great Queen Street, Lancaster which boasted a stable and coach house among other amenities: this could have been part of his father's or of John's estate, or he could have bought it himself before his parents' death: there are several permutations.[20] In any case Lune Bank was not the centre of a gentry style estate to kill for; but most likely simply a pleasant house with a few acres attached,– Robert had a brand new one – and the former headquarters of a now defunct brewing business. There is no evidence that William carried on the brewery.

So William was now both prosperous and rerooted in the old family home. Nevertheless he did not marry Sarah until 1804, although she was by then in her early thirties: the precious child-bearing years slipping by. This indicates cool calculation, negotiation, foot-dragging, at least on one side, rather than the white-hot rekindling of an alleged teenage romance over

fifteen years past. The attitude of the *teenage* Sarah to her suitor is

unclear anyway.

William settled down at Lune Bank broadly in the mode of his father, but an international, indeed transoceanic, not a mere local businessman; so closer to Uncle John, his likely mentor. He remained active in the business for years: 'William Housman Esquire, a West India merchant who traded to this port [of Lancaster] sixty years ago', as his son's obituary put it in 1872.[21]

A merchant ship he owned (whether solely or jointly), *The Thetis*, came off best in an encounter with a French man-of-war in Napoleonic times. Called upon to surrender, her courageous captain turned the tables, captured the French ship, and towed her up the River Lune past cheering crowds. William, of course, heartily approved, and had a drinking glass made in commemoration.[22] He had himself seen military service in West Indies, receiving 'an inscribed presentation sword' in 1797 when Captain in St George's Regiment in Dominica.[23] Whether this service was active against the French Antilles, the *History* does not record. More clearly inactive was his service once back home, for which the Caribbean militarism put him in good stead. William was a Major in the Lancaster Volunteers by September 1804, promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel of the Lonsdale Regiment of local militia in 1809.[24] These outfits were forerunners of the Home Guard, and likewise faded out with the end of hostilities.[25]

William's concurrent civic and judicial services continued. He was elected 'Bailiff of the Commons' of Lancaster as early as October 1801, an annual office, and 'Bailiff of the Brethren' in 1805, and then Alderman with two other 'esquires' in 1809, again following Uncle John.[26] At some point he became a magistrate to boot, presiding in that capacity over the conviction of one William Stevenson for robbing a garden at Skerton (1827) and over a special session for Overseers of the Poor held at Lancaster Castle in March 1832. In the wake of the General Election of 1818, public activity and conviviality blended when the Friends of Lancaster's sitting members, General Doverton and John Gladstone, Esquire (father of *the* Gladstone) gave 'an excellent dinner' in their honour at the Assembly Rooms. William, as Vice-President, returned thanks for one of the myriad speeches. 'Many toasts' were drunk 'amid bursts of applause', which probably grew louder with each toast.[27]

This glimpse of leisured elitist heartiness is broadened by the regular grant of a game licence to William, along with the local gentry and indeed the Duke of Buccleuch: not cheap at £3 13*s.* 6*d.* (about £730 today).[28] The hobby gave rise to the story of William and his devout brother Robert bumping into each other on a Sunday morning on Skerton Bridge, and Robert sighing, 'You are

going the wrong way, William', as the latter headed for some shooting on the moors while Robert went to his chapel on Moor Lane. William, remarks William Bradshaw Housman, great-grandson of both, somewhat redundantly,[29] 'seems to have been more inclined to indulge in gay and worldly pursuits' than his devout clerical brother. But that describes most people then and now: few can or could match the Revd Robert's intensity of devotion, or would want to. William, however, would have to have been conventionally religious, indeed a conforming Anglican, and respectable to have held his cluster of public offices and commissions – and there is no evidence to the contrary, indeed in 1833 he helped found and fund the new Church of St Luke at Skerton. He was one of the original four trustees who together contributed £1,000 for an endowment.[30] By the time of his death in 1840, he was up to his neck in close clerical connections,[31] and his own son and heir, Robert Fletcher, exerted himself to emulate his uncle in active devotion: and William does not seem to have stood in his son's way.[32]

But what Robert Fletcher does not record in his life of Uncle Robert is any touch of such exceptional active fervour in his father, William. The *History* and the *Lancaster Gazetteer* are equally silent here. Hence William comes across as, within the constraints of decency and convention, largely secular in his interests and activities. This picture is of course coloured by his worldly wealth, both absolute and relative to the income of his brother Robert, who was pinched for most of his life. By 1804 three sources had converged for William: the money he himself had made in business, the parental property itself, and his wife's dowry. His fortune, however, cannot be adequately quantified. In 1806 he let 'two very fertile and desirable closes of land' measuring over twelve acres altogether in Scotforth on the turnpike road; but this quantity is small: one field's worth. More substantially, near the end of his life (April 1838), he was among the principal landowners of Heysham who convened a meeting to appoint valuers 'to apportion the sum to be paid by way of rent charges instead of tithes' there.[33] William then may have converted a substantial slice of his fortune into land in the time-honoured fashion. His son, Robert Fletcher, would have to have acquired the land from somewhere for his own, ultimately ill-starred, foray into pedigree cattle farming in the 1850s and 1860s. But whether William preceded him as a gentleman farmer rather than simply as landowner I have not discovered.

That William had his own carriage is revealed by the fatal accident of 1817: there was a carriage crash as his was turning into the Lune Bank lane. Mrs Sarah Housman slid out unscathed; but her maid was thrown out by the impact and killed (William himself was not on board).[34]

William's will of 24 October 1837 provides the most detailed indication of

the extent of his worldly wealth. There are the usual careful provisions: a life interest for his wife Sarah, then his son Robert Fletcher was instituted as heir to Lune Bank, with the daughters substituted if Robert's line failed. Besides the property itself 'and several closes of land adjoining' (which does not sound like a large acreage), William anticipates that the rest of his real and personal estate will realize £5,000 (around £1 million pounds today). The interest on this after Sarah's death was to be apportioned between his two daughters for their 'separate use', exclusive of any present or future husband. The Married Women's Property Act lay over forty years in the future, so fond and concerned fathers had to stipulate such explicit provisions.[35] Sarah Agnes was already married to the Revd Charles Rowland Dickon, 'Chaplain of the Charterhouse, afterward rector of Balsham-Cam';[36] and £1,000 (about £200,000 today) had already been advanced to Dickon as part of his bride's dowry/portion. Shortly after William's death Frances (born 1815) married Joseph Whalley, a barrister and a friend and neighbour at Skerton.[37] Her attractions were hardly diminished by her substantial portion and other inheritance.

Mutatis mutandis, William appears to be a type still prominent today: a businessman whose success enables him to afford time for public service, active support and finance for the Tories, expensive hobbies and means of transport: one who has made his pile and intends to use some of it to enjoy life; but temperately, no question of dissipating it. With him the Lune Bank line tips over clearly into the gentry: his father Robert the brewer, however 'stately', had been border-line there. Nowadays, the offices of local councillor especially, and to a lesser extent of JP are often held by people of a modest situation. Not so in William's day: they went with considerable socio-economic standing and the lifestyle associated with them was proverbial. In 1814 an English lady touring the Alps enthusiastically acclaimed what she thought were the chicken fritters with which she was regaled at Simplon as 'delicate and tempting' enough to 'have graced the table of an Alderman' (until she discovered that they were in fact frogs' legs).[38] The nineteenth century got off to a start of the greatest family prosperity yet with William. Unfortunately a sharp decline set in less than thirty years after his death.

B. John Housman (1766–1802)

John is in the *History* rather vaguely termed a merchant.[39] His firm was Housman & Mashiter, with an establishment on the quay at Lancaster.[40] He collapsed and died of a heart attack in Market Street at the age of 36. His health, obviously delicate, could have been undermined by his exertions in producing his recently

published work, which has ensured that he, if far from immortalised, is at least remembered: *A Descriptive Tour of the English Lakes* is the short title of the book, which is 564 pages long. In its length as in content, the work seems typical of the many such *Descriptions* appearing at the time. 'Some of the Descriptions are truly awful' is William Bradshaw Housman's ambiguous comment on his great-great-uncle's depictions of natural scenery. Mr Pugh seems to assume that this is a criticism; but William, writing in 1913, may have been using the adjective in its old sense of awe-inspiring.[41] The book is of its time: it would not have been written a hundred years previously. It reflects the passion for 'aweful' or awe-inspiring natural scenery which characterised the Romantic Revival. John was very close in age to his fellow lover of the Lakeland, Wordsworth. For 'truly awful descriptions' that of Skiddaw (pp. 293–7) could be sampled: necessarily at full length to convey the flavour.

The book, however, is not simply about natural and virtually unpopulated vistas: it is thorough and comprehensive, and there is much in it about human activities of all sorts: the growing industries and towns, canals, manners and customs, leisure activities, and farming. Thus it seems and probably has been a markedly useful historical source.[42] In Westmoreland, for example, he describes a fair and the diversions of the country people after the serious business was over: dancing and drinking, of course. It all seems remarkably like the fictionalised fair at the other end of the country about thirty years later where Henchard sold his wife.[43]

Literally down to earth from the awe-inspiring, the agriculture of Lancashire is fully surveyed. It has been to a degree adversely affected by the growth of industry; but on the other hand this has stimulated milk production for the growing centres of Manchester and Liverpool: an early example of this activity which has remained important until the present day. Lancashire is ahead in its breeding of Longhorn cattle, and potatoes are more thoroughly cultivated here than elsewhere. The farmers are extremely skilled at turning peat bog into fertile land. He takes most of this impressive overview (pp. 144-156), however, from a certain Mr Holt's agricultural survey; likewise he lifts most of the extended description of the fashionably Gothic ruin of Furness Abbey from Mrs Radcliffe (pp. 368–777), and she is followed by Mr West on the Priory of Conishead (pp. 377–9). 'The elegant pen of Mr Gilpin' is borrowed to describe the country around Keswick (pp. 278–82): the *Cumberland Pacquet*, a weekly newspaper published at Whithaven, provides an article from 1782 which describes a *regatta* on Lake Derwent (pp. 282–4). Then a Mr Hutchinson takes over (his *History of Cumberland*) to describe the long departed, reclusive St Herbert, who features in Bede, and his island (pp. 285–7). Then Mr Gilpin's pen is borrowed again

(pp. 287–8), to be immediately succeeded by Mr Pennant's 'awesome' description of Derwentwater (pp. 288–9). The 'jocular' author of *A Fortnight's Ramble to the Lakes* is empanelled to describe Helvellin (pp. 333–4). So John Housman was in large part producing a compendium, which explains why his book was so impressively long.

John was not the first Housman known to have published something; that was his brother Robert with his controversial *A Sermon Preached at Lancaster* in 1786; but he was the first to publish a substantial book: and Robert's subsequent publications were collections of sermons rather than books proper. John's prose is clear, workmanlike, and readable by the standards of the day, and it went into eight editions before being overtaken.[44] It would have involved a vast amount of travelling in the days when there was only horse and water transport, even though he incorporated so many other descriptive writers. Perhaps, however, at least some of the 'descriptions' were the by-products of business trips. It is only fair, and relevant, to finish by taking a leaf, literally and figuratively, out of John's book and let him describe his home town in 1800: the year when brother William returned for good, brother Robert was just five years into his long ministry there, and John himself was about to publish his work, but had not long to live:

> LANCASTER stands on the south bank of Lune, on an easy rising ground. Several of the streets are rather narrow; but the buildings are good, being chiefly formed of freestone, and covered with blue slate. In many parts of the town the shops display an elegance not often met with in northern towns of equal magnitude; and here are likewise several excellent houses inhabited by gentlemen of independent fortunes. Buildings and inhabitants are increasing, but not with that rapidity which distinguishes many of the manufacturing towns in the more southern parts of this county. The most moderate calculation makes the present population of Lancaster 8,000 souls; but it is the opinion of some, that there are not less than 10,000, the number having augmented greatly since the cutting of the new canal. The occupations of the inhabitants are extremely various, as no great staple manufacture is carried on. There are, however, considerable quantities of sailcloth made; and also a great deal of cabinet work and upholstery for the cabinet-makers in London. A few hands are employed in printing cotton. Ship-building is carried on to a considerable extent, and vessels of large burden have been sent from hence. That very respectable gentleman and noted ship-builder, MR BROCKBANK, has built vessels in his ship-yard here for London, of 450 tons.
>
> Lancaster is also of some consequence as a port for shipping; but, unfortunately, the shoals of the river not yet being deepened, large ships are under the necessity of stopping at a place five or six miles below, and

of sending up their cargoes in small vessels. – A prosperous trade is carried on from hence to the West Indies, the Baltic, and other parts. – This town being on the confines of the cheese country, is the principal market for that article. A great fair for the sale of Lancashire cheese is held here in October.

Lancaster, also being the county town, where the assizes are held and other public business transacted for this populous county, is thereby rendered still more important. It is likewise a great thoroughfare, one of the principal north roads leading through it.– An old narrow bridge, in a bad situation, long continued to connect the banks of the Lune opposite Lancaster; but a new one, on a very elegant and liberal plan, at the expense of the county, amounting to 14,000*l*. has lately been erected further up the river, at Skerton, and which is much better adapted for an entrance into Lancaster. It consists of five equal elliptical arches; is 549 feet long; and is said to be one of the handsomest bridges of its size in Europe. Along the riverside there is a fine quay and good warehouses adjoining. – The church and castle stand together, on an eminence at the west end of the town, and are conspicuous objects from every side. The former is a handsome Gothic structure; and the latter, which is the county jail and also the hall where the assizes are held, and other public business transacted, is likewise a fine building. It is now undergoing great improvements under the direction of Mr Harrison, which will render it one of the completest places for the purpose in the kingdom. – Here is likewise a chapel of the establishment, with an elegant steeple. A turret being also placed upon the new exchange, or town-hall, the town altogether has a noble and striking appearance at a distance. The new canal winds round a part of this town; and, when finished, will add much to its trade and convenience.[45]

C. The Revd Robert Housman (1759–1838)

Robert alone of the three brothers gained an uncrumbling if narrow niche of national renown: William was a worthy whose significance hardly outlasted him; John's bulky, if somewhat plagiarised, travelogue was overtaken; and I have discovered scant other evidence about him. However, if Robert's descendants had made no mark, literary or otherwise, Robert would still have his mezzotint stored, though not displayed, in the National Portrait Gallery,[46] represent the family in the *Oxford Dictionary for National Biography*, and be written up briefly by Watson and copiously by Pugh.[47] And these (fairly) recent accounts are, naturally, based on the large and at the time celebrated biography published just after Robert's death by his hero-worshipping nephew/son-in-law Robert Fletcher

Housman and on the brief notice in the *History*. There are also Robert's own published sermons.[48] With all this, a brief reminder of the outlines of Robert's life will serve. Robert Housman senior, distrusting his son's growing religiosity, had him apprenticed to his friend, the local surgeon, which young Robert hated, although he retained much useful medical knowledge throughout his life. Eventually he prevailed upon his father, helped by his sister Mary's intercession, to let him go to Cambridge, a natural prelude to ordination. There he became firmly of the evangelical wing of the church. When he graduated in 1784 he had already forfeited the prospect of a fellowship at his college, St John's, through 'his strong views on certain doctrinal points', expressed in a sermon in Holy Trinity Church, Cambridge. His first brief curacy in 1785 was in his native Lancaster, and about this time he married Miss Sarah Audley from near Cambridge: she died at the end of 1785, possibly following the birth of their only child, Robert Audley Housman. He also raised a storm in Lancaster: hence he moved and spent most of the next decade ministering in and around Leicester. There he met his second wife, Miss Jane Adams, without whom there would have been no A.E.H. or Bromsgrove Housmans at all.

In 1795, however, Robert settled permanently back in Lancaster and obtained the Episcopal permission and the funding (the great Wilberforce himself subscribed £20) (*Life*, xci) to found a new church, St Anne's, where he ministered until 1836.[49] He had to overcome considerable initial local opposition to his fervent evangelicalism, both from those who like Lord Melbourne thought it intolerable that religion should interfere with private life, and from conservative fellow Anglicans to whom his stance was barely distinguishable from 'Dissent'. But eventually he became influential and esteemed: 'the Evangelist of Lancaster'.[50] A brief example of how and why Robert was such a 'divisive' figure who polarised contemporary tensions within the Church is a key to some understanding of the man and his situation.[51]

That Robert was spitefully reviled, at times in public, to his face as unorthodox and officious on his *return* to Lancaster in 1795 is a well-worn tale. But suspicions about his Anglican orthodoxy started up during his first ministry there as early as the spring of 1785, when he and his short-lived first wife took to holding evening prayer and study meetings 'for six to eight young men belonging to the humble classes. Such meetings had hitherto been restricted to *Dissenters*.' Hence 'they soon attracted the attention and incurred the reproaches of the orthodox as *innovations* swelling from below' (*Life* xxvi). It could not have helped that young Mrs Housman 'was of a … family of Independent Dissenters', although 'highly respectable' (*Ibid.*, xxiii). This was increasingly common practice among the Evangelicals, and they, including, of course, Robert and Sarah Housman, all

claimed to be loyal Anglicans. So at that stage did avowed Methodists. Such unauthorized prayer, however, outside the regular time-honoured services, seems at least an oblique challenge to the authority of the church and by extension to that of the lay establishment. Educating the working man could seem a path to *political* radicalism to boot.

Any such perception of the Revd Robert, however, was mistaken. Although it is hard to envisage him as the life and soul of bibulous post-election celebrations, his 'general politics were those of the Pitt school' (*Life*, cccxi), just like his brother William's. 'Mr Pitt's party', 'the Second Tory Party', has a reactionary, indeed repressive allure, grounded on such excesses as the Peterloo Massacre (1819) in Lancashire itself. In fact, it was a 'big-tent' coalition of the *bien pensant* which was in power practically the whole time from 1784 until its internal tensions got too much for it in 1829/30, long outlasting the death of its founder in 1806. William Wilberforce himself represents the blend of progressivism and reaction found among the many evangelical supporters of the regime, and he was a leading political figure who helped anchor them to it. He combined his famous drive against slavery and for a 'general reformation' of manners with a less famous support for certain repressive measures against working-class radicalism in the interests of stability. Robert essentially agreed with Wilberforce, his correspondent, erstwhile financial backer, and fellow 'Johnian'[52] on the first two points – he was very anti-slavery – and he also valued stability. Indeed Evangelicals and Methodists have been accused of actually *discouraging* working-class radicalism by stressing the need for 'resignation' and deference.[53]

These incompatible assessments of the political spin-offs from the Evangelicals just illustrate that their political legacy was mixed and oblique. Robert and William, with their fellow magistrates, recorded their abhorrence of the recent attempt to assassinate the Prince Regent in 1817.[54] This does not cast Robert as a reactionary; but simply indicates that he was against the bloody revolutionary overthrow of the established order, and that he valued it for the stability that it embodied.

But so does Robert's commission as Justice of the Peace in itself – a far more wide-ranging and powerful office then than now. He held it, moreover, from 1802, probably years earlier than William. He had accepted the commission 'from an earnest desire to have access for purposes of spiritual instruction, exhortation and comfort to the cells of the prisoners in the county jail' (*Life*, cxviii). But, however high-mindedly, he thus cast himself as a major pillar of the local establishment alongside religiously temperate laymen of William's stamp. Also in 1802 John Dent MP donated the organ at St Anne's.[55] The previous year Robert

had been appointed to the committee to apply to Parliament for an act to divide and enclose the adjacent moors: decidedly secular and materialistic business.[56]

And all this just five or six years after Robert had been publicly reviled for his fervent 'religious radicalism', a prophet without honour in his own country. Hence this harrowing tableau oversimplifies: Robert obviously had a party of supporters in Lancaster from 1795, even 1794; otherwise he could have gained neither episcopal licence nor the financial backing to found his church. The licence made the Bishop of Chester himself a supporter, and so was the Vicar of Lancaster.[57] Then the appointments and donation of 1801/2 show that Robert was soon, at least partially, reabsorbed into the local conservative establishment from whence he sprang. Against Robert's local enemies must be set influential supporters, who even if they found him strong drink undiluted, could appreciate his virtues of sincerity and integrity. Many could have valued his crusade to regenerate the masses as a civilizing, therefore pacifying, influence upon them. This was a time when considerable number of newcomers were moving into Lancaster, uprooted and, therefore, unchurched.[58]

Robert's own material circumstances were for long easily eclipsed by those of William, which fortifies the impression of unworldliness and asceticism: even by legerdemain of 'radicalism'. It is true that, as his father had feared, Robert took a financial downer by becoming a clergyman, and he was the incarnation of the sort who placed his own convictions before the career-facilitating orthodoxy of the day, and there were periods of financial constraint: in 1818 Robert was forced to sell 'Acrelands', the house he had built for himself and his family in 1799. 'For many of the last years of his life his entire income from every available source did not reach £200 p.a.', and after retirement in 1836, 'it barely amounted, including the congregational benefaction, to £90 p.a.' (*Life*, clxiii–xiv). Broadly, £200 is £40,000 today: far from destitution, but far also from enough to maintain the gentry lifestyle maintained by brother William and family, while £90 a year equals a mere £18,000 today.

This, however, was in the *last* period of his life, when some of his children were, in theory at least, no longer dependent on him. His eldest daughter Jane had married as early as 1813.[59] Inferentially, his income may have been greater when his children were growing up. His retirement – the £90 p.a. period – was brief, a matter of months, and he spent the last five of them (he died on 22 April 1838) with daughter, Elizabeth and her husband, Richard Prichard, near Liverpool. It is unlikely that this prosperous couple charged him for his board.[60]

Far more strikingly, however, the juggling of £200 or £90 a year must have

been rendered irrelevant by a near-sensational event in 1819, when his second wife and his seven children by her were bequeathed by a distant connexion of the Adamses the vast sum of £59,000 (c.£11.8 million today) to be divided among them. This came to more than £7,000 (about £1.4 million today) each. Such a sum would have made the unworldly Revd Robert a beneficiary of his wife's wealth, even if he never officially possessed it himself.[61]

The eldest daughter, Jane, had married the Revd John Gathorne, the Curate of Lutterworth, Leicestershire, and later Vicar of Tarvin, Cheshire, well before, in 1813 at the latest: respectable enough. The great windfall, however, must have had a lot to do with four of the other children, two sons and two daughters, making 'good' marriages. William and Thomas, as is well known, married into the Worcestershire elite: the first married Mary Vernon the day before the benefactress's will was proved, so William was certain of receiving the £7,000; unfortunately for the calculations of all concerned, William's creditors had seized this vast sum by January 1821.[62] The far steadier Thomas, however, famously married Ann Brettell shortly afterwards. Elizabeth was matched (1834) with Richard Prichard, JP, DL, who was High Sheriff of Anglesey with an estate there at Dinham as well as a house near Liverpool. Around the same time, Robert's youngest child, Agnes, married her first cousin, Robert Fletcher Housman: this must have seemed a good idea materially on both sides at the time, as Robert was the heir to Lune Bank and to his father William's fortune in general.[63] So the ancient core family patrimony was not to bypass Robert's line entirely – or so it then seemed.

Nothing seems to be known of Hannah Roe, wife of the eldest son, John (1792–1875). John himself remained equally shadowy until Julian Hunt's recent article, which strongly indicates that he was virtually adopted by John Adams, his uncle and probable godfather, sent to Bromsgrove School, making him the uncelebrated first of Bromsgrovian Housmans, and then trained up by the elder John in his business. Unfortunately John Housman, like his brother William, was a serial bankrupt, and must, equally, soon have lost his £7,000.[64] Two other of Robert Housman's children – his eldest son, Robert Audley (born 1785), from his first marriage, and Mary (born 1800/1) – are well written up as dissolute, delinquent ne'er-do-wells. John and William were to join them with scandalous misfortunes of a commercial nature.

None the less, Robert and Jane could be very affectionate to their family. Visiting his eldest daughter Jane in August 1814 at Lutterworth (*Life*, xxviii), where she had just borne her first child (*Life*, cxxix), he wrote to son Thomas, asking him to convey his love to William and all at Lune Bank. These were relatively happy times for Robert and Jane: Tom was about to follow in his

father's footsteps and go to Cambridge and then into the church, and the delinquency of three of the delinquent quartet had not yet got under way: they were too young. His hostess, Jane junior, was a young wife and new mother.

Sadly Jane, 'admirable' and 'beloved', was to die long before her parents, in 1825. Her husband, by then Vicar of Tarvin, followed in 1831. John and William's first bankruptcies occurred in 1821, and in 1837, in their parents' last months, they both went bankrupt again. Mary was a sexually promiscuous 'adventuress', while Robert Audley disappeared from the family view and probably died a vagrant.[65]

In their last years, therefore, the aged couple leant on Elizabeth, Agnes, and Thomas, and invested their remaining hopes in Thomas, their favourite and youngest son. He, after all, was the sole one who was following in his father's footsteps, and both his parents had hopes (not entirely realized) that some deed of noble note might soon be done. His mother wrote a characteristically 'very spiritual [and exhortatory] letter' to Thomas in 1832, 'It would rejoice my heart to hear that the Lord is using you, my dear Tom, as an instrument for good in Kinfare [sic]' (*Life*, ccxxx). In the Revd Robert's last weeks at daughter Elizabeth's house, 'the Revd Thomas of Broomsgrove [sic]' was much on his mind and tongue. His father

> invariably spoke [of him] in language the most affectionate, saying 'I shall advise him to select for his first text in his new church [Thomas was currently Curate of St John's, Bromsgrove] the beautiful and cheering words of the Angel of the Lord to the shepherds at Bethlehem, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people".' (*Life*, ccclxviiii).

Both parents, therefore, expressed their love in perhaps relentless exhortations to strenuous spiritual exertion.

One can understand why the delinquent quartet *may* have deliberately reacted against all this high-mindedness. Thomas for his part, however, 'added greatly by his respectful attentions, to the comfort of his parents' declining years' (*Life*, ccclxviiii); so did Elizabeth and Agnes, as Robert gratefully acknowledged (*Life*, ccclxxii). When Elizabeth and her husband were looking after Robert in their Birkenhead home in his final days, Agnes, his youngest daughter, and her husband, Robert Fletcher, who had been his close neighbours until he left for Birkenhead, made a long visit there. Robert Fletcher adulated his uncle/father-in-law in any case, and within three years produced the biography which is the source of this section. Agnes affected her dying father greatly by

bringing him 'a parcel of white violets' from Lune Bank, his childhood home, where she herself now lived (*Life*, ccclxxvii). Robert spoke of his brother William with 'true affection', as of the rest of the Lune Bank household, just as he had in his letter home of 1814. Sons William and John are not mentioned in this final phase, but it is dangerous to assume that they were estranged from, or indifferent to, their parents. In 1837 they both lived, William especially, at a distance, and had troubles of their own.

One sad event just afterwards may be salient. On 10 April 1839 William Vernon Housman, son of William Housman Esq. of St John's Wood, London, died at the King's Arms, Lancaster.[66] A medical student of considerable promise at Edinburgh, he had been 'attacked by consumption' and was returning to London 'in the hope the change of air might be blessed to the restoration of his health': sadly it was not. This raises some questions. Why should a medical student who had *ipso facto* privileged access to the resources of one of the medical capitals of the advanced world leave that city? And why should he lodge in the inn when his close relations lived just two or three miles away at Lune Bank? The new chatelaine, Agnes, was his paternal aunt. He could have been too weak to travel the couple of miles, so had to be left at the staging-post inn; or else he collapsed after having been deposited there to wait for the onward coach.

But he was buried in St Luke's Church, Skerton. Hence this youth, born in London, now resident there again, was interred 'ancestrally' by the side of his paternal grandfather, the Revd Robert, and in the new church which his just-deceased great-uncle William had helped to found and fund a mere seven years before.[67] It was as if William junior had been brought up at Lune Bank. Hence if there was any coolness of the Lune Bank line towards William Vernon's father, it is unlikely to have extended to his children.

Conclusion

Mr Watson speculates that the John Housman who died in 1706 may have been virtually illiterate, although 'a brewer of substantial means' as he made an unwritten will.[68] There can be no such speculation about his great-grandson, the John Housman of the turn of the next century, as he published a substantial book; *a fortiori* about John's brother Robert and their first cousin Henry (usually known as Harry). They were both Cambridge graduates and clergymen. In terms of cultivation and the rising prosperity which enables it, the family were on the turn with the century: '… the Housmans [were] now rising above the mundane

struggle … their heyday of rustic simplicity and earthy enterprise would not recur'.[69]

Mr Watson is essentially correct, although he could be overdoing the 'rustic simplicity' of the earlier eighteenth century. The generations of Robert the Brewer and his sons seem to mark quite a transition.[70] Robert, obviously aspirant, was 'a man of stately deportment and most particular about the correctness of his dress'.[71] But the same might have applied to *his* father, also Robert the Brewer (1689–1756) for all we know, although he was styled 'yeoman', as well as 'esquire'. After all, that Robert placed a round stone with the date (1726) and his initials over the main door of Housman House, which he renamed Lune Bank.[72] Our perception could be distorted by the fuller evidence for the later eighteenth century; however, while Robert stuck to the established and local family business, his two brothers' involvement in Lancaster's growing West Indian trade was clearly new. They raised the family into direct transoceanic commerce: and this was to be continued, probably expanded, successfully by Robert's son, William.

Equally clearly the son Robert junior was the family's first documented clergyman and university graduate, soon to be followed by his short-lived cousin Harry (1767/8–1802), son of Miles the Mercer. Harry matriculated from Pembroke College, Cambridge in 1786,[73] became the incumbent of St Anne's Church, Liverpool, and seemingly predeceased his father.[74] There is no evidence that Robert directly inspired Harry, but at least his 'controversial' prayer meetings of 1785 did not put his young cousin off. The family's 'preponderance of clergymen', which characterized their nineteenth century, had been set in train.[75]

This rash of clerics, if one includes in-laws and a nephew, is a rough guide to the family's changing occupational character and milieu. In Robert the Brewer's generation, the sole cleric was his son William's future father-in-law, the Revd Fletcher: the four Housman brothers themselves were in commerce. The next generation saw two clerics, Robert and Harry: three if brother-in-law John Harrison, a Unitarian minister, is roped in. The next, first fully nineteenth-century generation saw four Anglican clerics: Thomas Housman, William Higgin, nephew of Robert and William, and John Gathorne, and Charles Dickon (their respective sons-in-law). William Higgin, indeed, became Bishop of Londonderry. To vary the profession, William's second son-in-law, Joseph Whalley, from another prominent Skerton family, was a barrister.[76] William's namesake (so probable godson) and nephew became a solicitor, although a rackety one, like *his* nephew, Edward of Bromsgrove. William's own son, Robert Fletcher, plunged into a bewildering variety of activities, but they were underpinned by his setting up as a country gentleman at Lune Bank on the basis of his father's fortune.[77] Robert Fletcher

married his first cousin, Agnes, and the 'good marriages' of three of Robert's other children have been noted. The only Housman of this third generation who seems to have been groomed for business was Robert's son John – by his uncle John Adams; and this, like the West Indian trade of the two preceding generations, was quite big business. By 1816 John Adams was reputed to have spent £8,000 (pushing £2 million today) on his worsted mill at Bromsgrove.[78] Perhaps that was the trouble: the elder John inspired in his acolyte big thinking which the younger man could not put into effective practice.

Another family first achieved by the Revd Robert was as a published author, from 1786. This spread over the next generation to three lines of his descendants: of Lune Bank, Woodchester, and of course Bromsgrove. They wrote on a diverse variety of subjects from Shorthorns to Manilius. It is more striking that John, a 'mere' merchant, published a book than that his learned clerical brother did: Robert was a professional sermon-writer *ex officio* and sermons were what he did publish. John's prose postulates a sound secondary education, a stab at which always accompanies a family's rising affluence. It is documented that Robert went to Lancaster Free [Grammar] School, and probably John and William did too, prior to starting their careers in commerce. William was 'about 15' when sent to the West Indies: deemed a suitable age for an apprentice merchant to leave school. The Housmans were Freemen of Lancaster and education for them actually was free at the Free School until 1824.[79] In the third generation, Robert's son Thomas went to the same school, which makes it likely that his brother William and their cousin Robert Fletcher went there as well. That William would have needed a secondary-school grounding to be accepted for legal training; Robert Fletcher's deep and diverse learning implies that he had a university education to boot, but I have found no record of this.

Lancaster in the decades hinging on 1800 was prosperous and expanding moderately. It had ancient advantages, situated at the estuary of a fertile river valley with a large rural hinterland: thus it marketed especially the pastoral products of wet west Britain, with cheese the most prominent among them. This role as a market town was of course enhanced by the demands for food – and beer – from the ships of its port, which in turn brought in exotic goods for the locals and for general onward transmission. Ship-building was naturally stimulated. The ancient port function had been much expanded in the eighteenth century, with Lancaster ships crossing to the Caribbean, not forgetting the Baltic. At least three Housmans were involved in this shipping trade, and as the authorial John's premises were on the quay, he probably supplied the ships. Lancaster's role as an ancient shire town also drew people in to boost the economy.[80]

An expanding economy meant an expanding population.[81] The focus on the controversy of Robert's brand of religion when he founded St Anne's obscures the basic fact that new churches, and therefore new clergy, were needed. William also helped to found in the 1830s a new church in their native Skerton, St Luke's, whereas previous generations of Housmans had trekked into the town to attend St Mary's. William was buried in this new church, and so was Robert (not in his own St Anne's).[82]

The failure of Dilworth's Bank in February 1826 served rude notice that the long-established 'large trade with the West Indies which had made Lancaster so prosperous' had been gradually declining for years. 'Modern ports', led regionally by Liverpool, could offer docks with economies of scale. The leading citizens had to think of ways to renew through diversification the local economy.[83] By then, however, the Housmans (William's family) had made their pile in the town's palmy days; or had acquired wealth by serendipity (Robert's family). And Robert had made his mark on the town in more elevated ways. Supported by this wealth, the family moved *en masse* into the professions or into a life of landed ease. The major question was whether their money would last.

The title of the article is a terse remark by A.E.H. in a letter to Maurice Pollet dated 5 February 1933; see Grant Richards, Housman 1897–1936 *(Oxford, 1941), p 269. Quoted by Watson (see below, Note 3), p. 34.*

NOTES

Below are my six main sources with the abbreviations I have used:

Description: John Housman *A Topographical Description of Cumberland, Westmoreland, Lancashire and part of the West Riding of Yorkshire* (printed by Francis Jollie, Carlisle, 1800)

History: William Bradshaw Housman, *Housman History* (privately printed, 1913)

JPP: John Pugh, *Bromsgrove and the Housmans* (The Housman Society, 1974)

LG: *Lancaster Gazetteer*

Life: Robert Fletcher Housman, *Life and Remains of the Reverend Robert Housman* (London and Lancaster, 1841)

THL: Cross Fleury, *Time–Honoured Lancaster* (Lancaster, 1891).

1. Norman Page, *A. E. Housman: A Critical Biography* (London, 1983, 1996).

2. Richard Perceval Graves, *A. E. Housman: The Scholar Poet* (London, 1979).

3. George L Watson, *A. E. Housman: A Divided Life* (London, 1957).

4. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

5. The copy of the *History* I am using has been lent by Mr Gerald Symons.

6. JPP, p. 12.

7. *Description*, pp. 371–2.

8. Website of St Luke's Church, Skerton: http://www.stlukes-skerton.co.uk

9. *History*, II, p. 16.

10. *Description*, p. 397.

11. Mildred Campbell, *The English Yeoman* (New Haven, CT, 1942)

12. *History*, I, pp. 4–6. There seems little information about Mary and Alice and various other ladies. Those of the upper middle class and lesser gentry were far more confined to the domestic sphere than their sisters above and below them.

13. William's dates are slightly muddled: the *History* gives his age on marriage as 36 and as 'about 15'when he was sent to Dominica and that he spent 'about 15 years there': I, p. 11, II, pp. 16–18. He married in September 1804. *LG, 22 September 1804.*

14. *History*, I, pp. 6–7; Watson, p. 25.

15. *History*, II, pp. 15–18; JPP, pp. 14–17.

16. *Watson*, pp. 19–20; JPP, p. 36–7.

17. *History*, II, p. 26; JPP, pp. 20–21.

18. See the diary (1777–8) of Daniel Walters, my predecessor at Cowbridge School, Glamorgan by nearly two hundred years. Daniel was then aged 14 to 15. Out of school his time was largely his own. He had a girlfriend, Mary Lewis, and the romance was accepted by both families. His father was vicar of Llandough near Cowbridge. Hence the social background as well as the age and the period is very close to that of William and Sarah. See Iolo Davies, *A Certaine Schoole* (Cowbridge, 1967), pp. 57–62; full text of diary, pp. 362–374. Also Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*: this, set in the 1830s, is substantially autobiographical. The boys, though minus a feminine interest, appear free to wander around the area out of classroom hours.

19. *THL*, p. 241. On Acrelands, see JPP, p. 67; History, I, p. 7.

20. The Great Queen Street sale is noted in an advertisement of Apter-Fredericks, furniture dealers; autumn 2010.

21. *LG*, 13 July 1872.

22. *History*, II, p. 28.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *LG,* 22 September 1804 and 10 July1809.

25. On these Napoleonic War militias, see Thomas Hardy, *The Trumpet Major* (1880).

26. *LG*, 24 October 1801, 6 October 1805, 16 December 1809.

27. *Ibid*, 21July 1827, 14 April 1832, 17 April 1819.

28. *Ibid*, 12 September 1818, 11 September 1819, 13 September 1823, and 8 September 1832.

29. *History*, I, pp. 6–7; Watson, p. 25; JPP, p. 27.

30. See St Luke's website, (as n. 8).

31. See the conclusion of this article.

32. See Part 2 of this study (to appear).

33. *LG*, 1 November 1806, 5 May 1838.

34. *Ibid.*, 20 September 1817; *History*, III, pp. 30–31; JPP, pp. 22–24. The two latter print the letter which the Revd William Higgin, who ended up as Bishop of Londonderry, wrote to his aunt-in-law about the accident.

35. *Will*: filed 24 October 1837.

36. *History,* I, p. 11.

37. *LG,* 21 July 1841.

38. Quoted in Jim Ring, *How the English made the Alps* (London, 2000), p. 11.

39. *Histor*y, I, p. 6.

40. *THL,* p. 241.

41. JPP, p. 13.

42. Time constraints have prevented me from researching this point so far.

43. *Description*, p. 197. See Thomas Hardy: *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886).

44. See Joe Hunt: a speech delivered at the opening of the National Book League Exhibition *The Three Housmans* on 4 February 1975: http://home.freeuk.com/whe/WorcestershirePast/people/housman.html

45. *Description*, pp. 397–99.

46. Mezzotint: S W Reynolds (after J. Lonsdale), NPG, published 1822.

47. For the references, see my introduction.

48. Robert Housman, *A Sermon Preached at Lancaster* (1786); *The Pastoral Visitor;* in sixteen numbers (1816–19); *Sermons Preached in St Anne's Chapel, Lancaster* (1836). There are also seventeen sermons in the *Life*.

49. Wilberforce also presented Mrs Housman with £5 p.a. for many years to aid the Sunday School.

50. See Watson; JPP, op. cit.; *ODNB.*; and the early chapters of the *Life.*

51. The great bulk of this notice is distilled from the *Life.* I have left its roman numerals in brackets in the text as citations. My purpose is largely to glean information on Robert's family life and material circumstances from what is an overwhelmingly (in both senses) spiritual biography.

52. Member of St John's College, Cambridge. It is unlikely, however, that the pair overlapped: Wilberforce went down in 1780 just before Robert went up.

53. See for example the works of the late E. P. Thompson.

54. *LG,* 22 January 1817.

55. *THL,* p. 354.

56. *LG*, 26 September 1801.

57. See, for example, JPP, p. 63.

58. *Description,* op. cit., p. 397.

59. See below.

60. See below.

61. JPP, pp. 80–81.

62. Julian Hunt, 'Bromsgrove and the Housmans Revisited', *HSJ*, Vol. 35 (2009), pp. 77–86, esp. p. 83.

63. *History* I, p. 8.

64. Julian Hunt, op. cit., pp. 77, 79, 81.

65. *History* I, pp. 7–8.; Watson, p. 25; JPP, pp. 46–9.

66. *LG*, I, 8 July 1893, 'From Old Gazette Files'.

67. *THL*, p. 558.

68. Watson, p. 18.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

70. All ages, of course, are 'Ages of Transition', but they vary in the rapidity and

scale of the change.

71. *History*, I, p. 5.

72. *Ibid.*

73. J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, Part II: 1752–1800 (Cambridge, 1947), p. 456.

74. *LG*, 9 January 1802, obituary; 23 January, an elegy on his death: verse well-meant, but execrable. Harry was even shorter-lived that his first cousin John, who died in the same year.

75. Watson, p. 20.

76. *History*, I, p. 11.

77. See Part II of this article, to appear.

78. Julian Hunt, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

79. *LG*, 1 August 1857, for the admission of Robert Fletcher's son, also William, as Freeman. His grandfather and namesake's elevated position on the Corporation automatically meant that *he* was also a Freeman; *THL*, pp. 74–5, for the school.

80. *Description*, pp. 397–9, op. cit.

81. *Ibid.,* p. 397.

82. *THL*, p. 558.

83. *THL*, p. 322. Banks were much smaller in those days: see the failure of the bank in Mrs Gaskell's *Cranford*, set not far away, in Cheshire, just a few years later.

An Informed and Unrivalled Critic

A Pastor's notes on Volume III of A.E. Housman's *Classical Papers*[1]

by

Darrell Sutton

"Propertius certainly and urgently needs a new commentary; but this commentary has not that novelty of which his need is most extreme."[2]

Volume three of Housman's Classical papers is a potpourri of material. The editors also included a twenty-piece appendix. In this volume, the progression of Housman's thoughts can be clearly traced through the years 1915-1936. Since a collection of published papers is more or less an anthology of discussions on various and sundry topics, aside from references to his many articles, in this essay we will confine ourselves to some historical issues and literary remarks on A.E. Housman's text-critical ideas, along with ample endnotes.

Housman's Literary Technique

I. It would be of value to only a small number of people to read through the whole of the *Classical Papers* of A.E. Housman. Even so it is an endeavour well worth the undertaking. To the uninitiated, page after page offers few enticements for further probing of this daunting collection of learning. His essays do not elicit the same type of sentiment expressed by Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 BC – AD 65), whereupon reading a new book by his friend Lucilius,[3] he stated that neither the cry of the sun, nor hunger, nor the lowering clouds could loose its pages from his hands before he had completely devoured the volume's contents. Such an engrossing experience would be unlikely to befall most readers of Housman's papers.

More often than not, though, one does feel that another foray into Housman's papers inevitably brings forth things old and new. And in this vineyard, text-critical theories and opinions grow on classical vines in clusters, and there is much to be extracted. The past is retold each time an article is read. Grecians and Romans become different figures altogether as we look upon their texts with Housman peering over our shoulder and whispering into our ear. There are definitely interconnections between past and future scholarship.

Inevitably current interpretations will shape tomorrow's published texts. So we read Housman, skirting around his meanings, only to return to them again and again at a future time.

Housman remains a bit of an enigma to the academic. He is often lauded for his brilliance in emendation and at the same time castigated for his scathing invectives directed against fellow scholars. Between these extremes, a reader must make up his or her own mind, applying critical methods, in order to render an informed judgment. In the end a reader is left with Housman's body of published work, and it is to these papers that careful consideration must be given because therein is found an English literary style reminiscent of a time when one's academic language could fall short of a full compulsion towards subjective interpretation; and it was plain, direct and to the point.[4] Housman's English language style, like that of any writer, can be studied minutely and will be found to resemble those individuals under whose shadow he or she finds comfort. For Housman, Roman writers were important to him.[5] Housman, possibly, would have declined to acknowledge any debt to classical writers for his literary style;[6] although the English poets did directly sway his conscience.

One aspect necessary for understanding how Housman formulates his opinions relates to the topic of *form*. Usually the strictest form-critical measures are applied to casts of poetry: in this genre, ambiguity, obfuscation and vagueness often dominate. As an example of a critical reading of one of Housman's didactic poems, below is the text followed by a terse exegesis.

A Shropshire Lad XLV

If by chance your eye offend you
    Pluck it out, lad and be sound:
'Twill hurt, but here are salves to friend you
    And many a balsam grows on ground.

And if your hand or foot offend you,
    Cut it off, lad, and be whole;
But play the man, stand up and end you,
    When your sickness is your soul.

Often perceived as a text condoning suicide, quite a different understanding emerges upon closer inspection. One must be taken by the hand and led far and away so as not to miss what is plainly evident from a close reading of each line. A little theological explanation seems to be in order here,

especially since the poem is steeped in allusion. First of all, Jesus' famous words, which Housman clearly adapts for this poem, were typical Hebraicisms of the day. They were short pithy sayings which allude to (in this context) a fulfillment of judicial images, which in turn lead to an abrupt end to a personal dilemma. Jesus' actual words (Mat 5: 27-30) are linked to the previous pericope on sexuality: adultery, in point of fact.

Secondly, an interpretive perspective and response would suggest: inward twists and pulls on the heart can wrench the soul of contentment and wrest the mind of peace. Housman's adaptation places a lad squarely in the midst of a 'cage of interference', which has wrought a degree of illness. Therefore, he invokes the image of the healing powers found in small Arabian shrubs whose roots contain a life-giving medicine. Later, he implies to the lad, just as the balsam is able to restore health, he himself must effect the cure of his own soul. "Stand up and end you" in its rearranged English syntax means to put an end or a stop 'to some particular thing'. The lad is the one who must search the inner chambers of his loving heart and finish off the issue that is so troubling and obvious to him and him alone.

Decoding poetry is always a subjective enterprise.[7] In some sense or another, it engages one's feelings, sympathies, moods, internal ideas, and private biases. In poetry the moral pendulum swings freely from a fixed point; but the human conscience is rarely a stable thing: intellectual growth keeps it in a state of flux. The basis for all critical theories consists of fundamental principles which guide or control one's interpretations. How Housman read authors and how he is to be read are not wholly the same. As his *Classical Papers* demonstrate, he did not write or arrange his material in a haphazard way. He did not stultify or lack intensity; his writing was sententious and so often invidious: the form of each note or article or extensive review being the result of strong and forceful design.

To begin to read each of his papers, 'context' is needed. Context is everything in a field of critical inquiry. A series of questions is in order. Is this a coherent statement? With respect to these allusive words, why are they situated so? What is the history of transmission here? These queries, among many others, demand explanation. Discourses on contexts that surround a word or event often help to explain its meaning. All things considered, A.E. Housman wrote in a thoroughly logical manner. However there are many sides to his inflexible views. These are all perspectives that cannot be understood apart from adroit contact with various Greek and Roman cultural worlds spanning from one thousand years before Christ unto the year of Our Lord Eighteen-fifty.

For instance, in April 2003, T.G.H. James (1923-2009), former curator of Egyptian Antiquities in the British Museum, gave a lecture in Denver, Colorado, at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science entitled "The Painted Box of Tutankhamen". In his address he led the crowd through a thoughtful but academic discussion on several scenes illustrated on the Egyptian chest. From one side of the box to the other, Pharaonic art was encountered and interpreted. The imagery emblazoned on the box seemed to come to life through James' speech. The lecture illustrated a simple point: without an acquaintance with relevant background material the images and writings are meaningless.

On one level Housman may be read and understood as a redoubtable classicist, a standing to which he aspired and through the years pointedly attained. On the other hand he may be read for the scholar-poet he was, whose delightful interactions with the ancients pose no threat to us now but nonetheless are still entertaining, as well as educational. To put it another way, to read Housman one must lay his or her fingers upon the ancient Braille that fascinated him. He felt his way through the poets of Greece and Rome, touching with ease, the writings of the Church Fathers,[8] medieval scholastics, Elizabethan-era dramatists, and authors of Holy Scripture. An awareness of these 'ancients' who lived so long ago, and the mutually friendly terms with the deceased, to which Housman's scholarship attests, illuminates the otherwise faded colours of the dull, black-and-white biographical images of him often issued in print.

The era of Housman's maturity

II. In July 1926 Francis Dodd gave to posterity a charcoal portrait of A.E. Housman. He sketched a picture which calls to remembrance Horace's description of Tibullus in *Epist*. 1.4[9] and ever reminds us that there is more to a man than an author's conception of him. As with any picture the eye focuses on the dominant while the less prominent is left to the imagination. The picture really is quite telling. Housman is presented to us in a seated position. His appearance is accentuated by means of shades and shadows. His suit jacket hangs upon his mortal frame where tie and dress shirt are notably centered. With hands resting peacefully on the lap, a darkly shaded chair beneath him, he gazes at his onlookers through eyes which are situated in a head that seems unusually large for his body. Dodd made sure that we could see his face: there are the thickened eyebrows, pursed lips, a defined nose and ear, along with moustache and mane combed and brushed black and white. There he sits, blindly watching as though he is a man keenly attuned to the conversations about him.

Yet it is not the facial features or his dress which is most appealing: it is the withdrawn background that merits attention. There are only a few noticeable items behind him: some faint images of untitled books and a celestial globe given as a gift to Housman in the year 1920 by the Rothstein family. There are also blackened, vertical and horizontal lines. All the white space therein conveys emptiness. Perhaps what one takes away from the portrait is the idea that the material matter behind him is inconsequential to the person in the foreground. If that is an inference a casual observer might make, this writer's dissent must be expressed in order to assert an opinion all too important to our dissertation on Housman: some idea of the times, culture and general beliefs of Housman's era are needed, and they have a way of bringing sharper definition to this man studied by Dodd.

Fred Robinson's 1994 volume on *The Editing of Old English* contains a chapter on "OE Literature in its Most Immediate context". Many of his strictures are as applicable to the study of human contexts as they are to codicological environments. It is all a matter of recovering salient material for the purpose of authorial and/or MS reconstruction. And conceptual clarity is certainly the goal as one seeks to understand something of the *persona* of A.E. Housman. He was a scholar whose work transcended the period of World War One and this event was transformative for the whole of his person and the whole world.

The advent of World War One was initiated by causes too numerous to outline here. Therefore only a few lines are needed for the purposes of this paper. The War changed the world as we know it. It created the new nation states of the Middle East, and since then, nothing has remained the same. By the year 1914, the British Empire consisted of about four hundred million souls. The Empire stretched from Canada to New Zealand. The various subjoining sects and ethnic groups made the issue of "unity and cohesion" a hugely impossible but colossal enterprise. So somewhere in some place there was always an undercurrent of hostility. Looking back, the Germans had already begun to beat the war drum as early as 1900 when they announced their intention to build an armada sizable enough to handle the British fleet.

Various signs and signals were definitely overlooked. The publication of *The Great Illusion*[10] by Norman Angell ensured that thousands of readers would be duped into believing that worldwide economic interdependence would prevent the calamity of any future war. After all, what sound-minded person could rationalize the need for financial disruptions of any type? These were the days when even the middle class, to some degree or another, were polished and competent. Europe was intellectually bound together in many ways by their

strict adherence to 'Classical Literature'. Almost all respectable English persons would have had some knowledge of the great Greek poet Homer or had studied lines from the master-historian Thucydides. Caesar, Livy and Cicero were household names for this genteel class. Through these readings, students of Greece and Rome eventually came to see many of the antecedents of World War One through the eyes of ancient history.

How do we know these things? It is all a matter of inference. The newspapers of the day tell the story plainly. There were thousands of patriotic youth marching off to foreign fields of battle with high expectations, machine gun fire cutting down friend and foe, brutally cold weather, hungry rodents in military trenches, the horrors of trench warfare, and more funerals than any one soldier would have wanted to attend. All this told the story! Amid these trying times, the 'War Poets'[11] arose. Their poetry framed The War in verse – a grand design of word pictures that evoked painful images. In the end, more than eight million soldiers died. One by one England's wounded and maimed returned to the sheltered corridors of the colleges, and to the cloistered environs which they had previously known. No one thought the same again, ever again.

All Great Britain was shaken, and empty seats multiplied in university classrooms across the land. Yet in spite of the difficulties, some Professors in England may have produced their best scholarship under the strains of international war. This case surely could be made for Housman.[12] Volume three of his *Classical Papers* (spanning 1915-36) demonstrates maturity, an intellectually rigid and riveting person whose precision penetrated every line of his articles. Guided by his Oxford muse, he was *nullius addictus iurare in verba magistri*, 'not bound by an oath to the words of any master'.[13]

This is all the more fascinating when one considers the paucity of scholarly books available and the paper shortages throughout the land.[14] Now in his fifties, Housman's scholarship followed a distinct path, but always keeping in step with the many ancient poets he loved.[15]

The 'history' of classical scholarship is in many ways a parallel form of prophecy. It is prophetic in that the past is able to foretell the future. Through the writings of the deceased, modern critics imbibe their *genius* or *daemon*. This interface ensures a constant re-acquaintance with their memory and a perpetual reoccurrence of their methods. A.E. Housman was unique to his generation but his uniqueness was limited by the accomplishments of those critics to whom he looked for direction and inspiration. Accordingly, it will be appropriate now for us to pursue an excursus through the history of classical textual scholarship before coming back in section IV to Housman.

Textual Criticism through the ages[16]

III. We owe an incalculable debt to Aristophanes of Byzantium (c.257-180 B.C.). Greek literature's rise to prominence in the Western world can be essentially linked to the ancient scribe's desire to preserve various texts. The question, "what makes a text a classic?" has more to do with the popularity of a text than with anything else. It is well known that the more popular a text, the greater its chances of influencing for good or ill those who are able to read its words. Many Greek writers were celebrated for their literary achievements: Sappho's lyrics, Sophocles' tragedies and Plato's philosophy and Aristotle's works were all deeply appreciated. Although these writings were highly esteemed, it was Homer who was the unofficial spokesperson for beauty and literary success.

If we accept the ninth century before Christ as a reasonable hypothesis for assuming a Grecian appropriation of Phoenician letters[17] for the transmission of Greek thoughts and ideas, then we must further assume that, with the rise of reading and writing, a layman's form of textual criticism immediately began. Future readers always struggle with what their ancestors were, and are still attempting to declare to their generations. The question 'How is older ritual and wisdom to be employed in a more modern scenario?' is an important one that should be underscored. Criticism of a text begins with a reader's attempt to understand the meanings placed before him or her.[18] Since ancient scribes and ordinary citizens wrote without spaces between letters and/or punctuation,[19] it would only be a natural consequence that a so-called 'expert' analysis would suddenly burst onto the literary scene.

We do not want to give the impression that textual criticism as a practice was indigenous to the Greeks solely. All communities where writings are at the center of cultural influence have, in some shape or form, a non-specialist's critical spirit. This has been evidenced also in many extant documents in Far East China. Charles S. Gardner writes: "It should be said at the outset that the Chinese are not a whit behind Western scholarship in the exacting domain of textual or preparatory criticism." Professor Gardner further stated, "...it may be claimed without exaggeration that textual criticism has absorbed much of the attention of the best Chinese scholars from the second century before Christ to our own day."[20] To what degree we should affirm the amateur labors of the Sumerian or Egyptian or Akkadian or Hebrew scribe – who borrowed/edited their neighbors' literature – prior to the second century, is a matter for further debate.[21]

By the time Christianity had come to dominate the Northern, Southern and Eastern sides of the Mediterranean Sea, Alexandrian styles of criticism were

popularly displaced by fidelity to oral traditions and a desire to publish early readings of Christian texts. Jerome (347-420 A.D.) issued the Latin Vulgate, based on multiple reading traditions, and put forth a text which remained central to (Roman Catholic) Christendom for more than twelve hundred years. In his mind, his labours were academic, scholarly and in the mainstream of comparative work in his day. The Church Fathers, as a matter of course, did not engage in what is commonly known today as textual criticism, although their many volumes do display an unusual interest in distinct textual variants within their own and other Christian communities.

To the East near the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, poetics in the form of verse carried forward variant strands of communal readings. New light in Syriac studies has shown us places where primitive forms of textual criticism were carried out. Philoxenus (†523 A.D.) studied the Septuagint[22] carefully and sought to reconcile his Syriac edition of scripture with the extant readings of his day. Our earliest MSS of the Gospels are in Syriac: the Curetonian and the Sinaiticus. And there is presently a revival of interests in the Syriac Church Fathers, spurred onward no doubt, in part, by the labours of Dr Sebastian Brock, a noted Oxford Syriacist, who has been prolific in this province of studies.

As seen in the historical origins of any number of groups, textual recensions are fundamental to a unified perpetuation of communal thought. For a group of citizens to dwell together harmoniously they must all, for the most part, view things in a commonly agreed upon way. What better way to reach educational unity than through the promulgation of diplomatic texts which say the same thing to different peoples? There is not a geographic hindrance because the text becomes a 'remaining image'[23] in the culture. This too is an ancient method strongly demonstrated by early Islamic communities[24] which developed right alongside the Late Patristic Fathers of the East, and the Jewish Rabbis of Babylon who compiled the components of the Talmud of the sixth century.

By Late Antiquity,[25] and clear through to the Middle Ages, broad and sweeping changes often and quickly brought about language shifts and cultural upheavals through war. The subjugation of various ethnicities across Europe led to their new (and supposedly improved) master's push for a Latin literature perceived to be best suited for a commoner's mind. The Carolingian revival of the eighth and ninth centuries propelled Charlemagne to historical notoriety. During his reign occurred the creation of schools as a corrective to the ignorance of many priests unable to read the Latin Vulgate, and the development of the new scribal hand of 'Carolingian minuscule', an outcome of the royal desire to bring some standardization to the diversity of Latin speech in use among European

communities.

In the end, grammar, logic and rhetoric became supreme exemplars and commanded attention well into medieval times. So few people knew Latin well at the time that others engaged not in textual criticism but in a systematic process of censorship.[26] Even monasteries proceeded to preserve those writings decreed appropriate by higher authorities, both religious and secular. As manuscripts languished in remote hideaways and secluded monastic dwellings, here and there 'banned documents' were still privately loved, secretly read and routinely commented on. These measures would be of extreme importance later as the Renaissance came into view.

The dating of the Renaissance is purely arbitrary. Some significant events to mark the time are now mentioned: the advent and expansion of Islam c. AD 622 and the fall of Constantinople in 1453 are without a doubt pivot points in European history. Scholars from the Byzantine East fled for their lives and often carried with them precious MSS and Greek learning along with them.[27] Such immigration allowed for the transmission of ideas and learning long unknown to those isolated in the west.[28] As far as dates go, multiple evidence of a genuine 'Rebirth of Learning' certainly can be discovered from a study of the period beginning c.1340 and ending c.1620. During this time there was Renaissance activity of still untold proportions.

The rediscovery of old Greek MSS greatly excited each humanist. Traveling far and wide, expending vast sums of money for worn and dusty old MSS, explorers and adventurers[29] brought great fame to kings and institutions of higher learning. Private libraries would soon archive MSS and books[30] that would lead later scholars like Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) to collect voluminous works with regard to timeless pieces of literature. In the meantime, Italy and all Europe became captives of ancient Greece and Rome. Ciceronian controversies over writing styles, arguments of the type "who is greater, Plato or Aristotle?", sought to reorient society away from the Aristotelian logic predominant in that day. This was a tidal wave of learning coming to European shores, and whether one found enjoyments in its refreshing waters or not seemed irrelevant.[31]

Most important of all was the return to careful investigation and analysis of actual texts – as texts. Lorenzo Valla, later Scaliger and Casaubon[32] and the new turn toward philology (or the broad and expansive study of MSS) brought radically new conclusions to debates which had gone on for ages. It should not be forgotten that it was the Renaissance that gave birth to Hebraic studies among westerners,[33] and that the Reformation sprung from those doctrines

believed to be revealed in the original Greek and Hebrew texts. Erasmus' labours, in varying degrees, were a driving force at this time. He edited Greco-Roman texts, collated biblical MSS and put Latin translations of the New Testament books on pages facing the Greek for all literate humans to compare. This forward-looking generation saw their future in the ideals, attitudes and actions of men and women of the past who could be studied only in credible texts. No wonder Catullus, Persius, Manilius, Pindar, Sophocles and Xenophon and others received extensive attention from scholars together with the New Testament MSS.

The Renaissance and Reformation are so intertwined that it is impossible to disentangle the one from the other. The threads of their academic pursuits cannot be unraveled without twisting history into major contortions. Indeed historians still seem to find little common ground in this area. Where the Renaissance was a secular reformation among multitudes of educated persons the Reformation was a sacred renaissance among the popular masses.[34] Critical inquiry was in the air, and those who inhaled these fresh breezes could never be drawn again toward the pale consensus readings of the establishment. In effect, the Renaissance inaugurated the unspoken view that 'consensus opinions' of the previous generation(s) are fair game for thorough review; and, if and where possible, a reconfirmation of dogma might be in order.

Volume Three of Housman's *Classical Papers*

IV. Basil Gildersleeve (1831-1924) was a very public face for the Classics movement for decades and his bibliography consists of more than 430 items.[35]And for a brief period of time he even served as a professor of Hebrew.[36] Whatever his contributions may have been in this Semitic sphere, it was minute in comparison with his rummages through the literature of Greece and Rome.[37] Gilbert Highet's (1906-`78) fulsome bibliography of nearly 1,000 items proves his erudition in literary circles and his academic contributions to scholarship are both esteemed and berated. He conquered the minds of many readers and listeners and was arguably the most famous classicist in America in the fifties and sixties. Outside the traditional Greco-Roman field, working as an Orientalist, but still making a minor contribution to "Classics" at times[38] was the universal scholar W.F. Albright (1891-1971), whose published corpus weighs in with just under 1,100 items.[39]

In comparison to the aforementioned, Housman was of a different breed of scholar. He neither travelled to Germany for academic training, as did Gildersleeve, nor did he acquire Gildersleeve's keen abilities in cultural-historical analyses.[40] Housman too lacked Highet's composure in print, his lust for mastery

of innumerable branches of literature and his general appreciation for the verities and virtues of the humane arts; and, in stark contrast to Albright, Housman's writings lack the multi-disciplinary approach all too often taken for granted in today's studies. Moreover he did not possess any substantial understanding of our modern intricacies (or reconstructive tricks) of archaeology or the inter-connectedness of all the attending sub-disciplines; if one cites "epigraphy" in a broadly text-critical sense, as a sub-category of archaeology, then Housman's first-hand control of Greco-Roman material texts knew no bounds. But on no account could Housman ever be refashioned in the image of a *bricoleur* – jack-of-all-trades.

Although he was far less prolific than other internationally renowned scholars, Housman's published papers contain many strokes of genius. The articles written in volume three represent his published material over the final twenty-one years of his academic life. And though the book covers the standard fare of ancient writers, it also displays Housman's sovereignty over large areas of knowledge. The intermittent articles on Ovid, Propertius and Martial are continued. For at least seven years (1915-1921) Ovid's *Ibis* and *Tristia* settled again into his thoughts.[41] Still, this *ménage à trois* between Housman, Ovid and Propertius courses its way into nearly every article of the volume.[42] And to this we can look forward.

Here his maturity in quite a number of areas is on full display. By now he is far more comfortable asserting himself in paleographical matters. A sure sign of this confidence is located on page 954, which is the article entitled 'Anth. Lat. Riese 678'. He is reproaching W.M. Lindsay for what Housman believes to be a cavalier attitude developing in Latin studies. He writes: "Professor Lindsay says in C.Q. XI p. 41 that with the help of the *thesaurus* Latin scholarship is now becoming easy, and that textual emendation will become equally easy when certain advances have been made in palaeography. No advance in palaeography will ever make textual emendation easy, because textual emendation depends much less on palaeography than on several other things, the chief of which is the textual emendator; and for a like reason Latin scholarship will never be made easy by any dictionary."[43]

By definition, paleography (Gk. *palaios*, 'ancient' + *graphein*, 'to write') is the study of ancient writings and inscriptions. This was an area of expertise far too important to be left in the hands of amateurs, and so Housman berated most efforts as juvenile. In his published lecture of 1922, 'The Application of Thought to Textual Criticism' (pp. 1064-5), he mockingly writes: "The practice is, if you have persuaded yourself that a text is corrupt, to alter a letter or two, and see

what happens. If what happens is anything which the warmest good-will can mistake for sense and grammar, you call it an emendation; and you call this silly game the palaeographical method." If the above words appear remotely similar to Housman's own text-critical method nothing could be further from the truth. Housman is highlighting an inherent weakness he believes to be the manifest result of one's inability to read and understand the text at hand. An editor of this type irresponsibly assumes his guess-work to be scientific. As for Housman, his own uncanny ability to recreate the sense of a text and to restore other textual deficiencies was aided by the logic required for an editor with a capacity to apprehend the general relations of particulars.

The most recent edition of Housman's Letters[44] is a trove of relevant data for comparative chronological studies of Housman's academic growth and development. Of vital concern to us now is his usage of foreign language material throughout volume three. Essay after essay is written with a view to manifesting his anxieties related to "understanding" the meaning of words. For the non-philologist today this may seem trite and unimportant. But to Housman, he saw the need for language acquisition early. In a letter to Elizabeth Wise, dated 17 February 1878, he mentions a commencement of German language study.[45] Understandably, German studies would be necessary for any classical work since so much of the best of the raw material was available only in German. Housman's soundings in *Geschichte* or primal history furthered his cause. Indeed Housman's linguistic accomplishments were notable.

The English, unlike their American cousins, are a part of a European cultural milieu which fostered multilingualism at the earliest stages of childhood training. This aspect of educational theory was on its way out of the (North) American system as early as the 1880s.[46] Indeed, many of Housman's criticisms of American scholars revolved around his presuppositions about their philological weaknesses, hence a belief that a weak or shabby scholarly muse attended American publications. What is ably put forth in *HCP* III, are discussions on variants in German, French, Dutch and Italian.[47] A scholar's equipment in these areas of investigation does matter, and Housman refused to take these issues lightly.

Housman followed European classical publications in his reviews of books in languages other than English. Through his perusal of other scholars' editions, he was forced to conclude that many editors were publishing his emendations under their names. Of one famed German Hellenophile he writes: "Other people, from Dr. U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff downward, so often print emendations of mine as their own, or indeed as anyone else's that I am even more anxious than

I otherwise should be to avoid printing as mine the emendations of other people."[48] The heavy-toned academic style of Wilamowitz required some degree or another of mastery. In order for Housman to become a *Meister* he would need to be able to engage with the writings of genuine scholars who at times or usually published in non-English tongues. This he understood well even in his earliest years.

Included in volume three are the occasional mini-series, 'Prosody and Method' (pp. 1114ff. and 1136ff.) and also Housman's 'Notes on the *Thebais* of Statius' (pp. 1197ff. and 1214ff.), and several scattered points to which Housman continually returned.[49] Another succinct demonstration of his philological nerve and maneuvers comes through clearly in the short piece, 'The Latin for *Ass*' (p. 1263ff.), in which he examines possible mutations in the ancient Latin words *asinus* and *asellus,* and the usurpation of their place by the word, *donkey*! His refinishing of the fragmented text in 'An African Inscription' (*HCP* III, 1127ff.) restores an image of a gladiator otherwise lost to us, and his labours tie in well to our understanding of ancient history today.

Housman and his Ideas of Textual Criticism

V. It would be difficult to consider the contributions of British scholarship to the restoration of texts without an honorable mention of Richard Bentley. The period stretching from the late 1600s unto the early 1900s can be divided into timeframes where the "Richards" gave their very best in scholarship: Richard Bentley (1662-1742)[50], Richard Dawes (1708-66)[51], Richard Porson (1759-1808)[52] and Richard Jebb (1841-1905)[53]. If students are forced to return to Pliny's *Historia Naturalis* in order to obtain mastery of select material on ancient worlds in Africa, then one must become acquainted with those masterpieces created in the writings of Bentley in order to grasp the critical worlds in which he lived. There is the beauty of language, facility in both Greek and Latin, even an understated knowledge of data outside the traditional field of classical studies. One may not always agree with his dead-end solutions but neither should the intersections of his thought or arguments be dismissed without careful scrutiny. This is not a novel idea. C.O. Brink led the way and interpreted English scholarship through a prism, and the spectrum displayed is made of shafts of light which illuminate the brilliance of Bentley, Porson and of course Housman.[54]

Close on the hills of the Renaissance a number of destabilizing events occurred. These would inevitably result in changes in scholarship that later would lead Housman to lament that between Richard Bentley and H.A.J. Munro

(1819-1885) England offered little academic help to anyone in the way of critical textual scholarship. Munro lacked the profundity of Bentley, who excelled in numerous subjoining categories of Greek and Latin philology and textual exegesis, but Munro certainly displayed great dexterity in elucidating Latin texts. In preceding years of the eighteenth century, textual critics worked in the shadow of theological precepts. The dogmas and creeds of the day often determined what made it into the printed text or into the apparatus. Eventually these top-heavy labours in the biblical field did slowly make their way into the study of profane texts but only with some effort. The names of all those who were bivocational textualists, working in sacred and profane authors, is not as numerous as one would imagine. However this is not the essay for intersecting all the points where the historical crossover took place.

Karl Lachmann (1793-1851), though, is the real bridge, as far as method is concerned, between the old critical theory and the new "Lachmann Method" which spread over Europe in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Lachmann suggested that MSS be treated as families with lineage and projected genealogy. Furthermore he developed a more mechanical way for examining the greater mass of manuscripts.[55] This was an invention of the Enlightenment age. The rationalist scholars of the day previously misunderstood preceding ages to represent eras that abode in *tenebrae*, darkness. Thankfully, the rescue from the Enlightenment grip was now partially complete. But out of this came new techniques for examining (and restoring) texts in a mechanical way.[56] In 1893 Housman published the first of his essays on 'The Manuscripts of Propertius [I]' (*HCP* I, 232). He begins with the cardinal manuscripts, attempting to unravel who collated each, and he treats their designations, as to whether one was better or worse, and he follows up with his own thesis for his approach to the textual problems.[57]

Then, on p. 233, he declares MSS NAFDVfv to be "authorities independent of one another and therefore are one and all to be employed in the reconstruction of the archetype". This evidences Housman's predilection for using 'all major MSS' – see the rejection of 'best' MSS below – for primary source study; this method is crystallized later in life as he continued his efforts to correct and emend corrupt readings. His actual ideas or theories of text-critical method from the latter periods of his life are more readily understood when a few specimens are laid out in print:

1. "Now there are indeed many places where the worse MSS give a true reading and the better MSS a false one; but in those cases we can generally find a cause for error."[58]

2. The rules of criticism[59] are a very inadequate outfit for the practice of emendation, which is mainly an affair of natural aptitude and partly even of mere luck; but problems will now and then present themselves which the rules of criticism, with no aid from genius or fortune, are competent to solve."[60]

3. "One of the causes why any proposal to correct a verse or sentence alarms and distresses the natural man is that it makes an unusual demand upon his intellect and entails the weary work of reading and considering the context. That form of correction which consists of transferring a verse or sentence from one place to another is in consequence doubly discomposing, because of the mental fatigue which it involves is twice as heavy."[61]

4. "Before I edit a work, I read it; and a quarter of a century ago I read the Ibis and consequently noticed this discrepancy. I am the first editor who ever did read the Ibis, and down to this year 1916 I am the last; but it may have been read by some persons other than its editors."[62]

5. "Wherever the MSS have a variant worth mentioning, I mention it; but in every such case the balance of their authority is in favour of the form which I adopt."[63]

6. "The result of my action deserves to be put on record as exemplifying the customs of classical scholarship in the twentieth century."[64]

7. In commenting on Dr. Postgate's "iron resolve", i.e. stubbornness, which inclines its possessor toward error, Housman stated that such a quality "may be a good thing in its proper place, *but in criticism it is less desirable than perception and consideration*" (my emphasis).[65]

8. "Imperfect knowledge of the meaning of words and phrases will account for much false rendering."[66]

With regards to points 1 and 2, "best" and "worst" MSS is a matter of opinion. Housman's disdain for these matters was well known. He believed most historical research in matters of transmission to be misguided.[67] He did not view them as unnecessary but misleading on the grounds that they were guided by an ethos that was illogical. Whatever rules of criticism are, they are an invention of men. Housman knew this, sounded the trumpet and cried aloud that many of the inventors of the rules were not acquainted with their own inventions. And he paraded many critics' weaknesses in print because they misunderstood precisely of what criticism consists.

Ars Critica is commonly referred to as the 'art of (textual) criticism'. But

this meaning has too limited a value for this treatise; and the Latin phrase needs a more extended definition: the craft of (discerning) literary techniques fits the train of thought we are attaching to Housman. Essentially, this is (*inter alia*) what a textual critic's vocation includes. He or she is attempting to master authorial styles, whether deducing this from manuscript texts, a fragmentary stele, ostraca inscriptions, and data written on clay tablets or general literary history. Textual criticism searches out features of a story that untrained eyes avoid through ignorance or neglect, and it involves more than the superficial arrangement of letters and sentences. There is a vast field of lections that are to be implanted in the brain's memory for easy recall when needed.

Exhaustive literary surveys are in high demand today and there are monographs by the score that are useful in more ways than one. Extensive treatments of an author's writing style[68] are only one branch of study in which Housman engaged. Although many of the popular titles of classical topics published in journals today are not in his bibliography, it is because of the times in which he lived, and cannot be connected to a deficiency in his thinking.

The quotations cited above (points 1-8) are not groundbreaking by any means but they are revealing. Plowing the fields of Housman's thought is time consuming and all that is overturned in the process yields one element on which we all should reflect: that of reading! Each point above revolves around the habit of "reading and considering the context". This pathway of persistent interaction with texts led him to ask questions that few would consider and to posit answers few could conceive. I would now instance his article 'Ovidiana' (p. 923). Of the last line of *Tristia* 3.14.47-50, he issues a complaint – after a possible solution to the syntactical problem: "neither the one nor the other is the diction of Ovid or of any Latin poet." Naturally his reading was wide and varied. His often-heard battle cry, 'No Roman ever spoke such'[69] is a template for future scholars; but only in the sense that a student of Roman literature should read more and more ancient Latin texts.

We get a glimpse of the impact of his reading methods from a remark made in the article '*Aios* and *Eios* in Latin poetry' (*HCP* II, 877). He tells us that when he was young he was "curious to know the principles, if any there were, upon which the Greeks, in forming adjectives from substantives by means of the suffixes *–aios* and *–eios*, made either choice between the two." This curiosity, it seems, stemmed from the fact that as he read Latin texts he observed the "indiscriminate employment of the terminations *–aeus* and *–eus*... which he encountered in Latin poets." It is a personal recollection, and on the surface appears insignificant but it does assert itself as you ponder the manner in which he might have forged the tools of his trade through reading texts.

Lucan: Housman's *Opus*?

VI. In 1926 Housman issued his edition of Lucan's *Civil War*.[70] It is a poem on which much thought has been given and there appears to be very few easy pathways to more advanced understandings. The impression given is that, reading and comprehending one of the great Latin poets of old is still difficult. So difficult that Housman said "the art of understanding Lucan makes no steady and continuous progress".[71] Even in his day the need for a fresh look at the text was recognized. And there still was no adequate apparatus available for research. Thus for many centuries, this epic poet of war was unable to be read as its author had originally intended.

As for Lucan, he was well trained. He was raised among the elite and lived in sight of the towering geniuses he could count as relatives. Having Seneca the Elder (54 BC - 39 AD) as a grandfather is an indication of the genealogical stock from which Lucan was descended. Seneca the Younger (4 BC-65 AD) was an uncle, as was Gallio of *Acts* 18:12-16. Admitted into the small but significant circle of Nero, he participated in a neo-Augustan poetic rebirth of poetic literature. For a young man he was certainly prolific, and if half of the books ascribed to him were in truth written by him, then there is little wonder that his name was recognized early on. In his extant epic poem his reporting of historical events is encased in many diverse poetic flourishes. The mental prowess exhibited in that poem alone led Dante (*Inf.* 4.88-90) and others to rank Lucan beside the great epic writers: Homer, Horace, Virgil and Ovid.

When A.E. Housman broached the subject of performing text-critical work on Lucan, he already, undoubtedly, had formed some strong opinions on what had been done and what had been undone through the efforts of other editors. His English introduction is rife with short, pithy and witty observations conveying his judgment of MSS forming the textual tradition of Lucan's text and his views of previous editors and their critical editions.

In his introduction Housman quickly begins by summarizing the problems in Luc. 1.8-12: this is to be a purely philological work as demonstrated on p. vi. He complains that modern printed texts of Lucan have suffered from the misfortune of having been formed by editors afflicted by an "indulgence of love for one manuscript". Housman states: "[Lucan] has been plagued by a 'codex optimus' and a 'better family of manuscripts'." The notion that a family could be constructed was silly to Housman.[72] He did speak of factions but his critical acumen would never allow him to ignore multitudes of codices without reading through them for useful or probable variants.

On pp. x-xviii of the introduction he attacks the greatly beloved 'M' MS, shows its blatant errors and exposes its shortcomings, all in the space of fewer than four printed pages. He points out that for the portion 1.1-482 M has no close relationship with any of the other extant MSS of Lucan. He dismisses the notion of a "Pauline class" of MSS and sees to it that M no longer sat atop that alleged class. On p. xiii he castigates those editors who blindly relied upon M without appreciating its strengths (which Housman is prepared to admit) and weaknesses.[73] Housman compares their unreasoned faith in M with that of the Athenians' reverence in erecting an altar to an "unknown god", quoting in Greek *Acts* 17:23.[74]

On pp. xviii-xxxi he treats omission in the texts and outlines (p. xix) a novel idea of *homoeomeson* – similarity within two verses: the theory rests on a belief that an entire verse can be omitted because of similarity of a sequence of letters in an adjacent verse.[75] His schema lists examples from various MSS and demonstrates how easily these omissions may occur.

On pp. xxvii-xxviii scholars are denounced for creating fictitious reasons for preserving errors in the place of restoring sense to a text. In his understanding of mending textual fabrics Housman often outstripped those surrounding him. There is a case involving the emendation *athlio^n*: the narrative is on p. xxx. This was a conjecture published by Housman in 1908, wholly ignored for years and later inserted into two different texts without any ascription to him. On investigation Housman found that Mr Seymour de Ricci had visited Egypt and returned to say that this variant was in a text there. Three things are of note here:

i) Scholarly adaptation of one's conjecture is a matter of trust. An editor must often take another at his or her word when the philological grounds for the new form appear weak.

ii) MSS always provided a suitable fountain of recourse as questions arise over the appropriateness of a conjecture.

iii) Housman's insights were guided by precepts that made it all but certain that his conjectures were legitimate.

Housman detested the "ineradicable opinion that the probability of a conjecture depends on its nearness to the text" (p. xxx). Housman's theories regarding the making of a text and apparatus are popularized in part through the introductory essays to his critical editions, all standard texts to which editors will refer for decades to come, which stand in the ancient *ars critica* stream.

One uncommon feature of Housman's edition is the preparation of his *apparatus criticus*. At the foot of the pages of critical editions are to be found

wide-ranging ornamentation, a plethora of smaller printed letters (used as symbols identifying the various MSS on which the printed text is based), various ligatures, numbers and alternate renderings, which have been put down and/or resuscitated in another form as a new conjecture *et cetera*. An apparatus provides a resource to further a reader-scholar's continuing study of the transmission of the text by means of handwritten copies.[76]

In his edition of Lucan, Housman goes beyond the typical bounds of an *apparatus criticus* to add occasional observations on the interpretation of the text. To take a random sample illustrating interpretative notes of this nature, let us consider his comment on 4.389 (pp. 102-3). On the expression *tot in orbe labores* Housman expresses doubt (dubito) whether the meaning is "world" (orbis terrarum) or "cycle", for which meaning he cites passages from Virgil, Manilius, *Aetna* and the *Ilias Latina*. These references advance an idea of 'progressive labour'; a somewhat cyclical or all-round struggle. He certainly is emphasizing something toil-intensive.

Thus his annotation of the text does more than give merely the MS readings or unprofitable *coniectanea*; rather he offers insightful comments that are helpful in situating a line of verse; this, in part, made Housman's network of ideas unique. Rather than merely going the traditional route offering technical instruments alone, or offering the school-book version of annotated grammatical devices, he gave – in great Latin prose – a model, a new exemplar.

But, as epic poetry, what message is Lucan attempting to convey to his readers about the civil war described in his pages? Much has been said about the structure and style of the ten books,[77] and there is still more to say. Lucan whisks us away to battlefields far away and recreates for us the sensations and horrors of war. Caesar, the urban stalwart, is painted up as a man of rustic and savage inhibitions, and although Lucan does not theorize about the rightness or wrongness of ancient warfare in this instructive poem, the lesson seems clear: extreme megalomaniacs do drive us from one field of battle (Book 1.1) to another (Book 10.545), in essence destroying us all bit by bit.

Surely, if Quintilian could remark on the worth and utility of *Bellum Ciuile*, a further remark too is needed. We read Latin texts for the sheer, joyful experience of facing our ancient betters. To that end, we view old Latin texts as emblems not to be discarded but to be worn throughout our service in this life. If Lucan writes like an educated man, it is because he is. And his perspicacity is as wonderful in its Latinity as is the Elizabethan English of G. Chapman's deep-browed Homer.[78] Neither of these two are readable texts for those estranged from classical literature;

nor did Housman ill-treat his good friend Lucan, and so he gave him to us with an honest heart.

Housman and Contemporary Reference Tools

VII. More than two thousand resources[79] at Housman's disposal are cited in his papers. Deducing the exact meaning(s) of words used by ancient writers led Housman to reproach a number of authors for their lexical mishaps, and to repudiate problems discovered in dictionary and thesaurus. In 'Ovid, *Ibis* 512' and '*Tristia* III 6 8' (p. 907), concerning the word *stella*, Housman says, "[it] does not mean constellation: the examples alleged in the dictionaries are all false." In a fit of sarcasm with regard to how a poem is titled in '*Anth. Lat.* Ries. 678' (p. 953), he states: "In this connexion I have a word to say on the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. That lexicon is not unacquainted with this poem, which it calls by no fewer than three different names." His 'Notes on Martial' (p. 990) censures a number of authors and editors: "It is clear from the whole tenour of the three or four poems in which Martial celebrates him that Antonius Primus of Tolosa is wrongly identified by Friedlaender and Klebs *prosop. Imp. Rom*. 1 p. 103 and Pauly-Wissowa *Real-encyl*. I pp. 2635-7."

Later, casting discredit on a dictionary in '*Siparum* and *Supparus*' (p. 996), Housman laments: "A student who looks out for *siparum* in the dictionary is sent on to [at this point Housman lists multiple word-forms] ...this then is one word, rejoicing in no fewer than eleven forms (most of which I have never met anywhere outside a dictionary)". Mr Housman read things closely[80] and suffered no fool gladly. The discipline he exhibited in giving close scans to each and every 'problematic word' paid rich dividends into his scholarly account. His study of the word *attamen* led him to conclude that "[a] column and a half of the *Thes. Ling. Lat.,* chosen at random will generally contain a good many errors, and this specimen is no exception to the rule".[81] On the subject of the Latin poets, Housman did feel that [Louis] Quicherat's (1799-1884) *Thesaurus Poeticus* was "the most trustworthy book of reference" (cf. '*Aios* and *Eios* in Latin Poetry', p. 891).

Housman shows his familiarity with W.A. Oldfather's (1880-1945) Illinois *index uerborum* for Seneca the Younger (1918) and was not impressed. He believed the editors to be more dependent on German philological theory than independent reasoning and wrote as much: "In 978 Leo punctuates 'ora; quae exoptas dabo'. *America hears and obeys*:[82] she translates the words as 'ask, and whate'er thou

wishest I will give' in verse, and as 'make request; what thou desirest will I give' in prose; and in the Illinois *index uerborum* this *ora* will be found registered under the verb *oro* and not under the noun *os*."[83] In addition to this, in the same paper he tells us of a weakness of a couple of lexicons, stating "the exclamatory *quis* and *qui* is unknown to the lexicons of Georges and Lewis and Short."[84] In '*Dracus* and Martial XI 8 1' (p. 1167), Housman adds: "It will not be out of place to add that the obscene sense discovered by lexicographers and editors in *strangulare* at Cic. *Fam*. ix 22 4 is another hallucination."

Most people read "literary sources" in light of the commentary added in popular academic reference works. Housman's skepticism of the reference volumes mentioned in the preceding paragraphs is rooted in one fundamental thought: generally the editors and authors themselves were deficient in Greek and Latin grammatical knowledge, hindered by unacquaintedness with vast swaths of Greco-Roman history,[85] an inability to interpret adequately the thought or thoughts of a passage, and the lack of independence needed to free one's mind from the strictures of other European critics in order to reach one's own conclusions based on the wording of the source text.

Housman and Comedy

VIII. Since *HCP* III overflows with variety, let us directly choose for greater elucidation an overlooked item in the compendia, Housman's work in Latin comedy, for greater elucidation. Two very compelling Latin and Greek notes argued in this volume are, 'Jests of Plautus, Cicero and Trimalchio' (pp. 960-3) and 'Herodas II 65-71' (pp. 1056-7). To the former the following statements are restricted. Greek and Roman comedy suffer from scholarly neglect all around the world. It is a very small subset of Classical studies. So to read of Housman, a serious-minded scholar, unraveling a few twisted and misunderstood jokes of antiquity is reason enough for pause. Ancient comedy typically is coarse for modern tastes and contained those intended allusions which few today would want as invited guests at any social gathering.

One must be acquainted with myth, cultural idiom and the like to read the 'behind the scenes' ideas that Plautus has taken over from the Attic stage.[86] Cicero is multi-faceted. He is orator and philosopher and advocate and rhetorician, even poet, at times, and civil servant but few have been the articles linking him to 'the funnier side' of human existence.[87] If Athenaeus provided us a 3rd century AD peep-hole into the Hellenistic world – and the Greek literature they adored – through his *Deipnosophistai* (*An Evening Feast for Wise Sages*), Petronius too

has left us a craftily stitched tapestry of the rural dining habits of the Roman bourgeoisie. Housman felt strongly that his first and only task in the *Trimalchio* puzzle was to be philologically accurate.

This is not the easiest assignment when one comes face to face with Petronius. His Latin sentences lack the puristic style that Julius Caesar sought to popularize. Petronius' *Satyricon* is an altogether different species of writing. Therein remain the ancient literary constructs all classicists enjoy dissecting: a mix of colloquialism here, an insider's joke there, and puns and parody at every turn. Petronius' book is amusing but it is no walk in the park. We know virtually nothing of his biography. All that has come down to us is known by conjecture and inference. It is impossible to tell, for instance, if Petronius in Tacitus' *Annals* (16.17-20) is to be identified with the author of the *Satyricon*. And with so little personal data to go on, all critics – after a brief introduction on who they "think" he is – quite naturally, and rather quickly, turn to his text. It is in the text that Petronian social histories are found. At issue for Housman is the way in which "*LIBER esto*" has been mangled by translators at Petr. 41.6-8.

The context for the scene begins to take shape in section 28 of the *Satyricon*. Trimalchio is presented as host to a horde of individuals. One colourful character after another is offered up to the reader. Their habits, customs and ethnic roots are on full display and interspersed throughout is the Petronian drawing of word-pictures for the reader's imagination and amusement. Previously in the story, one has encountered the whorish (8), some paedophilic discussion, (25), the vain (32-33), Ethiopians (34), Syrians (22), an Egyptian (35) the *cinaedus,* sodomite (21), a eunuch (27), and even a slave with a skeleton, the ever-present symbol of human mortality (34). Throughout the narrative, the participants seem to live and die by the creed "*vinum vita est*" – wine is life! And Petronius fills their hearts – line after line – with those literary touches which inebriate a reader's heart.

The passage that interested Housman comes just after a discourse on the zodiac; after which a delicacy of a cooked boar has been placed before the dinner guests. The boar wears a small cap, and Encolpius, one of the guests, puzzles over its meaning.[88] Enter Housman: he detects a pun and proceeds to explicate it. "LIBER" is the key here. The point is to demonstrate this locution's status as a word-sign for a deity, viz the god of wine, Dionysus, Bacchus, Liber. This Housman asserts. A slave boy, by removing the cap from the boar and placing it upon his own head, assumes the office of the God Dionysus, whose role he has been playing both in costume and act among the dinner guests. Thus he falls under the authority of Trimalchio since he, the slave, is in the host's home, hence

our host's announcement "*habere*[89] *LIBERVM*[90] *patrem*."[91] The pun has two sides which Housman displays. Furthermore Dionysus, the servant, capped in wreath of vine and ivy is every bit the captive charge as is the boar. Both are adorned, both subjected to a satirical moment, and both forced to act as a motivation for further reflection.

Reactions to Housman: Then and Now

IX. Poet-classicist or classicist-poet: of the two, which should one choose when making an honest attempt at categorizing Housman? By the former label he is more popularly known. But this grave injustice is not all bad. Some years ago, there lived a man by the name of Rolfe Humphries (1894-1969). West of the Atlantic Ocean his trenchant poetry reviews angered multitudes. One poet extraordinaire, Robert Frost (1874-1963), bore a grudge against Humphries till the day he died: despite Frost's ill-will, Humphries' translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* elicited high praise from another skilled literary practitioner, W.H. Auden (1907-73).[92] Volumes of poetry are in abundance these days, much of which is more of a pain to read than a pleasure; but the poet of *Proteus, or, The Shapes of Conscience* was also a critic and close reader of texts: and after considerable deliberation over Housman's poetics, Rolfe found little Alfred guilty of a few literary thefts: of having 'stolen a line or two' from the English poet John Clare (1793-1864).[93] A judgment, one might say, that was spot on.

Yes, Rolfe was a natural. He was a poet first and foremost. However, today he is popularly known for his translations of great Latin classics; and his skilful poetry seminars are long forgotten. Few are able to combine successively the poet-classicist personas. Housman knew this all too well; and his antipathy towards modern poetry was well hidden beneath the thin veneer of his love for many of his deceased predecessors. Ezra Pound (1888-1972) was disgusted with Housman's ignorance of major and minor poets of his day.[94]

To Housman, the latter tag (classicist-poet) fits more snugly. He climbed Mount Parnassus and conquered both friend and foe in the process. Yet despite a catalogue of nearly two hundred scholarly publications in the field of Classics, Housman is familiar to most through his first book of poems, *A Shropshire Lad*. Besides his poetic work, he declined to write popularly. Although his mind turned in many Greek and Roman directions at once, we have from him no volume of essays one would delight to read at an evening fireside. Unlike classicist-poet C.M. Bowra (1898-1971) who nourished and cultivated an enriched mind that crossed a thousand fences of literature,[95] Housman pursued less widely accepted

lines of thought.[96] Mr Bowra issued a marvellous publication with *The Greek Experience*,[97] and most found it accurate, a good read, Grecophilically authentic. But Mr Housman chose to give his heart to other matters.

Housman lived and wrote well and in the winter years of his long life shrugged off honours and unwanted accolades, a response similar to Achilles' disdain for all things connected to Agamemnon. Everyone knew Achilles was heroic and different. It was easy to see. The pages of the *Iliad* turn, and his glory stands out in all places. One wonders though, who did not know of Housman's might in classical matters? Everyone in the textual field had either felt or viewed up close the manner in which he wielded the critical blade. Housman ventured from battle to battle, ambivalent in attitude towards others and indifferent to all. It is possible that some critics may read Housman's articles and find the content insipid. Ultimately, such misunderstandings of his papers might lead some to dismiss them entirely as no more than mere Iliadic songs of rage.

Therefore reactions toward him and his responses are plentiful in number and copiously outlined in the three-volume edition of Housman's articles. During his lifetime Housman was feared, scorned and accepted, by some, with indifference. And from time to time, an impression surfaces that seems to undermine popular lore and opinions regarding him or his pedagogy that is negative.[98] In this regard we cite the British historian of the Soviet Union, E.H. Carr (1892-1982), who wrote of Housman as "the most powerful intellectual machine I've ever seen in action, whose effortless handling of obscure classical texts I enormously admired and should have liked to imitate". Further on Carr stated, "I should like to think that I had learned something of his flair for cutting through a load of nonsense and getting straight to the point."[99]

Carr's assessment is one of the hallmarks of his writing: summation in brevity. He is surefooted, and at the time of writing, knew where he stood concerning Housman. Few today, looking backwards in time, would be willing to take a stand now, in the place he once stood. Certainly a more sobering and less intoxicating view is needed, if for no other reason than to avoid being tied to the 'he is a slavish disciple' ascription. Through the ensuing years, in the wake of Housman's death, justice has been done on this account – many times over – and Housman is represented properly in the light of stronger criticisms. Arnaldo Momigliano (1908-87) believed that Housman had the tendency to attack in reviews "persons smaller than himself".[100] This may be true in a sense but only in light of the idea that Housman saw himself standing in a unique sphere, without equals.

D.R. Shackleton Bailey (1917-2005) believed a publication of the many

criticisms against Housman's edition of Lucan since 1926 would make a nice collection if 'judiciously anthologized'.[101] Some could reasonably conclude that Housman was the last in a long line of traditional scholars in which stood Scaliger, Casaubon, Bentley and a few others. But however thoughtful and sympathetic this might seem, a supposition along those lines would encourage a misrepresentation of history and of the progression of classical scholarship. No one should be forced to be judged beyond the peer group of his (her) own generation. Only feeble minds will indulge in meaningless and contentious debate. Still many doltish persons have done just this and been rewarded with high accolades. Some have indeed enjoyed the leisure derived from aimless studies, but these affectations normally reside outside the field of textual criticism.

Generally, the path to textual criticism is embarked upon by those whose nimble minds are able to twist and turn with the orchestrated nuances of an author, one who presupposes that a manuscript contains a readable context of ideas along with a transferable message for every age. So the feet which trod its path are often few and their propensity towards rightness of thought draws them into close combat with their predecessors. Whereupon once the weakness of a MS is uncovered or an error is revealed, a particular reading is consigned to burn inside the belly of Phalaris' brazen bull, until another critic, some days later, sees fit to resurrect it from the ash heap of criticism for renewed life.

Conclusions in textual criticism are always exposed to the suspicion of error and the suspicion often falls more on the deceased than on the living. It goes without saying that "it is easy to wrestle with a dead man – he puts up no fight!". But wrestling with his ghost is harder still. Some do it well, most do not. It is the rare individual who is able to grasp a spirit, as Jacob did, until good fortune comes;[102] but one critic, among others whose careful analyses I have come to enjoy at leisure, a Scotsman, W.S. Watt (1913-2002), did so,[103] and from all appearances sought to lean upon scholarship's critical staff well into his old age.[104] Quite prolific, after he retired from university teaching, his contributions to editing texts of Cicero are known the world over.[105] Of his one hundred and seventy-five or so published papers and reviews there is food-a-plenty for the reader with a voracious appetite who has time to crosscheck all his feisty but tasteful corrections of Housman.[106] Even Watt was not without his critics,[107] as no scholar is.

Housman's influence still permeates the modern-critical age of Latinity in many ways, but a proper analysis is lacking of how deep this influence goes and of how it is to be registered and scored in the present day. Most critics tend to prefer refereeing the 'variant games' played by the dead. And books on Housman

have been good, bad, and ugly and everything in between.[108] A very small portion of Housman's critics (who often avoid his published papers) draw questionable conclusions concerning his character and reputation, savouring whatever is unseemly; most classicists refrain from making moral judgments, as well they should, in their approach to his writings. But Housman, the Classicist, would make an ideal subject for a 'companion or very short introductory volume'. It would be nice to have one with a varied approach which treats issues outside his scholarship and assesses his publications from new angles. Submitted now are a few thoughts:

> He contributed to the understanding of far more than one hundred and seventy ancient Greek and Roman writers and little in this regard is known by those infatuated with his allusive poetry. His textual contributions, both positively and negatively, need to be evaluated by multitudes of specialists in their respective authorial fields – since he did much more than just issue critical texts of Juvenal, Lucan and Manilius.
>
> His philological style and historical-linguistic philosophy could stand adjustment and reconfiguration: his papers are filled with countless Greek and Roman words heaped one upon the other and traced out from Homeric times unto the centuries of Late Antiquity. The theory and method of translation he employed is untreated – note how he adorns Greek and Roman phrases in English garb – his English translations vary in quality.[109]
>
> A reconstruction of the sources cited in his classical papers and 'how he used and (de)valued them' needs refinement. And certainly a sound, rational introduction to his scholarly life and career as a classicist – by a single author or in a series of published articles – has been wanted for decades.

Varia on Housman

X. The disparate facts compiled below accumulated rapidly over a period of time and accentuate those authors or volumes or statements Housman used to spice up his published papers. He read widely and the references are nearly always utilized to tone up a particular Greek or Latin phrase or definition which seems to have eluded so many other capable minds.

Housman's poetry is known for its allusive style, and interest is piqued as inter-textual moments are noted. With so many fabulous tales and stories swarming Great Britain it is no wonder he appropriated 'remaining images'[110] for his metrical writings. In his classical papers the sparse remains are not so exciting. But those listed here are well worth the perusal, if you have the time to read prose and

poetry in English and Latin and Greek. Amid others, Housman mentions the tongue of Shakespeare and the faith and morals of Milton (1608-74), pp. 484, 966[111]; Tennyson (1809-92), p. 350; Southey (1774-1843), p. 486; Longfellow (1807-82), p. 486; E. Young (1683-1765), p. 855; V. Hugo (1802-85), p. 916; Pope (1688-1744), p. 1198; Ben Jonson (1572-1657), p. 942; Shakespeare (1564-1616),[112] pp. 942, 1115, 1173; C. Marlowe (1564-93), p. 942.

Housman's use of the bible in his poetry has been treated before.[113] In his earlier academic statements, his profession of atheism was silent and his introductory lecture of 1892 at University College would have left no one with any impression other than that he was historically aligned, one who feared God[114] and was fond of Holy Scripture. Knowing of his generation's awareness of holy writ he generously interspersed his writings with biblical citations and allusions.

Stating his opinion of Mr Owen (p. 903), Housman alludes to *Genesis* 15:6 and *Galatians* 3:6; complaining of scholars who are like Pilate (p. 905), he alludes to *Matthew* 27:24; the phrase, casting pearls before swine (p. 962), cites *Matthew* 7:6; referring to the Queen of Sheba (p. 968), he alludes to *I Kings* 10; on the "grave" reference (p. 976), he cites *I Corinthians* 15:55; on Balaam and the ass (p. 977), he refers to *Numbers* 22:24; Israel's prayer (p. 1147) refers to *Psalms* 83:13; again, a reference to Balaam (p. 1163) is from *Numbers* 22; the footnote on p. 1166 contains the phrase "all things are possible" mockingly, which is lifted from *Matthew* 19:26; the blood of Naboth and Jezebel (p. 1244) is connected to the story of *I Kings* 21.[115]

Patristic study mandates that a student of its history sift through the morass of (in)credible Late Antiquity writings whose authors more often than not engaged first- and second-century writers and their books. Housman's use of Patristic documents or of the Church Fathers was restricted to tracing a locution's history, its formation or parallel meanings. Here are several men cited by Housman in his work: Tertullian (AD 166-220) pp. 998-9, 1118, 1149, 1195; Minucius Felix (c. AD 150-270) pp. 925, 960; Eustathius (AD 1110-98) p. 981; Jerome (AD 347-420) *HCP* I, pp. 156, 160, 168, *HCP* III, pp. 1115, 1153; St John Chrysostom (AD 347-407) p. 1226; V. Vitensis (born c. AD 430) p. 1119; Stephanus Byzantius (c. 6th cent. AD), pp. 902, 1036, 1085. In *HCP* II: Gregory of Tours (AD 538-94), p. 644; Lactantius (c. AD 240 -320), pp. 689-90, 895; Gregory of Nazianzus (AD 335-94), p. 856; Cyprian († AD 258) p. 856;

Another less prominent poet in Housman's writings, but certainly useful to his work,[116] was Tibullus. Housman wrote "Tibullus' MSS are almost the worst in the world"(*HCP* I, p. 409). That little detail did not prevent him from mastering Tibullus' style. The index to Housman's papers list only three citations of Tibullus

on pp. 149, 594 and 1123. As with many ancient figures, his use was purely philological. Below are page references and – where cited – books and verses from *Tibullus*. In the pages of *HCP* I: p. 46: Tib. 3.4.64; p. 48: 1.2.46; p. 49 1.2.45; p. 131: 2.5.118; p. 163: 4.1.39; p. 249: 2.4.27-30; p. 276: *pollio-desino*; p. 291: 4.5.15 (3.2.15); p. 391: 1.5.14; p. 409: 1.6.45; p. 410: 4.1.129; in the pages of *HCP* II: p. 439: Tib. 2.5.66; p. 574: 2.5.5; p. 633: 3.5.38/4.7.8; p .646: 1.2.6; p. 739: *seposita uestis*; p. 786: 1.3.11-28; p. 821: *Cilicas;* in the pages of *HCP* III: p. 938: 1.6.81, 1.2.39, 2.3.12; p. 939: 2.3.22; p. 976: 1.5.51; p. 985: 1.10.43; p. 1115: 1.7.61; p. 1116: 4.6.19/ 1.7.61; p. 1235: 4.7.8.

Housman's obsession with the semantics or precise sense of a word or phrase forces its way into all his articles. His internal drive to "fix" broken contexts and to "emend" fractured texts leads to his continued use of the word, *sense*, over and over again.[117] Here are more items to add to the "sense" category: pp. 908, 912, 918-22, 928, 930, 932, 934, 951, 963, 975, 987, 1009, 1017, 1032, 1072, 1075, 1081, 1108, 1117, 1127, 1129, 1160, 1212, 1221, 1236, 1238, 1240-41, 1247.

Value of Housman's *Classical Papers*

XI. Compiling a *Festschrift*[118] has become a well-worn method of honouring a respected colleague. By amassing articles from friends, mentors and students, one is able to see how a man or woman has altered or engaged a field or several fields of study. Collected papers, on the other hand, help unravel a number of knotty problems that could never be untangled otherwise. Reading a writer or author chronologically helps situate a person in a particular context. In this case, everything from public notices, journal entries, and letters to newspaper clippings can have a bearing on one's outlook. The three volumes of Housman's *Classical Papers* have created a unique vista for looking backwards into the past, as if overlooking an ancient world.

And this new perspective is bold and grand. There are narrow streets, wide by-passes, side roads and trails here and there. Most of all there are the tall skyscraping structures which, when dissected piece by piece, begin to seem humane and less ornate. Pausanias' (c. AD 143-76) movements brought us into contact with forgotten peoples and places of antiquity and we are forever grateful. Now we have another *periegesis* – descriptive guide – in Housman's essays. Like most editions of Greek and Latin papers, they really are more than critical studies of texts. They are guides which lead us about through archaic periods unto later times in Roman antiquity.

Inside Housman's world, we come to see that *Hellas*' first historians, Herodotus and Thucydides, are there to help paint a clearer picture for the inquisitive. Often we can hear the major poets of the Augustan age reciting their verse on the corners. We observe Sophocles, Euripides and Aeschylus seldom playing to small crowds. Homeric glosses lay strewn along the road, while comedians and satirists vie for the attention of others. Rhetoricians, even, explain obscure MS readings and mark out the long and shorts in a line of verse: all this and more in Housman. If there is more than a hint of nostalgia attached to the Housman corpus it is because it is a capital city in the world of textual criticism and should be visited often. There is so much to see and feel.

When Petrarch visited Rome in 1337, he, like other pilgrims, found it all so startling. Its physical features brought to life many authors whom he had read privately – so reminiscent of Gilbert Highet's award winning book *Poets in a Landscape,* where every stone and mountain and all the sky overhead seem to cry out *Carpe Diem!* All that Petrarch felt while alone wandering the Italian streets of Rome was true and real. *Seize the day! Seize the day!* It was so real in his mind, later he penned words which duly express an honest textualist's thought when departing the confines of Housman's mega-city of criticism: *de civitate… illa, cui nulla similis fuit, nulla futura est.*[119] Of course, the educated tourists come and go. But the inhabitant of Housman's worlds will forever dwell in his long shadow.[120]

A Poem in memory of Housman

Along ancient paths he strolled
    Possessed of rancorous muse and roaring sounds;
Dwelling in an unsmiling world
    He walked to the edges of life and there died –
Suddenly and quietly.

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NOTES

1. Hereafter Housman's *Classical Papers* shall be referred to as *HCP* I, II, III. For the names of those who have read and commented on this paper, refer to the end of the main text.

2. Quoted from *HCP* III, *Review: H.E. Butler and E.A. Barber,* The Elegies of Propertius, p. 1234.

3. See *Epist*. 46.1, *Sol me invitabat, fames admonebat, nubes minebantur; tamen exhausi totum*.

4. Housman's vigorous style is reminiscent to me, in many ways, of Tertullian's (AD 160-220) aggressive manner throughout his treatise *De Spectaculis*.

5. Housman enjoyed Catullus' artistry and said as much: "Of all Latin poets Catullus is the most sensitive to position," in *HCP* III, *Prosody and Method II*, p.1140.

6. So Stephen Harrison, "[S. Heyworth] plausibly notes that Horace is more influential than Propertius on Housman's poetry." D.J. Butterfield and C.A. Stray (edd.), *A.E. Housman: Classical Scholar* (London, 2009), *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2010.03.58.

7. For one example of this, see Robert Douglas-Fairhurst, 'Housman's Rejected addresses', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 151 (2007), pp. 83-111. This lecture covers Housman's poetry in a round-about way. The author provides a fulsome and very candid portrayal of how he perceived Housman, both poetically and morally, especially in section III of the paper. This paper is a guiding light to one point: subjectivism as the governing ethic of many poetry seminars. This is the reason that so few students of Housman's poetry actively engage with his Classical papers, because with regard to them there is little room for re-imagining.

In the aftermath of Housman's failed exams in May 1881 at Oxford, myth-making arose as a new department of science in Housmanniana. So many urban legends abound now surrounding A.E.H. and Moses Jackson that if documentary evidence comes to the fore to support all the extant theories little will be left to be said. Maybe some ingenious hack will come along and raise a new theory: that Housman's mentioning of the boxer, Rose Harland, in *A Shropshire Lad* #25 was really a subliminal message to future readers of his love for the masculine female pugilist type. This hypothesis is as plausible and as unattested as the jabberwocky available presently. Now that A. Jackson's book, *A Fine View of the Show* (2009) is published, is it possible to say that any new light has been shed on the Alfred/Moses relationship authors so often fantasize about in print? (although it is nice to know that Housman considers Moses to be largely responsible for his poetry writing). Finally, maybe, writers will return to reading Housman's poetry as poetry rather than as a judgment on Victorian prudery, or as a mirror reflecting petty in-print fisticuffs over twenty-first century inclusion.

8. Housman's labours among ancient writers of Christendom are a less explored field of study. Much unlike (his heroes) – cf. Joseph Scaliger's *Historical Criticism of the New Testament by H.J. De Jonge*; or Richard Bentley's *Proposals for a New Edition of the Greek New Testament*; or Richard Porson's *Letters to Mr. Archdeacon Travis, in answer to his defence of the three heavenly witnesses, I John 5.7* – Housman declined to offer his services for the betterment of the greater mass of church-related studies, confining his citations of 'Church Fathers' to his own philological pursuits – see section X. *Varia* in this paper. But Lorenzo Valla (1407-57) discredited the value of the supposed *Donation of Constantine* and removed a historical basis for the temporal rule of the papacy. Then later, T.C. Skeat (1907-2003) undermined the "improbable" theory that the Codex Sinaiticus was a survivor from the consignment of MSS ordered by Constantine. If Housman had only entered the biblical-textual fray, literary wars would have been waged, and in the aftermath of these skirmishes, new light might have shone on many obscurities now found in the Greek New Testament texts.

9. Horace presents his own assessment of Albius Tibullus, wondering whether he is writing, wandering or meditating, especially since the gods appear to have blessed Tibullus with good looks and the sense to enjoy life.

10. Originally published in 1909 and entitled *Europe's Optical Illusion*. In 1910 the title was changed.

11. R. Brooke (1887-1915), E. Thomas (1878-1917), S. Sassoon (1886-1967), I. Gurney (1890-1937), I. Rosenberg, (1890-1918), W. Owen (1893-1918), D. Jones (1895-1974).

12. Remarkably, Housman accomplished all that he did without a doctoral degree. He refused many honorary awards, even the Order of Merit in 1929. Doctoral level studies were popular in some places around the world. While P. Shorey (1857-1934) was finishing his doctoral work in Berlin in 1884, Housman was already

producing articles and notes which were unrivalled by European peers. Graduate level studies in Great Britain were considered (by some professors) to match that of any other European post-graduate institution. F.F. Bruce (1910-90), a Scottish scholar, was an eminent Biblicist and trained strictly as a Classicist – in Aberdeen, Cambridge and Vienna – yet he later deplored the overseas, American belief that assumed the non-completion of the PhD to be a handicap to future academic work, believing most doctoral students to be rather deficient in their research. He even pondered the idea of writing an article entitled, "the menace of the Ph.D. cult!"; cf. *In Retrospect* (posthumous edition, 1993), p. 97. Similarly, C.H. Dodd (1884-1973), distinguished himself as a classicist, specializing in numismatics and inscriptions. He offered a few pointed words concerning his training under his classics tutor, A.B. Poynton (1867-1944) (in contrast to the German model), "[Poynton] saw the task of scholarship not as the reinterpretation of ancient masterpieces or the rediscovery of ancient modes of thought but simply as the transmission of the most exact possible mastery of two ancient languages." Cf. F.W. Dillistone, *C.H. Dodd: Interpreter of the New Testament* (London/Grand Rapids, 1977), p. 44. Dodd did later receive an Oxford D.D. in 1951 after an outstanding career in New Testament criticism; having sat – in Germany – through the lectures of Adolf Harnack (1851-1930) and U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1848-1931) as he studied 'coins' in Berlin.

13. Horace, *Epistles* 1.1.14.

14. See the comments of Gilbert Highet (1906-78) on the effects of the aftermath of World War One in a lecture given in 1975 to the New York Classical Club, entitled "Then and Now: The Classics Profession", in R.J. Ball (ed.), *The Unpublished Lectures of Gilbert Highet* (Michigan, 1998), pp. 297-314.

15. Although the Germans, a century prior, had pioneered new and exciting fields of scientific investigation, English scholarship at the turn of the twentieth century, which has as of now received much bad press, still pursued "classics" as a driving, living force capable of molding a rational man. It was deemed necessary for the cultured politician and for the religious creatures who donned clerical robes to preach to multitudes of ancient worlds mostly unknown. This aspect of moral grounding was/is wholly absent from a number of German models of investigation. There were German *gymnasiums* that held to a higher standard in Classical studies and acquitted themselves accordingly. Moreover historical differences in the methods used for educating the middle-class within Germany and England are marked and may be measured and sharply contrasted by the publications issued by the distinguished leaders and scholars of the day. In Great Britain, English literary appreciation, too, was unattractive to Housman. He was a maverick with little interest for marching in step to the percussions of either English or German drummer boys.

16. Now let us describe 'how textual criticism might be performed' in a way that is helpful for the educated layman or the unlearned. Today there are still a handful

of nations around the world which ban certain religions and/or suppress religious dogma of any type by means of violent measures. In some locations, adherents have taken to residing briefly in countries adjacent to their own in order to hand-write their religious texts as a reinforcement of memorization. This practicum later pays rich dividends. Upon returning to their own lands with 'God's Word' embedded in the human heart, there they proceed to scribble the contents which they are able to recall from memory, and the text's liturgical use is inaugurated. If this religious text were to be found centuries later and studied, a textual critic would attempt to recreate the circumstances in which it arose, master the author's literary styles, collate the religious document against any other related MSS to see whether regional nuance has played any part in its transmission, locate any or all historical figures and events cited, note all foreign loan words which have been imported into the text, also restore – through conjecture – letters, words, and phrases s/he believes to be appropriate. In the end, all the critic's conclusive findings would be published, somewhat in the scholarly format of *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri Project*.

17. So F.M. Cross, 'Early Alphabetic Scripts' in id., *Leaves from an Epigrapher's Notebook: Collected papers in Hebrew and West Semitic Palaeography and Epigraphy* (Harvard, 2003), p. 339: "From the standpoint of the Orientalist, certain standard arguments of classicists for a late date of the borrowing of the alphabet no longer carry weight." Other proposals for earlier dates of Grecian alphabetic borrowing – such as J. Naveh's 1100 BC suggestion – are cited extensively in Cross' footnotes.

18. Aristophanes of Byzantium established a system of metrics for reading old texts, added simple diacritics in order to stabilize readings for all time, and provided a method of punctuation. Other Alexandrian librarians whose contributions are no less great are Zenodotus, Apollonius Rhodius, Eratosthenes and Aristarchus; cf. L.D. Reynolds and N.G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature* (3rd ed., Oxford, 1991), p. 8.

19. *Reading the Past: Ancient writing from Cuneiform to the Alphabet* (Berkeley/ London, 1990) has more than enough material for the student of epigraphy. It contains several important articles: 'Introduction' by J.T. Hooker; 'Cuneiform' by C.B.F. Walker; 'Egyptian Hieroglyphics' by W.V. Davies; 'Linear B' by J. Chadwick; 'The Early Alphabet' by J.F. Healey; 'Greek Inscriptions' by B.F. Cook and 'Etruscan' by L. Bonfante. For my notes you should study the photographs in the section entitled, 'Introduction to Greek Inscriptions' (pp. 262-75).

20. Quotations are lifted from C.S. Gardner, *Chinese Traditional Historiography* (Harvard, 1961), p. 18. See especially two chapters: 'Textual Criticism' (pp. 18-63) and 'Historical Criticism' (pp. 64-8).

21. "There is a considerable amount of material, especially in the Pyramid texts, Coffin texts and Book of the Dead, that bears upon the subject of textual criticism,"

so stated E.F. Wente, Emeritus Professor of Egyptology at the University of Chicago, in a personal note to me. On the Akaddian side of things, textual criticism, as understood in the modern sense, was unknown to Mesopotamian regions, although there is evidence of a recension of the Gilgamesh epic. Through accurate collations of tablets and fragments, J.H. Tigay published a thorough analysis of some scribal tendencies in his astute book *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic* (Philadelphia, 1982; repr. 2002): see especially Chapter 6. The most comprehensive study may be found in A.R. George's two-volume masterpiece: *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic* (Oxford, 2003). For information on the present state of textual criticism concerning Sumerian texts, see the introductory remarks in *Variation in Sumerian Literary Composition: A case study based on the Decad*, a massive 2,525-page PhD dissertation presented in 2006 by Paul Delnero to the Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, available online at bolhapiac.valodi.hu/tumi/delnerodisscomplete.pdf. Another resource by Paul Delnero is 'Pre-verbal /n/: function, distribution and stability' in J. Ebeling and G. Cunningham (edd.), *Analysing Literary Sumerian: A Corpus-based Approach* (London, 2007), pp. 105-43. According to Dr John Huehnergard of the University of Texas at Austin, (with respect to ancient scribes' use of sources) "we have similar evidence in the text of the Hebrew Bible, e.g., the Deuteronomist's mention of court records and other sources in I and II Kings". Moreover, there are colophons in literary and scholarly texts which state that scribes used multiple copies of texts they were transcribing – even declaring that they arose in areas such as Babylonia and Assyria. Prof. Grant Frame, Associate Curator of the Babylonian section of the Pennsylvania Museum, and a specialist in the history and culture of Mesopotamia in the first millennium BCE, informed me that even though there were commentaries written to help explicate "hard to understand" texts, there is little evidence of the mention of any variants. Another antique form of criticism may be seen in the extant texts of the ancient Hittites. They adapted older rituals as well as foreign material and often utilized more than one strand of source material. Professor G. Huxley directed me to the Luwiya/Arzawa instance of ancient Hittite textual criticism. In a 14th century BC set of Hittite Laws (19a), there may be evidence – depending on one's reading of document KBo 6.3 – of political influence which led to a scribal change from the old 'Luwiya' script to the new 'Arzawa' variant. The most recent discussion of the variations of this matter is by Ilya Yakubovich in *Sociolinguistics of the Luvian Language* (Leiden, 2010). I am indebted to H. Craig Melchert, Hittitologist, and A. Richard Diebold, Professor of Indo-European languages at UCLA, for his insights into this particular knotty issue of Hittite criticism. One further note: forensic studies of Eastern texts also show that ancient scribes engaged in some type of critical study and arrangement of material in their textual labours.

22. The *Septuagint* is a Greek Version of the Old Testament or Hebrew scriptures, whose translation supposedly began in or around the 3rd century before Christ;

cf. H.B. Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (Cambridge, 1914). For a recent discussion on the Septuagint as a "collection of translations" see N.F. Marcos and W.G.E. Watson, *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible* (Leiden, 2010).

23. I define a 'remaining image' as a conventional feature, mainstream to society at-large, and not unique. It is an illustration or words which are stained into the cultural fabric and used as a common linguistic property of all citizens.

24. In the catalogue of early Muslim campaigns, traditional Islamic lore dictates, the Qur'an was compiled after the battle of Yamama where 70 'carriers' of the Qur'an were killed, cf. M.A. Draz, *Introduction to the Qur'an* (London, 2000), p.15. Many persons from Muhammad's inner circle were lost in battle. Most of these had memorized the Qur'an wholly. So in order to preserve the true Muhammadan oral traditions they ordered a new MS to be made by the hand of Zayd Bin Thabit and that all other MSS would be discarded. This 'tradition' has been thoroughly challenged in recent days by Christoph Luxenberg, who has ably demonstrated that the Qur'an, as a document, was and is in a state of quandary. He posits that the word 'Qur'an' is of Aramaic origin, that the Qur'an was originally a 'lectionary' comprising liturgical readings, and that it has been misread from its beginning; see his *The Syro-Aramaic Reading of the Koran: A contribution to the decoding of the language of the Koran* (Berlin, 2007). Furthermore, Luxenberg's claim, that Arabic, as a language, was not in written form at the time of the alleged compilation of the Qur'an (early 7th century A.D.) is spurious: cf. p. 10 n. 5. His citing of Theodore Noldeke's 19th century views has been proven to be misguided through the many South Arabian inscriptions unearthed. This has been treated in full by the Arabist Moshe Hanna in an essay for the Dean Burgon Society, in December 2008, issue #83, entitled 'Allah's Lexical Problems: A Critical Notebook'. In this article he traces the etymological roots of the word "Allah" prior to Islam's emergence and also gives evidence of Arabic writing which is pre-Muhammadan. Housman certainly was no fan of Islamic critical theory. He tells his hearers so in his lecture on the 'Application of Thought to Textual Criticism'. His complaints against naïve readers adopting the prejudices of a writer without the necessary mental equipment to search out an author's assertions are given plainly in the statement "Stand on a barrel in the streets in Baghdad, and say in a loud voice, 'Twice two is four, and ginger is hot in the mouth, therefore Mohammad is the prophet of God', and your logic will probably escape criticism" (*HCP* III, p. 1061). For another statement by Housman critical of Muhammadan lore, see *HCP* II, p. 842: Housman is attempting to untie the knots of a horoscope dilemma in his note, 'Dorotheus Again, and others', and compares these poetic remains to the "pretended geniture of Mohammad". In Islamic tradition, 51 generations or 2260 years are alleged to exist between Abraham and Abdullah, Muhammad's father.

25. A clearheaded account of events of the second, third and early fourth century, and a corollary to the above discussion, can be found in Peter Brown's 1976 Carl

Newell Jackson Lectures, published as *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA, 1978).

26. It is believed by many scholars that our small number of MSS of select ancient authors must stem from their suppression and destruction during this timeframe.

27. One must not forget that during the period formerly designated 'the Dark Ages' in the West, on the Byzantine side, in the East, the Greek Orthodox church, as well as independent scholars, preserved many valuable Greek MSS. In the West, scribes of the Roman Church also protected various Latin MSS. When the Renaissance ignited, multitudes of these MSS were retrieved and once again put into circulation through their transcription.

28. The most recent comparative illustration would be the dispersion of Orientalists and Classicists to the far-flung corners of the earth before and during and after the Holocaust. Most Orientalists were classically trained prior to work in Semitics. Rabbi Rosenblatt, speaking of W.F. Albright (1891-1971) said, "when Hitler came to power..., I know personally that he, Albright, must have helped at least five hundred scholars that came to this country – provided them with positions or recommended them very highly, so that they were able to continue their work in this country, thanks to his deep interest" (D.N. Freedman and L. Running, *William Foxwell Albright: A Twentieth Century Genius* (New York, 1975), p. 186. As far as the area of humanities, classical departments from Europe, North America and Australia (and other places) are grateful for the German, French and Italian scholars who helped change Western scholarship for the better. This has been explained in detail by W.M. Calder III in 'The Refugee Scholars in the USA: An Evaluation of their Contribution', *Illinois Classical Studies* 17.1 (1992), pp. 153-73. However, this is an article to be read with caution: it gives a heavily undervalued view (in many ways wholly negative) of American and English classical scholarship in the early 20th century. The word "dilettante" is the dismissive catchword used to counter fans of the British and American scholarship of that era. There is a risk, in my opinion, that a reader, whose native tongue is not English, easily can misread him to be an extreme Teutonophile and/or mistake Calder's genius in historical writings to exhibit debatable academic prejudices; although these certainly are not his literary intentions. Moreover, Calder's views on P. Shorey (1857-1934) deserve renewed critique in light of the role of patriotism – affection for one's fatherland – and how it might obstruct or enhance a scholar's worldview at the time of his or her literary activity. In a note to me, the editor, David Butterfield has offered a few words of historical import: "As to Calder's comments on the state of American Classical scholarship at the turn of the 20th century, it is very true that it lagged markedly behind the wider breadth, and greater austerity, of German scholarship. The few notable exceptions of the late-19th century typically spent a few years in Germany, and were very thankful for that enlightening experience. In Britain, scholarship was certainly practised with rigour and by a serried host of formidable scholars, but the virtue of mastering wide swathes of *Altertumswissenschaft* was still held by a comparatively small

portion of professional classicists."

29. See M.D. Reeve's article 'Classical Scholarship' in J. Kraye (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 20-46.

30. For insightful historical comments on the Vatican Library and its medieval and Renaissance holdings, see Carmela Franklin's paper '"*Pro communi doctorum virorum comodo*": The Vatican Library and Its Service to Scholarship', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 146. 4 (Dec. 2002), pp. 363-84.

31. R. Pfeiffer's *History of Classical Scholarship from 1300-1850* (Oxford, 1976) treats this period but is found to be wanting by E.J. Kenney, *Classical Review* n.s. 28.1 (1978), pp.131-4.

32. These names are not intended to be exhaustive in any sense of the word. They are merely indicators of the kinds of scholarship arising from one's love of scholarship and antiquity.

33. C.D. Ginsburg (1831-1914), an outstanding Hebraist, shed the most light on this area in his 1867 translation of Jacob Ben Hayyim's (1470-1538) *Introduction to the Rabbinic Bible*. Also his republication of *Masoret ha-Masoret* by Elias Levita (1469-1549) demonstrates the operations of true Humanist-Hebraists in their field. Critical connections between Classicists and Orientalists of the 19th century are on display in the marginalia of an old Ethiopian Grammar in my possession written by Job Ludolph (1624-1704). My copy was owned at one time by the redoubtable Divine and Semitist, Dr Samuel Lee (1783-1852) of Queens' College, Cambridge, founder of Ethiopic studies in Europe, and later became the property of Dr William Henry Green (1825-1900), at one time pastor, then eminent Professor of Biblical and Oriental Literature in Princeton Seminary and University. The scholia reflect both professors' musings in the Latin and Arabic languages, each being former Latin instructors.

34. Standing shoulder to shoulder were major Renaissance and Reformer figures: Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536) ~ Martin Luther (1483-1546); George Buchanan (1506-82) ~ John Knox (1510-72); Francis Portus (1511-81) ~ John Calvin (1509-64); Richard Croke (1489-1558) ~ Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556).

35. See preface of W.W. Briggs (ed.), *The Selected Classical Papers of Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve* (Atlanta, 1992). Prof. Briggs states that his writings fill more than 3,500 pages. It should be said that these were all writings of extremely high quality and depth.

36. B.L. Gildersleeve was 25 years old when he was made the Professor of Greek and Hebrew and the University of Virginia, in *Jefferson, Cabell and the University of Virginia* (1906) by John S. Patton, p. 333.

37. James H. Breasted (1865-1935), who held the first chair of Egyptology in the United States for the University of Chicago, was less impressed with

Gildersleeve's scholarship and wrote as much of him. Travelling onboard a ship, he had just completed *The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page* (1855-1918) by B.J. Hendrick when the radio "announced [Jan. 13, 1924] the death of Page's former teacher." In speaking of how ambassador Page was trained in research, Breasted wrote, "When it came to researches, Gildersleeve set him to investigating the detailed history of a Greek adverb from Homer onward! That is the kind of thing our classicists have been steeped in, and in spite of Gildersleeve's great services to learning and research (his students hold professorships all over the US), he never contributed anything toward a broader view of ancient Greek life as a chapter in human development." See C. Breasted, *Pioneer to the Past: The Story of James Henry Breasted, Archaeologist* (New York, 1943; repr. 1977), p. 354. Prof. Briggs has drawn my attention to a significant point: it appears that Page was a student of Gildersleeve for only one year in the Seminary but years later thought enough of Gildersleeve to invite him to write for the *Atlantic* when Page edited it, "which ultimately led to 'The Creed of the Old South' and 'A Southerner in the Peloponnesian War'," as stated to me by Prof. Briggs.

38. Albright's article, 'Some Oriental Glosses on the Homeric Problem', *AJA* 54 (1850), pp. 162-76, is still enlightening after more than six decades.

39. See foreword of D.N. Freedman, R.B. MacDonald and D.L. Mattson (edd.), *The Published Works of William Foxwell Albright: A Comprehensive Bibliography* (New York, 1975).

40. Cf. 'The Creed of the Old South', pp. 361-88, or 'A Southerner in the Peloponnesian War' in W.W. Briggs, *A Soldier and Scholar: Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve and the Civil War* (Charlottesville, 1998), pp. 389-413.

41. Review: S.G. Owen, *P. Ouidi Nasonis Tristium libri quinque* (p. 903); 'Ovid, *Ibis* 512 and *tristia* III 6 8' (p. 905); 'Ouidiana' (p. 915); 'Transpositions in the *Ibis* of Ovid' (p. 969); 'The *Ibis* of Ovid' (p. 1018); Review: A. Rostagni, *Ibis* (p. 1049). This affection for Ovid continues in his word-studies in *Heroides* and other *Ovidiana* in the appendix.

42. As far back as 1888, in 'Emendationes Propertianae', Housman detected an Ovidian dependence of Propertius (*HCP* I, 41, 43, 44). Housman noticed how closely Ovid often 'imitated' Propertius in his verses.

43. Housman and Lindsay's disagreements are carefully registered by D.J. Butterfield, 'Housman and W.M. Lindsay', pp. 193-216, Butterfield and Stray 2009. Other paleographical comments – both positive and negative – cf. *HCP* III, 954, 968, 994, 1016, 1058, 1116, 1244. In the year 1889, in 'Notes on Latin Poets [I]' (*HCP* I, 108) Housman is found announcing his own paleographical opinions.

44. Burnett, *The Letters of A.E. Housman* (Oxford, 2007).

45. Burnett cites in a footnote Paul Naiditch's suggestion that Housman was mistaken about when his "serious study of the German language" actually began: see

Burnett, *Letters* (2007), p. 30.

46. By most oral accounts which I have heard from elderly American citizens, the steady influx of European immigrants along with their desire to assimilate led to monolingual systems of education throughout most of the United States. Although many retained a practice of using their mother tongue in the homes, in the inaugurated government school system (in contrast to private schools and immigrant founded places of worship) an English-only mindset developed. The literary evidences of the timeframe demonstrate that Latin and French (in parts of the South) and German (in the Heartland States) were quickly disappearing except where studied specially, e.g. parochial schools *et cetera*. For an authoritative affirmation of my statement on America's bilingual histories c. 1880, see J. Fitzgerald, 'Views on Bilingualism in the United States: A Selective Historical Review', *Bilingual Research Journal* 17.1/2 (Winter/Spring 1993), pp. 35-56.

47. E.g. French: pp. 916, 982, 1116, 1148, 1158, 1168, 1172, 1195, 1239; German: *HCP* I , p. 54; *HCP* II p. 849; *HCP* III, pp. 926, 934, 936, 962, 974, 976, 978, 986, 990, 995-6, 1057, 1100, 1130, 1136; Dutch: p. 1047; Italian: pp. 1050, 1154.

48. *HCP* III, 'Notes on Seneca's Tragedies', p. 1073.

49. Although he spent years on his Manilius volumes, there are few published articles in *HCP* III resulting from this detailed labour.

50. Richard Jebb's excellent monograph for the Men of Letter series, *Richard Bentley* (London, 1882), is still a thoughtful appreciation of R. Bentley's work.

51. Cf. J. Hodgson, *An account of the Life and Writings of Richard Dawes* (Newcastle, 1828), who began his memoir of Dawes writing "after the death of Bentley, [Dawes] stood pre-eminently at the head of Greek literature in these kingdoms". Housman's critique of Dawes' abilities is not so lavish but worthy of a look in *HCP* III, 1004: Review: I Bywater, *Four Centuries of Greek Learning in England*.

52. M.L. Clarke's *Richard Porson: A Biographical Essay* will provide you with sound insight into the man, his scholarship and his world. For those who have no fear of perusing obsolete material, Charles Anthon's (1797-1867) review of 'The Life of Richard Porson' by John Selby Watson (London, 1861) in *Harpers New Monthly Magazine* (Sept. 1861) is of interest as a peephole into how scholars were scrutinized in the mid-19th century.

53. Paul Shorey (1857-1934) referred to Jebb as "easily first... of all European scholars since the Renaissance" in a 1919 address to the American Philological Association (*TAPA* 50 (1919), 39). This is certainly a debatable point.

54. See C.O. Brink, *English Classical Scholarship: Historical Reflections on Bentley, Porson and Housman* (Cambridge, 1985, repr. 2010).

55. Sebastiano Timpanaro, in his *The Genesis of Lachman's Method* (tr. G.W. Most)

(Chicago, 2005), proposed a new way of reading Lachmann. He insisted that Lachmann merely assembled theories already known and popularized them, such as: J. Le Clerc's (1657-1736) *lectio potior difficilior*, 'the more difficult reading is better', p. 63; J. Bengel's (1687-1752) family theory, p. 66; J.S. Semler's (1725-1791) external and internal age of readings, p. 69. Timpanaro's thesis is really beside the point: Lachmann's procedures invaded all critical fields from secular/profane studies in ancient Greco-Roman studies and Renaissance texts, unto Old and New Testament critical work. Lachmann's theories set aside so many useful manuscripts that Housman's strictures in textual criticism were intended to thwart the "family" theory which from time to time could hinder specious investigations into allegedly derivative texts. In the twenty-first century Housman's eclectic reasoning is being reconfigured by the many scholars today who now study medieval and ancient scholia side-by-side and produce amazing first edition volumes (*editiones principes*) in classical fields, while text-critical studies of sacred texts are still, for the most part, limping along aided only by Lachmann's aged and feeble crutches.

56. M.L. West's benchmark work, *Textual Criticism and Editorial Technique* (Leipzig, 1973), replaced Paul Maas' *Textkritik* (Leipzig, 1957) as the standard work on critical procedure. On page 70, West says: "An associated problem that may face the editor is that of deciding what exactly it is that he is trying to constitute."

57. Possibly his best short MS examination is 'The Codex Lipsiensis of Manilius', *HCP* III, 1046.

58. *HCP* III, 'Ovidiana', 924.

59. The canons of textual criticism in use at the time were those adopted and adapted by Lachmann, namely: (1) Where all authorities agree the text is best established; (2) A text is doubtful when various MSS are defective at the place of citation; (3) The text is authentic where MSS of differing geographical reaches agree; (4) The text is doubtful when texts of various regions disagree; (5) When one regional MS shows a reading which contradicts a reading from another region, that text is very doubtful; (6) All texts which are in dispute on account of a classification in (4) or (5) are to be supplanted and replaced by the preferred reading of the majority of regional MSS under study, see *Preface* of Lachmann's 1850 edition of the New Testament. Lachmann's rules were also used by B.F Westcott (1825-1901) and F.H.A. Hort (1828-1892) for the construction of their *New Testament in the Original Greek*, which undergirded the 1881 *English Revised Versio*n of the New Testament. It was ably refuted, though dismissed by all scholars, in *The Revision Revised* by the Anglican cleric Dean John William Burgon (1813-88). Since Greek MSS generally lack signatures of authorship, Burgon spoke of the absurdity of Westcott and Hort's propositions by comparing the "genealogical evidence" theory of transmission to a group of persons who are assigned the task of digging up bones in a cemetery and then attempting to designate which cadaver-remains are related to the other, and this is to be accomplished despite the fact that none of the graves are marked or possess headstones, *The Revision Revised* (London,

1883), p. 256. Of these rules of criticism, conservatives on the opposing side argue that few courts in any land today would adjudicate a (textual) case apart from fact, witness or evidence; yet this, in the main, is believed to be the tendency today within academic circles. A preponderance of evidence is often refused so long as an "improbable" thesis is well argued and a jury of peers (scholarly consensus) finds in its favour. I am grateful to G. Huxley for reminding me of the indispensable contributions of Alexander Souter (1873-1949), a distinguished New Testament editor and former Yates Professor of Greek and Exegesis at Mansfield College, Oxford: Souter's trilogy – *Novum Testamentum Graece*, *Text and Canon of the New Testament* and *A Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament* – merits further commendation. It should also be noted that Souter was also man that Housman believed equally qualified to stand for the Corpus Christi Latin Chair to which E. Fraenkel succeeded: cf. Burnett, *Letters*, p. 457.

60. *HCP* III, 'Ovidiana', p. 928

61. *HCP* III, 'Transpositions in the Ibis of Ovid', p. 969.

62. Ibid., p. 976.

63. *HCP* III, '*Siparum* and *Supparus*', p. 997.

64. *HCP* III, '*Nihil* in Ovid', p. 1003. Housman's ideas of "customs" were usually in opposition to the current German methods. In another place, Housman complains of the German's editorial propensity to put the worst possible MS reading in the text, e.g. in his short piece, 'Notes on Phaedrus' at III 17 5-11, regarding the choice between *genitor* or *gentium* he writes: "If Phaedrus falls into the hands of this generation of Germans, we shall find *gentium* in the text and this note in the commentary: 'Die Überlieferung der besten Hss. ist ohne Tael: vgl. Verg. Aen. VIII 36 gente deum, X 228 (Catull. 64 23, Sil. XIII 862) deum gens, XL 305 gente deorum, Hor. Carm. I 3 26 gens humana, Manil. I 236 gentes hominum atque ferarum." *HCP* III, 659. In the 1907 publication 'Luciliana' (p. 678ff.), Housman wrote: "In Germany at the present moment, as everyone knows, an editor who wishes to be praised (unless, like one or two influential persons, he has a troop of retainers who will applaud whatever he does) he must be a conservative editor; that is to say, he must defend the MS tradition not only where it appears to be right but also where it appears to be wrong." On another occasion, upon hearing a lecture by J.S. Phillimore, in which he spoke ill of German scholarship, Housman sent him a note saying, "I should say for the last 100 years individual German scholars have been the superior in genius, and tact, as well as learning, and industry of all scholars outside Germany except Madvig and Cobet"; cf. Burnett, *Letters*, p. 422. For an excellent obituary of Carel Gabriel Cobet, see *Classical Review* 3 (1889), pp. 470-4, in which W.G. Rutherford states, "[Cobet] will always be remembered as the greatest Greek scholar of this century." Housman's love for Cobet was not shared by all. American Classicist/titan, B.L. Gildersleeve, took a less than enthusiastic position of Cobet's abilities in *AJPh* 31 (1910), p.490, and also in *AJPh* 14 (1893), p.520 (I am grateful to Ward Briggs for

the two preceding references). Furthermore, in a review of Lewis Campbell's 1881 edition of Sophocles, John Williams White (editor of *The Scholia on the Aves of Aristophanes*) went so far as to write: "It is a relief to conservative scholars to know that both Professor Campbell and Professor Paley have refused to follow the principles laid down by C.G. Cobet, whose brilliant work in the field of conjectural criticism compels our admiration, though it fails to win our assent to his sweeping condemnation of existing Greek MSS.", *AJPh* 3 (1882), p. 95.

65. *HCP* III, Review: J.P. Postgate, *Phaedri Fabulae Aesopiae*, p. 1009.

66. *HCP* III, Review: J. Wight Duff and A.M. Duff, *Minor Latin Poets*, p. 1241. Immediately after the quoted statement, Housman proceeds to offer some 57 places where he believes misreadings and misunderstandings have occurred.

67. Housman offered his own historical MS assessment in his work on Propertius.

68. Cf. M. von Albrecht, *Cicero's Style: A synopsis followed by selected analytical studies* (Leiden, 2003); D.R. Shackleton Bailey, *A Profile of Horace* (London, 1982);. A.S. Gratwick, 'A Matter of Substance: Cato's Preface to the *De Agri Cultura*', *Mnemosyne* 54 (2002), pp. 41-72; J.T. Ramsey, 'The Proconsular Years: Politics at a Distance', in M.T. Griffin (ed.), *A Companion to Julius Caesar* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 37-56; M.C.J. Putnam, 'The Ambiguity of Art in Virgil's *Aeneid*', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 145.2 (2001), pp. 162-83; G. Sheets, 'Elements of style in Catullus' in M.B. Skinner (ed.), *A Companion to Catullus* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 190-211. All of these notable items are diverse in coverage and style and reflect how the classical field has aged since the days of Housman. And they all reflect the kinds of valid and useful analyses in which he never engaged.

69. Cf. 'Corrections and Explanations of Martial' (*HCP* II, 717): "*togae scripula* is nonsense and *flammaris togae*, so far as we know, is not even Latin." For the dismissal of a Greek word in 'Luciliana [II]' (p. 687), he writes: "In one point however I agree with Mr. Marx, in rejecting *summeirakio^de^s*. No such word exists in Greek.". In *HCP* II, 'The Aratea of Germanica', Housman says at page 501, "Never in the age of Latinity", or in 'Greek nouns in Latin poetry' he says at page 834 (of two Greek words): "I have met them in no Greek author.". Also at p. 1211, we find: "*quis non*! Is something which I did not know to be Latin."

70. Lucan's *De Bello Civili* is sometimes known as the "*Pharsalia*" on account of the expression *Pharsalia nostra* at 9. 985, on which Housman wrote a short note (*HCP* II, 532).

71. See Housman's *Lucani Bellum Civile*, p. vi.

72. A systematic attack on the 'family theory' was well under way in England long before Housman's siege began. Dean J.W. Burgon (1813-88) – of whom it was said "[i]n point of research for and, acquaintance with [Greek] cursives, he probably excelled every other English student of his time" (*The Church Quarterly*

Review 34 (1892), p. 158) – was a poet and a conservative Anglican clergyman. He was as bombastic and spirited as Housman later became. He had the same spirit and combativeness and held similar beliefs about the MSS as those later espoused by Housman. Burgon hated 'best and worst' MS ideas, deprecated it whenever possible – in print – and shocked one and all by his profound arguments and statements. B.L. Gildersleeve, a remarkably honest though opinionated man, referred to Burgon as a "vigorous controversialist", in *AJPh* 35 (1914), p. 497. After long and careful readings of both Burgon and Housman, a conjecture may be made that a widely-read Housman may have adapted and modified some of Dean Burgon's popular, scientific principles of textual criticism, which were laid out so clearly in two posthumously published volumes, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels* and *The Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text*, both issued in 1896 under the editorship of Edward Miller. Burgon was vicar at Oxford's University Church of St. Mary the Virgin until 1876, during which time his inductive studies of the last twelve verses of the Gospel of Mark were issued. These textual principles were clearly set forth in seedling form in his three latterly published essays which comprise *The Revised Revision*. J.W. Burgon felt that to adjudicate readings properly one must consider a text's *Antiquity* (its age), *Variety* (among more than a few texts), *Number* (how many MSS contain the reading), and *Respectability* (its trustworthiness) and *Continuity* (how the MS was used throughout the ages). Housman was by no means conservative in any way. He reversed the use of these fundamentals. Instead of defending traditionally held readings, he denounced standard transmitted texts and conjectured where he felt the need existed. However, all the aforementioned Burgonian ideas are readily discernable in Housman's introductions to Juvenal, Manilius I-V and in his Lucan editions; these critical ideas later became the benchmark methodology later utilized by him in attacking any editor, past or present, who put forward the notion of a 'stabilized' contemporary vulgate text for a Greek or Latin writer. All useful readings and extant MSS were to be read and considered, if possible. Of similar feeling, yet much less inflammatory with his pen than J.W. Burgon, was the textual scholar F.H.A. Scrivener (1813-91), whose *A Plain Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism* (issued in four editions, the last and 4th edition, 1894) became the standard in biblical-academic circles for the next 65 years, until along came B.M. Metzger's *The Text of the New Testament: Its transmission, Corruption and Restoration* (Oxford, 1964; 4th edition with B.D. Ehrman, Oxford, 2005).

73. Contrary to lore, Housman did, on occasion, examine MSS first-hand: see 'The *Ibis* of Ovid', p. 1020, where he speaks of adding the 'less important 'H' MS'.

74. In Housman's introduction (p. xiii) he provides a Greek text of *Acts* 17:23(b). His wording differs from both the *Textus Receptus* and the Critical Text editions, in what is a unique construction for the quoted passage: since he removes the Greek particle *oun* from his citation possibly seeing it as a redundant marker. He certainly would have had access to A. Souter's (1910), E. Nestle's (1898) and Westcott

and Hort's (1881) critical editions of the Greek New Testament: I have checked 21 editions available during his day. His form of usage appears to be a rhetorical device and/or simply a deliberate omission.

75. There is always room for discovery in the field of criticism and sound minds tend to notice what has been overlooked for ages. In October 1995, for the *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (95.10.15), Anne H. Groton reviewed A.S. Gratwick's edition of *Plautus: Menaechmi* (Cambridge, 1993) and cited a portion of Gratwick's own words (p. viii) where he states he believes he has offered "the first correct account of Plautus' iambo-trochaic media in more than 2000 years." And, in a posthumously published paper, W.S. Watt (1913-2002), a distinguished classicist, noted an error of transcription which he called "Error Wattianus": defining it as when a scribe, having to repeat one of two words which he has just written, repeats the wrong one", *Classical Quarterly* 54.2 (2004), pp. 658-60.

76. For an excellent survey of this subject, see Luigi Battezzato, Renaissance Philology: Johannes Livineius (1546-1599) and the Birth of the *Apparatus Criticus*', in C. Ligota and J.L. Quantin (edd.), *History of Scholarship: A Selection of Papers from the Seminar on the History of Scholarship held annually at the Warburg Institute* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 75-111.

77. We cannot say, for instance, whether the poet, knowing of the certainty of his death stitched and sewed up the loose endings as best he could or whether he may have purposefully sought to impress an inconclusive image upon the reader/listener without what appears to be a satisfying conclusion.

78. Keats' affectionate poem '*On First looking into Chapman's* Homer' displays a romantic attachment to Chapman on par with Dante's love for Lucan's War story.

79. By resources, MSS, glossaries, lexicons, thesauruses, ancient and modern authors, Greek and Roman and English and German and French volumes are referred to.

80. In the 1928 article 'The First Editor of Lucretius' (*HCP* III, p. 1154, n.2) Housman accuses the Latin scholar A.S. Pease of citing three irrelevant examples in the textual discussion at 5.1341-9: two, which were wholly false, and another, too "different" to be helpful.

81. *HCP* III, '*Attamen* and *Ovid, Her*. I 2', p. 1052

82. The italics are mine.

83. *HCP* III, 'Notes on Seneca's Tragedies', p. 1082.

84. Ibid., p. 1083.

85. In a note to D'Arcy Thompson, Housman cites an example of *excetra* "not in the dictionaries or in Goetz's *thes. Gloss. Emend*." (*Letters of A.E. Housman,* Burnett, 2007, p. 405).

86. In *Plautinisches im Plautus* (Berlin, 1922), E. Fraenkel (1888-1970) argued for the uniqueness of Plautine comedic invention.

87. In recent days Mary Beard has offered the world a witty, Roman Cicero. In fact her Sather Lectures delivered at the University of California Berkeley in the Fall quarter of 2008 gave as a topic "The Funny Side of Cicero".

88. "All the dishes served at his instigation are designed to reinforce the notion that appearances deceive." So S. Frangoulidis, 'Trimalchio as Narrator and stage director in the *Cena*: An unobserved parallelism in Petronius' *Satyricon* 78', *Classical Philology* 103.1 (2008), p. 82.

89. Defined as: to have, possess; retain; to know; (+adv.) be disposed (in such a way).

90. The root of the word contains the dual pun: Becoming free! And as a correlative to the mood, he then is to be seen 'possessively' as belonging to Trimalchio.

91. Emphasis is Housman's, *HCP* III, p. 963. The influence of Housman's conclusions is reflected in the numerous succeeding translations of classical authors which have adopted many of his interpretations.

92. Rolfe wrote reviews for the *Nation*, the *New Republic*, *New Masses* and in the magazine *Poetry*. He taught Latin from 1924 to 1956 at the preparatory school Woodmere Academy, and his translations of poetry won him fame. Yet in his final years he lamented in a letter of 9 Sep. 1967 to Barbara Heldt of not having received an honorary doctorate: see R. Gillman & M.P. Novack (edd.), *Poets, Poetics and Politics: America's Literary Community Viewed from the Letters of Rolfe Humphries* (Lawrence, 1992), p. 273.

93. Ibid, p. 115 (letter to Louise Bogan, dated 1 July 1935). My quotation marks make allusion to a section of Donatus' *Life of Vergil* (46), where Virgil's sarcasm shines through in his observation that it is easier for one to "steal his club from Hercules than to steal a line from Homer".

94. E. Pound specifically references the period 1910-30. He wrote: "During the twenty-five years wherein my acquaintance with letters has been anything but casual and my observance of English production far from disinterested, I have barged into no single indication that Mr. Housman was aware of the world of my contemporaries" (*The Criterion*, 1934; repr. in T.S. Eliot (ed.), *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound* (London, 1935), p. 67.

95. C.M. Bowra believed that "Housman's tastes were too narrow. He pleased himself rather than opening up new worlds." (L. Mitchell, *Maurice Bowra: A Life* (Oxford, 2009), p. 89).

96. So A.S.F. Gow (1936, p. 21): "for the University College Literary Society he produced at one time or another essays on Matthew Arnold, Burns, Campbell, Swinburn, Tennyson, the spasmodic School and, in a lighter vein, Erasmus

Darwin."

97. *The Greek Experience* (London, 1957) is a wonderful survey of Greek culture.

98. For an anthological look at various views of Housman's teaching and of the content of his lectures, see Housman's Cambridge Lectures by D.J. Butterfield, in *HSJ* 35 (2009), pp. 122-48.

99. Memoir of E.H. Carr by R.W. Davies, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 69 (1983), pp. 473-511, at 476. For a more detailed exposition of Carr's years under Housman's spell see J. Haslam, *The Vices of Integrity: E.H. Carr, 1892-1982* (London, 2000), pp. 11-12.

100. In *Proceedings of the British Academy* 74 (1988), pp. 405-442, a biographical memoir by P. Brown. The citation is from p. 441.

101. In 'Lucan Revisited' (id., *Selected Classical Papers* (Ann Arbor, 1997), p. 236).

102. This statement alludes to *Genesis* 32:24, where Jacob wrestles with an angel.

103. Of W.S. Watt, E. Frankel, Corpus Professor of Latin, wrote: "He is possessed of unflagging energy and a capacity for sustained hard work which I believe is uncommon. He is a born grammarian, and I have to think twice before I query any statement of his on points of language. Owing to the perfect lucidity of his mind and his severe self-discipline he is also an excellent textual critic," p. 365 of the 'Biographical Memoir' of W.S. Watt by R.G.M. Nisbet in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 124. In his remarks on the second volume of A. Barchiesi and G. Rosati, *Ovidio Metamorfosi* (Rome-Milan, 2005), Gauthier Liberman, a Latin text critic of Université Bordeaux III, refers to the late William Watt as "one of the foremost 20th century critics of Latin literature" in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2007.10.55.

104. This sentence contains allusions to *Gen*. 32.24 and *Heb*. 11.21.

105. The antique glory of Richard Bentley's train now compasses a large and new clientele: But the deceased duo of W.S. Watt and D.R. Shackleton Bailey (who at times was also critical of Watt), in tandem, shared a harmony of interests and aims: specifically as it pertains to the text of Cicero and the criticism of Latin authors. And the above laudatory remarks could easily be applied to the latter too for his immeasurable service to the Oxford, Teubner and Loeb series of Classical texts. At one point in their relationship, while working together on a new OCT of Cicero's letters, an abrupt halt to their labours ensued as a result of a falling out. Their quarrel was made public when Shackleton Bailey published a 'Letter to the Editors' in the *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* for 1961, in which, he sharply dissented from the manner, tone and style of Watt's 1960 *JRS* review of Shackleton Bailey's monograph: *Towards a text of Cicero,* Ad Atticum (Cambridge, 1959). I am grateful to J.T. Ramsey for alerting me to Shackleton Bailey's response to Watt's review..

106. On a personal note (20 Dec. 2009): Rob Watt has informed me that his father "was intimate with everything Housman wrote", adding further: "As for A.E.H.'s conjectural emendations, my father said to me that although many are of course brilliant, others would not meet the standard required nowadays."

107. From a critical standpoint: Vincent Hunink was unimpressed by all W.S. Watt's conjectures "brought forward" in 'Ten notes on Apuleius, *Apologia*', published in *Mnemosyne* 47 (1994), pp. 517-20. Hunink's remark on the superfluity of Watt's proposals – in contrast with the good readings of MS F – is found in footnote 3 of his 'Notes on Apuleius' *Apology*', *Mnemosyne* 49 (1995), pp. 159-67.

108. The recent volume on *A.E. Housman: The Scholar* (London, 2009) has been reviewed by Isabel Raphael in *HSJ* 35, pp. 155-60. Her criticisms are well taken; even so, one should add that the plan, design and essays presented within the book are very interesting, but for the most part the essays do not make Housman accessible to the heart and mind of a twenty-first century inquirer. For another review of this volume see *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2010.03.58 by Stephen Harrison.

109. Something along the lines of Nina Mindt's edition, *Manfred Fuhrmann als Vermittler der Antike: Ein Beitrag zu Theorie und Praxis des Übersetzens* (Berlin/New York, 2008), is needed. Housman's three volumes of *Classical Papers* hold more than 200 translation specimens. His theories and methods of translation co-existed alongside his theories and methods of conjecture, and indeed are worthy of study in the history of the translation of classical texts into the English language.

110. See n. 20.

111. Milton was also mentioned in *HCP* I, p. 68.

112. In his Introductory Lecture as Professor Latin at University College London in 1892, Housman cited Shakespeare and Milton as the two greatest poets Great Britain has ever produced.

113. See Vincent Freimarck, 'Further Notes on Housman's Use of the Bible', *Modern Language Notes* 67.8 (1952), pp. 548-50.

114. A well-written and popular but academically nuanced definition of a sympathetic, classical "Godfearer" can be found in the article of Angelos Chaniotis, 'Godfearers in the City of Love', in *Biblical Archaeology Review* 36.3 (May/June 2010), pp. 32-44. A good academic and technical statement of my usage may be found in Dietrich-Alex Koch, 'The God-fearers between Fact and Fiction: Two theosebeis inscriptions from Aphrodisias and their bearing upon the New Testament', *Studia Theologica: Nordic Journal of Theology* 60.1 (June 2006), pp. 62-90.

115. In *HCP* II, p.810, Housman alludes to *Psalm* 137: 1 in his citing of "sat by the waters of Babylon". He also quotes (p. 823) Jesus' words to Peter from *John*

21:18, “another shall gird thee...”.

116. I have made similar notes on Housman’s use of Homer in ‘Reading Ancient Greek and Roman texts with A.E. Housman’ in *HSJ* 35 (2009), pp. 87-121.

117. For a more detailed look at Housman’s grasp for the sense of a text, see my ‘A Rural Pastor’s Notes on A.E. Housman, the Classicist: A Man of Right and Necessary Sense’, *HSJ* 34 (2008), pp. 92-111.

118. A.E. Housman was never made an honorand of celebratory essays by his students, colleagues or mentors, in the vein of *Studies in honor of Basil L. Gildersleeve* (Baltimore, 1902). For one of Housman’s ability and temperament, it certainly would have proved difficult to publish studies in his honour.

119. English translation: “...of a city... to which there was none like nor will there ever be,” *Fam.*, 2. 9 (ed. Rossi I, 96).

120. There are complaints about the continued existence of some sort of ‘cult of Housman’. These murmurs derive mostly from older persons who once were members but now have opted out, citing personal growth and maturity; this is in contrast to some persons’ continual veneration of Wilamowitz or even those who would claim to be partisans of B. Gildersleeve, a fancy which existed more than one century ago. Gildersleeve was an eminent scholar and brilliant man and he stands ahead of a short line of distinguished persons in the history of American education and scholarship. Two noteworthy participants were, Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), whose love of books and fondness for Classical literature put him in a position to (a) craft a number of our most esteemed historical documents and (b) to supply the original corpus of books for the creation of the Library of Congress, and also (c) to found the University of Virginia – an institution in which Gildersleeve taught for two decades. The other notable contributor to American Scholarship, but specifically classical studies, was Charles Anthon (1797-1867), Professor of Greek and Latin at Columbia College for more than forty years. In the year 1830 he published a magisterial edition on the works of Horace – with profound and persuasive comments through one thousand pages – and initiated a critical stage in American Classical learning only later to be mastered and popularized by Gildersleeve at The John Hopkins University. Comparatively little more can be said. Anthon often was accused by his enemies of displaying ingeniousness for plagiarism. But Gildersleeve’s muse stood by his side for decades, protecting him from shoddy scholarship as he infused new life into the American academic body of classicists while standing at the helm of the American *Journal of Philology* for four decades. It remains to be said that, the publishing of a multi-volume critical edition of all Gildersleeve’s books and articles and notes would, in my humble opinion, lift modern American classical scholarship to new heights. For Housman though, a sizeable part of his popularity in the literary world today stems from his internationally acclaimed poetry and from numerous rumours of Sapphic tales of his putative homophilic lusts: emotions which were frowned upon during his day, but are now admired by various persons

who feel a sort of mutual kinship with him. Indeed he earnestly desired to be remembered, not for anything exotic or erotic but, for his clear and crisp classical writings, which sometimes consisted of loathsome exhibitions of his peer's editorial flaws. And although Housman permitted himself to be irascible in print, and at times mean-spirited and all the like, he still was in full possession of a genius for intuitive conjecture and a merciless talent for insult. Many of Housman's most hideous remarks – such as: "Mr. Hilberg's observations are not merely infantile: they are observations of an infant who has not read Lachmann's note", in 'Ovidiana' (p. 927) – state just as much about the state of editing at the turn of the twentieth century as they do of his inability to dissent peacefully. In the best interests of all parties involved, scholarship has moved forward now, and his day is past; if things were not better presently there would be little need for my contributions to his memory. The analytical nature of studies of the ancient world, along with a popular demand for histories of ideas within literary scholarship, lead to the presumption that one day the published results of comprehensive surveys of scholars' collected papers will be found to be helpful on two accounts: (1) in a general way, to document the evolution of an author's analytical thought processes over a number of years is critical to studies in methodologies, and more specifically, (2) provisions of notes and indices of obscure and sometimes useful truths, which otherwise, might never see the light of day, may be of use to students of history who seek to accent their material with oft overlooked facts.

Housman's Borrowings – Allusive or Not?

by

Geoffrey Plowden

That great critic and scholar, Professor Maynard Mack of Yale, used to stress the importance of distinguishing allusive and non-allusive borrowings. With an allusion the context alluded to contributes to the meaning of the context in which the allusion occurs. A non-allusive borrowing is, in Mack's words, "just something I picked up somewhere and can use". I shall reserve the term "echo" for these.

As Mack was the pre-eminent Pope scholar of recent times it may be appropriate to illustrate his meaning from Pope, who made full use of both allusions and echoes. At the beginning of his description of the villa created by the vulgar and ostentatious Timon Pope wrote "Soft and Agreeable come never there" (*Epistle to Burlington* 102). This alludes to Horace's '*molle atque facetum/ Vergilio annuerant gaudentes rure Camenae*', or "the Muses, who love the countryside, have bestowed what is soft and agreeable upon Virgil (*Sat*. 1.10.44-5). Pope is not merely using Horace's words, but calling in Horace's context to supplement his own, and so tell us that Timon is unloved of the Muses, and his efforts to adorn the countryside will fail. If we miss this, as, so far as I can tell, readers and commentators generally do, we miss something important.

Elsewhere, Pope wrote (*Essay on Criticism* 297-8)

> True wit is Nature to advantage drest,
> What oft was thought, but ne'er so well exprest.

Pope here is indebted to a passage from Thomas Creech's 1697 translation of Manilius, a work he owned and knew well. On p. 40 we find "And from these so many curious propositions are deduced, so many difficulties... explain'd, and all set off with that neatness and aptness of expression... that I am very much inclin'd to believe that Nature was never so well drest before". The context of this passage, an account of a work of science, has nothing to do with Pope's. Pope has merely found some useful words, and arranged them in the best possible way. The borrowing is an echo, of no importance to the reader.

The Oxford edition records innumerable borrowings, or possible borrowings, to be found in Housman's poetry, and, insofar as they may be allusions, we shall be missing the full meaning of the poetry if we fail to recognise them. Insofar as they are echoes, however, they merely tell us that he was a well-

read man with a good memory, and that, like Pope, he was prepared to use the words of others to achieve his effects. Perhaps this is a practice likely to be found in those who have been taught Latin or Greek verse writing. It is pleasant to find the words you want already written for you. There are examples of this in Housman's version of Dryden's *Fairest Isle*: the translation of the first two words is from Catullus, and there is Horace further on.

After reading through the Oxford notes I have concluded that Housman almost completely eschewed allusion as a poetic resource. This was also the opinion of the *TLS* reviewer, Dick Davis. In his full and searching article he aptly quotes Housman's declaration that he was writing for "all ill-used fellows", that is, not for a cultured elite that could enjoy reminiscences of Heine or Lucretius. He was aiming, rather, at the unlearned simplicity of the early Wordsworth, writing for ordinary people in the language of ordinary people, which everybody could fully understand without being learned. Besides, he was not only writing for ordinary readers, but also in the guise of a rustic persona, who would not have been capable of making the allusions that his readers were not expected to be able to pick up. So we find rustic expressions like "there's men" and "there's chaps" in a poem where the notes refer to Euripides and Juvenal, among others. It is absurd to think that the Shropshire lad who is meant to have written this poem was expecting his readers to recognise the words of these two worthy classics.

Furthermore, one can sometimes add to the notes of borrowings without adding to our appreciation of the poem in question. Take, for example, what may well be the most elaborate borrowing of all, *The Day of Battle* (*ASL* LXVI). As Sir Brian Young has pointed out, this poem is derived entirely from the famous speech of Sarpedon to his comrade Glaucus in *Iliad* 12.310ff.: but the few who have this knowledge will not find the poem more effective or moving than the many who do not.

I would assert, therefore, that hunting for borrowings in Housman's serious verse may be amusing for the hunter, but it will yield little or nothing of value for the appreciation or enjoyment of the poetry itself. Housman himself tells us this by his reaction when a borrowing was pointed out to him. In effect, he just shrugged. (See his remarks on Browning and Richard Corbett on pages 372 and 416 respectively of Burnett (1997).). At the end of this note I list what I believe to be Housman's very few allusions.

When we turn from the serious English poems we find Housman ready to employ allusion for comic effect. The best example must be his "Fragment of a Greek Tragedy". If you do not know the *Agamemnon* you lose half the fun. I

throw in here a supremely comic allusion from his prose. In a review of a work by S.G. Owen of Christ Church, in which Owen made and twice repeated an assertion that Housman believed false, he wrote "no further doubt is possible: for, in the words of another Student of Christ Church, 'What I tell you three times is true'", thereby relegating Owen to the realm of nonsense.

The Latin dedication of *Manilius I* to Moses Jackson also employs allusion to poetic effect. Professor Stephen Harrison has demonstrated how it brings in Ovid's exile poetry to heighten the pathos of Housman's separation from Jackson. But these lines were written for Fellows, whether ill-used or not, and the few who set out to read Manilius before the Loeb came out could justly have been expected to spot Ovidian allusions. I am greatly fortified by Professor Harrison's agreement that different considerations apply here from those that apply to Housman's English poetry.

Yes, Housman could use allusion, but he kept it in its place.

A parallel practice is offered by William Barnes, another learned poet who kept his learning out of his poetry, and adopted a rustic persona and rustic, indeed dialect, diction. When accused of being a barely literate peasant, however, he countered by quoting Pindar in the original, and Hafiz too.

Here follows the list of what I believe are the only true allusions in Housman's serious English verse:

For *ASL* I, "1887", you need to know the National Anthem.

For *ASL* XLV, "If it chance your eye offend you", you need to know Christ's words in the Gospel.

For the joke about malt and Milton in *ASL* LXII you need to recognise Milton's words.

The note in the Oxford edition on *AP* XVIII, "Oh who is that young sinner...", details the use of allusive language that helps to establish that the subject of the poem is homosexuality, which could not be referred to explicitly in those days; besides, Housman does not seem to have intended this poem for publication.

Possibly one or two additions could be made to this list, but Dick Davis would still be right: Housman was not an allusive poet. He was a well-read man with a good memory.

To Teme nor Corve nor Severn Shore

by

Andrew Breeze

We cannot do better than start with A.E.H. himself.

> And if my foot returns no more
> To Teme nor Corve nor Severn shore,
> Luck, my lads, be with you still
> By falling stream and standing hill,
> By chiming tower and whispering tree,
> Men that made a man of me.

Of the river-names here used to effect, the first and last are accepted as Celtic. The Teme is thought to be the 'flowing one', like the Thames, Tamar, Teviot, or Tay elsewhere in Britain, while the Severn is now related to a root meaning 'liquid', represented by Sanskrit *sabar-*, explained as 'milk'. The exception has been the Corve, south of Wenlock Edge and flowing south-west for twelve miles to join the Teme at Ludlow. Standard authorities regard its name as English. This note examines whether this is so, thereby applying (it is hoped) to his own verse something of the techniques that Housman employed on Greek and Latin poetry.

The Corve is recorded as *Corue* in 1256 and *Corfe* in 1272. It has been related to places in England called 'Corfe', as with Corfe Castle in Dorset, where a shattered keep looks down on a gap through hills. The forms are explained from unattested Old English *corf* 'a pass' from the verb *ceorfan* 'cut, carve'. It is claimed that these locations are on or near passes. Most recently the Corve has been recorded as *Corf* from a document of 674 x 704, though with the comment that the 'loss of the pre-English name for this major river is surprising'.

Surprising it is, because Shropshire and its neighbours have many unEnglish toponyms, some of them (Bredon, Clun, Wenlock, Wyre) employed memorably in *A Shropshire Lad*. Later philologists have mapped and gazetted them. Although the Corve pierces a cleft in a ridge near one of its sources, by the village of Bourton, for most of its course it flows through a broad vale. It may thus, perhaps, not relate to an English form meaning 'pass' at all, but to a previously unrecognized Celtic one. That would explain why *Corf* figures in a document of about the year 700, from a region that the English occupied only decades before.

If we then consult Welsh dictionaries, we find *corf* 'saddle-bow, pommel: wooded precipice by river; hall-column'. It occurs in early texts. In the twelfth-century *Four Branches of the Mabinogi*, Welsh heroes go to Hereford and take up saddle-making, where one of them 'began to shape pommels [=*corfau*], and colour them with blue enamel'. Besides *corfau* for quality saddles, there are also the names of Gwarygorof 'brink of the steep wood' in Carmarthenshire, and Y Gorof 'the steep wood' (by Ystradgynlais) and Caeau'r Gorof 'fields of the steep wood' (by Llanwynno) in Glamorgan. Welsh *corf* has been derived from Latin *corbis* 'basket'. This is confirmed by the early Irish gloss *corb* 'chariot(-body)', which is not a cognate of the Welsh word but is also from Latin *corbis*. Replicas of Celtic chariots make the meaning clear. A British or Gaulish war-chariot was smaller and lighter than one might think, especially when compared with the one driven by Queen Boudica and her daughters in Thomas Thornycroft's statue (unveiled in 1902, but dating from the 1850s) at Westminster Bridge. The Celtic chariot that Swiss archaeologists reconstructed (and drove across fields) weighed 100 kilos, with a platform 80 centimetres wide, 1.34 metres between its wheel-centres, and side-screens of wood shaped by using steam. Screens with a wooden frame and wicker insets would be of similar lightness. Hence the semantic development that gave *corf* for part of Welsh saddles and *corb* for part of Irish chariots, both going back to Latin *corbis* 'basket'.

What does this imply for the Corve? One might at first propose an immediate link with Y Gorof (with initial mutation after article and dialectal svarabhakti) or the like in South Wales. But this is hardly so, since Welsh *corf* is never used directly of rivers. A better answer is supplied by the river Cale in Somerset and Caul Bourne in the Isle of Wight. They are related to Welsh *cawell* 'basket, pannier; fish-trap, creel', itself from late Latin *cauella* 'basket'. These rivers supplied fish caught in wicker traps. On that basis we may regard the Corve as another 'fish-trap' river, its name deriving from Latin *corbis*, which also gave Welsh *corf* in its various senses. The word *corbis* most often refers to fruit-panniers, as in Juvenal (XI.73-4):

> Signinum Syriumque pirum, de corbibus isdem
> Aemula Picenis et odoris mala recentis
>
> Baskets of Syrian pears and Italian bergamots, fragrant
> Apples, the equal of any you'd find in an east-coast
> orchard.

Yet there seems no reason why a Romano-British *corbis* might not trap fish, as well as store fruit. It also explains why we have *Corve* in Shropshire, but

Corfe in Dorset and Somerset. The f of Welsh *corf* represents [v], developing from mutation of the b of *corbis* in the later fifth century. This is not shown (in present arguments) by *Corf* of about 700 because Old English orthography used f for both [f] and [v]. The [v] of our presumed borrowing appears in later documents only when [f] and [v] were distinguished by spelling.

Welsh contains hundreds of Latin loanwords dating from Roman times. During the four centuries that Britain was part of the Roman Empire, the British language (ancestor of Welsh, Cornish, and Breton) received an influx of Latin borrowings, many relating to daily life, and no doubt due to orders by Roman masters to native slaves. In modern Welsh these loans include *llin* 'line', *magl* 'snare, mesh', *pysg* 'fish', *rhwyd* 'net', and *rhwyf* 'oar'. Other words did not survive into the medieval or modern language, but are known from place-names. Here are two. Kilpeck, a village near Hereford, has a name meaning 'nook of snares', where Britons trapped birds and animals. The first element is native, the second is from Latin *pedica* 'trap; fetter'. Tardebigge 'magpie height', near Housman's own Bromsgrove, shows a Celtic first part (cf. early Welsh *ardd* 'height') but a second from Latin *pica* 'magpie'. Other English places with Latin-via-Celtic forms are Eccles 'church' near Manchester, Fontmell 'bare-hill spring' in Dorset, and Lincoln '*colonia* by a pool'. If the Corve owes its name to a British borrowing from Latin, then, it will not be alone.

So there seems a connection between the Corve in lines by Housman and *corbibus* in lines of Juvenal edited by Housman. If fish-weirs figure in early records for the Corve, that will strengthen the present etymology. It would also explain why the Corve was recorded as *Corf* in about 700, when Corvedale had new English rulers, who would learn this and other local toponyms from their British thralls. Housman was keenly aware of Shropshire as a region of ancient fighting between Celt and Saxon; he also used the area's unfamiliar place-names to thrilling effect. The Corve apparently casts light on both. If its name is pre-English, it tells us something of Shropshire's early history, Roman, Celtic, and English; it accounts as well for the form's strangeness and somewhat rustic quality, apt for a border county like Shropshire.

NOTES

1. Eilert Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Oxford, 1936), 116.

2. V.E. Watts (ed.), *The Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Cambridge,

2004), 159.

3. K.H. Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain* (Edinburgh, 1953), 220; Richard Coates and Andrew Breeze, *Celtic Voices, English Places* (Stamford, 2000), 326-30.

4. *The Mabinogion*, tr. Sioned Davies (Oxford, 2007), 37

5. *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* (Caerdydd, 1950-2002), 558.

6. Joseph Vendryes, *Lexique étymologique de l'ancien irlandais: Lettre C* (Paris, 1987), 207.

7. Andres Furger-Gunti, 'The Celtic War-Chariot', in Sabatino Moscati et al. (edd.), *The Celts* (London, 1991), 356-9.

8. Watts, (as n. 3) 109.

9. Juvenal, *The Sixteen Satires*, tr. Peter Green (Harmondsworth, 1967), 229.

10. Alistair Campbell, *Old English Grammar* (Oxford, 1959), 20.

11. Jackson, (as n. 3) 78-9.

Housman's Public Use of Reproof

by

David Butterfield

There can be little doubt that one of the most famous, or perhaps infamous, aspects of Housman's legacy is his ability to cut down, succinctly, wittily and often unanswerably, his scholarly contemporaries in print, most especially in his academic writings. Almost every biographical account of the man has dwelt, with varying degrees of analysis, upon this aspect of his writing:[1] while some see Housman's faculty to prick the bubble of pretension and misinformation of other scholars with a forceful rebuke as a virtue of his intellect, although occasionally carried slightly to excess, others see it as an unfortunate trait of the man's character, and perhaps an unwelcome sign of an inner feeling of spite towards fellow men. The purpose of this article is not to enter the moral maze of whether harsh invective deserves a place in humane scholarship – although I am firmly of the view that it does; rather, I wish to look at a particular sphere in which Housman had the opportunity to make detrimental comments about his fellow scholars.

That sphere is the public, which loose term I define rather narrowly as occasions where Housman was in the physical presence of people with whom he was not already acquainted, and whom more often he never knew. Given the well-defined and delimited areas in which Housman worked and operated, it is clear that this definition limits the field of analysis almost solely to Housman's own lectures, delivered as the core duty of his academic employment. Sufficient evidence does not survive to judge how much invective Housman employed when he did respond to papers delivered at the Philological Society in Cambridge but I am inclined to believe that on these occasions, which cannot truly be regarded as public, given the closely-knit community of Cambridge Classicists, Housman was typically reserved. In none of Housman's three published university lectures – his inaugurals at University College, London (1892), and the University of Cambridge (1911), and his Leslie Stephen Lecture on 'The Name and Nature of Poetry' at the latter (1933) – does his narrative turn to forceful reproof of other scholars and their failings (for his rhetorical salvo against the *TLL*, see the article of Tom Keeline in this volume of *HSJ*). At the majority of events at which he gave his celebrated after-dinner speeches, most often with his dining club The Family in Cambridge, the fact that he typically knew most, if not all, of the other diners means that any speech he did give cannot be regarded as a public address; even if it could be, the nature of discussion would rarely have touched upon serious

scholarship. He consumed thousands of meals in the Hall of Trinity College, Cambridge, but this is no sphere for public speeches: he knew the Fellowship well and, more importantly, speeches from a Fellow are extremely rare at such gatherings in Trinity.

The question which I seek to answer in this brief article is a simple one: when it came to delivering views upon other scholars in the physical presence of other people with whom he was not on intimate terms, did Housman show the same willingness to wield the sabre as he did in his widely-circulated articles and editorial prefaces? It will be seen from the material that I present, that a conclusion seems relatively clear. In a previous article for this journal,[2] I surveyed much of the surviving evidence regarding Housman's lectures: since little material survives relating to his more paedagogically focused lectures, or rather classes, given whilst Professor of Latin at University College, London (1892-1911), I focused on the longer spell of a quarter-century of lecturing that Housman weathered as Kennedy Professor of Latin at the University of Cambridge (1911-36). On the basis of an anthology of testimonies and quotations, I attempted to give some colour to what was by far the dominant public office of Housman's life. In this shorter piece, using a similarly anthological approach, but drawing material from Housman's own surviving lecture notes, I shall attempt to collect instances of his more marked instances of reproof and to comment on their setting in his wider lecture content. As before, Housman's own words can say a lot more about the tenor of his lectures than my contextualisation of them can.

As part of my earlier article, I discussed the nature of Housman's extant lecture notes, which survive in notebooks deposited in Cambridge University Library (Mss. Add. 6874-6902) and serve as an almost complete record of the lectures he gave to third-year undergraduates on the text and manuscript transmission of Classical authors, almost entirely Latin poets. I there observed that, although Housman must occasionally have filled out the syntax of the material he wrote in his notes for the purposes of smooth oral delivery, very often he could simply have read verbatim the sentences that he had penned without expansion. Therefore, unless Housman regularly allowed himself off-the-cuff tangents in which he reprimanded the academic flaws of scholars whose names he touched upon, which is not impossible but perhaps improbable,[3] these lecture notes can be taken as a comparatively faithful index for the frequency and scale of Housman's public reproof of other scholars. In preparing this article I have read through the text of all 29 volumes, and have selected the majority of occasions where Housman allowed himself more than a brief clause to discuss the poor method, logical failings or sheer ignorance of other Classical scholars, both his predecessors and those alive as he wrote. I have no reason to believe that, in

cases where Housman did thus upbraid other Classicists, he refrained from delivering these parts of his lectures to his audience. Rather, I take everything written in these notebooks as having been said openly in the lecture theatre.

What may surprise readers, even those particularly familiar with Housman's academic writings, is the comparative rarity, amidst all of this material, of such passages of reproof. With the exception of one series of lectures, to which I shall come at the end, Housman's lectures for the most part remained focused on the immediate task at hand: highlighting a textual problem, weighing up the probabilities of various manuscript readings and conjectures, elucidating a linguistic or metrical rarity, explicating the sense of a passage, or more generally discussing the history of criticism and editing of the text in question (typically at the beginning of a series of lectures). As Housman dealt with these various tasks, proceeding methodically and sequentially through the text, the listening undergraduates had a published edition of the given author's text in front of them, as well as a pad on which to make their own notes from the lecturer's dense statements. Housman was typically business-like in his discussions, as one would expect, limiting his selection of material to what bore direct relevance to the passage being treated; as a result, those conjectures or interpretations which were inherently outlandish or implausible were often passed over in silence, with no words wasted upon their discussion and dismissal. Nevertheless, in cleaving to what he saw as the correct interpretation of a passage, Housman did sometimes have to point out the absurdity of some of the more commonly cited conjectures, interpretations or translations, lest his undergraduates unknowingly be misled to their sorrow. Regularly, then, do we find Housman merely mention an unattractive textual suggestion, interpretation or translation, but in such cases where he does he rarely expounds upon these incorrect notions of other commentators past and present, but rather dismisses them curtly with some appropriately negative adjective or adverb: 'absurd(ly)', 'stupid(ly)', 'ridiculous(ly)', 'thoroughly bad', and so on.

It is only occasionally amidst these lecture notes that Housman expatiates at greater length (i.e. a long sentence or more) about the inadequacies of such misguided attempts in the published writings of other scholars. What follows below is a collection of almost all of these longer dismissals, leaving aside some that have an especially technical nature, which often bear little sign of the distaste that so often pervades Housman's invectives.

Let us now turn to Housman's words themselves. The following collection of comments is drawn from the 2050 leaves of Housman's lecture corpus, an almost complete repertory of his lecture courses for the 25 years in which he addressed undergraduates at Cambridge. We may begin with some barbed

comments that occur in the introduction to the history of the editing of Lucretius, a more colourful topic than most, and one written in the tradition of Hugh Munro's famous survey, which opens the lecture notes on Book V of that author's *De Rerum Natura* (Ms. add. 6895, delivered in 1928-9):

> ...Gilbert Wakefield [1751-1801], a clever but shallow and careless scholar, sometimes very successful in emendation, but treating all MSS alike, ready to explain everything and unable to explain anything, contradicting and abusing his readers with ridiculous confidence. (7r)

> In 1920 Lucretius was edited at Paris with a short apparatus criticus and a French translation by [Alfred] Ernout [1879-1973]. He is a good Latinist, and his text is not a bad one; but his preface is a disgusting and memorable example of the pollution of scholarship by politics. There had been a war between France and Germany, so M. Ernout was obliged to spit at [Karl] Lachmann [1793-1851]; and now posterity will see him petrified in that ungraceful and imprudent attitude... The most important edition since Lachmann's for the text is that of [Hermann] Diels [1853-1923], Berlin 1923, with a very full apparatus criticus and a translation (1924) into that dreadful metre, the German hexameter. Diels, who died shortly after its publication, was one of the first Greek scholars of his day, and particularly occupied with Greek philosophy, and had also a very good knowledge of Latin; and in Lucretius he made a considerable number of ingenious conjectures. Yet his book also is a rather repulsive one, for he was an egotist and a men-pleaser. Construing through brick walls before an admiring crowd was his speciality; and this performance put them into a good temper and made them willing to accept even conjectures coming from so popular an entertainer; and this emboldened him to substitute his own conjectures for those of his predecessors, when his own were no better or even worse. (8r)

Housman also lectured upon one other book of Lucretius, namely the last of his epic work, Book VI (Ms. add. 6894, delivered in 1913, 1917, 1920, 1924, 1933). For this series of lectures Housman troubled to write out once more his survey of Lucretian editors. Given Munro's precedent in this field, it is fitting that, in this continuation of that great account, Housman offers his own critique of Munro's Lucretian edition (Cambridge, 1864; 1866; 1873; 1886). He writes of that work:

> Its chief strength is grammatical interpretation and information; in tracing the philosophical argument, though vastly superior to anything earlier, it is not always so good; the contribution to the correction of the text is respectable but not remarkable. In conciseness and avoidance of irrelevancy Munro might be to English commentators what the brazen serpent was to the Israelites in the wilderness. And the book amounted to nothing short of the revival of Latin scholarship in England, where

> there had been no great Latinist since the death of Markland in 1776; Munro introduced his countrymen, who were contented with Conington's Virgil, to all that had been done abroad and especially in Germany since the beginning of the century. (6r-7r)

In the wake of that work, Housman underlines the shortcomings of the foremost Lucretian scholar that America has reared to date:

> The American edition of W. A. Merrill in 1906 [=1907] is based on great bibliographical knowledge, and as a condensed repertory of the opinions of various scholars it is a useful work; but the editor is not an intelligent critic; and his smaller edition of 1917, where he is not content to record the opinions of others, but gives effect to his own by introducing his own conjectures and expelling those of his betters, is a nightmare of a book. (7r)

Despite these more colourful remarks in the opening portion of these two series of lectures, the actual commentary upon the text of Lucretius V-VI is typically focused and business-like, very rarely taking tangents from the task at hand. Nevertheless, the notes on Book VI do differ somewhat from those upon Book V, in that the hapless Merrill allows some more venomous comments to flow forth from Housman's pen. The citations begin with the line reference to Book VI of Lucretius:

> 349 *transuiat* MSS, *transuolat* Naugerius, *trameat* Gifanius. *uio* first appears in Appuleius, its compounds are later still. 'L. [=Lucretius] has too many plebeian words for this to be rejected, as it makes perfect sense' Merrill. L. has just as many plebeian words as Milton: but who says that *uio* was any more plebeian than patrician in his time? Merrill quotes from Quintilian a passage which does not exist there, though it does exist in Lewis & Short. (26r)

> 453 'Bockemueller and Merrill go about to prove that clouds are sometimes yellow, as if anyone doubted that. Merrill says he has seen yellow clouds in California, and adds 'The Californian climatic conditions are nearer those of Italy than were Bentley's Cambridge or Lachmann's Berlin. It is noteworthy that the early Italian scholars saw no objection to *fulvae* [=yellow].' The infant in arms would see no objection to *fulvae*; and the Californian intellectual conditions are nearer those of the nursery than were Bentley's Cambridge or Lachmann's Berlin. (32v)

> 663 *morbi* MSS, (i.e. *morbi mali*), retained by Bockemüller Bailey and Merrill who says 'The repetition of *morbi* in 664 is not strange in Lucr.' What Marullus and Lambinus and Lachmann and students who read their author have objected to is not the repetition of *morbi* [=of sickness] but the nonsense which arises from its repetition: 'earth and sky produce

> enough sickness [correcting 'malady'] to give rise to a huge amount of sickness [correcting 'malady']'. What they produce is enough foul stuff to create in man a huge amount of sickness [correcting malady]: therefore *nobis* Marullus. Lachmann's *orbi* is not so good, for it cannot easily seem to mean *orbi terrarum*, i.e. mankind. (46r)

The important Italian editor of Lucretius, Carlo Giussani (1840-1900; edition: Turin, 1896-8), also suffers Housman's lash in one instance:

> 563 *minent* MSS, which, if it existed, would, so far as we can judge, be appropriate, but which exists nowhere else (for in Sall. ap. Non. p.555 half the MSS have *emines*, and *e* precedes) but was read by many old editors and now by Giussani (also of course Diels), who asks "Where is the positive demonstration that Lucretius could not absolutely use the simple verb of *im-minere*, *e-minere*, *pro-minere*?" The way to deal with such arguments, as Bentley [correcting 'Burke'] says, is not to answer them, but to use them. Suppose I conjecture *cubant*, which Lucr. uses just in the required sense 4.517 "prava *cubantia* prona supina atque absona tecta" and ask "Where is the private demonstration that a scribe could not write *mine-* for *cuba-*?, how would Mr [cancelled] G. like that. The only critics who argue like this are conservative critics: it is only they who treat a reading as true provided it is not demonstrably false. As a matter of fact scribes did such things as writing *mine-* for *cuba-* much oftener than authors did such things as writing *mineo* (or (237) *cello*) because *immineo* (or *praecello* ['*excello*' added above]) existed. Our business is to balance probabilities: and that is what Mr [cancelled] Giussani could not do, being a proud Italian. Lachmann's Latin was in the marrow of his bones: Giussani's was an external layer, not very thick. (40r)

Outside these two lecture-books on Lucretius, however, one has to search much harder to unearth other extended criticisms of scholarly malpractice. In the introduction to the lectures on the longer poems of Catullus (Ms. add. 6875, delivered in 1915, 1917, 1919-20, 1922, 1924, 1926-7, 1929, 1930, 1932, 1932-4, 1936) we find a couple of similar statements directed against the scholarly community:

> The truly epoch-making work in the criticism of Catullus' MSS is not Lachmann's but Baehrens's, though many of Baehrens's countrymen would rather die than admit it. When Germans say, or sing, in the celebrated and popular hymn of Mr Lissauer, that England is the only thing they hate, they are mistaken; they also hate one another, and in particular, if they are classical scholars, they hate Baehrens. (2r)

> A third long commentary was produced in 1908 by G. Friedrich, a man of much reading but not of much learning, plenty of independence, little judgment, and no modesty at all. (9r)

Housman's various discussions of the text of Catullus, by contrast, lack any similar swipes. A number of strictures can be found in the introductory section of the lectures on Juvenal (Ms. add. 6877) but I refrain from quoting them here, for they had already appeared in a more complete state within the preface to Housman's edition of that poet from 1905.[4] The series of lectures that covered the ten books of Lucan's *bellum ciuile* (Mss. add. 6887-93) are devoid of any prolonged attack on any scholar, as are those on Martial (Ms. add. 6879) and Ovid's *heroides* (Ms. add. 6880, 6897-8). In the book which contains notes on the text of the satirist Persius (Mss. add. 6881) and a full translation of these caustic poems, Housman does weigh up the virtues and vices of the great Latinist Isaac Casaubon (1559-1614). Some of these criticisms I have quoted elsewhere,[5] but I here record only this sentence from page 10: "A great deal of useful matter first put together by Jahn must have been known to Casaubon; but instead of sticking to his proper work he was always running out into the garden to play." This form of gentle and humorous criticism is symptomatic of cases where Housman wished to highlight the shortcomings of a scholar for whom he otherwise had great respect, and he therefore held back from the sharpest form of his invective.

The lectures on Plautus (Ms. add. 6882) do, however, contain some more concerted attacks on the unsatisfactory practice of other scholars, especially W.M. Lindsay (1858-1937), the Latinist of Oxford and subsequently St Andrews with whom Housman had a strained and sometimes stormy relationship in print.[6] Three pages (4r-7r) of the lecture notes are devoted to exposing the methodical flaws and illogicalities of Lindsay's treatment of the manuscript history of Plautus' plays. The nature of this criticism is technical, but Housman still oversteps what might be taken as the bounds of politeness in a number of places, a sample of which I have quoted elsewhere.[7] The great 19th century German Latinist Friedrich Ritschl (1806-76), who inaugurated a new era in the study of Plautus and Early Latin, is also discussed in some detail by Housman, who outlines the virtues of his major contributions to the field. With this done, however, he comes to survey the less positive sides of Ritschl's scholarly character:

> As a critic he was not so great. He had a very lucid and logical mind; but he had neither of the two first qualities of an emendator: neither divination, which hits intuitively on the truth, nor deftness, which elicits a true reading from a false by gentle means. His alterations of the text were often wrong; and many of them proceeded from views of Plautus's versification which have now been left behind... [Ritschl was] one of the greatest teachers who have ever lived: his pupils were devoted to him, and he founded a school. A school is always a bad thing; and Ritschl's school was worse than a school: it was a bodyguard, such as used to

> accompany a Greek tyrant through the streets of Corinth or Syracuse. For more than a quarter of a century, – say from 1850 to 1880 – what Ritschl said must be right, and the Ritschelian school was the orthodox church. (6r-7r)

The third and final victim of Housman's rapier in this introduction is the Frenchman Louis Havet (1849-1925). Housman moves from a backhanded compliment to outright disapproval, describing him as:

> the most eminent French Latinist of the last two centuries or more, though that is not saying so very much. He was a critic something of the type of Ritschl, clear-headed and acutely observant, but with even less skill or felicity as an emender, and egotistical to a degree hardly consistent with sanity. (10r)

In his lectures on the *captiui* (*The Captives*) of the playwright Plautus (Ms. add. 6901), Housman was given another opportunity, which was one he found difficult to resist, of once more ridiculing Lindsay, who had edited this play for schoolboys (London, 1887) and later with a large-scale commentary (Cambridge, 1900). Housman had only reached the second line of the play's text when he wrote the following:

> When Lindsay to mend the metre writes *quia astant* ['because they are standing']..., and interprets that the captives are standing because some people at the back of the theatre cannot find seats, he destroys the joke and substitutes a stupid and incredible lie, which also renders verse 3 absurd: for the audience could not possibly bear witness that this statement of cause and effect was true, even if it were. (1r)

On verse 201, Housman turns to flag up Lindsay's ill-conceived emendation:

> *oculis multa mira aitis* ['you say many wondrous things with your eyes'] Lindsay, characteristically bad, and the very type of the 'palaeographical emendation' which consists in altering a letter or two at random. Imagine the Lorarius [=the 'flogger', who oversaw slaves] saying such a thing to the captives! Imagine anyone saying such a thing to anyone! And the verse is not even metrical, for the last foot is either an anapaest or a spondee. (12r)

Elsewhere in his discussion of the *captiui*, however, Housman elected not to waste many words on the inadequacies of Lindsay, and his name crops up much less than it could have done.

There is no doubt, however, that one series of lectures was much more riddled with polemic against other scholars than probably the remaining 28 volumes combined, namely those given for the course 'The Application of

Thought to Textual Criticism' (Ms. add. 6874, delivered in 1913 and 1921). A wealth of material could be offered from this one series of lectures, each devoted to a specific episode where former critics have made one or more wrong turns owing to poor method and insufficient thought. The discussion begins (1r-2r) with a reference to Lindsay's *Introduction to Latin textual emendation, based on the text of Plautus* (London, 1896), a work which is rebuked for its complete failure to treat the core aspects of textual emendation, as opposed to mere palaeography.[8] A few pages later in his lectures (at 5r), Housman touched upon the general lack of interest in 19th century England towards textual criticism:

> Now if a subject bores us, we are apt to avoid [correcting 'shirk'] the trouble of thinking about it; but if we do that, we had better go further and avoid also the trouble of writing about it. And that is what English scholars often did in the middle of the 19th Century, when nobody in England wanted to hear about textual criticism.

This much appeared in the published version of Housman's lecture, also entitled 'The Application of Thought to Textual Criticism', delivered to a meeting of the Classical Association in 1921.[9] Yet Housman allowed himself to add a further barb in his lecture to undergraduates, for his text continues with words later omitted in print:

> It is so in most volumes of the *Bibliotheca Classica*; it is so even in Mayor's Juvenal. Mayor's notes fill 800 pages of close print, but it is only from a few casual allusions that you gather that Juvenal had any MSS at all. His notes are about things that interested him, and textual criticism was one of [these two words correcting 'almost'] the two [correcting 'only'] things [correcting 'thing'] that didn't.

Given that John Mayor (1825-1910) was Housman's predecessor as Professor of Latin at Cambridge, and Housman had allowed himself to critique Mayor's scholarship gently in his Inaugural Lecture,[10] this additional comment is not unduly surprising.

Throughout the other varied discussions that this series of lectures touches upon we find a number of similarly disparaging remarks against the editorial method of others. About the former lawyer Benjamin Bickley Rogers (1828-1919), when discussing the text of Aristophanes' *Plutus* 546 (at 14r), Housman objects, "though I don't know what a translator has to do with orthography or dialectic forms... In making these statements, Mr Rogers is making some statements which he cannot know to be true, others which he could easily ascertain to be false, and others which cannot possibly be true." A later lecture, in which Housman critiqued the esteemed Cambridge Hellenist Richard Jebb

(1841-1905) for a number of reasons, including his failure to argue logically against Dawes and Porson (25r-30r), has been quoted and discussed by James Diggle.[11]

Elsewhere, Housman found the opportunity to turn yet another salvo against Lindsay's book on 'textual emendation' (21r-23r), this time to rebuke his naive faith in the palaeographical method:

> This piece of advice to the tiro therefore leaves the tiro just where he was; because it is advice from a tiro. Mr Lindsay goes out for a walk, and comes upon Simple Simon trying to catch birds by putting salt on their tails. He accosts him thus: "Young man, you are mistaken in supposing that salt is the only granular substance which will catch birds when deposited on the right spot [these six words added at a later date]. I assure you that sugar is equally efficacious: let me earnestly advise you to try sugar for a change. Here is a bag of it, 3/6, Macmillan. How many birds have you caught this morning with salt [these two words added at a later date]?" "Alas, kind sir, none" says Simple Simon. "Use sugar," says Mr Lindsay, <">and you will catch twice that number this afternoon. Good day to you, and good sport." (22r)

On the next page, Friedrich Vollmer (1867-1923), another of Houman's regular adversaries, before over time they came to be on more positive terms, is rebuked for his misunderstanding of the meaning of the pseudo-Virgilian *culex* at verse 402 (*laurus item, Phoebi decus urgens* [so Vollmer for the transmitted but unmetrical participle *surgens*]), which he takes to mean *Daphne amore urget deum*.

> It seems almost incredible that anyone could say anything so false and imagine it to be true; but knowing what I do know from experience about Mr Vollmer's vague notions of the meanings of Latin words, I believe that he is confusing *urgeo* ['I urge'] with *uro* ['I burn'], though that may also seem incredible. (23r)[12]

In a later lecture of this same series, amidst his discussion of matters relating to Manilius (57r-63r), Housman has a chance to turn on H.W. Garrod of Oxford, who had criticised some of Housman's methodology in his edition of Manilius II (Oxford, 1911). Housman was obviously keen to set the record straight in public, in order that his audience not be misinformed by this recent publication, on which he was crafting his *gigantisches Lebenswerk*:

> Why I say this [i.e. that he dismisses the existence of a 'best' family of mss in the preface to the first book of Manilius], Mr Garrod says he [these two words were added later] does not know. So completely does he not know, and so impossible is it for him to read the page on which the sentence occurs and to find out why I say it, that he is obliged, no doubt

> with great pain and reluctance, to suggest a discreditable reason. He says [these two words added later] [i]t may be that I hate some unnamed critic more than I love consistency. I really [this word added later] am not much in the habit of dissipating my vital [correcting 'mental'] energies in the passion of hatred; and so far as my skill in self-examination will carry me, I should say that my hatred of unnamed critics and my love of consistency are about equally tepid. It is not part of the duty of man to make consistent statements: the duty of man is to make true statements; as if one true statement is inconsistent with another true statement, the blame for that condition of affairs will fall not upon the man who is responsible for the statements, but upon the Creator of the universe, who is responsible for the facts. (58r)

Housman also ridicules in the same lecture the variable treatment of an important manuscript of Manilius, namely the Gemblacensis, at the hands of previous editors. Although the tone is ironic rather than openly critical, Housman's low opinion of his contemporaries cannot escape notice:

> A fallen MS is like a fallen President of Mexico; its late slaves and subjects are all burning for revenge; and Mr Vollmer said that if I had an inkling of *Ueberlieferungsgeschichte* – you see you are gradually becoming acquainted with my deficiencies: not only am I a critic who doesn't understand his business, but also I have no inkling of the history of MS tradition, – if I had, said Mr Vollmer, I should have cast G aside and based my recension upon M and L. (62r)

Many more quotations could be drawn from the rich collection of material that this lecture series provides, although a good number of these criticisms subsequently appeared in a slightly more polished form within the published version of Housman's lecture, and therefore need not be repeated here. Given that these lectures were expressly designed to illustrate editorial method, which can be best achieved by highlighting misapplications of it, an exercise that would be difficult to do comprehensively without naming and shaming the culprits, the presence of reproof in these lectures does not require further defence or explanation.

However, if we leave aside this one set of lectures, only delivered in two terms by Housman, we must confess that the overall haul of passages united in this article is much more meagre than one would have expected, given the content and tone of Housman's many published writings. Rather, from the large and varied corpus of lecture material, which details almost completely Housman's publicly delivered courses for the last 25 years of his life and his full spell in Cambridge, we can draw a clear and apparently secure conclusion: when in front of undergraduates and dissecting a text for the purpose of cleaving to the correct

reading and interpretation, Housman engaged to a notably lesser degree in the more forceful and detailed attacks of other scholars' efforts. When invective was used, it was typically employed with wit and style; its greater frequency in the introduction to lecture courses reflects the fact that typically the work of other scholars demands appraisal there, and it may also have served to set the young audience at rest to learn that professional Classicists can certainly be fallible in both word and deed. Housman's reputation as a keen practitioner of invective in the public sphere, therefore, should rest almost entirely upon his published articles and the prefaces to his editions.

NOTES

1. The most thorough and rewarding treatment is that of P.G. Naiditch, 'The Slashing Style which All Know and Few Applaud: the Invective of A.E. Housman', in H.D. Jocelyn (ed.), *Aspects of Nineteenth-Century British Classical Scholarship* (*Liverpool Classical Papers* 5) (Liverpool, 1996), pp. 137-49 (=id., *Additional Problems in the Life and Writings of A.E. Housman* (Los Angeles, 2005), pp. 52-69).

2. 'Housman's Cambridge Lectures', *HSJ* 35 (2009), pp. 122-48.

3. I make this assumption on the grounds that Housman elsewhere showed a desire for careful and precise phrasing in such statements, which would be difficult to produce in an extempore fashion.

4. The preface was extended by six pages, with fifteen further pages treating textual problems in the revised 1931 edition, much material being drawn from Housman's lecture notes.

5. As n. 2, p. 138.

6. For detailed analysis of the relationship between Housman and Lindsay, see P.G. Naiditch, 'A.E. Housman and W.M. Lindsay: Two Notes', *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 14 (1989), pp. 29-31 (=id., *Problems in the Life and Writings of A.E. Housman* (Beverly Hills, 1995), pp. 75-9), and D.J. Butterfield, 'Housman and W.M. Lindsay', in D.J. Butterfield & C.A. Stray (edd.), *A.E. Housman: Classical Scholar* (London, 2009), pp. 193-216.

7. As n.2, 137.

8. Cf. the opening paragraph of the published version of this lecture in J. Diggle & F.R.D. Goodyear (edd.), *The Classical Papers of A.E. Housman* (Cambridge, 1972), III p. 1058.

9. As n. 8, p. 1060.

10. See J. Carter (ed.), *A.E. Housman / The Confines of Criticism: The Cambridge Inaugural 1911* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 22-5.

11. See ‘Housman’s Greek’, in P.J. Finglass, C. Collard & N.J. Richardson (edd.), *Hesperos: Studies in Ancient Greek Poetry Presented to M.L. West on his Seventieth Birthday* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 145-69.

12. I may add here that, to expose the oddness of the employment of *eques* (‘knight’, ‘esquire’) with *care* (‘dear’) in a Horatian ode (*carm.* 1.20.5), Housman penned his own couplet, which he presumably read to the undergraduates: ‘Come, sit beside my winter fire, / Dear Joseph Chamberlain, Esquire’. This was later altered to ‘Come, sit beside the fire with me, / J. Chamberlain, the dear MP’.

Housman's Other Secret

by

J. du Plantis[1]

The goal stands up, the keeper
Stands up to keep the goal
(*A Shropshire Lad* XXVII)

It was, I think, Cyril Connolly who castigated these lines as the most unpoetic that Housman ever wrote. How unperceptive, Cyril. The lines are alive with imagery both penile ('stands up') and penal ('keeper', 'goal' ~ 'gaol'). But, more than that, they contain a clue which, once detected, will be seen to afford a wholly new insight into Housman's character and behaviour. It has not been recognised that, behind the off-hand jauntiness (and further sexual imagery) of the poem ('Ay, the ball is flying, / The lads play heart and soul'), there lurks a despairing passion, nurtured in solitary and shamefaced isolation, a passion which dare not speak its name, for the game of football itself, in particular for Tottenham Hotspur, of whom our poet was a closet devotee in his early years. Why, he declares it in the very first line, if only we have ears to hear. 'Is my team ploughing?' he asks. Now, in the 1896 season Tottenham were relegated to the second division. Of course, he could not say 'Is my team being relegated', because that would give the game away (in any case, it doesn't scan). So what verb could he more appropriately use than one in which he could encapsulate all the anguish of his own personal 'relegation', a few years before, to temporary obscurity, his being 'ploughed' in Greats?

The fact is that, every other Saturday afternoon, Housman took the number 13 omnibus from Highgate to his beloved White Hart Lane, and stood on the terraces, rubbing shoulders with the working lads of north London, disguised in a cloth cap (probably the very one we can see him wearing in some of the later photographs, e.g. Grant Richards, *Housman 1897-1936*, facing p.152). And (here comes the bombshell), forget about Moses Jackson. The real love of Housman's life was the Tottenham goalkeeper, a young man from Shropshire called Terence Hearsay. You will remember that this is the pseudonym under which he wanted to publish *A Shropshire Lad*, before his friend A.W. Pollard argued him out of it (evidently Pollard was in on the secret and wanted to keep him out of trouble).

Twice a week the winter through
Here stood I to keep the goal

There still speaks the authentic voice of beloved Terence.

> Football then was fighting sorrow
> For the young man's soul

There speaks the authentic voice of Alfred. And now the unspeakable tragedy begins to unfold. In that dreadful season of 1896, when Housman gazed, transfixed with all the strength of his unspoken passion on his beloved Terence, as the game entered its final minute, the score nil-nil, sufficient to keep the team in the first division, the centre-forward of Wigan Town charged into the penalty area and, to the agony, the unspeakable agony of 40,000 palpitating hearts (none palpitating more agonisingly than Alfred's), Terence Hearsay tripped the centre-forward. What followed was described next day by *The Times* correspondent. 'Mr Shorthouse calmly picked himself up from the grass, placed the ball on the penalty spot, and without further ado kicked the ball beyond the reach of a helpless Mr Hearsay. Who could have imagined that a game which seemed for all the world as if it would end in goalless irresolution, yet salvation for the home team, would be terminated by a penalty shot which produced so quick, so clean an ending?' Home went Alfred, who never recovered from the shock, and passed his life henceforth in his books, never to visit the scene of his youthful ardour ever again, never to gaze again on the lad who had failed him, yet destined to encode his secret in his immortal verse, no verse more immortal than the one he penned next day, after he put down *The Times*: 'Shot? So quick, so clean an ending' (XLIV).

NOTES

1. This curious piece was handed to the editor anonymously and is published here in the hope of amusing or enlightening *HSJ* readers.

BOOK REVIEW

A Fine View of the Show: Letters from the Western Front. Edited by Andrew Jackson; 2009 (USA, but no publisher given); pp.viii + 262; £10.54 via Amazon. ISBN: 978-0-557-06225-6 (paperback).

The letters which comprise the main contents of this book are those of Hector Jackson, second son of Moses Jackson, who was the friend (and unrequited love) of A.E. Housman. Jackson – henceforth Hector – arrived in France in late 1916, having missed the worst part of the Battle of the Somme: however, he saw more than enough action at Vimy Ridge and at Third Ypres, more generally known as Passchendaele, and he emerged with a Captaincy and an MC, having been gassed just before the end of the war. Sadly, having returned to Canada, he was run down and killed by a drunken driver in 1920 at the age of 27. The editing of the letters by Hector's nephew Andrew has been carried out with pleasing competence, adequate commentary, and a good range of illustrations.

However, the justification for its review in *HSJ* lies not in its accounts of the horrors of war – certainly toned down for home consumption – but in the light, some of it new, that it casts on Housman's relations with the Jackson family. Hector himself occasionally refers in his letters to attempts (at least once successful) to see or write to A.E.H., as he does to A.E.H.'s friend Alfred Pollard, and the family solicitor A.E. Ward, but it is not until after the war, and Hector's death, that Housman fully enters the picture. It appears that Moses Jackson's deeply unsatisfactory farming venture in Canada , originally costing £3,000 in 1911 (about £168,000 today), had been financed by loans from Housman and Ward, and shortly before (the always impoverished) Moses died A.E.H. offered another £500 (£17,000). The book contains, most valuably, the full text of the last letter which Moses sent to Housman, in which he quotes the whole of *Parta Quies*, now *More Poems* XVLIII, albeit in the form in which it first appeared (see Archie Burnett (ed.), *The Poems of A.E. Housman* (Oxford, 1999), p.146). Jackson opens the letter – a long one – with "My dear old Hous", and ends, in three lines, with "Goodbye. / Yours very truly / M.J. Jackson"; perhaps rather curiously, at one point he addresses A.E.H as "Larry, old chap". In his letter of reply, which Jackson never saw, A.E.H. commented on Jackson's quoting *Parta Quies* with the words "If I had known you would recollect it 42 years afterward, my emotions would have been too much for me".

Of course, this emphasis on A.E. Housman is liable to give a wholly unbalanced impression of a book which most people will, rightly, buy for its detailed and lucid accounts of what it was like to be an officer on the Western

Front for two years. Hector was not a gifted writer in any "literary" sense – indeed, at Charterhouse he had been on the "Army" side – but his letters are none the worse for that, mercifully being without introspective musings or philosophising about the rights and wrongs of the war.

Readers of *HSJ* will find the relatively full account of Moses Jackson's life and career (see especially pp.3-23) notably interesting: happy in his private life, his career was regularly beset by disappointments: the editor does not mention A.E.H.'s unsuccessful attempt to secure for him the Headmastership of University College School in 1898 (see*, inter alia*, P.G. Naiditch, *Problems in the Life and Writings of A.E. Housman* (LA, 1995), p.142, n.3). The editor's comment (p.5) that it was only in 1967 that A.E.H's homosexuality became "public knowledge" may be technically correct, but it was certainly widely known many years earlier than that; and he is wrong to refer on the first page of the book to the German armies' "unconditional surrender" on November 11th, 1918: not so: it was an Armistice. *Hinc illae lacrimae.*

Colin Leach

Biographies

Dr Andrew Breeze, FSA, FRHistS, was born in 1954 and has taught at the University of Navarre since 1987. Married with six children, he is the author of the controversial study *Medieval Welsh Literature* (Dublin, 1997), and co-author with Professor Richard Coates of *Celtic Voices, English Places* (Stamford, 2000). He has also published over three hundred research papers, mainly on English and Celtic philology.
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David Butterfield is the W.H.D. Rouse Research Fellow in Classics at Christ's College, Cambridge. His academic researches primarily focus upon Latin poetry, in particular Lucretius. He has published numerous articles concerning the textual criticism of this philosopher-poet, as well as papers on Catullus and Propertius; his doctoral thesis concerned the manuscript history of Lucretius. He also finds the history of Classical scholarship an intriguing and rewarding field for study and hopes to develop this interest throughout his career. He is the co-editor with Robert Shorrock of the *Penguin Latin Dictionary* (London, 2007) and the co-editor with Christopher Stray of *A.E. Housman: Classical Scholar* (London, 2009). He takes up the Editorship of the *Housman Society Journal* with this volume.
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Nicholas Goodison was formerly Chairman of the Stock Exchange and of the TSB Group, Deputy Chairman of British Steel, and Chairman of the Courtauld Institute of Art, the National Art Collections Fund, the Crafts Council and the Burlington Magazine. He has published books and papers on the decorative arts, most notably *Matthew Boulton: Ormolu* (2002), a revised edition of *Ormolu: the Work of Matthew Boulton* (1974). His love of the landscape of Morvern resulted in a photographic work *These Fragments*, published in 2005.

Richard Perceval Graves was born in Brighton and studied Modern History at St. John's College, Oxford. After teaching for some years at schools including Harrow and Ellesmere College, he became a full-time writer in 1973. He is the author of several biographies, including his enduring *A. E. Housman: The Scholar-Poet* published in 1979, and now available again in the Faber Finds series. He has also written a 3-volume biography about his uncle, the poet Robert Graves. Since 2000, he has been a partner in Grave Web Services, a website design company, and has co-authored several Beginner guides in Computing.

Andrew Jackson, youngest son of Gerald and Honor Jackson, was born in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1953. He completed a B.Sc. in geology at the University of Rhodesia

(as it then was) and served as an officer in the Rhodesian Army during that country's bush war. He has a post-graduate degree in mineral economics from the University of Western Ontario in Canada and has practised as a geologist, specializing in the management of mineral exploration teams worldwide. Andrew is currently a minerals resource analyst with an investment company. He is married to Jackie, has two daughters and lives in San Diego, California.
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Clive Jenkins was born in 1948 in the Vale of Glamorgan of a farming family. He was educated at Cowbridge Grammar School and won a scholarship to Jesus College Oxford where he graduated in History. He first read *A Shropshire Lad* at the age of fifteen, and soon moved on to the rest of the oeuvre. He is currently Principal of a tutorial centre in Oxford and is married with one son; his wife and son are both Classics graduates. He is currently trying to improve his Welsh, in part inspired by spending so much time in The Marches.
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Tom Keeline is a graduate student in Classics at Harvard University. His main academic interests lie in Latin and Hellenistic poetry, textual criticism, and the history of classical scholarship.
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Colin Leach was educated at Shrewsbury School and Braesnose College, Oxford, where he was a Fellow in Classics; he has written a history of his school, a biography of a nineteenth century Master of Pembroke College (where he is now an Emeritus Fellow), and, with James Michie, an edition-cum-translation of Euripides' *Helen*. A frequent reviewer for the *TLS*, his life has been divided between Oxford and the city of London.

Paul Naiditch (Librarian Emeritus, University of California, Los Angeles) is the author of *A.E. Housman at University College, London: the Election of 1892* (Leiden, 1988), *Problems in the Life and Writings of A.E. Housman* (Beverly Hills, 1995) and *Additional Problems in the Life and Writings of A.E. Housman* (Los Angeles, 2005). Mr Naiditch has also written on the history of classical scholarship, the reception of the press of Aldus Manutius, the history of bookselling, and the history of science fiction. Under another name he writes humorous fantasy fiction.
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Geoffrey Plowden was born in 1929 of an Anglo-Indian family, with Shropshire Lad country roots. He was at school in England and Canada and read Greats at Balliol from 1947-51. He was a War Office Russian interpreter in 1953 and a civil servant in the Admiralty and elsewhere from 1953 to 1989. He published *Pope on Classic Ground* (Athens, Ohio, 1983), a study of previously unnoticed sources of the poet and of meanings revealed by his allusions to them.

D. Antoine Sutton is an American Pastor and Biblicist who resides in the state of Nebraska. His doctoral work at Knox Theological Seminary developed in him a passion for a number of research areas that intersect here and there, namely, the study of: 1. Greco-Roman comedic allusions, and satirical terms, in the Greek texts of the Holy Gospels; 2. Second Temple Period writings; 3. The Trinity in Tertullian literature; 4. Jonathan Edward's use of ancient Near Eastern languages and literature in his pastoral and typological exegesis of the Holy Scriptures. Moreover he is currently translating James Henry Breasted's 1894 Latin dissertation *De Hymnis In Solem Sub Rege Amenophide IV Conceptis* as a contribution to the field of Egyptology. He is also the director of Semitica Language Academy – a private tutorial, in which he offers instruction on Hebrew, Syriac and Arabic grammar.
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The Housman Society and Journal

MEMBERSHIP

The Housman Society was founded in 1973, its main purpose being to bring together all those interested in the lives and works of the Housman family and to generate interest in literature and poetry. The subscription year starts on 1st May and the current annual subscriptions are:

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THE JOURNAL

The Journal, which is published annually and sent free to members, exists for the publication of critical researches related to the poetry, prose and classical scholarship of A.E. Housman and the works of other members of his family, and for the review of books concerned with the same. It also exists for the publication of documentary evidence relating to the family.

The 2011 Journal will be published in late November of that year. Articles intended for publication, or books for review, should be sent to **David Butterfield, Christ's College, Cambridge CB2 3BU**. If possible please send as an attachment to an e-mail, preferably in Microsoft Word, or as a file on a CD-Rom. E-mail: <djb89@cam.ac.uk> Proof copies will be sent by PDF.

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Lines of poetry quoted within a sentence should be indicated by the siglum |: e.g. I to my perils | Of cheat and charmer | Came clad in armour | By stars benign.

Numbers of poems, where appropriate, should be in upper case Roman numerals: e.g. ASL II (not ASL ii)

Authors are reminded that the Editor reserves the right to edit and his decision is final.

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1. A.E. Housman

Copyright in the author's poems expired in 2006 but any queries regarding the writings of A. E. Housman should be addressed to his estate which is represented by the Society of Authors, 84 Drayton Gardens, London SW10 9SB – www.societyofauthors.org

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These notes are intended to give an outline of the situation only. Advice on the copyright status of specific works and general guidance on copyright matters in A.E. Housman's work should be sought from the Society of Authors 020 7370 9808 – <estates@societyofauthors.org>.

2. Clemence Housman

The literary executor until her death in 1984 was Ethel Mannin. The Society still has no information about who is now the lawful owner of the copyright of Clemence Housman.

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