The Housman Society Journal

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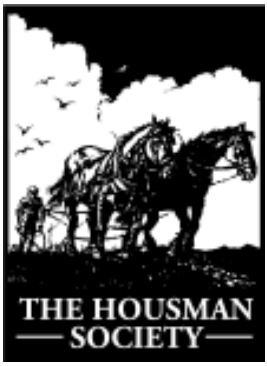
Volume Thirty-eight 2012

Editor: David Butterfield



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ISSN 0305-926X
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The Housman Society

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Housman Society Journal

Volume Thirty-Eight **December 2012**

Chairman's Notes 2012

Since Bromsgrove School have been the owners of Housman Hall and loaned it to the Society over the autumn half term, our triennial weekends have taken on a new lease of life, and there was such a buzz about the one that has just ended that one is tempted to say that it was the most stimulating yet. Certainly from the cards, letters and e-mails that I have received members seem to agree with that view. Every session – and there were ten of them – held our attention and the range of topics defied the notion that there was nothing more to say about A.E. Housman or indeed Laurence and Clem.

The title for the Weekend was 'The Housmans of Bromsgrove: Contexts and Perspectives' and the breadth of the topics covered in the sessions on the Saturday fully embraced that title. We were plunged straight in to the heart of the Housmans with Linda Hart's intriguing 'A to Z of A.E.H'. She covered every aspect of Housman's life in twenty-six succinct two and a half minute 'bites'. Her research was impeccable, her opinions well considered, her delivery engaging and the content little short of brilliant. Here we had a summary of every aspect of Housman in 60 minutes – quite a feat! Andrew Maund followed and in his introduction to the members' reading of *Last Poems* he summarised the background to Housman's writing of this 'slim volume' and gave illuminating comments on some of the poems before we embarked on the reading. This was a genuinely moving occasion when all present had the chance (albeit subconsciously) to show how they thought poetry should be read. The variety was extraordinary and the resulting whole became a unifying experience for all members present. After lunch it was Laurence's turn to take the limelight for Celia Jones brought her 'Dear Mrs Ashbee' programme in which Pamela Marsh read Laurence's letters and Celia read what she imagined Janet might have replied. It was an intriguing dialogue and yet another side of Laurence's character was opened up. One thing puzzled me – how extraordinary it is to think that this correspondence covered forty years, yet Laurence in his *Unexpected Years* does not mention Janet once and even C.R. Ashbee is only mentioned in perfunctory manner three times.

After a short break we were into potentially the most intriguing session of all – for what was Nicholas Shrimpton, himself an unknown quantity in Housman circles, going to tell us about Victorian Pessimism and how would it relate to the Housman family? Our curiosity was quickly satisfied as his brilliant exposition of how the optimism of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment and the spiritually uplifting early Romantic movement declined into a so-called

'Victorian Pessimism' by the second half of the nineteenth century. This he vividly placed in context and elucidated the dark world view of A.E. Housman's *A Shropshire Lad* for his audience.

It was indeed a pleasure to welcome Wendy Cope to our weekend and her session after tea had all the ingredients that one had hoped for. She began with her own poems and showing a healthy irreverence in a number of subjects, her description of the emotional shortcomings of men went down particularly well. Her articulation of the unhappiness of failed love affairs were moving too, because they were so obviously heartfelt - and it was good to hear her reading her classic two-verse poem about Housman, for who would have ever thought that there was yet another area in which A.E.H. would achieve immortality! A selection of her favourite Housman poems and an interesting question time concluded the last formal session of the day.

A feature of these weekends is the catering arrangements whereby meals are served at round tables and discussion can follow on from topics covered during the conference. The service provided by Bromsgrove School's Catering team was excellent and their menus were imaginative with the Barbue Housman provided for the main course of the Saturday dinner being just right for the occasion. Instead of speeches Elizabeth Oakley introduced a selection of parodies by Alfred, Laurence and members of the Society who had responded with wit and imagination to the challenge.

David Butterfield was the first speaker on Sunday morning and his exposition of the life A.E.H. led at Cambridge was full of fascinating revelations, which we hope he will let us see in print in the Journal soon. Julian Hunt followed with a final tour de force in which he charted, by way of many dodgy family escapades (including bankruptcies and elopements), how the Housman Family came to Bromsgrove. In correcting many of the errors that John Pugh made in his *Bromsgrove and the Housmans* (1974) he explained how much easier research was now with the internet.

The weekend had started on the Friday evening in Bromsgrove's local arts centre with a complete performance of *A Shropshire Lad* by James Rutherford and Simon Lepper. Twenty-four of the poems were sung (the majority by the neglected C.W. Orr) and the rest read, and for the majority this was the greatest of successes. The minority, who regretted the absence of Butterworth, Somervell and Gurney, failed to realise that this was deliberate, since we had many of the well-known ones three years ago in Roderick Williams' fine recital. The quality of James Rutherford's interpretations of both the sung and read poems was superb and the projection on to a very large screen at the back of the stage of Gareth Thomas's atmospheric photographs added an extra dimension

to a unique evening of poetry, song and picture that to my knowledge has never been produced before. The recital had been preceded by a stimulating talk before supper in Housman Hall from Valerie Langfield in which she analysed what makes a successful setting and in so doing introduced us to her discovery of Arthur Farwell (1872-1952), a composer who had set Housman to music two years before Somervell's earliest setting.

The Schools Poetry Reading Competition continues to have mixed fortunes and although this year – the competition takes place a week after the deadline for these notes - the Middle schools entry has been good, there has been a poor response from schools in the Senior and Sixth Form categories.

James Jones, who is a House Parent at Housman Hall, joined us at the Annual General Meeting because he is studying the Victorian bachelor and offered to share his findings with our meeting. His talk produced much of interest and discussion flowed freely afterwards; it turned out to be a useful a preamble to the Weekend's Victorian Pessimism session.

The Dean of Worcester Cathedral, The Very Reverend Peter Atkinson, was our guest at the Commemoration of Housman's birthday in Bromsgrove this year and with the weather being kind to us he was able to elaborate on his duties at the cathedral as well as having personal thoughts on Housman's poetry. Ludlow's Commemoration this year was followed by a tour of St Laurence's with a special emphasis on the stained glass, and sitting down to lunch afterwards in this cathedral-like building was a special and unusual experience.

Our sponsored lecture at Hay on *The Name and Nature of Poetry* was the fourteenth in the series and Michael Berkeley's position as a composer gave him a very different view of the nature of poetry; his sub-title, 'The Music of Loss', chimed particularly well with Housman's poetry and you will enjoy the transcript of what he said later in these pages.

The summer event was a reading of *Last Poems*, which reached its 90th anniversary this year, in Bromsgrove School's Old Chapel, an appropriate venue indeed as A.E.H. would have worshipped here in his time at the school. It was preceded by a lunch and a look at a triptych of Housman's Shropshire which Bromsgrove School had commissioned from their Head of Art, Sara Rogers.

It is good to be able to welcome Sir Geoffrey Hill to our ranks of Vice Presidents and it is a happy chance that this coincides with our publishing the second edition of *Three Bromsgrove Poets* – to which he has added two poems. Thanks go to Robin Shaw for seeing this through to fruition – never an easy task, and even in these days of sophisticated technology, still a challenging operation!

We have made some progress during the year in sharing the workload of keeping the Society going and thanks go to Sonia French for taking over the responsibilities of Merchandise Officer. Thanks also go to David Butterfield for taking on the physical setting of the Journal and to the rest of the committee for their loyalty.

Jim Page

The Housman Lecture
The Name and Nature of Poetry

by

Michael Berkeley

Delivered at the Hay Festival of Literature on 6th June 2012.

In his 1933 lecture, *The Name and Nature of Poetry*, A.E. Housman began with a disclaimer. In order to make a lecture interesting one had to be allowed to posit ideas with a degree of certainty and without apology even if that risked provocation and irritation. Housman's intellectual pedigree might have rendered this warning redundant or even disingenuous but, for other reasons, I am as one with him. Unlike Housman I am not a classical scholar and so my talk will concentrate largely on the emotional motivation of poetry and music (especially as seen through my father, Lennox Berkeley – in many ways a Housman-like character), and on why many people find contemporary music difficult but on the way I hope you will bear with me if I tread on some Greek and Latin toes!

I wonder how many of you listening to, or reading, this have had a recurring dream of never quite arriving, of continually striving to get from one place to another, only, Sisyphus-like, to be frustrated. An even more astonishing statistic might be the number of those who have *not* had this dream.

We need to yearn. We need to seek the unattainable. Therefore, in some ways, we are doomed, for if what we seek is unattainable we can never be truly satisfied. This was (and still is) a profoundly held belief for many societies, cultures and religions. It echoes the Prometheus version of the myth that man is destined to constant restlessness. Woody Allen's take on love is a rather nice example of just one of our conundrums:

> To love is to suffer. To avoid suffering, one must not love. But then, one suffers from not loving. Therefore, to love is to suffer; not to love is to suffer; to suffer is to suffer. To be happy is to love. To be happy, then, is to suffer, but suffering makes one unhappy. Therefore, to be happy, one must love or love to suffer or suffer from too much happiness.

Animals do not have this problem since they *do* rather than *think* about *doing*! Humans discuss and engage in endless prevarication, justification, fear

and, let us not forget our prize plum, GUILT! We are riddled with contradictions. In fact Woody Allen also advised that if you want to make God laugh you should tell him your plans!

William Blake put it more poetically – Did he smile his work to see? Blake's poem is not just about the beauty of the tiger, though it is certainly that as well, but it is essentially about contradiction, about the extraordinary notion that lambs and tigers are indeed what we all are:

> When the stars threw down their spears,
> And watered heaven with their tears,
> Did he smile his work to see?
> Did he who made the Lamb make thee?
>
> Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
> In the forests of the night,
> What immortal hand or eye
> Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

When Ian McEwan compiled his text for our Oratorio 'Or Shall We Die?' he used the first few lines of that quote as a kind of chorale, a Greek chorus referring in that instance to the dangers of Nuclear Arms Proliferation in 1982.

Many find in religion some answer to the eternal quest, to the need to understand why we are here. Others turn to music and poetry or a combination of all three. George Steiner has said that it is the very 'unknowingness' of where we came from, where and what we are and where we are going that lies at the heart of our restlessness and that truly great works of art can be defined by their ability to create their own vision of that 'unknowingness'. Think of your favourite paintings, novels, pieces of music and that element of 'unknowingness' is often to the fore.

What is it in the make up of our nature and psyche that gives us the restlessness that is, some would say, the foundation of creativity? What David Malouf in his marvelous little gem of a book, *The Happy Life*, refers to as the irritant that produces the pearl.

This irritant was identified not just by the Athenian Academy but also in Judaeo-Christian thought.

When God at first made man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by,
"Let us," said he, "pour on him all we can.
Let the world's riches, which dispersèd lie,
Contract into a span."

So strength first made a way;
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honour, pleasure.
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all his treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

"For if I should," said he,
"Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore my gifts instead of me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature;
So both should losers be.

"Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast."

That was 'The Pulley' by George Herbert.

I shall be returning to David Malouf's 'search for contentment in the modern world' because on his intellectual travels he explores precisely those circumstances that, in Housman, and indeed in his readers, create writing and reading of beauty and power, a power that is indelibly linked to what we might call the eternal struggle. Of course in Housman's case his quiet but ferocious intellect seems, at first sight, at odds with his emotional, even naive, yearning; a male friendship and unrequited love. Rather than re-recite in depth Housman's probable homosexual love for the definitely heterosexual Moses Jackson, I would like to consider whether this was not precisely the catalyst Housman required to ignite his poetry and whether, had it not been Moses, it might just as easily have been Jack Sprat.

In other words do artists require emotional turmoil to fuel their creative engine? Or, as the classical world would assert (and of course no one knew it better than Housman) this is all nonsense. You do not need to be miserable or starving in a garret to create great art – Bach and Mozart are testimony to that! Yet Bach's genius was, nevertheless, fuelled by a search – the search for God. Mozart, and indeed Shakespeare, seemed powered, like the Greek poets, by their fascination with, and desire to understand, man's fragility, not to say stupidity – How the *Gods* do laugh to see…

In Housman *we* see, at first sight, an unusual marriage of classical Latin scholar par excellence and the kind of hopeless would-be-lover of the sort the Greeks rather despaired of. They invented the word 'mania' to cover just this sort of obsession. It is a mark of the wonderful madness of the human condition that intellect and emotion can be (*need to be*?) so exhilaratingly in conflict. Productively so, for in his poetry Housman uses classical skeletons to structure and support the romantic flesh.

To these two contradictory viewpoints – the romantic and the classical – must be added a third, I think; What we might call the Black Russian – Solzhenitsyn (though it is there in Chekhov too), in which the *actual* conditions of life genuinely do not promise much hope – the Gulag, the slave trade, the concentration camp, the starving. Wonderful works of hope against hope, to borrow from Mandelstam, do emerge from conditions of appalling misery and fear – the Blues, the Quartet for the End of Time, for example, but all too often the black is so dark that there is no glimmer of creativity possible. If you are for years in a cell with no light and no paper or pencil, even if you had light, you are rather more likely to go mad than create a masterpiece.

There is of course a link between the romantic, yearning side of Housman with much Russian literature but where we are discussing appalling horror, as in Mandelstam's *Hope against Hope*, I think trying to make that link would be distasteful. It is not that despair in the imagination or founded on love and its loss is not devastating, poignant and painful, but to compare it to terrible human privation, torture and death seems wrong. So, when Beethoven conjures up in music the extraordinary sensation of the prisoners coming out into the light in Fidelio, he is giving us a vision of the meaning of life itself. That is the huge difference. The words here are scarcely necessary; the poetic beauty of the music is so strong.

Yet music is able to blur the edges – in its pure abstraction it is less specific than words or visual images – it leaves the listener to decide what it means to him or her. That is why Shostakovich was able to use the codification of music to speak yet stay alive. The quality of abstraction, of pure thought

some find in meditation, and some in the choreography of George Balanchine; eschewing narrative Mr B. created essays in distilled movement and form – little wonder his collaborations with Stravinsky are so enduring. In both artists less is more. We do not need elaborate props if the imagination is firing on all cylinders. Balanchine is often performed in front of a plain screen.

The sheer resilience and creativity of the human spirit is remarkable. Visiting India and seeing families living under a flimsy roof of plastic sheeting and with no belongings whatsoever, it was deeply moving to see the children happily playing with sticks and stones, creating their own games (cricket more often than not) and allowing the imagination full rein. In fact the absence of western comforts, toys and TV, seemed to inspire them to much greater feats of imagination. It is not simply that ignorance of what they *might* have had meant that they were untainted, but that they joyously made the most of what they *did* have.

A stick or a stone is a starting point. It, with singing, was the start of all music and rhythm. Starting from nothing is the greatest challenge but, in one sense, there is no such thing as nothing since we are all the product of our various experiences. No artist is totally innovatory. In much the same way, there is no such thing as total silence since atmosphere is very noisy. That is why sound technicians will always record a couple of minutes of pure atmosphere at any location so that when they come to edit there is not a sudden drop out of background noise. Without that noise our aural antennae become very confused. Yet silence, albeit with atmosphere, or space, is in many ways the most potent instrument in the orchestra and is far too underused. In the theatre, as in music, the ability to use space – silence – comes with confidence. That as you feel the tempo and context of the occasion so you are able to add stress to a moment by creating an extended up beat – a long inhalation of breath.

Space can be daunting or overly dramatic if indulged. Then there is space as possibility. As a composer I always find it easier, and less of a challenge, to discover ideas when I am setting a text because rather than being confronted with a blank sheet of paper, a poem or libretto or even a picture immediately conjures up a sensibility if not a precise musical idea, though it often does that as well. Words anchor us where music leaves us adrift, floating free.

In the programme I have presented for Radio 3 for some 17 years, *Private Passions*, I have discovered, or, more accurately, confirmed what I always suspected, that, of some 800 guests, the vast majority chose music and poetry that by and large was sad, profound and even disturbing. As their music unfolds or we listen to a poem in my spare bedroom where we record the programme, politicians, scientists, writers and painters are inevitably surprised, tearful and

even apologetic for choosing music and words that depict or suggest tragedy and loss. "I am not really as melancholy as my choice suggests," they say. Some, like the actor Tom Courtney, even warn me in advance that the floodgates will open more than once. I sometimes feel that, like an analyst, I should have a box of tissues ready by their chair! Curiously amongst the minority who chose unremittingly happy and joyous music was Stephen Fry who has often talked about his periods of depression!

Why do we lean towards music and works of art that tug at our heart strings, that move us to tears? The answer is, I think, catharsis. We feed off our once-removed observance of tragedy happening to others and relate it to our lives from a safe distance – you only need to read a newspaper to see that. But in works of art, as opposed to the Tabloids, we are not merely voyeuristic but are enriched by partaking in a profoundly moving event from a safe distance and in the hands of a Shakespeare, a Mozart or a Beethoven we are given some insight into the human condition, our condition, some comprehension of our frailties, some clue as to the workings of our psyche, some clue as to why we are here. It is a form of communion.

I asked the Psychiatrist, the late Anthony Storr, during his *Private Passions*, why we relate so powerfully to sad music and, while agreeing about catharsis, he also pointed out that people who are clinically and seriously depressed can listen to nothing. That when the world is totally black everything is turned off. So it is with creativity. What you might see as the psychological equivalent of the lightless cell. This is an important distinction since it suggests that it is in relative health that we choose to view the abyss rather than when we are already in it.

It is also through the third person that we are most able to see inside ourselves. The Psychoanalyst and writer, Adam Phillips, attributed part of the success of *Private Passions* to a technique he and other analysts employ. Rather than asking direct personal questions of a client he will encourage him or her to tell a story. In talking about music we, on *Private Passions*, are doing just that – using music to gain an insight into personality. In explaining why the Trio from the end of *Der Rosenkavalier* or *The Four Last Songs* by Strauss is, for the guest, so unbearably moving we peer into their inner psyche and emotional history. In discussing death and loss in others through the language of music we enter the speaker's own sense of both aspiration and mortality. Having disclosed this information I must report that Mr Phillips suddenly became a degree more reticent as a Private Passionee!

Focussing on the music is therefore what distinguishes *Private Passions* from *Desert Island Discs*, where a life history is sought more directly and

journalistically.

I recently discovered a great deal more about my father's relationship with Benjamin Britten through a penetrating volume called *Lennox and Freda* by Tony Scotland. It is the story of how an ostensibly gay man changed his emotional centre of gravity and fathered a happy family and how that affected his music. The parallels with Housman are striking if, of course, different. Housman suffered from a lack rather than a loss. Lack and loss are worlds apart. Lennox was in love with Ben's gifts as much as with the man himself and when he essentially lost the man to Peter Pears his most eloquent description of his feelings came in two of his finest songs, both settings of Housman:

Because I liked you better
  Than suits a man to say,
It irked you, and I promised
  To throw the thought away.

To put the world between us
  We parted, stiff and dry;
'Good-bye,' said you, 'forget me.'
  'I will, no fear,' said I.

If here, where clover whitens
  The dead man's knoll, you pass,
And no tall flower to meet you
  Starts in the trefoiled grass,

Halt by the headstone naming
  The heart no longer stirred,
And say the lad that loved you
Was one that kept his word.[1]

There is an obvious connection with Housman, not just in the sentiments being expressed but also in the fact that Lennox, like Housman, was spiritually a neo-classicist yet in the presence of words, sacred and secular, a romantic element is allowed to blossom.

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.

Lennox and Britten both set Auden but only Lennox set Housman. The composer, Ian Venables, has rightly suggested that the simple folk-like verse of Housman is in fact a trap – that the internal complexities and, in particular, the irony make the lines far harder to set than at first might appear to be the case. This is why, he suggests, that despite the fact that Housman is one of the most set poets in the English Language, certain composers, most notably Britten, have avoided him.

I am not sure that I entirely agree with Ian. I think my father's settings get to the very essence of the poetry and I would like to think that in my own settings of 'Grenadier' (commissioned by the Housman Society) and more recently (what I call) 'Hollow Fires', the apparently straight-forward and lyrical setting is in fact subverted by the music gradually or suddenly slipping or diving into something surprisingly frenetic or angry.

In a poem or indeed any text, what is essential for a composer is space – a jewel encrusted text (most of Shakepeare in fact) leaves nothing for the music to do and no space in which to do it. In her *Private Passions* Carol Ann Duffy discussed this very issue and she said that she does not, for precisely this reason, like her poems to be set. On the other hand she is open to writing lyrics (and has translated Mozart opera libretti) because she can then deliberately create more open vowels and lines that leave the composer room in which to move. This is why the pure openness of the vowels in Italian make it such a good language to sing. I am not saying that the openness of the vowels in one language only goes to emphasise the opening of the bowels in another, because gifted composers transcend this problem, but there is no question that some languages have a natural beauty, regardless of beauty, and others are more grating.

Britten was probably the finest setter of texts since Purcell (whom he studied and performed) and his choice of texts, helped by well-read friends like Peter Pears and my father, in the case of French Literature and, indeed, *Les Illuminations*. In Lennox and Freda I learnt a lot more about how poetry helped form my father's aesthetic sensibility and some of this, naturally, rubbed off on me. As I read Tony Scotland's words I cannot but help think of Housman. He writes:

Lennox had always been an avid reader. Apart from French literature his list at Oxford included two of the works on every undergraduate's shelves at the time, *The Waste Land* and *Time and Western Man*, together with Bridges's anthology, *The Spirit of Man*. Long before Oxford, Lennox had been reading poetry for pleasure. Now he began to see it as a source of song texts. For expert guidance he sought the advice of the Professor of Poetry, who happened to be a Fellow of Merton, H.W. Garrod, the widely-loved classics tutor. It may have been through Garrod that Lennox discovered the texts by Ronsard, du Bellay and Charles d'Orléans which he set as songs and performed at the Oxford University Musical Club and Union. His setting of the du Bellay pastoral 'D'un Vanneur de blé aux', 'The Thresher', was first performed in 1926 by the future Poet Laureate, Cecil Day Lewis, who had a 'ravishing light tenor singing voice'. He valued 'The Thresher' as 'one of the most musical pieces of song writing produced during our period'. But Berkeley's two Auden settings which Day Lewis sang in that same concert were a bit of a disaster. Day Lewis recalled that he limped through the first one – about a coach-load of trippers – and stalled irretrievably in the second, which was received 'with a sustained outburst of silence'.

It was Auden who persuaded Berkeley to allow Day Lewis to sing these three new songs, after Auden had tried out his Wadham friend in some more standard fare. Auden had a piano in his rooms at Christ Church, on which he thumped his way through the forty-eight preludes and fugues by Bach – 'the only composer. According to Day Lewis, his playing was 'loud, confident, but wonderfully inaccurate'. Rather like his dress and hygiene!

Auden must have approved of Berkeley's two settings of his poems because, that same year, he presented Lennox with his own, personal copy of Oxford Poetry 1926. 'If,' argues the unmistakable voice of Auden in the Preface, 'it is a natural preference to inhabit a room with casements opening upon Fairyland, one at least of them should open upon the Waste Land.' T.S. Eliot, whose controversial poem was by then four years old, was not represented in the new collection, since he had never been an undergraduate at Oxford.

In one of Auden's contributions, 'Cinders', a 'dissolute man', sees 'a phallic symbol in a cypress tree', wonders whether he dares to drink from the stream of 'sweet lust' and, deciding that he can, he

> Forsakes phlegmatic company of stars
> For pressure of strange knees at cinemas.

But, after sporting thus a little, he
Turns back to lyric, tired of lechery.

There is absolutely nothing to prove it, but this seems to convey something of the state of mildly experienced innocence which Lennox himself may have reached, but not yet passed, at Oxford – unlike the less than virginal poet, who was already sleeping with Christopher Isherwood.

Berkeley and Auden kept in touch, meeting occasionally, and in 1957, when he had returned to Oxford as Professor of Poetry (and an American citizen), Auden wrote to say he would be 'honored and delighted' if Berkeley cared to set any of his poems, adding generously: 'Please treat the words simply as raw material and change or cut anything as you feel inclined. (Not a sentiment you would hear from either Eliot or Duffy!) It is impertinent, I know, continued Auden, for me, to venture a suggestion, but I would like you to glance at a song called Nocturne 2 ("Shield of Achilles")… since it was written consciously as something to be set…'.

Lennox felt differently about what worked with music and what did not, though he would have been just as diffident about saying so, and in the event he set, not 'Nocturne 2', but 'Lauds' from *The Shield of Achilles*, using it as the opening song of his *Five Poems of W. H. Auden*, first performed in New York in 1959.

Among the leaves the small birds sing;
The crow of the cock commands awaking:
In solitude, for company.

Bright shines the sun on creatures mortal;
Men of their neighbours become sensible:
In solitude, for company.

The crow of the cock commands awaking;
Already the mass-bell goes dong-ding:
In solitude, for company.

Men of their neighbours become sensible;
God bless the Realm, God bless the People:

In solitude, for company.

Already the mass-bell goes dong-ding;
The dripping mill-wheel is again turning:
In solitude, for company.

God bless the Realm, God bless the People;
God bless this green world temporal:
In solitude, for company.

The dripping mill-wheel is again turning;
Among the leaves the small birds sing:
In solitude, for company.

Lennox loved setting words (particularly Auden's words: he made beautiful settings of five more Auden poems twenty-one years later), but he concentrated less on the meaning of the words than on the atmosphere they created. He believed that when a composer set a poem he had 'in a way to destroy one side of that poem in order to re-create it in another form... in another language, translated, re-made'.

When, in the Sixties, he set some poems by Laurie Lee, he wondered, in his diary, how poets could ever tolerate 'having their work freely interpreted, pulled about, the prosody destroyed and sometimes the meaning obscured by a composer'. And yet he felt that a composer could occasionally 're-create the atmosphere of a poem and even (though this is almost impossible with great poetry) add something to it'.

All four of Lennox's Housman poems are about parting, all are bleak and final. The first is about the pain of unrequited love, and the second about a young soldier marching off to war; the fourth seems to suggest that the loved one is in love with himself, so he must not look in his lover's eye or he will see his own face and, like his lover, die. Lennox completed the settings in January 1940, but later in the year, he added that fifth song, 'Because I Like You Better' that we heard earlier.

Benjamin Britten's choice of texts in which innocence is corrupted reveals the turbulence caused in coming to terms with his own psycho-sexuality and he was able to import this whether it was with or without words.

In mirroring the sudden changes of mood of the sea, Britten in *Peter*

Grimes and *Billy Budd* was, I have often thought, mirroring his own troubled waters in a not totally un-Housman-like manner. Where Housman had an unerring technical skill, Britten had the musical equivalent and both had an unfailing ear.

I suspect that because he made so many folk song arrangements that Britten was looking for more extended lines and more complicated metres, yet *Winter Words*, the Hardy cycle, tends to dispute this.

If Housman's yearning was indeed based more on lack than loss, and I suspect, despite his more Latin inclinations, that he knew better than most his Plato and the *Symposium*, he did experience real loss when his youngest brother, Herbert, was killed in the Boer War.

This kind of literal (as opposed to literary) loss affects writers and composers in very different ways but two whom I have set have reacted with rage at the dying of the light and in one case quite horrifically so. I refer to Kipling and, indeed, Hardy.

My first opera, *Baa Baa Black Sheep*, to a libretto by David Malouf, fused two works by Kipling. The short autobiographical story called *Baa Baa Black Sheep* in which Kipling recalls how, as a very young boy, he and his sister were sent back to England from India and into the hands of a fearsome woman whom he calls Auntie Rosa. She and her bully-boy of a son, Harry, torment the young Kipling and lock him in a cupboard at the bottom of the house where he scratched the word 'HELP'. This is still chillingly in evidence in that house in Southsea. It was here that Kipling first thought up the idea of an imaginary world of animals where revenge could be exacted on hated adults. So the opera marries the *Baa Baa Black Sheep* story to *The Jungle Book*. Harry becomes Sheer Khan, Kipling Mowglie, his sister Grey Wolf and so on.

During this period Kipling began to have real problems with his sight. David Malouf wanted the return of Kipling's mother to be redemptive but from this childhood experience the element of revenge was never to be far off in his writing and was compounded for Kipling by the loss of his own son in the First World War.

So that when, at the end of the opera, Kipling's mother says 'I am back, I am here for you', David imagined something warm, redemptive and reconciling but prompted by the music and the reality we in fact ended the opera with the young child replying with the awful words 'Too Late, Too Late'. And it was too late. The psychological damage was done as so much of Kipling's later works, full of revenge, describe. Here the mother arrives to fetch her son (Punch) and is appalled by what she finds. The music is an expressionist scream since I could

see no other way to encapsulate the shocking significance of what had happened in the mother's absence.[2]

The loss of his son John led, I imagine, Kipling to write perhaps his most terrifying short story and one that I think would make a gripping *Salome/ Elektra* type opera, *Mary Postgate*.

In this tale, Mary Postgate helps to bring up and dote on a young child, Wynn, as though he were her own, only to see him, as a young man, killed while training to be a pilot in the air force. Then a local child is killed when a German bomb lands in the village. When a German airman is forced to leave his damaged aircraft and parachute to earth, he lands in a tree near a bonfire (what was known as a 'destructor') in Mary Postgate's garden. She is burning Wynn's effects. As the unfortunate German dies Kipling describes Mary's reactions in what one can only call orgasmic terms:

> 'She wielded the poker with lunges that jarred the grating at the bottom [of the 'destructor'], and careful scrapes round the brickwork above'; 'the exercise of stoking had given her a glow which seemed to reach to the marrow of her bones'; 'she thumped like a pavior through the settling ashes at the secret thrill of it'; 'an increasing rapture laid hold on her...'

This passage has caused much discussion, after all it is a staggering page to write in Victorian times, but I think it all goes back to Kipling's childhood mistreatment by guardians and by the loss of his son and the rage that that provoked in him.

Again, I would find it uncomfortable to compare this kind of traumatic loss with that of the jilted or spurned lover and the difference in art that the two conditions inspire is interesting; the former tending towards the savage and retributional, the latter towards the poetic.

In Housman's 'Grenadier' there is a savage irony about the young boy who goes to war for thirteen pence a day:

> The Queen she sent to look for me,
> The sergeant he did say,
> 'Young man, a soldier will you be
> For thirteen pence a day?'

For thirteen pence a day did I
  Take off the things I wore,
And I have marched to where I lie,
  And I shall march no more.

My mouth is dry, my shirt is wet,
  My blood runs all away,
So now I shall not die in debt
  For thirteen pence a day.

To-morrow after new young men
  The sergeant he must see,
For things will all be over then
  Between the Queen and me.

And I shall have to bate my price,
  For in the grave, they say,
Is neither knowledge nor device
  Nor thirteen pence a day.

In a way, to use a disarmingly simple folk-like melody (albeit with a bitter and violent twist) as I did makes the shattering awfulness of the waste even more telling.

Compare those sentiments by Housman with these by Hardy in which another young boy goes to his end. Again the idea of service must at first have seemed glamorous (and the contrast between light and dark only underlines the bleakness) but there is little glamour in the end result.

Drummer Hodge

They throw in Drummer Hodge, to rest
Uncoffined -- just as found:
His landmark is a kopje-crest
That breaks the veldt around:

And foreign constellations west
Each night above his mound.

Young Hodge the drummer never knew --
Fresh from his Wessex home --
The meaning of the broad Karoo,
The Bush, the dusty loam,
And why uprose to nightly view
Strange stars amid the gloam.

Yet portion of that unknown plain
Will Hodge for ever be;
His homely Northern breast and brain
Grow to some Southern tree,
And strange-eyed constellations reign
His stars eternally.

It is hard not to be struck by the barely restrained fury in both poems and there is an unsettling Rupert Brooke sentiment in 'Yet portion of that unknown plain | Will Hodge for ever be'.

In the *War Requiem* Britten tellingly married the Latin Mass to the poems of Wilfred Owen and, as though echoing Blake's 'Did he who made the Lamb make thee?', Owen asks 'Was it for this the clay grew tall?'.

Film and television glamourise war but there is nothing romantic about being cut down in your teens and yet the fact that Owen was killed right at the end of the war somehow, and at some level in our consciousness, imbues his poetry with an additional quality of pathos and power that we do not invest in the survivors – Siegfried Sassoon, for example.

We need to question ourselves about this because I suspect we are decorating the poetry of the fallen with our own need for catharsis.

If I think of how we award iconic status to those who die young – from Marilyn Monroe to Amy Winehouse, from James Dean to Jim Morrison, their deaths become part of their creativity, part of their oeuvre, almost. And even if there is no oeuvre, as in the case of Princess Diana, her death somehow becomes her achievement.

This is all too human; it's why we like our stories and myths to be

dramatically tragic. We live in an age of instant gratification – we have less and less time to look piercingly into a Shakespeare Sonnet or a Beethoven Sonata, film and television editors are not allowed to leave a motionless shot on the screen for more than a moment. The busy world becomes ever more frantic and to stop and think an almost eccentric aberration. So we accept, in this age of celebrity, the big names that are hyped and we have less time to look behind the scenes as, to be fair, this Hay Festival does, at the less famous. If we do not have a sense of context, how can we judge what is really remarkable and wonderful, discover that some first rate Hummel and Haydn is more sparkling than second rate Beethoven and Mozart?

You, I am sure, could come with a list of poets arguably unfairly eclipsed by the brightness of undoubted stars like Elliot and Auden – Day Lewis, MacNeice, Roy Fuller. It is not that these artists would or could replace the giants but that not only would we be poorer without their work but we need it in order to see fully the true gifts of their peers. This is why I disagree with Pierre Boulez when he casts aside Poulenc and Dutilleux, given the presence of Debussy and Ravel. I love all four and I don't care if the last two are unquestionably greater composers because I get great pleasure from Poulenc and Dutilleux and they allow me to see the magnitude of Debussy and Ravel's achievement.

If you mention Britten or Shostakovich to Pierre he will say: It does not interes me, this music. Fair enough and you certainly cannot like everything. But if *Private Passions* has taught me one thing it is this: the untrained music lover in some ways benefits from his innocent ears. He or she have not differentiated between what you are supposed to like and what you are not. While most are scared of contemporary music they will happily put music of great intellectual rigour next to work of indulgence and repetition and take great pleasure in so doing.

What is the problem with contemporary music that so many of my guests fail to get past Britten, never mind Berg or Boulez? Why are intelligent people receptive to abstraction and fragmentation in the visual arts – Jackson Pollock, Francis Bacon – and yet feel so at sea with contemporary music? Worse than being at sea, they feel as though they are on another planet. Curiously, in one of his finest pieces, that alleged bogeyman of the 20th century, Arnold Schoenberg, set Stefan George in, of all things, a string Quartet.

Schoenberg's Second String Quartet (written 1907-8) reveals the composer gradually moving further and further away from tonality. The introduction to the finale is very chromatic, with no tonal centre, and features a soprano singing "Ich fühle Luft von anderem Planeten" ("I feel the air of another planet"), taken from a poem by Stefan George. What we feel here is a composer

discovering a new world, slipping away from the moorings of tonality and that, to audiences brought up on key signatures, is like a cosmonaut who becomes detached from his space shuttle and floats away into intangible infinity. This new language, actually highly disciplined in Schoenberg's hands, produced two supreme masters in his pupils, Berg and Webern.

My point here is that it is *in* the mystery and magic of music that are also its problem. That in George Steiner's 'unknowingness' we entrance but also baffle. That beyond Joyce and Beckett there is not much room for writing to advance in terms of language and silence. As Salman Rushdie said the other night, "Where else is there to go?" – you have to build your own corners as a novelist. Whereas in music there is no end to what is possible and that confuses listeners brought up on conventional tonality. That is why it is so endlessly fascinating. For those of us versed in the language the exquisite ear that Pierre Boulez brings to sonority and orchestration transports us into a brave new world much as Stravinsky did in 1913 with *The Rite of Spring*, and as did Picasso with *Guernica* or Rothko with his concentrated tunnels of colour that vibrate as they rub against each other. So, simply because composers are ahead of their time (Beethoven was greeted by incomprehension) they should and cannot dilute their language. I have always felt that all artists must, in the first and final analysis be true to themselves. If their music communicates with an audience then that is a huge bonus and they are lucky. Think also on this: Bach was largely unplayed for a century or so before Mendelssohn helped to trigger a revival of interest in his music. Nadia Boulanger did the same for Monteverdi, while until quite recently Janacek was barely known in this county. Then Charles Mackerras showed us just how stunning are his operas, orchestral works and chamber music. But it is true that all of those composers were working in tonally centered languages. One of the reasons popular music – rock, pop, folk and rap – has enduring appeal is that it seldom ventures beyond a key signature. That is why minimalism is very popular. Yet would we want painting to be locked into representational art? Hardly.

So I would exhort you to curiosity, to make the effort to look beyond the immediately accessible just as you do with a Beethoven late quartet or a Shakespeare sonnet and if the musical language seems at first impenetrable think of it as sound sculpture washing over you, as air from another planet.

Untold riches abound. Driving to Wales in the car the other day I heard Schoenberg's *Ewartung* on Radio 3 and the fact that most of the daytime fare tends to be relatively unchallenging meant that this performance hit me between, well not the eyes, but the ears. It suddenly sounded so fresh – a good bite of

expressionist angst, while not ideal for driving, was nevertheless profoundly exhilarating.

I have used Schoenberg as an example because, in fact, he is not one of my favourite composers, indeed I am a composer who uses shifting and fractures tonal centres, but I hope that by espousing the cause of someone I find less compelling than Bartok, Stravinsky and indeed Berg and Webern I might make my point about effort on the part of the listener more convincing. Follow Schoenberg's journey from tonality to atonality before you completely eschew the language he arrived at.

I promised to return to David Malouf and I think he poses eloquently the question I have been attempting to answer:

> How is it, when the chief sources of human *un*happiness, of misery and wretchedness, have largely been removed from our lives… that happiness still eludes so many of us?... What is it in us, or in the world we have created, that continues to hold us back?

To which I can only say that maybe more is less. That instant gratification is ultimately soul destroying and that the muscles of the mind atrophy if not worked and worked hard. Housman was a good example of that.

NOTES

1 At this point a recording of Rolfe Johnson's 'Because I liked you better' was played.

2 At this point a recording from Michael Berkeley's *Baa Baa Black Sheep* was played.

Housman: A Cry Against the Wind

by

Rob Macadie

In May, 1933, and just three years before his death, A.E. Housman gave the annual Leslie Stephen Lecture to a packed audience at the Senate House in Cambridge. His lecture "The Name and Nature of Poetry" epitomised his singular qualities both as a poet and as a textual critic. Not only did it illustrate his renowned intellect and scholarly exactitude but also his accomplished mastery and knowledge of poetry. According to George Watson in his book *Never Ones for Theory? England and the War of Ideas* (2000) it was a justly famous lecture, "as compelling to read as to hear" (48). This is made apparent by Housman's subtext which is a carefully crafted counter-assault on the supporters of modernist poetry in general and on the poet T.S. Eliot[1] (1888-1965) in particular. Given their collective and largely uncontested predilection for a particular form of verse produced in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, Housman presented a powerful and compelling case that much of it was little more than "sham poetry, a counterfeit deliberately manufactured and offered as a substitute" (16). Essentially Housman suggested that modernist poetry shared many of these same qualities. Conversely – and illustrated by personal testimony – he argued that the production of poetry was a natural rather than a manufactured process. This argument presented a persuasive and alternative viewpoint to the current, dominant trend in poetry.

In order to correctly comprehend the complexity and importance of Housman's valedictory lecture it is helpful to see it in a theory-war context. Its opening salvos had been fired seven years earlier by T.S. Eliot in his Clark lectures. Housman's response and retaliatory broadside in his Leslie Stephen lecture was – as New Critic Cleanth Brooks remarked some years later – "a rear-guard action fought against the modern enemies of Romanticism" (15). Essentially Brooks' fighting metaphor[2] alludes to the losing battle Housman was engaged in but that is not to say that Housman had been wrong in what he had said. Crucially for Housman, it was the outcome of this intellectual duel that would set the framework for the evolving direction of poetry and no doubt his influence to exert and compete upon it. This chapter will therefore first consider its background in order to draw out the two main dividing lines that signified this rift. Furthermore, it will determine why his lecture failed and what were the consequences.

An Unbridgeable Divide

It is wretchedly self-evident that the death-toll during the 1914-1918 war effected Britain's demographic composition in the immediate post-war period.[3] The war – and one of particular and unimaginable horror – had decimated an entire generation of young men. It is also self-evident to say that this new demographic had its consequences. In *A Literary History of Cambridge* (1985), author Graham Chainey emphasises this often forgotten point by quoting Rose Macaulay's poem, "Cambridge" (1919). She presciently predicted "an unbridgeable divide between 'warriors' and 'schoolboys:'"

> They shall speak kindly to one another,
> Across gulfs of space.
> But they shall speak with alien tongues,
> Each an alien race.
> They shall find no meeting place,
> No common speech at all;
> And the years between, like mocking owls,
> Shall hoot and call. (233)

Ironically the language in this poem also reflects another 'unbridgeable divide' that later characterised two distinct literary mindsets. The event that partly contributed to this split was the poet T.S. Eliot's 1919 essay, "Tradition and the Individual Talent." Eliot's thesis represented the genesis of a new literary theory that found itself in harmony with modern critical theory at Cambridge, primarily propounded by the academic, I.A. Richards.

The new demographics (aside from creating a gulf between the 'warriors' and the 'schoolboys') had also highlighted a distinct generation-gap. This disparity was typified by an atmosphere of traditional orthodoxy mixed with exciting progressiveness:

> Housman still dined in rigid propriety on Trinity high table and Q[4] still proceeded in morning dress to deliver his lectures, elsewhere Bowes & Bowes was stacked with the latest works by T.S. Eliot; [...] I.A. Richards was dissecting the psyches of poets and readers of poets in his critical laboratory; and William Empson, *enfant terrible* of the new movement, was peeling apart familiar texts with his scalpel intellect to reveal onion-layers of unsuspecting meaning

(Chainey 233).

This progressiveness – exemplified by Eliot, Richards and his prodigy Empson – tapped into a sense of disenchantment that many young students were feeling now that war had ended. Indeed the Armistice had signified a change in atmosphere and new ways of thinking were once again in vogue: Sigmund Freud was exploring the mind, Karl Marx, economics and politics, and Ludwig Wittgenstein, the philosophy of language. Why, therefore, could not Eliot – in alliance with Richards, Leavis and Empson – revolutionise English literature too?

Certainly Richards was revolutionary in the way he was teaching English. This he exhibited through his radical and systematic methodology. One student recalls his lecture on Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind:" "ingeniously illustrated [...] with little drawings on the blackboard of electrical wires and switches and boxes, meant to represent 'communication'" (Raine 37). Besides this innovative teaching methodology, Richards was also revolutionising critical theory. This he anchored in his fascination with science and psychology. Certainly Richards' interest in the science of symbolism found expression in his first book, *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923), and this was followed six years later by *Practical Criticism* (1929). One former student of Richards', Alastair Cooke,[5] recalls the highly cerebral atmosphere at Cambridge: "Richards, Empson and Leavis were busy proving that criticism was a crusade to discover the truth about literature, which in turn had the power to improve society" (Clarke 29). Housman came to challenge this vision. He would make the point that good literature should be read for pleasure and whilst more discriminatory opinions could be derived from this, opinions they must remain, "not truths to be imparted as such with the sureness of superior insight and knowledge" (Housman 6). Here would lie a clear and unequivocal dividing line – on one hand was the argument that literature represented an objective and measurable truth and on the other Housman's more subjective interpretation.

Eliot was also modernizing poetry. Not only had he composed and published two ground-breaking poems,[6] he had also written a number of major essays on literary theory which he set out in his book *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (1920). Housman by comparison had been devoting his energy to his academic scholarship. His prodigious output[7] is clearly made evident in *The Classical Papers of A.E. Housman: Volume 3: 1915-1936* (1972). In 1922 both men published important works of literature. In September Housman published his second slim volume of poetry, *Last Poems*.[8] This book received encouraging reviews in both Britain and America. *The Londoner*

believed its first twenty-two thousand copies would sell quickly for Christmas whilst *The Bookman* noted that "if the permanence of poetry be in proportion to the intelligent emotion it evokes, Housman's poetry should certainly endure" (Benet 85). In October, Eliot rather astutely published his poem "The Waste Land" in the launch issue of his own magazine, *The Criterion*. In America, however, an anonymous reviewer for *Time* magazine's inaugural March 1923 issue noted, "There is a new kind of literature abroad in the land, whose only obvious fault is no one can understand it" (TIME). Indeed, most reviewers drew attention to the poem's esoteric form which many found puzzling.[9] Paradoxically, this perplexing nature of Eliot's poem made it more fashionable, and this in turn began to give him a small yet significant cult-following.

Certainly his rising popularity is made unmistakeably clear from a notice entitled "The Waste-Landers" in the November 1924 issue of the Cambridge undergraduate magazine, *Granta*:

> Mr. Eliot is notorious for his poem "The Waste Land" which has occasioned nearly as many disputes as Prohibition... many a home has been broken up owing to a difference of opinion as to its poetic merits! The secretary says that he had hoped to obtain larger premises, but he has not been able to. Members or guests are therefore advised to appear fairly punctually, unless they want to sit on the floor (Schuchard 70).

It can be argued that Eliot – at this stage at least – was deriving his popularity as much through the notoriety his contentious poem engendered than from any perceived quality of the poem itself. In fact, this notoriety would have been welcomed by Eliot who had privately made no secret of his desire for money and recognition.[10]

The contentious nature of Eliot's poem lay in its inherent knottiness. The famed critic J.C. Squire in a review of "The Waste Land" remarked, "I read Mr. Eliot's poem several times when it first appeared. I have now read it several times more; I am still unable to make head or tail of it" (10). The answer to this conundrum – or at least an explanation for the confusion it might have evoked – had already been given by Eliot the previous year. In his essay, "The Metaphysical Poets" (1921), Eliot had written:

> It appears likely that poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be difficult. Our civilization comprehends great variety and

> complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results (Eliot, *Selected Essays*, 248)

Yet here lay the crux, if not the source, of the difficulty; it was his attachment to the metaphysical poets and their penchant for intellectual complexity. Eliot's early interest in them had been ignited by his introduction to the poetry of Donne whilst a freshman in 1906 at Harvard. After moving to England his passion had coalesced with what had been its growing revival. To Housman, however, their fixation on this type of poetry was a fallacy: "Meaning is of the intellect, poetry is not" he later argued (Housman, 38). His observation would illustrate another fault-line he was to later forensically expose.

According to academic Ronald Schuchard, Eliot's interest in the metaphysical poets had led him to formulate a major theory of metaphysical poetry during his time in England, though its development remained largely "fragmented in his literary reviews" (x). In the spring of 1925, an opportunity arose that suddenly gave him the chance not only to reaffirm and extend his growing reputation but more importantly to unify his ideas into a new and unified theory of poetry. The opening that had presented itself was the Clark lectureship at Cambridge. There is no evidence to indicate why Trinity College extended this offer to Eliot[11] but as Watson points out, "if a Zeitgeist ever issued an invitation, it did so here" (39). Ironically, it had been Housman's declining of this very position that had opened the door for Eliot. Housman had written to the Master of Trinity College, Sir Joseph Thompson, the previous month, outlining why he must decline the post:

> If I devoted a whole year (and it would not take less) to the composition of six lectures on literature, the result would give me, I do not say satisfaction, but less consolation for the wasted time: and the year for me would be one of anxiety and depression, the more vexatious because it would be subtracted from those minute and pedantic studies in which I am fitted to excel and which give me pleasure (Housman 1: 586).

Conversely, Eliot was more than happy to accept. Whatever the rationale behind Trinity's decision, it was ultimately Housman's refusal to accept the earlier invitation that provided Eliot with a platform to formally lecture on the "Metaphysical Poets of the Seventeenth Century".

On 26 January 1926, Eliot gave his first lecture at Trinity College Cambridge in front of an impressive gathering of distinguished guests. Aside from Housman, other notable attendees included Alfred North Whitehead, co-author with Bertrand Russell of the *Principia Mathematica*, and the philosopher G.E. Moore.[12] Also in attendance from the Cambridge School of English were I.A. Richards (who attended all six lectures) and F.R. Leavis. In total Eliot gave eight lectures over a continuous six week period collectively entitled, "On the Metaphysical Poets of the Seventeenth Century with special reference to Donne, Crashaw, and Cowley." Eliot himself later recalled seeing Housman in the audience "but with a face so impassive that he had no idea whether or not Housman approved" (Lloyd-Jones 194). Unfortunately his quiet delivery and abstruse language made his lectures difficult to follow and the audience numbers gradually began to dwindle. His key message, however, had been to establish a foundation for a new direction for poetry. According to Watson, "The metaphysicals, for Eliot, were the small rough model of modernism" (41). Housman's consent to give the Leslie Stephen's lecture seven years later would be his way of redressing the error of not having given the Clark lectures.

A Cry against the Wind

By the early 1930's Cambridge had witnessed the transformation of Richards' Cambridge English School and the meteoric rise of Eliot. According to a Faculty teacher, Basil Willey, "Old literary luminaries were sinking below the horizon, and others rising into the sky. It was now to be down with Milton up with Donne" (26). Against this backdrop the aging Housman was surprisingly invited to present the annual Leslie Stephen Lecture for 1933. Given that he would be seventy-four years old, it was remarkable that the invitation was even extended and that much more remarkable that it was later accepted. In point of fact, earlier that year Housman had declined to write an essay for his brother Laurence on the poet Coventry Patmore, saying that the endeavour "would give me more trouble than you can imagine, whereas I want peace in my declining years; and the result would not be good enough to yield me pride or satisfaction" (Graves 253). Unsurprisingly he may have soon regretted the decision. Precisely six weeks before the lecture was due he wrote to his publisher: "Your invitation is very kind and pleasant, but I dare not accept it. Until I have broken the back of that infernal lecture I have no time for anything else" (Housman II: 331). Given that he was to speak as a literary critic it remains no more than speculative as to what his thoughts might have been as he struggled over his lecture's thesis.[13]Almost certainly his mind would have grappled with the conundrum of

modernism.

Frequently overlooked by literary scholars and critics of English literature is the fact that Housman was first and foremost a classical scholar and one of supreme ability. The historian E.H. Carr recalls the highly stimulating intellectual milieu at Cambridge and describes Housman as being "the most powerful intellectual machine I've ever seen in action" (Haslam 11). Another former student and classical scholar A.S.F. Gow remarked, "it was impossible to listen attentively to Housman for long without becoming aware that one was in contact with a mind of extraordinary distinction" (Gow 44). Enoch Powell, arguably the most gifted scholar of his generation,[14] also recalls his lectures: "The exhilaration was produced by watching what seemed to be a mental machine of great power and precision applied to material at first sight unexpectedly" (Graves 249). This impression of an intellectual machine that Powell and Carr both allude to is further supported by Gow:

> He would commonly answer without hesitation the minutest questions on the history of scholarship, and seemed to have read all the works even of scholars of the second rank and retain in his memory every detail of their lives and writings (36).

This testimony – and especially coming from such eminent scholars – makes clear that Housman had an astounding and unique intellect. If any person could therefore articulate a convincing challenge to the prevailing forces of modernism, then Housman could.

On May 9 1933, A.E. Housman, Kennedy Professor of Latin in the University of Cambridge, delivered his Leslie Stephen lecture at the Cambridge Senate House. From the moment Housman rose to speak one eyewitness recalls "you could have heard a pin drop" (Page 135). What came next was a forensically expounded thesis on the *name* and the *nature* of poetry. Underpinning his argument was the simple premise: "Meaning is of the intellect, poetry is not" (38). From this basic standpoint, he drew on numerous examples of poetry to support his case. His central target was 'intellect' – "the intellect is not the fount of poetry," "centralised tyranny of the intellect," "intellectually frivolous." Clearly he had a much larger target in mind but that was couched in the verbal undercurrent. His thesis was reminiscent of his poetry; the surface simplicity being overridden by sub-layers of greater complexity. Furthermore, his lecture was profoundly ironic. Here was one of Cambridge's foremost intellects, and a man renowned for his icy-cold demeanour, advocating the supremacy of

emotion over intellect. Indeed, he suggests a peculiar function of poetry was "to transfuse emotion" – not to "transmit thought."[15] It was a devastating display of intellect - and most incredibly, one of self-revelatory emotion too. Indeed, his *coup de grâce* was a personal insight on how his own poetry came into being.[16] His story confirmed the absence of any objectivity in the production of poetry and thereby any deliberate or manufactured meaning.

Certainly Housman was pleased with the initial reaction in Britain to his lecture.[17] In a letter to his brother on May 20th he noted that "success here has taken me aback" before adding, "the leader of our doctrinaire teachers of youth [F.R. Leavis][18] is reported to say that it will take more than twelve years to undo the harm I have done in an hour" (Housman 185). Yet in another letter to his brother on the 24th May, Housman alludes to the strain he was under and his dismay at being misunderstood:

> The painful episode is closed; but I may take this sentence from a paragraph I cut out. 'not only is it difficult to know the truth about anything, but to tell the truth when one knows it, to find words which will not obscure it or pervert it, is in my experience an exhausting effort.'
>
> I did not say that poetry was the better for having no meaning, only that it can be best detected so (Housman 1: 349).

Housman's correspondence also records that he had written his lecture with some degree of reluctance. In a letter to H.E. Butler, Professor of Latin at UCL, of the 15th May, he wrote, "I am not proud of my lecture, which I wrote unwillingly"[19] (1: 344). Also in the same letter to his brother of the 24th May he writes, "I am not proud of this, which I wrote against my will, and am not sending copies outside the family" (Housman 185). Unwilling or not, the seventy-four year old Housman had made an important and principled stand. His academic status as an eminent classical scholar together with his reputation as a reputable poet meant that his carefully worded exposition could not be easily dismissed by his detractors no matter how well regarded they might be.

Although his principal critic in Britain, F.R. Leavis, did not publically respond to his lecture, he nevertheless had a way of making his opinion known. As the editor of his recently launched literary journal *Scrutiny: A Quarterly Review*, Leavis was highly influential. The periodical had some noted subscribers[20] together with an impressive range of contributing literary critics that included Herbert Read, I.A. Richards and William Empson. *Scrutiny*'s

editorial for its September publication pointedly felt inclined to respond to the criticism of Eliot in the daily press, *public lectures*, and the columns of high-brow journalism: "These gestures are not literary criticism and they cannot be discussed as if they were; they shirk any precise examination either of Eliot's writing or of their own critical concepts" (Knights 185). Moreover, this masked and misrepresentative retort was further bolstered in a separate review of the lecture written by his undergraduate student, Gorley Putt: "Many who enjoyed the charm of Professor Housman when he delivered his Leslie Stephen lecture will be sorry to see its appearance in cold print" (207). According to Watson, Putt had later told him that his review "had been sharpened in acerbity by an editor [Leavis] who was still his teacher" (47). Leavis's counter-offensive not only illustrated his unwavering and devoted support for Eliot but also his instinctive dislike for Housman's well-considered thesis.

On the other side of the Atlantic (after a short copyright delay for the American publication) Housman's lecture received largely mixed reviews. The leader article for the July issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature* described the lecture as "disappointing" and incorrectly stated that Housman had declared that poetry was "entirely non-intellectual, and has nothing to do with the meaning of what it says" (673). Conversely, in a review of the lecture for the August issue of *Scribner's*, Yale Professor William Lyon Phelps said he had always believed "the test of great poetry was physical rather than intellectual or spiritual." He further noted that "what Mr. Housman says of the poetry of the eighteenth century was never more needed than now, when there are writers who are attempting to persuade the world that Pope was a poet of the first class" (116). This line by Phelps was further reinforced by poet and professor of English literature Eda Lou Walton in a long and detailed article for the August issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature*:

> There is no better survey of what has been wrong with poetry for some eight or more years than A.E. Housman's essay, "The Name and Nature of Poetry." Without once applying his thesis to contemporary poetry, Housman, in defining his own position in poetry, his own judgments concerning it, has cleared away more critical nonsense with a stroke of the pen than any confirmed critic can build up soon again. [...] All English-writing poets have, since Eliot became the leading figure in poetry, worshipped the poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This poetry, they found, was intellectual and therefore suited to their purposes (Walton 63).

Clearly the press coverage in Britain and America presented Eliot as Housman's prime adversary. Yet these reviews partly reflect the reflexive response to prevailing prejudices rather than a critical examination of an astutely argued piece of literary scholarship.

Ironically, it was Eliot himself who wrote a distinctly more measured response to Housman's lecture. In fact, such was his thoughtful appraisal that it prompted Housman to comment in a letter to his sister: "Thanks for your letter and the press cuttings. I enclose another one, which is amusing, because its author, T.S. Eliot, is worshipped as a god by the writers in the paper which had the only hostile review" (Housman 1: 382). Certainly Eliot's balanced critique did not support the review written by Putt and edited by Leavis in *Scrutiny*. This restraint suggests that Eliot was astute enough to recognise the merit of Housman's argument. In a carefully-worded article for the October 1933 edition of his magazine, *The Criterion*,[21] Eliot was complimentary yet cautious: "Mr. Housman's quotations, in this lecture, show about as sensitive and refined a perception as any human being can aspire to. But, in this way, is he quite fair to Dryden?" (Eliot 153). The difficulty Eliot faced was the fact that he was too much the figurehead to dismiss what Housman had said in a fit of pique or simply disregard it as nonsense.[22] Housman was a renowned intellect – albeit within his own area of expertise[23] – so it would have been churlish of him not to respond in kind. Interestingly, rather than attacking Housman's lecture, Eliot respectfully compliments various points whilst at the same time politely expressing reservations on the ones he disagrees with. What Eliot does not do, however, is forcefully express any contrary assertions.

Housman's lecture had come too late to make a lasting impact. His presentation had failed for three principal reasons. The first had been the revolution at the Cambridge English school. Since its inception in 1917, Housman had witnessed the school's growing authority under Richards together with the all-pervasive presence of his understudy, Leavis – 'the leader of our doctrinaire teachers of youth' as Housman had cuttingly remarked. Secondly, Housman was no longer in fashion. As Basil Willey had rather pithily observed "Old literary luminaries were sinking below the horizon, and others rising into the sky" (26). Indeed, Eliot's meteoric rise to fame had reflected the mounting appeal for modernist poetry. Thirdly, his lecture had been too recondite – not in its delivery but in its highly nuanced assertion. Whilst this would have been quite manageable for one of his students, it was beyond the grasp of a wider audience and even for many critics too. Indeed, writer Mary Colum described Housman's "Name and Nature of Poetry" seven years later as "the last word in intellectual sophistication" (322). For all these failures, the lecture remains

nonetheless a brilliant exposition on the name and nature of poetry.

Housman's decision to give the Leslie Stephen lecture was in some ways unusual. It could not have been to gain kudos. In his life he had turned down every honour that had ever been offered to him, the only exception being an honorary fellowship of his former Oxford College, St John's.[24] Furthermore, his reputation was already established as an accomplished poet and as one of England's most eminent scholars. Why, therefore, would a seventy-four year old in declining health subject himself to such an onerous and unforgiving task? Given his renowned passion for truth and correctness, it would seem reasonable to view his lecture in these terms. If this conjecture is correct then a possible clue might lie in his comment, "There is also such a thing as sham poetry, a counterfeit deliberately manufactured and offered as a substitute" (16). This lay in sharp contrast to his own account of how his own poetry came into existence which alluded to a process that was more natural than it was deliberate. In other words, he viewed modernist poetry as a 'counterfeit poetry' and felt passionately driven to say why this was so. Housman's famous lecture was the first time that such a prominent and respected figure coherently explained why Eliot and his theoretical out-riders – Richards, Empson and Leavis – were wrong. Within ten years a young poet-critic in America would do likewise and ironically, draw on a detailed analysis of Housman's poetry to help him do so.

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NOTES

1 Watson notes Housman's long passage derogating Dryden's poetry and suggests that this is a rebuttal of Eliot's *Homage to John Dryden* written nine years before (Watson 47).

2 According to Professor Leonard Diepeveen in *The Difficulties of Modernism* (2003) "those involved in literary politics enjoyed seeing it as a battleground on which the lines were clearly drawn. Its military metaphors are a central characteristic of early twentieth-century literary discussion" (246).

3 According to T.E.B. Howarth, in his book, *Cambridge Between the Two Wars* (1978), "The number of Cambridge men killed in the Great War was 2162 together with 2902 wounded, nearly a third of all who served." On the same page he quotes J.B. Priestley, who served throughout the war and returned afterwards to read English at Trinity: "Nobody, nothing, will shift me from the belief, which I shall take to my grave, that the generation to which I belong, destroyed between 1914 and 1918, was a great generation, marvellous in its promise. This is not self-praise, because those of us who are left know we are the runts" (16).

4 Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (1863-1944) was made the King Edward VII Professor of English Literature at Cambridge University in 1912 and remained in this position until his death.

5 Alistair Cooke (1908-2004) British-American broadcaster and writer, noted for his radio series, "Letters from America".

6 These were "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1917), that was characterised by its 'stream of consciousness' in the form of a dramatic dialogue, and the similarly structured poem, "Gerontion" (1920).

7 Housman annually wrote reviews, articles and critical comments on diverse Latin and Greek subjects. This is in addition to his five-volume commentary on the *Astronomica* of Manilius and editions of Juvenal and Lucan.

8 This was only Housman's second (and last) volume of poetry to be published in his lifetime. In the introduction he writes: "About a quarter of this matter belongs to the April of the present year, but most of it to dates between 1895 and 1910." *Last Poems* (1934) Page vii. The reference to his output in April refers to his friend Moses Jackson. Housman heard he was dying of cancer in Canada. This news induced a short but sustained period of writing. A copy of *Last Poems* managed to reach Jackson before his death.

9 Professor Leonard Diepeveen, in his book *The Difficulties of Modernism* (2003) notes that "*all* the initial reviewers of Eliot's "The Waste Land" (about twenty) mention some form of difficulty as central to their response" (247).

10 In a letter to his mother, in 1919, he had written, "Such work is really a disadvantage to me now as it would consume the time which I can devote to writing which will *give me notoriety and in the end more money." The Letters of T. S. Eliot: 1898-1922* (1988) page 337. Furthermore, author Patrick Collier in his book, *Modernism on Fleet Street* (2006) describes how Eliot's correspondence to friend, family and supporters shows his desire for recognition: "The letters reveal Eliot as a savvy publicist, of himself, colleagues, and literary causes, a skilled and pragmatic manipulator of London's "huge journalistic organism."" Page 53.

11 Although it does not provide evidence why they offered the position to Eliot, the writer John Middleton Murry appears to have recommended him. Eliot wrote: "I do appreciate your kindness in suggesting me for the Lectures at Cambridge. I think it ~~likely~~ almost certain I should accept. £200 should make ~~a vast~~ just all the difference to my inclination to jump out into the world this year – and the appointment is very attractive" *The Letters of TS Eliot. Volume 2*, *1923-1925*, 591.

12 L. Schuchard, *T. S. Eliot: The Varieties of Metaphysical Poetry* (1993), 11.

13 In an obituary for Housman on his death in 1936, Percy Withers recalls Housman's dread at the prospect of giving his lecture: "As our intimacy grew and I became, more venturesome in inquiry, he talked willingly of his creative methods and experiences. The more superficial and amusing of these figured in the famous lecture delivered in the Senate House in 1933; the private recital told a very different story. It conveyed the impression of nervous travail so intense, so prostrating, that the bare thought of a recurrence was too formidable to contemplate." 'A.E. Housman', *The Living Age* (July 1936), 414.

14 Enoch Powell (1912-98) was a prominent British politician. Before entering politics he had been a classical scholar and a full Professor of Ancient Greek at the age of twenty-five. He joined the British army at the outbreak of World War II as a private soldier and left at its close with the rank of brigadier. For a few weeks he was the youngest brigadier in the entire British army and one of only two who had risen from private to brigadier during the course of the war.

15 This reinforces an earlier statement: "Poetry is not the thing said but the way of saying it" (37).

16 By strange coincidence, Eliot had himself outlined this very same process. In his book, *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism: Studies in the Relation of Criticism to Poetry in England* (1964) – which was based on the text of two lectures he had delivered at Harvard University during the winter of 1932-3 – he quotes in a long footnote the relevant section from Housman's lecture before adding: "I take added fascination in the fact that I only read Mr. Housman's essay some time after my own lines were written" (138).

17 The initial print-run of 3,000 copies quickly sold out and within two months had to print a further 7,000 copies.

18 According to *Dr. Leavis, I Presume? The Man Who Put 'Critic' in 'Criticism'* (2006) by Brooke Allen, "Leavis wielded tremendous influence. The Downing curriculum was so thorough and rigorous that schoolmasters across Great Britain obtained the college's exams and entrance papers as a sort of training manual for their sixth-formers, so that innumerable students left school with a Leavisite education whether or not they had any intention of going on to Cambridge. These same schoolmasters, on Leavis's advice, soaked up his recommended reading list: I.A. Richards's *Principles of Literary Criticism* and *Practical Criticism*, William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, T.S. Eliot's *Selected Essays*, and Leavis's own work. Their students were specially directed toward Leavis's favorite authors, who included John Donne, Jane Austen, both Eliots (T.S. and George), and D.H. Lawrence" (*The Weekly Standard* 11.34 (May 2006)).

19 Author Sydney Roberts in his book *Adventures with Authors* (1966) suggests that it was Will Spens, Master of Corpus Christi and Vice Chancellor at the time, who "persuaded him to accept the invitation to deliver the Leslie Stephen lecture in 1933" (126).

20 "By the beginning of May 1932 *Scrutiny* was out, with a hundred copies sold in the first week and subscriptions coming from T.S. Eliot, George Santayana, R.H. Tawney and Aldous Huxley." Source: "F. R. Leavis and the Anthropologico-Literary Group" in *Adventures with Britannia: Personalities, Politics, and Culture in Britain,* 206.

21 *The Criterion* was a literary magazine founded and edited by T. S. Eliot which ran between 1922 and 1939.

22 Housman had also been courteous to Eliot during his Clark lectures. In an inscription on the reverse of a sketch of Eliot speaking at the Clark lectures (drawn by Eliot's artist sister, Teresa Garrett Eliot), it is noted that he had introduced Eliot for his final lecture on 9 March, 1926. On a negative copy of the drawing she also notes that later that evening, "Housman sat at high table, an honour to T.S.E." (Schuchard 16).

23 Housman's former student and British parliamentarian Enoch Powell thought that Housman "was greater as a Latin textual critic – greater in intellectual achievement and in the moral dimension – than as a poet" (Shepherd 23)

24 Burnett, *Letters* 1: 171.

Housman History 1500-1913

by

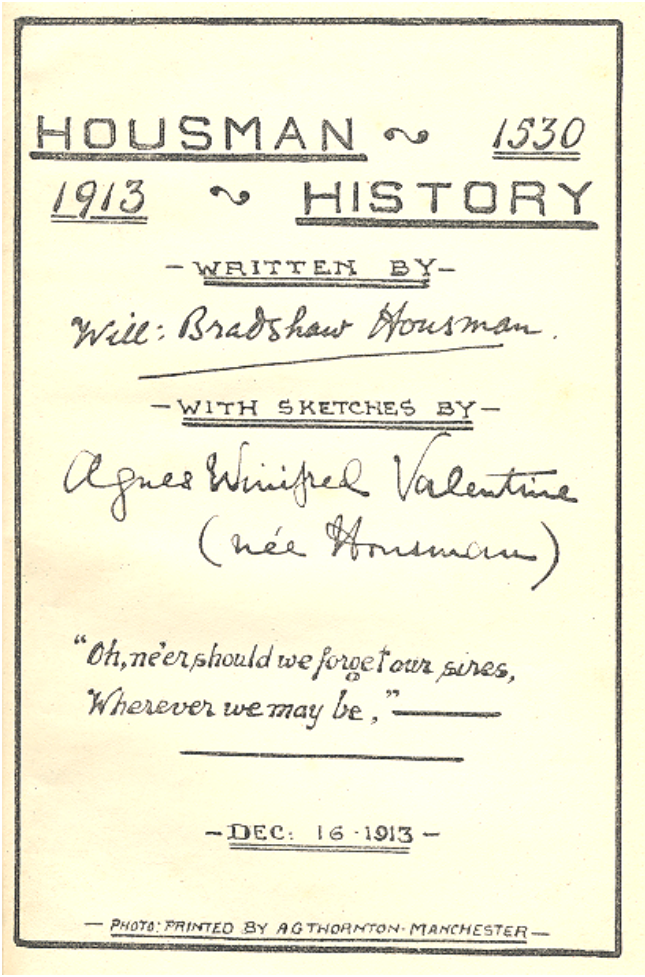
Julian Hunt

A.E. Housman may have chosen to celebrate Shropshire in his poetry, but he was brought up in Worcestershire and his ancestors came from Lancashire. In alluding to his family's origins in the town of Lancaster, several biographers of A.E. Housman have drawn upon a rare manuscript work entitled *Housman History, 1500-1913*. It gives the names of each generation of the Housmans of Lune Bank, Lancaster, along with many family traditions the author was anxious to place on record. The genealogy is complete, right up until the date of writing in 1913, and includes the extended family of the Rev. Robert Housman of Lancaster (1759-1838), great grandfather of the poet. *Housman History* is the only source for one of the most intriguing stories in the Housman family, that of the Rev. Robert Housman's second son, the solicitor William Housman, "... whose character and conduct are a mystery. Apparently a good and affectionate father, for many years, suddenly he disappeared and left no trace or clue to his whereabouts. It was afterwards discovered that he had eloped with an actress to America." A.E. Housman must have been fully aware of this scandal, as in 1873, his widowed father, Edward Housman of Perry Hall, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, married Lucy Agnes, daughter of the vanished solicitor, William Housman. In listing the children of Edward Housman, the author of Housman History refers to A.E. Housman, not as the author of *A Shropshire Lad*, but as "Alfred Edward... professor of Latin at Cambridge".

The *Housman History* was written by William Bradshaw Housman (1878-1955), the son of William Housman of Lancaster, who sold Lune Bank for development in 1898. William Bradshaw Housman was born in London in 1878 and was apprenticed as a mechanical engineer. By 1911, he was working in the drawing office of the Workington Iron and Steel Company, Cumberland, where his brother in law, Herbert Valentine, was a director. William Bradshaw Housman lived first at Seaton Cote, a large double-fronted house at Seaton, near Workington, and later, at Thwaitebank, Seaton. He was evidently a keen genealogist, but he credits a cousin, Colonel W.H. Chippindall, with the compilation of the Housman pedigree. His real passion was astronomy and he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1937. He did not marry and died

at Highfield House, Wigton, Cumberland, 18 January 1955.

The *Housman History* is in William Bradshaw Housman's own handwriting, but a few photographic reproductions were printed in 1913 for circulation amongst the Housman family. It is often referred to in footnotes to learned articles, but it is difficult to access by those with a passing interest in A.E. Housman's family background. The text of *Housman History* is therefore reproduced here in full, along with two of the line drawings. I am grateful to Clive Jenkins of Oxford for supplying a photocopy of an original *Housman History*, and to Lancaster Library for scanning the illustrations which are reproduced here.


HOUSMAN ~ 1530

1913 ~ HISTORY

— WRITTEN BY —

Will: Bradshaw Housman.

— WITH SKETCHES BY —

Agnes Winifred Valentine

(née Housman)

"Oh, ne'er should we forget our sires,
Wherever we may be,"

— DEC: 16 · 1913 —

— PHOTO: PRINTED BY A.G. THORNTON · MANCHESTER —

Title-page to the *Housman History*

Housman History 1530-1913

Written by William Bradshaw Housman

with sketches by Agnes Winifred Valentine née Housman

"Oh, ne'er should we forget our sires, | wherever we may be"

Dec: 16, 1913

Photo: printed by A.G. Thornton, Manchester

[Page] 1

Housman History

(I) From the "Pedigree Sheet"

John Houseman & Thomas Houseman were born about the year 1500. Presumably they were brothers, and probably were born in Skerton.

They were tenants of the manor of Skerton about the year 1530, when they jointly complained against Alexander the Abbot of Furness concerning his fishery in the river Lune. Of the cause of their complaint, and the consequences thereof, I have no particulars. From all that can be gathered up, John was my 9th great uncle, and Thomas my 8th great grandfather. Of the conjectured descendants of John we know a little, and of those of Thomas we know quite a lot. About a generation later we again find two "Housemans", John and Thomas, respectively assumed to be my 8th great uncle and 7th great grandfather, and respectively sons of their namesakes mentioned above.

John's descendants are known for two generations, and are as follows: - children – James, John, Henry, Alice. Children of Henry: - John, James Henry, James, Elizabeth, Margaret and Ellen. He made his will Dec 20 1590. His wife Elizabeth survived him, and married a Shierson, having two more children. His son James died 1622. His son John had a lawsuit in 1591 (Bradyll v. Houseman & Heysham) and died 1623. Alice married James Fooler, and Henry married

and had seven children as above. The second of these, James, was made heir to his uncle, but died very young.

[Page] 2

The presumed family of my 7th great grandfather Thomas was as follows: - Thomas, Henry, Richard, and John. All I know of him is that he also had a lawsuit in 1564, jointly with one Carver, and another, Jepson, claiming the right to occupy about 258 acres of land in Skerton neighbourhood as tenant. This action was won by Housman and Jepson; what became of Carver I do not know. The name of the defeated plaintiff was Yorke, which may have militated against his chances of success before a tribunal of the Duchy of Lancaster, at a time when the Wars of the Roses were still recent and lively memories! Be that as it may, the successful litigants apparently celebrated their victory by marriage and giving in marriage.

Thomas Houseman's family of four sons all married and had descendants, the youngest son marrying Isabel Jepson, my sixth great grandmother, who was perhaps a daughter of his father's lawsuit ally. Taking this family in order: - Thomas was buried in 1636, styled "senex"; from which we may conclude he was born about 1566. His wife's name was Anne; his children were Henry, John and Helena. Anne died 1622. Henry married Anne Turner in 1630, and had two sons, Henry and William.

Henry, presumed to be brother of Thomas (senex) married Anne Preston, and had eight children, e.g.:-

[Page] 3

an infant son died 1600 buried unbaptised on Aug 11. Isabel twin sister of above, baptised Aug 11, 1600. Alice, John, Jenet, Francis, Margaret and Bryan arrived in order, and of these, Jenet married Laurence Bull, and Bryan married Jenet Shyrson, the latter before the Mayor of Lancaster. Bryan appears to have had no surviving children. His widow lived at Bare and died 1683.

Richard, presumed brother of Henry, born about 1580, bought a house in Skerton in 1618, from one John Eccleston, which became known as "Housman House" and was the home of our branch of the family for 280 years. Richard was a yeoman, and his descendants were: children – William Jenet, Alice,

Grace. William married Ellen Stout of Bolton-le-Sands before the justices of Lancaster, on January 23, 1653/4. Their issue were Elizabeth, Richard, John, Jenet and William. Of these, John, described as yeoman, inherited Housman House, but sold it in 1693, "for and in consideration of the full and just sum of £120 of lawful money of England", to his kinsman John, a grandson of:-

John, presumed brother of Richard. He married Isabel Jepson in 1617, and is my sixth great grandfather. His family began to spell the surname without the letter "e". From him onward all the links in the pedigree are proved, and we pass from the hazy period where conjecture has to sometimes come to our aid, to that in which documentary proof can be found

[Page] 4

for every statement. John's family were: - Ellen, William, Robert, Anne, Jenet, Nicholas, Margaret and Elizabeth. Anne married Robert Greenhood before Mayor Rippon at Lancaster, October 17, 1654.

Robert, my 6th great grandfather, married and had a family of six; he sold a malt kiln to his son Thomas for £16 down and 2d a year, was a linen Webster, and died 1702. His children were: - Margaret, John, Elizabeth, Thomas and Alice; also a son, un-named in pedigree. Of these, Thomas, born 1670, married Alice Edmondson of Lancaster in 1694, bought the malt kiln, had five children of his own and educated those of his brother John. His children were Dorothy, who married Ed: Rawlinson, Robert, Thomas, John (of Williamlands, Skerton) and his twin brother William.

John, my fourth great grandfather, eldest son of Robert Housman, married in 1688. He bought "Housman House" in 1698 from his kinsman John, my second cousin six times removed, was a party to the sale of the malt kiln, was a maltster or brewer, and made an unwritten will. He died in 1706. His children were Robert, Dorothy and Margaret. Dorothy married Christopher Barrow, of Lancaster, in the year Queen Anne died. Her elder brother, Robert, my 3rd great grandfather, was born 1689, and married Mary Wright of Lancaster in 1718.

[Page] 5

He was a yeoman, and he built "Housman House" which became known as "Lune Bank" about this period. Over the front door he placed a round carved stone, with date and initials thus:- RHM 1726. He died in 1756. His eight chil-

dren were:- Elizabeth, born 1720, then in order, John, Miles, Robert (my great great grandfather) John, Thomas, Mary and Miles. The first three died young. The second John married Elizabeth Kilner of Ulverston in 1789. He was an Alderman, and was Mayor of Lancaster in 1789. He was a West India merchant. His children were Anne and Mary. The latter married Thomas Heaton of Lancaster in 1784. He died in 1793. Thomas, his brother, commanded a ship which sailed to the West Indies in 1755 from Lancaster. Mary married John Preston, of whom there is documentary evidence that he was a "gentleman". Miles was a mercer, and was afterwards in the customs office in Lancaster. His wife's name was Frances; their children were Dorothy and Harry

Robert married Agnes Gunson. He was a maltster or brewer and lived at Lune Bank. He was a man of stately deportment and most particular about the correctness of his dress. His children were numerous, and though only four out of the ten married, his descendants to the fourth and fifth generations probably number about 200.

[Page] 6

He married in 1754, and died 1800, his wife Agnes surviving him only a few months. Their children were:- Alice, Mary, Robert, John, Thomas, John, William, Miles, James, and Miles. As will be seen from the duplication of names, some died very young. The second John was a Lancaster merchant. He wrote a "Descriptive Tour of the English Lakes", in which some of the descriptions are truly awful. He died suddenly in Market Street, Lancaster, from heart failure in 1802, unmarried, aged 36. Those who lived to old age and married were: Alice, Mary, Robert and William. Alice and Mary were celebrated beauties and known locally as the "Stars of the North". The former married John Harrison, Unitarian minister in Lancaster, and the latter married John Higgins, governor of Lancaster Castle, both in 1784. The descendants of Mary and John Higgins are very numerous, and many have held and now hold good positions in the various professions in the land.

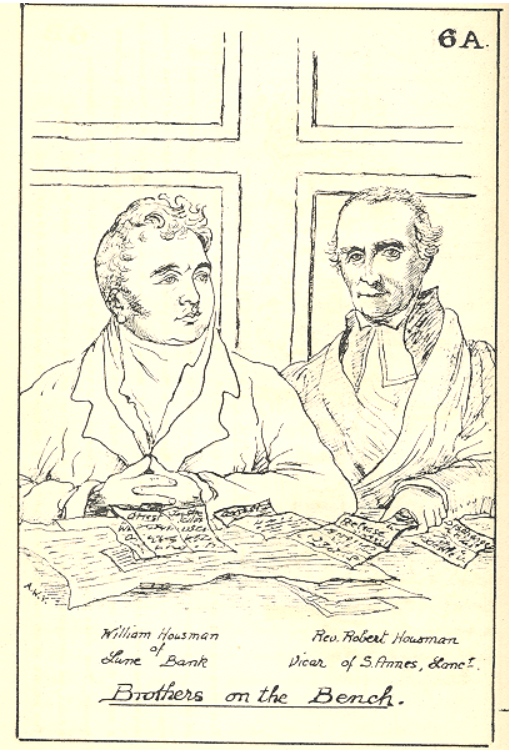
Robert, my great great uncle and great grandfather, and William my great grandfather, were county magistrates for Lancaster, sitting on the bench often together at Lancaster Castle. They were men of widely different character. Robert took holy orders, bought a site in Moor Lane, built thereon a plain church with no tower or spire, and as vicar there for 40 years he preached with great effect, his heart and soul being in the work. William seems to have been more inclined to

[Page] 6a [right]

William Housman of Lune Bank

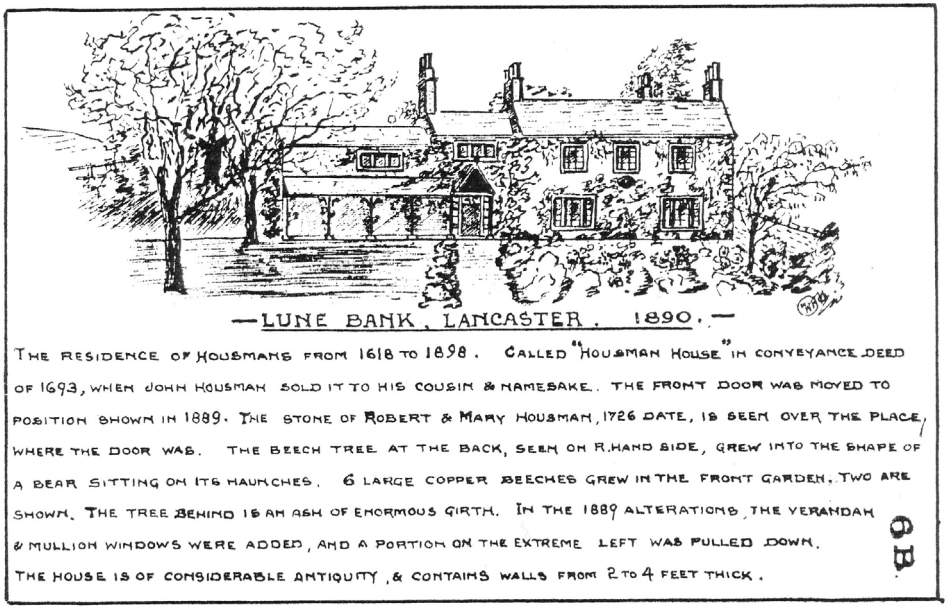
Rev. Robert Housman, Vicar of St Anne's, Lancaster

Brothers on the Bench



[Page] 6b [below]

Lune Bank, Lancaster, 1890



The residence of [the] Housmans from 1618 to 1898. [It was] called "Housman House" in [a] conveyance deed of 1693, when John Housman sold it to his cousin and namesake. The front door was moved to [the] position shown in 1889. The stone of Robert and Mary Housman, 1726 date, is seen over the place where the door was. The beech tree at the back, seen on [the] right hand side, grew into the shape of a bear sitting on its haunches. Six large copper beeches grew in the front garden. Two are shown. The tree behind is an ash of enormous girth. In the 1889 alterations, the veranda and mullioned windows were added, and a portion of the extreme left was pulled down. The house is of considerable antiquity, and contains walls from 2 to 4 feet thick.

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indulge in gay and worldly pursuits. Sometimes on Sunday each would leave their home, William from Lune Bank and Robert from Acrelands in the morning, on very different purposes bent. At the end of Skerton Bridge, if they chanced to meet, Robert would gravely remark to his brother, "you're going the wrong way, William!" and the other end of the bridge was the parting of the ways for them, Robert going to his sanctuary in Moor Lane, and William probably to his sport on the Moor.

And now we come to the "Parting of the Ways" in this brief review of the family, for the descendants of these brothers are so numerous that we must follow each line separately.

Robert married Mary Audley, in 1783, and had a son Robert. His wife died the same year this son was born. Robert Audley was the full name given to the child, and he grew up unfortunately, very wild, spent all his money with reckless extravagance, was reduced to poverty, and I do not know where he died. The old Housman Bible, with records of generations of the family, was given him in the hope that he would read it, but he only valued it for what he could get for it in the pawn shop. His grandfather left him by will his silver tankard, and that went the same way.

Rev. R. Housman married again, to Jane Adams,

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and had seven more children, namely:- John, William, Thomas, Jane, Mary, Elizabeth, Agnes. Agnes married her 1st cousin, my grandfather, son of Wil-

liam Housman J.P., and thus it is that her father is my 2nd great uncle and great grandfather. Elizabeth married Richard Williams Pritchard J.P., D.L. (a high sheriff of Anglesey) of Dinam. Mary, like her half brother Robert Audley, went astray, became an adventuress, and brought much trouble upon herself and the family. Jane married Rev. John Gathorne, Vicar of Tarvin. Thomas took holy orders and was vicar of Catshill, Worcestershire. He married Ann Brettell, a lady of an old family, of Bromsgrove, and died at Lyme Regis, Dorset, in 1870. He had 12 children, four of whom died very young. Of the survivors, the eldest, Thomas, was born in 1823 and died in 1874 without issue. Mary and Jane, daughters, left no issue. Joseph became rector of Cheriton Bishop, Exeter, married Felicia daughter of - Rawlinson, rector of Symondsbury, in 1871. Elizabeth Agnes married John Webster of Catshill, and died aged 27. George Adams went down in the wreck of the "Canadian", June 4, 1861; of him we speak again in part III. Edward was a solicitor, of Perry Hall, Bromsgrove; he married Sarah Jane, daughter of John Williams D.D., rector of Woodchester, in 1858, and after her decease married his first cousin Lucy (mentioned later). The latter had no children. The family of Edward and Sarah are as follows:- Alfred Edward is professor of Latin at Cambridge,

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Robert Holden Housman M.I.E.E. died in 1905. Clemence Annie is an authoress. Katherine Elizabeth married Edward W. Symons in 1887, and lives at Bath, having four sons. Basil William Housman F.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., lives at Tardebigge. He married Jane Dixon of that place in 1894. Laurence is an author and dramatist, living usually in London. George Herbert was killed in action in the Boer War at Bakenlaagte, fighting in the King's Royal Rifles.

These are the descendants of Thomas Housman, vicar of Catshill. (The correct order of birth of his children was:- Thomas, Edward, Mary, Jane, Elizabeth A., George and Joseph B. Edward died in 1894.)

Rev. T. Housman's elder brother was William. He married Mary, daughter of J.S. Vernon, of Hanbury Hall, Worcester. He was a solicitor, and had ten children. His character and conduct are a mystery. Apparently a good and affectionate husband and father, for many years, suddenly he disappeared and left no trace or clue to his whereabouts. It was afterwards discovered that he had eloped with an actress to America. He never returned. His elder brother John married Hannah Roe; they had a daughter, Margaret, who died recently. The children of William Housman and Mary (Vernon) were William Vernon, Jane, Emma, all

died young. Then came George Vernon, Mary Theophenia, Francis, Jane, Lucy, Helen Agnes, and Henry. The last named took holy orders and was rector of Bradley.

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He married Susan White and their children are: Rosalie Endora; married Rev. J. Scrimgeour of Calcutta; Arthur Onslow B.A. in holy orders at Paignton; Janet Mary married Harold Batger of New Zealand at Capetown. Helen Agnes, sister of Rev. Henry Housman, married Sir William Smith, 3rd baronet. Lucy Agnes, her sister, married her cousin Edward. Jane died an infant. Francis was a barrister, Recorder of Rangoon, Burmah; he married Emma, widow of Col. Hughes Hallet, and died without issue in 1873. Mary Theophenia remained single.

George Vernon, born 1820, was rector and dean of Quebec for 25 years (it is now a bishopric). He died in 1887 at Quebec. He married twice, first to Izza Reeves, and had issue:- Percy, Charles Vernon, George Frederick, Edith Izza, Emily Eliza, Arthur Vernon, Isabella Agnes and Mary Augusta. Of these Edith Izza married George Barnes Symes Young in 1873. Emily Eliza married Edward Le Mesurier Sewell in 1872. Isabella Agnes [married] Edward Greaves Meredith, a son of Sir W. Meredith, Quebec. Mary Augusta married Robert Rickart Hepburn in 1892. All these have issue. George Frederick married Kate Teister, having issue:- Mervyn Vernon, George Vernon, Edith, Adelaide, Maud and Elsa Agnes. They are in California. Mervyn is married. The second wife of George Vernon Housman was Louisa Aylmer, daughter of Edward Bowen C.B., Chief Justice of Lower Canada, and their children are:-

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Ada Vernon Housman and Eva Vernon Housman. The latter only survives; she married Arthur Paget Parker and lives at Redgate, Malvern.

We now go back to the younger brother of Rev. Robert Housman, my great grandfather William. He married at the age of 36 Sarah, daughter of Rev. Robert Fletcher of Halton Hall, near Lancaster, and lived at Lune Bank. Their children were:- William (died in infancy), Robert Fletcher, Sarah Agnes, Maria (died aged 7 years), and Frances Margaret. The latter married Joseph Whalley, barrister and left issue. Sarah Agnes married Rev. C.R. Dicken, chaplain of the

Charterhouse – afterwards rector of Balsham, Camb. They had four children. Robert Fletcher, my grandfather, married Agnes daughter of Rev. Robert Housman (his cousin). He was possessed of considerable artistic and literary talent, painted portraits, edited journals, and took a great and active interest in the breeding of pedigree shorthorn cattle. He kept a herd of shorthorns on the Lune Bank Estate, where he lived. In his early years and in the prime of life, he was characterised by remarkable and very real Christian piety. He converted the old barn adjoining the garden into a private chapel, and preached in it himself to large congregations, showing the greatest concern for the spiritual welfare of his neighbours, many of whom undoubtedly derived much good from

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his labours. In later life he steered a false course entirely, got under the power of evil influences, was overtaken by financial disaster, and died at Lune Bank in 1872. His children were:- William, my father, Sarah Agnes, Mary Bateman, Charles, Mary, Robert Fletcher and Fanny. Of these, only four survived to adult age, namely:- William, Mary, Robert Fletcher and Fanny. The latter married Rev. T.E. Ellwood, who was vicar of Hawes for 15 years. He resigned the living this year. Robert Fletcher married first Ellen Augusta Pritchard, his 1st cousin, daughter of R.W. Pritchard J.P., D.L. (Anglesey). She died without issue, and later Robert Fletcher married Mary J. Willan of Hawes; their children were:- Agnes Esther Irene, and Vera Nary Willan Fletcher. He breeds and is an expert judge of Langshan fowls, and lives at Morcombe. Mary, his sister, lives at Liverpool.

William Housman, the eldest son of this family, married in 1871, Frances Isabella, elder daughter of George and Sarah Woollam, of Chadderton Hall, Lancs, and later of the Manor House, Burton-in-Westmorland. The marriage took place at Giggleswick Church, in the Yorkshire dales. William took possession of Lune Bank in 1889 by inheritance on the death of his mother. The estate, or what was left of it after the

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William Housman my father, whose place in the pedigree is shown on page 12, died at Prospect House, Distington, Cumberland, April 9, 1900, and is buried in Camerton churchyard, in the same county. I do not think I can better describe his life as it appeared to me, than by saying that it was a fine proof of

the reality of Christianity, free from the blighting influences of inconsistency on the one hand and fanaticism on the other. In early years he was very fond of outdoor sports, riding, fishing and shooting. He was a very active man, an untiring pedestrian, an excellent amateur gardener, and a recognised authority on shorthorn and other breeds of cattle, contributing largely on this subject to the leading agricultural journals. I received the following letter from him when a youth in London:-

Lune Bank Lancaster
November 12, 1897

Dearest Will

I am glad you have seen something more of the E... family, and that you are going again to Miss S... at the end of the week. She is very kind in repeating her invitation, and you I am sure, value the opportunity it gives you of meeting many in fellowship and reading God's word with them. Much reading of the word, meditation upon it and mutual help given and gained in speaking often to one another in simple sincerity of desire to know the mind of God; together with prayer as often as may be in meetings and constantly in the privacy of each one severally, to ask that the heart's eyes may be divinely opened for spiritual discernment and understanding; that so the precious thought of God may be seen and appropriated, cannot fail to bring the needed increase in heart knowledge of God in Christ. It is only when so learned, until it becomes incorporated with our inner man, as our natural food enters into the constituents of our physical bodies, that the life can confirm the testimony of our lips, or even our lips can send forth more than superficial testimony. We cannot learn, except in heart communing with Christ Himself, the depths of the word of truth. Unless the Word, applied by the Holy Spirit's energy, brings us to Mary's place, the feet of Jesus on the choice of Mary's part, to listen to his voice and learn of Him directly the tale of Divine Love, we get little from it, and that little only the shell that contains the precious fullness of God's revelations.

May you dear Will, and I, and all the Lord's loved ones, ever seek by God's grace to retain freshness of love in our hearts: freshness of delight in the Love that comes down to us.

Yours in the Lord, W.H.

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unhappy misfortunes of my grandfather, instead of passing to the eldest son as in the good old yeoman days, was divided up in equal shares amongst the four surviving members of the family. My father's portion was the house, garden and barn (or "chapel" as we always called it in memory of the preachings held therein in times past) besides a small piece of land and seven cottages. Here we lived for nine years, during which time the other three portions of the property were sold to the jerry builder. The character of the neighbourhood was thus quickly and entirely changed. The haunts of the skylark and the corncrake became small noisy streets and the rich beautiful pasture land rapidly disappeared. By this time also the water mill just across the road from Lune Bank, which had originally been quite unpretentious and even picturesque, had assumed the proportions of a large factory, which overshadowed the house, and shook it night and day with the constant revolutions of its monster wheel, which only ceased for a short period at the weekends, and in summer weather required practically the whole stream of the river Lune to drive it. The inevitable result of these changes was the sale of the house in 1898 by public auction.

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The children of William, the last Housman of Lune Bank, are:- Agnes Winifred, married Herbert Valentine of Seaton, Workington; Robert Fletcher Aston; myself; and Frances Aston.

Robert Fletcher Aston married Ethel Mary, daughter of Thomas Eadie Purdon, M.D., of Ellerslie, Croydon, in 1908. They have a daughter, Audrey Elizabeth. The children of Agnes W. Valentine are Amy Guenever and Audrey.

This is a brief survey of family history, abridged from the pedigree, with a few notes added. Not many dates have been given. The pedigree sheet, the result of the energetic researches of Col. W.H. Chippindall, a cousin of the family, contains a very full record of all events of genealogical consequence in the family for a period of 400 years, from the lawful complaints of my 9th great uncle and 8th grandfather "poor tenants" of King Henry VIII, to the squeals of their respective little 10th great nieces and 9th great grand-daughters, important subjects of our good and noble King George V.

In the following pages a few personal notes and incidents in family history are recorded.

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(II) Notes and Incidents

The first four stories related here have been handed down as remarkable incidents. I was present when, some sixteen years ago, my father related them to my mother, who wrote them down verbatim on a sheet of foolscap paper, which is before me as I write.

1. Jane Adams

When a girl, Jane Adams, whose parents lived at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, had a very vivid dream. She dreamed that the man she would one day marry appeared to her, and that she was told this should be her husband. She only told this dream to one person, an intimate friend. The appearance and features of the man were very strongly impressed on her mind, and she described them to her friend. Sometime after, Jane went with this friend to evening service at St Mary's, Leicester, when visiting in that town. They entered together after the service had begun, and a new curate was at the reading desk. Instantly Jane Adams turned to her companion, and whispered, "The man of my dream". They became acquainted and were married September 24, 1788, in St Nicholas Church, Leicester. "The man of my dream" was Rev. Robert Housman, who was then a young widower of about 28 years of age.

2. Sarah Fletcher

Two years or thereabouts before the romantic dream incident just related which had such an

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Important bearing on the life of Rev. Robert Housman, that gentleman's much younger brother, a boy of about 15 years of age, conceived an admiring regard for the youngest daughter of the Rev. Robert Fletcher, who lived at Halton Hall, although she was only about 13 years of age. William began to go to Halton Church instead of to St Mary's, Lancaster, and his father very soon noticed the

fact, as he was an exceedingly exact and proper old country gentleman and insisted always that all members of the family at home should accompany him in decent procession to the old parish church. He was most particular and fastidious in his dress and deportment, carrying a nosegay, and wearing silk stockings and silver shoe buckles, and was never known to have a speck of mud upon his shining shoes (this surely, weather permitting!) In all matters of family discipline, he was an autocrat. Thus it came about that noticing his son's absence from church, an interview on the subject took place. Doubtless he looked upon the love-affair of his 5th son as a ridiculous matter; probably others did too at the time – therefore Robert Housman (senior) laid his commands upon William to accompany him in future to the church of their ancestors and to refrain from going to Halton. The latter did not see why he should not go to Halton if he liked and boldly said so;

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nay, further, he declared that rather than be interfered with in this sacred matter, he should go off to sea. To this last bombshell from his rebellious son, Robert made no reply and the interview closed. But next morning at 4 o'clock William awakened to find his father standing by his bedside with a very stern expression on his face. "You remarked yesterday", the old man said, "that rather than obey my orders you would go to sea; is that your intention still? Were you in earnest?" William, it is recorded, had not been altogether in earnest, but had spoken in a sudden impulse of indignant anger on the previous day. On the subject being thus, however, so unexpectedly and unceremoniously renewed, his indignation came upon him again and from between the sheets he promptly answered, "yes!" "Dress yourself", ordered his father. William did so and his father led him to the front door. At the gate stood a post-chaise. "Get in", said the old man, and the son obeyed, his father closing the door. "Glasson Dock!" said old Housman to the postillion, and away rolled the chaise to the port of Lancaster. William sailed that day on a West Indiaman, bound as a common sailor lad to work his passage out to the West Indies.

It took place as quickly as an execution and thus my great grandfather William started life. He got a clerkship in a business house in the West Indies and became a partner in the firm. Altogether

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he was about 15 years there, though he returned occasionally to see his parents. His father died in 1800 and he returned to Lancaster to live there, taking a house in Queen Street. On his arrival, he went to pay a necessary call upon a barber. The latter was talkative and kept making remarks during the hairdressing operations, on local events and persons, doubtless interesting to William who had been so long away. At last the barber remarked contemplatively, "Nice young lady, Sir, Miss Fletcher of Halton Hall!" William suddenly became more interested and old memories revived quickly. "Is she still Miss Fletcher?" he inquired. "Yes Sir," came the ready response from the garrulous barber, Unconscious of the effect his remarks were having on his customer, and repeated, "A most 'pertickler' nice young lady she is Sir." William Housman called on Sarah Fletcher, and went again – and so on until one day they married and went to live in the old family house, Lune Bank, the house from which he had been so suddenly banished on her account so many years before.

3. The Lost Ring

This is a story with neither a moral nor a meaning, but I record the facts as they have been handed down. The Rev Robert Housman, in the year 1792, was curate at St Michael's Church, Leicester, with the annexed living of Foston. He used to go out to Foston in the morning, returning to Leicester in the afternoon, the

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distance between the places being seven miles which he often walked. Once on leaving Leicester for Foston in a gig, he bade his wife farewell at the door of his house, where they embraced as he sat in the gig holding the reins. On re-entering the house, she discovered that the wedding ring had gone from her finger. Search was made at once in front of the house and down the street, and the town crier was sent out to proclaim the loss, but in vain. The Rev Robert Housman could offer no explanation, when told on his return. Several months later the ring was found at Foston, and restored to its owner. It was supposed that it had caught in part of the clothing of Rev. R.H., been carried thus to Foston, and fallen to the ground on his alighting from the gig. Many years after this, Mrs Housman was presiding at table as a hostess, and the conversation touched upon losses and finds. She drew the wedding ring from her finger, remarking as she held it up to view, "This ring was lost at Leicester and found at Foston." As

she spoke, the ring dropped in two pieces from her hand. That is the whole story, and explanations I have none.

4. A Portentous Dream

William Housman, West India merchant, settled in Lancaster about the year 1801, having come over from the West Indies to manage affairs at home. He lived at Lune Bank, as mentioned before. There had been three partners. One died shortly before W.H. left the West Indies

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and thus there were only two, one remaining out there as manager of the business. One night William Housman had a dream. He dreamed that he was walking upstairs in company with the living partner at Lune Bank, when at the first turn of the stairs they met the dead partner descending! They both showed evidence of alarm and uneasiness at the sudden apparition, and the more so as the dead man had his right arm appraised, with the evident object of placing it upon the head of one of them, for he alternately moved it from one side to the other as he came down to meet them. Just as the dreaded hand was about to fall on William Housman's head, the latter stepped quickly out of the way, and the next instant it rested upon the head of his partner. William Housman related this dream at the breakfast table next morning, but it only caused amusement. He made a note of the date however, for the incident had greatly impressed him. The sequel was still more impressive. On the night of his dream, the partner in the West Indies had died.

William Bradshaw

William Bradshaw, of Halton Hall, near Lancaster, claims notice in this history as an interesting personage; being never married, he is not a direct grandsire of mine, nor of any others, but his sister was one of my sixteen great-great-great-grandmothers, and he was great uncle to Sarah Fletcher. He lived in rather unsettled days, and of his adventures as a volunteer soldier against the Pretender in 1745, we

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have an account in the "Historical Records of the First Royal Lancashire Militia", by R.J.T. Williamson, an officer of that regiment. Briefly, his connection with this warfare was as follows:- On October 28, 1745, Bradshaw, as a county gentleman volunteering his services to defend the throne, was commissioned as Captain of the Lonsdale and Lancaster Company of the Lancashire Regiment of Militia. From this date until November 20th, he was left in charge of Lancaster Castle with his company and was occupied in drilling and training his men. On November 20th, when the Pretender was victorious at Carlisle, and was making rapid preparations for the march south through Lancaster, Captain Bradshaw, having received instructions from the Earl of Derby, the officer commanding the regiment, to forthwith remove all the stores and ordnance that were in Lancaster Castle, to a place of safety, commandeered the necessary wagons and horses under a magistrates' order, and starting in early morning, rushed the whole stores and implements of war over the vast expanse of sands in Morecombe Bay at low water, to Ulverston, where the head constable had found for them a "secure and secret place". There Bradshaw and his company remained in charge of them. Four days afterwards Prince Charles Edward halted at Lancaster with six thousand odd men, where he met with no opposition, but from whose citizens he received scant encouragement. For three weeks or more, which must surely have tried the patience considerably, Captain Bradshaw's orders kept him at Ulverston. Then when the Stuart was in full flight, and had passed northwards out

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of Lancaster with the remnants of his army on the morning of December 14, with every horse, cart and wagon he could lay hands on, orders were sent to Ulverston for the return of the ordnance stores to the Castle at Lancaster, and on the afternoon of December 15, Bradshaw returned at low tide over the sands and safely deposited his charge in the Castle. His company was immediately joined to the Volunteer Regiment of Liverpool Blues, which arrived the same afternoon in the county town in hot pursuit of Charles Edward. The Duke of Cumberland next day held a council of war at the Castle, and instant advance was decided upon, to recover the horses and wagons seized, and engage the rebel army before they gained the Scottish border. In this action Bradshaw took part, and in a very full account of it in his subsequent report to the Earl of Derby, he describes the scenes at Clifton Bridge and Moor near Penrith, in chilling terms.

The stormy night – the brilliant but intermittent moonlight - the frost and snow – the excitement of the chase as the swift and unencumbered pursuers gradually drew near to the lumbering rear-guard of the retreating army – the dawn, and sighting of the enemy – the guerrilla warfare all day long, as pursuers some up from the south, and Highlanders rushed back from the north to protect their rear-guard – the fall of evening again with the issue still doubtful – the desperate and successful charge of Highlanders in the darkness – the sudden burst

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of full-moonlight from inky black cloud masses revealing the still more desperate and futile attempt of the rear-guard to pass over Clifton Bridge with all their stolen wagons – the simultaneous attack of the various royal troops at this critical moment, as they "powered" volley after volley into the ranks of the rebels – the capture of the whole baggage train of the Pretender's army – the burning of Penrith, and occupation of the town at day-break, with estimates of killed and wounded on both sides, are described and related in a style that would do credit to the most talented war-correspondent of modern times.

"Ye lonely heath of Clifton Moor, looked dark and weird. Ye alarm fires were burning redly on Skiddaw and Helvellyn and in ye distance was seen Lowther Castle, with ye woods and coppices all aglow, with ye camp fires of ye Royal troops around them." Thus he describes the scene immediately preceding that midnight skirmish which ended disastrously for Charles Edward, yet could not be counted as a victory for the royal troops. The Highlanders had about 100 killed – the royal forces lost about 20. Bradshaw remained at Penrith until January 4, 1746. Then he was ordered to escort the prisoners from there to Lancaster, and his short but exciting experience of warfare then came to a close.

Another incident in the life of William Bradshaw is handed down to us by Sarah Fletcher his great niece, and as I do not know any reason for doubting it, I record it briefly here.

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Dick Turpin

This time it is an outlaw, not a rebel, that my fourth great uncle had to do with, and he would be a young man at the time, (some years before the outbreak of

the Scottish rebellion).

On a journey by carriage through the country, William Bradshaw halted for an evening meal at a wayside inn, where other guests were assembled. Dick Turpin was at large, and had become notorious. The conversation at table was about him. He was vehemently denounced by the company, and no epithets seemed too bad to be hurled at this violent highwayman. Bradshaw protested however that that they ought to moderate their language in reference to him; that, not being present to defend his actions, or make any plea in self defence, he ought not to be too hastily condemned. For himself he detested such acts of violence as Turpin had perpetrated, as much as the rest of the company, but he thought that there were extenuating circumstances; moreover he knew that Dick often freely and liberally helped those that were in need, and perhaps even that might be his sole motive in robbing the rich; a wrong one, without doubt, yet allowances must be made for errors, to which all of us are liable.

In words somewhat of this character Bradshaw spoke for a man he did not like, but who was absent and could not speak for himself.

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The window was open; the door of the guest room was open. A form like a shadow noiselessly slipped past the door of the chamber, out through the inn door into the darkness. The company was startled. Some cried out that it was Dick Turpin. Others had still darker theories about the incident. It was, however, soon forgotten, and the guests separated. William Bradshaw's carriage was ready. He paid his bill and drove away across the moorland. It was a lonely way, and a dark night. The carriage suddenly stopped. The suddenness of the action was so marked that Bradshaw opened the window to ascertain the cause. He half suspected it, and one glance confirmed his suspicions. A mounted man had stopped the postillion with (doubtless) a double barrelled flint lock pistol of latest pattern levelled at his head. Bradshaw was no doubt prepared for the worst, but the usual highwayman's formula was not repeated. Instead the robber lowered his weapon and addressed him with polite respect, in words somewhat like these:- "I overheard all that was said at the inn at dinner; I heard what was said about me – and what you said. Thank you Sir! Accept this ring of mine. I have many confederates, but none will molest you if you present this ring for their inspection – they know the passport; Adieu!"

Before Bradshaw could draw his breath to reply, Dick Turpin was gone, and the sound of the hoofs of Black Bess at full Gallop grew faint in the far

distance till all was silent again. I have heard that this ring

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was in the possession of the Bradshaws, I believe in the lifetime of Sarah Fletcher. That family is quite scattered now, and all traces of them have gone from the Halton neighbourhood, except perhaps the mausoleum in the chapel yard.

Bradshaw's Heir

The following is an extract from a letter written by my grandfather to my father 13 July 1866.

Did it ever occur to you while at Bedford that it was there that your great-great-great-uncle Esquire Bradshaw, while resting at the inn, heard the bells ringing, and on asking what it meant, was told that the curate's wife, Mrs Fletcher, had just given birth to a boy. This boy was my uncle William Bradshaw Bradshaw. The old gentleman had thought his niece, who would be his heiress, had married beneath her to take a respectable fellow of St John's College, Cambridge, and had turned his back upon the pair. The idea of a male heir pleased him however and he sent a large hamper of wine to the curate's wife 'with Mr Bradshaw's compliments'. Poor Mrs Fletcher, your great grandmother, was delighted beyond measure at the idea of a reconciliation, and soon afterwards, her husband was presented with the two livings of Kellert and Halton, and all went well.

The above incident took place in 1760. No doubt the large hamper of wine considerably added to the jubilations at the christening of William Bradshaw Fletcher. The infant duly entered into his inheritance, and is described in an old deed as 'Lord of the Manor of Halton' at the age of 18. He then took the surname of Bradshaw in place of Fletcher. A thick and handsome walking stick of his, with silver plate nearing the initials W.B.B., is at present in my possession, being in a perfect state of preservation, though over 100 years old.

Note: Full size oil portraits of William Bradshaw (obit 1760), William Housman and Sarah (Fletcher), and Rev. R. Housman, are in the possession of my mother at Braithwaite, near Keswick.

The Ghost

We none of us believe in ghosts, but there was one at Lune Bank. It was only seen in the month of November. My father, on one occasion, came into the hall from outside, late at night and saw, as he thought, a strange female form pass quickly downstairs, turn to the left at the foot of the stairs and disappear into that portion of the drawing room which has a large glass door exit into the back garden. He followed at once, but the room was empty and the glass door fast closed. He called others, and a thorough but futile search was made. On a later occasion, my father about to descend the stairs from the bedroom corridor, saw a woman's form apparently hurrying downstairs in front of him, turn to the left at the foot of the stairs and disappear as before. Instant search again revealed no trace of any living person. At another time, my sister Winifred, descending from the attics at night, suddenly became aware of a figure below as if a woman was passing downstairs in haste. She could not see which way she turned in the hall, but none of the family had been on the stairs, and no stranger was in the house. These incidents all took place in different years and at night. When my father was a child, a very distressing incident took place, one November night, at Lune Bank. A maid servant, named Ellen Hall, committed suicide in a state, presumably, of temporary insanity. Late at night she left her room, passed through the room in which one or two of the little children, one being my father, were sleeping,

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And embraced them as she passed. With one of her master's razors she went downstairs, turned to the left through the glass door into the garden, where she cut her throat with the razor, finally walking towards the Lancaster Canal, in which her body was found next day. As the apparition was only seen after extensive alterations had been made in the hall, we tried to account for it on the theory of reflections from lights in the road on vehicles, producing the appearance of a moving person, these alterations having opened up a window into the hall, which before was shut out by a partition. This theory, however, was never proved and the apparition could not be artificially produced by any means.

Compliments and Peaches

Robert Fletcher Housman, when a little boy, was sent by his mother one summer's day about the year 1817, with a basket of peaches grown at Lune Bank, to Lune Villa, as a present. When arrived at the latter house, and ushered into the

presence of the family there, he thus gravely announced his errand. "My mother sends you this basket of peaches with her compliments – and the compliments are inside with the peaches".

The Thetis

The Thetis was a merchant ship owned (whether solely or jointly I cannot say) by William Housman the West India merchant. In the Napoleonic Wars, a French man-of-war met her in the high seas and demanded surrender. Captain Charnsey of the Thetis refused, and having guns used them to such effect that the surrender came from the man-of-war which in due course, to the great excitement and jubilation of the townspeople appeared being towed up the River Lune to the quay side at Lancaster and by the triumphant merchant man. A drinking glass, elaborately engraved with [a] ship, was made to commemorate this event and it is now in the possession of my mother.

William Housman was himself a fighter, seeing active service in the West Indies, and received from the Hon. A. Cochrane Johnston an inscribed presentation sword, in 1797, when Captain in St George's Regiment, Dominica.

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Housman History

(III) Accidents and Disasters

Fortunately under this heading there is not very much to record, but as "accidents will happen in the best regulated families", I give a short notice of the more serious ones that have been recorded.

Coach Accident

The following incident occurred apparently a few miles out of London on August 10, 1814. Rev Robert Housman thus relates it in a letter to his son Tom.

"Great mercy has likewise been shown unto me on my journey. I was preserved, unhurt, in a moment of considerable danger. On my return from London last Wednesday the coach was much crowded, both with passengers and luggage. We were nineteen within and without. About nine in the evening the

coach overturned; I was on the outside. Out of the nineteen, only two escaped without injury; I was one of the favoured two. When the coach was in the act of going over I was preserved from all fear; and when we were down I found myself near a gutter with a box resting upon my leg. I soon extricated myself, and found that I had not received even a scratch. This wonderful and entire deliverance calls for the profoundest gratitude, and a life devoted to the deliverer. That scripture has since been much upon my mind "I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord". Five of my fellow travellers were very seriously injured. Whether the injuries will be fatal I cannot say."

The whole account shows that this coaching disaster was a very serious one, comparable indeed to quite a bad railway accident of the present day. The scripture quoted is remarkable in view of the fact that about this period, Robert Housman had suffered from serious symptoms in his health which his medical attendant had feared might prove fatal at any time, and that he lived for twenty four years after this event, preaching and working with great energy.

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Carriage Accident

Copied from a manuscript notebook once kept by Sarah Housman (nee Fletcher) in which she had written out herself what follows.

"A letter addressed to me by Rev. William Higgin, on my providential escape, when the car returning one evening from Lancaster came in contact with another carriage. The maidservant was killed on the spot, and I was miraculously preserved:-

"Then I saw and considered it well. I looked upon it and received instruction." Proverbs 24, verse 32.

My Dear Aunt Clifton Sep 29, 1817

You will excuse my intrusion. Your merciful deliverance which I have read in this morning's Lancaster paper persuades me that my enquiries after you will at least be accepted amongst many which must have been made before this. The Lord has long been speaking to you. His still, small voice has long since wakened your soul to serious consideration, and when in his kind and merciful providence he tore from you Maria, the darling of your heart, it was only that he might come and take up his abode, I will not say in her absence, but in a tender

and affectionate remembrance of the departed Heir of Glory. He follows his children with much loving kindness; he speaks in mercy and in judgement as seems best to his unceasing wisdom. Now He is speaking in the way of an awful providence. He has given you and your dear partner a most convincing proof of his love, while he has proclaimed himself the Sovereign disposer of the lives of his creatures. The account I have read ascribes your deliverance to your great presence of mind. The Lord was with you. He gave you that presence of mind which should restore you to your family, and which I doubt not has in this made you raise another Ebenezer to his praise. "One shall be taken and the other left." You might have been taken and your servant left. You might have been torn from your beloved husband and your dear children; you might have been called into the eternal world and this letter might have been directed not to yourself, but to a bereaved and a most affectionate mourner. But you have been spared, and you have been spared to hear what the Lord will say concerning you. I need not I am sure suggest the propriety of listening to his voice, and I can only fervently pray that out of this afflictive dispensation, you and my uncle may reap much instruction. It is painful, but through the countless ages of Eternity it may minister to your joy and your happiness. Now we see through a glass darkly. God moves in a mysterious way, but a time is coming when we shall know as we are known. Mysteries will be mysteries no longer, and we shall see that God is most great and wise and good. If I mistake not Ellen was well disposed. I hope she is in heaven. If so she has reason to adore the Lord's goodness. To us, however, this interposition of the Divine Hand wears

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an important lesson. "Be ye ready!" Have oil in your lamps. The grace of the Spirit and the righteousness of Jesus, that whether your death be sudden or lingering, whether you are summoned at the first or at the last watch of the night, all will be well, you will sleep in Jesus to awake again after His likeness.

Excuse this poor tender of my affectionate regard for you. I have not time to write anything but what affection dictates, and commending my good uncle and your family to the Shepherd of Israel.

Your affectionate nephew, W. Higgin.

Notes

"Maria" mentioned above was Sarah Housman's little daughter who died aged 7 years. "Ellen" was the servant, killed in the accident.

The writer of the above letter afterwards became the Bishop of Derry.

Skating Fatality

Some three years before the carriage accident referred to above, a younger brother of the writer of the letter of sympathy to Mrs Housman, Edward Higgin, was drowned in the river Lune through the ice breaking under him whilst he was skating. It occurred on January 6, 1814, and he was only 14 years of age. Notwithstanding his extreme youth, when faced with certain death his calmness and resignation were most striking. According to the account given to me of this incident by my father, when it was apparent that he could not hold on to the ice until adequate help arrived, owing to the cold, and exhaustion, to the few who had attempted but failed to reach him, Edward Higgin called out, as he threw his hat upon the ice in front of him, "That marks the spot where I have gone down!" and then he sank beneath the ice. On the occasion of this sad accident, Rev. Robert Housman wrote a long letter of sympathy to his

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sister Mary, the bereaved mother, which is given at length in the "Life of Rev. R. Housman". In it he points out three principal lessons which afflictive dispensations are intended to teach us:

1. To bow with unfeigned resignation to the will of God
2. To pray earnestly that the visitation may be sanctified.
3. To consider our remaining mercies.

Shipwreck

Coming to much more recent days, the Atlantic liner "Canadian", on June 4, 1861, foundered at sea with the loss of many lives, amongst others George Adams Housman, my 2nd cousin once removed. The following extract from a letter to me dated April 28, 1913, from Mrs Symons (nee Housman) gives all I know of the incident.

"George deserves a place in the Housman records. He was a troublesome character, I believe, but went abroad to try his fortunes in Canada, and on

the way out something happened to the ship, and it went down with considerable loss of life, as there were not enough boats. Uncle George was safe in a boat, when a woman was seen still on board, so he gave up his place to her, and went back to the ship, and was drowned. He was twenty one years of age."

Fire

The House of Richard Williams Pritchard, who married the 3rd daughter of Rev. Robert Housman, was totally destroyed by fire with all its contents, excepting one picture, a portrait in oils by Lonsdale of Rev. Robert Housman, which Mrs Pritchard herself tore from its massive frame and carried to a place of safety. This was about the year 1840. Mr Pritchard, returning from Liverpool by ferry to his Birkenhead home, was met at

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the landing stage by someone, who with tragic suddenness exclaimed "Your house is burnt down!" "My wife and children?" was Mr Pritchard's instant question. "Safe," was the reply; and he showed no further signs of worry or anxiety as he passed on.

The Clock House that is Gone

by

Robin Shaw

> "and Morcom is dead now and Turing with him;
> the Clock House demolished. At the sharp turn
> where it was always dark the road steepens
> to Housman's Pisgah."
>
> Geoffrey Hill

So ends Geoffrey Hill's poignant poem, 'A Cloud in Aquila'. If walls could talk (and they still existed), then surely the walls of the Clock House would have more than their share of tales to tell.

The old Clock House was where A.E. Housman spent his teenage years between 1871 and 1878. In this article I am bringing together in outline the story of the house in the last two centuries, which includes not only the era of the Housmans but also the interesting era of the Morcoms. My own interest derives from researches when writing *Housman's Places*.

The old Clock House was in Fockbury, adjacent to Bournheath, two miles north-west of Bromsgrove. There at the end of Valley Road it stood, where Bumble Hole Lane forks away. It was demolished in 1976 and replaced by two modern houses, one of which is still called the Clock House. A brick wall surrounds the development. The gate house and clock tower of the lost buildings remain, the latter built into an even more recent house. And a good stretch of the grounds is an arboretum lovingly cared for by the present owner.

Fockbury is supposedly in the Domesday Book. The Clock House that was there in the early nineteenth century evolved from a Jacobean house. You would not know that if you saw the house just before it was demolished. Then it looked part Victorian, part early twentieth century, a large complex of wings and gables, brick below, timber and plastering above. Perhaps it incorporated old timber and frames of the early house but not discernibly.

Even before Jacobean times there was probably a medieval manor house at Fockbury with its own estate. Into the early nineteenth century the estate still comprised several farms, Fockbury Mill, and a number of cottages.

Step by step over time these were sold off by the different owners, and finally there was the house and ten acres. It was not always called the Clock House. In the time I am covering it was sometimes the Clock House, sometimes Fockbury House and even the Rookery. It had an ancient clock in one of its gables still there in the mid nineteenth century and the name, given to it by locals, stuck.

The Holdens and Brettells

In the early nineteenth century a Bromsgrove solicitor, Joseph Brettell, lived in the Clock House. The property and its estates had come to him when he married Ann Holden, heiress and descendant of a family tracing its lineage to the time of Henry II. The Holdens came from Wood End House, Erdington; they did not live in the Clock House. A.E.H. as a child was enamoured to find a hoard of Caxton books in an attic which came to his grandmother via the Holdens.

Before the Brettells there had been a number of different owners so we cannot think of the Clock House as the seat of one family.

The Housmans

A.E.H. was the third generation of Housmans to live in the Clock House. It began with his grandfather, Thomas Housman. If you were there in the 1840s you would have seen the Reverend Thomas as the vicar of Catshill parish which included the Clock House estate. He appeared to be the squire of Fockbury and lived in genteel style. He is said to have been a man with a powerful presence and with a voice that made the members of congregation quake in their pews. He presided over the community of Fockbury and he served on key committees in Bromsgrove. I say 'appeared to be the squire', as squire is how he was known by locals, though he never owned the Clock House.

The Housman family came originally from Lancashire. Thomas became a clergyman and early in his career was vicar of Kinver. He was introduced to the Brettell family, probably while visiting his uncle, John Adams, cotton manufacturer, who lived in Perry Hall (now Housman Hall). and in 1822 he married Ann, daughter of Joseph and Ann. The couple lived at Kinver with a growing family until Joseph was widowed in 1838. Thomas and Ann then moved into the Clock House to join Joseph and Ann's sister Mary. They were

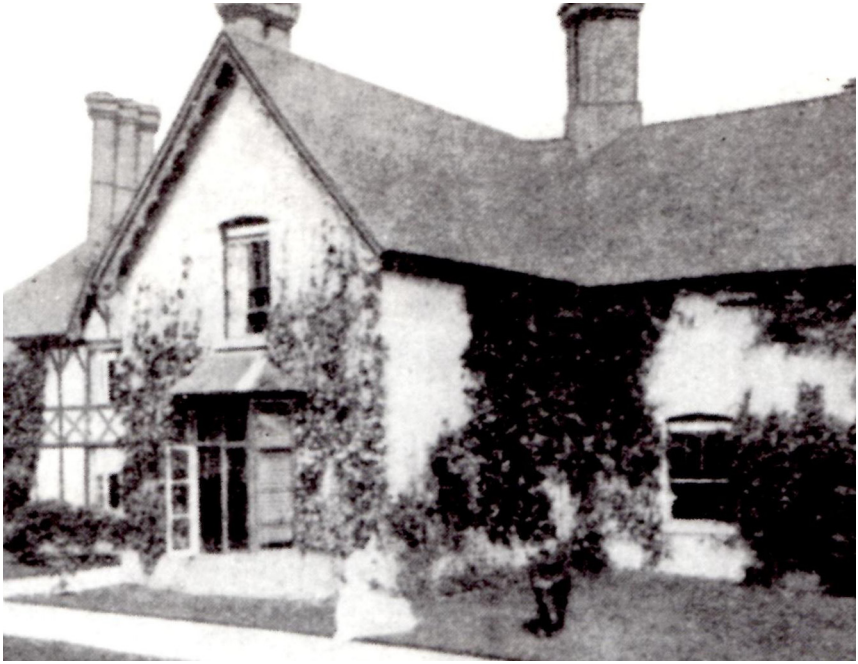

Figure 1: The Clock House about 1860. The view is probably of the wing added by the Rev. Thomas Housman. He is in the garden with A.E.H.'s mother and A.E.H. as a baby.

there until 1868. Thomas and Ann had about twelve children but only seven survived. That was enough to fill the Clock House. In 1841 in the Census we find Thomas, Ann and their six children, Joe Brettell, Mary Brettell and two servants. The two servants must have had a busy time.

Joseph Brettell died in 1847 and left the estate to his daughters, Ann and Mary, for their lifetimes and then to the Housman grandchildren. The affairs of the Housmans subsequently became very complicated with the spread of ownership. John Pugh attempted to tease this out and recently Julian Hunt has taken the task forward. All I need to say here is that Thomas, and in turn his son, Edward, lived in the Clock House at different times appearing to be the owners. The consequence of the dissipation of family wealth for the Clock House estate was that it was gradually broken up and sold off. In Thomas's time the Clock House was extended and renovated, probably financed by sales of property. Thomas benefited from inherited wealth but earned little and lived well.

Edward, the poet's father, was the second son of Thomas. He was born in Kinver but came to the Clock House when he was about seven. He had a carefree childhood there. His elder brother had left home early so Edward accustomed himself to the role of the squire's son. Eventually he became a

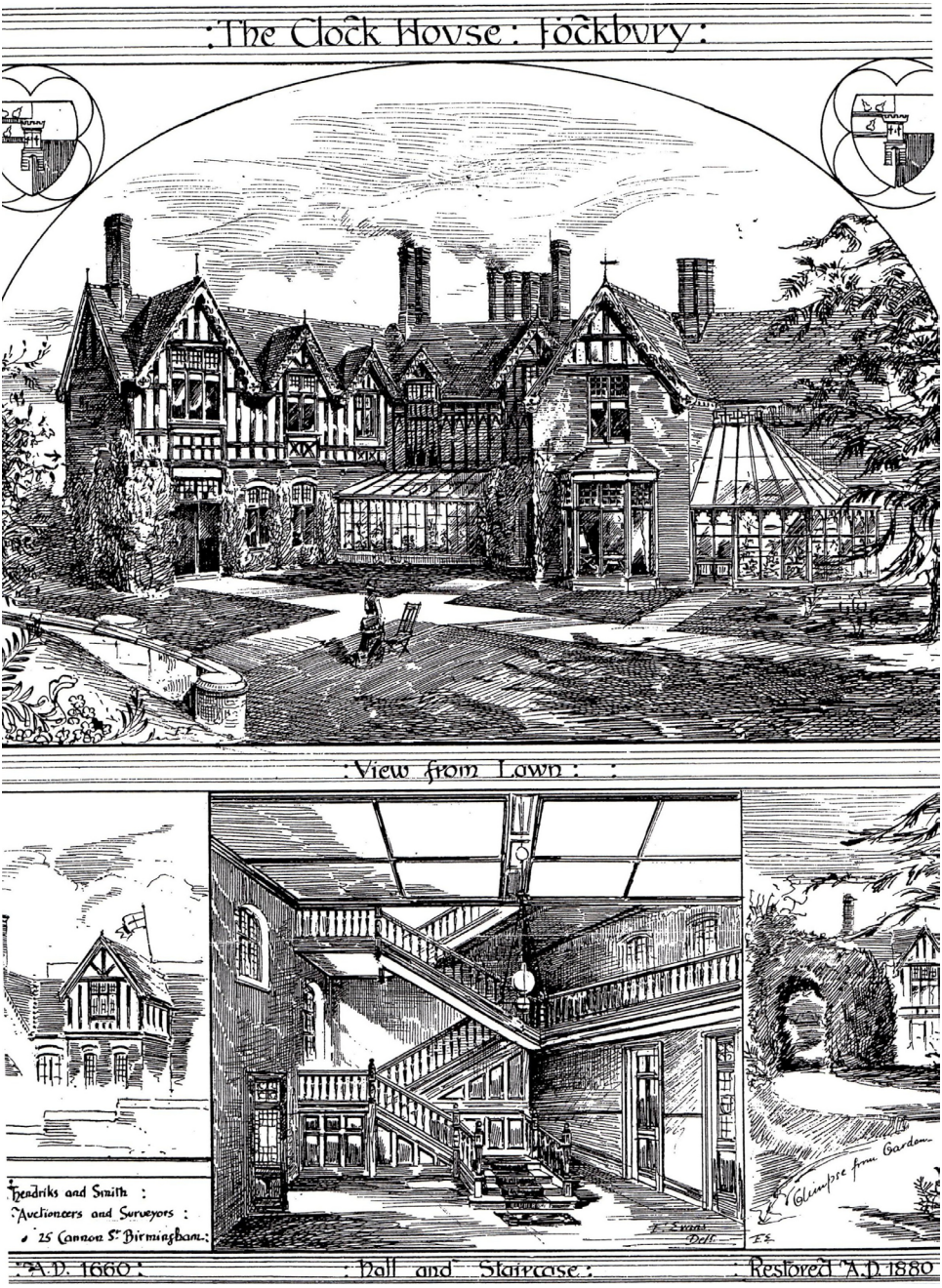

Figure 2: Surveyor's drawing of the Clock House, exterior and interior (probably early 19th century).

solicitor and moved out of the house when he married Sarah Jane Williams of Woodchester in 1858. They set up home in one of the estate properties, Valley House, just along the road from the Clock House. It is still there, renovated by the Morcoms and renamed 'Housmans' by John Pugh, who later lived there.

Edward and Sarah Jane lived in the Valley House for less than a year and their first child Alfred, was born there. They moved to Perry Hall and had six more children who enjoyed a very happy family life. But the happiness came to an end when Sarah Jane died in 1871; Alfred was only 12. It happened that Thomas had retired to Lyme Regis and moved out of the Clock House. Edward was grief stricken; grasping at solace and nostalgic for his childhood, he moved his family into the Clock House. There he married again to his cousin, Lucy.

So from 1872 to 1878 Alfred and his brothers and sisters came to spend important years in the Clock House. Although they were recovering from the shock of their mother's death they were excited by the move to the country. It was only two miles from Bromsgrove but they saw it as remote and isolated. They were able to play games in the large gardens, to explore the farms, and rick yards, and talk to country folk. A.E.H. (as Alfred became known - even signing letters to his step-mother thus) attended Bromsgrove School so he had a long daily walk through fields and orchards, descending to Bromsgrove through Perryfields, with the spire of St John's a focal point. Just up the lane that veers to the right from the Clock House is a small hill (private land), which the Housman children called Mount Pisgah - it is now crowned with a television mast. There in the evenings A.E.H. would like to go to watch the sun go down behind the Shropshire Hills.

In the main *A Shropshire Lad* is not biographical but the inspiration for some of the poems can clearly be attributed to AEH's Clock House days. I am sure this one can:

Into my heart an air that kills
From yon far country blows:
What are those blue remembered hills,
What spires, what farms are those?

That is the land of lost content,
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways where I went
And cannot come again.

When he wrote those words in London, long after he had left Bromsgrove, he was thinking of the farms and spires of St John's and Tardebigge that lay

before him every day as he walked down to Bromsgrove School. And he was remembering the views he had of the distant hills when walking the Fockbury lanes and looking out to Shropshire from Mount Pisgah. *Last Poems* XXIX, 'When summer's end is nighing', is also a recollection of Mount Pisgah.

A.E.H. left the Clock House behind when he went with a scholarship to St John's College, Oxford, in 1877 at the age of 18. Edward Housman and the rest of the family left in 1883 and returned to Perry Hall. The Clock House estate was sold by the Housman family in 1883. There were two owners in succession after that: Harold Barham, who after a short time sold it to Thomas Welles. Welles was a fender manufacturer and lived there with his wife, three children and no fewer than six servants - they were well looked after, and they looked after the Clock House well. Laurence Housman, A.E.H.'s brother, wrote of a friendly family who began alterations and extensions.

The Morcoms

In 1909 the Clock House was purchased by Reginald Keble Morcom. He was an engineer whose grandfather had been the co-founder of an important Birmingham company, Belliss and Morcom. The company started in steam engines and developed them for electricity generation, manufacturing combined units for power stations and trams. Between the wars they changed to manufacturing diesel generators and made units for powering ships. The Morcoms were to own the Clock House for fifty years. In that time Reginald Morcom served in the First World War rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel so that he was afterwards known to everyone as Colonel Morcom. He became Chairman of Belliss and Morcom and was much respected in engineering circles.

Mrs Morcom, Isobel, was the daughter of Sir Joseph Swan, an engineer, who is well known as the inventor of the electric light bulb. She was a sculptor. She had trained at the Slade School of Art. She did not exhibit after she married but retained an interest in sculpture and the arts.

During their years at the Clock House the Morcoms poured wealth into the buildings from the prosperous family business. They transformed the house and other properties on the estate. They started building about 1910 and kept improving the property throughout their tenure. They built a large new wing with a new clock in its own tower. The original clock of the house had gone by the 1870s when Thomas Housman lived there and carried out extensions. They built

the gatehouse, demolished some earlier buildings, and they harmonised the style of everything so that new black timbering and white plasterwork created a unity with the earlier parts of the house. They spent lavishly on the interior, putting in a very fine staircase and Mrs Morcom designed and installed beautiful fireplaces. Visiting the house in the late 1930s Laurence Housman said it 'had been transformed into a mansion', and he applauded the clock tower.

The Morcoms behaved as people of a big house were expected to behave. While Colonel Morcon was known as autocratic and distant he was benevolent (I expect he was a busy man), and Mrs Morcom was always generously involved in the community.

The Morcoms had two sons and a daughter. Rupert, the eldest son, was born just before they moved in to the Clock House, and Christopher born about 1911. They were both bright and interested in science. Colonel Morcom set up a laboratory in the Clock House to encourage them. Both boys went to Sherborne School and Christopher was there a year ahead of Alan Turing.

Figure 3: The memorial window to Christopher Morcom in Christ Church, Catshill.

Alan Turing

Alan Turing is now very well known for his crucial role in code-breaking at Bletchley Park during World War II, but more broadly he is increasingly recognised as someone who was pivotal in the early development of computers. He was already showing that he had an extraordinary mind when he was a school. It started with mathematics and he spent a great deal of his time, a report

said, investigating advanced mathematics to the neglect of required elementary work. His thoughts were ranging far ahead of the school curriculum and ahead of anything his teachers were comfortable with.

In the sixth form at Sherborne, in 1927 he made friends with Christopher Morcom. He found that here was someone with whom he could share his scientific theorising. Alan had broadened his interests - as well as mathematics he was studying critically the work of Einstein and impenetrable aspects of physics, chemistry and astronomy. Christopher was exceptionally bright and their two minds had a great rapport. Their friendship and collaboration was taking place as they were preparing for Higher School Certificate and planning to go to university. Christopher was accepted by Trinity College, Cambridge, then tragically died in his last term at school in 1930. He had suffered from tuberculosis as a small boy and had complications from that.

Alan was devastated. Christopher had talked much about his home in the Clock House and his laboratory. When Alan wrote with his condolences to Mrs Morcom, she immediately befriended him. A correspondence ensued and led to Alan visiting the Clock House. He was particularly keen to see Christopher's laboratory and the partially completed astronomical telescope that was being built for him. He and his parents came to the Clock House several times over the next few years.

Alan shared with Mrs Morcom his view that Christopher in some way was still with him, guiding him. He tried to explain his belief, that the spirit had its own existence and was not dependant on the body. He had arrived at this belief when reading the works of the Cambridge Astronomer, Sir Arthur Eddington, a distinguished academic who wanted to build bridges between science and religion. The Morcoms had a memorial window for Christopher installed in Catshill Church. Alan was there for the dedication.

Alan Turing was to die of cyanide poisoning at the age of 42 in 1954. He had been charged with homosexual behaviour which was then illegal. He was being harrassed by the authorities. The official verdict was suicide. His mother never believed this - he was carrying out chemical experiments at the time.

After the Morcoms

The Morcams lived on in the Clock House until 1960 when Colonel Morcom died. The Clock House was bought by Mr C.P.D. Davidson and his wife Jean in 1960. They lived there for about 11 years and made it a very happy family

home. They sold it in 1972 because it was too big for their needs. It was a time when buyers for such large houses were hard to find. They explored alternative uses but Bromsgrove Council refused planning permission for any change. In the end the house was sold to Mr Ted Greaves, Chairman of the Greaves Organisation, a firm of builders.. He claimed initially that he intended to keep it intact. Four years later he convinced Bromsgrove Council and local protesters, including John Pugh, that it was beyond repair and in 1976 it was demolished. The Davidsons were desolate and Mr Davidson wrote a long letter to the Bromsgrove Messenger to put the record straight. He asserted that it was in good condition when sold in 1972 and blamed the Council for not trying to see it preserved.

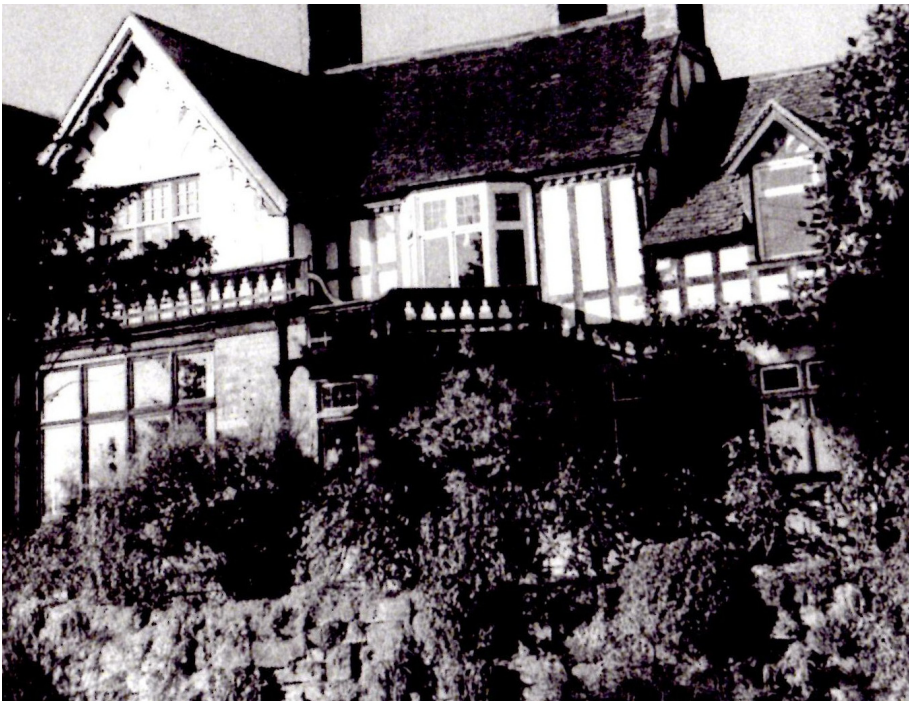

Figure 4: The Clock House in the 1970s.

So as Geoffrey Hill's poem says the Clock House is gone. And the people are gone. There is a group of mouldering Housman graves in the corner of the Catshill churchyard, - not A.E.H.'s, his ashes were scattered at Ludlow church - and the Morcoms grave is across the road, a large square of ageing stones. Christopher's window is still in the Lady Chapel at Christ Church,

Catshill. We have the poems of A.E. Housman forever with us. And we are increasingly grateful to Alan Turing.

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Moses Jackson's Family

by

Andrew Jackson

The remarkable attachment that AEH had for Moses Jackson prompts speculation as to the kind of family that produced that charismatic individual. David McKie's article in the 2011 *Housman Society* Journal reproduced the Jackson family photograph from circa 1883. The bearded patriarch, Moses Snr, looking like his biblical namesake, is surrounded by his 11 offspring Figure 1).

Figure 1: The Jackson Family in about 1883

Using a process of elimination, David McKie identified the individuals as follows:

Adlabert J Margaret A Ailsa L Elizabeth M Moses J
Flora M Moses Snr Ida C
Mother-in-law Agnes K Robert O Martha H Irene P
Victor H

McKie's inferences were mostly well-based. However, the Jackson family

archives include a piece of paper that accompanies the photo, which identifies the individuals as follows:

Adlabert J Elizabeth M Margaret A Ailsa L Moses J
Flora M Moses Snr Ida C
Louisa D Peck Agnes K Robert O Martha H Irene P
Victor H

The labels are corroborated by other photos in the archives taken when the daughters were in their teens or early twenties (Figures 5 to 13). I can therefore confirm that M^{c}Kie identified all the family correctly except for Elizabeth M., Margaret A. and Ailsa L. The photo is not dated but M^{c}Kie's logic, which suggested Christmas 1883, seems sound.

I have copies of two additional family photographs taken a few years later and including the same eleven offspring. They were both evidently taken during a single sitting at Fred T. Palmer's photo studio, 72 George St, Croydon. The youngest child, Irene, appears four or five years old, so the photographs were therefore probably taken in 1886 or 1887. The latter date would have been immediately before Moses John sailed for India to take up his post as Principal of the D.J. Sind Science College in Karachi. That would have been the last opportunity for a group sitting of the entire family. The back of one of the photos (Figure 2) is annotated with the following names:

Moses J Flora M Elizabeth M Ida C Adalbert J
Ailsa L Victor Margaret A
Agnes K Moses Snr Irene P Martha H Robert O

It appears, however, that Agnes and Irene were transposed in this photo. Labeling on another piece of paper attached to the third photo (Figure 3) has the two reversed and is in agreement with Figure 1.

Moses J Ida C Margaret A Flora M Ailsa L
Elizabeth M Victor H Robert O Adalbert J
Irene P Moses Snr Agnes K Martha H

Later photos of Agnes and Irene in the archives support the view that the labeling in Figure 2 is incorrect and has the two youngest girls transposed.

M^{c}Kie's research on Moses' siblings was sound. Some of the facts

Figure 2: The Jackson Family in about 1887

Figure 3: The Jackson Family in about 1887

below are repetitions, but I have added others that are apparently not published and may be of interest to readers.

Moses and all his younger siblings were born in Ramsgate.

Figure 4: Elizabeth Muirhead Cole (née Jackson)

Elizabeth Muirhead Jackson was born on 1 December 1859. Her middle name was derived from the maiden name of her paternal grandmother, Elizabeth Muirhead (1785-1860). Elizabeth Jackson was known as 'Auntie Zoub' by her nephews and nieces, who had difficulty pronouncing 'Elizabeth'. Elizabeth married Frederick Cole on 2 August 1890 in Ramsgate. The couple had three children, Alan (1892-97) who died aged just five years old, Vera (1895-1969) and Dulce (1899-1992). The couple lived in Ramsgate until at least 1917 when Frederick Cole died. Elizabeth died in Tonbridge on 15 February 1947.

Figure 5: Ailsa Louisa

Ailsa Louisa was born on 4 October 1861. She never married and in later life was admitted to Stone Asylum, near Dartford, Kent. In his dairy Moses John recounted visiting Ailsa there in 1909, during a trap back to England from India. She died on 13 March 1925.

Figure 6: Adalbert James

Adalbert James was born on 9 August 1863. His middle name is that of his uncle, James Jackson (1809-49). Adalbert studied classics at the University College of London while sharing accommodation with Moses and A.E.H. in Talbot Road from 1882 to 1885, while Moses was working at the Patent Office. In 1885 the three moved into separate digs. Adalbert is listed in the 1891 census as a classics teacher at Belmont, Wardle Road, Sale, Cheshire, now part of the southwestern suburbs of Manchester. He died of typhoid the following year on 12 November 1892 while still in Sale. A.E.H. kept a photo of Adalbert on the wall of his rooms at Cambridge, next to Moses' picture.

Margaret Adelaide never married. She worked as a teacher, initially at a school in Lansdowne Road in Tonbridge, Kent, but was listed as being resident in Oaklands Park, Chichester in the 1911 census. During the First World War she lived, at least part time, in Leicester Square, London and corresponded regularly with Moses' second-oldest son, Hector, who was serving with the Canadian Expeditionary Force on the Western Front in France. Her letters reveal a likeable and humorous person. She died in Dumfries, Scotland on 22 May 1939.

Figure 7: Margaret Adelaide

Flora Marion was born in about May 1867. She died of diabetes in Ramsgate on 21 January 1889, aged just 21 without marrying. In her short working life, she was a governess.

Figure 8: Flora Marion

Ida Caroline was born on 4 July 1870. She was generally known in the family as 'Tiger', perhaps from her reportedly fiery character which is reflected in letters from Margaret to her nephew, Hector, or from a childish mispronunciation of her name. She too worked as a governess in a variety of places, including Tunbridge Wells, Kent (1891), Llandygwydd, Wales (1901), Weston Super Mare, Somerset (1911) and Deal, Kent (1917). A photograph of her in old age in the archives shows she had a ready smile, in spite of her nickname. Ida died in Ramsgate on 4 January 1934, aged 63.

Figure 9: Ida Caroline

Victor Herbert was born on 21 December 1875. He had a distinguished career in tertiary education, joining Moses in India and becoming Principal of the elite Patna College in India in 1908-1909 and 1914-19, becoming 2nd Vice-Chancellor from 1920-3, and again Principal from 1924 until just before his premature death in 1928, aged 52. His interest in archaeology led him to study Buddhist inscriptions in the nearby Barabar Hills. It was while he was at Patna that Victor met E.M. Forster and is said to have been a model for Cyril Fielding, the compassionate,

Figure 10: Victor Herbert

principled intellectual in Forster's novel *A Passage to India*.[1] The fictional Marabar Caves in the book are a thinly veiled version of the Barabar Caves. Victor never married. He returned to England on leave in December 1927 and suffered a stress-related breakdown; he died of heart failure a few weeks later on 20 January 1928 at an institution in Darlington, near the home of Moses' eldest son Rupert, a medical practitioner. Victor's obituary incorrectly states his date of death as 18 January, but the death certificate shows it as 20 January.

Agnes Katherine and **Robert Oswald** were twins born on 10 February 1880.

Figure 11: Robert Oswald

Robert moved from Ramsgate to London by the time he was 21 where, according to the 1901 census, he was employed as a bank clerk in Islington. Soon after he emigrated to Winnipeg, Manitoba in Canada and married Violet Ellen Gould, who was born in Brockley, formerly part of Kent, on 13 May 1905. The couple had four children. In 1906 Robert was listed in the census as farming at McDonald, just northeast of Winnipeg, but sometime after 1916 he bought a farm near Altamont, 70 miles SW of Winnipeg. He died on 21 December 1955.

Figure 12: Agnes Katherine

Agnes was initially a teacher at her father's Vale College, before following Moses to British Columbia in August/ September 1911, travelling together on the same ship with Moses' wife, Rosa, and three of his sons some 6 months after Moses himself had emigrated to British Columbia to find and purchase a farm.

Figure 13: Irene Phoebe

Irene Phoebe, the youngest child, was born in September 1882. She appears to have sailed for Canada separately after Agnes. The two sisters settled in nearby Mission, 11 miles from Aldergrove, where Moses had bought his farm. In Mission Agnes taught music (mainly violin) and Irene was a governess then a stenographer at the Commercial Bank of Canada. A letter written by Irene between 1912 and 1915 describes visiting Moses' farm in Aldergrove over a weekend and punting down the creek on the farm with her nephews. Hector, the oldest nephew

in Canada, was only 10 years younger than her. Neither sister married and they continued to live together in Mission until Irene died on 6 September 1948 aged 66. Agnes died ten years later on 4 May 1958 aged 78.

McKie's article states "The Tonbridge School Register erroneously enters Victor as 'Fourth son of Moses Jackson, J.P.'" In fact the Tonbridge School Register was correct. A 12th child does not appear in any of the family photos. **William Stow** Jackson was born on 18 September 1872 (between Ida and Victor) but died tragically on 12 May 1873, aged less than eight months, apparently from pneumonia. Thus Victor was indeed the fourth son of Moses Snr.

The mother of this very large family was born **Martha Hemming Peck** on 3 August 1836, in Kimbolton, Cambridgeshire. Her middle name was from her mother's maiden name, Louisa Dunkin Hemming, who was the elderly lady in Figure 1. In all the photos of Martha, she appears a serene and slight woman and it is remarkable that she managed to produce twelve children. Serenity would probably have been essential as a mother of twelve children and wife of the principal of a school with perhaps 20 teenaged boys drawn from all over Britain, Europe and beyond.

Figure 14: Martha Hemming Jackson (née Peck)

But what of **Moses Jackson Snr** himself, patriarch of this large family? Moses Snr was born in Ayreshire, Scotland in 1822. He attended Heidelburg University. On his return to Britain he was head of a school in Witham, Essex, before starting Vale College in Ramsgate in 1851. At his funeral in Ramsgate on 31 January 1937, an address by a long-standing friend, Rev. S.C. Gordon, M.A. brings Moses Snr to life.

> 'Our friend was a great personality. His large, well-shaped head firmly set on broad shoulders, supported by a stalwart frame marked him off from the common multitude as designed for leadership. You could not be long in his company without feeling the force that was in him. He was made on a large scale but everything about him was in proportion. He hated everything mean, pretentious, cowardly or base. His striking outward form expressed the soul within. That soul, upright, capacious, richly endowed and assiduously cultivated enabled him to have large

Figure 15: Moses Jackson Sr

ideas and wide interests in the world of men and things. He lived a strenuous life, devoted his energies to the work of teaching, taking his share in public affairs and making his influence felt in the various movements of the time. He was a man of independent spirit and settled convictions, and in his opinions and conduct, was guided by what he believed to be reasonable and just. He never courted popularity by taking the path of least resistance or the side of the majority; he thought for himself and always commanded a respectful hearing for what he had to say.

From his early Scottish training he believed in and practised the simple life, filling the day with hard and honest work and found opportunity for aiding the cause of social well-being and religious progress. He was happy in his marriage, in his home, in his family, in his scholastic and other work. He was a good classical scholar, a student of books and men and the course of events; he was fond of science and regularly attended the meetings of the 'British Association'; he took an interest in all that was going on in the great living world. He was practically acquainted with horticultural and agricultural affairs, was equally at ease in conversing with a peasant, parson or squire. He had the qualities of a great teacher. He was fond of boys, shared their spirit and sports, studied their individual tastes and proclivities, and sought by the impartation of knowledge and the discipline of school, to form their characters and fit them for the business of life. And it came to pass that in the years of his scholastic work he imprinted his character and deposited his principles in pupils who preserved and spread his influence in divers parts of the world. And those of his own loins who were trained by him and received the first start in the race of knowledge, especially his sons by their brilliant university career (*sic*) and posts of service, perpetuate his name and all that it stands for.'

Although funeral orations often exaggerate the departed's merits, much of this praise can be corroborated. In 1884, when aged 62, Moses Snr spent several weeks in the United States and Canada to attend a meeting of the British Association in Montreal. He recorded his impressions in a small book, *To America and Back: a Holiday Run*. Many of the characteristics described at his funeral are illustrated in his book. A keen interest in the sciences is shown in an intense curiosity in the details of how things work, such as the logistics of cutting and storing almost a million tons of ice from the frozen Upper Hudson River during winter, to be transported to New York in summer and sold from carts pulled daily around the city. He was dedicated to precise observation and recording of facts, meticulously noting for example, the exact mileage, latitude and longitude for each daily run of the voyage, the air and water temperatures and changes in colour of the sea as the Newfoundland Grand Banks were reached. From these he drew conclusions as to the currents encountered in the Atlantic crossing.

We can imagine Moses Jnr growing up inculcated by his father's fascination with science and the scientific method of observation, hypothesis and logical thought process. Pollard, A.E.H.'s and Moses' roommate at Oxford University, described Moses as 'a delightful science scholar'. There can be little doubt of the source of Moses' ability in science, which led to the Neil Arnott Medal in Experimental Physics at the University of London, and a St John's scholarship at Oxford.

Moses Snr was especially interested in horticulture and agriculture. In upper New York State he recorded the state of the wheat crop over the previous five years, the precise months for sowing and reaping, the cost of farm labour and price of wheat in New York versus Chicago. Perhaps this interest in farming was echoed when Moses Jnr retired from teaching in India, and shifted radically to a new career in farming.

More importantly than demonstrating his fascination with science and agriculture, Moses Snr's book confirms a deep and genuine interest in his fellow man, rich or poor, educated or not, which allowed him to perceptively judge character. He showed no hesitation in initiating deep conversations with fellow travelers or people that he met on the street. Some of the conversations struck up on ships, boats or trains appear to have been lengthy. The fact that he recorded long sections of those conversations shows that he was not just an interesting speaker, but he was also a good listener. One can't help but assume that this ease of conversation and genuine interest in the subjects being discussed and his straightforward manner was passed on to Moses. Was it partly this that attracted A.E.H. to Moses in the first place, and allowed them to while away

long evenings in their lodgings at 58 & 59 St Giles in easy and companionable conversation, long after Pollard had retired to study or sleep?

Moses Snr's book records a fine sense of humour. At times this was self-deprecating, as when he almost fell victim to a street con artist in New York. That sense of humour can be seen in the twinkle of his eye in Figure 4. This seems to contrast with his son Moses, whose demeanor and correspondence were stern in the last 20 years of his life. I suspect, however, that this severity was not apparent when he was young but grew from a series of personal disappointments: the lack of support from the board of D.J. Sind Science College in Karachi that led to his resignation, the rejection by the Education Commission of his plan to advance the Baroda College of Science to full university status,[2] the struggle to make profitable his farm in British Columbia during the first World War, and the death of his second son, Hector, in a road accident after his return from the war.

Moses Snr must have been deeply satisfied that nine of his eleven children that reached adulthood followed in his steps in the teaching profession. He surely must have been an inspiring teacher himself. He would have been particularly proud of the teaching careers of his sons Moses and Victor, who reached pinnacles exceeding his own achievements. On the other hand, he endured the heartbreak of seeing a child committed to a mental asylum, and had to bury three of his children before his own death.

Moses Snr died on 25 January 1907 in Herne Bay, not far from Ramsgate, after a fall. Moses was still in India at the time and was unable to see his father before he died, nor to attend his funeral.

NOTES

1 A.P. Ganguly, 1990, India, Mystic, Complex and Real.

2 Moses' proposal was eventually adopted 40 years later.

The Wild Green Hills of Wyre and Other Notes

by

Andrew Breeze

This paper has eight parts, each concerning a problem in A.E.H.'s poetry. Five of them (Oh See How Thick the Goldcup Flowers; When the Lad for Longing Sighs; Oh, When I Was in Love With You; As Through the Wild Green Hills of Wyre; The Immortal Part) deal with *A Shropshire Lad*. Of these, four set out medieval antecedents for Housman's lyrics, while the fifth (As Through the Wild Green Hills of Wyre) proposes a Celtic etymology for *Wyre* and (related to it) *Worcester*. If correct, the conclusions of the last should go beyond Housman studies, because *Wyre* and *Worcester* have long mystified the English Place-Name Society. The last three items (Star and Coronal and Bell; The Flower of Sinner's Rue; Where Cuckoo-Flowers Are Lying About the World) are concerned with *Last Poems* and *More Poems*. The first relates 'Spring Morning' to medieval reverdies; the others discuss the folklore of plants. Because the material is diverse, the eight poems are discussed in the order of the collected edition, so that *ASL* V comes first and *MP* XXX at the end.

1. Oh See How Thick the Goldcup Flowers

'Its chief sources of which I am conscious are Shakespeare's songs, the Scottish Border ballads and Heine', explained A.E.H. of *A Shropshire Lad*, in a letter of 5 February 1933. Yet analysis suggests another origin for poem V. Spring has come, goldcups (= buttercups) are in flower, and so is love.

> Oh may I squire you round the meads
> And pick you posies gay?
> -- 'Twill do no harm to take my arm.
> 'You may young man, you may.'

Springtime was made for lass and lad, in delay there lies no plenty, and so,

-- Suppose I wound my arm right round --
''Tis true, young man, 'tis true.'

Some fellows love a girl and leave her, but not the speaker:

My love is true and all for you.
'Perhaps, young man, perhaps.'

Dialogue proceeds to its final dischord.

-- Ah, life, what is it but a flower?
Why must true lovers sigh?
Be kind, have pity, my own, my pretty, --
'Goodbye, young man, goodbye.'

This kind of lyric has a name. It is a pastourelle, a medieval form wherein (at its simplest) a knight comes across a shepherdess, descends quickly from his horse, and requests her love. Lively dialogue follows, ending in joy or disappointment. The pastourelle appears earliest in twelfth-century Provençal, spread to French and other literatures, and survives in modern folksong (where it may have been all the time, poets having borrowed it from the people in the first place). Housman's late Victorian man and maid come in direct line from the work of troubadours and *trouvères*, a little surprisingly, for one associates A.E.H. with Sophocles and Horace, but hardly with medieval song. Yet it is easy to trace back his unhappy love-encounter in Shropshire to more successful ones in Provence, Italy, or south Germany. The Shropshire lad is less English and more Continental than imagined.

Pastourelle means 'little shepherdess' and so 'song of a shepherdess'. Study of such lyrics was absorbing British scholars when Housman was at UCL. Citing Gaston Paris, Jeanroy, and Bartsch, Sir Edmund Chambers (1866-1954) described them as 'dialogues between a knight and a shepherdess, in which the knight makes love and, successful or repulsed, rides away'. He thought that the literary versions were developed from folksongs or even folk drama (dialogue and drama are natural fellows), and quoted Gaston Paris on the last as part of the '*fêtes de mai*, those agricultural festivals of immemorial antiquity in which women traditionally took so large a part.'[1] He later published two late English examples

from Tudor manuscripts. The first begins 'Hey, troly loly lo, maid, whither go you?' (answer: going a-milking) and is unserious, if outrageous:

'Sith [since] I love you, love me again;
Let us make one, though we be twain.'
'I pray you, sir, let me go milk my cow.'

The second begins 'Come over the woodes fair and green', is more serious and sophisticated, but has moved farther from any French source. Addressing her as 'thou lusty wench', the lover bids the girl join him under the 'greenwood tree' (by the last stanza he has better manners and calls her 'O ye fair maiden, sweet lady now'). Like Housman's poem, this makes much of flowers: cowslip, daisy, primrose, basil, rose, violet. She declares,

Then of my mouth come take a bass [kiss];
For other goodés have I none
But flowers fair among the grass
Which I have gatheréd all alone.

Gaston Paris is cited for both poems as being pastourelles.[2] He himself stated that a lyric of that kind 's'agit presque toujours de la rencontre du poète avec une bergère, et des succès divers qu'obtient la requête d'amour qu'il lui addresse.'[3]

Amongst others taking note of pastourelles at this time was Sir Ifor Williams (1881-1965) of Bangor. He discussed one (beginning 'Fal yr oeddwn yn myned') by Dafydd ap Gwilym, Chaucer's older contemporary. He observed how, in Provençal and French versions, the shepherdess normally has a tongue as ready as she is fair, but the knight/clerk/poet usually gets his way by fair means or foul. It is true that the object of Dafydd's desire does not keep sheep. (Williams suggested that shepherdesses were uncommon in early Wales, perhaps.) But the chance meeting on a journey is there, as is lively debate between the two. Despite the resemblances, Ifor Williams considered it unlikely that Dafydd knew French instances at first hand (and Provençal ones still less so). He mentioned similar features in another poem then attributed to Dafydd (but now dated to after his time).[4]

These examples from Tudor England and medieval Wales are predated by two (perhaps three) in thirteenth-century English. In London, College of Arms,

MS Arundel 27 is a lyric beginning 'As I stod on a day'. One fine morning the poet met under a tree a girl in splendid garments. He sought her love, but she was a match for his words. For all his ardour, in the end she told him to go to where he 'might speed better'. This lyric is not well known, because some lines are lost and so anthologists neglect it. Yet it predates Housman's poem by six centuries. The two other poems are more familiar because they are in London, British Library, MS Harley 2253, a famous collection of love-lyrics copied by a Ludlow scribe (making Ludlow a poet's town before A.E.H. or even Milton's *Comus*). 'In a fryht as Y con fare' tells of a meeting in a *fryht* (= frith or wood) with a lovely lady, who yet bade the poet go his way. His blandishments are worthless in the face of her desire for a 'man without guile'. The third poem, 'My deth Y loue, my lyf Y hate', is hardly a pastourelle, though sometimes called one. There is no shepherdess, no chance encounter, merely a dialogue of lovers. However, in this case she gives in (unlike the women of the two other poems, who are of sterner stuff).[5] 'As I stod' and 'In a fryht' are hence better precursors for Housman's lyric. In both, an Englishmen gets nowhere with an Englishwoman possessed of a cool head and a distrust of smooth talk.

Pastourelles end sometimes in male chagrin, sometimes not. They also had the unanticipated effect of putting scholars at loggerheads, prompting long debate on their origins, whether Latin or vernacular, popular or learned, and so on. Problems are compounded by the rapidity with which pastourelles had spread by the year 1200. 'Declinante frigore' and 'Sole regente lora' are by Walter of Châtillon (still active in 1184), who studied law at Bologna, knew Henry II, was a clerk in Canterbury, and ended up in Reims. 'Maio mense dum per pratum' and (where the girl is no humble shepherdess but a princess) 'Si vera somnia forent' are from the Ripoll Collection, and hence by a monk of unknown name (but undoubted worldliness) in the Catalan Pyrenees. The anonymous 'Lucis orto sideres and (where the girl worries about what mother will say) 'Vere dulci mediante' are in *Carmina Burana*, and so were copied in Bavaria.[6] Debate notwithstanding, common sense suggests that the medieval literary pastourelle is the child of a popular form in the vernaculars of France and Italy. It has humble parents, and not the blue-blooded ones of Classical Latin pastoral or the rhetoric of the schools. One might gather this not only from popular English instances of the 'Where are you going to, my fair maid' variety, but others in early modern Irish, Welsh, and Cornish (as we shall see).

From books of various kinds we may gather pastourelles sad or glad, delicate or lewd, artistic or incompetent, and with a provenance extending from Sicily to the West of Ireland. They include the following. The three thirteenth-century English poems figure (as 371, 1449, and 2236) in a standard handbook.[7]

Of nearly two hundred surviving French examples, one ('De Saint Quentin a Cambrai') from thirteenth-century Picardy may stand for others.[8] Latin instances cited above are obligingly set out in a useful collection.[9] A comment on 'Under der Linden' by Walther von der Vogelweide (active in the decades around 1200), 'das aus dem volkstümlichen Thema der "Liebesbegegnung im Freien" emporgewachsen ist, gleich der sogenannten Pastourelle des Romanischen', comes down firmly for pastourelle as a genre taken from the people.[10] Supposed Continental influence on Irish folksong is to be guessed at in a study which would be hard to use, even if it were not written in Irish.[11] One paperback helpfully translates a further French pastourelle, 'Par desous l'ombre d'un bois', of the thirteenth century.[12] Another does the same for three of the Latin verses mentioned above.[13] 'Come over the woodes fair and green' and 'Hey, troly loly lo, maid, whither go you?', in manuscripts of Henry VIII's day, are itemized (as 642.5 and 2034.5) in a handy catalogue.[14] Walther's 'Under der Linden', on an open-air spot which provided an ideal bed for lovers, as proved by 'gebrochen bluomen unde gras' that they left behind them, is related to Romance pastourelle, though with a difference in that events are related by the woman and in retrospect.[15] 'In a fryht as Y con fare' now appears (with references to a study of 1962 by Theo Stemmler) in an edition for philologists.[16]

Peter Dronke of Cambridge naturally comments on our genre. Though he agrees with others in deriving it from the 'primordial, universal love-poetry of the people', he stresses that those sources were 'not the stuff of *courtoisie'*, which entailed a new start. He goes on to the 'radiant celebration of mutual love' of 'In un boschetto trova' by Guido Cavalcanti (d. 1300), where the *pasturella* gives her love spontaneously, and the poet 'felt so great a joy and sweetness in it that it seemed to him an epiphany of the god of love'. Professor Dronke, whose response to love-poems tends to the rapturous (if not gushing), here takes issue with Reto Bezzola, who could not believe that Guido was serious in what he said. Dronke contends that for Guido, '*gentilezza* can be independent of birth and wealth', and 'he can recognize a beauty in the mutual pleasure of love which cuts across both social and literary conventions.'[17] How different, how very different from what A.E.H. thought of love.

Returning from Florence to Britain, we find 'In a fryht as Y con fare' (with 'My deth Y loue, my lyf Y hate') in Harley MS 2253 edited for the common reader. The poet declares that 'As I was going in a wood, a stranger', he met a 'fair prize (*fair fenge*)'. There was none so beautiful in her appearance. Yet she bade him go his way, lest she became angry; she did not want to hear any dishonourable suggestion. He persists, promising her gifts and fidelity 'till I grow old'. She talks of paying the price, of being 'hated and despised' in every household, and 'driven

from all that I knew'. She then starts to yield.

> Betere is taken a comeliche i clothe [well-dressed man]
> In armes to kisse and to clippe [embrace]
> Than a wreche I wedded so wrothe [so unhappily]:
> Though he me slowe [slew], ne mighte I him aslippe [escape].

And the poem ends with her declaring that she is weary of her maidenhood, and 'Leef me were gome boute gile' (she would welcome a man without guile).[18] With the prospect of a peasant for a husband, she decides to chance it with her new gentleman.

This poem was discussed by Rosemary Woolf of Oxford. She noted the slide from the maiden's initial 'admirably moral sentiments' (another might say 'practical') to her final abrupt 'abandonment of the most strenuous verbal resistance', which 'so often provides the punch at the end of a pastourelle'. (Housman's poem also ends with a punch, if of another kind.) It contrasts with 'As I stod' in MS Arundel 27, where the maiden sends her would-be seducer packing, telling him 'Wend fort ther ye wenin better for to sped' (= Go where you think you will have more luck). Also treated as pastourelles are 'Hey, troly loly lo', where the milkmaid is quite lacking in 'wit or imaginative resourcefulness', and (a late instance, in Child's famous ballad collection) 'The Baffled Knight', where the would-be seducer falls victim to the maiden's humiliating trick.[19]

Popular instances of the theme come from Wales and Cornwall. A sixteenth-century Welsh verse tells of a laundress by Cardigan bridge, washing her sweetheart's shirt 'with a battledore of gold'. A rider comes and offers to buy the shirt, but she refuses. She will not sell it 'for a hundred pounds or a hundred loads' or 'the fill of St Davids churchyard of herbs trodden out'. That is the way she will keep 'the shirt of the lad I loved the best'. From seventeenth-century Cornwall is a dialogue of gentleman and maiden, with her refrain, well translated in this stanza:

> 'How if I get you with child,
> With your pale face and your yellow hair?'
> 'Then I will bear him, sweet sir,' she said,
> 'For strawberry leaves made maidens fair.'

The verses are adapted from English.[20] In a late Irish folk pastourelle (with

editorial apparatus in Irish), the girl confesses that she has fallen foul of her family in Youghal, east of Cork, and is on her way north to Cappoquin. But she is wary of the speaker, thinking he may be married.[21]

Varied attention was given in a 1970s compendium to pastourelle or *pastorela*. It is said that northern French poets handled the theme well (which is true), sometimes exhibiting male fantasies of 'aristocratic shamelessness and condescension' (also, unfortunately, true), and prompting 'countless English equivalents' (misleading for the medieval period, where we really have two only). The oldest known example, by Marcabrú (active in around 1140), and beginning 'L'autrier jost'una sebissa' (= One day, by a field's edge) is elsewhere analysed in Marxist terms of feudalism and class. The *pastora* defends her integrity with dignity and success.[22] Marcabrú's poem, praised for its wit, survives with its music. The inventiveness of the oldest pastourelle to survive points to models now lost.[23] So clever a poem was hardly the first of its kind.

Derek Pearsall notes tenuous links of the Harley Lyrics with Provençal.[24] Far from Provence is another Irish folksong, known only from a printed source of 1897. It mentions the Killarney Lakes and Bantry, both in Kerry. The girl is without shoe or stocking, cape or cloak, though with long beautiful hair.[25] Peter Dronke defines the pastourelle as showing a meeting in the open, in daylight, and not prearranged. The woman's love is still to be won, with 'the character of a seduction', often accentuated by the social difference of sophisticated speaker and country lass. It keeps us guessing to its close on what will happen (as does Housman's lyric, ending with a snap). Dronke comments too on the 'grim humour and stabbing shrewdness' of Marcabrú's shepherdess, who 'demolishes her wooer's Arcadian fantasy as a romantic falsehood'; Walter of Châtillon's 'sparkling and elegant confection "Sole regente lora"'; and the 'open and blissful love' and 'almost mystical celebration of earthly joy' in Guido Cavalcanti's 'In un boschetto'.[26] The differences between three poems of one century are striking. It had undergone rapid evolution.

A Scottish contribution, Henryson's 'Robene and Makyne', has been related to pastourelle, but is closer to popular ballads. Both lovers are humble, but she takes the initiative (at first), and there is no first-person narration or refrain.[27] Finally, Wales and Cornwall. Rachel Bromwich, who translated Dafydd's poem (where the girl never shows up at the rendezvous), saw the connection with Continental exemplars as so loose as to imply parody.[28] She played down the connection elsewhere.[29] Another adds nothing to this.[30] On the Cornish folksong, the girl has been said to respond 'with encouraging pertness'. Strawberry leaves were meant to lighten her sunburnt skin. She wants to be a lady. Though predating its English analogues, the Cornish song must derive from their lost predecessors,

thereby providing a lesson in cultural contact.[31]

The above demonstrates that the pastourelle (as confirmed by *OED*'s entry for the word) has been studied in the academy for over a century. How, then, do we place Housman's lyric? Its allusion to 'How that life was but a flower' in *As You Like It* has long been noted.[32] But its model predated Shakespeare. The Shropshire lad does not, it is true, dismount quickly from a steed upon spotting a fair maid. But we still have a meeting in the open, in daylight. The woman's love is still to be won, there is the dialogue of love-negotiation, increasing warmth in his declarations, and abrupt conclusion. All these are features of the pastourelle. The encounter may not have been pre-arranged. The two have in any case not known each other long. As regards class, he is articulate, plausible, and facile: a man of some education. She would seem to be more than a country lass (who would not, perhaps, say 'young man'), and so his social equal. Hence, it may be, her caution.

What appears the clincher in our quest for origins is his final 'Be kind, have pity, my own, my pretty'. Seeking the beloved's compassion is authentically and idiomatically medieval. Gerald of Wales tells the story of a Worcestershire priest who, thanks to the songs of churchyard revellers in the early hours, had a sleepless night. At mass next morning he startled the faithful by singing 'Swete lemman dhin are' (= Sweetheart, have mercy) instead of *Dominus vobiscum*. Late-night party-goers had left the refrain ringing in his ears. There was such a scandal that William of Northall (d. 1190), his bishop, pronounced an anathema upon anyone who sang this song in the diocese.[33] Seven hundred years before Housman, Midlands youths were asking Midlands girls to feel sorry for them.

The upshot will be that, for all its freshness, *A Shropshire Lad* V has bookish and even learned origins. Comparison with pastourelles in English and other tongues suggests that Housman knew their outdoor and pastoral bargainings of love, with winner and loser. They were certainly known to his friend W.P. Ker (1855-1923), appointed to the Quain Chair of English at UCL in 1889.[34] Housman's poem can hence be seen as that rare thing, a medieval revival that seems modern. The beauty of the poem, its fastidious use of language, the skill with which dialogue alone depicts a scene, and narrates a love-affair nipped in the bud, are Housman's own. He surpassed his models, creating a poem that is dramatic, compelling, and apparently quite new.

Last of all, a recent conjecture. Sophie Becker (1845-1931), governess to the young Housmans, was described by Laurence as probably the woman whom, except for his mother, A.E.H. 'loved most in the world'. 'Oh See How Thick the Goldcup Flowers' has correspondingly been taken as conveying his feelings for a woman fourteen years older than himself. The beloved is 'wiser and more mature than the youth; she seems to be in charge of the situation. She seems to be teasing

him, humouring him...'[35] Yet this is not convincing. The wooer refers to 'lass and lad' and 'man and maid'. He would be foolish to say that, if she were much his elder. His allusions to how one should be glad 'before the world is old' and how what flowers tomorrow is 'never good as new' likewise emphasize youth. He would not say this to an older woman (whether by fourteen years or not). It might seem tactless. His warning to her of lads who 'only court to thieve' further suggests that he courts an *ingénue*, still innocent of love. Experienced women know that men were deceivers ever. Even the nature of pastourelle indicates somewhat more to the poem than flirtation. Pastourelle is artificial, with shepherdesses no more like real ones than a Dresden shepherdess of china is like a real sheep-handler. But the issues dealt with (however concluded) are for real; and, the instant that the Shropshire lass senses that reality, young though she may be, she departs.

2. When the Lad for Longing Sighs

So transparent are Housman's poems that one may miss their learning, as in *A Shropshire Lad* VI.

When the lad for longing sighs,
  Mute and dull of cheer and pale,
If at death's own door he lies,
  Maiden, you can heal his ail.

Lovers' ills are all to buy,
  The wan look, the hollow tone,
The hung head, the sunken eye,
  You can have them for your own.

Buy them, buy them: eve and morn
  Lovers' ills are all to sell.
Then you can lie down forlorn;
  But the lover will be well.

Within this jaunty, ironic lyric are ghosts of old poems and (still less

expected) older medicine. We can prove this from Chaucer's Knight. Part two of his tale begins with the grief of Arcite, smitten with love for fair Emily.

> His sleep, his mete, his drink is hym biraft,
> That lene he wex, and drye as is a shaft.
> Hise eyen holwe, and grisly to biholde;
> His hewe falwe [wan], and pale as asshen colde,
> And solitarie he was, and evere allone,
> And wailling al the night, making his mone.
> And if he herde song or instrument,
> Then wolde he wepe, he mighte nat be stent;
> So feble eek were his spirits, and so lowe,
> And chaunged so, that no man coude knowe
> His speche nor his vois, though men it herde.
> And in his gere [behaviour], for al the world he ferde
> Nat oonly lyk the loveres maladye
> Of Hereos, but rather lyk manye [mania]
> Engendred of humour malencolyk,
> Biforen [at the front], in his celle [compartment] fantastyk.

Here are the lover's sighs or *making his mone*, his being mute and dull of cheer (*And solitarie he was, and evere allone*), his being pale *as asshen colde*, wan look (= *hewe falwe*), hollow tone *that no man coude knowe*, hung head (*So feble eek were his spirits*), and sunken eye (= *eyen holwe)*.

Arcite's miserable condition goes on for a year or two, but help was at hand, because doctors had a name for it: *amor hereos* (= *the loveres maladye of Hereos*). It appeared in Arab and Western textbooks on medicine, as explained by modern commentators. We begin with Skeat (1835-1912), whose edition is quoted above. He explained that from ancient times the brain was thought to have three compartments or 'cells' (medieval manuscripts have diagrams of them), the front one being concerned with 'fantasy' or, in present-day terms, perception. Arcite had problems because this part had an excess of melancholy, one of the body's four humours in the old physiology. Hence, in a translation by Stephen Batman (d. 1584) of *De Proprietatibus Rerum* by Bartholomew the Englishman (d. 1272), the resulting 'mania' by which 'the imagination is hurt'.[36]

More on this was said in a classic paper by John Livingston Lowes, of Princeton.[37] It was unnoticed by an early editor, despite Chaucer's words in book one of *Troilus and Criseyde*, where the hero developed *amor hereos* after spotting the heroine, losing in a trice his appetite, high spirits, colour, and capacity to sleep:

> And fro this forth tho [then] reft hym love his slepe,
> And made his mete [food] his foo, and ek his sorwe
> Gan multiplie, that, whoso tok kepe,
> It shewed in his hewe, on eve and morwe.[38]

But Lowes's study was picked up by another editor, who (calling it 'enormously learned and extremely interesting') described how it showed 'Hereos' as a hysterical condition that was recognized and fully described by medieval doctors, Christian and Muslim alike. 'Hereos' is a corruption of Greek eros 'love' by confusion with Latin herus 'master' and heros 'hero'. As for symptoms, Razis (d. 923) or Abû-Bekr ar-Razi, an Iranian writing in Arabic, stated that the patient's eyes are hollow, his skin loses its colour, and he gives himself to sighing. Another Iranian, the celebrated Avicenna (d. 1037) or Ibn-Sina of Khorassan, referred to the lover's long-term sadness. Bernard of Gordon, who taught medicine in around 1300 at Montpellier, declared of sufferers that 'unless hereos is cured, they fall into mania or die'.[39] Housman's theme goes back to the (supposed) scientific observations and remedy of physicians from east and west. It is curious that *A Shropshire Lad* should owe something to Muslim scientists in Asia, so far from Shropshire, but there it is.

Their account of love's woes held sway until *The Anatomy of Melancholy* by Robert Burton (1577-1640), where many pre-scientific ideas make their last stand. It also had consequences for Arabic poetry and prose, including *Tauq al-Hamama* ('The Ring of the Dove') by Ibn Hazm of Cordoba, a study of chivalrous love (including some of the author's own intimate experiences).[40] Verse by Chaucer and Housman thus mirrors Arabic poetry and prose. Precise understanding of Arcite's malady had consequences for textual criticism. Jack Bennett gave Chaucer's last line as 'Biforne, in his celle fantastic', citing (in a school edition!) London, British Library, MS 7334, as against 'Biforne his owene celle fantastik' of the Ellesmere Manuscript (San Marino, Huntington Library, MS El. 26 C. 9) in California.[41] Another agrees, but punctuates 'Bifore in his celle fantastik' (= In the forward cell of the brain, where the imagination operates).[42]

In the last fifty years, commentators have added to the material assembled by Lowes. One of them observed that the medical nature of Alcite's complaint

means that 'we are obviously not invited to share' in his feelings for Emily. Readers are not involved personally in the plot. The same critic quotes early authorities on 'heroic' love as against true or virtuous love, with *De parte operativa* by Arnaldus de Villanova (d. 1311) recommending baths, pleasant conversation, travel, and flirtatious girls as cures for the former. In his *Lilium Medicinae*, Bernard of Gordon gives a psycho-physiological account of the illness's origins, and concludes gloomily that it may drive the patient to insanity and suicide. His cures are drastic. They include sound thrashings (for the young), bad news, good news, physical activity, and music. If all else fails, close contact with a disgusting old woman may do the trick. Robertson made the point that, when a literary character 'says that he will die if his love is not satisfied, we may conclude that the love he refers to is "heroic" love, which, since it is not based on virtue, is not very admirable.'[43] That sums it up.

Another school edition simplies, for the benefit of adolescents, description of this love-sickness.[44] Troilus, who suffers from it, figures thereby in a study of ambiguity.[45] More helpful are remarks of an Egyptian scholar. He observed that, like Arcite and Troilus, Damyan (in the tale of the Merchant) had the illness, having to take to his bed, but recovering instantly after his employer's young wife sent him a certain letter. Damyan was the very opposite of heroic. Another source describing the malady is the ninth-century Kitab al-Zahra ('Book of the Flower') by Ibn Dawud, offering details on the physiological effects of love, and quoting many poets.[46]

An editor remarks on Arcite that, while mania was considered an affliction of the brain's front cell, the equivalent for its middle cell was melancholy.[47] Another scholar emphasizes how the condition is caused and worsened (in medical theory) by continued thinking upon the object of desire.[48] Yet another refers to extended discussion of *amor hereos* in Italian (it was known to Guido Cavalcanti, Dante's studious but violent fellow-poet) and German.[49] It now has a monograph to itself.[50] Discussion continues elsewhere.[51] On this, as also work on medieval psychological theory, one may consult a standard edition.[52] All the same, medieval writers did not need to consult learned treatises to see something amiss with a young man. The last of the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi* begins at the court of Gwynedd, where the king's nephew has fallen for Goewin, 'fairest maiden of her time'. His 'colour and his face and his form' waste away, his brother sees that something is wrong, and then the truth is out (it leads to war). But the author of these tales, though with remarkably experience of royal politics, government, and diplomacy, did not possess book-learning. What she said of love came from what she saw about her, and not out of a book.[53]

Housman is not usually thought of as having much feeling for the

middle ages. Yet a biographer records his pleasure in visiting Midlands churches, responding to Anglo-Saxon work at Brixworth and to Norman carvings at St Peter's, Northampton.[54] Clapham regarded the former church as the grandest of its age to survive north of the Alps; Pevsner described the latter as 'outstandingly ornate' (and having parallels at Jumièrges and Durham).[55] So Housman's discernment is clear. In any case we know from 'The Name and Nature of Poetry' of his reading of Chaucer and Dryden's rewriting of Chaucer, with the palm given to the older poet.[56] One may hence see a debt to the tale of the Knight in *A Shropshire Lad* VI, as in the Cambridge lecture of four decades later.

The Canterbury Tales, so much part of English culture and English classroom memories, were once dismissed with the comment, 'glorious reading, but they have always been sterile', unless we take Crabbe, William Morris, and Masefield as great poets and not just good ones.[57] But those narratives, and the (pseudo-)learning behind them, have surely left their mark on the present poem, if with a difference. Housman's comment on *amor hereos* certainly does not ask us to share in the lover's feelings for the beloved. It is a tough-minded exercise in wit, written with mocking and deliberate heartlessness. In short, a commentary on love with nothing of the sentimental.

3. Oh, When I Was in Love With You

A Shropshire Lad XVIII is a firework or shooting star of a poem, brilliant and soon over.

Oh, when I was in love with you,
  Then I was clean and brave,
And miles around the wonder grew
  How well I did behave.

And now the fancy passes by,
  And nothing will remain,
And miles around they'll say that I
  Am quite myself again.

It makes the notion that loves bestows virtue look ridiculous, as is obvious. Yet

its sources are less obvious. A survey of the theme will thus show how A.E.H. subverted a tradition unfamiliar to the ancient world, but commonplace in the middle ages. Housman jokes at the expense of medieval poets, showing disobliging knowledge of their verse, which he robbed to create his own.

The bard who most cherished the belief that love endows a man with goodness was Chaucer, in his *Troilus and Criseyde*, a poem about making love and making war (the Trojan War). Books one and three tell how the young hero Troilus, having fallen for the young widow Criseyde, becomes fiercer in attack and gentler at home, which leads the narrator to say of love:

> And ofte it hath the cruel herte apesed,
> And worthi folk maad worthier of name,
> And causeth moost to dreden vice and shame.

Troilus is no longer the callow youth who mocked romance:

> For he bicome the frendlieste wight [person],
> The gentileste, and ek the moste fre [noble],
> The thriftiest [most admirable], and oon the beste knyght
> That in his tyme was, or myghte be.

Book three's proem invokes Venus, addressing her as one who soothes the anger of Mars and makes hearts more noble.

> And, as yow list [please], ye maken hertes digne;
> Algates hem [at least them] that ye wol sette a-fire,
> They dreden shame, and vices they resigne;
> Ye don hem curteys be, fressh and benigne.

When Criseyde at lasts yields to Troilus, he becomes glad and generous, gaining so many friends,

> That swich a vois of hym was and a stevene [report]
> Thorughout the world, of honour and largesse,

That it up rong unto the yate [gate] of hevene.

Beyond Troy's walls, however, battle and sudden death remain. Thanks to his love of Criseyde, the Greeks now dread Troilus more than any Trojan except Hector.

And this encres of hardynesse and myght
Com hym of love, his ladies thank to wynne,
That altered his spirit so withinne.[58]

There is a chorus of comment on the above, if a discordant one. Fr Mathew long ago said this of chivalric love. 'It was conceived to be the stimulus of achievement. It was held to be irrevocable and unique.' He cited the popular romance *Sir Torrent of Portyngale* to make his point, but implied distinction between art and life by a careful choice of words.[59] Less penetrating was Jack Bennett, quoting the second of the above *Troilus* passages and offering this conclusion. 'Not only does he [Troilus] grow in humility and other "graces"; he begins to show sympathy and consideration for others. The psychological truth of this *A Shropshire Lad* confirms:

Oh, when I was in love with you,
Then I was true and brave,
And miles around the wonder grew
How well I did behave.'[60]

Whether or not Bennett missed Housman's sense of the incongruous, he certainly missed his exact words, even in 'corrected' reprints of his book.

Robinson was more factual on Troilus's new-found virtue. While others here cite book one of Ovid's *Amores*, he saw the tradition as thoroughly medieval, owing little to Greece or Rome (where there was love for the asking, but rarely of the seraphic kind). Yet he mentioned parallels for love as enhancer-of-virtue in Arab writing, if expressed with less enthusiasm than in the West. It appears thus in *Tauq al-Hamama* 'The Ring of the Dove', a discourse on men and women by Ibn Hazm (994-1064) of Cordoba, an unlikely combination of amorist and fundamentalist, whose books on Islam outraged liberal Muslims in Seville, who had them burnt in public.[61]

Robertson saw matters with a colder eye. He observed that, after seeing

Criseyde, Troilus became '"virtuous", without, however, manifesting any real interest in Criseyde's virtues or the condition of the city which he is supposed to be defending.'[62] No wonder it all ended in tears. Derek Brewer of Cambridge had the clarity and firmness ever useful in a teaching career. On medieval values he said this. 'The characteristic knightly virtues were also those of the lover, and the bravery of a knight in battle was considered to be enhanced if he were in love. Literature is full of examples: Chaucer's Troilus, Malory's knights, the young Squire in the *General Prologue*.' But he acknowledged that many who served no lady fought bravely for the king of England.[63] Elizabeth Salter commented on the startling change in Troilus's personality, his new 'dedication to a life of love, service, and "vertu"', with a 'high valuation of human love, which the more prudent Boccaccio [Chaucer's source] did not suggest.'[64] Peter Dronke quotes Ovid's *Amores* I.9 on how passion banishes sloth from the lover, as also fragment 889 of Euripides on love as source of *aretê*. Since, however, the passage in *Amores* shows the lover *agilem nocturnaque bella gerentem* ('alert and making night-campaigns') in the figurative stronghold to which the lady summons him, we gather that goodness had nothing to do with it, as Dronke's concessive 'perhaps not propounded as solemnly as at times in the middle ages' half-admits.[65] Ovid says that love's delights dispel apathy, providing zest and *joie de vivre* instead. Whatever the military effectiveness of these (Ovid's victories are mainly those in bed), they are remote from Chaucer's 'They dreden shame, and vices they resigne.' Ovid is rather nonchalant about shame and vices.

In the later 1960s, Derek Brewer again supplied young people with forthright views in avuncular tone. 'Troilus, already a good and brave young man, becomes even better through love. The security, happiness, energy, and warmth generated by loving and being loved are a commonplace of modern psychology, and of ageless common sense.'[66] Ida Gordon discussed the ambiguities of Troilus's virtue.[67] Stan Hussey saw it as innate but requiring stimulus.[68] Patricia Kean took this hero's feelings for Criseyde as showing 'an influence for good'.[69] Stevens similarly regarded his emotions *tout court* as 'a source of gentlemanliness'.[70] So did Utley, if with a touch of American wryness. Though Troilus's love and hope may be 'misdirected', his 'virtues are positively enough described, and, whatever a strict churchman might say, no subtlety is needed to guess the appeal of this passage to a gentleman or lady of the court of Richard II.'[71]

References to statements by Boccaccio and Dante on love as stimulator of courage and virtue are given in the standard edition of *Troilus*. The two Italians saw it as noble, especially Dante, in chapter eleven of *Vita nuova*. But the lines in Ovid's *Amores* also cited show annotators confused between feats in bed (= Ovid's forte) and feats in battle.[72] For a final statement we quote a Canadian writer, who

declares, without citation of evidence, that the doctrine on how love made a knight 'a *better* knight was central to the idealization of heterosexual love expressed in the courtly literature of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries'. She later quotes the fifteenth-century chronicler John Hardyng (allegedly following Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace, and Layamon) on the love of a lady,

> Whiche caused knightes armes to exercyse,
> To be vertuous, and clean of life and wise.[73]

Housman, then, took hold of a theory that was medieval to the core and pushed it to a *reductio ad absurdum*. He did not derive it from classical authors. It can hence be seen as going with his interest in (and rather more positive debt to) the traditional ballads, also attracting attention in the 1890s from Kipling and Hardy as part of a 'counter-decadence', and studied keenly by the distinguished Scottish medievalist W.P. Ker, Housman's friend and colleague at London University.[74]

The matter is a topical one, for *A Shropshire Lad* XVIII has lately been juxtaposed with Heine's tearful *Seit die Liebste war entfernt* 'After my sweetheart left me', the one allegedly prompting the other.[75] Yet little connects the two. Heine's lover is broken-hearted; Housman's is cheerily impudent. The Englishman's debt was not to the German poet, but to earlier English ones, perhaps specifically to Chaucer in his *Troilus and Criseyde*. That great poem sets out clearly the notion of love the ennobler, bestower of courage and honour: notions merrily toppled by Housman's observation that, if a man then falls out of love, why, back to square one.

4. As Through the Wild Green Hills of Wyre

The opening of *A Shropshire Lad* XXXVII prompts enquiry.

> As through the wild green hills of Wyre
> The train ran, changing sky and shire,
> And far behind, a fading crest,
> Low in the forsaken west
> Sank the high-reared head of Clee...

The speaker is travelling on the Great Western line (long closed) from Tenbury Wells to Bewdley. It wove, 'changing sky and shire', along the Shropshire-Worcestershire border. Yet this paper deals not with railway routes to London, but the names of Wyre Forest and Worcester. They have lacked satisfactory derivation, and so the solution offered here may solve an old problem of English toponymy, as well as underlining A.E.H.'s evocative use of place-names. One hopes as well that it shows the 'vigilance over the mode in which we conduct our studies' counselled by his 1911 Cambridge inaugural lecture.

Wyre and *Worcester* were discussed nearly eighty years ago by the Swedish philologist Ekwall, who (in the manner of scholarship) is echoed even now. For the city of Worcester he gave attestations that include *Uueogorna civitas* of 692, *Uueogorna ceastre* of 889, and *Wigraceaster* of 904, understood as 'Roman fort of (the people called) *Wigoran* or *Weogoran*'. Their name relates to those of Wyre Forest (recorded in 816 as *Weogorena leage* 'wood of the Weogoran') in the county's north-west and Wyre Piddle in its south-east. Ekwall, comparing the river Wyre of north Lancashire and *Vigora* of ancient Gaul, thought all three might come from a hydronym.[76]

That factitious river-name occurs thereafter in book after book. Kenneth Jackson, citing Ekwall and Max Förster of Munich, unhesitatingly derived *Worcester* from reconstructed Brittonic *Uigor*.[77] Reaney, noting that Continental Celts knew the Vière and Voire as *Vigora*, conjectured that the Piddle by Wyre Piddle was formerly the 'Wyre'.[78] Margaret Gelling similarly referred to the Lancashire Wyre and Gaulish *Vigora*, both taken as 'winding river', but added that Wyre Forest (fourteen miles north-west of Worcester) is a long way from Wyre Piddle (eight miles south-east of it). She saw a further difficulty. The larger rivers of the area, such as Dowles ('black rivulet') Brook in Wyre Forest, have Celtic names, none of them corresponding to 'Vigora' or 'Weogor'. She yet believed that a study of field-names might reveal a river called Wyre.[79] Field stated that 'Wyre' and 'Worcester' probably derive from a hydronym meaning 'winding one'.[80] A popular dictionary informs readers that the *Weogaran* were 'dwellers by the winding river', perhaps the Severn.[81] Mills accounts for *Worcester* as representing a pre-English folk-name, 'possibly from a Celtic river-name meaning "winding river"'.[82] So do Coates and Breeze.[83] The new Cambridge dictionary's entry for *Worcester* describes the first element as 'unexplained', but cites the suggestion 'that it derives from a lost river-name parallel to Gaulish *Vigora*.'[84]

At this point a familiar voice sounds in our ears. It comments, in a preface to Juvenal, on the habit of 'treading in ruts and trooping in companies which men share with sheep'. If we persist in seeing a West Midlands river behind *Weogoran*, we shall never find it, for four reasons. No such stream is ever mentioned in our

documents; no equivalent hydronym exists in Welsh, Cornish, or Breton; even if there had been such a river, it would not supply the names of Wyre Forest and Wyre Piddle, so far apart. We may observe too that English forests are often known by Celtic forms, as with Chute and Milchet in Hampshire, Irchenfield in Herefordshire, Malvern in Worcestershire, Arden in Warwickshire, Kinver and Morfe in Staffordshire, Wrekin in Shropshire, or Kesteven in Lincolnshire.[85] Yet none of these relates to a river. Instead of blindly and obstinately taking *Wyre* as a hydronym, we should regard it as what it seems, referring not to running water but to a wood.

If we do this, we shall find an etymology in Welsh *gwair* 'grass; hay', the exact cognate of Irish *féar* 'grass'. *Gwair* is well attested. The twelfth-century *Four Branches of the Mabinogi* tell of the heroine Rhiannon, grotesquely and unjustly punished by bearing on her neck the collars of donkeys 'after they had been hauling hay (*gueir*)'; a thirteenth-century poet-priest adores Christ in the stable at Bethlehem, with but 'a bundle of hay (*sopen weir*) instead of a cradle'.[86] Naturally, the recorded senses 'grass; hay' at first appear discouraging for Wyre Forest, which is thick woodland and no prairie. Nevertheless, the history of *gwair* permits a coherent etymology, since our form predates medieval instances by a thousand years and more, which allows ample time for semantic evolution.

Gwair derives from reconstructed Common Celtic *uegro-*, from a root with the sense 'to be strong, to be green' also found in Latin *vegeo* 'I quicken' and *vegetus* 'lively, vigorous' (as well as Vulgar Latin *vegetare* 'to grow', giving English *vegetable*).[87] Other linguists relate *gwair* to Gothic *wahsjan* 'to grow' and English *wax* (as opposed to 'wane').[88] A sense 'to be strong, to be green' well suits trees in a wood, which have conspicuous greenness and strength. On that basis, unattested British *Uegro-* will lie behind Uueogorna civitas 'city of the Weogoran, city of dwellers in the *Weogor'* and *Weogorena leage* 'forest of the Weogoran'. As regards phonology, the *g* of the British noun survived to be heard by the Anglo-Saxons, who reached the Worcester region in the sixth century.[89] After borrowing by English, the word underwent two changes. The second *o* will be parasitic, as in Old English *fugol* 'fowl, bird' (contrast Gothic *fugls*), a development occurring before the earliest records of English, of the late seventh century.[90] That parasitic vowel in turn produced the breaking or diphthongization represented by *eo* or *io*, thanks to back mutation, when original *e* was broken by a back vowel following a single consonant, a fairly late change, apparently still going on in the early eighth century.[91] In other words, late British **Uegr-* 'greenery, vegetation; woodland' was learnt by the Anglo-Saxons when they arrived at the Severn in the late sixth century. In Old English it became **Uegor*, with parasitic vowel, which then caused breaking of the preceding vowel to give the *Uueogor-* or *Weogor-* of early charters.

Worcestershire, heavily wooded to this day, was in ancient times a sea of forest, as old maps and modern research make clear.[92] No wonder then if Britons of the early Iron Age, looking down from the Cotswolds on endless leaf, should call the Worcestershire lowlands **Uegros* 'what grows, what is green' and so 'woodland', a form now existing with restricted sense in Welsh *gwair* 'grass; hay'. That excess of foliage had long-term consequences for the county's archaeology. It is poor in Roman and Anglo-Saxon remains.[93] Having few attractions for English settlers, the area harboured British populations into the early medieval period, so that it has more Celtic place-names than do regions to the east.[94] Hence *Wyre* in verse by a Worcestershire poet; hence also, at another level, the surname *Wooster* 'Worcester', implying upper-class foppishness and negligible intelligence, of novels by P. G. Wodehouse.

When Housman the poet wrote of 'the wild green hills of Wyre', his toponym was therefore apt and precise, for *Wyre* would be an early Celtic name for vegetation or woodland that grew and was green. When Housman the scholar spoke of textual criticism as 'the science of discovering error in texts and the art of removing it', he might have said as much of place-name studies, where error is continually to be detected and put right; even, one fears, when repeated by professional scholars for generation after generation.

5. The Immortal Part

Classics, the Bible, English poetry from the ballads and Shakespeare to Arnold and Swinburne, the sharp edge of nineteenth-century scientific rationalism: all these were facets of A.E.H.'s artistic sensibility. Harder to make out is anything owed to medieval literature or thought. Yet it appears, a little unexpectedly, in *A Shropshire Lad* XLIII, 'The Immortal Part', amongst the most ironic and anti-religious items in the volume, and having this theme.

Day and night, as he wakes or goes to sleep, the poet hears the complaint of his bones. They chafe at being bound up with flesh and soul, and long for freedom:

> This tongue that talks, these lungs that shout,
> These thews that hustle us about,
> This brain that fills the skull with schemes,
> And its humming hive of dreams...

Grumbling like slaves at the 'dying flesh and dying soul' which lord it over them, the bones still live in hope. Their oppressors will one day vanish, but they will endure 'as long as earth'. Yet the poet has the last word, at least for a while. At present, a skeleton must do as bidden,

> Before this fire of sense decay,
> This smoke of thought blow clean away,
> And leave with ancient night alone
> The steadfast and enduring bone.

The poem's mischievous upending of convention is easily seen, as when the bones, alluding to Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, urge flesh and soul to 'Fear the heat o' the sun no more' (= die).[95] Even more obvious is a link with the much-anthologized 'A Dialogue between the Soul and Body' of Andrew Marvell (1621-78), which appears less of a dialogue than a report on how the two bicker. The soul laments imprisonment within the body,

> With bolts of Bones, that fetter'd stands
> In feet; and manacled in Hands.

The body retorts on the dreadful things that the soul makes it do.

> What but a Soul could have the wit
> To build me up for Sin so fit?
> So Architects do square and hew,
> Green trees that in the Forest grew.[96]

In 'The Immortal Part', bones are at odds with soul and flesh; in Marvell's 'Dialogue', body and soul resent each other and say so, loudly. Yet the background to Housman's poem stretches far beyond Marvell. Notes on the older poet observe that, 'The dialogue poem as a moral debate was common in medieval times.'[97] It included debates of body and soul. A.E.H.'s decidedly up-to-date and provocative poem is hence offspring to a decidedly ancient and orthodox tradition. Once we grasp that, we shall see better how his lyric bites the hand that feeds it.

Serious study of body and soul dialogues began over a century ago.[98] Their work was summed up thus. These debates were popular in the middle ages, with examples in Latin, Greek, French, Provençal, German, Dutch, Spanish, Italian, Danish, and Old and Middle English. (Material in Welsh escaped notice.) They fall into two classes. In some the soul hogs the conversation and scolds the body on its evil life. More interesting and numerous are those in which the body answers back. To keep discussion within limits, we ignore Continental examples of the genre and concentrate on England, where it attracted a poet nine centuries before Housman, as proved by the Old English *Soul and Body* in the Exeter Book (in Devon) and Vercelli Book (in Italy). This poem, in manuscripts of about the year 1000, is followed by the twelfth-century *Worcester Fragments* and other Middle English poems of varying merit.[99] We shall look at these English poems as a contrast to Housman's.

Before that, we may note how their matter has been traced to early Christian writers of the Near East, to St Ephraem of Syria (d. 373) and to the apocryphal *Visio Pauli*, perhaps of his time, because its absurdities were mocked by St Augustine (354-430), who ridiculed 'the folly of those who had forged an Apocalypse of Paul, full of fables, and pretending to contain the unutterable things which the apostle had heard'. Despite Augustine's scorn, the text (setting out what St Paul saw 'when he was transported from the body') was long popular. We have versions in medieval English, Welsh, Irish, and other languages. It tells how, when the soul of a good man enters into glory, the soul of a rich sinner is snatched away by evil angels, who 'admonished it thrice, saying, "O wretched soul, look upon the flesh whence thou art come out; for thou must needs return into thy flesh at the day of resurrection to receive the due reward for thy sins and for thy wickedness"'.[100] This hint of conflict between soul and body was developed by the later dialogues.

What that meant for medieval Latin verse in England and beyond is powerfully demonstrated *by Altercatio Animae et Corporis*, known solely from the twelfth-century London, British Library, MS Royal 7 A.iii, formerly at Bardney Abbey, near Lincoln. It begins 'Nuper huiusce modi' and describes a bishop's vision of a soul (in the form of a child) standing by the decomposing corpse, and jeering at it for its lost vanities. Drama comes when the corpse lifts its unlovely head and ripostes. The verses close when two black devils come and carry the terrified soul away. Deriving from this poem is *Visio Philiberti*, with a first line 'Juxta corpus spiritus stetit et ploravit' (but sometimes with a preface beginning 'Vir quidam extiterat'), and perhaps by the scholar-bishop Robert Grosseteste (d. 1253). It was a lesser work but more popular, surviving in over a hundred manuscripts.[101] Fortunately for us, Housman's poem is shorter than both and free from their gruesomeness. Despite writing much on the grave, A.E.H. for

obvious artistic reasons avoided the repulsive (in contrast to unflinching medieval didacticists, with their own agenda). A later handbook takes note of *Visio Philiberti*, offering a bibliography and doubting attributions to St Bernard or Grosseteste.[102]

As for verse in English, a thirteenth-century fragment is a fair precursor of Housman. A bad man falls ill, a priest is summoned, but to no avail. After that men dig a pit or carve out a stone, lay the fickle or deceitful bone in it, and the soul starts its complaint.

> Me gravit him put other ston [pit or stone];
> Therin me leid the fukul bon [fickle bone].
> Thenne sait the soule to the licam [body],
> 'Wey! that ic ever in thee com.
> Thu noldes, Friday, festen to non [fast to midday],
> Ne, the Setterday, almesse [alms] don,
> Ne Cristene werkes wurche [do]....'

After the pride of life and good looks, what remains is chewed by worms, a disgusting sight for 'everyone that you loved here' (*that here thee were ilewe*).[103]

This and similar English poems are chronicled by a standard account. It sets out their oriental origins, going back to Ephraem of Syria, expounding Christian themes (mainly in Syriac) with exotic enthusiasm. In various texts he tells how a soul, as it leaves a dying body, reproaches or praises its host. The motif became associated with the passage in *Visio Pauli* where St Paul sees a blessed soul and a damned one, as they quit the body at the point of death. Together, Ephraem and *Visio Pauli* provided arresting matter for meditations on Last Things. Added for a while to the tradition was a strange legend of the soul's visit to the body long after death, which figures in Old English sermons and the Old English *Soul and Body*. In Middle English, verses stress with an elegiac effect the vanity of this world, now doing the dead man or woman no good at all. So one soul asks in a thirteenth-century verse, 'Where now are your garments of fur, grey and mottled?', which were worn by one who dined on food with sauces, and let the destitute stand outside in frost and ice (þ*u lettis* þ*e pore stondin* þ*rute in forist and in is*).[104]

The influence of Ephraem in the East and of Egyptian Christians with supposed knowledge of *The Book of the Dead* is acknowledged in a useful collection of texts. But what directly concerned Latin Christians were sermons. Important here are the so-called 'Nontola Version', and the *Sermones ad Fratres*

in Eremo spuriously attributed to St Augustine. In the first, the poor soul says in anguish, 'Why did I ever enter that gloomy, wicked body! Flesh, you were fat and I was thin; you were vigorous and I was wan; you were merry and I was sad; you laughed and I always wept. Now you will be food for worms and dust's decay.'[105] As for the *Sermones*, although they are now attributed to a thirteenth-century Netherlandish forger, they contain material which must be older, because it figures in the tenth-century *Blickling Homilies* and other Old English sermons. In the Old English poem, the vexed soul tells the decayed body, 'Your red ornaments cannot get you out of here, nor gold nor silver nor any of your goods, nor your wife's ring nor your rich house (*boldwela*) nor any of the goods that you once possessed.'[106] In the same mode are the twelfth-century *Worcester Fragments* (in Worcester, Cathedral Library, MS F.174). The soul accuses the body on how, lolling at ease and with one knee over the other, it ignored the poor,

> Noldest þu nefre helpen þam orlease [humble] wrecchen,
> Ac þu sete on þine benche, underleid mid þine bolstre [cushion]
> Þu wurpe [cast] cneowe ofer cneowe, ne icneowe þu þe sulfen [self]
> Þet þu scoldest mid wurmen wunien [dwell] in eor!an.

Now being dead, the body has a new house, the cold and cramped one of the grave. It has a bed but no bedclothes, nor will its former servants send any, 'for they think that what you left them in your will is much too little (*al to lut*).'[107]

More recently, Milton Gatch remarks of the Old English poem and sermons that, even if a description of bodies seething with worms repels us today, we may gather that from 'the frequency with which it is used, it must have been thought effective'.[108] Dr Haycock of Aberystwyth gives a handy outline of the theme's beginnings in early Egypt and the Near East, thanks to the popularity of *Visio Pauli* and other texts. She observes that full debate, with both body and soul speaking, is rare before the twelfth century, when we find it in English, Latin, and Spanish, as also a Welsh poem in the thirteenth-century Black Book of Carmarthen (Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS Peniarth 1).[109] In another context, *Visio Philibert* is related to thanatological books of the 1980s and 1990s.[110]

So even Marvell's dialogue of perennially ill-matched entities, modish in its coolness and wit, had ancient forebears. Its more recent sources have had careful analysis by Ian Parker. He lists six of them: a poetic dialogue in English by Francis Davison (active about 1600); a verse translation by Richard Crashaw (d. 1649) of 'Juxta corpus spiritus'; Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici*; *Pia Desideria* (Amsterdam, 1624) by Hermann Hugo, Jesuit and Latin poet; *The*

Vision (1651) by James Howell, Welsh hack-writer; and *Divine Weekes and Workes* (1608), Josuah Sylvester's translation (also influencing *Paradise Lost*) of Du Bartas's Scriptural epic on Creation.[111]

The above offers two conclusions. First, it shows that Housman's *jeu d'esprit* owes far more to the past than a mere allusion to *Cymbeline*. Second, we can see it thereby as a modern, secular, unsentimental, and scoffing reworking of a venerable, pious, emotive, and sepulchral theme. Who would have thought that the pointed comments of the bones in Housman's lyric should take us back to the tombs of ancient Egypt and Syria, thereafter to Anglo-Saxon, Anglo-Latin, and Middle English dialectic of the grave, or even the Mannerist or Baroque culture of France, England, and the Netherlands? 'The Immortal Part' thus adds a twist to a long tradition. Like its predecessors, it stresses antagonism. Accusations fly. Yet it does this with a difference. Medieval writers had had a didactic purpose, to rail against the pride of life and to induce compunction for sin. But Housman's verses have no fear of death. The bones seem in fact to relish it. It will free them from tyranny. After years of busying itself in solemn foolery, soul will be nothing, not even a wisp of itself. With flesh, it will vanish utterly,

> And leave with ancient night alone
> The steadfast and enduring bone.

6. Star and Coronal and Bell

Last Poems XVI or 'Spring Morning' begins with flowers: the stars of anemones and celandines, the coronals or garlands of primroses, and early bluebells.

> Star and coronal and bell
> April underfoot renews,
> And the hope of man as well
> Flowers among the morning dews.

The old, coming out to see winter gone, are comforted by sunshine and 'gentle air'. The young have love on the mind. The 'scorned unlucky lad' awakes, rises, takes heart from the lengthening days, and pits hope against disappointment:

Blue the sky from east to west
Arches, and the world is wide,
Though the girl he loves the best
Rouses from another's side.

The title 'Spring Morning' describes the poem well. Yet another poet might have called it 'Reverdie', the term for a medieval French lyric of greeting to the spring, when the world returns to life and becomes green (*vert*) again, as with Spanish *reverdecer* 'to grow green; to revive, gain new life or vigour'. After welcoming the spring, a reverdie moves on to talk of love, usually of a frustrated kind that contrasts with the happy matings and growth of nature. 'Spring Morning' will be a modern reverdie, Housman apparently modelling his poem on examples in French, English, Latin, Provençal, and other medieval languages. If so, he achieved originality by imitating *trouvère* lyrics of the twelfth and thirteenth century, at the same time producing something so fresh and timeless that a debt to the middle ages is unsuspected.

There is no surprise here. In the years about 1900, reverdies in French and other tongues were gaining attention from European and American scholars, who were realizing what English poetry from Henry II's time onwards owed to France. Jusserand, *savant* and professional diplomat, declared that English poets in the twelfth century became 'familiarized with the "reverdies", May songs, which celebrate springtime, flowers, and free loves; "carols", or dancing songs; "pastourelles", the wise or foolish heroines of which are shepherdesses', and '"aube" songs, telling the complaint of lovers parted by dawn.'[112]

Scholars in Britain took Jusserand's hint. This can be proved by accounts of one poem alone, 'Lenten is Come With Love to Toune' (= spring has arrived with love amongst the dwellings of men), which has the reverdie's twin concerns of nature and love. It survives only in British Library, MS Harley 2253, containing a famous collection of English lyrics copied at Ludlow in about 1330. It has long been known to scholars, being first published in 1790 by Joseph Ritson (1752-1803). But significant here is the edition of Chambers and Sidgwick.

Lenten is come with love to toune,
With blosmen and with briddes roun [birdsong],
That al this blisse bryngeth.

Daisies appear, there is singing of nightingale and thrush. Rose, lily, fennel, and

thyme are in bloom, ducks and wild animals are breeding, but not the poet, who is amongst those *For love that likes ille* 'wretched because of love'. In their commentary, the editors note how his song of unhappy love 'has the setting of a *reverdie* or salute to the spring', and elsewhere speak of the earlier and more famous 'Sumer is icumen in' (the so-called 'Cuckoo Song') as no folksong, 'but a learned composer's adaptation of a *reverdie* or chant of welcome to the spring'.[113] So the concept was familiar to scholars in England a century ago.

It was also familiar in Wales. In an edition of the fourteenth-century poet Dafydd ap Gwilym, Sir Ifor Williams (1881-1965) quoted Jusserand's observations to explain French symptoms in Welsh poetry.[114] Across the Atlantic, John Wells referred to the same features in Middle English, including the *chanson d'aventure* (wherein the poet goes into the country and encounters a maiden, monk, or even a singing bird, and relates what the person or songster had to say), and the 'motive of the return of Spring, the *reverdie*', the latter occurring in 'Lenten is Come With Love to Toune' and other Harley Lyrics.[115] In a standard anthology, Carleton Brown quoted Chambers on the Cuckoo Song as an 'adaptation of a *reverdie*', although he thought the words (not the music) more popular than Chambers did, remarking that he knew 'no *reverdie* which compares with this in freshness and unstudied simplicity'.[116] So the word *reverdie* appeared in English in 1894, 1907, 1916, and 1932, all predating the earliest attestation (of 1933) recorded by *The Oxford English Dictionary*.

By the time A.E.H. published 'Spring Morning' in 1922, then, the notion of English reverdies was in the textbooks. Everyone agreed that, in about 1200, English verse started going to Paris, and coming back dressed in the latest fashions. Poets in medieval German, Provençal, and Latin also found Parisian hues to be the wear. Yet the Parisians had perhaps stolen some of their ideas from others. One reverdie, of about the year 1000, is in Latin. It is unlike any other poem and is known from a unique copy of about 1050 (which contained similar love-songs, later erased because of their immodesty). This sole survivor begins 'Levis exsurgit zephirus' and is one of the Cambridge Songs, a collection of lyrics sacred and profane that was assembled for some cultivated ecclesiastic in the Rhineland, and thereafter copied (at St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury) into the last part of what is now Cambridge, University Library, MS Gg.5.35. The speaker of the piece, from France or Italy, is a woman. We hear that 'nothing can equal the freshness of this lyrical spring'.[117] But there is sorrow as well. The heart of the singer, as she looks forth on the joy of nature, is full of care. Scholars have wondered if the poet was also a woman. The lyric was certainly well rendered by a modern female translator.

Softly the west wind blows;
Gaily the warm sun goes;
The earth her bosom showeth,
And with all sweetness floweth.

Blossom and leaf appear, animals breed, birds make their nests, but the speaker's love is hopeless.

I see it with my eyes,
I hear it with my ears,
But in my heart are sighs,
And I am full of tears.

And the lyric ends in despair.[118]

After French or Italian verses in Latin, copied for a Rhineland prelate and recopied in Anglo-Saxon Kent, we move to fourteenth-century Wales and other frustrations. One of Dafydd ap Gwilym's most famous poems involves a spat with a sharp-tongued magpie. It is April. Nightingale, blackbird, thrush, and lark are in song. The bard is in the green wood, composing his songs of love. A magpie takes him to task as she builds her next, asking in an unfriendly way what an old man like himself is doing out in dew and rain (instead of being at home by the fire), and writing poems for a girl (who must be half his age). The verses end, understandably, with bard insulting bird and vice versa. Dafydd's poem is even better understood once one grasps that it is a reverdie. Sir Thomas Parry assured readers that the brilliant nature introduction is 'not in the least essential to its plan or purpose', being written 'out of pure love for the spring and the birds and the trees'.[119] If that were true, Dafydd would be an incompetent poet. But, once we realize that the poem is a reverdie, the contrast between nature (which is renewing itself) and the bard (who is not renewing himself at all, but is ageing fast) begins to make artistic sense.

'Lenten is Come' was expounded in sub-Leavisite mode, now dated, by Dr Speirs of Exeter.[120] Professor Frings found *Natureingang* in early poems from Egypt, Greece, China, and Iceland, and took this as proof for popular origins.[121] Yet this should not mislead us. The reverdie is distinctively medieval and sophisticated, as opposed to 'universal' and 'popular'. ó Tuama of Cork has a complete chapter, of interest to those who can read Irish, on the reverdie as influencing modern Irish folk-poetry.[122] One Penguin anthology presents two anonymous French reverdies,

both startling exercises in fantasy. In the first, a trouvère goes out one morning in April and encounters the God of Love, who rides a horse of 'love's delight' and wears a 'helmet of flowers'. In the second, the poet encounters a fairy or goddess, 'mounted on a mule, with silver shoes and golden saddle'.[123] It is true, however, that neither poem concerns the lover's sorrow, so that these reverdies differ from the ones considered above. Another Penguin anthology publishes 'Levis exsurgit zephirus' with plain translation.[124]

In 1962, Sir Thomas Parry again misrepresented Dafydd ap Gwilym's dialogue with a magpie, saying that it 'begins with thirty-two remarkable lines describing a fine April morning, not strictly relevant to the theme of the poem, but introduced and brilliantly executed because the author enjoyed portraying natural scenes'.[125] Nobody had told Sir Thomas about reverdies. If they had, he would have understood how spring (which is burgeoning with new life) is here deliberately chosen to contrast with the bard (who is ageing fast). A similar contrast appears German reverdies (though not given that name), including one in the *Carmina Burana* where the speaker is a woman. It is so brief that we may quote it entire.

Gruonet der walt allenthalben
wa ist min geselle also lange?
der ist geriten hinnen,
owi, wer sol mich minnen?

Everywhere the woods are green, but where is my beloved? He has ridden far hence; alas, who will love my now?[126] A poignant German scrap of lyric may be placed by an English one of similar date.

Foweles in þe frith,
Þe fisses in þe flod,
And I mon waxe wod!
Mulch sorw I walke with,
For beste of bon and blod.[127]

Birds are in the wood, fish are in the waters, but the singer is losing his wits out of sorrow, all because of the fairest of flesh and blood. Both the German and the English poem show at its simplest the juxtaposition of spring, with birds that build, against men or women who neither build not breed. So terse are both of

them that readers today might find them unintelligible without the longer instances in French, Provençal, or Latin.

Peter Dronke cites 'Levis exsurgit zephirus', of spring outside and anguish within, and thinks it the work of a female poet, which may be so, although the text is too short for it to be proved.[128] The Sisams provided an edition of 'Lenten is Come' which is accessible to non-specialists.[129] Rosemary Woolf sees the celebrated 'Sumer is icumen in' not as a simple-minded folk reverdie, but as sophisticated subversion of it, the cuckoo's note being 'a word of fear, unpleasing to the married ear'.[130] By far the best translation of Dafydd's altercation with the magpie is by Kenneth Jackson.[131] Elizabeth Salter spoke of 'Levis exsurgit zephirus' as 'incomparable' and no 'simple poem'. As such it is distinct from the more popular and frank kind of song, 'a guide for hands and dancing feet', that is spoken by a woman.[132]

The oldest Provençal reverdie is 'Ab la dolchor del temps novel' by Guilhem de Poitou, the earliest troubadour, active in around 1100. Woods come into leaf and birds sing with the sweetness of the new season; he is far from his beloved, but does not grieve, for they have all that is necessary for their happiness. More like the poems above is 'Lo gens tems de pascor' by Bernart de Ventadour, who was active six decades later (and wrote one of his lyrics in London). All nature rejoices in the spring, except he alone, because the lady he adores grants him few favours.[133] Derek Pearsall hears echoes of these Provançal poems in the Harley Lyrics.[134] 'Levis exsurgit Zephirus' and 'Gruonet der wlt allenhalben' are discussed together by Peter Dronke.[135] 'Fuweles in þe Frith' is edited by Dobson, who comments on the conventions of how, when birds and even fish are mating, the poet endures the pangs of unrequited love.[136] As for A.E.H.'s lyric, Richard Graves calls it 'less sombre' and more 'cheerful' than others in *Last Poems*, which is true, though it acknowledges both the realization by old people that 'the best has gone', and the youth's loss of 'the girl he loves the best'.[137]

By now it will be evident how much 'Spring Morning' reflects poems of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries. But there are still surprises. By Housman's twentieth-century verses we may place a Spanish *kharja* of before 1145, and written in Arabic script.

> Bénid la pasqa, aún sin elle,
> lasrando mew qorazun por elle.[138]

'Easter comes, but he is still away; how my heart burns for him' says a Mozarabic woman, pining for her lover. For a study in contrasts, this snatch from southern

Spain may be put besides Dafydd's undignified squabble with a magpie in a Welsh wood.[139] They differ almost as much as two poems can; yet both are reverdies, both speak of the hopes of spring and frustrations of love. In thirteeth-century England are 'Sumer is icumen in' and 'Foweles in the Frith', both reverdies, in which the sorrowful lover of the second is evident, the sorrowful husband of the first (if the insistent 'Sing, cuccu!' points to a faithless wife) rather less so.[140] The mating of birds strengthens links of Dafydd's poem with Continental reverdies, despite the late Dr Bromwich's doubts.[141] More recent works discuss the Middle English reverdies, playing up the spring joy and glossing over the unhappy love.[142] Professor Fulton of York offers comments on the subject that some may find gauche and unhelpful.[143]

For an exercise in what our medieval poems are *not*, and a way to stop ourselves from seeing all spring-greetings as reverdies, we may compare 'Solvitur acris hiems' ('Biting winter melts away') in book one of Horace's *Odes*. Spring is there welcomed, but the poet is also possessed by intimations of mortality. Harsh winter loses its grip, warm winds blow, ships are hauled down to the sea, flocks and ploughman return to the fields, meadows no longer shine with frost. Venus leads dancers forth beneath the moon, the graces and nymphs move hand in hand to music. After these lyric themes, Horace gives us a thrilling shock.

> Pallida Mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas
> regumque turris.

Death comes to Buckingham Palace and shanty town alike, kicking without ceremony on the door. The fall of night comes soon; in Pluto's narrow house, there will be no dicing or kissing.[144] Horace returned to this theme in book four with 'Diffugere nives' ('The snows have melted'), usually thought a greater work of art, and one with profound associations for A.E.H., as providing one of his few translations.[145] All the same, even if the two odes salute the spring, dwell on love, and end in sorrow, they are still not reverdies. They are not complaints, telling of a lover's unhappiness. What they mourn is the ineluctability of death. Hence the difference between them and our medieval verses.

Housman thus owed a creative debt to the middle ages and to academic exposition of medieval lyric; which is something that may be recalled by poets as well as by scholars, especially when one reads what the latter make of the texts that they are paid to write about.[146]

7. The Flower of Sinner's Rue

In its five stanzas, *Last Poems* XXX records a nocturnal encounter.

> I walked alone and thinking,
> And faint the nightwind blew
> And stirred on mounds at crossways
> The flower of sinner's rue.

The speaker recalls how those dead by suicide are buried at crossroads, in unconsecrated ground, where this 'weed of sorrow' grows.

> By night I plucked it hueless,
> When morning broke 'twas blue:
> Blue at my breast I fastened
> The flower of sinner's rue.

And he wears it thereafter. Reminding him of one with a heart more troubled than his own, it alleviates his distress.

Readers may wonder what this plant was, with macabre associations that yet comfort the poet. It cannot be rue (*Ruta graveolens*), a medicinal plant that Shakespeare and others called 'herb of grace', punning on the sorrow or remorse that a penitent must have before God can again bestow grace.[147] Ophelia's 'There's rue for you' and 'We may call it herb of grace a Sundays' have nothing to do with Housman's poem, because rue is a native of the Mediterranean and will not grow wild in England, at crossroads or anywhere else.[148] Its flowers are not blue, but greeny-yellow. Nor is the poem about contrition for sin.

Taking Housman's 'sinner's rue' as meadow-rue is no improvement. The species of these most likely to occur on waste ground is lesser meadow-rue (*Thalictrum minus*), described as having a 'cluster of delicate, often purple-tinged, greenish-yellow flowers'.[149] Yet greenish-yellow is not 'blue', whether purple-tinged or not. The blooms of meadow-rue are too insubstantial to 'wear for breastknot', as the poet says he does. Put them in a buttonhole, and they wilt. Far better for that purpose is chicory (*Cichorium intybus*), common and conspicuous on roadsides and in grassy places, like a big blue dandelion.[150] If one were pressed to name the plant which allowed contact of living and dead, chicory fills the bill

better than most. If it prompted the poem, one could see why Housman was vague on its name, sounding too cheerful for thoughts of the grave, and awkward for rhyme and metre.

There is a particle of evidence in favour of chicory, as opposed to scabious or other stiff blue weeds of English grassland. Although probably native to Britain, it has never played much part there in sentiment or tradition. In Germany it was a different story. 'German folklore has several pretty tales to explain the blue-eyed Chicory by the roadside. The young girl wept for her dead lover, and would only stop weeping, she said, when she was turned into a flower by the road. So she became the *Wegwart* or Chicory.'[151] Housman's theme of a blue wayside plant as 'herb of healing', a 'balsam and a sign' has, therefore, a Continental parallel.

After all that, a surprise. Once the above was written, the writer bethought himself to consult a recent Housman Society book, to find (with comment on problems of verse translation) a lyric by Heine printed with 'Sinner's Rue'.

Am Kreuzweg wird begraben
Wer selber sich brachte um;
Dort wächst eine blaue Blume,
Die Armersünderblum.

Am Kreuzweg stand ich und seufzte;
Die Nacht war kalt und stumm.
Im Mondschein bewegte sich langsam
Die Armersünderblum.

'At the crossroads are buried
Who sought in suicide release;
There grows a light-blue flower --
Chicory, woe's surcease.

At the crossroads I stopped and sighed;
The night was cold, at peace.
In the moonlight gently stirred
Chicory, woe's surcease.'[152]

Heine's lyric inspired Housman's; his 'Flower of Sinner's Rue' renders *Armersünderblum*, a name for chicory in older or dialectal German. The present exercise thus offers a warning. After going through books, one may write for an hour or two, to find and be disconcerted that one's discoveries are known already, and (if one checks) were noted long ago.[153] Yet there is a consolation. If a cosmic cataclysm had now destroyed every copy of Heine's poem, we might still, with the aid of botanical handbooks, conclude that 'Flower of Sinner's Rue' was chicory.

A sharp researcher, familiar with German folklore, might even surmise that Housman took his matter from German tradition and not anything English. Housman's lyric on a herb which dispels gloom, offspring of Heine's sad poem on the *Armersünderblum*, has no precedent in England, whose poets ignore chicory, with one exception. The sole lines that can be coupled with those of Housman predate him by five centuries, and contrast with them almost as much as verses can. In book VII of his *Confessio Amantis*, John Gower (d. 1408) describes the northern sky's fifteen brightest stars. They include 'Venenas' or Benetnasch (= Arabic *Banat Na'sh* 'Chief of the Daughters of the Bier'), also called Alkaid ('The Governor'), the first or last star of the Great Bear, Plough, or Dig Dipper, seen more pessimistically by the Arabs as the stand of a corpse on its way to burial, followed by mourners.[154] It comes at the end of its snout, or handle, or procession of those bewailing the dead, and Gower's learned source identified it with adamant the precious stone, and chicory the flower.

> The sterre ellefthe is Venenas,
> The whos nature is as it was
> Take of Venus and of the Mone,
> In thing which he hath forto done.
> Of Adamant is that perrie [gem]
> In which he worcheth his maistrie;
> Thilke herbe also which him befalleth,
> Cicorea the bok it calleth.[155]

Book VII's main source is Brunetto Latini's *Li Livres dou Tresor*, written in the 1260s. But its account of the fifteen stars, with their minerals and herbs, is from a treatise called *Liber Hermetis de xv stellis et de xv lapidibus and de xv herbis, xv figuris, etc.*, where 'Venenas' is called 'Benenais' (= Benetnasch).[156]

Our quest for a flower's identity has been brief but salutary. It teaches us that truth may be reached by different paths, and not always the most obvious

ones. It underlines the importance of books published by the Housman Society. It has also led us far, from a roadside weed to the starry train; which may be apt for A.E.H., who, with Milton, was of all English poets the most expert on and responsive to astronomy.

8. Where Cuckoo-Flowers Are Lying About the World

The eight lines of *More Poems* IX appear simple, but have a riddle at their end.

> When green buds hang in the elm like dust
> And sprinkle the lime like rain,
> Forth I wander, forth I must,
> And drink of life again.
> Forth I must by hedgerow bowers
> To look at the leaves uncurled,
> And stand in the fields where cuckoo-flowers
> Are lying about the world.

What, we wonder, are cuckoo-flowers? And why should they deceive us about the world or anything else?

First, the plant's identity. Dialectal 'cuckoo flower' is a name for bluebell, cuckoo-pint, early purple orchid, lady-smock, ragged robin, red campion, and wood sorrel. But the two sole contenders here are lady-smock (*Cardamine pratensis*) and early purple orchid (*Orchis mascula*), which grow in April meadows, possess a reputation to be hinted at, and have 'cuckoo flower' as a common name. The remainder lack one or other of these defining characteristics.

Of the twin remaining possibilities, lady-smock might seem preferable. A.E.H. refers to it in *A Shropshire Lad* XLI:

> Whether in the woodland brown
> I heard the beechnut rustle down,
> And saw the purple crocus pale
> Flower about the autumn dale;

Or littering far the fields of May
Lady-smocks a-bleaching lay...

The Shropshire lad has read *Love's Labour's Lost*, a play closing with a song on spring, when 'lady-smocks all silver-white' paint the meadows, 'maidens bleach their summer frocks', and the cuckoo 'mocks married men'. Having once echoed Shakespeare on lady-smocks that lie in fields, A.E.H. might do it twice.

Yet why should lady-smock be a deceiver? It is true that Shakespeare's smocks, cuckoo, and breeding turtle-doves suggest indelicacy; and lady-smock (not Lady's smock, as if to do with the Blessed Virgin) has a name less pretty than its petals. It occurs in Old English medical texts as *lustmoce*, where the first element means 'lust' and the second 'muck', as in *hlos moc* 'pigsty filth'.[157] This undelightful form has been referred to 'the semen-like spume or cuckoo-spit surrounding the larva of the froghopper (*Philaenus spumarius*)' regularly found on the plant.[158] That does not, however, help with the poem. Its implication of spring's renewed life in a world where all perish might be a lie, perhaps. But, applying to all spring plants, is too flaccid an interpretation for a poet of Housman's calibre.

There is profounder sense with the other cuckoo flower, early purple orchid. Although it is 'widespread and locally common in woods, often with bluebells', it grows in meadows as well.[159] It blooms in April and May, the time of the poem. As for its reputation, it had age-old and unmistakable links with matters of the heart and beyond. There is any amount of evidence for that. This strange-looking plant, known by more than eighty different English names, including 'cuckoo flower' in Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, and East Anglia, stands a foot high and erect, like a guardsman at attention. It has two root-tubers. Rising up conspicuously from these paired bulbs or globes, from which it is called after Greek *orkhis*, this was a plant believed even by Dioscorides to be helpful in exciting desire. An ingredient from ancient times for love potions, it was commented on by many, including the Cambridge astrologer Robert Turner, who in his *Botanologia* of 1664 observed that there were sufficient early purple orchids in Cobham Park, Kent, to 'pleasure all the seamen's wives' of nearby Rochester. Most famously, these vigorously masculine plants were amongst those gathered by Ophelia in her madness, being the

long purples
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them.[160]

In short, early purple orchid or *Orchis mascula* was a notorious aphrodisiac, a plant that aided the venereal act. Hence, it would seem, the barbed comment of A.E.H., whose experience of love was not that of man and woman for each other. He might well declare with bitterness that flowers perennially linked with love between the sexes were 'lying about the world'. It would be the verdict of an unhappy homosexual on a universe where even the flora, propaganda for heterosexual desire, lends support to 'foreign laws of God and Man'.[161]

It is submitted that this interpretation gives sense to the poem, elucidating the twist or bite in its conclusion. Unlike most lyrics on spring, these lines view nature with pessimism. As such they resemble *More Poems* XXXII, where charlock, with flowers that gild the ploughland and catch the traveller's attention, 'But twice 'twill not arise', is set against the ineradicable nettle,

> which towers
> About the courts of Kings,
> And touch it and it stings.

Or, for a further last-line jab at optimists, take *Additional Poems* XXIII, on the olive:

> Close should the fruit be clustered
> And light the leaf should wave,
> So deep the root is planted
> In the corrupted grave.

In the poems of A.E.H., charlock, nettle, olive, and (it appears) early purple orchid all designate a world which is out of joint. Together, they are amongst the weapons that he selects for a long war on the illusions of hope.

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The Housman-Rothenstein Connection

by

Ian Rogerson[1]

Although having its origins in publishing, by the mid-twentieth century, Elkin Mathews Ltd. had become one of the leading antiquarian and fine booksellers in Britain, administered by bibliographers of knowledge and taste. Unlike most booksellers' ephemera, many of the firm's erudite catalogues have survived. One notable example, the memorial sale catalogue of the Library of Sir William Rothenstein, issued in September 1954, contains a number of items concerning Alfred and Laurence Housman, including the following:

221, *A Shropshire Lad,* Richards 1906, is a presentation copy inscribed by the author:- W. Rothenstein from A.E. Housman. On the flyleaf Max Beerbohm has written a six-line humorous verse, title 'Spring Time', and beginning 'Young Master Hubbard Turned from the cupboard…' to which he has added a note 'see pp. 64-766 – see indeed any page' – this reference is to the poem 'The Immortal Past.' Also, facing the first page of the text is a quatrain by Max comparing Housman with Hardy. On the verso of the title-page Housman has drawn a head-and-shoulders skeleton, which he has inscribed 'Yours most sincerely A.E. Housman. The Author. Photo. By Roëntgen.' We know of no other instance of such embellishment of one of his books by Housman. Even signed presentation copies are of the utmost rarity. The edition is a scarce one, bound in stiff parchment gilt and uncut.

222. ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN. [Supplement to "The Bromsgrovian"] Oct. 1936, (2) Memories of A.E. Housman, by Mrs. E.W. Symons, Sept. 1936. (3) More Memories of A.E.H. [by the same] Dec. 1936. Bound together in one vol. With an angry note by W. R. on the unauthorised reproduction and mutilation of his portrait by (sic) A.E.H.; a letter of apology from the Headmaster; and a long and interesting letter from Mrs. Symons.

223. ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN. [Supplement to "The Bromsgrovian"] Oct. 1936.

Reminiscences by his sister, brother and others. Illustrated. With a note by W.R.

on the treatment of his portrait. One of 250 numbered copies.

William Rothenstein, (1872-1945), was born in Bradford, the son of Moritz Rothenstein, a German Jewish immigrant, who became a wealthy woollen merchant. After studying at the Slade School of Art, William was a practising artist, living in London and exhibiting with the New English Art Club, which at that time set the standard of painting in England[2]. In middle age, he became Principal of the Royal College of Art, a post he held from 1920 to 1935, successfully establishing the College as the powerhouse of art education in Britain. A Trustee of the Tate Gallery from 1927 to 1933, he was an influential figure in the art establishment. In addition to publishing several volumes of lithographed portraits, including those of Laurence Housman and A.E. Housman, he wrote critically on art matters.

Two of William's brothers anglicised their names to Rutherston during the First World War. Charles worked in the family firm and his wealth enabled him to become a patron of the arts and an astute and discerning collector. Albert, a younger sibling, also studied at the Slade, exhibited with the New English Art Club and made significant contributions to stage design and book illustration. He was Principal of the Ruskin School of Art from 1929 to 1940.

William was a gregarious man who admired Housman's verse and who became a firm friend. In his first volume of autobiography, he tempered his belief that *A Shropshire Lad*, was an immediate success: 'perhaps success is not the right word, for rarely has a work of genius been at once accepted at its true value. But people who had sneered at minor poetry were silenced. Here was fine poetry, and a poet taking his place quietly as an immortal, as a great fiddler goes to his seat in the orchestra. There was no legend about Housman. No one seemed to know anything about him, save that he was Laurence Housman's brother.'[3]

After leaving art school in 1888, Laurence Housman found work first with the publisher Harry Quilter, this followed by commissions for Kegan Paul. By the end of 1893, Laurence Housman had completed designs for four books for John Lane and his partner Elkin Mathews at Bodley Head, a publishing house which, in that decade which became known as *fin-de-siècle,* was pushing the boundaries. His brilliant binding design for Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market*, together with the striking illustrations engraved on wood by his sister, Clemence, excited critical comment when displayed at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition held in October 1893.

Resulting from this, Aubrey Beardsley invited him to contribute

a drawing to the first issue of *The Yellow Book*, which made its startling appearance in April 1894. Here, he found himself in the company of Beardsley, Robert Anning Bell and William Rothenstein, among others. Laurence was also busy writing, with three volumes of original fairy tales published by Kegan Paul prior to 1900. Unsurprisingly, Rodney Engen found that Laurence 'was readily accepted in the artistic circle of the nineties, noted for its eccentricity and influence which had its base in the Café Royal.'[4]

In 1893, William Rothenstein joined the group. At this time, he was at work on *Oxford Characters*, a series of twenty-four lithographed portraits, with biographical sketches by F. Yorke Powell and others, which would be published in 1896 by John Lane in an edition limited to 200 copies. A letter from one of the Café regulars, Max Beerbohm, to William, helped to explain the nature of the man. 'The William Rothenstein of the Café Royal begins to live before us. Do you know, I have just solved the problem of your personality? Your whole secret lies in the way you call attention to and imbue with the deepest artistic significance all the little trivial actions and most commonplace circumstances which form your existence.'[5]

Max Beerbohm wrote a curious short story about a poetic genius, *Enoch Soames*, in which all the characters were real persons known to the author, save the eponymous poet, who was fictional. Beerbohm used the story to explain the attraction of the Café Royal. 'By Rothenstein I was inducted into another haunt of intellect and daring, the domino room of the Café Royal… there, in that exuberant vista of gilding and crimson velvet set amidst all those opposing mirrors and upholding caryatids, with fumes of tobacco ever rising to the pagan and painted ceiling, and with the hum of presumably cynical conversation broken into so sharply now and again by the clatter of dominoes shuffled on marble tables, I drew a deep breath, and this indeed, said I to myself, is life.'[6]

Augustus John, another Café Royal devotee, later remembered that 'one of William Rothenstein's endearing traits was that his conversation, in which serious matter contended with irrepressible gaiety, was both enlivening and educative'.[7] Rothenstein had much to contribute to the many Café Royal lunches. John was not so sure about Alfred Housman, remembering his first meeting as 'not auspicious… Housman looked like a solicitor but didn't behave like one.' John believed that Housman was not altogether approving of the surroundings.[8]

The publisher Grant Richards also took part. In 1892, he had first sought to make Rothenstein's acquaintance in Paris. Following Lane's publication of *Oxford Characters* in 1896, William agreed to do a series of twenty-four lithographic portraits for Richards. *English Portraits* appeared in 1898, but

did not sell well, while a portfolio of prints which followed, *Liber Juniorum,* containing, *inter alia*, portraits of Beardsley, Beerbohm, William Butler Yeats and Laurence Housman, did not sell at all. Despite growing acknowledgement of the importance of Rothenstein's skill with the pencil, a surviving copy of *Liber Juniorum* was sold at Sotheby's to Stevens and Brown in 1960 for a derisory £8, almost certainly for the American market.[9]

After a courtship lasting several years, in 1899, William married Alice Knewstub, an actress who worked under the name Alice Kingsley. After a summer in France, they returned to their first home, Pembroke Cottage, in Edwardes Square, Kensington, moving on following the birth of their first child, with Laurence and Clemence Housman taking over the cottage tenancy.[10]

Alfred Edward Housman's early life needs no reiteration here, save that he took up his appointment of Professor of Latin at University College London on 19 April 1892, at the age of thirty-three. It is probable that he was introduced to William Rothenstein by Laurence and, despite his reputation for privacy and for confining his sociability to his own kind, he discovered in Rothenstein a kindred spirit with whom he was to form an enduring friendship. In 1906, Rothenstein made three portrait drawings of Alfred. At this time, Beerbohm remembered an early meeting with Alfred, who was like 'an absconding cashier', contributing little to the conversation save brief comments on the weather.[11]

Rothenstein had been introduced to the magic of the theatre by the Beerbohm family, 'to first nights at the Haymarket and later at Her Majesty's Theatre'. He also came to like the music-halls. 'Maybe it was the drabness of ordinary life that made the music halls so attractive. And not only the music-halls, but the theatres as well and the fair and the roundabouts.'[12] Surprisingly perhaps, Alfred Housman also enjoyed the music-hall, Graves surmising that 'with his underlying melancholy, what Housman required was something light-hearted'. This he could find in a good music-hall. Apart from his publisher, Grant Richards, the chief of his friends with whom Alfred visited the halls was Rothenstein.[13]

Alfred's earliest recorded letter to Rothenstein, dated 14 Jan 1907, asked if he would dine with him at the Café Royal on the first of February. 'The form which these orgies take is that after dinner we go to a music hall, and when the music-hall closes, as I have no club, we are thrown on the streets and the pothouses, so you know what to expect.'[14] Subsequently they lunched together occasionally and Alfred took him to see Laurence's play *The Chinese Lantern* when it opened at the Haymarket Theatre in June 1908. Rothenstein was moved to admiration, drawing from it the moral that 'if one wants to be a great artist one must be *absorbed* in a work of art'.[15]

Alfred Housman's happy letter to Rothenstein shows that aspect of his character which was unknown to most with whom he was to come into contact. In his introduction to *The Letters of A.E. Housman*, Archie Burnett drew attention to A.S.F. Gow's recollections. 'To the outside world, a figure alarming, remote, mysterious. To see Housman at his best, therefore, it was best to meet him in a small social circle… he would show himself as vivacious as any other member of the party.'[16]

During the first years of the twentieth century, Rothenstein was establishing a reputation as a successful portrait painter. In 1908, while painting the Liverpool ship owner Charles Booth and his wife, the Rothensteins rented a farmhouse near Bisley, Gloucestershire. Much taken with Cotswold landscape, they purchased the run-down Iles Farm at Far Oakridge, overlooking the Stroud's Golden Valley. Rothenstein lovingly recorded that they enjoyed making the house habitable, with furniture and metalwork by the Arts and Crafts influenced neighbours, Ernest and Sidney Barnsley and Ernest Gimson.[17]

Graves suggests that Alfred found Mrs Rothenstein to be 'rather tiresome' in her frequent invitations to dinner, although she must have done this as a domestic duty on behalf of her husband. In January 1911, Alice wrote a congratulatory letter to Alfred on his appointment to the Chair at Cambridge and later invited him to visit them at Iles Farm. From his replies, it is obvious Housman appreciated her kindness and welcomed the opportunity to walk the four or five miles from Woodchester to Far Oakridge while staying with his Gloucestershire relatives.[18]

In the second volume of his autobiography, published three years before Housman died, Rothenstein, who had been knighted in 1931, was surprisingly frank. 'It is true that Housman looked or talked like a poet. He prided himself on this, I think; he was grim and dry and seemed to disdain the artist in himself, to be contemptuous of temperament.' Perhaps Rothenstein was comparing him with the convivial John Drinkwater who, when staying with the Birmingham artists Joseph Southall and Arthur Gaskin at Minchinhampton, walked over to Far Oakridge. Drinkwater stayed the night and 'a new friendship' came into being, with the Drinkwaters taking over a nearby cottage recently vacated by the Beerbohms and becoming 'perfect neighbours'. In 1918, Rothenstein's brother Charles helped finance the staging of *Abraham Lincoln*, the first of Drinkwater's chronicle plays, which 'made Drinkwater's fame and fortune'.[19] According to the writer and critic Frank Swinnerton, the play 'impressed two nations… a remarkable piece of construction which set a fashion and a high standard for such pieces'.[20]

Unfortunately, A.E. Housman spoke with asperity of Drinkwater's

verse, but that didn't stop him writing a consoling letter when Drinkwater was unjustly accused in *The Times* of plagiarising *A Shropshire Lad.*[21] Drinkwater, on the other hand, in a tribute which appeared in the A.E. Housman Memorial Number of *The Mark Twain Quarterly,* Winter 1936, wrote 'that A.E. Housman was a lyric poet of the rarest quality there can be no doubt'.[22]

One interesting outcome of the developing friendship between the Rothensteins and the Drinkwaters was a literary and artistic relationship which grew between John Drinkwater and Rothenstein's younger brother Albert, now known as Rutherston. This was hardly surprising, in view of Albert's considerable reputation as an innovator in stage design, earned while working with Harley Granville Barker.[23] Rutherston's sets and costumes for both theatre and ballet were later celebrated in collotype, finely printed by the Oxford University Press.[24]

Both John and Albert were hugely impressed by the stage designs of Claud Lovat Fraser, who had been badly affected by gas attacks while serving on the Western Front and, as a result, had been returned to England. Fraser, while still serving in the army, worked at night on the stage designs for Drinkwater's Birmingham production of Goldoni's play, *The Liar,* but his finest achievements were presented to the public at Nigel Playfair's Lyric Theatre, in Hammersmith, west London, from 1919, first with *As You Like It,* which had premiered at the Shakespeare Festival at Stratford-upon-Avon. Following the production of Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln,* designed by another hand, Fraser introduced the 18th century into theatre design with Gay's *The Beggar's Opera,* a production which was to run for 1469 performances until 1925.[25] Rutherston and Drinkwater collaborated on a finely produced volume commemorating Fraser, who had died in 1921 as a result of a weakened heart, in which some of Fraser's controversial illustrations to A.E. Housman's *A Shropshire Lad* were first published.[26]

In 1920, Housman's publisher, Grant Richards, had planned an illustrated *A Shropshire Lad,* with black and white vignettes drawn with a reed pen by Fraser. Housman was unimpressed. 'I return Lovat Fraser's designs, most of which I do not like at all… to transpose into the 18th century a book which begins at Queen Victoria's Jubilee is the act of a rhinoceros.' Housman took this opportunity to pillory both illustrators and composers who set poems to music, following this with pithy comments on individual illustrations.[27] In a letter written later to the Fraser collector Seymour Adelman, Housman reinforced his views. 'Neither illustrators nor composers care twopence about words and generally don't understand them'.[28]

Harold Curwen of the Curwen Press took the opportunity to acquire

the Fraser drawings which, in 1924, were published without text in a private book club limited issue with an introduction by Holbrook Jackson.[29] It was not until 1995 that *A Shropshire Lad* with Fraser's illustrations became more widely available with a well-made volume designed by David Wishart and published by the Hayloft Press.

By 1920, the Curwen Press had become known for quality advertising and had a large collection of Fraser's decorations to support this, specialising in colour printed economically by the line block process. Albert Rutherston, working with his nephew Oliver Simon, further refined the process, with fine examples of his work illustrating *The Four Seasons,* a diary and almanack, printed for Curwen Press business clients. *The Four Seasons* was an outstanding example of the printer's art, eagerly sought after by collectors. Drinkwater used his treasured copy as a birthday book, to which friends contributed their autographs.[30]

Rutherston and Drinkwater also put together a single broadsheet, with Albert's decoration embellishing Drinkwater's poem *The Witch Ball.* A planned series did not materialise. Attractive Christmas cards featuring Drinkwater's poems *Christmas Eve* and *Dialogue at Christmas*, with wintry scenes in colour by Rutherston, were published in 1922 and 1925 respectively.

A.E. Housman did not warm to art. Of the three portraits of A.E. Housman which Rothenstein made in 1906, one was presented to the sitter.[31] Housman professed dislike of Rothenstein's portraits of him, writing to Grant Richard's about Rothenstein's 'permission to reproduce one of his drawings of me', no doubt choosing the more repulsive of the two. In a further letter to Richards, he describes one of Rothenstein's portraits of 'fifteen years ago' as 'a venomous libel'.[32]

He was more conciliatory when Rothenstein presented him with a proof lithograph from the recently published *Twenty-Four Portraits*: 'I am grateful for the proof, as the portrait is not in the most eminent artist's most virulent vein.'[33] The three-quarter profile of Housman's head and shoulders, with evidence of academic dress, showed him in serious mood and treated with the utmost sensitivity. Housman should have been more grateful. Rothenstein's choice of subjects was 'an act of homage to those who give rather than take'.[34] Housman's portrait was a fine example of that which Allan Gwynne-Jones identified as Rothenstein's 'seeking to combine austerity of design and unflinching research with radiance of tone'.[35]

Walter Sickert claimed that Rothenstein's 'set of transfer printed lithographs from famous men are of the highest importance historically and

technically'.[36] Yet, in 1926, Housman was telling F.W. Hall, a Fellow of his old Oxford college, that Rothenstein 'never gets a likeness of anyone, being presumably too great an artist'.[37] By this time, it is likely that Alfred's friendship and respect for William was such that he felt able to offer such tongue-in-cheek observations but, as late as 1933, he obtained permission to substitute a Rothenstein portrait of him, held by Trinity College Cambridge, for one of which he approved, and burnt the one he thought inferior.[38]

A.E. Housman's contribution to classical studies has been assiduously recorded, with Graves charting the progress of his greatest single work of scholarship, the *Astronomica* of Manilius. Knowing of his interest, the Rothensteins thoughtfully presented Housman with a celestial globe and, in acknowledging the gift, Housman assured Mrs. Rothenstein that 'he was now completely equipped for dealing with the 5th book of Manilius, for which I required it. I am just finishing the 4th.'[39] Despite their long association, Alfred was never able to address her by her Christian name.

In 1928, a slight cloud appeared over the friendship when Rothenstein decided that he wished to do a composite portrait of the pall-bearers at Thomas Hardy's funeral. Housman was an unwilling participant but did not refuse outright until he knew that J.M. Barrie had refused to participate, and so the matter fizzled out. As the nineteen-twenties drew to a close, the correspondence becomes sparse. Presumably, the friends could communicate by telephone if they wished. Rothenstein was invited to Cambridge in the Summer of 1932 and again in May 1933, when he was fortunate to hear Housman deliver the Leslie Stephen Lecture for 1933, '*The Name and Nature of Poetry*' to great acclaim.[40] This was probably the last occasion when the friends were able to meet.

William survived Alfred by ten years and, despite his considerable reputation, did not receive much attention in the city of his birth. Speaight records that a visit he made to Bradford's art gallery in 1961 to see William's paintings was a dismal experience.[41] Perhaps it was the publication of his biography, together with the prompting of the artist's son, Sir John Rothenstein, which stirred the city fathers, for a centenary exhibition was held in 1972, complete with scholarly catalogue.[42]

Returning to the Elkin Mathew catalogue, William Rothenstein, in the second volume of *Men and Memories,* remembered that 'Max once wrote in a book Housman gave me:

Thomas Hardy and A.E. Housman.

How compare either of this grim twain
Each has an equal knack
Hardy prefers the pill that's blue
Housman the draught that's black.'[43]

Pictorial embellishment of other writers' books also appealed to Beerbohm. In 1938, perhaps bored, he drew a caricature of Rothenstein on the title-page of his friend's copy of *Twelve Portraits*, probably a gift from the artist when published in 1929.[44]

While not in the first rank of illustrators, the decorative book illustrations which Fraser and Rutherston created were both charming and light-hearted, exemplifying the famous *Spirit of Joy* trade advertisement of the Curwen Press. As Peyton Skipwith has pointed out, 'it was Harold Curwen's desire to lift the spirits of his customers and bring gaiety to printing in the aftermath of the First World War.'[45] Both artists enhanced Curwen Press text. Collections of their work can be seen in the United Kingdom in Manchester Metropolitan University Library and in the United States in the Mariam Coffin Canaday Library at Bryn Mawr College.

NOTES

1 Through my colleague, Professor Colin Harris and Ayelet Brinn at the Lilly Library, University of Indiana, I was able to obtain kind permission from Mr David Muir to quote from the Elkin Mathews catalogue. Thanks also to Jonathan Smith, Archivist at Trinity College Cambridge and to Archie Burnett for his magnificent edition of *the Letters of A.E. Housman.* My professional colleagues at the University of Manchester Library and Manchester Metropolitan University Library helpfully retrieved the literature which has enabled me to write this article.

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39 Gow, Andrew S. F. *A.E. Housman. A Sketch.* p. 23.

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Materials for a new study of Housman's journey through Manilius' *Astronomica*

by

Darrell Sutton

As a discursive introduction, this particular essay treats some basic, historical elements of ancient astrology and astronomy as background for the reading of the Astronomica*. The objective of this preliminary survey may be of concern to the educated reader and interested non-specialists of astronomy who value Greek and Roman classical studies. Moreover, the author stands up to a few deductions made by Housman scholars, whose technical arguments and conclusions should not be left uncontested, and offers a handful of polemical points of interest concerning Housman's first steps into the world of Manilius' astral-centric and theological poem.* [1]

What we commonly describe as didactic poetry is one of the many stand-out poetic inventions practiced by ancient Greeks and Romans. This type of poetry is now evaluated diversely by modern critics. Didactic poems seemed to have served at least two purposes: (1) they allowed the author to paint literary images in a delicately composed language, on a broader canvas as he utilized a much lengthier treatise than was commonplace, (2) they allowed the reader temporarily to enter the author's imaginative world in order to be tutored on a subject the author felt needed to be mastered.

Virgil believed the Romans needed an inspiring treatise on the founding of their nation, so he wrote the *Aeneid*. There is much to be learned from the Latin text of this poem; but Virgil's allusions and shaded thoughts push advanced readers to the limits of comprehension. Lucan captured the essence of war in an extended series of books with his instructive work, *Bellum Civile*. Lucretius unleashed his thoughts of how he assumed existing things came to be with the issuance of his poem, *De Rerum Natura*. But when Manilius desired to give the initiate a tour of the skyward compass that supposedly directed the affairs of men, he issued his *Astronomica*.[2]

Manilius' writings suffered from depreciation in ancient times.[3] With

Virgil recognized by Latin students as the premier author of Latin texts, Manilius never stood much of a chance to be appreciated fully. Aside from the fact that he did not possess Virgil's predilection for un-prefixed verbs, his categories of interest were too eccentric. Although astronomy and astrology were popular as interpretative constructs for reading into the affairs of men, few persons understood them in professional terms. The lack of mention of Manilius by notable writers during and after his day cannot be all that surprising when one considers that by the fourth century, though astrology was widely practiced, Christianity had risen to supplant the dominant pagan worldviews which existed previously around the Mediterranean.

Christianity, with its heroic notions of the person of Christ, collided with poly-theistic and mono-theistic cults of the day, left little pagan debris in its wake, and abruptly steered a course toward a partisan worldview that now appears unseemly to some people. The Patristic Fathers' use of ancient literatures was not typically concordant with our desires for their use today. They looked for intimations of Christ[4] in obscure places; they allegorized the tales of ancient epic; they used philosophical models to build the case for Christianity in apologetics,[5] and this continued onward through late antiquity. Astrological emphases, however, did not enjoy widespread popularity among the readers of theology.

By the dawn of the early middle ages, Manilius appears to have been a forgotten author, although I cautiously believe that some copyist somewhere, from time to time, glanced at his esoteric work. The fact that copies of an archetype of the *Astronomica* were preserved for more than a millennium, despite the existence of other censured MSS, leads to many questions we are unable to answer here. The real work, however, of restoring Manilian studies to acceptable mainstream classical research begins with Joseph J. Scaliger (1540-1609), of whom a few words appear below.

Renaissance tastes were unique in that, if a MS could claim some linkage to antiquity, men wanted to read it and, in few cases, study it. Richard Bentley's (1662-1742) work on Manilius' text, and many other texts, is noted on nearly every occasion Housman is afforded to speak of the five books.[6] From Bentley to Housman there have been notable contributions to studies of Manilius' writings but few to which Housman would extend much praise:[7] Pingre's 1786 edition elicited no little commendation from him; also worthy of note is Claude Saumaise's, *De annis Climactericis et Antiqua Astrologia Diatribae* (1648).

Excursus I: Scaliger's[8] Manilius

The discovery of a text of Manilius by Poggio Braccilioni (1380-1459) breathed new life into the study of an unmentioned author of antiquity. This manuscript later became the *editio princeps* of Johannes Mueller of Konigsberg, also known as Regiomontanus. An edition and commentary of this text of the Manilius was printed in his own house in the years 1473 and 1474, respectively. Although it presented a diplomatic text it did not solve many historical problems related to the text. Analytical work did not begin until more than one century later when J.J. Scaliger (1540-1609) published his critical text in 1579 (2nd edition, 1600). He emended the text and transposed lines[9] at a time when direct observation of some useful manuscripts was difficult to obtain.

In his '*Prolegomena In M. Manilii Astronomica'* Scaliger stated he did not believe Manilius to be the person so named from Antioch (p.1), nor did he believe he needed to be a writer of old age because he desired to be granted long life (p.2). Scaliger complains that smoke fogs the discovery of truth regarding him (p.3) and he has accumulated a vast encyclopedia of facts which are illustrated throughout nineteen pages of preliminary remarks. He supplied the text with a number of useful conjectures, and his commentary was much the most important aspect of his contribution.

In more recent times two formidable scholars, G.P. Goold[10] and E. Courtney, have sought to reshape the landscape of Manilius studies: although Courtney has contributed primarily textual remarks. The two of them examined the texts of Manilius, along with Housman's commentary on them, and I feel obliged to question one or two of their assertions and conclusions. This should not be done without a note of gratitude for their especial efforts in this regard. The arguments are often striking and arresting, if not always well reasoned. Goold's Loeb edition has been rightly hailed as a notable contribution to classical studies. He issued a useful Latin text[11] with a reliable English translation.[12]

His understanding of astrological themes and translation of the Latin texts' content in this arena was, too, hailed as noteworthy.[13] So Goold's researches require detailed studies of four areas: (1) the Latin text he published; (2) the accompanying English translation; (3) the critical apparatus; and (4) the guide he issued with the Loeb text. This is not the place for an extensive review but a handful of remarks are justifiable.

Goold's guide retains its value even in its revised and corrected editions: 1992

and 1997 in that order. However, Goold's guide to the poem (pp.xvi-cv) is a piecemeal restatement of the several prefaces Housman placed in each of his critical editions. It is a comprehensive rewording though, with innovative and numerous expansions of minor ideas. But his discussion of Babylonian backgrounds on page lxxxii is woefully inadequate.[14] Goold expresses disbelief that there is a connection between the Manilius mentioned in Pliny's *Natural History* 35.199 and the Manilius of the *Astronomica.* The author may be of west Asian background, as Bentley thought, but I think a more likely scenario is that 'Marcus Manilius' is a pseudonym.[15] It is one that links the author to the cathartic astrology of yesteryear and to the decades-long folk tradition associated with a few persons named 'Manilius'.[16]

Dating the exact time of writing is unto this day unsettling. Explicit places of agreement are not expressly difficult to discern.[17] But allusive statements tend to be relatively clear to the one linking them to corresponding evidences; the same person usually remains blind to evidences he or she refuses to consider or fails to know exists. The poem apparently was crafted slowly and fastidiously like Virgil's *Georgics*[18] and prepared over a period of several years late in the reign of Caesar Augustus. More should be said on these things but we now turn to the guide to the poem. On page xxii Goold states "there is no evidence that the twelve signs as a group existed before the 4th century." That is simply not true. In a compendium of cuneiform clay tablets (MUL.APIN) made in Babylon about BC 687 one finds zodiac signs which are believed to be transcriptions of records from as far back as c. BC 1370.[19]

Despite that one historical inaccuracy, Goold more than compensated for other slips with his English translations of the text. In 1959 already he had abandoned a formal equivalence method of translation for a dynamic mode of interpretation.[20] One of the weaknesses of this style is that only close readers and exact grammarians can discern when and where the English moves far and away from the original texts. The paraphrase has the advantage of clarity. But it bears the disadvantage of {mis}leading the reader to believe he or she is reading the author's original words or what the author originally wrote, instead of gamely admitting that the translation loosely reveals what the interpreter understands him to have written. If free translations were not delivered so dogmatically, perhaps the possibility of error would not be so great.

Courtney's recent statements have been more nuanced.[21] The caution he exhibits at some points is remarkable.[22]

1. He believed Housman turned away from Propertian studies around the time of Postgate's publication citing, "this avenue seemed closed...".[23] But this is doubtful. Had Housman been so inclined I doubt he would have had reservations about issuing publications on texts he felt had been ill-treated by any classical scholar. Manilius, though, presented him with a field of inquiry into which few of his peers would venture, astrology being such a specialized and recondite topic.

2. On page 33 Courtney discusses Housman's emendation at 4.800-1 concerning the 'leap into the Euphrates' by Venus and Cupid.[24] The question regards an assumed enigma: whether or not they rode upon the backs of the fish and made it to safety or were themselves transformed into gill-bearing aquatic creatures? "Euphrates" is a hydronym, a derivative of a Sumerian prototype (>Akk. Purattu).[25] The word 'Euphrates' was unknown to western parts of the world for a long time. Any knowledge of its existence would be based on its conveyance through a document or on someone's lips. In near east wisdom traditions the Euphrates' waters were known to be magical;[26] like Egypt's Nile: creative as well as destructive.

   The image of the surface of the water as a type of mirror was, too, not unknown in antiquity, nor is the belief that beneath its surface its substance-matter was transformative. I am unaware of a legitimate reading among Manilius' variants with reference to *ubi ab his ope sumpta,* which should justify the idea of animals being ridden: in the sense of their use by trainers of aquatic species working at a modern day Sea World. Anything other than 'metamorphosing' is wholly illogical in this context. The referencing of *Man*. 2.33 should be enough to quell the debate.

3. Of Housman's confident diatribes Courtney also remarked: "one must also note the implication that only a select few are fit to judge the emendations of A.E. Housman" (p.35). Though the inference was not entirely true to reality, Housman would have thought so. He wrote as though most of his predecessors and all his peers were incapable of comprehending Manilius.[27] But with MSS contradicting one another, Housman was forced to construe texts according to his own dexterity, by means of transpositions and conjectural emendation. However, what

he did was not always correct.

4. Of Housman's explanatory notes, Courtney rightly declares "it is impossible to overpraise the profound and exact familiarity with the author which they show, and not only with Manilius but also with the usage of Latin writers (particularly poets) in general;" (p.37). Housman does a great job comparing readings in medieval MSS and also citing various Roman authors in antiquity whose uses of Latin words are worth remembering. But having worked through his five volumes of "explanatory notes" and in comparison to all the others noted by Courtney, I've concluded there is far less material on astrological matter than may have been surmised. The disparity throughout amounts to about a 5 to 2 ratio in favor of lexical and linguistic issues.

The latest re-evaluations of Manilius are best accounted for by acknowledging the turn of events in post-modern[28] academic thought. In this era of relativism, judgments are restricted, right and wrong verdicts have been displaced by the more congenial "I agree or disagree with…"; and to assume that something is absolutely true is to confirm that one is irrational and unscientific, that any supposed truth is only a matter of personal opinion. Since opinions are overturned easily in such an environment, it was only a matter of time before Manilius' ghost would arise from obscurity. He now retains the "classic" status, not because most people find his Latin writing to be marvelous[29] but because his text is ancient.

This new appraisal of Manilius has some parallel to the renewed interests in the text of Apollonius Rhodius beginning after World War II. The *Argonautica* had been thought to be second-rate and imitative of its epic predecessors, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey.* In the end, we learned that Apollonius told a much better story in Greek than the ones for which he had been credited previously in English.

The style of the Latin text of Manilius is, in my opinion, misunderstood and therefore misrepresented. One technical treatment of this may be read in W. Hübner's 'Manilius als Astrologe und Dichter' *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II 32.1 (1984), pp.126-320, especially 214-227. As expected, one clearly sees that there are a number of allusions to Horace in the satires of Persius, but to be able to track Lucretian material throughout the text of Manilius is harder still.[30] I do not find the Latin style of the *Astronomica* to be

nearly as technical as some might aver; and I surmise that the textual structure of the poem contains many colloquialisms.[31] His usage of the Latin word *currus* (1.174; 2.59; 2.96; 2.139; 5.10; 5.21), a vehicle of motion, would have resonated with anyone familiar with the vocabulary of Cicero and Catullus and Virgil; *currus* denoted transportation or conveyance in a generic sense. And Manilius' adoption and adaptation of the term is worthy of further elucidation. Identifying textual relationships may be less about intertextuality than it is of vernacular adaptation.

The kind of critical study required for investigating Manilius' idioms seldom has been attempted since Housman published his volumes. The laud dutifully extended to these volumes is not without merit. Many difficulties impede the way of any who seek to conclude that Housman's critical notes rapidly became obsolete, but as it relates to a number of his conclusions, modification is desirable.[32]

Excusing the religious conventions of the day, a variety of books did lead one to believe that some Renaissance scholars tended to halt their reading of texts between the opinions of the later scholastic era and the early middle ages, i.e. from the time of Francis Turretin (1623-88) and Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) descending back in time to Thomas Aquinas (1225-74), where theological and scientific works were written in a tightly compressed language of a genre that still befuddles the students of Latin texts today.[33] The presumptive quest for Greek influence on medieval writers of the day still guides contemporary inquiries into these research matters.

Would it then be a fundamental error to inquire if detection of overtly Greek influences on the text of Manilius appears, too, to be falsely presumed? The Greek way of formal scientific and technical expression may have been invasive but its supposed forcefulness and prevalence in all Latin idioms at the time of Manilius may be subject to challenge. The processes of reception and transmission of terms was certainly under way but there is no way it could have crested by the time of the invention of *Astronomica*. Lucretius, too, made more use of vulgar speech and his volumes contain an abundance of locutions whose exact meanings yet escape us now at such a great distance.[34]

The two of them, Manilius and Lucretius,[35] wrote their works to be read and understood by their hearers, that is, if you argue for an oral use of their documents. Similarly, of the same century but of a different language: the collection of Greek documents popularly known as New Testament, contain a

volume entitled *The Revelation of St. John*. Its text is technical throughout.[36] But this requires explanation. For, technical terms become a technical difficulty only when their meanings cannot be apprehended. Whatever words are required to be used for description of events the majority of them must be words already in the language stream in order for their specific uses to be understood. More than seventy-five percent of Manilius' Latin forms are locatable in other forms of didactic poetry. But the "scientific" scarecrow rumored to be in Manilius' literary fields has frightened away many a reader. One major hardship experienced by a reader of Manilius is that his philosophy of determinism seems so irrelevant in the twenty-first century.

I am doubtful that Manilius' positive convictions pertaining to the preordainment of events is the strongest evidence of a strict Stoic belief system. Generally, most ancient persons accepted some form of a fatalistic worldview.[37] The options at the time were fairly limited. Since scholars are content to parade the "Stoicism" theory and are obsessed with reconstructing the archetypal readings of the MSS, the poem itself now seems fit only for parsing select words. Original ideas abound in this arena but they overlook the basic premise of the poem that human deeds and performances, and the unfolding drama of inanimate activity all stem from the arrangement of celestial bodies. Western classicists' prevailing lack of in astronomy, and the lack of discussion on the influence of astrology on all ancient Roman writers – to be used as an ancillary tool for textual critics – is lamentable.[38]

The need to represent Manilius accurately on his own merits is now an ideal generally acknowledged. No doubt some of the content is bewildering and appeals to very few individuals. However, the manner in which a text is presented to a reading public will affect how it is received. To frame my argument differently: one single Latin inscription found on an ancient Roman tomb will probably be of little value academically, but if you place it among fifty or sixty others in an anthological volume with critical notes and commentary, it's worth appreciates rapidly.

Manilius' text endured 1400 years of obscurity because its content was unattractive, and this is because of the lessening of interest in astral studies that occurred simultaneously as reason and rationality developed ;[39] and also because it became lost amid other neglected manuscripts that were not deemed worthy of consistent perusal.

Apart from a reconstruction of Manilian lore and some new historical conjectures for approaching him afresh, the content of his books will remain at–view from a distance. Manilius' works are only one of a vast number of solid compositions in the fields of cosmology. Intrigued by the handwriting of

the gods in the heavens, literate ancient near eastern dwellers wrote profusely on the topic. But Housman's labors never did intersect directly with views which might have assisted him in evaluating ancient Babylonian tablets,[40] nor could he have benefited much from knowledge of these influences,[41] since decipherment of most of these texts were still at an early stage: the years 1880-93 saw Assyriologist, J.N. Strassmaier copying by hand many of the tablets being housed in the British Museum. However, now there is much to add to any discussion on the astronomical intelligence of Manilius. And this, despite the fact the fields of astronomy and astrology are rarely received on the same grounds in our day.

For many, the former signifies a scientific study of the heavens, and the latter delves into interpretations of how the arrangements of celestial planets influence the actions of humans on earth. As it pertains to scholarly curriculum, astronomy is a natural science whose departments in universities are numerous; whereas, astrology is looked upon by virtually all scholars as a pseudo-science masquerading as an academic field of study. The existing dichotomy between the two fields is a recent invention,[42] spurred on in-part by individuals who through more enlightened ideas have cast off old and historical restraints that bound human actions to very specific readings and meanings of the movements of astral portents and their superintendence by the gods. Of these things now we can speak with more detail.

Excursus II: Housman and Ancient Near Eastern Studies

To my knowledge no one has attempted to reconstruct or gauge Housman's acquaintance with ancient Near East materials for the study of the *Astronomica*. Such reassembly could not be made with ease. His studies were wholly autodidactic, most likely acquired while working through the texts of Manilius. He deciphered ancient Hellenistic and Latin texts and reconfigured an entire astrophysical scheme. He attended no oriental seminars, of which we are aware, or sat through academic courses in Sanskrit, Assyriology or Egyptology or Old Testament, which one today would think necessary for the understanding of any astronomical material in antiquity. It is a marvelous thing that, as a scholar who went to such great lengths and pains to spell out the details of the transmission of Manilius' manuscripts, it was not necessary for him to acquire formal or informal competency in the languages of the original sources which formed the basis of the resources he himself used for his *Astronomicon* commentaries.

Unfortunately his correspondence in connection with these issues – as we know it presently – consists of a handful of letters to a specialist in the history of religions [43] and to the fact that he was known by a few credible Orientalists with whom he worked during his university years. His comprehension of Babylonian lore and the further southwest Asian texts is due to his investigation of Greek and Latin authors;[44] and these quite often are far less secure than is most other second-hand information, especially since the material texts available to him were indirectly connected to Mesopotamian works. So they are mostly of a tertiary design (e.g. one should take note of his declaration that Diodorus ascribes the system to the Chaldeans which assigns one god to each zodiac sign, cf. p.xvi of Housman's *Astronomicon* II, or take note of his knowledge of the Egyptian astrological writings (in Greek Language) of Nechepso and Petosiris, to whom Manilius references. Cf. p.x of Housman's *Astronomicon* III).

Clearly by the publication date of the fourth volume of his critical edition (1920) he was making suitable use of the notable work of eminent European Egyptologists, e.g., German Heinrich Karl Brugsch (1827-94) and Prussian Karl Richard Lepsius (1810-14) among others, see p.vi. This indirect usage of material can be observed too in his papers: *Cf*. #66, #83, #96, #100, and #103, in *HCP* II, pp.598, 740, 809, 840, and 863 in that order. The understanding of Babylonian mathematical texts was in such a raw state of development that neither Housman's classical papers nor his introductions to Manilius or his historical notes illustrate an accrued knowledge of their ancient genius.[45]

His treatment of spherical geometrics is rudimentary, thus his calculations on 'risings and settings' is too linked to the emergence of sunlight and darkness rather than established on exact, quantitative principles.[46] The qualitative appearances of light and darkness are necessary to discern zodiacal designs but they are no contributor to the constellations' patterns within the zodiac; one would not know this so easily from Housman's observations in his introduction to book 3 (cf. pp.vii-ix) or in his notes on vv. 3.443–682. All this makes Housman's feat with the texts of Manilius all the more remarkable; he read ancient works at a feverish pace and wrought wonders by his use of such material as was explicable to him.

Housman once opined that "The elements of astronomy were once part of a scholar's ordinary equipment" and that "astronomical allusions in the poets, if expounded at all and not left by the editor to the knowledge and intelligence of the reader, were usually expounded aright."[47] This opinion has little bearing

on discussions today. For the 'elements of astronomy' are neither a part of a scholar's ordinary equipment today, nor are they usually a part of an exceptional scholar's equipment. But we need not be detained here any further.

As adverted to above, people of ancient cultures displayed interest in the stars and their influences on men, even architecture of the past attests to this.[48] Men resorted to horoscopy and the reading of entrails, even historical sightings of astral portents as signs of a god's favor or displeasure.[49] Manilius stands squarely in the middle of this theological stream whose source we cannot reconstruct, but whose rivulets remain with us until today. To delve further into ancient history in order to describe the origins of mankind's perceptions of astro-phenomena is another matter altogether.

The ever lingering question is this: is it possible to trace the origins? Probably not. But from the evidence that is extant we do know that from the earliest times men and women have been admirers of the stars: ancient scripts from pictographs to hieroglyphics reveal this clearly. Where one stands on a specific, historical chronology derived from these artifacts is really of little import in interpreting astrological signs.[50] What is of immense consequence, though, is the fact that the earliest literary texts show far more sophistication in ancient astral beliefs than is often acknowledged.[51]

Sumerian Cylinder Seal VA-243 is a case in point. It is approximately 4500 years old. It is a cylinder seal with an image of the sun and known planets in rotation. Religion with luminary objects forming their basis had always been in vogue, the sun being the acknowledged reigning king, and this fascination was passed down to cultures in all directions. The ideas that form Manilius' volumes had been blowing in the winds about the Mediterranean for thousands of years (to my knowledge, Housman's commentary strangely omits a useful narrative or sketch of the history of the transmission of Astrology among ancient peoples) and a few less-than-comprehensive remarks should be made in order to situate and advance Manilius' achievements.

The diffusion of so many diverse but uniformly superstitious ideas follows a predictable route: through travel and diplomacy, or large-scale war and minor raids, in which case peoples are plundered and taken captive.[52] What follows from these disruptions has been the norm throughout recorded history: (1) trading commences, (2) intermarriages occur and (3) ruling powers seek to superimpose their cultural genius in subtle and not so subtle ways. Therefore multi-lingualism forces information across differing terrains and the tribally ethnic walled villages of the past often found their homes penetrated by an inescapable influx of religious myth, which, though wondrous at first encounter, usually took on a variety of forms of legend in time, that was slowly handed

down until the diversity of opinion became canonized and uniform.

As far as I am able to discern, the greatest transmission of astral culture from east to west occurred from 1800BC unto 400BC. Its specific route is not easy to trace. Apparently this transference had moved out via Egypt and made its way to the Romans in the Hellenistic age, then into the first century BC, when Babylonian lore took its final shape in the form we know today. Celestial beliefs existed at the time in a strength which is equivalent to Schliemann's belief in an actual Trojan War. But two millennia prior to that age, c.3000BC the Babylonians already were interpreting celestial constellations to be a form of heavenly writing. Incontrovertible evidence exists to confirm that fact. They believed that they were living daily underneath sky-signs derived from gods.[53] And these signs permitted earth-bound persons to think the thoughts of god(s).

Otto Neugebauer (1899-1990) argued persuasively that "one of the main reasons for the transmission of astronomical knowledge from one nation to another was undoubtedly the spread of the belief in astrology as the one science which gave insight into the causes of the events on earth."[54] Neugebauer's conception of the word "science", which we now hold to be a mode of "systematized knowledge derived from observation, study and experimentation carried on in order to determine the nature or principles of what is being studied",[55] seems to me to be an ornate description of what seldom appears to be a set of primitively simple astronomical practices.

However, the oldest attested Astronomical writings appear to be the Egyptian star tables (or, star clocks), [56] which depict the annual motions of luminary objects. The earlier and later ones[57] are dated roughly to the years c.2150-1850BC and c.1250-1100BC respectively. With regard to examples which signify evil premonitions, among the Mari documents, there is a letter[58] (dated 1765BC) in which a lunar eclipse is described as a bad omen for a king. Afterwards it seems a period of silence extended itself over the Mesopotamian area until near the 7th century. This in no way implies a cessation in the dispersion of regional astral belief.[59]

For the period prior to 1400BC we know next to nothing about bronze-age Minoan astronomy, and there is but little evidence extant for any real astronomy practiced later by the Hittites. The early Hittite texts that contain astronomical features are all translated from Akkadian texts (i.e. sun and moon omens). There is a meteorological example where King Mursili claimed that one of his enemies was weakened by a storm-god who struck Ephesus with a mighty thunderbolt. The spectacular event was apparently seen by the ruler of the city, its citizens and the nearby Hittite army.

But such observations were typical of that period. By 400BC the calculations of birth signs were a customary part of life around the Fertile Crescent. Horoscopes from the cities of Babylon and Nippur date from about 410BC. And the knowledge for understanding the zodiac system seems to have become standardized by no later than 450BC.[60] This is underscored by the fact that the Babylonian remarks admitted by Hipparchus (c.190-c.120BC) all belong to the age of Naburianos[61] or earlier, ranging from 721 to 491BC.

From a Greek and Roman perspective, the significance of comets as portents of doom and disaster found its way into Manilius' *Astronomica*. But over a century earlier, further east, and principally in the case of Mithradates VI, the sight of comets implied more than peril; it signified the overthrow of existing powers and the emergence of a new King.[62] This novel but positive application of comets in propaganda was reinforced by their use on minted coins. Both Tigranes the Great (140-55BC) and Mithridates VI, also known as Eupator Dionysius, King of Pontus (135-63BC) issued coins with comets emblazoned upon them. The use of comets as favorable omens was so successful that a 'Pegasus' horse was displayed on Mithridates' coins, connecting his supernatural birth with the appearance of the comet in Pegasus.

Texts discovered more than six decades ago in the regions of the Dead Sea provide better insight into the use of Babylonian astronomical science among adherents of Judaism. The scrolls are dated between *circa* 150BC - AD75. No fewer than twenty texts exhibit astronomical features; the Jewish calendar tradition is amply attested and forms its own self-contained intellectual unit.[63] As scientific documents, albeit pervasively theological, each scroll reflects a dominant lunar tradition in use at the time of its composition. The tradition contains subtle links to the Mesopotamian school of thought that is dominant in previous centuries. Lunar phenomena found within scrolls 4Q320, 321 and 321a demonstrate how vast and wide the dispersal of Babylonian science was in antiquity.[64]

Across the greater Near East: Strabo (64BC - AD24), who wrote the *Geographica* under Augustus (27BC - AD14), mentions three Mesopotamian Astronomers, Cidenas, Naburianos and Sudines[65] (*Geo*. 16.1.6). His encyclopedic text is one of the best guides to understanding the diffusion of astronomical ideas through the wider spheres of the Roman worlds. A few of Hipparchus' supposed astronomical discoveries are now known to have been derived by him from Cidenas. One fragment related to Hipparchus witnesses to the fact that Simplicius (c.AD470-c.560) was right when he stated 'Babylonian wisdom in this regard was available in Greece *circa* the fourth century before Christ.'[66] And it may be true that Alexander the Great encouraged the translation

of eastern astronomical records into the Greek tongue for its dissemination among Hellenes.

When the Herodian dynasty (37BC - c.AD100) surfaced within Roman controlled Palestine, Babylonian Astronomy quickly fell into disfavor: though it may have been privately practiced till the 6th century AD. The earlier promulgation of ideas spurred by Jewish immigration after their captivity in Mesopotamia and upon their return to the Mediterranean regions did not prolong the scribal practices connected to Babylonian astronomical teachings.[67] Indeed by the time the cessation of Chaldean inscription had taken root, much further west and very much later in time the Anglo-Saxons were in process of perfecting their own ideas concerning *tungolcraeft* (astronomy). And the practitioner of this craft, known among them as a *steorceawere*, guided the thoughts of many Old English speakers. And even this lately formed, but altogether Westernly, astronomical model bore the distinct markings of those astral presumptions now better understood from contemporary studies of the Ancient Near East.[68]

The traveling sage could have caused Chaldean astrology to slowly seep into Roman philosophical schools by offering instruction in various forms of Stoicism. But in another, Manilius saw beyond the usual abstractions of broader philosophical views and produced a poem that never could have been written were it not for all the orally transmitted tales and widely dispersed Greek texts from the past, upon which he directly depended. Rebuilding the textual structures from which he culled his precise formulae is not an easy task; but I surmise that the author of the *Astronomica,* or one of his sources, was somewhat familiar with some Egyptian notions conveyed in hieratic and demotic writings, and that Manilius (or his sources) was less acquainted with the widespread features and contents of Babylonian astral ideas still extant in cuneiform.[69]

In regard to the material outlined above, more or less formal acquaintance with its type is, I believe, useful for reevaluations of the text of Manilius. Along with the knowledge of Latin, an understanding of Near Eastern astral lore, statistics and spherical geometry would be no less serviceable to anyone who is reading Manilius' text with Housman. Manilius' mastery of poetics in expressing astronomical features is superlative. When he writes that "thrones have perished, peoples passed from dominion to slavery, from captivity to empire, but the same months of the year have always brought upon the horizon the same stars" (*Astron*. 1.495), he assures us that the gods of old will be connected forever to the superintendence of modern men.

For more than three decades A.E. Housman worked on the manuscripts of Manilius. This was accomplished through his astute use of photographs and collations. He studied the form of the *Astronomica*, interpreting various shades of meaning in its poetry and plausibly conjecturing ways to establish the text on a scientific basis. Manilius was studied in times past but interest in his work now is greater than it has been in the last eighty years.[70] And Housman's detached style, found within his own five-volume publication on the poem, overshadows all investigations of Manilius' *Astronomica*. The downside to this improvement is clear: although he does not claim his commentary is comprehensive beyond the scope of his own objectives, his critical notes now seem to be canonical.. Housman's chief contributions are his emendations of the Latin text and conjectures; his comments on historical matters and astrological and astronomical phenomena are routinely given short shrift. His numismatic studies, such as they were, are ignored entirely.[71]

Few studies have looked at the artistic value of Manilius' poem,[72] a value that is deeply underappreciated, as can be seen by the relatively few published Latin anthologies which contain extracts of Manilius' poetry. He is labeled a minor poet[73], in the sense that his writing is not cited by anyone in antiquity. The poem is historically complexioned by its ancient language and content, but the manuscript might have been intended to be a privately circulated document. His Latin verse is often dismissed as mediocre. Viewing the *Astronomica* as a form of art and categorizing it as such, and interpreting it according to modern methods, is a strange idea. All the more fascinating is the fact that A.E. Housman spent so much time working with this text and wrote so extensively on nearly all aspects of the poem. Over the course of five volumes, his apparatus[74] is full of pithy bits of wisdom and acute knowledge gained from studying the relevant scholarship of the day. One facet of Manilius' poetry deserving renewed study is the presumed but undocumented use of the *Astronomica* in Late Antique authors of astral treatises. Today, uniqueness seems to be a term that is out of favor in studies of poetic genres. The prevailing opinion is that every author makes use of the standard traditions of the day.

Though there may be some truth to this belief, it will not do to deny the *Astronomica* the virtue which separates it from other poems of the time. A careful examination of its contents will challenge a pessimistic critic to defend his position. In the hope that a better appreciation of Manilius' achievement would challenge the reader's mind, I provide below an outline of the poem's contents.

A Layman's Guide to Manilius' *Astronomica*[75]

Book 1[76]

1.1–121 Prelude to astronomical song.

A summary of the intent, task[77] and purpose of Manilius' song (1–24); Gods and Priests and the uses of astral phenomena (25–121).

1.122–254 The universe: theorizing its origins (122-48) and the outward manifestations of its appearance, along with ruminations on predetermined movements of constellations (149-254).

1.255–560 Heavenly signs: Images of the zodiac described (255–93); the use of them by ancient navigators of the seas (294–307); The twelve zodiac constellations of the north and south, and their storied connections to Greek and Roman Myth (308–455); Nature and orderly appearance of the constellations (456–82); Brief thesis on how the ordered universe is proof of God's existence and everlasting decree;[78] the changing civilizations of Greece and Rome beneath the never changing luminaries; the wonder of the permanent heights of starry skies (483–560).

1.561–804 Celestial circles described: their arrangement, with regard to one another (561-630) and their apparent demarcation among the signs of the zodiac (631-734); Ancient Myths: The swift chariot of Phaethon's father (735-49);[79] and the Milky Way (750-4); Men of feats and valor (755-70); Wise ones (771-5); Valiant soldiers of Rome (776-804).

1.805-8 The planets: possibly a later insertion, see W. Hübner, 'Manilius als Astrologe und Dichter,' in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der R*ömischen *Welt* II 32.1 (1984), pp.126-320, especially 247f.

1.809–926 Comets and Shooting Stars: Thesis: comets are caused by the earth (817–66); Thesis: comets are caused by solar effusion

(867–73); Thesis: comets are divine portents of impending misfortune (874–926).

Book 2[80]

2.1–149 Prelude to continuance of song.

A survey of ancient Greek and Roman stories (1–56); The originality of the content of his unique song (57-79); Theme of the sovereign power of god (80-135); Reaffirmation of the stated aim of the song (136-49).

2.150–269 Division of signs and demarcation of signs of the zodiac, their influence on the seasons of the year and remarks on each sign's gender (150-222); Characteristics of zodiac signs and their influence on humans (223-69).

2.270–692 Interrelations of zodiac signs and their twelve aspects: i.e., trigons, squares, hexagons *et cetera* (270-432); Various deities appointed to individual signs (433-52); Bodily parts of and the twelve zodiac signs (453-65); Natural dispositions of men and their overt links to the arrangement of the stars (466-84); Signs of the zodiac illustrated to buttress the point of their influence on human nature (485-569, cf. 516; 534-5); Mutual and alternate signs: hatred and hostility among mortals explained (570-607), love and peaceful affection, too, described (608-42); Geometrical aspects: variances of the signs' nature according to heavenly positions (643-92).

2.693–787 Elucidation of the meaning and use of the Greek word, *dodecatemoria*, in the zodiac and explanations for why people born under the same sign display different human characteristics (693-750); Instructing children in the rudiments of writing (751-71); Metaphors highlighting his procedural activity of creating this poem (772-87).

2.788–970 The four cardinal points in the heavens above and their powers (788-840); Eastern and Western curves and their points of

interest regarding the governance of time from youth to old age (841-55); Discourse on the twelve temples, the gods who dwell therein and their powers (856-970).

Book 3[81]

3.1–42 Prelude to continuance of song.

Invocation (1-4); review of various events of ancient warfare: things he will not address since these topics are attractive and easy (5-30); The task of composing numerals *et cetera* in poetry (31-42).

3.43–202 The sequence of the stars and their connection to the fate of men (43-66); Proportional designations of signs of the zodiac (67-95); The twelve {horoscopic} residences, so elucidated as to permit one to understand all human existence according to the assemblage of signs (96-159); Uncovering the scientific position of the Lot of 'Fortune' (160-202).

3.203–509 Calculating the horoscope for one's time of birth (203-46); The use of daylight and darkness calculations in different seasons (247-74); Computing the ascension and descension of zodiac signs in order to discern an exact horoscope and their variations (275-384); Exhortation to the reader to learn Manilius' method (385-94); an alternate route laid out for calculating a horoscope (395-442).

3.443–682 The proper way to estimate the increase of daylight hours from the winter season to the summer solstice (443-82); Another method for calculating rising signs (483-509); special timeframes of human life: fortune and misfortune and the reasons no two periods of life replicate one another precisely (510-59); Calculating a human life span through horoscopy; understanding the years of life each sign can bestow and the role of the moon in this scheme (560-617); Tropical signs: what they mean to our understanding of the four seasons, especially

to the growth of agriculture on earth[82] (618-82).

Book 4[83]

4.1–121 Prelude to continuance of song.

The vanity of greedy desires[84] (1-13); Fate: the governor of the universe and source of human enrichment (14-22); Instances of fate's governance over various persons and events of Roman and Greek history (23-68); Melancholy verses on mysterious forces of fate in times of fortune and misfortune (69-107); Remarks on how the ordered structure of the constellation does not absolve anyone of guilt and/or commendation (108-21).

4.122–293 Explanation concerning what each individual sign imparts to earth's citizens: Ram (124-39), Bull (140-51), Gemini (152-61), Cancer (162-75) Leo (176-88), Virgo (189-202), Libra (203-16), Scorpio (217-29), Sagittarius (230-42), Capricorn (243-58), Aquarius (259-72), Pisces (273-93).

4.294–386 Greek system of decans (294–302); the complexity of it all (303-9); System of decans and their connection to each zodiac sign (310-62): although the signs display unity they are unable to produce similar characteristics in those born under the same sign (363-86).

4.387–584 The difficult tasks involved with discovering God (387-407); Additional information one needs to know in order to properly understand the nature of one born under a particular sign, numerical arrangements and what happens when the position of signs shift in degrees (408-501); The effect of temporary powers incurred as a change of degree increases (502-84).

4.585–817 Zodiac signs and their reign over select portions of the earth; Brief historical sketch of the land divisions and peoples of the known world (585–695); How different parts of the world ruled by different signs (696–710); Ethnic diversities (711–

43); Analysis of the phenomenon of the zodiac, sign by sign, and its influence upon worship practices; Distribution of the nations among the twelve signs: their influences on animate and inanimate creation (744–817).

4.818–935 Periods of time when zodiac signs lose their power to influence (818-40); the reason for the '*failing*' or '*ecliptic'* power (841-65); Of what use is such research if heaven's gifts remain invisible and impenetrable? (866-75); An answer: a man's mind knows no limits in its ability to perceive (876-97); The majesty of man and the formation of his indomitable spirit for the purpose of achieving an understanding of the riddles of heaven (898-935).

Book 5[85]

5.1–29 Prelude to final verses of extant song.

Manilius presumes that other poets would have concluded their poem at this point (1-7); A perceived divine summons to continue his adventures amid celestial signs (8-29).

5.30–173 Effects of the rise of Argo on the development of men's propensities toward sea worthy ventures (32-56); Orion's almighty visage (57-66); The charioteer and his steeds (67-101); Ram's rising and the manifestation of the kids (102-17); Hyades star cluster (118-27); Olenian goat of Jupiter (128-39); Bull and Pleiad sisters (140-56); the hare (157-73).

5.174–485 Astral configurations: belt (174-96); Procyon (197-205); Dogstar constellation (206-33); The bowl (234-50); Erigone (251-69); Ear of corn (270-92); Arrow (293-310); Goat/Hoedus (311-23); Tortoise shell (324-38); Incense flame (339-47); Centaur (348-56); arcturus (357-63); Golden swan (364-88); Serpent/Ophiuchos (389-93); Fish (394-408); Tortuous lyre (409-15); Dolphin (416-48); Cepheus' rising with Aquarius: with thoughts on the comedy of Menander (449-85).

5.486-709 Constellations, Aquarius continues: Eagle (486-503); Cassiope (504-37); Beginning of Pisces---Andromeda (505-630);[86] Pegasus (631-44); Engonasin (645-55); Whale (656-92); Bear (693-709); Cosmological magnitudes (710–33); Constellations as types of Roman social orders or caste system (734-45).

I acknowledge my indebtedness to George L. Huxley, adjunct Professor of Classics and Mathematics NUI-Maynooth and John T. Ramsey, Emeritus Professor of Classics at the University of Illinois-Chicago, who offered a profusion of suggestions about book sources and provided numerous criticisms, without which, this essay would have been less intelligible. Also I would also like to express thanks to Wolfgang Hübner, Professor of Classical Philology at the University of Munster, for his many critical remarks and bibliographical suggestions. He and I hold dissimilar views on significant points of interests, but his frequent disagreements with me on historical matters led me to not a few reconversions in my thinking, the worth of whose disagreements were not diminished by my persistent deviation from his opinions.

NOTES

1 Although this paper does tender a small number of polemical examinations of contemporary researches into Housman's Manilian work, for the most part it interacts with researches published in English.

2 There are a host of arguments witnessing to Manilius' alleged usage of *De Rerum Natura* in the formation of his work. One finds here a lot of research: H. Rösch, *Manilius und Lucrez: Inaugural Dissertation* (1911), B, Effe *Dichtung und Lehre. Untersuchungen Zur Typologie des antiken lehregedichts*, Manilius vv. 106-126, (1977), and in particular K. Volk, *The Poetics of Latin Didactic* (2002). I have found most of the inter-textual suppositions to be falsely presented, although the conclusion is not derived erroneously. To study comparatively the whole of both the Latin texts (*De Rerum Natura* and *Astronomica*) a variety of new ideas inevitably emerge. In one instance I collated Books 1-5 for comparison with Lucretius' work—making allowance for book 6 of *DRN*. Later I read Manilius' texts in reverse from Book 5 and read Lucretius texts forward from Book 1. Finally I read the *DRN* in reverse: from Lucretius' Book 6 to 2 backwards, as

I again read Manilius' Books 1 to 5. The results are not so exciting. Generally, similarities in wording, syntax or prepositional usage can be ascribed to formulations or terms which were readily known or were a common property in the vocabulary of the day. With respect to Manilius, the attempt at original research has typically ended in an obliteration of the uniqueness of the author under study: in this case, we refer to an author Housman found to be tedious after working with him for more than thirty years. I quote here an observance by Georg Luck: "Classicists have a tendency to assume that an ancient reader remembered almost everything he had ever read and that he, if he happened to be an author himself, was eager to quote anything he remembered on any suitable or unsuitable occasion", see page 62 of the article 'Was Lucretius Really Mad?--published (pp. 60-5) in *Ancient Pathways & Hidden Pursuits* (2000). Luck's statement about a reader's remembrance seems more applicable to persons such as me than to Manilius.

3 A. Maranini may have found Manilian influence upon Venantius Fortunatus (AD 535-603?). See the article 'Manilio Y Venancio', *Faventia* 19 (1997) pp.111-14.

4 For instance, they believed the "special child" of Virgil's *Eclogues* IV. 8-10 prefigured Christ Jesus, thus ushering in a Messianic age. Multitudes of Patristic authors used the "Star of Bethlehem" motif for their refutations of the patrons of astrology. Ignatius, Chrysostom and Basil may be called as witnesses too. They wrote much on this "star" issue during their day. One good resource on this subject is *Early Christianity and ancient astrology* (2007) by Tim Hegedus, and also W. Hübner's *Zodiacus Christianus:Judisch-Christliche Adaptionen des Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (1983).

5 Gregory of Nazianus' poem *Peri Pronias* defends God as The Divine Mind, and also offers a sterling critique of astrology. Gregory's exegesis of the concept of *logos* in Christianity, and of *muthos* in astrology, is still useful for study.

6 Housman wrestles with Bentley's arguments in his discussions on Manilius' texts in his classical papers and throughout his commentaries on the *Astronomica*.

7 The 1846 edition of F. Jacob remained the unsurpassed standard for some time. T. Breiter published in 1907 a text with apparatus, and J. Van Wageningen published a Teubner edition in the year 1915.

8 See A. Grafton's two volume work: *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship* (volume one: Textual Criticism and Exegesis, 1983; volume two: Historical Chronology, 1994) or see the brief article, 'Scaliger, Joseph Justus,' also by Grafton in *The Classical Tradition* (2010) pp.865-866.

9 Cf. M.D. Reeve, 'Scaliger and Manilius', *Mnemosyne* 33 (1980), pp.177-179.

Also see A, Maranini, *Filologia fantastica. Manilio e i suoi Astronomica* (1994).

10 G.P. Goold (1922-2002) was the William Lampson Professor Emeritus of Latin language and Literature at Yale and for many years editor of the Loeb Classical Library series.

11 See *M. Manilii Astronomica*, ed. G. P. Goold (Teubner, 1985; rev. 1998). Although some may find the (1996-2001) critical edition *Manilio Il poema degli astri (Astronomica)*, of E. Flores, S. Feraboli and R. Scacia to be better than the edition of Housman, indeed this is not my view. Their work has been strongly criticized by M.D. Reeve: see, e.g., *Gnomon* 72.1 (2002), pp.15-21.

12 See D.R. Shackleton Bailey's (1917-2005) review, 'The Loeb Manilius', *Classical Philology* 74 (1979), pp.158-69.

13 See D. Pingree's review, 'Manilius Astronomica' by G.P. Goold and 'Struttura Degli Astronomica di Manilio' by Elisa Romano, *Phoenix* 34.3 (1980), pp.263-6.

14 Goold does place O. Neugebauer's three volume work, *A History of Ancient Mathematical Astronomy* (1975), in his bibliography. However one well might quibble over places where he could have made better use of it.

15 In the genre of pseudepigraphy not a few works appear in abundance from the first century before Christ unto the third century in the year of our Lord. See Anthony Grafton's *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (1990), pp.10,18.

16 Pliny also mentions a Manilius who was a mathematician and invented a zodiacal sun-dial which was placed atop an obelisk by Augustan decree (cf. *Nat. Hist*. 36.15).

17 See M. Schanz's remarks in *Geschichte der Römischen Litteratur* II (1914), sec.363, where he refers to seven places: I.7, 384, 798, 898; IV.764, 934 and V.513.

18 I do not maintain Goold's view that the name "Astronomics" (p.xii, Loeb) is a nod to the name of Virgil's *Georgics*; only that it was wrought with the same care the author of the *Aeneid* exhibited in his compositions.

19 For the transcription of the actual texts see H. Hunger and D. Pingree's volume *MUL.APIN: an astronomical compendium in cuneiform* (1989). More useful remarks may be found in *Mesopotamian Cosmic Geography* (1998) by W. Horowitz: see especially pp.168-174. As to the second millennium date, see the

article, 'The Latitude and Epoch for the Origin of the Astronomical Lore in MUL. APIN' by B.E. Schaefer in *Bulletin of the American Astronomical Society* 39 (2007), p.157. Also see, 'Origins of the ancient constellations I. Mesopotamian traditions' by J.H. Rogers in *Journal of the British Astronomical Association* 108.1 (1998) pp.9-28: in which a careful survey and examination of the evidence are presented. More detailed coverage on these origins in English is provided by J. Evans in *The History and Practice of Ancient Astronomy* (1998). But this volume begins with astronomy among the Greeks c. BC 700.

20 See his still-useful paper: 'Adversaria Maniliana' in *Phoenix* 13.3 (1959) pp.93-112. He examines 12 texts from book one. A number of the English glosses are better translated in this paper than in the Loeb, and vice versa.

21 See his learned paper 'Housman's Manilius' in *A.E. Housman: Classical Scholar* (2009), pp.29-43.

22 *Ibid*. He cites his "lack of expertise" in astrological matters on page 37. To Courtney's credit, though, there is no lack of critical study of Latin word usage.

23 *Ibid*. p.29. Still too, it may be argued that labors of E. Baehrens' (*Sextus Propertius* 1880) and Palmer's (*Sex. Propertii eligiarum libri, iv, recens*, 1880) on the text of Propertius may have affected his decision,

24 For *Piscibus Euphrates datus est*, Goold wrote "on the fishes was bestowed the Euphrates...", utterly nonsensical. Would it not be better merely to insert a gloss such as 'to the fishes was given the Euphrates {river}… and the Tigris and the radiant shores of the red sea?

25 This word has been defined as "mighty water source" by F. Delitzch in *Sumerisches Glossar* (1914) s.v. I suppose it to mean 'Almighty waters,' as a description of its other than natural abilities embedded in its later Semitic roots.

26 Cf. *Manilius* 4.579-81.

27 His short preface, on pages v-xxxi of *Astronomicon* II, would not have been useful for navigation to most scholars of his day. His remarks make for turgid reading, since it contained astrological details which would have been more appropriate in his footnotes. His distressful reviews of editors of Manilius in the preface of *Astronomicon* V further illustrate his line of reasoning.

28 Post-modernism is a style and movement in the arts characterized by a distrust of theories and ideologies and by the deliberate mixing of different styles--so defined by the *Compact Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (2005).

29 Technical studies of the Latin style of the text of Manilius do not seem to be multiplying rapidly at all; indeed fresh interpretations of the poem's subject matter are on the rise. Of the latest attempts at interpreting the poetry of the *Astronomica,* Patrick Glauthier assumes the unthinkable: reading three divergent but didactic poems side by side for a "common intellectual dialogue". Thus in his 2011 PhD dissertation, *Science and Poetry in Imperial Rome: Manilius, Lucan and the* Aetna, submitted to Columbia University, he analyzes Manilius *Astronomica*, Lucan's *Civil War* and the *Aetna*. He presupposes that "Lucretius poem exerts a pervasive influence on all three texts", see p.13. But while reading and studying with him about Manilius' arrangement and transformation of mathematic science into poetry I am still unable to sense the overbearing presence of Lucretius, such as is the claim of other eminent persons and is maintained in Glauthier's arguments (pp.26-67). More than likely part of the "pervasive influence" is held together by *DRN* 5.335-7 where Lucretius claims to be 'first' to sing of Epicureanism. Standing alongside Manilius' claim at originality also it may appear to be probable that the influence is extensive but on the *DRN* lines I tend to agree with Cicero (*Tusc. Disp*. 4.3.6-7) that C. Amafinius preceded Lucretius and believed that Lucretius' wording refers to one who is 'first' (among others) in rank rather than 'first' in the seizing of an opportunity.

30 Housman's method of searching out the textual influences of other authors was not merely to search for similar wording, but to observe how the wording could be used to signify several points of interest in one context. There are only so many ways to say "Jeff observed the features of the sky and lamented its color." If the phrase "lamented its color" is discovered in another author's text, evidences will be needed to prove intertexuality. If one follows Housman's example in criticism, then readers cannot just cite the use of similar wording as evidence of 'borrowing'.

31 There is hardly any material left to us within the corpora of Latin texts that reveal the vulgar speech of the Roman native. One may look to the speech of the freedmen in the *Cena Trimalchionis* episode of Petronius' *Satyrica*, which is dissected repeatedly but remains unexciting for linguists performing strict diachronic analyses of ancient Roman terms. Moreover the prurient remarks of ancient Pompeian graffiti are not representative of society as a whole. In an adjacent arena of textual studies, such as the field of Assyriology, in not a few ways, colloquialisms are better represented in cuneiform tablets than in Latin script types. See William Hallo's two part series: 'Nungal in the Egal: An introduction to Colloquial Sumerian' (583-588) and 'Back to the Big House: Colloquial Sumerian, Continued' (pp.635-43), in *The World's Oldest Literature: Studies in Sumerian Belles-Lettres* (2010).

32 For instance, see his comments on 1.44-5. Manilius is describing how the wisdom of the knowledge of the sky descended to men, and he is speaking of how early

kings brought some humaneness to uncivilized peoples. The discussion then falls primarily to the area of the Fertile Crescent. Housman notes Bentley's deletion of line 44 and then moves on to describe his understanding of what Manilius means by the term "nigras". Housman goes so far as to state that Egypt did not have what he would have considered to be black-skinned inhabitants. He tries to ground his assumption by citing Manilius 4.724-7. Housman certainly believed that a specialized knowledge of astronomy far exceeded the understanding of any ancient, darker complexioned peoples. Popular opinions of his day found much agreement with the idea that the Caucasians introduced civilization to the Nile Valley, cf. *Ancient Egypt* (1843) by George Gliddon, chapter 6. Housman issued his commentaries on Manilius with scant regard for the modern discoveries of Orientalism: i.e. Assyriology, Egyptology. It is true in fact that, in a number of ways these areas of study were still in an immature stage but they were not so juvenile as a science that better truths for the undergirding of his comments could not be discovered and/or found. As far back as 1830s Gardner Wilkinson (1797-1875) published the results of his research in *Manners and Customs of the ancient Egyptians* (1837). He gave us pictures of Asians (Theban tomb 100), and Negros (Theban tomb 78). But to observe another place, Hanna Jenni, professor of Egyptology at the University of Basel (on March 18, 2011), directed my attention to the ancient Egyptians' awareness of ethnicity, with the illustration from the Book of Gates (New Kingdom) 5th hour 32nd scene published in E. Hornung's volume, *Die Nachfahrt der Sonne. Eine altegyptische Beschreibung des Jenseits* (1991), pp.81-3. The relief distinctly shows the portrayal of lighter and darker skinned peoples. These evidences were available during Housman's day, and the so-called father of Egyptology, Sir Flinders Petrie (1853-1942) occupied the chair of Egyptology at the University of London from 1892-1933. Though generally absent from the school, his publications were useful then, and he was a scholar of means during the time of Housman's professorship at UCL from 1892-1911. In light of these truths, an acute revision of historical matter in his (or any) commentary will be needed if it is re-issued. Housman's wrong idea was given new life by G.P. Goold. When he published his Loeb edition of Manilius, he translated *qua mundus redit et nigras super evolat urbes* as "where the stars return to view and soar above the cities of the dusky nations." – considering the context, there must be another way to settle the matter.

33 F. Turretin's four volumes *Opera*, *Institutio Theologiae Elencticae* (1847) and Aquinas' four volume, *Summa Theologiae* (1265-74) in *Patrologia Cursus Completus* (1846) still represent two of the best of the tradition of truly theological but scholastic Latin works of their ages. Isaac Newton's *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (1687) is noteworthy too and is a valuable contribution to the purely Latin scientific treatises published in its era.

34 Despite the variety of translation philosophies prevailing today, I believe the paraphrase has overcome them all because there are fewer professional scholars,

anymore, who read texts fluently enough to offer an essentially literal rendering of ancient texts. Since most students begin Greek and Latin studies much later than did the children of our forbearers five centuries ago, each stumbling-block to understanding a text usually leads to new and innovative interpretive theses that most likely would have been foreign to the original author and certainly is now to everyone else except the one who constructs them. Ancient authors often become modern-day puppets, saying all those things the contemporary 'living voice' inserts into their mouths.

35 I mention Manilius and Lucretius in tandem only because G. Goold says of Manilius: "He displays a thorough familiarity with Lucretius, whose philosophy he repeatedly seeks to rebut, and also with Virgil, from whom he repeatedly takes a word, phrase or idea," in *Astronomica* (2006), p.xiii, published by Loeb Classical Library. Goold's comparative system of eisegesis here is not so comforting to me.

36 I state this despite the claim made by Richmond Lattimore in the introduction (p.vii) to his English translation of the Greek New Testament. He speaks of the "natural ease" by which the text turns over into English. In *The Four Gospels and the Revelation* (1979) published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. For more extensive analysis, see Franz Boll, *Aus der Offenbarung Johannis. Hellenistische Studien zum Weltbild der Apokalypse* (1914; repr. 1967).

37 The reader is referred to the Dead Sea Scroll writings or any other literature from various parts of the world in pre-modern times. Generally ancient writers assumed some form of deity was behind all human action. Manilius' Stoicism remains unproven despite G.P. Goold's claims and Housman's contentions. Also see A. Macgregor's article 'Was Manilius really a stoic?' in *Illinois Classical Studies* 30 (2005) pp.41-65. The thesis that Manilius was not aSstoic is very old and W. Hübner disagrees with my argument here, citing to the contrary: G. Lanson, *De Manilio poeta eiusque ingenio* (Thesis, Paris, 1887). Once more see W. Hübner, 'Manilius als Astrologe und Dichter', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der R*ömischen *Welt* II 32.1 (1984), pp.126-320, in particular pp.257-268. In general Ernst Zinn, 'Die Dichter des alten Rom und die Anfänge des Weltgedichts', *Antike und Abendland* 5 (1956), pp.7-26, repr. in H. Oppermann (ed.), *Römertum* (1967), pp.155-87, and E. Zinn, *Viva Vox. Römische Klassik und deutsche Dichtung*, M. v. Albrecht Frankfurt (ed.), 1994, pp.123-48.

38 There are a number of classicists whose scholarship proceeds along astrological lines but their work, as I read the literature, has yet to be integrated in a focused way into the specific debates of why Roman authors framed their material as they did. Most often the invocation to the gods appeared at the beginning of the treatise or poem, or play. And if one reads closely, calendrical discoveries can be made. After this te usual signs here and there of what they believed the gods had

determined for the outcome of their literary works are perceivable.

39 By the early Middle Ages, astral studies do seem to have languished in the west, but in the east and in parts of north Africa, many ancient Greek volumes found Arab translators, and the sciences of mathematics and astronomy flourished greatly, again see Hübner's *Zodiacus Christianus* (1983).

40 The historical state of understanding of ancient Babylonian texts is treated in A.R. George's paper, 'Shattered tablets and tangled threads: Editing Gilgamesh, then and now'. The version on-line is an updated version of an earlier paper delivered in 2001 for the 37th Annual Conference on Editorial Problems: Reconstructing Ancient Texts. It must further be noted that Orientalists of Housman's day controlled Greek and Latin right alongside other languages of the Orient. This was in stark contrast to the fact that most Classicists of his day possessed little, if any, skill in the adjacent fields of Near East Studies or of what we now call West Asian studies. But Jesuit scholars J.N. Strassmaier (1846-1920), F.X. Kugler (1862-1929) and J. Epping (1835-94), were Assyriologists of note who formed a triumvirate of leadership in cuneiform studies and actively published their mathematical/astronomical findings from the 1880s unto the 1920s.

41 Ludwig Koenen's 1974 essay 'Egyptian Influence in Tibullus' underscores the ways in which some form of mediation was used to transmit ideas from one culture into another. To my knowledge Manilius' text has not yet been treated to thorough examination as to the extent that influences of ancient near eastern terms and cosmological constructs permeate his texts.

42 In early Greek works "astronomy" was also a term used for astrology and was linked to the adjective *astronomos*, (star-arranging). See Liddell and Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th edition. By the 17th century the division and distinctions between astronomy and astrology were more or less complete. I hasten to note one exception: in Syriac literature, astronomy appears to have remained distinct from astrology, as mentioned in a Syriac sentence in chapter four of Severus Sebokt's 1929/30 volume *On the Constellations edited*. Severus also wrote a treatise, *Description of the Astrolabe* (1899); prior to Nau, E. Sachau edited some fragments for *Inedita Syriaca* (1870), in which he published Severus' study 'On the measurement of the Heavens and the earth and the Space between'.

43 He wrote to Sir James G. Frazer (1854-1941) on occasion. Frazer was an anthropologist, historian of religion and classical scholar, known worldwide for his 1890 book *The Golden Bough*. It was a comparative treatise on folklore, magic and ritual in early cultures, including the beliefs of Christianity. None of this had any bearing whatsoever on Housman's understanding of ancient astronomy. However, on page x of his preface to *Astronomicon* IV he made

sound use of Professor A.A. Bevan's expertise in the Chaldean dialect for a term found in neo-Hebrew dress.

44 In his 1918 paper 'Anth. Lat. Ries. 678', in *HCP* III, p.955 Housman cites Sir George Cornwall Lewis' (1806-1863) useful 1962 volume *A Historical Survey of the Astronomy of the Ancients*. In the second half of the volume it contains an up-to-date and extensive description of the astronomy of the Babylonians, Egyptians etc., as understood by the ancient Greeks and Romans. Lewis possessed a keen understanding of ancient and modern languages. The text and footnotes contain the encyclopedia of his wide reading; but his conclusions call into question how Egyptian hieroglyphics were read and understood at the time he published his own astronomical treatise, and he deprecated the notion that the Greeks owed any of their astronomical understanding to the unscientific Chaldeans. This misapprehension of truth was finally overturned on February 21, 1928 when J.K. Fotheringham, University of Oxford Reader in Ancient Astronomy and Chronology, printed his public lecture 'The Indebtedness of the Greek to Chaldean Astronomy' in the *Observatory: A Monthly Review of Astronomy*, vol. 51, no. 653 (October 1928). All these observations were buttressed by the efforts of the German Jesuit Assyriologists, Strassmaier, Kugler and Epping.

45 I am grateful to G.L. Huxley for urging me to pursue this line of thought and its possible effect on Housman's studies of Manilius' calculations.

46 Professor Hübner disagrees with me here, stating: "This is not true: Housman follows the ancient discussion [of] the classical text the "Anaphrikos" of Hypsikles: Greek mathematics surmount Babylonian observation, see B.L. van der Waerden, *Die Astronomie der Griechen*. *Eine Einführung* (1988) pp.126-8." Even still, Housman's concurrence with ancient discussion does not absolve him of what I perceive to be a less than first-rate treatment of Manilius' estimations.

47 Cf. *HCP* II, 'Astrology in Dracontius', p.809.

48 The shapes of the Egyptian pyramids are thought by most Orientalists to be more or less astrologically defined.

49 By far the fullest study of comets preserved in Western sources is found in John T. Ramsey's 'A Descriptive Catalogue of Greco-Roman Comets from 500B.C. to A.D. 400', *Syllecta Classica* 17 (2006). For new findings on ancient horoscopes see A. Jones and J.M. Steele, 'A New Discovery of a Component of Greek Astrology in Babylonian Tablets: The "Terms"', in *Institute for the study of the Ancient World*, *Papers 1* (2011).

50 Astrological and astronomical lore/science was, in fact, one and the same for most of the ancients throughout most of the world. The Hebrew scriptures of the Old

Testament portray an early people attempting to build a city with a tower whose relationship with the upper heavens would prove significant (see *Genesis* 11:4). For most of the cultures which comprise ancient Western Civilization, Berosus' (c.mid-4th century BC) three volumes entitled: 'Babyloniaca' and Ussher's 17th century chronology controlled how ancient history was read and interpreted, and the latter's features still show up in Oriental studies now and then, however much scholars have attempted to cast off Ussher's long, shadowy cloak. Chronological formulae that make use of figures ranging from 100,000 to 1 million years ago and beyond, are of little formal value for developing astrological theories as to how and why citizens began to observe distinct features in the heavens. For these criticisms, texts and pictures are needed; essentially the hidden mysteries of old pictograms too are unfruitful apart from some minutiae of textual data. Dating the events on cuneiform tablets is fairly secure, within a range of 75 years. Ancient battles can be cross-referenced to other parallel documents of surrounding cultures, ancient kings can be matched to lists of other literary texts, and astronomical occurrences can be properly plotted forwards and backwards in time.

51 Published in 1936 by P.J. Wiseman (1888-1948), the "Wiseman Hypothesis" (or, Tablet theory) asserts that the *Genesis* accounts attributed to Moses were more or less passed down in time to later Hebrews from Abraham, more than likely through some form of cuneiform library which consisted of the earliest depictions of Jehovah's interaction with his creation. Although this theory is disputed in a thousand ways, few doubt that our earliest writings stem from Mesopotamian regions. More specifically, Sumerian tablets, have much to tell us, but the impression one often receives while reading through the critical notes of Sumerologists is that the interpretations of these ancient texts are not so firm.

52 It is argued that this is not the case with the ancient Persians (c.100BC) whose law and religion supposedly forbade slavery. However there are inscriptions which prove otherwise. There are instances of the sale of slaves documented during the period of Persian empire. See M.W. Stolper, 'The Neo-Babylonian Text from the Persepolis Fortification', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 43.4 (Oct. 1984), pp.299-310. Also see id., 'Fifth Century Nippur: Texts of the Murasus and from Their Surroundings', *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 53 (2001), pp.83-132.

53 See Francesca Rothberg's volume: *The Heavenly Writing: Divination, Horoscopy, and Astronomy in Mesopotamian Culture* (2004).

54 See p.168 of *The Exact Sciences in Antiquity* (2nd ed. 1993).

55 See *Webster's New World Dictionary* (2nd ed., 1986).

56 See Leo Depuydt's definitive article: 'Ancient Egyptian Star Tables: A

Reinterpretation of Their Fundamental Structure', in A. Imhassen & T. Pomerening (edd.), *Writings of early Scholars in the Ancient Near East, Egypt, Rome and Greece: Translating Ancient Scientific Texts* (2010).

57 The bulk of the early tables are found on the reverse side of wooden coffin lids while the later tables were painted on the ceilings of ancient stone crypts in the Valley of the Kings.

58 See Wolfgang Heimpel's volume: *Letters to the King of Mari* (2003) Letter 26 l.81, p.209.

59 One Hebrew fragment, allegedly of Palestinian provenance but dated to c.750BC, refers to Babylonian astrologers, cf. Isaiah 47.13. The depth of his acquaintance with Babylonian lore, as noted in his oracle against them, is beyond dispute here. It was understood that astrologers divided the heavens into various divisions in order to study luminary movements in the skies so to predict future events.

60 See Francesca Rochberg's volume: *Babylonian Horoscopes* (1998), pp.126-31, published by the American Philosophical Society, and H.G. Gundel, *RE Zodiakos* (1972), pp.488-95; G. Aujac, 'Le zodiaque dans l'astronomie grecque', *Revue de l'Histoire des Sciences* 33 (1988), pp.3-32.

61 This form is known in Greek sources. He is correctly known by Nabu-ri-mannu (?560-480BC).

62 See John T. Ramsey's paper, 'Mithridates, the Banner of Ch'ih-Yu, and the Comet Coin' in *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 99 (1999), pp.197-253. This paper provides a 'revised chronology of Mithridates' birth and accession' (pp.230-6) that is based upon exhaustive analysis of numismatic evidences, as well as examining the statements of Chinese sources (records of royal astronomers of the Han dynasty) with regard to the two comets of 135BC and 119BC. Ramsey concluded most likely the comet made its appearance in the constellation Pegasus (pp.218-28).

63 See J. Ben-Dov, *Head of All Years: Astronomy and Calendars at Qumran in their Ancient Contexts* (2008).

64 An examination of this point and of three calendrical scrolls was made by J. Ben-Dov and W. Horowitz in their article 'The Babylonian Lunar Three in Calendrical Scrolls from Qumran', *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 95 (2005), pp.104-20. As to the dispersion of Babylonian science among the Jews, the rabbinical schools of Second Temple Judaism valued Babylonian scientific tradition and embraced it thoroughly.

65 See W. Hübner, 'Zum Planetenfragment des Sudines (Pap. Gen. inv. 203)', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 73 (1988), pp.33-42.

66 See *In Aristotelis De Caelo*, ii. 12 (ed. J.L. Heiberg, 1894), p.506.

67 The Pseudepigraphal book I Enoch betrays links to Mesopotamia. Chapters 72-82 clearly display some understanding of astronomy and calendaric materials. Cf. *The Astronomical Chapters of the Ethiopic Book of Enoch (72-82)*, translation and commentary by Otto Neugebauer, with additional notes on the Aramaic fragments by Matthew Black (1985).

68 Otto Neugebauer might take issue with the above statement. For he had previously written: "The common belief that we gain "historical perspective" with increasing distance seems to me utterly to misrepresent the actual situation. What we gain is merely confidence in generalizations which we would never dare make if we had access to the real wealth of contemporary evidence." See *op. cit*., p.vi.

69 Cuneiform was still in use at the time of the composition of the *Astronomica;* the last known cuneiform tablet dates from the first century, c.75 AD. It is an astronomical tablet. See M.J. Geller: The Last Wedge, *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 87 (1997) pp.43-95. As to the Babylonian/Egyptian influences, W. Hübner informs me, "There has been a competition between Franz Boll who defended the Babylonian influence, and Wilhelm Gundel, who defended the Egyptian one. Recent research has shown that the Babylonian astronomy came to Egypt, where it was combined with indigene elements. After conquering Egypt in 31 BC the Romans learned the astrology from Egypt."

70 Proof of such renewed interest was exhibited in a 2008 conference on Manilius, the papers of which were published as a new book on *Manilius and his Intellectual Background* (2009).

71 An analysis of his accuracy or inaccuracy in handling numismatic material is long overdue. On page xvi of his preface to *Astronomicon* IV he does reveals a proper awareness of the importance of published results in numismatics.

72 The Apparatus contains subtle signs attesting Housman's delight with certain features of the poem as he journeyed through the text. This evidence needs to be further exploited in order to counter a tradition predominant today: that Housman was wholly unimpressed with the poem as a whole and saw it as a redundant mass of material. Would a man of his intellect spend decades on trying to improve the text of a worthless piece of writing, lamenting the time used by him to read through such an undesirable morass of literature?

73 Of Manilius, Sir Frank Adcock (1886-1968), a historian of Greece and Rome, said: He was "a lesser light, who shines in the reflected glory of a greater poet than himself", quoted by Christopher N.L. Brooke, *A History of the University of Cambridge 1870-1990* Vol. 4 (1992) p.2113. Of the scholarship of Gilbert Murray, as contrasted with A.E. Housman's Manilius work, distinguished classicist Gilbert Highet wrote, "He {Murray} would not spend years upon editing an obscure and third-rate poet – as his contemporary Housman did with Manilius, chiefly because the obscurities of the poetry and the corruptions of the manuscripts gave him good opportunities for demonstrating his intellectual acumen and advancing the art of textual emendation," in *The Immortal Profession*, (1976) p.162.

74 He informs us of his idea of what an apparatus criticus should consist: "interpretation and criticism", see *M. Manilii Astronomicon: Liber Quintus*, p.xxxiii.

75 I have chosen not to follow the traditional arrangements set out in the most recent commentaries on Manilius but have summarized the content in a way that may seem awkward but is novel and comprehendible to an educated laity.

76 Regarding the 1903 volume (*M. Manilii Astronomicon*: *Liber Primus*) of Housman's commentary, the 75-page introduction (i-lxxv) includes seven sections. Section {I}, vii-xi, is a survey of manuscripts, their oddities, their similarities and dissimilarities. Section {II}, xi-xxiii, surveys older and recent editions which "influenced, for better or for worse, the formation of the vulgate" (cf. p.xii). Section {III}, xxiii-xxx, presents a studied analysis of the merits and defects of MSS G,L, M and V. Section {IV}, xxx-xl, provides an outline of what Housman believes to be the requisite facility of mind and critical skills needed to edit Manilius; a series of problems and solutions from various ancient roman authors are then described. Section {V}, xl-liii, entails his personal, critical assessments of the art of textual criticism to-date, as practised by English and German persons – with discussions of specific texts. Section {VI}, liii- lxix, assails the traditional modes of criticism and defines his own methods in studying the 'transposition of letters' (liv-lix) and corruptions' (lix-lxix) when correcting texts. Section {VII}, lxix-lxxv, concludes with those details one typically expects to read in the initial part of a critical introduction: the title of the poem and historical arguments concerning the date of various books of the *Astronomica*. Housman's footnotes throughout the volumes are generally brilliant. Like a small notebook of ideas concerning history, grammar, old readings, *et cetera*, they contain things which may be interpreted a variety of ways. Moreover, as noted in his critical introduction to Book 1, on page lxxv, he does place his many conjectures for Books 2-4 at the end of the volume (pp.84-99). However, his conjectures on book 1 and 5 were published in the *Journal of Philology* 26 (1898) pp.60-3, and 27 (1900) pp.162-5 respectively.

77 The uniqueness of his perceived task is spelled out in lines 6 and 113; cf. 2.57, 3.1-3, 31.

78 Cf. lines 484 and 531.

79 This story is an eloquent piece of Latin composition. In my opinion it may be Manilius' best written short stanza in book one.

80 In the second volume, published in 1912 (*M. Manilii Astronomicon*: *Liber Secundus*), Housman's preface is thoroughly astrological (pp.v-xxxi). On pages v-x he presents a descriptive exposition of the various signs of the zodiac, as it relates to their image and appearance and function: gender (masculine and feminine signs are noted); signs with human semblances, double imaged signs; contiguous signs; diurnal and nocturnal signs, fruitful and barren signs are listed; signs pictured positioned as running, standing, sitting and lying are explained; maimed signs and signs corresponding to the four seasons: spring, summer fall and winter are noted. Pages xi-xvii are an exegesis of the 'circle of the zodiac:' of equilateral triangles; of trine aspects and hexagons and the aspect of direct opposition. But pages xvii-xxxi provide a complete list of 'geometrical relations of the signs:' love/hate relationships, *dodecatemories* (twelve equally divided arenas connected to each individual signs) and so forth. There is little original in Housman's exposition: mostly one finds very innovative restatements in English of the Latin text of Manilius. These summaries are the closest thing to a complete translation of the textual matter that one will read in Housman's edition. Certainly one must admit that the small print compendia found on many of the pages is encyclopedic and illustrative of Housman's concentrated powers of genius.

81 In *M. Manilii Astronomicon: Liber Tertius* (1916) Housman's preface (pp.v-xxviii) expounds these aspects of Manilius' astrology: explanations concerning the circle of the twelve athla (pp.v-viii), with a rebuttal of Scaliger's assertion that diurnal and nocturnal methods are essentially the same (p.ix); notes on Manilius' use of Pharoah Nechepso's and High Priest Petosirus' Greek terms (pp.x-xi); calculating a horoscope (pp.xi-xxii); notes on astrologers' views on celestial influence over the time-spans of human life (pp.xxiv-xxvi); temples (pp.xxvi-xxviii).

82 Manilius refers to this development specifically under the sign of 'Cancer' in lines 625-36.

83 Housman's abbreviated preface (pp.v-xvii) in *Astronomicon* IV (1920) covers only select verses: e.g. 294-386 –material related to *decanica*, pp.v-vii; 408-501 – an investigation into the 30 degrees of each sign, pp.x-xii; 744-817 – an

examination of the incomplete world system in which various signs supposedly governed various land tracts.

84 This small portion reads like an adaptation of portions of the Biblical book, *Ecclesiastes*.

85 In *M. Manilii Astronomicon: Liber Quintus* (1930) a preface of 41 pages is given (pp.v-xlvi). Pages v-xxiii offer another glance at Manilius' MSS as collated and examined anew; pages xxiii-xxxvii presents his criticisms of various editions of Manilius' work published since the turn of the twentieth century: criticized are T. Breiter's text and commentary of 1907-8, pp.xxiii-xxv; H.W. Garrod's 1911 edition of book II, pp.xxv-xxvi; J. van Wageningen's 1915 text and 1921 Latin commentary, pp.xxvi-xxxii; Housman's own laudations of his work on the texts of Manilius, pp.xxxii-xxxvii; on pages xxxviii-xlvi Housman puts forward remarks on the astrological and astronomical material in book V. *Please note: in the summary for Book 5 I have bypassed the usual outline which denotes in order, Aries (30-139), Taurus (140-56), Gemini (157-73), Cancer (174-205), Leo (206-50), Virgo (251-92), Libra (293-338), Scorpion (339-56), Sagittarius (357-88), Capricorn (389-448), Aquarius (449-537) and Pisces (538-630). This outline and much more is found in W. Hübner's *Astronomica Buch V* (2010).

86 Lines 538-618 are, in my opinion, the finest piece of poetic-narrative writing in this entire astronomical treatise.

Limericks and A.E. Housman

by

P. G. Naiditch

Limericks do not figure largely in A.E. Housman's writings.[1] It is known neither how many he wrote, nor how many he enjoyed.[2]

The most general testimonies for his enjoyment of limericks consist of references in letters from his brother Laurence.[3] '[A] youth (aged 19) on his way to Oxford… wants to be assured that the object of his adoration did not love smutty jokes and naughty limericks: on which point I have had some rather malicious satisfaction in disappointing him'.[4] Likewise, in letters to Maude Hawkins, Laurence affirmed that he and his brother 'exchanged naughty "Limericks" for which (when they were witty and not merely dirty) we both had a taste', and that AEH was delighted by improper limericks 'when they were clever: when they were only 'dirty' they didn't'.[5]

Only one limerick by Housman seems to survive, and it is innocuous: 'There was a young lady of Rhymss | Who filled the cathedral with screamys | And tore out her hair | As she howled in despair | "I shall never be Countess of Wemyss"' (California State University, East Bay, Special Collections, PR 4809.H15 A11 1897, first successfully transcribed and published by Burnett *ibid*. p.69).[6]

NOTES

1 Housman was the subject of a limerick in 1907: 'There was a Professor of Latin, | Who honoured the Chair which he sat in, | In preparing a text | He was never perplexed, | When to strike this word out and put that in' (*UCLUM* 2.3, March 1907, p.92 = Naiditch, *A.E. Housman at University College London* [Leiden 1988], p.136).

2 One has to take care in recognising the risqué: as Tom Lehrer sang, in 'Smut', 'All books can be indecent books | Though recent books are bolder, | For filth (I'm glad to say) is in the mind of the beholder. | When correctly viewed, | Everything is lewd' (http://www.sing365.com/ music/lyric.nsf/Smut-lyrics-Tom-Lehrer/6AF3E9A2451F2F05 48256A7D0025920C). I think of the Oxford bus, the 'Little Nipper' (http://www.bus-and-coach-photos.com/picture/

number3974.asp), and call to mind the infamous cabin-boy. Others, more innocent, see nothing obscene in the name of the bus (cf. 'Cabin Boy' [©1951] in *The Best of Damon Knight* [New York: Pocket Books, 1976], p.18).

3 L. Housman to Reginald Reynolds, July 19, 1939 (Bromsgrove Public Library, box 2). I am grateful to Caroline Faulkner (ACS, Libraries and Learning), Bromsgrove Public Library, for leave to publish the excerpt from Laurence Housman's letter, and to Jim Page for arranging the permission (both per e-mail Nov. 29, 2011).

4 Feb.12, 1957 and March 30, 1957: Library of Congress, L. Housman collection, box 2, the last two quoted by A. Burnett, *Notes and Queries* 46.244, (March 1999), p.69.

5 Such statements depend on the values of the listener. 'Housman then told me one of the most obscene French stories I have ever heard in my life – not funny, only abominable' (diary of A.C. Benson, Magdalene College, Cambridge, vol. 169 f.14 [Jan. 26, 1923] = T.E.B. Howarth, *Cambridge between Two Wars* [London, 1978], p.80).

6 For Housman's collection of erotica and sexual studies, see Naiditch, 'The Extant Portion of the Library of A.E. Housman: Part IV. Non-Classical Materials', *HSJ* 31 (2005), pp.155-8. Peter Howarth, 'Housman's Dirty Postcards: Poetry, Modernism, and Masochism', *PMLA* 124.3 (2009), p.779 n.4, adds several works I excluded because missing when I consulted the collection.

A.E. Housman and Babu English

by

P. G. Naiditch

A.E. Housman relished different sorts of humour. One sort was Babu English, a pompous, semi-learned language, associated with India and superimposed atop a loosely English grammar.

In reality, there is little actual evidence of Housman's enjoyment of Babu English. One can put no emphasis on books such as F. Anstey's *Baboo Jabberjee B.A.* (London, 1897; for context, see Shompa Lahiri, *Indians in Britain: Anglo-Indian Encounters, Race and Identity, 1880-1930* [London, 2000], pp.92-5), for there is no evidence that Housman owned any such book. (But Anstey, like Housman, was a contributor to *Ye Rounde Table*.)

Still, one instance to evidence Housman's enjoyment survives: William White, 'Housmaniana', *American Book Collector* 15.2 (Oct. 1964) p.6, who reported:

> … Another [sc. Housman] collection is owned by Houston Martin[1] in Mr. Martin's collection are a number of items he obtained from Laurence Housman, … some of them of the greatest importance. Other pieces, such as the one below, are of small value, though they are nonetheless very amusing… Written in his [AEH's] … clear and legible hand, this letter, which is not dated, was according to Laurence Housman, copied from an Indian newspaper:[2]

Beloved Sir,

I arrived by passenger train at Ahmedpore Station and my belly is too swollen with Jack fruit.[3] I am therefore went to the privvy. Just as I am doing the nuisance, the guard making blow the whistle for the train to go off and I am running with lota in one hand and doti in the next, when I am fall over and expose my shockings to many female women on platform and am got leaved at Ahmedpore Station. This is too much bad if passenger go to making dung that damn guard not wait train five minutes for him. I am therefore pray your honour to make big fine on guard for public sake, otherwise I am making report to the papers. From your truthful servant<.>

Okhil Chunder Ser.

Behampore, Bengal.

Evidently no one make a big fine on the guard, for his victim seems to have had a full report to the papers…

NOTES

1 For Houston Martin, see Archie Burnett, *The Letters of A.E. Housman* (Oxford 2007), I p.xli. Martin sought to create a comprehensive AEH collection. Eventually, Martin sold his holdings to Seymour Adelman, whose collections are now at Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania. Eric L. Pomroy (Director of Library Collections and Seymour Adelman Head of Special Collections, Bryn Mawr College) has kindly provided me with a very faint scanned image (per e-mail Nov. 18, 2011).

2 Over twenty variant readings, mostly trivial, are to be found in this and other transcriptions. Starting with a preface absent from *ABC*, and present in other transcriptions,—'Letter written by Okhil Ch. Sen. in 1909 to the Sahibgarij divisional office West Bengal after which train compartments came to have attached toilets.'—http://treebeard31.files.wordpress.com/ 2006/07/okhil.jpg: 'Beloved Sir.'] 'Dear Sir'. 'I arrived'] 'I am arrive' 'train at'] 'train' 'Jack fruit'] 'jackfruit' 'therefore'] 'therefor' 'the privvy'] 'privy' 'am doing'] 'doing' 'blow the whistle'] 'whistle blow' 'lotah'] 'LOTAH' 'and'] '&' 'dhoti'] 'DHOTI' 'next'] 'next,' 'and'] '&' 'my shockings'] 'all my shocking to' 'many women'] 'man & female' 'platform'] 'platform.' 'am'] 'I am' 'at Ahmedpore'] 'Ahmedpore' 'This is] (new paragraph) 'This' 'dam'] 'damn' 'therefore'] 'therefor' 'sake, otherwise'] 'sake. Otherwise' 'report to the'] 'big report to papers' 'From your truthful servant'] (new paragraph) 'YOUR'S FAITHFULLY SERVENT' 'Chunder'] 'Ch.'

3 For Jackfruit (Artocarpus heterophyllus), a laxative, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jackfruit.

Terence, this is stupid stuff

by

P. G. Naiditch

In 1937, the theatrical producer Daniel Frohman referred to '[t]he old Greek dramatist, Terence' (*Encore* [New York 1937], p.163; GoogleBooks). Five years afterwards, Katharine E. Symons referred to Terence as a 'Greek' dramatist (KES to Grant Richards, June 8, 1942: Library of Congress, Grant Richards Papers box 2). In 1979, Mr Richard Perceval Graves elaborated on the statement: 'The Greek dramatist Terence was brought to Rome as a slave, and lived there in exile; no doubt Housman, thinking of his own exile in London from the world of his childhood, saw some similarity in their situations' (*A.E. Housman: the scholar-poet* [London, 1979], p.101).

In 1981, Mr Graves corrected his blunder in his Oxford edition.[1] In 1997, Kristen Deiter, dependent on RPG's uncorrected edition, wrote: 'Graves compared the Greek dramatist Terence, who went to Rome as a slave'.[2] Most recently, in 2011, George Haynes again revived the idea. In 'The importance of Housman's lad', *HSJ* 37 (2011), p.110, Mr Haynes suggested that: 'Terence (*ASL* 8, 62) may represent Terence, the Greek dramatist, who was brought as a slave to Rome where he lived in exile. References to Terence in *A Shropshire Lad* unify the cycle for just like Terence, Housman's lad, in *ASL* 37, is removed from Shropshire, a place of happiness and innocence (almost pastoral idyll) to London.'[3]

The life of Terence is sufficiently vexed that one must now see it peopled with another zombie. Elsewhere, we have, lurching along the highway, Terence's patron Gaius Terentius Lucanus, or Publius Terentius Lucanus, or Marcus Terentius Lucanus, or Quintus Terentius Culleo. And now Terence himself is re-created as a Greek.[4]

NOTES

1 R.P. Graves, *A. E. Housman, the scholar-poet* (London, 1979 = New York, 1980), p.101; (Oxford, 1981), p.101 (text changed to 'The Latin dramatist Terence'). In reviews, easily half-a-dozen critics corrected the mistake: see Philip Toynbee, 'Ashes under Uricon', *Observer*, (Sunday) Nov. 18, 1979, p.39 col.1; Hugh Lloyd-Jones, 'A.E. Housman and biography', *London Review of Books*, Nov. 22,

1979, p.3; Julian Tunnicliffe, 'A. E. Housman', *Trinity Review* 1980, p.34; John Sparrow, 'Lunching with life', *London Magazine* 20.3 (June, 1980), p.85; James Diggle, *Classical Review* 31.1 (1981), p.148; my review in *Classical Journal* 77.4 (April/May, 1982), p.363 = Naiditch, *Problems in the Life and Writings of A.E. Housman* [Beverly Hills, 1995], p.183). In 2009, all of this was changed again when Mr Graves reverted to his text of 1979 in the 'Faber Finds' reprint of his book, which dates to July 16, 2009 (http://www.faber.co.uk/article/ 2009/10/ aehousman-new-introduction/).

2 '"But oh, good Lord, the verse you make: a critical history of A.E. Housman's, "Terence, this is stupid stuff"', *HSJ* 23 (1997), p.73.

3 The improbable thesis, that *A Shropshire Lad* is a unified poem, was championed e.g. by B.J. Leggett, *Poetic Art of A.E. Housman* (Lincoln, Neb., 1978), p.104. Leggett explained the positioning of *ASL* 20 as Housman's 'pursu[ing] his new conception of death to its logical conclusion by contemplating suicide'; however, AEH explained the poem as 'only put in for variety' (H. to J. W. Mackail, July 25, 1922: *The Letters of A.E. Housman* ed. Maas [London, 1971], p.200; ed. Burnett [Oxford, 2007], I p.505).

4 Suet. uit. Ter. 1: '*P. Terentius Afer Carthagine natus seruiit* [al. *seruiuit*] *Romae Terentio Lucano senatori.*'

Corrections

Moses Jackson's last letter to A.E.H. was written in a mix of pencil and ink from his death bed in hospital in Vancouver. A transcript of that letter was published in *Housman Society Journal* 36 (2010), pp.34-53. Following close scrutiny of a high-resolution scan of the original letter, two errors in my original transcript need to be corrected:

- At 12.1-2 : Original transcript read ' I haven't your last letter here, but remember an extraordinary exhibition about blacking boots!' This should read 'I haven't your last letter here, but remember an extraordinary ebullition about blacking boots!'.

- At 12.5-7: Original transcript read '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...' This should read '… to consume cold ribs of beef 10" thick...'.

Andrew Jackson

'My father's family was Lancashire', *HSJ* 36 (2010), pp.77-101.

- P.88: My remark that the Revd Robert Housman (1759-1838) gained an albeit narrow niche of national fame in his own right stands; but I go on to say that had A.E.H. made no mark Robert would still "be written up briefly by Watson and copiously by Pugh." Of course he would not have been: these writers were inspired by A.E.H., the great grandson, and would never have tackled Robert for his own sake even though Mr Pugh does spend a deal of time in Lancaster.

- Ibid., p.92: Julian Hunt's recent research demonstrates that Robert never benefited even indirectly from the vast inheritance bequeathed by a distant relation of his wife's to her and their children; and neither, it seems, did his wife. The inheritance was only released in the 1850s, at least sixteen/eighteen years after their deaths, to the benefit of the by then well middle aged, even elderly, surviving offspring.

Clive Jenkins