

English Department Alumni Newsletter

January 2016

*Welcome from the Head of Department,
Professor Mark Ford*

That should really be 'Welcome from the *temporary* Head of Department': after five years at the helm Professor John Mullan is currently taking a well-earned break from the rigours of the top job, but will be reassuming control for another five years next September. One of his last instructions to the caretaker cap'n left in charge was, 'Get out an alumni newsletter if you can, plus organize an alumni event, or two ...'

I recently ran into a illustrious, novel-publishing former student of the Department, and we reminisced about the likes of Karl Miller, Dan Jacobson, Michael Mason, Keith Walker ... all, to borrow a phrase from one of Karl's favourite poets, Henry Vaughan, 'gone into the world of light', a poem whose beautiful opening stanzas I can't resist quoting:

They are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit ling'ring here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest,
After the sun's remove.

Our discussion made me think not only of the vast changes that the Department has undergone since such as Karl and Dan crossed swords in ferocious critical debate in graduate seminars, but also of the continuities that make the UCL English Department of 2016 not so very different from the one of thirty or forty years ago. We still give all our students

one-to-one tutorials, we still make them learn Anglo-Saxon and Middle English in the first year, we still insist that Chaucer and Shakespeare are compulsory, we still spend a whole day each year scrutinizing every exam paper minutely to make sure that a student can write in Finals on, say, Joanna Southcott or Charles Brockden Brown. We have many more students now than back then (our current first year is around 90) but our principles remain roughly the same.

It has not, I won't deny, been easy to preserve our way of doing things, which is at variance with the modular systems that most departments operate, but our position has been made easier by the high scores we achieve in National Student Surveys – a big thanks to any of you who filled in one of these towards the end of your third year, and most especially if you gave us the thumbs up! High performance in such assessment exercises has been crucial to our ability to resist pressure to make us like everyone else.

We have also been helped in this by our performance in another assessment – the dreaded REF! i.e. the Research Exercise Framework. When the results of this were published in September of 2014 we were delighted to find that what they call our 'outputs', that is our books and articles and editions, were deemed to be the best in the country – or to put it in REF terms, 49.5% of our 'outputs' were ranked at 4*, the highest percentage of 4*s in English out of all submissions. Phew! We all breathed a collective sigh of relief, and got back to teaching and writing and editing, confirmed in the belief that sticking to our guns and doing what we believed in was a viable 'strategy' conducive to achieving 'global excellence', to borrow

a couple of academia's favourite buzz-words.

I can't, in this prefatory note, do more than gesture towards the most important publications seen into print by members of the Department, or events that we have organized or participated in. I would like to give a special mention, however, to Bas Aarts and Nick Shepley, who were both nominated for the Provost's Spirit of Enterprise Awards, and then made the final shortlist of 3. Alas, they were pipped on the night by a Professor of Biomedical Technology, but you can see what made them into contenders by clicking on this <https://www.londonentrepreneurshiponline.com/videos/viewvideo/2761/ucl-awards-for-enterprise-2015/ucl-provosts-spirit-of-enterprise-award-2015>

The UCL English Department has never been an Ivory Tower sort of place, and books such as John Mullan's *What Matters in Jane Austen?* and Matthew Beaumont's *Nightwalking* have racked up sales figures that many a literary novelist would envy – and make a poet hang his head in despair! *Nightwalking*, incidentally, will form the basis for our next alumni event which we will be hosting in Foster Court on the evening of Monday, 22 February. If you can't make that, why not come to our *One Day in the City* festival, which will be on 27 May (see Nick Shepley's account of its programme below). Lots of us will be involved, delivering snapshots of our current research projects, introducing and interviewing favourite writers, and we intend to put an all-day readathon, the current front runner for this being Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*. If you come along you may well be asked, or invited to read too. I wonder how long it will take to get from 'Mrs Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself' to

'For there she was'. Well, you'll only find out if you join us.

Mark Ford

Enslaved to Austen

by John Mullan

Some readers of this newsletter might once (over the last two decades) have attended the Jane Austen seminars that my tolerant colleagues allow me to give every couple of years when the Romantics course (remember that?) is running. If so, you therefore humoured me in my obsession and perhaps contributed to my 2012 book *What Matters in Jane Austen?* (for it is rich in insights filched from undergraduate seminars.) Perhaps, when life lours, you still read her novels, for being a Jane Austen aficionado is usually a lifetime commitment. You can go for a few years without rereading *Paradise Lost*, wonderful though it is, but not without rereading *Emma*.

Being a Jane Austen buff, I have discovered, is an occupation in itself; once you have attached yourself to Austen, she is always with you. As you will see from Mark Ford's Head of Department's column above, I am on leave this academic year. I am working on a book on Dickens' novels – and really, I am - but I can't get away from Austen. Members of the Department are supposed to use this newsletter to tell alumni what they have been up to, and the truth is that the last few years have seen me in a state of happy Austen-enslavement.

Of course, more than any other classic writer, she has a huge non-academic readership. Even newspapers love her. Whenever I write an Austen-based article for the *Guardian*, there comes a shower of responses on the website. Half of these respondents say that their

faith in newspaper journalism has been restored, while the other half complain vehemently that Austen is an over-rated purveyor of snobbish chick lit or observe that they prefer the Brontës. (There seems a common conviction that you cannot love *Persuasion* and *Jane Eyre*.) When I give talks about Austen at literary festivals the most enthusiastic Austenites are sometimes accompanied by partners (let us be candid – husbands) who sit glassy eyed through the whole event.

The most faithful of the faithful are the members of the Jane Austen Society. They are sometimes condescended to, but are a more demanding constituency than some academic research seminars. Before I completed my book I road-tested different parts of it at various meetings of the Jane Austen Society, whose beady members were quick to detect errors (though much politer than academics in pointing them out). In the USA many of the members of JASNA (the Jane Austen Society of North America) don Regency garb for their gatherings. But the academic who thinks it is all a joke had better be careful: members of this audience are as gimlet-sharp on the minutiae of Austen's life and work as their British counterparts.

I gave the plenary lecture at their annual jamborees in Philadelphia (2011) and Minneapolis (2013) and am already booked for Kansas City in 2018 (formidably efficient JASNA gets itself organised well in advance). I was booked to talk about hair and the seaside in Louisville, Kentucky and in April will be going to Philadelphia to talk about courtship and kissing (yes, there is some in Austen's novels, you just have to know where to look).

The Americans are crazy for 'Jane', but so are Germans, Italians and

Scandinavians. In December I was in Paris talking about *Sense and Sensibility* to an audience of candidates for the agrégation, the post-graduate exam that guarantees those who pass a job in French secondary education. Austen's novel is this year's English set text: nice to think that a proper understanding of the folly of Marianne Dashwood's judgements might qualify you for educating the Republic's teenagers. The assembled would-be agrégés seemed as exercised as any other group of Janeites about how fair it was to make Marianne marry Colonel Brandon and whether Elinor did have a sense of humour. My old mentor Tony Tanner, whose original Penguin introductions to Austen novels first opened my eyes to their brilliance, told me that wherever in the world he gave talks about Austen, audience members would tell him that her fiction made perfect sense in their countries, even if the British no longer understood it. Yet cultural expectations do differ. In Norway, during a *Pride and Prejudice* Q&A, I incautiously expressed the view that Mr Bennet had been wrong to allow Lydia to go to Brighton chaperoned only by another teenager, and that we should be troubled at the thought of Lydia, one month past her sixteenth birthday, shacked up with a practised rake in his mid-twenties. My opinion was greeted with amused shaking of heads amongst the Janeites of Trondheim. Several explained to me that only repressed English readers would think this, and to them Lydia seemed a free spirit doing what teenagers naturally do – though they agreed that Wickham might be a poor choice of fellow experimenter.

I probably give a talk about Austen somewhere or other every two or three weeks. As Falstaff says, 'tis no sin for a man to labour in his vocation'. Usually there is a quiz element, exploiting the

sagacity of the many amateur experts out there. Which Austen novel has the most times of day in it? Why is Ramsgate a dangerous place? Who says they hate money? How many times does Mr Darcy smile? Who is the only married woman in Jane Austen to call her husband by his first name? Naturally, the answers to these questions reveal new aspects of Austen's ingenuity.

I had not realised it when I was writing my book, but it was published just in time for a string of anniversaries. It just missed the 200th anniversary of Austen's first published novel, *Sense and Sensibility*, which appeared in 1811, but – to my publisher's pleasure – it was in place for the bicentenaries of *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814) and *Emma* (1815). And we have Jane Austen's death (1817) and the publication of *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey* (1818) to come. Oddly, journalists and broadcasters love anniversaries, which license them to talk about things that did not happen today or yesterday.

2013 – *Pride and Prejudice* year, so to speak – was a bonanza year for Austenites. On the night of 27 January 2013 I found myself staying in a melancholy hotel in Alton, Hampshire, so that I could be on location for a live broadcast at 6.30 the next morning from Jane Austen's House at Chawton, a couple of miles away. My slightly befuddled comments duly became the opening moments of Radio 4's Today programme. Even BBC 2's the Culture Show managed a feature, as I hopped from foot to foot in the snow outside Chawton Manor, the house inherited by Austen's older brother Edward, and tried to find something to say between clips from film adaptations. (The extracts from the 1940 Laurence

Olivier/Greer Garson *Pride and Prejudice*, scripted partly by Aldous Huxley, seemed not to have a word written by Jane Austen.)

The path to Chawton, where Austen wrote all of her six novels in an incredible period of some six or seven years, became well-trodden. The then-controller of BBC 2 turned out to be an Austen aficionado and gave the go-ahead for a high-budget restaging of the Netherfield ball in *Pride and Prejudice*, the event at which Elizabeth and Mr Darcy dance together. This time I was a consultant – meaning I had to keep explaining why dancing was such a big deal and to provide a running commentary on each character's behaviour. But in fact, with the gaggle of food experts and costume experts and the Regency dancing expert that the BBC had assembled, I learned much more than I ever explained.

Emma year has, sadly, just slipped past. All UCL English graduates will, I'm sure, know that while the title page of the first edition of *Emma* said '1816', it was in fact published in December 1815. In December 2015, to mark the anniversary, I took part in a discussion of *Emma* on Radio 4's In Our Time. Melvyn Bragg doesn't usually demur from the judgments passed by quantum physicists or historians of Mesopotamia, but he was not reticent about Austen's most brilliant and complex novel. *Emma* was remarkably cruel, he thought, recruiting at least one of the other contributors to his side. 'Emma Woodhouse, c'est moi', I reckon.

As I write this, I'm just back from talking at a school where *Northanger Abbey* is being studied for GCSE. Tomorrow it is the Woodstock Literary Society, whose members are apparently hungry for details of Frank Churchill's deviousness

and Harriet Smith's stupidity. My only problem is that, being on leave this year, I can't get a member of my UCL seminar group to find the tricks and jokes in Austen's novels that I have never noticed before.

John Mullan

Sylvia Townsend Warner Journal

by Peter Swaab

I'm glad to report to alumni that I've taken on the editing of the *Sylvia Townsend Warner Journal*, which will now be published by the expanding UCL Press and have its home in the English Department. The Journal was first published in 2000 and has appeared once a year since then, until now only in print versions. Under the new arrangement it will be continue to be published in a print version received by members of the Sylvia Townsend Warner Society, but will also come out electronically, on open access to all. There will now be two issues each year, and the url (to be confirmed) will be easily findable with a google search of the journal title.

More recent alumni may remember me proselytizing about this wonderful writer in seminars and tutorials. She was versatile and she was long-lived. Her first book, a collection of poems, was published in 1925. It might have been read by Thomas Hardy, and was read – and admired – by Housman and Yeats. Her final book, a collection of astringent fairy stories, appeared in 1977, when the Sex Pistols were in their brief prime. In the years between she was enormously prolific in several genres: seven novels, around 250 short stories, a biography, poetry, a travel book, essays, translations from Spanish and French. She was also a composer

and a musicologist before she turned to literature. She was a great letter writer too (three volumes are in print), with an intellectual energy, generous curiosity and verbal flair that never abated. Her friends spoke wonderingly of her rapidity of mind. On waking of a morning she could at once carry on the conversation of the previous evening, full throttle, no coffee needed. She lived most of her life with another woman, Valentine Ackland, was a member of the communist party, twice went to Spain during the Spanish Civil War. She'd be around the table at my fantasy dinner party, along with Jean Renoir, John Keats and a few others who change from month to month.

What can literary criticism do with a writer of such fertility and scope as Warner? As yet, it hasn't done nearly enough; there is, for instance, no critical monograph on her writing (though Claire Harman has written a fine biography). Her main genres – the historical novel and the short story – are often condescended to. Both her longevity and her versatility hinder the categorizing that helps writers onto curricula. Her career represents a challenge to current ways of thinking about literary history. She does not fit readily into a story of avant-garde 'modernism'. Terms such as 'intermodernism' and the 'middlebrow' have been brought forward recently to challenge the straitjacketing narrative that sees experimental modernists on one side and all the rest on another. Such terms help a little with Warner, but she is too long-lived for the one, too difficult for the other. The categories, moreover, can be tendentious, with 'modernism', for instance, doing double service as partly a descriptive and partly an honorific category. And literary periodization is hard to apply cogently

to such long-lived writers as Warner, West, Isherwood, Lehmann, or Rhys.

I'd like the Journal, like Warner herself, to have a crossover appeal within academia and beyond. There are six different categories of contribution that I want especially to encourage:

1. Writers on Warner, with (I hope) contributions from writers who are on record as Warner's admirers (these include Colm Tóibín, Ursula Le Guin, Ali Smith, Sarah Waters, Adam Mars-Jones, Richard Howard, Wendy Mulford – and the list could go on).
2. Works by Warner, both fugitive and uncollected pieces, and unpublished manuscripts from the extensive archives in the Dorset County Museum.
3. Biographical accounts. Warner died in 1978, so there are many people who knew her, and she tends to be recalled vividly.
4. Articles on Warner's writings and also on those figures with whom she could be associated either in her life or her literary affiliations. These include quite a range, among them the Powyses, David Garnett, Bowen, Woolf and T.H. White in literary Britain, Proust, Colette and Huguenin in France, John Craske in the art world, Vaughan Williams, Ireland, Nordoff, Britten and Pears in the world of music.
5. Reviews of books and editions that include discussion of Warner and sometimes of her literary or musical associates and friends.

So this is to commend a wonderful undervalued writer; to urge people to check out the journal when it goes online in a few months; and also to get in touch with the editor with comments, suggestions or even contributions.

Early Modern Exchanges: A New Book

by Helen Hackett

Back in 2010 Dr Alexander Samson (UCL Spanish) and I founded the UCL Centre for Early Modern Exchanges, an interdisciplinary forum where all those interested in travel, trade, translation, and other forms of cross-cultural exchange in the period 1450-1800 can meet to share knowledge and ideas (see www.ucl.ac.uk/eme). Our launch conference in 2011 was a greater success than we could possibly have imagined, with around 160 delegates from all over the globe. It seemed essential to gather and record some of the excellent papers given on that occasion and also at the Centre's regular seminars. This project has now come to fruition in a book edited by me and published by Ashgate, *Early Modern Exchanges: Dialogues Between Nations and Cultures, 1550-1750* (see www.ashgate.com/isbn/9781472425294). You can purchase the book at a 50% discount if you enter the code 50DNG15N when ordering online).

The volume opens with three essays on various forms of linguistic and literary exchange. Brenda Hosington is founder of the amazing Renaissance Cultural Crossroads project (www.hrionline.ac.uk/rcc/), a searchable and annotated catalogue of early modern translations which has established that over the period 1473 to 1640 over 6,000 translations were printed in the British Isles, involving almost 30 languages, over 1,000 translators, and roughly 1,200 authors. Brenda's contribution to the Early Modern Exchanges volume is an authoritative overview of early modern translation theory, including fascinating discussion of how early modern

metaphors for translation were often borrowed from trade: translated works were conceptualised as purchased goods, discovered treasure, or coins for circulation. This is followed by an illuminating essay by Alessandra Petrina on an English version of Petrarch's Triumph of Eternity that may be by Elizabeth I; and an analysis by Gesine Manuwald of the three-way relationship between English and neo-Latin poems by Thomas Campion (1567-1620) and their Latin sources, a vivid example of how early modern writers frequently forged the new from creative dialogue with the ancient past.

Members of cultural elites – rulers, courtiers, and other political leaders – were often those most engaged in intercultural dialogues, and so form the subject of Part II of the volume. Rayne Allinson and Geoffrey Parker offer transcriptions and analysis of hitherto neglected or misidentified holograph letters (i.e. written in their own hands) from Mary I of England to Philip II of Spain, and from Philip to Elizabeth I. The letters reveal the special value of letters in a monarch's own hand, rather than that of a secretary or scribe: a holograph letter conveyed a powerful sense of presence and a wish for direct communication. Tracey A. Sowerby discusses how royal portraits similarly stood proxy for the rulers they represented in diplomatic exchanges: gifted portraits could create and embody various kinds of reciprocity and goodwill, but could also be used in nuanced ways, for example to profess ongoing friendship while discreetly withholding practical support. Such portrait exchanges extended across Europe and beyond to include the Ottoman Sultan, the Moghul Emperor Jahangir, and the rulers of Persia and China. Closer to home, Noah Millstone discusses how the English looked across

the Channel to glean lessons from the development of early newspapers and other forms of managed public political discourse in France in the 1620s and '30s.

The third and final section of the volume looks at diverse communities as settings for cultural exchange, and at the roles of particular key individuals in initiating and developing international dialogues. Andrew Hadfield reveals the importance of Sir Thomas Smith, a sixteenth-century author, diplomat, connoisseur, and patron who was 'probably the closest candidate there is for an English Renaissance man'. Smith imported and disseminated many continental influences, especially at his seat of Hill Hall in Essex which he developed as a Renaissance palace and community of scholars. Hadfield thus focuses on an English traveller bringing foreign knowledge home, whereas Eva Johanna Holmberg considers the practices of travellers when abroad, examining the hitherto overlooked figure of the travelling companion in narratives of journeys through the Ottoman Empire. The companion might be of a different nationality, race, or religion, making him simultaneously friend and alien stranger, and this complex relationship had a significant shaping effect on both the traveller and his writing.

Eavan O'Brien discusses a play by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, in many ways a personification of early modern cultural exchange: born near Mexico City in New Spain, illegitimate and of mixed parentage, she became a scholar, a nun, and a prolific author. O'Brien uses her play *Los empeños de una casa* (The Trials of a Noble House) to demonstrate how Sor Juana synthesised literary influences from Old Spain with distinctive New Spain ingredients, such as a reference to Aztec sacrifice, and a

song and dance uniting Mexico's main ethnic groups, Spaniards, Africans, Italians, and Mexicans. Finally, Caroline Bowden's essay explores the cross-cultural dialogues of other nuns in a European setting: the members of the English convents in exile in Flanders and northern France. Caroline's groundbreaking *Who Were the Nuns?* research project (wwtn.history.qmul.ac.uk) has produced a database of the nuns in exile and editions of their writings. She finds that as enclosed communities the convents were in some ways islands of Englishness outside England, but at the same time they inevitably interacted with their local neighbours in diverse practical, social, and spiritual ways.

Some of the chapters of the book consider broad themes while others carefully analyse and contextualise selected examples of cultural exchange in particular times and places. They speak to one another in various ways about the motivations, circumstances, agents, and processes of early modern cross-cultural dialogues, and about their political, artistic, and literary consequences. Over recent years we have become increasingly aware that the early modern – encompassing the early modern world-view, the early modern state, and early modern subjectivity – was largely formed in encounters and dialogues between diverse cultures. We see our book as a contribution to this lively field of research and debate, and hope it will inspire others to pursue their own further exchanges. Two ways of doing so are at the continuing programme of events of the UCL Centre for Early Modern Exchanges (www.ucl.ac.uk/eme/seminars) and on the Early Modern Studies MA programme which is hosted by the Centre

(<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/eme/prospective-students/early-modern-studies-ma>).

Henry James Centenary ----- February 28 2016 by Philip Horne

The Native Henry James

The novelist Henry James was born in New York on April 15, 1843, and died in London at the age of 72, on February 28, 1916, in the midst of the First World War. He had had a stroke on December 2, 1915 – and had become progressively weaker and more confused – though he continued to dictate to his trusted amanuensis, the remarkable Theodora Bosanquet, a 'Last Dictation' in which at times James seems either to have thought he was Napoleon (or a member of the Bonaparte family) or, just as likely, that he was writing an historical novel about them. After he died, Bosanquet recorded in her diary that 'Several people who have seen the dead face are struck with the likeness to Napoleon which is certainly great.'

The funeral was held at Chelsea Old Church on March 3, 1916, with a mostly British congregation of mourners – though his sister-in-law Alice, widow of his brother the philosopher William, was in attendance, having crossed the war-torn ocean when she heard of his illness.

The U.S had not yet entered the War – the issue was controversial, and indeed, James and his old antagonist Theodore Roosevelt, who had long denounced him as un-American, had found common cause in their indignation at their country's prolonged neutrality. This caused particular tension on James's death, because the novelist, under the tension of his adoptive country's

struggles and losses, and many deaths among those he knew, had taken British nationality in July 1915 ('Civis Britannicus sum!', he wrote to Edmund Gosse), implicitly as a protest against America's refusal to join the conflict. As he had written to his fellow American-in-London John Singer Sargent just after the event, 'It would really have been so easy for the U. S. to have 'kept' (if they had cared to!) yours all faithfully, Henry James'. He had just got tired of waiting for America to end its neutrality, and felt he needed to end his own appearance of detachment.

James's writing, particularly late in life, was known for its ambiguity; and not surprisingly his paradoxically patriotic act (doing what he felt his country should do) was misread and resented – even by friends like Edith Wharton and William Dean Howells. The Anglo-American understanding he had spent most of a lifetime trying to improve, always fragile, failed yet again, so that many Americans did not grasp the subtle implications of his Anglicisation. The memorial in Chelsea Old Church tactfully describes him as 'a resident of this parish who renounced a cherished citizenship to give his allegiance to England in the 1st year of the Great War' – 'cherished' insisting that James had been a good American.

Those who loved him reclaimed him for the U.S.: Alice James smuggled his ashes back to Cambridge, Mass. despite wartime restrictions and buried them in the family plot: she would have been familiar with her late husband's opinion that Henry was 'a native of the James family, and has no other country.' But this was a figure of speech; Howells had an equal point when he asserted in a memorial essay that 'James was American to his heart's core to the day of his death.'

Issues of allegiance and nationality inform the last books James finished – his memoirs, *A Small Boy and Others* (1913) and *Notes of a Son and Brother* (1914) – which are the main texts in the Library of America volume I have just edited, *Henry James: Autobiographies*, alongside the unfinished *The Middle Years*, a selection of autobiographical writings across his career, and Theodora Bosanquet's charming but critically very acute memoir, *Henry James at Work* (1924). It is the last of the Library's now-complete set of volumes of James's major works.

In these two main books James set out to write about his brother William, who had died in 1910, but felt he had to speak from his own experience of the family – and found the memories of the past come flooding back. In *A Small Boy* the novelist who had so sensitively charted a young girl's bewildering experience in *What Maisie Knew* (1897) portrayed his childhood self as 'a little gaping American', and recreated a child's thrills and confusions – the latter of which were much enhanced by having a rich, eccentric, restlessly paradoxical religious-philosopher father in whose household, as James says, 'we wholesomely breathed inconsistency and ate and drank contradictions.'

The autobiographies were warmly received even by many who were none too sure about James's complex late fiction – partly for their vividly detailed pictures of the past he recalled, scenes in New York, Newport, Paris, London, Switzerland, bringing back the textures of a vanished past – and also for the proliferating cast of characters, eccentric and touching, feckless or exploitative or victimized, who are rendered with a quasi-Dickensian power (amongst them, in fact, is Dickens himself, whom James encountered in

1867). James conjures up an Edenic world of peaches, uncles, streets, theatres, circuses, restaurants, hotels, schoolrooms and atmospheric houses that is spellbinding. For instance he recalls one school he attended on Sixth Avenue whose central urban location allowed '... for an inordinate consumption of hot waffles retailed by a benevolent black 'auntie' who presided, with her husband's aid as I remember, at a portable stove set up in a passage or recess opening from the court; to which we flocked and pushed, in a merciless squeeze, with all our coppers, and the products of which, the oblong farinaceous compound, faintly yet richly brown, stamped and smoking, not crisp nor brittle, but softly absorbent of the syrup dabbed upon it for a finish, revealed to me for a long time, even for a very long time supposed, the highest pleasure of sense. We stamped about, we freely conversed, we ate sticky waffles by the hundred....'

He also recounts what he calls 'the most appalling yet most admirable nightmare of my life'. *Notes of a Son and Brother* includes many family letters – it is nominally about William James and certainly those interested in the great psychologist and philosopher will want to know it. But to set them in context, James inevitably – being James – gravitates towards his own ramifying memories – of European educational experiments, of his own academically disengaged but imaginatively formative time at Harvard Law School during the Civil War, searching for authentic 'Americanism' among his comrades, and finally of his doomed, fascinating cousin Minnie Temple, whose death from tuberculosis in 1870, he says, was 'the end of our youth'.

No one who reads these books can doubt the earnestness of James's baffled

quest to immerse himself in American life – while at the same time he makes clear how far the James family's foreign travels and education enforced on him the appeal of a culture in Europe that was broader and richer than was available in the America of his time. When the 'Great War' broke out in 1914, James was immediately reminded of the outbreak of the Civil War five decades before – though he was soon writing to a friend from his home of the Sussex coast that

It leaves one small freedom of mind for general talk, it presses, all the while, with every throb of consciousness; and if during the first days I felt in the air the recall of our Civil War shocks and anxieties, and hurryings and doings, of 1861, etc., the pressure in question has already become a much nearer and bigger thing, and a more formidable and tragic one, than anything we of the North had in those years to face.

James engaged himself actively as far as he could, given his age and state of health, visiting Belgian refugees and British soldiers, writing pieces towards the war effort, becoming President of the American Volunteer Motor-Ambulance Corps.

Questions about James's patriotism, and his manliness, have long hung over him, since he and William did not fight in the Civil War, whereas their younger brothers Wilky and Robertson did (and were wounded). Was he a draft-dodger? And James's discussion in *Notes of a Son and Brother* of the Newport accident which disabled him for combat – 'I had done myself, in face of a shabby conflagration, a horrid even if an obscure hurt' – has in its discreetness only provoked a storm of speculation about possibilities of castration,

impotence, and assumptions about James's sexuality.

Fortunately some fine research by Charles and Tess Hoffmann has shown that James was drafted in summer 1863 – but that when he came up before the Rhode Island Board of Enrolment in Providence he was exempted by reason of physical disability. The physical injury was evidently sufficient for them, so not apparently just psychosomatic; and we know, moreover, that James reported severe back pain over many years, so there is no need to speculate.

From Harvard Law School, where he was amid 'fine fierce young men, in great numbers, . . . who hadn't flown to arms', James followed the progress of the Civil War with passionate attention, seeing his academic strivings as a modest symbolic parallel to the heroics of combat. Insofar as he began to write fiction at this time, letting the law get by without him and invoking 'the muse of prose fiction' in his nook in Winthrop Square, his literary career could itself be seen as in its origins a kind of patriotic endeavour – and his sense of his function as an American writer in Europe being, at least partly, that of a cultural ambassador for his homeland.

Philip Horne

For the centenary of James's death Philip Horne has put together a series of radio programmes for the BBC programme Book of the Week, to be broadcast in March under the title 'The Real Henry James'. Philip Horne is the editor of *Henry James: Autobiographies*, published by the Library of America. He is also editor of *Henry James: A Life in Letters* (Penguin Classics), and has also edited James's *The Tragic Muse* and *The Portrait of a Lady* for Penguin Classics. He is the founding General Editor of *The Cambridge University Press Complete Fiction of Henry James*.

'Th'intertraffique of the Minde': Intercultural Exchanges, the UCL English Research Conference 2015

On the 18th of December 2015 a one-day conference was held at UCL in the new Wilkins Main Quad Events Venue – North Side, a surprising venue which looks temporary but is apparently there to stay and resembles nothing so much as a wedding marquee. It was a rich and varied programme (see below) and for those lucky enough to attend a welcome respite from end of term duties and the build-up to Christmas. (editor's note: I arrived begrudging the time and left reinvigorated and grateful for the reprieve from all the usual preoccupations of the season. The conference was open to all and I can wholeheartedly recommend it to all alumni should UCL host it again).

Dr Paul Davis (UCL) — "Hollow murmurs": Addison, Milton and Virgil on Etna'

Prof. Helen Hackett (UCL) – book launch, *Early Modern Exchanges: Dialogues between Nations and Cultures, 1550–1750* (Ashgate, Nov. 2015)

Prof. Colin Burrow (All Souls, Oxford) — 'Shakespeare's Authorities'

Panel 1: Writers and Critics Crossing Boundaries

Roberta Klimt (UCL): "Il drama di Giovanni Milton": An Italian Adaptation of Milton's A Mask'

Prof. Phil Horne (UCL): 'Strings of Pearls: James, Maupassant, and Paste'

George Potts (UCL): 'Washed Far Away: 'Lycidas' in America in the Early Twentieth Century'

Dr Scarlett Baron (UCL) — 'Nietzsche and the Birth of Intertextuality'

Panel 2: Other Cultural Exchanges: Politics and Ecology

Jonathan Williams (UCL): 'A Culture Unheard: Oralism and England in the Nineteenth Century'
Kent Su (UCL): 'Confucianism and Ecology: Mt. Taishan in Ezra Pound's Pisan Cantos'
Matthew Holman (UCL): 'The New York – Amsterdam Set: Collaboration and the Cold War'
Dr Ruth Scurr (Gonville and Caius, Cambridge)
Roundtable discussion:
Prof. Richard North (UCL), Dr Julia Jordan (UCL), Dr Beci Carver (UCL), Dr Rob Turner (UCL), Dr Claire Pascolini-Campbell (UCL), and Prof. Colin Burrow (Oxford).

UCL's Festival of Culture and One Day in the City

27th May, 2016

Please do come and join us for the department's bi-annual celebration of London and literature, *One Day in the City*, which takes place on Friday 27th May, as the grand finale of UCL's Festival of Culture. It's our third day of events, and although it will be a tough ask to follow 2012 and 2014, which welcomed onto campus the likes of A.S. Byatt, Alan Hollinghurst, John Agard, and Kazuo Ishiguro, amongst many others, this year the speakers look set to be just as spectacular. (I can't name names, yet, but ... the BBC has just been showing an adaptation of one of our speaker's novels, and there are more Booker- and Granta-listed authors to look forward to. As well as poetry, performance, walks, talks, and numerous 'in-a-nutshells' from department members.)

It's not simply the big names that matter, though. Sure, *One Day in the City* is all about sharing our love of London and the literature and lives it has

inspired and continues to inspire, but it is also about opening the doors for writers of the future. As always, we will be working with First Story to welcome secondary school students from across the country. These students will have creative-writing workshops with published authors in a number of UCL's museums – the Grant Museum of Zoology, the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, UCL Art Museum, the Rock Room, and Special Collections – and later read out some of their work to the public.

It promises to be a frenetic and vibrant day, full of thought-provoking debate and conversation. We would love it if you came along. Take the day off work. Get a group of friends together. Or just pop in for the evening headline. There will be events will be taking place all day. And everything is free.

For more information, please contact Nick Shepley – n.shepley@ucl.ac.uk

Nick Shepley is a Teaching Fellow in the Department of English. His first book, *Henry Green: Class, Style, and the Everyday* will be published in August 2016, by Oxford University Press.

The Best Elizabethan Theatre You've Never Seen

February/March 2016

Jack Drum's Entertainment, by John Marston

Sam Plumb, a second year PhD student working on early modern drama, announces that as part of his practice-related research he will be directing a production of Marston's little known *Jack Drum's Entertainment*. The cast is made up of young people aged 11-19 - boys and girls - and the play hasn't been produced since the original performances in 1600 by St Paul's Boys.

It's going on a mini tour of Cambridge-Oxford-London in late February/early March. The final performance will be at UCL's brand new Bloomsbury Studio on Monday 7th March at 7.30pm.

It will be of interest to anyone with a background in English and drama, since it is almost completely unknown but almost precisely contemporary with - and clearly not entirely unlike - Shakespeare's later romantic comedies. It is a little bit like the work of Edwards Boys, although with mixed casts and with a slightly different musical approach -- there are eight new songs in the production, all original compositions using Marston's lyrics.

John Marston's acerbic city comedy was last performed by the Children of Paul's in 1600. With its obsession with lust, money and double-dealing and its dense Shakespearean allusion, *Jack Drum's Entertainment* is the best Elizabethan comedy you've never seen. *Jack Drum's Entertainment* will be performed by The Young Actors Company, one of the most highly regarded theatre companies in Cambridgeshire, especially trained by leading academics and practitioners from UCL and KCL. It will be brought back to life in a Georgian setting, with Marston's original lyrics set to fresh compositions, performed live by the company.

Jack Drum's Entertainment takes place in Renaissance London where the cynical Ned Planet observes the changing fortunes of two aristocratic heiresses and their social network: Katherine is courted by the impoverished but loyal Pasquil, the conniving usurer Master Mammon, and the ridiculous Master Puff, while her sister, Camelia, vacillates between an army of suitors according to the self-interested advice of her serving maid, Winifred. Meanwhile, Winifred conducts her own intrigues surrounding

the extravagant Frenchman John fo' de King, who will do anything to get a 'vench'.

For further details see below in Events and/or contact Sam Plumber, second year PhD, samuel.plumb13@ucl.ac.uk, www.theyoungactorscompany.com, www.thebloomsbury.com

Bloomsbury Festival-----2015 and 2016

After a two year hiatus, the Bloomsbury Festival returned in October 2015. It spread over three days a celebration/exploration on the theme of 'light' in the form of dance, music, theatre, sculpture, readings, creative writing, discussions and much more in venues throughout Bloomsbury including many events held at UCL and Senate House. UCL, and in particular the Department of English, have long been what the festival organisers refer to as 'partners' and in 2015 the Department was represented by hosting two events. The first featured one of our own alumni, Louise Treger, whose historical novel on the Bloomsbury resident and literary pioneer, Dorothy Richardson, was the focus of an engaging discussion (<http://louisatreger.com/the-lodger/>). Richardson mixed with the Bloomsbury Group although was never quite of their number. She is credited with being the first to use a stream of consciousness form in her writing and *The Lodger* brings to life a fascinating period of literary history and an intriguing, little-known personality.

The other event showcased the rich diversity of Arts and Humanities with specialists from Philosophy, German, Greek and Latin and English in a panel discussion with artists from the Slade and architects from the Bartlett. The

idea was to explore the theme of 'light in art, literature and culture', discovering the ways in which such a universal theme connected our diverse subjects and interests. As expected these were many and surprising and the event went on long past its allotted time, in other words was terrific fun and full of fascinating interchange.

The Bloomsbury Festival 2016 theme is 'language' and there is every reason to expect that we will be approached to contribute again. Any ideas from alumni would be most welcome and all are equally welcome, indeed encouraged, to attend. The Festival takes place in the autumn. For dates and details visit their website <http://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/about-us/>.

Berry Chevasco

Events in 2016:

Save the Date!

Monday, 22 February.

Alumni evening, 6.00 - 7.00pm.

Nightwalking, with Matthew Beaumont Foster Court, followed by refreshments. All are more than welcome. Please RSVP to Carol Bowen c.bowen@ucl.ac.uk

Jack Drum's Entertainment, by John Marston (directed by Sam Plumb, see above)

February 26 & 27, The Junction, Cambridge

March 5, Simpkins Lee Theatre, Oxford

March 7, Bloomsbury Studio, London

UCL Festival of Culture and One Day in the City 27th May, 2016 (see above) For more information please contact Nick Shepley – n.shepley@ucl.ac.uk

Bloomsbury Festival Autumn 2016
For dates and details visit their website <http://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/about-us/>

Books and such:

Well Done God!

In February 2013, to coincide with what would have been his eightieth birthday, Picador published *Well Done God!*, an anthology of prose, drama and journalism by B.S. Johnson. Bringing together important out of print and previously unpublished archival material, the anthology was edited by me, along with Johnson's biographer Jonathan Coe and Philip Tew. To mark this publication I participated in a series of events on Johnson's experimental legacy, including an event at the South Bank Centre hosted by Will Self, and one at the British Library with speakers including David Quantick and Jonathan Coe.

Building on this growing interest in Johnson's work, in July 2014 Palgrave Macmillan published a collection of essays that I edited with Martin Ryle, on Johnson's work and his 1960s avant garde circle.

Julia Jordan

The Poetry Foundation's 2015 Pegasus Award for Poetry Criticism was awarded to Mark Ford's *This Dialogue of One: Essays on Poets from John Donne to Joan Murray*

"If more literary criticism were like this," John Lanchester has said of Ford's essays, "more people would read it." The 13 vivid, lucid, refreshing, and

unfailingly surprising pieces in his collection range from the canonical (Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Charles Baudelaire, and T.S. Eliot) to the overlooked (James Thomson, Samuel Greenberg, and Joan Murray). Randall Jarrell believed that a critic writing at his or her best makes people see what they might otherwise never have seen; in this enriching and rewarding book, Ford is at his very best.

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/foundation/press/2015/186502>

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/This-Dialogue-One-Essays-Murray/dp/190899827X>

Shortlisted for the William Berger Art History prize:

Metropolitan Art and Literature 1810-1840: Cockney Adventures by Gregory Dart (CUP, 26 July 2012) expands upon existing notions of Cockneys and the 'Cockney School' in the late Romantic period by exploring some of the broader ramifications of the phenomenon in art and periodical literature. He argues that the term was not confined to discussion of the Leigh Hunt circle, but was fast becoming a way of gesturing towards everything in modern metropolitan life that seemed discrepant and disturbing. Covering the ground between Romanticism and Victorianism, Dart presents Cockneyism as a powerful critical currency in this period, which helps provide a link between the works of Leigh Hunt and Keats in the 1810s and the early works of Charles Dickens in the 1830s. Through an examination of literary history, art history, urban history and social history, this book identifies the early nineteenth century figure of the Cockney as the true ancestor of modernity.

The Real Traviata: The Song of Marie Duplessis

By René Weis

The Real Traviata is the rags-to-riches story of a tragic young woman whose life inspired one of the most famous operas of all time, Verdi's masterpiece *La traviata*, as well as one of the most scandalous and successful French novels of the nineteenth century, *La Dame aux Camélias*, by Alexandre Dumas fils. The woman at the centre of the story, Marie Duplessis, escaped from her life as an abused teenage girl in provincial Normandy, rising in an amazingly short space of time to the apex of fashionable life in nineteenth century Paris, where she was considered the queen of the Parisian courtesans. Her life was painfully short, but by sheer willpower, intelligence, talent, and stunning looks she attained such prominence in the French capital that ministers of the government and even members of the French royal family fell under her spell. In the 1840s she commanded the kind of 'paparazzi' attention that today we associate only with major royalty or the biggest Hollywood stars. Aside from the younger Dumas, her conquests included a host of writers and artists, including the greatest pianist of the century, Franz Liszt, with whom she once hoped to elope. When she died Théophile Gautier, one of the most important Parisian writers of the day, penned an obituary fit for a princess. Indeed, he boldly claimed that she had *been* a princess, notwithstanding her peasant origin and her distinctly *demi-monde* existence. And although now largely forgotten, in the years immediately after her death, Marie's legend if anything grew in stature, with her immortalization in Verdi's *La traviata*, an opera in which the great Romantic composer tried to capture her essence in some of the most heart-wrenching and lyrical music ever composed.

--**Out soon!** *Andreas*, the Old English epic poem on St Andrew in the land of the cannibals, edited by Richard North and Michael Bintley, (Liverpool University Press, £75).

ANDREAS
AN EDITION



EDITED BY RICHARD NORTH
AND MICHAEL BINTLEY

--**To be broadcast on Radio 4** in March (time and date as yet undetermined): Commemorating the centenary of Henry James's death a series of radio programmes devised by Philip Horne for the BBC programme Book of the Week will be broadcast in March under the title 'The Real Henry James'.

--**T. S. Eliot Prize winning poet Sarah Howe** will be joining the UCL English Department as a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in May of this year. Her first collection of poetry, *Loop of Jade*, published by Chatto & Windus, has just been awarded the T.S. Eliot Prize. Her book was chosen over volumes by such as Les Murray, Sean O'Brien and Don Paterson.

--**Nightwalking: A Nocturnal History of London**, by Matthew Beaumont, paperback available April 2016. Hardback re-issued so available through Verso Books and other outlets. Also available on Kindle: <http://www.versobooks.com/books/1851-nightwalking>

--**Metropolitan Art and Literature 1810-1840: Cockney Adventures**, Gregory Dart (CUP, 26 July 2012).

--**Henry Green: Class, Style, and the Everyday**, by Nick Shepley, will be published in August 2016, by Oxford University Press.

-- **Early Modern Exchanges: Dialogues Between Nations and Cultures, 1550-1750**, ed. Helen Hackett, (Ashgate, 2015) (see www.ashgate.com/isbn/9781472425294). You can purchase the book at a 50% discount if you enter the code 50DNG15N when ordering online.

--**Edward Gibbon and the Shape of History**, by Charlotte Roberts, (OUP, July 2014) <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Edward-Gibbon-History-Charlotte-Roberts/dp/0198704836>

--**Selected Poems** Mark Ford, (Coffee House Press, 2014) <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Mark-Ford-Selected-Poems/dp/1566893496>

--**Well Done God!**, an anthology edited by Julia Jordan, Jonathan Coe and Philip Tew <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Well-Done-God-Selected-Johnson/dp/1447227107>

--**B.S. Johnson-Post-War-Literature**, ed. Martin-Ryle and Julia Jordan http://www.amazon.co.uk/B-S-Johnson-Post-War-Literature-Martin-Ryle/dp/1137349549/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1452509286&sr=1-1&keywords=B.S.+Johnson+postwar

--**English syntax and argumentation**, Bas Aarts. Fourth edition. Palgrave Modern Linguistics Series. (Basingstoke: Palgrave. 2013). A Korean translation of this book by Professor Dong-hwan An was published in 2014 in Seoul by the Hankook Publishing company.

--**The verb phrase in English: investigating recent language change with corpora**, edited by Bas Aarts with Joanne Close, Geoffrey Leech and Sean Wallis. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

--**Oxford dictionary of English grammar**. Second edition, 2014. edited by Bas Aarts with Sylvia Chalker and Edmund Weiner. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014)

--**Granular Modernism**, by Beci Carver, (Oxford University Press, November 2014)
http://www.amazon.co.uk/Granular-Modernism-Beci-Carver/dp/0198709927/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1452525032&sr=1-1&keywords=granular+modernism

--**Against the Event: The Everyday and Evolution of Modernist Narrative**, Michael Sayeau, (OUP, August 2013)
http://www.amazon.co.uk/Against-Event-Evolution-Modernist-Narrative/dp/0199681252/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1452515067&sr=8-1&keywords=against+the+event

-- **The Cambridge University Press Complete Fiction of Henry James**, General editor, Philip Horne, first volumes, *The Europeans* and *The Ambassadors*, published in 2015.

Major Research Award to Professor Susan Irvine

Professor Susan Irvine, Quain Professor of English Literature and Language, has been awarded a 2015 Anneliese Maier Research Award by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

The award – 250,000 euros to be spent over five years – was established in 2012 to promote the internationalization of the humanities and social sciences in Germany. Professor Irvine will collaborate with the Seminar für englische Philologie at the University of Göttingen in developing a research project focusing on the preaching texts and traditions of Anglo-Saxon England.



Humboldt Foundation/[Christian Schneider-Bröcker].