

# Virginia Woolf Miscellany

Number 2

Spring 1974

## THE AMERICAN PREMIERE OF "FRESHWATER"

On March 3, 1974, the Stanford Museum of Art presented Virginia Woolf's "Freshwater," a playful spoof about her great-aunt, Julia Margaret Cameron. Anita Ventura Mozley, Registrar and Curator of Photography, received Angelica Garnett's kind permission to give a private staged reading of the play in conjunction with the museum's exhibition of Julia Cameron's photographs.

According to Quentin Bell (*Virginia Woolf; a Biography*, New York: Harcourt, 1972, p. 424), the play was first performed in Vanessa Bell's studio, 8 Fitzroy Street, London. The actors then were: Mrs. Cameron, Vanessa Bell; Mr. Cameron, Leonard Woolf; Alfred Tennyson, Julian Bell; Ellen Terry, Angelica Bell; G. F. Watts, Duncan Grant; John Craig, Ann Stephen; Mary Hillier and A Visitor, Eve Younger.

The 1974 cast was assembled from the Stanford community, and David Richman, of the Stanford English Department, directed the production. We are pleased to share with you his sense of the play's problems and delights.

## DIRECTING "FRESHWATER"

I was doubly gratified when I was invited to direct a staged reading of Virginia Woolf's three-act comedy "Freshwater." Although I had produced a number of plays, I had never before enjoyed the use of a theater as elegant as the European Gallery of the Stanford University Museum of Art. I was also attracted to the project because I believed that a reintroduction to the stage of this unpublished and virtually unknown play would be an artistic event of some significance. The play was first performed in 1935 by Woolf's own circle of Bloomsbury family and friends; since then it has hardly been read and never produced. This performance would serve both as a revival and as the American premiere. In directing the play, I encountered few of the usual thorny problems of administration and set construction which plague most productions. The problems which did arise were generally more interesting and, in some cases, more challenging than those of most college productions.

"Freshwater" is a whimsical satire, loosely based on events in the life of Woolf's great-aunt, the photographer, Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879). The first act is set in her cluttered studio. As the play opens, she is washing her husband's hair; we soon learn that she is preparing to embark for India — a voyage planned six times, but postponed because the Camerons' coffins have not yet been delivered. She laments that the coffins have once again failed to arrive and renews her vow that she and her husband will not leave without them.

In the same studio, George Frederick Watts, the famous Victorian painter and friend of the Camerons, attempts to

paint Modesty at the feet of Mammon. His young wife, Ellen Terry, poses as Modesty. Soon after the play's opening, Alfred Tennyson strides into the room and begins to read *Maud* in his sonorous tones. At length, Ellen Terry, weary of posing, abandons her model's throne, and, after a bit of amusing and suggestive dialogue with Tennyson, rushes off, apparently to keep a rendezvous with a young man. Watts, who has continued to paint despite the loss of his model, triumphantly finishes the great toe of Mammon. But he suddenly discovers, much to his chagrin, that he has seriously blundered. As the chorus chants, at the close of the act, he has made the veil of Modesty symbolize the fertility of fish.

The second act, set at the seaside, depicts Ellen Terry's decision to leave her aged husband and her life as an artist's model and to run off with her young man, the naval officer, John Craig. The couple hope to live in Bloomsbury. (W.C. 1 later seems a vulgar word to the "mixed company" of the artists.) Throwing her wedding ring to a hungry porpoise, Ellen frees herself, with that symbolic gesture, from her husband and escapes the bondage of art.

In the final act, again set in the studio, Watts bursts on stage, crying that his wife is dead. Mrs. Cameron bewails only the loss of her model, while Tennyson immediately begins an elegy about her supposed drowning. Just as the poet is about to read his "Ode on the Death of Ellen Terry," she enters to announce her elopement. Craig comes to claim her, and the young couple prepare to depart. And since the Camerons' coffins have finally arrived, they can set off for India. Joining in a comic choral farewell, the two couples leave a final message with the audience and with Watts and Tennyson, now deserted but for their art. But, wait, they are not yet completely abandoned; suddenly Queen Victoria appears in the studio to bestow on Watts the Order of Merit and to honor Tennyson with the Peerage for which he has waited so long.

The first problem of the production concerned the script. As the work is unpublished, we based our reading on a copy of Woolf's original manuscript which is, as one would expect, a patchwork of corrections, deletions, and, for the most part, unintelligible marginalia. In many cases we were faced with two or more words without any textual indication as to Woolf's final decision. My choices were based on my view of the play's general tone and manner and on my understanding of the dramatic necessities of our production. Of course, I consulted with members of the cast before making any decisions. A description of all these choices would constitute an arduous and largely unprofitable task. I will mention two of the more important ones as examples. Early in the first act, Tennyson, in discussing the possibility of his being given a Peerage, remarks that the decision will rest with the gods or with the Queen. Both words are given. I asked the actor playing Tennyson to refer to the Queen, because this line would serve as the only mention of the Queen in the play and would therefore anticipate her entrance in the final scene. Secondly, the first act ends with a passage which Woolf



apparently excised from the play. I chose to reinstate this passage as it concludes the act with a choral line, spoken by three major characters, and thus creates with the more extended choral section of the third act a formal symmetry.

Not only does the play have an operatic quality; the structure of the three acts is much like that of a symphonic composition. The fast-paced first and third acts are similar in their abundance of thematic material to the outer movements of a classical symphony. The middle act, a lyric section which focuses on Ellen Terry and her lover, is in the nature of an *andante*. When she makes her important decision, Ellen commits herself to natural life, which, in this play, is sharply opposed to art — here depicted as imperious and constraining. It seems to me that Ellen's decision is the most important action in the play. It forcefully points up the play's major thematic contrast between life and art and suggests the sterility of art divorced from experience. As we have seen, Ellen is important to the artists only as a symbolic object in their works. But she matters to John Craig as a human being. To indicate this dramatic contrast in tone, we chose an abstract setting for the second act. An oddly shaped stage piece, covered with a mud-daubed sheet, only vaguely resembled a rock on which the lovers could sit. Their surroundings were indicated by two large unspecified objects, while, by contrast, during acts one and three, the stage was cluttered with picturesque memorabilia to suggest the Victorian world of art.

One other aspect of the staging of the outer acts is also of interest. Woolf depicts her artists as essentially isolated human beings who respond to events only insofar as they bear upon their respective arts. Julia Cameron, for example, thinks nothing of directing the newly liberated but still trembling Ellen Terry to pose as Penitence. We attempted to indicate this isolation by allotting each artist a particular portion of the stage — Tennyson in a chair, stage right, from which he moved only twice, and Watts in a circumscribed area next to his painting, stage left. I should note, however, that our small stage tended to blur this effect.

Although the play may be seen as an indictment of sorts, Woolf never abandons her light, affectionate touch. The characters' vices are foibles rather than major defects, and the satirical tone rarely becomes harsh. We tried to stress this affectionate spirit by focusing attention on the characters' more charming qualities. For instance, Tennyson's fine voice, rolling out the verses of *Maud*, was intended to amuse, not to alienate. Mr. Cameron, the photographer's philosopher husband, uttered his lines in a slow, reedy voice which brought out the humor of his philosophical platitudes. Mrs. Cameron, the unquestioned mistress of the house, spoke and acted in a commanding manner which grew more pronounced as the play progressed until she fairly bellowed while ordering a young passerby to pose for her.

It is unlikely that "Freshwater" would appeal to the general audience. The play requires knowledge both of the Bloomsbury Group and of the Camerons' artistic circle which the average audience cannot be expected to possess. The play can be enjoyed, however, by a group of people who know something about its concerns. The elegance of our setting and the knowledge and interest of our distinguished cast helped to recreate the spirit of the play's first performance. And we venture to hope that the author herself might have been pleased.

David Richman  
Stanford University  
Stanford, California

#### REVIEW:

LUCIO P. RUOTOLO, *SIX EXISTENTIAL HEROES* (Harvard University Press, 1973)

Clarissa Dalloway is the first of the six existential heroes Lucio Ruotolo presents to us across what he calls "the widest spectrum of existential intention in English fiction during the past fifty years." The authors, ranging from Woolf to Malamud, have not been directly influenced by existential philosophy nor by one another, yet each of the novels studied "reveals an historical treatment of the existential experience." Such a treatment of Clarissa Dalloway rescues her, barely in time, from the dragon of Freudianism which would imprison her forever within the form of a frigid and desolated woman. Calling upon, among others, Heidegger, Ruotolo perceives that Clarissa explores nothingness within the context of Time and Being. Both she and Septimus share the experience of nothingness; but she, meeting the dread that Heidegger defines as "man's anxiety over having nothing to rely on save his courage to be," is able to share with her friends the life she has experienced in solitude. This marks her existential triumph. Heidegger's understanding of how "a moment of vision... makes the situation authentically present," illuminates the final affirmation of Clarissa's being: "For there she was." In fewer pages than many critics take to damn Clarissa in her narrow bed, Ruotolo reveals how, in her life, space becomes the catalyst for communication. The important consideration about Clarissa Dalloway, as about Being, is not "what" or "how" it is, but "that" it is. Here, then, is Clarissa Dalloway.

Carolyn G. Heilbrun  
Columbia University  
New York City

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#### TO THE READER:

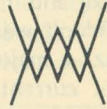
Since our first issue, the *Virginia Woolf Miscellany* has received over three hundred responses. We are extremely pleased to have reached so many Virginia Woolf readers. With a better sense of your questions and interests, we can begin to shape the *Miscellany* accordingly. We would like to hear from more of you, and to thank all of you who returned the questionnaire; we hope this is the beginning of significant connections for all of us. During the summer the questionnaires will be reviewed and information from them will be included in future issues so that readers with related interests can be in touch with each other.

In addition to our contributors, we would also like to thank members of the Sonoma and Stanford English departments and Stanford's Modern Thought and Literature Program for help with this issue.

Peggy Comstock, Chris Cozzens, Ellen Hawkes Rogat, Lucio Ruotolo, J.J. Wilson

Mailing address: The Virginia Woolf Miscellany  
c/o Department of English  
Stanford University  
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FROM THE READER:

Dear VWM:

I agree Nigel Nicolson's Portrait of a Marriage is invaluable for those of us interested in the life and writings of Virginia Woolf, yet I question its value as a contribution toward the understanding of "androgyny." Leon Edel's dust-jacket blurb speaks of Vita Sackville-West's "real-life experience that reads like a novel of the spiritual as well as physical conflicts of androgyny": what we have in Portrait is ordinary lesbianism — despite the extraordinariness of the participants — and let's not fancy it up with high-falutin' nonsense. The Vita—Violet affair was an extreme example of egoism à deux between two narcissistic, manipulative, and self-indulgent women. It was distasteful to me not because it was a lesbian relationship — a homosexual relationship can have validity and integrity like any other kind of human relationship — but because there wasn't any real love there at all, because Vita and Violet manipulated Denys and "poor Hadji" and each other in all kinds of creepy, sadie-massie ways, and because half the fun of the whole thing was spitting in the eye of old Lady Sackville and shocking hell out of their hypocritical Edwardian milieu. How superior they were, how un—"bedint"! How free of dull, tiresome, middle-class restraints!

There's something unsettling about this mixture of autobiography, biography, and memoir called Portrait of a Marriage; I'm not at all sure that many readers would agree with Nicolson's contention that the marriage of his parents, despite its admitted peculiarities, was, at the deepest level, an example of enduring love. We are meant, it appears to me, to concur with Nicolson's belief — apparently sincere — that there is some sort of spiritual uplift in the fact that this odd couple finally "berthed like sister ships" and faded off into the sunset together. Nicolson's tribute to his parents — he calls it a "panegyric to marriage" in the preface — emerges as less a portrait of a marriage than of a type of relationship described by, say, Sacher-Masoch. Understandable as Nicolson's reluctance is (or is it blindness?) to face the relationship of his parents for what it really was, a classical case of a sado-masochistic union, a fusion without any integrity whatsoever, I nevertheless would have preferred that he showed more psychological awareness and insight in dealing with it. For there is a poignancy in relationships like these, however distasteful and destructive they are. Instead, however, we are served this "rich pot-pourri," as he calls the marriage, are asked to agree that it is good and never mind all the peculiar flavors. If there is not hypocrisy in Nicolson's continual insistence on the pot-pourri's essential goodness, there is a decided lack of taste on his part. Panegyric to marriage indeed!

"Bedintently,"

Katie Timmerman  
19 Ana Court  
San Rafael, California

Dear VWM:

Re Portrait of a Marriage (about which comments were invited). I wonder what Virginia Woolf's own reaction would be to certain things bared there. She valued privacy, or she would not have said about Lady Sackville's indiscreet tattling, "The old woman ought to be shot." If that was V.W.'s "instant response," mine tends to be the same.

Harvena Richter  
The University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Dear VWM:

Why does Sara Pargiter wear those mismatched stockings?

James Hafley  
St. John's University  
New York City

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REVIEW:

MRS. DALLOWAY'S PARTY:

A SHORT STORY SEQUENCE BY VIRGINIA WOOLF  
edited by STELLA McNICHOL (London: The Hogarth Press, 1973)

The Dalloways are the only figures to appear and reappear as major characters in Virginia Woolf's fiction. We first encounter Clarissa and Richard Dalloway in Woolf's earliest novel, The Voyage Out, where they are fashionable, conventional, and above all, sociable. Leaving the Euphrosyne and her passengers, they insist on being visited in London. We again see them entertaining or preparing to entertain in Mrs. Dalloway (completed in 1924) and in a group of short stories written the year after the novel's completion.

Their presence in these stories is especially striking, for usually upon completing a book, Woolf shoved her subject out of mind, eager for relief in a fresh subject. Perhaps the Dalloways, whose function it is to give parties, persist because their party is not over in Mrs. Dalloway, but in a sense, has scarcely begun. Woolf, like Clarissa Dalloway, must return to her party; as she states in her diary, "party consciousness" is a subject she is "always coming back to..." (A Writer's Diary, April 27, 1925).

In Mrs. Dalloway's Party: A Short Story Sequence by Virginia Woolf, Stella McNichol presents together for the first time the seven short stories in which the Dalloways and their party appear. The earliest of these is "Mrs. Dalloway in Bond Street," Mrs. Dalloway's rejected first chapter. Several of the stories have been printed elsewhere. Four ("The New Dress," "The Man Who Loved His Kind," "Together and Apart," "A Summing Up") were published by Leonard Woolf in A Haunted House (1943). "Mrs. Dalloway in Bond Street" was originally published in The Dial (1923) and has not been reprinted until now. Two stories ("The Introduction" and "Ancestors") appear for the first time, culled from the Berg



manuscript. The Dalloway stories, as McNichol arranges them (abandoning the order in which they were written) form a fluid sequence chronicling the anticipation, intimacies, disappointments, and dissolving illusions of the party. The result approximates a novella.

McNichol's introduction offers much valuable background to Mrs. Dalloway and the stories. She reminds us that Woolf, during the period 1921-23, around the time she was writing Mrs. Dalloway, was often ill and exiled to Richmond with its restricted social life; her art shows a preoccupation with the parties she was denied in life. McNichol tells us that the working notes for Mrs. Dalloway (first thought of as At Home or The Party) project "a short book consisting of six or seven chapters, each complete separately. Yet there must be some sort of fusion! All must converge upon the party at the end" (Berg Manuscript, October 6, 1922). Though Woolf abandons this plan for the novel Mrs. Dalloway, McNichol reconstructs it. In Mrs. Dalloway's Party we have perhaps the fulfillment of Woolf's original intention.

We can be grateful for such creative editing which has given us a new Woolf text. And we can look forward to more. Mrs. Dalloway: A First Draft Version, which McNichol promises to publish in the near future, should provide us with still greater understanding of the Dalloways and their party — subjects there from the start which came to preoccupy Woolf during what was chronologically and developmentally the mid-point of her career.

Nora Eisenberg  
Columbia University  
New York City



#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Miscellany's foreign correspondents tell us there will be a "colloque" on Virginia Woolf in France this summer. Beginning August 10, the meeting will be held at the Chateau de Cerisy La Salle (Centre Culturel International). We understand that Quentin Bell and Peter Fawcett will be among the speakers. For further information, write directly to Viviane Forrester, 188 rue de Rivoli 75001 Paris.

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The English Institute will offer a section on Virginia Woolf at its meetings September 2 and 3, 1974, at Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Professor Ralph Freedman, Department of Comparative Literature, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey 09540, is coordinating the section and the scheduled speakers and their topics are:

Harvena Richter, "Hunting the Moth: Virginia Woolf and the Creative Imagination"

Quentin Bell, "Dark Lady or Sonnets: The Role of Biography in the Criticism of Virginia Woolf"

Avrom Fleishman, "Virginia Woolf: Tradition and Modernity"

J. Hillis Miller, "History and Narrative in Between the Acts"

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On November 15, 16, and 17, 1974, a symposium on current work on Virginia Woolf will be held at the University of California at Santa Cruz. A major goal of the conference is to find the main areas of current interest in the study of Woolf, and the approaches and problems of work in progress.

The conference is designed so that all who attend can be active participants, whether or not they have submitted papers. Papers are being received now; the deadline for submission is August 31. A paper is not required for participation, but conference planners urge everyone currently working on Woolf to submit a paper. Student papers are welcome.

Possible topics might include the following: problems of interpretation and misinterpretation in existing critical work on Woolf; modes of self-presentation in Woolf's works: autobiography, biography, and the novel; Woolf as a critic and as a social critic; and the phenomenological study of Woolf's novels, including the study of their spatial metaphors.

A registration fee of \$7.00, due August 31, entitles participants to receive copies of the papers to be discussed and to attend all sections. After August 31, the conference planning committee will circulate a schedule, a roster of participants, and information about accommodations.

Address essays and fees to The Planning Committee, either c/o Madeline Hummel, Kresge College; or c/o Thomas Vogler, Cowell College; both at the University of California, Santa Cruz, California 95064.

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The Women in Literature Section of the 1974 meeting of the Philological Association of the Pacific Coast, to be held November 29 and 30 at California State University at San Diego, will have as its theme "A Form of One's Own." It will consider for presentation papers which explore in depth the type of questions raised by Virginia Woolf, such as whether changes in women's consciousness lead to new forms of fiction, poetry, criticism or teaching. For further information and P.A.P.C. rules for submission, write to: Ellen Hawkes Rogat, Modern Thought and Literature, Stanford University, Stanford, California 94305.

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The Cortauld Institute has prepared a set of slides from the Vanessa Bell Exhibit last November: for further information write Carolyn Scarlett, Slide Collection, Teaching Division, Cortauld Institute of Art, 20 Portman Square, London W1H 0BE, U.K.

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The MLA Woolf Seminar was well attended, as always, and discussion centered around Ellen Rogat's review of Quentin Bell's biography. Fortunately, the review is being published in the Spring 1974 issue of Twentieth Century Literature. The editor has offered to make offprints of this article available at a small cost, if you write directly to him: William McBrien, Hofstra University, Hempstead, L.I., New York 11550.

Next year's seminar on Woolf at MLA in New York will be chaired by Ellen Rogat, and she would welcome any of your suggestions as to topic and form (by June 15).



The following statement was originally intended by Jane Novak to be read in her absence as an opening to the Virginia Woolf Seminar held at the Modern Language Association Convention this past Christmas. Since it did not arrive in time to serve as an introduction, we are printing it.

#### THE WORK AND THE PRIVATE PAPERS: THOUGHTS IN A TIME OF CRITICAL EXPLOSION

Ten years ago a doctoral candidate in a prestigious midwestern university's English Department would have read in the mimeographed advice on the search for a dissertation topic a warning to avoid, together with other critically crowded or critically exhausted subjects, the fiction of Virginia Woolf. The pioneer work of Daiches, Chambers, Blackstone, Johnstone, Moody, and what was considered to be the summa of Jean Guiguet had been finished. There was a flutter of articles aroused by these critical works. But although Virginia Woolf had been established as an interesting modern novelist, the contemptuous attacks of *Scrutiny* still hung in the air. In many quarters there was the impression that her novels were pastel Pateresque reveries unstiffened by moral or social concern. All in all, a study of her work was judged to be a poor choice for neophytes whose professional survival would depend heavily on their opportunities to publish in a major area.

The counsel, as we know, was not well advised. Today there is not only an explosion of critical interest but a somewhat muddling popular interest as well. The London *Times* Sunday magazine section asks with amusement, "What's New in the Bloomsbury Industry?" Dr. A.L.N. Munby of King's College Library, Cambridge, remarks in *TLS* that Bloomsbury scholarship is not only a business but "a growth industry." Memoirs and letters of unconventional, talented, charismatic friends, either in the famous circle or on the periphery, seem to appear every few weeks.

But the disciplined academic interest has more solid grounds than gossip. We are at present sufficiently distanced from the literary politics of Bloomsbury-hating to assess the quality of Virginia Woolf's work with some justice. New readers with heightened consciousness, more subtle reading skills, and a deeper awareness of human issues in Woolf's fiction (such as the abuse of power and the failure of communication), have had to develop these new critical skills in response to the brilliant complexity of the fiction.

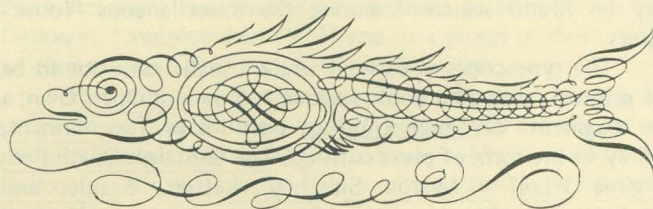
A great nourisher of this activity of analysis and appreciation has been the rich flow of primary materials which have quickened our understanding of Virginia Woolf's temperament and experience. First there was the purchase of the correspondence by the Berg Collection; then the memorable announcement by Dr. Lola Szladits of the Berg's acquisition of the diaries. Quentin Bell's biography followed; we have, in addition, the Charleston Papers at Cambridge and the unpublished holograph manuscripts and letters at Sussex. There is no question that the novels stand completely on their own, their value and substance independent of the use of these sources, but to see the stuff of Virginia Woolf's quotidien and creative lives inextricably mingled in her letters and diaries gives a keen sense of the movement of a brilliant mind. In a letter to Roger Fry, full of both light-hearted play and critical insight, she leaps back and forth between her analysis of Henry James and a description of the bizarre burial of a white horse taking place across the road. The fiction's fusion of the inner and the outer life is played out here as intuitive mental action.

There are many ways in which the biographical material will be useful, but at present much of it is, as the University of Sussex sub-librarian puts it, "embargoed." That is, one may read but not quote. Nigel Nicolson and Dr. Joanne Trautmann are editing the letters; Olivier Bell will edit the diaries. The University of Sussex is readying important manuscripts for publication — early travel diaries and the significant "A Sketch of the Past," three versions of a memoir written in 1939, not available to Quentin Bell when he wrote the biography. As we wait for the availability of this material to all, how can those privileged to read the materials make best use of their opportunity?

I have a suggestion. Surely no one who has read the diaries has not laughed aloud in the reverential silence of the Berg. And the wit, the humour, and the satire that run through the private papers should alert us more wisely to the wit, the humour, and the satire of the novels. Properly moved by their shadowed side and perhaps too much influenced by the gloomy portrait of *A Writer's Diary*, we have neglected an important view of Virginia Woolf's work. Surely we have noted, among many other details, that Mr. Ramsay's intellectual concentration sometimes makes him a figure of absurdity. I think we must read with less unremitting solemnity.

Quentin Bell says that one of his great satisfactions in writing the biography was to show that his aunt was not a pale and languid Elizabeth Barrett Browning lolling on a sofa in a darkened parlor. Virginia Woolf herself, writing to Goldsworthy Dickinson in answer to his praise of *The Waves*, complained that critics seemed to ignore what she was trying to show as the "significance" and "continuity" in life's relentless vitality. In the critical work to come, I look for some recognition of her satire and wit and much celebration of her laughter, her *joie de vivre*.

Jane Novak  
Leverhulme Visiting Fellow  
School of English and American Studies  
University of East Anglia  
Norwich, U.K.



#### VISITING THE MONK'S HOUSE PAPERS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

The University of Sussex lies in Virginia Woolf country, or almost so, since it is a mere eight or ten miles from Rodmell and Monk's House. Modern Brighton with its high-rise apartments is just six miles in another direction, accounting for the University's setting in the midst of what was formerly spacious Stanmer Park. Since 1961 buildings have multiplied on this campus, one of the newer universities of Britain, which serves the million and more residents of East and West Sussex.

Having taken sabbatical leave for 1972-73, I wanted to work somewhere in Sussex, but it was not until the appearance of Quentin Bell's biography that I realized the size of the



Woolf collection available there. As it turned out, I spent the better part of seven months at the University examining the letters, notebooks, working notes, typescripts, and manuscripts that passed into the hands of the University of Sussex Library after the estate of Leonard Woolf was settled in 1972.

The bulk of the papers, I soon learned, belonged to Leonard's writings, which have been separated from Virginia's papers. There is no catalogue at present, but thanks to the industry of Mrs. Quentin Bell, an excellent though temporary handlist can be consulted at the Documents Room by advanced students who wish to explore the Virginia Woolf material. According to A. N. Peasgood, Sub-Librarian, the University intends to prepare a permanent handlist. The portion of the Monk's House papers that consists of letters to and from Virginia, her typescripts, rejected chapters of essays, working notes for book reviews, and so forth, may be consulted more easily than the papers of Leonard, which (by report — I have not seen them personally) are even more miscellaneous and voluminous.

Much of the manuscript and typescript material is of lesser importance than the documents available at the Berg Collection, but early drafts of short stories of all periods, sketches going back into the earliest period of Virginia Stephen's apprentice writing, and great volumes of note-taking that provided her with the ideas for her book reviews exist in some abundance.

It is impossible to furnish an accurate idea of such variegated papers, but here is a quick sampling of some of the typical and important items for those interested in Virginia Woolf's essays and non-fiction. Some of these appear in several stages, from manuscript to typescript: three complete "Memoir Club" contributions, and some fragments; five bound volumes consisting mainly of printed book review clippings, all prior to 1923; working drafts and fragments of articles in manuscript, a few of which never reached print; various MS and TS stages of "Phases of Fiction"; a typed copy of the address upon which her pamphlet *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown* (1924) was based. Fiction is represented mainly by drafts (some in MS.) of her short stories, including those related to *Mrs. Dalloway*; but rejected pages from one or two novels also may be found scattered among the miscellaneous "loose" papers.

The typescripts at Sussex, which usually turn out to be the printer's copy of a book, include *A Room of One's Own*; a few fragments of *Three Guineas*; portions of *The Moment*, mainly in the form of press cuttings; *The Captain's Death Bed*; *Virginia Woolf - Lytton Strachey: Letters*; *Granite and Rainbow*, the printer's copy; various notes, extracts of letters, and materials related to her book *Roger Fry*.

Yet, taken together with the 1500 letters (or typed copies of letters), this is a most impressive collection. Some of the most delightful days of my own stay were spent in reading Clive Bell's marvelously entertaining letters, especially those of 1906 to 1908 from which Quentin Bell quotes so engagingly in the biography. It is fortunate for us that Leonard, Virginia, Lytton, Maynard, Morgan, Vanessa, and all the others apparently seldom threw away a letter. Some of them must have maintained filing cabinets just for the letters of their friends, not to mention their numerous postcards and telegrams from all parts of Europe.

The preliminary handlist of papers indicates at least 192 separately named persons with whom Virginia Woolf exchanged some correspondence — not to mention a whole box of fan mail. And when the fan mail includes, for example,

tributes from persons such as Eudora Welty and Elinor Wylie, this collection at Sussex must indeed be regarded as one of the remarkable gatherings of literary papers by a modern author.

Edward A. Hungerford  
Southern Oregon College  
Ashland, Oregon

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#### REVIEW:

JAMES NAREMORE, *THE WORLD WITHOUT A SELF: VIRGINIA WOOLF AND THE NOVEL* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1973)

Over and over again, usually by male critics, Virginia Woolf has been portrayed as a prudish lady and a squeamish writer. Wyndham Lewis, in his *Men without Art*, called her a "peeper," and Lytton Strachey criticized *To the Lighthouse* because it avoided all reference to copulation.

James Naremore challenges that opinion: "Whether unconscious or not, a highly sensitive, 'curious sexual quality' is present everywhere in Mrs. Woolf's novels" (1). He feels, moreover, that this sexual quality is not merely reflected in the moods of Woolf's prose but that it provides a vehicle for the resolution of her chief problem: her characters' need to overcome the space between things, "to attain an absolute unity with the world" (242). Although the desire for this unity can be expressed in both physical and spiritual terms, in most of Woolf's work it "nearly always has sexual connotations" (242). Naremore successfully argues that the erotic quality of her novels underlies and defines their visionary nature; and that a metaphysical impasse is reached when her characters' desire to embrace the world in an ultimate union can be realized only in death. "That is why she often seems to be striving to work out some kind of compromise between a basic inclination to inhabit the world and a spontaneous impulse to depart from it" (245).

Naremore organizes his discussion around six texts, but devotes more space to *The Voyage Out* than to any of the later novels. For Naremore this novel is characteristic; it presents Woolf's major themes in ways representative of her style. The correlation between sex and death, for instance, is reinforced not only in Rachel's imagination, but in the language itself. The settings are symbolic and the external landscapes often objectify a kind of internal landscape.

Woolf's mode of narration, with its apparent need for unity between internal and external, creates uncertainty about what self or what consciousness defines the observer or narrator. Naremore summarizes the stylistic implications of the term "stream of consciousness" by reviewing the ideas of Robert Humphrey, Melvin Friedman, Frederick Hoffman and Wayne Booth, and he shows that it is possible to include parts of Woolf's fiction within this category. He concludes that the term is problematic, however, for *The Voyage Out*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *The Waves*, because the "stream of consciousness" method does not comprehend the expression of non-conscious experiences so prevalent in these works.

Woolf, while criticizing Joyce in her essay "Modern Fiction," calls for a literature which reveals the self as it "embraces or creates what is outside itself or beyond." Her two verbs, however, postulate separate attitudes toward



nature, and Naremore asks, "Is the world around us an ultimate order which we can 'embrace' by somehow getting outside the ego, or is it a chaos out of which we 'create' order through the effort of the imagination?" (74) In To the Lighthouse we find the first alternative:

It was odd, she thought, how if one was alone, one leant to inanimate things; trees, streams, flowers; felt they expressed one; felt they became one; felt they knew one, in a sense were one; felt an irrational tenderness thus (she looked at that long steady light) as for oneself. There rose, and she looked and looked with her needles suspended, there curled up off the floor of the mind, rose from the lake of one's being, a mist, a bride to meet her lover. (101-102)

The impersonal pronoun "one" creates a tone in which the narrator seems to have merged with the objects she is describing, and we are uncertain about who says "a bride to meet her lover." It is not clear whether the image is something in Mrs. Ramsay's mind or if it is supplied by the narrator as a means of describing her feelings. In The Waves, on the other hand, at a particularly crucial moment Bernard declares "We are creators"; and, as Naremore suggests, "...Mrs. Ramsay's Boeuf en Daube, like Lily Briscoe's painting, functions to create order out of apparent disorder."

The movement toward the impersonal which began in The Voyage Out reaches its formal apex in The Waves. All the voices exhibit the same fondness for repetition and alliteration, and the associative field of the imagery is shared among them. So Naremore questions the accuracy of those who claim that the speeches are soliloquies. He objects that the language is too artificial and the degree of selectivity too great. And just as the voices, while asserting their personalities,

also imply a life devoid of personality, so Bernard yearns for some "little language such as lovers use," a medium like music which de-emphasizes distinctions. Naremore says of him that "in the last pages of the novel he oscillates between the sense of having a special identity and that other feeling of infinite possibility, until at the end he is convinced that those very oscillations are part of some eternal renewal and that his habitual struggle against the enemy is futile but noble" (187).

Regrettably, Naremore identifies the two worlds of experience, ego-defined and egoless, with traditional sexist connotations of male and female. He associates the world of the "self" with "the everyday world of the masculine ego" where separations result in agony; and the "world without a self" with a traditionally defined "feminine sensibility" — "watery, emotional, erotic," "where all of life seems blended together in a kind of 'halo,' where the individual personality is continually being dissolved by intimations of eternity, and where death reminds us of a sexual union." While realizing that Woolf did not dispense with either world, Naremore argues that it was the "second that held her imagination and inspired her to evolve a highly personal technique." For me, this is not fully accurate. Woolf did believe that the qualities traditionally associated with women had been undervalued and that women writers would have to see the strength in them. But the ways in which Woolf defined and valued "masculine," "feminine," and "androgynous" are more complex than Naremore suggests. Most important, Woolf would not have identified the "world without a self" as simply feminine. It is Bernard, after all, who asks "But how to describe the world seen without a self? There are no words."

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#### VIRGINIA WOOLF AND THE YALE REVIEW: MATERIAL IN THE BEINECKE LIBRARY

Between 1926 and 1938 Virginia Woolf contributed nine essays to the Yale Review, making this quarterly a major American outlet for her journalistic work. The Beinecke Library at Yale holds the typewritten manuscripts, and in some cases corrected galley proofs, of seven of these pieces, as well as forty-three letters from Woolf to Helen McAfee, the Review's managing editor.\* The correspondence includes covering letters, responses to requests for material, explanations of delays in submitting copy, queries about the magazine's interest in various subjects, as well as routine acknowledgments of receipt of proofs, payment, and final copies. While by no means of major importance, these letters provide useful information for anyone interested in dating the genesis of various projects; and they suggest, moreover, a bracing, down-to-earth view of Woolf as a professional writer.

Few people, I expect, cling to the image of Woolf as "the Invalid Lady of Bloomsbury," rarified and out of touch with life, but her dealings with the Yale Review certainly show that this lady knew the value of her journalistic work and sold it to make money. In a tactful way, she was not above haggling, and such drama as there is in her correspondence with McAfee is largely economic. In the spring of 1928, for example, Woolf replied to a request for an article by proposing what would become "Dr. Burney's Evening Party," but she wanted to know what they could pay her for it. "I ask because I have now made an arrangement with Curtis Brown for articles in various American papers. As I don't write many, I want of course to place my work as profitably as I can." Delay followed delay, and excuse excuse, and "Dr. Burney" eventually appeared (in July, 1929) in the book section of the New York Herald Tribune, which presumably paid better than the Yale Review. When McAfee next wrote to solicit a piece, Woolf replied bluntly, "Of course it would make a great difference if as you suggest the Yale Review were able to increase the fee to 200 dollars, but if I may be frank, I find that I can dispose of my longer articles for a good deal more than that; and as I write journalism in order to earn a living, I have to accept the best offer."

In general Woolf replied promptly and efficiently to McAfee's queries and returned proofs immediately, but in the fall of 1929, she promised something for the next summer's issue, and when McAfee wrote in April to ask where her



contribution was, it appeared she had forgotten her promise. She told McAfee to take a piece on Augustine Birrell away from the Bookman, as it had been there too long and she had nothing else on hand, and this review was duly published in the June, 1930 number of the Yale Review. By this time her fee has been increased to \$250. In the same year Galsworthy was paid \$200 by the Yale Review for a story and Hugh Walpole \$150 for an article.

Before the 1929 crash, the Yale Review had a circulation of 18,000, and throughout the years Woolf contributed to it, the journal was in its heighday under the editorship of Wilbur Cross, the remarkable man who in his time was both professor of English at Yale and four-times-elected Governor of Connecticut. He intended the Yale Review to satisfy the many-sided interests of the mature mind with articles on social questions, political and economic affairs, religion, science, philosophy, as well as literature and the arts. Cross's audience, in other words, was much like the cultivated but non-specialized audience to which Woolf addressed The Common Reader: no wonder she found the Yale Review a congenial, if relatively unremunerative, place to publish. From the editors' point of view, Woolf could be counted on to provide "delightful" essays, and she was a valued member of a stellar group of contributors which included H. L. Mencken, Walter Lippmann, William Allen White, Julian and Aldous Huxley, Edith Wharton, Harold J. Laski, Thomas Mann, and André Maurois.

Only one article Woolf submitted to the Yale Review was turned down: an essay on Goldsmith, later published in the Times Literary Supplement, was said to be unsuited to American readers. Ironically, the Beinecke also owns Woolf's reading notes on Goldsmith, which were purchased by Helen

McAfee's friends in 1956 and donated to the library in her memory.

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\*Note: See B. J. Kirkpatrick, A Bibliography of Virginia Woolf (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1957), entries C 277, 291, 323, 326, 332, 334, 341, 344, 358 for Woolf's publications in the Yale Review; manuscripts of these articles are in the Beinecke, with the exception of "Memories of a Working Women's Guild" and "Two Antiquaries: Walpole and Cole." For information on the Yale Review, see Wilbur L. Cross, Connecticut Yankee: An Autobiography and Frank Mott, A History of American Magazines.

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