DLS

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DLS
American Journal of Sayers Studies

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I will not weep nor cry for work unperfected.
Still labouring faithfully, I have no tears to shed.

LAY XII, OP. I., 1916

Watercolour, 2016
Private Collection
To M.J.

Now that we have gone down – have all gone down,
   I would not hold too closely to the past,
      Till it become my staff, or even at last
         My crutch, and I be made a helpless clown.

   All men must walk alone, not drowse, nor drown,
      Their wits, with spells of dead things overcast,
   Now that we have gone down, have all gone down,
      I would not hold too closely to the past.

   Therefore, God love thee, thou enchanted town,
      God love thee, leave me, clutch me not so fast;
         Lest, clinging blindly we but grope aghast,
            Sweet friends, go hence and seek your own renown,
      Now that we have gone down – have all gone down.

   OP. I., 1916: 70
First Women’s Graduating Class
Oxford University
October 14, 1920

The Illustrated London News, 1920
Watercolor Pixel Sketch, 2017
Private Collection
Welcome

We are delighted that you have returned to visit Dorothy L. Sayers in Oxford, town and gown, through DLS, *American Journal of Sayers Studies*. Continuing our quest to interest and encourage readers in the writings, work, life, and times, of Dorothy L. Sayers and those ideas and people who influenced her work as well as those whom she influenced, we remind ourselves, and note for others, that DLS has been created for the general Sayers enthusiast as well as for the specialized reader. We are committed to providing a good reading experience for the full range of Sayers’ wide readership: beginner, long-term enthusiast, and expert. Within this second volume of *DLS*, we continue to share an adventure with Dorothy Sayers; that of her three years, 1912-1915, at Somerville College, Oxford University as we focus upon a collective of varied student writers, from 1912 – 1922, who maintained lifelong personal and/or professional ties to one another and to Dorothy L. Sayers by virtue of their links to one Somerville student writing circle titled the Mutual Admiration Society (henceforth, MAS).

Beginnings: a Note from Barb Prescott

The idea for Volume II, A Mutual Admiration, began several years ago as I was in the initial stages of researching the Oxford poetry of Dorothy L. Sayers, archived at the Marion E. Wade Center in Wheaton, IL, and, in the process, kept finding notes, journals, and references to the Mutual Admiration Society, or MAS as Dorothy termed it. Amused by the title and intrigued by the organization, I could not ignore this aspect of Sayers’ Oxford life – in fact, the MAS kept knocking on my door, insisting upon being recognized and carefully considered. As a result, a sideline of my research on Dorothy Sayers began to take shape, one which was focused toward learning more about the society and the members of the MAS
as students, writers, and later as professionals in their varied occupations, most keeping in contact with one another through the years. My initial research culminated in a paper read at the noted C.S. Lewis & Friends Colloquium at Taylor University in 2016, titled “Dorothy L. Sayers and the Mutual Admiration Society: Friendship and Creative Writing in an Oxford Women’s Literary Group,” later published (2017) in *Inklings Forever* by Winged Lion Press. That marked the beginning of a journey with the MAS which continues to this day, destined to manifest in a book titled, *Interwritten Lives*. As part of this volume, my thoughts and continuing research about the society are shared in the anchor article, “A Mutual Admiration: Connection, Creativity, and Critique in a Somerville Women’s Writing Circle,” as well as in “Preamble to *Interwritten Lives*.” Stay tuned, good readers, as I continue to explore the MAS, early and later, in its varied aspects and, somewhat unexpected, development through time as a Somerville writing circle which grew and evolved in most interesting ways as members and history changed.

**Mutual Admireations**

In DLS, Volume II, titled “A Mutual Admiration,” we explore Dorothy Sayers’ participation in the MAS circle. Furthermore, we look more closely at several other members of the society who remained important influences on the later life of Dorothy L. Sayers, as she remained also an influence upon their personal and professional lives. The web of interinfluence among MAS members lasted, among most early and later members, throughout their lives. We also extend the timeline of the MAS to include members who participated in the writing group after Dorothy, and other original members, left Oxford. This second wave added a new, outwardly-oriented, modern, social perspective to the existing Somerville writing circle.

The editor would like to extend her thanks and sincere appreciation to the kindly and clever scholar from the C.S.
Lewis and Friends Colloquium at Taylor University in 2016 who suggested that she use the name, *A Mutual Admiration*, as title for her upcoming book about the writing lives of members, early and later, of the MAS. As the book remains, to this day, in its writing stage, she has, instead, bestowed upon this volume of DLS his inspired title suggestion. Many, many, thanks, kind sir.

In Part I of DLS, we introduce and explore various aspects of the early and later Mutual Admiration Society, a group of Somerville student writers, usually numbering from seven to twelve (or more) participants at any given time between November 1912 and June 1915 for the early members, then to approximately 1922 for later writing circle participants. After 1922, we hear little more of the MAS at Somerville, remaining members such as Muriel St. Clare Byrne and Dorothy Rowe, as well as later participants such as Winifred Holtby, Doreen Wallace, Marjorie Barber, and H.S. Reid, having graduated Somerville College, Oxford University, to begin their writing, teaching, research, and social activist careers.

In Parts IIA & IIB, we offer a rich selection of poetry and prose, fiction and nonfiction, by MAS members, including those students who joined between 1912 and 1915, the years Dorothy L. Sayers participated in the circle, and after 1915 by a new wave of Somerville writers who joined the circle after most original members had left. We consider Part II to be the heart of this volume, presenting, in their original words, the ideas, values, scholarship, and imagination of a substantial number of MAS members or MAS-linked Somerville writers, early and later, by their poetry, fiction, and essays. We introduce the early and later MAS members through their own words, so that our readers may appreciate the variety of writing within the MAS as well as the depth of each individual writer’s voice.

We extend our sincere appreciation to Oxford Poetry for their kind permission to share poems from MAS members first published in editions 1913 – 1923. We are also very grateful to those collectors of *The Fritillary* who were so generous in
providing to us copies of the magazine from 1895 to the early nineteen hundreds, and who so courteously allowed us to share these first, and sometimes rarely found, published writings of the early and later MAS, existing currently in public domain.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to those publishers, listed after certain poems, who unreservedly supported our efforts to share the early work of the Somerville writers, and, of course, to those writers whose works speak for themselves. The published writings of MAS members and links, currently residing in public domain, are a gift from the authors to their readers, and we honor that gift.

Part III, “Armesia & Fritillaries,” is a treat. Included are several unusual, rare, or ancillary points of interest regarding Oxford in the early twentieth century, all within the experiential world of Dorothy Sayers or those of her colleagues, later biographers, or reviewers. First we are delighted to present an article by author Linda McCabe on “Orlando Furioso, Barbara Reynolds, and the Warrior Maidens,” as we consider further writings and Italian translations of Sayers’ biographer and friend, Barbara Reynolds. Next, we provide another excerpt from the Mass in B minor, Dorothy’s favorite choral extravaganza from the works of Bach, and one which she often sang as part of the Oxford Bach Choir. Our choice for this volume is “Patrem omnipotentem,” for its joyful melody and grand interweaving of choral voices. We also post a YouTube link to hear the music firsthand. Dorothy must have loved singing, in her contralto voice, the “Patrem.”

Moving on, we have included, in “The Bibliophile’s Record,” the primary catalogued information on Unpopular Opinions, again courtesy of Catherine B. Gilbert, The English Catalogue, Whitaker’s, and the Library of Congress, as an aid to organizing your Sayers library. Following is a “Tour of Oxford Cathedral,” courtesy of P.H. Ditchfield and Herbert Railton (illustrator), complete with measured dimensions, for the architecturally-minded among us.
“Regarding Somerville” provides a contemporary view of forward-thinking Miss Emily Penrose (later Dame Emily Penrose), by her student-secretary Vera Farnell and then-student Vera Brittain. Gleaned from several issues, 1913-1915, of *The Fritillary*, are a series of interesting tidbits from Somerville, followed by excerpts from the 1922 book by Muriel St. Clare Byrne and Catherine Hope (Godfrey) Mansfield, *Somerville College, 1879-1921*. Finally, we include the music and lyrics of *The Somerville College Song*, composed in 1903 by students Helen Darbishire, Margaret F. Moor, and Margaret Robinson, reflecting the enthusiastic and optimistic tenure of Miss Catherine Maitland, principal prior to Emily Penrose.

In the following section, “Review, Response, and Opinion,” we are delighted to present a reflective essay by Dr. Crystal Hurd on the never-ending (it appears) issues of social and professional equality that are, to this day, faced by women throughout the world. The focus of Crystal Hurd’s argument is that of Dorothy L. Sayers’ biting essay, “Are Women Human?” located in Sayers’ book of essays, *Unpopular Opinions* which addresses various questions regarding women’s social equality. Dr. Hurd continues Sayers’ argument by reflecting upon the still pertinent question, “Are Women Human Now?” Next is a review of Barbara Reynold’s classic Sayers biography by Nancy Vermette, a long standing Sayers researcher and enthusiast as well as member of the editorial board of DLS. Nancy’s second review of “The Locked Room,” a short story by Sayers, is also included.

Another biographical review, that of Doreen Wallace, MAS member, democratic socialist, and later land-rights activist, follows. We must note that Doreen Wallace’s life and rather spirited Oxford-centered friendship with Dorothy Sayers has not been often addressed by women’s literary historians, and the topic remains ripe for further research. Following is a review, by Emily McClanathan, of *Whose Body?* - The Play, adapted by Frances Limoncelli and performed at Lifeline Theatre in Chicago in the autumn of 2019.
A review of the papers from the XIth Frances Ewbank Colloquium on C.S. Lewis and Friends in 2018, published in The Faithful Imagination deserved a place in DLS and we provided our review of this important biennial conference in which Sayers research is always welcome and given a voice. Finally, we address a long-standing pesky thorn in the question of the singular possessive linked to Sayers’ name, the Big Three style guides notwithstanding. I’m sure, by simply reading my last use of the possessive, that this editor’s firm stand on the subject is fairly clear.

A new section, “Contemporary Comment & Modern Reflection: Poems and Stories,” makes its debut in this volume. We are very pleased to bring to our readers both contemporary (to the MAS) and modern poems inspired by Dorothy Sayers, her friends, and Oxford, an old essay that still strikes a chord to this day, and a diary excerpt from a time-traveling student. We hope to expand this section in future volumes and encourage our readers to submit their Sayers-inspired stories as well as poems to the future volumes of DLS. These will always be welcome.

Our final area of interest is titled, “References and Recommendations,” where we list a selection of recommended readings by Dorothy Sayers (Part I), selected MAS writers, and general sources. Our listings of societies, organizations, and online resources remain, as do our submission guidelines for the next volume, “Sayers and Christian Romanticism.” Rounding out this section are our heartfelt thanks and acknowledgements to each and every person who by good will and useful suggestions, as well as each organization by permission and encouragement, helped us along the way. The final word is given to Dorothy L. Sayers. We maintain, given Dorothy’s strongly expressed opinions, that she would probably have taken it anyway.

We hope you enjoy your visit with Dorothy Sayers at Oxford in our second volume, and continue to join us as we accompany Sayers on her many writing and life experiences.
through future issues of *DLS, American Journal of Sayers Studies*. So now, gentle reader, let us continue our Oxford adventure together with Dorothy and friends, by looking more closely at the Mutual Admiration Society, early and later. We begin with a quote from the Oxford memoir of that blithe MAS spirit, Charis Barnett:

*Scholarship in its widest aspect is the supreme Oxford objective; my pursuit of this was frustrated by the war, but the parallel endowment of friendship remained mine for life.*

(Charis Barnett Frankenburg, 1975: 62)

*The Editors*
In Aeternum Floreant:
A Divergent Introduction

Oxford has usually been described either by her lovers or her malcontents. She has suffered the extremes of filial ingratitude and affection. There is something in the place that makes all her children either adore or detest her; and it is difficult indeed to pick out the truth concerning her past social condition from the satires and the encomiums.

(Andrew Lang, 1890: 191)

Continuing our quest to discover the early twentieth-century world of Oxford University, rather like curious Alices in a curiourser time, again we settle as guests of Dorothy L. Sayers in Somerville College. Yet, during this visit, we are content to remain, for the most part, within the comfortable parameters of Somerville, exploring the history of the college, several of its principals, and the sixty to eighty students who inhabited this women’s college before, during, and a bit after, Dorothy’s 1912-1915 tenure. Most particularly, we focus upon a student writing group, the Mutual Admiration Society (henceforth, MAS).

As we consider, throughout volume two of DLS, this Somerville writing circle created in November 1912, we will look at its beginnings, its growth, and, most importantly, at its student members, both early and later. As a result, the current volume of DLS is one which expands our perspective to include the Somerville writers who influenced Dorothy L. Sayers during her Oxford years and beyond, as well as those who were influenced by Sayers, personally and at times professionally, throughout their collective lives. These women, in various ways and along with various members, formed a web of long-term linkages to one another (Prescott, 2016). Dorothy L. Sayers, by
virtue of her participation in the early Mutual Admiration Society, was part of the web and remained so, even during her later return to the city of Oxford while working for Basil Blackwell from 1917-1919. During that period, Sayers developed a closer friendship with Vera Brittain who had returned to Somerville, as well as with Doreen Wallace, a MAS member who lived near Dorothy Sayers in Oxford since there was limited space available for Somerville students on campus during this period. Both women linked Sayers again to the writers’ circle of Somerville. The group had, by this time, grown to include Margaret Kennedy, Doreen Wallace, Winifred Holtby, and Hilda S. Reid, as well as retaining older members such as Marjorie Barber (also a friend to Brittain), Muriel St. Clare Byrne, and Dorothy Rowe.

In addition to the original MAS, we mention in this volume, as well, several other Somerville literary and philosophical groups. All of these are reported in the written words of the women students, themselves, submitted to The Fritillary, before and during The Great War which materially affected Somerville College and its students from 1914 to the early 1920’s, and very often far beyond those years.

When we wander, for brief periods, away from Somerville, particularly as we discuss pre-war Oxford, we look to the earlier reminiscences of Andrew Lang from his Oxford: Historical and Picturesque Notes (1890). Furthermore, we shall again call upon Blair (a male student several years in the future), as he is eager to continue his story to us of insiders’ Oxford Ways (1926), albeit those are, of course, men’s ways.

Following our model in Part I (Volume I, 2018), we note that topics are presented as vignettes of student observation, so that a reader may focus on those areas which are of interest and skip over those which are not.

With that optimistic agenda in mind, let us begin by asking Miss Charis Ursula Barnett, a founding member of the MAS and lifelong friend to Dorothy L. Sayers, about her memories of Somerville as a new student in situ pupilari, and later, as a
seasoned Somervillian. From Not Old, Madam, Vintage, we hear the voice of Charis Ursula Barnett, upon arriving at Somerville:

In September 1912, I became an undergraduate of Somerville College, Oxford. My parents’ theory that a year’s break between school and university ensured more benefit from university life than if one went straight from school, might have been valid if that interlude had provided any profitable experience. But another twelve months in West Kensington merely set me a year behind my school contemporaries. However, it did give me a group of exceptional College friends, so all is forgiven.

Women, not being members of the University, had to register at the Delagacy for Women Students with Miss Rogers – known as The Dragon. To one girl she commented, “I don’t think much of your year for looks!” She liked my name and remembered it in Responsions (Smalls) papers – the preliminary examination essential for “The equivalent of a Degree.” I reminded her that she had seen it twice as, like all the best people, I was ploughed at my first attempt (1975: 37).

Vera Brittain, a later MAS-link, remembers arriving at Somerville in 1914 and noticing two students in particular, both early MAS members:

...a prospective novelist, Muriel Jaeger, and a more celebrated future writer, Dorothy Leigh Sayers,... her exact contemporary (Brittain 1960: 122).

Brittain describes Dorothy L. Sayers as follows:

A bouncing, affable, exhuberant young woman, she had a vivid and somewhat crude taste in clothes, which at least could not have been described as “dowdy.” Her thin, straight dark hair became an excuse for extravagant indoor headgear, which varied from shrill colors by day to gold or silver at night... (1960: 123).
... and another probable, albeit short-lived, early MAS member, Agnes Elizabeth Murray, who published poetry in *The Fritillary* as well as in *Oxford Poetry*:

*A remarkable first-year student of 1913 was Agnes Elizabeth Murray, Professor Gilbert Murray’s brilliant and beautiful younger daughter, whose fierce love of life did not suggest her mournful fate of premature death, at twenty-eight, in a village of Auvergne* (1960: 122).

**A Reminder of Somerville Basics from Volume I, DLS:**

It can be noted that Somerville College had a Principal, Emily Penrose serving in that capacity during Sayers’ student years. First Years were called *Freshers* at Somerville and, we suspect, most elsewhere.

To receive a more objective view of early twentieth-century Oxford, we may look to certain descriptions by University historians such as Somerville College archivist, Pauline Adams (1996), in her *Somerville for Women, An Oxford College 1879-1993*:

*The students’ At Home was a normal feature of Michaelmas Term, providing them with an opportunity to invite friends and to organize their own form of entertainment... As the years went on the occasion became more and more ambitious, to the extent of hiring professional entertainers and caterers... Whether they enjoyed their social responsibilities or not, Somerville students learned to accept them with good grace... “I tried to swot (rest) a bit after lunch but it was our At Home day and people poured in. I swore at them inwardly, but received them smilingly,” reported Cornelia Sorabji in 1890.*

For a general description of the interior of Somerville, we cite the words of a French guest who visited in 1892. The interior did not vary significantly from the date of his observations to the time of Dorothy Sayers (1912).
The lady student who showed me over Somerville Hall hardly troubled to conceal the disdain my astonishment inspired. Here is the gymnasium with its parallel bars, its horse, and its bicycles; the drawing room, plain but comfortable, and provided with pianos and violoncellos. As we went up a delightful staircase, she asked me about the most famous French geometrician... (Bardoux 1899: 14).

Somerville Customs of Address
Charis Barnett recalls:

We were called “Miss” with our surnames by dons and students, and preferred this to the indiscriminate use of Christian names in other women’s colleges. As friendship with a contemporary progressed, one “proposed” and Christian names were henceforth used. Etiquette decreed that this advance was made by a senior to a junior. Conventions about names were rigid in the outside world; when staying with May, I knew her brother as ‘Mr. Boulton,’ even in writing in my diary (Frankenburg 1975: 59).

The members of the early MAS, in a sorority-like gesture, developed nicknames for one another. Muriel Jaeger was ‘Jim,’ Dorothy Rowe was ‘Tiddler,’ Amphilis Middlemore was ‘Amphy,’ Marjorie Barber was ‘Bar,’ Catherine Godfrey was ‘Tony,’ and Dorothy Sayers, at certain times, signed herself ‘Rallentando’ in tribute to her Oxford crush, conductor Hugh Percy Allen. Later group members dropped this custom, as they dropped the name MAS and its sorority-like status, becoming a more experienced writing group, and some adopted the use of initials in place of a given name, both in voice and in author names, such as D.E.A. Wallace and H.S. Reid. Even Marjorie Barber was referred to later as M. Barber and Muriel Byrne as M.S.C. Byrne. Although the use of initials is often found in The Fritillary, the later Somerville authors adopted this somewhat formal habit in their author names and often in reference to one another.
Student Humor

“When I’m in statu pupilari,
My only Aunt! I must be wary.”

(attributed to Dorothy Rowe)

This was in reference to women’s rather dubious status at Oxford before full matriculation rights were given them in 1920.

Miss Penrose was, at times, referred to as “The Pen that fills in a flash,” referencing her habit of rapidly eating at table while others talked.

And this:  

We have a dear dame called the Pen  
Who is rather distrustful of men.  
Once she chaperoned me  
When I went out to tea,  
But I don’t think she’ll do it again.  

(Frankenburg 1975: 59)

The Practicalities of Living at Somerville:
Charis recalls:

The Maitland building was not in use until October 1913, and before that we were divided into Hall (East) and West and had separate dining- and common-rooms; this resulted in friendly rivalry (Frankenburg 1975: 57).

According to Somerville student and later secretary to Miss Penrose, Vera Farnell:

The Maitland Hall, which could seat two hundred or more, swept away this division of East and West. It formed part of a block of buildings including kitchen, servants’ hall and domestic offices, S.C.R., and a private dining-room, and, separated from it by a low loggia, a three-storyed building with three tutors’ sets and eighteen student’s bed-sitting-rooms. From the beginning to the Hall you could cross from the first floor passage by a way passing above the roof of the loggia (Farnell 1948: 37).
From Charis Barnett:

We were supposed to be in our own rooms by 11 p.m. and as passage lights were put out at 10 p.m. an electric torch – not very widely used – was an advantage. Mine was brought after a nocturnal incursion into the Vice-Principal’s room, which was next to mine – fortunately she did not wake. My room was in West, on the first floor overlooking the garden, with a very comfortable window-seat. Essential furniture was supplied, and I added an armchair, a corner-cupboard, and a most useful wooden fender which provided extra seating – there was once a party of fourteen (Frankenburg 1975: 57).

The large party of women students mentioned by Charis may very well have been a meeting of the MAS. It is also probable that Dorothy Sayers’ room was on the third floor, from a comment made by Vera Brittain that Dorothy was often seen cheerfully running about on the third floor with an apron tucked into her skirt and carrying a tea kettle (1978: 67).

Our rooms were kept clean by scouts – mine was round and rosy Emily – and they called us in the mornings, bringing a jug of hot water. A washstand was in each room, curtained off, but mine was soon banished, as a row of bathrooms was opposite my door – as was also the pantry where we left crockery to be washed. We had coal-fires and also a gas-ring; the porters brought us coal, which we could augment from a chest in the passage (Frankenburg 1975: 58).

Looking Back in Time:

Though the (early) students did their own washing up and lit their individual coal fires – rare forms of self-help at that period of amply staffed middle-class households – more work was probably accomplished then, than by women in modern Oxford. But they lived, inevitably, a self-centered life with few distractions, in which their own hopes and aspirations created their world (Brittain 1960: 94-95).
About Food and Dining Rituals:

The college food was good. The three main meals were served in our dining-rooms and later in the Maitland Hall. Tea was available in the common-rooms, but we generally preferred it in our own rooms. Bread and butter were provided, milk was entered in the pantry-book and paid for termly, and we bought what extras we could afford. Heinz tomato-sauce on bread-and-butter was delicious; a three-pound pot of apricot jam cost a shilling, and, on affluent days, we had bottled raspberries.

The scouts waited at meals except for the cold Sunday supper, Nondescript or Nondy. When serving-hatches appeared in the Maitland hall there was more self-service, but never at dinner.

Dinner was a formal occasion for which permission to be absent was necessary. We dressed for it and assembled in the Junior Common-room – shared by all years. A don would approach a student and convey her to the High Table; a third year would take a second year or a first year (fresher); a second-year might take in a fresher. The rest of us went in with a contemporary (Frankenburg 1975: 58-59).

... breakfast at many of the colleges (Somerville included) was an all-too-sociable occasion at which selected undergraduates... were expected to entertain their tutors with bright conversation at the High Table. Only in relatively modern times did the dons have the courage to admit that they found this form of ‘fellowship’ as trying as the students (Brittain 1960: 94-95).

Dining with Miss Penrose:

Before breakfast we shook hands with the Principal, Miss Penrose, rather intimidating in appearance, but a delightful and sympathetic person. She read prayers. At breakfast we were expected to fill up places at the High Table.
It was rather daunting to be Miss Penrose’s partner, as intelligent conversation was expected, and she ate so rapidly that one’s own needs could not compete. She was, in fact, known to some of us as “The Pen that fills in a flash” – a reference to a much advertised fountain-pen, the earliest for which a little pen-filler was not needed. (The makers of the film A Yank at Oxford had obviously not heard of this; they depicted women students in 1933 using quill pens.) (Frankenburg 1975: 59).

To balance our perspective, let’s look toward a male Fresher’s introduction to the rituals of table at his college:

His first dinner in Hall with his fellow Freshmen is really the beginning of college life for him. “Does not our life consist of the four elements?” “Faith, so they say; but I think it rather consists of eating and drinking.” “Thou are a scholar; let us therefore eat and drink.” So it is that this communal eating and drinking in Hall is the great ritual of Oxford scholarship, the essential collegiate sacrament. On this first night, there will be only Freshmen present, with but one or two ‘dons on the dais serene.’ Our Freshman may or may not have a schoolfellow or two to go in with him. But either he or the next man to him at his table will break the ice over the passing of the salt with: ‘I say – we might as well introduce ourselves, don’t you think?’ And eventually one or other will issue the invitation to ‘come round to my rooms afterwards for coffee.’ That is the beginning of all things (Blair, 1926: 10).

Back to Somerville & Chaperoning:

Chaperon rules were elaborate, but we felt no resentment. We realised that we were in Oxford on probation and that to attain what we all hoped for – complete recognition by the University – it was up to us to provide no ammunition for the die-hards.

In visiting men’s colleges an accompanying don was obligatory. Even seeing a brother in his college needed a chaperon, but, if he were in outside rooms, one could go alone.
Your brother could also come to your room – so could your father, uncle, and spiritual adviser. An Indian student with an undergraduate husband had leave to receive him unchaperoned “at certain times” (Frankenburg, 58).

In contrast, men’s customs were somewhat more casual. A noteworthy difference may be found in dining customs at Hall, particularly in the then-curious rite of “sconcing.” According to Blair (1926):

“To sconce a man is to fine him, or claim from him a forfeit in liquor. Generally it is the senior man at the table who is qualified to impose a sconce. He may do so for a host of petty offences: talking shop (i.e., about one’s work), using a foreign language, or bad language, throwing bread – all that sort of thing…. The sconce is born in by the Scout of the table and religiously set before the delinquent with the lid thrown back. A sconce is a fair round vessel of silver…. If he can empty the sconce – ‘floor it’ – he may then triumphantly sconce the next man to him on the left... (1926: 15).

Dinner in Blair’s college must have been a sight to behold.

**Money Customs at Somerville:**

Tipping was absolutely forbidden, except for a termly one shilling and sixpence to the porters, Scroggs and Saunders. It was a great day when Scroggs was invited to the Oxford Scouts’ dinner; an indication that one day we too might be acknowledged as part of the University.

There was a college fund called Amalgamation which provided newspapers and flowers for the common-rooms, games’ and boats’ apparatus and the services of a messenger who daily delivered our letters, parcels, and essays all over Oxford; for this we each subscribed fifteen shillings and sixpence a term (Frankenburg, 58).
Comparing a male student’s experience:

Expenses at Oxford are very little to be gauged by colleges, but almost wholly by social sets.... From the semi-official handbook and asserted by the Head of the college: ‘An undergraduate who is careful in his expenditures should be able to live on £100 a year.’ It is said that certain undergraduates of the college (embittered by their parents’ expectations) once when at breakfast with the Head tackled him on this mendacious statement. The Head (himself a notorious Spartan and once an undergraduate fifty years earlier) stoutly defended his assertion. ‘But I do not say,’ he added, ‘that he would have very much to eat.’ ... Or one might say that, as in everything else, the best is always the cheapest... (Blair 1926: 17).

So, apparently, on both ends, and for most students, there was never enough money throughout their undergraduate years to soften the somewhat Spartan lifestyle expected of students. Well, things have not changed much in that arena.

Andrew Lang, in his description of Oxford life somewhat earlier in the 1880s – 1890’s, however, observes that Oxford has an unusual influence on some undergraduates who happily adopt either a “entitled, heroic, persona” or the “suffering scholarly student syndrome”:

The picture daubed by the emaciated undergraduate who dabbles in fiction is... unrecognisable. He makes himself and his friends too large, too noisy, too bibulous, too learned, too extravagant, too pugnacious. They seem to stride down The High, prodigious, disproportionate, figures, like the Kings of Egypt on monuments, overshadowing the crowd... The mildest of men suddenly pose as heroes, (or as) fellows who... read all night with wet towels bound round their brows. These sketches are all nonsense. Men who do these things do not write about them; and men who write about them never did them (Lang 1890: 259).
Activities & Social Life at Somerville:

As soon as cycling began it was hedged round with restrictions; bicycles were forbidden on Sundays, and must not be ridden over Magdalen and Folly Bridges. Finally Miss Wordsworth (of Margaret Hall) took up cycling herself, and the prohibitions went with the wind (Brittain 1960: 94).

As noted in volume one of DLS, Dorothy L. Sayers was voted Bicycle Secretary in 1915, citing bicycle offenders with little mercy. See that volume also for Sayers’ Going Down poem, “The Bicycle Secretary’s Song.” In an earlier decade, walking for pleasure was considered de rigueur:

As there were then (ca. 1900) few parties and no dancing, Eleanor Lodge used up her surplus energy on the still fashionable long rambles. These gave the students a knowledge of the country round Oxford, no longer so attractive to walkers to-day owing to the miles swallowed up by the ever-extending suburbs... (Ibid. 94).

We thought it would be helpful, in our survey of Somerville College, to repeat the previous description (DLS, Volume I) of pre-war social norms within the women’s colleges, and particularly within that of Somerville:

In contrast to the social opportunities afforded our previously mentioned male student, Blair, university societies and clubs were generally closed to women students. There were specific rules of behavior that women were expected to comply with, as noted in Miss Penrose’s letter of welcome to students who had been accepted to Somerville in 1907:

Students never go into Colleges alone. They do not attend College chapels nor walk in College gardens without permission and in some cases not without a chaperone. They do not walk ‘by the Barges’ nor along the towing path. They do not take long country walks or bicycle rides quite alone and if they want to go out of Oxford by train, they must always ask leave. As a rule, they do not walk much about the city alone.
When attending College lectures, they do not go in singly but two or three together. They all sit together and it is understood that even if they have relatives or friends attending the same lectures, they do not speak to them... We are always anxious that new students should understand this and realize how completely the reputation of the College passes into their hands. We have many privileges but no rights (Penrose, 6 September 1907).

Clearly, this letter of welcome, a litany of Do Nots, had the intent of a warning. Little wonder women students to Somerville in the early century felt the burden of being in statu pupulari, continually being scrutinized for any little slip, however innocent, while male students were held to no comparable standards of behavior.

It appears that Dorothy Sayers took the instructions of Miss Penrose’s letter to heart as a ‘situation’ developed when Sayers once attended an entertainment event at one of the Colleges. A male friend sat next to her, being unaware of the faux pas. She was so unnerved by this transgression that she arose and, climbing over several rows of students to a Senior chaperone, made it quite clear that the situation was not of her making. The chaperone laughed and assured her that it was quite alright under the circumstances.

Despite the strict rules placed on behavior, there were unexpected liberties granted women students. For example, there was no objection to smoking at Somerville excepting in the Common Room (Sayers: “Isn’t that Grand?”). Riding a bicycle was an accepted and welcome form of transportation, active participation in intercollegiate sporting events was encouraged, and a certain amount of personal freedom was allowed in forming societies, such as the Mutual Admiration Society, and in socializing among students within their own College communities.
Sports, Clubs, and Debate:

The major portion of text space in the Fritillary (or so it seems) was taken up with news about Debate and Sports events, some, at times, being described in excruciating detail. Several members of the MAS, namely Dorothy Rowe, Charis Barnett, Catherine Godfrey, and Agnes Murray, belonged to the Oxford United Hockey Club, the Oxford Students’ Lacrosse Club, and the Somerville Boat Club (along with Miss Pope, and Miss Penrose during the war). Dorothy L. Sayers was not involved in sports as a rule, but she participated in the Boat Club for one year, possibly as an academic requirement.

Debate loomed large in participation by the women’s colleges, but Somerville, surprisingly, did not shine in debating events. Dorothy did take part in several debates with fairly good results, but in her letters home commented primarily on her clothes rather than detailing the debate issues.

I forget if I told you about the Balliol debate in my note. It was very deadly. My speech went off alright, though, and my dress was a great success (Letter to parents, March 1914).

In a rather scathing review of the Somerville contingent at one meeting, the Fritillary commented:

Enthusiasm did not seem to extend beyond the first four speakers and the large number and gorgeous attire of the Somerville contingent served rather to emphasise their silence (Fritillary, Hilary Term 1913).

However, Margaret Chubb did become President, in 1915, of the Tub Thumpers Club, a debating and philosophical society. According to Somerville archivist, Pauline Adams (1996: 137):

...Somervillians came increasingly under censure from the other women’s colleges for their slack attendance at the Oxford Students’ Debating Society.... When at the end of Trinity Term 1914 a motion was proposed at College meeting that Somerville should retire from the joint society, Miss Scott Stokes said no one would notice if it did.
Margaret Chubb commented (with what appears to be characteristic Somerville condescension):

_We certainly had a feeling of superiority where OSDS was concerned – but the inferiority of OSDS existed only because of our superiority... We certainly are rather different from the other colleges – more different than they are from each other – and for that very reason we ought to go in larger numbers and mix up with them when we have the chance_ (Adams, 1996: 138).

Apparently, Margaret Chubb took her own advice to become President of Tub Thumpers, an intercollegiate debating club.

Charis Barnett, as well, became Joint President of Sharp Practice, a Somerville club which held debates with men’s colleges Balliol and New College, as well as participating in Women’s Inter-College debates:

_In February 1914 Cicely Hamilton came to a Women’s Inter-College Debate to support, “That the reluctance of the modern woman to marry is a benefit to Society.” I proposed this in four minutes, illustrating the wrong attitude with the reply to a telephoned offer of marriage: “Yes, thank you; who is this speaking?” The guest made the main speech; she was extremely good, but very bitter. Afterwards she came to coffee with my friends and me, and next day she came to us again. These debates were a most useful foundation for future public speaking; I had already begun to speak direct from notes instead of writing out speeches_ (Frankenburg 1975: 64).

**The Fritillary Interrupts with a Reminder:**

**THE FRITILLARY**

June 1912, No. 56

Editorial:

The Fritillary, we would remind our readers, stands upon a different footing (...from that of other publications). Its readers are at once both its contributors and subscribers, and as the organ of woman University life in Oxford it can only be a success if it is supported and kept alive by the whole body of students.
THE ‘SECOND YEAR’ PLAYS

On the last Saturday of the Michaelmas Term the Second Year gave a dramatic entertainment in the Maitland Hall. This was the first occasion on which a play had been performed in the Hall, and in consequence new state properties and footlights had been provided. This added considerably to the difficulties of producing the plays, and much of the credit for the success of the entertainment, which went without a hitch, is due to the efficient work behind the scenes of those members of the year who undertook the scene shifting and the management of the lights and the new properties. The chief feature of the scenery of ‘Prunella,’ the drop-scene at the back, had been specially painted to represent a Dutch garden by the stage-manager, A.T. Middlemore. Of the success of the plays there was no doubt from the enthusiasm of the large audience which filled the Maitland Hall. The pieces chosen were ‘Prunella, or Love in a Dutch Garden,’ by Grenville Barker and Lawrence Housman; and ‘Admiral Guinea,’ by Stevenson and Henley.

Middlemore as Pierrot in ‘Prunella, struck just the right note, and brought out the half poetic, half fantastic spirit of the play. She was well supported by the other actors. D. Rowe as Scaramel, M. Jaeger as The Boy, and A. Organe as the Statue of Love, being particularly good. The chorus of mummers acted very well together in a rather difficult role.

The full-blooded and melodramatic tone of ‘Admiral Guinea’ made an excellent contrast to the subtler charm of ‘Prunella.’ There was a certain risk on the part of the organizers in attempting such a play but the result was more than successful. This was largely due to the remarkable acting of T.M. Browne, as the broken-down ruffian, David Pew, whose impersonation and playing was quite above amateur standards. She was supported by a well-chosen cast, and the stage-managers are to be congratulated on the success of their work, and the whole Second Year on the evening’s entertainment.

FROM THE EDITOR: Miss Byrne, Somerville College

... The number of entries for the three competitions announced last Term was extremely disappointing. Two fables, two short stories, and one article, are hardly a creditable record for four hundred odd people.
A prize of 5s. has been awarded to Miss D.H. Rowe, Somerville College, for a fable entitled 'The Bricksellers.'

The other entry was more of a lyric than a fable; a refrain especially hardly fits in with that particular type of verse. The idea of it was charming, but seemed slightly incongruous when cast into that form.

SOMERVILLE COLLEGE
The two events of the Term have been the migration to the St Mary Hall Quadrangle of Oriel and the transformation of Somerville into a military hospital.

STUDENTS LEAVING THIS TERM: A. Middlemore (SC)

OXFORD STUDENTS LACROSSE CLUB
Secretary – F.G. Lupton (S.C.)

It would not be presumptuous to say that if Oxford had had their full team and if a large number of the XII playing had not been suffering from influenza during the week-end, we ought to have won.

* * * * * * *

Somerville in The Great War

All aspects of student life at Oxford, particularly at Somerville, changed with the onset of Word War I. Somerville was transformed into a military hospital, displacing students to Oriel College and elsewhere, with staff scattered in lodging houses around Oxford. Doreen Wallace, from her Freshman year of 1917, spent her student tenure at Somerville living in rented rooms in the city of Oxford, no other accommodations being available. The Literary and Philosophical society came to an end in 1916, speakers being scarce. Even noted lecturer G.K. Chesterton left Oxford and his previously assigned room on campus, as space became increasingly cramped with the arrival of volunteer civilians and military personnel. Other than non-Oxford residents, women became the dominant population on campus. Vera Brittain noted that although women were still not officially ‘recognised’ by the university, they actually ran Oxford during these years and were the
predominant student population, classes often consisting only of women.

On the other hand, here is a male Oxford student’s retrospection:

*So much of permanent effect has the war had on Oxford – here and there a tradition, a small, well-prized peculiarity, smoothed out and lost. And yet the amazing thing to know is how little has been permanently lost, when one remembers those years of utter disruption – of an unrecognizable Oxford, swept clean of undergraduates, and at last filled again with the fitful post-war fever of the demobilized and experienced who thought and acted as if ‘things could never be the same again.’ There remained just a thin thread of continuity, provided not merely by the more senior dons, but also – and perhaps more potently – by the elderly scouts and other College Servants, that most tradition-steeped and fiercely conservative and loyal body of retainers* (Blair 1926: 53).

It is interesting that Blair never mentions the predominantly female population that kept the university administratively and academically intact during the disruptive years of the war. Perhaps he didn’t notice. Well, that may be an unfair observation. Blair did notice, however distantly, women on campus. Following is an assessment by this male student, albeit edited, of the women’s colleges in 1926:

*It is little hard to remember that an account of Oxford Life is now incomplete without mention of the women who are now actually members of the ’Varsity as much as the men. The truth is that the actual admission of women has made very much less difference than one would have expected. The women and their colleges have long been there... but they do not inherit from the past that sustenance which deep roots of tradition and finance provide... And so the difference of life at the women’s colleges is conditioned by tradition, finance, and human nature. They have not yet the enormous, centuries-old accretion of customs and manners which... go to make the atmosphere of nearly all the
men’s colleges. Their living is not on the same extravagant scale.... Undoubtedly, the women lead a cloistered life with certain restrictions.... But the modern young woman at Oxford has none of the flies of the Victorian proprieties upon her mind: she has exchanged prunes and prisms for marrons glacés and the microscope.... I almost think that a greater proportion of the women may be worthy of Oxford when one recalls the mere conventional vacuity of the minds of so many of the men. Not that I would overpaint the impression.... And yet it is finally to be noted that the average man’s complete vagueness of the very whereabouts of these colleges has been enshrined in his naming of the former Somewhereville (Blair 1926: 62-64).

Going Down During the War:
Pauline Adams, Somerville archivist, notes that:

One college institution survived intact: the going-down plays, transformed into open air events performed in the St. Mary quadrangle, were, if anything enhanced by the peculiar domestic circumstances in which Somerville now found itself (Adams, 1996: 145).

The 1915 Going Down play, *Pied Pipings*, or the *Innocents Abroad*, in which MAS members wholeheartedly partook, was written by Dorothy Sayers, Dorothy Rowe, Amphilis Middlemore, and several other Sommerville students. The play was a comedy emphasizing the futility of modern research. Dorothy Sayers played the main role as a Pied Piper and gave a memorable performance impersonating the conductor of the Bach Choir, High Percy Allen, thus saving her reputation among friends who had, among themselves and within the college, ridiculed her undergraduate crush on Allen.

The 1916 play, *A Mess of Pottage*, took on a more serious flavor by its theme, that of emphasizing Oxford’s poverty during the war and the ways in which women rallied and saved the university by their administration, support, and presence. The underlying message was the advantage, thereby, of
granting degrees to women for keeping the university afloat during the war through their intelligence and skill. In effect, Oxford University now owed women the rights of matriculation. The play was cleverly done and may have, by its message, further spurred the university to declare that right to women by 1920. Performed by women students, it carried the unspoken, yet clear, message: Women Never Give Up.

In 1917, the Going Down play, *Paradise Regained; or, It’s a Long Way to Tipperary*, was transferred at the last minute, due to a downpour of rain, to St. Alden’s. The play contained, among other things, an interlude of the Bally Flu Ballet, in which dancing ballerinas were overcome by malevolent germs but rescued by two heroes holding gigantic thermometers (Adams: 145). The play’s main theme was, however, the college’s optimistically impending return to its own premises of Somerville hall. Staff and students joined in a celebratory grand finale in which all sang, “Way Back to Somerville.” It was a touching play which emphasized in turn, the loyalty of Somerville students to their college and determination to return to its traditional habits and ways.

What could not be anticipated, however, were the profound ways in which The Great War would affect Somerville life, in spirit and materially, through the 1920’s and beyond. The effects of war: physical, emotional, psychological, and academic, were to play a transforming role in the work of the Somerville writers, as well.

At the conclusion of her first book of poetry, *OP I.*, Sayers writes an *homage* to the experience of leaving Oxford University by her short and somewhat sadly nostalgic poem, “Going-Down Play.” The going down ceremony was a *rite de passage* for Somerville students who had successfully completed their course of study. Since the graduation degree was denied women at the time, it was the formal ceremony of closure for graduating Somerville students and held a great deal of significance as a ritual of departure. When degree rights were granted women in 1920, Dorothy L. Sayers and several
Somerville students partook in the first women’s graduation ceremony on October 14, 1920 during which Sayers received both an official undergraduate and graduate degree from Oxford University, cementing for life her formal association with that university. Several other MAS members, namely Muriel St. Clare Byrne, Marjorie Barber, and Charis Barnett received at the ceremony not only their B.A. degrees, but advanced M.A. (Oxon.) degrees as well.

As we have focused, primarily, upon Somerville College in this volume, noting its customs, rituals, and practicalities of life before and during the first world war, we are beginning to collect more puzzle pieces to construct the reality and spirit of life at Oxford for women in the early twentieth century. Thus, we modern Alices are beginning to understand Wonderland, in its complexity, reality, and arcane, eccentric, habits. Through the vignettes and memoirs presented, we may visualize a picture taking shape, one which details the atmosphere of Oxford during the time immediately prior to, and well into, the first world war, reflecting, as well, the world Dorothy L. Sayers entered, and in which she thrived, as student through the years 1912 – 1915.

Join us in Volume III, 2020, of DLS as we resume this journey with Dorothy L. Sayers, but this time in the town of Oxford during her Blackwell years, 1917-1919. We will consider the poetry of Dorothy Sayers as she created and constructed her second book, Catholic Tales and Christian Songs, published by Basil Blackwell in 1918. G.K. Chesterton comes back into the picture with respect to Catholic Tales in an interesting episode. The MAS continues with new members who visit Dorothy in Oxford as well as her old friends who have remained at university. We also get the viewpoint of Basil Blackwell about Dorothy’s apprenticeship, as well as Dorothy’s perspective. Again, we invite you, gentle reader, to move forward with us, through the volumes of DLS, as we share the adventure of her Oxford years, and later, with Dorothy L. Sayers.
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Mutual Admiration:  
Connection, Creativity, and Critique in a 
Somerville Women’s Writing Circle  

Barbara L. Prescott

“The robust criticism of contemporaries is most salutary, and we, undoubtedly, had the sense to profit from it.”

“The lecturer expoundeth what we think we think, And why we think we think we do.”

_Not Old, Madam, Vintage_  
Charis Ursula Barnett Frankenburg, 1975: 63, 61

…companions in this airy hermitage…

_Gaudy Night_  
Dorothy L. Sayers, 1935: Ch. 11

The women students at Oxford University, prior to 1920, found themselves in somewhat of a curious situation. They were allowed to attend university, take classes and exams, prove their academic value, but they were not allowed to receive degrees. In point of fact, women attending Oxford University prior to October 7, 1920¹ were not given the rights of matriculation, that is, of full student status. They were there ‘on probation,’ a situation of which these women students were very well aware.²

However, acceptance to the university was certainly an honor and sought, in fact coveted, by young learned women at the time. Within the Oxford world, Somerville College was noted to be the ‘school for women’ rather than the ‘school for ladies.’ From its early days, this college encouraged a strong spirit of individualism among its students.³ Somerville’s proudly held reputation was certainly attractive to the young independent woman scholar of the day.
The principal of Somerville at the time was Emily Penrose, a strict but forward thinking administrator who made the raising of academic standards one of her chief objectives. She believed that women should take the full degree course even if the degree itself was denied them. Emily Penrose’s insistence upon fulfillment of the degree requirements by Somerville students facilitated the later validation, in 1920, of their right to an official Oxford degree.4

In this fairly complex situation, Dorothy L. Sayers, a young and hopeful student recipient of the Gilchrist Scholarship for Modern Languages, found herself in October 1912 at the age of nineteen. By November 1912, Dorothy and two other Somerville students, Amphyllis (Amphy) Middlemore and Charis Ursula Barnett, formed a women’s writing community, ostensibly for the purpose of reading and critiquing one another’s writing efforts, which Dorothy named the ‘Mutual Admiration Society,’5 henceforth referred to as the MAS. Dorothy Sayers chose this name for a variety of reasons, some of which are rather amusing and subtle. First, as she remarked, “if we didn’t give ourselves that title, the rest of College would.”6 Secondly, the name was meant to be humorous, meant to soften its closed status, making its existence tolerable, even attractive, among students. Further, one cannot help but think there was additional humor involved (knowing Dorothy’s gift for irony), as the MAS, by its very name, threw the ball back to those who looked upon women students at Oxford with hidden disdain or trepidation, aiming, with subtlety, that name toward male dominated Oxford.

For these young students, the opportunity of belonging to a writing circle, a community of like-minded women, within their new, sometimes bewildering, academic environment, was a welcome addition to life at Somerville. Writers gravitate toward one another, and writing communities occur frequently in a university environment.
The Inklings themselves adopted their name from a former Oxford student writing society. However, roughly twenty-five years earlier than the formation of the Inklings at Oxford came the MAS, another lightly titled writing circle with very similar intent and raison d’être to that of the Inklings: to share their own poems, stories, and essays, to inspire one another by appreciation, analysis and critique, sometimes severe, of one another’s compositions, and to support one another in the friendship of their company. Furthermore, each society elected into membership only those people with whom they felt comfortable. They were, each group, serious about their writing and serious about one another’s writing yet discussed their work within an informal yet sometimes argumentative circle that was marked by stimulating conversation. They were friends of the spirit and mind.

Despite their similarities, the Inklings and the MAS had two distinct differences: status and gender. The nineteen canonical Inklings, led by C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, were men secure within their professional lives in Oxford and its environs, secure within the closed Inkling circle, sharing mature poetry, prose, fantasy fiction, philosophical and religious essays with their critical yet encouraging writing community. Their sympathy to one another lay in their intent, seriousness of purpose, profound thought, recognized talent, and ties of friendship. In essence, these men shared sympathy of mind and spirit.

The MAS, founded much earlier, began, and remained, a student writing community composed entirely of women undergraduates at Somerville College, women who were only just beginning their adult lives and sought a safe haven, a place where “they could relax their guard,” a safe place in which to present their burgeoning efforts of poetry, prose, plays, and essays for one another’s critical evaluation. Their literary experiences intersected within the MAS as well as through
academic classes. For example, both Dorothy L. Sayers and Muriel St. Clare Byrne took the same Montaigne seminar in their first year at Oxford. The members of the MAS shared literary experiences as well as literary study. In this writing circle, friendship and bonds formed which were to last, for many members, throughout their lives and affect both personal and professional futures. As Charis Barnett noted casually of the MAS:

In November 1912 some of us arranged weekly meetings to read aloud our literary efforts and to receive and deliver criticism.... Dorothy Rowe, Amphilis Middlemore, Dorothy Sayers, Margaret Chubb – we were Freshers who enjoyed each other’s company, and, with others of our group, have kept in touch over the years. (Frankenburg, 1975: 62)

Although Dorothy L. Sayers, Amphilis Middlemore, and Charis Barnett were the founding members of the MAS, they were by no means its officers nor guiding influences. The mission statement of this society actually did reside in its name, “Mutual Admiration,” and decisions, regarding works read or future members admitted, were conducted in an egalitarian fashion, each member having equal voice and influence within the society.

Notable among the original members were future science fiction writer, Muriel Jaeger, and Dorothy Hanbury Rowe, a strong-willed, strong-voiced, charismatic student with whom Sayers formed an immediately connection, both girls having a solid literary background and each considering herself a burgeoning poet. In point of fact, the two Dorothys, each a large character, indulged in a sort of unspoken, friendly, rivalry, both submitting poetry to the same magazine at the same time during 1914-1917. Dorothy Rowe appeared to have a slight edge in this friendly rivalry, her poems more often being accepted, particularly in Fritillary, the Oxford student women’s
journal. Dorothy Hanbury Rowe was voted on the editorial committee of the *Fritillary* in October 1913.

Within a year of its debut in November 1912, several more members joined the MAS, notably Muriel St. Clare Byrne, Catherine Hope Godfrey, and Agnes E. Murray, daughter of famous Oxford Classics scholar and professor, Gilbert Murray. These women were strong-willed, young, independent thinkers. While clearly respecting the conventions of Oxford and Somerville, they “reserved the right to use their own common sense in regulating their behavior and not to get into a state if they unwittingly overturned convention,” often finding humor in the daily situations that were perplexing or confounding to young university women at the time.

In fact, it is a testament to the independent spirit of the women of the early MAS that they did not ask permission to form the society, they just decided among themselves to create the company, acted upon this decision, and continued to keep the writers’ circle alive and lively through their student tenure, at least until 1915 when several members, Dorothy Sayers among them, went down from Oxford. However, several of the early MAS members, notably Dorothy Rowe and Muriel St. Clare Byrne (now editor of the *Fritillary*), remained at Oxford and continued the writing group, welcoming new members such as Winifred Holtby, Marjorie Barber, and D.E.A. Wallace who formed the later MAS, its name eventually going by the wayside, yet the society retaining its original intent as critique circle which encouraged young Somerville writers.

As I continued to read references to the MAS in the pursuit of my interest in the Oxford poetry of Dorothy Sayers, I found myself asking, well, just who were these women? How many were there? To date, I have found fifteen variously documented members, although there were certainly others. These are Dorothy L. Sayers (1912), Amphillis Middlemore (1912), Charis Ursula Barnett (1912), Muriel Jaeger (1912), Margaret Amy
Chubb (1912), Dorothy Hanbury Rowe (1912), Catherine Hope Godfrey (1912), Muriel St. Clare Byrne (1913), Agnes E. Murray (1913), and later Marjorie Maud Barber (1914), Doreen Wallace (1916), Winifred Holtby (1917), Margaret Kennedy (1915), Sylvia Thompson (1920), and Hilda Stewart Reid (1917), among others, who began, or continued, membership, along with St. Clare Byrne, Rowe, and Barber at Oxford after 1915.

As an intriguing extension, there were other student writers at Somerville who may or may not have officially belonged to the original MAS but who had solid literary and personal links to MAS members, and thus to the group. Those included Margaret Leigh (1913), cousin to Dorothy Sayers and later prolific social activist and writer, author Vera Brittain (1914), associate and close friend to Winifred Holtby as well as to Marjorie Barber, Hilda Stewart Reid (1917), and Sylvia Thompson (1916). I like to call this second wave LMAS (Later MAS), comprising an influx of new student participants to the writing circle with an experienced, strongly war-influenced, perspective on literature, life, and social responsibility. The primary participants in this second wave were Margaret Kennedy, Vera Brittain, Sylvia Thompson, Hilda S. Reid, Winifred Holtby, and Doreen (D.E.A.) Wallace.

Vera Brittain is famously noted for not being a member of the original MAS, but she actively associated with existing members of the original group (St. Clare Byrne, Rowe, and Barber) still at Somerville, as well as with the later group (Holtby, Thompson, Kennedy, and Reid), also famously pairing with Winifred Holtby in their future shared life as journalists and novelists. Several life partnerships such as that of Brittain and Holtby as well as of St. Clare Byrne and Barber began through the Somerville MAS and its later second wave extension. Vera Brittain and Doreen Wallace visited and spoke often with Dorothy L. Sayers when Sayers returned to the city of Oxford in 1917.
We can see that the complete picture of Somerville writers in the teens of the century is neither simple nor linear. Various writing groups existed at Somerville during the most prolific period of creativity from 1912 through the early 1920's, and some members overlapped literary groups and time periods. Yet, despite the somewhat chaotic conditions that were experienced by student writers and MAS members between 1914 – 1920, Somerville writers, early and later, remained remarkably connected to one another. The Somerville writers during this decade of literary inspiration and activism were, indeed, a closely woven and linked group of women, MAS members and beyond. Further, their influence upon one another’s careers and personal lives wove through decades and lifetimes. Muriel Jaeger’s continued influence, as well as support of Sayers’ initial detective fiction efforts, was so strong that Dorothy dedicated Whose Body? to Jaeger with the words: “Dear Jim: This book is your fault.”

During its documented first years, the original MAS was a closed group, an invitation-only writers circle with entrance criteria and distinct sorority-like characteristics. A candidate submitted written poetry or prose, this work was read aloud at a meeting, and the student was voted in, or not. When Muriel St. Clare Byrne applied for membership as a Fresher, in May 1913, one of the members (i.e., Dorothy H. Rowe) noted that Byrne was “an awfully nice child who writes quite good stuff.” Byrne remained a MAS member through her long student tenure at Somerville and later flourished in her professional career as a noted Shakespearean scholar. Both Byrne and Rowe remained influences upon one another’s professional careers, Byrne as scholar and Rowe as English teacher.

Charis Barnett, when speaking of MAS membership, remarked that they elected only “people we liked” and so the MAS stayed a fairly small community through 1915. Some
members were given nicknames, usually informal male names. Muriel Jaeger was “Jim.” Catherine Godfrey was “Tony.” Amphilis Middlemore was “Amphy.” Marjorie Barber was “Bar.” Dorothy Rowe was “Tiddler.” Dorothy Sayers seems not to have had a verbal nickname, but often signed herself as “John Gaunt” or “J.G.”, from her role in *Admiral Guinea* and sometimes as “H.P. Rallentando”, or “R. Allentando”, a not-so-subtle reference to Hugh Percy Allen, the Director of the Bach Choir and her Oxford crush.

This tight circle of affectionately nicknamed friends thus grew with the purpose of providing a platform to share both fiction and non-fiction writing and to help one another develop as writers and scholars: in other words, for literary growth and personal support. “The robust criticism of contemporaries is most salutary, and we undoubtedly had the sense to profit from it.”13 Charis Barnett wrote in her autobiography, *Not Old, Madam, Vintage*, the following:

*The items read at our meetings were of all kinds – plays, sonnets, foretastes of future novels, a soliloquy in verse by Nero, a dissertation on Shakespeare’s Fairies. My contributions included a criticism of Shaw’s plays, the discussion between Dr. Johnson and Boswell on adult suffrage, a short story, and some verse. But my most interesting recollection is that Dorothy Sayers read a conversation between the three Magi – an anticipation of *The Man Born to be King*. (Frankenburg, 1975:63)*

It is likely that Charis Barnett, in the quote above, mistakenly attributed the conversation to *The Man Born to Be King*. This conversation among the Magi actually occurs in the Prologue to Sayers’ 1938 play, *He That Should Come* (1939, 1977: 133-138).

Dorothy Sayers read sonnets, ballads, lais, and other verse at the weekly MAS meetings, as written in her 1912-1914 MAS notebooks, or albums as she preferred to call them. Dorothy Rowe, having an interest in the theatre may very well have read
her own plays, later revised and performed by her amateur theatre company, as well as reading her poems.

Early drafts of future novels, *The Man with Six Senses* (1927), later published by Leonard and Virginia Woolf at the Hogarth Press, as well as *The Question Mark* (1926), an early Utopian Sci-Fi novel, were read by Muriel Jaeger, as was Nero’s soliloquy in verse. Poems read by Muriel St. Clare Byrne at the meetings were included, eventually, in her 1917 book of poetry, *Aldebaran*, published, as was Sayers’ *OP. I.*, in 1916, part of the *Adventurers All* series (No. 14), by Basil Blackwell, Oxford. A dissertation on Shakespeare’s Fairies clearly would have been in the literary world of Muriel St. Clare Byrne, as a young Shakespearean scholar, or possibly by Amphilis Middlemore, the future notable English instructor at Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore Colleges in the United States.

Furthermore, and perhaps as importantly, this community provided its female members a small, safe, friendly literary haven in the midst of a large, sometimes bewildering, male oriented university which was in itself an environment of mixed messages. On the one hand, these women were welcomed to Oxford in recognition of their brilliance. On the other hand, there was a clear, sometimes not so subtle, message that they did not belong, as a group, in Oxford by virtue of their gender. To a certain extent, partly as a result of these confusing messages, the MAS was purposely formed as a closed circle in which to share sensitive thoughts, support one another’s writing efforts, and so became for these women student writers, a mutually enhancing writing and reading community. Bonds were formed in the society that lasted throughout the lives of many MAS members. These students became writing comrades-in-arms, almost all became lifelong friends, and, perhaps more significantly, their friendships affected literary and social history.
We do not often consider student writing communities in the light of historical significance, but in the case of the MAS, argument can be made that each of its members became a force within her chosen field and that some contributed appreciably to the professional writing lives of other members. The links that were formed in the MAS grew to be a web of literary, social, professional, and personal support among these gifted women. In essence, the women of the MAS became vibrant and integral parts of what can be titled a Somerville ‘school of writers’ by virtue of their continuing communication with one another and long term, influential, effect upon one another’s literary, theatrical, teaching, or social welfare careers and writings.

When viewing, in this light, the valuable effect that the women writers of the MAS had upon twentieth century literature and society, one cannot help but wish to know more about these gifted women, their writings, and to bring each from the shadow of anonymity, to rightfully credit them for their valuable lives, for their significant effect upon the history of Somerville, and particularly for their contributions to the professional careers of one another.

**Poetry First**
The reading, writing, and sharing of poetry were vital to the women of the MAS, and, to a certain extent, the lives of these women were poetic. Powerful, expressive, language - drama within structure, were all familiar elements within their experience. They were comfortable using the language of literature and used it with the ease of scholarly confidence, sometimes even profoundly so. Most of the MAS women, not unexpectedly at this time of life, wrote verse and read their poetry within the circle.

A congenial and supportive environment is almost necessary when sharing sensitive thoughts inherent to poetry
written at an early age. It takes an amount of courage to open one’s thoughts to the critique of others, and it is to the credit of this young writing community that members felt at ease so doing. Their confidence in one another was certainly an extension of friendship and mutual regard. This trust of one another, for most, lasted a lifetime.

On Wednesday evening, November 7, 1912, at 7:00 P.M., the MAS met for the first time. There were six members present, and those were most probably Dorothy L. Sayers, Charis Barnett, Amphy Middlemore, Muriel Jaeger, Margaret Chubb, and Dorothy Rowe. Dorothy Sayers read two poems, “Peredur” and “Earl Ulfric.” Another girl read two pieces, and Amphy served refreshments. It was considered a successful meeting.

In the summer of 1913, Dorothy Sayers began to write an epic poem of 700 lines titled “Sir Omez,” sending verses throughout the summer to Muriel (Jim) Jaeger for her opinion and critique. Sayers sent to Muriel Jaeger, as well, copies of her poem later published in Op. I., “The Gates of Paradise,” for review.

Dorothy Sayers continued to prefer larger-than-life, heroic, and often mythic themes for her ballads, lais, sonnets, and epics, themes which she later applied to her detective fiction, Lord Peter Wimsey himself being a flawed, multi-dimensional, hero figure. Structure was paramount to Sayers; she carefully constructed and adhered to classic rules and rhyme. Muriel (Jim) Jaeger was acknowledged to have a good ear for the language of poetry, and her opinions as well as critiques became valued by Dorothy Sayers, so much so that Sayers continued to send Jaeger copies of her poetry for review throughout her vacations from Oxford and beyond. Therefore, as they became attuned to one another’s opinions and advice, the women writers of the MAS wove an intricate web of shared
writing, reading, and literary analysis through three Oxford years of classes and vacations.

An annual venue of publication for the Somerville writers was *Oxford Poetry (OP)*, a yearly book published by Basil Blackwell. Between 1910 and 1913, there are no poems from Somerville students included in this poetry journal. However, between 1914 and 1916, there is a distinct blossoming of poems from Somerville writers included in *Oxford Poetry*, primarily from MAS members. In 1914 Charis Ursula Barnett translated a poem from Theodore De Banville for *Oxford Poetry*, and Dorothy Rowe wrote two poems: “Asleep” and “Morpheus.” In 1915, she also wrote “An Old Rhyme Re-Sung” and Dorothy Sayers published a twelve-part “Lay” for the 1915 issue of *OP*.


The MAS did create at least one album of written work containing six pieces, three of which were poems by Sayers, documented by Dorothy Sayers in her letter to Dorothy Rowe during the summer of 1913. Included, as well, within this published album was a short story by Dorothy Sayers, titled “Who Calls the Tune?” an early prototype to both her later detective fiction and sacred plays. The first issue remained the only issue of *The Blue Moon* by the MAS with a copy still existing in the Oxford archives from Somerville College. Sayers’
“Hymn in Contemplation of Sudden Death” appeared in *Oxford Magazine*, 1915 followed by “Icarus” in 1916. The *Fritillary*, a magazine containing news about college activities and debates was also a venue, printing several of Sayers’ Oxford poems through 1915.

In 1916, Dorothy Sayers dedicated her first published book of poems, *OP. I.*, in part to her MAS sisters, and particularly to Dorothy Rowe, the director of the Second-Years’ December 1913 play, *Admiral Guinea*, and fellow poet. The unusual title, *OP. I.*, interestingly, appeared to be a subtle acknowledgement of her experiences with, as well as interest in, music (i.e., Opus I), a nod to the Bach Choir and its director, Hugh Percy Allen, along with a likely nod to the journal, *Oxford Poetry (OP)*, in which she had already published poems, and to the publisher of this journal for whom she worked, Basil Blackwell, who, it should be noted, also published Sayers’ book of poems, *OP. I.* in 1916, and later *Catholic Tales and Christian Songs* in 1918.

Further in her career, as she began her translations of *L’Inferno* and *Purgatorio* from *La Divina Commedia*, Dorothy Sayers often sent translated cantos to both Marjorie Barber, who was skilled in Italian as well as being a scholar known to have translated Chaucer into modern English, and Muriel St. Clare Byrne, by then a noted Shakespearean scholar, for their expert advice and review. These both, her former MAS co-members, remained an important link of literary support, information, and consultation throughout Sayers’ life and various writing careers. As expressly noted by Marjorie Lamp Mead, “Friends were not a luxury in Sayers’ life, enjoyed but not essential; rather friends were foundational, as necessary to Sayers as the very air she breathed.” Catherine Godfrey Mansfield and Dorothy Hanbury Rowe, as well, retained a personal and professional correspondence with Sayers, Byrne, Barber, and Jaeger, often sharing experiences of daily life with
all of these women. The early and later MAS information conduit and support web remained in full effect for decades.

During the Oxford period of her writing life, Dorothy Sayers was primarily a poet. She experimented with a number of poetic structures, such as sonnets, lais, and ballads to complement various themes: medieval stories, epics, religious and classic myths and legends. We do not usually think of Dorothy Sayers in light of her poetry, but she certainly considered herself first and foremost a poet. She began her writing life with poetry and translation and ended her writing life with the translation of poetry.

As I study the poems she wrote during her time at Oxford, I am further persuaded that the skills Dorothy Sayers acquired by applying various poetic structures to effectively contain language within those structures, deeply influenced her later carefully structured, clear, narrative and argument, as well as richly influenced her use of powerfully distilled poetic language in novels, plays, essays and translations, particularly in the translation of La Divina Commedia.

However, in her early Oxford days, Sayers appeared to be somewhat reluctant to write prose:

... I cannot get any ideas for prose. Prose is a thing (now is it? Is it a thing? It’s not a person at any rate. Well, thing will have to do) – a thing I only write upon compulsion & then badly. (Letter to Jim Jaeger, July 1913. Reynolds 1993: 71)

As Sayers continued to experiment with various genres, she also continued to transfer successfully, in very subtle but effective ways, the structure applied to poetry, toward her fiction, essays, and plays. To Dorothy L. Sayers writing poetry and prose became, through time and experience, a feedback loop, each functioning to support the other, each lending structure to the other. Her command of various genre structures within the writing process, interestingly, can be
identified in Sayers’ reader friendly, storytelling, approach to the translations of the beautifully dramatic story poems of Dante.

**Story Telling and Narrative Fiction**

One subtle thread that wove through the literary lives of several MAS women was an ability to recognize coherent story construction and the skill to write clear narrative that is easily understandable to the reader. Dorothy L. Sayers certainly learned to write a good story. To be a good story teller, one must have a good sense of audience, a good sense of the reader, and this rich sense, clearly, Sayers possessed. She noticed everything about people, and in detail. Dorothy Sayers’ friend, Amphy Middlemore, was acknowledged as well, at Godolphin and at Somerville, for her own skill in creating narrative, that is, for telling a good story. In fact, Amphy was affectionately described by her friends and, later, by students as, “the world’s best storyteller.” Her gift for story construction, one which she certainly shared during MAS meetings, may have been a factor in Dorothy Sayers’ own decision to venture, however reluctantly at the time, into the world of writing narrative prose.

Sayers presented at least one such story at a MAS meeting. The case in point was a puzzle-in-story-form titled “Who Calls the Tune?,” an intriguing tale written almost as a prototype mystery by Dorothy Sayers years before her first detective novel, “Whose Body?”, partly nursed by Muriel Jaeger, was published in 1923 and almost a decade before her short story, “The [Fascinating] Problem of Uncle Meleager’s Will” was published in 1925 in *Pearson’s Magazine*, Vol. 60, July Issue.

The effect of Amphy Middlemore’s talent in story construction would not have been lost on Sayers nor lost on the other MAS writers. Dorothy Sayers’ sharp observation and appreciation of the writing presented, particularly of those
stories she approved, might very well have started a fermentation process in her own mind that encouraged an effort to write clear, interesting, well-structured, narrative, that is, to create a good story. Furthermore, Sayers developed skill in written dialogue, partly through writing letters. Her engaging letters are written conversations, verbal text. Furthermore, the clear narrative techniques and engaging dialogue which Dorothy Sayers developed in her Wimsey series, in addition to her early ability to structure language in poetry, certainly affected her later style in translation, aiding Sayers’ confidence and achievement in tackling the story poems of Dante.

Later in their communication, the reference to enjoyment as a property of good story-telling resurfaces between Marjorie Barber and Dorothy Sayers when Sayers sends her a translated copy of *L’Inferno*. Barber notes that the translation was a joy primarily because Sayers made Dante approachable; he became, “… just like somebody sitting there in an armchair and telling you a story.” Later Sayers uses this quote of Barber’s to title one of her papers about Dante, and she, herself, notes in a letter to Charles Williams, “I knew everybody had got the wrong idea of D., same as I had….” Furthermore, Marjorie Barber’s own interpretation and modern translation of the works of Chaucer may have partly inspired and encouraged Sayers’ later decision to attend to her own roots by translating *La Divina Commedia*.

Amphy Middlemore, Marjorie Barber, Muriel Jaeger, and certainly Muriel St. Clare Byrne may be seen to have influenced in different ways, Dorothy Sayers’ blossoming interest at Oxford in the writing of fiction as well as to have encouraged later her clear, story-telling, approach to Dante. In addition, Muriel Jaeger took an active part as commentator and encourager while Dorothy Sayers was creating her first novel,
Whose Body? For that literary support, Sayers dedicated her first detective novel to Muriel Jaeger (To M.J.), by stating:

_Dear Jim:_

_This book is your fault. If it had not been for your brutal insistence, Lord Peter would never have staggered through to the end of this enquiry. Pray consider that he thanks you with his accustomed suavity._

_Yours ever,_

_DLS_

Furthermore, the communication channels among the MAS women, remaining open through letters and visits to one another and spanning decades, recounted the daily doings of their lives and substantially added to the shared narrative of those lives. Sayers’ subtly powerful and satisfyingly structured writing, particularly her detective fiction, did not occur spontaneously – it was a long process in the making and influenced by many individuals, however seemingly unexpectedly the venture of detective fiction writing materialized in her career. Sayers was not a solitary writer; she was, however, an experiential writer who gathered from and shared her work with many friends, particularly with members of the MAS.

Acting, Playwriting, and the Fun of Theatre

“_Amateur theatricals had a permanent place in college._” The theatre was always a welcome topic among the students of Somerville, and this writing community was equally enthusiastic for anything dealing with theatre: writing, acting, directing or attending. Playwriting was popular among the writers of the MAS. Charis Barnett and Dorothy Rowe were known for their playwriting efforts.
In February 1913, together they wrote, read to the group, and starred together in, a spoof play titled, “Hamlet, the Pragger-Dagger”\(^{39}\), brazenly revising the plot of Hamlet and blithely rewriting the play to include a case of measles at Somerville. Cases of measles, apparently, were running rampant through Oxford in early 1913, and this play gave a much needed outlet to the anxiety and inconvenience involved. It was a huge success. Dorothy Rowe played a “wildly hilarious”\(^{40}\) Hamlet and Charis played Horatio (as well as being stage-manager). According to Charis Barnett, “The show elicited such loud and prolonged explosions of laughter, that we were asked to repeat it to the whole college, dons and students, which we did, with an equally riotous reception.”\(^{40}\)

Dorothy Sayers and Muriel St. Clare Byrne later famously collaborated on the play, *Busman’s Honeymoon*. However, both took this shared writing experience very seriously. During the collaboration, both Sayers and Byrne admit to struggling with the structure of the play, with the application of their ideals to the story, ideals of remaining fair to the reader. The authors state that they do not attempt to provide a “perfect dramatic formula for the presentation of the fair-play rule”, but that, “They suggest, however, that the future development of the detective play may lie in this direction, being convinced that neither sensation without thought nor argument without emotion can ever provide the basis for any permanent artistic structure.”\(^{41}\) The fair-play rule was of paramount importance to Dorothy Sayers throughout her detective writing history, and one cannot help but think she was well schooled at Somerville, under the care of Emily Penrose, to adhere unflinchingly to this rule.

**Adventuring Writers All**
Friendship within a community of women writers takes on additional dimension. Not only are personal lives involved, but
professional lives are involved as well. The more deeply I delve into the history of these complex women, the finer and more intricate becomes the web of ties among them: ties of professional association, ties of personal and career influence, ties of affection and support, ties of shared knowledge and continued analysis of one another’s writing efforts, continued sharing of ideas, and communication of ties to daily life among them. Some members collaborated with others in authorship, as in the earlier discussion of *Busman’s Honeymoon*. Some inspired one another to greater work, notably Marjorie Barber and Muriel St. Clare Byrne in their support and editing efforts toward Sayers’ Dante translations, and some inspired one another by their social conscience and practical application of those principles, notably Margaret Chubb Pyke’s effect upon the social reform research of Muriel Jaeger. This mission of Margaret Chubb’s was reported, by Charis Barnett, to influence other girls at Somerville, as well as the MAS members, toward social welfare work, volunteering, and writing.

During one MAS meeting in the Spring of 1913, Margaret Chubb described to the members a play she had seen, titled *Eugenics*, written by a fifteen-year-old girl. This particular play had a deep effect upon Margaret Chubb who later became Chairman of the UK Family Planning Association. Her son established the Margaret Pyke Memorial Trust for family planning and training. Muriel Jaeger consulted Margaret Pyke during her own later historical research on social reform. The drama of all this would not have been lost on Dorothy Sayers who, in turn, later wrote several essays (*Unpopular Opinions*, 1946) on the question of social morality and Christian responsibility toward questions of humanity and welfare.

By these examples, we are given a glimpse into the complexity and richness of the relationships between and among the members of the MAS through their tenure at
Oxford, throughout their chosen fields of profession, and throughout their writing and research lives. Despite their divergent paths, the women of the MAS continued to affect, to a great degree, one another’s professional and personal lives throughout their post-Oxford days. That which began as a small society of student writers at Oxford grew to be a web of published writers, teachers, and agents of social change.

**Concluding Thoughts**

My intent through this paper was to bring out the Somerville women writers of the MAS, early and later, from the shadows, to introduce them as individuals – strong, talented, creative, student writers, as well as to focus upon them as vibrant, prolific authors, theatrical figures, social activists, teachers, and scholars in their own right. These women wrote at a pivotal time, each dealing with the dramatic and profound effects of World War I upon their own lives and upon history. Their writings and lives, in turn, had profound effect upon the lives of many individuals. Furthermore, it is important to recognize how deeply this community of women writers and friends affected and continued to affect the literary and personal lives of Dorothy L. Sayers through their continued communication with and influence upon Sayers as well as upon the professional careers of one another. The Mutual Admiration Society of Somerville became an interrelated web of women writers and activists linked through life, sometimes indirectly, by their mutual interests, shared spirit of independence, written work, scholarship, professions, social conscience, and possibly most of all, by their enduring friendship with one another, all of which have, in turn, affected twentieth century social, literary, and women’s history.
NOTES

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1 On October 7, 1920, women were officially allowed, by university decree, to matriculate at Oxford (i.e., become a recognized and official part of the Oxford scholarly community) and to graduate with an official Oxford degree and diploma. Therefore, the first class of women to matriculate and receive a degree at Oxford University was that of the 1920 entering class. The first graduation occurred at Oxford also in 1920, officially granting a degree to those women students who had met the requirements previous to 1920. Dorothy L. Sayers was among this graduating class, although she had actually gone down from Oxford in 1915.

2 Frankenburg, 1975, p. 59
3 Batson, 2008, p. 156

4 On October 14, 1920, the first class of women graduates, Dorothy Sayers, Muriel Jaeger, Charis Barnett, Muriel St. Clare Byrne among them, participated in the university graduation ceremony and had the distinction of receiving an official Oxford BA degree in Medieval Literature. Sayers also received, on that date, an MA (Oxon.) in French Language Studies. Charis Barnett received her BA and MA (Oxon.) degrees as well.

5 This was not the first writing group at Somerville. In the late 1800s, a literary society calling itself ‘The Mermaids’ was also formed by Somerville students to be a writing support community and platform. Somewhat later than ‘The Mermaids’, an exclusive Somerville writing club was formed called the ‘Associated Prigs’ who were defined by solemn earnestness in their meetings and writing. The Mutual Admiration Society “shrugged off the excessive earnestness and became a more social network” (Batson, 2008, p. 150).

6 Frankenburg, 1975, p. 63
7 Brabazon, 1981, p. 44
8 Batson, 2008, p. 154
9 Ibid., p. 156
10 Prescott, MSb, 2016; forthcoming, 2021
Frankenburg, 1975, p. 63
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Letter, DLS to MJ, 7-30-13
15 “Peredur”, MAS Notebook, DLS MS-164, 1912-1913
16 “Earl Ulfic”, DLS MS-365, 1910-1911
17 Letter, DLS to Parents, 11-10-12
18 Letter DLS to MJ, Summer, 1913
19 Downing, 2004
20 Oxford Poetry, 1910-1913
21 Oxford Poetry, 1914-1916
22 Oxford Poetry, 1917-1919
23 Letters, DLS to Dorothy Rowe (DR), Summer 1913
24 Mead, 1994, p. 8
25 OP. I., dedication
26 Letters, Marjorie Barber to DLS, 1935-1949 (423b)
27 Mead, 1994, p. 8
28 Prescott, Msa, 2015; forthcoming, 2020
29 Willerton, 2011, p. 47
30 Brittain, 1933, pp. 105-06
31 Godolphin News, 1914-1918
32 “Who Calls the Tune?” DLS MS-239; The Blue Moon 1
33 Prescott, MSc, 2016.
34 Lee, 1994, p. 60
35 Letters Barber to DLS, 1942-1957 (423a)
36 Reynolds, 2006: 122; Folder 423b, Marion E. Wade Center
37 Whose Body?, 1923, dedication
38 Frankenburg, 1975, p. 66
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid, p. 67
41 Sayers & Byrne, 1937, Intro.
42 Jaeger, 1956, dedication
43 Frankenburg, 1975, p. 66
44 Ibid., pp. 66-67
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Doreen Wallace
Charis Ursula Barnett (Frankenburg)  
1892 – 1985  
Latin Scholar, Early Childhood Educator,  
Women’s Healthcare Pioneer  

Charis Barnett was always aware of the power in women’s organizations. It was part of her upbringing. She had often gone with her mother to listen to the suffragettes, and she became a member of the Salford Women Citizens, joining the National Council of Women (Debenham 2013: Appendix). Her father had been a Classics teacher and she was weaned on classical Latin from an early age (Frankenburg 1975).

Charis entered Sommerville College in 1912, as one of Dorothy L. Sayers’ class, and specialized in English Literature. She and Sayers formed an immediate friendship, despite their philosophical differences, Sayers maintaining her staunch traditional British Edwardian viewpoint and strong Anglican religious ideals, while Barnett was far more open in her religious beliefs and tended toward progressive views on birth control as well as on women’s political and social advancement. Barnett also formed a strong friendship with Dorothy H. Rowe, another student arriving in 1912 and co-member of the MAS. Barnett’s and Rowe’s initial friendship formed immediately upon their meeting at Sommerville and through the MAS
solidified later into a published partnership as Rowe provided the illustrations to two of Barnett’s books, *Latin with Laughter* (1934) and *More Latin with Laughter* (1937).

It was no wonder that, as a woman of strong opinion and action, Charis was one of the founders of the Mutual Admiration Society in 1912 (Frankenburg 1975: 62). The early Society tended to share writings that were usually literary, academic, philosophical, or poetic. Barnett shared some early poetry which, apparently, is no longer extant, a critique of Shaw’s plays, a discussion between Dr. Johnson and Boswell on adult suffrage and a short story (Ibid, 63).

Barnett’s claim to literary fame while at Oxford centered on a submission to Oxford Poetry on the translation of a poem by Theodore de Banville (Oxford Poetry, 1914). Charis also achieved some inter-collegiate fame as she created a mnemonic to remember the names and habits of more than thirty of the British (Anglo-Saxon) tribes for the Moderations exam, a pass necessary to qualify for a university degree, and for the women to achieve *the equivalent of a degree*. Charis’s mnemonic was so successful that it travelled underground to all the women’s and men’s colleges. Miss Lorimer, Charis’s tutor, was so enchanted with the poem that she urged Charis to submit the entire mnemonic to Oxford Poetry, which Charis declined to do.

In August 1914, after war was declared, Charis decided to leave Oxford to volunteer in the war effort. She received leave from Oxford in September to postpone her Oxford Terms and left to join the Women’s Emergency Corp, followed by the Women’s League of Services where Barnett provided
translation services, interpreting for Belgian refugees, and administering first aid to civilians and soldiers (Ibid, 76-77). In December 1915, Charis began nurse training at Clapham Maternity Hospital. Barnett notes that an unexpected benefit to her early Latin education was that she found it quite easy to memorize medical terms. In 1916, Charis became a Certified Midwife and gained the Clapham Maternity Hospital Midwifery Certificate of Honour. Later, in 1936, Charis Barnett Frankenburg became a member of the committee which administered the hospital.

In October 1916, Charis set off for France to a convalescent hospital in Samoëns in the Haute Savoie and later to the Maternity Hospital at Châlons-sur-Marne which she describes as a night-and-daymare (Ibid, 91). In June 1917, Charis returned from France and became engaged to her cousin, Sydney Frankenburg, a wealthy Jewish industrialist who had proposed marriage several times to Charis. In November 1916, she accepted his proposal. By all accounts, it was a very happy marriage, producing four, perfectly spaced, children.

In the summer of 1921, Charis Barnett Frankenburg received an official M.A. degree in English from Oxford University. Her English and French Service medals, proving work in the war-zone, entitled her to a War degree without taking Schools. Miss Penrose wrote that Charis was the first Somervillian to be excused from finals.

During her women’s health-focused career, Charis became a member of the Maternal Mortality Committee. Despite its alarming title, this organization campaigned for increased status and respect given to midwives, and promoted
maternal welfare as well as birth control campaigns. Charis proved to be an excellent organizer and established the Manchester, Salford, and District Mothers’ Clinic and helped in the formation of other maternal clinics, such as the Wolverhampton and Liverpool clinics, contributing both money and time to these efforts, supported by her husband. Later she served in the Co-ordinating Committee of the Society for the Provision of Birth Control and its successor, the National Birth Control Council (Debenham: App). During this period, Charis wrote *Common Sense in the Nursery*, 1934, later followed by *Common Sense About Children*, 1970, which she dedicated to her old friend, Dorothy Rowe: “To Dorothy Rowe From Somerville, With hoops of steel.”

In addition to her social activism for women’s health care during this time, Charis became an official Justice of the Peace (J.P.) and, further, wrote two beginner’s books on Latin: *Latin with Laughter* and *More Latin with Laughter*, both books proving to be popular introductions to Latin which Charis maintained should be taught as a living, not dead, language. With Dorothy Rowe providing illustrations, Charis imbued both books with a cheerful, amusing, and everyday practical approach to Latin, appropriate for home schooling and young children.

Charis Frankenburg wrote a number of books on childcare, adolescent behavior, and common sense strategies for home schooling and early child education. In her 1975 biography, *Not Old, Madam, Vintage*, Charis noted that her friendship with Dorothy Rowe, formed at Oxford, stayed with her throughout life (1975: 188). Charis Barnett’s and Dorothy
Rowe’s friendship was nurtured in Somerville as they wrote for the MAS, worked on school plays together, joined in late-night discussions with friends (MAS and others), and kept in professional touch throughout their adult lives. Charis further notes that her Oxford experience was invaluable. “In that life, I grew up, maturing quite noticeably to myself and to several friends…. It was this that enabled me to take the decisive step in August 1914 (1975: 71).” Finally, Charis Barnett Frankenburg notes of her Somerville experience and of the friends she found there:

“Our group,” presumably including the MAS, “had never felt the slightest inclination to break rules…. We were completely satisfied with our full and orderly life in incomparable pre-war Oxford (1975: 71).”

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LATIN WITH LAUGHTER

(Edition without Translations)

By

MRS. SYDNEY FRANKENBURG
(CHARIS URSULA BARNETT)

With a Foreword by Sir John Adams, and
Illustrations by Dorothy H. Rowe.

Poeta cantat; muta poetam non amat.

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Muriel Jaeger (Jim)
Early Science Fiction Writer, Historian, Social Critic
1892 - 1969

Muriel Jaeger was one of the first women to write professionally in the genre of science fiction. She entered Oxford in 1912, as one of the students in the 1912 Somerville class along with other early MAS members, most of whom entered Somerville in Michaelmas Term of that year. She majored in History, going down in 1916, having competed her course of study. Muriel participated, with several other members of the MAS, Dorothy Sayers included, in the first women’s graduation class of October 1920, receiving an official Oxford B.A. degree. Muriel’s MAS nickname was ‘Jim’ (along with the variants ‘James’ or ‘Jimmy’). Dorothy Sayers often wrote to her during summer breaks, sending drafts of her own writing for comment and opinion to Muriel Jaeger, by addressing Muriel in the letters as Jim and referencing her to friends by that nickname. (Marion E. Wade Center, Sayers Letters Archive, Letters to Muriel Jaeger, Wheaton, IL).

Muriel met Dorothy Sayers during Michaelmas Term, 1912, and the two formed a strong friendship that would last throughout their Somerville tenure and beyond, each often visiting the other during vacations and in their later years. Muriel became an early MAS member, most certainly invited to the first MAS meeting of November 7, 1912. Charis Barnett noted, in her 1975 biography, that, during MAS meetings, some members would read chapters from early books in progress. It is conceivable that Muriel Jaeger was one of the members who shared her early sci-fi writings during those meetings. Along
with Dorothy Sayers, Muriel participated in the going down ceremony of 1915, and Dorothy’s poem, published in *OP. I.*, “To M.J.,” was addressed directly to Muriel as an expression of their shared experiences and sadness at leaving university life.

Muriel Jaeger also formed a bond of social activism with Margaret Amy Chubb, another MAS member. Margaret Chubb often read and advised Jaeger on her early writing efforts. In turn, Muriel dedicated her historical study, *Before Victoria* (1956), to Margaret Chubb Pyke, first reader and friendly critic.

Muriel Jaeger left Oxford briefly during World War I to become a temporary civil servant, returning within a year. After Oxford, Muriel Jaeger worked for *Time and Tide* and *Vogue* as a journalist, reviewer, and publisher’s reader, before setting out on an independent writing career. She was encouraged by Leonard and Virginia Woolf who published her first two books at The Hogarth Press. At the time, Jaeger’s work was not well received, causing her to abandon the genre of sci-fi. However, those first two books proved to be an influence (often unacknowledged) upon the work of later sci-fi writers. *The Question Mark* (1926) explored an ambiguous utopia that likely influenced Alduous Huxley in his later novels. *The Man with Six Senses* (1927) brought to the field of sci-fi those themes much later developed by writers dealing with extrasensory perception, some famously presented in several episodes of *The Twilight Zone* during the 1960’s. Muriel Jaeger’s novels, including *Hermes Speaks* (1933) and *Retreat from Armageddon* (1936) dealt with the topics of utopian speculation, extrasensory perception, and genetic engineering. Today, Jaeger’s books are considered important for their place in the history of
science fiction. During this period, Jaeger also experimented with psychological themes in non-fiction, exemplified by her book, *Sisyphus: Or, the Limits of Psychology* (1929) which may have been useful earlier to Sayers as she grappled with psychological trauma and deviance in the plot of *Whose Body*? For a time, Jaeger became a dramatist but encountered political censorship against her work which caused her to look toward other ways to support her socialist political views.

Muriel Jaeger was a firm supporter of Dorothy Sayers’ initial efforts to write detective fiction, encouraging Sayers in her plot development of *Whose Body*? Jaeger was such a prop to Sayers that Dorothy dedicated the book to Muriel Jaeger, with the words: "To M.J. Dear Jim: This book is your fault. If it had not been for your brutal insistence, Lord Peter would never have staggered through to the end of this enquiry. Pray consider that he thanks you with his accustomed suavity." (1923)

Both during and after her experiment with science fiction, Muriel Jaeger explored historical themes in her written work, which she had also pursued at Oxford, becoming a social critic in the process. Her published work in this genre included *Experimental Lives* (1932), *Wars of Ideas* (1942), and *Liberty versus Equality* (1943). Later in life, she became particularly interested in the unexplained puzzles of history, writing and publishing *Before Victoria: Changing Standards and Behavior, 1787 – 1837* (1956). In 1965, she published *Shepherd’s Trade* in which Jaeger discussed her personal reminiscences and reflections about the literary life.

Muriel Jaeger was a writer before her time. Today, as she is finally being given credit for her seminal work in writing
science fiction, we can only wish that Muriel Jaeger had continued to develop her stories in that genre. Her influence upon other writers, Dorothy L. Sayers included, now is also being acknowledged. Finally, it can be noted that a solid biography of Muriel Jaeger is long overdue.

* * * * * * * * * *

Muriel Jaeger
Photo, Courtesy ARCO Publishing.
AMPHILIS T. MIDDLEMORE (Amphy)
English Teacher Extraordinaire
1891-1931

Amphilis Throckmorton Middlemore was the daughter of Sir John Middlemore, who was described as a man with “a lean eager face, and burning eyes, and an air that told us no single minute must be wasted; he had to get at the truth and make it clear, and every word was hammered in with the skill of a parliamentarian,” (Godolphin School Records) who apparently passed these characteristics to his four daughters, Amphy being the youngest. She met Dorothy at Godolphin School (Sayers attended from 1909-1911) and both met again at Somerville in October of 1912 where they quickly resumed their friendship. Amphilis was a founding member of the MAS with Dorothy Sayers and Charis Barnett, hosting refreshments at the first MAS meeting. Dorothy’s references to Amphilis were invariably kind and affectionate. To Sayers and the MAS, she was always, ‘Amphy’.

Although not known to have submitted her writing often to school literary magazines, Amphilis had the singular honor of being the first of the MAS group to have her writing accepted for publication in The Fritillary, June 1913. She wrote a character sketch of a postal clerk (see this volume) noted by the editor for the detail of her description. Amphy was known in the MAS as a great story-teller, although her written stories appear no longer to be extant. She participated, also, in the Oxford Women’s Hockey Club but resigned in early June 1914. Amphy Middlemore left Somerville in the summer of 1914 and returned in October 1914 as a home student (both news items in The Fritillary, June & December 1914).

Amphilis and Dorothy Rowe were both stage managers of the Second Year Plays held on the last Saturday of Michaelmas
Term. Amphy managed *Prunella* while Dorothy stage-managed *Admiral Guinea*. Both plays performed as part of the whole event were recognized, school-wide, as great successes. Amphy Middlemore and Dorothy Rowe each received accolades in *The Fritillary*, March 1914: 114-115, for her work.

“The chief feature of the scenery of ‘Prunella’ the drop-scene at the back, had been specially painted to represent a Dutch garden by the stage manager, A.T. Middlemore. Of the success of the plays there was no doubt from the enthusiasm of the large audience which filled the Maitland Hall. The pieces chosen were ‘Prunella, or Love in a Dutch Garden,’ by Grenville Barker and Lawrence Housman; and ‘Admiral Guinea,’ by Stevenson and Henley. A. Middlemore as Pierrot in ‘Prunella,’ struck just the right note, and brought out the half poetic, half fantastic spirit of the play. She was well supported by the other actors. D. Rowe as Scaramel, M. Jaeger as The Boy, and A. Organe as the Statue of Love, being particularly good. The chorus of mummers acted very well together in a rather difficult role.

The full-blooded melodramatic tone of ‘Admiral Guinea’ made an excellent contrast to the subtler charm of ‘Prunella.’ There was a certain risk on the part of the organizers in attempting such a play, but the result was more than successful. This was largely due to the remarkable acting of T.M. Browne, as the broken-down ruffian, David Pew, whose impersonation and playing was quite above amateur standards. She was supported by a well-chosen cast, and the stage-managers are to be congratulated on the success of their work, and the whole Second Year on the evening’s entertainment.”

With Dorothy L. Sayers, Muriel Jaeger, and Catherine Hope Godfrey, Amphilis helped to write and participate in the Going-Down play of 1915. Amphilis Middlemore graduated in the Honors School of English Language at Oxford.
After qualifying at university, Amphilis became a graduate student in 1920-21 at Bryn Mawr in Pennsylvania, graduating to become a teacher there in English Composition, also teaching in the Workers’ Summer School at Bryn Mawr, and rarely after that point returning to England. At Bryn Mawr, she used her talent for producing plays and acting in them, a talent which was discovered and honed previously at Oxford. In 1922, she became an English Instructor at Swarthmore College, a position she held until 1928.

In 1922, while at Bryn Mawr, Amphilis organized several faculty plays to benefit the Russian Relief Fund. They were titled “Culinary Comedies.” In the first, “Between the Soup and the Savoury,” Amphilis played the part of Emily, a kitchen maid, her acting and accent receiving rave reviews. “Lima Beans” was the second play in which Amphy played a male role. Both plays were a great success and netted the Fund in excess of one hundred dollars, a substantial amount in those days.

As well as being a gifted teacher, Amphilis was known for her affection for children, “… they loved her, and she had nothing less than a genius for entertaining them.” (Obit)

Amphilis Middlemore died unexpectedly in London while visiting London on July 18th, 1931 at the age of thirty-nine. Her death was a shock to the other members of the MAS (Frankenburg 1975). Amphilis was described in the following words at her memorial:

“...a woman of rare personal magnetism, full of zest for life... in addition to her chosen field of literature, gardening and drama – she herself a gifted actress-astronomy, sociology, music... enlisted her unbound enthusiasm.”
(Obit, 1931)

* * * * * * * * * *
Amphilis T. Middlemore

Image Courtesy Middlemore Family Archive
Pencil Pixel Sketch, 2018
Private Collection
We Too Are Here:
A Note on Literary Societies of Women’s Colleges
Listed in The Fritillary, 1895-1920

Part I: Literary Societies at Somerville College

The Mutual Admiration Society was one of many writing circles and literary groups that existed within the women’s colleges at Oxford in the early twentieth century. To provide a sense of the number and variety of women’s clubs that existed at the Colleges before, during, and a bit after, Dorothy L. Sayers’ student tenure, we have combed The Fritillary for its wealth of information on the subject. In this volume, we present a short overview of the student literary societies of Somerville listed in The Fritillary from 1895 - 1920 which called for member written contribution, commented on literary study, or provided members with talks by experts related to their subject of interest. Oxford provided its women students, even during the war, with a rich literary environment in which to study and hone writing skills, although speakers were often scarce from 1914-1919. We list the societies by name and year when they reported activities to The Fritillary. We provide, also, several examples of society activities as reported by Somerville students to The Fritillary.

As an interesting note, Charis Barnett Frankenburg made the comment, “All the leaders of the college Lit. Phil. groups were M.A.S. members and one of us became President (1975: 63).” Barnett, herself, became Joint President of the Sharp Practice debating society and Margaret Chubb was voted President of the Tub Thumpers Philosophical and Debate Society. Dorothy Rowe was voted to the editorial committee of
the *Fritillary* during 1913-1914. Muriel St. Clare Byrne was voted chief editor of the *Fritillary* in 1914-1915. So, although the MAS was not an “official” writing society recognized by the college, its members were affiliated with those literary societies and often held leadership posts among them. Below are the Literary and Philosophical (Lit. Phil.) groups of Somerville listed in the *Fritillary*, 1895-1920, to which MAS members contributed from 1912-1920. In future issues, we shall also list the Lit. Phil. societies of the other women’s colleges as well as the intercollegiate literary societies.

**Somerville College:**  
**Browning Society** (variously reported from 1894; by 1913 it was well attended)  
**Literary and Philosophical Society** (variously reported from 1911; strong in 1913-1914)  
**Mermaid Society** (variously reported from 1894 – 1900, then seems to have disbanded). Women’s tame counterpart to the men’s more exhuberant literary society, the Mermaid, during which punch cups were drunk and poets toasted with, “Souls of poets dead and gone!”  
**Shakespeare Society** (variously reported from 1894; reported to be well attended in 1913)  
**Sharp Practice Society** (variously reported from 1894; strong in 1913-1914). Debating/Phil.  
**Social Study Circle** (strong in 1913; mainly formal speakers invited along with group discussion of their papers)  
**War and Peace Society** (seems to have emerged in March 1914). Members read papers.
MAS Members Holding Elected Offices:
Dorothy Rowe, Editorial Committee, *The Fritillary*,
   November 1913 – October 1914
Muriel St. Clare Byrne, Chief Editor, *The Fritillary*,
   December 1914 – October 1915
Margaret Chubb, President, The Tub-Thumpers Club
   (Debate & Phil. Soc.), March 1915
Charis U. Barnett, Joint President of Sharp Practice
   (Debate Society) 1913-1914

A Somerville Retrospective from the December 1894 issue
No. 3, of *The Fritillary*:

**BROWNING SOCIETY** – the Browning Society has much increased in size, and meetings are held fortnightly. This term we have read a paper “A Blot on the Scutcheon,” and several short poems. Miss Howitt and Miss Russell hold the offices of President and Secretary, respectively.

**MERMAID SOCIETY** – Out first meeting this term was held on Saturday, Nov. 3rd, when our founder and ex-president, Miss C.G. Marshall, whom an opportune visit to Oxford enabled to be with us, read a most successful paper on “Childhood.” Other papers are to be read this term by Miss Pease on “Women’s Sphere,” and by Miss Martin on “Gothic Architecture.”

**SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY** – President, Miss Moore; Secretary, Miss Carless. This Society has largely increased and now numbers 30 members. There have been two meetings, at which “A Winter’s Tale” was read. “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” has been chosen as our next play.
SHARP PRACTICE SOCIETY – This Society continues to flourish, and many new members have joined it this term. Two meetings have been held. On Oct. 19th, the motion before the House was “That Total Abstinence is necessary to national perfection;” this subject did not evoke much enthusiasm. The debate on Nov, 9th was very animated, much eloquence being displayed in discussing the subject of “Slang.”

From the December 1911 Issue of The Fritillary:
LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY – Miss Penrose read a most interesting paper on “Trajan’s Column,” illustrated by lantern slides. The subject, though neither literary nor philosophical, proved to be one of great interest, and was greatly appreciated by members of the Society. Professor Gilbert Murray has kindly consented to read a paper on “Some People who were in advance of their Time,” with special reference to Mary Woolstonecraft (sic) and Day.

In the temporary absence of Miss Gerrard, Miss Sutcliffe has been elected as a circle leader.

From the December 1914 Issue of The Fritillary:
WAR AND PEACE SOCIETY – The women’s branch of the War and Peace Society is in a very flourishing condition; as the treasurer of the Oxford Society put it, ‘we men are now the poor relations.’ Many new members have joined this Term, owing largely to the fact that we were able to persuade Prof. Vinogradoff to come and speak to us about “Russia.”... On November 26th, Miss Chubb will read a paper on ‘Alliances.’ No
other meetings have been held owing to the fortnightly lectures on the war....

This selection of samples from Somerville’s literary and philosophical societies gives a good idea of the variety of circles available to Somerville students and reinforces the reality of the opportunities given MAS members who existed in a multi-social literary environment within and apart from the Mutual Admiration Society. We will continue the story of these societies, and others, in the next volume of DLS.
In truth, this short article is written more along the lines of an exploratory discussion, rather than being a formal preamble or preface to the upcoming work, Interwritten Lives, one which I’ve been working on for several years and will probably be working on for several more. The point is, however, that I am researching the MAS as a long-term writing society, name notwithstanding, changing members and structure, from 1912 to approximately 1922 - ten years in which a good number of writers moved in and out of the circle through the course of their student lives at Somerville College, and later.

The MAS was formed in 1912 by three enterprising Somervillians who were interested in sharing their writing in a student group: Charis Barnett, Amphilis Middlemore, and Dorothy L. Sayers, joined almost immediately by Dorothy H. Rowe, Margaret Chubb, Muriel Jaeger, and Catherine Godfrey - Muriel St. Clare Byrne and probable MAS member Agnes Murray arriving one year later. The early MAS, which I call the ‘first wave’ functioned, for the most part, as a closed writing sorority, with entrance criteria, society nicknames, and voting rights among existing members to approve new members. Membership varied from six to twelve (or more) students at any given point in time. The first wave of the MAS met on a weekly basis from late 1912 through mid-1915.

New applicants were screened and considered pledges until they proved themselves, and only those students whom
the members liked were allowed in. Members had male nicknames and circulated their writings only among themselves to be critiqued by other members of the group. Its saving grace, of course, was the humor evident in the MAS members’ personalities and communications. They liked to have clever and involved discussions long into the night, Dorothy Rowe being often a star of those late-night discussions. Their writing efforts were primarily inwardly focused, centering on poetry, legends, Shakespeare, literary fiction, philosophy, and academic work. When matters waxed ‘suffrage,’ the arguments were, for the most part, theoretical. Only later did Margaret Chubb and Charis Barnett begin to shift the group’s perspective, bringing in women’s healthcare issues. Social activism did not interest Dorothy L. Sayers; her work stayed focused on heroic and Romanticist poetry. In effect, the first-wave MAS functioned as an inwardly-focused support group for women students in a dubious Oxford position at an uncertain time in the history of the university.

An interesting point to note is that not all MAS members were dedicated creative writers or novelists. Some were social or healthcare activists like Margaret Chubb, some were scholarly writers such as Marjorie Barber and Muriel St. Clare Byrne (although she had a later flirtatious episode in fiction with Dorothy Sayers as they both collaborated on the play, *Busman’s Honeymoon*), some were both, such as Charis Barnett, Muriel Jaeger, and D.E.A. Wallace.

Some evolved into writers of different genres at different (or even the same) points in their later lives, exemplified by Dorothy L. Sayers, poet, novelist, translator, playwright, and essayist. Some changed focus, as did Muriel Jaeger. Some dedicated their careers entirely to the writing of fiction, such as Margaret Kennedy and Sylvia Thompson. Others were happy to be teachers, such as Amphilis Middlemore as well as
Marjorie Barber, and some, like Dorothy H. Rowe, loved producing amateur plays as well as teaching.

Most were *members* of the MAS circle, even later when the name MAS and its sorority flavor were dropped, and some were *links*, not formally identifying themselves as MAS writers, but nonetheless having developed and maintained strong connections to the group, such as Vera Brittain and Margaret Leigh. Amid this remarkable variation, personal and professional links occurred among these active women which were often to last a lifetime.

In my 2016 paper in the C.S. Lewis and Friends Colloquium at Taylor University, I made the point that the early MAS looked very much like the later (by 25 years) Inklings circle, with two exceptions: *status* (the women were students when they joined and participated in the MAS) and *gender* (members were female). The paper is included in this volume, should one wish to read the full argument.

However, unlike the Inklings circle in which twenty canonical members preserved their connection with the ongoing title and met for years at the same place, with scholars C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien maintaining a dominant leadership role, the MAS changed membership as women left Oxford, preserving personal and professional ties with several members rather than with the entire group which shifted focus substantially after World War I. In fact, there were no leaders or members dominating the MAS in its early or later waves. It functioned in an egalitarian manner, members sharing different work at will, as close friendships and professional ties were formed among different members. There were no canonical members who remained throughout the course of the writing group, students leaving Somerville after three to six years. However, there were two waves of the group, pre- and post-war, that altered, dramatically, the atmosphere of the writing circle. In time, the society turned from being a formally
named and primarily inwardly-focused group to an outwardly-focused circle of writers, the name MAS going by the wayside, most of whom were concerned with post-war social and political issues in their fiction and nonfiction works.

The first-wave MAS members remembered the society with affection (e.g., Sayers: *We had some fun with it, didn’t we?*) and formed the circle as a closed writing sorority with entrance criteria and nicknames. Dorothy L. Sayers and several first-wavers left Oxford in 1915, while others stayed on, namely Muriel St. Clare Byrne and Dorothy Rowe. New writers moved into the circle starting in late 1914 and through the war years. In time, the name MAS was dropped as were the sorority-type requirements to join, as original members left. However, the primary MAS links remained intact as D.E.A. Wallace, H.S. Reid. Margaret Moore Kennedy, Marjorie Barber, and Sylvia Thompson linked in and joined remaining older members in a ‘second wave’ of writers, still sharing and discussing their writing in a circle.

The work shared among these second-wave writers displayed an outlook that was much more socially aware and politically oriented, bringing in current issues among differing British social groups and classes, as even their poetry and fiction had political elements and suffrage built in. Why was this second wave so very different? The catalyst of change was, of course, World War I.

Please join us as I continue this discussion of the first and second waves of the Mutual Admiration Society of Somerville writers in Volume III of DLS, American Journal of Sayers Studies. We should continue to read the poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and essays of these remarkable Somerville women writers from the early and mid-twentieth century to ensure that the individual voices of these women be heard once more in the twenty-first century.
Sylvia Thompson

Chariot Wheels

New York: Little, Brown & Co., 1929
Life with Laughter:
The Unusual MAS Friendship of
Dorothy H. Rowe and Charis U. Barnett

It was agreed that the test of a true friend
was that she would eat the rest of her ice cream
quickly because you had finished yours.

Frankenburg 1975: 65

Paired friendships, within and without the early MAS, which blossomed into professional partnerships have often been discussed by Sayers’ researchers, partnerships such as that of Dorothy L. Sayers and Muriel St. Clare Byrne, Marjorie Barber and Muriel St. Clare Byrne, or that of Winifred Holtby and Vera Brittain. However, one friendship not often discussed was that of Dorothy H. Rowe and Charis U. Barnett.

Both parents of the girls were known to one another through linked relations and alerted the girls to each other’s presence at Somerville in October 1912. Charis and Dorothy met as they attended an auction of the discards of previous students, each hoping to pick up a bargain. Both bought the same type of item, a two-penny pair of tongs, and slipped out, happily triumphant. As they congratulated themselves, the girls recognized a kindred spirit in one another and were friends from that shared adventure.

It is most probable that Charis invited Dorothy to join the first meeting of the MAS. To further cement the relationship, both girls stayed members of the writing group, being active in the circle until each left Oxford.

Both were students in the English School and both Dorothy and Charis received a B.A. as well as a M.A. (Oxon.) degree, participating in the first women’s graduation ceremony of October 14, 1920. As members of the English School, they were assigned Miss Darbishier (an expert on Wordsworth) as Tutor. They were amusingly aware of the unofficial English School rhyme, “The English School is, credit me, a matrimonial agency.” Neither student was a living example of this particular
rhyme. Both went to Miss Lorimer for coaching in Greek and Latin and both studied Homer, Plato, Tacitus, and Latin prose composition. This training later manifested itself, for Charis, in the writing of two elementary Latin grammars, *Latin with Laughter* (1934) and *More Latin with Laughter* (1937). It is likely that Dorothy Rowe helped to edit the books, contributed several Latin conversations to the texts, and illustrated each book during her own teaching career.

While at Somerville, Charis and Dorothy were partners in most things, according to Charis (1975: 64), and were acknowledged at Somerville to be “a pair.” Being so, they often shared expenses and were known for their hospitality. Neither had very much money, Charis’s parents allowing her £2 a term for entertaining, some of that money going toward refreshments when they, in turn, hosted MAS weeks. Charis notes that she was fortunate in receiving cakes from home which she shared with Dorothy Rowe and others. “There was a continuous flow of parties among our year, and we were invited by senior years whose hospitality had to be returned (Frankenburg 1975 64).”

Alphabet biscuits and the half-inch square Huntley and Palmer breakfast biscuits decorated MAS meetings and Dorothy was known to have introduced toasted marshmallows which “floated deliciously on coffee and were much cheaper than cream (Ibid).” Charis specialized in brewing good coffee. She roasted, ground, and percolated it. “Friends were victimized by my ritual; guests had the first pouring, and my friends drank in descending strength – the most intimate having the weakest brew. Amphilis Middlemore soon qualified with Dorothy (Rowe) as the most frequent sufferer (Ibid.).”

Both Dorothy and Charis, along with Amphy Middlemore and Dorothy Sayers wrote, directed, and acted in the Second Year play, *Admiral Guinea*, which Dorothy Sayers mentions in her dedication of *OP. I*. They did the same for *Pied Pipings, Or*
Innocents Abroad, the Going Down play of their class in 1915. Dorothy Rowe was so enamored of theatre that she dedicated most of her professional life to producing and directing amateur plays as well as teaching English. She is listed also as one editor of English Literature, a text published by the Grolier Society in 1968. Charis Barnett became a social activist for women’s health, with support from her husband, writing several books on childcare and adolescent behavior, in addition to her two Elementary Latin grammars which proved to be popular with students, if not with traditional language teachers. The books, apparently, were too amusing in content and illustration to be school texts. However, it has been rumored that they were “unofficially” recommended to parents as supplementary material for disinterested students.

Both Charis Barnett and Dorothy Rowe proved to be, by their character, vibrant personalities, independent thought, and enthusiasm for life, prime examples of lives filled with purpose and dedication. As a pair, or individually through the course of their adult lives, they were prime examples of their determined and cheerful Somerville generation, and each, as well, fulfilled the MAS motto to the letter: “The best of what we do and are – just God forgive.”
Correspondence Column
The Fritillary, December 1917: 124-125

The editor does not hold herself responsible for any opinions expressed in this column.

A Women Students’ Club

Madam,

The present position of women at Oxford is a very hopeful one, every term fresh opportunities are offered them and the possibility of their admission to the University is on the increase, but at the same time they have hardly on their part taken the necessary steps, either to accelerate the process of incorporation in the University, or to fit themselves for that position when it is gained. At the present moment they are without the two essentials of effective corporate life and action – they have no organ of opinion (this, I hope the Fritillary may become) – and they have no common meeting place, and this is what I wish to propose in the present letter. What they need is a meeting place where they can discuss matters of inter-collegiate interest apart from the repressive and sectional atmosphere of the different colleges. They need also a possibility of getting to know members of other colleges and an inter-collegiate hall for debate and lectures which will obviate the present fidgeting system of exact rotation. They need also a library, composed of all types of books, easily accessible, and open during the vacation as well as in the term.

To gain all this, it is in the first place necessary to acquire a house, with a garden or room for expansion when the need arises. Its position would depend on what houses are available

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and on whether it is considered more important for it to be near the women’s colleges or near the centre to the town.

The house should be arranged to contain a Common Rood in which teas could be served when desired, a hall for lectures and debates and a library. The library of Modern Literature would of course be moved to the club and form a nucleus from which to work, but it would be much more satisfactory if the Nettleship Library were also shifted to these new quarters. The hall would be used for all sorts of inter-collegiate lectures and debates, and in particular would save the O.S.D.S. the degrading necessity of borrowing the High School Hall. In course of time, it might be possible to use the upstairs rooms as a hostel for students staying up for the vacation, or for Old Students and others paying visits to Oxford. It might also be possible to develop in connection with the club an employment bureau analogous to the University Appointments Committee, but it ought to work on broader lines and include Cambridge students, if they so desired, so as to avoid this incompleteness which so seriously detracts from the usefulness of the Appointments Committee. The management ought in the main to be in the hands of the students themselves, but as they are too inexperienced and impermanent to have complete control, I should suggest that the management should be under an elected committee composed half of students and half of old students or Tutors, or Shareholders. There should also be a purely student committee with powers of suggestion and criticism.

The finance is rather hard to deal with when all the proposals are so vague, but it should be possible, if the club is run satisfactorily, to enroll as members all women students and many old students who live in Oxford or keep up their connection with it. At the same time there is no necessity to limit membership to past or present students any more than the membership of the Union is limited to members of the
University. The capital could be raised by shares, backed if necessary by the credit of the colleges. It is practically impossible to carry out this scheme in its entirety in war time, but a committee might be elected immediately by the different colleges and employ the period before the close of the war in giving publicity to the scheme, selecting a suitable house, and discussing details of management, so that at the close of hostilities the club might be started without delay.

Your obedient servant,

M. Glint

(Correspondence on this subject is invited)

The Fritillary, December 1917: 124-125

Editor's Note: M. Glint is a pseudonym for Miss Sturt of Somerville, her name thoughtfully supplied by the Response Correspondence of M. Forster which follows.

1 Nettleship Library is the library of St. Anne’s College, Oxford (previously Oxford Home Students).
Response to A Women Students’ Club

Flora Forster, Somerville College

Correspondence Column
The Fritillary, March 1918: 142-143

(The editor does not hold herself responsible for any opinions expressed in this column).

Response to A Women Students’ Club

Correspondence Column
Somerville College, Oxford
February 10, 1918
To the Editor of the ‘Fritillary’

Madam,

I wish to given my hearty support to the views set out in Miss Sturt’s open letter to the Fritillary, in December 1917. Miss Sturt passes quickly over the fact that the Fritillary does not satisfy its public, and dwells longer on the wider issue, ‘the promotion of inter-collegiate interests, the necessity of fitting ourselves for taking part in the wider University life which must some time be opened to us, or, at any rate, of dissipating the pleasant, but intellectually deadening, boarding-school atmosphere which obtains here at present in varying degrees at the various women’s colleges.’
Miss Sturt’s proposals are ambitious, and few people will go all the way with them; but a beginning could surely be made at once. The hire of a room large enough for inter-collegiate debates, with a club-room attached, in which the Inter-Collegiate Library could be transferred, would cost comparatively little in money, time and energy. I am convinced that we have the money and the time, though I am compelled to admit that energy is far to seek among us. But the requisite energy can and must be found, and at once, unless we are content to go on lotus-eating forever within the narrow bounds of our own little colleges.

I would like to add a few remarks on the subject of the Fritillary. It is not a satisfactory magazine, and it is in no way representative of the woman student of Oxford – Heaven forbid! Seven or eight pages of Hall Notices, nicely spaced and scattered with names in capitals, which waste paper recklessly to tell us in doubtful English that a meeting was held, and that we were all very interested in to hear, &c. &c.; and three pages of literary matter – this is the Fritillary.

The question of hall notices is pressing. From term to term their absurdity has been on the increase; we are long inured to their dullness, and we would bear with it, perhaps, if only it were respectably phrased. But some of the December notes might well have been from the work of illiterate persons; and Punch, (see issue December 27th, 2nd page, 2nd Col.) quotes them with deadly effect. We cannot help laughing at the quip, but we feel for the Fritillary the shame that should be felt by the writer of the paragraph referred to, and by the editor and Committee which printed the absurdity.
As to the three pages of literary matter, our grievances are of a different kind. One is careful not to leave the *Fritillary* lying about in the Vac., for fear that a casual observer may open it, and, logically enough conclude that these three pages represent all the best that we can produce in an eight weeks’ term. And these three pages are usually of no more than passable merit, although a few brilliant exceptions, the *Fritillary* appears to an unbiased observer as a rather absurd and mightily earnest travesty of the reviews of the day. It is aesthetic, in a false ‘greenery yallery’ style; it is middle-aged; it never speaks out. One sparkle of youth, one ripple of mirth, however vul-feeble, however cheap, however vulgar, would be more truly representative of the woman-students of Oxford than these three pages of heaviness.

How can a change be made? In the first place, the Hall Notices might be condensed into a one-page Calendar, supplemented, perhaps, by a very brief note of the term’s activities by the senior Student of each College.

In the second place, I would suggest a larger Committee, and a more energetic Committee. At present the *Fritillary* is managed by a small Committee which meets once a term, and waits with folded hands for contributions. In fact its attitude in the past has been to discourage would-be contributors, to say to them in effect, ‘Dilly dilly, come and be killed,’ i.e., ‘Send us your stuff, and we shall be very pleased to reject it.’ The Committee itself has rarely written for the magazine, it has waited for the ravens, - and the ravens have brought it once a term, three pages of proper mediocrity.
What we want is a small business committee to manage details of printing and finance, and to arrange for the insertion of advertisements, without which the Fritillary will always be practically handicapped; and, besides, a large editorial staff, drawn from the literary talent of the various colleges, which could be depended upon to write, and to stir up other people to write.

The reform of the Fritillary is the duty of the present generation. Let us be flippant, let us be cheap, let us be vulgar; but let us stop being middle-aged.

I am, Madam,

Yours faithfully,

Flora Forster

Editor’s Note: Although we truly enjoyed reading M. Forster’s well-written, albeit scathing, assessment of the Fritillary’s content, we must note, on principal, that we object to the use of the term ‘middle-age’ as a derogatory descriptor, however well-intentioned.
Oxford Architecture I
Photo: Andrew Parebea,
with permission, 2019
Writings of the Mutual Admiration Society

The best of what we do and are, just God forgive.

Motto of the MAS
Muriel St. Clare Byrne

from *Aldebaran*

**A Charm**
O slender footed and slender thewed,
Child of Morning! Oh thou endued
With perfect body and shapring brain!
Here's a charm in a world of pain,
To keep thought happy, and sweet, and sane!

Earth beneath thy foot,
    Earth in thy hand,
Lay thee down in the brown
    Rain-washed land.

Winds to kiss thy body,
    Primroses thy feet:
Bathe thy face at the place
    Where the waters meet.

**Domiduca**
A warm fire in the grate
If the hour be late;
A companion by the fire
For thy desire.

White bread on thy board;
Let thy land afford
Lettuces green and sweet,
Apples to eat.
Stars without in the night,
Within, candlelight;
Out-doors a star-lit walk,  
Within, quiet talk.

So I invoke for thee,  
That such thy homecoming be,  
Domiduca, and pray  
Her to guard thee always.

In the Garden  
You and I in the garden,  
Walking up and down,  
All in the chill December,  
And the trees so bare and brown.

Talking I jest and earnest,  
While the mist hung low and gray: -  
Log ago in our youth-time  
Such was our youthful way.

Now in the after days,  
In the bleak winter weather,  
Crouching over the fire  
I think how we walked together;

Roamed and talked in a garden  
On a day in drear December; -  
But this is the deepest joy,  
To know you too remember.

Aldebaran 1917; 1
Of Certain Persons and Places
(For D.L.S., D.H.R., and C.H.G.)

This night I’m very fain to be
Back in the town where I was free
Of a right joyous company:

You who would chant your rhymes to us,
Of vivid life all amorous,
“Whose youth was not ungenerous,”

O you who sang the bitter-sweet
And valorous courage of defeat,
Who strode ahead afire to meet

An unknown future! Also you
Dear Tony – words are all too few
For you, and other folk I knew;

And you, whose nimble wit so glanced
Through every theory you advanced
We listened half the night entranced,

Whose tonic laugh and timely jest
Came ever with as brave a zest; -
Dost still launch dream ships on the quest?

O! I am very very fain
By night to see the High again,
Its lamps all blurry in the rain;

And I would gladly give a year
Of this my life just now to hear
The bell of Tom toll deep and clear.
Autumn and Spring will come and go,
And I shall never even know
Where the first primroses do show.

O! I am very very fain
By night to see the High again,
Its lamps all blurry in the rain;

And I am very fain to be
Back in the town where I was free
Of your right joyous company!

*Oxford Magazine*, 1916
*Aldebaran*, 1917: 53

Editor’s Note: The initials placed after the title refer to: Dorothy L. Sayers, Dorothy H. Rowe, and Catherine Hope Godfrey, co-members of the MAS and fellow students at Somerville. In verses 2-3, Byrne refers to Sayers and her poems, particularly “Peredur” read at a meeting of the MAS. Sayers is also referred to as the one “who strode ahead afire to meet an unknown future.” In verse 4, “Tony” refers to Catherine Hope Godfrey. Verses 5-6 refer directly to Dorothy H. Rowe, her “nimble wit,” “zest,” and her famous high spirits. Verse 7 refers to Oxford High Street.

**The Age of Youth**
At fifteen, Horace,
Sixteen, Tom Paine,
Seventeen, Plato,
Nineteen, Montaigne.

And now I look back
And, to tell the truth,
Stand aghast
At the age of youth!

*Aldebaran*, 1917: 18
Definitely Edwardian

It is difficult to carry back the senses. It is so easy for memory, with its treacherous deposit from other minds, to silt up the channel in its leisurely flow. But the sense-vision is instant and piercing, and for the moment that it endures the water is crystal-clear, the experience is seen and felt, not remembered, but timeless. At first the stream is troubled, thick with the sediment of other people’s recollections. I remember much: but I see nothing. On the morning of the day after Queen Victoria’s death it clears, and I begin to see.

I am standing on a low chair in front of a white washstand in my mother’s bedroom, cleaning my teeth. My father, already dressed, comes in and tells us that the Queen is dead, and that Uncle John and Aunt Emily have asked us to stay with them. Nothing more – until I am sitting in a railway carriage with blue-cushioned seats that bulge mysteriously, and are be-sewn with tightly affixed black buttons. Heavy brown smoke from the engine rolls past the carriage window as the train pulls slowly out of a station, and across a bridge, the river glinting beneath in the late afternoon sunlight. The window is open, and the smoke makes me blink, but I like the smell of it. Opposite to me is Uncle John’s serious handsome face. He leans across, picks me up gently, and deposits me in his place, taking mine himself. He explains that if I sit facing the engine I may get a red-hot cinder in my eye, which will hurt me very
much. He, it appears, will not be hurt by such things: he is a
grown-up person. It means nothing to me, but I accept it as I
accept the other fact of my existence....

The afternoon tea has been warm and fragrant with
sensations of happiness. I have been useful. I have attended in
the pantry while the best tea-things have been prepared. I have
extracted the silver from its green baize bags, and handed each
vessel reverently to my mother. I have been entrusted with a
clean chamois leather with which to rub each of the best silver
tea-spoons before I place it carefully at the right-hand side of
the saucer. The leather’s pale creamy yellow and its exquisite
softness in the hand have filled my cup of happiness to the
brim. Even my best clothes have been invested with an air of
unwonted glory. I regard them with a positive pleasure: with
an almost religious fervour I acquiesce in the washing of my
neck and the cleaning of my nails. And when the front doorbell
rings it is I who am despatched to welcome the visitors – dear
visitors, whom I love, because they are coming to tea in the
drawing-room, and because the sun is shining, and because a
chammy leather is softer even than the cat’s fur or my mother’s
best velvet hat. One of them is wearing a pale blue dress. Never
has pale blue seemed lovelier or more desirable.

Muriel St. Clare Byrne, 1942: 10–11
Courtesy, Faber & Faber, Ltd.
‘Poems’ and ‘1914 and Other Poems’ by Rupert Brooke: A Review

The poetry of youth, we are told, is, as a rule, more or less of an indiscretion: and the task of its would-be critic is a somewhat thankless one in most cases, for posterity is apt to take a malicious, if justifiable, glee in reversing contemporary judgment. In the present instance, however, the chief difficulty is for the critic to approach the poems of Rupert Brooke in anything like an impartial critical frame of mind; writing in 1915 it is hardly possible to forget the man when dealing with his work. But his poetry, let it be said at once, was emphatically not a youthful indiscretion, and so it is of the utmost importance, if justice is to be done, that is should be approached solely from the point of view of its value as poetry.

Probably the first thought that will occur to any reader of ‘Georgian Poetry’ who has just been introduced to the re-published ‘Poems of 1911’ will be surprised at the omission of ‘The Old Vicarage – Grantchester.’ The vogue of ‘local poetry’ is nowadays, perhaps, not what it was in the 18th century, but it would be hard to find anywhere a more delightful example of the type than this. Those who know Cambridgeshire, ‘The shire for men who understand,’ will appreciate the entire truth of the picture; while those who do not will add that shire, and particularly the ‘lovely hamlet, Grantchester,’ to their intimate little lists of private El Dorados. There is, in all his verse, a peculiarly distinctive touch; it is impossible to define its essence: a subtle turn of phrasing, the quaint use of an epithet, a trick of melody – these are a part, and nowhere are the more apparent than in ‘Grantchester.’ It is the man with decidedly original byeways in his imagination, that, instead of
‘A faun a’peeping thro’ the green,’

sees

‘. . . spectral dance, before the dawn,
A hundred Vicars down the lawn,
Curates, long dust, who come and go
On lesson, clerical, printless toe.’

The new reader, turning to the second volume, however, will at once feel how entirely appropriate it was to close the record with this particular poem. Apart from the obvious reason of date which places it in this book, one instinctively recognises that this is the right note to end upon; the dash of bitterness in ‘The Beginning’ is a little too pronounced; the ‘Funeral of Youth’ shows that the extravagance of that period had not been entirely outlived; but

‘Grantchester, ah, Grantchester!
There’s peace and holy quiet there,’

And it is good to put the book down with that mood prevailing.

The unpractised hand of youth is revealed now and again in little lapses, such as ‘The One before the Last’; nevertheless, youth calls no man master. Rupert Brook has a vivid originality and immense energy of thought; these find vent in the first ‘Sonnet’ of the ‘Poems,’ in ‘Dust,’ with its exquisite lyric note, and in ‘Dining Room Tea,’ to cite but a few of the more striking examples. These three poems, indeed, tempt the critic to take refuge in that remarkably useful line – ‘What oft was thought but ne’er so well expressed’; while ‘Pine Trees and the Sky – Evening’ brings a sense of fulfillment that is rarely captured by this type of poem.

Very distinctive is the recurrent apprehension of the ‘second best’ and runs through so much of his verse: and along side of this undertone of ‘the good hours that are over’ is an
intense doubt of self. One would hesitate before asserting these
to be unusual to youth, but they are much rarer in youthful
poetry; it is neither the almost proverbial world-weariness, nor
yet cynicism; it is simply the state of those

‘. . . . wanderers in the middle mist,
   Who cry for shadows, clutch, and cannot tell
   Whether they love at all, or, loving, whom.’

And poets who can catch the lyric exuberance of the ‘Song’ on
page 42 do not, as a rule, foresee with such uncompromising
vigour the time ‘when love has changed to kindliness.’

It is always interesting to note the use a new writer will
make of the ‘sonnet’ – that trap for the unwary. Rupert
Brooke’s skill is as evident here as elsewhere. With regard to
the sonnet sequence entitled ‘1914,’ The Times’ enthusiastic
verdict will be remembered: -- ‘It is impossible to shred up this
beauty for the purpose of criticism. These sonnets are personal
– never were sonnets more personal since Sidney died – and yet
the very blood and youth of England seem to find expression in
them.’ It will not be for the first time that it is here claimed for
‘The Soldier’ that it is the finest poem this war has evoked.
Nobody who has read it can ever forget its splendid simplicity
and the everlasting triumph of the sacrifice: --

‘If I should die, think only this of me:
    That there’s some corner of a foreign field
    That is forever England . . .’

Rupert Brooke would not be a true child of his age if realism
did not find a place in his poetry. Most people have their own
definitions of this much-abused word, so often expounded, and
equally seldom explained, but leaving its ambiguity aside for
the moment, it is interesting, in the present case, to try to
discover the reason of it, and its ultimate and intrinsic value.
We cannot doubt that it is sincere: all his poetry is that; but we cannot say that ‘A Chanel Passage,’ for example, has ‘the one excuse and breath of art – charm.’ The intense feeling, however, for bravely sensuous beauty, elsewhere manifested, shows that there must be a counter-balancing intensity of feeling for the ugly side of things; we expect it of the writer of ‘Dust’ and of ‘Grantchester.’ And it is just this extremely vivid perception that produced that unpleasant sonnet – the vision is too narrowly focused to get the breadth of outline which alone makes this sort of thing possible; as it is, it can give no species of satisfaction to anyone. In the writer’s mind, however, there doubtless, was a justification: charm may be the breath of Stevenson’s art – it is enough for the poet of today that he see and feel with understanding. ‘L’écrivain n’est qu’un miroir . . . qui n’a rien à se faire si ses empreintes sont exactes. Si son reflet est fidèle,’ wrote George Sand in 1832, with more of prophetic insight than she was aware. So long as the writer is honest his sordid realism is justified of itself. Its ultimate value is, naturally, not great: but as evidence of a period of transition it is of relative importance; it is important, too, as a reflex of the state of much modern poetry – a state with which the literary history of the future will have to reckon.

There is another side of this movement, however, that is of immediate and enduring artistic worth. Between this passionate realism, which is the stuff of the finest love poetry, and the lyric idealism in which most poets are fain to express sentiment and emotion, his poems alternate curiously. It would seem as if the chants of sheer beauty he now and again pours forth are to be explained on the same principle as we would explain the singing of a bird; but that a certain faultless poetic instinct he possessed, and to which he undoubtedly listened as a rule, is to be held accountable for the former, with all its little commonplace details – details such as those who have really lived remember to the end of their days:
‘... you, asleep,
In some cool room that’s open to the night,
Lying, half forward, breathing quietly,
One white hand on the white
Unrumpled sheet . . .’

This is the day of the ‘apotheosis of the insignificant,’ and the tendency is to be traced in many of these poems:

‘I watched the quivering lamplight fall
On plate and flowers and falling tea
And cup and cloth . . .’

In the desperate cry in ‘Ambarvalia’:

‘With snuffle and sniff and handkerchief,
And dim and decorous mirth,
With ham and sherry, they’ll meet to bury
The lordliest lass of earth, ’

And in the last few lines of ‘Home’:

‘I lay and watched the lonely gloom;
And watched the moonlight creep
From wall to basin round the room.
All night I could not sleep.’

It would be unfair to omit a mention of the technique of these poems, for they show a spirit of conscientious workmanship, and are remarkably free from the carelessness, and the metrical peccadilloes that one has come so largely to associate with most youthful verse. Time would undoubtedly have proved him a master of rhythm: as it is, his command of it is very noticeable, and his few licences are all judicious.
It is impossible to enter into an account of the many details that delight us in both volumes: noteworthy is his quaintly humorous love of fish, in their ‘cool curving world;’ and technically a certain trick of repetition very effectively used. His epithets are fresh and original ‘apt, explicit, and communicative’: --

‘Great Hopes, gold-armoured, jester Fantasies,
And pilgrim Dreams, and little beggar Sighs

... and the grave, jewelled courtier Memories’; the ‘sharp black heads’ of the pines; his ‘most individual and bewildering ghost’; the ‘this gnat voices’ of the stars; ‘swift hair’; the ‘rough male kiss’ of blankets; the ‘brave sting’ of the rain, -- space forbids their enumeration at length, but these, though by no means exhaustive, are typical.

Biographical criticism of any sort has been deliberately avoided; the poems in themselves deserved in 1911 the reputation they are now acquiring – works do not, like wine, mature by keeping, and evolve into masterpieces after the lapse of a certain number of years. His death has only brought his poetry within the knowledge of some thousands of new readers – it has not altered the value of his genius.

In leaving out all the personal element, however, we have been compelled to disregard one of the greatest appeals of Rupert Brooke’s poetry: behind it we realise all the time an eager, varied, and brave personality; an eager truth-seeker, with a saving sense of humour.

It is the most difficult task of all to criticise contemporary literature; at present opinion in high places is divided as to how far these two small volumes represent achievement, or only promise; let us, therefore not rush in where angels fear to tread, and generalize rashly as to their enduring quality, but confidently recommend Rupert Brooke, poet, to the judgment
of a posterity permitted by time to be enthusiastically appreciative, if it will, and in its unanimity, more entitled than we to withhold or confer the laurel.

M.S. Byrne
Somerville College

The Fritillary, December 1915: 40-41

Notes:
1 ‘The writer is only a mirror. . . who has nothing to be forgiven if his fingerprints are accurate. If his reflection is faithful... (George Sand, Preface to Indiana, 1832:37)

Note from the Editors of The Fritillary:
A prize was awarded to Miss Byrne, Somerville College, for a review which fulfills the primary function of such an article by creating desire to read the book. The writer very deliberately distinguishes between the man and the artist, in order to demonstrate the intrinsic literary value of the poems. The style is careful but not labored, and the phrasing judicious.

The Fritillary, December 1915: 38
Charis Ursula Barnett Frankenburg

Mnemonic to Remember the British Tribes from Tacitus (Excerpt)
The disciplined Chatti in infantry strong
Have rings on their shoulders and wear their hair long;
They depend on their chiefs, wage not battles but wars,
And the Tencteri live all their lives on a horse.
The Cherusci were noble till one day men fancied
That they, being lazy, were cowards; sic transit.
The Harii blacken themselves and their shields
And attack on dark nights, and the enemy yields.
But imagine the swank of the old Anglii
If their author had told them they ancestered ME!

_Not Old, Madam, Vintage, 1975: 61_

Editor's Note: Reprinted with kind permission from Galaxy Press. While being coached by Miss Lorimer on Homer, Plato, Tacitus, and Latin prose composition, in order to pass Mods, Charis noted the difficulty of remembering the names of British tribes reported by Tacitus, Since Tacitus describes the habits of more than thirty British tribes and students were expected to remember their idiosyncrasies, she was driven to perpetrate this mnemonic in 1913 which was shared with the MAS, other friends, and traveled to the men’s colleges as well. Miss Lorimer was so delighted with Charis’s mnemonic that she urged Charis to submit it to Oxford Poetry and have it published by Basil Blackwell, which Charis declined to do. However, she did publish part of the poem in her autobiography, _Not Old, Madam, Vintage, 1975: 61._
Translated from Theodore de Banville

Youth untouched by gravity,
Bright as sun in Italy,
Guard thy golden levity.

This is wisdom! To love wine,
Beauty too, and spring divine;
Let others go. Let these be mine.

Nod to fate among thy foes,
Amd when thou greetest the primrose
Quaff her beauty ere she goes.

To the corpse locked in the grave
What is left? Why nothing, save
The love some months of spring-time gave.

“Each event a cause supposes,”
Sullen age research imposes,
Words! Words! Come and gather roses.

Oxford Poetry 1914: 9

Latin with Laughter
From the Preface

This little book is primarily written for the mothers who, having learnt no Latin, or having forgotten what they learnt, wish to give their small sons and daughters a foretaste of the subject before school life begins.

School is necessarily such an agglomeration of new experiences that if even one of them can be familiarsed the strain is lessened. To be taught by a stranger, with an unfamiliar method, in a new environment with unknown companons, is surely enough to distract the child; and if we an, by a little forethought, ensure that when the Latin lesson
begins he or she will heave a sigh of relief and say, “Well, here is something I do know,” surely we have our reward.

Mrs. Sydney Frankenburg

*Latin with Laughter, 1931: 9*

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*Editor’s Note: Charis Ursula Barnett was a Somerville student (1912-1914; 1921), member of the Mutual Admiration Society, and remained a friend to Dorothy L. Sayers, Catherine Hope Godfrey, and Dorothy H. Rowe throughout life. She left Oxford in August 1914 to serve as interpreter for the Women’s Emergency Corp. and returned to Oxford after the war to complete her degree in 1921, being then eligible for an Oxford University War Degree. Dorothy H. Rowe provided the illustrations for Latin with Laughter (1934) and More Latin with Laughter (1937). Courtesy, Wm Heineman, London, archive permissions.*
The Strangeness of Michael Bristowe

The strangeness of Michael Bristowe slid into my life with this amazing commonplaceness. It seemed to me at that time merely a small, but annoying, factor in my personal problem. “Neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” Is that the true description of my attitude? Am I indeed one of those who would have washed his hands of Christ, condemned Socrates, silenced Galileo? Even now, I am not sure who was right, Hilda or I. The thing is beyond me. I don’t know whether it was important or trivial. I don’t know whether Hilda was heroic or ridiculous. This I may say, in my excuse, if it be that I need one – we are not brought up to be easily impressed in these days. It is axiomatic, a matter of faith, with us, that everything is commonplace... Nothing unusual can happen to a modern man, for his reception of it immediately transmutes it into a complete banality. We fly through the air to our business interviews, we conduct newspaper controversies on Survival after Death, in which the controversy plainly becomes more important than the Survival; voices speaking to us from the other side of the globe are quite likely to be cut off because we cannot be bothered with them: “death rays” are a drug on the market. It is not surprising if a minor wonder passes almost unregarded.

Partly, I think, also, my attitude to Bristowe’s peculiarity was due to the fact that Hilda herself was so quiet and practical.
about it. Of course, she had had time to get used to the idea. She presented it without excitement, though she presented it as significant. On the other hand, it was to my interest to minimize it, and I did minimise it. I found it easy to minimise it. That seems curious now. I ought to have taken it seriously from the first. Whatever its intrinsic value, it was certainly capable of having a decisive influence upon the course of my life. I pause to wonder, whether otherwise, I should even now have found it worthy of much consideration. It almost appears as if human reason were not so far developed as we commonly suppose, and that even a trained intelligence could still judge things only in an egocentric manner. One is Man, the latest product and protagonist of the Struggle for Existence, in the first place, and, only in the second, if at all, *homo sapiens*. I am, without boasting, a highly educated man, and I belong to a profession which has accustomed me to the investigation of external facts, and to introspection and criticism of my own mental processes. Yet I cannot be sure that in my judgment of this matter I was more disinterested than old Rosenheimer himself, with his “Gold and copper exactly alike! Ha! ha! ha!” or than any savage who ever made gods in his own image.

Thus, the circumstances under which I listened to Hilda’s account of young Bristowe were such that I had a preoccupation – a lively adverse preoccupation; and, like those who go to Russia, I saw what I expected to see, and came back with my previous opinion confirmed.

*Muriel Jaeger*, 1927: 31-32
Leonard and Virginia Woolf,
The Hogarth Press
Muriel Jaeger

*The Question Mark*

New York: Macmillan Co., 1926

First Edition
Chapter XII
SUCH THINGS AS DREAMS

I

That night Guy dreamt long and vividly that he was back in the twentieth century. He had often returned in sleep to the old life, re-enacting scenes in which he had played a part, calling up forgotten personalities, embroidering old incidents with a confusion of fresh variations. But to-night it was none of the things specifically connected with his own life that came back to him out of the past. It was a more generalized experience, the life of the London streets which he had passed through unnoticing a thousand times. All the details which had made the background of existence in those old days came thronging through his brain, like actors stepping up to the footlights, starting one after another into full significance.

It was the London of the evening hours in which he was wandering – such another chill, drizzling evening as that on which he had received Marjorie Cannon’s final letter. It seemed to him at times that he had an appointment to keep, that he was to meet someone at some place before the night was over, and that meanwhile he travelled to and fro incessantly about the great city on devious routes to his rendezvous, a lost unit among the thronging people, impersonal as a wandering ghost.

As he went, certain things, impressions, started vividly out of the crowd from time to time as if picked out by spotlight, to vanish again the next moment into blackness....
IV

It seemed that the strange quest persisted through many hours and many places. Now he was tramping through gas-lighted back streets where children shrieked and somber crowds pressed along the wet pavements; now he was among the blazing light signs of the West End, dodging the whirring taxis which disgorged warm, brilliant women, and men in evening dress before the theatre entrances. And always, as he tried to progress to this rendezvous on which it seemed that everything depended, he was hampered, dragged at, kept back, turned aside by a thousand and one mischances. The person with whom he was to keep the rendezvous varied; sometimes it was Marjorie Cannon, sometimes Burrows from the bank on a business matter, sometimes, curiously, his mother. But, more often, it was some other vague person whom he knew, but for whom he had no name....

Suddenly, through his anguish, he realised that he was dreaming and willed to wake.

He came up slowly through swirling darkness. For an instant, which might have been an eternity, there floated again beside him the white-swathed image of the Sufferer with whom he had once watched through the passage of the centuries. Then he opened his eyes again upon the walls of his riverside bedroom whitening in the approaching dawn.

Muriel Jaeger, 1926: 238-39; 242-49

By Courtesy, Macmillan Company.
Wars of Ideas

History as Guide?

In the problem of modern society, of which that of national fanaticism is only one, though at present the most acute, there is a general opinion that we can get no guidance from history because these problems have never occurred before in their present forms and settings. Nevertheless it may be useful to study what has become of somewhat similar problems in the past, equally acute in their time but now long forgotten. This may at least suggest the nature of the solutions to our own problems that may be looked for. If we find that these earlier problems that have disappeared without mortal catastrophe did so in certain recognizable conditions we may, in our present situation, discover corresponding trends with which men of good-will could usefully cooperate. Individuals and groups, armed with a theory, however logical and benevolent, are practically powerless; but, if there are already in existence tendencies making for peaceful conditions and emergence from our worst difficulties, it is comparatively easy to contribute to their impetus.

Europe has been through religious wars before – over a century of them. The driving ideas at that time were very different from those that urge the warring sections of modern Europe now; but there remains the fundamental likeness – that they were wars of ideas. The test was, as now, between people insisting on opposed ways of life and incapable of finding any modus vivendi with those who disagreed with them.

What one may call the “Chosen People” complex is at the root of the trouble. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries
both Catholic and Protestants (and every particular sect of Protestants) had this idea of themselves. In that instance it cut across nationality, though the Germans are willing to extend a minor degree of “election” to Scandinavians and Dutch, and were even ready to receive Anglo-Saxons into the fold if they would come with due submissiveness. The French, who regarded themselves as the exclusive guardians of civilization, were possessed by an equal though less dangerous egotism, and still believe that it is the duty of other nations to spare and help them at all costs. Italians have imagined themselves the belated heirs of the Roman Empire. Soviet citizens think their country the hope of the world, though they have the saving grace to be willing to admit all peoples to the Communist Heaven. Japan is the Germany of the Far East. For smaller nationalities it is difficult to have quite so high an opinion of their vocation. Yet, as those who have lived in these countries testify, Spain is still in fantasy the Spain of the sixteenth century as Greece is the Greece of Marathon and of Pericles. Even the Mongols are said to be expecting the return of Genghis Khan, now that the old prophecy of the disappearance of the Great White Tsar and of the Son of Heaven is fulfilled.

In Britain too, in spite of our deprecating habit, a sense of mission is growing again under stress, while in the American soul Messianic impulses fight an incessant war with proud detachment.

For these enthusiasms the “democratic” ideal is mere cover. The two volunteers questioned by Mr. Nicolson were scornful when it was suggested that they wanted to fight for “Democracy.” What they wanted, they said, was to down Hitler,
and when asked why, “Well, he’s treated us like dirt, hasn’t he?” Several of our allies were not democracies at all; Soviet Russia was and is as bureaucratic as Germany; Poland had a dominant aristocracy. As an alternative to democracy every statesman of every conquered or attacked country announces in turn that his people are fighting for “liberty and freedom.” That these two abstract terms, dictionary synonyms, are nearly always used together suggests in itself some uneasiness about the nature of the entity they represent, and one is driven to suspect that if these gentlemen were asked to give practical definitions of them we should have a bewildering varied result. However, no one really misunderstands. What they mean is that they will not submit to Nazi rule, and that they are very wisely postponing their own national egotisms until this most dangerous one has been eliminated.

In the same way every sect that found itself at a disadvantage in the Europe of the religious wars gave out that it was fighting for toleration; but there was no toleration when it was dominant.

*Jaeger, 1942: 15-18*

**Editor’s Note:** *Wars of Ideas, 1942,* is a series of essays by Muriel Jaeger in which her skills of analyzing and writing about historical events, honed at Oxford as a student majoring in History, are combined with her insights as a science fiction writer.
Admission to Degrees

The 14th of October, 1920, will always be a memorable day in the history of women’s education, the day of the first women’s degree ceremony in Oxford. It was an instance of the gracious and thoughtful attitude of the University that before the ordinary ceremony began, degrees should have been conferred on the Principals of the five women’s societies by decree of Convocation, in order that they should be the senior M.A.s of their respective societies. No one who was able to be resent on that occasion will forget the dignified and impressive entrance of the five Principals. The great doors at the south entrance of the Sheldonian Theatre were thown back there was a second’s silence, and then amidst the enthusiastic applause of the whole assembly the first women M.A.’s of Oxford University walked slowly up to the Vice-Chancellor, bowed, and took their seats.

The ceremony might easily have meant less than it did, had the Statute been less liberally framed, or the women’s triumph more forced. But forty years had not seemed long to wait for the full privilege of membership of a University in itself seven or eight centuries old, and if the women had worked wisely Oxford had given a statute that was all that could be wished. A passage in the speech of the Prince of Wales on receiving his
own degree on February 3, 1921, is characteristic of the welcome
given by the University to its women members. ‘Speaking, as
an Oxford man,’ he said, ‘even Oxford, popularly supposed to
be proof against innovation, has in one important respect
shown herself more progressive than the sister University, -- I
mean the inclusion of women as members of the University; and
I am glad to see so many here to-day.’ Thanks are due to all
those members of the University who have so warmly
supported the movement and especially to Professor Geldart,
who did so much to make the Statute what it is. It was a high
tribute to the women who, in the words of the Chancellor, had
by the irresistible logic of their claim won the recognition
which the grant of the degree implied,’ and it was made in a
liberal spirit in which there were no reservations, and no
belittling conditions.

Not many months after the admission of women to
membership of the University, another memorable scene took
place in the Sheldonian Theatre when, on March 11, 1921, the
degree of D.C.L. was for the first time in history conferred upon
a woman, in a person of her Majesty the Queen....

Her Majesty’s interest in the women’s Colleges was
subsequently expressed in a form both gracious and practical
by a generous donation of £500 to the Oxford Women’s
College Fund.

Somerville College, 1922: 69-71
Oxford, Frederick Hall
Amphilis T. Middlemore

THE POSTAL-CLERK
Character Sketch

He has a pale, shiny face, and thin rusty-looking hair that would feel gritty to touch, and dingy fingers, with a signet ring of some pale yellow metal gleaming on one of them. His shirt is grimy, and his tie looks as though it had never been untied, but had fossilized into that loose draggled know that shows the collar stud. He talks very fact, and does not look at the person he is talking to – which makes him absolutely impersonal in his official capacity. He volunteers endless information about Old Age Pensions, Insurance stamps and Savings Bank accounts, in much the same way that a machine at a railway station produces little strips of metal with anything you ask for stamped in raised letters on it, if you only turn the handle the right way. In the same mechanical way he can do mental arithmetic at an incredible pace, and will give you change for 7s. 91/2d. out of £1 as quickly as if the exact amount were lying in a pile just inside the counter drawer. His face is always hot from the stifling atmosphere of the big post office, and his feet always cold from the draughts which come tearing along the stone floor from under the doors. The post office always smell too, of smoke and clothes, and human beings, but he doesn’t notice that now – probably he never did. He keeps his perceptions for the time when he goes dancing or to a melodrama, or (if he is a family man) to his little semi-detached villa, with dingy lace curtains in the window, and pick glass
ornaments and an empty grate in the ‘front room.’ In work hours he does not reckon to be anything but a machine for mental arithmetic and various information on post office questions.

A.T.M.

The Fritillary, March 1913: 71-72

Somerville student room, 1895
Courtesy, Oxfordshire Libraries, Central Library, Westgate, Oxford
TO –
You stood before me in the dim half light
Beneath a blossoming tree;
And all around
Flowered narcissus and forget-me-not; the ground
Was one pale fragrant sea
Of delicate petals, pink and red and white,
And over all a dim blue mist of coming night.
I stood before you – just a foot apart,
With all the hunger of the world gnawing my heart.

That dim hair of yours -- ! like clouds before the day,
Where blossoms fell and slept.
And eyes like fire
Seen through the depths of mist-enchanted seas. Desire
Shook me like autumn storm. I could have wept.
For thy most passionless loveliness no way
I knew to conquer. Yet I scarce could stay
My lips, that thirsted for those lips of thine,
Thirsted, as never lips of man thirsted for wine!

I stood before you, Night came on apace.
The secret murmuring breath of darkened spring
Paused, moaning thro’ the quiet flowers. A wing
Of moon-white moth, rustling there beneath
The luminous blossom, stirred the throbbing space
Of passionate silence. God! If I might seize that face –
Those frail invincible limbs to me – and press
Their life out in one burning, fierce caress!

But then I turned. The odorous darkness glowed
A secret jewel thro’ dim trees I strode,
Nor ever turned again.
Thro’ long grey years I lived, and strove with pain,
And now he is not master – only day
And night are filled with some dull ache of yearning,
now a world away.
But still on warm spring nights, when slow blood courses fast
And throbs with memories stirring from the past,
And when I smell the apple-blossom sent
Or white narcissus, with their pale heads bent
Beneath the April dew – the fresh-cut grass,
Or when I see dim moonlight moth-wings pass,
The old pain wakens, never dead, and fires
Into live flame the sleeping old desires.
The love of youth and beauty and the bursting spring of life,
The days of love and laughter behind the gates of strife.
The old fierce yearning for the joy I never knew –
For the lips and the limbs and the soul of you.

Oxford Poetry 1914: 42-43
Dorothy H. Rowe

THE DREAM MERCHANT

The merchantmen went out of town below the evening star, Steering for the sunset and the isles of their intent; Their prows were stiff with scrolls of gold, their keels were wet with tar, Twenty goodly galleons, full of silver to be spent – We watched them growing far, and a so stately as they went.

And just about the hour that the air grows grey and deadly, A little boat ran into port and moored beside the rails; Its hold was crammed with merchandise, heaped up in gorgeous medley, Gleaming like the glimpses of an old sea-serpent’s scales, And the water rippled redly from its rose-red sails.

His robe was strewn with wizardry and legends of star-gazing, Mystic as the glitter of that magic pedlary; Out he leaped upon the stair with attitudes amazing, Squandering magnificence in riot on the quay – The summer light was hazing, and no one there but me.

Splendours lay within his hands, the spoils of midnight thieving Out of secret opium-dens and desolate bazaars – Shreds of crimson tapestry and webs of wondrous weaving, Dragon-painted porcelain and curving scimitars, Fishes past believing, and Genii in jars.

And ‘Oh,’ he cried, “come buy, come buy! Here’s many a toy and faring, Warranted as Magic of the rarest quality; The price is but a bagatelle, the bargain past comparing,
A little scorn of dreams too low, an ache for hopes too high,
A little heart’s despairing, -- Will nobody come buy?
Boxes carved of sandalwood, of cedar and acacia,
Stuffed with poisoned sweetmeats such as diplomats require,
Looted from the palace of the Empress Anastasia
The night we sacked her citadel, and set the world on fire
From Babylon to Asia and the Isles of Lost Desire!

All my wealth I showed him, all my treasure-hoard of earning, --
His eyes grew green with avarice enkindled by the sight, --
Lastly, as we bartered by the lantern’s fitful burning,
I paid him with my peace of mind for each undreamed delight;
The tide was scarcely turning when he vanished through the night.

When did he bewitch me, with what spell was I enchanted
So to be beguiled of faith, so cheated of my trust?
For when the first sift spear of light through leagues of
morning slanted,
The painted silks began to fade, the jewelled knives to rust,
Crumbled to a haunted shade, a heap of elfin dust!

Day by day the citizens, with hearts athirst for plunder,
Count their gold with eyes of greed, hot hands and mumbling lips,
Bandy tales of sea-faring, above the wave and under,
Hag-brewed storms and cries at night, the death-fire and Eclipse,
Watching for the wonder of the homeward-steering ships.

And still alone at evening, when air grows grey and deadly,
Beggared and despised I stand beside the weed-hung rails,
Waiting for a little boat, heaped up in curious medley,
Glimmering with the lustre of an old sea-serpent’s scales,
And the water running redly from its rose-red sails.

D.H. ROWE, Somerville College
The Fritillary, March 1915: 3-4
Proclamation

I
Oyez, Oyez! Good folk, give ear,
   Of every age and station,
Silence awhile that ye may hear
   Our Liege’s Proclamation
Against a spy who lurks abroad
With fell intention to defraud
   The burghers of this nation, --
A most notorious, smooth-faced wight,
A rogue, a cheat, a hypocrite
Called Cavaliero Candle-light!

II
That ye may know his heinous crimes,
   Deceits and tricks degrading:
He hath been met with sundry times
   About the court parading:
Or, wrapt with flame in lieu of cloak,
   Trailing a silvery plume of smoke
In ballroom’s masquerading.
The ladies vow, where’er they go,
He dazzles and districts them so
They often answer ‘Yes’ for “No’!

III
He hath been noted, now and then,
   When midnight fires are sinking,
Seated in some poor scholar’s den
   With mirth malicious winking;
And when his aster – (vainly wise) –
   Strains o’er the book his wearied eyes
Splutters to see him blinking.
At times, his portly form appears
Mourning above funereal biers
And smugly dropping fat wax tears.
IV
Wherefore, for these his proved misdeeds
    Against our subjects’ reason
We find, whate’er the rascal pleads,
    He’s guilty of High Treason, --
Condemning him by this decree
An outlaw from our realm to be,
    That any man may seize on.
Whoso shall find him hereabout
We thus empower, without a doubt,
( Oyez! Oyez! ) to blow him out!

_The Fritillary_
December 1915: 43
Latin with Laughter
Illustrations
Dorothy Hanbury Rowe

Vespa columbam vulnerat.

A poet is singing.

1934: 26-27
Courtesy, Wm. Heinemann Ltd.
THE POEM
Kiss me! It cannot be that I
Who wove such songs of pain and fire
Last night – that fierce, desiring cry –
It cannot be that I should tire?

Prove to me, prove you’re not grown weak,
Break down this citadel of sense,
Show me myself too faint to speak,
Not armoured in my eloquence.

I swear my singing was begun
Out of love’s black and bitter deep –
But oh! The work was so well done
I smiled, well-pleased, and fell on sleep.

Now all day long I must rehearse
Each passionate and perfect line,
Mine the immaculate great verse –
I do not know the thoughts for mine.

DOROTHY L. SAYERS
THE LONDON MERCURY, IV, (October 1921): 577. No. 24
Epigraphs to OP. I.

I Will build up my house from the stark foundations,  
If God will give me time enough,  
And search unwearying over the seas and nations  
For stones or better stuff.

Though here be only the mortar and rough-hewn granite,  
I will lay on and not desist  
Till it stand and shine as I dreamed it when I began it,  
Emerald, amethyst.

OP. I., 1916: Epigraph 1

There is no remedy for this:  
Good days that will not come again.

Since Adam lost the bower of bliss,  
There is no remedy for this.

Till Oxford stand on Cam, I wis,  
Or cedar spring from barley grain,

There is no remedy for this:  
Good days that will not come again.

OP. I., 1916: Epigraph 2

A MAN GREATLY GIFTED  
You are the song that a jester sang,  
Gambolling down the woods alone,  
When a wide, low, yellow moon  
Stared into the dusk of June;

And here and there, among the trees,  
Where sudden foxgloves showed like ghosts,
The tiny streams, from edge to edge
Slipped, smothered by the mossy ledge.

The shadow dodged between the stems
Fantastically lengthening,
And like a silly, sweet guitar,
The little bells were all a-jar.

O music swifter than a sword,
Sharper than scent of spikenard,
Thus carelessly, to left and right
Tossed by a jester in the night!

OP. I., 1916: 70

HYMN IN CONTEMPLATION OF SUDDEN DEATH.
LORD, if this night my journey end,
I thank Thee first for many a friend,
The sturdy and unquestioned piers
That run beneath my bridge of years.
And next, for all the love I gave
To things and men this side the grave,
Wisely or not, since I can prove
There always is much good in love.

Next, for the power thou gavest me
To view the whole world mirthfully,
For laughter, paraclete of pain,
Like April suns across the rain.

Also that, being not too wise
To do things foolish in men’s eyes,
I gained experience by this,
And saw life somewhat as it is.
Next, for the joy of labour done
And burdens shouldered in the sun;
Nor less, for shame of labour lost,
And meekness born of a barren boast.

For every fair and useless thing
That bids men pause from labouring
To look and find the larkspur blue
And marigolds of a different hue;

For eyes to see and ears to hear,
For tongue to speak and thews to bear,
For hands to handle, feet to go,
For life, I give Thee thanks also.

For all things merry, quaint and strange,
For sound and silence, strength, and change,
And last, for death, which only gives
Value to every thing that lives;

For these, good Lord that madest me,
I praise Thy name; since, verily,
I of my joy have had no dearth
Though this night were my last on earth.
SYMPATHY
I sat and talked with you
In the shifting fire and gloom,
Making you answer due
In delicate speech and smooth –
Nor did I fail to note
The black curve of your head
And the golden skin of your throat
On the cushion’s golden-red.
But all the while, behind,
In the workshop of my mind,
The weird weaver of doom
Was walking to and fro,
Drawing thread upon thread
With resolute fingers slow
Of the things you did not say
And thought I did not know,
Of the things you said to-day
And had said long ago,
To weave on a wondrous loom,
In dim colours enough,
A curious stubborn stuff –
The web that we call truth.

Oxford Poetry 1915: 170
Dorothy L. Sayers, *OP. I.*, 1916
Oxford: Basil Blackwell, Publishers
First Edition
Introduction
The picture of Chaucer’s life... seems a strange one for a poet. It makes one wonder, first of all, how he found time to write so much poetry and indeed, when, as Comptroller of the Customs, he had personally to impose the duties on wool, hides, and sheepskins entering the City of London, and to enter all such transactions on the account rolls in his own hand, or when abroad on the King’s business negotiating port facilities for English merchants at Genoa or discussing the terms of a peace treaty with France, his mind must have been full of practical matters of immediate importance.

And it was not only poetry that claimed his attention in his spare time. For he was student as well as poet, though we know nothing of how he was educated. He could certainly read Italian and French with ease, as well as Latin, he knew something of history, theology, and medicine, and certainly of astronomy, and he owned sixty books, which was, for his day, a very large library. No wonder that he says in the House of Fame that he leads a hermit’s existence, without its abstinence,
for when his ‘reckonings were made,’ he went home and sat over a book, till he was ‘fully dazed.’

It is strange to us too, though not quite as strange as it would have been even fifty years ago, that so much of his attention was given to matters of business and diplomacy. Soldier, page, and squire a poet might well be, but not a tax collector or a Clerk of Works. We are apt to think of a poet as a dreamy, impractical person, perhaps a professor or even a publisher, but more given to

‘Walk down Piccadilly
With a poppy or a lily
In his medieval hand.’

But that is just what a medieval poet would not have done, for there was no profession of poetry and a poet had to earn his living in other ways. And the fact that he possessed more imagination than ordinary people did not disqualify a poet from practical affairs. On the contrary, it was regarded as a recommendation. Chaucer was sent on so many diplomatic missions that he must have been well thought of. As Clerk of Works, however, when he was in charge of the Tower, Westminster Palace, and St. George’s Chapel, Windsor, besides having to see to the repairs of wells, ditches, and bridges by the Thames, he resigned or was dismissed from office after two years, so perhaps he was not as successful when dealing with things as he was with people.

It is strange too that a vintner’s son should find a place in the intimate circles of the Court. In his teens Chaucer was waiting on the King’s daughter-in-law, and as Yeoman and Squire of the Chamber on the King himself. But his father, who
was a prosperous merchant owning lands in London and Ipswich, seems to have had some great influences with John of Gaunt, Edward III’s son and Duke of Lancaster, as did Chaucer’s wife on her own account, while Chaucer himself obviously knew Blanche the first Duchess of Lancaster well and was devoted to her – and this connection probably accounts for his early success. Once appointed, his brilliance must have stood him in good stead. The Yeomen and Squires not only made beds, served food, tasted wine, but ‘drew to Lords’ Chambers, to keep honest company – in talking of chronicles of Kings . . . . in singing lays and martial deeds.’ One can easily see the young Chaucer shining in such circumstances. His contemporary, the poet Gower, speaks of him ‘in the floures of his youthe’ filling the country with songs in honour of Venus.

Under both Edward III and Richard II the patronage of John of Gaunt seems to have been the determining factor in his career, and accounts for the vicissitudes of his later years. When the Duke was abroad, or his brother Gloucester was in control at home, Chaucer’s fortunes ebbed; he lost jobs, his pension fell into arrears, and he had to borrow money. But the last year of his life was prosperous again, through the granting of another pension by the new King, Henry IV – John of Gaunt’s son.

Chaucer, however, was a poet not pre-eminently of nature, though he shared the medieval love of spring, birdsong, and flowers in sunshine, but of human character and feeling. And the wide experiences of his life brought him into contact with a vast variety of people – from the Gascon sailors who came to his father’s wineshop and the merchants paying their dues in
his Aldgate office, to the royal personages and nobles of Edward III’s brilliant Court. As a prisoner of war he was able not only to perfect his French, but to learn many lessons from French poetry, while his Italian journeys revealed to him a literature far greater and more developed than anything attained in England. Every experience brought grist to the mill of his genius.

Marjorie Barber, 1961: x-xii
By courtesy, Macmillan Company.
TO A V.C.
Because your feet were stayed upon that road
Whereon the others swiftly came and passed,
Because the harvest you and they had sowed
You only reaped at last.

Tis not your valour’s meed alone you bear
Who stand the object of a nation’s pride,
For on that humble Cross you live to wear
Your friends were crucified.

They shared with you the conquest over fear,
Sublime self-disregard, decision’s power,
But Death, relentless, left you lonely here
In recognition’s hour.

Their sign is yours to carry to the end;
The lost reward of gallant hearts as true
As yours they called heir leader and their friend
Is worn for them by you.

Oxford Poetry 1919: 126

THE LAMENT OF THE DEMOBILIZED
“Four years,” some say consolingly. “Oh well,
What’s that? You’re young. And then it must have been
A very fine experience for you!”
And they forget
How others stayed behind, and just got on—
Got on the better since we were away.
And we came home and found
They had achieved, and men revered their names,
But never mentioned ours;
And no one talked heroics now, and we
Must just go back, and start again once more.
“You threw four years into the melting-pot—
Did you indeed!” these others cry. “Oh well,
The more fool you!”
And we’re beginning to agree with them.

**Oxford Poetry 1920: 7**

**DAPHNE**
SUNRISE and spring, and the river agleam in the morning,
Life at its freshest, like flowers in the dawn-dew of May,
Hope, and Love’s dreams the dim hills of the future adorning,
Youth of the world, just awake to the glory of day—
Is she not part of them, golden and fair and undaunted,
Glad with the triumph of runners ahead in the race,
Free as a child by no shadows or memories haunted,
Challenging Death to his solemn and pitiful face?
Sunset and dusk, and the stars of a mellow September,
Sombre grey shadows, like Sleep stealing over the grass,
Autumn leaves blown through the chill empty lanes of November,
Sorrow enduring, though Youth with its rhapsodies pass—
Are they not part of her, sweet with unconscious compassion,
Ready to shoulder our burden of life with a jest,
Will she not make them her own in her light-hearted fashion,
Sadder than we in her song, in her laughter more blest?

**Oxford Poetry 1920: 8**
Winifred Holtby

from ANDERBY WOLD

She produced the book from a drawer and sat down in John’s arm-chair before the fire.

At first, she read with knot brows; then her eyes opened wide; then she sat up straight in the arm-chair, her lips parted in a half-amused, half-incredulous smile. It really was an outrageous book! Mary was unacquainted with any social or political theories more violent than those expounded in the columns of the *Yorkshire Chronicle*. The only excuse for this tirade against capitalism, patronage and ‘the dependence of the proletariat upon the self-interested solicitude of a bourgeois minority,’ lay in the youth of its author. Of course he must be a mere boy – a student at Oxford, according to the preface. And they were always very young, Mary was sure. A footnote explained that the writer had spent one summer vacation on a walking tour, investigating the conditions in which agricultural labourers of the South Country lived and worked. It added that he hoped to continue his researches in the North at an early date, for the conclusions he had reached after his Southern pilgrimage had convinced him that the only hope for England lay in social revolution. Anything less drastic – the extension of trades unionism, or the political ascendancy of the Labour Party – was merely a sop thrown to the proletarian Cerberus.

‘He’s very fond of that word “proletarian” thought Mary. She was not absolutely certain what it meant.
There followed a scornful rejection of the passive optimism of the Constitutionalists. Darwin was denounced as a traitor to the cause of progress. ‘Society,’ declared Mr. Rossitur, ‘is perishing from senile decay, awaiting the fabled miracle of evolution.’ Reform could only follow destruction: destruction of empty loyalties, destruction of cowardly compromise, of a tyranny based on material advantage and sentimentalism that masked rapacity.

Quotations abounded. In his zeal to carry conviction the author rarely expressed an opinion without the support of some famous authority, as if his own cheques would not hold good unless backed by a great financier.

It was all bewildering, and ridiculous and intriguing. Certainly Mary had never encountered anything of the kind before. She became entangled in a labyrinth of obscure reasoning. She was belaboured by pages of savage rhetoric. She stumbled over unfamiliar phrases that recurred here with unremitting urgency – ‘Living wage,’ ‘Standard of comfort,’ ‘Private capitalists.’ Quite half of it was wholly beyond her comprehension.

‘Perhaps I’m tired,’ she thought. ‘I shall be able to take it in better to-morrow.’

When John returned from the meeting, she rose regretfully and hid the book in the sideboard drawer.

Of course, it was all nonsense; but what amusing nonsense! And somehow, for all its extravagance, it was really rather refreshing. Some grace of youth and burning sincerity relieved its ugliest violence and crudest rhetoric. She wished she could talk to the author. It really was amazing that anyone clever
enough to go to Oxford should know so little about farms. Mary would like to explain exactly why one had to look after people who weren’t capable of looking after themselves and why one paid labourers’ wages instead of every one sharing the profits. It was all so self-evident when one knew anything at all about agriculture. Of course Mr. Rossitur didn’t. He was only a boy, whose tempestuousness was too childish to be dangerous and whose idealism was too unselfconscious to be sentimental. Quite a dear, Mary thought, but terribly ignorant of what things were really like.

Winifred Holtby
Anderby Wold, 1922: 82-84

The Dead Man

I SEE men walk wild ways with love,
Along the wind their laughter blown
 Strikes up against the singing stars;
But I lie all alone.
When love has stricken laughter dead
And tears their silly hearts in twain,
They long for easeful death, but I
Am hungry for their pain.

Oxford Poetry 1920: 22
Winifred Holtby
*Anderby Wold*
John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1923
Margaret Moore Kennedy

Olympus
(Speaks the Agnostic).
When I of wisdom’s crystal draught am fain,
Why do I always scale the heights celestial?
Of aching knees and brow I’ll not complain;
But, surely, for these treasures we might gain
A store
That’s more
Terrestrial?

(The Orthodox, in chorus).
Wisdom will always be an arduous prize.
Wisdom has always been the Gods’ monopoly:
These heights are meant to tame her volanes,
So they’ll abase their too observant eyes
Nor chaff
Her staff
Improperly.

(The Agnostic).
When I in summer seek the town I love,
Why do I cause in Heaven, such a crisis,
When all too humbly my request I move?
For, oh alas, unless the Gods approve,
I may
Not stay
By Isis.
When I, and such as I would entertain,
And summon youth and maid to gathering festive,
Why must Olympus first approval deign?
In asking why, and why, I own in pain
I find
My mind
Gets restive.

(The Orthodox).
The Olympians dwell aloft were none intrude,
They have a mystic censor, high and haughty,
It watches o’er our beds in cryptic mood;
Its mission is to praise us when we’re good,
And biff
Us if
We’re naughty.

(The Agnostic).
Oh who are these Olympians, rare intrepid,
And will they always bully and disturb us?
In time, perhaps, they’ll age and wax decrepid,
Bu then, alas, our valour may be tepid,
And still
Their will
May curb us!

(The Orthodox).
Olympus is the Gods’ high harbourage,
A refuge from reformers, fierce and fickle.
Beware, all you who scoff in mortal rage!
The Ladies of Lyndon
Chapter I
The Virtuous Stepmother

In the first decades of the twentieth century, London contained quite a number of distinguished, grey-headed bachelors who owed their celibacy to Mrs. Varden Cocks. In her youth she had refused offers of marriage from most of them and they found themselves unable to choose again when she tardily but finally dashed their several ambitions by selecting Varden. Indeed they almost gloried in their shackles, for this lady had reached, at forty-seven, the very zenith of her attractions. She was excessively handsome in the liberal style of the First Empire, and endowed with a wit in keeping with her appearance. She talked a great deal, in a rich, temperamental contralto, and had fine eyes which spoke for her in her rare silences. Her photographs were seldom successful since few of her friends were acquainted with her face in repose.

The fatigued erudition of her husband set off her animation with an especial piquancy. He had been a distinguished scholar when she married him and was, subsequently, never heard to speak. At intervals she would discuss with her friends the advantages of a political career for him, but his views on the subject were not known. He was, fortunately, very tolerably well off.
They had one child a beautiful but silent daughter, who accompanied them to most places of entertainment and whose wardrobe was a perpetual testimony to a mother’s taste. It was generally believed that Agatha Cocks was a very nice girl and everyone was pleased when she became engaged, a few months after her introduction, to an entirely suitable young man, a baronet, wealthy, and devotedly attached. Mrs. Cocks, who believed in early marriages for young women, was overjoyed. The bridegroom had an additional advantage; he possessed a most exceptional stepmother. Mrs. Cocks was accustomed to point out that a step-mother-in-law, of the right kind, is so much easier for a young bride to get on with than the usual mother-in-law. She was less likely to interfere; she has fewer claims. The Dowager Lady Clewer was this kind of stepmother. She was a perfect monument of tact. “I had thought,” Mrs. Cocks would say in her rapid, vibrant, voice, “I had thought it to be impossible for a widow and widower, each with children, to marry and produce a third family without a certain amount of storm and stress. But the Clewers have undoubtedly done it! There they all are, his sons and her daughter, and their child (I forgot its sex), living together in perfect peace and amity. But then of course she is unique . . . and he died pretty soon. . . .” One evening, about ten days before their wedding, this paragon gave a dinner party to which Mrs. Cocks took her family. None of the trio anticipated a very pleasant evening, but only Mrs. Cocks said so, since she alone could talk audibly and without discomfort while driving through London traffic. Her gloomy forebodings enlivened the entire journey from South Kensington to Eaton Square. This sort of party, she said, was apt to be trying. “It isn’t as if you didn’t know all your in-laws already.” She complained. “You’ve met them all by now, haven’t you? To go on meeting in this way is quite unnecessary.... I shouldn’t wonder if there aren’t enough men to go round. That’s what people generally mean when they call a dinner.
'quite informal.' I hate a superfluity of women. Even dull men are better than none.

Agatha sighed. She was disturbed by the tinge of petulance in these remarks... and she sighed because she feared that a dull dinner at this point would be most inopportune.

It was, unfortunately, very dull indeed.... Depression, like a murky fog, hung over the tasteful brilliance of Mrs. Clewer’s table and barely lifted with the appearance of dessert, when the company rallied a little, sustained by the prospect of release. Lady Clewer ... glanced around the room, preparatory to rising, and her little blue eyes were ominous. The five women left the dining-room in an atmosphere of heavy displeasure.... Lady Clewer’s jaw became grim and she preparing to send for James on the instant when Cynthia demurely added that he had gone to bed. He had further threatened to come down in his pyjamas if anyone bothered him. Lady Clewer sharply bade her daughter to have done, and Cynthia was silent, her keen eyes flitting from face to face. She secretly enjoyed these trying situations invariably created by James; they gave variety to a monotonous life.

_Margaret Moore Kennedy_  
_The Ladies of Lyndon, 1923: 9-15_
Margaret Moore Kennedy
Circa 1920
Private Collection
A NORTHERN ANNUNCIATION
Angelico, With sunshine in his heart,
Painted our Lady with untroubled eyes;
But had I skill, I’d paint her otherwise,
With darker spirit and more restless art.
In some dim wilderness of moors apart
I see her kneeling under northern skies,
In peace yet trembling with a vague surmise
That she in all our griefs must bear her part.
I see the angel, armed with sword and mail,
Holding the lily; but its leaves are dyed
With vine-juice from the vessel at his side,
At once the cup of fury and the grail,
Which first her Son must drink ere he prevail.
And after, those that follow him as guide.

The Fritillary, March 1915: 6

TWO EPITAPHS

On Two Lovers
Love, whe we walked on earth, your chastity
Was all to you, your body all to me;
Now the grave holds the flesh that parted us,
And being nought, we shall united be.
On An Aristocrat Dying Under A Democracy
Living, your constitution levelled me;
Dead, all are equal in their six-foot graves;
But God counts not by heads; in His regard
One freebom man is worth a host of slaves.

Oxford Poetry 1917: 41

TWO EPITAPHS

3. On A Diplomat
Oh, who will bid me rise again
That gambled with the souls of men?
Those whose lives I signed away
Will meet me at the Judgment Day,
My dead: can they forgive and pray?
All honest men, pray for me, and pray well,
Lest true men’s curses send the false to hell.

II. On A Profiteer
I fattened on the blood and tears
Of these long aborious years;
Out of loss came forth my gain,
Watered by another’s pain:
Who shall bid me rise again?
Pray for me, all poor men, and pray right well,
Lest poor men’s curses bring the rich to hell.

Oxford Poetry 1918: 98

Sonnet: The Journalist
He called for blood, and would not shed his own,
He sat at ease, and sent young men to die
With his strong pen; he was the enemy
Stalking at noontide, by whose hand were sown
Rank tares among us – love of country grown
To poisonous cant, and blind hostility.
He forged a chain to lead the people by,
A chain of words, rattling with strident tone.
He battened on men’s selfishness and fear,
He pulled the strings that shook their statesmen down;
The people were content to sit and hear
His platitudes, and tremble at his frown,
And followed him with meek attentive ear
Till His Mendacity assumed the crown.

Oxford Poetry 1918: 99

Editor’s Note: Margaret Leigh was a cousin to Dorothy L. Sayers on her mother’s side. She attended Somerville College from 1913 to 1917. There is no evidence that Margaret was a member of the MAS. However, she was a Somerville writer with links to MAS members, both early and later, but in contrast to Dorothy L. Sayers, Margaret was primarily concerned with political and social activism while at Oxford. She continued to write professionally after Oxford and in later life.
Margaret Leigh
Harvest of the Moor
G. Bell & Sons, 1937
Hilda Stewart (H.S.) Reid

Description of a Personality in Vers Libre

He runs for his train in the morning
And not infrequently misses it.
Each day he determines to start
Earlier to-morrow.
At breakfast he thinks he will walk to the station more quickly
And if he should stop for a moment to speak to a friend or look into
a garden,
He decides that the train will be late.

He worries his household with little economies
Of butter and string.
He writes to the papers condemning promiscuous charity,
He values himself on his shrewdness and business acumen,
And he spends all his substance on (spurious) prints and
writers
Of (sham) begging letters.

He looks on himself as a man of the world, embittered and cynical,
And wholly devoid of illusions.

H. Reid (S.C.)
The Fritillary March 1918: 139-140

A Dream
I sailed among the Orcades
In the green encircling seas.
So near the isles our nest did glide
I picked a flower at the waterside;
And just so quickly were we sped
That I bruised the stalk and plucked the head.
There was no foam upon the waves,
They swelled to glassy hills and caves;
But foam white were the thorns that grew
Among the meadow flowers blue.

Laus tibi Domine,
That gavest such a dream to me.

Oxford Poetry 1919: 1

The Magnanimity of Beasts

MAN—you who think you really know
The beast you gaze on in the show,
Nor see with what consummate art
Each animal enacts its part—
How different do they all appear
The moment that you are not there!
Then, fawns with liquid eyes a-flame
Pursue the bear, their nightly game;
Wolves shiver as the rabbit roars
And stretches his terrific claws;
While trembling tigers dare not sleep
For passionate, relentless sheep,
And frantic eagles through the skies
Are chased by angry butterflies.
—But beasts would suffer all confusions
Before they shattered man's illusions.

Oxford Poetry 1920: 45
Hilda Stewart (H.S.) Reid, *Emily*
London: Constable & Co., 1933
Sylvia Thompson

*The Hounds of Spring*
(Dedicated to the mind of H.G. Wells)

**Foreword**
It is possibly presumptuous to try to deal, however indirectly and romantically, with the essential tendencies of a decade, 1914 – 1924, into which one entered at the age of eleven. It is possibly, at a time when change has been so swift and fundamental, so complex and so extensive in the social and political life of civilization, a breach of the laws of historical perspective to hover round a decade so lately wrought, and not yet cool from the furnace of the present; to inspect it, as it were, at one moment with a telescope, the next with a microscope; and by way of alternative to view it through green or rose-colored spectacles.

Possibly one presumes in believing that Edgar and Colin Russell, Zina and Wendy are in the infinitesimal way the human atoms which, fused by events, go to make that subtle mass of stuff that solidifies history.

S.T.

**Epilogue**

**What else is there?**

“What else is there, in such a grotesque muddle as the sort of life we’ve inherited?”

Colin’s voice came back to her, Colin’s words to her that day at Oxford, when he and Zina came to say goodbye: Colin
and herself walking through Magdalen cloisters on that starry December evening, through the tunneled archway, out into the quad flooded with moonlight, and a window, somewhere high up in that dark mass of buildings, like an oblong of red topaz, and somewhere someone playing the Valse Triste. “At least, you have your chance, Wendy, you and your generation, to try to straighten things out, and get at life cleanly and rightly; to make for decency, and beauty, and peace.” [...]

“What else is there?” the young man repeated.

Wendy stared before her. The topaz window, the haunting loveliness of the Valse Triste.

“Too much else,” she whispered, on an indrawn breath.

Sylvia Thompson


Shared by kind courtesy of the publishers.
Sylvia Thompson

The Hounds of Spring

London: Grosset & Dunlap, 1926
Doreen Eileen Agnew Wallace (D.E.A. Wallace)

Words To Music
Why in the words, Columbine,
   In your frail white dress?
Why in the pale moonshine
   And the loneliness?

I knew the moon was high
   So I left my trade,
To hear the lone birds cry
   In the silver glade . . .

I must go back – goodbye –
   To the harlequinade.

D.E.A. Wallace (S.C.)
The Fritillary December 1917: 122

The Traveller
You with your soul for the distance sore,
Come down to your lover and stand in the street,
Come out to the dust you have known, and the heat,
And the folk that go plodding and dull evermore.
Your lover has found you a land to explore,
More distant than Thule and older than Crete:
There’s many a country untraveled before,
Sweet wanderer, less than a mile from your door.
‘The sun and the city are just as of yore,
And these are the folk I am weary to meet’ . . .
But look how your lover lies dead at your feet,
In sarafan brighter than ever he wore –
A journey it was that he had clad himself for –
And the smile on his lips unaccountably sweet.
He has found a new land: he has learned a new lore . . .
You shudder? Go back, then and fasten the door!

D.E.A.W. (S.C.)

The Fritillary, December 1918:

Sonnet in Contempt of Death
When I consider some day wanton Death
With sudden hand ungently laid above
The heart of her, my softly-sleeping love,
Shall fright away her sweet and rhythmic breath;
Shall quell the colour in her flower-face,
Inevitable and underalde
As frosts in May that strike the blossom dead –
Shall quench her eyes, transfix her dreaming grace;
When I consider that her limbs shall be
Set stiffly in a strong rigidity;
That by-and-by her flesh shall fall away,
Unsightly in a horrible decay,
Then do I laugh, despite my catching breath –
A piteous fool, a sad, blind fool is Death!

Oxford Poetry, 1917: 59
**Life and I**
Life and I are a pair of lovers:
  Life is only as old as I.
Here he kissed me, with no one by,
Here the day long will we lie,
On a hillside swept with the calling of plovers,
Until the stooping midnight covers
  Life and me with the star-wrought sky.

Life, come kiss me! Joy, come tell me,
  Will you love me still to-morrow?
Will you ravish me and sell me,
  Love of mine, to sorrow?

“Sweet, come kiss me! Sweet, come tell me
  No misgivings of the morrow!
But . . . there are two ways to spell me:
  I am Joy – and Sorrow.”

*Oxford Poetry 1918: 118*

**Impromptu in March**
I will cut you wands of willow,
I will fetch you catkins yellow
  For a sign of March . . . .
I’ve a snowy silken pillow
For my head, you foolish fellow –
  I’ve no love for March!

Get me buckles, bring me laces,
Amber beads and chrysoprases,
  Fans and castanets! . . . .
Lady, in the sunny places
I can find you early daisies
   And sweet violets.

Oxford Poetry 1918; 118

**In New College Cloisters**

   Time sleeps –
   Hush ye: go light –
   Time sleeps
By day and by night.
   Be your tread
Softer than feet of the dead,
   Lest he wake
And his heart break.
   Stern bells,
Muffle your chime;
   He dreams –
Suffer the dreams of Time!
To the patter of ilex leaves,
To the sound of birds in the eaves,
To the sibilant wings of a dove
   Time dreams – of his love.

Oxford Poetry 1919: 178
... then everybody in desperation sang wildly whatever notes they could hit on, and the organ came in, and by a miracle the thing righted itself...

17 May 1914
Bach Choir
The Magnificat
Amphilis Middlemore

Circa 1915
Pixel and Pencil Sketch
Courtesy, Middlemore Family
Private Collection
Barbara Reynolds, famed Italian scholar, developed a deep and collegial friendship with Dorothy L. Sayers. Reynolds wrote the biography, *Dorothy L. Sayers: Her life and soul*, and when Sayers passed away before finishing her translation of Dante’s *Paradiso*, Reynolds completed the task for publication. Furthering her scholarship with Dante, Reynolds translated his *La Vita Nuova* as well as writing the biography, *Dante: The Poet, the Political Thinker, the Man*.

Reynolds was also known for translating *Orlando furioso*, Ludovico Ariosto’s epic poem. *Orlando* is not as famous as Dante’s work, but it was one of the most popular books published in the sixteenth century. It has appeared in almost fifty separate editions being republished many times over and translated into many languages including French, Russian, German, Portuguese, Polish, Hebrew and Japanese.

Numerous operas were created to dramatize scenes and portions from this heroic tale, composers including such luminaries as Handel, Haydn, Piccinni, and Vivaldi. Ariosto created a sprawling tale with a cast of thousands, dozens of major characters, a myriad of interweaving plotlines, and diverse locations spanning three continents and ranging from the depths of Hell to the summit of Terrestrial Paradise while also including a magical trip to the moon. The legends of Charlemagne are still popular on the island of Sicily where there are many theatrical troupes performing *opera dei pupi*.

*Orlando furioso* recently celebrated two landmark anniversaries. The year 2016 marked the 500th anniversary of its original publication, and with the recent 50th anniversary of the moon landing there were many mentions of the first literary journey to the moon done in that epic poem.
The titular storyline features Orlando’s unrequited love for Angelica, the beautiful princess of Cathay. His love for her began in the predecessor poem, *Orlando innamorato*, written by Matteo Maria Boiardo, but the story was left unfinished with the death of the poet in 1494. The patrons, the noble house of d’Este in Ferrara, hired Ludovico Ariosto to finish this tale.

Here in a nutshell is the story of Orlando and Angelica:

Angelica arrived at the Pentecost tournament hosted by Charlemagne that included Christian and Muslim warriors. She was accompanied by her brother, Argalia, and four giants who served as bodyguards. This unexpected entrance interrupted the banquet and all eyes were focused at the beauty speaking to Charlemagne. She announced a challenge for all the knights in attendance to joust against her brother. Anyone victorious in a single pass would win her as the reward, but those who lost would become a prisoner. Every man in attendance burned for her and without a second thought threw their names into the list for competitors.

This had been an elaborate plot by Angelica’s father, King Galafron of Cathay, to seize the best warriors for himself and he sent his son with enchanted armor designed to be invincible. However, things did not go as planned as Angelica’s brother was killed by the second jouster who refused to admit defeat and instead insisted on a duel. Chaos erupted after the death as multiple knights chased Angelica and she used magic to return to her father’s kingdom in Cathay.

Angelica arrived home and discovered her father had agreed for her to marry a king she despised. She rebelled and sought refuge in a castle that was soon besieged by several armies. Archetypically, I view Angelica as being similar to Helen of Troy. She is the object of desire for every man who sees her and is the cause of a war.

Orlando followed her to Cathay, joined the army defending her, and championed her in many daring escapades and magical realms. He believed her when she claimed to love
him for his bravery and acts of chivalry. The circumstances of the war became dire and Angelica returned with Orlando to the Frankish Empire where another war was breaking out.

During a battle against the North African Muslim army, Angelica was being protected by one of Charlemagne’s dukes. She became fearful and escaped. Orlando became a knight errant and searched for her all over the Frankish Empire. This led to many more fantastic adventures until he finally came upon proof that his beloved had given her body and soul to another. He saw Angelica’s name written on the bark of a tree along with the name Medoro. He grasped at finding an innocent explanation for this, but after finding a shepherd who told of giving hospitality to a princess who nursed a wounded common foot soldier from Death’s door - Orlando could not deny the reality she did not love him. The couple had become lovers and left eastward to her father’s kingdom in Cathay. Orlando lost his mind at this news. He not only lost his wits, he threw off his armor, uprooted trees and became feral. He could no longer speak or understand spoken language. He was a danger for any living thing in his path as he reacted by instinct and lacked all reason.

On the left is Orlando feeling despair that he cannot find Angelica. Above is Angelica linking her name with Medoro on a tree. On the right is Orlando after he has gone “furioso.”
Orlando's cousin Astolfo went on a quest to the moon where all things lost on the earth are found. There Astolfo retrieved Orlando's wits which were housed in a large bottle. Astolfo later was able, with the help of a team of men, to subdue Orlando and have the wild man breathe in his wits and be restored to sanity. He then returned to being Charlemagne's most valuable paladin and helped end the war against the North African Muslim Army.

This is an unusual theme for romances: boy meets girl, boy falls for girl, girl is uninterested in boy but leads him on until he finally realizes she will never love him, boy goes insane, boy goes on murderous rampage, then boy is restored to sanity and all is forgiven because the boy is a brave hero. This plotline about Orlando's unrequited love for Angelica has inspired numerous operas. Perhaps it is because the men who composed the opera understood the pain of unrequited love and sympathized with the idea of letting go of propriety when they realized their own love would never be returned. Perhaps. Orlando's plotline is not what draws me to this classic piece of literature. Instead it is the story of impossible love between Bradamante and Ruggiero.

Now I feel compelled to explain how I came to read Orlando furioso back in 2003. I was involved in the online Harry Potter fandom and engaged in theorizing with other fans where we thought the unfinished series was going. There was a theory regarding hippogriffs as potentially being a symbol of love and that there might be some significance of Harry and Hermione flying alone on the back of the winged magical creature. During my research I learned that the first time a hippogriff was used as a character in literature was in Ariosto’s masterpiece. My first attempt at reading his poem was using the online version from Project Gutenberg. I had difficulty following it when I tried reading it on my computer screen, so
I printed portions out hoping that seeing text on the page would make things easier. It didn’t. I was confused, perplexed and lost. Then, I discovered the translation by Barbara Reynolds.

“Of ladies, cavaliers, of love and war,
Of courtesies and of brave deeds I sing.
In times of high endeavor when the Moor
Had crossed the sea from Africa to bring
Great harm to France, when Agramante swore
In wrath, being now the youthful Moorish king,
To avenge Troiano, who was lately slain,
Upon the Roman Emperor Charlemagne.”

Those opening words in her translation set forth an expectation of a grand tale encompassing war, romance, and heroic acts. It was like a light had been turned on in a darkened room. All of a sudden, I was able to read, understand, and enjoy the story. By the third canto I found myself astounded that this classic tale had, Bradamante, a warrior maiden and niece of Charlemagne, receiving the Call to Adventure to rescue her beloved being held prisoner in a high tower – by a wizard. This was the inverse of what I had come to expect from tales of knights and princesses. It was always the fair young royal maiden being held captive and a brave knight who risked his life to rescue her. Instead, here was a fearless young woman being sent to rescue a knight and also instructed to take the lives of specific people who could stand in her way of marrying her beloved.

I started thinking about Joseph Campbell’s thesis about the “hero with a thousand faces” and how the hero – raised in obscurity – was given the Call to Adventure, generally by a mentor/wizard. Ariosto instead gave a young maiden, who was a respected warrior, the Call to Adventure in a cave by the enchantress Melissa. She was being asked to rescue her beloved from an enchanted castle, convince him to convert to
Christianity from Islam, and then marry her so that she would bear a son who would lead to an entire line of future heroes.

In feminist iconographic terms, a crone was calling a maiden to become a mother. This was being done in a cave, and caves are recognized as a symbol of a womb. And this was not just any maiden, but a warrior (symbolized as a blade) being transformed into a mother (chalice).


Archetypically I see Bradamante as a combination of Joan of Arc (*Jeanne d’Arc*) and the Greek goddess Athena. She is a warrior who rides on the back of a white horse, carries a white shield, has cropped hair and disguises herself as a man at times, and her nickname is “The Maid.” All those are pointers to *Jeanne d’Arc*. However, Bradamante has a much better character arc than the real-life heroine who was condemned to death for being a religious heretic. The similarities with the Greek goddess include both being respected warriors with minds for battle strategy. The difference is that Bradamante...
falls in love and wants to marry and Athena is committed to being a virgin goddess.

As I made it farther into the poem, I found myself skimming the storylines that weren’t about Bradamante and Ruggiero. The tale has numerous interweaving plotlines, and my interest featured on knowing more about the “impossible love” between lovers on opposing sides of a holy war. Their story having to keep their love for each other secret because it would be seen as disloyal to love “an enemy” was powerful. It also lasts throughout the entire poem with numerous and repeated obstacles to their union as a couple.

Ruggiero as the hero was also quantifiably different than expectations of fantasy literature. He was the prophesied hero raised in obscurity, but there was not a single prophesy about him – there were two. The two prophecies had divergent fates with dueling magical forces trying to determine which one would come to pass. This hero was also of a different faith than the heroine. Archetypically I see him as being in the mold of Hector of Troy, considered to be the perfect knight. Ruggiero is descended from this iconic hero and strives to live up to his image and will put honor before all else. I found all of this to be heady stuff.

I remember crying as I read the climax of the story where Ruggiero was willing himself to die so Bradamante could honorably marry another. He had gone into the wilderness and was refusing food and water in the hopes of dying from dehydration, starvation, and exposure to the elements. All so his beloved might live with honor. I sat outside on a patio during my lunch break and I wept by the power of this 500-year old story.

As I reflected on the story I finished, I felt cheated. I had not heard of this incredible warrior maiden from literature, nor of her struggle to marry for love in a time when nobles’ marriages were arranged for political alliances. I knew about Guinevere and her messy love triangle with King Arthur and Lancelot – that didn’t end well – but I had never heard of
Bradamante and Ruggiero. I wondered why I had never heard of their incredible love story.

Two years later in 2005, a writing project I had been working on ended. As I cast about for a new project, I remembered my thoughts upon finishing *Orlando furioso*. I then made the decision to embark on an ambitious writing project that is still ongoing. I decided to adapt Bradamante and Ruggiero’s love story into novels for modern day audiences to enjoy. It has been an odyssey that included expanding my source material to include *Orlando innamorato* since it was in Boiardo’s unfinished poem where the two characters met, fell in love, and were cruelly separated for the first of many times. I immersed myself in researching medieval history, customs, religious practices of the time both in Christianity and Islam, as well as traveling to France to see the places I was writing about.

As part of my writing process, I have consulted the source material frequently and in close detail. I realized as I began outlining plot sequences that the poets were marvelous storytellers, lousy historians and even worse geographers. There were aspects of the story that would need to be changed in order to satisfy continuity requirements for modern day readers. For example, there is an enchanted castle holding Ruggiero as a prisoner and it appeared in the storyline multiple times, but it was not in a fixed location. Instead, the castle moved and was in three different locales. First it was off the coast of Brittany, second time it was near Paris, and then the third time it was in central France. The poets took great poetic license with their works of fantasy, but I feel the internal logic of the story as it is retold needs to held to higher standards. That is why I fixed the location of the enchanted castle to being inside the Gresigne Forest east of Montauban.

I have also examined the various plot threads and have only kept those which impact the Bradamante and Ruggiero through-story. Even by paring it down to focusing on Bradamante and Ruggiero, I still have an immense storyline
that includes Orlando losing his wits, Astolfo going into the Underworld and the moon, and a restored Orlando helping end the war.

At times, I refer back to the source material for inspiration and will find a passage that needs clarity. At those times, I will consult both Reynolds and Guido Waldman’s versions. Occasionally, I will compare a passage to other translators’ work as well. In doing so, my appreciation for Barbara Reynolds’ craft has increased. I am indebted to those who have the knowledge of the Italian language and can translate the meaning into something I can understand. And, the poem wasn’t written in modern Italian, it was written in archaic Italian. I have Italian friends who, when asked about Orlando furioso, will wince and mention how they disliked being required to read it, because it was in archaic Italian. I have a similar difficulty reading Chaucer in old English. So, Reynolds not only had to understand the Italian language, but she had to have an understanding of how that Romance language has changed and evolved over the centuries.

I have been working on this adaptation since 2005 and in the last fourteen years, I have two volumes of my trilogy done. I am uncertain how many more years it will take for me to finish this project, but I can take comfort in the knowledge it will be less than the original composition by the poets. Boiardo began writing his poem around 1476 and stopped in 1494, for a total of eighteen years of writing. Ariosto began his writing around 1505 and the first publication of Orlando furioso was in 1516, eleven years later. Combined it makes twenty-nine years. However, Ariosto continued to add to his masterpiece and the final version was published in 1532. So, in total it took the two poets forty-five years to write this massive story. I am optimistic that I can finish this project in only a few more years’ time. That will be far less than the time it took for Boiardo and Ariosto.

My reading of this poem started by following a wild theory about hippogriffs in the Harry Potter series, and it
ended with my wanting to share the love story of Bradamante and Ruggiero with others. My hope is that my writing will introduce a new generation to this marvelous tale of chivalry, heroism, and romance. I hope readers may be inspired to go to the source material and read the poem for themselves. Tales of chivalric literature are classics that should be discovered by each generation and valued as literary gifts from the profound minds of the mediaeval world.

Linda C. McCabe is the author of *Quest of the Warrior Maiden* and *Fate of the Saracen Knight*. Her website is [www.LindaCMcCabe.com](http://www.LindaCMcCabe.com) and she can be reached at Linda.McCabe@gmail.com.

*Bradamante on the back of a horse fighting Atlante the wizard who is in the sky on the back of a hippogriff.* Jean-Honoré Fragonard etching. Scan performed on a plate owned by Linda C. McCabe.
This is the edition used by the Bach Choir, conducted by Sir Hugh Percy Allen, during Dorothy Sayers’ tenure, 1912-1915, and later, 1917-1919, as one of the contralto voices in the Choir. She would have read the historical notes below and sang from the score encased in green hard cloth binding. The Mass in B minor was Dorothy’s favorite choral masterpiece. In this volume, we present No. 18, Chorus, “Patrem Omnipotentem.” Sayers would have sung the alto chorus parts, along with other choir members, in alto voice. This is as close an experience as we can provide of Dorothy’s participation in the Bach Choir of Oxford University.

HISTORICAL NOTES

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was fifty-two years old when he completed his Mass in B minor known as Die hohe Mass, the Grand or High Mass. This stupendous creation of his mighty genius occupied him, on and off, about six years. The Credo was probably written first, in 1731 or 1732; the Kyrie and Gloria followed in 1733; the date of the Sancta is probably 1735, possibly a little later; and the work was almost certainly completed in 1737.

Like Bach’s four other Masses, the Kyrie and Gloria of the B minor Mass originally formed an independent composition. In the autograph manuscript of these two movements, the inscription Fine S. D. G1. – Bach’s way of denoting the close of his compositions – is written at the end of each; moreover, it is certain that the Kyrie and Gloria only were presented by the composer to the Duke of Saxony, when Bach petitioned His Royal Highness for the Office of Court Kapellmeister. Spitta, in his ‘Life of Bach’ (English edn., vol. iii., p.88), gives the text of this petition, which, with the autograph manuscript above referred to, is still preserved in the private library of the King of Saxony. Here is the petition, in all the fulsomeness which characterised such documents at that time:

To the most illustrious Prince and Lord, the Lord Friedrich August, King and Prince of Poland and Lithuania, Duke of Saxony, &c., my most gracious Sovereign,

Most illustrious Elector,
Most gracious Lord.
I lay before your Kingly Majesty this trifling work (or proof) of the science which I have been able to attain in music, with the very humble petition that you will be pleased to regard it, not according to the measure of the meanness of the composition, but with a gracious eye, as befits your Majesty's world-famed clemency, and condescend to take me under your Majesty's most mighty protection. For some years, and up to the present time, I have had the direction of the music in the two principal churches in Leipzig; but I have had to suffer, though in all innocence, from one and another vexatious cause – at different times a diminution of the fees connected with this function, and which might be withheld altogether unless your Kingly majesty will show me grace and confer upon me a Prædicate of your Majesty's Court Capelle, and will issue your high command to the proper persons for the granting of a patent to that effect. And such a gracious acceding to my most humble petition will bind me by infinite obligations; and I hereby offer myself in most dutiful obedience to prove my indefatigable diligence in composing church music, as well as in your orchestra, whenever it is your Kingly Majesty's most gracious desire, and to devote my whole powers to your Majesty's service, remaining with constant fidelity your Kingly Majesty's most humble and obedient servant.

Dresden, July 27, 1733

Johann Sebastian Bach

As in some of his larger works, - e.g., 'The Christmas Oratorio' – Bach borrowed material from his other compositions for his great Mass in B minor. The extent of these borrowings is set forth by Spitta in his 'Life' of the master (vol. iii., pp. 37-64).

The Mass in B minor was not published till quite fifty years after Bach's death – that is, early in the nineteenth century – part by Nägeli, of Zurich, and part by Simrock, of Bonn. No performance of the work seems to have been given during the composer's lifetime. Emmanuel Bach gave at Hamburg – previous to 1788, the year of his death – a performance of the Credo, with an independent orchestral introduction of his own! Doubtless stimulated by the revival, by Mendelssohn, of the 'St. Matthew Passion' in 1829, the earliest performance of both portions of the Mass was probably in 1835, when it was sung by the Sing-Akademie of Berlin, where it had long been rehearsed by Zelter.

October 1907

F.G. EDWARDS

Editor's Note: Should you wish to hear the Patrem omnipotentem sung in all its glory, here is a Youtube link to the music performed by Collegium Vocale Gent, conducted by Philippe Herreweghe:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-IbaJ8Fy7Q

The entire Mass in B minor performed by the Choir of the English Concert, conducted by Harry Bicket at the Royal Albert Hall, may be found here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7F7TVM8m95Y
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IN VOCAL SCORE

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*Alto.*

*Cello.*

Bass.

_Credo._ in _unam Deum._

*Credo._ in _unam Deum._

*Credo._ in _unam Deum._

*Credo._ in _unam Deum._

_Pater Omnipotentem, fac to rem coeli et terrae._

_Pater Omnipotentem, fac to rem coeli et terrae._

_In unam Deum._

_Pater Omnipotentem, fac to rem coeli et terrae._

_Pater Omnipotentem, fac to rem coeli et terrae._

In _unam Deum._

_Pater Omnipotentem, fac to rem coeli et terrae._

_J. S. Bach.—M. in B minor.—Novello, Ewer and Co.'s Octavo Edition.—1868._
Patrem omnipotentem, factorem coeli et terrae, factorem coeli et terrae, visibilibimum factorem coeli et terrae, visibilibimum factorem coeli et terrae, visibilibimum factorem coeli et terrae, visibilibimum factorem coeli et terrae, visibilibimum factorem coeli et terrae, visibilibimum factorem coeli et terrae, visibilibimum factorem coeli et terrae, visibilibimum factorem coeli et terrae, visibilibimum factorem coeli et terrae, visibilibimum factorem coeli et terrae, visibilibimum factorem coeli et terrae.

J. S. Bach - Mün in 3 minor, Nicolai, Boer and Co's German Edition.
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UNPOPULAR OPINIONS
Twenty-one Essays
Dorothy L. Sayers
London: Victor Gollancz Ltd.
First Edition
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30 September 1946

Photo: Private Collection
Oxford is so full of varied interest that we must leave our readers to gain knowledge of its history from other sources, and confine ourselves to its Cathedral records. This see was one of those founded by Henry VIII. Out of the proceeds of his spoliation of the monasteries. The Cathedral was originally the Church of the Priory of St. Frideswide. This lady was the daughter of Didan, the chief man of the town. At an early age she took the veil, and her father built for her a convent; but Algar, King of Mercia, wished to marry her, and swore that he would carry her off. She fled for refuge, and on her return to Oxford was gallantly defended by the men of her city against Algar, who was struck blind. She was buried in her convent, and many miracles were wrought at her shrine. Such was the beginning of what ultimately became the Cathedral of Oxford. Terrible was the scene which took place in this little church. The Danes were in Oxford. There was peace between the Saxon king, Ethelred, and their foes; but on St. Brice’s Day, 1002, the folk of Wessex were excited to slaughter the Danes, who fled for sanctuary to the little church. The Saxons respected no more the sacredness of the building than the laws of hospitality, and set fire to the place and massacred the helpless Danes. The remains of this Early Saxon church are said to have been discovered, which we shall examine later.

Ethelred, repenting of his crime, determined to rebuild the church, which he accomplished, and recent authorities assure us that the present church is in plan and main substance the Saxon church of Ethelred, erected in 1004, and not the later Norman church about which the older writers tell us. He seems
to have established a community of secular canons. The work was interrupted by the later Danish invasions, and perhaps never finished. At any rate it was ruinous in the time of the Early Normans kings.

In 1111 A.D., it was granted by either Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, or by Henry I., to Prior Guimond and his fellow canons. This prior began to restore the ruined church and monastery, but his successor, Robert de Cricklade (1141-1180), did most of the work, and restored the nave, choir, central tower and transepts. All the later Norman work is due to him. In 1180, in the presence of Henry II., his nobles and a goodly company of bishops, the relics of St. Frideswide were translated to a place of honour in the restored building on the north side of the choir, to which there was great resort of pilgrims on account of the miraculous healings which took place there.

Fire played havoc with the city of Oxford in 1190, but the church escaped without much injury. The monastic buildings suffered, and the traces of fire can still be seen on the old Norman doorway in the cloisters. In the thirteenth century the Lady Chapel was built adjoining the north side of the choir, some of the old walls being used, the spire raised above the tower, the chapter-house and part of the Latin Chapel added, which was completed in the fourteenth century. A few Decorated details were added at this period, and windows in this style inserted. The fifteenth century witnessed sundry alterations in the cloisters, the building of St. Frideswide’s latest shrine, the insertion of some Perpendicular windows, and the erection of the fine vaulting of the choir.

Then a mighty change dawned on the old monastery. Cardinal Wolsey obtained a bull from Pope Clement VII. For its suppression and determined to convert it into a college, which was designed to be the largest in Oxford. He played sad havoc with the fabric of the church. A great part of the nave he destroyed altogether in order to make room for his great “Tom Quad,” so named after the famous bell which still rings each night at five minutes past nine, and is the signal for the closing
of the gates of all Oxford colleges. Part of the old cloisters disappeared also. Wolsey contemplated the building of another church for his college, and indeed began its construction; but his fall in 1529 put an end to the carrying out of his great conception, and the college fell into the hands of King Henry VIII. Here the monarch established one of his newly-formed sees (the bishop’s seat was first fixed at Oseney Abbey, just outside Oxford), and with characteristic parsimony applied the revenues of the college to the support of the see. The dean of the Cathedral is still the head of the college, and the canons are university professors. As was usual at this time, the Cathedral was shorn of all its costly ornaments, vestments, plate and other treasures, but the fabric remained intact.

Dean Brian Duppa in 1630 wrought much evil in the way of restoring his Cathedral, destroying the old glass and woodwork, tearing up the brasses, and “improving” the windows by cutting away the old tracery. He was rewarded for his zeal by being made Bishop of Salisbury. His loyalty to the fallen fortunes of his sovereign, Charles I., somewhat atones for his wanton destruction of much that was beautiful in Christ Church Cathedral. In the Civil War, Oxford was the great centre of the Royalists. Here King Charles held his court. Students flocked to his standard, and the Cathedral was the scene of several thanksgiving services on the occasion of victories.

Cromwell’s soldiers at length captured Oxford, and did some damage in the Cathedral, breaking much of the glass. Bishop Fell (1676-1686) was a munificent benefactor of the college. His father when dean had built the fine staircase to the hall with its fan-tracery vault, and commenced the buildings on north and west of the quadrangle. This Bishop Fell finished the buildings of the college together with the west belfry, designed by Sir C. Wren, but he does not appear to have done much for the Cathedral.
Neglect and the hard hand of time wrought much mischief, and it seems to have been in a deplorable state when the restorations of the last half of the nineteenth century were inaugurated. To rescue it from its wretched condition Dean Liddell, whose name is familiar to every student of Greek, set himself with much energy, and the work was entrusted to Sir G. Scott. His restoration was carried out with much wisdom and careful regard for antiquity.

The author of *Alice in Wonderland*, a fellow of the college, published a satirical pamphlet on *The Three T’s*, the tunnel, the tower (the third we forget), and compared the new entrance with a railway tunnel, representing a railway train emerging from the portal, and scoffing at the new tower, which arose above the grand staircase to the hall. But it is easy to criticise, and Sir G. Scott’s work at Oxford compares favourably with most restorations, and for this posterity will thank him.

**The Exterior**

Oxford Cathedral is so hidden away behind the obtrusive walls of Wolsey’s college that it is difficult to obtain any good exterior views. The best is that seen from the garden of one of the canons,[128] to enter which permission may be obtained. The view from the cloister is also satisfactory.

The principal entrance is from “Tom Quad” by the “tunnel,” as Lewis Carroll termed the passage or porch situated a little to the north of the entrance to the hall. As we have said, the west front and the greater part of the nave were destroyed by Wolsey when he erected the college buildings. He also destroyed the west walk of the cloister, which we enter by a passage leading from the entrance to the hall. The cloisters are Perpendicular work of the latter part of the fifteenth century. The north walk was at one time converted into a muniment room, but has recently been restored to its original form, and has a modern imitation of the old vaulting. The old refectory stood on the south side, but has been converted into college rooms. Its large Perpendicular windows still remain looking on
to the cloister. The entrance to the chapter-house is in the east walk, and a fine Norman doorway it is. It belongs to the later Norman period. It has four orders, richly ornamented with zigzag. A round-headed window is on each side of the door.

The chapter-house is one of the best examples of the Early English style in the kingdom, and may be compared with those of Lincoln, Salisbury and Chester. The east end is very fine, and consists of an arcade of five arches which are double. Slender clustered shafts with capitals adorned with foliage support the inner arches. The three central arches are pierced for windows. Similar arcades are at the east end of north and south sides. The sculpture in this chamber is extremely fine. Grotesque corbels, carved capitals and the bosses in the vault, are all beautiful and interesting. One of the bosses represents the Virgin giving an apple to the infant Christ. There is also some old glass and interesting mural paintings. Diocesan meetings are held in this delightful room. The foundation stone of Wolsey’s college at Ipswich is preserved here.

In the room on the south are some fine paintings, an Elizabethan table and an old chest. Another door in this cloister leads to the old slype, a passage to the monastic burial-ground. On the left is St. Lucy’s Chapel, mainly of Norman construction, the east window being much later. It is of Decorated character, and the tracery is flamboyant and of very beautiful design. The south choir aisle adjoins, and is part of the original church. The windows are modern imitations of Norman work. The windows in the clerestory of the choir are Perpendicular. The east end is modern, having been reconstructed by Scott. On the north side of the Cathedral, viewed from the canon’s garden, we see the north transept with its large Perpendicular window, erected at the beginning of the sixteenth century, flanked by two turrets crowned with pinnacles; the Latin Chapel of beautiful Decorated design, erected in the fourteenth century, and the Lady Chapel, the east wall of which is part of the old Saxon church, and Mr. Park Harrison has discovered the remains of three Saxon apses.
which are perhaps the remains of the earliest Saxon church, the Church of St. Frideswide, built by Didan early in the eighth century. A Decorated window has been inserted here.

We must now notice the *Tower* and *Spire*, a beautiful feature of the Cathedral. The lower storey is Late Norman, similar to the style of the nave; the belfry and the spire are Early English. This spire ranks with that of Barnock, Northants, and New Romsey, Surrey, as being one of the earliest in the kingdom. It was restored by Scott. The pinnacles at the angles of the tower are modern but accurate copies of the ancient ones. The spire is octagonal, and is what is termed a broach spire, *i.e.*, it rises from the exterior of the tower walls and not from the interior of a parapet as in the later spires.
The Interior

Entering by the new porch from the quadrangle and passing under the organ-screen we see a Cathedral, small, indeed, but possessing features of peculiar interest. In its main plan it is possibly the church of Ethelred begun in 1004, but finished in Late Norman times when Robert de Cricklade or Canutus was prior (1141-1180).

The piers of the Nave are alternatively circular and octagonal. There is a very unusual triforium. Arches spring from the capitals of the piers, and in the tympana are set the triforium arcade. From half capitals set against the piers spring another series of arches at a lower level than the others we have mentioned, and above the curve of these is the triforium arcade. Very few examples of this curious construction are found in this country. The carving of the capitals is graceful, and though it differs somewhat from the stiff-leaved foliage of Early English style, it somewhat resembles that character.

The clerestory belongs to the period of transition between Norman and Early English. The central arch of the triple windows is pointed, and the others, which[132] are blocked up, round. The corbels and shafts which support the roof are Norman, but the brackets are Perpendicular, erected by Wolsey, who intended to build a stone vault. The present fine timber roof belongs to his time, or a little later. The stalls and seats are modern. The screen is Jacobean, above which is the organ, a fine instrument enclosed in a Jacobean case. The pulpit belongs to the same period and is very interesting, especially its grotesque carving.

The central tower has fine and lofty arches, and its appearance has been improved by the removal of the ceiling which formerly existed here. A curious subterranean chamber was discovered here in 1856. It contained two aumbries, and was evidently intended for the keeping of some treasure, possibly of the monastery, or of the university. It is known that the university chest during the thirteenth century was
deposited in a secret place within the Church of St. Frideswide, and this, doubtless, was the spot.

The Choir is of the same character as the nave. The piers are more massive, and the style of the carving of the capitals differs. We are told that we have distinct evidence here that this is part of Ethelred’s church, that the sculpture is Saxon, copied from Saxon MSS., that it has been worn by weather which could only have been done during the ruinous condition of the church prior to its Late Norman restoration. Possibly this may be true, and the carving is certainly peculiar, but at present we cannot quite agree to accept this view. The triforium is Late Norman, and the roof is a fine example of fan-tracery begun in the fifteenth century. Wolsey changed the appearance of the clerestory, and introduced Perpendicular details.

**Oxford Cathedral**
(Herbert Railton)

The East End is modern, and is a fine conception of Sir G. Scott based upon early models. The Reredos is a fine modern work, and the altar, lectern and throne are also new. Turning to the north we enter the North Choir Aisle, where we stand upon debatable ground. Perhaps we are in the Early Saxon church built for St. Frideswide, or the later Saxon church of Ethelred. Authorities differ, and it is impossible to decide. At any rate, there in the east wall are the remains of the three Saxon arches which lead to the apses discovered on the outside. And here, too, is the noted Shrine of St. Frideswide, of which Mr. Ruskin said that every stone was worth its weight in silver, if not in gold. It has been gradually collected from odd corners of the precincts, as the shrine was destroyed by Henry VIII.

The carved foliage is very beautiful, and when this base of the shrine was complete and crowned with the jewelled cover, beneath which reposed the relics of the saints, it must have been very imposing. There is a curious story in connection with these relics. When the tomb was destroyed these were
carefully preserved in secret by “the faithful,” and in the meantime the body of the wife of Peter Martyr, a Protestant professor, was laid near the saint’s shrine. As this poor lady was an ex-nun, in the time of Mary and Cardinal Pole her body was cast out into a cesspool, and the relics of the saint restored to their place of honour. In Elizabeth’s time the saint’s bones were again removed. The queen ordered the decent re-burial of the remains of Peter Martyr’s wife, and while this was being done the sacred box containing the relics was produced, and “the married nun and the virgin saint were buried together, and the dust of the two still remains under the pavement beneath our feet inextricably blended.” The exact spot is conjecturable, but a brass has been placed where the mingled remains are supposed to lie.

The Lady Chapel is on the west of the choir aisle, and is of Early English construction. It was added about 1250, when
the present piers and vault were built. The east wall, as we have said, is manifestly earlier, and is part of one of the earlier Saxon churches. The east window is restored Decorated. The west arch is round-headed, and shows that this part of the chapel was the east aisle of the north transept. There are extensive remains of colouring. Here is the remarkable “Watching Chamber,” supposed by some to be a later shrine of St. Frideswide, and by Professor Willis and others to be the chamber where watch was kept for guarding the gold and jewels which adorned the actual shrine. It has three stages, and is very beautiful Perpendicular work. In this chapel there are some interesting monuments—Sir George Nowers (1425) (with good example of armour); Prior Guymond (?) (1149), or Prior Alexander de Sutton (1316), with Decorated canopy and effigy; Lady Montacute (1353), the supposed founder of the Latin Chapel; Robert Burton, author of *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1639). Some “Morris” windows have been inserted here designed by Burne-Jones, very beautiful in themselves, but perhaps scarcely in keeping with their surroundings. The St. Cecilia window is extremely fine.

The *Latin Chapel* is mainly Decorated work of the time of Edward III., the western parts being earlier. The vault has some richly-foliated bosses, on which appear the waterlily and the roses, and heads surmounted with crown and mitre. The east window has strange Venetian tracery, but some excellent modern glass designed by Burne-Jones and representing incidents in the life of St. Frideswide. The other windows have some fine old fourteenth-century glass; the north-east window is modern. The woodwork is very fine; it is later than the chapel, and was not designed for it. The cardinal’s hat, supported by angels on one of the carved poppy-heads, shows that this was prepared for Wolsey’s choir. Some of the work is much older. In this chapel the writer used to listen to the lectures of the divinity professor, and was often distracted from the discourse by the architectural beauties around him. Beautiful vistas may be obtained here of “long-drawn aisles and
fretted vault,” and he became very conversant with the history of St. Frideswide as depicted in the fine east window.

The North Transept is similar to the nave in style. The north window is a modern restoration, and the glass is not very pleasing modern work. Here is the Perpendicular tomb of a monk, Zouch (1503), and some good brasses in the aisle. The north aisle has Norman vaulting. The windows are restored Perpendicular, and the glass is modern. The window at the west end of the aisle was refashioned by Dean Brian Duppa in his usual barbarous manner, but it has some good Flemish glass by Van Ling representing Jonah and the Gourd, with Nineveh in the background. Crossing to the south side of the church we pass several monuments in the vestibule at the west end and reach the South Aisle, which is later in style than the north. At the west end is a Burne-Jones window, representing “Faith, Hope and Charity.” The south transept preserves its Late Norman character, but has been shorn of its length. On the east side is the Chapel of St. Lucy. At the back of the wall on the south is the slype, and above this the vestry. One of the windows here is said to be Saxon. St. Lucy’s Chapel is Norman, and is now used as a baptistry. The east window has flamboyant tracery and some fine old glass. Several monuments of distinguished Cavaliers who died for the Royal cause in the Civil War are in this part of the church.

The South Choir Aisle resembles that on the north. The south windows are in the Norman style, but are modern imitations. The glass of the east window was designed by Burne-Jones and portrays St. Catherine. It was erected in memory of a daughter of Dean Liddell. The monument of Prince Leopold, brother of the king, formerly a student of Christ Church, has a pathetic interest, and the tomb of Bishop King, Oxford’s first bishop (1557), is a fine piece of Perpendicular work. The window to his memory is on the south and shows a representation of the Abbey of Oseney, where his episcopal throne was first established, before it migrated to the Church of St. Frideswide.
Dimensions of the Cathedral Building:

Extreme length 175 ft.
Length from screen to reredos 132 ft.
Extreme breadth 108 ft.
Height of spire 144 ft.

Dates of Construction:

Saxon: East wall of Lady Chapel and north choir aisle, and possibly window in south transept.

Norman: Nave, choir, transept, aisles, door of chapter-house, St. Lucy’s Chapel.

Early English: Lady Chapel. Decorated—Latin Chapel and several windows.
Perpendicular—Cloisters, windows and vault of choir.
Vera Farnell attended Somerville College as an undergraduate student from 1911 to 1914, having previously attended The Laurels, Rugby. Miss Farnell was in residence during the years Dorothy L. Sayers attended Somerville (1912 – 1915), first as student and later as secretary to Emily Penrose. She recounted the history of several Somerville principals, foremost among those Emily Penrose, in her memoir, *A Somervillian Looks Back* (1948).

Author and confirmed pacifist Vera Brittain entered Somerville in 1914 from St. Monica’s School, Kingswood, Epsom, her first year at Somerville being Sayers’ last year at the college. Miss Brittain left Oxford to volunteer as a xxx in World War I but returned to Oxford after the war to complete her degree in History which she received in 1921. Vera Brittain recalled with clarity and humor her impressions of Somerville, Miss Penrose, and Dorothy L. Sayers, among other Somervillians, in her book, *The Women of Oxford* (19xx).

Each of these Somerville women provides, through her written work, a personal perspective, while a student at Somerville, of the college, her student peers, and of the Principal Emily Penrose. This article presents the views and recollections of both Vera Farnell and Vera Brittain with regard to the person and principalship of Miss Emily Penrose during her years as head of Somerville College, Oxford University, 1907–1926.

Starting with a brief overview of three Principals of Somerville College, Vera Farnell comments that with, “the
successful integration of Miss Shaw Lefèvre’s daring, adventurous, and delightful students into a closely knit College with a recognized aim and purpose was the work of Miss Maitland” (1948: 31). However, “it was certainly due mainly to Miss Emily Penrose’s statesmanlike vision, unfailing wisdom and powers of leadership that the Oxford women owe their admission to full membership of the University in 1920” (1948: 31).

We know of Miss Penrose’s remarkable abilities as Principal, yet it appears that little is generally known of her background which prepared her for such a formidable task. To construct a rounded view of Emily Penrose, let us delve briefly into her family history and student years at Oxford University.

Emily Penrose was born into the famous Arnold and Huxley families of Britain. Her grandmother, Mrs. Markham, was author of the popular Child’s History of England. Her father, Dr. Francis Cranmer Penrose, was a descendant of Archbishop Cranmer and a well known architect, archaeologist, and Director of the British School at Athens. He had a firm influence on Emily’s academic and career choices, particularly on her choice to become a student at Somerville College in 1889 at the age of thirty-one. When Emily Penrose enrolled in Somerville to read Literae Humaniores, there were no entrance qualifying exams. She started at Somerville with no knowledge of Latin and little knowledge of modern Greek, yet despite this handicap in her classical training, Emily Penrose took a First Class in 1892, being also the first woman to win the honour of a First in Greats (Farnell 1948: 31).

In 1893, Emily Penrose was made Principal of Bedford College, and five years later, of Royal Holloway College where she remained until 1907, becoming Principal of Somerville College in that year. As an M.A. of Dublin, Miss Penrose began the modern era in which trained scholars replaced, as principals, the daughters of bishops and headmasters. Penrose immediately realized that the strongest argument for the institution of women as matriculated scholars would be the
number of women qualified to receive the Oxford degree. By 1914, Somerville, under her guidance, was refusing students who would not take the degree course. (Brittain 1960: 121)

**Battle for The Degree**

When Emily Penrose returned to Oxford in 1907, as Principal of Somerville College, women still had direct relation with the University only through the *Delegacy of Local Examinations*. In 1910, a *Delegacy of Women Students* was established which recognized the five existing Societies and registered, although it did not matriculate, female students. Also, in 1914, The Chancellor, Lord Curzon, included in his Memorandum on University Reform a conservative proposal for granting the degree to women, one which offered the title but no degree privileges.

The war years (1914-1918) worked to the benefit of the struggle for women’s degree rights as women worked alongside men, sharing responsibilities, labours, and dangers. As a result, after the war, the rights of women to a university degree was looked at in a different light as women’s colleges had been steadily developing a more rigorous curriculum. Their academic existence became increasingly identified with the course for the degree. Furthermore, the four colleges worked to develop their own libraries, buildings and gardens. In 1920, the University of Oxford passed the Women’s Statute, granting all rights and privileges and full rights of membership in the University to all women students.

Miss Penrose was adamant in her insistence that Somerville students sat for the Preliminary Exam, as tiresome and seemingly time-wasting it appeared to be at the time. Thanks to her insistence, when the Great Day came, Somerville women escaped the toil and sweat of retrospectively taking Groups, or having to Pass Mods. and ‘Divvers’ (Divinity Exam), which they had already done, per Miss Penrose’s insistence. Dorothy L. Sayers passed all Prelims in her first year, and thus
had only to ‘bob’ to the Vice Chancellor at the Degree ceremony of October 1920.

Throughout these reforms, Miss Penrose played a leading part. Everyone who worked with her recognized her statesmanlike vision and her masterly powers of direction. Not a word was wasted, not a charm nor wile exercised; sphinx-like she saw as far ahead as there could possibly be any consequence that would matter; swift and strong in intellect, she was patient and thorough in deliberate mastery of detail (Farnell 1948: 34-35).

**Who was the Person?**

According to Vera Farnell, student at Somerville and later Secretary to the Principal, Miss Penrose served the cause of men and women alike as scholar, administrator, and public servant. Having worked closely with Miss Penrose for many years, Farnell describes her characteristics as following:

Impartiality, a strong sense of justice, unfailing personal modesty, large generosity – these are some of her great qualities. But this singularly modest and very shy person had, too, a large share of more everyday accomplishments which it was our delight to discover and encourage: she was a fearless mountain-climber, a beautiful skater, an artist in water-colour, an adept at ‘punto d’Assisi’ embroidery, and at the fascinating game of knuckle-bones which she could occasionally be induced to play with one or two of us upon her sitting-room floor. She was, furthermore, an accomplished amateur actress... Her shyness made sometimes a barrier between herself and her students, but the barrier dropped whenever we could tap her rich anecdotal vein, as, too, when she allowed us to discover that she was a blood-curdling reader of Browning and could be persuaded to read “The Bishop orders his tomb at St. Praxed’s Church’... to an enthralled college audience. Children at no time felt this barrier: they loved her at sight and would play happily with her for hours. (1948:35).

Emily Penrose had a striking, a noble, physique captured well by De Laszlo in her official portrait. She was tall and spare in build, holding herself rather still and straight, with gestures that were sudden and decisive, light blue eyes watchful and somehow suggestive of the proverbial basilisk, a smile that
came and went with startling suddenness – it did indeed take courage and determination to penetrate that guard of hers, but the reward was to discover a secret nature that was surprisingly simple, kind and human (1948:35).

However, according to Vera Brittain (1960: 121), that for all her prophetic and administrative gifts, Miss Penrose’s personality lacked both ease and charm. She was “acutely, excruciatingly shy... hers was a stern, repellent quality which, except for he few who knew and understood her, tended to throw an immediate barrier between herself and the individual with whom she sincerely desired to establish sympathy.” However, Brittain maintained that no one doubted her vigour and conscientiousness as a public servant, or her impartial sense of justice. “She felt a deep concern for anyone in trouble or want, and not least for the bereaved students of the First World War.... She was also a popular and kind aunt” (Brittain 1960:121).

**The Penrose Legacy**

Emily Penrose’s name is commemorated in the College by the Penrose Fund, constantly drawn upon by those in residence and in financial need. The beginnings of he Fund were provided by a large portion of the gift presented to her on her retirement by the alumnae of Somerville, and with characteristic generosity handed back by her to the College for the Fund. She is also remembered by the Penrose Building – named after her and opened in 1927, the year after her retirement.

Shortly before Emily Penrose’s retirement, the seal was set upon Somerville’s status as a College in the University. On June 7, 1926, the Royal Charter was granted which put an end to the existence of the College as a registered company and brought into being the Corporation of the Principal and Council of Somerville College, and on this Council each official Fellow found her place. The Charter secured to Somerville College official recognition by the University and serves to assist the
educational usefulness and development of the College through time (Farnell 1948: 50).

In June 1926, the year of her retirement, the University of Oxford granted Emily Penrose the highest honor it had to bestow, the degree of D.C.L. *honoris causa*. Only one woman, Queen Mary, preceded her in this honour. One month later the University of Sheffield bestowed upon her the honorary degree of L.L.D, making a fitting close to the reign of Emily Penrose, a great principal of Somerville College.

In 1946, *The Times* obituary notice of her life and work concluded with a judgment which might well serve as her epitaph: “For all her masculine powers and feminine accomplishments, her great qualities were neither masculine nor feminine, but simply those that belong to great persons” (Brittain 1960: 121).
EMILY PENROSE
Principal
Somerville College
1907 – 1926

Pencil & Pixel Sketch, 2017
Private Collection
The *Fritillary* was an Oxford student magazine, in print from March 1894 through 1931, that functioned as the information, communication, and literary hub among four women’s colleges: Lady Margaret Hall, Somerville College, S. Hugh’s College, S. Hilda’s Hall, and that of the women Oxford Home Students (when in 1952 became St. Anne’s College), making a total of five contributing member schools.

Organized and run by representatives of the women’s colleges noted above, the *Fritillary*’s main purpose was to assert the “educational and social claims of women students who until 1920 remained excluded from membership of the University of Oxford. Its inter-collegiate interest makes it unique among all-women publications of its kind (Ewins 2008: 60).” Originally, its cover (designed by student activist for women’s rights, Miss Whelpton) and its overall style were similar to the Oxford undergraduate magazine, *Isis*, set up only two years earlier (see a representation of its early cover on p.XX). However, *The Fritillary* differed dramatically from *Isis* in its spoken and unspoken advocation for women’s rights. The magazine, from its beginning was strongly suffragette as well as literary, setting its course in the first issue with an unsigned poem, “The Fritillary,” that ostensibly symbolized the woman student as a native plant with subdued colors amid the “crowds
of daisies” representing the majority male population of the university.

The Battle for the B.A. became the overriding concern of *The Fritillary* until 1920 when degrees were finally granted to women. The most forceful writer on degrees and the vote for women was early student Eleanor Rathbone of Somerville, later president of the National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies and an independent MP, who opened the March 1897 issue with a three-page article calling for the formation of “A Political League of University Women” (Ewins, 61).

Until the early 1920’s, most issues were divided equally among poetry, short prose, editorials, articles, reports on sports, clubs, and societies (primarily debating societies), and ending with notices from each of the five participating colleges.

In December 1923, a new, softer, cover was designed depicting three women in motion. On the back cover, in a similar style, is a picture of a women reading. The subtitle, “Magazine of the Oxford Women’s Colleges” is added. The purpose of these changes was to depart from the magazine’s traditional mode of a news sheet in an effort to become more of a review magazine. The section for college and society notices was deleted and a series of articles by famous women began to appear.

At the end of its publishing life, in January 1931, *The Fritillary* attempted to return to its roots by, again, recording women’s college news with notices from each school. The June 16, 1931 magazine was the last publication recorded. The end of *The Fritillary* was unexpected and abrupt, with no indication that it would not continue and no explanation for its end. It has been theorized (*History of the University of Oxford*) that there was substantial decline during this period of women-only organized societies in favor of gender mixed social groups and events that continued to dominate Oxford’s future. The men’s and women’s colleges began to function as a united university.
Somerville College News, 1912 – 1915: A Selection
MARCH 1913, NO. 58

Editor: Miss Cameron, Somerville College
Treasurer: Miss Bright, S. Hilda’s Hall
Committee: Miss Knight, Lady Margaret Hall
Miss Leys, Somerville College
Miss Pym, S. Hugh’s College
Miss Gurner, S. Hilda’s Hall
Miss Murray-Howe, Oxford Home Students

The staff listed above served during the December 1912 through June 1913 academic year.

Oxford Students Debating Society (O.S.D.S.)
February 6th. – Motions: (1) ‘That a dead level is better than a submerged tenth.’
The Hon Mover, Miss Scott (S.H.H.), inveighed against the horrors endured by the ‘Submerged Tenth,’ and argued that any condition would be better than the present one. Her manner was a bright and convincing, but she had not a wide enough grasp of her subject.

Public discussion was supplied entirely by the supporters of the motion, and that, despite the fact that the motion was lost by a large majority. There spoke: Miss Lenanton (S.H.H.), Miss Ibberson (S.H.C.), Miss Ratallack (S.H.H.) and Miss Sayers (S.C.).

LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
A meeting of the above society was held on February 14th, when Dr. de Selincourt read a paper on ‘The Brontës.’ The second meeting has been fixed for February 21st, on which date we hope
to welcome Professor Ker, who has chosen for his subject, ‘Antony Trollope.’ (1913: 76)

SOCIAL STUDY CIRCLE
The Social Study Circle formed last term in Somerville College has been continued this term, and has been greatly encouraged by two addresses from experts. Last term the subject of discussion was Housing Conditions and Remedies. This has been carried on and continued into Health Problems. On the 28th of January, Mr. R.H. Tawney addressed a meeting in the West Common Room on the subject of a Minimum Wage. He pointed out in an extremely interesting speech that the fact that underlies nearly all social evils is the the average working man does not get a sufficient wage. The audience were keenly interested, and great appreciation of Mr. Tawney’s combination of real illumination with delightful exposition was generally expressed. (1913: 76)

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JUNE 1914, NO. 59

A Complaint
DEAR EDITOR. --- Ever since Whit-Sunday or thereabouts, i.e., during all this gorgeous weather, I have pursued my leisured way with shouts of joy --- to the extreme indignation of my neighbor. The sun went to my head as if it had been champagne, and life has been one long revel, so deep as not even to be disturbed by the effort of essays and coachings. Yet underneath there was an underlying sadness, though I manfully hid it, and I racked my brain to discover its source. Schools? No – my fate is not to be settled this year. ---? Thank you. I am very well. And then to-day it suddenly dawned on me. I have had nothing to grumble at. For a few minutes consciousness of this lack filled me with the deepest gloom.
Life appeared a perfect whole, and the knowledge of that fact nearly broke my heart. But I was born under a lucky star, and a ray of light almost immediately pierced the darkness. I have deep reason to complain of the Long Vacation. Mark the words – Long Vacation. Do they fill you with horror? No? – Dear Editor, were you never a little girl at school? What was it that you looked forward to all through the hot, dreary hours of July as you toiled to acquire learning for Certificates and Locals? What words had power to thrill you at any moment of the year – or at least from November to July? The magic phrase ‘Summer Holidays.’ Ah, now you remember! Sea, Sea, Sea – and as few clothes as might be. And now – merely the ‘Long Vacation.’ What book is it that I am going to the sea, that it will be summer, and that for a fortnight it will be holidays? What I want is *Summer Holidays*.

Yours regretfully,
An Entirely Contented Grumbler

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NOVEMBER 1913, NO. 60

Editor: Miss Higman, St. Hugh’s College

Treasurer: Miss Lewis, Lady Margaret Hall

Committee: Miss Horne, Lady Margaret Hall
Miss Rowe, Somerville College*
Miss Muscott, St. Hugh’s College
Miss Gurner, St. Hilda’s Hall
Miss Fox, Oxford Home Students

The staff listed above served during the November 1913 through June 1914 academic year.
Somerville College News:
We are very glad to welcome Miss E. Jebb, of Lady Margaret Hall, who has joined the staff this Term as English tutor; Miss Jones, who is holding the Somerville College Research Fellowship in order to pursue her researches on the subject of Wace and his sources; and Miss Phillpotts, Pfeiffer Students of Girton, and first holder of the Lady Carlisle Fellowship, who has already published ‘Studies on the Sociology of the Scandanavian Peoples,’ and is now at work on the history of Iceland. (November 1913: 99)

NEW SOMERVILLE STUDENTS (42)
1913 Michaelmas Term:
D.D. ADAMS, Maida Vale High School
H.M. BROADBENT, Manchester High School
I.D. BRYAN, Conamur, Sandgate
H.M. BUCKHURST, St. Paul’s Girls School Hammersmith
M. ST. CLARE BYRNE (alternate source)
D. CASH, Oxford High School
G.E.M.G. CRUIKSHANK, Cheltenham Ladies’ College
L.M. DAVIES, Bradford Girls’ Grammar School
J. ENFIELD, Polam Hall, Darlington
M.E. GIBBINS, The Mount School, York
E. HART, Manchester High School
G. HILL, Cheltenham Ladies’ College
M. HOLMES, Newnham College Cambridge
F. KARLINSKY, St. Paul’s Girls’ School, Hammersmith
B.M. KELMAN, St. George’s, Edinburgh
N.J. KESSLER, Downs School, Seaford, Sussex
M.M. LEIGH, Oxford High School
H. LISTER, George Watson’s Ladies’ College, Edinburgh
F.G. LUPTON, Priors Field, Godalming
M.L. MARSHALL, Croham Hurst School, Croydon
J.S. McGREGOR, Girls’ High School, Rondebosch, South Africa
H.M. MOORE, Huddersfield High School
A.E. MURRAY, Conamur, Sandgate
The Tub-Thumpers have had three meetings this term. The first debate, on ‘National Service,’ was opened by Miss Chubb; the second, on ‘The Future of Alsace Lorraine,’ by Miss Roberts. Both subjects roused very keen discussion. The third meeting, on ‘The Results of the Employment of Indian Troops in the War,’ was a public one, and was opened by Miss Holman. There was a large attendance, and the ensuing debate was very interesting, creating, as it did, much discussion of the past and
future of the British Empire. With the handing round of coffee and biscuits, the discussion became wholly informal, and continued in an animated way for some time.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY (Secretary, D. Scott-Stokes) - At the end of last term a large party visited the tower and chapel and other ruins of Oxford Castle. They are now in the hands of the prison authorities, and going through the double-gated entrance gave one a distinctly unpleasant feeling....

Editor's Note: After reading this alarming notice twice, our editors decided the plural pronoun “They” actually referred to the historic buildings and not to the hapless visitors who, we now feel certain, were able to exit at will.

DECEMBER 1915, NO. 66

Fritillary Editor's Remarks
Prizes for Division II
There were only two entries for the poem in the metre of ‘Hertha,’ and no prize was awarded in this section. It was hoped that contributors would attempt this poem, the metre being such as demanded much care in construction, and a true conception of what matter was fitted to be so presented....‘Cor Cordium’ was the better of the two poems received, having for its subject one which shows that the author has an adequate idea of suiting matter to manner, although a lavish use of words has obscured much of the idea.

Editor's Note: “Cor Cordium’ is an unpublished poem by Dorothy L. Sayers, located in the Marion E. Wade Center archives, Wheaton, IL.
Prizes for Division III

There were two entries for the review of modern poetry; both took for their subject the work of Rupert Brook, ‘1914 and Other Poems.’ A prize was awarded to Miss Byrne, Somerville College, for a review which fulfills the primary function of such an article by creating desire to read the book. The writer very deliberately distinguishes between the man and the artist, in order to demonstrate the intrinsic literary value of the poems. The style is careful but not labored, and the phrasing judicious. The other entry was not equally interpretative and presupposed a knowledge of the poems, instead of endeavoring to excite curiosity as to the nature of the volume. It is, however, genuinely appreciative, although it over-emphasizes the personal element.
‘Like ancient Gaul, time is nowadays divided into three parts, before, during, and after the war.’ This happy phrase of J.W. Locke sums up the three hard-and-fast sections of most lives of the present day, and Somerville is no exception to the rule. The most immediate effect in the College was the change of residence which took place in the Summer Term of 1915, when there was a sudden exodus from the privacy of the secluded position in North Oxford to the publicity and central situation of the Rhodes block and the St. Mary Hall quadrangle of Oriel College in the High.

In response to an urgent request, the War Office was granted the use of the Somerville buildings as a military hospital for the duration of the war, and before the Summer Term each student received a type-written letter from the Principal informing her of the change and of the rooms she was allotted in the new quarters.

This change of residence, with all the inconvenience and novel situation which it involved, would have seemed a most extraordinary proposition to any but a war-time generation. As it was, the grim use to which the College was to be put overshadowed the situation of the young Somervillians. The move was accepted as a matter of course; much enjoyment derived from its incidental consequences; and the splendidly ordered removal all accomplished in a fortnight’s time, was only another of those quick changes to which the early days of the war accustomed every one. All England was improvising, and Somerville’s action in this crisis was only another example
of the genius for improvisation exhibited in the English reaction to the war.

The evacuation of the College buildings was a triumph of quick and competent arrangements. On the 27th March, 1915, a preliminary inspection of Somerville on behalf of the War Office was made, the day (Sunday) an emergency Committee of members of Council met to consider a request from Colonel Ranking from the Base Hospital that he might put the College before the War Office authorities as a building ‘in every way suitable for the purposes of a Military Hospital.’

Within the two following days, the Provost of Oriel College had been asked by the Treasurer (Mr. A.B. Gillett) if it would be possible for Somerville to rent the St. Mary Hall Quadrangle of Oriel College, the Principal and Bursar had made a thorough inspection of the buildings, which they found would accommodate about fifty students, the financial arrangements had been threshed out, and permission to use Somerville as a hospital had been given, contingent upon a definite decision being received from the War Office by Easter. A slight pause followed these breathless negotiations, but on the 7th April Colonel Ranking stated on behalf of the War Office that he wished to send his men in to commence operations as soon as possible, and matters were finally committed to writing on the 9th April, 1915.

The students came up for the Summer Term to find the move from Somerville to Oriel accomplished. The Principal and five of the staff, with forty-eight students and six maids, were installed in the quadrangle itself, and the rest of the College were scattered in various lodging as nearly adjoining St. Mary Hall as possible. There were five of these ‘outhouses.’ Micklem Hall was situated in Brewer Street, a turning off St. Aldgate’s. It had a delightful garden, a paneled room, and it had distinguished traditions. It had housed Christ Church undergraduates: we could recite some aristocratic names. King Edward VII as Prince of Wales had sat in one of its red-plushed chairs, and his equerries had lodged there. Canterbury House,
presided over by Miss Bruce, was near the bottom of King Edward Street, conveniently near College. The view from the street of the long table with a row of girls each side caused them to be nicknamed the Girls’ Friendly Society. Houses in the Broad and Holywell, and others in King Edward Street, provided for varying numbers for longer or shorter periods.

There was difficulty in finding a substitute for the Maitland Hall, where the whole of College could assemble together, but for Sunday evening prayers this was solved by the kindness of the Vicar of St. Mary’s, who put the Parish Room over St. Mary’s Church at the disposal of the College. For College meetings the St. Mary Hall dining-room had to be used, chairs being discarded for the most part, and the audience sitting on the floor and window-sills. The corporate life of the College undeniably suffered a little from this dispersion.

The cliques and small sets which will always form in College life were narrower and more evident, and were bound to thrive in the isolation caused by distant lodging-houses and darkened streets. But there were compensations. The separation made a pleasant ventilation of that atmosphere which is bound to arise between the walls of a building devoted to an artificial segregation of one sex. ‘Schools fever’ abated in the new atmosphere; there was new light on old relationships; and out of it all the personality of the College emerged – different, perhaps, as the war left most things different, but strong as ever.

It is difficult to bring the change home to the imagination of the old student or the onlooker. It had both an element of romance and an element of the bizarre in it. The block into which Somerville moved was founded by Cecil Rhodes in tribute to the Oxford spirit as he conceived it; and the appeal that the University made to that strange mixture of the visionary and the materialist is an instance in itself of the diversified nature of the charm which Oxford always exerts on those who come within her walls. It was not in human nature, student nature anyway, not to feel some response to this move.
into the heart of Oxford, with St. Mary's chiming unusually loud across the way, the High curving outside, and meals in a gloom dark oak-panelled hall built in the early seventeenth century, whose precincts Sir Thomas More had haunted as an undergraduate. It was a breath of the spirit of Oxford which informs all education there. Yet the change came strangely mixed with Victorian furniture, red arm-chairs, and unfamiliar inconvenience.

The romance was similar to the privilege of going in for Divinity Moderations – an examination which, though duly appreciated as a picturesque survival, entailed hard work and an unwelcome fee. It was bought at the price of such inconvenience as basement bath-rooms, initiation into the complicated system of Oxford ‘staircases,’ and tea-parties given on a very insufficient ration of gas-rings. The daily life of the College was surprisingly little altered, however, and the move had been made with a knowledge on the part of the authorities of the friendships and peculiarities of the students. Everyone found not only their possessions safely transported but their neighbors judiciously arranged, and such social attributes as a power to share sitting-rooms nicely judged. Among minor inconveniences was the distance from the College boat-house, but that was overcome to some extent by punts at Magdalen Bridge, just at the bottom of the High. The Library was also very much missed. The Librarian had access to it at all times, but, of course, no work could be done there. Nearly a third of the books were transferred to one of the Oriel College lecture-rooms, and any book could be obtained from Somerville on application. For working purposes the Library was superseded by the Camera, the modern section and reading room of the Bodleian, which was conveniently near in Radcliffe Square.

If College traditions and life quickly adapted itself to the new surroundings, and retained little permanent impress of the change, we may perhaps claim that the presence of Somerville in Oriel exerted some influence on general opinion in Oxford. Somerville's behavior in its forced emergence from
retirement created, on the whole, a favorable impression. The
general expectation that the College in its new quarters might
do something unsuitable – no one quite knew what – was not
justified; and its preoccupation with its own affairs, both in
work and play, prevented any misuse of its position. Somerville
returned from its exile with much affection for the war-time
quarters and with no sense of having abused its privileges. A
clock was presented to the Oriel Junior Common Room, which
had been used by Somerville for its dining-hall, as a souvenir of
the four years.

Somerville as Hospital
Meanwhile the Somerville buildings themselves had been put
to excellent use as a hospital. The proximity of the College to
the Radcliffe Infirmary made it additionally useful as a hospital,
and an opening was made in the wall of the Hall to permit of
patients being carried straight through to the operating
theatre. Originally the College was a hospital for both officers
and men, the Maitland block only being kept for the former;
during the first year of its existence, however, it was converted
into an officers’ hospital, the number of small rooms making it
more peculiarly suited to such a purpose. The buildings were
beautifully light and airy, and even retained a certain faint
atmosphere of liveliness and learning. Many Oxford men –
dons, graduates, undergraduates whose careers had been
broken short by the war, or prospective undergraduates whose
careers were postponed by it – were send to Somerville as
casualties. Not a few of them have expressed their pleasure at
finding themselves in such congenial surroundings, in cheerful
rooms, with a green Oxford garden to look out upon, and
actually within reach of books.

The Maitland Hall was to some extent protected by having
parts of the floor and the panelling covered with deal. Bath-
rooms were built beside it, and it was at first used as the largest
ward, but later as the Officers’ Mess. The Hall J.C.R. was used
as a ward, and the Senior Common Room as a billiard-room.
Except the Library, every other available inch of space was utilized by the Hospital authorities, even to the extent of erecting a considerable number of tents in the garden, so that accommodation was provided for over three hundred patients. Somerville students naturally took the greatest interest in what they felt was their own hospital, and a ‘Comforts’ table was kept at St. Mary Hall for stamps and magazines, stationery and novels, for distribution among the wounded so long as it accommodated men and N.C.O.’s. One Term, arrangements were made for giving the men motor-drives; another Term, a working party, with the help of the College maids, produced a large parcel of socks and shirts for the hospital.

In March 1919 the buildings were at last restored, and in July St. Mary Hall was finally vacated. The Somerville buildings had been left in the condition that might be expected after four years of occupation as a military hospital; so that the process of cleaning and redecorating was very slow, and a difficult one for those concerned. Nevertheless, by the beginning of the Michaelmas Term, all essential repairs had been completed, and so the College settled down once again in its own home.

Muriel St. Clare Byrne and Catherine Hope Mansfield.

Miss A.C. Maitland, Principal of Somerville, 1895
Courtesy, Oxfordshire Libraries, Central Library, Westgate, Oxford
SOMERVILLE COLLEGE SONG
(To the tune of British Complaint – Welsh Melody)

(To the Welsh Air, "Cwylfan Prydain")

Omnès laetae nunc sodales
Concinentes gaudio
Uno corde conferamus
Laudem huic collegio;
Conditum quod olim jure
Nunc integritate stat
Atque permanebit orbem
Donec rursus impleat.

Enitentes ut sorores
Simus sapientiae
Jungimus labori ludum
Juvenes et impigiae.
Doctae floreant "Tutores",
Principalis floreat,
Semper venerandae donec
Orbem rursus impleat.

Florent Oxonienses
Urbs et Universitas
Ac nobis piis alumnis
Sit fides, sit veritas!
Omnès laudis studiosi
Nunquam laude careant——
Aedes Somervillienses
In aeternum floreant!

Helen Darbishire.
Margaret F. Moor.
Margaret Robertson.
1903.

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Review, Response, and Opinion
“Are Women Human Now?” A Reflective Essay

Crystal Hurd

I attended a Protestant church service just recently, as a guest, in which the pastor referred to women as “weaker vessels.” He then followed the logic, claiming that Satan targeted Eve because she was weak. In a room resounding with “amens,” the crowd grew curiously silent. Saving face, the pastor then recovered to say that he “couldn’t be blamed” because that is “what God said.”

Over the years, I have been subjected to such rhetoric. The Baptist church I grew up in was staunch on several points, one being that it was perfectly natural for a woman to teach classes and bake casseroles, but she was prohibited from preaching. This never bothered me much, as I had no aspirations to become a clergyman, but I never considered that other women would have such desires. I simply understood that, selfishly, this prohibition did not apply to me specifically. But this reflection is not about the ordination of women. Rather, it is about the fog of discrimination and prejudice fostered by some Protestant congregations and subcultures, based upon my experience.

I studied and understood scripture in my adolescence, but as a young adult I began to witness gender discrimination in various denominational settings. Some charismatic pastors had created, perhaps unintentionally, a deep and unrelenting privilege due to a particular interpretation of obscure verses which dictate what women “shouldn’t do.” Out of it is born the capacity for an unforgiving resentment of women, an unjustified need to assert power, and recently, a call to “recover masculinity” from the empathetic view of women that most of church culture currently espouses.
In its most aggressive form, such privilege can dismiss the whole of women without considering the individual. This is what Dorothy Sayers heralds in her essay “Are Women Human?” The female response, she rightly asserts, is not to recoil from such discrimination. Nor are women to retaliate with an iron-fisted patriotism toward our sex which Sayers identifies as “aggressive feminism.” Indeed, subverting the power dynamic is not a solution, but simply shifting an issue. Sayers mentions that “sex-equality” as an issue is both “delicate” and “complicated.” It is rooted in the desire to lump all of women into one category, creating an “us” and “them” dichotomy for some individuals.

Yet, this is our grave error, Sayers states. We have failed to see women as individuals. As an example, Sayers highlights how women are being trained in Aristotle. Tennyson, she writes, thought that a classical education would make women better wives. And yet, not better scholars? She posits, “What women want as a class is irrelevant. I want to know about Aristotle. It is true that most women care nothing about him, and a great many male undergraduates turn pale and faint at the thought of him—but I, eccentric individual that I am, do want to know about Aristotle, and I submit that there is nothing in my shape or bodily functions which need prevent my knowing about him” (26-27).

Why would men prevent such learning? The truth is, in contemporary American culture, most men would not prevent a woman from gaining an education. In fact, statistics and social observation prove that a majority of men have “come around” to a modern worldview in which women are valued for roles that can be untraditional. This is perhaps why the sanctuary was silent that morning during my visit, with a pastor grasping for approbation after revealing an unpopular interpretation of scripture.
But a select few men of uncharacteristic persuasion in the Protestant church honestly believe that Paul wished for women to be silent in the church, or that—indeed—women were an easier target for corruption in Eden than men. These men, I firmly believe, are not misogynists at heart; rather they are well-intended individuals who are simply repeating what was taught and endorsed as a common belief. But here the law is privileged above compassion and understanding. We as recipients of grace and mercy should recognize the law, but exercise mercy. Wrought-iron devotion should never substitute for common sense. Some men may perhaps wish to dissuade more competition by prohibiting women from participating in what is commonly viewed as a “man’s profession.” This is certainly not true in other walks of life. For example, although women have conventionally prepared food for the family, many famous chefs—with television shows and restaurants sprinkled all over the country—are men. There is no inherent shame in this. Men can cook. Women can cook. Need we add some senseless discrimination to such an occupation? Why must reproductive duties determine, with such ferocity, the nature of our fates? Sayer echoes this sentiment:

I am not complaining that the brewing and baking were taken over by men. If they can brew and bake as well as women or better, then by all means let them do it. But they cannot have it both ways. If they are going to adopt the very sound principle that the job should be done by the person who does it best, then that rule must be applied universally. If the women make better office-workers than men, they must have the office work... Once lay down the rule that the job comes first and you throw that job open to every individual, man or woman, fat or thin, tall or short, ugly or beautiful, who is able to do that job better than the rest of the world.” (33-34)
On an essential level, we all must be free to pursue our dreams. Wouldn’t it be a grievous fault to forbid a person from accomplishing a dream simply because of ego? Or fear? Pride usurping love for fellow man: in this perspective, it becomes a moral issue. Let all who are willing and determined attempt to succeed; we as a society thrive when the best individuals, regardless of gender, are doing the work set before them, the work ordained by God for them to do.

Work is a calling. Women, like the male counterpart of *homo erectus*, must have an occupation. We must have goals and schemes, plans and ambitions. Sayers admits that, “Every woman is a human being—one cannot repeat that too often—and a human being must have an occupation, if he or she is not to become a nuisance in the world” (33). These preconceived notions of womanhood are restrictive and often supersede what God has ordained for individuals. Often what we place on women as a “social norm” is in fact merely a recommendation that keeps a sturdy prop under the patriarchy. Although it is true that women have specific qualities which aid them in the care of children (including, but not limited to, breastfeeding) as well as organizing and maintaining a home, most of these duties (except for the nursing!) can be shared between spouses. After all, a house is a mutual space; studies show that women/mothers are now in the workplace more than ever in human history. If marriage truly is a partnership, then boundaries concerning the division of labor must be flexible and negotiable. Such intimate decisions should be determined by the two individuals involved in the marriage, with guidance but without interpretive interference. The family unit, each individual nuclear family, is a collaborative effort.

Some have inquired of me, “And who are you to cry foul on sexism? You who have beat men out of good jobs, you who have earned a doctorate in leadership, you who enjoy equal share in an egalitarian marriage?” I must reply, “I have earned
employment positions with hard work and consistency. I earned my degree with hard work and consistency. My marriage also requires hard work and consistency. These values contribute to my marriage by making me a better partner in life, but also an observant, conscientious human equipped with a mirror (my spouse). Scripture states that iron sharpens iron. How can I help my husband when I am considered by some inferior? Weak and compromised metal is useless in such a task.

Have we improved since Dorothy Sayers sketched those words across the page? Certainly. Should we then capitulate our struggle to earn better opportunities for hard-working women with unquenchable aspirations like Sayers? No. As the sermon painfully reminded me, we still have much work to do in certain aspects of our culture to ensure that every deserving woman has a chance to achieve her desired outcome. Now more than ever, such dreams can be achieved. Young females are searching for role models who display a diversity of talents. Homemaking and childrearing are admirable indeed. But those who stray from conventionality, what of them?

Like Sayers, we must dedicate ourselves to the work before us. Do not simply speak of society’s ills but work tirelessly to create lasting change, no matter the gender. I am optimistic at the cultural and social shifts which welcome women into places where we were previously discouraged, but there is still more to be done around the globe in respecting women’s work, whatever the term “work” chooses to be. It is a spiritual issue. When we see beyond the gender to the human beneath, these misconceptions vanish like a morning mist. We are spiritual beings, unified as members of the body of Christ. This is the idea that blends us together and defines us, a spirit that connects us all in larger and more pervasive ways than our carnal bodies.
A Review of Dorothy L. Sayers: Her Life and Soul by Barbara Reynolds

Barbara Reynolds wrote this biography for publication on the 100th anniversary of the celebrated author’s birth. There had been some attempts previously to write about this idiosyncratic lady, but Ms. Reynolds has made the best job yet as to the revelation of Dorothy Leigh Sayers, woman, author, playwright, and translator. Indeed, she was a good friend of the author in later life, was her god-daughter, had access to photos and materials hitherto unavailable to other biographers, and subsequently organized some five volumes of Sayers’ correspondence, as well as penning The Passionate Intellect: Dorothy L. Sayers’ Encounter with Dante (1989). She shared a birthday with Sayers, June 13, chaired the Dorothy L. Sayers Society from 1986 to 1994 and was its president from 1995 until her death in 2015.

Lewis Carroll — ‘Begin at the beginning, the King said, very gravely, and go on till you come to the end: then stop.’

As Dorothy’s Lord Peter Wimsey was fond of telling people, and as a good story teller should, Ms. Reynolds follows closely the timely unfolding of Dorothy’s childhood and early life in Oxford and London. She uses the letters extensively and incorporates a sense of the times in which Dorothy L. Sayers was growing up. Dorothy was the beloved only child of older parents, born in Oxford, and grown to young womanhood in Bluntisham Rectory, Cambridgeshire, amongst her parents, and elderly aunts and uncles. She was schooled at home from a very young age, (indeed, her father began teaching her Latin at the tender age of six!), then was sent to Godolphin School in
Salisbury to prepare for an Oxford education. Her Oxford years were affected by the advent of the Great War, but she developed a deep and abiding love for Oxford that is to be seen particularly in her novel, *Gaudy Night*.

Her literary career began early, with stories, poems, cantatas, and renditions of some her favourite authors such as Molière and Dumas in play form. She wrote dutifully, as Edwardian children did, to her parents whilst at school. Reynolds points out the frankness and directness of these letters, though a previous biographer (Brabazon, 1981) felt she was simply telling them what they needed to hear and not being entirely truthful with them. Her enthusiasms were certainly expressed in them as well as a supreme self-confidence and sense of her talents in both music and writing! She praised others, as well as herself, with unabashed self-assurance. She was smart, quick-witted and clever and she knew it! “I mean to be famous”, she is alleged to have said, “and I will let no-one stand in my way.” Whether this was said seriously or self-mockingly is not known, but there is little doubt that she knew she had a creative imagination and a talent for writing (1993: 25).”

She came of age in changing times. The Great War was greatly transfiguring the role of young women in Britain and Dorothy moved through this time as a young, inexperienced and unsophisticated adult, caught between changing attitudes and the older social mores of Edwardian England. Ms. Reynolds candidly portrays for us this growing up, this coming of age, with the struggles and the lighter moments of a young woman trying to make her own way through wartime Oxford; then postwar life: attempting to become independent of her parents financially, and finding that it was being a writer was what she really most wanted.

She was supported throughout this time by her friends, (lifelong friends), of a Mutual Admiration Society, MAS, formed whilst in school: trading literary ideas, criticism, sharing teen angst, social times, and helping one another
whenever needed, emotionally and practically. Dorothy meets many men at this time, both in England and France, and Barbara Reynolds often can detect bits and pieces of the future Lord Peter, and other fictional characters in Dorothy’s observations of them. Indeed, she had begun writing “Whose Body?” at this time, and had found a publishing firm for it at last, just as her employment at Benson’s, an advertising agency in London, began. Ms. Reynolds portrays well the flowering of the many-faceted character of this lady with whom she was to have an adult friendship, (they met in 1946), by drawing upon Dorothy’s letters, a sense of the times, and her own personal knowledge of the writer in later life.

Ms. Reynolds next addresses the most speculated upon episodes in Dorothy’s life in the same way: her relationship with author, John Cournos, an affair with Bill White and her subsequent pregnancy and how she got herself through this time with no public disclosures. I found her final paragraphs concerning this period of Dorothy’s life to be the most significant as she drew upon her friendship with the woman in later life to write them. They shared an abiding high Anglican faith (Dorothy L. Sayers was her godmother when she underwent adult baptism) and Ms. Reynolds found this to be an important point to use to settle speculations about Dorothy’s sensibilities as to this part of her life. “Much has been made of the burden of guilt which Dorothy L. Sayers, the celebrated detective novelist and pillar of the Church, supposedly carried because of her illegitimate son. This is to disregard the fact that she was an Anglo-Catholic and that, as it has been shown, it was her practice to go to confession....Whenever it was that she entered into a state of repentance, her recourse then was to make confession and seek absolution. When she did so, the burden of guilt was lifted.... In any event, as an instructed Catholic, she would know that she must individually take responsibility for what had occurred (1993: 141).”
Sayers’ mature adult life is skillfully told, once again through a use of her letters and reminiscences from others, as well as Reynolds’ personal exchanges with an older Dorothy. I, as a lover of her mystery writing, particularly enjoyed how Reynolds weaves the writing of the beloved lord Peter Wimsey canon into this hectic, emotional, and somewhat exhausting time of Dorothy L.’s life. Her mind just seemed to have compartments for separate occupations, for she began to take interest in play writing and theatre production as she was more or less finishing her canon of Lord Peter Wimsey and detective fiction. An invitation to write a play for the Canterbury Festival was the start of her religious play writing. A secretary once remarked that she would keep sets of writing in different rooms in her house: one room for materials of a play, one for a novel she might be working on, another for a speech or talk she was preparing!

Ms. Reynolds describes the war years as the consummation of Dorothy’s energetic creativity and intellect. This time also marks her BBC radio play broadcasts. They were at first quite controversial for their style and language, though later were to be deemed very successful. She tries to convey to us the author’s rather reluctant status as a religious apologist, and national figure as the Mind of the Maker and The Man Born to be King became well-known. The more she was pressured to render religious opinions, attend symposiums, and write speeches, the more she spoke of not being able to do her ‘proper job’ as a creative writer.

As an older woman, many found her opinionated and testy. While it is true she did not suffer fools gladly, it is also true that those who were close to her found her sense of humour and wicked wit, her kindesses and concern for others in the close circle of her life, endearing. One is drawn back to a scene in which her character, Harriet Vane, states categorically to a group of women dons in Oxford: “She paused. ‘I know what you’re thinking – that anybody with proper sensitive feeling would rather scrub floors for a living. But I should scrub floors
very badly, and I write detective stories rather well. I don’t see why proper feeling should prevent me from doing my proper job’ (*Gaudy Night*, 1935).

Dorothy L. Sayers’ ability to combine intellect and creativity in her work is to be seen in all her myriad enthusiasms throughout her literary career. No matter the genre nor subject, Reynolds finds in her a liveliness of mind that is brought to bear in any type of writing she undertook. That was her proper job. For those who value her religious and humanist writings or those who admire her fiction, or translations, there is always that Dorothy “quality” to be found in her words.

Reynolds speaks of the influences of writers such as Wilkie Collins, (for whom there is an unfinished biography much like Harriet Vane and her LeFanu!), and Charles Williams, by whom her fascination with Dante was fostered in the last fourteen years of her life. Another point her biographer makes is Dorothy’s view of the intellect: “She regarded the intellect as androgynous – neither male nor female, but human, and she took pleasure in using it, as she did in using her writing skills. She rejoiced in the English language and in the right use of it by others (1993: 359).” Indeed, this thought brings to mind Lord Peter, who, although not really a writer himself, is famously quoted in *Gaudy Night* as answering Harriet Vane’s query of “Do you find it easy to get drunk on words?” with the following: “So easy that, to tell you the truth, I am seldom perfectly sober.”

I should like to have read more about her Dante years. Reynolds does address the enthusiasm with which the author undertakes her study and subsequent translation of Dante. Indeed, Barbara Reynolds herself was to take up and finish Sayers’s *Paradiso* for its publication after Dorothy Leigh Sayers’ rather unexpected death just before Christmas, 1957. Perhaps Ms. Reynolds felt she had handled that subject in her previous book: *The Passionate Intellect: Dorothy L Sayers’ Encounters with Dante* (1989). It shall be next on my ‘to read’ list!
As a further temptation for one to read this book, I close, as Ms. Reynolds does, with a poem by a young, Oxonian poet entitled “Hymn in Contemplation of Sudden Death.”

“Though immature, it speaks with a strange prescience for the whole of her life.” (1993: 364)

Lord, if this night my journey end,
I thank Thee first for many a friend,
The sturdy and unquestioned piers
That run through my bridge of years.

And next, for all the love I gave
To things and men this side the grave,
Wisely or not, since I can prove
There always is much good in love.
Next, for the power Thou gavest me
To view the world mirthfully,
For laughter, paraclete of pain,
Like April suns across the rain.

Also that, being not too wise
To do things foolishly in men’s eyes,
I gained experience by this,
And saw life somewhat as it is.

Next, for the joy of labour done
And burdens shouldered in the sun;
Nor less, for shame of labour lost,
And meekness born of a barren boast.

For every fair and useless thing
That bids men pause from labouring
To look and find the larkspur blue
And marigolds of a different hue;
For eyes to see and ears to hear,
For tongue to speak and thews to bear,
   For hands to handle, feet to go,
   For life, I give Thee thanks also.
For all things merry, quaint and strange,
For sound and silence, strength and change,
   And last, for death, which only gives
   Value to every thing that lives;

For these, good Lord that madest me,
    I praise Thy name; since verily,
    I of my joy have had no dearth
Though this night were my last on earth.

Dorothy Leigh Sayers (OP. I., 1916: 66)
(Previously appeared in The Oxford Magazine)

Nancy Vermette
Nordegg, Alberta, Canada
Among all the MAS members, early and later, Doreen Wallace was, perhaps, the most consistently active campaigner for social and economic reform. She was also an artist, teacher, academic, poet, farmer, wife, mother and grandmother known as Mrs. Rash in Wortham, Suffolk.

June Shepherd, in her timely biography of Wallace, give us a comprehensive picture of a seldom-recognized Somerville MAS powerhouse, one who deeply affected women’s history through the sheer determination of her social activism and through her numerous novels and writings.

Shepherd’s biography is divided into eleven chapters, preceded by a list of illustrations, acknowledgements, introduction, preface, and author’s note in which June Shepherd speaks of her several short meetings with Doreen, known to her family and friends as “Eileen,” regarding “The Tithe War” of Suffolk in 1965. The author notes that, at that time, she had no idea that one day she would write Wallace’s biography but also notes that the time has come, in women’s studies, to appreciate the determined social activist who chronicled life in country towns and villages in Suffolk. By her
vision of equality and activism, Doreen Wallace influenced the political climate of those areas, organizing marches and revolts against unfair taxation and unsustainable wages imposed upon the working class.

Following her exploration of the life of D.E.A. Wallace from youth through death, Shepherd includes a useful Appendix of Wallace’s rarely found poetry (greatly appreciated), a selected bibliography, and an index. By her comprehensive and detailed approach to the purpose-driven life of Doreen Wallace, Shepherd has given us, particularly those of use interested in the life paths of Mutual Admiration Society members, earlier and later waves, a work which is, in this reviewer’s opinion, the standard reference for the writings and life achievements of D.E.A. Wallace, Somerville student, MAS writer, and lifelong social activist.

In her organization of the book, the author delves almost immediately into Wallace’s Oxford experience in Chapter II, “Oxford and a Lost Love.” Doreen arrived in Oxford during the autumn of 1916, approximately one year after Dorothy L. Sayers had left Oxford. Doreen, along with other Somerville students, were located to private lodgings, there not being enough room in the new quarters at Oriel. As a result, Doreen was a Somerville College student and Home student at the same time. She chose to remain a Home student in her third year, even when accommodations opened at Oriel. Thus situated in town, it was easy for Doreen and Dorothy to strike up a friendship in 1917 when Dorothy returned to the city of Oxford. June Shepherd, in this chapter, makes the fairly ironic point that although women still were not awarded an Oxford
degree, during this war period most of the university was being run by women, the men exiting in large numbers to serve in the war. From 1914 through 1919, the University of Oxford was primarily a women’s university in administration, teaching, and student population.

Oxford suited Doreen very well. Somerville Hall was nondenominational and thereby, in Doreen’s opinion, unfettered by religious status. Although somewhat a loner, Doreen enjoyed the friendship and fun of Somerville. “There was about her an air of individuality, of being her own woman, that attracted people to her…. She smoked, as was highly fashionable, a habit that stayed with her for most of her life (Shepherd, 2000: 17).”

The most intriguing portion of this biography, for our purposes, occurs in Chapter II when Shepherd recounts the relationship between Sayers and Wallace. They met after Sayers returned to Oxford in 1917 as an intern with Basil Blackwell publishers. Wallace was a student at Somerville and became a member of the writing circle, along with Byrne, Rowe, Thompson, Barber, Jaeger, Reid, Kennedy, and others. Although no longer a Somerville student, Sayers invited Wallace to her Sunday teas which she held among her bookish friends, men and women, to promote literary discussion and share writings, almost as a gender-friendly extension of the MAS, post-Somerville for Sayers.

Doreen’s strong, individualistic, personality drew her to Dorothy L. Sayers who lodged at Bath Place, just around the corner from Doreen’s rooms. “The two bright young women were drawn together by their wit, high spirits, and precocious
love of learning (2000: 18).” In fact, Dorothy often tutored Doreen in French and literature during this period. Both girls were living a hard existence, neither earning enough money, or receiving adequate financial support from parents, and their friendship solidified through this period of want. A further interest Sayers and Wallace shared was a love of poetry. Both were confirmed poets and loved to play with language, rhyme, and rhythm. They loved words and the structures of language, poetry, and writing. Thanks to June Shepherd’s thoroughness, the reader is given a taste of Wallace’s poetry in the Appendix.

Shepherd recounts a delightful episode when Dorothy joined Doreen and her friends, Eleanor and Leon Geach, for one weekend of vacation in Chipping Norton. Doreen devised a rhyming game which gave rise to a “Rhyming Club.” Dorothy became a member of the club during her weekend stay, and she and Doreen composed several verses, most of which are not extant, but a sample has survived and is shared by Shepherd in Chapter II. The reviewer cannot resist including this, Dorothy, Eleanor (a friend), and Doreen’s, combined poetic effort:

You were as potter’s clay between my hands; (Doreen)
I was the potter with the heavy thumb. (Eleanor)
I worked you into two umbrella stands - (Dorothy)
Throughout the job you were entirely dumb. (Doreen)
Or, even better...

Three horsemen came a-riding over the moor and fell; (Doreen)
They were the devil’s messengers, spewed from the nether hell. (Eleanor)
They knocked upon my door and said that they had come for me. (Doreen)
I said: ‘O yes, pray do come in, you’re just in time for tea.’ (Dorothy)

So what happened to their friendship? Perhaps the answer lies in the personality of each writer as well as in their philosophical differences. Sayers was, at this time in her life, an Edwardian traditionalist and evangelical Christian who was deeply involved in her Anglican spiritual beliefs, to the extent of keeping religious symbols (e.g., crosses) on her desk at Blackwell’s, rejoining the Bach Choir, and vigorously writing the romantic, religious, poetry found in Catholic Tales and Christian Songs. Wallace was a confirmed atheist and Socialist whose writings not only reflected those beliefs but encouraged English social reform toward the politics of Socialism. These differences, in the end, served a death-knell to a possible long-term friendship. As Dorothy’s and Doreen’s friendship cooled, each had rather unkind things to say of the other. June Shepherd does not gloss over these comments which sometimes cross over to insults, but presents them to the reader in a true biographer’s neutral fashion. The final break occurred when Sayers referred to a character in Gaudy Night as
one who made a fatal decision to become a failed Socialist farmer, a line of work which, additionally, did not suit her training in the least, and a job which could have been done much better by the working class. Doreen took this as a personal insult, and the break was final. Neither woman attempted a reconciliation. Dorothy and Doreen’s story provides an example of a MAS-inspired friendship which did not last into the professional career of each.

In all, this reviewer found Doreen Wallace’s biography to be handled well by her biographer, June Shepherd. We get a rounded, comprehensive, yet deliciously detailed account of the life of Doreen Wallace, from Oxford student and poet, through her friendship with Dorothy Sayers, to her later life as writer and Socialist farm manager. It was a complex life, filled with extraordinary events and curious people. Although a popular author in the mid-twentieth century, Wallace is not often remembered in this day and age. It is time to bring Doreen Wallace again into the consciousness of women’s contribution to history and to honor her remarkable life.

Reviewed by Barbara L. Prescott
Wheaton, IL
WHOSE BODY? A Play Based on the Novel by Dorothy L. Sayers

Adapted by Frances Limoncelli, Chicago, Lifeline Theatre, 2019

Reviewed by Emily McClanathan

The first hints of autumn weather have barely touched Chicago, but with its season opener, Lifeline Theatre turns to that coziest of genres: the classic British murder mystery. Jess Hutchinson directs a revival of WHOSE BODY?, adapted by Frances Limoncelli from the 1923 novel by Dorothy Sayers. Though the English author and scholar is not exactly a household name for modern American audiences, Sayers counted C.S. Lewis among her friends and was one of the first women to graduate from Oxford University. WHOSE BODY? marks the debut of her best-known character, Lord Peter Wimsey, a quirky aristocrat with impeccable taste in antique books, classical music, and fine wine--as well as a penchant for amateur sleuthing.

When a middle-class architect discovers a dead body in his bath, wearing nothing but a pair of pince-nez spectacles, Wimsey is called in to consult. This curious case soon becomes a double mystery when a prominent member of London society goes missing, and the official Scotland Yard detectives are determined to connect the two incidents. Wimsey must follow a trail of clues that bring him into contact with a host of entertaining stock characters: the flustered maid, the uncouth American railroad tycoon, the bull-headed policeman, the
simpering socialite, and more. Alan Donahue's set cleverly accommodates a variety of locations by hiding cubbies in Wimsey's wood-paneled, book-lined drawing room; these open to reveal set pieces that indicate a bedroom, an office, a courtroom, and an open grave.

William Anthony Sebastian Rose II portrays Lord Peter Wimsey with charm and humor, clearly having mined the source material to recreate this character for the stage. For anyone who has read the books, Sayers' detailed descriptions of Wimsey's mannerisms practically leap off the page, and Rose nails his drawling speech, drooping eyelids, eloquent eyebrows, and graceful gestures. Caitlin McLeod and Anna Wooden's elegantly tailored costumes ensure that he looks every inch the aristocrat. Though some lines are lost through Rose's stylized delivery, overall it's a well-crafted performance. Wimsey's friendly banter with his faithful butler, Bunter (Scott Danielson), is reminiscent of P.G. Wodehouse's Jeeves and Wooster--though in this case, butler and gentleman are more equally matched in the IQ department.

A fine supporting cast join Rose, each playing multiple roles. Katie McLean Hainsworth shares a natural rapport with Rose as Wimsey's mother, the Duchess of Denver, from whom her son inherits his mischievous sense of humor and zest for adventure. John Drea, a senior at Loyola University, displays versatility doubling as Inspector Parker, the intelligent, hard-working police detective, and Mr. Thipps, the harried, absent-minded architect who discovers the body in his bath. Joshua K. Harris, Michaela Voit, and Tony Bozzuto give comedic turns in a variety of roles, while Bozzuto also plays Dr. Julian Freke, the
smooth-talkin psychiatrist who espouses some troubling views about the criminal mind. Though many of the minor roles veer into caricature, this tendency can be forgiven as a staple of the genre—especially in the hands of this entertaining cast.

On a more serious note, the play introduces a recurring theme from the Wimsey novels: the detective's struggles with PTSD, or 'shell-shock,' as a WWI veteran. A former army officer, Wimsey suffers from nightmares, hallucinations, and paralyzing guilt about the men who died under his command. In this adaptation, his shell-shock returns when he solves the case but cannot stomach the idea of sending another man, even a murderer, to his death. Hutchinson's staging hints at this plot thread early on, with eerie flashes of light that silhouette images of barbed wire, trenches, and dead soldiers through the set's back wall. These glimpses are brief enough to confuse audience members without previous knowledge of the Wimsey canon, though Act I culminates in a fevered dream sequence that more clearly sets up Wimsey's troubled conscience in Act II. Once the idea is fleshed out, it forms a sobering snapshot of the period between the two world wars, when the psychological effects of combat were first widely recognized.

WHOSE BODY? may not boast the most intricate of whodunit plots, but this atmospheric period piece offers plenty of entertainment. Wimsey fans will appreciate a faithful adaptation of Sayers' beloved detective. However, previous familiarity is by no means required; this strongly acted, creatively designed murder mystery is well worth a visit from anyone who enjoys the genre.
WHOSE BODY? plays through October 27 at Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood Avenue, Chicago, IL 60626. Tickets are priced from $20 - $45 and are available at 773.761.4477 or LifelineTheatre.com.

Appeared originally in BroadwayWorld (broadwayworld.com), September 22, 2019, by Emily McClanathan.

Emily McClanathan is a communications professional and freelance theater critic based in Chicago. She holds a Master of Arts in Modern History from King’s College London.

Photo credit: B. Prescott
Every two years, in the heartland of the Midwest, at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana, a miracle of a colloquium appears in June, one which draws Inklings and Linklings scholars from around the world in a four-day feast of papers, poetry, music, and theatre. The biennial event reflects various expressions of scholarship and literary adventure, both student and seasoned, which are centered on C.S. Lewis and his friends of the mind and spirit; Dorothy L. Sayers and other Linklings being part of that thoughtful, extended, circle. This conference is the Frances White Ewbank Colloquium on C.S. Lewis and Friends, the latest convocation having occurred in 2018 and organized around the theme, *The Faithful Imagination*. The Proceedings of the conference are published the following year by Winged Lion Press in hard cover format. The current substantial and seminal book, containing essays from the XIth Colloquium, provides a reading festival in itself.

The Lewis & Friends Colloquium is a huge event, organized with awe-inspiring attention to detail and perfect timing. I am always amazed at how right everything goes during the entire four day phenomenon. I am, furthermore, always pleasantly surprised at the personal kindness and care toward others that is evident among participants and organizers, a graceful touch not often associated with large conferences.

Those points being made, this reviewer will attempt to comment on most of the thirty papers included, happily and unapologetically highlighting the magic moments of scholarly

There are a number of fascinating papers and topics in this volume that insist, by their quality, upon being recognized and recommended to both Inklings and Linklings enthusiasts. First of all, in ‘Preface: “A Balcony Perspective,”’ by Ashley Chu, we are given an insider’s view of what it’s like to organize and carry out plans for a multi-faceted conference which grows by leaps and bounds every two years. Many people contribute to the success of the event. Some of those wonderwomen and supermen are Joe Ricke, Director; Ashley Chu, Archivist; Dan Bowell, Anne Cooper, Kaylen Dwyer, and Michael Hammond of the Colloquium Planning Committee, Julie Moore and Eden Woodruff Tait, Judges; and most importantly the many, many, students and volunteers who make sure things go smoothly (these unnamed heroes and heroines really run the show).

The Keynote speech of the XIth conference, “Dorothy L. Sayers and the Wages of Cinema,” was given by Dr. Crystal Downing, noted author of *Writing Performances: The Stages of Dorothy L. Sayers (2004)* and forthcoming book, *Subversive: Christ, Culture, and the Shocking Dorothy L. Sayers*. Dr. Downing is Co-Director of the Marion E. Wade Center in Wheaton, IL. What joy to introduce a colloquium on C.S. Lewis with the work of Dorothy L. Sayers. It was an elegant touch.

The Foreword to *The Faithful Imagination*, “Across the Threshold,” thoughtfully written by Crystal Hurd, is a personal reflection on the reasons this conference (“a blur of bliss and blessing”) is such an important event, as it “brings together scholars, writers, poets, literary fans, and provides a place to unite under a common banner to appreciate the works of our beloved authors.”

The text proper is organized into six sections, each dealing with a topic of Lewis’s work, his family, or the links to Lewis by other writers and their work, as well as creative works
inspired by Lewis & Friends, and, finally, a collection of participant reflections on the Colloquium.

Section I, Essays on C.S. Lewis, holds seven essays focusing entirely on Lewis, his family, and his own writings. “Bookish, Clever People,” by Crystal Hurd gives us a clear view of the environment in which Lewis grew and of the close relationships of his youth, a topic which is certainly of importance as we consider the influences in youth upon Lewis which shaped his own later influential writing. Following is Devin Brown’s essay, “When Lewis Suggests More Than He States,” providing a fascinating insight to the clues which at times exist beneath Lewis’s written words, clues which take us further to the center of his profound truths. Next, we are taken to Narnia, in Vickie Holtz Wodzak’s, “Lewis Underground: Echoes of the Battle of Arras in The Narniad,” where we learn that Lewis’s personal experiences in World War I may have influenced certain of his written descriptions of scenes in Narnia. Daniel Ippolito’s, “C.S. Lewis’s Moral Law Apologetic and Modern Evolutionary Biology,” interestingly connects Lewis with Domning’s insight that “our faith (through grace) requires us to transcend our biological selfishness.” In “The Five Deaths of C.S. Lewis,” Jennifer Woodruff Tait makes the cogent point that Lewis’s life was profoundly shaped by death, particularly that of his mother and of Joy Davidman, thus shaping his writings as he grappled with that complexity.

Kyoko Yuasa provides a treat with “Surprised by Walking: C.S. Lewis’s Channel of Adoration,” as she integrates Lewis’s walking habit with his love of God and notes the importance of the ways through which God speaks to us by our habits and experiences. Similarly, in “Faith Awakened in the Woods of Narnia,” Jim Stockton guides us toward a picture of Narnia as a “magical world wherein natural entities (particularly trees) are often portrayed as harbingers of faith,” yet “offer much more than a foreshadowing of faithful events.” In this section, we are offered a variety of insights regarding Lewis’s thought
processes, inspirations, and influences upon his life and work. Each paper is a gem.

Section II, “Lewis and…,” contains nine papers, each of which examines Lewis’s connection with familiar or unexpected authors, partners, or churchmen. In the first two papers, “C.S. Lewis’s Assessment of George MacDonald’s Writings” by Marsha Daigle-Williamson and “Good Death”: What C.S. Lewis Learned from Phantastes,” by Edwin Woodruff Tait, we are firmly placed into the connected worlds of Lewis and a primary influence, George MacDonald. It is very good to have the connection reinforced within the context of this collection, and I appreciated the reminder of the primary link between Lewis and MacDonald, both papers bringing into focus MacDonald’s writings of fantasy which so inspired young Lewis’s own imagination. In the charming, “CS. Lewis and Joy Davidman Disagree about a Phoenix,” by Joe R. Christopher, the feisty relationship between Joy and Jack is brought into focus by an examination of several sonnets to Jack from Joy, and by their lively talks which added such interest to their complex relationship.

At this point, I was delighted to find “A Difference of Degree: Sayers and Lewis on the Creative Imagination.” Oh joy, a Sayers paper! Gary Tandy observes that Lewis and Sayers viewed creative imagination in slightly different perspective, or degree, which certainly reflected their spirited friendship, Lewis considering Sayers a friend but not an ally, and Sayers doubting Lewis’s understanding of women in general. Despite their differences of degree regarding the creative imagination (or, perhaps, because of them), Sayers and Lewis kept up a lively correspondence, sometimes touching on this topic, over many years. Tandy makes the point that both authors believed “literary works could be entertaining as well as edifying, could both delight and teach,” yet were able to disagree within that context regarding a Christian aesthetic, and one argument in particular surfaced over Sayers’ Mind of the Maker. Read the
article for Tandy’s scholarly insights and for Lewis’s and Sayers’ feisty written communications.

In “Lessons from Venus: Lewis’s Perelandra and Barlow’s History of a World of Immortals Without a God,” astronomer Kristine Larsen takes us on the journey to other worlds, Perelandra and a World of Immortals, where Lewis and Barlow, versed in the same theological and philosophical viewpoints, used their science fiction as a vehicle to explore those viewpoints. Brenton Dickieson presents an intriguing study of Lewis and Montgomery as unmet conversation partners in “C.S. Lewis’s Sehnsucht and L.K. Montgomery’s Flash: Vocation and the Numinous.” Following this vein of cosmic fantasy, John Stanifer provides an entertaining link between “Cosmic Horror vs. Cosmic Redemption: C.S. Lewis and H.P. Lovecraft.” It’s about time these two authors were linked in an alternate reality. Grace Seeman takes us to the literary realm of “A Passive Darkness: the Veil in Henry Vaughan’s “Cock-Crowing” and C.S. Lewis’s Till We Have Faces,” where we learn of Lewis’s literary links to yet another author, Henry Vaughan, as both authors use the imagery of darkness and light to embue the image of “the veil” with theological nuance.

Rounding out this section focusing on the links between Lewis and others, Richard James looks at the relationship of spirit between Anglican churchman Bleakley and Lewis in “All this and Heaven Too”: the Friendship of David Bleakley and C.S. Lewis,” by presenting a brief overview of Bleakley’s life in which Lewis figured as mentor and friend. These papers, each and every one, give important insights to Lewis’s great sphere of literary, religious, and philosophical influence among those whose writings and work he affected and who, in turn, had an effect upon Lewis’s own work and life.

Section III goes one step further, this time by focusing on Inklings and Others (those whom I call “Linklings”). Eight essays comprise this part of the book. The first, by Grace Tiffany on “Shakespeare’s and Tolkien’s People-Trees,” brings a Middle English flavor to Middle Earth yet underscores the
differences between Shakespeare’s focus, at times, upon political drama, for which Tolkien did not particularly care, and Tolkien’s sense of story as a freer domain when creating a plot as he “found all tales most enthralling when they unfolded in some Other-world, where stones had virtue, ropes and rings sought their masters, and trees were spirits who walked.” Allison DeBoer brings the elusive Tom Bombadil into the conversation with “Tom Bombadil: Lessons from the True Ring Lord,” as she argues that “Tom Bombadil – through his unique relationship to the ring, his persistent childlike nature ..., and his influence within and outside his borders,... - encourages readers to become more attuned to the world around them while letting go of the need for control.” Following is “Rings, Charms, and Horcruxes: Souls and Sacrificial Love in Harry Potter and The Lord of the Rings, by Emily Austin, focusing upon the use by both authors of “vivid dichotomies to illustrate ideas about morality and human nature” which “emphasize the importance of the soul and its relationship to love, particularly love that is sacrificial.” Lesley Willis Smith, in her paper, “Baptising the Reader: The Faithful Imagination in George MacDonald,” examines the vision of MacDonald to write not for children, but for the childlike, within three of MacDonald’s famous stories: The Princess and the Goblin, At the Back of the North Wind, and The Princess and Curdie. Marie Hammond brings a novel by Joy Davidman into focus with, “Joy Davidman’s Weeping Boy: An Anti-Catholic Diatribe?” as she examines whether a political maneuver to discourage distribution of Davidman’s novel, Weeping Boy, occurred because of the novel’s interpreted hostility to the Catholic Church. The author brings into question, as well, whether Davidman’s novel is of enduring value or should be “interpreted as a simple diatribe, best left forgotten.” Read her most interesting argument.

At this point in the collection, we arrive at the current reviewer’s essay, “Literary Images of Christ as Hero in the Poetry of Dorothy L. Sayers: The Influence of English and
French Romanticism,” which has been curiously transformed, through a creative editing process, into “Christ as Outlaw in Dorothy L. Sayers’s (sic) Catholic Tales.” I was very surprised to find this unexpected rewritten version, with my name attached to it, rather like a goblin child that had been switched in place of my original baby. That being said, this reviewer (and author) is relieved to report that the main thesis, i.e., the telling effect of the English and French Romanticist Movement on the imaginative spiritual poetry of Dorothy L. Sayers as manifested in Catholic Tales and Christian Songs, remained somewhat intact, despite the condensed rewrite, rewording, and curious title change. For purposes of accuracy, and for the complete argument, the reader is directed to the author’s original essay which can be found in Academia.edu and through this link: https://works.bepress.com/barbara-prescott/.

Next in line is Paul Michelson’s, “W.H. Lewis, Writer and Historian: A Prolegomena,” in which the author directs our attention to the writings of Warren Hamilton Lewis, brother of Clive Staples, whose writings have, until recently, received surprisingly little attention among Inkling scholars. The purpose of the paper is to introduce the “other” Lewis as then-popular historian and writer. This reviewer must comment that it is about time Warren is recognized for his expertise as biographer, historian, and boating enthusiast, taking his rightful place among noted writers of the period. A bibliography of all known boating articles by W.H. Lewis follows the essay. The final paper in this section, “Two Different Lewises in Barfield’s “Pegasus” Poem,” by Stephen Thorsen, comments upon the various personae of C.S Lewis, focusing upon two of those personae reflected in Barfield’s poem. An “ideal” Lewis is summarized in the poem, as Perseus “made peace with his creative eros (Andromeda) and was ultimately constellated...in the heavens.”

The essays of Section III are a feast for those who wish to learn about the unusual connections of C.S. Lewis and those individuals, some not widely recognized, whom he influenced,
as well as rare and intriguing insights into hitherto unknown aspects of the writings of the Inklings and Linklings. More Sayers papers are, of course, always welcome. Read each and every article to learn something new about the fascinating, and sometimes unexpected, literary world of C.S. Lewis and his friends in the kingdom of Oxford.

Section four, “Essays on the Faithful Imagination,” consists of seven papers ranging from the Bible’s wisdom literature to teaching Phantastes in the classroom. The first article, “Mary, Martha, and the Faithful Imagination” by Reverend Doctor Laura A. Smit, directs our attention to the New Testament gospel of Luke, in conjunction with Dorothy Sayers’ article, “The Human-not-quite-human,” as Dr. Smith tackles straightforwardly the elephant in the room, sexism, in the interpretation of the Mary and Martha passage. If you’ve ever been uncomfortable with attempts to “explain away its text,” this article is for you. Richard G. Smith brings us back to the Old Testament in his, “Paradoxical Integrity in Job: The Faithful Imagination in the Hebrew Bible’s Wisdom Literature,” as he points out that, “To ask what constitutes a faithful imagination is to inquire about wisdom itself.” Smith discusses Job and the Theodicean Imagination, Job and the Traditional Anxious Imagination, Job and Competing Heavenly Imaginations, and Job and Competing Earthly Imaginations, among other Job-related issues of study. Read this article for Smith’s reflections upon our, as well as Job’s, ability to “punch on through to experience God’s unexpected revelation and care in ways they could not have imagined” before living through such heavy experiences.

Next is a useful article by John Pennington on “Teaching Phantastes to Today’s Students.” The author posits the unique idea that a shared enthusiasm by today’s students for the book is possible if the story is considered vital to the rise of the realist novel, rather than simply being considered mid-century fantasy literature. This places the study of Phantastes in an
alternate genre, and one which widens its importance to the overall growth of nineteenth-century literature.

Following is an unusual selection, “Warming the Wintry Heart: Redemptive Storytelling in “the Rime of the Ancient Mariner and Adela Cathcart,” by Abby Palmisano who comments that a curiosity of winter is “how often it represents not so much of a particular emotion or feeling, but a lack of emotion.” The author discusses this feature in relation to the redemptive process in an effort to acknowledge both the “horrible and wonderful in the world.” Next, D. Shane Combs directs our attention to “Considering Joy: Spiritual Centering and the Faithful Imagination,” bringing into focus the paradox, “that students are disinterested in modern education yet skeptical of imagination.” Read his analysis of dealing with the concept of spirituality (the s-word) in pedagogy.

Jim S. Spiegel discusses C.S. Lewis’s theme of self-transcendence through imagination and its significant moral implications in “Art, the Golden Rule, and Lewis’s An Experiment in Criticism.” This reviewer truly appreciated the inclusion of the Golden Rule in this collection of essays. Read the article for a refresher in this basic law of morality.

Concluding Section IV is the delightful transcription of the Keynote Panel discussion of “The Fantastic Imagination: Keynote Conversation,” wherein Joe Ricke, Crystal Hurd, Joe Christopher, Crystal Downing, Stephen Prickett, and Charlie Starr give us the benefit of their collectively profound thoughts about the effect of Lewis and Friends on their lives, both personally and professionally. No summary can do justice to their responses. One must simply read this section to feel the spiritual depth of these speakers.

In Section Five, “Creative Work Inspired by C.S. Lewis & Friends,” we are given the gift of literature in the form of original poetry and a short story, “The Taste of Death toll,” by Bethany Russell, each selection having been inspired by the writings of C.S. Lewis and friends.
There are two remarkably intriguing poems by D.S. Martin, “Mr. Milton Tries to Read The Philosopher’s Stone” from Martin’s book, Conspiracy of Light, and “The Sacred Fish” from Sojourners. For added enjoyment, read the notes attached to D.S. Martin’s poems. Kendra Smalley’s four poems, “Red Poppies,” “Summit of Arthur’s Seat, January,” Oxford Visit,” and “The Rabbit Room,” present a range of myth, legend, and reality that only Lewis and friends can inspire in a talented young poet. Joe R. Christopher’s poem, “C.S. Lewis, Poet,” (The Lamp-Post, April 2007) begins with the memorable acknowledgement, “A maker is what you were, a shaper of lines,” encapsulating perfectly, in a few short words, the essence of Lewis’s relation to God, philosophy, and to literature. Each of these poems must be read and re-read to appreciate the myriad and profound thoughts inherent to their creation.

It should be mentioned that there are a number of photos interspersed through the book, of presenters, poets, the discussion panel in the midst of discussion, and exhibitors. One particularly expressive photo is of artist Emily Austen as she discusses her exhibit, “Paintbrushes, Pubs, and Perlandra: Visualizing the Worlds of Lewis and Tolkien.” A musical trio, The Balrog, captivated attendees during a balcony concert. Read Crystal Hurd’s personal reaction in her Foreword to their absolutely entrancing evening of music.

The final Section VI is titled, “Magic Moments”: Reflections on the 2018 Lewis and Friends Colloquium.” Closure to the colloquium is presented by thoughtful comments and reviews from the participants and presenters. T.R. Knight and John Stanifer give us a review of the Inklings and Gaming Workshop (“What? No Owen Barfield-inspired games?”) complete with Inkling Gameographies. We receive a student’s perspective from Caleb Hoelscher, a poet’s reaction from D.S. Martin, an afterword from Sarah O’Dell, and an opinion from Brenton Dickieson about “Why the Lewis & Friends Colloquium is Awesome (It’s the Students)."
The C.S. Lewis biennial colloquium is certainly a profound event to those for whom C.S. Lewis and Friends fulfill a spiritual and literary longing, an experience of sehnsucht. *The Faithful Imagination* encapsulates that experience through the written word. This is an important book. Give yourself the gift of reading *The Faithful Imagination* cover to cover. Then re-read it several times, or to your heart’s content.

Barbara L. Prescott
Wheaton, IL
Review of “The Locked Room,” a Short Story by Dorothy L. Sayers


Reviewed by Nancy Vermette

This one does not disappoint. What a treat to read a NEW! lengthy short story which is fleshed out so nicely with Bunter and Lord Peter Wimsey in cooperative investigation, and Lord Peter playing the innocuous ‘silly ass’ at times in a classic country house locked room mystery. It follows a pretty standard ‘playing fair’ form, but contains that Sayers’ touch: LPW introducing each of the key persons, in a flirtatious opening exchange with Betty, a woman of the younger post Great War generation, whilst at the same time learning about the family members and friends from her banter. My favourite lines end this scene:

“ ‘You are a perfect horror, said Betty, ‘and you’ve restored all my self-respect.’

She ran rather hurriedly into the drawing-room. Peter pulled out his cigarette-case.

‘Unsettlin’, he said to the moon, ‘uncommonly unsettlin’. So many nice things are.’

He followed her more slowly.”

The lead up to the mystery plays quickly and LPW is soon on the scene to observe the details of an apparent suicide. I shall not spoil the story with any more detail in that regard, but mention instead the themes of man/woman and law/justice which are tied up in this mystery. These themes are not new to us in the author’s work—they do indeed have their place in many of her writings.
I found it interesting to try to place its time of writing, as that is not given in the commentary about the story. On the one hand, the law versus justice theme comes up quite early in Sayers’ novels and stories, but the other theme in this story is definitely more reminiscent of later works, most especially *Thrones, Dominations* (1999): how men and women struggle to understand one another in twentieth century relationships, as older Victorian and Edwardian social and personal attitudes come up against a post War awakening of women and their changing role in society and marriage. Lord Peter finds the aggressive womanliness of Mrs. Deerhurst worrisome and notes that Mr. Deerhurst is a man who thinks all women are alike and want to be swept off their feet and bullied. Deerhurst’s stepbrother, on the other hand, thinks all women are fragile, helpless things that must be sedulously cared for.

Lord Peter himself gives us a few clues as to the story’s possible time of writing. He speaks to Betty as a slightly older, ‘gettin’ a grey hair or two’ person. He seems to be handling his own bouts of PTSD pretty well, getting about in society, and has a bit of a reputation for his knowledge of old books and for sleuthing, so perhaps he is in his mid to late thirties? I would say it is definitely pre-Harriet, maybe somewhere just prior to *Strong Poison*.

There’s not much piffling but, nonetheless, I found six or seven things worth looking up, such as a reference to Amelia Sedley, Verrey’s versus The Carlton, deMaupassant’s “Une Vie”, Dorothy Richardson and “dree his weird”. Such fun!

The Bunter/Peter relationship is so well written in this one: there are several scenes depicting Bunter’s unerring ability to be in the right place at the right time, producing a misplaced cigarette case or supplying needed information as to someone’s whereabouts. Bunter has an uncanny sense of both Peter’s personal and sleuthing requirements! Evident also, is Lord Peter’s ability to speak to women: he treats them as persons, not feminine accoutrements, and the understanding ones respond in kind.
At any rate, for a fairly straightforward puzzle type mystery, there are many interesting elements of our hero’s character development to be found in this one. I wonder that the author did not include it in one of her short story collections. Lord Peter fans should not miss the fun of a few more truly “Wimsical” scenes.

Nancy Vermette
Nordegg, Alberta, Canada
Why It Should Be Sayers’ and Not Sayers’s:  
A Note on That Pesky Personal Possessive

Barbara L. Prescott

Disclaimer: To those not bothered by the inconsistency found among books, journals, and articles regarding the spelling of the singular personal possessive with names ending in -s, particularly within the already volatile Inklings and Linklings research world, please disregard the following article. Simply note that the singular possessive form “Sayers’” is correct. Thank you.

Most of us who research and write about Dorothy L. Sayers, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams share at least one unifying bond, and that is annoyance, or, at the very least, uncertainty, about forming the personal possessive (as though we have nothing else to worry about). Should it be Sayers’ or Sayers’s? Lewis’ or Lewis’s? Williams’ or Williams’s? Furthermore, each journal or publisher has a preference, usually following the mandates of APA, MLA, or Chicago, none of which agrees with the other two, thus spreading unhappiness all round.

Truth be told, I find the inconsistency and uncertainty distracting. In the past, I admit going through grammatical acrobatics to avoid making a decision about the pesky personal possessive when writing about Dorothy L. Sayers and/or C.S. Lewis and, still worse, would change from one form to another when a particular journal or publisher insisted upon its own preference. Yet, the continuing argument raging between the -s’ and -s’s contingents in the battle of the possessive attached to the names of Sayers and Lewis is rather a tempest in a teacup. Really, there is no need for confusion. The problem is easily solved and does not depend upon the current variant preferences of APA, MLA, or Chicago. The solution lies in English pronunciation and the way we, as Standard English
speakers (and, in this case, American or British dialects notwithstanding), habitually pronounce the final -s (sibilant) in each name. An explanation will follow.

Now, lest you think that I am not familiar with the APA, MLA, or Chicago mandates about the use of personal possessives with names that end in -s, let me set your mind at ease on that point. I have wrestled with them all in fair combat. However, it should be noted that there is also a distinct lack of consistency on this topic among the Big Three:

**APA:** Per APA Style, it is noted, the answer is that the **possessive** of a singular **name** is formed by adding an apostrophe and an s, even when the **name ends in -s** (see p. 96 in the sixth edition of the Publication Manual). Therefore, in the case of the name Adams, the correct usage would be “Adams’s (2013) work.” However, typically, possesives are discouraged when writing in APA format.

**Chicago:** Add an apostrophe if the word ends in s; otherwise, add apostrophe-s. Proper nouns ending in s follow previously stated styles (e.g., for Jesus’s sake in Chicago style).

**MLA:** In MLA style, proper nouns ending in -s that are singular follow the general rule and add -’s: Diogenes’s philosophy, Athens’s history, or Alexandre Dumas’s novels. Some styles may allow you to add only an apostrophe, such as Diogenes’ philosophy, Athens’ history, or Dumas’ novels.

Furthermore, according to Karen Yin of *AP Vs. Chicago: Edit or Die* (2011): “Both AP and Chicago styles take pronunciation into account, handling new syllables formed by back-to-back sibilants in their own way. The style that many of us are accustomed to — simply adding an apostrophe after the s (e.g., moss’ growth) regardless of how the words sound — is a “formerly more common” alternative practice, according to Chicago, one which it does not recommend. But just between you and me, you can use this shoot-from-the-hip style in
personal e-mail, where you are also free to forgo capitalization completely. (This may or may not be a test.)”

**What’s a writer to do?**

Many have suggested a solution, and, most probably, have presented the following key to the pesky problem with far greater authority than I, but the problem still exists. Enough. I believe it is time for consistency, if only among writers who focus upon the Inklings and Linklings, so I am proposing the following general rule, even if it is a repetition of previous effort or needs further refinement. Please raise your hand if you have, or another has, previously offered this simple answer, and I will acknowledge your brilliant precedence and heroism within the next volume of DLS. In the spirit of united purpose to end time wasted in needless confusion, let us go forth.

A simple solution to these variant forms lies in the sound of the final -s and whether that -s is voiced (i.e., has a zzz sound, e.g., has = /hāz/) or is unvoiced (has an s sound like a hiss, e.g., class = /klās/). English does not like to end a personal possessive with the unvoiced sibilant -s (hiss) and will move it to a voiced -z sound whenever possible.

In the case of Lewis /ˈluːɪs/, the -s at the end is a voiceless hiss. Since English does not like to end a personal possessive with the voiceless /s/ sound (i.e., English speakers don’t say Lewis-is, we say Lewis-iz when using a possessive), we add an ‘-s to supply the sound /z/ to Lewis in the personal possessive. Therefore, the singular personal possessive will always be Lewis’s since English pronunciation wants that final -s to be a /z/ sound, and that preference is denoted by the addition of an -s that turns into the voiced /z/ sound.

In the case of Sayers /ˈseɪərz/, the final -s already has a voiced /z/ sound so we need not add another -s. That would be redundant. Instead, we simply add the apostrophe to denote possession attached to the final /z/ sound with which English
likes to end personal possessives of names ending in -s, i.e., /sɛərz/. Therefore, the singular personal possessive will always be Sayers’ since the /s/ that ends the name is already voiced. Thus, in the case of Sayers, we need only to add an apostrophe. The final -s in the name Williams follows that of Sayers, having a final /z/ sound (voiced), so only an apostrophe is needed for the personal possessive. Therefore, the singular personal possessive will always be Williams’.

Below are several names that follow each of the voiceless or voiced -s pronunciation rules and their resultant logical use of either -s or -s’s in the personal possessive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voiceless ending -s /s/</th>
<th>Voiced ending -s /z/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>PERS. POSS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis</td>
<td>Lewis’s book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonas</td>
<td>Jonas’s money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas</td>
<td>Lucas’s library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks</td>
<td>Brooks’s job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas</td>
<td>Douglas’s pin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By looking at the examples above, we can note certain vowel patterns that precede the unvoiced or voiced final -s, but then we start getting into more complicated and sophisticated English phonological patterns that need not concern us at this point. For our purposes, the voiced and unvoiced final -s patterns present a good starting point to promote consistency in our habits of denoting singular personal possessives, particularly with regard to Sayers, Lewis, Williams, and other s-ending Inklings and Linklings whose names appear in written research, our own or that of others.

It is, of course, a given that one of the style manuals will be chosen as particular venue for any given book, journal, article, or paper. It is an easy step to state the rule outlined above as
publisher’s or writer’s additional preference. Consistency across the board is the target goal.

Perhaps I will continue this discussion in later volumes of DLS, dealing further with issues that may surface regarding possession or plurality, particularly as they are relevant to the research world (and name) of Dorothy L. Sayers. At any rate, it is hoped that this note may be of some value to those who need a useful anchor in the wild sea of variant spellings currently existing among Lewis’s and Sayers’ researchers with respect to those pesky personal possessives.

References


Contemporary Comment and Modern Reflection

Linking Then and Now
A Sonnet (inspired by present events)
And art thou Arthur come again at last
(As come he surely shall, or soon or late),
That thus our knights now end their quest so fast
When once it seeed that strife would ne’er abate?
Or art thou Lion heart, that leadest on
O’er ancient fields of war a new Crusade?
Forsooth, how can men say tht thou are gone
When in the hottest battle gleams thy blade?
The noise of our great conflict thunders forth
To thee, and all who sought and seek the Light,
The trumpets sound to South and sound to North,
And thou has heard them, for our Cause is right.
On! Hosts invisible, till battle cease,
And all earth’s heroes win a heroes’ Peace.

M.M. Dalston. S. Hilda’s College
The Fritillary, December 1918: 164
To Dorothy

How I love thee, voice of poetry
in a world of utter tyranny,
words of colors sift through me.
A masterpiece of idea and dream.
A man’s world would not imprison
thy prose of beauty, subtly written,
nor with discourse negate,
your worth that gently resonates.

Your words a palette to the soul,
your brush, words painted long ago.
And yet throughout the years resound,
as if we all must feel them now.

In such a world to make a mark,
a woman must be direct and stark,
and yet your playful, lovely, sparks
have haunted us with sweet remark.
The thing I see that rings most true,
is how you never let it get to you.
Had you guessed while penning clues,
women’s histories would have need of you?

Your words a palette to the soul,
your brush, words painted long ago,
and yet throughout the years resound,
as if we all must feel them now.

Angel Dunworth
Masquerade
What do you see when you look at me?
It’s not who I am honestly.
This face I made to keep me free,
I painted with my secrecy.
Don’t we all try to perceive
What we most want to believe?
We use lies just like costumery.
Hides truth and scars so easily.
A mask for hope, a mask for woe,
I hide the fact I can’t let go,
And that might be my highest low
But look real close, you’ll never know.
These are my secrets, not your whim,
So don’t ask me to let you in,
Whether you can sink or swim,
Trespassing is the biggest sin.
Maybe everybody lives too fast,
And carries faces from their past
Switching dramas, mold is caste,
Disguises gold and brass and glass.
Just to keep those eyes away,
That peering closer every day,
Intruding in the darkest way
Into truths that we betray.
Understand these chasms wide,
I dug by hand and glorified,
My bloody rivers, black sea-side
And all this darkness held inside.
These are my secrets, not your whim,
Do don’t ask me to let you in,
Whether you can sink or swim,
Trespassing is the biggest sin.

My mask it hides a thousand eyes,
And every one of them has cried.
A million deaths that I have died,
Buried behind these faceless eyes,
My pallid eyes and veil’ed cheek,
Are the mysteries I choose to keep,
And just like you I'll never speak
Of broken blossoms buried deep.
These are my secrets, not your whim,
Do don’t ask me to let you in,
Whether you can sink or swim,
Trespassing is the biggest sin.

Angel Dunworth
My Seraphim
Where angels cry and hearts beat wild,
Where souls ignite and reconcile,
Where night is white and days are grayed
That place you hide when led astray
Where hopes die and love betrays
In wasted time and memories frayed.
I promise no matter how deep the scars,
I’ll find a path to where you are,
I’ll put my arms around your waist,
Wipe the tears streaked on your face,
I’ll pick up all your pieces then,
I’ll put you back together again.
And if you’ll have me I do swear,
I will stay till the end of eternity there,
And if I falter, I know at least
I tried to alter the hands of grief.
Heroes conquer and mages cast,
But the truest honor, unsurpassed,
Is not stories of glories old,
But being there to simply hold.

Angel Dunworth
Burnt Away (For Peter Wimsey)

His life fell away,
his memory grayed,
haunted her heart with
words she didn't say.
How quickly the tides turned,
turned into rain
as the last of his flame burned
away,
away,
away,
today.

She stands trapped
in time, space and soul,
of how he’d tapped into
places she couldn’t control.
How suddenly wicks lit
flickering bright as the day,
with softest of breezes
blow away
away
away
to stay.

Her life’s a missive,
and he read each word,
her heart submissive
rebelled and deferred.
How suddenly sorry
would never be heard,
no matter how hard he
believed in her,
she prayed
prayed
prayed
prayed
him away.

Pick up the pieces,
light them ablaze,
ash just increases
the more you delay.
Kindling, tinder
that sizzles a spray
of the embers of him
who swept you
away
away
away
away
to stay.

Angel Dunworth
A Cautionary Tale
(with apologies to Hilaire Belloc)

In College once there was a girl
Who kept her tutors in a whirl
They never ceased to sing her praise
And mention her industrious ways,
They read her essays through and through,
And when they told what to do
She never wrote a line amiss.
Now hear the dread result of this!

You know – at least you ought to know –
For everyone has told you so,
That you before your ardour cools
Must work if you would pass your Schools.
But she would never try to play,
She worked all night – she worked all day –
With ceaseless unremitting toil
She burnt up all her midnight oil.

And t’was through working at this rate
She met her sad and awful fate!
For when the day of Schools came nigh,
As she was walking down the High
There suddenly was heard a roar
And she alas was seen no more.
She was so over-crammed with learning,
She’d simply burst through not discerning
That those whose knowledge thus increases
Are sometimes blown in little pieces!
When all her tutors heard it they
Were more concerned than I can say,
But one said as she dried her eyes
“Alas it gives me no surprise;
I always fear’d she’d go to pieces!”
The other as her colleague ceases,
Bids all the undergrads attend
To this one’s miserable end,
And never try to take a First,
For fear that they may some day burst!

B. Nickalls, S. Hilda’s College
The Fritillary, December 1921: 274
The Spires of Oxford

I saw the spires of Oxford
   As I was passing by,
The gray spires of Oxford
   Against the pearl-gray sky.
My heart was with the Oxford men
   Who went abroad to die.

The years go fast in Oxford,
   The golden years and gay,
The hoary Colleges look down
   On careless boys at play.
But when the bugles sounded war
   They put their games away.

They left the peaceful river,
   The cricket-field, the quad,
The shaven lawns of Oxford,
   To seek a bloody sod—
They gave their merry youth away
   For country and for God.

God rest you, happy gentlemen,
   Who laid your good lives down,
Who took the khaki and the gun
   Instead of cap and gown.
God bring you to a fairer place
   Than even Oxford town.

Winifred Letts
The Spires of Oxford and Other Poems,
E.P. Dutton and Company, 1918; 3-4
The Magic City

I had not known you skilled in wizardry
Until I trod the pavements at your side,
When sudden at your Open Sesame
The magic city flung its portals wide.
Against a sky pale as a chrysolite
I saw, sharp cut in shadow, dome and spire,
Belfry and gabled roof, bewitched by night,
Spangled with flame – my town of heart’s desire.
I left it thus at moonrise, and with day
Came back alone – ah! folly! But to find
The glamour fled from street and square and tower.
Vanished my magic city, chill and grey
This drear familiar town, with face unkind
Giving the lie to that enchanted hour.

Winifred Letts
The Spires of Oxford and Other Poems,
E.P. Dutton and Company, 1918:46
Poetry Circle

Weaving rhyme in languid curves that turn into balanced verse written or said, we are baptized by language. So bred to the life of a thoughtful word, we burn forth toward those flashes of truth that bleach the conscience, sear the soul with pristine dread, lead the sight into realms of script well read.

Such clocks of word, such delicate rings of speech.

Our vowel rounded stories resonate with minds that walk the labyrinth of time. Incomplete theory are we all, so gaze yearningly toward the bards.

They are late.

Now we turn away, seeking other rhyme from other minds, other gates to the maze.

M.B. Prescott
Anaglyph: Sonnets of Variance
August Press, 2017: 81

Inscribed to the women of the MAS
Isonism

Moving spirit through space: isonism.

Wings rippling my mind, it clicks into place,
becomes bolded and nounced, takes on a case.

Savoring the sound of this creation,
I slip into each conversation with
a multi-syllabic variation.

It is captured, my whisper of a word face
shining new lights of meaning, a prism.

Stay. I now draw enchantment from its cage,
fly this wordbody with infinite grace,
an alternate time to inhabit, seek,
so create a world of isonist-speak

where anyone escapes without a trace
any book, any body, any page.

M.B. Prescott
Anaglyph: Sonnets of Variance
August Press 2017: 85
Festival of Lessons and Carols

Winter music drifts and lingers with light.
Swirling snow sound crystals settle on trees,
upon blossoms of voice, with diamond keys
of ice-perfect notes, then melt in my sight.
Vessels of memory, strange circled flight,
structure the lessons to celebrate wounds
sung deeply in vocative celtic runes,
carolling chapters, celestial rite.

Through this atlantean nativity
I learn of cathexis, catholic verse
lasered in music by ancient cadence.
A sonnetful lesson, once grated & terse,
now melodied and wrapped in radiance,
ends well the sacred blind festivity.

M.B. Prescott
Anaglyph: Sonnets of Variance
August Press, 2017: 4

Inscribed to Christ Church, Oxford
Margaret Amy Chubb Pyke

Courtesy, The Pyke Foundation
Pixel & Pencil Drawing
Private Collection
The Efficient Student. By An Inefficient One.

She rises betimes; not to early as to appear an obnoxious model to the unpunctual, but early enough to secure, with no appearance of haste, a bath and a hot breakfast. She so orders her day as to include in an apparently leisurely manner many hours of productive work, one or two lectures, a hockey match, a coaching, a literary reading, and a debate – with occasionally a concert, a theatre, a paper-chase, or a missionary meeting; and ends ti with a cocoa-party, at which she discourses with ease and brilliancy upon eugenics, Home Rule, the Kikuyu controversy, or the latest problem play. Without haste or rest she passes serenely through the events of the day, ready at meals, in the lecture-room, or in the street, to express her opinions upon any and every topic. These opinions are definite, well-grounded, amusingly illustrated, and impossible to refute. Nor are they limited in scope to questions of purely national or literary interest. They frequently deal with her personal acquaintances, and indicate their noble qualities or their little defects with a firmness which can only be based on a large experience of humanity.

At lectures, she enters as the lecturer is about to begin, and takes her place, unruffled, in the front row. She has used the minutes intervening since the preceding lecture in finding a shelf-mark in the Bodleian catalogue. Or see her arrive at the Camera, attache-case in hand. With what an air of business, does she direct her steps to the particular volume of the catalogue which she wishes to consult! With what leisurely resolution does she establish herself at her favorite desk, with a good light and an open window! How swiftly do the messenger boys flit upon her errands, and with what scorn does she wither the wretch who brings her the wrong book! Watch her progress in the High at one o’clock – how the abject undergrad. Starts aside at her imperious bell!

She writes her essay at the last moment, but it is never hurried, always adequate, and always concise. In her work for the week she has found time to digress upon many interesting side-issues which the less capable ones are forced to abandon. On the hockey-field she
is quiet, but effectual. Without getting overheated, she takes the ball up the field, dexterously dodges the defence, and shoots goals with ease and elegance. She is public-spirited, and never fails to appear at meetings of all kinds, or to provide useful information, suggestion, and criticism thereat. At debate, her witty and pregnant remarks are the despair of her opponents. Her entertainments are lavish and spirited. Freshers and third-years alike enjoy her cocoa-parties, and she never lacks time or energy for social festivities. A sick friend may be sure of a cheering visit, and often she will appear at the bedside with a breakfast-tray tastefully decked with a fair white cloth and ethereal bread-and-butter.

She is not beset with the trials to which the rest of the human race are liable. She does not forget to water her plants or to brush her skirt, or to put her shoes out to be cleaned. Her fire lights easily and does not smoke. Her stockings do not degenerate into rags, because she darns so perfectly the first hole that appears. She has a spruce and comely appearance, unspoilt by ends of hair, even in the highest wind. Her bicycle lamp does not refuse to burn, nor does she skid at inconvenient moments in the High.

O ever efficient and ever serene, with what envy and admiration do we behold you from afar, as we toil painfully in your wake!

E.M.U.

The Fritillary, March 1913: 115

Editor's Note: E.M.U. was the pseudonym of U. M. Ellis-Fermor, Somerville College.
Extract from the Diary of an Oxford Woman Student, Written in the Year 2020.

(Reproduced from the original shorthand)

Wednesday. – Everything seemed to go wrong this morning. To begin with, I overslept and found that my breakfast must have been waiting on the lift beside my bed at least an hour – on my busiest day, too! However, I hurried up, and luckily finished dressing just before the electric vacuum came to clean out my room.

As it was raining, I went by the Underground to the Camera in the hope of finishing my essay before the first lecture. I had a feeling that I wouldn’t be able to get the book I wanted, and, sure enough, when I pressed the button for vol. III of ‘The Great War,’ a dilapidated treatise on Aeronautics, printed in 1915, came sliding down, which someone must have pumped up by mistake. In consequence I walked to the Clarendon Building and took the lift to the Nettleship. As usual, I was late for the lecture – this time because my electric scooter had been moved from its stand, and I spent quite a quarter of an hour looking for it. Next Term I shall have it painted a more distinctive colour.

The lecture was half over by the time I appeared. I don’t know what I shall do, as I haven’t the courage to ask if I might hear the record again, as I did last Wednesday. I suppose I must borrow someone’s notes, which are sure to be in a different shorthand from mine.

This afternoon I went in for my half-pilot’s test. I was frightfully nervous, especially when I was told to alight by the
Calhan’drome. Still, I managed better than I expected, on the whole, though I ‘pied’ our own ’plane shed disgracefully.

There was great excitement at dinner to-night at the far end of the table. In fact, everyone was talking so much that the table-trolley was held up, and by the time it reached me the dinner was nearly cold.

It seems, from what I could understand, that someone had ‘excavated’ an ancient periodical called the *Fritillary*, which was written by the women students a hundred years or more ago. I heard them mentioning La Crosse and Hockey (which I suppose have some connection with those strange-looking instruments in the Ashmolean Museum), and also Clubs and Societies and Sculling and several other names and strings of mysterious initials which I can’t remember. I really must have a look at this curiosity myself . . . . Several people are going to hear the record of the Prime Minister’s opening speech to-night. I wish I had time to go, too, as I have never heard her voice, but I must send a wireless home to tell them I am through my ’place test, and then there is my essay . . . .

[The remainder of this entry is unintelligible.]

*Anon.* (S.C.)

*The Fritillary*, March 1919: 173
# Recommended Readings

## Selected Writings of Dorothy L. Sayers

### PART I

## Poems & Novels

### Poems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year of first publication</th>
<th>First edition publisher</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Tales and Christian Songs</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>McClure, Oxford</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Poetry, 1917</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Blackwell, Oxford</td>
<td>Contributor and editor with Wilford Rowland Childs and T. W. Earp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Poetry, 1918</td>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Blackwell, Oxford</td>
<td>Contributor and editor with T. W. Earp and E. F. A. Geach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Poetry, 1919</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Blackwell, Oxford</td>
<td>Contributor and editor with T. W. Earp and Siegfried Sassoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord, I Thank Thee</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Overbrooke, Oxford</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Story of Aule and Gvast</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Hamilton, London</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Year of first publication</td>
<td>First edition publisher</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whose Body?</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Bony &amp; Liveright, New York</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clouds of Witness</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Unwin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unnatural Death</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Benn</td>
<td>Published in the US as The Dawson Pedigree</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Unpleasantness at the Beltona Club</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Benn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Poison</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Gollancz</td>
<td>With Robert Eustace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Documents in the Case</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Benn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Five Red Herrings</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Gollancz</td>
<td>Published in the US as Suspicious Characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Floating Admiral</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Hodder and Stoughton</td>
<td>With members of The Detection Club. A chapter each was completed by: Canon Victor Whitechurch, George and Margaret Cole, Henry Wade, Agatha Christie, John Rhode, Milward Kennedy, Sayers, Ronald Knox, Freeman Willis Crofts, Edgar Jepson, Clementine Dane and Anthony Berkeley. G. K. Chesterton contributed the prologue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have His Carcase</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>Gollancz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder Must Advertise</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Gollancz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask a Policeman</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Barker</td>
<td>With members of The Detection Club: Anthony Berkeley, Milward Kennedy, Gladys Mitchell, John Rhode, Sayers and Helen Simpson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nine Tailors</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Gollancz</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaudy Night</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Gollancz</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Six against the Yard</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Selwyn and Blount</td>
<td>With members of The Detection Club: Margery Allingham, Anthony Berkeley, Freeman Willis Crofts, Father Ronald Knox, Sayers and Russell Thordike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busman's Honeymoon: A Love Story With Detective Interruptions</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Harcourt Brace</td>
<td>Adapted from the play Busman's Honeymoon (1936)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Death: a Murder Story</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Gollancz</td>
<td>With members of The Detection Club</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Writings of the Mutual Admiration Society

Part I:
Charis Barnett Frankenburg, Muriel Jaeger, and Doreen (D.E.A.) Wallace

Selected Writings of Charis Barnett Frankenburg
February 9, 1892 - 1985
Latin Scholar & Early Childhood Educator

*Oxford Poetry*, Translated from Theodore de Banville, 1914
*Somerville College, 1879-1921* (with Muriel St. Clare Byrne), Oxford at Frederick Hall at the University Press, 1922
*Latin with Laughter*, (Illustrations by Dorothy H. Rowe), Wm Heinemann, Ltd., 1931
*Common Sense in the Nursery*, World’s Work, 1934
*More Latin with Laughter*, (illustrations by Dorothy H. Rowe), Wm. Heinemann, Ltd., 1937
*Spoilt Baby into Angry Young Man*, Macmillan, 1960
*Common Sense About Children*, ARCO Publications, 1970
*Not Old Madam, Vintage*, Galaxy Press, 1975
Selected Writings of Muriel Jaeger
May 23, 1892 – November 21, 1969
Science Fiction & Fantasy Novelist; Non-Fiction Writer

The Question Mark, The Hogarth Press; Macmillan, 1926
The Man with Six Senses, The Hogarth Press, 1927
Sisyphus: Or, the Limits of Psychology, Kegan Paul, 1929
Experimental Lives, G. Bell and Sons, 1932
Hermes Speaks, 1933
Retreat from Armageddon, 1936
Wars of Ideas, Watts & Co., 1942
Liberty versus Equality, Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1943

Selected Writings of Doreen (D.E.A.) Wallace
June 18, 1897 – October 22, 1989
Political & Social Activist; Novelist; Poet

The Tithe War, Gollancz, 1934
East Anglia, Batsford Face of Brittain series, 1939
English Lakeland, Batsford Face of Britain series, 1940
How to Grow Food, Batsford Home Front Handbook, 1940
In a Green Shade, Lutterworth Press, 1950
Norfolk (with R.P. Bagnall-Oakeley), Robert Hale County Books series, 1951
The Money Field, Collins, 1957
Forty Years On, Collins, 1958
Mayland Hall, Collins, 1960
Lindsay Langton and Wives, Collins 1961
Woman with a Mirror, Collins, 1963; White Lion, 1976
The Millpond, Collins, 1966
Ashbury People, Collins, 1968
The Turtle, Collins, 1969
Elegy, Collins, 1970
An Earthly Paradies, Collins, 1971
A Thinking Reed, Collins, 1973
Changes and Chances (Short Stories), Collins, 1975
Landscape with Figures, Collins, 1976

Poems
The Fritillary, 1917-1918: Words to Music; The Traveller
Oxford Poetry, 1917-1919: Sonnet in Contempt of Death;
        Life and I; Impromptu in March; In New College Cloisters
At a Venture, Blackwell, 1917 (five lyrics)
Esques, Blackwell, 1918 (with E. Geach)
The Oxford and Cambridge Miscellany, Blackwell, 1920
Days and Years, H.G. Dixey, 1951
References and Relevant Readings


Byrne, Muriel St. Clare and Catherine Hope Mansfield. *Somerville College, 1879 - 1921*. Oxford: Frederick Hall at the University Press, 1922


Organizations, Societies & Resources

Somerville College, University of Oxford
Margery Fry House, 14 Little Clarendon St, Oxford OX1 2HT, UK
https://www.some.ox.ac.uk/about-somerville/history/

The Dorothy L. Sayers Society
Membership, Publications, Awards, Annual Conference
https://www.sayers.org.uk/
https://www.facebook.com/groups/382860698544262/

Marion E. Wade Center, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL
Drs. Crystal and David Downing, Directors
351 E. Lincoln Ave., Wheaton, Illinois 60187, USA
630.752-5908; wade@wheaton.edu
https://www.wheaton.edu/academics/academic-centers/wadecenter/
authors/dorothy-l-sayers/

DLS: American Journal of Sayers Studies
Annual Journal
https://americanjournalofsayersstudies.wordpress.com/

Dorothy L. Sayers in Oxford
Oxford University Student Years, Poetry
https://www.facebook.com/Somerville1912/

DorothyL
Mystery Discussion Group
https://www.facebook.com/groups/dorothyl/

Center for the Study of C.S. Lewis and Friends
Library, Biennial Colloquium, Inklings Forever Proceedings
Taylor University, Upland, Indiana, USA
https://library.taylor.edu/cslewis
https://cslewisandfriendscolloquium.org/
Online Articles & Discussion

https://planetpeschel.com/the-wimsey-annotations/

https://loredanacrupi.wordpress.com/2014/12/17/mysterious-dorothy-l-sayers/


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https://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/jun/11/dorothylsayers


https://player.fm/podcasts/Dorothy-L%252E-Sayers


http://www.cslewisinstitute.org/The_Iconoclastic_Dorothy_L_Sayers_FullArticle

http://www.cslewis.com/tag/dorothy-sayers/


https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED534298.pdf  (Kyoko Yuasa)

http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bio/19.html


http://web.sbu.edu/friedsam/inklings/dorothy_sayers.htm

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Submission Guidelines

DLS, American Journal of Sayers Studies, is an annual journal of the American Society of Dorothy L. Sayers Studies, published in August of each year, which specializes in the writings and life of British mystery novelist, Dante translator, critic, essayist, poet, and playwright, Dorothy L. Sayers.

We encourage submissions of original research about Dorothy Sayers, her writings, Oxford University in the early twentieth century, the world wars as they affected British women writers, women of Oxford, early British women mystery writers, or any other topic related to Dorothy L. Sayers and her world. DLS encourages original short stories and poetry related to Sayers or her literary era (1912-1957). We are also looking for book reviews, editorials, letters, and yearly conferences or events in which our readers may be interested.

All article submissions for publication should conform to the current MLA Handbook (New York: Modern Language Association). Critical essays should include a list of works cited, and normally should be 1000-1500 words. If notes are included, please use endnotes (not footnotes). Reviews of books should be 200-500 words. Submissions of original work, such as short stories or poetry, should include permission to print. We accept up to ten poems per submission. Short stories have a 2000 word limit. Submissions should be formatted in Microsoft Word. Decisions take three to six months. Authors are notified by email in response to the original submission email.

All email submissions should be sent to augustpressinc@gmail.com with a copy to barbprescott@alumni.stanford.edu and include the words DLS JOURNAL SUBMISSION in the title. The third volume of DLS, to be published in August 2020, will continue to feature Dorothy L. Sayers in Oxford, her poetry, and Christian Romanticism. Critical essays or articles should be attuned to these topics to be considered for publication.

Thank you for your interest in DLS, and we look forward to welcoming you into our journal family.

Barbara L. Prescott, Editor
augustpressinc@gmail.com
barbprescott@alumni.stanford.edu
Oxford High Street
William Mathieson
1913-1915

Watercolor Print
Private Collection
Join us as we visit Dorothy once again at Oxford, *Urbs et Universitas*, town and gown, yet clothed in a persona with which we, her readers, are not very familiar: that of Romanticist Poet. We will visit her at Blackwell's and discuss her second book of poetry, *Catholic Tales and Christian Songs*. During this period, Dorothy is in transition and searching for a life purpose, personal and professional. Yet, she is always delighted to see you, and, again, will provide us with tea - and good conversation. Bonne journée.
A great number of people, publishers, poets, and, most of all, cheerful Sayers enthusiasts, have contributed their valuable resources, time, inspiration, and goodwill toward seeing Volume II of DLS come to light. Our heartfelt thanks are extended to each and every one of you.

Many thanks to Somerville Library, and particularly to Kate O’Donnell, for constant support and helpfulness in research and result. To those collectors of The Fritillary, many thanks for generously allowing our access to the magazine issues. To Oxford Poetry, our deep gratitude for permission to print the poems found in this volume. These thanks extend to all publishers who so generously allowed us access to their archives and courteously gave permission to reprint. Many thanks to members of The Dorothy L. Sayers Society for their helpful comments and suggestions. Thanks, as well, to Inklings Forever, 2017, for permission to reprint, “Dorothy L. Sayers and the Mutual Admiration Society: Friendship and Creative Writing in an Oxford Women’s Literary Group.”

A heartfelt thanks to all our contributors, writers and poets, who gave us the benefit of their wisdom, opinions, and talent. We believe Dorothy extends her thanks to you as well, along with her critique to all of us.

As in our first volume, we wish to acknowledge a primary center of Inklings Studies which houses a wealth of Dorothy L. Sayers’ published works, manuscripts, letters, notes, and the fascinating incunabula of her life. That treasury is, of course, the Marion E. Wade Center of Wheaton College in Wheaton, IL, USA, where one may study original handwritten notes and manuscripts, connecting a reader directly to the material thoughts of the writer. When the writer is Dorothy L. Sayers, one is blessed indeed. Thank you, Marion E. Wade Center and Friends, one and all, for your kind hospitality, good advice, expertise, and cheerful support of our studies. Many thanks, as well, to the Dorothy Sayers Estate administered by David Higham Associates, for their cheerful support of our research, helpful suggestions, and expertise in all matters Dorothy.

Finally, we extend our thanks to everyone who helped make DLS, American Journal of Sayers Studies, a reality, including, of course, the Somerville women who walked the talk. We hope this journal will provide a further stepping-stone to guide Sayers enthusiasts, students, scholars, and researchers toward a greater understanding and appreciation of the writings and life experiences of Dorothy L. Sayers. She was one of the few women writers of the twentieth century who experienced both world wars in adulthood and wrote those experiences into her poems, stories, characters, essays, and plays. Dorothy L. Sayers was, indeed, a versatile and strong woman writer of her century. We acknowledge her stubborn brilliance, as well, in this century.
Somerville Banquet and Dining Hall

Pixel Watercolor, 2018
Private Collection
To the last banquet of the appointed days
We came; there was no change; I drew my chair
With heedless hands up to my usual place;
Though afterwards, a strangeness stirred my hair
To think that this was done for the last time;
From wizard windows died the sunset rays
Aslant through jewelled figures of ancient rime,
And down from the heaped beakers dropped the blaze.

And those tall pillars, dim as amethyst,
Soaring like smoke incredibly aloof,
Where, lift on high above the censer-mist,
Pale capitals glimmered in the golden roof--
O marvellously, magically went
Our music up among them, coldly kissed
From pipe and reed, or plucked in thin consent
By white, frail fingers of the lutenist.

_The Last Castle_
_OP. I., 1916, v. 4-5_