



WG: Letters etc

(1) Letter to Gregory and Veronique Peck, who through the summer of 1960 lived next door to WG as he worked, in Cap Ferrat, France, on *The Grove Of Eagles*

ABBOTSWOOD HOUSE,
BUXTED,
SUSSEX.
TELEPHONE BUXTED 2232.

1st. November, 1963.

Dear Gregory and Veronique,

The English edition of *THE GROVE OF EAGLES* comes out on December 2, but it will not be published in the States until March, so I am sending you a copy of the English publication, with many thanks for your kind efforts on my behalf via à vis ~~via~~ John Kimberley, ill though they were rewarded.

How are you both? It seems a long time since we met, and I have not heard of your having been in England since the premiere when we came up and had dinner with Shoshone. Nor have we seen Shoshone since then, or Joe, though I believe Rosamund hears from him from time to time. Andrew is now in his third year at Oxford, and Rosamund, having been 'finished' at her finishing school in Switzerland, is at a secretarial college in London learning shorthand and typing. We don't know whether she will then get a job or go abroad again for a bit, to either Italy or Spain, but in any case we are told that shorthand and typing are useful things to have.

Do hope all your family are well and that we shall see something of you next year.

Love from us both,

Winston

Joe is Veronique's younger brother and Shoshone their Russian-born mother. WG told Susan Hill that he "admired her more than any other woman I ever met". In *Memoirs* he wrote: "Her charm of character and personality made a great impression on me, and generations later she surfaced as Shona in *The Green Flash*."

(2) Letter found in a second-hand copy of *The Grove Of Eagles* (Thanks BF)

ABBOTSWOOD HOUSE,
BUXTED,
SUSSEX.
TELEPHONE BUXTED 3233.

13th. October, 1965.

Dear Commander Tredinnick,

Thank you so much for your letter of the 29th. September. I was so pleased to know you had enjoyed *THE GROVE OF EAGLES*, and thank you for writing to tell me.

~~You're certainly right; it~~
was a monumental undertaking, and occupied nearly three years in the writing and the research. It began as a labour of love, and to some extent continued so all through, but I certainly had no idea at the outset that, apart from English history, it would involve me in so much Spanish history as well. Spanish documents are troublesome to come by and even more troublesome to read. But it is good to have done, and appreciative letters such as yours make the doing all the more worth while.

I did once think of a sequel, and the Robert Killigrew from whom I partly developed the character of Maugan had a highly chequered career in the 17th. Century; but at present I am still suffering from the 'combat fatigue' of the writing of this book; and modern novels, though by no means easy, seem such relatively uncomplicated tasks by comparison!

Yours sincerely,

Winston Graham

(3) Letter of condolence to Lucile Moore, 3rd August, 1967

Tewkesbury-born John Moore (1907-1967) was Gloucestershire's best-known and loved author of the twentieth century. A gifted naturalist and communicator and one of the earliest to draw attention to conservation issues, Moore was described by Sir Compton Mackenzie as the most talented writer about the countryside of his generation. In a relatively short life (he died at the age of 59 following surgery in a Bristol hospital) John Moore packed in a great deal. As well as writing 34 books (about half of them novels), he was instrumental in launching the Tewkesbury Festival of Plays and the Cheltenham Literary Festival. He gave wartime service first in the Fleet Air Arm then, following injury, as a naval press attaché at Supreme Allied Headquarters, in which role he participated in the D-Day landings, going ashore at Arromanches-les-Bains. He wrote two plays, collected and wrote knowledgeably about moths and butterflies, broadcast regularly on the BBC and penned many articles for assorted publications as well as a weekly column that ran in the *Birmingham Evening Mail* for eighteen years. His last novel *The Waters Under The Earth* (1965) stands as an enduring testament to his gifts; his *You English Words* (1961) is one of the best books on the delights of the English language you'll ever read. That last title, incidentally, comes from the first line of a poem by Edward Thomas, whose *Life & Letters* Moore published in 1939.

John Moore and Winston Graham were near-contemporaries (born in November 1907 and June 1908 respectively). Both first drew attention as "regional writers"; both were members of the Savile Club; both served as chairman of the Society of Authors. Indeed, Moore's untimely death on 27 July 1967 fell during WG's tenure of that office. Thus it fell to him to write a letter of condolence to Moore's widow Lucile. But he did so not formally, officially, dryly, as an office-holder, but as a friend:

Dear Lucile,

I think we have only met twice, but I feel I must write to say how distressed and shocked I was to learn of John's untimely death. It seems only like three weeks - but is probably nearer three months - since I saw him last at a Foyle's Literary Luncheon; and he then looked as well and as cheerful as I have ever seen him.

As a colleague, and as an old friend at the Savile, I shall much miss him, and he will be equally missed by many others. He had a warmth and generosity of personality which is all too rare. I was on the Committee of Management of the Society of Authors some ten or eleven years ago when he was Chairman, and these qualities - together with tact and balance & great understanding - were of immense value in helping to steer the Society through an unusually difficult year. It is an infinite pity that such a fine writer & fine man should have been lost to us all so soon.

Believe me, most sincerely,

Winston

ABBOTSWOOD HOUSE,
BUXTED,
SUSSEX.
TELEPHONE BUXTED 3233.

3rd August, 1967

Dear Louisa,

I think we have only met twice but I feel I must write to say how distressed & shocked I was to learn of John's untimely death. It seems only like three weeks - but is probably nearer three months - since I saw him last at a Foye's Literary Luncheon; and he then looked as well and as cheerful as I have ever seen him.

As a colleague, and as an old friend at the Society, I shall much miss him & and he will be equally missed by many others. He had a warmth & a generosity of personality which is all too rare. I was on the Committee of Management of the Society of Authors some ten or

eleven years ago when he was Chairman, and
these qualities - together with tact & balance
& great understanding - were of immense value
in helping to steer the Society through an
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infinite pity that such a fine writer & fine
man should have been lost to us all so
soon.

Believe me, most sincerely,

Winston

Winston Graham

(4) Letter dated 29.11.87 to BF. For transcript, see
In Profile pages 321/322

ABBOTSWOOD HOUSE,
BUXTED,
SUSSEX.
TELEPHONE BUXTED 3293.

29.11.87

Dear Mrs F

Thanks so much for your letter
and for all the nice things you say about
my books. I expect you will have
difficulty in finding my earliest books
because I have suppressed them and
really would like them to sink without
trace - though they were invaluable to
me at the time. Now & then, however, as
you observe, I haul one out, brush it
up, & it gets launched afresh, e.g.,
"Night Journey", "The Hercules Lodge" and
"Woman in a Throat" - formerly "The Giant's
Chain".

I have just entirely rewritten
"My Turn Next", & it will be republished

next July as "Carnes."

I don't think there's much hope of the BBC doing Poldark 8, 9 & 10. They very much wanted me to write a third series when the second finished, but I wasn't willing to dash something off in haste, & now they have lost interest.

Incidentally, I've known about Robin Ellis - I think he feels that a third series would mainly be about the children, & he would not be willing to play a subservient part ^{say they} - but both Desmond Rees & Ralph Bates would be happy to appear if the opportunity were to arise.

Best wishes.

Winston Graham

(5) Text of a letter published in *The Daily Telegraph* on
26 August 1992

Writer's privacy

Sir - Kirsty McLeod's remarks on Stephen Spender and uninvited biographies ... are interesting and well researched until the last paragraph when she says: "As for the great man himself: be he painter or writer, he has - despite what Spender says - been trying to draw attention to himself from the very moment he first picked up a paintbrush or wielded a pen." She does not seem to understand the vital difference between a creative artist and his work. Every writer and painter needs and wants his work noticed: it is his life's blood. Some, too, may be self-seeking exhibitionists, but many are not. Miss McLeod's argument would seem to differ little from the justification which every tabloid journalist gives for his revelations. WG.



Stephen Spender (1909-1995)

(6) Letter dated 16th Nov. 2002 to JD. For transcript,
see *In Profile* pages 323/326

ABBOTSWOOD HOUSE,
BUXTED,
SUSSEX,
TN22 4PB
TEL. 01825 733233

16th Nov. 2002

Dear Mr D

Your letter of 12 August has not
dwelt unregarded. As well as thanking you for
all the good things you say, I wanted to give
myself time for reflection. Then, in September,
the good health you wished me deserted me
— or rather my luck ^{did} for in a quite ludicrous
accident I fell + broke both ankles. Even
now I possess any comprehension.

The result is that I have had a
long stay in hospital, + plaster on both
legs for 8 weeks, + am only recently
home and learning to walk again.
Believe me, it is a struggle at my
considerable age!

Since finishing BELLA I have

been completing an autobiography which I
began some years ago. I posted this off
yesterday and with luck it should be published
next year.

In going through it recently I spotted
a page particularly relevant to your kind
suggestion. I found it only rather elaborately
on what I wrote to you three years ago, but
there it is. Reflection while I was immobile
did not, I fear, dwell on this, but what
hovers, in my conscience I may come
round to further thoughts on the subject?

Most of these early books are gone,
but, surprisingly, someone found a copy of
Anti The Fog in Australia and sent it to me.
So I have re-read it quite recently. It has its
faults, agreed. Not long ago I had to listen
to The Little Wells on tape (1955). Some of that
is horribly dated (dress, for instance) but the moral
arguments in the book are spot on for today.
Similarly the theme of Anti The Fog is absolutely
current (illud mirum) but much of the writing is

So
send
you
2
stat.

3

overdone, overheated.

How you have manipulated the fact
right out of me I can't imagine. The
one I remember almost nothing about is
'Stranger's Meeting'.

After I had so little regard
for myself that I threw all the early
M/S away - & presumably the page proofs
with them. Even the first four
Reprints suffered the same fate.

I do not know if any publisher
would receive these books. A firm
called Stratus (Yorkshire with US backing)
have just taken a lease on 24 of my
earlier books. But they have been near
bankruptcy once so I am writing waste.

With sincere good wishes

Yours ever,

Winston Graham

(7) Postcard dated 1.3.03 to JD. For transcript, see
In Profile page 319



HOLYWELL CAVE — CORNWALL

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To the north of Holywell Bay are a few small caves one of which contains the ancient holy well from which the bay takes its name.

1/3/03

Congratulations on getting a
Full House! Or should it
be a Royal Flush?
I think I am about four short.
But, then, I never did win at
Poker.

Best wishes,

Winster G. Turner

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