

Winston Graham and Ward, Lock

The publishing firm of Ward, Lock existed in a number of guises:

(1) From 1854 to 1865, under partners Ebenezer Ward and George Lock, as *Ward & Lock*.

(2) From 1865 to 1873, during the eight years in which a third partner, Charles T. Tyler shared ownership, as *Ward, Lock & Tyler*.

(3) From 1873 to 1879, following Tyler's retirement, as *Ward & Lock* once more.

(4) From 1879, when two new partners, James Bowden and George Lock's younger brother John, were taken on, until 1891 as *Ward, Lock and Bowden*.

(5) Following the death in 1891 of George Lock, until 1893 as *Ward, Lock, Bowden and Company*.

(6) From 1893, when it became a limited company, until 1897 as *Ward, Lock and Bowden Limited*.

(7) Following Bowden's retirement in 1897, as *Ward, Lock & Company, Limited*, under which title the firm traded until it was sold in 1989.

The abbreviation WL used below may be taken to refer to all of the above, as applicable to the period in question.

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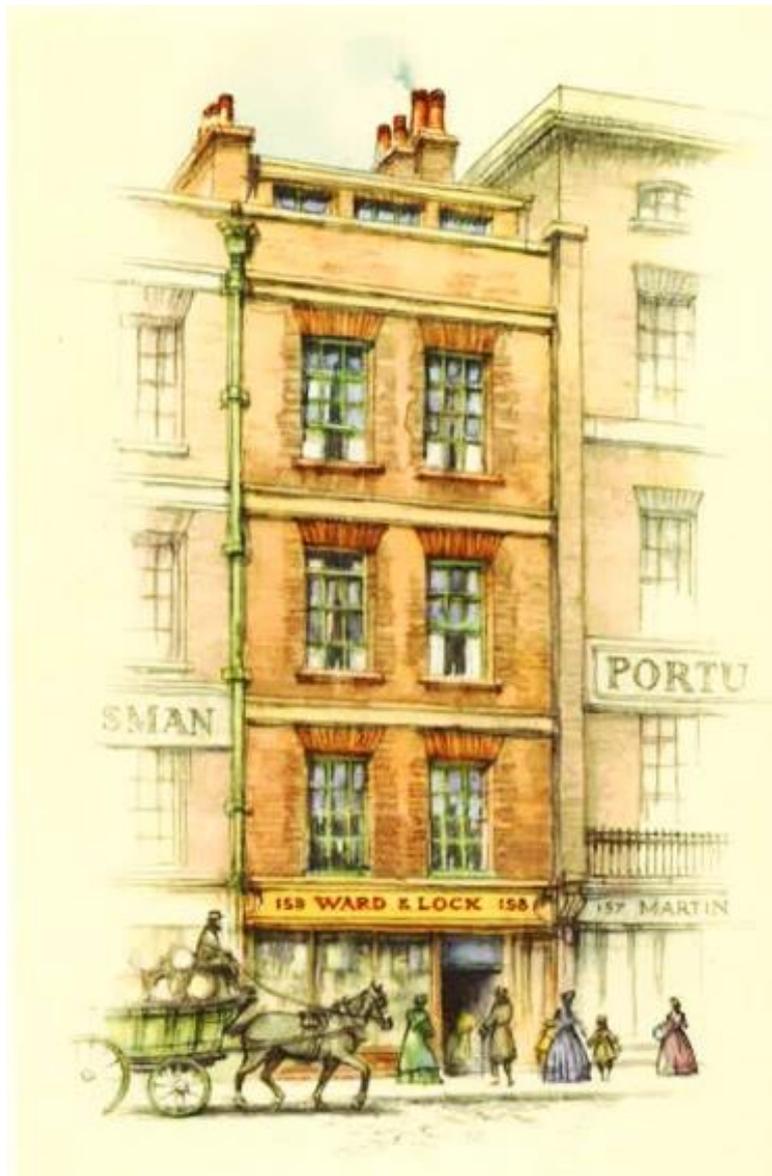
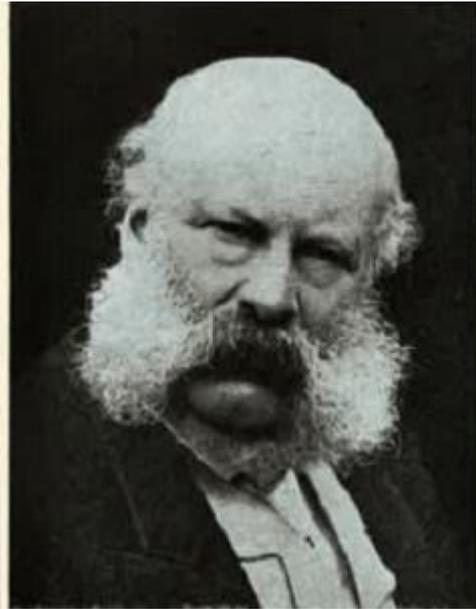
GEORGE LOCK was born into a prosperous Dorsetshire farming family in 1832. After a private education in Southampton and a short period spent apprenticed to a Salisbury chemist, in 1854 Lock quit the West Country to seek his fortune in London. There, through Dixon Galpin, a cousin in the printing trade, he was introduced to thirty-five-year-old EBENEZER WARD.

Though then employed as manager of the book department of Herbert Ingram and Company, Ward – who had previous experience of publishing with Henry G. Bohn of Covent Garden – was looking for a more promising opportunity. The two men hit it off; with £1,000 capital advanced by Lock's father, they launched Ward & Lock, publishers, operating from 158 Fleet Street, an attractive four-storey Queen Anne-style office building taken on a leasehold basis.¹

As the new venture found its feet, the connection between publisher and printer was crucial; each business helped the other. When Ingram (the company Ward had worked for) went into liquidation towards the end of 1855, this informal cooperative bought their assets, which included, most importantly, the rights to and plates, blocks and engravings of *Webster's Dictionary of the English Language*. Over the next few years this title earned for all concerned a great deal of money. But when in 1859 the printers acquired [John] Cassell and branched into publishing on their own behalf, former amity metamorphosed into a business rivalry that persisted for twenty years. Though both houses survived to trade on into the future, it is somewhat ironic that the 135-year existence of WL was finally brought to an end in 1989 when the company was bought by Cassell.

In 1861, having outgrown its Fleet Street base, WL moved to Amen Corner, Paternoster Row, already home to established publishers Longmans, Blackwoods *et al.* In 1866 they employed as an editor the recently ruined Samuel Beeton, at the same time buying all his existing copyrights. This netted a number of books and magazines – all good sellers – as well as his late wife Mrs Beeton's *Book of Household Management*. Though the association ended sadly for Beeton – he was sacked in 1874 as a result of increasingly erratic behaviour – *Mrs Beeton* would prove for many years to come a most valuable WL property.

The buy-out in 1870 of another ailing publishing concern – that of the late Edward Moxon (est. 1826) – added Wordsworth, Robert Browning, Tennyson (then Poet Laureate), Southey and others to the increasingly eclectic WL roster. In 1881 the acquisition of W. Tegg and Company (est. 1800) netted a fresh tranche of "household" literature as well as the Peter Parley series of books for boys, Clarke's *Commentary* and many other notable volumes.



[Previous page: \(1\) Ebenezer Ward \(1819-1902\) / George Lock \(1832-1891\) \(2\) 158 Fleet Street in 1854](#)

In 1878 the firm moved again, this time into Warwick House, purpose-built for the company in Salisbury Square (off Fleet Street) at a cost of £14,000. It wasn't long before repeated problems with bookbinders persuaded WL to install their own bindery on the top storey. This remained *in situ* until it was moved first in 1895 to Stoke Newington and from there in 1920 to Edmonton. In 1885 WL also bought the Botolph Printing Works in Kingsway, central London (relocated in 1931 to Brixton). Though the outsourcing of some printing remained necessary to sustain production in volume, Botolph served the company well until, following repeated bomb damage during WWII, it was finally disposed of in 1945.

By now a firmly established member of the UK publishing scene, but unwilling to coast or rest on their laurels, WL sought rather to expand into other English-speaking countries: offices were opened in New York in 1882, in Melbourne in 1884 and in Toronto in the mid-1890s; the first two prospered; the third not so much, eventually closing in 1919. In addition to this, travellers made annual visits to booksellers in South Africa, Egypt, India and the Far East.

Founding partner Ebenezer Ward retired "virtually" in 1883 and completely in 1893; none of his children followed their father into WL; Ebenezer was the firm's one and only Ward. In contrast, four of George Lock's five sons followed in their father's footsteps, as did four of his grandsons and two of his great-grandsons. From 1893, when the firm became a limited company, through to 1989, when it was taken over, the chairman or MD was:

- 1893-1906: GEORGE ERNEST LOCK (1861-1906; GL's eldest son)
- 1906-1926: ROBERT DOUGLAS LOCK (1869-1926; GL's second son)
- 1926-1945: WILFRED GALPIN LOCK (1871-1945; GL's third son)
- 1945-1952: LESLIE LOCK (1877-1952; GL's fifth son)
- 1952-1969: ERIC ASHLEY SHIPTON (1893-1977; grand-son of GL by his third daughter Alice)

- 1969-1979: ANTHONY ASHLEY SHIPTON (born 1929; great-grandson of GL)
- 1979-1989: PETER GRAHAM LOCK (born 1933; great-grandson of GL)

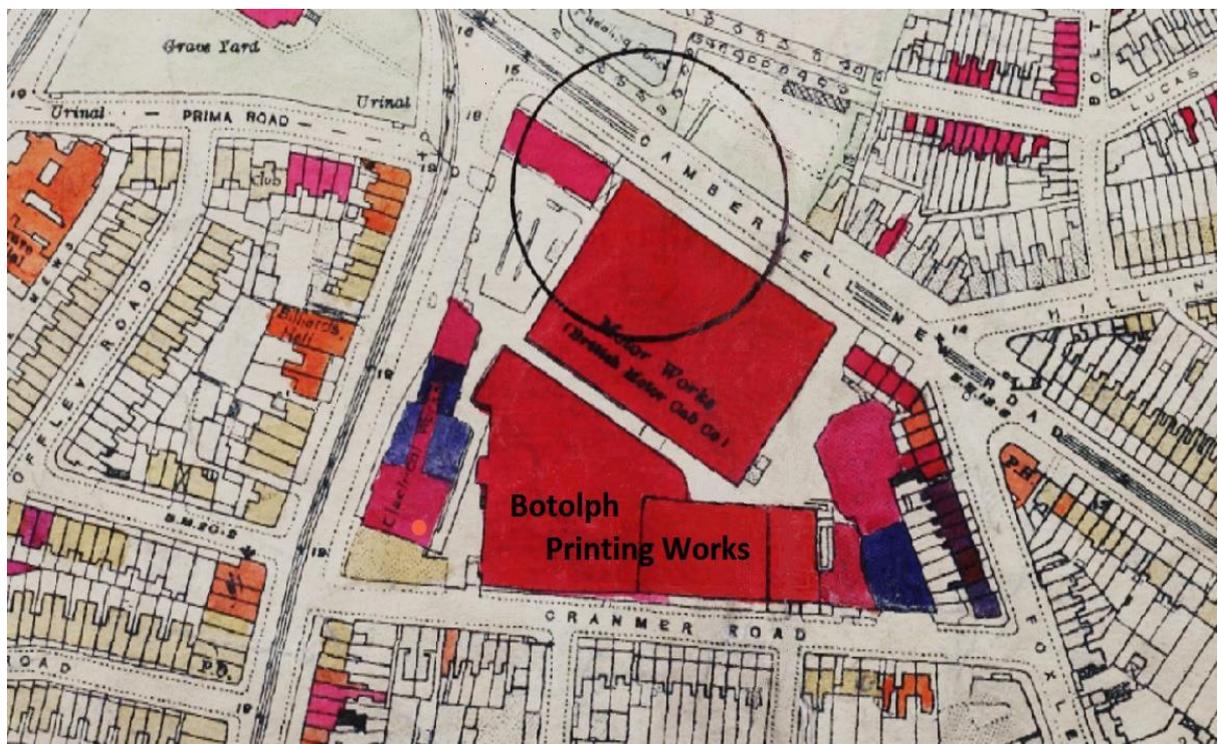
As can be seen, the association of the Lock family with the house of WL remained pre-eminent throughout the firm's 135-year history.

In addition to titles previously noted, what did WL publish? Initially, reprints of standard works, classics, atlases and other reference books; then from 1861, a selection of original work also, by, among others, Miss Braddon and Charles Reade. The Moxon acquisition added volumes of poetry to their list. The first Sherlock Holmes story – *A Study in Scarlet* – was published by WL in 1887; in 1890 they also published the second – *The Sign of Four* – in *Six Complete Novels by Famous Authors*, although this time not exclusively. In 1894 the company catalogue ran to 170 pages. 1895 saw the launch of *The Windsor Magazine*, which ran profitably until September 1939 when, after 537 consecutive monthly issues, the outbreak of WWII forced its closure. In 1896 WL produced the first of a very long-running (136 volumes by 1954) and hugely popular series of Guide Books to the British Isles. In 1900, yet another acquisition, of A. D. Innes and Company, took the company into the field of sports-book publishing. A range of travel, gardening, children's and educational titles – *Haydn's Dictionary of Dates*, *The World Library*, *The Wonder Book* – followed. The publication of authors such as Edgar Wallace and Dornford Yates fed an increasingly voracious public appetite for popular fiction. As the century turned and the Victorian age ended, the company chose deliberately (with one or two exceptions) to steer a middle course between high and low-brow publications, aiming first and foremost, whilst eschewing the mediocre, to give the public what it wanted.

In 1911 fire badly damaged Warwick House and completely destroyed a vast stock of warehoused books; pending repair, the premises had to be vacated for more than a year. Shortly after that, the Great War forced a change in company culture: prior to 1914, WL employed only one woman – a critic – but military service took many young male employees whom the directors were compelled to replace with women; by Armistice Day 1918, more than sixty worked for the firm.

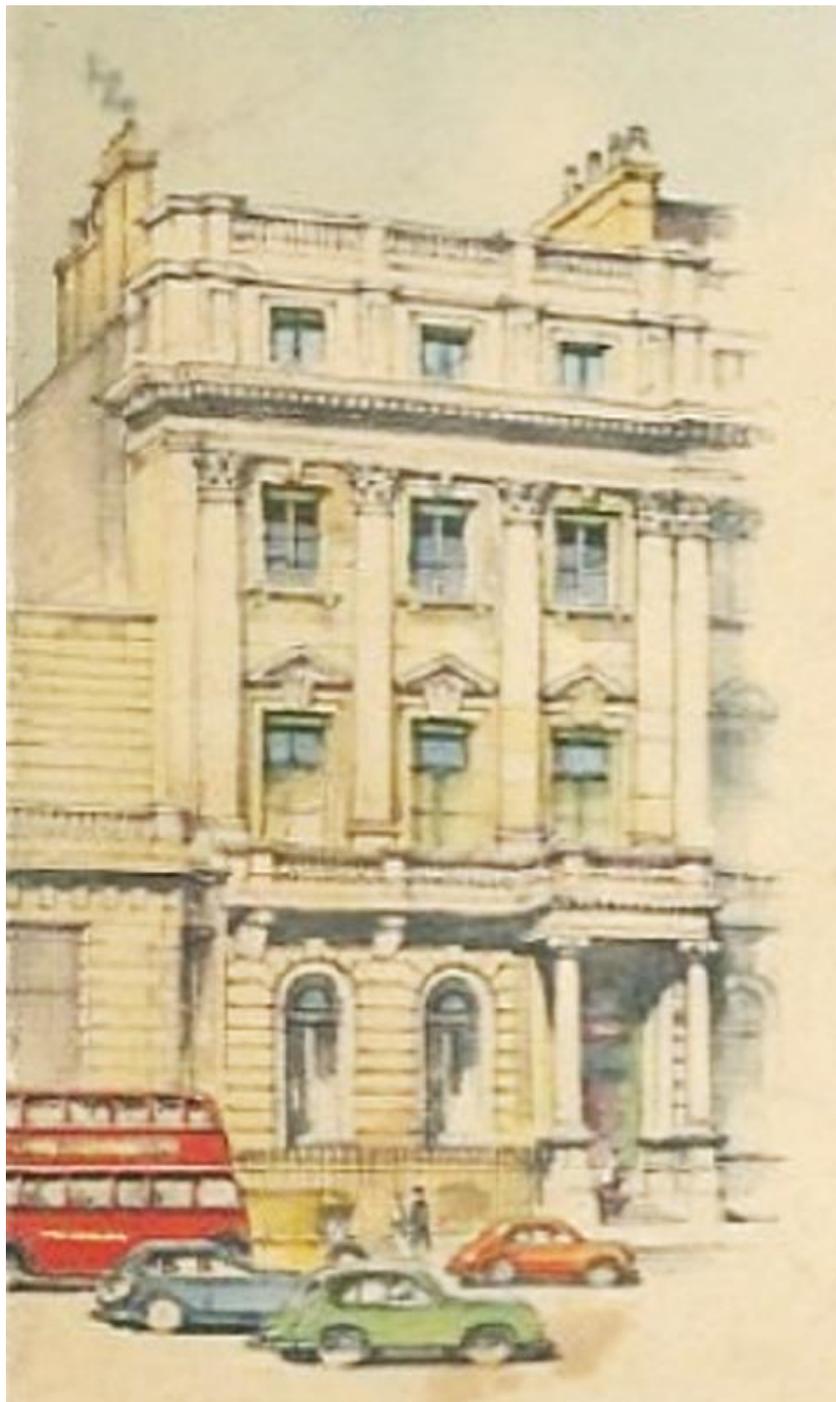


Bomb damage, Salisbury Square, EC4, December 1940



Cranmer Road, Brixton: 1945 map showing bomb-damaged properties: red denotes "seriously damaged"

In the last week of 1940 Warwick House was in the wars again – quite literally so, "almost entirely destroyed" by enemy bombing. Among much else, irreplaceable archival documents were lost, also the company's "entire collection" of file copies of publications issued in the previous eighty-six years.² The firm relocated temporarily to Unilever House on the Embankment before moving back to Salisbury Square, then, in 1946, to 6 Chancery Lane. A further and more permanent move in 1954 took the peripatetic business to 143 Piccadilly (below).



In 1989, as previously noted, WL was bought by Cassell; in 1998 they in turn were taken over by the Orion Publishing Group, a subsidiary of Hachette Livre. In 2019 came exciting news – that the WL archives, comprising more than one thousand books and associated documents, had been sold by Orion to Dr. Richard Meli, a Florida-based American book-dealer. What might this potential treasure-trove reveal about the twenty-seven-year (1933-1960) association between WL and Winston Graham?

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In his long literary career, **Winston Graham** was published by no fewer than six UK publishers, but it was WL who first took him on; gave him a chance when others would not. The company archives sold by Orion (see above) reveal disappointingly little of the association between publisher and author. No document in that cache pre-dates 1941 – it is likely that the near-complete destruction of Warwick House in December 1940 (see page six) accounted for all previous records – but copies of five later book contracts have survived, together with exchanges of letters concerning the determination [i.e. lapsing or cancelling] of the *Night Journey* and Poldark novels' contracts. The archives of WG's first literary agent A. P. Watt³ include copies of four earlier novel contracts plus letters concerning his fifth book *The Dangerous Pawn* and his 1936 short story "Mystery at Brome". Finally, WG himself retained a couple of important early letters, the second of which was to launch him, after twenty-six years of waiting, on the path of his life. (Sadly, other potentially revelatory archives – of WG's second UK agent, A. M. Heath, or American agent Brandt and Brandt⁴ – remain inaccessible.) It is on the basis of this sparse documentary record that the association between WL and WG can be appraised.

WG's first known contact with the firm took place in late 1932 or early 1933 when he submitted to them a book he had written (his second, though they hadn't seen the first) called *Black Beard*. Hodder and Stoughton had turned this book down in 1931; on 17 March 1933, WL wrote rejecting it also.

WG must then have written back asking for more detailed or useful feedback, for he received a second letter from the publisher, dated 29 March 1933. Signed (actually, initialled) by Sidney E. Sarcoe of the firm's Editorial Department, it advised as follows:

We do not, as a rule, care to make any criticism on novels submitted for our consideration, on the ground that our opinion is not infallible, and further, although a book may not be suited to our list, it may yet appeal to another publisher. As, however, we understand that BLACK BEARD is your first novel, we are giving you below the comments of one of our readers:

"Of its kind it moves quickly, but the whole story will not stand close scrutiny. None of this kind of work will, however, and for what it is worth, this is a readable story and swift in action. To sum up, the basis of the plot is a little too fantastic and divorced from reality for our list."

Trusting that these remarks may be of some help to you, and looking forward to the opportunity of considering your next novel.

Black Beard is now lost, nothing known of it beyond the vague reader's comments above. But WG had another novel in his drawer – his first, completed in 1929 and thrice-rejected by other publishers, which, perhaps on the strength of the last sentence of the letter above, he now submitted to WL. On 9 May 1934 they wrote agreeing, subject to minor revisions, to accept it. Five months later, *The House with the Stained Glass Windows* was published; at last its tenacious author was on his way.⁵

WG recounts in *Memoirs* that when his first novel was finally accepted, he wasn't fazed by the publisher's request for another within six months, for *Into the Fog* was already written⁶ – and an early draft of his third novel, *The Riddle of John Rowe*, had preceded that.⁷ So it was that WL were able to launch their new author in style, with three titles appearing in twelve short months (October 1934 to September 1935). Throughout his long career WG wrote slowly and painstakingly; to maintain production at a pace such as this was quite beyond him – nonetheless, novels continued to appear at roughly yearly intervals up to and on through the war; *The Merciless Ladies*, published by WL in January 1944, was his twelfth in a decade.

Much the rarest of all of WG's books is his 1941 novel *Night Journey*. This is because, soon after its publication, when only about 700 copies had been sold,⁸ an air-raid on the Botolph Printing Works (see pages four and six above) destroyed the type and sheets such that no further production was possible. Though the title was eventually republished by The Bodley Head in 1966, it was in substantially revised form. Book-trade copies of the 1941 WL edition are *extremely* hard to find.

Young WG also tried his hand at short stories; perhaps conveniently for him, from 1895 to 1939, WL published *The Windsor Magazine*, which dealt predominantly in that literary form, and three of his stories duly appeared in its pages: "The Medici Ear-ring" in issue 490 (October 1935), "Crystal Clear" in issue 502 (October 1936) and "Mystery at Brome" in issue 526 (October 1938). The last-named earned him a fee of fifteen guineas, which, he noted in a letter dated 16 January 1938, was "slightly more than they gave me for the last one."⁹

Advances

That payment, though modest, compares favourably with advances paid by WL on some of the author's early novels, although the figures below do confirm, as might be expected, a gradual improvement:

- *The House with the Stained Glass Windows* (1934): advance on royalties: nil.
- *The Giant's Chair* (1938): £25, payable on publication.
- *Keys of Chance*, *Strangers Meeting* (both 1939), *No Exit* (1940): all £30, payable on publication.
- *Night Journey* (1941), *Ross Poldark* (1945), *Demelza* (1946): all £55, payable on publication.
- *Cordelia* (1949): £150 on signature of contract plus £100 on publication.
- *Jeremy Poldark* (1950), *Warleggan* (1953): £225 on delivery of MS plus a further £225 on publication.¹⁰

In 1937 Victor Gollancz paid A. J. Cronin an advance of £3,333 for his fifth novel, *The Citadel*,¹¹ in light of which the WL figures above seem unduly parsimonious – but the success of Cronin's previous novels meant that

Gollancz would have been confident of getting his money back; success of that kind, for WG, would come far more slowly.

The Poldark novel contracts

Ross Poldark (published at eight shillings and sixpence) and *Demelza* (at nine shillings and sixpence) earned their author a royalty of 15% on the first 5,000 copies sold, 20% on the second 5,000 and 25% on everything after that. WG stated in 1974 that *RP* sold "about eighteen thousand" copies,¹² which under the above terms would have netted him circa £1,600 (exclusive of income from WL's "Colonial" and other cheaper editions, Doubleday's 1951 US edition, Jano's 1953 Spanish edition etc). The royalty rate for *Jeremy Poldark* and *Warleggan* was simpler (to the author's detriment), returning 15% on the first 5,000 copies sold and 20% on everything after that. The *RP* and *Demelza* contracts were cancelled on 1 June 1959; the *JP / Warleggan* contract (a single document, dated 19 September 1949, for "THE NEXT TWO HISTORICAL NOVELS TO FOLLOW "CORDELIA"") was cancelled on 24 August 1960. In each case the copyrights were taken up by The Bodley Head.¹³

The decision to move on

At WL, WG liaised initially with company chairman Wilfred Lock (see page four), whom he described as "a strange small man who ... had a very disconcerting habit when you met him of falling completely silent and then, when you volunteered something, *immediately* interrupting with a remark of his own."¹⁴ Following Lock's death in 1945, his principal contact (with whom he developed "a personal friendship") was Colonel Eric Shipton, "an ex-soldier with much greater charm and address than [Wilfred], but not a man in the literary swim."¹⁵

In the late 1940s, WG decided to change publishers and the last comment above may give some indication of the trend of his thoughts; of at least one of the considerations that led him to decide on this perhaps surprising step. Why surprising? Because, on the face of it, after fifteen years of unswerving support from WL, it does smack rather of disloyalty. Yet if an author, in his own interest, is required to take a hard-headed, pragmatic business decision, why should he be less free to do so than a butcher, a banker or anyone else?

WG observed that:

WL had started off many famous writers and then, through editorial inadequacy or failure of their publicity department or the meanness of their directors, had allowed them to slip away to more fashionable publishers who proceeded to cash in.¹⁶

No doubt all publishers have such tales to tell – The Bodley Head, for example, published the first five modestly successful Agatha Christie novels, after which she moved to Collins, wrote *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* and proceeded over the next fifty years to outsell just about every other author going. In a letter to his agent mailed on 17 January 1938, WG cites an instance from his own experience of WL's "inadequacy":

I have just heard from the local bookseller that "The Giant's Chair" is to be published to-morrow. I had heard nothing of this and have wired Ward, Lock's to know if they have made arrangements to this effect with you. If so, I am, of course, quite agreeable; but I understood that you were still trying to dispose of the book serially.¹⁷

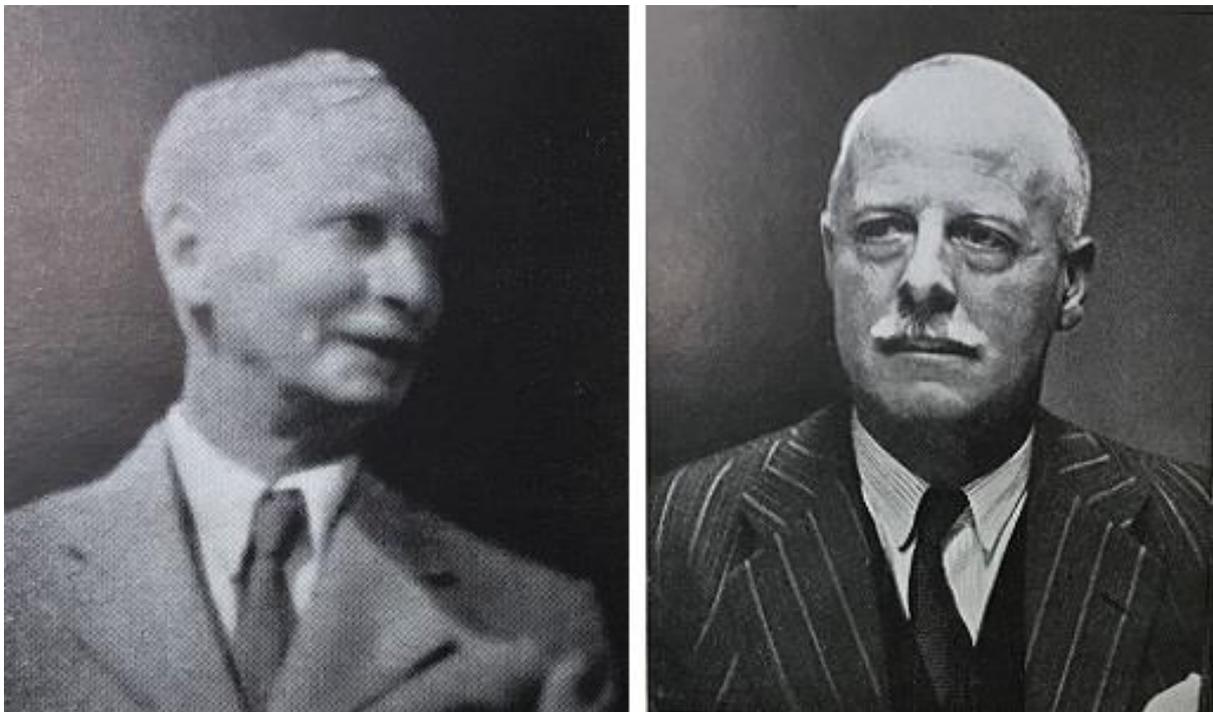
(It is worth noting that after WG submitted his completed *Giant's Chair* manuscript to WL on 25 October 1937, the book was published just twelve weeks later¹⁸ – a remarkably short turnaround time which might have some bearing on the apparent snafu reported above.)

Still, *fifteen years*? Say what you will, a faint whiff of ingratitude lingers.

On the other hand, consider WG's circumstances. When the war came to an end and his Coastguard service with it, he was faced with a momentous decision. He had been struggling for eleven years to establish himself as an author and though his standing had improved to some extent in that time, ultimate success was still by no means assured. But in the interim the stakes had been raised, for his status had changed from that of a footloose bachelor, who, in making a determined effort to succeed whilst living with and supported by his mother, actually risked little but his own time and energy, to that of a householder, husband and father with a wife and young

family to support, not to mention an aging parent (although she did have an income of her own).

At this point, two paths lay open before him: should he take the safer and more practical, which would involve forsaking his dream, shouldering his responsibilities and settling into the life of a Perranporth hotelier who wrote novels in his spare time, or should he press on, risking all, in pursuit of his muse? Then, having chosen the braver, bolder, more hazardous course, was he not obliged to look out for himself and his dependants as cannily, charily and single-mindedly as possible? Of course he was.



Wilfred Lock (1871-1945) and Colonel Eric A. Shipton OBE, MC, TD, DL (1893-1977): the two WL partners with whom WG principally dealt

WG's change of literary agent circa 1947 is probably significant – of the contracts referred to above, *Cordelia's*, dated 6 October 1948, is both the first to name A. M. Heath as WG's agent and the first to secure a three-figure advance. Perhaps it was Audrey Heath who persuaded her new client that a change of publisher would suit them both. Most probably a combination of factors accrued until, tipping point reached, a deal was struck with Hodder and Stoughton.¹⁹ Yet WG's break with WL was initially far from complete, for on 19 September 1949, as noted above, while Hodder were preparing *Night Without Stars* (their first Graham of an event-

ual nine) for publication, WL contracted to publish both *Jeremy Poldark* and *Warleggan* (with neither book's title named in the contract)²⁰ and then throughout the 1950s kept all four Poldark titles in print whilst WG was off attaining belated success elsewhere. Happily, an exchange of letters between author and publisher in August 1960, which was necessitated by the need to transfer the last of the Poldark copyrights from WL to The Bodley Head, reveals a residuum of genuine affection on both sides:

My dear Eric [Shipton]

[The Bodley Head] have written to me this week asking me if [Warleggan] is now officially out of print ... Hope you are very well and that all your family prosper. Kindest wishes, Winston

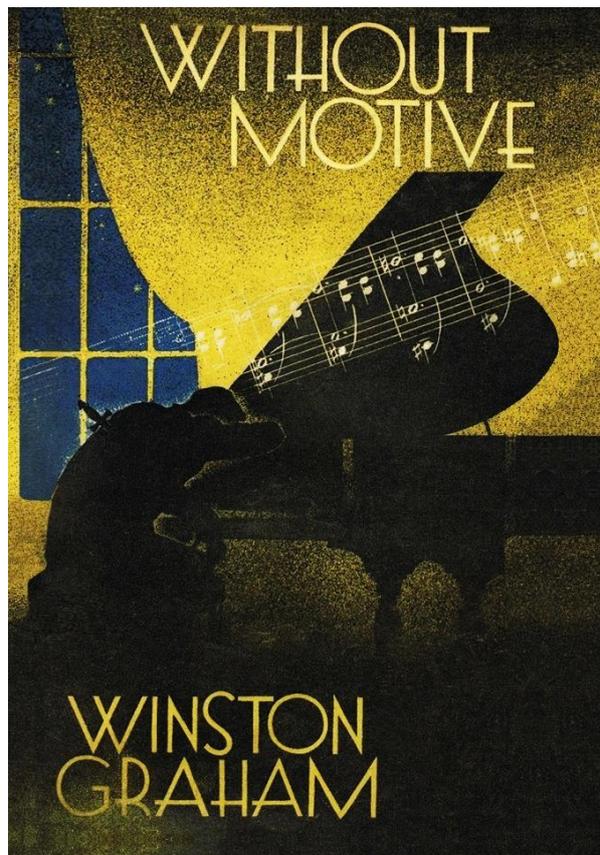
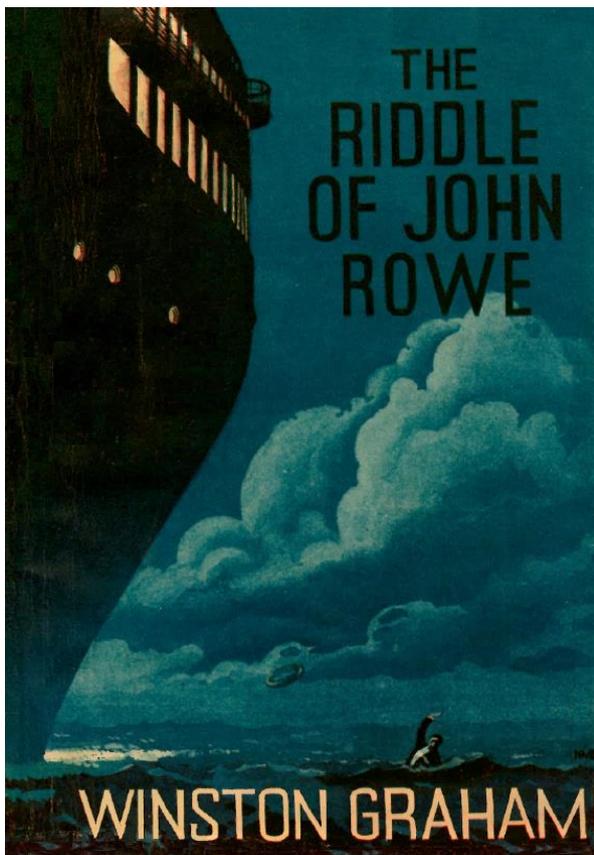
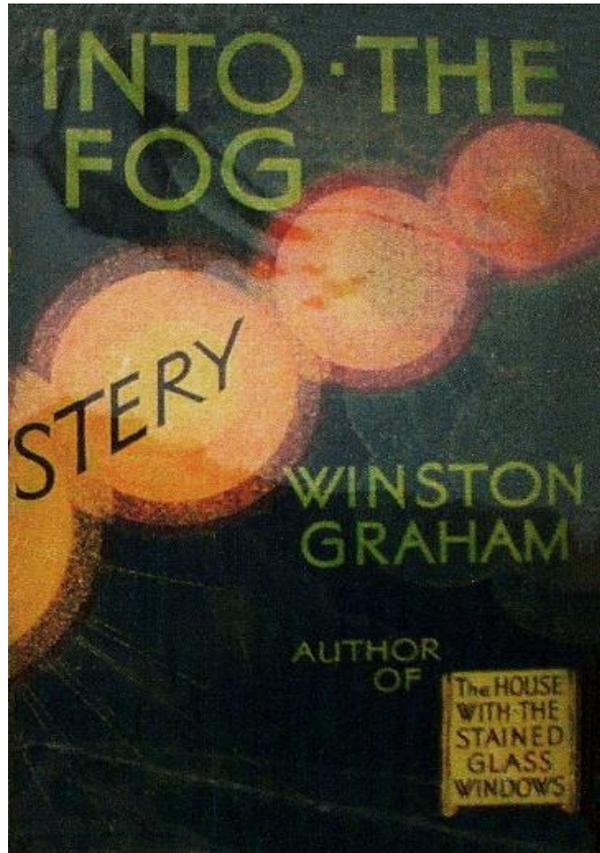
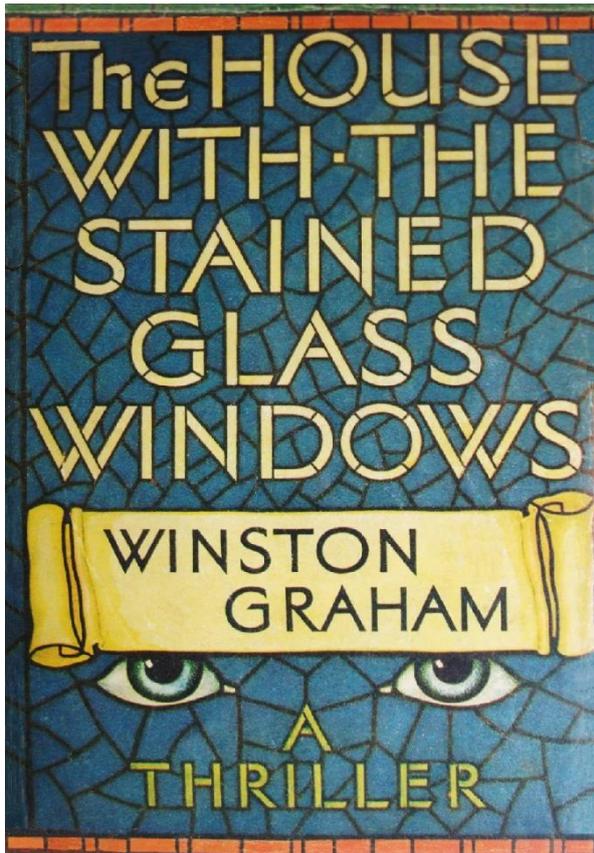
My dear Winston

I was so glad to get your letter of the 21st August, and delighted to hear that the Bodley Head are doing pretty well with the Poldark books ... With every good wish to you all, Eric²¹

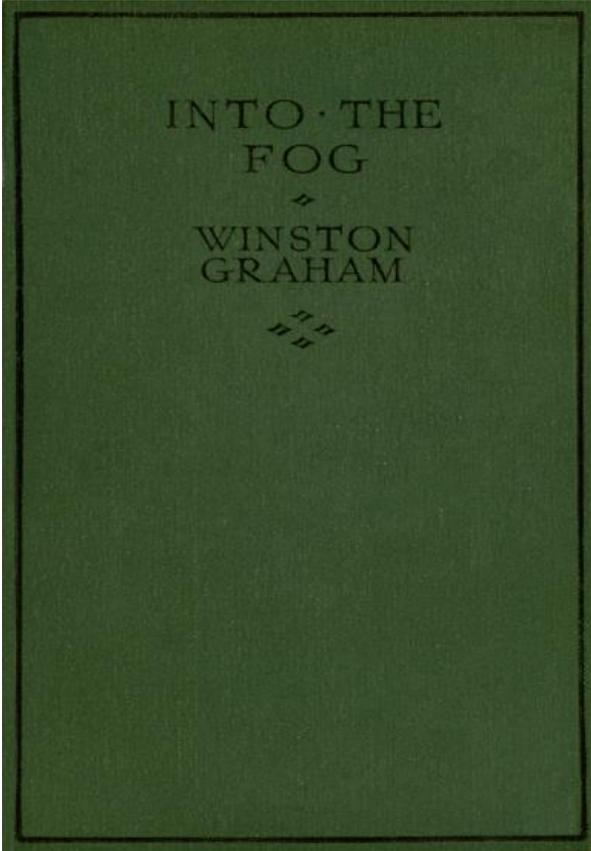
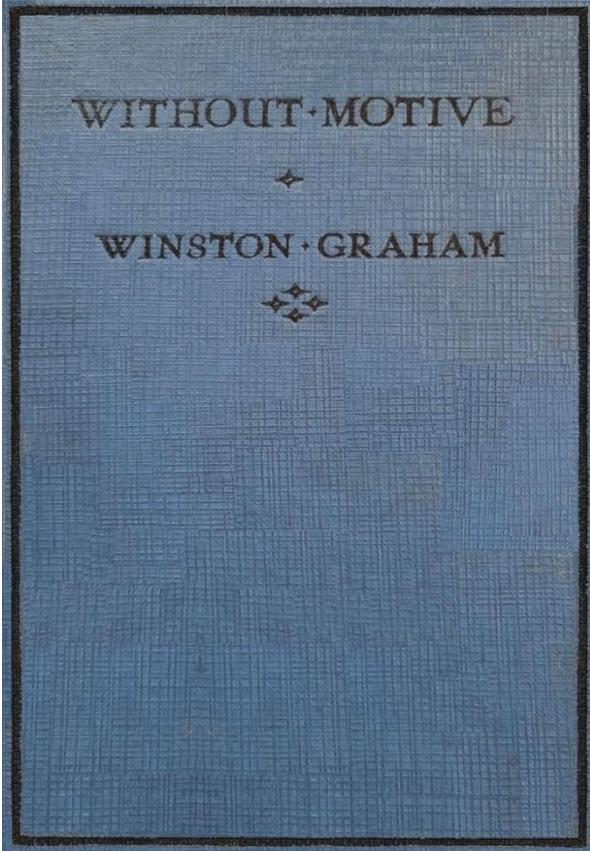
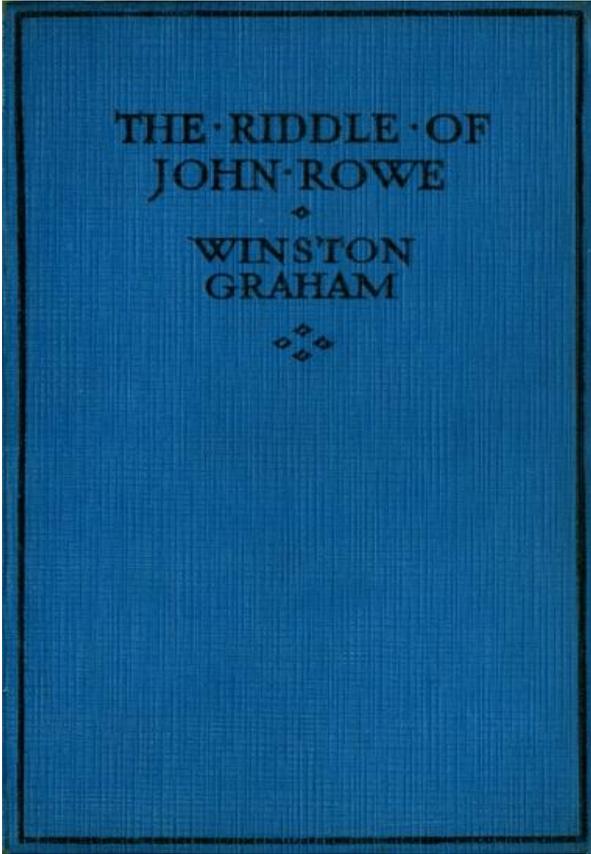
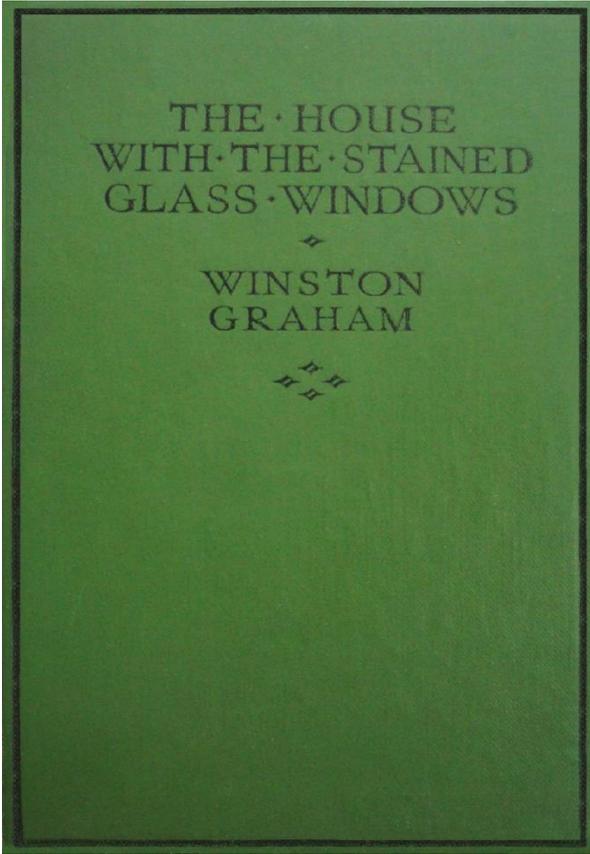
WL published nineteen WG novels plus three short stories in the first nineteen years of his literary career. They first launched him and then stuck by him when his early books garnered sales which proved both small (he earned £29 from his first novel,²² £33 from his second and £41 from his third) and frustratingly stagnant (the fourth netted just £35).²³ When, after the war and more than ten years into his career as a published author, he began at last to succeed in his own terms, they continued to support him, humouring his decision not to cut the manuscript of *Ross Poldark*, even though their advice to do so was (as proved by subsequent events) sound; they also agreed to continue publishing his historical novels even though the publisher he left them for would not. All things considered, WL may have done moderately well out of Winston Graham, but what's certain is that he (and we) did very well out of them.

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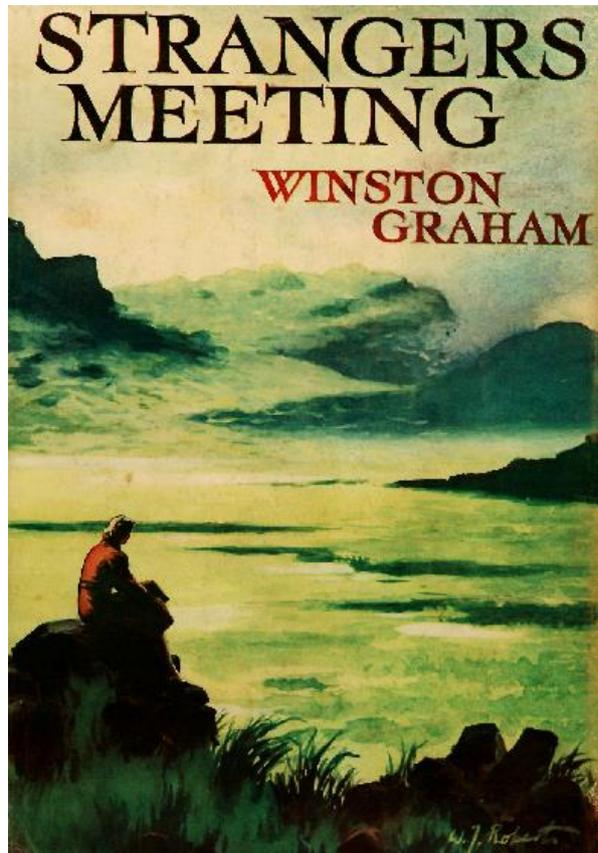
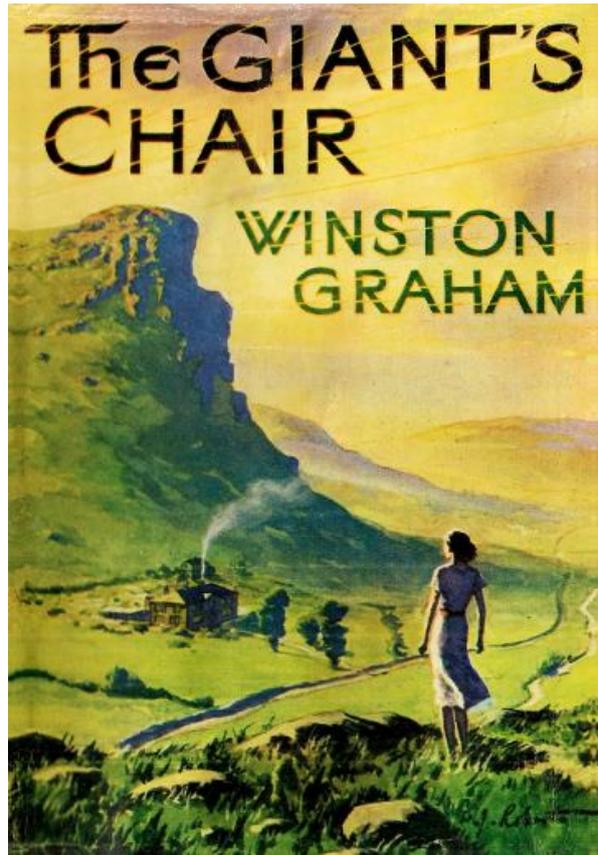
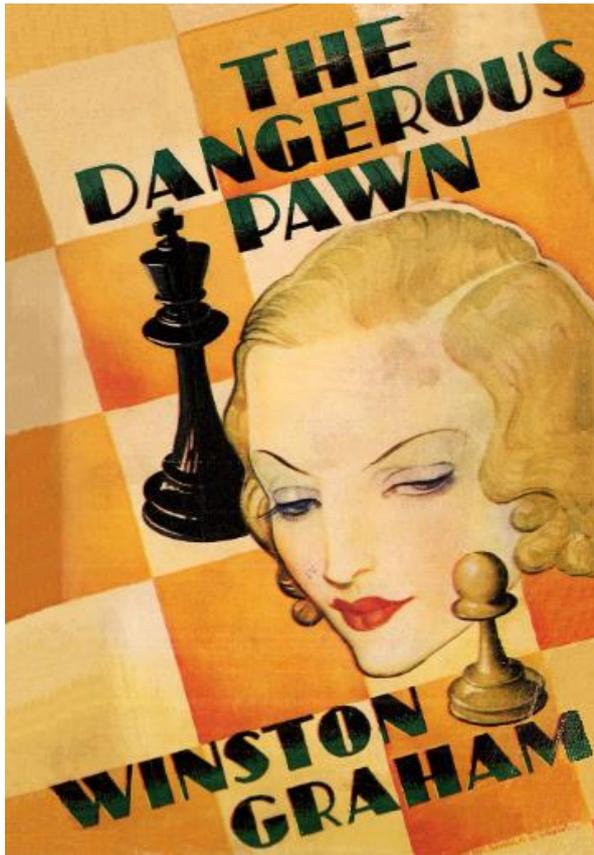
[Below: WL's nineteen WG titles, with year of publication](#)



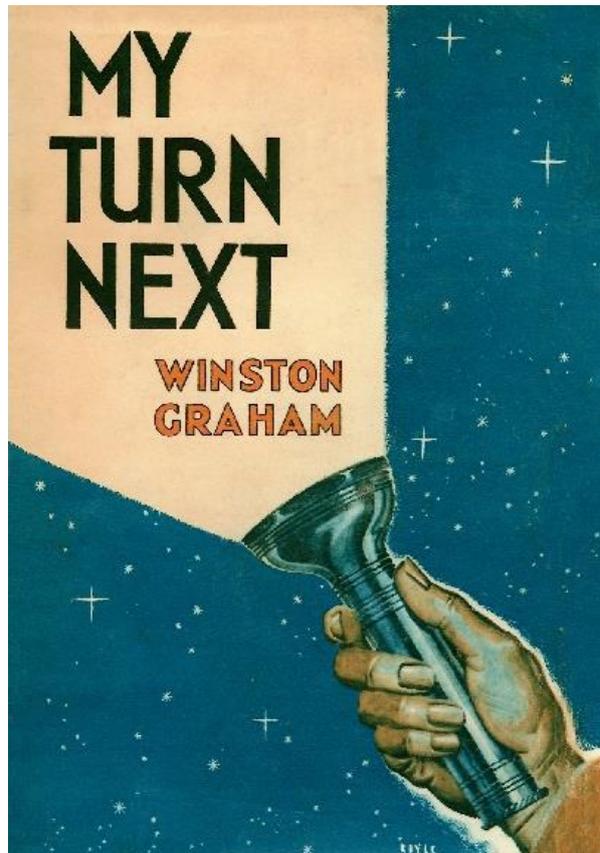
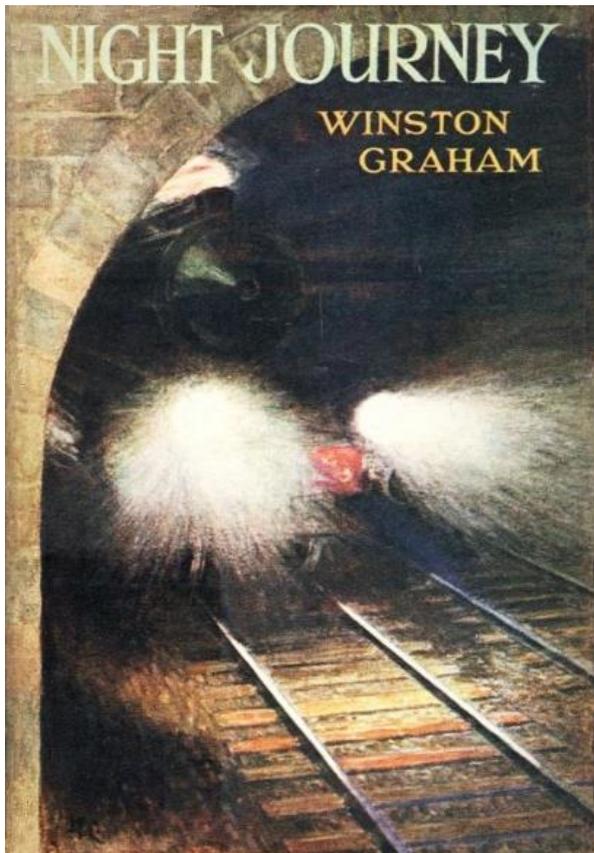
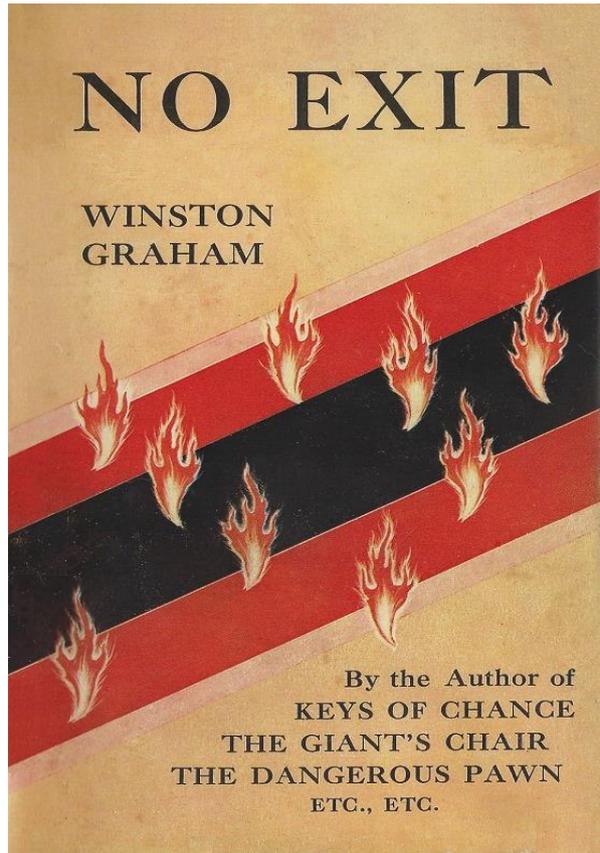
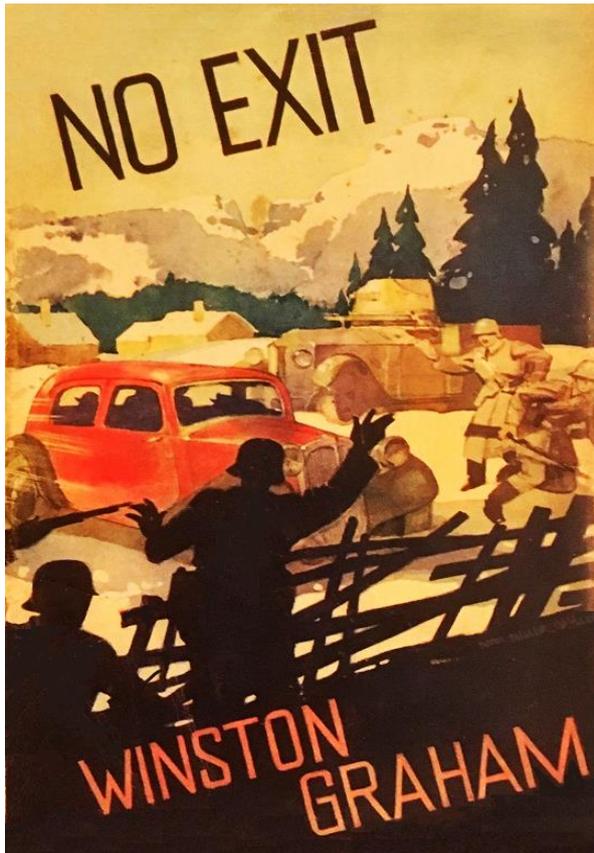
(1) *The House with the Stained Glass Windows*, 1934 (2) *Into the Fog*, 1935 (3) *The Riddle of John Rowe*, 1935 (4) *Without Motive*, 1936



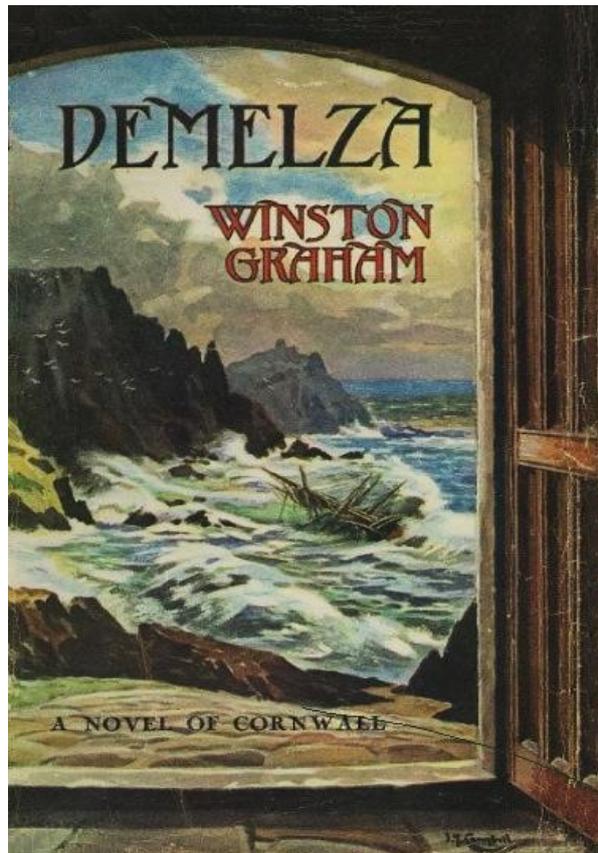
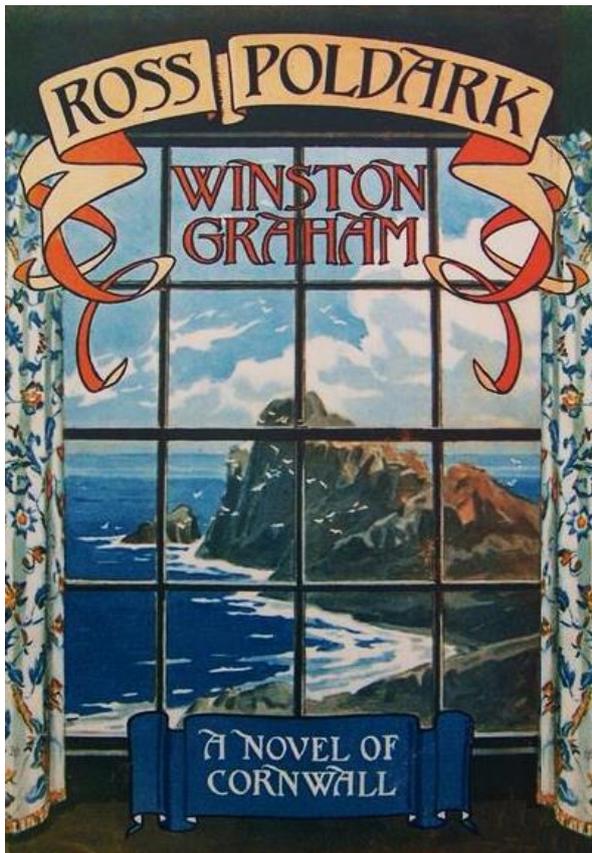
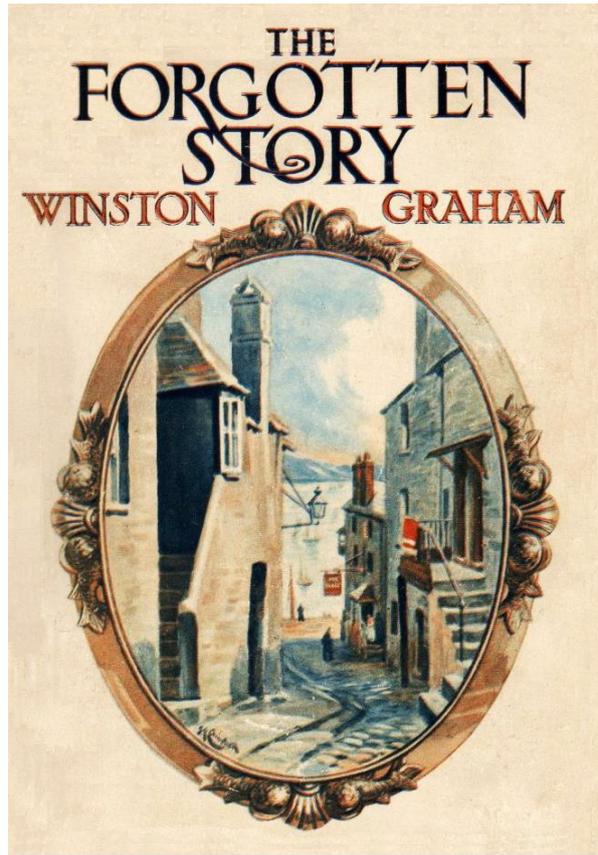
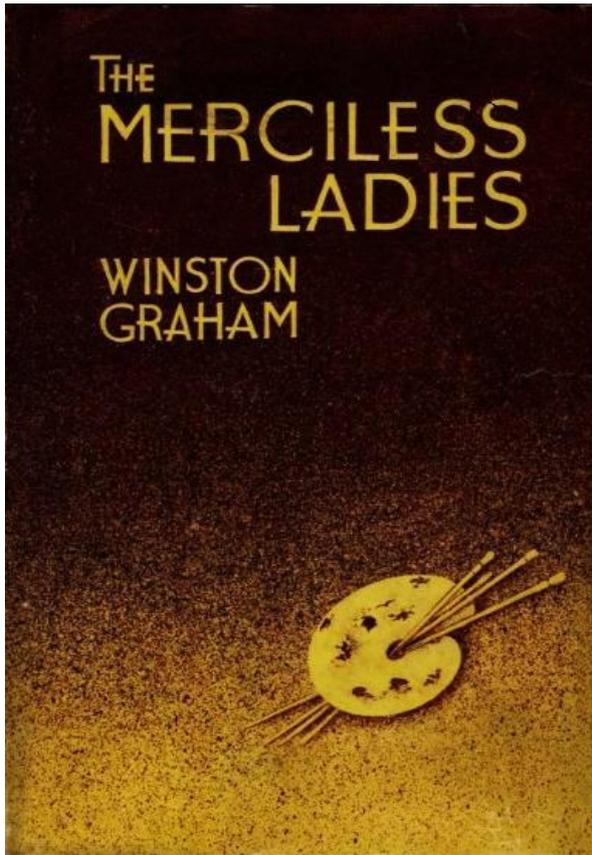
Books (1)-(4) without jackets



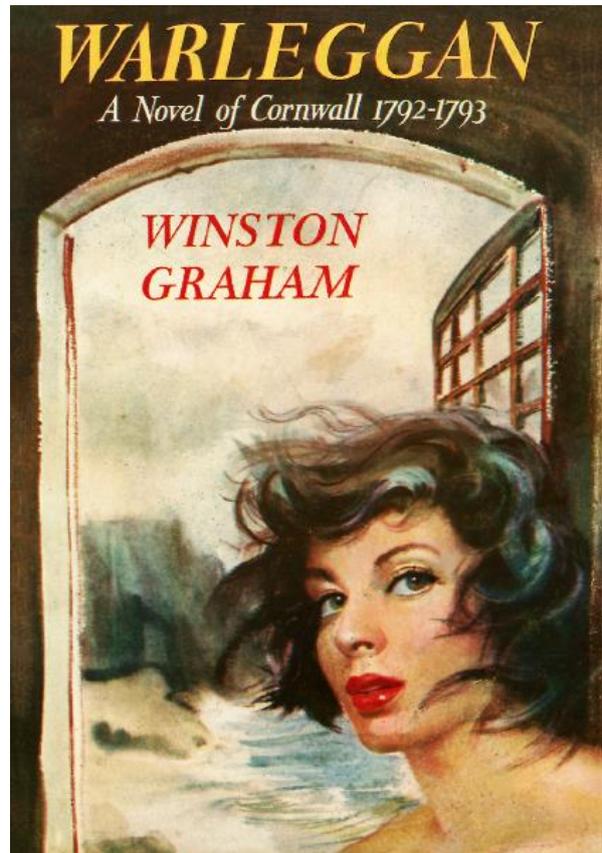
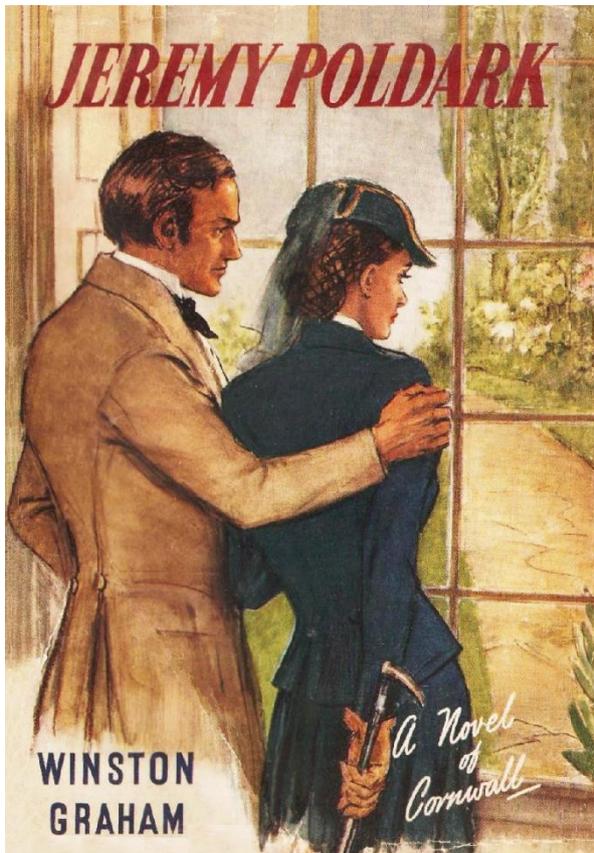
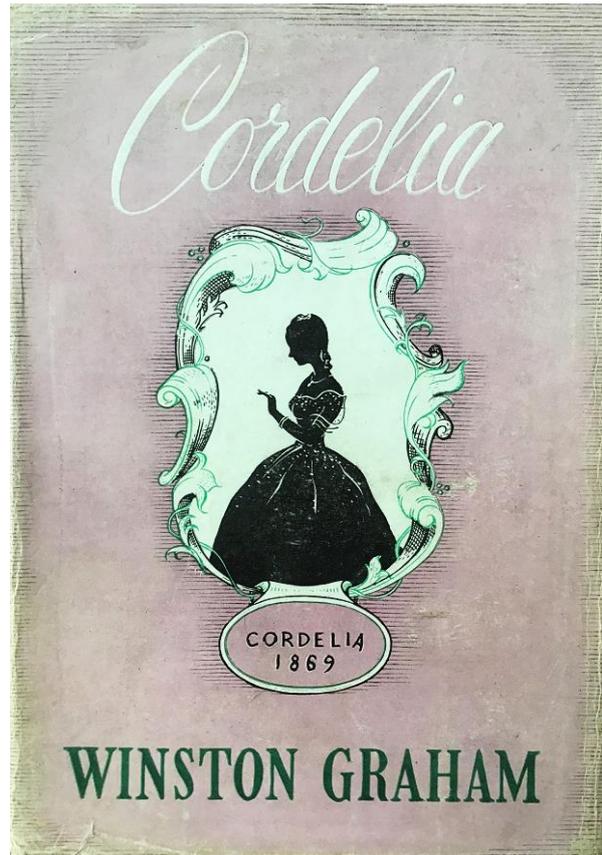
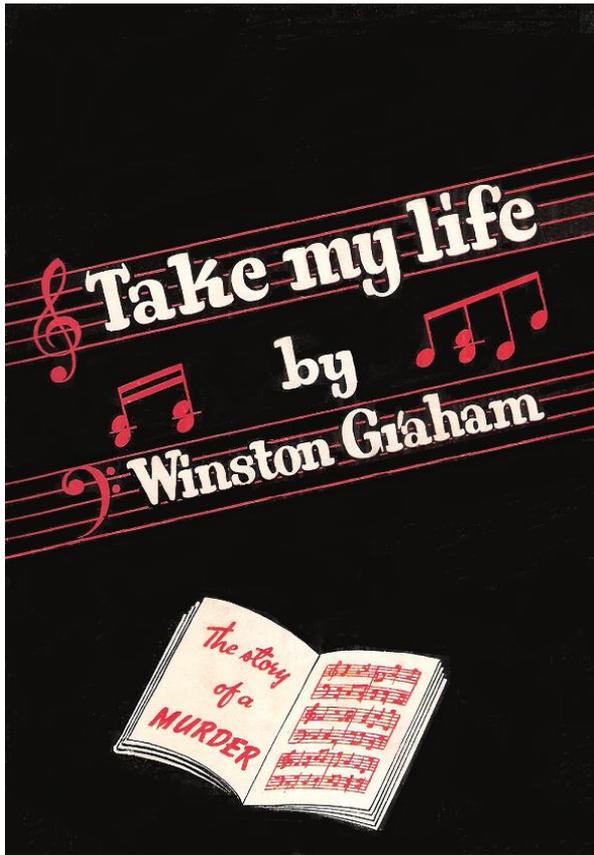
(5) *The Dangerous Pawn*, 1937 (6) *The Giant's Chair*, 1938 (7) *Keys of Chance*, 1939 (8) *Strangers Meeting*, 1939²⁴



(9) *No Exit*, 1940 [uniquely, with two jacket designs, probably due to war-time austerity] (10) *Night Journey*, 1941 (11) *My Turn Next*, 1942

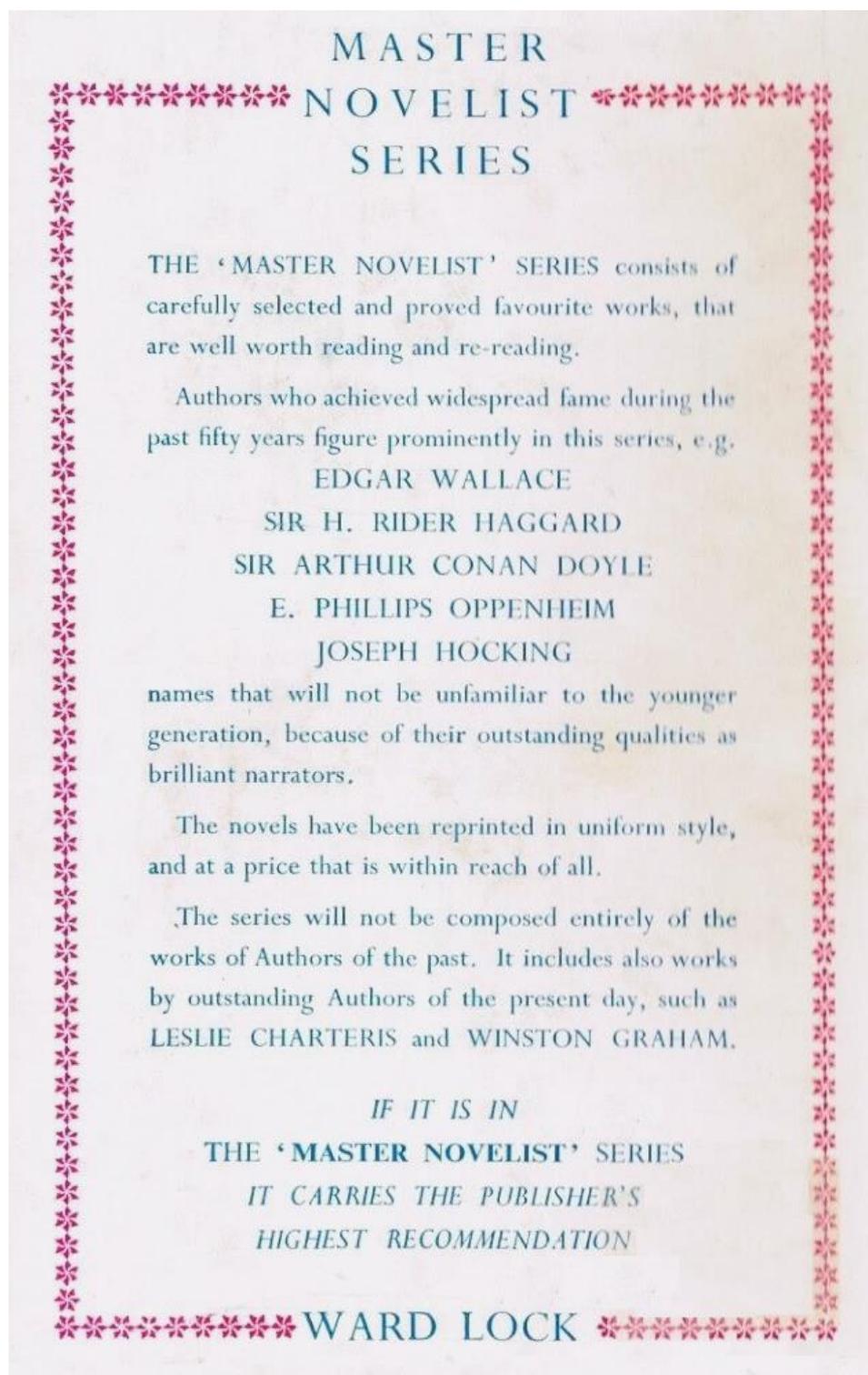


(12) *The Merciless Ladies*, 1944 (13) *The Forgotten Story*, 1945 (14) *Ross Poldark*, 1945 (15) *Demelza*, 1946



(16) *Take My Life*, 1947, (17) *Cordelia*, 1949 (18) *Jeremy Poldark*, 1950
(19) *Warleggan*, 1953²⁵

WL's Master Novelist Series



Circa 1950, WL began selling reprints of *Demelza* in their Master Novelist Series – the image above shows the rear panel of a contemporary *Demelza* jacket. By 1956, the series ran to at least sixty-eight titles, almost half by Edgar Wallace. Back covers such as the one below from Wallace's *Bones*

(undated, circa 1956) indicate that by 1950 the series included two WG novels (*RP* and *Demelza*), with *JP* and *Cordelia* added in 1953, *The Forgotten Story* in 1955 and *Take My Life* and *Warleggan* in 1956, which accounts for all seven of WG's "unsuppressed" post-1944 Ward, Locks. So perhaps not so "carefully selected" after all.

THE MASTER NOVELIST SERIES

EDGAR WALLACE

The "Sanders" Stories

SANDERS OF THE RIVER
BOSAMBO OF THE RIVER
BONES
LIEUTENANT BONES
SANDI, THE KING-MAKER
THE PEOPLE OF THE RIVER
KEEPERS OF THE KING'S PEACE

Mysteries

JACK O' JUDGMENT
THE DAFFODIL MYSTERY
THE DARK EYES OF LONDON
THE THREE OAK MYSTERY
BLUE HAND
MR. JUSTICE MAXELL
MAN WHO BOUGHT LONDON
THE JUST MEN OF CORDOVA
THE COUNCIL OF JUSTICE
THE GREEN RUST
THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE FROG
KATE, PLUS TEN
THE SECRET HOUSE
THE ADVENTURES OF HEINE
A DEBT DISCHARGED
DOWN UNDER DONOVAN
THE FOURTH PLAGUE
THE NINE BEARS
THE MAN WHO WAS NOBODY
THE RIVER OF STARS
THOSE FOLK OF BULBORO'
GREY TIMOTHY
THE DUKE IN THE SUBURBS

E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

THE TRAITORS
MYSTERIOUS MR. SABIN
MILLIONAIRE OF YESTERDAY

LESLIE CHARTERIS

X ESQUIRE
THE WHITE RIDER
THE BANDIT
MEET THE TIGER
(The first Saint novel)
DAREDEVIL

BERTHA M. CLAY

BEYOND PARDON
A WOMAN'S TEMPTATION
LOVE WORKS WONDERS

WINSTON GRAHAM

ROSS POLDARK
CORDELIA
THE FORGOTTEN STORY
WARLEGGAN
TAKE MY LIFE

GUY BOOTHBY

DR. NIKOLA

JOSEPH HOCKING

THE PURPLE ROBE
MISTRESS NANCY MOLES-
WORTH
ROGER TREWINION

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

A STUDY IN SCARLET
(The first Sherlock Holmes story)

SIR H. RIDER HAGGARD

AYESHA (The return of "She")

NIGEL TRANTER

THE NIGHT RIDERS
RUM WEEK
RIO D'ORO
THE LONG COFFIN

WARD LOCK

NOTES AND SOURCES

¹ Principal source for pp. 1-7: *Adventure in publishing – the House of Ward Lock, 1854 to 1954* by Edward Liveing, Ward Lock, 1954; other sources: *The Lock family of Dorchester, Dorset – a pedigree compiled by David Beamish*; version 3.04, 8 April 2004 and *Whitaker's Red Book of Commerce or Who's Who in Business*, J. Whitaker & Sons, Ltd., 1914.

² Though Liveing asserts this, it would appear to be untrue; the archive acquired by Dr. Meli in 2019 included more than 1,000 file copies of books published both after 1940 *and before*. And the German bombing-raid on London on the night of 29 December 1940 disrupted not only WL – indeed, the destruction of the vast warehouse of the world's largest book wholesaler, Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., along with its stock of six million books, was a grievous blow for British publishing across the board. (*The British Book Trade*; ed. Sue Bradley, The British Library, 2008)

³ Held by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC, USA

⁴ As was – since 2001, Brandt and Hochman.

⁵ Letters from WL to WG dated 29 March 1933 and 9 May 1934 held by the Royal Cornwall Museum's Courtney Library, 25 River Street, Truro, TR1 2SJ.

^{6, 23} *Memoirs of a Private Man*, Macmillan 2003, Book One, Chapter Three.

⁷ Draft speech "The Novelist at Work" (1937), RCM, Truro.

⁸ *Night Journey*, Bodley Head, 1966, Author's Note. (A sale of 700 copies would have recouped for WL a little under half of their £55 advance.)

^{9, 17, 18} Watt archive, as ³.

¹⁰ No advance for the first novel: *Memoirs* 1.3; other figures from contracts in the Watt and WL (Meli) archives.

¹¹ *A. J. Cronin – the man who created Dr Finlay* by Alan Davies, Alma Books, 2011.

¹² A filmed interview given by WG at Trerice Manor, Newquay on 27 March 1974.

^{13, 21} The WL (Meli) archive.

¹⁴ *Memoirs*, 1.3, in which WG also describes how, after reading his fifth novel *The Dangerous Pawn* and despite rightly recognising it as a major advance on prior efforts, Lock told him "commercially I could shake you" (because he knew buyers would prefer another humdrum thriller to anything "different", however fine). This grimly pragmatic rebuff sent WG back to grinding out thrillers for another six years until, with 1944's *The Merciless Ladies*, his better literary self emerged once more – but what if Lock had expressed not displeasure but encouragement; had said, "Yes, this book may struggle [as had the previous four], but it's much your best yet, *so let's have more of the same.*"? Would the writer-to-be not have quickened somewhat sooner, to the benefit of all concerned?

¹⁵ *Memoirs*, 1.6.

¹⁶ *Memoirs*, 1.3. If WG felt this way, it begs the question why he didn't leave sooner – presumably because, until he was "established", no better prospect would take him.

¹⁹ From *A Living Memory: Hodder and Stoughton Publishers 1868-1975*, by John Attenborough, H&S, 1975:

In the immediate post-war years ... [[Hodder's sales director](#)] John Attenborough [exploited] a number of editorial openings ... On the fiction front, his faith in Richard Mason's *The Wind Cannot Read* (1947) brought him into new and friendly contact with Audrey Heath ... leading to Jerrard Tickell's *Appointment with Venus* (1951), Winston Graham's *Night Without Stars* (1950) and a series of novels from Edith Cadell [[all being published by Hodder](#)]. All those authors were important additions to the fiction list.

So the prime mover would appear to have been John Attenborough with Audrey Heath lending active support.

²⁰ This shows that by 1949 WG already had a clear grasp of what it would take to complete his Poldark saga (as then

conceived), even though the third and fourth instalment titles had not yet been determined.

²² For every copy of his first novel sold, WG received ninepence (i.e. 10% of its 7/6d cover price). An overall income of £29 (assuming it's a pre-tax figure) equates to a sale of just 774 copies.

²⁴ Nina Miller Davidson (1895-1972) designed the jackets of *John Rowe*, *Without Motive*, *The Dangerous Pawn*, *Keys of Chance* and the first *No Exit*; those of *The Giant's Chair* and *Strangers Meeting* are by W. J. Roberts. For more on Mrs Davidson's life and work, see [NMD](#).

²⁵ It is surely no coincidence that all four Poldark jackets offer a view *through a window*; similarly, both of the other period novels, *The Forgotten Story* and *Cordelia*, feature a mirror, all suggestive of looking back into or reflecting the past.

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