

A WG Who's Who

ATTLEE, Thomas Simons "Tom" (1880-1960)



From 1906, Wandsworth-born, Putney-raised, newly-qualified architect Tom Attlee mixed practise of his profession with social work in the East End of London. But, when war broke out in 1914, Tom's Christian beliefs would not allow him to fight, nor would he undertake non-combatant community service. In 1917 and 1918, rather, he endured three spells of imprisonment as a conscientious objector before eventually relocating with his wife and young family to the West Country, settling near Falmouth. There he made no attempt to practise the architecture for which he was trained but, instead,

sustained by his faith, took an active role in the education and support of the community in which he now lived. His younger brother Clem (1883-1967) fought with distinction in WWI, led the Labour Party for two decades (1935-55), served as deputy Prime Minister in Churchill's wartime coalition government and then from 1945-1951 himself became PM. Their mother Ellen remarked that she didn't know which of her two sons made her more proud.¹

WG first encountered Tom circa 1937 in a WEA (Workers' Educational Association) class in Perranporth, where Tom was lecturing (which he did on Architecture, Literature and History). His daughter Peggy recalls:

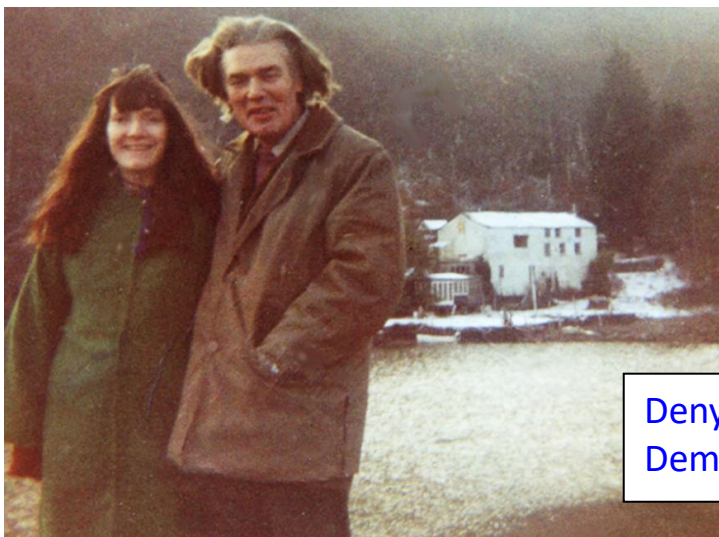
The aspiring novelist was very ready to ask for advice from his tutor and over the next twenty years regularly brought his manuscripts for criticism or encouragement. Tom was generous, particularly with the latter, and strongly urged Graham to continue with the historical [i.e. Poldark] books. Tom was himself quite enraptured with the heroine,

Demelza, as were the television audiences who saw the adaptation of the novels in the seventies. On the books set in other, mainly modern, periods, Tom offered suggestions, sometimes on style, with reference to his favourite nineteenth century authors, Meredith or Browning, sometimes correcting factual errors from his architectural experience. He was always tentative in making criticism, ready to blame his own obtuseness, and on one occasion had simply to admit his inability to judge. He wrote [ref Cordelia]: "I have no doubt the Music Hall was like that; I never entered such a place. I would as soon have thought of attending a chapel." Such were the limits of his experience.²

To discover which novel WG dedicated to him, which includes pen-portraits of Tom and his wife and which ones Tom critiqued, see [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

BAKER, Denys Val (1917-1984)

Like WG, a "Cornish writer" who was not actually a Cornishman, Denys Val Baker was a prolific author and anthologist who published fourteen novels, twenty-two short story collections, twenty-six volumes of autobiography, over forty anthologies and another twenty books on general subjects as well as hundreds of uncollected short stories and articles in magazines across the world. Twelve of his short fiction anthologies include a contribution from WG. For a detailed biography and more information concerning his relationship with Graham, see [HERE](#).



Denys Val Baker with his daughter
Demelza circa 1970

BARRETT, Michael Arthur "Mike" (1927-2011)



Godfrey Vosper, *aka* Godfrey Brown, third title character of WG's 1970 novel *Angell, Pearl and Little God*, is a professional featherweight boxer who aspires to be British and eventually world champion. Although both titles prove beyond him, still it behoved the book's author to know enough about the sport, both within the ring and without, to write convincingly authentic text – and the man he turned to in order to learn what he needed to know was leading fight promoter Mike Barrett. This is from *Memoirs*, 1.10:

At this juncture I knew virtually nothing about boxing, but constant visits to the East End of London quickened my interest. Several times I borrowed a seedy raincoat from the Secretary of the Savile Club, wore my oldest trilby, and slouched down to the Thomas a Becket pub in the Old Kent Road, where with a stub of cigarette in my mouth I would prop up the bar; and presently, when folk had got used to me, I would saunter up to the gym upstairs and watch Henry Cooper [\[British and Commonwealth heavyweight champion 1959-1971\]](#) sparring.

Then, by chance, I got an introduction to one of the big fight promoters, Mike Barrett, and he generously opened every

door. By this time fascination with the subject itself had taken over from any mere matter of duty-research, and it seemed abundantly clear that I could write a book entirely about the boxing career of Little God. I attended meetings between the various promoters when their protégés were being matched. I went to weigh-ins, sparring bouts, sat behind the scenes in the dressing rooms before and after they went up to fight. I even attended the pay-outs. The world of prizefighting had become much more interesting to me than the world of law offices or even of a pretty girl on the perfumery counter of a big store.

The novel's dedication reads "For Mike".

BARTEAU, (Anne) Rosamund (née Grime; from 1947, Graham) (1946 -)

Born in Perranporth, only daughter of Winston and Jean; seen below with her parents. Married American divorcé Douglas Barteau, eight years her senior, in London in 1967; mother of three; a widow since 2013. Having previously run a Coeur d'Alene, Idaho B&B named Abbotswood House (with rooms including "Ross", "Demelza" and "the Poldark Suite") and worked in California in education administration, Rosamund (according to winstongraham.org) now lives in Berkshire.



Of WG, she said in 2015: "As a father he was fun, because he took us to fantastic places and he'd play cricket on the beach and we'd play tennis ... He was a nice father."³

BIGGINS, Christopher (1948 -)



1977, on set: Christopher Biggins (in costume) and WG.
(The smiling girl to WG's left is his daughter Rosamund)

After Christopher Biggins was cast as the odious Revd. Osborne Whitworth in the second (1977) BBC *Poldark* series, a friendship sprang up between actor and author which endured through the years that followed. WG proposed him for membership of the Savile Club, an establishment Biggins considered "fabulously old-fashioned":

... Every time I went ... it was always full of classic old colonels. It wasn't really my scene and I loved it and laughed at it in equal measure. The club has a rigid set of rules. If you are on your own you are seated at a long table next to other members and left to sink or swim in conversation. Fortunately small talk is something I'm good at. I swam away happily. Ordering meals took some getting used to as well. The waitresses aren't allowed to interrupt the members to ask them for their orders – instead you have to write down what you want on a bit of paper and they have to peer across at it. How quintessentially English, and bonkers, is that?⁴

And then there's this:

Once I joined [the Grahams] on holiday in Menorca ... We were all laughing because a lady sunbathing near us was reading one of Winston's ... novels. So when she went into the sea for a swim he dashed over and signed it. Did she see him? Did she ever notice the signature? Did she dismiss it as a joke? Who knows, but it was lovely to conjure up a mystery for her. Maybe she can solve it by reading this.⁵

Biggins was born in Oldham, making him a Lancastrian, like WG, but grew up in Salisbury, Wiltshire. His portrayal of Whitworth in 1977 won him not merely plaudits and admiration, but also a dubious accolade, as he explained after attending the launch in 2019 of Series Four of Mammoth Screen's *Poldark*:

David Tennant ... called me over and said, "Biggins, meet the man who is playing your part in Poldark." So I met Christian Brassington, who was the new Ossie Whitworth, and David then told me they had both been talking about my original role when they spotted me. I then explained to them it had led to me being voted the most hated man on TV, which they found hysterical.⁶

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BRAND, Desmond (dates unknown)

When WG's novel *The Green Flash* was in the very early stages of gestation, with its setting not yet decided, Max Reinhardt arranged for its author to meet Desmond Brand, then managing director of Helena Rubinstein. Following a lunch on 26 February 1974,⁷ all went well:

*Desmond ... put everything I asked for at my disposal. I visited the works, the testing laboratories, the big commercial suppliers, the shops, the beauty salons. Desmond ... was a very down-to-earth character. He emphasised the commercial, no-nonsense side of the business, but was willing enough to utilise the mystique, the romantic advertising, the bally-hoo that has grown up around the whole subject of perfumery.*⁸

The book, which proved a struggle to write (see [HERE](#)), eventually emerged in 1986 with a dedication reading "To my friend Desmond Brand" – and its boxing elements read very well indeed.

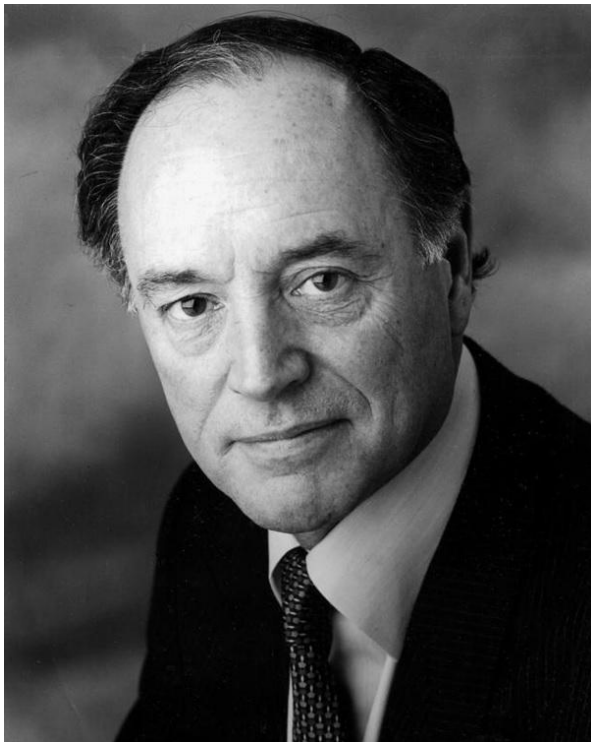
CHAPMAN, (Francis) Ian, CBE (1925-2019)

When WG left Hodder and Stoughton for rival publisher William Collins in the mid-1960s

*... there was an unexpected bonus (for) I met the Managing Director of Collins, one Ian Chapman, who was among the most distinguished publishers of his generation, and, a few months later, Marjory, his charming wife ... I look on them now as my most valued and loving of friends.*⁹

After forty-two years loyal service at Collins (the last ten as Chairman) Chapman lost his job in 1989 when the company was taken over by News International. He then launched with his wife their own publishing house with the prestigious address Chapmans of Drury Lane. The imprint's first publication in August 1990 was WG's *The Twisted Sword*. In 1992, his next novel, *Stephanie*, was added to their list, shortly before another takeover saw the nascent enterprise swallowed by Orion.

Between 2001 and 2004, Ian Chapman made a number of tape recordings at his home for the British Library, resulting in the addition to their archive of more than twenty-four hours of personal and professional recollections captured on forty-one C60 cassette tapes. Although they are sure to make interesting listening, sadly, public access will not be granted until 2029. For more on Ian Chapman, see [HERE](#).



Ian and Marjory Chapman

CHAPMAN, Marjory Stewart (née Swinton) (dates unknown)

Wife of Ian (see previous entry). When WG returned in the early 1970s to writing Poldark novels after an eighteen-year break, he took a decision that would change many lives, not least his own – and, according to his daughter Rosamund, the initiative came from Marjory Chapman:

He was talking to his publisher and one of his editors who happened to be good friends of my father's and he said: "I'm sort of wondering what I should write next." In this twenty years [\[since the previous Poldark\]](#) he'd written a whole series of modern novels, one of which was Marnie, that was made into the film by Hitchcock and probably The Walking Stick was in there as well; that was made into a film. So '74, '75,

[sic] he's talking to Ian and Marjory saying: "Well, what do you think I should do?" and Marjory said: "Why don't you revisit Poldark?"¹⁰

The Black Moon is dedicated to her, so it may have been so. WG stated in *Memoirs*, 1.3 that Marjory also gave him "invaluable" advice about reworking 1942's *My Turn Next* into 1988's *Cameo*. As the result proved so disappointing, he might have done better to ignore it. And did Marjory edit his work? Their professional association stretched from *The Walking Stick* (his first book for Collins) through to *Stephanie* (after which Chapmans was taken over) but still the answer isn't clear. Nonetheless, his faith in her judgement was clearly profound. On the opening page of *Memoirs*, discussing the writing of autobiography, he states that

I had written a large part of mine some few years ago but then, self-doubting, had put it away in my safe pending further thought. Only four people had read it, and of those the only "outsider" was an old friend who had been the chief editor at a large London publishing firm. Her view was one of general approval of what I had written, with one proviso — she felt that my life, at least as I had depicted it, was a little too "exemplary" to attract attention these days.

There seems no reason to doubt that that one "outsider" was Marjory Chapman. It's very likely that the dedication of *The Twisted Sword* – "For MAY" – also refers discreetly to her.

CHURCH, Richard Thomas, CBE (1893-1972)



Although his first volume of poetry was published in 1917, and his ninth in 1932, it was not until 1933, at the age of forty, that Battersea-born Richard Church left his job as a civil servant to pursue a full-time literary career. Whilst continuing to produce a steady stream of poetry, together with adult and children's fiction and some non-fiction, he also became a respected journalist and critic, was literary editor of the

Independent Labour Party's *New Leader* and an editor from 1933 to 1951 for publisher J. M. Dent. Between 1955 and 1964 he also published three acclaimed volumes of autobiography.

He wrote his first review of a novel by fellow Savilian WG in 1956, critiquing *The Sleeping Partner*, after which others followed, always positive and often highly complimentary:

*He is one of those rare practitioners in the art of fiction who really does treat it as an art ... His new novel, I think, is his best. (re [The Tumbled House](#))*¹¹

*... in the manner of Alexander Dumas. (re [Cordelia](#) reprint)*¹²

*The ... story is highly woven, thread upon thread adding to the tapestry its element of gold, or sable tinge. The hero takes part in the expedition by which Essex sacked Cadiz. The account of this is detailed and masterly. But the book is more than picturesque. It is rich in moral force and sane historical judgment. (re [The Grove of Eagles](#))*¹³

*... Mr. Graham's novels are based in spiritual honesty. (re [After the Act](#))*¹⁴

*Winston Graham is a novelist to benefit by this recurrence of an interest in pure story telling, a function, and a duty, for some time out of fashion. He is a master of it, in the same class as R. C. Hutchinson and Graham Greene. (re [The Walking Stick](#))*¹⁵

*Winston Graham is a novelist whose reputation grows steadily with every new book, because of his fidelity to the realistic technique on which he has founded his artistry ... Here is storytelling that is powerful and professional in its architecture ... (re [Angell, Pearl and Little God](#))*¹⁶

WG expressed his gratitude on each occasion, as well he might. For more, see [HERE](#).

CROWDEN, June (née Moulton) (1929-circa 2023)

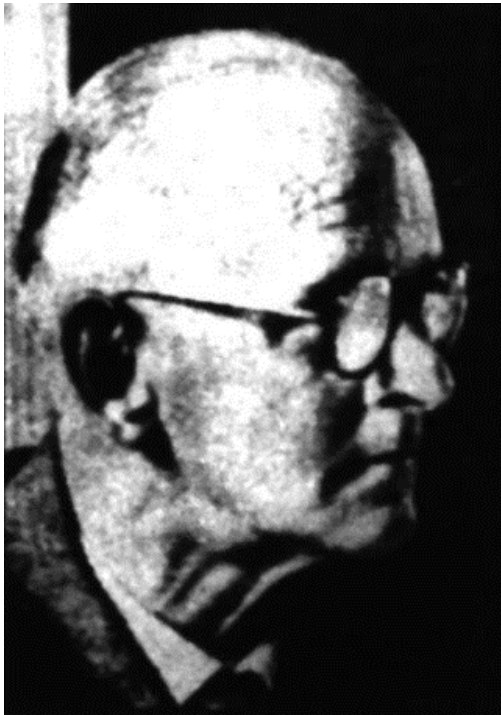
June Moulton was born in Plymouth in 1929. Her mother Vera Anne was a cousin of WG's (her mother Mary – June's grandmother – and WG's mother Annie were sisters), making June a first cousin of WG's, once removed. After her marriage in 1952, June's surname became Crowden. In the *Western Morning News* of 30 September 2003 her son James Crowden wrote:

As a young girl of twelve, my mother was evacuated to Perranporth from Newton Ferrers [Devon] in 1941 ... WG and his mother welcomed them and arranged for them to rent a chalet owned by Donald Healey's parents a few houses away from Treberran ... Much later WG wrote a novel called Tremor which had as one of its characters a woman who went off to New Zealand. This was based on my mother's experience and letters about sailing she sent him from the Bay of Islands.

During the war years, WG and June established a mutual rapport which endured until his death in 2003. She – seen below in 2015 feeding a calf – passed away in Kerikeri, New Zealand between 2022 and 2026 (precise date unknown).



CURNOW, Dr Reginald (1903-1970)



In order to write convincingly about a man subjected to surgical treatment for an eye badly damaged by shrapnel, WG needed specialist knowledge of the issues and techniques involved and, in order to acquire it, and possibly arrange to view such surgery, he first approached Dr Reginald Curnow, Cornwall's Medical Officer of Health, a Perranporth resident whose son Robert was a sometime tennis partner of the author's.

His *BMJ* obituary records that Curnow was "an approachable man ... with contacts in every department of the hospital service"¹⁷

which made him the ideal candidate to further WG's unusual request and, after cautioning that eye surgery could make gruesome viewing,¹⁸ he duly put him in touch with Truro-based ophthalmologist A. Gerard East ...

EAST, A. (Arthur) Gerard (1809-1969)

From *Argosy*, December 1967:

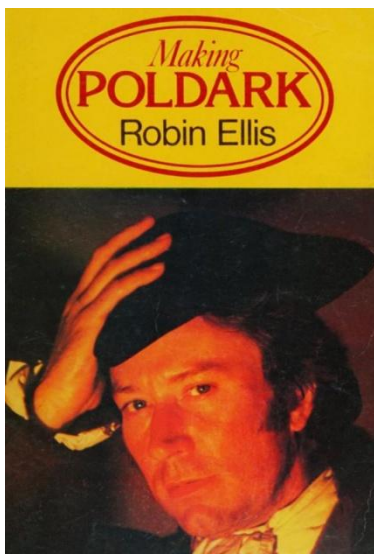
I talked over details at length with [Dr East] and wrote the passage [describing an iridotomy]. Then a week or so later he rang up and asked me if I'd like to see the operation performed. I said, "God, thanks, no!" But after twelve hours of indecision – if I was a writer, what was I thinking of, turning that down? – I got dressed up in surgeon's coat and mask and went along and saw it all at close quarters. Afterwards the surgeon's wife laughed to see the colour of my face. I never mind dead people; but to see the surgeon cut his patient's eye made me feel terrible.

The novel in question – 1950's *Night Without Stars* – is dedicated "TO A. GERARD EAST".

ELLIS, (Anthony) Robin (1942 -)



Another 1970s *Poldark* actor – see also BIGGINS, REES – with whom WG subsequently kept in touch. Ellis, Ipswich-born, has the unique distinction of having appeared in both BBC adaptations of the novels, first as Ross in the seventies then, from 2015 to 2019 (eight episodes across five series) as the Reverend Dr Halse. Author and actor appeared together on BBC1's *WOGAN* on 1 February 1988 to promote a re-run of *Poldark*, Series One. Since 1999, Ellis has lived in south-west France with his wife Meredith. WG and Jean attended their wedding (see above) in 1990.



Making Poldark by Robin Ellis was published by Bossiney Books, Cornwall (79 pages; left) in 1978, again by Crossaction Ltd, London (89 pages) in 1987 and for a third time by Palo Alto, California (199 pages) in 2012.

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EVILL, Wilfred Ariel (1890-1963)



Wilfred Evill (above) was a London solicitor, art collector and Savile Club member who – corpulent, hectoring, mean-spirited and egotistical – seems to have repulsed most of those who met him. Here's WG:

... during the war, I am told, [he] always ate at Claridge's Causerie (fixed price) before coming on to the Savile for dinner, and often managed to talk in a loud voice about the food he'd eaten in the hearing of some members who had recently lost a son or a brother. He was a great art collector, and one of the last things I heard him say was: "I'm going to buy more Stanley Spencers. I hear he's got cancer." [The pencil sketch above was drawn by Spencer in 1942.] A few years later I used him as a character in one of my novels ...¹⁹

Yes, and as "Wilfred Angell", very thinly disguised.

FRYER, Rev. Arthur Frederick., M.Sc., F.I.C. (1868-?)

The Principal at WG's first and only school, Longsight Grammar, who on 21 January 1924 wrote concerning his charge:

I have pleasure in certifying that the work and conduct of Winston Grime, aged 15½, pupil of this school for the last 7 years, has been in all respects excellent; indeed, out of all my 400 pupils of the past 13 years, there is not one that I could recommend more highly ... He is a good all-round worker, has developed high mental ability, and his exemplary conduct has throughout been marked by sterling honesty and integrity of purpose.²⁰



In WG's third novel, *The Riddle of John Rowe*, much the most effectively drawn character is Professor Crabtree, who, WG acknowledged in 1937, "is as good a reproduction as I could manage of the headmaster [above, at back, with mortar board] of my old school."²¹

GRAHAM, Andrew Winston (né Grime) (1942 -)

WG's first child and only son, and the man who, since 2003, has controlled his late father's literary estate, Perranporth-born Andrew Graham keeps busy, though in his eighties, after a long and distinguished career as an economist, political advisor and academic; Master of Balliol College, Oxford 2001-2011 and a passionate windsurfer. On his father:

*Winston Graham was someone who habitually held his passions clenched tight to his chest, revealing little of his innermost thoughts ... Of course in the novels passions appear all over the place, especially in the characters. But that is at one remove. It is not direct. It is not the author speaking about himself.*²²

And his mother:

*My mother would have reinforced this [post-war] mood [of trying to make a better and more just world for the future] and been another great source of inspiration. She was energetic; she was an optimist; she could hardly go to Perranporth village without coming back with a funny story; she had an exceptional eye for detail and she was, at least in part, the model for Demelza, Ross's wife.*²³



Left: September 2020. The likeness to his father is notable, apropos of which, in 2012, Robin Ellis wrote: "Last week, when sitting with my back to Andrew whose seventieth birthday we had gone to Corfu to celebrate, I heard a voice say, *And what are you going to do this afternoon?* It was uncanny – the voice and the intonation were **Winston's!**"²⁴

For more, see [HERE](#).

GRAHAM (1939 to 1947, Grime), Jean Mary (née Williamson) (1912-1992)



First met Winston in the summer of 1926, when they were fourteen and eighteen, and married him in 1939, soon after the outbreak of war. Ran the family B&B while he wrote, latterly between spells of Coastguard duty. Within months, his mother had moved in, to remain until her death in 1949. Bore him a son in 1942 and a daughter four years later. Supported him devotedly through the barren years and the good. All that may sound like a heavy load, and surely was, but Jean was described by those who knew her as *fearless, a fireball, a bundle of energy*. Even the two strokes she suffered in 1967, when just 54, did not slow her down or curb her enthusiasm for life. Diagnosed with leukaemia in the summer of 1992, she passed away four days before Christmas, after fifty-three years of marriage, leaving WG to face his last ten and a half years alone.

Her headstone, standing beside his in Buxted graveyard, reads "LOVED BY ALL WHO KNEW HER". Who could ask more?

GRIME, Albert Henry (1867-1927)

A Lancastrian, born in Darwen; father of Cecil and Winston and husband of Annie (the couple are depicted below, circa 1890). Described by his younger son as "a small tubby vigorous man with a fair moustache, a bald head and keen twinkling eyes"²⁵ ... relentlessly energetic ... did not suffer fools gladly"²⁶; in the April 1881 census, Albert (13) is recorded as a "shop lad" and his twelve-year-old brother as a "warehouse lad", which suggests that neither received much schooling, although Albert did "play the cello"²⁷; in the 1901 and 1911 censuses he is a "commercial traveller" living in Weeton, Yorkshire and Manchester respectively [in the 1891 census, oddly, he does not appear]; by 1921 he is a "manager, wholesale grocer" employed by D. Mawdsley & Co. of 4-6 Riga Street, Shudehill – but the stroke he suffered, aged 54, in November 1921 put an end to that; in October 1925, at Cecil's urging, the family decamped to Perranporth on the north Cornish coast, which is where, on 11 November 1927, Albert died, aged just sixty. His remains lie in Perranzabuloe churchyard.



GRIME, Ann "Annie" (née Mawdsley) (1868-1949)

The descriptions of his mother WG sprinkled through *Memoirs* reveal elements of her nature: "pretty but very slight ... brilliant china-blue eyes ... a very strong character ... a faithful and loyal wife [and] devoted mother, generous and guardedly warm-hearted ... imbibed Liberalism at her father's knee". She was an accomplished pianist but an inability to sight-read limited her repertoire and, supposedly "delicate", was a martyr to bronchitis and catarrh. She supported her younger son through his long apprenticeship years, although, following Albert's death, his presence was a boon to her too. Her recollections of her early life in Victorian Manchester inspired him to write *Cordelia*, the last book he completed before she died and the one that made his name in America.

GRIME, Cecil (1898-1982)

The age-gap between Cecil and his brother was almost ten years, leaving WG "an only child in all but name"²⁸ and Cecil old enough to serve in the Great War, which he did, in France with the South Wales Borderers in 1918. Despite being wounded, it was an experience he told WG late in life that he "wouldn't have missed ... for anything"²⁹. In 1921 he was a shipping clerk at Henry Franc & Lauder, Chepstow Street, Manchester, but, after marrying in 1926, moved with his new wife to Perranporth, on the north Cornish coast – a place he'd visited and was enchanted by two years before – to run a ladies' and gents' outfitter's shop on Boscawen Street, next to Polgreen's chemist's. There they remained for the rest of their lives. Cecil was best man and a witness at Winston and Jean's wedding in September 1939; he died, aged 84, in October 1982.

WG tells that, having decided to leave Manchester, the family was considering relocating to the Lancashire coast and it was Cecil who persuaded them to try Cornwall instead. But for him, then, no Ross, no Demelza, no George, no seventies adaptation or Mammoth Screen reboot. In 2002, WG told Valerie Grove (*Times*, 7 May) that the move to Cornwall was lucky for him – and not just him – for "how could I have written stories about Southport?"

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HARRIS, Dr Frederick Louis "Fred" (1905-1998)

Dedicatee, with his wife Gladys, of *The Four Swans*, source of short-story THE OLD BOYS and another of the cadre of learned friends cultivated by WG to better inform his writing.



In 1928, after graduating from Oxford, where he read Modern History, then, at post-graduate level, Geography and Economic History, educationalist, historian, County Councillor and writer Fred Harris returned to his native Cornwall to take up a position (see ATTLEE) with the WEA. In 1936, the University College of the South-West (which in 1955 became the University of Exeter) appointed him their University Resident Tutor for Cornwall, then, after the war, when staff numbers swelled, Senior Resident Tutor.³⁰ A 1951 Ministry of Education report³¹ observed that:

A remarkable trait of adult education in Cornwall is the unity which informs it. Equally unmistakable is the very high standard of work. Many hands have no doubt played some part in bringing about these two happy results but by far the largest share has been that of one man, the senior resident tutor, who has worked in Cornwall for over twenty years. To him essentially must be ascribed the achievement of today.

Fred remained on faculty until 1969, while continuing his WEA work as "local branches were neither sufficiently strong nor established to challenge professional leadership".³²

WG relates in *Memoirs*, 1.5 that, immediately after his wedding, the bride and groom went into Truro for tea with one of their witnesses, his "dearest friend, Fred Harris". Having such folk, able and willing to put their often considerable knowledge at his disposal must, for the young author, have been a great boon – as was his happy knack of finding them.

HARTFIELD, Gwendoline "Gwen" (née Davis) (1931-?)



In *Memoirs*, 2.10, while writing about the extreme difficulty of coming to terms with the loss of his wife of fifty-three years, WG paid a handsome and plainly heartfelt tribute:

Sometimes if you wear a cheerful face to deceive, the deception begins to stick, and you end up by deceiving yourself. I was of course greatly helped by my family, though necessarily after a few weeks most were far distant. And a few very good friends, the Chapmans, Christopher Biggins, Angharad Rees and some of Jean's bridge friends such as Molly Burton. But the largest contribution came from a young woman called Gwen Hartfield. My wife had taken her

on when Gwen was living nearby with a husband and a daughter of seven. She came to help in the house, but then, as Jean's health deteriorated, she took over ever more of the housekeeping, and when Jean died she became my housekeeper, while continuing to see to her own husband and child, and this has continued ever since. Efficient, humorous, cheerful, witty and eccentric, she offered me friendly yet challenging companionship which I so much needed at that time and which has never wavered. She has recently celebrated twenty years with us.

WG dedicated his 1995 novel *Tremor* to her (and two others) and also invited her to a late-era Savile Club birthday celebration. Additionally, in 2008, she was a guest of Andrew Graham at the opening in Truro of "The Life and Times of Winston Graham", an exhibition which ran through the summer at the Royal Cornwall Museum to mark the centenary of the author's birth. In *Stephanie* (1992), the description of James Locke's faithful housekeeper Mary Aldershot resembles *in some aspects* that of Gwen Hartfield as outlined above, as indeed elements of Locke's personality call to mind WG himself.

HEATH, Audrey (1888-1957)



The first literary agency engaged by WG to represent him was A. P. Watt & Son and the second, which he joined in 1948 and then stayed with for the rest of his career, was Audrey Heath's A. M. Heath & Co. The firm still manages his literary estate (on behalf of his son Andrew) to this day.

For more on the pioneering first female literary agent (left, circa 1927) and her business, see [HERE](#).

HITCHCOCK, Sir Alfred Joseph, KBE (1899-1980)



On 11 January 1961, three days after its publication in the United States, acclaimed film director Alfred Hitchcock placed an anonymous bid of \$25,000 with the William Morris Agency, Beverly Hills for the screen rights to WG's twenty-sixth novel, *Marnie*. After talking it over with the author, the agency rejected the bid, whereupon Hitchcock doubled it and revealed his identity; on 16 January his offer of \$50,000 was accepted.

WG confirmed in *Memoirs* 1.9 that this turn of events "wholly delighted" him

and on 4 April he wrote to Hitchcock to make initial contact with the director. Thereafter, letters were exchanged over the next three years, often with long interludes (although there were also some telephone calls) as the film was scripted and put into production. Hitchcock co-funded with Doubleday, the novel's US publisher, an advertising campaign to promote the book (whilst simultaneously shilling his film) but at no time did he invite or respond to any creative input from its author. He, WG, endured a brief but unwelcome bout of intense press interest when it was announced in March 1962 that Princess Grace of Monaco, the former Grace Kelly, would resume her acting career to play the eponymous girl-thief.

Marnie opened in London's Leicester Square on 8 July 1964, but it seems that WG did not attend the premiere (he saw it, as a paying customer, a little later with his son Andrew) and, not surprisingly, was disenchanted by what he saw. When reporter Gonzáles Sosa asked him in 1970 what he thought of the film, he guardedly replied:

*The critics said it was good. It seemed to me that something was missing. It may be that the author of a work has high expectations and believes that the adapter and director who made it into a film have not taken full advantage of it.*³³

Twenty-five years later, during an interview with Victoria Hinton of the *Daily Express*, the conversation turned once again to Hitchcock's *Marnie* and, this time, no longer obliged to be "polite", he didn't hold back:

*I didn't like the film at all; the story was distorted and a lot of subtler points were lost. When it came out, the critics disliked it, but now they look on it as one of the most important of Hitchcock's canon. God knows why.*³⁴

HOCKING, Frederick Denison Maurice "Denis" (1899-1996)

A Perranporth resident from 1934 [he later moved to Carlyon Bay] and Cornwall's County Pathologist from 1941, Denis Hocking was "one of the most popular men in the west country – a gentle, good tempered person who seemed to find endless amusement and delight in the more gruesome aspects of his profession and whose autobiography, *Bodies and Crimes* (Book Guild, 1992) is undoubtedly the funniest book ever written by a pathologist."³⁵

In 1954, WG contacted him to ask for details of post-mortem change in a body buried for a three weeks in a cellar under a ton of coal (this part of the plot of his 1956 novel *The Sleeping Partner*). Denis's comprehensive reply can be seen in [MAT MED](#). He also suggested the unusual murder-method used by WG in his 1979 play *Circumstantial Evidence* and later recycled in 1992's *Stephanie*.

Denis's willingness to share his expertise with authors earned him the soubriquet Doctor of Crime. After his death in 1996, one such, Colin Wilson, recalled the experience:

When I came to live in Cornwall in 1957, I lost no time in making his acquaintance, and asking his advice about a novel I was writing about a serial killer. I arrived at his home in Carlyon Bay to meet a trim, genial-looking man with pink cheeks and grey (later white) hair. Listening to him recalling cases was an unforgettable experience. He looked so innocent and good-humoured and talked with such enthusiasm that he sounded like a family doctor describing

how he had just delivered healthy twins when in fact he was talking about two women concreted under a garage floor or a young man who had murdered his parents and tipped them over nearby cliffs in a wheelbarrow.³⁶



Though clearly dedicated to his calling, Denis lived his long life to the full. In *Who's Who*, 1969 he listed his recreations as "motoring, golf, sailing, hotels, good food"; he was also a keen surfer – that he and WG should have hit it off, then, is hardly surprising. When they first met is unknown, and hardly matters. More important is what came next.

HOFFMANN, Ann Marie (1930-2014)

Originally from Abingdon, in Oxfordshire, Ann Hoffmann (pictured below circa 1975) began her literary life in publishing, before travelling widely in Europe. On her return to the UK, she spent four years as secretary / researcher to well-known writer Robert Henriques (1905-1967) and then, in 1966, established a Tunbridge Wells-based research service for authors,

which she ran until 1987. Her own books include *The Dutch: How They Live and Work* (1974), *Bocking Deanery* (1976), *Lives of the Tudor Age* (1977) and *Majorca* (1978).



One of the writers who sought her help was Winston Churchill's official biographer, Martin Gilbert and another the great man's youngest daughter, Mary Soames, author of *Clementine Churchill* (Cassell, 1979) and editor of *Winston and Clementine: the Personal Letters of the Churchills* (Doubleday, 1998). In both of those books, Mrs Soames pays warm and clearly well-deserved tribute to her assistant:

I am greatly indebted to Miss Ann Hoffmann of Authors' Research Services, who did all my research from 1966 onwards, which included interviewing many people on my behalf. She has housed and organised my archives and typed the greater part of the manuscript; she has also compiled the index. I am deeply grateful to Ann Hoffmann, not only for her professional skill and hard work, but also for her unfailing enthusiasm and devotion to the task.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to ... Ann Hoffmann, who again has been my right hand, and has borne the main burden: transcribing over 1,700 letters from manuscript, researching

and constructing the greater number of the footnotes and compiling the index. She has assisted me in the difficult task of deciding which letters to cut or omit. I have greatly valued her professional knowledge and advice, her unremitting hard work and her resolute cheerfulness.

From 1970's *Angell, Pearl and Little God* through to the end of his life, Ann Hoffmann would have been the first person, other than the author himself, to read each of WG's books as he delivered them, via notebook and pen, to the world. In 1998, he dedicated his last non-Poldark novel, *The Ugly Sister*, to her and, in *Memoirs* 2.10, vouchsafed why:

*Ann Hoffmann, [who worked] for me on a freelance basis for upwards of thirty-five years, has been an enormous help both as researcher and typist. Recently that help has become even more invaluable. Very early in my creative life I found it impossible to type correctly and at the same time to concentrate on the exact meaning and perception of what I was putting down. Some subtle communication was lost ... I have therefore had a variety of typists of varying quality (or lack of it). Coming to live in Sussex meant losing whatever help I had had [in Cornwall] before, so I was extremely lucky to meet Ann by chance at a book launch at Elise Santoro's bookshop in Crowborough, and a friendship blossomed. Although primarily a researcher, and a writer herself, she agreed to type for me if required ... I have never met anyone else who can copy a manuscript so error-free. This has been indispensable in view of the untidy nature of my later manuscripts, made ever worse by the cramped and spidery nature of my handwriting ... Among other publications, Ann is the author of the definitive research manual, *Research for Writers* (1975), which has recently gone into its seventh edition.*

In an Author's Note in that volume, Ann herself declares:

Mark Twain, the first writer known to have delivered a book to his publisher in typescript, purchased one of the early

Remington typewriters in 1874. Five generations on, in 2003, some bestselling authors still choose to write in longhand and to pay a professional typist. The message is clear: the age of electronic authorship – and, it follows, electronic research – may have arrived, but you are still free to suit yourself.*

* Had she, I wonder, anyone in particular in mind?

LYNE, Arthur Jeffery (1913-2009)

Arthur Lyne (below) was born in Launceston but lived in Truro from a few months old. He joined Truro solicitors Nalder & Son straight from school in 1932, became a partner in 1942, the firm's senior partner in 1964 and retired in 1977, aged 63. Additionally, he worked as a County Court Registrar part-time from 1963 and full-time from 1977.



Whilst WG lived in Cornwall, Nalder & Son were his solicitors – they legally transacted his name-change in 1947 – and it was probably through this professional association that he and Lyne first met. But, work aside, Arthur

was a dedicated student of the history of Cornwall in general and Truro in particular – a subject of abiding interest to the Poldark author too, of course – so, that a friendship between the two flourished and endured is hardly surprising.

The numerous ways in which Lyne assisted WG in the course of his literary endeavours are detailed in [ACORNS](#), pp. 12-16.

McCORMICK, Kenneth Dale "Ken" (1906-1997)



From 1942 to 1971, Ken McCormick was Editor in chief of Doubleday & Co., at that time the largest and most influential publisher in the US. He played a key part in launching WG in America and thereby securing his future when he took his 1949 novel *Cordelia* and sold it in huge quantities through direct and book club outlets. The association of publisher, editor and author remained strong and mutually beneficial until Doubleday's demise in 1986, by which time they had published twenty-nine Graham titles.

For much more on all this, see [HERE](#).

MOORE, John Cecil (1907-1967)



A distinguished writer with a strong regional association, a Savilian, a former Chairman (1956-7) of the Society of Authors, a lover of cricket and cats and a gentleman are some of the attributes common to John Moore and his friend Winston Graham. Moore, Gloucestershire's best-known and loved author of the 20th century, was described by Sir Compton Mackenzie as the most talented writer about the countryside of his generation. His weekly column on rural matters in the *Birmingham Mail* ran for eighteen years and his last novel, *The Waters Under the Earth* (1965) capped off a choice bibliography in fine style.

Upon John's untimely death in 1967, WG wrote to his widow Lucile:

*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.*³⁷

NEUSTATTER, Dr Walter Lindesay (1903-1978)

A German-born, London-based consultant and forensic psychiatrist who read and critiqued a draft of WG's 1961 novel *Marnie* and also advised on aspects of 1965's *After the Act*.

For more, see [HERE](#).

PARTRIDGE, Eric Honeywood (1894-1979)

New Zealand-born Eric Partridge – author, lexicographer, etymologist and another Savilian friend – was fondly remembered by WG in an appreciation he wrote for *Eric Partridge in His Own Words* (1980) which begins:

Eric Partridge and I were elected to the Savile Club in the same year, 1950. There we met casually, and exchanged names and views once or twice. I knew him of course as a distinguished etymologist, but I didn't then know that he had included a passage from one of my novels [Night Without Stars] in his book, British and American English Since 1900, which was to be published the following year. Then one day he invited me to his birthday party, which he was giving for a few friends at the Club, and our acquaintance ripened into the warm friendship that persisted until the day he died.



For more, see [HERE](#).

PASSANI, Alexandra "Chouchoune" (née Vinitsky) (1907-1985)



When WG went to spend the summer of 1960 in Cap Ferrat on the Côte d'Azur, he found himself living next door to the American actor Gregory Peck, Peck's young wife Veronique and her Russian mother, Alexandra Passani, known to the family as Chouchoune. She took a shine to her British neighbour. From *Memoirs*, 1.8:

Madame Passani [above, date unknown] was a distinguished Russian woman ... an intellectual of great charm and

force of character, with formidable good looks that appeared and disappeared with her moods ... [She] took a great fancy to us, and our friendship blossomed and lasted for years. Her charm of character and personality made a great impression on me, and generations later she surfaced as Shona in The Green Flash.

For more, see [HERE](#).

POLGREEN, (Edward) Ridley (1901-1934)

Born in Andover, Hampshire, but, by the time of WG's arrival, a resident of Perranporth, on the north Cornish coast, where his father was the village chemist (their shop, in Boscawen Street, stood next-door to Cecil Grime's draper's). Ridley and WG (who took the photo below) shared an enthusiasm for tennis and became "very friendly".³⁸ Ridley's surname, suitably modified, is said to have inspired that of *Poldark*.



Lylie Robins, Ridley Polgreen, Vera Polgreen (date unknown)

REES, Angharad (1944-2012)

A vivacious actress who, although born in Edgware, Middlesex to Welsh parents, grew up from the age of two in Cardiff. Best known to WG's readers as the first and best TV Demelza, a role she made her own in twenty-eight

Poldark episodes from 1975 to 1977. In 1983 she portrayed another Graham character, namely Patricia, in HTV's six part serialisation of his 1945 novel *The Forgotten Story*.

As happened with some other *Poldark* actors (see BIGGINS and ELLIS), WG and Angharad struck up a lasting friendship. "Whenever I invited her to lunch at my club, my popularity leapt. Men would think up excuses to come over and speak to me," he told Michael Williams.³⁹ The photo below was taken at Oxford's Balliol College on WG's ninetieth birthday.



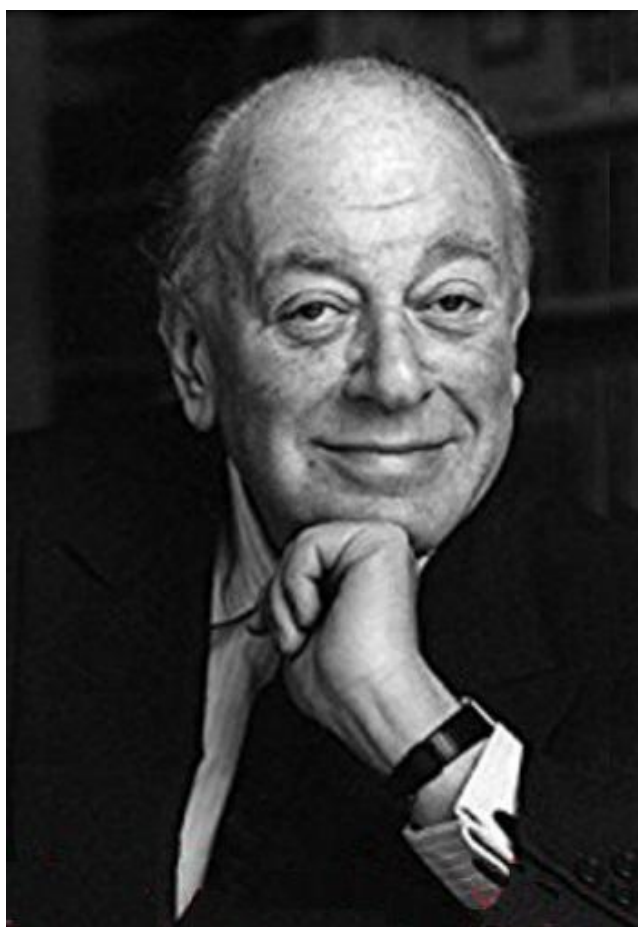
Following her death from pancreatic cancer in 2012, her *Poldark* co-star Robin Ellis wrote:

*Angharad was a wonderful friend and talented professional colleague. Her portrayal of Demelza in Poldark was definitive and the series could not have enjoyed the success it had without her unique spirit informing the role. We shared a very special time. I will always remember her with enormous affection and respect. She was a person who took pains to care for others. She spread her magic wherever she went. Her sense of humour was a joy and often for me a morale booster. It was a privilege to know her.*⁴⁰

REINHARDT, Max (1915-2002)

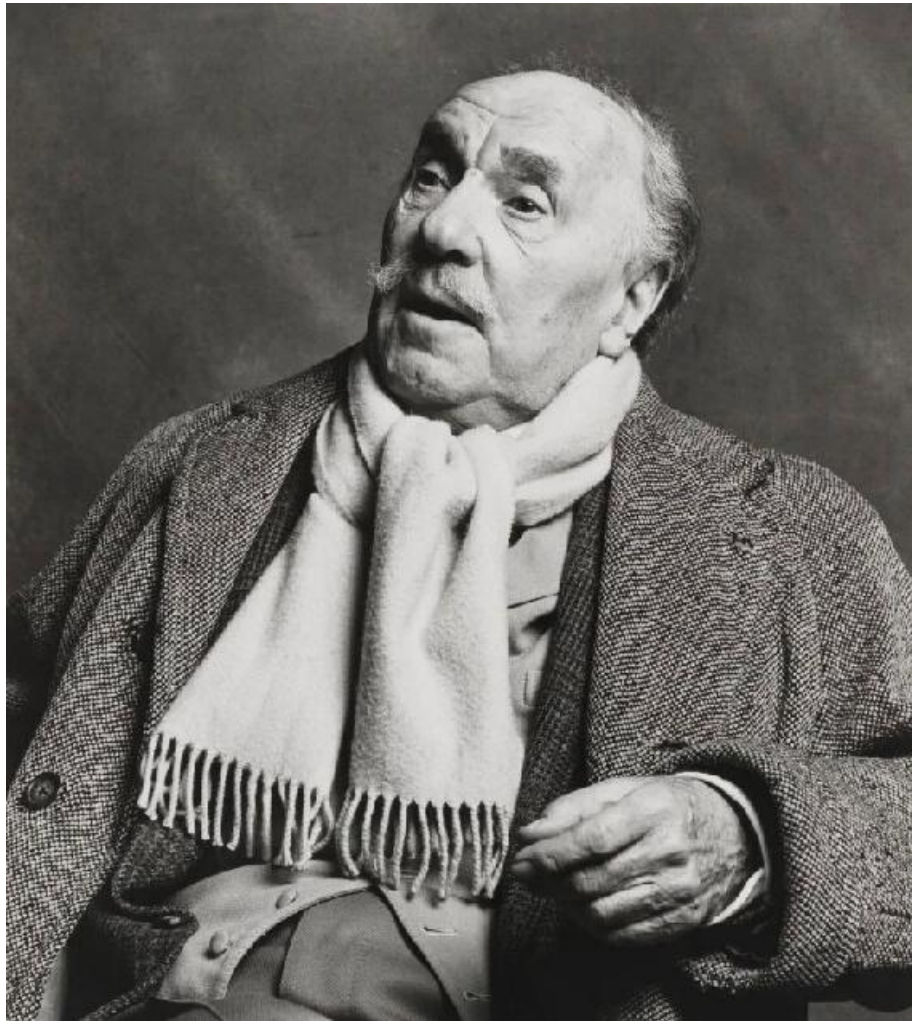
Another Savilian and another dear friend (in *Memoirs*, 2.1, WG called him his "closest friend"), between 1960 and 1983, Max Reinhardt's The Bodley Head published (or, in the majority of cases, *re-published*) nineteen Graham titles, with a twentieth and last following in 1991 after the firm had been taken over by Random House.

Max helped his friend in a number of ways, notably permitting unusual accounting procedures, buying back his copyrights from Ward, Lock and Hodder & Stoughton and placing his titles with paperback reprint houses on both sides of the Atlantic. The two shared a love of travelling and conviviality. What remains of their correspondence reflects the richness of their bond. WG dedicated *Bella Poldark* "To Max and Joan Reinhardt for many years of loving friendship". Max, who died on 19 November 2002, lived just long enough to see it.



For much more, see [HERE](#).

RICHARDSON, Sir Ralph David (1902-1983)



Actor, Savile Club member and some-time business partner of Max Reinhardt (see previous entry), Ralph Richardson was a larger-than-life character whom WG came to "know well". In *Memoirs*, 2.11 he recalled that, in Cap Ferrat, Ralph

had rented Max's cabin cruiser, which I had had the year before, and he was having trouble in making his wishes known to Jeannot, the difficult, tetchy, unagreeable custodian of the boat. I, having suffered the year before, went across to see if I could help, but my French was scarcely better than Ralph's, and if a Frenchman wishes to be misunderstood it's hard to get your message across. However, the struggle enhanced our friendship and we dined together as a quartet several times during his stay ...

[After one such occasion], we walked home from the restaurant in double file, Mu [\[Ralph's wife\]](#) and I in the lead. Halfway home Ralph and Jean, bringing up the rear, disappeared for about three minutes and then took up the trail again. When we had separated and were indoors Jean said: "Wow! What a kiss!"

I was furious, not because of the kiss but because I had fancied doing something the same to Mu, but, not being aware of the goings-on behind, I had funk'd it.

In the same chapter, the description of a hair-raising trip around the streets of London on the back of the actor's motorbike indeed sounds as "reckless" as WG declares it.

ROSEWARNE, John Noel (1899-1972)

In the first (Ward, Lock, 1950) edition of *Jeremy Poldark*, WG includes an Author's Note "thanking those of my friends, Cornish and otherwise, who have generously put their time and learning at my disposal whenever I have needed it." He then expresses his gratitude to three in particular for "their advice and encouragement", namely "Mr. T. S. Attlee, Mr. F. L. Harris and Mr. J. N. Rosewarne." For more on the last-named, see [ACORNS](#), pp. 16 and 17.



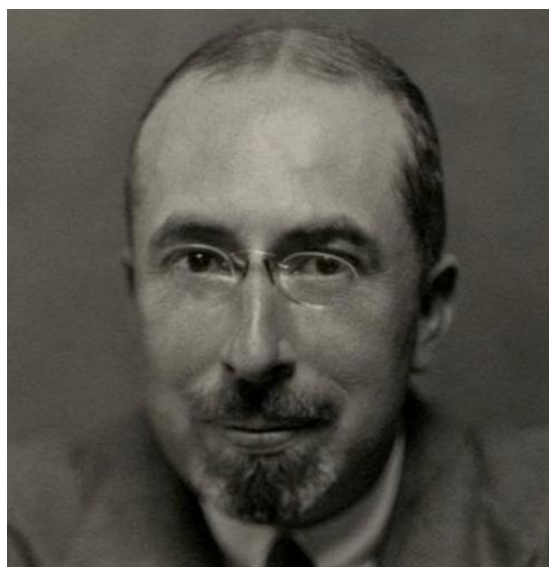
ROWSE, Dr A. L. (Alfred Leslie) (1903-1997)



A. L. Rowse was a distinguished, Cornish-born, Oxford-educated historian who interacted with WG regarding two of his books (both with significant historical content): 1963's *The Grove of Eagles* and 1972's *The Spanish Armadas*. Rowse praised the first but took issue with various points made (erroneously, according to him) in the second, in which he also noted "one or two pieces of sloppy writing". Letters were exchanged on both occasions. For chapter and verse, see [HERE](#).

SWINNERTON, Frank Arthur (1884-1982)

Frank Swinnerton was not only a prolific author and but also, from 1937 to 1943, literary critic of *The Observer*, in which capacity WG admired his work from afar but felt unable to contact him for fear of being thought to wish to curry favour. However, when Swinnerton resigned that post, WG did send him an introductory letter, which sparked a correspondence and also a friendship that lasted for many years. In 1967, when WG was Chairman of the Society of Authors, he invited Swinnerton to speak at a dinner arranged to commemorate the centenary of Arnold Bennett's birth, even though Swinnerton did not belong to the Society, and never had, and in defiance of the wishes of fellow committee members. But he got his way



and Swinnerton (who as a younger man had known Bennett well) "made an excellent speech".⁴¹

For more, see [HERE](#).

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TAYLOR, Valerie Ferenze (1902-1988)

In 1945, one evening over supper, actress Valerie Taylor pitched to WG an idea she had for "a brilliant opening for a film" which, after consideration, he fleshed out into a coherent story, which, with her encouragement, he proceeded to turn into his first screenplay. It was duly taken by an agent, sold to Cineguild (a subsidiary of the Rank Organisation) and put into production, which precipitated a temporary deviation from the literary path WG was pursuing. But it put his name on cinema screens across the country (and beyond) and also earned him some money. It did both of those things for her, too, for she received a screenwriting co-credit on the strength of her initial idea and received a share of all monies earned by *Take My Life*, film and book. Indeed, royalty payments from sales at home and abroad of the numerous editions of the latter continued to drop through her letterbox periodically for the rest of her life.



For more, see [HERE](#), pp. 86-90.

VAN DEE, Eugene Henry "Gene" (1919-2006)



The Van Dee family in the spring of 1950

Gene Van Dee was an American film industry rep active in Europe after the war. After meeting him (*when* and *where* not known) WG was moved to jot into his notebook a detailed pen portrait, recording details of the other's appearance and character. From these few lines sprang Gene Vanbrugh, protagonist of 1958's *Greek Fire* (with the book dedicated "To Gene").

WILLIAMS, Michael (dates unknown)



A proud Cornishman and Cornish Bard, freelance journalist, author and publisher who wrote extensively on the folklore, history and culture of the West Country, Michael Williams penned an affection profile of WG for a 2000 *Cornishman* supplement called *Fifty Famous Cornish Folk* and in a series on Cornish villages run in the *Western Morning News* in 2008 included well-informed features on both Demelza and Warleggan. Bossiney Books, launched with his wife Sonia in St

Teath in the early 1970s (and still active under different ownership today), specialised to the end of the century in accessible, highly-illustrated local interest paperbacks, scrapbooks and guides about Cornish villages, legends and landscapes; among its titles, *Supernatural in Cornwall*, *Ghosts in Cornwall*, *Ghosts Around Bodmin Moor*, *Ghostly Encounters*, *Ghosts of Devon*, *Ghosts of Dorset*, *Dorset Mysteries*, *Paranormal in the West Country*, *Occult in the West* and, on a different tack, *Poldark Country* (jointly with *Cornish Life* magazine) by David Clarke in 1977 and Robin Ellis's *Making Poldark* in 1978. Over both of those ventures, WG, when approached, was "very co-operative". Other titles written or edited by Williams include *My Cornwall*, *About Boscastle*, *Curiosities of Cornwall*, *People & Places in Cornwall*, *Unknown Cornwall*, *The Three Du Maurier Sisters* and *Writers in Cornwall*. A profile of WG in the last of them ends with these words:

When he died in 2003, The Times said "Though he enjoyed the celebrity the Poldark television series conferred on him, Graham, who used to describe himself as 'The most successful unknown novelist in England,' never aspired to du Maurier's grand status." Nonetheless the fact that he was never given a knighthood rankled many. As it was, he was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and awarded the OBE. Winston's death at the age of ninety-five was not only the end of a distinguished literary career; those of us who knew him felt a bright light had gone out.

And in 2013 he wrote: "The title MEMOIRS OF A PRIVATE MAN fit him like a good pair of gloves. He was quite simply that."⁴²

NOTES AND SOURCES

- ¹ Joanne Moorhead, *The Guardian*, 25 April 2014
- ² *With a Quiet Conscience – A Biography of Thomas Simons Attlee* by Peggy Attlee, Dove & Chough Press, 1995
- ^{3, 10} Valley PBS, 21 August 2015
- ^{4, 5} *Just Biggins : My Story* by Christopher Biggins (John Blake Publishing Ltd, 2008)
- ⁶ *The Scottish Sun*, 24 May 2019
- ⁷ From Reinhardt / Graham correspondence held in the British Library's archive of Reinhardt papers
- ⁸ *Memoirs*, 2.11
- ⁹ *Memoirs*, 2.1
- ¹¹ *Evening Standard*, date unknown
- ¹² *Country Life*, 14 March 1963
- ¹³ Draft review among the Richard Church Papers held by the University of Texas at Austin's Harry Ransom Center. A possibly somewhat revised or edited version was published in *Country Life* on 2 January 1964 and possibly also in *The Book Society News*.
- ¹⁴ *Country Life*, 29 July 1965
- ¹⁵ *Country Life*, 1 June 1967 29
- ¹⁶ *Country Life*, 5 February 1970
- ¹⁷ *The British Medical Journal*, 17 October 1970
- ¹⁸ Rear-view review – *The Tumbled House* by Dan Atkinson, thelionandunicorn.wordpress.com, 30 January 2021
- ¹⁹ *"Hang Your Halo In The Hall!" A History of the Savile Club* by Garrett Anderson, The Savile Club, 1993
- ²⁰ Original document held in the Graham Archive of the Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro
- ²¹ From notes held by RCM, Truro for "The Novelist at Work", an address given at least three times by WG in 1936/7
- ²² *Poldark's Cornwall*, Macmillan, 2015, introduction
- ²³ *The Sunday Times*, 28 August 2016
- ²⁴ robin-ellis.net, 30 June 2012
- ²⁵ From WG's *THE ISLAND, The Japanese Girl & other stories*, Collins, 1971
- ²⁶⁻²⁸ *Memoirs*, 1,1

²⁹ *Memoirs*, 1.2

³⁰ 'The Gentle Path' : Fred Harris, 1905-1998 by F. R. Rayner, *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall*, New Series II, Volume III, Part 1, 1998

³¹ A survey of liberal adult education in Cornwall 1948-51, The National Archives, Kew; reference ED 149/11/2

³² *Back to the land? Service and self-interest in adult education in rural England 1920-1945*: a paper by the University of Exeter's Bernard Deacon and Lynne Thompson, presented at the 29th Annual Conference of SCUTREA (Standing Conference on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults), 5-7 July 1999 at the University of Warwick

³³ *El Eco de Canarias*, 3 November 1970 – but, in private, he was prepared to express his antipathy more bluntly, admitting to Ken McCormick, his editor at Doubleday, that after seeing the film he had "wanted to wreck the theatre". (Letter dated 12 February 1970 in the WG files of the archive of Doubleday and Company records (1882-1992) held by the Library of Congress, Washington, DC)

³⁴ Victoria Hinton, *Daily Express*, 18 November 1995

^{35, 36} *Science and Justice*, Vol. 36, issue 4, 1996

³⁷ Original, dated 3 August 1967, in Gloucestershire County Archives

³⁸ *Memoirs*, 2.4

³⁹ *Writers in Cornwall*, Tor Mark, 2010

⁴⁰ robin-ellis.net, 21 July 2012

⁴¹ Letter, WG to Irene Campbell, 20 August 1985

⁴² Letter to this author dated 7 October 2013

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