

The Charles Williams Society

CHARLES WILLIAMS CENTENARY YEAR

NEWSLETTER

No. 43, AUTUMN 1986

MEETINGS OF THE CHARLES WILLIAMS SOCIETY

22 November 1986: Elizabeth Brewer will speak on "The Role of Women in Charles Williams' poems".

13 December 1986: A plaque on the site of 36 Victoria Street, St Albans, will be unveiled at 11am - all members and friends are invited to this final event to mark Centenary Year.

21 February 1987: Mrs Joan Northam will speak on "The Division of Knowledge" - looking at some of CW's ideas on the subject.

3 October 1987: Dr Gisbert Kranz will speak on the subject "Priests in CW's novels".

LONDON READING GROUP

For details please contact Richard Wallis (01.221.0057).

OXFORD READING GROUP

For details please contact either Anne Scott (Oxford 53897) or Brenda Boughton (Oxford 55589).

CAMBRIDGE READING GROUP

For information please contact Geraldine and Richard Finch, 5 Oxford Road, Cambridge CB4 3FH, telephone Cambridge 311465.

LAKE MICHIGAN AREA READING GROUP

For details please contact Charles Huttar, 188 W. 11th St., Holland, Michigan 49423, USA, telephone (616) 396 2260.

NETHERLANDS READING GROUP

We are delighted to hear of the formation of this group who are at present discussing the novels, starting with The Greater Trumps and War In Heaven. For information, please contact Tilly Reijnen, Bentincklaan 66, 3771 J.R. Barneveld, The Netherlands.

PROFESSOR CLYDE J. KILBY

We have heard, with much regret, of the death of Professor Clyde J. Kilby, Curator Emeritus of the Marion E. Wade Collection at Wheaton College, Illinois, a member of this Society from 1976 and well-known to several of our members. He was a frequent visitor to this country and a great collector of material relating to the seven authors, one of which is Charles Williams, in which the Wade Collection is particularly interested.

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

At 3 Caedmon Road, London N7

On Saturday morning, 12 July 1986 at 12 noon, members and others gathered outside 3 Caedmon Road, Holloway, London N7 for the unveiling of the plaque affixed to the wall of the first floor, recording that Charles Williams was born there on 20 September 1886. We were warmly welcomed by Mr and Mrs Nandi, the present owners of the house who invited the Chairman to go up to the first floor rooms and to cut the tape securing the covering of the plaque. This was successfully accomplished

amid acclamation from below. Descending to ground level, the Chairman, after a short speech, asked Gillian Lunn to present Mrs Nandi with a bouquet of flowers and the two children with a plant each for their garden, and handed to Mr Nandi a copy of Alice Mary Hadfield's book Charles Williams: An Exploration of his Life and Work. After this, members dispersed, some to lunch happily together in an Islington pub and to see the exhibition which had been set up in the Central Library in Holloway Road.

At St Mary the Virgin, Oxford

It was fitting that a large number of members of the Society and others were able to remember and pay tribute to the life and work of Charles Williams at a Service of Thanksgiving in the Church of St Mary the Virgin on Saturday 20 September 1986 as this was the hundredth anniversary of his birth.

The service was arranged by Anne Ridler and the Revd. Brian Mountford, Vicar of St Mary's and the form of service is reproduced in this Newsletter. For the prayers Anne Ridler had selected collects from those composed by Charles Williams and which appear in the appendix to The Image of the City, to which were added one written by Revd. Dr Brian Horne and a Bidding Prayer composed by Revd. Paul King, Vicar elect of St Mary Magdalen, Oxford. Anne Ridler herself read from "The Way of Exchange" and Thelma Shuttleworth and Richard Wallis read the "Apologue on the Parable of the Wedding Garment" from The Image of the City. The Rt. Revd. Kallistos Ware gave the address and we hope to reprint this at a later date.

After lunch some twenty members made their way to the churchyard of St Cross Church in Holywell where in a short, moving ceremony, Dr Gisbert Kranz laid a laurel wreath from the Inklings Gesellschaft, Aachen on Charles Williams' grave. It was indeed a memorable day.

Members who were at Oxford also had the opportunity of visiting the exhibition of Charles Williams' life and work in the Divinity Schools prepared by Anne Scott and Brenda Boughton in conjunction with Mr Palmer of the Bodleian Library. This exhibition, displayed from 8 September to 18 October, was skilfully and tastefully arranged in six exhibition cases and illustrated admirably the principal aspects of his life and work. Our grateful thanks are due to the Bodleian Library for making it possible.

As a contribution towards our centenary celebrations and as he was not able to be in England this year, Professor Giorgio Spina of the Istituto di Lingue e Letteratura Straniere at the University of Genoa published on 20 September in a Genoese newspaper a commemorative article on Charles Williams, a copy of which he has sent to the Society.

At St. Albans

We were not able to include in our Summer Newsletter a report of the production of Charles Williams' play Thomas Cranmer of Canterbury at the Studio Theatre, St Albans from 24 to 28 June. There were six performances in all, many of our members attended and there was full support from the people of St Albans. The production by Terry Newell was very skilful and the playing by the Company of Ten excellent, particularly so by the actors taking the exacting principal roles of Cranmer and the Skeleton.

Wheaton College, USA

Mr Lyle W. Dorsett, the Curator of the Marion E. Wade Collection has told the Society that the twelfth Annual Marion E Wade lecture which was given on 30 October 1986 at Wheaton College by Dr Joe McClatchey, Professor of English, was entitled "Charles Williams and the Arthurian tradition" and was the focal point of Wheaton College's celebrations of the hundredth anniversary of Williams' birth.

CHARLES WILLIAMS, born 20 September 1886

SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING

in St Mary the Virgin, Oxford. 20 September 1986

WELCOME	by Brian Mountford
Hymn 21	The spacious firmament on high (tune: London)
Bidding Prayer	
Collects	O God, who hast illumined the world by the writings of thy servant Charles: grant that we receiving the truth that he taught, may be conformed to the mind of Him whom he adored, even Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen
	Almighty and most merciful God, who by the glorious Incarnation and Atonement of Christ Jesus hast made men capable of eternal life: Increase among us the knowledge of the exchanges of Thy love, and from the common agony of our lives redeem us to the universal joy of thy only City: through the fructiferous mediation of the same Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, Amen
	God, who by the teaching of holy doctors has called us in all images and patterns to the unimaginable peace of goodwill: Grant that we may so study felicity with our minds that we may attain it in our lives: Who in the Triune Mystery art the perfect and only Godhead, Amen
Readings	from "The Way of Exchange" (pp 152-3) 1 Corinthians 13
Psalm 19	The heavens declare the glory of God.
Reading	"The parable of the wedding garment"
Hymn 362	O thou who camest from above (tune: Hereford)
Address	The Rt Revd Kallistos Ware
Hymn	Light's abode, celestial Salem Vision dear whence peace doth spring, Brighter than the heart can fancy, Mansion of the highest King; O how glorious are the praises Which of thee the prophets sing! There for ever and for ever Alleluya is outpoured; For unending, for unbroken Is the feast-day of the Lord; All is pure and all is holy That within thy walls is stored.

Hymn, continued

There no cloud or passing vapour
Dims the brightness of the air;
Endless noon-day, glorious noon-day
From the Sun of suns is there;
There no night brings rest from labour
There unknown are toil and care.

O how glorious and resplendent
Fragile body shalt thou be,
When endued with so much beauty,
Full of health, and strong, and free,
Full of vigour, full of pleasure
That shall last eternally.

Laud and honour to the Father,
Laud and honour to the Son
Laud and honour to the Spirit,
Ever Three and ever One,
Consubstantial, co-eternal,
While unending ages run.

Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

Collect

May the Sacred and Incarnate Intelligence excite in us
the graces of belief and disbelief, of labour and
humility, of clarity and devotion, of faith, hope and
love: to whom be ascribed, as is most justly due, in
the unity of the Father and the Holy Ghost, all might,
majesty, dominion, glory and power, now and to the end
of all the dispensations,

Amen

Collect (for Quinquagesima):

O Lord, who has taught us that all our doings without
charity are nothing worth; Send thy Holy Ghost, and
pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity,
the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which
whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee: Grant this
for thine only son Jesus Christ's sake,

Amen

The Blessing

The wreath-laying ceremony at Oxford moved Martin Moynihan to write the following lines which we are delighted to reproduce:

Charles Williams Centenary

20th September, 1986. St. Cross Churchyard, Holywell, Oxford.

Lines to Dr. Gisbert Kranz

(on his laying a laurel wreath from the Inklings-Gesellschaft "dem Dichter Charles Williams" upon the Poet's grave, following the Memorial Service in St. Mary's and the Address there by the Rt. Revd. Kallistos Ware)

He sang the Rose: that union of each heart
In love, with Love: whose flowering, first, is here -
Here, in the cities of our loves. Most dear
To him was London. Yet all Place had part
In ("Time doesn't matter") Camelot. His art
Showed heaven - or hell - by every Stair brought near.
Through every Window - curtained or drawn clear -
Carbonek gleams: wood, bower - Exchange! - court, mart.

Oxford he passed from:- like the Florentine,
Far from the font where should have thronged the Nine.
Yet, holy Alban, we remembered thee
And, by his graveside now, what joy to see
Aachen to London's add her grateful praise:
Gisbert, thy Laurel! Sarras, glean these Bays!

Martin Moynihan

21 Sept. 1986

Footnotes

1. Lines composed between four and eleven-thirty a.m. on Sunday morning, 21 Sept. 1986: 7½ hours.

2. Dante hoped that the publication of the Divine Comedy would win him public acclaim in the city of his baptism, Florence. Alas, he died still in exile, in Ravenna. Charles Williams was baptised in London where a memorial service had been held earlier in the year, at St. Alban's Cathedral.

Attendance at one of the performances of Thomas Cranmer of Canterbury also moved John Hibbs to write to the Director of the play in St Albans, Terence Newell. His words express what many of those who saw it felt, and the letter is reproduced:

"My wife and I saw 'Cranmer' last night, and apart from the excessive heat in the theatre, enjoyed the production enormously. We would like it for you to pass our congratulations to the whole cast.

I have known the play for many years, and have read it twice and referred to it many times. Last night the true meaning of the final lines - 'if the Pope had bid you live' etc. - for the first time was made plain to me. That is in a measure the success of the whole production, to which each actor made a contribution.

One other thing I would say - the verse was so well spoken. I too have 'spoiled paper', as the Chinese say, and sometimes I have writhed at the way actors can speak verse. Williams wrote powerful but intricate lines, with so many internal rhymes and counter-stresses, and it all lived. Outside the theatre, the best of the words continued to sound in my mind.

Thank you all for an experience never to be forgotten."

International Charles Williams Symposium - Mülheim, West Germany

From 6 to 8 November 1986, an international symposium was held at the Wolfsburg Catholic Academy in Mulheim, organised by the Inklings Gesellschaft as part of the Centenary celebrations. Members of the Society who contributed were Dr Judith Kollman of the USA, John Heath-Stubbs, David Llewellyn Dodds, Dr Angelika Schneider, Dr Jos Vanachter, Dr Rev Brian Horne, Professor Charles Huttar, and Martin Moynihan.

Martin Moynihan's paper "Charles Williams and the Occult" has been put in the Charles Williams reference library at Kings College, London.

BOOKSELLER SPECIALISING IN C.W.

A bookseller, Aidan Mackey, one of whose speciality authors is Charles Williams, has got in touch with the Society. If members wish to contact him his address is 15 Shaftesbury Avenue, Bedford, MK40 3SA, telephone 0234 57760.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:

- Tilly Reijnen, Bentincklaan 66, 3771 J.R. Barneveld, The Netherlands;
- Mrs Margaret L. Heitler, 42 Lilymead Avenue, Knowle, Bristol, BS4 2BX;
- Mr Andrew Wadsworth, Marine House, St Andrew's Square, Colyton, East Devon, EX13 6LN;
- Miss Mary L. Bannister, 5 Drumgarve Court, Helensburgh, G89 8XU and
- Revd. Geoffrey P. King, Flat B, 61 Mildmay Grove, London N1 4PL.

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A Footnote from Martin Moynihan:

Allusions by Charles Williams are sometimes difficult to trace because he does not give the source. "This also is Thou, neither is this Thou" is a classic example. DonBede Griffiths has not found it in Hindu scripture and believes it

to be by Charles Williams himself. Here I report finding (I believe) a reference which has long eluded me. In chapter II, The Grail, of 'The Figure of Arthur', it is said that to St Peter Damian (1007-1072) "is ascribed in the West the first use of the word transubstantiation". And, linked with this, C.S. Lewis notes that "the H.S. here gives a blank space enclosed in brackets" Now, in the chapter on Transubstantiation in 'The Body of Christ' by Bishop Go Inwray, 1901, reprinted 1931, I find a footnote as follows:

'St Peter Damian (c. 1072) appears to have been the first to use the term, Patrologia Latina CXLV 883.'

There is also much in this book by Charles Gore which sheds light on the verse

'Then the Byzantine ritual, the Euclesis began'.

Incidentally, I have found Young's "Night Thoughts", once so widely read but n almost never, a mine of 'quotations'. Of interest to us is a fine passage extolling Exchange.

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OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Chairman: Richard Wallis, 6 Hatlock Court, Kensington Park Road, London W11 6BS (tel. 01.221.0057)

Secretary: Mrs Gillian Lunn, 26 Village Road, Finchley, London N3 1TL (tel. 01.346.6025)

Treasurer: Richard Wallis, address as above.

Membership Secretary: Miss Hilda Pallan, 167 Holly Lodge Mansions, Oakeshott Avenue, Highgate, London N6 6DU (tel. 01.348.3903)

Lending Librarian: Rev Dr Brian Horne, 11b Roland Gardens, London SW7 3PE (tel. 01.373.5579)

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