SPRING 2018

THE HERON-ALLEN SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER NO. 32

THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM 2018

Theme: "Edward Heron-Allen: A Gallimaufry".
Venue: The Woolstaplers Room, The Novium, Chapel Street, Chichester, West Sussex.
Time and Date: Saturday 7 July 2018 at 11.00.

Programme
11.00 Welcome and Introduction by the Chairman.

David Bone, 'Heron-Allen and the Ice Age Boulders of Selsey'.

John P. Mahoney, and Barbara P. Mahoney, 'The Cult of Harrow and the Suicide of Sylvester Gray. The Servant Edward Heron-Allen'.

Interval

Joan Navarre, 'A Prince among Friends. Exploring the Life and Times of Gabrielle Enthoven'.

Timothy J. McCann, 'Edward Heron-Allen and his silver Spoons'.

David Thompson, ' The Large Acres inscribed Treasure Chest'.

The Annual General Meeting.

Lunch at *The Crate and Apple*, Westgate, Chichester.

Coffee will be available before the meeting.

Will those wishing to attend the Symposium please contact the Honorary Secretary, Juliet Field at 40 Portland Road, Oxford, OX2 7EY, Tel: 01865 552640, e.mail: jools.field@btinternet.com

Those wishing to join us for lunch at *The Crate and Apple* should inform the Honorary Secretary by 9 June. Meals have to be pre-ordered.

THE ANNUAL HERON-ALLEN LECTURE AT LADY MARGARET HALL, OXFORD

This year's lecture took place on Friday 2 March and was given by Professor John Vucetich of Michigan Technical University.

A goodly crowd braved the snow to hear John Vucetich deliver an excellent and entertaining lecture with the title *Wolves, Lions, Social Justice and the Ethics of Conservation*.

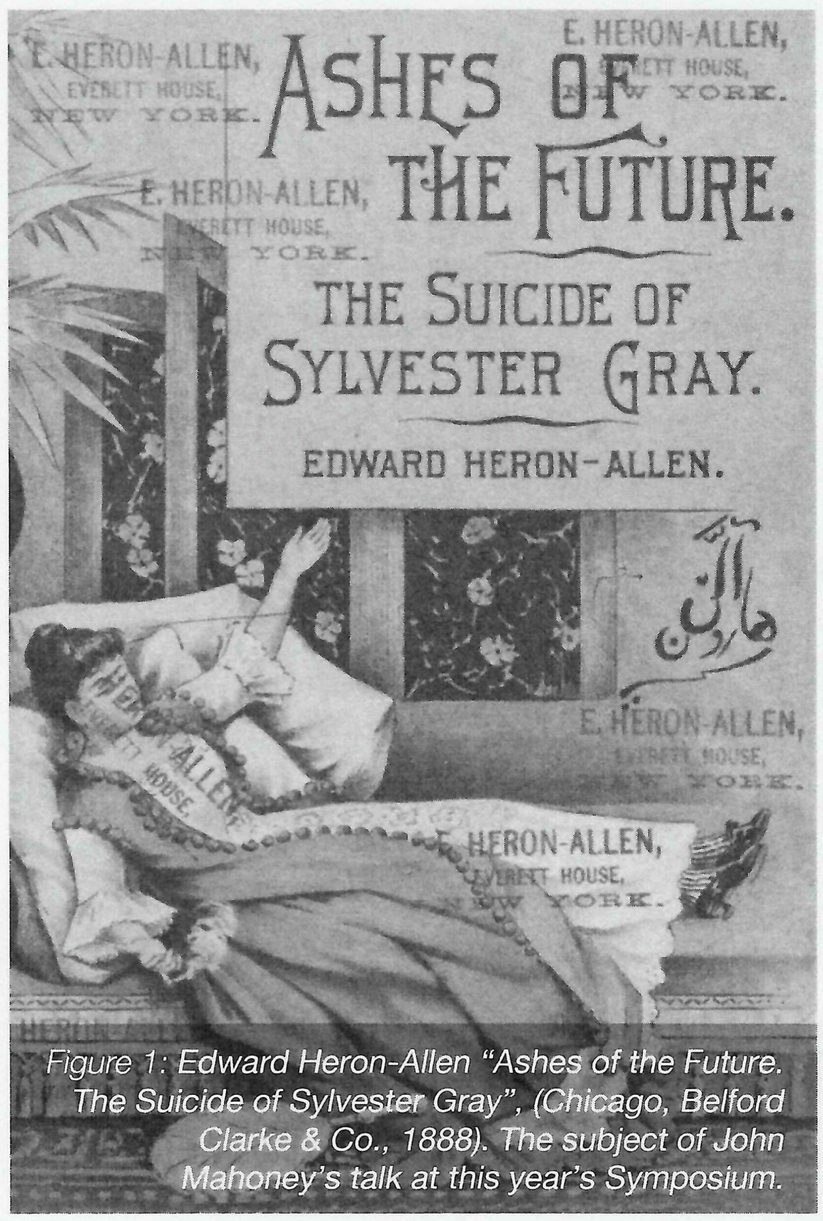

Figure 1: Edward Heron-Allen "Ashes of the Future. The Suicide of Sylvester Gray", (Chicago, Belford Clarke & Co., 1888). The subject of John Mahoney's talk at this year's Symposium.

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The talk was divided into five vignettes which introduced various aspects of the subject of conservation ethics, leading up to the fifth section drawing these together to summarise the debate.

Ecosystem health: we were introduced to the wolves and moose of the Isle Royale in Lake Superior. Isolated on the forested and uninhabited island, these form an almost unique single predator-single prey population, and they have been continuously studied since the 1950s. It was found that although the wolf population should have been quite quickly weakened by inbreeding, in fact it was not, because in those winters when an ice bridge formed to the mainland the population was refreshed. Recently however, global warming has resulted in fewer and fewer winters when this happens, and so the population has declined. So the conservation debate develops as to whether the endangered wolf pack should be helped to recover or whether to leave the situation to develop without interference.

Endangered or not? Another wolf with declining numbers, the Mexican wolf, illustrated the difficulty of defining the criteria for judging a species to be endangered. In the U.S. the legislation does not make it clear, and there is continuing and unresolved debate. One can look at the reduction in range over time and plot extinction risk scientifically, but to decide at what point a species should be added to the 'Red List' remains subjective. The wolves in the U.S. now occupy around 15% of their historic range, and over the globe the average mammal species has now lost around 60% of its historic range.

Sustainability is an important aspect of the conservation debate. The key phrase given was 'realizing human well-being in a socially just manner without compromising conservation'. Definitions again become important, and are not agreed. Does conservation entail maintaining and restoring ecosystem health, or restoring endangered species? Social justice should involve equality, need, and deserving, and implies fair treatment of others, but who are the others?

A key phrase here was 'intrinsic value', and the question how to decide who or what possesses it. Something that has only instrumental value (what it does) and is replaceable (e.g. a hammer) does not, whereas a child for instance is valuable for its own sake not for what it does, and is not replaceable and so does have intrinsic value. When setting the needs of the natural world against the needs of the human population, nature does not 'trump' humanity, and the needs of both can be held to be important, and be weighed up in each situation. Another useful tool is to look at avoidance of pain, or flourishing; at present it is thought that insects do not seek to avoid pain, fish were thought not to but recent studies suggest it's possible they do, and mammals, and of course humans, do. There is a further question as to whether a concept such as 'animal welfare' or entities such as ecosystems or species can have intrinsic value.

Social Justice: governance of natural resources must be collaborative and involves conflict resolution. The relevant stakeholders need to come to the table and find a way to agree. 'Nature' only has a voice here through the human stakeholders. The best outcome is mutual satisfaction; failing that, a compromise must be reached. Power dynamics can make this harder to achieve.

Conservation of habitat to preserve species numbers shows the nature of the debate. It has been argued that trophy hunting helps to conserve lion populations, since it is in the interests of local people to preserve enough good habitat so that there can be enough lions to attract these

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The Heron-Allen Newsletter was edited by Timothy J. McCann and John Whittaker and designed by Gregory Whittaker.

hunters, who bring in money to the area.

Ethics can be defined as the formal analysis of propositions pertaining to how we ought to behave; so any discussion about conservation which includes the idea that we ought to do something is an ethical discussion.

In any debate about what ought to be done in conservation, the arguments brought to the table need to include at least one empirical and one ethical premise if an ethical conclusion is to be drawn. These premises must all be true, and the logical structure must be valid.

Progress in this field is slow, but does lead to further insights; we have need of more scientific knowledge as well as wider understanding of ethics in order to improve our conservation decisions.

The lecture was followed by a lively question session, much of it focusing on whether ecosystems can be said to possess intrinsic value, and a prolonged round of applause.

For the background to Professor Vucetich and his colleagues' work, see https://www.mtu.edu/forest/about/faculty-staff/faculty/j-vucetich/, and specifically www.isleroyalewolf.org/. For one of their latest papers, "Just conservation: What is it and should we pursue it?", see https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S000632071732116X.

David and Juliet Field

THE 7TH INTERNATIONAL HERON-ALLEN SYMPOSIUM, PISA AND FLORENCE, 22 – 29 SEPTEMBER 2017

Tim and Alison met Minoo Lord at Gatwick to travel together to Pisa. We should have realised that something was happening when our slightly delayed flight was full of over-excited Baby Boomers. After we were airborne, the Stewardess announced that she had been asked to enquire whether any of the passengers were booked for the Rolling Stones concert in Lucca the next evening and about fifty passengers out of some 160 on board held up their hands, to great cheers. Their excitement reached fever-pitch as we landed at Pisa airport to see just across the tarmac a private jet with an enormous tongue painted on the side of the fuselage - the Rolling Stones' private jet. While the fans rushed off to take photographs of themselves with the plane, we collected our luggage and took a taxi past the Bastion St. Gallo to our hotel. The Minerva hotel proved to be a fairly standard one but with a very welcoming and friendly staff and it boasted a delightful garden complete with an open-air tub. After we had settled in to our rooms we took tea in the garden.

When Minoo joined us, we went out for our first glimpse of the city. We walked through the street to the banks of the River Arno, and then retraced our steps to the hotel. We then wandered down the long street parallel to the river, to find somewhere to eat. Our first choice for dinner proved to be fully booked so we went to the restaurant next door - The Voglia di Puglia - and enjoyed an excellent meal washed down with some fine Italian wine.

After a good night's sleep and a good breakfast we set off to see the sights. The main sights were at the far side of the city, so we took the same route as the previous night, but this time we crossed the Arno and struck out for the Piazza dei Miracoli. Pisa seemed like an attractive, fairly quiet city, until we approached its most famous attractions. The Piazza dei Miracoli, which contains the Cathedral and the Tower was seething with visitors. The tower is every bit as impressive and bizarre as we expected. We walked round it, photographed it but declined to climb the steps inside. Nor did we join the multitudes who were standing on a wall at the edge of the Piazza so that their friends could photograph them seemingly holding up the Tower. The Piazza dei Miracoli encompasses a magnificent cathedral, and also the Baptistery and the Monumental Cemetery, all of which are spectacular. We explored the interior of the Cathedral (which was full of people taking "selfies") and then moved on to the Baptistery where Minoo climbed up to the balcony high in the dome, before we explored the stunning monumental cemetery, with its magnificent colonnades and frescoes (some of which, sadly, were badly damaged by bombing during the last war) where we took lots of photographs. We set off from the crowded Piazza to walk back to the river, and on our way, came across the hotel where Pam and David were staying. There had been a mix-up with our bookings and their reservation had been cancelled and so they had to find a separate hotel, which was not easy in a Pisa full of Rolling Stones fans, so their hotel was a long way from the Minerva. Their hotel had a little restaurant outside, so we decided to stay there for lunch. We sat outside under an awning, and found ourselves surrounded by fans who were going to the Rolling Stones concert at Lucca. We were still enjoying a leisurely lunch, and chatting with the groupies when Pam and David arrived and joined us for a drink. Whilst we were there, to the huge embarrassment of the young woman responsible, Alison had her handbag and feet doused in balsamic vinegar in a rather spectacular fashion. Once Pam and David had settled in we all went back to our hotel, making a detour on the way to visit the delightful little Gothic church of Santa Maria della Spina – now deconsecrated – that had been moved to its present position on the banks of the river in 1871 to avoid the floods. The splendid marble and the statues remained intact. In the church was an installation of cast iron blocks arranged in an almost straight line placed at

some arbitrary tangent across the floor by Richard Nonas. The label on the wall so elegantly sums up the situation,

> "This line clashes with the pre-existing ones of this place: the line of the river, hidden from view, but crucial to the position and orientation of the gothic building; the oblique lines that form the perimeter of the church and that come together to cross at the meeting point of the nave and the steps of the apse, at an angle that is, unexpectedly, not a right angle. In this context, the line designed by Nonas dramatically emphasizes the simultaneous lack of reassuring orthogonal lines in the entirety of the composition, as well as the force of its precarious equilibrium.".
> How could we not agree entirely??

Ted and Evie were due to arrive from Ireland, but their plane had been delayed so we went out to find dinner, and had to start without them. Although we searched for a restaurant as we traversed the town, we ended up at the Voglia di Puglia again and were on the sweet course when they finally met up with us, but we rounded off the meal in style and returned to our hotels.

In the morning Ted and Evie set out to explore the Piazza dei Miracoli while we enjoyed a lazy morning relaxing in the garden and drinking coffee before we all set out for the railway station. There we caught an impressive double-decker train for Florence but unfortunately Alison had a fall when carrying a case up the steps to the upper floor and badly damaged her hand. The journey only took an hour and we arrived at Florence and joined the flood of people streaming out from the station. It is a miracle how Florence manages to stay reasonably sane in the face of such a constant influx of visitors. Having settled into our hotel, and got our bearings, we were fortunate to be able to get an extremely late lunch at La Divina Osteria, which was the start of a beautiful relationship. We then set out on foot towards the centre of the city via the Piazza San Marco. The McCanns stopped at Santissima Annunziata, which Heron-Allen described as "by far the most gorgeous church I have ever seen' just in time for Benediction and stayed for the evening Mass. Afterwards they joined the rest of the party for drinks in the back garden of the hotel before we all walked to La Divina Osteria again where we enjoyed a splendid dinner. At this point the Fields joined the party – rather late having been disorientated by the complicated road works by the station, but in time to join in the dinner.

On Monday morning, realising that our hotel was near to the Fortezza da Basso, we decided to begin our first day by exploring the huge fortress. This proved to be a bad idea, as there were major road works going on. We walked round two sides of it, but could find no way of getting inside the fort anywhere so we cut our losses, somehow managed to cross the traffic and made our way south into the city. We did the usual tourist thing of window shopping until we found ourselves beside the Duomo [see Figure 2], but it was the leather shops that particularly caught our attention. Led by the ladies we invaded one particular leather shop named Acquisto, where Alison bought a splendid red leather coat and Pam

Figure 2: Members of the Heron-Allen Society outside the Duomo in Florence

Figure 3: Members of the Heron-Allen Society en route to the Ponte Vecchio, Florence

a very elegant blue one. We then walked on to the Piazza della Signoria where we enjoyed an al fresco lunch at the Tavolo restaurant. Having been looking at the Pallazo Vecchio throughout our delicious lunch, we decided to explore it after our meal. The high tower and the dramatic crenellations are mighty impressive from the outside and inside we admired the massive Salone dei Cinquecento and the chapel decorated by Vasari. Afterwards we walked down to the Arno [see Figure 3] and explored the Ponte Vecchio, where Heron-Allen added to his silver collection and 'carefully inspected every jewellery shop', but I think we all came away with our purses intact. Exploring a museum and window shopping are tiring in the extreme and we then faced the long walk back to our hotel. There we rested, reassembled in the garden bar for a drink, and on the hotel's recommendation, walked round to the Vecchio Mercato where there was a choice of restaurants. This time there was musical accompaniment to another excellent dinner. A number

of players, often with unexpected instruments, joined the resident pianist and just played impromptu together. It was a bit noisy because our table was so near the musicians, but it was very enjoyable. The introduction to the musical entertainment was performed by the young son of the leading musician who aimlessly bashed on the piano keyboard for what seemed like an age; something of a musical torture. When the band got going the rather good lead pianist was accompanied by a saxophonist who played just out of tune with the piano to produce a rather irritating clash. We made a big sigh of relief when he stopped doing it. There followed two female singers who were both really rather good and provided a very nice contrast to the earlier discord.

The next morning, after an excellent breakfast, we again set off for the centre of the city. We were aiming for the Piazza San Marco, where we visited the church and then the convent, where we admired the stunning Fra Angelico paintings and frescos in all the cells of the friars, including that of Savonarola. We also visited the exhibition of books and manuscripts on the ground floor. When we regrouped, we crossed the Piazza, admiring the terra-cotta roundels of babies by della Robbia on the walls of the earliest orphanage in Europe. We walked past the entrance to the Galleria dell Accademia, where we ascertained that the waiting time for admission was at least two hours, and unanimously decided against it.

The Fields did a detour via Orsanmichele, the spectacular Guild Church of Florence – admiring the amazingly ornate 1359 Tabernacle, housing a slightly earlier Madonna and Child by Bernardo Daddi, among other treasures.

When we came down for our usual pre-dinner drink in the hotel garden we found Ted deep in conversation with an Australian girl. When asked for the best place to eat she instantly suggested ZaZa, so to ZaZa's we walked. Fortunately they had a table for nine and we did indeed enjoy an excellent meal, in a packed and lively restaurant.

On Wednesday the party split into smaller groups. The McCanns walked down to the Bargello. First we sat in the airy courtyard and looked at the coats of arms lining the walls, then we climbed the stairs to see the finest collection of renaissance sculptures in the world. First we saw the magnificent collections of armour and weapons, and then, on the next floor, the huge sculpture collection including Donatello's David, which Heron-Allen described when it was still in the Pallazo Vecchio as 'Here too are the chief works of Donatello – his David is the most ridiculous thing. David's Giant killing costume was an elaborate hat of flowers and tassels on it and a pair of bronze gaiters – and that is all. Donatello had (a) a keen sense of humour or (b) none'. Other groups explored other aspects of the rich history of Florence; the Fields visited the San Marco Church - where they had not joined the others on Tuesday - and looked into some of the less spectacular churches, and visited Dante's house, discovering on the way the 'Anglican Church of the Trinity' built between 1892 and 1904 by George Frederick Bodley (now used by the Waldensians).

For lunch we had another alfresco meal in a narrow side street. In the afternoon we walked all around the Duomo, which is much more exciting outside than in, admired once again the doors on the Baptistery and retraced our steps to the Ospedale degli Innocenti with its Brunellesci portico. We explored the museum in the basement, with its fascinating account of the care of orphans for six centuries, almost up to the present day. We then made the unexpected discovery of a very rewarding art gallery on the upper floor with pictures of the first order including a fine Botticelli. Then, on the top floor, we found a delightful café with a veranda with superb views of the surrounding city, where we stopped for a very welcome drink [see Figure 4]. Alison and Tim then decided to set out for the Capella Brancacci, which contained frescos that we had been strongly urged to see. It was a long, hot, walk. We walked along the Lungarno, where Heron-Allen stayed in 1923, crossed the river at the Ponte alla Carraia and made for the church of Santa Maria del Carmine. Through a side door we were admitted to the Cappella Brancacci, where we came face to face with the stunning frescoes by Masaccio and finished by Filippino Lippi, of the Life of St. Peter. We were both hot and tired and struggled on the way back to the hotel, but, after a rest, we again foregathered in the sheltered little garden for a pre-dinner drink and then returned to ZaZa for another first class meal.

Thursday was our last full day in Florence. After breakfast we said goodbye to Jools and Dave [previously referred to as the Fields!] who were setting off for Lake Maggiore, where their son Rob was getting married at the weekend. The remaining seven of us, on the advice of the hotel receptionist, caught a bus from outside the hotel for the Piazza Michelangelo. We were driven to the station and then, to our pleasant surprise, were taken through most of the streets of the city before climbing the hills on

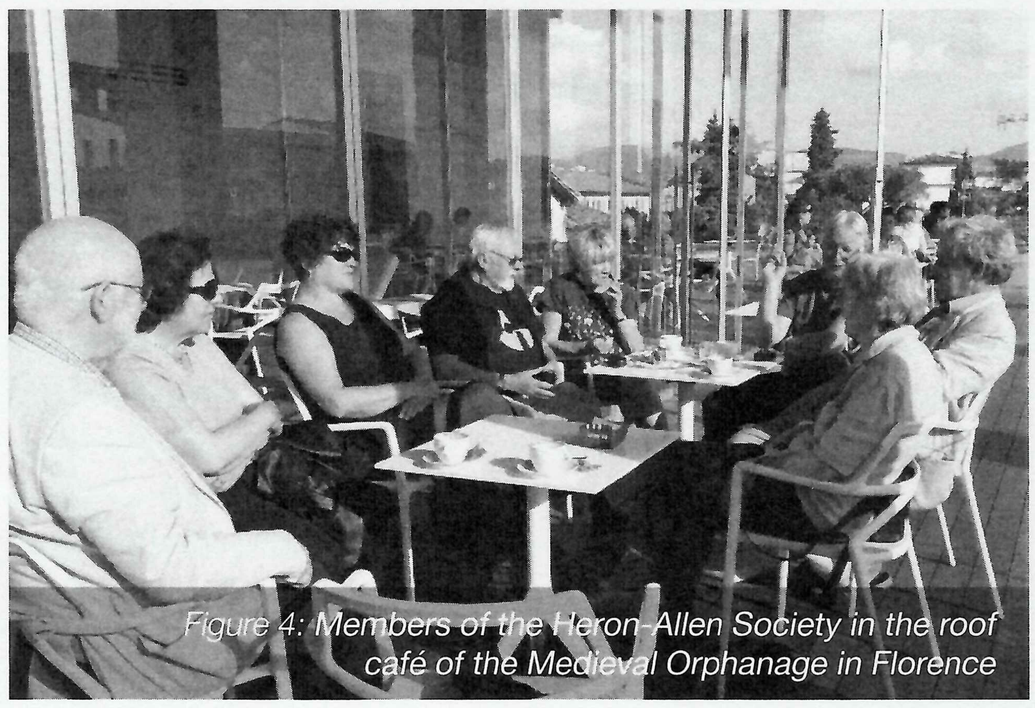

Figure 4: Members of the Heron-Allen Society in the roof café of the Medieval Orphanage in Florence

the other side of the Arno and being put down on the Piazza. The views over and right across the city were simply breathtaking. It was a lovely warm clear day and the visibility could not have been better. Once we had feasted our senses we went down to a café slightly below the Piazza for a morning coffee. By this time Ted and Eve had disappeared so David was sent off in search of them. Thirty minutes later they were found, having wandered down the road to look at the souvenir stalls. When all were safely gathered in we followed coffee with an extended lunch – most enjoyable. Unfortunately we did not realise we were a cricket ball throw away from the grave of Yoï Maraini, which was in the church just to one side of the Piazza.

After lunch we walked down the hill back into the city, crossed the river at the Ponte alla Grazie and walked to the church of Santa Croce. Despite its vast size we were able to find the tombs of Michelangelo, Rossini, Machiavelli and Galileo and the sarcophagus of Dante. We also explored the cloisters and outbuildings. When we came back onto the Piazza Santa Croce, Alison recognised the shop where she had bought a much loved pair of gloves the last time we were in Florence, and so we crossed the square with the statue of Dante in the middle, which Heron-Allen described as 'dreadful to look at', went back there and bought another pair. Then we had the long draining walk back to the hotel, punctuated by a delightful and refreshing drink in a roadside café on the way. Changed and refreshed at the hotel we had our customary pre-dinner drinks in the garden, where we were joined by the hotel manager for a post-mortem on our holiday, before we walked to La Divina for our final meal together. (Our devotion to La Divina Osteria was not just because of the good food, and friendly staff, but they kept giving us money-off-the-next-meal vouchers.)

In the early morning Pam and David set off for Pisa and the airport, while Ted and Evie also started early in order to have a day in Pisa. When they reached Pisa they discovered that, like Pam and David, their booking of a room at the Minerva had been cancelled. Gavino, the manager, was distraught on their behalf because they were fully booked out, but through personal contacts with other colleagues, he secured a room for them in another (two-star) hotel, the Astor, which was actually closer to the railway station and the river, and cheaper, though that came with a price -they had to share toilet/shower facilities across the corridor, with other rooms on the floor! As it seemed to be the only vacant room left in Pisa, and it was only for one night, they took it. After that, they took themselves off to go leaning on the tower [see Figure 5], taking the obligatory photos surrounded by bus loads of Japanese doing the same thing. While there they made the last discovery of the trip – sieves! They were hanging on the front wall of an antique shop and were more than a century old. Evie reckoned they were probably used for sieving flour, but the mesh was so fine they would have done duty sieving for foraminifera, though the one on the bottom left is well past it now. But unlike Heron-Allen, they did not purchase a sieve and bring it home with them. They ate their last meal in a small restaurant frequented by locals a short walk from the Astor, where Evie had the best tuna she had eaten thus far and Ted had a huge veal cutlet with all the trimmings, all rounded off with a couple of carafes of their "house" white and capped with the obligatory limoncello!

Armed with David's tip-off about the queues at the airport, they headed to the airport early, but got through security without any noticeable delay - perhaps Saturday mornings are quieter in Pisa airport. Their homeward flight on Ryanair took off on time, and even landed in Dublin some twenty minutes ahead of schedule! As the last of the party in Firenze, Alison, Tim and Minoo spent a truncated morning in the Botanical Gardens near San Marco and paid a brief visit to the Natural History Museum. Minoo introduced us as three distinguished palaeontologists from England and asked if we might see the Director of Palaeontology. The girl on the desk had no idea who he was and said we would have to make an appointment. Since we only had half an hour we declined. We then walked to La Divina for a final lunch at 11.45 and used up our last money-off voucher, purchasing a bottle opener for Pam and David from the Charity Shop on the way; it was delivered to them at our next committee meeting. Then it was back to the hotel for our luggage, a bus to the station, a train to Pisa and a shuttle to the airport, where as David had kindly warned us, we were faced with queues all around the terminal building. We finally took off only half an hour late and made up the time on the journey. We made

Figure 5: Ted Collins at the Leaning Tower of Pisa

our farewells with Minoo and found a convenient train back to Havant finally getting home very tired at 10pm.

Alison and Timothy McCann

JOSEPHINE PRESTON PEABODY: EDWARD HERON-ALLEN AND THE 'PETRONIUS' CONNECTION

Edward Heron-Allen's personal letters are archived as the Josephine Preston Peabody - 1902-1907 Collection at the West Sussex Record Office in Chichester (1). In this series of letters, Heron-Allen penned several pseudonyms; one in particular was Petronius (2). This article explores his relationship to the American poetess [see Figure 6] and the probable origin of this pseudonym by a new 'judge of elegance'.

Josephine Preston Peabody was an attractive single 28-year-old American poet and dramatist who resided as an instructor at Wellesley College in Massachusetts (3). Heron-Allen was a recent widower. In January 1902, his wife, Marianne Lehmann Heron-Allen, died of unexpected surgical complications for treatment of infertility (4). In mid-1902, Peabody exchanged letters with Heron-Allen who was residing in England. Heron-Allen's early letters were clearly friendly, perhaps flirty, requesting that she stop by and stay at his estate "free of charge", or meet for lunch. Heron-Allen dispensed with any worry about improprieties stating in his 28 August 1902 letter, "What nonsense! I gave up all attempts at conventionalities years ago." At her request, he had just reviewed two of Peabody's books. In early September 1902, they met and shared poems together. Heron-Allen wrote, "....your eyes were like dreams upon the edge of sleep....(signed) Flavian" (5). He followed up with a letter about their pending divergent departures, "Au Revoir, Rose, keep a kindly spot in your memory for the one whom you passed in the dark." Heron-Allen was soon departing for the Orient. By December 1902, he wrote of his progressive mental and physical stress presumably due to his first wife's death and other public embarrassing legal woes (6). He signed the letter with his Farsi signature. Following a "nervous breakdown", Heron-Allen travelled the upper Nile for two months starting in early February 1903 (7).

Figure 6: Josephine Preston Peabody

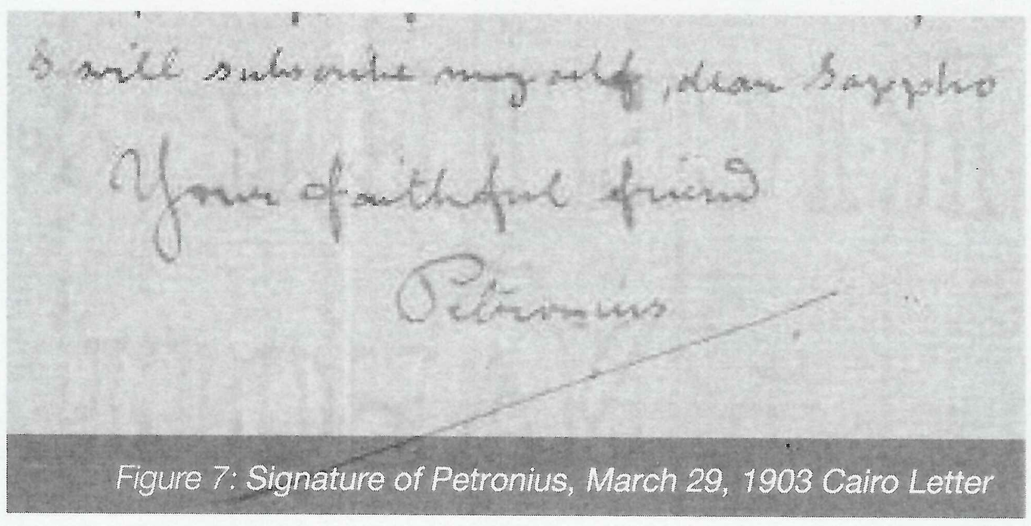

Figure 7: Signature of Petronius, March 29, 1903 Cairo Letter

On 29th March 1903, he wrote Peabody from Egypt about feeling "older, sadder, wiser & more hopelessly alone in the world, without energy or desire to be otherwise." He scribes a startling admission, "I hope I may feel differently, but the fact is, I came here to die, & now that the doctors say I can go on living, I feel as if I were starting fresh....." He signed this letter, "Your faithful friend, Petronius" [see Figure 7]. In a subsequent note, he extended congratulations to Peabody on her forthcoming birthday in May 1903 and again signed as Petronius.

There is a four year gap in the collection of their personal letters. By June 1907, Peabody married a Harvard professor, Lionel Peabody Marks in 1906 and Heron-Allen had married Edith Pepler in 1903. Peabody wrote Heron-Allen about her pending trip to London and Heron-Allen responded with two letters attempting a joint meeting with both married couples, and signed each letter as Petronius. The last letter in the collection dated August 16th 1907, complained of both couples inability to find a mutually agreeable meeting time. By then, the American couple had already returned home. He scribes to Mrs. Marks that "I have not begun Petronius – age came upon me & one must be young for that kind of book." He expressed great regret to their failure to see each other and ended his letter, "Your hair and eyes & Madonna chin, occupy my thoughts so often – so often. Don't think me horribly personal for I am with all respect, your servant, Petronius."

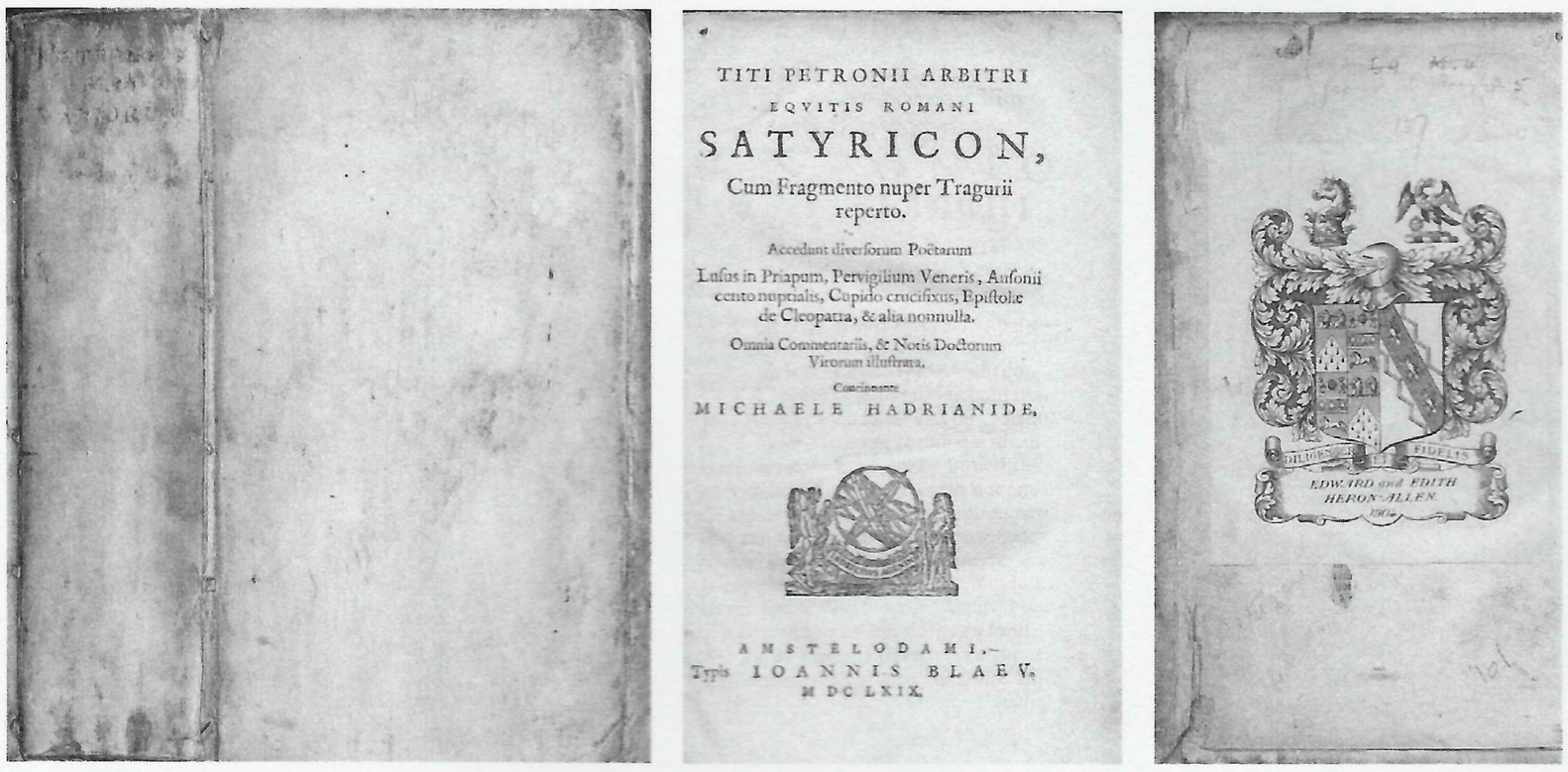

Figure 8: Titi Petronii Arbitri Equitis Romani Satyricon, © 1669. Private Collection.

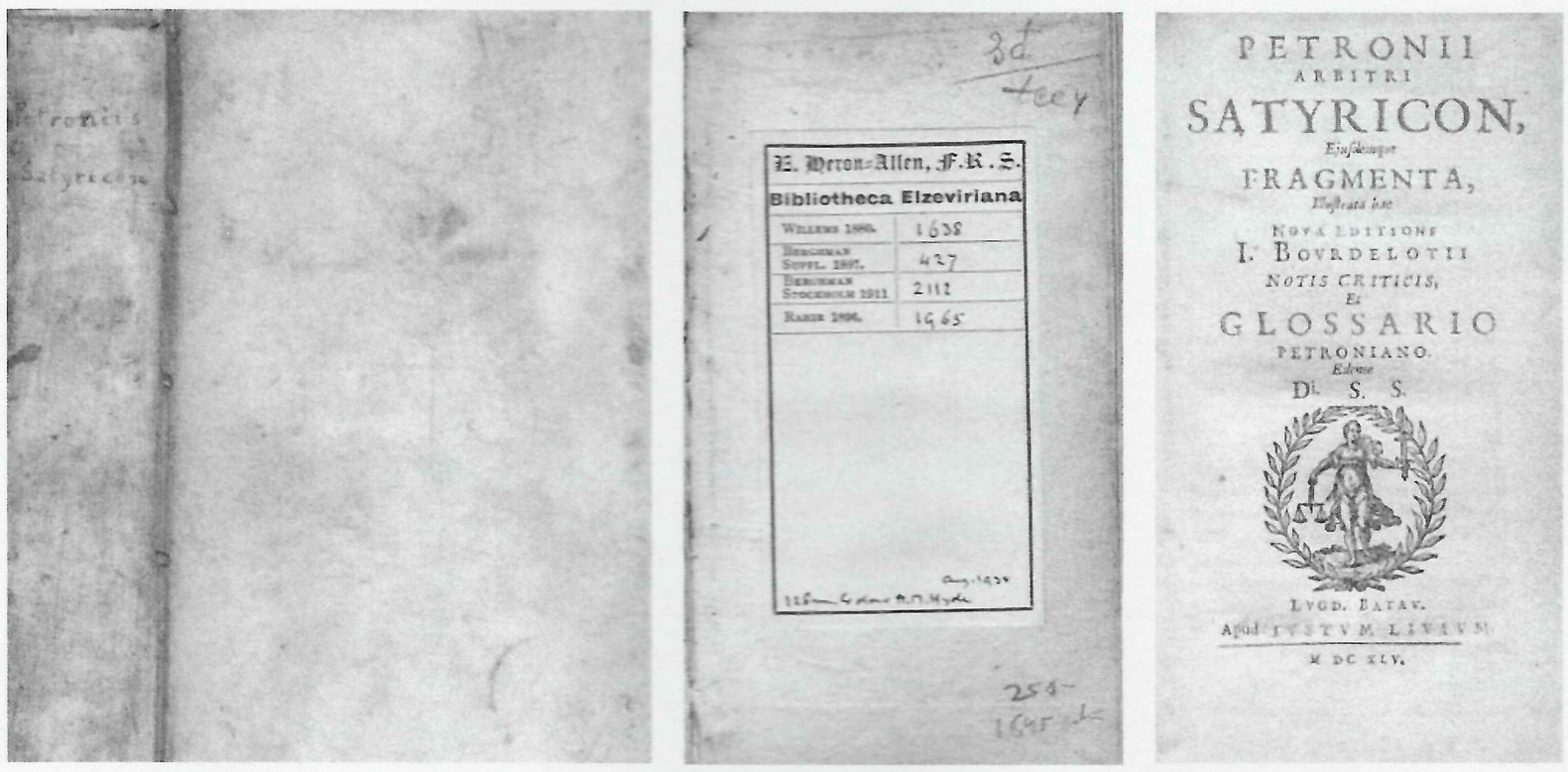

Figure 9: Vellum Spine-Front Cover; Heraldic Bibliotheca Elzeviriana Heron-Allen Bookplate; Title Page © 1645; Smaller volume, 13 x 8 x 3 cm.

We suspected that Heron-Allen penned the pseudonym from Gaius (Titus) Petronius Arbiter, the judge of elegance in the court of Emperor Nero in 62 AD. Petronius devoted his life to seeking pleasure, indulgences, and luxury (8). Petronius Arbiter had been credited to be the Titus Petronius, the presumptive writer of the Satyricon (9). This satire was consider to be written purely for entertainment using the standard that he, the judge of elegance, determines what is tasteful. Might such an elegant tome have actually existed in the literary treasures of his renowned library's 20,000+ volume inventory?

As happens in the 50-75 year life cycle of rare antiquarian books, remnants of Heron-Allen's vast library at Large Acres, Selsey, sold in his 1944 estate public auction, are being re-distributed from the now deceased purchasers of these literary gems. We were astonishment when we were notified that a 1669 copy of T*iti Petronii Arbitri Equitis Romani Satyricon* dated 1669 was available for purchase endowed with a period vellum cover [see Figure 8] and a 1904 heraldic Edward and Edith Heron-Allen bookplate (10).

The Latin text layout is tightly spaced. The font size is quite small for these compact 558 pages. Subsequently a second smaller volume, *Petronii Arbitri Satyricon Ejusdemque Fragmenta* dated 1645 was purchased with a similar period vellum cover [Figure 9] and a *Bibliotheca Elzeviriana* Heron-Allen bookplate (11).

We understand why Heron-Allen might desire avoiding a prolonged translation of complex and tedious 17th century Latin scripts solely for doodling simpatico letters of affection. However, after noticing the wooing tone of his letters toward the married Lady Marks, née Peacock, we doubt this reluctance was related to this 46 year-old widower's biological clock (which we judge had been ticking quite elegantly). Edward 'Petronius' Heron-Allen chose and lived his noms de plume with unabashed gusto. We have not discovered any Petronius-cited publications, public or other private letters or comments directly attributable to Selsey's new 'judge of elegance'.

John P. Mahoney and Barbara P. Mahoney

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BARON CORVO, HERON-ALLEN AND THE 'HOTEL WINDOW' STORY

In 1923, at the request of publisher John Lane, Edward Heron Allen (hereafter EHA) agreed to write an Introduction to a second edition of Frederick Baron Corvo's translation of the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, the first edition having been published by Lane in 1903. It was finally published in 1924 under the title The *Rubaiyat of Umar Khaiyam*, and with the sub-title, "*Translated from the French of J.B. Nicolas by Frederick Baron Corvo, together with a reprint of the French Text. Edited with notes and a comparative study of the original texts, and an Introduction by Edward Heron-Allen FRS*" (1).

In many ways it was surprising that EHA took on the job, as Corvo knew no Persian, and had merely translated, from French to English, Nicolas's translation from Persian to French. Furthermore, as EHA noted in his introduction, Corvo's version was "a gospel of pure sensualism, into which he introduced a predominant note of homosexuality, which is far from justified by the original" (Introduction p.v.) (2).

Not a great deal was in print about Corvo back in 1924 – an article by Shane Leslie, "Frederick Baron Corvo", was pretty much the first account of him, having been published in the September 1923 issue of *The London Mercury*. EHA seems to have become aware of this whilst he was working on his Introduction and Notes, and it is mentioned in a footnote, on page v of his Introduction. It was not to be until 1934 that the first edition of A.J.A.Symons's classic biography, *The Quest for Corvo: An Experiment in Biography* was to be published (3). This has probably done as much to raise Corvo's profile as his works themselves, and, despite some inaccuracies, it remains my personal favourite, given the later appearance of at least three biographies which have had the benefit of more recent research (4).

So who was Frederick Baron Corvo? The truth, I'm afraid, is rather sad and at times rather sordid. His title of Baron Corvo was a sham, for a start, and he was plain Frederick William Rolfe, born and baptised thus in London in 1860. Bitterly disappointed in life by his failure to become first a priest, then an artist, then a successful writer, he was a poseur and one who was, shall we say, frequently economical with the truth. But he was one with enough charm to be able to sponge off numerous friends, the said friends generally ceasing to be friends ere long, when the 'Baron' failed to repay his debts. In addition, as EHA indicated in his Introduction, Corvo was a homosexual. There is nothing wrong in that, of course, but when one realises that the 'Baron' was rather fond of buying the sexual services of teenage boys, and worse, of procuring the services of such boys for others, then one's sympathies rapidly wane. This unsavoury business was revealed in the notorious Venice Letters, written by Corvo to a homosexual friend back in England in 1909-1910. (Corvo had travelled to Venice, effectively as tourist, in 1908, but then decided to stay, living there until his death in 1913.) Before turning to the Venice Letters, and more particularly EHA's comments on them, we need to visit the London Library.

There is a unique copy of the1924 edition of Corvo's *Rubaiyat* in the Heron-Allen Collection at the London Library. Inside it are bound together a copy of Nicolas's translation of 1867 followed by an annotated copy (made up from proof-sheets) of the EHA-Corvo edition of 1924. More importantly, tipped-in to this volume are various newspaper cuttings, reviews, letters, and clips about Corvo-related material, plus a copy of Shane Leslie's article "Frederick Baron Corvo", published in *The London Mercury*, as mentioned above. Of particular interest to us here is EHA's insert relating to the books by, and letters (the Venice Letters) from, Corvo which were being offered for sale by book-dealer "C. Millard" in 1926.

Millard was Christopher Sclater Millard (1872-1927), and he ran a book business, specialising in Uranian

(homosexual) Literature, from his bungalow in the St John's Wood area of London. (Symons gives an interesting account of him in the opening chapter of *The Quest for Corvo*, which book, incidentally is dedicated to Shane Leslie). But it was the sale of the letters which roused EHA to fury. He pasted-in to this volume the pages of Millard's catalogue which contained expurgated summaries of the letters, and prefaced them with a lengthy hand-written note of which the following is a transcription:

> The 'Advertisement' of the Letters of 'Baron Corvo' in this folded sheet is from the Catalogue No.14, issued in February 1926 by [C. Millard, The Bungalow at 8 Abercorn Place, London NW8 &c] and I insert it here as documentary evidence of the statement which I did not shrink from making in my 'Introduction' that Frederick Rolfe's tastes & tendencies were purely homosexual.
>
> I have seen these letters which were written to one Mason (*sic*) Fox (his name is indicated in Millard's headline 'The Raven & the Fox' (5)) who, I understand, is still living, a respected citizen of Plymouth (6). How he can ever have preserved them, much less parted with them passes my comprehension. They contain the most filthy & detailed descriptions of homosexual lust – Corvo's own experiences in Venice, & incidentally make it quite clear that Mason Fox was of similar tendencies, and a companion of Corvo in this form of debauchery, which is recounted with a cynicism compared with which the descriptions of the love affairs of Giton in the "Satyricon" of Petronius Arbiter and some passages in the Memoirs of Casanova are decent and restrained.
>
> That they should have come into the possession of Millard is not surprising, however, though it seems unbelievable that he should advertise them for sale publicly – it is certain that to send them through the post would be an indictable offence. Millard – who under the pen-name of 'Stuart Mason' has contributed much to the literature concerning Oscar Wilde & published a Bibliography of his works (7) – is notoriously of the same habit of life & mind & has on more than one occasion been sent to prison in consequence (8).
>
> I add these notes to this special volume, as I have been reproached with having thus stigmatized 'Baron Corvo' both in my 'Introduction' & my 'Notes', without proof of the justice of my suggestions (9). The proof is amply contained in these letters as is clearly shown in the extracts which Millard has printed in his advertisement.
>
> The same catalogue contains the subjoined 'offers' of works of Frederick Rolfe – in which Millard specializes. [The offered works are: Stories Toto Told Me; Hadrian the Seventh; The Weird of the Wanderer; Tarcissus, The Boy Martyr of Rome; In His Own Image; and some manuscript poems].

The 18 letters, 5 postcards and 2 telegrams which Millard offered for sale as a collection for £65 were eventually bought by A.J.A. Symons for £25, and subsequently re-sold by him to the somewhat dubious character, Maundy Gregory, some years later for £150 (*The Quest for Corvo*, p. 280.) The letters received due attention in Symons's book, mostly in the opening chapter (ibid., p. 26-28), but again later in the book (p.241), though Symons refrained from naming the recipient of the letters. After Maundy Gregory, the letters passed through the hands of several collectors and dealers, and were eventually acquired by the Humanities Research Library at the University of Texas, Austin, where they still are. They were finally published, unexpurgated, in Cecil Woolf's book, *Baron Corvo, Frederick Rolfe: The Venice Letters* (1974; 1987).

In many ways, the evil reputation of the Venice letters has outstripped the reality of their contents, though we should note that EHA had actually seen the letters, which few people had back in the mid 1920s. For the most part they are Rolfe's usual complaints about the world's mistreatment of him, denunciations of former friends who have betrayed or cheated him (at least as he saw it), his illnesses, his frequent hunger, his abject poverty, and even the number of rats he has had to trap in the miserable room in which he lived. Not surprisingly, the letters are also liberally interspersed with pleas for Fox to rescue him and send more money, which he did until his patience ran out – this on account of Rolfe's extravagances, which seemingly began whenever he received any money! However, there is certainly a darker side to the letters. Attitudes to homosexuality have changed massively in recent years, so the explicit descriptions of his sexual antics with the 16½ years old boy Amadeo Amadei (Woolf, letters 5 & 6) or the 17 years old boy Piero / Peter (letter 11) do not raise the eyebrows they once would have done, even given the ages of the boys, both of whom had clearly had many 'patrons' before Rolfe came along. But when Rolfe shows no objection to Fox's preference for younger boys of age 14 (letter 10), or when he suggests that Fox might like to send him the money to set up a place in Venice to which he (Rolfe) could arrange to bring boys along for his (Fox's) pleasure (letter 7), or again, when he offers to send Fox the address of a nice Jewish boy of 16 in Bristol (letter 10), it is clear that Rolfe saw nothing amiss in sexually exploiting young boys. Though attitudes

to homosexuality might have softened massively in recent years, attitudes to pederasty have, if anything, massively hardened, as the awareness of the concepts of child abuse and the sexual exploitation of young people have become more widespread. In that sense, Rolfe stands more condemned now than he did in EHA's time (10). In some ways, then, EHA's condemnation is fair enough.

But not everything is as it seems. The generally prevailing view of EHA is that he was a twice-married conventionally heterosexual male, with an eye for the ladies. But how true is that picture? It is at this point that the story takes a very surprising twist, to which I was alerted by Timothy d'Arch Smith's book *The Frankaus: Prejudice & Principles within a London Literary Family* (2015). Tim's great-grandmother, Julia Frankau, knew EHA and in her novel *The Sphinx's Lawyer* (1906), written under the pen-name of Frank Danby, she had partly based the character of the lawyer in her title on him. But all that is by the by, and our main concern here is with Tim's reference to EHA's above-quoted note condemning Rolfe's Venice Letters and Millard's convictions for what was then called "gross indecency":

> Heron-Allen's discovery of Millard's troubles was probably made by listening to booksellers' gossip (he was a keen bibliophile) and betrays a deeper curiosity than absolutely necessary for a translator of Omar. Further interest is evinced by the existence in Heron-Allen's hand of a short story he wrote (or copied), the contents of which, with more justification than Rolfe's letters, could be described as offering "filthy and detailed descriptions." (p.158)

In a footnote to this, Tim adds:

> The present whereabouts of this document is unknown. It was offered for sale by myself in the early 1970s. The location is a tourist hotel abroad in which the narrator sees from his balcony window certain goings-on in a room opposite. The manuscript is written on hotel writing-paper, perhaps to lend verisimilitude to the reported escapades.

As Tim later put it in an email to me, the story detailed "the antics of two men 'at it' in another of the hotel's rooms."

The present location of the original manuscript remained unclear for some time, but thanks to leads given by Tim McCann and Ray Russell (of Tartarus Press), it eventually turned up in a town only a few miles from where I live! Its present owner, John Eggeling, had inherited it in about 2009 from his late friend John R Hale, and it came in an envelope bearing the hand-written description "Remarkable document discovered among the papers of the late Edward Heron-Allen". Tim Smith confirmed that when he sold the manuscript it was in this same envelope, though he does not recall the name of John R. Hale, so the MS may well have passed through other hands between Tim Smith and John Hale. No other details of provenance are known at this stage (11), though I should add that in the course of writing this essay, John Eggeling sold the manuscript to a private collector in America. Be that as it may, I was fortunate enough to obtain both a typed transcript of the story and a photocopy of the original manuscript, so I can now add considerably to Tim Smith's account.

The sexual activity of the hotel window story involves "a rather fine-looking dark-haired soldierly-looking German, evidently an ex-officer" and "a fair … wavy-haired boy, tall for his age – about twenty." Though the story may have some basis in fact, it is clearly an embellished version of that underlying fact – it uses phrases like "one's mind's eye saw" and "I could imagine." That said, it should be stated here and now that the story is nothing less than homosexual pornography, for which reason, by request, no extracts are quoted here for fear of causing offence.

And yet the hotel window story was undoubtedly written by EHA. The letterhead of the notepaper on which the story is written – "Insel - Hotel / Konstanz – Bodensee" – gives us our best clue as to its date, for, as Tim McCann has discovered, EHA and his second wife, Nour, stayed at that hotel from 28th July to 3rd August 1931, having previously stayed in the Hotel Alpenhof at Pertisau, from 6th to 27th July. This period tallies with the "nearly three weeks" during which the sexual activity in the story was observed. There seems little doubt, then, that the events described took place in Pertisau, but were written down in Konstanz, or at least on hotel paper acquired there, in the summer of 1931.

This is only five years, at most, after EHA's condemnation of the Rolfe letters and the Millard catalogue, surely too short a time for him to have undergone a radical change in his sexuality and to have done a complete U-turn in his views. In any case, two years after writing down the story, he publicly reiterated his condemnation of Rolfe in a short article published in *Notes and Queries* on 29 April 1933 (p. 305). Was he, then, a bisexual who, aside from this story, had successfully hidden his homosexual inclinations? There would be nothing wrong in any of this – bisexuality or even the writing of such a story - were it not for the fact that EHA condemned Rolfe for penning "the most filthy & detailed descriptions of homosexual lust", a sin of which he himself was far more guilty in penning the hotel window story. For let there be no mistake, as Tim Smith indicated long before me, the Venice letters are far less obscene than the hotel window story. It is difficult not to see EHA's note on pages 9-10 and his piece in *Notes and Queries*, as a hypocritical defence of conventional moral standards to which he did not really subscribe. Much as I admire the works of EHA, particularly his

Rubaiyat studies, and indeed will continue to admire them, this episode reveals an aspect of EHA which I find difficult to understand, let alone to justify.

Notes

1. (1) Lane asked EHA merely for a short introduction in return for 10 guineas worth of the books when published. It was EHA himself who decided to append to the Introduction some copious notes on the text and their Persian originals. He then suggested that Lane might care to reward him with £20 plus a dozen copies of the book when published. In the end he got a cheque for 10 guineas plus a dozen copies of the book. See Appendix 15 of my Rubaiyat Archive at: http://www.bobforrestweb.co.uk/The_Rubaiyat/Appendices/app15.htm.
2. By today's standards, the homosexual content of Corvo's translation is nothing startling – again see my Appendix 15 via the link given in note 1 above.
3. In what follows, unless otherwise stated, page numbers refer to the 1979 Penguin Books edition. Incidentally, the front cover of this edition bears the title *The Quest for Corvo: Genius or Charlatan?*
4. Donald Weeks, *Corvo: Saint or Madman?* (1971); Miriam J. Benkovitz, *Frederick Rolfe: Baron Corvo* (1977); and Robert Scoble, *Raven: The Turbulent World of Baron Corvo* (2013).
5. The centre pages of Millard's catalogue, summarising the letters, bore the headings, (left) "'The Raven and the Fox': Unpublished Letters of", & (right) "Frederick William Rolfe, Baron Corvo." Corvo is the Italian for Raven, this bird being Rolfe's adopted emblem, as detailed in my Appendix 15 (link given in note 1 above.)
6. Charles Masson Fox (1866-1935) – note the double 's' in his middle name - was a timber merchant from Falmouth, not Plymouth, who had met Rolfe in Venice 1909. Rolfe's "Venice Letters" were sent to Fox after he had returned to Falmouth. Fox was eventually ruined via the blackmailing partnership of a woman and her young son, the latter passing on useful information to the former about his various 'suitors.' As a result of Fox's courageous stand in the face of impending ruin, however, the corrupt mother and son were prosecuted for blackmail and sent to prison. [See Timothy d'Arch Smith's account in his excellent study *Love in Earnest – Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English 'Uranian' Poets from 1889 to 1930* (1970), p.129].
7. Stuart Mason, *A Bibliography of Oscar Wilde* (1914). [Previously, under the same pseudonym, he had published A Bibliography of the Poems of Oscar Wilde (1907).] Under the pseudonym of Stuart Mason, he also published *The Oscar Wilde Calendar: a Quotation from the Works of Oscar Wilde for every Day of the Year* (1910) and *Art and Morality: a Record of the Discussion* which followed the Publication of *'Dorian Gray'* (1912).
8. Millard was imprisoned twice for what was then called "gross indecency" – firstly in 1906, for 3 months with hard labour, and secondly in 1918, for one year, but without hard labour, on health grounds.
9. I do not know to whom EHA is referring here. Some of the names mentioned in this article, and in my Appendix 15 (link as in note 1), are obvious possibilities, but I have seen nothing in print to date.
10. See also Donald Weeks, *Corvo: Saint or Madman*, p.304-334; Miriam J. Benkovitz, *Frederick Rolfe: Baron Corvo*, p.249-251; and Timothy d'Arch Smith, *Love in Earnest*, p.129-130.
11. According to Merlin Holland, the writing on the envelope mentioned on page 11 is definitely not that of his father, Vyvyan Holland, one of the executors of EHA. In particular, he was involved in overseeing the dispersal of EHA's famous cabinet of erotica, the precise contents of which remain obscure, but which are generally assumed to have been heterosexually erotic. Having seen the Hotel Window story, though, Merlin added, "Knowing my father, if he had found it at Large Acres when he was 'clearing up' I suspect he would simply have burned it....What seems more likely is that it had been in someone else's possession at the time of his death, which is why it survived". (From a personal email 19th May 2017: EHA's Will did provide for the destruction of letters, papers and books at the discretion of his male executors).

Bob Forrest

[Readers who wish for further details of this story should consult Bob Forrest's extended website version at http://www.bobforrestweb.co.uk/The_Rubaiyat/Appendices/app15.htm.and his recent publication, *Edward Heron-Allen. A Walk on the Wild Side*].

THE SOCIETY'S WEBSITE

The Heron-Allen Society's website is at:
http://www.heronallensociety.co.uk
The webmaster, Maira Canzonieri, can be contacted through the website or directly by e-mail at: maira.canzonieri@rcm.ac.uk Maira updates our web-site on a regular basis, and members are encouraged to keep in touch by making use of it. There is an opportunity on the site for members to make comments and suggestions and to post queries.