SPING 2021

THE HERON-ALLEN SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER NO. 38

THE TWENTIETH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM 2021

THEME: Edward Heron-Allen: The Monsters and The Man
DATE: Saturday 3 July 2021

The Society was hoping to hold a Zoom meeting on Saturday 3 July to include the AGM and at least two talks including Joan Navarre on "Edward Heron-Allen and Bram Stoker" and Timothy McCann on "Edward Heron-Allen and the Loch Ness Monster". However the serious illness of the Chairman has now made this impossible and the whole programme will be rearranged for the autumn. Please follow the website for further details.

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

This year's lecture had been cancelled because of Covid. It is hoped that next year's lecture will take place in March 2022.

EDWARD HERON-ALLEN, WAR PROPAGANDIST

Heron-Allen's involvement with the M.I.7.B.(i), the War Office's WWI Propaganda Department section, is documented in some of his wartime journal entries in the fascinating *Edward Heron-Allen's Journal of the Great War*, Brian W. Harvey and Carol Fitzgerald (editors), Phillimore Press, 2002. The four issues of *The Green Book* [Figure 2] were published from January, 1919 to 1922 by ex-members of that department, including Lord Dunsany, H.R. Wakefield and one A.A. Milne (who was re-assigned after suffering injury in the Battle of the Somme).

EH-A contributed a short story ("The Mirror that Remembered") to the fourth issue and "A Fragment" [Figure 3] to the first. While the story was later to be included in *The Strange Papers* of *Dr. Blayre*, I suspect that "A Fragment" was never re-published.

Figure 1: Edward Heron-Allen in military uniform

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In spite of EH-A's occasional doubts about the degree of his section's success, A.J. Dawson wrote in the introduction to the first issue of *The Green Book*: "Every day for two years and more its [M.I.7.B.(i)] messages appeared in pretty nearly every country in the world that counts; and I doubt if any other Section in the War Office ever did more than this one to justify its existence." As a side-note, Milne contributed "Some Earlier Propagandists (as they would have written, if only they had been properly organised)" to the first issue, including parodies in the styles of Tennyson, Campbell, Shakespeare and Lovelace.

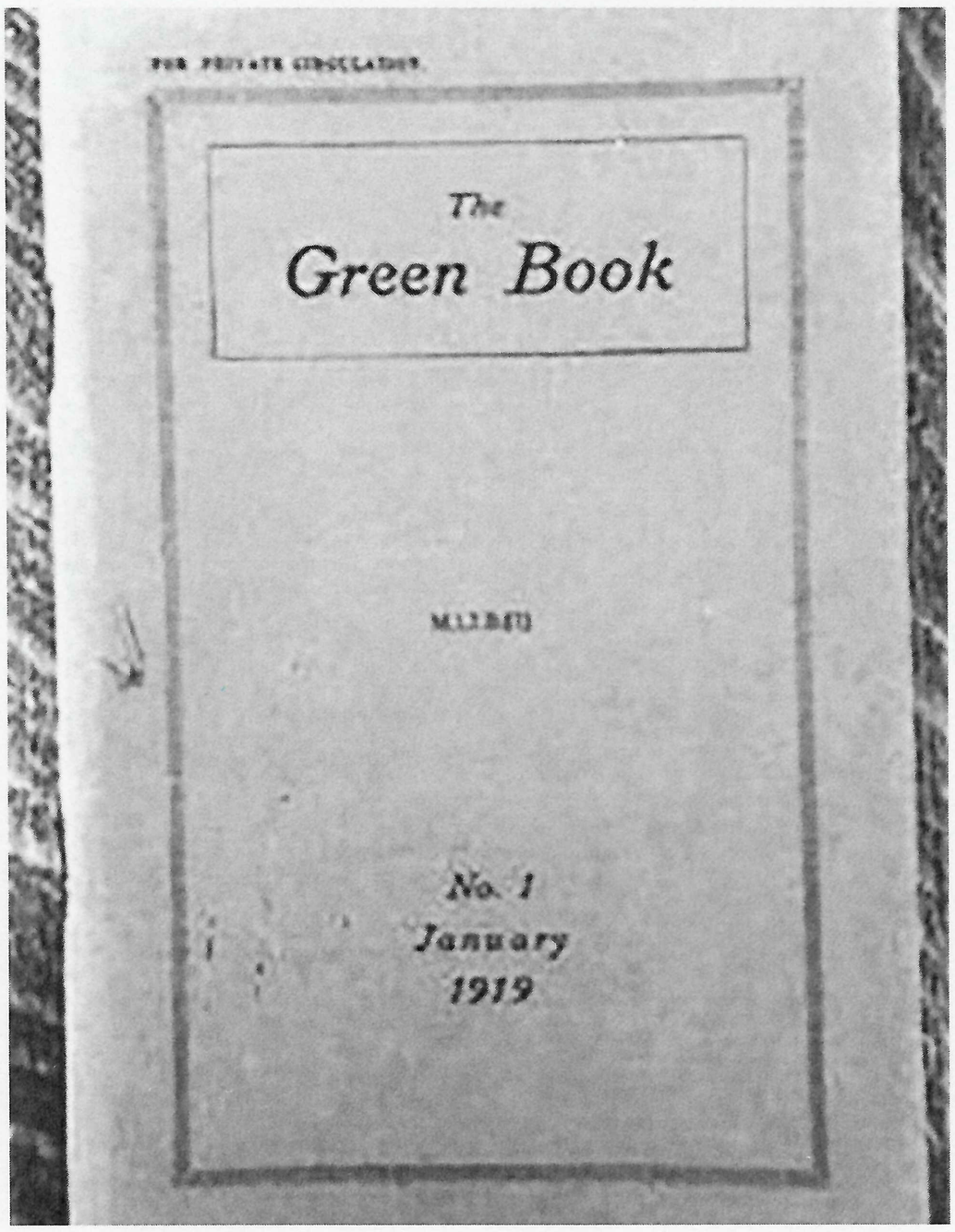

Figure 2: The Green Book. no. 1, 1919.

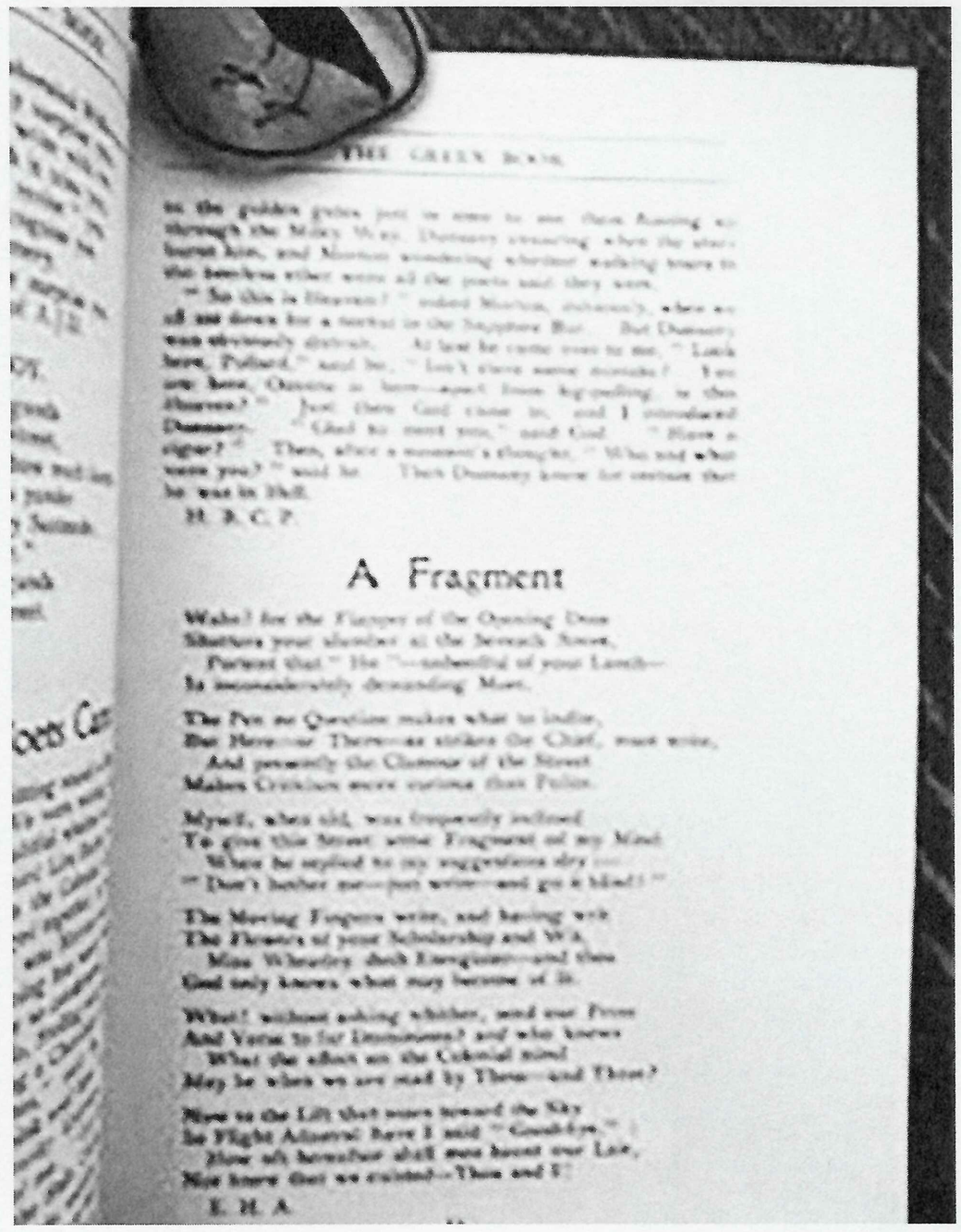

Figure 3: Edward Heron-Allen, A Fragment (from The Green Book).

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

A Fragment

Wake! for the Flapper of the Opening Door
Shatters your slumber at the Seventh Snore,
Portent that "He "—unheedful of your Lunch—
Is inconsiderately demanding More,
The Pen no Question makes what to indite,
But here—or There—as strikes the Chief, must write,
And presently the Clamour of the Street
Makes Criticism more curious than Polite.
Myself, when old, was frequently inclined
To give this Street some Fragment of my Mind,
When he replied to my suggestions dry
"Don't bother me—just write—and go it blind!"
The Moving Fingers write, and having writ
The Flowers of your Scholarship and Wit,
Miss Wheatley doth Enregister—and then
God only knows what may become of it.
What! without asking whither, send our Prose
And verse to far Dominions? And who knows
What the effect on the Colonial mind
May be when we are read by These—and Those?
Now to the Lift that soars toward the Sky
In Flight Adastral have I said "Good-bye,":
How oft hereafter shall men haunt our Lair,
Nor know that we existed—Thou and I!

E. H. A.

Brian Hulan

OSCAR WILDE'S LETTERS TO EDWARD HERON-ALLEN

Edward Heron-Allen eagerly collected his correspondence from eminent persons and particularly from artists, whether musical or literary. It was his custom, before his marriage to Marianna Lehmann in July 1891, to have his letters bound in volumes of a similar style to his travel diaries. There is little evidence of him collecting his letters after his marriage, except for letters relating to important events in his life or concerning his publications. For example. there survives a letter book relating to his election to the Fellowship of the Royal Society in 1919 and to his Presidency of the Royal Microscopical Society from 1914 to 1920. It was purchased by Alfred B. Richards after Heron-Allen's death in 1943, formed part of the collection of the Royal Microscopical Society and was finally purchased by the History of Science Museum at Oxford, where it remains. Similarly, a collection of letters written to and from people to whom he sent a copy of his article: "A Hoard of Roman Coins from a Villa Site in Selsey". published in *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, vol. 74, in 1933 has survived. It is not clear how extensive his correspondence was with Oscar Wilde, but some clues are given by the sale of his library after his death by Sothebys on 9 and 10 October 1944 (1).

Lot 17 was described in the sale catalogue as "Autograph Letters. Personal Correspondence of the late owner, about 190 letters to all, arranged alphabetically and guarded in 3 vol. half morocco". The catalogue goes on to say that it "includes letters from Sir G. Alexander, Richard Garnett, J.E. Hodgkin, Richard Le Gallienne, George Moore, Ray Lankester, Max O'Relf, Mayne Reed, Whitelaw Reid, Edgar Saltus, Bram Stoker and Gleeson White, also two from Oscar Wilde – one with postmark 18 June 1885", and goes on to print the letter about reading the horoscope of Cyril Wilde. The lot was purchased by K. Fletcher for £13. 10s (2). The volumes reappeared at an unidentified sale in 1935 where it was listed as Lot 91 and described as "A fine collection of 190 A.Ls written to him between 1884 & 1891 by many English and American celebrities, dealing with the varied subjects in which he was interested, such as Cheiromancy, Art, Music, Journalism, Writing, the Theatre, Botany and Protozoology". The volumes were purchased for £35 by Donald and Mary Hyde. Now, bearing the bookplates of Edward and Marianna Heron-Allen and Donald and Mary Hyde the volumes form part of the Eccles Collection in the British Library where they are catalogued as Add. MSS. 81,724-81,726 (3). In fact the volumes contain three letters from Wilde to Heron-Allen.

Lot 250 was described as 'Autograph Letters. A Collection of A.L.s in an album, 33 items in all, including Sir Richard Burton, Lady Burton, Carlyle, Elizabeth Fry, Sir John Herschel, Joseph Hume, Thomas Moore. J.G. Lockhart, Count Nesslerode, James Spelding, Whistler, Oscar Wilde, Duke of Wellington, Wilkie Collins, Bulwer Lytton, Victor Hugo, W.P. Frith, Samuel Rogers and Charles Matthews'. The album was mostly illustrated with portraits. At the sale it was purchased by Foyle for £13, but its present whereabouts are unknown.

Not included in the Sotheby's sale catalogue were three further bound volumes of autograph letters, presumably reserved for the family (4). These differed from the previous volumes by being composed not just of Heron-Allen's correspondence up to 1891 from such as Herbert Beerbohm Tree, Wilkie Collins, Walter Crane, J. Fitzgerald Molloy, Bret Harte, Justin MaCarthy, Walter Pater, Andre Raffalovitch, John Lane, Augustus Moore, E. Nesbitt, J. Todhunter and Gleeson White, but also a collection of letters from earlier luminaries such as Charles Dickens, George Cruikshank and William Makepeace Thackeray. These volumes, which included two letters from Oscar Wilde of which only one has survived, formed part of the collection of Heron-Allen's grandson, the late Ivor Jones and are now in the West

Sussex Record Office at Chichester.

It is not known how, when and where Edward Heron-Allen and Oscar Wilde [Figure 4] first met, though it is possible that the initial contact was with Constance Wilde and the reading of her hand at the end of 1884, but their growing friendship was chronicled in Heron-Allen's diary which he began writing a year later, in December 1885 (5). It is clear, however, that by then they were well acquainted. In 1884 Heron-Allen's *Violin Making as it was and is* was published by Ward Lock & Co. [Figure 5], and his treatise on violin making has remained in print down to the present day. Heron-Allen presented a copy of his book to Wilde and elicited the following reply.

---

16 Tite Street [Figure 6]
9 January 1885

Dear Mr. Heron-Allen,

I have just returned from Ireland, and find waiting for me your beautiful book, and your kind invitation: both of which I have much pleasure in accepting.

I am greatly struck with the loveliness of the violin curves, and delighted to find that grasshoppers are fiddlers.

I hope you will come and see us: in the interim I am glad to have your photograph, violin and all.

OSCAR WILDE (6)

Besides Violin-making, Heron-Allen's other great interest at the time was in hand-reading. He wrote that he was deeply interested with the late Sir Victor Horsley on the scientific basis of 'Cheirosophy' {Cheiromancy, or Palmistry) he published with Ward Locke, the first complete and scientific work on the subject which has since been through innumerable editions (7). He presented a copy of his little book to Constance Wilde, and she responded enthusiastically in a letter of 12 December (8). Constance had had her hand read by Alfred Sinnett, who headed the Indian branch of the Theosophical Society, and it proved to be of such interest that Sinnett contacted Heron-Allen, as 'the best cheiromantist' about it, recommending that they got together. A meeting was duly arranged for 9 December. Heron-Allen later read Oscar Wilde's hand and the success of these two experiences (9) led to Wilde's letter to Heron-Allen on the birth of his first son, Cyril.

[Postmark, 12 June 1885]
[16 Tite Street]

My dear E.H.A., Thank you for your letter. Will you cast the child's horoscope for us? It was born at quarter to eleven last Friday morning. My wife is very anxious to know its fate, and has begged me to ask you to search the stars. Ever yours

OSCAR WILDE (10)

Addressed to E. Heron-Allen, Constitutional Club, SW.

The relationship had now ripened into visiting and socialising. On 13 December 1885 Heron-Allen recorded in his diary: "In the afternoon I went up to call on Mrs. Oscar Wilde. Oscar is away in Edinburgh, but his charming wife kills time pretty satisfactorily by herself:

Figure 4: Oscar Wilde.

how picturesque she is! & how dignified. She was a Miss Constance Lloyd very aesthetic & poetic of course & devotedly attached to Oscar, rather small with a pretty sedate little face & deep thrilling eyes thrown into relief by masses of glorious black-brown hair which frame her face in artistic confusion. She is almost always fantastically dressed, today she was wrapped in soft coloured cachmires in the oriental style

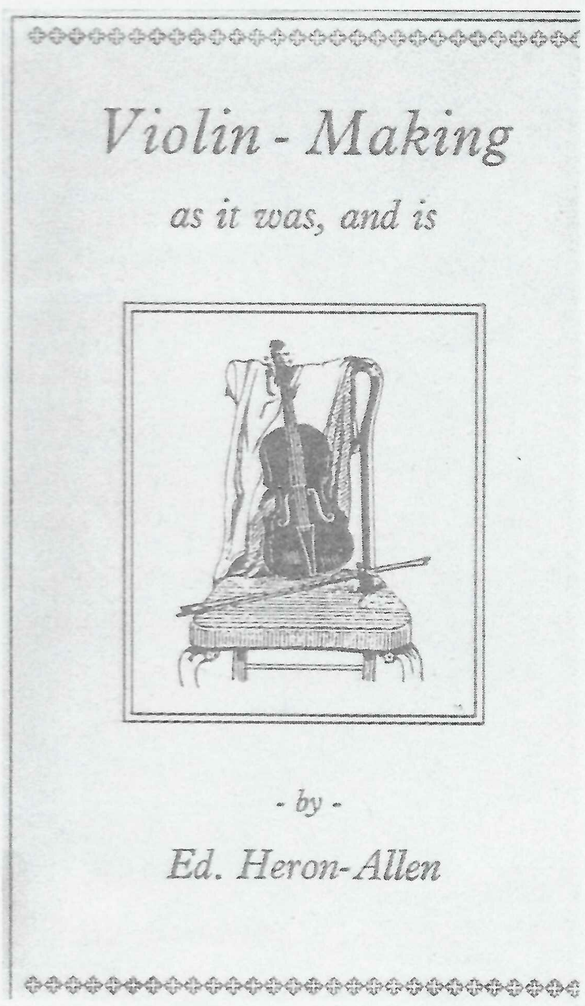

Figure 5: Edward Heron-Allen, Violin Making as it was and is.

& looked positively dangerous, she always harmonises however with her drawing room which is all white except for the ceiling which is panelled with beautiful Japanese brocades: its only decorations are a gold medallion let into the wainscoting over the fireplace & some exquisite etchings of Whistler's similarly framed by the door, it is lit by large Chinese lamps & hung from the ceiling & is carpeted with mats. I found her discussing the photograph of me, which I sent her the other day & which she says is the most mesmeric portrait she ever saw; like Constance Foy who thinks it uncanny; the eyes. she says, follow her all over the room & when she looks at it, it seems to mesmerise her as I do myself" (11).

Three days later, he called again: 'in the afternoon went & called on Mrs Oscar Wilde whom I found alone & with whom I had a long chat'. On 20 December he wrote: 'went up to lunch with the Oscar Wildes, found poor

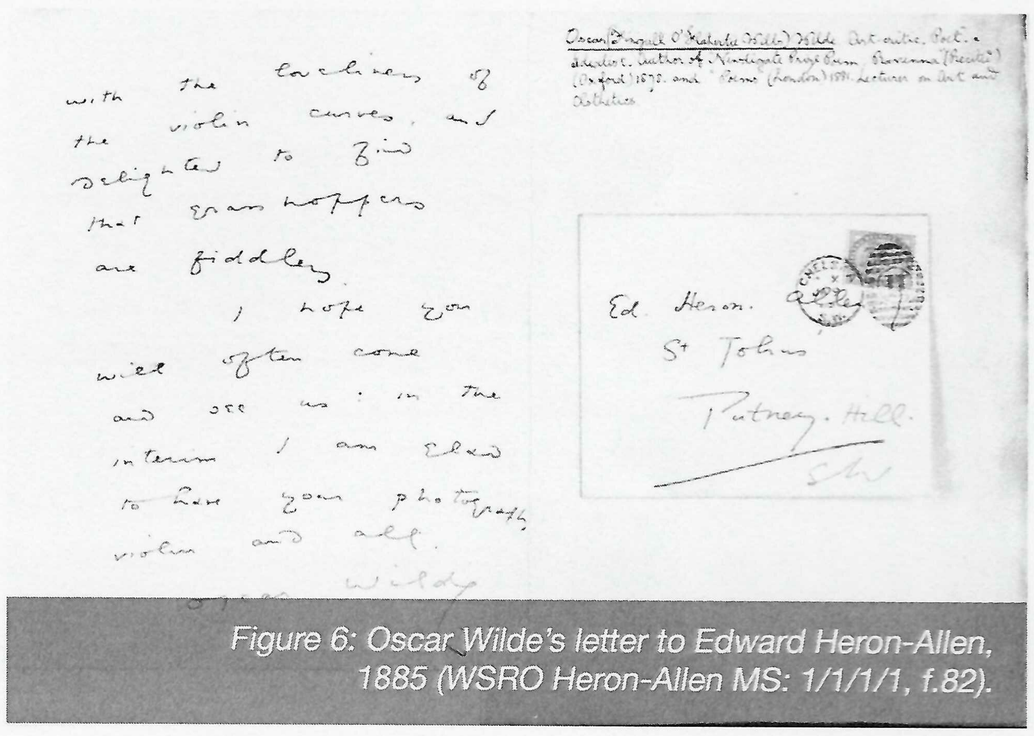
with the touchiness of the violin curves, and delighted to find that grasshoppers are fiddling.
I hope you will often come and see us: in the interim I am glad to have your photograph, violin and all.
Wilde
Ed. Heron.
St Johns
Putney. Hill.
SW

Figure 6: Oscar Wilde's letter to Edward Heron-Allen, 1885 (WSRO Heron-Allen MS: 1/1/1/1, f.82).

Figure 7: Constance Wilde with Cyril. WSRO Heron-Allen MS.

Oscar suffering from a cold & Miss Boaugha's late book on 'Handwriting' a somewhat chaotic & irresponsible work. Oscar with his hair cut & clothed like an ordinary Christian is a most unwanted & therefore interesting sight: he has a grand face despite his sensuality & his enormous height & size helps it out, but today he was miserable & told us that his life since he was twenty had been spent attending the funeral of his youth, a remark borrowed I think from Beranger but none the less beautiful'. He went on to describe his fellow guests: 'Arthur May, a clever young artist, was lunching with us & afterwards a strange creature named Sherrard came in, a young man with an old face, a square jaw, no complexion & long straw coloured hair; he said little but looked wonders. It appears he lives upon about 5/- a week in a garret in the Quartier Latin, & lives upon tobacco, Opium & Absinthe to obtain which he writes for six hours a week, translates advertisements & similarly sordid literature. He has written a curious novel & a volume of poems both unknown to fame' (12).

On the following day he was part of a party of eight 'at Andre Raffalovich's beautiful rooms in Albert Hall Mansions. We were eight: our host & Miss Gribell, Oscar Wilde & his wife, young Justin MaCarthy, Louise Jopling & Walter Pater'. The socialising continued apace. On Christmas Eve he called on Blanche Roosevelt and 'I went with her to call on Mrs. Oscar Wilde where I left her. Mrs. Oscar was at home & we had a long chat upon mesmerism & kindred subjects & she gave me this photograph of herself with her baby Cyril [Figure 7], the baby, the casting of whose horoscope, firmly cemented the friendship between the Wildes and myself. It was a strange thing altogether: I cast the horoscope at Oscar's request, & it came out so exactly what I should have expected a child of theirs to be, that I thought I must have unconsciously directed my reading by my knowledge of the parents, so I sent it to T.B. Dale, the astrologer & as he sent me an identical reading I sent it on to the Wildes. It grieved them very much I am sorry to say, but I take a great interest in the small Cyril in consequence'. He went on to add: 'Whilst I was there this afternoon, Willy Wilde the notoriously disreputable came in. I have avoided knowing him for years, as I don't think he is a man to know, but this afternoon there was no help for it. I was introduced & was charmed with him, we had a most interesting conversation about Irving's Faust & as we left together he drove me to Earls Court Station' (13).

On Boxing Day, he lunched with the Wildes at the home of Blanche Roosevelt. On the last day of the year he 'went up to Tite Street accompanied by my fiddle to play duets with little Mrs. Oscar. When I arrived she had gone out so I fiddled till four when she came in with Blanche Macchetta [Roosevelt]. The latter went away & we played to one another until nearly six when Oscar came in with a little fellow named Clement Harris & a charming Harrow boy with a wonderful talent for music. He played over a quantity of the old Harrow Tunes & it quite reminded me of the old days there. His brother & Madame Macchetta came in to dinner, she is very ill I am sorry to say, but we had a merry little dinner, during which she & Oscar & Harris told the most outrageous 'stories' of phenomenal

animal sagacity. Oscar's was, I think, the nicest, it was about a pig that was taken to India in a voyage for pork, who so ingratiated himself by his charming manners that they could not kill him & he remains a pet on board the ship to this day' (14).

On 6 January 1886 Heron-Allen was again dining in Oakley Street with Blanche Roosevelt, when Constance Wilde joined them. Unfortunately, Heron-Allen ceased to keep his personal daily diary shortly afterwards and so there are no more glimpses of his friendship with the Wildes. The next record is a short letter from Wilde:

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9 June 1886
16 Tite Street, Chelsea. S.W.

Are you a member of the Lyric?. I forget. If not come tomorrow.

O.W. (15)
Addressed to E. Heron-Allen, St.John'a , Piutney Hill.

Heron-Allen was a member of the Lyric Club and dined there with Sir George Errington the same day he visited Constance Wilde on 13 December the previous year, as well as on several other occasions (16).

Heron-Allen invited Wilde to dine with him as his guest at a meeting of the Sette of Odd Volumes.

[? September 1886]
16 Tite Street

My dear Astrologer: It will give me much pleasure (*stellis voluntibus*) to dine with you on the day you mention. We are all looking forward to d'Arpentigny (17).

Very sincerely yours

OSCAR WILDE (18) (propria manu)

Heron-Allen was, of course, Brother Necromancer in the Sette of Odd Volumes and not Astrologer. It is difficult to know whether this was a slip of the pen or some sort of joke. The word 'necromancer was sure to appeal to Wilde.

In November 1886 having resigned from the family firm of solicitors Heron-Allen travelled to America to lecture on Cheirosophy for the lecture agent Major J.P. Pond and, at first, achieved a great success.

[postmarked 17 October 1887]
16 Tite Street

My dear Heron-Allen:

We are all charmed at your success, but of course we want you home. When do you come back?

My wife tells me she has sent you a copy of '*Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*'. I was going myself to send it to McClure, the newspaper syndicate man in Philadelphia, as I want to have it published in the States. If you can sell it for me to any enterprising editor pray do so, and you can write a short preface on the cheiromancy of the story.

I think I should get between fifty and a hundred dollars for it. Try McClure: he commands about fifty papers. I was at Molloy's the other night. It was very pleasant, and Bernard Partridge was charming. He talked about you a great deal. Believe me, ever yours

OSCAR WILDE (19)

Oscar Wilde's *Lord Arthur Saville's Crime* was originally subtitled 'A Story of Cheiromancy' and it owed a good deal to Heron-Allen's various works on cheiromancy, as Joan Navarre has shown (20). There is no evidence that Heron-Allen approached MaClures, but he did contact his own publishers, Belford, Clarke & Co., on Wilde's behalf, but although they offered to publish it with a preface by Heron-Allen, they decided it was not commercial enough on its own.

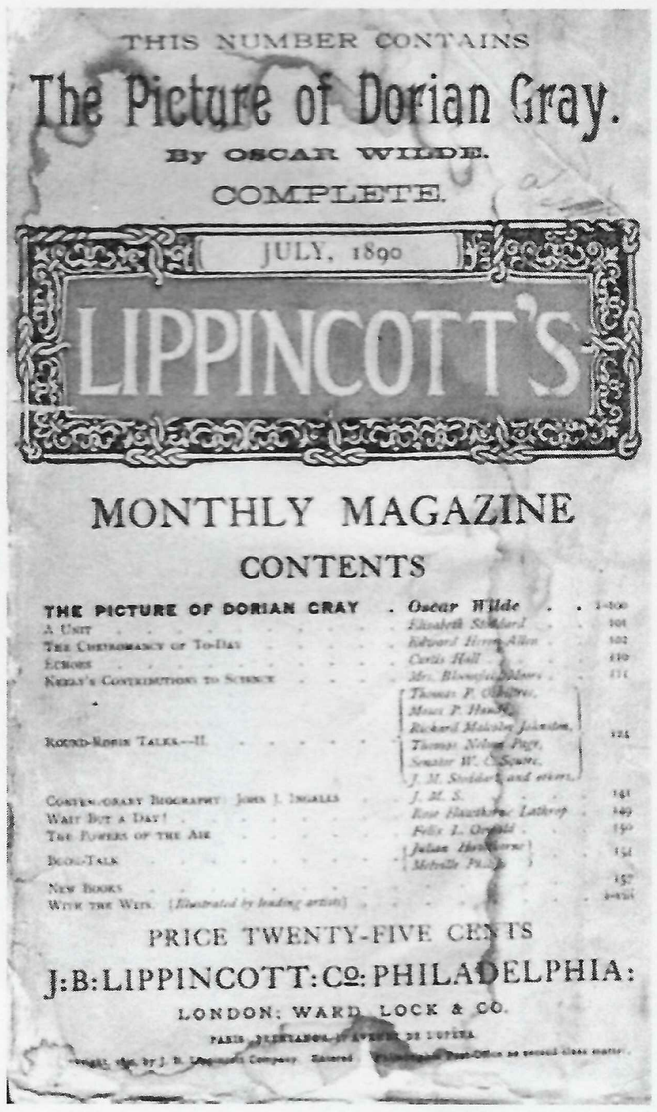
THIS NUMBER CONTAINS
The Picture of Dorian Gray.
By OSCAR WILDE.
COMPLETE.
JULY, 1890
LIPPINCOTT'S
MONTHLY MAGAZINE
CONTENTS
THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY . Oscar Wilde
PRICE TWENTY-FIVE CENTS
J:B:LIPPINCOTT:Co:PHILADELPHIA:
LONDON: WARD LOCK & CO.

Figure 8: Lippincott's Monthly Magazine.

The two men were linked again when Heron-Allen's "The Cheiromancy of Today. The Evolution of an Occult Science", and Oscar Wilde's, "The Picture of Dorian Gray" were the first two articles in the July 1890 issue of *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* [Figure 8]. F.J. Edwards, reviewing the journal in the *Wichita Daily Eagle*, wrote: "it is perhaps something of a coincidence that in the current number of *Lippincott's Magazine* there are contributions from Oscar Wilde and Edward Heron-Allen. The coincidence which brings these men of notoriety together in this magazine is emphasised by the fact that they are probably the only two writers who use the English language, and very likely the only ones to be found of any other language, who have constructed novels the underlying suggestion of which is something not to be spoken of, scarcely to be thought. When Mr. Allen published his piece of fiction it created no other comment than that caused by belief that he had, with skill and artful suggestion caused a tale to turn on the abnormal. Oscar Wilde, in the story which is printed in Lippincotts under the title of 'The Picture of Dorian Gray', has overmatched the skill of Heron-Allen, and has undoubtedly accomplished the purpose which in addition to pecuniary consideration he had to view when he wrote the story' (21). No doubt the next letter was to discuss some of these points.

[19 February 1890]
16, Tite Street

Dear Heron-Allen,

I will be in St. James's Street on Thursday at 3 o'clock and will look in on you and discuss the wicked Lippincott if you are at home.

Truly yours

OSCAR WILDE (22)

There exists in the Eccles Collection an envelope addressed to Heron-Allen in Wilde's hand postmarked 5 September 1890, but. alas, the letter which it enclosed has not survived.

[Postmark 5 September 1890]

Addressed to E. Heron-Allen, 2 Ryder Street, St. James. SW. (23).

On 1 July Heron-Allen married Miss Marianna Lehmann, daughter if Rudolph Lehmann, the eminent painter, at St. Anne's in Soho. Among the guests were Mr and Mrs Oscar Wilde (24).

In the absence of any more surviving letters and the closing of Heron-Allen's diary there is no further record of the friendship between the two men. Six surviving letters sent over a period of five years is a somewhat meagre ration for marking a significant friendship, but the letters are of interest and touch on a number of issues important in the careers of both men. The first letter refers to Heron-Allen's *Violin making, as it was and is*, which marked his appearance as a significant musical authority, and as a writer who exchanged his works with Wilde. The second showed his growing closeness with the Wilde family and his practical performance as a cheiromantist. The third revealed both men as regular diners at a fashionable London club. The fourth letter relates to Wilde attending a meeting of the Sette of Odd Volumes as Heron-Allen's guest, where he reportedly added to the gaiety of the occasion. The final two letters allude to Heron-Allen's influence in Wilde's writing. In the fifth letter Wilde asks him to find an American publisher for *Lord Arthur Saville's Crime,* a story heavily influenced by Heron-Allen's writing on cheiromancy. While in the final letter, although it refers to their two articles published together in *Lipincott's Magazine*, it was rather to Heron-Allen's *The Suicide of Sylvester Grey* that Wilde looked to for inspiration for his *Portrait of Dorian Gray*.

NOTES

(1). W(est) S(ussex) R(ecord) O(ffice). Heron-Allen MS. 1/7/1.

(2). W.S.R.O., Heron-Allen MS. 1/7/2.

(3). B(ritish) L(ibrary), Eccles Collection. Add MSS. 81,724-81,726.

(4). W.S.R.O., Heron-Allen MSS. 1/1/1/1-3.

(5). W.S.R.O., Heron-Allen MS. 1/2/1/1.

(6). Oscar Wilde to Edward Heron-Allen, 9 January 1885. W.S.R.O. Heron-Allen MS. 1/1/1/1, f.82. Published in Rupert Hart-Davis (ed.), *The Letters of Oscar Wilde* (1962), 167; and Merlin Holland & Rupert Hart-Davis, *The Complete Letters of Oscar Wilde* (2000), 245.

(7). Edward Heron-Allen *A Manual of Cheirosophy* (1885).

(8). Constance Wilde to Edward Heron-Allen, 12 December 1884, MS 1959-004, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, Los Angeles, USA.

(9). See Timothy J. McCann, "Edward Heron-Allen and Constance Wilde: A Horoscope and two Palm-Readings", in *The Wildean*, no. 47, July 2015, 56-64.

(10). Oscar Wilde to Edward Heron-Allen, 12 June 1885. B.L. Eccles Collection, Add. MS>, 81.726, f. Pubished in Rupert Hart-Davis (ed.), The Letters of Oscar Wilde (1962), 177; and Merlin Holland & Rupert Hart-Davis,

The Complete Letters of Oscar Wilde (2000), 262.

(11). W.S.R.O., Heron-Allen MS, 1/2/1/1.

(12). *Ibid.*

(13). *Ibid.*

(14). *Ibid.*

(15). B.L. Eccles Collection Add. MS. 71,826, f..

(16): See Timothy J. McCann, "Edward Heron-Allen and Sir George Errington", in *Heron-Allen Society Newsletter*, no 34 (Spring 2019), 5-7.

(17). Heron-Allen's *Le Science de la Main, The Science of the Hand or The Art of Recognising the Tendencies of the Human Mind by the Observation of the Formation of the Hand.* Translated from the French by M. le Capitaine C.S . d'Arpentigny and edited with an introduction, appendices and a commentary on the text, due to be published by Ward, Lock & Co. later in the year.

(18). F.L. Published in Merlin Holland and Rupert Hart-Davis, *The Complete Letters of Oscar Wilde* (2000), 286.

(19). Oscar Wilde to Edward Heron-Allen, 17 October 1887. Published in Stuart Mason, *Bibliography of Oscar Wilde* (1907), 40-41; Rupert Hart-Davies (ed.), *The Letters of Oscar Wilde* (1962), 209-210, and Merlin Holland & Rupert Hart-Davis, *The Complete Letters of Oscar Wilde* (2000), 328.

(20). Joan Navarre, "Oscar Wilde, Edward Heron-Allen, and the Palmistry Craze of the 1880s" in *English Literature in Translation 1880-1920*, vol. 54, no. 2 (2011), 174-184.

(21). *The Wichita Daily Eagle*, 29 July 1890.

(22). Oscar Wilde to Edward Heron-Allen, 19 February 1890. B.L., Add. MS. 72,714. Published in Merlin Holland and Rupert Hart-Davis, *The Complete Letters of Oscar Wilde* (2000), 424.

(23). Oscar Wilde to Edward Heron-Al;len, 5 September 1890. B.L., Add. MS. 81,726.

(24). *Flintshire Observer*, 7 July 1891.

Timothy J. McCann

MEMORABLE MEALS

The origin of this article can be traced back to January 2021, when our Chairman, Tim McCann invited those who had taken part in the various International symposia over the years to choose their favourite meal enjoyed during these activities. It was one way to stay connected as we endured the current, ongoing lockdown. It was thought initially, that the participating members would arrive at a consensus, but it became apparent that this would not happen, as everyone had their own favourite choice. I've been dwelling on this, and in reading the various accounts published subsequently in our Newsletters, have been wallowing in the warm memories rekindled. What makes a meal memorable is frequently not so much quality of the food, but the ambience and friendly treatment by welcoming staff, making us feel special and, of course, the spirit of comradeship engendered by the company dining (- and wining!) together.

As well as dinners, I also remember memorable lunches, frequently enjoyed out of doors in warm sunshine, munching salads so fresh and bursting with flavour, while quaffing cool beers to keep dehydration at bay.
The quality of the company dining was also important, with laughter forming a major component in the memory. And it wasn't just at table. For instance, Gerald's encyclopaedic knowledge of Renaissance art freely shared when visiting thousand-year old basilicas in places like Bologna, Ravenna, Modena and Verona gave me a new respect for the relevance of religious iconography, which would otherwise have gone over my head. The same applied when walking through Roman arenas in places like Verona. Again, Gerald would bring these places vividly to life with his descriptions of what we were looking at.

From the beginning, each trip produced memorable meals. For instance, Helen O'Grady's lunches and dinners on Clare Island in 2011 were excellent and flavoursome, enhanced by having spent each day outdoors in the fresh air, consequently coming in with a healthy appetite – and thirst!

So, to standout memorable meals. Foremost among these for me is the lunch eaten in the university town of Corte, Corsica, when we broke our train journey from Bastia back to Ajaccio in 2013. The report of that trip doesn't name the family-run restaurant where we had lunch, but it was memorable for serving the most savoury boar casserole, a Corsican dish I had been hankering after, but hadn't seen on any menu up to then. Another reason it was so memorable is that it had been cooked and served by the most severe-looking lady of the house, whose silent visage would stop the most raucous customer in his/her tracks. The contrast between the heavenly food she produced, and her looks couldn't have been more striking. Somehow, David and I agreed that the name 'Wild Myrtle' suited her best, and as such she has appeared in his report of our visit. Even when serving us with a complimentary myrtle-based liqueur of her own making after we had eaten, it came without a smile, though we must have merited it in her eyes, especially as we had made sure to clear our plates,

eating everything she served up!. I even tried and failed to get a smile out of her, when complimenting her in my mongrel French later!

Yet another memorable lunch was partaken in 2016 in St Martin de Ré, main town of Île de Ré, the island off La Rochelle, now connected by bridge to the mainland, but accessible only by steamer from La Rochelle when Heron-Allen visited more than a century before. This was in a quaint restaurant up off the seafront spotted by Alison and Tim [Figure 9]. Again, the quality of the produce left a lingering memory on the palate, with fresh seafood and salads bursting with flavour to tickle our palates. We also toasted John Whittaker's birthday that day, not that we needed a reason to imbibe! La Rochelle was also memorable for some of the best dinners of all, notably *Di Venezia* in La Rochelle in 2016 [Figure 10], where we were looked after by Adrianna, that year's elected 'Flapper', Polish-born, but without a word of Polish, as her parents had migrated when she was still a baby. I agree with Alison, though, the best seafood of all was had in La Marée, again in La Rochelle, a restaurant run by two Breton brothers, who really knew how to source and serve shellfish.

Tim likewise has singled out *Osteria Al Boscarel* in Verona in 2015 as the most memorable [Figure 11], which I'm inclined to agree with, as the produce, both meat, vegetables and fruit, was mostly grown and produced in the owner's own nearby farm, something he took great pride in telling us about, as he took us through his menu each night, neatly written in chalk on a blackboard. The meals we ate there were also memorable for another reason. This was where I discovered Pam could sing! Her rendition of 'Ma Belle Marguerite' has yet to be bettered! So, it really is difficult to pick out a single standout meal. All of our meals were memorable, though always because of the food. For instance, I'm thinking of a dinner eaten in Venice with Alison and Tim in 2014 when, after a heavy hailstorm accompanied by vivid lightning, our restaurant becoming flooded with rainwater which washed in the front door like a mini tsunami!. Undeterred, we continued eating with water lapping around our feet, as the staff tried to channel the water away towards the downstairs toilets!

Yet another dinner that will be remembered was eaten at the *Etna*, a Sicilian cuisine restaurant in Pau France in September 2019, but for a different reason. While

Figure 9: Heron-Allen Society dining at St. Martin de Ré, Île de Ré.

Figure 10: Heron-Allen Society dining in La Rochelle.

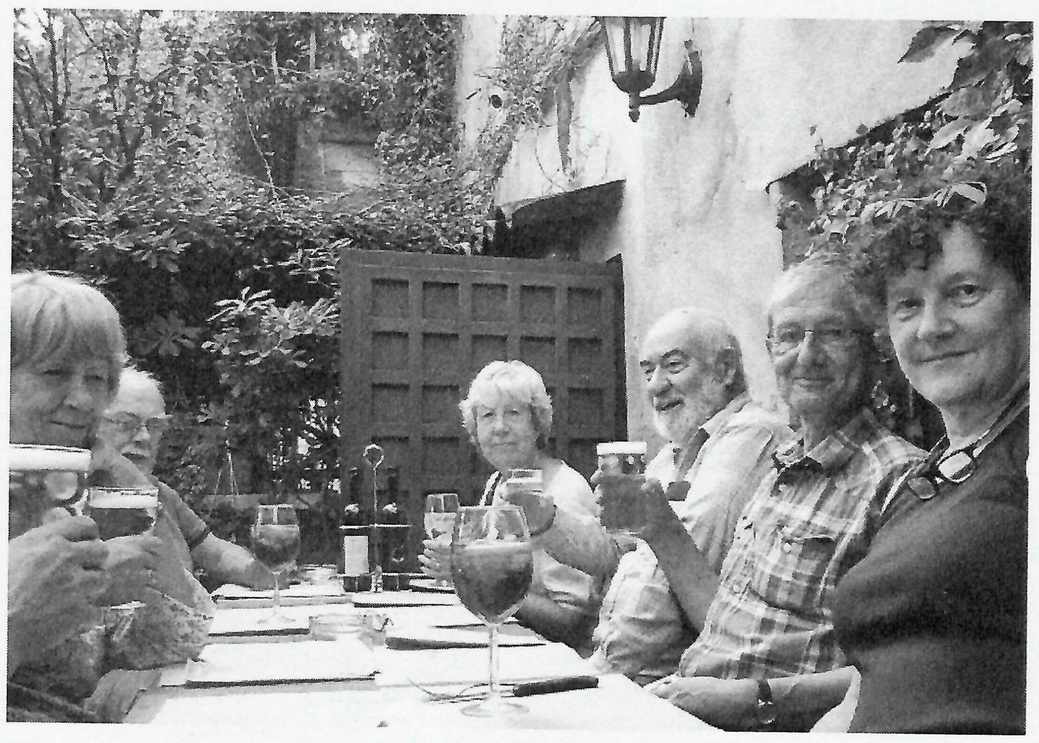

Figure 11: Heron-Allan Society lunching in Verona.

Figure 12: Heron-Allen Society lunching in Florence.

working my way through a Sicilian seafood tagliatelle I bit down on what I thought was a piece of carapace, not unusual in a seafood meal. Upon examination I found a large 'smiley face' fridge magnet! The incident was recorded in the *Newsletter* report as follows: 'When Ted showed it to the waiter, his face visibly paled and taking it, he told the table he would ascertain its origin. Arriving back, he informed the group that the cook was 'desolée'. He explained that it must have fallen off the extractor hood over the cooker, and by way of recompense there would be no charge for Ted's tagliatelle and, to help Ted's discomfort (!), there would also be a round of post-prandial liqueurs for everyone! Needless to say, Ted was more than happy to ease the cook's feeling of being 'desolée' by clearing his plate and accepting the liqueur'

For myself, my most memorable dinner has to be the final dinner served up at *Arthur et Compagnie*, the family-run restaurant again in Pau. Discovered early on in our stay, the group ate there initially for lunch, and two dinners on subsequent nights. Owned and run by husband and wife team Yvonne and Pat within sight of the Château de Pau, it is named for their eldest son Arthur, a rather serious 8-year old, who was duly brought out and introduced to us, when he distinguished himself by speaking in grammatically correct schoolboy English. Each of the meals we had there was distinguished by the personal interest Pat took in guiding our dinner choices, producing excellent food of his own creation which wasn't on his menu. Our last dinner in Pau was distinguished by Pat's starter of roasted camembert, followed by flavoursome sardines and chipirons (tiny squid). Of course his desserts were equally memorable for the size of his inhouse crème brûlées and tiramasus, all accompanied by various local Jurançon wines which were perfectly matched with each course by Pat.

I could go on, but in reading the reports in these plague-ridden Covid times, we really did accomplish so much - and we didn't know we had it so good! We can only dream now of walking down the crowded streets of an old town somewhere in France or Italy, before choosing a local restaurant and exploring its cuisine.

Hopefully, we will be able to continue with the ongoing programme of following Edward Heron-Allen's footsteps before too long (- maybe 2022?), with Budapest being mentioned...

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Ted Collins

NEW BOOKS

THE ITALIAN CHEETAH GIRL

Cheetah! La Ragazza Ghepardo [Figure 13]
By Christopher Blayre [Edward Heron-Allen]

Reprint: Italian edition, (Limited edition, no. 91, of 100 copies) by Bernardo Cicchetti & Pietro Guarriello,

Dagon Press (Italy), December 2020, 139 pp. Hard cover (illustrated paper boards and dust jacket), 8vo, 35 page (six-part) Appendices.

Spectacular new edition with detailed Preface by Bernardo Cicchetti, Editorial note, & 35-page well-illustrated Appendices – Zoology, prostitution, biology, freak show, bestiality and myths and metamorphosis.

Unfortunately, the volume is already out of print.

THREE GHOST-WRITTEN BOOKS [Figure 14]

Following their publication of the *Complete Short Stories of Edward Heron-Allen* in October 2019, Snuggly Press have this spring published *Three Ghost Written*

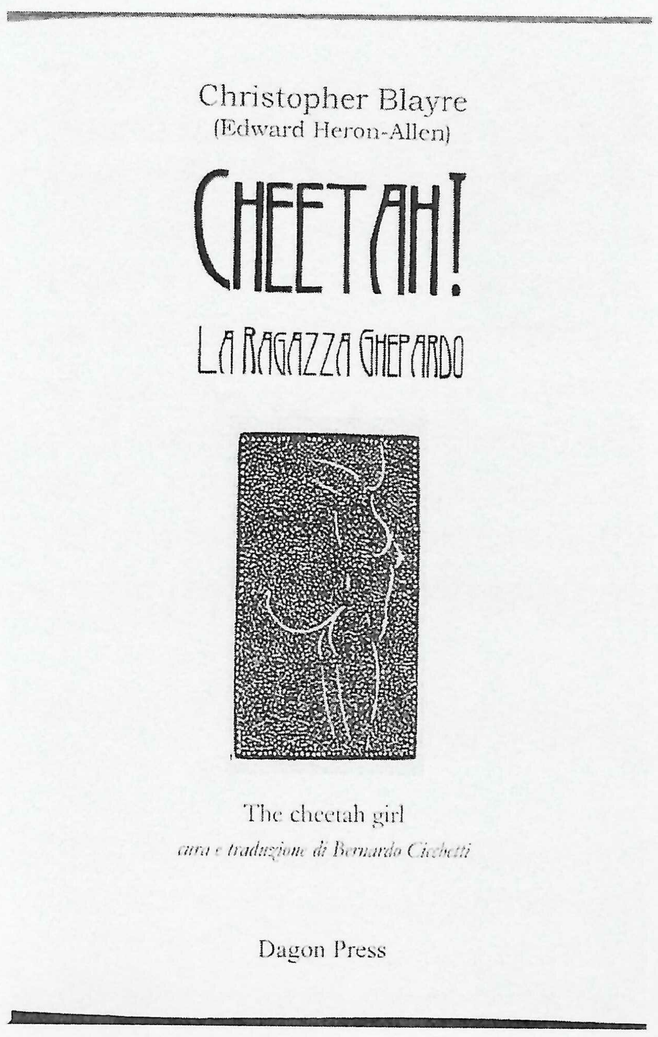

Figure 13: Cover of Cheetah! *(Italian version of the* Cheetah Girl *by Dagon Press).*

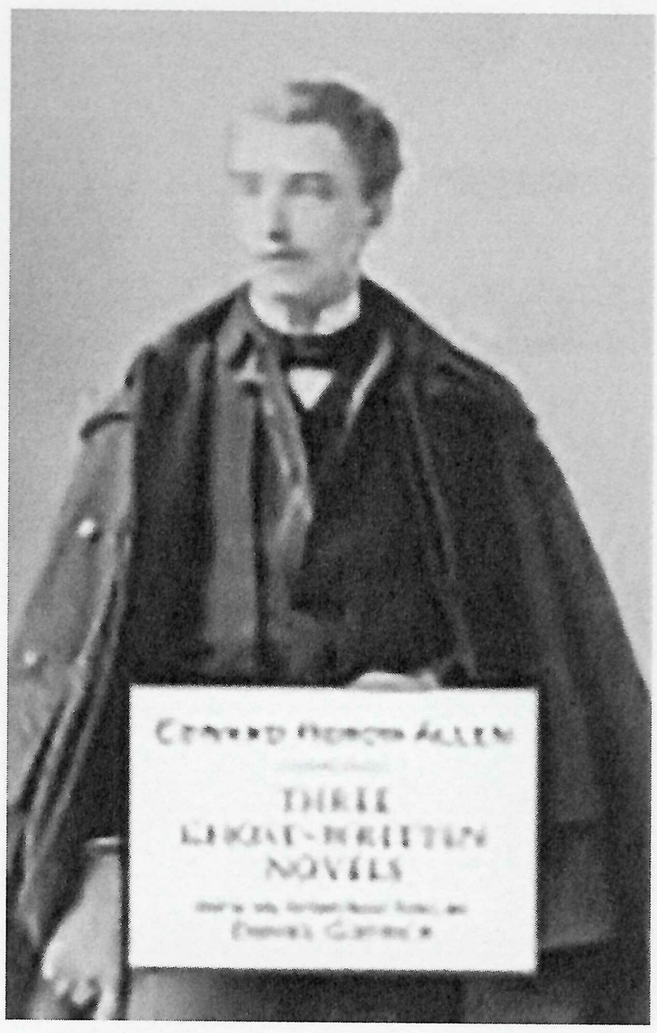

Figure 14: Cover of reprint of Three Ghost-Written Novels. *(Snuggly Books).*

Novels by Edward Heron-Allen, with an introduction by Daniel Corrick. The volume contains *The Princess Daphne, Bella-Demonia* and *The Vengeance of Maurice Denalquez*.

The book will be published on 4 May and will be available from Snuggly Books (snugglybooks.co.uk).

VALETE

JAN MORRIS

Members will have read of the sad death of Jan Morris on 20 November 2020, but they will perhaps not know of her pivotal role in the foundation of the Heron-Allen Society. In the summer of 1991 I read The Times as usual, and noticed in the *Saturday Review* an article by Jan Morris on her favourite books and, in particular, on the messages of previous owners written inside them. She concluded with a passage, which had far reaching results.

> 'Nevertheless, the most thoroughly personalised book in the library, and the one that will give most pleasure to my great-grandchildren, I do not doubt, is nothing to do with me. It is the copy of Augustus Hare's Venice which Edward and Marianna Heron-Allen bought during their visit to Venice in the Spring of 1895. When they came home again they had this volume grangerised - rebound, that is, to incorporate photographs and mementos of their own - and so made of it a sweet and permanent encapsulation of their delight. The tout from the Testolini glassworks gave them a map when they got off the train, so they bound that in at the beginning. They found two four-leaved clovers somewhere, and pressed them opposite page 99. A snapshot of a disconsolate man sitting on the steps of a bridge is wittily captioned, "my wife is shopping". A boatload of flowery-hatted ladies and boatered gents pulls alongside at Our Steps. There is a photograph of a Temperance Drink Stall on the Riva degli Schiavoni, and to make up for it one of a drunk flat out at the feet of the Goldoni stae. Best of all, there are the pictures that the couple took of each other, Mr. H-A suave with his pipe, cane and rakish hat on the steps of the Piazza flagstaff, Mrs. H-A windswept and demure on the Lido sands, or draped more elegantly over the balustrade of our Terrace.
>
> I love the book. I bless the Heron-Allens, whoever they were, for projecting the pleasure of their days in Venice so intimately through this medium down to me and my progeny. I bought it in Brighton, I see, in 1959, for 15 shillings (slight foxing in end-papers'.

So I wrote to Jan Morris to tell her who I thought Heron Allen and his wife Marianna were. I didn't really expect to hear anything, and for several weeks there was silence. Then a letter arrived at our house in Havant from Jan Morris. She had initially replied to our holiday cottage in Cornwall, where I was staying when her article was

published and the letter had been returned to her. Eventually she wrote to my home address and told me that 'heaps of people had written to her about different aspects of the polymathic Heron-Allen and his family, but nobody else has told me that he grangerised most of his books. How lavish!'. Jan Morris's article was the first ripple on the pond, whose waves eventually led to the flotation of our society. She gave me the address of the Harveys and soon afterwards Ivor Jones, the Harveys, Ray Russell, Peter Wilkinson and I met in Chichester and determined to form the Society. I tentatively suggested that Jan Morris might be willing to deposit her volume with the Heron-Allen papers already deposited in the County Record Office at Chichester, but she wrote to say that she felt that she wanted to leave it for her grandchildren to enjoy. Nevertheless, she kindly loaned me the volume and thus we were able to copy Heron-Allen's precious honeymoon photographs.

JOAN PLEDGER

Members will be sorry to hear news of the death of Joan Pledger on 11 October 2020 at the grand age of 94. Joan lived with her husband and two sons at *Large Acres*, Heron-Allen's house in Selsey from November 1955 until January 1965.

She rescued a number of precious items from the house when it was to be demolished and gradually made them known to the Society. She preserved the doors to Heron-Allen's Library at *Large Acres* and offered them to the Society. We had one recut and positioned as the entrance to the Heron-Allen Room in the Natural History Museum in London. Mrs. Pledger formally unveiled the new door at our eighth symposium in the Natural History Museum in 2008 [Figure 15] and afterwards joined us for lunch a Pierinos. She also preserved the Sundial from the garden at *Large Acres* which David Thompson described in *Opusculum XXVII* and the *HMS Foudroyant* plaque which David and I described in the last Newsletter (no. 37).

Figure 15: Joan Pledger unveiling the library door from Large Acres, transferred to the NHM London in 2008.

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.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Treasurer will be billing all members very soon and would appreciate prompt payment so that we can ensure that our publications continue, as they have (miraculously, despite ill health, and thanks to a wonderful team) over this past horrid year. We shall not increase the cost of subscriptions for the coming year, so you will all receive absolute bargains. If you failed/forgot/overlooked last year's subscription, I will remind you. Many thanks.

- UK Individuals £20.00 / Joint £25.00
- Individuals abroad £25.00
- Institutions £25.00

Payments can be made:

- by cheque payable to the Heron-Allen Society, sent to Pam Thompson, Treasurer, Fairlea, Slade, Bideford, Devon EX39 3LZ
- by PayPal to heronallenscoc@aol.com
- by bank transfer to HSBC Bank, sort code 40-41-01, account Heron-Allen Society, account no. 11204734 (add your name as a reference)

Pam Thompson