

The Journal
of the Arthur Machen
Society

AVALLAUNIUS



The Journal of the Arthur Machen Society ISSUE Nº 3

PATRON Julian Lloyd Webber

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"Let us look for more exquisite things said Lucian"; and he found them in the Garden of Avallaunius.' So wrote Arthur Machen over 90 years ago in *The Hill of Dreams*; and one hopes that he would find such 'fruits' in the pages of the journals of our Society.

The reaction to the second issue of *Avallaunius* was both stimulating and vigorous, as the selection of members' letters on pages 31-32 testify.

The present journal has been compiled with the accent firmly on the long and vital American A.M. tradition. Their contribution to Machen lore began in 1918 with Vincent Starrett's essay, A Novelist of Ecstasy and Sin. The subsequent championing of A.M., Stateside, has been diligently explored by Rita Tait in her contribution to this issue of Avallaunius.

We are highly delighted to have gained two new honorary life members: Mr Edwin Steffe, now living in retirement in Ocean City, New Jersey from a life of operatic singing. During a long career, Edwin still found time to haunt the antiquarian bookshops of many countries; securing a unique collection of Machen material. Our second honorary member is Mr Bob L. Mowery, Professor Emeritus of Libraries, Wittenburg University, now living in North Carolina. In the 1960s, Bob rose to become President of the A.M. Society in America. We know that their experience and scholarship in the field of Machen will provide great benefit and guidance to the Society.

The euphoria at the Society's progress has to be tinged with sadness at the sudden death of Arthur Machen's son, Hilary. I only met him once, but was immediately impressed by his energy, and his fervent desire to see the Society succeed. A tribute to Hilary has been included in this issue.

Earlier this year, a few local members managed to attend an impromptu talk about Machen, by Father Brocard Sewell at the Nelson Museum, Monmouth. It proved to be an illuminating evening, with much lively discussion, especially later over a few tankards of ale in the local inn!

The first of our annual A.M. birthday memorial dinners was held at *Romans*, Caerleon-on-Usk on March 5. It was a highly successful debut, with members attending from many parts of the country. In fact, one member, Andrea Jorio, enthusiastically travelled from Rome to be with

us! It was certainly delightful to be able to meet the faces behind the names on the membership list. Professor Eric Holmes has penned an excellent personal account of the evening, which is included in this issue.

We intend in future issues to feature a regular 'For Sale' and 'Wants' section for books by or about A.M. There will be no charge for members for their advertisements.

If members wish to obtain a new journal, Aklo, edited by Roger Dobson and Mark Valentine, copies are available from either Rita Tait or the Editor at £1.90 + 20p p+p.

Lastly, may I remind members that articles, ideas, comments etc. are warmly weclomed by the Editor. All contributions will be personally acknowledged.

Godfrey Brangham



Obituary Hilary Machen (1912 - 1987)

Arthur Hilary Blaise was the only son of the writer and his wife Purefoy, and often boasted that he 'trod the boards' for the Benson Company whilst still 'en ventre sa mere'.

From the age of five Hilary was part of the charmed circle at Melina Place where a love of victuals and conversation set a standard which remained lifelong. He took much pleasure in speaking of these happy memories. Like Arthur, Hilary benefited from a classical education, at Merchant Taylors, leaving to become apprenticed to an organ builder; here began a passion for Bach which was to result in his first son being

christened John Sebastian. A framed print of the composer always graced his living room wall.

A youthful first marriage to Una led to his conversion to Catholicism, though in the end he died an Anglican. Like his father, Hilary did not proceed to higher education, instead taking a succession of often poorly paid jobs and experiencing many hard times. He inherited the urge to write and had an excellent prose style, having his father's love of 'holy and ancient words'. I always felt that had Arthur lived to know Hilary in his maturity they would have been very much 'kindred spirits'. Childhood was happy and, in one unpublished work Hilary writes of the halcyon days at Penally in West Wales and of the friendship with Tom Jones, station master; summers spent with friends and cousins such as Sylvia Townsend Warner the novelist. As well as childhood experiences he loved to talk of adventures during the war when Hilary served in Northern France and in North Africa. On several occasions he was taken prisoner and managed some daring escapes.

After the war he, Una and their children moved to County Kerry and ran a duck farm. Some years later from there they went to Cork where Hilary worked as an electrician for the Cork Theatre. Finally they returned to this country and after Una's death Hilary met and married Marion, a marriage which was to bring much happiness and the three youngest Machens, fondly referred to by him as the 'second litter'. With Marion, Hilary was to rediscover his old love of music and he took a position running choir and organ at a church in Chiswick; finally he sang at Cookham at the Church of The Holy Trinity, being joined there by his six-year-old son Ben who sings at Cookham twenty years later. In 1976 Hilary retired from BOAC, where he was shop steward of his Union and a member of the Labour Party.

I remember a man who was proud of his father and his Celtic connections, a man who loved simple pleasures such as cooking and walking. It was a measure of the man that when we were together I rarely mentioned Arthur Machen, preferring to learn more of Hilary's charismatic personality and to enjoy his infectious sense of humour.

He is mourned by those who were priviledged to know him, especially Marion and his children, Anne, John, Clare, Felicity and Ben.

Rita Tait

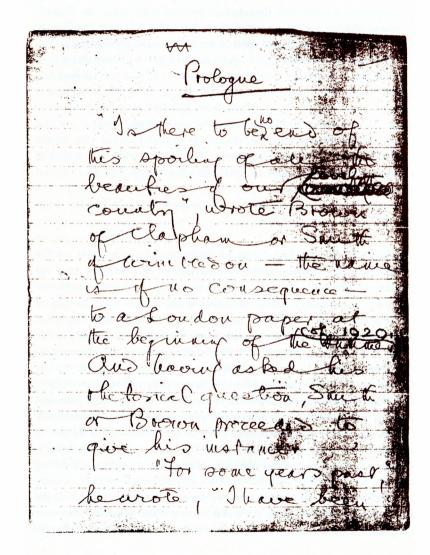
In the early 1920s, R. Townley Searle, the proprietor of The First Edition Bookshop, Wardour Street, London, offered a series of catalogues containing, in addition to the normal book lists, various literary supplements. Catalogue No. 6, 1923, contained an essay by Machen entitled, 'The Collector's Craft'. This rare, and much sought-after work, was re-issued only once, in November 1923 as a pamphlet running to 250 numbered copies.



Some time in the seventies of the last century, not quite fifty years ago, a man with a black beard and an olive skin was roaming and sauntering among the labyrinths of Soho. This, be it known, was in the happy and unreformed days of Soho; there was no Charing Cross Road then, no Shaftesbury Avenue; there was the old Latin Quarter of London in its first and pure complexity — a maze of grave old streets all of mellow and ancient brick, all winding and twisting into another, all pretty much as they were in the reign of Queen Anne.

Well, in that Soho of a former day the black-bearded gentleman of my first sentence was, as I say, mooning and loafing in a very desperate and disreputable manner; in a fashion that would incur the severest censure, I am certain, both from the Capitalists' point of view and also and even more from the point of view of the class conscious proletariat. The dark man was certainly not consciously earning wealth, still less was he substituting the motive of service for the motive of profit. Instead, he was having a conscious and thoughtful stroll round a curious and interesting part of London; in a word he was enjoying himself, and behaving like a human being. Well, in the course of his mooning he came upon a second-hand bookshop in a street of Soho called, to the best of my recollection, Castle Street; and this shop was kept by a Mr Quaritch, who knew all that there was to be known about rare and valuable books, and afterwards moved into Piccadilly, where he reigned for many years, a sort of Emperor among second-hand booksellers.

But in these old seventy something days there was a twopenny box outside the shop in Castle Street; and the dark man began to peer and poke into it; looking at titles, opening title-pages, glancing here, glancing there: a grand sport as he felt it, for you never know what might



happen. And then something did happen.

The searcher into the twopenny box came upon a small volume of poetry, which struck him as being of very high and rare merit, as being entirely unlike anything that had happened before in the English language. And it was only a translation, and so far as I know the literary stroller had never heard the name of the author or of the translator, but he knew poetry when he saw it. And he paid his twopence like a man and took his book home. And then, enchanted, he showed his find to a red-bearded friend, also a good judge of a good book; and the red-bearded man confirmed completely the judgement of the black-bearded man. And they and their friends between them cleared out Mr Quaritch's twopenny box of all its copies of that humble little poetry book. Thus Rossetti, confirmed by Swinburne, discovered Fitzgerald's version of Omar Khayyam in Quaritch's twopenny box, in dim, old Soho, long ago.

That edition cannot be bought for twopence today. The last copy offered for sale brought £115.

Now this story of the Omar Khayyam is, of course, one of the romances which illustrates the singular charm and adventure of the great sport of book-collecting. It is not every day that one can wander into a dim street and discover a new poet in a twopenny box. The salmon fisher knows that a fifty pound fish is a rare event. But I think the moral of the story is here: that the original discoverer was guided purely by his literary judgement. Rossetti had not the remotest notion of buying for the rise in value — the rise from twopence to £115 — he simply discerned the presence of quality in Fitzgerald's verse, of something that was rare and very precious. And that, I would say, is the principle on which all legitimate collectors base their pursuit of the precious book. It must be intrinsically precious, a piece of good literature, a thing that will endure purely as fine literature. One hears sometimes of bookbuyers who are let down, who find themselves caught on a falling market. These are the people who back a fashion and follow a whim, who hardly know the distinction between the literary methods of the Bible and Bradshaw. They suffer badly; but they deserve no pity or compassion. The man who makes money in the long run by bookcollecting is the man with sound literary judgement who can recognise the real thing, that most precious thing which we call quality, wherever he sees it, be it in the twopenny box or elsewhere.

Now, of course, there are apparent exceptions. Of course, a youthful lampoon on the Warwickshire Lucys, signed W.S., would fetch an enormous sum, though it had no trace of literary merit. Of course, the early pieces of any great man are of high value quite irrespective of their literary merit or value. But this appreciation of work, worthless in itself, is simply a reflection of that later work which is confessedly of the highest literary value: Shakespeare's school exercise-books would be of enormous value simply because the lad who wrote them wrote Hamlet afterwards. But the general principle remains: the successful collector is the man who only buys what he admires, that which is of permanent literary value. Paragraphs do not interest him nor move him. He is not excited by lists of best sellers, though he resolves, in nine cases out of ten, to leave them severely alone. He is guided solely by his own judgement, by the presence or absence of that mysterious something which we have called quality.

Take, for example, the work of the late W.H. Hudson, the naturalist. For long years he was neglected and unknown to all but the discerning few. The chattering paragraphists and the fashionable literary gossipers had never heard of him. The Libraries knew him not. But to anyone with literary discernment a glance at a page of Hudson's was enough. Every line, every phrase, however simple and straightforward, even commonplace the matter, had within them the mysterious glow of beauty which is, perhaps, indefinable, but is clearly and radiantly present to those who know; and those who recognised this and bought Hudson's books are now amply rewarded. No writer is more sought out, the smallest 'Hudson item' is now appreciated enormously.

And so with Conrad. Two or three years ago a writer in *The Bookman's Journal* noted down some particulars of the Conrad story from the collector's point of view. Mr Conrad's books were issued as six shilling novels. The judicious bought them and kept them, the great mass of readers were occupied, as usual with 'best sellers' and ephemeral fashions, and the mighty list of the paragraphed. But, to take one instance out of many, the man who paid four-and-six for *The Nigger of*

the Narcissus on its issue could have obtained three guineas for his copy in 1915. In 1918 the price was four guineas, which had risen to six guineas in 1920. By 1921 the value of *The Nigger of the Narcissus* had mounted to £15 15s.; again the triumph of quality of the individual writer who writes to please himself and to approach as nearly as may be to his own high standard of perfection. And so in a word, the collector must, in the first place, cultivate his literary taste. He must altogether shut his ears to the babblers and their talk. He must keep his eyes upon the booklists of the publishers, marking down the authors who appeal to him, looking always for that glow of beauty which enchanted Rossetti as he stood outside the shop in Castle Street. Then he must become a devout student of the second-hand catalogues. He has his list of the men whom he is following. He notes when a book is published at seven and sixpence a year ago is priced at ten shillings. In another year's time that title will have risen to a guinea, and so on.

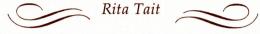
The collector who buys on these principles will never find that his fairy gold has turned to dead leaves. He has mastered the true craft of the collector.



Bertholly House. 'lone white house, symbol of a world of wonder . . .'
Things Near and Far (1923)

Rita Tait

'The Flower-tunicked Priest of Nightmare': The Americans and Arthur Machen



'The cloud of Americans of which you saw the fringe has drifted back to the States.' (letter from AM to Colin Summerford October 2 1924)*

A few members lately have expressed an interest in hearing a little about the original American Arthur Machen Society, which flourished in the years following Machen's death.

The American Society was founded in May 1948, six months after the writer's death, by Dr Nathan Van Patten, Professor of Bibliography and Director of Libraries at Stanford University. He was well known as a bibliophile and was said to be the possessor of an extraordinary memory and to have produced articles on Machen 'too numerous to mention'. Van Patten was the acknowledged authority on Machen from the 1920s, and it was he who wrote the famous obituary which was published in the *Canton Repository* January 1948, and is reprinted elsewhere in this Journal. Entitled 'There are some who mourn', it gives an idea of the mood amongst the Macheniacs, as they liked to call themselves. Machen had 'cleared the ree-fand melted on the white-sea rim'.

The notoriety associated with the publication of *The Bowmen* (1914) was no less across the ocean than here, and by 1918 Vincent Starrett had brought out what must have been the first book about our writer, namely *Arthur Machen: Novelist of Ecstasy and Sin.* Starrett, born in 1886 into a bookselling and publishing family, was an author and journalist who corresponded with Machen from 1915 to 1924. In the 1950s he wrote: 'there would always be a Machen cult, that Machen would be discovered over and over again.' More improbably, he also wrote: 'Arthur Machen is married and has two children. That is an astonishing thought, after reading "The Inmost Light" it is surprising indeed to learn that he was born.'

Starrett had a varied career as a war-correspondent, book-reviewer, poet, literary editor, book-collector, bibliographer and man of letters. He was an acknowledged expert on Sherlock Holmes. A one-time Honorary President of the Society, Vincent Starrett was responsible for reprinting much of Machen's earlier work in collections such as *The*

Shining Pyramid (1923) and The Glorious Mystery (1924).

At the same time as Starrett was making his own and Machen's reputations in the States, Carl Van Vechten, an essayist and reporter who was also a well known aesthete, music critic and musicologist, wrote a book called *Peter Whiffle* published in 1922 and, with Starrett, added fuel to the argument that in America appreciation was replaced by adulation. In *Peter Whiffle* Machen is described as 'The most wonderful man writing in English today.'

'We are uplifted and exalted by his suggestion of impurity and corruption, which leads us to ponder over the mysterious connection between man's religious and sensual nature'.

Before mentioning others let us pause for a moment and take a look at the American Society itself.

Between 1948 and 1957, membership rose to 37 and in 1968 it stood at 109. This compares with our situation in July 1988 of 107, only 12 of which are women. The American women numbered 13 out of 109. (This discrepancy might prove an interesting subject on which to do a little research in the future. Why are there so many more men than women reading Machen? I would be delighted to hear from anyone with any theories.)

In a letter to the late D. Parry Michael, author of the *Writers in Wales* book on Machen (University of Wales Press), Edwin Steffe, baritone and Machen enthusiast, stated: 'our continuing interest in Machen is our main purpose for being.' The letter dated April 11 1963, enunciates:

'The Arthur Machen Society is an informal group, bound together by an interest in Arthur Machen, his life and work, and by a continuing interest and devotion to his memory and the promotion of a more widespread reading of his works.'

Subscriptions were never taken, due presumably to the affluence of the individual members who between them appear to have paid the bills for printing and other expenses. Would that such halcyon days might return! A letter in February 1969 to members headed 'Gentlemen', mooted the idea of a newsletter between major publications. Members were asked to send news 'worthy of circulating to our colleagues'. A card was enclosed for returning, should one wish to receive the next publication.

A Centenary Memorial Journal appeared in 1963 but though quarterly journals were planned, to take the form of bulletins of activities, these never materialised. Two attractive publications appeared in Autumn 1967 and in 1969 entitled *Occasional 1* and 2. These were of a high level of design and production and it is reported that recently an American bookseller has asked 75 dollars for one of these booklets.

By 1967 we see that Edwin Steffe is listed as Past President of the Society and superseding him Bob Mowery of Wittenberg University, where *Occasional 2* was produced as a signed edition of 100. *Occasional 2* reproduced 'Eleusinia' and 'Beneath the Barley: a Note on the Origins of Eleusinia'. A tribute to a recently deceased member and 'A few words from the president' plus a Trivia column complete the work.

Occasional 3 contained amongst others a piece by Wesley D. Sweetser, Associate Professor of English at State University New York, whose own Ph.D. thesis, many years before, was on Machen. The present writer and her co-founders were delighted when Professor Sweetser joined our new Society.

It would be impossible to talk of the early Macheniacs without mentioning James Branch Cabell, who when asked his opinion is said to have exclaimed 'I like Machen you know, but the labels fade so badly'. (A reference to the Knopf edition, published in America which had purple-blue covers prone to fading.) Of equal eminence was Paul Jordan Smith, Literary Editor of the Los Angeles Times, who wrote about Machen in Strange Altars, published 1923 and For the Love of Books, (1924). His collection can be found at The Honnold Library at Claremont, California.

The Society secretary Adrian Goldstone who, together with Wesley Sweetser, produced the Bibliography in 1965, visited Wales on a number of occasions where he signed the visitors' book at Llanddewi Church and presented a Bible and set of prayer books to the parish, thus honouring Machen's memory at his father's old church. The Goldstone Bible was given by the present writer to Ben Machen, youngest

grandson of A.M. on the occasion of his father Hilary's funeral, several months ago. (Members will be aware that Llanddewi church was put up for sale some time ago, and the contents were in danger of being lost.) It is hoped that Adrian Goldstone would have approved of his Bible being returned to the Machen family under these circumstances.

We are delighted to welcome a number of members of the original Society into our own; their presence forms a moving link with those early pioneers.

*Reprinted with thanks to Dobson and Valentine Artist and Mystic (Caermaen Press).

Rita Tait

List of American Members of Present Society

Richard Allen, California; Douglas Anderson, New York; Cyler W. Brooks Jr., Virginia; Alice Cassazza, Sierre Madre; Steve Eng, Tennessee; Kenneth W. Faig Jr., Illionois; Stephen Foster, Florida; Steve Hale, Georgia; Prof. J. Eric Holmes, California; T.E.D. Klein, New York; John Law, New York; Bob L. Mowery, North Carolina†; Robert W. Sirignano, Delaware; Edwin Steffe, New Jersey†; Harlan L. Umansky, New Jersey; Prof. Wesley D. Sweetser, New York.

Footnote: John Collett, British secretary to the former Society is a most welcome addition to our ranks.

† Honorary Life Members

For those visiting the States the major collections are as follows:

A. Goldstone University of Texas

Charles Parsons University of Yale

J.B. Cabell University of Richmond (Cabell Library)

James Stewart Jr University of Kansas

V. Starrett Yale (see Parsons' collection above)

Joseph K. Vodrey Canton, Ohio

P.S. If any American member has time to get details of our Society to the above libraries it would be a great help. Please confirm if you are doing this. Subscription for American libraries is £24 per annum — International Money Orders (Sterling) please.



Sketch of Arthur Machen in the 1920s by Will Farrow of 'The Daily Sketch'.

The following short story by Machen, made its initial appearance in a little-known London journal, The Outlook on April 26 1919. It was later included in Vincent Starrett's American collection of Machen tales, The Shining Pyramid (1923), and later again in The Cosy Room (1936).



We wake sometimes from dreams uttering strange phrases, murmuring incredible things. At the moment of waking, for some ineffable instant of time, the words we speak, or perhaps think we speak, seem to us full of illumination. To everyone who speculates at all as to the heights and depths of the soul, there comes at very rare moments — there are not, perhaps, more than half a dozen such experiences given to any man's life-time — the sense of the true world which lies beyond this dark place of images and shadows; a world that is full of light and glory, a world where our dim desires are interpreted and fulfilled. It is as if we stood among shadows before a black curtain, as if for one moment a fold were caught back and we saw that which we can never utter: but never deny.

In dreams and waking and in waking dreams, most of us, I suppose, penetrate into this other world, the world beyond the black curtain. But we are not suffered to make any report of it; the secret, it seems, must be kept fast. And this is one of the reasons why I am usually inclined to disbelieve most stories of the communicating spirits of the dead. Their messages are, to my judgement, altogether too lucid, too comofrtably and easily and clearly set forth. There is no obscurity in the interpretation of their sentences, no impression as of a great gulf of the spirit which has been traversed with the utmost difficulty. And if we, still in the flesh, cannot utter to ourselves our own visions, it scarcely seems likely that those who have passed beyond the flaming ramparts of the world should be able to chatter to us so easily and colloquially of the regions of their dwelling.

The speech of that far land, if any speech there be, will, I think, be delivered rather in sensible images than in logical and grammatical utterance. And it is only the unspiritual who can discern nothing of the spirit in sensible images and symbols.

Here is the true story of such a presentation.

On the eleventh of November, 1918, the armistice between the Allies and the German Empire was signed. This meant that the incredible had happened. A few months before we had all been in terror of a Power that seemed capable of fighting all the world. Now, in a moment, as if by enchantment, that Power had ceased to exist. The armistice terms were, most justly and wisely, rigorous, and on November 21st., 1918, it was appointed that practically the whole German fleet should surrender to the British. I said that the event was incredible, and so true is this that the British Navy could scarcely believe that the surrender would be accomplished peacefully. Sailors are generous men to all, but more especially to other sailors. There is a brotherhood of the deep, which surpasses the bounds of nations, and our Navy could not believe that the German sailors would give up their ships without fighting; even though the fight might be a hopeless one for them. Consequently, on the morning of November 21st., 1918, the British Navy awaited the enemy in a state of mind that this hard to describe. The surrender of the German fleet, they all knew, had been demanded and granted; but at the last moment, our men thought, the unutterable disgrace must boil in the veins of those German sailors, and the guns of their great ships must speak their final word of fire before they sank beneath the water. Every preparation was made for the fight. The ships were cleared. The men were at 'action stations'. Naval discipline was at its strictest. Every man on board every ship knew his place to an inch, his duty to the most minute detail. The King's ships had made them ready for battle; it is hard for a landsman to realise the awful and inexorable import of such an array.

The Fleet steamed to the appointed rendezvous, waited, and looked eastward. It was a misty morning with a gentle breeze.

One of the ships was the *Royal Oak*, chiefly manned by sailors of Devonshire. She was flying on that day a magnificent silk ensign, made for her by Devonshire ladies. On her bridge, sixty feet above the top deck, was a group of officers: Admiral Grant, Captain MacLachlan, of the *Royal Oak*, the Commander, and others. It was soon after nine o'clock in the morning when the German fleet appeared, looming through the mist. Admiral Grant saw them and waited; he could

scarcely believe, he says, that they would not instantly open fire.

Then the drum began to beat on the *Royal Oak*. The sound was unmistakable; it was that of a small drum being beaten 'in rolls'. At first, the officers on the bridge paid little attention, if any, to the sound; so intent were they on the approaching enemy. But when it became evident that the Germans were not to show fight, Admiral Grant turned to the Captain of the *Royal Oak*, and remarked on the beating of the drum. The Captain said that he heard it, but could not understand it, since the ship was cleared for action, and every man on board was at his battle station. The Commander also heard, but was perplexed, and sent messengers all over the ship to investigate. Twice the messengers were sent about the ship, about all the decks. They reported that every man was at his station. Yet the drum continued to beat. Then the Commander himself made a special tour of investigation through the *Royal Oak*. He, too, found that every man was at his station.

It must be noted, by the way, that if someone, playing a practical joke, had been beating a drum between decks, the sound would have been inaudible to the officers on the bridge. Again, when a ship is cleared for action, the members of the band have specially important duties in connection with the fire-control apparatus assigned to them. The band instruments are all stored away in the band room, right aft, and below decks.

All the while the British fleet was closing round the German fleet, coming to anchor in a square about it so that the German ships were hemmed in. And all the while that this was being done, the noise of the drum was heard at intervals, beating in rolls. All who heard it are convinced that it was no sound of flapping stays or any such accident. The ear of the naval officer is attuned to all the noises of his ship in fair weather and in foul; it makes no mistakes. All who heard knew that they heard the rolling of a drum.

At about two o'clock in the afternoon the German fleet was enclosed and helpless, and the British ships dropped anchor, some fifteen miles off the Firth of Forth. The utter, irrevocable ruin and disgrace of the German Navy were consummated. And at that moment the drum stopped beating and was no more heard.

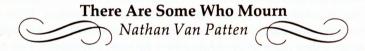
But those who had heard it — Admiral, Captain, Commander, other

officers and men of all ratings — held then and hold now one belief as to the rolling music. They believe that the sound they heard was that of 'Drake's Drum': the audible manifestation of the spirit of the great sea captain, present at this hour of the tremendous triumph of Britain on the seas. This is the firm belief of them all.

It may be so. It may be that Drake did quit the port of Heaven in a ship of fire, and driving the Germans across the sea with the flame of his spirit, drummed them down to their pitiful and shameful doom.



This fine tribute to Arthur Machen, by Nathan Van Patten (1884-1956), is taken from The Canton Repository, Ohio, for January 11 1948. Its author was a librarian, bibliographer and an early collector of Machen material; his admiration for the literary merit of Machen's works being virtually boundless. Later, in May 1948, he founded the Arthur Machen Society in America.



Life is a lonely experience. The greater number of men, sensing this, take to the highroad and gather in its lively traffic from day to day such glory as they can. In this extraversion there is some release from the preoccupations which make up the human consciousness. This is the way of the practical man.

Some there are who follow other paths. These seek not glory nor material things. Omar is their prophet. Pleasure too can give a measure of release.

A few are destined to travel alone. Life is for them a mystery beyond human understanding — but in spite of this a mystery which impels them to inquiry and meditation.

When such a man turns to literature he will write his books for a small company. Neither great beauty nor depth of thought and feeling are likely to make it otherwise.

A man and a writer of this ilk 'cleared the reef and melted on the white-sea rim' a few days before the Christmas season.

Arthur Machen was concerned with the mystical from the beginning of his literary life when as a boy of seventeen he wrote the first line of *Eleusinia*, a little book printed at his own expense in 1881. Sixty-two years have passed, years in which his books became numerous enough to fill five shelves in my library, years in which these same books remained comparatively unknown.

Here is the *Chronicle of Clemendy* (1888) which might have been written by Balzac or by Rabelais. This is a book which thousands would have read for the wrong reason if it had been more widely known. The first edition of 250 copies was apparently large enough to meet the demand over a 35-year period.

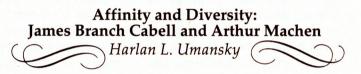
And here is *The Three Imposters* (1895) with stories which rival those of Stevenson and one — 'A Strange Occurrence in Clerkenwell' — which almost seems to be a part of the Sherlock Holmes canon. *The Hill of Dreams* (1907) is one of the great English novels and *The Secret Glory* (1922) is of equal stature.

Hieroglyphics (1902) which attempts to answer the question, 'What is literature?' was brought to the attention of American readers by James Branch Cabell in his Beyond Life, where he says, 'I wonder if you are familiar with that uncanny genius whom the London directory prosaically lists as Arthur Machen?' and later speaks of the thirty years' neglect that has been accorded to Machen as, 'the sort of crime that ought to be discussed in the Biblical manner, from the house-top.' This has availed little. Cabell is himself a writer with whom Machen obviously has much in common.

Machen was a humble man. In his own words, 'The humble have many treasures; and one of the greatest of these is the gift of vision.' The gift of vision is in his books. His was a small discipleship but a faithful one. Many collectors of his books, always readers as well, have made a pilgrimage to his home in London and others treasure his friendly letters.

These books must live, and like those of our own Poe and Whitman, have an ever-increasing audience.

Machen has gone and the mysteries remain.



Few are those to whom the name of Arthur Machen is meaningful, and fewer indeed are those who read him today. He is not unknown to Cabellians, however, primarily because of what Cabell wrote about him briefly and cryptically in *Beyond Life*. There Cabell cites Machen's *Hieroglyphics*, characterises him as 'that uncanny genius,' and concurs with him 'that all enduring art must be an allegory'. Continuing to speak through John Charteris, Cabell writes, 'But here in a secluded library is no place to speak of the thirty years' neglect that has been accorded Mr Arthur Machen: it is the sort of crime that out to be discussed in the Biblical manner, from the house-top.' The criminal neglect of which Cabell complained has not diminished in the many years since the publication of *Beyond Life* in 1919, nor is Cabell's complaint any less just.

The almost-forgotten Arthur Machen (1863-1947) was born in Caerleon, Monmouthshire, in the ancient kingdom of Gwent on the borderland between Wales and England. For Machen his native countryside was from earliest childhood an enchanted land. Here and at so young an age he developed the feeling and belief that behind temporal reality lie eternal mysteries, that beyond the finite, visible universe is an infinite, invisible cosmos of ultimate actuality. An only child, solitary, introspective, imaginative, and senstitive, he internalised a variety of disparate but kindred elements: high-church Christianity, Welsh mythology, stories of the Roman legions that had once conquered his birthplace, the legend of the Holy Grail, tales of King

Arthur and his knights, and the magical beauty of his natural surroundings. His companions were such writers as Dickens, Cervantes, De Quincey, Scott, and the Brontes, to whom later on was added Rabelais. Because of his personality, school was no joy to him. More and more he lived in the world of his own imaginings.

Eventually he settled in London, where he eked out a living as a clerk in a publishing house, as a teacher, and as a free-lance writer. During his early years in London, he published such singular works as *The Anatomy of Tobacco* and *The Chronicle of Clemendy*. Both volumes were written in an imitation of seventeenth-century prose style, the former a slight and mildly amusing pastiche of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, the latter a series of thin-blooded tales imitative of Chaucer and Rabelais. As a result of the appearance of these two volumes, Machen was commissioned by a publisher to translate *The Heptameron* by Marguerite of Navarre.

In 1887 Machen married. About the same time, some unexpected legacies helped to improve his precarious financial position. During the following years he translated *The Memoirs of Jacques Casanova* and wrote *The Great God Pan, The Three Imposters,* and *Hieroglyphics.* The death of his wife in 1899 resulted in an emotional trauma from which he never really recovered, even though he remarried several years later. In 1901 he joined an acting company with which he travelled for the next nine years. During those years with the Benson Shakespeare Repertory Company and other companies, he wrote *Dr Stiggins, The House of Souls, The Hill of Dreams,* and *The Secret Glory.* He also reviewed books and wrote articles for various periodicals.

A short story entitled 'The Bowmen' appeared in the Weekly Dispatch in September 1914. As Wesley Sweetser has written, 'It opened the door to the only fame ever to come his way during his lifetime.' This brief tale relates how a troop of British soldiers are enabled to turn defeat into overwhelming victory when one soldier successfully though unintentionally invokes the aid of St. George and his Agincourt bowmen against the Germans. Because of the emotional atmosphere of wartime, many Englishmen accepted the fiction as a true battlefield report.

Over the succeeding years, other writings followed: The Terror (a tale

of the revolt of the animals against mankind because of the evil of war), Far Off Things and Things Near and Far (two autobiographical works), as well as collections of personal essays, Dog and Duck, The Glorious Mystery, The Shining Pyramid, Dreads and Drolls, and Notes and Queries.

In 1917 Vincent Starrett heralded Machen's brief acclaim in the United States with an article (later a slim volume) entitled 'Arthur Machen, Novelist of Sin and Ecstasy', in which he compares Machen favourably with Rabelais, Cervantes, and Boccaccio. This article was inspired, at least in part, by Cabell's communicating his esteem for Machen to Starrett. Starrett's lead was followed by Ben Hecht, Carl Van Vechten, and Robert Hillyer. The Machen boom resulted in nine volumes of his writings being published in a collected edition and in A.A. Knopf's publishing in America almost a dozen of Machen's books.

Unfortunately for Machen, the revival of interest in him on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean was ephemeral; his backlog of material was scanty; his creative powers were waning fast; collectors of first and limited, signed editions of his works declined; both his subject matter and his style were out of fashion; he lived in less than genteel poverty. His later years were eased by the generosity of friends and admirers who sent money, gifts, and even packages of food. In 1933 he began to receive a government pension of £100 a year, later increased to £140 a year. On his eightieth birthday, in the midst of World War II, at a luncheon in London, Machen was honoured in the presence of such eminences as Max Beerbohm, Algernon Blackwood, and Augustus John. He was presented with a cheque for 1200guineas, the first instalment on a fund that was to grow to over £2000. Sponsors of this collection and birthday celebration included George Bernard Shaw, T.S. Eliot, and John Masefield.

In 1929 Machen had moved to Old Amersham in Buckinghamshire. He died in 1947, his second wife having predeceased him by several months.

Cabell's esteem for Machen is easy to understand. Machen's writings reveal a detailed knowledge of such matters as ancient worship, demonology, folklore, necromancy, and mystic symbolism. His stories concern the mysterious and secret borderland between the material world and transcendent reality. As Joseph Wood Krutch has written,

Machen had 'only one theme, the Mystic Vision, and only one plot, the Rending of the Veil'. For Machen there is a glorious but often perilous universe beyond the frontiers of our diurnal world. Almost standard in Machen's narratives are the occult, the ineffably horrible, the weird, and the supernatural. For him the past can penetrate into the present if the barrier between the two is breached, and usually with fearful consequences. The old gods may have fled from Olympus, but they still dwell in some secret realm beyond human ken and are yet potent. The Little People who inhabited the land before the Celt and the Saxon and the Norman still live in their hiding places beneath the earth. When disturbed or angered by strangers, they erupt from their concealment and their revenge is terrible indeed. Machen's style, as well as his subject matter, was congenial to Cabell. In the words of Carl Van Vechten, 'The prose is finely distinguished, simple, supple, and stamped with the author's personality.' Although Van Vechten was writing specifically about Far Off Things, the statement is true enough of Machen's other writings when he writes as Arthur Machen and is not imitating the style of another author.

Cabell appears to have first read Machen around 1906. In his letter to Vincent Starrett of November 8, 1917, Cabell states,

'It was eleven years ago I was impressed by an unfavourable review of *The House of Souls*, and made it my business to procure the volume. Then felt like some watcher of the skies & sea, in cold sober earnest. That his book — personally I still rank it as Machen's best — should still remain unknown, is really the sort of crime that ought to be discussed from house-tops with Biblical invectives. Indeed, in all the elevent years you are the second person I have encountered who had read Machen or, at least had any memory of having done so.'

It was in 1917 also that Cabell published *The Cream of the Jest*, a novel that he acknowledged was influenced by Machen's *The Hill of Dreams* and 'A Fragment of Life', the latter a short story that was included in *The House of Souls*, first printed in 1906. Machen intended *The Hill of Dreams* to be 'a *Robinson Crusoe* of the soul; the story of a man who is not lonely

because he is on a desert island and has nobody to speak to, but lonely in the midst of millions, because of his mental isolation, because there is a great gulf fixed spiritually between him and all whom he encounters.'

Cabell sent Machen a copy of *The Cream of the Jest*. Machen, in a letter to Cabell, praised the novel as 'curious, singular, and engaging'. He declared that he had 'read it with admiration and delight. It is, indeed, beautifully done; you have all my congratulations.' Then, inexplicably, he writes, 'But I do not know whether you know all that is to be known concerning small mirrors; but of this, silence.' In a later letter Machen tells Cabell,

'I have been re-reading your book with very great pleasure. I think that there is a very exquisite skill in your dissolution of the spell, as it were; in your identification of the Seal with the top of a cold cream vase — and yet the truth of the vision remains. It was the fatal and most abominable error of protestantism not to see this, not to see that the art of life is to pass thro' things temporal so that we lost not the things eternal: the eternal things that are hidden under the temporal veils.'

As might be expected from so learned and competent a writer, Cabell was no uncritical admirer of Machen. Writing to Burton Rascoe, Cabell admits, 'In fact, as I foresee it, I would violently find fault with every book of Machen's except *The House of Souls*, so that my real and great admiration would be obscured.' Cabell particularly critizes Machen's technique of utilising innuendo rather than specific detail when attempting to convey a sense of sin, evil, diabolism, or deviance. In the same letter, Cabell states,

'His "whispered enigma" you see, sometimes, on the bare face of it, refers to nothing whatsoever: and still he whispers ...'

Although Cabell preferred *The House of Souls* above all other of Machen's fiction, it was *Hieroglyphics* that he chose to mention in *Beyond Life*. First printed in 1902, *Hieroglyphics* consists of discursive monologues by a 'literary hermit' residing in London. The deduction is

not far-fetched that the hermit is Machen himself. According to the hermit, ecstasy is the touchstone by which literature is distinguished from mere reading matter. 'If ecstasy is present, then I say there is fine literature; substitute, if you like, rapture, beauty, adoration, wonder, awe, mystery, sense of the unknown.' Cabell found the book 'peculiarly interesting', as he wrote to Rascoe, 'But then how maddeningly it skips from splendid things to profound inanities! His observations as to Thackeray, for example, are the dicta of the imbecile ward ... But with all that, he is one of my enthusiasms, and I only wish that he were better known'

Where Machen was a thorough-going mystic, Cabell appears to have been a deliberate romanticist. Machen believed as a tenet of faith that 'the whole world is but a ceremony or sacrament which teaches under visible forms a hidden or transcedent doctrine.' For him everyday reality was a veil behind which moved spiritual powers in a cosmos only occasionally and dimly apprehended by mortals. Cabell's approach (at least in this period of his life and writings) is that,

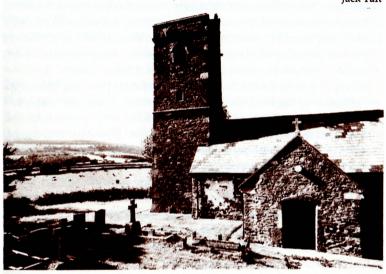
The philtres of romance are brewed to free us from this unsatisfying life ... a stupid and unlovely routing ... The things of which romance assures him (man) are very far from true: yet it is solely by believing himself a creature but little lower than the cherubim that man has by interminable small degrees become, upon the whole, distinctly superior to the chimpanzee.

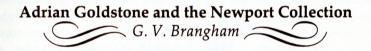
Machen's themes were few and his talents limited, though impressive. To quote Wesley Sweetser, 'He dreamed in fire, but he worked in clay; his desire far exceeded his grasp.' Nevertheless, Machen deserves to be read and re-read for his own sake, and those who would better understand and appreciate Cabell and his unique universe would do well to turn to Machen's fiction and essays for comparison and contrast.

This is an edited version of an orginal article which appeared in Kalki 33, the journal of The James Branch Cabell Society. Thanks are due to the author Harlan L. Umansky, and to Khalki for permission to edit and reprint.

'There was Henllis, high up on the mountainside, in the place of roaring winds, under the faery dome of Twym Barlwm . . .' Far Off Things

Jack Tait





As a species, Book-collectors can be neatly divided into two main varieties; the common-or-garden *B. hoarderii* or, the much rarer *B. philanthropii*. Of the latter persuasion may be listed the American bibliophile and collector of Machen's works, Adrian Homer Goldstone. By his innumerable acts of generosity over the years, he has gained both the gratitude and the admiration of the library at Newport, Gwent.

He was short in stature, Jewish, full of humour, owner of a textile company and the possessor of unbounded energy. He hailed from Mill Valley, California; the entire basement of his home being crammed with thousands of books; not only those of Machen, but also of his other loves, Steinbeck, Conan Doyle and Beardsley.

He and his wife were dedicated travellers, often visiting Britain en route to Europe, where they frequented the best hotels, restaurant and night-spots. Naturally, one item always on their agenda were the visits to the local antiquarian bookshops. It was these sojourns that enabled him to build up one of the most comprehensive and striking of Machen collections. Not only first editions, but *any* editions, ephemera and even personal items; all were assimilated in his Mill Valley home.

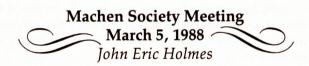
During this early period, the reference library at Newport was under the guidance of the late John Warner. The shelves naturally displayed works by local authors of note, but of these only a few odd and indiscriminate titles were by Machen. On Warner's retirement, Mr W. J. (John) Collett succeeded to the Chief Librarian's post, and it was to be in this era that the A.M. collection was born and nurtured to full maturity.

One singular afternoon, an American visitor to the reference section, asked to speak with the Head Librarian. John Collett still remembers clearly this first meeting with Goldstone. The Californian immediately produced a photocopy of that much sought-after pamphlet, Eleusinia; Machen's youthful and unsuccessful first venture into print. A second copy for the library was quickly done, and a friendship was struck between the two men that was to become the catalyst for the future collection. Throughout the succeeding years, books, pamphlets, letters etc., streamed across the Atlantic to be proudly placed on the expectant shelves. On one occasion, Goldstone journeyed to meet John Collett at Tewkesbury, there to travel on to seek a third man who held a copy of the extremely rare collaboration between Machen and A. E. Waite, The House of the Hidden Light. Again a photocopy of this volume was obtained, and it likewise rests in the Newport library. As the collection grew, so did the friendship between the Colletts and the Goldstones. Indeed, on the retirement of John Collett from his post in 1973, his colleagues presented him with air tickets to enable him and his wife to visit California, and Adrian Goldstone. The wheel had come full circle since that day in the early 1950s, when the energetic American had first appeared in the library.

Today the Machen collection, under the charge of Mr H. J. Francis and his staff, numbers 615 items consisting of 360 books and 255 pamphlets.

A visit to view them is certainly worthwhile. Familiar titles gaze from serried ranks; for the long-time traveller in the by-ways of Machen, they are like living friends; they have their voices and their physiognomies. Here the blue-black covers of John Lane's 'Keynotes' series, there the paler Secker volumes; gilt-lettered spines vying with the more fragile paper labels of later works. Further shelves bear books of a more puzzling nature: George Dewar's The Pageant of English Landscape, Robert Hillyer's The Halt in the Garden, Richard Middleton's The Ghost Ship, and many more. The sole reason for their presence rests on the fact that a master of prose had long ago agreed to write their Introductions. It is a haven for A.M. scholars and admirers; a place to visit and to dream. Perhaps the very same dream that long ago inspired Goldstone, and a host of remarkable American collectors, such as Paul Jordan-Smith, Charles Parsons, Joseph Vodrey and Edwin Steffe.

Adrian Goldstone is sadly no longer with us, and John Collett is in active retirement. Yet that marvellous collection continues to expand in its rarified gallery within the reference library; available to all who come seeking the works of a true literary man — Arthur Machen.



When the traveller in Wales and the Western Counties takes the turn at the junction of the M4 just a few miles south of the Forest of Dean and crosses the River Usk, he comes upon a lonely and curious country. The ground gets higher and the briar-bordered stone walls press closer and closer against the curving road ... When a rise in the road brings the mountains in view above the woods, the feeling of strange uneasiness is increased. The summits are too rounded and symmetrical to give a sense of comfort and naturalness, and sometimes the sky silhouettes with especial clearness the tree-covered tumuli with

which some of them are crowned.

Here, nestled between the hills and the river, lies the tiny historic town of Caerleon-on-Usk, once the headquarters fortress of the Second Augusta Legion, identified by the poet Tennyson as one of the strongholds of King Arthur. Here is the beautiful Roman Legionary Museum, the green-turfed ruins of the Roman amphitheatre, the excavated foundations of the great baths. Here also are the remains of the old hill-fort that long preceded the Roman occupation, and a still-impressive mound that marks the site of the Norman castle that guarded the Welsh Border long after the Romans left. Here, too, is the birthplace of Arthur Machen (1863-1947), author and mystic, who wrote *The Great God Pan, The Three Imposters, The House of Souls, The Angels of Mons* and *The Hill of Dreams*. These strange and beautiful books have strongly impressed American writers such as H. P. Lovecraft, Frank Belknap Long, Henry Miller and T. E. D. Klein.

In ancient Caerleon, on the night of March fifth, at the pub of Ye Old Bull, there gathered some twenty members of the Arthur Machen Society to honour the author who had been born just across the narrow street. It was a festive occasion, and the warmly-lit old pub, with its ceiling of low wooden beams, was filled with conversation and the fumes of tobacco, wine, and good British beer. The Society is one that Machen would have enjoyed, a group of writers, artists, students, publishers and booksellers, with a mingling of a few from academia and the professions, and some of the local residents who could still remember the writer.

Later in the evening we all moved down the road to a local restaurant for supper, more conversation, and an informal address by R. A. Gilbert, scholar of mysticism, and author of a recent book on A. E. Waite, a close companion of Machen. There was much talk of books, old books and hopes of new books. The hour was late, and tatters of cloud covered the face of a gibbous moon as your American correspondent wended his way, somewhat unsteadily, back to his lodgings. It occurred to me that it was a night when Machen's 'Little People' might be abroad. There were flickering shadows in the garden of the Priory House, where strange stone faces are reputed to peer out of the old stone wall, and I hurried off to bed.



A. E. Waite: Magician of Many Parts by R. A. Gilbert (Crucible £12.95)

If in 1925, Machen could write, 'I have known my very dear friend A. E. Waite for 38 years; and I have not the faintest notion as to his real beliefs.', the problems facing a biographer 45 years after his death are somewhat daunting. That R. A. Gilbert has managed to produce such a readable book, bristling with informative detail, is indicative of his deep involvement with his subject.

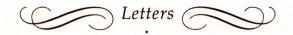
Waite's journey through life is faithfully recorded, stretching from his birth in America in 1857 to his death over 84 years later at Bridge, near Canterbury. After suffering in early life the barbs of Victorian bigotry, he turned to Roman Catholicism, only to move on to explore the great questions posed by religious movements and their thinkers. Notwithstanding the essential descriptions of delusion and sorrow in his love-life, of conflicts and crises in occult orders, of symbolism and their attendant rituals, the dominant theme is the path trodden by Waite from early awareness, to higher mysticism, and the eventual attainment of *Divine Union*. As Mr Gilbert rightly observes, 'Waite spent his life on a spiritual quest for his own identity in God.'

For Machen admirers, he is well represented in the text, even to the extent of a full reprinting of one of his rarer short pieces.

Perhaps there is a lack of information concerning the *domestic* Waite, the *every-day* Waite. One would have liked to have gleaned a little more of Waite away from his rituals and book writing. To learn about the inevitable conflicts in the Waite household, after two marriages and a singularly unhappy daughter in Sybil Waite.

Although this is the first full-length biography of Waite, it will surely stand the test of time and remain *the* definite work. Altogether a major publication, and one hopes that it will prompt the author to produce more of a similar vein.

Godfrey Brangham



A vallaunius 2 prompted a highly encouraging response; the nature of the correspondence varying between laudation, positive criticism and additional information to the published articles. Please keep sending your missives, it's the only means we have of gauging the feelings of the Society's members. (Again a stamped, addressed envelope is helpful where a reply is called for.)

from Mike Ashley, Chatham:

... for some while now I have been working on a biography of the writer Algernon Blackwood. Like Machen he was a member of the Golden Dawn and he was also a close friend of A. E. Waite. Yet, surprisingly, from such evidence as I can find, Blackwood and Machen did not associate ... I wonder whether any other members of the AMS can throw any light on the Machen/Blackwood relationship? (Address: 4 Thistlebank, Walderslade, Chatham, Kent. ME5 8AD.)

from Father Brocard Sewell:

... the second number of Avallaunius is a very creditable production, from all points of view. The standard of proof-reading seems commendably high; and the typography is most satisfactory.

Julian Lloyd Webber, Patron of the Society;

... the Society appears to be doing great things. Long may it continue!

Mark Valentine, author, writes from Southampton:

Avallaunius 2 is a very fine piece of work, something which does honour to the memory of Arthur Machen ... Did you know that The Lost Club was reprinted in a Gawsworth anthology? ... The interesting point is that there is a footnote after The Lost Club. It reads—

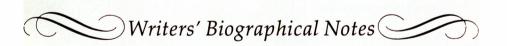
'The above story was founded on certain rumours current in London in 1890. However, in the journalist's phrase, there was another end to it. Paragraphs about something that had happened in Quito, Ecuador, appeared in one or two papers just before the outbreak of the War. They passed unheeded; we were busy with other things. A.M., Oct. 1934'

Wesley Sweetser, co-author with Adrian Goldstone of the monumental, A Bibliography of Arthur Machen (1965), writes:

...on a lighter note, the letter from Mike Butterworth on Dog and Duck Punch deserves some notice. In my Twayne book Arthur Machen, I repeat the recipe that Machen himself gave, I believe to one of his correspondents—gin and sauterne in equal parts and not too much bitters. Whether it was served hot or cold I know not; but it sounds like an early forerunner of the dry martini and frequently produced a more than mystical experience. ... Any rum concoction, on the other hand, (especially if it is Bundaberg rum, 180°) causes the human flesh to burn with a black flame, leaving only flaming eyes in a formless thing and, finally, in a reversion of

evolution, becoming 'a dark and putrid mass' a kind of hideous protoplasm, a primordial slime. Gin, however, which Machen favoured, along with four-ale and fine wines, produces some extremely mystical experiences, (as I can personally testify), primarily because it takes one through the first stage of the mystical process, the loss of the self. (and I always thought that American academics only drank coffee, ah disillusionment! — Ed.)





G. V. Brangham

Godfrey Brangham has been an admirer and collector of Machen's works for over 25 years. He also collects books by many of the Machen 'circle', e.g. Henry Savage, Gawsworth, Waite, Richard Middleton, Starrett, Morchard Bishop etc. Born in Wales in 1942, he is married and lives in the Machen

'heartland' of Usk, Gwent. A pharmacist by profession, he is currently coediting a forthcoming book devoted to the 'letters' of Arthur Machen.

Prof. John Eric Holmes

The author of many short stories in the Mystery and Imagination genre and a novel The Maze of Peril published by Space and Time, New York. He is an authority on fantasy role-playing games such as Dungeons and Dragons. Eric is Professor of Brain Anatomy at the University of Los Angeles, and he has just finished a two-year sabbatical at Oxford. He is married to a doctor and he has four children.

Rita Tait

Co-founder of the Arthur Machen Society. Interests include psychology, mysticism, the occult, folk-law, and mythology. Degree in Law. Is a landscape photographer and worked as picture-researcher and photographer on the Duckworth book.



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Members: £10, libraries and institutions £12; U.S.A. £15 (international money order).

Others by arrangement.

Back issues of Avallaunius available at £3 from Rita Tait, 19 Cross St, Caerleon, Gwent, NP6 1AF, or Godfrey Brangham, The Cottage, New Market St, Usk, Gwent, NP5 1AT, both of whom deal with all correspondence.

Postcards of Twyn Barlwm and the Skirrid Mountain, with Machen quotes on reverse from Rita Tait, price 15p each or £4.50 for 50 mixed.

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Designed by Linda Chung & Ian Pennington - students at Gwent College.

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