

The Flax of Dream: Some Bibliographical Notes

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Following the bibliographical notes and listing for *Tarka the Otter* that appeared in Journal No. 16, I have been asked to contribute a similar item on the quartet of novels known collectively as *The Flax of Dream*, for this 'special' issue.

I make no claim to this being the definitive listing; there may well be reprints of which I am unaware. (If you own or know of any such item perhaps you would let me know?)

After some hesitation I have included *The Star Born* as historically it has always been associated as a coda, or, as Henry Williamson called it, a pendant to the novels.

As with *Tarka the Otter*, the collation is given as a single entry in arabic numbering. All leaves are reckoned, recto and verso, from the half-title, whether blank or with arabic or arabic and Roman numbering, to the verso of the last leaf printed or blank, ending the text, or as a colophon, index, etc. Free endpapers, because publisher's reckoning is not uniform may, or may not be included. However this may be determined by checking the numbered prelims, or page number on which the text begins. Whichever is applicable pre the text will apply to similar papers following the text.

The heading references used, e.g. A1 etc. are not random. In a full bibliography the letter A = all books of original work published by Henry Williamson, numbered chronologically.

A1 THE BEAUTIFUL YEARS

1921

(a) First Trade Edition

THE / BEAUTIFUL YEARS / A TALE OF CHILDHOOD / by / HENRY WILLIAMSON / (quotation in three lines) / (publisher's device) / LONDON: 48 PALL MALL / W. COLLINS SONS & CO. LTD. / GLASGOW MELBOURNE AUCKLAND 264pp. Blue cloth, lettered and lined on upper cover in red and lettered on spine in red. All edges cut. Pictorial wrapper of gypsy fire scene by Lenden. The edition is said to have comprised 750 copies. Issued in Collins' "First Novel Library" on October 13th 1921 at 7/6d.

The first book of the tetralogy "The Flax of Dream", and originally the opening part of a single massive manuscript entitled "A Policy of Reconstruction".

Never reprinted in this original form, and the sub-title never used again.

(b) Revised and rewritten trade edition

1929

THE BEAUTIFUL YEARS / BY / HENRY WILLIAMSON / (quotation in three lines) / LONDON / FABER & FABER LIMITED / 24 RUSSELL SQUARE.

248pp. Red cloth, lettered on spine in gilt. Top and fore-edges cut, bottom trimmed. White dustwrapper printed in black and red. The edition is said to have comprised 2,850 copies. Published October 11th 1929.

(c) Revised and rewritten trade edition — limited edition

1929

248pp. Blue buckram, lettered on upper cover and spine in gilt. Edition limited to 200 copies on handmade paper, numbered and signed by the author. Published October 1929.

(d) First American edition

1929

THE / BEAUTIFUL YEARS / by / HENRY WILLIAMSON / (quotation in three lines) / (publisher's device) / New York / E. P. DUTTON & CO., INC.

288pp. Bright blue embossed paper with frost-like pattern. Lettered on upper cover and spine in gilt within impressed rectangles. Top edge cut, fore-edge and bottom, trimmed. White dustwrapper, with upper dark blue wavy band, title in blue, light blue band with "author of *The Pathway*" in white, band of dark blue, author in dark blue on white; light blue band to bottom. Ditto to spine. The number of copies printed is unknown.

- (e) Second impression of (b) 1930
- (f) New trade edition. "The Faber Library" (No. 3) 1932
248pp. Green cloth, lettered on spine in gilt. All edges cut. Puce dustwrapper, ornate scrolls around edge of upper cover in dark green, with "The Faber Library" ditto in cartouche at top, titles in black, and publisher's name in cartouche at bottom. The number of copies printed is unknown. Published June 1932.
The text is slightly revised from (b) above of 1929, and was used in all subsequent Faber editions *except* within the one-volume edition of *The Flax of Dream*, 1936 — See item A23 and items (h) and (l) below, which used the 1936 text.
- (g) Second impression of (f) above 1935
Published November 1935.
- (h) New trade edition, Faber "Q" Books (paperback) 1942
This edition used the text of the 1936 one-volume edition; see item A23.
- (i) New trade edition of "The Faber Library", (f) above 1943
- (j) New trade edition of "The Faber Library", (f) above 1944
- (k) New trade edition of "The Faber Library", (f) above 1948
- (l) First Penguin, trade, edition (No. 696) 1949
THE / BEAUTIFUL YEARS / by / HENRY WILLIAMSON / PENGUIN BOOKS / in association with / FABER & FABER LTD.
256pp. Paper covers, divided into red/white/red — for fiction. Titles on upper cover and spine in black. All edges cut. To back cover, photograph reproducing the Edward Seago portrait, with thumbnail history of Williamson below. Text is that used in the 1936 one-volume edition; see item A23.
- (m) New trade edition of "The Faber Library", (f) above 1952
- (n) New trade edition, Faber — paperback. Text as (f) above 1957
- (o) New trade edition. Text as (f) above 1969
Issued simultaneously as a cloth bound and paper covered edition.
- (p) New trade edition, Zenith Books (paperback) 1983
Published through the above by Hamlyn Paperbacks, March 10th 1983.

A3 DANDELION DAYS

- (a) First trade edition 1922
DANDELION DAYS / by / HENRY WILLIAMSON / Author of *The Beautiful Years* and *The Lone Swallows* / (quotation in four lines) / (publisher's device) / LONDON: 48 PALL MALL / W. COLLINS SONS & CO. LTD. / GLASGOW MELBOURNE AUCKLAND
320pp. Blue cloth, lettered and lined on upper cover in red and lettered on spine in red. All edges cut. Dustwrapper of white ground. On upper cover, within black circle, titles in black (with artist's name, C. Dasque?) and seated figure of Willie Maddison and around vignettied busts of eight characters from the book, all in muted colours. Titles etc. to spine in red and black.

The edition is said to have comprised 600 copies. Published October 1922. Contains a 6-page "Epistle Apological to Mr Dakers" (an open letter to his literary agent) and an "Addenda", neither of which were subsequently reprinted, this being the only edition in this original form.

- (b) Revised and rewritten trade edition 1930
 DANDELION DAYS / BY / HENRY WILLIAMSON / (two quotations in seven lines)
 / LONDON / FABER & FABER LIMITED / 24 RUSSELL SQUARE
 316pp. Blue cloth, lettered on spine in gilt. All edges cut. White dustwrapper, printed in black and red. The edition is said to have comprised 2,500 copies. Published February 7th 1930. A one-page dedicatory letter to Andrew Dakers replaces the original "Epistle Apological", wherein Williamson suggests that only seventeen sentences remain from the original version.
- (c) Revised and rewritten trade edition — Limited Edition 1930
 316pp. Yellow buckram, lettered on upper cover and spine in gilt. Edition limited to 200 copies on handmade paper, numbered and signed by the author. Published February 1930
- (d) Second impression of (b) 1930
 The text on five pages was slightly revised for this impression. Published April, 1930.
- (e) First American edition 1930
 DANDELION DAYS / by / HENRY WILLIAMSON / (two quotations in seven lines)
 / NEW YORK / E.P. DUTTON & CO., INC.
 322pp. Green cloth, lettered on upper cover and spine in yellow within impressed rectangles. Mid green dustwrapper with, on upper cover, titles in white within a darker green block; below, "Author of The Pathway" in dark green, and to upper and lower edge zigzag in yellow. White lettering to spine. Top edge cut, fore and bottom edges trimmed. The number of copies printed is unknown.
- (f) New trade edition, "The Faber Library" (No. 9) 1932
 316pp. Green cloth, lettered on spine in gilt. All edges cut. Puce dustwrapper, ornate scrolls around edge of upper cover in dark green, with "The Faber Library" ditto in cartouche at top; titles in black, and publisher's name in cartouche at bottom. Ditto to spine. The number of copies printed is unknown. Published October 1932. Text as (b) but for indelicate phrase (p. 269) being replaced.
- (g) Faber trade reprint, using text of (f) above 1942
- (h) First Penguin, trade edition 1950
 DANDELION DAYS / by / HENRY WILLIAMSON / PENGUIN BOOKS / in
 association with / FABER AND FABER LTD.
 324pp. Paper covers, divided into red/white/red — for fiction. Titles on upper cover and spine in black. Text is that used in the 1936 one-volume edition of the four-novel sequence. See A23.
- (i) Faber trade reprint, using text of (f) above 1956
- (j) Faber trade reprint, using text of (f) above 1966
 Title page unchanged but 312pp. Issued simultaneously as a cloth bound and paper covered edition.
- (k) Faber trade reprint, using text of (f) above 1969
 Re-issue exactly as (k) above.
- (l) New trade edition, Zenith Books (paperback) 1983
 Published through the above by Hamlyn Paperbacks, March 10th 1983. The remaining two novels were also published in 1983.

- A5 THE DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN 1924
- (a) First trade edition.
 THE DREAM / OF FAIR WOMEN / A Tale of Youth after the Great War / by / HENRY WILLIAMSON / (quotation in three lines) / (publisher's device) / LONDON: 48 PALL MALL / W. COLLINS SONS & CO. LTD. / GLASGOW MELBOURNE AUCKLAND 432pp. Blue cloth, lettered and lined on upper cover in red and lettered on spine in red. All edges cut. Pictorial dustwrapper with fancy dress ball scene to upper cover. With (from left to right) Nelson (naval dress); Axeman (in black); Belle —? Evelyn Fairfax? (pink dress); turban of Rajah (green); man (evening dress); clown (light blue); and man —? Maddison? looking toward group (brown suit). Titles above in blue, and ditto to spine. The edition is said to have comprised 750 copies. Published June 1924. Of the first three novels this was the only one reprinted — in America — in its original form.
- (b) First American edition 1924
 THE DREAM / OF FAIR WOMEN / BY / HENRY WILLIAMSON / (author's owl device) / (quotation in three lines) / NEW YORK / E.P. DUTTON & COMPANY / 681 FIFTH AVENUE
 478pp. Paper covered boards patterned in gold; light blue cloth spine. With white paper labels to upper cover and spine with titles in black. Edges rough trimmed. Dustwrapper of white ground with, to upper cover and spine, a blue oblong with titles in white. Further, to upper cover, rural cottage and garden in green, blue and light purple, and to spine gulls above and below title. The print of this edition is unknown. The first of Williamson's books to be published in America.
- (c) Revised and rewritten trade edition 1931
 THE DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN / BY / HENRY WILLIAMSON / WITH / A VALEDICTION TO / THE FLAX OF DREAM / (quotation in three lines) / LONDON / FABER & FABER LIMITED / 24 RUSSELL SQUARE
 448pp. Brown cloth, lettered on spine in gilt. All edges cut. White dustwrapper printed in black and red. The edition is said to have comprised 3500 copies. Said by Williamson to have been rewritten over three weeks in a New York hotel, winter of 1930. This is the only appearance of the "Valediction" — specially written for this edition — in its original form. It was abridged as "Post War" in some later editions. The publisher's statement, "First published in June MCMXXXI" still has this cited as the first edition by those unaware of the Collins issue. Published in June 1931.
- (d) Revised and rewritten trade edition — Limited Edition 1931
 448pp. Brown buckram, lettered on upper cover and spine in gilt. Top edge cut, others uncut. Limited to 200 copies on handmade paper numbered and signed by the author. Published June 1931.
- (e) First American revised edition 1931
 THE DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN / by / HENRY WILLIAMSON / with / a valediction to / THE FLAX OF DREAM / (quotation in two lines) / NEW YORK / E.P. DUTTON & CO., INC. / Publishers
 448pp. Blue cloth with watered effect horizontal banding. To upper cover and spine gold-filled incuse rectangles with titles raised in cover blue. Dustwrapper of natural ground, with all details as (b) above. Variant bindings in grey and red were used later. The print of this edition is unknown. The publisher's blurb makes much of this being "A NEW STORY", reflecting the author's "more mature and changed point of view", and offers the book as a "most unusual experiment in literature and publishing."

- (f) New trade edition, "The Faber Library" (No. 14) 1933
Details as (c) but text slightly revised. Issued January 1933.
- (g) Trade reprint using the text of (f) above 1947
- (h) Trade reprint (paperback) as above 1948
- (i) Trade reprint using text of (f) above 1955
- (j) Trade reprint using text of (f) above 1957
- (k) Trade reprint (paperback) as (f) above 1958
- (l) Faber trade reprint using text of (f) above 1968
Issued simultaneously as cloth bound and paper covered edition.
- (m) New trade edition, Zenith books (paperback) 1983
Published through the above by Hamlyn Paperbacks, May 26th 1983.
Note: This was undoubtedly published by PENGUIN, but no details are available at present.

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- A9 THE PATHWAY 1928
 - (a) First trade edition.
THE PATHWAY / by / HENRY WILLIAMSON / (publisher's device) / (quotation in one line) / LONDON / JONATHAN CAPE 30 BEDFORD SQUARE.
416pp. Green cloth, lettered on spine in gilt. White dustwrapper printed in black and red. All edges cut. The edition comprised 2,000 copies. Published October 29th 1928.
 - (b) Second impression of (a) above 1928
 - (c) Third impression of (a) above 1929
Published February 1929.
 - (d) Fourth impression of (a) above 1929
As before, but pagination increased to 422pp. Caused by the addition of three extra fly-titles at pp. 96, 194 and 330. Text slightly amended by 18 extra lines being added to pp. 405/6, and quotations amended on pp. 414 and [416].
 - (e) Fifth impression of (a) above as amended by (d) above 1929
The first five impressions were printed for Cape by Butler and Tanner of Frome.
 - (f) Sixth impression, as (e) above but issued in Cape's 2/6d. Series and printed by John Wright in Bristol 1929
 - (g) First American edition 1929
THE PATHWAY / BY / HENRY WILLIAMSON / (quotation in one line) / (publisher's monogram) / NEW YORK / E.P. DUTTON & CO., INC.
400pp. Emerald green cloth. Titles to upper cover and spine in raised gilt lettering within impressed gilt-filled rectangles. Top edges cut, others rough trimmed. Dustwrapper with, to upper cover, stylised sea-scene in four shades of green from pale (top) to dark (bottom), with white seabirds superimposed. Titles to upper cover and spine in red. The print of the edition is not known.
 - (h) Seventh impression, as (e) above 1931
This impression, printed by the Alden Press in Oxford, is mistakenly identified by the publishers as the SIXTH impression.
 - (i) New trade edition, as (e) above — Limited Edition 1931
326pp. Green buckram, lettered on upper cover and spine in gilt. Top edge cut, others uncut. Limited to 200 copies on handmade paper, numbered and signed by the author. Published December 1931 by Jonathan Cape in association with Faber & Faber. The text is preceded by a seven-page Preface that was never subsequently

reprinted. The publisher's pagination is extremely strange in taking no account of prelims [10] — inc. an endpaper, four section fly-titles [8] nor (presumably) a final endpaper [2] and calling for only 415 + [1] = 416pp. and not as shown above.

- (j) New trade edition, "The Faber Library" (No. 16) 1933
As (e) above, published June 1933.
- (k) Trade reprint of (j) above 1940
- (l) Trade reprint of (j) above 1942
- (m) Trade reprint of (j) above 1944
- (n) Trade reprint of (j) above 1947
- (o) New trade edition, as (e) above 1969
Issued simultaneously as a cloth bound and paper covered edition.
- (p) New trade edition, Zenith Books (paperback) 1983
Published through the above by Hamlyn Paperback, September 15th 1983.
Note: This was undoubtedly published by PENGUIN, but no details are available at present.

A18 THE STAR-BORN 1933

- (a) First edition — De Luxe Limited Edition.
THE / STAR-BORN / (row of five stars) / WITH AN INTRODUCTION / BY / HENRY WILLIAMSON / AND WOOD-ENGRAVINGS BY / C.F. TUNNICLIFFE / (vignette of owl) / LONDON / FABER & FABER LIMITED / 24 RUSSELL SQUARE
240pp. Green parchment, lettered on spine in gilt. Top edge gilt, others uncut. Limited to 70 copies on handmade paper, numbered and signed by the author. Including 15 full-page wood engravings, and title-page and 19 others vignetted wood- engravings by C.F. Tunncliffe. Published April 1933.
- (b) First trade, unlimited edition 1933
As above, but for the following: green cloth, lettered on spine in gilt. Vellum paper. In two states: top edge gilt, others trimmed (first state); top edge cut, others trimmed (second state). Dustwrapper, white with red and black lettering to upper cover and spine. To upper cover a wood-engraving not repeated in the text. The edition consisted of 2580 copies and was published in May 1933. Sometimes described as a "pendant" to "The Flax of Dream" tetralogy, Williamson consistently denied authorship of this book, maintaining it was the work of the dead Willie Maddison.
- (c) New trade edition, revised and rewritten and with new illustrations 1948
THE / STAR-BORN / with an Introduction / by / HENRY WILLIAMSON / with drawings by / M.E. ELDRIDGE / (vignette drawing) / FABER & FABER LTD / 24 Russell Square / London
204pp. Mauve cloth, lettered on spine in silver. All edges cut. With a frontispiece and 7 other full-page drawings, a title-page and 26 other half-page or vignetted drawings, and 8 full-page lithographs by Mildred E. Eldridge. Dustwrapper of pale blue, with titles to upper cover and spine in red and black. The upper cover also reproduces (in red) the vignette drawing found to the foot of p. 71. The print of the edition is not known, but was eventually remaindered in 1953. Published 1948.
- (d) New trade reprint of (b) above 1973
Published under licence by Cedric Chivers as a "New Portway" edition.
A facsimile of (b) above but for addition of new publisher, non-vellum paper, and dustwrapper titles all in black.

A23 THE FLAX OF DREAM

1936

(a) First trade edition — Collected Edition.

THE / FLAX OF DREAM / A Novel in Four Books / by / HENRY WILLIAMSON / London / FABER AND FABER LIMITED / 24 Russell Square

1416pp. Blue cloth, lettered to spine in gilt. All edges cut. Printer's correction slip tipped-in preceding p. 7. Printed on India paper. The dustwrapper exists in two versions, as follows: blue ground with, on upper cover, titles in black within an ornate red and white rectangle, and in black to spine with a red star between title and author's name; and light blue ground overlaid with random spangled silver stars, with titles to upper cover and spine in red. The edition is said to have been 10,000 copies and was published in March 1936.

The spur for this one-volume edition seems to have been the visit to Nazi Germany in the autumn of 1935, with Williamson's friend, John Heygate. There he saw, in some measure, a revival of spirit along the lines his novel sequence had sought to produce after the Great War. This is referred to in the Foreword which included the now notorious tribute to Hitler. The texts for all four books were slightly revised for this 'definitive' edition. The edition finally sold out in 1945.

Due to the flimsy nature of the paper used for this collected edition Faber were unable to reproduce this text for subsequent editions (although it *was* used by Penguin for their editions of Books 1 and 2). Consequently all post-1936 individual editions issued by Faber have used the last revised text (see individual entries) issued before 1936.

For their kind assistance with information, corrections and comment, I wish to thank Stephen Clarke, John Hanson and Anne Williamson.

References to *The Flax of Dream* in past issues

A full index to the *Journal* to date is to be published in due course (compiled by Brian Fullager); meanwhile here is a somewhat rough and ready reference aid to those of you who may wish to look up other references to these particular works that have appeared in past issues, although many are but in passing, and I have not attempted to be exhaustive.

'Henry Williamson and His Writing - A Personal View', Colin Wilson. No. 2, Oct '80, p. 9.

'In the Monkey-House', David Hoyle. No. 4, Nov '81, p. 6.

'The Two Maddisons', George D. Painter. No. 5, May '82, p. 30.

'From Dandelion Days', Fred Shepherd. No. 6, Oct '82, p. 32.

'The "Victory Day" Chapters of *The Dream of Fair Women*', Ronald Walker. No. 7, May '83, p. 10.

'Henry Williamson in Conversation with Kenneth Allsop'. No. 9, March '84, p. 27.

'The German *Beautiful Years*', Horst A. Reshke. No. 9, March '84, p. 39.

'A School Prize', Peter M. Heinecke. No. 9, March '84, p. 43.

'*The Dream of Fair Women*' (Review 1931), Frank Kendon. No. 9, March '84, p. 46.

'*The Beautiful Years*' (Review 1967), Kenneth Allsop. No. 9, March '84, p. 47.

'Henry Williamson', Malcolm Elwin. No. 10, Oct '84, p. 11.

'Between the *Flax* and the *Chronicle*', Dennis McWilliams. No. 13, March '86, p. 10.

'*The Star-Born*' (Review 1933), Frank Kendon. No. 13, March '86, p. 25.

'A Reader On the Coast', John Millar (sporadic ref. in) Nos. 12, Sept '85; 13, March '86; 14, Sept '86; 15, March '87.

'Henry Williamson and Wilfrid Meynell', Father Brocard Sewell. No. 15, March '87, p. 18.

'The Apprenticeship of a Novelist: the early unpublished fiction of Henry Williamson', J.W. Blench. Part I, No. 17, March '88, p. 5; Part II, No. 18, Sept '88, p. 39; Part III, No. 19, March '89, p. 31.

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