

Letters

In reply to Pat Murphy's letter regarding my article 'South Devon Days'; Journal 24; I have to disagree with his statement 'the trap H.W. set for his reader.' I don't propose to elaborate on any topographical points any further than I did in my article but I am in no doubt that the substituting of, certainly, Vention Sands for Malandine Sands, South Molton for Marlborough and Braunton for Queensbridge would indeed be the readers' error. Henry had spent some time in this area, that we do know and his descriptions were taken precisely from the landscapes here in the South Ham. I know Pat and I discussed this briefly at Woolacombe last October but once again I offer the challenge; come and see for yourself. The landscapes of this corner of South Devon are incredibly similar to Henry's country and coastline in the North of the county and whilst I accept Pat's points on The Sun in the Sands, the reader would, I believe, be sadly misled by transferring the locations in The Innocent Moon to North Devon.

I've just returned from a walk on Bolt Tail and through 'Esperance', Hope Cover; the summer migrants are all here, the early purple orchids are flowering in profusion. 'Still the beautiful clouds lie over the downs the larks are singing, the wheat rising green. There is hope in the wide and open sky.'

Come and join me in a celebration to Henry sometime!

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Not having discovered the works of Henry Williamson until fairly late in my life, (better late than never!), I am probably not the first person to have spotted the 'howler' made by Theodora in 'Donkey Boy' where she says to her friend Rechenda, '... that though Pestalozzi was famous in his day, a hundred years or more ago, his ideas should still be, in Keats' phrase, 'caviare to the general'.'

Possibly she was at the time, in Keats' phrase, 'Lost in a sort of Purgatory blind' not remembering that 'caviare to the general' was a phrase used by Shakespeare in 'Hamlet'.

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I noticed in a recent edition of the Journal a reference to Henry on Lundy Island. As a member of the Lundy Field Society I am aware that a new book on the Island is underway. Does any member know offhand of a passage from one of Henry's books which could be included in such a selection?

I obviously only wish to know where it occurs and matters of copyright will be cleared by the publisher after the information is passed on.

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