

Editorial

The London Branch of the T. E. Lawrence Society asked our President to give them a talk on the relationship between HW and TEL at their Spring 1992 meeting. This entailed research on my part to prepare a paper for Richard to read. In view of the misapprehensions that arose after TEL's death, which in many ways are still maintained, it is important that the facts should be objectively set out. So I hope that you will not feel it inappropriate that it is printed in this issue of the *Journal*. Part I is basically the paper given to the TEL Society on 12th March 1992, except that a brief *résumé* of HW's biographical details has been omitted here whilst some pertaining to TEL have been added in (the assumption being that each Society is aware of facts pertaining to its own protégé, but not necessarily to those of the other). Part II will appear in the next Issue and will examine the aftermath of this relationship, and also that of HW and Richard Aldington in so far as it is pertinent to rounding off the TEL picture.

It is amazingly apposite that Ronald Walker should have examined HW's writing from a hypothesis which immediately lifts our eyes from a particular example in real life (i.e. the honour of a particular friendship) to a general overview of the total oeuvre. It was Brian Fullagar who pointed out the connection, saying in his notes on the circulated material; 'Link "The Genius of Friendship" with Ronald Walker's "The Honour of Life" — i.e. HW's great sense of loyalty, power and despair of human love, the heroic truth of the brotherhood of man.'

Ron, as he states in his opening paragraph, took his title from a closing passage of *The Gold Falcon*, in which HW links the phoenix and the turtle (Ed's underlining) with the honour of life. *The Gold Falcon* was published in 1933 and arose from HW's first visit to the USA in the autumn of 1930. Quite independently of this, I had made an exciting discovery which has a direct connection. In the course of researching the TEL/HW article I read for the first time HW's 'Threnos for T.E. Lawrence' published in two parts in *The European* in May and June 1954. The article itself is remarkable enough but I felt immediately drawn to the poem which heads it, simply attributed to Shakespeare.

*Beauty, truth and rarity
Grace in all simplicity
Here enclosed in cinders lie*

I could have passed it by; it is suitably apt for HW's subject. It could have had no more significance than that. But I instinctively felt it was of great importance. They were not lines I knew — four more verses are actually quoted. Investigation into the source proved very fruitful. The lines come from a longer poem entitled 'The Phoenix and the Turtle' and the verses actually quoted are subtitled 'Threnos'.

HW's 'Threnos' fits into Part II of 'The Genius of Friendship' so, having planted the thought in your minds, I will examine the implications of 'The Phoenix and the Turtle' in the next issue. But it is interesting that HW had already used the ambience of its import over twenty years before in *The Gold Falcon*, and again in *The Star-Born* (two volumes which have merit currently unheeded).

For the rest, let me recommend the Society's excursion to 'Wiper's Land'. As Ronald Walker draws on many examples from 'the war novels' to illustrate his thesis, the thought process is not unconnected.

AW