

Letters

I wonder if you, or any society member would know the location of the farm '4 Winds' near Shoreham, W. Sussex, which HW viewed with a view to purchase. This is quite well described in 'Norfolk Farm' (As a disaster!)

As a Sussex Downsman born and bred, I sometimes imagine the book on my shelf could easily have been 'The Story of a Sussex Farm'! Being born in Shoreham I would like to view and photograph the site.

I thought the letter from the little girl in the Journal No. 27 was quite moving. My own 9 yr old daughter is just starting her first 'Tarka', after watching the video about 20 times!

*Phillip Melling
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I have been a devoted admirer of Henry Williamson's writings for the past sixty years. There is, however, one constantly recurring thought that irritates me somewhat. It is this: The sun sees no shadows.

If the Sun could see, it would certainly see shadows. It is the cause of shadows. Without the sun there would be no

shadows. What does Henry mean by this statement? I imagine he means without prejudice, or without pre-conceived ideas. Am I right, or have I missed the point altogether?

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Ed: The sun may cause shadows but because it is directly behind the object it illuminates, it surely cannot see them? When you think about this it is quite significant; if HW had seen the 'shadows' things might have been very different. My understanding of the phrase is that he means to be objective, to throw equal light on every 'object'.

I enjoyed Peter Lewis' article on the Hawthornden Prize very much. However I looked in vain on his list of prizewinners for a mention of Emyr Humphreys and his novel A Toy Epic. On the cover of my Grey Arrow paperback it states this book won the 1959 prize and that Mr Humphreys was the only Welshman beside David Jones to have won the Hawthornden Prize.

Also a belated note re Margaret White's Road to the Somme from Journal 18. She quotes the poem 'In Flanders Fields' and names the author as 'Gordon McCrae' instead of John McCrae(1872-1918).

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Brocard Sewell's letter (Issue No. 27, March 1993) on Oswald Mosley's campaign at the 1959 General Election can not be allowed to pass unchallenged.

To describe as 'nursing' the constituency, the kind of activities and campaigning pursued by Mosley's supporters and hangers-on in North Kensington in the run-up to the election is to lend a novel meaning indeed to that word; for a more sober assessment, readers may refer to Nicholas Mosley's eye-witness account of the election and its aftermath in his biography of his father.

To give the impression that all that stood between Mosley and certain victory at the Poll were 'professionally organised opponents" and ballot riggers is an optimistic view of events. As Mosley's opponents between them gained more than 30,000 votes compared to his own 2,600 (resulting in a lost deposit), fraud on a massive and blatant scale would have been required. In fact, contrary to Brocard Sewell's assertion, Mosley's petition was indeed heard, and his case comprehensively demolished, not least on account of his own sudden inability to substantiate in court his dramatic claims (see All England Law Reports 1960 Vol. 2 p.150). Leaving aside its inaccuracy, it is this final sentence which most disturbs –

'Unfortunately the petition was rejected ...'. To follow the implication of that 'Unfortunately' leads us abruptly out of the domain of history and into the less comfortable realms of contemporary value judgement.

I would not be a member of the Society were I not to believe that, despite everything, the inspiration emanating from the he life and writings of Henry Williamson has a universal validity, transcending all boundaries of race and creed; and furthermore, that Nature as revealed in the English country-side, to whose beauty he opened so many eyes, should be accessible to all people regardless of their origins or the colour of their skin, including the children and grandchildren of those blameless residents of North Kensington who directly or indirectly had to endure the consequences of Oswald Mosley's rhetoric in 1959.

In promoting Henry Williamson we have – it goes without saying – to accept him in his totality, and it barely needs repeating this this in turn requires us to confront some uncomfortable truths. Doubtless too, the Society's membership encompasses a diversity of opinions and outlooks reflecting Henry Williamson's own preoccupations and allegiances, and hopefully we are adult enough to accept that fact. It is quite a different matter, however, to be giving up previous Journal space to stale rationalisations which seek to explain away the final decline of a political leader and his movement, whose aims and objectives it has never been the Society's purpose to promote or justify.

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