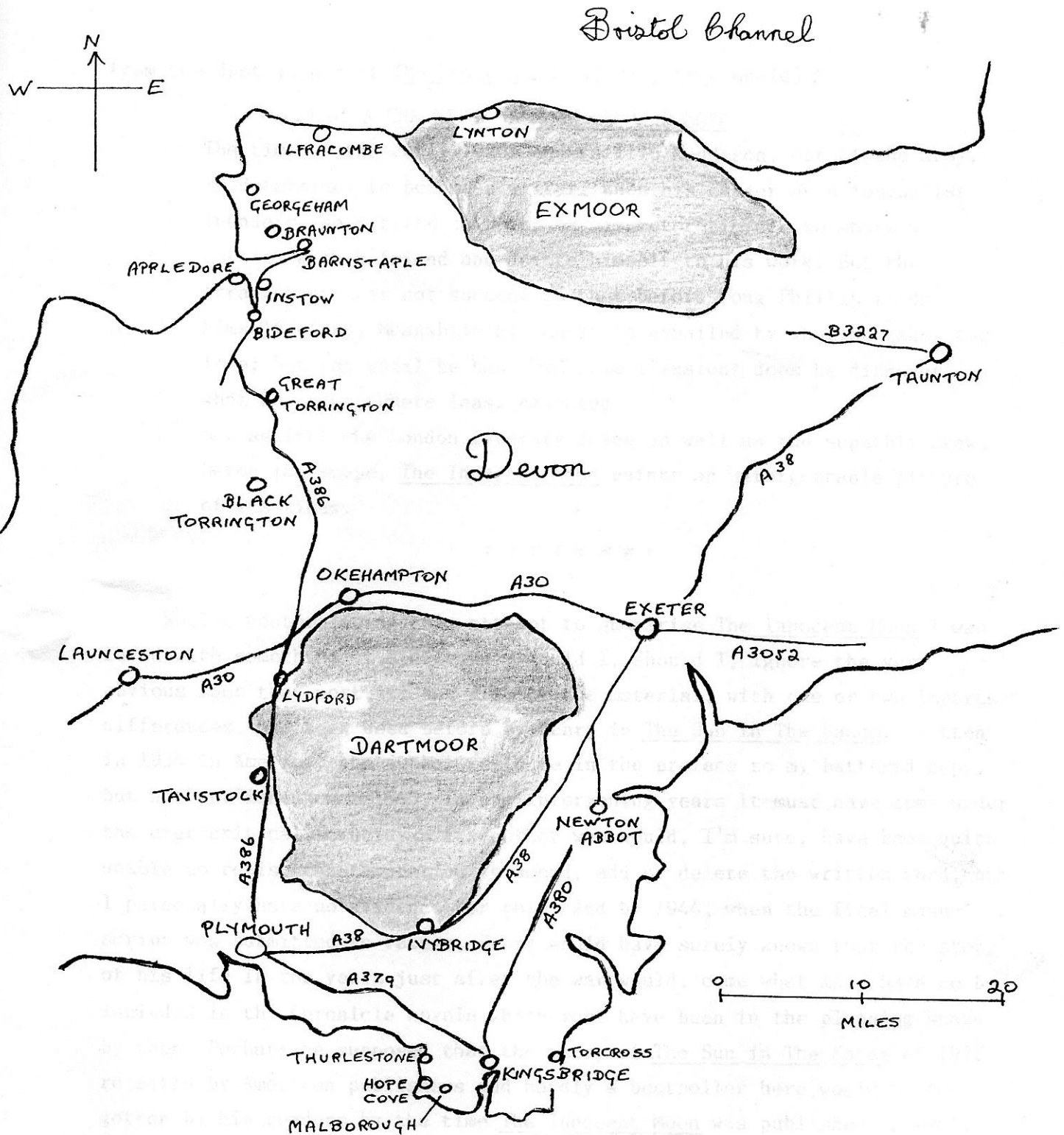


THE INNOCENT MOON

AN INDEX





I have tried to locate 'Malandine' on a real map, but not very hard, for of course it is wholly fictional. But we know that it is a five-mile walk from 'Queensbridge' (which is probably Kingsbridge), see page 408; and it is a 20-minute cab ride from 'Queensbridge', see page 146. The road from 'Queensbridge' runs through the village of 'Clayborough' (which might be Malborough), see page 408. 'Malandine' is near the sea, for Phillip could smell the sea when approaching the village, see page 150, and there are several references to 'Malandine' sands e.g. pages 41, 158, 173, 203. 'Esperance Cove' (probably Hope Cove) is a short pony-and-trap ride down a narrow winding lane from 'Malandine', see pp 177/178 - this puts one in mind of the lane down from Georgeham to Croyde.

from the dust jacket of The Innocent Moon(1961),(Macdonald) :

Vol.9 of A CHRONICLE OF ANCIENT SUNLIGHT

The time is the early 1920s and Phillip Maddison, out of the army, is determined to become a writer. When his career as a journalist founders, he retires to Devon on his motor bicycle to share a cottage with a friend and devote himself to his work. But the arrangement does not succeed so that before long Phillip finds himself alone. Meanwhile his heart is assailed by what he takes for love; but not until he has shed some illusions does he discover what he seeks, where least expected.

Set against the London literary scene as well as the superbly drawn Devon landscape, The Innocent Moon paints an unforgettable picture of its times.

* * * * *

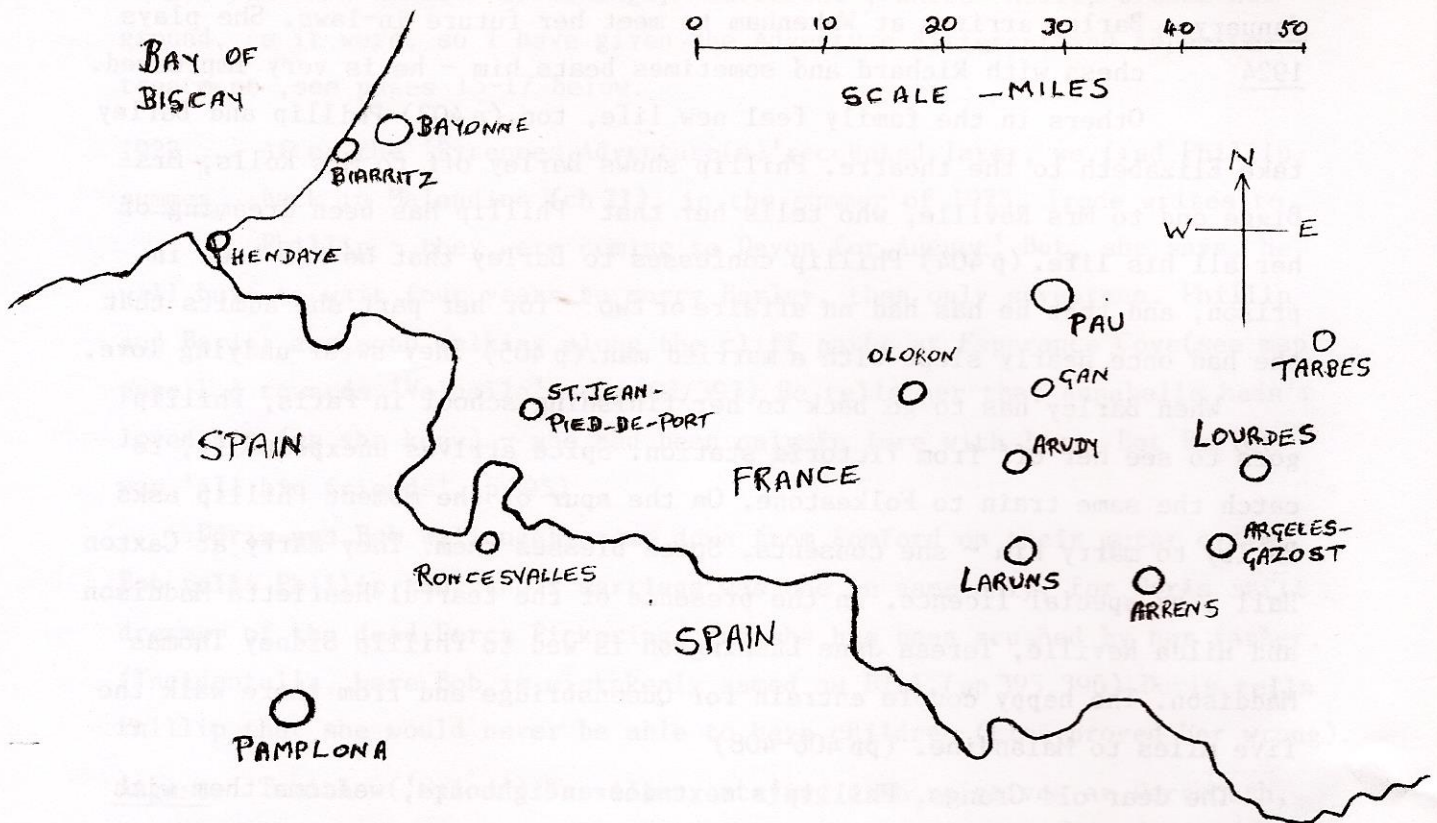
Whilst contemplating this attempt to summarise The Innocent Moon I was faced with something of a dilemma - could I, should I, ignore the very obvious fact that most, if not all, of the material, with one or two important differences, had been used before by Henry in The Sun in The Sands, written in 1934 in America, the author tells me in the preface to my battered copy, but not published until 1945. In the intervening years it must have come under the ever-critical scrutiny of its author who would, I'm sure, have been quite unable to resist the temptation to amend, add or delete the written word, but I personally have no evidence for this. And by 1944, when the final manuscript was submitted to Fabers, Henry would have surely known that the story of his life in the years just after the war would, come what may, have to be included in the Chronicle novels which must have been in the planning stage by then. Perhaps he supposed that the story of The Sun in The Sands of 1945, rejected by American publishers and hardly a bestseller here, would be forgotten by his readers by the time The Innocent Moon was published in 1961, even if his new publishers Macdonald must have known about the earlier book. No matter, a literary device or two would suffice, and the new book would survive on its own merit, as indeed it has.

Williamson's first ploy was to move the village in which the main events of both novels take place from North Devon to South Devon, in the later book, and to disguise, albeit thinly, most of the characters by giving them new names. Then he gave the 'new' book a happy ending, always good for sales (Tarka, Salar and The Pathway, where the protagonists die on us, are 'old hat' by 1961). For my part, I have decided, from the outset of this summary,

to leave The Sun in The Sands to look after itself and, remembering that comparisons can be invidious, have included only one paragraph below to locate the different settings of the villages in the two novels, together with that important last episode, The Pyrenees Adventure, from the earlier book.

At the beginning of The Sun in The Sands 'H.W.' on his new Norton motor-cycle sets off to the West Country on what he mistakenly describes as the Great West Road (which is actually the A4 London/Bristol road), taking the A303 through Basingstoke, Andover, Mere, Wincanton and Sparkford. Beyond Sparkford he turns off on to what is now the A372 through Langport and into Taunton, so evidently, although no further towns are named, he is making for North Devon. His companion, 'Julian Warbeck', travelling down by train with their 'luggage', arrives at Skirr cottage (ch 5) by taxi from 'Branton' (Braunton), the nearest station. There can be no doubt that H.W.'s village, though never named, is Georgeham, with, for instance, its two pubs the Higher House and the Lower House, and its Skirr cottage (small c) under the churchyard wall just past the Kings Arms pub (the Lower House), within walking distance of an estuary beyond sand dunes. But 'Malandine', Phillip Maddison's fictional village featured in The Innocent Moon, is very firmly placed in South Devon, near 'Esperance Cove' (Hope Cove), 'Clayborough' (Malborough), 'Turnstone' (Thurlestone) and 'Queensbridge' (Kingsbridge), all places south of 'Fernbridge' (Ivybridge) and Dartmoor.

* * * * *



In May 1924 Henry Williamson went on a walking tour in the Pyrenees in the company of two journalist friends, D. Bevan Wyndham Lewis and Johnny B. Morton. (see biog p 91) Williamson draws on this experience when reliving this adventure in fiction in both The Sun in The Sands (1945) and in The Innocent Moon. (1961) In the earlier book he is himself (more or less), and he is accompanied, at Easter 1923, by 'Johnny', 'Johnny's cousin 'Guy', and 'Bevan'. 'H.W.', Bevan and Guy travel by train from London to Bayonne in France (see map) via Boulogne and Paris, and are met there by Johnny who has gone on ahead of them. The four change trains at Hendaye for Pamplona, in Spain, and dine there. After the meal, in moonlight, they hire a car (with its drunken driver) to the highest point of the road at Roncesvalles and set off on foot to cross the border back into France. At dawn they trail into St Jean Pied-de-Port (foot of the pass) in the French foothills of the Pyrenees for breakfast. Johnny impatiently walks on and away from them and right out of the story, while Bevan, Guy and H.W. lounge about in the Basque village of St Jean, staying in cheap empty hotels. Soon they walk eastwards through Arudy to

Laruns. Bevan and Guy are tired of walking and decide to entrain next day for Chartres, near Paris, leaving H.W. to be entertained by Irene and Barley Lushington who happen to be staying in Laruns. (Irene's mother has a place there, see p 196) H.W. reads ^{some} of his manuscript of *The Star-Born*, which he happens to have with him, to Barley, who tells him she loves him and tries to dissuade him from walking the 20-odd miles over the mountains to Argeles Gazost where, also conveniently, the Selby-Lloyds are staying. But H.W. thinks he loves Annabelle, and he plans to propose to her. Barley insists that Annabelle is no good for him, and in any case the pass is blocked by snow and avalanche. Next day Guy and Bevan walk with him for some of the way then turn back to catch their train to Montparnasse, but H.W. presses on, risking life and limb, past Arrens and into Argeles. There he soon encounters the Selby-Lloyds en masse in the hotel, Annabelle attended by her beau Brian Talbot and his mother Lady Maude - all treat him in cavalier fashion, and he retreats to his hotel.

Then - tragedy. Barley, convinced that H.W. will not make it over the mountains because the dreaded le Corniche, the narrow track above the precipices, is blocked and the Col d'Aubisque closed, sets out to look for him, falls and dies. After the funeral H.W. entrains for Paris, stopping briefly at Lourdes. In Paris he joins Guy and Bevan, and they visit the Folies Bergeres - no mention of Johnny. Soon Guy and Bevan return to London; H.W. stays to walk over the old battlefields of the Somme; end of story, and book.

Phillip Maddison's foray into the Pyrenees, recorded in The Innocent Moon chs 19 & 20, also takes place at Easter 1923. His companions are the same as in The Sun in The Sands, except that two of them have different names: 'Rowley Meek', his cousin 'Archie Meek', and 'Bevan Swann'. When they arrive at Pamplona, as in the earlier book, they are driven by a drunken driver to the highest point of the road to Roncesvalles then trudge through the night in the footsteps of their predecessors in The Sun in The Sands down over the border past dozy Spanish frontier guards into St Jean Pied-de-Port in time for breakfast. Here the irascible Rowley, with a "So long, cretins!", strides away from them and out of the story. Our three remaining heroes eventually slog on through Arudy to Laruns where, surprise, Phillip meets up with Irene and Barley Lushington. Barley, as before, tries in vain to stop Phillip going on to see Annabelle Selby-Lloyd who is staying with her family at Argeles some 30 kilometres away. She points out that le Corniche is blocked and the Col d'Aubisque closed, and in any case Annabelle is bad for him. Barley tells him that she loves him; no good - ignoring all advice Phillip takes to the

hills, sans guide, sans snow-shoes. He miraculously survives intense heat, avalanche and terror to arrive exhausted at Arrens after twelve hours during which he realises that he does not love Annabelle after all - it is Barley! After coffee at Arrens he hobbles on to Argeles to join the Selby-Lloyds in the hotel, about to travel on to Pau. That night he learns that Barley, out looking for him on the mountain, has been found dead after falling from le Corniche. Phillip is 'fixed unendurably in the horror of time'. (p 388)

But wait! Henry relents, and this time gives us a happy ending. Yes, it's all been just a horrible dream - Barley lives. (She has the same dream, about him.) Phillip visits Lourdes before returning by train from Pau through Gan and Arudy to Laruns, where he stays for a few days with the Lushingtons. Barley agrees to marry him when she is eighteen, if her father consents. (The Judge, separated from Irene, still lives in the Far East, while Irene has been dallying with Ivan the Terrible Swede. Eventually, Irene marries Phillip's Uncle Hilary - another failed marriage for both of them, sadly, but that is another story.)

other accounts of the Pyrenees escapade:

HW Society Journal no.8, October 1983 - in a letter to the editor, Father Brocard Sewell, vice-president of the Society, and a friend of all three, Williamson, J.B.Morton and D.B.Wyndham Lewis, refers to Henry's 'fictionalised work of autobiography', The Sun in The Sands. He relates how the three men 'set out on a visit to the Pyrenees', date not given. At some point Johnny and Bevan return home together leaving Henry 'to carry on alone'. Clearly this brief account differs in many ways from 'H.W.'s' own fictional account in The Sun in The Sands.

HW Society Journal no.11, April 1985 - in his article 'Beachcomber Rediscovered', John Homan, then the Society's esteemed Secretary, refers to the Pyrenees adventure which Henry shared with J.B.Morton and D.B.Wyndham Lewis, and clearly implies that it took place in 1924. (Henry, not yet married, lived alone at Georgeham at that time.) The episode, says Homan, somewhat revised, later appeared in The Innocent Moon, where the fictional names of Rowley Meek and Bevan Swann were used [for Phillip Maddison's companions]. Neither Fr Brocard nor John Homan mentions the fourth member of the expedition who in the earlier story is Johnny's cousin 'Guy' and in the later yarn is Rowley's cousin 'Archie', so clearly 'Guy' and 'Archie' are wholly fictional. But in both these accounts, at least, as in both novels, 'H.W.' and 'P.M.' are at one point left behind to go it alone.

* * * * *

characters in both The Sun in The Sands and The Innocent Moon

Dora (the farmer's daughter), Eveline Fairfax, General Gotley and his daughter Cynthia, Violet Hunt, Ivan the Terrible Swede, Irene and Barley Lushington, Lauritz Melchior, Jack O'Donovan, Bridget O'Malley, 'Woppy' Raymond, the Selby-Lloyds (Annabelle, Marcus, Queenie and Sophie), 'Naps' Spreycombe, Bevan Swann, Brian Talbot, Lady Maude Talbot, Porky Tanberry and family, Kay and Tabitha ('Spica') Trevilian, Julian Warbeck and his father, & 'Sailor' Zeale.

and many more including the following, with names changed for The Innocent Moon (here in brackets):

'Barleybright' ('Barley'), J.D.Beresford ((J.D.Woodford), 'Revv' Carter, (Walter Crang), Mrs Dawson-Scott (Mrs Portal-Welch), Johnny Morton (Rowley Meek), Guy Morton (Archie Meek), Walter de la Mare (Walter Ramal), Lord Northcliffe (Lord Castleton), Dr O'Connor (Dr MacNab), Lamprey, lawyer (Wigfull, lawyer), 'Pickles' and wife (Denis & Georgie Sisley), J.C.Squire (J.C.Knight), Tomorrow (P.E.N.) Club (Parnassus Club), Henry Williamson aka 'H.W.', Harry, Willie, Mr Wisson (Phillip Maddison, 'P.M.')

* * * * *

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	50 (4th anniversary of July 1916, so date is 1/7/1920)
	64 (August six years ago Phillip preparing for Mobilisation, so date is 2/8/1920)
	214 (Phillip, born 1895, is 26, so it is now 1921)
	283 (death of Lord 'Castleton', drawn on Lord Northcliffe who died 14/8/1922)
	399 (death of 'Willie Maddison',24/9/1923, year clearly noted in <u>It Was the Nightingale</u> p 159, and <u>Lucifer Before Sunrise</u> p 397)
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