

David Jones Unabridged

The Online version of David Jones
Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet

Thomas Dilworth

David Jones Unabridged,
the online extended version of
David Jones Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet
by Thomas Dilworth

Tell the truth—suppress nothing. —Harman Grisewood

It is about how everything turns into something else & how you can never tell when a bonza is cropping up ... & how everything is a balls-up & a kind of 'Praise' at the same time' —David Jones

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Preface

This is a comprehensive biography of David Jones (1895-1974). It is an extension of *David Jones Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, which was promised in that book. The present text is a slight revision of the final uncut typescript of the book, which, for print-publication, had to be halved and then reduced a further 350 pages.¹ Over three-times longer than the Cape book (as I call it), the present version provides more biographical detail, more illustrations, and fuller context, including more information about people in Jones's life. It contains richer analysis of his visual art and of his poetry, from which it quotes. And it quotes more extensively from his manuscripts and letters. For some, this unabridged version will serve as a David Jones database, but it is biography, not an archive. Since its 1414 pages download all at once, it is digitally searchable in its entirety. But the Index of the Cape book may remain helpful. Whoever finds this long version useful, interesting, or enjoyable may wish more comfortably to read the Cape book.

To safeguard the interest of the publishers of that version and copyright protection for Jones's visual art, the present online text-with-pictures cannot be computer-copied as a whole or in part. Pages are printable, but that reduces vividness of pictorial images. Unlike the Cape book, this version groups endnotes after each chapter. And unlike the Cape book, this version has not been proofread except by me, and I apologize for typos and other errors. Acknowledgements in this online version appear after the final chapter, but I want to emphasize from the start my gratitude to the trustees of the estate of David Jones. Without their permission freely to quote him and reproduce his visual art, there could be no biography of much substance.

A preface to a book is usually written not by the author of the book but someone else, who commends the book, its writer, or its topic. With this precedent in mind, I can perhaps be forgiven for handing over the rest of this preface to reviewers of *David Jones Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet*, which the present online text more-or-less contains:

Those of us who love the work of David Jones have been waiting for years for this book. Dilworth has done magnificent work. He has an instinctive feel for Jones's haunting paintings, and above all the symbolic watercolours. He rightly insists on the greatness of the two long poems, *In Parenthesis* and *The*

¹ The shortened text was published in London by Jonathan Cape, 2017, Vintage paperback, 2019, and (audio recording by Leighton Pugh) RNIB, 2017 and in Berkeley Ca. by Counterpoint Press, 2017.

Anthemata. And he tells the story of the heartbreaking life with neither prurience nor condescension, evoking Jones's ability to make art out of heartbreak. As well as being a richly enjoyable biography, this book will remain the essential work of reference for those who return frequently to the poems, to the lettering ... and the paintings. It is a portrait of a wholly lovable human being. One feels ennobled to have read it. —A.N. Wilson, 'Books of the Year', *Times Literary Supplement*.

Everything is illuminated ... the point of reference for Jones's life for a long time to come. [Dilworth's] research is exhaustive. He ... provides a wealth of detail on every page. ... This biography is a landmark. —Rowan Williams, *New Statesman*.

Unquestionably now the major and most reliable factual source on its subject.
—Merlin James, *Burlington Magazine*.

A perfect biography, a marvellous match of subject and writer. —Melanie McDonagh, *Evening Standard*.

Absolutely an extraordinary biography, a joy to read ... a wild journey through this man's singular career... Dilworth establishes himself as the master of the art.
—Max Porter (editor of *Granta*), 'This Month's Editor Tip', BBC Radio 4.

At the very least, Dilworth's book is a splendid example of biography-making, unlikely to be superseded for many decades to come. ... exemplary within the genre. ... Dilworth has researched his man properly; and as importantly, he has selected and shaped the fruits of his research into a gracefully written and fitly proportioned whole ... I cannot recommend it highly enough, both as an adjunct to an appreciation of Jones's literary and visual achievements, and as a literary achievement in its own right.
—Mark Scroggins, *Notre Dame Review*.

Those interested in Jones's art or in his singular poetry will not be disappointed with the careful, delicate way Dilworth connects them to his confounding story. But the real joy of his book is not analytical. It is that it makes Jones so vivid. —Rachel Cooke, *Observer*.

Exceeds even our high expectations for its readability and insight With his well-known ability to synthesize biography, literary analysis, art criticism and psychology, Dilworth shows us how these relationships helped to shape some of Jones's major works. ... [he writes with] subtlety and wisdom Its insights will offer scholars fresh access to the sources and complexities of Jones's views on culture, his aesthetic and theological commitments, and his practice of arts, not least the arts of love and friendship.
—Kathleen Henderson Staudt, *Religion and Literature*.

Dilworth does justice to this deeply spiritual, original artist and poet the reader will find everything of interest.... Apart from his great skill in expounding the poetry, and his intuitive knowledge and love of the visual art, Dilworth is memorably intelligent and sensitive in describing Jones's many intense and emotional relationships with women. ... Dilworth is deft in tracing two of the essential ingredients in Jones's life and work. One is the way that his poetry ... often came to him, as it were, ready-made.... The

other ... is the texture of Catholic life in England between the wars. [a] wonderful book.'

—A.N. Wilson, *Spectator*.

Eminently readable [owing] to Dilworth's pliant literary style, but also to his organization, like grouping the text into bite-sized pieces. ... the text is such that it accommodates all sorts of readers.

—Anne Price Owen, *Europe Now*

Beautiful, exquisite—an amazing read Dilworth is here taking his time to set the record straight on David Jones, and he does so with aplomb. I took my time reading this, savoring every moment of the feast, getting to know Jones as I never thought I would. I appreciated all the homely details—that is, what his daily life was actually like—as well as the tracing of the books and people who were his artistic, intellectual, and spiritual influences. Jones struggled with sometimes severe depression—and both the good and the bad of the treatments he received are uncovered. His many close friendships come wonderfully to life here—including the three main loves of his life.... Dilworth 'gets' Jones's ... Catholic faith. His evocation of Jones's part in the Chelsea Group of mostly Catholic humanists brilliantly emphasizes the artistic and intellectual strength of the early 20th century Catholic revival. —D. Kovacs, *Amazon.com*

An expert teaser of meaning from Jones's elusive, allusive art. ... particularly good when tracing the books, poems, and half-remembered songs that Jones had read or heard and what he took from each. ... draws out his oddness and visionary intelligence in this moving biography. —Laura Freeman, *Standpoint*.

Dilworth is the man to write about David Jones. He's most likely the world's leading expert on Jones, and this book serves as a fantastic introduction to the person some call the Blake of the 20th century. ... what Dilworth ... did was quite genius: his biography is inspired (whether consciously or not) by the spiritual architecture of Jones's painting. Everything is presented as vital to the totality, with barriers and window frames obliterated and all people and events becoming equally illuminated, sharing light, and snared in a common web of metaphysical energy. Any biography meant to act as a conduit for Jones's vision would necessarily have to succumb to influence of that vision's power. Dilworth's book is both ambitious and humble enough to do so. —Scott Beauchamp, *The Conservative*.

His full-dress Life, ... his close-grained account ... reflects the tenacity and hiddenness of its subject is attentive to Jones as a chap, rather than ordering the life at the cost of its recalcitrant and scattered realia, since for Jones everything bore witness. ... this Life is more than the sum of its parts.

—Paul Keegan, *London Review of Books*.

Wonderfully well written Dilworth is that rare thing: a scholar who has the capacity for great clarity.

—Rachel Cooke, *Guardian*.

If Thomas Dilworth had chosen to arrange the material ... a bit differently, a big-budget biopic starring Daniel Radcliffe would already have been announced. All the necessary sensations are there In fact, the time for a Jones biopic may be ripe. ... Dilworth has followed Jones's own methodology of intense observation and jarring contrast. Nobody alive knows more about David Jones Dilworth ... doesn't

assault readers with theories — he collates relevant data and organizes it in a chronicle, and he lets the stories speak for themselves. The chronological organization permits Dilworth to spin out several different threads without bewildering the reader. insightful handling of Jones's visual art: not merely Jones's greatest hits, but significant works that also mark significant life events. Dilworth's insightful comment on the impact of [Jones's map-making during the war] is worth the price of the book.

—Kevin McMahon, *Los Angeles Review of Books*.

As lucid, sympathetic and insightful a life as could be hoped for. Jones emerges from it strongly now surely ready to take his place at the head of 20th century English letters and art.

—Brian Morton, *Sunday Herald*.

David Jones now has ...a biography worthy of his originality and genius.

—Michael Dirda, *Washington Post*

David Jones Engraver, Soldier, Painter, Poet was chosen as Book of the Year by A.N. Wilson, *Times Literary Supplement*; Claire Harman, *Times Literary Supplement*; Melanie McDonagh, *Evening Standard*; Christopher House, *Tablet*; Adam Thorpe, *Resurgence & Ecologist*.

—Tom Dilworth, Windsor, Ontario, 1 November 2021

Introduction

David Jones (1895-1974) is *sui generis*. A latter-day British original in visual art and poetry, in some respects he resembles William Blake. Both were highly accomplished visual artists as well as poets. Both were poor. Both lived and worked for most of their adult lives in a single rented room. And work by both—Jones's poetry, Blake's visual art and poetry—was neglected during their lifetimes and for decades after. (Jones's poetry suffered academic neglect.) Both were Christian in vision, although Jones loved nature and history, while Blake did not. Comparable to Blake as an outstanding engraver, Jones was a better painter and a far greater poet.

Widespread academic appreciation of Jones's poetry was delayed by the decades-long failure of its English publisher to list his writing as poetry or Jones as a poet. Academic being the sort of creatures they are, that postponed incorporation of his poems into the modernist literary canon. (A book on the modern long poem published in 1986 makes no mention of either of Jones's epic-length poems.) Practitioners in the arts praised his poetry—these included T.S. Eliot, Igor Stravinsky, Graham Greene, Edith Sitwell, Dylan Thomas, and Henry Moore. But for a quarter of a century, the only academics to show interest in his writing were Herbert Read and W.F. Jackson Knight, both of whom considered Jones a great poet. Not until 1962 was an academic article published on any of his poetry, and not until 1971 did a book appear on the whole of his work. Till then and largely since, he has been a poet's poet, admired by, among others unmentioned above, W.B. Yeats (who revered *In Parenthesis*), W.H. Auden, Basil Bunting, R.S. Thomas, Robin Robertson, Michael Symmons Roberts, John Montague, Robert Lowell, Louis Zukofsky, John Matthias, Robert Kroetsch, Fred Wah, and Phil Hall. The former US poet laureate W.S. Merwin wrote in 2009, 'David Jones, I believe, is one of the greatest twentieth century poets in English. I have thought so since I first began to read him, years ago, and my regard for his gift has deepened with continued reading.' And he kindly added, 'as Prof. Dilworth makes the background of those writing clearer and more comprehensible, he confirms the power, depth, and relevance of the work as a whole.'ⁱ

David Jones's first published writing was his epic poem, *In Parenthesis* (1937). W.H. Auden considered it 'a masterpiece', 'the greatest book about the First World War'. The novelist and poet Adam Thorpe wrote that it 'towers above any other prose or verse memorial of that war (indeed, of any war).' It is the greatest literary work on war in English. Also epic-length, Jones's second poem, *The Anathemata* (1952), is a dramatic-symbolic anatomy of western culture. After

its publication, T.S. Eliot included him in the company of the foremost literary modernists: himself (Eliot), James Joyce, and Ezra Pound. In 1977, Auden declared *The Anathemata* ‘probably the finest long poem written in English in this century’. Jones himself considered it his best single creative work. (He said he regarded his poetry as more important than his visual art.) In *The Sleeping Lord* (1974), he published mid-length poems, which W.S. Merwin considered ‘treasures’. Reviewing them, Seamus Heaney called Jones ‘an extraordinary writer’ who ‘enriches not only the language but people’s consciousness of who they have been and who they ... are’. Soon after, the Scottish poet Hugh MacDiarmid publicly acclaimed Jones as ‘the best English poet of the twentieth century.’ⁱⁱ

In appreciation by others, Jones’s poetry has had constantly to play catchup with his visual art, which was well and successfully exhibited during his life, has been since, and is now easily viewable online. For example, see its use to illustrate a fifteen-minute talk on Jones given by me on YouTube: <<https://www.lrb.co.uk/podcasts-and-videos/videos/bookshop-events-films/david-jones-a-guide-to-the-poet-and-artist-with-thomas-dilworth>>. And of course, many of his pictures illustrate this online biography and the Cape version. It is true, however, that most of his paintings cannot be quickly seen. They are crowded, subtle, unified but daringly verging on chaos. Adequate, intelligent viewing requires looking for a long time. (Analogously, the poetry needs to be reread.) This is not true of his engravings, which instantly reveal their mastery of design. He was in the vanguard of the modern revival of wood engraving and, by 1928, was among the best living engravers in wood and copper. He created two enduring masterpieces of book illustration: *The Chester Play of the Deluge* (1927) and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1929). Afterwards, he became chiefly known as a painter in watercolours. By 1932 he was the best-selling member of the Seven and Five Society (then the most popular group exhibiting in London) and recognized by H.S. (Jim) Ede and Kenneth Clark as one of the foremost living British painters.ⁱⁱⁱ

David Jones is also the author of an original and compelling theory of culture. In it he differentiates between utility and gratuity as psychologically in (or out of) balance in historical phases and individual people. Civilization is characterized by utility, of which the only value is efficiency. Culture is characterized by gratuitous acts and objects that tend to become signs. (Birthday cakes symbolize love, whereas wrenches symbolize nothing.) The value of gratuity may include beauty, goodness, or truth. Articulated in essays published in *Epoch and Artist*

(1959) and informing *The Anathemta* and his later poetry, his culture theory was praised by the New York art critic Harold Rosenberg as formulating ‘the axiomatic precondition for understanding contemporary creation’ and by the US critic Guy Davenport as realizing the ‘configuration ... into which culture seems to be shaped, and the historical processes that shaped it.’^{iv}

As a person, Jones was neither self-important nor shy. And he had a remarkable gift for friendship, which consisted largely of ready affection for others. Knowing this and interested, as you may be, in his work, in the 1960s (assuming you were alive and old enough) you might have visited him. Anyone could. Let us say that you are—I’ll shift into the historical present tense—indeed visiting him. Telephone ahead and go in the afternoon. You walk south from the Harrow underground station uphill toward the famous public school. On the left side of Peterborough Road is a large, grey-brick Victorian boarding house, ‘Northwick’ painted on one porch pillar, ‘Lodge’ on the other. The bell clangs loudly, but if no one answers, walk in. You pass through a large hallway—to the left a dining room with long table and places set, to the right an empty sitting room. Ascend the creaking staircase past the half-landing up to the first (North American second) floor. Knock at the door at the back—it has no name or number on it. You hear a low ‘Come in’. The room is large, its walls hung with framed watercolours and painted inscriptions but mostly lined with packed bookshelves rising nearly to the ceiling. A single bed on your left is loaded with books, a slagheap of (unanswered) letters, and a large blue-and-white china meat platter filled with pencils, sharpening-knives, biros, and brushes. On the floor are thigh-high stacks of mostly newspapers. Beyond the far large double window and through the feathery branches of a tall acacia is a falling-away view to the distant sweep of London’s skyline from the Dome of St. Paul’s to the Battersea Power Station. Before the window is a table, on which a forest of brushes bristles in marmalade jars. He sits there. In repose, his face conveys immense sadness. He looks up at you over yellow horn-rimmed spectacles, rises to shake your hand, offers you a chair, and sits in one near you. He speaks haltingly, with deliberation, in a richly timbred voice, communicating largely with his hands and facial expression. Looking down at his lap and fiddling with a pencil, he reminisces, slowly becomes interested, more animated, glances up, smiling his eyes alight, expecting you to get a joke or catch the significance of a reference. Never still, his hands cup to contain one thought, sweep to dismiss another, or his right hand aimlessly pushes a ballpoint over scrap paper. He speaks from immense depth of mind with great feeling,

weaving aloud a tapestry of associations. He mentions something ‘Tom’ Eliot said to him about fire-watching during the Blitz, then relating an experience he had during night patrol in no-man’s land, recalls Yeats bowing from the waist to ‘salute the author of *In Parenthesis*’, expresses enthusiasm for Ben Nicholson’s paintings, remembers Walter Sickert complaining of ‘stacks of unsold fucking pictures at home’, declares his love for the paintings of Pierre Bonnard, and perhaps—to accommodate what he senses are your background and interests—says he read *Moby Dick* twice. One thing leads to another. Occasionally he drags nicotine-stained fingers through the graying hair falling over his forehead. (You notice his frayed shirt-cuffs the extraordinary thickness of his wrists.) Interrupted and redirected by your questions and comments, he talks for five or six hours, often humourously, his mind alternating between anecdotes about people and strands of history, some of it Welsh, which he relates and explains in detail. He disapproves of Spenser’s attitude towards Ireland and thinks *Faerie Queene* bogus but has little negative to say about anyone. An exception is Oliver Cromwell, whom he nevertheless praises as a soldier and for his organization of the cavalry. Stalin, he says, ‘had a genius for tyranny.’ Mention Gertrude Stein, and he silently makes a face. There is no sense of formality or distance, only his impressive intelligence, the originality of his judgment and insight, his amusement, his pondering pauses and slow modulation of his voice, his expressive face, and—though you and he have not met before this afternoon—his affection for you.

When negotiating the materials that contribute to a biography, it is infinitely helpful to have known the subject personally, as I did, albeit slightly. (I visited him four times in 1971-2, each visit lasting about five-and-a-half hours.) You can now see and hear him for yourself in a 1965 television interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psQkOT7eNwE>. Except that during the interview he usually averts his eyes from the powerful lights then used for filming, this is the man you are visiting.

Notes to Introduction

ⁱ W.S. Merwin to author, 7 April 2009.

ⁱⁱ Auden, quoted in *David Jones Man and Poet*, ed. John Matthias (Orono, Maine: National Poetry Foundation, 1989), p. 45; Thorpe, ‘Distressed Perspectives,’ *Poetry Review* 86 (Spring 1996), 56; Eliot, ‘A Note of

Introduction', David Jones, *In Parenthesis* (London: Faber, 1961), p. viii; Auden, *A Certain World* (New York: Viking, 1970), p. 373; *The Spectator* (4 May 1974), 547; MacDiarmid speaking at Central London Polytechnic, 19 October 1974. (Saunders Lewis, too, considered Jones an English, not a Welsh, poet.)

ⁱⁱⁱ Jones's visual art is reproduced in Nicolette Gray, *The Painted Inscriptions of David Jones* (1981) and *The Paintings of David Jones* (1989), Jonathan Miles and Derek Shiel, *David Jones, the Maker Unmade* (1995) and Ariane Bankes and Paul Hills, *The Art of David Jones* (2015).

^{iv} 'Aesthetics of Crisis', *The New Yorker* (22 Aug. 1964), pp114, 115, 122; 'In Love with All Things Made,' *New York Times Book Review* (17 October 1982), 9.

Part I: Beginnings

Chapter 1: 1895-1909

At 8:54 on the cold and foggy evening of 1 November 1895, he was born, into an argument. His Welsh father wanted to name him David. His English mother wanted to name him Dorian after the protagonist of Oscar Wilde's novel. The father protested against any association with Wilde, whose trials in the spring of the year had been a public scandal. From her bed of travail, she angrily, 'I suppose I can have some say in the naming of my own son. I do not care what is said about Wilde. I think *The Importance of Being Ernest* the most brilliant and certainly the most amusing play ever written. I dislike the name Oscar, and therefore, Dorian *it shall be!*' Six and a half years before, she had named their first son, Harold Thomas Peart Jones and two years later had given her own first name to her daughter, Alice Mary, called Cissy to avoid confusion. The father had wanted their first child named after his younger brother David, who died four years before. She refused then and, to his proposing to give that name to their second son, she also refused. In the face of moral opprobrium and paternal conviction about the derision that 'Dorian' would elicit, however, after further struggle, grudgingly, she compromised: the boy would not have to endure for the rest of his life the question, 'Got a picture in your attic?' But she was determined that England would not lose this battle and, from the high ground of having relinquished her name-choice for the good of the child, she insisted that he be named Walter. 'David' could be his middle name.¹ Not a family name, 'Walter' was chosen probably in homage to Walter Pater, who, having gained a following in Wilde and the aesthetes, had recently died in middle age at the height of his fame. The child would later insist on being called 'David,' and that is what I will call him, though for most of his childhood he was Walter.

His thirty-five-year-old father was among the more benign of Victorian fathers. With copper-tinged brown hair and a large droopy moustache, Jim Jones bore a slight resemblance to his fellow North Welshman and favourite politician, David Lloyd George. He had a fiery temper and could be quite stern but was usually gentle, generous, affectionate, and humble. He played the harmonium, sang beautifully in a resonant voice, smiled easily and often, had a ready sense of humour, and would laugh uproariously. He advised his children, 'If you can't find something

good to say about somebody, say nothing’—a rule he lived by and so would his son David, partly for what would become psychological reasons in his adolescence. Jim was devoid of worldly ambition. Those who knew him considered him genuinely holy. These included his English nephews, who regarded his Welshness as a quaint eccentricity and considered him personally a bit of a joke. They put a rubber bladder under his plate surreptitiously to raise and lower it by squeezing a bulb as he ate, and he good-naturedly played along with the joke. In nearly all circumstances he was calm, but with ‘inward strength,’ which his son David would ascribe to ‘Welsh ‘refusal to give in.’ Temperamentally in touch with his feelings, Jim could verbally express himself freely and with ease in any circumstance, however stressful—an ability thought Welsh and would himself lack.²

Jim’s ancestors were North Welsh stonemasons and farmers. His great grandfather Robert Jones, born about 1796, was a mason who, to take up farming, moved with his wife, Sarah, from Groesfen, twenty-three miles south of Holywell, to Ysceifiog, a tiny village three-and-a-half miles from Holywell. There, between the hills above Halkyn and the hills of the Clwyd Range, the youngest of their three sons, John, was born and raised. Over six feet tall, John married a Sarah Jones, also from Ysceifiog. They moved to Holywell where he worked as a master plasterer. Known locally as Jones *Plastrwr*, he traveled throughout North Wales making elaborate embellishments for ceilings and fireplaces. According to the letterhead on his stationery, he was also a ‘Builder, ... Slater, Paper Hanger, &c.’ Their son Jim was born on 14 July 1860. He had an older sister, Mary Elizabeth Peart (known as Elizabeth). Six more followed: Joseph, Ruth, Helena, John David (known as David); Joseph, and Charles. Despite the Methodist Revival, the family was devoutly Anglican. The parents were anglophile, monarchist, politically Conservative, constitutionalists. They spoke only Welsh to each other, allowing their children to speak Welsh or English as they pleased, except for their eldest son. To ensure his worldly success, John insisted that Jim speak only English at home. As a consequence, he could not speak Welsh with the fluency of his brothers and sisters. In the elementary school he attended, the curriculum and the language of instruction was English. Any child caught speaking Welsh in school was beaten.³

At thirteen or fourteen, Jim was apprenticed for seven years to a local printer. He then joined the staff of the *Flintshire Observer* in Holywell. In the spring of 1884, he worked briefly

in Liverpool and then moved to London, where his brother David had gone in the previous year to teach in Rotherhithe. Jim would refer to this as ‘the year of Gordon’s death at the stairhead’ for he arrived at Whitefriars off Fleet Street to newsboys stopping traffic by shouting the death of General Gordon at Khartoum. For a short while he worked as a compositor with Hansard, which published the records of parliamentary debates. He was offered promotion within the firm to printer’s reader but had to decline because the position required fluency in Welsh.⁴

In 1884 he joined the printing and editorial staff of The Christian Herald Company Ltd. as a compositor. Five years later he was promoted to Printers’ Overseer, a position he held for the next thirty-three years before promotion to Production Manager. As an Overseer, ‘J.J.’, as he was known at work, maintained high standards, admonishing any compositor who made more than two or three errors a week and firing any who made more than six or seven. He was friendly with the founder and owner of the company, Michael Paget Baxter, Jr. (Lord of the Manor of Aldrington, Shoreham by Sea and Lacing), and was strongly influenced by Baxter’s mother, Elizabeth, an evangelical healer and prolific author who published, in the year of his younger son’s birth, *Sensitiveness and its Cure*.⁵ Because the Christian Herald published her books, Jim Jones read them in proof.*

He became an evangelical open-air speaker in South London for the parish of St. James, Hatcham. Having taught Sunday school in Holywell, in 1887 he resumed teaching Sunday school, at St. Michael New Cross, a daughter church of St. James. There he met another Sunday-school teacher: tiny, auburn-haired Alice Ann Bradshaw with dark brown eyes.⁶ On 20 September 1888, they married in Christ Church, Rotherhithe. He was twenty-eight; she, thirty-four. Their youngest son would tell me, ‘It was a happy marriage, despite the age difference.’

* Their titles include *Leaves from Genesis* (1885), *Practical Lessons* (1885), *The Living Word of the Gospel of St. John* (1887), *Words for Daily Life* (1887), *Portraits from Proverbs* (1891), *Saul and David* (1890), *Gleanings from St. Luke’s Gospel* (1891), *The Lord’s Coming, a few hints to the children of God* (1893), *Job* (1894), *Purpose in Man: Bible Studies from Adam to Moses* (1895), *God’s People* (1896), *God’s School for Parents* (1896), *His Last Word: Bible Readings in Revelation* (1896), *Holy Ghost Days, the Trials and Teachings of Paul* (1896), *Leaves from the Gospel of Matthew* (1896), and *Teachings from St. Mark’s Gospel* (1896).

Alice's family can be traced back to 1798, when her grandfather Thomas Bradshaw was born in Surrey. According to the census of 1844, he worked as a carpenter. He married Hannah Wadham and they lived in Upper Neptune Street in Rotherhithe, where they raised seven children. The second oldest was Ebenezer, born on 31 May 1829, and called Eb. Like his father, he worked as a carpenter but as a shipwright, becoming a master mast and block maker during the high tide of Victorian Thames-side prosperity. He supplied parts for and repaired ships and made small boats. A handsome man, on 1 September 1853 he married a woman known as 'the beautiful Miss [Ann Elizabeth] Mockford', daughter to a boat-builder named Joseph Mockford and a Piedmontese beauty maiden-named Vergado. With classical features, olive complexion, and dark brown eyes, Ann looked 'I-talian,' as her in-laws pronounced it.⁷ She had a sister who married Thomas Pethybridge, who manufactured paper, and a brother, John (Jack) Benjamin Mockford, who was a marine engineer. Eb and his bride began their married life in Rotherhithe at 48 Paradise St. Their first child, named Alice, died in infancy. Their second, Alice Ann, was born on 6 September 1855. Three more followed: Annie (called Dolly), Thomas, and Ebenezer.

A Victorian post-card photograph survives of the father, David's maternal grandfather, powerfully built with a barrel-chest and full beard, in his best (silk) Sunday suit (fig. 1). No mere workman, he had his own workshop in Rotherhithe east of the landing pier called Cherry-Garden Stairs with a yard running down to the river. While supervising ships' repairs, he wore a suit and top hat, though he did not hesitate to take off his coat, roll up his sleeves, and get down to work with his men. No Cockney, he spoke in a home-county accent, like Churchill and George V, dropping the 'g's at the ends of words, and pronouncing 'gels' instead of 'girls'. His children and grandchildren would inherit something of



1. Eb Bradshaw, c. 1870

his manner of speech—his grandson David would pronounce ‘paintin, drawin, and engravin’ as though he belonged to country gentry. Eb was a devout Anglican, extremely low-church or, as his daughter Alice said, ‘very Protestant.’ In 1851 he became parish clerk of St. Mary, Rotherhithe, a position he held for forty years. He and his family moved to 11 Princess Street, a three-story Georgian house in a row of the grandest houses in Rotherhithe with six large windows facing the street, two in each story. During winter he rose at six, during summer at five, to do accounts and read the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, and Milton—he was, his grandson David said, ‘addicted to Milton.’ Afterwards he had breakfast with his family and walked to his Thames-side workshop.⁸

Fully grown, his daughter, Alice, was four feet five inches tall. When she sat on a tram seat, her legs stuck straight out. To anyone commenting on her size, she said tartly, ‘Little and good, like Zacchaeus!’ Nervously energetic, with quick intelligence and a sense of humour, she conversed well. She spoke, for example, of an acquaintance whose parents had named their daughter Wild because their surname was Rose but who had the misfortune to marry a man surnamed Bull. Alice had an independent spirit. As a girl she used to take her own boat onto the Thames and in later years boasted, ‘I could row better than any man.’ Her father nicknamed her ‘Hard nails.’ A worrier, she was prickly, impatient with those she considered fools and liable to flay them with her tongue. According to her grandson, Tony Hyne, she was ‘quite a Tartar.’ She was emotionally undemonstrative, embarrassed by any show of affection.⁹

The feminist movement was encouraging female education and financial independence. For most middle-class women, the only available occupations outside the home were teaching and governessing. She did both. At twelve, she began her apprenticeship as a teacher at Rotherhithe Deptford Road National School, finishing at nineteen, as her rector attests, ‘very creditably.’ She then taught a large section of the elder children in the infant department of the School of Industry in Rotherhithe. Her pupils did well in their examination.¹⁰ She taught all subjects, including drawing, at which she was highly skilled in the manner of the Victorian drawing masters.

In 1879 she trained for a year in Oxford to be a governess. There she was strongly influenced by the Oxford Movement, presided over by Edward Pusey.¹¹ He and his followers sought to revive in the Church of England the high-church forms and doctrines of late

seventeenth-century Anglicanism, the basis of which was belief in sacraments, especially the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. She would inwardly remain high-church and pass on this disposition to her younger son.

From Oxford she went to Totnes, west of Exeter to work for a wealthy Devonshire couple named Cornish-Bowden in a house called Blackhall. She taught their five daughters reading, writing, music, and drawing, and they loved her. When once she ‘became suddenly giddy’ and fell into a pond where the water was six feet deep, the eight-year-old daughter risked her life to rescue her. (The story became part of family lore and may have influenced what would become a saviour-myth* in the imagination of her son David.) When Alice left the position, the parents presented her with a ring with five large pearls, representing their daughters, surrounded by twenty-nine small pearls for the months she spent with them. The daughters send her a bouquet of snowdrops each year on her birthday for the rest of her life.¹²

In 1882 she returned to London to be headmistress at Christ Church Rotherhithe and mistress of the Infant School, helping also with the Sunday Infant School. Decidedly high-church, as a nephew, Maurice Bradshaw, recalled she began, ‘bowing and scraping’ in church; but her evangelical family ‘soon knocked that nonsense out of her.’¹³ Nevertheless she was now inwardly more Catholic than Protestant. During her fifth year as head mistress at Christ Church, Jim Jones courted her, frequently visiting the Bradshaw home. Accompanying him often was his brother David, who was in love with Alice’s sister Dolly.



2. 1 Arabin Road, 1985

* By ‘myth’ I mean not a falsehood but a story involving gods or God.

A regular feature of their visits was intense political argument. Though devoutly C. of E., Eb Bradshaw was a radical who, on the sole basis of his surname, gloried in descent from Bradshaw-the-regicide, the judge whose signature tops those on the warrant that brought to his death ‘the man Charles Stuart,’ as Eb called Charles I. Jim’s brother David was a hot-headed Tory, strongly opposed to Gladstone. He and Eb argued vehemently but without loss of affection while Jim, a lukewarm Liberal not much interested in politics, remained neutral. David and Dolly intended to marry, but he died in 1887 of typhoid fever after taking a post at a national school in Cowes on the north shore of the Isle of Wight. One of his (Welsh) sisters remarked, ‘If that boy hadn’t gone to those foreign parts, he’d be alive today.’¹⁴

Jim and Alice wed on 20 September 1888 and began married life in the large Bradshaw home. Eb loved him and died in his arms of a sudden heart attack on 7 October 1891. Shortly thereafter, the Joneses and Eb’s sixty-eight year old widow, moved into the first of a series of rented Victorian terraced houses—a brand new blond-brick building at number 1 Arabin Road (fig. 2), thirty yards from its intersection with Brockley Road in Brockley, then a village south-east of London. Upstairs in the master bedroom four years later, their third and last child was born and contentiously named.

The home and family were artisan lower middle-class. Living with them was a boarder, eighteen-year old William Randall, a civil servant with the Education Board. Three servants did the housework. A woman came daily all day to clean and often cook. One came weekly to do laundry. Another came periodically to do ‘the rough’ work. Suffering from indigestion, David’s mother ate very little and only bland, English food—boiled chicken, fish (no red meat), rice, stewed fruit—which is what the entire family was served. The usual evening meal involved rice pudding, biscuits (in a biscuit barrel) and cheese, kept under a china cover. David would remember his mother putting out the aspidistra to be washed by rain and his father mending the laundry mangle in the scullery. A visitor who met them in 1929 remembered the father as ‘quiet, and easy going, and smiling ... mild ... not at all an assertive or dominant male figure, a very gentle, sweet man’ while the mother was ‘hustling about, forceful, ... always very energetic, bringing in the tea and cake and seeing that you were all right.’ If dogs began fighting outside in the street, she rushed out with a bucket of water to douse them. ‘No sooner one thing than another,’ she would say, irritably.¹⁵

Each weekday morning, Jim took a hansom cab to Crofton Park Station for the train to the City. On Sunday he wore a frock coat and a silk top hat. The household was of a period and kind described in George and Weedon Grossmith's *Diary of a Nobody*, as were the relationships with servants, neighbours, and tradesmen. The Joneses shared the fictional Pooters' scope of interest and activity, but Jim was without Charles Pooter's priggishness, social aspirations, and social disappointments. He did not live for material gain. His wife admired him for this, though she was concerned with social distinctions and opposed his accepting invitations to address meetings of Nonconformists because 'those people have not Holy Orders—and anyway half of them are grocers.' The Bradshaws scorned Nonconformity as the 'shop-keeper's religion.'¹⁶

Jim and Alice gave their children a strict upbringing. She was, her daughter remembered, 'a tyrant' in the house. To enforce discipline, she used a thin bamboo cane bought from an ironmonger for a penny and referred to as a 'tickley-toe,' possibly in reference to the 'the tickler' used on Pip in *Great Expectations*. With it she whacked the fingers or palm of a child putting elbows on the table or improperly holding a knife or fork. More compelling than the threat of punishment was her sharp tongue and force of personality. David would never steal as an adolescent and in later life tried always to be honest about money because as a child he once took a half-penny that his father had left on a chest of drawers, and, observing him, his mother commented curtly, 'That way lies the gallows.' Fifty years later he would say gravely, 'I've never forgotten that.' He was spanked at least twice by his father, whose standards at work indicate that he was not lax, despite being mild, gentler than his wife, and as quick to show affection as she was not. Expressing the difference, their children called him 'Dad' and her 'Mother.'¹⁷ This was also how Jim and Alice addressed one another.

The domestic ruler imposed less discipline on David than on her older children. He was clearly her favourite and, Cissy later said, 'spoiled.' When David was indulged, his brother would say to him, 'It's always little Benjamin's mess', alluding to Genesis 43:34, in which 'Benjamin's portion was five times' that of any of Joseph's other brothers. The rebuke stung.¹⁸

Close in age and affection, Harold and Cissy resented this unwelcome intruder. Having to mind him inhibited their play. He was, Cissy said, 'always crying and grisling—he was a nuisance.' In fact, they hated him with the undisguised sincerity of childhood and, from quite early on, conspired against him. In the summer of 1896, when their mother ordered them to take

Toady (his nickname from infancy) in a push-car to a nearby park called the Hilly Fields, they did as they were told but, once there, lifted him out and sat him in the wet grass hoping he would catch cold and consequently be kept indoors and out of their way. Once with some malicious delight they discovered him eating earthworms in the garden. This, too, entered family lore. It may later have resonated for David Jones when celebrating in his poetry the ‘labouring worm’ as ‘essential’ to the Eucharist (*A* 82), an allusion to Darwin’s final book, *The Formation of Vegetable Mould Through the Action of Worms* (1881)/ At children’s party a few years later, his brother and sister put a firework down his jumper, burning his neck and back, for which they were punished. The victim remembered, ‘A little girl put ointment on my back and I loved her like anything.’ There were other vicious acts. Late in life, he remembered that childhood April-Fool tricks became ‘so cruel and violent that they had to be stopped at noon.’¹⁹

There were also accidental traumas. As a very small child, he swallowed a large sweet called a gob-stopper that lodged in his throat, blocking his breath so that he had to be hoisted by the feet and banged on the back to cough it out. On another occasion, Harold and Cissy decided to reenact the escape of St. Paul from Damascus when his disciples ‘let him down by the wall in a basket’ (Acts 9:25). They put their two- or three-year old brother into a laundry basket and lowered it by a rope from an upstairs window down the outside of the house. The bottom of the basket gave way, but close enough to the ground to save the apostle to the gentiles from serious injury.²⁰

Very much part of the family throughout his childhood was his mother’s mother, Granny Brad, as they called her.* Her influence was considerable and, as she grew senile, disquieting. In mid-July she always said, ‘I hear them singing “lavender” in the streets—winter is not far off.’ After Christmas, she frequently said, ‘As the light lengthens, so the cold strengthens’—a refrain her daughter inherited and would also give voice to. Later, David was convinced that ‘these

* She was not an aunt, as she is mistakenly identified by Blissett (*The Long Conversation* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981, p. 123) and Jonathan Miles, and Derek Shiel (*David Jones the Maker Unmade* [Bridgend, Wales: Seren, 1995], p. 269).

gloomy forebodings' affected his own 'apprehensive psychology.' During the day Granny Brad sat in a chair in the corner, wearing a black Dickensian dress fronted by a vertical queue of buttons. She constantly complained of feeling cold. That irritated him. At meals she behaved oddly. At night she wandered the house bewildered. It was the job of Cissy, who shared her bedroom, to guide her back to bed. Jim would not hear of sending her away. As her behaviour became stranger, David found her unnerving—an adult no longer kind or predictable, often frightening. Twice he was caught shaking his fist at her—the first time he was warned; the second, he received 'a real whacking.' She died at the age of 78 in the autumn of 1907, when he was twelve.²¹

The Joneses had a strong sense of extended family. On Sundays, they visited or were visited by Alice's relatives. These included the elder Bradshaws and Mockfords, contemporaries of Granny Brad and living relics of the era of the Crimean War, the digging of Brunel's Thames tunnel, and the Pool of London prior to the Tower Bridge. One of his mother's cousins worked with the Royal Victualling people, another in commercial shipping. The language of nautical commerce coloured their conversation: 'bills of lading,' 'sight drafts,' 'brokerage,' 'harbour dues,' 'mast-ponds'. Initially like a foreign language to young David, such terms registered with him and would later emerge in his poetry. In other respects, too, he was interested in how they talked. His uncles referred to Queen Alexandra, among others, as 'a real stunner,' a mid-Victorian term of appraisal of feminine beauty that would survive in David's adult vocabulary. His Great-uncle Mockford said, whenever a preacher had been flowery, 'My word! don't 'e put the butter on.' A great aunt used to say to her husband, 'Don't show your ignorance John, don't show your ignorance', and David listened with alarmed fascination, anticipating the next dreadful repetition. Another relative greeted any disagreeable turn of events with 'There it is!' an expression David found 'maddening'. Someone else said, 'Don't choose your wife by candle-light'—he wondered what that meant. Several of these elders were censorious about language. When he was five years old and used the expression 'aren't they,' a great aunt informed him that the correct expression was 'are they not.' His elder relatives were, he later said, 'absolutely pure "Dickensian."' He would remember that they dropped the 'h' at the start of words and pronounced 'office' and 'hospital' with an 'r'—in a manner then general but later considered Cockney.²²

Those he knew best were his Great-aunt and Uncle Mockford, who came to the house after church for a whisky and soda. (Jim took the Temperance Pledge in 1898 but kept whisky in the house for visitors.) Fat Jack Mockford was a maritime engineer who had made the family proud and himself wealthy by inventing a device to improve steam-navigation which had been exhibited in the South Kensington Museum. He held his top hat in his lap while visiting. David watched as he caressing its beaver skin. Though David never saw his Grandfather Bradshaw's workshop, he once or twice visited Uncle Jack's workshop, which was also near the river and which he 'loved.'²³

His Dickensian elders were also Dickensians, speaking of Dickens characters as though living acquaintances. It was inevitable that David would read Dickens. Holding second place in the family literary canon was Thackeray, whose novels he would also read. Chief among the poets was Browning, who appealed more than Tennyson to the Christian middle class. Some of David's relatives belonged to Browning Societies, and he, too, would read and love Browning. The family library contained no Shakespeare.²⁴

His earliest cultural experiences were aural and maternal. His mother taught him to recite the rhyme that told him who he was:

Walter Jones is my name.
Simple is my station.
Brockley is my dwelling place.
And Christ is my salvation.

Tucking him in, they recited together, 'Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, / Bless the bed that I lie on.' She sang to him the first two stanzas of 'Johnny's so long at the Fair'—she had 'bonny brown hair', and when she sang 'Oh dear, what can the matter be?' he was moved to tears. Later, he would weave the lyrics of this song into his poetry (*IP* 43, 49). And she sang him the rhyme,

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the robin do then?
Poor thing!

This made him 'very miserable.' He liked best to hear her sing the mid-Victorian song 'We'll go to the Baltic with Charlie Napier to help him to govern the Great Russian bear.' That cheered

him. She told him about his own Great-uncle William Pethybridge, who worked in a bank, disliked it and quit, crewed on a merchant ship, disliked that and quit, then joined the army and found himself in the trenches outside Sevastopol ‘knee-deep in blood’ and disliked that, too. She told him stories of the Norman kings including Henry I, William the Conqueror’s son who was crowned when an elder brother died in a hunting accident, whose only legitimate son perished in 1120 in the foundering of the ‘White Ship,’ and who, because of this, ‘never smiled again.’ Tales of the deaths of sons and brothers would soon have special meaning for David.²⁵ She taught him the rhyme about the Zodiac, ‘The Ram, the Bull, / The Heavenly Twins’ which would gather Christian connotations and influence his poetry (*A* 52, 235). She chanted the rhyme about ‘the house that Jack built,’ which would come to typify for him his own mature associational mode of thinking and influence his poetry (*SL* 101).²⁶ Here is that rhyme’s final, cumulative stanza:

This is the farmer sowing his corn,
 That kept the cock that crow'd in the morn,
 That waked the priest all shaven and shorn,
 That married the man all tatter'd and torn,
 That kissed the maiden all forlorn,
 That milk'd the cow with the crumpled horn,
 That tossed the dog,
 That worried the cat,
 That killed the rat,
 That ate the malt
 That lay in the house that Jack built.

The former teacher and governess imaginatively enriched her younger son’s infancy and childhood.

The first rhyme he would remember hearing from her was ‘Three Blind Mice.’ As he listened, did he make any association with his brother, his sister, and himself? Did he associate the wife who ‘cut off their tails with a carving knife’ with his mother, use knives in the kitchen? He may have felt some menace—a sensitive child of a mother who sharply expressed angry disapproval and wielded the tickley-toe.

He played rhyming games, ‘Here we come gathering nuts & may’ and, a favourite, ‘Here we go round the mulberry bush.’ These began in the house and continued in the back garden.²⁷

When he was three, the Joneses moved a short distance west along Arabin Road to a nearly identical row house at number 67. In the garden here were his father’s green-house (his hobby was vegetable gardening), a number of moss-rose bushes, whose flowers David loved, and a large pear tree, beneath which was a small log of *lignum vitae* that he used to sit on. His mother told him it had been taken from his grandfather’s Thames-side workshop years before and was an especially hard wood once used for parts of blocks and shoes that had to withstand much rope-rubbing. At the bottom of the garden was a wall he liked. Beyond it a fruiterer’s horses were stabled. He liked watching them from the top of the wall and through a hole in its brickwork.²⁸

Seasonal holidays were wonderful: Guy Fawkes day, for instance, occurring four days after his birthday and celebrated at night with sparklers and bonfires. Best was Christmas. The Jones children decorated the house and hung up stockings at their beds to be stuffed with small presents as they slept. In bed on Christmas Eve, David heard a German brass band come up the street and stop outside the house playing carols, he imagined, at midnight—an experience, to him, ‘very mysterious & moving.’ On Christmas morning, his father always read aloud to them Milton’s ‘Hymn on the Morning of Christ’s Nativity’ and some of them went to church for Matins. Despite this, and although his parents were devout, he only vaguely associated Christmas with the birth of Jesus. For this reason, perhaps, he wondered what ‘herald angels’ were—he knew what a herald was and what an angel was but could not join the two.²⁹ Certainly his brother Harald was no angel.

When barely four years old, he acquired his earliest vivid memory. Napping in a cot beside his parents’ bed, he was awakened by strange noises in the road. Slipping from his cot and lifting a slat of the venetian blinds, he gazed in wonder at cavalry riding in column in a great white cloud of dust. Above the high-pitched thunder of hooves rose the sound of bugles. It was January 1900. The Boer war had begun, and the City Imperial Volunteers were on recruitment parade. Having heard him shift the blinds, his mother arrived from downstairs and lifted him back to his cot. As she tucked him in, she scolded him for getting up. ‘Who are they?’ he asked. She answered, ‘You’ll know about them soon enough.’ Persisting, he asked whether they were

guardian angels and noticed her pause before answering. (Unaware of theological tension between his parents, he had heard a visiting high-church friend of hers talk about guardian angels and remembered his father saying that there was no warrant for them in scripture.) ‘They were no guardian angels,’ she said, ‘for little boys who do not do as their mothers bid them—even Matthew, Mark, Luke and John expect little boys to be obedient. Stay put and don’t let me hear another sound.’ Lying there, he wondered why she had been so guarded in answering. Before falling asleep he heard again the bugles in the distance, like a blessing, convincing him that the riders were, in fact, angels. He was determined that someday he, too, would ride a horse.³⁰

In adolescence when he read *The Mabinogion*, he would be struck by the similarity between this experience and that of young Peredur (Percival) who, after seeing knights ride by, asks his mother what they were. Not wanting him to leave home, she replies, ‘They are angels, my son’ and he says, ‘I will go and become an angel with them.’* This is the first of affinities with the legendary hero who can heal the Maimed King and restores the Waste Land by asking questions—something David Jones would attempt in his poetry.

His second vividly remembered experience occurred one night in May 1900. Sleeping in his cot next to his mother, he was startled awake by a frightening noise and an explosion of light through the blinds. It was, he was told, a motor car, the first in his experience, come to take his father away to insert news of the relief of Mafeking on the front page of the morning paper.

In 1900, David was moved into nine-year old Harold’s bedroom, where his brother had on the wall a map of the Transvaal in which he pinned tiny Union Jacks into places captured by British forces. David was aware of the strain between his father who opposed the war and was therefore ‘pro-Boer,’ and certain relatives, including his Uncle Ebenezer. The arguments were heated. Visiting on Sundays after Matins for a whisky and soda, his uncle would pound the table

*Jones included this conversation between Peredur and his mother as an epilogue to *In Parenthesis* but deleted before publication.

with his fist, the glass jumping on the silver tray, declaring, ‘Jim, you’re a Little Englander.’^{31*} The Boer War was important world event of his early childhood.

His impressions of the war were from pictures in the newspapers and magazines that inundated the house. His father brought them home each weekend from the printing office, so that the home was overflowing with illustrated printed material. London was then rife with newspapers. For the area of Lewisham, Brockley, and Greenwich, there were nine; for the whole of London, seven evening papers and twenty Christian newspapers, including his father’s *Christian Herald and Signs of our Times*. In addition to what his father brought home from work, his parents may have subscribed—they later did—to the *Daily Mirror* and to one or both of the *Daily News* and *Daily Chronicle*. They also received the *Illustrated Mail*, a popular weekly combining photographs and drawings of current events, newsworthy people, and interesting places. Illustrations of events in the far reaches of the Empire cluttered David’s childhood—mostly, at that time, engraved drawings. One of these was of African royalty abasing themselves before British officials. In 1961 he would see a reproduction of it, recalled it from his childhood, and said that he had grown up in a ‘Kipling-conditioned world.’³²

The Joneses also subscribed to the Book for Bairns series of monthly volumes, edited by W.T. Stead. They were supplementary educational reading, well written with engraved illustrations, most volumes including several stories. Titles that the family received and collected include, *Great Events of British History*, *Stories from Chaucer*, *Stories from Shakespeare*, and *The Kings and Queens of England*. David wanted ‘always Arthurian things,’ and his favourite in the series was *King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table*, stories adapted from *The Mabinogion* and Malory, published in September 1899 with fifty-one illustrations.³³ To him the most impressive was ‘Prince Geraint and Fair Enid,’ in which Geraint avenges an insult to Guenever by defeating the Knight of the Sparrow Hawk, who is a bully and a thief. His mother read them aloud to him, and he paid his sister a penny an hour to read them to him.

* Grown up, David would agree with his father and consider the Boer War ‘ridiculous’ and ‘quite ‘unjust,’ involving ‘abominable behaviour’, principally Kitchener’s establishing the first concentration camps.

When he was five, his mother thought it time he learned to read for himself. As a former schoolteacher, she was allowed to keep him home for instruction until he was six. She taught him the alphabet, but with difficulty, that she then sent him to a series of children's schools in nearby houses. One was run by a Miss Humphries. In this or another, he fell in love with one of the two young-women teachers. This may have been an extremely pretty girl named Mabel, who lived in Howson Road and would die of consumption in her early twenties. Whoever she was, she had a clear, light complexion, a beautiful smile, and peat-dark hair worn in two long plaits bound with black ribbon. He thought the black ribbon a mistake and wished her hair was golden, like that of a figure in his sister's illustrated children's history of the Anglo-Saxons. He went to school eagerly each morning. She inspired in him a determination to make 'those black lines of print mean something,' and with her help, in the company of six other children, he began to read and write—an accomplishment he attributed, in retrospect, to her enchanting power. For him, literacy had its muse. The experience set a precedent: he would produce much of his best work while in love. His first muse (apart from his mother) also taught him sums but was unable to teach him subtraction. She would ask whether, if she wore her hair in a bun, that would be 'a plus or a minus in plaits.' Failing to understand, he wept, but she was kind. Before the year was out, the school closed, and then, he later said, 'I vaguely understood what was meant by "minus two plaits."' ³⁴

He viewed the outside world through the front bay window. People walked the pavements. Children played in the street: girls in dresses, boys in knickerbockers. Groceries, milk, and other goods were delivered from the shops in Brockley Road. The neighbouring houses had maids, as his did, who wore black dresses and white caps and aprons. The German street-band performed in front of the house even when it was not Christmas. Church parades passed. A man came around with a donkey, offering children a ride for a penny. Organ-grinders came with dancing monkeys holding out tin cups. Less frequently, a man came with a bear that would dance at the end of a leash—for David 'a horrible thing to see.' There was a regular street-singer, with white beard and blue eyes, to whom alms were given. A costermonger pulled a cart through the streets selling firewood. He and other peddlers filled the air with their cries, and one of them, a woman, held David spellbound with her singsong 'Who'll buy my sweet lavender?' This cry, which

saddened his grandmother, was to him ‘a heavenly sound’ and would bracket the great central monologue of his second epic-length poem (*A* 125, 168).³⁵

He played with a hoop, the universal toy, iron conventionally for boys, wooden for girls. His mother told him to bowl it in the garden and not on the pavement, where it was a dangerous for the shins of pedestrians, and never in the street where children were in danger and run-away hoops were a danger for horses. (In the previous century there had been a concerted reaction in the press against ‘the Hoop Nuisance’ but to no avail.) Bowling hoops in general she objected to as a ‘regrettable ... low class habit.’ Stilts were also in vogue and considered essential for various games. Some of his relations and friends walked on them easily; he could not. Bicycles were also in fashion, and he learned to ride one that may have belonged to his brother.³⁶

Not yet part of greater London, Brockley remained through his childhood an unfinished housing development with its own postal address in Kent. Partly running between rows of elm trees, Brockley Road connected Lewisham High Road to the north with the local District Railway Station, Crofton Park, to the south. Brockley Road was paved and lined with shops, but near the station were remnants of a farm, including, here and there, a stile on which David climbed to improve his view. Across from a big house with grounds called Brockley Hall was a pub, the Brockley Jack and, beyond, large open fields and a scattering of houses under construction. To the south, the area called Honor Oak Park was open country with fields of wheat. To the north also was open space, with a brickfield between Brockley and Wickham Roads and, at what is now Brockley Cross, a blacksmith’s shop, where he went to watch the smith making horseshoes and shoe horses and where he took his hoop to be soldered. Further north, what is now New Cross was open country. Arabin Road was now paved, but not the streets parallel to it, nor Howson Road running south from its western end—streets soon to be fronted with unbroken rows of houses. No one in the new houses owned a horse or carriage, and except for deliveries and the odd hansom cab, these side streets were places to play. At the east end of the row, beside their former house, was a yard with chickens. Across the road was a builder’s yard, on which houses would rise in 1903. On Easter and Whitsun his father hired an open carriage and took the family for rides in the country. David was impressed by how close this open otherworld was to where he lived.³⁷

The landscape of childhood is basic to a person's spatial imagination, and, from the beginning, his sense of place developed in these semi-pastoral environs. A turning point in gradual suburbanization was the cutting down of the elms lining Brockley Road in 1910 to accommodate tramlines. When, in February 1911, electric trams replaced horse-drawn buses some felt 'sadness & annoyance,' he remembered, while others spoke of the 'advantages of progress.' With the passing years, the large areas of open fields diminished but did not disappear until 1913, and then he could still easily walk into the open country of north-western Kent, which he could even reach on foot in 1919—walking as far as Farnborough, Shoreham, Wrotham, and Aylesford.³⁸ Not until he was fourteen, would Brockley lose its feeling of being of, though no longer in, the country. Until then, it had unique magic, as all such semi-rural places do, a zone of metamorphosis. In retrospect at least, it would be a site of nostalgia and of personal experience of the transformation and loss taking place throughout the western world.

A living remnant of receding rural life appeared at the door of the house each May Day until he was five or six, a man covered in branches and green leaves who mimed or danced and was called 'Jack o' the Green'. Later, David learned that the green man originally personated a vegetation god in a fertility rite that ensured the return of spring. He would allude to this leafy figure in his poetry (*IP* 168; *SL* 68). The coming of the Green Man, he remembered, 'used to frighten me terribly—I don't know why.'³⁹

A short walk south along Brockley Road and east along Adelaide Avenue brought him to the Hilly Fields, a green area almost a half-mile square rising high above the roofs of bordering houses. When his brother and sister were at school, his mother sometimes took him there. As a schoolboy and later, he went with friends and by himself. From this height he looked south into the bare green hills of Kent. To the south-east he saw the towers of the Crystal Palace and, after dark, the weekly fireworks displays there. To the north-east, he saw Blackheath and, beyond, the southern slope of the hill of Greenwich Park. In the north-west on a clear day he could see the dome of St. Paul's.⁴⁰ This place of vantage was his native hill, the height of his earliest imagining, the familiar prototype of the ancient hills with maternal guardian spirits that he would celebrate in his poetry (*A* 55-8, *SL* 59-69).

The Jones family culture was imbued with bible-Christianity. Although Alice Jones was high-church and had the stronger personality, she deferred to the evangelicalism of her husband, knowing how important it was to him. He was Church of England but half-Nonconformist at heart. He led the family in prayer before and after meals, carried on small cards quotations and admonitions to meditate on throughout the day, and made lists of scriptural passages for family members to read prayerfully each day. On Sunday evenings, he read aloud to the family from *Pilgrims Progress*, which impressed David ‘a good bit.’⁴¹

David was, he later said, ‘brought up on the authorized version of the bible & the Book of Common Prayer.’ They gave him a rich sense of language and resonant fields of evocation. As a boy he was intrigued by the Prayer-Book version of Psalm 42: ‘Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks’ partly because he loved deer above all other animals—it would remain his favourite verse of scripture. About the story of David and Goliath he felt morally ambivalent but liked his biblical namesake arming himself with the ‘smooth stones of the brook.’⁴² His experience of scripture was first of all aural. He heard it read at Sunday school and church. At home, his father read favourite passages ‘in his best manner.’ One of these was from Isaiah 6 and contains the words, ‘I saw also the Lord sitting upon his throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple’—a passage David would always remember in his father’s voice. In 1971 when noticing that an article on his poetry was published in a journal out of Philadelphia, he mentally heard his father reading from chapter three of Revelation the words of the Son of Man to the angel of the church at Philadelphia.⁴³ More thoroughly than any other important modern writer, he knew scripture, from which he could quote easily and at length.

Surrendering himself imaginatively to the Passion narratives, he would hope that Pilate might, this time, resist the pressure of the mob and temple authorities. David sympathized with Pilate in fearing Caiaphas and his agents and was perplexed over Pilate’s, to him, undeserved infamy. At the age of nine, he questioned his father about the fairness of the credal statement that Jesus ‘suffered under Pontius Pilate’, and his father explained that, while Pilate yielded out of fear, he alone was in authority and so was responsible. And he added, ‘Our Lord was crucified for us—that means for *you* and for *me*—remember that, rather than bother yourself as to the guilt of Pilate or Caiaphas.’⁴⁴ The Passion narratives initiated life-long sympathy with Jesus in his agony.

One Good Friday afternoon when he was six or seven, he was left alone to play in the garden. His father was at the Ante-Communion service, his mother and sister out, and the daily help on holiday. Deciding to commemorate the historic events of the day, he tore up lengths of wooden slat bordering a flower-bed, searched the greenhouse for hammer and nails—smashing several earthenware flower-pots in the process—and nailed the lengths of slat together to form a cross. Holding it aloft, he had begun carrying it round the garden when he saw his father, just arrived, his face white with repressed anger. He lectured his son about damaging the garden and breaking the pots ‘on this most solemn day of the Christian year.’ With patient fury, he explained that parading round holding up a cross was the sort of thing ‘people called Catholics’ do ‘but true Christians do not.’ David had never heard of Catholics—apparently they were people like him. For punishment he was sent to bed, broken-hearted at his father’s failure to appreciate his intentions. Afterwards, Jim asked his wife, ‘Where had the boy picked up such a papistical and Pusseyite idea?’⁴⁵

David overheard a conversation between his mother and the family doctor, a Yorkshire Quaker with a quiet inwardness that was, to David even as a child, impressive. The doctor cared for patients in the Deptford slums, where he sometimes got down on his hands and knees to scrub their floors. He had just tended Cissy, who was ill with flu, and was at the doorstep, about to depart, when David’s mother asked him why Quakers have no sacraments. He replied, ‘But Mrs. Jones, surely the whole of life is a sacrament.’ His words impressed David, who remembered and, as an adult, agreed with them.⁴⁶ He would always respect Quakers.

The evangelicalism of the family stressed the need to bear personal witness, something that kept his father busy and out of the house. For a time he traveled abroad selling bibles. On weekends he preached in public to small audiences on Clapham Common and Peckham Rye.⁴⁷ Sometimes the family accompanied him and picnicked, so that David heard his father calling people to Jesus in the field where young William Blake had seen a tree spangled with angels.

Jim Jones preached easily, garrulously, unselfconsciously, with a *hwyll*, the high-pitched monotone of Welsh preachers. As he preached, he worked up to an emotional crescendo and, as whenever he got excited, his vowels became purer, his accent more Welsh. The style of his preaching and of his theology may be gleaned from an admonition he wrote for himself:

Christ never contemplated such a thing as Saving Men to live to themselves. The Branch

‘that beareth not fruit’ will be taken away. John XV.21. & the fruitless fig-tree will be cut down. We are saved for a purpose—that Christ may dwell in us, & make us like Himself. If we fail we are cumberers ... & we ‘d better make room for others! Thousands today in our Churches, Chapels & O.A. Meetings who though present pay no heed to the Call of God—they do not respond & they regard the call & the Word of God as having nothing to do with them. So Satan has the Mastery & they are kept in Darkness. Such were Felix and Agrippa. One said: ‘Go thy way for this time (Gods Time), when I have a Convenient Season I will call for thee.’ Acts XXIV.25. The other: ‘Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.’ Acts XXVI.28

In 1936, Lloyd George speaking on the radio about ‘the ramparts of Snowdonia’ would remind David of his father preaching.⁴⁸

Much of the printed material in the house was Christian. He liked looking at Keble’s *Christian Year*, illustrated by Johann Fredrich Overbeck.⁴⁹ He looked at the weekly tabloid his father worked on, *The Christian Herald and Signs of our Times* with its engraved illustrations. Its writing combined current events with Christian gossip, news from the foreign missions, much reporting on the royal family, reprinted sermons, and emphasis on the Revival in Wales. Animal anecdotes were a regular feature: ‘Elephants stampede through Cincinnati,’ ‘Ship cuts whale in half,’ ‘Prisoner kept alive by Cat,’ ‘Lost Child fed by Dog,’ ‘Saved by an Elephant firing a Gun,’ ‘Sanctity of a Hen.’ The paper was ecumenical except for marked antipathy to ‘Romish and Ritualistic influence’.

Four evenings a week, his father was involved in mission meetings for which he acted, in turn, as speaker, leader, secretary, and organizer. As leader he prayed aloud spontaneously and eloquently, without embarrassment. These meetings were usually held in south-London Church-of-England Mission Halls, sometimes in Deptford lodging houses, occasionally in Nonconformist halls.⁵⁰

When David was about six, his father took him to one of these meetings, sat him on a chair at the back of the speaker’s platform, and told him to stay put. He then began delivering a sermon and David began to squirm. Somehow, he got his head caught in the double curve of the chair-back. Facing the congregation and absorbed in preaching, his father did not see his son’s plight, but attendants noticed and removed the chair-and-boy. Unable to separate them, one of

the men said, to David's horror, 'We'll have to get a saw'—he thought they were going to cut off his head. The man returned and, without explaining his intention, sawed through the top of the chair-back, freeing him. A half-hour later, his father appeared, saw the damage and complained at having to pay for the chair.⁵¹

David later frequently recalled this event. He may have associated the occasion with the fate of Sisera in 'The Song of Deborah' who loses his head—David later regarded it as 'one of the world's great poems' (*RQ* 143n24). In it, the Hebrew heroine invites the battle-weary enemy, 'Turn in, my lord, turn in to me.' Under a peace-pledge and in violation of hospitality, she waits for him to fall asleep and then decapitates him. Half a century later, David would recount his experience, at an event presided over by his father, to a psychotherapist who would find considerable Freudian significance in his fear of decapitation.

The religion of his childhood contributed to the formation of his imagination in many positive ways—certainly, it deepened the significance of what I have called the saviour myth—but it also encouraged feelings of guilt, which are always psychologically unhealthy. At home the family used to sing a hymn including the words, 'I wake I sin, I sleep I sin, I sin in every breath.' At eleven or twelve, after preparing for confirmation, he received a copy of Thomas a Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*, an extremely neurotic text, though he could never 'get on with it much.'⁵² Even the central doctrine of Jesus dying for our sins intensifies feelings of guilt in those knowingly benefiting from that sacrifice. The ground in which his imagination had its cultural taproot undoubtedly contributed to his later emotional difficulties. For good and ill, the imprint of his childhood religion was permanent. Jesus would always be, for him, 'our Lord.'

The local life of the towns south-east of London was rich. There were performances in the church hall at St. James, Hatcham. Children saw pantomimes such as ‘Puss in Boots’ and ‘Blue Beard’ in local theatres and at the Crystal Palace. There the Jones family went to exhibits and plays and sometimes attended fireworks displays on Thursday nights: the Catherine wheels



3. Harold, Jim, Cissy, David, Alice Ann, c.1899

‘radiating stars, flung in golden showers’ and ‘the gay rainbow rocket light’ (*IP ms*).⁵³

Sometimes he went into London, usually with his mother. They took the black, smoky District Railway to London Bridge Station. In town they traveled by horse-drawn tram and omnibus. You could stop a bus anywhere by lifting a finger. The air was sharp with the smell of horse manure and urine and resonant with the clatter of iron-shod hooves and the rumble of wheels. He loved the river and enjoyed watching the shipping.* He went to public displays in the Alexandra Palace in Tottenham Court Road. In 1903 his mother took him for the first time to the British Museum. His father took him to visit the office of the *Christian Herald* in Tudor Street,

* His love of the Thames endured. In 1923 to the weaver Valentine Kilbride, he mentioned lending a friend named Laurie Cribb white flannel trousers to wear to take a girl boating on the river. Kilbride asked, ‘What river?’ Jones replied, ‘The Thames, that great rive.’

off Fleet Street, where he talked with the Cockney composers, and to the nearby Hills Restaurant where he and his father ate lunch. David visited the office of his Uncle Ebenezer, who manufactured paper, in Great St. Thomas the Apostle Street near the river and later remembered the area as having ‘the atmosphere of Dickensian London.’⁵⁴

All his life he would remember this earlier, less crowded horse-drawn city, whose river still bore ships and barges under sail. The remembered, more humane city would be for him a measure of the technological revolution that made his generation modern and involved losses as well as gains. He would yearn for what was lost: the living fire, for example, that electricity replaced. As with all true modernists, his awareness would be grounded in experience of the preceding less technologically advanced age.



4. Jim, Harold, Cissy, David, Alice Ann, c. 1900

Apart from excursions into the city, his mother disliked ‘going places’. When his father received the offer of a better job in the United States and wanted to emigrate, she refused to go.

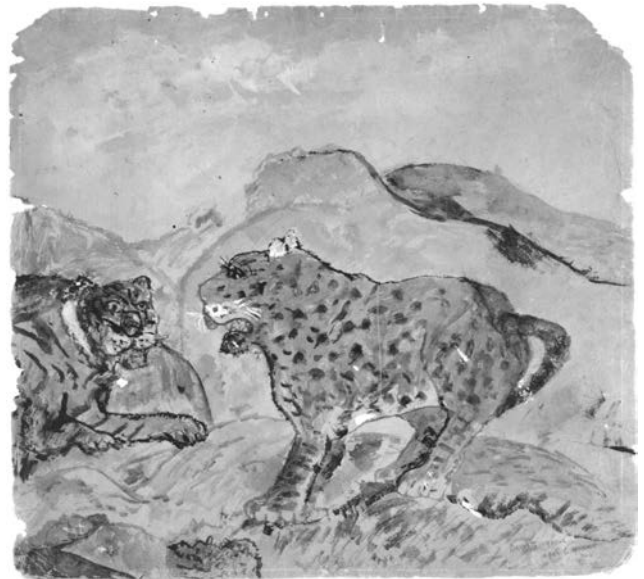
(Years later, David wondered what he would have been like as an American.) Her husband wanted to travel during his two-weeks holidays, but she preferred staying home, and that is what they usually did, sometimes taking short trips to the seaside.⁵⁵

When David was about five, the family visited Deal. Walking from the railway station there, he glimpsed for the first time, at the far end of a narrow street, the taut blue horizon of the sea. It stirred in him ‘a distinct emotion’ he never forgot. At the ruins of Sandown Castle north of town, he sat on a cannon gazing at the Channel. When weather and the tide were right, he saw several wrecks on the Goodwin Sands, a ships’ graveyard. He was told that the ninth wave is the biggest—a phenomenon not easily disproved, waves being hard to count. His father enjoyed sitting in the sun. He would sunburn badly the first day—and his skin would peel, to the acute embarrassment of his wife—but afterwards his skin didn’t burn. The seaside towns to which the family traveled included Herne Bay and Tankerton near Whitstable, where the Thames opens to the sea. David liked Deal best.⁵⁶ On one of their excursions to the sea, they had an outdoor photograph taken—the fragile Wet-Collodion glass print is now even more badly cracked than when I had it photographed (fig. 3). In the summer of 1899, the family stayed at Littlehampton, between Bognor and Worthing. While there, they visited a photographer’s studio for a family portrait (fig. 4). In both of these photos the older children are beside their father and David is with his mother. A natural grouping, one possibly arranged by the photographers, it nevertheless suggests the closeness between mother and youngest child. He later said of her, ‘she was a beautiful woman’ but ‘did not like having her picture taken’ because in photographs she ‘never looked like herself.’⁵⁷

Throughout these early years, he made pictures. He would be unable to remember a time when he did not draw, and he would never lose the child’s excitement over ‘fresh paints.’ He drew well, was praised for it and, by the age of five, was drawing obsessively. By seven he assumed that he would always make pictures and therefore grow up to be an artist, if only a pavement artist, which was the only kind he had seen. It puzzled him that neither his brother nor sister drew, an activity that seemed to him ‘as natural as stroking a cat.’⁵⁸

He had begun drawing with his mother’s encouragement and example. Some of her framed red-crayon drawings hung in the house though she was silent about them—she was

highly self-critical and had earlier destroyed most of her drawings. Three survivors were among his earliest memories: drawings of Tintern Abbey, a curly-haired gladiator, and a donkey's head. There was also a beautiful sketch of a pony, dated 1874, and one of a costermonger holding the bridle of a horse harnessed to a cart. Her last drawings—dated 1888, the year she married—are impressive sketches of horses including detailed studies of legs and hooves. They were all, he later wrote, 'delicately and sensitively drawn.' His favourite was one of



5. David Jones, *Tiger and Leopard*, 1901



6. David Jones, *The Bear*, 1903

geometric

figures. When he

asked why she no longer drew, she told him marriage kept her busy with other things. When, in the 1920s, he offered to show her drawings to one of her grandchildren, she objected, 'That's just some of my rubbish; you don't want to look at that.'⁵⁹

He began drawing animals after aunts took him to a Royal Academy summer exhibition of animal drawings. Seeing that he was good at it, his mother took him to Regents Park Zoo to draw mainly the big cats, antelope, and deer. He boasted to her and her Quaker doctor that he 'could draw bears and lions, and even the horse in the greengrocer's stable better than Rosa Bonheur', the famous Parisian painter of horses.⁶⁰ In 1901 he made a very large picture (18 x 18 inches) of a truncated leopard simultaneously threatening and backing away from a tiger in what looks like a Welsh hillscape (fig. 5). It is an astonishing achievement for a six-

year old, and the media—ink, wash, and white body paint—surprisingly sophisticated. In 1902 at the zoo he drew a mother elephant and her baby.

At the age of seven, when he saw from the front window a bear dancing on a leash, he quickly drew the outline of the bear on a large piece of paper. It was then led away, and he completed the drawing from memory, adding, for background, planks of the fence of the builder's yard across the street. To get them straight, he borrowed a round-backed ebony ruler from his sister, who told him, 'No real artist would use a ruler.' He thought, 'blow what a real artist would do,' and ignored her. The result was a large drawing (20 x 11 inches), unconventional, slightly primitive, with an abstract freedom in the rendering of fur within the outline—the work of a prodigy (fig. 6). Later in life he would say that he had 'not done a better drawing since.' On the evidence of this picture, he would claim that the essentials of his mature style were present in his earliest work.

Justifying his claim is the fur, drawn not at once in easy overall harmony but in distinct areas maintaining a vital, shaggy tension between one another. Made to dance on the end of a leash, with the end of the keeper's rod just visible, the muzzled bear offers a premonition of several victim-figures he would draw as an adult. In the spring of 1958, he would frame this picture, hang it over his mantle, and write to a friend, 'It's much the best drawing I've ever done, which shows how, in the arts, there ain't no such thing as getting better as you get older!' To another friend he would say, 'it's the best drawing in the Western world!!!'⁶¹

In February 1902, his father enrolled him in the Royal Drawing Society's Revival of Youthful Art League, paying sixteen shillings for 'criticism' and exhibition fees. The exhibit was at Queen Anne's-Gate, an annual show of the work of about 250 children between the ages of three and nineteen. Every exhibitor received a prize. He was awarded a 'Commended Second Class' in the category 'from memory, imaginative' for a small pencil and wash drawing of sheep in a field—a wonderful picture, now too dark to reproduce. Also exhibited in 1903 were *The Bear* and a pencil-drawn roaring lion he would continue to value for its 'freedom.' These drawings were also exhibited that year at the Cork International Exhibition. For the next three years, his father renewed his subscription with the Drawing Society League. In the 1903 exhibition, his work was 'Highly Commended.' On 7 April he was mentioned in the *Morning Advertiser* as most noteworthy among exhibitors for his 'series of wild animals, whose aspect is

so fierce and terrifying that one simply trembles before them.’ In 1904, the Society gave *The*



7. David Jones, Illustration of his father’s anecdote, 1903

Bear a prize.⁶² The last of his childhood prizes for drawing would be a fourth prize in a competition held by his father’s company in 1907.

When he was eight, he illustrated one of his father’s supper-time anecdotes. His father had seen on the Embankment someone feeding gulls beside a man smoking a cigarette. ‘Imagine his astonishment when one of the birds swooped down and whipped it out of his mouth!’ David sketched the two men in a crowd with the air before them alive with birds, one about to snatch the cigarette (fig. 7). Perspective is

awry, the people wooden, but the birds are marvellously natural and alive. He gave the drawing to his father, who wrote the vignette on the back.

His father added enthusiasm to his mother’s encouragement and provided large sheets of paper. He thought David’s drawing might lead to a practical career journalistic art. In the autumn of 1903, after returning from the zoo, David made drawings from memory of a lion, a rhinoceros, and an elephant, which his father sent to the *Daily News*. Engraved for reproduction, they appeared on 19 October in the ‘Children’s Corner’ of its ‘Page for the Home’ (fig. 8), and above them a quotation from his father’s letter: ‘I beg to enclose a few sketches done by my little boy Walter, who is not yet eight years old.’ His father also sent a painted snow scene signed ‘W. D. Jones’ to the *Signal*, which published it, engraved, on 30 December (p. 412) as a New Year greeting from the editor to the readers. In the foreground is a tethered donkey in a pen before a thatched cottage, in the background a castle. At about this time, at his father’s request he drew missionaries threatened by lions. A drawing of this subject, now lost, was engraved and probably published. David met the engraver, who worked for his father’s firm. To David’s surprise, he said he could not draw since he was



8. David Jones, Sketches, *Daily News*, 1903

not taught to but only apprenticed in engraving.⁶³ Having pictures published in newspapers was heady encouragement for a boy so young.



9. David Jones, *Lion*, 1903-4

Among other surviving childhood drawing is one in ink and wash, dated 1902-3, of a lion in a gorge (fig. 9), its fore legs repeating the diagonals of the hills behind. It is an impressive achievement for a seven- or eight-year old but, lacking the imaginative freedom and originality of the earlier drawings, it indicates a penchant for realism, which is the nemesis of all child artists.

Just after turning nine, he made a painting for the family Christmas card for 1904 which his father had photographically reproduced in pale green (fig. 10). Its greeting is the earliest surviving example of artistic lettering by David Jones. The



10. David Jones, *Christmas Card*, 1904

scene is a house in a hilly Welsh setting, the cross-hatched fence beside the house evocative of Welsh wattling. The picture's vitality is in the erratically alive lettering and floriate boarder, full, irregular, charged with movement. At about this time he also made wonderful wash and gouache paintings of a farmhouse in a snowstorm and a Guy Fawkes bonfire, seen in the street from the front window.⁶⁴

When he was eleven or twelve, his drawing went into a steep decline, precipitated by the appeal of realism and abetted by the illustrated dailies, weeklies, and the magazines, including boy's adventure magazines, that flooded the home and modelled illustration which was perfunctory, lifeless. Equally baleful was the influence of old Royal Academy catalogues and the misdirecting praise of relatives and teachers. He now began producing conventionally illustrative drawings devoid of originality and vitality, as can be seen by his Christmas card for 1908. It demonstrates that his ability was, as he later said, 'practically destroyed' (fig. 11). The pen-and-ink drawing on the cover is devoid of anything but technical competence—though the legs of the Renaissance figure are too short (despite David's resent acquisition of Robert Colenso's *Landmarks in artistic anatomy*.) The lettering is dully proficient.

The picture and card are signed ‘W. David Jones’—evidence of his shifting to his middle name. Among the pictures not subsequently destroyed, this marks his nadir. The imaginative fall from grace happens to all children who draw. Spontaneity gives way to imitation. Eagerly, proudly, inevitably, they exit aesthetic Eden.

At the age of twelve, he was still drawing continually—imaginary medieval Welshmen on hillsides with wolfhounds, Russians surrounded by wolves in snowstorms—but producing less of merit.⁶⁵ Among his last impressive childhood works is a Welsh-winter painting done in 1906, in which a wolf stands alone in a mountainous wasteland (fig.13). His mother hung it along with *The Bear* in the family’s front room.⁶⁶ Remarkably evocative, it nevertheless testifies to his succumbing to conventional realism.



11. David Jones, Christmas Card, 1908



12. David Jones, *Wolf in Snow*, 1906

His mother did not share his father’s anticipation of a practical artistic career for their son. During excursions into the city, she and David frequently passed pavement artists, whose work he regarded with the eye of a future colleague. Making the same association, his mother invariably dropped a coin into the artist’s cup or extended hand. David

asked, ‘Why do you give to all regardless of the quality of their work?’ She answered, ‘That is my business, and anyway, we are obliged to give to the poor.’ He: ‘Our family is not rich like Uncle Jack’s.’ She: ‘Don’t refer to your uncle as rich and stop arguing.’ Years later she confessed having feared that if he continued drawing so

much he, too, would end up in the gutter.⁶⁷ She was giving alms for his sake in the spirit of sympathetic magic.



13. Brockley Road School, c. 1900

At the age of seven, he commenced seven years of erratic formal academic education in the London County Council Brockley Road School.⁶⁸ It fronted Brockley Road at the corner of Dalrymple, directly across from the Roman Catholic Burying Ground in Deptford (later renamed Ladywell) Cemetery, half a mile south of the family home. The school was a long plain two-story red-brick building with a T-shaped floor-plan, a dark-wood and white-plaster interior, large windows, and, on the peak of the roof above the entrance, an incongruous, ornately spired copula. The headmaster was Alfred Garside, a balding, middle-aged man with a walrus mustache. Between 1905 and 1909 the teaching staff of seventeen included a teacher and assistant teacher for each large class. David joined an unruly class of nearly sixty junior boys. It was a terrible change from neighbourhood starter schools, and he was, as he later put it, ‘appallingly bad’ at his lessons. In compensation for his academic deficiencies, he concentrated all the more on drawing and painting. He could not read with ease until he was nine and would remain a slow reader all his life. At the age of sixty-nine, he said about reading, ‘it takes a bit of time for things to sink in.’⁶⁹ The part of his brain that was most fully, intricately developed was the right, visual-spatial hemisphere, not the left, temporal-linguistic hemisphere.

At school he read history, British—in 1905 he painted a small watercolour of *Edward III entering Calais, 1347*—and Roman. He read about, and was impressed by the heroism of Cloelia, a Roman girl who escaped the Etruscans by swimming the Tiber, which was, in his mind, as wide as the Thames at London Bridge. He learned about the Roman conquest of Britain and was made to memorize Cowper’s poem about Boadicea, the ‘British warrior-queen / Bleeding from the Roman rods’.⁷⁰ He knew about her from the May 1901 volume in the Books for Bairns series, which opens to a frontispiece depicting ‘Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni, calling upon the Britons to Defend their country against the Romans.’ (When in 1961 *The Times* published an article praising Boadicea for giving ‘the Anglo-Saxons something to boast about at

an extremely thin time in their history,' he sent a letter asking what 'this Celtic queen' had to do with Anglo-Saxons and hoping that, in Belloc's words, 'the truth might be allowed to prevail a bit.')

In the Book for Bairns for July 1901 entitled *Stories from Ancient Rome*, he learned about the fall of Troy and the journey of Aeneas, the legend of the founding twins, the attack on Rome by Gauls, routed because the Citadel geese gave the alarm. Acquired so early, all this was a strand that would be woven into *The Anathemata* and his later Roman poetry. He became an avid reader, devouring the Lewis Carroll's Alice books and 'a certain amount of English poetry—a favourite being *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Volume 97 of the Book for Bairns series, published on 1 March 1904 with twenty-five illustrations by Brinsley Le Fanu.⁷¹

He also read Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906), in which Puck introduces modern children to figures from Britain's past, including a monologuing Roman centurion serving on Hadrian's wall. This book seems to have influenced his imagination deeply—certain of its phrases and episodes echo in his poetry.* Kipling's movement between monologues by figures from various periods may influence the historical leaps in *The Anathemata* and 'The Sleeping Lord'. In 1944 Jones would write, 'He had a real feeling, old Kipling, about the past—rather rare in Englishmen—but buggered up by a good bit of annoying stuff also.'⁷²

All this history and historical imagining deeply impressed him, partly because so much of it occurred or was set in Britain where he lived; because he had been to Deal, where Caesar landed; because London was originally a Roman town; and because, himself half British Celt, three-eighths English, and one-eighth Italian, he bore the genetic imprint of his nation's history.

When he was nine or ten, he read his brother's copy of *Harold the Boy-Earl*, whose verse and dialogue he would be able to quote from memory sixty years later. Imbued with Victorian Germano-philia, it praised the Anglo-Saxons at the expense of Celts. David wrote furiously all over it in uninformed, passionate disagreement.⁷³ His opposition to Saxons may have involved his rivalry with his brother. The boy-earl and Harold had the same name. David felt Welsh;

* Cf. the beer 'metheglin' (SL 55), 'Vectis' Insula (A 110), Phoenicians come to Britain to buy tin (A 97-108), Romans serve on Hadrian's Wall (RQ 64-83). Jones also read Kipling's *Rewards and Fairies*.

Harold, English. In any case, David would always despise the Anglo-Saxons as humourless, pragmatic, tasteless ants who had overwhelmed the impractical, aesthetically ingenious Celtic grasshopper.

His fascination with historical literature provided source material for family Christmas recitals. For one of these, his Great Uncle Jack Mockford made for him a wooden shield, sword, and helmet covered with shiny metal foil, equipped with which to declaim his recitation. During a full-dress rehearsal at home, using the dining-room table as stage, he brandished his sword, smashing the mantle of the lamp so that darkness abruptly ended the performance.⁷⁴ Recitations intensified association between history, poetry, and drama, which may help explain his later propensity for writing dramatic monologues.

The history he learned at school was distorted by national chauvinism. For instance, he was taught that the British fought the Hundred Years War against ‘the tyrant’s yoke’ and won it on the strength of the victories at Crécy and Agincourt but not that the French subsequently reconquered. Pervading his reading was Victorian admiration of the Romans as forerunners of the imperial British in spreading enlightened civilization.⁷⁵ On Empire day, he and his schoolmates sang Kipling’s ‘Recessional,’ whose theme is that imperialism is all right if imperialists are humble and contrite. He read the patriotic stories in the Union Jack Library. He would later list expressions that give a taste of his school culture:

Below the belt. / Natives. / Sportsman. / Whiteman. / Boxing. / Sarawak. / Lower-deck. / Exports. / Club. / English woman-hood. / Port of London Authority. / Wide open spaces. / Dr. Livingstone. [Throughout his life whenever Africa was mentioned, the first thing he thought of was Stanley’s famous greeting, ‘Dr. Livingstone, I presume.’] / Law of Gravitation. / North West Passage. / ‘but not the six hundred’. / Stock Exchange. / Slave Trade. / Good wholesome food. / ... sun never sets. / Royal Horse Show / Royal Humane Society.’ / Royal Naval & Military Tournament. / Clean living. / Cricket. / Small Nations. / Gordon. / Kitchener. / Roberts. / Florence Nightingale. / Grace Darling. / Somehow, Dr. Nansen. / Nelson, who existed uncreated and who stood as he were Zeus, behind the Gods. (*IP ms*)

By the age of eight, he was devoted to Nelson, whose death on the deck of the *Victory* was the most poignant moment in Victorian popular imagination. David admired the ‘perfect signal’ Nelson wanted to send to the British fleet at the opening of the battle, ‘Nelson confides

that every man will do his duty’, and he was angry at the first two words being changed to ‘England expects’. (Throughout his life, continuing chagrin over this jingoistic depersonalization would erupt in his conversation and correspondence.) His interest became intense when he was nine, during the centenary celebration of the victory at Trafalgar. Several times he walked from Brockley across Blackheath—with its, to him, ‘heavenly deer’—to Greenwich Park to see the admiral’s relics. It was a two-and-a-half mile trek, but he enjoyed walking, and he was eager to see and see again the objects that the great man had handled and the uniform in which he had died—the hole from the fatal musket ball visible below the left epaulette—and his blood-stained stockings. They were on display in the upper Painted Hall of the Royal Naval College, where Nelson’s body had lain in state. Nelson was, for Britain and for David Jones, a saviour-figure, and he would commemorate him as such (*A* 114), though he would also criticize him for supporting slavery (*WP* 38). He ‘was torn’ in his youthful hero-worshipping ‘between Nelson & Owen Glen Dûr’⁷⁶

The list of indicative expressions continues: ‘Selfridge. / Lucknow. / Ladysmith. / St. Lawrence. / Goodwin Sands. / Trinity House. / Beef Eater. / Tilbury. / Virgin Queen. / Open Bible. / Constitution. / Fine body of men.’ ‘All these,’ he would write, ‘aroused ... directly, or by association an identical emotion, an attitude of adoration which we properly tender to that which makes and sustains us.’ Occasionally a naval commander would address the student-body on ‘the Bull-dog breed’ and ‘the Union Flag in very hot, and very cold places’ and ‘how the sea was free.’ A history lesson in the fourth standard stressed ‘the Inquisition and the habitual cruelty of foreign nations.’ In England, ‘Philanthropists and Policemen seemed to strive with each other in a race of which the goal and crown was an universal affability and kindness’ (*IP* ms). For the children of the middle-class, theirs was a nation of polite idealism and public and private virtue sustained by convention and widespread, sincere Protestant Christianity. Except for the Court, Edwardian England remained culturally Victorian.

At school he learned little arithmetic and was unable to memorize the ‘twice-times table.’ This he was taught by a woman who briskly fired problems at him, such as: ‘Seven sevens!’ He would venture a wild guess and cover his head with his arms because, when he was wrong (as he almost inevitably was), she hit him.⁷⁷ No wonder that, as an adult, he would be unable to count by tens.

Neither did he learn to spell well. This was a special irritant at home. As a reader of proof, his father spelled perfectly. So did his mother. She was, he remembered, ‘very hot on spelling’ and was particularly ‘horrified’ at his inability to spell common words. With the help of Butter’s *Etymological Spelling Book*, he tried hard to learn and did make progress but still tended to spell phonetically, an indication of how oral his sense of language was. His adult writing contains ‘desease’, ‘desasterous’, ‘devison’, ‘devine’, ‘rediculous’, ‘reflexion’, ‘ribbons’, ‘peninsular’ (the noun), and ‘aspedister’ (the plant). ‘Passchendaele’ defeated him. Inability to spell meant that he could often not look up a word in a dictionary to see how it is correctly spelled. He regarded faulty spelling as ‘an awful curse’ which competent spellers cannot appreciate. Near the end of his life, he would exclaim, ‘Great God, *how* I wish I could spell.’⁷⁸

As a former teacher, his mother was anxious about his lack of progress and tutored him at home. He remained, he later said, ‘an awful dunce as a child.’⁷⁹

He was inept as a student for the same reason he was so gifted in visual art. He simply could not do well what comes easily to left-brain people. They are proficient at mathematics, enjoy music, read early and quickly, are verbally articulate, spell well, and are often visually insensitive. Jones was the opposite. His speech would always be tentative, groping. Apart from his father’s singing and a madrigal called ‘Livia’s Frock’, he did not, as a child, care for music. At home his sister played the harmonium and in 1904 used to perform a piece intended to depict Russians on a sledge pursued by wolves. He accompanied her by jingling sleigh bells, but his personal inclination was to respond visually and, that year, he painted the image, entitling it *A Race for Life*.⁸⁰ His tendency to imagine spatially correlates with his being throughout most of



his life primarily a draftsman rather than a painter. Colour is the aspect of art most like music in its tonal effects; line remains purely visual and spatial.

‘Physically feeble’ as a boy, he ‘loathed’ and tried to avoid organized games. He did not, if he could help it, take part in pageants, though when he was ten, he agreed to make a Christmas-card advertisement for a ‘Cantata, in aid of Sports Fund’ (fig. 14), in which a jester dances

surrounded by ten ‘imps’ all wearing red and white, on a stage framed by a dark green curtain—a picture that demonstrates the deterioration in his art.

In the spring, pupils on the school playground danced round a maypole draped with ribbons which the dancers interwove, unwove, and reweave round the pole—imagery which later emerges in his poetry (*A* 243, *SL* 61) and suggests a paradigm for the form of it. He would say that if *The Anathemata* ‘has a plot’ it is as ‘the dance round the may-pole plots itself out in patterns round the central arbor.’⁸¹ The image combines circularity with interweaving.

As a schoolboy he participated in group recitations of a then widely known circle-chant. It started slowly and proceeded faster and faster at great length until the reciters became breathless or confused:

It was a dark and stormy night.
The brigands sat round their campfire.
The Chief said to Antonio, ‘Antonio, tell us a tale,’
And the tale ran thus:
‘It was a dark & stormy night,
The brigands sat round their campfire ...’⁸²

The potentially endless circular recession of this chant has affinity with the informing structure of *The Anathemata*, of which, altered, it serves as an epigraph.

He went with a class-six school friend to the Tower of London. The display of armour and weapons in rows of glass cases fascinated him. Within the White Tower, he saw and admired the pale-stone romanesque garrison chapel of St. John, one of the oldest churches in England, a numinous cave-like place. Here, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, men had knelt in all-night vigil before being knighted by Henry IV and Edward IV. David and others were encouraged to visit the Tower by remarkable teachers, including the headmaster, Garside, who, according to a former classmate of David, made Brockley Road School ‘no ordinary place.’⁸³

Whether sent by teachers or taken by his mother, David also went to Westminster Abbey, a place imaginatively charged for him by his interest in medieval history. The architecture of the Abbey influenced his adolescent drawing, which often depicted knights in armour sometimes with settings involving Gothic architecture. There may be in the *horror vacui* of his mature visual and literary styles an enduring Gothic influence. In this respect, he resembles William

Blake who, when young, frequented the Abbey, which was and remained in David Jones's childhood, an object of official neglect. On one visit, at the age of twelve, in an act of historical indignation (but careful not to be seen), he spat on the tomb of Edward I, the conqueror of Wales.⁸⁴

David had felt affinity with Wales from an early age and began to feel it strongly 'by the age of seven.' While on a family holiday in Folkstone, or a seaside town like it, at a boarding-house table, his father had spoken about failing to get the job with Hansard because he had no Welsh. This was owing, he said, to his own father, *Taid* (Welsh for grandfather) having forbidden him to speak it. David then announced, '*Taid* was a bloody old bastard.' His father immediately whisked him away and said he knew that he did not know the meaning of those awful words he had picked up from other boys, but he had to be punished 'for offending against man and God.' He gave as scriptural justification the story of Elisha being jeered by boys and praying to Jehovah, who sent a bear to devour them. David responded, '*Taid* was a bloody old bastard and Jehovah isn't any better.' Appalled, and feeling obliged to curb filial impiety and incipient blasphemy, his father spanked him.⁸⁵

David spent much of his childhood at the house of his Bradshaw cousins nearby in Wickham Road. His Uncle Ebenezer had four sons and a daughter, one of whom—he would remember with amusement—would quickly say after lunch 'ThankyouformynicedinnerGodamen' and rush from the table. They were aware of what one of them called his 'obsession with Wales.' When he played a version of children's rugby with them and his uncle in the garden, they jokingly taunted him, 'Don't you try any of your Welsh tricks.' This infuriated him because of the aspersion cast on his father's people.⁸⁶

With her youngest in school, his mother was frustrated. Middle-class Victorian wives did not work outside the house, and she had no domestic interests but, because she felt the cold, seldom went out. Having postponed marriage far longer than most women, she had been used to independence and public responsibility. In the house, she had no obligations other than looking after the children when home and supervising the women who came to do the housework. Occasionally she made a fruit pie. For this restlessly energetic woman, ill suited to undemanding ease, the house was a prison. From the front door and bay window she watched children on their

way to and from school and wished she was their teacher.⁸⁷ Much of her time she spent sitting, her legs on a hassock, furiously knitting for lepers.

Intellectually and emotionally more powerful than her husband, she regarded him as regionally inferior. ‘That’s your father,’ she would say, ‘born halfway up a mountain with the back door open.’ She joked about ‘Welsh heathens’, and behind the joke was an assumed superiority to the Welsh, whom she scornfully called ‘country people’. Only partly as a consequence of general economic decline, she was living a more restricted life than that of her girlhood. Instead of the grand Georgian house on the best street in Rotherhithe, she now lived in a small brick row house. Her brother Ebenezer made a better living than her husband and lived in a bigger house. She regarded Jim as inferior to her handsome and capable father, with whom she remained enamoured. In later years when Jim was late for tea, she would, in the presence of their grandchildren, call him an ‘old fat head.’⁸⁸ She usually treated him with affection. She certainly loved him—everybody did—but she had devoted herself to her children, and now all three of them were all at school. For her own sake, therefore, she allowed her favourite, school-deading David, to stay home at the slightest sign or pretext of illness.



Her concern for his health was also genuine. Thin and small, he often had respiratory ailments, and she lived in fear of tuberculosis, the scourge of the family. Jim’s brother and her sister Dolly had died of it. Before her brother Ebenezer married, he voyaged through the Mediterranean to strengthen himself against the disease. So when her younger son suffered from congestion, she put him to bed, boiled water, and pumped steam at him. Her habitual response to illness was, ‘Be *sure* and stay in bed—& be still for a while.’ As a consequence, he spent much of his childhood in bed drawing and reading. And even in this she favoured him, for when ill Cissy was sent to school and resented it. This may not have been quite the case with Harold, who also suffered from bronchial ailments. But certainly, when her youngest showed any sign of illness, the half-mile walk to school in bad or unpredictable weather was, she thought, too risky. The risk diminished somewhat in 1908 when the family moved to 128 Howson Road, a larger

15. David Jones ‘circa 1907’

house, the last in a row backing onto the railway tracks and ending at Dalrymple Road only a few hundred yards away from school. Here as well, however, to avoid academic and personal distress, he was ill as often as possible. Ill or malingering, he skipped so much school, that he could later say with some truth, 'I had no education.'⁸⁹

He and his mother were psychologically interdependent. She wanted to be busy and in charge, and she wanted conversation, and he wanted to stay home. He liked her attention, sickness got it, and that conditioned him to be ill and to magnify illness. Later in life, he would stay in bed with a cold that would keep few from going out to work. He was sick, but in his over-reaction, hypochondriac.

Time spent alone with his mother benefited him imaginatively. In their long conversations, she recreated her Thames-side childhood in Rotherhithe, which, when he was eight, 'seemed an almost mythological world.' She spoke of the technical details of shipbuilding: about tree-nails, for example, made of wood because iron would rust, that fastened a ship's long timbers. He mentions them in his poetry (*A* 174). She spoke of the 'mast-ponds' (*A* 118) where great floes of softwood from the Baltic were stored for use as masts and spars. She described her relatives, who had been marine engineers, draughtsmen who made blue-prints for shipbuilding, and merchants concerned with sight-drafts, brokerage, bonded goods, and harbour dues. From her, he heard expressions (e.g., 'mum as a muffled oar') that had coloured the speech of Victorian Rotherhithe. These lay dormant in his memory until reading T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* in 1926 or '27, when 'c.i.f. London documents at sight' instantly, like Proust's *petite madeleine*, recalled the whole world of the Pool of London as his mother had recreated it.⁹⁰

She regaled him with family anecdotes in which her father figured large and her mother hardly at all. Certain relics in the house made Eb Bradshaw's imaginative presence tangible. One of David's earliest playthings had been a single sheaved block from his grandfather's work yard, and there were other blocks and dead-eyes and, most impressive of all, his carpentry tools. She told David how her father prided himself on his integrity as a workman. His main employment was to row out to a ship to make necessary repairs quickly so that it could sail with the next tide and avoid further harbour-dues. A perfectionist, he insisted on doing each job well and refused to start work unless allowed enough time to properly complete it. If a captain insisted on inordinate haste or offered extra money for a quick job, he left with his men for shore. He was sparing in

the use of what he called ‘bad language’. When faced with a difficult task he used to say, ‘I’ll manage somehow or dash m’ buttons.’ In arguments his greatest oath was ‘Not for the Pope o’ Rome!’ She related an argument aboard a ship cargoed with sulphur from Sicily, which would become the basis of the ‘Redriff’ section of *The Anathemata* (118-21). She spoke of Bradshaw’s employment and the family prosperity declining as metal steamships replaced wooden sailing ships. This was an early awareness of the momentous technological changes transforming the world, a transformation that later preoccupied his thoughts.⁹¹

He would mine memories of his mother’s conversation when writing the great central monologue in *The Anathemata* (124-68). From his mother, he wrote,

I got a pretty vivid impression ... of the city itself on the further shore—the churches & parishes of the various ‘wards’ of the municipality—with St. Paul’s towering high above the rest and ‘the Bridge’ meant simply London Bridge Certainly ‘the Lady of the Pool’ section of *The Ana* could hardly have been written but for those childhood conversations with my mother. Of course, much else beside went to the making, but to a surprising degree, it depends, in odd ways, on what can only be called the handing on of an ‘oral tradition’—though that was the last thing either of us had in mind.

‘Whole sections’ of ‘The Lady of the Pool,’ he would say, ‘are practically direct quotes from her, rounded off.’⁹² His monologuing mother would be the initial model of the maternal figure who speaks all but one of the forty-four pages at the heart of *The Anathema*.

Psychologically, his relationship to both parents enriched his imagination in ways that would influence his written and visual art. In old age, he conveyed the sense of having been happy as a child. He said his parents were ‘both very wonderful people ... absolutely marvellous.’⁹³ He loved and admired his mother but was, I think, unable to achieve what psychologists regard as adequate separation from her, largely because she did not wish it. He played, drew, painted, and imagined largely in symbiotic communion with her. Although his father was seldom home, he also loved and was loved by him in ways that enhanced and complicated his inner life. At some level he drew, read, and would write, primarily to please his mother. Her dominant influence may explain why, in later life, he ‘always’ found ‘so moving’ the medieval story of the tumbler who, lacking any other gifts to give to the Blessed Mother, performed his acrobatics before her.⁹⁴ But his father provided materials, praised his pictures, and

got them exhibited and published. Both parents valued reading, and writing. Both sang to him. His father read aloud, spoke in public, and produced and brought printed matter home. Inwardly David would subtly sustain, elaborate, and alter his relationships with his parents through his writing and visual art. How he managed this would be seen in his poetry, which from the beginning reveres maternal figures. In the later poetry, paternal saviour-figures have complimentary significance without, however, receiving equal intensity of lyric celebration.

Because his mother refused to go, the family did not visit his father's relatives in Wales during David's first eight years. She got on badly with her in-laws. When they came to visit the house in Brockley, she would leave the sitting room and bustle about the kitchen, banging saucepans and slamming doors. During her husband's holidays in 1904, however, the Joneses did visit North Wales. Jim agreed to this because of moral opprobrium attaching to his father, who had been cohabiting since 1891 with his dead wife's sister Eleanor without benefit of marriage. Eleanor died in 1903. In 1904, the Jones family visited North Wales.⁹⁵

They left Euston station in the evening. In the early dawn, David awoke and his father said, 'Well, here you are now.' He looked out the window on the right at the coastal flats of the wide estuary of the Dee extending to the sea-horizon. Through the window on the left, he saw the rising hills and, beyond, the mountains of North Wales appearing and disappearing in the mist. Near the end of his life, he wrote of this experience, 'the Rubicon had been passed. And so this was the land of which my father had so often spoken, and that's why he had said just then, "Well here you are now." This was ... the first glimpse of a visual "otherness" and for me it was an otherness that, as is said of certain of the sacraments, is not patient of repetition but leaves an indelible mark on the soul.'⁹⁶

It was a sacrament for which he had been well prepared. Among his earliest memories was his father singing in Welsh: *Ar Hyd y Nos* ('All through the Night'), *Aderyn Pur* ('The Pure Bird'), *Dafydd y Garreg Wen* ('David of the White Rock'), and, the national anthem, *Mae Hen Wlad Fy'nhadau* ('Land of My Fathers'). His father sang in perfect pitch, effortlessly and, for David, movingly, filling him with pride and 'a kind of awe.' Jim did not cultivate his Welshness. He belonged to no society of London Welshmen, had no close Welsh friend, but he was proud of being a Welshman and declared his pride, sometimes expressing regret that Welshness had

become identified with religious dissent. For supper on St. David's day, his wife made sure he was served leeks. He told his children stories of his native Gwynedd (Flintshire), and, as he did, he conveyed the sense of an otherness in which his identity was rooted.⁹⁷

David emerged with his family from the train on the western-most point of Colwyn Bay at Llandrillo-yn-Rhos, now called Rhos-on-Sea.* There they stayed in the house of Jim's sister Elizabeth and her husband, James Tozer, a pawnbroker who had, according to David's mother, the facility of simultaneously speaking English out of one side of his mouth and Welsh out of the other. The Tozers had two daughters, Effie and Gladys. Their mother spoke Welsh but the family was anglophile and the daughters were determined to be as English as possible.⁹⁸ The Tozers had a photograph taken of themselves, their daughters and their daughters' cousins (fig. 16): David reclines in the foreground. Effie is to his right, behind him. The older boy in the back row is probably Harold. He stands beside Gladys. Cissy is missing.



16. The Towzers, bottom row David Jones, top row probably Harold, Elsie

The Tozer house, called Glasdir, was in Colwyn Crescent on the southern edge of the village beside open country. David felt the freedom of the place and loved the open land. He and

* The original name means 'Church of Trillo on the Moor.' Jones later regarded as absurd the new name, which means Moor-on-the-Sea.

his golden-haired cousin Effie were close in age and liked to play by the sea a short walk from the house.

It was from this shore that Prince Madoc supposedly sailed in 1170 to discover America—a plaque on an ancient quay-wall in a seafront garden commemorated the wonder voyage. To the west of the village, beyond the coastal road, the yellow gorse grew among great boulders down to the shingle. Here, below the seawall was St. Trillo's chapel (fig. 17), so close to the sea that at high tide in rough weather waves broke over it. Squat, thick stone-walled, stone-roofed, and derelict, it had been built in the sixteenth century on the site of a sixth-century

oratory associated with the Celtic saint. The cousins squeezed into the tiny chapel between the door jamb and its nearly-closed, chain-fastened heavy oak door. The inside was dark, dank, cobwebbed. Where an altar would have been was a shallow, gravel-bottomed 'holy well' filled with cool fresh water. David thought it 'marvellous' that the spring at the edge of the sea should be free of the taste of salt.⁹⁹



17. St. Trillo's Chapel, c. 1900

In the sea just east of the chapel was the Rhos Fynach fishing weir, made of thick wattled fencing secured by a bank of stones. It had been constructed in the twelfth century by Cistercian monks of Aberconwy Abbey for salmon fishing and repaired for continual use ever since. Even now the vicar of Llandrillo was entitled to a share of the catch. Its interwoven fence was nine feet high, 630 yards long, in the shape of a V with the point seaward where the receding tide trapped fish in shallow water, to be released, if unharvested, by the flood tide. In 1907 in one tide alone, ten tons of mackerel were taken from the weir.



18. Ruined Manor House on *Llys Euryn*, 1990

David loved the rough wattling.¹⁰⁰ His fondness for all kinds of interweaving would endure and profoundly condition his visual art and poetry.

During this, his first visit to Wales, he met his Welsh grandfather, a widower since 1886—tall, once powerful, now bent and using a cane. As he sat with him on a bench by the sea near St. Trillo's chapel, David's resentment against *Taid* evaporated. This chapel, its well, the fishing weir and his ancient Welsh-speaking grandfather together here formed in his imagination a significant constellation, linking him with an ancient past. A few years later he would read the Taliesin story and associate Gwyddno's weir with the wattled weir at Rhos and the Welsh king Maelgwyn the Tall, whose principal seat had been in Rhos, with his tall grandfather.¹⁰¹ He also associated him with the medieval figure Llywarch Hen, his staff a third foot for him. He would die before David visited again.

At Rhos he was also familiar with the hill rising behind the town. It was named *Bryn Euryn*, 'Hill of Gold,' for the colour of the gorse on its slopes. The Joneses and Tozers often picnicked in a ruin on this hill. West of St. George's Church, a path leads from the junction of Rhos and Tan-y-Bryn Roads to the summit. Not far up the path but well hidden from the roads is *Llys Euryn*—the 'Golden Court,' originally the fortified manor house of Edryfed Fychan, a baron and the chief minister of Llywelyn the Great, who had fought in the crusades. Owen Glendower burned it in 1409. It was rebuilt during the Wars of the Roses and occupied by the Conways, who abandoned it in the eighteenth century. The site was a wild place, its ruins unexcavated and overgrown (fig. 18). The picnickers build a fire in the late-Gothic fireplace (the opening of which is six feet, three inches high) to boil water for tea. At the age of 'eight or nine', David sat among these ruins thinking 'a lot' about Llywelyn the Great '& his chief minister Ednyfed'.¹⁰² At the top of the hill, where ash and sycamore give way to low, wind-swept thorn bushes, are the remains of a circular stone-age fort. From there he looked out on the whole of Rhos, the immensity of Conwy Bay curving west to the Little Orme and beyond, the top of the Great Orme visible on the far side of Llandudno, five miles away. To the south can be seen the craggy summits of Snowdonia and the wide sweep of the valley where run-off from the peaks is drained by the Conwy. It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance for David Jones of this unspoiled, enchanted height.

From visiting Rhos and, specifically, its seaside chapel and the ruins of *Llys Euryn*—from playing here, pretending to be an ancient Briton and a medieval Welshman—his imagination acquired permanent direction. If there were a single location central to his historical imagining, this would be it.

Back at Brockley after his first holiday in Wales, while listening to his father singing, nine-year-old David ‘decided,’ as he later said, that he belonged to his father’s nation. But it was not so much a decision as a ‘passionate conviction,’ as he also called it, forcing itself into awareness. He did not understand why he identified with the Welsh while his brother and sister did not—though he later said, ‘I have a few guesses.’ (Cissy did show some interest, Harold none.)¹⁰³

His identification with Welshness balanced his determination to be an artist—both decisions occurring when he was eight or nine years old. He ‘became’ Welsh partly, at least, to compensate his father not for drawing but for the attachment to his mother that underlay his drawing.

A clear indication that Oedipal compensation informed feelings of Welsh affinity was his replacing his baptismal first name, which by then he knew was his mother’s choice, with the name his father had initially wanted—though consciously he renounced the name ‘Walter’ solely because it is Saxon. From the age of ‘eight or nine’, he would ‘answer only to “David.”’¹⁰⁴ Formally, the name ‘Walter’ survived past the age of twelve but shrank to the initial ‘W’ preceding ‘David.’ Not until his early twenties would the ‘W’ disappear altogether. Even then, however, his Bradshaw cousins continued to call him Walter.

Becoming ‘David’ was also a way of nullifying his family nickname, ‘Toady’ (as spelled by him) or ‘Tody’ (as spelled by others).¹⁰⁵ Either it was ‘Tody’, from the Gaelic for ‘wee’ or ‘small’ or it was subsequently spelled that way to abrogate an original insult. David was convinced it began, at least, as ‘Toady’ and originated in Harold’s opinion that, as an infant, David resembled a toad.¹⁰⁶ Being ‘David’ meant sibling victory as well as Oedipal compensation.

Though themselves “‘temperamentally” about as Welsh as possible’, his Welsh relatives did not encourage his Welsh enthusiasms—chief among them then being Owen Glendower, the leader of

the last great rebellion against the English. David told them how ‘disgraceful’ it was that they did not habitually speak Welsh. They laughed indulgently. Effie, who understood Welsh but, apart from ‘*Ach y fi!*’ (O dear!), spoke only English, told him his interest in Welsh history and language was ‘crazy’¹⁰⁷

During childhood holidays in Wales, he did, however, find encouragement in a local vicar. The Joneses went with their relatives to services in large neo-Gothic St. George’s Church on the northern spur of *Bryn Euryn*. One of the vicars was Thomas Evans Timothy, who had read Classics at university, could read Hebrew, and was a Welsh patriot, avidly interested in the antiquities of his parish. Each Sunday, he held one of his two services in Welsh. His sermons incorporated references to the medieval past of the locality. Some thought this interest in the ages of popery unsuitable in a minister of Christ’s religion, but it was for precisely this that David ‘loved talking with him.’ Timothy urged him to learn Welsh and read the Welsh poets. At thirteen, David attended a seaside service for children, during which Timothy preached—first in Welsh, then in English—as David would remember: ‘There was a well in Samaria and there was a well of the Five Porches in Jerusalem and there was the Well of Siloam and Jacob’s Well & the waters of the well sprung at Bethlehem, *and* there is the well at Holywell, that *we* call Treffynnon, the Well-Town, and *here* at this salt-sea margin of the waves there is this ancient little building & within it springs the well of St. Trillo, *here* in Llandrillo, it is *our* well, we are very privileged to have it in this parish. Let it signify for you the well-spring of Living Water.’¹⁰⁸

On these holidays, David saw a good deal of Gwynedd/Flintshire. He and his father often went by themselves on excursions. They visited Ysceifiog, the birthplace of his grandparents, near where Offa’s Dyke is presumed to have run, so that he thereafter associated his Welsh grandfather with this great eighth century earthwork that divided Wales from England.¹⁰⁹ His father showed him the house where his grandfather had lived in Holywell, near the estuary of the Dee, and what had been his workshop above Holywell on Pen-y-Bal. From this height the view in one direction is of the Clwydian hills and, in the other, of the flats of Wirral. His father stressed to him that both his grandfathers had been builders and, in this connection, taught him one of his first Welsh words: *saer*, which means ‘builder,’ ‘carpenter,’ a word that would take on special significance when he learned that a Welsh expression for poetry means ‘carpentry of song.’¹¹⁰ He went with his father to the well of Gwenfrewi, called, in English, Winifred, where,

under fifteenth century fan-vaulting, he watched the surface of the pentagonal well boil with the force of the spring.

In Holywell, he met a ‘big upstanding’ man who introduced himself as Ben Caesar Jones, the ex-Chief Constable of the town. The name epitomized for David the historical Welsh-Roman connection. This huge Welshman looked to him like a fifth century centurion left behind by the departing legions. He wondered, but dared not ask, how he had managed to be christened Caesar—he would later wonder the same thing about Julius Caesar Ibbetson, a ‘very good artist,’ whose watercolour of Conwy he greatly admired.¹¹¹

In 1910, Thomas Timothy was transferred to Raegs-y-cae, a hamlet of small, scattered whitewashed houses, dirt roads and free-ranging sheep, with a large, gabled gray-stone vicarage adjacent to Christ Church. It was four miles from Holywell, where, during their holiday that year, David and his father hired a trap and drove to visit him. There Timothy spoke with David of Owain Gwynedd, a prince of Aberffraw, fighting at nearby Coleshill in 1149 and winning back for Wales what had been part of English Mercia for over 300 years. Had that battle been lost, David’s ancestors would have been culturally English. The clergyman took him to the western wall of his garden to point out the distant mountains of Snowdonia and the nearer green hills that lay just over a pasture and valley, hills that David’s father had often mentioned as landmarks of his boyhood. The southern-most was *Moel Famau*, Hill of the Mothers, with a tower on top. Beside it was *Foel-y-Crio*, Hill of the Cry, and beside that, *Moel Arthur*. The vicar also pointed out *Moel Ffagnallt*, which he said meant Hill of Dereliction.¹¹² From the vicarage garden, these hills are low against the sky but they impressed David as shapes with names to conjure with. They would be for him a remembered poem-in-landscape, juxtaposing maternity, grief, and the legend of Arthur. In a region so long contested by the earls of Chester and the princes of Gwynedd that it was a cumulative Welsh Gettysburg, these hills would symbolically mediate for David an association between Calvary, Arthur-as-Christ-figure, and the history of Wales. They were a landscape of mortality and the universal experience of decline and loss inherent in the lives of men and cultures. He commemorates these ‘vision lands’ in *The Anathemata* (233).

He and his father visited areas mostly between the Clwyd and the Dee but also traveled once to Anglesey and on various occasions into east and west Caernarvon and north-west and

south-east Denbigh. As they traveled, David often gazed at the steep hillsides where the long-maned wild ponies grazed that would become signature details in his paintings. In 1911, his father took him to Caernarfon for the investiture of Edward as Prince of Wales, who was David's age. On that trip, David tried to see Mt Snowdon but it was "too misty." He never would see it.¹¹³ Always, however, their central base was Rhos, where, playing on the shore one day, he came upon the corpses of two drowned men, a gruesome experience which would underlie references in his poetry to sailors lost at sea (*A* 104, 106, 141).¹¹⁴

At fourteen, David had deep brown eyes, inherited, his mother told him, from his Italian great-grandmother. His mouth was small and bow-shaped, his ears large, his hair ginger like his father's with the same bronze tinge. As he aged, it would darken to brown like his mother's. In manner he was sweet and gentle like his father, but his interior disposition resembled that of his high-strung, anxious mother. He would later say, 'I've always been deeply depressed inside—more like in various ways my English mother though she had great fortitude in tribulation.'¹¹⁵

His most formative years were the last five of Victoria's reign. And because his parents were older than those of most of his contemporaries, because his grandmother lived in his childhood home, and because her contemporaries visited, he absorbed Victorian manners and values more than many of his contemporaries. This would be evident in his habit of liberally underlining words for emphasis in letters and in his assumption that society should be hierarchical, in his dedication to work, in his uncompromising sense of integrity, in his inventiveness, in his avid interest in history, in his fascination with archaeology, and in his love of the sea and the countryside. He would show a courtesy towards women that typified that bygone age. In many important respects he would, of course, be post-Victorian: he would not, for example, be liberal, optimistic, dutiful, or moralistic. He would endorse the sexual revolt led by that other Victorian child, D.H. Lawrence, but Victorian sexual repression affected his emotional life.

He had masturbated since early childhood and, from the start, felt guilty about it. Compounded with intensification of sexual awakening in early adolescence, his feelings of guilt probably contributed to a traumatic experience in 1909. He was suffering from tightness of the foreskin that makes erections painful. He suffered for quite a while before confiding the problem,

with acute embarrassment, to his parents. The only cure is circumcision. His mother took him to a surgery, where a nurse took charge and chloroformed him for the operation. Recovery was slow and painful, acutely and with further embarrassment after an erection broke the stitches. The initial problem, the nature of the operation, the terrible pain, his being fourteen, the involvement of his mother and the (female) nurse: these are enough to make even a non-Freudian wince. Thirty years later the experience gave him nightmares. For the rest of his life, he thought the sight of his penis unappealing and could not imagine it being attractive to a woman.¹¹⁶

Notes to Chapter 1

¹ To Valerie Wynne-Williams 3/11/59; DJ interviewed by Peter Orr early 1970s (all interviews by P. Orr are, unless otherwise specified, on audio tape); DJ to Colin Hughes 24/3/71.

² Maurice Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975; Petra Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86; Alice Hyne in conversation with Tony Hyne interviewed 20/6/90; Stella Wright interviewed 26/6/86; Mollie Elkin interviewed summer 1985; to Dorothea Travis 18/3/74, to V. Wynne Williams 10/6/59.

³ Letter draft frag.nd; to Rachel Price 12/59; to Cathy Hunt 4/7/71; to Vernon Watkins 5/4/62; Sarah Williams to author 3/12/09; DJ, 'A Letter from David Jones' *Poetry Wales* 8 (Winter 1972), p. 6; to Harman Grisewood 1/1/64; to Mr. Emlyn-Davies 19/6/64.

⁴ To H. Grisewood 1/1/64; *E&A* 26; testimonials by E.J. Beck, Rector and H. Marlow, Headmaster; T. Hyne interviewed 6/85; biographical note for the British Council n.d. [c.1971]; letter frag.nd; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record 9/6/66.

⁵ On 11/12/24, Jim Jones was given a watch to mark his fortieth year with the firm; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record 5/5/66; obituary of James Jones, *Christian Herald* 21/10/43.

⁶ *Kentish Mercury* 12/7/40 with emendations by James Jones; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86.

⁷ To Saunders Lewis 9/4/70; DJ in conversation with the author 9/9/72; to Dnd [Donald Attwater?] draft frag.29/1/53; to S. Lewis 9/4/70.

⁸ DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72; to René Hague 27/9/74; Philip Hagreen to author 26/1/86; to S. Lewis 9/4/70.

⁹ S. Wright interviewed 21/6/89; T. Hyne interviewed 6/85; M. Elkin interviewed summer 1985; S. Wright interviewed 19/6/88; to V. Wynn-Williams 7/2/74.

¹⁰ Letter of reference from Edward J. Bech 3/7/1874; letter of reference by Lucy Mockford n.d. [1875].

¹¹ To S. Lewis 9/4/70.

¹² To H. Grisewood 24/8/47; *The Times* 4/2/1880; to P. Tegetmeier Good Friday 1935.

¹³ Letter from Vicar of Christ Church 7/9/1888; Hubert Corniosh-Bowden to T. Hyne 31/10/96; M. Bradshaw to T. Stoneburner in conversation, written record 1975.

¹⁴ DJ to William Blissett, *The Long Conversation* (Oxford, OUP, 1981), p. 125; 'Fragments of an Attempted Autobiographical Writing,' *Agenda* 12:4-13:1 (Winter-Spring 1975), 101; to H. Grisewood 8/10/72; S. Wright to author 10/2/96; S. Wright interviewed 29/6/89; Douglas Cleverdon interviewed summer 1985; Anthony Hyne, 'The Jones's—an Anglo-Welsh Family,' *David Jones Journal* (Summer 1997), ll.

¹⁵ To V. Wynne-Williams 23/2/61.

¹⁶ *DGC* 24; IN 54; M. Elkin interviewed 17/6/88; Stanley Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87; T. Stoneburner written notes 1975; *IP* typescript concerning Bobby Saunders; H. Grisewood, who met DJ's parents in Brockley in 1928, interviewed 4/10/87; M. Elkin interviewed 21/4/95; S. Wright interviewed 26/6/86. R. Hague, who visited the Brockley home in 1927, is the first to make the connection with the Grossmith book (*DGC* 24-5). Douglas Cleverdon, who also visited DJ at Brockley, agreed that the atmosphere was 'Pooterish' (interviewed 28/6/86); to H. Grisewood 14/11/70, 1/1/64.

¹⁷ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86; Cissy Hyne quoted by S. Wright interviewed 21/6/89, 2/5/93; Kathleen Lockitt and S. Wright interviewed 21/6/89; John Ryan interviewed 6/8/87; to S. Lewis 18/1/62; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; 'Fragments of an Attempted Autobiographical Writing,' 99.

¹⁸ Manuscript note to early draft of *The Anathemata*.

¹⁹ T. Hyne interviewed summer 1985; M. Elkin interviewed summer 1985; T. Hyne interviewed 24/6/86; S. Wright interviewed 19/6/88; P. Hagreen to author 26/1/86; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record 26/5/69.

²⁰ S. Wright interviewed 21/6/89; P. Hagreen interviewed 2/6/86; D. Cleverdon interviewed summer 1985.

²¹ To D. Tegetmeier 29/12/60; to V. Wynne-Williams 12/8/59, 24/9/62; to Pamela Donner 19/12/63; M. Elkin interviewed summer 1985.

²² Biographical note for the British Council n.d. [c.1971]; to H. Grisewood 12/12/66; to Janet Stone 30/3/65; to Christopher Dawson frag. n.d. [1953]; to J. Stone 22/1/72; to M. Percival 10/67; to R. Hague frag. n.d.; to V. Wynne-Williams frag.

²³ M. Bradshaw to S. Wright 20/8/76; to R. Hague frag. n.d.

²⁴ DJ to Blissett, p. 69; to R. Hague 27/9/74.

²⁵ Cf. A 229n; to P. Donner 8/5/62; to D. Tegetmeier 14/2/45; to Bernard Bergonzi 11/11/65; M. Angela Gloria Donati Dorenkamp, *'In the Order of Signs,' An Introduction to the Poetry of David Jones* (Ph.D. diss. Univ of Connecticut, 1974), p. 7; to H. Grisewood V Kal.8/66; Blissett, recalling visits with DJ in 6/73.

²⁶ To R. Hague 19/1/73.

²⁷ DJ to Blissett, p. 63; to Mr. Revell n.d. [c 1972].

²⁸ To Nancy Sanders 31/9/64; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69; DJ ms draft n.d. [c. 1970].

²⁹ To Molly O'Neil 7/1/71; R. Hague, *David Jones*, p. 45; to T. Stoneburner 8-9/1/70, 13/1/70.

³⁰ DJ, taped interview by P. Orr early 1970s; DJ to Blissett, p. 121; 'Fragments of an Attempted Autobiographical Writing,' 99; Blissett, recalling visits with DJ in 6/73.

³¹ To T. Stoneburner draft n.d.; DJ to Blissett, p. 125; *IN* 88; to H. Grisewood 6/10/72; to JS 15/3/65

³² S. Wright interviewed 21/6/89; to H. Grisewood 9/10/61.

³³ DJ recorded by Arthur Giardelli 1965; 'Sign of the bear, David Jones talks to Nesta Roberts' *Guardian* 17/2/64; 'Fragments of an Attempted Autobiographical Writing,' 104.

³⁴ K. Lockitt and S. Wright interviewed 21/6/89; M. Elkin and S. Wright interviewed summer 1985; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; 'David Jones--Maker of Signs,' (BBC/British Council), script broadcast on Radio 3, 6/11/75, based on DJ, interviewed by P. Orr and Jon Silkin.

³⁵ S. Wright to R. Hague 1/3/79; Miles and Shiel, p. 17; to Mr. Emlyn-Davies 13/7/64; A 125n1; to S. Lewis 9/4/70.

³⁶ To Mr. Rates frag. n.d.; to J.S 18/4/65; M. Percival to D. Cleverdon 1/10/77. A figure in the ms drafts of *In Parenthesis* who is modeled on Jones rides his brother's bicycle. In 1928 Jones attempted to teach a young girl to ride a bicycle.

³⁷ To Mr. Rates draft n.d.; DJ ms draft n.d. [c. 1970].

- ³⁸ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record 26/5/69, 30/7/69; M.A. Fletcher, Librarian, London Transport Museum; to author 26/5/88; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; to V. Wynne-Williams 25/11/64.
- ³⁹ To David Blamires, 9/7/66.
- ⁴⁰ Remembering visiting Brockley in 1924, P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86, 18/6/88, *IP* 218 n 40.
- ⁴¹ To Mr. Emlyn-Davies 19/6/64; Dorenkamp, p. 7; 'DJ life for Jim Ede' (5/9/35), second correction of typescript 3/5/43.
- ⁴² To H. Grisewood 22/5/62; to T. Stoneburner 14/6/70; 20/6/74; to Nancy Sanders 20/2/74.
- ⁴³ To H. Grisewood, 22/5/62; to T. Stoneburner 18/7/72; 7/7/71.
- ⁴⁴ DJ's memory of his father's words ms frag. n.d.
- ⁴⁵ To R. Hague 9-15/7/73; R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77; to P. Donner 11/5/74; DJ to Blissett, p. 126.
- ⁴⁶ To D. Blamires 7/6/66; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record 9/6/66; DJ to Donald Allchin interviewed 23/9/95.
- ⁴⁷ Letter draft frag. n.d. [1963]; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87; *IP* ms.
- ⁴⁸ T. Hyne interviewed 6/85; to H. Grisewood 4/8/62; to R. Hague 1/3/36.
- ⁴⁹ Paul Hills interviewed 11/6/91.
- ⁵⁰ Obituary of James Jones, *Christian Herald* 2110/43; to H. Grisewood 4/8/62; to T. Stoneburner 5/8/69.
- ⁵¹ P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record 5/5/66.
- ⁵² P. Hagreen interviewed by Douglas Cleverdon typescript 1982; to H. Grisewood 14/7/56, 4/8/62.
- ⁵³ T. Hyne interviewed 24/6/86; S. Wright interviewed 21/6/89.
- ⁵⁴ Neville Braybrook, 'David Jones: Painter and Poet,' *Queens Quarterly* (Winter 1964), 509; Valentine Kilbride in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record 3/6/69; S. Wright interviewed 26/6/86; to H. Grisewood 14/10/70; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 5/5/66; to T. Stoneburner. 15/5/70.
- ⁵⁵ S. Wright interviewed 11/10/87; DJ quoted by Richard Wald, 'I Don't Think I'm Modern,' *New York Herald Tribune Books* 8/7/62; S. Wright interviewed, 19/6/88.
- ⁵⁶ To J. Stone 7/3/65; *E&A* 27; to H. Grisewood 14/8/51; DJ to Blissett, p. 146; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 9/6/66; to J. Stone 7/3/65; *A* 110.

⁵⁷ S. Wright interviewed 21/6/89; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 5/5/66.

⁵⁸ V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 22/9/95; DJ 'Fragments of an Attempted Autobiographical Writing,' 102; DJ to Blissett, p. 44; DJ interviewed by P. Orr typescript edited by Orr 1973.

⁵⁹ 'DJ Life for Jim Ede' (5/9/35), second correction of typescript 3/5/43; *E&A* 26-7; DJ undated ms draft c. 1970; S. Wright interviewed 11/10/87; T. Hyne interviewed 24/6/86; M. Elkin interviewed summer 1985.

⁶⁰ DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s.

⁶¹ To Mr. Emlyn-Davies 13/7/64; DJ interviewed by P.O. summer 1972; ms frag. n.d.; to S. Lewis 9/4/70; to HS 2/4/58.

⁶² DJ interviewed by P. Orr summer 1972; to JS 16/10/70.

⁶³ P. Hagreen to R. Hague typescript of taped interview 16/5/78; P. Hagreen to author 26/1/86.

⁶⁴ These are reproduced in Miles and Shiel, p. 15.

⁶⁵ 'DJ life for Jim Ede' (5/9/35) second correction of typescript 3/5/43; 'Sign of the bear, David Jones talks to Nesta Roberts'.

⁶⁶ M. Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975. *Wolf in Snow* is now lost, this photograph taken from Robin Ironside *David Jones* (London: Penguin, 1949), plate 4.

⁶⁷ DJ interviewed by P. Orr, typescript 1973.

⁶⁸ M. Elkin, S. Wright interviewed summer 1985. Neither school nor school-records survived the intense bombing of south-east London during the Second World War. For information about the school, I am indebted to photographs preserved in the Lewisham Library.

⁶⁹ Dorenkamp, p. 7; John Petts, quoted by Rothenstein, *Modern English Painters II* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1952), p. 211; to John H. Johnston 16/5/64; H. Grisewood interviewed 23/6/86.

⁷⁰ To R. Hague 29/2/60; to *The Times* 22/2/61.

⁷¹ Letter draft frag. n.d.; *DG* 186; to Kathleen Raine frag. n.d.

⁷² DJ to Blissett, p. 110; to D. Attwater 10/10/44.

⁷³ To H. Grisewood 28/3/61, 25/7/35.

⁷⁴ Anthony Bailley, 'The Front Line,' typescript 2/73; S. Wright to R. Hague 1.3.79

⁷⁵ To H. Grisewood 15-24/4/72.

⁷⁶ To S. Lewis 9/4/70; to H. Grisewood 1/2/71; to A. Giardelli 9-11/8/73; to S. Lewis 9/4/70; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69; 7/6/69; To William Cookson 23/10/73; to T. Stoneburner draft frag. n.d. c. 1968; IP ms; to Jackson Knight 11/10/52.

⁷⁷ Ms draft 1965; R. Hague, *A Commentary on The Anathemata* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1977), p. 101; Colin Wilcockson interviewed 22/6/88; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s.

⁷⁸ To R. Hague 19/6/74; to Catherine Rousseau 17/10/65; Anne Beresford, 'A Friendship with David Jones--a personal account,' typescript. n.d.; to R. Hague 19/6/74; to A. Giardelli 9-11/8/73.

⁷⁹ To T. Stoneburner 17/2/66.

⁸⁰ Sid J. Segolowitz, *Two Sides of the Brain* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ; Prentice-Hall, 1983), p. 175; to Bernard Wall 30/1/43; M. Elkin interviewed summer 1985.

⁸¹ DJ interviewed by John Silkin 1965; DJ 'Life for Jim Ede' typescript 5/9/35; to JK 13/10/52.

⁸² To T. Stoneburner 20/10/64.

⁸³ *IP* 223 n 37; Howard Grimmet to DJ 10/1/55.

⁸⁴ To R. Hague 6/1/65; to V. Wynne-Williams 26/12/64.

⁸⁵ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 9/6/66; to V. Wynne-Williams 24/9/62; *LF* 13; DJ in conversation with author 31/8/72.

⁸⁶ K. Lockitt interviewed 21/6/89. DJ ms draft n.d. [c. 1970]; to Helen Sutherland 29/8/61; to V. Wynne-Williams 5/4/62.

⁸⁷ S. Wright interviewed 19/6/88; Alice Ann Jones to DJ 28/3/37; M. Elkin interviewed summer 1985.

⁸⁸ The boredom of his mother was an impression DJ conveyed in the 1960s to Sarah Balme interviewed 17/6/90. M. Elkin interviewed summer 1985; D. Cleverdon interviewed summer 1985.

⁸⁹ To H. Grisewood 6/10/72; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87; M. Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975 written notes; Alice Ann Jones to P. Gill 3/8/31; to R. Hague 18/2/36; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

⁹⁰ To J. Knight 11/10/52; to H. Grisewood 31/3/72; DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72.

⁹¹ To Frank Morley unposted 1/53; to R. Hague 4/9/74; to W.H. Auden 24/2/54.

⁹² Letter draft frag. n.d.; DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72.

⁹³ *Manchester Guardian* 11/2/72; Sarah and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971 typescript.

⁹⁴ To T. Stoneburner 15/3/68.

⁹⁵ *E&A* 23; to V. Wynne-Williams 11/12/72; S. Williams to author 21/11/11.

⁹⁶ DJ, 'A Letter from David Jones' *Poetry Wales* 8, p. 8-9.

⁹⁷ DJ, 'A Letter from David Jones' *Poetry Wales* 8, p. 8; unaddressed letter frag. drafts n.d.; Alice Ann Jones to DJ 11/3/37; to H. Grisewood 1/1/64.

⁹⁸ T. Hyne interviewed 6/85; to V. Wynne-Williams 5/4/62.

⁹⁹ To M. O'Neil 7/1/71; to Valerie Price 11/8/59; to S. Lewis 10/67; to T. Hyne 18/5/72.

¹⁰⁰ Richard Baddeley, *The Borough of Conwyn Handbook* (Borough of Conwyn, n.d.), p. 63; JJ to M. Elkin to R. Hague, 'Note on the draft of Kensington Mass' (typescript n.d.).

¹⁰¹ To Gwladys Toser 26/10/48; *E&A* 27.

¹⁰² Richard Buddeley, p. 90; to T. Hyne 18/5/72; to S. Lewis 3/7/54.

¹⁰³ Biographical note for the British Council, n.d. [c.1971]; to R. Hague 27/9/74; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 9/6/66.

¹⁰⁴ To V. Wynne-Williams 5/4/62 unposted.

¹⁰⁵ Rupert Hope to DJ 3/11; Jim Jones to DJ 24/921.

¹⁰⁶ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; to V. Wynne-Williams, 5/2/61.

¹⁰⁷ Letter draft frag. n.d., to V. Wynne-Williams 11/9/59.

¹⁰⁸ To Jeremy Hooker 8/5/70; to H. Grisewood 1/1/64.

¹⁰⁹ To J. Hooker 8/5/70; DJ, 'A Letter from David Jones' *Poetry Wales* 8, p. 6.

¹¹⁰ To S. Lewis 22/7/48, 6/7/60.

¹¹¹ To T. Stoneburner 7/10/64; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 9/6/66; 26/5/69; to Alun Oldfield-Davies 23/12/59.

¹¹² To Peter Levi 29/1/65.

¹¹³ To S. Lewis 4/71; DJ to Blissett, p. 44; to V. Wynne-Williams 4/2/59.

¹¹⁴ RQ 11.

¹¹⁵ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; to D. Tegetmeier 18/3/74; to S. Lewis 14/6/72.

¹¹⁶ DJ notes for his psychotherapist [1948]; Dr. Glyn Davies interviewed 8/10/89; R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77; R. Hague to Blissett 1977; DJ to S. Honeyman int 24/11/2013; Edward Hodgkin to the author 15/5/97; Prudence Pelham to DJ [1936]; DJ to R. Hague int. 1976; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89.

Chapter 2 1909-14

The senior students at Brockley Road School sat for a scholarship. Those passing with high grades went to the Prendergast Grammar School in Lewisham, as had Cissy. Those passing with lower grades went to nearby Hilly Fields College, as his parents hoped David would. But he informed them that he wanted to go to art school. They urged an academic education, he refused. Relatives weighed in on his parents' side, but, after months of argument and stubbornness, he got his way. The nearest art school was the L.C.C. School of Arts and Crafts on Peckham Street in Camberwell, three miles north (fig. 1). He was enrolled and, on the morning of 20 September 1909, wearing a high Eton collar and knickerbockers buttoned at the knee, he began his first term as an art student.¹ Not yet fourteen, he was the youngest in the school—most new students were sixteen or older—and he was small for his age. Upon arrival, a group of students deposited him in a wastepaper basket.²



1. L.C.C. School of Arts and Crafts, Camberwell, c. 1910

Each morning he went to school by horse-drawn bus, in winter taking hot potatoes in his coat pockets to warm his hands. The journey was shortened in 1910 when the family rented a house a mile north at 31 Vesta Road near the top of Telegraph Hill. It was the best house they had lived in, the location giving a feeling of spaciousness and light, though far from shops and the railway station. Up the hill was a school with playing-fields where he could look out on a wide expanse of southern countryside. In front of the house, the road ran down-hill to the east in a falling-away view. He continued to go to Camberwell by bus in the morning but in the evening, weather permitting, he walked home, avoiding main roads, keeping as much as possible to open fields.³

Built in 1903, the school was an addition to the Passmore Edwards South London Art

Gallery and Technical Institute. It was three stories, red-brick Victorian Baroque, with stained-glass windows at the front. Two pedestalled stone torsos, male and female, supported the portico of the main entrance. Inside were dark wood-paneled corridors with arched ceilings, and, at the back, high-ceilinged studios with immense north-facing windows. The fee per term was £2.10, which paid for all day-classes including two using live models. Classes began at 10 am and ended at 4 p.m. with an hour break for lunch. Here he was, as he put it, ‘implanted’ with ‘the last dregs of the Classical tradition.’⁴

He drew well enough to be enrolled in ‘Drawing the Figure’. Instruction began with ‘doing antique,’ which meant drawing plaster casts mostly of classical and renaissance statues. After a few weeks, the class divided into sexually segregated Life Drawing classes.⁵ Considered too young for nude models, he was required to postpone ‘Life’ and, for a few months, continued ‘doing antique.’ Among his plaster-cast subjects were: *The Boy and the Goose*; the *Faun*; various death masks, including that of Voltaire; Michelangelo’s *David*, which ‘bored’ him; Donatello’s *St. George*, with a large shield that he liked; and the *Disk-Thrower*, which he found ‘angular in a boring sort of way.’ His favourite was the *Venus de Milo*, which he later called ‘a marvel of serene beauty’, ‘the Academic at its best.’ Drawing her was to experience an ‘immense stillness.’ Another favourite was the *Dying Gaul*, a fallen Celtic chief, whose neck-torque he especially liked. Prolonged ‘doing antique’ was arduous training for the eye and an extensive lesson in distortion. The statues were made according to principles then unknown to him, which, he later said, made capturing their ‘subtleties’ ‘surprisingly difficult.’ When, after a few months, he joined the life class,* he found live models much easier to draw.⁶

His negative evaluation of (his own) male genitalia received corroboration of a sort in this class, where male models posed with genitals covered and teachers advised shrinking the genitals when drawing the male nude, as in classical sculpture. In 1939 when reading that, correcting student drawings, Legros ‘cut down the size of the genitals, saying, “Michelangelo always made them small,”’ Jones added in the margin, ‘As a matter of fact, that is very good advice, ... certainly the proportion in the male figure is enhanced in some way by so doing. I’ve never understood quite how, but it is so in practice.’⁷

* Jones did not study at Camberwell for ‘years’ before drawing Life, as Miles and Shiel mistakenly claim, p. 18.

During his first year he may also have taken courses in ‘Modeling,’ ‘Carving,’ and ‘Unclassified’ still-life drawing.⁸ Indication of this last is a surviving watercolour done in 1910 of a grinding-stone in a metal half-casing.

The closest among his student friends were two other new arrivals, seventeen-year old Harold Frederick Weaver Hawkins and eighteen-year old Frank Charles Medworth. A free-thinking agnostic, Hawkins was upper middle-class, from the genteel suburb of Dulwich, the eldest son of a senior architect in the Admiralty. Having attended secondary school for some years, he was better educated than either Jones or Medworth, was arrogant, and loved plays. He led his two friends to the Lyric Theatre in Hamersmith, where Nigel Playfair was producing Shakespeare. Of the three, he was considered the best artist and was appointed in November 1912 an ‘Art Pupil Teacher,’ which gave him free tuition. Medworth was lower-middle class, Cockney, Anglican, the only child of a Rotherhithe carpenter. After an apprenticeship as, he delighted to say, ‘a designing artist,’ he had entered Camberwell on a £90 scholarship.⁹

With his friends, Jones went to the annual costume balls for art students in London. One of these he attended as a medieval bowman. For his costume, Cissy knit a wool garment, which he transformed into chain mail by applying aluminum paint. He wanted to go to the Chelsea Arts Ball as a jovial friar, so he went to the monastery beside the Carmelite church in Church Street, Kensington, and asked to borrow a pattern to make a habit. The porter called the superior, who loaned Jones a habit to wear to the dance.¹⁰ It was his first experience with a Catholic clergyman.

In the autumn of 1910, before Jones advanced to Life class, his brother entered the advanced stages of tuberculosis. Afraid of infection, his parents withdrew David from school and sent him to stay in Brighton with his wealthy Great Uncle Tom Pethybridge and his unmarried daughters. Semi-retired from the paper business and a former Justice of the Peace, Pethybridge was a Gladstonian Liberal who celebrated the Glorious Revolution of 1688. He was also a Germanophile who liked reciting to Jones a poem he had written that began, ‘Our Saxon fathers built a bridge with piers and arches massive. / The Stuart took it for himself and from the people blocked it.’ The recitation infuriated his grandnephew, who protested, ‘I *am not* a Saxon.’¹¹

Since Jones was missing school and his granduncle was convinced that he should have been enrolled in a grammar school, Pethybridge insisted that Jones spend time in his library,

which was well stocked with books by nineteenth century Liberal authors. Jones was to read certain books, and Pethybridge came around in the evening to make sure that he had. One of these was J.R. Green's *Shorter History of the English People*, which reproduces thirteenth century drawings of Welshmen, each with one bare foot. These inform figures with a single bare foot that appear in Jones's later visual art.¹² He did not otherwise much like the book, in which, he thought, Victorian Germanism adulated Anglo-Saxons at the expense of Celtic Britons. He read Macaulay's essays, William Stubbs on constitutional law, and J.A. Froude—probably *Caesar a Sketch* (1903), which is 450 pages long. It begins with an introduction to the age and a description of Roman government and society. Before focusing on the events of Caesar's life, it considers the ill-fated attempt by Tiberius Gracchus to break up estate monopolies and restore the land to yeoman farmers, an attempt Jones later commemorated (*A* 89). He also read the versified celebrations of Roman heroism in Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*, passages from which his uncle required him to commit to memory and recite. He memorized parts of 'Horatius'—from which he would recite 'How Horatius kept the bridge' at a family Christmas concert—and the whole of his favourite, 'The Battle of Lake Regillus'. The verse was 'doggerel,' he later said, 'but it got to me.' Reading it left, he said, 'an indelible mark.' 'One never gets rid of these Roman things.'¹³ His interest in ancient Rome would inform much of his poetry.

During this prolonged visit, his great uncle became attached to him. For his birthday the following year, he gave him Sebastian Evans's translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth (1904), inscribed to 'Walter David Jones, Champion of the Ancient Welsh from a converted Saxon.' For his birthday in 1912, his granduncle gave him Lutzow's *Medieval Towns* (1907) inscribed to 'W.D.J. an introduction to a wider circle of knowledge.' Jones would say of his Liberal greatuncle, 'I owe him ... quite a lot.'¹⁴

His historical and political education in Brighton ended on 20 November, when his brother died at home in Brockley at the age of twenty-one. The burial was in Nunhead Cemetery, west of Brockley. David may not have been summoned home in time to attend. Afterwards, his parents never spoke of Harold in the presence of David or Cissy—it was as though he had never existed. Cissy thought Harold had been wonderful, entertaining and lively, and she thought their mother remarkably unperturbed by his death. She had seemed far more upset when her mother

died. David, too, was silent about Harold. In later life, he did not mention his brother even to close friends, one of whom (Harman Grisewood) felt it was a subject he positively wanted to avoid.¹⁵

His grief over his brother's death was, of course, contaminated by guilt. Feelings of being secondary to Harold, and Harold's awareness that their mother preferred David had intensified rivalry between them. Throughout their struggle, illness was David's best weapon, allowing him to have her to himself. By contracting tuberculosis, his brother turned this weapon against him, exiling him to Brighton. At certain times, all younger siblings wish elder siblings dead—many say so in the heat of anger. For David this wish came true. Psychologically, survival was a Pyrrhic victory—so great the cost in regret, which he would pay for the rest of his life. The title of an essay he would write in 1966, 'The Death of Harold', marks an important turning point in English history. The words also mark a critical juncture in his personal history—the death of innocence, no less intensely felt for being illusory. Harold died in November, the month of David's birth, which is called, in Welsh, 'a dying' and referred to as the Black Month, an epithet David would later regard as 'very apt.'¹⁶ For nine years he had shared his brother's bedroom. Now he had it all to himself.

The remainder of his life is remarkable for its freedom from residual sibling rivalry. He had nothing negative to say, for example, to or about any other artist or writer. He avoided, if he could, any dispute or argument. He had an extraordinary talent for sustaining friendship. These characteristics may indicate a determination not to make the mistake he made unavoidably, because largely unconsciously, with his brother.

With Harold dead a month, Christmas in 1910 was not a happy one. Since 1906, the Joneses had gone to celebrate Christmas at the new house of Alice's brother Ebenezer, nearby at 30 Dalrymple Road. In 1910 the celebration was on Boxing Day. It was a reunion involving the Bradshaws, Mockfords, Pethybridges, and Ebenezer's Shipley in-laws. Festivities began with supper at 2 o'clock for about twenty-five people sitting at a single table. David's father extemporized grace and after the meal, a thanksgiving. He then fell asleep to awaken not knowing where he was, calling out loudly in what his English nephews assumed was Welsh. In the evening, the Jones and Bradshaw children put on a concert for the adults. In 1910, there was a printed program for which David drew the cover. It features a shield depicting the Welsh

dragon, beneath which sits a Welsh bard beside a wolf hound—how well he drew animals—and a table bearing, incongruously, a ciborium (fig. 2). The adults paid three pence for admission. Cissy played the piano and ‘Master W Jones’ recited ‘selections from *Henry V*’. He also recited ‘Griffith’s Answer to Harold’, the refusal in 1063 of the King of Wales to surrender to Anglo-Saxon Harold Godwinson.¹⁷ The Bradshaw cousins sang and also gave recitations. All sang together ‘Clementine’ and ‘Yp I Addy I Ay’, finishing with a ‘Torchlight Procession’ in which the costumed children carried sparklers. In the procession Cissy dressed as Britannia and David as ‘Cadwal (a Briton)’. Their father concluded the evening by singing ‘Land of My Fathers’ in Welsh, and as he sang, tears streamed down his face. For him, for all of them, the festivities had been haunted. The previous year, Harold, too ill to join the entertainers, had lain on a couch, calling, after each performance, ‘Encore!’¹⁸

Even before this, David was ambiguous about Christmas, which, because it celebrates family, stirred conflicting feelings. Apart from his trouble with Harold, he found it difficult to watch his Bradshaw cousins receive presents that his family could not afford, which were, to his dismay, mostly ‘smashed & useless’ by Boxing Day night.¹⁹ In his poetry, he would briefly recall these parties and his Uncle Ebenezer’s ‘diamond dress-stud’ (*IP* 32). Continuing to like Christmas carols and be moved by the Nativity, he would otherwise, for the rest of his life, dislike Christmas with Scroogean intensity.

Since feelings of guilt sometimes subconsciously bring on ‘accidental’ injuries, guilt over the death of his brother may be related to an event shortly afterwards. On 19 January 1911, arriving at Camberwell Art School, David swung out at the rear of a tramcar and, crossing the street behind it, was struck by a tram passing in the opposite direction. He was helped from the street bleeding, with ‘a nasty cut on his head’ and injury to one eye. After examining and bandaging him, members of the school staff took him home by taxi. His mother immediately had him seen by a doctor. He nearly lost the sight in his eye. A photograph was subsequently taken of him wearing an eye patch, flanked by Medworth and Hawkins, who delivered to him this



2. David Jones, Programme Cover, 1910

(undated) joke telegram:

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF DISREPUTABLE ARTIST. DODGES UNDER BUS ON WAY TO PASS WATER. LAST SEEN STRUGGLING WITH W.C. ATTENDANT, FULL OF GIN AND IT. LEAVES TWO YOUTHS GAPING ON THE PAVEMENT WHO SUBSEQUENTLY SLOUCH DOWN PICCADILLY AND END OFF BY POURING OUT THEIR SOULS OVER DINGY TABLE-CLOTH AT LYONS CORNER HOUSE ...²⁰

About this time, Jones had his handwriting analyzed. The graphologist's undated report survives, on the back of which are two faint drawings of a large harp, which was a prop at Camberwell. He inscribed the report in big red capitals 'NB' and saved it for the rest of his life. The analysis is remarkably accurate:

This writing shows a good deal of energy and ardour, but more in the mental than physical realm. The writer is rather reserved and somewhat sensitive, is kind hearted and does not appear to be selfish. He shows however a certain amount of conceit and he has a fairly strong will, & is determined. He is persevering but not strikingly ambitious. He has a quick imagination which almost runs ahead of his pen. I should say he is rather quick-tempered & excitable. He shows some originality, & has the sense of the artistic. He is very critical but shows excellent powers of deduction, i.e. has a good judgment. He is generous but his generosity is controlled by prudence. There are slight signs of a temporary physical weakness, or struggle with obstacles in the way.

Early in his art-school career, he decided, like his friend Hawkins, to study 'Book Illustration, Composition and Drawing from Life'. It was a flexible program, including 'Lettering and Illuminating,' a course he never took. Repetition of courses was allowed, and he enrolled in other courses repeatedly. One of these was Reginald Savage's 'Drawing and Design for Book Illustration and Composition'—called, for short, 'Design'. Another was A.S. Hartrick's 'Drawing and Painting the Draped Figure'.²¹ These were the two teachers who most influenced him.



3. David Jones *Lions*, 1910

On Wednesdays and Thursdays, from 10 to 4, Savage taught his course, in which students drew shells, plants, and other natural objects, especially animals, birds and beasts, mounted specimens and living animals—the school kept a small menagerie. Studies by Jones in 1912 of a horse survive. For wild animals, Savage sent them to the zoo, where Jones drew two lions, a male and a female, and then, at home, added watercolour and a wild setting (fig. 3) The same year he visited Medworth in Rotherhithe and painted there a small watercolour (now lost) entitled *The Pool of London* with ships in a dock area and a factory chimney in the background.²² For Savage, he also made illustrations, headings, tailpieces, initial letters, and title pages in wash, line, and chalk. From Savage he learned composition, including the convention of making a dark patch in the foreground of a picture.²³

Nicknamed ‘Solly’ by the students, Savage was a man of the ‘90s, a book illustrator and former associate of Charles Ricketts, Charles Shannon, and Sturge Moore. In the spirit of affectionate mockery, Jones and his friends imitated him clearing his throat (‘Woof’). At the time, Jones considered him the model of a cultivated man and later credited him with ‘a civilizing influence’. He would imitate him teaching:

Well now you might take your pencil & make a careful loving study—you will do well to notice the delicate contours—you can’t steal a march on nature—some of you students think you can invent & invent without going to the fountainhead—mother nature—I strongly advise you to spend some hours each evening in careful observation—the great Ruskin as you may know, made the most careful drawings...—the point of his pencil conveyed the utmost veracity.

Savage showed his class the great nineteenth century illustrators: George Pinwell, Frederick Sandys, Aubrey Beardsley, and Louis Boutet de Monvel. He taught the history of art as culminating in the Pre-Raphaelites. A romantic medievalist himself, he had his students do studies of figures wearing cross-gartering. When assigned figure-composition, Jones ‘nearly always’ chose a medieval subject involving a ‘vested priest’.²⁴

He became enamoured of the Pre-Raphaelites. For the next decade, his work would be, like theirs, illustrational with staged poses and settings implying a story. He followed the lead of the Pre-Raphaelites in painting on a white ground instead of dark ground as in paintings since the Renaissance. A white ground produced brighter, clearer colours and would typify modern painting. Pre-Raphaelite influence went deep and would last long. Late in life he said, ‘I have got

a bit of the Pre-Raphaelite in me, and it aint no bloody good vis-à-vis painting', but his figure paintings of the 1940s, '50s and '60s would remain Pre-Raphaelite in subject, if not in style.²⁵ Now, at Camberwell, he unreservedly admired the Pre-Raphaelites and, while he would later achieve critical distance, he would never lose interest in them.

Pre-Raphaelitism at Camberwell reflected a Victorian story-telling impulse that pervaded the school, in which art was seen as an extension of usually historical, often medieval, narrative. There were courses in Costume Design and Dressmaking, in which female students produced historical clothing worn by models and by other students posing in tableaux and performing skits. Students photographed in these costumes include Jones dressed as Robin Hood (fig. 4), as a Dominican friar blessing a half-naked barbarian (fig. 5), and as an eclectic bard with Celtic harp, Saxon cross-gartering, and Viking helmet (fig. 6), the costume he probably wore at the Bradshaw family Christmas party in 1910. Historical dress and interiors



4. Robin Hood

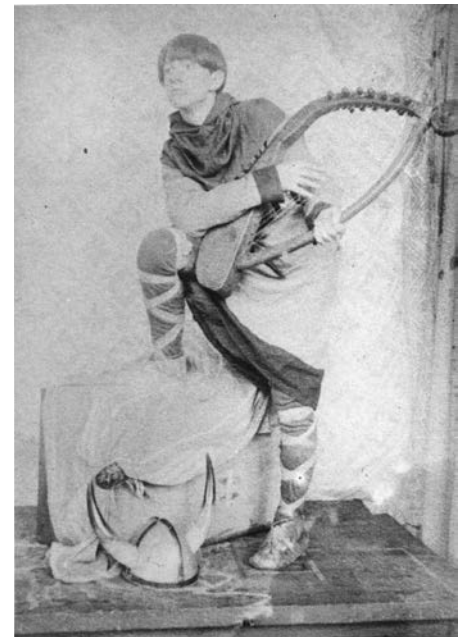


5. Dominican friar and barbarian

were part of the curriculum. Savage had them go on Saturdays to the Victoria and Albert Museum to sketch the period specimen rooms.²⁶

During at least one term, Jones took the course in Design not from Savage but from Herbert Cole, who taught only in the evenings. He had illustrated eleven books, including *Gullivers Travels* (1899). More than any other teacher, Cole made his students laugh, as he did when availing himself of the hope a girl in his class was not there 'to have a high

old time' and reminding her of the need for 'detachment from certain types of nonsense that I'm very much afraid are all too



6. Eclectic Bard

prevalent in this school, especially among some of you young ladies.’²⁷ Jones would count him with Savage and Hartrick as teachers from whom he learned something, but he learned most from Hartrick.

In his mid-forties, friendly and unassuming, A.S. Hartrick was short, round, strongly built, spectacled with dark brown eyes, bright with intelligence. His course was in drawing the head, the costumed model, and still-life for illustration and poster work. Jones attended on Tuesdays or Fridays—or both for an extra term-fee of £1. Hartrick was a gifted teacher, articulate, independent, perceptive, devoted to art and his students. He was the most eminent artist on staff—a founding member of the Society of Illustrators and a member of the New English Art Club. In France he had known Degas, Gauguin, and Toulouse-Lautrec and had been a close friend of Van Gogh. In London, he had been friendly with Beardsley and with Whistler, the ‘quickest brain’ he had ever known. Himself sporting a Whistlerian moustache and imperial, in class he would mimic Whistler mimicking Rossetti, Swinburne, Sandys, and Beardsley. John Sergeant had written in support of his application for his teaching post, obtained in 1907. He considered some of the school regulations ‘futile’, and the principal, W.B. Dalton, gave him considerable leeway.²⁸

Hartrick understood immediately what had gone wrong with Jones’s drawing. The problem was not that he had imitated bad art but that he had imitated at all. He explained that imitators usually succeed in capturing only weaknesses, the glamour of a fashion or obvious facility of execution, which can be imitated because it is artistically immature, like clever art-student tricks that should be regarded as diseases. So stop imitating. ‘Trust what you see,’ he said, ‘not what you know.’ The chief artistic virtue is sincerity, he said, the subordination of technique to integrated perception and feeling, which, he told them, had been the source of originality in Gauguin. It had forced him to go ‘back to beginnings’ and touch nature ‘with emotion.’ Initially Hartrick asked for accurate observation and exact control in drawing, an emphasis that Jones later endorsed, thinking that before working freely with distortion or abstraction you should be capable of rendering with realistic precision. Jones would fault many modern artists for not knowing ‘how to draw’.²⁹

Hartrick had his students begin by looking at the model for some minutes before drawing. See relationships, then lightly draw the general outline. At the Académie Julian, he had learned the conventional approach of working paper with chalk, charcoal, and India-rubber as a prelude to painting but he rejected all that. See and draw first the silhouette of an object. Forget for the moment mass and tone. ‘Look at the outline,’ he said, ‘and you will see the form, which is the object of drawing.’³⁰

He taught Jones how to draw in two styles. The first is characterized by a thick, emphatic contour line that may merge into shading. The Pre-Raphaelites and Millet drew this way and belong, he said, to a tradition of drawing that extends back through Poussin and Rubens to Michelangelo. Jones adopted this style, visible in his picture of a soldier being advised by an old man (fig. 7), a picture possibly indebted to Charles Henry Ashdown’s *British and Foreign Arms and Armour* (1909), which he won as a school prize in 1911. He would draw this way, with thick contour lines into the late 1920s.



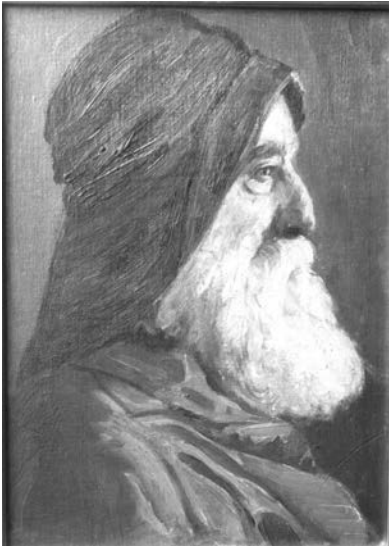
7. Soldier and Old Man, 1914

The other style—drawing the contour thinly, with the point—had a far greater impact on Jones’s later art. Hartrick was convinced that this style made the best draughtsmen. Stressing it in his teaching above the other style, he said he had learned it at the Slade from Legros, who had learned it from his teacher Ingres, who had discovered it in Raphael and the earlier Italian masters. Drawing with the point had the advantage, he said, of eliminating subjective self-expression and personal mannerisms. Exemplars of this style included Degas and the mid-century newspaper and magazine illustrators, who had drawn for facsimile-reproduction by wood engravers. Hartrick praised especially Frederick Walker and, preeminently, Charles Keene of *Punch*, whom he called ‘the most original of all British draughtsmen ... and in his way one of the great artists of the nineteenth century.’ Savage, too, praised these illustrators. Jones admired them and, thirty years later, would write to *The Times* pleading for care in preserving Victorian magazines, particularly those of the 1860s, because of their wood-engraved illustrations which

‘remain almost miraculous in technique.’*³¹

Hartrick urged drawing contour with the point as the essence of ‘Classical’ art and said that everything else, including the more thickly drawn line, is ‘Romantic’. And classical outline underlies the feeling, planes, detail, shadow, and atmosphere that establish art as romantic. The development of most of the great western painters, even those who began with the classic, was towards ‘pure Romance,’ which justifies the breaking of classical rules. Drawing only really becomes art, he said, when it goes beyond precision of representation to communicate emotion. In 1939 he would declare that his former student David Jones was ‘an incurable romantic.’³²

He fired Jones’s enthusiasm for drawing for its own sake and not merely as a prelude to painting. This affected Jones permanently—for most of his life even in his paintings, he would be primarily a draughtsman. In 1960, he would tell a friend that in his pictures ‘line is everything.’ Now he was drawing, as Hartrick urged him, continually, and he was drawing well. Hartrick would sometimes look at one of his pictures and say to the class, ‘Look at that, you see,



8. *The Skipper*, c. 1913

Jones leaves out everything but the magic.’ ‘It was,’ Jones said at the end of his life, ‘the nicest thing ever said about my work.’ But when the work was too tentative or elaborate, Hartrick would say, ‘Make a frank statement, Jones, make a frank statement.’³³

Along with drawing with the point, the colour-technique of Impressionism would inform Jones’s mature style, and this, too, he owed to Hartrick, who taught him to paint as Gauguin and Van Gogh had painted, not in gradations of light and dark but in alternating warm and cool colours. Hartrick showed how, even in chiaroscuro paintings, the shift through warm and cool tones controls the effect of roundness. ‘That is *the* secret,’ Jones later said, ‘it doesn’t matter what the colours

contrasted are so long as one is cold and the other warm.’³⁴

The only surviving painting Jones did in Hartrick’s class is an oil of a fisherman in oil-cloth and rain hat (fig. 8), a portrait painted from life but resembling the label on Skipper

* By then he would value also the craft of the anonymous engravers, ‘who worked for next to nothing’ and ‘had to cut two sides of each line, and you couldn’t tell where their work took up and the drawer’s left off.’

Sardines because the same model had been used for the sardine label. Unsigned and undated, the picture demonstrates realistic proficiency and won a class prize.³⁵

He mainly painted in oils but also worked in watercolours under Hartrick, who was better in that medium. A member of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours, he conveyed in his teaching a sense of the history of the medium, praising Turner, Girtin, Cotman, and the founders of the old watercolour society and tracing the origins of the tradition to the eighth and ninth century illuminators, beginning with the Book of Kells and the Lindisfarne Gospels.³⁶ His enthusiasm for watercolours went against prevailing art-school convention.

In other respects as well, his teaching diverged from contemporary emphases. While the prestigious central schools insisted on surface finish, which was the standard of excellence at the Royal Academy, Hartrick deplored 'slick surface smoothness' as robbing a picture of spontaneity and distracting from basic form.³⁷ Such polish was technically skillful but uninspired and served only to advertise the artist. Gauguin, he said, had first shown him this.

Jones began to share the contempt of Hartrick and Gauguin for academic pictures. They were not paintings, Hartrick said, but 'machines.' He repeated the warning of Samuel Butler, that 'skill getting in advance of judgment even with artists of real talent can kill art.'³⁸ This insight was crucial to Jones's development. For the sake of aesthetic vitality, he would spend much of his life escaping or displacing the skill he was now, at Hartrick's insistence, acquiring. Hartrick offered as a paradigm of this displacement Cézanne, whose achievement Gauguin had been first to appreciate. (Whistler had mocked it. Walter Sickert was still ridiculing it.) When few in England knew that Cézanne was a surname, Jones was able to appreciate his abnegation of technical skill—thanks to Hartrick. For Jones, Cézanne would mark the beginning of modernity.

Hartrick made Jones imaginatively an artist by narrating the lives of his artist friends. Jones was proud to work with a teacher who had known the great Impressionists, about whom he was, Jones said, 'vastly entertaining.' In Hartrick's narrated reminiscences, Gauguin and Van Gogh were models of artistic integrity and independence. Gauguin had quit a lucrative career as a stockbroker to become an artist. As a painter, he was adamant about self-determination and would not admit to owing anything to anyone. He repeated what Gauguin had told him: 'In art there are only revolutionaries and plagiarists.' Hartrick and the example of the Impressionists would lie behind Jones's later independent development and originality, though, as a student, he

was merely trying, he later admitted, 'to emulate the varying techniques of the changing art-masters.'³⁹

Hartrick's recollection of his friend 'Vincent' (as he referred to Van Gogh) warned of the price of artistic integrity. He had never earned more than ten francs (thirty pence) for a picture and used occasionally to rage about not selling pictures even though he was closely connected with the picture trade, having worked in his uncle's Goupil galleries in London. He felt so little appreciated that once, when Hartrick praised his lithographs, Van Gogh had offered all of them as a gift. (Not wishing to exploit his impulsiveness, Hartrick refused.) After Van Gogh's death, he had seen in a Parisian shop window a large still-life by his friend, priced at the French equivalent of six pence. He would have bought it but was showing someone the city and did not want to carry the picture all day. To eliminate the last vestiges of illusion about their financial prospects, he informed his students that Rembrandt died bankrupt.

Although Jones was in Brighton for the first month of the Post-Impressionist exhibition at the Grafton Galleries in 1910, he may have visited it in December or early January to see the work of Gauguin, Van Gogh, and Cézanne.⁴⁰ He certainly went to the second Post-Impressionist exhibition in October 1912, which featured Matisse and Picasso.⁴¹ He probably attended with Hartrick and other students. It was then that he first heard the term 'abstract art'. The cubist and futurist paintings dominating the exhibit did not impress Hartrick, who used the occasion to warn against 'isms' and the sort of stunts that attract attention but have the short life of insects. Warning against theory, he would say that all permanent change in painting arises out of the craft itself, not ideas about it.⁴² Jones would later agree, although substituting for 'craft' the sensitivity of the artist.

Hartrick introduced his students to the work of the best living journalistic and book illustrators, many of whom he knew personally from working as a draughtsman for the *Graphic* and other magazines. He knew Paul Renouard and E.J. Sullivan, to whom he gave his highest praise. Showing his students *The Yellow Book*, he drew special attention to Sullivan's 'Gardener,' telling them it was originally designed to illustrate the Man with the Muck-rake in *Pilgrim's Progress*. Jones would recall this picture in his poetry (*IP* 174). Hartrick showed them the work of Adolph Menzel, whom Degas considered his equal and who had the ability to include an immense amount of detail without loss of dramatic form. Hartrick recommended

Daniel Vierge for lightness of skill. He praised work by his friend Phil May, unsurpassed in economy and vitality of line.⁴³

He showed them Beardsley's work, proposing him as a model of clear thinking in art with immense power and real design. He had first seen Beardsley's portfolio when, at nineteen, Beardsley was trying to get work at the *Graphic*. While both contributing to *The Yellow Book*, Hartrick had watched him making large finished drawings without preliminary sketches, having worked the picture out beforehand in his mind. He praised Beardsley's anatomical skill and with one of his drawings traced the line of a leg beneath an immense dress to demonstrate how the tip of a shoe appeared at the hem at precisely the correct angle to the hip. He related his memory of Whistler dismissing Beardsley's line as 'spidery,' waving his hands and fingers about while grimacing in disgust. Shortly before his death at twenty seven, however, Beardsley showed Whistler his mature work, including the erotic drawings, and Whistler said to him, 'I was mistaken—you are a great artist,' at which Beardsley burst into tears.⁴⁴

Jones would not be a Beardsley-enthusiast, however. While conceding that Beardsley, like the Pre-Raphaelites, 'represented something positively vigourous and "real" as against the academism and philistinism of the times', he later said that he 'created a "phony" thing that I can't swallow.' He would place Art Nouveau in the same category. During his childhood, it had given its languid motifs to 'every "fan-light" & bit of brass' in Brockley. It was inferior, he thought, to its source in ancient Celtic art, which was 'bursting with vigour.'⁴⁵

Leading his students through the National Gallery and the British Museum, Hartrick instilled in them a sense of the history of drawing. Emphasizing his doctrine of drawing with the point, he showed them Greek vases; drawings by Mantegna, chief among the Renaissance masters; and pen drawings of body contours by Raphael and Ingres. Holbeim, too, belonged to this tradition, unequalled for his reticence and command of line. He introduced them to Holbeim's drawn portraits, praising them for their principle of 'no more than enough.' Jones would always admire these, his favourite being that of John Fisher. On their own, he, Hawkins and Medworth spend hours looking through the folios of prints and drawings in the British Museum.⁴⁶

Hartrick encouraged his students to study the old masters in order to develop what he and Savage called 'good taste'. Experience of works long considered valuable allowed a standard of

judgment to evolve. On excursions to the National Gallery and British Museum, he pointed out aspects of various works, recommending some over others, repeating that the goal of art is beauty and quoting Gainsborough: 'Beauty is its own excuse.' Beauty was not a matter of rules, he said. 'There is no absolute test of beauty, and probably this is just as well or we should certainly lose that suggestion of the infinite, which is the final charm of beauty.' The notion that taste has nothing to do with rules or conventions impressed Jones. Twenty years later, when a friend proposed for Jones's epitaph, 'Here lies a man of taste,' he would reply emphatically, 'You couldn't say anything that would please me more.'⁴⁷ Because of its effete connotations, he would drop 'taste' from his vocabulary in favour of 'sensitivity'.

Hartrick insisted on memory-drawing. He had them copy an old master's work, put the copy away, and later redraw it from memory. In the redrawing, they were to forget incidental details and retain the essentials of design. It may have been for this exercise that Jones copied Rubens's *Judgment of Venus* in the National Gallery, a 'bloody difficult' task.⁴⁸ Stressing the importance of memory-training for the imaginative painter, Hartrick talked of Phil May following a person whose appearance he wanted to capture through the streets of London for ten minutes and then being able to draw that person accurately from memory from any angle with any facial expression.⁴⁹ Practice in memory-drawing would bear fruit for Jones in the late 1940s and '50s, when he would observe women and children on the street or in church and go home and draw simplified versions of them.

Thanks largely to Hartrick, Jones was exposed broadly to western art through history. On the walls of his classroom studio, Hartrick hung full-size photographs of drawings by the old masters, especially Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael. By referring to reproductions and during tours of the National Gallery and in classes held in the Prints and Drawings Room of the British Museum, he exposed Jones to the whole of European art.⁵⁰ While Jones would be a quintessentially British artist, his graphic genealogy would be European, traceable through Legros to Ingres to Holbeim to Raphael, to the Italian Primitives to Classical art, with a branch growing from Millet, Poissin, Rubens and Michelangelo. By making him aware of these traditions, Hartrick gave him an aesthetic pedigree—one to which, characteristically, he never laid claim.

Although Hartrick insisted that students look to the past, he was interested chiefly in the

present. The great masters were not to be imitated but to be studied for methods ‘to express the spirit of to-day’, which had, for him, a ‘mystical’ aspect that ‘lies open for us in the study of nature and modern life.’ What he sought most in painting was the ‘imaginative and mystical’. He would say of a picture he liked, ‘It’s got the magic.’ Later, Jones would not confuse magic, imagination, and mysticism as Hartrick did, and he would deny that the theological term ‘mysticism’ applied to his work, saying in 1971, ‘the critics call me a visionary and a mystic—would to God I were!’ In 1972 however, he may have remembered Hartrick’s openness to the transcendent when writing that something about Hartrick’s ‘vision has had an abiding effect on my work.’⁵¹

He later said that he learned more from Hartrick than from any other teacher, and certainly no one would ever have so much influence on him as an artist. For Jones, he was an artist father-figure. He and ‘Mr. Hartrick’, as he always called him, would remain ‘companions’ until Hartrick’s death in 1950. Many of Hartrick’s perceptions became his own. In later years, he regarded most of Hartrick’s published visual art as ‘mediocre’ but the pictures he made for himself, ‘pretty marvellous’—‘very directly felt’ and establishing Hartrick as more than an illustrator. He set the standard for Jones of what an artist ought to be as a person. In 1951, Jones wrote *The Times* that as an artist Hartrick did not receive

the appreciation he deserved, and as a man his great & lovable qualities were of that sort which are known best on rather intimate acquaintance. The nature & limitations of his work did ... preclude him from being a ‘major artist,’ but he was an artist through & through, and a most individual, sensitive & disinterested one. The Degas saying ... ‘In my time, sir, one did not succeed’ in some difficult to define & very amusing way does evoke Hartrick’s *res*. Do the work & you will be lucky if people like it. And how very pleased he was when someone did; for he was humble in a proper & decent sense.

Jones liked best about his teacher’s best work that it was ‘lyrical,’ ‘tentative,’ and with a ‘sense of design & understanding of form.’⁵² His own work would have these qualities, of which the most important for him as a poet would be sense of design and understanding of form.

His training at Camberwell was not as narrow as might be suggested by the limited number of courses he repeatedly took. He saw and was interested in work by students enrolled in other courses. For women, there was Embroidery, Embroidery-Design, Dressmaking, Historic Study

of Pattern, and Drawing and Design for Textiles. He would have an enduring interest in embroidery that probably began here. As a prospective book illustrator, he was very much interested in dress design and its history, an interest he never lost. There was also Typography and Lithography, both chiefly for printers apprentices. He tried lithography, later referring to it as ‘an art I could never master.’⁵³ There were also extra lectures illustrated by lantern slides which were open to students and the general public at no cost. His enduring interest in medieval tapestry may have been sparked by a visiting lecture by Arthur Kendrick, an expert on the subject.

For three and a half years, he was required to study English Literature for one hour a week late on Tuesday afternoons. During his first, interrupted term, R.F. Winch M.A. taught ‘selections from Shakespeare’ and other Elizabethan plays. In the spring term of 1911 and subsequent years, Miss A.K. Foxwell M.A. taught a wide range of topics, beginning with ‘Art and Nature’ in the Romantic poets and continuing with ‘The Classical Element’ in them and Arnold; aspects concerning art in novels by Scott, Thackeray, Austen, and Dickens; and essays on art from Mandeville to Ruskin. (In the spring term of 1911 he may have substituted for this course a series of twenty-five lectures on ‘The Different Schools of Design’—otherwise the literature course was obligatory.) It may have been for this class—it was certainly while at Camberwell—that he read Reynolds’ *Discourses*. Here also he probably read Emerson, whom he later remembered ‘liking ... a good bit.’ He read Ruskin avidly, whom he considered brilliant, though he would later dislike him for being pompous and lacking in humanity.* Ruskin led him to Turner.⁵⁴

Although Turner was then seldom shown and would remain in obscurity for decades, Jones loved his paintings, especially the later, ‘more impressionistic ones,’ which he considered ‘real miracles.’ They ‘astounded’ him. He would later praise him as ‘easily ... the greatest of all British painters by world standards.’⁵⁵ Turner would influence his work, but that influence would only show itself years later, when he employed a diffusion of colour as an antidote to the flat, hard-edged style then dominating contemporary painting.

* Jones would, however, like Ruskin's autobiography, *Praeterita*, which he later read and found ‘intensely interesting and much more readable ... than a lot of his other writing.’

He was by now an avid reader. Unlike many of the other students, who regarded the literature class as an irritation, he read the assigned works with interest, and his reading ranged far beyond the requirements of any course. During his years at Camberwell, he read translations of Bede and Gildas, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the Norse sagas, and *The Song of Roland*. (He associated dying Roland with the Dying Gaul that he had drawn while ‘doing antique’.) He read ‘a little Chaucer’; William Langland; Shakespeare, ‘mainly the historical plays’ and *Macbeth*; John Skelton; Hugh Latimer’s sermons; the Scottish ballads; ‘some Milton’; Gibbon; ‘bits of Coleridge’; *Percy’s Reliques*; Browning; and the Pre-Raphaelites, the poetry of Rossetti and, chiefly, William Morris, who were then special ‘enthusiasms’. He also read ‘mythology, & things about the sea’ and George Borrow, preferring *Lavegro* and *Romany Rye* to *Wild Wales*. He read Stowe’s *Survey* of Elizabethan London. The sites Stowe mentions were still largely recognizable. Imagination recovered others as Jones walked through central London.⁵⁶ This imaginative restoration would later find expression in the great central monologue of *The Anathemata*. About the association between present and past in his poetry, he would explain, ‘that was the only way my mind worked, or ever had worked since I was a child.’⁵⁷

His adolescence was enriched with an abundance of inexpensive books. Those published by Everyman Library cost a shilling each. He went to Denny’s Bookshop in the Strand to buy them and the equally inexpensive volumes published by the Home University Library and Temple Classics. He read the early novels of H.G. Wells and liked them, though he would come to regard Wells as shallow. He probably read J.G. Edgar’s *Heroes of England* (1910), which he gave to his seven-year old nephew in 1937.* Like C.S. Lewis, he probably read fiction about the ancient world: *Quo Vadis*, *Darkness and Dawn*, *The Gladiator*, *Ben Hur*.⁵⁸

Much of his reading was romance. In 1910 he bought and began reading, ‘in bits,’ the Everyman Library two-volume edition of Malory. That year also he was reading Maurice Hewlett’s modern romances of medieval intrigue, which borrow heavily from Malory and are spiced with bizarre eroticism. In 1913 he read Eugene Mason’s translation of *Aucassin and*

* It summarizes the exploits of Edward the Black Prince, Henry the Fifth, Francis Drake, John Moore, Nelson, Wellington, and Charles James Napier, to all of whom Jones would allude in *In Parenthesis*.

Nicolette (Dent, 1910), an authentic short medieval romance about a knight in love with a lady. It impressed him deeply and would influence his poetry. Although he never reread it, he could vividly recall episodes from it half a century later.⁵⁹ Interest stirred by romance led to amateur scholarship. On 27 April 1915, he bought H.J. Chaytor's *The Troubadours* (1912).

He was by now fascinated with etymology (a flame sparked by Butter's *Etymological Spelling Book*), so much so that, despite having foregone grammar school, he considered becoming a philologist. He shared his etymological passion with Rupert Hope, a pedantic boyfriend of his sister. Jones reveled in knowing the layers of meaning of words linking the present to the distant past. He would always retain this interest, especially in the Latin survivals in Welsh and the Celtic echoes in English place names. When the porter at London Bridge Station sang out: 'Platform 2, 11:45 for New Cross, Brockley, Honor Oak Park, Forest Hill, Sydenham, Penge, ...', he delighted in 'Penge' being an Anglicizing of the Celtic *Pen Coed*, 'Chief Wood'. Interest in etymology would sustain life-long regret at having missed a more conventional education. He would regard having gone to art school at such an early age—'years too young'—as 'a great mistake' because it meant that he missed learning academic research methods and languages: 'Latin & Greek first & foremost & also French & German.'⁶⁰

He would never fully appreciate the advantages of having escaped secondary school, where emphasis is exclusively on nonspatial, temporal, and linguistic modes of thinking. Because he was a visual artist by inclination and training, his imagination would remain predominantly spatial. This would make him, as he would come to realize, unique among modern poets in his approach to language and literary form.

In his early teens, he read James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*. It sparked his 'first conscious awareness of a dichotomy' between civilization and 'indigenous cultures.' His sympathy with cultures falling before powerful civilizations helps to account for his being unable 'to swallow' what he would call 'the nonsense about "progress" with a capital P.'⁶¹

A large part of his reading concerned Wales, an enthusiasm encouraged by his father, who, for birthdays, bought him books on Welsh history and grammar. For his sixteenth birthday, his father gave him *A Pocket Dictionary of Welsh-English*, in the hope that he could learn the language, and John Rhys and David Brynmor-Jones's *The Welsh People*. The latter was David's first broad grounding in Welsh history and would remain important to him. At nearly 700 pages,

it is a full account of the Welsh from pre-Roman, continental beginnings to 1900. As the son of a North Welshman, he was interested to learn that the lineage of northern princely families was by far the most important to medieval Wales.⁶²

Most important to him was the dramatic climax of the book, which occurs midway through, in the death of the last Welsh prince, Llewelyn ap Gruffydd on 11 December 1282. The authors emphasize that Llywelyn's death brought to an end one of the oldest reigning families of western Europe, a family that, with brief interruptions, had ruled Gwynedd for nearly a millennium and ended Welsh political identity. Llywelyn's death haunted Jones. For the rest of his life on 11 December, he would remember with sadness the ambush of this prince in a wood near Beullt, who was pierced with a spear and beheaded. He would wonder why the story did not 'provide material for many romantic quasi-historical novels' but realized that Welsh history in general had failed to touch the English imagination. Worse, English historians lacked 'real comprehension' of the meaning of this man's death, treating it as merely a feudal affair. For Jones, Llywelyn's death was the end of a world.⁶³

His father also gave him Owen M Edwards' *Wales* in the series called 'The Story of the Nations' and, sometime before 1915, John Lloyd's great two-volume, *The History of Wales from Early times to 1282* (1911). This book he would value as the best history of Wales in English. He admired it for being 'civilized and scholarly,' for combining 'warmth of feeling and accuracy' and because Lloyd writes with 'a certain degree of charm & amusement' and with 'strong emotion' that is 'held totally in check.'^{64*} The existence of Lloyd's history aggravated his life-long bewilderment over the abysmal ignorance about Wales in otherwise educated Englishmen.

Much of his Welsh reading was literary and quasi-literary. He read the Welsh triplets, one of his favourites being, 'Three things he who can may love—/ 1) fat priest saying Mass 2) soul in clutches of fiend / 3) an English song.' He copied this into a letter to Rupert Hope, sent in the spring of 1911 from North Wales, and Hope replied that he expected that Jones must 'reek ... more than ever of Cymbryanism.' At this time, Jones was reading Charlotte Guest's translation of *The Mabinogion* and Girandus Cambrensis's *Itinerary and Description of Wales*. Over the

* He would buy the second edition containing new material on the Roman period in 1939 and another copy in 1953.

years he would acquire different translations.* Later, he would complain about Giraldus repeatedly contrasting the depravity of his (Welsh) countrymen with the virtues of the Romans and add, ‘What that chap could have told us, if he’d given contemporary facts instead of the most boring bloody sermon—it’s tragic.’ He also read Sabastian Evans’s translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth, a writer he would consider ‘maddening’ for mixing fantasy with information from sources now lost to us. In 1913 he read Evans’s *In Quest of the Holy Graal* (1898).⁶⁵ In the year of its publication, he read Lewis Jones’s *King Arthur in History and Legend* (1914), which he would reread in 1925.

It was a great disappointment to him that the Welsh produced little visual art, though he found consolation for this in Hartrick. A pure Celt and proud of it, Hartrick was North Welsh on his mother’s side and Scottish on his father’s side and regarded his Celtic blood as the source of his artistic inclinations. Showing students the La Tène bronze Battersea shield in the Celtic collection in the British Museum, he turned to his young fellow Celt and said of their common ancestors, ‘They knew what they were up to, Jones.’ Jones would always admire this shield—which, he later wrote ‘looks at first sight wholly symmetric but actually each of the applied “decorative” spiral floriations etc. are other from each other.’ This tension between symmetry and variety would inform his art and poetry. His admiration for Celtic aesthetics would be lifelong. Half a century later, the illustrations in Franciose Henry’s *Irish Art of the Early Christian Period* (1966) would prompt him to exclaim, ‘What miraculous stuff it was. The extreme sensitivity ... within those vigourous, technically perfect, hard, exacting, abstract forms—it was a most extraordinary phenomenon.’⁶⁶

In one respect at least, his Welshness was political. He inherited from his father an enthusiasm for Lloyd George, who had become Chancellor of the Exchequer under Asquith in 1908 and was at this time an ardent Celtic nationalistic, favouring home-rule for Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Jones wrote him a fan letter, to which the Chancellor replied on 23 December 1910 thanking ‘Mr. W. David Jones for his good wishes.’ Hartrick would remember

* He acquired the 1937 printing of Guest’s translation of *The Mabinogion* in 1940, the 1913 printing in 1948, the Gwyn Jones and Thomas Jones translation (1949) in 1949. He acquired the H.E. Butler translation of *Giraldus Cambrensis* (1937) in 1943, the Richard Hoare translation (1806) in 1951, and the Dent translation (1935) in 1954.

Jones as ‘a worshipper of Lloyd George.’⁶⁷

In his sixteenth year, which is an important time for the confirmation of identity, Jones began to study Welsh in earnest, an attempt that might have been more successful, he later thought, had it not interrupted by world events in 1914. He would study Welsh on and off for the rest of his life, maintaining familiarity with substantives and capable of approximate reading comprehension. To his extreme embarrassment, however, he would never pronounce Welsh like a native. Approached at school by a young Welshman asking if he was as Welsh as his name, Jones admitted he was not but declared his love of Wales. The other student boasted of being wholly Welsh, with a family motto ‘Be Worthy of Your Noble Ancestors’ and descent on his father’s side from Coil Hen Godebog, known to English children as Old King Cole. Jones was able to tell him that Coil was descended, as he himself was, from North Welshmen. He knew the history, but the other boy spoke the language. Jones’s inability to master it would be, he said in his final years, his ‘bitterest grief.’⁶⁸

Despite seeing a good deal of naked female flesh in life class, he knew nothing about sex and neither did his two older friends. Medworth and Hawkins were inhibited, puritanical and—during their years at Camberwell, at least—sexually ignorant. In this, they were typical of their class and time. Jones’s mother first spoke to his sister about sex on the eve of her wedding in 1916, saying: ‘I suppose you know what you’re in for. You won’t like it but you’ll get used to it.’⁶⁹

Ignorance does not preclude desire. In an early draft of *In Parenthesis*, he wrote about

a quite new & terrible desire to
 talk to—buy sweets for—fondle,
 his sister’s friend who is sixteen
 & worked in an office
she mostly came round on Saturday afternoon with paper parcels with things in from Miss Jobbins shop
 ...—she used to giggle with his sister & only half open the packages when he was in the room—and say he
 was too young, but she would smile at him, when his sister wasn’t looking—and stand so, slightly leaning,
 her flowered frock like a casement opening on her ~~bosom~~ loveliness, about the midst some undulating
 shadow, across whose deeps and borne up on what precious tide, a strand of ribbon floated, rising, fluttering

free, falling, intimately still. ... she offered him a toffee.*

The girl with the enthralling chest may have been Cissy's pretty friend Maud or one of the Levitt sisters, of whom Cissy's closest friend was Edith. A slightly younger sister, Elsie, was the object of David's amorous interest, which was reciprocated. She was tall, big-boned, brunette, with a pleasant voice but not pretty—none of the Levitts were. He dated her. He would later tell his youngest Bradshaw cousin, Kathleen, that if you take a girl to the cinema it is a good idea to sit in the back where you can put your arm round her without others noticing. He may have taken such liberties. By now there were cinemas in Brockley: the Rivoli in Brockley Road and the Palladium at Brockley Cross and Foxbury Road.⁷⁰

He collected picture postcards of contemporary beauties, including Lily Elsie and Zena Dare.⁷¹ A certain amount of the illustrated reading admitted to the house under the aegis of culture was erotically stimulating: for instance, the illustrations in the Book for Bairns of May 1904, *Some Fairy Tales of Ancient Greeks*. On its cover a nubile Diana displays the contours of her breasts beneath a thin Grecian half-dress. Within, she mistakenly shoots her lover Orion while prominently displaying her breasts and, on another page, stands with her naked back to the reader and Actaeon.

In the summer of 1913, during which students were expected to produce work for Camberwell's autumn exhibition, he arranged to go to Wales with a school friend named Whitaker, a hunchback with dirty blond hair and a face like the young T.S. Eliot.[†] They went by train to Cardigan. Jones was struck by its beauty, by 'how Welsh it was', and by the vividness of the 'flaming' sunset there. Then they went north to Tragaron via the Teifi Valley, which was 'like a green salad—fresh virid trees on both sides of the railway carriage.' In one of the most Welsh-speaking regions of Wales, they stayed for three months just outside Tragaron in a hill-side bungalow belonging to 'a jolly nice Englishwoman.' The town was a sheep-selling and small-

* Appalled at having produced such idealized soft-core pornography, Jones wrote in the margin 'god!' and drew a canceling line through the entire passage.

† Whitaker remained for some years a friend of Jones and his family, since he gave Jones's sister for her wedding in 1917 a striking, realistic picture he painted of the brewery then located next to Camberwell Art School.

farm centre dating back to its eponymous seventh century saint, Caron. East of it spreads the central Welsh moorlands, grassy hills rising to 1600 feet, on which Bronze-Age people left cairns and Iron-Age people built circular forts, such as Castell Rhyfel three miles to the east. Every day he and Whitaker went out to paint. Jones made an oil painting of the tower of the fourteenth century church of St. Caron at the centre of town and sold it to a townswoman who was a friend of his mother. From the heights above, he painted the town-and-landscape in oils. A distant relative named Maria Evans, in Tregaron from Maesyfed to visit her husband's parents, saw and praised the painting and wanted it because it showed the church in which she was married. He said he would let her have it as a gift once it dried. Actually he wanted to keep it, but his father later insisted that he give it to her, so he posted it to her.⁷² This painting survives along with two other oils done nearby—one of a church on a hill, the other a landscape with a farm house. They are murky and dull.

One Sunday evening, he and Whitaker visited a Calvinist-Methodist chapel. The hwyl of the preacher was highly emotional, holding the congregation in grim enchantment. 'They had bright eyes and high cheek bones that were tinged with red—small and rather fierce looking'—'swaying to the singing', which was 'like a torrent', so that he felt 'quite afraid.' Once outside, the worshippers were 'chattering and smiling'—'How are you, glad to welcome you.' The change startled him. They were so hospitable, he would remember, that 'if we had drunk all the tea that was offered us we would have drowned.'⁷³

Sometimes he and Whitaker walked to nearby Cors Goch Glanteifi, the largest peatbog, in Wales—a vast 'purple reddish brown' saucer of undrained wilderness, white with the tassels of cotton sedge and noisy with marsh birds. The mist drifting over the bog in the early morning reminded him of Gwyddion's magic mist in *The Mabinogion*. Here they watched men cutting blocks of peat for fuel. In a little cottage on the bog they came upon a woman attempting to stoke a dying peat fire with a leaky bellows, which seemed to Jones the work of a local craftsman. He expressed admiration for it, so she gave it to him, resisting his attempts to hand it back. The next morning, he bought a new bellows in town and took it to her. She was delighted because, he would later say quizzically, 'of course it worked better.'⁷⁴

During his stay, he and Whitaker traveled in a horse-drawn trap five miles north to Ystrad Meurig, passing the bog and crossing wild, bare upland country to the east of it. At Ystrad

Meurig they headed east and south three-and-a-half miles towards Strata Florida. Halfway there, they passed through Pontrhydfenigaid (meaning ‘the bridge of the blessed ford’), which Jones thought a ‘jolly beautiful name.’ Here the river Teifi tumbles down from the moors under a single-humped stone bridge. He loved the ‘peaty, rusty-coloured stream water’ that looks ‘dark like some sort of beer but when you lap it in your hand it’s quite clear.’ And he admired the formidable beauty of the surrounding wild, bare, wind-swept moors. At Strata Florida, they viewed the remains of the most important Cistercian abbey in Wales, founded in 1164, now merely a ‘desolate arch’ of the western door ‘and a little walling.’ The ground plan of the abbey was clear, and there were tiled floors and grave slabs. He knew from reading Borrow’s *Wild Wales*, which he carried with him, that the greatest Welsh poet, Dafydd ap Gwilym was buried here. They explored the country to the north, then considered the wildest in Wales, a district where getting lost could cost your life. He would remember the ‘astounding beauty’ of ‘all that part of Ceredigion.’⁷⁵ He did, however, dislike the few Scotch pines on the south side of the bog. They lacked the irregularity and sense of movement of leafy trees.

Along with his childhood trips to Wales, this extended visit gave a personally experienced contemporary setting to the history and legend of his reading. For him Welshness was largely an imaginative and informational acquisition, a sort of Yeatsian mask, felt as basic to his makeup yet to be striven for. Intellectually, he surpassed his father in Welshification, but he would never be, like his father, Welsh. English-born and bred, he was not even Anglo-Welsh. It is important to realize this, since, without qualification, many of his Welsh admirers claim him as their own, and he loved it when they did. But, to borrow the language of Gestalt psychology, his identity consisted of a largely imaginary Welshness figuring against a social and cultural ground that was almost entirely London-English.

His identification with one of the smallest of European nations would later cost him readers impatient with the occasional Welsh word or reference, but it would not render him parochial. For him the imaginative life of Wales has at one with its source in the pre-modern culture that informs the Arthurian romances. Originating in Celtic Britain, these romances are to the western world what the Homeric epics were to the Hellenic world. Reflected in the romances, Celtic British history is a centuries-long story of defeat. The vehemence of his anger over the Anglo-Saxon conquest would be softened by his realization that it ‘gave the world the Arthurian

Cycle, which is indeed,' he wrote in 1935, 'worth the loss of many islands & continents. Seeing that nothing succeeds like failure.'⁷⁶ Rather than narrowing his imagination, his Welsh affinity deepened it, generating sympathy for an aspect of universal experience that he would later read about with the force of recognition in Spengler's *The Decline of the West*.

Balancing his deepening love of his father's nation was a compensatory movement in the direction of his mother's theology. While deferring to his father's low-church dedication, she was, in the house, a High-Church fifth-columnist. Her son would describe his religious upbringing as 'in the Protestant tradition ... with a decided undercurrent or ground-swell of a sacramental and Catholic nature.' When he was quite young, she told him to call the day after Christmas not 'Boxing Day' but 'the day of the proto-martyr Stephen.' Later she explained that St. Stephen was not a priest but a deacon, which is why in pictures he is shown wearing a dalmatic, a vestment she named for him. He later supposed that she may have instigated his 'obsessive' love of the tunic—the basic Roman garment that became the liturgical alb. One of the first jokes he would remember her telling was of a High-Church curate heading a letter to Temple, the Low-Church Archbishop of Canterbury, 'St. Cuthbert's Rectory, Eastbury-on-the-Wold, St. Cecilia's Day, Virgin & Martyr' and receiving a reply headed 'The Palace, Washing day, Nov. 22nd.'⁷⁷ *

On Sunday evenings, the family went to the tiny, red-brick mission church of St. George where his father conducted Matins and Evensong and preached. When they attended Communion Services at St. James, Hatcham, David felt 'something almost in the nature of a compulsion' to kneel during the creed at the words expressing belief that, in Jesus, God 'was made man.' The urge was especially strong at Christmas. Such kneeling, even on one knee, indicated papist propensities and 'on that account was greatly disliked and subject to rebuke.' Because no one else in the congregation did it, he feared 'being thought odd.' His mother or sister urged him to stop making himself conspicuous. In response, he employed the tactic of dropping his handkerchief and kneeling apparently to retrieve it. His mother urged him to stop

* A joke with widespread currency, it was attributed by Strachey in *Eminent Victorians* to Bishop Shuttleworth of Chichester.

for his father's sake, but he argued that his father couldn't see him from where he stood, and that it was no business of anyone else anyway.⁷⁸

He could not understand why Protestantism was so hostile to bodily action. By the time he was eighteen, 'the words of prayer, the hymns, the homilies, the psalm singing' of his Anglican faith 'all' seemed to him 'arid.' He was bothered by the pervasively Anglican rejection of the doctrine of the real presence while accepting Jesus as God-incarnate and redemption through his death and resurrection. He found it easier to believe in the real presence (once you believe in the divinity of Jesus) than in the divinity of Jesus, and could not understand why so many considered it 'a monstrous perversion.' In late adolescence, when he became convinced that the minister at St. James, Hatcham, was not exercising a sacramental ministry, he stopped attending and went instead—sometimes, perhaps, with his mother—to high-church St. Cyprian's at Brockley Road and Adelaide Avenue. She subsequently took a nephew there and, he remembered, 'acted as to the manner born.'⁷⁹

Jones's religious reading at this time was largely the bible and Bunyan, although he had free access to his father's theological books and tried, at least, to read a calf-bound copy of Bishop Jewel's *Apologia* in defense of the doctrines of the Church of England and looked into Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*.⁸⁰

He also read Belloc's *The Eye-Witness* (1908), a series of imagined historical incidents ranging from Julius Caesar's expedition to Britain to a parliamentary election speech of 1911. The story that most moved him was entitled 'The Christian.' It concerned an African catechumen who refused to offer flowers to the image of Caesar and, although physically unprepossessing, was sentenced to fight a gladiator. To the end of Jones's life, whenever he heard the word 'catechumen,' he would remember this man's embarrassed inability properly to explain the Christian mysteries to his questioners and his dying while struggling unsuccessfully, because of severed arm-muscles, to bless himself with the sign of the cross.⁸¹ Clearly he identified with this incompetent martyr, as someone who was also physically unimpressive incapable of explaining whatever mattered most to him.

His friend Medworth received his art teacher's certificates on 18 March 1913. It was, for all of them, a sort of graduation and photographs were taken. Jones joined in, posing indoors and on

the front steps of the main entrance to the school (fig. 9), Jones and Medworth on the left, Hawkins on the far right. Jones's hair plastered with oil and parted in the middle (in another photo taken on the same occasion), he is the best-dressed in the group and the only one with a walking stick. He had become a bit of a dandy. Later in life, he would be fussy about what he wore, preferring the best quality in clothes and shoes—a sartorial inclination apparently well established by 1913.⁸²



9. Jones and other Camberwell art students on the steps of Camberwell Art School, March 1913

By 1914, he and his friends Hawkins and Medworth were painting ‘all day, every day, except Sunday.’ On Saturdays and summer evenings, they went to a studio for an open life class in a former warehouse in Kennington near the Oval, a mile-and-a-half west of Camberwell Art School. Through a small door within a larger door, they entered a draughty room containing a hot coke-stove. They paid the proprietor, whose name was Fripp, signed a registry, found an unused easel or vacant stool, and greeted the other artists and the model, who undressed behind a

torn piece of curtain hanging from a bent curtain-rod. Then, breathing the evocative aroma of cigarette smoke, turpentine, and linseed oil, they began drawing or painting. The place was like a French *atelier*, with large dusty plaster casts, including Jones's favourites, the *Venus de Milo* and, in a corner, the *Dying Gaul*.⁸³

Inspired by Hartrick's stories of the Impressionists, he dedicated himself totally to his art. For this reason, unlike Medworth but like Hawkins, he refused to take the Board of Education national examinations to qualify as an art master. For the same reason, he was determined to avoid commercial art. He wanted to draw animals and to illustrate historical subjects, preferably medieval Welsh history and legend, but had no idea how to earn a living at it.⁸⁴ Working commercially constrains development and reduces important work to a hobby—it had hurt Hartrick as an artist. Committed to being a 'fine artist' and pessimistic about his economic prospects, Jones decided while at Camberwell that his vocation precluded supporting a wife and family and resolved to forgo marriage. That he reached this determination between the ages of fifteen and eighteen, before seriously trying to sell pictures, suggests considerations other than economics, the nature of which he would appreciate when undergoing psychotherapy decades later. For now he was committed to art and bachelorhood and faced with poverty. If he could not somehow earn money, he would have to continue living with his parents and, while he stayed in school, to have them pay his fees.⁸⁵

During his first four years at Camberwell, the labyrinth at Knossos was excavated—he would be fascinated with mazes—Harriet Monroe founded *Poetry: a Magazine of Verse* in Chicago, Sigmund Freud published *Totem and Taboo*, the remains of the purportedly 50,000 year-old Piltdown Man were uncovered near Lewes—a hoax that would not be revealed until 1953—the telephone came into widespread use in London, four hundred cinemas opened in the city and were showing the films of Charlie Chaplin, which he went to see, and in the music halls, Jack Judge was singing a song he wrote entitled 'Tipperary.'

Notes to Chapter 2

¹ K Lockitt and S. Wright interviewed 21/6/89; to *The Times* ms. draft. frag. [1951]; biographical note for the British Council n.d. [c.1971]; DJ in margin of Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage Through Fifty Years* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939),

p. 206.

²² DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; E. Hawkins to author 26/1/88.

³ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69.

⁴ To H. Grisewood 24/8/56

⁵ To Aneurin Talfan Davies 27/11/62; Ernest. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88.

⁶ DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; *DG* 50; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971.

⁷ Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 7; DJ, marginal note to Hartrick, p. 7.

⁸ E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88.

⁹ E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88, 1/8/87.

¹⁰ E. Hawkins interviewed 1/9/87; DJ to Blissett, p. 23; Brother David Lawson, 'A bit on David Jones, R.I.P.' unpublished typescript 1974.

¹¹ To H. Grisewood 12/12/66, 28/3/61.

¹² DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 9/6/66; Bim Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86; to H. Grisewood ¹²12/66; *A* 41-2 note 1; Joan Hague. interviewed 20/6/89.

¹³ To H. Grisewood 9/10/71; 13/3/42.

¹⁴ DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; to H. Grisewood 9/10/71; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 9/6/66; to T. Stoneburner 5/8/69. ¹⁴ The Pethybridge house in Brighton was not 'a converted old fortress or gun emplacement right on the shore' where 'spray would hit the windows' (Miles and Shiel, p. 120), a mistake originating in a misremembering by Blissett of a conversation with Jones at which I was present and in which Jones was describing the house where his family stayed in Hove (*The Long Conversation* [Oxford, OUP, 1981], pp. 101-2).

¹⁵ S. Wright to author 3/10/83; M. Elkin interviewed summer 1985; S. Wright interviewed 19/6/88; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87; 16/6/89.

¹⁶ To M. Percival 1/11/67.

¹⁷ For the gist of the recitation, see Edward Bulwer Lytton's *Harold, the Last of the Saxon Kings* (London: Dent, 1906), pp. 233-4.

¹⁸ S. Wright interviewed 26/6/86; M. Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975; K. Lockitt interviewed 21/6/89; D. Cleverdon interviewed summer 1985; M. Bradshaw to S. Wright 20/8/76; Edward Lytton, from *Harold, the Last of the Saxon Kings*, reprinted in *Cambrensis*, ed. W. Jenkyn Thomas (London: Edward Arnold, 1908), pp. 35-7.

¹⁹ To Mrs. Ede 20/1/50; to T. Stoneburner 8-9/1/70.

²⁰ The school minutes of 27/1/11; DJ marginal note in Hartrick, p. 223. Claire Leighton interviewed 1/87 (she told of the

existence of this photograph, which neither she nor the executor of her estate could find and which I have not seen).

²¹ To Nicolette Gray 4/4/61; E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88.

²² Ruth Daniels to S. Wright 15/1/75.

²³ To R. Hague 22/12/33, 5/1/35; horse studies Tate Gallery 8222 A3 DJ 23; Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts minutes of 1910-11; to P. Hagreen 1/7/38.

²⁴ E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88; ms draft note to *Paintings, Engravings and Writings of David Jones* (London: Word and Image Catalogue, 1972); to R. Hague 22/11/34; Robin Ironside, *David Jones* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1949), p. 5; to Jim Ede 15/4/43; to R.Hague Easter/36.

²⁵ To J. Stone 13/10/59.

²⁶ E. Hawkins interviewed 1/8/87, 1/9/87

²⁷ Miles and Shiel, *The Maker Unmade*, p. 307; to R. Hague 3/6/35.

²⁸ A.S. Hartrick, Obituary, *The Times* 2/2/50; Hartrick, p. 206.

²⁹ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

³⁰ Hartrick, *Drawing* (London: Pitman, 1921), 54-7; *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, pp. 8, 37.

³¹ Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 95; to *The Times* 21/3/42; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72.

³² Hartrick, *Drawing*, pp. 38-41, 5; Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 233-4.

³³ DJ to Blissett, p. 44; S. Balme interviewed 17/6/90; to V. Wynne-Williams 12/5/74, 5/4/72.

³⁴ 49. Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 209-10; Paul Hills interviewed 11/6/96; DJ in margin of Hartrick's *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 209.

³⁵ T. Hyne interviewed 23/6/91; T. Hyne to author 24/4/96. Miles and Shiel are inaccurate in their account of the genesis of this painting (p. 20).

³⁶ DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 215.

³⁷ Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 145.

³⁸ Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 84; underlined by DJ in his copy of *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 56.

³⁹ DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; DJ 'Life for Jim Ede' typescript 5/9/35; to S. Lewis 4/71.

⁴⁰ He marks a reference to the exhibition in a marginal note in Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 222.

⁴¹ DJ, 'Looking back at the Thirties,' *London Magazine* 5 (April 1965), p. 48.

⁴² Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, pp. 224, 211.

- ⁴³ Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 98.
- ⁴⁴ Hartrick, *Drawing*, p 79; DJ in conversation with TD 1972; DJ to S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86.
- ⁴⁵ To J. Stone 18/4/65.
- ⁴⁶ Hartrick, *Drawing*, pp. 68-78; DJ to Blissett, p. 56.
- ⁴⁷ Hartrick, *Drawing*, pp. 95, 94; H. Grisewood, 'Remembering David Jones,' *Journal of Modern Literature* 14 (Spring 1988), 576.
- ⁴⁸ Hartrick, *Drawing*, p. 60; Paul Hills interviewed 11June/91.
- ⁴⁹ Hartrick, *Drawing*, p. 66.
- ⁵⁰ To R. Hague 9-15/7/73.
- ⁵¹ *A 24*; quoted by DJ to Kenneth Clark 3/8/60; ms draft note to *Paintings, Engravings and Writings of David Jones*; DJ to author, 4 June 1971.
- ⁵² H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 233-4; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; to Arthur Giardelli 13/7/66; to *The Times* draft n.d. [1947]; to *The Times* draft [1951]; ms draft 'Note on Ms' n.d. [c 1942].
- ⁵³ E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88; to Juliet Shirley-Smith 4/8/61.
- ⁵⁴ To Granny Ede 27/9/49; to H. Sutherland 17/10/43; DJ to P. Hagreen interviewed 11June/91.
- ⁵⁵ DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; DJ to P. Hagreen interviewed 11/6/91; DJ to Blissett p. 41.
- ⁵⁶ Letter draft frag. n.d.; to RH 9-15/7/73; to T. Stoneburner 30/8/63; to R. Hague 22/12/33; to J.H. Johnston 2/5/62; to H.Sutherland 29/9/58; to T. Stoneburner 30/8/63.
- ⁵⁷ To J. H. Johnston 16/5/62.
- ⁵⁸ Letter intended for publication frag. n.d.; to H. Grisewood 1/9/56.
- ⁵⁹ To Tom Burns 17/10/71; to R. Hague 22/12/33; to H. Grisewood 7/5/64.
- ⁶⁰ Joan Hague interviewed 20/6/89; to H. Grisewood 23/12/65; DJ quoted in *Manchester Guardian* 17/2. 64; DJ ms frag. n.d..
- ⁶¹ To T. Stoneburner 25/6/67.
- ⁶² DJ 'Some Notes on the Difficulties of one Writer of Welsh affinity whose language is English,' typescript for Vernon Watkins 11/4/62, printed in *The Dying Gaul*; to V. Watkins 5/4/62; to Mr. Emlyn-Davies 19/6/64; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69.
- ⁶³ To H. Grisewood nones/1-16/2/66; to J. Hague 8/5/70.
- ⁶⁴ Letter draft frag. n.d.; to H. Grisewood 18/5/56; to Aneurin Talfan Davies 17-18/2/59.
- ⁶⁵ Rupert Hope to DJ 3/11; to Meic Stephens 27/2/73; to R. Hague 27/9/63, 11/8/74; to S. Lewis 14/6/72.

⁶⁶ To H. Grisewood 17/12/70; to A. Giardelli 13/7/66.

⁶⁷ Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 7

⁶⁸ E. Hawkins, interviewed 15/6/88, said that the friend who accompanied DJ to Wales was not his brother Harold and almost certainly not Medworth, with whom Ernest was friendly and who never mentioned such a trip. To Meic Stephens draft 27/2/73.

⁶⁹ E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88; K. Lockitt and S. Wright interviewed 21/6/89.

⁷⁰ K. Lockitt and S. Wright (who could not recall Maud's surname) interviewed 21/6/89; S. Wright interviewed 21/6/89.

⁷¹ To H. Grisewood 1/9/56.

⁷² *LF* 11-12; T. Hyne interviewed 20/6/90; T. Hyne to author 23/4/96; photograph of Whitaker; *Western Mail*, 26/10/84; DJ to V. Wynne-Williams 22/8/60; Newsletter, Acquisitions Dept. of Pictures and Maps, National Library of Wales (1984); DJ to V. Wynne-Williams 22/8/60.

⁷³ To V. Wynne-Williams 22/10/60.

⁷⁴ To N. Sanders 12/10/70; *LF* pp. 12-3.

⁷⁵ To J. Stone 18/4/65; to N. Sanders 12/10/70; Biographical note for the British Council n.d. [c.1971]; DJ to Blissett, p. 119; *LF* 14; to S. Lewis 4/71.

⁷⁶ To H. Grisewood 28/3/61, 25/7/35.

⁷⁷ To R. Hague 9-15/7/73; to H. Grisewood 31/12/71; to J. Stone 11/1/71; Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians* (Garden City, New York, n.d.), p. 28.

⁷⁸ Ms draft n.d; to R. Hague 9-15/7/73; DJ to Blissett, p. 126.

⁷⁹ To R. Hague 9-15/7/73, 11/8/74; M. Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975.

⁸⁰ To H. Grisewood 8-9/9/67; to HS 22/11/55.

⁸¹ To T. Stoneburner 29/8/69.

⁸² E. Hawkins to author 26/1/88; E. Hawkins interviewed 1/9/87; Charles Baudelaire, *Selected Writings on Art and Artists*, trans. P.E. Charvet (Hammondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1972), p. 420-1; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/6/86; Morag Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88.

⁸³ To H. Grisewood 24/8/56; Miles and Shiel, p. 35. Walter Sickert did not, as Miles and Shiel claim, occasionally look in at this atelier in Kennington

⁸⁴ DJ, 'Life for Jim Ede' typescript 5/9/35; Eileen Chanin and Steven Miller, *The Art and Life of Weaver Hawkins* (Roseville, New South Wales: Craftsman House, 1995), p. 20.

⁸⁵ DJ notes for his psychotherapist n.d [1948]; DJ ms frag. n.d.; to R. Hague 21/10/63; to S. Lewis 4/71.

Part II Great War

Chapter 3 1914-16

On 5 August 1914 David Jones was delivered from anxiety about earning a living as an artist. The front page of *The Times* consisted entirely of the headline: BRITAIN AT WAR. Throughout the day, he bought half a dozen editions of various papers.¹ History had overtaken the present and he intended to be part of history.

He wanted to enlist in a Welsh regiment, and he had wanted to ride a horse since the age of four, when he had seen the column of cavalry on recruitment parade. So he went to the recruitment office of the Royal Welsh Yeomanry at the Inns of Court. The recruiting officer, a major, wore a single eyeglass and was so short and fat that he seemed perfectly round. Jones said he hoped the war would last till Christmas. The major said it would last till Christmas 1918 or '19 and then asked whether he or anyone in his family had ridden a horse. Jones said no. The major asked, 'Are you Welsh?' and Jones said, 'My father is.' The major then advised him against the Yeomanry, where 'horses receive better treatment than men' and suggested instead the Royal Welch Fusiliers. Jones left discouraged. He never would learn to ride a horse and would always regret it, but he would also always be grateful to the spherical major for putting him off the cavalry.²

Anxious that his son join a Welsh regiment, his father wrote, without David knowing, to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lloyd George, who was trying to raise two Welsh divisions, one of which would contain a London-Welsh battalion. The letter was passed to a recruiting officer who replied on 17 September that the battalion was not yet constituted but was taking applications for enlistment and enclosing a badge for David Jones to wear to an address by Lloyd George at Queen's Hall on Saturday the 19th. He went and he heard Lloyd George announce:

I should like to see a Welsh Army in the field. I should like to see the race who faced the Normans for hundreds of years in their struggle for freedom, the race that helped to win the battle of Crécy, the race that fought for a generation under Glendower against the greatest captain in Europe—I should like to see that race give a good taste of its quality in this struggle. And they are going to do it.

Lloyd George's oratorical panache and his reference to Crécy suggest that his speaking informs the great, rhetorically heightened boast at the heart of *In Parenthesis* (79-84), a boast delivered

by a soldier who shares the politician's first name. This was one of three occasions on which Jones would hear Lloyd George speak.^{3*}

Jones sent in his application and waited but by the end of October was impatient. Many of his acquaintances and friends had enlisted, and he feared missing his chance. In August, Hawkins had joined the Territorials—the Queen's Westminster Rifles, 1st Battalion of the 16th County of London Regiment—so Jones went to their recruiting station behind St Paul's. There he spoke with an unfriendly Cockney sergeant who, when he said he wanted to join the Territorials, replied, 'The Territorials be blowed! This is the bloody Army.' Jones turned away, put off by the man's manner and determined to choose his regiment.⁴ In September Medworth enlisted in the East Surrey Regiment. On 12 November Jones went to Duke's Road in Euston Road to enlist in the Artists' Rifles—the London regiment of the 28th (County of London) Reserve Battalion. He filled out the forms and was examined by a doctor named Goodbody, who rejected him as physically unfit 'on account of deficient chest measurement.' Disappointed, Jones returned home to find a letter announcing that the London Welsh battalion now existed and inviting him to enlist at once. To increase his chest measurement, he donned running shorts and began jogging through the streets of Brockley and Lewisham. While jogging, he noticed that the name plate of 'Berlin Road' had been ripped off and temporarily replaced with 'Canada Avenue.'⁵ War posters were everywhere, encouraging his exertions, which were, however, futile.

A passage in a manuscript draft of *In Parenthesis* may offer a glimpse of the family at this time:

One night at supper, his father, pushing his cocoa a little toward the centre of the table, folding his Daily

* The second occasion, in the spring of the following year, is described below. The third was a visit to the gallery of the House of Commons 'as a young man' in which he noticed that, as Lloyd George spoke, the MPs in the front bench sat, some of them asleep, with their feet up, in spats, against the railing where the mace was--'just like a drawing in *Punch*.' He would always admire Lloyd George but with reservations, as 'a charming man' (though he could not understand what women saw in him) but unscrupulous, as in his speeding up demobilization just before the first post-war election. He admired most his ability to 'give his imagination uninhibitedly to the future and let it play, with the result that he had an accuracy of prediction that the custom-bound and those with vested interests were incapable of.' In this sense at least he was not time-bound and therefore like Dai Greatcoat, the archetypal soldier who 'never dies' (*IP* 84).

Newspaper in four and resting it upon the cheese-dish, ... calling the family's attention with a certain solemnity that gave dignity and a momentary return of hierarchy and function to that board, which normally reflected nothing of these things, he began to read,

What will you lack sonny.
 What will you lack
 When the girls line up the street
 And say he was so young.

Widely used at this time to shame men into enlisting, this verse by Harold Begbie (inaccurately remembered here) affected the young listener with 'a double-twist.' He was not immune to the erotics of soldiering.

He was, moreover, patriotic, motivated by a sense of duty acquired during his Victorian childhood and his time at Brockley Road School. He was strongly moved by a widely distributed poster enjoining the viewer to 'REMEMBER LOUVAIN!' In August, the Germans had razed the city, executing civilians without provocation and burning its great medieval library. On 20 September, the Germans artillery shelled Rheims cathedral. He wanted to help rescue Belgium, to protect France, to restore freedom. He shared a widespread feeling of duty to save western civilization. Although he would never have conceived of it in these terms, he wanted to participate in an immense, international enactment of what I have called the saviour myth. The same altruism motivated most who enlisted—a zeal heightened by a frenzy of propaganda.⁶ By Christmas the English press was portraying Germans as barbarian Huns without Christian virtue or human feeling. While they were undefeated, the press claimed, western culture was in jeopardy.

Propaganda focused on the German occupation of Belgium, which was brutal, but also generated false accounts of Germans smashing babies against walls, commercially recycling corpses, crucifying Canadians on hayricks (why, Jones later wondered, on haystacks of all things!) and sodomizing nuns.* Newspapers played up the approaching centenary of the Battle of Waterloo in order to associate the current campaign against 'tyranny' with the previous century's heroic resistance to Napoleon. At this time, Jones acquired and read a copy of W.H. Fitchett's *Wellington's Men, Some Soldier Autobiographies* (1900), a collection of extracts from

letters of British and French soldiers. It allowed him imaginative access, at least, to the exertions so far denied him, though the vividness of the accounts increased frustration at inability to enlist.[†]

By the new year, recruiting needs forced relaxation of physical requirements so that, to his great relief, his chest measurement (while remaining unchanged) was no longer inadequate. On 2 January 1915, at the London Welsh recruiting office in Holborn Hall in Grays Inn Road, he enlisted, receiving the number 22579, a smallpox vaccination, and his Army Pay Book, in which he listed his mother as his next of kin. For occupation he gave 'Art Student,' for religion 'CE,' and for his age, exuberantly, '19 2/13.' He signed up for the duration of the war at two shillings per day, the only wage he would ever earn.⁷ He was now a private in the regiment in which commissions were held, in other battalions, by Robert Graves and Siegfried Sassoon, both of whom he would see but not meet during the war, since they were officers and did not socialize with privates.

In the first weeks of January, he continued living at home, each day taking the train up to town, going usually to Hyde Park for infantry training, which consisted largely of military drill. He and the other recruits wore brown quasi-military greatcoats and used walking sticks and brooms for rifles. He found drill difficult, tedious, and demoralizing. One evening after training on Parliament Hill in Hampstead Heath, he was walking away dejectedly in fog and drizzle when one of two passing Cockney girls said to him, 'God bless you, I'd be a soldier too if I had a handle to me belly.' He nearly kissed her.⁸

Before long he joined the 15th Battalion (London Welsh) of the 113th Brigade of the Royal Welch Fusiliers (23rd Foot) at Llandudno on the north coast of Wales. Stationed there under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel J.C. Bell, formerly of the Central Indian Horse, the battalion had begun recruitment too late to attract most eligible London Welshmen, so

* As a result of discovering after the war that such reports were lies, he would never again trust the press during wartime.

[†] Fifty years later he would reread this book and, from the perspective of an ex-serviceman, be impressed by the power of its factual memories in contrast to subsequent fictional 'improvements.' For example, he thought that Wellington's actual words, 'Now, Maitland, now's y'r time' were much more believable and more moving than 'Up, Guards, and at them' (Ms frag., n.d. c. 1965).

membership had been opened to non-Welshmen. As a result, most of the men were Cockneys, though there were also a few middle-class Englishmen, some of them, like Jones, of Welsh descent. Apart from the Colonel and the Medical Officer, all officers were Welsh. Jones was in the second section of the sixth platoon in B Company. There were ten men in his section, twenty in his platoon (in which he was one of a several Joneses), 118 in his company, and about 500 in the battalion.⁹

Beginning with basic training, the war was, for him, an immersion in a rich mixture of Welsh and English languages, accents, idioms, and dispositions. The language he mostly heard was Cockney, the vernacular of the army, its rough poetic idiom a product entirely of aural imagination—unlike the Welsh, Cockneys did not read. He would later say that his Cockney companions might have had for their motto a reversal of the tag *suaviter in modo fortiter in re*, for they were harsh in manner, gentle in deeds. Cockney became part of his own idiom, including its common obscenities—'sod,' 'bugger, and 'fuck' in all of their variations, such as 'sodding,' 'buggeration,' 'fucking,' 'fuck all,' 'would you be-fucking-leive it'. Army Cockney would influence his speech for the rest of his life and be, he later said, a 'potent influence' on his writing. The other three battalions of the 113th Brigade, also stationed at Llandudno, had been recruited entirely in North Wales.¹⁰ Over three-quarters Welsh, this would be his nomadic home in the coming years, a travelling league of tribes, twelve battalions within the 38th (Welsh) Division. Widely registered throughout the Division, an evocation of the Twelve Tribes of Israel would underlie Old-Testament allusions in *In Parenthesis*.

His largely Welsh brigade provided what would be his most extensive and intimate experience of the Welsh nation. He now sometimes heard spoken Welsh and the centuries-old Welsh English of Shakespeare's Fluellen. Jones's sergeant-major—also named Jones, a pedantic Boer-war veteran with a large moustache—was 'exactly like' Fluellen except that, instead of 'the disciplines of the wars,' he spoke of 'the exigencies of the situation'. For the first time, David Jones got to know what he would later call 'that kind of Welshman little known to the English—silent and without any of the exterior enthusiasm of the supposed "Celt", large of body, kindly, but a terrible disciplinarian.' The ordinary Welsh foot soldiers were, he found, 'pedantic in their rebelliousness,' resenting any officer who was, as they put it, 'an ass, whorson vague in his orders.'¹¹ They had a unique tenor of imagination and expressed themselves peculiarly in

English. During the war, Jones heard this joke, which he enjoyed retelling:

Someone says to a Welshman, ‘Oh I hear you’ve had an accident in the mines.’

‘It wasn’t an accident,’ replies the Welshman. ‘It was an explosion.’

‘But surely the explosion was an accident.’

‘Oh no, no.’

‘Well, what’s the difference?’

‘When you have an accident, well there you are, but with an explosion, where are you?’¹²

In the army, his earlier feeling for Wales gained variegated realistic definition.

It is hard to imagine people less like each other than the Welsh and Cockneys. The former were then largely rural, the latter entirely urban. Their sense of history differed. The



1. ‘W. David Jones, Llandudno 1915’

Welsh had a living sense of their past, and for them it was longer. If an Englishman knew any history, it was of post-Renaissance England. For the Welsh, history reached beyond that through Arthurian legend to the late phases of Roman Britain. Jones was chiefly interested in what the Welshman knew and the Englishman didn’t.

Llandudno, where he joined his unit, was essentially a Victorian resort-town of whitewashed hotels and covered promenades. Above it loomed the headland of the Great Orme, rising, like so many Welsh hills, closer than seems possible to the nearer flatness. Beneath it the town spread eastward in a crescent along its bay towards the Little Orme. The new recruits were billeted two to a room in the lodging houses not occupied by civilians (mostly from Lancashire) on holiday.¹³ From here he sent a postcard of himself to his parents. In the photograph he stands in his dress hat and greatcoat, slightly hunched forward, with a

dreamy, unsoldierly expression on his face (fig. 1).

Along with all those in training, he began his day at dawn with a two-mile run and drilled and marched for most of the rest of the day. Sometimes they went on operations in the mountains behind Conwy, eating a lunch of haversack rations in the open countryside. He did platoon drill

on Llandudno's two-mile-long esplanade. Except for those assigned to guard-duty, work ended for the day at 5 p.m, unless they practiced night attacks on the Great Orme.¹⁴ Otherwise, evenings were for relaxing and socializing until lights-out at ten. The men attended concerts and entertainments at half-price. On Sundays they were paraded for worship to the Anglican church in Holy Trinity Square.

He was billeted in a lodging house in Church Walks. One of his room-mates was Harry Marks, a bandsman who played the bass drum, smoked cigars, and drank whisky. At night he regularly entered the room saying, 'Gounod, Gounod—what a musician, and always drunk, thank God.' He refused to put out his cigar before going to bed. Fearing he would set fire to his mattress, Jones stayed awake and when he thought him asleep tiptoed over to remove the cigar, but Marks 'always' heard him approaching and clung steadfastly to it. One evening he returned very drunk and sank into a stupor sitting upright. As a joke, someone pinned an inked-black cardboard German iron cross to his chest. Jones drew the result in profile (fig. 2). Later, in France, he noticed that Marks seemed insensitive to hardship and to the suffering of those around him, but then, like Gounod, 'he was always drunk.'¹⁵

Other roommates were an east-end Cockney Jew named Lazarus Black and middle-class Arthur Pritchard-Williams. Black was a former furniture salesman in Grays Inn Road who developed a warm affection for Jones, which was not fully returned. About him, Jones later said, 'he attached himself to me.' Pritchard-Williams aspired to become a dentist, exchanged postcard-photographs with Jones, and would remain his friend through the early months in France.¹⁶

The men of the brigade were stationed by turns at guard houses along the seven miles of narrow coastal road from Degannwy to the bandstand at Llandudno. Most of the guard houses were on the seaward side of the road skirting the lower bulk of the Great Ormes Head and gave shelter from the strong, continuous cold wind off the Irish Sea. Sentries were stationed there to watch for enemy submarines in the approaches of the Conwy Estuary. The U-boat threat was real. In January, submarines passing from the direction of Anglesey sank three steamers after



2. 'Harry Marks of the band very drunk with pinned on "Iron Cross" spring 1915 billets Ch. Walks Llandudno'

shelling an airship shed on the Lancashire coast. The sentries were unarmed, however, and Jones wondered what they ‘were supposed to do in the event of seeing in the pitch dark waters a German periscope.’¹⁷

Often he stood watch at one of the sequestered posts beneath the white cliffs of the Great Orme. At midnight under the stars, the waves crashing below, he gazed into the darkness and daydreamed. He was a soldier in a Welsh division defending North Wales, the home of his father’s ancestors, the land of the house of Gwynedd, which had ruled from the time of the Roman-Briton Cunedda Wledig to thirteenth century Llywelyn ap Gryffydd, the last Welsh prince, whom he had read about in *The Welsh People* and whose death in a wood at Beullt on 11 December 1282 he would privately commemorate for the rest of his life. Llandudno was named for its sixth century saint, Tudno, a contemporary of Maelgwn, a great-grandson of Cunedda. Nearby to the south at Degannwy was a fortress of Maelgwn, originally the Arx Decanorum. Jones had read about Maelgwn in *The Welsh People* and in Gildas, who called him, for his evil deeds, ‘Maglocunus, the island dragon.’ Coming to North Wales was for Jones an affirmation of ancestral identity, and this included the eighth of him (on his mother’s side) that was Italian. For centuries the defenders of this land had been Romans, with whom, as a soldier, he felt considerable affinity. He would later say of himself and his fellow enlisted men, ‘we were about as poorly paid as the Roman army.’ On one occasion, on the west side of the Great Orme, while a sergeant harangued him for some infraction or inefficiency, he stood in rapture, gazing past the angry N.C.O. to the massive ranks of the Snowdonian range fronting the sea in lateral sunlight along distant Beaumaris Bay and the Menai Strait.¹⁸ There are few such sights in all the world, and none for him so charged with historical imagination.

For a while he was stationed at the lighthouse beside the coastal road on the northern slope of the Great Orme, where a field gun was installed to fire on U-boats. He loved the view from there—the sunsets were the best he had ever seen. There was a lighthouse keeper’s daughter, but she was unfriendly and seemed to him in perpetual fear of rape.¹⁹

On St David’s day, a Sunday, David Lloyd George visited Llandudno. Jones attended a united service in the Pier Pavilion at which the 200-voice brigade choir sang *Aberystwyth*, *Crug y Bar*, and *Hyfrydol*. In the afternoon, he was among the five thousand of the First Brigade of the Welsh Army Corps parading on the promenade in the cold wind and rain. They were inspected

by the Chancellor and Henry Mackinnon G.O.C.-in-C, Western Command. Soaked to the skin but with rapt attention, Jones listened as Lloyd George, his hair and cape blowing in the wind, delivered his famous speech about tearing the ‘ramshackle’ Austro-Hungarian Empire ‘limb from limb’ with the help of ‘the Russian steam-roller.’ Jones felt inspired while listening but when reading the speech in the papers a few days later was dismayed to find it ‘appalling bloody tripe.’²⁰

He stayed in North Wales long enough to feel the weather grow warm and see the wild flowers bloom. By May he and his companions had learned to perform with precision and were participating in brigade field days and staff rides.



3. (on reverse) ‘Working Party, Creuddyn Peninsula, 1915’

One sunny spring day, he was part of a working party sent into the Creuddyn Peninsula west of Llandudno. There, after practising digging trenches, they were photographed (fig. 3). At the back, topmost on a pile of dirt, Jones stands, small but muscular after seven months of hard exercise.

He hated the endless drill, the parade-ground renunciation of personality, the springing to attention, the marching, the saluting, the presenting arms, right wheel, left wheel, the bullying

and insults. He would always consider himself ‘incompetent as a “parade soldier”’ and confided late in life that he had difficulty telling his right hand from his left. He marvelled that he never incurred a penalty for blunders during drill, parade, or inspection. He also disliked fatigue-duties. He would later say that ‘the army itself was frightful’ and that he hated his year of training, which was almost always boring.²¹

Yet there were consolations. The army freed him from practical anxieties and difficult choices. All was determined from above, down to the time of going to bed and the manner of lacing your boots. And, when off duty, he was able to visit Aunt Elizabeth and his cousins in Llandrillo-yr-Rhos. There he was sad to see that the medieval fishing weir, damaged years earlier by a ship running aground, was ‘much decayed’ with only a few uprights visible at low tide.²²

He joined in when the marching Cockneys of his battalion belted out ‘Hullo, hullo, who’s your lady friend’ and other music-hall songs of Fred Karno’s Army but with no illusions about the quality of the singing. He was convinced that Englishmen cannot sing. In contrast, the Welsh sang beautifully in harmony. The difference ‘was staggering’, but he seldom heard Welsh sing, since the few Welsh in his battalion who were not Welsh-speaking and, in the other battalions of the brigade, those fluent in Welsh ‘tended to sing in small groups, & rather guardedly, among themselves—a secret people.’ He wondered what they thought of the ‘rancorous vulgarity’ of the English songs and raucous English singing.²³

His chief consolation was social. He met friends in the evenings in pubs. If he had not been a beer-drinker in art school, he became one now. The fellowship he experienced within the simplified regimen of army life constituted a unified culture, in relation to which he would later gauge all others. It was the purest, warmest comradeship that most men would ever experience. It



4. Private David Jones, 1915

would perhaps lend emotional substance to his later yearning for an integral culture he could not hope to find in the modern civilian world.

In August 1915, the entire brigade moved south by train to an immense camp north of Winchester on top of Winnall Down. There they joined the other brigades of the 38th Division from all over Wales—thirty thousand men, of whom only his battalion was not Welsh. They lived in wooden huts and congregated in the evenings in recreation rooms. On the assumption that the war would return to the mobility of the months before the battle of the Marne, they trained in the countryside for open warfare. On Winnall Down, he first heard ‘the drummed and fifed Long Reveille,’ which he found ‘very moving’ despite ‘the atrocious time of day.’ Here also he used to ‘adore lying in an army hut while some bugler played lights out.’²⁴ One Sunday



5. *Pro Patria*, *Graphic*, 11 December 1915

morning, as Anglicans and Catholics were detailed to go to church and ‘other religions’ were given fatigue duty, a sergeant named Morgan assigned Lazarus Black the unpleasant job of shovelling coal, adding, ‘that’s for crucifying Jesus Christ.’ Jones thought it very funny that anyone could say that, as if they were living early in the first century AD.²⁵ He may have missed the irony of Jesus himself being a Jew.

In September, all the battalions of the Division were inspected, found fit for combat, and began preparing to leave for France at the end of November. Shortly before embarkation, the men were granted leave, and he went home to say good-bye. His parents had several photographs taken of him, as an unspoken precaution against the possibility of never seeing him again (fig. 4)

While on leave, he visited Camberwell art school and spoke with Hartrick, who at fifty had twice tried unsuccessfully to enlist and was making lithographs for war posters. He asked Jones to make a drawing for publication in the *Graphic*, an illustrated weekly of which Hartrick was art editor.

Near the end of November, Jones sent a drawing, which was photographically reproduced in the issue of 11 December 1915 (fig. 5). In block capitals, obscure in the lower left corner, is the signature, ‘W DAVID JONES 1915.’* 26

Sentimentally conventional, this drawing depicts a medieval knight with laurel crowning his helmet, the suggestion of a nimbus at his head, and the words ‘Pro Patria’ on his shield. He holds his sword handle-up in a gesture of devotion while guarding three fallen or sleeping British soldiers—the foremost of them based on the lower figure in the sketch Jones had drawn on Salisbury Plain in October (fig. 6). The knight’s statuesque erectness contrasts with the crumpled figure at his feet and the chaotic background in which an airplane careens over leaning telegraph poles, a howitzer, and wreckage of battle. Visually, the knight stabilizes chaos. His prominence and that of the foremost sleeper suggest a symbolic relationship between knight and infantryman, past and present. As this picture indicates, before going to France, Jones saw continuity between medieval chivalry and the devotion of soldiers caught up in messy, unglamorous modern war, with which he was visually familiar through newspaper and magazine photographs. A sense of this continuity would survive experience of combat and influence *In Parenthesis*, where it would be apolitical. Like the soldier in the drawing reproduced in Chapter 2 (fig. 7), this knight resembles his creator—they have the same nose and prominent chin. Noticing the resemblance, Hartrick gave the picture the ambiguous caption, ‘The Soldier as Cartoonist.’ While his shield proclaims patriotism, the knight guards not his country but companions, an indication that, for Jones, the meaning of military service had already shifted in emphasis, as it did for most if not all soldiers, from love of country to love of comrades. This aspect of the drawing, too, has important thematic affinity with *In Parenthesis*. The depiction of Jones-as-knightly-sentinel reflects his experience standing



6. ‘(Salisbury Plain) Oct. 1914 DJ’

* This is the first of five drawings he contributed to the *Graphic* during the war. Fifty-eight years later, his memory faulty, he would confide to William Blissett and me (saying, ‘I have never told anyone else’) that he had published this drawing in the *Illustrated London News*.

night-watch over sleeping men during his year of training. The image of himself protecting sleepers against chaos may prefigure his poetic and artistic devotion in later years to retrieving and preserving endangered elements of western culture.

He was back in camp on Winnall Down when the full complement of their rifles finally arrived in mid-November. His battalion went immediately to ranges on nearby Salisbury Plain for musketry instruction. They were billeted in large circular bell tents on Lark Hill at the northern edge of the plain. Each morning an orderly corporal opened the flap of the tent to wake them, and through the opening he saw, about two miles away across the plain, Stonehenge. He would confess to ‘*not finding*’ it ‘*very impressive*’ at the time, though he liked Constable’s picture of it, and his morning vision of the distant stone circle later entered his paintings—*Vexilla Regis* (1947), for example, and *The Paschal Lamb* (1951).²⁷



7. B Company, 15th Battalion (London Welsh) Royal Welch Fusiliers (23rd Foot), 1915

The musketry instructors were Scots, rigidly, pedantically efficient—a characteristic he respected but disliked and from now on associated with Scotsmen in general. He admired his perfectly balanced Lee-Enfield Short rifle and for two weeks practised nothing but musketry. He

learned ‘rapid fire,’ a controlled volley of ten to fifteen rounds. He attempted ‘independent fire,’ shooting as fast as possible for as long as possible, which he found differed little from rapid fire since he could not fire beyond ten rounds quickly without the magazine jamming, nor did he ever meet anyone who could. At Camberwell, Hartrick had spoken of drawing as learning ‘how to shoot’ and taught them to ‘shoot straight.’ In Jones’s case, this turned out to be more than a metaphor—with the trained hand-eye co-ordination of an artist, he shot accurately and, at the end of two weeks, was rated ‘a first class shot.’²⁸ An even better marksman, his friend Arthur Pritchard-Williams was made a sniper

Shortly before going overseas, B Company of the 15th Battalion had its photograph taken (fig. 7). Marx, minus his moustache, is in the second row, second from the left. Above the big drum, with protruding ears, is Colonel J.C. Bell. To his right, Captain Jack Edwards. Jones is the fourth from the right in the fourth row. On his right is Pritchard-Williams. Jones also had his photograph taken solo, ‘Just before going to France’ (his note on the reverse of the photograph), on what appears to be Winnall Down, in dress uniform and puttees and holding a walking stick. (fig. 8).

On 29 November on Crawley Down, the entire Division was reviewed by the Queen and Princess Mary. Rain fell hard throughout the ceremony, which was, for Jones, ‘an exceedingly depressing experience in all respects.’²⁹

On 1 December at 5.45 a.m., having padded his shoulders with socks against the bite of knapsack straps (*IP* ms), he scrambled into line and began marching the seventeen miles to the Southampton docks for embarkation. Marching was now a torment because he had developed rheumatism in one foot. He dreaded it worsening in the trenches.³⁰

The battalion paraded in rain and passed through sleeping Winchester into open country. Perpendicular, penetrating rain increased with dawn and then fell steadily, increasing the weight they carried. Owing to newly issued hard over-sea boots and hard-wool issue socks, the entire column was soon limping. Although the road was straight, confusion among officers about the route lengthened the journey considerably, their incompetence infuriating the men who were forced to stand in full gear, using rifles to prop the weight of packs.



8. 'Just before going to France, 1915'

Small and relatively slight, Jones seemed to others in his battalion to be extremely young. As he struggled beneath the weight of his pack, a platoon-mate carried his rifle for him. On long marches, one or another of them frequently did this, after commiserating, 'Poor little sod.'³¹ Not yet at his full height of five-foot seven-and-a-half inches, Jones was smaller than most of the others but carried the same burden—seventy-seven pounds on a dry day, increased as now by rain (which soaked his thick wool greatcoat) to a hundred pounds, nearly his body-weight.* This mollycoddling resembled the favouritism he had enjoyed at home, though now he was limping painfully on his rheumatic foot.

The Battalion arrived at the Southampton docks at 12:30 p.m. They rested in sheds till the afternoon of the next day. At 4:30 p.m. on the 2nd, they commenced boarding the *Queen Alexandra*, which departed at 6 p.m., crossing the Channel at night to avoid detection

by U-boats. The crossing was rough. Seven hours after departing they arrived in Le Havre, disembarked in the rain at 7 a.m., and marched to a rest camp outside town. That evening they marched to the railway station and, at 9 p.m., boarded a train travelling north to Blendecques. They arrived at six in the morning at the station yard near St Omer where they emerged into the still-falling rain. In northern France everything man-made differed slightly from its counterpart in England. Villages were smaller, the roofs of the red-brick houses at a slightly sharper incline. Instead of hedges, pollarded willows and long poplars lined the roads.

In the rain they marched to the village of Warne, a mile south of Rocquetoire. Here they billeted in farm out-buildings. The farm where Jones stayed was pleasant, with a family, a dog, chickens, an orchard, a stream from which to fetch washing water, and a rectangular field

* His height is recorded in his 1928 passport. Assuming that his civilian clothes fit in 1915, a photo taken of him wearing them on leave in 1917 shows, by the distance of his trouser cuffs from his shoes, that he grew two or three inches between 1915 and October 1917. From the look of him in photographs, he weighed about 100 lbs. The average weight of an infantryman was 138 pounds.

bordered by bushes where they drilled.³² They remained here from the 4th to the 19th—all this time the cold rain continuing, more rain than in any December for thirty-nine years.

Each day, wearing waterproof capes over greatcoats, they did short route marches through the saturated countryside and platoon drill and arms drill behind billets in the rectangular field. Now that they had rifles to fix bayonets to, they practised bayonet-drill properly. On especially wet days, they assembled in a barn to hear lectures by the battalion officers, all of whom were regular army. Speaking on strategy, Colonel Bell gave them the benefit of his long experience with the Gurkhas. The men were fond of him and considered him quite old—he was in his early fifties. The Adjutant, Captain Thomas Elias, had been a lawyer and wore thick spectacles. Calm, efficient, dapper, remembered by Jones as a ‘jolly nice chap,’ he narrated the history of the regiment, recalling that the 23rd Foot was first raised to fight for Dutch William at the Battle of the Boyne—an origin that made Jones, who was pro-Irish, ‘bloody angry.’ A bombing officer told them how their predecessors had improvised bombs out of tin cans and scrap metal and how fortunate they now were to have the new Mills bomb—the modern grenade shaped like a small pineapple. The most popular lectures were those by the medical officer, ‘Doc Day,’ a specialist in tropical diseases. He spoke vividly and comically about sexual hygiene and venereal disease. It was the frankest sexual talk Jones had heard. According to official army policy, sexual intercourse was natural, almost a practical necessity. This was a radical departure from the prudery of his Victorian upbringing. In *In Parenthesis*, he would commemorate this doctor, ‘who glossed his technical discourses with every lewdness, whose heroism and humanity reached toward sanctity’ (13).³³

In the evenings they congregated at an estaminet, a farmhouse converted into a café presided over by the lady of the house. Here, in small groups, they sat at circular marble or painted metal tables drinking grenadine, grey coffee in glasses, sour cheap red wine, or light French beer which they were convinced was watered. At night they slept in thick dry straw.

The men were issued sleeveless sheep-skin jackets, which delighted Jones. Worn with the wool outside, grey, white, and black, they lent variety to khaki, gave rough splendour to drab, ill-fitting, uniforms, and were warm. In them, the men looked like Greek bandits—though usually, and always on the march, they wore them under greatcoats.

On the 19th after reveille at 4:30, they donned full packs and divided among themselves

paraphernalia belonging in common to each platoon, such as picks, periscopes, and wire-cutters. They boarded grey-painted London busses for La Gorgue, near Estaires. On the way, they saw for the first time, ammunition dumps, field hospitals, ordnance workshops and supply depots. From La Gorgue, in the late afternoon, they proceeded on foot between tall poplars down the straight, paved Estaire-La Bassée road. They heard the coughing of artillery and watched airplanes high above machinegunning each other. Jones and the others in his battalion passed ruined farm buildings and crossed newly filled-in shell-holes in the road. Further on, they walked round gaping holes and, to minimize casualties from in-coming fire, began marching by platoons in 'artillery formation'. Some of the trees flanking the road were broken.³⁴ They turned right, onto a smaller road and, a mile later, reached Reiz Bailleul, a tiny group of small farms. Here they joined a battalion of the Third Grenadier Guards for instruction during their first two weeks in the trenches.

Near a heavy artillery battery, as he was about to enter a barn where they were to rest till nightfall, Jones's lieutenant asked, 'Have you a match, Jones?' 'Oh yes,' he replied forgetting protocol, 'I have some here.' Without insisting on being sirred, the lieutenant took a match, lit his cigarette, and—something officers seldom did—returned the matchbox. As the lieutenant departed, Jones's sergeant, who had overheard the exchange, began to lecture Jones on the proper manner of addressing commissioned officers but abruptly fell silent and withdrew into the barn. Jones stood transfixed in the small farmyard, sensing it coming—a long-range heavy shell. It struck fifty yards away in a screaming apotheosis of violence. He was profoundly shaken. Afterwards he saw the gaping shell-hole and noticed dirt and turnip-sap spattering the breechblock of a nearby field-gun. That explosion tore time in two, dividing his early years from all to follow. He would poetically recreate the explosion very much as he experienced it (*IP* 24).³⁵

After dark, they resumed their journey, towards lights flashing in the eastern sky. It was four miles into the front line, the last three-quarters of a mile through flooded communication trenches. In platoons separated by intervals of a hundred yards, they struggled forward in pitch darkness, almost too tired to stay awake. Stumbling near-automatons, each conscious primarily of the weight of his kit, they splashed through slime, changing direction repeatedly as the trench zigzagged. This journey would become the subject of what would be perhaps the most

remarkable poetry of night in English (*IP* 28-55). They reached their destination in the firing-trench just east of where the Estaire-La Bassée road ran above ground. They were told to fix bayonets, which was standing orders in the front line, and settled in. Those not assigned to sentry-duty slept.

On the 20th, Jones experienced for the first time the impressive daily ritual of stand-to. A half-hour before dawn all the men in the front trench on both sides of no-man's land stood alert, heads and shoulders above ground in anticipation of an attack. As darkness gave way to daylight and the mist thinned, he saw the world into which he had come—an erratically undulating, primordially quasi-liquid, undulating slate-coloured plain with only barbed wire for vegetation. A hundred and fifty yards ahead was the German firing-trench. After an hour of standing and watching, he with all the others withdrew underground.

The trench was lined with sandbags filled with dirt or, preferably, clay. The front of the trench (the parapet) was eight feet high. Fires for warmth and cooking burned in petrol tins, ventilated at the base with bullet holes. Knee-high against the parapet ran a ledge called the fire step, on which everyone stood at stand-to and sentries stood at night. Made of sandbags elsewhere, it was made of duckboards here to allow for drainage. 'The fire-step was,' Jones later wrote, 'the front-fighter's couch, bed-board, food-board, card-table, workman's bench, universal shelf, the only raised surface on which to set a thing down above water level. ... The nature, height, & repair of fire-steps were of great moment to the front line soldier, especially before adequate dugouts became customary in all trenches.' During the day, sentries sat or knelt on it as they looked through periscopes or, when these were in short supply, at reflections in shaving-mirrors attached to fixed bayonets (*IP* ms). Timbers revetted the parapet against the back (called the parados), jammed against revetment frames strung with wire to hold the sandbags against collapse. Trenches were broken into ten-yard long fire-bays meant to limit damage if a shell burst in a neighbouring fire-bay or the enemy occupied one. Long communication trenches zigzagged back from the firing-trench to the support trench and from there to the reserve trench. Life underground was local and close: seldom could you see further than ten yards in any level direction. Moving in the maze of trenches, you were usually aware only of the general direction in which you were headed and the approximate bearing of the enemy line. In the parados were dugouts, rooms in the earth about five-feet long, five-feet wide, and six-feet high. They were

usually crowded, the atmosphere fetid. In them, out of the rain, men played card games, gossiped about the war and read newspapers. Dugout floors were lower than the bottoms of trenches and usually wet. For safety, their timbered entrances were small—it took some agility to sling yourself through. Because there were too few dugouts to sleep in, many men wrapped themselves in groundsheets and snatched what sleep they could while curled up on a fire-step or in cubby holes scooped out of the paradoss.

Men stood guard for periods of three hours, followed by three hours to sleep, followed, in turn, by three hours of fatigue duty. Up to a third of the men stood watch during the day, twice as many at night. Night-sentries were ordered to stand with head and shoulders above the parapet because enemy machineguns were trained just above the ground and it was better to be hit in the chest or shoulder than in the forehead. Often the darkness was broken by Very lights—bright flares, hissing as they rose to explode and shower down red, white, blue, or green, ‘feebly illumining / the nearer surfaces, pallid shadows / circled with its circling—sunk / spitting, rain-snuffed out’ (*IP ms*). They reminded Jones of fireworks at the Crystal Palace. Night-sentries had to remain still, and before long became unbearably, teeth-chattering cold—the cold kept most sentries awake.

Sentries did not wear packs, and before the cold penetrated, it was a relief to be free of the otherwise perpetual drag on shoulders. (A few months later, all men entering the front line would be allowed to dump packs at quartermaster stores.) It was liberating to see above ground in moonlight. Jones later described what he saw:

Heaped rusted conglomerate tangles, dripping
water, like rained-on, iron-briars, tentaculated
sprawlings, staked with rigid uprights
rising from fantastique earth undulations. (*IP ms*)

On day-sentry, he saw through a mirror the cook-fires rising from the enemy trench, and a mile beyond, the leafless, broken trees of Biez Wood . (He would lyricize his daydreaming while contemplating ‘Biez Cypse’ [*IP* 62-6].) Usually, there was nothing much to see, and sentry-duty was prime time for daydreaming, but it was unnerving in fog, which obscured whatever might be happening immediately in front. For the rest of his life, fog would remind him of the tension it brought on sentry-duty.³⁶

In the firing-trench he experienced the most vivid and indescribable aspect of trench-life, its smell. To the end of his life he would be able to recall ‘the unpleasant smell’ of the ‘bluish grey slime’ of subsoil covering sappers and the surface of the shell-torn earth. There were also smells arising from latrines, from shell holes used as latrines, from mildew, from cordite, from wood smoke, from the sweat of unwashed men, from noxious whale-oil grease applied daily to bare feet (water-proofing them to prevent trench foot, a condition resembling frost bite), from chloride of lime scattered to prevent contagion, and from putrefaction. In all seasons, this last was the dominant odour: the sour smell of corpses of mules, horses (in support areas), and men. Digging a trench, a sap, or a latrine, men on fatigue regularly encountered human bodies in various stages of decomposition. Artillery churned up (and further mutilated) corpses. Men smoked to cover a little this stench—though Jones did not much mind it since, he later said, ‘it was a natural thing.’ He liked ‘the absolutely unique smells of engineers’ dumps—mainly of rusted wire ... & newly cut lengths of soft-wood for revetting frames.’ Smells varied in pungency and composition depending on your location and the direction of the wind. High-explosive shells released acrid fumes that lingered for a long while. Great foulness was unleashed when a shell hit a latrine. As though determined to add as little as possible to the general odour, he asked his mother to send him a solid stick of eau-de-cologne to use as deodorant, which he found ‘a jolly useful thing to have.’³⁷

His initial experience in the firing-trench ended at 3 p.m. on the 21st, when the battalion withdrew to a support trench. After two days there, they returned to the front line. Apart from extreme discomfort, theirs was a tranquil apprenticeship since heavy rain and the struggle with mud discouraged both sides from heavy firing.

During these weeks of postulancy, he learned to ignore the roar of the big ‘coal-boxes’ that fell in the rear and to listen for the brief light piping or humming of smaller shells aimed at trenches. He learned to dread the cough of the heavy trench-mortar which lobbed a shell into a trench with a concussion so strong it could blow a man out of his clothes and blast a trench wide open. He learned to linger when off duty at traverses so that when he heard a mortar shell descending from its high trajectory he could, by leaping round the corner, put a solid barrier between himself and the explosion. There was no point trying to judge the trajectory of a rifle grenade: when you heard its thin hiss you dove into the grey-blue muck and stayed there until

after the metallic rip of its bursting. Before long he became a connoisseur of all this fiery modern music, able to distinguish in-coming shells by calibre. He learned to discriminate between the varying orchestrations of a barrage and know when it had not quite attained the status of ‘drum fire’—the term for uninterrupted roaring. He learned never to peek over the parapet in daylight since a sniper needed only a half-second to see you and shoot.

He also became proficient at stringing barbed wire. Nearly every night in the front line and in support areas, fatigues went above ground to repair and add to the local entanglements. Noiselessly (no hammering) they twisted corkscrew-tipped stakes into the earth at regular intervals and attached streams of wire. Two men held the heavy roll while others spooled it off. It may have been while stringing wire that he first heard Welshmen of a mining company ‘in a sap-head or some such place’ singing, very softly, *Sospan Fach*, a rugby football anthem of pots, pans, and billikins. It reminded him of the distant Celtic past, partly by recalling the Welsh saying ‘To Gwenawyfar the pot, to Arthur the pan.’³⁸

Although hard and dangerous, he liked this new life better than the empty routine and irksome discipline of the previous year. Only now did anything military acquire meaning. Life also became more relaxed. Camaraderie increased—‘people who could be jolly horrible,’ he later said, ‘were so much nicer to each other’—and it involved all ranks. Even though it was a fearful experience, he ‘much preferred being in the line’ to being anywhere else in the army.³⁹

Christmas was mild. In the morning, he heard Germans singing carols and Cockneys singing louder to drown them out. The Cockneys sang ‘Casey Jones,’ which he particularly liked. Before noon, his battalion went into a rest area behind the line. They zigzagged back through the communication trench and moved overground up the Estaire-La Bassée road, passing Cockney artillerymen straddling muzzles of heavy field-guns and singing carols very badly, their guns, eighteen-pounders, decorated with garlands.⁴⁰

That afternoon Jones heard that in the forward trench men from his regiment were meeting Germans in no-man’s land to exchange food, drink, and cigarettes. This unofficial truce was not as extensive that of the previous Christmas. The men had been ordered on Christmas Eve not to fraternize with ‘those people’—how pleased he was whenever orders referred to the enemy as ‘those people’ or ‘his people’. News of the current truce moved him. He longed to take part in it, but that afternoon artillery-fire cancelled peace on earth.⁴¹ It was to be the last

Christmas truce of the war.

The novelty of trench-life quickly faded to routine. After morning ‘stand-down’, there was usually an hour of tacit truce, during which they ate breakfast and drank tea, followed by rifle inspection about 8:30. Then fatigue parties assembled mostly to repair trenches damaged in the night. The midday meal, usually stew accompanied by tea, was much anticipated because the post (and newspapers and magazines) came with rations.

He read the *Daily Graphic* ‘with its full page pictures of the High Command,’ its assurances ‘that the spirit of the troops is excellent / and that the nation proceeds confidently in its knowledge of Victory,’ articles on ‘Fr Vaughan in Brompton Road “urging greater zeal in the matter of killing,”’ pictures of Miss Lena Ashwell and of the Cheltenham girls, and ‘a notice of Mr Belloc lecturing off the Strand.’ He also now began reading the *Times Literary Supplement*.⁴²

The daily rations distributed at lunch time included: one pound of meat, a portion of vegetables, bread (inevitably stale), and Ticklers Jam and Dairy-Maid canned butter. There were also army biscuits, sometimes so hard they had to be cracked with a rifle butt. From home some men received King George Chocolates, which most loved, and Maconochie tinned meat-and-vegetables, advertised as ‘The Ideal Ration’ but extremely greasy and generally considered inedible. He once received six tins from his sister (now working in the Civil Service), which, one by one, he discus-hurled into no-man’s land—as if to test the claim of its advertisement, ‘a little goes a very long way.’ Tea tasted of chloride of lime used to purify water and often also of whatever had previously been cooked in the field-cook’s vat. Food for privates was inferior to that for officers. Only officers, for example, were allowed to indulge in the regimental tradition of eating leeks on St David’s Day. (On that day in 1917, he would see a large consignment of leeks on its way to an officer’s mess, steal one, wear it tied to his helmet, and cook it that night for supper.)⁴³

More fatigue parties followed lunch. In the evening loose tea-and-sugar was brought up pre-mixed in a sack (one per section) for supper at six p.m. and for the next day’s breakfast. At dusk everyone stood-to again for an hour, watching for the enemy as mist rose from flooded shell-holes. Afterwards some men were assigned to sentry-duty, others assigned to fatigues, and others allowed to sleep before their turn at sentry or on fatigue. This was the routine he would experience for much of the next thirty-nine months.

Fatigues were continual, repetitive, and boring. Deepen this trench, repair that trench, repair this dugout, fill sandbags, dig a sap, sink a latrine, take buckets and empty the latrine, bring up rations, bring up ammunition, bring up barbed wire, bring up sheets of corrugated iron (from a depot that might be two miles away), repair the gap in the wire, add to the wire, deepen this trench, repair that trench. Whether you were in the front line or in support or reserve trenches, there was no relief from fatigues. So aptly named were they that a month before Jones's arrival, headquarters had decreed, in an attempt to improve morale, that they thenceforth be called 'work parties.' But language does not alter by decree, and fatigues remained fatigues.

He was assigned to fatigue duty more often than some since, apart from being a good shot, he had no special skills. He was, and would be for most of the war, one of the ordinary foot-mob, the 'platoon wallahs' who comprised the army's lower class, its labourers. The upper classes consisted of specialist units in the battalion: the Signallers, the bombers, the grenade throwers, the stretcher-bearers (big strong men), the snipers, the machinegunners, and the 'Suicide Club' who fired trench mortars (which always elicited retaliation). These were sometimes exempt from fatigues and even sentry-duty. He and his platoon mates were not.

Seldom off duty day or night, they were always tired. Chronic weariness sometimes reached the point of torment. Depending on the strength of a company, a man might spend over a week with no more than one hour off duty at a time, and many such interludes would have to be spent cleaning rifles. The time between 3:30 a.m. and 'stand-to' was usually quiet, however, and those not on fatigue or standing guard slept then.

Extreme weariness, boredom, occasional hunger and thirst (fear made men thirsty): this was life in the trenches, punctuated by sudden violence and hurried effort, made hateful by rain and mud and, in winter, by almost unbearable cold. The winter of 1915-16 was cold, sunless, and wet, with rain turning to sleet and mud-slush the consistency of soft ice cream. Perpetually wet, they were cold when not huddled round fires. Jones agreed with most who thought the war 'could not possibly last another winter—no one would "stick it".'⁴⁴ He inherited his mother's sensitivity to the cold, from which he would suffer, after winters in the trenches, for the rest of his life.

After two weeks of permanent saturation, with feet usually ankle-deep in water, the rheumatism in his foot vanished. He had never been so healthy as in the trenches. The sick were

not coddled in the army. Men on 'Excused Duty' were almost always assigned to 'Medicine and Duty,' which meant that they carried on as usual, with the added nuisance of having to attend a daily sick parade. If you were very ill, and assigned to 'Light Duty,' you performed 'any scavenger job going.' Because illness brought none of the advantages he had known as a child, he ceased being ill, despite the wet cold. He would, however, catch cold almost immediately upon returning home on leave.⁴⁵ But this was usual among the men. Fear increased levels of adrenalin, which supercharged the immune system.

Life in the trenches was not all bad, if only because opposites intensify one another as darkness brightens light. There were letters from home, and occasional experiences of being warm, unafraid, not thirsty, not hungry. The pure intensity of such pleasures was unknown in civilian life. Sleep on boards, against sandbags, anywhere, was delectable release. Best of all was rest in reserve billets where, after weeks in cold rain and mud under enemy fire, he had, for several days, dry blankets over straw on a stone floor under a roof—though here senseless military discipline reasserted itself.

There were also experiences that can only be described as pastoral. At morning stand-to, facing east over no-man's land, he saw 'marvellously beautiful dawns' accompanied by the morning-song of birds. He especially liked the moments when the sky was 'dark & the stars still out in the west & the dawn coming up in the east.' Once, he experienced this to perfection.⁴⁶ On the rare occasions later in life when he was awake at dawn, he would remember morning stand-to.

He noticed beauty where others did not. He saw it in 'improvisations, such as bits of sand-bag tied round people's legs' by which men acquired 'character & "picturesqueness"'. When his battalion occupied positions next to the French, he admired their revetments made of interwoven branches and saplings—wattling that reminded him of the weir at Rhos and stirred his fondness for all things interwoven. Even in the devastated landscape he saw a 'beauty of a strange sort that once experienced,' he would later write, 'remains imprinted on the mind forever.'⁴⁷

More than anything else, he enjoyed the fellowship of his companions. He 'loved them,' some more than others. Friendship between soldiers, during this war especially, has been called homoerotic, and friendship between young men often is. Indication that his youthful charm

stirred such feeling may be inferred from the words he heard ‘more than once’ from companions, ‘I wish I knew your sister’—a wish equally suggestive, however, of heterosexual feeling. He later echoed the remark in his poetry (SL 16).⁴⁸

The more erotic a friendship, the more exclusive, which his closest friendships were not. Since before coming to France, one of his best friends was a machinegunner named Reggie Allen, from Abertillery, north-west of Newport. Another was Leslie Poulter (13), a Londoner in the Signals section of the battalion. The three of them shared an intimacy that seems to have included Harry Cook, a mutual friend of Jones, Allen, and Poulter, who was, like Poulter, a signaller. Cook was regularly promoted for courage, intelligence, and efficiency and demoted for drunkenness. Allen, Poulter, and Cook were, like Jones, middle-class and highly intelligent. Poulter was a Londoner of partly Swiss descent, a month younger than Jones (but looked years older). He had volunteered at the age of seventeen in 1914, in time to fight at Mons. He was courageous without being aware of it and unfailingly amusing.⁴⁹ Jones, Allen, Cook, and Poulter were close friends.

In dugouts and between fatigues, Jones mostly talked with his platoon-mates in small groups about many things: death, women, mothers-in-law, irksome relatives, the tyranny of officers, and systemic military inequity. About these, he would remember, they spoke knowledgeably, sometimes wisely. Sometimes they obscenely mocked what they most cared about: women and love. About politicians, government, the causes of war, society at large, and the characteristics of foreign nations, ‘they mouthed the / catch-words of the Press.’ Usually their gab-sessions ‘cast all fear away’ so that ‘mirth had elbow-room’ (*IP ms*).

A society of fellow-sufferers, they were, for one another, the chief consolation of military life. Theirs was the intimate, open society of the slum. All volunteers, whatever their class and background, they were basically friendly, trustful, and, even when bitterly complaining, dedicated. Because of their enthusiasm, generosity, and good humour, they were, in one another’s eyes, the best of men. In most cases, their affection for each other would not have survived civilian life, but here, in unimaginable squalor and shared danger, it was intensely and generally felt. For Jones, fellowship was the principal redeeming aspect of trench-life.

It also may have kept him from succumbing to fear. He was, he later said, ‘bloody frightened’ in the trenches but, like most, was unwilling to display fear that would unnerve his

mates or elicit their contempt. About feeling afraid, he thought himself ‘average’. He later said, ‘I was young for my age. ... I disliked it greatly, but there was a curious kind of exhilaration’ mixed with the fear. By contrast, his sergeant—a Cockney who had been a professional burglar before the war and would be the prototype for Sergeant Snell of *In Parenthesis*—was nervous and often terrified, sometimes to the point of violent nausea.⁵⁰

The day after Christmas, the Grenadier Guards, their initiators, withdrew, and the battalion was relieved in the front line by verbose, jocular Irish Guards. Two days later, the battalion was transported eleven miles north-west to reserve billets in Merville, a town dominated by its hall-tower and shaped to the serpentine curves of the river Lys behind its main street. It was larger than most towns in the region, and, perhaps for that reason, Jones thought it ‘uncomfortable’. He had disliked leaving Warne, Winnalll Down, and Llandudno—he hated leaving any place once he got used to it—and now, even though he was ‘pretty scared in them,’ he ‘*positively disliked* coming out of the trenches.’ ‘I’m pretty cracked about “partings,”’ he later wrote.⁵¹ At Merville they rested and underwent further training from 28 December till 6 January.

From here he wrote home, reassuring his mother that the trenches were nothing like those before Sabastapol in in which one of her uncles had stood, as he had told her, knee-deep in blood. These in Flanders were, Jones wrote, ‘merely ankle-deep in muddy water in places.’⁵² (He did not tell her of places where water was thigh-high.) The terrain of the Richebourg sector was, in fact, the worst on the western front. The ground was barely above sea level, and the Germans had taken the higher ground. Near La Bassée the line was below sea level. There, after a dam burst, men in dugouts had actually drowned. Any digging almost immediately struck water. Men joked about the feasibility of using torpedoes here. The muddy water was now freezing and could make a single icy shell of boots, puttees, and breeches. For now, most casualties—from frostbite, rheumatism, and trench-foot—were caused by water and the cold.

The battalion began five months of regular tours of duty in the Richebourg-Neuve Chapelle line and in the Givenchy sector. The tours consisted of four periods of four to seven days spent respectively in front-line trenches, support trenches, reserve trenches, and divisional reserve. In all trenches, men were killed or wounded. In fact, the favourite targets of long-range enemy artillery during this period were the support and reserve lines. And most fire was incoming. The British artillery, even light-field artillery, was at this time strictly rationed to about

four rounds a day, so that requests for artillery support often received the reply ‘Sorry, we’ve already fired our quota for today.’ In the reserve line, men usually lived in the cellars of ruined houses. From here they serviced the forward trenches by making one or more journeys daily or nightly carrying food, water, material, or munitions. Miles further back at divisional reserve, they were safe, apart from occasional airplanes dropping bombs at night, but they were, he would remember, ‘continually being disturbed’ by warnings of bombing and obliged in daytime to endure tedious training, drill, and fatigues.⁵³

On 7 January 1916, the battalion marched from divisional reserve at Merville nine miles south to reserve trenches at Richebourg St Vaast, ‘a ghastly place.’⁵⁴ They remained four days in these trenches, where much work could only be done under cover of darkness, so that, here especially, night brought little sleep. In these trenches, on 10 January, they experienced their first enemy barrage. Under heavy fire, they were ordered forward and began trekking through a communication trench toward the front line to relieve the 16th Battalion. Then, owing to the heavy shelling, they were ordered back to dugouts in the reserve line. There they waited, trussed up in full gear in candle-lit darkness, listening with the sensitivity of aesthetes. (Jones would commemorate the experience, *IP* 108-9.) The bombardment was an appalling trial, during which, he wrote, ‘each variously averts his perception, masks the inward abysm.’⁵⁵ Four hours after it began, the shelling decreased, then stopped, leaving two men dead, five wounded. The survivors headed forward again, occupying the front trench at 8:30 that evening. From now until June, Jones’s battalion moved between trenches from Givenchy in the south to Picantin in the north.

On night sentry-duty now, aware of his comrades huddled round a fire under the lee-side of the trench or, in the reserve line, under the broken wall of a building, he wryly repeated to himself the circular chant of his childhood: ‘It was a dark and stormy night ...’ In later years, when it came to mind, he would associate it with memories of soldiers huddled together.* He also bolstered his ‘timid spirit’, as he called it, by reciting to himself the poems of Macaulay’s *Lays of Ancient Rome* that he had memorized.⁵⁶

One dark and stormy night, he was on sentry-duty in a trench at Richebourg l’Avou, a village utterly destroyed because the front line ran through it, when the brigade commander,

* He writes, ‘It’s a wonder’ the words of this rhyme ‘didn’t get into *In Parenthesis*.’

General L.A.E. Price-Davies, appeared round the traverse of a fire-bay. He was carrying his wooden staff, four-feet-six-inches long, which was the regulation height of the parapet above the fire-step. He determined that here it was an inch or so *over* regulation height and ordered Jones and others present to make the adjustment. In the rainy dark they disassembled revetments, removed sandbags, emptied a portion of their contents, and restacked them—the result being, to Jones, ridiculously disproportionate to the effort.⁵⁷



9. David Jones, '(periscope) early in 1916'

Price-Davies was slim, handsome, and obstinately fastidious. He spoke slowly, primly and was called, by his fellow officers, 'Jane.' He wore a unique, completely waterproof outfit resembling a pair of overalls, which Jones thought 'jolly nice and eminently practical' for endlessly wet trench life. Punctilious in making his rounds, Price-Davies was 'imperturbable,' ignoring rifle-fire, machinegunfire, shrapnel, and even heavy bombardment. Jones saw him several times fully exposing himself to fire in daylight in order to measure the level of sandbags. His fearlessness had won him the Victoria Cross and Distinguished Service Order in South Africa, but the men thought it stupid. On one occasion in a support trench, Jones watched him stand out in the open during a heavy barrage with his subordinate officers, unable to run for cover without him, carefully undoing a package and saying, 'I so hate to waste string, especially in wartime.' When he got it open, he complained, 'When will my aunt

learn that what I like is chocolate, not chocolates.'⁵⁸ A special concern of his was the collection and burial of the tins that littered the trenches. Later, in the Ypres sector, he would have the battalion devote a week to collecting enough to fill over 600 sandbags—a futile enterprise since every falling shell unearthed more tins. Jones was once within hearing of him while a Welsh battalion passed through a communication trench towards the front line, singing as it passed the brooding, melancholy hymns they generally sang. Totally anglicized, the General asked a Welsh-speaking brigade officer, 'Why do they sing such sad songs that sound like hymns? It's bad for morale, very bad!' Jones was dismayed at his insensitivity to the beauty of the singing.⁵⁹

Always cold, Jones spent much of his free time, when not huddled at a fire, hunting for wood dry enough to burn. On one of his expeditions, he found half a door in the ruins of a farm building and put it on his back to carry to his platoon-mates. As he walked, he bent further and further under the weight of the door. Crab-like, he proceeded until his limited, down-turned vision encompassed a pair of spotless boots, and the voice of Colonel Bell said, ‘What are you doing with that door?’ He replied, ‘I’m going to make a fire with it, sir.’ The Colonel said, ‘We pay rent to the French.’ (Land for trenches was leased.) ‘I’m not saying your regiment isn’t *brave*, but you’ve got a bad reputation for stealing.’ (Jones caught the allusion to ‘Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a Thief,’ but Bell may also have been referring to the plundering of



10. David Jones, ‘March 1916. Front line trench on the La Bassée Front’

Badajaz by the regiment in 1812.) ‘Take it back where you got it.’ Jones did, and after further scrounging discovered some sticks to burn. The next day the half-ruined building and its detached half-door were, in his words, ‘blown to buggery.’⁶⁰

He carried in his pack a 7 by 4 ½ inch sketchbook. On

Salisbury plain, he had drawn men sleeping in their greatcoats, using haversacks as pillows. Now he drew bivvy mates or other infantrymen in their soft service caps, alone or in groups: one of a soldier kneeling on a fire-step and looking through a periscope (fig. 9); another of a man in the La Bassée area sitting against a wall at a grenade store and smoking a pipe; another, done in March, of two men sitting by a petrol-tin fire, one of them cooking, the working parts of their rifles burlap-wrapped against mud (fig. 10). He also drew landscapes (fig. 11). These and his other sketches made in the trenches he later judged to be ‘without any sense of form’ and

displaying ‘no imagination,’ being only ‘feeble impressionistic ‘sketches’ much as might appear in any popular illustrated paper,’ but they may well convey more truth about life in the trenches than the less immediately rendered, stylized, highly finished work of official war artists.⁶¹ And compared to all photographs, they are alive.

His lieutenant saw his drawings, thought his talent might be useful, and ordered him to make maps of no-man’s land while on patrol at night. One of the maps he drew early this year in the La Bassée sector survives, a faint three-by-six inch sketch on note paper in which he indicates ‘Our Trench’ and, beyond, ‘Ruins,’ ‘Crater,’ a German listening post, and a German sentry post.



11. David Jones, ‘shrapnel burst, 1916 Givenchy, supports’

Patrols went out almost nightly to examine the strength of the enemy and ‘foster the offensive spirit.’ With a half dozen others, he would scurry in the darkness out through the British wire, drop on his belly as he approached the enemy line, and creep forward—carefully since the muddy earth hid sharp metal splinters. Going on patrol took nerve. No-man’s land was littered with the foetid corpses of

participants of raids and previous patrols. As the men approached the enemy line, any sound they made—in the wire, amid the tin-cans and garbage thrown forward from the trench—could be fatal. When a Very flare went up, they froze, knowing that the slightest movement would be seen. When he could, Jones crawled into a shell-hole and stayed there, but usually he had to move along with the others.⁶² It was important not to lose a sense of direction, as did one patrol that concluded its night’s work by jumping with relief into the enemy trench.

One night he went on patrol with an officer and two other men, one of them, a Sgt. Morgan. They crawled up to the enemy wire. Jones could see the sentry’s *Stahlhelm* moving back and forth in the trench. Morgan loudly kicked a tin. Because they were young, nervous, and

in mortal danger, they began to laugh, shaking with stifled hilarity, unable to stop. The muffled noise increased their danger, which increased their laughter and their desperation to suppress it. Minutes later, hysteria having subsided, Jones would remember, ‘we crept back as fast as we bloody well could.’⁶³

Whenever possible now he volunteered to go on patrol. A few hours in no-man’s land exempted him from fatigue duty the rest of the night, and fatigues were especially difficult for him because he was not strong enough to carry heavy weight long distances. He regarded patrols as only slightly more dangerous and considerably more exciting. ‘As for the danger,’ he later said, ‘there was nothing to it really. You just went out on patrol for a few hours, occasionally collided with Germans, mostly avoided them, and then ... you just came back and went to bed.’⁶⁴ Later, for a cousin, he imitated himself whining to his sergeant to be assigned to a patrol instead of fatigue duty: ‘Been wiring all the fucking afternoon—& told off for rations at 6:30. Why can’t no. 3 do rations? Went over last night’ [i.e. back to the kitchen]. ‘All right Copper Head, all right,’ said the sergeant, ‘It’s rations or Mr Smith’s patrol. What you bloody like.’ (His sergeant called him ‘Copper-Head’ because of the light tinge to his brown hair and to distinguish him from the other Joneses in the platoon.)⁶⁵

Early in 1916 he went out on patrol to examine the enemy’s wire. As he remembered,

It was a small party, 4 men including myself, a sergeant & I think a corporal under the command of a Lieutenant Best, for whom I had a liking. He wore a beautiful British Warm & a light Khaki muffler & when we got to the German wire immediately before the glassis [sic] of the front trench where the ground was soggy with mud we had to lie down as low as possible, Best whispered to me (I chanced to be next him), ‘Blast this wet mud, I simply loathe putting my chin into the stuff,’ and then with great deliberation he drew out from the left-hand cuff of his British Warm a silk handkerchief (purple as far as I could see) and spread it carefully & squarely over the mud & then put his chin & indeed half his face on the handkerchief.

Jones regarded this as ‘a rather grand thing to do.’⁶⁶

He admired and imitated the educated lieutenants of his battalion and, wishing to be like them, used their slang, speaking of ‘chaps’ and ‘blokes’ and the ‘Bosche’ (a term not used by Cockney privates). Poulter and probably Allen did the same—it was, for them, an identification with what Jones, at the time, called ‘the better classes’—though he also adopted aspects of Cockney diction. His feelings for the junior officers were not, however, easy or entirely

agreeable because they were authority figures, of superior rank, and, for him, the pressure to avoid blunders was a constant barrier.⁶⁷

On 8 February he and his battalion left the trenches for rest and further training. In reserve billets, they discarded their warm, stylish sheep-skin jackets because these occasioned a population explosion of body lice. Even without the jackets, lice were a torment, breeding in the seams of clothing and leaving red bite-marks over the entire body except the head. In the forward trenches, men spent much time between fatigues hunting lice and cracking them between fingernails. In reserve billets, they searched blankets for lice. Once every few weeks, at divisional baths in reserve they underwent delousing, which brought relief for only a few days, until resilient eggs hatched and the biting and itching resumed, increasing in ferocity until the next bath and change of clothes.

At divisional reserve, reveille was at 6 a.m., roll-call at 7, followed by the cleaning of rifles, and, at 8, breakfast. The rest of the morning consisted of inspections of arms and quarters and of a long session of drill. During lunch the regimental band gave a concert, which did not improve Jones's appetite. (All music by military bands, by bands of any sort, aroused in him 'something near to loathing.') The period after lunch until 4 p.m. was devoted to organized games, mostly football. Officers played cricket, along with enlisted men good at the game. The least athletic of men, Jones participated only when required to. He enjoyed, however, watching rugby football, the preferred sport of the Welsh battalions and, he thought, one of the great creative achievements of Wales.⁶⁸ (In later life, he would follow the rugby scores and root for Wales.) His friend Poulter was one of the best on the battalion teams. After games, the men were free, except for those on guard-duty, and could go to the canteen, YMCA, or Red-Cross hut to buy with their ten francs pay post-cards, razorblades, cigarettes, and food.⁶⁹

At one of these, sometime early in the war, he made a peculiar purchase. A platoon-mate had asked to borrow his toothbrush. Unable to refuse yet dismayed by the request and unwilling to brush his own teeth with it after its return, he bought another, carrying two for the remainder of the war, one for himself, the other a loaner.

He also carried in his knapsack a piece of oil cloth to sit on as a precaution against piles—this at the insistence of his mother, who subscribed to the belief that sitting on damp cold surfaces causes haemorrhoids, an affliction that ran in the family.⁷⁰

In the evenings he mixed with friends and got to know men outside his unit in his favourite among the many estaminets. Here he talked, drank, and smoked with companions—by now, he was smoking cigarettes, a habit that lasted with minor interruptions for the rest of his life.⁷¹ In an estaminet he could buy a meal, though the choice was limited to a fried egg or omelette and chips—this sector was known as the ‘Egg and Chip Front.’ It may have been here that he developed his taste for the simple omelette he later often ordered in London restaurants.

Because divisional reserve was beyond the range of heavy shells, civilians lived nearby, and a major source of delight was ‘screaming Froggie brats’ (*IP ms*). Sometimes, twice a week or so, there were organized entertainments—a divisional concert or boxing match. Battalions and brigades occasionally held impromptu concerts. These consisted of songs, recitals, and skits. Motion pictures were sometimes shown. Lights out was at 9:30.

He had acquired two anthologies of poetry printed on thin paper, *Palgrave’s Golden Treasury* and *The Oxford Book of English Verse 1250-1900*. Leaving one of these with his pack at Quarter Master Stores when going into the trenches, he carried the other, which he read when he had spare time.⁷²

On 17 February 1916, the battalion marched from reserve billets six miles east into support trenches at Givenchy. Four nights later, they took over the front line on a slight hill rising over a plain. Givenchy had an evil reputation. Shellfire had made it the most desolate place he had yet seen. The men called it, simply, ‘the craters.’ Here the enemy front trench was very close, separated from the British line by only ‘a solid briary brake of red rusted entanglements of wire.’ The place was ‘a tangle of trenches,’ ‘comfortless and untidy ... saturated with damp and broken revetment wire.’ There were dugouts in the sides of craters, but men mostly sheltered in makeshift cubby-holes scraped into the parados. Fires were forbidden day and night, a rule regularly broken.⁷³ Huge cavities pocked the area but not from artillery. Despite the highwater table here, there was much undermining and countermining. The explosion of a mine was especially unnerving because, unlike the bursting of an artillery shell, no sound preceded it. Over the coming weeks, furthermore, mortar-fire became nearly constant. Because of the flooding, the mining, and the mortars, these trenches would be, for the next three months, the hardest part of the line to hold anywhere on the western front. Casualties were high.

After four days here, they marched back through snow four miles along a canal towpath

into reserve at Gorre, arriving on 26 February. The contrast was extreme. The flat farmland of Gorre, with standing woods to the south and west, was miraculously peaceful, an oasis in the waste land—never shelled, now or later, though within easy range of enemy heavy guns. In billets here, the constant rumble of the front was faint enough to be eclipsed by quite ordinary nearer noises. The location of the front was indicated on the horizon by bright yellow observation balloons and little white anti-aircraft blossoms rising in the paths of insect-like airplanes. After three days at Gorre under instruction by the Lancashire Fusiliers, they returned to trenches at Givenchy. In this sector, they moved twelve times, working through their tour in constant rain, the heaviest rainfall in March for thirty-five years. Over the coming weeks, they occupied trenches at Givenchy, Hingette, Le Touret, and Festubert.



12. David Jones, 'Front line Festubert "The islands"'. 1916'

At Festubert, a mile north of Givenchy, the waterline was so high that instead of trenches there were only isolated sand-bag breastworks on the surface of the swampy ground, one of which he sketched (fig. 12). The 'Islands' or 'Grouse-Butts,' as the men called them, could be reached only at night on duck-board tracks over open ground. The men called the place 'Festering Hubert.' A member of his

battalion later described the 'eerie business' of reaching 'the Islands' by 'walking boldly above ground, across ditches, and through the remains of barbed wire, past long unburied corpses.' At Festubert, Jones was once crossing a plank bridge over a muddy ditch when, suddenly, he felt an terrifying certainty that he was about to be killed. The danger of being in the open so close to the enemy might seem sufficient justification for his sharp fear, but it was, to him, unaccountable—an eruption into consciousness of terror often subconsciously present but habitually repressed.⁷⁴ He finished crossing the plank and made his way to the designated breastwork. Never, for the rest of the war, would he knowingly feel so afraid.

By the beginning of April, the battalion had participated in no raid or assault and had defended against none, yet casualties were commonplace. There were walking cases, stretcher cases, and ground-sheet cases, the latter sometimes requiring a reassembling of body-parts.

Owing mostly to artillery and trench-mortar fire, in four months they had lost 105 men, more than twenty percent of the battalion—twenty-five killed, eighty wounded. Five days at Givenchy in April cost them five killed and nineteen wounded.

On 13 April the battalion received steel helmets. Synonymous with later cultural memory of the war, the new ‘tin hats’ resembled those worn by medieval foot-soldiers and completed Jones’s sense of affinity with medieval infantrymen, an affinity already visually established by the Short Sword Bayonet (fig. 13). When not fixed to the rifle, this eighteen-inch blade hung from the belt in its scabbard reaching to the knee. His feeling of affinity with fighting men of an earlier age was widely shared. Propaganda posters regularly depicted knights in armour, and most men thought of the war in relation to chivalry, the standard by which military conduct was still measured even by those who found it wanting. Ernst Jünger thought ‘chivalry’ survived until July 1916. Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria considered the poison gas that he helped to develop ‘unchivalrous’.⁷⁵

Throughout the war, Jones and most infantrymen he knew felt continuity with the past. It was officially encouraged by battalion lectures and by the ritual incantation of the battle honours of the 23rd Foot at the beginning of official pronouncements (an invocation which may help explain his later preference in poetry for lists):

Namur, Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde, Malplaquet, Deffingen, Minden, Corunna, Martinique, Albuera, Salamanca, Badajoz, Vittoria, Pyrenees, Nivelle, Orthez, Toulouse, Peninsula, Waterloo, Alma, Inkerman, Sevastopol, Lucknow, Ashantee, Burma, Ladysmith, South Africa, Peking.

Recalling battles since the late Renaissance, these were potent words, raising goosebumps. Feelings of continuity with the past were romantic, especially early on, but would survive, with



13. David Jones, ‘Front line 1916—why not fixed bayonette?’

diminishing idealism, in the more mechanized and deadly later years of the war. It was not merely a product of propaganda, nor had it now much to do merely with being in the army, and it was essentially unromantic. He 'felt it only when actually living the life of the Forward Area, in the actual trenches or their immediate vicinity.' There, he would remember, 'a strange metamorphosis seemed to take place in one's feelings,' a change to 'a feeling of reality, gravity, urgency. It was there that one felt in communion with all the past.' The feeling was never, for him, merely a matter of external, physical resemblances. He repeatedly thought, 'Ah well, this is what chaps must have felt like during recent or remote historical combat.' In *In Parenthesis*, he would allude to battles of the historical and legendary past, '*not*,' he writes, 'because I *consciously* wished or attempted to restore those far-past heroic struggles, but because, in my experience, men behaved in much the same way as those past heroes had behaved.' In the trenches, he became aware that any distinction between past and present is superficial, accidental, largely unreal. History had not ended; it continued. In 1960 he would approvingly check in the margin of a Sorbonne dissertation on his writing the assertion that during the war 'he had for the first time been made aware of living history.'⁷⁶

From Givenchy they went to Gorre for three days rest, then endured three days of purposeless, circular marching that gave unusual validity to a daily complaint by a long-faced Cockney in his platoon, 'If it ain't him over there, its those beauties back at H.Q. seem to 'ave it in for our mob.'⁷⁷ Then they took over the front at Moated Grange and Laventie. On 24 April, they moved into reserve at La Gorgue for a week of further training, which, as always, Jones hated. On 1 May in pouring rain, he was in the line at Picantin, where trenches were so sodden that rotten sandbags burst and trench walls tended to collapse. After being wet-through for four days in a soup of grey mud, they moved on 5 May into the front line at Fauquissart.

Here, on the 7th, they carried out their first raid. Jones volunteered but only the big and strong were chosen, since hand-to-hand combat was anticipated. He was assigned, instead, to the covering party and at 11:30 slipped into no-man's land with the raiders in order to fire on the flanking sections of the enemy line. As on other such occasions, someone commented, 'Bloody dark, mate,' and was answered, 'Christ, mate, it's a gift.' (Years later Jones would recall this remark with delight when he discovered the darkness of night called a gift in Book VIII of the *Aeneid*.) Advancing silently through no-man's land, the raiders came upon a German wiring

party finishing its work and followed it into their trench. There they attacked, hurling over 200 grenades and killing most of the enemy, unarmed and crowded together, struggling frantically to get grenades out of a store. The raiders waded into the carnage with bludgeons and revolvers. They withdrew at 2:30 a.m., Jones's party covering their rear. When he scurried back into the trench, he saw the few prisoners taken in the raid literally shaking with fear. His sergeant-major, who had not been involved in the action, grabbed one of them, twisted his arm up behind his back and began frog-marching him down the trench. Jones and his companions protested, 'You can't do that, sir' and stopped him. (Sergeant-majors, he later said, 'were almost all bastards.')

There were other instances of indignation at mistreatment of prisoners—something he and his mates would not tolerate. Later he wrote about the killing of men:

I don't recall that we felt anything like the shock & distress felt by many at home in contemplating the wastage of life, etc. etc ... we took much of this for granted—rather as though it were part of some unavoidable natural calamity—or a *bit* like that. Yet the ill-treatment of a prisoner could still be repellent to us—that would by no means be taken as a necessary part of the state of affairs ... though there were indeed, as always, bastards who if no one was looking, would act against this code, and circumstances when a number of persons might do so together.

Despite propaganda, he and most of his comrades did not hate the German infantryman, whom, they felt, shared their suffering, but felt toward him 'a detachment which inhibits moral judgement of others, more especially those upon whom we are called to inflict wounds.'

General headquarters would consider the raid the most successful carried out in the division and the third best so far by the British army.⁸⁰ Well over fifty Germans were killed or wounded. British casualties were light, two dead, eleven wounded, one missing. What most impressed Jones, however, was the testimony of the raiders that the sides and bottom of the German trenches were fully lined with wood and completely dry.

The next day, he looked at the British dead on the enemy barbed wire—'you could see them plainly, hung like rag-merchant's stock, when the light was favourable.' One of these was a lieutenant he had especially liked, 'an attractive man, very absent minded, and also fair-haired,' reminiscent of the bare headed squire in Paolo Uccello's *The Rout of San Romano* in the National Gallery. (This lieutenant would be twice commemorated in *In Parenthesis*, as Mr Rhys and as Mr Jenkins who mourns Mr Rhys.)⁸¹

The army was running out of front-line junior officers. Their casualty rate was high because their Sam Brown belts, close-cut coats, and riding breeches gave them a distinctive silhouette, making clear targets for enemy sharpshooters. Senior officers were told to search the ranks for men who might be promoted. Because Jones's accent was middle-class, Colonel Bell sent for him and asked why he was not commissioned. Jones replied that he was not 'that sort of person.' Bell said, 'That's nonsense, you know,' and Jones continued, 'I am totally incompetent, sir.' Pressed to explain, he said that he was incapable of ordering people about. (He thought, but did not say, that he would not mind being a general.) Although he admired the cultured manners of officers, he disliked the officer-class because most were arrogant and deficient in humour, which made present conditions endurable and which his fellow privates had abundantly. The only advantage he could see to being a junior officer was the right to wear a lioness-coloured British warm. Bell persisted, 'Look here, Jones, you're shirking your duty. As an educated man, you should put in for a commission—by the way, what is your school?' Jones replied, 'Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts.' 'Oh,' said Bell with a change of expression. He dropped the subject and terminated the interview. Never again was Jones asked to accept a commission.⁸²

At another time, he was offered the chance to be a batman, an officer's personal servant. Batmen had an easy life because they escaped fatigues on the pretext of prior obligations and, when moving, loaded their equipment on wagons with that of their officers. Jones declined this opportunity also because he preferred privates to officers and wished to stay with his friends.⁸³

Through the rest of May, they moved between support trenches and the front line near Fauquissart. Here they were heavily shelled on average twice a week and suffered one casualty every two days. They contributed to a British barrage by firing rifle-grenades into the enemy forward trench for three hours. From here they moved into divisional reserve at La Gorgue, then into the front line before Moated Grange, and from there into support trenches at Reiz Bailleul.

The warm weather brought mosquitoes and, especially, flies. Attracted by latrines and corpses, flies swarmed above and in the trenches, shrouding any exposed food. Men sprayed creosote to discourage them, which added tang to the composite stench of the forward areas, a smell that strengthened as the weather warmed.

Despite policy forbidding diaries, Jones kept a tiny pocket diary in which he entered, for

29 May, 'Blankets taken in—rotten to find none when we came back from the trenches.' This entry is one of only three to survive. The following year in the Ypres sector, he would leave his diary with his pack in a dugout and return, hours later, to find dugout, pack, and diary blown to bits by a direct hit.

On 2 June the battalion returned to the familiar Richebourg sector and made for the front-line trench near Moated Grange. While they moved along a communication trench towards the line, someone coming from the rear announced that Kitchener had been drowned at sea. Jones was passing a wet and weary Cockney who paused in his work to say, 'Oh, 'e 'as, 'as 'e. Well roll on fuckin Duration.'⁸⁴ To men in the trenches, no man's death was important news.

Having experienced six months of combat, Jones was now a seasoned infantryman, expert at survival. No good at drill, 'a parade's despair' (*IP xv*), he was nevertheless an efficient soldier. Late in life, when a friend jokingly accused him of having been an incompetent soldier, he was so chagrined that he asked him a week later to justify the accusation.⁸⁵ The battalion as a whole was now considered expert at trench-warfare, and, in the front line here, they were entrusted for the first time with the instruction of a unit new to the front.

On the night of 7 June at 1 a.m., he took part in a patrol to inspect a mine crater. A lieutenant in the forward trench at the time recalls:

one of our subalterns took out a patrol to scour the slopes of the crater to make sure that the enemy had not secured a hiding place on its eastern face. ... Soon we heard a bomb bursting ... then many more in quick succession: the enemy [in trenches] did not fire, neither did we, lest the wrong men be hit. All was darkness ... the flashes showed that the tussle was pitched near the crater, but after a dozen bombs were thrown, silence came again.'⁸⁶

The British patrol had met an enemy patrol. In his diary for the day, Jones later recorded, 'Went on patrol with Lieut. Frost in search of working party on German crater. Bombs thrown. Frost—splendid, but a bit "wild".' Despite the exchange of grenades and the patrol's lingering in no-man's land an hour after the encounter (which infuriated at least one superior officer), no one was hurt.

Courage of the sort that made Lt. Frost 'splendid' meant a lot to Jones. Two weeks before, a lieutenant in the battalion had received the Albert Medal for groping in the mud to retrieve a submerged live grenade and tossing it away in time to save several lives. There were

many acts of heroism, some honoured, most not. Without ever laying claim to courage himself, Jones admired it above all other virtues. War demanded it to an extreme degree, but he later saw no essential difference between ‘what we call war and peace’ in this respect. ‘That’s why,’ he would say, ‘fortitude is *the* cardinal virtue because without fortitude, which is the same thing as courage, you can’t have charity, you can’t do anything because you’re too cowardly—you’re unjust because you’re too cowardly.’⁸⁷

For 8 June, he writes in his diary, ‘Big bombardment on the right at ‘stand-to’ bombing attack by Bantams—glad to get relieved by the 16th RWF.’ During their six days in this subsector, the battalion lost six men, two killed, four wounded.

In reserve, warm weather intensified enjoyment of fields high with grass and poppy blossoms, hovered over by white and yellow butterflies. Absence of tension and fresh memory of the grey monochrome and stench of the forward zone allowed him to appreciate this sweet-smelling, richly coloured aspect of nature as never before. The men lounged bareheaded in the sunshine, reading newspapers, playing cards, smoking, feeling on their faces and bodies the warm spring breezes.

Nearly from the beginning, the smoke-filled estaminets in reserve had been filled also with rumours. Shortly after the men first arrived at the front, they heard of a mutiny in a French battalion that had been dealt with sternly. There were rumours of decimation—the execution of one man in ten—which were dismissed as ‘damned nonsense.’ (Only late in life would he learn that it was true: an entire French division had mutinied and been decimated.) At one time, the rumour was that they would be going to the Macedonian front for and were to be issued pith helmets. Always there was a rumour of the coming ‘Great Push’ that would see the ‘the triumph of the Entente over the war lords of Odin.’ About this they were confident, even enthusiastic. Now they thought this Push might be an offensive rumoured to be about to take place to the south ‘in conjunction with the Frogs.’⁸⁸ That offensive, originally expected in the spring, was now to take place this summer. It would be the Battle of the Somme.

On 10 June in the Neuve Chapelle line, the Division received orders to begin marching south. On the morning of the 11th, they gathered by the Lys River and marched away from the familiar places of the Richebourg front. Each private carried his full pack and equipment, weighing, because it was summer, only sixty pounds. (Helmet and boots weighed an additional

seven pounds.) Since it wasn't raining, the divisional band marching ahead played to give rhythm to the marching. In the sweltering June heat, they needed the encouragement.

After cramped life in water-logged trenches, consecutive days of rapid marching under full packs blistered the feet of large numbers of men. More were crippled than went to the medical officer though, since no one liked joining the 'cripples squad,' which, Jones later wrote, was 'an altogether depressing, ignominious, exhausting affair to be involved in.' The officially crippled were paraded hours earlier than the rest and allowed to march more slowly. "For Christ's sake don't fall out" was the best neighbourly advice to anyone inclined to faint by the way.' But Jones's feet did not blister. His mother had sent him soft woollen socks, which he wore under the hard grey army issue that had to be visible to inspecting officers. Throughout the war, his parents sent him a new pair of soft wool socks every few weeks. He would never have blisters nor, he said, did he mind marching.⁸⁹

Most mornings, reveille was at 3.30 so that they could cover as much ground as possible before the noon heat. Company billets were often far from battalion assembly points. Traffic on cross-roads caused miles-long traffic jams and hours of waiting.⁹⁰ Once they waited while a French division passed—singing, big-hipped Burgundians who marched out of step, scandalizing the British. Jones noticed, however, 'a rhythmic movement in those mob-like companies' and felt 'for the first time' that he was seeing 'something ... of the dense columns of the Armies of the Revolution.' Earlier, before beginning the long march south, he had been 'amazed' to see a troop of French cavalry in steel breast-plates and helmets with horsetail plumes—the metal parts covered with khaki but otherwise looking as if 'on the road to Moscow or Waterloo.'⁹¹

Leaving the flatness of Flanders, the battalion entered the wooded hills of Artois. On the 14th they reached Floringhem, where they spent the night. As feet healed, spirits lifted. It was good to be above ground and out of the mud, and they sang as they marched. On the 15th, they came to Bailleul-aux-Cornailles. So far, they had marched thirty-five miles.

Nearby at St Pol, they began ten days training in trench-assault—largely mindless drill meant to reduce them to automatons. The general staff doubted whether the enlisted men of the Fourth Army could retain discipline during a frontal assault on strongly fortified enemy positions. General Henry Rawlinson commanded what was to be the main attacking formation of the Fourth Army. To ensure discipline, he decided to conduct the assault at a leisurely walk in

strict formation with rifles at the high port position (diagonally before the chest). The men were forbidden to run or break into short dashes between cover, which was the usual and much safer manner of assault, until twenty yards from the enemy trench. As a consequence of this original tactic, Rawlinson would be responsible for far more British casualties than any German general. He also neglected to coordinate artillery fire on German batteries, leaving the matter wholly to the initiative of individual corps commanders, none of whom had commanded heavy artillery during battle. As a result, German artillery would take an appalling toll on the infantry.

High-ranking British officers were trained to refight the battle of Waterloo. They believed that morale determined the outcome of battle and that, as in earlier wars, the attacker had the psychological advantage. In fact, however, the machinegun, the modern rifle, barbed wire, and artillery now gave enormous advantage to the defender.

On 26 June, as part of a larger movement in which the 38th Division joined the Second Army Corps, the battalion commenced marching the remaining forty-five miles to the Somme. They travelled in a wide arc behind the lines, moving to Vacquerie-le-Boucq near Rubempré. Here, Jones and his companions, seeing Indian cavalry massed in preparation for battle, laughed aloud.⁹² The cavalry, they knew (though the General Staff apparently didn't), would not participate in the fighting.

On the 27th they moved to Bernaville and rested for two days. The men bathed and swam and strolled, mingling freely, joking, gossiping. At one end of the village, Jones watched a French priest strolling in his presbytery garden, reciting his breviary among bean plants pollinated by bees while artillery droned, bee-like, in the distance—an experience of antithetical symbolism that he would incorporate in his war epic (*IP* 117-8).

On the 30th they covered the greatest distance so far in a single day, eighteen miles, and entered the rolling chalk land of the Somme. At midnight, exhausted, they arrived at Puchevillers where they waited in reserve throughout 1 July. On this day the battle began. The British Fourth Army attacked the Germans along the front north of the river Somme and were checked on the centre and left. On the 2nd, Colonel Bell read a rescript from General Headquarters claiming success in the previous day's assault. The announcement concluded with permission to cheer, and they cheered. Years later 'gnawing thoughts' would well up in Jones at this memory.⁹³ That day's 'success' involved 57,470 British casualties, among them his art-school friend Harold Hawkins, who, terribly mangled, was crippled for life.⁹⁴ It would be the bloodiest day in British military history.



14. Happy Valley, early July 1916

In the evening, every man carrying the extra weight of an additional hundred rounds of ammunition in two bandoliers round his neck, they moved north six miles to Lealvillers. They remained there until seven in the evening on the 3rd, then marched eight miles to Ribemont-sur-Ancre, arriving at 2 a.m. on 4 July. Continually now they heard, and were mightily impressed by the roar of the British barrage, which was on a scale far surpassing any bombardment in previous warfare.

Several times while on the move, Jones saw lines of freshly made coffins—even though casualties were customarily buried without them. Like the poet Wolfe in the anthology he carried, he considered coffins ‘useless.’⁹⁵ Nor were they particularly ominous—everyone knew that deaths would far exceed availability of wooden boxes.

From Ribemont the battalion marched two miles south to Treux, joining up with the 15th Corps, and then eight miles to the village of Mametz. At noon on the 5th they moved east through its red and grey ruins and, at 8 in the evening, occupied forward trenches in preparation for an assault on Mametz Wood, north-east of the village. In these trenches throughout the 6th and 7th, they endured continuous, systematic bombardment by enemy 5.9 howitzers. Casualties for the battalion were high—fifty-eight killed and wounded, including victims of shellshock.

On the 7th at 6.30 in the evening, what the battalion diary calls a ‘small operation’ commenced against the southern portion of Mametz Wood but was immediately terminated because of daunting intensity of enemy machinegun fire. The aborted attempt cost them twelve casualties—a small contribution to the 10,000 per day the British were now losing along this front.

At 2.30 a.m. on the 8th, Jones’s battalion was relieved and went into brigade reserve at Minden Post in a place the men called ‘Happy Valley.’ Here they bivouacked in the open for the day and rested (fig. 14). On a grassy knoll, Jones joined Reggie Allen and Leslie Poulter, reclining, nonchalantly watching the occasional enemy heavy shell shatter one of the distant rows of tents. They talked about the coming assault and about conscientious objectors—Allen objecting bitterly to the pacifism of ‘Mr Bertrand-bloody-Russell’ and dead-pan Poulter announcing to imaginary Caesars, ‘We who are about to die salute you.’ Speaking very little, Jones mostly listened to the comical exchange between informed, passionate Allen and equally informed, outrageous Poulter. They spoke of H.G. Wells’s new book, of Rupert Brooke’s death, of the Greek Venizelos, who Allen said was important, ‘of the losses of the battalion since they came out, of the stupidity of the New Q.M., of the discomfort of having no greatcoats, ... of the neutrality of Spain’. About the British barrage roaring in the background, Poulter was sceptical, saying, ‘The fire power is there all right, but have we concentrated on the right targets?’⁹⁶ (In this, as we have seen, he was right to be sceptical.) Before long they returned to their units to spend the night on the open field, catching what sleep they could amid the shriek-and-crash of

in-coming shells.

At noon on the 9th the battalion moved forward to take part in a general attack on Mametz Wood by the entire 38th Division. They passed a cemetery on their right where artillery had caused gruesome general upheaval. Marching again between the smashed houses of Mametz, Jones noticed in wreckage close to the road, as he had four days before, a large, heavy metal roller incongruously undamaged (fig. 15). Beyond the village they entered Fritz and Dantzig trenches and awaited the order to attack. For two hours, as they waited, their emotions alternating between fear and desire—desire to be elsewhere or (as in the days immediately preceding) that what was about to

happen would not—punctuated, for him, by vivid perception of minute particulars that affirmed his physical existence on this patch of chalky dirt. At 2:30 in the afternoon, word was passed along that the assault was cancelled. The reason, which they did not know, was that their



15. Mametz Village with roller in lower left corner, *Illustrated London News*, 22 July 1916

divisional commander, Major-General Ivor Philips, had been sacked for a failed assault on the wood three days earlier, which had cost the division four battalions. (The catastrophe had not been his fault, but Haig and Rawlinson required a scapegoat.) For Jones and his battalion-mates, the two hours in the assault trench was like a mock execution. Physically and emotionally drained, they marched all night back into Minden Post, arriving at 6.30 in the morning.

This marching up and back and up and back again carrying 85 pounds (full pack and ammunition) with almost no sleep left the men exhausted and demoralized. After midnight, on

the tenth of June, Captain Thomas Elias brought orders, once more, to attack Mametz Wood.* In the dark, they marched a third time through the village, to take up reserve positions behind the 14th and 16th Battalions.⁹⁷



16. Mametz Wood in the distance, early July 1916

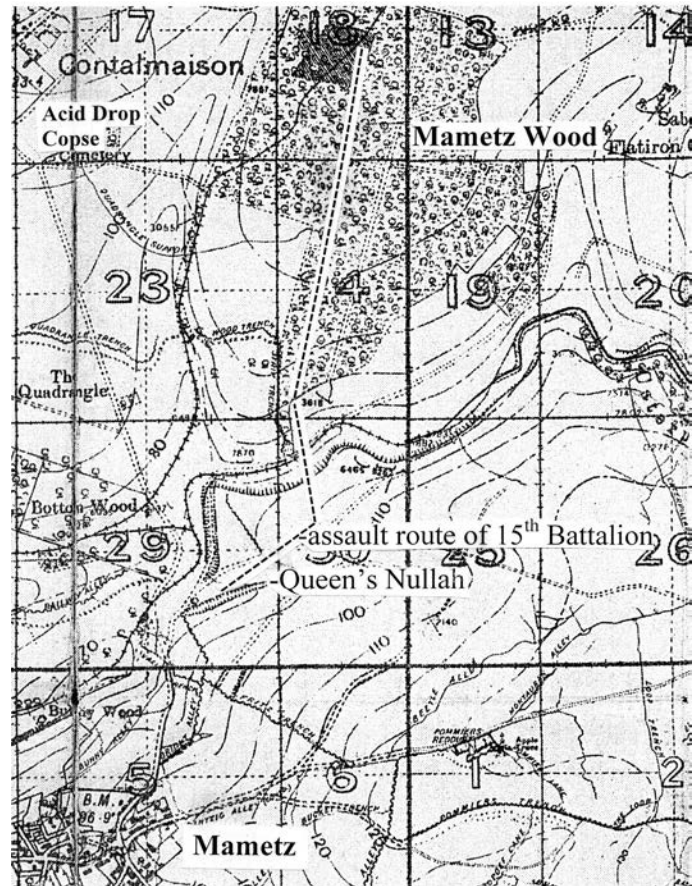
The wood was (and remains today) a thick forest, a mile deep and roughly three-quarters of a mile wide, much of it clogged by dense underbrush. It had been a hunting park and was the largest wood in the Somme battlefield (fig. 16).⁹⁸ Two east-west rides crossed the breadth of the wood, intersected by a central north-south ride to form a lopsided Greek double cross. On a map, the wood is shaped like the state of Texas with the British line to the south running roughly along the twenty-second parallel (fig. 17). The Germans in the wood were supplied and reinforced from their second line, three hundred yards north of the northern edge of the wood. The flanks of the wood were strongly defended by machinegun emplacements. The British High Command

* Years later, Jones would be startled when rereading Malory to find that 'Captain Elias came on the morn' to do battle (X, 29).

considered it so nearly impregnable that it had been omitted as an objective in the initial attack of 1 July. Of the two thousand men who had attacked it on the 6th, not one had reached it. Now the 15th Battalion, along with the other three battalions in the 113rd Brigade, was to undertake a frontal assault without flanking support on the portion of the wood west of the central ride.

Having repeatedly marched back and forth in the previous days and having slept little the night before, they were, as Jones later put it, ‘in a somewhat pathetic state.’ (Later a rumour would circulate among the troops that the divisional commander was severely reprimanded for bringing exhausted troops into action.) At 2.15 a.m., they moved into Bunny Trench, just north of Mametz village. Then, at 3.30 a.m., a heavy British bombardment fell on the forward edge of the wood, swallowing all other sound. A smoke barrage was laid down along the western and eastern approaches to the wood, drawing some fire to those areas, where the enemy thought screened infantry were advancing. At 4.15, the 14th and 16th Battalions attacked up the open middle in clear view of the enemy.

While the first waves advanced Jones and his battalion moved with bayonets fixed and in attack formation from Bunny Trench 500 yards forward and to the right into Queens Nullah on high ground immediately fronting the wood—it was a long ditch, deeper and wider than an ordinary trench. As he moved up, Jones saw waves of men from the other battalions slowly advancing towards the wood. To him, it was ‘an impressive sight.’⁹⁹ Flanking enemy machinegun fire pouring in from emplacements beyond the western flank from Wood Trench, Wood Support Trench, and Acid Drop Copse (fig. 17). It thinned considerably the impressive waves of slowly



17. Battlefied, 10 July 1916

walking men. Enemy artillery also took a terrible toll. It was the most frightfully intense artillery fire they had been subjected to.

Shells burst just above and in the nullah. Casualties mounted. Noise was deafening, the air thick with smoke and chalk-dust. He hugged the earth. Nearby, his colonel casually stood, unnecessarily exposed. Emerging immaculately from the smoke and dust, another officer called out to him, 'Well, Bell!'—a rhyme Jones would preserve in his epic poem (*IP* 154)—and they proceeded to reminisce about their service together in India. Jones was prevented from hearing more of the conversation by the agonized screaming of a badly wounded man next to him but he admired the composure of the officers and their indifference to danger and to the probable imminent killing or maiming of Bell, who was to lead the charge.¹⁰⁰

As the men awaited the order to attack, the 16th Battalion was twice beaten back. Its survivors regrouped in the nullah to join in the attack by Jones's battalion. The men of A Company went over first. In B Company, the four platoons formed into long lines to go over and across, each platoon to be separated from the next by a distance of a hundred yards. As they waited, machinegun fire striking the front lip of the Nullah dusted them in chalk powder. A man beside him yelled in his ear, 'Two minutes to go,' and he passed it on. As anxiety reached its peak, he noticed, on the white earth beneath his face, insects indifferent to the war and to his fear. Briefly in the smothering sound of gunfire, he heard on his right 'one of the most moving things' he would ever hear, the 14th Battalion singing in Welsh 'Jesu lover of my soul.'¹⁰¹ Faintly, over the unmodulated thundering drum-fire, he heard a shrill whistle and saw the lieutenant of his platoon, R.G. Rees, wave them forward. Along with the others in his platoon, he clambered up the chalky slope and over the top, fear vanishing in activity and confusion. Almost immediately, Lieutenant Rees, walking just before him, was shot dead. Jones would recreate his fall in one of the most moving passages of *In Parenthesis* (166).¹⁰²

No-man's land was 500 yards of wild prairie, uncropped for two years, a rolling veldt of grass, thistles, wildflowers, and self-sown mustard and wheat. Like a mechanism perversely preset to move slowly, they walked across sixty yards of plateau, scurried down a steep incline, and slowly walked up the bare, gradually rising slope towards high ground where the enemy waited. The walk took four minutes. It was a passage through a maelstrom of rifle and machinegun bullets, shrapnel and shell-casing fragments flying at every angle—a thousand

potential deaths and maimings with no protecting cover. The noise was beyond hearing. The earth quaked and erupted, the air thick with smoke, chalky dirt, steel, and bits of flesh.

Astonished to see them slowly walking, Prussian machinegunners thought them mad but were grateful for such easy targets and the time to aim carefully at the nearer, larger ones. When the British barrage let up, German machineguns dominated the battlefield, slowly, methodically sweeping the waves of slowly walking men, ravaging especially the Welsh to the right of Jones's battalion. His battalion was somewhat sheltered from the full fire of the machineguns by a fortunate alignment of ground. Nevertheless, owing to artillery and machinegun fire, a third of them fell (*IP* 163).¹⁰³

Reaching the southern edge of the wood, Jones and the other survivors rushed the first German trench. Reaching it, he tripped and fell but did not, as he expected, receive a bayonet in the back, since the trench was occupied largely by corpses.* He and the other survivors regrouped in the trench and advanced. The dense and broken wood was nearly impenetrable with its tangle of shell-torn tree-tops and branches.¹⁰⁴ It was also thick with infantrymen of the Prussian 3rd Guards Division and the 16th Bavarian and 122nd Württemberg regiments.

Machineguns rattled, shells burst, tree-branches crashed to the ground. In the midst of the confusion, quite close by, an unknown corporal with a very English face—'slim, pale-complexioned, blue-grey eyes, a slight moustache, fair hair, in a state of great excitement'—shouted in a suburban, public-school voice, 'Remember your nationality!' and a large South Welshman also close by remarked, *What nationality?* Fifty-five years later, Jones vividly remembered this Welshman's 'deep-set very dark eyes' and 'tight lips ... indicative of irony or amusement' and the slow 'solemn or mock-solemn' speech with which he added that when working a coal-face and hearing the rumble of a cave-in which might block their route to the pit-shaft, 'a lot of bloody use it would be for anyone to say "Remember your nationality"', and he added, 'who did that 'Kiss me Hardy' little chap reckon he was?'¹⁰⁵

Fighting forward until nine in the morning, Jones and the others pushed their way 600 yards to the southern side. From northwest of the wood, however, enfilading machinegun fire

* For certain personal details, such as this, I rely on *In Parenthesis* (167). Whenever I asked Jones whether an experience of the poem's John Ball happened to him, he said that it had.

pinned them down. Word was passed along, 'he's got a machinegun somewhere on the left.' They laid low for the rest of the morning, suffering casualties from British heavy artillery falling short.¹⁰⁶

By 1 p.m., flanking enemy machinegunners having been eliminated, Jones and those with him began again fighting forward towards the northern ride. He noticed a German accidentally drop a grenade and subsequently throw another over the bush in which he was hiding. In response, he threw one of his own, wounding or killing the man. He then examined the German's dropped stick-grenade, admiring the label on its handle—even battle could not eclipse the aesthete in him. He considered but decided against keeping it as a souvenir. About his years of combat, he later said, 'I'm not sure I killed anyone, though I ought to have done. What I didn't like was the Mills bomb, tossing it down into a German dugout, killing or maiming someone you couldn't see. It was horrible.' 'On the other hand,' he added, 'shooting a chap, having taken aim at him with a Lee Enfield rifle, seems quite a respectable thing to do' (*IP* 168).

Lack of water was becoming a serious problem. 'Terrible thirst' afflicted him and his companions. He was approached by at least one man begging for water. When water bottles were gathered to be taken back for refilling, he felt 'a good bit of reluctance' to hand his over because he expected that many of them, slung-together, would be punctured in the open approaches on the way back to the British line.¹⁰⁷

In the midst of the fighting, he overheard one impeccably dressed, remarkably unperturbed brigade staff-officer say with the incongruous nonchalance of social privilege to another impeccably dressed, unperturbed staff-officer, 'I say, Caltrop, have a bite, this dark French chocolate is really quite edible.'¹⁰⁸

After much confused fighting, in which the struggle moved forward and back, reinforcements from the 115th Brigade arrived, and, with them, they pushed past the northern ride. As they crossed it, Jones saw haggard enemy prisoners resembling sleep-walkers—the battalion would capture eighty to ninety that day, among them officers, whose long-skirted field-grey great-coats—'with bits of red-piping of exactly the right hue & proportion'—he could not but admire.¹⁰⁹

He and his companions continued pushing forward. By six in the evening, they were within forty yards of the northern edge of the wood, where they came under heavy rifle and

machinegun fire from the German second line. A captain brought orders to fall back 250 yards. Retreating, he passed the corpses of men he had known, some mutilated beyond recognition but wearing on their sleeves the yellow badge of his battalion.

In the dark, disoriented, he was terrified by strange noises. He began stalking what he assumed was a German but recognized in time to be Major Jack Edwards, recently promoted to second-in-command of the battalion. Jones and those with him were shooting separately and blindly into the vegetation. An inexperienced corporal from headquarters ordered them into line behind a thick tangle of trees from which they fired together from the prone position. Here they attempted to dig-in. As they laboured, a companion was shot, and Jones tried to stop the bleeding. He later wrote in the manuscript of *In Parenthesis* that ‘he’

does what he can with his First Field Dressing only he does not [know] a bloody thing about bandaging & its all abung & the blood jets impossibly fast ... & him screaming when you go near—let alone try to cut away the saturated khaki and Mr Trever telling you to leave him to the S.B. [stretcher bearer] & get back to your digging but he dies in your arms.*

With the help of captured German picks, they managed to dig a shallow trench (it remains visible in the wood today). Here, in the continuing roar of barrage and counter-barrage, they prepared to hold for the night. Regimental Engineers arrived to string barbed wire under cover provided by a single machinegunner. The water-party arrived, with a disappointing number of bottles punctured, and thirst continued to torment them.¹¹⁰

Probably after midnight, he was sent in a north-westerly direction to help clear a portion of the wood.[†] While advancing in pitch darkness, his left leg was suddenly slammed hard and he went down. He thought a large shrapnel-severed branch had smashed his calf but found that he could pull himself upright and then, feeling the warm flow of blood and realizing the bludgeoning violence had been a mere bullet, he fell again.¹¹¹

Unable to stand to walk, discarding his pack but keeping his gasmask and rifle, he began crawling—and found he could only barely crawl—back toward the British trenches. His rifle

* Handwriting and omissions suggest that he wrote this passage quickly, in a sort of frenzy, reliving what he remembered. In another version, the wounded man was shot in the genitals--the maiming which most soldiers especially dread. Cf. *IP* 174.

[†] His estimates of the time varied from 11 pm to ‘sometime round about 2 am.’

swung off his back, hung round his neck. Lengthened by its attached bayonet, it blocked his progress through the bush. When its strap became tangled in his helmet, he had to discard his rifle, the intricate tool he had cleaned and oiled daily for seven months and knew from others by its bias and the flaw in the grain above the lower sling-swivel. Leaving it, he felt ‘a sense of shame and ... real affection,’ which he would later compare to ‘the feeling of leaving a mate ... or as when a child has to leave a toy it has had affection for.’¹¹²

Before long he met a Welsh corporal from his battalion, who hoisted him onto his back and carried him. Soon, however, Major Edwards came upon them and told the corporal, ‘Drop the bugger here’ for stretcher-bearers to find. He explained that if every wounded man were to be carried back their firepower would be cut in half. ‘Don’t you know there’s a sod of a war on?’ The question amused Jones even as he was being lowered to the ground. He resumed crawling, in the dark passing and sometimes touching bodies and parts of bodies, until he was found by stretcher-bearers, who carried him back through the extremely dangerous valley of approach, still being heavily shelled by enemy artillery.¹¹³

They took him to a forward dressing station north-east of the village where his wound was cleaned and bandaged. He had been shot through the calf muscle half-an-inch behind the bone. The medical orderly exclaimed, ‘What a beautiful blighty!’ (In 1937, the children of friends called to him: ‘Dai, Dai, show us your bullet wound,’ and he stooped and rolled up his right trouser leg. ‘What did it feel like to be shot?’ they asked, and he said, ‘It was like being hit with an iron bar,’ and then he added, ‘I was so glad I’d got a blighty one.’) It was a flesh wound but caused by a bullet fired at close range, striking at near muzzle velocity. His leg was a livid bruise from toes to hip, but the bullet had not exited his leg. The orderly gave him the bullet—it was S.A.A., from a rifle or machinegun. He kept it to give to his father.¹¹⁴

He was loaded into ‘a very hot’ motor ambulance, from the window of which he saw once more the rubble of Mametz village with its large incongruous roller. He was delivered to a casualty clearing station ten miles behind the lines and placed on a trestle bed under a large marquee where, although the heat was extreme, after nearly twenty hours of combat at the end of a nearly sleepless week, he slept. He was startled awake by a cultivated, upper-class nurse asking how he felt. Her voice seemed to him ‘the nicest thing in the world’—the first female English voice he had heard in seven months. (Three months later, also having been wounded in the leg in

Mametz Wood, Lance-corporal Adolph Hitler would have a similar experience, waking to hear a nurse speaking his native language.) It ‘brought back a “civilized” world’ he had ‘almost forgotten existed.’ In later years he remembered that voice as having left ‘an indelible mark’ on him, and speculated about it’s possibly having made him sensitive ‘to a rather exaggerated extent’ to the power of ‘a certain sort of voice as if it were a *physical touch*—a healing thing it is almost.’¹¹⁵

In a few days, he would receive a letter from Poulter describing the relief of the battalion in Mametz Wood at 10 a.m. on the eleventh and relating how Colonel Bell ‘looked wonderful’ in his battle-torn tunic, with unshaved face and long stick ‘like a shepherd’s crook,’ walking at the head of the column. The battalion had lost over a third of its men: twenty-eight killed, 144 wounded, eight missing, most of the latter blown to bits. On the afternoon of the 11th, Poulter later told him, the battalion moved south to Hebuterne to spend a week burying the dead of the Irish regiments that had suffered terrible losses there.¹¹⁶

Every July for the rest of his life, he would relive his experience at the Somme, saying in 1971, ‘my mind can’t be rid of it.’¹

Notes to Chapter 3

¹ To H. Grisewood, 4/8/62; DJ, ‘Fragments of an Attempted Autobiographical Writing,’ 106; William Blissett recalling visits with DJ in 6/73 in conversation with the author.

² Letter to Bernard Bergonzi 11/11/65. DJ in conversation with author 31/8/72; my notes on Blissett recalling visits with DJ in 6/73; DJ interview by S. Lewis 1965 in Michael Alexander’s ‘David Jones’ B. BergonziC 2 radio programme 1977; DJ To R. Hague 7/11/63; *DGC* 27.

³ To H. Grisewood 1/1/64; to V. Wynne-Williams draft 5/4/62. Lloyd George, *Through Terror to Triumph* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915), p. 13. Soon after it was delivered, the speech was published in its entirety and widely circulated as a pamphlet under two titles: *Through Terror to Triumph* (London: Liberal Publication Dept, 1914), and *Honour and Dishonour* (London: Methuen: 1914). To H. Grisewood 4/8/62; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 9/6/66.

⁴ Chanin and Miller, *The Art and Life of Weaver Hawkins*, p. 28; DJ to Blissett, *The Long Conversation* (Oxford,

Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 116-7.

⁵ Certified Notice of Attestation 12/11/14; to James Jones 11/11/14 (a letter posted in the afternoon in London at this time would have arrived the next day). *DGC* 26. To R. Hague 13/10/63.

⁶ *DGC* 26; 'A Soldier's Memories', *Tablet* (16/4/38), 506.

⁷ Certified Copy of Attestation 2/1/15.

⁸ Blissett recalling visits with DJ in 6/73; letter draft frag. 1970; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86.

⁹ To R. Hague 5/11/64; Dorenkamp 'In the Order of Signs,' p. 17; DJ in conversation with author 5/6/71. The numbers in his section and battalion are approximate, based on the numbers in DJ's platoon and company (fig. 3).

¹⁰ To P. Levi 27/8/64; DJ 'Life for Jim Ede' (5/9/35) second correction of typescript 3/5/43.; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; letter to B. Bergonzi 11/11/65.

¹¹ DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; to P. Levi 29/10/63; 'A Soldier's Memories,' *Tablet* (16/4/38), 506; to Ren9 Hague 11/8/74.

¹² In the early 1920s he told it to P. Hagreen interviewed 10/87.

¹³ To B. Bergonzi 11/11/65.

¹⁴ To V. Wynne-Williams 6/8/62.

¹⁵ To R. Hague 9-11/6/74, 7/11/35.

¹⁶ Colin Hughes, p. 9; conversation with author 24/8/72; Arthur Pritchard-Williams to DJ 15/11/44.

¹⁷ Baddeley, *The Borough of Conwyn Handbook*, p. 58; to B. Bergonzi 11/11/65.

¹⁸ *Manchester Guardian* 11/2/72; letter draft frag. n.d. [1970]; M. Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975.

¹⁹ Blissett, p. 121.

²⁰ DJ to Blissett, p. 71; Colin Hughes, review of *David Jones in the Great War*, *David Jones Newsletter* 21/7/2015 to V. Wynne-Williams 6/8/62.

He remembered hearing the speech 'in the pavilion on the pier at Llandudno' (to R. Hague 11/8/74) although the *Llandudno Register* reported that it was delivered at nearby Conwy Bay (5/3/15).

²¹ To D. Blamires 26/1/72; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s.

²² To T. Hyne 18/5/72.

²³ To Donald Attwater 10/12/44; to H. Grisewood 9/10/71; 25/12/30; Letter frag. n.d.

- ²⁴ DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971; Munby, Lt-Colonel J.E., ed. *A History of the 38th (Welsh) Division by the G.S.O.'s I of the Division* (London: Hugh Rees, 1920), dated by DJ July 1929, p. 13; S. Wright to author, n.d.; S. Honeyman interviewed 21/6/86; Ms draft n.d. [c. 1965].
- ²⁵ To V. Wynne-Williams 11/12/59; V. Wynne-Williams to author 13,14/2/2006.
- ²⁶ Blissett, p. 122.
- ²⁷ Although Munby writes in *A History of the 38th (Welsh) Division* that rifles arrived in mid-August, an entry in the *War Diary of the 15th Battalion, Royal Welch Fusiliers* indicates mid-November, and the experience of the 15th Battalion was not necessarily that of the others in the division. Colin Hughes writes that the battalions had some sub-standard rifles while in North Wales and that the shortage of rifles persisted until November (*David Jones: The Man Who Was on the Field: 'In Parenthesis' as Straight Reporting* [Manchester: David Jones Society 1979], p. 9). To S. Lewis 4/71. For most of the details of the movements of the battalion in this chapter, I rely on the battalion war diary. To P. Tegetmeier 6-7/9/70. To Richard and Juliet Shirley-Smith 17/8/61.
- ²⁸ S. Honeyman to author 20/6/86; to H. Grisewood 12/12/66; Blissett, p. 81; Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 12; to John Roberts of Ganymed Press frag. n.d. [1961].
- ²⁹ DJ's annotations to his copy of Munby, p. 14.
- ³⁰ To V. Wynne Williams 5/4/63
- ³¹ Unnamed fellow battalion member to DJ 1/7/37. I paraphrase words addressed to Bobby Saunders (*IP* 6), whom DJ modelled on himself and who, in early drafts, had been initially kept from enlisting by insufficient chest expansion. Alice Hyne in conversation with S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91.
- ³² To R. Hague 9-15/7/73; *IP* ms.
- ³³ To R.Hague 6/67; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; to D. Blamires 6/11/66; To H. Grisewood 1/2/71; to Sir J. Cecil-Williams unposted 22/12/51.
- ³⁴ For many details in the first half of this chapter I rely on Llywelyn Wyn Griffith, *Up to Mametz*.(London: Faber and Faber, 1931). Griffith was a member of C Company in DJ's battalion. He records the dogfight (p. 17). *IP* ms.
- ³⁵ DJ in conversation with author 31/8/72.
- ³⁶ To Colin Wilcockson 19/12/56.
- ³⁷ S. Honeyman interviewed 6/91; to Sister Mary Ursula draft n.d.; To R. Hague 6/7/70; DJ to Edward. C. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87.
- ³⁸ To Aneirin Talfan Davies 13/3/56.

- ³⁹ DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s.
- ⁴⁰ To H. Grisewood 25/12/30; A 216.
- ⁴¹ To H. Grisewood 16/5/40; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s.
- ⁴² *IP* ms; letter frag. n.d. [1950].
- ⁴³ DJ in conversation with author; DJ to Blissett, p. 107, 120; DJ did not mention the words of the Maconachie advertisement.
- ⁴⁴ DJ, 'Somewhere in France' May 1917, typescript.
- ⁴⁵ *IP* ms; Bernard Wall to T. Stoneburner 5/5/66.
- ⁴⁶ To H. Sutherland 9/2/48.
- ⁴⁷ To P. Levi 29/10/63.
- ⁴⁸ *IP* ms; to S. Lewis 6/5/61; S. Lewis 16.
- ⁴⁹ DJ to Blissett, p. 133, 81; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69.
- ⁵⁰ DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; quoted in Dorenkamp, p. 19; *IP* 42; Anthony Bailey, 'The Front Line,' typescript, 2/73; DJ in conversation with author 31/8/72.
- ⁵¹ *IP* 116; to J. Silkin 13/10/59.
- ⁵² To B. Bergonzi 11/11/65.
- ⁵³ To Mr Korda 16/2/62.; to T. Burns 4/9/40
- ⁵⁴ To R. Hague 9-15/7/73.
- ⁵⁵ DJ to Blissett p. 74; *IP* 109.
- ⁵⁶ To T. Stoneburner 20/12/64 draft, unposted n.d. [Dec/64]; to H. Grisewood 9/10/71.
- ⁵⁷ To R. Hague 9-15/7/73; to C. Hughes draft n.d.
- ⁵⁸ To R. Hague 9-15/7/73; to C. Hughes draft n.d.
- ⁵⁹ To H. Grisewood 9/10/71.
- ⁶⁰ DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; Colin Hughes, review of *David Jones in the Great War*, David Jones Newsletter, 21/7/2015.
- ⁶¹ DJ 'Life for Jim Ede' (5/9/35), second correction of typescript 3/5/43. See also DJ to Blissett, p. 23; Adam

Thorpe, 'Distressed Perspectives,' *Poetry Review* 86 (Spring 1996), 56. In David Jones *A Fusilier at the Front* (Bridgend, Wales: seren: 1995), Anthony Hynes reproduces all surviving front-line sketches made by Jones during the war.

⁶² DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72.

⁶³ DJ quoted in 'David Jones—Maker of Signs,' (B. BergonziC/British Council), script broadcast on Radio 3, 6/11/75, incorporating interviews by P. Orr and J. Silkin; DJ to Blissett, p. 95.

⁶⁴ DJ quoted in 'David Jones—Maker of Signs' (B. BergonziC/British Council), script broadcast on Radio 3, 6/11/75 incorporating interviews by P. Orr and J. Silkin.

⁶⁵ DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971; To R. Hague 3/6/35; M. Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975.

⁶⁶ To H. Grisewood 12/1/74.

⁶⁷ DJ interview by P. Orr early 1970s; DJ, 'Somewhere in France' May 1917, typescript.

⁶⁸ Ms draft n.d. [c 1965]; S. Honeyman interviewed 21/6/86; ms draft n.d. [c 1965]; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971; A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86.

⁶⁹ DJ quoted in 'From David Jones's locker' *Manchester Guardian* 11/2/72.

⁷⁰ S. Honeyman interviewed 9/10/87.

⁷¹ DJ to P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87.

⁷² DJ in conversation with author 31/8/72; DJ, 'For the Front,' *Tablet* 13/1/40. Blissett heard him say that he carried only 'one book' (p. 107).

⁷³ Munby, p. 16; to R. Hague 9-15/7/73; *IP* 186; DJ interviewed by P. Orr summer 1972.

⁷⁴ Griffith, p. 63; DJ to Blissett, p. 122.

⁷⁵ DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (New York: Doubleday), p.162.

⁷⁶ To P. Levi 29/10/63; To J. H Johnston 23/3/62, 30/9/63; 16/5/62; Catherine Ivanier's thesis on *The Anathemata* (Sorbonne, 1960), preface.

⁷⁷ To H. Grisewood 25/8/67.

⁷⁸ Annotations to Munby, p. 16; to J. Knight 28/4/59; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971; conversation with author 4/6/71.

⁷⁹ To H. Grisewood Laetare Sunday/57; ms draft n.d.; to *The Times* 14/12/60; 'A Soldier's Memories,' 506.

⁸⁰ Munby, p. 16.

⁸¹ *IP* 106; C. Hughes, *David Jones the man who was on the field. In Parenthesis as straight reporting.* (Manchester: David Jones Society, 1979), p. 12.

⁸² Sarah and Maurice Balme interviewed 24/6/88; to Dorothea Travis 18/3/74; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; DJ to Blissett, p. 78; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971.

⁸³ DJ to Blissett, p. 77.

⁸⁴ To H. Grisewood 18/2/60.

⁸⁵ The friend was P. Orr, interviewed 2/6/86.

⁸⁶ Griffith, p. 149.

⁸⁷ DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971.

⁸⁸ To H. Grisewood 24/2/63; DJ, 'Somewhere in France' May 1917, typescript; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971; *IP* 103.

⁸⁹ To T. Burns 2/7/71; *IP* ms; Bailey, 'The Front Line,' typescript 2/73.

⁹⁰ To H. Grisewood 18/2/60; to R. Hague 27/9/74.

⁹¹ To H. Grisewood 12/12/66; to T. Burns 2/7/71.

⁹² DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72.

⁹³ To R. Hague 2/7/35.

⁹⁴ To R. Hague 2/7/35.

⁹⁵ DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72.

⁹⁶ *DGC* 29; *IP* 141-3; *IP* ms; to R Hague 27-30/9/74.

⁹⁷ To D. Blamires 6/11/66.

⁹⁸ P. Chasseaud, *Topography of Armageddon, a British Trench Map Atlas of the Western Front 1914-1918* (Lewes: Mapbooks, 1991), p. 180.

⁹⁹ DJ's annotations to Munby, p. 16; Munby and DJ's annotation, p. 18.

¹⁰⁰ To Miss Carver 29-30/6/72; to Nancy Sanders 11/7/72.

¹⁰¹ To R. Hague 27/9/74; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971. Cf *IP* 160.

¹⁰² *IP* 166; DJ in conversation with author 31/8/72.

¹⁰³ To R. Hague 27/9/74.

¹⁰⁴ Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁵ To T. Burns 2/7/71.

¹⁰⁶ *IP* 168; Griffith, 220; to R. Hague 14/6/70.

¹⁰⁷ To R. Hague 4/3/74; *DGC* 231; to C. Hughes draft 25/11 1969.

¹⁰⁸ DJ to Blissett, p. 64; *IP* 173. When telling the story, DJ could not remember the name of the man addressed or precisely what kind of food he had offered.

¹⁰⁹ *IP* 170; to H. Grisewood 31/12/71.

¹¹⁰ C. Hughes, p. 21; DJ marginal note in Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 7 (Hartrick mistakenly identifies Edwards as DJ's colonel); *IP* 172; to T. Burns 2/7/71; *IP* 175.

¹¹¹ Hague, *David Jones* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1975), p. 50; to R. Hague 10/7/35; 27/9/74.

¹¹² DJ marginal note in Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 7; *IP* 184; *DGC* 259.

¹¹³ To R. Hague 27/9/74; Griffith, p. 210; to R. Hague 10/7/35.

¹¹⁴ DJ's annotations to Munby, p. 19; to H. Grisewood 14/2/38; DJ to Blissett, p. 139; Michael Hague interviewed 10/9/89; *Manchester Guardian* 11/2/72; P. Hagreen to author 9/10/85; T. Hyne interviewed 6/85.

¹¹⁵ To S. Lewis 14/7/70; to C. Hughes 5/12/70; to Allan Lascelles 27/6/64; *DGC* 175.

¹¹⁶ To R. Hague 4/3/74; DJ's annotations to Munby, p. 19; to R. Hague 27/9/74.

Chapter 4 1916-18

1. Park Street Hospital, Shipston-on-Stour, 1916

On 15 July while he was waiting to be taken to England, a ‘jolly nice fair-haired’ Canadian nurse kissed him and said, ‘You ought to be in kindergarten.’ When she asked how he managed to get attested, he told her he was twenty, and she said, ‘You can’t kid me.’ That night, in the hospital ship *St. David*, he crossed the channel to England and in the morning was moved to hospital in

Birmingham. There he donned the blue flannel uniform and red necktie of a military patient. On 20 July, he was sent to the idyllic Warwickshire village of Shipston-on-Stour to convalesce in Park House Hospital at 40 Church Street (fig.1). It was one of several Georgian houses with Victorian façades on the north edge of the village. Behind it was a long garden extending to the tiny river Stour and, beyond that, rolling farmland. Encouraged to get air, he and other convalescents strolled and were served tea on the large back lawn—an experience reflected in his poetry where men recovering from wounds are imagined walking ‘beside comfortable waters’ (*IP* 186). And they visited the Red Lion pub down the street. Shipston-on-Stour was, as he would remember, ‘an almost archetypal English village,’ ‘a heavenly place.’¹

It was especially heavenly for him because the hospital was staffed by unregistered Voluntary Aid Detachment nurses, one of whom was named Elsie Hancock (fig. 2), with whom he was soon in love. Slightly older than he, she was, tall, shapely, and natural. Although, as she told him, she was already engaged to an officer who had earlier recovered from a leg-wound, she felt affection for him and, during his time at the hospital, gave him three photographs of herself. (Jones and perhaps Elsie, too, probably considered that her officer-fiancé might not survive the war.) They spoke to each other frequently. On one occasion, he beckoned her to his side to show her a discovery: in the 22 July issue of the *Illustrated London News* was a large photograph of

the ruins of Mametz showing the incongruous metal roller he had noticed several times while passing through the village (ch 3, fig. 15). She was, he later said, ‘the object of my adoration’, ‘heavenly’, ‘a wonderful girl’, but ‘it wasn’t a real love affair.’ There was no opportunity for embracing.²



2. 'Yours ever Elsie', 1916

lawn chairs under the shade of a large tree—he insisted on not sitting in the sun. Mrs. Hancock offered them strawberries and cream, which he could not refuse in these circumstances but loathed to the point of nausea. Elsie was on duty that evening, so the party ended before it might have, and saying goodbye to one another in the hall of the house, he and Elsie returned separately to the hospital.

The next morning Dr. McTaggart, a Scotts Presbyterian who ran the hospital, astonished him by delivering what he later described as the most awful, arrogant, moralistic, generalizing speech he ever heard. Beginning with the ten commandments, McTaggart progressed to ‘the inflexible laws governing the universe’—Jones wondering all the while ‘what he was bloody well talking about.’ McTaggart concluded: the world is subject to certain principles ordained to be obeyed, the hospital was also subject to certain regulations, and he, Jones, had broken one of them by visiting the home of Nurse Hancock. McTaggart had hoped to keep him longer, he said,

His family visited, and he learned that his newly married cousin Gladys’s husband had been killed at the Somme. Once, his mother Elsie Levitt, in whom he had shown romantic interest before joining the army. He was polite, they chatted, but he was annoyed, and, taking his mother aside, he said, ‘Why on earth did you bring her?’ He did not say that another Elsie had replaced Levitt in his affections, but having the two Elsies together in the same place was disconcerting.³

Elsie Hancock lived with her family next door at number 36. Patients were forbidden to visit the homes of nurses, but, one afternoon in September, he and she risked going to her house for tea. They sat with her mother in

and, although he would not release him until professionally satisfied that he was fit, he now felt compelled to discharge him back to his unit soon.* Asked to comment, Jones said that he had thought the rule unimportant and asked how the doctor had received this information. McTaggart refused to disclose his source.

Before leaving the hospital, four or five days later Jones had a chance to speak with Elsie, who told him that the doctor's daughter, the hospital matron, had seen them from a top-floor window. She was jealous of popular, pretty Elsie but since Elsie was a good nurse and indispensable, Jones alone would suffer for their transgression. He was bitterly angry at the informer. Fifty years later he would say with considerable passion, 'Christ forgive me, I could wring her bloody neck.'⁴



3. David Jones, *Lancelot and Guinever*, 1916

During his convalescence or subsequent sick-leave, he made a brightly coloured pastel drawing of a knight in body-armor bearing a damsel on his charger (fig. 3), subsequently known in Jones's family as *Lancelot and Guinever*. With prominent chin, the knight clearly resembles the artist. His mother would say, 'That's David and Elsie,' meaning Elsie Levitt, but Levitt's hair was black, and the damsel's hair resembles the reddish chestnut hair of Elsie Hancock, with whom the damsel bears some facial

resemblance.⁵ The picture commemorates his love for her. The following year, he gave it to his sister as a wedding present.

* About the doctor's belief in 'the inflexible laws governing the universe,' Jones later commented, 'probably isn't true, anyway.'

He and Elsie wrote to each other throughout the rest of the war, and she sent him seven photographs of herself. Apart from these, all that survives of their correspondence is a picture postcard of Church Street and the hospital, with Elsie's house beyond it (fig. 1). On the reverse she writes,

9.8.17 Very many thanks for your letter, glad to hear you were still awfully fit. Am off to B[anbury] on Tuesday. I will drop you a line from there. The P.C. you will doubtless recognize, quite good don't you think so? am awfully busy at the Hospital, fifty up. I am in the kitchen with Miss Pratt.

All good luck

Yrs. E G H

Although this hardly seems fuel for erotic fantasy, he doubtless daydreamed about her—as his fictional infantrymen would daydream about their sweethearts (*IP* 69). He may have envied her fiancé, as does one of his fictional privates, fantasizing about his girl attending a fireworks exhibit with a rival, 'their closer bodies / cloaked in advantageous dark between the festive flaring' (*IP* ms), although her fiancé, too, would be at the front. Thoughts of Elsie would console him for the rest of the war.



4. Jones on leave, October 1916

Upon expulsion from the paradise of Shipston-on-Stour, he received two-weeks post-convalescent leave. Passing through London on his way to his parents' home and still wearing hospital blue, he visited Hartrick, who was now teaching at Southampton Row. Jones recounted to him the assault on Mametz Wood as a sort of comedy. Hartrick suggested that he draw a picture of it for the *Graphic*. Jones went on to his parents' home. Since his father and sister worked during the week, his leave was largely a reunion with his mother. She asked him, they all asked him about the war. He probably made light of circumstances at the

front, as he had with Hartrick, but it was plain that he had suffered a great deal. She took him to have his picture taken, a photograph showing eyes that had seen too much. They are sunken, and, to the left of his left eye, wrinkles are visible that had not been there before (fig. 4).⁶

While at home, he made and delivered the drawing Hartrick had asked for, which was published while he was still on leave, on 9 September, under the caption ‘Close Quarters: a Feature of Old-Time Warfare that Survives’ (fig. 5). Beneath the caption are words that may reflect his conversation with Hartrick:

It may be said that the nearer the belligerents the more closely do they approach the conditions of Napoleon’s day, until, in hand-to-hand conflict, the difference ceases to exist. This sketch, showing the entrance of Mametz Wood by the Welsh Division—helmeted like their ancestors at Agincourt—is by a private in the Royal Welsh [sic] Fusiliers, who was wounded during the engagement.

The drawing is realistic, in the mode of the boys-adventure style of illustration typical of the *Graphic* but is sophisticated in design. Structurally it is divided in two with strong diagonal impulses and contrasting light and dark axes: dark in upper left and lower right corners, light in lower left and upper right corners. Moving from left to right into the darkness of the wood, soldiers crumble and fall backwards.



5. David Jones, ‘Close Quarters’, the *Graphic*, 9 September 1916.

Contrasting movements of advance and collapse are perpetually fixed in the diagonal crisscross suggested by slanting grass, smoke, and the lines of rifles and bayonets. The only indication of the presence of the enemy is a fallen German helmet in the centre foreground. Barely visible in the lower right is the signature ‘DAVID JONES.’

Also while on leave, he wrote and gave to his parents an essay entitled ‘A French Vision.’ It is his earliest surviving writing and the only contemporary written record of his thoughts and feelings about his early combat experience. His father had it typed and proofed it for publication in the *Christian Herald*, correcting the punctuation and many spelling errors, though it was not published. And he sent a copy, on 19 October, to Lloyd George. Here is Jones’s essay, written at the age of twenty:

A French Vision

(By a one-time Art Student, now in the R.W.F.)

IS IT WORTH IT?

How often this question comes with ever-increasing persistency to the intelligent fighting-man in France.

The Battalion is new to the line—just come from England; it is the first night of going into the trenches. At last, after months of training, face to face with the actualities of war. In single file, one finds oneself trudging along a desolate road—broken ruins stand grim and piteous against the dim light of the evening. One had seen numerous pictures—photos—ever since one was a child of the desolation caused by war—here at last was the actual thing. These grim ruins—these smashed, wrecked homesteads—were once, only a few months back, comfortable ‘homes’—contented and happy peasants loving every corner of them.

IS IT WORTH IT?

At this moment the man in front—your chum with whom you have shared company since enlistment—drops without a sound. One had never seen a man die before, perhaps. There is a momentary halt, and the Sergeant mutters, ‘Only a stray’. Again there comes the voice: *‘Is it worth it?’*

This is a dangerous thought—it suggests ‘giving up’, it suggests something ‘un-British.’ But the trench is knee-deep in mud and slush—the wind is biting cold—overcoat, tunic, shirt, are soaked through—very little to eat. The man carrying the rum was shot in the communication trench, and that warming spirit has helped to strengthen, and perhaps in some measure to disinfect, the water of the trench drain. Hands are frozen; eyes are craving for rest, and weary with watching. There is sandbagging to be done, parapets to be built; enemy artillery is active and accurate. ‘Is it worth it?’

A young lieutenant passes, new from Woolwich Royal Academy. He looks cold and ‘fed up’, probably thinking of that charming little enchantress safely ensconced in a warm drawing-room in the suburbs. As he passes he mutters half audibly, ‘Damn this war! Why the ___ did I join the Army?’ *‘Is it worth while?’* Then down the trench comes E ___, of L ___, of ___ ‘Varsity fame: ‘Hallo, old fellow! Awful bore, this war; what! I was in the middle of a volume entitled ‘War is the necessary Forerunner of Peace and Civilization in All Ages’ by Professor ___, that talked a lot of drivel about the ‘Purifying Fire’ of war etc.

I'll know what to do with that wretched collection of piffle when I get back, providing the 'Purifying Fire' lets me!

Evidently, one thinks, both these chaps think it is *NOT* worth while! It is an awful business, this wretched devastation, this wholesale butchery. If one had lived in the old days, war was so different then! And one mentally pictures a sunlit valley, massed squadrons of emblazoned chivalry with lances couched; and behind, bowmen armed 'cap-a-pie' with short sword and buckler. Suddenly the bowmen, with a fierce and mighty cry, charge madly to the valley, and the arrows fly thick and fast! The imagination carries one away, it is so fine. How grand to have lived then, to have heard the stirring fanfare of the heralds' trumpets, to have seen the pennons dancing in the sunlight!

.....

And now the vision passes. Night falls, and another, and far different scene presents itself. The same valley lit by the pale moon; the groans of the wounded and dying break the silence.

'Was it worth while for these men,'

five centuries, maybe, ago. By their fierce conflict, and their outpoured blood, they freed the land from the tyrant's yoke!

Worth while? Perchance Europe in thralldom still would be, but for that battle on that sunlit day. And but for the holding of that trench—but for the blood spilt—the ruined homes—the stricken hearts of thousands—but that *one* stood in that muddy trench in cold and misery—but that the young lieutenant, 'so bored,' had left the vision in the drawing-room to cry her eyes out, perhaps—but that the 'Varsity man had left his books—Europe to-day might lie prostrate 'neath the iron heel of the Teuton terror. Yes, it was worth while, after all. One wakes from the dream with the sudden command of a cockney Sergeant: 'Now then, you! relieve that man on sentry-go. Ye're late orlready!' And one goes to his post to watch for marauding Huns—goes with the smile of contentment. The trench is still cold and wet; eyes still ache, and hands freeze. But it's worth it!

Earnest, immature, lacking historical sophistication and political perspective, he writes as though trying to convince himself. He later confessed that in the trenches he was young for his age and, unlike Wilfred Owen, believed 'the old lie.'⁷ But Private W. David Jones was doing what soldiers have always done in time of war, anesthetizing himself through euphemism, limited vocabulary, and comforting clichés. The strained analogy with the Battle of Agincourt is not original to him. The Second Battle of Ypres had taken place in the five-hundredth-anniversary year of Agincourt, and newspapers had compared the two battles, repeatedly asserting similarities between the current conflict and the French campaign of Henry V. The analogy

pervaded the consciousness of men at the front and later informed their published memoirs.

Jones's essay is remarkable for its affinities with *In Parenthesis*. Both writings contain a fresh battalion's night-march through a flooded communications trench to the front line. The essay concludes with underlying affinity between modern and medieval warfare, which is implied throughout *In Parenthesis*. In the essay, bowmen with short swords (like the short-sword bayonet), charge 'to a valley' like that immediately before Mametz Wood. Jones's poem, too, will allude to Agincourt, but in a way that contradicts the nationalistic warmongering of Shakespeare's Henry V. Moralistic propaganda, and certainly not poetry, the essay is nevertheless the seed of the epic.

In London, Jones was dismayed by civilian incomprehension of life in the trenches. He later said, 'When I came home on leave I could hardly endure it at all because you couldn't make people understand anything.' Moreover, what interested civilians meant little to him. The Easter rebellion in Dublin was, for example, frequently discussed. When asked by relatives what 'the loyal Irish in France' thought of it, he replied curtly, 'Most of them I knew are dead.'⁸ After the deep sharing and common understanding between men at the front, the discrepancy in awareness was painful. It may have been partly to escape questioning civilians that he visited the zoo—some months later, in the trenches, he would draw from memory a lynx he had seen there. Ambiguous and curiously unsettling, leave was further complicated by sadness at its drawing to a close.

Shortly before he was to return to the front, his mother asked him to visit his Great Aunt Mockford, who still lived in her house in Rotherhithe. He tried to back out but she insisted, 'Oh, she'd *love* it', so he obediently went. Because it was a Sunday, the aunt was dressed grandly in black watered silks with lace frills and a bonnet. She said to him, as he later remembered,

Well, David, I hear you've been fighting the Prussians. Big-boned men are they not? We thought they were in the right last time, and the French in the wrong and badly led as well, but now they tell me the Prussians are in the wrong and that we must summon all our British courage and help the French to beat them. Your dear mother tells me in a letter that you were wounded fighting the Prussians ... in a wood and will soon be back again with your regiment, which is quite right for that is a soldier's duty—but I still think the Prussians were in the right in the other war, though I suppose they are in the wrong in this one.

He was amused to hear the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 referred to as ‘the last war’. This widow of the man who had made him a foil-covered sword, shield, and helmet seemed to think he had contended ‘blade to blade with great blond Prussians of the Bismarck era.’ She was, he thought, the ‘nicest thing’ about his leave, much better than ‘the sort of questions you couldn’t answer because of disparity of experience.’ When he described this visit to Allen, Poulter, and his other mates, they were much amused, and one of them said, ‘Suppose the old girl reckoned you spent half your time knocking out bloody great Goliath-sized Jerrys with perfectly aimed sling-stones.’⁹

He returned to France in late October 1916, joining his battalion in the Boesinghe sector just north of Ypres, near Poperinghe. This was the extreme northern end of the British line and its area of most concentrated violence. On both sides, the men were continually pounded by artillery and trench mortars. The earth was pockmarked, grey, utterly barren—it was the most desolate

area on the front. Upon reporting to battalion headquarters, he was unhappy to learn that he had been transferred from B Company to D Company and so would be separated from intimate friends.¹⁰



6. Leslie Poulter, 1918

Near headquarters, he met Poulter (fig. 6), who had secured from the regimental sergeant-major permission for Jones to delay joining his new company. To celebrate Jones’s approaching twenty-first birthday, Poulter had stolen rum and bottled cherries from officers’ supplies. The best thing about the party was Poulter himself, whose sense of humour and nonchalance always made Jones grin. Poulter also greatly amused himself. He had what the French call *fou rire* and at a certain point would convulse in uncontrollable laughter.¹¹

There was more to John Gustav Leslie Poulter than hilarity and athletic ability. He was sensitive, cultivated, and widely read in English and French literatures. A gifted linguist, he read Greek and Latin easily, and was fluent in French and in Welsh, which he had learned since

enlistment. After a childhood spent in Ealing, London, and Southsea in Hampshire, he had studied at Dover College, where he won prizes in language and literature. He then went to Switzerland to learn watchmaking in a company owned by his godfather (who was probably also his father). Poulter was middle-class, but his values and manners were those of a conventional upper-class clubman, ‘the kind of bloke,’ said Jones, ‘who would have “dressed for dinner” had he been alone in some bloody jungle.’¹² Although English in manner, he was also the most broadly European person of his generation Jones knew.

During their celebration he told Poulter how he had disliked leave, and Poulter related his own experience of having to sleep on the floor while on leave because bed was too comfortable. He told Jones much of what had happened to the battalion during his absence, including a successful raid by sixty-five of its members (at the cost of twelve casualties) in the preceding week. Poulter, too, had been urged to become a lieutenant and, like Jones, would have preferred being something grander. It may have been during this birthday celebration that he gave Jones a joke-application for promotion to colonel. Only part of the document survives, which includes attestations by fictional referees: ‘He was born to lead. He has traits in his character which would be I consider indispensable for such a position. e.g. He is a strong Imperialist. Enthusiastic. Keen perception & wonderful memory, & is always alert. ... I think there are few men of his age who have traveled as he has done. To my knowledge he has visited U.S.A., Canada, Russia, Switzerland, France, Ceylon, Australia. He is a good conversationalist. Smart in repartee, no mean linguist & good at cross-examination. I often tell him he ought to be a K.C. [King’s Counsel].’ Not as adamant as Jones in resisting promotion and having attended something ‘better’ than an art school, Poulter would finish the war as a captain.¹³

Although Jones now knew who among their common acquaintances had fallen in the assault on Mametz Wood, he found it distressing to seek out other companions no longer with the battalion. The dead and wounded had been replaced by conscripts. Fully half of the current 486 officers and men of the battalion were strangers to him. Still, he enjoyed reunions, especially one with Reggie Allen, about whom we know virtually nothing except that after the Somme he was haunted by an unshakable premonition of death.¹⁴

On 24 October 1916 as a member of the 14th Platoon of D Company, Jones went into

reserve dugouts in the Boesinghe sector, east of the village of Brielen, a mile-and-a-half north of Ypres. These dugouts were strong, with sandbagged walls backing like caves into the southwestern bank of the Yser Canal so that the surface of the water in the canal was at a level with the heads of men standing in dugouts, which opened onto a little stream called the Yser Lea. Across it lay plank bridges with, here and there, rustic hand-rails that Jones thought surprisingly humane and lovely in this 'most uninviting of areas.' Beyond the stream was the Liserne-Ypres road, its flanking trees shattered. Exposed to enemy fire, the bridges across the canal were shielded by camouflage hung on uprights like washing on lines. Years later he would recognize this place of dugouts in Chaucer's description of the temple of Mars in the *Knight's Tale*: a grisly place of mischance set in a dead forest of sharp and hideous stubs, a place of harsh wind, cold, dim light, sharp burning, black smoke, and frightening, grating noises.¹⁵ For much of the coming year, this would be home.

The day after their arrival, the battalion went into the front line across from Pilckhem Ridge. The pungent smell of corpses here was worse even than in the Richebourg sector—there were fewer rats in these trenches owing to abundance of corpses in no-man's land. During their first four days here the battalion suffered four casualties—one killed, three wounded. On the 31st they moved into support trenches where, that evening, one man was killed, one wounded. The relative quiet allowed the men to work continually at grading and draining trenches.

Jones was aware that the war had changed. The absence of friends and companions and their replacement by strangers diminished domestic intimacy, and, like all who had lost friends, he began to insulate himself emotionally against further loss. But there were also objective differences: slaughter had now become more wholesale and mechanized. Mechanical transport now outnumbered horse-drawn wagons. There was much more artillery, 'ours & theirs.' Ammunition-dumps lined the roads and 'rose like slag heaps on every available bit of ground,' perfunctorily camouflaged with bits of foliage. Along with 'guns of every imaginable calibre' heavy platform howitzers had been brought forward. For the first time, he saw big guns facing each other and firing in the open—pure force having replaced cunning. There was also a change in mood. The enthusiasm of before the Somme was gone. Life now seemed 'an endless repetition with no foreseeable end.'¹⁶

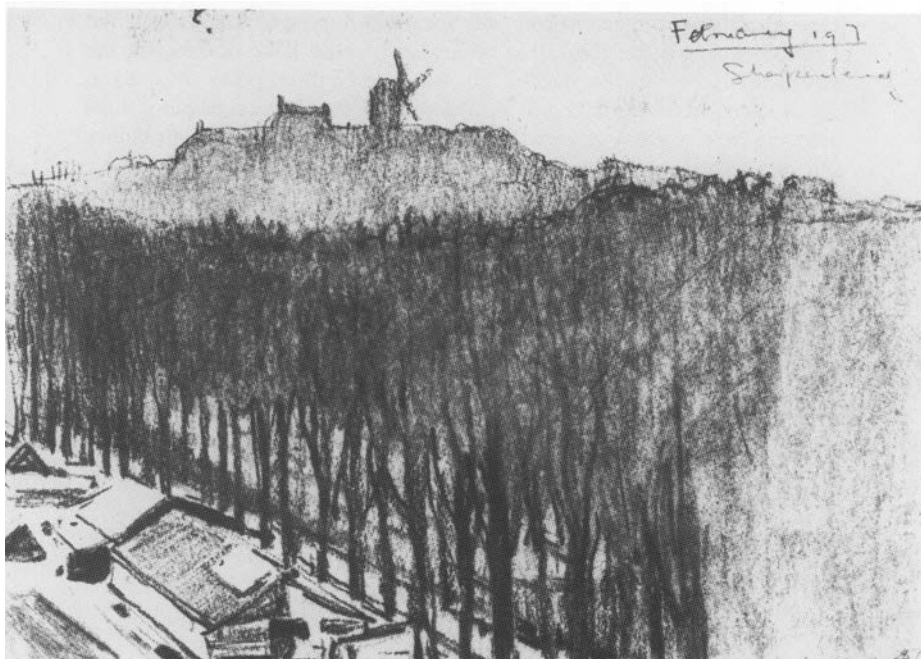
Another, more irksome change was an increase in hard labour. In preparation for a major offensive planned for the following August, the General Staff had given orders to achieve a depth of defense comparable to that of the enemy. The division would spend the next ten months consolidating and improving the trench system and, especially, building new communication trenches. Jones assumed that his division was staying so long in the sector because of its large number of mining companies—their members, mainly from the south-east mining valleys—being invaluable in the massive trench-construction.¹⁷

The battalion intelligence officer, Lieutenant Williams, learned that Jones had been an art student and, at the beginning of November, had him transferred to Battalion Headquarters, which was a dugout in the Canal Bank. During daylight hours he worked at headquarters making maps. On nights when not on patrol, he was available for fatigue duty and participated in the continuous labour of constructing, repairing and extending trenches. Most nights, however, he accompanied Williams on patrol to see if the enemy had dug any new trenches or put out new barbed wire, Jones making sketch-maps. They never encountered parties of the enemy but often saw sentries silhouetted above enemy parapets.¹⁸ He now slept in a little dug-out of his own in the support line. Shortly after his arrival, on 2 November, when he was out of his private dugout, five rounds of artillery destroyed it, his pack, and his diary.

Before being assigned to Battalion Headquarters, he and his companions were, as he put it, ‘one whole of bedraggled ochre. Having been a bit of a dandy, he had experienced ‘brief visual pleasure’ in the elegant cut of the service tunic of the lieutenant commanding his platoon and, on rare occasions when an officer from brigade or divisional headquarters visited: the whipcord riding-breeches, the laundered shirt, and superbly tailored coat with scarlet gorget patches on immaculate khaki lapels. Always, however, his admiration had been mixed with trepidation over the reason for the visit. Now, a private at headquarters, surrounded by sartorial elegance, he felt strongly the degradation of his own shapeless military issue. He also resented watching batmen bring officers alcoholic drinks unavailable to him as a private (see *IP* 127). He had never been so uncomfortably aware of class distinctions. Yet, shortly afterwards, when officers in the front line began dressing like privates to avoid the distinctive silhouettes that identified them as officers to the enemy, he and his fellow privates disliked the change, which

made taking orders feel like being bossed by an equal¹⁹

At this time, Field Survey units issued a call for men with surveying or drawing experience, and he was sent to the 2nd Field Survey Company based at Second Army Headquarters at Cassel.²⁰ There he was tested for the mathematically accurate draughtsmanship required to make large-scale trench maps. Like most artists, he failed at this and was relegated instead to being an artillery observer. He was sent to Observation Group B of the 2nd Field Survey Company, Royal Engineers. This group was assigned to locate enemy batteries by cross-observation, or flash-spotting, in an area seven-and-a-half miles south of Ypres. He underwent three-weeks training in survey principles, map-reading, and the operation of a Flash-Spotting Theodolite, an enlarged, elaborate version of the surveyor's scope. This training and his association with 'the Survey' would underlie references in his poetry to the technology of maps and surveying. The move to the Observation Group was fortunate for him, since it meant that he was continually in reserve areas for the harshest months of the coldest winter in twenty years. He now spent time in French towns, and was most struck by their "ancient and modern" aspect'.²¹



7. David Jones, 'February 1917 Scherpenberg'

His unit observed from three posts in the area, one a hill overlooking Ploegsteert Wood, which spread out to the south and east towards the front line a mile away. The sight stirred his romantic imagination. He later wrote, 'Ploegsteert is Broceliande,' the name of the enchanted

forest in Brittany where Merlin was imprisoned (*RQ* 193). From this hill, he had a nearly topographical view of a labyrinth of British trenches. The place was ‘amazing,’ he wrote, ‘with a complex meander of entrenchments,’ more like a German trench-system than the usual British line. Hours he spent gazing down on British trenches here increased his fascination with labyrinths and would later strengthen the affinity of his visual and literary art with mazes—though he was supposed to be looking beyond to the Messines-Wytschaete Ridge and east to Warneton behind enemy lines. He may have been reprimanded for misdirected gazing. Half a century later he would write a poem in which sentries are chastised for looking in a direction other than the one assigned (*SL* 28, 30).²²

He may have gone to the observation station on Mont Kemmel (Kemmelberg), 150 meters above the Flanders plain with a good view of the maze of German lines on Messines Ridge to the east. Atop Kemmel was a Celtic hill-fort, a circular ridge within which were the ruins of a Roman temple. This would be a place to provoke imagining of a sort later reflected in his poetry and pictures. Two miles north was the village of La Clyte, where he may have been billeted with some of the 2nd FSC. In his poetry he would commemorate the prostitute of this suggestively named village (*SL* 102-3). From here, in February, he drew in his sketchbook the landscape south and west towards Scherpenberg (a half-mile away beyond some woods), a village with a mill atop a hill (fig. 7).



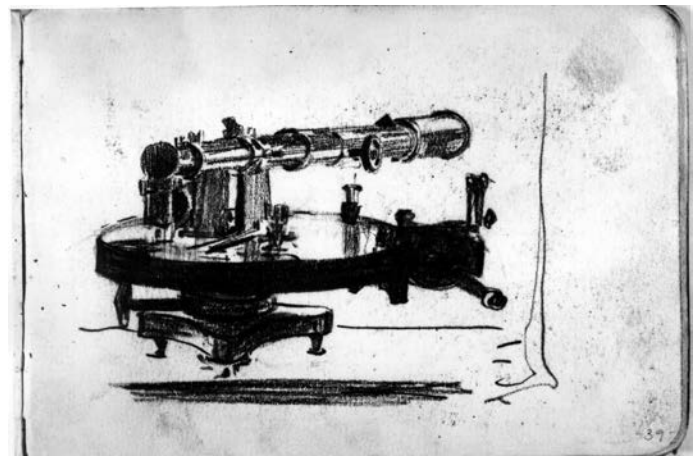
He spent a lot of time at the observation post in Neuve Eglise, a hill-top village two-and-a-half miles from the front line two miles west of the western point of Ploegsteert Wood. The observation post was a rickety post mill, whose

8. David Jones, ‘the mill at Neuve Eglise which we used as an OP for spotting gun flashes etc.—the building in the foreground is the estaminet.’

workings fascinated him. He sketched the bottom and the central post on which it was turned to face the wind. The mill was three-minute walk from an estaminet, where they spent off-duty hours. He drew a picture of them (fig. 8).

Here he made a very quick sketch of an infantryman looking through the transit of a theodolite and another, finished drawing of the instrument, shiny in its metallic perfection and symmetrical gadgetry (fig. 9). Clearly, he appreciated its machine-beauty. He may have had it in mind thirty-two years later when writing about the absence of significance in utilitarian devices, ‘I have looked for a long while / at the textures and contours. / I have run a hand over the trivial intersections’ (SL 9).

His job here was to help plot coordinates to pinpoint German batteries along the Messines-Wytschaete Ridge so that British artillery could destroy them prior to an attack on the ridge planned for 7 June. At night, high in the mill, when he noticed a gun-flash, he took a fix on it through the transit and read, by the light of a tiny torch, the number of degrees on the dial. He then reported by field-telephone the figures together with his estimate of the size of the enemy gun, for



9. David Jones, Theodolite, 1917

which he used a code employing the names of dogs—‘Foxhound baying at twenty degrees north; Great Dane barking at five degrees south.’ In his war epic, he would commemorate this method of identification in a reference to ‘Berthe Krupp’s terrier bitch’ (182). He would also project his experience as a flash-spotter into the last words of a fictional forward observation officer who reports, ‘he’s bumping the Quadrangle ... X 29 b 2 5 ... 10.5 cm. gun ... 35 degrees left ... (177).

Attached to the Observer Group, with more leisure than he had at any other time during the war, he wrote to his vicar, Rev. Edwin Davies, at St. James’s, Hatcham, who gave his letter to Jones’s father, who, after copy-editing and typing, passed it on to the editor of *The Christian Herald*, who published a cut-down version in ‘Sidelights of the War’ (17 May, 1917) under the title, ‘A Soldier’s Letter Home’. Here it is the typed original in its entirety, entitled by his father

‘Somewhere on the Western Front’:

This Christmas 1916 completed my first year of ‘life in Flanders’. A year ago I was just beginning to enter into the full realization of what war means to the ‘foot-slogger’—the common-place private of the infantry of the Line. The beginning of 1916 was, I think, a time of hope and looking forward to all of us, military and civil—both in Flanders and Britain. We all talked with great confidence and enthusiasm of the ‘Great Push’. We thought, at least most of us, that most likely 1916 would see the triumph of the Entente over the war lords of Odin. I remember quite well sitting in a very wet and particularly bad trench in the noted Richebourg sector with a chum. We were both very cold and very wet; our rations, such as they were, had unfortunately been dropped into the mud in the communication trench, so that, on the whole, the situation was far from what the official report would call ‘satisfactory’. After reviewing the situation with as much philosophy and as little pessimism as was possible, we both decided that the war could not possibly last another winter—no one would ‘stick it’, we argued. We really believed that, simply because we were both so utterly ‘fed up’ that to think of many more months under similar conditions was out of the question. Yet we both have experienced, since that time, many a worse situation, and still the business continues month in and month out! Nearly a year has rolled by since the time of the latter incident—I almost said we are still in the same position, but obviously that is untrue—we are at least one year nearer peace, and certainly during the past year, although the Bosch [sic] is very far from being completely smashed, we have shown him in every way that he is, as a Tommy would say, ‘up against it’.

I am fortunate enough to have recently been transferred from my battalion to a detachment doing work in connection with observation—which, of course, means that I do no duty in the Front Line and have considerably more chance of seeing things a few miles behind. I think everybody is really very interested to know whether the press accounts of Hun barbarities in Belgium and France during the 1914 advance are exaggerated or otherwise. Of course, one hears a mixture of tales and opinions concerning the matter. A few days ago I was speaking to a fairly well educated French woman, who had been in a certain town—a fairly well known place—during a terrible ten days of German rule. She told me the story of bare-faced cruelty and unheard-of arrogance in a delightfully charming broken English accent, and in such a simple fashion, that no one could have suspected exaggeration. The Crown Prince was present during part of [the] occupation, and according to this lady’s evidence, behaved in the manner attributed to him. I will not go into any details of her pathetic story, but it will be sufficient to say that in general it was identical with that the press reported. I could not help noticing the intensely French patriotic spirit with which she referred to the Bosch. Among other remarks, this one was with an abundant amount of feeling, ‘We, in France, remember 1870, you English do not. Perhaps you will remember 1914-17’.

From all appearance, the better classes out here are considerably more determined concerning the war and are obviously more patriotic than the lower orders—I don’t say that this is so, but that it appears so, in most cases. A French town just within easy walking distance of the lines is really full of interest of a very mixed

nature. The curious and striking ‘ancient and modern’ aspect is remarkable. For instance, one sees a Market Square with a Gothic Church—its ancient embattled tower against the sky, a British ‘plane circling above, British Staff Officers, resplendent in much brass, red tabs etc., easy-going French soldiers on leave, perhaps mud-covered Tommies straight from the trenches but usually pretty cheery, peasants with baskets of foodstuffs, Roman priests with parchment-like skin and shabby black cassocks, giving a friendly nod to passers-by—these latter seem very reminiscent of the France of long ago. It would no doubt be some surprise to the person who is perhaps familiar with pre-war France with its difficulty of language, to see to-day, on almost every other shop and house, such notices as ‘Tea Room’—‘Open to English troops’, ‘Dinner provided here’, ‘Grocery and Fruit’ etc.—and certainly almost every inhabitant speaking some sort of English! It is sometimes rather hard to imagine that perhaps the very house one is seated in has been the billet of German troops sometime during the last two years. Certainly other inhabitants of northern France deserve every ounce of our sympathy, indeed I always feel that even the British soldier actually out here altogether fails to duly appreciate the sacrifice of France. I fear he rather judges the French nation hardly, because some money-making inn-keeper overcharges him occasionally!



10. David Jones, ‘Is there peace?’

Sometimes, by way of additional interest, a batch of Bosch prisoners, seeming fairly contented with life, pass by to work. One wonders if perhaps any one of them ever saw the place of their captivity in the days when the cup of success was running over, and when, with vandal joy, they gloated over a prostrate and stricken Belgium. Naturally enough the good-humoured and humorous Tommy cannot withhold some taunting jest at the expense of the captive Hun—who usually passes on with sullen indifference! During the two years or more that have expired since the British first set foot on French soil, the English influence has gradually spread, until to-day the country seems, in some respects, like an English Colony. Naturally enough many destitute refugees from the territory now occupied by the Hun have become quite the reverse from destitute, by means of setting up small shanties behind our lines and selling coffee and all sorts of odds and ends to the British troops. Well of course one could go on writing for ever about life out here, but I think I must really finish here

for the present. Give my kindest regards to everybody whom I know. Like yourselves at home, we have to live in

hope that 1917 may see the end of the struggle—but of course to discuss the ‘duration of the war’ is worse than futile. So au revoir.

Yours very sincerely,

David Jones

During this time of greater leisure, he made about twenty drawings in his sketch book and two finished drawings for reproduction. The first of the latter was printed by his father as the cover of a New Year’s card (fig. 10). It displays a damsel in distress and tonsured monk (wearing the Dominican habit Jones had worn to be photographed at Camberwell [ch. 2, fig. 5]), awaiting the outcome of a fight between two knights. Inside, Jones writes *A oes heddwch?* (Welsh for ‘Is there peace?’)—the question asked three times in bardic ceremonies by the archdruid with a naked sword. When the congregation has answered *Heddwch*, ‘Peace,’ three times, he sheaths the sword. The damsel is a version of Elsie Hancock, whose photographs Jones carried with him.

The second finished drawing, made soon afterwards, reflected recent political events. In November 1916, Germany began publicly calling for an end to the war and offered to help the United States establish a League of Nations to ensure world peace. On 12 December the German chancellor sent written peace proposals. News of this gave Jones and his companions hope that their ordeal would soon be over. On 30 December



11. David Jones, ‘Germany and Peace,’ the *Graphic*, January 1917
 Britain and France rejected the German offer as insincere. Jones regretted this, as the second of these drawings suggests. He sent it to Hartrick, who published it on 20 January 1917 in the *Graphic* over the caption ‘Germany and Peace’ (fig. 11). It was drawn, according to a note

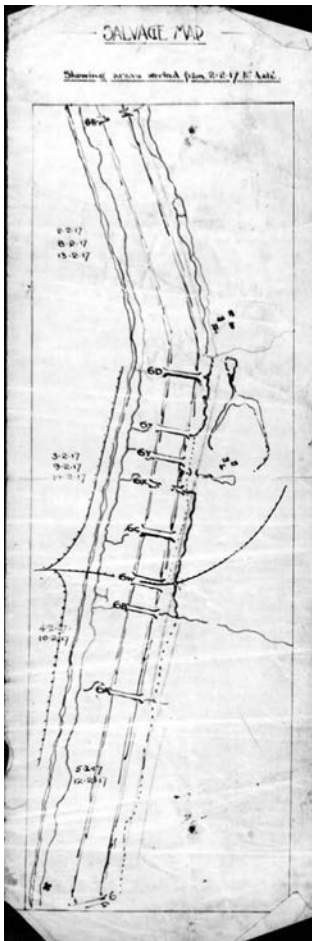
published with it, 'in a dug-out by the aid of a candle.' In the picture, the alluring and vulnerable angel Peace—yet another Elsie, idealized but now also eroticized with a shoulder bared—kneels amid graves with Gothic architecture in the background. She watches with apprehension as a German knight, sporting a modern Prussian moustache, approaches with outstretched hand and lowered, loosely-held sword—a weapon visually corresponding, as well as causally related, to the graveyard crosses. On his shield is a heraldic eagle that has oppositional affinity with doves of peace flying to the angel's arm. Germany's intentions seem chivalrous. As a Gothic knight, he corresponds to the symbolically positive Gothic ruins rising in the background into a light sky. The angel is anxious, however, and her anxiety is stressed by the diagonals and slanting verticals of the sword and crosses. The meaning is uncertainty, tension between fear and hope.

Jones was not a successful flash-spotter. Sometimes flash followed flash so quickly that he had to mark the second while reporting the first and he was unable to do two things at once. The mill swayed in the wind. In the dark he sometimes had difficulty finding the speaking end of the telephone. Often, when reaching for the phone, he joggled the theodolite, moving its dial. Having lost the bearing, he made up the figures—not, he realized, a useful thing to do. By the end of February, he was discharged from the Survey Company on the trumped up charge of not having had his hair cut. 'My association with the Engineers,' he later remembered, 'was shameful and brief.'²³

On the morning of 1 March he trudged several miles under full pack to a railhead to catch a train back to his battalion north of Ypres. Despite his protests, a transport officer insisted on putting him on a train going south-west. That afternoon he arrived at a camp on a hill above Rouen, where he was detained for nearly a month, awaiting confirmation from his battalion. In the meantime, he was sent nearby for training to the notorious Bull Ring, 'a paradise for Staff Instructors; detested by all front-fighters.' The place specialized in 'assault drill', which he hated.²⁴ When approval from his battalion finally arrived, he caught a north-bound train and, with a fresh draft of new recruits, rejoined his unit in reserve. Once again he had reunions with Poulter and Allen, and he learned that, owing to nearly continuous artillery bombardment, the battalion had suffered severe casualties during his months away.

A few weeks later, on 6 May, in a forward-post, Reggie Allen was killed by a trench-

mortar projectile. Being a soldier was a job. Death and mutilation had long since ceased to appall him, but when a close friend was killed, friendship, which had been his chief solace, became his sharpest grief. He mourned for Reggie Allen. In 1937 he would dedicate *In Parenthesis* ‘especially’ to ‘PTE. R.A. LEWIS-GUNNER FROM NEWPORT MONMOUTHSHIRE’—using only his initials lest ‘some relative or someone who loved him might chance to see it & be upset’.²⁵



12. David Jones, Salvage map, March 1917

On 29 March the battalion went by train to Ypres and marched from there to the Hill Top sector of the western Canal Bank. Once again, he was stationed at Battalion Headquarters. There he drew on canvas a salvage map based on a tracing of a regular series-map of a section of the Yser Canal (fig. 12). Resembling a section of spinal cord, in brown, green, and purple inks, the map shows eight of ten bridges across the canal intact and passable. The Yser Lea flows along the west bank paralleling the road. The buildings and moat to the east belong to North and South Zwaanhof Farms. In four groups to the left of the canal are the dates material was deposited at salvage dumps. He kept for himself a copy of the long, abstractly beautiful map. He also kept another map, which he labeled ‘Barrage Map, Pilckhem, 1917.’

He was now an ‘office-wallah’, benefiting from the practice of assigning ‘old sweats’ to headquarters, men who had been wounded or who had special qualification. He could draw maps, and he was now one of the few surviving original members of the battalion, to be to keep him alive for the sake of continuity. Headquarters was a little safer than anywhere else, but, while remaining attached to headquarters for much of the next year, he took part in the regular tour between firing, support, and reserve trenches, and reserve billets, continuing to take his turn on sentry duty and taking part in

patrols, fatigues, and raids.

About this time, moving one night in pitch darkness along a communication trench, he met a man on sanitation fatigue—a ‘shit wallah’ assigned to empty a latrine and carrying two full buckets. The stench was strong. Just able to make out the face of Evan Evans from a rural area of

Cardiganshire and belonging to one of the Welsh battalions in the regiment, Jones said, ‘Hello Evan,’ and, offering him a cigarette, ‘You’ve got a dirty bloody job.’

‘Bloody job, what do you mean?’

‘It’s not the kind of work I’m particularly keen on.’

‘Bloody job—bloody job indeed. The army of Artaxerxes was utterly destroyed for lack of sanitation.’

Evans urged him to read some history, and they went on talking, but it was the start of the conversation that Jones would remember. It amused him, serving to exemplify the difference between ordinary Welshmen, who are often learned, and ordinary Englishmen, who are not. He thought that Evans took ‘comfort from the historical parallel’—a thought possibly involving projection on Jones’s part, who certainly found comfort in historic parallels giving the new an aspect of familiarity. Evans would be a prototype for Dai Greatcoat at the centre of *In Parenthesis*, the archetypal soldier who never dies (79-84).²⁶



13. David Jones, ‘Nov. 1916 rats shot during the pulling down of an old dug out in Ploegsteert Wood D.J.’

When not in reserve billets, the men of the battalion continually trapped rats, at a rate of about 500 a month. Rats bred far faster than they could kill them, but some attempt had to be made to control their number because rats spread an infective jaundice called Weil’s Disease. Abundant in no-man’s land owing to frequent raids, human corpses were the favourite food of rats, who preferred the eyes and liver and literally ‘dug in’. But they

also frequently invaded the trenches in search of garbage, boldly swarming dugouts, and scampering over the faces of sleeping men. Jones once went to sleep using his greatcoat as a

blanket—there were biscuits in its pockets. At dawn he discovered the biscuits gone and holes in the pockets—rats had crawled over his body under the coat and eaten through the pocket-lining.²⁷ He felt little if any revulsion for rats. While with the Observer Group, he had made several sketches of a pair of rats shot as an old dugout was pulled down. One of these drawings (fig. 13) is among the best of his war-sketches. It exhibits the sympathy that typifies his best animal drawings. (Jones would be one of the modern artists best at depicting animals. *) He would celebrate rats in his war epic where they ‘sap’ their ‘own amphibious paradise’ and ‘redeem the time of our uncharity’ because they feast on ‘the secret parts of us’ by a rule of their nature (*IP* 54). As natural as corpse-stench, they were, to him, inoffensive reminders of a saner order than the one he was professionally involved in.

On 18 February, while still with the Observer Group, he had written to a friend—possibly Whitaker, who, as a hunchback, was disqualified from service. On a visit to Jones’s parents, he showed them his letter, part of which Jones’s father copied onto one of the rectangular scraps of paper on which he carried scriptural admonitions to read throughout the day. Labeled ‘from David’ and entitled ‘Extract from letter,’ the copied passage reads, ‘I am glad you called to see my people. I often wondered how they really took the war. I thought I knew what it was to love them before I left home—but *I know now in truth.*’ On the reverse of the paper are his concluding words: ‘At any rate I shall see you in what our fathers called “the green fields of Avallon.”’ Nothing else of his letters to his family survives. Of those he received from family members, all that remains, because he later remembered it, is a sentence his mother wrote near the end of a letter: ‘Really, David, the spelling in your last letter was a disgrace to the family—a child of four would do better.’²⁸

Letters from family and friends may have saved his life. One evening as he was removing his clothes, he discovered to his surprise that a ricochet bullet had penetrated the left pocket of his tunic, passing through a packet of letters and then through his cardigan, waistcoat, shirt, and

* The American fiction writer, artist, and critic Guy Davenport writes of Jones’s drawings of animals, they ‘alone place him way UP in the hierarchy of draftsmanship ... Jones’s only rival on the continent was Dufy’ Letter to author 20 Dec. 1995.

underwear vest, just grazing the skin of his chest. He could not remember having felt the impact.²⁹

Early in 1917, his his steel helmet saved his life. He was in the firing trench when a mine exploded just in front of him. In the rain of debris, a large piece of metal struck his helmet, just failing to penetrate but knocking him unconscious. He came to with his helmet pressed down around his ears and eyes and a herringbone pattern imprinted across the inside of it. For the next week he had a very stiff neck. After the war, Poulter, who was six-foot two and strong, would recount Jones being struck down and he (Poulter) picking him up, tucking him under one arm, and running with him to safety.³⁰ It may have been on this occasion—Jones would never recount being carried by Poulter, but then he had been unconscious. His first war sketch in 1917 is a self-portrait, in which he appears to have a black eye—he may have drawn it shortly after this battering (fig. 14)



14. David Jones, *Self-portrait*, 1917

Perpetually cold, while off duty on a rainy Sunday, and wandering alone between the support and reserve lines looking for firewood, he came to the wreckage of farm buildings destroyed by shelling. The wood of those buildings was too wet to burn, he knew, but nearby was a byre that seemed to have its roof intact and might contain dry, broken cart-wheels, spare lumber, or even a stack of wood cut for burning. He picked his way over the broken, muddy terrain and, reaching the byre, put his eye to a crack in the paling, expecting to see in the darkness the light of an opening in another wall where he could enter. Instead he saw two gusty candle flames. As his vision adjusted to the dark, he made out the back of a man in an alb and short gold-coloured chasuble facing a stack of ammunition boxes covered by a white cloth. On this stood the two candles. Their flames extra-gilded the chasuble and gave a golden warmth to the cloth and to the drab, muddied khaki tunics of a half-dozen kneeling infantrymen huddled on a straw covered floor. Among them were two burly privates he recognized, a Cockney Italian and an Irishman, kneeling still. He was especially impressed at the sight of the Irishman, a fearsome, hard-drinking fist-fighter. All was silent till a little bell tinkled, followed faintly by mysterious words spoken by the man in the chasuble. Jones gazed in rapture

and then quietly withdrew, realizing that this was a Catholic Mass in progress.* It had seemed to him like the Last Supper. Never had he experienced at the Anglican Office of Holy Communion the unity he sensed between that priest and those men. And he was impressed at how close to the front line this was. In a panorama of desolation, ‘a wasted land of ubiquitous mud and rusted iron’, peering into this ramshackle Chapel Perilous, he had experienced an epiphany of beauty and transcendence. It was a paradigmatic vision of a peace impervious to physical circumstance. The location, in a byre, may have subconsciously evoked the Nativity. This sight of the Mass in the wasteland was for him ‘a great marvel,’ something like what he might have read about in an ancient Celtic tale.³¹ It would remain one of the most numinous experiences in his life. He resumed his search and eventually found some wood for a fire.

On 7 April 1917, a bright, quiet day, after a gas-alert test, the men of the battalion received news that the United States had formally declared war on Germany. That night, from their reserve positions, they watched Ypres being heavily shelled little more than a mile to the south. The shelling went on for two and a half hours, involving incendiary shells which, the battalion diarist records, ‘burst to fine effect.’ For Jones, it was like watching fireworks at the Crystal Palace from atop the Hilly Fields. A few days later they saw enemy artillery flatten the remnant of the famous Ypres tower. On the 9th, local shelling killed three men and wounded two. On the 10th, the battalion moved north into support trenches in the central sector of the Western Canal Bank. Heavy snow had transformed the forty-five-minute walk into a five-hour ordeal. Three days later Jones’s company remained in support trenches as the rest of the battalion moved forward.

At ten on the morning of 16 April there was a gas alarm. On went the masks, and the men waited, remembering victims of gas coughing up their lungs in clots in field hospitals. Near the end of his life, Jones would tell a friend, ‘The terrible thing about gas in the war was you never

* He later surmised that he had witnessed the part of the Mass beginning just after the elevation of the chalice and continuing through the prayer beginning *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*, ‘To us, also, your sinful servants, who hope in the multitude of your mercies, please grant some part of fellowship with your holy apostles and martyrs’

knew when they were going to use it. They mixed gas shells with ordinary shells. Battalion [Headquarters] had a gong—you beat it, just like announcing dinner. The brigade took it up, and then division had a terrific siren. Everybody would rush about, saying there isn't gas, yes there is.' The possibility of gas increased anxiety during artillery fire, intensifying feelings of vulnerability and helplessness.³²

On the 17th, in wind and sleet, they left for divisional reserve at Roussel Farm—the cold mud so deep that it took hours to pass through 400 yards of communication trench. They arrived at 3.30 a.m. On occasions such as this, he was intrigued by the closing of headquarters at precisely the moment it was opened in the new location, so that the battalion was never without a headquarters yet never had two.³³ After five days of training, they went back into support trenches on the Canal Bank, where it was quiet until 10 a.m. on the 24th, when a heavy German bombardment fell all along their front.

Expecting an attack, they waited in dugouts. He was in the firing-trench and, not having seen his friend Harry Cook all day, was worried that Cook might have been hit, though, as a signaler with access to whisky, Cook might be 'tucked away dead-drunk unaware of Jerry's mounting bombardment' (fig. 15). Noticing that his platoon was low on small arms ammunition, Jones slipped out of the firing-trench and ran towards a recess in a communication-trench wall where boxes of S.A.A. were stashed. As he ran he saw Poulter running down a trench at an angle to his own and shouted to him as loud as he could across the earth wall and against the noise of explosions, 'HAVE YOU SEEN HARRY?' Without pausing, Poulter yelled back, 'I SAW YOUNG HARRY WITH HIS BEAVER ON'—a beaver being, Jones knew, the faceguard of a medieval helmet. Instantaneously the present conflict imaginatively became one with earlier warfare. So Cook was alive, and Jones lifted the box of S.A.A. with a light heart, but Poulter had been quoting something. It took him a while to recall the source—*Henry IV, Part I*, a play he chiefly remembered for its Welsh character Owen Glendower, of whom he was extremely fond.³⁴ Later he would cite Poulter's spontaneous



15. David Jones, 'The [Ypres] Salient Harry Cook asleep 1917'

allusion to illustrate the penetration of the present by the literary-historical past in the minds of soldiers during the war.

For eight of the next eleven days, the battalion was heavily shelled. On the night of 6 May, an enemy raiding party broke into the front line, killing two men, wounding three, and taking three prisoners. Jones was among those who rushed to expel the raiders. The following days were fairly quiet—a day with only one or two short periods of heavy shelling was now considered quiet. On the 10th and 12th, artillery fire fell on them sporadically all day long. Old hands informed new recruits anxious about the increased fire that ‘a German attack was about as likely as getting a spot of leave,’ but during day-long shelling on the 14th, ‘all composure vanished’ at the ‘unmistakable crackle of ... “independent fire,”’ which meant that enemy assault troops were attacking. To him the sound was ‘exhilarating.’³⁵ It was another raid, which he also helped repulse, resulting in eight British dead, five wounded.

In this sector at about this time, he had a memorable encounter. He was shaving very early in the morning where a communication trench joined two trenches leading to the front line. A pleasant voice from around a revetment said, ‘Good morning.’ Turning his head, he was astonished to see the Prince of Wales, wearing a short ‘British Warm’ and light woolen scarf. ‘Do you happen to know,’ Edward asked, ‘which of these trenches leads directly to’—he named a certain post—‘in the forward trench?’ Embarrassed, with lather on his face and wearing a tattered weskit, Jones indicated the trench and advised the Prince to be careful by a certain trench-sign ‘as it’s exposed, sir.’ Edward said, ‘Thanks, can’t have a fag with you—an awful hurry,’ and disappeared. A few minutes later, a red-faced colonel, puffing to catch his breath, stuck his head round the revetment and asked, ‘Have you seen Wales?’ Jones said yes and that he had directed him to the forward trench. ‘Why didn’t you stop him?’ asked the colonel, and, as the colonel ran off, Jones said, ‘How could I, sir?’ (The Prince was not supposed to be alone in areas subject, as this was, to violent bursts of fire.)³⁶ The encounter would inform part of his war epic, in which ‘A young man in a British warm ... enquired if anyone had seen the Liaison Officer from Corps, as one who asks of the Tube-lift man at Westminster the whereabouts of the Third Sea Lord’ (97). Edward’s courtesy and courage stirred in Jones the affection that most infantrymen felt for him. In some respects, this was an encounter of the sort that might have

occurred in one of Lewis Carroll's Alice books, of which Jones was sometimes reminded while, on sentry duty, scanning the local wonderland through a periscope's looking-glass.

In mid-May the battalion was told that it would take part in a major offensive on the Ypres front. This would be the Third Battle of Ypres, better known as Passchendaele. The battle plan represented in the High Command a renewed faith in decisive frontal attack. It was a faith undermined by failures at Second Ypres, Loos, and Gallipoli, severely shaken at the Somme (where official victory had been actual disaster), and would subsequently be discredited at Neuve Chapelle, Festubert, and Arras. Unable to develop an alternative strategy, however, the General Staff wanted to try again.

Two days of marching brought the battalion to St Omer, where, on 1 June, they began a week practicing for the assault. This included rifle practice, which seemed to Jones now especially futile. With the increasing dominance of artillery, the rifle had lost much of its importance. He considered his rifle a counterpart to the medieval long bow. Both had transformed warfare, both were the perfected weapons of the individual, and, as the long bow had become ineffective at the end of the Hundred Years War, the rifle was now, he thought, losing its usefulness.³⁷

The frightfulness of artillery fire now exceeded even that at the Somme. On 17 June they were shelled heavily and took enormous casualties: thirty killed, sixty wounded. Dawn bombardments became routine, with other shelling irregular, often after long periods of quiet. Heavy shelling on the 22nd caused what the battalion diarist calls 'a great amount of damage to trenches & personnel.' Artillery was now also more accurate than earlier in the war and its main target was not opposing artillery, as before the Somme, but infantry in the trenches. In addition to increasing casualties, increased shelling added to heavy labour, requiring constant repairing of collapsed trenches—digging them out, filling and stacking new sandbags, installing fresh revetments. Because fatigue duties were continuous, the sector was a place of dangerous hard work.

On the 23 June, huddled in a dugout with others, Jones endured seven hours and fifteen minutes of continuous shelling.

Even veterans of later wars find it hard to imagine what it was like to endure such intense

artillery fire so often for so long. A barrage begins with the shriek of in-coming shells. Muscles tense. Explosions convulse the air, earth flies high, and jagged shell-casing fragments whiz and whistle—followed by the distant banging of the guns. If accurate, the first shells catch men exposed in the trenches. Realizing that this is not isolated shelling, survivors scurry into dugouts, sheltering with others inside the earth which shudders as if with fright. Despite its roof of timber, corrugated iron, sandbags and covering earth, a dugout directly hit crashes like a matchbox. Men cringe with each near burst, sharing blank anticipation. A near-miss exploding before a dugout can seal its entrance, burying men alive. Jones would remember how the near ‘burst on burst of Howitzer H.E. of heavy calibre’ left them shaken and aching, and made ‘the sharp, brittle detonation’ of lesser artillery seem, by comparison, ‘trivial’ (*IP ms*).

In a light bombardment, one shell a minute might land in the immediate vicinity. In a concentrated bombardment, they were shelled by one field gun for every ten yards under fire and one heavy gun for every twenty yards. In a heavy bombardment, one shell landed in a company sector every two or three seconds. The bigger shells launched geysers of mud, sandbags, rocks, sometimes mixed with gore, hundreds of yards into the air—gigantic exclamation marks, hugely cratering the earth. More dangerous over a wider area was shrapnel, which arrived with (approximately) every four heavy howitzer shells, bursting like an oversize grenade in a compact cloud of thick, slowly diffusing dark smoke.³⁸ Whatever the kind of shell, every near crash hurt the mind.

Then, suddenly, quiet. You heard the moaning of men; the screaming of rats; the buzzing of flies; and if you were in the reserve line, the cries or groans of terrified or wounded horses. Five, ten, fifteen minutes, then a shrieking explosion and another and the barrage descended again. In a very bad bombardment, the interval between explosions gave way to continuous crescendo. Underground in a dugout, the roar resembled an amplified tropical thunderstorm. Outside in the trench, the raging was beyond noise, an oppressive solidity you shrunk from. If down below the earth shook, up above it heaved like the surface of the sea in storm. In dugouts, men stricken with claustrophobia were restrained from rushing into the maelstrom. Jones never wanted to rush out. In his experience, there were ‘chaps who fear being caught underground & those who fear most the nakedness of above ground.’ He was among the latter, for whom the

dugout was enwombing safety, the earth a protecting mother.³⁹

A prolonged artillery barrage was physical and emotional torture. While it lasted, men were reduced to aching vulnerability. One soldier described the experience as like being tied to a post while someone swings a sledgehammer at your head. The hammerhead whirls forward slamming, if it misses, into the post inches from your skull, sending wood splinters flying.⁴⁰ This happens again and again. The continual experience, day after day, of even light bombardments was enervating—a numbness like shock set in. Exhaustion, too, eclipsed fear or drove it beneath consciousness, leaving a sadness that lengthened into malaise. At some level of awareness, it was difficult not to take personally such an extreme manifestation of hate.

Men assigned to sentry-duty could not, as a rule, shelter from a bombardment in dugouts but had to remain in the open trench watching through periscopes for an attack. On many occasions Jones stood sentry during a barrage. Through the looking-glass, he saw the boundary between earth and sky dissolve in sudden twilight illuminated by the leaping flames of explosions transforming the wasteland into a Turner seascape. It was not unusual for men to emerge from dugouts after a bombardment to find a sentry crushed under earth or blasted open or sitting as usual, his life neatly taken by the surgical slice of a shell-casing splinter.

On 28 June, after four days of especially heavy shelling, Jones and his battalion left the Canal Bank for a camp in the St Hilaire area for two weeks of assault training and drilling.

On 23 July they were the night near Tuquela Farm, within 200 yards of the German line, amid exploding shrapnel and falling howitzer H.E. and gas shells, digging narrow (two feet wide, seven feet deep) assembly trenches for the coming offensive. In 1970 Jones would recall this night as ‘the worst of all.’ From the start they had to wear gasmasks. Colonel C.C. Norman, who had replaced Bell, walked up and down in the open wearing no gasmask but ‘threatening blue murder on any man taking off his mask’, which they desperately wanted to do. Gasmasks were ‘ghastly to wear for very long,’ Jones recalled, ‘especially if one was exerting oneself—they became a filthy mess of condensation inside & you couldn’t see out of the misted-over talc of the eye-vents.’ It was typical of Colonel Norman, who had already won the D.S.O., to stroll in the open amid the falling shells. Like his predecessor, he was a man of ‘outward calmness & immaculate attire as though he were paying an afternoon call in Belgravia’—an attitude that was,

for Jones, at once amusing, morale-boosting, and ‘*aesthetically* right.’ Among those digging

were new recruits who had come straight from Wales. One of them was a farmer’s boy; he couldn’t speak a word of English. ... when he’d dug his little hole he just got into it and snuggled up. You simply couldn’t budge him. The NCOs kicked his backside and so on but he just wouldn’t move. And it made it jolly difficult to dig the trench. The Germans ... must have known about the digging and got the range, but the shells were falling a few yards further on, on a hedge. But this chap was absolutely petrified. Then a nice chap, Sergeant Morgan, said ‘Lift him out and I’ll finish the trench and then you can put him back in.’ All this was in gasmasks. We dug all night. I thought this is the end; they’ve got us this time. But d’you know, in the morning—it was August [sic], not a long night—we found not a single person had been hit. No casualties in the whole battalion—in the whole brigade, I think.

Before dawn, as they covered the new trench with branches cut from the hedge behind it, he recalled the words from *Macbeth*: ‘The wood of Birnam / Let every soldier hew him down a bough’ (V, iv, 6). When asked what happened to the farmer’s boy, he replied, ‘God knows. Probably in a couple of weeks he was a bloody good soldier—if he survived.’⁴¹ He would be mistaken about there being no casualties. No one was killed or wounded in the ordinary sense, but for the first time in the experience of the battalion, the gas shells mixed with ordinary artillery shells contained mustard gas, a terrible surprise for some of the men, whom it blinded.

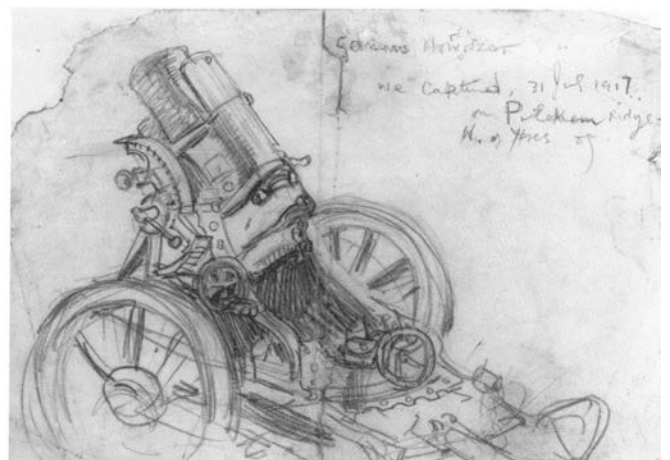
On the morning of 25 July, D Company, with Jones probably helping to guard the flanks, participated in a raid on Pilkhem Ridge and was forced to retreat, suffering heavy casualties and sixteen men taken prisoner. Two days later the whole of A Company conducted a raid in the evening. Jones was sent forward with his platoon to guard its flanks. The raiders advanced to find the front line empty and advanced further to the support trenches where two German battalions waited. As the night darkened, fighting was furious, and the outnumbered raiders were annihilated. The battalion diarist writes that more than a hundred men were ‘for the most part ... either killed or wounded.’ Jones’s platoon was also ‘badly cut up.’

Lazarus Black, with whom he had shared billets in Llandudno, was in the raiding party and had survived. After returning to the firing trench, he confided to Jones that he intended to ask for a decoration for saving an officer’s life by killing a German. Jones was astounded. The night had been utterly dark, the raid disastrous. He urged Black not to make the request since

word was sure to leak out and he would be a laughingstock. The next day, Black nevertheless made his appeal to the officers immediately above him, who scoffed at him. News of this quickly spread, and Black was ridiculed, though not as much as Jones had feared. Later, Black confided to him that he had wanted the decoration solely to make his wife and four children happy.⁴²

On the night of the 30 July 1917, the regiment moved into position to initiate the battle of Passchendaele. They arrived at three in the morning. The brigade's objective was to capture Pilckem village and Pilckem Ridge up to half-way between the village and the Steenbeek River. Jones was assigned to 'battalion nuclear reserve'—a group from which the already depleted battalion could be reconstituted if it were wiped out during the assault. Upon receiving his assignment, he asked the adjutant to be removed from the list so he could take part in the attack. (The adjutant was no longer Captain Elias, who had been killed since the Somme.) Although he wanted merely to remain with his friends, Jones argued that he ought to trade places with a married man. The adjutant furiously berated him for 'pretending to wish to be a bloody hero' while knowing full well that men detailed had no choice in the matter. Simmering down, he told Jones that there would be plenty of other opportunities, that the nucleus was likely to be called upon anyway, and that he only wished he had been assigned to it. Feeling foolish, Jones tried to explain that he had not meant it that way. He was forced to endure the ignominy of relative safety. The 'nuclear reserve' occupied positions 'beneath the trajectory / zone' (*WP* 33) and, so, was subject to artillery fire.⁴³

Without him, his battalion moved on 31 July east to assembly trenches across the only intact canal bridge—seven bridges having been destroyed since he had drawn the salvage map five months earlier (fig. 8). They attacked at 3.50 a.m. and moved forward easily to Pilckem Village, where the German Third Guards, newly arrived and rested, met them with fierce machinegun fire, sniper fire, and an artillery



16. David Jones, 'German Howitzer we captured 31 July 1917 on Pilckem Ridge N. of Ypres'

barrage. Casualties were heavy and included most of the officers, including Colonel Norman. Keeping in formation, they struggled in deep mud past Pilckem Village and concrete machinegun emplacements, which they outflanked, compelling their garrisons to surrender. In reserve, listening to the gunfire, Jones worried about his friends and bitterly regretted being separated from them.⁴⁴ Rain started falling steadily as the battalion gained the ridge, capturing a German howitzer (fig. 16) and machine-gun, both of which he subsequently sketched, demonstrating an interest in intricate mechanicality shown in his drawing of the theodolite (fig. 9). The battalion dug defensive positions, which they held in constant rain for a day.

Jones rejoined them by the evening of 1 August. At midnight on the 2nd, they withdrew to take over the front line at Steenbeek. By the 3rd, according to the battalion diarist, rain had turned ‘the battlefield into a sea of mud’ so deep they could scarcely move. On the 4th, they were relieved and withdrew and returned to the Canal Bank, where they were given chocolate and cigarettes, hot food, clean clothes, and a fresh colonel, R.H. Montgomery.

Here Jones heard from the survivors, including Poulter, what they had endured and learned who among his acquaintances had fallen. Their experience scoured his imagination differently than when he had fully shared it. He would say, ‘I saw enough to guess something of the assaults over a terrain of churned-up mud, water-brimming shell-craters, not a yard of ‘dead



17. David Jones, ‘Brielen Aug 1917, N.W. of Ypres

ground’ not a fold of earth the length of your body and sighted with his usual accuracy his sweep of fire from narrow slits of concrete pill-boxes covering all approaches, & heavy mortars

operating from behind each stark ridge.’⁴⁵ He may have experienced survivor’s guilt, as he probably had when rejoining his battalion in March. Twenty years later he would write about this assault and, in the last years of his life, rework that writing for publication as his most poignant and humorous mid-length poem, ‘Balaam’s Ass’ (SL 97-111).

The Battle of Passchendaele would continue disastrously for the next four months, but the battalion, which had suffered great losses, would not rejoin it. In August and September in reserve billets at Proven, Leipsig Farm, and Langemark, they were subject to training in musketry and bayonet-fighting and underwent extended order drill, route marches, specialty training, and gas drill. Jones detested it all, but what he hated most was bayonet-practice, led by instructing sergeants demanding that they pretend ferocity, shout obscenely, and not spare the enemy’s eyes and genitals—it was for him ‘revolting’. He later wrote, ‘after you’ve been in a fairly rough house, to be taught how to do the stuff is ridiculous nonsense: you must hate the enemy, and so on.’ In all his time in the trenches he would never see anyone bayoneted.⁴⁶

While they were in reserve, an enemy airplane dropped a bomb among the bivouacs, killing one, wounding ten. He made three sketches of the ruins of Breilen, one with a British tank in the middle distance and artillery shells standing in the foreground (fig. 17).

The weeks of training and marching and drill were hateful to all of them, but the battalion was now too weak for battle, so it was finally sent, on the 25 September, to the unusually quiet Bois Grenier sector. They entered the front line just as a Welsh battalion on their right conducted a raid. In retaliation, Jones’s battalion suffered heavy trench-mortar fire the next day and artillery fire at night. Then things became quiet, except for 2 October, when they were shelled all day. Because the battalion was thinly spread—as was the entire 38th Division, holding the line from Armentières to Laventie—tours of duty in the coming weeks excluded periods in divisional reserve.

At this time, he was granted his second leave, to begin on 4 October in the week his parents were moving house. Disinclined to spend his leave helping with unpacking and advising on the placement of furniture and the hanging of family pictures, he asked for a postponement, vaguely explaining to the incredulous adjutant that there was trouble at home that made being there inconvenient. The officer remarked that this was a new twist on the common request for

early leave because of ‘trouble at home’. He consulted the orderly-room sergeant and, reminding Jones that he might not live to take a postponed leave, arranged a swap with another man so that Jones could go on the 14th.⁴⁷

Leave lasted ten days, including travel-time. In mid-October, when he arrived at Victoria



18 Home on leave, 1917

Station, he was, as usual, crawling with lice. He went straight to his parents’ new semidetached house, called Hillcrest, at 115 Howson Road, nearly opposite where they had lived seven years before. Without stopping, he went through the main door at the side of the house and up the stairs to the bathroom, removed his uniform and underclothes, and threw them out the window. His mother had insisted that he discard his clothing in this way. (Although leaves were unannounced, his mother had known he was returning—she always did, his father told him and, laughing, said, ‘Your mother isn’t Welsh but she’s a bit of a witch.’) Looking out the window, he saw his sister approaching the pile of lousy clothing and shouted, ‘FOR CHRIST SAKE, LEAVE THE FUCKING THINGS ALONE.’ The profanity astonished her—such language had never been heard in the Jones home. He himself was appalled and, from now on watched his language at home. After bathing, he put on his civilian clothes, which no longer fit. In a photograph taken during this leave, the cuffs of his trousers are three inches above the tops of his shoes (fig. 18).

Again he felt uneasy ‘owing’, he wrote, ‘to the utter impossibility of answering the question “What’s it really like out there?”’ When asked about ‘our gallant allies the French,’ he replied, ‘Better the Fourth Bavarian for backup than the bloody Frogs!’—the general impression among British infantry being that the French were poor soldiers. The antipathy was, he knew, reciprocal—the French regarding the British as drunkards or as just having come from French girls.⁴⁸

His curtness was more expressive of pique, however, than irritation with the French, whom he liked. After the assault on Pilckem Ridge, he and his companions had exchanged with

French infantry bully beef and other rations for long French loaves. In the sector north of Ypres, the French had held the line to their immediate left and had several times been neighbours to D Company, whose members were always glad to trade for their ‘real bread.’ Jones had noticed ‘how different all sorts of things’ were in the French trenches, where they used wattled pens to form gabions packed with earth, which worked ‘exactly like ... defenses’ he had ‘seen in early photographs of the Crimean War.’ These French infantry were bearded and elderly, members of a militia corps. Insisting on silence, lest the enemy hear and send over trench-mortar shells, they used to shush noisy Cockneys, who would jeer, ‘Got the wind up proper, Old ‘un. Why, there’s a tidy width of Canal between Jerry an’ us.’ Jones admired the ‘splendid work’ of the French roads and reinforcing trenches, especially communication trenches, with beautiful wattled revetments, which he loved. On one occasion, he overheard a French lieutenant ‘mothering’ (as he would remember) ‘his battered, over-loaded, weary, exhausted men with heartening words that began *Mes enfants*.’ For Jones it was an epiphany of the root-meaning of ‘infantry,’ which would influence the imagery of his war epic, whose dedication is shared by ‘THE BEARDED INFANTRY’ of France of this sector north of Ypres.⁴⁹

Sometime ‘during the war’—it may have been on his return from this leave—he became desperately seasick. He had not been ill on previous crossings and would not be on subsequent voyages, but now, he would remember, the waves were ‘perpendicular in ascent and descent.’ He was too ill to fear or to care whether he lived or died, too ill even to wish to die. Over three decades later, he would remember this experience when writing about a medieval ship struggling under the ‘green arching darks’ of great ‘tilting heavens’ whose ‘immenser hovers dark-áipse her’ (the ship)—‘hovers’ referring to ‘the great waves meeting over the ... vessel’ (*A* 140).⁵⁰

He was happy to be back in trenches at Bois Grenier. The land was flat, the trenches old, and communication trenches, he thought, ‘quite beautiful’ with flowering Morning Glory and other convolvuli tangling over the revetment frames. One of the ruined farms in the area was said to be the setting of the early Bainsfather cartoon captioned, ‘We are billeted in a farm’. Part of the front line was a ruined monastery. A little boy regularly came to the road at the entrance to the communication trenches selling French newspapers and blowing a little horn to announce his presence. The battalion would remain here through most of the autumn of 1917 and return in

January and February 1918. It was the quietest front Jones experienced, with opposing firing-trenches three-hundred yards apart. He ‘had quite a nice time’ here.⁵¹

Again he was attached to the intelligence officer at Battalion Headquarters with whom, as he put it, he used to ‘mooch about a bit at night’ in no-man’s land making sketch-maps of enemy saps and trenches. He found these maps ‘awful things to make’ because he kept ‘putting things in the wrong place’ and he later said that he ‘was not much use’ at making them. In self-criticism he may have exaggerated. If his map-making was not valued, he would hardly have been required to do it on and off for three years. He also drew finished maps and wrote reports. In *In Parenthesis*, he would commemorate his military cartography in a fictional character temporarily assigned to headquarters and named ‘Private W. Map’ (*IP* 127). According to the Welsh colloquial practice of identifying a person by his occupation, ‘Walter Map’ could identify someone named Walter David Jones who made maps.^{52*}

Mapping no-man’s land and his battalion sector since early 1916 intensified his spatial imagination in ways that would influence his art. Throughout his life his imagination would have a decade-long incubation period—important experiences taking approximately ten years to gestate in his subconscious and then emerge in his painting or poetry. His visual art of a decade later, and increasingly from then on, would be characterized by irregular areas of colour, wandering lines, and irregular, often flattening perspective that give them striking affinity with maps. He had been fascinated with the trench-mazes of the Ploegsteert and Boesinghe sectors but also felt considerable affinity for the common, single wavering line more typical of British defenses, a line such as he would make when drawing with the point and which he would later think differentiated the British imagination from that of other nations. It would certainly differentiate his imagination from those of other visual artists and other writers except Joyce in *Finnegans Wake*. In Jones’s poetry written after *In Parenthesis*, the narrative and rhetorical ‘lines’ would waver freely to chart the geography of his imaginative engagement with western

* In the poem, moreover, ‘79 Map’ has the number of ‘79 Jones.’ David Jones also had in mind the twelfth century Welshman Walter Map who was attached to Henry II’s court, a sort of headquarters.

historical culture. His interest in maps had not begun with the war and would not end with it. As a young history buff, he had been fascinated by them and he later sought them out in history books. He would acquire them to aid his writing, sometimes drawing copies of them. In 1943 he commented, 'strange how any map is so convincing & real & how one can never make up a map—well, not strange at all really, because it is reality.'⁵³ He would also say of a drawing or painting, 'it is reality.'

Shells fell occasionally at Bois Grenier, but, after the inferno of the Ypres Salient, life in this sector was a pastoral idyll. He was particularly fortunate to be stationed at headquarters, which was a cottage hidden from hostile view by an overgrown hedge. Water was the primary enemy here, and he sometimes worked on fatigues to grade trenches so it could drain away. Whenever a trench was blown in by a shell, neighbouring trenches flooded. In heavy rain, all trenches flooded. Even in the best weather, some trenches remained running drains through which men could move but not rest or build dugouts.

He would remember the sector as 'uncannily quiet.' (The most common battalion diary-entry is 'very quiet day.') Lulled into a sense of security and because he was sleeping alone in a little dug-out in the support line, he ignored standing orders not to remove boots at night in forward or support trenches. The quiet continued until the night of 25 October 1917. He would remember, being 'snug in this cubby-hole wrapped in a complex of blankets—my boots off & feeling pretty good' as he fell asleep. He was awakened by 'a hurricane of enemy shelling'—the worst barrage he had ever experienced. His 'little dug-out shook with the vibrations of near H.E. bursts.' Although 'only half awake and very bewildered,' he could also distinguish low bursts of medium shrapnel, long-distance 'nine-fives,' and twelve-inch shells trundling far over the support line. A barrage in such depth usually heralded an attack. Quickly he put on his left boot but could not find the other. He lit the stub-end of a candle, but the shaking of the earth extinguished the flame. He could not run safely through the trenches with one foot bare. In what seemed an endless nightmare, he felt frantically for the other boot, eventually finding it tangled in his equipment. After putting it on, he emerged onto the duckboards. In the misty half-light before dawn, the violence of fire 'from every conceivable calibre of gun' had worsened. He and the others in the trench presumed that the forward companies had been over-run. Major Edwards

was standing on the fire-step, his ‘handsome stern, anxious face’ peering into the fog. Before long, the ‘tornado of violence’ ended. There was no crackle of rifle fire, no assault. Not knowing that the shelling was retaliation for a raid carried out that night by a Welsh battalion on their right, Jones supposed it to be a try-out for some future offensive. Never again would he disobey standing orders to keep boots on.⁵⁴

Whenever enemy shelling increased in this sector, it was often in retaliation for raids—mostly carried out by Australians holding the line to the left. They were avid about raids, which were unpopular with Jones and his companions, who considered them ‘dishonest—like burglary’ and pointless. The Australians would bring back great numbers of prisoners but also, to Jones’s horror, decapitated heads. But Australian barbarism also had its positive aspect. Jones had seen British privates undergoing ‘field punishment number one,’ known as ‘crucifixion’—sergeant-majors would order men tied for days to the rim of a limber wheel by wrists and ankles, with arms extended. (He once assumed the position for a short while to see how it felt and found it

very uncomfortable.) He was glad to hear of an Australian seeing a private punished this way and, upon seeing him still tied to the wheel the next day, sought out his sergeant-major, and, by threatening his life stopped the punishment.⁵⁵ Threats by Australians were taken seriously.

In November, Jones’s battalion was twice assigned to instruct a Portuguese unit—and ordered, the second time, not to refer to these ‘gallant allies’ as the ‘Pork & beans’ or the ‘bloody geese’. On the night of the 28th, Jones was assigned to help wire a reserve trench. The fatigue party consisted of a young lieutenant, a Welsh sergeant, six other privates, and thirty Portuguese. They arrived at their destination to find the trench merely a shallow indentation marked by engineers with white tape. When shells began falling behind them, the Portuguese scrambled into a ditch by the side of a road and refused to budge. Enraged, the sergeant

threatened to shoot them but they understood neither Welsh nor English. The others put out some



19. David Jones, ‘N.W. of Ypres. (probably Elverdinghe church) Flanders 1917

wire and tried to deepen the hollow between the tapes. As dawn approached, the young lieutenant was almost in tears because it was his duty upon returning to report their mission accomplished. The Portuguese were not cowards, Jones realized, who knew their reputation as knife-fighters; they were merely peasants unsuited to 'an essentially Industrial type of war.' He had noticed that, in general, conscripts from rural areas were more bewildered and lost than those from cities. The Portuguese were not only 'useless under shell-fire,' he later remembered, but also 'caused much difficulty' because of sanitary habits uncongenial to the British.⁵⁶

Upon returning from convalescent leave in the autumn of the previous year, he had acquired a khaki-covered Reeves sketch book in which he continued to make drawings. He made a lot while with the Survey but fewer after returning to his unit. He sketched his boots, his equipment hanging on a peg, the captured howitzer and machine-gun, and buildings torn open by artillery. Before the Somme, men had been the primary subject of his sketches; now he seldom drew men and often perfunctorily. Only fourteen of these forty sketches are of soldiers. The shift away from the human figure to landscapes and still life probably reflects emotional withdrawal from his companions to objects that could not, by being killed or maimed, cause suffering. (To the end of his life, he later said, the visual image of 'wounded men' haunted his memory.) Most of these drawings are of ruined buildings: one of a row of smashed houses, another of a ruined nave and tower of '*probably* Elverdinghe church 1917' (fig. 19). Psychologically, these ruins may displace men and serve as their symbolic counterparts. This is suggested by the language he used to describe ruins, such as a church 'cut in a kind of cross-section by a shell-burst & all the construction showing like bones laid bare.' It was now that he realized he liked 'things shorn & a bit maimed.' Only such things were true to the human condition. The dead rats he drew (fig.13) seem also to have something of this symbolically-displaced humanity.⁵⁷

Jones still carried in his knapsack one of his two poetry anthologies. In his early months at the front, he had found that reading poetry aroused disdain in his Cockney companions, who considered it an interest of sissies. There was also a semi-official belief that the cultivation of sensitivity was bad for morale because it could only heighten awareness of what Jones later called 'the futilities, stupidities and bestialities' of warfare. Despite this and the weight a book added to his pack, he continued reading poetry. Now, however, he was finding it increasingly

difficult to enjoy because of



20. David Jones, 'The Wrack of War,' *The Graphic*, December 1917

the feeling that the writers and compilers of most works were remote from us and our particular realities that they knew no calamity comparable to what we knew; that they wrote of death and hurts and despair in highfalutin' terms, without our close-up, day by day contact with such things, and consequently 'literature' rather slid away into that lost world of comfort and safety and illusion that we felt we had finished with, probably for ever. The great writers became almost as remote from us as were those friends and relatives we tried so hard to keep contact with in our letters home—always knowing that our secret new world was hidden from them. ... we were so impressed with being the first men of our race to face real war under modern conditions that we tended, inside ourselves, to be impatient of the writings and words of those who had not shared our trials.

He would later decide that feelings of diminished connection with the literary-historic past 'were largely unreal and exaggerated.'⁵⁸ To some degree, *In Parenthesis* would effect a rapprochement with the literary tradition. Many of its allusions

would be to poems in the anthologies he was reading.* Yet *In Parenthesis* is unlike that poetry, and much of the literature it alludes to predates the verse canonized by anthologies.

He made his fourth drawing for publication in the *Graphic* probably in mid-November. Reproduced murkily (fig. 20) in the 8 December issue, it is remarkable in several respects. Accompanying it is the caption 'The Wrack of War by Private W. David Jones,' and the words of Mark Anthony's funeral oration in *Julius Caesar*: 'O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beast / And men have lost their reason' (III, ii, 104-5). Like Adam and Eve exiting paradise, a couple

* Poems alluded to in *In Parenthesis* from Arthur Quiller-Couch's *Oxford Book of English Verse* or *Palgrave's Golden Treasury with Additional Poems* (1912) are: Dunbar's 'Lament for the Makers,' Wyatt's 'They flee from me,' the folk song 'Barbara Allen,' Milton's 'Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity,' Shirley's 'Death the Leveller,' Coleridge's 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' and 'Christabel,' Southey's 'After Blenheim,' and Wolfe's 'The Burial of Sir John Moore.'

departs the picture frame. The man in the lead, wearing laurels and carrying a staff and book, represents the Liberal Arts. The woman carrying a lyre and representing music has removed her laurel crown. Two leopards enter behind them ostensibly to take their place. In the background are the ruins of a church, based on his sketch of 'probably' Elverdinghe church near Ypres (fig. 18). Further back are factory chimney-stacks spewing black smoke. Clearly the ruined church has gone the way of humane culture, and the industrial smokestacks are meant to resonate symbolically with brutishness, indicating that if war is loss of rational culture, so is modern industrialization. The enemy here is not Germany but dehumanizing civilizational change. Visually the allegory fails, however, because the lovely leopards resist the negative significance assigned them by the quotation from Shakespeare. They seem, rather, to join their human counterparts in sadly departing the fallen paradise of this uncongenial industrial wasteland, as if both couples were seeking, two by two, an ark to deliver them. This picture is an early indication of Jones's antipathy to industrialization, which reflects his reading of Ruskin and Morris and would strengthen his friendship with Eric Gill and influence Jones's poetry.

In the Bois Grenier sector in the spring of 1917, he had become friendly for the first time with a Catholic, a chaplain named Daniel Hughes SJ, called by the men 'the padre'. Assigned to the brigade but stationed with a solidly Methodist Welsh battalion, he visited the London Welsh for company, though even here he scandalized some by drinking whisky with the men. Jones would remember him as 'a hell of a nice chap, ... a remarkable man and of great bravery.' (Catholic chaplains were generally well liked because they ignored pressure by military authorities to stay out of the combat zone, unlike Anglican chaplains, who were allowed no further forward than Brigade Headquarters.) Hughes insisted on administering the sacraments to the dying, and for risking his life doing it had won the Military Cross. The impression made on Jones by his glimpse of the Mass some months before moved him to speak to Hughes about the Catholic Church, to which he increasingly felt himself drawn. Hughes lent him St. Francis de Sales's *The Introduction to a Devout Life*, a spiritual classic intended for lay people. It was the first religious book by a Catholic that Jones read.⁵⁹

To Jones the destruction and boredom of war typified the emptiness of life, for which the only antidote was meaning of the sort he had glimpsed in the Mass north of Ypres. The virtues

occasioned by war—the heroism, the patience, the love between soldiers and their general goodness—implied a moral (metaphysical) economy, of which the significance could only be spiritual. The meaning of such virtues in ordinary people is precisely what Francis de Sales emphasizes in his *Introduction to the Devout Life*. Anglican Christianity had become, for Jones, a matter of dead routine, a convention to which he subscribed rather than a vital experience and an awareness. ‘There was something pretty unlovable about those official “church parades,”’ he would remember, ‘very Erastian’ (subordinate to the state) ‘and totally devoid of the sacramental.’ As the war tested the efficacy of the forms and resources of Anglican and nonconformist Christianity, many sensitive men became skeptics and agnostics, but Jones’s way of shedding superficial Christianity was conversion to something deeper.

It was a conversion that reaffirmed his childhood faith but with discovery of something theologically richer and with historic claims and dimensions that the Church of England lacked. He thought now that he would become a Roman Catholic and would later say that he was ‘inside, a Catholic’ from this time.⁶⁰

Poulter, too, was drawn to Catholicism through Hughes. In Jones’s dugout, he and Jones talked about their new shared interest, sometimes while sharing another kind of spiritual sustenance, ‘whisky kindly provided by the R.S.M’ through the signaller. Poulter entered the Catholic Church during the war, as did ‘a lot’ of others who converted owing to Hughes. Jones hesitated. Given a chance, he usually procrastinated, and this was a big decision, one which, he knew, would greatly upset his father. He did not, moreover, find Catholics generally as appealing as Hughes. To his ‘discomfort,’ as he later said, a number of Irishmen in his battalion, though identified as practicing Catholics by their use of the rosary, were characterized by ‘crude, revolting, unchristian discourtesy.’⁶¹

On 30 November the battalion moved three miles north to Erquinghem, a more violent sector where heavy artillery fell on them almost daily. On 11 December the bombardment was so intense that they retreated from the forward trench. The enemy advanced, entered the trench under cover of the barrage and, finding it empty, retired. For Christmas 1917 the battalion was in reserve in the village of Erquinghem. It was Jones’s third Christmas in France, celebrated with Poulter and other companions. He would remember it as ‘almost the only’ Christmas of his adult

life that he ‘really enjoyed.’⁶²

In November, he had finished a drawing together with a short pseudo-medieval allegory in the style of William Morris’s late prose romances. Entitling both the drawing and writing *The Quest*, he had sent them home for his father to print as a New Year’s card, a three-page string-bound allegorical pamphlet. In the drawing on the cover (fig. 21), an aspiring knight and bare-shouldered damsel are once again idealizations of himself and Elsie Hancock, very much as they appear in *Lancelot and Guenevere* (fig. 3). As the allegory makes clear, the knight’s shield bears ‘a red heart all aflame, because his heart did ever burn within him.’ She is a lady ‘most desirous fair’ so that ‘many there were whose hearts were nigh unto breaking because of her.’ They travel with a minstrel/bard—who, in the picture, also resembles Jones—and a monkish scholar. Together they seek ‘the Castle called Heart’s Desire,’ which houses a classless society in which wood-hewers and pot-washers are not called “mean,” “knave,” or “churl.” The castle is visible in the background ‘bathed in golden light.’ The picture illustrates the moment when, having searched for an approach to the castle, each of the questers hears an angelic voice. It urges the scholar to ‘seek only to learn and teach that which is pure and faultless true’; it urges the bard, ‘cause thine instrument to fire the hearts of men with strong and blameless zeal’; it urges the lady, ‘use thy matchless love to help thy lover live the better’ like those in the castle who ‘love only to keep their lovers pure’; and it urges the knight, fight only for liberty and justice:

the men of valour in yonder wondrous hall, when they make them wars, war not but for the cause of liberty. Thou, therefore, when thou liftest high thy battle-blade, strike not but to make men free. And if a great prince shall say to thee, ‘Sir, fight thou for me, and for my fair province, for surely thy reward shall be great,’ thou shall cry scorn upon him and upon his province; for he speaketh a vain thing, and after the manner of princes. But if one grey-headed shall cry unto thee, saying, ‘Fair Sir, they have taken from me the only ox that I had,



21. David Jones, *The Quest*, New Year’s, 1918

and despoiled me of mine only acre,' then shalt thou straightway raise thy sword for him,—yea though it meaneth a right bloody affray. Thou shalt e'en esteem thy life well hazarded in such a cause.

The four questers are sent back each to his or her 'separate place' to live with the assurance that eventually the 'mighty king, who rules in equity' shall guide them to his castle and lead them in. This is Jones's first purely fictional writing, and it is fundamentally religious, with God as the king of the castle (heaven) and guarantor of chivalric values. The injunction to the knight implies an altruistic belief in the Allied cause, which is explicit in his prefatory greeting: 'May the coming year bring Confidence and Hope to all such as seek to uphold the cause of Emancipation and Liberty and to shatter the cult of Militarism and Aggression.'

In January 1918 his battalion returned to Bois Grenier, where conditions had worsened. In anticipation of a major German offensive, the High Command had ordered the entire division to spend the next four months strengthening the line. This meant increased fatigues: digging trenches, laying barbed wire, and constructing concrete defenses as far back as the river Lys, two miles away.

The Bois Grenier sector was now as familiar to him as the Richebourg sector had been in 1916. It was still a friendly place compared to the desolate area north of Ypres. One quiet night, he and Poulter discussed the prospects the Bois Grenier sector would offer to tourist agencies when peace came. He later remembered,

we went into glowing details & wondered if the unexploded projectile lying near us would go up under a bright holiday maker & how girls in muslin frocks would stand & be photographed on our parapets. I recall feeling very angry about this, like you do if you think of strangers ever occupying a house or garden you live in & love. There was a great sense of possessiveness among us. It was always 'our trenches' 'our dugouts'—*we* knew exactly the kind of shell *he* was likely to put on ... *we* knew the best way across the open to where the big crater was, where the good water was. Some twist of traverse in a disused trench-system had for us something of the quality of the secret places lovers know.⁶³

He was acutely sensitive to place and now especially this place.

Rain, sleet, and snow fell throughout January and February. On 14 January the entire 38th Division left the sector for the last time, and he felt considerable regret. They marched fourteen miles west to Le Sant near Merville. Rain fell heavily. The farm buildings where they billeted

were soon surrounded by water. They could move outside only by wading. He would remember, 'it was also, at least part of the time, *appallingly* cold.'⁶⁴ Mercifully, the flooding precluded drill and training.

Here orders came that greatly distressed him. Depleted by casualties, the number of battalions in the brigade was to be reduced from four to three in order to bring battalions up to full strength. The 15th Battalion was to be abolished, its companies going intact to other battalions in the brigade. As one of the original members to arrive with the battalion in France, he, more than most, dreaded the end of 'cap-badge loyalty,' an aspect of the fellowship that made military life endurable. On 6 February, the battalion was officially disbanded in a funerary ceremony for which Colonel Bell returned to give a eulogy. The actual dispersal of the companies of the battalion took place in mid-February, when Jones went with D Company into the line near Armentières with the 13th Battalion.

In his copy of an account of the war during this period, he would place a large, endorsing X in the margin beside the following passage: 'A feature of the stationary warfare of these latter months ... was the system of Artillery 'Crashes,' or salvos, which was employed by both sides; these crashes were probably accountable for far more casualties than any systematic bombardment in such warfare, for they came whenever and wherever least expected.'⁶⁵ These crashes made life in the line especially nerve-wracking. All at once and suddenly, noisy death fell all along the forward and support lines and then immediately ceased, leaving a treacherous quiet.

In fact, an important casualty of these crashes and of previous experience of artillery fire was quiet itself, which is the basis of equanimity. For the past three years—except while on leave, in divisional reserve, and when with the Survey—he had experienced some degree of enemy shelling almost daily and an extensive bombardment, on average, twice a week for the past three years. Over this time but especially now, quiet became a horribly pregnant time-between. He would later suffer two nervous breakdowns and decades of depression, which have, at the very least, contributing causes in years of artillery fire culminating with these treacherous 'crashes', and their disquieting hiatuses.

From his first arrival in the trenches through the autumn of 1916, he had been deeply,

irrationally convinced that he would survive the war. As time passed and most of his companions died, he began to doubt that he would survive. Now he felt that probably he would not—the odds were against it. ‘There was no let-up at all for the infantry,’ he later remembered. ‘It was continuous—I felt the sands running out. ... When I went out to France I was a first-class shot. In my last year I was rated third class. You just went off, or perhaps you didn’t care anymore.’ Since the Somme, life in the trenches had elicited ‘a feeling akin to indifference, tedium.’⁶⁶

He was suffering from some degree of shellshock, an ill-named ailment since it is not shock, though its cause was shellfire. Forty years later it would be called ‘War Neurosis’ and, later still, Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome. Its symptom is unbearable fear. Cases were either hysteric or neurasthenic. The hysteric is the stereotype: a man suddenly becomes a frightened child, crying, clinging to his nearest companion, pleading not to be left alone. Jones witnessed such behaviour (see *IP* 153). Far more common, however, was the neurasthenic, which included many, perhaps most, combatants. Their anxiety gradually increased, often resulting in a breakdown, sometimes delayed, so that a man going on leave might collapse upon reaching Victoria Station. But delays might extend to six months or more. Paradoxically, the very conditions to which fear was a response could postpone its manifestation. Being actually under fire evoked resilience and stiffened resolve. Neurasthenic symptoms were also masked by dullness and tedium—in the exhausting repetition of marching, sentry-go, and fatigue duty. Jones was not treated for shellshock during the war—after the Somme, very few neurasthenic cases were diagnosed and treated. Those afflicted with the condition might suffer breakdowns years later or never. Unclimactic, lingering neurosis would keep a great many ex-servicemen from leading conventionally happy lives. They would withdraw from social involvement, communal activity, or personal commitment. Many would find human intimacy impossible. A decade after the war (before the Great Depression), when they might have been expected to be well established in careers, ex-servicemen would constitute eighty percent of the unemployed. In some respects, Jones would be one of these. His time under fire in the trenches may not be the sole cause of later unhappiness but it would have been sufficient cause. For the last three of his first twenty-two years, his psyche had been repeatedly, cruelly assaulted.

Physical good health was endemic in the trenches, where the common cold was almost

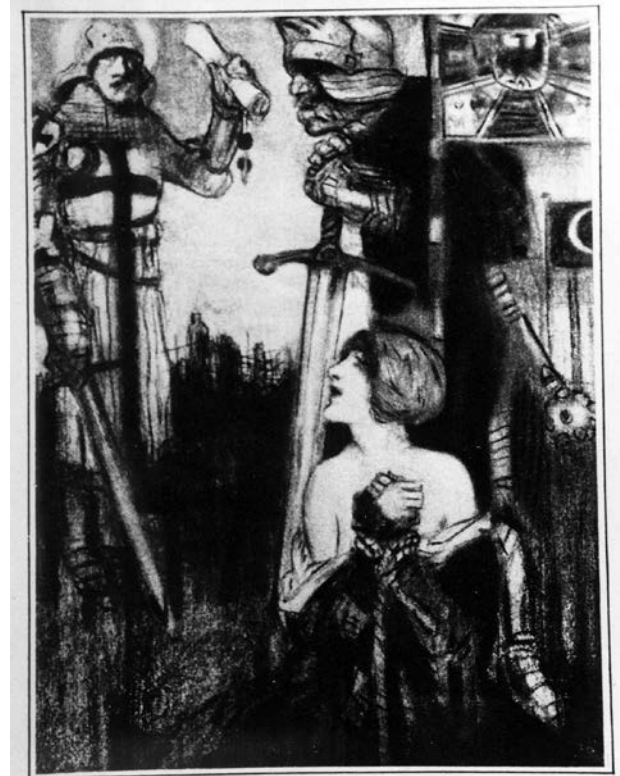
unknown, and physically the years at the front were his healthiest, but on a misty cold day in mid-February, he began to feel sharp shooting pains in his shins and came down with a high fever—it felt like ‘the worst imaginable type of flu.’ It was trench fever, what doctors called ‘Pyrexia, Unknown Origin,’ a disease spread by lice. He would later remember that, ‘curiously enough’ he became ill ‘*almost on the day* the London Welsh were disbanded,’ an event he had so dreaded that, he speculated, ‘perhaps that’s why I suddenly got trench-fever!’ He was excused all duty and sent to divisional reserve, his fever remaining at 105 degrees for several days. His neck and face swelled, and the surface of his tongue turned green. It was a severe case, involving ‘disorderly action of the heart.’ He was evacuated to Base Hospital, where he nearly died, and from there to a hospital in north London. There he remained for three months and was visited by his family. With no known cure, the illness had to run its course. He completed his convalescence in nursing homes.⁶⁷

On 21 March a few days after his evacuation to England, the Germans began their last great offensive of the war, the Battle of Lys, which he followed in newspapers. As with the assault on Pilckhem Ridge, he vicariously felt the ordeal of his former companions. He could hardly believe that the German advance had overrun in a single day what had taken the British and French months to capture. Places he had known well were now behind enemy lines: Laventie and Fleurbaix, overrun by 9 April, Armentières on the 10th, and by the end of the month, Estaires and Merville, and Bailleul, which had been twenty miles behind the Bois Grenier trenches. His admiration increased for Lloyd George as the only member of Cabinet not to panic. Jones would imitate him: ‘If you think we will lose, *we will not!*’ Reading accounts of the fighting, Jones became convinced that trench fever, which had nearly killed him, had saved his life. A friend at the front, possibly Poulter, wrote to him, ‘You know when to go sick, don’t you!’⁶⁸

Before becoming ill, he had been contacted at the front by the Camberwell School of Arts Sketch Club and asked to contribute to its first show since the start of the war. He contributed, and the exhibition was on while he was in hospital. His father brought him a clipping from the *South London Press* of 15 March 1918, which reports that Sergeant F.W. Medworth R.F.A. had sent ‘some interesting sketches of life in the garrison’ where he was posted since being wounded early in the war. The paper also commends work by Lance-Corporal H.F.W. Hawkins as ‘of

interest' because of 'the conditions under which they were executed.' Hawkins was still in a hospital in Bristol being treated for devastating wounds. 'Mr W. David Jones,' gets the highest praise of all for exhibiting 'some drawings excellent both in conception and execution, one of which,' *The Wrath* [sic] *of War*, 'was recently reproduced by the "Graphic"' (fig. 22).

While convalescing, he made a rough preliminary sketch of a bare-backed brunette being rescued from a German knight by a white knight plunging his sword into the German. While recovering from his illness, he revised this sketch for his fifth and final drawing for the *Graphic* (fig. 22). It appeared in the issue of 13 July. According to the accompanying note, it depicts 'Civilisation bound by the Black Knight of Prussia, who is challenged by another Knight, who represents the Allies.' The swarthy Prussian is ugly, brutal. His crusader-opponent sports a halo, wears on his tunic a Christian cross, and holds in his hand a sealed scroll representing Law. He has interrupted the rape of Civilization—who, once again, resembles Elsie Hancock, more eroticized than ever, with her clothing partially stripped away.



22. David Jones, 'Civilization bound', the *Graphic*, July 1918.

This is his sole published war drawing that is unsigned and not attributed to him by name. He may have requested anonymity because of reservations about its propagandistic crassness or about its design. If so, he published what he thought to be an artistic failure possibly for the money—he received a check for five guineas from the *Graphic* dated the day of publication. This would then be a rare lapse in a lifetime of uncompromising artistic integrity. It seems more probable, therefore, that he felt compelled to express indignation over the recent German advance, which had, he knew, killed and maimed many of his former comrades.// The calamity apparently intensified his conviction that Germany threatened western civilization, a conviction

the Germans had done a lot to justify. They had attacked civilian populations. From the air, they had bombed London, Liverpool, and Paris, slightly damaging Notre Dame. From U-boats they had shelled English ports and seaside resorts and had killed civilians at sea. They had been the first to use asphyxiating chlorine gas in contravention of international law and the first to use mustard gas. He did not sign it, perhaps because uncomfortable with its depiction of a hateful enemy.

He was susceptible to propagandistic use of the myth of the saviour. As he understood it, he and his companions were fighting to save France and Belgium and also western culture, whose values Germany was violating. This conviction imprinted his imagination. The saviour-archetype had been and would remain central to his religious faith and would become a prominent feature in his later poetry. Without being conscious of it, he would himself approximate the archetype as an artist striving to preserve the vital roots of western culture.

In July 1918, he was home on sick-leave. Visiting his former teachers, he listened to Reginald Savage describe the lovely village of Bois Grenier, where he had lived before the war, which Jones knew only as a ruin.⁶⁹ After his sick-leave, he went to a military camp near Liverpool, where men from the front were subjected to rehabilitation by means of endless drill, button-polishing, and cleaning of equipment.

In August, he was sent to Limerick, Ireland, to join the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers permanently stationed there and under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel McCartney-Filgate, a surname that delighted Jones.⁷⁰ Limerick was a thriving centre in rich, rolling dairy land. It had several tanneries, tobacco factories, and plants for the production of condensed milk to supply the troops. There were four bacon factories, four cinemas, and each Wednesday, a cattle and sheep market. Architecturally impressive, the town was a long eighteenth century body with a medieval head to the north on King's Island, where an eleventh century castle remembered having guarded the Shannon.

Strategically important on the river and at the junction of railway links, Limerick was a garrison town with four barracks. He was stationed at the largest, the New Barracks (now

Sarsfield Barracks) at the southern end of town. Built in 1789, and housing battalions of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry and the Royal Welch Fusiliers, it was a vast compound of limestone buildings behind high walls. The men drilled and practiced in the adjacent countryside and on a firing range two miles north in what was called the Island Field, just outside the medieval city walls and within sight of the Clare Mountains to the north-west.

Limerick was peaceful when he arrived. Though most townspeople supported Irish independence, they were also friendly to the British and unsympathetic to the Irish Volunteers, as the rebels called themselves. The town was home to the Munster Fusiliers and the townspeople benefited financially from separation pay earned by sons and husbands in the British Army in France. The local paper was full of news and editorials praising the Irish contribution to the war effort, and British soldiers wandered the town with impunity. Here, at a cost seven pence a pint, Jones acquired a liking for Guinness.

If the townspeople were largely pro-British, he was entirely pro-Irish. He had long entertained romantic sentiments about the Irish Celts and, as his father did, favoured Irish independence. Before the war he had followed the slow movement through parliament of Asquith's proposal for limited home rule, with Ulster resisting all the way. He remembered the pre-war threat of rebellion by military units at Curragh, which had been ordered north to enforce home rule against the Ulster Volunteers. He had seen a placard on a newsagent's shop across from Camberwell Art School that read, 'Will Ulster Fight or is it a Great Game of Bluff?' All that had been eclipsed for him by the war, the Easter Rising having barely registered with soldiers at the front. But he had read a newspaper from home denouncing the wickedness of Irish rebels thinking to take advantage of Britain in her hour of need, and he had thought, 'If this bloody journalist had seen the Irish regiments in action & the casualties they sustained he had better have held his tongue.' When the papers reported talk of extending conscription to Ireland, Poulter had smiled and said, his steel-grey eyes glistening, 'Quite right, except that more Irishmen have freely enlisted in the British Army than from any given English county—bloody funny.' Jones was aware of the general Irish refusal that had frustrated extension of conscription. He fully realized that British war propaganda about freedom, the sanctity of small nations, and their right to self-determination implicitly contradicted British rule in Ireland, a country that had

claimed a right to independence long before some of the countries for whose freedom Britain was now ostensibly fighting.⁷¹

Jones had civilian contacts among the Protestant ascendancy in Limerick. His father knew a fervent Church of Ireland doctor named Lang, a medical missionary to the Catholic poor who gave free medical services in his surgery, preaching as he worked. Prompted by a letter from Jones's father, Lang had Jones to his house, which was upriver from Limerick and was, Jones thought, 'jolly nice.' Lang was 'a nice bloke' but a 'muscular' Christian with a 'sort of General Gordon thing about him' that Jones found uncongenial. He heard that Lang once hired a jaunting-car whose driver, to whom he was preaching, stopped and took the horse out of the shafts and left him stranded, and Lang stayed for hours in the vehicle preaching to passers-by. Jones used to hear the urchins in town sing a song containing the line, 'Dr. Lang's mother has a cook-shop in hell.'

Lang introduced him to his assistants the elderly Misses Gregg, sisters of the Protestant Archbishop of Armagh. 'Entirely English,' they invited him to lunch and tea when off duty. He alarmed them by asking whether another soldier, a Catholic, could accompany him one day to tea. They seemed to think his 'Catholic buddy might have horns & a tail', and he found this odd, since they were surrounded by Catholics with whom they seemed on quite good terms. His Catholic friend was Francis Salkeld, whom he drew in August playing piano (fig. 23). Salkeld shared his enthusiasm for poetry and gave him for his birthday a copy of *Georgian Poetry 1913-1918*, inscribed in mock Middle English to 'Hys Palle.' Other soldier-friends whose portraits he sketched at this time were Ezra Davey, playing a violin, and Dewi Owen.⁷² Release from the carnage at the front had freed him to draw people again.

Through the Misses Gregg, he met their niece Eileen Gregg, whom he found extremely



23. David Jones, 'Francis Salkeld, *Limerick Aug 1918* by D. Jones.

attractive, ‘a “stunner.”’ While off duty, he and some of his friends from the 3rd Battalion used to visit her. A lovely young brunette, with a vivid personality, she gave him a photograph of herself (fig. 24). Another was taken with Salkeld standing behind and Jones sitting beside her wearing her white tamoshanter as a joke while she and Salkeld grin broadly. (Jones’s face is obscured by the sleeve of the photographer.) Jones also met and visited a young woman named Nanette MacFarlane, who gave him a copy of Edward Marsh’s *Rupert Brooke a memoir* (1918), and a photograph of herself and her sister. He was grateful to escape military routine occasionally and enjoy the company of young women.⁷³



24. Eileen Gregg, Limerick, 1918

Because battle-weary troops were thought to need an infusion of the aggressive spirit, he was assigned to undergo assault training—as always, hateful to him. While practicing storming enemy trenches, he badly sprained an ankle. A medical officer gave him a walking stick and permission to use it. As he was hobbling across the parade-ground in barracks, a huge regimental sergeant-major, who had seen little combat, strode up and commanded, ‘Put that stick down!’ Jones explained that the M.O. had given him permission to use it. ‘Put the bloody stick down,’ insisted the sergeant-major. ‘No, sir, I have permission to use it.’ After giving the order a third time and again being refused, he called over two soldiers, put Jones under arrest, and marched him to the guard room to await Court Marshal. The medical officer did not object or intervene.

Jones spent three days and nights in the guard room, which had a dirt floor and mattresses for six prisoners. In daytime a slanting ray of sunlight through a high, barred, window penetrated the gloom, reminding him of Cruikshank’s engravings of the Tower of London. He thought, ‘Well, now I know what Byron was talking about in “The Prisoner of Chillon”—“dim with a dull imprisoned ray a sunbeam that had lost its way.”’⁷⁴

Upon hearing that he was incarcerated, a friendly lieutenant named Evans, who had been on leave at the time of the arrest, visited him in the guard room and expostulated, ‘Jones, Jones,

you can't be in this sort of mess.' When told what had happened, the lieutenant went to the sergeant-major and convinced him to reduce the charge from 'refusing three times to obey an order' to 'hesitation in obeying an order.' Removed from the cell, Jones was confined to barracks for two weeks. Afterwards, in town, the medical officer approached him and apologized for not backing him against the sergeant-major because, he said, 'we officers have to stick together.' Jones said nothing. The man's cowardice and the injustice rankled for a long time.⁷⁵

Although Limerick was peaceful and its population generally pro-British, he was acutely conscious of anti-British feeling. Members of rebel paramilitary units were regularly arrested and imprisoned in his barracks, and then the tension was palpable. At the main gate, the mothers and sisters of the incarcerated Irish came up to the sentries and shouted in their faces, 'Murderer!' (Their screeching and jeering had made one of his nights in the guard room nightmarish.) When a sentry tried to shoo them away, they took the bayonet in their hands. It was hard to retain composure and 'very embarrassing,' remembered Jones, who may, on occasion, have been one of these sentries. He associated the bravery of the women with that of unarmed Gordon facing his adversaries on the stairs at Khartoum. One night returning to barracks, he saw a Cockney soldier holding his head, Jones asked what was wrong, and the Cockney said he had been talking to an Irish girl on the street when a Catholic priest came up 'and knocked in my bloody face.'

In a small shop under (outside) the barracks wall where soldiers bought cigarettes and sweets, a copy of the 1916 Proclamation hung behind the proprietor, and beside it a picture of Patrick Pearce over the words 'MURDERED BY THE ENGLISH.' Jones bought a copy of the Proclamation and hung it on the barrack-room wall, where the other soldiers read it with interest and respect.⁷⁶

He sometimes stood guard at night on the banks of the rushing Shannon. In the dark he was afraid. How easy it would be, he thought, for a single push out of the darkness to tumble him, heavy in his uniform and equipment, into the fast flowing water, which would weigh him down as it carried him away.⁷⁷

Technically, he and his new companions were in reserve, subjected to parade-ground drill and training. While not involved in any active large-scale policing of the general population, they were ready to intervene if circumstances required, and he was 'beginning to get very worried.'

He would remember, 'It's a jolly frightening thing to be in a place where there's an unseen enemy. I was entirely pro-Irish, but I was very worried because, I thought, if it comes to a real showdown, I don't know what I will do. Probably I would be part of the crowd and do what I was told.'⁷⁸

Each Sunday (accompanied by the regimental mascot, a large goat), the battalion paraded from New Barracks up O'Connell Street through Georgian Limerick into the medieval 'old town' to its twelfth century cathedral. One Sunday as they marched, he saw an old woman trying to cross the street through a gap between platoons—something no civilian would have attempted in England. Jones saw the sergeant-major of his battalion elbow her back towards the pavement where she collapsed in the gutter. No one objected or went to her aid, including the well-bred officers passing her crumpled body. For the first time, he understood how serving in a hostile country affected the behaviour of soldiers, whom fear made cruel.⁷⁹

His circumstance and that of his mates reminded him now or later of first century Roman soldiers subjugating the Celts in Britain. For the past three years he had read that he was fighting 'in defense of the Empire.' His now serving in a conquered, occupied part of the Empire would later bear literary fruit in the Roman poems of *The Sleeping Lord*. In one of them, a fictional Roman soldier recounts to a young conscript a first century campaign against Germans in Teutoburg Forest (*SL* 15-23) just as now in Limerick Jones recounted to companions the assault on Mametz Wood.

Once, he was assigned to escort prisoners to Dublin. During the two-and-a-half-hour train ride to Westmorland Station, he gazed at the lush rolling countryside, thick with grazing cattle and, as they moved north, sheep and horses. The whitewashed stone houses resembled those of Wales. A ridge of bare hills appeared on his right, indistinguishable from Welsh hills. The Tipperary Mountains became visible in the east, reminding him that he had come 'a long way.' Deserted farmsteads and ruined cottages on the slightly rolling central plain recalled the Famine and expulsions by landlords. Although his only visit to Dublin was brief, and despite the devastation at its centre caused by British shelling two years earlier, he liked the city.⁸⁰

His months in Ireland impressed him. It was, as he said, 'a lovely country.' Years later he wrote: 'It made a fairly vivid impression especially the soft rain & the intense blueness of the

distance & also the great beauty of young women very dirty in *red* skirts bare footed & in white shifts or blouses.’⁸¹

Once especially, he was affected by a young beauty. In the second week of November, he was taking part in elaborate daylong maneuvers in the hills north of Cork. He and four companions got ‘hopelessly lost’ and agreed ‘to bugger off and turn up at the end.’ After a leisurely afternoon in the green countryside, the loitering fusiliers on a wet hill-road passed a barefoot young woman with loose, wind-blown red hair walking in the red light of the setting sun, driving before her a red-brown cow. ‘A wild & almost savage figure’ with ‘the carriage of a princess,’ she wore a torn white shift and a homespun red wool skirt with a wide plum-coloured velvet hem that fell to just below her knees. Her legs, feet and arms were bare and ‘her skin ... of exceptional whiteness.’ The reds and bronze of her hair, her skirt, its hem, and the cow burned in the lateral light. (Helen of Troy might have looked like that, he later thought.) He watched, fearful that his friends would begin whistling and calling to her, but they, too, were spellbound. She passed into a long low lime-whitened farm building, thatched and overgrown. Compelled by her beauty, he left his friends and approached the building. As he pushed open the door, he smelled a strong stench, and saw in the smoky interior a small pond in the dirt floor in which ducks swam. Beyond it a very old woman wrapped in a cloak and muttering to herself hunched before a peat fire, over which a pot was suspended. ‘Here,’ he thought, ‘is the Bronze Age or Iron Age virtually unchanged: hanging ‘cauldron,’ old hag muttering ‘spells’ by an open fire, the litter of human habitation, apart from the cowherd, who looked like the daughter of the High King of all Eire.’ But the peasant princess was nowhere to be seen.⁸² It was as if he had walked into a tale about a *caillech*, an Irish hag who had temporarily transformed herself into a young beauty.

This experience is in some respects a counterpart to his sight of the Mass north of Ypres the previous year. He would frequently recall both, which therefore seem, for him, psychologically revelatory, like recurrent dreams. In both episodes he is alone approaching a building. In the first, he wanders a cold wasteland and is drawn by desire for warmth; in the second he walks in the lush green countryside and is drawn by feminine beauty. In the first, desire for warmth brings him to a numinous religious sight hidden indoors. In the second,

feminine beauty vanishes in stench, smoke, and muttering old age. In the gradual disappearing of the benign gentleness of his maternal grandmother into senility, he had already experienced something like a paradigm for this recent incident. For him, the meaning of these oft-narrated wartime experiences may involve the contrasting implications for religion and sex. The first involved surprising fulfillment and inward liberation; the second, disappointment. If a Freudian were to interpret his Irish vision not as a mere event but as a significant memory, the old woman would be a mother-figure, suggesting an Oedipal fear of what a beautiful young woman might become or might actually be.

In addition to the beauty of the countryside and of its young women, he experienced as never before the ‘exceptional beauty & great virility’ of the English language as spoken by the Irish, which he would subsequently be able convincingly to imitate and would recognize and appreciate ‘monumentally’ in the writing of Joyce, especially *Finnegans Wake*.⁸³

He also gained extensive experience of a Celtic temperament different from that of the Welsh. The Irish were light-hearted and optimistic. Their ability to find something funny in the least likely circumstances amazed him. On one occasion at a train station, he watched an Irishman roar with laughter after just missing the last train home for twenty-four hours.⁸⁴

Jones was waiting to be posted back to his unit in France, but on 11 November, during the maneuvers near Cork in which he saw the beautiful young woman, the Armistice was declared.

He had survived the war—his only accomplishment that would surprise those who came to know him. He marched in triumph with his battalion up Limerick’s O’Connor Street. On 22 November his marksmanship was tested for the last time, and, perhaps because the Armistice improved his morale, he was rated a second-class shot. Also on the 22nd, he bought David Hume’s *The History*



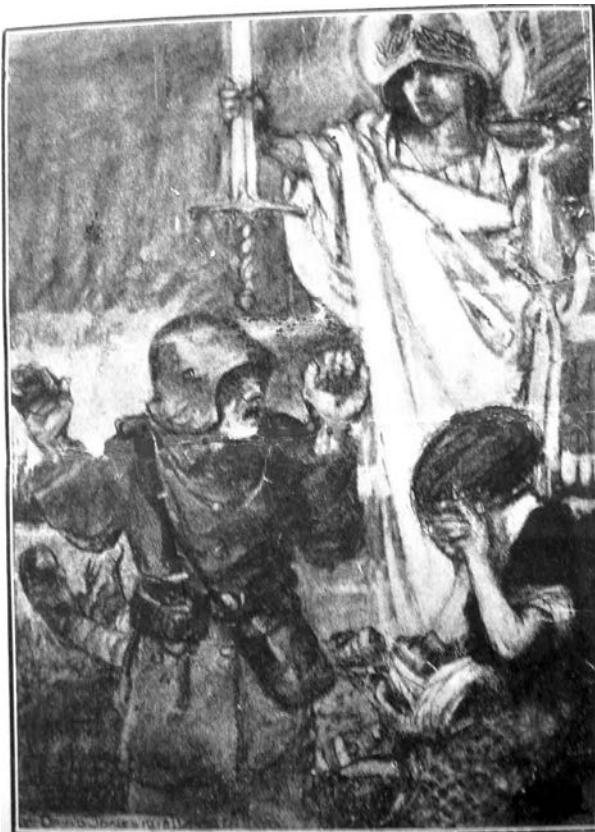
25. David Jones, NADOLIG LLAWEN, 1918

of England (1828).

He drew a picture for a Christmas card, over the title HAPPY CHRISTMAS in Welsh, depicting an infantryman holding the hands of a female resembling, again, Elsie Hancock, now in traditional Welsh dress (fig. 25). He sent it to his father to have it reproduced. It is headed ‘New Barracks, Limerick’, includes the words

Christmas comes round, and a fifth New Year,
But what a different story:
Let’s drink a toast to the Fusilier,
Blighty, Home and Glory

and is signed ‘W DAVID JONES 1918’.



26 David Jones, SIC SEMPER TYRANNIS, 1918

In his excitement he made, also this year, a second Christmas card entitled SIC SEMPER TYRANNIS, depicting an angelic victor holding a sword held by the blade who is delivering a still-distraught damsel from a vanquished German soldier (fig. 26). Inside the card he writes:

The Festival of Yule, 1918

Let those who are my friends accept this message as a token of my lasting regard for them. Never has the Season of the Nativity meant quite so much to each one of us as in the present year. To those among you who mourn the fallen, may I offer my most sincere sympathy? They surely did not die vainly. Through their splendid sacrifice the brutish gods of the Teuton lie despoiled and broken. Justice and meek-eyed Compassion stand unshrouded before the eyes of the distressed people. Let us, then, with cheerfulness of heart, step into the sunlight of a New Day, ever keeping in remembrance the sacred dead who preserved for us so great an heritage.

He was ordered to go to Wimbledon to be ‘disembodied’, meaning to be transferred to Reserve, from which he could be called up if the truce failed. Just before leaving Ireland, he entered a latrine, leaning his rifle against the wall outside, and emerged to find it gone, stolen for use by rebels. He

was frantic. To lose your rifle is among the worst of military crimes. He had no choice but to leave Ireland without it and decided to postpone confessing the loss until the last possible moment. On 18 December at Wimbledon, with mounting anxiety, he walked up to the desk where he was supposed to turn in his rifle and receive his certificate of disembodiment. Nearby, he noticed a stack of recently turned-in rifles and quickly took one and handed it over as his own. After receiving his certificate and his campaign medal, the 1914-15 Star, he walked away, convinced that someone would check the serial number and discover his ruse. Back in Brockley in his parents' house, he waited anxiously for the military police, convinced that sooner or later they would come for him. Only gradually over several months did his anxiety diminish.⁸⁵

David Jones saw more active duty than any other British writer associated with the Great War—a designation heretofore accorded, mistakenly, to Edmund Blunden. Jones served in the army seven months longer than Blunden. With time subtracted for convalesce and leave, Jones spent a total of 117 weeks at the front, which is at least two months longer than Blunden, half a year longer than Isaac Rosenberg, twice as long as Siegfried Sassoon or Ivor Gurney, and more than twice as long as Wilfred Owen, Charles Sorley, Robert Graves, or Wyndham Lewis.. Because he was a private soldier, moreover, his experience was more onerous than that of most of the war poets, who were junior officers.

Unlike most of his generation but with characteristic perspective, he would not regard the war as an important historic watershed. It was not comparable, he thought, to events of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to the Napoleonic Wars, or to the Industrial Revolution, of which it was such a terrible epiphany. It would be, however, the single most important event of his life, occupying the last four of his most formative years and indelibly staining the litmus of his identity. Decades afterwards, when a door slammed, a car backfired, or someone dropped a walking stick, the noise would startle him back to the trenches. In distant thunder, he would hear the roar of artillery. Like an Ancient Mariner, he would repeatedly recount his wartime experiences. In his final years he would say, 'the memory of [the war] is like a disease I still think about it more than anything else.'⁸⁶

Notes to Chapter 4

- ¹ *DGC*, 250; to H. Grisewood, 11/7/58; *DGC* 258; Anthony Hyne. 'Military Service,' typescript, n.d.; to H. Grisewood, 30/6/72; to H. Sutherland, 3/11/52; DJ, interviewed by P. Orr, summer 1972.
- ² To J. Stone, 7-8/7/72; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; *DGC* 258.
- ³ DJ interviewed by P. Orr summer 1972; S. Wright interviewed, 21/6/89.
- ⁴ DJ interviewed by Peter Orr, 1970s; to H. Grisewood, 30/6/72; DJ interviewed by P. Orr summer 1972; to J. Stone, 7-8/7/72.
- ⁵ Miles and Shiel repeat the mistake of DJ's mother in identifying the woman in the picture as Elsie Levitt (p. 215).
- ⁶ Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 233-4; On the back of the photograph, DJ writes, 'On leave from France 1916, Autumn.'
- ⁷ Letter from Lloyd George's secretary to James Jones 25/10/16; the text of DJ's essay corrected by his father was published in *London Magazine* 33 (April-May 1993), pp. 73-9. Printed here is the original typescript, subsequently located. As much as clarity allows, I restore DJ's punctuation, which consists largely of dashes and I delete the sometimes substantial insertions made by his father, who gave it the title, 'A Letter to His Parents.' DJ to Blissett, p. 122.
- ⁸ DJ interviewed by Jon Silkin 1971; John Montague, 'From *The Great Bell*,' *David Jones Man and Poet*, John Matthias, ed. (Orono Maine, National Poetry Society, 1989), p. 82.
- ⁹ DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; to H. Grisewood 9/10/71; to R. Hague 27/9/74. The aunt's remarks are given as DJ remembered them.
- ¹⁰ Postcard from Edward Hodgkin to DJ 9/9/17.
- ¹¹ *DGC* 243; *DGC* 230; David Poulter (Leslie's son) interviewed 11/6/90.
- ¹² To Harman Grisewood 1/2/71.
- ¹³ D. Poulter interviewed 11/6/90; D. Poulter to author 9/2/90. The document quoted here was subsequently inscribed by DJ 'Leslie's poem 1916.'
- ¹⁴ DJ to Blissett, p. 122.

- ¹⁵ DJ ms frag. n.d.; to R. Hague 14/12/73; *DGC* 251.
- ¹⁶ To Miss Carver 29-30/6/72; *DJ Tablet* 1/7/66; conversation with author 9/9/71; to H. Grisewood 2/10/64; to R. Hague 27/9/74.
- ¹⁷ DJ ms frag. n.d.
- ¹⁸ DJ ms frag. n.d.; to S. Lewis 27/4/74.
- ¹⁹ To R Hague 9-15 7/73; ms frag. n.d.; *IP* 137; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72.
- ²⁰ For the operation of the FSO and information that follows about specific locations, I am indebted to P. Chasseaud, letter to author, 8/7/93 and his essay 'David Jones and the Survey,' *David Jones, Artist and Poet*, ed. Paul Hills (Scolar Pres: Aldershot, 1997), 18-30.
- ²¹ DJ, 'Somewhere in France' May 1917, typescript. Full text below.
- ²² *DGC* 243.
- ²³ To Julian Asquith 13/11/39.
- ²⁴ *IP* ms; *IP* 219n12; *DGC* 242-3; 'David Jones--Maker of Signs'.
- ²⁵ To T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; to Miss [Jane] Carver 5/7/72; *Soldiers Died in the Great War 1914-19*, part 28 (Royal Welch Fusiliers), His Majesty's Stationers Office, 1921.
- ²⁶ *IP* 207 n 37; to R. Hague 11/8/74; to S. Lewis 19/11/54; DJ interviewed by P. Orr 1972.
- ²⁷ To V. Wynne Williams 3/11/62.
- ²⁸ To T. Hyne 19/6/74.
- ²⁹ To R. Hague 1/1/73.
- ³⁰ David Poulter interviewed 11/6/90.; to René Hague 1/1/73.
- ³¹ DJ quoted by Hague, *David Jones*, p. 58; *DGC* 248; to R. Hague, 9-15/7/73. DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 5/5/66; letter draft frag. n.d.; DJ in 1964 to Solange Dayras interviewed 9/89.
- ³² DJ quoted by E.C. Hodgkin, 'Some Memories of David Jones,' typescript.
- ³³ Letter frag. n.d.
- ³⁴ DJ to Blissett, p. 64; DJ interviewed by P. Orr 1972; to R. Hague 15/7/73; to B. Bergonzi 11/11/65; to JC

5/7/72; to R. Hague 9-15/7/73.

³⁵ To H. Grisewood 12/12/66.

³⁶ To Mr [Thomas] Whitaker draft 1970; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; DJ to Blissett p. 66.

³⁷ To H. Grisewood 21/5/40.

³⁸ To Sister Mary Ursula draft n.d.

³⁹ To T. Burns 14/9-5/10/40; *IP* 176-7.

⁴⁰ John Ellis, *Eye-Deep in Hell: Trench Warfare in World War I* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1976), p. 52. I am also indebted elsewhere and in many ways to this marvelous book.

⁴¹ Record made by Edward Hodgkin immediately after his conversation with DJ in hospital in 1970; to H. Grisewood 2/10/64.

⁴² DJ in conversation with author, 4/6/71; DJ to Blissett, p. 74.

⁴³ To D. Blamires 6/11/66; ms draft frag. n.d.

⁴⁴ DJ annotation to Munby, p. 25.

⁴⁵ *DGC* 252.

//⁴⁶ .Bailley, 'The Front Line,' typescript 2/73; To S. Lewis 27/4/74.

⁴⁷ *DGC* 234. The precise dates in this paragraph are as David Jones recalls them within an unnamed month in a letter to H. Grisewode 9/10/71. Since he regularly remembers in letters events of the war on their anniversary dates, the month of his leave was probably that of the letter, and the dates mentioned were probably not invented. The approximate time of his second leave can be confirmed by process of elimination. A photo of him on leave shows bushes in full leaf. It is unlikely that he would have been granted leave less than a year since his prior leave, in October 1916, and Jones told T. and Pat Stoneburner that he received this leave 'a year' after his convalescent leave (6/6/66).

⁴⁸ Cissy Hyne to T. Hyne interviewed 6/85; DJ to Blissett, p. 134; to H. Grisewood 9/10/71; to Valerie Wynne-Williams 6/8/62; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71.

⁴⁹ To S. Lewis 27/4/74; to Mr Korda draft n.d.; to H. Grisewood 7/7/71; to T. Stoneburner 12/3/64; *IP* 41.

⁵⁰ To T. Stoneburner 20/12/64; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69.

⁵¹ Ms frag. n.d.: DJ in the margin of his copy of Munby, p. 29.

⁵² *DGC* 203; to S. Lewis 27/4/74; Blamires, 'The Medieval Inspiration of David Jones,' *David Jones: Eight Essays*, Roland Mathias, ed (Llandysul: Gomer Press, 1976), p. 18.

⁵³ *DGC* 243; to Jim Ede 27/3/43.

⁵⁴ To S. Lewis 27/4/74; DJ, *Word and Image*, p. 50; DJ to Blissett, p. 140; ms frag, n.d.

⁵⁵ DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; Cf DJ to Blissett, p. 73.

⁵⁶ To H. Grisewood 2/2/73; to Herbert Read unposted 18/11/67; *DGC* 244; annotation to Munby, p. 30.

⁵⁷ To David Blamires 9/7/66; to Clarissa Churchill 11/12/39. The sketches referred to here are reproduced in *David Jones, A Fusilier at the Front*.

⁵⁸ *Tablet* 13/1/40.

⁵⁹ To M. Wilkinson 30/7/65; to P. Levi 29/1/65; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971; DJ to Blissett, p. 127; DJ's annotation to Munby, p. 21.

⁶⁰ To Sister Mary Ursula draft, n.d.; Blissett, recalling visits with DJ in 6/73.

⁶¹ To H. Grisewood 9/10/71; David Poulter to author 9/2/90; David Poulter interviewed 11/6/90; 'A Soldier's Memories,' 506.

⁶² To S. Lewis 20/12/71; to T. Stoneburner 8-9/1/70.

⁶³ DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971; letter frag. n.d.

⁶⁴ Annotation to Munby, p. 31.

⁶⁵ Munby, 46-7.

⁶⁶ DJ to Blissett, p. 122; *Manchester Guardian* 17/2/64; Letter draft frag. n.d.; To John Roberts of Ganymed Press n.d. [1961]; DJ to Blissett, p. 122; letter draft frag. n.d.; Ms frag. n.d.

⁶⁷ Ellis, p. 52; DJ biographical note for the British Council nd [c.1971]; DJ ms frag. n.d.; Bailey, 'The Front Line' typescript, 2/73; to S. Lewis 4/71; letter draft frag. n.d.; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 19/6/66.

⁶⁸ To C. Ivainer 13/3/61; to H. Grisewood 22/3/72; DJ ms frag. n.d.; to Meic Stephens 27/2/73; DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72; Bailey, 'The Front Line' typescript 2/73; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record

9/6/66

⁶⁹ DJ ms frag. n.d.

⁷⁰ DJ ms frag. n.d.; letter draft frag. n.d.; to H. Grisewood 12/12/66.

⁷¹ To H. Grisewood 1/2/71.

⁷² To R. Hague 8/6/66. These sketches are reproduced in *David Jones, A Fusilier at the Front*, pp. 168, 169, 175.

⁷³ To H. Grisewood 12/12/66; DJ to Blissett, p. 128; to Jim Ede 23/8/46. Jones is identifiable in the photograph only because he writes on the back, 'Eileen G with Salkeld & myself in E's white tamoshanter.' Behind him in the photograph stands a third soldier, also obscured.

⁷⁴ To H. Grisewood 12/12/66.

⁷⁵ DJ to Blissett, p. 24; R. Hague, *David Jones*, p. 51; R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77; John Montague interviewed 9/9/89; R. Hague to C. Carter 3/7/80., Blissett remembers DJ saying that a colonel altered the charge (p. 32), but only the officer who put Jones on charge could have altered it.

⁷⁶ DJ in 1970 to J. Montague interviewed 9/9/89; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69.

⁷⁷ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69.

⁷⁸ DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1971; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69.

⁷⁹ Charlie Bartlet (interviewed 11/6/92) remembers Limerick as it was and at the age of four saw the RWF on church parade with their goat. DJ in conversation with author 31/8/72; J. Montague 'From *The Great Bell*,' *David Jones Man and Poet*, 83; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69.

⁸⁰ To Dorothea Travis 26/12/48.

⁸¹ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69; to D. Travis 26/12/48.

⁸² To D. Travis 26/12/48; DJ to Blissett, p. 129; J. Montague interviewed 9/9/89; to R. Hague 1/55; to H. Grisewood 12/12/66; RQ 101.

⁸³ To V. Watkins 5/4/62.

⁸⁴ DJ in conversation with author 31/8/72.

⁸⁵ To S. Lewis 4/71; DJ to Blissett, p. 129; S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86.

⁸⁶ DJ ms frag. n.d.; 'Sign of the bear, David Jones talks to Nesta Roberts'; J. Ede interviewed 6/85; *Manchester*

Guardian 11/2/72.

Part 3 New Beginnings

Chapter 5 1919-21

‘Hillcrest’ at 115 Howson Road was the last of the houses in which the family would live (fig. 1). Narrow but deep, semidetached, it was on the east end of a cream-coloured Victorian row near the southern end of Howson Road. A gate opened to the tiny front garden. The main door was on the detached south side, with a tradesmen’s entrance further back. You entered a small parlor containing the harmonium Cissy played. To the left of the parlor was a combined sitting and dining room, carpeted, with a long-dark-curtained bay window, fireplace, ornate plaster moldings from which pictures hung on long cords, and a potted aspidistra. The room was furnished with a thick-legged Victorian dining table draped with a green cloth, dining-room chairs with upholstered seats, a sofa, armchairs, and a side table on which a stuffed canary perched under a glass bowl. In a brass wire newspaper stand was an archive of magazines, dating to the start of the war, with Bairnsfather cartoons. Off the parlor to the right was a stairway and, to the right of that, a passage to the kitchen and scullery. Up the stairs, past a landing illuminated by a blue-and-red stained-glass window, were three bedrooms, in whose doors were windows of orange stained-glass. At the front beside the bathroom, was the parents’ bedroom. On the north side was the large bedroom of his sister and five-month old niece, Stella. David was given the small back bedroom, which contained his books in shelves and in piles on the floor. Adjacent to it was a smaller storage room crammed with empty trunks, cases, unused furniture, and his drawings and paintings.¹



1. Hillcrest, 115 Howson Road, 1934

Shortly after returning home in December 1918, Jones fell ill with flu for the first time in four years. He withdrew to bed for a week, his mother bringing up his meals. Sensing his absence, the family dog, Mike, sniffed about the house all week until, one evening, he pushed open the door of the bedroom, found Jones in bed, licked his hands and face, wagged his tail, and

departed 'with', Jones recalled, 'a look of contentment on his face.' Having been apathetic about Mike and surprised by this display of affection, he thought, 'Cripes, 'Kiss me Hardy.''² He would celebrate in his poetry the fidelity of dogs (A 79-80).

During his illness and for some weeks afterwards, he and his mother conversed for hours at a time. She told him about her father's having been in the crowd at Tilbury to see the arrival of Princess Alexandra and subsequently praising her 'radiant beauty' with such ardor that his wife, Ann (not-yet Granny Brad), refused to speak to him for days. Mostly his mother reminisced about her childhood in Rotherhithe, which locals then still called Redriff, its Saxon name. She told him of the local tradition of the Danes, led by Canute, besieging London and outflanking the bridge by digging a wide ditch from the site of Greenland Dock to Walworth. Her specifying these locations evinced, to her son's delight, a millennium of oral tradition that made Rotherhithe, and London, seem alive through its long history. He would embody this sense of the living city in the figure of the Lady of the Pool at the centre of *The Anathemata* (124-68).³

By Christmas he was no longer house-bound and was going to the local newsstand to buy *The Times*, which he habitually read for most of the rest of his life. On 3 January 1919, he went into London with his certificate of disembodiment to apply for unemployment benefits and visited Hartrick, who before the war had been considered by the art-world as fashionably 'advanced but was now regarded as passé.'⁴

His sister's husband, George Hyne, was demobilized and moved into the house. This complicated life for Jones, who considered his ill-tempered brother-in-law 'a ghastly man.' They had nothing in common. (Hyne had served with the Royal Engineers in Ireland and had seen no combat.) His sister's marriage was and would remain for him painful. About his brother-in-law he would be silent, often with a shake of the head, or groan.

Early in the summer of 1920, when Hyne found alternative accommodations and work as an electrical engineer, he, Cissy, and their daughter moved out, and Jones took over their large side bedroom, putting his books on shelves along the walls and making his former bedroom into his studio. It was twelve by twenty-four feet but bright, with a large east-facing window overlooking the garden and rows of gardens backing on one another. He sat at a worktable facing the window, lit at night by an oil lamp on a high table to the right and a gas-jet in the wall just to the left. There was a coal-fireplace in the wall to his right and, because he felt the cold, a small

Aladdin oil stove. There was also a bed, for the studio had to double as guestroom. Neither his bedroom nor studio was carpeted. He wanted the floorboards bare to resemble the deck of a ship and successfully resisted his mother's wish to put down carpets.⁵

He renewed his friendship with Poulter. They both were dissatisfied with civilian life and felt that the end of the war had brought merely an extended leave. After so much anticipation heightened by propaganda, peace was disillusioning, conditions apparently inferior to before the war, which seemed, therefore, to have been futile. They now distrusted politicians and despised political rhetoric. This was a new world to which they felt they could never belong. London seemed an alien place, except for the screaming of tram cars, which sounded exactly like incoming shells.⁶

Longing for lost fellowship and the reality of combat, they discussed the furious fighting that had broken out in Russia between the White and Red Armies, and decided to join the British Archangel Expedition to fight the Bolsheviks. The press had reported that the Reds had executed thousands of former officers found in violation of a law against possessing fire arms, had attacked the British embassy, killing four people, one a British subject, and were closing churches and persecuting Christians. Jones announced his decision to his family. While sharing his political antipathy to Bolshevism, his father argued against going again to war and managed finally to prevail. Poulter went, however, fighting as a member of the North Russian Expeditionary Force through 1920.⁷

One reason Jones was swayed by his father was an eagerness to resume painting—now, he thought, with an open mind. His enthusiasm was increased by the appearance in London galleries of Post-Impressionist works from Paris, and the anti-academic movement currently led by Wyndham Lewis.⁸ He resumed his friendship with Medworth and Hawkins, a relationship deepened by shared military experience.

Medworth had fought at First Ypres and at the Somme, where he had lost part of his skull so that now, in an opening the size and shape of an egg, his brain lay directly beneath the skin. For fun, he sometimes closed his mouth and nose and blew to make the skin over the hole bulge. For protection, he wore a cloth-covered metal plate resembling a yarmulke. While recovering from his head-wound, he had had himself declared fit for service, had joined the King's African Rifles, and had fought in Kenya. During years in sergeants' messes, he had deliberately

exaggerated his native Cockney accent, which he now tried hard to lose, affecting an upper-class accent and uttering mottoes and clichés in Latin and Greek.⁹

Hawkins was much more badly wounded. After a year and nine months as a regimental signaller, he had been assigned to a sacrificial attack at Gommecourt on 1 July 1916, in which most in his unit were killed. He was shot through the right calf, the right arm, the chest, and the right shoulder blade, his right armpit torn open by shrapnel. Left for dead, he spent two days dragging himself back to the British line. He underwent thirty-two operations and was now able to use his right hand but not the arm and his left arm but not the fingers of the left hand. So to paint he supported his right hand, which could hold a brush, with his left forearm. He had a lifelong disability pension and, so, was financially independent.¹⁰

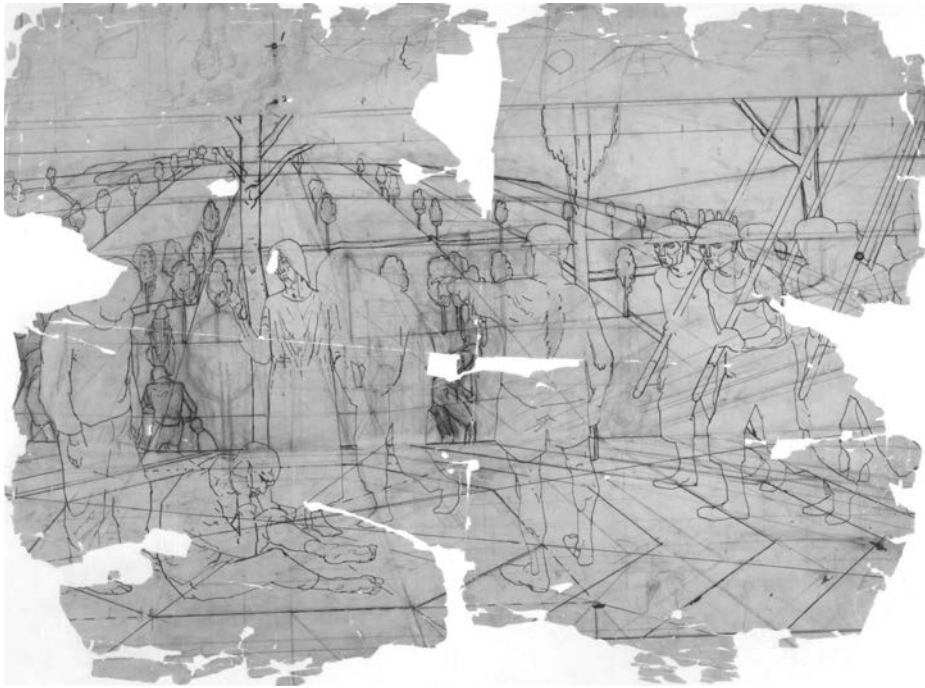
About art, Jones would remember that he and his friends were ‘pretty single-minded.’ They returned to the Kensington open life-class, which now seemed to him a relic of the Whistlerian past. In the summer of 1919, he and Hawkins, sometimes with Medworth, went on sketching trips into the countryside of Kent and Surrey.¹¹

He continued to write to Elsie Hancock and in the spring or summer of 1919 returned to Shipston-on-Stour to visit her. He stayed a few days at her parents’ house, and they went to Stratford to see (in the ‘hideous’ theatre) a comedy he disliked—he disliked most of Shakespeare’s comedies. The next day they visited Banbury Cross. The reunion was not what he had hoped. Here fiancé, Thomas Montague Bullock, had survived the war, and Elsie was not prepared to break her engagement to him. So Jones and she parted. At the end of his life, he would confide that his feelings for her had never been ‘wholly eradicated’ but resembled prehistoric earthworks that ‘aerial photography reveals as though they were digged yesterday.’¹²

With Hawkins and Medworth, he enrolled again at Camberwell. They applied for, and received in October, government training grants to study ‘Commercial Design and Illustration’ for two years.* For each year, the award paid £7 for tuition fees and a subsistence allowance of £121. He was glad to be no longer financially dependent on his parents but continued living with them. All the other students were younger and looked up to Jones and his two friends. He was attractive, gentle, witty, well-spoken, quiet, wistful, deliberate in speech, his accent now slightly

* At the time of application, the grant was open. He would tell a friend, ‘I could have gone to Christ Church.’

Cockney, his voice extraordinarily rich and modulated. His conversation unfolded slowly, accompanied by changing facial expressions, hand gestures, and shifting posture. Half of his expression was body language. Female students especially admired him and sought his company. At least a dozen were infatuated with him, including two sisters, Doreen and Evelyn Dillon, the latter for a time in hot pursuit. To all of them he was unresponsive if not oblivious.¹³



2. David Jones, *The Betrayal* 1921

With the exception of one teacher, Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts was no longer, as it had been before the war, an interesting place. The principal was now Stanley Thoroughgood, who sculpted imitation Pre-Raphaelite knights on horseback. Reginald Savage lingered on with nothing new to teach. The most intelligent of the new masters was Walter Bayes, a fifty-year old painter, art-critic, and

disciple of Sickert. Bates had studied under Fred Brown at Westminster School of Art and briefly in Paris at the Académie Julien, and was associated with the Camden Group, the Allied Artists' Association, and the London Group. At Camberwell, Bayes taught 'Life Drawing, Costume', 'Still Life', and 'Book Illustration, Figure Composition and Commercial Design'. He was ruddy, Punch-like, out-going, articulate. Jones considered him a very good artist and 'marvellous man' and would always speak warmly of him.

Bayes insisted on technical proficiency and 'the science' of art, as he called it, with emphasis on perspective and geometric proportion as constituting nearly the whole of appearance. To improve their sense of perspective, he had students attach string to the subject-to-be-drawn and pin the loose ends to points on walls at the horizon line. For him, the most



3. The Three Musketeers, 1919

important geometrical ‘fact’ was ‘the axis’, which discloses the ‘essence’ and ‘inner life’ of solid form. Jones accepted Bayes’ approach. Evidence of Bayes’ teaching survives in a sketch by Jones for a (no-longer existent) painting entitled *Betrayal*, in which Jesus is being arrested in the garden of Gethsemane (fig. 2). In this drawing, the centre of interest and distribution of figures are within a recession of geometric octagons drawn (apparently as a guide to perspective) flat on the ground, one within the other. Gradually Jones would grow tired of Bayes reiterating his ‘scientific’ principles, became less convinced, and find himself reacting against them.¹⁴ But Bayes’ axile spatiality would influence the innovative structure Jones would give his poetry, particularly *The Anathemata*, which concludes with a reference to Jesus crucified ‘riding the Axile tree’ (244).

Jones, Hawkins and Medworth began calling themselves ‘The Three Musketeers,’ a phrase adopted as a sort of company name. They sought to establish themselves as a combination of ‘group’ and corporation in hopes of attracting attention, selling pictures, and finding commercial work. In March 1919, they donned their uniforms to have their photographs taken at Camberwell Art School (fig. 3). They launched their business by going together, each with a portfolio, to the galleries in Bond Street. The work they showed elicited little comment, and, according to Medworth, Jones would mutter to the dealers about the pictures, ‘They’re not very good, are they? They’re pretty rotten.’* Jones was no self-promoter, but neither were the other two. They disliked dealers and were unwilling to ingratiate themselves with people who could further their careers. Jones did, however, place pictures in an exhibition at Walkers Galleries, 118 New Bond Street, for April and May 1919, as the other Musketeers may also have done.¹⁵

All three of them managed to exhibit works in the first important series of post-war exhibitions in London. These were the large exhibitions, averaging 400 works by 200 artists, in

* When Hawkins’s younger brother, Ernest, related the story to Jones in 1960, he denied it.

the Goupil Gallery, at 5 Regent Street, Waterloo Place, run by William Marchant. Jones and his friends had visited the first of these shows in January. The main attraction had been a collection of fifty-four war pictures by Wyndham Lewis, including his *A Canadian Gunpit*, which Jones especially admired and thought exactly ‘got’ its subject. (It may have been at one of the subsequent Goupil Gallery exhibitions that he met Lewis, whom he found very odd, bowing as they shook hands and clicking his heels ‘like a German.’) Jones, Hawkins, and Medworth subsequently presented their portfolios to Marchant, who chose pictures by each of them for the exhibition of November and December 1919. Two paintings by Jones were exhibited, each priced at £63. One was an oil painting entitled *The Reclaimers*, which has for its subject suburban gardening (fig. 4). (People like his father



4. David Jones, *The Reclaimers*, 1919

were ‘reclaimers’ because they grow vegetables on former farmland.) In this painting, obviously indebted to Millet's *Gleaners*, the raised railway prematurely cuts off light, so that gardeners work in shadow, and separates them from the church. The train on the right is the industrial snake in the garden. In the other painting, entitled *The Military*, Jesus is crucified between two thieves with soldiers wearing modern helmets casting dice in the foreground. Instead of dicing at the foot of Jesus's cross, they do it at the foot of a thief's cross. This allows the irony of the gambler on the left kneeling with his back to Jesus. Only the final drawing for this picture survives (fig. 5). In its notice of the exhibition, *The Morning Post* announced the arrival of ‘The Three Musketeers.’ The critic for the *Observer* writes that their work is ‘the most welcome’ feature of the exhibit, and says that they ‘make a creditable debut with works of distinct individuality.’¹⁶

The Military attracted special attention. One critic wrote that ‘in these hard times we seldom see a student's work so promising.’ Another praised it for its ‘superb design’ but objected to ‘the anachronism of modern British tin helmets on the soldiers’ heads, which ‘is apt to give

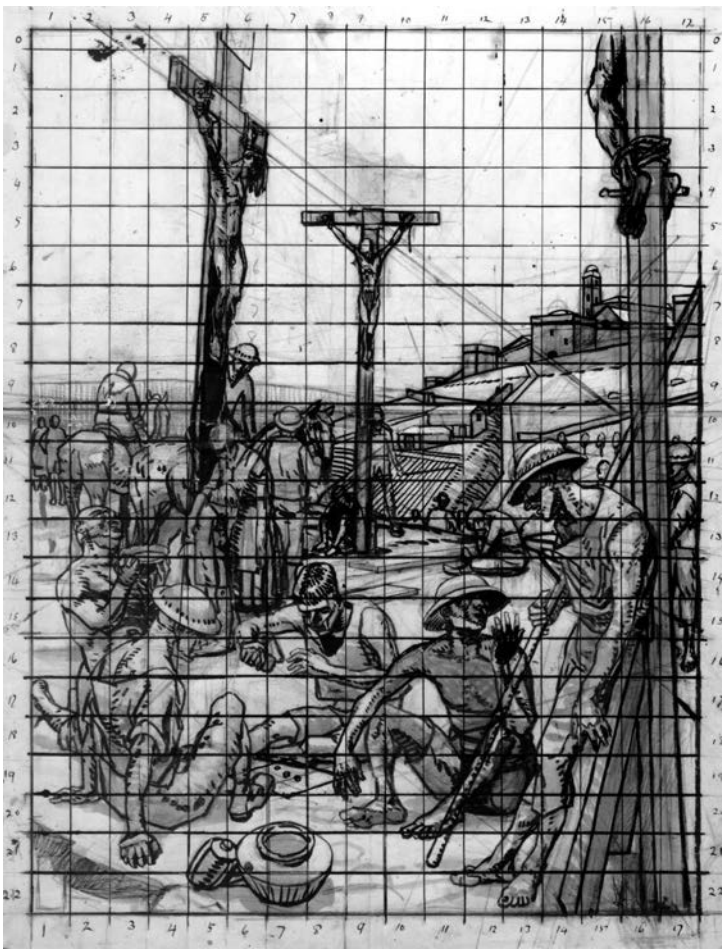
offense.’¹⁷ The helmets establish continuity between ancient Roman and modern British soldiers. This painting was the first of a series devoted to the Passion which include *The Betrayal*. But no record survives of Jones meaning to imply that the British have re-crucified Jesus. The conception may have been, simply, of continuity between (symbolized by contemporaneity of) past and present in the military—an idea subsequently informing his poetry. In *The Military*, he foregrounds the soldiers and relegates Jesus to the middle-ground—a reversal of traditional emphasis that accounts for the title not being ‘The Crucifixion.’ The soldiers are indifferent to

their assigned duty, uncomprehending witnesses.

At the Goupil Salon, the *Three Musketeers* were in very good company. Also exhibited in the November-December show were works by Matisse, Cézanne, Sargent, Lucien Pissaro, Bayes, Sickert, Bernard Meninsky, Augustus John, and Eric Gill. Gill’s sculptures included ‘Crucifix,’ ‘Adam and Eve,’ and ‘Madonna and Child’—subjects that may have attracted Jones’s attention. With the other *Musketeers*, Jones would exhibit pictures at the Goupil through 1920 and also, that year, at the Chester Gallery.

Early in the winter term of 1920, Bayes resigned from Camberwell to replace his friend and mentor Walter Sickert as headmaster at Westminster School of Art. He urged the *Three Musketeers*, his most accomplished students, to move with him. ‘Under his spell,’ as Hawkins’s

younger brother remembered, they notified Principal Thoroughgood of their intention to leave. On 27 February 1920, the Advisory Sub-Committee of the school registered a protest over losing ‘the oldest and most advanced pupils of the school,’ but Jones and his friends had their

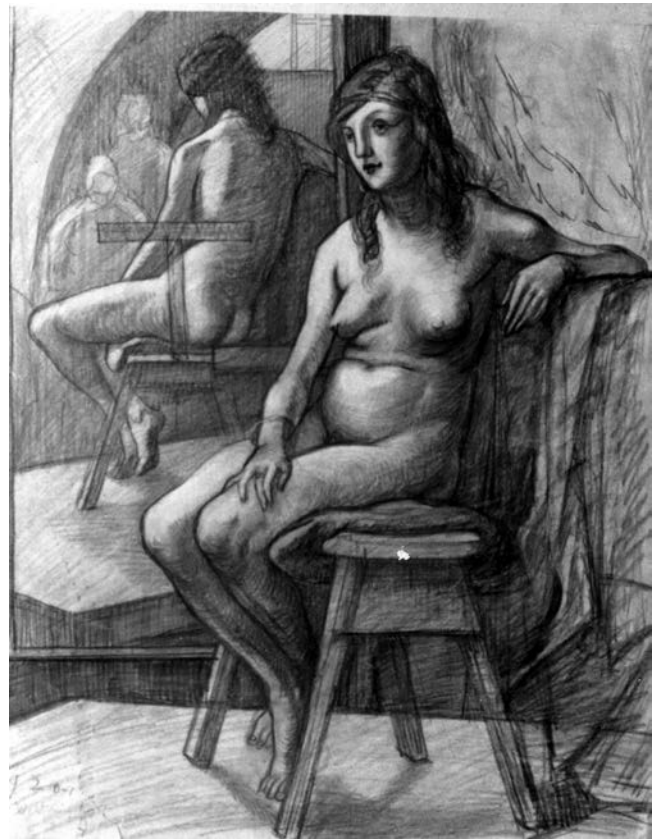


5. David Jones *The Military*, 1919

government grants transferred and departed in March for Westminster.¹⁸

The Westminster School of Art occupied the upper floors of the Westminster Technical Institute, a large brick building on the northern tip of Vincent Square at number 77, beside the Royal Horticultural Society. It was the smallest, least prestigious, least funded of the London art schools. The square was a quiet oasis of open green close to some of the busiest roads in London, a short walk from Victoria Station, to which Jones now commuted daily by train. No enrollment records survive, but he later remembered attending classes taught by Bayes, Randolph Schwabe, and Bernard Meninsky. Bayes taught 'Figure Composition' and 'Decorative and Narrative Design', a class in 'The Figure in Costume' and an advanced course in 'Perspective, Anatomy and the Science of Pictorial Construction'. Schwabe taught 'Book Illustration' and 'The Figure in Costume'. We know that Jones enrolled in Meninsky's life-class for men on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings from 7 to 9.30. He later remembered entering the high-ceiling life studio through a swing door, scrambling for pegs, easels and wooden 'donkeys,' trying to get a good place to draw the model '& dragging round with easels & pegs & feeling sick over ... miserable drawings.'¹⁹

Meninsky was a charming Ukrainian-born Polish Jew and the best-known artist on the regular staff. Only four years older than Jones, he had studied at Liverpool, and Paris, was a member of the London Group, and had exhibited as a Vorticist with Wyndham Lewis. He greatly admired Matisse and the heavy, monumental neo-Classical style of Picasso. A fine draughtsman and painter of landscapes and portraits, Meninsky chiefly taught solidity of form, firmness of line, and strength of construction. Under his influence, Jones hardened the contour-lines of his drawings, indicated volume with a yellow wash, and shaded with an unrealistic uniformity that



6. David Jones, '1920-1 West.'

gave human limbs a slightly tubular look. He found Meninsky ‘of great help and encouragement,’ especially in making him ‘feel the recession in drawing.’ Meninsky’s influence can be seen in the most elaborate of Jones’s surviving Westminster drawings, done in an academic old-masterly style, of a model with her back to a mirror reflecting vaguely those drawing her (fig. 6). This drawing also reflects Sickert’s insistence that the figure be related to its background in order to avoid ‘the blank monotony of the nude on a platform.’²⁰

Walter Richard Sickert was the *genius loci* of Westminster School of Art, and its students worked under influences largely derivative of him. Sickert himself lectured once a week. He was sixty years old, tall, energetic, a brilliant conversationalist and public speaker with a wit that had famously rivaled that of Whistler. An unconventional dandy, he wore thick country tweeds that made him look as though he had just come from a stable. When not smoking a cheroot (always backwards), he sometimes chewed a straw. He used to take Jones and the other students on drawing expeditions, then back to school where he made them square up their drawings for transfer to fresh paper or canvas, the corresponding squares having to be exact to the millimeter, and then transfer one square at a time. He would exclaim, ‘There you are! Isn’t it easy? Some learn to be accountants, and you are learning to be artists.’ Jones found this method useless and silly.²¹

More than any other of the Westminster art masters, Sickert impressed Jones, who ‘found him very helpful & extremely amusing.’ He would take them to a near-by ABC (Aerated Bread Company) for tea and biscuits, where he loudly complained of having ‘stacks of unsold fucking pictures’ at home.²² Born in Munich to a German-Danish father and an English mother, Sickert was the most cosmopolitan painter in England. He had studied Classics at King’s College, London, and read Latin and Greek for pleasure. His example stirred regret in Jones that he had not studied classical and modern languages before entering art school. After studying at the Slade under Legros, Sickert had become an assistant, friend, and defender of Whistler and had gone on to study in Paris where he became a close friend of Degas, whom he considered the greatest painter of that generation. Back in London, Sickert was the primary force behind the Camden Town Group and the New English Art Club. These were the main alternatives to the Royal Academy, from which he resigned in disgust in 1921 and steadfastly refused to rejoin. He had been a minor professional actor for three years, and retained dramatic flare. He quoted from

memory from Martial (in Latin), Diderot, Flaubert, and Balzac and recited from *Hamlet* and *Lear*. He enjoyed declaiming Rossetti's unpublished limericks and singing comic songs. The most articulate artist of his generation, Sickert published balanced, insightful, and authoritative art criticism in various London magazines and newspapers.

Although open to innovation, he insisted that art-school training remain traditionally academic. In his lectures, he propounded a method and rules: draw and paint exactly what you see no matter how awkward the arrangement or the lighting of the subject; paint from studies, not from nature; transfer using grids without adding or changing a thing; never erase. He would frighten students by coming into the life-studio and ominously booming, 'I smell RUBBER.' Bayes enforced Sickert's rules, and Jones had to comply but did not believe in them. He sometimes suspected Sickert of joking in issuing his commandments, for he 'was given to leg-pulling' and greatly disliked academicism. In any case, he was certain that only Sickert's genius made his method work for him. In later life Jones would regard him as 'the best English painter since Turner.'²³ Hartrick, whom Jones continued to visit, warned against Sickert's methods, which had been in vogue in the '90s especially among candidates for entrance to the Royal Academy Schools. The use of grids was, Hartrick said, a 'mechanical-minded method' that produces lifeless art.²⁴

Although inwardly rejecting the techniques he prescribed, Jones and his friends were, as he would put it, 'school of Sickert,' imitating his manner of drawing and painting, even though current fashion was turning against Sickert's Impressionist style. Jones later said that the only technical teaching of Sickert that remained important to him was how colour tones change in value depending on the colours to which they are juxtaposed.²⁵

Sickert's conversation and his lecturing on topics other than methodology helped Jones clarify certain of his ideas about art. Sickert respected Ruskin and praised Turner above all other painters. Jones was the only student in the school who also admired Turner. Sickert repeated Hartrick's advice to distrust art-ideology and the party-politics of self-proclaimed movements—a distrust Jones would have all his life. Sickert decried the inclination of art critics to assign influence, and Jones vehemently agreed.²⁶

It may have been Sickert, with support from Bayes, who first challenged Jones's admiration for the Pre-Raphaelites. Sickert held them in contempt, particularly Rossetti who, he

said, was ‘a lady’s maid,’ a face-painter unable to conceive of the figure as a whole, lacking a sense of composition, lacking rhythm in his lines, devoid of awareness of the spaces between figures. He conceded that Sandys and Brown were good artists. (A large drawing by Brown hung in the central stairway of the school.) Edward Burne-Jones, whom he had met, was, he said, all right if you could stand ‘the eternal prolongation of wistfulness’ which is his subject.²⁷

For Jones, the Pre-Raphaelites now became a ‘test case,’ ‘the analysis of their goodness & badness ... a most intriguing subject.’ A few years later, he would write about the movement with penetrating insight:

The Pre-Raphaelites very seldom, if ever, give one the feeling that the work is a living contribution to painting or to drawing as such. ... The truth is that it was so largely a sociological, ‘moral’, literary, religious or pseudo-religious urge & they never really (as it were) ‘transubstantiated’ their ‘content’ under the form of paint. It is interesting that they took such very great pains to ‘design’ a picture—endless care & arrangement—yet—in hardly any example one can think of is there real integral design in their pictures. Turn *almost any* Pre-Raphaelite picture up-side down & it either looks just a mess or a photograph the wrong way up. Now, although the turning of a picture upside down is no infallible test—it usually—I think almost always—gives you some inkling of whether ... there is real design or not.... I think that in one way or another almost all Pre-Raphaelite painting, for all its great qualities & intense feeling & observation of the appearances of nature lacks vitality in design & lacks a feeling for *painting* as such. It’s never absolutely convincing & free & inevitable as really great painting is—it tends to a curious sort of *flatness* even when it’s supposed to be very ‘three-dimensional’ and I believe most of all this is caused by the fact that the painters in question *really were* more interested in ‘subject’ (in the literary sense) & in theories of this & that sort, & of course in ethical & whatnot ideas tremendously as you can tell from what they wrote & said. They were colossal workers & in deadly earnest without doubt & produced great numbers of exceedingly interesting & moving pictures & those early Rossetti watercolours of Arthurian subjects are, some of them, lovely & I think Madox Brown’s ‘Last of England’ a most fascinating work—Holman Hunt too did some good ones—in their totally different ways they all got ‘feeling’ ‘emotion’ very very often but ... rather by being reminded of the subject than by the formal disposition of the work.

He would continue to admire work by lesser-known Pre-Raphaelites, such as Windus and Hughes. They ‘did fascinating things & Lord! how *English* they are!’²⁸

One of Sickert’s convictions, with which Jones would agree, was the invalidity of the enduring myth of the modern, by which each new movement or fashion claims to displace its predecessors. New art was an addition, Sickert said, not a revolution. The history of art is a

continuity in which traditional styles and techniques retain their value. Art develops without ‘progressing.’ Neither ancient nor modern, it is continuous and, on gallery walls, contemporary.²⁹ He promoted a tolerant breadth of appreciation, which Jones would later maintain in the face of repetitive avant-garde denigration of the past.

Jones may first have heard about ‘distortion’ as a source of vitality in art from Sickert, who used to quote Degas, ‘One gives the idea of the true by means of the false.’ Distortion was a virtue, Sickert said, if its aim was truth, and he recalled that for Ruskin truth made art valid and precluded it from being merely ‘for art’s sake.’ Truth had nothing to do with photographic accuracy but was, in words by Oswald Spengler that Jones endorsed, imitation of the ‘soul’ of nature, ‘not of its surface.’ For Jones, distortion would remain a key artistic concept. It was, he realized, the primary characteristic of Post-Impressionism but no innovation. It characterized all visual art in varying degrees since the earliest cave paintings. Even in the centuries since the Renaissance and, earlier, in academic late-Greek art, apparent fidelity to nature was conditioned, he would write, by ‘mannerisms, styles, tricks, “distortions” etc. (however hidden to the eyes of the average man because of familiarity with those forms etc.).’ Apparent fidelity to nature was ‘the reproduction of the *appearance* of nature but to an arrangement of academic principles of design &, in the case of the figure, to classical canons of proportion, propriety etc.—that’s more or less “Josh Reynolds”.’³⁰

For Sickert the prime example of truth through distortion was El Greco. In 1919, Jones had felt for himself ‘the compulsion of El Greco’ when the National Gallery first displayed the newly acquired and cleaned *Christ on the Mount of Olives*. It was as Post-Impressionist as any contemporary work, its distorted central figure inhabiting an essentially abstract painting. Jones’s enthusiasm for distortion began not with Sickert but in this painting, which moved him deeply and which he repeatedly went to view and continued to visit over the coming years.³¹ In 1923 he would call it ‘the best picture in the world.’ The influence of El Greco would be visible in the elongated figures in Jones’s copper engravings for *The Ancient Mariner*, in the modulating depth of skin-surface in his portraits and figure paintings, and, above all, the ever-present sense of movement in his pictures. A friend studying at the Central School, Vera Cunningham, shared his enthusiasm for El Greco, and also Tintoretto.³²

His other major discovery at this time was William Blake, whose watercolours and

engravings he, Hawkins, and Medworth saw at the Tate Gallery and which they were the first among their acquaintances to appreciate. Jones also admired the other early English watercolourists, especially, Samuel Palmer, whose paintings were, he realized, sometimes superior to Blake's. A few years later he would tell a friend that he was influenced more by El Greco and Blake than by anything he had learned in art school.³³ It is chiefly as a draughtsman of 'powerful linear' form that Blake influenced him.

Much in vogue among art students at this time was Piero della Francesca, whose *The Baptism of Christ* and *The Nativity* Jones went to see in the National Gallery.³⁴ In these paintings, pale pastel figures wearing light-coloured robes stand against darker pastels like holes cut in the paintings. These light opennesses in darker backgrounds would have an enduring influence on Jones's later style.

Blake may have encouraged him to shift increasingly to watercolours. Sickert, too, encouraged him, advising his students to buy Neville Lytton's book on watercolour painting (1911) and recommending watercolours as having been moribund since Turner and Girtin and therefore an art form of opportunity. It was hardly an art form of financial opportunity, however, since a watercolour fetched a third the price of an oil painting. And over time, watercolour pigments fade with exposure to light. Tongue in cheek, Jones told a friend that he was considering forming a Society for Painters of Impermanent Pictures. He would always call his watercolours 'drawings.' In this he retained the disparaging usage of art-schools, where watercolours were mainly used to tint drawings.³⁵

Although art-school training had not changed since before the war, most students and young artists felt an urge to be modern. Jones and his friends felt 'the imperative need to break away ... from the academic "laws of composition."' Impressionism had 'marked the end ... of "fidelity to nature"' and the Post-Impressionists were 'the counter-blast ... certainly they blew most of the walls down!'³⁶ Impressionism had emphasized colour and was, in spite of its theory, romantic; Post-Impressionism, especially in its theory, reestablished balance with classicism by emphasizing linear form.

Jones saw all he could of the new art from Paris in the London galleries. In the summer of 1920 he visited the exhibition of Modern French Art at the Goupil, where he saw works by

Van Gogh, Renoir, Pissarro, Matisse, and (seven paintings) Cézanne. He also saw there two paintings by the artist who now became his favourite—Pierre Bonnard. His response to Bonnard was confirmed by Sickert, who praised him along with Gauguin as the greatest of the Post-Impressionists. Jones was also, at this time, ‘very impressed’ by André Derain’s still-lives, which seemed ‘monumental & ageless’, even though Derain was not regarded as important by his teachers or fellow students.³⁷

Sometimes heatedly, he and his friends spent long hours discussing the nature of art. He was interested in the Post-Impressionist theory generated among Bloomsbury artists and thinkers. Initially, he was intrigued by Clive Bell’s concepts of ‘form,’ ‘content,’ and ‘significant form.’ He read about these in Bell’s *Art* (1914), which Sickert urged all his students to read, in which Bell announces that representation is irrelevant to aesthetic experience, that form alone is aesthetically important. Everything has form, but, in art, form attains significance. In these terms, Jones discussed with his friends El Greco’s *Christ on the Mount of Olives* and Blake’s watercolours.³⁸ In 1920, Fry renewed Bell’s formalist argument in *Vision and Design*, which became a modernist primer for young artists. Jones agreed with Fry’s fundamental, essentially Ruskinian contention that art was neither utilitarian nor subject to moral judgment. In 1922 Bell’s *Since Cézanne* would consolidate Bloomsbury aesthetics, its title becoming for a while Jones’s mantra for modern culture. This book would influence most artists of his generation. Significant form and the relation of form to content would remain concepts essential to his thinking about art—visual and literary.

According to the Bloomsbury thinkers, form is essentially abstract. Jones had heard the word ‘abstract’ applied to art before the war. Now it was becoming a synonym for the unity of a work in any medium. Abstract, integral, significant form gives a work distinctive being. T. E. Hulme would give the concept of abstraction increased prominence in *Speculations* (1924), which Jones would read and like.³⁹ Hulme’s theory of ‘geometric’ form would support the ideas of Frye and Bell in promoting a new classicism, confirming Hartrick’s emphasis on line, which would remain the heart of Jones’s aesthetic sensibility.

Of all the propositions of Post-Impressionist theory, he especially valued Fry’s declaration that a painting is not an imitation or impression of a thing but is a thing in itself. Fifteen years later Jones would write that the ‘thingness’ of a work of art was his ‘sheet anchor in

times of bewilderment.’ It is the identity both of the subject painted and the painting. The relationship of a painting to the girl who posed for it is not that of a metaphor to a truth, but of a symbol to the truth it shares. Abstract form enables this sharing, and the form of any picture, however ‘representational,’ is always essentially abstract. Jones saw an analogy with sacraments, which, according to Catholic theology, ‘effect what they signify.’ The analogy is strongest with the Eucharist, in which Jesus is present under the forms of bread and wine. Similarly, a thing painted is present under the forms of paint on canvas or paper. The analogy between art and sacrament was, he would say, a ‘key’ that ‘made sense of all that my mind had for long been searching after.’ It enabled him to begin seeing a broad phenomenological synthesis in which (in *The Anathemata*) all human activity is continuous. All art, poetry, music, religious ritual, and culturally defining acts such as making a birthday cake are ‘sacramental’ in being signs. A sign is a “re-presentation” of a reality ‘under another form.’⁴⁰ The hyphen in ‘re-presentation’ is necessary, he would argue, to distinguishes this effect from conventionally understood representation as artistic depiction of something other than itself. Works of art are not copies of things; they *are* those things given new being in another medium.

His Post-Impressionist sacramentalism may explain why he would later always speak of a picture in terms of its subject rather than in aesthetic terms. It was always a tree, hill, ship, cat, or woman, re-presented. The purpose of technique was not to display itself but to re-create truth in various recognizable manifestations, including those seldom or never seen before in ‘the appearance of nature’. Because the picture does not depict but *is* a thing, its ‘formal vitality’, which is always abstract, takes precedence over registering that appearance, which is no longer seen as governing the artwork. Jones later marked approvingly Desmond McCarthy’s remarks in the catalogue of the first Post-Impressionist Exhibition that ‘the good rocking horse has more of the true horse about it than a photograph of a Derby winner.’⁴¹

This intellectual breakthrough was facilitated by juxtaposition of art and sacrament in his daily life. For some time now, he was slipping out of life-class to be present for ‘at least a bit of High Mass’ in nearby Westminster Cathedral. Walking quickly, as he always did, it was three-and-a-half minutes from the front door of the art school to the side-door of the cathedral near the main altar. He was be back in class before being missed.⁴²

He explained to his art-school friends the resemblance between Post-Impressionist theory

and eucharistic theology. To Medworth, Hawkins, and other non-Catholics, the analogy seemed far-fetched and pointless. Unsure about his theology, Jones consulted Catholic friends, Frank Wall and Sylvester Humphries. They thought the analogy ‘rather dangerous’ because, they said, in the Eucharist a change of substance occurs—bread and wine cease being bread and wine and become ‘the body, blood, soul and divinity’ of Jesus—whereas, in a picture, paint remains paint. Jones replied, ‘Of course, but *by analogy* they are speaking in not dissimilar terms. The desire is to make the flesh & blood Dorothy Price’—a model employed by the school—‘under the appearance of chalk or paint.’ The Catholics, too, failed to see the point and joined the others in regarding him as, in his words, ‘absolutely cracked’. Expressing his insight usually resulted in frustration. All his life, he would never discuss it with a fellow artist who ‘more than *very vaguely* saw the point’ and never with a priest who did. He would find friends capable of appreciating the analogy but initially he expressed it in isolation. Twenty years later he would write, ‘it is a *delicate* matter & one which has *greatly exercised* my mind & one with many obvious snags, but, as *I* think, a matter which, within limits, has a real meaning, a crucial meaning.’ His most tentative and indisputable expression of the analogy would be, ‘All works of *poesis seek* to be, in some sense, what they signify.’⁴³ Along with Fry’s assertion that art is not utilitarian, this analogy and the commonality it implies between ‘signs’ would be the heart of Jones’s theory of culture and the basis of the thematic unity of *The Anathemata*.

Among his new art-school friends, Jones invited Wall and Humphries, who served Mass at the cathedral, home to Brockley, and he and Humphries used to drink in a pub there. He also met and especially liked the sculptor Stephen Tomlin, ‘an extremely nice bloke & *really* intelligent.’ Through him he met Sylvia Townsend Warner who would later write verse (which Jones would think ‘good’). Another friend was Mirita Blunt, with whom he was briefly in love and whom he later commemorated in his poetry (*IP* 32). He knew students at the Slade: one was Ray Howard-Jones, another Mollie Higgins, whom he considered ‘the most beautiful girl in Bloomsbury’ and to whom he gave two drawings. He also became acquainted with émigrés from revolutionary Russia, who seemed to him very French.⁴⁴

He mostly met his art-school friends at ‘The Old Lady’s,’ a one-room eating house in Artillery Row. Here and at nearby pubs, they discussed art theory. They expressed contempt for

the Royal Academy, applauding Sickert for his resignation from it. They expressed enthusiasm for the Post-Impressionists, especially Cézanne, and respect for Augustus John, Jacob Epstein, and Eric Gill. (They had seen Gill's newly finished stations of the cross in Westminster cathedral. *) The Three Musketeers declared their enthusiasm for Blake; and Jones for Turner. They discussed world politics. One young man subscribed enthusiastically to Communism because it meant 'the end of all war.' Jones replied, 'Don't be stupid, you'll fight each other about what you mean by Communism.' Ex-servicemen spoke about the war. These were the 'conversations of 1919-20' that Jones would re-present in the first pages of 'Balaam's Ass.'⁴⁵

Of the Musketeers, Medworth was the most ambitious, and now technically the best artist, and he became a 'pupil teacher' at Westminster. He and Hawkins were also attending classes at the Royal Academy School and studying etching at the Royal College of Art. Medworth went home to visit his mother in Rotherhithe each Sunday and occasionally brought Jones and Hawkins with him. Rotherhithe then retained vestiges of its late-Victorian flavour. Some of the dilapidated large Georgian houses—formerly of sea-captains, merchants, and shipwrights—were still hung with tackle. Bowsprits of sailing vessels still extended over some of the Thames-side streets. There were pubs and a church frequented by Norwegian sailors. The Musketeers patronized a pub called *The Paradise*, in the street of the same name. Jones would commemorate it in his poetry the 'mahogany cornices ... the sawdust thinly spread ... the turned spirals that support the frosted panels they call through, half open, from the other bar' (*IP* 112-3). He visited for the first time the childhood home of his mother. Walking about the area, remembering the stories of her girlhood and her father, he haunted the past of his family.⁴⁶

His base during these wanderings was Medworth's house at 16 Rebecca Terrace. There he met his friend's alleged Great Aunt Mary (nee Stewart), who was actually, as Medworth himself discovered about this time, his paternal grandmother. She had been mistress to a

* Three decades later, Jones would write that 'of all his works done for public buildings,' Gill's stations were 'his most satisfactory.' When certain features of the stations were newly painted and gilded in the late 1940s, he drafted a letter to the *Catholic Herald* protesting that the new application of 'too insistent colour' flattens 'the linear pattern of the reliefs' and saying that Gill used 'a different colour-value' and that even he, when painting his carving, often diminished 'the unity of the carved forms.'

nobleman whose son, Medworth's father, she had borne and given to a sister, a housekeeper, who subsequently married Medworth's supposed grandfather. The 'aunt' received from her former lover a substantial annuity, and her son was apprenticed to a carpenter. It was disconcerting for Medworth, a sexual prude, to discover his father a bastard and learn of cousins living in a castle on the Rhine. 'Auntie,' as they called her, was now in her sixties, a delightful woman, one of the best talkers Jones had ever met. She entertained him and Hawkins with uproarious stories of Edward VII and his friends. She would later be the principal model for Elen Monica, 'the Lady of the Pool' in *The Anathemata*, who is also a late middle-aged Rotherhithe Cockney who acquired much worldly knowledge in her youth while giving and receiving carnal knowledge.⁴⁷

With the help of his parents and his disability pension, Hawkins bought a house at 6 Margravine Gardens in Barons Court, which he used as a studio and residence, sharing it with other artists and two of his brothers. For a while Medworth was a tenant. Jones visited, worked in the studio, and may have stayed overnight. Here he got to know Hawkins' sixteen-year old brother Ernest, who agreed with his brother Harold and Medworth that Jones was suffering from shellshock. Ernest was then interested in Catholicism and spent hours discussing religion with his vehemently anti-clerical brother, Medworth, and Jones. Artists who visited the studio were the sculptor L. Cubit Bevis, a wounded ex-serviceman and a student at Westminster; the lithographer A.R. Laird, whose wife they disliked; and the stained-glass designer James Hogan, the director of the White Friar's Glass Works and designer of the windows for Liverpool Cathedral and St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. 'Discussions on all subjects ... were,' Harold (who now called himself 'Weaver') would remember, 'continuous, entertaining, informative, enlightening.'⁴⁸

Russia was then the rage among art students, who wore Russian boots, read Russian novels, and went to Russian plays and ballets. A female student, possibly Mirita Blunt, began, as Jones put it 'dragging' him to see *Uncle Vanya* and other Russian plays. To him they seemed 'much the same ... a general moan, a lot of long diminutives and pistol shots off stage.'⁴⁹

More than at any other time in his life, he was now a theatregoer. Often led by Weaver Hawkins, he and other friends went to performances of Shakespeare at the New Court Theatre. Hawkins, Jones and two others attended a performance of *King John* in which one character

repeatedly says ‘and bastards.’ Hearing this as modern usage, Jones and his friends laughed hysterically. An attendant threatened them with expulsion, and with difficulty they quelled their hilarity. In 1921, Jones arranged to take his sixteen-year old cousin Kathleen Bradshaw to a matinee performance of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. He met her train and took her to Hawkins’s studio, which she had the impression he shared. The four of them then went to lunch, during which Medworth or Hawkins asked whether she liked custard. She asked why and was told that she would soon be in one—the interior of the New Court Theatre was painted bright yellow. Later that year, Jones and Medworth saw there Nigel Playfair’s enormously successful revival of *The Beggar’s Opera*, a play which they took ‘particular delight in’ and returned to see several times, and which contributed to Jones’s sense of London’s living past. A year or two later, he went to a modern-dress production of *Macbeth*, in which Lady MacBeth wore a bright-red knee-length dress and MacDuff wore a modern English officer’s uniform with an incongruous Scottish headpiece. Thinking the appearance of the actors ludicrous, Jones laughed uncontrollably and was again threatened with expulsion. He was disappointed that the witches, whom he hoped to see in a clairvoyant’s posh flat and getup, were exempt from modern dress. All this experience of the theatre would perhaps have some influence on his poetry, which is in various ways dramatic and intended always to be spoken. After his time at Westminster, however, he virtually ceased going to plays, later writing, ‘I don’t like it much,’ and, about drama, ‘I think that of all the arts it’s the most hard to get right.’⁵⁰

Neither did he much like music, and, when he could, he avoided concerts, the opera, and ballet. When ‘enticed’ to a concert by a fellow student, he ‘endured’ it and if Mozart was performed enjoyed it. From Wagner, he ‘fled to the bar.’ Art-school friends once ‘dragged’ him to Covent Garden for a performance of *Parsifal*. Finding ‘the sheer noise ... the stage sets & the attitudinizing of the actors’ unbearable, he left the theatre, entered the underground, and rode round on the Circle Line reading until the end of the performance, when he rejoined his friends emerging from the theatre. In addition to the music, he objected to Wagner’s distortions of Celtic legend. Years later, after informing a friend’s girlfriend that Wagner had not invented the story of Tristan and Isolde, he would say, ‘I suppose Wagner was a “genius” but what a confounded nuisance the man was.’⁵¹

By the summer of 1921, Jones was in love with vivacious, unconventional Dorothea de

Halpert (fig. 7). Nine months his senior, she was the Catholic daughter of an upper-class Englishwoman and a highly cultured Polish diplomat. She had gone to convent school in Cambridge, the Byam Shaw School of Art, and the Slade. As a debutante she had been presented at Court, gone to hunt balls, and ‘done the season’ in London and Cairo. During the war as a V.A.D. nurse, she had sung ragtime songs to recuperating soldiers while accompanying herself on a ukulele. A protégé of Sickert since 1917, she now attended his classes at Westminster and accepted invitations to his breakfast parties in Fitzroy-Street studio, working with him there and exchanging paintings with him. She was now also attending Mevyn Lawrence’s life-class for women at Westminster on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. The first record of her association with Jones is in her mother’s diary for 30 June 1921, which mentions



7. Dorothea de Halpert, c. 1920

him and Dorothea going together to paint at Hampstead. A Russophile, she ‘made’ Jones read Tolstoy’s *Tales of Army Life* and the short stories of Gogol. She admired Russian ballet and ‘dragged’ him to a performance, which he liked ‘a bit’ though it seemed largely ‘whimsy.’⁵²

She introduced him to her circle of friends, among them the landscape painters Richard and Sydney Carline, who had been official war artists and were exhibiting at the Goupil Gallery. Both had studied in Paris, knew the Post-Impressionists, and were influenced by the Cubists. Sydney Carline had been at the Slade with Stanley Spencer and, possibly through him, Jones met Spencer, probably at an exhibition. Also in the circle were Katherine Mayer, a portrait-painter, Adrian Klein, a painter and set-designer on the staff of the Camouflage School, and his brother Daryl, likewise an artist, both of whom were also in love with Dorothea. A friend from her convent-and-Slade days was Leila Reynolds, a Communist and atheist who thought Jones ‘the holiest young man’ she knew and ridiculed him for it to Dorothea. Leila drew a caricature of him dancing naked except for a rosary around his neck with its crucifix strategically placed. Through Jones, Dorothea met and became friends with Medworth and Frank Wall. At one of their get-

together, she or Medowrth made a fine sketch of a pensive David Jones (fig. 8). On 4 July 1921, Jones showed the Carline brothers his paintings and then went with them for tea to the de Halperts' flat at 25 Ashley Place, opposite Westminster Cathedral. Dorothea's mother, who called her Doris, recorded in her diary that it was 'a cheery party and much talking and exposing of views went on. D. Jones is not a gent at all but clean and well mannered and fervent. Of course he is a bit smit with Doris as are most of those she sees much of.' In July, he was a frequent visitor to the family flat.

Dorothea rented a tiny, one-room ground-floor studio in Vincent Square, where Jones and other students spent a lot of time between classes. There he and she painted together and discovered that each felt a great dread when about to begin a painting, an 'awful feeling,' he would remember, that 'was enough to stop anyone painting ever.' In the room was a gas-ring on which they boiled gelatin for priming canvas. One 'bitter winter day,' they snuggled close together by the fire to keep warm, fell asleep, and nearly died. The gas ring was on but unlit.⁵³ The knock of a visiting friend woke them in time to save their lives.



8. Medworth or De Halpert, *David Jones*, c. 1921

His love for Dorothea was reciprocated but complicated by her being already engaged to an American named Forrest Travis, whom she had met in Cairo. At some point, she had second thoughts about her engagement and contemplated marrying Jones. They 'almost became engaged,' Jones later said and, once at least, hinted that they actually were engaged. They were not sexually intimate. Once in her tiny studio, sitting beside her, he made advances. She jerked away, saying 'Don't ever do that again.' He never forgot those words.* Decades later, memory of the event would prompt him to confide, 'I don't really understand this blasted sex thing.' She

* Referring to de Halpert's prohibition, his close friend of a few years later René Hague commented, 'That I think must have had a very, very, very, very big influence upon him.'

steered their relationship back to that of just friends. In 1969, Frank Wall would remember that ‘she got fed up’ but Wall’s memory may have been unreliable, for he remembered them as being engaged and her as a student of the Royal Conservatory of Music.⁵⁴

She married her American in February 1922. Afterwards, she worked as a textile designer. Throughout the 1920s, Jones would occasionally go to the flat in Ashley Place solely to visit Dorothea’s mother, Beatrix, a good watercolourist herself, who initially considered him coolly as ‘a good painter—rather immature’ (30 June 1921) but grew fond of him, regarding him as ‘our David’, ‘very pleasant and entertaining as he always is in his unaffected natural way’. She was one of many older women whose company he would enjoy and who may have been mother-substitutes. For the rest of his life, he and Dorothea remained friends. They visited and wrote one another and exchanged gifts. As she aged and her features became increasingly bird-like, he would muse on how beautiful she had been when young.⁵⁵

Jones was increasingly drawn to the Catholic Church. He attended with his father a debate between a leading representative of the Protestant Truth Society and a Dominican, who, to his father’s chagrin, Jones thought won the debate. When he received the Camberwell School of Arts Sketch Club award in January 1919, he chose as his prize G.K. Chesterton’s *Orthodoxy*, a brilliantly imaginative argument in favour of Catholic Christianity. In 1919, he began regularly attending Mass and reading the Roman missal.⁵⁶ He discussed religion with his cousin Kenneth Bradshaw, who gave him for Christmas 1920 a book entitled *The Immaculate Conception* (1919) by Thomas Harper SJ.

During this time, Jones experienced a spiritual crisis which ultimately brought him closer to Catholicism. He began reading comparative mythology, primarily James Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* and Jessie Weston’s *From Ritual to Romance*.⁵⁷ Frazer, especially, shook his faith by revealing similarities between Christianity and paganism. Like Jesus, the pagan vegetation gods Attis, Osiris, and Adonis, died, rose from the dead, and were commemorated in ritual meals. Jones discussed these parallels with his Catholic friends, who also found them disconcerting.

In 1919 he discovered a book that addressed these similarities in a way that reaffirmed his faith: *The Goddess of Ghosts* (1915) by the Jesuit classicist C.C. Martindale. In a series of narratives written in Pateresque style and set mostly in the ancient world, Martindale reveals the

harrowing desolation of the classical world-view as a context for pagan myths as vibrant intimations of Christianity. Remarkably evocative, the numinous stories discover mystical significance in paganism, which Christianity validates and renews. From now on, Jones would hold precisely this non-reductive view of the relation of Christianity to paganism. The resemblances that had been ‘terrifying’ were now assurances of the harmonious continuity between Christianity, natural processes such as the cycles of the seasons, and the pagan rites based on those cycles. This harmony made imaginatively possible continuity between ancient and modern cultures. Martindale’s book is one of the major formative influences in Jones’s development. Some of the imagery in it—which he would reread in 1967 and call ‘formative’—later emerges in his poetry. He now thought it wonderful that Osiris had given his life to devotees in bread made from wheat which had been his body. He found it reassuring that the virgin Mary’s epithets *virgo potens* and *stella maris* were originally those of Athena. Not that he believed in equivalency. Difference between myth and history precluded that. In mythology, meaning is desired and expressed; in history, it may be ontologically realized. What Osiris intimated, Jesus incarnated and enacted. Without intending the slightest denigration, therefore, he would refer to the liturgical services commemorating the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus as ‘the Vegetation Rites of the Redeemer.’⁵⁸ In a profound sense, Jones’s collection of poems entitled *The Sleeping Lord* is an extension of *The Goddess of Ghosts*.

Conversation with Catholic friends—de Halpert, Humphries, Wall, and Poulter—and, as he put it, ‘various other things going on in my mind’ decided him ‘to take the step of receiving formal instructions’ from a Catholic priest. He had become increasingly friendly with Wall, an irascible, misogynistic, hawk-nosed pupil-teacher at Westminster, whom he several times invited home to Brockley. At the start of summer holidays in 1920, he went to stay in Warfdale, Yorkshire, where Wall had previously lived with two aunts, and toured with him, visiting Fountains Fell whose ‘great extent & ... great natural beauty’ impressed him, and the ruins of Fountains Abbey. Wall knew a remarkably intelligent, highly cultured priest named John O’Connor at St. Cuthbert’s Catholic Church in Heaton, a middle-class suburb of Bradford. Together they visited him in his rectory at 53 Wilmer Rd, high on Heaton Hill. Impressed, Jones asked him for religious instruction. On subsequent visits, he stayed with Wall’s aunts and visited the priest in the evenings for lessons that were doubly spiritual: at the start of each session,

O'Connor put a blanket over the dining room table, got out two bibles, two glasses, and a bottle of whisky. They drank, discussed theology, and consulted scripture late into the night.⁵⁹ It was the beginning of a personal friendship that would be active until 1937 when O'Connor was called to Rome to be private chaplain to Pope Pius XI.



9. John O'Connor c. 1925

Fifty-years old, short, pudgy, and bald, John O'Connor (fig. 9) had been, since 1904, a friend of G.K. Chesterton and, for nine years now, the prototype of Chesterton's fictional detective Father Brown, though Jones could never see 'much resemblance' between the O'Connor and the fictional priest. Born in County Meath in Ireland, O'Connor had been educated by Franciscans, Christian Brothers, and, since the age of twelve, Benedictines in Douai and in Rome. He was an unworldly man of the world, intelligently enthusiastic about literature, art, music, drama, and architecture. He possessed remarkable aesthetic judgment, which allowed him to finance the building of two churches by buying and selling art and antiques. He advocated liturgical renewal and had translated sequences in the English Dominican Missal. He especially admired the hymns written by St. Thomas Aquinas—as would Jones. He was widely

read and morally non-judgmental. His speech was rich with metaphor and spoken in a faint Yorkshire accent.⁶⁰

And he was amusing. For Jones he recited Belloc's then unprintable 'Ballad of Mrs. James,' which celebrates one of Edward VII's adulteries.* He was devoted to the rosary, which he urged Jones to pray. Jones told him that recently when he was praying alone in Westminster Cathedral, a group of men belonging to a pious sodality drifted in and sat around him. The man beside him began leading the others in the rosary and then left after passing his rosary to him and

* Jones subsequently gave Humphries a copy of the ballad, possibly written from memory and, in September 1961, would write from memory the entire ballad, whose stanzas conclude with the line, 'And Mrs James shall entertain the King.'

saying 'you carry on.' Unable to refuse, acutely embarrassed and unsure of how to proceed, he found himself leading the others by reciting alone the first half of the 'Hail Mary' and waiting as the others recited the second half. Someone else took the lead at the end of the decade, saving him from having to announce the 'mystery' (mystery, indeed, to him) celebrated by the following series of prayers. Possibly in response to this story, O'Connor told him about a group of young people saying the rosary and one boy, when his turn came to lead, announcing as the fifth Sorrowful Mystery (which should be 'The Crucifixion'), 'Pontius Pilate cuts his bloody throat.' This story and his own amusement at it would subsequently come to mind whenever Jones thought of the rosary.⁶¹

Theologically sophisticated, O'Connor was convinced of the limited usefulness of doctrinal formulae. About the eucharistic transformation of bread and wine into the person of Jesus, he said that 'transubstantiation' and the related terms 'substance' and 'accidents' were expressions of late medieval scholasticism and 'in no way pretended' to explain how, by the words of the priest, the change is effected. Even the documents of the Council of Trent, he said, admit that these terms are 'inadequate to convey the reality of that change.' He emphasized that the Mass was not the commemorative service of thanksgiving that Jones had known from childhood 'but an actual and effectual sacrifice.' And Jones 'felt' for himself, as he attended Mass, 'the reality of the sacrificial nature of the Mass as against the "memorial meal" of Protestant theology.' O'Connor told him that the real presence of Jesus made the Eucharist closely analogous to the Incarnation. This analogy would be a dominant theme of his personal devotional life and a motif in *The Anathemata*.⁶²

O'Connor had little regard for the Church as a bureaucratic, temporal institution. He positively disliked what he called 'the bloody owls in the Curia' and gleefully recounted the scandals of popes and cardinals, of which he had a knowledge rivaling Sam Weller's of London. He was convinced, however, that the Catholic Church was the only true Church, even though the Orthodox Churches had valid orders and sacraments. It may have been from him that Jones acquired his life-long love of the words of the Canon of the Mass, '*orthodoxis atque Catholicae et apostolicae fidei cultoribus*.' About the Church of England, O'Connor maintained the standard Catholic position that its orders and consequently its sacraments were invalid. He said that, when receiving Communion, Anglicans actually received 'spiritual communion' in which Jesus

spiritually but not sacramentally enters their hearts. Jones accepted all this, and at about this time subjected his high-church Anglican cousin, Maurice Bradshaw, to ‘some hard-line talk’ about the Catholic Church. During their long evenings together, O’Connor discovered he had little to teach that Jones did not already know.⁶³

Jones confided to O’Connor his disenchantment with art school and his uncertainty over the place of art in the world. The priest asked him whether he knew the sculptor Eric Gill, and Jones said that he had seen some of his work and knew him by reputation. One of a half-dozen English artists currently being promoted by Fry and Bell, Gill was a mason, letter-cutter and sculptor for public monuments who, like Epstein, worked directly in stone, without first making a model in clay, as academic sculptors did. O’Connor had recently met Gill and commissioned him to carve stations of the cross for his church. He asked whether Jones would be interested in the work of Gill and other members of a newly founded guild of Catholic craftsmen at Ditchling Common in Sussex. Jones expressed interest. O’Connor wrote to Gill arranging an introduction.⁶⁴

On Friday 28 January 1921, Jones and Frank Wall went to Portslade, west of Brighton, where Jones’s parents had the loan of one of a row of stone houses built on the beach by his father’s employer, the owner of the *Christian Herald*. The next morning they hiked ten miles over the Downs, through tiny, beautiful Ditchling village and across the high flatland of Ditchling Common. They arrived in the rain at lunchtime and found Gill in his workshop looking like a Tolstoyan satyr—short, wiry, with a full reddish beard, bushy eyebrows, and twinkling eyes behind thick spectacles. He wore a stonemason’s knee-length smock, belted at the waist, over legs bare above woolen stockings turned down at the knee. Thirty-nine-years-old, a parson’s son but now a Catholic, Gill was energetic, friendly, responsive, inclined to grin as he listened and spoke, with a voice like Greta Garbo’s (husky but slight). He worked as they talked.⁶⁵

He was carving letters in stone, and Jones was impressed. He had ‘felt the majesty and power’ of the inscription on the plaster casts of Trajan’s Column at Camberwell and at Westminster, and had looked ‘in wonder’ at a cast of the beautiful fragmentary Wroxeter ‘Forum Inscription’ at the V & A (fig. 10). He admired the Roman art of inscription, and decades later would tell a friend: ‘There’s a freedom and felicity in the lettering that one does not feel about

most other roman art-works.’ He regarded lettering as the only artistic form the Romans developed with sensitivity—and ‘they really did get somewhere aesthetically’—whereas in other forms they were ‘borrowers & courseners’.⁶⁶ But his own attempts at Roman lettering, and those of his fellow students taking (as he had not) W.G. Hewitt and Miss M Coleman’s class in “Lettering and Illuminating” at Camberwell were either pathetic or boring. Here, at Gill’s hands, however, was ‘living lettering’.⁶⁷ This was the moment the seed dropped that would flower decades later in his painted lettered inscriptions.



10. Wroxeter Inscription, AD 129-30

To Gill Jones expressed dissatisfaction with art school and misgivings about his role as an artist. Gill commented on his not having a very clear direction. Jones agreed, and Gill spoke about the attempt of the workmen in the Guild to integrate life, work, religion, and local culture. Jones was impressed. They agreed that people were going to operas, concerts, and plays, visiting galleries and buying pictures, and intellectuals were talking ideas, but there was no real underlying culture, no unifying experience informed by values rooted in religious faith. Gill’s chief concern—and this was his chief attraction for Jones—was with basic underlying culture. Jones was convinced that ‘you can’t have the things the intelligentsia call “culture” unless you have a real “culture” underneath.’⁶⁸

That evening, Jones and Wall ate in the Gills’ house. The three Gill daughters appraised them. (‘Which one do you like?’ asked the eldest, Betty. ‘The one with red hair,’ said the youngest, Joan, referring to Jones. Petra agreed.). The visitors met the other craftsmen, who also wore smocks but spent most of their time talking to Gill. They left at eight in the evening. Wall told Jones he was relieved to escape that shrine of artsy-craftiness and said he thought Gill and

his friends an ‘affected lot of sods.’ But Jones had been impressed, had enjoyed Gill’s ‘Socratic way’ of conversing, and said that he wanted to return to work with him.⁶⁹

He finished the winter term at Westminster and, during the spring holiday in mid-May, went with Wall on a walking trip along the old Pilgrim’s Road to Canterbury, having taken the train from Crofton Park station to Orpington to walk from there. For most of the way, the path ran along the southern slope of the North Downs. After years of military marching, it was a pleasure to walk at his leisure without a heavy pack. The may-blossom was out on the black-thorn bushes. A light fall of unseasonable snow remained on the white blossoms after melting elsewhere. On the slope of the Downs near Hollingbourn, they passed a small cromlech, which Jones would remember, for it was the only megalith in eastern England. Twice they lost their way: once, thirty-five miles out, turning south to Ashford, where he saw and admired ‘a marvellous medieval bridge (very wide-spanned for the period).’ Near the end of their pilgrimage, they mistakenly turned north, to Charing Hill, then got their bearings and came upon Canterbury, settled at the bottom of its shallow geomorphic bowl. The walk of over sixty miles had taken three days. Entering the town, they passed beneath the overhanging upper stories of its centuries-old houses and shops. Jones bought a postcard and sent it on 17 May to Gill announcing that ‘Frances [sic] & I have walked from London here, to the shrine of St. Thomas.’ He and Wall entered the vast, long, gloomy cathedral and walked round the tombs, including those of Edward, the Black Prince, who at sixteen had led the English to improbably victory at Crécy. There, too, was Henry IV (Bolingbroke) of Shakespearean notoriety, the only king buried in the cathedral. The face of his brass effigy resembled that of his dissolute descendent, Edward VII. On the north wall of the north-west transept, near where Beckett had been murdered, Jones came upon the tomb of John Pecham, the Archbishop who had helped Edward I to conquer Wales. Under ornate, Lanfranc-period stone arcading, his effigy was carved in hard, smooth, mutilated, bog oak. Roused to historical fury and muttering army execrations—and hoping that no verger was watching—Jones gave the oak effigy ‘a whack,’ which hurt his hand. He later remembered this as ‘a childish act for someone 24 [sic] years of age’ but he never changed his opinion of the archbishop. With Pecham in mind, he would write, ‘Upon my soul, what sods these high ecclesiastics tend to be. ... I could *never* feel anti-clerical in regard to a [priest] as such but with regard to the ecclesiastical authorities hand in glove with the state I can feel bitterly

anticlerical.’⁷⁰

For him and Wall, the chief characteristic of the cathedral was the absence of its shrine, which Henry VIII had dismantled for its gold. At the nearby ruins of the once great Benedictine Abbey of St. Augustine, their chagrin mounted further at its starker testimony to beauty, religion, and culture destroyed by what Jones later called ‘Tudor totalitarianism.’ Jones would continue to be astonished at how easily Henry VIII had managed to destroy the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury, ‘considering the vast devotion of many centuries that attached to it’ and even more bewildered by the ease with which Henry had desecrated the shrine of Edward the Confessor at Westminster Abbey. Jones wondered whether everyone had been ‘totally petrified by the Tudor power-machine.’⁷¹ Matters of this sort were a topic of conversation between him and Wall, who had given him in the spring of 1920 Dom Norbert Birt’s *The Line of Cleavage under Elizabeth* (Catholic Truth Society, 1909), inscribing it in Latin, *Dominus vobiscum*.

During his walk to Canterbury, Jones made a sketch of the Kentish hills that he used as a study for a large oil painting. He painted it that summer in Dorothea de Halpert’s studio and entitled it *North Downs* (fig. 11). It is a rare surviving early oil painting based on a preliminary sketch. Afterwards he would paint in watercolours and directly from nature.⁷² He submitted the painting to the London Group. On 21 October, Dorothea’s mother records,



11. David Jones *North Downs*, 1921

‘Poor Jones is depressed as his picture was rejected—it is too large I think.’ He gave it and another picture to Dorothea, who, in exchange, gave him some Japanese prints.

Thanks probably to the contacts and organizational push of Bayes, the study for the painting was shown in the November-December 1921 Goupil Gallery Salon Exhibition, priced at £4.4. So were two drawn portraits, of *Francis Wall, Esq.* (£3.3) and *L. Cubitt Bevis, Esq.* (£3.3),



12. David Jones, *Our Lady of the Hills*, 1921
Rothenstein, and Utrillo.

along with an oil entitled *Our Lady of the Hills* (£31). In this painting (fig. 12), Mary kisses her child as her sorrowful eyes foresee Calvary—which, though undepicted, is one of the hills of the title, along with her breasts and the visible hills in the background, which resemble the Kentish Downs. None of these pictures sold. The exhibit also included two oils and a watercolour by ‘H. Weaver Hawkins, ‘one oil and four watercolours by Frank Medworth, a drawing by Wall, sculpture by Bevis, and work by Sickert, Bayes, and Meninsky. Also exhibited were works by Bonnard, de Chirico, Degas, Henry Lamb, Modigliani, John Nash, William Nicholson, William

Immediately after the Canterbury excursion, Jones experienced anxiety, depression, and insomnia and wondered what was happening, but after a few days, the symptoms disappeared. These were the first indications of severe emotional turmoil to come.⁷³ The seismic foreshock was triggered by his return to his parents’ home. Whatever the underlying causes, it may have been triggered by his struggle over whether to become a Catholic and by concern about the effect the change would have on his father.

Faced with such an important decision, he became at this time intellectually uncertain and emotionally paralyzed. He wrote about his indecision to Gill, who replied on 5 March 1921, ‘you describe your present state of uncertainty very lucidly. I hope you will soon find it possible to take the leap for in my own opinion it is not necessary that a person should feel himself absolutely convinced on every point of faith.’ Jones was writing to O’Connor, whose replies suggest the sort of instructions Jones was receiving. On 9 June the priest wrote to him,

You are swapping horses in mid-stream, I see. There is always that trouble in disabusing a man of what is erroneous—that he thinks disabusing is disillusionment. What act of faith did you make as an Anglican? Like as many of them your act was right, you subjectively had divine faith, objectively, and by no fault of your own that faith was misapplied. This is the idea of the matter at its best as in say, Newman’s case. Newman had all the agony of a leap in the dark, but he found himself landing very soft on a little higher level instead

of falling down a precipice, because he began to see that all the best things of his Anglican days were either essentially Catholic or preparation for the faith. He even said that he and others too had got much grace from the fervour of their spiritual communions (which they thought sacramental as Anglicans).

If you are being fitted out with a perfectly new *rig*, leave it to God in all simplicity. Say: Lord help my unbelief and grant me peace and joy in believing.

This time of darkness and aridity is whetting your appreciation of the light and the living waters which are in store for you. As Chesterton said to me in 1911 or 12: The best Anglicanism is but a pale copy of the real Catholic article. As moonlight unto sunlight.

Perhaps you are permitted by God to have this mental trial, that you may realize how faith is a supernatural gift different in kind from all natural gifts or acquirements whatever.

He advises Jones not to require 'mathematical certitude in a moral question' and says that even mathematical certainty has flexibility, as 'Einstein now shows.' He reminds him that while faith and doubt are irreconcilable, 'difficulty about this or that point' of doctrine 'is not doubt.'

Faith is an act of the will as well as of the mind. You want these things of the Faith to be true don't you? Well, be thankful if your desire is so. The enlightening of the mind will come with prayer. For God must give us a little of His own certainty of Himself before our mind can rest in the possession of a thing so much beyond its grasp.

We Catholics seem like pigs in clover sometimes, as if we did not realize the beauty and wealth of our old familiar household of faith. But I am constantly assailed by ejaculations of uncontrollable delight from all grades of people as one facet after another flashes on them in the Dance of Life. That is because we have the habit of seeing everything in a half-light or cross-light, i.e. natural and supernatural lights mixed. But sometimes we see things in the pure supernatural light and all our birds sing in our bushes.

Jones found decisions difficult, and this was an important one. In early July, he wrote expressing further doubt. On 12 July O'Connor writes, with impressive psychological insight:

To make your submission while still in doubt would be imprudent if your doubts are positive, that is, if you have one or two important ideas in your mind which could not be reconciled with the whole Catholic cycle of truth. But it would be a cure for *negative* doubt or nervous misgivings about almost everything, such as attack a man when he is casting off from his ancient moorings. ... Anyone making his way from the wreck to the shore is naturally nervous about what is in between, so God must be your landing man and give you confidence.

Hesitation was not, however, merely neurotic. About the claims of the Church Jones was skeptical in a way that seems to have been related to his general post-war disillusionment.

O'Connor also understood this and wrote:

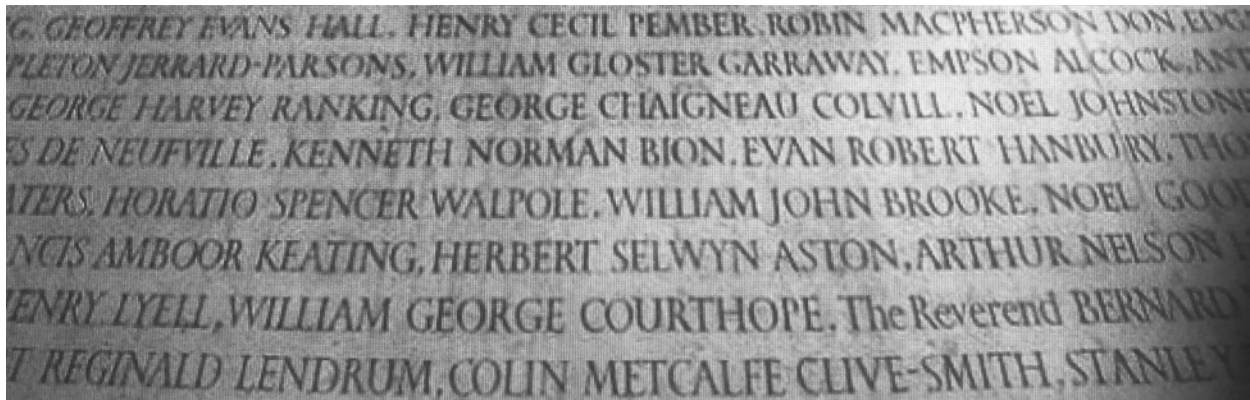
The world of journalism, politics, finance, even art, is a huge confidence trick, but no one ever finds it out except some few comparatively. Knowing this, I too have had the suggestion: Is the Supernatural power of forgiveness of sins, the Real Presence, and all that, also a confidence trick? I have handled the Holy Eucharist all these years and never seen any wonder in it—never a sign of the Reality. Precisely, and we never need to see it while the obvious effects are all round us in a purity and gentleness among those who receive It, which are plainly not their own but very real. The great miracles are too big to see and the small ones too numerous to count. Only, as in art, when one knows what to look for, how easily one sees it. ... the proofs which *are* given are ... the secrecy of growth and strength, the clearness of the inward eye, the unconscious bond and compulsion which crowds the poor mountain chapel for low Mass.

He concludes 'Your trouble is largely nervousness at the untried,' and he quotes, 'Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?'⁷⁴

On 19 July Jones went alone to Ditchling and stayed the night. On the 20th he spoke to Gill of his hesitations, saying he could not see how anyone could be sure that the Catholic Church was what it claimed to be. Gill took charge of the conversation, questioning, leading, pointing out inconsistencies. Reasoning was for him a matter of simple logic—like the unwavering line of his drawing and carving, neither ambiguous nor subtle. He said that of all the Churches, only the Catholic Church had its origin in New Testament times, professed to be universal in membership, and claimed absolute authority in moral and religious matters. The authority claimed was that of God, and anything less is hardly authority at all. Whether or not the claim is true, no other Church makes it. One moment in their conversation was particularly clarifying for Jones. Gill drew three triangular shapes, one whose lines did not quite meet at one corner, a second even more disconnected, and a third whose lines joined to make angles. Then he asked Jones to pick out the triangle. Pointing to the last, he said that he liked that one. Gill replied, 'I didn't ask which you preferred. One isn't a better triangle than the others. The others are not triangles at all. Either it's a triangle or it's not.' There was only one.⁷⁵ It was the Catholic Church, the non-triangles being the Church of England and any (other) Protestant or Eastern Orthodox church. That day, Jones made up his mind to become a Catholic.*

* In their biographies of Gill, Robert Speaight and Fiona McCarthy relate the anecdote of the triangles without suggesting its meaning, which Jones related to Blissett and me in conversation in 1971 or '72.

On the 21st, he returned to Brockley where he was reading the penny catechism and, on O'Connor's recommendation, Maisie Ward's *Father Maturin, a Memoir with Selected Letters*. Early in the last week of July, he received a note from Gill proposing that he return to Ditchling for a prolonged stay to help paint the incised letters of a war memorial for New College, Oxford. Jones replied, 'I am absolutely delighted. Thanks awfully for the chance to do something worthwhile.'⁷⁶ He would later say that in this memorial Gill solved the problem of inscribing English words by forgetting 'what the words mean altogether & just' making 'as even as possible a pattern of incised lines covering equally the whole panel.'⁷⁷



12. Eric Gill, New College Oxford, War Memorial (1921), detail

On the afternoon of 3 August 1921 he arrived at Ditchling Common and was given a place to sleep in the attic of the dairy behind Gill's house with another former art-student and ex-serviceman named Denis Tegetmeier, who had also come to help paint the incised letters. The war memorial consisted of the 228 names of the dead carved into slabs of stone by Gill and his apprentices Joseph and Laurie Cribb. Jones thought the unpainted memorial 'marvellous'. Gill wanted the letters painted with red ochre to make them more visible on the dimly lit chapel wall on which it would hang. Intermittently throughout August, Jones, Tegetmeier, and a third man painted the thousands of letters—tedious, painstaking work in the hottest month of a hot summer. Jones would remember the memorial as one of Gill's 'best things' (fig. 13), though after its departure from Ditchling he never saw it again.⁷⁸

When not painting letters of the war memorial, he sometimes did ‘odd jobs’ for Gill. One of these was to draw a somber, burdened infantryman for a figure that Gill was carving in a war



14. Gill and Jones, *Westward Ho*, 1921

memorial for the town of Trumperton. From this drawing, Gill made a wood engraving he entitled ‘Westward Ho’ punning grimly on ‘going west’ as dying (fig. 14). Much of his time, however, Jones was free to do whatever he wanted or nothing at all.

On the first or second day of his stay, he visited Desmond Chute, a close friend of Gill and co-founder of the Guild, who lived in a red-brick house called Wobarton’s Cottage at the edge of the Common. Chute was making a wood engraving, Jones expressed interest, and Chute began showing him how to do it.

Wood-engraving was the oldest way of making prints. It was a medium of fine art from the start of the Fifteenth Century to the mid-sixteenth century, afterwards surviving mainly as a skill of professionals illustrating books, magazines, and newspapers. These engravers cut drawings made on woodblocks by artists such as Doré, Tenniel, Keene, Millais, Rossetti, and Burne-Jones, none of whom cut their own blocks. Soon after *Punch* first photographically reproduced a drawing in 1892, the craft went into decline. By 1910, it was replaced in picture journalism by line and half-tone photoengraving. After the war, young artists mostly in France and England—following the earlier example of Bewick, Blake and Calvert—began engraving their own drawings, so that the art that had survived as a craft and then died as a craft was reborn as an art again.⁷⁹ Gill and Chute were among the founding members of the Society of Wood Engravers, which put on the first important exhibition of wood-engraved prints in England in 1920. By initiating Jones, Chute was now making an important contribution to the revival of the artform.

Except for his spectacles, Chute resembled a fin-de-siècle vision of Jesus—red-bearded, green-eyed, tall, wan, and languid. He was tubercular, hypochondriac, effeminate, refined, elegantly mannered and intellectually tough and humble ‘with a deep & true religiousness,’ Jones later said, ‘such as one can scarcely conceive.’ The same age as Jones, he was Bristol born and bred, a descendant of the tragedian and friend of Dickens, William Macready. He had studied at Downside and the Slade and at the end of the war had met Gill, become his apprentice

and eventually a collaborator, closest friend, and surrogate son. He read Greek and Latin, was fluent in French and Italian, was a gifted musician, and was currently painting with exceptional talent and sensitivity in a style reminiscent of Samuel Palmer. (Since 1916, he had been a close friend of the painter Stanley Spencer, the modern painter whose style most resembles Palmer's.) Chute had designed most of the stations of the cross that Gill was now carving for O'Connor's church in Heaton. He had 'one of the most remarkably able & perceptive minds' that Jones would encounter and an 'acute sense of amusement' that shook him 'with merriment' and erupted in infectious laughter. Chute was also extremely neurotic, a perfectionist with 'foibles ... & prejudices' that made talking with him 'very exhausting' for Jones. In 1965, he would remember Chute



15. Desmond Chute, c. 1921

as 'the most "civilized" man he ever met.'⁸⁰

Sitting with him in his house, Jones learned 'with appalling difficulty' to engrave with a burin on the end of a boxwood block. Chute had him read R.J. Beedham's manual, *Wood Engraving*, first published by the Guild's St. Dominic's Press in the previous year. It is a practical book, describing the graver and various other tools, indicating how they are to be held and used, and describing the leather sandbag on which the block is held and turned to be cut, and the magnifying glass on a stand that is usually required for such close work.* Gill looked in and offered suggestions, but Chute was his teacher. The medium of wood-engraving required simplification and therefore placed great emphasis on design. Jones was already a master of design. Within days of their meeting, Chute knew that as an artist his pupil was more gifted and more accomplished than he.⁸¹

Gill encouraged Jones's wood engraving as an antidote to art-school training. He spoke of it in terms which they both understood as basically Post-Impressionist. In engraving, Gill said, the difficulty of the medium de-emphasizes the subject. The graver and the wood are both so demanding that close imitation of



16. David Jones, Sts Joseph and Dominic, 1921

* Jones acquired a copy and annotated it. Several years after I saw it, this book was stolen from the National Library of Wales along with his annotated copy of Donald Attwater's *A Cell of Good Living* by someone who, I hope, will return them.

nature is nearly impossible. The engraver must consider his engraving primarily as a thing in itself and only secondarily as a representation. Jones did one of his early engravings for Gill, an emblem, depicting Saints Joseph and Dominic to illustrate cheques for the ‘Spoil Bank Association’ in which Guild property was vested (fig. 16). In the engraving, the saints are united in the darkness of their clothing and in their function: each presents the Word, Joseph in the flesh of his wife’s son, Dominic in the gospel he preaches. Gill ‘touched up’ the engraving before printing the cheques, which accounts for its deadening uniformity of lie-width.⁸²

While engraving, Jones remembered his father taking him as a child to a printing shop where he had seen what he then took to be old men sitting round a table engraving individual two-inch-square blocks that would later be bolted together with brass rods to form a total block for a double-page newspaper picture. Now he pitied those men for having to copy other men’s drawings, but he respected their craft. They ‘did miracles,’ he later said, though their work was never appreciated. The Pre-Raphaelites complained that their drawings, when transferred to engravings, ‘lost’—and here his voice expressed scorn—“their ‘realism.’”⁸³

Jones visited Hilary Pepler, the Reeve of the Common and third cofounder of the Guild (fig. 17). He and his family lived in a house on Fragbarrow Farm on the south side of the Common, separated from Gill’s house by a five-acre field. Pepler was forty-eight, tall, handsome, spectacled, with dark flowing hair brushed back from his high forehead. A cast in one eye combined with his classical good looks to make his appearance uncanny.* His wife, Clare, was quiet, gentle, well-educated and had studied art in Paris. She was beautiful, and Gill had invited her, as he put it, to lie down with him in bed—she had declined. Hilary had been born into a Quaker family and, after earning a living in London in the tea-trade, land-surveying, and pewtering, had become a social worker for the LCC. He had been the first person to organize school meals for children and was the author of four books on childcare. As an avid Fabian, he had got to know Belloc and Chesterton. He had become a Catholic in 1916 and had taken up the craft of hand printing. He wrote plays for production by the community members, was interested in puppetry and in mime.



17. Hilary Pepler with son Stephen and wife Clare, c. 1921

* Jones would remember this effect when referring to the ‘cast’ eye of Aphrodite in *The Anathemata* (194, n2).

He was benign, reserved, amiable, clever, extremely witty. For the rest of his life, Jones would feel affection for him and on each 14th of January remember that it was Pepler's birthday and name day.⁸⁴

Pepler ran the Guild's St Dominic's Press, the chief purpose of which was propaganda. He and Gill used it largely as a means to preach, which they thought their right and duty by virtue of association with the Dominicans, officially known as the Order of Preachers. During an early visit by Jones, Pepler showed him his three presses, then housed in one of the farm outbuildings. He explained that he printed on Batchelor's handmade paper using the type that William Caslon's designed in 1720. He may have mentioned that Stanley Morison and Francis Meynell were frequent visitors, advising him on how to achieve a typographical high standard. He told Jones that he could use any wood-engravings Jones made.⁸⁵

The Guild of Saints Joseph and Dominic, as it was called, was a manifestation of the Arts and Crafts movement, which originated in the 1880s with William Morris, whose writings had influenced Pepler. Craftsmen were regarded as workmen, free of the pretensions and preciousness of the fine arts. The Guild members were not, like Morris, socialists but 'Distributists,' dedicated to distributing rather than abolishing private ownership. The Guild was a cooperative, owning the houses and workshops, which workers rented, while each worker owned his own tools, the products of his work, and his earnings and was expected to earn his own living. The members were Gill, Pepler, Chute, and Joseph Cribb. Cribb's brother Laurie had apprenticed himself to Gill but was not yet a member. Wives were denied membership because they worked in the house and garden and not at crafts.

Apart from private dwellings, the Guild's buildings consisted of newly built workshops in the south-west corner of the crossroads at the centre of the Common. About 150 yards behind Chute's house and a short walk south across what was called 'the community field' was a small brick chapel. Jones especially liked this chapel with its white interior walls and oak beams. About it he would write, 'whitewash and candle-light is about as good a thing as you can see in this world I reckon. That luminous thing about whitewash is so wonderful It makes the obscure corners of rooms full of reflected light—I don't know anything else that does it.'⁸⁶

The Guild-members and their families were trying to retrieve the values and modes of pre-industrial rural life. On Pepler's farm, the craftsmen and their family members mowed hay

with a scythe, cut corn with a swophook, threshed barley with a flail, and winnowed it with a fan. They wore smocks in imitation not of clerics, as many have thought, but of the old local farmers and shepherds. It was largely as a return to country living that the Guild appealed to Jones, who would write that his going there was bound up with ‘a romantic desire to be free in real English countryside.’ Parties on the Common brought to life the scenes in Bruegel’s village-paintings. Men, women, and children of all ages danced and played games, sang and played musical instruments. They ate home-made bread, drank home-brewed beer, wore home-spun clothing. The community resembled a medieval Catholic village with a vital culture. It was a fellowship recalling (apart from the presence of women and children) what Jones had known among soldiers. Gill, Tegetmeier, and Laurie Cribb were ex-servicemen, the latter two having seen a lot of combat. Like infantrymen, the craftsmen discussed and argued among themselves at all hours of the day and night.⁸⁷

Headquarters was Gill’s house, called ‘Hopkins Crank,’ a knapped-flint Georgian squatter’s house at the edge of the Common on the London-Brighton Road fifty yards south of Chute’s house. Jones often went there evenings. On 7 August 1921 he, Tegetmeier, and Chute ate supper there. Topics of discussion included the inadequacies of art schools, their inimical emphasis on technique, and the need for artists to regard themselves solely as workmen. Recalling his own time at art school, Chute quoted Juliana of Norwich, ‘Anon he falleth into a slade and taketh full great sore.’⁸⁸ Jones began thinking of life with the Guild as an alternative to art school and suburban Brockley.

On the 30th, he worked for the last time on the New College inscription, was introduced to Father John Gray, just arrived from Edinburgh, and was driven to the railway station to return to London. Back in London, he continued making engravings, which he hoped to sell to Hilary Pepler. He also showed Medworth and Hawkins what he had learned and taught them how to do it—engraving was, he would say, the only thing he ever taught anyone—and Medworth would become a masterful engraver. From now throughout the 1920s, Jones habitually carried his graver in one coat pocket and the block he was engraving in the other, so that he could work whenever he had a quiet moment.⁸⁹

After returning to Brockley from his second visit to Ditchling, Jones notified O’Connor that he

had made up his mind to become a Catholic. The priest invited him, for the first time, to stay at his rectory ‘for a night or two’ and got faculties from the bishop to receive him into the Church. Jones would be ‘conditionally baptized’—conditional upon his Anglican baptism being invalid.

After his arrival at the rectory, O’Connor decided that Jones needed a baptismal middle name and, since he was born on All Saints day, jokingly suggested the French name Toussaint, which they both thought would be ‘rather fun.’ O’Connor then suggested ‘Michael,’ whose feast occurred at the end of the month. Jones agreed to the name, probably because the archangel is the patron of soldiers.* He may also have recalled the fidelity of Michael, the Jones-family dog. His new middle name would be unregistered and have no legal status, but as late as 1931 he would sign his name ‘David Michael’ though only to intimate friends from his Ditchling days. He subsequently dropped ‘Michael’ altogether and objected to its use by others, saying, ‘I use no other form either publicly or privately or legally than David Jones.’⁹⁰ Rebaptism washed away forever the prefatory initial ‘W’ for Walter.

He wrote to his parents from Ditchling in August announcing his decision to enter the Catholic Church and conveying an invitation from Gill to visit. His father’s reply survives. It illuminates the evangelicalism and hints at the son’s motives. Jim Jones writes:

Dear Toadie,

I am amazed at the contents of your letter re your joining the Romish Church. It baffles my understanding how any well-balanced mind can be brought to accept such teaching. I always gave you credit for insight & common sense. To link yourself with a church that has always barred the spread of the Bible, that is & always has been the enemy of progress and Enlightenment; the friend and helper of the assassin & murderer—to wit her opposition to the carrying out of the Home Rule Bill in Ireland, knowing very well that her power would be curtailed by the setting up of such a Constitution.

By joining such a Church you are limiting your loyalty to your King, for His Highness the Pope claims first place. You are dishonouring God by accepting the dictates of the church in preference to the plain command of His Word. You are asked to swear a lie when you have to renounce your former beliefs in saying that you never believed them & that they were all wrong or some such words. You become an idolater like the heathen in worshipping idols of wood, stone & brass, beside the horror of the Confessional, again God *dethroned* & Church entrusted with your secrets.

* Temporal proximity to his rechristening was not Jones’s sole consideration in taking the name Michael. There were other saints nearer than Michael with acceptable names, one of them being Francis of Assisi on the 17th.

You speak of the want of authority. The Roman Church, as the R.C. Bishop of Clifton said the other day, puts the *Church first* & Bible second: & that the authority of the Bible is subordinated to the Authority of the Church. God *de*-throned—Man enthroned!

The Bible records, under inspiration, the Words of God Himself, His Son and those of His Apostles: & under the influence of the Holy Spirit, the Soul realizes in them an Authority superior to any priestly assurances. If the Bible does not contain the Inspired words of God then it is not the Authority for which men Crave & ought to be prohibited. But, thank God, Experience has taught & proved that it is—& as such should be honoured. And so might one go on, but, as you say in your letter, 'It is futile to argue.' I can only say that I hope you will not rue the day.

Your new name ought to be Reuben!

I see from your letter that you hope to be home on Monday. In that case you will see Ken [Bradshaw] on the Thursday, when he hopes to be here. Mother sends her love with mine, & thank Mr Gill for invitation which is not possible to accept. Your Affectionate Dad.

Reuben sold his brother (Genesis 37) and forfeited his birthright by defiling his father's bed (I Chronicles 5:1). The letter reveals deep affinities between father and son: desire for religious authority, and aversion to political activities of the Catholic Church. From Ditchling, Jones urged his father simply to wait. His mother, too, was upset.* His father never mentioned the matter again, and over the course of the next month, religious tensions diminished, and life at 115 Howson Road returned to normal.⁹¹ For Christmas 1921, his father would give him Newman's *The Dream of Gerontius*.

On 7 September in the baptistery at the back and to the left of the entrance of St. Cuthbert's neo-Gothic church, John O'Connor received David Jones into the Catholic Church, Frank Wall witnessing in the role of godfather.† That evening for supper, O'Connor's housekeeper prepared, at the priest's request, a peasant dish which he had eaten as a student in Italy, 'a mash of chestnuts mixed with white wine.' Jones found it 'pretty awful—terribly sweet & indigestible.'⁹²

He now saw more of O'Connor's light side. In the evening, settled back in his armchair

* Years later, when her goddaughter, Ruth Pethybridge, became a Catholic, Jones's mother was extremely upset.

† Wall's Catholic ardor would evaporate. Five years later, Jones asked a friend, 'What are the duties of a godson to his godfather?' to which the friend replied, 'None,' and Jones replied, 'I hope you are right because mine has just lapsed.'

in his sitting room-study, the priest would often break into dramatic recitation of Robert Browning, especially 'Bishop Blougram's Apology,' of Villon, of Kipling's 'Drink up y'r Schweppes an' follow me,' of sonnets by Shakespeare, most of which he knew by heart. Often he would ask, 'What about a snatch?' and burst into song. It might be 'The Croppy Boy,' or a song in Gaelic, followed by an Italian peasant song, or liturgical chant, or Gilbert and Sullivan. He also sang folk songs, including 'Six Dukes,' which Jones had never heard before and loved. Later, Jones wrote of O'Connor that although he could always 'see the, so-to-say, twinkle in his greenish-grey' eyes, he 'could be rather severe on me for I think he thought I was wayward & needed a bit of discipline.' O'Connor's impression of the twenty-five-year-old artist was doubtless influenced during this or a subsequent visit by Jones going for a walk after having an early bath, neglecting to empty the tub, and leaving the hot-water running. O'Connor was out and returned some hours later to see water flowing out the front door of the rectory, down the steps of its high porch, and along the pavement.⁹³

To the end of his life, Jones would have vivid memories of O'Connor celebrating sung Mass in his Victorian Gothic church, incensing the altar in a silence broken only by the slight clank of the chains on the thurible. Before he finished censing, the choir began singing, and he turned his head 'in great annoyance.' He had a sensual way of pronouncing Latin at Mass, as though he were savouring the words rather than praying, and Jones found this distracting. But he considered him 'a remarkable man & full of wisdom.'⁹⁴ Decades later he would dedicate a poem entitled 'The Kensington Mass' to the memory of that 'altogether astonishing Irishman from Meath ... whose love of Italy was so strong and his width of understanding so great & always hand in hand with that inevitable Irish humour,' what Chesterton called 'That little worm of laughter ... that eats the Irish heart.'

'*Quite apart* from the truth or untruth of it,' he would write forty years later, 'it seems to me that only by becoming a Catholic can one establish continuity with Antiquity.'⁹⁵ In the Catholic Church, he discovered in a rich and ancient, living culture. For Anglicanism and Protestantism, cultural continuity extends from the renaissance. For Catholicism, it begins in the classical world and includes the dark ages and the middle ages. Jones was aware of the Anglican apologetical claim of continuity with the ancient Celtic Church in Britain and was familiar with Anglican emphasis on the antipathy at the end of the sixth century between the Celtic "ancient paths" and

the “Roman obedience” of Canterbury,’ but he knew that there had been no such disunity earlier, when Britain was a diocese of the prefecture of Gaul. As he later put it, ‘the “ancient paths” were not un-Roman in origin and the church of Alban of Verulamium, Aaron of Caerleon, Germanus of Auxerre, Illtud, Dubricius, Gildas, Paulus Aurelianus and David was in union with the Apostolic See.’ Celtic Christianity ‘is as Roman in origin as the Welsh dragon.’⁹⁶

With a sense of historic continuity came a complimentary, essentially mythic sense of contemporaneity with the past. To a large extent, historical Catholic culture was alive in the liturgy—in the numinous candlelight of the Easter Vigil, in the third century Greek Kyrie, and in the chant to which Gregory the Great had given his name. What had been a living experience for Roman Britons, for the Celtic Saints, for Arthur, for Richard II, for the crusader knights, and for Llewelyn ap Gryffith, was now alive in Jones’s life. He was one with a whole past—because of continuity of ritual but also because of the time-abolishing presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. He now lived, felt, and imagined in a medium which included all time. At Christmas midnight Mass, on ordinary Sundays, and often at weekday Mass, during the prayers he followed in his missal and in the silence after communion, he had mystical experiences—experiences of ‘Mystery,’ of the ‘numinous,’ of ‘incomprehensible otherness’ which fed a deep liturgical devotion that would last the rest of his life. These did not, in his opinion, make him a mystic, but at Mass he would be completely absorbed in attention rare even for him—though one friend who witnessed his intense concentration at Mass said that he also saw it once when Jones was staring at a dog in a pub.⁹⁷ *

Decades later Jones remembered,

One accepted the Catholic cult because it appeared to make sense of the incomprehensible otherness. One was not a theologian and had no desire to be everlastingly asked ‘Do you believe in’ this or that? ‘Believe in’ has always seemed to me somewhat odd as commonly understood. I can’t explain what I mean ... but ‘Look not upon my limitations, incomprehensions, innate blockheadedness, *‘sed fidem Ecclesiae tuae’* [but upon

* It was in the Catherine Wheel on Kensington Church Street during the Second World War. Peter Kelly remembered, ‘There was a dog lying on the floor. David couldn’t take his eyes off it. It was as though he was in a trance.’

the faith of your Church] makes some sense.* The 'Evangelical' Xtian would immediately retort: It is as we supposed. You 'believe in' the dogmatic assertions of the Church rather than in 'the Man Xt Jesus.' Here I tend to get exasperated if not blasphemous, for we have 'believe in' twice over & neither in a truly satisfactory sense.

Faith could not, for him, be reduced to beliefs, in which there was a large amount of subjective feeling that he distrusted. Moreover, the Church historically mediated all we know of Jesus. As he later wrote, "'Evangelical' Xtns or anyone else would have no message of Salvation by the Cross had not it come to them by way of the tradition of the institution called 'the Church'—in this instance I mean the Churches of the Eastern Orthodox as well as the Catholic Ch of the West, for the break was posterior to the defining of the canon of the New Testament.'⁹⁸ For him, now, the message included the medium. Becoming a Catholic was an act not of willful ideological affirmation but of historical responsibility.

It was largely a matter simply of attending Mass. He later wrote,

the Mystery remains wholly insoluble for all of us (at least it does to me) but the Mass did make sense, perceived by all our faculties, of this mystery

Well we can't take in more than a tiny bit of *realitas* & the Mass did in some indefinable way give us just about all that our natures are capable of apprehending. Not that it solved the stupendous *mysterium* of God being offered to God but it established a form sufficiently creaturely, sufficiently of an otherness & of things of the supernatural order for chaps of every kind of disposition & status in life to in some fashion apprehend, which, presumably is why it was institutionalized & 'commanded [by Jesus during the Last Supper] to be continued.'⁹⁹

'Perceived by all our faculties,' the Mass, within its changing liturgical cycle, is an aesthetic experience in which form and content are indistinguishable.

He now participated in what may be the greatest single, serial or collective popular work of art that western culture has produced. The daily, weekly, yearly repetitions of the liturgy are, like all repetition, potentially boring; he enlivened them by active, interpretive, appreciative participation. When not at Mass, he often read his missal as though it were a scriptural text (it largely consists of scriptural texts). The verbal repetitions in a specific liturgical service, such as the repeating of a psalm-verse or scriptural quotation in the Introit and Gradual, he 'always found

* Here Jones paraphrases and quotes from the Communion prayer in the Mass following the *Agnus Dei*.

moving.’ They sometimes recalled the childhood circle rhyme ‘It was a dark and stormy night,’ which in turn evoked memories of his companions huddled together in the trenches—a fellowship blending somehow with the fellowship he felt at Mass. Since his Anglican youth, he had appreciated the overall form of the liturgical year, which he now knew mirrored the cycles of pagan festivals, but he also appreciated, as few have, the shape of the Mass. He came to regard it as ‘a supreme art-form,’ consisting of ‘juxtaposed forms in relationship ... which centuries of usage had perfected.’ He was not seduced by performance—that was often bad. What enthralled him was the written and choreographed form-and-meaning to which excluded, subordinated, or generalized everything individually personal and subjective. For him, even this early on, the Mass was the paradigm of symbols, capable of containing and interpreting legend, myth, and pagan ritual—because everything else was, he thought, more or less an approximation or precursor either of the Eucharist or of the Passion which the Eucharist makes present. He saw the Mass as the centre or apex of a continuity of all art works throughout time.¹⁰⁰ As a paradigm of art, moreover, the Catholic Mass was essentially modernist: without linear continuity, moving by juxtaposition and accumulation. Of all individual and corporate works of art, the Mass would have the most profound, influence on his poetry. The overall form would inform that of *In Parenthesis*.

The aesthetic centrality of the Mass would take on sharper focus as the years passed. He would continue to claim that the manual acts and spoken words of the Consecration (when bread and wine sacramentally becomes Jesus) are ‘the prototype or supreme model, analogically speaking, of all the arts of man,’ which are ‘of necessity the ‘unbloody’ showing forth of some ‘bloody’ enough ‘reality.’ The Mass contradicted ‘the ludicrous division’ between abstract and non-abstract art ‘for nothing could ... be more “abstract” than the Mass, or *less “realistic”* or *more “real”*.’ At the end of his life, he would consider the Mass to be the greatest of the works of art that he loved and continuous with all the others: the Parthenon, the Venus of Melos, the Lindisfarne Gospel, the west portal of Chartres Cathedral, Gregorian chant—especially Palestrina’s setting of the Good Friday liturgy, the sequence *Dies Irae*, and Fortunatus’s hymn *Vexilla Regis*—Botticelli’s *Primavera*, Rembrandt’s *Julius Civilis*, Cezanne’s *Card Players*, and (supreme among works of literature) Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*.¹⁰¹

Not that his religious conversion was merely historically imaginative or aesthetic. He did

not become a Catholic to experience or achieve continuity with antiquity. Now was he like Dowson, Johnson, and Wilde, who followed Huysmans into the Church as though into a museum that preserved what would otherwise be ‘the lost beauty of the ages.’ And he did not act in order to save his soul. He regarded the long-standing conciliar statement that ‘there is no salvation outside of the Church’ as utter nonsense. As for ‘piety, sincerity, goodness, knowledge of the Scriptures and the Fathers and deep devotion to the Passion & effectual grace,’ there was more of these in many of the Protestants he knew ‘than in most Catholics.’ What fundamentally and finally motivated him was a conviction that the Catholic Church was ‘real’ as none other was—the very point Gill had made by drawing triangular shapes. Jones had sensed this reality in 1917 in Father Daniel Hughes— ‘a “reality” absent in C. of E. parsons.’ He felt it in the chant during high Mass at Westminster Cathedral, so different from the ‘elegant, sophisticated but unreal sung Evensong at Kings College Cambridge.’ A few years later he would sense it in a bunch of ‘pretty ghastly & woefully ignorant Irish workmen,’ one of whom asked to borrow a rosary in order to perform a penance after going to confession. It was what Jones called ‘the reality, ... the thing that seldom or ever seemed quite there among the many, many different kinds of Protestants I’ve known.’¹⁰²

After entering the Church, he returned to Brockley and walked from there to Greenwich, where, sitting high in the park and facing the river, he made a drawing in ink and yellow wash of the tree-filled scene (fig. 18). It is a rare indication in ink of how quick and sure-of-hand he was. He signed it ‘1921 David Michael J.’



18. Greenwich, '1921, David Michael J'

Gill had written O'Connor on 13 October, ‘We are delighted about David & hope he’ll come back afore long (then we’ll have to keep him up to the mark & knock some corners off him D.

V.).' On 5 November, Jones was back in Ditchling, but only for the weekend. On Sunday, he walked over a mile with Gill and his daughters Petra and Joan to Mass at St. George's Retreat, a chapel to a convent and hospital north of the Common. That afternoon he walked with Gill and Petra ten miles to Heywards Heath. In the evening he returned to Brockley.

He was still enrolled at Westminster, but his heart was less than ever in his courses. From the start, his attendance had been spotty. Now he was convinced of the futility of all art-school training because it exposed students only to a dead tradition or, at best, to the vital idiosyncrasies of a few teachers. Influenced by Gill and Ditchling, he now thought apprenticeship preferable to art school because it provided training based on 'the continuity of a living tradition.' He had lost patience with what Bayes called 'the grammar' of art. His teachers appreciated his dissatisfaction. According to Sickert, no one should be more than three years in art school, and Jones was in his seventh year. It was madness, Sickert said, to continue learning to draw drapes and differentiating human types and ages. Get out and enter the market or else, he said, begin your education all over again, which means unlearning art-school habits. This is what Jones would do if he joined the craftsmen at Ditchling. Drawing and painting seemed to have no place in modern life, but at Ditchling art was integrated with life.¹⁰³ He consulted Bayes about going there to live and work, and Bayes, who agreed with Gill's notion that a painter should have the attitude of a workman, thought it a good idea.

In the latter half of November, Gill was in London carving an inscription at the British Museum. On 15 November, Jones met him at the Leicester Gallery, to see carvings by Frank Dobson. From there they went together to the Chevail Gallery to see an exhibition of engravings. On the evening of the 16th, Jones brought Gill home to Brockley where he met Jones's parents and stayed the night. On the evening of the 18th, he had tea with Gill in London. They talked seriously about Jones moving to Ditchling, and Gill suggested another extended visit. He wrote to O'Connor, 'I expect you have heard that, in the absence of definite prohibition from you, David made up his mind, with the encouragement of his headmaster at Westminster, to come here without further delay. ... I think we can keep him employed and for myself I promise you that I will do my best to see that he gets from us normal and "no new-fangled popery".'¹⁰⁴

Jones returned to Ditchling on the evening of 23 November. Gill records that Pepler kept him 'hard at it' engraving for the press. On 13 and 14 December Jones and Gill ground and

mixed colours for paints. With Joseph Cribb, they make a nativity scene for the chapel, Jones making figures of Mary, Joseph, and St. Dominic that Gill thought ‘jolly good.’ Gill wrote to Chute, who had gone to Fribourg to study for the priesthood, ‘It’s a great pleasure having him with us.’ On the afternoon of the 18th, Jones sat briefly for Gill who drew his profile, a good likeness except that it makes him look effeminate and he was, according to Gill’s daughter Petra, ‘not a bit like that.’^{105*} He returned to Brockley for Christmas.

Since being received into the Church, he had been attending Mass in Brockley a short walk north of his parents’ house, at small, red-brick St. Mary Magdalene Church. It was manned by three Augustinians of the Assumption on the corner of Howson and Cumberford roads. For the next two decades, whenever he stayed with his parents, this was his local church. Here he attended his first Christmas midnight Mass. He thought the building a ‘hideous little tail-end of imitation baroque,’ but as a parish it was ‘lovely.’ Behind the church was a Catholic elementary school and beside that a playground swarming with children. He would especially like attending Midnight Mass here, and Vespers on Sunday evenings, sung ‘with great fervour by the choir & a large part of the congregation.’ He found the censuring of the altar at sung Vespers ‘one of the most moving things.’ Of the three priests, he especially liked Father Bernardine Balfontaine, who was from the south of France. Jones admired

his ascetic, classical features. The priest had ‘parchment-like skin,’ a firm, thin, straight mouth, strong jaw, prominent nose, and dark serious eyes. Jones thought he looked like a figure in Villon or a French medieval miniature or illuminated manuscript. He sketched from memory a side view of ‘Fr. Bernadine at Brockley’ (with halo) preaching in the elevated pulpit (fig. 19). Jones loved hearing him intone the Gospel for Christmas, his French accent making the Latin ‘slightly nasal & very strong.’ His sermons were short, ‘five to ten minutes but always dead on the target’ and, though he ‘never actually said anything remarkable,’ they were the best he ever



19. David Jones, ‘Fr Bernardine at Brockley’ c. 1925

* The drawing is reproduced as the frontispiece of Hague's *A Commentary on The Anathemata*.

heard. Balfontaine frequently paraphrased St. Athanasius: ‘God became man so that you might become gods.’ He also paraphrased Augustine: ‘If you love God you may do what you will. But,’ he added, ‘you *must love* God,’ and, gesturing with his thumb to the crib at Christmas, and at other times to the tabernacle, in which the Eucharist is reserved, he would add, ‘that is what *that* means.’ As a preacher and in private conversation, he had ‘a great influence’ on Jones’s spiritual life. In 1964, Jones confided that Balfontaine influenced him ‘more than any other’ priest he had known and said, ‘I often think of him.’ Only once did a flaw in the priest’s character give Jones pause. Amounts donated to have a Mass celebrated for the dead were announced at Mass, and thinking monetary boasting on behalf of donors grotesque, Jones objected to Balfontaine, who responded that if amounts were not announced, people complained. Faced with capitulation to the materialist crassness of others in a man so holy, Jones ‘didn’t know what to think.’¹⁰⁶ Balfontaine would leave the parish in 1929 and afterwards Jones would sometimes wonder what happened to him.*

Jones especially liked the way the Augustinian priests intoned the *Te igitur* loudly while standing a little back from the altar so that he could see them kiss the altar and make the three signs of the cross over the bread and wine—unlike the others in the congregation, Jones made these along with the priest.† He knew that, according to theologians, a reference in this prayer to ‘the Catholic Church throughout the whole world’ was to the entire Christian Church, but as far as he was concerned it referred ‘to the mob of which I was one.’ Listening to the prayer, he was ‘childishly pleased’ that the ancient pagan word *antistita* was used for ‘bishop’ instead of the more recent Christian *episcopus* and he ‘delighted to hear’ *cultoribus* used for ‘teachers’ of the Catholic faith—it implied the relationship between faith and culture.¹⁰⁷ He would open *The Anathemata* with the opening of this prayer.

* After working in a parish in Bethnal Green, Balfontaine went on to become head of the French province of his order and, subsequently, a member of its general curia in Rome, and superior of the house in Jerusalem.

† This prayer became one of his favourite parts of the Mass. The signs of the cross gave hesitancy to its ‘groping syntax’: ‘*haec + dona, haec + munera, haec + sancta sacrificia illibata*’ [‘these + gifts, these + presents, these + holy unblemished offerings’ of bread and wine]. Three months before he died he would say, ‘I always loved those words and the careful making of signs.’

Sensitivity to the liturgy was not always an occasion of delight. One Holy Saturday at St Mary Magdalene's he would record his irritation when 'some bastard in the choir did Caruso stuff just a bit too precious & swallowed up the celebrant's commencing of the Magnificat at the end of Mass which is one of the plums of the year I think.'¹⁰⁸

Notes to Chapter 5

¹ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87; T. Hyne interviewed 24/6/86; S. Wright interviewed 4/9/94.

² To R. Hague 9/9/74.

³ To R. Hague afternoon 27/9/74, 4/9/74; *A* 120 n.l.

⁴ 'Note to the *Times* Christmas 1963; 'Note on MS' draft n.d. [1951]; letter draft to *The Times* n.d.

⁵ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; 5/10/87; S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91; S. Wright interviewed 26/6/86; to S. Lewis unposted draft frag. 15/1/63; Mollie Elkin interviewed summer 1985; to S. Lewis draft 15/1/63; DJ quoted by Paul Hills interviewed 11/6/91. During a visit to the house, I measured the room.

⁶ Anne Beresford, 'A Friendship with David Jones--a personal account' typescript. n.d..

⁷ D. Poulter to author 9/2/90; DJ to Blissett, p. 133.

⁸ H.S. Ede, 'David Jones,' *Horizon*, 126.

⁹ E. Hawkins to author 29/4/88; Diana Macartney-Filgate to author 18/4/91; E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88.

¹⁰ *The South London Press* 15/3/18; Chanin and Miller, *The Art and Life of Weaver Hawkins*, pp. 33, 36.

¹¹ To H. Grisewood 24/8/56; E. Hawkins interviewed 1/8/87.

¹² DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; to Janet Stone 7-8/7/72.

¹³ Announcement of Award, Reg. No O, 40366/19; DJ, 'Autobiographical details given to D. Cleverdon, 3/7/70'; S. Wright and K. Lockitt interviewed 21/6/89; Valentine Kilbride in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 3/6/69; Elizabeth Swan interviewed 24/6/86; K. Raine interviewed 26/5/86; Diana Smith interviewed 30/1/88; E. Hawkins interviewed 1/8/87, 1/9/87, 15/6/88.

¹⁴ Walter Bayes, 'The Grammar of Drawing II,' *The Architectural Review* LV (Feb. 1924), 54-5; E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88, 1/9/87; 'D.J. life for Jim Ede,' (5/9/35) second correction of typescript 3/5/43.

¹⁵ Medworth in the 1920s remembered by E. Hawkins interviewed 1/8/87. I am unable to locate the Walkers Galleries catalogue.

¹⁶ DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; P.G. Konody, the *Sunday Observer*, 9/11/19; Ian Jennings to author 13/3/95; Miles and Shiel, pp. 39, 31.

¹⁷ Unidentified clipping taken by Frank Medworth; P.G. Konody, the *Sunday Observer* 9/11/19.

¹⁸ E. Hawkins interviewed 1/8/87, 15/6/88.

¹⁹ E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88; *Westminster Technical Institute, Vincent Square, Rochester Row, S.W.1 Prospectus and Time Table of the Westminster School of Art for the Session 1920-21*; to D. Tegetmeier 9/1/34, 14/1/35.

²⁰ E. Hawkins interviewed 27/6/90; DJ 'Life for Jim Ede' typescript 5/9/35; letter draft frag. n.d.; drawing inscribed by DJ '1921-2 West.'; Walter Sickert, *A Free House or the Artist as Craftsman*, ed. Osbert Sitwell (London: Macmillan, 1947), p. 330.

²¹ To Mr. McCormic 8/1/65; Paul Hills interviewed 11/6/91.

²² DJ to Blissett, p. 129; letter draft frag. n.d.

²³ DJ to Blissett, pp. 129-30; Morag Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88; to S. Lewis 4/71.

²⁴ Hartrick, *Drawing* p. 71.

²⁵ To T. Stoneburner 24-5/10/69; *LF* 15.

²⁶ *Exhibition of Twentieth Century French Art* (Leicester Gallery, January 1932).

²⁷ W. Sickert, p. 225.

²⁸ Letter draft frag. n.d. c. 1929-35.

²⁹ John Rothenstein, *Modern English Painters I* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1952), p. 46; Sickert, p. 91.

³⁰ Sickert, 102, 293. *Decline of the West II* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1926), p. 291, emphatically underlined and marked with approving Xs by DJ in his copy, acquired 1/4/43; to *The Times* draft 19/12/45; to the *Tablet* draft 20/12/45.

³¹ To P. Gill 17/6/23.

³² to V. Wynne-Williams 13/9/59.

³³ 'D.J. life for Jim Ede' (5/9/35) second correction of typescript 3/5/43; Letter draft n.d. [1957]; Reggie Lawson, whom Jones knew in 1922 and who became Brother David Lawson, 'A bit on David Jones, R.I.P.' unpublished typescript 1974.

³⁴ DJ to Blissett, p. 4.

³⁵ The friend was Harold Hawkins' younger brother E. Hawkins interviewed 7/9/87.

³⁶ To *Tablet* draft 20/12/45.

³⁷ To S. Lewis/12/67.

³⁸ *E&A* 171; Rothenstein, *Modern English Painters* II, p. 215; to *Tablet* drafts 20/12/45

³⁹ DJ in conversation with author 31/8/72.

⁴⁰ 'D.J. life for Jim Ede' (5/9/35) second correction of typescript 3/5/43; to Harold Rosenberg 23 draft frag. 8/64.

⁴¹ A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86; to *Tablet* draft 20/12/45; McCarthy quoted in DJ's copy of Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage*, p. 222.

⁴² To H. Grisewood 12/12/66.

⁴³ To R. Hague 19/1/73, 23/2/72; R. Hague, *David Jones*, (Cardiff: University of Wales, 1975), p. 56; to H. Grisewood 9/10/71; to J. Ede 19/4/43; to H. Grisewood 17/5/72.

⁴⁴ E. Hawkins to author 7/9/87; to Reynolds Stone 23/9/58, 14/2/62; R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77; Jane Debenham interviewed 28/4/95; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 5/5/66.

⁴⁵ E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88; Letter draft frag. n.d.; S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87; S. Lewis 97.

⁴⁶ E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88; Jones in conversation with author 9/9/72; to T. Stoneburner 5/8/69; to Helen Sutherland 14/5/43.

⁴⁷ Diana Macartney-Filgate to author 24/1/91; birth certificate of Charles Joseph Medworth, born 11/11/1863; E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88.

⁴⁸ E. Hawkins interviewed 25/8/89, 1/8/87; Chanin and Miller, p. 42.

⁴⁹ To H. Grisewood 15/2/57.

⁵⁰ 'David Jones--Maker of Signs,' (BBC/British Council) script broadcast on Radio 3, 6/11/75, based on DJ interviewed by P. Orr and Jon Silkin; Kathleen Lockitt interviewed 21/6/89; E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88; to R. Hague 27/9/74; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69.; to P. Donner 16/6/61.

⁵¹ Mss drafts nd [1965]; to D. Blamires 7/6/66.

⁵² Beatrix Dufort to author 23/9/86; to R. Hague 9-15/7/73; to Jacqueline & S. Honeyman 29/7/62. Thanks to Beatrix Dufort for permission to quote from Dorothea's mother's diary.

⁵³ To D. Tegetmeier 25/8/43, 20/2/43, 26/12/48.

⁵⁴ B. Dufort to author 23/9/86; note from Teresa to T. Stoneburner (who cannot now recall her surname) written record 6/6/69; DS interviewed 30/1/88; R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77 Frank Wall interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69.

⁵⁵ B. Dufort to author 23/9/86, 9/6/86; B. Dufort's diary 18/3/29, 27/2/29; H. Grisewood interviewed 22/6/86.

⁵⁶ M. Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975; to H. Grisewood 26/11/70.

⁵⁷ DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; to William T. Noon S.J. 7/10/65; to William Cookson 23/7/71; to J. Ede 24/10/29.

⁵⁸ To P. Levi 3/11/67; ms frag. n.d.; passage marked by DJ in his copy of Victor White, *God and the Unconscious* (London: Harvell, 1953), p. 223; H. Grisewood to author 13/3/91; to R. Hague Holy Saturday/32.

⁵⁹ To D. Blamires 6/11/61; Frank Wall interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69; to F. Wall 27/6/44; to T. Stoneburner 31/3/65; DJ 'Autobiographical details given to Douglas Cleverdon 3/7/70'; to H. Grisewood 26/7/61; R.Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77; S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86.

⁶⁰ .D. Attwater, *A Cell of Good Living*. (London: Chapman, 1969), p. 62; to T. Stoneburner 31/3/65; S.M. Albert, 'John O'Connor,' *Blackfriars* 33 (May 1952), p. 213-5; R. Hague to William Blissett tape recorded 24/11/79.

⁶¹ P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; P. Hagreen to author 23/11/85; to H. Grisewood 1/2/71.

⁶² To H. Grisewood 31/12/71; to R. Hague 18/5/74; Letter draft frag. n.d.; to H. Grisewood 15-17/1/68, 23/12/65.

⁶³ To H. Grisewood 20/1/72; O'Connor's obituary, *Tablet* 23/2/52; J O'C to DJ 9/6/21; to S. Lewis 13-14/1159; M.Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975; John O'Connor to DJ 10/8/21.

⁶⁴ DJ ms frag. n.d.; to T. Stoneburner 31/3/65.

⁶⁵ John O'Connor, 'Eric Gill,' *The Bookman* (December 1930), 190; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86.

⁶⁶ Unposted, to Colin, 11/7/45.

⁶⁷ to N. Gray 4/4/61.

⁶⁸ DJ to R. Hague interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 11/6/69; to H. Sutherland 14/5/43; DJ 'Autobiographical details given to D. Cleverdon 3/7/70'.

⁶⁹ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86; Dorenkamp, 'In the Order of Signs,' p. 7; Rothenstein, *Modern English Painters* II, p. 215.

⁷⁰ To T. Hyne 25/5/71 25/6/71; DJ regularly misremembered the walk as having occurred in the 'spring of 1919 (to T. Hyne 25/5/71); to H. Grisewood notes/1--16/2/66.

⁷¹ To H. Grisewood 26/7/61, 29/12/65.

⁷² DJ quoted by John Rothenstein, *Modern English Painters* II, p. 223.

⁷³ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record, 19/6/69; DJ quoted by Richard Wald, 3.

⁷⁴ John O'Connor to DJ 10/8/21.

⁷⁵ Gill, 'Responsibility' (1925), *Art-Nonsense and Other Essays*. (London: Cassel, 1929), p. 131; *Manchester Guardian*, 11/2. 1972; see Gill, *Autobiography* (New York: Devin-Adair, 1961) p. 188; DJ in conversation with author 1971 or '72.

⁷⁶ J. O'Connor to DJ 10/8/21; to Eric Gill 26/7/21.

⁷⁷ To Nicolette Gray, 15/1/63.

⁷⁸ To P. Levi 24/4/64; to N. Gray 15/1/63; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86.

⁷⁹ Campbell Dodgson, 'Forward,' *Catalogue of the First Annual Exhibition of the Society of Wood Engravers* (1920).

⁸⁰ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; to T. Stoneburner 31/3/65; Attwater p. 66; to T. Stoneburner 30/8/63, 31/3/65; to H. Grisewood 12/8/56.

⁸¹ To N. Gray 14/4/61; Walter Shewring, 'Desmond Chute, 1895-1962' *Blackfriars XLIV* V (Jan 1963), p. 29.

⁸² Eric Gill, 'Wood-Engraving' (1921), *Art-Nonsense and Other Essays*, p. 99; E. Gill, Preface, Beedham, pp. vii-viii; E. Gill, quoted by Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, (London: Clover Hill Editions, 1981), p. 7.

⁸³ DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71, 24/8/72.

⁸⁴ Barbara Wall, 'A Note on Hilary,' *Aylesford Review* VII (Spring 1965), 26; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; Attwater, pp. 56, 57, 71; Susan Falkner, *A Ditchling Childhood* (Bures, Suffolk: Iceni, 1994), pp. 10, 31.

⁸⁵ Brocard Sewell, 'Hilary Pepler: 1878-1951,' *Aylesford Review* VII (Spring 1965), 13; to D. Allchin draft 14/1/70.

⁸⁶ J. O'Connor to DJ 9/6/21; DJ to Desmond Chute 6/2/56 quoted in Miles and Shiel, p. 49.

⁸⁷ Attwater, p. 80; to H. Grisewood 9/10/71.

⁸⁸ Here as subsequently when referring to a specific occasion when Eric Gill was present, I take the information from Gill's diary; to T. Stoneburner 29-30/11/69.

⁸⁹ To D. Blamires 6/11/66; to Désirée Hirst unposted frag. n.d. c. 1967; DJ quoted by Dorenkamp, *In the Order of Signs*, p. 13.

⁹⁰ To T. Stoneburner 7/10/64; to R. Hague 26/2/74.

⁹¹ James Jones to DJ 24/8/21; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 5/5/66; K. Lockitt interviewed 21/6/86; *LF*, p. 8.

⁹² P. Hagreen interviewed 2/6/86; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 10/3/78; DJ to Blissett, p. 57; to S. Lewis 27/4/74.

⁹³ To S. Lewis 27/4/74; to H. Grisewood 12/12/66; to R. Hague 9-11/6/74; J. O'Connor, who may have exaggerated this anecdote; to W. Shewring interviewed 24/6/88.

⁹⁴ To R. Hague 10-14/9/74, 11/8/74; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 5/3/78; to T. Stoneburner 31/3/65.

⁹⁵ To Richard Shirley-Smith, 13 Nov 1961.

⁹⁶ To *The Times* unpublished n.d.

⁹⁷ Peter Kelly interviewed 9/6/86.

⁹⁸ To H. Grisewood 9/10/71.

⁹⁹ To H. Grisewood 9/10/71.

¹⁰⁰ Letter draft to T. Stoneburner n.d.; Ms draft frag. n.d. [c 1965]; to H. Grisewood 9/10/71.

¹⁰¹ To H. Grisewood 3/10/71.

¹⁰² Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Against Nature*, trans. Robert Baldick (Baltimore: Penguin, 1959), p. 87; to H. Grisewood 10/6/64.

¹⁰³ Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, p. 2; 'D.J. life for Jim Ede' (5/9/35) second correction of typescript 3/5/43; John Rothenstein referring to conversation with DJ, *Modern English Painters* II, p. 215; Sickert, 'The Teaching of Art and Development of the Artist,' *The English Review*, (July 1912), *A Free House*, p. 314-5; Brother David Lawson, 'A bit on David Jones, R.I.P.' unpublished typescript 1974.

¹⁰⁴ E. Gill to J. O'Connor 30/11/21

¹⁰⁵ To D. Chute 13/12/21; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86.

¹⁰⁶ To R. Hague 9/9/74; to H. Grisewood 1/1/64; A 129n4, where, probably because the priest was an Augustinian., DJ mistakenly attributes the words to Augustine; Tate Archives: Jones 8222 A2 DJ 87; to R. Hague 13/12/63.

¹⁰⁷ To R. Hague 11/8/74.; to H. Grisewood 9/10/71.

¹⁰⁸ To R. Hague Holy Saturday/32.

Chapter 6 1922-4

Early in January 1922, he gave up his government grant, withdrew from art school, and moved to Ditchling Common. Initially, he lodged for some weeks with the Gills, then with the Peplers, then back with the Gills, sleeping in the dairy behind the house. He joined the Gills at midday for a hot meal, with bread freshly baked by Gill's wife, Mary, and plum cake made weekly by their fifteen-year-old daughter, Petra. Severely rationed in economically depressed postwar London, food was plentiful here, owing to the large farm run by Pepler's son David and to Mary Gill's garden, quince and apple orchard, and Guernsey cows. With a steady income from carving war memorials, Gill could afford to support Jones for a while as he also did others considering becoming Guild members.¹

In his first weeks, Jones was relatively free—in the afternoons, walking in the countryside, reading, or engraving. Occasionally he helped Gill with a job, as on the 11th and 12th of January, when they leveled wood blocks for engraving by filling in low spots on the back. Gill wanted him to become a workman in order to escape what he considered the effete aestheticism of art school and studio. The workshop was the ultimate confirmation of Fry's doctrine that works of art are things in themselves, not representations of things. Gill said, 'take this letter: A. That's not a picture of a letter—it *is* a letter.' Jones wanted to experience the atmosphere of the workshop but did not ask to learn to cut letters in stone, to his regret in later years.² Gill proposed that Jones become, for the next five years, a carpenter's apprentice.

For various reasons, this suited Jones. He wanted 'to get the hang of tools & their sharpening,' and liked the idea of emulating his English grandfather. Furthermore, carpentry embodied in a clear and simple way an essential aspect of art. As Sickert had said, the word 'joiner,' a synonym for 'carpenter,' is precisely what 'artist' means, and Jones was convinced that, like a carpenter, an artist is always 'concerned with a fitting together of some sort.' Apropos of this, Gill contributed his favourite quotation about the heavenly Jerusalem, 'which is built as a city strongly interjoined' (Ps 122: 2-3)—a text that became a favourite of Jones.³

He was apprenticed to the George Maxwell, who had arrived from Birmingham in December with his silent, hard-working wife, Cis, and their two daughters. Maxwell was a cradle

Catholic, a committed Distributist, and an abstract thinker, who enjoyed reading philosophy, especially Aquinas. A skilled craftsman who had earned a living as a coach-builder, he was now completing construction of the press workshop and building his own house, which he would own, and several other houses to be owned by the Guild. Soon occupied all day long with woodwork for floors and beams, Jones missed being able to go for long walks.⁴

The Guild members, now numbering six, and their families lived in quasi-Victorian-medievalist opposition to modern industrial civilization. They were dedicated to restoring an England of guilds, monasteries, and anonymous craftsmen. The outward signs of their dedication were the rustic smocks they wore at Gill's insistence. Collarless, white, gray, or black, falling to the calf and belted at the waist, these were meant to liberate them, he said, from 'the tyranny of the tailor.' He opposed all modern dress, including underwear except for warmth, his own preference in cold weather being lady's knickers of scarlet Ceylonese silk. Pepler wore a full tweed suit beneath his smock. Beneath his, Jones always wore at least a shirt and trousers.⁵

The workmen and their families resembled costumed Merry Englanders, but their medievalism was rooted in work and religion. All tools and activities were pre-industrial except Pepler's presses, though they were hand operated. The women cooked on open fires. Ditchling medievalism was less a pretense than that of Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris, because of the language, vestments, ritual, customs, social orders, and theology of Catholicism. They were mostly classical in origin and medieval in form.⁶ By 1924, after two and a half years of Catholic immersion, Jones was, in a sense, over seven hundred years old. The same might then have been said then of any practicing Catholic, but Jones's experience was more intensively medieval than most. He now conformed to an archetype that will appear in his poetry, the figure who has lived into the present from the remote past.

The daily schedule combined work and prayer after the monastic model. At set times, the workmen met in the chapel to read aloud the hours of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, a shortened form of the Divine Office prayed by monks and priests. A bell outside Gill's workshop, rung usually by Gill, summoned the workers to prayer, the women being too busy to attend. The day began at 6 a.m. with the Angelus, after which they went to the chapel, entering

through the sacristy and sitting on oak benches facing each other along the walls. Together they recited Prime, which, like the other hours, consists basically of three psalms and a hymn. After Prime they meditated and by 8 were in their workshops. At 9 they returned to the chapel to recite Tierce and then either lingered to talk or returned to work. Shortly after 11 they gathered to recite None, then dispersed to their homes for a hot meal. The noon Angelus brought them back to the chapel for Sext, after which they returned to their workshops. Late in the afternoon, they assembled in Gill's workshop for a half-hour of tea and discussion—all smoked and, while conversing, rolled cigarettes. At 6, after the Angelus, they returned to the chapel for Vespers and the rosary, and after that went to their homes for a cold supper. At 9 they reassembled in the chapel for Compline by candlelight and then went home to bed. On Sundays and feast-days, Vespers and Compline were sung, with as many of the women joining in as had time.⁷

On Saturday evenings many of the workmen and members of their families went to confession. They walked to Burgess Hill or to Ditchling village to catch a bus to Keymen. Those who did not wish to confess went to a pub and were joined later by the freshly absolved.⁸

On Sundays, they usually attended Mass a mile-and-a-half across the Common at St. George's Retreat, a convent whose nuns cared for the insane. Catholics then fasted from waking till receiving Communion, and Jones dreaded walking to Mass in the cold wind on an empty stomach. On Saturday nights he would sometimes say, 'Soon we shall have to face the question of whether we lapse.' The priest at St. George's was old, rheumatic, cranky, and hostile to the bearded, besmocked craftsmen and, one Sunday morning, berated Jones like a Sergeant Major for coming to Mass with muddy shoes.⁹

Afternoons on Sundays and feast days were given over to sports on the Community Field and long walks, often involving picnics. Holiday evenings were spent in one of the houses, often in the open-beamed kitchen of Gill's house. Someone fetched the best beer from the favourite local pub, the Royal Oak, near the north gate of the Common close to where Havelock Ellis lived. On Christmas and high feast days, they made beer into grog in a large copper pan on an open fire. Gill would bring out his flageolet, and his daughters would sing carols and English folk songs—they knew a vast number by heart and, during washing-up, would vie with one another to see who could remember the most. Gill, too, would sing. Jones first heard 'John

Barleycorn' from him and learned from him to sing 'Six Dukes,' which in later years he would sing for friends. Many folk songs moved him 'very deeply'. They were now his favourite secular music. Negro spirituals were also sung, and, hearing them for the first time, he considered them the finest religious music after Gregorian chant. Parties broke for Compline in the chapel and afterwards resumed with more singing and drinking, frequently concluding with all singing together 'Green Grow the Rushes-O.'¹⁰

On a clear day from the hill above St. George's Retreat, they could see the neo-gothic spire of St. Hugh's Charterhouse ten miles (as the crow flies) to the northwest. It was the largest monastery in England, built at Parkminster near Cowfold at the end of the previous century for Carthusians expelled from France. On the evening of Saturday 28 January, Jones, Gill, Pepler and Maxwell walked to Burgess Hill and took a bus from there to Parkminster. They entered the monastery through its massive gateway and were led past a stall displaying for sale religious objects that elicited their aesthetic scorn. In the men's guest house within the cloister, they were served a meal, as they would be also the next day, by a monolingual brother repeatedly exclaiming, '*Comme c'est belle, la vie contemplative!*' The Prior, a friend of Gill and Pepler, stopped by to greet them. When he left, the visitors lit cigarettes, exhaling the smoke up the chimney on the assumption that smoking was forbidden here.¹¹

Gill and Jones agreed to attend the chanting of the night office, which consists of Matins and Lauds. Jones's first experience of Gregorian chant had been an Introit at a weekday High Mass in Westminster Cathedral in 1919. Hearing it, he understood for the first time Plato's definition of music as 'a movement of sound which, by some means unknown to us, reaches the soul.' He was eager to hear monks sing the chant. At nine they went to their beds to sleep between itchy woolen sheets. Near midnight, awakened by a bell calling the monks to office, he and Gill dressed and went together through a hallway to a gallery opening high at the back of the monastery church. The monks entered: brothers in brown capes over white tunics, priests in white cowls covering scapulars and tunics. In the candle-lit darkness, they began singing, and the experience was for Jones 'overwhelming.' This was 'so infallibly what the heart desires & the whole being lifts up.'¹² The singing lasted an hour, then he and Gill returned to their beds.

They and the others awoke and attended Sunday Mass at eight. Then Gill and Pepler

talked with the Abbot, while Jones and Maxwell were shown round the abbey. After lunch they walked home, arriving at six.

Deeply impressed by the atmosphere and way of life at the Charterhouse, and especially by the chant, Jones began to consider becoming a monk. Some weeks later Gill wrote to Desmond Chute, ‘David J. ‘got the wind up’ properly and has hardly yet got over the feeling that as he is single and without ties,’ he should devote his life to God as a monk.¹³

Wanting ‘very much to become a monk of some sort’, on 4 November he began a ten-day retreat for the purpose of discerning whether he had a vocation. He stayed in the guest house, where the guest master, Dom Paschal Jefferys, celebrated Mass at 7 a.m., supplied him with spiritual reading, and gave him private conferences and spiritual direction. Jones attended the singing of the office, which sounded ‘primitive ... *immensely* ancient & coming up from the deeps.’ The night office in the numinous candle-lit darkness took him back, he felt, to primitive Christianity. For the rest of his life, he would prefer the chant to any other kind of music, all of which seemed to him less ‘real’. It would be one of the principal precedents for his poetry, which is, like plainsong, ‘unmeasured, irregular in stress and interval, of interior rhythm’ (A 63). In the chant, form and content are indistinguishable because the words sung are not, as in most other vocal music, subordinated to melody. Unable to express what such singing meant to him, he said, Dunbar’s ‘hodiern, modern, sempitern, angelicall’ came close, adding,

it makes all other musical forms however stupendous and of no matter what greatness—even Bach—seem ... self-consciously “grand”—“religious,” yes, but a bit like Milton’s “religious solemn musick,” “organ-like.” Airborne? Well yes, but more as a powerful aeroplane is “air-borne”—one is aware of the *engines*. Whereas in the Chant the *gravitas and gaiety & lightness* seem more like the unconscious flight & song of a bird, and, of course, it evokes echoes of every stratum of Xtian modal chant, back through the long centuries, back indeed in *some* of its origins to the chant used in the Palestine of the 1st Cent’ and sung at the Last Supper.¹⁴

When he spoke in this way to the guest master and asked about becoming a monk, Dom Jefferys told him that he was enjoying the chant for aesthetic, not religious, reasons, and insisted that he stop attending the night office. About this Jones later agreed: ‘it *had nothing whatever to do with my theological etc. convictions or feelings*—it was just an aesthetic thing.’ He discussed the possibility of his becoming a monk with the prior, Dom Peter Pepin. Noticing in conversation that Jones’s chief interest was art and concluding that his vocation was to be an artist, the prior

advised him 'to find a good Catholic girl' to marry, have a large family, and join the guild of St. Joseph and St. Dominc. Jones said, 'Well, I don't reckon that's up my street either,' and the Pepin replied, 'You artists are difficult people.' In any event, there was no possibility of his entering this monastery. Carthusians accepted as postulants only men who had been Catholics for at least eleven years. When another young man, Reginald Lawson, left Ditchling in 1924 to become a postulant with the Benedictines, Gill wrote Chute that 'David J. wd. have been in the same boat but that he, unlike R.L., was a man with a definite trade & a definite vocation to that trade—& so has pulled through.' One summer day in 1923, he had an experience that may have sealed his sense of not having a monastic vocation. He, Gill and Pepler went again to the Charterhouse, walking the full twelve miles. On arriving, tired, he sat in the cloister while the others went to visit the prior. A passing monk asked him whether he was comfortable, and he replied, 'Yes, thank you,' to which the monk said, 'Then think whether our Lord was comfortable on the cross.' Rising immediately, Jones quick-marched to the monastery gate and asked the doorkeeper for directions to the nearest pub, where he made himself even more comfortable and was subsequently joined by Gill and Pepler. Back home in Brockley, Father Balfontaine would occasionally urge him to join a religious order where 'bells instead of the mademoiselles' tell you what to do, and Jones would reply, 'But Father, I have no vocation to the Religious Life, I'm told.'¹⁵

In addition to occasional visits to the Carthusians, Jones and his new friends were regularly and for long periods visited by Dominicans, who contributed much to the medievalism at Ditchling. Dominican culture was pre-Reformation, the order having been founded in the thirteenth century. As a group, they were humanistic, well educated, broadly cultured, unpuritanical, and comfortable in the world. Through association with them, the Guild workmen, including Jones, were learning to use in their thinking the concepts and distinctions of the most famous Dominican, Thomas Aquinas.

Most visiting friars came from the Dominican Priory at Haverstock Hill in Hampstead. Among them was short, bearded John-Baptist Reeves, a gifted debater, sympathetic listener, and much sought-after confessor. Others included Vincent McNabb and Austin Barker, both social radicals, and John McQuillan and Patrick Flood, both with doctorates in philosophy and teaching

appointments in Glasgow. Flood was a Welsh-o-phile, which endeared him to Jones. The political sympathy of these priests was with workers and the poor. This was true generally of the Catholic Church in England, for, since re-establishment in 1850, it identified with the largely Irish poor in the slums of industrial cities.¹⁶ Priests and religious were encouraged to promote social justice even if this discomfited the political establishment.

McNabb was the most frequent of the Dominican visitors. A bald, craggy-faced Irishman with a high forehead, deep-set eyes, and narrow, protruding chin, he always wore his white and black Dominican habit and big black boots. Although rigorously ascetic, he complained of indigestion caused by fasting. His puritanical disposition was mitigated by Thomistic insistence on the goodness of nature, which led him to support Gill's eroticism in its early manifestations. An avid Thomist with a then-rare master's degree in theology, he was highly argumentative, having honed his rhetorical skills in years of public debate. Entering a workshop to talk, he would neither sit nor warm himself by the fire nor accept a cup of tea but stand cheerless and apart, monologuing without pausing even for questions.

George Maxwell once asked Jones, who was going up to London, to visit the Dominican house at Haverstock Hill in order to put a question on social justice to McNabb. On arrival, he asked to see the priest, who entered the parlour talking. Recalling the question with which he was charged, Jones waited for a pause, but in vain. McNabb took him out and walked him round and round the vegetable garden behind the monastery, telling him that he must go out into the country, cut down four trees and build a house with them and dig a garden. Eventually Jones backed to the door. McNabb followed, talking. At the outer door, Jones went down on one knee for a blessing. Talking, McNabb went down on both knees. Jones bowed his head. McNabb descended to all fours. Jones sank lower; McNabb, lower still, without breaking eye-contact or ceasing talking. Eventually, unable to sink any further, McNabb gave his blessing, and Jones escaped, not having said a word.¹⁷

Gill admired McNabb. Maxwell revered him. Jones thought him 'futile & a bore.' He and Pepler avoided him whenever possible, but in a workshop there was often no escape. Jones did, however, enjoy one thing McNabb said, that hearing confessions of nuns 'was like being nibbled to death by ducks.'¹⁸

Gill, his wife, Pepler, and Maxwell belonged to the Dominican ‘third order,’ which was a lay auxiliary, friars being the first order, nuns the second. As ‘tertiaries’, they were to live ‘in the world’ as married people but were obliged to pray the Little Office daily. Gill and Pepler thought that being tertiary in the Order of Preachers authorized them to denounce art dealers, bankers, machines and pre-processed food.¹⁹ The Ditchling tertiary elected Gill as ‘prior’ even though a tertiary could not have or be a prior. Gill liked to pretend. Most who joined or associated themselves for long with the Guild became Dominican tertiary.

On many evenings, in the candle-lit kitchen of Gill’s or Pepler’s house, Jones listened as Dominican friars argued with one another and with Gill, Pepler and Maxwell in the high scholastic manner. The air was full of the concepts and the vocabulary of Aristotle, Duns Scotus, and Aquinas. There was much defining of terms and making of distinctions between form and matter, means and ends, intellect and will, tool and machine. Scholastic slogans abounded, such as ‘the right reason of the thing to be done’ and ‘doing follows being’.²⁰ The ‘final cause’ was the purpose of the thing being made; the ‘material cause’ was the medium; the ‘efficient cause’ was the technique and tools; and the ‘formal cause’ was the essence of the work as intended and perceived in the imagination of the maker during creation.

Jones took part in discussion but never argued. He later recalled ‘those comic Dominicans ... who used to hold up all conversation by saying: “Let us distinguish & sub-distinguish”’ and would commemorate them in a fictional ship’s chaplain infuriating a crewmate by saying ‘Sirs, consider nautics, is it in itself a good’ (*A* 149)? Jones’s impression of scholastic argument was, however, generally positive. Upon first experiencing it, he felt a ‘sense of *reality*’ akin to that which he associated with other aspects of Catholicism. He loved the ‘vitalizing, invigorating, sense-making, illuminating precision’ of this kind of thinking. Years later he would say that scholasticism had gone wrong, in his view, only when it veered away from Aristotle to Plato with William of Ockham and Nominalism, which he first learned of and came to dislike at Ditchling.²¹

Thomism was the chief Dominican contribution to the workmen on the Common and to Jones. He read little Aquinas. His copy of the first part of the *Summa Theologica*, given to him at

Ditchling in 1923 by Reggie Lawson, is unmarked* He was, however, exposed to the fullness of Thomistic thought in conversation with Dominicans and lay Thomists as he would be over the next quarter century. He would always insist that he was a Thomist. More than the theology, he was interested in the metaphysics, particularly as it illuminates aesthetics. Especially congenial to him was Aquinas's belief that all aspects of being are united by resemblances. This appealed to an analogical sensibility in Jones, which would account for unusual correspondences in his visual art and poetry. He liked Aquinas, furthermore, because Aquinas was a poet and had a sense of humour.^{22†}

For Jones the most important Thomistic doctrine was that nature is real and good. It eliminated the dualism between matter and spirit which, he now realized, had characterized his pre-Catholic religious faith. He had been, he later said, a Marcionite. Like second century gnostic Marcion, he had believed that after creating the physical universe God deserted it until descending from heaven as Jesus, not incarnate but disguised in a body. Marcion became a Manichaeon, an abhorrer of flesh and physical nature. Jones later said, 'that is not me.' In Aquinas's Aristotelian non-dualistic view, the body and soul are essentially inseparable. The life of a body *is* its soul or 'form.' The body is no Marcionite illusion or husk to be shed by the Platonic soul. Years later, when endorsing Teilhard de Chardin's description of dualism as a trap that 'a kind of human spirit' succumbs to, he recalled his own early dualistic inclinations.²³

As he came to understand the Aristotelian-Thomistic notion of 'form' not as shape but as 'informing principle,' he saw analogies with art. Form (soul) is to body as form is to content in art.²⁴ When fully achieved, a work of art consists of a single 'form-content,' as he called it. Without this unity, it fails fully to exist.

Aristotelian ontology also implies a distinction, explicit in Thomistic epistemology, between the particular and the universal. Gill often emphasized these as dimensions of artistic truth. The form of a specific tree (whether living or drawn) is its own particular essence but also

* Neither did he read much Aristotle. Later in life he would object to a reviewer claiming that he was steeped in Aristotle and tell a friend that he had read only Aristotle on art in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

† He saw evidence of Aquinas's humour in the statement that 'the heart of man is supported neither by temperate nor intemperate drinking but by the grace of God.'

identifies it with all other trees. The distinction illuminates possibility in art. Jones would write, 'in each particular the general should shine out.' In his own art, he was now emphasizing truth in its general aspect by discarding the details that differentiate in favour of the commonalities that generalize. In 1928, Gill would write that when Jones paints a lamp post it is 'all lamp posts,' a 'universally seen lamp post.'²⁵

In the dairy attic he was soon joined by Denis Tegetmeier and, on 11 July, by Reginald Lawson—both of them sent by John Baptist Reeves, who, like the other Dominicans, regarded Ditchling as a rehabilitation centre. Jones enjoyed an easy friendship with both.²⁶

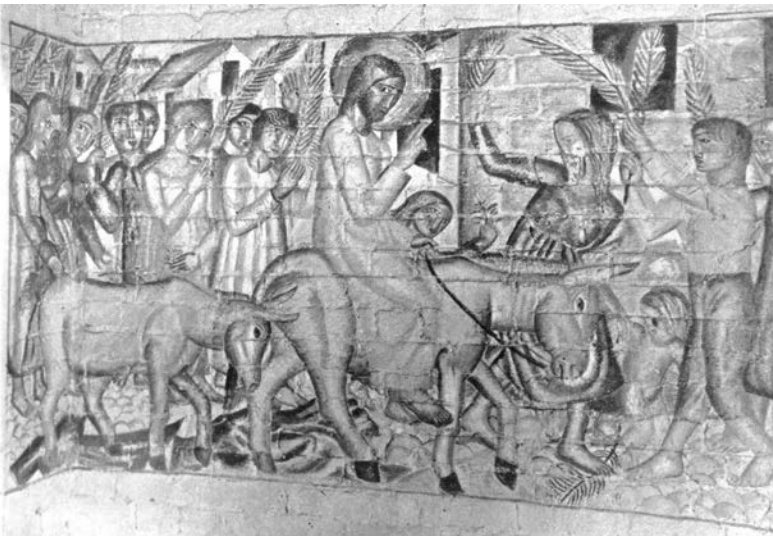
Tegetmeier was his age, tall, blond, and handsome, resembling Rupert Brooke and, it would later be remarked, Garry Cooper. After working beside Jones the previous summer, he had gone to his family in London, then into the country to help a brother run a chicken farm. He now returned to apprentice himself to Gill as a letter-carver. A former art student, he had served in the Horse Artillery at Ypres, and had taken part in covering the British retreat during the great German offensive in the spring of 1918. Unlike Jones, who talked freely about the war, he could not bear to speak of it. He had an appealing sense of humour but obviously suffered from shellshock in the forms of insomnia, depression, irritability, and rage.²⁷

Lawson was thirty-one years old, the youngest son of an affluent father who had invented the modern prototype bicycle, had helped develop the motor car, and was now in prison for fraud. After serving as a stretcher-bearer in the Ypres salient in 1914, Lawson had been invalided out of the war with measles. After the war he had a brief, successful career in films as a writer and bit-actor. He became a Catholic after discussing the matter with John Galsworthy, whose play *The Skin Game* he was adopting for film. His career in cinema ended with a nervous breakdown. He had been actively homosexual but was now chaste, which he found liberating. He wanted to become a lay brother in a religious order, preferably the Dominicans, but Reeves, who had received him into the Church, persuaded him to put off such a decision. Although a gifted pianist and writer, Lawson had no craft, so he worked on Pepler's farm, gardened, did odd jobs such as brewing beer, and taught the Gill and Pepler children math and music. He played the flute and joined Gill regularly in the evenings for what Gill called 'whistle practice'. In later

years, Jones came to think of him as ‘a real person and a marvellous one ... for he understands deeply and subtly and feels intensely and is utterly without self-pity.’ Two years later, Lawson would depart for Quarr Abbey on the Isle of Wight to try his vocation as a lay brother.²⁸

In the summer of 1922, when none of the three bachelors showed signs of moving on or marrying, Gill and the Guild decided to convert a small (48 x 16 feet) carriage shed into quarters for bachelors. The conversion was made possible by the arrival of a fourth, older bachelor, a cousin of Katherine Mansfield named Burrell Payne, whom Jones later remembered as ‘very civilized & nervously ill.’ Payne had spare capital, which he agreed to invest in the building and its renovations. A brick wall was built dividing the shed into a sitting room and a kitchen-dining room. Over the sitting room Maxwell laid a plank ceiling, supporting a dormitory beneath the rafters. The kitchen-dining room remained open under the roof and was furnished with a table and stove. The water-closet was outside. When renovations were complete in the spring of 1923, Jones and Payne moved in, and Tegetmeier and Lawson soon joined them. Because the outside walls were a single-brick thick and the brick floor rested on clay, the cottage was damp and cold. Jones’s mattress grew mildew. In winter, water left in basins froze overnight.²⁹

Payne soon left Ditchling, suffered a nervous breakdown, and spend the rest of his life in an asylum. At his departure, he left Jones a beautiful set of razors—a gift that caused ‘a certain amount of amusement’ possibly because Jones was then, like the other Guild workmen, bearded.



1. David Jones, *Entry into Jerusalem*, 1922

After two days of discussion with Jones, Tegetmeier, and Lawson, Gill began to regard them as his ‘novices’ and, as he says in his diary of August 25, under obedience to him ‘pro tem.’ Gill decreed Lawson head of the house. Tegetmeier was the housekeeper, Lawson the cook. Lawson later said that he and Tegetmeier spoiled Jones.³⁰

To commemorate taking possession, Jones painted on the newly whitewashed

north and west kitchen walls Jesus entering Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (fig.1). He was inspired by the surface, exclaiming appreciatively to Lawson, ‘That’s a wall, that is!’ First he made a small watercolour study, which he later gave to Petra Gill. In evenings and on Sundays he worked on the mural using oil paints. He painted with immense enjoyment, Lawson remembered, and with a strong sense of the event he was re-presenting. As he worked, he spoke about processions and exclaimed, ‘There’s people for you! The people of God, and who is this but Christ the Lord to keep you company.’ He entitled the mural *Cum Floribus et Palmis* but usually referred to it as *The Entry into Jerusalem*. The sight of it would move to tears William Rothenstein, principal at the Royal College of Art. It is the only one of his wall paintings that Jones would continue to like. Forty years later, when he heard that it had been whitewashed over, he regretted ‘the loss,’ saying that he retained ‘a bit of affection for that one.’^{31*}

He wanted to be a mural painter, an aspiration rooted in childhood viewing of Thornhill’s nearly hallucinatory murals in the painted hall of the Royal Naval College at Greenwich and encouraged by pre-war art-training.[†] Shortly before coming to Ditchling, he had read Cennino Cennini’s treatise on quattrocento tempora and fresco painting. Now he planned to revive the art of wall-painting on a grand scale in permanent colours. When Joan Gill sent him a drawing for his birthday, he wrote to her: ‘It would be superb enlarged 500 times & painted on a very large wall.’ In addition to *Cum Floribus et Palmis*, he painted in the cottage a crucifix over the door and another over the fireplace.[‡] On the whitewashed tongue-in-groove walls of Maxwell’s carpentry shop he painted three murals: a



2. David Jones, *Jesus Mocked*, 1922

* In recent years, the mural has been uncovered and restored.

† At Camberwell in 1910-11, a Professor Moira gave a series of public lectures on murals and the course in design co-taught by Savage and Hartrick in 1913-14 was partly devoted to ‘Mural Decoration.’

‡ The first of these was destroyed years later when a ceiling was built over the kitchen; the second was smoke-blackened beyond saving.

small crucifixion scene, a round-faced St. Dominic, and a large picture of the mockery of Jesus (fig. 2). For most of the next decade, he wanted to paint murals, an ambition he later considered ridiculous. In 1947, memory of it caused him to exclaim ‘really, the nonsense one has imagined!’³²

To Pepler’s cheerful son Stephen, who visited from school during holidays, the denizens of the cottage seemed ‘a rather depressed lot’ Petra thought them ‘all in a state of indecision and misery.’ A later arrival thought them ‘not doleful people but at a loss about how to earn a living.’³³ In the autumn of 1922, Betty Gill called the bachelors in the cottage ‘the Sorrowful Mysteries,’ which then became the name of the building.

Sorrowful Mysteries, the cottage, was in a paddock in a corner of a meadow with two pigsties and a cow shed, of which the bachelors were given charge. They procured a goat (for milk), rabbits, and two pigs—Jones often fed the pigs, first mixing their food in two great bins. They planted two dozen fruit trees and established three skeps of bees. A menace to the young trees, the goat had to be expelled and its milk replaced by that of Mary Gill’s cows, delivered by Joan every afternoon. Women cooked the midday meal and did laundry, for which they were paid in pork, home-brewed beer, and rabbits. The cottage-mates brought in wood, cleared hedges and ditches, scoured barrels, and collected fodder for the pigs from neighbours. The following spring, the two stock-pigs produced eight successors and were slaughtered, the meat being distributed among the community. That summer the three bachelors acquired a seven-ton hayrick and worked with it to pay some of the interest on Payne’s investment.³⁴

Jones and his two housemates were now partaking fully in the Guild’s experiment in Distributism, a movement expounded by Belloc in *The Servile State* (1912), which Jones read and would increasingly consider prophetic as the events of the century unfolded. Also promoted by G.K. Chesterton, Distributism advocated small-scale agriculture and widespread small ownership of tools and land as a guarantee of full employment, professional responsibility, and political liberty. The aims of the movement were to eliminate mass production, powerful banks, socialist collectives, and state-control. Gill and Pepler were committed Distributists, but the chief ideologue of the movement was McNabb, who emphasized moving back to the land and living as he had seen large families live in Ireland, surviving on what they grew. Currently he was urging

the workmen to campaign for land-reform subversively along the lines of Sinn Fein.³⁵

Jones was now a convinced Distributist and would remain one until the late 1930s, when he would see the agrarian aspect of Distributism as unrealistic. In later life, he said, at Ditchling ‘we had it jolly nice ... but if 100,000 people from Birmingham had descended on us we would have been in trouble.’³⁶ The Distributist League would survive until the start of the Second World War, after which many of its principles would be incorporated in the highly successful Basque industrial communes, whose economic model is neither capitalist nor socialist.

Distributism was the positive aspect of Jones’s aversion to industrialism, which was now the focus of his post-war dissatisfaction with civilian life. He fully endorsed Gill’s protest against factories as an expression of capitalist greed and a new imperialism. The factory system had produced a servile state worse than imperial Rome, Gill said, because slavery was now mental. Workers do not make; they merely do. Consequently, they are dehumanized, reduced to mere tools to make money for owners of the means of production, distribution, and exchange. The only fully human person (i.e. artist) involved in any industrial production is the design engineer. Jones appreciated this from having been an infantryman acting under orders while knowing ‘no more than do those hands who squirt cement till siren screams, who are indifferent that they rear an architect’s folly’ (*IP* 87). The Ditchling workmen thought capitalistic profit contemptible as a primary aspiration. Socialism is no better, they thought, since it replaces many capitalists with one capitalist, the state, which likewise annuls individual responsibility. They considered capitalism and socialism as, while not actually sinful, opposed to Catholic Christianity.³⁷

Jones no longer painted to illustrate. In 1922 he made a good many small watercolour drawings in the style of his mural, *Cum Floribus et Palmis*. They were, he later said, ‘stylized, conventionalized, ... imitative of primitive Christian art.’ Some were inspired by the Roman *Martyrology* read aloud daily at lunch with the Gills. Three were for Maxwell, depicting St George slaying the dragon, a deposition, and Sts Peter and Paul. Two were of Ignatius of Antioch, whom Jones liked for being the Church Father most open to pagan wisdom. On the feast of the Exaltation of the



3. David Jones, *Sancta Helena*, 1922

Cross (its discovery by St. Helena), he sent Petra Helen Gill a postcard on which he painted the



4. David Jones, *S. Gregory who sent S. Augustine to England*, 1922

saint praying to Christ crucified (fig.3). He liked St Helena because she was the British mother of Constantine and united in legend Britain, the crucifixion, and imperial Rome. He gave pictures of the Presentation and the Flight into Egypt to Pepler, and painted a close-up of the crucifixion. Works of religious devotion, they are also attempts to become modern through

primitivism, something many of his contemporaries were doing by

imitating African art. His hieratic, iconographic style was motivated, he later said, by ‘hatred of the “Academic”, a terror of the slick and a loathing of the sentimental, and, of course, a despising of the immediate past.’ He was also influenced by Post-Impressionist flight from any display of technical sophistication.³⁸

Jones made a watercolour of ‘S. Gregory who sent S. Augustine to England’ in 1922 (fig. 4). He especially liked Gregory for being motivated by the beauty of English slaves. The picture is a triptych: on the left Gregory blesses an Angle slave-couple; on the right Augustine blesses the Kentish king and queen; in the centre is a lovely drawing of the ship bearing Augustine and corresponding to the Holy Spirit flying above, whose wings conceptually rhyme with the ship’s sails. The waves indicate a headwind and mirror the clouds. Structurally, this picture anticipates *The Anthemata* in several respects, including a balance around centrality, which is not merely the central panel but the ship midway between top and bottom margins.

Deliberately naïve and simplified, the figures in these drawings are, like Gill’s drawn figures, sculptural. The clean, sharp edges and shading emphasize contour, solidity, volume. They resemble relief carvings and are obviously influenced by Gill carvings in relief, while

remaining, in crude vitality, free of the technical slickness of Gill's human figures. Like reliefs, these pictures diminish or discard perspective—a subject he debated with Gill and others. Smallness almost requires diminished perspective. Seeing examples of his new work, his former teacher of perspective, Walter Bayes, considered him 'a deserter'. Jones was also reacting against conventional depiction of light and shade. He used to paraphrase from a book on drawing, 'The excellence of the art lies in making round objects appear on a flat surface,' and would add that this was done for centuries through chiaroscuro, which is academic and out of date, and that now 'we must not use light & shade but we may smooch the edges with black.'³⁹

His primitive Christian style was a modification of the style of his pre-war Camberwell drawings with heavily rendered dark outer edges and was a style then widely in vogue. Later he would say that it was 'awfully reflective of what for convenience one might call a "London Group" technique' or the then current 'tendency among various art-students to at all costs be rid of "looseness," "naturalism," & "impressionism" and try to make "formal shapes."'⁴⁰

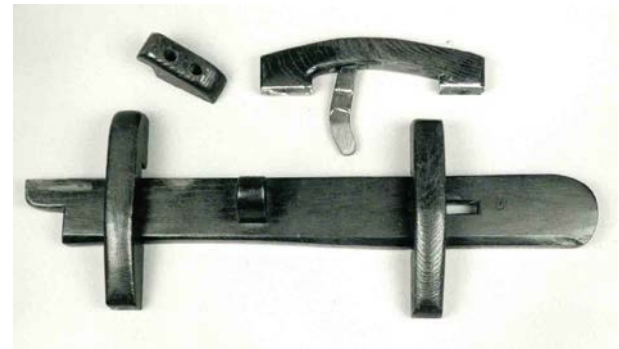


5. David Jones, *The Garden Path*, 1922

His experimentation with perspective and lighting led to the breakthrough, for him, of broken perspective in 1924, when he worked in one of the few larger, fully-rendered paintings done at Ditchling. In *The Garden Path*, made behind Gill's house (fig. 5), the wall and bottom of the house obey the rules of perspective while the brick path outrageously violates them. Visually the path is an erect nearly vertical column even though its far edge is crossed by iris leaves. Its visual verticality continues in, and is confirmed by, the trees beyond. Corollary to the liberation of the path from perspective, the house seems to float above the ground. Compliance with and rebellion against perspective constitute the principal contrast in this study of contrasts. There is also antithesis in lighting: from the right in the background but not in much of the foreground. The organic curves and fluff of plants contrast with the straight lines of the path, building and wall, which achieve rectangular

intensity in the bricks in the walk and the top of the wall and in the slates on the roofs. Synthesis between curves and straight line is present in the Romanesque far upper-floor window, the trees, and the slight concave surface of bricks on the path. But this merely extends contradiction, between antithesis and synthesis, which gives this picture it life.

In 1922 as an apprentice carpenter, he learned about and came to love wood, its kinds and qualities, and learned how to sharpen and care for tools, skills he needed as an engraver. But he learned little else. He was unable to cut and plane straight and square in order to mortise and tenon. Dovetails are supposed to be air-tight; his were out an eighth of an inch. He preferred shape to be awry, perversely it seemed to Maxwell. Jones made a wooden box to hold his



6. David Jones, Ditchling door latches. 1922

engraved woodblocks, its sides and corners wildly out of true. He was incompetent at the measurement and mathematics of carpentry. Maxwell gave him a ruler. Jones used it primarily to draw straight lines. He had difficulty associating tools with their intended purposes and often used the wrong tool for a job. He did not fasten wood in a vice but held it in one hand while pushing at it with a chisel in the other. When shown how to twist bolts into wood with a ratcheted Archimedean driver, he locked it and used it as an ordinary wrench, laboriously turning it round and round.⁴¹

Long-suffering Maxwell set him to various tasks, and found that one he could perform well was making wooden door-latches after a design by Gill (fig. 6).⁴² Beautiful in simplicity



7. David Jones, Puppets, 1922

and proportion, these kept him busy carving, sanding, and polishing. He was unable, however, to install them. Maxwell had to do that.

Carving, was relief from carpentry. For the Gill children he made four hand-puppets, one for each, three girls and a boy (fig. 7). He carved head, neck, and shoulders in the round out of a single piece of wood and painted-on the face and hair. He inserted

sticks into the bottoms as hand grips and drilled the holes at the base of the shoulders to attach cloth.⁴³

The only surviving work of carpentry, strictly speaking, that is identifiably Jones's is a toy medieval village.* It consists of nine small, separate buildings. The highest is three inches; the longest, four inches. He made cottages and a windmill (with turning spokes) of single blocks and glued together two or more blocks to make three larger church-like buildings with towers. He painted all of them light grey with auburn roofs and drew with ink Romanesque arched windows and shingles or lines of thatch. Their construction is simply a matter of sawing, but they are all slightly irregular.

As it became apparent that he would never make a carpenter, tension grew between him and Maxwell, and they spent less of their free time together. Referring to Maxwell in the winter of 1924, Jones would quote from Chaucer, 'this silly man, this carpenter,' though he later acknowledged having been himself 'the world's worst carpenter,' 'more a bloody nuisance than anything else.' With four years yet to go in his apprenticeship, to Maxwell's immense relief, he quit.⁴⁴

Although incompetent as a joiner, he had gained immediate knowledge of one term in the Welsh-bardic metaphor for poetry, 'carpentry of song.' Practice shaping and fitting together pieces of wood later influenced his poetry, the manuscripts of which would reveal an inclination to fit-together nearly finished pieces of writing in sequence but also one within another.

Having failed to master carpentry, he remained at Ditchling as a non-craftsman, unqualified for membership in the Guild. Sometimes he helped Gill with a job but never as an apprentice. He was, as he later put it, 'a sort of hanger-on', as Desmond Chute had been.⁴⁵

From the start he had engraved and now he had little else to do. He moved from Maxwell's carpentry shop into a shed, which became his engraving workshop, next to a new building that housed St. Dominic's Press. Pepler paid him a small amount per inch for engraved blocks, which became the property of the press to be used and reused at Pepler's discretion. This contravened the policy of the Bond Street Fine-Art Trade Guild, which insisted that engravers produce

* This and the puppets mentioned above are now exhibits in the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood.

limited editions and then destroy blocks or plates to increase the value of prints—a practice Pepler and Gill opposed as encouraging collection as capitalist investment. At Ditchling you could buy a print for a shilling, a signed print for five shillings. A visitor once wanted to buy one by Jones on condition that he ‘correct’ a slanted horizon, and he refused.⁴⁶ Prints were not often sold separately, however. Gill and Pepler insisted that engraving was not so much fine art as a means of providing illustrations for the press. Early on, Jones engraved for publication.

The press published a short monthly magazine entitled *The Game*. It contained juvenilia, comic verse by Pepler and others, and polemical essays by Gill. Before moving to Ditchling, Jones had contributed two wood engravings for covers, in October the Virgin giving the rosary to St. Dominic, in December a night-time nativity scene. He was engraving in intaglio (the lines printing white), which encourages spontaneity in design. And he liked intaglio because it does not entail cutting away large areas of the smooth-planed, sanded wood. He would feel the wood, caress it. Pepler noticed how different he was in this from Gill, who simply imposed his will on whatever medium he carved. Jones ‘had the grace,’ Pepler writes, ‘to love the wood and the feel of it’ and discerned its nature and brought its ‘life into his own.’⁴⁷ While liking the effect of intaglio, Jones was aware of the danger of the print looking ‘like a photographic negative’ or a chalk drawing on a blackboard. He would write that ‘only the *very simplest* of designs works in white on black. ... I think it works alright sometimes in very formal & ‘abstract’ designs but not in more “realistic” “visual,” “pictorial” ... designs.’⁴⁸ To mitigate the chalk-drawing effect, he began combining, on a single block, black-line with white-line engraving. This hybrid method would produce his best engravings.

Pepler completed Jones’s training as an engraver by ensuring that he engraved blocks that printed well with type. Pepler had a hard time, however, getting him to remember that printing reverses the image. This matters most when the engraving involves lettering. Cutting a commissioned bookplate, he failed to reverse the S of his client’s surname, which consequently printed backwards. He was surprised when she wanted it put right. Engraving a bookplate commissioned by Desmond Chute (for £4), he cut four or five letters the wrong way round. To fix this he had Maxwell inlay a piece of wood and then he recut, this time getting three letters wrong, to which Chute made no objection.⁴⁹

In these, his early engravings, he discovered division (a vertical dividing line) as a source of unity. He was influenced in this by the physical nature of the block. An engraving is cut in the end-grain of a hard wood block seldom more than two inches wide. For larger engravings, Maxwell bolted blocks together with brass rods. Where the edges joined and different grains met, a line appeared. Often Jones introduced a vertical division—a door-edge, a roof-support—to coincide with that line. This can be seen in his engravings for *The Game* of December 1922 and January 1923 (see also figs. 11 and 13 below). The unifying line of division would remain a favourite compositional device, visible, for instance, in the final full-page copper engraving of his *Ancient Mariner* illustrations (1929), and in his paintings entitled *The Farm Door* (1937), and *Vexilla Regis* (1947). The concept would influence the overall design of *The Deluge* and subsequently the structure of many of his poems—*The Anathemata* and ‘The Sleeping Lord,’ for example, which are centred by being divided at mid-length.

Initially division did not unify, as is evident in his covers for the 1922 issues of *The Game*. The theme for the year was the Ten Commandments, and Pepler and Gill had him divide each engraving into depictions of good and evil—as in the engraving for the fourth commandment: where Jesus on the right honours his father, and Absalom on the left does not (fig.8). The imposed moral antithesis was uncongenial to Jones and, Pepler later realized, hampered him in his work.⁵⁰



8. David Jones, *Honour thy Father*, 1922

Although a failure as design, this double engraving is an early manifestation of Jones’s analogical sensibility. Rebellious Absalom hangs from an oak tree, his head held high; obedient Jesus bows low over wood. Absalom is surrounded by enemies. Jesus has Joseph and Mary as co-workers (she brings drink). Absalom squirms away from the raised spears of soldiers, the points of which have their diminished antitheses in the zigzagging teeth of Jesus’s saw. The faces of Absalom and Jesus turn to the right and down, suggesting continuity. Beyond simple contrast, the hanging of Absalom forsignifies Jesus’s final act of obedience

pierced by a spear on the wood of the cross. Although the two joined pictures are compositionally separate, the line of the arm of Joseph-the-father-figure flows significantly into the limb from which Absalom hangs, and the wood that Joseph works on joins this limb.

It is an engraving to intrigue Freudians. Jones, like Jesus, was an apprentice carpenter and may have identified with Jesus, who would die obedient to God the Father and who exists here in typological correspondence (not mere antithesis) with the father whom Absalom dies in rebellion against. Jones had known Absalom's story since childhood as part of the biblical story of David. Since childhood, Jones may have identified with Absalom for his head had also been caught—stuck in a wooden chair—and while his father preached, he had thought that men with a saw would decapitate him. (In the picture, the saw becomes spears about to pierce the young man, their points mirrored in miniature by the saw teeth.) The figure of Absalom would continue to fascinate him, appearing in the manuscripts of his poetry as Jesus's fore-type, associated with the Golden Bough growing high in oak trees and symbolizing eternal life (*RQ* 116, 117, 195). The father-figures behind this engraving may include George Maxwell, against whom Jones felt rebellious stirrings, and Eric Gill.

Gill was certainly the dominant figure on the Common and now the most important person in Jones's life. He had trained not as a fine artist but as an architect and letterer and had worked for an architectural firm. As a draughtsman, engraver, and stone carver, he was technically impressive, his line and style being characteristic of the post-war continuation of Art Nouveau that would later be called Art Deco. Gill's best work—and Jones was convinced of this—was not in this style but his letter cutting, which was impersonal and timeless.⁵¹

Socially Gill was well connected. As Jones later said, 'You couldn't help but like Eric—even those who disagreed with him liked him.' A former Fabian, Gill knew Shaw, Wells, Bertrand Russell, and Leonard and Virginia Woolf. He knew Wilfred Meynell and his family, from whom he had sought information about the Catholic Church prior to joining it. He knew well the older generation of artists: Roger Fry, William Rothenstein, Augustus John, Frank Dobson, and Jacob Epstein—and, in London, he would introduce Jones to them. Jones liked Augustus John and got on well with Dobson and his wife. He disliked Epstein, though he thought

him unequalled as a modeller in clay and especially admired his sculptured Madonna over the door of a convent in Wigmore Street. Years later, he would meet him again, mellowed by age, and find to his surprise that he liked him.⁵²

Jones later said of Gill that ‘no one could be more *simple*, more integrated,’ yet ‘of such *complexity*.’ It would be impossible, he thought, to give a fair impression of him, and on that score considered Speaight’s biography of Gill a failure. As a man, Gill was optimistic, direct, accessible, curious, and practical, able to build furniture and houses. He radiated benevolence, understanding, wisdom, self-assurance, energy, and physical strength. Habitually disputatious, he was so forceful in personality that many who disagreed with him felt guilty about it, yet he was also a good listener. In argument, he used the chisel of logic convincingly to chip away dross, though he was often, Jones thought, ‘more than a little *simpliste* and naive.’ His thinking was tidy. For all his logic and neo-Thomist vocabulary, Gill argued, Jones thought, like a man in a pub. Truth, for him, was unambiguous, abstract, timeless, and amenable to syllogisms. In argument he stuck to the point but was prone to exaggerate and—although usually gentle, responsive, and patient—capable of vehemence. Jones later recalled, ‘in certain moods he would suddenly get very angry with me for letting slip a perfectly subjective & personal objection—I often copped out in that way! It was of course all part of his almost *unconscious* determination to see *everything* as OK for *everyone*.’ Jones thought this determination ‘salutary on the whole’ but realized that it was sometimes ridiculous, as when Gill flew into a rage at a workman for claiming to dislike apples.⁵³ His talk was much better than his writing, which is stilted, platitudinous. The positive side of his simplicity—and this made him such enjoyable company—was the freshness of his reactions. It was a quality he shared with Jones, which made conversation between them delightful for both.

In some respects Gill was emotionally shallow and insensitive. Jones thought him ‘appallingly bad at understanding human psychology’ and realized that this caused Gill and others considerable suffering. ‘I suppose,’ Jones would reflect, ‘it went with that other thing of imagining that if one beat a chap in argument that meant that one was right, whereas all it means is that one has been more able as an arguer than the other chap.’ Gill considered himself rational and ‘normal’ and expected either understanding and agreement or compliance from others. This

extended even to his dealings with cows, which exasperated him because they would not stay put. Although in many respects genuinely humble, he was a self-designated oracle, and emotionally self-centred. His daughter Petra would remember, ‘My father was very interested in talking to people who were interested in him. It was rather a subordinate relationship.’⁵⁴

He was quick to laugh and his conversation was full of fun. One of his jokes was about a Bishop dining with the Lord Lieutenant who whispered to the butler that the bishop was a teetotalter and would like some water. After sipping it, the bishop commented uncertainly, ‘Delicious’ and asked, ‘What is it?’—to which the butler replied ‘The Water of the Lord, your Pumpship!’ Another joke concerned two men drinking and discussing art. One said, ‘I prefer Chianti to Botticelli.’ The other replied, ‘You idiot, Botticelli is not a wine; it’s a cheeze.’⁵⁵



9. Jones and Eric Gill, photo by Brownlee, 1926

Jones and Gill shared an enthusiasm for Robert Browning. Jones ‘frequently’ read *Men and Women*, liking especially ‘The Bishop Orders his Tomb’ and ‘Bishop Bloughram’s

Apology.’ Twice, he listened to Gill reading ‘Bishop Bloughram’ aloud in its entirety, making asides and chuckling at parts he enjoyed most. In their ‘domestic and workshop banter,’ they quoted to one another with delight phrases and lines chiefly of this poem but also of others by Browning.⁵⁶

Gill loved Jones. He said of him, ‘What a loveable boy that is,’ and treated him, another workman remembered, as ‘something very special.’ Jones would remember him as ‘very loving, very affectionate.’ Of all Gill’s friends, Jones was, after Chute, closest to his heart. Gill enjoyed his intelligence and recorded in his diary Jones saying about a lecture Gill was to give entitled ‘Applied Sculpture’, ‘As though there were any other kind’ (18 Feb. 1922). Those closest to them, including Petra, said they were like father and son. To nineteen-year old Philip Mairet, who lived in Ditchling village with his mother, Jones seemed to revere Gill as a guru. One of Jones’s closest friends and an intimate of Gill after 1924, René Hague spoke of ‘the brainwashing’ Jones received at Ditchling. Another close friend is reported to have said that Gill so completely dominated Jones so that he was like a person unable to act without first obtaining his psychoanalyst’s approval. (This is Stuart Hampshire’s memory sixty years later of an impression expressed by Prudence Pelham in the 1930s.) And it is true that Gill and Jones were, to some extent, master and disciple. Jones learned from and, at the time, venerated Gill; but Jones was also, in important respects, impervious to pressure and extremely stubborn. Philip Hagreen, who knew them both well at Ditchling, remembered Jones as ‘strangely independent’, uninterested in learning anything Gill could teach, and ‘affectionate’ yet ‘detached’.⁵⁷ This contradiction is evident in a photograph of them (fig. 9), in which Jones sits close to Gill and wears the same style of glasses but is leaning away.

Combined dependence and autonomy may express difference in temperament. Jones was quiet, gentle, tentative, and accommodating; Gill was insistent, indefatigable, and domineering. There was, said Hagreen, ‘no resemblance’ between them, and if they were like son and father, as Hagreen agreed they were, they were also ‘gazelle & buffalo.’ Gill insisted that Jones follow his example in keeping accounts by recording the cost of materials and the hours of work for each job. Jones acquired a diary for this purpose and inscribed his name beautifully in the front but made no entry—all the pages are blank. Gill would come into Jones’s workshop and chastise

him for the disorder of his work space, calling his table ‘the altar on which you offer your work to God’ and insisting that it hold nothing but the tools for the job arranged in proper order. Jones responded by ordering his tools, but his table continued to be cluttered with mounds of books, brushes, papers, and his open paint-box, in which he put cigarette butts. Jones disagreed in principle with Gill’s insistence on tidy order. He thought that for himself and most artists it was unnatural and inimical to creation. This applied to time as well as space. He was astonished by Gill interrupting his engraving because his watch told him it was time for stone cutting.⁵⁸

Jones’s greater understanding of art precluded a complete take-over by Gill. Jones now admired Gill’s drawing, engraving, and sculpting, though within a year or two, as his own work became more subtle and complex, he would grow to dislike Gill’s slick, simple technical expertise. He was now certain that Gill’s doctrine of undoing former influences and beginning again as a craftsman was destructive. Sensing the danger for himself and knowing that he wanted to continue drawing and painting, he was able, as he later put it, to say ‘no’ to Gill, ‘I’ll do what I see to do.’ In retrospect he would cite as an example of Gill’s destructive influence Philip Haggren, whose complete subordination to Gill ruined him, Jones thought, as a painter.⁵⁹

Jones and Gill were in fundamental disagreement over the purpose of art. Although Gill spoke of pure devotion to beauty, he was largely interested in art for social, moral, purposes. For most of the winter of 1922-23, Gill was carving Jesus driving out moneychangers dressed as modern financiers. Jones would never, after his 1922 engravings on the commandments, use art for argument in this way. Gill believed that the artist/craftsman could immediately, on a broad scale, resist and repair cultural disintegration; Jones did not. He regarded Gill’s social optimism as an illusion that would not have withstood the experience of battle, which humbles the individual will.*

In addition to confusing artistic truth with propaganda, Gill also confused aesthetic delight with erotic pleasure. Jones thought—he discussed this with his cottage-mates, who agreed—that the eroticism in some of Gill’s work was pornographic. As Jones realized, this is an aesthetic fault. The intention sexually to arouse reduces objectivity and, like any ulterior motive, corrupts art, whose primary purpose is beauty. It was not a question of morality—he agreed

wholeheartedly with Gill about the essential innocence of sexual activity, and he did not mind frank sexual talk. He regarded Gill's interest in sex as obsessive but thought it not harmful to him as a person. He was 'a good man,' Jones writes, 'a wise man & a man in love with beauty,' though his art was diminished by extra-aesthetic intentions.⁶⁰ He seems not to have been aware of Gill's incest with his eldest daughter.

Gill and Jones both loved the Song of Songs, which eroticizes religion. To aid meditation on it, Gill made jointed paper puppets to manipulate into sexual positions. For him its theme of marriage between God and man meant, as he put it, being 'being fucked by Christ.' Jones did not identify with the figure of the bride in this way or feel his soul female to God. This may be why he later found it impossible 'to get into' the poems of St John of the Cross.⁶¹ For him, the Bride is the Church or mankind and also, in his imagination, the goddess of pagan religion, a sort of female adjunct to the Trinity whom he associated with Mary and Mother Earth, and for whom he felt the combined attraction of devotee, lover, and son.

There were other areas of disagreement. They believed that the artist was homeless in contemporary society and without a tradition in which to work. For Gill and others at Ditchling this was regrettable but not for Jones. He rejoiced that for the first time in history the absence of tradition left the artist free. Gill endorsed the Arts and Crafts movement's antipathy to modernism; Jones did not. They differed in their appreciations. Gill loved and would read aloud Bridges' *The Testament of Beauty*, which Jones thought 'a bloody bore on the whole.' Gill regarded Jones's interests in cultural anthropology and history as a waste of time and distraction from work, and he said so. Yet Jones continued his reading, which included, at Ditchling, Spengler's *The Decline of the West*, and he continued to pursue his interests 'in 'comparative religion' & mythology.'⁶² His detailed knowledge of history and his exploring of cultural anthropology gave his thinking perspective and depth that Gill lacked and could not appreciate.

Jones was emotionally attached to Gill and intellectually receptive, but he was also aesthetically and intellectually autonomous. Later he described Gill as 'someone to whom one owes a debt of gratitude at a certain period of one's life but with whom one disagreed in all sorts of ways, but whose friendship remained altogether independent of the disagreements.' And he

* Gill's military service was limited to a few months at the end of the war in an RAF transport camp in Dorset.

acknowledged ‘the clarifying ideas’ of Gill as ‘at that time, and for me, of very great value.’⁶³

The best of these ideas were borrowed from *Art et Scolastique* (1920) by the French neo-Thomist philosopher Jacques Maritain. In this book, Maritain elaborates on the aesthetic implications of medieval scholastic (especially Thomistic) thought. It is a seminal work, engaging and combining assumptions implicit in modern art and literature that were contributing to a broad-based international formalist aesthetic. Maritain’s ideas were the chief intellectual preoccupation at Ditchling. Gill and Pepler had asked John O’Connor to translate Maritain’s book for publication by St Dominic’s Press, and Gill was helping with the translation, even though he knew little French. (When he met Maritain on 10 September 1922 in Paris, they were unable to converse except through Betty Gill acting as interpreter.) Jones and the other workmen often spent mornings after Tierce and entire evenings discussing Maritain’s exposition and its implications. When the translation was published in 1923 under the title *The Philosophy of Art*, its ideas had already been woven into the fabric of Jones’s daily life for over a year. And Jones read and reread O’Connor’s translation. On 23 October 1923, he wrote to Gill from London, ‘it gets better each time.’ He persuaded Meninsky to acquire it for the library of the Central School of Art and urged Medworth, Hawkins, and other friends to buy copies. It was then, Ernest Hawkins would remember, Jones’s ‘bible.’ Decades later Jones would describe it as ‘greatly illuminating’ and, according to a close friend, continued to revere it. In 1930 he briefly looked at the improved translation of the expanded version but put it down, saying, ‘I prefer O’Connor.’⁶⁴ Few books would influence him so profoundly. From early in 1919, a major aspect of his post-war ennui had been a crisis of vocation. Without a significant relationship to the rest of life, art seemed meaningless. Maritain resolved this crisis by defining for him the values of art and the relationship of art to its subject, to the artist, to the ‘consumer’ of art, and to God. By the mid-1920s, the relationship of this book to the Jones’s mind resembled that of a map to a place.

Maritain begins with the Aristotelian distinction between doing (*praxis*) and making (*poesis*). Doing is governed by prudence and morality. Making is governed only by aesthetics and is amoral. Jones thought the distinction ‘a great truth’, which refuted moral objections to ‘art for art’s sake.’ ‘The artist, *qua* artist,’ Jones insisted, ‘must know no conscience except with regard to the formal perfection of the work on hand—& there his conscience must be of the most

scrupulous order.’ Making is essential to man, defined by Aquinas as *‘homo faber’*, man the maker. The distinction between activities underlies what Jones thought to be Gill’s ‘main contention’, that modern civilization is concerned only with doing and is therefore dehumanizing.⁶⁵

Art is objective, writes Maritain. Artistic integrity focuses on the thing being made and does not concern ‘self’-expression. Acute perception and awareness allow an artist to *be* ‘in some way’ his work as he makes it. Without this sensitivity, technique is valueless. In fact, technique is dangerous because it tends to displace sensitivity—a doctrine that helps to account for Jones’s now primitive style and subsequent stylistic transformations. He would always try to avoid technical facility. Maritain writes that an artist is oriented towards beauty to a degree that may require heroic sacrifice of other ‘goods’. Maritain makes no mention of sacrificing marriage, but Jones had long thought that supporting a wife and children would compromise him as an artist. Maritain writes that an artist has to see deeply and discover in physical reality ‘spiritual radiances’. Jones was and would remain convinced of this. He remarked about critical response to his later paintings:

Chaps refer to the ‘mystery’ or ‘subtlety’ or ‘ellusiveness’ or ‘fragility’ or ‘waywardness’ or ‘complexity’ or ‘fancyfulness’ etc., etc.—well, Christ almighty! what else is there in a bunch of flowers or a tree or a landscape or a girl or a sky but these qualities? By the severest logic one must somehow, if possible, capture something of these qualities if the thing is going to be any damn good. It isn’t the artist’s ‘fancy’ or ‘imagination’ that imposes these qualities on a work—the blasted stuff is there as plain as a pike-staff—the bugger of it is how to ‘transubstantiate’ these qualities into whatever medium one is using, whether paint or words or whatever.

An artist must have an acutely perceptive sensibility. Awareness of this would underlie his saying to psychiatrists thirty-five years later: ‘Don’t make me normal.’⁶⁶

Maritain endorses the three Thomistic conditions of beauty: 1) integrity, which demands that art be objective; 2) proportion, order, or unity, valuable solely as a means to the following condition 3); ‘splendour of form’, or ‘clarity’ or ‘radiance’ of being (37), which is transcendent and results in delight or ecstasy.

This, the third condition of beauty, makes art sacramental in that it partakes of the splendour of God. In Maritain’s words, ‘every light’ is an ‘irradiation coming out of the primal

clarity'. As Gill put it when discouraging realistic imitation, 'beauty is not achieved by making things like things, but by making things like God.' Gill also liked repeating that in medieval thought, Beauty is one of the names of God (the others being Goodness and Truth).⁶⁷ Jones found all this utterly convincing. In a draft of an essay written in 1943, he would suggest that the ultimate disclosure of degrees of beauty will come at the end of time, when the angel Michael will shout, 'What is like God, in all this straw?' 'Then,' he writes, 'we shall know how Chartres stands in relation to the Parthenon, the *Prima Vera* to Picasso's best, the lamp-shade in the room to the candelabrum of 1842.'

Maritain supported Gill's contention that making art is equivalent to praying, a notion that conditioned Jones's sense of his vocation and emerges as a theme in his later poetry. Identification of art with prayer partially healed an inner rift between religion and art that had troubled him since adolescence. He had felt himself serving two masters and felt guilty at serving art a good deal more than God. This unease originated in his father's evangelicalism, which subordinated to religion all activities not excluded outright. Now he understood that art was 'good in itself', ratified and validated, along with all things human and natural, by the Creation, the Incarnation, and the metaphysics of Aristotle and Aquinas. He would nevertheless continue wondering whether his commitment to art was idolatrous, whether he was seeking 'that satisfaction in painting & engraving etc. that can only be found in God.'⁶⁸

Maritain writes that Beauty, which is God, motivates the artist. Jones and the workmen often discussed love as determining the goodness of a work of art and agreed that sentimentality was debased love; its effect on art, vulgarity. Art is Christian, Maritain writes, only if Christ is present in the artist through love. Jones responded warmly to this Franciscan dimension of Maritain's thought, which endorsed the love of particulars that so characterizes Jones's later work.⁶⁹

Judgement must guide love, however, for there are degrees of beauty, which exist, Maritain contends in a hierarchy of kinds. In what amounts to a reversal of Freud, Maritain endorses Aquinas's borrowing from Aristotle: 'No one can live without delight. That is why he who is deprived of spiritual delights goes over to carnal delights.' Prayer and the sacraments are means to becoming more spiritually human, but so is art and the cultivation of aesthetic

sensitivity.⁷⁰

Echoing Kantean aesthetics and anticipating Eliot's notion of dissociated sensibility, Maritain writes that the perception of art 'restores, for an instant, the peace and delectation at once of understanding and sense' that belonged to Adam and Eve in Eden (34). Expanding on this, Jones would assert that art escapes the effects of the Fall because it achieves a unity and perfection absent in fallen nature. Over the next twenty years, he would speak about this to friends. One of them would remember that in the 1920's and '30s, 'He talked about practically nothing else, in a sense.'⁷¹

From Maritain's neoscholasticism, Jones took to heart certain formulations: 'we proceed from the known to the unknown'—words that John Baptist Reeves repeated—and 'the virtue of *ars* is to judge.' These, he thought, expressed precisely what the artist does. 'For the "man on the job,"' he later wrote with Dominican pedanticism,

there is no other way of proceeding—he has, with conscious deliberation, to 'judge', as the work proceeds, whether or not this line, mark, smudge, accent of colour, etc. (in the case of drawing) or this word, or order of words, this break of line, this space between lines, etc. (in the case of a writing) give those juxtapositions which best (in his judgement) create the forms which are most congruent and essential to the form and content of the whole, remembering that form and content must, by hook or by crook, be indissolubly wed otherwise there can be no whole.

Such judgement is practical, not ideological. However intellectually clarifying metaphysics was for Jones, it had little effect on practice. He would later write that he thought no

amount of true philosophical or metaphysical definition will aid *one bit, necessarily*, the painting of a picture. The ability to paint a good picture does not come through philosophy or religion in any direct manner at all. They could only have indeed a damaging effect on the making of things if thought of as providing some theory to work by—a substitute for imagination and direct creativeness; and would so sadly defeat their own object—which is to protect the imagination from the slavery of false theory and to give the perfect law of liberty to our creativeness.⁷²

He thought that Maritain's neo-Thomism served the only valid purpose of theory: to confirm creative liberty and protect it from false theory.

One of Maritain's convictions, taken over by Gill, was the 'unity of all made things.' Maritain stresses this unity as including making 'from the art of the Shipbuilder to the art of the Grammarian and the Logician.' Jones would discover in Aquinas the underlying principle of this

unity, that all works of art and artefacture are, as he would later write, the same ‘in kind ... once utility has to any degree been overpassed and ... the quality of gratuitousness has to any degree been operative.’ Conviction about the unity of made things would eventually encourage Jones to write poetry and would thematically influence *The Anathemata*, in which his maternal grandfather typifies artistic integrity, partly in deference to Maritain’s repeated use of ship-building as an example of art in general.⁷³

For Jones, the idea that there was no difference between artist and workman normalized art. It also discouraged aestheticizing verbally over art works. Composition and colour-value were matters for decision, not discussion. You simply got on with the job. He acquired a workman’s modesty towards his art. Years later when asked, ‘How do you start a painting?’ he would reply, ‘Oh, I just start in a corner.’ He did not discuss paintings in aesthetic terms; if he liked one it was ‘Jolly nice’ or ‘Bloody marvellous.’ To avoid being drawn into aesthetic discussion, he would quote the words of Turner after dinner with a nobleman who lamented not having talked about painting: ‘Paintin’s a rum business.’ Gill and Jones both knew, however, that Jones was no mere workman. In the 1930s, Gill would tell an apprentice, ‘I’m just a craftsman. David is an artist.’⁷⁴

Maritain encouraged Jones in remaining, in later years, a non-abstract artist. When irritated by the term ‘significant form,’ Gill would ask, ‘Significant of what?’ Jones thought the question ‘never ... quite fair’ because a work of art had ‘meaning’ and ‘life deriving from a juxtaposition of forms.’ Maritain stresses, however, that the truth of art involves or can involve things outside art. In a passage very important to Jones, Maritain writes that works of art reveal other things than themselves, that is to say *as signs*. And the thing signified may itself be a sign in turn, and the more the work of art is laden with significance (but spontaneous and intuitively grasped, not hieroglyphic significance), the vaster and the richer and the higher will be the possibility of joy and beauty. The beauty of a [non-abstract] picture or of a statue is thus incomparably richer than that of a carpet, ... a Venetian glass, or ... an amphora. (84)

From this passage, Jones adopted the word ‘sign,’ which he would use instead of ‘symbol’ in his essays on art and culture. Here was justification for avoiding pure abstraction in visual art: an attachment to the significance of created and man-made things. They are themselves ‘signs,’ so including them in art increases potential significance.

All these ideas lived in the discussions that permeated life at Ditchling and would continue for Jones, with different participants, for most of the next two decades.

He loved the liturgy. For over a year now, he had been experiencing as never before the liturgical year, which gives to shapeless temporal flow a circular shape that is also bi-partite, with Advent culminating in Christmas and Lent culminating in the Passion and Easter. The Mass mirrors this dual culmination with the offertory and consecration as minor and major climaxes. The two-part shape would influence the form of *In Parenthesis*, which culminates in the arrival in trenches at Christmas and then in a battle, which is charged with allusions to the Passion.



10. David Jones, *Candlemas*, 1923

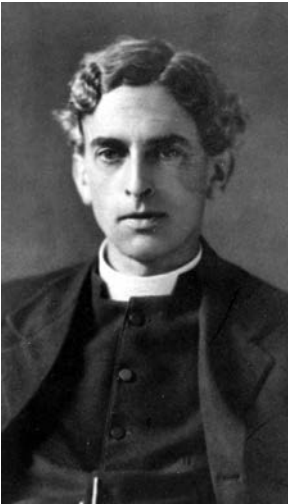
flames dominate the composition like plainchant notes on a page of music. Long afterwards he vividly remembered the sight that inspired the engraving and continued to have ‘a thing about Candlemas, ... the oldest feast of our Lady by a good bit.’ He associated it with the feast of St Bridget on the previous day, when fires—which, he was happily aware, had originally been pagan—were lit in Ireland. (A ‘wonderful thing’ he liked about Bridget was ‘how they used to say “she could hang her mantle on a sun-beam.”’) The feasts of Bridget and Candlemass were a relief to him, indicating that ‘the Christmas tunnel’, which he disliked, ‘is virtually through.’ In

The liturgical year has its division at Candlemas, the feast of the Purification of Mary, on 2 February. He liked Candlemas as ‘a terminal or junctional feast.’ To him ‘the little huddle of children & adults all holding points of flame’ on this day in the tiny dark bare chapel was especially beautiful. It is the subject of one of his best early white-line engravings (fig.10), in which figures standing in darkness behind a vested priest hold candles whose oversize flames dominate the composition like plainchant notes on a page of music.

later years, he would always make an effort to attend Mass on Candlemas. Although he loved the liturgy, he was no fanatic. Upon hearing of someone attending two or three high Masses on a single Sunday, he was appalled.⁷⁵

Early in 1922, he read and was deeply impressed by an article in a Catholic paper outlining a two-volume theological treatise, entitled *Mysterium Fidei*, by a French Jesuit named Maurice de la Taille. His thesis is that the Last Supper, crucifixion, and Mass are united through interrelated modalities of sacrifice. At the supper, Jesus obliterated himself as victim; in the crucifixion, he was immolated; during Mass, this oblation and immolation recur sacramentally. As he read, Jones thought 'That's it!' The Supper was the unbloody pre-enactment; the crucifixion, the bloody enactment; the Mass, the unbloody re-enactment, three events that form, he thought, a sort of triangle. In front of his workshop, he enthusiastically expounded de la Taille's thesis to Vincent McNabb and a few of the workmen. McNabb glowered, then denounced the treatise, which he, too, had read about, as dangerous and heretical, saying that it diminished the crucifixion as the sole cause of salvation. Quoting Aquinas and Albert the Great, he 'got really worked up & bitterly angry' although, Jones later remembered, he did not 'appear to understand in the least what de la Taille *actually* had written.' And Jones wondered what McNabb thought he was doing when he said the words of consecration during what he himself called 'the holy sacrifice of the Mass.' Younger, uneducated, newly Catholic, Jones was disinclined to argue with the Dominican, whose undisguised hostility he found embarrassing, though he recognized it as expressing the antipathy that O'Connor had told him existed between Dominicans and Jesuits. When McNabb subsided, Jones merely said that, for him, de la Taille's view 'appeared to open windows.' From then on, the three-fold relationship conditioned his experience at Mass and his thoughts about the events of Jesus's life. At Mass during the consecration, he believed himself essentially and really—though not, of course, historically—present at the Last Supper and crucifixion. In the most profound sense, these events were synonymous, and he would later suggest in conversation that the redemption occurred in time not at the crucifixion but at the Last Supper during the words of consecration. De la Taille's thesis would inform *The Anathemata*, where it finds remarkable expression in that work's concluding simultaneous triple exposure of the Last Supper, the crucifixion, and a consecration during a modern Mass. In the preface of that

poem, topping the list of writers to whom he is indebted is de la Taille, whom he called ‘my theologian.’ After their disagreement, McNabb would say of Jones—to the amusement of those who knew him Jones, ‘There’s a leaven of malice in that man.’⁷⁶

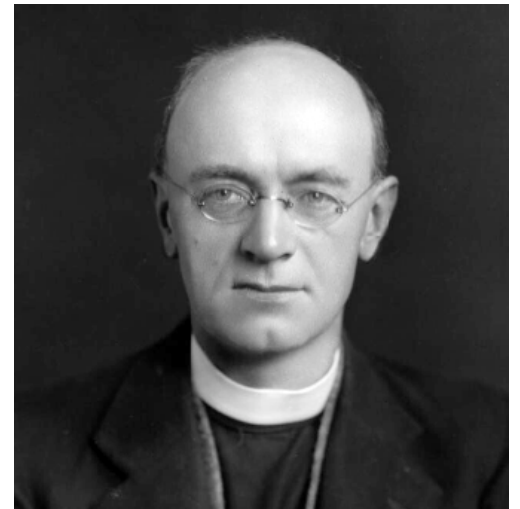


11. Martin D’Arcy SJ, c. 1930

By late spring, 1922, when he was, like the other men at Ditchling, bearded as well as smocked, he went to Burgess Hill station to meet his cousin Kenneth Bradshaw, who was arriving for an overnight visit. Seeing him on the platform, Bradshaw thought, ‘My God, It’s Jesus himself!’ Like Gill, Jones now wore his smock everywhere. He wore it to London on his first visit to his parents, who were horrified. Their reaction affected him, for he shaved his beard, discarded the smock when travelling, and before long ceased wearing it entirely.⁷⁷

On the evening of his cousin’s arrival, they ate with the Gills, Pepler and a thirty-five year old Jesuit priest named Martin D’Arcy (fig. 11). A small man of penetrating intelligence,

D’Arcy was ending a ten-day visit, during which he and Jones became friends. D’Arcy had excelled in Classics at Oxford and received a doctorate in theology at the Gregorian in Rome. He now taught at Stoneyhurst, a Jesuit public school. He and Jones talked about visual art, to which D’Arcy responded sensitively, and theology. They discussed de la Taille’s treatise, and Jones was pleased to see that D’Arcy, too, found it exciting. Four years later, D’Arcy would publish a book summarizing de la Taille’s ideas under the title *The Mass and Redemption*, which Jones eagerly read. Before leaving Ditchling, D’Arcy invited him to stay as his guest at the Jesuit house of studies in Oxford, Campion Hall. Nearly fifty years later, D’Arcy would remember that Jones looked, when they met, ‘exceedingly boyish’ with ‘an air of innocence’ and ‘a passion for truth & lovely things’ and that a ‘rich imagination informed all his speech.’ D’Arcy would always regard him as ‘the dearest of people.’⁷⁸



12. C.C. Martindale SJ, 1927

In July, Jones made the first of what would be several extended visits to Oxford. He

stayed in Campion Hall, which was then in St Giles Street north of the university, conveniently adjoining the Lamb and Flag pub, whose sign bore the conventional iconography that Jones subsequently employed in pictures such as *The Pascal Lamb* (1951). He spent his days reading, walking through the medieval lanes of the university and its vast open meadows, browsing in bookstores, and visiting and eating with the Dominicans at nearby Blackfriars, where his principal host was John Baptist Reeves. At meals with the Jesuits, he was especially glad to meet Father Cyril Martindale (fig. 12), the author of *The Goddess of Ghosts*. Though Jones would not know him as well as he would D'Arcy, he got on better with him, for Martindale had a creative sensibility and avoided philosophical abstraction. He appreciated all the arts, having been the best undergraduate in Classics among his contemporaries at Oxford, was intellectually brilliant. Jones and Martindale discussed their great mutual interest, the relationship of paganism to Christianity, and writers on the subject whom they both had read. Martindale was the most sensitive, intelligent, well-rounded person Jones had met, 'an amazing chap,' he would remember, who, because he devoted himself to pastoral work, 'never used' 'the full power of his mind' /⁷⁹ Also at Campion, he met a young friend of D'Arcy from Stoneyhurst, Henry John, Augustus John's brilliant son, who subsequently visited Ditchling, sometimes with D'Arcy.

Soon after returning to Ditchling, Jones got to know the priest he had briefly met in August 1921: handsome, fifty-three-year-old John Gray, whose second volume of verse *Pepler* was now publishing. His first, *Silverpoints* (1893), had had been financed by his lover Oscar Wilde, who had used Gray's surname for his fictional character Dorian Gray. As a minor poet of the '90s, Gray had been a close friend of Lionel Johnson and Ernest Dowson. Like them and Wilde, he converted to Catholicism. He befriended Beardsley and may have influenced his death-bed conversion. Early in the century Gray and his wealthy companion, André Raffalovich, became Dominican tertiaries. Gray then studied at the Scots College in Rome and became a parish priest in Edinburgh, initially among the poor of the Cowgate district, now in genteel Morningside, where, as pastor of St Peter's Church, he celebrated Mass wearing a monocle. An amusing man of fine intelligence, he often spoke of Walter Pater and the other famous acquaintances of his youth and told stories of other famous men. Jones particularly enjoyed one about the celebrated Classical scholar and alcoholic Richard Porson (1759-1808). One evening in

his rooms at Cambridge while inebriated, he tried patiently, again and again for ten minutes to pour himself a glass of whisky. Finally noticing that the stopper was still in the bottle, he furiously hurled the bottle into a corner and, recovering his temper a fraction of a second too late, exclaimed as it crashed, ‘Damn the nature of things’, an expression thereafter frequently used at



13. David Jones wood engraving in Hawkins’s studio, 1923

Ditchling (*IN* 55).

After writing his two long poems, Jones would confide that ‘in a difficult-to-describe way’ John Gray ‘most certainly was an influence’ on his writing. In the early years of their acquaintanceship, he loved Gray’s poem ‘The Patriarch of Uz.’ In 1930, he would be impressed by Gray’s novel, *Park* (*IN* 76). He spent time with the priest during Gray’s annual August visits with Gill, but they were not be close friends. Aloof, cultivated, precious, portentous, with dated patrician manners, Gray was too much a man of the ‘90s for Jones.

On 10 March 1923, at 6.30 am, Jones became a Dominican-tertiary postulant, meaning that he entered a probationary period prior to becoming a tertiary. He received a copy of *The Dominican Tertiary* (St Dominic Press, 1921), in which he inscribed his name, ‘David Michael Jones o.s.d. [*ordo sancti dominici*].’

Gill commenced instructing him in the singing of the chant, since he would now have to take turns leading the Little Office as cantor in choir. Jones’s postulancy lasted until 17 April 1924, when, kneeling in the centre of the sanctuary after Mass and holding a burning candle, he was professed as fully a third-order Dominican.⁸⁰

Shortly afterwards, he wanted to see the first London production of Shaw’s *Saint Joan*, with Sibyl Thorndike playing the lead. Dominicans were not then allowed to go to the theatre. As

a layman, he was not bound by a vow of obedience, but Gill thought plays frivolous for tertiaries and insisted that he first ask McNabb's permission. Jones went to Haverstock Hill, found McNabb uncharacteristically silent and, with understandable misgivings, make his humble request, to which McNabb replied 'Of course you can go. I wish I could.'⁸¹

Jones's third-order status mattered most to him while he lived at Ditchling, less and less later. A friend who knew him subsequently said that through 1929 he sometimes wrote 'T.O.S.D' after his name and continued to value his Dominican connection. In the 1930s and '40s, he would visit Dominican friends in Oxford and London, and they would visit him. He liked the Dominican emblem, a dog carrying a torch in its jaws, derived from a pun on *Domini canis*, 'dog of the Lord,' to which he alludes in his poetry (*A* 79-80, 148). He liked the pun having a pagan analogue in the Brittonic name of Cunobelinos (the source of Shakespeare's 'Cymbeline'), which means 'Hound of (the lord) Belin.'⁸²



14. Wood-cutters and family, 1923

He now sometimes went into London, where galleries had his pictures for sale. In June 1923, he was home alone in Brockley, his parents being at Hove. He sent Petra a postcard saying, 'Please tell Eric that the Goupil ... chucked out my best drawing not that it matters—Everybody is awfully pleased with his things.' And later he writes that William Marchant at the Goupil has 'chucked' his 'best & most saleable drawing. In December 1923 and again in 1924, he exhibited works in the Patersons Gallery, 21 Old Bond Street.

Apart from his visit to Oxford, he left Ditchling only for London. One day he told a workman that he had received an invitation to stay with a friend for a fortnight and wished he could go. When asked why he did not, he replied, 'He lives in Surrey and I am in Sussex.' Planning, railway schedules, and a change of trains were too much for him.⁸³

He spent much of autumn 1923 in London painting Gill's inscription for the Royal Navy

Hospital and sometimes took Gill home to Brockley. His parents had visited Ditchling in October and now, Jones said, ‘adored Eric.’⁸⁴ On 30 October, he sent Gill at Ditchling a British-Museum postcard of Indian sculptures, on which he writes, ‘I think you are right about my painting feeling between two stools—it is a constant failing.’ Gill may have criticized him for remaining too little a craftsman and too much an aesthete. On 1 November, Jones went with Augustus John’s son David, the Gills, and Petra to the Goupil Gallery. On 10 November, he and Gill went to

Burlington House to see an exhibit of English Primitives

and from there to the Tate, where Jones liked to look at the works of Blake. He wrote to Lawson on 4 November, ‘I am becoming acclimatised to London again & seem to have been away from Ditchling for ages. The work will be finished this week however. Have seen various old pals & had many long talks.’

Among these pals was Medworth, now teaching at Westminster School of Art. Petra would



16. David Jones, *Landscape*, 1923



15. David Jones, *Mater Inviolata*, 1923

remember him as his best friend at that time, ‘a very quiet chap, awfully nice,’ who twice visited him at Ditchling. Medworth roomed on the first floor of a house at 44 Russell Road, opposite the Olympia, with Harold Hawkins’s younger brother, Ernest, a seventeen-year-old apprentice architectural stone carver. After Medworth taught an evening course, Jones sometimes met him for a drink, sometimes with Ernest Hawkins and once at least with Gill, at the Shakespeare Head across from Victoria Station.⁸⁵

Jones would go with Ernest or Medworth or by himself to Weaver Hawkin’s studio, where Harold’s

brother Wilfred took two photographs of him. In the one reproduced above, he works on an



17. *Girl's Head* (Petra Gill), 1923

engraving (fig.13). His hair is combed back, in the direction he characteristically pushed it as he worked or talked. His suit is made of ginger-coloured tweed woven by Petra, who was learning to weave in Ditchling village from Ethel Mairret, a leader in the revival of hand-loom weaving and the use of vegetable dyes. When he had taken the cloth to a tailor who had asked what sort of suit he wanted, he had replied, 'I am only interested in the things eternal'— words supporting the memory by Mairret's son Philip of Jones then as in 'a state of tense religious aspiration'.

Having paused to take this in, the tailor explained the different styles, one of which apparently suited Jones. The trousers proved so scratchy that they had subsequently to be lined with silk. It was, Ernest Hawkins remembered, the hairiest tweed he had ever seen.⁸⁶

The January 1923 issue of *The Game* bore on its cover Jones's most striking engraving so far, in which two men chop wood for a fire in what may be the house of Jesus's family in Nazareth (fig.14). It is a combined white- and black-line engraving, in which dark areas are dramatically broken by white daylight under clouds and white flames indoors. And it is visually unified by the roof support spatially dividing it. Failing subscriptions



19. David Jones, *Madonna and Child*, 1924

forced Pepler to cease publication of *The Game*, which was unfortunate for Jones as an engraver. It had been a flexible vehicle for his fast-developing skill. Now he was without regular employment and would remain so for over a year. Having made about two dozen engravings, he was already a finer engraver than Gill, whose work is slick and lifeless by comparison.

Through experimentation in contrasting black-line and white-line styles, Jones developed rapidly as an engraver. In 1923 he engraved



18. *St. Dominic*, 1923

Mater Inviolata, which looks carved in wood (fig.15). It is stiff, tubular, totemic, deliberately primitive, emphatically unsentimental, yet the design is interesting, and can be viewed for a long time without diminishing interest. Its life is the play between light and dark, and between the dark areas on Mary's outer edges, her lower hand, the veiled portion of her left breast, and inside her veil at her head. The union and agreement of mother and child is expressed in the gesture of her left arm along his body and his arm up to the line of her neck. In terms suggested by the lily beside them, they are two blossoms on the one stem of humanity. Her face expresses awareness of suffering to come. Jones's alternation in black-line and white-line engraving may be seen as more freely powerful in a landscape (fig.16) that mixes organic curves with straight lines. Slanting rain unites bulging earth and clouds.

The great British engraver Simon Brett would later say that Jones is one of the few engravers 'to switch successfully' from engraving (white-line) to intaglio (black-line) 'and do both well'—an experience that would give his later work 'a feel of incising the surface and a sense of contextual subtlety, of the relationship between background and foreground'⁸⁷

Jones also carved. Following Gill's example, he turned unsuccessful engravings into small low- and mid-relief boxwood sculptures. He carved crucifixes, for Gill, Petra, himself. The best (and, he thought, his best carving) he attached to his rosary, which he lost while haymaking and searched long for in vain. Gill's was attached to Gill's rosary, which he lost on a train in France. He carved into a relief a failed engraving of Petra Gill in profile and exhibited it, entitled *Girl's Head* and priced at £12.10, in the autumn 1923 Goupil Gallery Salon Exhibition (fig.17), where he also exhibited two watercolours.* Unsold, he gave the relief to Petra. The only large sculpture he made was of St Dominic (fig. 18), carved in 1923 of what he later remembered as 'bloody hard "heart of island grown"' oak, given him by Maxwell's father-in-law. The figure of the saint is totemic and Celtic in its primitivism. Unlike his other carvings, this would remain in his possession. He carved a head and torso of Jesus being taken down from the cross, and several versions of the Madonna and Child. In one of the latter he combines relief with sculpture in the round and conveys a remarkable strength and totality of embrace (fig. 19). He would carry these

* *Near Newtimber, Sussex* (£6.10) and *Sussex Landscape* (£7.10).

in his pocket to take out and work on at leisure. In the evenings he worked at them on his knee.

One of them, in 1924, was a little female torso in sycamore, which he kept it in his pocket, fondled, rubbed the oil of his skin into, and would take out to gaze at as though it were an erotic talisman (fig. 20).⁸⁸



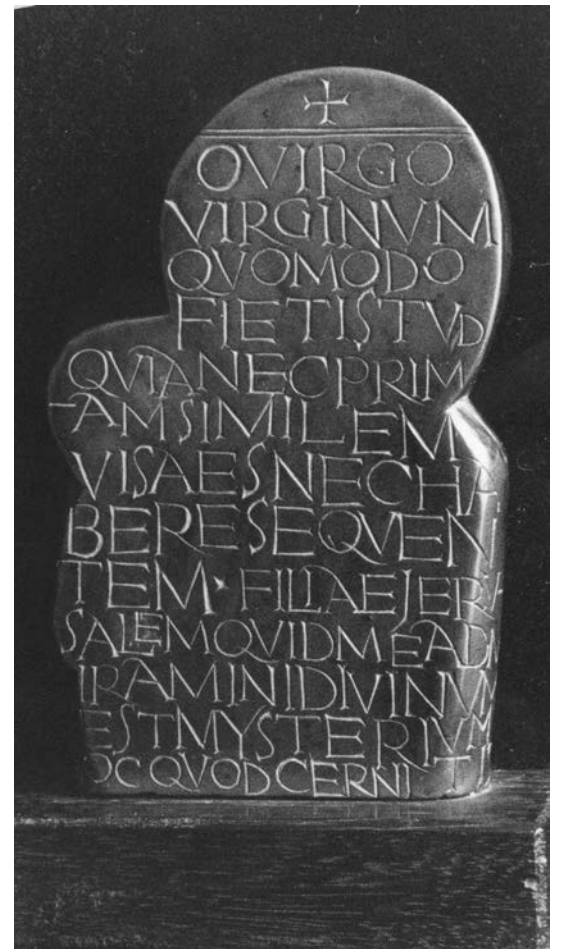
20. David Jones, Female Torso, 1924

One of the largest of his small carvings he entitled *Mater Castissima*. It was an engraving gone wrong, which he carved into relief in 1924. Haggren watched him shape it in the workshop, mostly ‘with a spitsticker used on its side.’ It is remarkable in that, across the back and round one

side, Jones carved a Latin inscription (fig. 21). Momentarily

forgetting that this was no longer an engraving, he inadvertently reversed one letter. Having completed the inscription, he wanted to fix the carving onto a base but had no idea how. Haggren had to do it for him. Gill loved this carving. Jones exhibited it at the Goupil Gallery and sold it eventually to Maxwell.⁸⁹

Although miniature, these carvings are monumental. Most are perfect in proportion and can be photographed and enlarged to many times their size without loss of aesthetic integrity. Gill would claim that Jones’s ‘few small sculptures in boxwood alone would place him in the first rank of modern artists.’⁹⁰ The more of these you see, the more judicious that sounds.



21. David Jones, *Mater Castissima*, back, 1924

In January 1924, Jones was often joined in his workshop by lanky blue-eyed, warm-hearted Philip Haggren (fig. 22), ‘of the Society of Wood Engravers, he

had come to Ditchling in December to apprentice himself to Gill as a stonecutter. Jones's workshop was no place to work in winter, ceilingless under naked roof-joists, with a single row of abutted boards for walls. Wind blew through the paling and floorboards, the cold amounting, Hagreen remembered, 'almost to torment.' They worked side by side in greatcoats tied at the waist for maximum warmth, Jones's with a string. Jones was never able to get warm but, to Hagreen's continuing amazement, never complained. His conversation was as rich, said Hagreen, as that of John Gray, and he spoke like country gentry (and like his Grandfather Ebenezer) of 'paintin', drawin', 'engravin'. Hagreen was no equal to Jones in intelligence or sensibility, and, although, five years older, he recognized him as 'far more mature', but they immediately became friends. 'There was no shield to be penetrated,' he later recalled, adding that the biblical 'Nathaniel must have been like that—seen from afar as an Israelite in whom there was no guile.'⁹¹



22 Philip Hagreen,
c. 1924

Working together, they spoke about literature and discovered that they both loved Langland and Chaucer. Jones spoke of Malory and Arthurian legend, enthusiasms unshared by Hagreen. They spoke of Jones's favourite poet, Browning, whom all the workmen read and used to quote. They also all read and talked about George Borrow.

Jones used to quote from Chesterton's *Ballad of the White Horse*, a poem he especially liked, but he was no fan of Chesterton's rollicking prose style. He thought Cecil Chesterton's *History of the United States* better written than any book by his brother. Jones was then reading Belloc, whose fascination with Roman legions he shared, and Hagreen thought this strange in 'so unmilitary a person.' Jones would recite Belloc's 'The Birds,'

When Jesus Christ was four years old,
The angels brought Him toys of gold,
Which no man ever bought or sold.
And yet with these He would not play.
He made Him small fowl out of clay,
And blessed them till they flew away.

He enjoyed quoting Peacock's 'The mountain sheep are sweeter / But the valley sheep are fatter; / We therefore deemed it meeter / To carry off the latter.' In the spring of 1924, Gill read Hagreen's copy of *Moby-Dick*, which Gill praised to Jones, who subsequently read it. The novel

had, Jones would say, ‘a great impact on me.’ He would reread it, and it would be for him, along with Malory and *Wuthering Heights*, a model of cumulative power in literature and an influence on that aspect of *In Parenthesis*.⁹²

Jones and Hagreen spoke of visual artists, particularly the Victorian illustrators and English painters they both admired, ‘especially Blake and Turner’. They agreed about academic tyranny in the arts, which held up Raphael—whom Jones would later say he had ‘no time for’—as prince of painters and Rembrandt as a paradigm.* Jones said he admired Renoir and loved his *Umbrellas*, acquired by the National Gallery in 1917. (Hagreen disliked it.) Jones was enthralled with drawings by the young children at Ditchling, so free from convention of any kind, and envied the Gill children their ability to draw naturally because, he said, ‘I have to do it with effort.’ (Hagreen thought admiration for children’s art ridiculous and also disapproved of Jones’s appreciation of shapes ‘accidentally wonky.’)⁹³

Jones talked to him of Wales, having read Geraldus Cambrensis, as Hagreen put it, ‘as though it were a letter from a friend.’ At the time, Jones’s main ‘historical worry’ was the fall of Richard II, who had, he was sure, ‘a fair bit of Welsh blood’—a historical interest that included the painting of the blond king in profile on the Wilton Diptych, which Jones visited in the National Gallery, and Shakespeare’s play, which he knew well. His interest endured. In the hot June of 1966 while waiting in a cue for a taxi, he would recall Bullingbrook’s words, ‘O, who shall hold a fire in his hand / By thinking of the frosty Caucasus’ (I, iii, 294-5), and mirrors would ‘always’ remind him of the scene at the end of act four of the play.^{94†}

He talked about the war, which Hagreen had missed owing to poor health, and was fascinated by logistics—the way, for example, troops were manoeuvred into position. He told war stories, many of them ‘grim’. Listening to him, ‘so thin and frail,’ Hagreen wondered at his having survived the war.⁹⁵

* In conversation with Paul Hills, Jones would later make one exception in his dismissal of Raphael, the tapestry-cartoon for *The Miraculous Draught of Fishes*, in the Victoria and Albert Museum: ‘I like those birds [cranes] standing on the shore.’

† He consciously echoes IV, I, 276 when a siren in *The Anathemata* commands, ‘fetch us a looking-glass’ (145)! He was especially fond of the Welsh captain in Act II who says, ‘The bay trees of our country are all withered.’

Jones frequently accompanied Hagreen home for meals—during which he took, Hagreen noticed, ‘an inordinate amount of salt.’ Hagreen’s wife Aileen was a very good cook, beautiful, and extremely intelligent, having earned a first-class degree in philosophy at Bedford College, London. Jones was more friendly with her than with Philip. ‘She got on awfully well with David,’ Petra would remember.⁹⁶

He enjoyed Hagreen’s sense of humour and thought him ‘a remarkable bloke’ and ‘*extremely* able as a craftsman.’ His work was not necessarily beautiful, Jones would remember, but always ‘so terribly well made—I should think he had the most sharpened tools, gravers or what not in Britain.’ Hagreen would remember Jones as joyful, altogether delightful. They talked about ‘anything funny,’ he remembered, ‘& that meant almost everything.’ He was, Hagreen later said, gentle and sensitive, never showing irritation or resentment, and understanding others when ‘they could not understand him.’ Nearly sixty years later, Hagreen would say that he ‘never met his like for patience & charity,’ for ‘utter goodness.’⁹⁷



23. David Jones. *The Presentation*, 1924

In 1924 Jones illustrated a book for the first time, essentially a picture-book with captions. He made fifteen engravings, one for each of the mysteries of the rosary for *A Child's Rosary Book*, published by Pepler. The style is hieratic, packet full, emphatic, reflecting Gill's insistence that book illustrations be tight and

finished since they are to be parts of a book, which is a tight and finished object. They mix white- and black-line engraving. Most involve a grouping of squat figures with oversized heads. They may be influenced by watching Gill for over a year carving stations of the cross for O'Connor's church. (At Gill's request, Jones had designed the first of these stations, 'Jesus before Pilate.')

Several of the *Rosary* engravings are fascinating in design. In *The Presentation* (fig. 23), figures and columns rise to the viewer's eye-level where they culminate in a series of

Romanesque arches, haloes, and heads that reverberate with one another. In ‘The Crucifixion’ (fig. 24), a tense clarity stretches in nearly horizontal beams and diagonal arms up out of a jumble of bent lines and dark thickness. In this picture, St John is dressed as a Dominican, an allusion to medieval anachronism in art. Jones came to dislike the *Rosary-Book* illustrations probably while engraving them, since the last five, the glorious mysteries, are visually dull and lifeless, but then he had less affinity with things glorious than things joyful and sorrowful.⁹⁸ Like most people who attempt it, moreover, he disliked the rosary, a form of prayer that he would discard/ He may have lost interest also because he had already begun more exciting work.

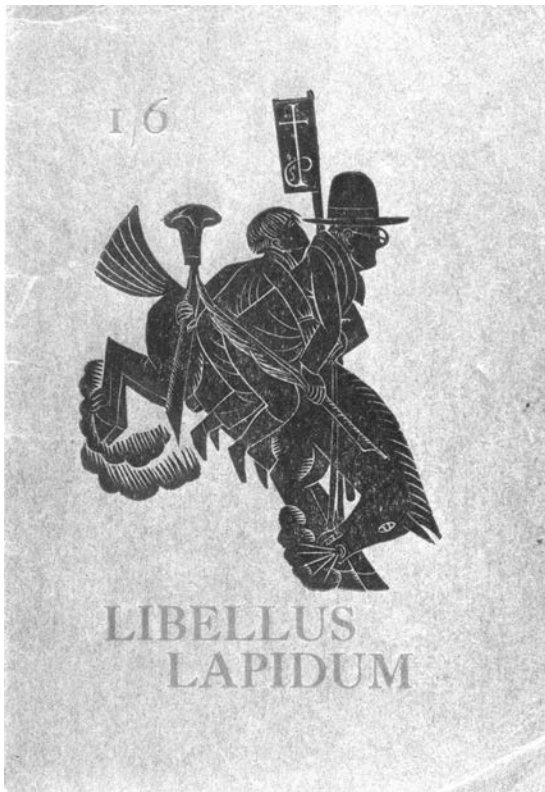


From the adjoining press building, 24 David Jones, *The Crucifixion*, 1924

Pepler often visited. He was, Hagreen remembers, ‘a merry companion,’ and often the purpose of the visit was to recite a satirical rhyme that he had just composed. He challenged Jones to illustrate one of these rhymes with a wood engraving, and from then on, Pepler would visit, recite, say ‘Now make a block of that,’ and depart. Without hesitation, Jones would engrave with a spontaneity and invention that astonished Hagreen.⁹⁹ As these engravings and rhymes accumulated, Pepler and Jones decided to make a book of them. They worked sporadically, a rhyme at a time—the engravings differ from each other in style—until there were thirty-one, which Pepler printed as *Libellus Lapidum* (1924). Among the most striking of the engravings is that done for the cover, on which Jones with a giant graver (the one called a ‘spitsticker’) sits behind Pepler, holding a large quill pen, on a wingless, bucking Pegasus (fig. 25). The picture is so lively and successful that few notice the extraordinary anatomical flaw of Jones’s right arm, which holds tight to Pepler’s belly, not joining at the shoulder but draping from behind like a scarf. To make and publish such a mistake indicates the freedom that characterizes these engravings, which are an important advance for Jones in liveliness and technical ease.

Hagreen was impressed by the ‘astonishing quantity of engravings, drawings & carvings’

that Jones produced, but considered him hopeless as a workman, unable to find anything and incorrigibly whimsical. Jones once left a block with his magnifying glass suspended above it to one side. Returning, he saw the block distorted through the lens at an angle and exclaimed, ‘That’s lovely,’ and beckoned Hagreeen to come see it from where he was standing. (Irritated at what he considered frivolity, Hagreeen refused.) Jones sometimes took a trial proof, stuffed it into a pocket, and later removed it, smoothed it, and said, to Hagreeen’s chagrin, that it looked better with wrinkle lines. Catching him at this once, Pepler declared, ‘A proof is to let you get on with the block, knowing what needs doing. It is not to be lifted up, carried about or adored.’¹⁰⁰



25. Cover for *Libellus Lapidum*, 1924

Jones’s escape from carpentry resulted in a surge of creativity. It was only the beginning, however, of an accomplishment as an engraver that would make him, in Hagreeen’s estimation, the equal of the great early English engravers Hogarth, Bewick, and Blake.¹⁰¹

Life on the green and open Common was humane and affectionate. Jones enjoyed the fellowship of the workmen and an easy intimacy with their wives, especially Mary Gill, Clare Pepler, and Aileen Hagreeen, who were each extremely fond of him. He was closest to the Gill family and considered Mary ‘an incredible woman,’ without whom Gill’s style of life would be impossible. She managed the household and farm like a tight-fisted peasant to whom waste was a serious offence. While Jones loved her, he could see that she was intellectually no match for her husband, whom he thought wonderful for the elaborate

care he took in helping her grasp a point in argument. Jones also liked the free-range children on the Common, and they him. Pepler’s youngest son, Mark, ‘adored’ him. When Jones left to visit London, Gill’s youngest daughter, Joan, felt a terrible absence and wanted to know ‘when’s he coming back.’¹⁰²

Blue, grey or purple in the changing light, the Downs on the southern horizon drew him. Alone or with one or more of the Gill family or others of the community, he walked across their huge sweeping roundnesses in sunshine and mist. He passed grazing sheep and hailed shepherds with crooks and, sometimes, umbrellas. He passed little farmsteads in the bottoms, where some of the old men still wore smocks. In the bottoms, too, were woods carpeted with primroses where bee orchids and butterfly orchids grew. Sometimes he would walk south to the windmills at Clayton and over past Devil's Dyke to for tea (with boiled eggs, bread, butter and jam) at the Shepherd and Dog Inn at Fulking, and then back the eight miles in the balmy evening, his way lit by glow worms. It was an experience of a place substantially unchanged since before the time of Blake.

He often spent Sundays walking. Sometimes after attending Mass in Keymer he and a few others went for a nine-mile walk up into the hills at Westmeston and along the top to Plumpton, then down for bread, cheese, and beer at the Half Moon, and finally home by Streat and across the fields at Blackbrook Farm. On 12 March 1922, he walked with Gill, Joan, and Petra to Westmeston, returning over fields snow-white with wood anemones. On 29 June 1923, he went with Eric, Mary, Petra, and Lawson by train to Shoreham, visited a church there, and walked five miles to a hill over Steyning, where they had lunch. It was nearly ten miles back to Ditchling. Petra, Lawson and Eric walked, Jones and Mary taking a train.

Gradually, he began walking out alone with sixteen-year old Petra (fig. 26). She was, natural, lovely, warm, shy. Gradually, tentatively, they fell in love. They went together into the countryside to sketch. Very often they walked east through Plumpton and south over the Downs, returning through Ditchling village. It was always, at the very least, a five-mile walk, involving visits to country pubs for beer, which was then the only alcohol he drank. As they walked, he spoke to her about the war; his little niece Stella, whom he loved; and Welsh history. He walked quickly. When they returned one afternoon, her father asked, 'Did you have a nice walk?' and she replied, 'David had a nice walk. I had a nice run.'¹⁰³



26. David Jones *Petra Helen, Feast of St. Thomas*, 1924

By 13 December 1923 their romance was well advanced. Gill records in a letter to Chute, ‘supper’s finished and Petra is sewing & David J. is reading *Twelfth Night* to her!’ (Petra later thought him ‘quite interested in plays.’)¹⁰⁴ He read her other poetry as well, attempting to make up for Gill’s refusal to educate his daughters.

Petra would remember, ‘He used to love ... holding my hand, and we would have kisses and a certain sort of cuddling, but apart from that it was rather immature, really. And I wasn’t old enough to know it. I was very fond of him.’ He was, she later said, ‘very humorous’ and ‘a very, very dear person, ... very affectionate.’ He told her nothing about Elsie Hancock or Dorothea de Halpert, so that she had the impression that he ‘had never had a girlfriend before.’ This was his first physical relationship. They became engaged. Petra recalled, ‘We almost drifted into it.’ His words of proposal were something like, ‘Well, we must get married.’¹⁰⁵

On 22 April 1924, Jones told Gill of their decision, and that afternoon he and Gill walked together over the Downs talking about the engagement and Jones’s future. She was seventeen and he twenty-eight. That night he ate with the Gills. Also present were David Pepler and John O’Connor, who had come the day before to see the now nearly finished stations of the cross. After dinner Gill recorded in his diary, ‘Mary & I agreed to P’s engagement. They are both very happy.’ (It is mistaken to assume, as some have, that Gill had reservations about the engagement owing to incestuous feelings towards Petra. Gill had had an incestuous relationship with his eldest daughter, but, long before Jones’s arrival at Ditchling, horror at beginning one with Petra had caused him, with the help of his confessor, to terminate all incestuous acts, even with the eldest, Betty.) Gill insisted on a formal ceremony of betrothal. After Compline in the chapel on 24 April, with O’Connor presiding and before the entire community, Jones and Petra solemnly declared their intention to marry and signed a document of attestation.

He gave Hagreen a shilling to make into a silver engagement ring. Hagreen used a hammer and a marlinespike to shape it and engraved round its outer edge in Latin from the Song of Songs: ‘he is my beloved and I am his.’ He charged ten shillings for the job, and Jones, deadpan, told Petra that since she was going to wear the ring, she should pay for it.¹⁰⁶

He now ate and travelled more with the Gills. Shortly after the betrothal, he and Petra visited her grandparents at North Walls near Chichester. Jones thought it a ‘heavenly’ place, which he

knew was on land once important to King Alfred.¹⁰⁷ On 7 June, he went with the Gills to Chichester where they were met by bald, bearded Henry Royce of the Rolls Royce Motor Company and driven to West Wittering to stay as his guests. They played bowls with Royce, stayed the night, and returned the next day to Chichester by bus. There they attended Mass for the feast of the Ascension, visited the cathedral, and walked through the city, Gill pointing out its many lovely late-Renaissance houses. Jones was learning from Gill about architecture. Chichester was the first town he had visited that was still visibly Roman—laid out within its walls according to the Roman quadrilateral plan, centred by the intersection of the principal north-south and east-west roads. This was something that Gill knew nothing about but Jones was especially interested in. The Roman quadrilateral plan would figure prominently in his later poetry (*A* 87, *SL* 79). After lunch they went by bus to the nearby village of Lavant to introduce him to Gill's in-laws. Then they returned to Royce's, where Gill worked all the next day on an inscription for the mantel. They stayed for supper and played bowls again that evening.

On the Common, especially when it rained and the lovers had nowhere else to go, they visited the Pepler house or the less populated Hagreen cottage. One evening shortly after the betrothal they were there while the Hagreens were putting their four-year-old daughter to bed. She had been given a toy horse on wheels which she clung to as they carried her up the steep narrow stairs. When her parents returned to the fireside, Jones observed, 'Strange how early in life one wants to take what one loves to bed with one.'¹⁰⁸

On another occasion during the first weeks of the engagement, they were sitting by the Hagreens' fire when Petra interrupted one of them to say that she did not understand how something just recounted could be true. Jones explained it, and she said, 'I still don't see.' He explained again. Again she said she did not understand. Patiently, more fully, he explained for the third time, again without success. Finally, turning to Hagreen, he said, 'Tell me, Philip, is there anything in marriage to make up for having to keep your temper with a woman?' Petra was the daughter most like her mother, no intellectual, incapable of following abstract thought.¹⁰⁹

Conrad Pepler would remember them in his parents' house, sitting at opposite ends of the sofa, Jones reading poetry to her. Not only did they sit far apart, but when they walked together it was not arm-in-arm, as lovers do, but on opposite sides of the lane—'that was a joke' among the

community at Ditchling.¹¹⁰ But, of course, this was how they walked when thinking they were being observed.

Gill explained to Hagreen what he understood to be the reason for such reticence. He said that Jones would only kiss her, for example, but never fully embrace her because he had a problem with seminal emissions. 'His sex-works work too easily,' he said, attributing this characteristic to Jones's being half Welsh. He told Hagreen that he thought Jones the most highly sexed man he had ever known and regarded his chastity as a marvellous spiritual accomplishment. * Desmond Chute had the same affliction but more severely, with up to four unprovoked ejaculations daily, which threatened, for a while, to impede his ordination. There are reasons for scepticism about Jones having this affliction. When told about it decades later, Petra was surprised and said, 'I saw nothing of that,' but added that he might have kept it to himself. The daughter of the Ditchling weaver, Valentine Kilbride, said that Hagreen himself had this problem, that it caused him serious anxiety, and that he tended to see his own characteristics in others. But the information ostensibly came originally from Gill, and from someone so sexually uninhibited that projection seems unlikely. Jones probably did have the problem and mentioned it to Gill, since he wryly referred to himself a few years later as 'poor old hair-trigger Jones.'¹¹¹

Petra thought that he was under-sexed. His being so much a part of the family was undoubtedly an inhibiting factor. There was also a lack of opportunity. Whenever people of the opposite sex live together in groups, furthermore, familial affection diminishes sexual feeling. Petra would remember their engagement as 'just rather a brother and sister relationship, rather a religious, idealized, thing.' She also thought that fastidiousness might have inhibited him. They behaved, she said, like a couple of seventeen-year-olds. 'The sexual side of the engagement wasn't there really,' she said. 'We were quite happy just to kiss goodnight or walk along hand in hand, that sort of thing. There wasn't the urge.' Full sexual intercourse was certainly out of the question. She did not want a baby out of wedlock, and neither did he. About intercourse, she remembers, 'We had a sort of terrific feeling that it was wrong.' He was not, she would later think, a very passionate person.¹¹²

* Tom Burns, who knew Jones well a few years later, also said that he thought Jones very highly sexed.

Abstention from coition is not, however, proof of absent inclination, and public reticence is no indication of private ardour. There was considerably more physical intimacy than Petra ever acknowledged to others. Out on the Downs, in what Jones would later call ‘the secret places lovers know,’ clothing was displaced and removed, and amid the wild columbine, cowslips and early purple orchids, they enjoyed the pleasures of mutual masturbation.¹¹³



27. David Jones, *Octavia*, 1924

Theirs was not, however, even in private, an untroubled rural experience of Lawrencean erotic bliss. At Ditchling he made four depictions of her head in profile: the relief carving, an engraving, and two drawings. All but the carving seems uninspired. And there is another re-presentation of her, not previously noted as such, which suggests tension in the relationship and conflict in him. A *Libellus Lapidum* engraving that he particularly liked, since he signed it with engraved initials (fig. 27), illustrates verse spoken by a rejected suitor who says that if she had behaved differently ‘beneath the mistletoe’ she might have been saved from ‘a wedding full of woe’. The speaker resembles a monkey, conventionally a figure of lust. A

‘Note’ printed with the verse apologizes ‘to her relatives’ for ‘an accidental likeness to Octavia in the picture.’ Since Octavia resembles Petra Gill, either the simian suitor is Jones or the ‘wedding full of woe’ is to him. Either way, Simian sexuality is denied or repressed. One of Jones’s favourite folk songs was ‘Barbara Allen,’ about unrequited love. When he sang it, he substituted the name ‘Petra Helen.’¹¹⁴

Yet another depiction of Petra, this time with himself as suitor, also portends trouble. In 1924, from an alcove at the back of Gill’s house, he painted a small (9 x 10 inches) but monumental oil that he entitled *The Garden Enclosed* (fig. 28) First he made a pencil and watercolour study, raising his point of view about fifteen feet above the ground. Based on this he made an oil painting, including two joined outbuildings, one of them the diary where he slept, and inserting the human figures, representing himself and Petra.

Taken from the Song of Songs, the title suggests holy eroticism—to some, a problematic notion. The garden in this picture is not the least enclosed, however, and the garden in the title is not so much a reference to setting as an allusion to the scriptural statement, ‘a garden is my sister, my spouse.’ The terms ‘sister’ and ‘spouse’ seem contradictory. The two joined buildings correspond to the joined male and female and suggest permanence of union but also a certain lifelessness. On the ground in a red dress at the divergence of paths is a wooden doll, Petra’s doll, Brunhilda, carved for her as a little girl by her father. Its being dropped indicates her change from childhood to womanhood. Symbolically it corresponds to the swing in the left background, too high to sit on now, as though the growing tree had lifted



28. David Jones, *Garden Inclosed*, 1924

it with the passing of time. The geese stretch phallic necks across the middle distance, penetrating the expansive and tumescent grove. The picture tips slightly to the left of vertical. This and the movement of the geese and the eye’s tendency to read left-to-right generate a sense of the middleground moving right-to-left. Not diminishing in perspective, the Y of the red-brick path is repeated in the forked trees.¹¹⁵ The right fork of the path juts up like a branch and directs the eye to the solidity of joined outbuildings and human figures, which block further movement. The forked walk may suggest divergence between past and future, to which the organically curving Y-forks of the trees give nature’s imprimatur. This meaning seems, however, contradicted by other visual cues. The middle-ground movement is, as trees and geese suggest,

erotic in direction and force and may be seen as originating in the male figure, who faces that way, but it moves away from the joined couple. The couple are wooden and unerotic, which suits their association with the buildings behind them. The moment of divergence, which is the subject of the picture, has its focus in contradictory aspects of the female figure. She leans away from the male and places a hand against his embracing arm (the same hand that pushes away an arm of the rejected suitor in the *Libellus* engraving). She kisses but does not hug. Instead of the doll of childhood, she flowers of fertility, but they are few and droopy.

Every figure and object in a dream expresses something about the dreamer. The same may be said of this picture and its painter. He may have felt the sibling uncertainty suggested by the verbal context of the title, by the contrast between the path's right fork and the leftward movement of nature, and by the posture and gesture of the female figure. The divergence in the path and in the tree branches suggest not so much a change in direction as a tension between marital sexuality and bachelorhood. Two roads diverge before the painter. He looks down one but will take the other, the one less travelled—a choice that would make considerable difference, though he would leave it, as men sometimes do, to the woman.

He exhibited *The Garden Enclosed* (priced at £15.15) in the 1924 Goupil Gallery Salon, along with two other paintings, *Garden Path* (£12.12) and *The Lovers* (£10.10), and his carving *Mater Castissima* (£10). In the same exhibit, Gill and Hageen exhibited a carving each; Harold Hawkins, two pictures; Medworth, six. In their smoothed, sculptural surfaces and nearly machined, almost Art-Deco curves, Jones's pictures evidence a distortion that was, for him, an escape from the academic realism of art school.

For Passion Week, 1924, the Guild members put on, in the chapel, a play written by Pepler about Pilate. Jones engraved the block for the broadsheet advertising it and took the role of a Roman soldier who, apart from holding a spear, did and said nothing.¹¹⁶ That Easter, he drew the heads of Gill's daughters in a recession of profiles—a remarkably ugly picture in which they look like deeply lined cadavers.

On 6 April 1924, he was elected a 'postulant' of the Guild, which was not the same as being a Dominican tertiary postulant though modelled on it. After Compline that day, he was

ceremoniously admitted, kneeling before Gill and beside Pepler and promising to live and work according to the rules and spirit of the Guild. He would attend one Guild meeting in the beginning of May but never became a full member.¹¹⁷

Gill was now determined to leave Ditchling. He had three reasons. He wanted to live somewhere too remote to become, as Ditchling had, a show-place community of Catholic lay people; he wanted to distance himself from McNabb, who increasingly disapproved of his erotic art; and, most of all, he wanted a break from Pepler, whom he considered financially dishonest. Gill was in touch with the Benedictines of Caldey Island off Tenby in Pembrokeshire, who were willing to let him rent an abandoned monastery high in the Black Mountains of Wales. Initially the plan was for the entire Guild to move. Now he wanted to go without Pepler.

On 11 June, he finalized arrangements and journeyed with Jones and the Prior of Caldey to London. From there, he and Jones went north to Bradford to install the newly completed stations of the cross. The installation took most of the next five days, with Jones painting the lettering.¹¹⁸ For four days they worked, with a break on the 13th to inspect Gill's relief *The Money Changers* at Leeds University. Evenings were spent with O'Connor before the fire, talking, drinking, reciting Browning, and singing folksongs. On the 17th, Gill talked to Jones about going to Wales and asked him to go with him.

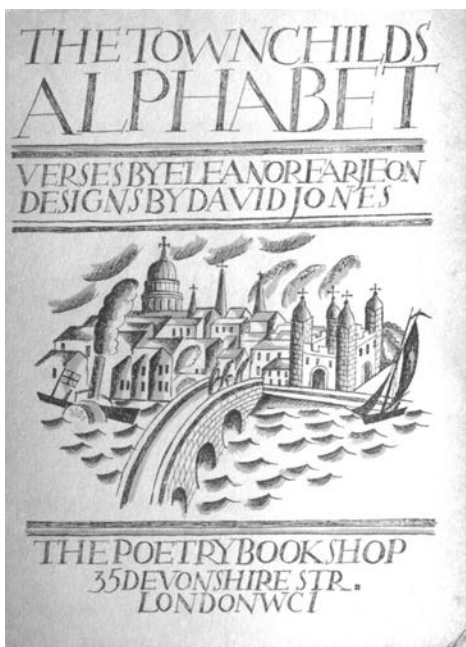
The next day, on the train to London, Gill composed an accusatory statement about Pepler's 'financial methods'. Jones continued on to Ditchling, and Gill went to the priory at Haverstock Hill to read his statement to McNabb, Pepler, and Maxwell. Pepler's defence was financial incompetence. Running the press had cost him his own fortune and was now depleting his wife's money. Whether inept or dishonest, Pepler certainly operated at the expense of others. This has been obscured in everything written about the Ditchling split in order to save the feelings of the Pepler children. Eventually the Guild would expel Pepler because of his incorrigible freedom with the money of others.¹¹⁹

On 29 June the split finally came. At a Guild meeting, Pepler and Maxwell moved to reorganize the community on socialist lines. Since Gill had by far the largest income, this change would chiefly be at his expense. It also contradicted Distributist insistence on private property. He voted against it but was outvoted. The new policy meant that the Guild, and not Gill, owned

the blocks he had engraved for St Dominic's Press (which Pepler had not bought as he had Jones's engravings). Pepler insisted on keeping them, and for this Gill would never forgive him. He decided to sever his connection with the Guild and move to Wales.¹²⁰ That evening Gill, his family, Jones, and the Hagreens assembled to discuss Gill's reasons for departing. Hagreeen was in complete agreement and decided to accompany him to Wales.

Jones did not want to go and refused to take sides in the quarrel. He assumed that the basis of conflict was merely a difference in temperament between methodical Gill and disorderly Pepler. The financial side of the disagreement was of no interest to him. He would never blame Pepler and would remain convinced that 'no *fundamental differences*' divided those who were staying, from those who were leaving.¹²¹

On 10 August, he walked to Ditchling village for the last time with Gill, together with Patrick Flood and Petra. On the next day, Flood engineered what Gill records as 'Reconciliation with HP & GM.' On the 12th, the community gathered for a farewell picnic on Mount Caburn in the Downs east of Lewes. All mingled freely. On the 13th, Flood celebrated the Traveller's Mass, and Jones helped load the last odds and ends into a van they called 'the covered wagon.' He and Petra, who was staying to complete her training with Mrs Mairet, watched her family and the Hagreens and Brennans (a farm labourer and his wife) depart, leaving what seemed to him 'a very desolate Ditchling.'¹²²



He was staying to finish a job. The success of his engravings for *Libellus Lapidum* had won him his first external commission. Pepler and Gill had done work in the previous year for Harold Munro, the modest, soft-spoken, humourous Scottish literary kingpin whose Poetry Bookshop published the *Poetry Review* and the influential anthologies of Georgian poetry. Promoting what he thought would be his future son in law, Gill had shown Munro a copy of *Libellus Lapidum*, which he liked so much that he commissioned Jones to illustrate Eleanor Farjeon's *The Town Child's Alphabet* (1924). The job required an ink drawing for each of the letters of the alphabet and an extra for the cover, all to be

reproduced with line-blocks in two colours. Jones devoted the last two weeks of August to the drawings, making preliminary sketches and then the final pen-and-ink drawings and adding blue and orange watercolour. They are deliberately contemporary in style, with detail generally reduced to what may be conveyed by cartoonish lines. The best of them are minor triumphs of design. When Munro saw the cover, he objected to sails billowing in a direction opposite to that in which smoke was blowing and insisted that Jones correct the drawing, which he did (fig. 29). This commission led to another in the following year: a now extremely rare 'New Broadside' for the Poetry Bookshop in which a poem by Shane Leslie entitled 'Fleet Street' is printed above a drawing by Jones of the stigmata feet of Jesus above newsboys calling headlines in a jumbly London. During his last two weeks at Ditchling, he also engraved his bookplate for Desmond Chute.¹²³

At about this time, Pepler was printing *The Child's Rosary Book*. Upset by the row with Gill and depressed over the break-up of the community, he was inattentive, allowing the ink to congeal on the blocks, which spoiled the printing—its botched printing may be one reason Jones disliked the book.¹²⁴

When his work was finished, 'with much hesitation' about whether to stay or go, Jones decided he had to leave Ditchling because he was unable to earn a living there. As he packed to leave, he expressed dislike for his unsold painting *Our Lady of the Hills* as 'an art-school sort of work' (ch. 5, fig. 12) and Petra said she liked it so he gave it to her.¹²⁵ The engravings he had done remained with St Dominic's Press as property of the Guild, which sold prints of them separately and as Christmas cards through the 1930s.

Living again with his parents in Brockley, he often went into London, occasionally attending a life class in the evening. He, Medworth, and Hawkins often drew and engraved in Hawkins's studio. Hawkins could not learn wood engraving, which requires the use of both hands, one to grip the gravure, the other to turn the block. Jones tried to learn etching from them, which they had been studying at the Royal College on Saturdays, but he could only manage dry-point. He and Medworth printed engravings on a press that Medworth had bought and kept in the basement of the studio. At this time, Jones visited his father's printing room, where an eighty-year old trade engraver about to retire gave him a full set of engraving tools that he had used

since the 1860s. They were a physical connection to the anonymous journalistic engraving that he had long admired. The well-made old tools, separation from Gill, the stimulus of working with Medworth, and the return to the studio setting made a difference to him, for he later wrote that only upon his return to London in 1924 was he able, as an engraver, 'to start fire.' Contributing to the difference may have been a change in hair style. For the first time now he had a pudding-basin haircut, his hair falling over his forehead in a fringe and requiring no interruption of work for pushing back as he bent over a block.¹²⁶

His father insisted that he insure himself against illness, and he applied for a policy with the Artist's Benevolent Fund, which required proof that he was an artist. He submitted pictures, which, the fund officials informed him, proved that he was not an artist, so he had to get a well-known artist, Gill or perhaps Sickert, to vouch for him.¹²⁷ His father made the payments regularly on his behalf.

At the end of the first week of October, Petra made the second of several week-end visits to Brockley. She slept in the bed in the spare room that Jones used as a studio, so that while she was there he drew sitting on the bed in his own bedroom. She had previously visited in June. Her visits were so infrequent because, he explained to her, his mother was ill and over-night guests put a strain on her. During her visits, Petra noticed that there was no open talk at table. Jones's mother was quiet. His father did his best to be amusing and keep the conversation going. It was clear to Petra that tension was in the air and that Mrs. Jones, who 'had quite a strong character,' disapproved of the engagement, possibly because her son was not well established, possibly because she thought Petra unsuitable owing to her youth and the age discrepancy between them. But she was also attached to him and wanted not to lose him to another woman. Petra realized that he was her favourite—though, from what she could see, he no longer belonged to the life of his parents, who did not, she felt, 'really understand him.' She thought that 'the war perhaps' had separated him from them. Although Mrs Jones remained 'reserved,' she and Petra would talk during the washing up, and then she seemed to Petra 'sweet' and 'kind.' But Petra 'always felt ... an intruder' at Brockley. David may have felt the tension, for he arranged usually to be out of the house with her. They went to the top of the Hilly Fields for the view and to the allotment his father cultivated there and to bring back vegetables. They went up to London to visit galleries.

He liked London, she remembered, much more than she did. They visited Medworth, with whom, Petra thought, he had ‘an intellectual relationship’ and ‘talked a lot about life.’ They also went for tea to his sister, who now had a second daughter, Mollie.¹²⁸

During the four months that he lived in Brockley and Petra lived in Ditchling, he never visited her there, possibly because he lacked train fare. He often wrote, however, though not, she thought, as often as he might. Once while walking across the Common with Val Kilbride who was posting a letter to his own fiancée, she asked, ‘Do you write to her every day?’ He said, ‘Yes,’ and she said, ‘David doesn’t write every day to me.’¹²⁹

On Wednesday October 8, Eric Gill, who was apparently less of a strain for Mrs Jones than his daughter, took her place in the spare room, Jones’s studio, and stayed till the end of the week. On the 9th, Jones and he went to 7:30 Mass at St Mary Magdalene’s and then visited the Tate Gallery to see the director, Charles Aitken, who was away, so that they saw J.B. Manson instead. Then they separated, Gill going eventually to the Goupil to promote the fortunes of his future son-in-law by talking about him with Marchant.

Having officially resigned from the Guild, Gill convinced Jones also to resign as a Guild postulant.¹³⁰ On the 12th, they went to Mass twice, then walked together and talked ‘re art & work etc.’ They walked and talked again that afternoon and again that evening. That week, Jones met Gill’s brother Cecil and went with Gill and Joseph Cribb to the Goupil Gallery and then on for drinks to the flat of a young friend of Gill’s named Louis Bussell. On the 14th, Jones, who had by now agreed to visit Gill in Wales, accompanied him to Paddington to see him off. Gill visited London on November 25, went with Jones for dinner at the Guild of Sts. Gregory and Luke at Belgravia Hotel, and they attended a lecture afterwards on ancient crucifixes.

The painter Mark Gertler had been visiting the Gills at their new home at Capel-y-ffin in Wales and had allowed Gill’s adopted son Gordion to give him art lessons. In response to birthday greetings, Jones wrote to Gordion on November 3, ‘when I come down you shall teach me how to paint instead of Mr Gertler,’ and sent this advice:

DO ONE PICTURE
EACH DAY AND
WHEN YOU ARE
OLD YOU WILL

BE HAPPY.

Notes to Chapter 6

¹ DJ, 'Autobiographical details given to D. Cleverdon 3/7/70'; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; Brother David Lawson, 'A bit on David Jones, R.I.P.' unpublished typescript 1974; John Ginger, 'A Brother's Life: Reginald Lawson, 1891-1985,' typescript; P. Hagreen to T. Stoneburner n.d.

² Here and subsequently where Eric Gill is present and a precise date is given but no source specified, that source is Gill's diary; E. Gill to J. O'Connor 13/9/21; to D. Blamires 6/11/66; E. Gill to Will Rothenstein 11/11/61; to V. Watkins 2/2/63.

³ P. Hagreen interviewed 2/6/86; Walter Sickert, *A Free House!*, p. xxvi; Sickert, 152; DJ interview by P. Orr early 1970s.

⁴ D. Attwater, *A Cell of Good Living* (London: Chapman, 1969), p. 69; Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, p. 3; Ginger, 'A Brother's Life: Reginald Lawson, 1891-1985,' typescript; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69.

⁵ Susan Falkner, *A Ditchling Childhood 1916-1936* (Bures: Icen, 1994), pp.61, 20.

⁶ P. Hagreen to author 27/9/85.

⁷ To R. Hague 22/12/33; R. Lawson to T. Stoneburner 17/1/66; Conrad Pepler, 'In Deibus Illis: Some Memories of Ditchling,' *Chesterton Review* VII (Nov 1982), 346; to T. Stoneburner 16/11/56; To T. Burns 4-5/10/63.

⁸ P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; P. Hagreen to author 26/1/86.

⁹ Falkner, p. 26; Ginger, typescript; P. Hagreen to author 27/9/85.

¹⁰ Falkner, p. 15; to Bernard Wall 30/1/43; Nest Cleverdon interviewed 15/7/92; ms draft n,d, [c. 1965]; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69; Ginger, typescript; Lawson to T. Stoneburner 17/1/66.

¹¹ Ginger, typescript.

¹² Ms draft n,d, (1965); to H. Grisewood 29/12/72; Ginger, typescript.

¹³ E.Gill to D. Chute 18/2/22.

¹⁴ To V. Wynne-Williams 18/10/62; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; Fr. Benedict Wallis to author 23/4/86; 8/5/86; to T. Stoneburner 13/1/70, 28/9/67.

¹⁵ DJ to P. Kelly interviewed 9/6/86; to H. Grisewood 29/12/72; DJ to Blissett, p. 22, and my memories; to V. Wynne-Williams 18/10/62; Ginger, typescrip; E. Gill to D. Chute 12/1/24; P. Hagreen to author 19/10/85, to H. Grisewood

1/1/64. DJ tested his vocaton only once by all accounts, but the precise occasion is never specified; Nevertheless, by a complex process of elimination, the occasion can only have been here, at Parkminster and now, November 1922.

¹⁶ Ginger, typescript.

¹⁷ P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86.

¹⁸ Daphne Pollen, *I Remember, I Remember*, privately published 1983; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10 87; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 5/3/78; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86.

¹⁹ P. Hagreen to R. Hague 27/2/78.

²⁰ D. Attwater, 'Eric Gill's View of Good Work,' 105; Pepler, '*In Deibus Illis*,' 346.

²¹ P. Hagreen to author 27/9/85; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/6/86; to H. Grisewood 5/12/44, 10/6/64.

²² To Winifrede Wilson 30/4/66; to S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86; to H. Sutherland 29/10 1931.

²³ H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; A 149; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; DJ's marginal markings in T. de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu* (London: Collins1960), pp. 22, 41.

²⁴ To R. Hague 19/1/73; H.S. Ede, 'David Jones,' *Horizon* viii (August 1943), 128

²⁵ Ede, 'David Jones,' 128; Eric Gill, 'David Jones,' ms 7/9/28.

²⁶ Lawson, 'A bit on David Jones, R.I.P.'

²⁷ Michael Hague interviewed 10/9/89; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86; DJ ms frag. n.d.; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; P. Hagreen to author 4/11/85. Here and subsequently, I am grateful to P. Tegetmeier for permission to quote her.

²⁸ Ginger, Prospectus for A Brother's Life: Reginald Lawson, 1891-1985; P. Hagreen to author 13/1/86; Ginger, typescript; to Richard and Juliet Shirley-Smith 11/2/61.

²⁹ Lawson, 'A bit on David Jones, R.I.P.'; DJ's annotations in Attwater, *A Cell of Good Living*; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 22/6/90; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 19/2/78.

³⁰ Joanna Gill to author 20/8/88; Ginger, typescript; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87; Lawson to T. Stoneburner 17/1/66

³¹ Lawson, 'A bit on David Jones, R.I.P.'; Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, p. 5; to T. Stoneburner 29/6/65, 17/2/66.

³² To J. Gill 6/11/23; P. Hagreen to DJ 12/40; to D. Travis n.d.

³³ C. Pepler to T. Stoneburner 18/11/65; 11/1/66; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87; Conrad Pepler interviewed 11/6/89; P. Hagreen to author 1/3/86.

³⁴ Fiona MacCarthy, *Eric Gill* (London: Faber, 1989), p. 152; V. Wynne-Williams 1/11/62; Ginger, typescript

³⁵ Brocard Sewell, 'Hilary Pepler: 1878-1951,' *Aylesford Review* VII (Spring 1965), 10; Ginger, typescript.

³⁶ DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72; Attwater, *A Cell of Good Living*, p. 76.

³⁷ Ginger, typescript; see Gill, 'Responsibility' (1925), *Art-Nonsense and Other Essays* (London: Cassell, 1929), 131-42.

³⁸ George Maxwell to Mr Carey 8/7/35; to Nicolette Gray 14/4/61; DJ 'Life for Jim Ede,' typescript 5/9/35.

³⁹ P. Hagreen interviewed by D. Cleverdon 1982; Bayes, 'The Grammar of Drawing,' II, 57; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 20/5/78

⁴⁰ To T. Stoneburner 24-5/10/69; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69.

⁴¹ To V. Wynne-Williams 30/4/66; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 17/2/78; DJ, *Manchester Guardian* 11/2/72; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86, 2/6/86; P. Hagreen interviewed by Cleverdon 1982; to P. Tegetmeier 3/11/41, P. Hagreen to T. Stoneburner 1/9/69; P. Hagreen to T. Stoneburner n.d.

⁴² To D. Blamires 6/11/66.

⁴³ R. and J. Hague interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 11/6/69.

⁴⁴ P. Hagreen to R. Hague 17/2/78; to Evan Gill 8/8/61; P. Hagreen interviewed 2/6/86, 27/6/86.

⁴⁵ To Evan Gill 8/8/61.

⁴⁶ P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86, 2/6/86; D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86.

⁴⁷ Quoted by Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, p. 4.

⁴⁸ To Mr Barkley 21/1/64; to Evan Gill 11/11/57.

⁴⁹ To Désire Hirst unposted frag. n.d. c. 1967; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 22/2/78; P. Hagreen interviewed by Cleverdon 1986; P. Hagreen to D. Cleverdon 13/8/24; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 22/2/78.

⁵⁰ Quoted by Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, p. 4.

⁵¹ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 20/6/72; to V. Wynne-Williams n.d. [1966].

⁵² DJ quoted by Dorenkamp, 'In the Order of Signs,' p. 13; DJ to Blissett, p. 25.

⁵³ To J. Stone 20/11/63; Bernard Wall in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 4/6/69; to D. Tegetmeier 13/11/53; to T. Stoneburner 30/8/63; to P. Hagreen 12/12/40; Ginger, typescript.

⁵⁴ DJ's annotations to Attwater, *A Cell of Good Living*, p. 78; to R. Hague 5/11/64; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

⁵⁵ A.S. Hartrick to DJ 4/12/40; Eric Gill to DJ letter frag. n.d.

⁵⁶ To R. Hague 27/3/78; to the *Tablet* 17/9/50.

⁵⁷ P. Hagreen interviewed by Cleverdon 1982; DJ interviewed by Guy Brenton and Cleverdon, BBC typescript 5/61 quoted by Miles and Shiel, p. 154; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86; P. Mairet to T. Stoneburner 15/9/69; R. and J. Hague interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 11/6/69; Stuart Hampshire interviewed 22/1/89; H. Grisewood interviewed; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; Hague, *David Jones*, p. 24.

⁵⁸ P. Hagreen to author 23/11/85; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 2/78; Dorenkamp, p. 16.

⁵⁹ To Ray Howard Jones interviewed 11/9/89; DJ to T. Stoneburner 30/8/72; DJ in the 1950s.

⁶⁰ Walter Shewring interviewed 24/6/88; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69; Ginger, typescript; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 27/2/78; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 6/85; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90; to the *Catholic Herald*, draft 1/2/48.

⁶¹ P. Hagreen to author 9/10/85; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 27/2/78; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72.

⁶² P. Hagreen to author 4/11/85; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 30/4/78; *LF* 86; W. Shewring interviewed 24/6/88; P. Hagreen interviewed by Cleverdon 1982; to J. H. Johnston 24/8/62.

⁶³ To Frank Kermode 12/7/66; DJ 'Life for Jim Ede,' typescript 5/9/35.

⁶⁴ Ginger, typescript; to EG 30/10/23; E. Hawkins interviewed 1/9/87; DJ 'Life for Jim Ede' typescript 5/9/35; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90, 5/10/87.

⁶⁵ To T. Stoneburner 30/8/63; to *The Times* draft 20/12/45

⁶⁶ Jacques Maritain, *Art and Philosophy* (Ditchling: St Dominic's Press, 1923), p. 90; to J. Ede 11/4/39; to H. Grisewood 22/5/62; DJ quoted by H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87.

⁶⁷ J. Montague, p. 37, 44-5; E.G. to G. Carey 5/4/34; EG, *Art-Nonsense*, p. 58; Gill, *Letters*, 6/9/17.

⁶⁸ To Helen Ede 13/8/28.

⁶⁹ Ginger, typescript, JM p. 101.

⁷⁰ J. Montague, pp. 114-5.

⁷¹ See DG 134, 151, 156; JE interviewed 31/5/85.

⁷² To H. Grisewood 22/5/62; Ms draft of incomplete unpublished essay c. 1955; DJ quoted by Ede, 'David Jones,' 133.

⁷³ Robin Ironside, *David Jones* (London: Penguin, 1949), p. 5; E&A 274; DJ 'Life for Jim Ede,' typescript 5/9/35.

⁷⁴ Victoria Ingrams interviewed 1/5/93; D. Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75; DJ to P. Hagreen 12/12/40; E. Gill to David Kindersley interviewed 22/6/88; to S. Honeyman 30/5/73; S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91.

⁷⁵ To Maurice Percival 5/2/56; P. Hagreen interviewed by Cleverdon 1982; to J. Stone 14/2/62, 1/2/62; P. Mairet to T. Stoneburner, 15/9/69.

⁷⁶ DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; to H. Grisewood 29/12/72; to R. Hague 18/5/74; H. Grisewood interviewed 9/83; A 36; R. Hague to Blissett to author, 17/5/01.

⁷⁷ K. Lockitt interviewed 21/6/89; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

⁷⁸ Martin D'Arcy to T. Stoneburner 15/9/66, 12/4/60.

⁷⁹ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; to T. Stoneburner 20/12/64.

⁸⁰ E. Gill to D. Chute 14/5/23; McCarthy, who confuses this with his profession as a tertiary, p. 148.

⁸¹ E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88.

⁸² P. Hagreen to R. Hague 5/3/78; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; to T. Stoneburner 7/10/64; A 148, 213.

⁸³ P. Hagreen to author 27/9/85.

⁸⁴ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 5/5/66.

⁸⁵ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88, 3/10/87; E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88.

⁸⁶ E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87; P. Mairet to T. Stoneburner 15/9/69; B. Dufort interviewed 9/6/86; E. Hawkins interviewed 1/9/87.

⁸⁷ Simon Brett in conversation with author, 23/4/95.

⁸⁸ P. Hagreen interviewed by Cleverdon 1982; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; to R. Hague 27-30/9/74; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 10/4/78. I am grateful to Fr. John Hagreen for permission to quote his father.

⁸⁹ P. Hagreen to T. Stoneburner 1/9/69; to R. Hague 19/2/78; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; W. Shewring to T. Stoneburner 13/9/69.

⁹⁰ 'David Jones,' 151.

⁹¹ P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 19/2/78; P. Hagreen to author 26/1/86; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; P. Hagreen to author 26/1/86.

⁹² P. Hagreen to R. Hague 20/5/78; P. Hagreen to author 9/10/85; P. Hagreen to T. Stoneburner nd; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 17/2/78; P. Hagreen interviewed 2/6/86, 27/6/86, 11/10/87; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; ms list of sources for *In Parenthesis*

⁹³ P. Hagreen to author 4/11/85; P. Hagreen to T. Stoneburner 1/9/69; Paul Hills, 'Making and Dwelling among Signs,' *David Jones, Artist and Poet*, Paul Hills, ed. (Scolar Press: Aldershot, 1997), p. 87; M. Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 15/3/78.

⁹⁴ P. Hagreen to author 16/11/85; P. Hagreen to T. Stoneburner nd; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 27/2/78; to H. Grisewood 4/8/62; to J. Knight 31/7/51; to R. Hague 11/8/74; to Eric White, 10/6/66; to J. H. Johnston 24/8/62.

⁹⁵ P. Hagreen to R. Hague 15/2/78; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86.

⁹⁶ P. Hagreen to author 26/1/86; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

⁹⁷ To P. Tegetmeier 7/9/70; P. Hagreen interviewed 2/6/86; P. Hagreen to author 27/9/85, 29/6/86; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 18/7/80, 19/2/78.

⁹⁸ Gill, 'David Jones,' ms, 7/9/28; to Mr [Thomas] Whitaker, draft, n.d. [1970]; Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, p. 8.

⁹⁹ P. Hagreen to author 4/11/85; P. Hagreen interviewed by Cleverdon 1982.

¹⁰⁰ P. Hagreen to R. Hague 19/2/78; P. Hagreen interviewed 2/6/86; P. Hagreen interviewed by Cleverdon 1982; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86.

¹⁰¹ P. Hagreen to R. Hague 30/4/78.

¹⁰² To J. Stone 20/11/63; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86, 10/87; C. Pepler interviewed 11/6/89; Falkner, p. 98; J. Hague interviewed by W. Blissett, 1977.

¹⁰³ P. Tegetmeier televised interview BBC Wales 4/91; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87, 18/6/88; M. Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88.

¹⁰⁴ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

¹⁰⁵ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 9/8/92, 3/10/87; P. Tegetmeier televised interview BBC Wales 4/91; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88, 22/6/90.

¹⁰⁶ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 30/8/72; P. Hagreen to author 23/11/85.

¹⁰⁷ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 30/8/72.

¹⁰⁸ P. Hagreen interviewed by Cleverdon 1982; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 1/4/78.

¹⁰⁹ P. Hagreen to R. Hague 14/7/78; Elizabeth and Christopher Skelton interviewed 21/6/86.

¹¹⁰ C. Pepler interviewed 11/6/89.

¹¹¹ P. Hagreen to author 5/9/85; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; T. Burns interviewed 13/6/88; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 22/6/90; P. Hagreen interviewed 10/87; R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77.

¹¹² P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88, 12/6/86.

¹¹³ Letter frag. n.d.; DJ, notes written for his psychotherapist, n.d. [1948].

¹¹⁴ To R. Hague 9-15/7/73.

¹¹⁵ See Hills, *David Jones*, p. 80; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86; see Merlin James, *David Jones 1895-1974: A Map of the Artist's Mind* (London: Lund Humphries, 1995), p. 12; Grey, *The Paintings of David Jones*, p. 23.

¹¹⁶ P. Hagreen interviewed by Cleverdon 1982; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; P. Hagreen to author 26/1/86.

¹¹⁷ P. Hagreen R. Hague 22/2/78; MacCarthy, p. 148; DGC 30.

¹¹⁸ E. Gill to D. Chute 8/6/24.

¹¹⁹ C. Pepler interviewed 11/6/89; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86.

¹²⁰ To Evan Gill 8/8/61; D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85.

¹²¹ 'Autobiographical details given to Cleverdon 3/7/70'; D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85; to T. Stoneburner 16/11/56.

¹²² Pepler, *In Deibus Illis*., 349; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 5/5/66; DJ to Desmond Chute 13/8/24.

¹²³ P. Hagreen to author 30/11/85, 13/1/86; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; P. Hagreen interviewed by D. Cleverdon 1982.

¹²⁴ C. Pepler interviewed 11/6/89.

¹²⁵ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86; to Evan Gill 8/8/61; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87.

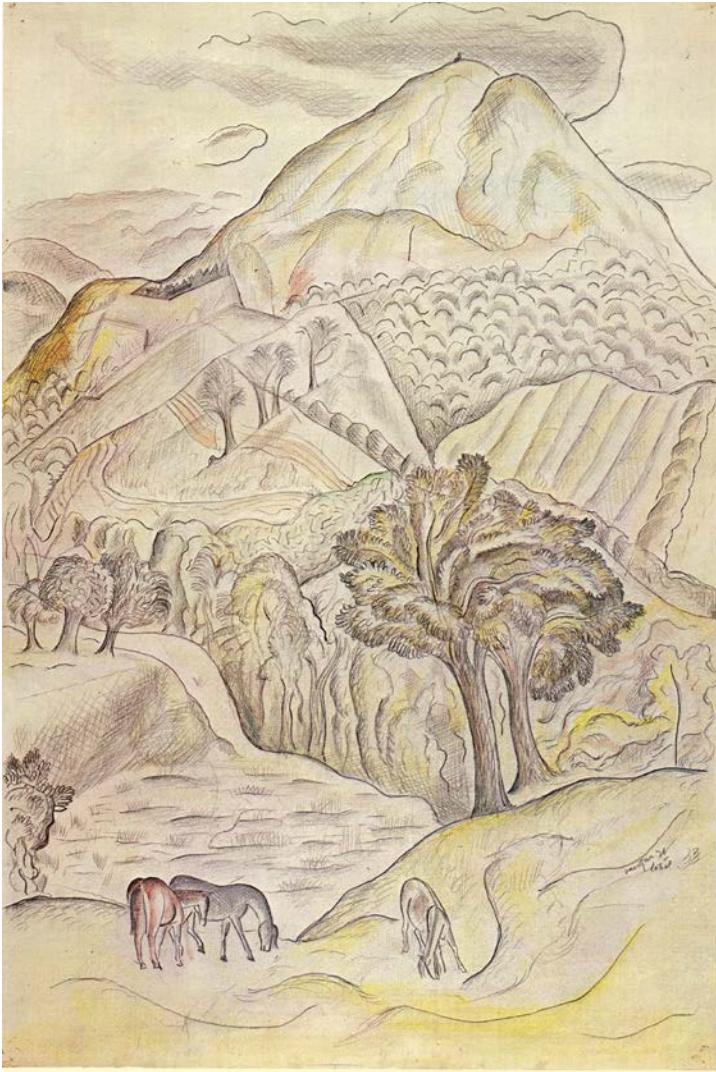
¹²⁶ To H. Grisewood 12/8/56; D. Macarthey-Filgate to author 24/1/91; Dorenkamp, 72; To Juliet Shirley-Smith 4/8/61; DJ 'Life for Jim Ede,' typescript 5/9/35; E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88; Gill, 'David Jones' ms 7/9/28; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87.

¹²⁷ P. Hagreen to author 19/10/85

¹²⁸ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 22/6/90, 9/8/92, 12/6/86, 18/6/88, 3/10/87.

¹²⁹ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 22/6/90, 18/6/88; Jennie Kilbride interviewed 19/6/88.

¹³⁰ E. Gill to D. Chute 19/10/24.

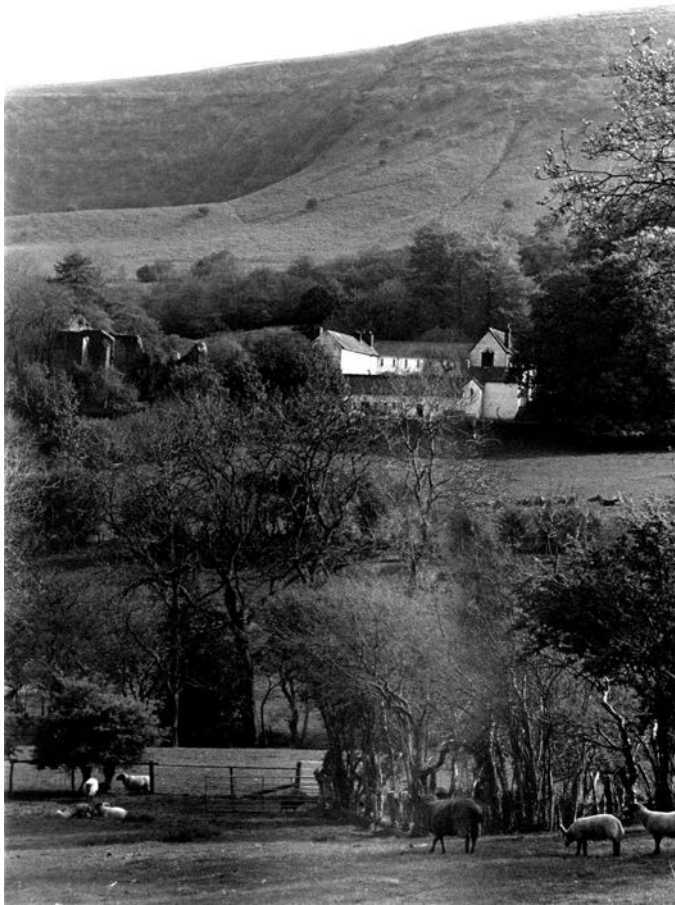
Chapter 7 1924-271. David Jones, *Y Twympa*, 1926

On 22 December 1924, accompanied by Norval Gray, Father Gray's nephew, and intending only to visit, not 'in any sense to join' Gill, he took a train to the station nearest to Capel-y-ffin. From the window, he noticed signs of the industrial despoliation of South Wales, including the Rhymni 'blackish & with surface scum soiling the banks', a sight he later recalled in poetry (*SL* 92). Gill met them at Llanfihangel Crucorney, where Jones saw to the south-west the striking triangular mountain called the Sugar Loaf. They drove up the long Vale of the Ewyras beside and over the twisting Afon Honddu into the wildest reaches of the Black Mountains. Gill had described to him the valley and enclosing mountains, and he had read Giraldus Cambrensis about a bishop telling the king of England that all his wealth could not buy loveliness such as this. The slopes were cultivated or enclosed for pasture and divided by *cwms* or dingles, each with its

thicket of thorn, birch, ash, elder, bird-cherry, and wynch-elm and its permanent or occasional stream. Sheep and wild ponies grazed on the bare upper slopes.¹

It is a place of majestic beauty. The valley floor is a thousand feet above sea level, between ridges rising a further thousand feet. Across the north-east is the Hatteral Ridge with Offa's-Dyke path running on top of it. Fronting the south-west is the Ffwddog Ridge. Covering

the treeless upper slopes are heather, ling, bracken, and bilberry. Capel-y-ffin, or ‘Chapel-of-the-End’ was named for a little stone chapel near the closed head of the valley, a mile and a half from the English border. Jones knew that Giraldus had passed here in 1182 in the company of an archbishop preaching the crusade.



2. The monastery at Capel-y-ffin, under the Ffwyddog Ridge

Before reaching the chapel, they turned to the left, up to a former monastery nestled at 1300 feet on a low slope of the Ffwyddog Ridge (fig. 2). Built in the 1860s of local sandstone, it was a spare neo-gothic quadrangle enclosing a small grass garth. Beside it, like a ruin, was a large, never-completed neo-gothic church, a roofless apse open at the front and cave-like. It would appear in Jones’s later paintings. Both were built by an eccentric Church-of-England deacon named Joseph Leycester Lyne, who called himself Father Ignatius and aspired to introduce Benedictine monasticism into the Anglican Church. When he died in 1908, his few monks joined a more recently founded, more successful Anglican Benedictine community on Caldey Island. Five years later, they all

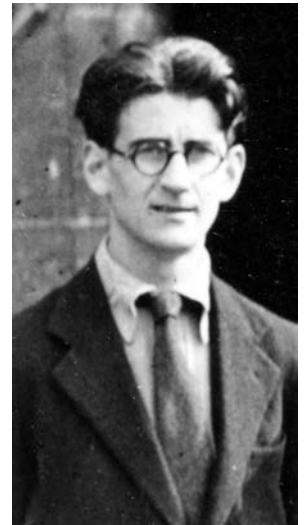
entered the Roman Catholic Church. Their successors rented and would sell the monastery and grounds to Gill.

The building was two-stories under a high-pitched gabled, slate roof. The ground floor was tiled throughout. There were no halls: rooms opened into one another. The outer walls had few windows. As Jones was shown around, he was reunited with the Hagreens and their children,

who inhabited the north side of the quadrangle and to whom he presented an inscribed copy of *The Town-Child's Alphabet*. He met again Denis Tegetmeier and also Donald Attwater, who had visited Ditchling and was now a Gill-devotee. Attwater lived with his wife, children and in-laws in the west side of the quadrangle. Jones was shown the long space beneath the rafters in the north-side which Gill planned to transform into a chapel. The Gills lived in the east side. Above them was an attic containing the monks' cells, ceilingless under bare rafters, each cell with a tiny window facing into the garth and divided from its neighbours by seven-foot-high pine partitions. Jones was given one of these cells to sleep in—a cold place in a cold, damp building.

Located on the shady side of the valley and facing north-east, the monastery was unwarmed by the sun. In summer, a mature plantation of larch, wellingtonia, and beech kept it shaded and damp. Now, in winter, it was almost always sunless. At dinner in the Gills' kitchen, at a long table with a fire roaring in the fireplace, the men wore overcoats and the women heavy woollen shawls. Hot food set before them became quickly cold.

A few hundred yards north-west of the monastery was a house called the Grange. Living there were three monks from Caldey: Dom Joseph Woodford, who was recovering from consumption; and, taking care of him, elderly Brother Augustine Frasick and young Brother Raphael Davies. With them was a nineteen-year-old graduate of Ampleforth named René Hague (fig. 3), who was tutoring



3 René Hague, c. 1925

Davies in Latin in preparation for ordination. Attwater's wife, Dorothy, cooked for them. Woodford celebrated Mass each morning in a temporary chapel on the ground floor of the south side of the quadrangle. Except for singing Compline in the evening, Gill and company did not, as at Ditchling, meet to pray the Little Office. Davies organized and led liturgical singing.² He, Frasick, and Hague were clearing bush on the property.

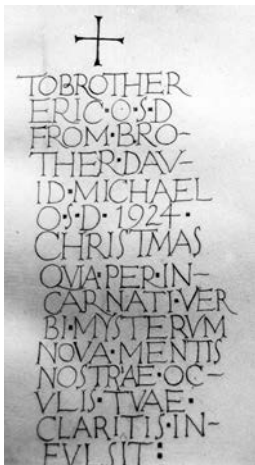
The day after his arrival, Jones went to meet Petra, who was arriving for a two-week Christmas visit. Alone, he drove back down the valley in a two-wheeled pony cart the size of a milk float, with one seat



4. David Jones, Christmas card, 1924

and a bar across the back. At Llanfihangel, he and Petra embraced joyfully. It was nearly dark. Unused to driving and anxious to return before night, he urged the horse to gallop. It refused. The way back was uphill, and with Petra aboard the cart tipped slightly back, making it harder to pull. Standing like a charioteer, he yelled and lashed with reigns, but the horse jogged slowly. At the Half Moon, they met Mary Gill and Betty, who had come down in another cart. It was now pitch dark, and he feared driving further, so Mary drove Petra the rest of the way. He followed in the other cart with Betty driving, or he walked—either way, an ignominious conclusion to romantic reunion.³

On Christmas Eve, the Gills and friends sang carols at neighbouring small farms. Such social initiatives were winning over the unfriendly Welsh farmers—all Anglicized border-Welsh, none Welsh-speaking. The carolers returned for Midnight Mass in the chapel, with singing and incense. There he saw again flat plywood figures he had painted for the manger scene at Ditchling. On Christmas day, he and the others attended the second and third of the three Christmas Masses and then had dinner. He went round the table placing at each adult's setting a print of a recent engraving (fig. 4) in which Mary and Jesus lie like lovers on straw in a vulval darkness with ox, ass, and bird attending—an image influenced by the enwombed disciples sleeping in El Greco's *Christ on the Mount of Olives*. The engraving comes alive only in its inscription, in which an 'N' is backwards and letters flow into or resist one another in wonky



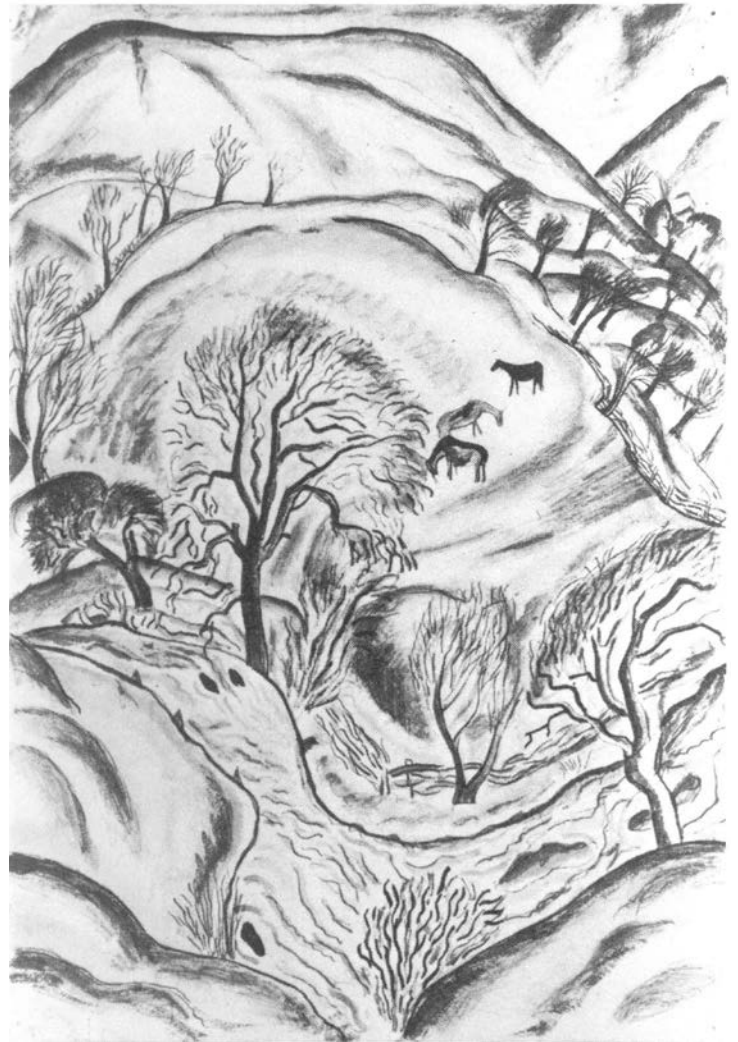
5. David Jones,
Inscription in *Religio
Poetae*, 1924

vitality. He gave a print to René Hague, who was surprised, since they had only just met, though Gill's daughters had told him to expect in Jones somebody 'marvellous'. At one end of the long, clothless, candle-lit table Mary Gill served; at the other, Eric presided and, while the rest began eating, read, as he did at every mid-day meal, from the Marquis of Bute's translation of the *Roman Martyrology*. Many of its brief accounts of the lives of martyrs are ridiculous and promoted mirth and sometimes ribaldry. One ludicrously funny favourite of Jones concerned a saint who had refused as an infant to look at his mother's breasts on Friday, the day Catholics abstained from meat.⁴ But on this Christmas, he heard for the first time a wonderful reading. It was the dating of the Nativity relative to important, mostly scriptural events. Decades later, it would be his model

for dating the paschal events in *The Anathemata*.

For Christmas, he gave Gill a copy of Coventry Patmore's *Religio Poetae* (1907), in which he inscribed favourite words from the Christmas Preface (fig. 5), which translate, 'by the mystery of the Word made flesh, the light of your glory has shone afresh upon the eyes of our mind.' He and his friends sang Compline at six, and afterwards carols, then played round-games, drafts, and ludo.⁵ The next day he walked with Petra and her parents up the near fork of the valley, west of the Twmpa. Here the road became a horse track, ascending a mile north to a pass that rises and flattens to a high rolling plateau extending for three miles to the cliff of Rhiw Wen, beyond which is Hay-on-Wye. In the evening, all played games. After games on the evening of the 28th, he, Gill, and Attwater read Maritain together. Throughout this week of celebration, there was singing of carols each evening indoors and at neighbouring farms.

Jones began painting watercolours outdoors. In response to the landscape but also the damp cold, he worked quickly and freely, no longer in the rigidly iconic Ditchling style. His first two pictures were *Nant-y-bwch* and *Tir Y Bleanau* (fig. 6). In both, wild ponies graze on the slope across the Nant-y-bwch and the high, irregular upward curve of hill is balanced below by the downward curve of the stream. Irregular planes tumble in the middle ground. Only trees (though not all, and not all entirely) and horses indicate gravitational direction. The picture seems to bend as perspective shifts from horizontal



6 *Tyr y Bleanau*, Dec. 1924-Jan. 1925

at the top and back to vertical at the bottom. To view it from top to bottom is to feel as though you are rising into the air. In this Jones may be influenced by the curved space of Einstein's relativity theory, which was 'much in the air' owing largely to Arthur Eddington's lucid *Space, Time and Gravitation* (1920), which Gill read and discussed with Jones, who may also have read it.⁶ In the painting, line dominates volume. Nothing in this work is straight, symmetrical, or still. If the water flows, so does the land. He would never part with *Tir Y Bleanau*. It would hang over his bed in the 1960s, the work from which, he said, all his 'subsequent water-colour thing ... developed.'⁷ He continued painting outdoors until the cold was too severe.

He lived as a member of the family, often entrusted with feeding the pigs which, along with sheep, he found hard to draw, much harder than horses and cats. He spent the long dark evenings reading and relaxing with the Gills by candlelight and oil lamp. They sat together in the kitchen before the roaring log fire. By the light of a dozen candles, Gill read aloud from various books, including the *Morte Darthur*, about which he and Jones enthused together. At other times they filled the long evening with talk or song, sometimes, with Raphael Davies, practicing Solesmes plainsong for Sunday high Mass. They sang shanties, English, French, and Latin carols, and English, Scottish, and French folksongs. While knitting with the wool of local sheep, the girls sang together 'The Hog's Eye Man,' 'Shallow Brown,' 'The Golden Vanity,' 'Spanish Ladies,' 'The Cruel Ship's Carpenter,' and, one of his favourites, 'John Barleycorn'. Gill sometimes accompanied them on a tin whistle or a newly acquired clavichord. Joan sang solo 'The Unquiet Grave'. Sometimes Gill and Betty together sang Elizabethan love songs. Gill or Jones sang 'Six Dukes'—Jones sang it 'rather low,' Joan remembered. He also sang 'She was poor but she was honest' and comical army songs, and introduced to the Gill-family the army saying, 'Close the doors they're coming through the windows, close the windows they're coming through the door'—which they all together sang.⁸

Weather permitting, he walked in the evening, sometimes with Gill, north toward the Hay or south towards Llanthony. On the evening of 5 January, he, Gill, and others walked to and sang in the Half Moon pub and the Abbey pub. Once, he, Hague, and Davies lost their way in mist high on the ridge, eventually being rescued by the farm dog.⁹ Jones disliked and feared dogs, but in his poetry would discern affinity between dogs and God as saviours (*A* 79-80).

Except for the weather, he loved everything about Capel. He liked all Gill's daughters, about whom he later said that 'while totally other from each other,' they were 'wonderful characters of great strength & wisdom.' He was (as Gill was not) fond of the family cats, including one named Tiger who would leap in through a window whenever Betty called its name.¹⁰ As an artist, he was interested in them and in the farm-animals. He sketched one of the goats that grazed on the slopes and made studies of a pig. There were horses, too, and he could have fulfilled his early ambition to ride one but was now afraid of them. Joan would remember that he loved animals 'to look at but not to have anything to do with. He absolutely loved cows,' she said, 'but David going and milking a cow was unheard of. He wouldn't have liked it at all.'¹¹

He loved the vast and irregular landscape. The place seemed animate. After rain, freshets broke out all over the upper slopes, splashes of white, ribbonary cascades, swelling streams. Nearby, they made the landscape audible with gurgling or roaring. There were wattled sheepfolds. He helped build a wattled fence, which he then sketched. Love of wattling and his experience now, making and drawing it, would be reflected in his poetry, where interweaving motifs appear, disappear, and reappear. Nearly always, small, wild, graceful, primitive-looking ponies grazed on the slopes, seeming to him suspended there. From the hill opposite, they appeared surprisingly larger than life, an optical effect he would wonder about for the rest of his life. A pair of herons, 'the most superb of birds,' flew up the valley each evening and back again in the morning. He looked for them and loved the way they flew 'with the necks & heads curved back.' He and Hagreen went together to fetch milk at the nearby Pen-y-Mais farm. On their way, if it was not too cold or rainy or windy, they would pause on the plank-wide wooden bridge over the Honddu to listen to the stream, which, Hagreen later recalled, 'washed the grit from our souls.' Sometimes they spoke of how Gill, who considered the beauty of wild nature a bourgeois notion, would think they were wasting time. It may have been during one of these walks that Jones made to Hagreen a remark that will not endear him to the Welsh: 'It's a pity Welsh women are so ugly, because they're very willing.'¹²

There was, for him, a bitter aspect to this beautiful place, the general disappearance of traditional Welsh rural life. Twenty abandoned cottages dotted the valley between Capel and Llanthony. The population of the valley was a quarter of what it had been fifty years before. The

young had gone to the mines and were wandering unemployed in the Rhondda. As he knew from reading the diarist Kilvert, the locals during the previous century had known the burial sites of three medieval Welsh chieftains slain nearby in battle against the English. Kept alive by seven hundred years of continuous habitation, that memory was now lost.¹³ Even here, there was no escape from the effects of industrialization.

In the evening, Jones and Gill often discussed Maritain with one or both of Attwater and Hague. Hagreen was ill, not an energetic partner in discussion, and Attwater was philosophically inept, so Gill was glad for Jones's participation. Gill presiding, they studied *The Philosophy of Art* and related books, one of which was Vivian Bickford's *Certainty*, privately printed, in which the author proposed as a criterion of knowledge 'the unity of indirect reference.'¹⁴ According to this principle, a multitude of apparently unrelated things indirectly indicate an encompassing reality or meaning—so that the world could be seen as an argument for Christianity. The unity of indirect reference expanded the Thomistic principal of analogy: things that are apparently unrelated have associations and connotations that achieve underlying, unifying significance. This became an important aesthetic principal for Jones. Much of his later poetry and painting achieves unity largely by 'indirect reference', one example being incongruous affinity between dogs and God.

On 7 January Hilary Pepler's son David came to seek Gill's consent to marry twenty-one-year-old Betty Gill. Bearing a grudge against his father, Gill argued against the marriage and insisted on a postponement. Jones could see that he 'was pretty put out' and thought to himself, 'How odd it is that a man of such perception in many matters should be so stupid as to imagine (whatever his reasons or feelings) that a love affair such as Betty's & David's could be disposed of by some argument or other still less by a show of hostility.'¹⁵

There were few visitors. One was Count Harry Kessler, a former German general who had known Rodin and was a friend of George Grosz, Jean Cocteau, and Albert Einstein. He wanted to discuss Gill contributing to a Cranach Press edition of Virgil's *Eclogues* and *Georgics*. On 20 January, after being introduced to him, Jones asked Petra who he was. She said, 'A great German general. He replied, 'Oh is he? I'll show him my leg' (with its bullet-hole scar). Gill showed Kessler Jones's box-wood carvings, which Kessler admired. He left that night.¹⁶ Jones would

meet him once more, briefly, on the afternoon of 29 September 1930, again in the company of Gill.

Jones's visit was now an extended one. The Gills gave him room and board and, in return, he occasionally gave them a picture. He carved a salad spoon and fork for Mary, rare for their ugliness.¹⁷ Petra watched him polishing them before the fire. Living as a member of the family, he painted, engraved, and carved, free of practical worries. When Petra returned to Ditchling at the end of January to resume her apprenticeship, he was still there.

The most frequent visitors were Benedictines. The forty-four-year-old prior of Caldey, Dom Wilfred Upson, came frequently to see the three monks at the Grange. He was east-end Cockney and proud of it, a good musician, avidly interested in cinema. Everyone liked him, especially the children, whom he entertained with expert magic tricks.¹⁸

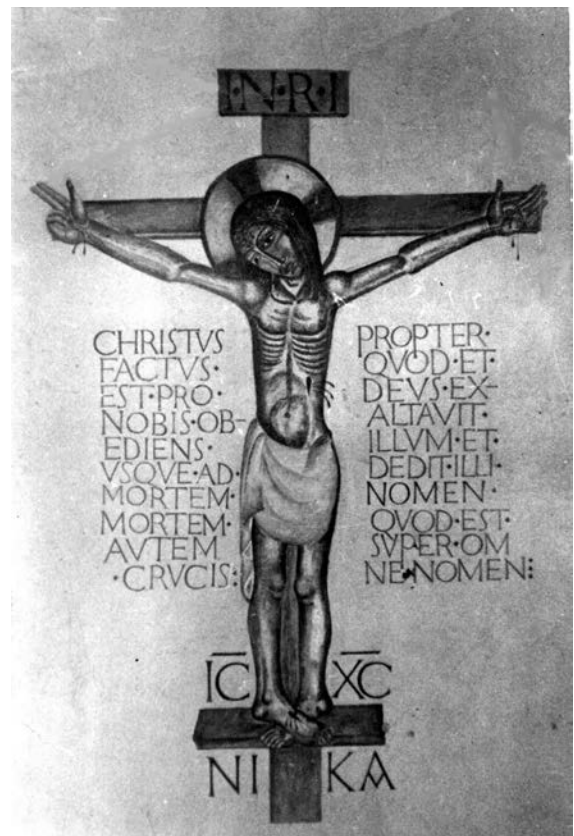


7. David Jones, *Sanctus Chritus de Capel-Y-Ffin*, 1925

On 21 January, Theodore Bailey arrived, a Benedictine who visited often in order to study wood-engraving with Gill. Three years younger than Jones, Bailey was an artist but an imitative one, painting icons and large crucifixes in an early Byzantine style. A designer of vestments and illustrator of books, he had spent a year in Paris studying at the *Ateliers d'Art Sacré* under Maurice Denis, who had influenced the thinking of Maritain. Before that he had gone to school at Dulwich College and had taught at Downside. Extremely sensitive and temperamental, Bailey was unpopular with other monks, who resented his disapproval of their bad taste. He brought to the discussions of Maritain a theological and philosophical expertise that the lay participants lacked.¹⁹

On the evening of 15 February, Gill proposed to Jones and Bailey that they form a new guild of

On 21 January, Theodore Bailey arrived, a Benedictine who visited often in order to study wood-engraving with Gill. Three years younger than Jones, Bailey was an artist but an imitative one, painting icons and large crucifixes in an early Byzantine style. A designer of vestments and illustrator of books, he had spent a year in Paris studying at the *Ateliers d'Art Sacré* under Maurice Denis, who had influenced the thinking of Maritain. Before that he had gone to school at Dulwich College and had taught at



8. David Jones, Mural, *Capyl-y-ffin*, 1925

Catholic artists to be called the ‘Confraternity of the Face of Christ.’ The next evening, Gill met with them and Haggren and explained that this confraternity would be more ecclesiastical than the Guild at Ditchling. They would have the approval of the Archbishop of Westminster and be directed by the local clergy. Pious women would be enlisted as associate members to pray for them and pay a yearly subscription. He turned for agreement to Haggren, who said he would have nothing to do with it, that dealing with clergy was a waste of time. What they needed, he said, was a London dealer to show their work and take orders. Gill then turned to Jones, who said, ‘I agree with Philip.’ Furious, Gill declared, ‘Well, the Guild is founded and Dom Theodore and I are the members,’ and stalked off without consulting Bailey. Gill never mentioned the Confraternity to them again though for the next two months he pretended that it existed.²⁰

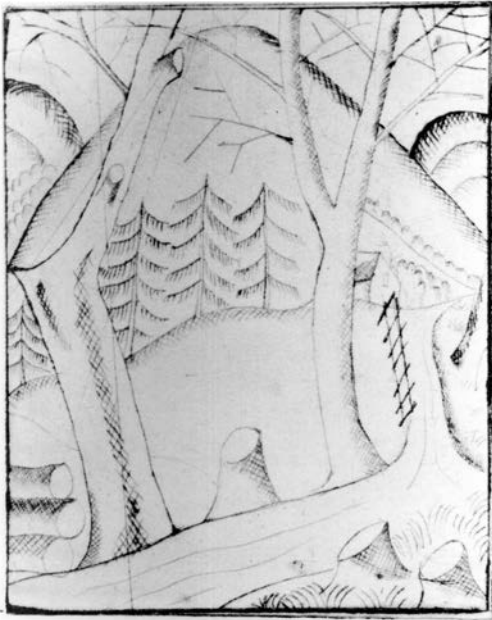
At this altitude, the cold was severe. Jones’s cell under the rafters was unheatable, and, in the morning, leaving bed was daunting. He hated the cold but ‘liked the look of’ the snow. He had never seen so much, great drifts of it. Even though the snow in this remote valley often looked ‘sublime’, it made him feel ‘rather *peculiar*’ as ‘some chaps seem to feel in thundery weather—a kind of ill-at-ease feeling almost of fore-boding’ and it made his eyes ache. Hungry wild ponies jangling with icicles came down from the ridge to gnaw bark from stacked firewood. The Haggrens would leave for France in the spring to avoid another such winter.²¹



9. David Jones, Tabernacle door, 1925
photo 1970s.

Prevented by cold from painting outdoors, he drew and painted inside. He used the landscape as stylized background in a tiny (5 x 7 inch) gouache icon, *Sanctus Christus de Capel-Y-Ffin*, in which Jesus hangs on a cross of trees hewn from stumps visible in the background (fig. 7). On the left is the monastery reduced to one of its sides. The ridge behind it is cleft to suggest that, as the cross comes from the landscape, Jesus emerges from the land. Jones continued engraving and carving and drew in pencil a very fine three-quarters profile of Mary Gill wearing a bonnet. He also contributed three paintings to the monastery building. The largest was a crucifixion on the north wall of the temporary chapel, soon to become Gill’s studio. The mural began three feet above the floor, rose seven feet, and was

centred on either side by lettering (fig. 8). He used ordinary oil-paint on the lime-washed wall. Above was a bathroom that froze each winter, and in ensuing years, the whitewash peeled, the plaster flaked, and the mural deteriorated. When informed of the state of the mural forty years later, he had ‘no regrets’ and, to someone wanting to restore it, advised, ‘leave it alone and let it grow old gracefully like me.’ He disliked the corpus but remained fond of the inscription, which quotes the Gradual for Holy Thursday and translates, ‘Christ became obedient for us unto death,

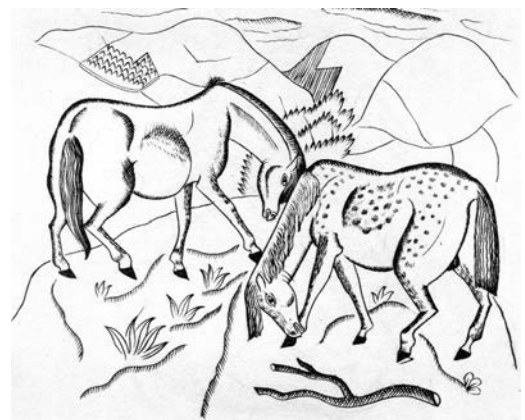


10. David Jones, *Y Tympa*, 1925

even to death on the cross. Therefore, God has exalted him and has given him a name above all other names.’ When the new chapel was complete, he painted on the front of the tin tabernacle door a Chi-Ro with an Agnus Dei carrying a *vexillum*-cross (fig. 9). In the border he added an inscription that he especially liked. It is the Latin Introit for Corpus Christi and translates ‘He fed them with the fat of wheat and filled them with honey out of the rock’—words with erotic double meaning for him, since ‘rock’ translates *petra*. On the back of the tabernacle door, he painted another Agnus Dei, in a freer, cartoonish style. In later years, he would remember the front of the door with affection, because it was anonymous in

a medieval way, and ‘was apt and one with all the theological, liturgical wholeness’ that he experienced in that long, white-washed rafted chapel.²²

Kept indoors by cold, he began engraving in copper. Gill had a copper-plate press, which Jones had helped him shop for in London. Jones liked the way copper plates printed. More vividly than woodblocks they had ‘that feeling of pressure’ because ‘they are pressed into the paper & feel part of it.’²³ The transition from wood-engraving was difficult. At first his burin slithered over the surface of the metal. To gain control he had to hold the burin tight and be sure to turn the leather cushion and plate rather than the burin as he



11. David Jones. *The Lancers*, 1925

would a pencil or brush. Initially this resulted in over-controlled imitation wood engravings. His first copper engraving was a tiny one (3 ¼ x 2 ¼) of the Twmpa rising above the valley between trees (fig. 10), in which the distance between foreground and mountain is diminished by lack of perspective in the road and fence on the right and equivalent quality of line in trees and mountain. His next copper engraving seems to have been one entitled *Puma*, which he liked well enough to make an edition of twenty. He did the same for the next three. The first of these is entitled *The Lancers* after performers of the Victorian dance (fig. 11). He would later call it *Ponies on a Welsh Hill-Slope*. In it, the curves of mountain-tops play against those of the ponies' backs, a visual interplay extending the communion between earth and animals implied by grazing. The animals are one with the place they feed on, which visually takes on something of their animation. The other engravings are *Reclining Cat* and *The Crucifixion*, the latter done in the primitive Ditchling style. All of these resemble his black-line wood engravings but required far greater effort for control to achieve. (He exhibited these copper engravings in 1926 with the Society of Wood Engravers, offering them at £1.1 per print.) He then engraved an address card and a Christmas card with more technical fluidity. Gradually, he was learning to relax and achieve a freedom of line that the new medium made possible.²⁴

One morning that winter or spring, he got into trouble with Mary Gill, who had asked him to light a fire. The wood was green and drenched from nearly daily rain. To set it afire he put votive candles under the grate and lit them. It was something that he—and Hague, too, taught by him—often did. On this occasion, Mary caught him and protested that it was 'sacrilegious and wasteful.' To the first charge, he replied that the newly arrived candles were unblessed—he had taken them from the chapel sacristy and paid for them. To the second he had no answer except that they needed a fire. He would later be irritated when Robert Speaight in his biography of Gill recounted this episode as indicative of his ineptitude and eccentricity. In France, Jones had become expert in building and maintaining fires. Soldiers frequently used candles to kindle wet wood.²⁵ Lacking dry kindling, gasoline, or other fuel, it was the only way to do it.

In early March, Robert Gibbings visited. A co-founder of the Society of Wood Engravers, he was a large-boned, energetic, thick-bearded Irish agnostic who shared with Gill a taste for the lewd. In the previous year, he and his wife had taken over the Golden Cockerel Press, which was

now, because of the quality of wood-engravings used, one of the finest English private presses. He came principally to plan the publication of Gill's lasciviously illustrated *Song of Songs*. Gill showed him Jones's engravings, and Gibbings commissioned Jones to illustrate Swift's *Gullivers Travels*.

After Gibbings left, Jones went on 3 March with Gill to Caldey Island. He had heard the place praised by Bailey and Hageen, and he wanted to escape the cold at Capel. He may also have wanted to escape cantankerousness. It was Lent, and life had been made harsher by fasting required not by the Church but by Gill. The effect was a general irritability, about which Jones expressed these thoughts to Hageen:

Anything that causes a deffinate [sic] & prolonged breach of charity should be avoided—if people can't fast & remain charitable & normally polite it seems to me sheer rot to go on fasting—seeing that the sole & only point in any mortification of the flesh is to *increase* Charity and kill selfishness—which it does do in Saints completely.

Jones and Gill went together by the train into Pembrokeshire to Tenby, a 'rather charming' town, Jones thought, atop high cliffs above vast sandy beaches.²⁶ Some of the narrow lanes were covered, the medieval city-wall largely intact. They made the twenty-minute voyage to the island and disembarked at a dock on the golden beach of Priory Bay. They walked up through trees to the tall white-walled abbey with its red-tiled roof and oddly tapered turrets, which give it a Tyrolian look (fig. 12). After a few days, Gill left and Jones stayed.



12. Caldey Abbey

Although there was a guest house, run by the Prior's sister, Jones was obviously so poor—he used a rope, instead of a belt, to hold up his trousers—that Wilfred Upson let him live and take meals in the monastery. It was warmer here than at Capel, but he continued wearing his overcoat tied at the waist for extra warmth, even on warm days, even—the monks thought this very odd—

at meals in the refectory. Out of doors, he wore a Trilby hat with the rim turned down. He attended Mass in the white monastery church and visited during the office to hear the slow pulsation of the chant as sung by Benedictines. Upson let him work in the scriptorium, which was one of a row of workmen's cottages. Here he made most of his *Gulliver* engravings with Bailey working beside him and sometimes Upson, who, in addition to being Prior, was the community's principal scriptwriter and illuminator. Jones and Bailey here painted a large Paschal candle for Easter.²⁷

While listening to the chant, Jones was twice reminded of experiences during the war. A few weeks after his arrival, while attending Vespers on Holy Thursday, he was startled back to the trenches in the darkness of Tenebrae by monks with wooden clappers making the sound of rattles used to warn of gas attacks. On another occasion, one of the monks made a mistake: as Jones later vaguely remembered, 'a chap ... instead of beginning 'Pater noster' ... bawled out 'allelujah' or something.' The other monks laughed, and their hilarity became giddy and unsuppressible as on patrol near the German trench when Sergeant Morgan kicked the can. Upson called a halt to the proceedings and waited a considerable time before resuming.²⁸ The liturgical *faux pas* is probably the prototype for that of the Candle-bearer in 'The Sleeping Lord' who calls out a loud response to the whispered private prayer of a priest (*SL* 87). When writing that poem in 1966-67, Jones frequently remembered his time on Caldey.

The island was, he found, 'a marvellous place' with an intriguing 'strange light.' His friendship with Bailey was deepened by shared love of Caldey. When not working beside one another, they walked together to sketch and paint or to explore. (The monks were free to do whatever they liked for three hours in the morning and nearly that long in the afternoon.) Bailey sketched his companion (fig 13). Through him, Jones got to know, as he boasted, 'every inch' of the island. It is a 550-acre plateau, resembling, if seen from above, the silhouette of a bear facing west. The plateau rises atop high sandstone and limestone cliffs on the south and tips to sea-level at its northern shore. He visited all of the bays



13. David Jones by T. Bailey, 1925

and loved those with cliff-top perspectives. The nearest to the abbey was Paul Jones Bay, named for the pirate, who used to anchor there out of sight of the mainland to take on water and provisions. Jones liked this bay but preferred Drinkim Bay, also close to the abbey, especially admiring the ‘tawny-red colour of the rocks’ there. With Bailey he went to the western tip of the island to visit the Cathedral Caves, five large-domed auditoriums in the cliff, emptied by waves of all but sea-sound. He found these ‘rather exciting.’ From high on Chapel Point, he loved watching the huge Atlantic waves. The island’s plateau differed little from ordinary mainland countryside with pasture and woods, but the sheer drops to the sea and jagged shore-line rocks were uncompromisingly wild and dangerous. Above and below the high cliffs were ‘great clattering sweeps’ of wild screeching, aggressive gulls, a nuisance to him. There were also cormorants, which he liked.²⁹

Between the monastery and Chapel Point, close to a pond of fresh water, are the ruins of the tiny Norman ‘Old Priory’—a rudely built church with a stone-capped tower and a little garth surrounded by living-quarters and refectory. Within the church was a sixth century ogham stone that stood nearly as tall as Jones. On it was inscribed a request for prayers and a memorial to ‘Dubricius’, probably St Illtud. This was the oldest historic object Jones had seen more or less *in situ*. Just behind the modern abbey, Bailey pointed out the lower walls of the small church of St. David, which dated back to the occupation of the island by Celtic monks. They had named the island, *Ynys Byr*, from the Latin *Insula Pirus* after its first, sixth century abbot, long before Vikings called it Caldey for its ‘fresh spring.’ Bailey took Jones to a shallow niche, called Nana’s Cave, north-east of the abbey, half-way down a cliff. Here, fourteen years before, a Roman-age skull had been found, among other human bones, Roman-British pottery, and a Roman coin and broach. In this niche, Jones sheltered from the wind and looked out over the timeless sea, as men had done fourteen centuries earlier.

In his historical meditations, he was especially moved by the island having been an outpost of Christianity in the early Dark Ages. Here and on other such islands, during the period of history that most fascinated him, he knew that the Celtic Saints had kept the sea-routes open to the continent after the fall of Rome, bringing Christianity to the newly pagan cultures of England and the continent.

In some respects, Bailey and his confreres were living reminders of the age of the Celtic Saints. The oldest order of western monks, the Benedictines had absorbed the asceticism of desert monasticism, which had strongly influenced Celtic monasticism, and had become the chief constructive social-cultural force during the Dark Ages. Here and now and centred by the liturgy and its chant, for him Benedictine monasticism symbolized what Celtic monasticism had been, a bulwark against social and cultural chaos. Appreciative of the history of the order, he made for Bailey a carving or picture—fifty years later, Bailey’s confreres would be unable to remember which—of St Benedict, which he hung on his wall under a crucifix.³⁰

Bailey himself exemplified the asceticism of his predecessors. Although obliged most of the time to live in community, he preferred solitude and silence and lived whenever permitted in a two-room cottage used by the monks as a hermitage and called Sambuca. It was within the monastery enclosure in the wood on a cliff top near Nana’s Cave, overlooking Carmarthen Bay. Afterwards when remembering Bailey, Jones would think of the Welsh proverb, ‘The wise love the places of retreat.’ Because Bailey was not assertive in his asceticism, it had, Jones thought, a ‘normality.’ Bailey sought solitude in order to experience oneness with nature and with God. He was familiar with the English spiritual writings of Julian of Norwich and Walter Hinton as well as the *Cloud of Unknowing*, but his favourite book was the fourth century *Lausiac History of Palladius*, which records the lives and teachings of sixty male and female ascetics in Egypt and Asia Minor. Jones often heard him quote from it with a ‘delightful smile, full of gaiety of spirit.’³¹ He respected Bailey’s asceticism but was himself interested in it only as a thread of continuity with the Egyptian desert monks who influenced Celtic monasticism, which had had this island as one of its outposts.

Jones’s rich historical daydreaming ranged back and forth in time. He regretted as a dark moment with enduring consequences the colonization of south Pembrokeshire in 1108 by ‘blasted Flemings,’ collaborators with the Normans who became and remained English in speech and did not, until the nineteenth century, intermarry with the Welsh.³² He mused on the earlier, half-millennium-long merging of the Irish-speaking Déisi with the Brittonic-speaking Demetae. He cast his mind further back through prehistory to the people who had worked with the flint tools that had been discovered on the island. Walking on a beach, he considered the many half-

millennia it took ‘to shape that small wet pebble or that delicately spiralled aquatic form’ that caught his eye in a turn of tide.³³ Time revealed more of itself in this place. The geological and biological passages at the beginning of *The Anathemata* may owe something to daydreaming here. Certainly, his essays and last poems reflect his time on Caldey.

The island probably informs some of the mythic atmospherics of *In Parenthesis*. Pembrokeshire was, he knew, the ‘heartland’ of a body of Welsh legend that informs the tales in *The Mabinogion* and belongs to a common prehistoric Celtic mythological matrix. In 1960 he wrote that such islands are ‘where lithosphere and watersphere and atmosphere merge with each other’ and that other islands or the shore ‘come and go in the changing light—now sharply defined, now lost in a diaphane of mist-drift.’ This was the Wales of semi-aquatic myth that informs the poet Taliesin’s sixth century wonder-narrative, ‘The Harrowing of Hades,’ to which Jones would allude in *In Parenthesis*. The exposure to weather and wetness here and at Capel recalled what he had experienced on the western front and clinched for him an association between his war-time experience and the Welsh mythic landscape that would emerge in his war epic.³⁴

He knew and used to visit the lay people on the island: Mr and Mrs Wire, the Styles, who had a son in the monastery, and several old couples. Once a week at least he visited the family of Charles McHardy, the bailiff of the eighteenth century island-farm: a large family of beautiful daughters, including Margaret and Veronica in their early twenties and late teens, sixteen-year old Celia—whom Jones ‘fancied,’ according to one friend—and ten-year old Monica. In old age, Monica would remember Jones as ‘a very nice young man’ especially kind to the children, for whom he made drawings—he gave her one in the spring of 1925 for her birthday. The eldest daughter and her husband ran a shop with a drinking room at the back. The entire family and Jones went there to drink and talk, sing songs, and play writing games. At nine o’clock, he returned to his room in the monastery.³⁵

In mid-March the weather was so clement that he felt compelled occasionally to suspend engraving to work outdoors. He writes to Hagreen, that he drew and painted a garden ‘of small trees and windy paths.’ It was, for him,

very thrilling—like the Garden of Gethsemene & the Garden of the Tomb & the Garden of—well—the other

sort of garden where Venus disports herself—in fact it is, as ‘B’[elloc] would say ‘a garden universal, a garden Catholic’ ... but oh! so difficult to seize hold of when one tries to draw it. I have nearly been demented trying to capture its beauty even but vaguely. I have made four or five furtive attempts—one in oils I have sent to the ‘Unknown & Unowned’ Artists Show.

He also painted land-and-seascapes, and writes to Hageen,

I believe I have learned a lot by so doing ... I like the stone walls & the murderously sharp rocks ... only I find the *form* most infernally difficult to co-relate—if you follow. I have never before drawn the sea—it’s difficult not to be led up various impressionistic & realistic & otherwise dangerous paths when faced with sea—or—even worse to fall back upon some dead convention.³⁶



14. David Jones, *Tenby from Caldey Island*, 1925

pressure or movement, the aggressive twin to the sky. Gradually the sea would enter his landscapes, giving solid ground a wild, unpredictable fluidity and movement.

From Chapel Point, he painted his most comprehensive picture of the island, looking down its width to Priory Bay (fig. 14). On the left is the abbey, purified of architectural oddity; on the right, a guest house called Ty Gwyn. Beyond the dunes of Priory Bay are freighters. He enjoyed watching the passing ships, a sailing vessel every few days and, daily, colliers like these, which he liked for their low waists.³⁷ Beyond is Tenby. He painted this picture from a viewpoint several hundred feet above where he stood or sat—unless he made it from atop the 188-foot Victorian lighthouse, which stands on the site of an ancient chapel after which the point is named.

The sea exercised a liberating influence on him, and in this respect was the fluid complement to the heights of Capel-y-ffin. Like the sky, it was almost pure lineless colour. Avoiding realism and convention, he saw it as a great, relatively shapeless source of light, consisting of varying pure colour tones, relatively empty of wave-shapes but weighted with

Here at the southern tip of the island, high on the grassy slopes far above a favourite spot for seals, he could see, nineteen miles to the east, Worms's Head at the southern end of the Gower Peninsula. On a clear day he could see, twenty-seven miles to the south, the flat profile of Lundy Island. Sometimes he looked, and directed his imagination, due south towards the submerged land of romance—Lyonesse, under the sea between Land's End and the Scillies. Thought of the Scillies recalled the folk song beginning 'From Ushant to Scilly is thirty-five leagues' and 'poor Sir Clowdislay Shovell who wrecked his flag ship and other ships there in 1707,' an event he would allude to in his poetry (*A* 100).³⁸

Mostly he painted Drinkim Bay. It gave him a sheltered feeling. Its red sandstone cliffs were crowned with a dense fringe of stunted trees. At its southern tip, a mass of cliff was broken off.

In the centre in water close to shore were parallel rock ridges. To paint all this, he imaginatively projected point of view 300 feet above where he had to stand (on the cliff edge) to see any of it. One of the best of his early paintings of the bay is *Ship off Ynis Byr* (fig. 15), in which the outer



15. David Jones', *Ship off Ynis Byr*, 1925

arms close in to change the open bay almost into

a lagoon. 'I had a thing,' he would remember, 'about the "solid" rocks against which the "liquid" sea washed being, because of its pounding, more substantial than the rocks. I tried to convey something of this idea in some of those watercolours, but it is a rather tricky thing to convey and did not often come off.' Sometimes the insubstantial rocks looked 'a bit like stage flats'.³⁹ In the

picture, the edges of cliffs are sharply delineated by shading darkening to the edge. Cliffs on the left appear flattened, like stage-sets. In contrast to stony vividness, the water in the bay is light, less defined, moving, relatively formless. The steamship beyond the mouth of the bay is like a nail on which the round bay hangs, though it is kept from dominating the picture by the nearby horizon. (He frequently centred the circumference of the bay with a ship.) Though the water is the lightest area in the picture, perspective and the position of the cliffs on either side give weight and force to its in-coming. The cliffs surrounding the water press it toward the viewer. The wind-blown branches of a single tree in the foreground meets and resists the tidal pressure. Free of it, the tree waves to the ship floating equally free above. This is a picture of weight and pressure



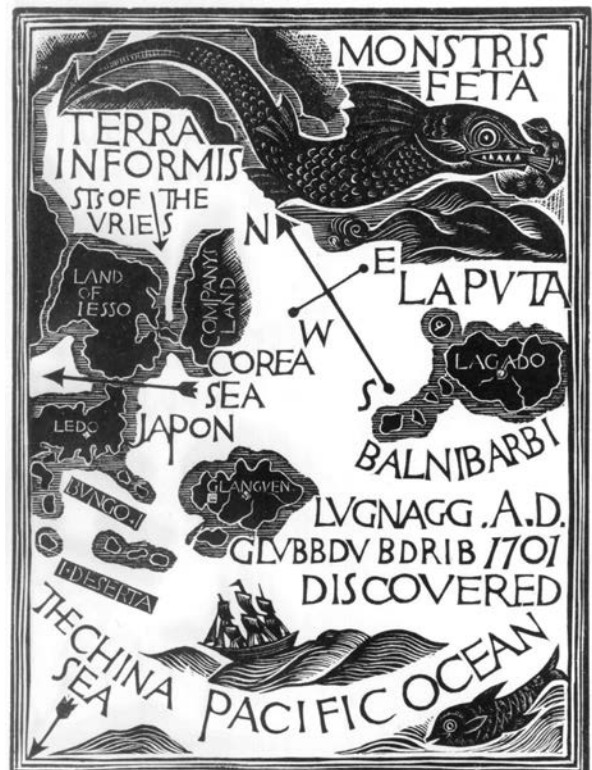
16. David Jones, *Gulliver* illustration 13, 1925

transcended.

Facing the sea, he was always painting into the light, and this had the effect of reversing academic values, which conventionally determined that the foreground

be dark and the background light. In these paintings, however, a distant ship or reach of land is often seen against the water-or-sky as darker than nearer objects.⁴⁰ This reversal would become characteristic of his style.

Most of the time, he laboured in the scriptorium on the *Gulliver* engravings, a job he tired of. There were far too many, mostly small engravings, thirty-seven, plus five full-page maps, and it was, he thought, 'such a boring book.' All utopias, positive or negative, including Thomas More's 'bloody dull book' bored him. The maps required black-line lettering, which he disliked engraving. It depressed him to cut letters backwards so that they would print the right way round, and he still occasionally failed to reverse them.⁴¹ Though he



17. David Jones, *Gulliver* illustration 24, 1925

disliked many of the engravings, some of them ingeniously accommodate spatial constraints. One of these, depicting the landfall of the second voyage, is a five-inch-long land-and-seascape depicting Drinkim Bay, drawn on the block as he saw it, so that it prints in reverse (fig. 16). The full-page maps with their vital irregular lettering are impressive (fig. 17).



18. David Jones, *Gulliver* illustration 35, 1925

One of the most intriguing engravings is of the female Yahoo embracing Gulliver in the pond (fig. 18). The visual rhyme of buttocks, breasts, and buttocks jars against the rhyme of their oblong back-bent heads. Her clawed hand rhymes with the lines of his ribs, or are they

scratches? The suffocating image of Gulliver within her forced embrace, both figures pressed within the edges of the pond (so that they seem under water) and cramped between the top and bottom of the picture, conveys a claustrophobic sense of sexual fear. Whether or not this engraving suggests anything about the artist's inner life, it is the most powerfully felt of the engravings and not, like many of the rest of them, merely demonstrations of competence in technique and design.

He stayed on Caldey a month longer than he had stayed at Capel-y-ffin. On 23 May, Gill wrote to Chute, 'He's been there since the beginning of Lent—painting & engraving. I don't know what'll happen to him. He's so determined to earn a living off his own bat—but he's so incapacitated by his temperament & unworkmanlike training.' Jones left Caldey not for Capel, although Petra had been there since the beginning of April, but for Brockley. The assumption generally made that he lived primarily at Capel-y-ffin during this period is erroneous: he lived at Brockley, paying extended visits to Capel and, less frequently, Caldey, where he recorded his home address in the guest book as 115 Howson Rd.

The *Gulliver* engravings took their toll in eye-strain. On 13 June he went to an optometrist in

Harley Street and received a prescription for drops to soothe sore eyes. Three days later he received a new prescription for glasses, to correct minor near-sightedness, slight astigmatism in both eyes, and a muscle imbalance in his right eye that pulled it one degree off true.* The correction was so slight that most people with these conditions would not need glasses, but engraving was close, exacting work.

On 18 June he met Gill at Paddington. That night they talked about Petra and the engagement from midnight till 4 am. On the next evening they continued the conversation, from midnight till 2 am. Gill was concerned about Jones and his daughter being so long separated.

That summer, 1925, Jones and Gill visited Ditchling, where Jones enjoyed a reunion with the Peplers and met newcomers Valentine Kilbride, weaver, Herbert Stone, metal-worker, and Dunston Pruden, silversmith. It saddened him to see new people occupying the workshops and houses. The place was not what it had been. He would never visit again. As he and Gill walked to Burgess Hill for the train to London, they began arguing about theology or art, and the argument became intense, so they sat together by the roadside to have it out and missed their train.⁴²

In London, Jones was visiting Harold Stanley Ede, whom he had got to know in the spring or summer of the previous year. Disliking his given names, Ede called himself Jim. He was Jones's age, born and raised near Cardiff. At twelve he had begun acquiring beautiful things, beginning with a Queen Anne bureau bought for £8. When his family moved to Cambridge, he frequented the Fitzwilliam Museum and fell in love with early Italian painting. He studied art at Newlyn in Cornwall and then in Edinburgh. During the war he served as a lieutenant at Ploegsteert Wood and in the sector North of Ypres; but, owing to chronic jaundice, experienced only a few months of active duty. After the war he worked as a photographer's assistant at the National Gallery, and, since 1922, as assistant to the keeper at the Tate Gallery—known till 1931 as the National Gallery, Milbank—where he was now third in command. In 1923 he met the painters Ben and Winifred Nicholson, who helped him to appreciate contemporary art. He was now acquiring unsold work by Ben Nicholson for the price of canvas and paint.⁴³

Ede was tall, thin, handsome, with a straight nose, pale blue eyes, and a high, smooth

* The prescription is: for the right eye $-.50/+ .25$ and for the left $-.25$.

forehead—he resembled the actor Peter O’Tool but with black hair. Reserved and courteous, he behaved with great dignity and spoke calmly, quietly, in a richly modulated voice. He was poor but pragmatic and knew how to stretch his meagre resources. His shirts had detachable collars and cuffs to save on laundry bills and he travelled to work from Hampstead by bicycle. He was fey, ethereal, and vain, advertising himself as an aesthete by wearing elegant white linen suits, coloured shirts, pale silk ties, and pale socks. Culturally and socially ambitious, he was nevertheless devoid of greed and envy. With his acute aesthetic perception, he was the only curator at the Tate then capable of appreciating the work of living artists. He gave reassurance and companionship to those who visited, including Jones, who showed Ede his portfolio of paintings. Ede liked them and him and invited him home for supper. There, at number 1 Elm Row in Hampstead, Jones met Ede’s lovely wife Helen, who, to her surprise, immediately began calling him by his first name. When he took Petra to meet them, she found Helen open-hearted and warm, and Jim distant, effete, puritanical. He disapproved of smoking, drinking, and using ‘swear words’, and had passed up a chance to meet D.H. Lawrence, the previous occupant of his house, because of the sex in his novels. In spite of censoriousness, he and Jones got on well because Ede responded to art with sensitive intelligence. Although Jones did not try to get him to promote his work, Ede was enthusiastic and showed and praised it to prospective buyers and to the only dealer he knew well, Arthur Howell, a former Cardiff draper who owned the St George Gallery in Hanover Square. Speaking about the pictures to Howell as he later wrote about them, Ede admitted that they initially seemed ‘muddled, childish and often tortured’ but, viewed longer, they achieve a clarity which incorporates a sense of movement—so that the picture seems never to cease or reach conclusion. Moreover, they seem different each time you look at them, as though living things. Howell thought Jones’s pictures ‘entirely new.’ Ede introduced him to the artist. ⁴⁴

In early July 1925, Jones brought his portfolio to the St George Gallery. Mentioning his association with Gill, he displayed his watercolours. Howell looked at them for a long time. As Jones replaced one picture with another, Howell expressed what seemed to Jones ‘genuine enthusiasm’ and impressed him by liking only the pictures that he himself thought good. When Howell asked what he wanted, Jones replied, ‘an exhibition.’ Howell said that an exhibition by

an unknown with no rich friends would fail, but offered, instead, to act as his exclusive agent, showing chosen pictures to select clients and building up interest for a possible exhibition the following year. Without actually declining the offer, Jones took his portfolio away, hoping to get an exhibition elsewhere.⁴⁵

He did, however, submit two framed pictures to Howell's October exhibition of 'Contemporary English Watercolours,' *Summer Day*, *Pen-y-maes* and *Evening, from Cae Melin*, both priced at £7. Of the many who reviewed the show, two mentioned his work: the critic for the *Morning Post*, who dismissed them for 'impoverished content'; and the reviewer for the *Observer*, who saw his 'tortured forms' as indicating a desire 'to "go one better" than the Nashes.' At the opening, Jones would have seen his friends Medworth and Frank Dobson and may have met Roger Fry, Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, John Nash, and Eric Ravillious. In November and December, he also exhibited two *Gulliver* engravings, in editions of ten (£1.5 per print), with the Wood-Engraving Society at Howell's gallery

Although he failed at this time to get an exhibition, he did place a number of pictures in other London galleries: two in the 1925 Goupil Exhibition, two in the February exhibition at the Lefevre Galleries in St James Square, and eight in the sixth annual exhibition of alumni of Camberwell Art School.* Medworth was in charge of the Camberwell exhibitions and made sure that his friend was well represented. And Jones was placing pictures in the Beaux Arts Gallery at Burton Place in Bond Street.

On 10 July 1925, he returned to Caldey Island, where Gill joined him for the first two weeks of August, and with whom he returned to Capel-y-ffin. On 27 August he walked with Gill, Mary, and Petra to Llanthony and on 4 October, went on a drawing expedition with Gill, Petra, and Bailey up the valley towards 'the Hay'. Once again, he was painting the Capel landscape.

* These pictures were: at the Goupil, *Above the Trees*, *Tal Sam* (£6.6) and *Nant Honddu, Evening* (£6.6); at the Lefevre, *Ponies Grazing on a Bank* (£12.12) and *Hill Country* (£12.12), and at the Old Cambrians, *Welsh Hill Ponies* (£8), *Mountain Stream* (£6), *South Welsh Coast* (£10), *Hill Country* (£5.5), *The Garden Path* (£5), *Nant-y-Bwlch* [sic] (£5.5), *Trees Planted by the Sea* (£10), *The Garden Enclosed* (£15.15)—this last priced high because an oil painting--the others were watercolours.

Jones and Petra worked together in a room on the south side of the monastery, which the Hagereens had vacated and which had been designated for her weaving. Wearing his trench coat, he drew and engraved at a high, deep windowsill to catch the light. She spun and worked at her loom, weaving for him a fine woollen cloth, which she dyed indigo. He had a tailor make it into a jacket and waistcoat.⁴⁶ He associated her weaving with the wattling he loved. He carved in relief and gave to her a Madonna and Child and, on 18 August for the feast of St. Helena, he



19. David Jones, *Helena*, front, 1925

made for her a stunning, tiny boxwood pendant, carved in the round (fig. 19) with lettering carved into the back of her halo (fig. 20).

They escaped the watchful eyes of the family and the others by going for walks. Weather permitting, they went out drawing together, going nearby to the shaded dingle where a small stream fell to the Honddu and ferns of all sorts grew lush and tangled, with foxgloves punctuating the green. Sometimes they crossed the Honddu and ascended a shepherd's path up the slope to Blaen-Bwch, a ruined cottage where they could be alone unobserved. Or they walked up the valley onto the high plateau. Several times they went a mile and a half



20. David Jones, *Helena*, back

north-west along the western valley wall to the 'Sixty-Footer,' a spectacular, difficult-to-find waterfall (actually about forty feet high) on the Nant-y-Bwch. In 1970, he would remember it as 'marvellous, very deep, chilly'. Once or twice, they slithered down the wet slope to the bottom. There you can stand behind the falling water and bathe in the pool though he did not. It was a lush secluded Edenic spot, one of 'the secret places lovers know', where they could indulge in physical intimacies without fear of discovery.⁴⁷ Back indoors at the monastery, they reverted to the behaviour of a couple who might be walked-in-on at any time.

At about this time, he got in an argument with Denis Tegetmeier over the running speed of a hippopotamus, which Jones said was very fast. Tegetmeier insisted otherwise, so Jones drew a picture, which he gave to him, of a ferocious hippopotamus with gaping mouth chasing him at full speed. In the picture, Jones is bent over, unseen by the beast and sketching the event.⁴⁸

Gill intended to write and publish an essay on the Thomistic tag *id quod visum placet*. To spur his thinking, in early October he held four evenings of discussion with Jones and Bailey on

the definition of beauty as ‘that which, seen, pleases.’ He and Jones agreed that what pleases is ‘the thing itself’ and not ‘that of which it reminds us.’ They discussed beauty as being seen ‘by the mind via the senses’ and pleasing by giving mental, not sensual satisfaction. They argued about the possibility of a moral component to beauty—Gill was for it; Jones, against—and the relation of beauty to truth. They discussed whether and how art is propaganda. Although convinced that overt propaganda corrupted art, Jones allowed that the best art is always subtly propagandistic in that it expresses love. Gill argued that the responsibility of a Christian artist is to be a prophet, in the biblical sense, as concerned with the present, not the future.⁴⁹ Nowhere does Jones explicitly agree, but his art and later poetry suggests he did.

Laurie Cribb did not join in this or any other intellectual discussion. He moved to Capel in April 1925 to work as Gill’s assistant, no longer an apprentice. Jones felt much affection for him. Cribb had lied about his age to join the army at the age of sixteen and served with a transport company during the Battle of Mons, where, as he described it, the ground shook continually during constant bombardment. His true age discovered, he was returned to England for retraining, then sent to Greece where he served in the mountains of Salonica. There he was put in charge of mules, for which he contracted an unabating hatred. As with most others, the war hurt him psychologically. Utterly devoid of self-confidence, he was unable to speak on the telephone or write a cheque. In his work, he was slow and fearful of making mistakes. He would draw a letter on stone, rub it out, redraw, rub out again. Eventually, through the black smudge, he would cut the letter—Jones believed, spontaneously and instinctively—with a combination of strength, simplicity and technical skill that made him a better letter-cutter even than Gill, as Gill in later years admitted.⁵⁰ Cribb was handsome, square-built. Though the young woman he would marry in 1927 was an intellectual, he distrusted people with theories: art was something to do, not talk about.*

More than anyone else at Capel, he reminded Jones of his time in the army, and because of that, influenced his poetry. Like a Cockney private, Cribb was entirely without side or pretence and complained constantly and about nearly everything—including his experiences in the army.

* At their wedding in June 1927, Jones presented them with a drawing of Cribb’s pet cat.

In particular, he griped about the cold in the mountains of Greece, about his feet freezing so that his boots had to be cut off. This and an amused awareness of Cribb's aversion to philosophy would inform the complaint near the heart of *In Parenthesis*: 'I am '62 Socrates, my feet are colder than you think on this / Potidaean duck-board' (80). Inevitably, Cribb's complaining culminated with the mules—Petra remembered, 'he was always talking about mules.' He is the prototype of Jones's Emeritus Nodens who complains in 'Balaam's Ass' about camels.* As he worked, Cribb sang the songs of the army, including one about a toreador named Alphonso, to which Jones would allude (*IP* 103). Together, they prolonged the fellowship which had made the war endurable. That informed their fondness for one another.⁵¹

Jones also found Donald Attwater congenial. He too, was an ex-serviceman, and they indulged in a good deal of barrack-room talk. Attwater was poor, handsome—with dark wavy hair and light blue eyes—and had a wonderful sense of humour. He had attended Aldenham Public School; read with ease French, Latin, and Greek; and had converted to Catholicism in 1911 because, he said, he had 'a logical mind.' While serving during the war with the Cornish Royal Garrison Artillery in Alexandria and Palestine, he had acquired an enthusiasm for the eastern Churches and ecumenism. After the war he and his family lived on Caldey Island, where he edited the Benedictine quarterly, *Pax*, and made himself an expert in Church history. He was now helping Herbert Thurston SJ revise *Butler's Lives of the Saints*. His wife, Evelyn, was a 'difficult' woman—Jones was friendly with her mother. Attwater was under Gill's spell and acted as his secretary, which kept him and his family impoverished. At his wife's insistence, he would leave Capel in the August of 1926 to save a new-born daughter from the ravages of winter there.⁵²

After Gill, Jones's closest friend at Capel, was twenty-year old René Hague. He was lean, spectacled, with thick, straight, dark auburn hair sprouting to either side of its central part. His long pale smooth face was grave, but he was quick to smile and laugh. Energetic, playful, witty, irascible—the eternal boy—he spoke in a rich voice precisely, quickly, with flowing ease and

* 'Camels' is a textual error (*SL* 98). In May 1974, Jones wrote that he 'actually *meant*' Nodens to complain about 'mules.'

confidence, punctuating his speech with ‘Christ,’ ‘hell,’ ‘damn’ and remarks such as, ‘life isn’t one-half bloody funny.’ He was deeply humble, magnanimous, gentle especially with women and children, yet his judgements were skewed by emotion and his criticism of the ideas, attitudes, and approaches of others was often as unfair as it was vehement.

His family had been wealthy, upper-class Anglo-Irish, some of his ancestors titled. His mother was a fluent French-speaker who had taught English to the children of the Tsar. She had wanted to become a nun, but a doctor advised her to marry instead, which she did, making the life of her barrister-husband so miserable that he fled to India. She sent René at the age of four to Ampleforth, the Benedictine boarding school in Yorkshire. While there, he had virtually no communication with her or his father and spent holidays in Dublin with aunts and uncles. Intellectually, he was a prodigy. The Benedictines had him sit at the age of thirteen for a scholarship to Oxford, which he won, though too young to take it. When the student playing the part of Portia in a school production of *The Merchant of Venice* fell ill, he took over the part at short notice and gave a spirited performance, improvising brilliantly when forgetting the lines. At sixteen, he won an open Classics scholarship to Oriel College and finished at the top of his class. During his final summer at Ampleforth, he was expelled from Officers Training Corps camp for a rebellious infraction that would have caused expulsion from the school were he not on his way to Oxford. At Oriel College, he was made treasurer of a dramatic society. By this time, his father had died of cholera and his mother had become a Benedictine nun, giving the entire family wealth to the convent, so René was impoverished. Probably in desperation, though he was also financially irresponsible, he spent the dramatic society’s funds, which he could not repay, and was sent down in disgrace.⁵³ As the years passed, it would be increasingly evident that this expulsion was a catastrophe for him. Any occupation that someone of his gifts was destined for required a university education, and he would not have one.

Outcast, he followed the example of his elder brother and entered the Jesuit noviciate at Manresa House. In the garden, which backed onto the Roehampton Golf Course, he began gazing over the wall at young women driving off the first tee. After watching a particularly striking specimen finish her backstroke, he went to the novice master and, despite remonstrances over ‘temptations by the devil’, quit the noviciate. Penniless, he walked to the flat of a former

schoolmate in central London and stayed there. That year, 1923, he fell in love with a young woman named Eleanor Chase, proposed marriage and was rejected. His mother urged him to resume his studies at the University of London, but he could not afford to. She then ordered him to live in Ireland with his grandmother. He refused and, through Ampleforth-connections, got a job tutoring Latin to monks on Caldey, where he fell in love with and was rejected by the beautiful Celia McHardy.⁵⁴ From Caldey he went to Capel, where he fell in love with Gill's golden-haired youngest daughter, Joan, whose hand he would try to hold in the half-darkness after her solo singing of 'The Unquiet Grave.'

Working now for a local sheep farmer, he slept in a cell next to Jones's. Over the dividing partition, they read Malory aloud to one another by candlelight before falling asleep. Hague tried to be first up in the morning so that he could take tea into Joan, though that meant taking it also to all the others. Jones would welcome him in vocabulary of the army, 'Ah gunfire! Thank you, china.' One morning, Hague arrived with tea to find him sitting up in bed carving an elaborate three-inch square crucifixion triptych. He said 'How d'you like that, René?' and handed it to him. Misunderstanding, Hague answered, 'My God! David, what a gift!' Jones grimaced, and after a short silence, said, 'I, I'm *very* sorry, René, but what I said was 'How *do* you like it.' Hague handed it back.⁵⁵

There were few if any other awkward moments between them. Hague overflowed with spontaneous good humour, Jones responded in kind, so that they delighted in one another's company. Petra would remember them during meals and domestic routine as joking continually, Hague making outlandish statements, each pulling the other's leg. She thought that they probably had 'great long deep discussions about things,' which she 'wasn't in on.' In Hague, Jones made a friend for life. He respected his 'razor-like intelligence' and Classical learning. He later said, 'He was the best scholar I've ever met.' Jones had a more balanced and penetrating mind, but Hague was a resource available to him whenever considering a Classical text or allusion. Hague's gifts would not otherwise bear much fruit. He was too undisciplined and impatient, too pressed to earn a living in activities that did not require much intelligence.⁵⁶ For the rest of his life, Jones would have special affection for 'René'.

Wanting to put distance between Hague and Joan, Gill enrolled her for harp lessons in

London. He brought her on 12 October to begin a six-week stay with the Joneses in Brockley. Of Gill's three daughters, she was the brightest, the best talker, and, at fifteen, more independent than nineteen-year-old Petra. Five days later, Jones arrived. She would remember that he was 'absolutely heavenly' keeping her company that autumn. They walked together in the Hilly Fields and visited London galleries and museums—the Tate, the Victoria and Albert (where they looked at hand-woven rugs and tapestries), and the National Portrait Gallery. In London, he walked—he could not afford busses or the underground. He was, she would recall, 'a great walker,' and she found, like Petra, that walking with him was really 'going for a run.'⁵⁷

To Joan, his parents seemed very elderly, about the age of her grandparents. She could see no family resemblance between him and them and thought that 'they hadn't a *thing* in common,' though he was devoted to them and they to him. Both parents were, she thought, kind, charming, and very intelligent, though they engaged in no intellectual talk. Conversation was limited to news and questions of the day. Of the parents, Mrs Jones was the 'leader'.⁵⁸ She did not mind Joan staying so long, though she had disliked even short stays by Petra.

Joan did not progress well in her harp lessons because she was unable to practice. Whenever she tried, the family dog, Michael, howled until she stopped. This was no great disappointment since she actually wanted to be an opera singer—she sang beautifully in a pure contralto voice—but her father did not want her learning to sing opera and had offered harp-lessons instead.⁵⁹ During her stay, Jones painted her in what may be his first portrait in watercolour.

Because Capel was so far from London, Gill was now renting a basement flat in Halls Road, in a building where Denis Tegetmeier was renting a room in a flat. Jones often went there to meet Gill and visit Tegetmeier. He went with Joan for tea with her father on 24 October and on the 27th, after which he and Gill went to supper at Snows. About this time, they went together to visit E. Powys Mathers, an author and translator of erotic poetry, in his flat in Lincoln's Inn Fields. He showed them some of Beardsley's then unpublishable drawings for Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, which Jones thought among Beardsley's best, 'marvellous in sheer artistic ability'—but 'a bit spoilt' for him by their owner valuing them solely as pornography. The walls were covered with pornographic postcards. After their visit, Gill told Jones, 'If I were not a Catholic, I

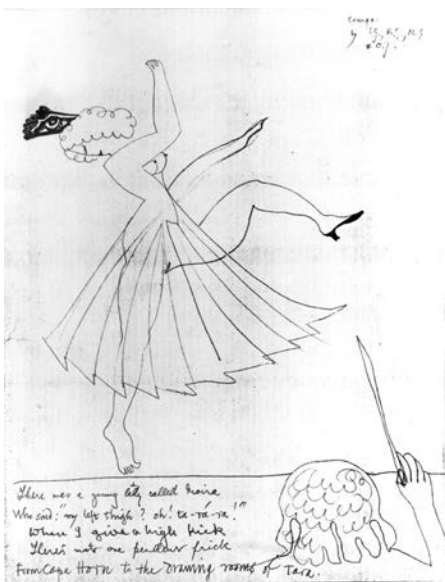
should have been like that.’⁶⁰

Jones was responsive to pornography, which is why he was adamant about keeping it out of his work, but he was no prude. When he found in a magazine a photograph of a nude blonde whose pubic area had been air-brushed to an angelic blur, he drew in the vulval cleft before cutting out the picture and saving it as an aid, presumably, to his art. (He also cut out and kept magazine pictures of ships, birds, buildings, animals, and trees.)

On the 29 October, he went with Gill by train to Twyford in Berkshire, where Robert Gibbings met them and drove them to Waltham St Lawrence, where he lived and ran the Golden Cockerel Press. He and Jones discussed the *Gulliver* engravings. Gibbings wanted to have the prints hand-painted after the model of brightly coloured thirteenth century wood cuts. Jones thought this a mistake, saying that what had worked in a medieval tradition of popular prints would not work now. He was diffident in objecting, however, and concluded by saying, ‘I suppose you might try it’ and even indicating on trial prints what colours should be used. Gibbings hired a group of female art students, and, Jones remembered, ‘they slopped on the colour’—in his view, ruining ‘the whole book.’ He subsequently managed to erase most of the colour in his own copy by applying a mixture of water and Milton, a mouth-wash containing a

bleaching agent. Subsequently he repressed all memory of having permitted the colouring. Although he disliked the book, which was printed in an edition of 480, it would be hailed by the critic of the *New Statesman* as ‘the most pleasing of all modern editions of *Gulliver*,’ with maps that were especially ‘delightful.’⁶¹

The visit was not all work. Jones got on especially well with Gibbings’s wife Moira and enjoyed talking with her.⁶² All four collaborated in making joke-sketches and limericks. One sketch is of an operatic woman wearing a fancifully nonsensical dress and stockings and posing melodramatically. Another is of a dancer high kicking without underwear in a transparent skirt (fig. 21). Beneath her is the head of an orchestral conductor raising a baton. Jones drew her head; Gill, the torso; Gibbings, the raised



21. Jones, Gill, *et al*, Dancer and limerick, 1925

left leg and possibly the skirt; and his wife, the shoe and head-dress. Here are the limericks, with the author of lines (identifiable by handwriting) indicated in brackets. The first accompanies the drawing of the high kicker.

There was a young lady called Moira [M.G.]
 Who said: 'my left thigh? oh! ta-rá-ra!' [D.J.]
 When I give a high kick
 There's not one pendent prick [R.G.]
 From Cape Horn to the drawing rooms of Tara. [E.G.]

A lady in fancy dress clothes [M.G.]
 Said: 'I wonder why every man loathes [E.G.]
 my charming appearance [R.G.]
 my coy perseverance! [E.G.]
 Not to mention my bloody great oaths. [D.J.]

There was a young lady of Isfahan [M.G.]
 With legs white as milk & much crisper than— [E.G.]
 the hair on the front [R.G.]
 of a Thames bargee's punt [D.J.]
 You could catch, if you liked, as catch can. [M.G.]

That evening, Gill danced nude with the Gibbingses, Jones taking no part in these revels and probably knowing nothing about them, though Gill took virtuous pride in avoiding ejaculation on such occasions and may later have told him about them. Jones would visit the Gibbingses again in 1926 and paint two landscapes. On that occasion, he joined Gibbings in his studio in drawing Clare Leighton, not yet a renowned wood-engraver, posing nude. The room was cold and Leighton stood by a stove. Jones was wrapped in coats and a scarf. Turning to Gibbings, who was in his shirtsleeves, he asked, 'Robert, do you ever burn?'⁶³

Petra was in London on 19 December. She may have stayed with her father, since her prolonged presence was, unlike that of her sister, a burden on Mrs Jones, but she may have stayed once over night at Brockley. Shortly afterwards, she, her father, and Jones left for Capel for Christmas.

The rest of the Gills were in Rome. On Christmas Eve, Petra, who was preparing a meal,

announced that no water was coming through the tap. Jones and Hague took a lantern and went



22. David Jones, 'He frees the waters,'
Christmas, 1925

up the steep slope behind to where the tank was. Finding it nearly empty, they returned for shovels and picks and went further up the slope to where they found the pipe to the tank blocked and the stream feeding it damned and diverted with sods. After telling each other what they thought of the person who had done this, they unblocked the stream so that it flowed freely to the tank. Coming down the mountain, Hague spontaneously declaimed, '*Duo homines per aquam nobis restituerant rem.*' This, he explained was his adaptation of a line from Ennius which Virgil had adapted in reference to the Roman general Fabius, who, 'by delaying had restored the state.' At the time, Jones recognized this general as Fabius Maximus, called *Cunetator* because of his delaying tactics during the Punic wars. Shortly afterwards, Jones drew a picture of their freeing of the waters (with

himself hatted) and gave it to Hague (fig. 22). Unblocking the stream would become for Jones a favourite memory of the early years of their friendship. Twenty years later he would adapt Hague's Latin adaptation in his poetry, to combine Roman associations, fertility religion, and Christian redemption (*A* 238).⁶⁴

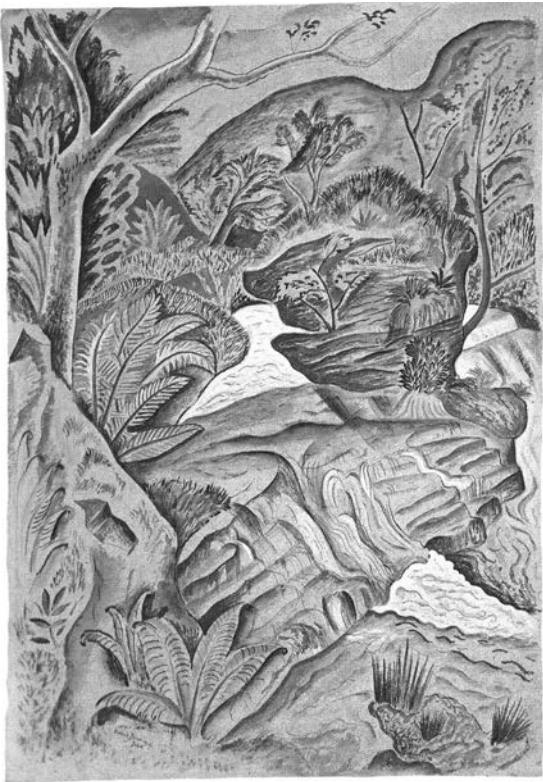
After a fortnight at Capel, he went with Petra by train to London, she going on to Ditchling to finish her apprenticeship, he returning to Brockley. Before spring he was back at Capel, and painting as he had never painted before.

He painted a section of the stream close by the monastery building where foliage, tumbling water, and hillside converge. Influenced by variously inclined planes of landscape and water, he multiplied points of view. In his 1926 watercolours *Honddu River Fach* (fig. 23) and *Horses At Water*, the



23. David Jones, *Honddu River Fach*, 1926

setting, a favourite, is a juxtaposition of ,largely discontinuous forms and broken perspectives. The river seems higher than its lower containing bank and seems to flow uphill at the right, where its movement metamorphoses into that of a fallen tree. The banks and slopes in the centre background are unintegrated. The central slope, above the bridge, seems to stand erect like a cliff, its apparent verticality lent emphasis by vertical tree trunks. The shapes are so irregular that they resist verbal description, but there is a steadying, centring pile of forms built on the surge of earth to the steps of the bridge and topped by trees with hairy branches. The colour is light throughout, which diminishes the difference between near and far.



24. David Jones, *Waterfall, Afon Honddu Fach*, 1926

The fracturing of perspective is most radically evident in *The Waterfall, Afon Honddu Fach* (fig. 24). All his Capel paintings are tight, definite in contour, continuous in technique with his wood engravings, but this picture resembles an engraved woodblock. The astonishing effect is of abrupt differences of location in space of the sort experienced when looking through a 3-D viewer. Areas of ground and water seem to occupy different picture planes. The foreground and background are seen from ground level, but the middle-ground from high above. As a result, the middle-ground seems to float loose from the earth, as does the dark area of shore on the middle-right. The water flows on a third plane. Contributing to the disjointed, three-dimensional effect is the firm delineation of solid landmasses, which seems influenced by the Vorticism of Meninsky. Charged by lively collision and pulling apart, his painting is essentially an abstract, but then so, essentially, is the irregular land-and-waterscape re-presented. With its sharp differentiation of planes, this painting resembles the best work by Paul Nash. In later years, this hard visual fragmentation would disappear, but the aesthetic would survive in his later poetry which is written, to use his word, in ‘fragments’ juxtaposed and inserted within one another.

The landscape at Capel was for him what the city was for other artists, a place of maximum changing visual variety. As at Caldey, his experience of place precipitated a transformation in style. He would later say that you cannot stand back from the mountains, ‘they press in on every side and the view changes with the slightest turn.’ Moving across these irregular, immense slopes, the eye loses a stable sense of single perspective. In his pictures, perspective shifts, multiplies, or vanishes in abstraction. No longer continuous and sculptural, form thins and breaks, and its fragments flatten. The sculptural-relief style of Ditchling Christian primitivism is nearly gone now; although, however wild, form and forms always reflect the ghost of vivid design.

Till now, his painting was derivative, ‘the product’, as he later called it, ‘of one or other of the “styles” of the epoch which, beginning before the Great War, increased in impetus throughout the 1920s’ and constituted ‘some aspect of the whole *putsch* against “Impressionism” on the one hand and “Academism” on the other.’ He, too, had asserted ‘the rectilinear and angular’, had emphasized continuous architected form, hard-edged contours, and strictly divided surfaces. He had obeyed the classical convention of design in which boundaries clearly divide the surface and command the page. But now he was moving to an art of hesitancy and apparent disorder, a sense of design which incorporates a degree of ‘chaos’ that keeps form from appearing static. A decade later, he would say that ‘from 1926 onwards’ there was ‘a fairly recognisable direction’ in his work: in 1926 he first realized what he ‘personally would ask a painting to be.’⁶⁵

His new use of line is visible in *Y Twmpa, Nant Honddu*, a pencil drawing made from just in front of the monastery building with faint yellow wash and touches of light brown paint (fig. 1). Long irregular curving contours (of clouds, hills, streams) combine with demarcated mid-sized areas and smaller, focused shapes of trees and ponies. The wooded area on the Twmp emerges from the slope and seems to hang forward, not far behind the nearest trees. This forwarding of part of the hillside was not fanciful. On clear bright days, seen in clearer detail, the sides of the Twmpa and the Hatteral Ridge appear to advance closer to the viewer. Roughly mirroring the peak in reverse, this irregular V-shape has its point above the vertical centre of the trees. These trees, the V-shape, the looming summit, and the cloud above create a column of

vertical force that steadies the picture. Irregular diagonal-to-horizontal lines in the middle-ground and foreground generate a contrasting field of force. Caught in a tension between opposing fields and corresponding inclinations to look up and down, the viewer tends to focus on the middle-ground air. Distances are uncertain. The four trees to the left of the V-shape are impossibly big. Planes converge or do not quite, and linear delineations live separate species of lives. All but nearer trees and horses are abstract forms, so that this landscape is half-way to being an abstract. As a draughtsman, he was relinquishing the thick line and emphatic edge of Michelangelo, Rubens, Poissin, and the Pre-Raphaelites for the thin, freer line of the Italian-Primitives. As a painter, he was showing the influences of El Greco, Tintoretto and Turner. This was not an exchange, merely, of one set of influences for another. Delay had aided digestion. He had taken a long time—he was now over thirty—but he was finding a style distinctively his own.

He realized that ‘our old & familiar friend “distortion” has to be infallibly right & requisite to the occasion or it is *worse* than all the academic tediums’ but was not about to give up distortion for realism. He later found ‘charming’ confirmation of his positive sense of distortion in an article by Alfred Daniell concerning an innovation in music by Bach:

‘Don’t try to put anything exactly in tune; put everything a little out of tune; make the octave consist of twelve exactly equal semitones; we *know* that’s wrong, but we shall get accustomed to it.’ Such was [Bach’s] advice and all the advances of orchestral music since his day have been rendered possible through everything being a little out of tune.⁶⁶

Back in Brockley in April or May, he gathered all he possessed of the paintings and drawings he had done before 1925, with the exception of his war-time sketchbooks and some art-school studies, and carried them into the scullery behind his mother’s kitchen. He dumped them into the washing copper and fed them a few at a time into the firebox beneath. Having found his direction as a painter, he wanted to obliterate the past—for him, an extraordinarily decisive and dramatic act. It indicates how ruthlessly critical of his own work he was and how clearly he saw

his new change in direction as a break from the past.* He was now in a transition period between thick definiteness and solidity, which most people find easy to see and like, and something subtler, more complex, more free. A close friend would remember that from about this time and for the rest of his life Jones wanted his work to be free. He would consider one of his paintings that others liked and give his own approval in these terms: 'Yes, I think it's all right. It's freer, isn't it.'⁶⁷ In 1926, however, he was only approaching liberation.

For most of the next six months, he worked at home. From his studio window looking out



on the back garden, he made a series of about seven paintings. Some were from a viewpoint projected back fifty yards or more from where he sat, allowing the backs of houses and the irregular smoke from their stacks to hold the picture in ranked parenthesis. Others, less panoramic, are as actually seen from where he sat at his window in his studio.

One of these, *The Town Garden* (fig. 25), seems a study in perspective, with vertical fences leading to a recession of horizontal fences broken only by trees. In the distance are the backs of houses in Whitebread Road. In the foreground, the dog Michael looks up, wagging his tail. Beyond are his father's vegetable plots. Bushes on either side of the fence in the right foreground and the tree branches beyond introduce a wild irregularity to counter the linear fences with their linear slats:

25. David Jones, *The Town Garden*, 1926

* Douglas Cleverdon and Nicolette Gray write that the burning took place in 1925, which is possible, since Jones was in Brockley for a short time in the summer that year, but Jones told Blissett and me that he burned his early work in 1926, which seems more likely since only then would he have been sure of his new direction.

living versus dead wood. Their waggly branches are in collusion with the dog, who looks back at the viewer from all this perpendicularity. While the fences go out in dead inanimateness, the trees in the middle-ground also look back and seem to greet the viewer with a sort of wild happiness. All the stiff vertical specificity has its off-centre in the curved horizontal abstraction (of bushes?) below the distant drying sheets. The picture is enlivened by multiple perspective. Each foreground fence is seen as from a good deal the other side of centre. The result is like seeing simultaneously through two eyes set five yards apart. (Realistically, we should see less of the sides of these fences, and their slats should be vertical instead of angled.) The bent-outward fences open up the picture, an effect contradicted by flatness of the land between. In an effect anticipating the work of M.C. Escher, the right fence seems lower at its base than the fence on the left—although this, too, is impossible because the land is flat. And the tops of houses march into the picture in the left background from a perspective all their own, as if belonging to different picture entirely. The life of this painting is not in the scene but in the changes required to see it—changes that have their analogue in the waggley bendings of the tall trees.

In another painting, done in May, he pulls the picture plane forward to the back of the first house on his right on Dalrymple Road to paint *The Maid at No. 37* (fig. 26). Emerging further than sitting allows, the maid's back seems to join the cloudy boughs. The line of her shoulders continues that of a branch. The curves of her bottom are mirrored (upside down) by the curves of foliage of branched in the right foreground that seem to express the wish to receive and sustain her bottom. The tied bow of her apron strings has its match in that of the ribbon worn by the cat on the fence, implying resemblance between their high balancing. These visual similarities (between bows and between branches and bottom) illustrate



26. David Jones, *The Maid at No. 37*, 1926

the rhyming or Thomistic analogy that will characterize much of Jones's work. It is a variant of his foundational aesthetic principal, which he would express years later to an art teacher in these words: 'Tell the child that once he has put two marks on the drawing paper—he has made, not two marks, but three, & it is by that third invisible 'mark' that we know whether the other two have significance.' This painting is a subtle collusion between beings that are animal, vegetable, and human, whose life is more lively for their dead, linear, architectural context. Exceptions within this context are the ornamental curves in the stone dressing at the upper corners of the window in which the maid sits. These ornamental curves have vivid focus and particularity, the only places where the curves of life invade the cold stone. The combination of architectural straight lines and angles with living curves is captured, in microcosm, in the numerals of the title, 3 and 7.

Indoors, he sat or stood with his back to the fireplace in the north wall of the living room



27. Dog on the Sofa, 1926

and painted the dining area (fig. 27). Curtains cover the door to the side entrance of the house and to the kitchen. Places are set at table for his parents and himself. On the cabinet beyond is his mother's eighteenth century silver tea pot. The woodwork on the chaise-lounge has affinity with the pattern of its upholstery and the pattern in the carpet. Multiple points of view give a rocking vitality to what might have been a dead scene. The back wall and cabinet are seen from the level of someone sitting. The two chairs beside the cabinet are seen from the level of someone standing. The sofa, on which Michael sleeps (where he was strictly forbidden to be) and the floor are seen from higher in the air, the table from lower. The late-Victorian furniture is almost animate: the sofa bends out of alignment with every bit as much curvy life as the dog, and the chair

closest to the viewer pulls back its left rear leg (out of perspective) as though in the process of stepping away from the table. If the dog can disobey rules, so can the chairs, and so can space itself.

These Brockley watercolours achieve a vital balance between sculptural vividness and freedom. The vivid solidity predominates, so that the freedom goes unnoticed by most viewers. The definite, recognizable forms make them easy to see and therefore makes these pictures saleable—everyone likes them. These are the last paintings he would make that are adequately reproducible in black and white photography. They represent a pause in his development, one step back after taking two steps forward at Capel and Caldey, their style a combination of Westminster and the future.

When not painting, he visited museums and bookstores, including Harold Monroe's bookshop in Theobald's Road. He went to the Imperial War Museum to see the war paintings. The only modern paintings permanently on show in London, they included works by Wyndham Lewis, Christopher Nevinson, Paul Nash, and Stanley Spencer. He visited galleries to see temporary exhibits of major French painters. He went regularly to the cinema and spent time with friends. Among them was Hague, who had left Capel at the beginning of February and, after losing a job with the *London Mercury*, was making a meagre living at George Coldwell's seedy second-hand Catholic bookshop in Red Lion Passage, Holborn, where he lived in a basement flat. Jones and he spent afternoons in the bookstore conversing, later adjourned to a pub, had a meal, and talked through the evening. Though less socially-politically enthusiastic than Hague, Jones sometimes accompanied him to meetings of the Distributist League in the Devereaux pub in Essex Street. Though poor, they dressed like dandies, Jones especially in a wide-brimmed black hat and very good shoes. Both wore gloves and carried ash sticks. They had meals in Soho and sometimes rode trams round the city.⁶⁸

Jones spent more time with Medworth. They met when Jones attended life-classes at Westminster in order to paint models.* He also visited Medworth at his rooms in Kensington.

* He did a pencil-and watercolour of a seated nude at Westminster School of Art in June 1925. His last visit to a life-class there was in 1928.

Aggressively ambitious, Medworth was frustrated at selling so little, and jealous of Meninsky, who was not much older than he and who at one exhibit sold £100 worth of pictures and, Medworth complained, ‘didn’t buy anybody a drink.’ Jones sympathized but was not prone to envy. Each Monday at 6:30 p.m, they met for an evening pub-crawl, during which Jones would drink Guinnesses. They observed this ritual through the early 1930s. ‘Whenever it was possible,’ they went together to see *Cyrano de Bergerac*, a play whose main attraction for them was the line ‘Gascon cannon never recoil,’ which they used to insert into conversation whenever possible ‘and laugh like anything.’ When drunk during the war, Medworth had been seduced by a sergeant’s wife, but he was now single, unattached, and contemptuous of impure women. About Jones’s love-life, he would wrinkle his nose in disapproval, insinuating, as Ernest Hawkins misunderstood, that Jones had liaisons with obliging girls. Medworth’s prudery was partly a reaction to his living above sisters of dubious reputation. Upon arriving once Jones said, ‘What kind of house is this? A woman in a dressing gown opened the door to me.’ Neither of them now saw Weaver Hawkins, who, soon after marrying in September 1923, had moved to France, and would live in various foreign parts of the world before settling in Australia.⁶⁹

Jones was also meeting Poulter in pubs, where they may sometimes have been joined by their fellow ex-Fusilier, Harry Cook, with whom Jones stayed in touch until Cook became involved in an embezzlement and committed suicide. After returning from Russia, Poulter had worked with a watch company in London until marrying in 1924—Jones had attended the wedding—and now worked for the railroad and played rugby for the London Welsh.* At his insistence, Jones read *The Brothers Karamazov*, the only long Russian novel he would read and an influence on his later poetry.^{70 †}

Although not officially a member, Jones attended a meeting of the Society of Wood Engravers on 23 January 1926. This was his second or third such meeting—so that he was now

* As a wedding gift, Jones had given him the painting entitled *The Reclaimers* (ch. 5, fig. 4), which consequently escaped burning in 1926.

† Fictional Ivan Karamazov’s fictional Grand Inquisitor is a prototype of the Tribune in Jones’s ‘The Tribune’s Visitation’ (*SL* 45-58).

acquainted with most others important to the revival of engraving in England.⁷¹ These included John and Paul Nash, Gwendolen Raverat, Noel Rooke, and the most eminent in the group, sixty-three year old, white-bearded Lucien Pissarro, the son of the Impressionist, Camille, and the first modern artist to engrave his own drawings. He and Jones had as mutual friends Walter Sickert and John Gray. Gibbings chaired the meeting. Gill attended and afterwards Jones went with him to an Arts and Crafts Exhibition and then to tea and supper at Snows.

Visiting Jim Ede, Jones received from him a first-hand report of the flooding of the Tate Gallery in the early morning of 6-7 January 1926. Rising over the embankment walls, the Thames had filled the lower floor to a depth of eight feet. Ede was keeping some of Jones's watercolours there to show to dealers and collectors—but of greater concern were the 19,000 submerged watercolours and drawings of the Turner bequest. Awakened by police, Ede was the first on the scene, acting decisively to rescue and protect the Turners. Ede said that a set of cabinets in which Jones's pictures were stored was so well made, with doors so tightly fitting that work on its shelves below water-level remained dry.⁷² Jones appreciated this feat of carpentry as only a bad carpenter can.

He visited Oliver Lodge, a disciple of Gill since the Ditchling days who had a studio in Flood Street in Chelsea. Lodge was in his mid-fifties, had a good sense of humour, and was an avid reader of Shakespeare, to whom he bore some resemblance. Like Jones, he knew Hartrick and Sickert. Financial independence allowed him to paint, draw, and write, despite limited talent. He was a satellite of Bloomsbury, friendly with Venessa Bell and Duncan Grant, and had written plays, stories, and collections of verse. Raised Anglican, he now worshipped beauty, which he preferred in feminine form.⁷³ Jones and he sometimes talked and drew together in his studio, Gill occasionally joining them.

At one point, Lodge commented on Jones having a new hat, and Jones explained that he was merely its custodian. A friend who had entered a monastery the previous week had given it to him, saying he no longer needed it. But he would be kicked out in a few weeks, he said, and would then need his hat again. The friend was Denis Tegetmeier, who, motivated by secret passion for Petra Gill, had become a postulant in the Cistercian monastery of Mount St Bernard's in Leicestershire. The passing of the hat had been a symbolic act. After six months, he left, and

Jones returned the hat, an act which would likewise, but unintentionally, be symbolic.⁷⁴

Jones retained his connections with the London Dominicans. One indication of this is the appearance in the July 1926 issue of the Dominican journal *Blackfriars* of his first writing for publication since the war, 'Beauty in Catholic Churches.' He was responding to a proposal to replace ugly ecclesiastical art and architecture with the styles of Italian primitivism or sixth century Byzantium. At the heart of the essay, he writes that a graceful chasuble does not distract God from a graceless 'radiator casting and ... electric button.' As members of an advanced civilization, he writes, we are 'entirely deprived of the normal ability to create, as a matter of course, a thing of beauty' whereas members of primitive societies make things that always have 'considerable aesthetic merit.' In ancient empires when

naturalism and trumpery academism had killed the fine arts, there still remained a large population who made small things of superb merit quite unspoiled by the decline of the Schools of Art in Athens or elsewhere. But we have no such undercurrent of genuine art left us. In England it died in the middle of the nineteenth century. To-day the dead body stinks.

Because it is natural to make beauty, he continues, its current absence from human products is a sign of industrial and commercial 'tyranny.' The aesthetically sensitive are 'conscious of the "pain of loss"' and 'are, so to say, in hell.' The only practical hope is for 'the growing up within modern civilization of another civilization with a conscious determination ... to avoid being trapped in the general decline.' It was 'in some such fashion that Europe first became Catholic', but the odds against this happening 'are ten times greater now, owing to the unusual grasp of the industrial system.' Until such a change in civilization, 'the visible Church' cannot be 'clothed in beauty.'

To have a Church in suburbia aping the restraint and dignity, and the solemn abandon, of the age of Faith is far more hateful than having tip-up plush seats and electric altar lights as favoured in the States If Tooting likes the *ensemble* of its drawing-rooms, let Tooting give what it most likes to God: this would be just and right. If we do not like our churches to reflect the sort of life we have, let us have a different sort of life, and the churches will change inevitably.⁷⁵

His principal occupation during the early months of 1926 was making thirteen wood engravings to illustrate *The Book of Jonah* for Gibbings's Golden Cockerel Press, to be printed in an edition of only 175. In the tradition begun at Ditchling and evident in his *Rosary-Book*

engravings, Jones depicted Jonah's Niniveh as a modern city, which, by emphasizing the contemporary significance of the story, implies that the visual artist—'Jones' is nearly a homonym of 'Jonah'—is a modern counterpart of the biblical prophet. The illustrations emphasize the patristic interpretation of Jonah as prefiguring Jesus—who, on the title page, emerges from the tomb as Jonah does from the whale. In three engravings, Jonah spreads wide his arms as in crucifixion. In the first large engraving Jonah gets his orders from the angel Gabriel—the name is on the angel's halo—in visual evocation of the Annunciation. This suggests a conflation of Mary, Jesus, and Jonah (and Jones) as redemptive agents. Like Mary and Jesus, Jonah is asked to surrender his will to God, though he complies only after evasion and delay with reluctance and regret. Most of these engravings are in the firm, clear style that Gill excelled in and printers love. Figures are consistently bounded in line of unvarying thickness.

Among the four *Jonah* engravings that transcend this style, the best is the last, in which the prophet complains under his rocking shelter in the windy, blazing heat (fig. 28). He seems to



28. David Jones, *Jonah* illustration 12, 1926

float in the semi-shade, recalling buoyancy under water in an earlier engraving in the series. The worm in the gourd evokes the serpent in Eden, and his near nakedness evokes the crucifixion, so that there is an interesting suggestion of correspondence between the fall, Jonah's resentment, and the crucifixion. Visually, this engraving expresses the delirium induced by heat. Subtle variety gives the picture vitality that survives repeated long viewing. It is Jones's most impressive engraving to date.

In the *Jonah* engravings Jones began to discover in visual correspondences and suggestions of symmetry the powerful symbolic possibilities of extended spatial arrangement. The title-page engraving aside, there are twelve illustrations. Ten of them are symmetrically placed pairs that mirror one another. In the fifth engraving, for example, Jonah is cast into the sea; and in the eighth, he is cast by the whale onto land—in both

of these engravings, his arms spread wide, cruciform. Jones is discovering of how sequence may be wed to symmetry to produce symbolic form. It is a marriage of linear form and spatial unity that would characterize his subsequent illustrated books and *The Anathemata*, making it the only formally unified non-narrative modernist long poem. So Jones's *The Book of Jonah* deserves an important place in the history of modern literature.

Although some of these engravings have what Hartrick called 'the magic', most do not. In Jones's development as an engraver, he was now stalled, alternating between styles of his earlier development. The wardens of his stylistic prison were Gill and Gibbings. Like all printers, Gibbings wanted linear clarity of the sort Gill excelled at. In the *Jonah* engravings, Jones comes as close as he ever does to imitating Gill. For this reason, he would later especially dislike them.



29. Douglas Cleverdon, 1924, photo by Brownlee

In the spring of 1926, Jones visited Capel-y-ffin for some weeks. Desmond Chute was home from Fribourg, staying with his mother in Bristol. Swathed in scarves against the cold, Chute visited Capel with a new friend named Douglas Cleverdon, a twenty-four year old Bristol book-seller (fig. 29. Bristol born and bred, Cleverdon was slim, dark-haired, good looking, raised a Congregationalist but now religiously non-aligned, a recent graduate from Oxford in Classics. His father was a master-wheelwright; his mother Welsh, from whom he had

received a feeling for Wales. He had gone to Jesus College on a scholarship but finished with a third because he spent most of his time operating a mail-order business selling antiquarian books. Roger Fry supplied many of the volumes in his first catalogue. Cleverdon was benign: courteous, gentle, patient, humble, warm,



30. David Jones, 1926, photo by Brownlee

enthusiastic, giving and accepting affection without emotional expectations. He and Jones liked each other. Cleverdon would remember his first sight of him in ‘rough-spun clothes that

nevertheless had a touch of the dandy in their cut. He was unassuming and gentle in manner, and ... charitable in his judgements and free of malice in his conversation. He had a lively sense of humour with an endearing chuckle.’⁷⁶

In the late summer of 1926, Jones returned to Capel and saw a good deal more of Cleverdon, whose greatest gift was appreciation. He was distributing Gill’s recent book, *Id Quod Visum Placet*, and had agreed to publish Gill’s next book, *Art and Love*, with six copper engravings by Gill. Combining love of books and love of pictures, acute critical judgement, and unselfish financial optimism, Cleverdon wanted to encourage and market artistic books.⁷⁷ With Gill and others at Capel, Jones occasionally visited Cleverdon in Bristol. His bookshop was part of the ground floor of a large building at 18 Charlotte Street, near the top of Park Street, which runs uphill from

the Cathedral Green to the elegant eighteenth century suburb of

Clifton. On the first floor above the bookshop was the Clifton Arts Club, where amateur dramatics and concerts were held. Cleverdon lived in a large flat on the third floor as a lodger of G. Methben Brownlee, with whom he shared the flat. She was a forty-nine year old photographer and the secretary of the Arts Club. Her photographic studio was on the floor below. The heart of the local arts community, Brownie, as she was nicknamed, was warm, amusing, enthusiastic, with generosity that left her chronically in debt. Their flat was often occupied by visitors, now including Cleverdon’s new friends. In her studio, she made portrait photographs of Jones in the coat of blue cloth woven by Petra (fig. 30), of Jones with Gill (ch 6, fig. 10), and of Petra (fig. 31). Here, in August, Jones painted his first successful still life since the burning of his early works, *Still Life with Gladioli*. And Cleverdon introduced him to Eric White, another Oxford graduate and friend of Chute. Jones would subsequently meet White in London. (In May 1927, they dined together at the Café Russe.)⁷⁸



31. Petra Gill, photo by Brownlee,

At Cleverdon's, Jones again met Stanley Morison, whom he had first met at Ditchling on 25 January 1923. Morison (fig. 32) was a powerful figure in the Lanston Monotype Corporation. He was six years older than Jones, a north-Londoner, brought up a left-wing agnostic, self-educated after the age of fourteen, a Catholic since 1908, imprisoned during the war as a conscientious objector. He dressed always in black. Although no printer, calligrapher, or artist, he would be among the foremost typographical designers of the century, giving *The Times*, the *TLS*, and the *Tablet* their typeface and layout. Upon seeing the name-board Gill made for Cleverdon's bookshop, he



32. Stanley Morison, 1933

commissioned Gill to design a sans-serif type for the Monotype Corporation, launching Gill's career as a designer of printing type, which may be his most important work. That interaction would be typical of Cleverdon's often unacknowledged effect as a catalyst for creative production.* Jones would come to regard Cleverdon as 'an *astounding* man' with great 'resilience & powers of concentration over so many differing things.'⁷⁹

Gill showed Cleverdon Jones's carvings and copper engravings. Cleverdon thought them 'marvellous,' arranged to buy prints (paid for by check in October), offered to buy any carvings he would part with, and began talking to him about commissioning an illustrated book. Years later, Cleverdon remembered, 'it emerged that ... the one thing he would like to do' was illustrate Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, which he thought 'not only great but unique' in English poetry. In the spring of 1927, Cleverdon met Jones one evening in London and commissioned him to illustrate the poem.⁸⁰

Cleverdon wanted eight large (7 x 5 ¼ inches) copper-engraved illustrations, plus smaller headpiece and tailpiece. He wanted the finished prints by Christmas. That was agreeable to Jones, although Jones later postpounded the proposed date to early February, and the engravings

* That was the first instance; the commissioning of this biography was the last. See acknowledgements.

would not be finished till a year from Christmas. Because he doubted his ability technically to do justice to the poem in copper—his seven engravings in that medium hardly seemed to justify such an undertaking—he asked, instead, to engrave in wood, but Cleverdon insisted on copper. Jones agreed to engrave the plates but wanted £5 apiece, since they would be ‘hard work.’ Initially he intended the engravings to be

not essentially illustrations of bits of the text—but general ideas that emerge as the poem progresses.—I mean they may end by being purely illustrational but I don’t want to think of them in that way ... its much more right & more amusing ... I mean one does not *want* to illustrate ‘scenes’ described by Poem at line 155 ... or whatever it is, does one? but rather as I before suggested one wants to get in copper the general fluctuations of the poem.’

In the spring or summer of 1927, he made a sample engraving for the first full-page illustration. It depicts the bride of the poem’s wedding kneeling alone, as she is nowhere in the poem described. The engraving was ugly in design and wooden in technique, so he cancelled it, intending to remake it. But first he wanted to get a smaller commission out of the way.⁸¹



33. David Jones, *Aesop* illustration 1, 1928

Morison had asked him to illustrate with small copper engravings *Seven Fables of Aesop*, a booklet chiefly to serve as a type-specimen of a new Hellenic font designed for the Monotype Corporation. Because the plates were tiny (2 1/2 by 3 1/4 inches) and because of difficulty controlling the burin, Jones decided to simplify design and economize on line. He engraved them in the spring of 1927, and they are technically impressive. He would not, in later years, own a copy of the book.* When shown one in 1974 he would say that he thought

the animals ‘bloody good,’ that he disliked the sculptor in the fifth engraving, and that he liked the man’s hand on his hip as he smites the lion in the first engraving—it was a posture he had

* *Seven Fables of Aesop* is the rarest of the books illustrated by Jones. Initially Morison intended to print a hundred and fifty copies but changed this to thirty, and the plates were destroyed in a German air raid on the night of 10 May 1941.

noticed in the trenches (fig. 33).^{*} He would also make a large copper-engraving for his Christmas card that year, in which the slight stiffness of kneeling animals and the roughness of bounding lines betray his struggle engraving a large plate (7 x 5 ½ inches).

These recent engravings more than doubled his experience with copper and allowed him to make various technical advances that would contribute to the *Ancient Mariner* engravings—one of these advances being the use of short multiple dry-point style scratches to evoke the sheen of sea-surface and the contour of limbs. He was now engraving well in copper, with more control and freedom of line. No longer skidding across the surface ‘like an unpracticed skater,’ he did not now compensate by over-control. He was achieving a ‘flowing style’, the effect ‘of linear freedom and firmness hardly obtainable in any other material.’ It was just as he was finding with watercolours: the more exacting the medium ‘the more free and flowing the ultimate result.’⁸² This experience would save him from making another false start on *The Ancient Mariner*, such as the cancelled kneeling bride. He would not attempt another version of that—not, at least, in copper to illustrate this book, though he would return to the subject.

He was also, now, engraving in dry point. Unlike copper engraving, in which a burin cuts a crisp, definite line, in dry point a hardened steel needle scratches the plate, throwing up a burr beside the line or on each side when the needle is vertical. Instead of the ink filling the line, as with copper engraving, it is held by the burr against wiping. The result is a soft, fuzzy line that varies along its length in thickness and darkness, an irregularity that appealed to him. The disadvantage is that a plate yields only about fifteen prints before printing starts to flatten the burr, and the line blurs—whereas an engraved plate can be printed a hundred times or more before starting to deteriorate. He finished two dry-points that would be exhibited for sale in July-September 1927 at the St George Gallery's.[†]

Working in copper transformed him as a wood engraver. After gaining experience in

^{*} In the fable this illustrates, the lion has fallen in love with the young woman, whose father has promised her to him after his claws and teeth are extracted. But, once the lion is disarmed, the father beats him out of the house.

[†] These were *Animal Study*, a recumbent fawn, and *Animals at Rest*, two does, in editions of twenty, the prints of the first selling for £1 each, prints of the second for £1.50 each.



34. David Jones,
Vignette for *Llyfr y
Pregeth-wr*, 1927

copper, he devoted the first six months of 1927 to wood engraving, applying to that medium what he was learning in the other. The transforming of his wood-engaving technique was helped by his working for a press that was not subject to the requirements of Gibbings and the influence of Gill. He would now demonstrate ‘the instinct of self-preservation in a talent,’ which was Sickert’s definition of genius.

He received a commission from the Gregynog Press to illustrate an edition of the Book of Ecclesiastes in Welsh, *Llyfr y Pregeth-wr*. He cut two wood engravings: a vignette for the title page (fig. 34) and a large crucifixion-scene for the frontispiece (fig. 35). These engravings are masterful, especially the larger—a quantum leap beyond anything he had previously done. They achieve perfect fluidity of design chiefly through shallow white-line engraving. No longer cutting the wood, his extremely sharp graver glides in free curves across its surface like a burin or dry-point needle on copper. It is a new style, producing a block difficult to print: too little ink greys the black areas, and the slightest excess blocks up and obliterates the thin scratchings. When properly printed, however, the image has remarkable intricacy, richness and sense of movement. Jones was transforming the artform which previously had conventionally been relegated to ornament and mere illustration. He was revealing its capacity to achieve independent, technically and thematically major works.



35. David Jones, *Llyfr y Pregeth-wr*, 1927

The figure in the title-page vignette meditates. As Rodin’s *Thinker* is preoccupied with

the hellish passion depicted beneath him on the *Porte de l'Enfer*, Jones's tiny contemplative, with his chin on his wrist, has his meditation made visible in the frontispiece. There is Jesus on the cross with children embracing his legs. On one side, two men stab each other in a homicidal embrace; on the other a couple embrace in love against a background of thriving vegetation. Above them, Cupid reaches towards two quivered arrows—whose hidden shafts are antithetical to the buried blades of homicidal knives. On one side of Jesus are flames devouring a house, on the other the sun releasing its rays. In the upper left is the sea, higher than possible relative to the position of the sun. Beneath is a jackal tormenting and possibly raping a woman in hell, and, to the right, a sexually ambiguous figure embracing a man with the head of an ass. The entire ensemble evokes extremes of passion, homonymous with the Passion, a central innocence appreciated by children. The posture of Jesus on the cross establishes visual rhythms echoed in the figures to the right and left. In inclination and expression, Jesus's face mirrors that of one of the men killed beneath. In conjunction with arms extending across the top of the picture, Jesus's empty expression suggests comprehension of context—his face that of a quasi-divine thinker within the picture to match the human thinker of the vignette, whose mind contains it all. Clearly Jones cared strongly about his subject. He was also motivated by illustrating a text in Welsh published by a Welsh publisher—it was his first public work for Wales. These wonderful engravings are a prelude to his supreme achievement in wood engraving, which would also be one of his greatest works of art.

Gibbins commissioned him to illustrate *The Chester Play of the Deluge* with ten engravings. Recognizing the brilliance of the Ecclesiastes frontispiece, he ceased insisting on the linear simplicity that made the *Jonah* engravings easy to print. For the *Deluge*, Jones gave a lot of attention to preliminary design and made studies of animals in the London and Bristol zoos—the only animal drawings he would ever make as studies to use later. Deeply absorbed and working with intense concentration, he engraved in the intaglio, white-line style of the Ecclesiastes frontispiece. The engravings were large for wood engravings (5 ½ by 6 ½ inches) and, because of the detail in them, took a long time to complete. Except the penultimate engraving, all are busy with human or animal figures and demonstrate a mastery at grouping figures not seen in British art since Blake. The engravings are so full yet harmonious, so charged

with a sense of rhythmic movement that they erase awareness of size and seem monumental. These engravings established him as one of the foremost animal artists. He finished his ‘sumptuous work,’ as he called it, in Brockley at the end of June 1927.⁸³

Consistent in style and quality, the ten *Deluge* engravings follow the temporal sequence of the book but they also achieve autonomy from the text through pictorial interrelationships that generate non-linear spatial symmetry. Developing what he had begun in the *Jonah* engravings, he endows the *Deluge* with a pictorial centring unity. Separately, the engravings are triumphs of technique and design. Together they are a remarkable continuous, extended work of art, demonstrating a remarkable literary-symbolic imagination.



36. David Jones, *Deluge 2*



37. David Jones, *Deluge 9*,

Each of the *Deluge* engravings has its mirroring counterpart. The first five engravings correspond visually or thematically to the second five engravings in out-going sequence from the central pairing. In other words, the seventh and eighth, which form a pair, mirror the third and fourth, which form a pair, the ninth mirrors the second, and the tenth mirrors the first. This pattern—in no way suggested by the text of the play or by the biblical narrative—is entirely his invention. Since I have demonstrated the full effect elsewhere, here I will briefly indicate how a

single pair match, the second and ninth engravings.^{84*}

Visually and thematically, the hectic second engraving (fig 36) corresponds with the serene ninth engraving (fig. 37). The second engraving depicts an angel giving Noah his instructions and the plans for the ark. The angel evokes the Annunciation. In fact, the position Noah and the angel recalls the conventional pictorial motif of the Annunciation. The evocation associates Noah with Mary and the Ark with Jesus. In the ninth engraving, the ark floats serenely on the waves. A dove in the foreground arrives at the branch of an olive tree emerging from the water. The position of the ark identifies it with the sun (homonym of the Son) as source of its shadow, which is also Mount Ararat, and the rays above it. A tree occupies the foreground where it seems to reach out to embrace the ark. In engraving nine, both the tree and the ark ride the waves. Both sustain life. The dove from the ark has visual affinity with the tree's leafy branches and seems almost to become one of them—in an image of continuity between vegetable and animal life. The dove corresponds to the angel, likewise winged, in the earlier picture. That was the hectic beginning; this is the serene completion but also a new beginning, which is what the time, just before sunrise, symbolizes. With arms outstretched in engraving two, Noah reaching up to receive the ark mirrors the tree in engraving nine, which reaches up as though to embrace the ark. There is an implied correspondence between Mary at the Annunciation and the tree-as-representative of the living earth accepting its meaning and fulfilment. But in conventional pictures of the Annunciation, Mary is never depicted in this way, though the posture does suggest the Deposition, or taking down of Jesus's body from the cross, an association visually emphasized by the many short horizontal marks before Noah which suggest the rungs of a ladder.⁸⁵ (At Capel, Jones had watched Gill work for months on a low relief in black marble entitled *Deposition*, one of Gill's best sculptures.) These engravings, and especially engraving two, where one wood carrier recalls Jesus carrying the cross, evoke, therefore, the start and finish (before the resurrection, at least) of the body of Jesus. In conceiving his body at the Annunciation, Mary also receives his corpse.

The Deluge is archetypally autobiographical. Because Noah built the ark, he is a type of

* See Chapter 1 'The Deluge' in Thomas Dilworth, *Reading David Jones*. Cardiff, University of Wales, 2008, pp. 9-19.

the artist. Jones endorsed Maritain's assertions of continuity between the work of a boat-builder and that of the artist, and Noah is the archetypal boat-builder. In the tenth engraving, standing before sacrificial fire on an altar, Noah resembles a priest at Mass, evoking Gill's claim that the artist at his work-table is a priest at an altar. As Jones drew and engraved this final image in *The Deluge*, he may have remembered his own burning of early drawings and paintings some months before, that, too, a sacrifice to herald a new creation, of which these engravings were now the prime manifestation. And he cannot have worked for half a year on the story of Noah without associating the biblical flood with the recent flood in which the Turners and his own newer paintings had been saved from Thames-water by the ark-tight carpentry of well-made cabinets.

As he worked on these engravings, he also had social-cultural considerations in mind. Culturally, industrialism was a destroying flood. Patristic writers saw Noah's ark as a foretype of the Church. For Jones, the most important thing about the Church historically was its having preserved Christianity and Classical culture through the Dark Ages. Then its monasteries were arks. During a new dark age, he was aboard the Ark of the Church riding another flood. His art was also, in a sense, an ark. He would also entertain these associations when making his final wood engraving for a Christmas card for 1933, in which an ark rides the flood at night.

The guild at Ditchling had been an ark—Gill had often spoken of it as such.⁸⁶ In the naves (from the Latin *navis* for 'ship') of the chapels there and at Capel, Jones may have associated himself and the other worshippers with the crew of a ship. At Capel, he lived in a building perched part way up its own Mount Ararat and arking twelve adults and seven children in close proximity to a pony, pigs, goats, chickens, ducks, geese, cats and dogs. When it rained there, it deluged. That he was conscious of all these associations is suggested by affinity between the second *Deluge* engraving (fig. 38), in which Noah's family bends to work, and his 1926 painting *Mr Gill's Hay Harvest*, in which those living at Capel bend to work in the monastery field (fig.



38 David Jones, *Mr. Gill's Hay Harvest*, 1926

39). (The monastery appears high in the background.) It is an exceptional painting, for him, in that he first did a large number of quick preliminary studies, of figures and of the horse and hay wagon. At Ditchling and Capel, Gill was Noah and Jones was merely a prospective son in law, but now, in his own work, he is Noah, the captain of his own art/ark. For him, the archetype of the ark joined the Dark Age preservation and renewal of Christian culture by Celtic monks in a myth of personal purpose that would inform his sense of vocation for the rest of his life.

The spatial symmetry of the *Deluge* illustrations is a remarkable imaginative achievement. It visually unifies the book in a way that complements the forward-moving narrative unity of the text. Spatial symmetry was for him the discovery of new formal potential in books. It is a discovery no one else in the century would make, a structure that would unify his long poems—so that what was true of *The Book of Jonah* is truer of *The Deluge*: it deserves an



39. David Jones *Deluge* 6. 1927

important place in literary history. It also has a unique place in art history. His own favourite of its engravings is the sixth (fig. 39), the animals boarding the Ark. In the upper left are the herons he used to watch flying in the valley of the Honddu.

This is one of the world's great illustrated books but not as printed in 1927 because Gibbings did not rise to the challenge of the blocks. Jones would subsequently complain that the printers used hard paper, which, faced with a deadline, they omitted dampening, an essential preliminary to this sort of print-making. According to Gibbings, the paper, though hard, was damped. If so, his chief mistake was to allow the printing of blocks and

text simultaneously—orthodox procedure then—for seldom do wood-block and type respond equally to uniform pressure. He instructed the printers to ink the blocks lightly to avoid filling in

the too shallow, fine lines. It was the lesser of evils—preferable by far to over-inking. Would a softer paper and a different printing procedure have made that choice unnecessary? The lightly-inked blocks printed gray. Bitterly disappointed, Jones regarded the Golden Cockerel prints as ‘utterly worthless.’⁸⁷

Decades later, after the press made a set of prints for a C.E.M.A. exhibition of his work, he would write to Gibbings’ successor suggesting that the book ‘might well be reprinted’, and asking for prints for himself, but warning that the blocks ‘need the *most* careful printing as the lines are extremely delicate and get easily filled up—and the quality gets lost and the effect coarsened.’ Gibbings paid him £100 for the blocks. Jones would buy them back for four times that amount. The true book would remain only a possibility until reprinting, with softer paper properly damped and text and blocks printed separately (but with some over-inking and loss of detail) three years after Jones’s death. In his later years, he thought the *Deluge* engravings the only early wood engravings ‘in any way representative of’ his subsequent development. They were the only ones he would allow to be reproduced. He would say, in characteristic understatement, that *The Deluge* ‘still more or less stands on its own legs.’⁸⁸



40. *The Artist*, 1927

Shortly after completing *The Deluge*, he made what seems an archetypal self-portrait, a small wood engraving entitled *The Artist* (fig. 40) for the frontispiece of Gill’s *Christianity and Art*. He finished the engraving in August 1927. In it a naked painter holding a brush struggles awkwardly and intently with a picture. Jones used to work with just such physical intensity, almost wrestling with the picture. In the engraving, he works in a building symbolizing the Church, a low and oppressive shelter, but above it the hand of God extends in blessing. Around the artist are animals and flowers that may inhabit his imagination—the flower on the hill behind is too large to exist in space. There is affinity between animals and the Church. The stork on the right seems to help sustain its roof; the doe on the left, the leopard help the stork frame it, the Church an extension of animal physicality, which is half of human nature. The picture that the artist works on is an abstract design centring on a ship-shape that recalls the design of the ship in the second *Deluge*

engraving. He is, after a fashion, an ark-maker. The ark corresponds to the Church as ship and as building: no wonder animals (five of them) are associated with the building here. The artist's pose may be influenced by the photograph Jones had of himself engraving in Weaver Hawkins's studio six years earlier (ch 6, fig. 11).

On the strength of the Ecclesiastes and *Deluge* engravings, he was elected in 1927 to the Society of Wood Engravers. Elected with him was Eric Ravilious, whose work he admired above that of all other wood engravers and whom he considered 'one of the nicest people' he knew. He had been exhibiting with the Society since 1922. Now he began attending meetings. On 26 November 1928 he would help to hang the Society's show at the Redfern Gallery.^{89*}

Jim Ede was acting as a broker arranging sales of *Deluge* prints and had himself bought twenty artists proofs for four guineas. He asked Jones in October to send him a framed set to take to Paris. Jones promised to send his own set if necessary but delayed and then decided not to since he could not 'imagine the French being impressed by the work of a third rate English Artist.'⁹⁰

Unable to get an exhibit elsewhere, in July 1926 he had returned to Howell at the St George Gallery and nervously agreed to the former draper's year-old offer to act as his agent. Impressed especially by the newer paintings shown him, particularly those done at Brockley, Howell

* According to Hagreen, Jones had contributed to the second exhibition of the Society of Wood Engravers in November 1921, but this can only have been Gill's *Westward Ho*, based on a drawing by Jones. The history of his participation in the exhibitions of the Society is as follows: In 1922, the third exhibition: *Kentish Landscape*, *The Condemnation of Jesus*, and *The Resurrection* (each £1.1); in 1925, the sixth exhibition: *Gulliver's Travels* (edition of 15 at £1.5 each), *Map for 'Gulliver'* (edition of 10 at £1.11), *The Cock* (edition of 18 at £1.1); in 1926, the seventh's exhibition there were eight engravings, including the lapdog frontispiece for *Pompey the Little* (Golden Cockerel Press) and five of the *Jonah* engravings (editions of 15), *Crucifixion* (copper, edition of 20), *The Lancers* (copper, edition of 20), each at £1.1; in 1928 there were four *Deluge* engravings (editions of 20) at £1.5; in 1929, *Illustration to Everyman* (edition of 30) at 1 1/2 gns; in 1930, *The Stag* (edition of 30) at 1 gn each, *The Bride* (edition of 30) at 1 1/2 gns) and *Unicorn* (edition of 30) at 1 gn each.

arranged a package deal: cash down for delivery of ‘a score or so’ of watercolours. Jones would remember, ‘we laughed’ when Gill ‘reckoned up the price of each one separately, without regard to size or quality, & found it came out at some sum like a pound or two, five shillings, & nine pence three farthings ... precisely like an article in a draper’s shop of those days.’ A friend would remember that the payment amounted to about three guineas a painting.⁹¹

Howell began laying the groundwork for a David Jones exhibition. He knew that Jones’s pictures, were not easy to grasp at first sight. During his September exhibition, he took aside the ‘best known art critic of that time’ and showed him three of Jones’s pictures, which the critic disliked. Howell left them propped against his desk and kept the critic in conversation there for half an hour. A month later, he showed the same work to the critic, who liked it better this time. Again he held him in conversation before the pictures. The next month, Howell showed him three pictures, two of which he had seen before, and the critic exclaimed, ‘I have been too hasty. These are good.’ Howell made several converts in this manner, a technique he had learned from Ede.

In the spring of 1927, encouraged possibly by published praise of Jones’s paintings recently exhibited at the Goupil, Howell told Jones that an exhibition might now be held.* He asked whether Gill, whose name would draw people, would agree to contribute drawings. Jones relayed the invitation to Gill, who, knowing that his work suffered next to Jones’s, humbly accepted it. Shortly after, he wrote to Jones, ‘You know I don’t profess to draw well ... so please accept my apologies and let us both pray that the collaboration won’t hurt you.’ The combined show took place in April and May in the gallery’s single exhibition room. In all, there were twenty-seven pictures by Jones, mostly done at Capel, Caldey, and Brockley, some of them no longer traceable.† To the surprise of Howell and the delight of Jones, the exhibition was a huge

* In the 1926 Goupil Salon Exhibition of October–November Jones exhibited *August Garden* (£10.10), and *Backs and Fronts* (£10.10), which the critic of the *Daily Mail* thought were the most contemporary of the seventy works on exhibit. Currently he had a painting entitled *Mimosa* (£10.10) in the 1927 Goupil Gallery Spring Exhibition of Modern Art.

† According to the catalogue, the works exhibited were *The Dolorous Mountain* (£12), *The Sea Wall* (£8), *August*

success. Most reviews were favourable, including an anonymous half-column notice in *The Times*, written by Jim Ede, that virtually ignored Gill in order to praise Jones for ‘a fresh turn to a persistent strain in English landscape’ and acutely to describe his landscapes as ‘half maps and half pictures, with the distance between near and far abolished, but with considerable emphasis upon the relief of individual parts—such as the folds of hills.’ The reviewer detects in them ‘hints of Giotto, Cézanne, and—in the peculiar flexibility of the designs—Blake, but in total effect it is strongly original.’ He singles out for special praise *Pasture by the Water*, which he says ought to belong to one of the national collections. Many people came. Most pictures sold.⁹²

During the exhibition, Ede introduced Jones to Edward Marsh, who praised his pictures and bought one. Marsh was independently wealthy, Churchill’s private secretary, the editor of the influential *Georgian Poetry* series, and founder and secretary of the Contemporary Art Society, which, on his advice, purchased a painting, Jones’s first sale to a public institution. Marsh was one of the few perceptive early English collectors of modern art, and Ede had alerted him to Jones’s work. Marsh met Jones’s father at the exhibition and told him how much he liked his son’s pictures—a kindness the son deeply appreciated. He had Jones to lunch on 7 May and subsequently used his influence to have him included in the *Daily Express* Young Artist’s Show, which had previously rejected his work. In this he acted in collusion with Ede, directing Jones to take pictures to Ede, who had ‘the matter in hand.’ Jones sent Marsh a proof of one of the *Deluge* prints, which Marsh thought ‘a really fine thing,’ saying he would acquire the book when it was published. Jones thought Marsh ‘very smart’ and was impressed by his knowing ‘everybody of importance’ while being ‘totally devoid of snobbishness.’ Though never more than friendly acquaintances, they would meet through the years at exhibitions, and Marsh continued to buy his

Garden (£12), *Evening, after Rain, Wales* (£12), *Mulierem Fortem* (£20), *Backs and Fronts, S.E.9* (£10), *The Ship of 'Tarshish'* (£12), *The Dog on the Sofa* (£10), *Vessels Sheltering* (£8), *Mountain Gate* (£12), *The Open Sea* (£12), *Sundown at Sea* (£12), *Pasture by the Water* (£12), *Steamboats, Tenby* (£8), *The Valley of Tears* (£12), *Seascape with Town* (£8), *The High Mountains of Israel* (£12), *Sheep Grazing in a Hollow* (£10), *Early Morning* (£8), *Blonde* (£12), *Water with Ferns and Rocks* (£12), *Rocks and Surfs, Caldey* (£10), *Cattle and a Thousand Hills* (£12), *Silver Sea*, (£10), *'Paul Jones' Bay, Caldey* (£12), and *The Fine Morning* (£12). Some of these may subsequently have been called by different titles.

work. * Jones would remain grateful for the early encouragement given ‘without any ostentation whatever.’⁹³

Vindicated in his efforts on Jones’s behalf by the success of the exhibit, Ede now ardently befriended him. He recorded Jones’s home address in his pocket diary and had him to supper in Hampstead on 22 June 1927, a Wednesday, with the pianist Vera Moore and the painters Ben and Winifred Nicholson. Ede later remembered that Ben Nicholson was ‘polite’ to Jones and ‘*did* feel that he *was* something’ but ‘didn’t trouble to get much further.’⁹⁴ Jones came to supper the next two Wednesdays, and by the end of the month Ede was calling him ‘David.’ He came to supper twice in July. On 6 August, a Saturday, he and the Nicholsons came to tea. The party went on past time for Jones to catch the last train home, so Ede invited him to stay the night. Closing a shutter in Ede’s spare room in preparation to sleep there, Jones toppled a long, elegant, narrow-based vase by Staite Murray which the artist had given Ede three days before. It crashed to the floor, breaking into three pieces. Ede was worried about the potter’s reaction, but Murray was delighted, having long wanted to try mending one of his pots using traditional methods. Jones returned for supper four days later. From then on, he was a frequent guest of Ede. High above north-London, Hampstead retained its rural-village feeling. Like the Brockley of Jones’s childhood but in grander fashion, it had that magical quasi-rural feeling of being between town and country. He and Ede walked together on Hampstead Heath, a short distance north of the house. They went together to Kew to sketch, and Jones returned with a pencil-and-watercolour, *The Thames near Kew* (1927). Also that year he painted *Number One Elm Row* (Ede’s front garden, with its two trees) and an untitled landscape near the heath. On 13 September Ede visited him in Brockley. Once or twice they went together to the zoo, where Jones drew animals.⁹⁵

After contributing sixteen engravings—from *Gulliver*, *Jonah*, and *The Deluge*—to a Golden-Cockerel exhibition at Howell’s gallery in October and November, Jones discontinued his

* At the end of his life, Marsh would own five Joneses: *Ship off Ynys Byr*, a watercolour (1927), *Study of a Boy*, a pencil sketch (1928), *Panthers*, a watercolour (1931), *Trees and Stream*, a watercolour (1932), and *Mimosa* (1926): all bequeathed to the Contemporary Art Society. On May 5 1953, Jones would go to a reception at the Leicester Galleries to preview Marsh’s collection.

arrangement with Howell on the advice of Ede, Gill, and others. In the package deal, he made less than a half of what he could earn on straight commission, in which the artist gets two-thirds and the dealer one-third of the sale price.⁹⁶ Hoping now to sell fewer pictures for more money, he placed works in the Goupil Gallery Exhibition of October-November, 1927, and the South London Group Exhibition at Camberwell.* Also in 1927, he made a poster for Constable Books which included birds and deer, centred by a flowering tree.

In November, he was deeply impressed by the Blake-Centenary Exhibition at the Tate. He regarded Blake as ‘infinitely the greatest of all Britishers’ and loved seeing his illuminations, paintings, and wood-engravings but thought that some of Samuel Palmer’s work, also on display, was better than Blake’s. He also saw and admired the brightly coloured still-lives of the co-founder of Fauvism, André Derain, who was now adapting modernist style to traditional subjects, a rapprochement which Jones, too, was attempting.⁹⁷

On 27 November and 4 December 1927, he went to the Edes for supper. Ede was full of anecdotes, having just returned from two weeks in Paris, where he had met with Picasso, Braque, Brancusi, Chagall, Miro, and Rousseau. He had also met Gertrude Stein and said, ‘Oh Miss Stein I’m so glad to meet you. I’ve been longing to see your Picassos,’ and, to his astonishment, she turned abruptly and walked away. Picasso later told him, ‘You shouldn’t have mentioned me to Gertrude Stein because she’s very possessive and also she wants to be noticed for herself and not for the pictures she’s got.’⁹⁸

At Capel in the summer of 1927, he had been reunited with Petra and spent more uninterrupted time with her than he had since Christmas. At this time, a group photograph was taken (fig. 41). In the back row are Jones, Petra, Laurie Cribb’s wife Teslin, Mary Gill, René Bill, Eric Gill, and René Hague; in the front row are Joan Gill, Gordian Gill, Tony Waters (cousin to the Gills), Betty Gill, and Vie Waters (Mary’s sister).

After leaving Ditchling, Jones had spent little time with Petra. In the first half of 1926,

*The watercolour at the Goupil was *The Orchard Hedge* (£12.12). That at Camberwell was *Trees* (£12.12) along with a *Deluge* engraving (£1.1), and a portrait of *Miss Petra Helen Gill*, not for sale.

she had visited London twice, in May and June according to her father's diary. She may have made unrecorded visits to Brockley but would later remember only a few weekends. The extent of their separation from each another induced Gill, to revise his opinion of Jones as highly sexed. On 3 October 1925, after Jones completed a small wood engraving of a cockerel for the masthead of the Golden Cockerel Press, Gill sent Gibbings the following verse, in which he plays on the cliché about a dog's bark being worse than his bite:

D.J. is sending Cock by the same post.
Do you know Bach's organ works?
but as his works are better than his Bach
so D.J.'s 'crow' is better than his cock.⁹⁹

During the engagement, Jones had become increasingly anxious, and the relationship was troubled. He and Petra felt some urgency to come to an agreement about when precisely to marry. 'We were always sort of discussing it, all the time really,' she remembered, 'and David used



41. Group photo at Capel, summer 1927, Jones and Petra, back row, far left

to say, "Well, I can't get married until I've got more money." He refused to consider teaching, although that seemed the only means to a steady income. She assumed that they would somehow find enough money and live at Capel, though he disliked that prospect. At Ditchling they could have lived in their own house but at Capel they would have to live with her parents, and Capel was too far from the London galleries. After ending his arrangement with Howell, he had resumed visiting galleries with his portfolio. He could not afford a flat in London, however, and living as a couple with his parents was definitely out. To Petra it seemed that he wanted the sexual and material comforts of marriage—companionship, meals prepared, laundry done—without having to earn a living. Gradually, he, she, and her

parents became convinced that he would never have enough money to support a family.¹⁰⁰

The difficulty was not, however, merely monetary. He treated her, according to Hague, 'in a very, very off-hand way' and used to tease her, saying 'Come on, you old dear wife,' which she disliked. According to Hague and Joan, he took her for granted, as though they were already married. She was much younger than he, much less experienced. 'He may have found me terribly dull,' she later said, 'because I wasn't intellectual at all,' not 'sophisticated enough. Perhaps he found me rather boring.' Hagreen thought they had nothing in common. She was simple, straightforward, with nothing approaching his depth of sensitivity or breadth of interests. Hagreen said that Betty 'was a joy' and Joanna 'was a joy' but Petra was 'a lump' and there was 'a kind of numbness' to her.¹⁰¹

Contributing to the strain and aggravated by it were neurotic symptoms that surfaced soon after his recent arrival at Capel. He and Petra were strolling together in the Hay Valley and he literally felt, he told her, 'as though I'm walking two feet above the earth.' This was not likely a vascular event, brought on by abrupt cessation of drinking, which shrinks the blood vessels of the brain. More likely it was what psychologists attribute to fear, desire to escape. Physically the experience had striking affinity with the most terrifying moment of his life: his panic-attack while suspended over the earth on the plank at Festubert in April 1916. Now, at Capel, the experience was followed by a return of the debilitating anxiety, depression, and insomnia that had afflicted him for several days after returning from Canterbury in 1921. In this woeful condition, he was taken in mid-July to Bristol to stay with Desmond Chute and his mother in order to see a physician, Dr. Newman Field who prescribed two stimulants, Easton Syrup, and a strychnine tonic. The doctor told him, simply, 'Don't worry, you'll be all right.' Two weeks after it began, the depression lifted, and the anxiety and insomnia abated, though he would, in October, refill the prescription.¹⁰²

During his stay in Bristol, he had several conversations with Chute's mother, the owner of the Princess Theatre. She told him about her theatrical connections, including Sara Bernhardt, whose room she described, including the coffin she slept in. She also showed him a letter she had received from 'darling Clara' Butt, a popular contralto. Half a century later, he would demonstrate remarkable visual memory by telling a friend that his daughter's handwriting closely

resembled that of Clara Butt.¹⁰³

He was soon able to paint again and paint well. In August in the orchard east of the unfinished church at Capel he painted *Cabbages and Trees* (fig. 42). In this painting again, as if illustrating Einstein, space bends. You look across at the trees and beyond but almost vertically down to the near foreground. Grass swirls, blown by wind from the viewer's direction, as though the orchard-garden reacts to being seen. Tree boughs arch and reach, uniting the picture. In thick stillness, the bulgy cabbage leaves seem unaffected by the general commotion but reflect it in the still shapes of their thick, broad leaves. Fruit-laden tree-limbs bow, bringing forward the curves of the distant hills. It is a painting of windy motion, its (phallic?) path leading



42. David Jones, *Cabbages and Trees*, 1926

into the natural maelstrom. Although it seems naive to interpret the effects of wind in paintings as evidence of emotional distress, viewers who discern madness in the later paintings of Van Gogh (whose technique Jones's brush-stroked grass here recalls) may wish to see distress in this windy turmoil.

Certainly all was not well. He was fearful of mixing with people. He had always found the local Welsh farmers strange and frightening and wanted nothing to do with them. He disliked going into crowds, and for that reason would not accompany Petra into Hay-on-Wye and declined to join weekly excursions to Abergavenny. About these signs of agoraphobia, Petra later remembered, 'we had quite a bit of that when he was at Capel.' Whenever he had to decide to go somewhere or meet someone, he had a stomach ache or diarrhoea and stayed in bed. He seemed to her to want just to paint and engrave without any other concerns.¹⁰⁴ He was hiding in his work.

'The slightest thing upset him,' Petra later remembered. He was 'always getting colds,' always had a sore throat, was always worried about his health. The doctor who visited on

horseback weekly from the Hay could give him nothing that improved his condition. Jones was so often ill, that Petra got used to taking up his meals and waiting on him. He behaved, as she later put it, 'like a helpless child.' In fact, he was reverting to the pattern of his childhood, when his mother nursed him, behaviour he would subsequently repeat throughout his life.¹⁰⁵ He did not hypochondriacally imagine sickness, but he was often ill possibly for psycho-somatic reasons and certainly surrendered to it.

The engagement became increasingly tenuous. O'Connor told Gill that he 'was for Petra breaking it off years ago.' Her mother and John Baptist Reeves had suggested to her that it could not continue much longer. But (Petra later remembered) the betrothal ceremony in 1924 had been so wedding-like that breaking the engagement was unthinkable. Jones was paralyzed. It was, she recalls, 'a frightful crisis for him.' All the Gills but Petra having departed to winter at Salies-de-Béarne in the south of France and Petra soon to join them, she suggested that Jones and she have a period apart in which he could make up his mind. At the end of September 1926, they parted sadly, expecting not to see each other for some time.¹⁰⁶

He had an invitation from Upson to visit Caldey, but first went home. He intended to visit the Edes before going to Caldey, but Ede warned him that he had a cold, and Jones stayed away. 'I know I take too much thought of my own health,' he wrote, but 'I catch cold on the slightest provocation.' He went to Tenby but could not cross to the island owing to a raging sea, and stayed the night in the Coburg Hotel. He disliked being in a hotel alone and would have strolled through the town but for violent wind and rain. He could talk with none of the other guests about things interesting to him. The next morning, before he could finish breakfast and escape, a parson told him all about sandstone.¹⁰⁷

He made the crossing on 3 October and settled back into his Caldey life, eating with the monks, attending Mass and the office, and wandering the island with Bailey, recently ordained a priest. Initially, he spent a lot of time answering letters of congratulation over the success of the joint exhibition at the St George Gallery. This was an ordeal for him because when a letter was not just right he felt compelled to tear it up and begin again. As before, he spent evenings with the McHardys. During his first month on the island, he drank 'one whisky & soda one Grand Marnier two glasses of port—& great deal of water & tea.'¹⁰⁸

The weather was good, and he devoted most of his days to painting out of doors, most often at Drinkim Bay. Sometimes he painted from under the lip of the cliff, once at least during rain. On another occasion, a large gull dived and knocked his hat off. Although he repeatedly painted the bay, it was never the same. The light and heights of tide changed, or he would change his vantage point. Painting the bay repeatedly became a Monet-like tendency to make a series of pictures of the same subject. Initially his attempts resulted in little of interest, and he did ‘an immense amount of tearing up.’ Some of the paintings that he preserved he considered ‘awful.’ But two he liked, and regarded, he said, as ‘in a curious way the best things I have done so far.’¹⁰⁹

About his quandary over Petra, he was confiding by post to Ede. Thinking of Maritain’s view that the artist must channel into art the energies that would otherwise go elsewhere, Jones wrote on 4 November,

It may be I personally am too concerned with ‘inhibitions’—The whole question of sublimation—suppression—‘canalization’ & the rest—is a very vexed one—& hideously complicated for me—complicated largely by there being no general standard of practice, or accepted ethics in the world at the moment As to what you say about my thinking all ones energies can be turned into spiritual channels—I *know* this is *only the vocation of the few*—I know we *all* admit that God alone can satisfy our affections but clearly it is only the ‘mystic’ who is able to suit the action to the word so to say in the full degree—I loath the word mystic—it might mean anything—anyway I mean by it here that human being who is more *directly* in union with God than are most of us—for most, of course—rightly & properly, have to be content with loving God *through* created things.

Unaware of the extent to which his relationship with Petra was physically sexual, Ede had suggested that his nature was angelic, and Jones replied, ‘I think you off the track about the kind of person I am!—I cant imagine anyone more bound up in terrestrial comforts than I—it revolts me to think of it.’

While in London in July, he had confided at length to Denis Tegetmeier about his dilemma over Petra, admitting that his prolonged indecision was unfair to her and wondering whether he should simply break off the engagement. Tegetmeier was uncharacteristically irritable, asking bluntly whether or not he would marry her and listening with obvious impatience as Jones waffled. Upon returning to Capel, Jones related this to Petra, saying, she

later recalled, 'I don't understand, Denis was very off-hand with me ... He's always been so friendly. We've always had such good talks together. He was very unfriendly.'¹¹⁰

Learning that Jones was still on Caldey, Tegetmeier went to Capel after Christmas to woo Petra. A month later, she accepted his proposal of marriage. On 4 February 1927, she wrote two letters, neither of which survives, one to Jones, the other to her parents. Gill replied from Salies-de-Béarne on 6 February:

To me and I feel quite certain that mother will say the same, it is the very best thing you could have told us. I'm sure you and Denis will be perfectly contented with one another. I am filled with joy in your happiness. For years it has been evident that David was more reluctant than any man ought to be who is betrothed. You know very well that I love him dearly and I shall always do so. Had it not been so I could never have borne his coolness to you so patiently. He is one of the best artists now living and one of the best and dearest of men, but neither of these things spells marriage and, had it not been for your seeming acquiescence in his continued delaying, we shd long ago have felt it our duty, as indeed all our friends have urged, to insist on a breaking off of the engagement. I feel sure that David himself will be very much relieved and grateful for the step you've taken. I think he would have broken off the engagement himself long ago had he not felt that loyalty to you and his promise came before any personal reluctance or fear that he might feel. I hope you will soon hear from him and regain complete peace of mind. I hope he will write to me also, for I must meet him and place the future in a proper light for us all. We must by no means let this be a cause of break between us. I know you would not wish that. I hope I shall also very soon hear both formally and informally from that dear rascal named Denis. Know, though mother and I have often wished that what you have done could be done and, indeed, it is possible that I have hinted as much to Denis—I don't remember—it never occurred to me that his return to Capel would have this result or that he, in his mind, cherished any such purpose. Had I known I should have been glad; ... Certainly I should not think unkindly of David. I cannot understand his state of mind—I was never thus—but I know he has suffered a great deal. His love for you is real enough but it is not 'married love.' Neither do I think he will think ill of you for what you have done or of me for thus wholeheartedly, completely and enthusiastically agreeing with you.

This letter meant a great deal to Petra, reassuring her that her act was not reprehensible.

Gill had never, as some have thought, tried to dissuade Petra from marrying Jones. Nor did the engagement fail, as some have asserted, because of sexual reticence on Petra's part or recent coitus with her father. Gill was incestuous with his eldest daughter, Betty. Only once, in 1920, does his diary disclose that he approached Petra intending anal intercourse. Touching her slightly (without penetration), he was so appalled at himself that he ceased all incestuous

behavior from then on. This means that he never again touched Petra sexually, that he ceased sexual relations with Betty, which had been frequent though not coital, and that he never sexually touched Joan. Accomplished with much internal struggle and the help of confessors, Gill's change in behaviour was, I think, a great moral achievement, though unrecognized as such by his recent biographer, the first to make public his incest. Apart from fearing premarital pregnancy, Petra was not sexually reticent, and it is a mistake to see her subsequent three-year engagement to Tegetmeier as evidence that she only gradually came to terms with her adult sexuality. In a pre-prophylactic age, marriage and coitus were postponed for economic reasons.¹¹¹

In her letter to Jones she said, as she remembered, that she 'felt the time had come to break it off because obviously it wasn't going to work out at all.' She was not happy with the thought of him 'just taking any old job in order to get married' and wanted him to go on with his work. She also told him that Tegetmeier had proposed marriage and that they were now engaged, and she asked him 'to release' her to marry him. Jones was with the McHardys when he opened her letter. Thirteen-year old Monica McHardy watched him read it, heard him exclaim 'Oh no!' and saw him smash his fist into a stone wall.^{112*}

He wanted to go to Petra immediately but could not because the last boat that day had left for the mainland. That night McHardy gave him whisky, which he was not used to. He got drunk, then violently ill. The next day the sea was rough, and he was horribly hung over. Not up to a heaving, rolling crossing, he stayed in bed. By the following day, he had decided not to go. She had made her decision. Who was he to interfere? He did respond by post, however. The letter is lost along with his love letters to Petra, which she burned, but she recalled that he expressed shock and surprise. 'He couldn't understand my attitude,' she said, and his rival was 'Denis of all people! They were friends!' About Jones's state of mind during the following weeks, a young novice then in the monastery would remember in old age that 'he was desperate

*This account, which I have from Monica McHardy, corrects an erroneous anecdote of Jones hitting 'his head slowly against the stone' wall 'again and again and again' (Miles and Shiel, pp. 9, 248), which is unattributed but derives from a source that I know a) not to be first hand and b) unreliable.

... almost suicidal ... very depressed.’¹¹³ The assumption in the Gill-family circle that the breaking of the engagement was a relief to Jones is a family myth originated by Gill in his letter to Petra and subsequently perpetuated by René Hague after he became Gill’s son-in-law.

It is true that the breakup did not prevent him from painting. Upon leaving Caldey, he went to Bristol, intending only to stay the night. The next morning, he painted the scene through a round window in the sitting room of Cleverdon’s third-floor flat. He stayed for ten days, most days painting through the window, which was two-feet-in-diameter, and producing half a dozen watercolours of the falling-away view south along the backs of the regency houses on Park Street to the cathedral, the old city, the docks, and, in the distance, the Dundry Beacons. Twice he visited the Bristol zoo to draw animals, and he went to the docks to paint ships. He loved places ‘where shipping & the sea come into immediate contact with the things of the land,’ and there was a good deal of this in Bristol, ‘where masts of ships & tramcars were all mixed up.’ Cleverdon remembers, ‘He was a very agreeable companion, relishing the humorous, but with an inexorable urge to get a thing right, whether it was a phrase, or a principle, or a brush-stroke in a water-colour. All of us were devoted to him.’ When Jones left, so did pyjamas and a pair of trousers Cleverdon had lent him.¹¹⁴

He was nevertheless very sad about the broken engagement. In March, he wrote to Philip Hagreen,

The last month has been one of great nervous tension as you may guess. Everybody, as far as I know, has acted as they thought best & *charity has been preserved* but you can imagine, I expect, the pain & strain & general mental mix of it all. Lord!! However, one deserves it for one’s sins. ... My mind is still chaotic.

He added a nostalgic memory that reveals grief at being excluded from family life: ‘I so often think of the pleasant suppers I used to have with you both at Ditchling and at Capel. It used to be so cheery to talk & eat with you.’¹¹⁵ Of course, he missed much more the Gill household. With nowhere else to go, he remained on Caldey through Easter, extending his stay to seven months.

His reaction to losing Petra involved considerable self-accusation. In a letter to Ede, he apologized for not writing sooner and added, ‘it is really beyond words disgusting I know—but then I *am* disgusting to my friends & I suppose most disgusting to my best friends—hence my loss of Petra I expect.’ Three years later he would write to her about his parents: ‘They are *really* astounding, seem to grow in the Christian virtues as time goes on. & make one feel in

comparison very poor stuff indeed—so very cheap. Of course the practice of painting is a great strain on the cardinal virtues—as you know!’ His feeling of guilt would endure on some level for the rest of his life. In his final years, when calling bishops hypocrites for discarding the language and forms of the Catholic liturgy, he used this analogy: ‘You fall in love with a girl, visit her often, kiss her, tell her many times and in many ways that you love her; then you visit her less and less often, give her an occasional peck, tell her that she has your esteem’—when I later recounted these words to Petra, she acknowledged that this was what their engagement had been like—and Jones added indignantly, ‘What you do in religion as in love is a sign of what you are.’¹¹⁶

Back in London, he expressed his misery to Ede and acted, Ede remembered, ‘as if she was everything.’ To distract him from his grief, Ede proposed a quick trip to Paris, and they went together. On 27 April, Jones met and talked with Eric Gill there and then went with Mary to the Louvre. Back in London, two days later, he met Gill again. But it was to Ede that he confided how he felt. After a visit with him, Ede wrote,

David I was torn last night—I wanted so to help you; to be a rest & home to you & I felt that somehow I couldn’t be You need I am sure physical expression of your mental attitude. You need to *stroke** your cat & not just to think of the beauty of stroking. (*Whatever it is you want to ‘stroke’—stroke it & get relief—you being what you are, your ‘stroking’ will hurt no one—will only *add* to their life whereas your denial is suicide.) You are ill for Petra & the blank it has made. If you *know* it is Petra & not the blank *can’t* you go for her & *insist*. It is nonsense that she knows better than you ... Yes you are right it *is* a pain loving people¹¹⁷

He took Ede’s advice to heart and would, eventually, act on it..

Hagreen, who knew him well before and shortly after the break-up, thought it changed his life: ‘David’s boat was sailing with a fair wind towards a clear horizon, then ... the mast snapped. Thereafter he could only row.’ He now lived in exile, said Hagreen, ‘sore wounded & alone in the wilderness. All that is meant by home—warmth, trust, privacy, a fixed point on the map—all this was not for David. He could only be a guest or a lodger, never a potwalloper.’¹¹⁸

As late as 1934, Jones would write to Petra saying that he thought of her always and addressing her as ‘Sweet Petra,’ ‘My Most Dearest.’ On her birthday he sent her peaches—she

reciprocated with marigolds. On her feast day, he wrote sending her snow drops and primroses, telling her he went ‘to Mass for’ her, signing his letters, ‘David Michael’ and concluding with a request for prayers—as he did not in letters to others. On 23 December 1930 and again on 16 August 1934, he concluded letters to her with some urgency, ‘*Pray for me. please.*’ He loved, now poignantly, the blue coat made of cloth that she has woven for him and had it patched as it wore out. For the rest of his life, he would see two things as determining the course of his life, his not going to university and his not marrying Petra.¹¹⁹

The Charleston was sweeping London, hemlines had risen to the knee for the first time in history, and radios were broadcasting, ‘Button up your overcoat. Take good care of yourself. You belong to me.’ Buttoning up his overcoat and belonging to no one, Jones remembered a song from his military service: ‘I’ve lost my oil-bottle and pull-through, I’ve lost my four-by-two ...now I’ve got fuck-all, for I’ve lost you.’¹²⁰

Endnotes to Ch 7

- 1 Dorenkamp, ‘In the Order of Signs,’ p. 15; to W. Cookson 23/10/73; Attwater, *Cell of Good Living*, p. 89.
- 2 R.Hague to T. Stoneburner 21/10. n.y., 8/1/63.
- 3 P Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87, 22/6/90.
- 4 To T. Stoneburner 29/6/65; R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15 2/77; Ms draft n.d. apparently 1930s or '40s.
- 5 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.
- 6 Hague, *A Commentary on The Anathemata* (Toronto, University of Toronto: 1977), p. 63.
- 7 To N. Gray 14/4/61.
8. DJ to V.Wynne-Williams 22/8/60; Hague, *David Jones*, p. 25; J. Hague interviewed by Blissett 8/77.
- 9 E.C. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.
- 10 To P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88, 12/6/86; to J Stone 20/11/63; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87.
- 11 J. Hague interviewed by Blissett 8/77.
- 12 To H. Grisewood 7/7/71; DJ to Kenneth Clark, ‘Some Recent Paintings of David Jones,’ *Agenda* 5 (Spring-

Summer 1967), 99; DJ interviewed by S. Lewis 1965 in Michael Alexander, 'David Jones' BBC 2 radio programme, 1977; to Reynolds Stone 23/9/58; to R. Hague 2/5/70; P. Hagreen to author 10/4/86; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 29/5/78.

13 *Kilvert's Diary*, ed. William Plomer (London: Jonathan Cape, 1944), pp. 79-80.

14 Attwater, pp. 96, 97.

15 To R. Hague 5/11/64.

16 P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; Harry Kessler, 'In the Twenties,' *Encounter* (July 1967), 15.

17 Reproduced by Miles and Shiel (p. 47) in a photograph in which they look good because the curve from stems into the fork and spoon are not visible.

18 Peter F. Anson, 'From Caldey to Prinknash,' *Tablet*, 9/11/63.

19 'Dom Theodore Bailey,' obituary, *Pax* (Spring/Summer 1967), 38-42; Dom Dryfig Rushton and Dom Alban Léotaud, interviewed 11/6/86; Hague, *David Jones*, p. 27.

20 P. Hagreen to R. Hague 10/3/78.

21. To J. Stone 1/2/62; to VP, 7/2/60; P. Hagreen to T. Stoneburner n.d.

22 Edgar and Daisy Holloway interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 11/6/69; to A. Giardelli 29/9/66; to T. Stoneburner 17/2/66; Stan Knill interviewed 8/89; to Winifrede Wilson 30/4/66.

23 To R. Hague 13/12.1963.

24 Simon Brett and Hilary Paynter to author 8/4/96.

25 DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69.

26 To P. Hagreen 26/3/25.

27 *Pax* (Winter 1981), p. 227; Dom Dyfrig Rushton and Dom Alban Léotaud, interviewed 11/6/86; Peter F. Anson, 'From Caldey to Prinknash,' *Tablet*, 9/11/63.

28 IP ms notes; DJ interviewed by P. Orr summer 1972.

29 To P. Hagreen 26/3/25; to Alun Oldfield-Davies 21/12/60; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; to R. Hague 19/6/67 to P. Hagreen 26/3/25; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90; to H. Grisewood 23/3/32; to Helen Ede

13/8/28.

30 T. Bailey to DJ 16/1/50

31 Brother Teilo Rees to author, 1/11/00; To Fr. Michael Hanbury 4 Sunday/63

32 To J. Stone 18/4/65.

33 D. Jones, 'Ray Howard-Jones: An Introduction,' *Anglo-Welsh Review* 17 (Summer 1968), 54.

34 'Ray Howard-Jones: An Introduction,' 53.

35 Monica Brocklehurst interviewed 9/89; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89..

36 To P. Hagreen 26/3/25.

37 DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record 26/5/69.

38 To J. Ede 16/9/63.

39 To N. Sanders 19/7/67

40 P. Hills interviewed 11/6/91.

41 DJ to Blissett, pp. 71, 56; to R. Hague 1/1/73.

42 To T. Stoneburner 29/6/65. Walter Shewring interviewed 24/6/88.

43 Jones writes Ede's home address on the back of an invitation to Leslie Poulter's wedding, which took place on 26 July 1924. J. Ede interviewed 6/85; Jennifer Booth at Tate Gallery Archive to author 17/8/87; Rupert Shepherd interviewed 28/6/89; E. Hodgkin interviewed 7/6/90; J. Ede interviewed 25/6/86.

44J. Ede interviewed 31/5/86, 25/6/86; J. Ede to DJ 7/2/40; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87 18/6/88; Ede, 'David Jones,' *Horizon*, 125; Arthur Howell, *Frances Hodgkins* (London: Rodliff, 1952), p. 5.

45 Howell, pp. 5-10 (Howell neglects to mention his initially being interested in DJ by Ede.); J. Ede interviewed 6/85; to H. Grisewood 12/12.1966; to J. Ede 2/10/27.

46 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88, 9/8/92.

47 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; to A. Giardelli 14/10/72; to P. Tegetmeier 7/9/70; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87; D. Kindersley interviewed 8/89; E. Hodgkin and Dorothy Hodgkin interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 11/6/69; R. Hague and J. Hague interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record

11/6/69; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 9/8/92.

48 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 6/85, letter frag. n.d.

49 Eric Gill to Romney Green 20/3/34, to the *Universe* 7/12.34.

50 DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 20/6/72; David Kindserly interviewed 22/6/88; to V. Watkins 2/2/63.

51 Kevin Cribb interviewed 12/6/89; to R. Hague 18/5/65; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; to R. Hague 2/5/74; to E. Gill 14/6/36.

52 Rachel Attwater interviewed 24/4/95; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87.

53 Rosalind Erangey interviewed 28/6/88; Michael Richey interviewed 18/6/89; Michael Hague interviewed 10/9/89; R. Hague to Catherine Carter 3/7/80; K. Cribb interviewed 12/6/89; C. Skelton interviewed 21/6/86.

54 K. Cribb interviewed 12/6/89; M. Hague interviewed 10/9/89; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 5/5/66.

55 Peter Campbell interviewed 23/6/86; *DGC* 32; Hague, *David Jones*, p. 24; R. and J. Hague interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 11/6/69.

56 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; to R. Hague 19/1/73; S. Honeyman interviewed 16/6/88.

57 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86; J. Hague interviewed by Blissett 8/81.

58 R. and J. Hague interviewed by Blissett 8/81.

59 R. and J. Hague interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 11/6/69; R. Erangey to author 11/6/91.

60 To J. Stone 7/8/65; Robert Speaight, *Life of Eric Gill*, (London: Shenvall Press, 1966), p. 179.

61 To T. Stoneburner frag. n.d. [c. 1964]; see Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones* (London: Clover Hill, 1981), p. 11.

62 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

63 Clare Leighton to T. Stoneburner 23/6/75, 3/7/75.

64 To T. Stoneburner 30/7/69.

65 To P. Hagreen 2nd Sunday in Lent/27; P. Hills interviewed 11/6/91; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s

66. *IN* p. 50; to R. Hague 22/12/33 quoting Alfred Daniell, 'Some Remarks on Certain Vocal Traditions in Wales,' Transactions of the *Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* 1910.

67 D. and Nest Cleverdon interviewed 28/6/86; H. Grisewood to author 31/10/90.

68 H. Grisewood 4/10/87; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88 Barbara Wall, *René Hague a Personal Memoir* (Wirral: Aylesford Press, 1989), p. 16; T. Burns, *The Use of Memory* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1993), p. 78; Hague, *David Jones*, p. 7.

69 E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88; to D. Travis 20/2/43; to H. Ede 13/8/28; to R. Hague 27/9/74 and Hague's note to his typescript of the letter; R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77.

70 DJ to Blissett, p. 133; to R. Hague 9-15/7/73; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; Ian Jennings to author 13/3/95.

71 P. Hagreen to author 1/3/86.

72 DJ interviewed by P. Orreary 1970s; J. Ede interviewed 6/85; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 19/6/69.

73 Diana Lodge interviewed 20/6/88.

74 D. Lodge interviewed 20/6/88; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 9/8/92 22/6/90.

75 Quoted from a copy of the printed essay incorporating DJ's corrections of mistakes and of liberties taken by the editor

76 To T. Stoneburner 8/9/65; N.Cleverdon interviewed 6/6/90; D. Cleverdon typescript of talk n.d.

77 D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85.

78 D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85; N.Cleverdon interviewed 25/6/90; to Eric White 10/5/27.

79. To J. Stone, 6/1/62.

80 To D. Cleverdon 20/10/26, 6/85 (for permission to quote him I am indebted to N. Cleverdon.); *DG* 214, 187.

81 To D. Cleverdon 22/6/27, n.d. [1927].

82 DJ to Blissett, p. 134; Cleverdon, *Engravings of David Jones*, p. 15; *DG* 187; DJ quoted by Wald, p. 11

83 To Roger Billcliffe of the Walker Gallery, 21/5/68; to Mr Allsop, unposted draft 6/12.1944; Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones* p. 13; Cleverdon first observed DJ's skill in arranging figures in these engravings. *The Engravings of David Jones*, p. 13; to D. Cleverdon 22/6 27.

84 See Dilworth, 'From *The Deluge* to *The Anathemata*: Engraving towards Poetry,' *David Jones, Artist and Poet*, pp. 43-53.

85 In this paragraph I am indebted to the insight of Kathleen Henderson Staudt in conversation.

86 John Ginger, 'A Brother's Life: Reginald Lawson, 1891-1985,' typescript.

87 R. Hague to Blissett 24/11.1979; Robert Gibbings to Henry Bergen 31/12/27, to Basil Gray 3/2/43.

88 Quoted by Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, p. 14; to Captain Sandford draft 8/5/44.

89 To D. Cleverdon 27/11/28.

90 To J. Ede 29/10/35, 2/10/27, 4/11/27.

91 J. Ede interviewed 31/5/85; to H. Grisewood 12/12.1966; D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85.

92 E. Gill to DJ 11/4/27; 'D.J. life for J. Ede' (5/9/35), second correction of typescript 3/5/43.

93 Edward Marsh to DJ 10/5 [1927]; to J. H. Johnston unposted frags n.d. [Jan 65] [c. 1968]; D. Blamires, *David Jones Newsletter* 3 (July/76), 1.

94 J. Ede interviewed 31/5/85.

95 J. Ede's pocket diaries, in which DJ is not previously listed among Ede's acquaintances; J. Ede interviewed 27/6/88, 25/6/86; to J. Ede 12/2/36; J. Ede to R. Hague 15/11/77.

96 J. Ede interviewed 6/85, 31/5/85; J. Ede in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 12/6/66.

97 DJ to P. Hills interviewed 6/94; DJ quoted by Richard Wald, 11; to SL 12/67.

98 J. Ede interviewed 25/6/86.

99 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87; Quoted by Fiona MacCarthy, 'Gibbings and Gill: Arcady in Berkshire,' *Matrix* 9 (Winter 1989), p. 30.

100 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77; D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85. My thanks to P. Tegetmeier for her permission to quote her here and subsequently.

101 R. Hague interviewed by Peter Orr 15/2/77; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86, 18/6/88; P. Hagreen interviewed 2/6/86, 27/6/86.

102 DJ quoted in Wald., 11; to T. Stoneburner 31/3/65; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 19/6/69.

103 To H. Grisewood 22/3/72. The daughter was Sabina Grisewood.

104 *DGC* 33; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87, 18/6/88, 9/8/92.

105 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86, 18/6/88.

106 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 22/6/90, 18/6/88, 9/8/92; P. Tegetmeier televised interview BBC Wales 4/91.

107 To J. Ede 2/10/27.

108 Benedictine visitors' book for Caldey Island, Prinknash archive; to H. Ede/11/26.

109 DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 9/6/66; to J. Ede/10/27, 4/11/27.

110 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 9/8/92.

111 Gill's diary 12 /1/20. In this paragraph, I correct a series of false assumptions made by Sheil and Miles, 151, 246, 248 and Merlin James, *David Jones 1895-1974: a Map of the Artist's Mind* (London: Lund Humphries, 1995), p. 25.

112 P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86, 18/6/88; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; Monica McHardy interviewed 13/1/86.

113 P. Hagreen interviewed 2/6/86., 27/6/86; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; Dom Dyfed Rushton interviewed 11/6/86.

114 N. Cleverdon interviewed 25/6/90; D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85; D. Cleverdon typescript of talk nd; P. Hagreen interviewed by D. Cleverdon 1986; D. Cleverdon 6/85; to R. Hague 27/9/63; to D. Tegetmeier 7/1/72; Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, p. 16.

115 To P. Hagreen 2nd Sunday in Lent/27.

116 To J. Ede 4/11/27; To P. Tegetmeier 3/10/30; DJ to Blissett, p. 96; P. Tegetmeier in conversation with author.

117 Gill's diary; J. Ede interviewed 31/5, 25/6/86; J. Ede to DJ 'Tuesday,' n.d. [1927].

118 P. Hagreen to R. Hague 29/5/78.

119 To P. Tegetmeier 7/7/34; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87, 8/92; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69.

120 To D. Attwater, 10/12/44.

Part IV Wonder Years

Chapter 8 1927-30

He went into relative seclusion at Brockley but, avoiding a break in relations with Eric Gill, met him throughout the rest of 1927 when Gill was in London. Jones visited him at Hall Road in the morning and they went for lunch or in the afternoon and they went for supper. Sometimes they went together to see Oliver Lodge in his studio, sometimes to draw a model, Occasionally with Gibbings joining them. Jones sometimes brought Gill home to Brockley for tea or supper.¹ In May of 1927, Gill proposed that Jones ‘ghost’ for him, working on commissions that Gill would touch up and ‘even, if necessary, swear that I had done the whole thing’ before supplying to the customer ‘as from “the firm”’.² Jones declined. The Gill circle continued to include him but not now at its familial heart. He could not yet bear to see Petra.

In June 1927, he visited D’Arcy at Campion Hall. He enjoyed the talk at meals and was amused by a Catholic chaplain arguing that Shakespeare was written ‘in committee’. He visited the Dominicans at Blackfriars. He visited Walter Shewring, a student of Classics at Corpus Christi to whom Cleverdon had introduced him in Bristol. Impressively intelligent, with a flawless memory, Shewring was shy, stiff, critical, scornful. Petra had found him ‘terrifying.’ Jones would later hear him deliver this faintest of praise to a proud father after his son’s piano recital, ‘I could endure the child.’ Jones respected his intelligence and scholarship and asked him questions about Classical literature, though he found his replies ‘so terse and direct that it makes one reluctant to speak in his presence.’ After leaving Oxford with two Latin prizes, Shewring would become Classics master at Ampleforth, and Jones would ply him with questions when they met during summer recesses throughout the 1930s and ‘40s. But because of ‘that beastly wrong-sort-of pedantry that makes it *impossible* to ask most latinists about such things,’ he continued to be reluctant to ask him whether his Latin in a poem or inscription was correct.³

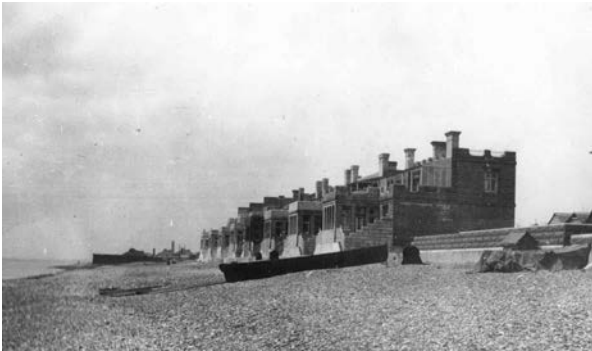
At Oxford, he spent all of 22 June with Shewring, having lunch in his rooms and afterwards walking with him to Magdalen bridge and along Addison's walk. He was, Shewring remembered, ‘very melancholy’ about the broken engagement and ‘inconsolable’, as he would be ‘for some time.’ The next day, Shewring, who had an appointment elsewhere, asked his friend Louis Bussell, whom Cleverdon had also introduced, to take him out. Bussell was reading

mathematics with French as his second subject. At lunch he spoke of his admiration for Jones's work, and Jones showed him some newly printed *Deluge* illustrations, which he had in a brown envelope. They then went together to hear G.K. Chesterton lecture to the French Club at St Hilda's College. There they saw Gill, who, after the lecture, handed Jones the envelope of engravings, which he had dropped on the way to the lecture. Gill had noticed it on the pavement and, compelled by the beauty of handwriting on it, retrieved it and looked inside.⁴

Bussell and Jones became close friends. Jones was eight years older, and would teach him, in Bussell's words, 'more than Oxford taught me about the things that matter most.' Whenever visiting Oxford or with academic scholars, Jones tried to make up for having missed university. Bussell would remember that 'those who were very learned were delighted to find so eager and receptive a mind and themselves received many insights. After many questions there would be a pause and a promise to think about it or an admission that they did not know and would have to 'look it up'. Jones and Bussell had similar backgrounds. Bussell's maternal grandparents were Welsh and Welsh-speaking, and the males on his father's side were craftsmen, compelled by the pressures of industrialism to make increasingly shoddy products in order to earn a living. Jones and he shared cultural pessimism, though Bussell's was darker. Their mutual refrain was the difficulty of making art in the absence of a widely-held, living tradition of values. Like Jones, he was a Catholic convert.⁵ Jones would be godfather to Bussell's son Julien.

It may have been at Oxford that Jones first heard about the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, and heard some of it read aloud. He responded by saying, as he later remembered, 'The chap who wrote that was either a Welshman or a man in love with medieval Welsh metric.' At the time, he was with Shewring, who rebuked him, 'Seeing you don't understand Welsh, I don't see how you can say that. There are all sorts of sources from which he might have developed his particular "style" and he seems, rather to be indebted to Hellenic forms.' But Jones persisted, 'I know the feeling of medieval Welsh poetry and I know how they did it, and sooner or later this will be an accepted view.' Shewring said that he had better wait till 'such time as it was recognized by those competent in such matters.' Jones would be vindicated in February 1942 by discovering in the *Cymmrodorian* a poem written by Hopkins in Welsh and using *cynghanedd*, the patterned alliteration of medieval Welsh poetry.⁶

The morning after the Chesterton lecture, Jones and Gill went together into London and visited the Goupil Gallery to see a Matisse exhibit. They then went to the St. George Gallery and afterwards had supper together. On 26 June, Jones came into London to meet Gill, Donald Attwater and Lodge. All together they went to Gill's room in Hall Road, where they met Denis Tegetmeier. Since Tegetmeier also had a room in the house, meeting him was inevitable, but this was Jones's first meeting with him since Petra broke the engagement. They all talked and went out to supper. Gill records it as 'a very nice meeting.' On 23 September 1927 the three of them were joined by Hague. On the 29th, all four had supper. If Jones was to remain Gill's friend, he had to remain friendly with Tegetmeier, and if this was awkward for him, he told no one. On 21 November he and Tegetmeier visited Gill, who had been reading *Ulysses* and *Dubliners*. They spent the afternoon and evening discussing 'Distributism and Production,' the subject of an article Gill was writing. On 16 December Jones, Gill, and Tegetmeier argued after supper till midnight about the doctrine of the Creation.



1. Hove Seaside Villas, 1920s. No. 5 Western Esplanade is third from the left.

In mid-August, 1927, Jones went with his parents to Portslade, west of Brighton. The row of posh stone bungalows where they stayed was called 'Hove Seaside Villas' (fig. 1). He had spent some weeks with them here each year since

the war and had come here from Bristol after Petra had broken the engagement. The row of bungalows had been built on the tideline

in 1908 by the owner of the *Christian Herald*, Michael Baxter. He let the house at 5 Western Esplanade to the Joneses (fig. 2). Like the other houses in the row, it had a large open terrace seaward above the dining room and backed directly onto shingle, which ran forty yards down to the sea at low tide. In rough weather at high tide, surf and spray broke on the terrace depositing seaweed, cuttlefish and starfish. All the bungalows were painted silver—hideously, he thought—to protect them from salt water. He thought the house his family rented 'hideous inside' and



2. 5 Western Esplanade, 1990

‘appallingly expensive.’ His sister once told him that the Aga Kahn was staying at another house in the row and, thinking the Aga Kahn a racehorse, he assumed she was joking. Packing up and going anywhere was ‘a damned nuisance’ but he usually went there from Brockley with his parents. After beginning to paint the sea at Caldey, he went for artistic reasons. If the weather was cold or windy, he painted from indoors through the dining-room windows or upstairs in his parents’ bedroom through the windows of closed terrace doors, sometimes with a gas heater on. Or he painted, from his bedroom window at the front of the house, overlooking narrow Shoreham Harbour at the eastern end of the Adur Canal, where large sailing and steam cargo boats docked and unloaded. If it was warm enough and windless, he painted on the open terrace



3. David Jones, painting of Shorham Harbour, n.d.

off his parents’ bedroom. It was twenty-two feet wide under a sloping glass summer-roof supported by wrought-iron posts with curving capitals. Several times he painted the tiny harbour in front from the flat roof of the house (fig. 3). Looking seaward through the dining-room window or upstairs terrace doors, he felt as though he were aboard ship—a feeling intensified by the harbour being on the landward side, ‘so that one felt very much surrounded by water.’ He loved being inside

near the gas fire as large waves lashed the terrace.⁷

He also enjoyed walking inland past Portslade Station up into the Downs or along the beech towards Brighton. On one occasion in bright sun and cold wind near Brighton he

watched a charming colt-like young woman playing tennis with very little on (me in one overcoat & vast scarf two cardigans one waistcoat one shirt one vest). She played well—I thought at least her movements were as rhythmic as the sea & the young man with whom she played was pleasant also—so that was good and complete as a sight. Aged & middle-aged ladies almost as huddled in clothes as I myself creeping from their hotels to seek the sun—colonels in short jackets & canes walked briskly & called to small dogs.

Portslade was now losing some of its charm for him—not the sea, which was as invigorating and fascinating as ever, but the area inland which was becoming ‘*awful*—just an arid waste of red villas & all that for miles & miles & miles.’⁸

Mostly he looked at the sea. For long periods he watched its changing movement and colours. On his visits since the break with Petra, he may have identified with Calypso deserted by Odysseus. In 1931, he would write to Petra, 'I always think of Calypso gazing on an empty sea.' Despite his grief over her or because his energies were released by the removal of his dilemma between marrying and developing freely as an artist, during the four weeks spent here in August and September 1927, he did 'quite a lot of work,' which included his first important Portslade paintings.* He had entered what would be his most prolific period as a visual artist. He worked 'all the time,' 'never seemed to stop painting' and was 'able to concentrate on getting towards' what he 'wanted in painting.'⁹

Some of the Portslade pictures were of ships in the tiny harbour but more were of the open sea under an empty sky, a lineless combination of colours and tones. Sometimes he turned the picture-frame east towards Brighton Pier or west towards Worthing Pier to paint the land meeting the sea, merging with it. Mostly the sea is a tranquil intermediary between opacity and transparency, its muted movement hinting at metamorphosis. A decade later, he would recall Ruskin writing that however calm the sea Turner painted, 'he always remembered that same sea heavy and full of discontent under storm.' That, Jones was later to write, is 'half the secret, more than half, of good painting, of good art ... it is both peace *and* war' (*DG* 140-1).

Painted here and at Caldey, the sea had, he would think, 'quite a *big* influence ... on my stuff.' It altered the way he used watercolours. From now on, the feeling of the sea would be present even in his landscapes. He wrote in 1962 that his Portslade pictures 'are, probably, quite the best I've done. More 'pure' somehow, *qua* the art of water-colour painting, than most of my stuff.' In them he was concerned chiefly with colour, tone, movement, not linear design. Always more a draftsman than a painter, he was now, at the insistence of the sea, becoming increasingly a painter. Concerned chiefly with the transitory effects of light and weather, he painted atmosphere. At Portslade as at Caldey, he was the first British painter since Turner for whom light is his primary subject.¹⁰

* These paintings are *Balcony and Sea*, *Sussex Haven*, *Tramp Steamer with a Fishing Boat*, *H.M.'s Fleet off Brighton*, and *Evening by the Sea*.

On 1 October 1927 he went from Brockley to Caldey for three weeks in a ‘final attempt to get some landscapes done before summer ends.’ Before returning to Brockley, he visited Cleverdon in Bristol and they talked again about the engravings for Coleridge’s poem.¹¹



4. Jim Ede c. 1936

Jones visited Ede (fig. 4) at the Tate to show him his new work, which he liked, and just to talk. Ede would let him into an office to see a great, impressionistic seascape by Turner, whose paintings were seldom exhibited then. He and Ede went for lunch to the basement restaurant, which Ede had opened and furnished with his own china and silver and for which he chose the single meal for the menu each day. He had commissioned the mural on its walls by Rex Whistler. What Ede called ‘the smart set’ came here for lunch, together with artists who might benefit from ‘smart’ contacts. Sometimes Jones and Ede went to the Café Royal in Regent Street, a meeting place for artists since before the war. Ede told him about Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, many of whose sculptures and drawings he had just acquired for £63 after J.B. Mason, the Tate’s philistine director, had refused them. In 1929, Ede would write the life of Gaudier, which

would make the sculptor famous and vastly increase the value of his work, which, because Ede owned it, would provide him with income for the rest of his life.¹²

Ede was the antithesis of Gill, contrasting starkly with him in manner, presence, thought, and values. Jones’s growing friendship with him was a measure of increasing personal and aesthetic independence from Gill. This was important for his current aesthetic transformation. Jones benefited from Ede’s conviction that a work of art should have a sense of movement. In his foreword to the catalogue for the seventh exhibition of the Seven and Five Society (1926), Ede claims that the artist sees not ‘mere objects’ but a ‘living fluid movement’ so that his paintings have this ‘feeling of movement’. From now on, this sense of movement was, after unity, Jones’s ‘criterion in assessing the worth of any picture.’ It had to ‘flow in some way,’ he said, and he adopted Galileo’s statement about the solar system—*Eppur si muovo*, ‘nevertheless it moves’—as an expression of an unassailable aesthetic principle.¹³

He later wrote to Ede about ‘all the stuff we go in for.’ When asked what Jones meant by this, Ede replied, ‘anything about a thing’ but ‘really the religious, spiritual meaning of life.’

Writing to Ede in February 1933, Jones was more specific about the range of their conversations:

It is odd how we have to paint pictures, make trenches, drink in the Cafe Royal, appreciate the texture of snow, be interested in the Roman occupation, know about Plato & talk to musicians, judge rightly betwixt ten million half truths, tolerate the folly of tailors all in the same life time—the angels would seem to have a comparatively easy time ... they are said to know by intuition & for certain—& not as we who make crude guesses over a mixed bundle of phenomena

Ede had read *Ulysses* and would remember, ‘we talked about it’—Ede preferring Henry James to Joyce. Much of Ede’s conversation was anecdotal, about the people he knew, including George Moore, Ottoline Morell, and his close friend T. E. Lawrence ‘of Arabia.’ He and Jones often talked about mutual acquaintances. According to Ede, Jones liked to talk and laugh about them but benignly, for he was, Ede said, ‘the least malicious person’. The closest he came to animosity was to say of someone, ‘She’s a bloody nuisance.’¹⁴

He was now spending a good deal of time at Ede’s small Georgian house at number 1 Elm Row. Ede had bought it in 1922 from D.H. Lawrence’s wife and divided it into flats. While visiting, Jones would sometimes see and speak with the occupants of the upper flat, Basil Gray and Ellis Waterhouse. The Edes lived in the lower flat, which had white walls, curtainless windows, bare waxed wooden floors and doors, and simple furniture. On the walls were paintings that friends had given Jim Ede or sold for the cost of materials. Ede had an uncanny knack, which Jones admired, for placing objects—pictures, sculptures, flowers, bowls, cups, goblets, pebbles, feathers, shells—on the mantle, tables, shelves, sills, floors, and in corners. The atmosphere in the house was, like Ede himself, precious, having, according to one visitor, a *noli-me-tangere* quality.¹⁵



Jim and Helen Ede, n.d.

The family consisted of Jim, his wife Helen, and their young daughters Elizabeth and Mary. Ede recalled of Jones, ‘He’d just wander in’ ‘unannounced’ and take down a book from

the bookshelves. 'He would borrow anything that was new and interesting.' He became part of the household, visiting usually twice a week for the next eight years, usually coming for Sunday tea and supper, often staying over night, sometimes for several days. The spare bedroom downstairs with a window looking onto the garden was considered his room.¹⁶

If he came to visit Jim, he stayed for Helen (fig 5). She was lovely and delightful, with rippling light-brown hair and a wonderful pealing laugh. She was clear-minded, forthright, positive in her convictions, spontaneous, and extravagant yet practical. Edinburgh-born to German parents, with a strong Scotts accent, she poked fun at her husband when he became pompous or too precious, interrupting his mental levitations with 'Stuff and nonsense, Jim!' Her only physical 'fault' was thick ankles, which she hid with long skirts. She attracted men, one of whom was the American pianist Webster Aikin, a vegetarian, who came to the house to practice Beethoven sonatas and eat vegetable stews. With a tinge of jealousy, Ede would later remember that Jones 'had a love for Helen' and that she would do things for him that Ede would not ask for himself, taking, he felt, advantage of her kindness. She 'would always be making him a cup of tea.' Arriving and departing, he kissed her. To him she was, Ede thought, sexually 'safe.' Often when Jim departed for work, Jones stayed with her. She was 'real' in the sense he meant when talking of one of her friends: 'She is a real person I felt. Rum how some people seem real & others not in a way.' When Ede went to the United States on a month-long lecture tour, Jones spent a week with her and the girls. As she worked, he sat and talked or read and sometimes painted. In 1928 she knitted him a pair of red socks so that he and Ede could be fashionably outrageous together. Closer to her, he felt a critical distance from Jim because, as he later confided to Kathleen Raine, 'Jim has a soft centre.' Helen, who knew a good number of men, told her daughter Mary, 'There are only two men in this world worth knowing. One is Jim Ede. The other is David Jones.'¹⁷ And she knew a great many men.

The Ede house was something of a salon. Regular visitors included the painters Ben and Winifred Nicholson, Ivor Hitchens, Edward (Teddy) Wolfe, the sculptor Barbara Hepworth, the potter Staite Murray. There were open tea parties at 4 pm each Sunday at which toast and marmalade was served. There were usually half-a dozen guests but might be as many as fifteen. Jones was present at one gathering attended by thirty, which included Arnold Bennett, Serge Lifar and half the dancers of the Russian ballet. Guests were mostly entertainers: classical actors,

performers in the Ziegfeld Follies, musicians, and they often performed, Helen sometimes playing the piano to accompany them. Some guests were wealthy, to introduce poor artists to. There were a few earls and the third wife of the Duke of Leincester. Jones had a great deal of fun in him, Ede said, and although agoraphobia later precluded his attending parties, he did enjoy meeting these people and regarded them all ‘humorously,’ as amusing. When taking his leave, a Jewish visitor once said to Ede, ‘What lovely women you’ve got!’ which Jones found very funny. He especially liked Margaret Gerstley, who returned his affection, though chastely, accompanied as she usually was by her South African girlfriend. He was amused by the eccentric Indian painter, Abani Roy, who helped look after the Ede children. Ede remembers Jones being ‘terribly amused’ by a rich man from Bulawayo, who lived in Malay and took the Edes and Jones out to a Vaudeville show, and whom Jones subsequently referred to as ‘Money-to-Burn.’ A museum curator would remember going to one tea party, at which Jones, ‘in the seat of honour’, had a bad head-cold, wore a heavy bright red wool muffler, and smelled strongly of vapex anti-cold inhalation. Ede showed this curator a number of pictures that, he said, were ‘by David,’ whom the curator took to be a small son of Ede and remarked ‘how clever!’ Astonished, Ede replied, ‘David is the Gainsborough of modern English landscape-painting.’¹⁸

The parties ended about 9:30, when Ede firmly showed all remaining visitors the door except Jones, who nearly always stayed on to share a light supper. He habitually sat in a corner on a wooden settle. After supper he made a trip to the pub round the corner for a pint of beer, which he brought back to drink while talking with his abstemious hosts. He was their most constant family friend.¹⁹ They gave him the familial intimacy he had had with the Gills.

In addition to teas and a meal following them, Ede usually invited Jones to supper once a week sometimes with other guests. On one occasion these included two psychoanalysts who were very quiet until Ede asked, ‘Do you believe in Freud?’ whereupon discord erupted and within minutes they were out of the house in opposite directions. (At Elm Row, Freud and psychoanalysis were frequently discussed.) One evening, Jones met Helen’s father, a professor of German named Schlapp, who judged people on their knowledge of *Faust*. When Jones said that he was unable to find a readable English translation, Schlapp exclaimed, ‘You have not read the *Faust!*?’ Jones would never manage to read it and would feel exonerated years later when a professor of German at Bristol University told him that none of the many English translations is

good. One evening, Jones came to supper to meet the painter Georges Braque, who had also been wounded in the war. On this occasion, there were only the two painters and the Edes, with Jim acting as interpreter (though unable, years later, to recall what was said). Jones would write of Braque as a painter, 'I feel he never really got his due. He could be marvellous. I've always liked him.' And he adds that Braque is 'better than Matisse by a long way I should think, but not as good as Bonnard, in my limited view.'²⁰

All the Edes agreed that Jones was different from other visitors. There was nothing dramatic or self-displaying about him, as there was, for example, about actor-guests like John Gielgud, who called everybody 'darling.' Jones did not bring the children treats or alter his manner when talking to them. He dressed differently, too, in heavy tweed suits. Jim recalled his 'twinkling humour.' He was, Mary Ede remembered, practical, humorous, wise, never pompous, and he had a remarkable voice, which she accurately described as 'rich, slightly off timbre, not sonorous, not deep, slightly foggy.' He smoked endlessly. Very often he was ill. He was anxious about his health, needing an extra coat or jersey because he felt the cold. Ede recalled, 'He was very touchy about himself. If he had a scratch it was a disaster.'²¹

Because he was so often in the house, the girls regarded him as part of the family. He would read them bits of *The Hunting of the Snark* and, as they got older, the whole of it, and gave Mary a copy of the poem. He didn't uncle them or play with them or tell them stories or lead them in games. When they went out to play, he stayed in the house or in the garden. He treated them, Mary remembers, 'as adults who hadn't much conversation. I can only think of him as a kind of big brother I loved him. It's as simple as that. And I would think my sister was probably in love with him. We were always pleased to see him.'²²

Jones spoke about religion with Ede, who had been raised Methodist, joined the Church of England, and was now agnostic, leaning towards Buddhism. Not possessed of a strong philosophical mind, he thought 'that body and spirit are one and the same' and that, therefore, 'God is a strawberry.' In his enthusiasm for Nirvana, he considered fortunate those who died young. He regarded the Catholic Church as repressively authoritarian. Jones explained to him that the Church really does not repress but

only (ideally) shapes & modifies & rightly orders the emotions as an artist rightly orders & makes significant the forms of his picture—you understand I speak ideally—but even in practice I believe it occasionally shows itself

in some people. Of course anyone might say—yes! but I don't like the 'shapes' the C.C. makes of peoples lives—well that's another story—I mean like saying of a man playing tennis that one prefers rugby football.

When staying over Saturday night, he went to Mass the next morning in Haverstock Hill over two miles away. Ede expressed amazement that Jones, who claimed to find getting out to visit people difficult, should get up early on a Sunday and walk so far for Mass. Jones replied, 'If you knew that your dearest friend was arriving in Paddington at eleven thirty'—he was thinking of the Eucharistic Real Presence of Jesus—'you would be only too pleased to go and meet up with him.' He was, Ede said, 'fundamentally spiritual.' Although they talked a lot about religion, he never tried to convert Ede, who later became a devout Anglican.²³

Ede wanted Jones's impression of George Moore's novel *The Brook Kerith*, in which he sees Jesus as merely human. Jones had read only part of it, stopping because it seemed unintelligent and devoid of 'spiritual understanding'. The only other Moore he had read were some short stories and about half of *Heloise and Abelard*. He was willing to grant, 'the man is an artist alright' but 'he just does not think hard enough.'²⁴

The Edes spent the first months of 1930 in Tangier, and Jones 'missed them deeply' till their return in March. He was now coming to supper regularly on Wednesdays and Sundays. Here he met Eddie Sackville West, Peggy Chetwode—Ede had her and Jones to supper on 26 August 1930. Later he met the man she would marry, John Betjeman, at the Café Royal, when, after being startled by a loud noise on the stairs, Jones saw a man running down to them waving a toy gun and shouting 'Bang! Bang! You're dead!' Ede, who had met him introduced them.²⁵

Often on his way to or from the Edes, Jones visited the wood-engraver Clare Leighton at her studio-flat in Belsize Square, South Hampstead. He had known her during his Westminster-Art-School days and at Ditchling, where she had posed for Gill and him, and recently at meetings of the Society of Wood Engravers, which she joined in 1928. A good-looking brunette, she was sexually uninhibited and once had intercourse with Gill (six thrusts but, Gill self-approvingly records in his diary, no ejaculation). She found Jones 'noncommittal sexually', and they remained simply friends. For her he was 'filled' with artistic integrity, 'interested in the work he did rather than what it might bring him.' Often when he visited, he drew or painted while she drew or engraved. He painted *Adelaide Road* (1928) while visiting her. When he worked in her studio, she would often go out so that he could work freely and without interruption. Once she

left him painting from her studio window the dull view of a corner with three houses and returned to see that he had transformed it into what she would remember as a ‘fantastically apocalyptic’ picture, so that afterwards the view was, for her, magical. She regarded him, in his work, as a visionary and was ‘awfully fond of him.’²⁶

Having met through Ede, Jones and Ben Nicholson (fig. 6) now most often saw each other in Ede’s company at the Tate and Elm Row. A year younger than Jones, Nicholson was small, wiry, energetic, fierce looking, nearly bald with a fringe of black hair, his round head tapering to a thin chin. He was descended on both sides from good minor painters, from whom, Jones believed, he inherited instinctive knowledge of colour and composition. He had attended the Slade for one term, during which he had known Paul Nash and spent most of his time playing billiards at the Gower Hotel. His skill as a draftsman resulted from exceptional hand-eye coordination, which allowed him to excel also at cricket, diabolo, and table tennis. As a boy he had won second prize at an Albert-Hall yo-yo competition.²⁷ He had married Winifred Dacre, a big-boned daughter of Lord Carlyle, a minor Pre-Raphaelite. A marvelous painter rather than draftsman, as Nicholson essentially was, she had a wonderful sense of bright colour.



6 .Ben Nicholson, c. 1930

He was aesthetically ruthless. When staying at the flat of a friend whose pictures he disliked, he took them down and put them outside the door. His taste was narrow, exclusive, limited to work resembling his own. In this, he was typical of painters—as Jones, with a wide breadth of appreciation, was not. Ede remembered,

David would look at a painting, if I showed one to him; Ben would much more likely turn away. For Ben, painting not like his own was trash. David was prepared to like anything. He hadn't got the complexes that these other artists had. He was ready to accept everything in a pleasant interested way.

They had contrary personalities. Nicholson was ambitious, direct, decisive, dominant, egocentric, tight, close, impatient, narrow, easily bored; Jones was unambitious, kind, tolerant, affectionate, available, open, and interested in a wide variety of things. He thought Nicholson remarkable in his gifts and was impressed by his belonging so completely to the modern age as to be insensitive to ‘degradation and decay’—a favourite expression of Jones at this time. A pure

aesthete, Nicholson was enthusiastic about the forms of airplanes, automobiles, electric torches, and lipstick holders, while Jones was bothered by their beauty being incidental or ‘accidental’. Despite these differences, to Ede’s surprise, Jones and Nicholson were very friendly. According to Ede, ‘Ben found amusement in David’ and felt that as an artist and a person he ‘was something.’ He signed his postcards to Jones ‘love Ben.’²⁸

For Nicholson, friendship began because they were now painting similarly. Especially in landscapes, both were working in the ‘lyrical’ English romantic tradition concerned primarily with creating space rather than objects in space. In conversation they discovered that they both loved the early Italian primitives—especially Giotto, Uccello, and Piero della Francesca—and Cézanne, Douanier Rousseau, Matisse, Derain, Braque, and Picasso.²⁹ They agreed in valuing freedom above all else in painting.

Late in 1927, Nicholson saw and admired *Tir y Blaenau* (ch. 7, fig. 5) along with other of Jones’s paintings. This, Jones later wrote, ‘was one of the reasons’—another may have been the advocacy of Ede—that Nicholson invited him to stand for election to the Seven and Five Society. On 26 January 1928 at the studio of Cedric Morris in Great Ormond Street, Nicholson nominated him. P. H. Jowett seconded the nomination. Six others were nominated but only Jones and Len Lye, also put up by Nicholson, were elected.³⁰

The Seven and Five Society was a co-operative founded in 1919 by mostly ex-servicemen, seven painters and five sculptors, to break the exhibiting-monopoly of the Bloomsbury-approved London Group and to share exhibition costs. After becoming a member in 1924, Nicholson infused the Society with the Post-Impressionist doctrine that art is itself reality and not mere imitation. In 1926 he was elected chairman and made Ede spokesman of the Society by having him write the forward to the catalogue for its seventh exhibition. In that catalogue, Ede states that the Seven and Five avoids photographic representation in order to ‘recreate the world, giving it fresh life.’ The aim ‘is to use the everyday objects ... with such a swing and flow that they become living things,’ their vitality coming ‘through colour and form’. The pictures express a ‘feeling of movement’ that wakes the viewer from habitual passivity’. Apart from basic Post-Impressionist doctrine, the Seven and Five was theory-free. In Jones’s words, it was ‘just a few chaps who seemed to apprehend some kind of vitality in each other’s works.’ The members now included the least parochial of living British artists. Many of them felt

the influence of Paris through personal contacts. Evie Hone had studied there and was a member of the Parisian group called ‘Abstraction-Création.’ The Nicholsons were friendly with Mondrian. Kit Wood was friendly with Picasso and most other celebrities in Paris. Among members not so well connected, Teddy Wolfe was a straightforward Post-Impressionist, and Ivon Hitchens and Winifred Nicholson were influenced by Fauvism. The general tendency of its members was to use landscape or still life as the basis of relatively free expression. From 1926 to 1932 the Society upstaged the larger London Group and exhibited most of the best and most enduring British art of the time.³¹

Three weeks after his election, Jones contributed five paintings to the eighth (1928) exhibition of the Society, at the Beaux Arts Gallery at Burton Place in Bond Street.^{*} He was unhappy with the gallery, which he found depressing, as he also did the St George Gallery.³² He went to the opening on 14 February with Joan Gill. She had recently been jilted by Cleverdon and had written to tell Jones—shared amorous disappointment deepened sympathy between them. Her father also came to the opening. The critic for the *Daily Chronicle* mentions Cedric Morris, Winifred Nicholson, Ben Nicholson, Teddy Wolfe, Sidney Hunt, Kit Wood, Maurice Lambert, Staite Murray, and ‘a good new-comer called David Jones.’[†] The critic for *The Times* lists Jones among the six best of the exhibitors. Jones was also exhibiting that February at the St George’s ‘Contemporary English Water-Colours.’[‡] In the exclusive world of London galleries, he had arrived. He was one of the foremost painters in what was now widely considered the most advanced group of British artists.

^{*}Jones exhibited two oils, *Contemplatives* and *Terrasse*, and three watercolours, *Fille Mare*, *Terraque*, *Surf*, and *Terrasse*.

[†] There were twenty-one members exhibiting, the others being: Jessica Dismorr, Elizabeth Drury, Sophy Fedorovitch, Claude Flight, Ivon Hitchens, Evi Hone, Norman Janes, P.H. Jowett, R.G.S. Mackechnie, , Elizabeth Muntz, and L. Pearson-Richetti

[‡] At the St. George were *The Maid at The End House* (£7), *Sea and Rocks* (£25) and *A Back Garden*, which was not for sale.

Nicholson was often in Cumberland or Switzerland until 1931 when he would leave his wife for Barbara Hepworth, move to London, work at Mall Studios in Hampstead, and become an almost daily visitor at Elm Row, where he and Jones regularly met.

In January 1928 Jones suspended work on the *Ancient Mariner* in order to work ‘violently ... trying to get watercolours done’ for a show at the Goupil in the autumn. In March and early April, he was painting at Portslade. That year the offices of *The Christian Herald* had moved there from London. Having retired in 1924 owing to heart trouble, his father continued to help with layout and editing and contributed a weekly article. Baxter now loaned him the house at 5 Western Esplanade for months on end in order to consult him about business, an arrangement that lasted through the mid-1930s. Staying with his parents, Jones was painting well but in late March or early April came down with flu and retreated to bed. Unable to paint, he felt that he ‘had to do something.’ He could draw and write sitting up in bed, so he decided to make ‘lots of drawings’ of infantrymen ‘and do little brief pieces of writing to go with them.’ He intended the drawings to be designs for ‘etchings’ and the writing to be ‘word pictures as a sort of running commentary, ... the writing to be definitely subsidiary.’ The project originated in his sense of himself as a book illustrator, though now he would also provide the text. He may have had in mind the example of Blake’s illuminated books since he would tell a reporter that Blake ‘has influenced me more than any other writer or artist.’* Among the early drawings was one of the ‘incredible moustaches and hard-peaked service cap of Kitchener.’ He ‘got down to writing’ and wrote ‘some sentences’ that would ‘be the initial passages of *In Parenthesis*.’ He wrote with lyric and dramatic immediacy, with ‘the intention of “re-calling,”’ in the sense that the Consecration of the Mass is *anamnesis* or making real and present again. He proceeded visually, in memory, trying hard to recall the morning of the day of embarkation, recalling events in chronological order, and ‘things slowly came to mind.’³³ After recalling a specific event, experience, sight, or feeling, he tried to remember what immediately preceded or followed it.³⁴

* This declaration should be taken with many grains of salt, since it probably reflects anxiety over reviewers claiming he was influenced by other writers, such as Eliot and Joyce.

Even this was not merely remembering, for he was investigating similarities between writing and visual art. Although he felt ‘that attempts to think of one art in terms of another are suspect & tend to the ‘phoney’, he wanted ‘*contactually*’ to

find out ... in what way the problem (content—form) familiar enough to me in the visual arts would disclose itself in this, for me, new and totally different medium of writing—or writing with the intention of being spoken—where the ‘sound’ and arrangement of sounds was part of the work to a considerable degree. I soon found, as I had expected, that at base the ‘form’ ‘content’ problem was in much the same proportion as it had been in the visual arts, in spite of the total difference of medium. After a bit one began to recognize that such & such a word or sequence of words was of no avail to the required ‘form’ however much that word or words was within the ‘content’ or ‘subject.’

He had long understood the difference between ‘drawing a line that is merely reality and getting it right so that it is part of a composition.’ He wanted, in the words of his Preface, ‘to make a form in words.’ People would accuse him of preciousness for putting it that way. That made him ‘cross’, since art was the making of form, whatever the medium. The antithesis between aesthetics and accurate representing was, for him, the crux of ‘the relationship between form and content.’ When asked later whether there was a relationship between his painting and writing, he replied, ‘Oh yes every relationship, almost no difference.’ They ‘proceed on the same principles.’ This was, he would say, his ‘main interest ... how form and content in all the arts relate to each other.’³⁵

Of course, there were differences. In some ways writing was more difficult, since the whole work can never be simultaneously visible or accessible. ‘When you’re drawing a line,’ he said, ‘you know every bit of it is there. ... whether it’s there because it’s realistically the thing or whether it’s there for that reason *and* for a formal reason as part of the whole design.’ But writing was also easier because changes are more easily made and the work can be improved by many reworkings while a painting cannot. He found writing ‘not *quite* so exhausting’ and was more than ever ‘convinced that there is nothing under the sun so difficult to accomplish as a good painting.’³⁶

He drew less and wrote more, until the writing grew beyond what could be appended to pictures. Then he concentrated on the writing, though he planned eventually to provide illustrations. After recovering from the flu, he returned to painting during the day and wrote only in ‘spare time and evenings’ in his room with the door closed—he needed privacy to write but

not to paint. The seclusion worried his parents. His father repeatedly came to the door calling, ‘What on earth are you doing?’ When he eventually explained that he was writing, his father told him he was wasting his time. So strong and persistent was his father’s disapproval that David hid his activity from him by writing, as he later put it, ‘in terrible secrecy.’ Although he had no intention to publish, he decided to call his writing ‘In Parenthesis,’ which were ‘almost the first words’ he wrote down, and, he would claim with some exaggeration, ‘the only words not’ subsequently ‘altered a dozen times.’ At one point while rewriting this early material, he intended to entitle it ‘(Parenthesis)’—with the word itself in brackets. In conversation, he referred to it merely as ‘the document.’³⁷ At the end of March he stopped writing for several months.



7. Passport photo, 1928

Gill invited him to accompany him and Gibbings to France, and on 26 March 1928—now, according to his passport, with dark brown hair (fig. 7)—they went by boat-train to Paris. They arrived in the evening, were met by Mary Gill, booked into the Hotel de L’Europe in the Rue S. Séverin, and ate supper at the Sorbonne Restaurant. Afterwards they visited the Edes, who were also in Paris, and Jones told them the good news that Edward Marsh had bought one of his pictures at the Goupil, a still-life entitled *Flowers*.³⁸

On the afternoon of the 15th, he went with the Edes to the Louvre, where he saw, as he had the previous spring, the dramatically displayed *Victory of Samothrace*, which would influence his poetry (*A* 114), and works of European masters including Michelangelo’s *Rebellious Slave*, which he especially liked because ‘it simply twirls you round ... instinctively to follow its spiral.’ After leaving the Louvre, they visited the Musée Cluny, where he admired the six large medieval unicorn tapestries, which illustrate the legend of the unicorn caught not by hunters, who wound it, but by the chaste lap of a virgin. From these tapestries he contracted an enthusiasm for unicorns that would influence his subsequent engraving and poetry.³⁹

He disliked arguing and regarded it as futile but would stand his ground where matters were important to him. On this or his previous visit, or it may have been in the National Gallery in London—in later life he could not remember which—he came upon a man copying a painting

that Jones thought uninteresting. They began discussing it, and an argument ensued, which became hot and loud, drawing attendants. They saw that the man at the easel had prior right of place and asked Jones to leave not just the room but the building. ‘I was turned out,’ he would remember.⁴⁰

On the morning of the 16th, he and the Gills took the train from Montparnass to Chartres and visited the cathedral. After walking around and through it, they wandered in the old town below, with its medieval timbered houses and washhouses on the riverbanks. They visited the gothic, many-buttressed church of St Pierre, east of the cathedral. Jones would later remember Gill as ‘a jolly traveling companion, mischievous, amusing, boyish.’⁴¹

They returned that afternoon to Paris, ate with Gibbings, then checked out of the hotel and took the train from the Que D’Orsay to Salies-de-Béarn, where the Gills were part-owners of a villa. Jones and Gill talked the whole way, for some of the time arguing about Chartres Cathedral, which Gill believed the most perfectly proportioned stone building in the world. Jones made him furious by saying he preferred the church of St Pierre. Gill praised the great western doorway of the cathedral, the north transept, the sight of the apse from the eastern terraces, the western windows, the internal rhythm of the whole. It is, he said, the most adequate architectural expression of the fullness of Christian mystery. Jones said he preferred late, light-filled Gothic architecture. In the morning they arrived in Salies, where a little boy who had shared their compartment was met by parents, to whom he complained that he had not slept because the two Englishmen had argued all night. Whether Jones had been teasing Gill or demonstrating independence, he would never forget the impact of seeing the cathedral. While he did prefer Romanesque and Norman architecture and was not ‘on the whole ... fond of gothic’, Chartres is, he thought ‘an absolute



8. Villa des Palmiers

stunner’, ‘the most breath-taking *gothic* building in the world, and by far the most beautiful building he had seen, one that ‘makes all other *Gothic* buildings seem nothing.’^{42*}

Salies was a tiny market-town and spa in a valley in the western foothills of the Pyrenees half-way between Biarritz and Pau. From the station, Jones walked with the Gills to the Villa des Palmiers, near the top of a hill behind the eleventh century parish church of St Vincent. Living in France was cheap, the pound being worth 200 francs, and Gill liked places that were culturally Catholic. The villa had eight rooms and was situated on several acres of land, much of it vineyards. Jones and Gill began the day with Mass at the church and breakfast at a café in the town square. Then they separated, Jones to paint. In the evening before supper, they returned to the church for benediction. Afterward they sat at the café in the square or the café de la Terrasse

on the little river Saleys, drinking coffee or beer or sipping a local liqueur.⁴³

Jones worked prolifically, and in two-and-a-half weeks finished well over a dozen large watercolours, many from the verandah of the villa, at least six of them including the large palm growing in the middle of the road beside the villa. Most of these paintings are of trees in the near distance, vineyards beyond, and irregular mountains in the distance (fig. 9). Most are painted as though looking down from a height, with very little room at the top for sky. Looser and wilder than any pictures he had done before, most are bright in colour, thin in pigment, with a broad palette: red, orange, yellow, green, and blue. He was inspired by the brightness of the southern light, something the paintings of Bonnard had prepared him for. He would write later that ‘the inception, or renewal or deepening

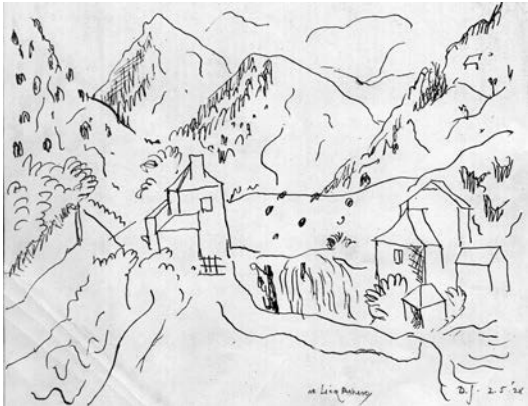


9. David Jones, *View from Villa des Palmiers*, 1928

* In September 1940, Jones would notice with considerable alarm the press announcement that an RAF bomb had fallen 170 yards from the cathedral.

of some artist vitality normally comes to an artist via some other artist or some existing art-form, not via nature.’⁴⁴

On 18 April, he, Gill and Gill’s adopted son, Gordian, walked round tiny ancient Salies, which was famous for salt baths, salt-distillation, and sandal making. On the 19th they walked five kilometers north to Bellocq with Mary and Elizabeth Bill, whom Jones knew from Capel—the co-owner of the villa, Gill’s secretary, sometime model, and, unknown to Jones, his mistress. The hills of the lower Pyrenees reminded him of Wales, but he was astonished to see ‘bloody great un-wind-bent trees such as one sees in English parks on the slopes of hills higher than Yr Wyddfa’ at Capel. Gill explained that there was no strong prevailing wind here to bend them.⁴⁵ On the 24th, they went with Mary by train south to Sauveterre and ate lunch where the Gave tumbles over long rapids. Afterwards, they had coffee and drinks at the Café de la Terrasse on a promontory high above the river-plain with a clear view of the high Pyrenees. Then they walked the twelve kilometers back to Salies.



10. David Jones, Licq-Athérey, 1928

While not painting, he did a considerable amount of sight-seeing with Gill. They visited the twelfth century church of St Martin near Sauveterre and the church of the Vierge Noire. They traveled fifty kilometers south to the village of Licq-Athérey near the Spanish border, where Jones made a quick ink sketch of houses beside a waterfall nestled in the mountains (fig. 10). On the 26th, he, the Gills, Gordian, and Elizabeth Bill

toured the Pyrenees by automobile, visiting Oloron-St-Marie to see its famous crucifix and stopping at Pau and St. Péde Bigerre.

There he had a spectacular view of the irregular snow-capped mountains rising above the plateau beyond Lourdes. They went on to Lourdes and visited the grotto, where in 1858 the Virgin Mary appeared in visions to a peasant girl. After vespers there, they visited the Hagereens who were living nearby in a large chalet, and over tea Gill and Jones praised the twelfth century carvings over the west door of the church at Oloren.⁴⁶ That evening the sightseers returned to Salies.

From the villa above Salies, Mary Gill pointed out to Jones the Brèche de Roland about seventy kilometers south. Moved by the proximity to the site of Roland’s death, he subtitled one

of the paintings, done from the verandah, ‘looking towards the Pass of Roland ‘and called another *Roland’s Tree*. From closer and higher at Sauveterre he had gazed towards the site. He wanted to visit it, so, near the end of his stay, he and Gill made the long journey south, through St.-Jean-de-Pied-de-Port. From the Pass of Roland, they sent a postcard to Hilaire Belloc, who had written a novel in which a woman says after an operation on her husband, ‘Had I been alone I should have prayed for him.’ Their postcard-message read, ‘Had we been alone we should have prayed for you.’ They walked into the pass on its dirt road nearly into Spain. They did not see Roncesvalles, which lies twenty kilometers over the border, but Jones saw the steepnesses of the forested pass. The place was, he thought, ‘wonderful ... with big crags & things & a hot dusty road with green lizards—lots of ‘em.’ According to the *Chanson*, these crags had echoed with Roland’s dying horn-blast. They are the ‘high projections’ he would mention in *In Parenthesis* (80). As he gazed down the pass towards Roncesvalles, he remembered a book of his childhood containing Browning’s ‘Child Roland,’ on the cover of which were mountains, a man in mail, and ‘a great eagle winging across the sky.’ Because of this recollection, he would commemorate this place as ‘*hautes eagle-heights*’ in a list of ‘anguish-heights’ (*A* 57, 163).⁴⁷ Seen from Salies and Sauveterre, the pass had been a site of romance, but here it was real and, on a day as sunny as that of the assault on Mametz, he may have felt affinity with wounded Roland that would inform *In Parenthesis* (166, 184-5). The affinity between the pass, from where Jones looked into it at the Spanish border (fig. 11) and Mametz would have been strengthened by the pass being heavily wooded.

On 4 May the Gills left to return to Capel-y-ffin. Petra was about to arrive at Salies, and to avoid a painful meeting with her, he left on the 5th for Lourdes to stay with the Hagreens at the Chalet St. Vincent (fig. 12) at the back of the walled garden of a large Dominican Convent.



11. View from French border towards Roncesvalles, 1990.

During his stay, Jones frequently went to hear the nuns sing the office. In French-accented Latin,



12. Challet St. Vincent, Lourdes

they sang it with ‘a more marvellous beauty’ than he had ever heard. From east-facing upper windows, he looked up the valley to the shrine and town, a kilometer upriver. On quiet evenings he could hear the rhythm of the praying. After dark, thousands of pilgrims with candles wound in a river of light towards the grotto.⁴⁸ Awareness of this impressive place as a contemporary Eleusis (where pagans prayed to the goddess Demeter) later surfaced in his poetry (See *IP* 39, *A* 95, 230). He painted the scene: the grotto, its crowds, yellow candles, the white statue of the Virgin, above these the basilica, the mountains towering in the

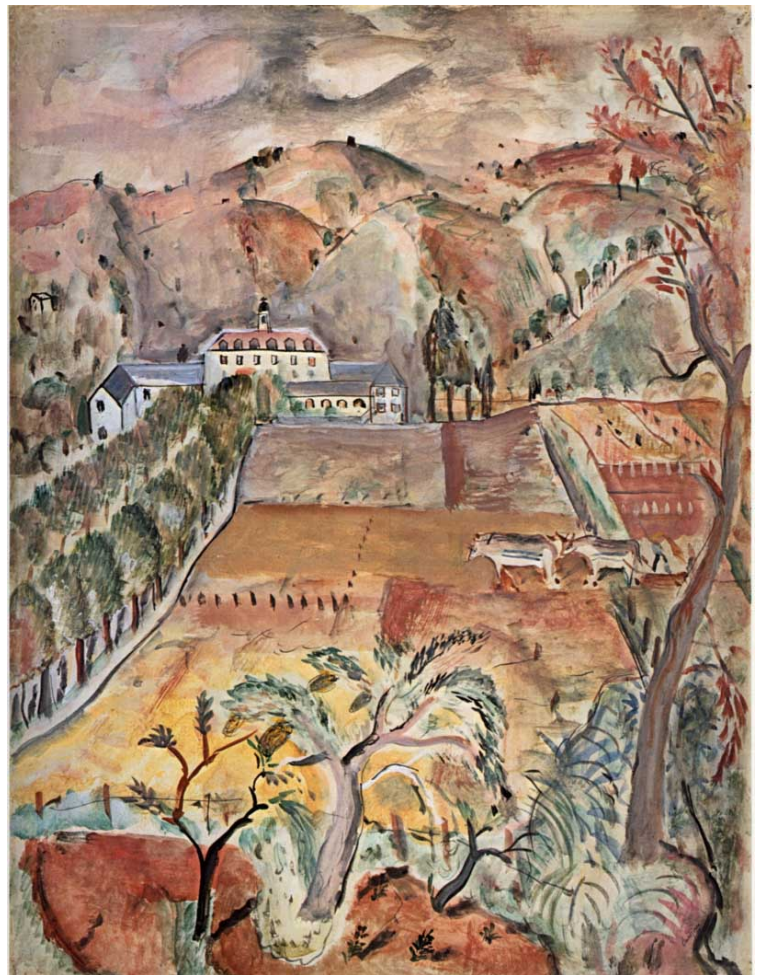
background.

From the time of his arrival, he wanted to paint outdoors, but wet weather allowed him only to look. He walked to the grotto of the Virgin, which seemed to him ‘alright,’ though the church buildings were ‘a piece of concentrated horror.’ Family members and uniformed nurses pushed the crippled in specially designed carts. Large numbers of people prayed with a fervor rare in churches. He was impressed by the ‘amazingly simple’ devotion of the pilgrims. One who caught his attention was a German peasant woman with ‘an immense black headdress like a peacock’s fan—jolly good.’ He walked through the town, liking the old buildings and thinking some areas charming, but not others, particularly the street leading to the grotto: ‘The money changers infect the temple,’ he wrote, ‘it’s like building a Woolworths store on the summit of the Mount of Olives.’⁴⁹

While Aileen Hagreen remained home to tend a new-born daughter, he and Philip visited fine old churches in the area, one at Arrens, where he saw a late medieval crucifix with a large, beautifully carved wooden corpus that he arranged to have photographed.⁵⁰ He had a picture taken also of the fifteenth century carving of St Anne in the church of Germincy-de-Prés.

Staying with the Hagreens was an old Yorkshire woman, Miss Best, who announced that she had chased away a cat trying to get into the larder.* When Jones asked ‘What sort of cat’, she answered ‘a chintz,’ Yorkshire for ‘brindled.’ Amused, he took a short pencil from his pocket and quickly drew on a piece of cardboard a cat with chintz-patterned fur. On another day, he taught a girl to ride a bicycle, something he would remember as one of the few instances of his teaching anyone anything.⁵¹

The weather having improved, the landscape did not at first inspire him to paint anything ‘new or thrilling.’ It was panoramic, with very beautiful ‘show mountains’ that he did not like at first. Only gradually did they begin ‘to mean something—not as mountains but as kinds of lights hung in the sky.’ He had to look at this landscape for a few weeks before painting it. Because he painted ‘so many utter duds,’ which he tore up, and wanted to achieve something good before departing, he extended his stay to six weeks. Gradually the mountains yielded to him. From the upper window of his room at the back of the chalet, he watched a nun in a wide straw hat picking roses, and painted a water colour of her, with a wall and trees behind her and, in the distance through the trees, the high, irregular mountains beyond Lourdes. She and the garden are seen from above, in a perspective that bends as the eye rises. He paints the near and middle distances as seen from his window and the mountains as seen from hundreds of yards behind his actual point of view. He liked



13. David Jones, *Roman Land*, 1928

* Her surname may be the source of that of the ‘Miss Veronica Best’ of *In Parenthesis* (4).

the picture but only ‘in some ways.’⁵²

Together, he and Hagreen carried portfolios and an easel many miles around Lourdes. As at Capel and Caldey, Jones disliked the discomfort of painting outdoors but endured it because, he told Hagreen, ‘he needed to struggle with unwilling material to produce the tensions & stresses that make a live painting,’ and he had found that to paint landscape from memory produced only easy lines and boring rhythms. He was working on very large paper, and Hagreen ‘marveled at the width & boldness of his intake.’⁵³ The best of his Lourdes paintings combine the solidity of his earlier work with the wildness of the Salies paintings. Diaphanous mountains partake of light and air.

With palms, bamboo, and other tropical plants, this was a far cry from the France he had known during the war. The region was Mediterranean, and the red-tiled roofs and white-washed houses had a distinctly Roman look that caused him to feel again the presence of the past. Just outside Lourdes, he painted in bodycolour, and watercolour (fig. 13). The tones are very bright and the paint so thick it seems almost to be an oil painting. The scene was of the north riverbank, west of the grotto. In the middle distance on the right, a team of oxen pull a plow over a field that has been cultivated continuously for two millennia. He had never before seen plowing oxen. In the painting, they are disproportionately large, nearly as high as the trees opposite them. Up to the building march a double row of trees. Perspective dominates. This is a solid, set, clearly delineated picture, easy to see quickly, Roman in form as well as association. Its vitality is mainly on the top and bottom: in the brightly coloured irregular hills and cloud above and in the quickly rendered trees and bushes below. These frame undulating fields of bright orange, pink, ochre, and violet. He made at least two other paintings of the scene and called one *The Latin Order*. The building in *Roman Land*, once a Napoleonic cavalry barracks, was now the ‘Convent of the Good Shepherd,’ which was initially the title written on the back. The takeover of the barracks by a religious order may have reminded him of the transformation sixteen centuries before, when the Roman Empire became Christian.

From a spot nearby, facing the opposite direction, he painted *Montes et Omnes Colles*, also using watercolour and bodycolour (fig. 14). The title is from Psalm 148, in which mountains, hills, and trees are told to praise the Lord. On the left and above are heights that seem, in irregularity, to writhe restlessly. On the right and below are trees—closer and roughly

equivalent to the mountains in pictorial weight. The trees are happily wavy, as though dancing or greeting the mountains or the broad ray of light falling from the sky. Much of the foliage of trees and the mass of mountains is unpainted cream paper. Out of the centre flows the Gave on undulating planes. The ray of light is an airy counterpart to the river. This picture of balance and counterpoint captures the ineffable quality of a certain kind of overcast day. The trees and river seem to praise the Lord but the mountains are restless, brooding, tormented. This painting is one of those that changes between viewings so that apprehending it remains endlessly unfinished.



14. David Jones, *Montes et Omnes Colles*, 1928

He would remember the circumstances of painting it: 'To reach the place from which I wished to draw I had to clamber down a grass wall, and as I was about to pitch my sketching

stool on a ledge, I noticed a blasted snake, and as it happens I have an extreme dislike of snakes. I thought that for sure I would be bitten by this one, but to my relief it was off in a flash, and then having finished the watercolour, I clambered back again a few feet onto the high ground, where an extremely fierce, growling farm dog came nearer to me every time I moved.’ The farmer who owned the dog called it off.⁵⁴

Hagreen had to go to Arcachon on the coast, and Jones accompanied him. They went the long way through flat Gascony (Jones remembering that ‘Gascon canon never recoil’), interrupting their journey for two days in the pine forest of Landes, where men on long stilts once tapped trees for turpentine for oil painting. Expecting to see tappers on stilts and with the



15. David Jones, *Self-portrait*, 1927

interest of one who had walked on stilts as a child, he was disappointed to find that they now used ‘some sort of blasted gadget,’ a self-extending ladder. He was, however, shown some of the stilts once used. He thought the place ‘weird’ and ‘somewhat depressing.’ He was told that it was reclaimed land, originally sand dunes planted with grass by order of Napoleon. Surface soil subsequently accumulated, eventually allowing the trees to grow. From there they drove north and east to Arcachon, in a landscape of sand and tall pines, a town of white-washed and cream-coloured buildings with red-tiled roofs fronting a vast beach on a huge basin of almost completely landlocked seawater. Here he painted *Bassin*

D’Arcachon, a seascape with a small steamboat, which

Cleverdon would buy. They went on to Cap Ferret on the open Atlantic at the tip of the long, crooked finger enclosing the basin. Here he painted huge waves crashing to shore. Hagreen watched him use the uncanny ability he shared with Turner of painting not from where he stood but from a point about twenty feet above. Throughout his visit, Hagreen remembered, he spoke of his admiration for Piero della Francesca, Blake, Palmer and, above all, Turner.⁵⁵

He also poured out his grief over Petra, talking, Hagreen thought, ‘as perhaps he did with no one else.’ Her rejection had thrown him ‘into the abyss.’ Looking through a window of the chalet, he saw from behind a Swiss girl hanging laundry, and moaned to Hagreen, ‘Why will she

look so like Petra?’ He was very much the subject of the self-portrait he had painted at Brockley the previous year (fig. 15), his sad and harrowed face reflected in a mirror whose left side is disconcertingly over the edge of the table on which it is propped. A lack of significant formal interrelationship contributes to a feeling of desolation. The mirror reflects two paintings, one a Caldey seascape. Within the frame of the mirror, he seems reduced to another painting in the room. His face and torso are effectively severed from his lower body. The candles—two, as on an altar—are phallic, and as phalluses are severed. Their reflections in the mirror point accusingly towards him. The odd expanding long white shape, indicating the side of the table which is clothed like an altar, is incongruously straight-edged, knife-like, pointing, like the candles, piercing in relationship to his chest. This is the altar of art, on which Jones in the mirror is sacrificed as a man and reconstituted as an artist. It is the man of sorrows whom Hagreen knew at Lourdes, though there Jones wove threads of humour through his grief, and, for Hagreen, the visit was ‘a wonderful time.’⁵⁶

On 7 June Jones returned to Paris, where he stayed for a few days with Ede. At the Café Royal in the Rue de la Pays, they sat outdoors and discussed art and mutual acquaintances. Ede took him to a house in Paris where he saw a large number of big Picassos, which had a great impact on him. In 1945, he would write that Picasso was ‘the biggest noise’ in art between the wars because of a special ‘vitality in co-ordinating. He is the master of the Eclectic in a big way & always creates *new form* from his juxtapositions ransacked from the old traditions & rhythms. I think there can be no doubt but that he is a very great artist indeed.’ As he walked the boulevards, he was haunted by the medieval city he would have much preferred, destroyed by Baron Haussmann and Napoleon III in the previous century. What he would remember most and longest about his ‘few & brief visits’ to Paris was ‘a peculiar quality of the atmosphere—of light.’⁵⁷

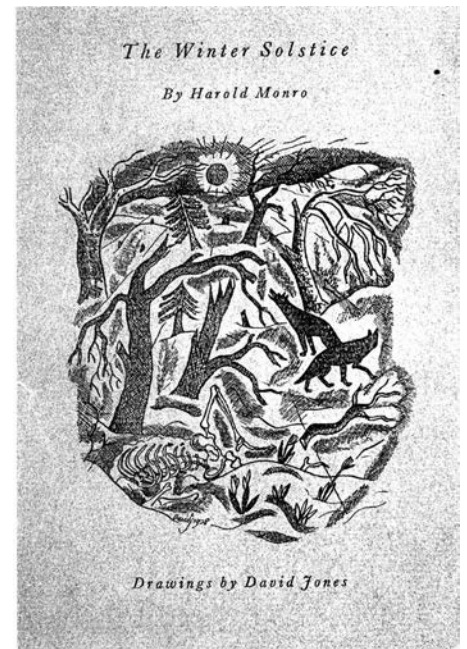
He did not paint in Paris, but in his eight weeks at



16. David Jones, *Lourdes*, unfinished 1928

Salies and Lourdes he had done a large amount of successful work. Ede bought one of his paintings of *Lourdes* for £10 by paying him £5 and canceling a debt for the rest, but in style it is a Ditchling landscape. More indicative of his new style is *Montes et Omnes Colles* or even an unfinished painting of Lourdes (fig. 16), which he quite soon after starting, possibly because of rain, and so is a record of how he began a painting. Jones's French pictures were successfully exhibited in the autumn at the Goupil Gallery, earning him for 1927-28 most of an income of £286.17.1, which, after expenses for supplies and travel, including exhibition expenses, left him with of £180.8.9. This windfall required him to fill out income-tax forms. Lacking mathematical competence, he hired an accountant, Ethel Watts, a brilliant woman, the first female chartered accountant in Britain. He posted to her in Wimbledon all the relevant documents. She would continue to do his taxes until her death in November 1963. Over the years, they became friends, and he met her doctor-husband and their son.⁵⁸

Gill urged him, upon his return in mid-June, to resume work on *The Ancient Mariner*, reminding him that Cleverdon had borrowed from his father to finance the project and was eager to repay the loan. But Jones had first to draw two illustrations for a poem by Harold Monro for the Ariel poem to be published at Christmas, for which he would be paid ten guineas. Monro had selected him from a list of possible illustrators presented to him by Richard de la Mare at Faber, a son of the poet Walter de la Mare and a director and Vice-Chairman of Faber and Gwyer, the other directors being Geoffrey Faber and T.S. Eliot. De la Mare then met with Jones, and they established a rapport. Monro's poem concerns the increasing winter darkness that made primitive people afraid. Jones's drawing for the cover is a waste land scene (fig. 17): a darkened sun, almost in eclipse, bare, drooping and broken trees, two wolves in the middle right, part of a human skeleton visible on the lower left, but on the lower right, flowers breaking through the snow. Monro 'liked it extremely.' Jones then made the inside drawing of men and women before a roaring fire and behind them, eclipsed by the back of the stable-building, the nativity of



17. David Jones, *The Winter Solstice*, 1928

Jesus, indicated by shepherds, an ox and mule, and the rays of the star. The pagan solstice celebration is in harmony with the nativity, the partial hiddenness of which corresponds to that of the skeleton on the cover. That was death, here contradicted by pagan fire and Christian birth. Monro could not, at first, comprehend the second drawing and thought it 'confused,' but as he looked 'suddenly it simplified & explained itself' and he was 'very pleased with it.'⁵⁹ Watching chaos ordering itself was a common experience of those looking at Jones's recent work.

The *Ancient Mariner* engravings had been commissioned for a year now. Jones's delay in resuming work on them was owing to hesitation to interrupt painting that was going so well. Economically, painting paid vastly more than engraving. For him at this time, a watercolour painting was the work of a day or less and earned him between £4 and £6, after dealer commissions. Engraving for *The Ancient Mariner* was going to be time-consuming. If he felt any regret at having to fulfill this commission, however, he did say. Consciously or not, he may also have been delaying until he felt technically ready.

His love of the poem and its greatness were reasons enough for wanting to illustrate it, but he may also have felt affinity with Coleridge's Mariner. In the poem, the Mariner brings on calamity by violating nature when he kills an albatross. The war for which Jones had volunteered involved mass homicide and was, he now thought, a violation of nature. He redeems himself by spontaneously recognizing beauty in 'slimy things' and subsequently expiates his sin by repeatedly narrating it. An inveterate teller of war anecdotes, Jones resembled the Ancient Mariner, who is compelled repeatedly to recount his story. Since the Mariner narrates the past, he is, furthermore, a type of the artist, although lacking in artistic freedom. The Mariner experiences the death of all his crewmates; by the end of the war, virtually all original members of Jones's battalion had been killed or seriously maimed. (Largely for this reason he never attended regimental reunions.) Furthermore, he considered the Mariner to be analogous to the neurotic and, therefore, he realized, to himself.⁶⁰ He would indicate awareness of these similarities by repeatedly evoking Coleridge's poem in *In Parenthesis* (53-4, 184). In some respects, therefore, the *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* would become retroactively autobiographical.

Now, in the summer of 1928, he immersed himself in the project. For nearly a year, he had had the copper plates, which looked to him 'gloriously enormous.' Often inspired by the surface to be worked on, he may have seen affinities between the shining plates and the sea, the

tropical glare, the mysterious Antarctic light—effects he wanted to re-present in the engravings. He delighted in Coleridge’s description of the ‘hot and copper sky’ (line 111). For such a big job, he needed his own copper-plate press in order to follow the progress of a plate during engraving, so, in July, he bought a small one for his work room—he wanted it small so he could apply maximum pressure.



He painted his workspace in *Engravers Workshop* (fig. 18). His worktable was directly before the window. Above on the left was a gas jet, on the right an oil lamp for working at night and heating plates before inking. On his left was the press, with four long wooden spokes to turn in order to move the bed and dampened paper laid over the engraved plate (inked and wiped), through the rollers. Behind the press was a crucifix and below that a map of Wales. Arranged on the table were four burins, and pinchers for holding the copper plate while heating it. Below were the bare wide floorboards reminding him of the deck of a ship.

He worked mainly on the *Ancient Mariner* throughout late-summer, autumn, and winter, a coal

fire burning in a grate to the right of his table. He went

18. David Jones, *Engravers Workshop*, 1928

to see the historic models of ships in the South Kensington Museum, and bought a book about sailing ships with illustrations, which he found ‘useless.’ He amassed a collection of clippings of thirty-four photographs of ships from newspapers and magazines plus a photograph of an albatross. He did not so much care about ‘correctness’ but did ‘need to know *how things work* or what is typical.’ He wanted detailed diagrams of rigging, wanted to know what happens on deck during the heaving up of sails. Cleverdon sent him two books that arrived too late to be much good, in late November.⁶¹

Since his experience with copper was still so limited, he realized that engraving on large plates would tax his abilities to the utmost. As earlier with the Aesop engravings, therefore, he wanted to economize on line and avoid complexity. He decided that the only approach he could take was to incise simple lines reinforced as sparingly as possible by hatching (proximate parallel lines). In retrospect, he would realize that this was best regardless of his ability, since ‘essentially linear’ design is true to the medium. The greatest beauty in copper engraving is, he writes, ‘a lyricism inherent in the clean, furrowed, free, fluent engraved line, as quintessentially linear as the painted lines on one type of Greek vase, or in Botticelli’s (strangely neglected) illustrations to the *Divina Commedia* or the purely linear designs in Anglo-Saxon illustrated MSS.’ The flowing lines also corresponded to what he saw as the poem’s ‘deceptive surface ease and facility and ... simplicity of artistry’ in ‘the rapid and easy flow of its versification.’⁶²

Since corrections and alterations in copper are difficult, each design had to be ‘as sure as possible.’ Initially the work went badly. On 28 June 1928 he wrote to Gill, ‘I struggle vainly with the “Mariner” as one beating the air.’ He drew ‘a fairish number of tryouts,’ which he later estimated as ‘between 150 and 200 pencil drawings’. He ‘designed and redesigned, eliminated and eliminated’ until he got the shape and simplicity he wanted. He later recalled that as soon as he arrived at a final drawing, he engraved it, and then ‘proceeded with the drawings for the next engraving.’ Once a finished drawing was done, he applied to the plate-surface a white spray that allowed him to trace the drawing onto the plate. Then he engraved the lines with a burin. With most plates, he made minor modifications while engraving. He completely redesigned four plates: number one (no longer the kneeling bride) and number eight, and the headpiece and tailpiece. All but the final drawings for each engraving he destroyed.⁶³

In May, five engravings were more-or-less complete when Cleverdon learned that they were 7 by 5 ½ inches instead of 7 ½ by 5, as had been agreed to. Not wanting to distress Jones—who never learned of his error—he and Morison silently changed the layout.⁶⁴

One day in late August, he left off work to attend the wedding of a cousin in Kenley in Surrey, which he may well have associated with the poem he was illustrating, especially the contrast between the lavishly dressed guests of his first large illustration and the poor worshipers in the last. The ceremony stirred conflicting emotions. He was poor—still, at the age of thirty-three, living at home—and his immediate family was middle-class, but his male Bradshaw

relatives were affluent. They and their friends were ‘alarmingly weddingish’ in morning coats and top hats that made them look, he thought, ‘hideous.’ (He wore a brown suit and a red tie that he had shopped long for but now considered too shiny.) And for him the formal, liturgical feeling of the Church-of-England service was obliterated by the ‘highly ‘personal’ unctuous manner’ of the officiating parson.⁶⁵ At this Anglican wedding feast, he was out of place—not an Ancient Mariner exactly but a financially disadvantaged Catholic aesthete. Not yet emotionally over his broken engagement, he was hardly likely enthusiastically to enjoy any wedding. The next day, he was back on the job.

Engraving is close work, demanding intense concentration. In a draft fragment of *The Anathemata*, he would convey his experience engraving long into the night,

who cripples his eye at [magnifying] lens under small pool of light, crabbed, bent, with a cobbler’s hunch on him, in small hours, with steel point manoeuvring the bright copper disk under gas-flame or candle flame in small hours in small urban upper-room where he makes the image, wills into the material the word.

Engraving hurt his eyes, and since mid-August they were so strained and sore that he had to stop working and thought he might have to quit engraving forever. The family doctor was pessimistic: if engraving hurt his eyes then ‘quite obviously’ he should not engrave. Depressed at the prospect of quitting, on 29 August he went into town to see an eye specialist—only to find that London’s oculists were all ‘shooting birds in Scotland or making love to film stars on the Lido.’ Without benefit of expert advice, he experimented and found that by working slowly between long periods of rest, he could keep going. Not until a year later would he go to an eye specialist, who told him there was basically nothing wrong with his eyes, changed his eye-glass prescription slightly, and prescribed a lotion for soreness.^{66*}

He resisted the temptation to run trial prints too early—the fewer printings the better for copper—but there were many proofs. To take one, he heated the plate and damped the paper, ‘going to & fro from ... work-room to the bath-room to immerse proof-paper under the bath-taps, usually, of course, when some member of the family wished to use the bath for its normal

* There cannot ever have been much seriously wrong with his eyes. The spectacles he wore in the 1930s are close to window-glass. (I looked through them.) His prescription in the late '40s or early '50s is for a slight astigmatism in the left eye. His 1961 prescription is for ordinary reading glasses whose sole purpose was magnification.

purposes.’ He took ‘a dozen or so proofs of various stages of the plate—on cheap proof paper covered with patches of ink.’ He hoped Cleverdon would accept these as ‘first state proofs’ that collectors buy. That would relieve him of having to interrupt work so a plate could be sent to professional printers for such proofs on good paper. ‘I should imagine,’ he writes to Cleverdon, that ‘the people who like “first state” proofs would much prefer “working proofs” with the dust of conflict thick upon them—snatched from the press with fevered hands or trampled on in despair by the distracted artist.’ Instead of a set of twelve identical ‘first proofs,’ he proposed to supply ‘a number of others ... in various sages of smudginess & crumpledness—very attractive,—unique,—& genuine.’⁶⁷ Astonished, Cleverdon replied that these would hardly appeal to collectors and insisted that work be interrupted for taking proofs by professional printers.

While first proofs were being taken of plates 7 and 8, he worked on the tailpiece and headpiece. One of his tailpieces included upper-case lettering, which he thought too dominant; the other involved lower-case lettering, which was ‘much more fun’. Cleverdon had got Stanley Morison to supervise typography and printing, and Morison preferred the upper-case letters. Jones agreed to forgo his favourite (with lower case letters), since he himself ‘felt it to be a bit too curly & with too many loops etc.’ though he continued to regret the decision. He made two headpieces and used the first. By the end of November 1928, he had all the principal plates back from the printers and resumed engraving on them. As late as Christmas, the fourth plate, ‘Death and Life in Death,’ was still ‘under reconstruction’.⁶⁸



19. *Dum medium silentium*, Christmas 1928

He interrupted his work on the *Mariner* to make a daringly primitive dry-point engraving for his 1928 Christmas card (fig. 19), which mirrors in basic design the last full *Mariner* engraving (fig. 15). On 22 December he was still working on the card while sitting up in bed with a ‘foul cold or flu’. He writes to Bussell: ‘I can’t tell you how damned difficult it is to try & draw Our Lady & the Holy Child—I mean without falling into A. Naturalism B. Sentimentality. C. some conventional “short cut”. D. woman

& child rather than the B.V.M. & the Son of God & so on—it's impossible. I suppose outside some great & abiding tradition.'⁶⁹ In the finished dry point, a womb-like cave encloses the mother and child. The opening of the cave rhymes with the shape of her hair, identifying her with the earth—which is this Saviour's mythic mother. The top of the cave joins the distant hills. The cave-mouth is counterpointed by the oval of a pasture in which two donkeys graze. They and the tiny advancing shepherds belong to utterly different spatial planes. This is his freest, most wobbly engraving so far, stabilized and possibly weakened by the size, serenity and realism of the ox's head. He printed it on his hand press and sent copies to friends.

He disliked the first state proofs of the *Mariner*, printed in an edition of thirteen, and wanted the finished plates not to be printed in such a clean mechanical way but with ink wiped to leave an even gray-green undertone to help unify the print. About professional printers he wrote to Cleverdon: 'Amazing how they inevitably lose what beauty there is they print so *appallingly* well ... They make 'em look so thin and without body, & all unity departs—of course if one engraved "professionally" I suppose it would be alright—it's my blasted "subtlety" that does it.' Six days later, he wrote that his engravings "depend to some large extent on really 'sympathetic' printing, they're very easily killed the "idea" *only just* gets across in any case & a mechanical process simply dishes 'em.' Dreading the alternative of doing the printing himself, he intended to take some of his own proofs to show the printers, Collins and Dear, what he wanted but then decided it would be impossible to explain his objections and concluded that someone else would have to print the finished engravings. To extricate himself and Cleverdon diplomatically, he paid for the first proofs. He then searched for a better printer so that he would not have to 'spend two or three years printing' on his little press. Eventually he selected Walter L. Colls.⁷⁰

After completing the engravings in mid January, Jones made a 'little dummy book' in which text and pictures were arranged. He also printed a small edition of thirty using black ink on good thin white paper. Engravings in this edition are unique because he inked the plates, wiped them, and pulled the prints himself. He wanted 'black ink on white paper' but acquiesced to the use of green-black ink. He, Morison, and Cleverdon were present when Colls began printing the engravings and were again together at the Fanfare Press for the start of the printing of type. On that occasion, when Morison asked him to decide on the placing of a line of type, he

wavered uncertainly for thirty seconds, then indicated where it should go. Morison later told Cleverdon that this long pondering was exactly what a real artist would do, that an ordinary chap would just say ‘Put it here.’⁷¹

The book was published in Bristol, where Coleridge and Wordsworth had first published *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* in *Lyrical Ballads* (1798). Jones liked the coincidence. He had Bristol in mind when designing the last large plate (fig. 22), whose right-hand falling-away view was inspired by the slope of Park Street at Cleverdon’s book shop. Knowing Bristol, ‘a shippy place,’ had been a help to him.⁷²

Like *The Deluge*, *The Ancient Mariner* is one of the great modern illustrated books. Its engravings do not merely reproduce events in the narrative, nor do they encroach on the story in a way that distorts it. Instead, they have a life of their own, one that brilliantly complements that of the poem largely by emphasizing its intrinsic religious motifs. Jones’s seriousness about these keep from his engravings any hint of the Gothic horror that pervades those of Doré. In Jones’s view, the primary archetype of the poem is Christian redemption, to which important analogues are the legendary Celtic voyages, which he thought had for their archetype the harrowing of hell. His illustrations convey an impressive range of feeling, including a numinous eeriness. These engravings allow us to see a literary masterpiece through a cumulative visual masterpiece in a way that deepens our sense of the poem. As with the *Deluge*, Jones designed the engravings to form a chiasmic, multi-parenthetical pattern. This especially suits Coleridge’s poem, which itself is parenthetical in structure.* The eight full-size engravings constitute four corresponding pictorial pairs: the first and eighth, the second and seventh, the third and sixth, the fourth and fifth. Since I analyze these correspondences elsewhere,[†] a single pair will serve as an example.⁷³

The innermost, central parenthesis consists of engravings four (fig. 20) and five (fig. 21), in which the phantom-ship and the Mariner’s ship are seen from the same perspective. In both,

* See T. Dilworth “Symbolic Spatial Form in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and the Problem of God,” *Review of English Studies*, 58, no. 236 (2007), 500-30.

† S.T. Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, illustrated by David Jones, edited by T. Dilworth (London: Enigharmon, 2005), pp. 82-116,

sterns extend diagonally through the upper right corner at identical angles to identically slanted horizons. Each engraving is dominated by two figures. Together they achieve visual and aesthetic effects unprecedented in the history of visual art.



20. David Jones, *Ancient Mariner 4*, 1929



21. David Jones, *Ancient Mariner 5*, 1929

In the first, Death is a skeleton who loses the dice-toss to Life-in-Death, a whore with open bodice and an exposed thigh. (Her two beauty marks repeat the dots on the lower die.) Jones began this engraving on 28 August 1928. Initially, he drew these figures hovering above the waves without hint of what is, in the poem, a phantom ship. But Cleverdon insisted on some indication of a vessel, so Jones drew a keel, mast, and ribs. Instead of a ‘phantom ship’ it was now a skeleton-ship (the ribs join the keel as Death’s ribs join his spine)—skeletal, but with a phantom stern, invisible behind the mast.⁷⁴ Because there is no deck, the figures continue to float in air. And the ship floats not in but weirdly above the water. Death grasps Life-in-Death’s wrist, and their ankles and feet cross, so that these figures form a jumbled circle, a chaotic aberration of the circular symmetry (slightly off centre) on the dice board.⁷⁵ This board with its eight sections

Figure 2 erratically placed round a circle is a symbolic disordering of the symmetry of Jones's eight centred, large engravings. At the mid-point in Jones's parenthetical illustrations, this jumbled fourth engraving indicates that Death and Life-in-Death oppose the formal symmetry and beauty of this illustrated book and the ultimate spiritual value these symbolize. Never good with numbers, Jones noticed, after engraving the dice-board, that he had numbered its divisions to nine, forgetting the numeral 4, which he then etched on the board's inner circle—adding to the local theme of confused symmetry. He had had 'grave doubts' about Life-in-Death, but felt he had her right, 'not a bad 'Mystic Babylon' now.'⁷⁶

In engraving five the Mariner stands blank-eyed with arms outstretched amid the dead, the pierced bird hanging from his neck. He and the dead Albatross seem to correspond respectively to Life-in-Death and Death in engraving four, and perhaps they do. In this engraving, however, something less noticeable and far more remarkable also occurs.

Skeletal Death is visually a ghostly presence in engraving five. He is there on the left, in roughly the same position he occupies in engraving four. Several details establish this invisible presence. The steps from the main deck to poop deck have visual affinity with his skeletal ribs in engraving four. The sun marks a place near his skull at the horizon in engraving four, and the light of the sun on the sea, a tonally empty space, suggests neck and upper torso. The crooked elbow of the first corpse evokes the curve of Death's left hip in engraving four. The upper arm of the second corpse on the left corresponds in place and shape to Death's right femur. These subtle visual associations suggest, rather than insist on, Death's ghostly presence. As spatial correspondences, they are all slightly inexact, so that the ghost skeleton in engraving five is an expansion of Death in engraving four. Far and near, the entire universe has become Death. His ghostly presence in engraving five suggests that the configuration of Mariner and Albatross and the bodies immediately behind them comprise a tableau symbolizing Death's partner, Life-in-Death.

Nowhere else in the history of art is there, as far as I know, anything like this symbolic use of not-quite negative space—the ghostly presence carried over from the previous engraving like a visual after-image. The simile is deliberate. Jones experienced after-images with more than usual force and frequency. During these years, a friend frequently urged him to accompany him to movies. Jones usually declined because he found seeing films physically uncomfortable. He

later explained, ‘all my life, my retinas retained the image a fraction of a second too long.’ Such after-images may have suggested or influenced the remarkable effect he accomplishes here. They may influence the transparent layering in his paintings. After-images result from lack of pigment in the photoreceptors in the retina, causing them to continue firing an image to the brain, owing to vitamin-A deficiency, which is, in turn, caused or aggravated by heavy drinking. Vitamin-A deficiency also explains his eyestrain. And it represses the immune system, lowers body temperature, and causes depression—so that it may help to explain a good deal about his emotional and physical condition.⁷⁷

With arms outstretched in engraving five, the Mariner suggests at once Christ and the cross on which the Christ-bird hangs. Physically and symbolically the Albatross and Mariner are united—as are Jesus and the cross in western symbolism. But meaning here goes beyond western symbolism. The legs, torso and arm of two corpses behind the Mariner have their linear convergence at his upper back and appear to extend outward from there, visually evoking Indian sculptures of the many-armed god Shiva, the Hindu creator, preserver, and destroyer of the world. The dead on deck, including one in the hatch-opening, evoke pictorial representations of the general resurrection, and that is appropriate since this is the moment before the Mariner blesses the watersnakes. There are eight watersnakes in these engravings. They correspond in number to the eight large engravings, which are their artistic counterparts—intended, at least, to be beautiful and to raise the viewer from his or her neurotic psyche into that experience of ecstatic joy, which underlies the famous words of Dostoevsky’s Prince Mishkin (later endorsed by Solzhenitsyn): ‘Beauty will save the world.’

Engravings four and five comprise the antithesis at the heart of Jones’s structure of parentheses within parentheses. In themselves, they combine with remarkable symbolic effect. The fourth engraving comes close to chaos; the fifth is strongly centred, peaceful by comparison, positive in promise, though haunted by the insinuated, disquieting presence of Death. If the image of the Mariner supporting the victim-bird is a crucifixion and a double-crucifixion, it is also a sort of pieta.

Jones matted the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth engravings within a single frame to hang on a wall in his parents’ home. Apart from the effect of pairing counterparts, engravings six, and eight are, in themselves, masterpieces of design and effect.

22. David Jones, *Ancient Mariner* 6, 192923. David Jones, *Ancient Mariner* 8, 1929

In engraving six (fig. 22), working ropes are the corpses of the crew, animated by angels, in the corposant-illuminated night. The atmospheric shimmering is achieved by hatching (waves of short parallel scratches in the copper). The picture is extraordinary for the ghastly feeling it conveys, an effect achieved through its wavering tones, its abundance of unnerving diagonals, and the breaking of darkness by tattered sails and electricity, the latter harmonizing with the shredded sails in shape and direction. The ship bends so acutely that it breaks out of perspective. The two masts are so far out of parallel that it is as though two different ships have collided. Broken perspective adds to the magically unnerving effect. This sixth engraving is remarkably alive with a difficult, not at first obvious beauty. As a single picture, it is one of his great achievements.

The eight engraving concludes the series by making visible in a single picture the structural principle that informs the whole series: the dividing centre that unites (fig. 23). He discovered this paradoxical possibility in his *Rosary* engravings, first introduced it to extended, linear work his *Jonah* engravings, and first used it fully in *The Deluge*. It would inform his epic-length poems.

In relying on simple line for these engravings, Jones was reverting to the tradition of drawing with the point, to which Hartirck had introduced him at Camberwell. This style influences his paintings from now on. Most are characterized by a single, fine bounding line and fine single lines wandering like loose threads within, across, and outside boundaries.

In the autumn of 1928, he exhibited 'extra proofs' of the *Mariner* engravings at the Beaux Arts Gallery. By way of advertisement, in 1929 he sent a print to Charles Aitken of the Tate and others to Campbell Dodgson of the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum. Published in 1929 in four hundred and seventy copies, seventy signed, the book was immediately recognized as the best illustration of Coleridge's poem. In 1943, it would be called 'one of the perfect partnerships between author and illustrator in modern times.'⁷⁸ It was the first important copper-engraved book illustration since Blake's *Book of Job* a century before. It was, however, a financial failure because publication coincided with the beginning of the Great Depression. In 1933, the last seventy copies, originally priced at £2.20, were remaindered by Blackwells at 37 ½ pence.⁷⁹

Skeletal Death from engraving four appeared once more in Jones's work, in a similar posture. Gibbings commissioned him to illustrate the medieval morality play *Everyman* with a series of white-line wood engravings. The following summer Jones completed a single engraving, in which a skeleton intrudes on musical frolickers in Arcady, an interesting but uninspired work. The moralistic play was, he found, 'utterly foreign' to his sensibility, and the project was 'proving an abomination,' so he abandoned it.⁸⁰

Late in the summer of 1928, before the *Ancient Mariner* was finished, Cleverdon proposed that he illustrate a quarto-sized edition of *Morte Darthur* with thirty wood engravings. That he should even consider a project of this magnitude indicates the depth of his devotion to Malory. The ten *Deluge* engravings had taken nine months to complete. At this rate, engraving *Morte Darthur* would take three years full-time and earn him £150, about half what painting had earned him in the previous year. Cleverdon increased the commission to something Jones considered 'generous,' but he could still earn as much by selling a dozen paintings. In February 1929, when most of the decisions about the printing of *The Ancient Mariner* had been made, he turned his mind, with considerable anxiety, to the *Morte Darthur* project. While *The Deluge* had basically

one theme, the *Morte Darthur* had many. He wrote to Cleverdon, ‘I’m infernally worried ... the more I think about it the less do I see how one can keep any ‘live’ ideas on the same theme for three years—anyway in my present experimental state.’ There were, he reckoned, maybe six universal ideas in the *Morte Darthur* that he could ‘with thought recreate in the medium of wood engraving.’ There would be several engravings per idea, and at his pace of a year per idea—‘a year is necessary to do justice to any idea’—he would be working on Malory not for three years but for six. He was prepared to devote 1930 to the job but then decided that even this was impossible. His eyes were not up to it—he was washing them three times daily with a solution of boric acid, hazelini, and aqua rosa. He knew the book too well and was fully aware of the many problems involved, one of which would be to avoid the feeling of a Pre-Raphaelitism. Finally he told Cleverdon that the project was beyond him and suggested he ask Eric Ravilious to do it instead, ‘a magnificent engraver, infinitely more able than myself in many ways’ and one who ‘might be able to get over the “costume” & “period” snag in the Morte Arthur.’ But for any engraver, he thought, it would be almost a life’s work. How otherwise could ‘a modern person ... extract what is “essential” & eternal from the Morte Arthur & free it from chain-mail-sword-knight-lady-pennon-castle-serf-romance-gothic-cloth of gold-chess board business?’ Also because of his eyes, he turned down a commission from Morison to engrave in copper for a book on typography. He took Morison to meet Ceri and Frances Richards and recommended her for the job. He would retain his interest in book illustration, but no longer be an active practitioner. In 1945 he visited an exhibition of French book illustration at the National Gallery and saw ‘some heavenly things,’ including ‘some *corking* good animal aquatints by Picasso.’⁸¹

Before entirely abandoning the Malory project, he drew a title page on a wood block, in which a lady supports a wounded knight, but, dropping the project, did not engrave it. The subject remained in his mind, however, and he began a dry point, a Celtic *pieta* in which a lady holds in her lap a wounded knight while riderless horses cavort in the background, a work never finished. Malory then went underground in his imagination to emerge as one of the allusive subtexts of *In Parenthesis*, so that, instead of illustrating Malory, Malory would, in a sense, illustrate Jones.

His last finished works in copper are two half engravings, half dry points. He made them for what would be his final pictorial Christmas card, in 1929. In the first of these a unicorn

cleanses the waters in the foreground so that all the animals may drink. He discarded this engraving, did not send out prints, and would use the plate for years to prop up a leg of his bed.⁸² In its place he made another with the title *Animetur gentilis*. (fig. 24).

This engraving is very lovely, very complex, more tightly unified than that in his discarded plate, and much richer in symbolism.

Like the Christmas engraving of the previous year, it is also compositionally influenced by the last large *Mariner* engraving, which he apparently liked very much. Visually dominating it is the hat-doffing shepherd, who, by leaning off balance, forces the viewer's eye to return to him. He is, in a sense, propped up by his

counterpart, the cow, shorter but more profoundly bent. She is not really bowing but attending to her calf, suggesting equivalence between worship and maternal love. Nativity-scene convention is broken by mother and infant lying together. She visually unites with him, her hand holding him as it would one of her own breasts, which seems visible through him, emphasizing their bodily symbiosis. The presence of the shepherdess also breaks pictorial convention. Balancing her nearest male counterpart by leaning back, she joins the shepherds as sister, lover, or spouse to match and externalize the union of male and female in the manger. Holding the lamb, an image of Jesus, she parallels Mary holding her baby in the manger. Above are birds. Some of the male birds' combs and the knob on the crook of the shepherd's staff resemble the erect sexual organs in the tree-blossoms. In this engraving, nativity is redolent of sexuality, for the nuptials between God and man are true to human biology. The sheaf of wheat beneath Mary's head adds eucharistic resonance.⁸³

In early October in his back-room studio in Brockley, he was painting still-lives of flowers for a show in the spring. He had three pictures he liked, and hoped to produce more.⁸⁴ One of them was his second painting of the site of his labours as an engraver in *Artist's Worktable*, a close-up of the table and window, which is now curtained with cretonne (fig. 25). Rectangles frame areas. In the window these are of varying definition partly because the upper sash is lowered. The glass lightens the tone, eclipsing vision with light. The light near-emptiness of window and tabletop is framed by the darker-toned wall, ceiling and floor. On the wall and



24. David Jones, *Animetur gentilis*, 1929



25. David Jones, *Artist's Worktable*, 1929

outside are transparent washes—greens, blues, yellows—all matching hues on the table. Flowers in the vase unite foreground with vegetation outside the window, some of which intrudes at its open top. Objects on the table—rag, scissors, etc.—are equivalent in definition to the curvy vegetative clusters above the vase and in the window. A contrast between drawing and painting energizes this work, in which painting (walls, ceiling) frames drawing. There is also contrast between objects and space, between sharply delineated tactility and soft, cool tonality. Pinned up away from the window, the right curtain balances the open drawer drooping at the left side of the table. Within the rectangle of the drawer, a delineation of engraving tools merges with flourishes of tonality in an off-centred blend of drawing and painting that has its

extension in the rag on the table beside it. This delicately magical painting opens out and in. The table with its open drawer on the left (the final recession of insiderness) is the counterpart to the window open at the top. These corresponding openings retain special fascination because their content is sharply defined. For those interested in Jones as a poet, they hold clues to how he would be able to break open already-written texts and write within them.

He wanted to visit Caldey in late September 1928 but, learning that the Benedictines were in the midst of moving to a new Priory at Prinknash in Gloucestershire, he postponed his trip to Caldey till October, when he stayed then in a guest house. French Cistercians were to take the place of the Benedictines but had not arrived. The weather was glorious, and he painted well, but

he missed his Benedictine friends and resolved to visit them. He returned to Brockley to work on the *Ancient Mariner*. After finishing it, he could not work and felt unable ‘to cope with things.’ This is the first instance for which we have evidence of his feeling depression after major creation, an experience he would have repeatedly. He was tired of ‘never’ feeling ‘fit for anything’. Bronchitis delayed his visit the Benedictines, but on 8 May 1929 he made the trip and became their first lay visitor, registered in the guest book as an ‘old friend’.⁸⁵

He stayed in a guest room on the first floor of the gray stone abbey, which Henry VIII had used as a hunting lodge. Built in 1312, with later additions, it had four gables facing an open half-court. Under the low, timbered ceiling of the small, ground-floor chapel, the plainsong was close and resonant. New Caldey, as they then called it, was the only building on a vast steep slope at the edge of the Cotswolds with a sweeping view that included Gloucester in the distance and, beyond, the Welsh mountains. All round the abbey were the great tall beeches of Cranham Wood. When the monks asked him what he thought of the place, he said, ‘It’s too green,’ words they would gleefully remember for sixty years as an example of his eccentricity, not realizing that he was speaking as a painter and quoting Bouchet, who said, ‘Nature is too green and too badly lit.’* He did not paint while at Prinknash. He renewed his friendship with Theodore Bailly and got on especially well with the new prior, Benedict Stuart, whom he liked ‘very much.’ He stayed a fortnight, and upon departing, on the 21st, left a donation of four guinies. He would return for a second and final visit, accompanied by two friends, in the summer of 1931.⁸⁶

On 5 September 1923 Augustus John’s brilliant son Henry had brought with him to Ditchling a Stoneyhurst schoolmate named Tom Burns. They had arrived in the evening during Compline, had slept in a stable, and had left in the afternoon after Jones had shown them around, introducing them to the craftsmen in their workshops. Sometime in 1926, Jones had heard, probably from Fr. D’Arcy, that Burns was working for the newly founded Catholic publishing house Sheed & Ward and, unannounced, had walked into Burns’s office and asked, ‘Do you

* In 1960 when a friend mentioned that she was trying to paint in a place that was ‘very, very green,’ Jones advised that too much green was difficult to manage in painting and told her, ‘forget about the over-all colour & think of the nature of trees. That, after all, is the key to paint[ing] trees—or anything else!’

remember me?’ Burns said, ‘Of course I do.’ Jones then told him about the Ditchling split and that he now lived in Brockley. Burns took him to lunch and, since then, they had seen each other once or twice a week, Jones entering the office at any time, interrupting Burns’s work to begin a conversation.⁸⁷



26. Tom Burns, c. 1934

Tom Burns (fig. 26) was the seventh son of a Scottish father and a Chilean mother of English and Basque descent. Born in Chile in 1906 and raised in Wimbledon, he was tall, with his maternal grandmother’s strong Basque features: large head, broad forehead, eyebrows thick on the outside like wings, and a pronounced underbite, giving him an alert, aggressive expression that accurately conveyed his personality. He was energetic, confident, gregarious, affable, full of initiative, and intellectually curious. He spoke with emphatic gusto in a high, raspy voice. Having been introduced to them at Stoneyhurst by D’Arcy, he was enthusiastic about the poet Hopkins, the modern lay theologian Friedrich von Hügel, and the seventeenth century Jesuit spiritual writer Jean de Caussade. He did not talk about personal piety with Jones but would remember him as sharing his enthusiasm for Caussade’s basic principle, that in the ‘sacrament of the

present moment’ you can, if you are aware, be present to God. While still in school, Burns had read a smuggled copy of Joyce’s *Ulysses*. He subsequently spent a year in Paris, reading, attending lectures at the Sorbonne and the Institute Catholique, and frequenting the bookstore Shakespeare and Company, where he had met Joyce’s wife and son, the famous father being away. He had become friendly with the painter Marc Chagall. He had got to know Jacques and Raissa Maritain and infiltrated the group of Catholic thinkers over whom Maritain presided. These included: Gwen John, the painter and aunt of his friend Henry; Emmanuel Mournier, the left-wing editor of *Esprit*; Gabriel Marcel, the philosopher; and Julien Green, the French-born American writer. The group had some affinities with the movement *Action Française* but resisted its right-wing politics. There was something childlike about Burns’s enthusiasm for Catholic intellectuals and ideas. Upon returning from Paris, he had worked briefly for an import-export business in the City before joining Sheed and Ward. Convinced that he could convert the English through reasonable argument, he and Henry John joined the Catholic Evidence Guild,

headed by Maisie Sheed and Frank Ward. Burns now handed out pamphlets and was achieving minor notoriety as a soap-box speaker at the Round Pond on Hampstead Heath and Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park. Not in the least sanctimonious, he attended balls, cocktail parties, and frequented night-clubs, his favourite being 'Hell.' To him Jones seemed 'very gentle' and ageless. He visited Jones's parents, and remembered them as 'sweet, diminished little humble people who adored David but didn't understand what the hell he was up to.' Burns lived with his older brother, Charles, a psychiatrist who owned a house at 40 St Leonard's Terrace in Chelsea.⁸⁸



27. Charles Burns, c. 1936

With the family features but blond, Charles was unassuming and brilliant, a man of immense gentleness, patience, sympathy, and understanding (fig 27). He had studied medicine at St. Thomas's Hospital in London and served during the war in the Army Medical Corps and the field artillery, where he was so badly wounded that he was allowed to resume medical studies and work afterwards in the hospital service. After the war he trained as a psychiatrist under Hugh Creighton-Miller, founder of the Tavistock Clinic for Nervous Diseases in Bloomsbury. In 1921, he joined Creighton-Miller at the clinic and had begun specializing in the treatment of disturbed children. For friends, he would prescribe what one recipient remembers as 'innocent peppening-up drugs.' On 20 July 1927, he prescribed for Jones a tonic containing caffeine, iron, and calcium to counteract a run-down condition and give him a lift. Charles owned a motor car and would drive his brother and Jones on excursions. One of these was to St Hugh's Charterhouse at Parkminster for a few days. In 1927 Charles Burns and Jones visited Caldey Island together for a brief painting holiday—Charles was an amateur painter—and at the conclusion of the holiday, they exchanged paintings.⁸⁹

The brothers were a study in contrast. Tom was effervescent, ebullient, practical, crass, and given to emotional outbursts, which amused Jones, who nevertheless reproached him for them. Charles was quiet, gentle, intellectually subtle, unaggressive, not so strenuously pragmatic. Of the two, Jones initially liked Charles better, but Charles—whose work Jones could hardly interrupt—was less available for friendship, so Jones saw more of Tom.

Tom became the pragmatic Joycean Shaun to Jones's impractical, artistic Shem. They had complementary personalities: Jones was sensitive, gentle, and deep; Tom, physically forceful, socially adventurous, aggressive in pursuit of women, decisive—all qualities Jones lacked and admired. Because Tom was so macho, Jones and another close friend of Burns, Harman Grisewood, would refer to him, behind his back, as 'South American Joe.' Not that Burns was pure Shaun. Like his brother, he was an amateur painter. He was an avid reader and he loved the blues and Negro spirituals, which he played on a gramophone for Jones. Tom introduced him to the writings of von Hügel. To Ede, Tom seemed 'a sort of jolly Spanish pirate' and theirs 'a very easy companionship' in which 'David felt happy.' According to Ede, Tom Burns was, for him, 'a kind of harbour.'⁹⁰

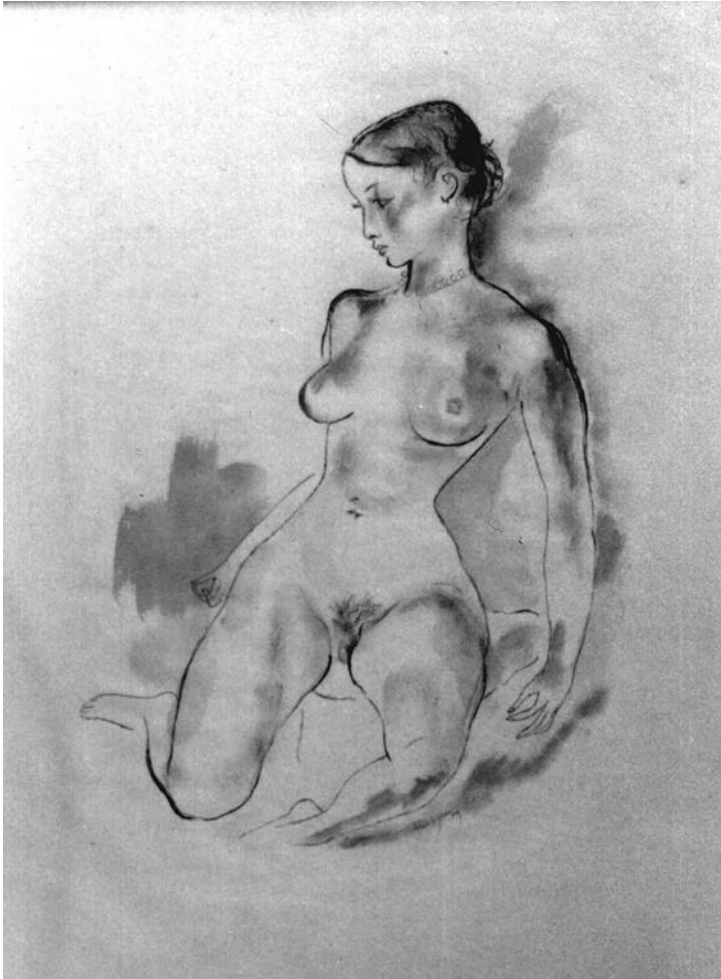
The Burns house at 40 St Leonard's Terrace was in a row of three-story Georgian houses down the street from the Royal Chelsea Hospital. Jones spent, as he said, 'half my time' there, a good part of it drinking Italian vermouth with Tom. In Tom's bed-sitter/study on the second floor, he painted directly onto the plaster a large and, according to Burns, 'gorgeous' mural of a beautiful stag prancing across green prairie with flowers and trees. On the facing wall, Burns painted 'a joke map of Europe' with historical exploits. Both murals would be painted over during subsequent occupation and destroyed when the house was pulled down by developers.⁹¹

Burns remembered Jones's presence as 'constant' and Jones as 'an anchor-man' during regular Saturday lunches and evening parties. Discussions begun over a meal in the ground-floor dining room and moved up to Burns's study. At parties, Jones 'crouched on the corner of a divan with two or three graceful girls draped round' him 'in earnest discussion.' By the end of the evening, Burns remembered, 'all the beautiful girls would be with David in the corner on their knees on the floor and sitting around him, getting his wisdom and charm,' the essence of which was, according to one of these young women, Vicky Ingrams, his 'great love for people.'⁹² Extraordinarily affectionate with men, he was even warmer with women. Another aspect of his charm was the unusualness of his intelligence. On almost any subject, he said things that were original, brilliant convincing and uniquely put. At the end of the evening, he usually attempted to catch the last train at 11:10 from Blackriars for Brockley, often accompanied in a taxi by friends and sometimes missing it and returning to stay the night. He sometimes stayed for several days, so that this became one of his alternative homes.

In the autumn of 1928, Gill moved his family to Pigotts, an Elizabethan farmstead five miles north of High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire. Jones had gone with him to inspect the place for the first time and discuss the purchase. Jones was interested in the area having been settled by Jutes. He next visited Pigotts, with Cleverdon, for the weekend of 2 February 1929 and spoke with Petra for the first time since the end of their engagement—though they had seen one another the previous June at the wedding of Evelyn Waugh. Jones stayed away for the rest of the winter and would advise friends, ‘For God’s sake don’t go there in the winter. It’s so bloody cold.’ His next visit began on 25 May and lasted till 11 June. Though Pigotts felt isolated, it was only an hour-and-a-half from London, and Jones came down frequently, in warm weather, with friends or alone. He preferred the fast ten o’clock train from Marylebone or, failing to catch that, the 11:25 from Paddington. Others coming to Pigotts, including Gill, caught a bus at High Wycombe, but Jones took a taxi. He rode through the shallow Hughenden Valley on the Speen Road—and was reminded by the shape of the hill where the road passes the Gate Inn of the gentle hills of the Somme. Before reaching the hamlet of North Deen, he turned right up an inconspicuous lane climbing a spur of the Chilterns for five hundred yards and going a further two hundred yards along the top to Pigotts. The farmstead was beside the road on the edge of an eighteen-acre clearing, its buildings forming a quadrangle open at three corners. On the south side, the Gills lived in a two-story red-brick Elizabethan farmhouse, called ‘the Big House’ or ‘Headquarters’. Adjoining and perpendicular to it on the east side, was a red-brick stable, where Gill drew and engraved. From that extended a timber threshing barn where he cut stone. Across from these, on the west side, were two joined red-brick cottages and, extending north of them, a wooden storage barn. Along the north, open side of the yard was a long low row of cattle-sheds. All with red-tiled roofs, the buildings enclosed a grassy yard in the midst of which Gill built an elaborate, ornamental red-brick pigsty in honour of the name of the place. In the corner east of Gill’s engraving shop was a small room designated as a chapel, for which Jones painted a crucifixion scene in oil on a wooden stand. Above the engraving shop were two small rooms, in the first of which Jones slept.⁹³

In June 1929, he was visiting, and on the afternoon of the 21st, Oliver Lodge arrived by car from London with a stunning brunette named Enid Furminger. Lodge was in love with her and had persuaded her to pose. She wore a long fur coat and nothing beneath. Coatless, she sat

for Lodge, Gill and Jones. Jones's drawing of her is the most erotic picture he would ever make (fig. 28). It captures her astonishing beauty, giving it volume by delicate washes of grey-green



28. David Jones, *Nude (Enid Furminger)*, 1929

and purple. She wears a pencil-swirl of necklace and, like Manet's famous nude, is all the more naked for that. When the three finished drawing, she put on her coat, got back into the car with Lodge, and drove away. (Soon after, Lodge proposed marriage to her, and she declined.) Cleverdon later saw and wanted the picture, which Jones sold to him, for £5, on the condition that it never be exhibited in his (Jones's) lifetime. Because it elicits erotic response which eclipses aesthetic appreciation, it passes over, he thought, into pornography. Years later he would wish he had burned it.⁹⁴ From now on, he would always diminish the realism of his nudes in order to avoid such violation of aesthetic purity.

To the south, behind the Big House, were



29. David Jones, *Nude for Diana Lodge*, c. 1930

Only he would ever know the desperation behind it and the desolation following its refusal.

Subsequently Lodge had tall twenty-three-year-old Diana Uppington pose for them in Lodge's London studio. She thought Jones 'shy'—she danced naked round the room between sittings. He liked her and drew for her a nude (fig. 29) with Matisse-like sureness of continuous line in which the erotic is safely subordinate to the aesthetic

She would remember Jones as 'rather shy' and quiet, especially with Gill present, who tended to monopolize conversation.⁹⁶ Jones liked her, partly because she was Welsh on her mother's side and could speak some Welsh. Soon after, in 1932, she and Lodge married and moved to Surrey and out of the circle of Jones's acquaintance.

Jones visited Pigotts with the Edes and Helen's father on 27 July and returned again for Petra's birthday on 18 August. (He would always like being there for her birthday.) He arrived the day before with Tom Burns and Fr. D'Arcy. All three talked with Gill till 2 am. On the 19th Desmond Chute arrived. The next day, Jones walked and talked with Gill and with Charles Burns, who was down for the weekend. Jones had come to paint. Of the many paintings he finished was a portrait of Petra (fig 30).⁹⁷ In it she wears an expression that might be interpreted as a mix of disappointment and disdain. The neckline of her dress is low, a bra strap fallen. Behind her is a statuette of the Madonna and Child with 'Mercy' written on its base, suggesting at once Oedipal inhibition and yearning for accommodation. Before Petra is an overwhelming tower of flowers and vegetation, which she coolly ignores, though she holds a spring in her hand—the broken sprig on the floor behind her possibly a token of the painter's disappointment.



30. David Jones, *Petra*, 1929

He was now painting extraordinary portraits. He had decided that there were no modern portraits 'that one can abide really—or not many'—and wanted to rectify this with pictures that conveyed not personalities but archetypes. (The archetype in this portrait of Petra is Artemis.) A portrait by him would not be a likeness but a '*signum*.' Making it extraordinary would chiefly be owing to his use of transparent watercolour, incorporating the whiteness of the paper and

achieving a visual shallowness rare in portraits, as though thinning away roundness of personality. Ede thought them a radical new beginning and would write in 1943 that if he were to continue making them, he might become the Gainsborough of the twentieth century. When he saw Ede's statement in print Jones protested, 'I think you've gone a bit far about the Gainsborough analogy!' but agreed that he had felt he 'might knock something up in that line.'⁹⁸

What he sought in a painting is expressed in his reaction to a London Group exhibition in late October 1929. He thought the one painting by Sickert good and unlike the others in that it 'had an "idea,"' while the rest, all "'able" paintings of various sorts,' seemed 'only seen with the eye of the flesh.' Six years later he would read a talk given by John Simon at the Royal Academy and consider it 'balls ... a cad speech throughout—as I suppose befits that loathsome institution—what a gang.' He urged Gill to tell Simon, if he saw him, 'about our old friend Art abiding on the side of the mind & that the Light of His Glory shines on the eye of the mind rather than on the eye of this flesh.'⁹⁹

He returned to Pigotts for Petra's wedding on 7 January 1930 (fig. 31) and donned cassock and alb to serve her nuptial Mass, assailed probably by gnawing thoughts of what might have been. With Gill, he signed as witness. At this wedding feast, entirely among friends, he was, if not an ancient mariner, an involuntarily celibate. As a wedding present, he gave a Capel-y-ffin landscape, a good one if not one of his very best, done during his engagement to her.



31. Denis and Petra Tegetmeier and Joanna Gill, 7 January 1930

He made his last commissioned wood engraving, *The Bride* (fig. 32), done as the frontispiece to Shewring's *Hermia and Other Poems* (called by Hague 'Strangulated Hernia'), published by St. Dominic's Press. It is an illustration of *The Ancient Mariner*, after the fact. He had intended his first large copper engraving for that book to depict a solitary kneeling bride, facing right, holding flowers before a large crucifix. He had wanted to evoke a nun taking the veil and the numinous feeling of '*sacramentum hoc magnum est.*' He had started engraving it but the figure was wooden and he cancelled the plate with a huge emphatic X. Now he cut it in

wood. While engraving, he feared it was ‘very Pre-Raphaelite’ but hoped it had its ‘points.’ There were many trial proofs. ‘These types of engravings make you fair sweat,’ he wrote at the bottom of one sent to Hague. When it was finished, he liked it more than any other of his wood-



engravings. At the end of his life, he would consider it his ‘favourite.’¹⁰⁰

In the engraving, the Romanesque windows repeat the curves of the bride’s breasts, their upper portions exposed like the sky above earth in the windows. Jones told a friend that the bird, which violates perspective in being so large on the right windowsill

is meant to be cheerfully carolling and the stag on the left hand side is partly because I particularly like stags and because of the—well there are many associations: an English carol about something of the merry organ and the running of the deer and also the psalm about ‘like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks.’ But the real thing I think is that I like the technique because I was always aiming at—I don’t think I can explain with words, but—getting a general grey feeling throughout the engraving with certain things [black], in this case it’s the spiked hearse on which the candles are placed—I’m jolly fond of them

32. David Jones, *The Bride*, 1930

In the other window is the hart of Psalm 42,

homonymous with her heart (beneath her breast)

which desires human and divine bridegrooms. The wrinkles of her dress and chiffon sleeves suggest vegetation. This and the correspondence between her and the outdoors indicate that symbolically she is the universe of earth and sky. Clearly and simply she is Mother Earth. Her sexuality is one with that of the flowers at the bottom of the engraving. They and the candles suggest an intercourse that is more than intimated by the nail in the vulval wound in Jesus’s foot. The veil that covers her head and shoulders—and is so transparent that it must be half-imagined, giving the picture a delicate tactility—seems an image of her humanity transparent to the archetype. She places a votive candle before the crucifix.

He believed that ‘in wood engravings, in general the most satisfactory kind are those where the blacks, whites, and greys are so ‘organized’ or managed as to give this unity. ‘In one way, he said, ‘old Bewick has never been surpassed in knowing how to get the best advantage out of the greys and whites very subtly set off against very small areas of solid black.’ ‘I think it’s largely in the technique of this one that I feel I got somewhere.’¹⁰¹

The Bride engraving involves two archetypes, those of humanity (or Mother Earth) and Christ, the subjects of two quotations Jones had in mind as he worked. He wrote them in Latin on the proof sent to Hague. The first, from the Song of Songs, translates, ‘I delight myself and bring him to me’. The second, from the *Crux Fidelis* of Good Friday translates, ‘Not a grove on earth can show us / Such a leaf and flower as yours. / Sweet the nails and sweet the wood / Laden with so sweet a load.’ Proximity to Petra’s wedding may have intruded on his sense of these archetypes. With her high forehead, the bride bears some resemblance to Petra. Archetypally, the groom of the bride is Jesus, the Saviour. As suggested earlier, Jones unconsciously identified with this archetype. The stigma-wound in the feet of Jesus here (and stigmata in other of his pictures) probably correspond on some level to the scars in his own bullet-pierced left calf. The nearly life-size corpus is visible only below the knee, and the foremost calf is the left one, with a blemish close in location to Jones’s bullet scar. His identification with the pierced and celibate Saviour may have allowed him to feel, like the Bold Lover in the ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn,’ forever loving and about to kiss.



33. Pigotts farmyard, 2000



34. David Jones, *Pigotts Farmyard*, 1930

On the day of Petra's wedding, Jones also witnessed in the chapel the solemn betrothal of René Hague and Joanna Gill. Her father had opposed this union, had sent her to France for a year to separate them, but had finally relented. Although such resistance has been cited as evidence of Gill's erotic feelings for Joan, there were more compelling reasons for it: 1) Hague had no economic prospects and 2) he was argumentative in a way and to a degree that tormented Gill and would go on tormenting him for the rest of his life. Hague had spent most weekends in 1929 at Pigotts and now lived there. He and Jones shared what they called 'the billet' over Eric's engraving room. (Hague would later clearly remember 'all David's painting gear lying around the place.')102 From the window of his bedroom (fig. 33), he painted the facing cottages and the entire farmstead, in some pictures as if from fifty feet above and behind the window where he stood. In *Pigotts Farmyard* (fig. 34), he shortens the cottages (removing two gables and three windows) and renders the tone of the buildings lighter than that of the rest of the picture so that the enclosure has the effect of opening out and buildings almost fade into landscape. Painted freely and irregularly, the picture rocks with life. Petra and Denis Tegetmeier lived in the cottage directly opposite, and Jones liked watching her washing dishes at the sink in the window.

The marriage ceremony and the passing of time reconciled him to her being Tegetmeier's wife. He writes to her after the wedding, 'Glad to hear you're "settling down"—[with] which phrase I envisage a great fire of wood logs with Denis in carpet slippers & you with needles making a "seamless vesture" & the purring of cats & the puffing of steam from kettles & ticking of clocks & the wind outside & for that matter, a good breeze inside!—very good.' A little less heartily he writes to Hague, 'it's somehow difficult to think of them married.—for that matter it is anyone—until they actually are! Then it rather tends to seem as though it had always been.' He and she remained loving friends. She wove wool cloth for him, and mended his blue tweed jacket. Increasingly and to his surprise, he found that now she was married, he got on better with her.¹⁰³

To provide a livelihood for Joan's future husband, Gill had acquired a Cope's Albion hand-press and established the Hague and Gill Press. They



35. René Hague at work, c. 1931

closed-in the front of the cow sheds to make the printing shop. Hague had worked briefly at Gibbings's Golden Cockerel Press but was sacked because Gibbings found him impossible to get along with. Now he learned printing from professionals he hired to help him. He was as quick to learn and as good with machinery (fig. 35) as he was bad with money.¹⁰⁴ It was not a private press. In addition to publishing under their own imprint, they printed books for publishers. They were now casting Joanna type, newly designed by Gill and named for his daughter. It was and would remain Jones's favourite type face.



36. David Jones, *René Hague's Press*, 1930

In 1930, Jones painted *René Hague's Press* (fig. 36), in which everything seems to teeter on the brink of collapse, barely withstanding gravity. Parts and aspects seem to float, though the floor, made real by the shadow of the press, is close and seems to rise, pressing the press from below and shortening it. Perspective is violated and instead of architectural form establishing structure, the composition is of separate shapes and colours (oranges, greens, browns, yellows, whites). The press is rickety, its parts teetering atop one another, all retaining individuality. The effect is to give the machine a sense of animal life. It raises a section of its long tripartite bed and one of its two feet on the right. Both of these are to the right of where they should be, relative to the back feet. This is a press rampant. Vividness emphasizes the independence of parts. All the picture's bits and pieces jangle

together, making a rough and vital harmony that animates the press, transforming still life to portrait. This animal life may be inspired by ornamentation: eyes with stars for irises on the staple and lion's paws at the end of its hind legs. A mechanical Galatea, it recalls an age when use and sign were incongruously united. Detail punctuates the composition: parts of the press, paper shapes on the bed; vegetation outside the window; and, everywhere, indeterminate brush

strokes. The floor and back brick wall are alive with strokes of green, red, orange, and grey. Beyond, the triple window with one frame open, corresponds to the triple-bedded press. The specificity of the delineation of the window latch matches that of the press handle. Window and press, each a source of light. This was a favourite painting of Jones, who confided that he especially liked ‘the feeling of shimmering light,’ which reproduction fails to capture.¹⁰⁵

This is a striking example of the change in his way of seeing and painting that revolutionized his style in 1927-28. Like all other art students, he had learned to see wholly, to subordinate parts to wholes. It is a sense of wholeness unnaturally achieved, in which relationship supersedes identity, according to the art teacherly rule: what matters is not what it is but where it is. He is now relinquishing this kind of seeing for a naïve vision that gives priority to particularity. The tree on the horizon, window locks, scissors or an ink pot on his worktable: these he selectively gives high definition, inviting the sharpness and narrowness of focus that characterizes the glance of an untrained eye. This, really, is how we see. Noticing of little things contributes to the picture a sense of quick immediacy. As in *Hague's Press*, it involves the impulse to step up and touch, not to stand back and view. This tactility undoubtedly reflects Jones's loving to pick up and handle things, to feel them. (He was always touching things. He could not have a conversation without handling a pen, doodling, playing with a match box, smoking.) The press exists first as a jumble of parts, not as a whole, and then it achieves wholeness in the viewer's mind.¹⁰⁶ This loosening of individual parts from overall pattern begins in the *Deluge* prints. If any previous art was an influence in this, it was the art of the children of friends, which he genuinely loved and kept tucked into his books.

Joan and Hague married on 19 November 1930. A wedding breakfast followed at the Red Lion in High Wycombe, followed by a reception for sixty at Pigotts. Jones gave the couple a watercolour portrait of Joan done the previous year. The Hagues took over the cottage next to the one occupied by the Tegetmeiers. On their kitchen wall, they hung a drawing he had made years earlier of St Nicholas presenting them with a cheque for £10,000 so they could marry.¹⁰⁷ Now whenever Jones visited, he stayed in their cottage and ate with them.

Helping to reconcile him to Petra's marriage, was his falling in love with Prudence Pelham (fig. 37), who would be the most important woman in his creative life. She was nineteen-years old, an aristocrat whom he had met in the spring of 1929 when she began visiting Pigotts to learn letter-cutting from Gill. The younger daughter of the sixth Earl of Chichester, she had been permanently saddened in 1926 by his sudden death followed, eight days later, by the death of her twenty-one year old brother, both of influenza. According to a close friend, it 'destroyed her world.' Moreover, double death-duties financially crippled the family. She met Gill when he and Laurie Cribb had gone to the family estate near Brighton, to cut the memorial for her father and brother. In 1928 she had studied art in Paris at the Academie Julien—she drew well but did not paint well—and spent time in the studio of the sculptor Antoine Bourdelle, a former apprentice



of Rodin. At the Academie she had become friends with Liberty Rothschild and subsequently with her sister Miriam, a tough-minded, willful student of entomology who was now her closest friend. Although reacting against her aristocratic background, Prudence was always spontaneously well mannered. She dressed poorly, looking like a gypsy, with her hair unkempt, but, as Miriam Rothschild said, she looked glamorous in rags and was 'one of nature's aristocracy.'¹⁰⁸

Tall, thin, very attractive, with a long thin face, dark brown hair, she had large blue eyes that sometimes gave her a startled look. (Fifty years later, the German actress Salome Krammer would bear an uncanny resemblance to her.) Petra would remember her as 'very charming,

37. Prudence Pelham, c. 1935

sensitive and affectionate.' Stuart Hampshire would remember her as 'attractive in every possible way, slightly ironic, rather depressed, very pleasant, delightful' but looking 'drowned,' owing to a very pale complexion. Approaching the infinite variety that Shakespeare attributes to Cleopatra, she was vivacious, imaginative, intelligent, spontaneous, magnanimous, sensitive, honest, courageous, passionate. She possessed a highly developed sense of the comic yet was melancholy, as if anticipating disaster. Like water, she was elusive, with an inimitable mixture of

gesture, glance and voice, and her voice was ‘tremendously musical’—high, light, delicately modulated in cadences, enchanting. (Jones was unusually sensitive to voices.) Enlightening or amusing, her remarks were darts, piercing their targets. Although conventionally brought up and having ‘come out’ as a debutante, she did not take refuge in her femininity. She drove a car when few women did, could change a tire, and liked to drink in pubs or anywhere else with men, yet she was entirely feminine. She loved animals, opposed foxhunting and shooting birds. She cared strongly about people, books, art, and politics. To her mother’s chagrin, she passed with bohemian ease through the barriers of social class. She felt happy at Pigotts, far from the encumbrances and conventionality of her Pelham and Buxton relations and free to behave as she liked.¹⁰⁹ Her great friends at Pigotts were the Hague and Jones.

For her, Pigotts was also a great relief from sexual pursuit of which she was elsewhere often the object. Miriam Rothschild would remember, ‘Everybody was in love with her. She was an absolute siren. She had more sex appeal than anyone I’ve ever met in my life. When my mother took us both to Paris, and we walked down the street, men turned around like marionettes and followed us.’ Another woman friend, Margaret Grisewood, would remember that when drinking with her in pubs in Brighton, ‘men used to come like butterflies round a candle, total strangers.’ Before Pigotts became a safe haven, she had first sexually to neutralize Gill by rejecting his never-subtle advances, which for her consisted of his displaying his erect penis and, on another occasion, his pornographic drawings. Firmly refused, he settled for friendship, and she came to think of him as ‘a dear’. A more persistent problem was Tom Burns, who pursued her aggressively in 1929 and ’30. His proposal of marriage definitely rejected in October 1930, they remained friends, sometimes meeting for dinner. She later confided to Jones that Burns never had a chance with her because he was so crude.¹¹⁰

She preferred conversation with Jones. She liked sitting with him in the thick beech wood that surrounded Pigotts, listening to the birdsong and the distant dinging of chisel on stone. Jones loved this wood, which like all woods reminded him, he said, of ‘woodlands in connection both with legend & history ... & with my first seven months in France.’ She was his equal in intelligence, sensitivity, and humour. They talked freely of many things including, for example, her great grandfather, the first Lord Wolverton, who ‘believed his arse was made of glass ... the house was padded all over & he never sat down on less than two cushions.’¹¹¹

In early summer 1930, Jones painted her portrait in the Hagues' parlor (fig. 38). During the sitting, Hague walked in after what he assumed was an 'emotional storm,' for she was sitting stiff and quiet in a corner, and Jones was 'glowering by the window.' Not a good likeness, the portrait is nevertheless a good painting. She is placid, totally relaxed, mentally elsewhere, her lips slightly parted, her gaze unfocused in daydream. The eye of the viewer moves up the diagonals of her lap and body, which seems, above her thighs, de-sexualized. Her arms are crossed as if guarding her genital area. Burns would later claim to have bought this portrait, and Jones would claim not to have sold it—it would be a lasting source of tension between them. Sometimes Burns would have the picture on his wall, sometimes Jones on his. He would exhibit it on the condition 'that it was on no account to be for sale.'¹¹²



38. David Jones, *Lady Prudence Pelham*, 1930

At Pigotts in 1929, Jones, Hague, Gill, and Prudence had begun reading Hamish Maclaren's recently published *Private Opinions of a British Blue-jacket*, which became one of Jones's most loved books and for the four of them a private lexicon. It is the journal of fictitious ordinary seaman, William P. Taplow, who is engagingly naive, ignorant, and sensitive. He records his reactions to ships, shipmates, ports, 'femails,' relatives, landladies, and meals in a screw-ball cute Southampton-Cockney, close to stream of consciousness, rife with malapropisms and replete with orthographic eccentricities. Jones, Hague, and Prudence spoke its language to one another, and soon all of Jones's close friends could at least understand it. Jones's letters frequently break into Taplowese: a meal is 'a primb feed'; an acquaintance, 'a nise tipe of gurl.' He would write to Gill in 1935, 'I hope you still read your daily portion of William P. Taplow. I cannot imagine the world now without that book—it's so marvellous how it remains satisfactory & makes you grin when nothing else could. Yet hardly anyone can tolerate it you know. I *do* think its odd. I don't think there is a single boring or wrong headed bit in the whole book. I found a bit the other day that I seem to have missed so far P. 238-240. As a commentation gloss on "all

flesh is grass” it seems to me to beat the tatters of both East & West.’ Here is the heart of what Taplow writes in these pages:

What is the humans raise? namely a mear footprink in the sands of time and come out in the wash next thing along sornter a new tipe of creecher says to it selve har! as what haves we here. which bless us if this is not a rellick of one of these orfull humans as use to be about the plase similuar to one of these socall dinningsurs but narstier damn it yes by a long chork. orl right I knows what I am torking of, this creecher might be a angle but it might be a tipe of flyeing Fish come from one of these stars you carnt tell. but it will have the lauff orl right say to it selve well cheerohs humans nacher a tipe of flood come and done you in proper this time I notise. ... come on a so call phozzil hold up its hand sing out Well Hosanner. as do they mean to tell me this tipe thort it were Orl Right? god dam ixcuse me if I lauff as har har har, gorn right of in a sterrick fit look at it What a fase. says well thank heaven for this nise flood and gorn of ... might be wurse nor a flood it might be a shere blow Up but I knows it will come Of. as this carnt go On. no it onist carnt these Humb Buggs increese and multerplyes too Rappid nise providense whont stand it.

Jones spent most of every summer from 1929 through 1936 at Pigotts, arriving in early June and staying through Petra’s birthday on 18 August and sometimes longer. By 1930, his parents had a telephone, and, when in Brockley, he often communicated with Pigotts by phone.¹¹³

On Monday 19 December 1927 at supper with the Edes, he had met one of the richest women in England, Helen Sutherland, forty-seven-year-old, intelligent, sensitive, petite, with sharp powdered bird-like features. She wore jewelry in moderation and dressed exquisitely in tailored powder-toned blues or pinks from Worths in Paris and in shining, tiny (size 3) Fortnum and Mason soes. Her father, Sir Thomas Sutherland, had been chairman of the P & O Steamship Company for thirty-two years, including the period of its greatest prosperity. He was founder of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank and a director of the Suez Canal Company. He had been so cantankerous that his own captains had avoided meeting with him. To escape his domination, Helen married in 1904 but disastrously, and in 1912 the marriage was annulled. During the war she became a Quaker and did social work in Lambeth. Her father died in 1922 leaving the whole of his huge fortune to the King Edward’s Hospital Fund and not a penny to her, but her mother, who had died two years before, had left her a fortune. With it, she began buying art. When she met Jones, her collection included Persian and Indian miniatures, a small Seurat, two Derains, a Malliol drawing, two Courbets, an early Picasso, and a few Ben Nicholsons and Winifred

Nicholsons. Acutely aware of Jesus' words about the slim chance of the rich entering heaven, she regarded her wealth as a trust for the support of impoverished artists. These included the Nicholsons, whom she befriended. Acquaintances lacking her aesthetic judgment thought her as foolish as she was rich. She bought only pictures she liked, often to give away. She had seen and liked Jones's pictures in galleries. Nervously tentative, she spoke in a small clear voice, carefully, exactly, intelligently, and occasionally in an outmoded poetic manner. She once told a friend that her favourite month was February because 'the light is in flower—flower of light growing and spreading,' and she added with characteristic self-awareness, 'forgive my Victorian language.'¹¹⁴ She and Jones continued to meet at Ede teas in 1928 and at the Tate restaurant.

She held the lease of a house at 4 Lowndes Square in Belgravia and, in March 1929, invited him for the first time to a party there. Guests were expected to wear formal evening dress, which he did not own. She considered giving him money for a suit but realized that she did not know him well enough. Instead, she asked Ede to dress casually, too, so that Jones would feel at ease. (Ede came to the party in a white linen suit, which she thought inappropriate.) Jones wore an ordinary day suit. So did Ben Nicholson. Considering the party a great success, she wrote to Ede that the drawing room 'looked wonderfully happy & had really bowed itself to the music & the flowers & friendship ... someone said it was such an unworldly party which pleased me... I enjoyed David Jones very much.'¹¹⁵

She also rented a large house in Northumberland four miles north of Alnwick, which she meant to be a place of retreat for members of her circle. Twice she invited Jones to visit her there. In August 1929, he accepted her second invitation and went up by train with Helen Ede and her daughters, Jim staying in London to work. In gratitude for her hospitality, he ordered for his hostess a copy of *The Ancient Mariner*. She wanted to buy a picture from him, and he tried to give her another, but she declined the gift and bought them both. He explained to her that he preferred off-white frames, and he repainted one of the frames with the picture in it. From now on, she would be his patron and the chief collector of his work, buying it direct from him and through galleries. His refined and delicate paintings appealed to her more than the work of any other artist.¹¹⁶ Throughout the coming decade, he would divide most of the spring and summer between Portslade (usually in early spring), Pigotts, and (in late August) Sutherland's house in Northumberland.

On 21 February 1929 he attended his first annual meeting of the Seven and Five Society—at the studio of Ben Nicholson’s father, the painter William Nicholson, in Apple Yard in York Street, Piccadilly. Eleven others attended: Jessica Dismorr, Claire Lambert, Sidney Hunt, Cedric Morris, Ivor Hitchens, Kit Wood, Staite Murray, Len Lye, Percy Jowett, and the Nicholsons. They reelected Ben chairman, elected Frances Hodgkins to membership (proposed the second year in succession by Cedric Morris), voted out Claude Flight, and elected Jones to the hanging committee along with Ben Nicholson, Wood, Morris and Lye. The job of the committee was to select which among the works submitted would be exhibited and to hang them, a job he was eager for, since he was convinced that very few knew how to hang pictures properly: ‘space & juxtaposition is everything.’ Nicholson and Wood brought to the gallery some paintings by seventy-three-year-old Alfred Wallis, who painted on cardboard and wood from grocers’ crates with ship’s paint because he could not afford tube paint. Jones noticed that Wood, more than Nicholson, admired Wallis’s work. Jones loved it, ‘passionately,’ according to a friend (Sarah Balme), and would write to Ede in 1963, ‘I still feel his work is marvellous.’¹¹⁷

The exhibit, of about sixty paintings, was at Arthur Tooth & Sons, in New Bond Street. Jones showed two watercolours and two oils—fewer only than Nicholson’s seven paintings. The press praised the show. The critic of *The Nation* noted that the quality of the work by the Seven and Five was much higher than ever before and recommends especially ‘two paintings by Mr. David Jones.’ The critic for *The Times*, probably Ede, praised his oil, entitled *Resting*, ‘a painting of deer,’ as having ‘the effect of a grateful sigh.’* The *Scotsman* complained that he had a ‘formula’ that he forced on all his subjects and lacked ‘particular observation’—a negative twist but a sound perception: Jones was interested in particular subjects as universals and omitted most distracting detail. As Gill writes in *Art Work* in the Autumn of 1930, Jones sought ‘the universal thing showing through the particular thing.’¹¹⁸

In March 1929, he was part of a two-man show at the Goupil with Gilbert Spencer, whose work occupied the largest area of the gallery. Jones exhibited thirty-eight pictures, most painted

* Other pictures by Jones were an oil entitled *Painting* and watercolours entitled *Spanish Border* and *Red House*.

in the south of France.* Gill wrote letters advertising the show and designed the poster. Jones took care over the framing of the pictures. He was convinced that it ‘is as difficult as painting the picture or more so ... especially in the kind of picture that I seem to do—they seem to be killed so easily by the wrong frame—this sometimes makes me doubt their real existence!’ The proportion of face to bevel and the tone and colour of the frame all had to be exactly right. He disliked seeing his pictures matted and framed. Matting (or ‘mounting’) made things worse. He was sure they were ‘much more ‘*things*’ if ... just framed close up’ directly under the glass, though he also hated the glass—he said, ‘they seem to me like museum pieces in glass cases, which I hate so much.’ He seriously considered varnishing watercolours instead of framing them in glass but decided against it because varnish ‘destroys the texture which is so important.’ Gill came on 6 March for the preview, Joan and Petra on the 7th for the private view. Jones’s pictures were hung crammed together in the smaller gallery just inside the entrance. So many in such a small space, they seemed, to the critic of the *Nation*, monotonous though ‘attractive’ because of ‘pleasin colour’ and a weaving of ‘intricate and arousing linear pattern.’ The critic for *The Times* (obviously Ede) wrote that Jones seemed to combine ‘something of Giotto and something of Blake.’ The critic of *Youth* thought his pictures ‘remarkable for the poetical interpretation of landscape in rhythmical designs—slightly reminiscent of Blake.’ Frank Rutter of the *Sunday Times* praised ‘their loose arabesques and ... charm of colour’ and compared them to ‘miniature tapestries.’ The critic of *The New Statesman* praised them for their ‘exuberance of unrestrained imagination’ that ‘make up for occasional loose handling of material.’ To pay his frame-maker Jones had obtained from Cleverdon an advance on *The Ancient Mariner* of £15. On 23 March

* Their titles and prices were: Palm and Pine (£18), Edge of the Field (£17), Pleasure Boat (£17), Neither Gas-Light nor Lamp-Light (£15), Spanish Wind (£18), Adelaid Road, NW3 (£17), Montes et Omnes Colles (£20), Mountain Scene wit Church (£17), La Gave (£18), Tangled Escarpment (£16), Sussex Haven (£18), French Hillside (£16), Terrace overlooking Sea (£18), Dominican Lay-sisters in Rose Garden (£15), The Salisian Gordian (£16), Mimosa (£16), Breakwater (£17), Salies-de-Béarn (£17), River-path (£18), Roman Land (£20), Elephant (£10), Garden of the Chalet St Unant (£17), Baroc (£12), Storm (£18) Flowers and Pot (£16), The Deep Place (£18), Window (£15), Brockley (£12), Sunny Place (£18), Drawing of Oar (£10), Foreign Ship (£16) Lourdes (£18), The Donkey and the Palm (£18), Drawing of Deer (£12), The Wave (£17), Basses Pyrenees (£16). Nearly half of these paintings cannot now be traced.

over tea with Beatrice de Halpert (Dorothea's mother), he confessed that only four pictures had sold and he was very disappointed.¹¹⁹ After expenses, he earned about five pounds.

In his *Times* review, Ede added to his praise that the objects in Jones's pictures are in 'almost a map-like relation' to one another. This suggests that he and Jones discussed the map-like quality of his pictures, in which he not quite entirely flattens space. Lines are sometimes organic wiggles, like streams flowing haphazardly over the earth. (Jones believed that 'there is always something crooked about the beautiful.') Diminishment of perspective makes them more purely spatial since perspective implies distance which implies time. So, in another sense, does light and, as Ede writes, while 'Monet painted his haystack a dozen times, each time for a different light, Jones paints all the lights in the same picture.'¹²⁰

Though affinity bedevils the question of influence, he was indebted to other painters in the Seven and Five. He found Kit Wood's work 'stimulating,' he said, in its expression of affection for what he painted.¹²¹ Although Ben Nicholson dominated the group by force of will, his wife, who received more critical praise than any of them, had the greatest stylistic influence. She used a few bright colours without line to evoke objects, often indicating contour solely by painting the area beyond it. Her husband adopted her lineless style in some of his still-lives. Jones would adopt it in a series of 1932 still-lives, including *Violin and Flowers*, *Martha's Cup*, *The Queen's Dish*, and *The Table*—very soon, however, returning to the use of line. The bright colours of Winifred's work led the Seven and Five into the airy brightness that distinguished it from the London Group, with its muted colours. There was no single or dominant style, but the Seven-and-Five exhibitions were the gayest and most varied in London. Jones would always consider Winifred's work underrated.¹²²

He acknowledged that Ben's work was 'stimulating ... and helpful' to him. Ben's example confirmed his move from the thick boundary line of the Michelangelo-Pre-Raphaelite tradition to the thin single line of the Raphael-Ingres tradition. But there were other influences in this direction. Ede had recently published *Florentine Drawings of the Quattrocento* (1926) and admired the thin single line. Jones went repeatedly to view the major exhibition of Italian art at the National Gallery in January 1930, which included several Piero della Francescas, which he loved. Above all, copper engraving had forced him to use the thin single line. And he could draw like Matisse in a single sure-flowing boundary line that emphasizes essential form rather than

surface rendering. This style greatly speeds drawing, encouraging spontaneity. The thin line achieved a classical form to which colour-washes added romantic form. Although Nicholson's example may have encouraged him to liberate line from contour to wander with a life of its own, Jones's vital, erratic line seldom resembles the mechanically tooled line of Nicholson. Perhaps the main affinity between them is a sure sense of design, evident especially in their still-lives. Jones would later say that as a painter, he considered himself nearest to Ben Nicholson and Stanley Spencer.¹²³

But he was skeptical of talk of influence. He would write to Ede years later, when one looks back over a long period it is damned hard to know who gave which what ... the *inner* history may have been often as not the other way round or anyhow a very tangled & chancy affair of *mutual* influences. I feel, of myself, particularly, that I owe *everything* almost to a series of chaps, without whom I might have been a really bloody awful artist & more than that, often chaps with quite wrong ideas influence one for the good in this 'art' business. Its jolly tricky. Very likely I should never have developed *any* of such 'life' as exists in that 1930 period but for a combination of accidents both in life & thought—& the depth of badness as an artist of which I am capable is easily proved by a glance at earlier work.

By 'chaps with quite wrong ideas' he meant Sickert, Bayes, and Gill, but also Winifred and Ben Nicholson. In any integral, important, or enduring way, he took no method or manner from any of them. Instead he was stimulated by their work in developing a style that is, all critics agree, uniquely his own. For him, current influences confirmed and gave new impetus to the teaching of Hartrick. Certainly, he had discovered his mature style as a painter before joining the Seven and Five:

That much earlier thing I got from Old Hartrick was only usable after I got through the Eric thing* & so on. (*I don't mean in disparagement of the Eric thing but 'got through it' in the sense that I could 'use' it for my own purpose.) I'm sure it's a point chaps don't much see.—it's a very long up & down process at least with blokes like me—the only thing I know or think I know for certain is that what *I* want a painting to be did become clear, *in direction*, up at Capel & on Caldey.¹²⁴

He was painting increasingly in watercolours. Ben Nicholson told him that he (Jones) could not paint well in oils. Whether or not he agreed, he 'always preferred ... water-colours' partly because his 'studio' was a room in his parents' house and watercolours were more convenient—his mother would have objected to the constant heavy smell of turpentine and linseed oil—and partly because of personal affinity with this most subtle, fluid, and transparent

of media. It is the most demanding and unforgiving medium but makes the least imposing sort of picture, the most transparent to its background, giving the impression of tentativeness and delicacy. This suited his sense of the world, in which he detected ‘a feeling of transparency and interpenetration of one element with another, of transposition and metamorphosis.’ When he painted in oils, he used lots of turpentine to get the effect of watercolours. The most successful of these oils may be *Birds and Twigs* (1930), one of his brightest pictures, which, as his watercolours fade, will remain to show what they once were. Sometimes he thickened watercolour to look like oils and made an impasto of Chinese white to get the density of oils in an attempt to overcome the limitations of the medium. ‘He was always impatient of the medium that he was working in,’ his close friend Harman Grisewood later remembered. ‘It was as though he wanted to transcend the medium, do something else.’¹²⁵ Having been in the forefront of the revival of engraving in wood and copper, he was now an important force in the revival of watercolour painting as a characteristically British medium. Since before the turn of the century, watercolour painting had been generically demoted and was referred to merely as ‘drawing’ instead of painting. The Modern English Water-Colour Society had been founded in 1922, but it was not until 1930 that the revival of watercolour was reported in the press.

Membership in the Seven and Five boosted his sales and reputation. It was an encouragement to know that every year a major exhibit awaited his best work. This may be one reason that the three years between 1929 and 1932 would be, in his own reckoning, ‘the most fruitful—the best watercolours & the largest number.’ His best year for drawing in his entire life was 1929, he later said, but the great creative surge had begun two years before. Since 1927 he had painted over fifty successful pictures a year. ‘I painted all the time,’ he remembered, ‘I never seemed to stop painting It was during this period that I was most able to concentrate on getting towards what I wanted in painting.’ In the heat of continuous creation, he broke through to new freedom. He was painting spontaneously ‘in a kind of fierce concentration,’ quickly and without preconception, making no preliminary sketches. He later said that whenever he began a picture, as he stood or sat in front of a blank piece of paper, he never knew what he was going to do, had no sense of what he wanted to achieve, and did not know how to begin. Now he subordinated line to colour and painted with ever greater lightness, strength, and speed. No longer hard and definite, line is fine, delicately irregular, unemphatic, varying in thickness, force, and fluidity.

Never before had his work been so good, never had so many ‘come off’. And gradually they were selling, even pictures that had languished on gallery walls for over a year. Writing in 1984, John Rothenstein would claim that Jones’s large watercolours of this period ‘are among the most original creations in modern painting.’¹²⁶

Membership in the Seven and Five helped his art and its sales but did not much effect his life. Friendly with all the members, he was close to none. He saw them at meetings to discuss exhibitions, though he sometimes missed meetings, and, after a meeting, he would have a drink or a meal with them. He saw them at previews and private views. More often, he saw the Nicholsons and Cedric Morris at the Edes. According to Ede, Jones had little personally in common with ‘Ben’s group of painters.’ Both Ede and Hague would remember that he seldom socialized with painters.¹²⁷ He disliked talking aesthetics and felt no need to belong. He was genuinely unconcerned about ‘one’s career’, that focus of acute shared anxiety which ambiguously unites so many painters and writers. To him, recognition and fame were uninteresting and, as objects of ambition, vulgar. Untypical, for an artist, he was generous in his appreciation of other painters. He liked going to galleries, disliked hearing negative criticism of living artists, and tried always to see the good in their work. He was immune to envy, that extension of childhood sibling rivalry. Whether or not this immunity stemmed from guilt over his brother’s death, his was a remarkably benign personality.

Although not his closest friends, he liked many artists as people. He was fond of William Coldstream, whose work he admired, and Ceri Richards, a Welshman whom he met in 1929 and whose work he liked except for its being imitative of Picasso. Richards taught at the Chelsea School of Art with Henry Moore, and Jones would occasionally meet him, or Moore, on the King’s Road and they would go together for a drink to the Six Bells. The members of the Seven and Five of whom he was especially fond were Winifred Nicholson, Sophie Fedorovich, Kit Wood, Cedric Morris, and Teddy Wolfe. Winifred was bright, open, humorous, affectionate, and, he thought (and would always think), Ben’s equal as a painter.¹²⁸ Fedorovich was enjoyable company on hanging committees. Wood, was, Jones would say, ‘an *extremely* nice bloke’ and ‘a *very* good artist.’ Morris shared his love of Wales and ardently appreciated Jones’s work. Wolfe was an affectionate and amusing anglicized South African Jew. Of all these, he most liked Wolfe, whom he usually saw in the company of other friends. Wolfe, Wood, and Morris were homosexual, which was no bar to affection. For Jones, a person’s

sexual orientation was a matter of indifference. He also knew and was friendly with a group of largely Paris-trained Catholic feminists. One of these was Jessica Dismorr of the Seven and Five, a former Vorticist who bought two of his paintings. Others were Catherina Giles, J. Rachel Levy, an archaeologist who painted, and Margaret Hodgson, a calligrapher who had visited Ditchling when Jones lived there.¹²⁹

His close friends were chiefly those he met at St. Leonard's Terrace. Lunch there on Saturdays was open to all comers, and conversation begun at lunch often lasted long into the night, sometimes till four in the morning. Conversation explored matters theological, cultural, historical, philosophical, artistic, moral, literary, and political—anything but personal ambitions or careers. Guided by the principle of the unity of all human experience, Jones and his friends explored the relationship between all aspects of life. Regardless of cultural or temporal context, every experience was, they believed, of integral importance to every other experience.

Everything had its place in a comprehensive synthesis, which they sought to understand. In a sense, theirs was a Christian-humanist analogue to the Unified Field Theory in physics, about which Einstein first published in 1928. But their theoretical foundation was provided by Maritain, who writes in *The Philosophy of Art* that 'divine Beauty ... likens all things to one another, and calls them all unto itself' (45), implying that this is true also of divine Truth and Goodness. The Quaker doctor of Jones's childhood had said, 'the whole of life is a sacrament.' Now Jones was beginning to see how, theologically, this might be so.

With occasional exceptions, those participating in these discussions were Catholic and saw themselves as an alternative to Bloomsbury, which was agnostic, Fabian, largely homosexual, and enthusiastically supportive of the Soviet Union.¹³⁰ Those who met at St. Leonard's Terrace did not regard themselves as an exclusive group and did not identify with the place they met, but, for convenience, I call them the Chelsea group.

They included Jones, the Burns brothers, Hague, Donald Attwater and occasionally Douglas Woodruff, who was then writing lead articles for *The Times*. Also present, initially because he was a paying lodger, was Alec Dru, a graduate of Downside and Oxford, fluent in German and currently learning Danish in order to translate Kierkegaard. (He gave voice to Kierkegaard's emphasis on the primacy of the individual and resistance to post-Hegelian

deification of society.) Tom Burns brought in Martin D’Arcy. D’Arcy brought in George Cattai, under-attaché at the Egyptian embassy, Jewish, in the process of becoming a Catholic—a wealthy acquaintance of many Parisian intellectuals, who talked ‘endlessly’, said Burns, of Proust, in whom Jones showed little interest. From Bloomsbury, Charles Burns brought in his friend Dr. Douglas McClean, who, as their ‘pet atheist,’ gave discussion an argumentative edge. Charles himself, sweet-natured, devoid of intellectual pretensions, remained on the fringe of discussion.¹³¹

D’Arcy came up from Oxford with undergraduates in tow. One of these was twenty-one-year-old Bernard Wall. He was short, blue-eyed, sharp-featured, spectacled, passionately intellectual, disdainful of money and bourgeois capitalism. A graduate of Stonyhurst, he was now at Brasenose, ostensibly reading Politics and Economics but ignoring the direction of tutors in order to read philosophy, particularly Aquinas and Augustine, but also Descartes, Berkeley, Locke, Spinoza, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Bergson—all critically from a Thomist perspective—and Unamuno, Eugenio d’Ors, Joseph de Maistre, and Eric Gill. Wall was fluent in French and Italian and able to read Latin, Greek, and German. He headed the tiny Distributist Society at Oxford and admired Mussolini and fascism for making a concordat with the Vatican and for bringing, he thought, moral and religious values back into Italian political life. He and Dru, his contemporary, were the youngest in the group. He soon became disenchanted with fascism and leaned more than most of the others to the left. In 1930, he roomed in the Burns house.¹³²

Wall brought in Edmond (Mondy) Howard, the son the British ambassador to Washington. Howard brought in an Oxford friend named Frederick Sillem, who soon joined the Benedictines. He also introduced his elder brother Francis, a graduate of Cambridge who boarded at the Burns house in 1930 while studying for his bar exams. Francis brought in Jack Hamson, a Dane and Cambridge don specializing in international law and active in the Aquinas Society. (Jones sometimes went to meetings of this society, and for a while fancied its secretary, a woman with lascivious-looking ‘bee-stung’ lips.)¹³³

In 1929 Tom Burns brought in Christopher Dawson, a forty-year-old historian of comparative cultures whom he had met in editorial discussions of Dawson’s *Progress and Religion* (1929). Dawson was thin, bearded, spectacled, with a faint, deep voice and light brown

eyes (fig. 39). He had an incisive intelligence and retentive memory and had read every important literary, historical and philosophical text in, or translated into, a major European language. In scope, depth, and clarity, his conversation was breathtaking. Academically in England, he was an outsider, scorned for receiving a second at Oxford and for not being a predominantly political historian. His regular presence at the St Leonard's Terrace meant a great deal to the younger participants. Jones was continually impressed by the 'width & depth' of his knowledge, regarded him as a model of comprehensive learning, and would read most of what Dawson wrote.^{134*}



39. Christopher Dawson, c. 1935

Dawson brought in his best friend, the philosopher E.I. Watkin, jokingly nicknamed 'Slogger.' He was gentle, tentative, with striking blue eyes, a Platonist, expert on John of the Cross, and author of *The Philosophy of Mysticism* (1920). Of independent means, he lived in the country and joined discussions whenever in London. He was a key figure in the group, deeply learned, personally more dynamic than Dawson, and with a poetic sensibility. Unlike Dawson, however, he was ill at ease with the younger men and nervous in manner. His intellectual sympathies were German, and he used the vocabulary of Kant and Hegel.¹³⁵

* At the time of his death, Jones owned the following works by Dawson (acquired in the year of publication unless otherwise noted): *The Age of the Gods* (1928, given him for his birthday, 1929, by B.H., probably Barbara Hepworth), *Progress and Religion* (1929, acquired 1932), *Christianity and Sex* (1930), *Christianity and the New Age* (1931), *Enquiries into Religion and Culture* (1933, acquired 1934), *Edward Gibbon* (1934), *Beyond Politics* (1939), *Religion and Culture* (1948) *Medieval Essays* (1953, acquired 1954), *The Formation of Christendom* (1967), *The Dividing of Christendom* (1971), *The Gods of Revolution* (1972). When his cousin Maurice Bradshaw left in 1931 for the Anglican missions in Borneo, Jones gave him a present of a book by Dawson, probably *Progress and Religion*. Dawson sent Jones a copy of *The Wind and the Rain V* (Spring 1949), containing his memoirs of childhood, 'Tradition and Inheritance.' In the 1960s, Jones would learn that Dawson's son 'had no conception of the greatness of the father ... mainly because that bloody little shallow minded journalistic Professor of History at Ox., [Hugh Trevor] Roper, had written somewhere or said to somebody that' Dawson 'was just an amateur—a gent., who went in for being a 'metahistorian.' This is between ourselves ,' he writes to Hague, 'but it really is appalling.'

One of the undergraduates D'Arcy brought in was Robert Speaight, a Catholic convert who had already achieved notoriety as an actor. Speaight was kind, friendly, shallow, and bent on cultivating the acquaintance of literary celebrities, whom he met at Ottoline Morrell's tea parties. He was included in the group because he wished to be. The others liked him, though they considered him a bit pathetic and comical. Because he ordered small whiskies in pubs, they called him 'Small Whisky' and owing to the vowels in his surname, which Jones despaired ever of

being able to spell, Hague called him 'Bobby A,e,i,o,u & sometimes w & y'. They were much kinder to him than the woman he married, who mocked him in public.¹³⁶



40 Harman Grisewood, c. 1935

In the summer of 1929, Hague brought into the group twenty-three-year-old Harman Grisewood (fig. 40), who had been junior to him at Ampleforth and a friend at Oxford. Grisewood had gone on scholarship to read History but partied continually and come away without a degree. It was to him that Hague had gone after quitting the novitiate. Extremely intelligent, confident, and personally magnetic, Grisewood had a dark complexion, bright penetrating eyes, and spoke fluently, vividly, with a strong

voice. He had been involved with Speaight and Cleverdon in the Oxford University Drama Society and won raves for his portrayal of King Lear. He had just returned to England and joined the BBC Repertory Company after a year with his family on Cyprus and Malta. Well-mannered, suave, gracious, culturally refined, and efficient, he was also, as Jones was to put it, '*sensitive*' and 'careful of the frailty of other people.' Influenced by group discussion and having eluded education at Oxford, he was determined to educate himself by reading Classical literature in the original languages and books that Dawson mentioned in conversation.¹³⁷

Descended from Neapolitan aristocrats and upper-class English Catholics, Grisewood was at once cosmopolitan and very English. He represented the old-English Catholic tradition, which was neither papal nor Italian, and preferred the English simplicity that Cardinal Wiseman had eliminated by Italianizing himself and his bishops. Grisewood's grandfather had gone with a delegation to Rome to hear and protest against constraints on Catholics attending university in England. Listening to Pius IX read the decree that students were obligated to pray the office

privately, ‘Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, Nones,’ the elder Grisewood loudly blurted out, ‘Why bloody Terce!’ which became among Harman’s friends a humorous protest-slogan. The family’s anti-Italianate streak predisposed Grisewood to Catholic anticlericalism. He had heard from his father the English medieval adage, ‘The place for priest is in chancel,’ which means that clergy should not interfere with people’s lives or pontificate on secular or even moral or theological matters. Influenced by Grisewood, Jones would come to share this anticlericalism. He would say to non-Catholic friends, ‘I don’t like all of this Italian thing,’ qualifying his criticism by adding that he was not criticizing Catholicism itself. Once in confession he said, ‘I don’t know, Father, how long it is since I last went to Mass.’ The priest replied, ‘Do you realize it’s a mortal sin to miss Mass on Sundays?’ and Jones said, ‘I came here humbly, Father, to confess my sins, not to indulge in theological speculation.’¹³⁸

Tom Burns, David Jones, René Hague, Harman Grisewood, and Bernard Wall: these five were the heart of the Chelsea group. One who knew them later said they ‘were like brothers.’ Jones was a decade older than the rest as he would be with most of his friends since, as he put it, ‘the 1914-18 war’ had ‘removed a good few’ of his own generation. He was the centre of this inner circle in the sense that each regarded him as his best friend. But he was closest to Burns, Hague, and Grisewood. His relationship with Hague was the easiest and most playful, but he found Grisewood the most ‘wholly sympathetic.’ Though differing in kind of mind, of these five Grisewood was the most impressively intelligent and, among the younger men, by far the most sophisticated. Jones later described him as ‘a truly civilized & cultivated man’ with a ‘rare kind of quick intelligence and *real* perception.’ In later years, he would say, ‘he is *without doubt* the one person who understands my states of mind over the years’ Cleverdon would say in 1986 that Grisewood had always been Jones’s most intimate friend.¹³⁹ Certainly, without him, his astonishing memory, and his generosity in giving interviews, this biography would lack much of its richness and vitality.

Jones brought in Cedric Morris, who brought along his homosexual lover, and Jon Betjamen, then very evangelical. Tom Burns introduced newly Catholic Evelyn Waugh, whose wedding Jones had attended in 1928 and who had recently achieved celebrity as the author of *Decline and Fall* and *Vile Bodies*—Waugh was less charitable than the others about Speaight. One day Jones was walking up Bond Street when Waugh passed him from behind. Jones said,

‘Hello, Evelyn’ and Waugh said, ‘Oh, thank God it’s you, I thought for a moment it was Speaight.’¹⁴⁰

Jones mostly met Waugh outside the group—with Burns or with Grisewood, who knew him from Oxford. Jones talked with him about art, since Waugh was a gifted draughtsman, had written a critical biography of Rossetti, and admired the Pre-Raphaelites. Jones found him ‘screamingly funny to talk to, even when you hated what he said,’ but Waugh also made him furious in conversation ‘because of his absurd exaggerations of all sorts of things, brainless stuff.’ Once Waugh took him aside to suggest that he ought not to brush his hair down over his forehead because, ‘You look like a bloody artist,’ to which Jones replied, ‘I am a bloody artist.’ Waugh dressed extravagantly as what Jones called ‘a sort of Roman Catholic John Bull’ but Jones would apologize for him, ‘he’s not half as bogus as he seems.’¹⁴¹

Occasional visitors to group meetings were Waugh’s closest friend, Christopher Sykes (also a good friend of Grisewood) and Christopher Hollis, the boorish former president of the Oxford Union now teaching history at Stoneyhurst. He was a friend of Woodruff, and they with Waugh indulged in an uncritical Bellocian Catholic triumphalism that the others rejected.¹⁴²

To a meeting at which the group discussed Wyndham Lewis’s newly published *The Apes of God* (1930), D’Arcy brought an undergraduate named Stephen Spender (generally supposed to be the model for Daniel Boleyn in that novel), whom he had met on the train from Oxford. Spender regarded the group ‘with a mixture of amusement and awe’ and was utterly lost whenever the talk became theological. He later remembered Jones as loved by everyone and ‘great fun,’ combining ‘emotional maturity’ and ‘buoyant boyishness’ that he would retain, Spender said, all his life. Spender attended subsequent lunch-meetings only occasionally.^{143*}

At Tom Burns’s request, Jones brought Eric Gill into the group. Gill was working on a relief on the Underground station at St James’s Park and, in 1930-32 on Broadcasting House. He often came for group discussions and was an important voice for the unity of human experience and the need for synthesis—‘it all goes together,’ he used to say. Although Jones was younger

* In a memoir, Tom Burns recalls D’Arcy also bringing W.H. Auden, though no one else, including Spender, remembers Auden coming, and Jones certainly did not meet him then or there.

than Gill and Dawson (who disliked Gill), these three were older than the others and tended to preside over discussion, Gill by virtue of his personality, Dawson with special authority in matters historical, and Jones in matters artistic. Neither Dawson nor Jones talked much or at great length, however, and no one led discussion for long. If the topic shifted to the liturgical theology of Maurice de la Taille, Jones or D'Arcy might take the lead. When it became purely philosophical, Watkin, D'Arcy, or Wall took over. Their theological and philosophical discussion found expression in Watkin's book *The Bow in the Clouds* (1931), which then became the basis for further discussion.¹⁴⁴

Jones spoke sometimes passionately, sometimes with Churchillian deliberation, but usually tentatively, gropingly, apparently inconclusively, caring for accuracy rather than effect. Meticulous about the nuances of language, he paused till the right word came to him. As with many whose minds are primarily visual rather than verbal, his speech was not fluid, quick, and easy. He communicated to a large extent through gestures and posture. As he talked, he tended to look down slightly but would suddenly look up, and, often, smile or laugh.¹⁴⁵

They discussed Ezra Pound's *The Spirit of Romance* (1929), which was, according to Grisewood, 'really important' to Jones. A baedeker for late-medieval literature, it glances at the chansons de geste, including *The Song of Roland*, which Jones read carefully. Pound also recommended, and Jones admired, Rossetti's translation of part of Villon's prayer to Our Lady spoken by his mother, with the refrain 'and in this faith I choose to live and die.' Jones did not, however, follow Pound through the narrow paths of troubadour poetry.¹⁴⁶

The group supported D.H. Lawrence in his reaction against Victorian prudery. They endorsed his warning that sex could be ego-perversed by ulterior psychological motives and his assertion that, to prevent this, sex should remain spontaneous, natural, ecstatic. They held, Burns later said, 'a fairly orthodox Catholic moral position' but 'were less against amatory excursions than most rigid Catholics.' They appreciated Lawrence's essentially religious sensibility without endorsing his belief that orgasm can be a mystical experience. Instead, they agreed, orgasm might symbolize a union with God that takes place on another level. Sex could not substitute for religion. Still, they thought, Lawrence was a prophet in the wilderness of Cambridge-and-Bloomsbury since he, in Grisewood's words, regarded 'God and how to "get at Him" as the basic

issue of life.’^{147*} They shared Lawrence’s abhorrence of modern society, though they thought he proposed no real alternative.

They spoke about T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, which Jones had first read in 1926.[†] His initial response had been an Archimedean ‘*That’s it!*’ ‘At last,’ he thought, ‘a chap has written a real poem about real things.’ ‘It has *extraordinary* authenticity.... It mirrors our civilizational phase with absolute validity.’ The first literary work he encountered that corresponded to the modern movement in the visual arts, it was readily accessible to him since he was already familiar with Malory, Frazer, and Jessie Weston. With unqualified approval, he and his friends spoke often of Eliot’s poem as brilliantly expressing in its form and content the decline and fragmentation of western culture.¹⁴⁸

Jones met Eliot in 1930, when Burns invited them for lunch at St Leonard’s Terrace. During the meal, Jones expressed his admiration for *The Waste Land* and may have talked about Gill, whom Eliot admired. They did not speak about what Jones had begun writing.¹⁴⁹

Burns and Wall led discussion about Joyce, especially *Ulysses*. ‘Joyce was very much background of our lives,’ Burns remembered. ‘We were very conversant with the text.’ Jones began reading it but, like most who do, did not get far. He heard a good deal about it, however, here and from Ede, so that indirectly it may have influenced his method of poetic composition, which was and would remain in its initial phase close to stream-of-consciousness. He may have read *A Portrait of the Artist*—which Burns read and later assumed Jones had, too, though Burns had read *Dubliners*, which Jones would not read till 1960.^{150‡}

Talk of Joyce took on new meaning for Jones in the summer of 1930, when Hague read to him from Joyce’s newly published *Anna Livia Plurabelle*, which would become chapter 8 of *Finnegans Wake*. ‘He read it straight off,’ Jones recalled, ‘almost as though it were a column in a newspaper! That certainly made a great impression on me.’ Shortly afterwards, using the

* In 1951, Jones wrote to Grisewood approving this assessment of Lawrence.

† He sometimes gives the year as 1927, but most of his earliest recollections are 1926, and he says that heread *The Waste Land* before starting to read Hopkins.

‡ His favourite of the *Dubliners* stories would be ‘The Sisters.’

gramophone at St Leonard's Terrace, Grisewood played for him the recording of Joyce reading the final pages of *Anna Livia*. Jones listened enthralled as the words flowed rhythmically in Joyce's gentle tenor voice. It was, for him, 'a revelation, most incredibly sensitive & impressive—& made the thing, that to read is *excessively* difficult, just sheer delight like a bit of music. & all the Irish 'folk' thing reduced to essence ... damned mysterious.' He loved it so much that Grisewood gave him the record. It confirmed Jones in the belief that writing is primarily aural and would later encourage him to record his own poetry. Later Hague read for him more of the chapter, including the pages read by Joyce and further fed his fascination.* He soon acquired a copy of the text, which he followed while listening to the record. It became for him a paradigm of literary art. In his estimation, Joyce now replaced Eliot as the preeminent modern writer. Jones learned by heart the recorded pages, which he recited to himself when alone. He, Hague, and Grisewood quoted bits to one another in conversation. After listening to it some years later, he wrote to Grisewood, 'How good it is. Authentic, that's what it is. There are some lines in Kit Smart that give you that same happy feeling of certainty—no questions needed, like looking at some natural beauty in a way.'¹⁵¹

Neo-Thomist discussion ranged through the history of philosophy. With Jones joining in, they voiced antipathy to Nominalism, which he had learned of from the Dominicans and Gill. The fourteenth century Nominalist William of Ockham was responsible, they were all convinced, for much that was wrong in western thought and culture. Jones's main objection was to the Nominalist principle of economy known as 'Ockham's razor,' which forbade the positing of unnecessary entities. This led to Protestantism, to the dualist minimalism of Descartes, to the skepticism of Hume, Berkeley, and the English empiricists, and finally to positivist reductionism: why have angels? why have saints? why have God? the less the better. Jones thought this abominable. They also objected to the Nominalist doctrine that the created world

* Erratic in his memories of which year Hague read the text, Jones nevertheless consistently recalls Hague's reading as his first experience of *Anna Livia*: 'That was ... my first "feel" of that incomparable genius of James Joyce. Later I got the record he made for the Orthological Insituted at Cambridge' in 1929. Grisewood said the record came first, Hague's reading second, and that 'David is just mistaken because he told me afterwards how much he admired René's own continuation of the record.' My account above reconciles conflicting testimony by assuming that Grisewood did not know of Hague's first brief reading.

consisted only of unrelated singularities and that universal concepts or names (hence the term ‘Nominalism’) were empty of meaning. Jones was committed in his work to expressing the universal through the particular as both essential to artistic truth. He and his friends discussed the dismissal by Kant of Aquinas’s five ‘proofs’ of the existence of God as a rejection of metaphysical intuition, a rejection that continued in the positivist belief that existence is limited to matter. Jones sympathized with positivist scepticism and admitted that he found it ‘everywhere, not least in my own tormented mind,’ but he was convinced that the perception of reality ‘as finite’ is the ‘peculiar weakness’ of positivism and of science, which is permeated with positivism. He and the others believed that, in itself, science ‘does not and cannot conflict with ultimate religious values, because ... the truth cannot contradict the truth.’ They thought that positivism distorted perception and resulted in intellectual poverty, which made the partial metaphysics of Marxism and fascism so appealing to so many. The tenor of Jones’s contribution to discussion may be gleaned from his writing, “loss of wholeness ... is one of the marks of positivists. Its no good being right about one thing—one must see the whole.... Why are nearly all Englishmen Platonists of one sort or other as against Aristotle’?¹⁵²

For him, the philosophical division between Plato and Aristotle was basic and typified by the difference between Yeats and Joyce. In these discussions, he would say of a person, ‘I bet so & so loves Yeats but can’t take Joyce.’ He realized that Yeats was ‘a good poet, but’, he said, ‘*generally speaking* his work does not mean much to me.’ ‘There is something missing in Yeats,’ he said, because of his Platonic denial of particular reality. To admirers of Yeats he would concede that perhaps he ‘ought to be’ more appreciative, but, he declared, ‘as far as I know *anything* about it, I back Aristotle.’ The ‘Aristotle-Plato thing’ was now his fundamental critical standard. Watkin defended Plato as giving penetrating expression to the vision of eternity, but Jones and his closest friends remained Aristotelian and, for that reason, disliked Augustine. Jones was convinced that the chronic disease of Christianity was dualism, which Aquinas overcame by freeing theology from oriental spiritualism and Neoplatonic idealism and bringing man back to earth, back into the order of nature and the data of the senses. For Jones, this would be especially important to art and poetry: ‘I believe,’ he said in 1944, ‘that all good poetry must hold up a clear bodily image & that the work is done by that *image*—so that the general shines out from the particular.’¹⁵³

From Dawson, he learned that the Church itself was a symbol of healed dualism, combining in herself Judaic oriental asceticism and (much preferred by Jones) Hellenic acceptance of life, intellectual curiosity, and freedom. The Incarnation resolved dualism in a union of matter and spirit. A Christian is not to be torn between God and the world but should lead an integrated life.¹⁵⁴

Aversion to dualism did not preclude discrimination. A pervasive topic of discussion (and the subject of *The Bow in the Clouds*) is the ordered hierarchy of experiences and values. It reflects Maritain's idea of a hierarchy of being, which derives from the Thomistic argument for the existence of God based on graduated perfections.* On the lowest rung of the hierarchy are the values of pleasure; above these are basic moral values; then intellectual-spiritual values, of which engineering and science are the lowest, and holiness, the highest. This implies a corresponding hierarchy of loves governing human activity. It became one of Jones's fundamental convictions, to which he refers in his Preface to *The Anathemata* as 'the scale or Jacob's ladder or song of degrees' (30). His belief in this hierarchy underlies his remark that "economics" are as important as Marx said—he merely truncated the hierarchy of Being,' meaning that Marx reduces the ladder to its lower materialist and political rungs.¹⁵⁵

The group considered and declined the intellectual models of Vorticism and Futurism but were much impressed with *Time and Western Man* (1927), which D'Arcy introduced as one of the most significant books of the age. In it, Wyndham Lewis, following T.E. Hulme's *Speculations*, posits a spatial sense of reality—which is classical, rational, objective—as preferable to a temporal sense of reality—which is romantic, impressionistic, relative, and subjective. Reading Lewis's encouraged Jones in his inclinations towards the spatial and objective in art.

In discussing cultural history, their guide was Dawson; and their primary text, his recently published *Progress and Religion*. They endorsed its basic premise, emphatically marked by Jones in his copy, that religion is the basis, not merely a product, of culture, and that a society

* Maritain asserts that: 'to progress ... is ... to pass from the sensuous to the rational, and from the rational to the spiritual, and from the less spiritual to the more spiritual' (114).

that loses its religion sooner or later loses its culture. Dawson held that the essence of all religion is intuition of transcendence, an experience integrating material and spiritual life. In the West, such integration occurred crucially in the vision of Francis of Assisi, which healed Platonic-Augustinian division between matter and spirit, life and faith. This integration typified the early and high Middle Ages, which Jones regarded as ‘a period of inevitably fitting & coordinated syntheses,’ but was lost in the late middle-ages and Renaissance. Culture then became increasingly merely humanistic and therefore hollow. The Reformation worsened this diminishment as Protestants and Catholics returned to dualism between matter and spirit. Descartes expressed this dualism and ushered in a myth of progress that engaged unfulfilled spiritual aspirations while giving free reign to Machiavellian pragmatism, a dualism that had its political manifestations in the French Revolution and Marxism. All this had its complement in the Bellocian thesis, of which Jones was utterly convinced, that the Reformation led to the Industrial Revolution in which material values eclipsed spiritual values.¹⁵⁶

Rapid change in modern civilization had achieved what Jones and his friends called ‘The Break’ between past and present, a term that translates Nietzsche’s *Aufbruch*.^{*} Initially, with Gill at Ditchling, Jones had referred to it as ‘the gap.’ He writes to Denis Tegetmeier in 1930,

Yes! the good old Gap—hell of a width, you know—*no* question of a bridge—have to take up ‘new positions’ on other side—can’t see anything else for it. Partial-pre-Gap blokes like us will be at some disadvantage of course.

The genuine post-gapiter are so bright & shiny & moreover slippery.

Ever the aesthete, he saw evidence of the gap in contemporary bad taste. He would search antique-dealers’ shops ‘for a single spoon that does not affront the senses.’ For the most part, the ‘utensils and impedimenta’ of modern life were ‘mediocre, shoddy and slick.’ He appreciated beauty in ‘the gleaming and exact apparatuses’ he saw ‘from the dentist’s chair,’ but it was accidental beauty. These products were “‘sub-human” in quality’, and he could not reconcile

* Jones may have adopted the term from Spengler, who writes of ‘the break of destiny’ as separating ‘that which is already fulfilled from that which is to come’ in a passage (I 26) that Jones marks with four vertical lines in the margin of the copy of *The Decline of the West* that he acquired in 1941. D.H. Lawrence uses ‘the break’ in something like this sense in ‘St Mawr’ (1925). Colin Wilcockson demonstrates that William Morris also uses the idea in a way that may have influenced Jones (‘David Jones and “The Break”,’ *Agenda* 15, 2-3 (1977), 130-1.

them with his conviction that man is essentially an artistic maker. The ‘dilemma’ haunted him.¹⁵⁷ Others, including D.H. Lawrence, stressed the social and religious implications of The Break.

Apropos of all this, Jones proposed a new paradigm for analyzing culture. It was an intellectual synthesis of Spengler’s distinction between culture and civilization and the two basic kinds of psychological value characterizing each. He suggested that all human acts, attitudes, motives, and experiences are either gratuitous or utilitarian—categories he derived from the writings of Roger Fry and Clive Bell and recognized as implicit in Aristotelian *poesis* (Maritain’s *ars*) and *praxis* (*prudentia*). Gratuitous values characterize culture, he said, while the utilitarian value (there is only one, efficiency) characterizes civilization. Gratuitous acts such as good-night kisses and gratuitous objects such as birthday cakes are innately symbolic and, in these instances directly express love; utilitarian acts (fixing a faucet) and objects (a wrench) are not innately symbolic and, in themselves, express nothing. A civilization might involve many technological benefits, but without adequate expression of gratuitous values in art, religion, and domestic and social activities, civilization is culturally impoverished. In the modern western world, as in imperial Rome, the scale has tipped drastically to utilitarianism. The emphasis of almost all public and professional life is pragmatic. Where beauty exists in certain tools, machines, airplanes and weapons, it is accidental and (at least in intention) non-symbolic.

The antithesis between utility and gratuity, and the capacity of the gratuitous to be significant were entirely insights that Jones brought to the group and not derived from discussion in the group. Tom Burns, who is the first to expound the theory in print, in one of his prefaces for *Essays on Order* (1931), admitted that Jones ‘was very much the originator of that theory.’¹⁵⁸ Jones would later articulate his theory most succinctly in ‘Use and Sign’ (*DG* 177-85) and most thoroughly in ‘Art and Sacrament’ (*E&A* 143-79). Outside Burns’s preface and Jones’s subsequent essays, nothing resembling it appeared in English until Jacques Ellul’s *The Technological Society* (1965, a translation of *La technique ou l’enjeu du siècle*, 1955), which Jones would read in 1966 with enthusiastic agreement.

Historically, ‘The Break’ separated a balance between civilization and culture (or utility and gratuity) from recent imbalance in favour of civilization or utility. For the next forty years, as the ramifications of The Break became increasingly apparent, Jones would try to discover how

it might 'be overcome'. It was and would remain the greatest challenge of his life, bewildering him in his final years. He realized that socially nothing could be done. But in his art, and in a special way in his writing, he would provide, for those who could respond to it, a bridge over the gap, an ark for the flood. For him an analogue was Malory, who wrote on the eve of the modern era and its cool pragmatism, exemplified for Jones by the despicable Tudors. Like Malory, Jones was writing late in a historical phase, 'just in time' to remain true to the cultural deposits of the past but also late enough, perhaps, to bridge into the future.¹⁵⁹

Dawson and Jones were the Spenglerians in the group, and Dawson reminded them that industrial-scientific civilization had not made men wiser, better, or happier. In these respects, medieval Florence is probably preferable to Chicago. For Dawson—as during his Gill days, for Jones—the basic distinction was between matter and spirit, which had been separated by Descartes and which Romanticism had tried unsuccessfully to reconcile. With Christianity pushed to the periphery of consciousness, modern civilization become spiritually impoverished and socially unstable. And losing touch with social life, Christianity became sectarian. They all agreed that only Christianity could provide Europe with a spiritual foundation for social order and harmony, but Christianity itself had to be put back in touch with the natural and social world.¹⁶⁰

They talked about the Protestant Reformation, which Dawson thought primarily a manifestation of national awakening. They appreciated and agreed with Protestant criticism of the decadent medieval Church but thought it wrong to have rejected the institution. In Jones's view, the historical faults of the Church were merely to be expected of fallible humanity. He had no sympathy for Protestant moral outrage. He and others in the group felt strong personal antipathy to Luther as a crude anti-intellectual who had renounced the good sense of Aristotle and Aquinas and diminished freedom of the will. They despised Calvin for seeing God as a despot arbitrarily predestining some souls to hell and others to heaven.^{161*}

* Grisewood listed Jones's antipathies, which he shared: 'Reformation man, Renaissance man, Luther, Descartes,' and added, 'he felt revulsion towards them.'

In current European politics, they liked the Right for its loyalty to the traditions of the past, but not for its nationalism and economic vested interests. In contrast, the Left professed the ideals of social justice and international brotherhood but dismissed tradition and promoted class war and revolution. The Right seemed the lesser evil, but they felt no need to choose one over the other. They read and agreed with Belloc's polemic in *The Servile State* against both socialism and capitalism and his contention that citizens of modern states would sacrifice freedom and dignity for security and material goods. As the century progressed, Jones would increasingly look back on this book as prophetic. He also enjoyed Belloc's essays, particularly 'The Servants of the Rich.' He read Burns's copy of Belloc's *Europe and the Faith* (1921), but he and his friends disliked Belloc's equation of Europe with Catholicism. They dismissed Liberalism as the watered-down Christianity of an earlier age. It was everywhere in retreat or defeat. As in England, where Labour had replaced the Liberal Party, in most places, the Left was replacing an old Liberal order generally regarded as bankrupt. They discussed Charles Maurras, leader of the right-wing *Action Française*. Maurras was in love with classical tradition and with whatever paganism survived in Catholicism. Without being a member of the Church, he supported it but had no patience for its Hebrew roots. He was a monarchist and a scathing chastiser of French anticlerical republicans. Jones and Burns especially found him sympathetic but without agreeing with his assertion that there could be a Catholic politics and that it would be royalist. They preferred the call of Henri Massis in *Defense of the West* (1927) for a Europe morally and intellectually unified by an order of ideas rooted in the Catholic faith. Burns especially was enthusiastic about Massis. The Chelsea group wanted to retrieve from the past what was of value and discover an alternative to the political, social, and economic present. In this sense, as defined in opposition to the Left, they considered themselves 'avant-garde in a rightist Catholic European style.' Far from choosing fascism over Marxism, they objected to both as absolutizing the state. But they thought Marxism worse because it denied the spiritual dimension of reality. They spoke about the atheistic materialism of Feurbach as the false inspiration of Marxism, and Marx's Hebrew longing for social justice as its true inspiration. At this time Bolshevism seemed the revolutionary force that would succeed. They realized that its success would involve further persecution of the Church but imagined that eventually there would be a cultural transformation

in which Christianity would emerge triumphant as it had from the hostility of imperial Rome. The group continued discussing all this through the 1930s.¹⁶²

They were especially intrigued and impressed by the Italian priest and social theorist Luigi Sturzo. A theologian who based his theory on Aquinas and the social encyclicals of Leo XIII, he wanted to reintroduce Christian moral and social ideals into Italian political life and founded a Christian Democratic movement, which became the Italian Popular Party. It advocated proportional representation in parliament, extending the vote to women, and reforming education and legislation. The Italian fascists suppressed the party and in 1924 exiled Sturzo, who was now in England and in touch with Wall and Burns. Jones may have met him. Watkin was reading him. Sturzo's movement survived underground as the sole internal force resisting fascism in Italy and would emerge in 1945 as the Italian Christian Democrat Party. In exile, he was developing a sociology that was congenial to the Chelsea group. He assigned historical efficacy solely to the person, thereby stressing freedom and responsibility in opposition to the metaphysics of race, nation and class to which individual persons are sacrificed by both fascists and Bolsheviks. Chiefly on moral grounds, Sturzo sharply dissociated his party from socialism.

Whatever Jones and his friends discussed was in relation to their main topic, Catholic Christianity. In varying degrees, everyone present felt liberated from the strict terms of Catholic doctrinal expression, which God transcends. Catholicism was not, they knew, the absolute religion that prelates pretended, since the only conceivable absolute religion was God's understanding of himself in relation to everything else. Not that all forms of religion were equally untrue, but if Catholic Christianity revealed and interpreted God better than others, it remained infinitely inadequate to comprehending absolute reality and the operations of God.¹⁶³ They were determined to get down to fundamentals, and that meant ignoring a certain amount of historically-late Catholic doctrinal ideology. The majority who were Catholics considered themselves reformers, as opposed to 'papalist' Counterreformation Catholics.¹⁶⁴

They discussed the importance of doctrine relative to religious experience and agreed that experience, which involves momentary intuitions of divine presence, is more important since, without it, religion is dead. Prioritizing doctrine over experience was symptomatic of 'ecclesiastical materialism', which was epidemic, they agreed, among the Catholic hierarchy and clerical theologians. By ignoring authentic mystery, academic theologians deadened Christianity,

and were, Jones thought, like ‘the bad old men of the Royal Academy.’ In a letter to Grisewood in 1932, he wonders ‘of what precise use, anyway, is the academic mind?’ ‘*Must* an institution necessarily be materially run by uncreative minds? We used to say that Sergeant Majors, Bishops, Dons, Academicians, & all that were all right for the jobs they had—but I don’t believe this will really wash for deadness is a bloody curse anywhere and it does seem obvious there has got to be a certain rising from the tomb in every official statement of any Body no less than in every new poem or painting or pot.’ That the Church as a whole is not dead is owing solely to the holiness of its members and their experience of the presence of God. This experience Watkin distinguished from mysticism, which is a heightened, vivid all-consuming awareness of union with God. Jones appreciated the difference. In his last years he would complain, ‘The critics call me a visionary and a mystic—would to God I were!’*¹⁶⁵

They, and certainly he, believed that art continues and fulfills God’s creation just as grace fulfills nature. As he wrote in an essay, artists ‘extend, in a way, creative and redeeming influences upon the dead works of nature’. Seen rightly, no creative activity is profane, but art is more religious than other work. It fulfills nature by being praise of God for the nature of things. Christopher Smart, for example, ‘prayed always in every line of his poem, for each line is a praise.’ Only good art manages this. The opening of Gray’s ‘Elegy’ is ‘pure praise,’ Jones writes, but subsequent stanzas are corrupted by ‘a moralizing, improving bias.’ Ideology and propaganda are, he believed, dangerous to poetry, reducing art to discourse. The identification of art with praise would account for Jones being the least ironic of important modern poets. It may also account for his new pictures being mostly devoid of explicit religious associations. A Christian who is an artist need not, as Gill had thought, preach or prophesy; it was enough, as Jones put it, to feel ‘an affection for the intimate creaturliness of things ... and appreciation of the particular genius of places, men, trees, animals. It is important ... to know that a beef-steak is neither more nor less “mystical” than a diaphanous cloud. God loves both.’ The painter ‘must deny

* It would be wrong to read this exclamation, made in 1971, as support for the mistaken assertion by Miles and Shiel that late in life Jones was bothered by a ‘failure of his aspiration to approach more closely into communion with God’ or that ‘the concept of mysticism preoccupied him throughout his life (p. 138). According to Grisewood, Jones was never much concerned about mysticism.

nothing, he must integrate everything. But he must only deal with what he loves, and therefore knows, at any given time. He will come a cropper if he tries to be more understanding or inspired than he really is. Let him love more and more things. “It is better to love than to know” is his golden rule.’¹⁶⁶

An important influence on the group and certainly on Jones was Baron Friedrich von Hügel, whom he was ‘quite addicted to ... in the late ‘20s & early ‘30s’ and later considered a formative influence. He read von Hügel’s *Letters to a Niece* (1928) probably in 1929 and acquired and read ‘quite a bit in 1931’ his two-volume *The Mystical Element of Religion as Studied in St Catherine of Genoa and Her Friends* (1923), which he would reread in 1953. Like Maritain, von Hügel was for them all a model of Catholic intellectual and psychological honesty. In his writings he freely quotes the seventeenth century liberal François Fénelon, whose writings were condemned by the Church. Like his close friends the modernists Loisy and Tyrrell, von Hügel had been censured by the Vatican but, unlike them, remained a Catholic. He was the most balanced of Catholic spiritual writers. ‘Interesting,’ Jones wrote, ‘how down the centuries there is a de Lugo, a Newman, a Von Hügel —about one I suppose to ten thousand “bead-counters”’.^{167*} In the winter of 1951, reading in bed, he would come across a long article on St John’s Gospel in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and say to himself, ‘This is bloody interesting stuff—I wonder what the boys [in the Catholic hierarchy] would say to this.’ And when, at the end of the article, he saw the initials F. von H. he felt the consolation of having admired and agreed with an old friend as though for the first time because anonymously.¹⁶⁸

Von Hügel appealed to the entire Chelsea group because he was an integrationist, asserting that religion, philosophy, science, art, literature, and politics, all things ‘beautiful, true, and good’ are ‘*closely inter-related parts of one great whole.*’ All acts and experiences of every kind are ‘the means and instruments of living, of transfiguration, of growth for your soul, and of its beatitude.’ Nothing can be excluded. There is no grace without nature. Religion can only fully live, he writes, in someone with strong, broad, ‘non-religious’ interests. Historically, puritanism

* Although aware of the works on social morality by the seventeenth century Jesuit theologian and cardinal Juan de Lugo, Jones could not have read them since they were in Latin and untranslated.

and iconoclasm harmed the religions they sought to protect. Christianity should correspond in a balanced way to the most important datum of revelation: human personality. ‘Live all you can,’ he wrote, ‘as complete and full a life as you can find.’¹⁶⁹

In their discussions, which continued till 1939, emphasis on wholeness and the spiritual significance of all things helped to liberate Jones from the narrow evangelicalism of his childhood and the Catholic parochialism of his early acquaintance with Gill. From now on, his art was seldom explicitly religious or iconographically exclusive but embraced the nondenominational world. Von Hügel stressed that it was not necessary or even good ‘to be *churchy*’ as Jones had been at Ditchling and Capel.

He expressed his freedom from parochialism in the summer of 1929 when asked by Hector St. Luke to help establish a Catholic Arts and Crafts Guild to promote ‘a Catholic interpretation of natural beauty’. In August, he and Gill, who was also invited, discussed the request, and they agreed not to participate. In October, Jones replied to St. Luke, stating his own opinion that

Man is ‘Artist’ in virtue of his being a *human being* not in virtue of his being a *Baptized human being*.... One can’t be a Catholic *painter* as painter, one can *only* be a Catholic as *man*. ...That this quality called ‘Beauty’ finds its highest expression in the plastic Arts, as often as not, outside the Visible Church—is obvious—I think that labels like Catholic painter & so on tend to create an atmosphere of self-consciousness as to Catholicism inimical to *truly* Catholic work. ...you speak in your letter of my own pictures having ‘Catholic principles’ behind them ... I say in as far as there is any virtue in any picture it obviously has behind it ‘Catholic principles’ ...—so has a man playing tennis well & rightly or a young woman putting on a hat intelligently—with due regard to the end in view.

He saw no way in which a Catholic artist could use his art to promote Catholicism.¹⁷⁰

In von Hügel there was none of the evangelical egoism of apologetics and proselytizing. God and his grace are present everywhere. Consequently, people are best wherever they are, he thought, unless God wants them elsewhere. Instead of seeking conversion, he advised ‘humility, consideration, patience: encouraging of others to become quite different from ourselves.’ This allows and safeguards the independence that is true to our created natures. Difference is a good thing and allows unity in grace. Jones’s full agreement with all this is one reason he never attempted to convert non-Catholic friends. Von Hügel encouraged in the group a radical ecumenism that went beyond Christianity, since each religion is, he held, the fullest religious truth for those adhering to it.¹⁷¹

Von Hügel spoke to Jones's heart when he recommended history as an objective counterweight to subjectivism, which is the dominant influence in modern intellectual life. For minds softened by extreme subjectivity, truth is neither received nor sought but 'somehow projected or created, by us.' Von Hügel insisted—as also did the great 'Realist,' Aquinas—that reality or truth exists prior to and independently of our explorations or affirmations. If subjectivity corrupts religion and personality, it also, Jones realized, corrupts art.¹⁷²

He read *The Mystical Element of Religion*, which largely concerns St Catherine's Platonic mystical theology, which did not interest him. About mysticism, Jones said, 'It's not for me.'¹⁷³ Still, he was impressed by von Hügel's broadly eclectic blending of theology, psychology, and history. He loved the mind of von Hügel. For him, it was an archetypally Catholic mind.

A frequent concern of the group was the papal condemnation of modernism early in the century. Gregory XVI and Pius IX had spent most of the nineteenth century resisting the secular assumption that reason is the principal approach to truth. Modernism, as they called it, erupted within the Church at the start of the twentieth century. Influenced by liberal Protestantism and scientific empiricism, extreme modernists considered dogmas to be empty of truth-value. Moderates, including Newman and von Hügel, ascribed meaning to doctrines only as understood within the historical contexts of their promulgation. Without distinguishing between extremists and moderates, Pius X had condemned modernism in his 1907 encyclicals *Lamentabili* and *Pascendi*. Every priest, bishop and professor of theology was now required to take an oath against modernism and to teach a safe, approved, textbook theology—the result being widespread intellectual stultification within the Catholic Church. Jones and his friends regarded these encyclicals as monstrous.¹⁷⁴

A constructive Catholic response to modernism had begun in France with Maurice Blondel, who rejected both extreme-modernist denial of transcendence and the authoritarian papal reaction. He based his moderate position on Aquinas, who had more authority than any pope. In doing so, Blondel created Neo-Thomism. He pointed to the basic Thomistic doctrine that autonomy is paradoxically synonymous with total dependence on God. Because God's activity is most fully realized in beings behaving freely as themselves, freedom manifests the power and presence of God. Far from opposing freedom, which the Vatican did, God created and

sustained it and obviously approved of it. This encompassed human sexuality and psychology, the existence and nature of which reveal the will of God. Tempering all this, of course, was the doctrine of the Fall, but Thomistic emphasis was on creation as the fundamental datum of revelation. Grace was not an alternative to nature but a deepening of nature by which people participate in the life of God, which is love.

The doctrine that God wills freedom implicitly challenged Catholic institutional egoism, which Jones and his friends discussed in terms of clericalism and institutionalism. Clericalism is a superstition in which the numinous value of God and sacraments is attributed to churchmen. The Chelsea group was anticlerical in that they held many priests, bishops, and popes responsible for misrepresenting Catholicism in a way that encouraged non-Catholics to regard it as monolithic idiocy. At the heart of clerical institutionalism is the assumption that the Church is an end, not a means. Because the Middle Ages were relatively free of clericalism, Dante could depict popes in hell without being considered anti-Catholic. Traceable to the Counterreformation and worsened by Pius IX, Catholic institutionalism was no better, they thought, than its Soviet counterpart. Both devalue the person. Both idealized themselves by rewriting history. For the Church this means ignoring the Inquisition and forgetting the use of excommunication by Pope Alexander VI to prevent his mistress from returning to her husband. Only hypocrisy allows the Church to see itself as morally superior to the alternatives.

An occasional participant in these discussions was Stanley Morison, the most vehement denouncer among them of what he called the Vatican ‘macaroni merchants’. He regarded papal claims to infallibility as regrettable. About Catholic stifling of biblical criticism, he exclaimed, ‘How *can* they go on saying that Moses wrote the Pentateuch?!’ Jones and most of the group enjoyed Morison’s fulminations—though Jones could not take seriously his moral outrage. For him, Morison was always something of a joke, as was his insistence on being called by his surname. (Jones would imitate him, ‘Morison here.’) Woodruff did not enjoy Morison’s tirades so much, since he sympathized with Catholic institutionalism, and for that the others called him ‘Pope Douglas’, too ecclesiastical for their taste, too dogmatic, too involved in entertaining and knowing important bishops, cardinals, and the papal nuncio, too enamoured of ecclesiastical gossip. Jones found the Church as an institution ‘pretty worrying really—it’s almost like another religion in a way When they say something like “Have you put your name on the

Archbishop's list" you feel awfully like when someone says "Have you been to the Royal Academy?"—you want to answer "No, bugger it—I'm interested in painting." Yet, Jones thought, this 'should not be,' since the institutional Church had a 'reality' that the Royal Academy did not.¹⁷⁵

He had a particular grudge against the Council of Trent. Others present disliked it for making the Church oppositional, narrow, sectarian. He mainly objected to its declaration that art should be spiritually edifying—he looked up the reference (Session 25, 3-4 Dec. 1563) and was very precise in his opposition. He thought—and most of the others agreed—that spiritual or moral propaganda corrupts art. His position shocked Fr. D'Arcy, but Jones did not argue the point with him. His strategy in disagreement was avoidance because, he once said, 'You can only really talk to people who agree with you.'¹⁷⁶

D'Arcy was often present but marginally because his Tridentine moralism was out of sympathy with the Neo-Thomism of the others. He would posit questions about whether it was sinful to pick up a match box with the deliberate intention of offending God or whether it was sinful to take pleasure in an erection unintentionally acquired while riding a horse. The others laughed and said he was being absurd. Certainly such questions meant nothing to Jones, to whom morality was largely a visceral reaction against people being horrid to others or to animals. Grisewood remembered D'Arcy as 'a delightful, sweet, charming, good man, and very amusing,' but also as a Jesuit through-and-through. As creatures of the Council of Trent, Jesuits were Counterreformation in culture, narrowed by a history of antagonism. Always acute, D'Arcy realized that the new Thomism was important and interesting but it made him uncomfortable.¹⁷⁷ Intellectually and culturally, the affinities of Jones, Hague, Grisewood, Dawson, Wall, Gill, Attwater, Hansom, and Dru were with the great pre-Reformation orders, the Dominicans and Benedictines. Because their affinities were pre-Reformation, they were also post-Counterreformation.

In the Chelsea group, Jones came to understand doctrinal formulae within their original historical and psychological contexts. Late anti-modernist doctrinal formulations, which would have been alien to the vast majority of thinking Catholics throughout the ages, could not, they decided, be essential to the faith. Catholicism is not reducible to a monolithic Vatican ideology, and Catholics can understand doctrines quite differently while remaining 'orthodox,' as Jones

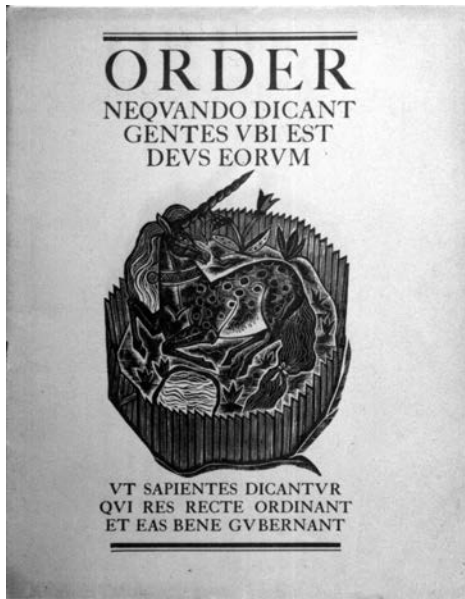
always considered himself to be. (Failing to understand this, some who write about him mistakenly consider his Catholicism eccentric.) He and his friends did not merely accept biblical myth or ecclesiastical dogma; they sought the meaning of the myth or dogma and they acceded to that. As he writes to a friend in 1935, he found ‘the truths of religion ... so different from what they appear at first sight—& much *truer* only much more difficult—& less outward ... anyway it is important to hang on, so to say.’¹⁷⁸

Grisewood once confided to him that he could not believe in the flames of purgatory, and Jones replied, ‘Well, you know, if you say that, you’ll get heaved out—they don’t like that.’ Grisewood asked, ‘Do you believe in the flames?’ Jones replied, ‘No, of course not, but I won’t say that to any priest. That’s just fanciful language, but that there is some kind of purgatorial process, yes.’ He was less serene when expressing to Gill his unhappiness about the flames of hell. They agreed that these were a metaphor for loss of the presence of God, but Jones said, ‘It seems a pity they don’t just leave it at that.’¹⁷⁹

The group agreed that the doctrine of the Fall could not be understood literally. The notion of transmissible moral fault seemed to them absurd. Adam and Eve made sense to him only as the first humanoids to evolve into human beings. Grisewood recalled him saying, ‘We don’t know what original sin was. We do know its effect in nature. You don’t ever have a perfect leaf; you only have an idea of a perfect leaf. You never have an absolutely beautiful cat; you only have the idea of a perfect cat.’ Furthermore, fossil evidence shows that suffering, violence, and imperfection characterized the eons prior to the appearance of humans. For the rest of his life, Jones would wonder ‘what precisely’ the Fall is but accepted ‘that something pretty fundamental has gone awry & certainly that great misery & appalling wrongness abound.’ It was, for him, a doctrine attesting to natural and human flaws for which the proper human response was compassion and love. He accepted the Fall as the precondition for the Incarnation and Redemption and therefore as a *felix culpa*.¹⁸⁰

Out of these discussions grew the idea of reforming the English Catholic Church, which they saw in its present state as an obstacle to faith. They agreed that the basic corruption was ‘ecclesiastical materialism’. Here Tom Burns took the lead. He would edit a journal that would, they hoped, have the effect of Wyndham Lewis’s *Blast* but chiefly resemble the Parisian journal *Cahiers*, in which Maritain, Berdyaev, Mauriac, and Bernanos published. Editor and contributors

would be anonymous, not to avoid recriminations, Burns claimed, but to keep argument impersonal. (I can remove the veil of anonymity below because Tom Burns identified the contributors for me.) He named the journal *Order*, which had nothing to do with the fascist ‘New Order,’ but reflected Maritain’s hierarchy of being and derived from Aquinas’s words on its masthead: ‘those are considered wise who put things into their right order and control them well.’



41. *Order*, 1929

Asked by Burns to make a picture for the cover, Jones contributed a large (5 x 4 inch) wood engraving of a unicorn in a circular enclosure—an O for ‘Order’ (fig. 41). The engraving suggests what ‘order’ meant to Jones: a reverberation of circles, some of which are filled in and therefore appear as centres. Within the circular fence is a circular pond. On the unicorn’s neckband is a circular collar with circular loop. On his body are thirty circular spots. The circular iris in his eye and the spots suggest that within the outer circle are many circles and centres. The animal’s head and horn turn back over its recumbent body to affirm the circularity of the fence, as do the lines of its

legs below. The water and the plants within the fence are emblematic of fertility. The circular pool, and the fence itself, are feminine shapes; the unicorn and his horn, masculine. In May 1929, the first number of *Order*, ‘an occasional Catholic Review,’ appeared in 500 copies published from a Monomark address and issued through Bumpus, the Oxford-Street bookseller. It quickly sold out and was reprinted. Three more numbers were published, in August 1928 and in March and November 1929.

The first number contains contributions by Jones, Burns, Watkin, and Gill. Jones’s is a full-size reproduction of the final engraving of *The Deluge*, suggesting affinity between the biblical cleansing and the renewal sought by the journal. Burns begins the first number with a brief manifesto targeting anti-Protestantism in the Catholic Press. Gill attacks ecclesiastical art as sentimental and false. In the lead article, Watkin attacks Catholic ideological and institutional imperialism and disdain for ‘doctrinal shortcomings’ of Anglicans without regard for the

‘goodness that mark so many of them and indicates a living membership in Christ which no intellectual error can destroy.’¹⁸¹

Ten weeks later, in the second number, Watkin develops a brilliant argument for the spiritual importance of aesthetic appreciation. Attwater encourages lay participation in the liturgy, and its simplification along lines promoted by the continental liturgical movement. Burns advocates the value of non-Catholic thought for Catholic intellectuals.¹⁸² This number advertises mounted and signed artist’s proofs of the cover engraving for 10s 6d, all profits going to the review.

In the third number, Burns attacks the ‘intellectual bankruptcy’ of English Catholics, Julien Green attacks bourgeois Catholicism, and Attwater appeals for a unity of spiritual life and external liturgical form. In the lead article, Dawson credits Freud with the ‘general realization of the importance of the sexual impulse’ and awareness of ‘the manifold disguises under which it manifests itself.’ This realization diminishes ‘puritanism and ... romantic idealization.’ Dawson criticizes Freudian belief that religion is merely a universalization of the Oedipus complex and claims that there is a spiritual counterforce to sexual passion that makes possible the attainment of ‘a supernatural moral ideal.’¹⁸³

In the fourth and final number, Burns proposes that doctrinal controversy with Anglicans be dropped for the sake of moral alignment; Dawson maintains that Catholicism is the sole representative of true social order, since it alone insists on supernatural Christianity without rejecting nature and human values; and Hamson criticizes Belloc’s Francophile anti-Prussianism, his ‘mystagoguery’ of Latin racism, and, especially, his anti-Semitism, and pleads that Belloc show ‘a little less enthusiasm for the new religion of Fascism.’¹⁸⁴

Publication of the journal ceased in 1929 because of the demands of Burns’s job at Sheed & Ward. He redirected his energy to a series of short books called ‘Essays in Order,’ which he co-edited with Dawson. The first of these was Maritain’s *Religion and Culture* (1929). For the cover of the series, Jones made a small wood engraving of a unicorn rampant at night in a landscape with a broken classical column symbolizing broken culture. The publishers later removed the column with Jones’s permission although, he said, the deletion ‘ruined the design.’¹⁸⁵

Although *Order* had a short run, it had a lasting effect on Catholic journalism. Its first direct descendent would be *Colosseum* (1934-49), edited by Bernard Wall and publishing essays by many of those who had appeared anonymously in *Order*. It would also inspire the *Catholic Herald*, edited by Donald Attwater under the directorship of John-Baptist Reeves. A more important result of *Order* would be the transformation of its chief target, the *Tablet*, a weekly Catholic paper that Cardinal Manning had bought from its lay founder to prevent it becoming liberal and modernist. In 1935 Woodruff and Burns would maneuver Cardinal Hinsley into restoring the paper to lay ownership with Woodruff as editor. Burns would be a director, supplying money and office space at Longmans Green, where he would then be working. Redesigned by Morison, it would achieve national breadth and high quality of journalism, including three of four pages per issue on world affairs by Woodruff. The *Tablet* would bring the Catholic Church out of its ghetto in England—although Woodruff embodied the Chesterbelloc tradition of seeing the Church as a complete society, centred in the Vatican and offering all the answers to the world's problems. In this he was out of step with the others in the Chelsea group. Burns was certainly less parochial, and there would be tension between him and Woodruff until the Second Vatican Council, when, in 1966, Burns would engineer a take-over of the paper and become its editor in 1967, opening it towards ecumenism and resisting the conservative post-conciliar papal-curial backlash.

With the rest of the group and often apart, Jones and Charles Burns talked—'endlessly,' according to Tom Burns—about psychology. As a psychiatrist, Charles was eclectic but primarily an Adlerian who preferred Jung to Freud because Jung valued spiritual awareness as authentic and not merely a distortion of sex. Charles led the group in discussing Jung. Jones learned about archetypes, an idea now influencing his painting and writing.* He learned about Jung's therapeutic innovation, 'free association,' which resembled the analogical thinking that Aquinas's advocated and which Jones would practice in his poetry. Charles was a close friend of Eric Strauss, a Freudian and member of a prominent Russian-Jewish family. He had recently converted to Catholicism while retaining his Jewish faith. He frequently visited St. Leonard's

* When asked whether Jones had actually read Jung, Tom Burns replied, 'I'm pretty sure, yes.'

Terrace, always with a cigar in his mouth. Together the Burnses, Strauss, and Jones, sometimes with others in the group, had many long discussions on Adler, Jung, and Freud, about whom Jones was then highly skeptical.¹⁸⁶

They dismissed Freud's reduction of religion to obsessional neurosis. They agreed with him that all man seeks in life is happiness but noted that happiness is the purpose of religion. They considered Freud's anthropological speculations peripheral and unconvincing. What they valued were his concepts of unconscious motivation and repression and his technique of analysis. Charles underwent Freudian analysis sometime in the early 1930s and subsequently valued Freud above Adler and Jung. He would like Freud for tearing off 'the mask of hypocrisy' so that, compared to Jung, Freud was 'the safer guide to health and perhaps even to holiness.' Jones followed Charles in his conversion to Freud. In the late 1930s, they sat together in a tea shop discussing the differences between Freud and Jung, and Jones likened Freud to Aristotle in contrast 'to Jung's Plato' and said, 'Siggy Freud was more "Catholic" than friend Jung, in some ways.' The writings of Geza Roheim would subsequently confirm Jones in his new preference.¹⁸⁷

The wide-ranging, frequent, discussions in the Chelsea group would be the matrix of *The Anathemata*, written after the group ceased meeting. In these discussions, Jones formulated his mature ideas about history, literature, sex, religion, and culture. Here he grasped a basically theological synthesis that unified all human experience and would be the overriding theme of *The Anathemata*. Here he worked out his theory of culture, which would inform that epic-length poem. These discussions would also be the matrix of the Third Programme, which Grisewood would shape and develop. Owing to their common origin, that poem and the Third Program would be, in a sense, first cousins.

Some months after returning from France, while engraving the *Ancient Mariner*, partly to rest his eyes Jones had returned 'in the evenings & at spare times' to writing. When his eyesight became too weak for engraving, he resumed work on *In Parenthesis* in earnest. He wrote in overlapping foliation drafts, rewriting in ink and then tentatively pushing forward in pencil. It was a method similar to his finishing one *Mariner* engraving and then drawing for the next.¹⁸⁸

In the spring of 1929, he read Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which was achieving unprecedented popular success. In England alone it would sell in translation a million copies in its first year and initiated a boom in which war memoirs dominated publishing lists for a decade. A vividly descriptive book, it may have been evocative for Jones, but as many reviewers noticed, it fails to convey a full and accurate sense of life in the trenches. Jones was at St. Leonard's Terrace when he finished it, and as he set it down, Tom Burns heard him say, 'Bugger it, I can do better than that. I'm going to write a book.' Perhaps with *All Quiet* especially in mind, he later remarked about war books, 'I didn't think anybody had done it properly. ... you couldn't exaggerate the tragedy of it, all the fear of it. At certain moments it was very uncomfortable. On the other hand, for a lot of the time it was like chaps going to the office ... you get used to things, you were much more interested in whether you were going to have any jam than whether the trench was going to be shelled. ... it's like ordinary life ... but only more intensified.'¹⁸⁹

Memory was stirred by other war memoirs, which nevertheless also failed, he thought, to deal 'satisfactorily with the war.' Early on, he had read and owned the books by C.E. Montague that give, he thought, 'a most accurate, moving account of what life was like on the La Basseé front.' He especially liked Montague's *Fiery Particles* (1923). He read Edmund Blunden's *Undertones of War* (1928), Robert Graves' *Goodbye to All That* (1929), Siegfried Sassoon's *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* (1930), Llywelyn Wynn Griffith's *Up to Mametz* (1931, acquired in April of that year), and Frank Richards' *Old Soldiers Never Die* (1933). He read in translation Ernst Jünger's *Storm and Steel* (1929) and *Copse 125* (1930). (He preferred the latter though finding in it 'the same ice-cold Nordic thing' that he disliked in the Saxon chronicles and the Norse *Heimskringla*, 'a savage grimness unrelieved by humour or less grim feelings.') He read Patrick Miller's *The Natural Man* (1924) in October 1930 and though it 'awfully good.' He read Herbert Read's *Retreat* (1930), which he considered 'absolutely a superb piece.' After reading a number of these books in the spring of 1930, he wrote to Petra, 'I'm not sure if it's good for me—one feels quite wistful about it, you know—like an old maid reading love stories'. He frequently spoke about these books to friends but while actually engaged in writing, avoided reading them for fear of unconscious borrowing. Later he said, 'I had read ... a hell of a lot of them I suppose, and none of them seemed to me ... to include what I wanted. Graves amused me,

but it all seemed to be about Robert Graves; Blunden I thought was much better, but again Siegfried Sassoon, jolly nice, but, you see, awfully about himself actually.’ He read little war poetry, none at all by Sassoon or Owen, whom he would read only after the publication of *In Parenthesis*. In his opinion, all war writers had failed to find a language true both to the war and the modern present.¹⁹⁰

His chief objection to war books and war verse had to do with history. He faulted them for not expressing the awareness of historical continuity that he and others had felt so strongly during the war. For him historical evocations had run deep and the western front was,

roughly speaking, the same ‘place of armies’ known to so many generations of sons—for centuries—long, long before Wellington, before Marlborough, before Harry of Monmouth & Talbot & his Goddams, before the Black Prince, before the Angevins, before the Colonization of Brittany by Britons—ever since Maximus the Great embarked his army raised in Britain for service across the channel ... nearly sixteen hundred years ago.

He later concluded that historical perspective was missing from books about the war because almost all their authors were upper-middle-class public-school and university graduates; and, he would say, ‘the main, cultivated, educated, civilized, sensitized English mind at that time had *very little historical appreciation*.’ He realized that the upper-middle-class Anglo-Welsh NCOs of his regiment would have written the same ‘subjective, disillusioned, courageous, wistful, ... outraged’ stuff as had disappointed him as a reader. Absence of historical perspective was, he thought, an aesthetic fault since ‘the inward feeling and the intimate texture of any “historic present” linked, necessarily, with a whole historic past, ... dictates the feeling and largely determines the form of any work of writing or painting, or whatever.’ In writing *In Parenthesis* he was trying ‘to re-present again under the form of words this complex of past and present.’ The complex involved contrast as well as similarity, but the inner nature of war is unchanged as long as fear is an emotional absolute. In this he had the encouragement of Dawson, who wrote to him, ‘I don’t see how you can avoid getting through *this* war to all wars.’¹⁹¹

Jones also thought that most war books failed to convey the affection infantrymen felt for one another. In 1930 he read Frederic Manning’s *Her Privates We* and wrote to Petra, ‘every line of it so far is like an echo of some personal experience: & he does get some feeling of the extreme *tenderness* of men in action to each other that I think, say, ‘Goodbye to all that’ & ‘All Quiet’ quite miss—But the war part of [Richard Aldington’s] ‘Death of a Hero’ [1929] also gets

to some extent this tenderness that was so poignant in the impossible hardness of the circumstances—but no one has yet done it properly—yet—I expect someone will before long.’¹⁹²

He had shown his writing to no one. At Portslade in late 1929 or early 1930, as they walked on the beech, he mentioned to Harman Grisewood that he was writing something in order to examine the relation of painting to writing. Soon after, he ventured to show and read to him an early draft of the opening pages, and Grisewood said, ‘You must jolly well go on with this.’¹⁹³

He also showed this material to Hague. It was eight pages of 7-by-5-inch lined note paper, in which privates are named Leg, Bum, and Ball, after ‘private’ parts, and others are Sergeant Snell, Corporal Spangler, and Captain Trubshaw. Of these only Ball and Snell would survive revisions. The anatomical naming suggests for Ball a sexual association that involves, in the published version, fertility ritual and the great unspoken fear of all soldiers, castration.

In the stages of composition, Jones took one step back into his text, expanding material, and then went forward, adding five more pages. He would expand half a page of prior draft into two pages of new draft. He continued writing this way, in overlapping foliations, back in ink, forward in pencil. To his surprise, he found that when he ‘concentrated hard enough’ he ‘could remember the sequence of events from day to day, or week to week ... starting from the parade-ground at Winchester on the 10th Dec. 1915.’ He proceeded, he later said, ‘rather like a chap unrolling ... some fragile & broken layers of a scroll from an archaeological “find.”’ For him, remembering was as much spatial as temporal: ‘gradually by getting a clear picture of some given situation I could then recall another a bit ... further forward and slowly by trying to recall what happened at such & such a time, was able to join the established points, but of course,’ he added fascinatingly, ‘it was rather like a map.’ He had no difficulty recalling his interior states of mind—which had permanently imprinted his memory, each leaving what he called ‘an indelible mark’—but had to struggle to recall external particularities—the shape of a trench tool, the working of a weapon. He checked his memory of these with Medworth and Poulter. He also took out his sketches made at the front, which reminded him of what ruined buildings looked like but had no direct bearing on his writing. He vividly recalled entering the front line and also the names of places, such as ruined farm buildings and trenches but was unsure about their location relative to one another. While working on Part 3—from the early foliations, the sections are

numbered—he consulted an ordinance survey map of north-west France and Belgium. Initially he had no sense of what period he would cover but, as recollection continued, he decided to include only the seven months of his service culminating in the battle of the Somme. He could remember all this vividly, while the time after the Somme was ‘just a dull repetition’ yielding ‘only a muddled impression,’ though he imported into his writing things said or done in the later period.¹⁹⁴

The process of remembering—he likened it to weaving a tapestry—would continue until he achieved a fairly continuous chronicle of the seven months. He saw himself as fulfilling the role of bard as ‘official “rememberer” and continuator of the tradition of that tribal organism,’ whose works are ‘evocative, incantative, and have the power of “re-calling”.’ So much remembering would give the poem a documentary aspect, although he changed chronology ‘when it appeared to serve my purpose.’* Re-calling was ‘renewing,’ which, he would tell a friend, ‘is a *very* good word because ... the past takes on a new form because of the changed [present] situation.’¹⁹⁵ The past was different in the present. One thing that changed was a sharpening of the antithesis he had felt during the war between traditional values and industrial technology. Another was a sense of what art and poetry could be.

From the start, remembering involved a good deal of free association revealing interior states of mind. In this, he was encouraged by John Livingston Lowes’ *The Road to Xanadu*, which he read in 1929 after engraving for the *Ancient Mariner* and which he would include in his list of sources for *In Parenthesis*. As possible influences on the voyage of Coleridge’s Mariner, Lowes presents accounts of voyages to uncharted polar regions described as places of impenetrable mists, horrors, and fantastic happenings. These accounts helped to open Jones’s imagination to the Hades-like seascape of ancient Welsh poetry to which *In Parenthesis* alludes. Lowes encouraged him in the creative process by stressing the importance of quasi-free association which allows the subconscious mind to reveal unusual analogues. Lowes repeatedly praises the way impressions and memories mix in the welter of the subconscious where the

* For the relation of the text to actual events, see Dilworth, ‘*In Parenthesis: the Displacement of Chronicle*,’ *Craft & Tradition: Essays in Honour of William Blissett*, eds. H.B. de Groot and Alexander Leggatt (Calgary: University of Calgary, 1990), 229-40.

associative faculty orders, interweaves, and transforms them before they emerge into conscious imagination. ‘Chaos precedes cosmos,’ writes Lowes, a statement Jones may have had in mind when telling a visitor that his writing was an attempt to find order in the chaos of the war and of the present phase of civilization, and all this was bound up in the act of writing as aesthetic discovery of order in chaos. He later read and agreed strongly with Thomas Gilby’s statement that the human mind is a hunter of forms. According to Lowes, artistic order emerges through ‘the architectonic imagination, moving, *sua sponte*, among the scattered fragments, and discerning, latent in their confusion, the pattern of a whole.’ He writes, furthermore, that the unconscious associative aspect of writing leaves its trace in works that seem alive, unusual, metamorphic. This is the sort of literature Jones loved most and considered characteristically Celtic.¹⁹⁶

One of his aesthetic mantras would be Aristotle’s quotation from the poet Agathon, ‘Art loves chance & chance loves art.’ Even though the job of the artist is ‘the deliberate juxtaposing of forms,’ Jones wrote, he ‘must constantly keep a weather-eye for whatever may loom on his horizon of a wholly “chance”, fortuitous, accidental and sometimes fleeting nature. In so far as that chance thing or notion subserves the end to which his particular *poiesis* proceeds he must indeed “take the current as it serves.”’ The source of many of these chance occurrences is, he wrote, ‘the “sub-conscious” & the “unconscious” of the psychologists.’ He did not need Lowes to tell him this—he knew it from discussions at St. Leonard’s Terrace and Elm Row—but, he continued in imagery suggestive of a Coleridgean link-up with Lowes, this subonscious ‘may well be comparable in bulk to the fathoms under bulk of ice in contrast to the jagged crenels of the drifting berg sighted by the look-out above the sea-fret at dawn.’¹⁹⁷ Many of Jones’s early drafts for *In Parenthesis* are characterized by quasi-free association and stream-of-consciousness. When writing his later poetry, less conditioned than *In Parenthesis* by sequential memory and less directed by narrative, these aspects predominate in early drafts. Receptivity to subconscious pre-creation throughout the creative process gives his writing its open, untamed, metamorphic character.

At the start of one of his early drafts of *In Parenthesis*, he is explicit about capturing semi-conscious mental associations. When Pte. Ball is late for parade and his name and number are taken, Jones writes:

When the bludgeoning of chance becomes too unspeakable, the brain, in self defense, just floats unsteered wherever it may choose—how it tacks & veers—John Ball forgot the iniquity of those in high places & considered many things in themselves wholly unconnected—He started off with the white porch of his home—& the Palatinus[,] then veered into better verse—‘the gentlemen of England now abet—abed—A-bed—Beds in general—& once the brain gets hold of the idea *bed* the narrow straits of the contingent are passed & one enters the vast limitless ocean of an idea—from Corporal Sprangler’s favourite post-cards to St John the Apostle or John the Elder is it?—& the beds the saints rejoice in—then this business of the gospels—odd texts floated about—Centurians—they had charge of a hundred men like Captain ~~Leslie~~ Aubrey Trubshaw, there on his nice horse—at this point he noticed the excellent profile of Mr Jenkins & all his elegance—like a gentleman of Verona—with yellow hair: Paulo Ucello—The Rout of San Romano the squire with the profile & the yellow hair all unhelmeted—the Rout of San Romano—we dont have lances now—nor banners—nor trumpets, at least not respectable trumpets—I wonder if they blew ‘Devaulters’ [sic] on the Ucello Trumpets—we have horses—but not war horses really—no—Ucello—14 Something—14 Something or other—*Gunpowder*—Yes thats it, *Gunpowder*—that ‘a little altered things’ as Browning says but it must be more than that. Pte Ball reajusted his pack with one hand. God! no mess-tin cover, ~~hell~~ ‘improperly dressed when parading for overseas’—they’re *bound* to notice it—

Some of Jones’s personal free association and stream of consciousness also enters these drafts by way of drawings of the heads of infantrymen and, predominantly, the heads, torsos, and bodies (usually clothed) of young women. He also drew a sketch of Edward, Prince of Wales, as he remembered meeting him in the trenches in 1917.¹⁹⁸

A consequence of giving free rein to mental association is allusiveness—Lowes’ study of Coleridge is largely a treatise on allusion. Jones was making allusions but not with premeditative deliberation. He was writing ‘not necessarily consciously intending to evoke this or that source’ but much more because they were within his “word hoard” and seemed the only way, given the changing mood of the content, to make the form.’ Allusions to Malory and Welsh legend are present in the earliest drafts. Allusions to Lewis Carroll came later. When literary critics later claimed that the work is at odds with its subject because of post-war associations violating the narrative present, Jones would privately object, saying that he had merely ‘made explicit what was ... implicit’ and that nothing in the book was without justification in a remembered word, reaction, feeling, or thought.¹⁹⁹ And, as we have seen, most of the material alluded to Jones had been familiar with before the war.

In 1930, when he ceased engraving, the writing changed from ‘a kind of spare-time occupation’ to ‘a serious obsession.’ Wherever he went, he carried the pages on which he was working in a long black Brampton’s Patent Instantaneous Binder. Writing became integral to his life. Grisewood and Ede thought the writing a purgation for him, an externalization of much about the war that was hurting him. But he regarded it as entirely an aesthetic challenge: the analogy between writing and painting remained his guiding principal, and he tried ‘to make every part both concrete & particular & yet with a recession of meanings & unlocalized as well. . . . not wandering off & writing “about” the thing instead of making the thing itself in words.’ Because he had already learned to solve aesthetic problems in visual art, he was convinced that his being ‘first and almost wholly a visual artist’ made his writing “different” from that of other writers.’ He generated verbal context, tried out different words, finding the right ones, placing them, and, as the context changed with new placements, adjusting, rearranging, readjusting. As with a picture, the meaning was in the relationships, and the relationships were multiple, complex, subtle, and changed with revision. ‘It nearly drives me mad,’ he said; ‘that’s why it takes me such a frightful time to do anything right. I don’t mean going to the dictionary but in a sense that’s the easiest way of saying it, to find out if some word or combination of words will do the trick. It’s very difficult.’ Thirty years later, when asked, ‘Did you work hard?’ he replied, ‘Oh, oh, oh, terribly,’ and added with some exaggeration, ‘Everything was written hundreds of times, actually.’²⁰⁰

Grisewood was writing verse, so he and Jones discussed their work and the craft of poetry. They met to do this in the basement restaurant of Simpson’s-in-the-Strand, which was easy for Grisewood to reach from the BBC in Savoy Hill off the Strand and close to Charing Cross, where Jones arrived from Brockley. The restaurant was downstairs from the main entrance on the left. It resembled the smoking room in a club, with green leather couches, a long wooden bar, white-painted wood paneling, and three brass chandeliers hanging from the ornate plaster-work ceiling. Meeting sometimes for lunch, sometimes for supper—Jones liked the plain but delicious English food—they mostly sat at a table on the left, close to the bar. After supper, they talked over drinks long into the night, sometimes going on to St. Leonard’s Terrace to continue talking. Jones was, Grisewood remembered, ‘breaking the back of the first parts’ of his poem, now rewritten on foolscap pages. After reading his new work aloud to Grisewood, they

crouched over it analyzing it. Or Grisewood read a poem he had recently written and they discussed that. In this way they investigated and, in the root sense of the word, ‘invented’ poetry. Grisewood recalls,

David attached a great deal of importance to contemporary responses. He knew that you simply couldn’t, if you were attempting to write poetry, try to reproduce the techniques and the achievements of those you admired. You had to make a completely new reconnaissance of the whole literary and verbal scene and make your words amenable to your historical situation. That’s why David’s historical sensitivities were very important to his art. It had to be contemporary, it had to be real in nowadays terms in the words that you heard people using. So the problem of writing poetry, we began to appreciate, was a new problem. One had to discover it anew. He used to say ‘Do you think this really works?’ We would discuss in detail the technical side of the thing. We didn’t bother about whether it was grandiose or wonderful or affected you or anything like that. It was really much more like making a machine or mending a window.²⁰¹

Some of Jones’s writing was clearly poetry; some not. They discussed the differences as determined by the relation of words to context. Placed in a certain verbal context, a word ‘gives rise to poetry,’ as Jones put it, whereas the same word in another context generates prose. ‘Deliberate juxtaposing’ followed the initial stages of quasi-free association. Such deliberation is, he was convinced, ‘the crucial *conscious* concern of the man making a work’ in any medium. The artist has

with conscious deliberation to ‘judge’ as the work proceeds, whether or not this line, mark, smudge, accent of colour, etc (in the case of a drawing) or this word, or order of words, this break of line, this space between lines, etc (in the case of writing) give those juxtapositions which best (in his judgement) create the forms which are most congruent with the content-form that constitutes the whole.

Together he and Grisewood examined the position of a word in its line and sentence and passage. ‘It was the position that made it poetry instead of prose,’ Grisewood said; ‘this was what defined poetry for us.’ A word would be placed, Jones said, to ‘best enhance ... the form and content of the whole, remembering that there can be no “whole” unless “content” and “form” are so wed and made one that we no longer think of them as separate’ and ‘the last thing that invades the mind’ is ‘any question of “content” and “form”.’ He wanted not to write poetry as conventionally understood (as stanzas of verse) but to make language mean as much as possible.²⁰²

The result would be original, but he was guided by literary precedents. His primary model for transforming conversational language into poetry was *Anna Livia Plurabelle*. He told

Grisewood that he wanted to put words together so that they have the same effect on him as the recording of Joyce reading from that work. *Anna Livia* may also have encouraged his penchant for catalogues, which appear in early draft foliations as well as the finished poem. His other important model for poetic use of colloquial language was Browning, especially ‘Bishop Bloughram’s Apology.’ For fragmentation of the sort that would characterize Part 7 of *In Parenthesis*, there was the example of Eliot’s *The Waste Land*. For a model of rhythmic freedom, there was plain chant, in which words determine an ever-changing, free-flowing measure. And for lyrical, meditative interiority joining with the ghost of narrative, there was the example of St. John Perse’s *Anabasis* in Eliot’s translation (1931), which he thought ‘magnificent’ and later said, ‘made a great impression on me.’^{203*}

For vitality and economy, there was the example of Hopkins, whom he began reading in earnest after his father gave him the collected *Poetry* for Christmas 1930. He was interested in the poetry of Whitman at this time, but Hopkins impressed him more. Reading his poetry was ‘rather like hearing plain song or very early polyphony for the first time ... which makes all the great Masters of music of later centuries seem, by comparison, just vulgar.’ Hopkins stirred his fascination with philology and demonstrated how Anglo-Saxon words were more deeply felt than those with Latin roots. Hopkins also demonstrated how the sound, rhythm, etymology, and connotations of a word may be emphasized by juxtaposition. Beyond that, Hopkins had a remarkable sense of intrinsic form. Jones found him ‘superb and more interesting ... than almost any poet for centuries. He really understood what poetry was all about & how it is a made thing with a shape—He really “makes” his poems in a way that can be said of few poets.’ Referring to him among friends as ‘High spot Hopkins’, he would reread him for the rest of his life. He would appreciate ‘The Wreck of the Deutschland’ as ‘the greatest of the poems,’ but have a special

* Of all important influences on his work, Perse would be the one unnoticed by critics. In 1962, Jones wrote that *Anabasis* ‘filled me with great admiration & still does.’ That year he wrote to Kathleen Raine in Washington asking her to tell St John Perse, the French ambassador, ‘that the *Anabasis* had a really direct influence on me (I think). I still read it every now & again & it remains just as good as ever. ... with T.S.E.’s trans. I can compare the French words & see how it works.’ In 1972 he wrote that ‘authors understandably do not like to talk about influences, but if anyone has influenced me in the deepest sense, it’s St John Perse.’

liking for others, particularly ‘The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo’ and ‘Spelt from Sibyl’s Leaves’. Decades later, he would write to Vernon Watkins,

Cynghanedd surely influenced those. I’m so *bloody* ignorant—but that verb-noun thing they go in for in Wales—and noun-adjective (is it?) seems to have the most valuable & caustic (if that’s the word) influence on the English speech-form. I wish those blasted chaps at St Beuno’s had let him go on with his Welsh studies. But perhaps it was just those intolerable tensions that made him such a superb poet, in spite of all the Victorianism. His sermons are interesting because they have *exactly* the same quality. God knows what chaps made of ‘em.

Hopkins’s poetry became for him the prime literary model of making the past contemporary. The influence of medieval Welsh court-poetry helped make Hopkins’s poetry so extraordinarily new that it was the first great manifestation of literary modernism, in some instances anticipating the linguistic pyrotechnics of *Finnegans Wake*. In the distant past, Hopkins had found a precedent for what Jones called ‘that tightening up, precision, search for compactness, finding the word that would give off the maximum association, the attempt to *make form & content indivisible* etc.’ By his own admission, Hopkins had ‘a very great influence’ on his writing, and he would later wonder why academics who claimed, wrongly, that he was influenced by Pound (whom he had not read) seldom saw or mentioned his debt to Hopkins.²⁰⁴

In his own writing, Jones moved from deciding about syntactical placement of words to considering visually their spatial placement. Line lengths, line breaks, and spacing were important to him as aural indicators. For him words had an almost physical texture and weight, like the boxwood he had carved, and, as he spoke them aloud, he hefted and caressed them. He tested everything repeatedly by reading aloud. ‘Unless it sounds right when read,’ he said, ‘it’s no good at all.’²⁰⁵ Although he discussed technique only with Grisewood, he now read aloud what he was writing to other close friends individually and in small groups.

He did not make the mistake of equating poetry with verse. He alternated between sections of run-on lines (prose form) and end lines (verse), but a passage best printed run-on was not necessarily prose. ‘Part of our theory,’ Grisewood said, was ‘that there was a sliding scale in this matter. There was an intensification of meaning that you would give to a word, and this would slide away into a non-poetic use.’ Writing in prose lines involved a ‘lessening of tension’ but might be poetry or close to it on the scale between poetry and prose. After discussing the matter, they found confirmation in Shakespeare’s alternation between verse and run-on lines in

the history plays, although Shakespeare had a different purpose. Three decades later Jones recalled,

The switches over from ‘prose’ to a sort of ‘verse’ form came absolutely naturally. And about the validity of that I did & do have rather definite feelings. It seems to me a perfectly reasonable & natural way of carrying on. Perhaps over that I was much influenced by the precedent of early literature the A.S. Chronicle & certain early Celtic stuff where chaps suddenly break into verse. I know it’s not quite the same thing, for there the distinction is quite abrupt & clearly defined and prefaced with some such remark as ‘there so & so sang to’ as also in Biblical passages such as the ‘Song of Debora’—whereas I required (and believe in) a completely fluid mingling of ‘prose’ form & ‘verse’ form. I don’t like what is called ‘poetic prose’, though maybe, in places, I’m guilty of it. But I hope not much.

He added, ‘It seems to me quite natural to slip from one to the other, as in in the *Heimskringla* ... or, indeed, in ordinary conversation. I think the division is academic—but this is a big subject. After all, when chaps are in love they tend to drift from “prose” to a sort of “poetry” quite naturally.’ He would write to Herbert Read, ‘it is “poetry” that matters, whether the medium is paint or stone or so-called “verse” or “prose” or whatever medium one can bloody well think of.’ When reading aloud he conveyed the difference between verse and run-on lines subtly in his voice, a practice discontinued by the time he made radio broadcasts and recordings. He read end-lines with greater deliberation in a steady, identifiable rhythm and run-on lines in differing rhythms and, sometimes, a quickening of pace.²⁰⁶

In practice, the question of genre was irrelevant. Grisewood would press him: ‘What is this, David? People are going to ask is this prose, is this poetry,’ and he would reply, ‘Let them ask. I don’t want to clear it up, and I don’t see why we should. This is simply how I want to say it, and this is best presented in this seemingly prose style whereas the other is best broken up like that.’ When asked by Laurence Binyon whether he was, in certain run-on passages intentionally writing blank verse, he would answer, ‘I just have to let the thing grow as it will in a kind of way—but curbing it & coaxing it or kicking it to give the form I feel best expresses what I want to say. ... I just proceeded as I do with my painting, making any marks & lines & smudges that the medium will allow somewhat desperately hoping that it will be intelligible in the end—an exhausting process, & very amateur.’ To a literature professor he would write,

I was pretty ignorant of, and not interested in, metre & all that, to me, terribly technical and difficult business of ‘feet’ & ‘quantities’ and ‘iambics’ etc. which are so much discussed by say Hopkins and Bridges & indeed by

all proper poets. I merely knew what the ‘*content*’ of I.P. was to be—as for the ‘*form*’ well, that, as I proceeded, seemed to be the *only* form agreeable to that content. So that no matter what the ‘influences’ vis-a-vis the form, my attitude toward the making of the writing was, I suppose, somewhat different from the attitude of professional poets and writers. I wasn’t attempting anything new or experimental, it was only that, as I proceeded, I was groping my way of saying what I wanted to say.²⁰⁷

He was wedding form to content, not achieving innovation for its own sake, and in this respect he would feel himself different from other modern writers:

Among some there seemed a conscious determination to create new forms in writing—rather than finding that new techniques were forced upon them by the particular nature of the content My sole conscious intention was to ‘make a shape in words’ which by their arrangement on the page, punctuation, lack of punctuation, breaks in lines, tensions, relaxing of tension, etc. etc. would re-call, re-present, under the form of words, certain flesh & blood experiences together with the historic, mythological etc *materia* which, for me, was inseparable from these experiences. Thus Part 7 approaches nearer to ‘verse’ than most of the rest of the work, because the quickening pulse of the content demanded it—or at least I could find no other way of re-presenting, making of, the content of that concluding part. My only ‘rule’ or ‘principle’ or deliberate and overriding consideration was that the words used & their juxtaposition with other words should have as many overtones & undertones as possible apropos the content, and to avoid if possible words that have the wrong evocation, or if not ‘wrong’, less fully evocative of the many-faceted image I was seeking to re-present.

‘Once one has embarked on the evocative use of words,’ he said, ‘the “form” will inevitably be directed by the content, if it is to succeed at all in conveying that “content” and its implications and associations.’²⁰⁸

Gradually he was achieving a technical miracle, inventing a new range of kinds of English. The language modulates between an approximation of Cockney and a heightened, artificial, epic language influenced, as he realized, by the King James version of the Bible. His infantrymen speak something like Cockney, which is the vernacular of the army. In the early foliation drafts, this is the ludicrous Cockney of Kipling. But that breaks intimacy with the reader, so Jones created a language suggestive of Cockney without imitating it:

The real thing I’m afraid of is this business of Cockney speech. It’s the very devil to try & make a *real enduring shape that won’t be embarrassing* with the stuff—dropped ‘h’s & ‘yers’ & ‘bloody’ & all that are so difficult. And yet you’ve got to get across that from of speech somehow because so much of the feeling of the sentences depends on all that. How to make it not *realistic* is the bugger. ²⁰⁹

A lot in initial drafts is in this sense embarrassing, as when, in Part 2, Sergeant Snell considers Lieutenant Jenkins, ‘friendly-like, but officers oughter be officers them hamatures wots done it—yus, an’ lose the bleedin’ war, and thats a cert ... too dam easy wiv the men ... them buggers takes hadvantage.’ As he worked through foliation drafts, Jones lessened orthographical notation of Cockney pronunciation while preserving Cockney syntax, rhythms, and vocabulary. He then returned to the early sections and de-Kiplingized them. He also eliminated the coarse (characteristically Cockney) vocabulary that pervades early drafts. Its impact on the page is greater, he found, than when spoken. For example, he changed ‘Fucking obliged’ in an early draft to ‘signally obliged’. Realism precluded imitation. The result may be the first successful literary use of Cockney, which, in Dickens and Kipling is mainly comic. He also de-Fleullenizes the English Welshmen speak. When Ball is late for parade, Lance-Corporal Lewis comments, in manuscript, ‘I tell you, it is a serious preach of discipline—suppose you wass late for the Lasst Blutty-Judgment ... Duw Duw.’ In the final version this becomes, simply: ‘there was a man in Bethesda late for the last bloody judgment.’ (A joke, since the Last Judgment is something for which it is impossible to be late.) As a result of meticulous adjustments during years of revision, the language spoken by infantrymen in the poem is closer to the broad middle range of its narrative voice. This closeness allows for easy modulation between the coarse, lower-class eloquence of fictional soldier’s speech and the more formally composed styles of the narrative range—a medial language operating like the middle tone in his paintings that unifies by serving as a basis for variation.

In the initial foliations of Parts I through III, the central figure is a private named Bobby Saunders, who has Jones’s inadequate chest-expansion and fascination with the breasts of his sister’s girlfriend. In the early drafts of Part 3, Saunders, John Ball, and Lieutenant Jenkins vie with one another for primacy. There the poet decides on Ball as principal narrative reflector, requiring a rewriting of the early parts, eliminating a dozen foolscap pages about Saunders’s childhood. It is also while drafting Part 3 that Jones discovers his narrative style.

Each foliation amounted to approximately three complete drafts. As he redrafted material, he changed names of figures. Veronica Smythe becomes Veronica Best. Liber Leutnant Hugel (in honour of von Hügel) becomes Ober-Leutnant Müller. In the course of five name-changes, a lance-Corporal named Evans becomes Aneirin Merddyn Lewis. And Jones

economizes. Corporal Quilter was originally two corporals. Initially, the battalion going to the front line comes under artillery fire several times—this Jones condenses into the single cataclysmic shell-burst at the end of Part 2. He wrote five initial drafts of this great archetypal shell-burst, and twenty initial drafts of Ball's meditation on guard duty at the end of Part 3.

Jones was for long periods uncertain about his writing, disliking parts or all of it. While he painted with absolute confidence, he wrote with uncertainty and tentativeness, unsure of the quality of the work. Repeatedly he was tempted to quit, but Grisewood encouraged, 'Well done, that's absolutely it—you must go on.' He had faith in Jones as a writer that, he remembered, 'David himself was very slow to acquire.' Jones frequently showed and read his writing to Hague and the Edes, but it was with Grisewood 'especially' that he talked about it and, he said, 'Harman Grisewood made me stick to it.' 'If it hadn't been for Harman, there wouldn't be an *In Parenthesis*,' though he also said that by the time he was discussing it with Grisewood, 'I was deeply interested in the experiment—so I might have proceeded, in any case.'²¹⁰

Jones was coming up to London from Brockley at least twice a week. Often, before going on to see anyone else, he visited Hague in the bookshop in Red Lion Square, since, of his employed friends, Hague was the most visitable during working hours. (This was prior to Hague's marriage.) Afterwards, they might go to one of a number of local pubs, or Jones would take his leave by saying, 'Well, I'm going now to Hampstead to see Jim and Helen,' and Hague would recite Belloc's Sonnet 28, beginning, 'But oh, not lovely Helen, not the pride of that most ancient Ilium matched with doom.' Learning the poem by heart from hearing Hague recite it so often, Jones liked it not as a poem but for its evocation of Troy. Often with Hague, he would go on to St. Leonard's Terrace or visit Grisewood at 42 Lexham Gardens, where he lived with an aunt.²¹¹

Jones and Grisewood with Hague and other St. Leonard's-Terrace friends went on the same day weekly to eat at La Commercio, at tiny, inexpensive family-run Italian restaurant on Charlotte Street in Soho, and others would meet them there. They were waited on by the beautiful daughters of the family, and there was a good deal of flirtation. Jones's favourite was lovely, reposeful Francesca, for him a standard of beauty. Sometimes he would look at a picture or speak of a person and say, 'That's like Francesca.' He sometimes drew her from memory.²¹² Or he and his friends would eat at the Gourmet restaurant in Lyle Street. Making his way out of

the Gourmet once with Charles Burns and Grisewood, Jones passed by Hilaire Belloc, holding a large glass of burgundy and saying, 'I have seen the horrors, I foresee the pit.'²¹³

Grisewood was a fascinating companion. He had spent his time since university travelling around the Mediterranean and was full of interesting stories, including one about an eccentric uncle from whom gramophones had to be hidden because he attacked them with his walking stick and another story about his own close escape when lava-flow from Mt. Etna swallowed the train on which he had fallen asleep. He fascinated Jones with a description of Aphrodite's foamy Pathos. He talked of himself and his father sailing into Athens, watching Greeks on board hail the sight of the Parthenon, and wondering how the Greek experience compared to what Englishmen feel coming home to the white cliffs of Britain—all of which would inform an episode in *The Anathema* (94-108). Grisewood got from Rupert Hart-Davis a green overcoat, which he passed on to Jones, who dyed it black. The hem falling to his ankles, it became his 'greatcoat' in army parlance or jokingly his 'little coat.'²¹⁴

He went to the special exhibitions at Burlington House, the most important of all for him being that of Italian masterpieces in January 1930. Among them were the early Italian painters, including his beloved Piero della Francesca. Also there were Tintoretos, which he greatly admired, favourites being *The Rescue of Arsinoe*, and Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, which would influence his painting and poetry.

He went to the Burlington House to see the Leonardo cartoon, which he thought 'stupendous' and 'far more interesting ... than the painting he made from it, now at the Louvre.' Though he was 'not, on the whole, *very* fond of Leonardo, and though he thought Leonardo's written comments on art 'bloody silly,' he considered that drawing 'a miracle ... the sort of thing that's done only once in human history.' He also visited the exhibitions of contemporary art at the Royal Academy on the chance, albeit slim, of seeing something good. Sometimes Grisewood went with him. Jones's response to the pictures was mainly nonverbal and visceral. He would approach one, wince and recoil as though physically hurt, shutting his eyes, exclaiming, 'Agh, God!' and then move to the next picture. Looking with powerful, raw openness, he was overwhelmed by a work, good or bad. Only when away from the pictures, would he talk quite freely about them. He realized that the 'mediocrity' of the Royal Academy was 'bound up with the history of the fine arts during the last hundred years & more,' that it was an institution 'typical of the

age when it was founded—but without much subsequent reality.’ On 10 June 1932, he would write to a friend, ‘For some obscure reason I ventured alone & unprotected into the Royal Academy one day last week—its horror is beyond expression—I always fondly think that perhaps a good picture will filter in by accident—but no.’ When entering Burlington House, he thought of the words inscribed above the entrance to Dante’s hell, ‘Abandon all hope ye who enter here.’²¹⁵

In 1929 he had gone to the library of the Victoria and Albert Museum to check details he needed for his writing. There he spoke to an Australian librarian named Arthur When (fig. 42),



42 Arthur When, 1935 by Edgar Holloway

with whom, in the course of several visits, he became friends, and the library became another of his regular London stops. Like the Australians he had talked with during the war, When spoke while barely opening his mouth, though his accent was very slight. He and Jones talked often and at length, their conversation shifting in quasi-free association natural to both of them. When’s mind was quick but deep and subtle. An Australian, enormously generous and sweet natured, with breadth and depth of sensitivity, he was well read in Classical and modern literatures and appreciated oriental, primitive, and modern art, including Picasso, of whom he was an early advocate.²¹⁶ He had fought at the Somme, where he had lost the use of his left

arm. He was thin, with an expansive forehead and a mouth that had a tortured look which suggested great personal suffering. He was haunted by the war, which had been, for him, especially horrible, as Jones soon learned.

In 1915 When had joined what remained of the Australian Expeditionary Force after Gallipoli and moved with it from Egypt to the western front. When it was discovered that he could speak and read German flawlessly, he was trained as a spy and told that he should immediately shoot any enemy suspecting he was not German. He was sent behind enemy lines, impersonating an artillery-liaison officer whom the English had captured. In the enemy trenches, he gathered information while consorting with officers and ranging guns on British positions. Joining a group of officers who met regularly to discuss literature, he became close friends with one of them. This officer was cultured, simple, modest, a person of great sympathy and

understanding, the best friend When had ever had. He returned When's affection, When wrote, 'as Jonathan loved David.'^{*} The discussion group met in the friend's dugout. Staying after as usual to talk, When began quoting from memory a long passage by Shakespeare in the midst of which he slipped from German into English.²¹⁷ † Seeing the expression on his friend's face change, he knew he had given himself away. The following week, after group discussion, the officer said that he knew the truth and that when he could bring himself to do it he would expose When. Shortly afterwards they were walking together to a forward observation post, and, in the noise of anti-aircraft fire, When shot and killed him. Although exposure would have meant execution, he did it not to save himself—in combat he was brave to the point of recklessness—but for the allied cause. He was awarded the Medal of Merit for bravery, but shooting his friend tore his psyche. For the rest of his life he was a broken man—brilliant, affectionate but unable to be happy, to achieve much, or to believe in God. He squandered his great gifts in brilliant conversation and letters to friends, and, in this respect, was what Jones might have been.

After the war, at New College as a Rhodes Scholar, he wrote a brief fictional account of his experience in a vain attempt to purge his conscience. He was one of the war's Ancient Mariners—who told his story as a sort of penance. He did virtually no academic work. The dons understood and, appreciating his brilliance, arranged his appointment at the V&A Library in 1924 as a sort of sinecure. Through an American university friend and fellow Rhodes Scholar, Frank Morley, he met and became a friend of T.S. Eliot. He joined Morley and Eliot at the weekly lunch at the Grove, which Burns now occasionally attended. Others who joined them there were Herbert Read, the literature don Bonamy Dobree, the French-and-German literature expert Alec Randall, and the novelist and Treasury official Richard Church, whom Jones knew and liked. Jones did not attend. In 1929 When published with Faber his fictionalization of his devastating experience under the title *Two Masters*. Jones read and, Tom Burns would

* The biblical allusion from When's fictionalized memoir, *Two Masters*, may influence *IP* (163).

† In *Two Masters*, Goethe was quoted but in fact it was Shakespeare.

remember, ‘enormously’ admired it. In a further attempt perhaps at expiation, When translated *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which is essentially an anti-war book.²¹⁸

Jones told him about his own writing and wondered aloud about whether he ought to go on with it. Through all the years of its composition, When encouraged him to continue. In the sense in which all authors have individual readers in mind, When was one of those for whom he was writing *In Parenthesis*.²¹⁹

More important to their friendship than literary interest and encouragement was When’s sensitivity to visual art. They frequently went together to exhibitions. When encouraged struggling artists. Australian artists in London visited him, and, when he could afford to, he bought their work whether he liked it or not. He thought Jones a wonderful artist and went to his exhibitions. The prices of his pictures were too steep for him, but the V&A bought art and, at When’s prodding, began buying Jones’s pictures: a pencil drawing entitled *Male Nude* (1926) and watercolour drawings, *Portrait of a Woman* (1926), *Number One Elm Row* (1927), *The Table Top* (1928), *English Window* (1931), and *The Violin*, (1932). As soon as When’s meager salary allowed, he began to buy Jones’s pictures in installments of £5. He thought that artists should benefit from the increase in value of their work owned by others, so, after full payment was made, he periodically sent Jones a cheque ‘in further payment of and for continued interest in’ the pictures he had bought. For this reason among others, Jones thought When ‘a rather splendid sort of chap’.²²⁰

Possibly through When or Laurence Binyon, Jones got to know the Curator of the Victoria and Albert Museum, Sir Eric Maclagan—‘properly civilized & very learned & courteous & human & without any conceit.’ Maclagan spoke interestingly about ‘all sorts of people from Tennyson to Sickert, from Jowett to Powicke’ and was, Jones thought, ‘a fast vanishing type.’²²¹

He visited Hartrick, whom he found ‘exhilarating’. Hartrick was psychic and often knew ‘where chaps were & what was happening to them by some queer intuition.’ Jones found it ‘rum & rather disconcerting’ but Hartrick took it for granted and was otherwise ‘a most stolid, matter of act sort of bloke.’ Often they went through Hartrick’s sketchbooks together. Sometimes he met other former students of Hartrick, including Tom Hennell, Vincent Lines, and Antoinette Clarke, all younger than Jones and with whom he was friendly. Lines gave Jones a picture by

Hartrick. At galleries, Jones saw them and Hartrick and other old acquaintances, including Bayes and Sickert. Probably through Sickert, he met Osbert Sitwell, one of the best-connected men in London, whose conversation in galleries and nearby pubs Jones enjoyed.²²²

Jones was fastidious about his appearance, carefully selecting what shirt and which woolen, monochrome tie to wear. Although not well off, he shopped expensively for quality. His suits were tailor-made in Saville-Row, and his shoes were made for him. He wore unpatterned Veyella-type shirts and sometimes a double-breasted waistcoat. When he shopped it was often for something of a colour to match or compliment another item of clothing, and this was always a problem since, as he said, 'no one can carry a colour in his mind.' He sought but never quite achieved, elegance.²²³

Jones seldom went to concerts, though in 1930 he went with Tom Burns and Grisewood to the Queen's Hall for the first English performance of Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, which moved him deeply. He seldom went to movies, which, he said were bad for his eyes, but in 1930 he saw and loved *The Blue Angel*. (He had, Burns would remember, 'a craze for Marlene Dietrich.') In the same year, he several times saw the film adaptation of *All Quiet on the Western Front*, once with Petra to whom he said, 'it wasn't too over exaggerated,' and once with Burns and Prudence Pelham, leaving early because she couldn't bear the violence. Part of the fascination of this film, one of the first talkies, may have been Jones's resemblance to the lead actor, Lew Ayres, who plays the infantryman Paul Baumer. Burns frequently tried to take Jones to movies, and Jones usually refused because of his experience of 'after-images'. Watching a movie, and later, television, made his eyes ache.²²⁴

He visited Louis Bussell, who by 1929 had moved to London where he was tutoring children of the well-to-do in mathematics for admission to Oxford and Cambridge. Bussell regarded his exhausting and unremunerative occupation as temporary but would eke out a living at it for the rest of his life. Jones was the only person he then knew in London and, before tutoring became a full-time occupation, they spent a lot of time together, Bussell remembered, making 'sorties ... to visit art shows.' Jones 'would point out how good Henry Moore, Ben Nicholson, Frances Hodgkins, Winifred Nicholson etc. were ... He would take me off to Tom Burns' house, where everyone was to be met.... Or up to Jim Ede's ... I followed in David's wake. Everyone loved to see him.'²²⁵

Jones continued visiting Medworth but alone. Bussell, Grisewood, and Tom Burns never met him. Sometimes they went together to Hall Road for tea with Gill, as on 14 January 1929, when all three went on to a lecture by Fr Bede Jarrett at the Aquinas Society. There they met Morison and Cleverdon with whom they adjourned to a pub. At this time, Medworth was keeping company with a Westminster student named Muriel (Mog) Anderson, who went with him on holiday to Spain to visit Weaver Hawkins and his wife in Barcelona. There Medworth and Anderson were married by the British consul but not legally since they had not been long enough in Spain. When they returned, Mog was pregnant and Medworth had cold feet. He consulted Jones, who advised, 'There's no question about it. You'll have to marry the girl.' The official ceremony took place on 5 July 1929 at the Chelsea Registry Office, with Jones and Gill as witnesses. By then, the bride was over eight months pregnant, a sight that greatly amused Gill.²²⁶

Jones often visited Gill. On 15 March 1929, they went from Hall Road for supper at the flat of Beatrice Webb, the beautiful and intelligent publicity manager of the Monotype Corporation, with whom Morison was platonically infatuated and whose relations with Cleverdon and Gill were carnal. Jones knew that Gill was, as Burns put it, 'poking her.' Gill suffered a nervous breakdown and spent most of October 1930 in hospital in St. Johns Wood. Jones visited him there three times.²²⁷

Probably through Gill, Jones had met and become friendly with the sculptor Frank Dobson and his wife Delia, and, probably through Dobson, he met, Dobson's former apprentice, the sculptor Stephen Tomlin. Four years Jones's senior, Tomlin was a Bloomsbury figure particularly close to Lytton Strachey. Jones and Tomlin occasionally met in Chelsea, where Tomlin worked in a small studio near Fulham Bridge. Personable, argumentative, alcoholic, Tomlin was a freethinker but unhappy about it and was undergoing psychoanalysis, which, though therapeutically ineffective, made him an ardent Freudian. In an attempt to stop drinking, he married a niece of Lytton Strachey, whom he then left for a life of boozy homosexuality. He would die in 1937 of alcohol poisoning and influenza.²²⁸

Also probably through Dobson Jones met the novelist and spiritualist Leo H. Meyers, author of *Root and the Flower*, and his wife Elsie. Leo Meyers was fastidious and aloof but generous, and Elsie liked Jones and his work. She was beautiful, big-eyed, grey-haired, the

heiress of an American railroad millionaire. She had been painted by Sargent, had been a friend of Henry James, was friendly with Virginia Woolf. The Meyers were hospitable to artists, including Cedric Morris and Paul Nash. Jones visited the family in London and, in 1929, went with the Dobsons to stay at the Meyers' eighteen-bedroom country house, Tweyford Lodge in the Ashdown Forest near East Grinstead in Sussex. He was at this time smitten with the Myers' twenty-one-year-old daughter, E.Q., an artist who had worked in the studio of the sculptress Betty Muntz and had been an early Braque enthusiast. She was tall, big-eyed like her mother, serene, and oblivious to Jones's infatuation. Her more worldly sister Eve could see that he was 'very keen on her.' Tom Burns, too, knew. Jones did not, however, pursue her, and she soon married Ben Nicholson's brother Kit. She would remember Jones as 'always ill, very delicate,' having been, as she and her family thought, 'shellshocked during the war.' Through her, he met Desmond MacCarthy's daughter, Rachel, who became one of his London acquaintances. He visited Tweyford Lodge a second time, giving the Meyers a drawing and making a painting of the view from the verandah, which he liked 'a good bit.'²²⁹ Elsie bought one of his 1929 Portslade paintings of the sea from the terrace.

At Tweyford Lodge, he met Clare Balfour, a former Slade student and friend of the Burns family, who invited him to stay at her mother's house in the village of Overy-Staithe on the north coast of Norfolk. He visited for the first time in the last week of March 1930, and would visit once more. In June 1930, she married a sculptor named Sidney Sheppard, a former apprentice of Dobson. Jones visited them in their flat in Battersea for conversation about culture and Christopher Dawson's ideas. Sheppard was a Blake enthusiast, and they talked about Blake. Jones was godfather to their daughter Christina. But they soon moved into a cottage in Norfolk and saw him only when in London.²³⁰

Jones was also visiting the home of Wilfred Meynell, essayist, managing editor of *Burns and Oates*, and the grand old man of Catholic journalism, who, with his late wife, Alice Meynell, had cared for the poet Francis Thompson in his last years. Tom Burns had first brought Jones to visit in 1927. Meynell lived in a comfortable flat at 47 Palace Court at Notting Hill Gate, where Jones listened to him reminiscing about Thompson, Disraeli, and Cardinal Manning. Jones got to know the family, including Meynell's granddaughter Barbara Lucas, whom he thought 'beautiful in a way.' He would remark to Hague when she was twenty-five, that she 'always seemed to

have a nice disposition &’—breaking into Taplowese—‘no need to say any word about her brellies’—breasts, like umbrellas—‘we all know about them I should fancy but things can get too large they can get far too large even if they are as nise as nise to begin with.’ In the first years of their acquaintance, Barbara would remember that he had an aura of what seemed a tragic love affair. How, they wondered, would he ever get over it?²³¹

In 1929 for a long weekend, as the guest of the Lucas sisters and their mother, he visited Meynell’s farmstead-compound at Greatham, south of Pulborough in the West Sussex Downs. One morning he joined others drawing a fellow guest, Diana Grove, soon to become the Duchess of Albemarle. He gave his drawing to Barbara’s mother. Hilary Pepler’s son Mark was also visiting and a Benedictine named Ignacius Rice. Jones and they talked continually for days about art, religion, and Aquinas. Barbara heard him say, ‘Of course it’s impossible to have *any* conversation that lasts under three days.’

It was probably here—‘staying over at a house in the country’—that he met G.K. Chesterton, a friend of Meynell. Jones would remember Chesterton telling stories and jokes but laughing so much as he neared the punch line that his listeners, also laughing, could not clearly understand him. Chesterton may have been aware of Jones’s work. The story survives of Chesterton and a friend named Ossario walking up Bond street and seeing a piece of paper on the ground. Chesterton stops, looks at it, picks it up and recognizes it as a drawing by Jones, who, he said, must be nearby. Further on he spots another drawing, not trodden on, an indication that his quarry has passed quite recently. Round the corner turning into Grafton Street, they see another, pick it up, pass further down the street and spot Jones entering the Grafton Gallery with his incontinent portfolio beneath his arm. Chesterton cries, ‘View Hallow,’ and they enter and return the pictures. If, as Jones said, he and Chesterton met only once and if a return of pictures constitutes a meeting, this story is probably a fictionalization of Gill’s recovering Jones’s envelope of engravings on his way to a lecture by Chesterton.^{232*}

* My source for the story in which Chesterton picks up the pictures is Philip Haggren who had a remarkably clear memory but heard it after losing touch with Gill and Jones, apparently from Alphonso Ossario, the son of an American millionaire, to whom he taught wood-engraving at Ditchling for a few weeks after returning from Lourdes. Ossario knew and wrote to Jones, and bought from him at least one engraving.

Jones may also have met Belloc at Meynell's farmstead or flat. Certainly they were acquainted, though only barely. * Jones once told a friend, 'Have you ever telephoned Belloc? It's like being put through to the Holy Ghost.' As a figure, Belloc interested him. In 1927 Jones had attended the debate in a packed Kingsway Hall between Chesterton and Shaw and drew a sketch not of either of them but of Belloc, who was chairing the debate, sitting with cigarette in hand, the smoke curling up towards a large 'No Smoking' sign. Belloc had seen but not appreciated Jones's pictures, for, Tom Burns related, he was heard to remark, 'David Jones has no sense of beauty.'²³³

In the summer of 1930, Jones stayed with Desmond Chute at Bristol and drew a portrait of him. While there he visited Cleverdon, who took him by car to visit Dorothea Travis at her home in Winsom in Gloucestershire 'a tiny hilly place all grey stone' that Jones thought 'adorable.' There, for the first time, he met her husband and their three-year-old daughter, Beatrix. She was drawing. He asked her, 'Shall I do a picture for you?' and she said, 'Yes please.' He painted on her paper, with her scribbles on it, a watercolour of a bright yellow and pink wild boar dashing through the woods. From Bristol, he went to a friend named Roger Kynston in Bradford-on-Avon, 'which,' he writes, 'is an interesting place—but, I think over-rated. Their somewhat talked of Saxon church is nothing very exciting at all.' Afterwards he went to the Meynells at Greatham. He loved the Downs there but complained of his hosts, 'they made me try & do country dancing which was hell—it's really too ghastly.'²³⁴

On the evening of 22 December 1930, he 'had to go' to a Christmas party given by the Lucas sisters at Meynell's flat. To get there and back (the party ended at 2 am) he had to travel through 'about the deepest fog' he had 'ever seen,' which had, for many days, imparted to London an 'appalling gloom'. He arrived in red socks, a woven terracotta tie, the suit of wool woven by Petra, and a hat with its brim pulled down all round. Hilary and Mark Pepler were present and put on a puppet show of the nativity that was, he thought, 'awfully good with a lovely carved ass & ox by Joseph Cribb in one scene—the animals are really superbly good.'

* Thanking Jones for a contribution to the collection of essays, Belloc would address him in a letter of 4 January 1942 as 'My dear Sir.'

Also present were Powis Evans, an artist with whom he was friendly. Mark Pepler, with whom Barbara Lucas was then in love, idolized Jones and hung on his every word. Jones sat cross-legged, speaking with his face shyly down and gradually became the centre of the party, attracting the others by his combination of brilliance and humility. Barbara would recall, ‘Everybody loved him. There was something so childlike about him.’ Every woman, she said, ‘wanted to mother him.’²³⁵

Sometimes he visited Charles Burns alone, as on Saturday March 8, 1930, when Charles drove him to Richmond Park. It was his first visit there and he was impressed by the great herds of deer. He wrote, ‘they were exceedingly beautiful—especially the young ones. & were so mysterious, quietly moving about under the trees & in the dead bracken.’ On that outing he caught a cold that made his jaw and ear ache.²³⁶

Usually he returned to Brockley for the night. When it was too late for public transportation and he was not staying with the Edes or Burnses, he walked the eight miles home. Otherwise he traveled by train or by tram to New Cross. Sometimes he brought home friends for tea or supper. One was Bussell, whom Jones’s nieces thought especially glamorous because he wore a green sports jacket and a red tie. Bussell would remember Jones’s mother as ‘quick and vivacious and sharp of mind, like David.’ Grisewood would remember her as ‘always sort of anxious and worried—always looking about and wondering whether David was all right and whether you were all right.’ His father was, in contrast, placid.²³⁷ Jones took his friends for walks on the Hilly Fields, where they could talk freely. There were also pubs in Brockley, the posh Breakspeare Arms nearby and the seedy Maypole close to Brockley station.

Brockley had a certain charm in good weather. On 3 October 1930, he wrote to Petra, ‘it is here just the best kind of autumn day with the sun warm & the day quite still & everything a pleasant slightly golden tone, not that the leaves are yet actually turned but there is a “golden feeling” in the air.’ He also liked Brockley when ‘wet ... with a boisterous wind & the trees in the garden wave like the feathers of an ostrich in a sand-storm.’ Two years before he had walked alone into Kent, which was now for him entirely ‘destroyed’ and rendered ‘ghastly’ by villas & arterial roads. He wrote to Helen Ede, ‘There is no love in this new civilization or at least I’m blind to it.—It has perhaps “Form” without “Content”—It leaves the soul hungry & thirsty, like loving a

celluloid doll.’ Late-Victorian Brockley was preferable to the horrors that had sprung up to the south. He and Hague spelt it ‘Broclieu’ to jokingly impart a Norman elegance.²³⁸

Late one night Jones returned from the city to his parents’ house to find the dog, Michael, who was not allowed on furniture, comfortably lying on a cushion on the sofa. He ordered the dog down to his basket in the scullery, but Michael

raised his head & bared his ancient teeth & snarled in a fashion that I did not *at all* like. Being by nature easily afraid and having a *particular fear of dogs* large or small, I thought well, this won’t do at all. Coward or no, I must somehow put in practice the ‘primacy of action’ and *immediately*, or that dog will *never* again do as he’s told and moreover he *may* use those bared teeth on me now, which I did not at all fancy, so after a further order which was met with a further snarl, I gave the creature a wack [sic], not hard, but with an ash walking stick, across his muzzle—the effect was very prompt & very satisfactory, for he came down from the sofa & went straight to his sleeping-basket ... But I afterwards never felt *quite* at ease with him—I think I feared he might choose his time to counter attack!

His parents had been out ‘at some church affair,’ and, when they returned, he narrated the episode. His mother commented that in this ‘*if in no other way*’ her son resembled her father, who would walk far out of his way to avoid a dog in the street. Jim added that, forty years before, dogs were more common in London and more ferocious.²³⁹

Of the family pets, David preferred the cat, Amos, a tabby, that would sit on the edge of his work table while he engraved or painted and gradually, little by little, move closer until he had gently to nudge it back. When not working, he enjoyed holding and stroking Amos, as he did the Hynes’ cat on rare visits to his sister’s family.²⁴⁰ He would paint cats and often include them in his paintings—more often than he would dogs.

His sister and her children visited each Saturday afternoon. He was usually home but upstairs working—even on Christmas day—and did not immediately appear. When his mother called up, ‘Tea’s ready,’ he would come down, sit at the table on a chair sideways and cross-legged, have tea, say very little, and then go back upstairs. In retrospect, his eldest niece would think there was a barrier between him and his family. He was ‘always amiable’ but ‘very quiet, rather withdrawn, not one to sit and chat.’ He was not avuncular, did not play with his nieces and nephew, did not talk down to them, but liked them. Stella, who was twelve in 1930, would remember, ‘We thought he was different from most adults in that he never told us off. He never said, “Pull your socks up” or “Comb your hair.” You were just accepted as you were, dirt and

all.’ To her, he did not seem a member of the adult generation. She and her sister liked visiting him upstairs in his tiny studio. He said hello when they appeared but continued to work as they examined his paintings and paraphernalia. He spoke little while working but did not mind them being there. At the age of five his younger niece Mollie said to him, ‘Draw me a mouse,’ and he did. When she asked about his press, he said, ‘Don’t touch that.’ She asked, ‘What is it?’ He said, ‘Never you mind.’ ‘Can I turn the handle?’ ‘No.’ They would wander across the hall into his bedroom, now lined with book-packed shelves all the way round. On the inside doorknob hung a large wooden rosary made for him by Gill—made of what Jones called ‘jolly nice oval-shaped wooden beads’. ‘The only decent rosary’ he had ever seen, it gradually disintegrated as the beads split and fell off.²⁴¹

On the morning of his thirty-fifth birthday in 1930, alone in his room, he opened his copy of the *Oxford Book of English Verse* and sung ‘Jerusalem my Happy Home’ in honour of all saints. He liked All Saints Day best of all the religious feasts, not because it was his birthday but ‘because it’s so good to have a day on which are commemorated all the men of good will from the foundation of the world—jolly good.’ The notion of all saints would inform his poetry, most notably the first section of *The Anathemata* and ‘The Sleeping Lord’. Later that day, his parents gave him two candlesticks, Mary Gill and Joan and René phoned him, and Petra sent him a large bunch of flowers which were ‘like an incarnation of all Autumn’ and made his tiny work room feel ‘very festive.’ He intended to paint them. In the afternoon, he took the train into town and had supper with Tom Burns and afterwards went to a party at Helen Sutherland’s—her London residence was now a flat in newly built Grosvenor House in Park Lane.²⁴²

At home when not painting he read. In the autumn of 1930, he was reading Newman, the Scanlan translation of *Art and Scholasticism with other essays*, bits of Abbot Butler, bits of von Hügel, and Naomi Mitchison's *When the Bough Breaks* (‘most awfully good’), about the late Roman Empire, and *The Conquered*, about Caesar’s war in Gaul.

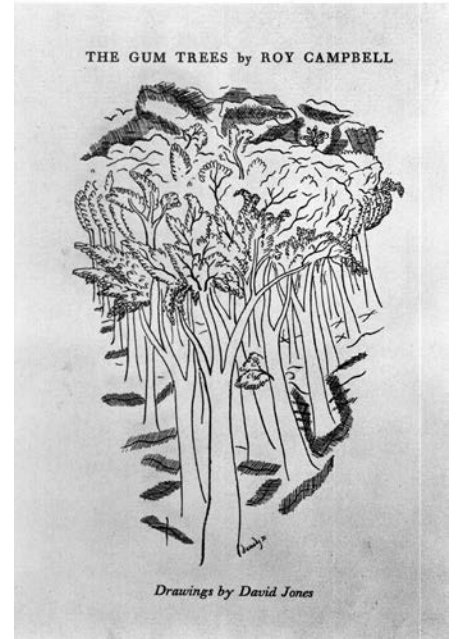
He illustrated his second Ariel poem, Roy Campbell’s ‘The Gum Trees’ (fig. 43). He was also ‘trying to paint each day.’ It was not always easy to work at home, although he thought ‘it *should* be.’

The washing was done by a Mrs. Robertson, who described what she disliked as ‘very mod-earn.’ He disliked her daughter Cissy, who cooked and did the housekeeping, because he thought she stole his Jaeger underpants for her brother. (David’s mother made his undershirts.)

On Christmas 1930, shortly after attending the Meynell party, he cancelled an intended trip to Pigotts because his mother was ill and his father had to be out. He went to Midnight Mass, which ‘*was good,*’ he writes, an ‘*incredibly packed church & a general melée of atrocious music, vestments, candles & heat—but jolly fine, it always astonishes me how the liturgy “comes through” these wads & layers of stuff.*’ He ordered food delivered and attempted what he called, not very confidently, ‘some kind of cooking’.

He was ‘trying very hard’ to paint in oils for the Seven and Five show in January—‘but so far no luck, only *mess*’—and cooking in addition to painting was, he found, ‘hectic.’ His father did the outside work, but on a rare occasion recently he had had to mow the lawn. He wrote to Petra, ‘that was an event I think worth recording—a hateful job!’²⁴³

The regularity and narrowness of his parents’ life in Brockley contrasted with his expanding interests and widening circles of friends. He was unhappy about living at home in his mid-thirties. When he returned to Brockley from London, a ‘fog of depression’ often descended upon him—he did not know why. He would later write to a friend that at home he ‘was always ... deeply depressed inside ... camouflaged by an appearance of cheerfulness of a sort.’²⁴⁴



43. *The Gum Tree*, 1930

Notes to Chapter 8

¹ R. Hague interviewed by . Blissett 8/77; here and subsequently the source for meetings at which Gill is present is Gill’s diary.

² E. Gill to DJ 5/5/27.

³ *LF* 85; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 5/5/66; W. Shewring interviewed 24/6/88; to H. Grisewood 14/8/51.

⁴ W. Shewring interviewed 24/6/88; to Saunders Lewis 13/7/72; L. Bussell to T. Stoneburner 21/8/69.

⁵ L. Bussell to T. Stoneburner 21/8/69; D. Cleverdon interviewed 19/6/86.

⁶ To J. H. Johnson 24/8/62; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1965; to J. Hooker 17/11/72; *LF* 79; to H. Grisewood 21/2/42.

⁷ DJ to M. Dorenkamp, 'In the Order of Signs,' p. 17; DJ, *Manchester Guardian*, 11/2/72; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; to J. Ede 24/10/29; to David Baxandall 13/5/49; to Fr. Sylvester of Prinknash Abbey 4/4/73; to A. Giardelli 4/9/64.

⁸ To P. Tegetmeier 21/4/31; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

⁹ DJ interviewed by P. Orr 1973. to D. Cleverdon 20/11. 27; To J. Ede 4/11/27; DJ quoted by Rothenstein, *Modern English Painting* II, p. 217.

¹⁰ To D. Baxandall 13/5/49; to S. Lewis 18/1/62; P. Hills interviewed 11/6/91.

¹¹ To D. Cleverdon 16/12/27.

¹² DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; J. Ede interviewed 6/85, 5/85, 25/6/86; Rupert Shepherd interviewed 28/6/89; H. Sutherland to J. Ede 8 or 9/29.

¹³ DJ interviewed by P. Orr summer 1972; DGC 198.

¹⁴ J. Ede interviewed 31/5/85, 25/6/86; to Thomas Hodgkin 26/1/33.

¹⁵ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 9/6/66; Edward Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87.

¹⁶ J. Ede interviewed 31/5/85, 25/6/86, 31/5/85, 6/85.

¹⁷ R. Shepard interviewed 28/6/89; N. Gray, *Paintings of David Jones*, p. 28; J. Ede to R. Hague 26/9/78; J. Ede interviewed 6/85; to J. Ede 24/10/29; to P. Tegetmeier 3/10/31; to J. Ede 29/8/28; K. Raine interviewed 6/85; Mary Adams interviewed 13/6/86.

¹⁸ To J. Ede 12/2/36; J. Ede interviewed 31/5/85; to J. Ede 16/9/63; M. Adams interviewed 13/6/86; Elizabeth Swan interviewed 24/6/86; J. Ede interviewed 31/5/85; Carl Winter, manuscript note in the Victoria and Albert Museum dated 22/3/40.

¹⁹ E. Swan interviewed 24/6/86; J. Ede interviewed 6/85.

²⁰ J. Ede interviewed 25/6/86; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69; to J. Ede 21/2/70 to T. Stoneburner 12-16/8/68; J. Ede interviewed 31/5/85; H.S. Ede, *A Way of Life* (Cambridge, Univ. of Cambridge Press, 1984), p. 58; to K. Raine 28/3/62.

²¹ M. Adams interviewed 13/6/86; E. Swan interviewed 24/6/86; J. Ede to R. Hague 15/11/77; J. Ede interviewed 31/5/86.

²² M. Adams interviewed 13/6/86.

²³ H. Sutherland to J. Ede 9/1/27; to J. Ede 2/10/27 Jones quoted by J. Ede interviewed 31/5/86; E. Swan interviewed 24/6/86; J. Ede 25/6/86.

²⁴ To J. Ede 29/8/28; J. Ede interviewed 31/5/85.

²⁵ To P. Tegetmeier 9/3/30; J. Ede pocket diary; DJ to Blissett, p. 58

²⁶ Clare Leighton interviewed 1/87; C. Leighton to T. Stoneburner 23/6/75; C. Leighton interviewed 12/11/89.

²⁷ Edward Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87.

²⁸ N. Gray interviewed 17/6/86; J. Ede interviewed 25/6/86; Helen Ede to DJ 11/1/62; H. Sutherland to DJ 8/12/48.

²⁹ Andrew Wilson, *The Seven and Five Society: Modernist Activity in British Arts 1919-1937*. M. Phil, History and Theory of Art, (Canterbury: University of Kent, 1988), p. 73.

³⁰ To D. Blamires 9/7/70. This and most specific information about DJ's involvement with the Seven and Five is taken from the minute book of the Society, which is, unfortunately, an incomplete record.

³¹ To P. Levi 2/12/63; Mark Glazebrook's introduction to the exhibition catalogue *The Seven and Five Society 1920-1935* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain), 1979.

³² To J. Ede 29/8/28.

³³ To H. Grisewood 18/2/60; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; to J.H. Johnston 2/5/62; to R. Hague 9-15/7/73.

³⁴ DJ interviewed by Glyn Roberts, *The Western Mail*, 23/6/37; J.P. to author 23/6/93; R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77; Obituary of James Jones, *Christian Herald*, 21/10/43; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1965; *An Exhibition of the Work of David Jones* (London CEM. Adams, 1944); DJ quoted by Wald, 11; to Fr Sylvester of Prinknash Abbey 4/4/73.

³⁵ DJ quoted by Wald, 11; to B. Bergonzi draft n.d.; to R. Hague 14/6/70; DJ quoted in the *Manchester Guardian* 17/2/64; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1965; to Mr Davies draft 18/9/61.

³⁶ DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1965; to P. Hagreen 22/7/37

³⁷ 'Sign of the bear, David Jones talks to Nesta Roberts'; to John Roberts, n.d.; to the *Tablet*, 2/10/61; to R. Hague 28/7/31.

³⁸ To D. Cleverdon 17/6/28; to J. Ede 21/5/28.

³⁹ Unposted post card; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86.

⁴⁰ DJ interviewed by Peter Orr early 1970s

⁴¹ Jones in conversation with T. Stoneburner, 26/4/69.

⁴² DJ to Blissett, p. 17; MacCarthy, *Eric Gill*, p. 76; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69; to Clarissa Churchill 12/3/39; to V. Wynne-Williams 2 Aug 1961.

⁴³ P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; Gill, *Autobiography*, pp. 232, 246.

⁴⁴ *E&A* 29.

⁴⁵ To A. Giardelli 4/9/64.

⁴⁶ P. Hagreen to T. Stoneburner n.d.

⁴⁷ P. Hagreen to author 2/2/86; to J. Ede 21/5/28; to R. Hague 11/8/74.

⁴⁸ To J. Ede 21/5/28; P. Hagreen to T. Stoneburner n.d.

⁴⁹ To J. Ede 21/5/28.

⁵⁰ P. Hagreen to R. Hague 27/3/78.

⁵¹ P. Hagreen to DJ 27/3/72; Maurice Percival to D. Cleverdon 1/10/77.

⁵² To J. Ede 21/5/28.

⁵³ P. Hagreen to S. Wright 28/1/78; P. Hagreen to R. Hague 27/3 78.

⁵⁴ DJ interviewed by P. Orr 1973.

⁵⁵ To J. Stone 18/4/65; P. Hagreen to T. Stoneburner n.d.; P. Hagreen interviewed 7/6/86.

⁵⁶ P. Hagreen to R. Hague 18/7/78; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; P. Hagreen to author 29/6/86; to R. Hague 29/5/78. The self-portrait is dated by DJ (on the back of a photograph), 1927.

⁵⁷ To T. Stoneburner 9/9/69; J. Ede interviewed 25/6/86; to the *Tablet* draft 20/12/45; DJ to Stanley Honeyman interviewed 23/3/98. to Len Walton 8/5/67.

⁵⁸ To P. Tegetmeier 3/10/30; DJ to Evan Gill 26/11/51; to H. Sutherland 26/11/63; to Miss Barber unposted draft 4/9/64.

⁵⁹ Harold Monro to Richard de la Mare 26/10/28.

⁶⁰ David Jones, 'An Introduction to *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*,' p. 214.

⁶¹ To D. Cleverdon 16/9/27; Hills, *David Jones*, p. 89; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69; to D. Cleverdon 27/11/28, 6/10/28.

⁶² To A. Giardelli 11/8/73; DG 188, 189.

⁶³ To A. Giardelli 9-11/8/73; DG 188; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69; D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85.

⁶⁴ D. Cleverdon to Morison, 7/9/28.

⁶⁵ To Jim Ede, 29 August 1928.

⁶⁶ To D. Cleverdon 30/8/28; to J. Ede 29/8/28; words expanding 'Man in the beginning ... already lord of plastic' in the first foliation or Ur-text of *The Anathemata*.

⁶⁷ To T. Stoneburner 9/9/69; to D. Cleverdon 31/7/28.

⁶⁸ To P. Donner 3/7/67; to D. Cleverdon 27/11/28, 22/12/28.

⁶⁹ To L. Bussell 22/12/28.

⁷⁰ To D. Cleverdon 24/8/28, 30/8/28, 9/1/29; N. Cleverdon to author 4/8/96.

⁷¹ To D. Cleverdon 12/1/28, 26/1/28, 14/2/29; D. Cleverdon interviewed 19/6/86.

⁷² To D. Cleverdon 30/8/28.

⁷³ DJ to D. Cleverdon, 30/8/29.

⁷⁴ David Jones to Jim Ede, 24 October 1929, Kettle's Yard, Cambridge.

⁷⁵ Belinda Humphrey notices the circle the figures make, p. 121.

⁷⁶ DJ to Douglas Cleverdon, 30/8/28.

⁷⁷ T. Burns interviewed 14 June 1989; DJ interviewed by P.Orr early 1970s; Vision scientist James M. Hillis, in conversation with author, 28/9/02.

⁷⁸ To D. Cleverdon 30/8/28; *English Book Illustrations since 1800* (London. CEM. Adams 1943-44) p. 26.

⁷⁹ Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, pp. 17-18.

⁸⁰ To D. Cleverdon 16/5/29.

⁸¹ To D. Cleverdon 30/8/28, 13/5/29; prescription written by Leslie Palon 23/11/29; to D. Cleverdon 16/5/29; to J. Ede 11/5/45

⁸² Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, p. 19.

⁸³ In my interpretation of this engraving I am indebted to P. Hills, 'Making and Dwelling Among Signs,' p. 86-7.

⁸⁴ to H. Sutherland 7/10/29.

⁸⁵ To D. Cleverdon 26/9/28, 13/5/29; Mrs De Halpert's diary 24/4/29.

⁸⁶ Hildebrand Flint interviewed 11/6/86; Dom Alban Léotaud interviewed 11/6/86; to Fr Michael Hanbury 30/3/63; to SL 22/7/60; to Fr Sylvester 4/4/73 (in this letter DJ misremembers this second visit as his only visit to Prinknash).

⁸⁷ Burns, pp. 36-72; T. Burns to R. Hague 12/8/78; T. Burns interviewed 13/6/88.

⁸⁸ T Burns interviewed 13 June 1988, Burns, pp. 5, 16, 24-5, 43, 1-5; T. Burns interviewed 13/6/88; T. Burns to R. Hague 12/8/78.

⁸⁹ 'Dr Charles Burns,' *The Tablet* 20/6/64; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/85; DJ to CB 20/10/52; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/88; Paul Burns to author 9/1/91; P. Burns interviewed 28/1/91.

⁹⁰ T. Burns interviewed 13/6/88; Cecile and Edmond Howard interviewed 16/6/90; H. Grisewood (the 'friend') interviewed 6/91; Burns, p. 43; J. Ede to R. Hague 26/9/78.

⁹¹ To D.B. 6/11/66; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89, 20/6/86.

⁹² T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89, 20/6/86; Victoria Ingrams interviewed 14/6/88; the experience of the author during four meetings with DJ in 1971-72.

⁹³ To P. Tegetmeier 3/10/30; Hague, *David Jones*, pp. 6-7; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87; to Nicolette Binyon 27/6/32; to J. Stone 20/11/63; Hague, *David Jones* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 1975), p. 5, IP ms.

⁹⁴ Diana Lodge interviewed 20/6/88; S. Honeyman, interviewed 20/9/98; Oliver Lodge, *Love's Wine Corked* (John Bellows: Gloucester, 1948), p. 35; D. Cleverdon interviewed 2/6/86.

⁹⁵ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

⁹⁶ Diana Lodge interviewed 20/6/88.

⁹⁷ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

⁹⁸ To J. Ede 15/4/43; DJ in conversation with T. and Pat Stoneburner, written record, 7 June 1969; H.S. Ede, 'David Jones,' *Horizon* viii (August 1943), 129.

⁹⁹ To J. Ede 24/10/29; to Eric Gill 21/5/35.

¹⁰⁰ To R. Hague n.d.; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71

¹⁰¹ DJ quoted by Brian North Lee, 'Richard Shirley Smith as a Wood Engraver,' p. 29; DJ interviewed by P. Orr summer 1972

¹⁰² R. and J. Hague interviewed 8/77; Hague, *David Jones*, p. 5.

¹⁰³ To P. Tegetmeier 9/3/30; to R. Hague 3/10/30.

¹⁰⁴ Christopher Skelton, 'Rene Hague and the Press at Pigotts,' *Matrix* 2 (Winter 1982), 76.

¹⁰⁵ James, p. 26; to H. Sutherland 22/10/30; to Janet Stone 27/4/65.

¹⁰⁶ The British wood-engraver Simon Brett writes brilliantly on DJ's recapturing what he calls 'the innocent eye' in 'Seeing and Showing,' *David Jones, Artist and Poet*, ed. Paul Hills (Warwick: Scholar Press, 1997), pp. 65-77.

¹⁰⁷ MacCarthy, *Eric Gill*, p. 241; R. Hague and JH interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 11/6/69.

¹⁰⁸ Miriam Rothchild interviewed 15/12/88.

¹⁰⁹ To J. Stone 12/2/63; M. Rothchild interviewed 15/12/88; E.C. Hodgkin, 'Prudence Pelham,' typescript; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86; Stuart Hampshire interviewed 22/1/89; Robert Buhler interviewed 6/85; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87.

¹¹⁰ M. Rothchild interviewed 15/12/88; Josie Bacon interviewed 5/10/87; E. Hodgkin interviewed 16/6/88, 6/8/87; T. Burns interviewed 13/6/88; S. Honeyman interviewed 16/6/88.

¹¹¹ To T. Stoneburner 26/8/68; P.P. to DJ 16/3 [during WWII].

¹¹² R. Hague to DJ 21/5 quoted by Miles and Shiel, p. 161; Miles and Shiel, p. 163; to Harry Whiteman draft n.d.

¹¹³ To Eric Gill 21/5/35; to Evan Gill 8/8/61; to Denis Tegetmeier 10/3/30.

¹¹⁴ J. Ede pocket diary 1927; J. Ede interviewed 6/85; Val Corbett, *H. Sutherland at Cockley Moor 1939-1965* (Helton, Penrith: Midnight Oil, 1996), pp. 13, 18; S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86; Nicolette Gray, *H. Sutherland Collection* (Arts Council, 1970), p. 15-6, 26, 22; EC Hodgkin, 'David Jones,' typescript, subsequently published as 'A Note about David Jones,' *London Magazine* (August/September 1994), 63-72..

¹¹⁵ H. Sutherland to J. Ede 25/3/29; J. Ede interviewed 25/6/86.

- ¹¹⁶ To J. Ede 24/10/29; to D. Cleverdon 10/8/29; to H. Sutherland 7/10/29; K. Raine interviewed 26/6/86.
- ¹¹⁷ To J. Ede 28/4/44; S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90; to J. Ede 3/2/63.
- ¹¹⁸ Ede, 'David Jones,' *Horizon*, p. 151.
- ¹¹⁹ To H. Sutherland 7/10/29; to D. Cleverdon 28/2/29; Mrs de Halpert, diary.
- ¹²⁰ Hague, *David Jones*, p. 20; Ede, 'David Jones,' 125.
- ¹²¹ DJ to P. Hagreen interviewed 11/6/91
- ¹²² S. and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.
- ¹²³ DJ 'Life for J. Ede' typescript 5/9/35; DJ to Blissett, p. 19.
- ¹²⁴ To J. Ede, 19/8/43; Gray, *Paintings of David Jones*, p. 29.
- ¹²⁵ To D. Travis 29/12/60; to N. Gray interviewed 17/6/86; H. Grisewood interviewed 6/91.
- ¹²⁶ To Mr. [Thomas] Whitaker draft n.d. [1970]; DJ quoted in Dorenkamp, p. 17; S. Balme interviewed 24/6/88; *DGC* 83; Arthur Wheen to Beryl Dixon interviewed 17/6/89; to J. Ede 24/10/29; J. Rothenstein, *Modern English Painters II*, p. 218.
- ¹²⁷ R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77; J. Ede interviewed 31/5/85.
- ¹²⁸ S. and M. Balme, 24 June 1988.
- ¹²⁹ To P. Levi 2/12/63; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90, 5/10/87, 16/6/89; Charlotte Gere interviewed 1/5/95.
- ¹³⁰ H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; 19/6/90; 8/83.
- ¹³¹ Francis Howard interviewed 16/6/90; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/88; Burns, p. 41.
- ¹³² *Order I*, 3 (March 1929), 104; Wall, *Headlong into Change* (London: Harvill, 1969), p. 51.
- ¹³³ H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89.
- ¹³⁴ Burns, p. 49; to R. Hague 10/10/63; to Fr. Harlownd; M. Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975.
- ¹³⁵ To T. Burns 1/11/41; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90.
- ¹³⁶ H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/80; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86, 10/87; to T. Stoneburner 15/5/67.
- ¹³⁷ Harman Grisewood, *One Thing at a Time* (London: Hutchinson, 1968), pp. 26-33; Josie Bacon interviewed 22/6/88; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; M. Grisewood interviewed 8/6/90; to H. Grisewood 25/7/35.

- ¹³⁸H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; DJ to P. Kelly interviewed 9/6/86.
- ¹³⁹ Letter draft n.d.; K. Raine interviewed 26/6/86; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 26/5/69; D. Cleverdon interviewed 28/6/86; B. Wall, *René Hague a Personal Memoir* (Wirral: Aylesford Press, 1989) p. 16; to T. Stoneburner 16/12/65; D. Cleverdon interviewed 28/6/86
- ¹⁴⁰ To P. Tegetmeier 3/10/30; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86, 10/87
- ¹⁴¹ DJ interviewed by P. Orr in the late 1960s and 1970s; *LC* 61
- ¹⁴² Burns, pp. 42, 61, 121, 122; Wall, p. 20.
- ¹⁴³ Stephen Spender, 'Notebook-III,' *London Magazine* (February/March 1975), p. 59; Sidney Sheppard interviewed 5/12/88.
- ¹⁴⁴ T. Burns to DJ 9 Jan 1928; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90; Christina Scott interviewed 15/6/90; C. and E. Howard interviewed 16/6/90; T. Burns interviewed 20/6/86; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90.
- ¹⁴⁵ L. Bussell to T. Stoneburner 12/8/69; S. Wright and Barbara Wall interviewed 27/6/86; personal observation by author.
- ¹⁴⁶ H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87.
- ¹⁴⁷ Dawson, *Christianity and Sex* (London: Faber and Faber, 1930), passages marked by DJ, pp. 33, 35; Watkin, pp. 110-118; *Tablet* 13/3/51; to H. Grisewood 12/4/51.
- ¹⁴⁸ J.H. Johnston 16/5/62; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; H. Grisewood interviewed 21/7/96.
- ¹⁴⁹ To Valerie Eliot draft n.d. [5/1/65].
- ¹⁵⁰ To J.H. Johnston 16/5/62; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72.
- ¹⁵¹ Hague, *David Jones*, p. 39; to T. Stoneburner 30/8/63; to H. Sutherland 27/1/41; to R. Hague 11/8/74; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/85, 4/10/87; to H. Grisewood 14/4/39.
- ¹⁵² H. Grisewood interviewed 23/6/86; Watkin, pp. 55-8; ms draft n.d.; letter draft frag. n.d.
- ¹⁵³ To J.H. Johnston n.d. [Jan/65]; to H. Grisewood 5/4/73; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; to J. Knight 16/1/44.
- ¹⁵⁴ *Progress and Religion* (New York, London, Toronto: Longmans, Green, 1929), p. 139, 175.
- ¹⁵⁵ Watkin, p. 10, 37; to T. Burns 28/8/40.

- ¹⁵⁶ *Progress and Religion*, pp. 233, 158, 4, passages marked by DJ in his copy, p. 230; to N.B. 8/7/31; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.
- ¹⁵⁷ To D. Tegetmeier 10/3/30; 'Further Note on the Great Divorce,' unpublished typescript intended as a note to 'Art and Sacrament' in *Catholic Approaches*.
- ¹⁵⁸ H. Grisewood interviewed 5/6/86; T. Burns interviewed 20/6/86.
- ¹⁵⁹ To H. Grisewood 15/2/57; E&A 224.
- ¹⁶⁰ See Dawson, *Progress and Religion*, p. 249.
- ¹⁶¹ H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87, 16/6/89.
- ¹⁶² Burns, p. 46; Hague, *David Jones*, p. 41; Watkin, p. 46-7, 44; *Progress and Religion*, p. 215-7; *Order I*, i (May 1929), p. 15.
- ¹⁶³ See Watkin, *The Bow in the Clouds* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1931). pp. 131-7.
- ¹⁶⁴ H. Grisewood interviewed 23/6/86
- ¹⁶⁵ To H. Grisewood 23/3/32; DJ in conversation with WB and author 4/6/71; Watkin, pp.133-48; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6 1990.
- ¹⁶⁶ E&A 287; Watkin, pp 81-2, 88; DJ's copy of *The Divine Milieu* (London: Collins, 1960), p. 34, in which he checks and approves with the Welsh for 'very good,' and pp. 35, 40 which he merely checks; E&A 286-7, 281, 285; 'Life for J. Ede' typescript 5/9/35.
- ¹⁶⁷ A 37; IN 90; to Fr. Michael Hanbury 30/3/63.
- ¹⁶⁸ To H. Grisewood 6/2/51
- ¹⁶⁹ Von Hηgel, *The Mystical Element of Religion*, I, p. 49; von Hηgel, *Letters to a Niece*, pp. 119, 121, 22, 18.
- ¹⁷⁰ To Captain St Luke 22/10/29; H. Grisewood interviewed 23/6/86.
- ¹⁷¹ Von Hηgel, *Letters to a Niece*, pp. 123, 115.
- ¹⁷² Von Hηgel, *Letters to a Niece*, p. 21, 133.
- ¹⁷³ H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89.
- ¹⁷⁴ T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89.

¹⁷⁵ Burns, p. 136-8; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87, 8/83; to H. Grisewood 5/10/48.

¹⁷⁶ H. Grisewood interviewed 22/6/86; *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, tr. J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848), pp. 233-6.

¹⁷⁷ H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87, 23/6/86, 22/6/86; T. Burns interviewed 20/6/86.

¹⁷⁸ To D. Travis 14/1/35.

¹⁷⁹ H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90; to H. Grisewood 23/3/32.

¹⁸⁰ H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; Watkin, p. 26; to H. Grisewood 9/10/71; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87.

¹⁸¹ *Order I*, i (May 1929), pp. 29, 2, 10, 11.

¹⁸² *Order I*, ii (August 1929), p. 71.

¹⁸³ *Order I*, iii (March 1929), pp. 74, 79, 80, 81.

¹⁸⁴ *Order I*, iv (November 1929), pp. 129, 123; T. Burns interviewed 24/6/89.

¹⁸⁵ To Mr Barkley 21/7/64.

¹⁸⁶ H. Grisewood interviewed 23/6/86; T. Burns interviewed 13/6/88; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 30/8/72.

¹⁸⁷ Charles Burns, 'Psychology and Catholics,' *Blackfriars* XXXI (March 1950), 120, 122; T. Burns interviewed 20/6/86; H. Grisewood interviewed 23/6/86; to C. Burns 20/10/52; DJ ms frag. n.d.

¹⁸⁸ D. and N. Cleverdon interviewed 28/6/86.

¹⁸⁹ T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; DJ to Blissett, p. 104n; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1965.

¹⁹⁰ DJ, introduction to the broadcast version of *In Parenthesis*, quoted by Cleverdon, *Poetry Wales* 8, p. 76; to J.H. Johnston 16/5/62; DJ quoted in the *Manchester Guardian* 17/2/64; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1965; to B. Bergonzi 11/11/65; to P. Tegetmeier 9/3/30, 3/10/30; Hague, *David Jones*, p. 37; DJ in conversation with author 31/8/72; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1965; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; 'David Jones--Maker of Signs' (BBC/British Council) script broadcast on Radio 3 6/11/75; to J.H. Johnston 5/62; DJ quoted in *Time Magazine* 6/4/62, 100.

¹⁹¹ DJ introduction to the broadcast version of *In Parenthesis*, p. 76; to J.H. Johnston 2/5 1962; C. Dawson to DJ n.d. c. 1935.

¹⁹² To P. Tegetmeier 9/3/30.

- ¹⁹³ H. Grisewood interviewed 15/9/96; to T. Stoneburner 16/12/65; DJ interviewed by SL 1965 in Michael Alexander 'David Jones' BBC 2 radio programme 1977; to J.H. Johnston unposted frag. 27 Ap/62.
- ¹⁹⁴ To R. Hague 9-15/7/73; to J.H. Johnston unposted frag. 27 Ap/62; to Bergonzi 11/11/65 draft frag. n.d.; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1965; to Miss Jones unposted 20/8/68; letter draft frag. n.d.
- ¹⁹⁵ To R. Hague 9-15/7/73; to Bergonzi draft n.d. [Nov/65, 11/11/65; DJ, 'Looking Back at the Thirties,' p. 52; IP xiii; DJ interviewed by P. Orr, *The Poet Speaks*, p. 99.
- ¹⁹⁶ To H. Grisewood 20/1/72; J. L. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1927), pp. 116-123, 117, 72, 115. According to the date inscribed in his copy DJ acquired this book in 1929; IP 62, 154. Solange Dayras interviewed 9/89.
- ¹⁹⁷ To Herbert Read 31/5/62; incomplete ms draft of unpublished essay c. 1955.
- ¹⁹⁸ To T. Whitaker draft n.d. [1970].
- ¹⁹⁹ To R. Hague 9-15/7/73; to Bergonzi draft frag. n.d. 11/11/65.
- ²⁰⁰ To J.H. Johnston 2/5/62; H. Grisewood interviewed 23/6/86; J. Ede interviewed 25/6/86; to Lawrence Binyon 13/7/37; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1965.
- ²⁰¹ H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87; to H. Grisewood 30/3/35.
- ²⁰² H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; ms draft frag. n.d.; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87., 5/10/87; ms draft frag. n.d.
- ²⁰³ H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; to J.H. Johnston 24/8/62; to D. Travis 29/12/60; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; to K. Raine 28/3/62 to T. Stoneburner 30/8/63.
- ²⁰⁴ To T. Stoneburner 30/8/63; P. Donner interviewed 21/6/88; to V. Watkins 17/4/62; to J.H. Johnston 3/3/63; to J. Ede 9/12/49.
- ²⁰⁵ H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87.
- ²⁰⁶ H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87; to J.H. Johnston 24/8/62, 16/5/62; to H. Read 31/5/62.
- ²⁰⁷ To L. Binyon 13/7/37; to J.H. Johnston 24/8/62.
- ²⁰⁸ To J.H. Johnston 24/8/62, 3/3/63.
- ²⁰⁹ DJ quoted by Wald, 11; to R. Hague 2/12/35; IP 138, 2.

²¹⁰ E. Hodgkin interviewed 6/8/87; to T. Stoneburner 16/12/65; 'Sign of the bear, David Jones talks to Nesta Roberts'; DJ quoted by S. Honeyman 20/6/86.

²¹¹ R. Hague to J. Ede 3/6/65; to H. Grisewood fourth Sunday after Easter/66; R. Hague interviewed by WB 8/77.

²¹² H. Grisewood Interviewed 5/10 87

²¹³ To H. Grisewood 9/10/71; H. Grisewood interviewed 23/6/86, 8/83

²¹⁴ Grisewood, *One Thing at a Time*, pp. 55, 63, 72; J. O'Connor to W. Shewring interviewed 24/6/88.

²¹⁵ To V. Wynne-Williams 11/8/62; to K. Clark 16/11/60; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; to J. Knight 16/1/44; to N. Binyon 10/6/32.

²¹⁶ Beryl Dixon interviewed 17/6/89; to V. Wynne-Williams 11/2/63; John Fuller to author 1/5/80.

²¹⁷ A.W. When's fictionalization of his experience, *Two Masters* (London: Faber & Faber, 1929), p. 24; BD interviewed 17/6/89.

²¹⁸ J. Fuller to author 1/5/80; B. Dixon interviewed 17/6/89; T. Burns interviewed 20/6/86; Burns, p. 124.

²¹⁹ B. Dixon interviewed 17/6/89.

²²⁰ A. When to DJ 18/2/64; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86.

²²¹ To H. Sutherland 23/8/48.

²²² DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; to V. Wynne-Williams 6/8/62; T. Hyne interviewed 20/6/90.

²²³ T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; L. Bussell to T. Stoneburner 12/8/69; T. Burns interviewed 20/6/86; S. Honeyman, interviewed 14/6/93; Margaret Grisewood, 24 June 1989.

²²⁴ H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s.

²²⁵ L. Bussell to T. Stoneburner 21/8/69; Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, 20-1; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89.

²²⁶ E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88; Diana McCartney-Filgate to Elizabeth Skelton 18/4/80; to E. Gill 14/6/36.

²²⁷ T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89.

²²⁸ S. Sheppard interviewed 26/6/90.

²²⁹ Eve Clark, who remembers David as having a Cockney accent, interviewed 17/2/91; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/88; E.Q. Nicholson interviewed 7/6/90; to E.Q. Nicholson 7/3/38.

²³⁰ S. Sheppard interviewed 26/6/90; Christina Sheppard to author 16/1/93.

²³¹ H. Grisewood to author 16/2/90; to R. Hague 3/6/35 7/10/35; Barbara Wall interviewed 27/6/86.

²³² Barbara Wall interviewed 27/6/86; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; P. Hagreen to author 19/10/85.

²³³ P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; Hague, *David Jones*, p. 41; Arthur Pollen to Daphne Pollen 4/4/41; T. Burns interviewed 20/6/86.

²³⁴ B. Dufort interviewed 9/6/86; to P. Tegetmeier 3/10/30.

²³⁵ Barbara Wall interviewed 27/6/86; to P. Tegetmeier 23/12/30.

²³⁶ To P. Tegetmeier 9/3/30.

²³⁷ M. Elkin interviewed summer 1985; L. Bussell to T. Stoneburner 21/8/69; H. Grisewood interviewed 6/90.

²³⁸ To P. Gill 12/8/20; to H. Sutherland 21/8/31; to H. Ede 13/8/28; R. Hague to DJ 10/1/56.

²³⁹ To R. Hague 9/9/74.

²⁴⁰ M. Elkin interviewed 22/9/95, summer 1985.

²⁴¹ S. Wright interviewed 25/8/87; R. Hague and JH interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 11/6/69; S. Wright interviewed 21/6/89; D. Cleverdon interviewed summer 1985; M. Elkin interviewed summer 1985; S. Wright interviewed 26/6/86, 4/9/94; letter draft, n.d.

²⁴² To P. Tegetmeier 1/11/30.

²⁴³ To P. Tegetmeier 3/10/30; to E. Hodgkin 25/10/30; IN 54; M. Elkin interviewed summer 1985; to DJ's mother 28/3/37; D. Cleverdon interviewed summer 1985; to H. Grisewood 25/12/30; to J. Ede 20/2/33; to P. Tegetmeier 21/10/30, 23/12/30.

²⁴⁴ To H. Ede 13/8/28; to S. Lewis 14/6/72.

Chapter 9 1930-33

1. David Jones, *Deer*, c. 1920

In April and May 1930, Jones co-exhibited with Ivor Hitchens in the Mansard Gallery in Tottenham Court Road. He saw Jim and Helen Ede and Helen Sutherland at the private view on 25 April. Most of his paintings were seascapes from the terrace of the house at Portslade. The exhibition boosted his reputation. He sold *Montes et Omnes Colles* to the Whitworth in Manchester, his first sale to a public gallery. Anonymously in *The Times*, Ede called this picture ‘as praiseful a thing as one ever saw, fairly singing its way about the paper’ and, after praising *Passing Sail* and *The Fens*, concludes that ‘There is no living artist with a style that can more fairly be called “lyrical.”’* In July, 1930, Jones exhibited animal pictures at Heal and Son of Tottenham Court Road. In October, he exhibited at the Mansard Gallery, and *The Times* critic

*Art criticism in *The Times* was unsigned, but the style and content are unmistakably Ede’s.

singled him out for special praise. The pictures of animals made these shows ‘important’ for him. He was now beginning to make ‘the *best & freer* sort’ of animals, which have affinity with prehistoric cave paintings.¹

Since 1928, he frequently went to Regents Park Zoo to draw. Most often he drew deer (fig. 1), wolves, and big cats, trying to capture the feeling and rhythm of the animal’s movement. Later he remembered, ‘I used to just use pencil and watercolour, as it were, at the same time, I mean, I didn’t draw and then use colour. The colour was an integral part of the work. And that is one of the reasons why it is very difficult to assess the quality of the drawings in [black and white] reproduction because everything might depend upon some flick or smudge of some colour.’² He did not alter the picture after leaving the animal. These were not ‘studies for pictures’ but ‘things in themselves.’ In 1930 in the Small Cat House, he made what he regarded as one of his best, of a serval cat, whose ghosted front legs convey motion. He called it *Agag* (fig. 2) after I Samuel 15: ‘And Agag came unto him delicately.’ He thought the story—of Samuel hewing the defenceless king to pieces after his people had been massacred—‘revolting’, though the use of the word ‘delicately’ raised the passage ‘to pure poetry’. The association came to him ‘immediately’ as he drew. He gave the picture to Grisewood. It is one of those animal-pictures that ‘place him’, according to Guy Davenport, ‘way UP in the hierarchy of draftsmanship’ his ‘only rival on the continent’ being ‘Dufy’. Jones’s favourite of these new animal drawings was a drawing of a panther (1931), which became a possession of the Walker Gallery.³



1. David Jones, *Agag*, 1930

When he went to the zoo with Grisewood, it was usually only to look at the animals. Grisewood later remembered him gazing long and intently, still, silent. On a few occasions, Grisewood watched him drawing there, always with concentration precluding conversation.⁴

Occasionally at the zoo, Jones thought of Tom Burns hunched over his desk

in a dark office and would go to the Lion House just before feeding time and telephone him to let him hear the lions roar. Once, alone, he was painting outside the House for Big Cats close to a heavy wire fence containing young lions when a cub leaping sideways—in a way that was, he thought, lamb-like—bounded hard into the fence and knocked him over. Nearby children laughed uproariously, but he was alarmed, fearing the animal's claws, and disgusted by its foetid smell. On another occasion elsewhere in the zoo, he was drawing an ostrich when one girl behind him said to another, 'Here's a man drawing, do you think he could draw me?' and her companion replied, 'No, your neck's not long enough.'⁵

On 21 August 1930, at the age of twenty-nine, Kit Wood threw himself under a train at Salisbury station, his death a grief to everyone who knew him. Nicholson wanted the next annual exhibit to be, as much as possible, a tribute to Wood and wanted Jones on the hanging committee. Jones agreed, although he had disliked helping to hang the pictures the previous year, owing to a man named Tatlock at Tooth's Gallery. On 3 January 1931, which was 'sending-in day,' Jones went to the general meeting at Nicholson's father's studio and was elected to the hanging committee along with Morris, Murray, Lye and Fedorovitch. They spent the whole of 5 January hanging pictures in the Leicester Gallery at 4 Audley Square in Mayfair, where he saw the director, Oliver Brown, whom he liked. The next day, a Tuesday but the feast of Epiphany, he went to 8 o'clock Mass in Brockley, then returned to the Leicester Gallery to finish hanging, went to lunch with Cedric Morris, visited Tom Burns, and had supper with Grisewood. At the exhibit, there were ten works by Wood; seven by Ben Nicholson; six each by Jones, Winifred Nicholson, Staite Murray, and Lye; fewer by each of the other thirteen exhibitors.* In the catalogue, a Ben-Nicholson oil is listed first, followed by five paintings by Jones. The number of his pictures chosen and his near-to-top billing in the catalogue indicates the esteem in which the others held him, Nicholson in particular. Jones remembered that the show 'didn't look bad in

* Jones exhibited four watercolours, *Inscape*, *Entrance*, *Agnes Fountain*, *The Curtained Window* and two oil paintings, *The Candle and the Cup* and *Unicorn Wood*. The other exhibitors were P.H. Jowett, Evi Hone, Elizabeth Drury, John Aldridge, Basil Taylor, Ivon Hitchens, F. Cole, Sophie Fedorovitch, Cedric Morris, Frances Hodgkins, John Skeaping, and Kanty Cooper.

some ways—but nothing hardly sold.’ He sold only two pictures, though he also sold two at Toths.⁶

Partly owing to the Seven and Five exhibition, this was a busy month socially, involving twenty-one meetings with friends. On 7 January he talked with Martin D’Arcy. On the 8th, at the invitation of their daughter Nicolete, he went to the Laurence Binyons’ tea party at their house in the middle of the outermost right-hand wing of houses attached to the British Museum. Its front windows looked across the courtyard and the row of columns—a view that impressed Jones. He spent the evening of the 9th with the Chelsea group at St. Leonard’s Terrace. The next day he went to 10:30 Mass at Westminster Cathedral, where he heard John Baptist Reeves preach ‘an amazing sermon on the nature of poetry,’ which he thought wonderful but wondered what the congregation made of it. He then attended the private view of the exhibition, where he met Dorothea Travis and Prudence Pelham, afterwards having lunch with Burns. On subsequent days, he had dinner with Travis and with a painter friend named Alison Debenham, a Catholic friend of Nicolete Binyon. He visited the exhibition with Gill and Hague. He went with Charles Burns to an exhibition of Persian art at Burlington House and afterwards to confession—a sacrament of which he was now availing himself once or twice a month—followed by supper with the Edes at Elm Row. He thought the Persian art largely ‘indifferent stuff’ but returned several times because he liked a large round carpet on display and ‘some of the earlier drawings awfully,’ especially one of men on horseback shooting arrows at one another (no. 437 in the catalogue), ‘very exciting.’⁷ On the 18th, he attended a meeting of the Seven and Five at which Henry Moore was elected to membership. Three days later he had lunch with Teddy Wolfe and supper with Tom Burns, Eric Gill, and Arthur Wheen. He spent the 26th painting, then went into London for supper with Burns, followed by a visit with the pianist friend of Helen Sutherland, Vera Moore. The next day he dined with Ben Nicholson and went alone to the Catholic Truth Society in Eccleston Square to hear Donald Attwater lecture. The day after that he attended a Stravinsky concert with Burns, followed by a party at Sutherland’s. The following day, he accompanied Prudence Pelham to an African exhibition at Burlington House.

On 14 February he came down with flu, which kept him in bed for five weeks. His utter surrender to illness prolonged its effects, weakening the body but not the mind, which, he writes,

‘will race on & involve itself in complicated cogitation.’ Illness meant long periods of thinking himself deeper into habitual patterns but also imaginative meditation. From bed he looked out his window at trees swaying in the wind, at the changing light on their leaves, at light changing in the sky. He wrote to Petra that during his illness he ‘saw cats in the garden sitting with contentment in patches of sunlight’ and ‘noticed that the birds sing immediately the sun appears & are dumb in the wind & cold.’⁸ The many window views he would paint owe something to days of illness meditatively gazing out of windows.

He wanted only to paint but did not. He wrote to Petra, ‘I think one *can* work feeling unwell up to a certain point—but I find one *must* have a certain *vitality* to just be able to concentrate that little bit extra which really gives the edge so to speak to some kinds of work—I think my own work *wholly* depends upon this final extra kick & if *that* is absent—its just awful rubbish—very wearisome & only fit for destruction.’⁹

Despite the flu, he managed to make during the last week of February a very unusual picture. His imagination having been stirred by the now-abandoned commission to illustrate Malory, he worked on what he calls in his pocket diary a ‘drawing for Morte D’Arthur.’ This he entitled *Merlin Appears in the Form of a Child to Arthur Sleeping*, a small (8 x 10), monochrome painting on wood that resembles a wood engraving. He called it, for short, *Merlin Land* (fig. 3). First he had painted the wood white, adding on top of that some orange and yellow, then painted the whole black. He drew by scraping away the black paint—a technique resembling white-line wood engraving. Sleeping Arthur in the foreground is barely indicated by a few white scratches, though a leg and hand are drawn in black in a Miro-like bubble



2. David Jones, *Merlin Land*, 1931

of white. The boy Merlin kneels, white, beside Arthur. Above is a white horse and dark (difficult to see) rider blowing a horn. Across the picture, on the left, is a stag, with horns of mythic proportion quasi-mirrored by the nearby tree. Between them in an apparent dreamscape are dogs, one wearing a crown-collar and apparently being attacked from behind by the other. The dream-dogs foretell Arthur's last battle. The picture conveys unease in its contrasting black and white, which correspond somehow to the pairings: Arthur and Merlin, the black and the white bird feeding below them, the two dogs beside them and at the top of the picture what seems a sort of horse/panther with a body nimbus and, across from it, a chalk unicorn in the side of a distant hill. The picture has affinity with the enigmatic world of Browning's 'Child Roland' poem, with surrealism, and, as he was himself aware, with prehistoric cave paintings.

He was not, in general, impressed by surrealist pictures, which were only just beginning to appear in the London galleries and was put off by the surrealist theory, which he thought displayed an ideological desire to 'make "sects."' 'I do think,' he writes to Nicolette, 'they talk such irritating stuff about it—always [sects] try to make out that the isolation of something immemorially present in painting is the one thing that matters.' He would comment specifically on only two surrealists. He thought Paul Delvaux 'far superior to Dali,' who seemed 'by comparison ... a kind of "show-man" of *huge* ability indeed, but lacking that "tenderness" which is, after all ... an essential ingredient of the *poetic* art.' Years later he would express to Herbert Read astonishment that this 'great' artist, Delvaux, should be 'so neglected.' Having seen only Delvaux's *Garden of the Night* and *Venus Endormie*, he would think that he gave 'the post-Freudian age in which we live ... its most "gentle" & thence most "poetic" expression.' He would agree 'with every word' of Read's chapter on Delvaux in *A Letter to a Young Painter* (1962), which confirmed his belief that 'Delvaux has real poetry.' Before reading it, he suspected that his liking for his work 'was purely sensual—it's so damned easy to deceive oneself.'¹⁰

Still in bed, he regretted being too ill to paint the light in February and March, which he thought the best of the year. This was one of the disadvantages of being so often ill then. Discussing this light years later with Katheen Raine, he said, 'it changes altogether in a few weeks time & loses all that particular feeling—it get awfully self-satisfied looking later on!' When illness

kept him from working in springtime light, he would ‘try & remember the feeling of that particular light for later on.’¹¹

Hague visited. A prayer book in Welsh from Attwatter arrived, as did flowers from Sutherland. On 8 March Jones went to St. Mary Magdalen’s for confession but felt too unwell and returned to bed. On the 12th, he records in his pocket diary, he ‘sat up in bed.’ Charles Burns visited, then Tom, which ‘was a great treat’ since he had ‘seen no one from the outside world’ for nearly a week. On the 18th, it was warmer outside than in, so he went for a half-hour walk. Still unable to paint, he now read all day, which was tiresome, though by the third week in March he was rereading Von Hügel’s *The Mystical Element of Religion*, which he found ‘astonishing.’* He was also reading a book about St Teresa of Avila, the writings of ‘St. Francis,’ and

a very exciting book about Isabella of Spain which is absolutely full of amazing stuff about the Moors in Spain & the Inquisition—of bishops who fought like tigers against the Saracens with spotless linen ... over their mail shirts—and incredible intrigue of every sort & an amazing fusion of staggering Piety & love of God with unmentionable cruelty & positively dizzy heights of luxury & sensuality. Queen Isabella herself appears to have conducted campaigns in awful weather with armour on like a knight, riding 40 miles a day, at the same time bearing children ‘making the King’s shirts with her own hands’—writing letters of state & intrigue to all the courts of Europe—teaching her children latin—hunting wild animals—seeing to the everlasting executions of criminals & Jews & spending much time in Prayer & fasting—and so on, what a game.

She fascinated him partly as an exaggeration of his mother, who once rowed ‘better than any man.’ (Subconscious association with her may underlie his admiration for other heroic women throughout his life—such as Joan of Arc and Bernadette Devlin, the young nationalist Irish M.P. at Westminster.) A sign of returning health was his wanting to go to the zoo, which he especially liked in springtime. On 25 March he ended his annual late-winter hibernation/convalescence by going into London to St. Leonard’s Terrace. He found, as he wrote to E.Q. Nicholson, that ‘when one is ill the rest of the world seems almost mythological & very remote—so that when one goes out for the first time one seems almost surprised to see pillar boxes, shops, & what not much in the same places as before!’¹²

* In December 1956 he would again reread it, finding in it ‘sensitized states of mind that seem now pretty remote—it’s good stuff—a pre-Woolworth world!’

He spent most of the first week of April with Tom Burns in the ancient, landlocked port of Rye and then went for the weekend of the 11th to Holkham in Norfolk to stay with Prudence Pelham and her sister possibly with their Buxton relatives, who were Quaker landed gentry. 'I felt fairly well there,' he wrote Petra, 'lots better—the country was good—great flat places & fine woods going down to the sea in undulating sand dunes ... & then a great Park stuffed with deer & a great lake with wild-fowl of all kinds—making croaking noises all day. Millions of hares & rabbits—& fish—what I believe is called a "Sportsman's Paradise"!!' The wind blew in from the North Sea—wind that, he recalled, used to bring 'those damned Vikings'—making this, he would remember in 1965, 'the coldest place I've ever been in.' Prudence was now trying to help him sell pictures by supplying him with the names of wealthy acquaintances to invite to his exhibitions.¹³

He was at Portslade in May, then returned to Brockley, where he made his first written reference to *In Parenthesis*. He wrote to Hague, 'The document has not advanced much further—been trying to paint but with no result, same intolerable annoyance & rage.' On 6 June he met with Helen Sutherland, who subsequently sent him Binyon's essay on Akbar, the remarkable sixteenth century emperor who unified the Indian subcontinent. Having known nothing about him, Jones read it 'with much interest'. In mid-June, he met with Dawson, whose new book, *The Making of Europe*, they talked about. Dawson had given him proofs, which he had lent to Nicolette Binyon.¹⁴ Dawson and he were now meeting outside the Chelsea group meetings.

When in London, Dawson stayed in a furnished flat in Queen's Gate Terrace, which was very dark with long heavy curtains blocking the windows—Jones and Tom Burns called it 'the Mausoleum.' Contributing to the gloom, Dawson was languid and usually neurotically depressed. Although Jones delighted in his company, he sometimes 'got utterly worn out' talking with him. Dawson was utterly pessimistic about all modern art and literature, which he thought undermined by the dissolution of western cultural tradition. But they shared many enthusiasms. Both were deeply interested in the history of ancient Greece and Rome and of the Christian liturgy. Both loved *Piers Plowman* and were fascinated with Spengler. Jones was amused by one unshared enthusiasm of Dawson, hunting-novels. Although Jones liked scholarship, he usually

disliked scholars for their arrogance and tendency to make others feel ignorant—but he liked Dawson, from whom he always came away feeling learned. Dawson ‘took it for granted,’ he remembered, ‘that one had read everything from Chinese classics of 500 BC to Racine or Sexton Blake or Lewis Mumford or Einstein or Ethel M. Dell.’ He

would say to one ‘you will, of course, recall what that Chinese 5th Cent B.C. poet ...so & so, said about such & such.’ And one says, ‘Well, no Xtopher, never heard of him.’ ‘I see, well, you’ve probably forgotten, but he’s very like that 13th Cent Armenian poet, so & so, in feeling.’ Another blank. But by the end of the conversation you really do feel you ‘know’ all that Xritopher has taken for granted. There is something wonderfully fruitful about such men, and their great knowledge goes with a *deep humility*, but an utter scorn for any slipshod scholarship or pretence of any kind.

Jones later wrote,

Christopher D. has taught me so much of what very little I know. What one does owe to certain individuals! It is odd how they turn up in one’s life just when they do. I think I personally owe *everything* to just two or three or four or so individuals, and Xtopher D is among them. Had one *not* come in contact with just these few persons one would have been absolutely nowhere.

More than Gill or any other acquaintance, Dawson had a broad and permanent influence on his thought. He was one of the few contemporaries—the others being Joyce and Eliot—about whom Jones was unreservedly enthusiastic; and the enthusiasm was mutual. Having misplaced his copy of Dawson’s *The Age of the Gods*, he borrowed and annotated Bussell’s copy. Bussell mentioned this to Dawson, who quickly replied that he would very much like to see the notes. They respected one another and, according to Dawson’s daughter Christine, loved one another.¹⁵



Jones was often at Pigotts in the summer, often intending a two-day visit but staying weeks. Also visiting, Grisewood noticed that Gill felt a unique affection for Jones—protective and appreciative. Gill once said to those around his crowded

3. Hagues and Gills with Jones at Pigotts.

dining table, ‘We have been talking a lot about art but,’ he said, pointing to Jones, ‘there is only one real artist in this room.’ Because he fitted in so well, because Mary Gill and the others loved him, Jones was happier, more at peace at Pigotts than anywhere else.¹⁶

The Hagues, with whom he always stayed now, thought it remarkable that he fit so well into their family, continuously without friction.¹⁷ Theirs was now his chief surrogate family. In 1931 René and Joan chose him to be godfather (with Prudence Pelham as godmother) to their first born, christened, to Jones’s immense delight, Michael Mary Immanuel Patrick Joseph Vesey Hague. The boy would grow up to remember ‘Di’ as ‘just part of the family.’¹⁸

If there was no friction, there was sometimes tension. Active and quick, always with a cigarette in her mouth, Joan was perpetually in a hurry—shopping, cooking, making bread, gardening, mending clothing, driving the car (René did not), cleaning, washing-up, washing clothes, feeding animals, and milking her two cows. Jones followed her around for hours talking, and she became irritated by his being perpetually underfoot, which she found especially annoying when pregnant, but she tried never to show her irritation. Sometimes he would be drawing in the narrow passageway in the cottage, obstructing her way. To get him temporarily out of the way, she asked him to make a board for the kitchen wall on which to hang her pans. He painted two joined planks blue, drove into the thinner lower board nails which he numbered 1 to 7, painted above them in red letters: ‘JOAN’S SAUCEPAN BORD,’ and added a spray of flowers in red, yellow, and green. He tried to be helpful, tidying a room, fetching wood for the fire, washing up. Gill had given them pewter dishes. Drying these, Jones banged the rims against the sinkboard to knock off excess water, splitting the pewter—a practice Joan had repeatedly to discourage.¹⁹

René status as Joan’s husband altered the emotional culture of Pigotts. Good humoured and energetic, he was also volatile and disorganized. He often distressed Gill, who loved to lecture and exhort but found arguing painful. More intelligent than Gill, Hague argued over almost anything, sometimes bullying him.^{20*} He was a good printer but not a good businessman

* This is as reported by Hague’s apprentice Christopher Skelton. According to Gill’s apprentice Michael Richey, ‘René argued with Eric almost every night, and Eric used to love it. He respected Rene’s intellectual capacity enormously.’ Of the two, Skelton seemdc to me the more sensitive observer.

and was chronically in debt.²¹ He was often also at loggerheads with quiet and methodical Denis Tegetmeier, who was grumpy and depressed. The Hagues' marriage was, however, extraordinary close, easy, and affectionate, though this was largely the achievement of his wife. For Jones, their marriage was, as he put it, 'a rock.'²²

At their house, he painted from a window, or just outside, or in his tiny bedroom, sometimes finishing two paintings a day. He wrote at a table in the sitting room and while lying on his bed.

Hague remembered him complaining about

rhetoric and verbosity. He was constantly thinking 'well I must leave this bit out,' then thinking, 'no I can't that's too good to miss, I must put it in again, no, it's too wordy.' And I think that if you put together all that he had written for *In Parenthesis* it would be about ten times as long. I can see him sitting in that very small living room of ours in the tiny cottage in which we lived when we were first married—sitting there in a chair and reading a very much longer and much more rhetorical version of that passage, the first great explosive purple passage at the end of Part 2 of *In Parenthesis*.

But writing took second place to painting.²³

Early in the summer of 1931, he painted a watercolour portrait of Jack's fiancée (fig. 5), a school mistress at High Wycombe. 'He reckoned she was jolly beautiful,' Jones said, 'but I remember I found her jolly hard to draw because I could *not* beat up any real feeling about her, for some reason. I didn't know which she was Athena or Diana or Persephone or whatever. & if you don't know the archetype how can you draw the type?'²⁴



5. David Jones, Hamson's fiancée, 1931



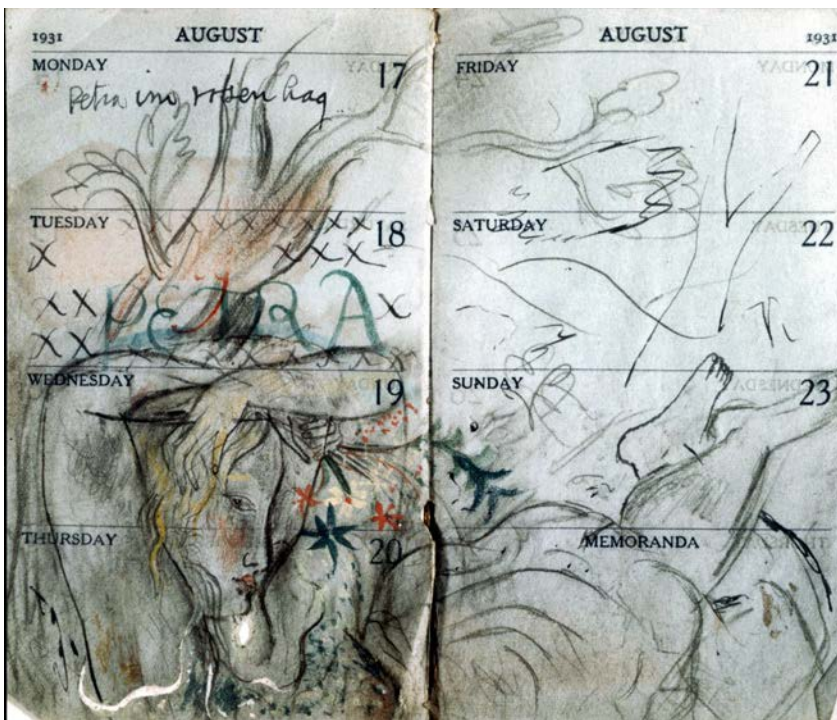
6. David Jones, *Curtained Outlook*, 1931

One of his most successful pictures this summer was *Curtained Outlook* (fig. 6), painted in watercolour at Pigotts from an open bedroom window in the Tegetmeier cottage. The gabled end of Gill's house looms in the open window three-quarters behind a barely visible gossamer curtain embroidered with delicate flowers. The window itself floats in the upper half of the picture, freed by fractured perspective from the wall and cluttered tabletop beneath, which seems to sink down into impossible space within the wall, so that the sill above hovers over it and nearer the viewer than the table's far edge. On the table is a scrambled hodgepodge of objects in various degrees of definition. Window and table seem almost to belong to separate paintings, though tonally alike and linked by cracks

in plaster. Everything floats in a blue wash. The house, the envased flowers below, and the messy tabletop are focal decentrings. The window is marvellous in ambiguity, with the outside seeming to enter through it—the sharply defined curtain-hook and window latch equidistant from the viewer with the highly defined open windows of Gill's looming house. The pressure inward of the gabled house, with curtain blowing out of one of its windows, is countered by the vase of flowers on the sill with its tiny bursts of the thickest, most colourful paint in the picture. By calling to other small thicknesses of tone above, beside and below, this slightly off-centre profusion tends at once to centre and decentre the picture. The vase and flowers vie with the great, tonally muted house beyond. Intensities on the table below are mostly unrecognizable in

abstraction. These counter the eye's inclination to fly through the window. A daring picture, its chaos only just achieves unity, by virtue largely of the window frame and its off rhyme with the table at an angle below.

Some pictures were utter failures. Painting from the scullery window in late July, he produced a 'ghastly mess—can't see anything,' he writes, 'you know—gone. ... I want a new vision—so tired.' He found some consolation in the Hagues' dog Jock, whom he was taking care of and who had, he writes 'attached himself to my person with unique devotion.'²⁵



7. 18 August 1931

simply in Petra but in a new portrait of her begun on 17 August. He wrote its title in the diary for that day, *Petra im Rosenhag* (fig. 8). She would remember sitting for it, initially each day in the afternoon for a couple of hours without conversation—'He was too concentrating,' she remembered, and 'very excited'.²⁶ Using pencil, watercolour, and bodycolour, he took a month to complete it, with Petra posing during later sittings for about half an hour.

Although initially caught up in the joy of creation, while painting this picture, in which her wedding ring is clearly delineated, he probably had for this woman who had twice refused him complex feelings which may account for the rich contrariness of the work. He transforms her

Petra remained dear to him.

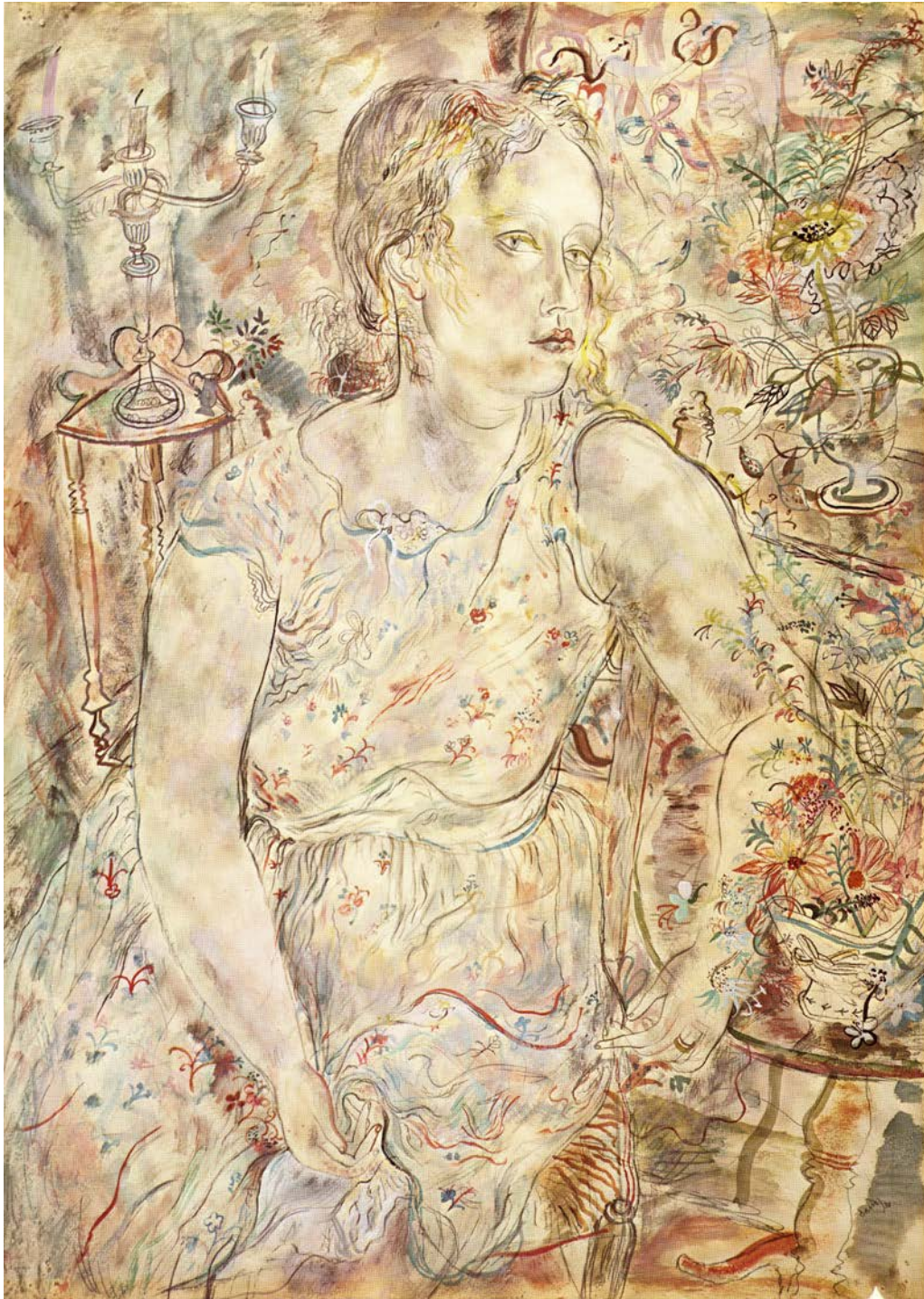
He marked her twenty-fourth birthday in his pocket calendar with 26 Xs, presumably for kisses, one for each year (he losing count), surrounding in large green letters PETRA. On the open two pages, he drew and painted her with yellow hair, holding green, white and orange flowers and lying in a treed landscape with white highlights on her green spotted dress. (fig. 7). This private visual celebration seems,

however, to have its cause not

into, or reveals her as, a numinous figure of mythic resonance and illumination. She is virginal enough to justify the verbal allusion to Renaissance Madonnas in rose arbors.²⁷ With flowers on her dress to match the cut flowers beside her, she is also Flora, goddess of springtime, as Botticelli depicts her in *Primavera*, a painting he had repeatedly viewed in the Italian exhibit at the National Gallery in early January. As flower goddess, she also has affinity with Blodeuedd, the Welsh fertility figure in *The Mabinogion*. Symbolically archetypal, she is also numinous, owing to the diffusion of light shining through her, which is brighter for the subtle shadowing on the forward-most surfaces of her head and body. Her physical context is depicted in fractured perspective, so that she is the only uniform wholeness in the picture. Because she is tonally weaker than her rocking background—Piero della Francesca is an influence here—she seems to sink back into it, to become part of it, and to calm it. Yet her posture is not calming but ambiguously crooked and unbalanced in its suggestion of unspecified meaning. She leans toward the flowers, turns her head towards them and away from the you, yet peers directly at you. Her facial expression is half-way between outward regard and profound inwardness, with a mouth that welcomes and eyes that warn you to keep your distance. The painting captures her in the act of revealing her archetypes. They are two, in paradoxical double exposure, Diana and Flora, virgin and mother. She transmits light. To view her is to be taken into the picture, to experience continual shifting of viewpoint, an ever-changing relationship with the subject. She is archetypal and symbolic in a way that swallows your psyche as a viewer, whose experience involves your relationship with yourself.

He would exhibit it November 1931 at the Goupil Autumn Salon Exhibition of Modern Art. It would be bought and reframed, according to Jones, ‘to its considerable damage’ by Michael Sadler, an adventurous collector who had bought Kandinsky abstracts in 1909. In 1935, Sadler would lend it for an exhibition in Cardiff, and when Jones saw in the catalogue that he ‘had the damned audacity to alter the title ... to “Girl with Flowers,”’ he wrote to complain. At Sadler’s death, Kenneth Clark would buy it, and Jones would write to him, ‘I rather attach importance to titles’:

It is called 'Petra im Rosenhag' because ... when I was doing it we had a German book of reproductions of various pictures of our Lady in more or less floral settings & the book was called 'Maria im Rosenhag' ... not that it improves the picture!—nor indeed had the reproductions anything to do with the picture—but it provided the title & fitted the theme.



8. David Jones, *Petra im Rosenhag*, 1931

Nothing to do with the picture but fitting the theme? As he at once denies and acknowledges, the virgin mother of Christianity has a good deal to do—at least as far as he was concerned—with the contrariness of Petra here. He would retain ‘a rather special attachment’ to this picture, and Clark would think that it had ‘more of his mind in it than almost anything else he did.’²⁸

With Tom Burns and Grisewood, he went to Caldey to paint in the last weeks of September and early days of October 1931. The weather was wonderful and he thought the island ‘adorable’, an ideal place to paint in every way’ on ‘the best kind of autumn day with the sun warm & the day quite still & everything a pleasant slightly golden tone.’ Despite viciously biting flies in the bracken—which he found ‘quite horrible and enraging,’ he went out to paint almost daily, though initially without success: ‘no new corner turned—only old stuff rehashed’.²⁹



9. Ty Gwyn, 1996

He, Burns, and Grisewood were the only boarders in a large white, red-tile-roofed cottage called Ty Gwyn (fig. 9), a half-mile north-east of the monastery. Two spinster sisters provided ‘superb’ meals. From the north-facing balcony, they could see the coast from Tenby to Giltar Point. Each morning they attended Mass in the monastery and often, at various times, the singing of the Divine Office, but there was little pleasure in this for Jones.

He writes, ‘the Trappists sing the Liturgy very badly indeed.’ In the morning Burns did editorial work, Grisewood read, and Jones painted, usually at Drinkim Bay and with great speed, often finishing a picture before lunch. In the afternoon he went back to painting or joined his friends in exploring the island. He was interested to see how the Cistercians ‘really got down to working the land in true “French peasant” manner,’ but he and his friends mostly visited the wild cliff edges. In the evening he worked on his book while they read, or he also read, or they all drank whisky and talked. He was finishing Part 3 of *In Parenthesis* and starting Part 4, thinking, now, that there would be five parts.³⁰

When he painted, all his energy was focused. ‘I only know one way to draw,’ he wrote, ‘and that is in a kind of fierce concentration.’ Like the figure in *The Artist* (ch 7, fig. 40), he bent over and partially wrapped himself around the paper, oblivious to anything else. Grisewood later remembered, ‘I can see him now on Caldey Island, working with such intensity, his whole physical being mobilized to an achievement on this piece of paper as though he was wrestling with something, which indeed he was.’ Jones would later have a conversation with Augustus John in the Six Bells pub in Chelsea, in which John said, ‘In order to paint a picture you’ve got to be as strong as ten elephants.’ Jones agreed, and subsequently complained to Grisewood, ‘It’s all very well for Augustus. He *is* as strong as ten elephants, but I’m not,’ and Grisewood replied, ‘David, you *make* yourself as strong as that when you’re actually painting a picture.’ He painted quickly and unselfconsciously with encompassing physical contortions. When he was done, he was exhausted. Only subsequently would he discuss the picture critically, as though done by someone else. If the struggle was a success, ‘transubstantiation’ had occurred. If not, the picture lacked the union of form and content essential to success and, as he put it, ‘didn’t come off.’³¹

In the next few years, he returned twice to Caldey, once again with Burns and Grisewood. During one of their visits, they walked together to the western tip of the island across from the small, high, cliff-bound island of St Marguerite. They knew that several people had drowned trying to cross the sound between the islands, but the tide was out, and Grisewood and Burns decided to cross and then scale the hundred-foot cliff to investigate ruined buildings visible from Caldey. Jones stayed behind to paint. After his friends were across and on their way up, he saw a race-tide starting to fill the sound and yelled—uselessly because of distance and the noise of herring-gulls—and waved his arms frantically. They saw him and hurried back, wading into the now waist-high, powerful riptide. ‘David was in a panic,’ Burns remembered; ‘we were too.’³² As the gulls laughed and screamed, his friends reached a high rock broken from the side of Caldey and from there clambered to the top of Star Cliff to a greatly relieved David Jones.

One afternoon as he and Grisewood strolled together along the beach of Priory Bay throwing stones into the sea, Jones expressed his views on sex and love. He said that with Petra he had wanted sex, and she had wanted marriage. Grisewood had the impression that now, at least, he was not broken-hearted or emotionally damaged by the breakup. Jones said that he was

now decided against marriage and would avoid sex because of the emotional commitment it involved. Without such entanglements he was freer to work. Although his economic prospects had improved, he continued to doubt his ability to support a family, but money was no longer the main issue. Freedom from involvement with Petra had released his creative energies. Aware of Freud's reduction of religion to frustrated sexuality, he believed in indeterminate, elemental energy, which could be used in artistic creation, prayer, or sex but is no more sexual *per se* than artistic or prayerful. But it is finite, and you must choose how to expend it. He chose artistic creation and aesthetic contemplation, art being, he found, all-consuming. He later wrote to Helen Ede that 'painting is so "totalitarian" & you *do* have to be strong to do it, once you know the snags.' As a monk chooses to dedicate himself to God through celibacy, he dedicated himself fully to art, a choice he understood in terms of this analogy. He would repeat favourite quotes: one by Francis Bacon on celibacy, 'How can charity water the ground when it must first fill a pool'; another by Thomas More, 'Far better that a priest have mistresses by the score than that he take a wife.' Jones did not want marriage and family or even the entanglements that sexual activity involves. In none of this was he much influenced by Christian moral objections to extra-marital sex. Walking on the beach, he said that there was nothing wrong with sex and that he had no objection to premarital or extramarital sexual relationships. When Grisewood demurred, he asked, "What do you think our sexual organs were given us for? The sexual act itself can never be wrong. Quite possibly it is the only thing a human being does that is free of the taint of original sin.' But sexual involvement was also, for him, emotional involvement. He felt confirmed in his choice of chaste bachelorhood for artistic reasons by the example of William Orpen (1878-1931), who was ruined as a painter, he thought, by a social-climbing wife. (As Orpen ascended socially through induction into the Royal Academy and a knighthood, his painting deteriorated.)³³ For Jones, there was more involved in celibacy than dedication to art. Similar celibate dedication had crumbled in other artists, such as Henry Moore, who had also decided to remain single for art's sake but was now married.

On this or a later occasion, Jones also gave fastidiousness as a reason for foregoing sexual pleasure. As Grisewood remembered, he said, 'I don't think I want to wake up with any girl beside me. I think that would be revolting to me in some way—I really don't want to ever.

All my habits are such that it would not be at all a pleasant experience.’ What would have suited him, according to Grisewood, was casual sexual relationships, affectionate but not involving cohabitation.³⁴

On the beach, Jones spoke to Grisewood in terms similar to the hierarchy of experiences and values that Watkin was writing about in *The Bow in the Clouds*. There is, Jones said, a hierarchy of loves and pleasures. At the bottom are sensory and sexual pleasures. You rise above these through perception and appreciation of natural beauty—in a person, a landscape, an object—and rise further through appreciation of artistic beauty and, further still, through intimations of transcendence. These loves and pleasures are hierarchical since art, for example, ranks above sensory pleasure because art is distinctively human. The entire range of appreciation is erotic, he said, from the bottom where you copulate to the top where you unite with God. Advancing involves discernment, which he called ‘taste’. You have to discriminate between kinds of love proper to their objects. You don’t love the sea as you love a woman, so you have to order your appreciations. You also forgo lower pleasures since you would not otherwise have time or energy for higher pleasures. Appreciation of a landscape engages erotic feeling which, if you were copulating, would be unavailable for aesthetic appreciation. Sexual involvement would, he thought, spoil his art by diverting energy from it. Every inclination to love is God-given, however, and not to be suspected, denied, or repressed for moral reasons. All of nature is loveable and deserves love. Merely to follow animal urges would produce chaos, but to deny or repress enjoyment for moral or religious reasons would also, he said, be a great mistake.*³⁵

On Caldey, he and his friends visited the McHardy family and learned that the French Cistercians had asked McHardy to tell his youngest daughter, Tessie, not to walk by a certain path when delivering milk since, when she did, they could not see her legs. Jones, Burns, and Grisewood agreed that if these monks wanted the erotic pleasure of seeing girls’ legs, they had no business being monks.³⁶

Jones and his friends posted to Hague an elaborate joke-document that conveys the free-wheeling, intelligent, ribald humour characteristic of their friendship. Completed on the evening

* Grisewood would later be reminded of Jones’s exposition when reading Hebert Marcuse’s *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), pp. 57-91.

of 2 October, it is a twelve-page folio mock-official arrest warrant for Hague. ‘Barbour-sergeon’ Jones is the chief author. In his handwriting, the culprit is identified as:

HAGUE (27) ‘lecher.’ Hague
 last known alibi Bond Salesman
 in UTAH (Salt-lake City)
 alias ‘Sissy’ Bourne.
 alias ‘high-spot’ Hopkins (S.J.)

He diagnoses Hague with of ‘Intermittent irritation of the Pelvic-girdle’ and indicates treatment:

take Unicorn-horn (fresh caught) .25 dms
 admix with green-carnation juice (.59 grms)
 compound with fresh shag
 well teased (1/4 oz) inforce in the
 usual manner.
 boil over quick fire (or Rimus stove)
 toward sun-down—(or any time
 on Holy Day of Ob[ligation])
 apply to affected parts.

N.B. thoroughly singe parts before application using *blow-lamp* (as used by common painters) if procurable—other wise candle will suffice.

He adds that this should be applied while intoning ‘any one of Miss Wilcox Poems’ and supplies a page on which he draws ‘animals last seen with HAGUE reconstructed by our experts from remains found near his accustomed haunts’: a rhinoceros, a boar, and a giraffe with a unicorn horn. He then lists thirty-two associations that seem to reflect the chapter-schemas of Joyce’s *Ulysses*, beginning

Date	1798
Countryside	Tyrol (spring)
Town	Heidelberg
Weather	filtering sun after rain—tall white clouds
Month	April
Time of Day	teatime

and going on to include, among other things, Food, Drink (‘Hoc’), Clothes, Animal, Bird, Flower, Smell (‘Lime’), Philosophic Axiom (‘La Volunté général est toujours droite’), Machine,

Boat, Woman (Moll Flanders), and Religion ('BEZPOPOVSTVO, the priestless Russian sect which rejects every sort of hierarchy has a strong apocalyptic tendency, is nihilistic in attitude toward the structure of the Church, to the State, & to Culture'). Then follows a Provost Marshal's Report by Jones,

In view of information received by us re
 'Gangster' Hague alias 'Letcher' Born
 we issue warrant for immediate arrest.
 As a preliminary measure we propose to
 confiscate Joanna (*type & wife lower-case italic*)
 Gill sans sousiant
 The said 'High Spot Cissy'
 was last seen
 by our Peelers
 on wot we calls the King's 'ighway
 heading in the direction of the Nonsuch Press
 where there is evidence of his having worked
 for two years as a title page designer
 in conjunction with Mr Stanley Baldwin-Morison
 who has made a statement implicating the authorship of the Pentateuch
 Three of his racket are believed to be muscling-in
 with the De Rancé whoopee-for-me bunch, Bullens Beech PEM.
 Our Police boats are patrolling the area Nig.d 6-9.
 The Universe Newspaper (M. Melvyn Prop)
 has generously come forward with the
 offer of a Papal Knighthood—sans puer et
 sans reproach—impartibus in fidelium to any
 co-religionist instrumental in the said
 'High Spot' Hague's arrest.
 Your Majesty would be advised to
 keep the Queen ('last word' Phillys)
 indoors.
 [signed]
 Alcock the Hoop, Bart, Acting Provost Mrshal
 Midnight 2/10/31

Jones appended to this a notice, which he signed ‘Clare Meynell Wardens of the Ports’:

Our lookouts at Station Z Longt 1.5 west Lt 35.8 north report that a person supposed to be Mr Stanley Baldwin-Morison referred to in this report, alias ‘Galatians Stan’ alias ‘Fourth Gospel Thorpe’ was sighted walking on the sea in the direction of the Spanish mainland.

The British & Foreign Bible Society were visited by our land-squad men & stated that a person answering to the description of Baldwin-Morison purchased a very large consignment of Bibles & Anti Superstition Books late on the Friday of last week—he seemed, they suggested, to be pre-occupied & said little.



Jones cut out photographs from newspapers and magazines and added captions identifying ‘Right & three quarter left view of HAGUE,’ ‘Hague with colours,’ ‘Hot-handed (‘Doodles’) Betty last seen with Typographer Hague,’ ‘Hague “snapped” at a galla-night at the Commercio the woman is believed to be his wife.’

After two weeks, in October 1931, they

10. David Jones, *Trade Ship Passes Ynys Byr*, 1931

returned to London, Jones with a stack of new paintings, many of them remarkable. In *Herbaged Coast*, *Ynys Byr*, a central outpouring flurry of foliage resist containment by rough cliffs of Drinkim Bay. In *The Reefed Place* the rocks of the bay are more roughly wave-like than the sea, as though in a reversal of land and sea or a flashback to Precambrian volcanic raging—a visual reminder that once rock was liquid and moved in waves. In *Trade Ship passes Ynys Bry*, rock, water and air actively intermingle and seem made of the same airy stuff (fig. 10). Attention is riveted by pinnacles of rock in the right middle-ground, which glow at the edges with bright yellow. These point upward to soaring gulls that move the picture plane nearer to the viewer,

giving the scene depth. They fly at eye-level, the ship beside (but far behind) them hovering in water as they do in air. Also standing out against their background are the rocks, which have, as they strain against gravity, affinity with the passing fliers. The entire painting is in motion, the rocks no less than the sea and the air, forming an active elemental community.

On 4 August 1931, he visited Helen Sutherland's house in Northumberland (fig. 11). He would make over a dozen visits, once or twice a year, sometimes in the spring, usually in late summer. These initially lasted several weeks. Later they extended to several months, partly because Sutherland wanted to support him during times of illness and poverty, partly because of inertia. 'He's bad at coming,' she said, 'and he's bad at going.' His summers were now mostly divided between Pigotts and Rock, each place influencing his painting. He said, 'the rambling, familiar, south, walled, small, flower-beddedness of Pigotts and the space, park, north, serene, clear, silverness of Rock both did something.'³⁷

She sent him a third-class rail ticket to which he added the money needed to travel first class. To hide his extravagance, he moved to a third-class car just before his stop. He had no qualms about her paying most of his fare, since he believed, as she did, that the wealthy should subsidize poor artists. He traveled first class, as in



11. Rock Hall, c. 1935

London he took taxis instead of the far less expensive underground, not to indulge expensive tastes, as friends assumed, but because he suffered from agoraphobia—fear of being in a crowded places like underground cars and third-class railway cars. Usually the company of a trusted companion allowed him to endure crowded confinement but not always. At the end of the decade, after visiting his parents, he rode east on the District Line with his twenty-one-year-old niece, Stella, towards his stop, Sloane Square, but he stood up at an earlier stop and, despite her protest, rush away frantically exclaiming, 'I must get out!'³⁸

In August 1931, on route to Sutherland's house, he was the sole occupant of the carriage. He worked for five hours, managing to write two pages of *In Parenthesis*, interrupting composition to fill a pocket flask with brandy, bought dearly on the train in small tots. The expense was necessary, he felt, since Sutherland, one of whose two brothers had died in a fall from a train while drunk, provided no alcohol for guests except, occasionally, wine. He noticed that Durham looked good from the train. His solitude was interrupted only by a fat young man (probably 'a rich northern manufacturer's son') who entered the carriage at York and left at Newcastle. Shortly before arriving, he moved to a third-class coach from which he emerged at Alnmouth to be met by Sutherland's chauffeur, known as 'the gloomy Mills.' In the back seat of her Rolls Royce, with a rug over his legs, he was driven eight miles through rolling farmland.³⁹

Sutherland's house was Rock Hall, the castellated manor house of the tiny village of Rock, named for a family that lived there in the fifteenth century. The house had begun as a peel tower, built for defense against the Scotts and was incorporated into an Elizabethan house burned in the eighteenth century and restored in 1820 by a Huguenot family named Bosanquet. Sutherland rented it from Robert Carr Bosanquet, who owned most of the farmland round about. The decoration of the house evolved through the 1930s. On one wall just inside the entrance hall was a large Frith painting of skaters on a pond, across from which Helen Sutherland hung Ben Nicholson's *St. Rémy, Provence*, a four-foot oil of dark and blanched Greek-vase-like profiles: a juxtaposition of paintings to announce the integration of tradition and modernity. Here also would be a stone on which Gill cut in Latin and French words from Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite which translate: 'From divine beauty is everything derived.' To the right was a dining-room where portraits of Sutherland's parents stared from green walls and massive, polished silver glittered on sideboards and table. To the left was a music room, with grand piano and, on pink walls, a Seurat and two Courbets. Behind it was the library, furnished with sofas and armchairs, its walls lined from floor to ceiling with shelves of largely Victorian and modern books of literature, history, theology, art, poetry, gardening, and cooking. Here, at the social centre of the house, visitors congregated, and from a large bow window, Sutherland fed birds with Fortnum-and-Mason nuts. On the shelfless wall hung either Nicholson's *Porthmeor Beach* or his *Cumbrian Landscape* and sometimes her Seurat. Inside the entrance a polished oak

staircase led up to the first floor and Sutherland's suite above the music room and library with a separate study above the entrance. She received special guests in this study, the less special, including her landlord, in the drawing room downstairs. Also on the first floor were guest bedrooms, a room with a ping-pong table, and a gallery with pictures propped on shelves round the walls, which by the end of the decade would include about thirty Ben Nicholsons and over thirty Joneses—the numbers varying as she acquired some and gave away others. There were five sitting rooms, five baths, fourteen bedrooms, a big kitchen and a scullery, three larders, and a servants' hall and sitting room. In the public rooms, she arranged in vases wildflowers and flowers from the garden. The house was clean, neat, polished and had something of the carefully arranged preciousness of Ede's house without being so aesthetically determined.⁴⁰

On the second floor were small bedrooms. Jones was usually assigned the one in the the original tower, over Sutherland's study above the main entrance. Here, at the top of the house, uninterrupted, he painted and wrote. He repeatedly painted the view from his window, which included the 'pretty *hideous*,' he thought, stone cottages of the village, and, across the road to the right a small Norman church built in 1176 and its graveyard. Further right was a large pond with rowboat surrounded by chestnuts and oaks. Sutherland had stocked the lake, as she called it, with mallard ducks, whom she tamed by feeding mealworms from Fortnum and Mason. The ducks followed her when they saw her, as they did when she went to church. Between the house and the church was a park a hundred yards deep, a tree-bordered meadow where sheep grazed and pheasants ran. It was an enclosed, intimate landscape, for Jones a place of 'calm & bird's-song.'⁴¹

In August of the previous year he had painted at Rock *Agnes Fountain* and *Coedwig Henaint* (Welsh for 'Old Forest') two of a number of unusual watercolour landscapes that resemble abstractions owing to their including much empty space, probably influenced by his sea-paintings. *Agnes Fountain* seems an experiment in avoiding linear definition. The ground seems flooded, with nothing of interest in foreground or background. It is all ghostly space of pale blue and pink columns of quick, short horizontal brush strokes from which emerge phantom trees that wobble in the middle ground, only the ends of their branches being highly defined. Linear shape is isolated in a pale sea of changing colour and tone insufficient to fill the

emptiness. It is a daring half-picture, demanding great patience of the viewer, whose eye is unengaged unless dancing among the distorted trees. He called it 'Forest Gate' before re-titling it *Agnes Fountain* because of the verse in the Christmas carol, 'Right against the Forest-Fence / By St Agnes fountain'. Sutherland purchased it from the Seven and Five exhibition in January.

Here he painted out of doors rarely, when it was windless and very warm. Otherwise he painted looking out a window, occasionally from Sutherland's study above the entrance. 'I like looking out onto the world from a reasonably sheltered position,' he wrote. 'I can't paint in the wind, and I like the *indoors outdoors contained yet limitless* feeling of windows and doors.' He did not mind company when he painted, but while actually painting was fully absorbed and did not converse. Jim Ede was once with him in his second-story bedroom when he began to paint the



12. View from Jones's bedroom window at Rock, August 1996



13. David Jones, *Chapel in the Park*, 1932

trees in front of the house. ‘They look like cabbages,’ he complained, ‘How can anyone paint them?’ He became agitated and cried out angrily, ‘but they are TREES, TREES, TREES. They *must* make a picture,’ and in the heat of desperation he painted a picture that Ede thought was successful. The view was easier to paint in leafless early spring, as in *The Chapel in the Park* (1932), which he painted from his bedroom window (fig. 13). Although there were often sheep in the field he was painting, there were none now so he drew them from memory, which he found hard to do, one of them turning out, he thought ‘very comical looking’.⁴² In this work a brilliant yellow tone floats like a cloud of light in the upper right, a bright emptiness amid pinks and greens. The background tilts toward the viewer, as though on the face of a hill, but this is a bending of perspective, for the land is flat. Because some of the washes float free, unconfined by drawing, the work resembles a palimpsest or double exposure of two pictures of the same scene, one primarily a painting, the other a drawing. As a painting it is unified by correspondences in colour and alive with variations in tone. As a drawing in pencil and paint, it is unified chiefly by correspondences between arches of tombstones, church-window, and bridge, by continuity between the foreground tree and background trees, and by affinity between upper branches of trees. There is also an enlivening contrast between the active presences above and on the right and the emptiness of the lawn. On the lower right is a dark green bush he later disliked, when showing it, brushing the back of his hand against the bush, dumbly wishing it away.⁴³

Behind the house was a large eighteenth century walled garden, which, along with the rest of the grounds, was tended by four gardeners. Jones loved the way they and other locals spoke ‘with a beautiful intonation ... like Scottish lowlanders, musical’ with something like an Irish lilt. Behind the garden was a wood called Willy Close and an avenue of century-old trees extending over a mile to the Great North Road. He sometimes walked here with Sutherland and other guests at dusk or by moonlight.⁴⁴

He thought the country around Rock ‘*heavenly*’ with ‘big blond ash trees,’ ‘very light & open & the colours are all silvery & everything seems washed with dew & swept with wind.’ In ways that were important to him, the area was historically redolent. A clay pot had recently been discovered nearby in a burial mound of one of the Beaker People, who came to Britain about 2000 BC. In the centuries before and after the turn of the first millennium BC, this land, from

north of the Wall up to present-day Edinburgh, had belonged to his Celtic ancestors, the Votadini, who subsequently, about the year 400 AD, were moved west by the Romans to combat Irish invaders. The area they vacated then became the Celtic kingdom of Rheged, defended against the Angles heroically and successfully in the sixth century by King Urien and his son Owain. After Arthur, these are the most renowned heroes of Celtic-British history and legend, from which they passed into the romances as Ureins and Yvain. On his first visit, Jones had been driven for the first time past the Duke of Northumberland's sprawling Norman castle fronting the main road north from Alnwick, and Sutherland had told him it was the site of Joyous Garde, Lancelot's castle in Malory and the supposed place of his burial. Jones's reading a few months later confirmed this. With the area's association with Lancelot in mind, he began habitually referring to the church across the park at Rock as 'the Chapel Perilous,' the place of terrifying enchantment that Lancelot nevertheless dares to enter—an episode in Malory that reminded him of his experience at night in Mametz Wood.⁴⁵

Almost daily, usually in the morning, he walked to the nearest pub, the Horseshoe Inn at the village of Rennington. It was nearly two miles west along the road from Rock, past the estate offices of Rock Moor Farm, and out over rolling fields—to the south a falling-away view of the broad, rolling Northumbrian plain. When out of cigarettes he made this trek even in the pouring rain. Then especially the plain country pub was cozy, with a fire and big box seats and lots of cats. There he drank Guinesses or, on rare warm days, gin-and-tonics, and filled his flask with whisky, then walked back for lunch, smelling, to Sutherland's chagrin, of alcohol. Throughout his stays, he would long to be with the Burns brothers and Grisewood to 'drink a vast quantity of some kind of beer.'⁴⁶

He complained to them that Rock Hall was always bitterly cold. To keep warm in bed, he pulled the Welsh rug from the floor up over the eider down. In the morning he put on his greatcoat in order to have tea in bed. And there was never enough to eat. Sutherland insisted that food look good, liked French cooking, preferred fish and chicken to red meat, though she occasionally allowed it, and liked salads and fruit. She believed such food relieved constipation, from which she suffered inordinately. Nothing out of a tin or made from ingredients from a

packet was served. All of this was fine with Jones, but the servings she approved were small. Wine was extremely good but offered rarely and frugally.⁴⁷

She (fig. 14) was a perfectionist who enforced domestic rules. Attendance at meals was to be punctual, and she chastised late-comers. There was little excuse for tardiness: clocks and chronometers were placed throughout the house, and the sounding of a gong announced meals.



14. Helen Sutherland, c. 1933

He dreaded arriving late—though he was usually late for breakfast, which began at 9:30. Working in his distant room and unable to hear the gong, he was sometimes late for supper and reported to a friend, ‘They fair scowl at you & are slap through the soup’. Guests were expected to sleep with windows open and not to waste water or electricity. They were not to make or receive telephone calls. They were to be clean, to dress properly, to converse well. She was ruthless to anyone who spoke foolishly or trivially. They were to take care not to trip over or sit on her Pekinese dogs. Guests were obliged to retire for the night when she decided it was time to retire. One of the duties of her elderly retainer, Beatrice Hornsby, was to wash in soap and water the change that she brought back from shopping, even though it would be handled only with gloves.⁴⁸

Jones was on his best behaviour with Sutherland, which largely meant watching his language. Kathleen Raine remembered that he was ‘very frightened’ of her—an observation that needs putting in perspective but suggests affinity between Sutherland and his mother. Both women were intelligent, disciplining, judgmental, iron-willed, occasionally bad-tempered, and, to him, affectionate. Like his mother, Sutherland was tiny, just over five feet, and, like his mother, could withdraw affection. He often saw her chill emotionally to those who made mistakes, as Jim Ede once did by presenting her with flowers from her own garden.⁴⁹ She was a

connoisseur of people as well as pictures, and she cultivated friendships, but for her they were more than that. As patron, she became a surrogate parent, a role arising from her need to create a 'family' after the loss of her parents and both her brothers—as she herself realized. By 1932, those she loved most were Helen Ede, Ben Nicholson, David Jones, and Vera Moore—the last an anglicized New-Zealander and professional pianist who gave her piano lessons, played for assembled guests in the evening, and spoke constantly of beauty. Jones enjoyed her playing and her company. Of all her proteges, Sutherland considered Jones and Moore to be, as she put it, 'my own,' and, of these, she loved him most. According to Kathleen Raine, 'she loved David's work best and she loved David best. She thought he was perfect. I remember saying to her, "It's a pity David didn't marry—it's so sad for him." And she said, "But I think David's life is very beautiful just as it is." She wouldn't forgive Jim Ede a thing. She would forgive Ben Nicholson a good deal. She would forgive David absolutely everything.'⁵⁰ She loved all her artists, Nicolette Gray said, 'as if they were her own children', and Jones was comfortable in the role of favourite child. Grisewood would remember her as a strait-laced Victorian who held to standards of behaviour but was tolerant of others in 'a rather school-mistressy' and 'motherly kind of way.' He would recall her gentle but insistent disapproval of Jones's drinking: 'I don't think you should do that, David, honestly; it's not a very good thing; all that whiskey is not very good for you.' And he replied, 'Oh, well, Helen, I really can't avoid it. Sometimes it's necessary.'⁵¹ Although their relationship included the paradigm of mother-and-child, it was not reducible to that. They were friends with a good deal in common, and in many important respects, as they both realized, he was more than her equal.

She was, furthermore, a complex woman. One of her guests remembered her as sometimes gay, sometimes intolerant, jealous of her possessions, defensive or angry. Another remembered her as 'sensitive, tough-minded, generous, strict, humble, exacting, affectionate.' For a person so demanding she was tolerant and flexible. She did not smoke and disliked smoking but provided for her guests two large boxes of different brands of cigarettes. (Jones tried to smoke as little as possible in her presence.) After Ben Nicholson divorced Winifred to marry Barbara Hepworth, a vicar saw no reason to regard the new couple as married, but Sutherland argued that their children were reason enough. When Vera Moore produced a baby

fathered by the sculptor Brancusi, Sutherland expressed her disapproval but then gave her an income, bought her a house in Surrey, and engaged a nurse so that she could continue her career.⁵²

Philosophically she was rigorous, criticizing Ede's metaphysical vagaries, but she could also exude affection, especially in letters. When not angry with Ede, she thought him 'April like,' generous '& outpouring' with a 'shining face turned in love towards whoever it looks at.' A visit from Vera Moore was 'a benediction'; Kathleen Raine, 'unparalleled'; Jones, an 'angel.' She invested all her friends, Jones thought, 'with a largely imaginary loveliness.'⁵³

Because she liked visitors, Jones met a good many people at Rock. One was Constance (Conty) Sitwell, a cousin of the poet Edith Sitwell. Beautiful and dramatic, the author of several travel books and memoirs, she lived with her husband, a retired general, twenty-two miles north in Barmoor Castle. Another was Constance (Cooie) Lane, a cousin of Conty Sitwell and an unsuccessful painter who liked to talk metaphysics. Both were close friends of Sutherland, and Jones liked them. A frequent guest was Walter (D'Arcy) Cresswell, a third-rate New Zealand poet whom Ede had introduced and whom Sutherland and Cooie Lane financially supported.* Violinists Jelly d'Aranyi and Adila Fachiri visited to give concerts. Vera Moore was often present and usually played from the classical repertoire—Bach, Mozart, Couperin. On the evening of 4 August 1931 she played Byrd. Sutherland brought up the Busch Quartet, one of the leading European string quartets. The Edes sometimes visited, so did Ben and Winifred Nicholson, separately after their divorce. One of the guests remembers Ben praising at some length the beauty of a refrigerator he had seen—'What beautiful lines!'—and Jones, across the table from him, responding, 'What a lot of balls!' Another visiting painter was Teddy Wolfe, who was, Jones said, 'very jovial' and 'extremely amusing & with a sense of sadness underneath.' Everyone who knew Wolfe felt affection for him. Other visitors included the translator Arthur Waley and the poet, literary scholar, and editor Peter Quennell.⁵⁴

* Sutherland was patient and encouraging to Cresswell in hopes that he would write poetry of value, until he made the mistake of privately publishing a sonnet dedicated to her and then sending her the bill for printing. Sutherland told him to move on, and he did, moving in for various periods with people he had met through her.

Jones did not enjoy them all. Often present was a barrister named Humphrey Paul, an expert on claret, who aggressively, unsuccessfully courted Sutherland. That Jones disliked him is suggested by his remarking that ‘people who “know” about wines are usually *so boring*.’ (Whenever possible he would avoid conversations on the subject.) One evening, he recounts,

the Lord Tankerville Earl of Chillingham & his new Swedish wife came to supper. ... He has only *one* subject—Social Credit—he talked for three hours about it—it was H[elen]’s fault for asking him about it. I was *tired out* before he started & *dead* when he went—its the Douglas scheme he cracks on about like anything. A sort of Panacea for all ills. I wished René had been here to say the right things—I just can’t cope with this finance business. he says it’s so simple you just make your member of parliament force the government to force the bankers to adjust their bleeding system so that everybody has enough bits of paper to get all the things they want. Lovely. So easy—go on—do it—give it us—they won’t.⁵⁵

At Rock he met many ‘Harris-tweed, worthy, scholarly, early-to-bed-earlier-to-rise chaps’, among whom the most important, for him, was Robert (Robin) Hodgkin, met probably in 1930, a history don at Queen’s College Oxford and a cousin of the Bosanquets. He had been expelled from the Quakers for joining the Lancaster Fusiliers during the Boer War. Each summer, he and his family rented, with Sutherland’s help, the large Captain’s Lodgings in Bamburgh Castle, and Jones got to know them well over the next ten years. He would especially like Hodgkin’s sons, Thomas and Edward—in 1930, twenty- and seventeen-years old. Thomas was at Balliol reading Greats (Ancient History and Philosophy). Edward was at Eton and went up in 1932 to read History. Jones visited them at Oxford, beginning with Thomas in the autumn of 1930. That year, he put his coat and scarf on Thomas and painted his portrait, which Thomas’s mother disliked because, she said, it did not resemble him. Sutherland bought it for £30 and would will it to him. In 1931 Jones painted the view in front of his window at Rock, which Thomas wanted to buy and Jones sold to him for £15, half the market value.⁵⁶

He did not, as he usually did, have an especially easy relationship with the Hodgkin mother, a close friend of Sutherland. ‘She must have been,’ he thought, ‘a huge great beauty before her girlhood had wore off but a proper Nordic Juno type ... not given to any in jokoes.’ She held back from conversation, feeling herself unqualified to talk about art, theology, or culture, except for certain English authors.⁵⁷

He thought the father—who told him that he smoked ‘far too many cigarettes’—‘an extremely nice man,’ though representing ‘the older generation’ of which he ‘was a bit scared in a way.’ They were ‘rather “severe” “plain-living-&-high-thinking”’ with ‘a kind of “integrity” & admirable ‘sobriety-in-all-things’ & fortitude & “strength of character” and “fitness” that makes one feel vaguely a bit “slack” & undisciplined and even a trifle “disolute” or something—“guilty” in some way’—though they were ‘all bloody nice’. Jones liked him ‘as a bloke’ but felt a little that he might offend him if he said ‘blast it’ at the dinner table.⁵⁸

While he found many scholars dry-as-dust, their work devoid of feeling, he found Hodgkin ‘lovely’ to talk to. They talked about the period of the Anglo-Saxon invasion, which was, for Jones, ‘of the greatest interest.’ Hodgkin was then writing volume two of his *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, intended for the general reader. Jones liked him for his deep sympathy with the Angles and Saxons—‘he felt them to be very much his people’—and for wanting to be fair to the Celts and Romano-Celts. He regretted, however, that Hodgkin had not examined the Celtic materials first-hand and, like most English historians, trusted the Venerable Bede too much, who ‘was quite unable to speak of the Britons without extreme prejudice.’ When he read the published book, a birthday gift from Sutherland in 1934, he thought it ‘beautifully done’,

Some lovely illustrations in it & proper *maps* & grand charts so you can see what was happening in Kent, Northumbria, Strathclyd, West Wales, Mercia at any given date—what one has always wanted. ... He obviously ‘feels’ a real ‘thing’ about that best Anglo Saxon ‘golden age’ that produced the piety & particular art in the 7th Cent. ... He is unable to be anything but a bit superior about the Welsh it comes out in the oddest ways. but at *least* he admits that with the loss of the Island to the ‘steady, prudent’, etc., Teutons they in their hills wove, as he would say, a web of magic & imagination round the story of their defeat which in turn gave the world the Arthurian Cycle. Which is indeed worth the loss of many islands & continents. Seeing that nothing succeeds like failure as Chesterton might say.⁵⁹

Hodgkin’s appreciation of the Celtic ‘web of magic’ may owe something to conversation with Jones.

They spoke about *Italy and her Invaders*, a book by Hodgkin’s father, Thomas, a Newcastle banker and historian. Jones read all eight volumes from the London Library, where Grisewood was a member and borrowed books for him, and may also have read it at Rock. He shared enthusiasm for it with Grisewood, who said it was ‘a really important influence’ on Jones,

who was interested in the invading barbarians more than in Rome. It was the only book in which he was able to read about them in any detail. He admired its vast scope and long-range perspective on the political and cultural consequence of events. He also liked the illustrations, which brought ancient Rome to life for him. One of these was of the *Ara Pacis*, which would become an important image in his poetry (*SL* 15-23).⁶⁰

They also talked about the crusades, which fascinated Jones, and which he discussed with anyone interested, as he may have with the historian of Byzantium Steven Runciman, whose family lived at nearby Doxford and whom he also met at Rock. Jones understood the crusades as ‘wars between rival culture-groups or power-groups’ but ‘never really understood the “religious” aspect’, and he positively disliked St. Louis for his extraverted ‘muscular Xtianity’.⁶¹

Hodgkin’s younger son, Edward, would remember Jones as ‘looking as an artist should,’ wearing ‘strongly coloured clothes.’

I remember particularly a peacock blue tweed suit and another tweed of rich brown, both with rather short and tight double-breasted jackets, somewhat naval in cut. He usually wore gay flannel shirts and thick monochrome ties which produced huge fat knots. His hair was short and almost black, but left in a slightly casual disarray which he would sometimes scrape with his fingers into a new arrangement as he caught sight of his face in a looking-glass ... His clothes, his quick movements—he had a particular way of making small vertical chopping movements with his hands, his elbows kept close to his sides, or smoothing the air with one hand held horizontally, as if he were stroking a cat—gave the impression that he might be what in those days would have been called an aesthete. His smooth grey (puttee-coloured, he called it) innocent face made him look much younger than he was.’⁶²

After Edward went up to Oxford, Jones often asked him questions about history, about which he knew far more than Edward did. Jones’s attitude towards history differed from the academic attitude. Edward said that Jones seemed to see the people as living and the events as actually happening. He asked ‘the sort of questions a contemporary spectator would have asked—why is that man behaving like that? What did he really mean when he said so and so? How did they get from A to B, and what did they eat? Who paid them, and how much?’ Edward lent him his copy of John Morris’s *The Welsh Wars of Edward I: a contribution to medieval military history, based on original documents* (1901), which Jones never returned. In subsequent conversations Edward was astonished at his detailed and vivid memory of the book. He seemed

to know the soldiers and their circumstances in the wet Welsh hills as if they had been his own battalion in the last war. Edward remembered Jones's knowledge of history as fuller in every respect than his own, fuller than could be learned at Oxford, especially about the early Church, the Celtic Church, and medieval Catholicism. Jones liked Edward, 'a sweet creature & jolly amusing, wholly unpretentious, kind & gentle but jolly able & firm underneath.' He taught Edward (everyone called him Teddy) to sing 'She was Poor but She was Honest'.⁶³



15. Sadler, Sickert, Jones, N. Binyon, *Oxford Mail*, 14 June 1930

On his first visit to Rock, he met Sutherland's goddaughter, Nicolete, the plain, severe, precocious nineteen-year-old daughter of Laurence Binyon, the poet, art-historian, and Keeper of Oriental Prints and Drawings at the British Museum. She had attended St. Paul's School for Girls and was now reading History at Oxford, specializing in medieval history, and active in the Arts Club. She had a good eye for modern art, organized an exhibition, bought a Mondrian with her £50 commission and

persuaded Sutherland to buy another. Because she was utterly confident in her judgments, Jones and his close friends referred to her as 'little Nicky Know-all.' While at Oxford, she attempted to get buyers for Jones's pictures and arrange portrait commissions. On 14 June 1930 she arranged for Sickert to address the Arts Club at St. John's College. Jones attended, and the *Oxford Mail* published a photograph of them in the college quad (fig. 15). Standing to the right of Jones is his old teacher arm-in-arm with Michael Sadler, the Master of University College. Jones holds his overcoat and looks unhappy at having to pose. Nicolete was infatuated with Jones and confided to a schoolmate that she would marry him if he proposed. He liked her but not amorously and

thought that ‘she ought to be dolled-up a lot ... that she ought to rouge her lips.’ He may have told her so, since she would inform him by letter that she had done her hair ‘differently with “a curly fringe”’—about which he joked with Hague, ‘slight porno touch here’. He became a mentor to her, introducing her to topics of discussion rooted in Maritain, including the relation between artist and craftsman, which posed no problem, he said, as long as an artist was considered a ‘maker of things’ and art the ‘ordering, rightly, of material.’ ‘After all,’ he writes to her, ‘it’s absurd to isolate an idea: any of the “making” activities—they are one essentially—but clearly as there *is* such enormous difference of sensibility & complexity etc between just “ordering” material to produce ... a wooden spoon ... & ordering material to produce the *Odyssey*, one does seek to find some word to describe the more complex activity.’ When she asked him whether he held engineering to be an art, he answered, ‘Well certainly, surely.’ In 1952 she would write to him about *The Anathemata*, ‘I fancy all I know or understand is there—& a lot more too. But then so very much of anything I know & understand has always come from you.’⁶⁴

In April 1930 at Rock, he met her parents. Laurence Binyon already knew and admired his work—he had chosen a Jones still-life owned by Edward Marsh to take to Tokyo for a lecture series the previous year. Though Jones thought Binyon a bad poet, he liked him. His wife, Cecily, abhorred Jones’s Catholicism, and, fearing its influence on her daughter, asked Sutherland not to invite Nicolette when he was there. Reading medieval history at Oxford, Nicolette, concentrated on St. Augustine, whose writing converted her to Catholicism, and Jones would tell an Anglican friend, ‘That was not my fault.’⁶⁵

Sometimes Jones accompanied Sutherland on her visits. She was an avid Liberal, and on 7 August 1931, they went to nearby Fallodon to visit Earl Grey and hear him speak ‘in the Liberal interest.’ The sixty-nine-year-old statesman had served as foreign secretary for the Liberals from 1905 until 1916 and had been an active supporter of the League of Nations. His chief interest now was birds, particularly wild ducks. Famous for his prophecy in 1914, ‘The lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our life-time,’ he was now ‘very elderly & almost totally blind’ but, Jones thought, ‘an impressive figure.’ Grey told him about one of his ancestors who was called ‘No-flint Grey’ because he had ordered a group of British troops in America, who were to attack the revolutionaries silently using only bayonets, to

remove the flints from their muskets so that none would be tempted to fire. Jones liked the nickname, and this became his 'Lord-Grey story'.⁶⁶

Often with Sutherland, he visited the Hodgkins a half-hour drive north at grandly romantic Bamburgh Castle, with its twelfth century keep and large Captain's Lodgings (restored in 1890) on a precipitous basalt outcrop 150 feet above the sea with the Farne Islands in view. Here his talk with Robin Hodgkin sometimes turned to local historical richness. The castle had been the capital of Bernicia, named for a Saxon queen. Hodgkin used to say that if Wessex had not surpassed Northumbria in importance, Bamburgh instead of London might have been the capital of England. The place was associated in legend with St. Aidan, who died at the site of the nearby church. There was also an association with 'the Laidley Worm'—a Northumbrian princess turned into a dragon by her wicked stepmother. The dragon laid waste the country until the king's son volunteered to fight it, unaware that it was his sister. Refusing combat, she revealed her true identity, which proved the antidote to the spell, and she became a princess again.* The evil queen became a toad said still to live under the castle in a cave. Jones would receive from Sutherland for his birthday in 1935 a 'grand' ordnance survey map of *Britain in the Dark Ages* giving Anglo-Saxon and Celtic names of places, and he would delight in knowing that Bamburgh was, in Anglo-Saxon times, *Bebbanburg* and, before that, *Dinguayroi*.⁶⁷

He did not then attend Mass when staying at Rock. There was no Catholic Church within walking distance. Nor did he attend Anglican services in the church across the park, though in 1930 he became close friends with its low-church vicar, Dick Owen Brown. Brown was thirty-seven, tall, with rugged features and an incisive mind. He was enthusiastic, an avid reader, quick to laugh, extremely sensitive and compassionate, yet with a caustic wit. Like Jones, he had a talent for friendship. After supper at Rock, he and Jones, and sometimes Sutherland, had long theological and philosophical conversations. Jones often visited him at his rectory, in Rennington, where he was usually confined to bed by severe asthma, an ailment that had forced his retirement from teaching Mathematics, History and Latin. His illness incapacitated him for most of the week but abated on Friday or Saturday in time for him to write Sunday's sermon.

*I convey this plot in some detail because of its affinity with Jones's view of the 1939 war with Germany, which he regarded alternately as fraternal and sororal to England.

Jones ‘used often to go & sit by his bedside to keep him company for a few hours.’ They ‘had lots of things to talk about,’ but Brown sometimes had to struggle for breath, a sight that alarmed Jones. They respected and loved each other. Those who knew Brown regarded him as big hearted, genuinely holy, a devoted priest. According to Sutherland, he drew people ‘to seek their centre in God ... their “perfect freedom” in heaven’s intention.’ Not ‘pious,’ self-serving, or embarrassing, he and Jones were like one another. Edward Hodgkin said that they shared a deep sense of tradition, simple faith, profound humility, and love of God. Neither was capable of pretence.⁶⁸

Regular features of visits to Rock were excursions organized by Sutherland to places that soon became familiar to him. Among these were the many castles in the area, including Warkworth and Hunstonborough. Sutherland and company would drive to Embleton Bay—where Jones saw boats with markings suggestive of eyes in their bows, to which he would refer in his poetry (*A* 99)—and walk south along the coast to Dunstanborough Castle, a fourteenth century ruin where John of Gaunt had lived as Lieutenant of the Scottish Marches. Ten miles north-west of Rock they visited Ros Castle, not a castle but the highest hill in the Kyloe range, with an Iron-Age fort on top and a wonderful view of surrounding hills and the coast. In the three-hundred-acre park below the hill grazed the herd of indigenous big-horned Chillingham white cattle, the last surviving wild herd in Britain, direct descendants of the cattle that roamed the island freely before the Roman invasion. White with red ears, their colouring is identical to that of fairy cattle said to kill whoever touches them. In late April 1932, after going with Helen Ede to see them, he wrote to Petra, ‘they were good’. The following spring, he took Hague to see them.⁶⁹

Other excursions were over the Belford Moors, ten miles north along the coast. Sometimes Sutherland had her guests driven fourteen miles north and west past Ros Castle and Chillingham to the foothills of the Cheviots beyond Wooler, which reminded Jones of Wales, and then had them walk to and up one of the two highest hills in the range. She announced plans to drive to a certain point and walk from there, and he thought, ‘Oh God! a bloody route march & no rum ration.’ They set out in the Rolls Royce with her Pekineses, partly for whose exercise these hikes were undertaken. He smoked in the car, which made Ede’s daughter Mary ill.

Sutherland liked walking all day, fifteen miles or so at a good clip—though small, she walked quickly and set the pace—stopping for a sandwich lunch eaten out of haversacks. Occasionally she had them take a boat from Sea Houses to the Farne Islands. Sometimes they visited local fishing villages. The nearest, a mile south of Dunstanborough Castle, was picturesque Craster. Another, five miles south, was Alnmouth, small, quiet, with six pubs and a harbour full of many coloured trawlers, tackle, and ‘toughs with their sea-boots on’. There were ‘sand dunes & mud-flats & a bridge across at just the right place & sea birds calling on the wrack left by the tide’—all of which he liked. They visited coastal villages north of Berwick, of which he especially liked Eyemouth, ‘a ramshackle type of small water-side town with mysterious & very smelly drying-sheds & store places & gaunt Scottish women sitting on door steps talking away & knitting—all looking pretty glum.’ He loved these, ‘fishing villages where the country & very strong built stone houses with stone steps on the outside wall & masts & tackle of small ships were all intermeddled & enormous nets spread out to dry.’⁷⁰

A favourite excursion of Sutherland’s was twenty miles north to Lindisfarne (Holy Island), which was accessible only at low tide by crossing nearly three miles of wet sand. From Beal on the mainland, they walked barefoot to the eleventh century priory ruins. Several times Jones made this ‘paddle’, as he called it because even at low tide ‘the water was just over your feet & ankles.’ At each quarter mile was a post topped by a square wicker basket for the safety of those cut off by the tide, which came in at the speed of a galloping horse. He shuddered at the thought of waiting on a pole for low tide but loved the baskets, which appealed to his ‘apparently innate affection for any kind of plaited or twined thing.’* Always as he trudged along, he remembered that on this wet sand, while besieging Angles on the island, Urien Rheged was murdered on the brink of victory, betrayed like so many Celtic chiefs before and since by his own people. As a consequence, the Angles spilled from their beachhead and conquered British Rheged. St. Aidan came to the island in 635 from Iona to found a monastery from which he evangelized the pagan invaders. St. Cuthbert was bishop here at the end of the seventh century. It

* During his last crossing in 1936, the beauty of these baskets occasioned mourning for civilizational change as a motor car incongruously sped past him with water half-way up its wheels. ‘It ruined the feel of the place,’ and he thought to himself, ‘The age of wicker baskets on poles is done.’

was famously sacked by Vikings in 875. Jones knew all this, and Sutherland regarded the outing as ‘a pilgrimage to St. Cuthbert’s Isle,’ but what most occupied his ruminations was the bloody struggle here against the Saxons for three days and three nights—an agony of effort and weariness for which his own day and night of close combat in Mametz Wood gave him deep appreciation. In 1930, while trudging over the wet sand, he told the Hodgkin boys and Nicolette about this historic defeat and was surprised that none of these bright, young university students had heard of Urien.⁷¹

They reached the sand hills and then the island’s village, whose inhabitants had a reputation for drunkenness. They visited the abbey ruins, with its one impressive standing arch. Sometimes they visited the island castle, owned by friends of Sutherland named De Stein. On the island, Jones’s historic preoccupation gave way to consideration of slipping away from the group for a double Scotch and soda in one of the island pubs. Realizing that it would be ‘fatal to attempt the operation & *fail*,’ he remained with the party as it returned to explore the coast, which had, he thought, ‘no special charm.’ They might take a boat and walk back across Ross Links to Budle Bay.⁷² On 12 August 1931, he sent Gill a postcard from Lindisfarne wishing him a happy feast of the Assumption and concluding, ‘it must have been good once on this wild gull-swirling island.’

Another excursion was forty miles south to Hadrian’s Wall. He would ‘curse inwardly’ at having to make what Sutherland called ‘a really early start.’ They drove most of the way, then walked ‘for miles up to the Wall & along it.’ He could ‘see its alignment for miles going over rises in the hills & dipping out of sight.’ Several times they walked along the Wall ‘for miles’ in the vicinity of the most impressive of the Wall forts, Housesteads. Here he saw the ruins of the commanders’ quarters, a few courses of stone walling, and the remains of an archway over what he took to be the *via principalis*. Beneath the arch were deep indentations in the stone showing the gauge of wagon-, cart-, and chariot-wheels. The sight of these ruts moved him deeply. Some of his ancestors among the Votodini had passed beneath this arch. More than any other Roman monument he had seen, the Wall and this fort gave him ‘the feeling of the past still living in the present.’ He felt ‘the presence of the Legions in [a] most extraordinary way.’ Although the Wall was narrow and low, it was as though he ‘might meet a Roman legionary round the next bend.’

He never wanted to go—he always tried to beg off excursions that involved a lot of walking—but Sutherland insisted, and afterwards he was glad he went.⁷³

On 28 April 1932 he accompanied Helen Ede from Rock to Edinburgh for the day. On the way, he enjoyed the countryside, especially ‘that Lowland part between the Wall & Edinburgh, ... the part where Cunedda lived.’* He thought Edinburgh ‘rather a nice town, but not, it seems to me, as marvellous as I’d heard tell—not by any means. It can’t help being impressive in one way because of its situation on & between hills & the sea just beyond.’ He walked the Old Town’s Royal Mile in the expectation of seeing ‘superb architecture’ but was disappointed. ‘There’s nothing really. Holyrood Palace is a crashing bore & everything is a dismal colour—the Cathedral of St. Giles is the worst Gothic building I *ever* saw—a congested & constipated affair—but the Rock & Castle—magnificent.’ Though ‘over-rated,’ Edinburgh was, he acknowledged, ‘unique among the large cities’ in Britain, largely because of the light that seemed ‘to have a special clarity,’ and he later said that it was ‘about the only beautiful *big* city I’d seen in Britain.’ He thought the Forth Bridge ‘superb’ because of its ‘beauty’ and liked the Scots for not being ‘prepossessing’. He intended to visit Fr. John Gray but there was no time. Helen Ede drove him up again the following year, and they stopped for lunch in ‘a lovely place on the north bank of the Tweed’ in Coldstream where, in Taplow’s spelling, he appreciated a family’s feminine good looks, ‘nise ma & three nise nise daughters’. The trip was otherwise ruined for him by wind and rain, and he was happy to return to Rock, from which he reported to Hague, ‘balls nearly frozen off but warm burgundy helped to restore them.’⁷⁴

Another trip north, in early May 1932, was to Berwick-upon-Tweed, which, upon seeing it, he judged, using words of the anthem for the penitential psalms, ‘one of the offenses of our forefathers.’⁷⁵

In the evenings when not listening to music or conversing, guests assembled to take turns reading literature aloud sometimes on consecutive evenings, Sutherland embroidering as she listened. (In such a group, Jones would not read his work-in-progress, which was for close friends, one or two at a time.) The quality of literary discussion was high. Sutherland was well read, her favourite writers being Dante, Shakespeare, Scott, Wordsworth, Austen, Balzac, and

* In 1949 he would make a picture, entitled *Gunedda Wleddig*, unsigned, with Hadrian's Wall in the background.

James (especially *The Sacred Font* and *The Wings of the Dove*), whom she considered equal to Shakespeare and Balzac. James, whose complete works she owned, deeply influenced the style of her feeling, thinking, and writing. She also read Byron, Hazlitt, Lamb, Joyce, Woolf, Wyndham Lewis, Muir, and, her favourite among the moderns, T.S. Eliot.⁷⁶

Jones became the most frequently present of the creative people she assembled around her. By 1932 he was among the few people in London she most wanted to visit. She had him and other friends to dinner at the *Maison Basque*, an expensive restaurant in Dover Street, and the inexpensive *La Commercio*. She exchanged with him many hundreds of letters, and valued what she called his ‘beautiful & so rich mind & heart & wisdom.’ She appreciated what she considered his Cockney sense of fun and ‘the sort of contemporary *folk* language . . . , which is’, she told him, ‘your own so particular language.’ They talked about religion—he liked pared-down Quaker simplicity—and his theology increasingly appealed to her as she relinquished Quakerism for high Anglicanism. She read a good many theologians on his recommendation: Aquinas, Gregory Dix, and her favourite, Baron von Hügel. According to Edward Hodgkin, she regarded Jones as the person who most justified her patronage of the arts because he was, she thought, all he should be as an artist and as a person. ‘She liked him,’ remembered Hodgkin, ‘because he was genuine, and because he talked so well—about literature, religion, art. She trusted his judgment about paintings and people. He would never lie, never pretend. It was a very easy relationship. Of course, she was very exacting; she was the patron. It was her house. It was her money. It is a tribute to both of them that it worked out so well.’⁷⁷

Through her, he now mixed increasingly with members of the upper classes. Although not socially ambitious, he responded to the snob-appeal of such company, some of his friends thought, and he liked the amenities that wealth afforded—the quality of food and drink, the comfort, the pleasant surroundings—but he chiefly enjoyed the refined tastes and good conversation that characterize many inheritors of wealth. (Those busy accumulating wealth are generally, in contrast, narrow, emotionally distorted, underdeveloped.) He liked the benefits of wealth, but it was not wealth that he liked. He had no time for uncultivated, uneducated aristocrats, the shooters and hunters whom Waugh sought out, and he regarded Waugh’s

‘wanting to be grand’ as a character flaw.^{78*} Gentleness, intelligence, and refinement made a person appealing. Social background was irrelevant except that leisure was the basis of culture, and wealth bought leisure.

Uninterested in class distinctions, he was not embarrassed by his lower-middle-class origins, but he disliked the roughness of the lower classes and the blandness of the middle class with its taboos against speaking plainly about certain subjects. He preferred upper-class candor (‘she died’) to middle-class reticence (‘she passed away’). And he liked the uninhibitedness of members of the upper-class—Prudence Pelham, for example—which was rare in the lower classes.⁷⁹ As an artist, he moved freely through class barriers, a slightly disorienting experience in that he felt tugged between affinity and identity. For him, however, these matters were primarily interpersonal and did not distort his sense of history and morality. At Rock in July 1935, he read J.L. and Barbara Hammond's *The Town Labourer 1760-1832*, which emphasizes what Disraeli called the ‘two nations’. It stirred in him residual Distributist feelings, ‘echoes of old stuff,’ and made him wonder that there had not been ‘revolution after revolution’ in England:

It would be so simple to be a Communist. ... What howling unspeakable shits the early industrialists were—& *everybody* in the Government—just *utterly oblivious*—it is rum you know—do you think each civilization & stage of civilization is just utterly blinded in some way to its *real* wickedness just because it is its ‘own’—like one’s character is one’s own & one just goes on being oneself until someone roots one up the arse or kills one in sheer exasperation. An early 19th Cent doctor before a commission or something was asked if he could say that a child’s health would be seriously impaired by standing 23 hrs out of 24—he replied that ‘he felt he could not commit himself “so far.”’ ... a politician of some kind defending the use of 5 yr old children as chimney sweeps said to the house that ‘these are not the children of the honest poor, but the illegitimate children of rich men & therefore they had no claims on the compassion of society.’ You see it is a kind of real insanity isn’t it. And yet the chaps who listened to this kind of stuff look out sensitively enough from the portraits of Gainsborough & Co. And I suppose *we* suffer just such delusionment.

In 1931, as he often did, he left Rock for Pigotts. Late this year for Petra’s birthday, he sent her a peach from Sutherland’s hot house and a copy of Trollope's *Doctor Thorne*. When he left Rock, he brought her more peaches, given to him by Sutherland for that purpose.⁸⁰

* About Waugh’s desperate social aspiration, Jones said, ‘That’s why he married Lady Herbert’s daughter,’ Laura in 1937. ‘That was almost childish—I mean that he did it.’

Although soreness of eyes made engraving difficult, he continued to engrave, doing for London Transport some commercial engravings. In 1932, he made his penultimate wood-engraving, *He Frees the Waters in Helyon* (fig. 16). It began with an inspiring medium, a large (6 by 9 ½ inch) irregular



16. *He Frees the Waters in Helyon*, 1932

end-grain block. He engraved the site—a nocturnal wasteland in early spring—where Moses dips his staff in the river Marah so the Hebrews can drink. According to medieval legend, bad animals daily poison the water, but a unicorn, ‘which in this case represents our Lord,’ visits nightly and ‘thrusts into it his single horn and makes it sweet so that the other animals when they come to the water course may drink of it.’⁸¹ The star recalls the Christmas star but may be Venus. Its rays are continuous with the phallic ivory entering the feminine stream in redemptive intercourse. Beside the unicorn is a wall—possibly the scriptural ‘middle wall of partition’ between Jews and Gentiles that is ‘broken down’ by Jesus (Ephesians 2:12-14). Its broken interior in conjunction with its top and the line of a hill behind evokes the cross. High on its broken interior is a blossom corresponding to Jesus’s heart-wound and evoking the dripping blossom in the *Corpus Christi* Carol. Before the unicorn stands the grail containing a slanting spear of Longinus and the reed holding the sponge offered to Jesus on the cross. The unicorn seems to bleed into the grail from a wound in its side. The engraving has some of the mystery of *Merlin Land* and, like it, resembles a photographic negative. Some of the engraved lines are mere scratches. As he engraved it, his eyes hurt so badly that he had to suspend work and never finished it, but this and *The Bride* were

now, and would remain, his favourite wood engravings. Though not intended as such, this engraving is autobiographical for, like the unicorn, he was attempting in his visual art and writing to make modern civilization culturally life-sustaining. As an artist, he shared with the unicorn the archetype of Jesus as redeemer. This engraving was the frontispiece of Gwen Greene's *The Prophet Child* (1935), and he would include it in *The Anathemata*. He would make one more engraving, but his inability to finish this one effectively ended his career as an engraver. He did not exhibit with the Society of Wood Engravers in 1931-32 or subsequently, although he was listed as a member throughout the 1930s.

Cleverdon had proposed that he illustrate, in addition to Malory, Christopher Smart's *Song of David* with its brilliant evocations of animals.⁸² Jones dearly loved the poem, would have suspended painting in order to illustrate it, and might have attempted it in spite of eye-strain. But the economic Depression killed the market for such books, and Cleverdon dropped the project. A *Song of David* illustrated by David Jones remains a tantalizing book that might have been.

Engraving had been previously a severely limited art-form, predominantly ornamental. For the past decade, Jones had been in the vanguard of the modern resurgence of the form. In the 1920s, he was one of very few important painters—another was Edward Wadsworth—who by taking up engraving raised and enlarged the medium. He was also one of the few wood-engravers to switch successfully between white-line and black-line engraving often within the same picture. Among engravers, he was a master of design. Usually understated in his paintings, this mastery is starkly obvious in his engravings. Engraving influenced his painting and painted inscriptions by giving him a feeling for the medium of paper as a surface to be incised with line.⁸³

After several failed attempts, on 23 January 1931 at Brockley, he spent the entire day painting what he called in his pocket diary a 'self-portrait,' a somber oil on canvas (fig. 17). He later referred to it as a 'quasi self-portrait in a sense' and entitled it *Human Being*, to shift emphasis from the particular to the general. The eyes demand attention because the irises differ in size. Their gaze directs our view to the ear, which sticks out like a pub sign and is the most clearly delineated element in the painting. Seeming to listen, therefore, and to look towards what he hears, he is intent above, relaxed below. Jones begun the painting with the position of the hands,



17. *Human Being*, 1931

taken from Jean Fouquet's *Charles VII*, 'that stupendous painting.' Mirroring the fingers, the wall-hooks emphasize use. Jones captures and exaggerates his own apparent agelessness—the thirty-six-year-old might be mistaken for a boy of fourteen. Firmly delineated shapes contrast with loose quasi-abstract mottling, a characteristic borrowed from others in the Seven and Five. The unifying element is the brown of hair, eyes, coat, wall, and table, contrasting with the blue and white to the right at top and bottom. It is a picture of a self divided: the eyes unsynchronized, one hand palm up, the other down, an image of self-caressing contradiction. The hands roughly centre and ground this loose unity. There is no back to his head, as though the face fronts limitlessness. This picture was exhibited with the Seven and Five in February 1932 and

bought by Helen Sutherland, who hung it in her library between a Nicholson and her Suerat. Despite this self-portrait, he felt in the spring of 1931 that he had painted nothing ‘that’s got anywhere since before Xmas.’⁸⁴



18. *Calypso's Seaward Prospect*, 1931

conveys continuity between near and far—and in this he was helped by filling the picture with sea and sky. This may be seen in his best Portslade paintings, which include very bright *Calypso's Seaward Prospect* and very ominous *Manawyan's Glass Door*.

That spring he went, as usual, to Portslade and, shortly after arriving, wrote to Petra that ‘*if one really continuously turned out work that really was satisfactory to oneself ... I think one would be so happy & confident that the money question would hardly worry one—what a happy state to be in!*’⁸⁵ He went on to paint brilliantly and, we may assume, made himself fairly happy. An important aspect of his work now was the juxtaposition of near and far, which he especially liked. Involved in this is the use of the terrace edge or wall or posts or doors against which to define foreground. He also largely eliminates perspective, which

In *Calypso's Seaward Prospect* (fig. 16) the bedroom doors open to a pink terrace indistinguishable from a pink and blue sea with grey and orange indications of waves and yellow highlights matching those in the sky, where the sun is apparently setting. An empty wicker chair beyond the doors faces the sun. The terrace is indistinguishable from the beach. Sky and sea and terrace shimmer. Light has taken over. Lightest of all are the interiors of beams, a post, and doors, which are not, as they would realistically be, darker, in silhouette. In them, architecture is made light. The eye is momentarily jerked from all this shimmer by foreground specificity of a door lock and handle on the doors, the intricacy of the wicker chair, and the flower pattern on the rug. The high definition of these focuses vision, but as soon as the eye is caught, the over-all bright and varying luminosity absorbs it once again.

He painted *Manawydan's Glass Door* (fig. 18) on a stormy day when, even though the doors were shut, wind blew the curtains about. In the bottom foreground are the bedroom rug and the closed half-doors, the upper glass-paneled two-thirds of the doors having vanished before the tumultuous sea and sky. Beyond the doors, the pale posts supporting the terrace roof frame a sailing ship of indeterminate period, a cloud in the sky, and a cloud-like whiteness on the sea, uniting the equally ruffled air and water. Near and far are juxtaposed because the middle-ground is largely indistinguishable from the foreground. The posts seem continuous with the doors and appear to have nothing sustaining them at their foundations because the wet, reflective terrace is as brightly aquatic as the sea (which is continuous with sky). Linear structures intersperse with painterly movement in a tension that threatens to go out of control. In the ruffled curtains and wood panels of the door, the motion of sea and sky comes indoors. The posts and the inside of the room are as light as the sea and sky. Like the vessel on the water, the viewer navigates ceaseless motion that offers no place of rest, not even indoors. The rug within is irregularly patterned with nervous intricacy from which the larger churn and sway recoil, taking the eye continually into it. What the door is closed against take you out. There seems to be a correspondence between the storm-driven ship and the interior from which it is seen, since the ship's delicate masts, and sails correspond, conceptually at least, to the posts and curtains. This, then, is a painting about frailty, without and within, during storm.⁸⁶ No reproduction has ever done this painting justice.



19. *Manawydan's Glass Door*, 1931

thought *In Parenthesis* was his way of 'getting the war off his chest,' but Grisewood thought it 'an externalization of much that was hurting him.' In the painting the sharply defined lock is ineffectual because the doors are so low. If viewed with the title in mind, the storm is a storm of memory, and all the raging past pours into the present. He completed this and each of the other large water-colours of this period within three days.⁸⁷

The title of *Manawydan's Glass Door* (fig. 19) refers to a forbidden door opened by one of a band of soldiers in the *The Mabinogion*. They were feasting happily in a royal hall, but when the door was opened 'they were as conscious of all the evils they had ever sustained, and of all the friends and companions they had lost, and of all the misery that had befallen them, as if all had happened in that very spot ... and because of their perturbation they could not rest.' Jones would use this passage as the epigraph of *In Parenthesis*—so much a work of memory, it may have been having a similar effect on him. Ede

Later that year, 1931, Tom Burns commissioned him to make a frontispiece of Fr. John O'Connor's translation of Paul Claudel's *Satin Slipper* (1931). Before making the picture (fig. 20), he read the introduction and glanced at the text without reading it, and knew that pirates had tied a Jesuit to the mast of a vessel in which nuns were dying. He wanted to illustrate not so much the play as the historical moment and a mystery beyond history. He wrote to Ede:

The ship is a fairly accurate rendering of a ship of the period, even the steel half-moons that the sixteenth-century pirates used to fasten on the yards of their masts with which to cut the enemy's rigging and sails, are shown and they seem to be interesting when related to the moon and eclipsed sun in the sky. The Scottish sailor lying dead over the gunwale indicates the whole business of the mercenary mix-up of the time (all the races on different sides on the high seas)—the little cannon on the left is reminiscent of a certain kind of light trench-mortar which used to be used in the European War (1914-18) and yet it is a correct sixteenth-century gun. Always there is an interweaving of periods and thoughts. The action of the picture is imagined in some wide sea in the southern hemisphere—where you feel that there is only sea and the sky full of night and day at the same time. I had rather a job to get the full sense of the inside of the ship, decks, etc., and the guns showing from the port-holes of the lower decks outside.⁸⁸



20. David Jones, *The Satin Slipper*, 1931

At the centre of this work—which is countercentred by scattered small darkneses of dead-eyes, canon mouths, barrel-ends, and the ship's stern—is the Jesuit, a priest-victim in torn *soutane*, tied by the wrists to a broken mast. White body paint with a faint blue tint renders him and the tumble of bodies on the ship as erasures in the drawing, tonally equivalent to the water in the upper right, which seems as near the viewer as the bodies. The vessel shows Jones's interest in 'the bowl-like character of ships'. The steel half-moon on the rear mast has its visual complement in the lunar shape of the eclipsed sun across the sky on the right. This suggests that the cross, evoked by the rear mast, on which the victim hangs, is the universe. In look and theme, this picture is a variation on the seventh *Ancient-Mariner* engraving and, apart from superficial historical accident, re-presents the same thing. The archetype moves freely in time from Coleridge's Middle Ages to Claudel's Renaissance and

from mariner to missionary. In Jones's poetry, too, archetypes will travel through the centuries, and the Ancient Mariner will be one of the most important of them.

In late 1931 or early 1932, Grisewood sat for a portrait in oils in Jones's small back upper room in Brockley. Jones did not chat while working—his concentration was absolute. He nearly



finished a full-face portrait but began to dislike it and, during a second sitting, uttered fusilier oaths the likes of which Grisewood had never heard, and then furiously slashed the picture to ribbons with a knife. Grisewood came to sit two or three more times, now for a portrait in profile, facing the window before the coal fireplace (fig 21). Jones thought this painting all right. He called it *Portrait of a Maker* because Grisewood was writing poetry and because of fondness for Dunbar's 'Lament for the Makers,' a poem they had enthusiastically discussed. The title also echoes Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist*. The overcoat worn by Grisewood in the picture belonged to Jones, who wears it in *Human Being*—the 'little coat' initially given by Hart-Davis to Grisewood. On the

21. David Jones, *Portrait of a Maker*, 1932

mantel, before his forehead, is an enclosing bottle, the curve of its right side rhyming with that of the hearth below and its label dimly mirroring the light on his forehead. (This was a bottle of Eno's Fruit Salts (a combined antacid and laxative), which Grisewood saw as he sat, its commercial label replaced by Jones's lettering in the belief that even ordinary domestic things should be beautiful.)⁸⁹ Although the title calls him a maker, this is the portrait of a man whose chief distinction is his mind.⁹⁰

When Ben Nicholson saw the pictures done at Caldey in 1931, he 'said he liked them very much' and urged Jones to send them to the Lefevre Gallery, where they were shown in

November along with works by Frances Hodgkin, the Nicholsons and Staite Murray. The Lefevre was one of the most important London galleries. When he told Sutherland that the Caldey pictures were there, she asked him to pick one for her to buy sight unseen. He insisted that it would be better for her to see them herself and make her own choice, assuming, he said, that she would ‘care for any of them.’⁹¹

In the 1932 Seven and Five Exhibition in February at the Leicester Gallery, sixty four works were exhibited, including six by Jones (*In Tide*, *Curtained Outlook*, *Herbaged Bay*, *Queen’s Chair*, *Human Being*, and *Portrait of a Maker*). Ben Nicholson and Henry Moore also showed six works; the others, fewer. Jones thought it ‘a jolly nice show.’ To his astonishment, he sold two pictures within a few days—Michael Sadler buying *Portrait of a Maker*. At the meeting of the Seven and Five on 8 April, it would be recorded that all six of Jones’s pictures had sold, more work than by any other—Ben Nicholson having sold three; Winifred Nicholson and Frances Hodgkins, two each; and Henry Moore, one. The critic for *The Times* thought that the Jones’s pictures expressed ‘a state of innocence ... the opposite of consciously intellectual art’ and were typified by ‘extreme flexibility of style, loose handling of pigment—allowing the pictures to rest upon values of colour—and a tendency to balance rather than symmetry in design.’ Hartrick came to see them and told him he was leaving ‘everything out except the magic.’ Gallery owners who had rejected his work wrote to say they had always admired it.⁹²

On 15 February after lunch with Burns and Grisewood at La Commercio, Jones and Gill visited the exhibit together. Then they went to Burlington House to see the exhibit of French Art from 1200 to 1900, which included twenty-four Watteaus, thirteen Fragonards, and three Cezannes. Jones thought ‘the best thing at the Show’ Fouquet’s portrait of Charles VII, and he ‘spent long in gazing at’ it. He would write of it as ‘the very image of an epoch, apart from being the particularized image of a man, but it is so contrived as to be a timeless image—and an unforgettable one.’ He also especially liked Fouquet’s *Virgin of Melun* (fig. 22): ‘the impression conveyed is one of monumentality and also of something iconesque, something which is a “true image”. And if the *Virgin* is ‘less “monumental” and more “illustrational”, ... it is equally an “icon”. The modish elegance is subjected to such severe draughtsmanship & rendered with such superb *intensity* as to present us with an *archetypal* elegance. What more can be asked of an art-work than

that it displays an archetype?’ He retained a vivid memory of this picture and writes, twenty years later, ‘I don’t suppose that “this flesh” ... has ever been delineated with more uncompromising verisimilitude, yet seen *sub specia aeternitatis*. By an exact and hard technique, and by something which can only have been made operative by a movement of the spirit, the particular



22. Jean Fouquet, *Virgin of Melun*, c. 1452

form of heightened femininity in vogue in the late-Gothic world is employed so as to create an abiding image of a most impressive stillness—and of a certain “remoteness”. A few days after visiting the French exhibit, he met Helen Sutherland and Nicolette Binyon at the Seven and Five Show, where he gave Nicolette a cut-out magazine photograph of a recently uncovered fifth century Scandinavian helmet that he thought ‘most awfully beautiful.’⁹³

On 2 May, 1932, he signed a contract with Ernest Brown of the Leicester Gallery to supply forty recent paintings. Brown agreed to exhibit them for three weeks in the autumn and take one-third of sales in commission.

Anxious, therefore, to ‘do a terrific lot of painting this year,’ Jones went with the Burns brothers to Caldey, returning to London for Easter. (At his Brockley parish church that Holy Saturday, he was irritated: ‘some bastard in the choir did Caruso stuff just a bit too precious & swallowed up the celebrant’s commencing of the Magnificat at the end of Mass which is one of the plums of the year I think.’) He planned to return to Caldey with the Burnses but came down with flu. In the second week of April, he regained enough strength to work again. On the 18th, he went to Rock.⁹⁴

Since January 1931, members of the Seven and Five had annually to be reelected in order to remain members. Nicholson now wanted to purge the Society of ‘water-colourists and portrait painters’ in order to move it away from romantic lyricism towards pure abstraction—a dogmatic shift that would have been impossible if Wood were still alive. Although abstraction was for Jones immensely clarifying and stimulating and he was tempted to go abstract, he did not by

1960 felt confirmed in his decision, and never regretted it. Looking back, he would consider no abstract painting great and would see ‘certain manifestations’ of the abstract movement as ‘almost as tedious and silly and as uninformed by the mind ... as that dead, bloody academism that we loathed so much. In fact it is, I suppose, the new academism.’ He would later doubt that any art emptied of ‘creaturliness’, ‘of all that links us with the animalic world, with flora & fauna and tenderness and sensuousness *can* be the proper subject for a humane work. We are chaps with bodies and our art-works cannot *escape the whole range of sensibility* which we have by reason of having bodies. We can’t have the necessary feeling of love for ‘speed’ or ‘light’ just as abstractions—we can love only candle-light or fire-light.’⁹⁵ Picasso was, he would then think, the greatest of modern visual artist, and he, too, had refused to go abstract.

There were now nineteen members in the Society.* Nine from when Jones had joined four years before were now gone, including Teddy Wolfe. Of the five newcomers, he was most friendly with ‘Harry’ Moore, whom he had met through Gill and had seen frequently when Moore was one of five sculptors working under Gill on the façade of the Underground headquarters above St. James’s Park Station in 1928-9. Subsequently, he often met Moore at Ede’s house. Jones was impressed by the amount of work Moore could do and considered him ‘a remarkable man—a most solid character & impossible not to like, *transparently* sincere.’ They shared military experience, Moore having been in the army for two years before being gassed at Cambrai. Like Jones, he had qualified as a ‘first-class shot.’ Jones probably has Moore, a Yorkshireman, in mind when referring to ‘Harry of Ilkley’ in *In Parenthesis* (114). He was now, in 1931, visiting Moore at 11A Park Hill Rd. They also met in galleries and would remain on friendly terms.⁹⁶ Moore thought highly of Jones’s work and would recommend him to John Thwaites for inclusion in an exhibition of English painters for a New York gallery in 1944.

Nicholson brought Barbara Hepworth into the Seven and Five after leaving Winifred and their three children in 1931 to live with her. Jones had visited the Nicholsons and their children,

* In May 1932 the nineteen members of the Seven and Five were: John Aldridge, Edward Bawden, R.P. Bedford, Elizabeth Drury, Sophie Fedorovitch, Barbara Hepworth, Ivon Hitchens, Frances Hodgkins, Sidney Hunt, David Jones, P.H. Jowett, Len Lye, Henry Moore, Cedric Morris, W. Staite Murray, Ben and Winifred Nicholson, L. Pearson Righetti, and John Skeaping.

thought Ben's act a terrible betrayal, and was angry with him, though not moralistic about it. Hepworth was young and lovely, with a large forehead and rippling hair. Jones understood romantic love as an undeniable imperative. One reason he liked Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* so much ('three bloody cheers') was that in it Agathon advocates the use of a flexible standard of measurement, 'for what is itself indeterminate can be measured only by an indefinite standard like the leaden rule.'⁹⁷ Jones did not believe in an absolute sexual morality, but he was not romantic about romantic love. When Nicholson proclaimed to him a newly discovered morality and said that Barbara was the first woman who fully understood him, he replied, 'Come now Ben. You've got a nice young girl to sleep with. Lucky you!' In more theological moments, he considered the desire for ecstatic sexual union an unconscious desire for union with God, who alone fulfills the longings of the human soul.⁹⁸

About now, he was visited in his parents' home by Stanley Sykes, a wealthy art collector who worked in the Ministry of Education. Jones had met him through Dorothea Travis or her mother. Sykes had bought a Salies painting at the Seven and Five show in 1929. He now wanted another picture and was pushy about it. Jones said that he hadn't any. Sykes observed 'There are plenty of them around here, I can see.' Jones replied, 'I haven't any I want to sell just now.' Sykes said he supposed there were 'other sources' and left in a huff. On another occasion, he offered Jones a ride in his automobile saying, 'Don't sit on that hat' and adding, 'Artists are notoriously clumsy.' This irked Jones. The man is a millionaire, he thought, 'He can buy ten thousand hats.' Decades later, he would say as though this were the ultimate indictment, 'my mother disliked him.'⁹⁹

He was painting a lot and well. Over the next few years he exhibited and sold in several galleries: the Leicester, Tooths, the Lefevre, the Redfern, the Beaux Art, the Wertheim, the Goupil, and the Zwemmer. For the years ending April 1931 and 1932, his annual earnings were £200 and, thanks to Ethel Watts, he paid less than £2 tax per year. Because of the sales of his pictures and the modesty of his expenses, he was comparatively well off. He could afford to go out to restaurants and pubs. Many could not, for the Great Depression had arrived. In 1932 there were nearly four million unemployed in Britain. As the Depression deepened, however, even wealthy collectors ceased to buy art and he would earn nothing.

He visited Gill, who was often in London, carving five panels for Broadcasting House in Langham Place. In 1931 Jones and Hagreen met and, going together, climbed the ladder to where he was working on *Prospero and Ariel* over the entrance. Then the three of them went into a nearby tea shop. Jones had under his arm the black folder containing the current draft of *In Parenthesis*. That was the last time he and Hagreen saw one another.¹⁰⁰

Jones was visiting the home of Victoria (Vicky) Reid, to whom Tom Burns had introduced him in 1930. She studied violin while living with her family at 72 Grosvenor Street in Mayfair, then a doctors' neighbourhood. She was named after Queen Victoria, whose personal physician her father had been. Also living with the family was Cécile Geoffroy-Dechaume, a beautiful brunette of an anglophile French family, a good pianist whose father forbade her to play professionally. Vicky and Cécile performed together in private concerts, which Jones did not attend since he was not, Vicky remembered, interested in classical music. Together and apart, the two young women filled their days with practicing. He arrived, found them at it, and began a conversation that lasted the rest of the day. Because 'he was so nice,' as Vicky put it, they stopped practicing (which 'he would have hated') but not without some feeling of inconvenience. He visited several times a week, sometimes with Burns but usually alone. Always he was muffled up, often saying he had a cold and couldn't work. Usually he stayed the entire day, sitting and talking, full of humour. Vicky remembered, 'we laughed endlessly.' He enjoyed their feminine domesticity and liked the command by which they sent the family terrier to its box bed, 'Box Nim!' Vicky's sister Margaret was sometimes also there, and a mutual acquaintance with an unrememberable hyphenated surname whom they called 'Mrs Thing.' Although thirteen years older than Vicky, to her 'he didn't feel older.' She and Cécile loved him, felt uninhibited with him, and unembarrassed about being uneducated. They also felt no sexual pressure from him. According to Vicky her mother was the main attraction for him, Lady Susan Reid, who had been a Baring and a lady in waiting to Victoria. Extremely well educated by a French governess, she conversed with him often and at great length, and especially enjoyed his visits. She did not, as with other frequent male visitors, evaluate him a suitor for her daughter. He 'didn't seem like an

ordinary man', Vicky remembered, not 'dominant enough to cope with marriage.' Nicolete also came to the house, and Vicky referred to Nicolete, Cécile, and herself as 'David's wives.'¹⁰¹

He and Burn, acting as godfather, were present when she was received into the Catholic Church in 1932 by H.J. Steuart SJ. Afterwards they all partook of a celebratory spaghetti lunch in Soho. Jones was by then an acquaintance of Steuart, a kind and simple priest descended, he was later surprised to learn, from royalty. Three years later, Vicky married a man named Ingrams, who jealously forbade her to have friends of her own, and she dropped out of Jones's circle.¹⁰² Her marriage was 'outside the Church', and Jones wrote a letter encouraging her not to think of that as endangering her spiritual wellbeing. Her friend Cécile married Edmond Howard and remained within Jones's circle of friends.

He visited Hartrick, that 'dear & admirable man,' and his wife, Lily Blatherwick, a gifted artist and lithographer whom Jones thought 'jolly nice, too.' They had a house in Fulham. Jones was amused when Hartrick became immoderate in speech—as when saying of a picture, 'The damn thing's no good'—and she would remonstrate, 'Now Archie, Archie.' Hartrick sometimes talked about the artists he had known when young, and Jones was interested to learn that Beardsley 'was *staggeringly* well-read, especially for so young a man, in all sorts of obscure matters.' Jones and Hartrick looked at one another's recent pictures. Most by Hartrick were, Jones thought, 'mediocre but at his *best* he *could* be pretty marvellous.'¹⁰³

Another of Jones's places to visit was the flat of Gwendolen Plunket Greene, the niece to whom von Hügel had written the letters that he had read and liked so much. Tom Burns had introduced him in 1929, and they and Grisewood often visited. Grey-haired and beautiful, Gwen Greene—her double surname shortened among friends—was the daughter of Lady Maude Herbert and the musician Sir Hubert Parry, of an upper-class Welsh family. She had married the Irish singer Harry Plunket Greene because he sang beautifully. Now separated, she lived with her daughter, Olivia, in Bloomsbury and was occasionally visited by her sons, David, a heroin addict, and Richard, a musician and friend of Evelyn Waugh. She and her daughter were deeply religious and had lately leapt from High Anglicanism into the Catholic Church. Olivia told Jones about her 'Uncle Freddy,' who had given her an extended reading course (with tutorials) that

ended with his death.* She surprised Jones by saying that von Hügel had very little sense of visual beauty and ‘hardly noticed whether he was in the town or the country.’ Jones found this hard to believe yet supposed ‘a mind so engrossed in spiritual-intellectual problems might be like that.’ A fine violinist, Gwen loved and understood music. She sensitized Jones, and to a greater extent Grisewood, to Bach, Beethoven, and (her daughter’s favourite) Schubert. Jones thought that the Welsh blood of the mother and daughter might explain ‘that intense enthusiasm which they both had in rather different ways for anything, good or bad, that caught their imagination.’¹⁰⁴

The daughter, Olivia, was bobbed-haired brunette with big eyes, full lips, and personal magnetism, a twenty-five-year-old charleston-crazed flapper who frequented nightclubs and drank heavily. She was gracious, good natured, enamored of whisky and jazz. Drinking made her prone to periods of depression. Evelyn Waugh fell in love with her, but she found him physically repulsive, preferring Negroes in general and, in particular, Paul Robeson. In 1929 when Waugh’s first wife run off with another man, the Greens rallied to his support, and Olivia was now his chief confidante. He said, ‘she bullied me into the Church’ and, in his autobiography, describe her as ‘incapable of the ordinary arts and efforts of pleasing and ... generally incapable of any kind of ostentation; a little crazy; truth-loving and in the end holy.’ She was deeply sensitive to music and poetry and perceptive about people. Burns introduced his girlfriends to her in order to have her assessment of them. Grisewood considered her a genius and was in love with her. In reaction against Victorian prudery, she had actively enjoyed sex, but shortly after becoming a Catholic experienced a vision of the Virgin Mary asking her to be celibate. She assented and entered her room to find her bed covered with rose pedals. She would recount this experience when, too drunk to undress herself and being undressed for bed by, on various occasions, Waugh, Burns, and Grisewood. Whatever the source of her vision, it was not naiveté. She had read and agreed with Freud, and she delighted in reading aloud John of the Cross, not as mystical theology but eroticism. Burns would remember her as ‘saintly in an extraordinary way, a God-

* First she had read Boissier’s *Histoire du Paganisme*; then Caesar, Cicero, Lucretius, Homer, Virgil, Tacitus, Horace, Livy, Pliny, Herodotus, Hesiod, Thucydides; then Augustine, Tertullian, Jerome, Minucius Felix, Aquinas, Julian of Norwich, then the English poets up to Browning; and finally the Hindu scriptures.

crazed person—she thought of nothing else, really—at the same time thoroughly witty and amusing,’ not unlike a character in *The Brothers Karamazov*, which she regarded as the greatest novel of the nineteenth century. For Burns and Grisewood, she was the main attraction. Jones was, according to Burns, ‘enchanted’ by her but distrusted her impulsiveness and her spontaneous judgments. When she spoke in earnest to Jones about mysticism, he went glassy-eyed and later once told Grisewood, ‘I don’t care for all that, you know. It’s no good to me, that sort of thing.’ Grisewood lodged with the Greens in Alfred Place in 1934 and moved with them to Egerton Terrace—his never-consummated off-and-on relationship with Olivia causing him considerable suffering. In 1935 Prudence Pelham wrote to Jones, ‘I *do* think it a shame that poor Harman should be made so miserable ... What weariness to the flesh that woman is—someone ought to bump her off.’¹⁰⁵

Jones especially liked the mother, ‘a most wonderful character.’ He also liked the maid, Mrs. Parker, an ‘admirable woman.’ He had sometimes gone to Sunday tea there, and, after Grisewood boarded with them, visiting him at home meant visiting them. There he saw his sculptor-friend Stephen Tomlin and Waugh. The talk was quick, full of bantering and jokes, enthusiastic, moving freely between music, mutual acquaintances, the quality of the crumpets, and the poetry of Browning or Tennyson. Once Gwen complained about being unable to get decent pudding basins, and Jones responded passionately, as Grisewood remembered, ‘No! I know. It’s so shallow, you see. You can’t get—bloody sods they are. They will not make the thing properly. All the world has come to an end in this sort of way. You can’t get a proper anything—you can’t get proper paper, I can’t get decent paper to paint on, and the degeneration of the pudding basin is the same. It all represents cultural decline.’ The spoon was another example. ‘In the Renaissance, the spoon reached a point of beauty, and it should have been left alone. But chaps had to go on changing the shape and getting it wrong.’ Talk about religion harmonized with discussion in the Chelsea group. Gwen, too, advocated an all-inclusive Christianity and believed that faith ought to enrich humanity and increase affection. Her opinions appeared in a book of spiritual psychology, *The Prophet Child* (1935)—one of its themes being the heroism of mundane virtue, which was, by then, also a major theme of *In Parenthesis*.¹⁰⁶

Gwen and Olivia Greene remained part of his circle until the end of the decade, when a

cousin of Gwen became Marquess of Bath and invited her and her family to rent the game-keeper's house in the Outer Park at Longleat in Wiltshire. They would accept the offer chiefly to remove from London Gwen's son David, whose heroin habit she could no longer afford. In a letter to Grisewood thirty years later, Jones would include Gwen Greene 'and hence Von Hügel' among 'those blokes' to whom he owed 'nearly *everything*' in that they 'offered me some comprehension of the stuff of 'Catholic "*cult & culture*".'*¹⁰⁷

In 1932, the Burns brothers left St Leonard's Terrace. Charles married and moved to Birmingham to found a child guidance clinic. Tom moved with their newly widowed mother and his youngest sister Margaret to 10 Jubilee Place, where he had a studio on the top floor with a skylight and divan-bed. Grisewood took a room in the basement. He and Jones spend long hours in Tom's more comfortable upper room.¹⁰⁸

Fr. D'Arcy loaned to Burns Gerard Manley Hopkins's not-yet published notebooks, which he stacked in a corner of his room at Jubilee Place. He and Grisewood, who was then writing about Hopkins, and sometimes Jones, stayed up late nights reading aloud and discussing these notebooks. Jones looked at and may have read them. Fifty-five years later, Burns remembered that Jones showed 'rather mild interest', and his memory confirms this. Burns had, he wrote, 'the temporary custody of one of Hopkins's note-books with drawings in them & I did have a look at them on one or two occasions & remember how much the drawings reminded me of Ruskin's drawings.' There was also, he recalled, an essay on 'Free Will'. He may have read as well as looked at this material, however, since he loved the poetry and, after devouring Hopkins's letters in 1935, would be convinced that his was 'one of the most integrated of minds,' since

one of the most remarkable things about Hopkins is that whether he is writing a poem or a sermon or a letter or an explanation of his poetic methods or theories, it's all unmistakably Hopkins. This unity of style is one of the things I like greatly about him. It means that from whatever complex or sources his 'style' derived, it was thoroughly integrated and wholly himself speaking. So often in the case of poets one would never know from

* Others he lists are Grisewood, Hague, Dawson, D'Arcy, and Martindale, and he adds, 'as far as I am anything at all as an artist (I'm not talking about the *Truth* of the Catholic Religion, here) it is ... to an indefinable extent to being conditioned by all that & those.'

their prose style the kind of poetry they wrote.¹⁰⁹

If he did read the notebook-manuscripts, they may have contributed to his standard for vividness in descriptive language. Certainly the descriptive passages of *In Parenthesis* have striking affinity with Hopkins's visually and acoustically rich, lyrical prose.

About this time, he also read and liked Abbot Marmion, a Benedictine whose spiritual writing combines Aquinas-made-readable with a compendium of the best of Tridentine Catholicism. Marmion discusses prayer as 'intercourse with God'—of which each soul must find the kind best for itself, and Mary, whose *fiat* initiated a new creation by giving human nature to the divine Word. The main thrust of Marmion's spirituality is that God gives divine life through Christ to man in 'grace', which is inherent in the human soul. Marmion's spiritual theology is almost completely free of moral fear and metaphysical (psychological) anxiety.

In the summer of 1932, Jones met Jacques Maritain. Burns drove them to visit Gill at Pigotts. Jones later remembered, 'Maritain & I carried on a conversation about the arts with Tom as interpreter.' At one point, they stopped and, urinating by the side of the road, Maritain said, 'You know our proverb? *Qui pisse contre vent mouille ses pantelons.*' Afterwards, Jones and Burns would quote this to each other with reference to their efforts to invigorate and spiritualize the Catholic Church in England.¹¹⁰

As much as shared interests and beliefs, a sense of fun united him with his closest friends, who were, Burns remembered, endlessly joking and laughing. Jones spoke entertainingly and with a twinkle in his eye. His sense of timing (of words, facial expression, gestures) was unerring, as when telling about the great Victorian Archbishop William Ullathorne speaking to an altar boy in a strong Midland *cum* Australian accent about plainchant score in the book of the gospels, 'Take it away, boy. Those black things mean nothing to me,' and proceeding to improvise as he sang. Jones told the story of a Welsh private's interaction with his sergeant over whether he has been detailed for guard: 'Sergeant said I wass for guard, I asked him, No, and now the bloody bastard says wass I.' Although he did not usually enjoy *Punch*, Jones recalled a 'really amusing' cartoon published in it shortly after the war, in which an elegantly dressed inebriated opera-goer is given back his ticket by a weary ticket-collector above this caption:

‘Did you punch this ticket?’

‘Yes, sir.’

‘Well, I must say, I think you punch ‘em extraordinarily well.’

Though it greatly amused him whenever he remembered or recounted this, he had no idea why.¹¹¹

Raised in their late Victorian and Edwardian heyday, he enjoyed hearing and telling jokes, particularly for shaggy-dog stories. This was one of his favourites, as Tom Burns remembered it:

A chap comes into a shop and says, ‘Can you make me a bun in the shape of an S?’ The baker says, ‘Yes, come in tomorrow and it’ll be ready for you.’ The chap comes in the next morning and the baker shows him the bun.

‘No, no, it isn’t *really* an S. You haven’t got the curves right, have you. They’re too tight and the overall shape is too long.’

‘I’m so sorry. We’ll try again. Come back tomorrow morning.’ So he comes back in the morning and the baker shows him a new bun.

‘No, no, I’m sorry but it isn’t right, the curves are too rounded, too wide, you know, they have to be, well, more like the curves of an S.’

‘Yes, I see, well, I’m sure we can get it right. Come back in the morning and we’ll have it for you.’

The next morning, the chap comes back and is shown another bun.

‘Oh, very good, you’ve almost got it. I mean, the curves are right, aren’t they, but the width of the curving line is a bit too thick. You’ve nearly got it.’

‘Hmm, well, we’ll try again. If you come in the morning, I’m sure we’ll get it right this time.’

So, the next morning the chap comes back again and is shown the new bun.

‘Well, that’s a pretty good S, a pretty good S. Yes, that’s it, that’s just what I want.’

‘I’m so glad. Can I parcel it up for you?’

‘That’s all right, I’ll eat it here.’

Another such story he liked went as follows:

A man goes into a milk-bar and asks for a drink. The bar-attendant asks, ‘What flavour do you want in your milkshake?’ He says, ‘I think I want one without flavouring.’ She says, ‘But what sort of flavour do you want it without?’ He says, ‘Ah, that depends on what flavours you have.’ She says, ‘Strawberry, orange, lemon, vanilla & lime.’ He says, ‘I’ll have mine without lemon.’ She looks through the bottles and says, ‘I’m awfully sorry sir, but I’m afraid we’re out of lemon. He says, ‘Very well, if I can’t have drink without lemon flavour, I won’t have a drink at all,’ and walks out in anger.¹¹²

Another he enjoyed telling concerns the theft of a vase from a church at Soissons by one of Clovis’s soldiers, an event as familiar to French schoolchildren as that of Alfred and the cakes to English children. Jones used to tell it at great length, but wrote the following abbreviated account:

The young instructor of schools turns up unexpectedly in the class-room of a French school and asks the class-mistress if he may put a few simple questions to her pupils. 'But of course, Monsieur.' He began by enquiring of Henri if he knew who stole the Soissons Vase. Henri replied, 'No, sir' and he received similar negations from each of the other children. This total lack of response perplexed and irritated him so that his voice assumed a sharper tone. 'Come, Jacques, this is absurd, I repeat: who stole the Soissons Vase?' This proved too much for little Jacques who burst into tears, saying 'please sir, I didn't steal it, I've never been to Soissons ... At this juncture the class-mistress intervened. 'Inspector, I'm sure he's telling the truth—Jacques is one of the most honest pupils I've ever had.'

This, in turn, was too much for the Inspector, who burst out of the class-room & into the office of the head-teacher: 'Will you explain to me, instantly, how it is that none of the pupils nor Mademoiselle Dru of Class X, herself, have any knowledge whatever of the stealing of the Soissons Vase?'

The head-mistress listened as patiently as she could: 'Monsieur, as deputy-inspector of schools in this area, you have a perfect right to question the pupils on educational matters, but why you should descend on my school & cast suspicion on one of my staff, Mademoiselle Dru, along with her very junior pupils, in a matter of pilfering at—where did you say? Soissons, yes—a town many kilometres from this district—I fail altogether to understand.' The instructor said nothing beyond enquiring the time of the next available train for Paris.

On arrival, he took a taxi direct to the Ministry of Education. The Minister was, of course, engaged—but to cut out various other complications, the inspector, though now at the end of his tether, was somewhat sustained by the thought at least he would have the ear of a man who would instantly grasp the significance of his incredible information. His only anxiety, as he completed his report, was that the shock might affect the heart of this now ageing servant of the state.

'And what can I do for you, young man? We must be brief, for I've an interview with the Minister of the Interior in five minutes time. Yes, yes, I remember now, my secretary has glanced through your memoranda—as a salaried official of my Ministry of Education—though of recent appointment, your concern is solely with the duties of a sub-instructor of juvenile schools within the area to which you were appointed—I find it wholly unaccountable that you should consider an averred pilfering of a paltry vase from some church in Soissons any concern of yours or of the Department of Education whose employee you are. As for your request for an urgent interview with myself I regard [it] as wholly preposterous. However, we'll let that pass—your record has otherwise been good—if a little overconcerned with trifles. But listen to me. If some theft has been committed, the matter will be gone into by the competent authorities and the Republic will defray the costs.'¹¹³

The story expressed one of his serious concerns, the disappearance of traditional common knowledge, which, in the 1960s, would have, for him, appalling proof in a literary school text in which the word 'Venus' is given the footnote: 'The Roman goddess of love.'

and masked face lifts to grope the air
and so disconsolate;
enfeebled fingering at a paltry strap—
buckle holds,
holds him blind against the morning.

Then stretch still where weeds pattern the chalk predella
—where it rises to his wire—and Sergeant T. Quilter takes over. (166)

This description acquires new intensity of meaning for a reader who recognizes in it the account of Oliver's death in *The Song of Roland*. In a sense, Jenkins, an exceptionally kind, absent-minded lieutenant, has been the friend to everyone in his charge, though he has been prevented by rank from being Oliver to John Ball's Roland.

The truth of the poem includes that of history, for while officially an allied victory, the assault on Mametz Wood, like the entire Battle of the Somme, was a catastrophe for the infantry on both sides. Throughout Parts 6 and 7 of the poem, Jones guards against a chauvinistic or militaristic interpretation by alluding to the death of Roland and legendary and historical defeats for the Celts at Camlan, Catraeth, and Buellt Wood. Later in life he wrote that the Celts 'are masters of defeat' and that 'indeed, the philosophy of defeat seems to me to be their great contributions to our culture.' He never specified what precisely that 'philosophy' is, but it seems to be the transformation of loss into literature—in particular, the Arthurian romances which, he said, are worth any defeat. He, too, was turning catastrophe into literature. For him, the assault and the larger battle were continuous with, and contained, all the defeats he alludes to. He later said, however, that he had not intended to foster pacifism any more than militarism and that his 'sole intention was to make a re-calling of ... my experiences as a private soldier and the actions, emotions, behaviour & the whole complex of recallings that necessarily conditioned the mixed Cockney and Welsh personnel of the unit in which I chanced to serve.'¹¹⁵

According to his note on the manuscript, he finished the first full draft of Part 7 'at Pigotts Aug 18th 1932', bringing the poem to chronological completion. There are 1137 surviving pages of foolscap foliation in three stages of draft, lettered A, B, and C, from which he distilled his final manuscript draft of 281 foolscap pages, in which he marked line-breaks in red pencil for the

typist.* In the first full manuscript draft, Part 3 includes neither the extraordinary passage on rats that appears in the published poem (54) nor Ball's final falling asleep on sentry duty. In this draft, the ending of Part 7 withdraws perspective from the battle and the plight of John Ball to an area in reserve, where soldiers sleep on the farm of the 'mademoiselle at Croix Barbée' and where her 'mastiff' evokes Argos—the mademoiselle being a French Penelope anticipating reunion with a Cockney Odysseus named Kelly who talks to her, earlier in this draft, at the farm pump. In subsequent revision, her femininity will be elevated to the mythic stature of the Queen of the Wood who visits the dead of battle in one of the most beautiful and moving passages in literature.

Jones had begun writing four years ago. Now the initial stage of composition was done. After Burns had it typed, Jones and Hague deposited the manuscript in Barclays Bank in Reading, Jones feeling 'vastly tickled' by the sealing of the package with wax and Hague's having to sign his name across the hot wax.¹¹⁶

After finishing the complete draft, he discovered in the 1910 volume of *The Transactions of the Honorable Society of Cymmrodorion* Edward Anwyl's translation of the Aneirin's sixth century *Y Gododdin*, the oldest Welsh poem.¹¹⁷ He had not read it but had long known of this fragmented lyric elegy of a Welsh force from the area of Edinburgh defeated at Catraeth. Reading it reminded him of his own combat experience and confirmed his sense of the continuity of warfare throughout history.

There would be much rewriting. Throughout this first complete draft was much impressive, publishable poetry that would not survive revision. But already *In Parenthesis* had its over-all climactic form and cumulative force, a gathering momentum that is essentially dramatic. His models for this effect were Malory, *Moby-Dick*, *Wuthering Heights*, and the Mass—and within the Mass, the Last Gospel, which he notes, 'has the sequence of drama rather than of history' (*IP ms*). He would say that *Moby-Dick*—which he read twice and 'had a great impact' on him—'gathers depth and drive as it proceeds toward the final disaster' and in this

* There are 78 foolscap manuscript draft foliation pages of Part I, 56 of Part II, 172 of Part III, 162 of Part IV, 300 of Part V, 63 of Part VI, and 228 of Part VII. Apparently, there were more early drafts, however, for the last of the 228 pages of the foliation for Part VII is numbered 283.

respect is surpassed in literature only by Malory¹¹⁸ He included most of these precedents in a list of sources that belongs to the first complete draft of the poem.*

In early 1932, Ede had told Richard de la Mare at Faber that Jones was writing a book about the war and hoped to publish it in a limited edition printed by Hague. De la Mare expressed interest, conveyed by Ede to Jones, and on 3 May 1932, wrote to ask Jones to consider Faber for trade publication and to drop by his flat in Gower Street. Jones visited, confirmed that he wanted first publication to be a limited edition printed by Hague, and expressed guarded enthusiasm for trade publication by Faber. De la Mare followed up their conversation by writing to stress his desire to read the book, about which Ede had given glowing accounts. In the autumn, de la Mare sent another invitation, saying that Ede told him the book was now finished and reminding Jones that he has half promised to let him see the work when done.¹¹⁹ Jones replied three days later from Pigotts:

I had not forgotten about our talk about my book—but it is not finished yet. I've got to the end of it chronologically, so to say, but now is the difficult task of interminable revision & all that. I will indeed come & see you when I return to town—I did expect to come last week but got ill & am still struggling to get better. That has held up everything—painting & all—how I wish one could get & keep reasonably well.

* Here is Jones's list, compiled in August 1932: The Canon of Sacred Scripture; The Roman Liturgy; The first Prayer Book of Edward VI (Rubrics); The Decrees of the Council of Trent; The Morte Darthur of Thomas Malory; Chaucer's Canterbury Tales; William Dunbar's 'Rorate celi desuper' and 'Lament for the Makers'; Michael Drayton's poems; Shakespeare's plays; The Mabinogion with its notes; Geraldus Cambrensis, the Itinerary & Description of Wales; Geoffrey of Monmouth, History of the Kings of Britain; The Bhagavad-Gita; The Ancient Mariner; Frazer's Golden Bough; Professor Rhys' Welsh People; The Poems of Gerald Manley Hopkins; Alice in Wonderland; The Hunting of the Snark; Moby Dick; The Song of Roland (Scott Moncrieff trans.); Aucassin & Nicolette; Information as to Wales in the 15th Century from various sources; Sir John Wyn of Gwydir; Browning's Bloughram; Professor Livingston Lowes' Road to Xanadu; Mr Belloc's account of the Retreat of Saratoga; Macaulay; Lays of Ancient Rome; Mr Eliot's Waste Land; Miss Weston's Ritual to Romance; The Miltonic Hymn.

Although he complained of not painting during this period, he did paint a good deal and very well. In May, 1932, at Rock, he made four watercolours, not as many as he had hoped, but among these is *Briar Cup* (fig. 23).¹²⁰ In this picture, perspective bends. You look nearly straight down at the table and level out beyond. Between circular containers and explosive foliage is explosive tension. The tonally light circular shapes of containers and table attract and still the eye; vegetative explosions move the eye on: a contrariness that finds compromise in vegetative quasi-roundnesses of flowers and leaves. The overall movement is upward and backward into the



calm, smooth distance, but the nearer teapot, tureen, and highly defined briar leaves and thorns resist the attraction of receding perspective. Nor will the curl of the near teacup handle and its maroon shadow let the eye go without regret. The tension between explosion and encircling containment is mediated by two large briar branches. One bends towards circularity; the other extends, its end balancing a shell-burst of green high in the left background. The briary branches divide space but also unify by pulling the eye down into their convergence. The circle of the table rhymes with those of teacup, pitcher-bottom and top, the tureen dish

23. David Jones. *Briar Cup*. 1932

and lid-top, and teapot-bottom. Except for casting shadows on sill or wall, tureen and teapot seem to float in air. Beyond them, out of doors, are walls and disproportionately large birds, the nearest apparently strutting on air. Beyond them are fields and hills and suggestions of vegetation, most notably the green shell-burst of trees. The distance is calm except for that arboreal explosion, which pulls the distance into the upward tumble of vegetation from the pitcher in a tonal reversal of the curve of perspective. The domestic objects are on a terrace or in a room whose demarcation from the outdoors has vanished. The meaning of this picture is rich, compelling, and beyond the power of language to convey. Thorns (masculine?) on long stems mixed with feminine flowers emerging from a golden grail-like pitcher evoke Jessie Weston's fertility symbolism and may suggest a verdant opposite to the Waste Land. The effect benefits by literary-cultural allusions remaining evocative without eclipsing visual imagination. The meaning of the picture has to do with wildness humanized, including the wildness of war, by interpenetration of outdoors and indoors, of nature and culture. It transforms space to light, and that, too, is part of its meaning. This picture, which will neither stay in nor go out, does not allow you to finish looking at it. In its lightness and explosive vitality and stillness, it is a harbinger of Jones's great chalice paintings of twenty years later. Helen Sutherland bought it.

The ambiguous lack of demarcation between indoors and outdoors resembles the erasure of doorframes in the Portslade paintings and parts of walls and tree trunks in other pictures. Ede may be an influence here. He used to talk about the insubstantiality of the wall of his house, which faced quiet Elm Row but sided directly on Heath Street, down which the nearer lane of heavy traffic hurtled within five feet of where his family ate breakfast. Only a thin course of bricks stood between them and the rushing lorries—an insubstantiality brought home to him one day when a bus crashed through the garden wall, a continuation of the house wall. Jones saw the damage, and Ede talked to him of the wall being really no wall at all but providing only a comforting illusion. Certainly, many of Jones's pictures would include what Ede calls 'that sense of substance being insubstantial.'¹²¹ It is a sense most marked in the disappearance or partial disappearance of barriers between inside and outside.* Such often partial disappearance also

* Such a disappearance can clearly be seen, for example, left of the windowsill in *Window at Rock* (1936) and on the right-hand side of *Flora in Calix-Light* (1950) at Kettle's Yard, Cambridge.

indicates Jones's awareness of actual seeing, in which focusing beyond an object renders it transparent or nearly so. (Try it: hold up your hand close to your face and then look past it and notice that as you do your hand becomes transparent.) This is the actual experience of seeing, to which most of us are blinded by mental awareness and familiarity with photography, which cannot reproduce it.¹²² He achieves, then, a true equivalent to seeing, which may owe a great deal to his habit of gazing out of windows. It is also certainly the result of attentiveness during the long, fixed staring, which Grisewood noticed him engaging in at the zoo and elsewhere.

He went in June to Pigotts at Joan Hague's invitation, living with the Hagues and sometimes, if it was warm enough, sleeping in the glass-walled 'doll's house' in the garden, which Gill had built to get his grandchildren out of his house.⁴⁹ In his continuing attempt to escape habitual technique, in which automatic movement determines style, he now did a series of left-handed drawings, one of Petra, one of someone holding a cat (fig. 24).



24. David Jones, *Left-handed drawings*, 1932

It was the summer of the Bathtub Rebellion. Gill's wife and daughters wanted a bathtub installed. Gill considered a tub with taps unnatural. You ought, he insisted, to bathe in a stream. Jones thought Gill silly, but would say afterwards that he prevailed to the extent of refusing to have 'the sort of thing you see in a shop window', acquiring, instead, a beautiful, immensely heavy, black marble tub with chrome plated taps.¹²³

This summer, the grave of 'a supposed Neolithic man' was discovered and opened at Wycombe. Jones joined an expedition from Pigotts to see the remains. The ancient man was, he writes, 'curled up pathetically with his knees to his chin only about three feet below the surface—in a barrow—it was awfully exciting seeing him his bones were incredibly porous & light.'¹²⁴ His only immediate experience of such an excavation, this would inform his writing of the first part of *The Anathemata*, which has as a dominant motif the light of Christ penetrating ancient graves, and would influence his later poetry having to do with 'sleeping lords'.

It may have been this summer that, crossing a field near Pigotts, he was passing Wendy Foster, the daughter of a neighbouring farmer. He stopped her—they were alone together in the

field—and asked, ‘Could you sing me that folksong, “Rupert the Pretty Ploughboy?” She sang it there to him, and they continued on their ways. Because it was such an odd request, she would never forget it.’¹²⁵

In the tiny upstairs cottage bedroom he used, he painted René Hague (fig. 25): the alert face thinking, the diagonal tumble from upper left to bottom right pausing at crossing forearms to indicate that he is doing nothing else and, as the oppositional distance of the hands from one another suggest, is not about to do anything else. The curtain at the window, the tree beyond, the towel below all partake of the relaxed haphazardness of his clothing and crossed arms, from which neck and head emerge like a pole, steady, deliberate. Circular spectacles frame his gaze into the empty middle distance. The delicacy of left eye and mouth contrast with roughness of clothing and powerful forearms and hands. Atop this tower of mental intensity



25. *The Translator of the Song of Roland*, 1932

is a mess of hair matching the jumble of clothing. Lacking is Hague’s humour; otherwise, this is the man—alive in a mixture of delicacy, intensity, rigidity, and tumbling chaos. It is one of Jones’s best portraits, which he kept for himself under his bed, entitling it, five years later, *The Translator of the Chanson de Roland*. He would think it ‘the best ... ‘likeness’ of any’ he had attempted. ‘For portraiture, in that sense,’ he later wrote to Hague ‘has never been a thing I could manage very well. I remember ... your fore-arm looks very powerful from pulling that hand-press.’¹²⁶ It is a portrait of a scholar-craftsman.

From Pigotts in mid-June he went to Oxford to be introduced to Evelyn Jamison at Lady Margaret Hall. Nicolete had arranged for him to paint Jamison's portrait, a commission he agreed to take despite feeling 'quite incapable'. He enjoyed being in Oxford again and meeting Nicolete's friends, particularly one named Joan and another named Livinia Alington, 'a real crasher—a sort of Diana Nemorensis, tall & white-skinned & red-gold tresses', whom he would commemorate in his poetry (*SL* 99-100). On the 18 June he returned to Pigotts, fearing he would make 'an awful mess' of the portrait. He invited Nicolete to Pigotts, and she came at the end of June. Her study of history remained a bond between them—she lent him a paper she had written, which he thought 'impressive'. In the third week of July, he returned to Oxford to paint the portrait. In it Jamison is a Galatea, her face clear-eyed, slightly cock-eyed, atop a column of neck in which lines suggest marble. Her expression is of anticipation—she seems about to speak. The portrait is fine but, with a nearly empty background, not one of his best. He returned to Pigotts, from where, on 25 July, he and Gill went up to London to the Royal Academy to see the designs for the proposed Liverpool Cathedral. They returned together, and Jones resumed painting, furiously and well.¹²⁷

In the Autumn of 1932, he painted Petra again and called the new portrait *The Seated Mother* (fig. 26), which Helen Sutherland bought. It is a remarkable portrait, combining sculptural conciseness (the single sharp line of the face and neck, the heavy shadow of the inner left arm) with airy unboundedness that opens the work to light and trans-spatial dimension—a picture differing in kind from *Petra im Rosenhag* of the previous year. The background is chaotic: broken planes, upright lines leaning out of vertical—a disorder mingling with her body at her right arm, in the hair at the nape of her neck, in her quasi-Charles VII hands, which, instead of facing one another and suggesting unity as in *Human Being* (fig. 17), back on each other, sending fingers out from their centre. This lively quasi-disorder is resisted by the definition of her torso, neck and head. The lines and slight inner shading of the chair affirm the torso. And there is a reaching-out-into-chaos where the Ben-Nicholson fruit-dish holds plums close to her face, the plums evoking the shape and tonality of her chin and ear. She in her chair, her head on its column of neck; the fruit in its stemmed dish. Centring the whole is that enigmatic, not very friendly face. Sutherland bought it, and the following year at Rock, the portrait hung 'over the mantle shelf' in his bedroom, and he lay in bed, looking at it, glad that it

was better than he had thought, for, he wrote to Petra, ‘it’s got one side of my idea of you ... but only one side I fear.’ His musings in bed may have been more than aesthetic. During a visit to Sutherland in 1946, when he took the picture from a cupboard and propped it against a chair in the drawing room, Kathleen Raine quietly entered and saw him gazing at it ‘in an unforgettable way,’ with a ‘pondering sweetness’ no one was meant to see. He would never paint another portrait, and it would be the last painting he would finish for years.¹²⁸

It concluded the astonishing summer of 1932, in which he worked at the edge of courageous artistic freedom. He later said about painting, ‘There are many, many, many ways of doing it, but this unity one must get, or, anyway, always have in mind. I find, just personally, that some of the few things—and they *are* few—of my own which give me any satisfaction have often been very chaotic until, by some accident I’ve *just* managed to put what these artistic blokes used to call an “accent” somewhere or other, &, without my knowing why the thing has come together.’ In the summer and autumn concluding with *The Seated Mother*, he finished sixty paintings, fifty large, free, fast watercolours and ten oils.¹²⁹



26. David Jones, *The Seated Mother*, 1932

In the second week of October 1932, a nervous breakdown ended this explosive creativity. There had been anticipatory signs. He had experienced neurotic symptoms since the war: agoraphobia, anxiety about illness (fear of germs), and an inordinate fear of animals (snakes, dogs, horses) and wasps. He found that ‘colds of a certain kind’ were accompanied by ‘depression’. In August, he

felt exhausted and, for no apparent reason, began suffering intense anxiety, insomnia and severe depression. The Hagues realized he was heading for a breakdown. After it occurred—René being away all day in his printing shop—Joan, alone with him in the house, felt the weight of his affliction. He was depressed, silent. The little he said was spoken in a thin far-off voice. Looking at an ordinary object sometimes caused him to panic. The Hagues vacillated between pretending not to notice and joking. At breakfast, René said ‘Hello Dai, what sort of night did you have?’ or ‘Were you biting the blankets much?’* In reply, Jones murmured, ‘Mmm, yes, you know, pretty rough. He's been sending over a lot of stuff, you know.’ He repeatedly used this artillery metaphor—which may suggest the war as origin of his suffering—but, at the time, Hague intuited another cause. It was, he thought, ‘girl trouble’, which they did not discuss, other than for René to ask, ‘The old pornos, Dai?’ and Jones to reply, ‘Ah, yes, the old trouble, you know.’ He was by now in love with Prudence Pelham, with whom he was not, as René knew, sexually involved. Seeing them together, he sensed ‘some check that came’ in Jones, which René attributed to his moral decision not to go to bed with a woman he was not going to marry but whom he nevertheless badly wanted to go to bed with. The ‘ pornos’ may have been more complex, however. Prudence told her friend Miriam Rothchild that his breakdown was caused by still being in love with Petra.† Petra herself felt that Burns and Grisewood thought that the breakdown was precipitated by her having ended the engagement.¹³⁰ There may be some truth in all these assumptions. Now in love with Prudence, Jones remained attached to Petra, and the presence of both of them in his life, often together at Pigotts, may well have given tangled emotions a severe twisting.

* Miles and Shiel take Hague's joking words about ‘biting the blankets’ literally (p. 169). In gauging the tone of his remark, it may help (though it hardly seems necessary) to have known Hague personally, as I did.

† Prudence also told Miriam that she was very bitter about the way Jones had been treated by the Gill family, perhaps because they preferred to believe, cheerfully, that he was relieved and not hurt by the break-up with Petra.



27. David Jones, *July Change*, 1932

If the proximate causes were sexual, the occasion was that summer's energetic creativity. He was not, at the time, happy with his new paintings. He wrote to Nicolette on 11 July, 'Have done no good paintings just cant see anything freshly' and later recalled, 'the 1932 group got nearest to what I had in mind—but a *very long way from the goal*. (I suppose that may partly explain my complete crash—I was conscious for some long time before it came that I was straining every nerve to do something more than I had power to do.)' Of the many different things he was trying to do, one was to liberate light from line, as in the nearly lineless still lifes of the summer: *Martha's Cup*, *Hierarchy*, *October Cup*, *The Queen's Dish*, *The Table*, *July Change*, and *Flowers on a Table*. The sides of containers lose definition. Nearly chaotic, they achieve

unifying continuity between dissolving objects and contextual fields of tone. The effect of transparent colour is of moving air. *The Table* is especially daring and is a descriptive challenge since what is named can barely be seen. A squiggle, two smudges and a circular shadow indicate a mug. Circular smudges of colour indicate fruit in a raised white bowl. The colour of a peach-half lies on a plate below. The tablecloth is white with orange, grey, and pink tones. The picture is a wonderful ghost, resembling the barest beginnings of a painting. In these works he moves closest to abstraction. In fact, he later confessed, 'I was strongly tempted to go abstract' at this time. The pictures are alive, nearly freeing themselves from constraints of content. He liked them because they were entirely free of the tightness that he felt was a danger to him. Especially beautiful is *July Change*, *Flowers on a Table* (fig. 27). It contains some specific objects but

much of the picture dissolves in faint pink, blue, and yellow light. This is painting that looks into what Eliot calls ‘the heart of light, the silence.’ But none of these pictures fully achieve what he wanted. Whether using oils or watercolours, he was, Grisewood said, ‘exasperated by the medium,’ and this was always so: ‘he lived in a sort of exasperation, really, artistically, over everything.’¹³¹

It was painting that first plunged him into anxiety and depression. By the spring of 1930 he had begun to find it an emotional strain and had written to Petra that ‘the further one penetrates into the mysteries of any art the more difficult it is to achieve even the barest result & it is difficult not to get into a panic at the futility of one’s efforts—Bad for the Nerves!’ As Sickert had said, a watercolour painter must be ‘a oncer.’ An application of paint is irreversible. As Jones put it, ‘one smudge of colour on a pencil-drawing will inevitably metamorphose that drawing & change its values, for better, for worse.’ Each addition changes the entire work permanently. One wash too many dulls and kills. Painting in watercolour is enough to paralyse even an emotionally healthy person—and Jones found decisions difficult. Grisewood remembered that he ‘worked very very quickly when he was working.’ The speed created a momentum overcoming hesitancy that might end in paralysis. Now he could not achieve that momentum. There exists an incomplete painting of this period that indicates how he proceeded and seems to record the paralysis that overtook him. He freely, lightly pencilled in the bounding lines of a cottage and trees at Pigotts. Then he began to paint the top left corner, moving down and to the right with coloured washes and brush strokes, transforming an essentially disunified sketch into vital art. But at mid-picture the painting ends in red and grey dabbing and a few nervously painted lines. To go on had become. Even looking at something was frightening, perhaps because he was looking, as he did everything, as an artist. To Nicolette he said, ‘I can look at the coal scuttle and be absolutely terrified.’¹³² Now fearful objects are precisely the sort that had figured in his paintings as of special interest and delight.

In the depths of depression, he could not think, act, wish to act. All normal feeling was obliterated. Or distress mounted to panic, and he could scarcely breathe—the air seemed thick and resistant—his heart pounded, he broke into a sweat, his legs went weak, and he felt dizzy and nauseated. But the worst symptom was enduring, incapacitating depression. Grisewood

remembers him anxious and debilitated, unable to summon the courage to cross a road, paralyzed by irresolution about catching a train, unable to pack his bag for an intended visit. He lived to paint but could not. Trying increased anxiety and depression. Prior to his breakdown he had worked ‘all the time’, so this paralysis was bitterly frustrating. It increased depression, which increased paralysis. Years later he said of his emotional problems relative to his life’s work—and it is doubtless an understatement—‘they have cut my production in half.’¹³³

He later wondered whether writing the first complete draft of the final part of *In Parenthesis* while doing so much painting had brought on the breakdown. In 1939, he would write to a friend, ‘It is a pity, in a way, I ever wrote that solitary book of mine because if I hadn’t I should probably be painting still. In fact I sometimes wonder if doing it didn’t partly bring on this breakdown, but I don’t know. I suppose I’ve always been pretty frightened underneath, only when I was young it never asserted itself and I was able to carry on.’ Finishing the complete draft of the poem probably did help to bring on his collapse. Recreating the assault that concludes the poem is hardly reducible to ‘repetition compulsion,’ but writing is analogous to such compulsion. He had been and would continue to be a kind of the Ancient Mariner, habitually telling war anecdotes. Apart from the possible affinity between compulsive re-enactment and poetic composition, the finishing of a major work would always leave him enervated and depressed. He later wrote that finishing even a ‘quite small work’ left him feeling ‘peculiar.’¹³⁴ In 1942, he would mark with two lines in the margin of Spengler’s *Man and Technics*, ‘Every truly creative human being knows and dreads the *emptiness* that follows upon the completion of a work.’ But his breakdown was chiefly brought on that summer by something different: increasing creative freedom. He would begin to understand this only years later.

When the seriousness of his condition became clear, Joan drove him, with René accompanying, to his parents in Brockley, where he remained during the long months of nervous collapse. ‘That’, he later said, ‘was a mistake.’ His insomnia was terrible and, in later memory, total. ‘I did not sleep for nine months,’ he said, adding, ‘no one I’ve told has believed me.’ When doctors urged that surely he had dozed off, he would ‘swear’ that lying in bed he had heard the chiming of his father’s clock ‘every quarter of an hour.’ In the morning he dressed and descended for breakfast as if nothing was wrong—which was, he later said, ‘the thing to do in

those days.’ At home he had always been ‘deeply depressed inside’, covering it ‘by an appearance of cheerfulness’. Now he felt unrelieved awfulness, like the momentary helpless fear before your hand or foot moves to break a fall but continuing hour after hour, day after day. Often he could not bear to write or read or talk or to go out. Finally, in at the end of October, he dragged himself to Harley-Street to consult a neurologist named James C. Woods, a specialist in shellshock, who diagnosed him as suffering from neurasthenia owing to shellshock. Fifty years later the diagnosis would have been Delayed Onset Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome. Woods thought Jones’s condition ‘severe’, ‘a Depressive Psychosis.’ Jones told him that trying to paint made him feel worse, so Woods advised him not to try, ‘Mr Jones, you know you must cultivate a masterly inactivity.’ Woods sent him to a general practitioner in Brockley with a letter describing him, to Jones’s amusement, as ‘a temperamental fellow, given to introspection.’ Chest x-rays were taken, which Jones found ‘rather beautiful.’ The doctor ordered him to take a tonic, drink Ovaltine, and smoke only a few cigarettes a day. Reduced smoking Jones found ‘a bit of a curse.’ Since he was unable to paint, he was now receiving £2 per week from the Artist’s Annuity Fund, although sales of pictures in 1933 brought him an income of £200 (on which he paid only £5.7.3 in tax). When he could, he read Wordsworth, Pepys, and Evelyn’s Diary—‘so now,’ he wrote, ‘I know all about the 17th Century!’ When he could ‘raise the energy’ he worked at revising *In Parenthesis*. He went for walks. He hoped he would ‘get better soon.’ By November he had not looked at the pictures he had brought back from Pigotts. ‘I will,’ he writes Petra, ‘when I feel a bit braver!’ He was upset at hearing that his sister had ‘a bad shock’. When out with her little boy, Tony, someone had snatched her purse, causing her to fall and cut her knee. He felt no improvement in his condition: ‘the treatment tends to make you even more exhausted than ever—I wish I felt more sure about it—its all very mysterious and I’m not confident that they really know enough.’¹³⁵

During the whole of 1933 he vacillated between acute depression, inexplicable terror, and extreme anxiety, which kept him from sleeping. It was all so ridiculous. He would later say ‘it’s the mysterious nature that’s so intolerable & the bloody impossibility of conveying what it feels like to anyone else ... & the fear that is not like ordinary fear, but meaningless.’ ‘The chief misery’ was ‘never knowing what or why or when.’ Things once pleasant and consoling were

now intolerable ‘& this is not only inexplicable to those who love one, but to oneself.’ He wondered whether being half-Welsh was a cause. He met and discussed his symptoms with Charles Burns at the Café Royal. As a trained psychiatrist, Charles was the only close friend capable of fully appreciating Jones’s affliction and sympathizing with him. According to Grisewood, who was also sympathetic, Charles was the only one to whom Jones fully confided and, in this time of suffering, Charles was devoted to him. Inventing the name ‘Rosey’ for Jones’s neurosis, Tom used to ask, ‘How’s Rosey today?’ Or he said in his rough and ready way, ‘Oh here’s old Rosy back again, tell her to bugger off. Come and have a beer.’ At his most miserable, Jones was, as Tom recalled, ‘dithery, lachrymose, frightened.’ Tom’s way to get him ‘out of Rosy’s clutches’ was to tell him a harrowing story of some friend who was worse off.* Other friends were not so helpful. Nicolette accused him of moral weakness and lack of will power. He was glad not to be living in the Middle Ages, when dejection was considered a sin requiring three years penance. ‘Lord!’ he later wrote, ‘I would have fared ill in those days.’¹³⁶

He found that often when he returned to his home in Brockley a ‘fog of depression’ descended on him. Because being there gave him ‘the jimjams,’ he began staying away as much as possible. Sometimes when returning from the city as he touched the front gate, he was overwhelmed with anxiety and he found it impossible to enter—so he walked on, returning to London to stay with Burns or the Edes.† In what he later called ‘the days of my greatest Rosy,’ he could not speak on the telephone, and Tom would telephone on his behalf to a doctor named Fothergill for advice and medicine. Jones increasingly stayed overnight with the Edes, whose daughters noticed that now he was often very sad.¹³⁷

A marked effect of his breakdown was intensified agoraphobia. He no longer enjoyed or went to parties. He seldom went outdoors. Increasingly now, friends had to visit him. The worst thing was waiting alone in public places. This brought on extreme agitation, a sense of impending disaster, an impulse to flee. Feeling panic in the underground or crowded train

* Miles and Shiel are mistaken in claiming that Jones’s Catholic friends (‘within the Church’) were not helpful to him in his distress (p. 294).

† During the Second World War, Prudence reflected what Jones confided about himself when she wrote from Carmarthen that now ‘it is I who begin to feel [ill] at my front gate & then walks on.’ n.d.

carriages, in large stores, and in unfamiliar public places was worsened by fear of panicking in such places. Not knowing when the terror would strike, he dreaded the embarrassing loss of control if terror struck. When walking alone, and even sometimes with a friend—it happened when walking with Prudence—he would sometimes rush fearfully ahead, to escape the unknown horror he sensed behind him—as children rush up from dark cellars. But he could not escape.*



28. David Jones, *Christmas card*, 1933

inscription that translates, ‘strengthen our souls for passing through intolerable waters.’[†] In the spring of 1940 when the Germans were conquering Europe and Charles Burns was urging on him the value of prayer, he would reply:

I feel personally & one can’t speak for anyone else) that intellectually one’s position is unmoved & unmoveable—but emotionally (or whatever the word should be) one is completely cut off—dried up, unperceptive—all the efforts & words of ‘religious’ leaders seem to be just almost without meaning. I, too, have been terribly distressed about all this—this inability to even begin to what is called ‘pray’—in any strength-giving or straight-forward way—(not that perhaps I ever did!)—but still it certainly has got a lot more involved or something—a deep bewilderment in the spirit (or whatever it is). As I say, intellectually, I don’t personally find it more difficult—I mean one can, as much as ever, see through all sceptical argument. The religious state

* During the Second World War, Prudence wrote to him in an undated letter that she felt ‘winded and utterly blank & no light anywhere ... & all the horrors are just behind you--I quite understand what I didn't before, of the things that make you 'shoot forward' at speed--poor Dai.’ n.d.

[†] Not mentioned or included in Cleverdon’s *The Engravings of David Jones*, this engraving was reproduced on the dust jacket of Ronald Knox, *Barchester Pilgrimage* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1937).

remains the only rational one—but for myself it gets harder to implement or something. This nervous collapse of mine over these many years has, I think, taught me that not many of the popular & accepted & believed-in theories or convictions about ‘heavenly consolation’ etc hold much water. I have become accustomed to living in a state of continuous fear & distress that buggered up all one’s intentions & made ineffectual most of one’s possible abilities. In many respects this was seeming to have lifted a good bit & I was beginning to take stock of the wreckage, so to say, & somewhat gingerly to collect my kit & venture to emerge from the trench feeling that the barrage had perhaps really spent itself in my sector for a time perhaps—well, my beginning to emerge from my subjective barrage seems to have coincided with an objective barrage on ‘all flesh.’ Like waking up from a hideous & very private night-mare to find the house really on fire, rather! ... I think that perhaps, in a vast & seemingly lunatic catastrophe, people have to learn as nerve-cases come to learn that all such clichés as, say, ‘God will help you’ are as misleading as ‘you must pull yourself together’—‘exercise the will’—‘there is nothing really the matter with you’ etc etc (all those imbecile but well meant suggestions that people make constantly to anyone with ‘neurasthenia’). The thing is, I suppose, one has somehow got to hold on to the fact that ‘God is helping me’ in the most hideous & catastrophic exterior circumstances as he is when one is in the very pit of some psychological-pathological state. This seems to reduce the matter to a pure intellectual conception. (*It has always been my main difficulty—How to make effective what is, perhaps, quite clear to the intelligence. Few people seem to be able to make any useful suggestion on this point. That’s why I wonder if one is up the wrong street in some way, but I can’t see where. Theologians etc aren’t usually very helpful about it ...) But it’s the best I can do at present. It may be I’ve never properly got hold of some important truth—I don’t know—but I’ve never got further than that myself.

No other letter survives in which he so candidly reveals the arid state of his inner life after his breakdown, partly because at its worst he was incapable of writing a letter. Even now, eight years after his collapse, ‘fear and distress’ were his habitual condition. It cancelled his vocation, the effective meaning of his life. Tom Burns thought he was experiencing what John of the Cross called ‘the Dark night of the soul.’¹³⁸ Perhaps he was.

Before his breakdown, he had been fairly robust. From now on, he would be frail and physically withdrawn. He now hunched his shoulders, making himself small, a lesser target, retreating from terrors into the dugout of his body. The sight of him made him seem incapable of achieving anything of importance. Grisewood later reconstructed a typical conversation with him at his lowest:

‘David, are you doing any writing?’

(pause)

‘Nah ... can’t write at all.’

‘David, you’re not painting anything, I suppose? (pause) You haven’t?’

(pause)

‘No. I can’t ... do anything like that. (pause) No ... no. I can’t even ... write a letter. (pause) I can’t do anything. I ... I’m ... it’s very bad. I really ... it really is very bad ... I.’

‘My goodness, poor chap! Have you seen anybody?’

(pause)

‘No.’

Then, gradually, it would emerge that actually he had seen friends fairly recently. He was seldom as isolated or neglected as he felt. In spite of his depression and physical withdrawal, his friends loved him and could discern, or at least remember, the man obscured by his condition. They were rewarded by moments when his inner clouds cleared and he became engaging, humorous, and brilliant. At such times, he was delightful to be with. But never would he fully return to the lightness of spirit and apparent happiness that characterized his first thirty-seven years of life, though conversation, especially with a woman, would often bring him close to being his former self. Nevertheless, his suffering was grim, and increasingly it showed in his face, which took on a grey pallor and a haggard expression, unutterably sad. In 1968 he would write of his 1932 breakdown, ‘it has persisted.’¹³⁹

Notes to Chapter 9

¹ To Helen Ede 30/4/30; DJ's annotations to the chronology of the 1972 *Word and Image* Catalogue; Merlin James, p. 20.

² Miles and Shiel, p. 90, to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; DJ interviewed by Peter Orr, summer 1972; H. Grisewood to T. Stoneburner 27/7/68.

³ Miles and Shiel, p. 90, to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; DJ interviewed by P. Orr summer 1972; H. Grisewood to Tony Stoneburner, 27/7/68; to Mr Allsop, unposted draft 6/12/44. G. Davenport, letter to author, January 1996.

⁴ H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89.

⁵ DJ to Carol Elizabeth Stoneburner 5/5/66; S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record, 20/6/72; P. Haggren interviewed by D. Cleverdon, 1982, typescript; DJ to Blissett, p. 44.

⁶ Ben Nicholson to Jones, n.d.; 'Looking Back at the Thirties,' p. 50; DJ's pocket diary for 1931—subsequent daily activity in this year is recorded in this diary; to Nicolette Binyon 24/3/31, 10/3/32.

⁷ To N. Binyon Ash Wednesday 1932; to E.Q. Nicholson, 22/3/31.

⁸ To P. Tegetmeier 21/4/31.

⁹ to P. Tegetmeier 21/4/31.

¹⁰ To N. Gray 24/6/36; to H. Read 31/5/62, 21/9/64.

¹¹ To K. Raine 29/3/50.

¹² To P. Tegetmeier 18/3/31; to H. Grisewood, Candlemass 1957; to EQ Nicholson 22/3/31.

¹³ To J. Stone 18/4/65; to P. Tegetmeier 21/4/31; P. Pelham to DJ, 6/11/31.

¹⁴ To R. Hague 28/7/31; E. Hodgkin to author 3/10/97; to N. Binyon 9/6/32.

¹⁵ T. Burns to R. Hague 12/8/78; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; Christine Scott, interviewed 26/6/86, 15/6/90; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record, 9/6/66; to H. Grisewood 12/8/56; H. Grisewood interviewed 22/6/86; to Fr. Harlow letter frag. n.d.; L. Bussell to T. Stoneburner 21/8/69.

¹⁶ J. O'Connor to W. Shewring interviewed 24/6/88; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; Eddie Nutgens quoted by Miles, *Backgrounds*, p. 33; Margaret Grisewood interviewed 24/6/89.

¹⁷ R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77.

¹⁸ M. Hague interviewed 10/9/89.

¹⁹ C. Skelton interviewed 15/6/90; D. Kindersley interviewed 9/6/90; R. and J. Hague interviewed by T. Stoneburner, written record, 11/6/69.

²⁰ M. Richey interviewed 18/6/89.

²¹ C. Skelton interviewed 21/6/86.

²² Kevin Cribb interviewed 12/6/89; D. Kindersley interviewed 22/6/88, 9/6/90; C. Skelton interviewed 15/6/90; Evelyn Montague interviewed 9/9/89.

²³ R. Hague interviewed by Blissett 8/77; to N. Binyon 8/7/31.

²⁴ To H. Grisewood 5/8/52.

²⁵ To R. Hague 28/7/31.

²⁶ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

²⁷ To K. Clark 20/1/44.

²⁸ To P. Tegetmeier 15/8/35; to K. Clark 20/1/44; K. Clark interviewed by Michael Alexander, 'David Jones' BBC 2 radio programme 1977.

²⁹ To P. Tegetmeier 3/10/31; to P. Tegetmeier 3/10/30.

³⁰ To Mr [T.] Whitaker unposted frag. 1970; to P. Tegetmeier 3/10/31; to T. Stoneburner 6/3/65, 12-16/8/68.

³¹ DJ 'Life for Jim Ede' typescript 5/9/35; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; H. Grisewood televised interview, BBC Wales, 4/91.

³² T. Burns interviewed 24/6/89.

³³ H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89, 5/10/87; 5/6/86; to H. Ede 11/4/39; Watkin 107-9; S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91.

³⁴ H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87.

³⁵ H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89, 8/83.

³⁶ R. Hague to Blissett 24/11/79; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90.

³⁷ DJ's pocket diary for 1931; to P. Tegetmeier 3/8. 1931; H. Sutherland to J. Ede 25/3/29 (in several sources, DJ misremembers his first visit as occurring in 1928); to E. Hodgkin 8/5/66; to J. Stone 15/3/65; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; H. Sutherland to N. Gray interviewed 17/6/84; DJ 'Life for Jim Ede' typescript 5/9/35.

³⁸ To P. Tegetmeier 3/8/31; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/8/86; D. Cleverdon interviewed summer 1985; S. Wright interviewed 26/6/86.

³⁹ E. Hodgkin, 'David Jones' typescript; to H. Grisewood 5/8/31; E. Hodgkin to author 19/5/96.

⁴⁰ To H. Sutherland 19/8/40; E. Hodgkin, 'David Jones' typescript; E. Hodgkin to author 19/5/96; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87.

⁴¹ N. Gray, 'Introduction,' *Helen Sutherland Collection*, p. 17; to D. Travis 17/9/38; to E. Hodgkin 14/9/38.

⁴² To V. Wynne-Williams 22/10/60.

⁴³ E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; DJ 'Life for Jim Ede' typescript 5/9/35; Ede, 'David Jones,' *Horizon*, 126; S. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.

⁴⁴ To J. Stone 15/3/65; Gray, *Helen Sutherland Collection*, p. 17.

⁴⁵ To R. Hague 2/8/35, 10/7/35; to H. Grisewood 12-14 Jan/68; to H. Sutherland 7/10/29; letter from H. Sutherland to Tate Gallery, 1/8., n.d.; IP 180.

⁴⁶ To H. Grisewood 3/10/38, 4/10/38; Mary Adams interviewed 13/6/86; to H. Grisewood 5/8/31.

⁴⁷ To J. Hague 17/9/35; M. Elkin interviewed summer 1985; E. Hodgkin, 'David Jones,' typescript.

⁴⁸ To R. Hague 17/9/35, 10/7/35; Gray, 'Introduction,' *H. Sutherland Collection*, p. 18; E. Hodgkin, 'David Jones' typescript.

⁴⁹ K. Raine interviewed 26/6/86; J. Ede interviewed 6/85.

⁵⁰ K. Raine interviewed 6/85.

⁵¹ H. Sutherland's diary (no date given) quoted by Corbett, p. 20; R Shepherd interviewed 28/6/89; H. Sutherland to J. Ede n.d.; J. Ede interviewed 31/5/86; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8.1987; N. Gray interviewed 17/6/86; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

⁵² N. Gray, *H. Sutherland Collection*, p. 18; E. Hodgkin in Thomas Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, ed. E.C. Hodgkin (London, New York: Quartet 1986), p. 33, n 2; H. Sutherland to DJ 5/7/52; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87.

⁵³ To J. Ede 11/3/35.

⁵⁴ To R. Hague 11/8/74; H. Sutherland to E. Hodgkin 10/32; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8.1987; P. Pelham to DJ 29/11.1935; H. Sutherland to D.J. 8/12/48; to J. Ede 5/9/35.

⁵⁵ E. Hodgkin, 'David Jones' typescript; to J. Stone 18/4/65; to R. Hague 2/8/35.

⁵⁶ To H. Grisewood 10/6/64; the earliest surviving letter from DJ to a Hodgkin is to Thomas 25/10/30; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8.1987, 16/3/98; Dorothy Hodgkin interviewed 19/6/89.

⁵⁷ To R. Hague 24/8/35; E. Hodgkin to author 7/6/96.

⁵⁸ To J. Stone 15/3/65.

⁵⁹ To J. Stone 15/3/65; to H. Grisewood 1.-16/2/66, 20/7/35.

⁶⁰ H. Grisewood interviewed 6/91, 4/10/87, 8/83.

⁶¹ To R. Hague 2/6/55.

⁶² E. Hodgkin, 'Some Memories of David Jones' typescript.

⁶³ E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/1987; Hodgkin, 'Some Memories of David Jones' typescript; to J. Stone 15/3/65.

⁶⁴ S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86; to N. Binyon 10/3/32; 11/7/32; Barbara Wall interviewed by T. Stoneburner nd; to R. Hague 10/11/34; to N. Binyon 10/3/32; N. Binyon to DJ 23/12/52.

⁶⁵ H. Sutherland to J. Ede 30/4/30; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; to J. Stone 4/4/63.

⁶⁶ To J. Stone 15/3/65; to R. Hague 5/11/64.

⁶⁷ E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; to E. Hodgkin 12/11/35.

⁶⁸ E. Hodgkin, 'David Jones' typescript; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; to S. Lewis 10/72.

⁶⁹ E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; A 108, 148; to P. Tegetmeier 2/5/33.

⁷⁰ To A. Giardelli 4/9/64; Jay Bosenquet interviewed 27/6/88; M. Adams interviewed 13/6/86; N. Gray, *H. Sutherland Collection*, p. 18; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; to E. Hodgkin 14/9/38; to H. Grisewood 8/10/35; to R. Hague 27/9/63.

⁷¹ To R. Hague 4/5/74; E. Hodgkin to author 6/4/96; to J. Stone 30/3/65; to SL 13/7/72; to H. Grisewood 7/7/71.

⁷² E. Hodgkin to author 6/4/96; to H. Grisewood 7/7/71.

⁷³ To J. Stone 15/3/65; to H. Sutherland 8/12/62; to S. Honeyman 14/11/71; to T. Hyne 19/6/74; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87.

⁷⁴ To Elwyn Evans 14/11/53; to TH 23/11/73; to S. Wright 6/12/72; E. Hodgkin to author 17/9/97; to R. Hague 1/5/33.

⁷⁵ To E. Gill 2/5/32.

⁷⁶ H. Sutherland to J. Ede 1/3/26; K. Raine, *The Lands Unknown* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1975), p. 135; H. Sutherland to J. Ede 4/1/28.

⁷⁷ E. Hodgkin, 'Some Memories of David Jones,' typescript; H. Sutherland to J. Ede 3/6/32; E. Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, p. 83; Letter from H. Sutherland to Tate Gallery 1/8/n.y.; H. Sutherland to DJ 28/10/52; S and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88; Hodgkin, 'David Jones,' typescript; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87.

⁷⁸ DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; M. Grisewood interviewed 24/6/89.

⁷⁹ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

⁸⁰ To H. Grisewood 20/7/35; to P. Tegetmeier 15/8/31; to H. Sutherland 21/8/31.

⁸¹ R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77; DJ interview by P. Orr summer 1972.

⁸² To D. Cleverdon 12/7/27.

- ⁸³ In this paragraph I am indebted to Simon Brett in conversation 23/4/95.
- ⁸⁴ To P. Tegetmeier 21/4/31; DJ interviewed by P. Orr 1973; P. Hills, *David Jones*, p. 96; to P. Tegetmeier 21/4/31.
- ⁸⁵ to P. Tegetmeier 21/4/31.
- ⁸⁶ To Fr Sylvester of Prinknash Abbey 4/4/73; to A. Giardelli 4/9/64. The correspondence between ship and interior is seen by Merlin James, p. 29.
- ⁸⁷ *The Mabinogion*, tr. Guest, p. 47; J. Ede interviewed 25/6/86; H. Grisewood interviewed 23/6/86; P. Hills interviewed 11/6/91.
- ⁸⁸ To T. Stoneburner 5/8/69; DJ interviewed by P. Orr 1973; DJ. quoted by Ede, 'David Jones,' *Horizon*, 133.
- ⁸⁹ H. Grisewood ms note 26/10/83; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90, 4/10/91, 6/91, 5/10/87; Miles and Shiel, p. 158; Grisewood, *One Thing at a Time* (London: Hutchinson, 1968), p. 75.
- ⁹⁰ Harman Grisewood to Tony Stoneburner, 27 July 1968.
- ⁹¹ To H. Sutherland 18/11, 29/10/31.
- ⁹² A Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86; *Manchester Guardian* 11/2/72.
- ⁹³ To N. Binyon 16/2/32; DJ interviewed by P. Orr 1973; to the *Catholic Herald* 22/8/52; to N. Binyon Ash Wednesday/32.
- ⁹⁴ To R. Hague Holy Saturday/32; to R. Hague Holy Saturday/32; to H. Sutherland 8/4/32.
- ⁹⁵ To Arthur Pollen, 31 August-1 September 1960.
- ⁹⁶ *Ben Nicholson*, London: Tate Gallery, 1965, p. 62; Henry Moore to P. Hills 1/4/80; S and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.
- ⁹⁷ To R. Hague 27 afternoon/9/74.
- ⁹⁸ DJ to S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86; N. Gray, *Rossetti, Dante and Ourselves*. DJ marks with approval and 'very good' passages on pp. 44-5; H. Sutherland to J. Ede n.d. [1931].
- ⁹⁹ DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; Mrs de Halpert's diary 7/3/29; B. Dufort to author 30/10/94.
- ¹⁰⁰ P. Hills interviewed 27/6/86.
- ¹⁰¹ Vicky Ingrams interviewed 1/5/93; to V. Ingrams 3/5/34.
- ¹⁰² V. Ingrams to author 15/3/93; DJ to Blissett, p. 90; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89.

¹⁰³ To K Clark 20/1/44; to A. Giardelli 13/7/966; Obituary, *The Times*, 2 Feb 1950; to J. Stone 7/8/65; to *The Times* n.d. November 1951.

¹⁰⁴ To Dom Michael draft n.d.; *Letters to a Niece*, p. 19; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90; to Fr Michael Hanbury 30/3/63.

¹⁰⁵ Martin Stannard, *Evelyn Waugh the Early Years* (Norton: New York, 1986), pp. 125, 106, 425; Christopher Sykes, *Evelyn Waugh* (Boston: Little Brown, 1975), p. 107; H. Grisewood to author 16/2/90; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; V. Ingrams interviewed 1/5/93; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; Like almost all P. Pelham's letters, this one is undated.

¹⁰⁶ To T. Stoneburner 12-16/8/68; to H. Grisewood 14/2/38; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87, 16/6/89; Stanley Honeyman interviewed 9/10/87.

¹⁰⁷ Olivia Plunket Greene to DJ 13/11/41; to H. Grisewood 1/1/64.

¹⁰⁸ H. Grisewood interviewed 23/6/86.

¹⁰⁹ T. Burns interviewed 20/6/86; to J. H. Johnston. 24/8/62, 16/5/62; to H Grisewood, reference lost.

¹¹⁰ To T. Stoneburner 12-16/8/68; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90.

¹¹¹ S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86; H. Grisewood interviewed 23/6/86; to H. Sutherland 28/1/66; to WS draft frag. n.d.; to S. Lewis /10/72.

¹¹² V. Wynne-Williams 18/10/62.

¹¹³ T. Burns interviewed 14/6/88; ms draft frag. n.d. c.1972.

¹¹⁴ To R. Hague 27/9/63; to N. Binyon 9/6/32; to SL 22/7/48.

¹¹⁵ To *Tablet* 2/10/61, 1/7/66.

¹¹⁶ R. Hague to H. Grisewood 29/1/76.

¹¹⁷ To H. Grisewood 12/8/57.

¹¹⁸ DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; *E&A* 248.

¹¹⁹ J. Ede to R. de la Mare 10/11/38, 20/11/38; R. de la Mare to DJ 17/10/32.

¹²⁰ To N. Binyon 9/6/32.

¹²¹ J. Ede, 'David Jones,' 130.

¹²² J. Brett, 'Seeing and Showing,' p. 72.

49.P. Tegetmeier interviewed 3/10/87.

¹²³ H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10 87.

¹²⁴ To N. Binyon 11/7/32.

¹²⁵ Peter Foster to author, 6 May 1988.

¹²⁶ To R. Hague 1/1/73.

¹²⁷ To N. Binyon 9/6/32, 10/6/32, 18/6/32, 27/6/32, 11/7/32; to R. Hague 21/10/63.

¹²⁸ To P. Tegetmeier 2/5/33; K Raine interviewed 26/6/86; K. Raine, *The Land Unknown*, p. 132; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69.

¹²⁹ To Richard and Juliet Shirley-Smith 11/2/61; to J. Ede 15/4/43.

¹³⁰ To Miss Hirst nd; to SL 18/9/70; to P. Tegetmeier 3/10/30; to N. Binyon 11/7/32; R. Hague interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 11/6/69; B. Dufort interviewed 9/6/86; R. Hague interviewed by WB/8/77; Miriam Rothchild to author 9/8/88; M. Rothchild interviewed 15/6/89; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

¹³¹ To N. Binyon 11/7/32; to J. Ede 19/8/43; DJ to Blissett, p. 13; N. Gray, *The Paintings of David Jones*, p. 34; H. Grisewood interviewed 6/91.

¹³² Letter draft frag. n.d.; to P. Tegetmeier 9/3/30; N. Gray interviewed 17/6/88.

¹³³ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69; DJ quoted in Wald, 11.

¹³⁴ To J. Ede 27/3/43; to Julien Asquith 21/3/39; T. Choy and F de Bosset, 'Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: An Overview,' *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* 37 (1992), p. 579; to K. Raine 20/6/59.

¹³⁵ DJ to Blissett, p. 67; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; to SL 14/6/72; DJ to P. Kelly interviewed 9/6/86; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 19/6/69; Dr James Wood to the National Service 20/11/41, in which he misremembers DJ's first consultation with him as occurring in 1934; N. Gray interviewed 17/6/86; to S. Honeyman 30/5/73; to P. Tegetmeier 10/11/32; to R. Hague unposted n.d.

¹³⁶ To H. Grisewood 20/1.1972, 31/3/72; C. Burns to DJ n.d.; H. Grisewood to author 24/9/86; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/85; T. Burns interviewed 13/6/88, 14/6/89; K. Raine interviewed 6/85, 7/2/89; to J.A. 22/3/39.

¹³⁷ To H. Ede 13/8/28; to T. Burns 21/9/41, 29/1/41; E. Swan interviewed 24/6/86, remembers this from DJ's visits in the '20s and '30s to Elm Row.

¹³⁸ To C. Burns 29/5/40; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/88.

¹³⁹ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83, 16/6/89, 23/6/86; to T. Stoneburner 12-16/8/68.

Chapter 10, 1933-37

Incapacitated by depression, seldom going out, he ceased attending Mass regularly, only ‘dragging to a late Mass on some Sundays.’ In mid January he stayed in bed with flu, and Dorothea Travis visited him. To do anything was a struggle in a fog of sadness that would not lift. Long days passed with nothing accomplished. Sometimes he ‘nibbled’ at revising *In Parenthesis* (fig. 1). He read *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Bede, Gibbon, and Geoffrey of Monmouth, all as ‘a kind of dope’. Before going out to socialize, he fortified

himself with Eno's Fruit Salts, a nerve tonic advertised for those feeling ‘languid—tired—

1. David Jones, c. 1935

“blue”.’ He went to dine with the Edes and Teddy Wolf on 12 January 1933, and with the Edes and Gill two weeks later. On 26 February he went to a large Ede tea party including Ben Nicholson and Henry Moore, he and Moore staying for supper. Together they were frequent guests of Ede this year. Moore now had his studio near Elm Row. Nicholson and Hepworth and Herbert Read lived in the neighbourhood, which, because accommodations were inexpensive, was now rivalling Bloomsbury as the locus of modernist creativity in London.* Jones would come to tea and stay for supper, alone or with one or more of the tea-guests, who might include Vera Moore, Basil Gray, Prudence Pelham, Martin D’Arcy, Margaret Gardiner, John and Penelope Betjeman, Lady Glenconnor, or Rupert Shepherd. The latter was a young painter, later known for his portraits of Dylan Thomas. He remembered the tea parties: Ralph Richardson being there, ‘Arthur Whalley’s falsetto voice,’ Henry Moore, John and Margaret Wit, and Jones seeming ‘sunk much of the time into his own deep thoughts’ and seldom speaking. Jones would

* By the mid 1930s, Bernard Meninsky, Piet Mondrian, Paul Nash and Sigmund Freud and his daughter were among those living in or near Hampstead.

meet Gill for tea or a meal as often as three times a week. His friends were caring for him, but they worked for a living, and most days he was alone in his parents' house. In the spring he went to Rock to paint but could not. He had hoped for restoration in Northumberland but, he wrote to Petra, 'I feel almost exactly the same—being here has done nothing, which is depressing—I hardly know what to do about it. I'm looking forward to being back in London—but didn't want to go back as ... tired & decrepit as I came.' 'I don't feel any more well—in spite of open air & all that & no immediate pressure of anything unpleasant so it *must* be some evil in my blood I think.'¹

To cheer him up, Hague printed Part 7 of *In Parenthesis* as it existed at this time down to the sentence about the 'green-gilled corporal' (172). In January, Jones made for Ede a little book of the printed text (4 by 2 ½ inches, 23 pages), binding it in wallpaper-covered cardboard and inscribing it 'To Dear Jim, while he waits on this slow boiling concoction, much love from David,' and he adds, 'For Jim only and Helen who may look over his shoulder.' It was a token of gratitude for sympathy and kindness during his breakdown but also thanks for believing this 'concoction' worthy of general publication by Faber.

Although he had not painted for a year, he had earlier produced so many pictures that many were still in galleries and selling, providing him with income. In 1933/34 he earned £225.0.0—approximately £12,600 in today's currency. In 1934 for the first time, paintings by him were sent abroad, to the Chicago Exhibition and the Venice International Exhibition.²

On 27 December 1933 he went with Grisewood for supper to the Gourmet Restaurant and sent Hague the menu, having underlined the food each liked. Jones preferred Petit Marmite (small slices of buttered bread), *Fines Herbes* Omlettes, *Pomme purée*, Cheddar, and Celery braised. Afraid of contagion in food, he usually ordered a simple omelet and spinach *en branche*—the spinach could not be sieved, since then it might have something awful mixed into it. An egg was safe because, till the last minute, protected by its shell. Grisewood kept from him his discovery that the eggs served at the Gourmet were imported from Holland in liquid state in a barrel. Jones would also eat roast chicken, smoked salmon, plain grilled (not fried) sole, and grapefruit. He did not much like cheese, and refused puddings and sweets. He smoked while he ate, but only a few puffs per cigarette because he became lost in talking and listening—his cigarettes largely consuming themselves. He smoked Goldflakes, or, in a pinch, Players. (Before

long, he would see the change in cigarette-packaging from tins to thin cardboard as symptomatic of cultural decline.) To drink he liked tea, water, and whisky, and he preferred his whisky pale.³

This year Grisewood left the BBC Repertory Company to be a radio announcer and became ensconced in the new building in Portland Place which Jones called ‘the B.B.C. Bastille’. ‘Be careful, Harman,’ he said, ‘or you’ll be with that institution for life.’ The change ended Grisewood’s creative life, and as one whose own creativity had been curtailed, Jones sympathized. That a person should be forced by having to earn a living to give up art—in Grisewood’s case writing poetry and acting—was, Jones thought, one of life’s great calamities.⁴

With no new pictures, when asked in early February 1934, to bring works to the Leicester Gallery that might be hung in the year’s exhibition of the Seven and Five Society, he was unable to respond. No works by him were exhibited, but his name was listed in the catalogue.

He had supper on New Year’s 1934 at Tom Burns’s flat. Also present were Ede, John Betjeman, the painter Robin Ironside, Basil Gray, and his bride Nicolette, no longer Binyon. After a year studying in Rome, she was now an expert on Dark-Age Italian inscriptions. From New Years till April, Jones’s pocket diary is blank—three months of insomnia, anxiety, and black depression. In early February 1934, he received an invitation to bring works that might be hung the following month in the thirteenth exhibition of the Seven and Five Society at the Leicester Gallery. He was unable to respond. He was now receiving from the Artist’s Benevolent Fund a weekly subsidy of about twenty-five shillings.^{5*}

As he continued suffering throughout the spring of 1934, his friends decided that he would have either to enter a nursing home or go on a rest cure. Led by Tom Burns, they planned for him a trip of indeterminate length to Cairo and Jerusalem. Burns and Helen Sutherland, at Burns’s suggestion, paid his way. (Possibly also helping financially, Ede gave Jones a cheque for £17 at this time.) Burns took a holiday from work to accompany him on the way out. Paralyzed by depression, Jones had ‘no wish to go.’ He had consulted Dr. Woods in February and went again in March. Woods said he ‘*must* go,’ insisting that he ‘was not to attempt to do any work but just

* The physicians treating him for neurasthenia would sign the sick-form provided by the A.A.F.: James C Woods of 40 Harley St in February and March of 1934 (fee £6.6.0) and seven times between 20 May 1936 and 6 May 1939; E. E. Lightwood twenty-two times; Charles Burns twice; and someone whose signature is illegible three times.

absolutely rest,' and assuring him that he would 'get better in time.' Feeling 'bewildered all round' and '*frantic*,' however, Jones cancelled the trip. Then his friends insisted that the sea and the change would have 'a miraculous effect,' and he half-heartedly agreed again to go but could not make any plans. Grisewood took him to Austin Reed's to buy a shirt. From counter to counter they went trying to find one he liked, but he was unable to decide, so the frustrated clerk inveigled him into buying one that so appalled him, he put it in the dustbin immediately upon arriving home. This he later remembered as 'the awful day I bought the yellow shirt.' Difficulty deciding and difficulty refusing made shopping a dreadful experience. When Burns took him to buy a dressing gown, he tried to decide between two and, unable, bought both. From then on, Burns did his shopping for him. Jones invited Vicky Reid to Brockley for supper and to help him pack. For a gift, she brought him yet another dressing gown. He was unable to decide whether to take a large or a small trunk. She chose the large one, since he said that he intended to bring back lots of things. He put in Spengler's *Decline of the West*, the Everyman Malory (his 'constant companion,') and a bottle of Eno's Fruit Salts but could not otherwise decide what to bring. So she chose for him, packing two of the three dressing gowns, one thin for heat, the other heavy for cold. In gratitude, he gave her a painting. Early on the morning of departure, 6 April, he announced, as Burns remembered, 'I, I, I, I can't go. I can't go. You see. It will get hotter as we go towards the Mediterranean, and I haven't got a little coat.' Burns replied, 'Look, David, I promise that we'll get you a little coat before it's too hot. I've bought all your tropical clothes and we've got the tickets—you've just *got* to go.' He acquiesced. They met Petra at St Pancras and all together took a taxi to the Tilbury docks where Burns 'only just managed to get him aboard' the P.&O. ship *Malaja*. Jones later said, 'I could not have gone on the boat had not Tom gallantly taken charge—like a kind of keeper.' Petra helped see him into his second-class cabin—it was, for him, 'heavenly' having her there—and wished them *bon voyage*. Under way in the Channel, he had his first full night's sleep in nine months.⁶

It was a twelve-day voyage. Except for the captain and chief stewards, the crew were Indians wearing red sashes and fezzes, turbans, and red hats. Initially the weather was good, the sea calm. Burns went on deck or into the smoke room; Jones remained below. He was, Burns remembered, 'intrigued' with his steward, a very pious Catholic Goanese named Marquis, 'a very lovely charming soul ... interesting to talk to.' Marquis was efficient and devoted, bringing breakfast in bed, allowing Jones to sequester himself. At 7 am on 10 April, their fourth day out,

they reached the Straits of Gibraltar and put in at Tangier, in the international zone of Spanish Morocco. There Jim Ede came aboard to visit. The ship sailed on to Gibraltar, where passengers disembarked for the afternoon. By now Jones had been on deck and was greeting other passengers, but agoraphobia forbade entering a crowded lighter. When the last left and they were the only passengers still aboard ship, he told Burns, ‘Bugger me, let’s go.’ Burns hired a dinghy that came for them from shore. Together they walked round Gibraltar, where Burns bought him his ‘little coat,’ a light tweed jacket. They walked up and down High Street before returning with the others to the ship. On the 11th, heat forced Jones for the first time to open his cabin port holes. As they sailed up the east coast of Spain, he sketched the hilly red coastline in his pocket diary. Burns took a snapshot of him on deck in his ‘little coat’ posing as a world traveler—as part of the pose, he holds a cigarette in his mouth, something he never did in real life (fig. 2). The brightness of the sun and its glare off the sea made sunglasses essential, but he found them hard on the eyes. On the morning of the 12th he went to Mass on board and then to bed staying there for two days. At Marseille early on the 14th, he and Burns went ashore a second time, Jones to buy and send postcards though he could find only ‘beastly’ ones. Afterwards, they both caught ‘vile colds’ that lasted most of the rest of the voyage. On the evening of the 14th, he watched the passing coasts of Corsica and Sardinia. On the 15th, a Sunday, he went to High Mass, recorded in his diary in slang as ‘hogel extra.’ That evening he watched the pastoral green of Italy passing to port and the mountainous grey brown of Sicily to starboard, saw in the distance Mount Etna, recorded in his diary a ‘sailing barke’ and the ‘oily sea.’ The Strait of Messina was ‘good.’ Then they drew out of sight of land, into the middle of the Middle Sea. They put in at Alexandria, and he now seemed to Burns visibly better and ‘pretty fit.’ He even played deck quoits and shuffleboard. On the 17th, he sat on the bows talking with a company commander named Herd and to the ship’s captain, named Milne. At 4 am on 18 April, the ship reached Port Said at the northern end of the Suez Canal. He looked at the ‘lights’ and noticed the new ‘smell.’ As a farewell gift, he presented his steward with a religious medal. He



2. Jones in his ‘little coat’ aboard the *Malaja*, April 1934.

felt that the voyage had been good for him. At 8 am, they disembarked, Burns deeply tanned, Jones pale. They went by train to Cairo, arriving at teatime.⁷

There they stayed with Ralph and Manya Harari, old friends of George Cataui, through whom Burns had arranged their visit. A British diplomat and former colonel in the British army, Ralph was a broad-chested Egyptian Jew whose family had been prominent in Ottoman politics, his father having moved from Istanbul to Cairo to supervise Jews in Egypt. Manya was a Russian Jew, lovely, petite, raven-haired, chic, and very intelligent. She had become a Catholic two years before, and, during recent summers spent in England, occasionally attended meetings of the Chelsea group. The Hararis were gracious, kind, and wealthy.

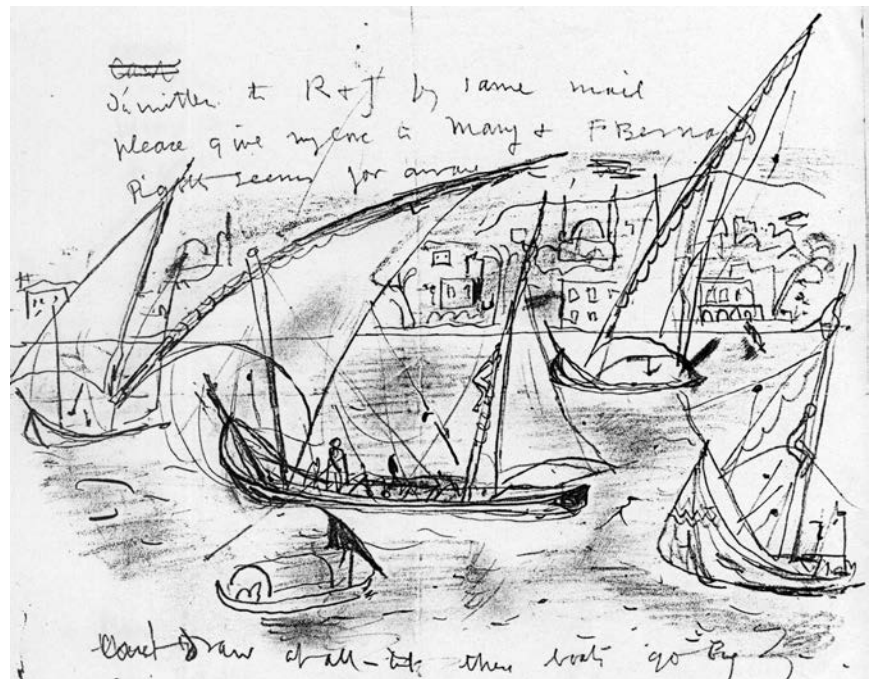
They lived in the top flat of a luxurious white house called 'Immeuble Eliaki' on the west bank of the Nile in the posh suburb of Giza opposite the city centre. The house was palatial but low-lying. Jones liked it. 'It's all so solidly built,' he wrote, 'but has a feeling of great lightness ... as though it might take flight at any moment.'⁸ The flat was modern and comfortable, with big rooms strewn with rugs and with back windows overlooked the Nile and the city. Behind the house was a large palm-treed garden running down to a gated wall on the river.

Jones found 'the sun a great weight like a powerful enemy' and the heat 'like the very hottest summer day *imaginable*', sometimes intensified by the scorching Khamseen wind. It was 'debilitating'. The evenings were cool. He felt he needed 'about 20 different thicknesses of clothes.' He suffered from mosquito- and 'fly-flea-all-bites under heaven.' He wrote to Petra, 'I can't cope', and to Vicky Reid, 'All my clothes are quite wrong of course—the two dressing gowns (they are both grand) have however been worn according to schedule,' the lighter during the day, the heavier in the evening. He slept well and late, spending the hot afternoons behind shuttered windows, draped over a big leather-sofa sipping the Harari's Napoleon Brandy or gin and soda. Friends of Manya visited repeatedly, sometimes for supper: Among them were Amy Smart and her husband and Beatrice (changed by Jones in his diary to 'Beautiful') Maadi, who 'loved' him. Another visitor was Christopher (Kit) Scaife, who taught at the university and whom he especially liked. But Jones was not much enjoying himself. In the flat, he felt isolated. The household servants and visitors spoke French, which he understood only enough to know approximately what they were talking about but not enough to join in the conversation. His stomach was 'perpetually out of order'. Morning was 'a bad time.' He wrote Petra, 'It's so

difficult not being able to cope with things & minding & getting bothered by every small thing—I wish I could write & say I was bounding with life.’⁹

After 5 pm, when the temperature dropped, he donned his dark glasses and ventured out of doors. Cairo extended for six miles along the east bank of the river from the head of the Nile Delta. Nearest the riverbank was the new city, French-designed, and consisting of shops, luxury hotels, and modern public and government buildings. He could feel the French influence. The old city was further east, along where the river had once run. Dating from the tenth century, its mostly unpaved lanes were narrow, crooked, arched-over. Since it was further away and he was on foot, it is unlikely that he saw much of the old city with its ancient souks (bazaars) and hundreds of domed mosques and minarets, except from the high Harari windows and the posh Harari automobile. What he saw of modern Cairo he thought ‘noisy & boring,’ characterized by ‘the gradual creeping in of contemporary western stuff from cinemas to golf.’ Men wore natty little western-cut jackets over their ankle-length robes. Several wore sock-suspenders ‘on their dark shapely bare calves.’ To his surprise, such western absurdities did not deprive the wearers of dignity, which they preserved by ‘the carriage of their bodies.’ He was also surprised to see men walking hand-in-hand, one carrying a spring of jasmine, but ‘without the slightest feel of effeminacy.’ He could see that there was ‘a great gulf fixed’ between people of the Harari’s class and the peasant population. Occasionally he visited a nearby public garden to sit in the shade where, he wrote Vicky Reid, ‘some ass has made a clipped shrub shelter shaped like a pyramid—its the one shape they wallow in ... & sham sphinxi—of course the trams, skysigns, general mechanized contraptions are in places like the Elephant & Castle under a brazen sky—bad.’¹⁰ As a city, he ‘loathed’ Cairo.

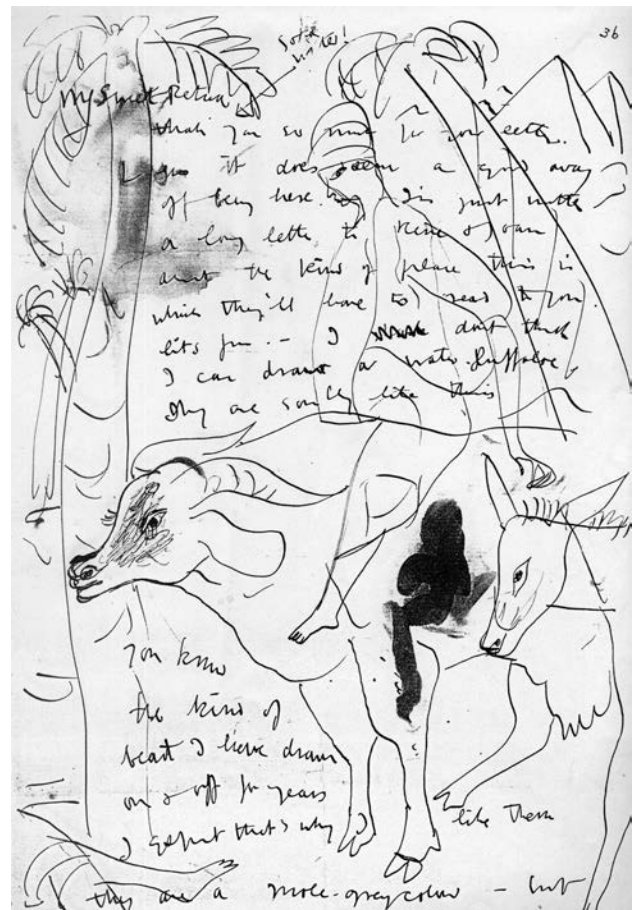
With the hot blowing dust and late summer flowers, he had difficulty believing it was May and longed for



3. David Jones, Dhows, 26 April 1934

English springtime. The flowers here were recent imports and had ‘no rightness of place,’ he wrote, ‘nor any of that intimacy as in England—they are all alien ... never look quite at home—yet some damned Frenchy said to me—“You have no flowers like this in England no.” I thought of the small gardens to the cottages anywhere—Sussex—Birmingham—even Brockley & could have kicked her arse—but there is a native dried sandy barren beauty & a beauty of lush green the Nile brings that is O.K in its own way.’ What he most liked to do, in the morning when it was not yet too hot, was go the bottom of the Harari garden, open the gates there, and watch dhows with their huge sails slowly passing ‘in positive fleets.’ He made several fountain-pen sketches of them, one in a letter to Petra (fig. 3). He also loved seeing animals on the roads with small children running beside them: camels, herds of dark glossy, long-haired goats ‘and their scuttling-by drovers’, ‘white Fra-Angelico asses’ reminding him of Palm Sunday, and especially the mole-grey water buffaloes—these he thought ‘grand’, ‘the star turn’.¹¹ He drew an ass and a buffalo in a letter to Petra (fig. 4).

Nearly every day, the Hararis took him and Burns for a drive, an event for which he prepared himself by taking Eno’s Fruit Salts—Amy Smart related how, before a drive, he swallowed a whole bottle of Eno’s. The first excursion, on 19 April was five miles south-west to the Pyramids at Giza in the early afternoon, when the sun and heat made him too ill to see them, though he recorded in his pocket diary his astonishment at how hot some stone steps were and that he noticed a film crew on the site. After this failed attempt to interest him, the Harari’s postponed excursions till early evening when it was cooler. On 21 April, a Saturday, at 4:30, they drove him and Burns to the Tulun Mosque, which seemed deserted. Later, this mosque, with its ‘heavenly’ ninth century twisting brick piers, would be what he most remembered about Cairo. They then drove to see other mosques, and he was reminded of *Arabian Nights*. The next evening they drove out for



4 David Jones, Buffalo and ass, 26 April 1934

tea in the desert. On the 23rd they visited the zoo and afterwards the Arab Museum. On the 25th they visited the nearby National Museum, which housed the Tutankhamen treasure, which he found ‘meretricious & boring’. On the evening of the 29th after Burns had left to return to England, the Hararis drove Jones to see the Citadel, which looms over the city in the south east. It consists of an ancient palace and five mosques high on a spur of the Mokattam Hills beyond the old city wall. From its ramparts, the city with its gilt-work minarets is a remarkable sight, and visible westward over the Nile are the massive Giza pyramids. On the 30th they returned to these pyramids but a dust storm made them impossible to see. He disliked the El Ahram Road to the pyramids. It was crowded with trams and speeding cars, and lined with pyramid-shaped shrubs, concrete water towers, night-clubs, restaurants, and French hotels. It was, he thought, like roads ‘west from Ealing or Hammersmith’ with ‘Picadillied’ cafes. On their return they drove around and through the old town, which imaginatively transported him, as he notes in his diary, to ‘old time Arabian Night.’ During a May Day excursion, he was struck by the incongruous ‘super-August-sun & cloud of dust about a line of proud camel-necks.’ On 2 May the temperature dropped, and he went to the zoo in the afternoon. That evening he wrote Petra, ‘The lion & leopards & what not look more at home than in London—but alas! for the polar bear he likes it, I suppose, as much as I do!!’ The next day, after he rose late, Manya informed him that it was the feast of the Ascension and involved him in a ‘violent rush’ to catch the last Mass. On 4 May they drove a third time to the pyramids, and this time he could see them. He was greatly impressed, thought them ‘utterly superb’ and ‘pretty astonishing.’ Guarding their eastern approach and facing out over the Nile valley is the Sphinx, which he found ‘absolutely grand’ and ‘a 1st class artwork—its proportions are so interesting’—and the dressed stone recently excavated on its lower parts was ‘heavenly’.¹²

Sitting near the Pyramids, he was ‘astounded’ by a cavalcade of horses in harness suddenly appearing, led by one or two grooms. The riderless horses had ‘high coloured saddles and bright trappings that gave them a medieval appearance.’ As they charged into view, he thought, ‘I must be dreaming.’ They looked ‘like those fiery, beautifully curved-necked Arab steeds’ in paintings by ‘Delacroix and Géricault.’ He then thought there was ‘just *something* about them’—their movement, the arch of the neck—‘that recalls the little black long-mained’

ponies on Welsh hills.* His reverie then turned to Roman cavalry, the mounted Roman British, and the post-Roman Britons of *The Gododdin*. He asked if a movie was being filmed on location, and was told no, that grooms were merely exercising the horses from some local rich man's stud farm.¹³

Encouraged by the success of the pyramids, a few days later the Hararis took on him fifteen miles south on the Saqqara Road to the necropolis of ancient site of Memphis, where he saw the step-pyramid of Zozer, sixty-meters high, the earliest stone structure in Egypt, the rough prototype of the later, smooth-sided pyramids. He sketched it in blue ink with a fountain pen and entitled 'Sakkara' (fig. 5).



5. David Jones, Sakkara Pyramid, 4 May 1934

The voyage and the change had done him good, as his pen-and-ink sketches attest, but the improvement was not what he had hoped for. 'If only one were *alive*,' he wrote to Vicky Reid, 'one could paint a bit here I think—but alas I'm not up to that,' and he added, 'I'm not on top of things enough to get anything out of the debased, fantastique fusing of occident & orient & the inimitable racket of the streets ... The worst of it is—it's like seeing *everything* like fish in a aquarium—you look on through a plate-glass of inhibitions—and actually through the plate glass of a motor-car.' There was, he writes Ede, 'No possibility of work—even if I were well I should take ages to digest what is presented to the eye—its easy to see how chaps do such awful pictures in "foreign parts".'¹⁴

But he loved his hosts, especially energetic, extroverted 'Momma Harari,' as he called her. She had been born in Russia in 1906 to a wealthy banker named Bennenson. During the war, her family had lived in Germany and afterwards emigrated to England, where she studied history at the University of London. She had worked in a kibbutz and in 1925 had been present with her

* He found his perception confirmed shortly after returning to England when he discovered that Robert de Beleme, whose father had fought at Hastings, had brought Arab horses from Spain into the middle part of the Welsh Marches.

husband at the opening of Hebrew University, when Balfour reiterated British policy favouring the establishment in Palestine of ‘a national home for the Jewish people.’ Drawn to Christianity since childhood, she had been received into the Catholic Church by Martin D’Arcy. Highly intelligent, multi-lingual, well-read, she shared the ideal of an intellectual-religious synthesis that characterized the Chelsea group. She was entirely at home in discussion of literature and ideas and was a gifted amateur painter. She allowed Jones to interest her in Malory, and he lent her his rebound two-volume copy to read. With Burns gone and her husband at work during the day, she was his principal companion. When they were not discussing art or ideas, she told him interesting stories—about the Orthodox priests of her childhood who were—despite being lazy and drunken, full of joy; about her childhood governess, a Swedish Finn, who used to wade up to her neck in a lake on their summer estate at midnight, convinced that the life of the Tsar depended upon it; and about discovering in the fifth form that she (Manya) could hypnotize any of her classmates merely by glaring. Initially she wanted to become a Christian to believe in angels, but her father told her she was free to do that as a Jew. And her mother, a witness to the great Kishenev pogrom, told her that if she became a Christian she would have to hate Jews. Manya now regarded herself as no less Jewish for being Christian and, in Cairo, devoted herself to the poor of the Jewish community at a home for Jewish orphans, at a hostel for discharged prisoners, and at the Goutte de Lait Charity. Though he loved them, Jones thought she and her husband had eyes that, while looking ‘centuries old,’ had the vulgarity of ‘many Rose Bowls.’¹⁵

He several times intended to leave for Jerusalem, and telegraphed Gill, who was completing decorative panels for the new Rockefeller Archaeology Museum, to say he would arrive in mid-May, but it was later, after six weeks with the Hararis, on 28 May, that he departed. At 8:40 am, he boarded a plane for Lydda—his huge trunk causing difficulties, as it would continue to do. Once airborne, he felt slightly disappointed with ‘the almost tram-car even & steady uneventfulness’ of flying. It felt ‘so absurdly safe.’ During the three-hour flight, he was reading his *Everyman Malory* when the passenger beside him urged him to look out the window. They were just over the Bitter Lakes, in which he noticed ‘a dead straight dark line ... as though drawn by a ruler’ that he took for a bridge although far too long. He asked a crewmember what it was, and, laughing, the man said, ‘Why, the Suez Canal of course, what else could it be?’ It looked ‘about as wide as a railway line.’ Jones was astonished at its visibility beneath the lake-surface. As the plane came over Palestine nearing Lydda, he was surprised to see the familiar

crenellated lines of entrenchment with fire-bays ‘so defined that one thought one would see troops moving about in them.’ He asked the crewman about them and he said they were General Allenby’s entrenchments from the 1914-18 War and that on the ground you can see nothing but a field of crops. They landed at Lydda and from the bus to Jerusalem he saw again ‘the field of tall grain & ... no indication whatever of the land ever having been dug-up.’ He was reminded of archaeological air photography which showed any disturbance in the earth ‘even if made centuries & millennia ago.’¹⁶

In Jerusalem, he stayed at the Austrian Hospice in the north-central area of the old walled city. Thomas Hodgkin had gone to live there and recommended it to Gill, who had booked rooms



6. Austrian Hospice, DJ’s window 5th from top right

for Jones and himself. Built in 1863—Edward Lear saw it under construction—at the first turn of the Via Dolorosa, the large white fortress-like building was an oasis of cleanliness with a limestone terrace above street-level and a garden of rosemary for fragrance and firs for shade. With five-foot thick limestone walls, it was cool, even on the top floor where Jones’s room was. In fact,

he found it uncomfortably cold at night. The interior was cavernous, with high Romanesque arched ceilings and thick rectangular pillars. The staff consisted of German-speaking Czech nuns. ‘They were jolly kind & efficient,’ he thought, ‘gentle, humble and beautiful’ and, ‘as is so often the case with nuns, ... very cheerful & happy-looking & laughed a good bit.’¹⁷



7. View from Jones’s room at the Austrian Hospice, 1996

His room was on the third story but further above ground-level than that suggests, to the right and across the hall from the stairway. It was spacious and bright, with two windows and a central door opening onto a balcony facing south through two Romanesque arches. The view was a remarkable panorama (fig. 6). In the immediate foreground was ‘a magnificent medley of domes & bumpy roofs & tiny climbing streets—grey-pink-white-yellow & dusty cypress trees here & there.’ To his right, the large dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulture, two hundred yards away. In the centre of his view, the tower of the Dormitian Abbey outside the walls. On his left, the dome of the neighbouring Armenian church and, behind it, in the middle distance, the Dome of the Rock. On his extreme left, across the Kedron Valley, was the Mount of Olives.¹⁸

It was a city of sounds rising even to his high room. ‘There is a tiny Arabic cafe under my window,’ he writes, ‘where they play an antiquated gramophone with Arabic music all day & night—and sometimes Mozart to one’s astonishment.’¹⁹ He did not mind the Arabic music or even its playing till midnight but was irritated by its beginning at 4:30 a.m. During the day, most frequently on Fridays, Christian pilgrims stopped just below and to the left, at the third station of the cross (‘Jesus Falls the First Time’), Spanish pilgrims singing to guitars. Across the street was a minaret, its high pinnacle level with his room, from which a mullah sang out the haunting, melancholy plainchant of Islam, which especially resembled the Exultet sung at Easter. In the relative quiet of morning and evening, echoing chant from distant minarets sounded in numinous counterpoint.

Two short flights of stairs took him to the roof, from which he could view in all directions the historic part of the city. The hospice was at the centre of the Moslem Quarter, the highest building on the north slope of the geomorphic bowl that holds the old city. To the west is the Christian Quarter, south of that the Jewish Quarter. The most distant point in the old city is the Armenian Quarter, 700 yards south. The views from the roof and his window were nearly the same as that from the top of the Fortress Antonia, which had stood two millennia earlier a hundred yards to the east. Later, in his poetry, he would place Roman soldiers on the walls of that fortress, and what they see, inside and outside the walls in the first century AD, is largely what he saw now, from atop the hospice. But in the hot sun, he did most of his viewing from his room.

He, Gill, and Thomas Hodgkin ate supper together in the refectory, where conversation was conducted in English. Four others also regularly ate there: Laurie Cribb, who was assisting

Gill; the vice-rector, an Austrian priest with an unsuccessful beard; the rector, a shy Austrian bishop; and an Italian painter, whom Jones found amusing except for his disconcerting habit of starting most sentences with the words 'For me'. A beautiful, kind old Tyrolese woman waited on them. Another bishop was in residence, whom Jones supposed to be the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. He sometimes appeared at meals, was very distinguished, and, because of his turned-up moustaches and beard, bore some resemblance to the pre-war Austrian emperor. Jones found him 'courteous & kind to speak with.'²⁰

Because of a stomachache unrelieved since Cairo, Jones ate little, and what he ate he thought 'beastly' 'because everything appeared to be smothered by some sweet concoction'. Before long, he discovered that he had lost fourteen pounds, which worried him. Hodgkin wrote, 'He does look ill, but then he always did, and he talks as much and as gaily as he ever did.'²¹

The heat was dryer than in Cairo but still oppressive, and the sun nearly blinding, reflected off the pale limestone (called Jerusalem stone) of which all the streets and buildings were made. He especially disliked there being '*nothing in the sky* but a beastly, restless, brazen sun.' He preferred 'clouds in the sky' which otherwise seemed 'such a waste of space!' He also preferred a gradual twilight, 'not this quite sudden sinking of the sun.'²²

After spending the hot daytime of 29 May indoors, he went for a walk with Gill, who wore Arab dress here. They walked up the Via Dolorosa to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which houses the sites of Jesus's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. Inside, it was crowded and thickly over-ornamented with marble, silver lamps, candles, icons, and mosaics. Calvary was now a raised terrace with a silver-ornamented hole marking the spot where the cross once stood. If Jones entered the tomb, he left no record of it. Whether or not the experience of the place was moving or off-putting, one visit was enough. Later, when Tommy Hodgkin tried to take him there again, he said, 'No, I think I'll stay right here and have a double scotch.'²³

On a more extensive walking tour of the old city with Hodgkin, he was silently uncomplaining but 'obviously hating it, so that one felt,' Hodgkin wrote, 'that Jerusalem was all dust in your eyes and stones that you trip over.' Intensely enthusiastic about the old city, Gill agreed that Jones had 'that effect on the place.' Jones did not dislike it, however; he disliked moving about in it. He preferred looking at it from his high window and spent much of every day doing that. He wrote to Vicky Reid, 'I just lounge about in the hospice, read, sleep, and look out of the window.'²⁴

He did, however, ‘creep out occasionally’ for cigarettes and sometimes would ‘meander about in the densely crowded & incredibly noisy streets and the Sug—chaps on donkeys & mules—Palestinian Arabs in ... argument over the price of *anything & everything* from a melon to a tin kettle (the colour of brass but seemingly & most skillfully contrived out of discarded petrol-tins).’ He liked the ‘nice pet sheep with blue-bead collars.’ The streets sometimes led through arched darkness under ancient buildings. All but a few were too narrow for wheeled traffic, so that the noise was human and there was lots of it: talking, shouting, and music on gramophones and radios. The city was almost completely Arabic and, he thought, too noisy. It was a city, too, of smells—of coffee, tamarind, and baked desserts in large round pans. He passed aggressive vendors in shop doorways and women squatting on curbs selling produce. Arabs in robes and kaffirs strolled, some arm in arm. Women from Bethlehem wore a blue embroidered dress and the tall coif that originated at the time of the crusades. Occasionally he saw eastern priests, western friars, rarely a Hassidic Jew. Turning right (west) at the hospice door, he walked to the Damascus Gate. Donkeys jolted by, carrying carcasses of sheep. Boys generated perpetual conflict of teasing, physical assault, and tears. At the gate, men unloading camels ordered everyone else out of the way. It was all redolent of the city at the time of Jesus. An infantry battalion was stationed in Jerusalem, and occasionally he would see a British soldier—a sight that recalled his years of service: ‘the very familiar stance of the figure, the bored, indifferent glance toward a closely grouped fiercely gesticulating, half dozen Palestinians. Or maybe one chanced to come close upon a couple off duty: “Gotta gasper mate?”’—and after Jones gave him a cigarette—““Thanks, what a sod of a place.” It might have been a rain-soaked Givenchy duck-board track-way’.²⁵

He greatly preferred all this to the new city to the south and west, dusty and full of motorized traffic. It was ‘a new town of horrible buildings, the whole place like a construction yard,’ a place hellish to him. He especially hated the ‘awful’ Cook’s Travel Office, which actually ‘frightened’ him. So he kept to the old city, where he preferred walking in the cool, less crowded evening. Then the Arab men relaxed after work on chairs in front of houses, being shaved or ordering coffee and hubble bubble.²⁶ There were several places where he could walk along the millenium-old walls, though he left no record of doing so.

One day Gill took him and Laurie Cribb to visit his favourite place in the city, the Temple Mount, the forty-acre limestone plaza covering the summit of the biblical Mount Moriah. After

visiting the cavernous, black-domed El-Aqsa Mosque, they walked to the southern end of the plaza and visited the Dome of the Rock. Jones liked the white, slightly undulating stone that forms its base. Within the octagonal shrine, beneath its famous dome, granite columns support arches bearing green and gold mosaics of plant-like arabesques. During the crusades, he knew, the eighth century shrine had been headquarters of the Templars, the military-bureaucratic monastic order that took its name from this place. At the centre of the building was a large black out-cropping of rock, traditionally regarded as the omphalos of the world (see *A* 58). Here Abraham came to sacrifice his son Isaac, a story that might have had special meaning for Jones, with his memory of being nearly decapitated, as he then thought, during the religious service presided over by his father.* The rock had been the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite where King David offered sacrifice, and the place where Mohammed ascended into heaven. Jones disliked the fence round it, which reminded him of the fence at the alligator pool in the London zoo.²⁷ Leaving the shrine and the vast enclosure, he and his friends adjourned to an Arab cafe.

On one occasion he arranged to meet Gill near St. Stephen's Gate. As he walked towards the place, he saw, at the turn of a street, Gill giving alms to a beggar woman who had either no hand or a growth of some sort on her wrist, a repulsive sight, but Gill leaned over her and, believing himself unobserved, kissed the spot. This act of compassion deeply impressed Jones, who thought it something that might have been done in the early middle ages or by Charles II of England.²⁸

Most evenings, he went out the hospice door, turned left, and walked along the Al Mujahideen Road past the site of the Fortress Antonia, past the north entrance to the Temple Mount, past the monastery that fronts the pool of Bethesda, and out through St Stephen's Gate where he would stand 'among the graves of the Moslem Cemetery & look towards the Mount of Olives which has two appalling churches in the middle of it—but on the whole a lovely scene.'²⁹ The cemetery ran beneath the city wall above the Kedron Valley. Long palm branches lay atop graves or stood upright by them, Arab children playing there, grazing goat herds and donkeys. He may have thought of Jesus's entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday through the Golden Gate, two-hundred yards south, now sealed up. Standing in the cemetery, he gazed at the Mount,

* He recalls the story of Abraham and Isaac and this site in *A* 232-33.

illuminated by the sun setting behind him over the city. He looked at Gethsemane, the olive garden of Jesus's agony and betrayal, a green spot three-hundred yards south east, near the foot of the Mount. Whenever leaving or returning to the hospice, he walked the Via Dolorosa and sometimes thought of Jesus carrying his cross through the labyrinthine streets.

He wanted to go to Mass on the feast of Corpus Christi, 31 May, but Mass at the Austrian Hospice was at 6 am. So, during supper the evening before, he asked the vice-rector to move the time an hour later. When this was readily agreed to, he 'cursed himself for not having asked for 8.' To rise early enough, he went to bed at eleven.³⁰ The next morning in the first-floor chapel, he attended his first Mass in Jerusalem, in the high bright Romanesque cavern-like chapel with richly coloured mosaics and impressive acoustics. For someone who believed in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, this was an extraordinary experience, 700 yards from where Jesus is said to have celebrated the first Mass at the Last Supper. In the here and now, close to where the words of consecration were originally spoken, he experiences not the past entering the present but imaginatively entered the past, attending the Last Supper. Such inversion of eucharistic experience was probably inevitable owing to his faith, his being at Mass, and the imaginative power of Jerusalem. This experience now and during the following weeks may help account for the movement at the start of *The Anathemata* from observing the consecration at Mass to being present at the Last Supper, a movement that also characterizes 'The Kensington Mass,' and other Mass-poems in his posthumously published *Roman Quarry*.

Jones wanted to go to Mass in the Armenian church beside the hospice so he ducked in on Saturday, 9 June, to ascertain the time of Sunday Mass and found himself attending a christening

which was exciting—they unrolled the many clothes from the scowling child & immersed him chanting their prehistoric modes, & the church itself & all their vestments have a curious half-Saracenic half Xtian feeling & the place of baptism like a green-room a medley of chaps taking off & putting on strips of dusty coloured silks & apparently thinking it all huge fun, especially the giggling godfathers in cheap European suits—the officiating priest in a vast crown ... taking no notice but yelling out his admirable incantations—I asked a little dark priest when Mass would be sung next day. He answered in perfect English. 'We start our service at 4 am & end at 10.30. Our service differs a little from the Latin rite.'

Jones appreciated the understatement. In Cairo he had attended a Coptic Mass and at least the latter part of an Armenian Mass. In both, he thought, the unchanging character of the continuous chant obscured the shape of the liturgy. He thought it appropriate to announce that Christ is risen

three times or nine or even more but ‘to do it a hundred made it monotonous.’ In the Armenian church he saw a ‘hanging pyx made of crystal’ which made him think of the *ampulla pendere* in which the Sibyl is imprisoned in the epigraph of Eliot’s *The Waste Land*.³¹ The next day he took Hodgkin to visit the church to see the mosaics and primitive Giotto-like paintings all the way up the walls.

One afternoon he did something extraordinary. Despite the heat, he walked out St Stephen’s Gate and over the Mount of Olives to Bethany.³² The two-mile trek up and over the steep hill and beyond (and two miles back again) was something of a pilgrimage. Bethany is the biblical village where Jesus obtained the ass he rode on Palm Sunday. It is the village of Martha and Mary, where Jesus raised their brother Lazarus from the dead. Most important for Jones, it is where Mary, either the sister or Magdalene, poured ‘costly ointment’ from an alabaster jar over Jesus’s head—for Jones, an archetypal act defining the significance of gratuitousness. The pragmatic disciples objected to the extravagance, but Jesus spoke up for gratuity and sign, saying ‘what she has done will be told in remembrance of her’ (Matthew 26:6-13). Jones refers repeatedly to the story in his writing (see *DG* 183, *WP* 36). He bought a postcard of Bethany, and another of Jerusalem taken from high on the flank of the Mount of Olives. Going out and coming back, he crossed the Kedron, a ‘squalid ditch like a fosse’ (*A* 228).

One day he was taken to a Franciscan monastery ‘not far from Jerusalem’ on an important site in Trajan’s Jewish war. There one of the friars showed him an inscribed stone still in place marking the cookhouse of a section of the legion whose members had been the first ashore in Britain in 55 BC. That moved him, at the time, more than anything else he had seen in Palestine.³³

In his depressed condition, he was not getting on well with Gill, who regarded depression as a moral failure. Tommy Hodgkin did not take this attitude and was therefore a more sympathetic companion. Jones saw a lot of him now, and they became good friends. After receiving a first at Oxford in 1932, while working for two years on an archaeological dig, Hodgkin had fallen in love with Palestine. In the spring of 1934 he had started work as a cadet in the Palestine Government civil service and for a few months had acted as private secretary to the fourth high commissioner of the British mandate. A young man of remarkable intelligence and generosity, Hodgkin was known among the typists in the government office at Haifa as ‘Sweetness’. Most evenings he and Jones talked, usually in Jones’s high room. On 17 June,

Hodgkin wrote to his mother, 'Though he hates the idea of any kind of activity he is magnificent company and not neurasthenic in that kind of way. Talking seems to be about the only thing that he enjoys doing, and he is so learned and witty that I always enjoy these conversations that go on intermittently from six till eleven at night. It's been a very good opportunity for getting to know him which I'm thankful for.' One reason the conversations were so long is that, like Jones, Hodgkin spoke slowly. With pauses. They got on very well, both essentially romantic in feeling, lovers of poetry, especially Shakespeare, the Metaphysicals, Hopkins, and T.S. Eliot.³⁴

Jones told him, 'I came to Jerusalem against my will under the pressure of friends who thought that they knew what was good for me and am wretched and grow wretcheder as the heat grows intense.' If the heat, in the evening at least, did not diminish him as a talker, it did Hodgkin, who writes that, from seven on, 'the interestingness of his conversation' and 'the overpoweringness of the heat' 'contest for my soul'. Jones did most of the talking for three hours, till the heat let up at about ten, when Hodgkin perked up and their exchange became more even. They had common interests, 'Jews and Crusades and the British empire.' He made, Hodgkin thought, 'admirable judgements about all of them, having Catholic wisdom without those particular Catholic prejudices that one doesn't like.' Jones expressed particular fascination with the battle of Hattin, where Saladin finally defeated the crusaders, a battlefield he later regretted not visiting while staying in Palestine.³⁵

A person of exceptional moral and political integrity, Hodgkin was well on his way to becoming a Communist. He felt acute moral discomfort working for an unpopular government, which was clearly failing in part of its mandate, forcing the Arabs to accept massive Jewish immigration while not developing self-government and security for native Palestinians. He was pro-Arab, as Gill was when joining in their discussions.³⁶ Hodgkin was not anti-Semitic—Arabs being, of course, Semites—nor did he feel antipathy to Jews as a group; the issue for him was injustice.

The afternoon was Jones's worst time of day. Then he was not talkative. Hodgkin spent one Saturday afternoon with him during which 'he was too wretched to talk.' 'On the other hand,' Hodgkin writes, 'he doesn't like it if you take half-an-hour's silence between you as a reason for going away.' He spoke freely about his emotional distress, Hodgkin wrote, 'and likes to show how miserable he is.'³⁷ Hodgkin lent him his copy of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, which Jones read in a vain attempt to understand his condition.

Mary and Joan Gill arrived from England on 8 June. On the 11th, Jones took them to the Archaeology Museum north-east of the city to see the work Gill had been doing. It was taking longer than anticipated, and Gill was prolonging his stay. Jones wanted to go home but not alone, so, reluctantly, he agreed to stay a month longer. He took the Gills and Joan to see the Armenian church. Afterwards, they wandered through the town, stopping to buy nuts and beer. There was much stopping, for Mary to examine merchandise and for Gill to give nuts to small boys, some of whom he knew. On Sunday 17 June, Hodgkin accompanied Jones and the Gills to a high Mass celebrated by German Benedictines. Jones gave him a running commentary and was, Hodgkin though, very relaxed, at home, and 'bold'. When they sang the *Te Deum* at the end, Jones said, 'It's probably because the Germans have taken Paris.'³⁸

On 23 June Hodgkin arranged a northern tour for Jones and the Gills to see Nablus, the Sea of Galilee, the Mount of the Beatitudes, Nazareth, and Mount Tabor. Jones declined to go, partly to avoid the heat and partly to avoid Gill. He was now sure he was getting on Gill's nerves. So Hodgkin went off with the Gills, and Jones stayed in his room. There he gazed, as usual, at 'the great & little vaulted domes of the city between two lines of insulated wire' and meditated on

The sharp contrast of the old world of herds & olives & immemorial ways of life immeasurably slow, dusty, full of pain, disease, & full of grace, dung coated & decayed, ramshackle, the end of a thing & this other way of *our* world—wired, lit, pipe-lined, hideous as yet & ramshackle too—it makes a horrible combination or cleavage—it seems to only arrive at anything like unity & a feeling of rightness in the air or on the sea. I mean if you see an electric light wired to a venerable fig-tree in the Valley of Hinnon your misery is complete & the soil, the fall of the land, the whole issue seems degraded & insulted—yet an air-plane seems to not at all insult the sky by its mass-produced contraptions. Neither, I think, does a mechanized ship seem incongruous on the sea even though a ship of sail seems a million times more lovely—perhaps the complete mechanized state will find its proper home in air & water—it certainly seems not friendly to the warm-worn-shaggy, affectionate-furry-soft-hard-flowered, moulded-by-hand earth.

'My mind runs that way,' he writes to Vicky Reid, 'as I look out of my window.'

Out the window he sometimes saw helmeted British soldiers. When marching in squad, they reminded him 'of the Roman auxiliaries in that same city in the 1st Cent AD.' This also occurred when he was down in the city 'mouching around':

a squad of these figures ... in this full parade rig—the light khaki drill shorts the bronzed arms bare from above the elbow to the wrist & pale khaki shorts—leaving the equally bronzed legs bare from above the knee to the brief ankle socks the feet in heavy field-service hob-nailed boots but above all the riot-shields aligned to cover

the left-side and in each right fist the haft-grip of a stout baton evoked not the familiar things of less than two decades back, but rather of two millennia close on, and the ring of the hob-nailed service-boots on the stone sets and the sharp commands—so they were a section from the Antonia up from Caesarea for duties in Hierosolyma after all.

‘As the days & weeks passed this analogy ... became established’: the present British Mandate was a lens through which he saw the ancient Roman occupation here and, beyond that, the essential character of empire. About this, he ‘used to muse ... a great deal’ as he gazed from his window or walked ‘in its meander of streets & alley-ways.’³⁹ As his stay lengthened, his impression of the presence of the past deepened.

There were contributing factors. He was now, in his room in the hospice, rereading *The Decline of the West*, in which Spengler writes about the parallel between ancient and modern imperialisms. The analogy also involved memory of his service in Ireland, where he had been part of an occupying force. Essentially, he had been in Ireland what a Roman legionary had been here. The unchanging nonchalant Cockney-speaking British infantryman validated his conviction that being a soldier is always fundamentally the same. Nothing essential had changed since his time in the trenches. Nothing essential had changed since the first century AD. It was the one thing about Jerusalem that made him happy. This awareness would influence the final redrafting of *In Parenthesis* and strongly influence his later poetry. Directly or indirectly, as he later said, ‘everything’ he wrote after 1934 ‘has arisen’ out of his experience of Jerusalem.⁴⁰

As his time here drew to a close, he wanted to see Bethlehem. Hodgkin took him on Saturday 30 June, a twenty-five-minute drive through the chalky-blond desert hills of Hebron. High on a Judean hill, Bethlehem afforded a spectacular falling-away view of the naked hills to the north. To Jones it was ‘a lovely country of hills—like a hot & barer & pinker Wales [with] olives & white ridged hills.’ From the square they walked to the Church of the Nativity and stooped through the small door in the larger closed door of the large basilica. It was bare with pale walls and high naked roof timbers. Lining the nave were double rows of dark reddish-blond marble pillars on which ancient large painted icons were darkly visible. Between the pillars and down the centre of the nave hung brass lamps just above head level. Otherwise it was an empty space from door to chancel, where elaborate brass chandeliers hang before a gilded Greek Orthodox icon-screen. Here the crusader kings had been crowned. It was a sixth century crusader church, the oldest surviving church in Palestine, spared by the Persians because its mosaics depict the magi as Persian. Jones thought it ‘lovely.’ He was excited to see Constantinian floor-

mosaics being uncovered. The first church on the site was built at the wish of Helena, mother of Constantine and widow of Constantius Chlorus (see *IP* 80-1, *A* 134). Behind the chancel and altar, they descended into the cavern of the Nativity, which was hung with lamps and cloths, with the place of the manger slightly lower, encased entirely in marble. Outside on the north side of the church was a cloister, the site of the cave of St Jerome. Jones thought of him there in the fourth century, translating the Greek and Hebrew scriptures into Latin. Bethlehem was, he thought, ‘convincing’ and ‘very beautiful.’⁴¹

Jones had been in Jerusalem five weeks and three days when, together with the Gills and Cribb, he boarded a train leaving the city on the morning of 7 July. Twenty minutes out, they passed Battir station, the site where his biblical namesake killed Goliath—‘it really is,’ exclaimed Gill. Jones saw a good deal from the train and wrote to Petra, ‘Palestine is an astounding country & very like Wales in some ways—we were at a place called Ortas where Soloman is suppose to have written the Song of Songs & it was very very like a hot & dry Capel-y-ffin—this is not a fad of mine—we all thought so.’⁴² At Capel, Petra had worn his engagement ring, inscribed with words from the Song of Songs.

At seven in the evening, they arrived at Port Said to discover that their ship was delayed. They booked into Bodell’s Hotel on the Rue Kitchener facing the sea and spent the next four days in this palm-treed port-town, which Jones thought attractive but too hot and dusty, ‘a sweaty place.’ They went to Mass at the Franciscan church beside the Customs House. Otherwise, he spent most of the time in the ‘nice cosy quiet little bar’ of the Hotel, alone or with Joan, partly as refuge from the swarms of beautiful but relentless boys pestering him to buy shoelaces or to let them shine his shoes. As he drank his brandy-and-sodas, his hair hung ‘in lank wet layers’ over his forehead. ‘We lie & sweat,’ he wrote, though cooling breezes sometimes blew from the sea.⁴³

As a cure, the visit to the Middle East was ‘bitterly disappointing’ to him. ‘I have seemed to be making some improvement every now & again,’ he wrote Petra, ‘but seem mostly to get wretched again so easily.’ While he had ‘loathed Cairo,’ he had found Palestine ‘lovely & exciting’ but felt too exhausted and ill to enjoy it. He thought Jerusalem had been a mistake, a bad place for him in his condition. He attempted a few drawings there but none ‘came off.’ He wrote, ‘all this near Eastern business is fatiguing in the extreme—not my cup of tea.’ Drinking brandy and soda in the ‘admirable little bar,’ he wrote Grisewood for the first time since leaving

England, 'I've thought of you everyday & more than that,' and adds, 'I've done no work of any kind & don't know if I've learned any more about 'the disease' except that it is even more tough & elusive to combat or relieve or cure.' He was counting on the homeward voyage to be more curative.⁴⁴

On 11 July the SS Dornala arrived, a small, 8,000 ton British India liner. They sailed at five the next morning. Jones and Gill shared a cabin with a Dutch priest, who smoked foul cheroots. Jones opened the porthole; the priest closed it. This happened even after Jones was sure he was asleep. The inconsiderate priest had the temerity to ask him to serve his morning Masses. Jones wanted to refuse but didn't. On the morning of the 18th they reached Marseille. Jones, Joan, and the Gills took a tram from the dock into the centre of town and walked along the Old Port, full of small trading ships, yachts, barges, and small boats. They ascended the hill to see the impressive view from the church of Notre Dame de la Garde, then visited the beautiful ninth century cathedral, which incorporated walls and pillars of a Roman Temple of Diana that originally occupied the spot. Gill insisted on being a tourist, though now in agony. He had gone to a native dentist in Jerusalem (against Jones's advice) and a tooth had abscessed. A western doctor had advised him to stay for treatment, but Gill wanted to sail on schedule. His face was now puffed with infection. The ship's doctor administered morphine and told Jones that he lacked any other medicine that would help. Jones suggested that he and Gill take a quick overland train home from Marseille but Gill refused.⁴⁵ Back on board, the core of the infection broke, probably saving his life. Memory of this voyage would inform voyaging in *The Anathemata* out of the Middle Sea and up to the southern-western coast of England (on the 26th they reached Plymouth) and east into the Channel. On the 27th they arrived at the Tilbury docks and were met by Hague and Gordian Gill. Soon after, having no more use for light tweed in a climate never warm enough for him, Jones gave Hague his 'little coat.'

Although Jones's friends were disappointed in its results, the trip did improve his condition, enabling him that summer to return to work on *In Parenthesis*. Hot Jerusalem had been debilitating, and after the return voyage, he felt 'a thousand times better.' Yet when he first approached his Brockley home, the gloom settled in again as soon as he lifted the gate-latch—just as it did whenever he had returned from central London. He stayed with his parents for less than a week. On the final day with them, 3 August, he wrote his name in his pocket diary

backwards, SENOJ DIVAD. He planned to go almost immediately to Rock. Nicolette Gray visited to help him pack, as she sometimes did for such trips. She would remember, ‘he just didn’t know what to take. Hopeless really. All his packing used to be just bundled among his paints in his painting boxes. His clothes were always in a turmoil. He was really disorderly in many ways. I don’t think he had ever been trained: everything done for him. He never seemed interested enough to look after his things like most are. He was quite orderly with his tools and paints but otherwise he never knew where anything was.’ She asked him to be godfather to her first child, with whom she was now pregnant. He agreed but wrote to Petra, ‘I most certainly ought not to have another godchild seeing I have about five & do nothing about any of them as you know—but it’s difficult to refuse Nicky.’⁴⁶

On 3 August he went to Rock with the Edes. He was ‘still trying to get well by resting.’



8 Glebe Place, 1990

He wrote from there, ‘the weather is coldish & it rains a lot but looks lovely—& sun in between.’ Again, Petra’s portrait was hung in his room. From Rock on 26 August he went to Pigotts and from there in September he returned to London. Avoiding Brockley, he stayed with the Edes and with Tom Burns, who had moved to the upper two floors of 3 Glebe Place (fig. 8). In the topmost of these, where Burn’s mother lived, was a spare room at the back of the house, which he let Jones use as a bedroom. From its window Jones could see the top of Chelsea Old Church. He and Burns shared the dining room on the lower floor and, on the upper floor, the book-lined sitting room containing Burn’s big desk, two armchairs, and a divan. In these two rooms, the Chelsea group now held meetings. On the walls in the flat were the five paintings by Jones that Burns owned: one done from the terrace at Hove, one of the garden at Brockley ‘with big tree in summer & cat walking on wall,’ *The Farm Door* (1937), the illustration to *The Satin Slipper*; and *Lady Prudence Pelham* (1930), of which ownership was a matter of contention and which Jones intended, someday, to reclaim by exchanging it for another picture. This was now his home in London, the place where he took illnesses to bed, Burns’s mother fretting over him. He paid no rent, nor did he pay in pictures—Burn’s sister Margaret thought him a scrounger—though periodically he would give Burns a drawing or a painting. There was a daily maid, Ethel, who cooked and cleaned—a ruddy-faced girl in her twenties, good looking, buxom, respectable and married to a policeman whom Burns and Jones distrusted. But they were fond of her, and she tolerated without question the comings and goings of young

women. There was a cat, Archibald, and soon another, a stray that Tom adopted and named Tim. Into the house Tim soon brought fleas, of which Jones had a horror. Whenever this happened, he had Ethel spray him round the lower legs to discourage migration to him. Burns threw many parties at Glebe Place, at which Jones was, again, a central figure, sitting with lowered head, his legs crossed, flashing unconventional red socks, attracting others, especially young women, by his combination of humility and brilliance. He and Burns went to Mass Sundays and sometimes during the week at nearby Holy Redeemer Church, Jones tending always to sit near the back and sometimes, during sermons, ducking out for a cigarette.⁴⁷

Nearly always, Mass was followed by a drink at the King's Head and Eight Bells, a sixteenth century pub fronting the embankment at the bottom of Cheyne Row. On weekdays after work, Burns would often enter the flat saying, 'Come on, Dai, let's have a pint. I'm absolutely dying for a quick one,' and they would go off together to the King's Head or the Six Bells in the Kings Road. After supper, they drank Haig whisky, easily getting through a bottle in an evening, though neither ever got drunk. It was Burn's whisky. He would remember that Jones 'was poor as a church-mouse,' unable to afford his own drink. At one point, they realized that they were drinking too much and decided to cut back by waiting until 10 pm to begin. Till then they drank Roses Lime Juice—sitting at opposite ends of the dining-room table, working, on the table two glasses, a bottle of Roses Lime Juice, a jug of water, a bottle of whisky, and a clock with the alarm set for 10. When it sounded, they threw into the fire whatever remained in their glasses and commenced drinking whisky.⁴⁸

One evening Evelyn Waugh visited, and he and Jones argued over a point of history, possibly Renaissance English history, about which Waugh was becoming an expert in order to write on Edmund Campion. He said, 'David, what do you bet?' Jones had acquired a copy of the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and had moved it into his room at Glebe Place. Waugh proposed, 'Your Encyclopaedia Britannica against £15.' Jones said, 'Well, all right,' thinking it all a joke. Early the next morning Waugh arrived by taxi and, to Jones's dismay, collected the encyclopaedia. Jones later thought, and told Waugh, that his book on Campion (1935) 'is frightfully good.'⁴⁹

Jones returned to Rock in September. When Helen Sutherland went to London and he was alone for a few days, he went daily to visit 'terribly nice' Dick Owen Brown, who now had 'a nice nurse to look after him.' Brown whispered to him 'all about Dean Inge & other back

chat.’ In 1936, Brown and the nurse married and left Rock for a prosperous parish in Somerset. After that Jones occasionally met him in London. He would always regard him as ‘dear and very special.’⁵⁰

By October, the news reached him that Barbara Hepworth had born Ben Nicholson triplets. ‘I don’t half feel sorry for them,’ Jones writes, ‘it really does seem too awful a thing to be possible—poor Ben.’ Despite genuine sympathy, he also felt that there was a certain poetic justice. Years later, his face creasing with mirth as though it had just happened, he would say, ‘Not only did she get pregnant, she went and produced bloody triplets! Served old Ben bloody right’—Jones weeping with laughter. ‘Had to marry the woman then, didn’t he. Poor old Ben, didn’t know what he’d taken on.’⁵¹ He felt considerable vindication in his own marital apprehensions. He liked and respected Nicholson’s previous wife, Winifred, and did not think much of his prettier new wife, who, he said, lacked ‘the brains for abstract art; not that Ben is particularly brainy, but what brains he has are the right kind.’⁵²

On 4 October Major-General Wauchope, the High Commissioner of Palestine, on route to Scotland, arrived at Rock ‘for bed & breakfast.’ Also present in addition to Sutherland were Jones, Edward Hodgkin, and his father Robin, acting as master of ceremonies. Wauchope ate his breakfast porridge while walking about, which disconcerted Sutherland, who liked conversationalists static. Jones found him ‘a mixture of Colonel Bell RWF & Dr. Woods—very queer.’ The General observed Jones smoking. (Edward Hodgkin remembers that Jones ‘had a way of playing with a cigarette before he lit it, rolling it over in his fingers, squashing it out of shape, even pulling bits of tobacco out from the ends, and then perhaps holding it still in the fingers of both hands for quite a while, looking at it, pursing his lips and smiling, almost as if he expected it to say something ... or simply light itself and take its own way to his mouth.’) Wauchope said to Jones, ‘You seem to smoke rather a lot of cigarettes, young man. About how many a day?’

‘About twenty, I suppose.’

‘Hmm. Well, better than thirty or forty.’

‘And better than ten.’

Jones was ill at ease with him. Having been commissioned into the Black Watch in 1896, wounded at the battle of Magersfonten in 1899, wounded again in France and Mesopotamia, Wouchope was

the oldest of old soldiers of the highest rank. He emanated authority as only a Scott can. Jones was unable to ‘get any war talk out of him.’ Jones wrote, ‘He rather put the fear of God into me.’⁵³

Jones was reading Helen Sutherland’s copy of the *Summa Theologica* ‘on the agility of the resurrected body’ and felt that Aquinas ‘was compiling a pretty big mass of stuff out of practically no real data’ and is ‘absurdly materialistic’ in insisting that the risen body have ‘flesh & bones’ and organs and senses, something Jones thought contradicted by his exclusion of animals and trees from heaven on account of their being not ‘simple’ but ‘composite’. Also, he could not conceive of ‘the existence of “bone” or “flesh” ... isolated from flora & fauna.’ He knew ‘what “the resurrection of the body” means’ and thought Aquinas’s ‘attempt at tabulation pretty bad.’⁵⁴

On 18 October Sutherland held a concert in Alnwick, for which Lawrence Binyon and his wife, Helen, came to visit. Jones ‘could not face Schubert & Co’ or the crowded concert hall, so stayed in his room—reading Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History* and writing to Hague—avoiding the after-concert supper party for five of the musicians, the Binyons, and ‘stacks of Alnwick chaps’.

During this visit to Rock, he discovered that there was a convent chapel in Alnwick—to which Helen’s chauffeur now sometimes drove him for Sunday Mass. He wanted to go to Mass on St Lucy’s day, but it was a weekday and the only Mass was at 7:30 am, too early for Mills or Jones.⁵⁵

Earlier in the month, he had sent Hague a few instructions for printing titles, and Hague made a private printing of a portion of *In Parenthesis* and sent it to Jones, who showed it to Sutherland, who, to his surprise, liked it.⁵⁶ Late in October, de la Mare wrote to him at Rock, asking whether his book was ready to go to press. It was not. He continued to revise.

Writing had become an alternative to painting. He would later tell a reporter, ‘I do think that a really sensitive creative temperament may express itself equally effectively through almost any medium, and if it is prevented from using one it will find another.’ In 1940, a young friend would express regret at his not having continued to paint in oils, and Jones would reply, ‘I know. But then of course I’d started *In Parenthesis*.’⁵⁷

He was back in London in late October. He had not seen T.S Eliot since 1930 but had had dinner with him on 11 November 1934, arranged probably by Burns. By now Eliot knew that Jones was writing something but not precisely what, and they did not discuss publication. That was between Jones and de la Mare.⁵⁸

Jones visited Fr. David Mathew to discuss ‘some Welsh stuff’ and met, in the *Commercio*, Donald Attwater, with whom they talked about Attwater’s new book on the Catholic Church in Wales. Four months later, Attwater sent him the proofs of the book, which he found ‘most interesting.’ He was now reading the first volume of de la Taille’s *Mystery of Faith*, a birthday gift from Burns. (He would acquire the second volume in 1950.) It concerns ‘the Eucharistic Sacrifice,’ and Jones found it ‘Technical & tough. Grand & almost fierce in places—like an irate Jerome. magnificent, & quite a joke too—like being in a great Church council with the old fellows thundering at each other & fumbling with their manuscripts—but one needs to be well to really read it’⁵⁹ De la Taille writes of Jesus, ‘He placed himself in the order of signs’—words important to Jones, who would use them as an epigraph for *Epoch and Artist*.

Agoraphobic, he found the congestion of London oppressive. Being there again was, he wrote to Sutherland, ‘horrible’...& I shan’t stay any longer than is absolutely necessary—I seem to get ‘worked up’ as soon as I’m in this town & all the alternatives & ‘horribles’ always panic me so I suppose I should not be surprised at feeling less well.’ And yet, he writes, ‘It’s nice to see my dear parents again & they are so dear & good—its horrible to not be flourishing & useful now that they are old.’⁶⁰ In the coming years, feeling guilty about being useless to them would be a motif in much of his conversation and letters.⁶¹ He was now under doctor’s orders to keep out of London as much as possible.^{62*}

After two weeks in London, on 13 November, he went at the invitation of Nicolette Gray and with the consent of her parents to visit them at their country cottage on Westridge Farm near Streatley in Berkshire, staying for ten days. Though near London, the countryside was ‘lovely’ and ‘remote-feeling,’ with a chalk down and, just above, ‘neolithic scrub country.’ Almost all the local population were, he thought, probably Celtic. He liked the way the narrow Thames divided Streatly from the neighbouring village of Goring-on-Thames.⁶³

The house was ‘snug with central heating,’ which he liked, though he was discomforted by ‘a tiny puppy ... a bugger for slippers & carpets & ... carrying havoc through the house.’ ‘The puppy is,’ he wrote Hague, ‘a bloody jock.’ There was also a kitten that he thought was a

*Miles and Shiel mistakenly suggest that he stayed away from London because he ‘found the competitive art world too exacting’ (p. 180). Jones never regarded the art world as ‘competitive’ and had little to do with it now that he was not painting.

British wild cat. It had ‘already caught & killed a rat as large as itself.’ It also went after the puppy but ‘someone rushed out & parted them.’ The house was ‘lousy with Anglican priests—uncles of Nicky—nice blokes—one of them,’ he wrote, ‘had been on the canal bank at Wipers when I was there because he came to see the colonel of my battalion—a pal of his—may have stepped off the bloody duckboard to let him pass for all I know.’ In Binyon’s library he found, in a 1896 collection entitled *The Pageant*, a story by John Gray entitled ‘Niggard Truth’ which, he thought, ‘opens authentically, “Harriet came of farmers. The stout race hesitated & hoped in the strong girl; at last, for she never had any children, finished with her.”’ He wished he had a collected works of John Gray. He liked Gray’s recently published novel *Park* (in which someone wakes in a later time to see a picture of animals that reminds him of David Jones.) He liked the writing of that period with ‘the careful punctuation & slight specialness.’ In the evening ‘old Binyon’ took out pictures and monologued, ‘making great points over his graphics in the opposite chair.’⁶⁴

The relationship between Jones and Binyon was, according to Nicolette, ‘remote’. On the afternoon of 22 November they went walking together. Binyon had known many artists since the ‘90s and knew a good deal about contemporary art. Jones had read his 1925 book on Blake’s followers Calvert, Palmer, and Richmond and had been surprised at his not noticing the decline in their later work. He wanted to talk to him about art, but, he wrote Hague, ‘you know how difficult it is in talking to great men of the decade just past—you get curiously shy & feel an awful little impostor.’ Though he thought Binyon’s poetry terrible, he felt a Celtic affinity with him—‘Binyon’ being an elided form of the Welsh ‘Ap Einion’—and considered him ‘a nice old chap,’ ‘jolly nice, indeed delightful,’ but ‘particularly hot’ on the ‘laws of prosody,’ and a devotee of Milton.⁶⁵

Nicky and Basil Gray were also there for the week. His father-in-law’s assistant in the British Museum, Basil was, in manner, officious and arrogant. With close friends, Jones joked that Basil’s job at the BM was to set out the post cards. At one point during an evening while looking at him, Jones broke into laughter, ‘and then had to make a joke to explain.’ On Sunday, he and Nicky went to Mass together ‘in a nice snug church with a stove.’ The Binyons and their relatives were ‘most awfully kind’ to him, and it was ‘nise & peaceful.’ He felt ‘not so bad ... alright as long as I do nothing & think of nothing & nothing happens. Hope I emerge some day. God I do wish I could get something done.’⁶⁶

On Saturday morning 24 November, Penelope Betjeman fetched him by car. Long a friend of Jones, the previous year, she had married John Betjeman, who was renowned as a conversationalist and partygoer and aspired to know everybody. He and Jones discovered that they had Grisewood and Cleverdon as friends in common, Betjeman having been with them in the O.U.D.S. Jones found him charming, liked his mind and values. He had seen him, less often than Penelope, at the Edes, envying his success with women, something for which he also envied Cyril Connolly. Betjeman and his wife had recently moved to Garrard's Farm, Uffington, from where Betjeman was commuting to London as the film critic for the *Evening Standard*. He was, at this time, an Evangelical and, with his eyes fervently closed, played for Jones Protestant hymns on a harmonium.⁶⁷

Jones stayed with them a week. He had always wanted to see 'the Whitehorse Vale' and was excited to be staying 'right against the White Horse where Alfred bollocked up the black heathen men—that old G.K. [Chesterton] carried on about.' He found the shape of the white horse on the hillside 'amazing.' He went 'to examine it at close quarters.' Up close the undulation of the slope made it impossible to recognize, but at a certain distance 'its clear cut form' manifested itself 'in extraordinary rhythm.' He understood that it was thought to have been made in the second half of the first millennium BC. He could not understand 'how they set about it ... how incise an exact & sweeping line of considerable size. In the 1950s he would have a photograph of the horse on the wall of his room, and this hill would be foremost among the 'West horse-hills' commemorated in *The Anathemata* (55). On 27 November the Betjemans took him to visit a nearby iron age 'Camp & Stone Circle.' He had financed his travel to the Binyons and Betjemans with a loan of £20 from Ede, which he paid back in £5 'dribbles' when the Leicester Gallery sold two of his pictures.⁶⁸

He '*couldn't* face Christmas in London.' He wondered why 'all that business of people *getting ready* for Xmas & that intolerable misery of trying to buy people presents no one can afford is so devastating—for one thing of course everybody gets so damned tired & hyped-up & worked up with artificial good will" that a collapse is inevitable.' Tom Burns agreed to join him in Scroogean flight from the holiday. Helen Sutherland gave him money to sail to Cannes for warmth and rest, but Burns decided on a less-expensive rest-cure in Devonshire. Jones wanted to go to a warm place in Devon 'tucked away round the south coast of the peninsular' [sic], not

necessarily Sidmouth but something like that. On the recommendation of Olivia Plunket Greene, Burns preferred the Quay Hotel at Hartland Point, which was seventeen miles from the nearest town, Bideford, and certain to be free of the slightest hint of commercial Christmas. So on 23 December 1934 they drove in Burns's Wolsely Hornet to the northern coast of Devon. They booked into the expensive, nearly deserted hotel, which had originally been a row of Coastguard cottages, high on the cliffs over huge Atlantic breakers. On Christmas, they came down to supper to find, to their chagrin, two paper party hats on their table. The hotel otherwise suited them, though Jones found the food too heavy and the cost of staying exorbitant. The place was sheltered from wind by surrounding hills, behind a great pyramidal rock marking the coast. Jones occasionally walked on the beech, where he found a 'curious type of animal bone or ivory ... that had ... suffered a sea-change.' He wrote on it 'David invenit me' and posted it to Gill, asking him to carve the words into the object. He climbed up into the hills and sat on a rusty coloured slope where, he wrote, 'a perfectly pet stream tumbles itself in a great waterfall to the sea.' He liked sitting in high places when the weather was mild and calm—but within a few days the weather became wintry, 'harsh & rude with bitter winds knocking all things sidelong & making a great foam & splendour on the rocks.' Hartland was, he thought, a lovely place, 'nothing at all but cliffs running out to sea & behind, small gullies, runnels, & tiny valleys with little ... bracken bordered streams.' Though windy and wet, it was not cold. On the 28th he and Burns toasted Bobby Speaight, who was getting married that day in London. On the 29th an architect named Geoffrey Clark arrived at the hotel. He had gone on walking tours with Canon Gray, was a character in *Park*, and had visited Pigotts. He and Jones spoke about mutual acquaintances and, since Clark had been with the heavy artillery in 1914-18, about the war. Jones liked him.⁶⁹

When not walking, and sometimes while sitting in the rugged cliffscape, he enjoyed reading a book he had found in the hotel, *Eothen*, in which A.W. Kinglake recounts his travels in the Near East exactly a hundred years before Jones's travels there. Reading it brought back his own experience in Palestine and, especially, Egypt. Other books in the hotel that he read were Jane Austen's *Emma* and Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year*, which he was sorry to discover was not an eye-witness account. He wished he had brought along 'Donne ... or something good' though he frequently read what he calls his 'regulars,' Malory, *Alice in Wonderland*, and T.S. Eliot, which he had brought with him, along with Christopher Dawson's *Medieval Religion*, a collection of 'good' essays.⁷⁰

Burns returned to London, and Jones stayed on to endure New Years, a ‘crashing bore’ for him especially since it did not initiate a natural season. He disliked the enthusiasm of the Welsh for the holiday. With Helen Sutherland’s money, he intended sailing either to Ireland or Lundy Island twenty miles north in the Bristol Channel, but examining sailing-lists made him feel ill. Besides, Hartland itself was so attractively wild that it diminished the call of the open sea. His lengthening stay at the hotel ate up his funds. He caught a ‘filthy cold,’ which made moving even less desirable and kept him in bed for over a week reading Carroll’s *Alice* and Maclaren’s ‘Taplow’. The latter he found ‘a great solace’ and ‘a marvellous book for remaining... hellish good.’ Sickness relieved him of the need to decide what to do, though he was ‘hardly capable of decision anyhow.’⁷¹

Compensating for rough weather that kept him indoors was a new arrival on 3 January, a sixty-year-old Welsh senior tutor in Classics named Vernon Jones of Magdalene College Cambridge. He, too, had suffered a nervous breakdown and had been sent to Port Said, but had been cured by diet, he said, and was, Jones writes, ‘a terrific diet fan and has a great thing about clearing out the colon & fasting & getting a clean blood stream—he says that’s the only way to cure neurasthenia or anything you like.’ He also indulged in cold baths and steam baths. Jones thought him ‘an astounding chap,’ ‘awfully nice,’ ‘a perfect dear ... wise & ardent & intensely amusing & a bit cranky,’ ‘a representative of a more ancient world.’ They ‘talked for hours & hours about everything’: the streams and hills, the fishing and rural ways of the wild part of Wales where the don’s father had been vicar. Vernon Jones waxed on about the special illumination resulting from knowing Virgil in Latin while living with an agricultural people. His a pastoral vision moved Jones—this was ‘the back-woods of Cambridge alright.’ David Jones felt ‘more intensely than *ever* how *hateful* a deprivation it is to be without any knowledge of the ancients,’ and particularly his inability to read them in the original languages. The elder Jones told the younger ‘lovely things that Martial said.’ He insisted on knowledge of Classics being essential to appraisal of English literature. He said that Welsh poetry is as bad as late Latin verse, ‘it’s technically perfect & very difficult but never “takes flight”,’ and is admired only by people who have never read Homer, Horace, Virgil, Dante or Shakespeare. He detested Welsh nationalism of any sort and had not even heard of *The Gododdin*. He said, ‘Professor Rhys of Jesus used to spit into the drawing room fire like a Welsh farmer & had all the other Welsh barbarities.’ Jones got him to promise to read Lloyd’s *History of Wales*. They disagreed about

Chaucer, Malory, Milton, and T.S. Eliot, about whose work they had ‘a real slapup set to.’ To Jones’s surprise, the don listened and was ‘awfully nice,’ but left him convinced that dons ‘aren’t half bloody fools.’ He agreed with the positive emphasis on Classics, ‘but why can’t they appreciate the inwardness & goodness & vitality [of] that other tradition ... the romantic tradition or whatever it is which anyhow is at least half the ingredient parts of English poetry.’ Within a few days, Vernon Jones moved on.⁷²

The harsh wind continued. On 5 January, Jones went out but could find no flat ground sheltered from the wind so he climbed down into a rocky place (‘miserable business’) and watched the waves, which ‘were good but all sullen & grey.’⁷³

On 5 January he wrote to Hague, ‘Been here two weeks today and have none of the good yet.’ A week later he wrote to Dorothea Travis, ‘It’s lovely & quiet & I just roam about the cliffs & read & sleep—& try & not bother about anything!—not awfully successfully—... I occasionally nibble at my book—but no painting.’ About his neurasthenia he added, ‘everybody, of course, has different theories about it but certainly this business of resting & keeping out of obvious bad places, like London, does something at my present stage.’ On the 9th, another Magdalene don stayed briefly, a teacher of music named Francis Turner. He, too, ‘was most awfully nice &,’ Jones wrote, ‘told me a lot of things about early music.’ Chiefly, he said that in the late-middle ages the English were considered the most musical of peoples, that in the 15th Century a school of composers, including Henry VI and Dunstable were creating a new polyphonic tradition which was terminated by the Wars of the Roses and grew up, instead, on the continent, flowering in Palestrina and Vittoria. After this don’s departure, Jones was ‘more or less alone.’⁷⁴

On 10 January he was ‘walking about & rummaging in ferny places where little streams tip themselves in three-fold waterfalls to the sea. It’s very jagged & Atlantic-broken.’ It was windy but ‘awfully good when the sun shines & the wind is the right way—It’s noble indeed with vast cliffs & this morning it was quite hot in the sun & the sea calm & the sky clear & a great peace. I met a boy with three donkeys laden with shingle from the beach stumbling up a *very* steep track he had a rosy face & a big stick & he said ‘Its a fine January day’ & I said it certainly was. The pack beasts & the little boy looked as if they had come up from the sea contentedly since the Roman occupation at least.’ The day was so clear, he could see the buildings on Lundy Island. On the following day a gale blew in from the south-west and the

waves lashed ‘in fury outside ... pretty impressive.’ On 12 January he drew the seaward view from the hotel in a letter to Grisewood, commenting beneath it, ‘the plastic art escapes me after so long of inactivity.’ In addition to revising *In Parenthesis*, however, he had begun writing something new, which he later entitled ‘The Book of Balaam’s Ass.’⁷⁵

Prudence Pelham and René Hague arrived for a visit on 4 February. He hiked the countryside with them and came, with Wordsworthian surprise, upon ‘great hordes of little snowdrops’ in a wood and along a stream. He left with Prudence in her Austin. The Quay Hotel was too expensive, and he wanted something warmer and sheltered and intended to move to the south coast, perhaps Falmouth.⁷⁶ They chose Sidmouth, however, perhaps because Jones had heard positive things about it from Dawson, who was staying in nearby Dawlish and whose daughters were in convent school in Sidmouth.

Sidmouth is a Georgian resort town cupped by hills and open to the sea. On the coast to east and



9. The Fort Hotel, Sidmouth, 1990

west are huge, wooded hills—Trowl Hill and Peak Hill—eaten at red sandstone cliffs by the sea. He and Prudence took rooms at the Fort Hotel west of the town centre, which, more than anywhere else, would be his home for the next five years (fig. 9). It was called the Fort because a battery had occupied the site during the Napoleonic wars. A white-washed

early-Victorian-imitation-Georgian building, it was isolated from other hotels to one side and behind by the fields of the Sidmouth Cricket and Croquet Club. To the east was a cobbled carpark; to the front, (seventy-five feet from the door) across a road, the beach and the sea. The nearest buildings to the west were beautiful, tall, thatched cottages. He wrote on 9 January, ‘the weather here is terrific just now great gales & vast seas. The hotel tremors & jars.’⁷⁷ In such weather the ground-floor lounge was nearly as good as the glassed in porch of his parents’ house in Hove.

Prudence dubbed the Fort lounge ‘the Lobster room’ because of its garish pink walls and red fireplace. During the day, the room was full of distractions. One Sunday morning, after returning from Mass, he wrote to Hague, ‘bloody old women are sending their nasty Adam’s apples up & down like anything in this lounge.’ He preferred it at night, after the ‘rabble’ had left, though sometimes, to his ‘intense annoyance,’ residents stayed on to play cards. He read and wrote letters here. Occasionally on the hearth rug ‘a nice dog’ lay, which he once sketched in a letter.⁷⁸

He drank here in the evening and argued till midnight with a high church parson from Staffordshire—‘nice,’ he writes, ‘but doesn’t half think’ the Irish Catholic clergy ‘a pretty lot of scum.’ ‘We crack on sometimes at each other like anything ... fair get down to it sometimes.’ That January he also became friendly with a guest who was an expert on gas defense, a man who had also been in a dugout on the Canal Bank north of Ypres. Jones would drop in on him and his wife for a drink and ‘old soldier stuff’ and to hear ‘about the pleasantness’ of modern gas masks.⁷⁹

His day began in bed, where he ate breakfast and read *The Times* and the post. At about 10:45 he emerged, glancing at the rack for letters from the second post. He spent the day reading and walking. Lunch and supper were announced, as at Rock, by the striking of a gong. At meals he often wrote letters or read, though not when eating with Prudence. In the afternoon, they sat and read outside at opposite ends of the garden, she in the sun, he in the shade. She thought the maid had a ‘damp soul,’ and they referred to her as ‘Brellies,’ short for ‘umbrellas,’ code for large breasts. In the afternoons he yawnd ‘with that dreadful afternoon fatigue that Sidmouth is renowned for.’ At 5:30, Brellies brought tea to his room. In the evenings, he and Prudence drank and talked at the nearby Royal Clarence or the Marine Hotel. At about 1 am, he fell asleep to the sound of the waves.⁸⁰ Because the coast was warmed by a southern current, because the Fort had central heating, and because he had an electric heater in his room, here, even in these darkest winter months, he almost always felt warm.*

With Prudence, he visited Dawson’s adolescent daughters, Juliana and Christina, in the nuns’ parlor at the convent-school of the Assumption. He was fond of them and visited each

* An exception would be 15 February 1938, when he felt the cold as never before in Devon and, he writes, ‘the wind cuts through you like chain-shot through a square of red-coats.’

weekend.* As Christina later remembered, he did not say much but sat silently and then said something original and extraordinary. He liked going to Mass t in the school chapel, where, he writes, ‘they sing the proper of the Mass & things rather nicely ... innocently,’ though he was regularly appalled, if not surprised, by the banality of the sermons. One, he writes, was ‘a real R.C. sermon ... it *is* a bloody shame ... to break the sequence of Mass with this stuff.’ He arranged to have Sunday breakfast served to him upon his return from Mass at 10 o’clock. The waiter objected but, after Jones insisted, was ‘like a lamb.’ Sometimes Jones went to the convent-school chapel in the afternoon to sit in back where he could see the Dawson girls and listen to the nuns reciting Compline ‘which,’ he wrote, ‘I like.’ Christina later remembered seeing him walking on the promenade looking very depressed in a mackintosh with the brim of his hat turned down all around. They had the impression that he was ‘very poor’ and always ‘tired.’⁸¹

The town was a maze of streets. A fishing village in the seventeenth century—many of the original cottages still thatched—Sidmouth had been built up during the Regency period and populated by retired military men and colonial administrators, who imported from sunnier climes architectural ornament such as balconies, verandahs, and curved peaks over windows and doors. Now most of the buildings were Victorian. Retired officers continued to occupy the town and kept it unspoiled by efficiently protesting the granting of permits to ice-cream vendors and pier builders. There was no shortage of drinking spots. In addition to the lounge at the Fort, a short walk east along the front was the Bedford Hotel, beside that the Hotel Riviera, and beside that the Marine, to which he used to walk for ‘a wet before lunch.’⁸²

Jones’s first taste of Sidmouth had convinced him that it was not his ‘cup of tea,’ and he intended to leave shortly. Prudence disliked everything about the place, including its red cliffs. It was, she said, a ‘pink hell of a hole.’ She called it ‘Sodmouth,’ ‘bloody Soddors’, ‘Sod.’ He, too, disliked the red cliffs. ‘On some days,’ he wrote to Ede, ‘it’s like living under a vast baulk of chocolate—they turn the bitter sea also into a kind of cocoa lake.’ Boats seldom passed under sail, which he regretted. He was not interested in the town’s mechanized ‘so-called fishing fleet’. He felt guilty over the cost of staying in a hotel. (In 1938 the weekly bill would be £3, approximately £147 in 2016 currency.) He wanted to move into the countryside, and Prudence in

* Juliana would be in Sidmouth till 1937, Christina till 1939.

her Austin scoured Sussex for a farm where he could stay less expensively; but less comfortable lodgings were, to him, intolerable and he lacked the will to move, so he adjusted to economic guilt and prolonged to six months this, his first stay at the Fort.⁸³

The sea was what he liked most about the place. He wrote to Petra, 'There is a lovely bay here that I walk along when the tide is out, on the flat sand & over rocks with nice shells in the crevices of them. The wind is up tonight & the sea angry—sometimes it drenches the Hotel with spray. One never gets tired of the sea. I do like living by it.' He liked the 'long taut line' of its horizon, 'always "a good thing".' While by the water he did 'not mind so much what the weather does.' Even cold did not bother him if there was no wind and it was sunny. Then the shore smelled of sea-wrack, which he liked.⁸⁴

He went for walks several times a day. In the evening, if he had not been out since morning, he would stroll along the shore before dark. He walked the beach under the cliffs for miles. Owing to the rough weather, there had been great falls of cliff, and the coast road westward to the golf-links had collapsed: 'quite exciting for this unperturbed type of place'. To walk on the sand, he had 'to clamber over a great huge messy red pile of broken clay & soft rock.' Walking on the beach in the opposite direction in mid January, he observed a battle at the mouth of the little river Sid between two swans and some gulls over bits of fish. The swans won because the gulls failed to 'make a proper concentrated attack.' He fantasized what a great battle it would be if cats joined it from the wood and then dogs from the promenade. Out of doors he wore his floppy brimmed hat, his greatcoat, and a muffler round his neck and lower face, and, on very cold days in February, a second muffler. All this was, he realized, a sort of 'disguise'.⁸⁵

Seven-minutes walking in either direction up and along the cliffs took him out of town into forests or farmland. Once when walking along the Sid at dusk, he was charged by very big sow. 'I've seldom been so scared or so astonished at the speed of this hulking fat creature. Mercifully I was near a stile & shot over it as quick as I could ... I really was jolly frightened.' He had come too close to her litter in a farm outbuilding. Soon one of his favourite places near Sidmouth would be 'a high flat place above the sea' where there was a Neolithic standing stone. He liked to go there, sit against the ancient monument, and think.⁸⁶

Prudence stayed for the first three weeks. She drove him round the countryside: one excursion was to Maiden Castle, the largest Iron-Age hill fort in southern England. After leaving Sidmouth, she remained in touch by telephone. Hague and Burns also phoned. He rarely called

them ‘because you can say so little & it costs so much.’ He and Grisewood corresponded. Listening evenings to the radio in the lounge, Jones sometimes heard Grisewood’s voice announcing a piece of classical music or reading the news. Prudence sent Admiral Collingwood’s *Correspondence*, which he found his ‘kind of thing’, ‘so good in places.’ In February, she returned with the Hagues. (She had been teaching Joan to drive, initially by having her reverse down the half-mile drive at Stanmer estate, on the principle that if you can drive backwards you can certainly drive forwards.) Jones and René discussed René’s financial worries—his living depended on commissions from Dents, the publisher. They also discussed the layout of *In Parenthesis*—Jones wanted Gill’s Joanna type.⁸⁷ He told Hague that he was still unable to work at revising. He had hoped to do a lot of writing in Sidmouth but could not settle to it.

As the weather improved Sidmouth became crowded on Sundays, with ‘too many blokes looking pleased with the Spring’s return.’ On such days he would stay in the hotel till evening when ‘the cars & nymphs have largely departed & the sea & cliffs are grey because of the evening & its much the best moment of the day’ and then walk along the beach. As the weather warmed, he deserted the increasingly crowded front in bright daylight and took to the country, where he liked seeing the snowdrops bloom and then the primroses. He did not welcome the strengthening sun, which, even in March, gave him a headache. Even with his hat on, the sun made the top of his head hurt. On the evening of 27 March, to his surprise and indignation, he was bitten by a mosquito, which reminded him of Port Said—‘where are those god damned nets I would be obliged to know.’ ‘Lord, its boiling hot here,’ he wrote in June. ‘I can hardly write this, the promenade is gleaming & white & the sea like brass.—I wish the sun didn’t make me feel sick.’ He hated it as much as the cold. His advice, and practice, was ‘in the sun walk quickly—that way you are out of it sooner.’ He preferred ‘grey days of a nondescript sort,’ when the sea was grey and the front bare ‘save for a doddering general or two.’⁸⁸

The trip to the Near East had not altered his emotional condition, but being at Hartland and coming to Sidmouth had improved it. There were still, however, ‘various convolutions of misery’ and a lingering dullness: ‘still no work,’ he writes ‘& no brain only just a kind of dull inert sort of life.’ ‘It still takes very little to unsettle me.’ He had now done no painting for over a year, and so long a lapse was, he thought, ‘bloody serious.’ But he was not strong enough to begin: ‘O God,’ he writes to Grisewood, ‘the *spare* nervous energy one needs to paint is quite

unbelievable.’ On 28 March 1935 he wrote to Hague that he seems to ‘be in a bad patch’ but hopes it will pass. A few days later, he added,

Yes I have been having a prolonged misrub—partly the old mysterious neurosis or whatever it is, & partly not knowing what to do next & not being able to settle to anything & not being able to write—not a *word* of the book done in Sidmouth—none done since that come-over at Hartland—I’m so afraid of sinking into a rut with this rest cure & never being able to put on any pressure again—yet what can I do? well if this rest cure don’t work there is only the old Psychologist stuff left. Goddamit—I loath them. ... Please God I shall get in some more revision soon.

He found the emotional downturn ‘disappointing & disheartening &,’ he wrote Petra, ‘its so difficult to know why—if rest & quiet & fresh air are what is needed—well I’ve had months of that now!’⁸⁹

Tom Burns drove down for Easter and they went together to Easter Mass at the convent-school chapel. During the sermon, the Irish priest became irritated at the nuns and girls in the gallery making slight noises while adjusting the organ bellows, so he refused to sing the rest of the Mass—‘(it was the missa canatata with the moon & all) & just turned the rest into a low Mass—can you beat it,’ Jones wrote Hague, ‘it’s one up on the old man O’Connor—they are buggers—... just bad temper—pretty bad show I must say.’⁹⁰

Burns visited fairly often on weekends and found Jones at the Fort ‘chatting to elderly ladies and retired colonels.’ ‘He was awfully good with ordinary people,’ Burns remembered. As a regular resident, he was treated with familiarity by the staff. Burns remembered the hotel as, ‘very charming’ with ‘comfortable little rooms.’ Jones usually had the same room, facing the sea, and it was ‘very personalized’ though without pictures hanging and tidier than his rooms elsewhere. He did, however, accumulate books. Prudence warned him about how much trouble they would be when he had to move.⁹¹

One of the books he bought was the Everyman Old Testament. He ‘stuck down their bloody end-papers’ and pasted his own lettered labels on front and spine. He liked ‘having the bible in a fashion that you can take to pubs or anywhere & read unobserved.’ The first thing he read was the Song of Deborah, where he discovered that some ‘Rev Bruce bloody Taylor’ had had the cheek to tamper with the text, and without saying where. In a letter to Hague he compares it with the Authorized Version by quoting from each with parenthetical comments. First the AV:

‘The mountains melted from before the Lord even that Sinai’ (that’s spiffing isn’t it) ‘from before the Lord God of Israel. The inhabitants of the villages ceased they ceased in Israel; until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel.’

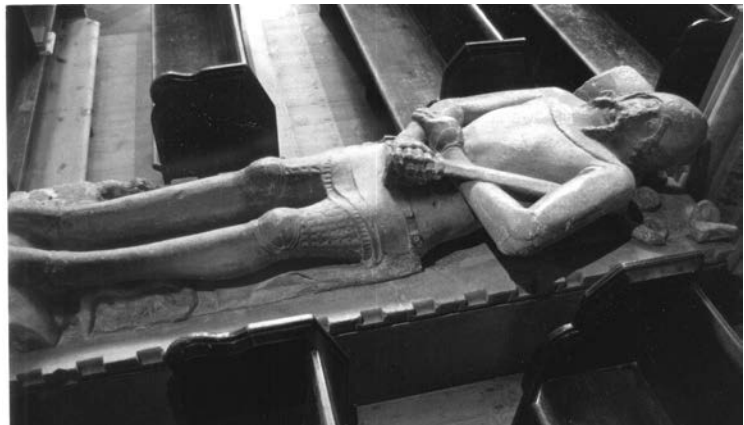
Then the Bruce Taylor

The mountains quailed at the presence of the Lord, the God of Israel. Even yon Sinai’ (get out, bugger off) ‘at the presence of the Lord, the God of Israel. The villages were unoccupied in Israel they were unoccupied’ (you will note that the villages were unoccupied) ‘until that thou Deborah arose, thou arose a mother in Israel.’

‘I ask you,’ he continues, ‘this to restore the obvious meaning of the original.’⁹²

Prudence visited in late April, having driven through St Ives, where she bought three paintings by Alfred Wallis. She gave them to Jones, asking that he keep two and send one to the Hagues. They ate leeks together on St David’s day. He had fleas, which she, too, caught. They went together to Sunday Mass, arriving just in time to hear a reading of two pastoral letters of Lenten instruction, one by the bishop of Plymouth, the other by the pope. In Taplowese Jones comments, ‘*I may say I am not struck on these types.*’ (On her next visit, they would go on Sunday morning to the Marine and be ‘happy’.) Burns turned up for the afternoon more cheerful even than usual, having just taken a job with a new publisher, Longmans, Green & Co., because Frank Sheed had refused to take him into partnership.⁹³

During the week, Prudence drove Jones through the Devon countryside. They visited the parish church of Ottery St. Mary, which tops a hill in the green valley of the river Otter twelve miles east of Exeter. Over six hundred years old, it is thought to be the finest parish church in Devon. Coleridge spent his childhood here, his father the vicar.



10. Tomb of Otho de Grandison (d. 1359)

Inside, Jones and Prudence were impressed by a tomb effigy of a knight, Otho de Grandison (d. 1359), lying beneath a carved canopy (fig. 10). In stone, he wears full armour with his head resting on his helmet and, his feet on a tiny lion. Jones thought it ‘a glorious carving.’ It was, he said, ‘absolutely grand—one of the most moving Gothic carvings I’ve ever seen.’ ‘It’s Our Lord

& King Arthur Dead & Lancelot & Roland & Jonathan & all Xtian men dead.’ The face, smashed by reformers or Puritans, helps make the effigy impersonally archetypal. Exiting the church, Jones and Prudence went a short distance into Broad Street to a chemist named, to her delight, Babcock, whom they commissioned to photograph the knight, at a cost to Jones of £1. If the pictures turned out well, he planned to reproduce the knight on the cover of *In Parenthesis*. Because of its placement between pillars, it is difficult to photograph well, however, and, when he received the photos, he thought them ‘not much cop after all.’ Prudence thought them ‘not half good enough’ and returned them to the chemist, though each later regretted not keeping them.⁹⁴

He wanted to see where his mother had worked as a governess in the early 1880s, so Prudence drove him to Totnes where they stayed in a hotel. He liked the town bridge. Together they visited the white Georgian house, formerly of the Cornish-Bodens, just where the flatlands meet the bare uplands of Dartmoor. He thought it a ‘heavenly place.’ They hunted out the children his mother had taught, now elderly maiden ladies—‘very charming,’ he wrote, and ‘awfully pleased to see me because they loved my mother.’ It was a rainy day, but on the way back to Sidmouth Jones and Prudence stopped on a high hill to pick primroses. Back in town, they practiced firing rifles at moving targets in a booth.⁹⁵

She could stay no longer, and he was ‘sad with sweet high bright Prudence going again’—an old-lady guest at the Fort had delighted them both by calling her ‘high and bright and up’—and he was afterwards irked to see ‘some old hag’s shoon’ outside the door of her former room. He missed her badly and longed to hear ‘from her that she is well & happy.’ In his immense leisure at Sidmouth he thought daily of his parents, of his friends Grisewood, Burns, Hague, and Ede, but mostly of Prudence. She was the one with whom he most shared his love of nature in its minute particularities. As a memento of her, he kept on the table in his room the bunch of primroses they had picked. ‘O my how hard are departings,’ he wrote Hague. ‘She has such a heavenly mind.’ Alone, depressed, and unable to work, he thought of going to Crantoch in Cornwall or to the Scilly Isles, but did not. Now that it was warmer, he sometimes drank ‘gingies’ (gin-slings) in the local pubs, but pubs can be depressing, ‘not much good ... without a china’ (plate/mate).⁹⁶ She was by now much more than a mate in the Cockney sense, though short of that in the sexual sense.

His relationship with Prudence Pelham was now the primary human context in which he felt, thought, and worked. No woman had meant so much to him in his adult life and none would. On this, all who knew him well agreed. The relationship meant an enormous amount to her as well. He was foremost among her closest friends. When staying in bed for a few days, she would ask that all callers except him be told she was out. They were spontaneous and happy together. She shared with him acuteness of sensitivity, a comic understanding, and an aversion to phoniness and arrogance. He found in her a depth and responsiveness that he had known in no other woman. She appreciated his talent and admired his valuing art instead of fame or money. They agreed about people, although she had reservations about some of his friends, particularly Tom Burns and did not fully share his interest in Catholicism, which she did not really understand.⁹⁷ She was vaguely Christian, her beliefs indefinite and loosely held, her sympathies not attached to institutional forms. She greatly admired Nietzsche as the supreme debunker, and they talked about him. With no theology to help her make sense of it, she regarded life as absurd, and this sometimes caused her agonies.

They gave one another haircuts. She knitted socks for him. He was among the poor friends for whom she stole clothing: a black suit, offered at least—it had moth holes in it, so he may have declined.⁹⁸ When he was ill in London, she moved into the Glebe Place flat to look after him. At other times, they went to plays, art galleries, the zoo, pubs—usually on her initiative. She once wanted him to go with her to an exhibition of ‘Reubens & Co’ at Burlington House—he liked Reubens—and went in advance to see if there was an adequate ‘amount of Reubens’ for him.

They kept in touch by telephone, although she regarded it as an ‘instrument of pain.’ Within London this was inexpensive, but he was usually in Sidmouth and sometimes in Northumberland or Pigotts, and she was often at the family house in Falmer, Sussex. Because money meant nothing to her, she telephoned so often and at such length that her mother and brother attempted to forbid her the use of the phone.* On her birthday in 1935, she was allowed to telephone friends, including him, ‘20 minutes each person.’⁹⁹ Several times in letters she complained that she can hardly hear him on the phone—a common complaint among his friends

* North American readers may not know that in the UK, those making even local telephone calls pay by the minute.

because, afraid of germs, he kept as far as possible from the mouthpiece of any public telephone he was using.

By the mid-1930s, when apart, they wrote one another twice weekly. They kept each other's letters. Hers survive, but his to her are now lost, except for a few fragments.^{100*} Because she seldom dated her letters and because his to her have disappeared, for us she exists uncertainly in time. In his letters to her, Jones confided his feelings. She wrote, 'I got quite overcome reading your letter & clearly saw the white emptiness of your glass & thought it would never be filled.' But sad letters were rare. She thanked him constantly for his 'lovely' letters, his 'angel letters'. Many were works of art, love-inspired writing at its most vivid and entertaining, interspersed with drawings, painted lettering, and watercolour paintings. One contained a portrait of Hague—she thought it looked just like him; others included drawings of a kitten and 'a dog doing his stuff at the edge of the waves,' which she liked so much that she pinned the illuminated page to the door of her room, to look at each morning. In an eight-page letter, he painted Sidmouth. In another he made what she called 'that ni, sweet drawing of you in tattered shift. God how I like people in rags I like them better in rags than anything.' She cut out and sent magazine photographs of animals that she thought beautiful: an arctic fox, a Koala bear on a pole (which she calls a 'picture of your loving Prudence up her greasy pole'), a white owl.

He gave her at least two engravings and a 'heavenly drawing' that, she writes, 'seems to contain your whole stock: cats, unicorns, suns, moon, birds, bears, trees, pots of flowers, holy writ, ships, stags & mountains. David dear, it is exquisite. I'm so carried away by seeing all the things I like to think about made into a single shape that I lie on my bed saying: O.' She bought paintings from him. In 1937 she wrote to him that she expects near the end of May 'a great lump of money' from the selling of some shares, 'so please reserve for me some of your remaining

* She gave Hague some pages of her letters on which Jones had drawn pictures. They are now in the University of Toronto Library. Robert Buhler read Jones's letters to her. Some with drawings, paintings, and inscriptions in them he loaned for display c. 1958 to Basil Jonzen, the owner of a weekend gallery. Soon after, the gallery closed, Jonzen died, and the letters were lost. In 1985 Buhler could not remember where the other letters were. When I last saw him, in 1988, he said that Prudence had saved only the letters with inscriptions and pictures on them. Her letters to Jones survive, although Miles and Shiel say otherwise (p. 9).

pictures.’ She acquired for the house in Falmer an ‘outdoors indoors still life’ by him and would eventually own eight of his paintings.¹⁰¹ She also had some on loan.

She spoke and wrote vividly. When she over ate she was ‘stunned with food’.¹⁰² Rain ‘comes down straight & heavy like stair rods’ or, in winter wind, ‘like machine gun fire against the glass.’ When snow threatened, the sky looked ‘constipated’. In springtime there was ‘the most terrific noise of rape ... being conducted up aloft between two thrushes.’ A night nurse was ‘the Welsh weazle [sic] of Aberystwyth.’ Arabic in a film translated: ‘There is no God by God & Mohomet is his profet’ [sic]. She disliked ‘spy-chologists.’ A favourite restaurant, the Hanover, was ‘The Hangover.’ A sensitive observer of nature, she wrote from Falmer in the spring of 1937,

I went over to Laughton woods ... & longed for you to see it—the trees are still at this special small-leafed shrill green shimmering stage (here the chestnuts have pretty well got their summer mackintoshes on) and the ground under was covered with primroses, violets & those small wood anemones blue-bells & wild lilies of the valley were just starting in small bursts of dark blue & white. I stupidly picked only the anemones for you because they were so incredibly beautiful & fragile & spiky, & sprigs of wild apple & cherry but they died almost before I got home.

Her extreme sensitivity made her acutely aware of dramatic irony. She recounts family guests arriving at the Falmer house looking ‘like Drakula’s daughters’— ‘these pigs who wantonly stay here at weekends don’t realize how tired you are & my Christ what balls they talk. This vampire said, “you must love the country” so I said no as I’m not keeping on this topic—“but have you never eaten grass in the spring?” she said.’ Prudence and Jones called a strong drink a ‘timor mortis’ after the lament in Dunbar’s poem, ‘*Timor mortis conturbat me.*’

They shared a love of literature and a belief in its vital importance to a fully human life. She regarded herself as having a ‘lower-Sunday-Express-reading nature,’ but the range of reading included many of his areas of interest, except for history. She enjoyed Herodotus and (a gift from Hague) the poetry of Sappho. She loved the Madrus and Mathers translation of *The Arabian Knights*. She liked Doughty’s *Arabia Deserta* ‘because he doesn’t pretend that it’s easy to get across great deserts & he’s in a great pea all the time & is as frightened as any sensible humans being [Taplowese] by the bedoins’ [sic]—in contrast to Lareence in *Seven Pillars*, which she disliked. She attempted the long poems of Blake but was ‘pretty hazy’ about their meaning. Occasionally she dipped into *Ulysses*. Jones shared with her his love for *Finnegans Wake*, and in 1939, she gave him a copy of the book. They both liked *Wuthering Heights*. He sent her for her

birthday Christopher Smart, whom she loved. They read together Catullus, especially liking lyric LVIII, making pen-and-ink inscriptions of it and speculating gleefully about the erotic meaning of the word *glubit*. Together they read *The Song of Roland*, Hopkins, Lewis Carroll, and, above all, Malory, of whom she, too, had become an enthusiast. She discovered Lucy Allen Paton's 1929 book on a French prose *Lancelot* and sent it to him, but then, she wrote, 'to get the taste of Miss Paton ... out of my mouth I've been reading the Morte D'Arthur proper—and wonder why I ever read anything else. Just read about Lancelot rescuing a lady out of a boiler & how she came out naked as any needle ... I do like the bit when Morgan Le Fay locks Lancelot up & he does all those drawings on the wall.' She sent him Lear's *Nonsense*. Jones's favourite was 'The Dong with the Luminous Nose,' whose protagonist suffers in love for the departed Jumbly Girl as he (Jones) had suffered over Petra and would suffer again. She entered into his imaginative world. In this respect, he was her mentor. She was fifteen years younger and looked to him as someone who, in many respects, knew more about life and art, but theirs was basically a relationship of equals. Whenever he affirmed something as generally accepted, she would reply, 'Speak for y'rself.'¹⁰³

They were often alone together, but he also knew her in her family. He first visited her in the family flat in London in 1929.* Her mother, Lady Chichester (Ruth Pelham before her husband inherited the title of earl) was a handsome, gracious, grey-haired matron descended from Norfolk Quaker landed gentry. Prudence called her 'the lyoness' [sic]. A woman of stoic fortitude, she was a conventional aristocrat with no interest in the arts other than opera and abhorred her daughter's bohemian ways. Prudence found her alternatively tiresome and irritating. They squabbled continually but were bound by mutual affection and the enduring pain of common loss. They lived together at Stanmer House on the Chichester estate near Brighton or in nearby Falmer and in London—first in Hans Crescent and later in Chesham Place—because unmarried younger daughters then looked after their widowed mothers and Prudence could not afford to live separately. In their London flat she had her own room, in which she entertained

* Miriam Rothschild met him then at Hans Crescent for the only time and would remember him as 'a huddled scruffy figure' extremely ill.

friends. Although courteous, Lady Chichester frightened many of them. * To Jones, usually fond of the elderly mothers of friends, she was ‘terrifying.’ ‘Old Lady Chich,’ as he called her, may not have approved of him, certainly not as a suitor to her daughter, though the mother was uncertain what, precisely, were his intentions in relation to her daughter. Prudence’s twelve-years older sister, Betty, had fled from unhappy love affairs into eastern wisdom acquired from a guru in India. She was warm and amusing, a friend to Prudence’s friends. The surviving elder brother, John, the Earl, was handsome, intelligent, easy going. He and Jones liked one another. Though Prudence had loved her father and her eldest brother more, she was so fond of John that they were more like lovers than brother and sister, emotionally incestuous. (Referring to John, she once confided to a friend, ‘It’s a shame there is a taboo against incest.’) Like her, John was bohemian, gifted, subtly amusing, sexually active. He passed his discarded mistresses on to her for consolation. In addition to family, there was also, often, a maid named Carrie, who had served one of Edward VII’s mistress, the entertaining Mrs James of Belloc’s ballad.¹⁰⁴

The Pelhams were actively aristocratic. Prudence visited Buckingham Palace at least once, wearing her sister’s dress and her mother’s jewellery. In March 1935, Queen Mary visited Stanmer. (In preparation, Prudence wrote, her mother was ‘frenziedly putting away & hiding all the things the queen would like’ because what royalty admired, the hostess is obliged to offer, and, as Edward Hodgkin put it, Queen Mary ‘was practically a kleptomaniac.’)¹⁰⁵ Her mother and brother would attend the coronation of Edward VIII in 1936. Never wealthy by aristocratic standards and having been crippled by double death duties, the family had just enough to live independently though modestly. To conserve funds, Lady Chichester regularly closed Stanmer, and whenever possible rented it. (Prudence warned Jones not to tell people about a ghost that haunts the house, lest prospective tenants be scared off.) The family now mostly lived half a mile away in Falmer, in a modest two-story eighteenth century flint-stone cottage named Mill House. To free-spirited Prudence, the loss of most of the family fortune meant little, although it was difficult being short of money. She travelled a lot, staying with friends, such visits being ‘happy times’ or simply ‘happies.’

* Edward Hodgkin and Grisewood found her friendly, but Miriam Rothschild remembers that ‘everybody was frightened of her.’

They were like lovers. Her letters to Jones indicate that they each saved the thoughts and observations of the day or days to share with the other in the evening by telephone or letter or when they met. Prudence's letters begin 'Dearest so dear David,' 'My dearest Dai,' 'Dearest sweetest David,' 'Sweet, sweet darling Dai,' 'My very dearest and best David.' 'Dearest, sweetest David—my very refreshing stream after which I thirst' [sic]. (To this metaphor he objected, and she replied, 'Most precious dear David. Why not let me say refreshing stream—I did really think that when I wrote it—not an old dried up waterworks. But today I think, more seasonably of a nice little fire licking up & down to keep you warm & happy.') 'O dear O darling,' she writes, 'I do miss you so much—I did love your letter & talking on the telephone.' She ends her letters: 'Your loving Prudence,' 'Sweet David God bless & keep you safe. Here is best sweet love to you from Prudence.' In one she writes, 'I do love you so much.' Despite such warmth at opening and close, the letters fall far short of love letters, as is indicated by her confessing being 'a little drunk ... but not drunker than you were when you put w kisses after whisky [sic] drinking with Col Hastings.'¹⁰⁶ The nearest she comes to overt sexuality is once in closing: 'Lay a kiss on your whiteness for me & here is very much love for you. God bless you & be so safe. Your loving Prudence.' Once she closes, 'Goo ni.'

He loved her with a fervour absent in her feeling for him. He depended on her emotionally as she did not on him. When separated, she missed him dreadfully, but partly because there was no one else who was also unemployed and available for interesting conversation during weekdays. She was physically undemonstrative, although they embraced affectionately at meeting and parting. In person, she did not talk much about her own feelings, and he may have confided more in her than she in him. Sexually, their relationship was not advanced—there was none of the intimate touching he had enjoyed with Petra. This is not owing to inhibition on her part, as has been mistakenly suggested. She had at least three extended sexual affairs during their friendship. One was with Victor Rothschild, who used to give her presents of first editions, which she sold to feed friends and stand them to drinks. While sexually involved with him, she preferred Jones as a person. Another affair was with Claude Philmore, whom she considered marrying (although she sometimes referred to him as 'Prigmore'). Because so independent, she was, in fact, generally regarded as sexually loose and wrote to Jones that it is awkward being so often suspected of ' pornos.' She often travelled alone. She smoked heavily Players but also a pipe; she went to pubs with others and alone—she enjoyed, in order of

preference, whisky, brandy, gin and Guinness and was particularly fond of a strong ale called Benskin's Colne Springs. Although Victor Rothschild said that her bohemianism was *nostalgie de la boue*, she was not promiscuous. For her, sex was an expression of love. She declined nearly all of the sexual invitations she received and turned down many proposals of marriage. She suffered greatly from unhappy love affairs. Nevertheless, she remained uninhibited, and if Jones, whom she dearly loved, had approached her sexually, she would have reciprocated.* Although Jones was warmly affectionate, she later confided to her husband, Robert Buhler, he was 'completely unsexed'—not perhaps the right word—and lived solely in a world of ideas.¹⁰⁷ Aware of his reserve, the check in him that sensitive women always felt, she took no sexual initiative. Yet he was deeply, passionately in love with her.

She was the muse of *In Parenthesis*, the one he thanks anonymously but 'very especially' in his Preface (xv).^{†108} In an early draft, he writes that a list of those to thank might easily exclude 'for reticence, the one most helpful of them all.' This can only be Prudence, since he then goes on to thank Grisewood. Thanking Prudence by name might have caused readers to infer a sexual involvement.

With a view to contributing to *In Parenthesis*, she sent him the *Heimskringla* and, in 1937, a Soninke legend copied by hand. It concerns a warrior prince named Gassire who wants to fight but is fated to carry a lute, one that will not play until it is given a heart by being carried into battle. For a calamitous week, he does carry it into battle, each day returning with the corpse of one of his sons, the lute absorbing a drop of each son's blood. After this happens with the seventh son, the lute begins not to play but to sing, melting the heart of the warrior, purging it of wrath, and causing the beautiful mother-goddess of war to vanish.[‡] The story is one of heroic tragedy and aesthetic sublimation. It is eleven pages long in Prudence's handwriting. That she took so much trouble copying it suggests that she was aware of its allegorical application to the transformation he had undergone or was achieving in his poem.

* This is the opinion of Robert Bruhler, her second husband and, from 1943, an acquaintance of Jones.

† When I suggested this to Grisewood in August 1985 he replied, 'Oh yes, certainly.' When I suggested it to Miriam Rothschild, she said, 'Of course, she inspired him the whole way along.'

‡ 'Gassire's Lute,' *African Genesis*, tr. Leo Frobenius and Douglas Fox (New York, London: Blom, 1937).

As the ‘most helpful’ of those who helped him, certainly during the later phases of composition, she provided important encouragement and editorial influence. He read bits aloud to her and sent her entire sections, which she read and responded to with suggestions. He consulted her, astonishingly (and tellingly), about correct spelling. He informed her by post of textual changes. Late in 1936 she wrote about changes made to what is now p. 17, ‘I love the new bit—“La! they’ve lopped his scarlet facings for him.” is heavenly. I think “born of immediate need” [which would subsequently be changed to ‘born of necessity’] is alright there don’t you? I like La better than Lor—much. O I do like this new bit so much more than the other old one.’ Sometime before December 1936 she wrote:

I’ve been reading your book up & down & backwards & forwards through the insertions—it isn’t half *bleeding* good. I like it best from chap IV onwards it gathers such terrific force from there. It would be a very great impertinence for me to do anything but praise it but I will tell you about some things in my next letter if you like! But they wouldn’t be worth anything nor should they (which I am sure they will not!) be taken seriously as my criticisms grow out of prejudices i.e. hate of prefaces etc.

She may have influenced the style of *In Parenthesis*. Her friend Miriam Rothschild said that in style it is more like Prudence’s speech than her letters to Jones convey and that Prudence’s letters to her, now destroyed, read like *In Parenthesis*.¹⁰⁹ It is certainly true that they shared ways of speaking, including the use of impolite language—her favourite line in the poem was ‘Who gives a bugger for the Dolorous Stroke’. It seems more likely that his speech and writing influenced her, but influence may have been mutual. Certainly she never thought of herself as his equal as a writer. She was too embarrassed ever to show him the poetry she wrote.

Mateless without Prudence, he nevertheless frequented pubs in the spring of 1935. In them he met ‘various ex-service blokes’ but, he writes, ‘all of ‘em seem to have been in the A.S.C.’—Army Service Corps (drivers of transport)—‘& all staff wallahs are canteen wallahs who sleep in beds.’ Occasionally he met some who had actually experienced combat, but they, too, often disappointed him:

I can’t say I recognize them as brothers or that those days have gentled their condition.—its the same conventional ‘dirty story’ stuff & the incompetence of the Staff.—damnation its such a bore. They all seem to have been ... driving imaginary RAMC majors to brothels—or majors themselves, & then only filled with talk of the Grand National & the scandal of the tax on shirts.—Of course its like the church I suppose—I mean all you ever hear about is Fr this & the circulation of The Universe & one or two odd superstitions thrown in.

Occasionally, however, he met an old soldier to suit him. He spent the whole of one Monday afternoon (11 March) talking with one about the Western Front. He also talked for hours about strategy with the Acting Adjutant to a county regiment (he was staying at the Fort) and who convinced him that ‘the next show isn’t half going to be a bugger.’¹¹⁰

His time now was marked by small appreciations. While walking the beach on 11 March, he saw a rare sight, a swan riding on the sea, ‘white & proudly on the sunny waves ...—a marvel to see’. He sat in the window-corner of the Marine Hotel eating ‘hake & egg sauce,’ writing with ‘the sea losing its shape in mist—I rather like it.’ Dorothea Travis arrived and drove him into what he thought was the ‘most lovely’ country. They walked and talked, and he picked primroses to send Petra.¹¹¹

He was now reading ‘old Blake.’ He wrote to Hague, ‘You would laugh at his comments on Sir J. Reynolds discourses such as “O Yes”—“Damned Fool”—“Liar” “Imposter.” Wish he would rise to “Bollocks” but no.’ He also read the eloquent strategy-focused battle-accounts of rugby matches in *The Times* and was astonished when Ireland beat Wales in Belfast, 9 to 3. ‘They simply chewed them up in a bitter east wind & frozen ground—huge Ulster giants & little dark battered men—they apparently became utterly demoralized & now they’ve lost the triple crown. bugger, bugger—but I’m glad it was Ireland & not the bloody Jocks that did it.’ (In December he would read about Wales defeating the New Zealand All Blacks: ‘I was overjoyed ... what a marvellous match it must have been.’). He read in *The Times* John Simon’s talk at the Royal Academy banquet, considered it ‘balls ... a cad speech throughout—as I suppose befits that loathsome institution—what a gang’ and wrote to Gill urging him, if he sees Simon, to ‘tell him about our old friend Art abiding on the side of the mind & how that the Light of His Glory shines on the eye of the mind rather than on the eye of this flesh.’ He found on the society page in March a description of the first Court of the season, which reminded him of Joyce and which he copied out, with changes, in letters to Grisewood and Hague:

For Mrs E.A. Strachan a classical gown of pearl tinted satin with diamanté embroidery and a train of chiffon & satin. For Miss Patricia Rose a Victorian gown of multi-coloured flowers appliqué at neckline & hem. For Miss Pamela Fisher a picture frock of white satin faille with a thick ruche of satin & silver leaves for her shoulders, with a train of white net needle-run with silver. For Mrs Napper-Tandy a gown of yellow & gold brocade with a nice bodice inlet with a tucker of gold, a train from Brussels of lace & net displayed on gold cloth from Worth of Paris and Hanover St West, and for Mrs Joan Hague an immortal Kirtle flowered & trim as her gentleness,

woven in silks from the Barbary goats by woof & weft by the gunners mate on the frozen hill in Hewenden Bucks.

‘What a pity’, he adds, ‘they don’t write their Leading Article up to that standard—“needle-run with silver” is top-boy stuff isn’t it & O the names!’¹¹² He looked frequently to such descriptions for their ‘accidental beauty,’ which he would imitate and augment in his poetry, most notably when describing the changing dress of Aphrodite through the ages in “Epithalamion” (*WP* 34-41) and in describing Gwenhwyfar in *The Anathemata* (195-203).

On 2 April the tide went out ‘a long long way’ and he walked out along the bay to the west ‘& seemed to be on the ocean bed with enormous masses of seaweed lank over the rocks & waving in the shallow pools looking like the Sargasso Sea.’ He ‘looked for living things but found only a dead crab.’¹¹³

On 15 April, rain pouring down, he wrote in bed to Hague, ‘I’ve been awfully miserable & horrible & not well & I ran my head accidentally against a great stone sticking out on the esplanade & that has been horrible—it was a great crash & grazed me head right through my green hat & wad of hair—I felt like Taplow when Odude hit him.’ (Taplow recounts, ‘I seen a hoast of stars in the firmanant’, 113). He went to the doctor, who insisted that he reduce his smoking to ten cigarettes a day, bathe in the morning instead of at night, rest half an hour before lunch and dinner, drink only two ‘gingies’ a day, ‘& do some *physical jerks* each morning.’ The doctor insisted that it was better to nap before than after lunch, so he lay in bed for a half hour with a Welsh rug over him, wide awake, then descended for lunch, returned, lay down and fell asleep. Waking, he thought, ‘What do you mean not good to sleep after lunch. These doctors aren’t you. I feel much better for that obliviousness—but have a head ache all the same.’ The doctor later visited, asked whether he was anxious about anything and inquired, ‘What do you read? Let me look—“The Nature of Belief,” “Shakespeare,” “Medieval Religion”. I shouldn’t trouble the mind with anything disturbing you know. What is your light reading?’ Jones replied with considerable embarrassment, ‘I like *Alice in Wonderland* if I want to have a good laugh.’ Writing to Hague, he translated more of his exchange with the doctor into Taplowese, ‘Are you troubled with the old pornoes—Says hold up! What’s this—I say what’s this—says only in the manner of all men—Humans Nature—says ah, yes.’¹¹⁴

Not having heard from Prudence for a while, he began worrying, ‘I do wish I could hear from her.’ The next morning he received a long letter, in which she wrote about having searched

in vain through half Sussex for a nice farm house in which he might stay. With her letter came two Trollope novels he had not read and ‘a nice pair of socks *that fit*, & are the colour of a pale lioness.’¹¹⁵ She visited again in late April.

In May 1935 Dawson came to Sidmouth to visit his daughters. Jones and Prudence met him on the promenade on the 3rd, just before she was to leave. Impressed by his learning, she exclaimed after he walked away, ‘What a Tiger!’ From then on, in their circle of friends, Dawson was ‘Tiger’. Jones had Dawson and his tall, beautiful wife, Valerie, to dinner at the Fort and went to lunch with him the next day. ‘I do like him,’ Jones writes. ‘We talked a lot about Wales—he told me the first thing he ever wrote was an essay on early Welsh stuff. Gododdin & Co. He told me about a freshly discovered Chanson de Geste called the Song of William which he said is better than the Song of Roland in some ways.’ They also spoke for hours about the Catholic Church. He showed Dawson the section of *In Parenthesis* that Hague had printed but received no encouragement. Dawson thought, he wrote to Hague, ‘that *all* modern efforts at creative work, by being cut off from our culture tradition are necessarily in the void.’ Jones had long been aware of this difficulty. ‘Are they *insurmountable* that’s what it comes to—I still cling, however vainly, to the idea that if you make a living thing with words that really correspond to something you have really perceived—(oh bugger why have I got into this awful stuff!) then some chap somewhere at some time will understand & it’s worth while & first class & primb “in the void” or no.’ Jones went with him to the University of Exeter to hear Dawson lecture in a small room in which ‘chaps & girls bent over taking notes’, Jones wishing he were young and among them. Dawson left Sidmouth in May but, for the rest of the 1930s, they would spend weeks together there, walking and talking. When Dawson was having a neurotic attack, Jones usually felt no increase in his own depression or anxiety. This he attributed to their having different kinds of neurosis. Their conversation began slowly and accelerated, bringing one or both of them out of the doldrums. Jones usually enjoyed these talks greatly, and they influenced his writing if only by inducing him to include Dawson among its intended readers.¹¹⁶

At the start of June, Prudence invited Jones to Stanmer to attend *The Magic Flute* at Glyndebourne. He wanted to go but felt ill and was uncertain whether to go to Rock also, or instead, or at all. He suffered ‘the usual misrub & come over’ whenever considering a move. He also ‘felt pretty *terrified* of Lady Chichester & chaps coming & me all in rags & perhaps having a come over ill.’¹¹⁷ So he declined.

Weary of Sidmouth since April, he was ‘absolutely broke with these vast hotel expenses’. His earnings from picture sales in the previous year had fallen to £147. There were still pictures for sale in each of the Leicester, Tooths, Lefevre, Zwemmers, Redfern, and French (formerly Goupil) galleries. There had been a lot more at Tooths because one of its dealers, Bunny Keen, was a fan of Jones, but he had left the gallery in the spring of 1935, and Jones was asked to remove six unsold watercolours. Nicolette promoted his work and sent him in July a cheque for £16.16 for a picture she had sold to a Welsh school master. Because the cheque drew on Barclays Bank, ‘Gorseinon Branch, ... the nicest kind of Welsh place-name’ he cashed it reluctantly after some delay. He wrote to Nicolette that apart from his pictures stored at Brockley and with Ede, there were now so few that she ‘might as well tell people to buy some obscure dead bloke.’ Dr Wood’s advice to avoid work seemed to make little difference in his condition except that he did feel better physically ‘but it is such a *vile* life doing no work—& with so much I *would* do. Bugger. The book seems out of the question—It was my *great* hope that at least I might by going carefully get through the part I brought with me—but not a line hardly have I been able to correct since Hartland.’¹¹⁸

In the second week of June, he packed his big trunk and on Thursday 12 June 1935 left for London and Burns’s flat. He took a taxi from the station to Glebe Place, dropped off his trunk, and then went directly to the Tate to see Ede. Augustus John was assembling an exhibition of Welsh artists to tour Wales and had asked Jones to contribute.* He and Ede were to select work, though Jones was inclined to send nothing because he ‘had so appallingly little ... & *nothing absolutely first rate*.’ He wanted to include the *Self Portrait*, as he now called it, a painting of cattle that Ede owned, and *Petra im Rosenhag*. But he felt the required borrowing to be beyond him, and rather than let Wales ‘have oddments,’ he decided to do nothing until he began working again and could produce ‘something worth while.’ But Ede took over and organized Jones’s part of the exhibit. Jones stayed in Brockley a few days because his mother was suffering from rheumatism and a dislocated shoulder. He went to Helen Sutherland’s dentist in London, she paying the bill. He saw Dr. Wood who strengthened his medication to a bromide mixture (a sedative, causing drowsiness), Empirin tablets (an addictive narcotic analgesic), and

* The other ‘Welsh’ artists included John himself, Cedric Morris, Frank Dobson, Wyndham Lewis, William Rothenstein, William Nicholson, Richard Sickert, Wilson Steer, Stanley Spencer, and Chirsiopher Wood.

tablets for an underactive thyroid. Soon ‘jiggered up’ in London, he fled with Dawson to Dawson’s inherited family house, Hartlington Hall, not far from Skipton in Wharfedale just above Burnsall Bridge in North Yorkshire.¹¹⁹

The wilds of the Yorkshire dales were a ‘welcome change.’ He loved the country. ‘This place,’ he wrote Petra,

is *absolutely heavenly*. Exactly the kind of scenery I like. Very like Capel-y-ffin in many ways that is to say great hills & wooded streams & the sound of waters & bare places above with grey stone walls & broken half-buildings with horned sheep under the walls—and this comfortable Victorian house built among trees in the middle of it all ... & it’s nice being with the Dawsons & the house is filled with books’—‘filled tight as tight ... so that you don’t know which to read at all. So as usual you find yourself reading something you might read anywhere—‘The Listener’ or Burke’s Peerage.

A bedroom was converted into a chapel, ‘just like a mass-room in a country house during the years of recusancy when you had to say Mass more or less in secret.’ His bedroom looked out over the valley and river ‘upon a great line of hills’. Though more prosperous, the place reminded him of Wales. There were horned sheep ‘that bleat all the time’ instead of ponies, but ‘under the tangled rowan, ash, oak, & alder trees by the wind of stream & the out-push of grey rock & a broken wooden bridge’ it was ‘*just* like the damp under-parts of the Honddu.’ He liked ‘a rowan tree that blazes with berries & yellowing leaves—like Moses bush’ and he liked walking along the stream in hopes of seeing a heron that lived there. On one of his walks he spotted a white horse on the hill above the stream ‘a very Welsh looking fairy horse made by enchantment.’ This was ‘glorious country—but remote & far & the kind of place that one wants roots in ... to feel right there.’ He wanted to try painting the ‘very romantic scenery’ but could not because it was too cold, though ‘colder, if anything, indoors—except downstairs’ where a fire was kept burning and where Dawson sat in a high-backed chair knee-deep in piles of books. Jones would have liked to paint from a window but found the views ‘rather cased in with heavy stone divided windows with small panes of glass.’ He found that the chief advantage of the house was proximity to a pub.¹²⁰

On the morning of 3 July he walked alone ‘over the hills ... & back under deep green places by the river & sat & shouted psalms in Welsh.’ He was carrying with him the Book of Common Prayer in English & Welsh, a book that gave him ‘great pleasure’. He liked learning a few words while declaiming. He especially enjoyed the sound of ‘Blessed Virgin Mary’ in

Welsh, *Fendigedig Fair Forwyn* (the 'F's pronounced as 'V's). That afternoon he would like to have napped but did not want to miss seeing with the Dawsons an ancient place called Grasswood, the mile-square site of a British village and fortified hill that Dawson thought may have been the capital of Urien's Rheged.¹²¹

Though a good deal better than at Sidmouth, Dawson seemed to him 'pretty sunk with the complications of mind & body,' sleeping only with a sedative and then hardly at all. (By comparison, Jones felt himself, 'a regular bruiser with a fine swagger on me.'¹²²) Nevertheless, they talked a lot, Dawson speaking frequently of the geological and historical importance of the local district. He told him that he was Welsh on his mother's side, had lived as a child in the Castle in The Hay, north of Capel-y-ffin, and from childhood had been interested in medieval Welsh history and literature. And so they talked of Wales, of The Hay being neither Welsh nor English, of Dawson's father who built the house on the site of Hay Castle, of his having been a Colonel in the artillery. 'I always remember Xtophr taking his father's sabre down from above the great fire-place in the hall to show it to me. It was a very touching moment for it was for him obviously a thing to be treasured.' Dawson's family was army, except for one member who baffled the others by becoming 'a damned lawyer.' His own becoming a scholar was tolerated owing to his ill health. Though he would not admit to linguistic ability, he read Greek, Latin, French, German, and Italian, and Jones asked him why, with his interest in the Irish and Welsh deposits, he had not learned Welsh. Dawson replied, 'Well, I'm too old to be a Celticist now.'¹²³

He was surprised at Dawson being such a country squire. The place and Dawson's relation to it gave a personal dimension his recent writing. The previous year, Jones had read in *Enquiries into Religion and Culture* (1934) about British culture being essentially rural. Only with the close of the Georgian period had England ceased being an agrarian state, and industrialism became the dominant element in the life of the nation. Jones and Dawson agreed in considering the conveniences of modern life not worth the sacrifice of the agrarian foundation of British culture.

Dawson complained of being unrecognized in the academic world, by the Catholic Church, and by the general public. Jones told him that he had visited a cathedral on the way to Sidmouth and heard the dean, preaching, refer to 'that distinguished historian Christopher Dawson.' Dawson dismissed the dean as an ass. Jones said, 'What, then, is the recognition or fame that you want?' Dawson replied, 'I want to be the subject of a story in the *Daily Mirror*.'¹²⁴

He had no inkling that his interests put him out of touch with most people and discouraged a large following.

Because the Dawsons were travelling, Jones could stay only a fortnight and went to Rock. It was good to be back, and soon after his arrival, for the first time in six months, he felt well enough to resume revising *In Parenthesis*. As he worked, he wondered ‘when the bugger *will* get finished.’ For a week or two he and Edward Hodgkin were Sutherland’s only guests. In the mornings they worked in their bedrooms at the top of the house, Edward preparing for Schools, Jones struggling with *In Parenthesis*. At twelve they set off together for the pub in Rennington. They were both collecting the Players-cigarette cards of the kings and queens and, by coincidence, each completed his series while buying packs together. It was quick march out, a fast Guinness, and quicker march back, to avoid disgraceful lateness for lunch.¹²⁵

Sutherland put Jones to work reordering the room she used as a picture gallery. About his pictures in her collection, he writes, ‘My own old work makes me quite *sick*—it is all such a bloody old tangle—but there are some lovely Ben’s here.’ He was, at this time, reading the correspondence between Hopkins, Bridges, and Dixon: ‘Lord poor old high spot Hopkins did have a twisting of the spirit what with the Jesuits & the “making” business combined. You can feel the torture in every word.’¹²⁶

He confided at this time to Grisewood that he had ‘been going through pretty good mental miseries.’ He thought that people are best when holding to their ““general line” as the Soviets say’ and that going seriously wide of it can be ‘pretty awful’ for them, as forced inactivity was for him:

I’ve always always as long as I can ever remember felt my business (however blindly) to be my work & always knew that everything had got to go for that. I’ve always felt ‘agnostic’ about every other matter—that other people ‘knew’ about the legislature, the command of men, marriage, council, the whole realm of prudence & affairs. I’ve always known that I must be & am essentially a Private soldier in & out of the war & who with fear & trembling might just manage to learn to slope arms & sometimes remember to turn left on the command Left & just have the physical strength to not fall out on the line of route perhaps. But that my own real life was that of judgement of the work to be made—line by line. To be unfettered when about that work & that that was the only sphere I knew about. That my only contribution was that. Not indeed that it was a contribution but that anyway perhaps it might be—or anyway that I was a fool indeed at all else. But now since this curious illness that has deprived me (anyway for the time) of doing that work I do find it excruciatingly difficult sometimes. I feel rather like a Life Guardsman in a breastplate & spurs without a horse in a mine-crater in a gas attack. He might do the

silliest things, mightn't he! 127

On Sunday 21 July 1935, Sutherland had seventeen miners from the Ashington colliery for tea and to see her pictures. A number of them were amateur painters whose work she was championing. She assigned Jones to show them her pictures. It was like being asked to conduct a seminar. He had never spoken in public and had always been afraid of the rough members of the labouring class. 'God! I was so frightened,' he recalls, 'but they were *so* nice—intelligent & sensitive, 20 times more “aware” than most people one meets. Of course I know miners have, like sailors, some special nobility belonging to their trade. They told me that candle-light was *much* the best light to work coal by’—better than modern acetylene lamps. The miners found him interesting and would remember that 'his gentleness, his sincerity, and above all the poetry that is apparent in his every gesture, struck a spark in one or two of the members of the group.'¹²⁸

He enjoyed seeing animals at Rock. He observed cart horses and plough horses and talked with ploughmen. On his way to and from the pub, passing a farm where there were seventeen cats, he delighted in watching 'a nise girl carrying a bowl of stuff to feed them & they were all about her with their tails waving upright in the air.' For a while a heron nested in the reeds of the pond, and he used to watch it fly by the house each evening. He liked sitting by the pond. He and Helen Ede sat and talked there in the 'copse, a preserve of game, a charming place where the trees seem to teem with live things—mysterious croackings from under the dark bushes & there are fowl kept in this copse in hutches, but on platforms among the trees.' A keeper 'with a gun & with things of his trade hanged about him ... showed me a lovely sparrow-hawk he shot the other day with great speckled wings spread & curved sharp talons & his golden eye proud still in his poor death-head with heavenly legs with trousers of spotted tawny feathers.' It reminded him of the speckled kites that fed on the dead in Saxon battles. On the morning of 16 July 1935, he watched a weasel eating a dead bird in the middle of the great lawn:

I was surprised he let me come ever so near in fact I stood within a yard of him he was enjoying it awfully & it looked all very sinister with black flies buzzing round. All very jackal-&-vulture-on-stricken-field 'in little.'

Then suddenly ... he looked up, gave me a look of great hate with beady eyes—drew away & then off over the big space of clipped grass to the nearest tree. His lithe twistings & snoutings into the decayed bird were pretty horrible I must say but I felt sorry to have disturbed his nice meal.

In his room during this visit, he kept by his bed Kuno Meyer's *Selections from Ancient Irish Poetry* (1911), in which he especially liked a poem about St. Patrick and another about a monk and his pet cat, which he could recite by heart.¹²⁹

Jim Ede asked him to write a brief account of his life for lectures he was writing for the Welsh Exhibit at Cardiff and said that he was describing him as the best modern British watercolourist and engraver. To this, Jones objected, ‘am I?? ...I don’t imagine there is any solid achievement in any of my stuff—only a kind of tentative reminder of the kind of “world” some of us friends happen to like.’ Throughout the summer, when not revising his poem, he wrote his account for Ede, which is also a manifesto. He send it to Ede, who would send him back a typescript, which he emended, noticing that in type his habitual underlining for emphasis looked ridiculous.¹³⁰

He missed Prudence. Talking about how marvellous and sensitive she was, he got Sutherland to invite her for a visit. About 10 August, Prudence arrived at Alnmouth and was met by Jones and Sutherland’s chauffeur. Since there was ‘no beer or rollicking’ at Rock, Jones was apprehensive. Informing her of the rules, he urged her to be on time for breakfast her first morning. She said, ‘For God’s sake wake me up.’ So he rose early and knocked on her door. Silence. He knocked harder. Silence. He nipped in, and roused her, urging her to wash her face. (‘Prudence,’ he said, ‘was not an awfully clean kind of a girl.’) The maid, Beatrice, spotted him exiting the room and reported to Sutherland, who was convinced they had spent the night together—*here*, infuriatingly, under *her* roof. She became extremely cool towards him and remained so for some time. (She subsequently claimed to have angry over the servants being scandalized.) He felt chagrined at being subject to moral opprobrium without having enjoyed the immorality.¹³¹

A few days after this disastrous start, he asked Prudence to cut his hair. To keep the clippings from the floor, they took a sheet off his bed and put it down. Afterwards they bundled the clippings in the sheet and together carried it into the wood behind the house—only to meet Sutherland returning from feeding birds. Discovered, they confessed, and she coolly informed him that if he had told her he wanted a haircut, the chauffeur could have driven him to a barber.¹³²

Because Prudence was a rival for his affection and because the two women were temperamental opposites, the visit was a failure. For Prudence, Jones had managed to get Sutherland to allow beer on the dining room table, but Prudence found the constraints unbearable. She wrote to the Hagues:

I feel criminal impulses of the worst kind welling up—Christ I could do with a spit of booz [sic]. ... This is a

house of 'utter prevention' ... It has been *heavenly* seeing David & you do really get given the day off in a way—but you are *so* frightened of being late for lunch & the pub is just too far to swil [sic] in & be back by 12.30. Today has been an absolute joko of a bloody awful one. Start off late for breakfast. We are asked to make a reath [sic] for Very [sic] Moore who's birthday it is. Sweat over reath using flowers out of two pots on the table (which pots were specially arranged by Helen for other purposes) well bugger it all you can't think of everything. ... Evening ... half the chaps waited in the library & the other half in the drawing-room—each waiting for each—gong going to & fro before dinner. Helen was just *fuming* It *was* awful & only cold rabbit to cheer you. There are many religious discussions mixed up with communism & good works. David leaps to doors & for coffee-cups I never saw him so agile. We sit by a small, nice pond for a bit nearly every day & complain and are happy in turns. I do think it *awful* that David is to stay here so long. I'm sure it will make him ill. too fed up to go on writing.

She left ten days later to stay with the Hagues at congenial Pigotts, and subsequently recalled her visit in several undated letters to Jones: 'it is *so* vivid in my mind, being with you & enjoying sitting by the pond & walking in the dark woods & seeing the rams fight on the moor.' 'Now it seems quite a short time ago that we ... shook your hair-feathers off the dust sheet in the wood & cursed & hurried back from the pub. I don't see how I shall ever be able to stay at Rock again tho' I don't think I would be asked even if I was able.' 'I am terribly sorry that I didn't make Hellen [sic] think I liked her a huge lot, because bugger it I am *terrifically* grateful to her but I couldn't say how frightfully kind and noble you are to let me have such a heavenly nise time with my old pall!' During her visit, he was reworking Part IV of *In Parenthesis*. 'Admit that I was forbaring [sic] & restrained,' she writes, '& did not grab it as I would have liked to.'¹³³

On 2 August news came that Edward Hodgkin had received a first in History and everybody was 'jumping with pleasure.' On the same day, Jones went by train for a short visit with Conty Sitwell and her daughter Ann at Barmoor Castle, twenty miles north and eight miles inland. Externally, Barmoor resembled Rock Hall but, Jones reports, it had 'a lovely spacious Adams interior with Ashanti—Somaliland, Afganistan, Boer, Crimean, Peninsular trophies & memories all over the place & an Egyptian cannon on the lawn.' He liked the country surrounding it, much of which Conty Sitwell owned, and it intrigued him that it was 'almost on Flodden Field,' where the Scotts suffered a calamitous defeat to the English in 1513. Whenever visiting Rock he usually stayed here for a few days, enjoying the relief from Sutherland's strict regime. It was a mile and a half west of Lowick, where he went to Mass on Sundays and would regularly nipped off 'for a gingy' in a pub. Sitwell was a gracious hostess. When he took the train to visit for a day, he enjoyed passing 'through nice rolling land with wheat & oat & barley

fields shimmering like a quiet sea'. As the train paused at Lucker, he would consider the capital L and think, 'Christ what a temptation to alter the signs by night.' It was a relief not to be driven there in Sutherland's car: 'not so much—Mills this & now Mills that & do be careful not to run down that bunny-rabbit & remember you must call at Mrs Things & don't forget to take the other road—not to be later than 5.31 or 32 at the very latest.'¹³⁴

Back at Rock in late August, a parson visiting for tea remarked on not seeing him at church and asked whether he ever went. 'No,' said Jones, 'I'm Roman Catholic.' The parson then asked 'before a crowded tea table, "What in your opinion is the essential difference between the Church of England and yourselves?"' Jones 'stumbled and stuttered.' He couldn't, in public, answer such a question.

Later that month, he wrote to Joan Hague that 'one of these sods of guests' had stolen his 'best thick flannel trousers,' tailor-made, with his keys and penknife in a pocket. 'Expect they are wearing them now in some posh place & thinking "Ha ha, what a find—aren't I a swell. Young D.J. can well afford this loss he is rolling in wealth."' After such 'grisly suspicion of those toffs' and a week after ordering a new pair with his 'meagre monies,' he found the 'stolen' trousers in his room below a curtain end.¹³⁵

On his dressing table he had two pictures he had received this month, 'a heavenly big photograph of a pussy cat' from Prudence, and a picture by one of the Hague children, 'a boat running in an inland sea—I do like it so much,' he wrote to Joan. 'It's so free & yet so objective.'¹³⁶

That autumn, he spent three weeks at Barmoor, 'lovely & free,' with a large party, including Conty Sitwell's sons, Bill and Simon, two of their Harrow schoolmates, Conty's daughter Ann, a friend of hers from Gurton named Bridget Balfour, and Cooie Lane. With them Jones picked mushrooms, although he considered them 'a detestable food' and 'highly dangerous' and never ate them. He declined to play croquet. At night he slept for the first time in 'a huge four-poster bed' and felt 'like the King of France or rather the Dauphin.'¹³⁷ He wore a vest to which he gave historical associations and wore a bracelet Prudence had left behind at Rock. She writes, 'I *am* glad ... you liked it there in your four-posted bed—I could not have resisted, had I been there, coming to look at you in it—with a scarf round your neck and an overcoat on ... I nearly weep when I think of you in the Roman-British *nise* innocent vest and my bracelet—please keep it for me on your *nise* wrist.' At Rock he had been sleeping in 'a little

room ... with a stone mullioned window, low & thick walls ... with a crenellated place below for archers & pourers of boiling pitch.’ He would possibly recall his stays at Rock and Barmoor and his visits to Bamburgh Castle when writing ‘The Sleeping Lord’ in 1967, a poem in which Norman night-sentries in a ‘crenellated traverse bay’ wake the captain of the castle ‘in his newly glazed, arras-hung chamber’ (*SL* 94-5).

On 7 October Conty Sitwell left for London and since Sutherland was also away, and he wished to avoid London, he went to Alnmouth, ten miles south of Rock, to stay in the comfortable Schooner Hotel, where he was the only guest. He had tea in the smoking room, brought to him by ‘a nice girl ... with a smile Christ what a smile.’ Upstairs there was a fire in his bedroom. He liked seaside Alnmouth very much, better than Sidmouth, though he preferred the warmth of the south shore and the central heating of the Fort. The tiny quiet town with its shops, church, chapel, and ‘six pubs in the one street or thereabouts’ was ‘a place where a small river meets the sea without any nonsense.’ At the estuary of the Aln were ‘sandy dunes & mud-flats & a bridge across at just the right place & sea birds calling on the wrack left by the tide—all the things I like. & simply no one at all about— ... I expect once it had boats.’ There was a wreck on the shore. ‘O how all the sea-trade has gone—everywhere in this island—no more the sails & the boats drawn up or listing out—it was the same in Devon.’ Because it was autumn, there were few people about. Those he met boasted about ‘their superb golf links’ and the numbers of ‘so called visitors’ in the summer. It was cold. He put the lining in his raincoat and on 8 October went for a long walk ‘along the sands’ and threw stones at a stake, something at which he was ‘out of practice’. He ‘met two types of golf-girl with a huge great mastiff that walked toward me—Christ what a bugger dogs are.’ In the evening he read his copy of *The Poet’s Tongue*, an anthology edited by W.H. Auden and John Garrett, which Grisewood had sent him in Cairo. It had ‘some good things in it,’ especially, he thought, good nursery rhymes. He also enjoyed the parodies, especially one by J.C. Squire entitled ‘If Wordsworth had written *The Everlasting Mercy*’ and particularly the lines

And there I long in serious converse stayed,
Speaking of Nature & of politics
And then turned homeward meditating much
About the single transferable vote.

He was also amused by E.V. Knox's parody entitled ‘The Everlasting Percy or Mr Masfield on the Railway Centenary,’ especially these verses: ‘I never knew what Life or Art meant, / I wrote

“Reserved” on my compartment.’ He would send a copy of the anthology to Prudence for Christmas and give another to Edward Hodgkin. During his stay, he saw Augustus John there and they visited briefly. When subsequently asked how Jones was, John answered, ‘He’s better. He went down to the beech and drew some sort of monster in the sands with a stick.’ On the 9th, Mills came with the Rolls and returned him to Rock.¹³⁸

Unable to paint or draw, when not revising *In Parenthesis* or talking with friends, he filled the empty days and evening since his breakdown reading. It was his ongoing self-education. He believed it ‘absolutely indispensable’ to read widely: ‘whatever you think about it, you must ... read it.’ This applied to scholarship, but also to literature, including novels. He tried Jane Austen but seemed ‘to miss the point.’ He read Trollope, whose writing he realized was ‘*really* only second rate compared with the great human works—but,’ he said, ‘I do enjoy it so for what it is.’ In the spring of 1935, Prudence sent him *Doctor Thorne* and *The Vicar of Bulhampton*, both of which he read for the first time and thought among Trollope’s best, especially *The Vicar*—‘what a lot of buggers,’ he writes to her. ‘I like Mary Lowther & Captain Marrable. The latter made him ‘laugh a lot.’ He found Trollope’s junior army officers ‘always entertaining—& always a bit like Hague.’ He read Dickens, whose artistic failings he found irritating: ‘It always seems *awful* to me’ when he ‘speaks through his characters.’ In March 1935 he read *David Copperfield*, which he thought ‘grand in places,’ liking Betsy Trotwood and ‘the Heep-Micawber business’ but bemoaning ‘how horribly old Dickens lacks any decent ideas ... about anything.’ If only he ‘had had a religion & a philosophy instead of a filthy tenth rate emotional “morality” I should have been obliged.’ In 1941 after reading *Nicholas Nickleby*, which he enjoyed, he would write to Helen Sutherland,

Dickens comes over me from time to time. I think him a very worrying writer, a very great artist, but worrying, hard work I always find & almost as remote from ourselves, in a way, as the civilization of ancient China!—yet very close too—a curious nostalgia & loathing combined he gives me sometimes. He is so benighted in a way. The Devil is more powerful than God in his stuff in a way, at least the ‘evil’ thing is positive & potent & convincing, whereas the ‘good’ thing is barely more than a sentimental thing—I suppose it’s because of a metaphysical deficiency—it’s supernatural evil of a vast sort opposed only by a kind of humanism—there is no love of God really in any of it—of course there is no doubt, really, but—like St Philip Neri, the Founder of the Oratorians (& also General Booth or someone) said, ‘the devil has all the best tunes’—well I feel in Dickens the devil has the best bits! Same way with Milton of course only different (It might be objected that it is also true of Shakespeare—but that’s all saved by sheer artistry—it’s true there are no ‘saints’ in S, or anything resembling

one—but praise, praise, & praise, all through none the less.) I except Pickwick & all the ‘Pickwickian’ stuff in all his work—that’s got really ‘praise,’ ‘Lauds’ to it. But take Scroodge. I feel he’s ‘realer’ as a bad old man than as a good old man. I do like it when he says to ghost No 1—‘Don’t be flowery, Jacob’—that’s grand! that’s like a saint would talk to a devil.

It was ‘a really most heroic concept’ he thought, ‘to rebuke a ghost for piling it on.’ He repeatedly read and delighted in George and Weedon Grossmith’s *Diary of a Nobody*. He also read Hardy’s *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* and *The Return of the Native* and some of Hardy’s stories, liking especially ‘A Tradition of 1804’ in which Napoleon, scouting for a good spot to invade, lands at night near Weymouth and is recognized by a shepherd who regrets being without his gun. He also read popular histories, such as *Mutiny on the Bounty* (given to him by Edward Hodgkin) and its sequel *Men Against the Sea* in which he particularly liked the description of those in the small boat casting lots for the parts of an albatross and Bly getting the feet.¹³⁹

He especially loved John Collier’s *His Monkey Wife* (1930), a novel he first read soon after publication and reread nearly every year for the rest of his life. Exemplifying one of his favourite axioms, ‘nothing excellent that is not odd,’ this novel concerns a female chimpanzee in love with a man. While remaining physically an ape, she has mentally evolved to human thought and sensibility. For most of the book, she is the maid of a nasty socialite, his fiancée, but at a crucial moment switches costumes so that she, not the socialite, weds the man, who then transfers his amorous feelings to the chimp. The novel ends with the couple about to consummate their union: ‘Under her long and scanty hair he caught glimpses of a plum-blue skin ... the candle, guttering beside the bed, was strangled in the grasp of a prehensile foot.’ The effect of this novel on Jones was sharpened by his fastidiousness but it is also very funny, its humour lying chiefly in the cumulative effect of convoluted expression and comic style.¹⁴⁰

He praised it to friends, including Hodgkin, who in 1933 gave him Collier’s next novel, *Tom’s a-Cold*, which Jones found ‘terribly interesting.’ It concerns a tribe surviving in Hampshire after a future collapse of civilization during aerial warfare. In this new Dark Age, virtually identical to that of post-Roman Britain, the tribe raids an outpost of Swindon forty miles away to obtain women. It is a gripping narrative of multiple betrayals redolent of the legends of Troy, Arthur, and the foundation of Rome. He occasionally reread this novel—in the spring of 1966 he would reread it ‘a number of times.’¹⁴¹ It gave vividly imaginative expression to his own belief that the decline of the west was ushering in a new Dark Age.

In Classical literature, he occasionally reread the *Odyssey*. In the spring of 1932 he had read it in Butcher and Lang's translation, 'more or less imitation O.T. prose,' which he disliked as 'not a thing,' not art. At the end of the decade he would read Virgil for the first time, but, after reading the *Aeneid*, preferred Homer.* His friend Hague had a strong Virgilian bias that, in early Jones-criticism, obscured Jones's initial, enduring, predominant Homeric affinities. These may be inferred in retrospect from his response to rereading the *Odyssey*—in Rieu's translation, which he also disliked—in 1956. He found that the intervention of gods was 'extraordinarily like "reality"', that Athena's words to Odysseus and her actions on behalf of him and his family were, he thought, 'very close indeed to our Xtian ideas about saints, guardian angels, and "Our Lady"'. 'I find it incredibly moving when Athena does a little bit to help & then withdraws & lets the chap himself do something. I find that terribly convincing. It must be astounding in the original.' He loved the moments when, to give the suitors an extra twisting, Aphrodite makes Penelope taller and more shining and whiter than 'newly sawn ivory' and when, during the climactic bloodshed, Athena restrains her power until the issue is all but decided and then raises her deadly aegis. He felt that woven with the, to him repellently savage, conditions of Mycenaean culture were 'all the time emotions & chance suggestions of such tenderness & civility & sophistication that it makes one jump—and weep also.'¹⁴² Jones's Homeric affinity would inform the Queen of the Woods who visits the dead at the end of *In Parenthesis*. Moreover, like all modernist writing, his is Homeric in its use of paratactic form—juxtaposition without explanatory coordination. He would also be, in *The Anathemata*, the only modern writer to use the geometric structure, or concentric 'circular form', of the Homeric epics. His affinities with Homer include a general literary preference for writing originally of the common people—writing that belongs to folk tradition. Even his literary output would be Homeric, with *In Parenthesis* as his *Iliad*, *The Anathemata* as his *Odyssey*; and the mid-length poems of *The Sleeping Lord* as his Homeric odes.

He reread early medieval poetry, in which he sensed the vigour of 'the springtime of a culture. He knew enough Welsh to appreciate the technical achievement of medieval Welsh

* As late as March 1939, Jones had not read Virgil or Ovid and was enquiring of friends with a Classical education what the best translations were. More even than in his poetry, his preference for Homer is apparent in its early drafts. Grisewood testified that after reading Virgil, Jones preferred Homer.

poetry: ‘the tightness of the form, its particular interior rhythms, its compounds, its leaving out of connecting words giving a great power of compactness.’ ‘Something of the feeling comes through’ in translation, he thought, though he would later advise me, ‘If you want to know what medieval Welsh poetry is like, read Hopkins.’ For years now he had read Anglo-Saxon poetry in translation, liking especially ‘that great, grim “Battle of Maldon”’. In it, he thought, is ‘one of the most moving passages in English literature’, the statement of the Saxon Earl Byrhtwold: ‘Purpose shall be the firmer, heart the keener, courage shall be the more, as our strength lessens ... from here I will not turn, but by my lord’s side, by the man I loved, I intend to die.’ He also liked the poem because it ‘provides one of the very few known examples of courtesy toward the enemy’ since the Essex leader allowed the attacking Danes to cross a narrow passage, where they could easily have been defeated, to fight on broad land. Even more, he liked the ‘Battle of Finnsburg,’ and, most of all, ‘The Dream of the Rood,’ which he thought ‘glorious’. He loved the ‘great northern conception of the crucifixion’ evident in that poem, in which the hero mounts the cross and is united with it. That this concept ‘has never *really* been expressed in plastic art’ is, he thought, ‘a loss to the world.’¹⁴³ In 1950 he would acquire Sweet’s *Anglo-Saxon Reader* and painstakingly work through these favourite works in the original.

He did not enjoy the Norse chronicles. ‘The Nordic stuff just simply won’t work—it is *curiously* boring. I never can make out why—its boring like “Sitting Bull” & “Grey Wolf” & Red Indian stuff is boring. In a way in which Greek, Celtic, Latin & whatnot myth stuff never is.’ He liked the account of the Stamford Bridge fight in section nine of the *Heimskringla* and was interested in the Canute succession in relation to England, but disliked the work as a whole as an ‘almost unrelieved rough house.’ Late in life, he said, the sagas and eddas ‘feel *to me* unmixed frightfulness ... almost “Nazi” in its horror & the same lack of humour.’¹⁴⁴

He disliked Dante, whom he read in Binyon’s translation. He could not share Dante’s interest in ‘power politics’ and found fault with Beatrice for being ‘not a compelling girl’ with a ‘positive substantial body’ and not, therefore, irresistibly beautiful, ‘not in any sense a Helen of Troy—but a disembodied creature of some sort.’ She seemed ‘a have on,’ a ‘convenient figure necessary to his worked out scheme.’ This he ascribed to ‘Nominalist inclinations in Dante.’ Because Bernard Wall, T.S. Eliot and others who read Italian and whom Jones respected regarded the *Commedia* ‘as the greatest of poetry known to them’ and because Christopher Dawson admired Dante, he was inclined to think his response owing to some flaw in his own

sensibility and to untranslatability of the poetry. In 1949, when Penguin brought out Dorothy Sayers' translation, he would buy a copy and find it 'jolly interesting' with 'interesting notes,' but he would never become a reader of Dante.¹⁴⁵ Of all his friends, only Grisewood, whose Italian was flawless, shared Jones's reactions to the *Commedia* and assuaged his self-doubt about disliking it.

He read, Chaucer and Langland in Middle English and, in translation, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, which he described to me as 'the most magical' of the medieval tales. He would say near the end of his life, 'My heart is ... with *Sir Gawayne & the Green Knight* & chunks of Langland more even than with Chaucer.' Langland's *Piers Plowman* is the first great vernacular English poem and expresses the values of the common people. Jones regarded it as 'one of the most moving and most English and most crucial of works' although a 'somewhat obscured bit of our heritage.' No work, he thought, 'could be more ... rooted in a given locality and its people' while having the universality of 'the religion-culture without which the poem could not, conceptually, have been.'¹⁴⁶ 'If ever there was a work that could be rightly described ... as *opus anglicum*, it is this.' Dawson shared his enthusiasm for Langland.

He could not bear the poetry of the most celebrated medieval Welsh poet, Dafydd ap Gwilym, whom he read in the original. He would write in 1953:

This bloody Dafydd ap Gwilym stuff I always did find sickening. Of course its most cunningly contrived & all chaps who know Welsh properly are *unanimous* in their admiration of his technique & beauty of form, but as far as I can see he had not got two ideas in his head. I should think he was about as bad as [Robert] Burns ... as far as ideas went. The 'me & my girl' motif I can't stand even when its in a birch-grove! In fact I dislike birch-trees so it makes it worse.¹⁴⁷

The 'supreme book' remained, for him, the *Morte Darthur*, 'a constant companion.' Since 1919 he had owned the Dent edition, which he had read till it fell apart and, in 1926, had rebound and recovered in vellum. He liked most that 'it is a collection of instances of chaps putting that before this & this before that, according to their several natures & impulses—there is no trite "loved I not honour more".' In Malory, 'honour itself moves with the object of worship—everyone instinctively understands this (except a certain kind of text-book theologian or, lower down, a person who has made absolute some relative scale of values that is of some particular society e.g. club rules etc) ... It is the crux of all behaviour. What is sauce for the gosling is by no means sauce for the gander.' His favourite part was the short first chapter of Book Twenty—'the packed small room, the *impotence* of Gawain, Gareth & Co, the venom of

Agravaine & the sense of imminent ruin' all 'in the space of the Hampstead tube lift. In fact from there on to the end of the book it's all simply matchless.'* He liked Malory's presentation of chivalry as culturally vital. While all his friends enjoyed *Don Quixote*, he could not because it lampoons medieval chivalry, which, he said, 'I happen to have a great affection for.' The knights and chivalry in *Morte Darthur* seemed to him 'the real thing'. Malory wrote late in the Middle Ages, on the eve of the modern era ushered in by the Tudors, 'just in time' to be true to the past but late enough to bridge into the future. In this regard, Malory was a sort of Noah and a figure with whom Jones identified.¹⁴⁸ A pervasive motive in *The Anathemata* would be the preserving and handing on of vital tradition to readers on the other side of the present cultural divide.

He reread Dunbar, liking especially 'Lament for the Makers' and, after that, 'Rorate Desuper' and 'The Ballad of Our Lady.' He loved Thomas Wyatt's 'They flee from me.' He read, and liked bits of, Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* and enjoyed the *Epithalamion* and *Prothalamion*, though not enough to reread. He could not stomach *The Faery Queen*, whose 'blasted red cross knight' seemed to him bogus—Spenser was born too late, he thought, to write about knights. And because Spenser wrote against the Irish, Jones was furious with him. He confided to Hague, 'the attitude of that sod Spenser with his bloody *Faery Queen* makes me speechless with rage,' though with a less intimate, Spenser-loving acquaintance he later said, 'I'm more sad about him than angry.'¹⁴⁹

He continued rereading Shakespeare but mostly *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *Macbeth*, and the play he liked best, *King Lear*. He felt and loved the sense of Lear being originally the Celtic Llyr or Lir, a god of elements and the sea, 'so Shakespeare was continuing a very ancient tradition in associating "King Lear" with tempest & storm.' He read others, but these were the plays he returned to and knew. Late in life he wrote, 'It's the *poetry* in S. that I like—the "plots" I usually can't follow. And *generally* acted versions I find pretty awful—something about actors' voices

* When asked by Ede for quotable passages, he advised that 'the 'gems' cannot very easily be taken out of their duller setting with much success But ... have a squint at the famous chapel Perilous bit—an early part, incidentally in Bk vi ch 15 & of course there is the equally famous 'How true love is likened to summer' Bk XVIII ch 25 & Bk XX chs 3 & 4 about the fight at the door of Queen's chamber—marvellous & most exciting in an almost 'rough house' sort of way—in fact verging on the melodramatic—but bloody good—but it is difficult because the M.D. is essentially a book to be assimilated rather than to quote 'selections from' also awfully hard to find anything. Even now I spend hours if I want to find anything in it—it's worse than the bible for that.'

that I can't stand, usually.' Distrusting words, actors infuse language with extraneous emotion—he hated that. The only reservation in his otherwise unbounded admiration was that Shakespeare lacked understanding 'of real spirituality'. About this he occasionally argued with Speaight, who thought Shakespeare 'very Catholic-minded,' something Jones could not 'feel in him at all.' In fact, he often wondered with bemusement at 'the loss of any sense, in Shakespeare, of the Catholic past.' He also read Skelton, whose poetry he 'greatly liked,' and the Metaphysicals, and the Scottish ballads.¹⁵⁰

He 'couldn't stand' most of Milton, though he thought *Comus* admirable and considered some of the other poetry acceptable if slightly boring. *Paradise Lost* he positively disliked. He wrote to Grisewood in 1935:

I still feel much as we use to. It's consummate skill but almost all 'suspect'. It is strange how one feels one loves the person, the man, when one reads almost any poem that 'gets one where one lives' (as I understand Americans to say) but *never* with *Milton* do I feel so—even when he's really on the spot I can't rid myself of something like a hate of him. His 'religion' seems a damned impertinence & his Philomels & Cyntheas always have something about them as of a licentious old man trying to get a kick out of girls names—it's all probably monstrously unfair—but there it is.

Conventional English cultural awe of Milton he thought silly. His chief objection to *Paradise Lost* was to its puritanical ideology, which he disliked as Calvinist. He writes to Grisewood, 'As for that blasted Milton ... his passage of how the pair in the Garden when realizing their criminal state, immediately sought consolation in sexual embraces, well that's the bloody limit & a most outrageous perversion of Xtian doctrine and on the conjugal condition as well. But we need not take heed of him, for his theology was not Xtian at all.' Jones was sure that Calvinism corrupted Milton's aesthetic judgement, that it accounts for Satan's revolution being exciting but wicked and Satan being courageous but damned while the Messiah is good and victorious but a milksop. He and Grisewood ridiculed Milton for creating bad art. For them, Milton was proof that theological dualism begets other forms of dualism: between the intellect and emotions, between morality and imaginative perception, between religion and politics. Jones also thought Milton's Latinate language laughable, a false use of English, and regarded Miltonic verse as facile, too rhythmically regular, and insufficiently pliable and varied. He despised the dignified effect of its elevated diction and considered its elevated thoughts psychologically incredible. He was amused to discover the observation by Milton's tutor, Alexander Gill,

that the Danish and Norman invasions had done less harm to English than the study of the Classics—‘rather a joke coming from Milton’s tutor’. (Because it was such a remarkable insight for a schoolmaster in the early seventeenth century, Jones went to the library to look up Alexander Gill in *The Dictionary of National Biography*.) Regarding Milton as the prime example of what he wanted *not* to be as a poet, he endorsed Eliot’s 1936 essay criticizing Milton. When Eliot published his second essay on Milton in 1947, he sent Jones a copy. In the new essay, Eliot reverses his negative judgement, praising Milton’s invented language, his mastery of structure in syntax and overall design, and his ability to work in ‘large musical units’—all of which makes him ‘the greatest master of free verse in the language.’ Jones was appalled, convinced that Eliot had sold out to the English establishment, which had always esteemed Milton. About his own aversion, he remained adamant and argued with Eliot. In 1957 he would write to him about the essays: ‘I *still* think *Milton I* is ok. I see the point of *Milton II*, but I think *Milton I* has permanent truths that still need much ramming home.’ When not speaking with close friends he softened his criticism. On one occasion late in life, he told me, ‘I like the sound, but there seems to be in the man a certain pride. I’m jolly glad he decided not to touch the Arthur business or it would have been scotched for good. I mean, he knew nothing about it—what the anthropologists have since discovered—and he was such an extraordinarily great poet. But I don’t much like the man.’¹⁵¹

Among his favourite poems was Christopher Smart’s *Song of David*, which stood out, for him, in English poetry ‘very bright and clear’ along with *The Ancient Mariner* and Blake’s ‘Tyger’ ‘beyond the frontiers of criticism and reservation.’ Despite his belief in objectivity in literature, the work was also, for him, a window to its author. One thing he admired in Smart, as in Skelton, was what he called a ‘feeling for, and unity with, the animal creation’ that is not, he writes, ‘nature-loving’ nor Wordsworthian but is more like ‘our emotions when we were children, when we would say to a long-suffering house-dog or escaping cat: “I do like your nice fur.”’ It is a ‘child-delight’ in animals which his own pictures of animals express and which he theologically considered sanctioned by the ‘Benedicite’, a canticle in Lauds in which all the works of the Lord, including dolphins, water creatures, and wild and tame beasts, bless the Lord.¹⁵² The long lists of names and things in Jones’s later poetry may owe as much to the example of Smart as the bible and Joyce.

He did not read Romantic poetry aside from *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, ‘Christabel,’ and some Blake (not the long ‘prophetic’ books). He liked Blake's line: ‘The deeds of Arthur are the deeds of Albion’ and saw Blake in relation to the Matter of Britain. He admired Blake as an engraver, but, Kathleen Raine thought, did not much like Blake’s paintings. Jones thought him a better artist than poet in that his ‘*best* drawings & designs are perhaps “greater” than his written poems.’ He disagreed with Kathleen Raine’s claim that Blake had created ‘an English “pantheon”’ and would later write to her, ‘I still regret & cant see the point of his transference of Neo-platonic concepts & Classical *nomina* into Hebrew or Hebraic-sounding & therefore Hebrew evoking ideas.’¹⁵³ Names such as Thel, Ahania, Urizen, and Los worried him: ‘I don't believe you can introduce an invented or altogether foreign nomenclature. Because names themselves set up all sorts of other forms & undertones & this causes difficulties within a tradition—it won't work in my view, but it's a big subject. It concerns the “word”. Joyce understood it’.¹⁵⁴

He was willing to admit that Wordsworth was ‘a very great poet’ with ‘a genuine sense of imminence of the “Creator” in nature’, but Jones was ‘the very last person to have any Wordsworthian thing about “nature”.’ Having ‘little use for that at all’, he did not ‘get on with him.’ It amused him that Wordsworth was such a figure of contention. Some of his friends—including Martin D’Arcy, Helen Sutherland, and Herbert Read—loved Wordsworth, ‘whereas other friends can’t stand him.’ As a poet, Byron meant nothing to him, though he was ‘prepared to believe he is a good poet’ and admired him for being ‘very courageous over certain political & sociological issues & stood up *alone* to defend certain rights.’ Jones positively disliked Shelley and thought it a black mark against Bertrand Russell that Shelley was the poet who most influenced him.¹⁵⁵

He continued to read ‘parts of Browning’, whom he considered ‘a very great artist.’ He liked his approach to poetry and at some point copied out, on two foolscap pages, a letter by him to an amateur poet in which he says about poetry that ‘only the best is bearable’ and gives advice, which Jones thought valuable:

If the writer ... lets the feeling & thought take the words & music they immediately suggest, just as if the experiment of expression were being tried for the first time, not neglecting meanwhile the mechanical helps to this in the way of proper studies both of Nature & Art, as well as the secret of the effectiveness of whatever poetry *does* effect the said author (not repeating nor copying those ‘effects’ but finding out, I mean, *why* they prove to be effects & so learning how to become similarly effective), I don’t see why success might not be hoped

for; & then it is success worth getting.

As though it might seem incredible, he would say in the 1960s, ‘I actually loved Browning.’¹⁵⁶

He read little modern poetry. He tried Hardy’s *The Dynasts* and Doughty’s *Dawn of Britain* but could not continue reading to the end. (He began reading Doughty’s *Arabia Deserta* and found it ‘astounding’ but did not finish it.) He read Francis Thompson’s ‘Mistress of Vision,’ from which he took one of his catch phrases of the time, ‘Danae of the shower of gold.’ He continued to enjoy Belloc, whose *Sonnets and Verse* (1923) Hague had given him in 1927. He thought Belloc’s serious verse ‘a bit light-weight or even slightly embarrassing’, preferring the comic verse as paradoxically ‘more ‘profound’ and much better purely as made works with the “form” & the “content” joined in what the Welsh bards used to call “carpentry of song”.’ In the mid-1960s, he would write, ‘They really are bloody funny & though *absolutely* of a *date*—they *don’t* “date” in their artistry of amusement plus the deeper undertones. Rather like Wilde—in that sense of not dating.’ He ‘adored’ ‘The Ballade of the Unanswered Question’ which begins, ‘What dwelling hath Sir Harland Pott / That died of drinking in Bungay?’ He loved the ‘Newdigate Poem,’ which he read, he said, whenever ‘particularly depressed,’ his favourite passage being about electricity:

The pear-shaped vacuum globe, I understand,
Is far too hot to handle with the hand,
While, as is patent to the meanest sight
The carbon filament is very bright.

He held the Contemporary Poetry Society in contempt for being not exciting, not pioneering.¹⁵⁷

He reread Hopkins and Eliot but by the mid-1930s had given up reading almost all other contemporary verse—which, in its reversion to outdated conventional forms, he found ludicrous.

He disliked most poetry from Milton to Browning and was convinced that little could be done with short lyrics. Most anthologised poems of earlier centuries now seemed to him ‘pretty silly.’ About this he would never change his mind. He wrote in 1962, ‘I still can’t see that “poetry”, bits of “verse”, apart from great felicity and skill in handling language, has much to be said for it.’ He thought that if all but ‘those lines that are really on the spot’ were eliminated from *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, it ‘would be a pretty thin book in the end.’ He included

Arthur Quiller-Couch, the anthology editor, among the empty icons of the British cultural establishment: ‘Three rousing cheers for Q[uiller-Couch], Walter P[ater] and the R.A.’^{158*}

By the mid-1930s, he had developed a remarkable and original literary theory of what might be called the Celtic tradition in English literature. ‘I am persuaded,’ he writes,

that there is a valid ‘Welsh’ strain in English Lit & tradition which is rather, perhaps, now, overlooked. It is obscure & not easily defined—but I mean it was present with Camden & Drayton & those people—& Milton felt it (although I’m glad he did not do his proposed ‘Arthuriad’, except that it might have stopped Tennyson doing his!). Blake certainly was aware of it, & the PreRaphaelites in their way—but already a bit tinged with that horrible ‘Celtic twilight’ idea. Perhaps the ‘Teutonic’ school of the 19th Cent. historians did a good bit to break the continuity of the thing I mean in one sense. For them, the History of the Island began with the landing of the Saxon pirates; and Ebbsflet became more sacred than Glastonbury—but this was a new thing & I imagine was a point of view that would have surprised Shakespeare.

Ebbsflet is the site on the Kentish coast where Hengist and Horsa (initially brought over by the British King Vorgigern as mercenaries) initiated the Anglo-Saxon conquest of Britain in 449 AD. But this Celtic tradition has its beginnings long before Wales. The original source of what Jones saw as a Celtic tradition in English literature was the ‘flexible, complex, hard, exact, “abstract” art’ that ‘characterized the works of Celtdom’ in ‘the Hallstalt and La Tene cultures of the first millennium BC and again in the resurgent sub or post Roman Xtian-Celtic cultures in the 5th or 6th or 7th or following centuries AD, especially in Ireland (Kells Gospel Book, etc).’ In its early Welsh written manifestations, this tradition involved a ‘metamorphic quality’. For Jones, the paramount modern manifestation of the tradition was Joyce ‘in his incredible way and in a totally other medium and still more differing intention.’¹⁵⁹

This tradition had nothing to do with the whimsy of the Celtic Twilight and modern Arthurian fantasies:

The spirit & mood of the early Welsh fragments ... is one of ‘realism’ of a kind—a kind of caustic observation & rather amused bitterness—but resigned also—rather more in the mood of those very early warrior Chinese poems that Arthur W[aley] has translated.

* This cheer is sarcastic. After rereading in 1960 Raymond Chambers, *On the Continuity of English Prose from Alfred to More and his School*, which Tom Burns gave him in January 1933, Jones wrote to Grisewood, ‘it’s even better than we used to think. ... He’s got old ‘Q[uiller-Couch] taped in a polite kind of way.’

This quality is the Celtic counterpart to Aristotelian realism. Although the *Mabinogion* involves a shift to fantasy, he thought one of its stories, ‘Kulwch and Olwen,’ ‘one of the best ... of the kind in the world’ and loved it for the realistic aspect of what might be called its magic realism.

He thought that

what distinguishes this native prose-tale from the subsequent great medieval Arthurian Romance-Cycles is its vivid sense of the particular, the actual, the tangible. The exact topography and terrain is in strong contrast to the vague and generalized topography of the Romances So that though it is interweaved with marvels & mysterious powers, the narrative reads in a perfectly matter-of-fact fashion. We are in no doubt as to who is getting the worst of it or at what site the changing fortunes occur. In *that* sense it is as precise as an eye-witness report of the Boat Race telling us which of the contestants is in most trouble & whether that trouble is by Fulham Wall or Dukes Meadow.

The story exemplifies one of his favourite maxims, that ‘we proceed from the known to the unknown.’ To most, he thought, the ‘known,’ realistic aspect might seem unCeltic, because, since

the ‘Romantic revival’, the idea behind the expression ‘the Celtic twilight’ and much besides has occluded, indeed reversed the characteristic qualities of authentic Celticity. There have been such oceans of bogus stuff, so many misconceptions which the accidents of history have done much to occasion, that it is small wonder that this matter is confused. Who on earth would suspect these qualities from the general attitude of the modern Irishman? The same applies to Wales.

Celtic-Twilight-induced fantasy was one reason Jones would be unable to read with enjoyment the Anglo-Welsh novelist John Cowper Powys¹⁶⁰

He saw the Celtic aesthetic as more than realism, however. In the personal manifesto written at Rock for Jim Ede in 1935, he identifies his own intentions with subtler aspects of the Celtic tradition:

I should like to speak of a quality which I rather associate with the folk-tales of Welsh or other Celtic derivation, a quality congenial and significant to me which in some oblique way has some connection with what I want in painting.

I find it impossible to define, but it has to do with a certain affection for the intimate creatureliness of things—a care for, and appreciation of, the particular genius of places, men, trees, animals, and yet withal a pervading sense of metamorphosis and mutability. That trees are men walking. That words ‘bind and loose material things.’ I think Carroll’s Alice Books and the Hunting of the Snark inherit, through what channel I do not know, something akin to this particular quality of the Celtic tales.

The Snark is always a Boojum in Celtic legend, and tragically so in much Celtic history. The Hunting of the Snark has for me an affinity to the Gododdin of Aneurin and the Hunting of the Boar Trwyth in the Olwen tale,

and the Grail Quest also.

He associates the Celtic motif of metamorphosis with a combination of contraries:

If you would draw a bruiser don't neglect to remember the fragility of 'this flesh' or you will be liable to make only a vulgar tour-de-force and to obscure the essential humanity of your gross man. There should be always a bit of lion in your lamb. The successful art work is one where no ingredient of creation is lost, where no item on the list in the *Benedicite Omnia Opera Dominum* is denied or forgotten.

The Celtic influence, which he claimed for himself, could be detected, he thought, in works of English literature that had vividness of imagery and a woven texture, an emerging and disappearing movement 'like tangled brush with cats coming & going.' He saw this texture in 'all of Julian of Norwich,' in Malory where Lancelot visits Chapel Perilous, in much of Shakespeare, in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, in the verse at the end of 'Christabel', and in the writings of Lewis Carroll. It is no mere coincidence that he was revising *In Parenthesis* while formulating these thoughts. After its publication, he would say that *In Parenthesis* is in this tradition.¹⁶¹

He saw as a Celtic quality a sense of intimacy in English painting that French painting lacks. He saw it in the Stuart needlework in the Victoria and Albert Museum, especially the embroidered linen caps with pearls for young girls 'that are,' he thought, 'very Nonney Noe'. In his opinion, 'the best stuff that the English nation has produced artistically' is its embroidery, famous in the Middle Ages as *Opus Anglicanum*. He saw the Celtic strain in much of Samuel Palmer's work, including *Bright Cloud*, though he thought that a bad painting. His own visual art is, in this sense, English, though he regarded it as less so for his having inculcated 'faded academism, the last dregs of the Classical tradition and later Impressionism & the early years of post Impressionism—the 'school' of Paris etc. etc. 'Nevertheless,' he would later write, 'even I have this feeling of wanting to include "everything"; "the whole" in such works as I've tried to make ... I mean the entirety or totality in a little place or space.'¹⁶²

He saw Celticity and therefore true Britishness as present stylistically in 'homely' English things. These did *not* include the English Bible, which 'superb as it is, tragically misses the real fragrance of our real goods—it's apt to hit on the chest & beat on the ears like Milton—blast him.' He preferred Wycliffe's translation of scripture 'in that unaffected English' ('more

potent than the A.V, less smoothed out & less donnish’) and regretted its being virtually unobtainable.* To him, truly English (at heart Celtic) works are

always a *loving* ‘*handled*’ ‘*textured*’ free-flowing affair with a bit of thunder-storm-behind-an-apple-tree—linear-tentative-not large-*packed* with life a bit of a joke—speckled—like a large thrush’s breast & spear points in a garden. ... It is the work of a motley race with Kent gardens & Capel-y-ffin darkneses within a day’s walk ...—it’s a patch-work quilt in a way, on the bed of a princess with a dead dog on the mat. ‘In scarlet town where I was born’ & ‘the cruel ships carpenter’ & all that no less than ‘this battle fares like to the morning’s war’—I rather fancy that the Bros Adams got a *kind* of English thing in their how-ever-so-much derived-from-Europe classicism (like Dick Wilson)—& I think that our Ben [Nicholson], even when he thinks he’s most ‘Paris’ & what not has it very markedly. 163

He believed that the Puritan Revolution largely destroyed Celtic Britishness as a major current within English creativity. Aiding and abetting this destruction were the foreign influences in the Jacobean and in neo-Classicism and Alexander Pope, which virtually obliterated the essential, elusive qualities that had informed British art and literature from the remote Anglo-Saxon and earlier Celtic past. The great eighteenth century English painters and ‘what I suppose floods Burlington House is the counterpart to the English-bible-Milton business’ and not, in this sense, authentically English. Britishness survived only the common songs where roses, death and bridal nights are vitally, incongruously joined. The real thing is there ‘to make you weep’ in the early medieval works; then becomes heavy and dull in the later Middle Ages; then, with Shakespeare and the Metaphysical poets, ‘happy, prouder, conscious, & having a regular fine old fling.’ It is significant, he thought, that the English Metaphysical poets were largely Welsh by descent. Not that their achievement was simply Welsh. It resulted, he thought, from Welshness meeting Englishness in imaginative transformation.† This later happened in reverse, when Englishness met Welshness in the poetry of Hopkins.

Kit Smart, Coleridge, the romantic revival picks it up only half—Blake with both hands & feet & so violently as

* He thought the Wycliffe version of the parable of the prodigal son in *The Oxford Book of English Prose* ‘a knock out.’ A friend had once leant him a copy of the entire Wyclif New Testament and he found it ‘terrific’.

† He writes in 1962 to Vernon Watkins, ‘It looks to me as though some fusion took place in the aristocratic poets of the Welsh-border in the 16th-17th Centuries between something that was, in part, “Welsh” and the new Counter-Reformation ... mystical tradition from the Continent, affecting Vaughan, Traherne, Herbert, Crashaw, Carew, Donne, perhaps Keffyn ... all these men were either Cornish or Welsh. None were “English”.’ Of these poets, his favourite was Donne, in whom he had read a lot, including ‘that heavenly thing’ Satire II.

to remould it with some quite other thing—immensely great & alone—but it was all British raw material. I think some of the PreRaphaelites recognized the thing but for some reason or other & many reasons just got every cart before all the wrong horses & so—bloody pathetic affair.

It was only ‘by a kind of “pseudomorphosis”,’ he thought, that Hopkins so clearly revives ‘this “Celtic” thing of demanding intricate & complex forms of compactness and precision and producing in his case, because of his great poetic genius, works which astonish, not only by their power but by their delicacy.’ Considering the Victorian age and the institutional culture of the Jesuits, he thought Hopkins’s poetry ‘a bloody miracle.’¹⁶⁴

Because the qualities that he considered Celtic were what he loved in visual art as well as literature, there was, he said, no English ‘painter or draughtsman who I would rise from my bed to look at with any certainty of reward since Blake.’¹⁶⁵ It was the denial of British Celticity in modern English writing and painting that convinced him, as much as anything else, of contemporary cultural decline.

In his own painting, he was true to Celticity in this sense, and it involved his seeing and re-presenting with an eye for small particulars. Whether a centre of attention or not, every detail resists being merely part of a whole. He thought the love of small, ‘deep down things,’ which Hopkins celebrated, distinctively Celtic and right. Each exists for its own sake, subsumed in a larger relaxed unity, which is not dominating or controlling in a way that diminishes the small parts. In this regard, his paintings symbolize love, not power. It is a ‘democratic’ kind of form—except that the ‘vote’ is unanimous and at the expense of no minority. The form seems at once accidental and essential with no surrender of the parts to the whole. It is a form not so much imagined or given as discovered, partly by accident, through judicious muddling and the least dictatorial of sensibilities.

This long view of British art and literature is a remarkable intellectual synthesis. How it illuminates British culture throughout history is a matter for debate. Many of the qualities he valued can be found in Homer and are therefore not exclusively Celtic, but they do seem distinctive of sophisticated art in vital cultures. Certainly, his theory indicates qualities that characterize his own work and, it seems fair to say, make it more distinctively British than that of any other modern English painter or writer.

In late October 1935 after four months in Northumberland, he went south, stopping in London to see his parents and friends. During this brief stay, Robert Speaight and his bride, Esther, had him to lunch, which consisted of ‘salmon with mayonnaise to be followed by strawberries & cream.’

He considered politely eating and feeling ill later, but instead announced that he ‘did not eat salmon, mayonnaise, or strawberries or cream.’ His hosts found some boiled chicken that had been prepared for a maid recovering from appendicitis. This he ate. Speaight was, at the time, acting the part of Thomas Beckett in *Murder in the Cathedral*, and they may have talked about the play and their mutual acquaintances, including Eliot. Jones saw the play at the Old Vic in 1937, but enjoyed better reading it slowly so he could take it in. The style of it reminded him of Dryden.¹⁶⁶

A current topic of conversation was the Italian-Ethiopian war. On 3 October Italy had invaded Ethiopia, and five days later, the League of Nations had imposed sanctions. For Jones the hostilities meant that visiting Rome, something he had always wanted to do, was now impossible. His reaction to the war itself was influenced by Bernard Wall, the Italian expert in the Chelsea group. Wall’s position was that Britain and France were hypocritical in imposing sanctions since both had accumulated empires in the previous century, and, having recently become a united nation, Italy, too, wanted an empire. Jones thought there was ‘a lot more to be said for Italy than appears on the surface.’ He hated the moralizing at the League of Nations and liked the Italians for not doing ‘so much of that but they talk another type of balls it’s true, about Destiny & Co.’ Though waffling and disinclined to blame, he hated the actuality of the Italian invasion:

O damn a million times—what a balls-up it all is. Although all one’s sympathies go to the poor ill-armed mountain-men—I do wonder if Italy has been properly treated—whether its not really a clash of imperialisms—& big business interests & heaven knows what all but it remains intolerable—to think of these damned air-planes, gas & the rest knocking hell out of chaps with spears, but contest between barbaric & civilized people always means something of that sort—only this is the first time the discrepancy has become so utterly awful. It used only to be say, in our wars with savages—spears & arrows against rifles & pompoms. ...it is a filthy business

He writes, ‘I don’t suppose we should be above that at a pinch—to wit Afganistan & Co.’ Only half jokingly, he considered going to ‘fight for the Abyssinians’ against Italy and imagined himself putting on once more his Royal Welch Fusilier tunic and cap, which he still had at Brockley. The only ‘nice thing’ to come of the conflict was, he thought, a music-hall gag: “‘Addis a baa baa black shirt / Don’t lose your wool”—that’s a true Cockney “art work” isn’t it.’¹⁶⁷ His failure to condemn such clear aggression suggests psychological dread to take any antagonistic moral position.

With his friends, he discussed Gwen Greene's recently published, *The Prophet Child*—a book 'one utterly agrees with,' he said, 'even when it's said in a way other than one could say it. There are some *splendid* passages.'¹⁶⁸ She writes about things in ways resembling his appreciations. In passages that could serve as glosses on his paintings from 1928, she writes of trees as suggesting in shape and movement 'the vision of water' (48), their changelessness 'reaches us somehow as sympathy,' they 'witness without seeing,' their lives seeming 'to touch and coincide with ours' (50).

He spoke with Burns about the death in June of Augustus John's son Henry, whom he had met at Ditchling in 1923. Henry John had spent eight years in the Jesuits as a scholastic (seminarian), the past three at Campion Hall, where Jones had talked with him. He had left the Jesuits and had fallen in love with Olivia Greene. Hoping in vain to meet her at Newquay in Cornwall, he had climbed down a Cornish cliff and, though an expert swimmer, drowned in treacherous waters. Augustus John thought it suicide. Burns and D'Arcy were convinced that it was, as various circumstances suggest, accidental.*¹⁶⁹

Prudence Pelham had journeyed to the Mid East and, because of the Italian-Abyssinian war, Jones worried about her being there. Before her leaving, on 14 September, he had sent her his medicine chest and arranged for her to meet Thomas Hodgkin. Jones had worried dreadfully upon hearing that in Prinkipo she was having stomach trouble.¹⁷⁰ Before she went on to Istanbul, he wrote her that 'Agya Sophia is the world's best building.' She subsequently wrote him that it alone made the city endurable. 'It is a *miracle*,' she writes. 'Every time I go inside it I have this odd feeling that I am "going out" & when I come out of it, that I am "going in".' 'It seems inside to be considerably higher (in every sense) than the sky.' He now waited anxiously for her letters, hoped she would be back before hostilities broke out between Britain and Italy. She was writing frequently, now from Palestine, where she found Hodgkin 'terribly nice but a bit difficult to talk to with his socialism simmering away & boiling up all the time.' To Hague, Jones lamented, 'if the Syrian waste is made to blossom by her being there it is that the English Garden is deprived for this.'¹⁷¹

*Henry John was not distraught over leaving the Jesuits and had spoken amusingly about it to Burns and Grisewood before succumbing to amorous despair over Olivia Greene.

While seeing his family and friends, he caught a bad cold—the last straw. He fled to Sidmouth, which was, he said, ‘the only place I could think of.’ He took with him a set of *Ancient Mariner* engravings intended for Jim Ede’s brother, whose address he had lost. He had carried the engravings around for months wrapped in tissue, cardboard, plastic, and bound together by a new pair of grey flannel trousers belonging to Stanley Morison. The Fort was nearly empty, the only other residents being Sir Harry Lamb, who had been ambassador to Istanbul, and his Italian wife.¹⁷²

Since the trains were fast, he went up to London in mid-November to see Edward Hodgkin but, he wrote from Sidmouth, ‘got a cold immediately I arrived there & fled here out of that hell hole—for it is an awful place & gets me down immediately.’ He would try again on 18 January and once more go back back quickly, but whenever he went up, he became physically or emotionally ill. Sidmouth was, he thought, a ‘ridiculous colonel-ridden little town’ but it suited him. Important museum-exhibits in London no longer compelled him. About a Chinese Exhibition he declined to visit, he wrote Ede, ‘it is rather like a polite funeral of Chinese civilization of course. Its not much use looking at things in glass cases—I feel that more & more intensely.’ And he was uninterested in Chinese art or Egyptian art; he cared only about Western art—which he loved, from Giotto through Picasso, for its ever-changing originality, in contrast to eastern art in which classical forms, once achieved, were faithfully copied ever after. (Decades later he would listen to a young friend praising some aspect of western art, and respond, ‘You’re like me. You’ve got the west wind in your face.’) Unchanging artistic traditions dumbfounded and appalled him. Even for an exhibition of western art, however, he was now disinclined to visit London. In addition to involving emotional upset, it required quitting his room at the Fort and possibly getting, upon his return, one less congenial to him. He preferred a room facing the sea. Unable to get one, he would take another and wait for one to become vacant. Self-exiled from London and its galleries, he was unable ‘to see much in the very latest contemporary work’ and wondered whether he was not ‘just fossilizing at a certain point.’¹⁷³

In mid November, 1935, he was trying hard to finish revising *In Parenthesis*, hoping it would ‘amount to something’ but uncertain. Wherever he went, he took his now tattered black binder, inside it a folded sheet bearing his London address, and within that the portion of typescript being revised and new manuscript he was adding to it. Revision was substantial and thoroughgoing. He could now look back on the long, interrupted process. Part 1 ‘was the *devil* to

cope with & very much cut down.’ Part 2 ‘curiously enough stands more entire.’ Part 4 ‘the long part (60 pages) has been a bugger—I do hope it is something. I terribly want outside judgement. Sometimes when I read it it seems to have a shape at other times it sounds awful balls & full of bad jokes & stained meanings.’ Part 6 was ‘more possible to deal with than’ he had thought. Throughout the initial writing and recent revising, he felt like ‘an unpracticed & ignorant driver trying to control a whole team of very restive horses on a steep path—in fact some of the horses seemed to be oxen & some mules’ and he wondered whether he would ‘make the journey in safety & intact.’ Only in Part 7 did he feel he achieved ‘proper control or approaching control & integration,’ though he was also especially fond of Part 3. As the parts of the poem and their revisions were finished, they went into a vault in a Reading bank. At one point, he almost ‘cut out’ Parts 1 and 2 & started with Part 3 but eventually changes his mind. He nevertheless considered Parts 1 and 2 to be ‘only a kind of introduction ... to the more integrated later parts’ and thought ‘the best things are in Parts III, IV & VII, especially the last part.’ When Herbert Read later wanted to include a passage from Part 2 in an anthology, Jones would urge reconsideration, saying, ‘I only really like the bits where I more or less managed to draw together the past & present thing.’¹⁷⁴

Now in Sidmouth in November 1935, he inserted Dai Greatcoat’s boast into Part 4, giving it a prominence that establishes a centred, parenthetical-spatial structure to the poem. It is the timeless boast of the archetypal soldier midway between the purposeful, linear journeys of the first three and last three Parts of the poem. Jones composed this boast by multiple insertions, splitting material to insert additions—a process that continued into the correcting of proof. The centring shape and the technique of dividing and inserting reflect and owe something to his concentrically structured illustrated books, *The Deluge* and *The Ancient Mariner*. This compositional technique and the formal result would influence much of his later poetry. Adding to Dai’s boast, he consulted Hague by post about whether he can say that the bosom of Helen, the mother of Constantine, holds ‘Comes Litoris Saxonici’ and asked the name of Roland’s horn.* As of 3 December 1935, he writes, ‘the revision is virtually finished.’¹⁷⁵ He would continue revising, however, whenever he examined a section he had not read for a while.

* Insisting on accuracy, about one word (unspecified in my source) he wrote six letters to people who might be able to reassure him about its correct form.

He had incorporated into his work quotations from C.K. Scott Moncrieff's translation of *The Song of Roland*, but now Hague was translating the *Chanson* for publication by Faber in 1937. Hague was translating 'as literally as possible' primarily with Jones in mind and in December sent some to him, who loved it. 'How moving it is *splendid*—It is primb I am overjoyed.' Hague had got rid of all the frills, Jones thought, and 'put it down straight & simply—it's terribly impressive & touching.' 'I do wish I could have written my stuff in those simple words—it does make my book seem flowery bollocks to a large extent.—It's that verbosity that makes me hate it *so* in great tracks. ... it's to all intents finished. Although I still improve it a lot by a careful sifting of each word. It is for me the only way.' Hague continued to send bits of the translation as he finished them, completing the whole in the spring of 1936. The death of Oliver made Jones weep. He changed all the quotations from Moncrieff to Hague's translation—which Grisewood would later have read on the BBC Third Programme, calling it the best translation of the *Roland* in English.¹⁷⁶

Apart from the *Song of Roland*, to which Jones made explicit allusion, he was conscious of being influenced in his revision by Negro spirituals, Malory, Macaulay, medieval Welsh works in translation, and, he would say, 'the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle & Norse sagas, & Caesar's Gallic War and all kinds of popular Cockney songs, and bits of the Metaphysical Poets and Lewis Carroll & [Edward] Lear.' He was also influenced by the poetry of John Skelton and Christopher Smart. For 'certain attitudes of mind or possibly techniques in past writers happen to "click" with something or other in the contemporary situation.'¹⁷⁷

Burns invited him to London for Christmas, but he feared getting a cold '& then the old nerves & everything,' so he stayed in Sidmouth, where he was suffering from neuralgia in the muscles of his sides. For Christmas 1935, Hague sent him Caesar's *Commentaries*. His father sent him Fowler's *Modern English Usage*, which he disliked for its 'donnish jokes ... because', he wrote, 'I don't like having my leg pulled very much' and because, when he could understand Fowler, he often 'flatly' disagreed with him, convinced that Fowler was deaf to "the evocative nature of words" and understood only 'grammar in its most boring sense.' He much preferred Ben Jonson's *Grammar of the English Language* (1640), reprinted and given him by Stanley Morison in 1928. 'That I can more or less understand,' he writes, '& it's a heavenly book.' He especially liked 'a truly "poetic" passage' on H, whether a letter or 'an aspirate merely,' perhaps not 'the

Queene mother of Consonants: yet she is the life, and quickening of them.’ He also liked Jonson’s reference to the ‘monstrous syntax’ by which the pronoun ‘his’ is misused, as in ‘Christ his Church,’ which Jones had heard as a child usually from high church ministers, a lingering phonic memory of middle-English ‘Christés church.’¹⁷⁸

Early in the winter of 1936, Joan Hague visited. (She subsequently told Prudence that he ‘walked her off her feet.’) René Hague came in mid-January, Tom Burns from the 24th through the 27th. Eric and Mary Gill visited in early February. Gill had a sore throat and was taking time off work. It had been over a year since Jones had seen him, the longest period of separation since they had known one another.¹⁷⁹ Gill was ‘run down, tired & overworked’ though also, Jones thought, ‘remarkable.’ For a week, they talked and read and walked, after Sunday Mass on the 8th walking in the rain all afternoon. Jones writes, ‘everybody in the hotel liked him like anything’. Gill enjoyed the visit but thought Sidmouth ‘too enervating for him.’ When he left, Jones had his sore throat, the first of a series of colds that made him miserable all spring.

The hotel had been quiet, ‘but’, he wrote Hague, ‘three incredible crumpled up old ladies have just arrived, who, I can see, will spread themselves out well round the fire with millions of bags, wraps, Boot’s library books, copies of the Morning Post & the “Presbyterian Armoury”.’ In February the east wind chilled the dining room. Everyone wore winter coats to dinner. Jones advised Griffin, the landlord, to put an oil stove at either end of the room ‘or every bugger will leave the hotel’—three already had. His account to Hague: ‘Get those oil stoves quick as a fish. Christ, do you think I’m going to have my balls frozen off,’ to which Griffin replied, ‘No’ and installed the stoves.¹⁸⁰

Although Jones did not patronize the Sidmouth cinemas, he may have gone in 1936 to see *Modern Times*. ‘I never want to go to the cinema,’ he wrote, ‘but I would like to see this silent Chaplin film—the stills of it look so good, the one great artist the film has produced.’ He wrote Ede, ‘I do think he is the only Film chap & it must be so nice to have it silent but I have not been to a Film for over two years you know & have no desire to—but that one does attract me.’¹⁸¹

In January 1936, though ‘still enfeebled,’ he was feeling better than he had during the previous year and was ‘more-or-less’ finishing *In Parenthesis*. There had been one completed manuscript (the fruit of many foliations), a typescript (emended and added to), and now a second manuscript. He wrote to Ede, ‘the main business of revision & arrangement & what not is over as far as the MSS is concerned—over, perhaps rather by a mere process of exhaustion! Really it

is not over because there is still so much I really dislike & which might take ten years to get right.’ There was no finality for him, in whom awareness of infinite aesthetic possibility combined with difficulty finally to decide. Neurosis aggravated this trait but was not its cause. According to the mostly Jungian polarities that would be popularised by the Myres and Briggs, Jones belonged to the one percent of the population which is Introverted, Intuitive, Thinking, and Perceiving (i.e. Procrastinating)—the sort of person who is highly self-critical, abhors emotional conflict, tends not to go out much, dislikes crowds, is sensitive to spatial form, and has difficulty making decisions. (Many architects have this personality profile.) Oppressed by critical second thoughts, he was not happy about finishing the manuscript. To Ede he wrote, ‘I feel limp & dissatisfied & wonder why I’ve troubled to do the damn thing at all. Its pretty good tripe in long stretches you know but here & there I still like it.’ In February, Burns visited and took the last of the second full text to Hague for a second typing.¹⁸²

In February Jones was rewriting the Preface for the third time, ‘what a fucking sweat.’ ‘It either gets too involved & long & personal,’ he wrote, ‘or leaves out everything one wanted “to say”.’ He found himself ‘less & less able to make any statement about art-works. ... As soon as you say anything it seems to be untrue or only half true.’ The inadequacies of critical language and the endless qualifications required involved for him an anguish absent in creative writing. In poetry ‘you can, I find, make a shape in words & the form in some way makes the words have significance—but if you start didactically making statements about your so & so being a so & so Artist then it seems to get wrong—or untrue or cheap or boring or something. I don’t mean that this is true of everyone—I mean its true for me.’ At the end of February he sent the finished Preface to Grisewood, who reported that he liked it, and passed it on to Burns for typing. While writing the Preface, Jones was mining epigraphs from Edward Anwyl’s translation of *Y Gododdin*, selecting one for the poem as a whole—‘their swords rang in mothers’ heads’—and an epigraph for each of its seven numbered parts. At about this time, very late in the process of

composition, he decided to set the numbered divisions apart by giving them titles—‘to make it a bit more easy to digest.’^{183*}

Ede suggested that the work might need ‘a running commentary’. Jones agreed that it probably did ‘almost to make it intelligible’ but suggested that such a commentary was ‘a job to be done subsequently if the thing turns out to be of any interest?—after all I don’t pretend to know whether its interesting or just a real failure—one can’t treat it as though it were an established work when it very likely is as ephemeral & amateur as can be ... it is very easy to be deceived about these personal efforts.’ He did, however, begin making notes to explain ‘obscure Welsh things’ and, as he emended the typescript, he compiled a glossary and a list of sources. Burns had Hague retrieve the manuscript from the bank for typing. At the beginning of March, Hague returned to Jones the first three Parts of the poem typed, and Jones found little to correct ‘except punctuation—that’s always been the curse.’ The typist, a ‘Miss Viviya’, ‘put punctuation & capital letters all over the place & it all looks “tight”.’ Having got used again to seeing the text hand-written, he was upset about this tightness and determined to make changes to loosen it. He complained to Prudence, who replied from Palestine, ‘Have you got used to the look of it in type writing—I do hope so & are no more doubtful about it. I *cannot* understand why you have these gnawing thoughts.’ The typescript had the positive benefit of helping him to see objectively, and he found Part 4 ‘much better than’ he had thought it and ‘quite enjoyed’ the jokes ‘like somebody else’s stuff, after all this while.’ In March he had difficulty proceeding with changes to the typescript owing to worry over trouble with Germany, which might make publication impossible. And he continued to have critical doubts: ‘it seems utterly bad in places—in most places in fact—but I’m incapable now of forming a judgement.’ The stages of revision and proof reading seemed endless. On 23 March he sent off Parts 2 and 7 to be retyped, finished correcting the typescript of Part 6 and had dinner with Christopher Dawson.¹⁸⁴

Dawson had come again to Sidmouth in February. He had suffered a nervous breakdown and had spent six months in Rapallo, where he had got to know Desmond Chute, now living

* In the final manuscript, Part 1 is first entitled ‘Who have no doubts or fears,’ which he changed to ‘The many men so beautiful,’ and Part 2 is entitled ‘At one remove,’ then ‘Entrance,’ and finally ‘Chambers go off Corporals stay.’ Part 5 is entitled ‘Itinerary’ and then ‘Great-Coats Folded,’ and then, in final ms draft, ‘Tin hats for White Knights,’ which he would later change to ‘Squat Garlands for White Knights.’

there and friendly with Ezra Pound. Dawson's nerves were very bad, and he was suffering from insomnia.¹⁸⁵ Every afternoon he and Jones went for a walk or rode together in a bus called 'The Post Rack' or 'The Toaster' because it had open sides. They were photographed in it together, each hatted and looking grim. The bus took them up to the top of Peak Hill, where they walked together on Mutter's Moor, or to the top of neighbouring Salcombe Hill, where they walked in forests and heather.

To Dawson, he lamented a recent aesthetic calamity. After the accession to the throne of Edward VIII in January, stamps had been issued for the first time using a photograph instead of an engraving. Jones drafted a letter to *The Times* protesting this 'unbelievably ignoble production.' A camera merely records 'the facial accidents of the sovereign,' he writes, whereas a postage stamp, like a coin, should symbolize 'nothing less than kingship,' and

to symbolize kingship in terms of plastic art the universal must needs shine through the particular & for that to be achieved an artist's mind proportioning the parts is necessary. Any artist of sensibility should have little difficulty in perceiving in the general aspect of the present King a suggestive model upon which to base his effigy of the people's crowned man. It so happens that there is that about his features, & that about the idea of him in the minds of men which calls for an image of him significant of his office & of his legend. Not perhaps since King Richard II who [sic] the people loved has this been so.^{186*}

The change from engraving to photography was for him a clear mark of civilizational decline. Whether or not agreeing about the effect, Dawson certainly agreed about the cause.

Again, Jones went to hear him lecture at Exeter University, but, emotionally distraught, Dawson was inaudible, virtually whispering into his beard. Jones worried about what he would think of *In Parenthesis* but gave him 'most of' it to read, and, to his immense relief, Dawson 'seemed to like it'—'thank God,' Jones wrote Hague. Dawson suggested that for the title he retain ancient usage, as in *The Red Book of Hengest*, by calling it *The Black Book of Wrexham* after the Royal Welch Fusiliers' depot. He also said that 'notes would be useful & help a lot—So' in April, Jones 'settled down' to write notes. He found it 'difficult to write explanations of things' and could only work at it for 'a shortish time each day.' This summer he made eighty pages of notes. Dawson had suggested that he write a marginal commentary like that of Coleridge in *The Ancient Mariner*, and although deciding against that, Jones considered placing

* On 11 December 1939 he would paste a postage stamp featuring a photograph of King George VI into his pocket diary and write over it, 'What insolence.'

the notes in the margins. He also considered inserting them into the body of the text. Hague wisely discouraged both of these ideas. Then Jones thought that some notes should be footnotes and began dividing them from endnotes, but he ‘got so fed up’ with sorting them that, in exasperation, he decided to put them all at the end, which Hague thought best. Subsequently he wanted to put the relevant notes at the back of each numbered Part, but Hague and de la Mare argued against it, and Jones acquiesced. He deleted a great many that seemed unnecessary and send the finished notes to Burns for typing on 25 July. Later in London, he drew the map of the Richebourg Sector that appears with the notes in early editions ‘partly from material’ he had ‘& partly from a map in the Imperial War Museum’ that had largely confirmed his memories of the location of trenches.¹⁸⁷

Near the end of his stay, in March, Dawson became very depressed and anxious. Jones wrote to Gill that although he enjoyed Dawson’s company, ‘toward the end when he got bad—it upset me—I thought I should have been able to help him, understanding from inside what it feels like to be like that, but unfortunately it seemed in the end to only bring my stuff back a bit—but please don’t talk about this as it would be awful if he ever thought that it was any strain to me & anyway perhaps I was due for a throw-back, I get them from time to time—it’s all very disappointing but,’ he wrote in June, ‘I’m better again now.’¹⁸⁸

Tentatively intending to illustrate his poem with wood engravings, he had been, in March, ‘trying to do some drawings of trenches & things.’* One of these he developed fully with pencil, ink, and watercolour into the frontispiece (fig. 11), an impressive picture, which he regarded as integral to the poem, it was, in posture and raised elbows, to be modelled on the tomb-effigy he and Prudence had seen. In the drawing, a quasi-cruciform infantryman, most of his clothing torn away, stands in the wasteland of the forward zone. His exposed, tiny genitals evoke an artillery piece, giving visual focus to the poem’s motif of gunfire as antithetical to fertility. The pain of burned flesh or a pathetic attempt to ward off harm causes him to raise his elbows awkwardly away from his body. The gesture may evoke Jesus crucified but also resists that association. It is a starry night. The soldier shares the foreground with four rats and a tangle

* Still considering himself an active engraver, he continued to pay his subscription (£1.1.0 in 1936) to the Society of Wood Engravers, and, as a result, engravings by him went with the Society’s exhibition that year from the Redfern to Holland, New York, Toronto, California, South Africa, and Hungary.

of barbed wire and wire-supports. The indistinctly painted area on the right, hip-high, is liberated from perspective and brings the background forward. This and tonal equivalence between foreground and background render him almost indistinguishable from his setting—he is one with it, the Waste Land personified. And because the trees, the background figures, the ruined buildings, and the night sky are tonally darker than any part of him, there is the distinct visual sense, violating perspective, that he is behind them, a symbolic giant embodying all they mean. Complete disappearance into background is resisted by the tonal darkening of his one clothed leg and the white



11. David Jones, Frontispiece to *In Parenthesis*, March 1936

bodycolor on left shoulder and right hand, whiteness he shares, significantly, with a suffering-servant pack-mule beyond. By a juxtaposition of nearness and distance, the scale of the rats approximates that of the infantrymen on fatigue duty.¹⁸⁹ This parallel corresponds to affinity in the poem between infantrymen and rats, who ‘redeem the time of our uncharity’ (54). The remarkable metamorphic reversibility of figure and ground here has its counterpart in the already finished text of the poem, in which allusive subtext tends to break through the surface narrative. In 1944 he would exhibit the frontispiece under the title ‘The Victim’.

He had wanted to make engravings to illustrate *In Parenthesis* and still wished to but was unwilling to wait till he was able to go ‘through it all again in another medium—another matter of years.’ It might have been possible merely to make drawings which could be photographically reproduced, but he decided not to—he did not ‘envisage that kind of work at all.’ Now that illustrations were out of the question, he wanted it ‘to be a simply printed document without embellishments or additions of any kind,’ but he would always regret not having illustrated *In Parenthesis*.¹⁹⁰

In March 1936, the Germans reoccupied the Rhineland, and, like most in Britain, Jones approved, his chief worry being a legalistic French reaction. He had begun drawing again and now began painting. For her birthday on 6 April he sent Prudence one of his first pictures since his breakdown, and she loved it. He made for himself a drawing of Germany as ‘a nice big girl’ with her foot in the Rhine ‘& Odin’s Dog Star in the background—only,’ he wrote Ede, ‘for my private entertainment you know.’ And he added, ‘I’m still very worked up about Germany & these nasty type of Frog—I wish we could pull up to Germany proper & let the other buggers do what they choose.’ By the end of the summer, he completed five watercolours, which showed the same spontaneous character as those done in 1932.¹⁹¹

He wrote to Gill on 14 June, ‘its getting very much ‘beside the sea side’ here now—on the prom’ & ‘what bout a dip old girl’ & long & hideous Methodists in shorts and char-à-bancs as large as the bloody Queen Mary disgorging their happy cargoes.’ The Methodists were from a Wesleyan Holiday Home behind the town who swept the promenade in parties of about forty, walking with linked arms ‘to the astonishment of the Sir Harry Lambs & Co at their after dinner coffee—wouldn’t half give old J. Wesley a pretty surprise I bet.’

In February 1936, Rex Nan Kivell at the Redfern Gallery (in Cork Street, around the corner from Burlington House) had wanted to mount a new exhibition of Jones’s paintings. Nan Kivell was a small, handsome New-Zealand born Australian, cocky, charming, encouraging, obviously homosexual. Jones liked him and respected his feeling for painting. They had met when Jones was exhibiting with the Wood-Engraving Society. Jim Ede undertook to organize the exhibition in order to raise funds for Jones and to encourage him to resume painting. Jones wrote to him, ‘I am touched or whatever the word is that you think I am some sort of artist—I always feel in as far as one lets oneself feel about oneself (its a bad thing to do) that there is something I’m dying to get out but somehow its pretty bugged up in some way.’ He had promised the

Leicester Gallery his next show, but Ede spoke with Brown at the Leicester, resolving this difficulty. Jones told Ede that in addition to the pictures Ede had in storage at the Tate, there were some at Brockley, and ‘one or two at Leicester & Zwemmer & two complete duds at Le Fevere.’ He liked one picture at Marchant’s French Gallery, a large one of ships in a harbour in Sussex, ‘a 25 pounder’, but, he thought, there were now too few for a show. To his astonishment, however, Ede managed to collect enough, many from Howell. When Ede worried that an exhibition might make him feel that he was in a zoo, Jones said that the sign before his cage should read, ‘Extinct Type—very jumpy—do not feed with nuts, or tease.’ The exhibit consisted of pictures that were, he thought, ‘of “the second line” so to say,’ though he liked many, especially one of a lynx, mistakenly called *Hyena* in the catalogue. After the exhibition opened, he added pictures and rearranged the others, so that, he felt, his pictures had never looked better together. The exhibition ran from 2 to 25 April, Jones sharing the gallery with Paul Nash, Ethel Walker, and Adrian Daintrey. Jones’s watercolours were the main attraction and received accolades in the press, all the critics singling out for special praise *Heat Wave*, *Chelsea*. Although put off by the prospect of being in London, he managed to come up for a day to see the show and meet Helen Sutherland. At Nan Kivell’s urging, he contracted to sell all pictures he would paint from now on through the Redfern Gallery.¹⁹²

Soon after the opening of the exhibit, he received notice ‘from the worshipful Company of 7 & 5’ that, a vote having been held at which he received only two votes, he was no longer a member. He regretted not having sent a dignified letter of resignation a year earlier, ‘but in a way,’ he wrote Ede, ‘its [sic] much nicer to be hooked out—certainly whatever happened I suppose my stuff would no longer “go with” their particular goodness.’ Nicholson now disliked Jones’s representational art, though Jones admired Nicholson’s new abstraction. Much of the best work then being done, he then thought, was abstract. It was, he thought, inevitable in a late phase of civilization—when modern secular man has lost most of his non-aesthetic values. Jones considered ‘pure abstraction’, a conscious isolation of the first principle, the juxtaposition of forms, in which ‘all the arts of man resides.’ To have ‘a life of its own’ juxtaposing must attain integration which is always abstract. Jones did not accept Nicholson’s notion that abstraction was radically new. He believed in continuity in the arts: ‘most things that are good have some affinity with ancient roots,’ he said, ‘however much they are, and must be, metamorphosed.’¹⁹³ Not that Nicholson’s new work was purely abstract. Like Picasso’s, it was almost all indicative or suggestive of

recognizable objects. Jones thought that representation added to the abstract a symbolic dimension. Less might be stunningly beautiful, but he wanted more.



12. David Jones, *Violin and Flowers*, 1932

To his surprise, there were sales at the Redfern show, but he had difficulty finding out from Nan Kivell what his earnings were. In June, Ede interceded and discovered that he had made £206/6/1, about (£10,365 in 2016 currency), which means that, priced between £22 and £25, he had sold about twenty-seven paintings. This was not the windfall it might seem, for Nan Kivell delayed making payments and made them only partially. The exhibition had been, in a sense, a parting gift from Ede, and Jones was grateful, although Ede would have preferred gratitude expressed by the gift of a picture. He had qualms about soliciting Jones for free paintings because Jones was so poor; nevertheless, he did, persistently. In this respect like Queen Mary, Ede often acquired a work from a grateful artist by saying how much he would like to have it. Jones allowed Ede to store paintings at his house, but he refused to relinquish ownership. On this occasion, knowing Jones's weakness for his wife, Ede wrote of an unsold picture at the Redfern, 'I must go & look again at "Flowers & Violin" (fig. 12)—Helen E was so enchanted by it.' Jones resisted such heavy-handed hints.¹⁹⁴ The painting Ede now had his eye on is one that avoids line and shadow for pure colour, in which objects and surfaces emanate rather than reflect light.

With profits from Gaudier-Brzeska sales, Ede had bought land near Tangier and had a house built, which he called, with typically naive immodesty, 'Ede'. He had prepared his escape from the Tate and from James B. Manson, its philistine director, whose insensitivity towards modern art he could no longer bear. Mason was, furthermore, in Jones's words, 'an awful lazy bastard'. Ede wanted things done; Manson desired only to avoid work. Thinking Mason 'ghastly', Jones fully sympathized with Ede. In October Ede resigned, citing as his reason ill health. Jones realized that with the move to Tangier, he (Jones) would 'feel the draught' financially—directly or indirectly, Ede had been responsible, he wrote, for half the sales of his paintings. He also anticipated that with the Edes gone, London would be emotionally for him 'a desert.' Ede's resignation was consequential. It meant that Ede could not apply to succeed Mason

when the latter was dismissed in 1938 after drunkenly disgracing himself before the King and Queen during an official dinner at the opening of an exhibit of British painting in the Louvre. Ede subsequently complained about losing his chance to run the Tate, but Jones replied that the Tate was part of the “academic” painting world’ which was in its entirety ‘fundamentally bogus—a vast mis-apprehension of the nature of the arts.’¹⁹⁵

Also this year, 1936, Augustus John arranged the art exhibit for the National Eisteddfod to be held at Fishguard and invited Jones to send four pictures. John was sending twenty of his own and there would be, Jones was glad to hear, over a dozen watercolours by James Innes. Jones wanted to send a picture Ede owned, *Cows in Field*, which he retitled *Gunman’s Field* because Mary Gill’s gardener (carrying a gun) had walked across the field while he was painting it. From among the works that Ede had kept at the Tate, he also chose *Violin and Flowers* (fig 11) and *Kings Cup* (which Jones retitled *Pinels Cup*). These he priced high, at £40 and £25 respectively, so that they would not sell—he wanted to keep them until he was financially desperate. He also arranged for the portrait of Prudence to be sent. He felt that gathering pictures for shows when he was producing so few was ‘a bit of a farce’, but he wanted to oblige the Welsh.¹⁹⁶

In late July or August 1936, he again visited Dawson in Yorkshire, going up by train with Fr. John O’Connor and staying for over three weeks. Dawson liked having him there because of his conversation. During this or his previous stay, Jones mentioned his first visit to Yorkshire in 1920 and his old Westminster-Art-School friend Frank Wall, so Mrs. Dawson invited Wall to visit. After a lapse of fourteen years, they were glad to meet and went for a walk, during which they found they had nothing to say to one another. Wall felt that in Jones’s eyes he seemed ‘Jesuitically worldly.’ Later, they went for separate walks, Jones by himself, Wall with the Dawsons.¹⁹⁷

Jones told Dawson that he had begun painting again at Sidmouth, and Dawson commissioned him to paint the view from a bedroom window. Jones did, and, as a way of giving him money, Dawson paid more than the going rate, which would have been £25, though his daughter Christina remembered the payment as £100.¹⁹⁸

Over the coming years, they occasionally wrote one another, Dawson in tiny script on small pages about books on Welsh literature or Celtic mythology. They continued to meet, though infrequently, until Dawson took a chair at Harvard in 1958, after which they never meet

again. Jones felt ‘great affection’ for him and considered him ‘one of the greatest Culture-historians of the West’. While ‘astonished at the lack of appreciation’ of him in Britain, he wrote that he could ‘see partly how this was. He was shy & withdrawn & had none of those assertive qualities that seem to make people (in all professions) become regarded as figures of great importance’—‘assertive qualities’, Jones realized (though with no regard for his ‘importance’), that he himself lacked.¹⁹⁹

By the end of July, he came into London for a few days at Brockley, and he and Hague visited de la Mare at the Faber offices at 23 and 24 Russell Square. Since intending to publish *In Parenthesis*, Jones had wanted Hague to print it. He wanted it to be ‘at least ... one book exactly according to’ Hague’s ideas of typography, ‘no frills, a slap up, no hokey pokey printing.’ Although Hague did good work, it was nothing special, and Jones realized that ‘the goodness & satisfactory character’ of his printing came ‘largely from the type that Eric [Gill] designed.’ Jones wanted to use Gill’s Joanna type, which only the Hague and Gill Press possessed. He also wanted to supply Hague with some income—his finances being precarious owing to the economic Depression. The physical shape of a book was important to Jones. He wanted the page to be foolscap size with the text ‘printed large’ in long double columns ‘like a newspaper.’ This format required wide margins to made the text look like a poem. He had written Hague in February, ‘It would be grand if we could do a two column book & fuck ‘em all.’ The layout was to be ‘sober & straight & not “artistic” in any way. His model was the shape of Government White Papers, which he thought were the last well-printed texts, ‘no nonsense about them on the whole.’ He had written Hague in March,

I have seen a book that I would like it to look like—it is the new *Tablet Publishing Company’s Memorandum & Article of Association* printed by Electric Law Press. ... *it’s just right*—& foolscap size with a limp greyish cover stiffened at back with red back &, I think, most beautifully printed, *utterly* right & satisfactory—except for a bit of Gothic script stuff on Title Page. It would be heavenly if *Parenthesis* could look like that. ... Another nice thing about it is that on the backside of the cover the Title etc is printed close up to the edge so that when you fold the whole book to put it into your nise overcoat pocket you still have that title.

He wanted to decide the format before and present it to Faber with an ultimatum: ‘This is how it is going to be printed, you can publish it if you like.’ Hague printed a sample crown folio with two columns in 12-point Joanna. ‘It was just like columns out of a newspaper,’ Hague

remembered.* They went together to see de la Mare at 24 Russell Square in his elegant office with beautiful furniture and china vases—‘old Dicky de la Mare,’ as Jones sometimes called the younger man, was an aesthete with a good visual sense, a collector of Japanese and Chinese porcelain. They showed him the specimen pages and argued for printing *In Parenthesis* in this form. De la Mare was astonished. Hague would remember that he ‘thought we were completely round the bend.’²⁰⁰

At Glebe Place, Jones was seeing a lot of a tall, slim, red-haired debutante named Ann Bowes Lyon, a young first-cousin of the Queen. Like Prudence, she had broken from her class and was thriving in the Catholic circles of the Chelsea group and Pigotts. Burns had met her through Woodruff’s wife, Mia, and was in love with her. She frequently stayed over, sleeping on the divan in the sitting room. She found Jones ‘endearing’, and they became friends. She did favours for him, such as collecting his laundry from the cleaners. She drank pink gins and wrote verse. Because she was easily distracted from writing, Burns and Jones locked her in a room at Glebe Place to encourage her to work. Her verse was clear, lucid, and subtle. She and Jones showed one another their poetry-in-progress and discussed the problems of writing. Burns sent hers to Eliot, who published it in the spring of 1937 under the pseudonymous Ann Lyon.† Jones had a copy. He would give her a set of pre-publication proofs of *In Parenthesis*. Burns wanted to marry her, but she procrastinated. They remained constant companions until 1939.²⁰¹

Jones would have returned to Sidmouth but could not afford it. He had still not received a penny owed him by Nan Kivell, and, after nine months of payments, the Artist’s Annuity Fund reduced weekly amounts from £2 to £1.²⁰² So, on 30 July, he set off for Rock, where he could live for free.

There for a time, Nicolette visited. She had seen his Redfern exhibit and had liked it, which pleased him. He enjoyed their reunion and was glad to find that they ‘had roughly the same notions on the whole.’ He subsequently wrote to her, ‘It was lovely having those talks at

* The sample Hague printed survives among Jones’s papers in the National Library of Wales.

† In the blurb for her book, Eliot wrote, ‘Mrs Lyon’s poems are distinguished by what is rare in our time: a delicate personal rhythm which makes old forms new, and a deliberate cultivation of a particular range of feeling. Within the limits which she has chosen in this book, the author achieves an unusual variety of effect. This is a book for those who require not momentary amazement but a permanent satisfaction.’

Rock.—You greatly encouraged me in some way—or anyway made me feel less hopeless about my work—for the difficulties confronting a maker of works at this date are considerable, unless one is fortunately one-eyed,' like 'our Ben [Nicholson].' He also enjoyed talking to Robin Hodgkin, whose wife records in her diary for 30 August, 'D. Jones here & friendly & much easier than I remember him. & very great in talking to R. on all his subjects most learnedly,' and the next day, 'DJ v nice about Teddy [Edward]—interesting about Prudence.' In early September 1936, at Rock, Jones received word that his mother had suddenly become weaker. He rushed to

Brockley and, when she got no worse, returned to Rock.²⁰³

During his visit, he painted *Window at Rock*, his first important watercolour since the breakdown (fig. 13) and, he thought, one of his best paintings.²⁰⁴ Helen Sutherland loved it and bought it. Its cool median tone is established by pale grey, brown, and blue, on which are drawn squiggly near vines and outlines of leaves and other, distant shapes. In contrast to these, whiteness of paper glows through top branches of a middle-ground tree and the foreground windowsill. On the left the windowsill has become architecturally disembodied and stands like a sculpture of lineless light. Leaves of vines from outside grow in and help



13. David Jones, *Window at Rock*, 1936

the stone window casing frame the picture while varying the straight verticality of the casing. The tree in the middle distance seems to disappear between lower trunk and top. It shines and shimmers there, partaking of the nature of the light it lives on. In the upper left distance is an almost realistic depiction of cows, bridge and tombstones. (Those are the focus of vision that allow so much nearer to diminish in visibility.) The picture frame having shifted right from that of *Chapel in the Park*, the church is out of view. This is a nervous, fidgety picture. The eye flashes, as Jones's hand had, from side to side, top to bottom. There are places to rest, on the top of the sill for example, where the latch is, and beneath and in the clearer foreground, where iron changes protect young trees. This is a new departure, a risk-taking picture, which is cavern-like, looking through and over light foreground to darker, more focused background: cow, fence, water, graveyard, greener foliage—its unity is in the thrust toward this focus. It combines Jones characteristic draughtsmanship with the lineless color that appears in some of his 1932 paintings.

Painting this picture aggravated neurotic symptoms, so that, before leaving Rock to see de la Mare in London, he suffered another emotional misrub. To Sutherland he seemed nervous and worried chiefly over the prospect of becoming ill again, so that the beginning of symptoms became the cause for their increase.²⁰⁵

In Prudence's letters to him and through those of the Hodgkin brothers to Sutherland, he fretfully followed Prudence's travels in the Near East. She had been gone since November 1935. In Palestine, General Wauchope commissioned her to carve a commemorative inscription, a job about which (reasonably enough) her great fear was that she would misspell. In the spring of 1936, she wrote that she has drunk water from a Syrian stream. Appalled, Jones did not 'believe even Eric would do that.' In the blistering heat, she felt 'like a disembodied pool of pale sweat.' In Sidon, she contracted blood poisoning and endured high fevers caused, she thought, by overeating. By the beginning of February, he was desperate over not having heard from her for two months until he learned from Sutherland that she and the Hodgkin brothers had made an arduous four-week journey by horse and camel through the Sinai desert to Egypt—and she was now suffering from malaria caught, sure enough, from drinking from that stream. He was very worried about her. She and Edward had a meal with the Hararis in their flat, and later she wrote to him, 'I think of that low down Mania & her great windy room & listening to a preventer-of-white-slave-traffic jawing about saving women for about 2 long hours - - - & save us a couple

for Saturday night Ma & where is this brandy? & where are my letters from David Jones.’ Between March and July 1936, she received none of his letters, which was a source of suffering for them both, so he began sending telegrams. She returned to Palestine and stayed there through the summer, despite general unrest and much shooting at night. Before returning to England, she wrote to him, ‘O I do long to be with you & see you.’ The homeward voyage from Aleppo of Prudence Mary Pelham recalled to him *Macbeth* and would underlie the return of the *Mary* from Aleppo to London in the great central monologue of *The Anathemata* (137). When Prudence got back in mid-August, she telephoned him at Rock and he joined her at Sidmouth for a three-week holiday-reunion.²⁰⁶ They had been apart for ten months.

As during earlier times together, he read her bits of *In Parenthesis*, and she read some of it by herself and make suggestions. He amused her by looking up ‘blanco’ in a Latin dictionary to find its Roman equivalent, which was chalk—but Roman soldiers had nothing to chalk. He and she drank together at the Dove and the Marine, and walked on the beach, where Jones enjoyed throwing stones into the water and at a boiler—‘bang.’ She was called away by her mother, who had a psychosomatic heart condition by which she emotionally blackmailed her three surviving children. Lady Chichester took to her bed each autumn, propped up with pillows and the attention of servants and her children.²⁰⁷

Prudence’s mother, brother, and sister were ambiguous about her friendship with Jones, who now wanted Prudence with him at Sidmouth for extended periods and was pressing her to come. In an undated letter from the family flat in Chesham Place, she wrote to him, ‘I felt I was bad on the telephone but when you reproach me or I *think* that you do, it makes me clutch the receiver. Lord how I wish I had more of a facade to live behind.’ (Her acute sensitivity was a cause of suffering. When in Jerusalem she had wanted to move from a seedy, bug-infested hotel to the Austrian Hospice but could not because no one else was staying at the hotel and the proprietor looked sad and discouraged.) She continued,

as it is, I am left in a state where the only things I can do are the ones that involve the least fight with the other occupants of this flat. I know you understand about this & how difficult it is to borrow money for a visit of which they vaguely disapprove. *I would love to be with you during this next week* but it seems impossible to combine doing what one wants to do & living with ones family at the same time.

Even frequent or prolonged visits in Sidmouth were not entirely happy, since, if she was a joy for him, she was also an occasion of suffering and not only because her departure was inevitable. After

leaving on a snowy morning in the spring of 1937 in order to go to stay for six weeks with the Rothschilds at their chateau in Switzerland, she wrote from Chesham Place:

So very dearest David most darling David how short it was—I did hate leaving you—I did not say it a lot because I knew I would have to go & I knew you didn't want me to & it is so difficult to primb yourself to it.

I *did love* being with you you know that don't you? Things will come better I do believe. There are a lot of things I would write but it is not much good to write complicated personal things in a letter. I think it leaves the other person helpless under a barrage of words.

Be very safe my darling Dai & if there was anything I said or left unsaid that was puzzling it is mostly because I am stupid & not because of lack of warmth & gladness to be there. ...

If there is a day when you feel strong, make a drawing of yourself with a puzzcat in it—I have no kind of picture of you that I like, to keep with me, do not bother with these [drawings of] thin girls! I'm not interested in them really. Good night my sweet David please please be happy I can't bare it when you are miserable & I have made it worse.

Bless you all the time. I will think at you all the time & send you what ever nise you would like.

Your loving Prudence.

From Switzerland she posted to him mountain flowers she had picked and packed in snow and moss. He had offered, and Prudence pleads for, a drawing of himself in the looking-glass. He had, at Sidmouth, drawn a 'Pierro della Francesca drawing' of her which, she thought, flattered her, and made her wish she had not snipped off inward-growing eyelashes that kept her awake at night by tickling her eyeballs.²⁰⁸

He had submitted *In Parenthesis*, revised and, he thought, finished, Richard to de la Mare probably in early August. It consisted of a typescript with manuscript insertions. By October 1936, at Rock, he was feeling impatient. 'I have had no word from young Dicky de la Mare, confound him—he ought to know if he wants to publish it one would have thought by this time.' On 1 October he received a letter from de la Mare explaining that the delay was not owing to doubts about publishing but to everyone in the firm wanting to read it and read it slowly. It was 'splendid' and the firm would be proud to publish it. But there were 'two knotty points': one being the format in which it would be printed; the other, Jones's insistence that Hague do the printing. De la Mare thought the 'peculiar' double-columned format would militate against sales. Jones agreed to forego that but insisted on Hague's involvement. Still de la Mare objected. The problem was cost. Hague only had type for hand-setting. De la Mare wanted it machine-set

because that was less expensive and allowed for the keeping of standing type for reprinting.

Jones replied,

I see this is an unexpected & grave difficulty. I had realized that the cost of production might arise. I believe we touched on that when I saw you in London. Knowing Fabers had frequently published things printed by R.H. & it being understood that he should print my thing in a way that seemed good to us & in keeping with the kind of thing it is (whatever that may be!)—seemed to happily fit in with my promise to you that you should read it to see if you would like to publish it. I had not, it is true, envisaged a wide public—but I can't see that there is anything 'idiosyncratic' in the bad sense—or any sense which would militate against its being read. To me, of course, it just seems a rational, legible & refreshing looking piece of printing.²⁰⁹

As a compromise, Hague was retained to design the book, but it was to be typeset elsewhere. The initial plan was for machine-setting in Glasgow and shipping to Hague for adjustment and printing, but the cost of shipping fifteen hundred-pound boxed pages of type by lorry and manufacturing type for corrections was prohibitive.²¹⁰ Hague then submitted an estimate for hand-setting—the cost was out of the question. Finally it was agreed that type would be set by the Temple Press at Letchworth, and Hague would correct and alter the type and then print the book on his press.* De la Mare explained to Jones that this arrangement—of having one press set type and another print it—would cost a good deal more than the usual practice and that consequently he could not offer Jones terms he would have liked.† Out of affection for Hague, Jones agreed to this. He also asked for and got a £15 advance upon signing the contract, to cover costs for typing a clean copy to help him read proof.

De la Mare sent the contract. Jones asked for changes. He wanted not to promise to submit any future book to Faber, though, he wrote, 'I don't imagine I shall write another book'.

* This is important: while he printed *In Parenthesis*, Hague did not set the type, as has previously been assumed. The typesetting was very badly done, as several reviewers noticed who complained of words eliding, making reading difficult. This was the fault of the Temple Press setting-machines, not Hague, who may, in fact, have corrected instances of such enjambment where space allowed. Physically the book was not as clearly readable as it would have been if he had set the type. Worse, the poorly set plates have been used ever since, which has silently discouraged anyone, to some degree, from reading of *In Parenthesis*, though many overcome this discouragement. This is true, at any rate, as of the year 2022.

† What de la Mare offered, and Jones accepted, were royalties of ten percent for the first thousand copies, twelve and a half percent for the second thousand, fifteen percent from two thousand to five thousand and, thereafter, twenty percent. For all paperbacks he was to receive ten percent.

He disliked making ‘legal agreements unless they were absolutely necessary.’ He also wanted it stipulated that no edition would ever appear illustrated by someone else without his approval, and added that he ‘might conceivably’ wish to illustrate it himself in the future. He also wanted no edition published with an alteration to the arrangement of type without his approval since ‘the thing depends, in places, for its punctuation etc, on how the words come on page.’ On 12 January 1937 at Sidmouth, he received his contract incorporating these changes.²¹¹ The publication date was set for 10 June.

In November 1936, at the Fort he was renting cheap a ‘little back box of a room’ which he liked and where he found he could write. Prudence called it ‘that meagre little room.’ The larger double-bedded rooms at the front were occupied, though when one was unoccupied he was allowed to go in to paint the sea. One of these was the ‘only room’ he felt he could paint from and it was too ‘damn cold to live in.’ He had hoped to paint at Sidmouth, but as of mid-November managed nothing. One reason was that he had torn a rib muscle and wore a plaster on his chest, which made him especially feel the cold. He was also, at this time, suffering stomach trouble again and was unable to drink Guinesses. He found he could drink brandy but didn’t want to.²¹²

One morning—it may have been during this stay—he had an odd experience in his little room, which overlooked the cricket field:

I was half awake & half asleep and indeed half dreaming & thought this is very odd, am I at the battle of Agincourt or Crécy or Borough Bridge & becoming more awake I got out of bed & looked out the window and there on this wide green space flights of arrows were being discharged at targets about 100 yards away. It was a club of the Royal Toxophilite Society contending for some prize or other. I had never heard the sound of arrows before or since. But it was an unmistakable sound.²¹³

He felt affection for the Fort and now that he was a regular resident, enjoyed its fellowship as well as friendships in the town. The managers of the hotel, the Griffins, and their family, and ‘little Tucker the porter’ and the maids, and a long-time resident named Miss Scopes formed a little community. One day in the spring he returned from one of his long walks with a bunch of snowdops, which he presented to Mrs Griffin, who later recalled his expression as that of a child giving flowers for the first time to his mother. Tucker once asked Jones to paint for him a small view of Sidmouth—rather, Jones thought, as young people used to ask artists to draw something,

or writers to write something, in their autograph books. Eventually, he painted one for him. He enjoyed conversations at the bars nearby. Prudence wrote to him, ‘It makes me scream with laughter to think of all those racing-grey-hound owners shaking you by the hand in *The Marine*.’ He knew a growing number of people in town, including a priest named Murray; the Misses Jervois; L.H. Hastings, a retired colonel to whom he once said, ‘It is not easy to live these days’; a teacher at the Royal Holloway College named Deanesley, with whom he discussed the Lollard Bible and plain chant as done at Parkminster; a woman named Spunday; and two married couples whom he refers to as ‘Bill & May and Charles & Barbara E.’ He saw his doctor, E.E. Littlewood, socially, walking the shore with him on 25 February 1936 and having him to dinner at the Fort, the doctor paying for his own meal. He made friends with a homosexual couple in their thirties, who lived together near the Fort in a house with a good library and who liked talking about books. Once Grisewood accompanied him to dinner with them at their house.²¹⁴

About homosexuality Jones was emotionally neutral. As a sometime resident of Chelsea and member of Ede’s circle, he was used to homosexuals and had experienced their advances though not to a distressing degree—except once. He was driven to distraction by the persistent attentions of a man who kept approaching and being ‘nice’ to him. The man’s persistence and Jones’s inclination to accommodate and be polite made brushing off an obdurate suitor torture for Jones. He later told a friend he had ‘been driven mad’ by it, and explained, ‘You see, I ought to be a homosexual. If you consider my nervous system, my so-called sensitivities, the way I live, what upsets me, what I like, I ought to be a homosexual—but I’m not.’²¹⁵

On 11 July 1936, Civil War broke out in Spain. British opinion divided. On the left, supporting the Republicans, were sympathizers with socialism and Communism. These included most intellectuals and artists: among Jones’s friends, Henry Moore, Ben and Winifred Nicholson, Augustus John, Eric Ravilious, Stanley Morison, René Hague, and Eric Gill—Hague and Gill were now close to being Communists. Hague believed that ‘Marxism is the only thing with a core of spirituality & comfort’, and he thought Jones nearly ‘½ a Marxist in so far as interpretation of history goes.’ On the right, supporting Franco, were anti-Communists and fascist-sympathizers but also many Catholics aligned against the Republicans for having murdered six thousand priests and monks and a few hundred nuns, in many instances after torturing them. Burns was constantly lobbied by nationalists and fully informed about anti-Catholic

atrocities, information he passed on to friends, including Jones. Bernard Wall (initially), and Grisewood were strongly pro-Franco, and so, Grisewood remembered, was Jones, ‘because of his opposition to the Communists.’ This is confirmed by a letter from Prudence, who was pro-Republican:

Yes I know about Marxists being wrong phylosophically [sic] & catholics being right theologically & agree about all that but it seems to me that priests of every sect wherever you go, *in the main* are on the wrong side—sided with the strong & the mealy mouthed against poor buggers in general & heavens I don’t half *loathe* them. Also I think this type of insincerity *justification* they go in for from Syrian Maronite Bishops to Canterbury & York is almost worse than blind mistaken thinking.

Strongly pro-Communist, Stephen Spender later remembered that though most members of the Chelsea group were pro-Franco, controversial politics were not discussed at the meetings, political disagreement was not personal, and there was no rancor or falling out.²¹⁶

Owing, perhaps, to skepticism about propaganda concerning atrocities, Jones seems not to have strongly taken sides or, with his pro-Republican friends, he tempered expression of feeling. The only surviving direct evidence of his alignment is associated with such friends. In November 1936, he wrote to Edward Hodgkin, who was pro-Republican, ‘Feel miserable about these poor devils rending themselves to pieces in Spain—what a grisly world. What oceans of courage you need in it—mental & physical.’ In December 1936, he was with Prudence at Burns’s flat when Burns’s Jesuit brother, David, arrived intending to stay the night. Neither Jones nor Prudence, whom he addressed as ‘Miss Jones’, liked him. As she remembers, he spoke of Franco’s troops, ‘They got 5000 machine guns, ammunition dumps, and 5000 prisoners—wonderful isn’t it’ and Jones replied, ‘Well, it depends which side you’re on.’²¹⁷

The start of the Spanish Civil War was overshadowed for him by the accession of Edward VIII, the gossip about his relationship with Mrs. Simpson, and his abdication. Since 1932, when Edward had begun publicly sympathizing with the unemployed, he had been the most popular person in Britain. He was informal and, no politician, despised red tape. On a tour of the north country, for example, he insisted on seeing slums not on his itinerary. At a home for mutilated soldiers, he insisted on visiting a limbless fragment of a man and (Jones especially admired him for this) embraced and kissed him. He brought hope to the politically disillusioned and aroused a popular enthusiasm like that which John F. Kennedy, whom he physically resembled, would stir in the United States decades later. Jones was, Burns remembered, ‘a passionate admirer’ of Edward. He had, said Grisewood, ‘a devotion’ to him both as Prince and King—he represented a

change from the clichés and routine banalities that had characterized English politics for decades.’ Grisewood had a new friend at the BBC named Charles Siepmann who had dined with King Edward and Mrs. Simpson and reported that the King was not shallowly conventional, that he loved Shakespeare, could recite from the plays, and had a real and simple love of poetry.* This fired Jones’s enthusiasm. How far back in English history would you have to go to find a monarch likely to back the artist in his perennial feud with the philistine? He promised to be a real leader, devoted to the cultural well being of society, while all around him were concerned with party politics. Jones was not blind to his faults but, as with other prominent figures he admired, he discounted them. ‘If these were pointed out,’ remembered Grisewood, ‘he would agree but go on to say that there was something mean in always harping upon faults.’ Jones thought Edward the modern equivalent of ‘Richard II who the people loved.’ So did Prudence.²¹⁸

In November 1936, touring the depressed mining areas in South Wales, Edward famously remarked, as newspapers reported, ‘Something must be done.’ Jones considered this an admirable ‘expression of ordinary humanity.’ When he read in *The Times* leader that it is not the role of a constitutional monarch to assess such matters, he was convinced that powerful forces were opposing Edward. And when, in December, the affair with Mrs. Simpson was revealed, and Edward was pressured to abdicate, Jones thought ‘that a “they” of some sort’ had been out to get the King. No moralist, Jones did not consider the wish to marry a divorcée valid reason to force abdication. To him and his friends—including Burns, Grisewood, Gill, Ede, and Prudence—it was a question of loyalty to the King, and in this they sided with Churchill against Prime Minister Baldwin and the Anglican establishment. Edward abdicated on 10 December and sailed from England aboard *H.M.S. Fury* on the 11th—which was, Jones bitterly realized, the anniversary of the killing of the last authentic prince of Wales in 1282. The exile of Edward was, for Jones, a defeat for philosophical and cultural values that had given a ray of hope to contemporary Britain. Grisewood agreed and felt that ‘in the Middle Ages, we would have gone

*Because of his job at the BBC, Grisewood was privy to much information not available to the general public and passed it on to Jones and his other friends. In January 1936 he had been able, for example, to disclose that the last words of Edward’s father, George V, were not, as reported, ‘How fares the empire?’ The King had recovered from illness the previous year at Bognor, which had since called itself Bognor Regis, and his physician had told him, ‘Cheer up, your Majesty. You’ll soon be better and then you’ll be able to go again to Bognor,’ at which the dying King delivered his last words, ‘Bugger Bognor.’

into exile with the King.’* Jones and Prudence had dreary telephone conversations about the abdication and the political rhetoric in its wake, and she told him that the children in the village of Falmer were singing a new carol: ‘Hark the herald angels sing / Mrs Simpson’s pinched our King.’²¹⁹

About the loss of Edward, Jones was first furious, then miserable. He thought it ‘a tragedy’. When including ‘SECRET PRINCES’ in his dedication to *In Parenthesis* he had Edward in mind, as also when inserting into Part 4, after ‘Come for sweet princes,’ the words ‘by malignant interests deprived’ (66). Convinced that Edward had been expelled for political reasons, he argued heatedly about it with a vicar, who exclaimed, ‘But it’s a matter of divorce, and you, you’re a Catholic!’ to which he replied, ‘And you’re an Anglican. Your religion is founded on a divorce.’ With balancing scepticism about possibly ‘labouring under an illusion,’ he often regretted Edward’s departure in the dark days to come.²²⁰ On 29 May 1972, late-night radio news of the Duke of Windsor’s death would stir in him intensely felt regret for what might have been.¹³

At Hague’s urging, in early December, he began marking the typescript to indicate which lines were verse and which run-on. For Christmas, his parents sent, along with presents, a request that he not spend much scarce money on presents and restrict himself to a bottle of scent for his mother and a leather wallet for his father. In the new year, Prudence visited. Walking together on the beach, they passed an old man in a squat fur hat combing the beach for sticks and useful refuse. He looked just like ‘the Jerusalem Jews’. Prudence liked the look of him, so, for her birthday, Jones painted a picture of him, which she hung in her bedroom.²²¹

During the winter of 1937 he was invited to lunch in nearby Lyme Regis to meet the great Welsh scholar Sir John Edward Lloyd. The meeting may have been arranged through Charles Evans, who lived in Sidmouth and with whom Jones had a friendship based on common Welsh interests. The meeting was at a pub called The Three Cups where Lloyd was staying with some friends, including the novelist Anthony Powell. Lloyd and Jones plunged immediately into Welsh history and archaeology. After lunch, an amused Lloyd whispered to Powell that Jones,

* About Grisewood’s memories concerning the abdication in *One Thing at a Time* (pp. 102-05), Jones wrote in 1968, ‘What Harman writes of that is ... exactly what I felt at the time.’

who had only been invited for lunch, ‘has just remarked he can’t make up his mind whether or not he will stay for dinner.’ He stayed.²²² Later, on 24 June 1937, Lloyd would write to Powell, saying he has *In Parenthesis* on order and had not realized that Jones was the painter who had given him such pleasure at the exhibition in Aberystwyth two years before.

Jones went to Lyme Regis at least once with Prudence and René Hague, and once with Dorothea Travis. He knew it well and enjoyed walking on the cobb: ‘the stone mole & harbour is such a very attractive shape.... I like the cool grey colours. Interesting how in Lyme you are jolly definitely in Dorset & not Devon although so very near—that sudden change in English county characteristics in the whole feeling of the landscape is jolly odd—makes you believe in the *numina* of places.’ He mused, ‘What a heavenly place it must have been years ago—when the boat life was still going.’²²³

On St David’s Day 1937, he had leeks for lunch and took a break from correcting proof and reworking the typescript to walk, despite the ‘bloody cold wind’ on the snow-capped hill above the sea. ‘The snow was nice in patches with grass & brambles in between & the sea like a leaden plain.’ He stayed in Sidmouth through July. He was now ‘better’ than he used to be, ‘all right’, he wrote, ‘if nothing happens to stir the old stuff up again, or frighten me, or exhaust me—a pretty poor lookout in so rocky a world.’²²⁴

Being able to paint little, he felt loss at sales of paintings. He deeply regretted not having had paintings photographed before surrendering them for sale. He had only eight photographs of paintings* and felt ‘as devoid of proper records as is the history of England from the year 400 to 600.’ He repeatedly asked the people at the Redfern to photograph his pictures at his expense before selling them, but they never did. He would later say that one advantage of writing over painting is that publication and sale did not involve loss of the work: ‘with painting, if someone buys it you don’t know where it is; with writing, you have the books.’²²⁵

Upon returning to London, he visited the Edes for the last time at Elm Row. Since quitting the Tate, Ede had lectured in the United States. Now he was moving his family to Tangier. Before going, they had Jones to a dinner of sausages among the packing cases. (Jones wanted mustard, Ede remembered, but there was now none in the house.) This house had been

* *Petra im Rosenhag*, *Gordion*, *Portrait of Prudence*, *Human Being*, *Lynx*, *Portrait of Joan*, *Salies de Béarn with Donkey*, and *Chapel Perilous*.

for Jones ‘a harbour’ in a city he had come to loath. He felt that his happiest moments had been here with them. He reminisced about laughing with Jim and Helen before the fire, and wrote, ‘I do not think I could have stood those years without coming.’ Even the thought of going to visit them had made him happy. On Sunday afternoons for the rest of his life, he would think of the Edes at Hampstead and how he ‘used to look forward to coming out from Brockley & talking & seeing the blokes.’²²⁶ The Edes’ departure was a great grief.

In January 1937, he saw the blurb for *In Parenthesis*, in which T.S. Eliot anonymously writes, it is not a ‘war book’ so much as a distillation of the essence of war books, and in particular it is the *chanson de gestes* of the Cockney in the Great War, men and ghosts, and behind them the shadows of all their ancestors who fought and toiled and died in the Britain of the Celt and of the Saxon. Having said this, we may describe the book as an early epic: one of the strangest, most sombre and most exciting books that we have published.

It is insightful of Eliot to call the work an epic—he was the first to do so in print—and as ‘an early epic’, more like those of Homer than that of Virgil. Jones sent the blurb to Prudence, who liked it but, quite rightly, objected to the adjective ‘sombre’ for such ‘a bright golden poem.’^{227*}

Jones had continued revising *In Parenthesis*. On the back of the letter of acceptance, he tried out alternative versions of words that would conclude the poem, and the fresh typescript quickly became another working draft. In November, 1936, he was amazed to discover that he was every day improving the work, except when he felt unwell and ‘unable to do anything but moon.’ Among late insertions into the typescript or subsequently into proofs are: in Part 3, the passage including ‘dogs of Annwy’ and ‘the Watcher’ (52) as Ball stand’s night-sentry; in Part 4, the centre of Dai’s boast, beginning ‘I saw the blessed head set under’ (81-2); and in Part 7, the near-final section beginning ‘Marry it man! Marry it!’ including the Queen of the Woods (183-6), which was now his favourite passage in Part 7. She visits the newly dead, British and German, bestowing on them garlands honouring their varying degrees of goodness:

* When he told her that Eliot had written it, she thought that ‘rather shameful’ and objected to the hype-phrases, ‘the most sombre,’ ‘the most strange,’ ‘the most exciting’. She speculated that he did it ‘for specially noble works,’ and added. ‘What a horrible type of job. We’ve got a lot to be thankful for one way and another not having to write blurbs.’

The Queen of the Woods has cut bright boughs of various flowering.

These knew here influential eyes. Her awarding hands can pluck for each their fragile prize.

She speaks to them according to precedence. She knows what's due to this elect society. She can choose twelve gentle-men. She knows who is most lord between the high trees and on the open down.

Some she gives white berries

some she gives brown

Emil has a curious crown it's

made of golden saxifrage.

Fatty wears sweet-briar,

he will reign with her for a thousand years.

For Balder she reaches high to fetch his.

Ulrich smiles for his myrtle wand.

That swine Lillywhite has daisies to his chain—you'd hardly credit it.

She plaits torques of equal splendour for Mr. Jenkins and Billy Crower.

Hansel with Gronwy shares dog-violets for a palm, where they lie in serious embrace between the twisted tripod.

Siôn gets St. John's Wort—that's fair enough

Dai Great-coat, she can't find him anywhere—she calls both high and low, she had a very special one for him.

Among this July noblesse she is mindful of December wood—when the trees of the forest beat against each other because of him.

She carries to Aneirin-in-the-nullah a rowan sprig, for the glory of Guenedota. You couldn't hear what she said to him, because she was careful for the Disciplines of the Wars. (185-6)*

Jones later confided to an interviewer, 'It's a frightful thing to say but I do love that bit—I mean I'm rather pleased with that.' In its context, it is one of the most moving passages in literature.

Hague had designed the book immediately after Christmas—consultating with Jones and subject to de la Mare's veto. When Hague sent specimens of the notes in bold Perpetua, de la Mare rightly judged them 'horrid', and the bold type was dropped. The Temple Press machine-set the type, Gill's Petra, and sent it with galley proofs to Hague. Jones corrected the galleys and Hague printed page proofs on his mechanized double Demy Warfe Press. Jones visited him the last weekend in February to watch the printing. By the end of March, Hague was sending him

* Fatty is the lover of 'Barbara Allen' of the folksong. Balder receives mistletoe, the Golden Bough of immortality. Ulrich receives myrtle, which the initiates were given at Eleusis. Despised by the men for insisting on keeping rules, Lillywhite receives daisies, symbolic of love. Whatever upper-middle-class Jenkins 'Crow-er' (a Cock-ney) receives, it erases the class-difference that had separated them in life. The 'twisted tripod' is that of a machinegun.

page-proofs. Jones had to read them slowly, otherwise he got ‘unwell again.’ In March he corrected proofs for the first two parts of the poem and, while waiting for the next sets of proof, was surprised to find himself revising the remainder of the poem ‘quite a lot one way & another.’ He writes to Ede, ‘there seems no end to what one can do to a thing—& you shudder to think how bad it must have been before you made these necessary corrections & rearrangements, deletions, additions—*tiny* things—but *terribly* important.’ He wrote an ‘Epilogue,’ which, upon reconsideration, he discarded. Before the end of March, the rest of the proofs came all at once. He was heartened to see them and got busy. ‘Getting everything ship shape & properly corrected’ under the constraints of a deadline was ‘a bugger.’ While working, he wondered whether ‘anyone will see the point of’ the book. By 21 April he finished correcting proofs, but wanted to see again those for the latter half so that he could reconsider changes he had made in punctuation in Part 7. Hague sent back to him proofs for the entire book for rechecking, which Jones sent, before correcting, to Prudence to read (she attempted no corrections). He sent the corrected proofs to de la Mare, who gave them to a proof reader named J.C. Jennet, who complained bitterly that the text was so carelessly written—and the notes were even worse—that de la Mare would be justified in refusing to pay for three-quarters of the author’s corrections.²²⁸

Because Hague was the one making final adjustments preparatory to printing and because he allowed it, Jones could continue revising while reading proof. Although the contract specified that he would be charged for changes other than correction of printer’s errors, Hague charged him nothing for making textual improvements. In the summer, Jones moved to Pigotts to allow for close working with Hague, whose Press had moved from Pigotts to 15 Easton Street in nearby High Wycombe. ‘He did,’ Hague would remember, ‘change a good many things—so much so that Canon Gray, staying with us in the summer of 1937 said to me, very seriously, with the corners of his mouth turned down severely, ‘David has a very grave vice’—‘Good heavens,’ I answered, ‘what is that?’ ‘Proof-correcting’, he said.’²²⁹ It was largely for accommodating these late changes, that Hague earned the accolade at the end the Preface, where Jones thanks ‘the printer who ... is more than an aid, he is a collaborator, and I know no one else so aware of both the nature of a writing and of how to print it’ (xv).

Jones liked the reproduction of the drawing he had done for Faber’s Ariel poem, ‘Winter Solstice’ because it looked slightly like a lithograph. Hoping for the same effect, he asked that the frontispiece be reproduced the same way, and it was. He wanted it to occupy as much as

possible the entire page, without margins, as it does. He wanted the map to go with the notes for Part 3 since 'it is really merely a kind of note to that part.' Then he decided to move it to the end of the notes, a page before the final text and drawing, but Hague or de la Mare convinced him that it belonged at the front of the notes. He 'particularly' wanted the right margin to be black because 'it makes rather an amusing pattern with that torn edge of map & white thing, whatever it is, sticking out at the side.' This was not done, though the torn edge remains visible. He was sent and approved bromide proofs of the frontispiece and map in early August, before they were sent to collotype printers.²³⁰

He was drawing an end-piece which he hoped would be included if he 'bore the cost of this extra reproduction.' It, too, originated as a design for an engraving, a scapegoat in the waste land, apparently a counterpart to the frontispiece infantryman. Beneath it Jones wrote and then erased the words from Revelation 5:6, 'I behold and lo ... stood a lamb as it had been slain.' He worked on this drawing in mid April with difficulty, making four fresh attempts, and finishing the final one early in May. He wrote, 'it has something in it that I like & conveys something I wanted to convey.' Initially he intended it to appear at the end of the text, before the notes, 'on a right hand page with a piece of stuff to go opposite it printed like the Dedication is printed.' But he had not yet decided on the words to go with it. On 6 May Prudence delivered the drawing in person to de la Mare, and Jones sent the words to accompany it to Hague. Ultimately Jones decided that the drawing and its page of text should go not between the poem and notes but after the notes as a 'completion to the whole thing' since he regarded 'the notes as integral to [the] text.'²³¹ He promised the first chance to buy this drawing and the frontispiece to 'a friend' (probably Prudence) and the second chance to Ede, but never parted with them.

He cared intensely about the look of the book and was fully involved in its design. For the binding, he initially proposed 'a *cold* colour—black—or a sort of sand-bag colour—or the colour of a battle-ship or dark blue.' He settled on gray, then changed to sand-bag colour with—and this he especially liked—the title printed on 'stuck-on paper labels' of the sort he used for books he owned that had lost their binding or required de-uglification. Then he wanted gold lettering on the sand-bag cover. De la Mar objected that it would be invisible and chose Jones's current second choice for cover-colour, blue. Continuing to prefer the gold lettering and regarding it as 'perfectly legible', Jones nevertheless felt compelled to accept instead a label with dark blue lettering. He wanted the dust jacket 'as *plain* as possible—just plain letters on a plain

paper ... simple & unadorned, so to say, austere.’ He approved the jacket-lettering. He also liked ‘the dull yellow & black against the grey’ and found ‘the red amusing & firm, & the whole seems ... to escape being consciously artistic, which one finds so difficult when doing these things, usually.’²³²

Postponed by revision and proofing, publication was in July. He came up from Sidmouth for the occasion on 26 July. On the train he wrote to Ede,

am exhausted with my bloody book—it is utterly finished now & should be out in about a fortnight.—alas it’s nothing like I hoped it would look—except René’s printing. It is awful how one gives way about everything & in the end you don’t want to own the thing. Fabers have been *very considerate* & done their best—but my idea of a book is, I find, rather different from theirs!—but *please* don’t tell people this. They have asked my advice about each item—but somehow when all is said & done publishers get their own way & there it is. The only thing I suppose is to do the whole jolly thing yourself. But still at least such people as wish to will be able to read it & without wishing to be pompous I say—‘they that have ears to hear let them hear’ & if there is nothing to hear—well then it’s a failure. I think you will like bits of it. I should like to have mentioned your name in the preface as one of the people who have helped me—but I found a list would be rather difficult—for all my intimate friends have helped me—so you can take this as expressing my thanks to you & Helen for your part in making it possible for me to write the damn thing.

He and Hague had already sent Ede an unbound copy. As soon as Jones returned to London and began to ‘see people & what not,’ he got his ‘nerves bad again.’ The publication of his book left him feeling ‘a vacuum.’ It had been ‘something always to fall to whenever possible during this long long weary unwellness,’ and without it, now, he longed more than ever to be able to ‘get down to painting properly again.’²³³

At the publication party, he was given six author’s copies. He gave one to his parents. His father expressed disapproval of its coarse soldierly language but, when reviews began appearing, subscribed to a press-cutting service. Jones signed and sent a copy to the newly opened Imperial War Museum. He sent one to Helen Sutherland, who loved it and would occasionally buy numbers of copies, some to send to him so that he could give them to acquaintances. Ede bought ten copies to give to friends. Thinking that Lawrence Binyon might review it and that he might, at most, ‘like some things in it,’ he sent him a copy. On 8 July 1937, Binyon replied,

Dear David Jones (or may it be ‘Dear David?’) It was most good of you to send me your book, which I was eager to see, & I do thank you for the gift of it. Will you, some day, write my name in it? I have now read it, & feel rather overwhelmed, especially by the culminating chapter. It is a wonderful book; wonderful to me because you have managed in some way, I don’t know how, to keep a wholeness of tissue throughout, in spite of a strange

complexity of elements. I suppose it is because you never lose your vision: the soldiers stumbling & losing their way in the mud & the rain & swearing & grumbling & talking of home are *there*, quite near & real, but all the time. Millions of strange shadows on them tend,—heroes & saints, and the stars beyond. As I read, I see, I hear, I smell with an acute distinctness. I boggle now & then at the phrasing—inversions & Latinisms—but it gets home. Vividness is a quality perhaps over-rated now-a-days, but your writing is never *merely* vivid because you are a poet, not a descriptive writer. For peculiar beauty I would choose the passage on p. 37 ‘Half-minds,’ etc. You have several blank-verse lines here & there: were they intentional? But I don’t want to criticize, because this is not just a piece of writing, but of living—of living through what it make one’s heart faint to think of: but even hell can be sweetened, it seems. ... Many many thanks. Always yours, Lawrence Binyon.

‘Delighted that he liked the book’, Jones was ‘greatly encouraged’ by this letter.²³⁴

The publisher had given him postcards to send out announcing publication ‘AT 10s 6d NET.’ He had sent one to Walter Shewring, who replied on 26 June, ‘Dear David, I’m in a great hurry. May I just say that I had ordered your book before your monetary postcard, that I’ve read it & that I admire it enormously? WHS’.

Faber had asked him for a list of prospective reviewers, which he compiled with the help of Burns and input from Prudence and Ede. Faber then sent copies for review with a note stating, ‘we consider it one of the most interesting & valuable contributions to literature of recent years.’ Jones awaited the reviews anxiously. They were numerous and, with very few exceptions, extremely positive.* First off the mark was James Agate in the *Daily Express* who called *In Parenthesis* a ‘masterpiece,’ the best book on the war likely ever to appear—a judgement endorsed by subsequent reviewers, some saying that it was the best book on any war. In the *Western Mail*. Llywelyn Wyn Griffith, author of *Up to Mametz*, wrote that now Jones ‘takes his place among the foremost writers of today’ and that there is no other war book that can stand comparison with its attainment of universality through its evocations of European myth.’ To interview Jones, the newspaper sent a reporter who found him in ‘a blue shirt, a green flannel tie, and red socks’, ‘very meek and amiable and helpful’ though his conversation ‘was rather unorganized and erratic’ jumping ‘from subject to subject.’²³⁵

* Here are the exceptions. *The Daily Worker* blamed Jones for writing ‘for the elect.’ So did *G.K.’s Weekly*. The *United Service Review* claimed that ‘to the plain man it will be scarcely intelligible,’ and the *Irish Times* accused it of being unoriginal and pedantic. Jones would later remember only the last two of these reviews as ‘negative’.

An anonymous review by Hubert Wolfe in the *Observer* raves in extravagant terms but is, Jones thought, uncomprehending, whereas the Scottish papers printed understanding reviews, and the *Listener* was, he thought, ‘appreciative in an understanding kind of way.’²³⁶ Neither praise nor blame mattered to him, only understanding. For that reason he liked Desmond MacCarthy’s long mixed review in the *Sunday Times*. MacCarthy realizes that Jones was attempting to ‘ennoble our new media’ by affiliating ‘the spirit of chivalrous legend to modern scientific warfare.’ Identifying chivalry as ‘traditional glamour’ he concludes that this ennobling fails, a judgement, repeated by Paul Fussell decades later, which involves failure to understand the tradition of romance and to see how *In Parenthesis* selectively and critically evokes it.^{*237} Because of what he sees as unsuccessful allusiveness and because of the notes, which he dislikes (unlike most reviewers, who find them helpful), MacCarthy accuses Jones of pedantry and considers Welsh ‘legendary associations’ as ‘overdone’—even though there are very few such associations. Insightfully, he sees the enemy not as the Germans but death, weariness, and pain, and he appreciates the impressionistic quality of the work.

In general, the reviews were insightful. The *New English Weekly*, Desmond Hawkins writes that Jones’s ‘method is to weave the detail of modern warfare into the general background of early myth, geste, saga, legend. ... to integrate the raw unbridled memories of the Great War within the general folklore of our culture.’ Howard Spring in the *Evening Standard* writes that any difficulty unravelling allusions and analogies results in ‘an abiding sense of reality more moving than is often come by through the method of straight-forward narration.’ Hamish Miles in the *New Statesman and Nation* writes that ‘it distils a personal and communal experience of the most intense kind, at once physical and spiritual merging the near present and the far distant past into a locking unity and creating ... a kind of timelessness.’ He also notes that ‘it urges no case, for war or against war.’ The reviewer for the *Glasgow Herald* writes that there is more of the experience of infantrymen in one of Jones’s paragraphs than in whole volumes of realistic description. John Stead in *The Cherwell* notices affinity with *The Waste Land* but writes that Jones ‘has used a much wider reference than Mr Eliot; his mind is warmer and richer, more deeply comprehensive of the past, more intensely aware of the unity of all experience.’ There were many more reviews, equally judicious and positive, many following the lead of Eliot’s

* The MacCarthy-Fussell objection is refuted by T. Dilworth in *The Shape of Meaning in the Poetry of David Jones*,

blurb in identifying the work as an epic—an identification that would be lost to academic criticism for the next fifty years, with the exception of Saunders Lewis in 1960. The reviews in Welsh papers were nearly universal in praise and in mistakenly identifying Jones as a Welshman.

The anonymous reviewer for the *TLS* was Herbert Read, who wrote that ‘this is an epic of war ... like no other war-book because for the first time’ all the realistic sensory experiences of infantrymen

have been woven into a pattern which, while retaining all the authentic realism of the event, has the heroic ring which we associate with the old *chansons de gestes*. It is almost inconceivable that this should have been done without affectation, without parody or pedantry. But the miracle is here—a book which we can accept as a true record of our suffering and as a work of art in the romantic tradition of Malory and the *Mabinogion*. But the possibility is clear to those who realize that to be romantic in this tradition is to be profoundly true to human experience. It is beautifully objective, and the words are as hard and bright as the things they signify ... But into this purely literary texture the author has threaded details which were not in literature before: not only the equipment and technique of modern warfare, but the slang, the songs, the sentiments of the private soldiers—everything except his more impious and impolite words ... To the realism and humour and inherent poetry of this book the author has then added a complex network of literary allusion, not awkwardly or wilfully, but because it was in the texture of his thoughts and experience The most sustained example of this literary allusion is the long ‘boast’ of a Welsh soldier in Part 4 of the book ... which is as fine a poem as any modern poet has written. this book is one of the most remarkable literary achievements of our time.

For thirty years, Jones would think this review ‘the best thing’ written about *In Parenthesis*.²³⁸ Read published another review in the *London Mercury*, in which he writes that *In Parenthesis* presumes the possibility of a work of art being ‘something which has been lifted out of the immediate flux of existence’ and possesses ‘impersonal and universal features due to definite relations of form and expression.’ The book is ‘a repository of every infantryman’s sensations but these details he has given ... sinewy and fierce shape, drained of personal and transitory emotion.’ The result ‘as near a great epic of the war as ever the war generation will reach,’ and it establishes its author ‘as a great poet.’ Very happy with this review, too, Jones thought it ‘wonderful.’²³⁹

The raves surprised him. The people at Faber now anticipated a best seller. The first printing of 1500 copies sold quickly, and in August de la Mare ordered a second impression of a thousand. By mid-October 1937, however, only two of these had sold. This saddened Jones, who

could only assume that the work which had taken him nearly a decade to complete had had its day. He later wrote, ‘One glance at *I.P* was probably enough to put off the possible buyer who had read one or other of the favourable reviews written by one of these “literary chaps”.’

Whatever the difficulty of the book for the general reader, a factor dampening public enthusiasm was the international political climate. Jones felt this himself, saying ‘all the recent preoccupation with, & fear of, newer, & dreadfuller, & equally meaningless wars has made me feel that the war I wrote about was of very remote interest to anyone.’²⁴⁰

In Parenthesis is the only modern epic poem in English.* And as Eliot describes it in Faber’s Spring Catalogue, it is ‘an *early epic*’, having more affinity with Homer than Virgil’s literary epic. It is narrated by a meditating imagination imbued with awareness of history, legend, liturgy, and myth. From these matrices, war acquires analogues that give it rich cultural resonance. The allusive tendency is so strong that the subject expands from seven months on the western front to many of the wars inhabiting what Eliot called ‘the mind of Europe’. War is seen as characteristic of, not exceptional to, human life. But the historical, literary, and legendary battles alluded to are all calamitous. The central question of the poem, asked by Dai Greatcoat, is ‘What is the meaning of war?’—a variation on the more profound question, ‘What is the meaning of life?’ The poem shares the contemporary assumption that the old political answers—justice, freedom, morality (defeating the wicked)—ring hollow. Instead, the poem reveals the intimate hidden virtues of suffering infantrymen: love, humility, courage, and patience. These are Christian virtues, and there are Christian allusions, but basically this is not a Christian poem. The central archetype is not, as has been mistakenly claimed, Jesus-crucified. Rather, it is the prior archetype to which Jesus conforms, the dying god of fertility ritual, a figure embodying the fate of all men (and women) but paradoxically symbolizing positive value and achieving the renewal of the waste land.²⁴¹ Since the death of men is not, like that of the god, positively sacrificial and ‘automatically’ beneficial, the relation of realistic image to the archetype is ‘Metaphysical,’ involving important difference as well as similarity. For example, the Queen of the Woods is a fertility goddess who appears where physical renewal is impossible and whom no one believes

* Because Pound’s *Cantos* is not a narrative or a poem but a sequence of sequences of poems, it may be adjectivally ‘epic’, but it is not ‘an epic.’

in. As a search for significance in catastrophe, *In Parenthesis* reaches no satisfying conclusion, even as it suggests that the physical and political desert of the forward zone is a metaphysical garden. In this, it takes literary modernism beyond irony.

In Parenthesis is important for its beauty. It is the rarest of modern literary phenomena, a poem that is epic-length but also whole. Its unifying narrative has rare cumulative power. Immediate and intermediate forms contribute to its momentum and are subsumed in an overall centred (literally parenthetical) shape. Initially, however, readers love its lyric immediacy. *In Parenthesis* is written with such vividness that it seems to erase the years between experience and writing. Here enemy machine-gunners reck havoc vegetative and human fertility:

they could quite easily train dark muzzles
to fiery circuit
and run with flame stabs to and fro among
stammer a level traversing
and get a woeful cross-section on
stamen-twined and bruised pistilline
steel-shorn of style and ovary
leaf and blossoming
with flora-spangled khaki pelvises
and where rustling, where limbs thrust—
from nurturing sun hidden,
late-flowering dog-rose spray let fly like bowyer's ash,
disturbed for the movement
for the pressing forward, bodies in the bower
where adolescence walks the shrieking wood. (170-1)

And there are even more intensely lyrical passages that significantly enrich English literature: Pt. Ball's night watch with its celebration of rats(52-55), the meditation on Biez Copse (66), Dai Greatcoat's boast (79-84), the moving death of Lt. Jenkins, and the poignant visitation by the Queen of the Woods—these last two quoted above. Informing these passages is an invented language that pervades the work, giving aesthetic permanence to the fleeting moment. This language and the 'significant form' of the poem comprise a triumph of art. It is a work thoughtfully transformed since 1932 and wrought to its lyrical pitch in moments when depression lifted enough to allow revision. The splendour of his transforming revision during the dark years following the summer of 1932 is one of the great human achievements in literary history. 'I think I just turned the corner,' he writes, 'but O Mary! what a conjuring trick it was.'²⁴²

With the publication of *In Parenthesis*, his acquaintance with T.S. Eliot became friendship. While writing the introduction and notes, he had dined with Eliot and, he wrote to Edward Hodgkin, 'I did like him—a great lot.' As poetry editor, Eliot had had the final say in approving publication. When first reading the typescript, he had been 'deeply moved' and 'regarded it as a work of genius.' In the second week in July 1937, they met at Faber and talked alone for the first time. Eliot said with apologies that *In Parenthesis* reminded him of Kipling. Jones said, 'Yes, I can believe it,' and remembered having read Kipling as a boy. Jones spoke of Binyon, whose translation of the *Inferno* Eliot praised. Apropos of soldiers singing 'Casey Jones' in *In Parenthesis* (68), Eliot told him that it was his favourite song, which he sung to himself in the morning while shaving. Eliot's favourite book was *Morte Darthur*—a deep bond between them. Jones found him 'quiet & unpretentious to talk with.' He writes to Bussell, 'I like him a lot.'²⁴³ The following summer, on 2 June, Eliot had him to lunch at the Oxford & Cambridge Club. Eliot was famous and relatively inaccessible, but they saw one another at the Garrick Club, when Jones was Grisewood's guest there, and, from now on, Jones occasionally telephoned him at his office, and they met two or three times a year, sometimes for lunch at the Garrick Club or the Russell Hotel. Sometimes Jones visited him in his office—going past the receptionist, into the elevator and up to the fourth floor, past the secretary, and behind a door with a brass plate announcing 'T. Stearns' to deceive the uninitiated.

Notes to Chapter 10

¹ To Petra Tegetmeier Good Friday/34; Rupert Shepherd interviewed 28/6/89; to D. Tegetmeier 14/1/35; to P. Tegetmeier 8/2/33, 2/5/33.

² DJ "Life for J. Ede" typescript 5/9/35.

³ R.Hague interviewed by Blissett 8/77; H, Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

⁴ To H. Grisewood 25/7/35; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87

⁵ R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77 and by Blissett 8/77.

⁶ To P. Tegetmeier Good Friday/34; E.C. Hodgkin, "Some Memories of David Jones," typescript; E. Hodgkin interviewed 7/6/90; R. and J. Hague interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 11/6/69; R. Hague interviewed by

P. Orr 15/2/77; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/88; to D. Tegetmeier 14/1/35; to P. Tegetmeier 17/4/34; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71.

⁷ T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89, 2/6/86; to H. Sutherland 1/11/34; to P. Tegetmeier 17/4/34; P. Kelly interviewed 9/6/86; To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34; to P. Tegetmeier 17/4/34; N. Gray interviewed 17/6/88.

⁸ T. Burns p.1; to C. Burns frag. n.d. [1934].

⁹ To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34; to P. Tegetmeier 26/4/34; P. Pelham to DJ 2/2/[1935]; to P. Tegetmeier 2-3/5/34; P. Pelham to DJ 27/2/36; to J. and H. Ede 5/5/34; to P. Tegetmeier 26/4/34.

¹⁰ To H. Grisewood 4/3/60, 14/7/71; to V. Reid 3/5/34.

¹¹ To P. Tegetmeier 2-3/5/34, to V. Reid 3/5/34.

¹² P. Pelham to DJ 2/2[1935]; to Stuart Piggott 20/11/59; to Ruth Daniel unposted 1/45; to V. Reid 3/5/34; to P. Tegetmeier 2-3/5/34;

¹³ To T. Stoneburner 13/1/70; draft n.d.; DJ to Blissett, p. 44-5.

¹⁴ To V. Reid 3/5/34; to J. Ede 5/5/34.

¹⁵ H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 19/6/69; Manya Harari, *Memoirs, 1906-1969* (London: Harvill Press, 1972), pp. 15, 36, 18-9; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69.

¹⁶ Lucy and Philip Jebb interviewed 15/6/90; DJ to Blissett, p. 33; to V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34; Letter frag. 24/7/71; to A. Giardelli 8 & 9/3/74.

¹⁷ Thomas Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, ed. E.C. Hodgkin (London, New York: Quartet Books, 1986), p. 38; Eric Gill, *From the Palestine Diary* (London: Harvill Press, 1949), p. 69; P. Pelham to DJ early winter 1936.

¹⁸ To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69.

¹⁹ To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34.

²⁰ To Thomas and Dorothy Hodgkin 16/7/38; Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, p. 61; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69.

²¹ To T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, p. 60.

²² To V. Wynne-Williams 20/6/61.

²³ Gill's diary; DJ to Blissett, p. 144.

²⁴ To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34.

²⁵ To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34; to S. Lewis 4/71.

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- ²⁶ To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34; to R. Hague 23/9/35; Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, p. 57.
- ²⁷ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 19/6/69.
- ²⁸ DJ ms radio script n.d.
- ²⁹ To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34.
- ³⁰ T. Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, p. 60.
- ³¹ To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 5/5/66; to J. Knight 20/7/57.
- ³² To S. Lewis/4/71.
- ³³ To S. Lewis 4/71.
- ³⁴ P. Pelham to E. Hodgkin 1/6/36; Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, p. 66; P. Pelham to DJ 22/11 [1936]; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87
- ³⁵ Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, pp. 64, 114.
- ³⁶ B. Wall, *Headlong into Change*, p. 85.
- ³⁷ T. Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, pp. 70, 67.
- ³⁸ To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34; T. Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, p. 65.
- ³⁹ To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; to S. Lewis 4/71; DJ interviewed by P. Orr c/69; ms note intended for "The Tribune's Visitation."
- ⁴⁰ To Clarissa Churchill 14/11/40; DJ conversation with author 4/6/71; DJ interviewed by P. Orr c. 1969.
- ⁴¹ To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34; Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, p. 71; to T. Stoneburner 20/12/64; to S. Lewis 4/71.
- ⁴² Gill, *From the Palestine Diary*, p. 34; to P. Tegetmeier 7/7/34.
- ⁴³ To V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34.
- ⁴⁴ To P. Tegetmeier 7/7/34; to D. Tegetmeier 9/7/34, 14/1/35; to C. Churchill 16/5/40; to P. Tegetmeier 7/7/34; to V. Reid 3/5-11/6/34; to H. Grisewood 8/7/34.
- ⁴⁵ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 19/6/69.
- ⁴⁶ E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; to Miss Carver 29-30/6/72; to J. H. Johnston 2/5/62; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 19/6/69; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; to P. Tegetmeier 7/7/34.
- ⁴⁷ Diana Smith interviewed 30/1/88; to T. Burns 19/11/44; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; Paul Burns to author 19/9/90; T. Burns to R. Hague 12/8/78; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/88; DS to author 5/7/86; to T. Burns 28/8/40; Barbara Wall interviewed by T. Stoneburner n.d.; to P. Tegetmeier 16/8/34.

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- ⁴⁸ H. Grisewood interviewed 1/93; T. Burns interviewed 20/6/86; to T. Burns 30/7/40; S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86.
- ⁴⁹ Richard Kehoe to T. Stoneburner n.d. [1972].
- ⁵⁰ To R. Hague 4/10/34; *Henry Dickinson Owen Brown Priest 1893-1961*, ed. Lucy Owen Brown (privately printed, 1961), p. 26; to H. Sutherland 1/11/34.
- ⁵¹ To R. Hague 4/10/34; Sarah and Maurice Balme interviewed 17/6/90.
- ⁵² LC 26
- ⁵³ To R. Hague 4/10/34; E.C. Hodgkin, "Introduction," Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, x; E.C. Hodgkin, "Some Memories of David Jones," typescript.
- ⁵⁴ To R. Hague 18/10/34.
- ⁵⁵ To R. Hague 18/10/34.
- ⁵⁶ To R. Hague 8/10/35, 4/10/34.
- ⁵⁷ DJ interviewed by Glyn Roberts, *The Western Mail* 23/6/37; PK to R. Hague 5/1/80.
- ⁵⁸ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 9/6/66.
- ⁵⁹ To R. Hague 22/11/34; to E. Gill 21/2/35; to H. Sutherland 1/11/34.
- ⁶⁰ To H. Sutherland 1/11/34.
- ⁶¹ To R. Hague 17/9/35.
- ⁶² To H. Sutherland 1/11/34; 15/1/35.
- ⁶³ To J. Stone 4/4/63; to R. Hague 22/11/34.
- ⁶⁴ To R. Hague 22/11/34.
- ⁶⁵ N. Gray interviewed 16/6/91, 17/6/88; DJ to Paul Hills interviewed 10/6/91; to R. Hague 22/11/34; to J. Stone 7-8/7/72; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87; to D. Tegetmeier 14/1/35
- ⁶⁶ S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91; to R. Hague 22/11/34.
- ⁶⁷ H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87.
- ⁶⁸ To R. Hague 22/11/34; to T. Stoneburner 18/7/72; DJ's pocket diary; to J. Ede 25/11/36.
- ⁶⁹ To H. Sutherland 1/11/34; to R. Hague 5/1/35, 18/2/36; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90; T. Burns, p. 164; to E. Gill 21/2/35; to H. Grisewood 12/1/35; to H. Ede 5/2/35; to R. Hague 5/1/35.
- ⁷⁰ To H. Sutherland 3/1/39; to N. Gray 10-11/1/35.
- ⁷¹ To Grisewood, 1 Jan 1964; to J. Ede 7/3/35; to H. Ede 5/2/35; to R. Hague 5/1/35; 18/2/36.

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- ⁷². To R. Hague 5/1/35.
- ⁷³ to N. Gray 10-11/1/35.
- ⁷⁴. To R. Hague 5/1/35; to D. Tegetmeier 14/1/35; to H. Sutherland 3/1/39; to N. Gray 10-11/1/35.
- ⁷⁵. To N. Gray 10-11/1/35; to 14/12/73
- ⁷⁶. To 5/1/35; 18/2/36; P. Pelham to DJ 11/2/37; to N. Gray 10-11/1/35.
- ⁷⁷. To D. Tegetmeier 9/1/35.
- ⁷⁸. To P. Tegetmeier 17/2/36.
- ⁷⁹. To R. Hague 18/1/35.
- ⁸⁰. To R. Hague 28/4/35; to J. Ede 11/3/35; P. Pelham to DJ 29/11/35; to H. Grisewood 13/4/40, 17/5/72; to R. Hague 3/6/35; to H. Grisewood 14/2/38.
- ⁸¹. P. Pelham to DJ 5/4/36; to R. Hague 3/6/35; Christina Scott interviewed 15/6/90; to E. Gill 21/2/35; to H. Grisewood 30/3/35; to R. Hague 7/11/35; to R. Hague 14/3/35; R. Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77; Christina Scott interviewed 26/6/86.
- ⁸². DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69; to R. Hague 18/1/35.
- ⁸³. To J. Ede 18/11/34, 7/3/35; to C. Churchill 12/3/39; to J. Ede 11/3/35; to R. Hague 17/9/35; to D. Tegetmeier 9/1/35.
- ⁸⁴. To P. Tegetmeier 17/2/36; to J. Ede 29/10/35; to P. Tegetmeier Good Friday/35; to J. Ede 12/2/36.
- ⁸⁵. To Julian Asquith 12/3/39; to D. Tegetmeier 9/1/35.
- ⁸⁶. To N. Sanders 30/5/65; to V. Wynne-Williams 1/11/62; to N. Gray 24/6/36.
- ⁸⁷. To H. Ede 5/2/35; to R. Hague 12/11/35; to R. Hague 2/4/35; to H. Grisewood 30/3/35; to E. Gill 21/2/35; M. Grisewood interviewed 10/9/89; to R. Hague 18/1/35.
- ⁸⁸. To H. Grisewood 30/3/35; to R. Hague 14/3/35, 28/3/35; to N. Gray 24/6/36; DJ to M. Elkin interviewed 23/4/95; to S. Lewis 13/7/72; to H. Grisewood 30/3/35.
- ⁸⁹. To H. Grisewood 30/3/35; to H. Ede 5/2/35; to D. Tegetmeier 14/1/35; to H. Grisewood 30/3/35; to R. Hague 2/4/35; to P. Tegetmeier Good Friday/35.
- ⁹⁰. To P. Tegetmeier Good Friday/35; to R. Hague 28/4/35.
- ⁹¹. Burns, p. 164; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; D. and N. Cleverdon interviewed 28/6/86.
- ⁹². To R. Hague 15/4/35.
- ⁹³ To J. Ede 11/3/35; to R. Hague 29/4/35, 10/3/35; Burns, p. 55; to J. Ede 7/3/35.

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- ⁹⁴. To J. Ede 11/3/35; to R. Hague 2/4/35; to R. Hague 5/3/35, 2/4/35; P. Pelham to DJ 5/4/35 n.d.
- ⁹⁵. To P. Tegetmeier Good Friday/35; to H. Grisewood 24/8/47; to R. Hague 29/4/35; P. Pelham to DJ 7/5/35.
- ⁹⁶. To R. Hague 14/3/35; to J. Ede 7/3/35; to R. Hague 29/4/35; to R. Hague 2/4/35.
- ⁹⁷ E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87.
- ⁹⁸ P. Pelham to DJ 29/11/ n.y. From here on, no reference is given for information clearly from a letter from P. Pelham to DJ if that letter is undated.
- ⁹⁹ P. Pelham to DJ 5/4/35.
- ¹⁰⁰ M. Richey interviewed 15/12/88; R. Buhler interviewed 16/6/88.
- ¹⁰¹ P. Pelham to DJ [Jan/38]; M. Richey interviewed 15/12/88.
- ¹⁰² P. Pelham to DJ 29/11/35.
- ¹⁰³ P. Pelham to DJ 29/2/37; E. Hodgkin interviewed 24/6/89; P. Pelham to DJ 29/11/35; to R. Hague 27/9/63.
- ¹⁰⁴ M. Richey interviewed 15/12/88; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; to R. Hague 2/4/35; E. Hodgkin interviewed 6/8/87, 24/6/89.
- ¹⁰⁵ To DJ 13/3/35; E. Hodgkin to author 3/10/37.
- ¹⁰⁶ P. Pelham to DJ 8/4/37.
- ¹⁰⁷ M. Richey interviewed 15/12/88; R. Buhler interviewed 15/6/88; Miles and Shiel, p. 253; P. Pelham confided her preference to R. Buhler interviewed 16/6/88.
- ¹⁰⁸ H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90; M. Richey interviewed 15/12/88.
- ¹⁰⁹ R. Buhler interviewed 6/85; M. Richey interviewed 15/12/88.
- ¹¹⁰. To R. Hague 2/4/35; to H. Grisewood 30/3/35; to J. Ede 11/3/35; to R. Hague 28/4/35.
- ¹¹¹. To J. Ede 11/3/35; to R. Hague 14/3/35; to P. Tegetmeier Good Friday/35; to R. Hague 10/3/35.
- ¹¹² To R. Hague 14/3/35, 23/12/35, 10/3/35; to E. Gill 21/5/35; to R. Hague 28/3/35.
- ¹¹³. To R. Hague 2/4/35.
- ¹¹⁴. To R. Hague 3/6/35, 15/4/35, 25/4/35.
- ¹¹⁵. To R. Hague 15/4/35.
- ¹¹⁶. To R. Hague 29/4/35, 16/5/35, 28/4/35; H. Grisewood interviewed 22/6/86; to R. Hague 3/6/35; C. Scott interviewed 15/6/90.
- ¹¹⁷. To R. Hague 23/6/35; 3/6/35.

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- ^{118.} To N. Gray 10-11/1/35; to J. Ede 11/3/35; to R. Hague 2/8/35; to R. Hague 3/6/35.
- ^{119.} To J. Ede 11/3/35; to P. Tegetmeier 29/6/35; 17/2/36; prescription filled/8 22/35 at Alnwick; to Philip Hagreen 14/10/35; to J. Ede 11/3/35; 12/6/35.
- ^{120.} To R. Hague 2/7/35; to P. Tegetmeier 29/6/35; to N. Gray 3/10/36; to H. Sutherland 3/1/39; Burns p. 4; to N. Gray 3/10/36.
- ^{121.} To R. Hague 2/7/35.
- ^{122.} T. Burns, p. 48.
- ^{123.} To H. Read 18/11/67, unposted; R. Matthias draft n.d.
- ^{124.} T. Burns, p. 49; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69.
- ^{125.} To R. Hague 2/7/35; to P. Tegetmeier SS Peter and Paul/35; to R. Hague 30/3/35, 2/7/35.
- ^{126.} To R. Hague 10/7/35.
- ^{127.} To H. Grisewood 20/7/35.
- ^{128.} To H. Grisewood 20/7/35, 25/7/35; Julian Trevelyan, *Indigo Days* [1957] (Aldershot: Scolar, 1996. The miners misremember the visit as occurring in 1938.
- ^{129.} N. Gray interviewed 17/6/88; to J. Hague 17/9/35; to D. Tegetmeier 17/9/38; to R. Hague 2/5/70; W. Blissett, p. 100.
- ^{130.} To J. Ede 11/3/35, 5/9/35; to J. Ede 5/9/35.
- ^{131.} To R. Hague 2/8/35; Bim Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86; P. Kelly interviewed 9/6/86; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86, H. Sutherland to N. Gray to S. Honeyman, interviewed 6/09.
- ^{132.} DJ to Kathleen Raine 1946; K. Raine, *The Land Unknown* (New York: George Braziller, 1975), p. 131.
- ^{133.} P. Pelham in Istanbul to DJ n.d. [1936]; P. Pelham to R. Hague and J. Hague 16/8/35; P. Pelham to DJ 29/11/35.
- ^{134.} To R. Hague 2/7/35; to H. Grisewood 8/10/35; to R. Hague 27/9/63, 2/8/35, 24/8/35, 10/7/35; to H. Grisewood 20/7/35.
- ^{135.} To R. Hague 24/8/35; to J. Hague 17/9/35; to R. Hague 9/10/35.
- ^{136.} To J. Hague 17/9/35.
- ^{137.} To R. Hague 2/8/35; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; to R. Hague 10/7/35, 24/8/35.
- ^{138.} To R. Hague 9/10/35; to H. Grisewood 8/10/35; to R. Hague 8/10/35: to P. Orr unposted frag. n.d. [1960s]; E. Hodgkin. to author 9/10/97; R. Shepherd interviewed 28/6/89.

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- ¹³⁹. DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; to R. Hague 2/7/35; to R. Hague 28/4/35; Arthur Pollen to Daphne Pollen 11/4/41; D. Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75; to P. Pelham 29/4/35; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72.
- ¹³⁹. To R. Hague 10/3/35; to J. Ede 7/3/35; to H. Sutherland 27/1/41; *IN* 54; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87.
- DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; to E. Hodgkin 14/9/38; Charles Nordhoff and James Hall, *Men against the Sea* (Boston: Little Brown, 1933), pp 140, 137.
- ¹⁴⁰ S. Honeyman interviewed 9/10/87.
- ¹⁴¹. To R. Hague 29/4/66.
- ¹⁴². To Grisewood, 18 May 1956; to R. Hague Holy Saturday/32; to J. Asquith 12/3/39.
- ¹⁴³. To S. Lewis 18/9/70; to Jeremy Hooker 17/11/72; DJ in conversation with author 31/8/72; to A. Giardelli 9-11/8/73; to R. Hague 2/5/74; to H. Grisewood 8/8/42.
- ¹⁴⁴. Letter to H. Grisewood 30/3/35 in which DJ says that his reading of *The Heimskringla* "confirms what one felt before"; to R. Hague 2/5/74.
- ¹⁴⁵. To S. Lewis 18/9/70; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; to H. Sutherland 7/12/49.
- ¹⁴⁶. DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; to J. Hooker 8/5/70; to the editor of *The Times*, 25/2/57; *Listener* 4/4/57.
- ¹⁴⁷. To H. Grisewood 10/8/53.
- ¹⁴⁸. *LF* 81; to T. Burns 17/10/71; to A. Giardelli 10/4/65; to J. Ede 7/3/35, 6/6/43; to T. Burns 28/8/40; S. Honeyman interviewed 10/87; to R. Hague 14/6/70; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; *E&A* 244; The insight about DJ and Malory is that of Kathleen Henderson Staudt, *At the Turn of a Civilization* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, 1993) p. 173.
- ¹⁴⁹. Colin Wilcockson. "Notes on Some Letters of David Jones," *Agenda* 14 (Summer 1976), p. 73; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; to R. Hague 14/6/70, 27/9/63; DJ to Blissett, pp. 3, 4; DJ in conversation with author 31/8/72.
- ¹⁵⁰. To J. Ede 16/11/52; to David Blamires 9/7/66; to H. Sutherland 29/8/61; to H. Grisewood 5/4/73; DJ to Blissett, p. 3.
- ¹⁵¹. H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; to H. Grisewood 30/3/35; to H. Grisewood 9/10/71; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10, 5/10/87; to E. Hodgkin 17/6/42; DJ to T. Stoneburner 17/10/57 conversation with the Blissett and author 31/8/72
- ¹⁵². *E&A* 280; to J. Ede 11/4/39; *E&A* 281.
- ¹⁵³to Kathleen Raine, draft, n.d. [1972]
- ¹⁵⁴ to Sutherland, 6/12/57.

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- ^{155.} To H. Sutherland 6/12/57; to N. Sanders 19/7/67; to H. Grisewood 15/2/57.
- ^{156.} To the *Tablet* 17/9/50; Browning quoted in *The life and Letters of J.E. Millais* (London: Methuen, 1899) I, p. 439; DJ interviewed by P. Orr late 1960s.
- ^{157.} DJ to Blissett, p. 41; H. Grisewood interviewed LF 84; to the *Tablet* 17/9/50; Browning quoted in *The Life and Letters of J.E. Millais* I, p. 439; DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s; R. Hague to BW 2/10/76; to H. Grisewood fourth Sunday after Easter/66; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89, 4/10/87.
- ^{158.} To J. Hague 2/5/62; to H. Grisewood 14/4/39, 29/2/60.
- ^{159.} To Beryl de Zoete 20/10/38; to J. Ede 15/4/43; to Peter Levi 24/5/64.
- ^{160.} To B de Zoete 20/10/38; ms note n.d c. 1964; to P. Levi 24/5/64; to Fr Michael Hanbury 30/3/63.
- ^{161.} DJ "Life for J. Ede" typescript 5/9/35; to J. Ede 18/1/34; LF 87; to J. Ede 15/4/43.
- ^{162.} To J. Ede 18/1/34; to Janet Stone 20/11/63; to Aneurin Talfan Davies 27/11/62; LF 80-1
- ^{163.} To J. Ede 18/1/34; to T. Stoneburner, draft frag. n.d. c. 1968; to *The Times* draft n.d.
- ^{164.} To Vernon Watkins 17/4/62; to H. Grisewood 14/2/38; to J. Ede 18/1/34, 15/4/43.
- ^{165.} To J. Ede 18/1/34.
- ^{166.} To R. Hague 5/11/64; to L. Binyon 22/7/37.
- ^{167.} Barbara Wall interviewed 27/6/86; to R. Hague 7/10/35; 8/10/35; to P. Hagreem 14/10/35; to H. Grisewood 8/10/35; to R. Hague 24/8/35.
- ^{168.} To H. Grisewood 8/10/35.
- ^{169.} To R. Hague 2/7/35; Michael Holroyd, *Augustus John* (New York, Hold Rinehart, Winston, 1974), pp 554-6; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87.
- ^{170.} To H. Grisewood 8/10/35.
- ^{171.} P. Pelham to DJ n.d.; P. Pelham to DJ 29/11/35 to R. Hague 12/12/35.
- ^{172.} To J. Ede 18/11/35; to R. Hague 7/11/35.
- ^{173.} DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72; S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91; to J. Ede 11/3/35, 11/3/35; to E. Hodgkin 12/11. 35; to J. Ede 18/1/36. In an undated letter from Hans Crescent (in 1934 or '35); P. Pelham asks DJ "Have you got a nice room where you can see the sea yet?" To H. Grisewood 30/3/35; to J. Ede 8/2/36.
- ^{174.} To E. Hodgkin 12/11/35; to R. Hague 2/12/35; to L. Binyon 13/7/37; P. Pelham to DJ 29/11/35; to HR 23/9/39.
- ^{175.} To R. Hague 7/11/35; P. Pelham to DJ 3 or 4/8. [1936]; to R. Hague 12/11/35.
- ^{176.} To R. Hague 12/12/35, Easter/36; R. Hague and J. Hague interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 11/6/69.

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- ¹⁷⁷ To H. Grisewood 22/11/34; to T. Stoneburner 18/7/72.
- ¹⁷⁸ To R. Hague 12/12/35; to J. Stone 4/5/65; to S. Lewis/12/60; to T. Stoneburner 15/5/70
- ¹⁷⁹ P. Pelham to DJ 22/12/36; to Mr Barkley 21/7/64.
- ¹⁸⁰ To R. Hague 5/2/36, 11/2/36.
- ¹⁸¹ To R. Hague 11/2/36; to J. Ede 12/2/36.
- ¹⁸² To P. Tegetmeier 17/2/36; to J. Ede 8/2/36; to J. Ede 8/2/36; to R. Hague 5/2/36.
- ¹⁸³ To R. Hague 11/2/36; to J. Ede 12/2/36; to J. Ede 29/3/37; to R. Hague 5/3/36, 1/3/36; DJ interviewed by John Silkin 1965.
- ¹⁸⁴ To J. Ede 12/2/36; to R. Hague 12/4/36; R. Hague to DJ 6/2/36; to E. Gill 14/6/36; to R. Hague 5/3/36; to J. Ede 20/3/36; to R. Hague 23/3/36.
- ¹⁸⁵ C. Scott interviewed 26/6/86; to J. Ede 20/3/36.
- ¹⁸⁶ Letter to the press ms draft.
- ¹⁸⁷ P. Pelham to DJ 5/4/36; to R. Hague 23/3/36; to N. Gray 24/6/36; P. Pelham to DJ 3 or 4/8/[36]; to J. Ede 3/4/36; R. Hague to R de la M 10/11. 36; R. Hague to R de la M 10/11/36; to J. Ede 25/7/36; to T. Stoneburner 12-16/8/68.
- ¹⁸⁸ To E. Gill 14/6/36.
- ¹⁸⁹ DJ ms note 5/51; to R. Hague 1/3/36; the insight of the genitals as artillery piece is that of Miles and Shiel, p. 213; Thomas Whitaker, "*In Parenthesis and the Poetics of Passage*," *David Jones, Artist and Poet*, p. 34; the insight about the fatigue party and rats is that of Paul Hills, "Making and Dwelling Among Signs," p. 82.
- ¹⁹⁰ To J. Ede 8/2/36.
- ¹⁹¹ To J. Ede 3/4/36, 20/3/36; to R. Hague Easter/36; to J. Ede 29/3/37.
- ¹⁹² To C. Churchill 7/2/40; to J. Ede 3/4/36, 8/2/36, 20/3/36, 3/4/36, 2/7/36; Stuart Hampshire interviewed 22/1/89.
- ¹⁹³ To J. Ede 3/4/36; E&A 266; to Richard and Juliet Shirley-Smith 11/2/61.
- ¹⁹⁴ To J. Ede 22/6/36; J. Ede to DJ 6/6/36; J. Ede interviewed 31/5/85 to J. Ede 9/12/49 DJ interviewed by P. Orr; to J. Ede 3/4/36, 8/2/36.
- ¹⁹⁵ R. Shepherd interviewed 28/6/89.
- ¹⁹⁶ To N. Gray 24/6/36; to J. Ede 22/6/36.
- ¹⁹⁷ To F. Wall 27/6/44; F. Wall interviewed by T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69.
- ¹⁹⁸ C. Scott interviewed 26/6/86.

¹⁹⁹ To P. Donner 16/6/61; to R. Matthias draft n.d.

²⁰⁰ To R. Hague 11/2/36; to H. Sutherland 28/11/39; to J. Ede 8/2/36; to R. Hague 27/9/63, 11/2/36; to J. Ede 3/4/36; to R. Hague 23/3/36; to J. Ede 12/2/36; to R. Hague 27/9/63; R. Hague interviewed by Blissett 8/77

²⁰¹ BW interviewed 27/6/86; Ann D'Abreu interviewed 1/5/95.

²⁰² To J. Ede 8/2/36; to J. Ede 2/7/36.

²⁰³ To N. Gray 24/6/36, 3/10/36; H. Sutherland to E. Hodgkin 15/9/36.

²⁰⁴ DJ, "David Jones Artist and Writer," a taped commentary on his paintings.

²⁰⁵ H. Sutherland. to E. Hodgkin, n.d.

²⁰⁶ T. Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, p. 168; P. Pelham to DJ 29/11/35; to R. Hague 7/11/35; to R. Hague 1/3/36; to R. Hague 5/2/36; P. Pelham to DJ 3 or 4/8/[36].

²⁰⁷ P. Pelham to DJ n.d.; R. Buhler interviewed 15/6/88.

²⁰⁸ P. Pelham to DJ 22/11/[35].to J. Ede 11/4/37; P. Pelham to DJ 8/4/37.

²⁰⁹ To N. Gray 3/10/36; R de la M to DJ 1/10/36 13/10/36; R de la M to John Easton 5/11/36; to R de la M 14/10/36.

²¹⁰ Robert Maclehouse & Co, Printers in Glasgow to R de la M 6/11/36.

²¹¹ R de la Mare to DJ 20/1/37.

²¹² To J. Ede 18/11/34; to J. Ede 25/11/36; to R. Hague 12/11/3[6]; to E. Hodgkin 18/11/36.

²¹³ To T. Stoneburner 12-16/8/68.

²¹⁴ To H. Grisewood 7/3/41; Dora Griffin to Kevin Cecil quoted by D. Blamires, *David Jones Newsletter* 13 (May 1978), 4; to H. Grisewood 8/8/42; [Col.] Hastings to DJ 16/1/40; to R. Hague 12/12/35, 25/2/36; to H. Grisewood 7/3/41; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83, 19/6/90.

²¹⁵ S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86.

²¹⁶ R. Hague to M. Richey 7/11/ny; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; Burns, p. 74; P. Pelham to DJ 22/12/36; Stephen Spender interviewed 5/12/88.

²¹⁷ Bernard Wall, *Headlong into Change*, p. 79; to E. Hodgkin 18/11/36; P. Pelham to E. Hodgkin n.d.

²¹⁸ To V. Wynne-Williams 20/6/1961; T. Burns interviewed 20/6/86; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; B. Wall interviewed 27/6/86; Grisewood *One Thing at a Time*, pp. 102-05; H. Grisewood ms note 8/76; to H. Grisewood 17/5/72; letter draft n.d.; P. Pelham to DJ 22/12/36.

²¹⁹ To *The Times* draft [June/72]; to H. Grisewood 17/5/72; to H. Grisewood nones/1-16/2/66; P. Pelham to DJ n.d. [1937].

²²⁰ James Jones to DJ 23/12/36; E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; conversation with author 4/6/71; to J. Ede 6/3/37; to H. Grisewood 18/6/40; to T. Stoneburner 12-16/8/68.

13. To H. Grisewood, 17 May 1972.

²²¹ R. Hague to R de la M 7/12/36; JJ to DJ 23/12/36; P. Pelham to DJ 27/2/37 n.d.

²²² To Anthony Powell 10-11/7/67; A. Powell to author 17/1/90.

²²³ To H. Grisewood 23/3/44; 10/8/53.

²²⁴ To J. Ede 6/3/37, 11/4/37.

²²⁵ To J. Ede 11/4/37; Dorenkamp, p. 25.

²²⁶ J. Ede interviewed 31/5/85; to J. Ede 8/2/36, 25/11/36.

²²⁷ P. Pelham to DJ 8/2/37, 11/2/37.

²²⁸ To J. Ede 25/11/36; Orr, "Mr Jones, Your Legs are Crossed," p. 113; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1965; R de la Mare to R. Hague 20/11/36; R. Hague to R de la Mare 24/2/37, 11/3/37; to J. Ede 6/3/37; to R de la Mare 5/5/37; to J. Ede 11/4/37; DJ to R de la Mare 15/11/37.

²²⁹ R. Hague to H. Grisewood: 29/1/76.

²³⁰ To R de la Mare 19/12/36, 10/4/37, 10/5/37, 9/8/37.

²³¹ To R de la Mare 5/5/37, 10/5/37.

²³² To R de la Mare 19/4/37, 2/5/37; R de la Mare to DJ 19/5/37; to R de la Mare 12/5/37, 27/4/37, 30/4/37, 15/5/37.

²³³ To P. Tegetmeier 17/2/36.

²³⁴ D. Cleverdon interviewed summer 1985; H. Sutherland to DJ 26/3/51; J. Ede to R de la Mare 10/11/38; to L. Binyon 13/7/37; My thanks to N. Gray for permission to quote from her father's letter; to H. Sutherland 11/7/37.

²³⁵ To Jeremy Hooker draft frag. n.d. c. 1972; *Western Mail* 23/6/36.

²³⁶ To L. Binyon 22/7/37.

²³⁷ Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 146-7.

²³⁸ To J. Hague 16/5/64.

²³⁹ DJ interviewed by P. Orr early 1970s.

²⁴⁰ To J. Ede 29/3/37, 19/10/37; to Jeremy Hooker draft frag. n.d. c. 1972; to B de Zoete frag. unposted 20/10/38.

²⁴¹ DJ quoted by Hague, *David Jones* (Cardiff: Univ. of Wales, 1975), p. 48.

²⁴² To H. Grisewood 14/2/38.

²⁴³ To E. Hodgkin 18/11/36; Peter du Sautoy interviewed 23/6/88; IP vii; to L. Binyon 13/7/37; DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72, 31/8/72; to L. Binyon 13/7/37.

Part V: Time Between

Chapter 11: 1937-39

Jones went to visit Prudence at Stanmer for the week of 11 July 1937. He brought a copy of *In Parenthesis* for Edward Hodgkin, who was already there and staying only the weekend. At the nearby house of Lady Gerald Wellesley, W.B. Yeats was staying with Edith Shackleton Heald, a wealthy feminist-journalist with whom he was having his last adulterous affair. Prudence's sister, Betty, had been corresponding with and visiting him. She invited him to Stanmer for tea. On Sunday afternoon, the 11th, Jones, Hodgkin, Prudence, and Betty were assembled in the sitting room when Yeats arrived, a towering figure with flowing white hair, wearing an open-necked blue shirt. Informed in advance of whom to expect, he paused in the doorway and, slowly bowing from the waist, intoned, 'I saluuute the author of *In Parenthesis*'—'that was a bit much', Jones thought. Straightening, Yeats proceeded to heap so much praise on the work in such lavish terms that Jones, baffled and embarrassed by his grand oracular manner, suspected he was being mocked. (In later years, memory of this stirred the same suspicion but he was inclined to think, rightly, that Yeats simply spoke that way when strongly moved in public.) Yeats may have seen in *In Parenthesis* validation of his recent contentious exclusion from the *Oxford Book of Modern Verse* of Wilfred Owen and other war poets for expressing suffering without moral vision.* Yeats seemed to Jones (quoting Betjeman) 'very old and very grand.' Betty, Lady Chichester, and Shackleton Heald gathered round and lionized him, and, as Jones remembered, Yeats began 'muttering half audible "bardic" verse over the tea-cups.'¹ Later that week Yeats came again, this time from Steyning, Shackleton Heald's house. Again Jones was present. The only record of this visit is by Prudence, who had a sore throat and was hard of hearing. She wrote to Hodgkin,

We had a pretty long session of W-Bloody-bore-Yeats ... He read a long long long thing (it took all the beautiful afternoon). Luckily I couldn't hear it all but what I did hear sounded a bit political & quite certainly fascist to my bunged-up ear. At the end of it there was a bit of talkie talkie—

* In 1972, William Blissett would make the less plausible suggestion that Yeats was repenting for his treatment of Owen, and Jones would comment, 'Yes, awful, the audacity of the man, excluding it as not being poetry! Astonishing that Owen could write in the middle of it all.'

everyone saying oo ah ... then he turned to me and said, 'Your sister has hereditary intellect' ... I thought he might have mentioned my hereditary good manners considering that I had restrained myself for more than 3 hours from saying 'Gad sir I must arise & go now.' yes even from belching & hiccoughing.

A year or so later, she read Yeats's poetry with surprise and wrote 'I ... am very much impressed—it is odd that he is such a trivial person at least vain & not grand like his verse.'

Stanmer was a 'heavenly' great Georgian house but, to Jones, 'damned cold.' He wondered what it had been like when occupied in the winter, with nothing for heat in the vast rooms but a fire at one end. Lady Chichester told him that dinner had been quite an ordeal for young women obliged by *décolletage* to keep shoulders bare, hoping that the soup would be hot. He and Prudence amused themselves for hours looking through old scrapbooks in the library. Some of the time, he worked at his new writing, not yet entitled 'The Book of Balaam's Ass.' It began with a description of animals in a zoo, moved into conversation based on conversations with friends (including Leslie Poulter) immediately after the war, and moved into an account of an assault at Passchendaele. He had worked at it only at Hartland, Mill House and now here, usually in the presence of Prudence, his main encourager and muse. He would later say about staying at Stanmer, 'There was a lot of marble—well, it was like heaven, really.'²

From there he went to stay again with the Binyons at Westridge Farm. Laurence Binyon had him sign his copy of *In Parenthesis* and wanted to talk about poetry, which largely meant prosody—a subject Jones thought unimportant and uninteresting. They found common ground, however, in the Arthurian tradition. Binyon was contemplating writing about Merlin and had plans for a poem about the Battle of Arderydd, which interested Jones. The older man was in the midst of translating the *Purgatorio* and showed him a letter from Pound about part of the translation. Pound had made a series of question marks on one line and a series of exclamation points on another. Binyon asked irritably what this meant, and Jones interpreted, 'Well, he's definitely happy about this passage but uncertain about the rest.' Binyon said he considered Dante the greatest of poets. Jones found this curious, since Binyon knew nothing of the underlying scholastic thought and would therefore be unable to understand crucial passages. He later read Binyon's three-volume translation with Italian on the facing page, and occasionally saw that, for this reason,

poor word-choice gave 'a faulty feeling.' He found the translation 'not ... moving except here & there. and 'too Miltonic or something,' unable 'to hold' him, and he could not understand why Pound liked any of it. Many years later, however, listening to it read on the Third Program, he thought it remarkably good.³

From the Binyons' farm, he went to Pigotts, where he painted *The Farm Door* which was, after *Window at Rock*, his best picture since his breakdown (fig. 1). He painted it in-and-from a tiny, dark, north-facing room at the back of Gill's workshop.



1. David Jones, *The Farm Door*, 1937

As he worked, he exchanged the darkness of the interior for the light of outdoors, stilling the picture by light inner walls with rectilinear brickwork. The rectangular geometry recurs enlarged and at a 90 degree-angle in doorway and window. On the windowsill is a vase with flowers, its central flower the lightest area in the picture. Above it are the heads of cows which seem on the same pictorial plane as the flowers. What looks like a tree outside with its top branches within the room may be a branch in the vase. In the tonally darker outdoors are chickens and cows and a row of trees darkening the horizon. Darker tone brings the outdoors close. It is unified by a chicken within the door and a shadow curving from the picture's

lower right corner up through the door-

opening, over chickens, and out along the underside of a cow. Lesser, green shadows on the door rhyme with the curve of the dark shadow, affirming it. Offsetting the stabilizing effect of the horizontal and vertical lines are these and smaller shadows and erratic linear shapes that make this work subtly frantic, not stilled but focused merely in the dark-toned vase, cow-heads, chickens, and door handle. It seems a

picture about the unifying complementarity between curves (mostly of vegetative and animal nature but also in door-handle and vase) and straight lines, and between inside and outside.

At Pigotts he was seeing old friends. These included Frs. John Gray, Patrick Flood, John McQuillan, and John O'Connor. Jones sometimes served O'Connor's Mass, which involved first helping him put on the vestments. O'Connor suffered from high blood pressure and was bad-tempered early in the morning. As a vester and server, Jones was incompetent, regularly lost in reverie and failing to act on cue. On one occasion he neglected to remove a kneeling-cushion, and O'Connor irritably kicked it across the tiny chapel—behaviour Jones found unnerving. On another occasion, an 'alarming experience' was being sharply lectured by O'Connor: 'You want to concentrate on the job. That *is* prayer in serving at Mass—doing what is required properly & exactly & carefully & not too long about it either.'⁴

He saw a lot of his old Dominican friend John-Baptist Reeves, who visited often to see his sister May, the mistress of a day school (and since 1933, of Eric Gill). Still an avid Thomist and now the editor of *The Catholic Herald*, Reeves was benign, non-judgmental, and sympathetic to the moral contradictions of human entanglements. From him, Jones acquired a favourite phrase, 'It is the nature of iron to rust.' Other Dominicans with whom he became friendly here were of a new generation: Victor White, a friend of Charles Burns and disciple and associate of Jung; Thomas Gilby a broad-minded Thomist interested in psychology; Richard Kehoe, a sensitive and intuitive scripture scholar; and Illtud Evans, a Welshman and journalist, whom Jones had met before Evans became a Dominican.

Jones also got to know Michael Richey, a nineteen-year-old former Trappist



postulant now apprenticed to Gill as a letter-cutter and taking the place of David Kindersley, who had recently left Pigotts. He took his meals with the Hagues, and now with Jones, and was attached to Hague, who was good with young people. At their first meeting, Jones talked 'endlessly,' Richey remembered, 'about the Great War.' There was never, for Richey, a sense of difference in age between them, and they soon became close friends. Extremely handsome, with a strong jaw and Roman nose,

2. Michael Richey, c. 1936

Richey was shy, intelligent, and possessed of a quick sense of humour. Jones considered him ‘a damned nice bloke.’ Richey would always think Jones the most acutely sensitive (‘raw’) person he had met.⁵

Also present were the now eleven Gill grandchildren, called by Hague the Ragged Arse Brigade. Jones was godfather to two of them, Hague’s son Michael and Petra’s daughter Prudence. To Petra he seemed ‘shy of children.’ They later remembered him as ‘lovely to us, to all of us.’ Unannoyable, he was a sort of favourite uncle. They were never told not to talk to or disturb him—except when he was ill or depressed. Then it was, ‘Be quiet, Dai’s not very well.’ Kevin Cribb remembered him as always very kind to him and the other children, taking time to talk about what each was doing. ‘Everybody loved Dai,’ according to Michael Hague, who later recalled observing him painting on paper flat on a table at which he stood, wandering around the house and then coming back and looking at it and wandering around again, and coming back again and looking at it and then maybe altering it. Sometimes he would look at it and press his head with his hands in exasperation, exclaiming, ‘Ahhh.’⁶

He spent hours visiting Laurie Cribb in his workshop, who would grouse like the private he had once been. Conversation would begin with Jones saying, ‘Hello Laurie, that’s a bloody beautiful inscription’ and might continue with Cribb replying, ‘Do you think so? Very glad you like it, but have you ever seen a stone like this—impossible—bits of flint all over, and this chisel’s like shaving with a blunt razor—and see that water dripping through the roof!’

‘Why not shift the bench?’

‘No good, light wrong then.’

All the while, Jones would be chain-smoking, lighting a new cigarette with the butt of its predecessor.⁷

Jones often visited Gill and Hague in their workshops. There were a great many jokes and much laughter and horseplay. A wire extended from Gill’s workshop to Cribb’s, connected to a bell on a coiled spring. Gill had a code, one pull to call out one of them, two for the other. Going across the quad, Hague and his fellow composers—Peter Jones, Gordian Gill, and Stan Iverson (who was the main composer, a dedicated Communist considered ‘round the bend’)—regularly pulled the bell, infuriating Gill who would burst out yelling, ‘What the hell do you want.’ At the press in High Wycombe, the composers occasionally had type-fights in which

they hurled loose type at each other before clearing off to a pub.⁸

The principal pubs near Pigotts were the Gate at Bryant's Bottom and the Harrow in North Dean. The Gate was nearer (down the hill, through the woods) and cheaper but tiny. The Harrow was low, dark, over 300 years old. Saturday nights were usually spent at one of these. On summer evenings, Gill and company used also to go further to drink, outside the Red Cow at Speen, a pub kept by a daughter of Ramsy MacDonald.⁹ The entire journey there and back was a long conversation.

In early September 1937, Jones ascended from Pigotts to Rock, where the poet Henry Newbolt was also staying. Possibly remembering Binyon, he thought, 'O Lord, I hope we don't get onto poetry.' Newbolt was old and frail, and they walked together round the walled garden behind the house, sheltered from the wind. To Jones's astonishment, Newbolt had read *In Parenthesis* and praised it. Jones suspected that the older man was just being polite until conversation turned to poetry in general and Newbolt said things in agreement with what Jones thought and different from what he had expected based on 'what little ... of his work' he had read. Newbolt went on to tell him 'some bloody amusing things about George V,' which Jones did not record.¹⁰

Within a few days, he received word that his mother was ill again and he returned immediately to London. He visited the house in Brockley, staying at Glebe Place until Burns left town on business and Grisewood, leaving for a holiday in the United States, lent him his mezzanine flat at 61 Kings Road. In addition to being ill, his eighty-one-year-old mother was now (as he mother had been) senile. The disintegration of her personality and sharp intelligence deeply distressed him—'bloody unnerving,' he confided to a friend. Five years later he wrote about senility, 'I don't know why, I mind that more than anything.'¹¹

After a three-week illness, on 22 September 1937 her husband being present, she died in her bed of a stroke—the death certificate lists as causes cerebral thrombosis and arteriosclerosis. A telephone call summoned David. He felt a depth of grief he had not known before. At her burial, he could glance from her grave northward to the Hilly Fields, where she had taken him as little boy. He spent that evening with Prudence, who wrote, 'he was pretty well done-in and shaky poor dear—but I think actually it is a relief to him.' The next morning, she walked him to Grisewood's flat, on the way buying for him a bottle of whisky and some ham. His mother's death left him feeling a new, primitive anxiety. She had been for him 'like things of nature ... that are part of one's landscape ... fixed measuring points.' He was sharply aware of

her enduring presence in his interior landscape, which was unaffected by her death. She remained the Alice of his inner wonderland, feeling just as real as when alive—that surprised him. Nevertheless, he felt more intensely homeless. Not long after her burial, he told Grisewood that his favourite songs at this time were ‘Frankie and Johnnie’ and ‘that one of Paul Robeson about ‘I’m going there [heaven] to meet my mother’—I do love that one.’¹² In the following summer, he consulted with Gill about the design for her gravestone—a rectangular base, from the top of which a cross emerges. Gill carved its inscription for a fee of £15.15.0.

After the funeral, David’s father, grieving deeply, wanted to visit North Wales and asked him to accompany him ‘for a few weeks.’ They went to Landrillo-yn-Rhos and stayed initially in a hotel on Colwyn Crescent. He now found this place of his childhood holidays ‘aggravating’, a ‘bloody wilderness of villas & bungalows, cars, trams, etc—like the coast of England everywhere now is. It used to be heavenly but is now wholly overgrown with hideous urbanization so that you exhaust yourself to death trying to get clear of the villas & what not, before you begin to get near any country—like it is in Sussex. Lord what a murderous thing this civilization of ours is ... already the bits of country left seem only like museum pieces without any organic life.’ To his grief, the ancient fishing weir he had loved as a boy was in ruins, now merely a few timber stakes visible at low tide. He found St Trillo’s chapel by the shore

cleaned out and cared for & a fence round it, but it hadn’t the same charm and of course lots of houses built near & a promenade with railings above it—whereas in 1907 it just stood among boulders & gorse-bushes for the seep of the rocky land merged with the sea. It’s a sad thing—like Stonehenge now it’s cared for & looked after by the authorities, has lost half its numinous feeling. Westminster Abbey also, was much more impressive in the days of its ‘Protestant’ more or less ‘neglect’.

What had been the rising green lower slope of *Bryn Euryn*, the ‘Hill of Gold,’ was now red-brick and white-stucco suburban sprawl. The upper slope was unchanged. He climbed it, saw again the ruined manor house where he had played as a child, and, at the top, gazed again at the distant mountains of Snodonia.¹³ The landscape seemed to him ‘colourful & bright ... with a dancing flickering light,’ a ‘gleaming’ something captured by J.D. Innis, whose work he did not otherwise much like.¹⁴

They visited Holywell, where he was also saddened by changes. St Winifred’s Well and the adjacent church were no longer in isolation near the shore. Where the

green hillside had sloped to the sea were now row on row of red brick bungalows. Use of red brick worsened, he thought, the obliteration of the countryside because ‘the proper stone for building’ here ‘is slate.’

Near Conwy, he visited Maenan Hall on the site of Maenan Abbey, where he noticed affinity between the sixteenth century ceiling-plasterwork and early Celtic linear design. It was a pattern of ‘a curvilinear nature with floral terminations, & with a sort of elegance that is almost Adams-like, yet ... one can detect a native feeling.’ Earlier, he had discovered in a photograph what he regarded as an epiphany of Welsh-Celtic visual sensitivity in the floriated decoration of carved Lombardic lettering at Cilcain.* He loved such far-reaching continuities. He and his father also visited Anglesey and went with one of his cousins to a Catholic community at Pantasaph.¹⁵

They visited his cousins Effie, married to a dentist, and Gladys, whose husband had been killed on the western front two weeks after their wedding. At her house in Fairway off Penrhyn Avenue in Rhos-on-Sea, Gladys gave them an enormous high tea of scones, cakes and bara-brith. He ate little since, he wrote, ‘tea is not a meal I take very seriously,’ but as the evening wore on it became clear that tea had been the final meal of the day. He slipped out to the local pub for a drink and ‘a number of ham sandwiches’. His father, who had been unable to warn him in front of the relatives, was ‘hugely amused.’¹⁶

They were now staying with Effie and her husband, who could not imagine why he had brought such a huge trunk. When the day came to leave, David asked to use the dustbin. He then proceeded to bring down from the guest bedroom arms-full of empty bottles, mostly beer bottles. He had put them in the trunk all the way to North Wales to dispose of them because, he explained, back in London, he had been in the midst of a move (from Glebe Place to the King’s Road). What they thought of this may be imagined. David found his father’s family a bit dour, ‘somewhat on their dignity.’¹⁷

For a day or two they visited David’s Aunt Polly and Uncle Joe in Chester. They had room only for his father, so David stayed at the Westminster Hotel. Passing through the East Gate of Chester, which had been the Roman Porta Principalis Sinistra, David strolled through the town and round its medieval walls. He walked

past the newly discovered but not yet excavated Roman amphitheatre and out to the river Dee, the Roman Deva, which would figure prominently in *The Anathemata* (67, 69, 136). He probably visited the Grosvenor Museum—he told his uncle that he was ‘impressed ... by the historical relics of the city.’¹⁸ He was conscious of looking from the walls of this stronghold onto what had been (from Roman and English points of view) enemy territory. The experience of the wall enclosing a maze of streets may have reminded him of medieval London, of the old city of Jerusalem (where Roman legionnaires had also kept watch), and of Troy in ways that would influence *The Anathemata* and *The Sleeping Lord*.

His Uncle Joe was the buyer for the linens department at Browns. When he explained having to judge between different qualities of weaves, David was fascinated. His uncle had, he was sad to notice, lost most of his Welsh. He was a severe critic of Wales and the Welsh, and said to David, ‘You love Wales because you don’t live here.’ Beneath his criticism, David realized, he was an ardent patriot. At the hotel, David ordered drinks freely, adding to the bill. He wanted to pay for his drinks but was told that his uncle had given strict orders that he (Uncle Joe) would pay for everything.¹⁹

After their holiday, David stayed in London to be near his father. For a while he lived at Brockley but he became convinced that the housekeeper’s daughter, Cissy Robertson, was stealing his Jaeger underpants to give to her brother. He retreated with his remaining underwear to Glebe Place, from where he telephoned or visited daily.²⁰

That autumn, he went to an exhibition of the paintings of the ‘tall & very beautiful’ Princess Bassano at the Lefevre Gallery. There he was introduced to her and her mother, who wanted to buy one of his paintings. He thought the daughter ‘a good painter’ and liked her work, especially a painting of St Mark’s in Venice in the evening. The best, he thought, were of Venice, possibly because they were ‘early works’ free of ‘a slight indication in the later ones of more visual realism—sophistication ever so slightly rearing its regrettable head—’ but it was ‘on the whole,’ he wrote Ede, ‘a most pleasing exhibition.’²¹

By November he was back at Glebe Place, where Prudence joined him for supper on his birthday and wild chrysanthemums arrived from Petra. During this, his

*The photograph of lettering carved on a slab is in a monograph published ‘in about 1912’ by one of his

first extended stay in London since the Edes had moved to Tangier, he felt deeply their absence and the disappearance of his Hampstead haven. With war coming, Burns told him that what he needed was a stout pair of shoes and a good overcoat. Burns had a Saville Row overcoat of green coachman's cloth that fell to his calf and made him look like a Prussian officer. Jones admired it. Dawson gave Burns a leather-lined overcoat that had belonged to his father, so Burns passed his green coat on to Jones, who dyed it black, shrinking it to his size, although it came to his ankles and made him look very odd.²²

About this time, he stopped to listen to a half dozen unemployed miners from the Rhondda standing in the gutter outside Harrods, huddling as though about to form a rugby scrum. One held out a cap for pennies, and they sang Welsh hymns in harmony. He disliked hymns, even in Welsh or Latin, because 'the same thing goes on verse after verse,' which he thought 'ghastly.'²³ Yet here, now, *soto voce*, 'with the noise of the traffic ... & rain pouring down, the purity of sound, the reality ...' it made him gasp with feeling. He asked them to sing one of his favourite hymns, *Bryn Calfaria* ('Calvary Hill'), which they did. These hymns lost all feeling, he had always found, when sung by organized choirs to instrumental accompaniment. In later years, he would sometimes listen to radio broadcasts of the English vs Wales international games, and, as the Welsh rugby fans sang, experienced something of what he had felt in the last years of the Depression outside Harrods. Sometimes, listening, he would 'collapse into tears,' which surprised him, since he regarded himself as not ordinarily very emotional. It convinced him that 'this blood thing is strange & strong.'²⁴

During the latter half of the decade, he made new friends. One was a lovely tall young woman named Diana Creagh, who rented the ground-floor flat in the house in Glebe Place. When Burns introduced them, Jones discovered that her aunt had been a nurse named Mabel Creagh, whom he had known and liked in Liverpool in September 1918. Fluent in French and Italian, Diana was working with the foreign exchange at the telephone company. She became a frequent visitor to the Burns flat and fell in love with Tom, though secretly, since he was involved with Ann Bowes-Lyon.²⁵

Welsh relatives.

One evening when Burns was away, Jones asked her up to the sitting room for a drink. They chatted, she in a chair facing the fireplace, he on a divan in a corner to her right. He asked her to come sit beside him, which she did. He put his right arm around her, placing his right hand on her breast. She stiffened. He withdrew his arm. She quickly returned to her chair. It had been, she later said, a gentle, affectionate touch, to which she would not have objected had she not been in love with Burns.²⁶ Subconsciously, he may have heard once more Dorothea de Halpert's words of sixteen years before: 'Don't ever do that again.'

Remaining friends, Diana continued to see him in the upstairs sitting room, and he went down to see her. She visited him once in Sidmouth where, after conversing in his room, they went by bus to Exeter for supper, she paying. She had heard him say to Burns, 'When I had dinner with Ann [Bows Lyon] the other day, she surreptitiously passed me some pound notes under the table so that I could pay, which I did, but I don't really know why she had to do that.' Though poor, Diana was better off than he, and took him to meals, sometimes in the Queen's Restaurant off Sloane Square and the nearby Royal Court Bar. She said, he 'had a gentle voice, a quiet unassuming manner, a charming smile, and yet something forlorn about him that brought out a strange, latent protective feeling. There was a certain sadness in him.' Years later, when she told him that he had a 'tranquilizing' influence on her, he was surprised, replying, 'I've never been other than pretty neurotic and agitated within myself.' He met some of her friends, including Patricia Carey, whom they visited together, and Margaret Smith, a Jewish convert to Catholicism, an artist who admired his pictures. She invited him to her studio to see her work, which he liked. She asked him whether it was true that he mixed his colours with spittle. He grimaced and admitted that it sometimes was. In 1938 Diana would move from Glebe Place in order to extricate herself emotionally from Burns.²⁷

Possibly through Prudence, Jones met Violet Clifton, a notorious eccentric who fed boxes of chocolates to her dogs and owned, with her husband, the Island of Islay off the west coast of Scotland. She invited him to dinner with Oliver St John Gogarty, the original of 'stately plump Buck Mulligan' in Joyce's *Ulysses*. Gogarty was a wealthy, long-winded raconteur and monopolizer of conversations who enjoyed a flexible relationship with truth. Diana Creagh knew him through his daughter Brenda, and, after the dinner, Gogarty told Diana, 'Your friend David Jones certainly knows a lot about the Arthurian myth. He knows his subject thoroughly.' Jones told

her, 'Your friend Gogarty makes some pretty wild statements.' In 1951, he would read Gogarty's *As I was Going Down Sackville Street* and like it for recording Joyce's declaration that in practical life boat-building was as much 'art' as the making of a poem, a statement consonant with Maritain and with Welsh bards calling themselves 'carpenters of song.' But he confided to Grisewood that Gogarty was an 'awfully boring sort of chap. ... What *conceit* and noise these about-town kinds of Irishmen have.'²⁸

He also got to know Arthur and Daphne Pollen, a wealthy young couple living nearby in Onslow Square. Arthur was a sculptor who had worked under Frank Dobson and knew Henry Moore and Gill. Daphne was a gifted painter, beautiful and intelligent, the daughter of the banker Cecil Baring. She had visited Egypt and Palestine a decade before Jones, had been received into the Church by McNabb. She was an avid reader and a lover of Proust chiefly because his characters resembled many of her acquaintances. Arthur was a cradle Catholic. They knew Jones simply as a fellow Catholic with whom they shared mutual friends and acquaintances, including Tom Burns, the Woodruffs, Clare and Sidney Sheppard, Eddy Sackville-West, Alison Debenham, Jelly D'Aranyi, C.C. Martindale, and Vicky Reid (now Ingrams), Daphne's cousin.²⁹

Through Arthur Wheen, Jones had become friendly with Herbert Read, who wrote so positively and insightfully of *In Parenthesis* in the *TLS*, though anonymously—Jones never knew. In 1932 Read had used a woodcut by Jones on the cover of his book *Form in Modern Poetry*. Jones often saw Read at La Commercio, where they sometimes ate together with friends. Actively anti-Franco and an avowed anarchist, Read was an idealistic socialist of the school of William Morris and believed deeply in many traditional values. He was interested in the Dark Age history of his native Yorkshire, in Bede, and in St Cuthbert. (At one of these dinners, Read questioned Jones about his pro-Welsh antipathy to Saxons. Not wanting to expound on the subject, Jones became 'rather glassy eyed,' Grisewood later recalled, and said, as though he had just passed a Saxon in the road, 'Well, visually they were so disgusting, I mean all that ghastly cross-gartering. Really terrible you know, like puttees in the war.') Jones liked Read's 'detachment, reasonableness & modesty,' his 'remarkable perception & sensitivity as a critic & a creative writer,' and his 'sweetness of disposition & kindness that by no means always goes with these other virtues & abilities.' He respected Read for having served courageously during the

war, winning the DSO and MC, in the Yorkshire Green Howards, one of the best line regiments in the army. He had written *In Retreat*, a factual account of the great retreat of March 1918 which Jones regarded as ‘an astonishing document,’ ‘most awfully good,’ ‘one of the best bits of writing about the war’, and ‘one of the best things Read ever wrote,’ much better than his poem on the subject. Together they reminisced about life in the trenches but mostly talked about painting, agreeing that modernism in the arts was a necessary new beginning. In subsequent years they seldom met or corresponded but retained deep respect and affection for one another. Jones referred to him as ‘old Bertie’ though in letters it was ‘Dear Herbert.’ In his last years, Read would regret doing nothing to promote Jones’s career as a visual artist.³⁰

Jones was seeing a number of women friends. The Harari’s had left Cairo in 1936 to live in a house in Catherine Place. Because Manya was home during the day, he mostly visited her. She promoted a movement called ‘The Sword of the Spirit,’ a precursor to the Ecumenical movement intended partly to counter anti-Semitism. She was working with Dawson on the *Dublin Review* and was planning to publish her own periodical to disseminate information about Russia, the United States, and Europe. Other women friends included beautiful and intelligent Sonia Bromwell, and the beautiful young poet Kathleen Raine, newly Catholic and soon to lapse (but to return on her deathbed). He had known her since 1931. He saw delicately beautiful Camilla Russell, daughter of Russell Pasha, head of the narcotics branch of the Egyptian police and related to the Plunkett Greens, Bertrand Russell, and the Duke of Bedford. She would soon marry the close friend of Grisewood and Waugh, Christopher Sykes. Jones was visiting and dining with these women and with the painter Alison Debenham, and they visited him.³¹

In 1936 Burns had introduced him to the novelist Graham Greene and his wife, and he and sometimes visited them. Once on his way across Clapham Common to see them, he was twice accosted by prostitutes, like a character in a Graham Greene novel.³²

Back from the Middle East, Prudence was now close to the Hodgkin brothers, and, when Jones was in London, they would all meet. Thomas had held different positions in the administration in Palestine and had got to know the Jewish and Palestinian leaders well. During the 1936 Arab revolt, he resigned in protest against British military oppression of the Arabs, who called a general strike in protest against, among other things, continued Jewish immigration. To prevent his participating in the

uprising, the British authorities deported him to Beirut and then home. In England, he joined the Communist Party and now sold the *Daily Worker* at cold and windy Blackfriars Bridge, where he was occasionally assisted by Prudence, her sole motive being to finish quickly so they could go for a drink. He taught grammar school for a while but, unable to keep order, left London to teach philosophy to unemployed miners in Cumberland. In 1937 he married Dorothy Crowfoot, daughter of the Director of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem and an expert at x-ray crystallography.* For a wedding gift, Jones gave them number twenty of the edition of *Ancient-Mariner* prints that he had pulled himself—a sumptuous present indicating great affection for Hodgkin. After Thomas went to Cumberland, Jones and Prudence continued seeing Edward, who joined the editorial staff of the *Manchester Guardian* in 1936 but was often in London. Edward introduced them to a circle of young Oxford fellows and dons who included Isaiah Berlin, Maurice Bowra, John Sparrow and Stuart Hampshire. Through the Rothschilds, Prudence had previously known Berlin, whom she called ‘the Burler’ and ‘Burler Bear.’ At a party at All Souls thrown by Sparrow at which she, Berlin, and Edward Hodgkin were present, Stephen Spender asked Jones how old he was. Jones told him, and Spender (even though they had met at St Leonard’s Terrace eight years before) exclaimed, ‘My God, I thought you were eighteen!’ The exclamation became a mocking refrain in Prudence’s comic banter with Jones.³³

An intimacy between Prudence and Edward grew and became sexual, straining her relationship with Jones. When she and Edward planned to go off together on holidays—a few weeks in France in 1937, one week in Dublin in the autumn of 1938—Jones experienced jealousy mounting to anguish. He argued with her over the Dublin visit throughout what she experienced as ‘a grueling day’ visiting picture galleries. She insisted that it would be ‘a most natural simple obvious pleasant nice & Co holiday.’ When Jones invited her to spend Christmas with him in Sidmouth and Hodgkin invited her to spend it with his family at Crab Mill in the Cotswolds, Prudence felt ‘torn in two halves’ and stayed home, though mostly for her mother’s sake. Her affair with Hodgkin lasted until 1939, cooling her relationship with Jones.³⁴

* She would win the Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1964 for work on the molecular structure of vitamin B12 and insulin, and would become the first woman inducted into the Order of Merit since Florence Nightingale. Her work in x-ray crystallography enabled Watson and Crick to analyze the structure of DNA.

A few long-standing friendships lapsed. He continued meeting Frank Medworth for an occasional drink until January 1934, when Medworth moved to Hull to become principal of an art school and they lost contact with one another. Medworth had remained faithful to the precepts of Bayes and the academic tradition. Through Gill, Jones learned that he wrote a book on perspective, which Jones thought might be ‘amusing—like any clock-work is interesting or any “problem solving”.’ From Hull, Medworth would emigrate to Australia to become principal of Sydney Art School and an official in UNESCO. On 11 November 1947, he would attend a United Nations conference in Mexico City, where altitude diminishes air pressure. He would give a nonsensical speech, attributed by listeners to drunkenness but caused by his brain expanding into the hole in his skull. After the speech he went back to his hotel, got into the bath, slashed his wrists, and died—a late casualty of the Battle of the Somme. Jones would always regard him as an ‘astounding man.’³⁵

His friendship with Leslie Poulter had virtually lapsed. Like so many ex-servicemen, a psychological casualty of the war, Poulter was always now slightly depressed, lacked ambition. He had failed to attain a position corresponding to his intelligence and linguistic ability. His family lived in poverty. In 1924 he had married an adamant Prince-Edward-Island Protestant named Amy Star, Jones attending the wedding. The Poulters had then lived for some years in West Africa before setting up house in Lewisham, near Brockley. Jones visited him in but against the wishes of his conventional, dominant, stubborn wife. She considered artists disreputable, disliked Catholics, and thought Jones a freeloader. In 1934, he visited them after their move to 10 Vanbury Park, Blackheath, talking with Leslie late into the night and, although Brockley was not far away, staying over. In the morning he departed but, to the undying indignation of Amy, neglected to empty his chamber-pot. He was not allowed back. Jones and Leslie continued to meet, but infrequently. Jones gave him a copy of *In Parenthesis*, but had the impression that he disliked its coarse army language. With the outbreak of war in 1939, Poulter cheered up and worked for the Intelligence Service, MI-6.* Then he worked for a fireworks company, then for the

* As a spy, Poulter was sent into Dakar in French West Africa to report on prospects for success of ‘Menace,’ Churchill’s planned attack. He informed the War Office that the plan had no hope of success. His report was not passed on to the Joint Chiefs. After the abysmal failure of ‘Menace,’ his career in military intelligence stagnated, ending in 1943.

railway as a clerk. He died in 1952 of cancer or kidney failure (he suffered from both), having remained all his life a devout Catholic, to the chagrin of his wife, who wrote to Jones informing him of his death.³⁶

Jones became convinced that his stay in London during the last months of 1937 was a mistake. He was anxious and depressed, and, since he had planned to spend the winter in Sidmouth, he went there early, in December. From there he wrote to Grisewood,

I felt a lot better when I got away & alone—I don't mean I don't love being with & seeing my friends. I wish I could be with them but if you get into a particular kind of state then it seems to me a type of solitude brings you to your own private senses in some way,—at least it does me, over some things. I think if I could only get not having the worse type of nerves & could work at painting or writing I should be quite happy alone always. At least I should not mind other types of unhappiness if I could work properly because it is all I really want to do, or ever have wanted to do. (at least I want to do it so much more than anything else. It always comes back to that.) It seems an innocent & proper enough desire. I hope They will let me do it. I mean They, God & Co.³⁷

Prudence Pelham was suffering from depression and insomnia and, in January 1938, was in the London Hospital in Whitechapel receiving ineffective psychotherapy. Ann Bowes-Lyon was also in hospital recovering from a nervous breakdown. 'What a real sod & bugger this neurosis is for this generation,' Jones wrote, 'it is our Black Death, alright. I wonder if everyone had neurasthenia about the time of the collapse of the Roman Empire. I suppose so.' He designed for Prudence a bookplate—a large, crowded drawing, utterly wrong for a bookplate. She liked it, though he thought 'it got a bit tight and worried.' What he wanted always was to keep such small works 'free and yet precise & delicate.' Burns asked him to draw a cat for Ann Bowes-Lyon, but he could not. 'Well,' he writes, 'it sounds easy & a nice thing to do but somehow for some god-damned reason it is extremely difficult to do anything you are asked to do ... I do feel a pig to not sit down & draw this cat ... but I've tried & can't get it done—its a kind of bugging perversity I suppose.'³⁸

Douglas Cleverdon visited in January to discuss the possibility of adapting *In Parenthesis* for radio. Distressed to see Jones not drawing or painting, he recalled their aborted intention to illustrate Malory and said, as he later remembered, 'You have nothing to do down here. You only read *The Times* and have a walk. Why not try doing a thing about *Morte D'Arthur*.' Within a week Jones was drawing and glad finally to be at it again. The picture took seven weeks to finish, largely because painting involved him in a new dilemma:

you can't do it by electric light & as the only time of day when I feel more or less unneurotic & with any energy is after dinner I cant do what I see is necessary to this drawing & in the daytime I can't bear to look at it because I've got little nervous energy.



3. David Jones, *Guinever*, 1939-40

He proceeded slowly because drawing brought back the worst symptoms of his breakdown, but going slow was also frustrating. He wrote Grisewood,

I only know one way to draw & that is in a kind of fierce concentration. The only times a drawing is good is when you nearly break yourself turning the corner from a muddle to a clarity & it takes every ounce of nervous effort to be any good—so it is very difficult to proceed gingerly & soberly & stop when you know it will be probably fatal to go on (I mean fatal because of bringing on some bloody recurrence of nerves) & hope to recapture something next time, because for one thing you get so bored with working like that & who can command inspiration? & yet I absolutely & definitely know there is nothing else I care about except this drawing business—writing, ah yes—as much but after all my equipment is that of a painter not a writer. My equipment as a writer is very severely limited by not being a scholar & for the kind of writing I want to do you really do have to have so much information & know such a lot about words that I can't really believe I can do it except in a limited way.

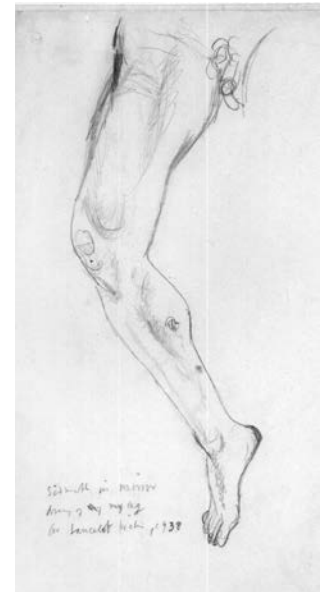
To conserve energy for a concentrated attempt at drawing, he now refused to write.³⁹

Since Ditchling, his paintings had been free of the illustrational impulse, even those with titles like 'Chapel Perilous'. This new, Cleverdon-inspired watercolour was a return to illustration but is far more than that. The subject is Malory, Book 19, Ch 6, Lancelot bursting through a window into a chamber in the Castle of Sir Meliagraunce where captive Guinever sleeps naked on a bed (fig. 3). Later entitled *Guinever*, the picture is large (24 by 19 inches), one of several he now intended doing on subjects from Malory. Across from the foot of the bed is a hearth for which he wanted an iron support for hanging a pot over a fire. Remembering the one at Pigotts, he got Gill to send him a drawing of it, which he used as a study for the painting. For Lancelot he modelled naked before the wardrobe mirror, drawing his own torso (fig. 4), but he 'couldn't make the angle of Lancelot's legs right,' so he drew a study of his right leg by standing on one leg while clasping his drawing pad in one hand and drawing with the other. He drew the foot, calf, and knee complete with the scar of his war-wound and, below it, a spot of eczema which itched 'like hell' (fig. 5). After finishing, he inadvertently wrote part of a letter to Grisewood on the back of the drawing. Turning the sheet to continue the letter, he writes 'Bugger, I did not know this had a drawing on the back ...I drew it as a study for a thing I'm doing—bugger! I want it, but can't write this letter over again.' So he posed once more, this time wearing only a shirt and, in the process, experiencing a reversal of the scene in the picture: 'I forgot to lock the door,' he wrote, and 'a maid ... burst in ... gave a startled noise and fled'—an experience he found 'highly embarrassing.'⁴⁰ For Lancelot's upper body he did another study (after locking the door), of his own nude torso, with genitals minimized according to art-school practice.



4. David Jones, Study for Lancelot in *Guinever*, 1938

In the painting, the queen has been captured with her wounded knights, whom she has kept with her (together with her two maids, lying nearest her) so that she can tend their wounds. The sleepers evoke the dead and, especially the knights, lie like tomb effigies, foreshortened and, some of them, flattened to merge with the floor, hinting strongly of the charnel-house, an effect strengthened by the crypt-like setting. (He believed that ‘so very often, in buildings of



5. David Jones, Study for Lancelot in *Guinever*, 1938

all periods and styles, the crypt is the best part.’)⁴¹ Guinever is asleep, her crossed legs,

like those of Lancelot and one of the sleeping knights, evoking Jesus in the crucifix above her head. Her nakedness implies sexuality, though her shape and awkward posture preclude eroticism. She is the Church and mankind, symbolically incorporating the death-evoking knights. Difficult to distinguish, in the upper-right Lancelot enters through a barred window. His head and neck bend to mirror the corpus in the crucifix above her head. Strenuous and painful, his entering initiates a redemption, but by a nearly invisible saviour, since he is one of the last things you see in the picture, if seen at all. He is tonally one with the wall and windows behind him and stands, or dances, so awkwardly in air that his body (fig. 6) is not immediately recognizable. The effect of the merging of figure and ground resembles, but is more extreme than, that in the frontispiece of *In Parenthesis* (Ch. 10, fig. 11). At the instant of ingress, only the startled cat is resurrected into motion. (The dog on the floor is one Jones had gazed at and drawn in the Fort lounge.) The picture redefines its subject, suggesting that this



6. Lancelot in detail of *Guinever*

is a harrowing of Hades and linking the Passion with sexual passion.^{42*} All figures have shut eyes and seem inhumanly statuesque. Lancelot is awkwardly puppet-like. This is a haunting picture—dreamlike in this arched, tomb-like place of fallen bodies, sleep, and spiritual coma. Emphasizing positive redemption, Lancelot's spatial relationship to the queen evokes conventional pictures of the Annunciation, which are also, of course, implicitly sexual.

On her bed, Guinever is the central lightness of the picture, her torso and limbs quasi-mirroring the curve and ribs of the Gothic vaulting. She is larger than the surrounding sleepers. Her upturned elbow recalls that of the infantryman in the frontispiece of *In Parenthesis*, an image that will exert its influence on other important figure-paintings during the next four years, possibly because he could see it whenever he opened *In Parenthesis*. Centred between the queen and the vaulting is the altar in the chapel behind her. On it lie the vestments for the next morning's Mass. (The vaulted room-and-chapel owes its form to the never-completed church beside the monastery at Capel-y-ffyn, to the Norman church across the park from Helen Sutherland's house at Rock, and to St John's Chapel in the Tower of London.)⁴³ The clothed altar corresponds to Guinever's bed, and she, therefore, to the humanity that incarnates divinity (sacramentally re-presented) in the Eucharist. Her affinity with the tabernacle behind her—its curtains draped to suggest a vulva—is emphasized by the altar also having its sleepers, a gun-team (part of the castle garrison) before it in a recess on the right, like sleepers in the garden of Jesus's agony and like guards at the tomb of his resurrection. The altar near her head visually complements the hearth at her foot—associating spiritual with physical food and church with home, a relationship that was, for Jones, the heart of culture.

Launcelot is largely naked and incorporates the leg and bending torso of Jones in his studies. Posing for the torso study, he had bent to imitate a kneeling knight in the thirteenth century Winchester Psalter (fig. 7). 'This was deliberate,' he would



7. kneeling knight, Winchester psalter.

* In 1946, he would force himself to read D'Arcy's newly published *The Mind and Heart of Love*, which he found nearly unreadable, though he admired D'Arcy's central purpose: 'to let Eros & Agape kiss each other ... a laudable objective (which of course they must in any case as I see whatever anyone says).'

write, 'a further link with the veneration-concept.' The knight on the lower left with one gloved hand is 'composite in idea: partly a suggestion of feudal warrior-bishops (cf. Turpin of Rheims) and partly one of the wounded knights—partly secular, partly sacred—his foreshortened legs and the soles of his feet being taken in part from Mantegna's dead Christ.'⁴⁴ His gloved hand gestures a blessing. The sleeping wounded may also show the influence of the sleeping disciples in El Greco's *Agony* and the effigy he and Prudence had admired in Ottery St Mary church (ch 10, fig. 9).

While working on the picture, he reread Malory and read Chrétien de Troyes, which became a strong influence. (In Chrétien, Lancelot genuflects before her 'precisely as though he were before a shrine.') Lancelot has wounds in his hands and feet to reflect Chrétien's narrative of entering after forcing the passage of 'the Sword-bridge,' where they are cut, as his hands are again when he forces the bars of the window to Guinever's chamber—'so that', Jones writes, 'he is in the first place a 'wounded' man. That is the 'factual' side ... but also, symbolically, or whatever the word is, he represents the 'Lover' & is anyhow wounded.' Here as in Chrétien, the wounds are stigmata-like. (Launcelot's horse is also wounded by arrows but faithfully follows him. Its head is visible through the window nearest the viewer.) As types of the lover and the beloved, Lancelot and Guinever corresponded to Jesus and mankind. Originally, he gave the picture the title *Dum medium silentium*, an allusion to the Christmas Introit ('in quiet silence and the night in the midst of her course, the Word came down from heaven') but 'the allusion seemed ... too strained' so he changed the title.⁴⁵ Jesus, Lancelot, and the artist are archetypally involved with one another. Jones's part in this involvement is secured by his bullet-wound scar visible not only on the leg in his study but on the calf of Lancelot's right leg. His Guinevere was, of course, Prudence Pelham.

The form suits the subject, reflecting medieval *horror vacui* requiring every emptiness to be filled. He liked the picture very much but doubted that others would. Unlike his pre-breakdown pictures of the early 1930s, which are all mostly quick, whole, all-at-oncers (finished in a day), this picture is a constellation of parts juxtaposed or interwoven but each part essentially made separately as though to limit potential damage. (This method of painting in parts may reflect the division of trenches into ten-yard long fire-bays meant to limit damage if a shell burst in a neighbouring fire-bay or the enemy occupied one.) 'It's got a lot of things in it,' he writes to Ede, 'packed tight & rather confused & takes you an hour to see it.' Because it was big and so 'full' he thought it should 'cost a lot of money.'⁴⁶ It was

unique, foreign to what any other artist anywhere was doing at the time or had ever done before. Yet it is distantly though obviously redolent of the movement that most strongly influenced him as an art student. This and a few later pictures like it would explain why he once told a visiting artist, ‘I am a Pre-Raphaelite.’⁴⁷

If *In Parenthesis* is, in its vivid visual evocations, the poem of a painter, this and his subsequent paintings are those of a writer. Earlier, the images in his pictures were not specific symbols. You could not say, for example, that the thorns of *Briar Cup* (Ch. 9, fig. 23) symbolize or specifically evoke the crucifixion. Now, however, he uses images as precise culturally Christian indicators. This may be the result of having recently enjoyed, as a writer, the specific precision that words afford and that painting usually does not. In his war epic, he had been able to employ archetypal coordinates from myth, history, legend, literature, and liturgy. *Guinever* bristles with explicit referents. A reason for this may be his increasing awareness of the accelerating pragmatism rendering anachronistic all traditional cultural signs. He is inclined to cram his painting with all he can save from annihilation, each picture an ark for the contemporary flood, teeming with symbolism and specific allusions. Virtually finished in March of 1938, he made minor adjustments over the next two years and dated the picture, after his signature, ‘1940’.

Each night he took a break from work from 10:30 to 11:30 to visit Colonel Hastings, with whom he drank a whisky in the Fort lounge and talked about the war. Still the officer he had been, Hastings issued a reprimand if Jones failed to appear at 10:30. ‘I wouldn’t half like to be like that,’ Jones writes, ‘which is rather as if I said I would like to be like Mae West or the Archbishop of York.’ He considered Hastings ‘a pet’. Jones’s poverty was worsened by drinking—‘how expensive whisky is,’ he confided to Grisewood, ‘I wish I didn’t have to drink it.’ To economize, he now mixed it with water instead of soda. When it was Hastings’ turn to buy, he would bring a whisky back to his room where he continued working till 1 or 2 a.m. His poverty was also worsened by smoking—he had no idea how many cigarettes he smoked each day.⁴⁸

The success of this painting cheered him. He could hardly believe it was mid-February already—as depression lessened, time seemed to ‘rush by quicker & quicker like the things in Alice in Wonderland.’ His spirits continued to improve. In March he felt ‘better’ than at any time since his breakdown. He writes to E.Q. Nicholson that ‘being quietly here is good for me.’ He thought he would write again if the politicians

would not bring on war and he ‘could get some nice peace & no hokey pokey.’⁴⁹

In June of 1938 he painted *Mall in Sidmouth* from his window at the back of the Fort. Its pencilled figures leap on a light, tonally nearly empty playing field in a great oval of wind contained by yellow and green hotel fronts and defined by a fence and wind-blown figures in the middle foreground and scaffolding in the immediate right foreground. Shortly after its completion, Ann Bows-Lyon visited for the weekend and he showed it to her.⁵⁰

Because he felt like working only at night and because electric light was not suited to painting, he reverted again to writing and by June added forty pages to his Balaam’s Ass manuscript. ‘I don’t know if any of it is any good,’ he writes to Grisewood,

a very rambling affair—sometimes it all seems balls & sometimes I like it in places. But I.P. was chained to a sequence of events which made it always a straight forward affair whereas this effort is, I fear, about ‘ideas’ the one thing I have always disliked in poetry—but now I see how chaps slip into it, because it seems that if you have not got a kind of racial myth expressed in war to write about & don’t know about our old friend ‘love’ & are not interested in ‘making a story’ it seems all you can do is to ramble on about things you think about on the whole all the time & that is what I think this is about. It is about how everything turns into something else & how you can never tell when a bonza is cropping up or the Holy Ghost is going to turn something inside out & how everything is a balls-up & a kind of ‘Praise’ at the same time. I see now why chaps write about ‘separate’ things in short poems—to wit odes to nightingales & what not, but it seems to me that if you just talk about a lot of things as one thing follows another in the end you may have made a shape out of all of it. That is to say that shape that all the mess makes in your mind.

He felt well, but still could not paint as he used to, and writing made him feel less useless.⁵¹

In early summer, he was notified that *In Parenthesis* had won the Hawthornden Prize and that he would have to go to London to accept it. To Prudence, who was in Bristol and unable to attend the ceremony, he confided his terror at having to give an acceptance speech. Having spent the entire winter in Sidmouth, he found his departure wrenching. It meant reducing his belongings to what he could take away, and that meant tearing up manuscripts and sketches. He refused to take away what was better discarded, but the decision finally, irretrievably to destroy was torture.⁵² He returned to Glebe Place on 21 June.

Then the only important British literary award, the Hawthornden Prize was

given by the National Book League for ‘a work of imaginative literature by a British author under forty-one.’ Previous winners included Sean O’Casey, Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, Edmund Blunden, and, recently, Evelyn Waugh. Indifferent to the honour because unconcerned with literary prestige, Jones was nevertheless glad that the prize was a cheque for £100—‘heavens! one needs this bloody money badly’—and he hoped the notoriety would boost sales. Lawrence Binyon was on the judging committee, but the member who initially suggested *In Parenthesis* for the prize was the biographer David Cecil, who thought it the most original book that had come before the committee during his membership and by far the most impressive piece of literature the war has produced. What had especially moved the committee was the work’s combination of vivid realism and spiritual meaning, a combination ‘unique in war literature.’⁵³

Jones would stay in London for nearly a month. He met the Ede family visiting from Tangier, and showed them his big new picture, not yet entitled ‘*Guinever*,’ which he wished not to sell. He also showed them the *Cricket Match*, which Ede wanted to buy. Jones thought that Ede deserved to have it for nothing but wanted to accumulate paintings for an exhibition in which that one might sell for ‘a huge sum.’ On the dining-room floor of the Glebe-Place flat, he also showed the Malory picture to Diana Creagh, to whom he said about the covers at the side of the bed, ‘I had to tuck them up because there wasn’t room for them to fit in.’ Stuart Hampshire visited and Jones also showed him the painting but asked him not to talk about publicly since he had not sent it to the Redfern (where he had promised to send all his new pictures).⁵⁴

On the hot afternoon of 26 June 1938, he went to the Aeolian Hall in Bond Street to receive the Hawthornden Prize. The hall was jammed. Sir Edward Marsh, a member of the committee, looked after him—Jones was unsure of where to go and what to do. Receiving the cheque and seeing Marsh again after several years were, for him, the only good things about the occasion. Otherwise, the entire event was ‘a terrifying experience.’ His friends attending included Burns, Grisewood, the Hagues, and Helen Sutherland. Other audience members did not know in advance the name of the prize-winner. The first speaker, A.P. Herbert, postponed disclosure by an elaborately facetious account of his own career as politician, humorist, novelist and yachtsman. Gradually he revealed that the winner was a man, then that the book was a war book, one whose ‘savage humour’ and ‘manly spirit’ he could praise. Finally, he

announced the title and Jones's name. Silence. There was no applause. On the platform Marsh mopped his brow. Jones came forward to speak, trembling, he thought, 'like a taut sail in a wind' but, to his relief, his voice was steady, and, he discovered later, could be heard clearly to the back of the hall:

I want only to express, if I can, how deeply sensible I am of the honour done me in being given the Hawthornden Prize for this year.

I wish I could do so in an adequate manner—but this is not easy to me. As a painter who has attempted to write a book, I may perhaps be excused a certain feeling of trepidation in receiving an award that belongs properly to the profession of letters.

I should, if it is not out of place, like very much to say one thing to you: I am glad to have done this writing because in doing it I have felt, more clearly than before, the unity of the Arts. Those same problems that face the painter confront the writer in almost identical proportion.

Form and content, the juxtaposition of ideas and shapes within a determined scheme, to so state the contingent as to display the necessary—an awareness of dissimilar threads of tradition and a conditioning of those traditions by our own contemporary sensitivity, the making of an object with its own way of behaviour; not so much to describe, imitate, or represent, but rather (if I may borrow my terminology from the queen of the sciences), but rather to show anew under another species some already existing reality.

To make substantially and really present in one's medium what already is.

To do in a ritual manner what has already been done with actual immolation.

To give a mode to that which exists modelessly—if one can so speak. For what we call an artist's 'creativity' is nothing but an uncovering—a discovering of what is.

To make available, to give local habitation, to dispense this airy store—because you will remember, who remember your nursery rhymes, that

X, Y, Z & Ampersand

All want a piece in hand.

This is our job, as far as I can see.

To use another analogy: to coax the Unicorn into the garden—this is the task of the writer no less than the painter.

If the Hawthornden Committee have felt that my own attempt, in whatever limited a fashion, and from however far off, has got a huntsman's 'view' of this illusive creature, whose capture is so arduous, I am naturally made glad.⁵⁵

It was a speech not many in the audience can have made much sense of.

A journalist for the *Daily Express* noticed Jones's hands trembling as he read. Another, for the *Oxford Mail* reported that he 'looked rather at sea.' After he sat down and the applause ended, R.H. Mottram rose and, with only passing reference to *In Parenthesis*, spoke frivolously and at length about his own literary career. Sir John Squire then surpassed his predecessor in inanity and concluded by congratulating 'a

David Jones with a shot’—an allusion, apparently, to whisky—‘in his locker.’ Jones later wrote to Ede, ‘I can’t tell you how bad the speeches were, just jocular stuff you know—horrible.’ After the ceremony he was steered by Marsh to a great tea-party, where people were introduced to him and he received congratulations.⁵⁶ In the crowd, he told a reporter for the *Yorkshire Evening Press*, ‘I now hope to get back to painting, for I feel that I am a painter rather than a writer, but perhaps my painting helped me in writing. I feel that all the arts are so interrelated that in spite of the difference in medium you are dealing with the same problems of form and content.’

Disappointed with most of the press coverage, he had new appreciation for the badness of political reporting: ‘no wonder political news is so appallingly inaccurate & mischievous,’ he wrote Ede,

‘not a single thing I’ve said over the telephone etc to press reporters has even vaguely got reported rightly. They all seem just dolts—not only without intelligence, which one forgives, but without competence or ordinary education—which is bad in a reporter I do think—seeing they have to deal with all sorts & conditions of men. They ask the stupidest questions & then invent the dullest answers I find. I know one would be utterly unable to do it oneself—but after all it is their trade.’⁵⁷

Concerned about the increasing shabbiness of Jones’s wardrobe, Tom Burns insisted that Jones spend some of the prize money on a new suit. He thought this unnecessary but did it. In response to his receiving the prize, Richard de la Mare ordered Hague to reprint another thousand copies of *In Parenthesis*. Jones was asked to write a miniature account of his life for *Who’s Who*, a task he found ‘difficult ... & boring.’ His father wrote to Brockley Road School to announce his son’s achievement, and the headmistress announced the news to the assembled children and hoped it would be ‘an inspiration to them.’ Congratulatory letters from friends and relatives and from acquaintances of his parents arrived. As a congratulatory gift, Philip Hagreen sent a Victorian picture of Brockley by W.B. Willis. Jones thought the movement of its trees ‘charming’ and intended to frame it. (Over contemporary, treeless Brockley he grieved, ‘alas! what departed beauty’).⁵⁸ Thomas Hodgkin and his bride sent flowers. Evelyn Waugh, who had won the prize in 1936 for *Edmund Champion*, wrote:

Dear David,

Laura and I were absolutely delighted to see that you had got the Hawthornden Prize. Yours is not only the sort of book that ought to get it—it is the book, and the news is all the more delightful as we had heard from sources on the committee that a difficult choice had been made. I hope the presentation was not too embarrassing & that you enjoyed Miss Warrender & Lady Hall. It

certainly adds rather to my pride in having got the prize to find myself in such good company.

Yours,

Evelyn Waugh

(Warrender funded and presented the prize; Hall lent her house for the tea party afterwards.)

Never again would Jones speak before a live public audience. He was invited that year to address the Oxford English Club and to give paid lectures to the Royal Society of Literature. He declined, as he also did the Tredegar Memorial Lecture that year, despite a tempting fee of £25. In declining, he wrote, 'I must explain that I have, for some time, been recovering from the effects of a nervous breakdown, which makes it difficult to promise anything in advance—because of the uncertainty of being able to perform it. But apart from that I fear I have not got that kind of ability necessary to giving a public lecture (for it is one thing to write a book or paint a picture & quite another thing to talk on literature or painting).' He told Grisewood, 'I couldn't talk from a platform to learned men for an hour—the whole idea makes me sick with misery & confusion. ... this neurasthenia of mine anyway makes such a thing quite impossible—but it is an awful bore to have to chuck away this nice £25.'⁵⁹ His refusal to appear before a live audience, even only for a live reading, would limit the public reception of his poetry.

The prize intensified his social life among old friends. Among his engagements was dinner with Nicolette and Basil Gray at their house in Northgate, Regent's Park, where they had lived since 1933 and where Jones occasionally saw Nicolette and her family on his way from the zoo. He admired her remarkable ability to care for her family while concentrating on detailed scholarship and retaining an openness and enthusiasm for new artistic developments. On the evening of 30 July, he was with Burns at Glebe Place when Gill visited, and they were joined by Herbert Read and his wife for tea. All this 'seeing people' in London made him feel ill and 'horribly tired, and he planned to escape to Pigotts in mid August.'⁶⁰ Till then, he was rereading Bunyan 'after many years' and finding it 'hellish good.'

Where the Hawthornden-Prize acceptance form had asked about political affiliations, he had indicated 'none.' Not in the least politically engaged, he was less interested in politics and political ideas than any of his close friends. To Ede, he 'was not a political being.' The only 'political' influence on him that Bernard Wall ever detected

was the guild socialism of Distributism, which Jones now thought impractical. Nevertheless, the threat of war compelled him to attend to arguments currently raging over international affairs. In the first book review he published, in the *Tablet* on 16 April 1938, of John F. Lucy's *There's a Devil in the Drum*, a memoir of the Great War, Jones praises the professional soldier as not inclined to

equate his cause with the Absolute Justice of God, nor charge his enemy with every deviltry, nor suppose himself to be in any way morally superior—three pitfalls into which ‘idealists’ are apt to stumble, to the satisfaction of politicians. We need not look beyond our own shores for evidence of this today.

That the fulfillment of the prophetic vision tarries long—that the lion yet declines to rest by the lamb, should not tempt us to blaspheme his lion nature, still less to pretend that our own cause is that of the Lamb Slain, or that the enemy alone plays the part of the Great Devourer.⁶¹

Like most ex-servicemen, he was pro-appeasement. He remained so though the Austrian *Anschluss* in the spring of 1938 and the taking of territory in Czechoslovakia later that year. Throughout the later 1930s he had been haunted by the possibility of war. For years he thought it the cause of the ‘empty feeling’ in his stomach when painting or writing. Increasing his fear was a belief in the superior military preparedness and tactical ability of the Germans especially in contrast to the French. About this he was in full agreement with *The Times* military correspondent. Jones thought a war would send him into an emotional tailspin, finishing him as an artist and, worse, bringing civilization to an end. Dread of war inclined him to see nothing in the behaviour of Hitler’s Germany worth fighting over. In 1938, this was also the inclination of most in Britain, including all his friends.⁶² They saw moral and economic disintegration as having forced the Germans to make a difficult choice between Fascism and unjust capitalist democracy as alternatives to Communism.

Jones accepted Hitler’s portrayal of National Socialism as a revolt by the dispossessed, the unemployed, and the humiliated against economic depression, social chaos, and unfair treatment imposed by the punitive Treaty of Versailles. The broad negativism of fascism encompassed many of his bugbears, including international finance, the machine-slavery of industrialism, and the brutality of Marxist dictatorship. He approved of Nazi opposition to ‘Capitalist exploitation’—something he also liked about Marxism. He wrote to Helen Sutherland,

I know a case can be made for the idea that we stand for civilized standards & humane way of life etc—but I feel it is a bit accidental & tricky, a bit like a powerful & rich & noble person who has generations of cultivated living behind him & has never known the need of trickery & violence, complaining the poor are

brutal & unscrupulous & untrustworthy—I mean I do think the human virtues that we take for granted are so much mixed up with belonging to a powerful & settled & sheltered order—with a century & more of almost undisputed supremacy.

He wrote to Ede, ‘I see this so-called Dictatorship v ‘Democracy’ business as largely an affair of the sword against money. It is more complicated than that, but that seems to me ... very much at the root of it.’ In this he was strongly influenced by Spengler who, he thought, had accurately predicted ‘the coming conflict between the money-interests and the rise of the new Caesars.’⁶³

He had no patience with moral arguments. He and others had entered the 1914 War as moral idealists only to learn later that they had been pawns in an imperialist contest. Now he saw the threatening war as between established imperialism and aspiring imperialism, so that imperial Britain hardly seemed morally or politically justified in criticizing German expansionism. In principle, he was against imperialism, which he, following St Augustine, considered ‘robbery’, but he was not morally outraged by it. He wrote to Bussell after war was declared:

Its rather like trying to decide who is most ghastly a cultivated, wealthy, humane, intelligent aristocrat with the ‘law’ on his side in argument with a crude, exasperated, physically powerful & highly dangerous gang of chaps with a basic & undeniable grievance. I feel also perhaps we ought to regard the situation as a-moral in a way: there are morals involved but it is no more use trying to assess them, than it would be for an historian to speak in moral terms of, say, ... the ‘just cause’ of the Long Barrow people, or pretence that God was on the side of the Goidelic Celts. As for the newspapers Lord! aren’t they awful.—I naturally find the hollow re-echoes of all the ‘14-‘18 propaganda altogether insufferable.⁶⁴

His opposition to Communism further inclined him to withhold judgement of Nazi Germany. Communist lying and ‘heroic self-deception’ had blinded the Bloomsbury intellectuals but not the Chelsea group. Jones and his friends saw Marxism as ideologically ridiculous in a way that the newer arrival, fascism, was not—if only because fascism had no ideology, being essentially a negative pragmatism centred on the effectiveness of a strong leader. In the apparent Hobson’s choice over which of the two would replace parliamentary democracy, fascism seemed to him the lesser of evils, but he was no fascist-sympathizer. He regarded both fascism and Marxism as a ‘rush of half-baked ideas of every sort that filter into every sort of mind & destroy ... traditional values without any real compensatory

understanding'. He had good friends who were either Communist or pro-Communist, including the Hodgkin brothers, Michael Richey, Eric Gill, and René Hague.* Jones listened to them discuss Marxism, Distributism, social credit, and the fascism of Salazar, the principal issue being whether and to what degree these were bourgeois or anti-bourgeois. Without arguing, he considered such evaluation silly.⁶⁵

Burns remembered, 'we couldn't bear the Communists because they took property away from peasants—it was monstrously unjust—but primarily because they were atheists.' He, Grisewood, and Jones were influenced by the harsh persecution of the Church in Mexico following Cardenas's socialist take-over. Jones also detested Marxism because it gave priority to the state above all else and was egalitarian. He hated its uniformity and would later be shocked at China abandoning its ancient traditions for Marxism. Collectivism guaranteed mediocrity, he thought, and denied primary reality, which is personal, not social—as the arts testify. Christianity was the faith of the individual possessed of reason, free will, the ability to love, and an eternal destiny. Marxism was based on fundamental misunderstanding of the psychology of ego-motivation. He wrote to Grisewood, 'you already know what I think about the Left-League & Co, the "idealisms" that have terrified one with their unreality for years.' In his copy of *The Decline of the West*, he marked with approval Spengler's contention that 'boredom ... will shortly kill Marx' as men give up "belief in theory" and 'the sentimental optimism of an eighteenth century that imagined that unsatisfactory actualities could be improved by the application of concepts.' In 1938, most in the Chelsea group leaned to the right because opposing Communism, the Popular Front, and Bloomsbury.⁶⁶ Vehement anti-fascism on the Left inclined most of them to give the fascist nations the benefit of the doubt.

* Hague had joined the Communist Party but was temperamentally ill-suited to membership. Required by his inductor, Comrade Duke, to read Thomas Paine, he broke off, saying, 'Christ I can't stand to read this bloody stuff.' He and Michael Richey joined the Left Book Club and went to meetings in High Wycombe at a time when the fascists were dropping thermite (poison gas) bombs in Spain. At one of these meetings Richey showed up with some corn on the cob and, to the horror of the devout, was greeted loudly by Comrade René, 'O bring the thermites, hand me over a thermite.' At another meeting, at which Victor Gollancz was illustrating the poverty of peasants in birch-bark sandals, Hague infuriated him and the others by asking where he could get a pair of such admirable sandals. After about six months, Hague quit the Party.

In addition to objections in principle, Jones had read in the press about Soviet persecution of Christianity.* He also had information not generally known. It came from a Chelsea pub-acquaintance and ardent pursuer of Diana Creagh named Vladimir Korostovetz. A Russianized Ukrainian in his late-fourties, he had been the St. Petersburg secretary to the foreign minister under the Tzar. During the revolution, he fought the Bolsheviks, who arrested and shot his mother and brother and raped and murdered his favourite cousin. A passionate advocate of Ukrainian independence, he was now an agent of, and frequent visitor to, the Ukrainian Hetman, Paul Skoropadsky, in exile in Berlin. Acquainted with Hitler and his circle, Skoropadsky was convinced that the Nazis would save Europe from Communism and liberate the Ukraine. Korostovetz told Jones about the recent forced mass-starvation of millions of Ukrainians and showed him smuggled photographs as proof. Diana Creagh later remembered, 'he was often present when I met David, and he always talked about world affairs, and I think David agreed with him.' Jones may not have been in complete agreement. After having dinner with him and Diana in 1942, he would write, 'I like talking to old Vladimir, he's awfully amusing in a way, & interesting, & can be maddening too!'⁶⁷

If Jones opposed any current political figure, it was Stalin, who was persecuting the Church and murdering millions in Ukraine, but in conversation he treated politicians no differently than other people, refusing morally to judge or speak ill of them. Stalin primarily fascinated him as a historical figure whose nerve he admired. 'My God, he's hard on them,' Jones said. 'That man has got a genius for repression.'⁶⁸

Hitler fascinated him more than any other public figure. Since reoccupying the Rhineland in 1936, Hitler was the most dynamic actor on the world-stage. With the help of Hjalmar Schacht as economics minister and partly by means of military rearmament, he had restored Germany to full employment by 1936 and had avoided the recession that crippled Britain in 1938. Jones agreed with Pound in *ABC of Economics* (1933), that the best political system, whether a republic, dictatorship, or

* Throughout the 1930s, parades were organized for the purpose of mocking Christianity. Churches were raided and closed, icons burned, priests and bishops imprisoned, some sent to gulags. Signed formal apostasy was compulsory upon penalty of forfeit of food, clothing, and shelter. Children were pressured to renounce parents who were secret believers.

monarchy, is one that best promotes a balanced economy. Jones considered Hitler a great historical figure. He agreed with Belloc's daughter, who had said to him, 'it is the weak who bring disaster to the world, not the strong.' (He once said, 'If the world was run by chaps like me, nothing would ever get done.') Lacking decisiveness and physical vitality, he admired these traits in strong leaders living and dead—including Charlemagne, Cromwell ('that appalling man'), and Napoleon.⁶⁹

Hitler was a fellow former front-line fighter. In the trenches Jones and others had longed for the day when the British and Germans would be friends and had hoped 'that friendship might be the greater & more intimate because of our mutual hardship.' He knew that Hitler had fought bravely. Like him, Hitler had been wounded in Mametz Wood and, after being wounded, had awakened in astonishment at hearing a female speaking his native language. He liked Hitler for having had artistic aspirations and for saying, 'I'm an artist rather than a politician', which Jones thought probably true. By way of recommending disarmament, Hitler regularly mentioned in his speeches the horrors of war, and Jones felt that as an ex-serviceman Hitler could be trusted to avoid war. One visitor to Pigotts in 1938 remembers Jones on the lawn reading aloud one of Hitler's 'no-more-war' speeches 'with evident approval.' Hague recalls him concluding his reading with the comment 'Great stuff!'⁷⁰

Jones considered Hitler 'less "left wing" than some of his party & far more "national" & romantically "patriotic" & less instinctively interested in the "socialist" side of national socialism.' Hitler was, in fact, a pragmatist, and this Jones mistook for honesty. Responding positively to Hitler's candor, he agreed with his analysis of European politics leading to the 1914 War; his view of the disastrous effects on Germany of the Treaty of Versailles; his belief in continuity between contemporary commercial British imperialism and earlier military imperialism. And he approved of Hitler's stated disdain for economic conquest as a political goal; of his elevation of national political idealism over economics; and of his stated preference for medieval cities dominated by cathedrals over modern cities dominated by temples of commerce. He agreed with Hitler's insistence on the practical importance of a strong army and was relieved by his disavowal of a 'new Alexandrian conquest' (though that is precisely what Hitler intended). He liked Hitler's promises to promote small business, to help the peasants and farmers, to restrict the growth of big cities, to take industry from the capitalists, the land from the Junkers, the army from the aristocrats,

and social administration from the bureaucrats—all promises that Hitler would never even attempt to keep. Hague, Grisewood, and, most enthusiastically, Bernard Wall shared these illusions about Hitler.⁷¹

Jones had read a truncated right-wing book-club copy of *Mein Kampf*, which Diana Creagh, had lent, unread, to Burns. * Jones thought it ‘made up of roughly equal parts of common sense and absolute rubbish’ or, as he also said, insight and blindness. As he read it, he was often reminded of discussions at Capel-y-ffin and in the Chelsea group ‘concerning the recovery of social justice: how to break the ‘chain store,’ how to live uncorrupted by the ‘banking system,’ how to free men from the many and great evils of ‘capitalist exploitation,’ how to effect some real and just relationship between the price of things and the labour expended. ... the whole system was said to be corrupt, unChristian, intolerable,’ and he had agreed ‘with most of this.’ He agreed with the judgement of the nations west of the Rhine as ‘decadent’. Now reading *Mein Kampf*, he agreed ‘that there is something radically wrong’ and endorsed much of Hitler’s naming of evils but not the brutal means proposed to correct them. In 1939 an important book for Jones was Dawson’s *Beyond Politics*, in which he marked with emphatic approval the following passage:

there remains an integral contradiction between the idea of the nation as a spiritual community and that of a totalitarian dictatorship ... which vitiates the religious idealism of the Nazi cult. It is impossible to revive the old northern ethics of heroism and honour by the secret police and the official press. The heroic idealism of Hölderlin and Beethoven, of Wagner and Nietzsche, withers in an atmosphere of propaganda and repression.⁷²

Jones found irrational and repugnant the Nazis interpretation of life as a kind of communal narcissism. Even if it met economic, social, and psychological needs, Nazism had nothing metaphysical to offer. And much of Hitler’s thinking was, he thought, ridiculous: a narrow, and therefore false, sense of history; racist biological notions that were absurd; and anthropology that was idiotic. Jones knew too much to believe Aryans culturally superior to the Chinese, for example, or to the Incas. He regarded as ludicrous Hitler’s claim that Aryan superiority was proved by the race’s ‘gigantic scientific-technical achievements.’ He disliked Hitler’s crudeness, his hatred

* In 1933 the abridged translation was published heavily censored by the German Embassy in London (297 pages; the German version was 781 pages). In January 1939, a translation of the full text was published.

of Jews, and his relentless moralizing. In April 1939, he would record his impressions of *Mein Kampf* in a letter to Grisewood:

I'm reading the full edition ... and it is so different from the miserable cut-about edition I read previously. I am deeply impressed by it, it is amazingly interesting in all kinds of ways—but pretty terrifying too. God, he's nearly right—but this hate thing mars his whole thing, I feel. I mean it just misses getting over the frontier into the saint thing—he won't stand any nonsense or illusions or talk—but, having got so far, the whole conception of the world in terms of race-struggle (that's what it boils down to) will hardly do. But I do like a lot of what he says—only I must admit he sees the world as just going on for ever in this steel grip. Compared with his opponents he is grand, but compared with the saints he is bloody. And I think I mean also by saints—lovers, and all kinds of unifying makers. Anyway, I back him still against all this currish, leftish, money thing, even though I'm a miserable specimen and depend upon it.⁷³

Jones's sympathy for Nazi Germany reflected unhappiness with parliamentary democracy. For him political freedom was not an absolute value but merely the by-product of a late phase of civilization. The shibboleth of political jingoism, freedom only really had meaning through purpose and discipline. In practice, he thought, democracy debased political freedom. He agreed with Hitler's critique of parliamentary democracy as a mediocre form of government in which the masses elect mediocrities who select mediocre leaders who negotiate compromises. Jones criticized democracy analogically by contending that the best works of art can only be achieved when artists had a firm sense of hierarchy of value and achievement. There have to be 'elites', he said. 'This seems to me to be just as true of cobblers or chair-makers or window-cleaners as it is of the Brigade of Guards or biologists or aero-mechanics or primitive tribal chief or the spiritual life.' He agreed with Spengler that 'popular self-determination' is a fiction, that the party leaders manipulate the will of voters through money and mass media.' Long before reading Hitler, who enjoyed verbally attacking it, Jones had thought that democracy was 'plutocracy' (a word used by Dawson, who was strongly anti-fascist), the wealthy alone being able to afford to run for office or influence those who do.⁷⁴ In his unhappiness with democracy, he anticipated Charles DeGaulle, Alcide de Gasperi, and Conrad Adenauer, the three Catholic statesmen most effective in saving Europe from Communism in the middle decades of the twentieth century.

What Jones preferred to democracy is unclear. According to Grisewood, he would have liked the rule of a tribe by a chief or a city-state by a king and, for the whole of Britain, preferred a pre-Tudor, medieval-style monarchy. Such a monarchy

would involve, according to Michael Richey, an almost sacramental or metaphysical union between ruler and nation. The monarch's personal interests would be identical to those of the whole community and not, as with a modern party leader, to only sections of it. The monarch would also be personally responsible for government as no negotiating, compromising parliamentarian can be. Jones was willing to risk a few bad monarchs to have a good one. Yet he did not prefer tyranny to the ballot box—it was precisely as tyrants that he hated the Tudors. Richey was certain that he would not have put up with an absolute monarch.⁷⁵ Grisewood leaned to the right; Richey to the left. Grisewood knew him best and may give the more accurate view of his politics, but Jones tended to accommodate his listener and may have given the impression that he agreed more with him than he actually did.

He would have been in some degree sympathetic with any neo-romantic popular movement, especially one claiming to want peace. His differences with fascism are, however, enormous. For him, the solution to the spiritual bankruptcy of modern civilization was not political but cultural and religious. Only a widespread appreciation of symbolic activity which communicates spiritual values can, he thought, fill the vacuum at the heart of technological civilization. He was convinced that social regeneration depends on spiritual renewal and that the need for this renewal was the basic sociological issue of our time. In words by Dawson that he strongly endorsed, 'unless we find a way to restore the contact between the life of society and the life of the spirit our civilization will be destroyed by the forces which it has had the knowledge to create but not the wisdom to control.' Jones knew that the Nazis were almost as hostile as Communists to religion and to Catholicism in particular. He could never have been an active fascist sympathizer as were neo-pagan Ezra Pound and neo-romantic W.B. Yeats. The poetry that Jones would write during and after the war is implicitly anti-fascist, and in none of his work is there anything of the fascist imaginative tendencies some detect in D.H. Lawrence or Wyndham Lewis. Jones's sympathy with Germany was not affinity with fascism. As implied everywhere in his poetry and painting, his deepest affinities were with 'saints—lovers, and all kinds of unifying makers.' In his later poetry he clearly and consistently sees all totalitarian and dictatorial regimes as hostile to human life and authentic culture. This is morally and intellectually consistent with his early opposition to the political oppression and economic hardship that gave rise to fascism. Decades later, Burns put it succinctly, 'Any notion of David as a fascist is all balls.'⁷⁶

In June 1938, Jones wrote a review of Herbert Read's *Poetry and Anarchism* that was published in the *Tablet* on 16 July. The review is a clear indication of his own profound skepticism about all things political. He disagrees with Read's belief that perfect freedom can be found in politics. The only realm of total freedom is art, Jones insists, where man 'is concerned with an order outside "morals" and nothing but an infirmity in his own creativeness hinders the perfection of the work, for it dictates its own laws and creates its own end.' He continues,

You and I wake up from making marks on paper to our hearts' desire, to be deluded by the horrors and absurdities of the Left and Right—and much more besides. ... If Mr. Read feels that certain Left tendencies allow a greater chance of some reasonable social and economic arrangement, one can, indeed, respect his opinion, but I reject altogether his equating this adjustment or development with that activity of the spirit which marks the poetry of man in all times and in all places—alike under tyrannies as under more tolerable systems.

Even if it were conceivably true, that, to use his words, 'we have come of age,' and that 'anarchy' will be our happy lot when 'the State has withered away'—even so, we should not necessarily be nearer that condition of freedom from ourselves—that's where the snag is. Now there is something analogous to the saints' freedom-from-himself which already does—and always did—operate in the realm of poetry. The Heavenly Jerusalem is already with us in an art-work.... One knows that in the last analysis Poetry is 'free' and Man is 'bound.' It is bound men who have been, and will be, poets.

.... I wholly agree with Mr. Read that Art is free, but I cannot agree that social justice or political liberty have any direct bearing on this freedom. On the other hand it is clear that we must seek 'social justice' if we are happy enough to think we know what the words mean (I cannot count that happiness mine) but let us not confuse the two realms.

The Kingdom of Heaven is Anarchy, and Anarchy is the Kingdom of Heaven? I think there is a sense in which any theologian would agree to that. The saint does what he chooses, because his choice is to do what God has chosen—that's trite and familiar enough—and might almost be said to be the sum of religion. It is precisely this that makes us keep our vanishing points outside Time.

He was politically apathetic because he cared almost solely about the perfect freedom of art and believed in a reality truer than society or politics. Three years earlier, he had advised Thomas Hodgkin, 'Don't get too overcome by this curious type of world of appearances & complicated shadows. There is a magnificent reality behind the bloody mess—I do think that even in my worst moments & know you do—but its a *bugger* of a difficulty to sustain I must say'⁷⁷ His vanishing points remained outside time

To investigate German politics and culture, Burns organized a small group consisting of himself, Jones, Grisewood, and two recent German émigrés, both anti-Nazi: a stern

schoolmaster named Egbert Munser and a jolly and amusing young Jesuit named Joseph Roggendorf. Burns would remember, 'David adored Roggy, a very, very intelligent and spiritual man.' He had arrived in England in 1937 at the age of thirty, pursued by the Gestapo for having warned a German Jew traveling from Japan to Germany of persecution awaiting him there. Roggendorf had been a leader in the German 'Youth Movement' and a close friend of Heinrich Brüning, the powerful Catholic centrist German politician and last chancellor before Hitler. Roggendorf was now studying English and Japanese Literature at University College, London, writing his thesis on the ninth century *Ise Monogatari*. From him Jones learned that the boundary between Protestant and Catholic Germany follows the frontier of the Roman Empire. Roggendorf and Munser explained the Nazi rise as a consequence of the injustice of the Versailles Treaty of 1919, which, along with inflation, demoralized the German middle class, allowing proletarian psychology to divide society into radical totalitarianisms of Left and Right. Because they utterly despised Hitler, Burns was skeptical of everything they said, Grisewood and Jones less so. Jones was fully involved in these discussions, absenting himself only from German-language lessons, which were conducted for Burns and Grisewood.⁷⁸

The five of them shared an impression of European disintegration under pressure between a decadent France and a vigorous, militarist Germany. The Nazis were acting, while English parliamentarians seemed paralyzed. Without pretence the Nazis announced their desire for territory. With its impressive strength, Germany was forcing a climax, and Munser, especially, regarded war as inevitable. Jones and his friends were chiefly interested in what the Nazis were doing to rehabilitate Germany and why this rehabilitation should threaten war. They were increasingly aware of something terrifying in the German character. When they heard that at Bayreuth Hitler would swoon during Wagner's operas, they thought, 'there's something not quite right about this chap.' But they were much less critical of the Nazis than were their two new, German friends.⁷⁹

From them they learned that the Nazis were beating up and murdering political opponents, but Jones, Burns, and Grisewood did not consider this unusual behaviour. The Soviets had done far worse to vastly more people, and even the British in India had committed atrocities. The persecution of the Jews under the three-year old Nuremberg laws seemed no different than anti-Semitism during much of European history. Furthermore, Jones regarded cruelty as endemic to imperialism. The

Assyrians, the Romans, every conquering people had been cruel. He regarded Nazi cruelty simply as the ordinary beastliness of which humans are capable. About their study group, Burns later recalled, 'We got slightly in trouble with the Intelligence service, which ... thought we were plotting pro-Germany.' With the discovery of the politics of Roggendorf and Munser, suspicion of the group lifted.⁸⁰ The discussion group disbanded in June 1940, when Roggendorf went to Tokyo to join the faculty of the English Department at Sophia University.

In September, war seeming imminent, Jones went to Rock, which was in an area of Northumberland that had been designated by civil defense as Area A. On 23 September, after attending sheep-dog trials that he found interesting, he heard the local school master speaking about gasmasks for his pupils and was appalled that this war would involve civilians. To him, suddenly, *In Parenthesis* seemed 'already about the Zulu war' in a prior technological era. But he knew full well what war meant and repeatedly recalled the words of Moncrieff's translation of *The Song of Roland*: 'Sirs, you are set for sorrow.' On 24 September, when England seemed about to go to war in defence of Czechoslovakia, he was able only to read Pepys' diary, 'just as dope,' and bits of Evelyn Waugh. The two were 'interesting to read together'—the contrast made the London of two centuries ago seem all the more attractive. He had recently read and very much enjoyed Gilbert White's *Journal* and had discovered in Sutherland's library the Renaissance sermons of Lancelot Andrews, 'the tightest English I ever read,' he thought, 'so so good.' He wished he had known them long ago—'one of the few good writers.'⁸¹ But mainly the international crisis preoccupied him.

He writes to Grisewood, 'It is awful ... to feel like an old woman in a panic when one needs to feel like a type of superman. I've known for very long that courage would soon be the only virtue worth possessing I must say I do loath this feeling of funk.' 'The ignominy of being a nervous wreck is past expression.' He found no consolation in Sutherland's company. He wished to be alone or with his London friends, Grisewood, Burns, the Plunket Greenes, and 'all the chaps' he knew there. 'It would be so much easier,' he wrote Gridewood, if we were all in a castle together & could hold the walls with arrows & co.'⁸²

He remained at Rock throughout the Munich Crisis. One of Sutherland's visitors was Lord Ropner, who was involved in the negotiations and was having a

brief holiday from Hitler. Jones met him on a Sunday morning in the library and, by way of initiating conversation, asked, 'How are things going at Munich?' Ropner looked at him and asked, 'Do you like Mendelssohn?' Jones later said that he had never been sat on quite the same. The non-conversation, he thought, ought to have been recorded by a Boswell.⁸³

On 30 September the Munich Agreement was signed, approving the Czech evacuation of the Sudetenland to be followed in October by German occupation. At Chamberlain's urging, Hitler also signed an Anglo-German declaration of desire 'never to go to war with one another again.' Chamberlain arrived in London to a tumultuous welcome and announced to cheering crowds that there would be, quoting Disraeli, 'peace with honour'—a phrase Jones disliked as rhetorical and false though he thought the stylistic lapse 'but a flea bite considering the immense achievement.' Chamberlain had managed the impossible by, it seemed, single-handedly saving Europe. In Parliament, only the Labour Party and a small group of Conservatives led by Churchill opposed the agreement. Most of the population approved, none with more relief than Jones. Drinking 'great quantities of Guinesses' in the pub in Rennington, he wrote Grisewood, 'I like so tremendously everything Chamberlain says & the way he says it & that curious shaggy face!—I feel he may have gone to Munich in carpet slippers ...—it is the English way I like the way Chamberlain treated Adolf as a truculent adolescent who needed to be understood.'⁸⁴ On 10 October Germany occupied the Sudetenland.

Jones liked Neville Chamberlain better than any prime minister since Lloyd George. For one thing, he had not been, like Baldwin, involved in forcing the abdication of Edward VIII. Since taking office in 1937, Chamberlain's foreign policy was dedicated to preserving peace by satisfying the reasonable demands of Hitler and separating Mussolini from him by rebuilding Anglo-Italian friendship. In contrast to his predecessors, Chamberlain was energetic, and Jones liked leaders who led. He thought Chamberlain heroic.⁸⁵

On 18 December he sent Chamberlain through Jelly D'Aranyi, who knew him, a copy of *In Parenthesis* accompanied by a three-page letter in which he says he is sending it

as a token of my respect, as an expression of gratitude for all you have done & are continuing to do to mend things in Europe & to save us from the worst. What you have already managed to effect by your forbearance, imagination, & very great courage, gives reason to hope still for the future—in

spite of the misunderstanding, prejudice & stupidity in this country & the unhelpful & difficult behaviour elsewhere ... I pray that ... you will see some realization of your Christian and courteous effort. I hope this for all our sakes—as also for the saving of our common European unity, whose custodian you are, in this country.

Chamberlain replied on 9 January that he hoped to find time eventually to read the book and conveys his ‘warm thanks for your understanding and sympathetic letter and to assure you that it has given me pleasure.’

As hostility to Chamberlain’s policy grew on all sides, Jones thought his perseverance remarkable and remained unswerving in his admiration, even though some of his friends, including Helen Sutherland, now criticized Chamberlain. Jones wrote that ‘not many statesman have ever practiced the particularly & specifically “Christian virtues” in their dealings qua statesmen—but I think he does, out of a kind of real “innocence” of the proper sort ... that takes no account of the other party’s faults & ill-will but just pegs away at the job being careful that anyway no reproach, or ill-humour, or insufficient understanding on his part shall be the cause of hostility or breakdown.’⁸⁶ A year later, he still thought Chamberlain ‘a magnificent character & completely dignified & properly humble ... not like any other politician quite—never used any of this claptrap—& seemed quite impersonal. Also I liked his kind of hardness.’⁸⁷

He left Northumberland for London on 5 October 1938, visited his father, consulted Dr. Woods about his emotional condition, visited Grisewood at 61 Kings Road, and planned to return to Sidmouth when Martin D’Arcy, the Master of Campion Hall since 1932, invited him to Oxford for an extended stay.⁸⁸

Campion Hall had moved in 1935 from Giles Street to a new building on Brewer Street. In the hall, D’Arcy had hung Jones’s *Ancient Mariner* engravings as part of a personal campaign against Catholic philistinism. Jones arrived in early October looking to young Jesuits scholastics like a stage artist. Sitting at high table, he wore what one of them remembered over half a century later as dark green corduroy trousers, a canary yellow pullover, a blue jacket, and a red velvet tie. When a priest asked, ‘Mr. Jones, would you describe yourself as a black-coated [meaning ‘professional class’] worker?’ scholastics at a nearby table struggled to suppress laughter. While at Oxford, Jones visited Robin Hodgkin, newly appointed provost at Queens College. He also visited the Dominicans at Blackfriars, and got to know better

Thomas White and Gerald Vann, both ardent neo-Thomist friends of Bernard Wall. Jones probably took some meals with the Dominicans at Blackfriars, enjoying as at Campion Hall collegial fellowship at table. At Campion, he conversed freely at meals with those in residence, including an American philosophy student named Ralph Hooker, and the non-resident poet Roger Venables, who usually lunched there. On one occasion, D'Arcy invited to dinner a professor of Celtic language and literature, to whom, as they ate, Jones put a question about an early Welsh poem by Llŵarch Hen. The professor replied, 'Ah yes, of course. Llywarch Hen, very interesting—what do you think of this claret?' After supper, Jones tried again but was similarly repulsed, which he attributed to English insistence on being unprofessional when off duty. He had many long talks with Fr. Eric Burrows S.J., 'an admirable biblical scholar & most charming & retiring man' with 'a rare mind.'⁸⁹ (After Burrows was killed in an automobile accident, Jones would buy his posthumously published *Oracles of Jacob and Balaam* [1938] in a second-hand bookshop in 1942.)

He had better luck discussing matters Celtic with Charles Williams, to whom D'Arcy may have introduced him. Eleven years older than Jones, Williams was a devout Anglican, minor poet, biographer, and writer of theological romances and literary criticism. He earned a living on the editorial staff of Oxford University Press. Jones would later say that he knew Williams 'very well.'⁹⁰ He read in proof William's best book of theology, *The Descent of the Dove* (1939). They shared enthusiasm for Hopkins and Eliot, but their friendship was chiefly founded on mutual interest in medieval Wales and what Jones would later call (as Gogerty had) 'the myth of Arthur.'



8. Julian Asquith,
1943

D'Arcy introduced Jones to Katharine Asquith, the fifty-three-year-old daughter-in-law of the former Prime Minister. Her husband, Raymond Asquith, had been killed in the war. In 1937, she had written as a stranger to Jones saying how much she admired *In Parenthesis*. She was gentle, quiet, astute, devout (a Catholic convert), and sympathetic. Jones liked her very much. Friends in common included the Pollens, Vicky Ingrams, Douglas Woodruff, and Tom Burns.⁹¹

She introduced him to her son Julian (nicknamed Trim), tall, gentle, benign, sensitive, and likewise devout. He had gone to school at Ampleforth, where he had heard of Jones from Walter Shewring, his

Classics master. From there he had gone on scholarship to Balliol, where he had read Greats (Ancient History and Philosophy). He was now studying agriculture and living in a house in St Aldgate's beside the Newman chaplaincy with David Harlick, Peter Wood, Charles Hope (Marquis of Lansdowne), and Hugh Fraser (the son of Lord Lovat). Asquith remembered that Jones was wonderful with his young friends. Though they were sporting people, they found his talk riveting. Jones called Lansdowne 'Charlie Wag' and brash, handsome Fraser, who was six-foot-two, 'Huge Frazer.' He visited in the evening, settling down with a glass of whisky, and discussed politics or reminisced about the war. Through Julian Asquith, he met Simon Asquith (a cousin), Clarissa Churchill (niece of Winston), and Fr Ronald Knox, the Newman chaplain at Oxford since 1926. Jones later said that he liked Knox 'very much—he was obviously a deeply spiritual man and an absolutely first-class scholar in Greek & Latin.' Knox had been ordered to translate the Bible based on the Vulgate, for which he felt unqualified since, he admitted to Jones, he knew little Hebrew.⁹² Jones later commented, 'Poor Ronnie K. ... *what* a job! the entire bible—it makes one shudder to think of the task & while I can't stand much of it I think his trans. of the Acts a wonderful achievement. It's like reading a new book.' He also liked Knox's Books of the Kings, 'very fresh & convincing & almost like reading some new stories. The 'noise'—the diction, the incantational quality of the A.V. & other versions having gone, one can attend to the story as it were.'⁹³ These were so good, he thought, because 'straight narrative, not, on the whole, involving evocative, incantative ... But ... when it came to things like "David's laments for Saul & Jonathan" or the "Song of Debora" it's no good at all.'⁹⁴

Prudence Pelham visited, and they went together to All Souls to see Isaiah Berlin and Stuart Hampshire. The main topic of conversation was the Munich crisis. Hampshire later remembered, Jones's position being 'anything rather than war, which would be the end of everything' and that he wished Edward VIII would fly to Germany and secure peace. 'That was tied up in his mind with Wales,' remembered Hampshire, and 'a lot of crankish stuff about Wales which I couldn't bear to listen to.'⁹⁵

Jones remained in Oxford through the autumn. Coming down with flu, he went to bed on 12 October and stayed there for ten days. He watched the leaves outside his window change from summer-green to yellow and then fall. On 7

November he visited the Bodleian to see the manuscript Red Book of Hergest, which he could not read, though he admired its thick, yellow, crinkly vellum.⁹⁶

In mid-November, he returned to London, where he had many long conversations with Grisewood but from which, after suffering increased emotional distress, he fled in December to Sidmouth, where, sheltered in the Fort from the relentless rain, wind, and mist, he resumed writing. It went, as usual, slowly. He tells Grisewood:

Writing is odder than painting in some ways—one seems to stodge on & scratch out for hours & days & then sometimes, quite out of the blew [sic], something breaks through that gives the thing a tolerable shape—but it seems jolly accidental. I should like to say how truly helped & pleased I was that you liked some of this new writing—because, as I said about ‘I.P.’ I am more helped by your understanding than by anyone else’s. For one thing I believe we have an almost identical attitude to this ‘word’ business. ... I’ve got a miserable feeling that my new thing is not so ‘tight’ & ‘made’ as I.P. It tends to be descriptive in a way that bores me—also rhetorical—my chief fear & danger. ... This bloody difficulty of writing about ‘ideas’ & somehow making them concrete is a bugger to surmount—but I believe it can be done.⁹⁷

He returned to London for Christmas and the New Year to see his father and his friends. On days when he was unable to leave the Glebe-Place flat because of flu, he telephoned his father. He visited Grisewood and was, with him, visited by Charles Seipman, now teaching at Columbia University in New York. Because they had both fought in the war, in which both had been emotionally damaged, Jones felt a special sympathy with Seipman, who loved the poetry of Hopkins, expressed a longing to enter the Church, but was unable to believe. Siepmann said about life-choices that having started down a road you must continue. ‘God dam,’ Jones confided to Grisewood, ‘I do repudiate that sentiment.’ Grisewood read, and Jones read aloud to him, recently written “‘Zone” part’ (*RQ* 207-211, later called ‘The Book of Balaam’s Ass’) and the “‘Absalom Mass” part’ (*RQ* 113-22) of his current writing.⁹⁸

In January 1939 he was back in Sidmouth, writing to his father each weekend. Grisewood sent him a new copy of *Anna Livia*. Jones had his old one, tattered and falling apart, rebound ‘for a household copy’ to stay at Glebe Place. The new one was now his ‘moving-about copy.’ He wished there were a gramophone in the Fort so that he could play Joyce reading from the work. Having memorized the pages Joyce reads, he enjoyed reciting it to himself while walking by the sea. ‘How good it is,’ he writes, ‘Authentic, that’s what it is.’ It gave him the ‘happy feeling of certainty ... like

looking at some natural beauty in some way. A bloody sight different to the general bulk of 'The English Poets.'⁹⁹

Increasingly he listened to the radio in the Fort lounge. He heard and enjoyed Grisewood's live commentary on the election and coronation of Pope Pius XII but found the experience odd because he kept wanting to interrupt this familiar voice to interject and respond as in conversation. During the broadcast of Chamberlain's speech at the World Press Service Dinner, he was appalled that appeals for reconciliation elicited silence while anti-fascist remarks were received with 'howls of delight and war-cries.'¹⁰⁰

On 2 March 1939 he read a letter in *The Times* by the painter Philip Connard, who had been severely wounded during the 1914-18 War. Connard complained that German paintings had been excluded from the exhibitions of old masters scheduled for Burlington House in the following winter and suggested that a German exhibition now might encourage more friendly international relations. Jones wrote to support this suggestion, and, to his angry astonishment, his letter was sent back by return post.¹⁰¹

On 14 March, German troops invaded the disintegrating remains of Czechoslovakia, and even Chamberlain lost hope in peace through appeasement. With Hitler now demanding Danzig, he announced in the Commons that Britain would guarantee Poland's independence. France also committed itself. The reprieve from war had been brief. 'Its all gone as wrong as can be,' Jones lamented, '& all the old boring, dreary, hypocrisies & half-lies half-truths are in full possession.' The *Illustrated London News* published a cartoon showing the 'comparative man-power of the Democracies', including the Soviet Union as a huge Cossack. Jones objected, 'I suppose Turkey will be called a Democracy in a minute! What can one do in such a world of utter bollocks.'¹⁰²

Throughout the spring, he had worked on the writing that he was only now considering calling 'The Book of Balaam' or 'Balaam's Ass.' He thought it 'rather a muddled unconstructed rambling-all-over-the-place—the-places-of-my-mind sort of thing that seems better than doing nothing.' He thought it 'may have to be (if it ever appears) a kind of thing in sections with only the continuity of my own rambling mind to give it a kind of unity. ... I think it is really about how if you start saying in a kind of way how *bloody* everything is you end up in a kind of *praise*—inevitably.' He would suspend writing this work because, as he said, 'it would not come together' but he would not scrap it. In 1944, he wrote that 'it will be very long in getting done &

may be extremely bad when “done”. At the moment I see no signs of finality—it is a bugger to do—far worse than “I.P.”.’¹⁰³ Decades later he would retrieve and rework a section of it for inclusion in his last book (*SL* 97-111). It is the most grimly humorous and punningly Joycean of his poems.

Owing to the worsening international situation, he found it impossible to paint. He needed, he thought, international peace and mental tranquillity for total concentration because, as he put it, painting ‘is so “totalitarian” & you *do* have to be strong to do it, once you know the snags.’ The German annexation of Moravia and Bohemia in March made him ill and unable even to work at his writing. Drinking whisky and water, he wrote to Asquith:

I agree it’s difficult to justify or not be pretty terrified with the new German action, taken by itself, it was an inexcusable action and must have broken Chamberlain’s heart I still find it difficult to find in it an affair of black and white—right and wrong. ... To me it is a state of affairs brought about by a fairly easily traceable historical sequence of events and probably as much right and wrong in it as has, say, the Greek-Persian war. If the Germans have developed a most ghastly and revolting method (and I certainly think they have and I hate it and I fear it, more than perhaps anyone), the forces that produced that method and state of mind are not less vile and sinister. And the misery in my heart is that if this thing is loosed, our alignment is with forces no less evil than Jerry and far more evil than the Italians. ... God almighty did you see the photograph in the Times of Hudson with his arm round Maisky’s Muscovite neck, I share the hope that you express that perhaps we might be able to disentangle Italy—but I don’t see much hope if we align with Russia. ... I wonder if a lot of my attempt to find argument for old Jerry is because I am in this pathetic neurotic state so terrified of anything and everything. Wish I knew a way of curing this bloody neurasthenia.¹⁰⁴

Inability to write was owing also to a personal upheaval. In mid-March, Prudence telephoned to say that he was the first to know that she was marrying Guy Branch, a friend of her brother. Stunned, Jones felt an agony of loss. As soon as they heard, Burns and Hague rushed to Sidmouth to spend the weekend with him. Burns returned in mid-April for Easter and took him for drives in the country, where they saw ‘two snakes & three little white owls in remote places’—just what Prudence would have loved to see. They went to Pilsdon Hill, the highest hill in Dorset, and walked in the prehistoric earthwork on its summit. He poured out his grief to Burns, the friend to whom he could most freely speak about sex. The rest of the time they talked international politics. His reactions to politics were now, he realized, confused with his grief over Prudence marrying.¹⁰⁵

On 22 March he received from her a sensitive non-invitation to the wedding. (Aware of its momentous meaning for him, he recorded the date on the letter.) She writes:

My Dearest Dai

Your lovely flowers, heavenly mixed up quickly together. Thank you so much. I'm glad you got the little box. I always *wanted* you to have it, it's so much your thing, with it's [sic] edges worn thin & smooth. And wanted it myself! I'm glad it is yours.

I'm getting married on Saturday afternoon [the 25th] at Stanmer. I've been so depressed & terrified & scandalized—I want to get down to cooking steaks & onions & not hear about Hitler (my God he does let you down) and all these moralizers, British [sic] types Dai—I might say *what* morals.

Good night Dear Dearest Dai. I don't think you'll much want to come to my wedding ceremony—it's far to come & for what purpose. Anyway it's at Stanmer Church at 2.45 on Saturday. I *do* send you so much love and I've thought about you continually but didn't know whether to come to Sid or not—perhaps not—but I longed to talk to you. Good night bless you.
Bellybone

She had rewritten her will prior to the wedding, bequeathing him, without his knowing, £1000.¹⁰⁶

On Saturday 25 March he entered in his pocket diary, simply, 'P. married.' He endured 'tortured & muddled thoughts.' Two weeks later, he wrote to Ede,

I love her very very much & our friendship has meant everything to me. So naturally, however much this may be 'a good thing' I've naturally had a twisting, trying to get all the tangled delicate emotional bits & pieces tied up & sorted out.... These here human relationships are so heartrending in a way. She is such a marvellous & unique, truly intelligent, & beautiful person. I've been privileged indeed to have her friendship & kindness & affection. (I leaned on her in some obscure kind of way although we seldom spent time together—we were so very alike in a lot of ways, however incredible that sounds.) So naturally a change in her life of so fundamental a character requires in me a readjustment.

He confided to Grisewood,

I have felt so much *part* of her & *leant* upon her in some strange, indefinable, yet *totalitarian*, kind of way that naturally the readjustments necessary now she's got married are not easy for me ...

Lord! it is a hard world to make much of as this human affection has such ramifications in all one's stuff—& one thing shunts back on to another. & whether this love is in the body or out of the body, like St Paul, I'm buggered if I can tell. I know I only feel a huge sense of *impoverishment* & loss.

He felt 'muddled & fuddled & tortured.' Two months later he was still no clearer in his feelings: 'O dear this old romantic love, the only type I understand, does let you

down. I do see why Lancelot ran ‘wood mad’ in the trackless forest for four years* so that no man might know him is easily understandable but all one does is to smoke cigarettes & drink an extra whisky or something.’¹⁰⁷

During his Easter visit, Burns had given him to review for the *Tablet* a copy of Christopher Smart’s newly discovered poem, *Jubilate Agno*, published under the title *Rejoice in the Lamb*. ‘It’s hellish interesting & marvellous,’ Jones writes, ‘a good man a good poet—the real goods. He wrote it in Bedlem. What a nice bloke.’ He felt affinity with Smart, devout, a lover of animals and particular things, a man barked in love and tormented by mental illness. In his review (20 May 1939), Jones writes that Smart ‘prayed always in every line of his poem, for each line is a praise.’ While noting Smart’s inability formally to integrate, he praises his ‘innocent eye’ which redeems ‘the tough, sordid, impoverished, grown-up world that we all know about.’ Jones had himself sought to see and paint with such an eye, free of the aesthetic polish and compositional determination he had learned in school. It was a choice to be true to the naïve experience of seeing, which means seeing in parts (as distinct from the whole) vividly.[†] It may be this valuation of ‘the innocent eye’ that lies behind his remark decades later that ‘The art of painting survives chiefly in amateurs.’ The effect of such seeing in Smart is freshness, vividness, absence of convention and cliché. For these qualities, Jones especially liked ‘For a LION roars HIMSELF compleat from head to tail.’ He comments, ‘that seems to me to have remarkable visual power. You could not see a lion more clearly even in the life.’¹⁰⁸ In his review Jones became the first important poet since Browning (who praised Smart for piercing ‘the screen / ‘Twixt thing and word’) to champion Smart.

In his review, Jones objected to the word ‘vague’ in Smart’s referring to a musician as a bee whose ‘vague mind’s in quest of sweets.’ Walter Shewring wrote to the *Tablet* protesting that ‘surely the word is a Latinism here: it means ‘roving’ or ‘coursing,’ and completes the metaphor of the bee’ (27 May 1939). On 3 June Jones

* Correction: ‘two years’ for Lancelot. See *In Parenthesis* 203 n. 12 and Malory XI, 3. Jones’s mistaken doubling of the time of madness suggests the intensity of his suffering.

† This aspect of Jones’s originality as a painter is brilliantly explained by the wood engraver Simon Brett in ‘Seeing and Showing,’ *David Jones Artist and Poet*, ed. Paul Hills (Warwick: Scholar Press, 1997), pp. 65-77.

replied, thanking Shewring for illuminating what may have been Smart's intention but pointing out that the adjective had its current meaning since the sixteenth century. He continues, illuminating his own sense of language in poetry:

It is part of the business of a person who makes writings to conserve the potency of words to keep keen their cutting edges, and sometimes to re-establish their original significance—by new juxtapositions the brightness is sometimes restored to worn and dulled words. I wonder if this use of *vague* by Smart did have this conserving, or this restorative power, for him and for his contemporaries? If his use of it did call up the roving alertly moving, plundering bee-activity which the context demands, then I am indeed free of the regret that I expressed in my article.

He invites Shewring to demonstrate how Milton or Dryden used the word. Shewring did not respond, but from then on Jones was inclined to give Smart's use of 'vague' the benefit of a doubt that never, however, left him.¹⁰⁹

In his review, he includes a political caution about the 'specialness and chosen-of-God-ness' that has inspired much English writing, including Blake's Jerusalem hymn. Awareness of this inclination should generate sympathy for other nations when they 'display a desire to regard themselves as God's special children.' ... actually it is beyond a joke and not worth a war.' He is inclined to favour, instead of nationalism, the 'sense of the local, and physical, the love of the fenced-in and familiar, the affection for what is known' that underlies and informs nationalism. Indeed, there is, for him, no other route to artistic authenticity.¹¹⁰

In April, Grisewood went to Berlin for a long weekend, sending Jones, as requested, a postcard of Hitler. Upon his return, he reported that the Bishop of Berlin had told him of Nazi persecution of Catholics. Secret police were at the door after every Mass noting the identity of regular attenders. The Gestapo had bugged Grisewood's telephone. He had seen the yellow-marked benches for Jews. All was worse than they had thought. Grisewood was now sure there would be war. He and Jones laughed derisively over the plan by the head of the BBC, Sir Frederick Ogilvie, to express the peaceful intentions of the British by broadcasting to Germany the song of a nightingale elicited by a lady playing a cello at night in Bagley Wood.¹¹¹ Yet Jones still hoped war would be avoided.

For publication in the *Tablet*, he wrote a long plea for peace. It opens with a six-page prelude in which he says that 'the most questionable arguments are daily being put forward by those who regard war with the Dictators as inevitable and

necessary' and that true patriotism lies in questioning these arguments if we are to avoid 'the suicide of Europe.' Dominance of the world by force must be resisted, but, he says, before actually going to war, we must first 'know, beyond any shadow of doubt, that this feared domination' is 'absolutely certain and absolutely the worst fate.' He complains that the press has characterized the Axis powers as the dragon and their opponents as 'the Champion'. If the Champion includes 'true defenders of liberty,' however, it also includes 'the instruments or creators of capitalist exploitation, of imperialist necessity, the unnamed forces that control commodities and gold and' Communist 'instigators of world revolution.'

To a considerable extent, he agrees with Hitler about what is wrong with the world, though he thinks that Hitler's announced solution, armed conflict, might mean 'the harsh and boring tyranny of the sword and all those new evils which as usual leap up where the old ones die.' A just society, might be centuries in the future. He does not object to this. He simply refuses to consider the issue as a moral one. 'What it boils down to,' he writes,

is that there is much in both the Fascist and Nazi revolutions that demand our understanding and sympathy. They represent for all their alarming characteristics, an heroic attempt to cope with certain admitted corruptions in our civilization. Even the terrible aspects of those regimes, the brutality and suppression of individual freedom, must at least be considered in relation to the nature and malignancy of the particular conditions and evils that those regimes set out to correct.

To understand this, he says, we need only consider British history, in which imperialist 'acts of brutality and aggression, the destruction of cultures, the infliction of wrong' allowed 'the amiable, sensitized, individual, appreciative, humane type of human being ... to exist. It took a lot of gangster-work and breaking of heads and hearts to rear the stately homes of England.' He writes that Hitler's political ambitions are similar to those behind the first and second British Empires.

He opposes the moralism of propaganda. 'I prefer "Germany must export or die, Germany will not die" to "Honour is above peace".' Hitler's speeches convinced him that the German incorporation of Moravia and Bohemia was 'reasonable enough.' And he is willing to let the Czechs go, too, in deference to Realpolitik. Like Germany, England would soon find all sorts of reasons to dominate and incorporate Wales if it were independent and antagonistic to England.

For political reasons, he realized almost immediately that the essay was unpublishable—and Burns and Grisewood agreed. It would have seemed pro-Nazi. So

Burns had it typed and duplicated for circulation only among friends.* Most would agree that Jones was wrong in his essay to refuse ‘to raise the moral issue’. And what he says about Czechoslovakia is certainly ill-considered. But for us reading the essay now, it is difficult to approximate pre-war perspective. In retrospect, we know so much that he did not, for one thing that he was mistaken in assuming that ‘this feared domination was’ not ‘absolutely certain’ and not ‘absolutely the worst fate.’ Especially disturbing for readers today, he complains in the essay about ‘the iniquities ... of international Jewry.’

Like most western gentiles before the war, he was mildly biased against Jews. Jewish self-identification is exclusive and resistant to cultural assimilation. Because it generally oppositional to Christianity, which is the heart of European culture, Jews could not, he thought, really be Europeans or British.¹¹²

One of the few men from his battalion that he met after the war was Lazarus Black. Jones was standing in an underground station with a woman he wanted particularly to impress, possibly Dorothea de Halpert, and up walked Black, looking like a comic music-hall Jew, with a gaudy tie-pin and shoes like mirrors. He threw his arms around Jones’s neck saying, ‘David, what are you doing?’ to which Jones icily replied, ‘Very well, actually.’ After further failures to initiate conversation, Black walked away sadly. ‘Who was that horrible man?’ the young woman asked. ‘Do you know people like that?’ Jones replied, ‘Just someone I was with during the war.’ In later years, he narrated this episode as one in which ‘I come off rather badly.’¹¹³

His dislike of Jews was bound up in his aversion to the world of commerce and finance, which, he thought, they epitomized. Edwardian in immediate origin, this antipathy stemmed from English resentment of Jewish financiers, some unscrupulous, in the circle of Edward VII. In this respect, Jones’s bias resembled that of Chesterton and Belloc—an aspect of opposition to capitalism. Jones was equally averse to the

* Unpublished in Jones’s lifetime, the essay (twenty double-spaced typed foolscap pages, dated May 11, 1939) was excluded from *Epoch and Artist* by Grisewood and from *The Dying Gaul* by Grisewood and Hague, although Grisewood thought it should sometime be published. Edited to reduce length, it appears in Dilworth, ‘David Jones and Fascism,’ *Journal of Modern Literature* 13 (March 1986), 143-59, and is reproduced in its entirety, edited by Tom Villis, in *David Jones on Religion, Politics, and Culture*, eds Thomas Berenato *et al* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018).

grand gentile financiers of the City, but he associated international finance with Jews. He had acquired from Gill, who was strongly anti-Jewish (but pro-Arab and so not anti-Semitic) the medieval belief that money should only be got by making and that profiting from investment was immoral. Rich without making anything, financiers were parasites, Gill and Jones thought. As a primary motive, the getting of money was, to Jones, despicable. ‘The worst kind of soldier is more attractive,’ he said, ‘than the best kind of businessman.’ When a Jewish interviewer wished aloud that men would not kill one another in war, he replied, ‘There are worse things ... the world of business is all, to me, worse.’¹¹⁴ He thought ownership and control of the world by those with money a great injustice. It troubled him that international financiers owed allegiance to no nation. Concerned only with profit, they undermined political stability. His words ‘the iniquities ... of international Jewry’ refer to the unscrupulous scheming of power brokers—most of them, he thought, Jews—who were largely responsible for the Great War and had helped to finance the armaments industry, the Bolshevik revolution, and the displacement and persecution of the Palestinian Arabs.

His aversion to the business world was largely owing to art dealers, most of whom he disliked for their crassness and greed. ‘Those awful commercial men,’ he once exclaimed, they care only for money ‘and yet they instinctively know a good picture.’ ‘They are prostitutes,’ he said, who try to make you paint the sort of things that sell. He also thought they took too much of the price of a picture. A large number of them were Jews—including one of the two he most liked: Freddy Meyer of the Meyer Gallery, whom he admired as a ‘genuine chap’ with perception and honesty.* But enough Jews seemed to him aggressive, dominating, and selfish to justify generalizing about them. From this generalization he exempted the Hararis, Isaiah Berlin, Eric Strauss, Teddy Wolfe, and Margaret Smith, all of whom he admired and liked, as he would later like John Rothenstein and feel great affection for Anna Kallin of the BBC and Lewis Cohen, his American publisher. About these and other Jews he would say, ‘Of course, holding the views I do, it would seem to some people inconsistent that I have a very great affection for them but I can’t see any inconsistency.’¹¹⁵

And there was none. His bias was not racial and therefore not inclusive. He agreed with Spengler that the difficulties experienced by the Jews were ‘due not to

race-distinctions but to difference of phase.’ He objected to unspiritual, urban, late-civilizational ‘thinking in money’, a trait he saw as accidentally and temporarily Jewish. Years later, he thought it surprising and amusing that in Israel the typical Jew, who had for so long been a city-dweller, should become a warrior-farmer. He considered them ‘a brave and resourceful people’ and regarded the Israeli army as having replaced the German army as, man for man, the best in the world.¹¹⁶

Politically and morally, he was opposed to Zionism. Like Gill, the Hodgkin brothers, and Prudence Pelham, he was pro-Palestinian. Especially knowledgeable, Thomas Hodgkin had discussed Palestine with him since their time together in Jerusalem. The British had allied themselves with Zionists to dispossess the Arabs. In the uprising of 1936, throwing stones at police was punishable by three years in prison. Arabs were jailed on remand, without trial. They were also punished by heavy fines, beatings, seizure of property, and retaliatory pulling-down of houses. After the Second World War, Jones deplored

the appallingly skilful manner in which the Israelis have managed to get themselves technically right with the U.N. But the fact remains that whatever mistakes the Arabs have made they have been diddled at every turn & for the United Nations to name them (in effect) as the ‘aggressors’ is monstrous no matter what may be said for a Jewish state in Palestine, or in extenuation of Jewish behaviour.

To the end of his life, he considered the state of Israel an injustice against the Arabs, a wrong that did not atone for Nazi genocide.¹¹⁷

He believed in broad psychological differences between peoples, differences that were not racial. Although the Welsh, the Irish, and the Scots are basically racially the same, he considered Welshmen melancholy, Irishmen light-hearted, and Scots efficient—‘they built the Empire’. He thought Saxons insensitive and pragmatic and Germans efficient with a hysterical streak. About the Jews he said, ‘there is a streak of vulgarity in the most refined and an element of refinement even in the most vulgar.’¹¹⁸

Most of his friends had no inkling of his bias against Jews, which he expressed seldom and privately.† There is no hint of it in the whole of his published writings.

* The other, gentile dealer he liked was Ernest Brown of the Leicester Gallery.

† In the early 1920s at Ditchling, Philip Haggren saw no evidence in Jones of any prejudice against Jews. Walter Shewring said that Jones showed no signs of being anti-Jewish whereas Eric Gill did—an aspect of Gill’s personality undisclosed in the biographies of him.

His close friends who knew about it shared it. Before the war, he, Burns, and Bernard Wall, would sing together, in parody of a contemporary popular song, ‘I’m dancing with tears in my eyes, ‘cause the girl in my arms is a Jew.’ To Grisewood in 1941, he wrote about the last Welsh ‘fastness’ to fall to Edward I as now probably ‘a place of bungalows & ice cream, Jews, Manchesterians, petrol pumps.’ Grisewood later said that Jones was humourous, not angry, about the Jews. Burns remembers that in reference to their friend Eric Strauss, who had stereotypical Jewish features, Jones sometimes recited from Belloc: ‘My name is Doctor Gluk, / My nose is like a hook, / I’m anything but Aryan.’ His bias was, Burns said, ‘similar to the Catholic attitude towards Protestants then as a benighted, inferior lot, with whom one had nothing much to do’ (a bias Jones did not have against Protestants). All his life, he used the term ‘frightful Jew,’ a Londonism rooted in the rigor of Jewish bargaining. At the end of his life, when considering drafting a will, he would express dread that ‘the Jews might get’ all his paintings.¹¹⁹

Except for the shameful lapse with Lazarus Black, he was too kind to let his bias influence behaviour. His earliest expression on the matter shows that he considered anti-Semitism—an essentialist, racial prejudice—stupid and unChristian. In the early 1930s one of his reservations about St Augustine was his ‘anti-Perfidious Jew stuff.’ He disapproved of the Jew-hating in *Mein Kampf* and agreed with Dawson that Nazi anti-Semitism was an attempt to make ‘the Jew the representative and the scapegoat of the mechanical, cosmopolitan, urban mass civilization.’ Jews were not alone, he realized, in epitomizing the current state of civilization and they certainly did not cause it. A decade later a new friend would show him a long essay by a Polish scholar, in response to which he would write a long letter criticizing its anti-Semitic tenor—‘this hate thing.’¹²⁰

He certainly did not blame the Jews for killing Jesus. On 15 August 1941, he drafted a letter to the *Catholic Herald* in support of an objection to a stained-glass window in a Lampeter church depicting Hitler nailing Jesus to the cross. This, he wrote, is subordinating theology to propaganda. It is like blaming Jews for the death of Jesus. What he approves, instead is the Welsh evangelical conviction that ‘it was Dai Davies & Ben Evans & Deacon Jones in that pew there, who drove in the nails & who spat upon the Victim’—these ordinary men and every world leader, too, ‘will answer’ at the final judgement.

Since the passing of the Nuremburg Laws in 1935, Nazi persecution of Jews had worried him. In 1937 or ‘38, he was visited by a senior cultural attaché from the

German embassy. They were alone together at Glebe Place. The German was amusing, erudite, delightful. After conversing for a while, Jones protested Nazi persecution of the Jews, and the visitor underwent an immediate transformation, rising to his feet and fulminating for five minutes on their 'iniquities', to Jones's extreme embarrassment. Then, concluding his tirade by saying, 'The Jews, you kick them out the door and they come back in through the window,' he sat down and relaxed into his former affability. Jones did not argue; there seemed no point. Years later he related this incident not to exonerate himself but to illustrate the German tendency to hysteria and to recall with amusement the similarity between the German's words and the wartime saying about the Germans, 'Close the door, they're coming through the window, close the window, they're coming through the floor.' As the Nazi concluded his tirade, Jones was especially amused by having heard the saying sung in 1928 by Teddy Wolfe, his 'artist friend, a very jovial chap of Jewish blood.'¹²¹

On 10 June 1939 he went again to Campion Hall at D'Arcy's invitation. On Sunday, 11 June, he attended Guest Night with nine others, including Sir Edwin Lutyens, the architect of the new Campion Hall, who was staying for a few days. Jones found him 'nice & kind' but off-putting, 'a proper academic wag' in that he kept up 'a barrage of jokes' and puns. Jones met and talked with Rudopf Pfeiffer, the eminent German Classicist, now living at Campion after fleeing the Nazis with his Jewish wife. He met Jewish refugees whom D'Arcy harboured. He rekindled friendship with Fr. C.C. Martindale, who was there to help Ronald Knox translate the bible and with whom he had many long talks. Martindale was the Jesuit most congenial to him, 'an amazing chap,' Jones thought, 'the full power' of whose mind was 'never used.' He also had several conversations with Cyril Bailey, retired Public Orator of the university, whom he and Helen Sutherland had visited in Northumberland, walking in 'drenching' rain for miles to reach his cottage. Bailey told him that during his long career at Oxford the best Classical scholars had been Raymond Asquith, Ronald Knox, and C.C. Martindale. At meals and after, there was continual discussion, Jones remembered, about 'religion, sex, the structure of society, the arts & everything. All these chaps have bits of right ideas & when you can see & sympathize with all the various apparently stark contradictory notions it is hard ... to equate in one's own poor head.'¹²²

One of the Jesuits heard him say, that he liked being in Oxford because ‘its always so easy here to have an excuse for doing something else.’ He sat in his room—number 1 at the top of the stairs along the hallway to the left of the main entrance—and read, did not paint, came down for meals, went for walks. When out, he left the door to his room wide open. Inside was a lectern and on it a cloth that he changed regularly to match the liturgical colour of the day. Open on the cloth was a book but not apparently a bible or missal. In the hall one day, a young scholastic named Vincent Turner asked him, ‘What on earth is that?’ and he replied, ‘Oh that’s *Mein Kampf*. I turn a page every day.’ Turner never checked to see whether this was a joke. He considered Jones ‘slightly eccentric, slightly crazy, outlandish’ and one of a number of people around Campion who, while neither fascists nor Nazis, opposed populist-democratic politics. The book probably was *Mein Kampf*, the complete version that he had acquired in April, but its prominence on the lectern may still have been a joke. He had by now heavily annotated his copy, which he would lend to Martindale, who took it with him to Denmark where he was stranded by the outbreak of war.^{123*}

Jones had confided to D’Arcy his early ambition to paint murals, and D’Arcy asked him to paint the wall of the Lady chapel in Campion Hall. He declined, thinking he would ‘be no good at large-scale work of that sort.’ He also felt ‘far from well.’ He and D’Arcy thought that if he could not take it on, perhaps Stanley Spencer would, so Spencer was invited to stay at Campion to discuss the possibilities. He stayed in June for ‘half a week,’ during which Jones and he had long conversations. During one of these Spencer, quoting from the harvest-festival hymn, spoke of all being ‘safely gathered in’—words that became for Jones paradigmatic of what the artist does. Spencer was small, like a jockey, with his dark hair also in a fringe on his forehead and, uncharacteristically for him, clean and neatly dressed. Jones found him ‘extremely amusing ... with the energy of a positive dynamo.’ Spencer had no reserve and spoke immediately and candidly about anything. With ‘the Fathers,’ as he called them, he was particularly outrageous, apparently intending to shock; and Jones, who

* This annotated copy, if it still exists, has not been located.

disliked brash sexual talk in public, acted as a buffer between Spencer and the Jesuits.*

After supper one evening in the senior common room, conversation turned to the mural, and some of the Jesuits began making suggestions about iconography proper to pictures of the blessed Virgin. Spencer leapt to his feet and, facing them on the hearth, shouted that *he* was ‘the hierophant’ of his art and no one else could say or suggest what might or might not go into it. Unstoppable, he raged for quite a while at the astonished Jesuits. On another occasion, Jones heard him tell them, ‘I never paint a woman I haven’t slept with,’ adding that he intended to paint on the wall the backside of his current mistress, Daphne Charlton. He also said, ‘In my painting I owe nothing to God and everything to the devil.’ He told D’Arcy, ‘I’ve got two wives, one divorced and one not, and feel equally married to both.’ He was in extreme financial trouble, his weekly payments to women amounted to £6.5, which left him only £2.5.1 to live on. Vigorously debating the respective advantages of celibacy and his own way of life, he rounded on a pale, intense young Jesuit and shouted, ‘HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO KEEP TWO BLOODY WOMEN?’ Jones thought that funny. So did D’Arcy. Spencer felt ‘obliged’ to give ‘tickings off’ to some of them, who, he thought were ‘bearing it very well.’¹²⁴ Mostly, however, he held forth on the subject of painting.

Jones and he were constantly together and always conversing in public—at tea, for example, and at coffee after meals. They ‘got on like a house on fire,’ remembered Vincent Turner. Jones thought his visual art had much affinity with that of Spencer. They both painted with mannerist distortion for numinous effect. Both despised the Royal Academy, Spencer having resigned in protest against censorship of Epstein’s sculptures. Both had served during the war, Spencer for two years in Macedonia. Jones knew Spencer’s brother Gilbert, who had been at Camberwell with him, and Desmond Chute had been a close friend of Spencer during the war. Now,

* Jones also attempted to fill this role on another occasion, at a private view for an exhibition of Spencer’s paintings at the Leicester Gallery. When he arrived, he heard Spencer with Oliver Brown, the gallery director, who was nearly deaf, Spencer shouting for Brown’s sake about the various women he was keeping and how much each was costing him. Noticing that Spencer was being widely overheard, Jones said, ‘Stanley, shhhhh.’ ‘I can’t,’ said Spencer. ‘He’s deaf. I have to speak up.’ Jones said, ‘Then talk about something else.’ ‘I can’t,’ said Spencer, ‘He wants to hear about this.’

Spencer wrote, he has ‘made such a friend in dear little David Jones’, and they ‘have found so much to talk about that our ‘sessions’ ... take up a bit of the evenings.’ Jones encouraged him in planning a building to house his religious art and assured him that he was ‘much nearer’ than he thought ‘to the particular religious quality of feeling’ he ‘wanted & needed’. Spencer ‘found it really quite important talking to him.’¹²⁵

D’Arcy and his committee decided against giving Spencer the commission. He did not, in any case, want it—he liked painting larger than the space available and did not even bother to take measurements. Spencer told Jones that he could not ‘take on the murals’ because ‘the spirit of his work was not congruent with the spirit of Catholicism.’ Apart from being together at Campion Hall, they knew one another personally, Jones said, ‘not extremely well, but we met on odd occasions.’ Spencer admired Jones as an artist.¹²⁶

As always at Campion, Jones had many long talks with D’Arcy, his closest friend among the Jesuits. On the last day of his visit, they talked about the accusation in the lead article of *The Times* that day that *In Parenthesis* promoted pacifism. Jones drafted a response to this in which he says that he had, when writing, ‘certainly no intention to foster “pacifism” any more than ... to foster ... “militarism”’; the sole intention was to make a re-calling of a given period of part of my experiences as a private soldier and the reactions, emotions, behaviour & the whole complex of recallings that necessarily conditioned the mixed Cockney and Welsh personnel of the unit in which I chanced to serve.’¹²⁷

These three weeks would be his last visit to Oxford. D’Arcy soon left England to chair the Philosophy Department at Fordham. Jones was at a welcome-back party, thrown by Speaight, in April 1942, where D’Arcy renewed Jones’s standing invitation to stay at Campion Hall, but after the war, when D’Arcy became provincial of the English Jesuits, Jones seldom saw him. They would meet for the last time in 1952 for dinner, after which Jones commented, ‘he has a most attractive & lively mind & is the most loveable of persons.’¹²⁸

Jones left Oxford for London, where he was angered by the sight of ‘Irish Pipers, air raid women, troops of all kinds parading the streets’—all of which he regarded as ‘ridiculous propagandist nonsense.’ In Oxford he had missed seeing Julian Asquith, who was in Italy, so he wrote to him arranging to meet for a drink in London in early July. (Whenever Asquith came up to London, they would meet, sometimes with

Burns, for a drink at Martini's in Regent Street.) At their meeting, Asquith invited him to spend a fortnight at the family manor in the ancient west-Somerset village of Mells near Frome. The manor house been an abbey, which during the dissolution of the monasteries, had become the 'plum' obtained from Henry VIII by its caretaker 'little Jack Horner'. It had remained in the Horner family for four centuries, passing to Katharine Asquith after her marriage. When she was received into the Church, Mells became a centre of Catholic belief and practice. Frequent visitors were Evelyn Waugh, Martin D'Arcy, and Ronald Knox. Jones spent the latter half of July 1939 there.¹²⁹

The family consisted of Julian, his sister Helen, his widowed mother Katharine, and her mother Lady Horner, who was bitterly anti-Catholic.¹³⁰ Jones loved Katharine and thought her mother 'a very remarkable woman who made the most wonderful embroideries—*huge* great pieces of tapestry—and who was jolly interesting in her old age, for she had known some of the Pre-Raphaelites, Burne-Jones in particular, quite well.' He found anecdotes about the Pre-Raphaelites 'fascinating & usually extremely amusing.' Katharine, too, made tapestries, which he thought 'lovely'. He had 'a thing about embroidery,' loved 'the obvious beauty of the interweaving,' and recalled that the best medieval needlework was English. One evening he sat with the others listening to Lady Horner read stories—probably Karen Blixen's *Seven Gothic Tales*—while gazing approvingly at the tapestry she had made of wild men in a forest, hanging above the walk-in fireplace—and, on the rug before the hearth, the family's great shaggy greyhound Jason, who reminded him of Llwellyn's dog Gelert.¹³¹

Katharine and Julian took him on a tour of the area, to Wells to see the cathedral with its hour-glass arch, its adjoining medieval row-housing, and the walled-and-moated bishop's grounds with the springs for which the place is named. Jones especially 'liked seeing the noble, gray, ... stone stair' winding up from the cathedral to the spacious round chapter house. From there they drove to Glastonbury, which had been until the thirteenth century a height surrounded by swampland and is thought to have been the island of Avalon, where Arthur was buried. The graves there that Geraldus Cambrensis identified as Arthur's and Guinevere's were bogus, Jones knew, but he was impressed by the Tor rising abruptly 500 feet like an Aztec pyramid from surrounding acres of reclaimed marsh. For him, the place had no great imaginative resonance, owing to the whimsical interweave of false legend being so

thick, though he believed that there was an underlying memory of the spreading of Christianity along the Roman *viae*. He was later fascinated to read of archaeological evidence for St David building a church here in the sixth century—beside a much older Roman-British church. While staying at Mells, Jones also visited the historian and school master Christopher Hollis, a fringe-member of the Chelsea group.¹³²

Also visiting Mells were Julian's cousin Simon and Belloc's sister, Susan Belloc-Lowndes, author of *The Lodger*. She was a relentless, superficial talker, parroting her famous brother's opinions. Jones did not like her. The painter Henry Lamb was also staying, a Bloomsbury figure he had not met before. A decade older than Jones, Lamb was a meticulous, cerebral Australian who had given up medicine for painting. He was an old friend of Augustus John, much influenced by him, and an occasional lover of John's wife, Dorelia. As an atheist who loved arguing about religion, he fitted in well at Mells, although the dominant topic of conversation now was the immanence of war. Jones liked him. He was surprised that Lamb could work at a portrait of Julian with people walking around him talking.¹³³

Eighteen-year-old Clarissa Churchill visited. Like the Asquiths, her mother was a liberal Catholic, and although Clarissa had been raised non-practising, these Catholics regarded her as one of their own. She was beautiful and intelligent. Jones particularly liked her deep, strong, commanding voice, which could soften to appealing tenderness. He was sensitive to voices and found that they 'have almost limitless power to deject, repel, bore, or elevate, enchant, console, attract.' Hers was 'a healing thing ... or anyway jolly nice.' After seeing Jones at Mells, she initiated a correspondence with him, they met for tea at La Commercio for supper, and she became part of his London circle.¹³⁴

He had arrived at Mells depressed but soon cheered up, largely because of his affection for Katharine, and that enabled him to paint. Just outside the leaded-glass window of his first-floor bedroom at the eastern end of the house was the fifteenth century parish church. He liked its 'great & extremely beautiful' sixteenth century tower just outside his bedroom window. Very close, the church is impossible to see in its entirety through the window. He painted it as more distant. In the picture (fig. 9), the tower looms larger than in reality. Yet its lines are emphatic, so that it is a nearly empty column movement against the greater tonal definitions of everything else. In the bottom middle of the picture is architecture that is part of the abbey. Flying against the wind (indicated by flags on the top of the tower) but in the direction



9. David Jones, *Mells Church*, 1939

August, he had the painting mounted and framed and sent it to her. He hoped it would not ‘deteriorate on acquaintance,’ and explained that ‘pictures are so odd, sometimes they seem to get better as you know them. Sometimes they get empty—& one can seldom tell which pictures are going to do which for certain.’ But this one ‘happened to come off’ and he would, years later, be glad to see that it ‘is not so bad.’¹³⁵

He left Mells sooner than he would have liked because he was becoming increasingly agitated and anxious. He was surprised that his neurasthenia should kick up in such a ‘beautiful and interesting place.’ This is the first time that a prolonged stay away from home made him feel worse—an experience that later recurred and would eventually preclude travel and over-night visits. Katherine gave him a cheese as a parting gift. Upon his return to Glebe Place he began reading the Loeb translation of Petronius, partly out of curiosity about Trimalchio, the rich and gluttonous host of *The Satyricon* after whom Julian had been nicknamed in infancy. Jones especially liked Eumolpus, the impoverished old poet and lecher who tells the tale of the widow

of the movement of the eye are three birds. Horses behind the church are impossibly large. Jones wrote, ‘I’m awfully glad I did the drawing. I wish it were better I mean, if I did almost a half a dozen of them perhaps two out of the half dozen might have got exactly what I wanted—however I think it has something, *if a bit enfeebled*.’ Katharine wanted to buy it, his first successful picture since *Guinever*. He would have liked to give it to her, he said, but felt he could not, so she paid him twenty-seven guineas. Back at Glebe Place in the beginning of

of Ephesus, one of the most famous stories of antiquity.¹³⁶ The classical convention of the banquet, which is the setting of most of *The Satyricon*, influenced his subsequent unpublished writing in which conversation takes place at a dinner party thrown by a ‘Roman blimp.’

He stayed at Glebe Place, trying to draw but, he wrote, ‘when I really try hard ... it usually brings back a bit of the nerve thing confound it.’ On 3 August he visited an exhibition of Stanley Spencer’s pictures at Tooth's Gallery. They were, he thought, not very good, except for ‘a marvellously good portrait of a girl Lord it was good ... the best I've seen for a long long time.’ He was ‘jolly oppressed about the international news now almost all the time.’¹³⁷

Notes to Chapter 11

¹ To Helen Sutherland 11/7/37; Stanley Honeyman interviewed 21/6/86; conversation between DJ and Blissett in presence of author 24/8/72; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; to John H. Johnson 16/5/64. My thanks to John Kelly of St John's College, Oxford, for information on Yeats's movements.

² To Janet Stone 12/2/63; DJ to Blissett, pp. 133, 142; DJ to Peter Kelly interviewed 9/6/86.

³ To Harman Grisewood 5/4/73; to Saunders Lewis 18/9/70; to Jackson Knight 8/8/51; to H. Sutherland 16/2/55.

⁴ To H. Grisewood 15-24/4/72.

⁵ Michael Richey interviewed 7/6/86, 18/6/89; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; to Giardelli 9-11/8/73.

⁶ MacCarthy, *Eric Gill*, p. 268; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 22/6/90; M. Hague interviewed 10/9/89; Kevin Cribb interviewed 12/6/89.

⁷ To H. Grisewood 14/11/70; K. Cribb interviewed 12/6/89.

⁸ K. Cribb interviewed 12/6/89.

⁹ Barbara Wall, *René Hague a Personal Memoir*, p. 28; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87.

¹⁰ To H. Grisewood 15/8/71

¹¹ DJ to Blissett, p. 123; to J. Ede 5/10/43.

¹² P. Pelham to E. Hodgkin n.d.; Blissett, p. 36; to H. Grisewood 14/2/38.

¹³ To J. Ede 19/10/37; to Gladys unposted n.d.; to V. Wynne-Williams. 22/8/60.

¹⁴ To V. Wynne-Williams 22/10/60.

¹⁵ To Francis Payne 14/1/66; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 20/6/72, 26/5/69.

¹⁶ Tony Hyne interviewed 6/90; to T. Hyne 18/5/72.

¹⁷ T. Hyne interviewed 6/85, 24/6/86; to S. Lewis 10/72.

¹⁸ To Tony Stoneburner 12-16/8/68; Joseph Jones to D.J. 19/1/48; *Chester Chronicle* 2/7/38.

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- ¹⁹ To V. Wynne-Williams 23/12/59.
- ²⁰ T. Hyne interviewed 6/85; to H. Sutherland 22/5/37.
- ²¹ To H. Sutherland 3/5/56; to J. Ede 19/10/37.
- ²² To J. Ede 5/11/37; to P. Tegetmeier 4/11/37; to J. Ede 19/10/37; T. Burns interviewed 20/6/86.
- ²³ To P. Donner, 5/7/62.
- ²⁴ To T. Burns, 4-9/8/63; to H. Grisewood 9/5/41.
- ²⁵ Diana Smith to author 1/10/92; D. Smith interviewed 39/1/88.
- ²⁶ D. Smith interviewed 30/1/88; D. Smith to author 1/10/92.
- ²⁷ D. Smith interviewed 30/6/88; D. Smith to author 19/3/88; to D. Smith draft 24/3/62; D. Smith to author 22/9/86.
- ²⁸ D. Smith interviewed 30/6/88; DJ 'Fragments of an Attempted Autobiographical Writing,' 101; to H. Grisewood 12/4/51.
- ²⁹ V. Ingrams interviewed 1/5/93; Antonia Pinter interviewed 5/8/87; S. Sheppard interviewed 26/6/90.
- ³⁰ H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87, 8/83; to J.H. Johnston n.d. [Jan 65]; to Miss Carver 29-30/6/72; to J.H. Johnston letter draft n.d.; to Griffith 12/9/64; to J.H. Johnston 17/4, 2/5/62; K. Raine interviewed 26/6/86; P. Orr interviewed 2/6/86.
- ³¹ K. Raine interviewed 7/2/89, 26/5/86; Lucy and Philip Jebb interviewed 15/6/90.
- ³² Blissett, p. 21; M. Richey interviewed 18/6/89.
- ³³ P. Pelham to DJ 22/12/36; Dorothy Hodgkin interviewed 19/6/89; to E. Hodgkin 18/11.1936; E. Hodgkin interviewed 16/6/88.
- ³⁴ P. Pelham to E. Hodgkin n.d.; E. Hodgkin interviewed 6/8/87.
- ³⁵ E. Hawkins interviewed 15/6/88; Diana McCartney-Filgate to Elizabeth Skelton 18/4/80; to E. Gill 14/6/36; to F. Wall 27/6/44; E. Hodgkin interviewed 1/8/87; E. Skelton interviewed 12/6/90; entries in the Medworth family bible.
- ³⁶ David Poulter interviewed 11/6/90; DJ to Arthur Pritchard-Williams 15/12/54.
- ³⁷ To H. Grisewood 14/2/38..
- ³⁸ To H. Grisewood 14/2/38.
- ³⁹ D. Cleverdon interviewed 28/6/86; N. Cleverdon interviewed 25/6/90; to H. Grisewood 14/2/38; to J. Ede 27/6/38.
- ⁴⁰ To A. Giardelli 9-11/8/73; D. Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, p. 22; to H. Grisewood 14/2/38; to A. Giardelli 11/8/73.
- ⁴¹ To Juliet Shirley-Smith, 4/8/61.
- ⁴² To H. Grisewood 9/6/46.
- ⁴³ DJ notes for the Tate Gallery 10/58.
- ⁴⁴ DJ notes for the Tate Gallery 10/58.
- ⁴⁵ To Mr Allsop unposted draft 6/12/44.
- ⁴⁶ To J. Ede 27/6/38.
- ⁴⁷ Noel White to author, 12/2/06.
- ⁴⁸ to H. Grisewood 14/2/38.

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- ⁴⁹ To H. Grisewood 14/2/38; to E.Q. Nicholson 7/3/38.
- ⁵⁰ To J. Ede 16/6/38; Ann D'Abreu interviewed 1/5/95.
- ⁵¹ To H. Grisewood 31/5/38; to J. Ede 16/6/38.
- ⁵² P. Pelham to HCE 21/6 [1937]; to J. Ede 16/6/38.
- ⁵³ To H. Grisewood 31/5/38.
- ⁵⁴ To J. Ede 27/6/38, 11/4/39; D. Smith interviewed 30/1/88; S. Hampshire interviewed 22/1/89.
- ⁵⁵ To P. Hagreen 1/7/38; Barbara Wall, *René Hague a Personal Memoir*, p. 26; Jones's speech, printed in *The Weekly Review* and *The Tablet*.
- ⁵⁶ To J. Ede 27/6/38.
- ⁵⁷ To J. Ede 7/7/38.
- ⁵⁸ To J. Ede 7/7/38, 27/6/38; A.E. Merrick to J. Jones 5/7/38; to P. Hagreen 1/7/38.
- ⁵⁹ 30/5/38 draft; to H. Grisewood 31/5/38.
- ⁶⁰ To T. and D. Hodgkin 16/7/38; E. Gill's diary to J. Ede 7/7/38; to H. Sutherland 11/7/38.
- ⁶¹ Letter draft frag. n.d.; M. Richey interviewed 18/6/89; J. Ede interviewed 31/5/86; Bernard Wall to T. Stoneburner 2/8/68; DJ 'A Soldier's Memories,' *Tablet* (16/4/38), 506.
- ⁶² To H. Grisewood 24/9/38, 18/6/40, 14/2/38; T. Burns interviewed 2/6/86; to T. Stoneburner 12-16/8/68; T. Burns, p. 39.
- ⁶³ S. Honeyman to H. Grisewood 25/9/84; to Louis Bussell 30/9/39; To H. Sutherland 28/11/39; to J. Ede 11/4/39; to the *TLS* n.d.
- ⁶⁴ S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87; *A* 88; to L. Bussell 30/9/39.
- ⁶⁵ To H. Sutherland 31/12/45; M. Richey to author 3/7/89; M. Richey interviewed 18/6/89.
- ⁶⁶ T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; Spengler, II p. 454; S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87.
- ⁶⁷ D. Smith to author 23/11/86, 5/7/86; to T. Burns 22/6/42.
- ⁶⁸ S. Honeyman interviewed 16/6/88.
- ⁶⁹ S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87.
- ⁷⁰ To Nicolette Gray 24/6/36; D. Cleverdon interviewed summer 1985; to N. Chamberlain 18/12/38; DJ typescript 11/5/39; Brocard Sewell to T. Stoneburner 10/12/67; R. Hague quoted by Miles and Shiel, p.258.
- ⁷¹ To L. Bussell 30/9/39; R. Hague to H. Grisewood. n.d. [c. 1980].
- ⁷² D. Smith to author 10/1/87; to H. Grisewood 25/9/84; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/6; to H. Grisewood 24/4/39; H. Grisewood to author 10/8/84; Dawson, p. 83.
- ⁷³ To H. Grisewood 24/4/39.
- ⁷⁴ M. Richey interviewed 18/6/89; to A. Pollen 31/8-1/9/60; Spengler II pp. 457, 464, 485, 465, 506 (all passages that DJ approvingly marks in his copy); H. Grisewood to author 30/9/86.
- ⁷⁵ S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87; H. Grisewood interviewed 23/6/86; M. Richey interviewed 18/6/89.
- ⁷⁶ Dawson, *Understanding Europe*, p. 240 (a passage marked with three marginal lines by DJ in his copy); T. Burns interviewed 2/6/86.
- ⁷⁷ *Tablet* 16/7/38 reprinted in the *Chesterton Review* XXIII (February & 5 1997), 89-91 to T. Hodgkin

12/11/35.

⁷⁸T. Burns interviewed 2/6/86, 14/6/88; H. Grisewood 16/6/89; J. Roggendorf, *Between Two Cultures* (Folkstone: Global Oriental, 2004), pp. 5, 23, 25, 27, 42.

⁷⁹H. Grisewood interviewed 6/91; 15/10/87.

⁸⁰ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; T. Burns interviewed 2/6/86.

⁸¹ To H. Grisewood 24/9/38, 14/9/38; to H. Sutherland 20/12/39; to H. Grisewood 19/3/40.

⁸² To H. Grisewood 24/9/38.

⁸³ S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86.

⁸⁴ To H. Grisewood 4/10/38.

⁸⁵ To H. Grisewood 4/10/38.

⁸⁶ To H. Sutherland 3/1/39.

⁸⁷ To C. Churchill 14/11/40.

⁸⁸ To H. Grisewood 3/10/38.

⁸⁹ Fr Vincent Turner SJ interviewed 7/10/87; to H. Grisewood 24/9/38; Fr Bywater SJ 10/6/91; to B. de Zoete frag. unposted 20/10/38; to S. Honeyman 5/11/63; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69.

⁹⁰ DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72.

⁹¹ K. Asquith to DJ 7/8/37; D. Pollen, *I Remember, I Remember*, privately published 1983.

⁹² To T. Stoneburner 20/12/64.

⁹³ To H. Sutherland 10/1/50.

⁹⁴ To H. Grisewood, 16 Feb 1956.

⁹⁵ Stuart Hampshire interviewed 22/1/89; to C. Churchill 16/5/40.

⁹⁶ To C. Churchill 7/11/38.

⁹⁷ To H. Grisewood 17/1/39.

⁹⁸ To H. Grisewood 17/1/39; to H. Sutherland 3/1/39.

⁹⁹ To H. Grisewood 14/4/39, 17/1/39.

¹⁰⁰ To Julien Asquith 12/3/39; to C. Churchill 12/3/39; to H. Sutherland 3/1/39.

¹⁰¹ To J. Asquith 12/3/39.

¹⁰² To J. Asquith 12/3/39.

¹⁰³ To H. Grisewood 14/4/39; to J. Ede 11/4/39; to Donald Attwater 10/12/44.

¹⁰⁴ To J. Ede 11/4/39; to J. Asquith 21/3/39.

¹⁰⁵ P. Pelham to DJ 21/5/39; to J. Asquith 21/3/39; to J. Ede 11/4/39.

¹⁰⁶ Markby, Steward & Wadesons to Elizabeth Pellham 3/12/52.

¹⁰⁷ To J. Ede 11/4/39; to H. Grisewood 23/6/39.

¹⁰⁸ To J. Ede 11/4/39; E&A 280, 282; D.J. to author 1971 or '72; E&A 286.

¹⁰⁹ E&A 284, 284 n1.

¹¹⁰ E&A 284.

¹¹¹ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

¹¹² Barbara Moray interviewed 6/85.

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- ¹¹³ DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71, see Blissett, p. 74.
- ¹¹⁴ E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; M. Richey interviewed 18/6/89; S. Honeyman to H. Grisewood 25/9/84; T. Burns interviewed 13/6/88; DJ to S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86, 10/87; DJ interviewed by J Silkin 1965.
- ¹¹⁵ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.
- ¹¹⁶ Spengler, *The Decline of the West* II 317; Blissett, p. 136.
- ¹¹⁷ E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; T. Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine 1932-36*, p. 201; to H. Sutherland, 15/7/48; S. Honeyman to H. Grisewood 25/9/84.
- ¹¹⁸ S. Honeyman to H. Grisewood 25/9/84; DJ to S. Honeyman interviewed 1986.
- ¹¹⁹ To P. Tegetmeier 4/11/37; W. Shewring interviewed 6/85; P. Hagreen interviewed 27/6/86; Barbara Wall interviewed 27/6/86; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/6/86; T. Burns interviewed 2/6/86; to H. Grisewood 6/5/41; R. Hague typescript of interview by P. Orr with S. Honeyman.
- ¹²⁰ To R. Hague Holy Saturday/32; William Cookson interviewed 14/6/88.
- ¹²¹ S. Honeyman to H. Grisewood 25/9/84; to R. Hague 11/8/74.
- ¹²² Peter Levi interviewed 17/2/91; to T. Stoneburner 20/12/64; to J. Stone 15/3/65; to H. Grisewood 23/6/39.
- ¹²³ V. Tanner interviewed 10/87; Blissett, p. 65.
- ¹²⁴ To T. Stoneburner 16/12/65; E&A 257; S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87; H. Grisewood 4/10/87; V. Tanner interviewed 10/87; Maurice Collis, *Stanley Spencer* (London: Harvell Press, 1962), 157-9; DJ to S. Honeyman interviewed 10/87; Stanley Spencer, *Letters and Writings*, ed. Adrian Glew (London: Tate 2001), p. 193.
- ¹²⁵ V. Turner interviewed 10/87; Blissett, p. 19; Stanley Spencer, *Letters and Writings*, Adrian Glew, ed. (London: Tate Gallery, 2001).
- ¹²⁶ To T. Stoneburner 16/12/65; Robert Buhler (a friend of Spencer) interviewed 15/6/88.
- ¹²⁷ *The Times* 1 July. DJ ms frag. n.d.; DJ interviewed by Jon Silkin 1965.
- ¹²⁸ To H. Sutherland 28/7/52.
- ¹²⁹ To C. Churchill 12/3/39; D Jms frag. n.d. c. 1970; to J. Asquith 8/7/39; to Katherine Asquith 3/8/39.
- ¹³⁰ to V. Wynne-Williams 12/6/64.
- ¹³¹ DJ ms draft n.d., c. 1970; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; to J. Asquith 5/3/40; to K. Asquith 3/8/39; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; J. Asquith interviewed 14/6/86
- ¹³² To K. Asquith 3/8/39; to H. Grisewood 23/12/65; to H. Grisewood 29/12/65.
- ¹³³ To J. Asquith 3/8/39.
- ¹³⁴ To C. Churchill 29/9/39; *DGC* 1775; to J. Asquith 8/7/39.
- ¹³⁵ J. Asquith interviewed 20/6/89; to K. Asquith 3/8/39, 21/9/39, letter draft frag: n.d.
- ¹³⁶ To K. Asquith 3/8/39; ms frag. n.d.; to J. Asquith 3/8/39
- ¹³⁷ To J. Asquith 3/8/39.

Chapter 12 1939-45

In August 1939 Hague persuaded him to come to Pigotts. Apprehensive about war, he brought with him some of the manuscript of *In Parenthesis* and the picture of Prudence to leave in safety. Although he planned a short visit (he left his books and paints in London), he stayed five months. He ‘just lived from day to day’, watching various of the sixteen Pigotts cats and feeling increasingly useless, with ‘no qualifications & messed up’ in a world ‘we may now expect will require efficient practical & strong people.’ ‘I don’t quite see where I fit in now,’ he wrote to Clarissa Churchill, ‘& yet it is intolerable to do nothing. It’s a bore being over-civilized & only wanting to be comfortable.’ He had spent considerable time reading government transcripts of international diplomacy and was sick at heart to think of all the, he thought, opportunities to secure peace that had been missed. He expected that the outbreak of war would be, for him, disastrous. ‘My Nerve thing was gradually getting much better,’ he wrote Bussell, ‘but I don’t see myself ever being well enough to face up to this new & steel type of world we’re in for.’ He was surviving on financial help from friends and on the slow but steady sale of left-over old pictures and rare new ones. War would end all that, he thought, and he had no idea how to earn a living. At Pigotts he was unable to paint but had begun ‘trying’ to further his new ‘book’.¹

He had brought with him Sir John Edward Lloyd’s *A History of the Welsh People*, newly published by Longmans. He was so enthusiastic about it that Burns asked him to review it for the *Tablet*. In his review, which appeared in November, he notes that ‘Welsh history has suffered particularly at the hands of its friends’ who tend to ‘obscure with romanticism the already immensely romantic and tangled story.’ Lloyd debunks such false romanticism without losing the real ‘poignancy ... inherent in the Welsh Story. It is a story that ends, in Lloyd’s account, with the “extinction of native rule” in Llewelyn’s death in Builth Woods, which, Jones writes, ‘finished for all time the political existence of the Welsh people.’ He continues,

The Welsh have watched and made songs by the funeral mounds of their ancestors, and cherish their traditions (and more particularly their language) in spite of virtual extinction, politically, but now even the grey burial-sites have grown a forest of cosmopolitan foliage, and the Welsh genius must of necessity, perhaps, be disincarnate—however real. This would seem to follow, when a people, for whatever causes, is unable in the long run to defend its physical boundaries.

He was unhappy that the Welsh as a whole did not commemorate or remember the terminal date of Llywelyn’s death in 1282. The history of Wales was, for him, a paradigm of real loss

generating imaginative gain, a paradigm with universal relevance owing to the Fall (in Genesis) and resonance with contemporary cultural decline. Politically, about Wales at least, he was a realist. As a nation, Wales no longer existed. ‘In my opinion,’ he wrote to Donald Attwater,

it is largely the continuance of the ‘laws’ of people which gives them a substantial national existence, because the laws form a kind of syncretism of their whole ‘ethos’— ... that seems to me the only point about ‘political’ independence—that it protects ‘cultural’ independence & that is why I think that Dec 10-11 1282 is a crucial date ... of course ‘it had to be’—but I think it unfactual to pretend that it was not a grave event & one that can never be retrieved. It marks a real end to a real thing.

Welshness survived, but Wales, he thought, did not. What most modern Welshmen value as Welsh is largely something else, which includes a large dose of fantasy. This is why he would never be able to summon much enthusiasm for the cause of Welsh Independence. The culture, which alone was real, was already largely gone, as inevitably happens when rulers are slain and laws replaced. It upset him that so much of the Welsh history taught to children in Wales was post-1282, all of which he considered ‘a bloody epilogue, more or less.’² He was nevertheless grateful that the princes of Gwynedd had managed to survive up to Llywelen’s death: otherwise, he later wrote to Valerie Wynne-Williams, ‘there would be no Wales or Welsh language today, we should be like Cornwall, a geographical expression merely’.³ In the mid 1950s he would write to BBC Cardiff urging them to make an annual announcement that this was the anniversary of ‘the termination’ of Welsh independence.⁴

He did not read novels now unless they were about Wales, and, in August, he read Richard Llewellyn's *How Green was my Valley*—sent for review by Stanley Morison, now editor of the *TLS*. Jones’s review appeared anonymously under the title ‘Light from Wales’ (7 Oct 39), his only review of a novel. He continued to think about the novel, recommending it in November to Helen Sutherland as ‘an amazing mixture of terrible & savage things & great tenderness & beauty ... *very* interesting about the beginnings of Socialism & Marxism in Wales & strikes & religion & the loves & hates of these very Welsh Welshmen, an amazing story.’ It haunted his imagination, and would be joined, in the autumn of 1961, by Alexander Cordell’s *Rape of the Fair Country*, a novel about the beginnings of the iron trade in South Wales in the 1830s—‘a *terrifying* book.’ ‘One knew all about it of course, but somehow, in novel form, the awful realities are brought home. God! what a world.’⁵ The despoliation of South Wales in the previous century, and the novels that made it real to him, would provide much of the felt intensity behind the poems set in Wales that he would finish in the 1960s. In one of them a

speaker urges, 'where the dark outcrop / tells on the hidden seam [of coal] / pray for the green valley' (*SL* 63).

At the end of August, Bernard Wall came to Pigotts, and he and Jones paced the kitchen of Petra's cottage, discussing whether there would be war. On the afternoon of 1 September they adjourned to the Red Lion pub in High Wycombe to continue the discussion. It was a warm day, what they would later call 'Hitler's weather'. One of them took up the local paper and saw that the *Luftwaffe* had bombed Poland. They were horrified. Yet the British declaration of war, on the 3rd, caught Jones by surprise and was a heavy blow. It took 'the meaning out of anything.' He was disappointed in Hitler, who he had hoped 'would manage to steel [sic] round this suicide.' It was 'lunacy.' He had 'really *never* thought they would manage to let it happen'—it 'has neither meaning nor shape.' He was appalled by the nonsense printed by the *Daily Mail* about the Germans dropping coloured balloons filled with poison gas for children to pick up. He phoned and wrote to friends. He worried about the pictures still at Glebe Place. He suffered a 'torture of the mind as to the general futility of it all.' It had been much easier in the previous war when he was young with 'a kind of blessed indifference to what happens' and the tranquilizer of immediate engagement and his own increasing military efficiency. On 18 September, he was appalled to read a letter to *The Times* by Sir William Rothenstein promoting the usefulness of the arts in furthering the war effort. This really was 'rotten,' he thought, and he regretted 'how everyone seems to line up and lose all integrity as soon as war starts. I've no doubt he meant well—but surely he might leave it to "the Prince" to use artists as propagandists and not talk nonsense about the arts aiding "the moral effort" of "the cause".'⁶

In late September, Grisewood visited for a few days, and Jones watched him digging in the garden 'vigorously', an activity he himself undertook only under duress and never vigorously. Hague would shame him into digging: 'Come on Dai, for God's sake,' and Jones would move about on the edges of the garden trying to look busy, occasionally wondering at his father's unaccountable love for gardening.⁷

October was cold, and he intended by the end of the month to return to London, where he could secure his pictures and be near his father, but he felt paralyzed, so he lingered at Pigotts. By mid-November he had several times intended to take the train to London but had been unable to do it. His neurosis manifested itself in an 'intolerable fear of being unwell everywhere' but especially on moving trains, from which there was no

escape. With people having to face up to ‘real and grim circumstances’ of war, he felt ‘more ashamed than ever of being futile and invalidish and afraid.’ As an old soldier, he felt especially guilty: ‘I am only a quaking creature, full of fear & useless The *ignominy* of being a nervous wreck is past expression.’⁸

He fretted, read newspaper reports, talked about them with Hague, Wall, and Gill. Living ‘with a leg in both the pre-war & war worlds,’ he felt all acts and situations to be ‘completely *unreal*.’ During these long months of what would be called the phony war, in which there were virtually no land operations, he grew increasingly depressed. Only Stalin had achieved what Jones had hoped for, a non-aggression pact with Germany.⁹

Prudence and her new husband, Guy Branch, visited. Marriage had made her happier, more emotionally stable. Her husband was as restless, charming, and unconventional as she. Jones thought him ‘awfully nice.’ They were intensely happy, living in a flat in Pimlico. Branch was now a pilot in Fighter Command based at Tangmere. (The one officer in his squadron whom she liked, Flying Officer Peacock, she renamed ‘Peeing Officer Flycock.’) He was called back to base the next day, she argued with Laurie Cribb, everyone became very drunk except Jones who was, she records, ‘gentle & sober,’ and, after Joan went to bed, Prudence somehow cooked supper sitting on the floor and then walked into the woods where she sang herself to sleep.¹⁰

Jones watched the woods round Pigotts change from deep green to ‘yellow ochre and burnt sienna & pallid dun colour.’ In October, he granted a request from Herbert Read for permission to include in an anthology for servicemen a section of *In Parenthesis* (pp 18-24). In November he read the eighteenth century Protestant mystic William Law and was surprised at Law referring to Christ as ‘Bright & Morning Star’ and ‘the Firstborn of all Creatures’—both titles of Lucifer. Calling Christ a creature was, Jones said, ‘the sort of mistake that even the stupidest Catholic would avoid.’¹¹

He read aloud his new writing to Grisewood when he visited Pigotts. It was tentatively called ‘Conversations at the time of the Passion.’ Some of it seems to have been influenced by the stream-of-consciousness method of Joyce’s *Ulysses*. Grisewood remembered:

David was not happy at what he had written. In fact, I think as a consequence of speaking the text aloud his dissatisfaction grew and deepened. My enjoyment of what I heard did nothing to relieve his anxieties. The passages I remember most vividly described a dinner party ... some time after the Crucifixion. It was realistic, witty, satirical, more in the style of a novel than of epic poetry. The characterization especially of the women I

thought brilliant. But the terms of my own commendation seemed to set David more steadily against the work than to encourage him.

When Jones later said he had rejected this dinner party, Grisewood asked, 'Why?'

'Because it was too prosy. It was like a novel.'

'Yes, but I thought that was exactly what it ought to be.'

'Well, it lacked poetic texture and intensity, which is all that interests me.'¹² * This was the beginning of thirteen years of writing that would culminate in *The Anathemata*.

For the next three and a half years, he worked on poetry involving Romans stationed in first century Palestine. During his visit to Palestine, he had felt that he ought to be 'moved by this or that' but was not; only now was he feeling 'the full significance' of what he had seen and heard there.'¹³ This confirmed his sense of having what the ancient Welsh called (in translation) 'a peculiarity', in that experiences are 'rather like projectiles that penetrate the earth but are fused to explode some time after'. An experience or series of experiences that had not moved him years before had now begun to 'continuously occupy' his thoughts.¹⁴

Initially he did not intend a single poem or sequence of poems; he simply wrote. From the start and for many years, he would read pieces to Grisewood or let him read them. Their discussions differed from those over *In Parenthesis*, however. Jones was now confident in his literary powers and independently self-critical. He was no longer investigating the art form as a beginner, no longer trying for the first time for language that was contemporary. Now he merely wanted to know whether Grisewood thought parts of it were successful. 'I don't quite know what I'm going to do with this,' he would say, 'but I thought it was rather nice, do you?' He would read a passage and ask, 'What do you think of that? Does it come off?' or 'Sticky? A bit boring?' A year later Grisewood might see the same material but much rewritten. Sometimes Jones read it as finished, not welcoming criticism but just hoping his friend would like it. No longer integral to the process of composition, Grisewood was nevertheless (apart from himself) chief among the

* The writing here admired by Grisewood appears in *RQ*, pp. 155-84. In 1962, Jones would revise this material and write to Grisewood, 'I'm trying to re-write that thing you liked—the dinner party with the old Roman blimp and the girl and the subaltern in Jerusalem at the time of Our Lord's Passion. I used to feel it was crude and impious, but on re-reading it, I think I can make something of it—at least I hope so.'

readers for whom he wrote. He also sent Jones recommendations of works to read and foolscap paper to write on.

Thinking of the first century Roman setting of his writing, in December 1939 Grisewood lent him a copy of *The Octavius*, written by Marcus Minucius Felix, a second century Christian. Jones thought this dialogue between a Christian and a pagan on the promenade at Ostia ‘very interesting & curiously modern, but that Roman world of the upper-classes always seems so very like the world we know about in so many ways, the same kind of mind & scepticism.’¹⁵

He saw the current war as analogous to the second Punic War and wrote, ‘it’s that Roman thing which seems to pervade one’s mind more & more—especially ... the Roman military thing. It all seems *very* near and the “middle ages” further & further away—a kind of, indeed glorious, but incredibly remote interlude—almost a “fairy story” in between* (*I feel we can know little indeed of the ‘inward feeling’ of medieval persons but would have little difficulty with the late Roman persons. So much is the same. Yet, of course, with enormous differences as well.).’¹⁶ In his writing, there would be important symbolic tension between dehumanizing Roman civilization and humane medieval culture.

He disliked reading the letters to *The Times* about the war: ‘It is extraordinary how they become so fanatically mean & worse & worse as the war goes on & even deny *courage* to the enemy, for even if he has no other virtues he has that.’ Although trying to keep fires going for warmth was nearly a full-time occupation, he was also working ‘hard’ on his writing but ‘not with much success.’¹⁷ Feeling more and more depressed, he remained at Pigotts through the phony war until, finally, at the end of December, cold finally drove him to London.

One evening after supper shortly after his return, he was walking with Burns and Grisewood in Berkeley Square past Bourdon Street when they noticed that the Italian Consulate was deserted yet accessible. They climbed over the railing and entered. Going through the rooms they saw a stack of absurdly impressive stationery with the letterhead: *Il Ministro della Cultura Popolare. Appanto per il Duce*. Since Mussolini was now, to them, an absurd Opera Buffo figure, they thought it would be fun to use the stationery to write to friends, so they took as much as they could carry.* Jones would use the back this stationery and, in a few instances, the imprinted side for most of the early drafts of pages 176-78 of *The Anathemata*, pages in which

* This is Grisewood’s memory; less dramatically, Tom Burns remembered them taking the stationery from a waste bin in front of the embassy.

dehumanized utilitarian civilization is exemplified by Roman battering rams. On another occasion about this time, he was in a right-wing Social Credit bookshop near Westminster Abbey when police raided it, and he quickly, successfully made himself scarce.¹⁸

For Christmas 1939, Burns bought himself his first gramophone. To Jones it was ‘rather a new toy.’ They listened to a recording of parts of the Mass in early English polyphony composed by King Henry VI and sung by the Anglican monks of Nashdom Abbey. It was, to Jones, ‘very curious & unusual—I like it more than I can say.’ After Christmas, he returned to Pigotts, caught a ‘beastly cold,’ stayed as much as possible in bed to keep warm and, after recovering, crouched over a fire while writing letters to friends.¹⁹ He resolved never again to return to Pigotts in winter and returned, this time without hesitation, to London.

In addition to warmth, he went to attend his first one-man show, at the Redfern Gallery. The exhibition had been the idea of the gallery-director, Rex Nan Kivell, who had now been exhibiting his pictures for several years.* Running from 4 to 27 January, the solo show consisted of twenty-three paintings unsold from previous exhibits and dating from 1925 through 1933, most from 1929.† Jones had found most of these by searching through the Brockley house. A third of the paintings had been done at Pigotts. One of the best, he thought, was entitled *The Inner Gate*, but they all looked ‘awfully nice,’ he thought, ‘awfully successfully mounted & framed & have never looked so well.’ He enjoyed seeing them together and looking at the differences in technique and treatment, but the exhibit exhausted him: ‘such a lot of talking to countless people about pictures & all that,’ he writes. ‘I was rather out of practice!’ He was disappointed that Prudence and Petra did not come. It was his first show that his father missed, on account of a heart condition and the cold. The exhibition was a remarkable critical and

* In January 1937 the Redfern had exhibited for sale *Sea from Verandah* (£25); in February and March 1937, *Dark Sea* (£25). In February 1937, the Redfern had exhibited ‘Watercolours’ by ten painters, Jones among them. Six of his paintings had been in the show: *Path on the Cliff* (£18), *Sea from a Window* (£25), *Trees* (£25), *Still Life on a Table* (£20), *Elm Row, Hampstead* (£18), and *The Verandah* (£25). Works unsold from this exhibition had been put on show in August-September 1937 and July-October 1938.

† These paintings included: *No 1 Elm Row* (£15), *Fruit on a Table* (£30), *Path by the Cliff* (£18), *The Bay* (£18), *Dessert* (£30), *Veranda by the Sea* (£18), *Cottage at Pigotts* (£25), *Sea from a Window* (£25), *Edge of the Wood* (£18), *Chrysanthemums* (£25), *The Violin* (£30), *Wind in the Window* (£30), *Still Life on a Table* (£28), *The Little Wood* (£18), *Garden in Elm Row* (£15), *Trees by the Lake* (£18), *The Park* (£18), *Bay with Cliffs* (£18), *Pen-y-Maes* (£10), *The Haven* (£8).

commercial success. The critic of *The New Statesman* called *The Violin* and *The Park* ‘astonishing masterpieces’. In the next room were a number of Rouaults, heavy and garish, in striking contrast to Jones’s delicate, ethereal pictures. One critic noted that the Rouaults ‘blare like a military band, shamelessly drowning the rarefied music of a clavichord.’ *The Times* called



1. David Jones, *Violin*, 1932

Jones ‘one of the most original of contemporary English artists.’

During the first days of the exhibition, a curator for the Victoria and Albert Museum named Carl Winter heard Gilbert Spencer describe Jones’s pictures as ‘the productions of a skilful de-control.’ He also heard from Nan Kivell that Jones’s favourite among the works exhibited was *The Violin* (fig. 1), so Winters arranged to purchase it for the V and A.²⁰ In all, watercolours

worth £500 were sold, though not all the pictures had belonged to Jones. This astounding success in the stagnant wartime art market was owing partly to his recent fame as Hawthorndon laureate.

During his month-long stay in London, he visited Hugh Frazer and his mother, Lady Lovet, at her London house. There he met Arnold Toynbee, professor of history at the London School of Economics and a director in the Royal Institute of International Affairs. Toynbee’s monumental multi-volume *Study of History* was now appearing. No record of their conversation survives. Jones would visit the Toynbee flat at 3 Morpeth Terrace on 24 May 1944. On that or another occasion, Fr. Richard Kehoe OP saw him there.²¹ Toynbee had a sense of the vast continuity of history, believed in Spenglerian cycles of the development and decline of civilizations, and had recently acquired a Dawsonian conviction of the cultural centrality of religion, so he and Jones were in considerable agreement.

About this time, however, Jones found himself in disagreeing with him. He read a lecture in which Tonybee contends that there is and will be progress or improvement in religion. Jones

found this ‘more reasonable than supposing a general line of “advance” or “getting better” in the realm of secular culture’ but was unconvinced. He wrote Sutherland,

I think it is all profoundly mysterious & as slippery as an eel. & I am not at all sure that the really important, deep, subtle integrated stuff necessarily is conveyed at all to the ‘next’ period. I rather believe the ‘wind bloweth where it listeth but [thou] cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth’ [John 3:8]. I perhaps think that the arts provide some kind of analogy & it is hard to maintain that the peculiar insight & perfections of this or that expression—archaic Greek, let us say, or Chartres ... or Baroque really *fulfils* itself in later expressions—on the contrary, conditions & genius corresponding to these conditions produce this & that ‘perfection’ at some moment in history & die for all *time*—it is indeed ... this finality-of-oblivion-in-time that makes one believe in ‘an-other-world’ if anything could or does. I mean *one just could* not have the perfections of Durham, the Parthenon, the Ajanta paintings, the air-plane, a Ben [Nicholson], a Cézanne, the 23rd Psalm, ‘Ulysses’ etc in the same physical world—their unity can only be found outside time—inside time they are about as unfitable-in & as mutually destructive as a Red-Indian & a company-promotion. Of course I grant that some periods of religious expression as some periods of secular culture seem to integrate past experiences & find some symmetry—but the intense & single expressions that provide the ingredients for the new symmetry & order are transmuted in the process & the third thing that results is something other. ... a savage without a tomahawk is not ‘better’ than a savage with one. He simply isn’t a savage & the *peculiar perfections* of a state of ‘savagery’ are lost—*ergo* (as the scholastics say) these excellencies can only be resolved ‘in heaven.’

Toynbee, he said, had transferred ‘a belief in “perfectibility” en masse ... from the secular field (which anyone, by now, begins to doubt) to the religious field—I am inclined to think it an illusion in any field & an unwarrantable assumption.’ It is a recent idea, he notes, not present in the writings of antiquity, whether classical or Christian.²²

Wartime London was not as depressing as he had anticipated. ‘I like this black-out,’ he writes, ‘it certainly looks lovely—& its rather mysterious & exciting with all the chaps with their little torches creeping out & disappearing into quickly-shut door ways—but it’s horribly dangerous & when you come out from being indoors you feel you can’t find your way at all & you barge into people & fall over obstructions, a thing I am particularly good at. It’s awfully got the feeling of a besieged town & a very *real* feeling & it’s nice that all the advertisement signs & all the commercial electric displays have vanished.’ Now he very much liked seeing so many in military uniform. Snow fell heavily in mid and late January, adding to the beauty of London in the blackout but keeping him indoors. (Snow made him ‘feel rather *peculiar* ... a bit like some chaps seem to feel in thundery weather ... a kind of ill-at-ease feeling almost of foreboding’. He wondered

whether others felt like this.)²³ When he did venture out, he slipped and sprained an ankle. It was the same swelling and pain that had got him into trouble in Limerick in 1918, but now the pain and lameness were worse. He borrowed from Arthur Pollen a walking stick with a gold band on it. That afforded him some consolation. At Sidmouth, he had felt isolated, ‘a stone in a stream of strangers.’ Now he enjoyed being reunited with friends. Many, including Julian Asquith and Edward Hodgkin, were now servicemen and scattered, though occasionally in London on leave. Fascinated by the similarities and differences between this war and its predecessor, Jones wanted to hear all they could tell him about infantry-drill, training, regimental customs and reputations, army food, army language.²⁴

At the end of January he returned to Sidmouth and again felt exiled from friends. ‘Talking to most people,’ he writes, ‘is like talking to children—one just has to make up appropriate remarks & listen to ‘em babbling away & its jolly frightening I find.’²⁵ He was glad of a visit from Dorothea Travis and her daughter Beatrix, who, staying at the Fort, took him for supper to a restaurant where he and Beatrix suffered an attack of giggles over whether the spinach should be mashed or en branch.²⁶ Throughout most of Lent, he did not go to Mass. Instead, he prayed in his room—not the rosary, which bored him, but by reading the liturgy and Little Office. He preferred this to having the beauty of the liturgy, and its meaning, diminished by the usual poor performance.²⁷ He knew much of the Latin liturgy by heart. Often he read his copy of the Welsh Prayer Book, which would need rebinding in the summer of 1953. (The binder wanted to charge only for materials, but he insisted on paying for the labour as well since ‘all jobs should receive their payment’ and the job was ‘a most good & satisfying piece of work.’)²⁸

On the morning of 18 March 1940, he read in *The Times* that Mussolini and Hitler were meeting on the border between Italy and Germany, at the Brenner Pass, and that, because Italy was neutral, the meeting might bring about an end to the war. The journalist contends that Hitler seems about to embark on a ‘peace drive in which he hopes to enlist the support of Italy, the Holy See, and America.’ Moved by new hope, Jones wrote a poem that day, entitled it ‘The Brenner’ (*WP* 79), and the next day sent it to Grisewood ‘as a joke’:

Pius Quinctilius Varus
and the Hercynian
Arminius knew

the *limes Germanicus*
 as the Lord Lancelot knew
 & the implacable Gawain,
 the barrier of the lists,
 but
 in this later day,
 in sleet,
 at the preparation of the *Parasceve*,
 within the prohibited days,
 at the hill-gap,
 Dux,
 the measurer, meets,
 at the apex of time,
 the Hammerer, whose
 strength is in his reins (after the northern fashion).
 Boniface with Barbarossa, both
 (supposing that the shades
 allow them counsel)
 supplicate the Divine Mercy,
 to see to it that the Out-Isles behave with circumspection for
 Jesus Christ's sake, and for yours and mine.

In the accompanying letter, Jones writes about world-leaders, 'I wish & I hope & pray an historical intuition will be granted to those responsible.' His poem supplies a large historical perspective to cool tempers. The poem begins with the historical moment that, Jones had learned from Fr. Roggendorf, determined the difference between Germany and the rest of Europe. The Germanic tribal chief Hermann, called by the Romans Arminius (line 3), was native to the central wooded, mountainous region that ancient writers called 'Hercynian' (line 2). In AD 9 he lured the Roman general Publius Quinctilius Varus (line 1) into the vast, dense Teutoburg forest. There, in a battle lasting three days, he led warriors from a temporary federation of tribes in the destruction of three full Roman legions. This catastrophe for Rome stopped imperial expansion at the Rhine, and, as a result, Germany east of the Rhine remained outside western or Roman Europe. The separation between Romanized and Germanic territories was first bridged in the eighth century by the English Benedictine St Boniface (line 18), who converted the German tribes to 'Roman' Christianity. This conversion made possible the incorporation of what

would become Germany into the Carolingian Empire and, later, into the Holy Roman Empire—of which the German king Frederick ‘Barbarossa’(line 18) would become emperor in the twelfth century. For the poet here, the distinction between German and Roman or post-Roman Europeans is balanced by a long history of religious and cultural communion that ought to discourage people from going to war. So far, opposing sides in the current European conflict have limited themselves to the relative inaction of ‘the phoney war’. Jones hopes there will still be time to make peace. And ‘the prohibited days’(line 12) of Lenten fasting and abstinence seem auspicious for restraint and a spirit of conciliation not only in Hitler but also in the British ‘Out-Isles’ (line 23), which Jones hopes will be receptive to a peace initiative. He remembers well the German peace overtures of December 1916, which, to his own sorrow then and that of other foot soldiers, Britain and France rejected as insincere. In the spring of 1940, however, there would be no peace proposals from Germany. Ensuing events would prove Hitler to be a ‘Hammerer’ indeed (line 16), but unrestrained, one whose strength lay not at all ‘in his reins’ (line 17, cf. Psalm 26:2). When writing the poem, Jones was sharing an optimism that was widespread but fleeting. He never intended this poem to be published, and it was almost immediately unpublishable. Quickly and increasingly the ennobling epithets for the dictators become politically and rhetorically inappropriate, and so, as an occasional poem this is dated—or, rather, obsolete. But however unacceptable some of its imagery and rhetoric remains, even today the underlying vision of ‘The Brenner’ is benign and valid. It is a broad, inclusive historical and cultural vision that, in greater elaboration, will inform *The Anathemata*.

Grisewood visited Sidmouth for Easter on 2 March 1940. and he and Jones talked about the progress of the war, one which Jones thought was essentially ‘two “cities” in siege.’ His hope for a negotiated peace throughout the phony war come to a violent end with the German invasions of neutral Holland, Belgium, Denmark, and Norway. He now had no doubt whatever that Britain had to fight Germany and had better win the war. He was anxious about tactics. He wished the Allies could have broken through at Narvik in May to outflank the Germans. He worried that the rapid movements of the furiously mechanized war would not allow time for the traditional English strategy of ‘hanging-on

& recovering & then striking-back.’²⁹ He worried about a German invasion separating him from his father in London.

About Churchill he was ambiguous. He had no doubt about his courage and determination but objected to his rhetoric—‘as out of period as an Academy picture’ and ‘if one is “since Cézanne”—one just is not impressed—indeed one is exasperated & frightened by it rather.’ He hoped that with respect to the conduct of the war ‘the old bugger’ was more a man of the present ‘than he is generally speaking.’ Yet he thought that when informing the Commons of war-operations Churchill was impressive—though some of the news was ‘unnerving.’³⁰ His admiration for him increased as the war continued.

He was upset that so few had what he called ‘a contemporary mind’—which for him meant an honesty free of the ‘dope’ of sentimentality, scape-goatism, and rhetorical self-indulgence. Listening to Harold Nicholson on the radio appalled him—it was no better than the talk he heard in pubs. It seemed to him that he and Grisewood and a few other friends were rare in enduring the present ‘without any dope at all.’ He could not bear talking about the war with most people and loathed ‘the stupidity and vulgarity’ of the rhetoric of hatred in the press and political speeches.³¹

He saw the war as ending a period of important intellectual and aesthetic achievement and inaugurating a moralistic false simplicity in the general level of public discussion. He writes Grisewood:

the *real* problems are only shelved for a thousand years may be. ... It is far easier it appears to get the human race to face high explosives (& anything else they like to invent) than to get it to face an elementary philosophic or aesthetic proposition—the awful mental slackness & sluggishness that can accompany dazzling physical courage is really a knock-out. Things always seem to get cut off in the most interesting moment of development. It would be nice to get one set of experiences settled & be able to pass on to a subtler & more developed set of perfections but no—it’s never possible in this world Thank God Joyce did his stuff—*only just in time* it would seem.... As you know in a way I’m neither shocked nor surprised by this eclipse of all our world—less than most, perhaps, but I *do* want to keep my head & not forget. I already think I see signs of chaps ratting. I feel spasms of it in a subtle way myself. ... We have known what it is to have civilized sensibilities, & my belief is that in these heightened moments we were nearer the ‘truth’ than at any other time. I only want to remember that if in some future agonizing situation one is tempted to say ‘ah, well, here is *real* stuff—how much better than the Cézanne-appreciating-gin-&-lime & Jung & Doris-in-cellophane of the twenties’—I only hope that we don’t capitulate to the moralists & deny the things perceived in those days.³²

In his role as advisor on what to read apropos Jones's Roman writing, on a visit in April Grisewood had given him W.F. Jackson Knight's *Cumaean Gates*, which Jones read with joyful astonishment. He was convinced that it is 'a *very important* book' although it had been in print for four years and 'we never so much as heard about it!'

It seems to me that Mr Jackson Knight is a rare bird—for one thing he knows what poetry is & what it is not—or at least poetry in our sense. I am most grateful to you for giving it to me. It is in every way exciting. The last chapter is full of things that hit the nail on the head. ... Every now & again as I read I felt confirmation of this or that & of course it all bears very much on the thing I'm trying to write. ... if there were one or two more Jackson Knights who combined real slap-up scholarship with a nose for the pattern & external correspondence of this with that it would be jolly nice & helpful. ... 3 bloody great cheers anyway for Jackson Knight & 2 Alleluias & a Heil.

Nowhere does he write with such enthusiasm about other book, even *Finnegans Wake*. *Cumaean Gates* 'verified and supported' with scholarship what he half-knew and 'instinctively felt' about primitive men, their art, and events behind the Homeric epics. A brilliant synthesis of archaeology and cultural anthropology, Knight's great work concerns pre-classical mother-goddesses, ritual labyrinths, tomb mazes, maze dances, ritual circles, the affinity of all these to the walled city of Troy, and all of this as influencing Book 6 of the *Aeneid*. More even than Dawson's *Age of the Gods*, this book would contribute importantly to the content and shape of *The Anathemata*. Jones especially liked Knight's final sentence about 'proper poets having "to *know* and *say* while others could only *be*.'" That, he thought, was the simple and exact truth about the artist. He also enthusiastically endorsed Knight's assertion that Rome went wrong when, in its civilization, the male principle forsook the female principle. The one disturbing thing about the book was a citation of a work Jones had read by Dorothea Chaplin which asserts bogus relationships between Hindu and Celtic myth.³³

Reading *Cumaean Gates* prompted him carefully to reread *Mort Darthur* and to read Lucy Paton's *Sir Lancelot of the Lake*, a translation of Malory's French sources. He found Malory 'an inexhaustible mine—I had missed so much in spite of some years desultory rereading of that stuff.' He felt that now at last he understood the Lancelot story.

It is all an amazing business—wheels within wheels. There are some glorious passages in the French prose Lancelot that Malory misses altogether. & the layer on layer of universal 'Initiation Myth', Celtic or Celticized

folk-stuff, possible bits of 'history' (in proper names at all events), mediaeval Xtian symbolism (purely French), sex interest in the Romance sense, the beginnings of the novel, all dovetailed & superimposed.

He writes to Joan Hague asking her to send Bertram Lewis's *Arthurian Myth and Classical Romance*, which he had read skeptically but now thought 'his theory may well be very near the mark after all.'³⁴

While doing all this reading, he shifted from writing to trying to paint 'some houses opposite' his room at the Fort '& a squint of sea.' Grisewood was sending him hot-pressed Royal Whatman paper, twelve sheets at a time, to paint on. Jones wrote to him, 'I'm getting really frightened' that I've lost my "thing" in painting. Can't make the bloody thing work.... Perhaps its trying to write & paint at the same time—bugger it—I hope it comes back.' 'Distracted & exhausted,' he nevertheless produced a few pictures, one bought by a friend, which Jones was glad to sell because he needed the money. It was now taking him much longer to paint a picture, he found. He was trying to 'get up some sort of stride again' and ignore the war. He found himself succumbing to 'that dreadful afternoon fatigue that Sidmouth is renowned for.' He was delighted to see here Gilbert Spencer and his wife and child—whom he visited in their lodgings. But they stayed only for a short time.³⁵

He intended to return to London in the third week of April but a week earlier came down with acute appendicitis, initially misdiagnosed as indigestion. When the pain became extreme, he was rushed to hospital for an emergency operation. A nurse asked whether he minded her shaving his abdomen, since no male orderly was available. He replied 'No, do it. I am in such damned awful pain that the sooner that blade is used the better.' A priest was summoned and gave him the last rites. At midnight a surgeon arrived from Exeter and operated just in time to save his life. The appendicitis and its aftermath lifted his depression. Writing to Charles Burns, he confided that he would prefer the operation 'a dozen times to one bad assault on the "nervous system."' When doctors told him he would be 'better than ever', he wondered what that was supposed to mean. Maybe his emotional health would improve as a consequence of 'having this poison trap ... removed.'³⁶

As he recovered, he became interested in hospital culture and his part in it. The hospital was a world of its own. The nurses were nice though busy. He was an easy patient, accommodating, considerate. By his bed was a radio earphone, which enabled him to listen to news of the conflict in northern France. He had a vivid sense of the suffering of the combatants

but found it hard imagining this new kind of war, ‘stupendous’ and of ‘lunatic proportions’ that rendered words like ‘pain’ and ‘sacrifice’ nearly meaningless. The familiar placenames on the radio, the smell of the hospital, the white iron bedstead, and the busy nurses brought back to him ‘curiously & uncannily’ his times in hospital during the previous war. He remained hospitalized and in bed for a month. His doctor’s daughter lent him a translation of Virgil, which disappointed him owing, he supposed, to the translation, but he was glad to read for the first time Virgil’s presumed prophecy of the coming of Christ in Eclogue IV.* His father visited. So did Tom Burns with Ann Bowes-Lyon. Olivia Plunkett Green wrote to him. His medical expenses probably wiped out earnings from his recent exhibition. Of these, he had not received much. Nan Kivell had explained to him that ‘chaps buy pictures & don’t pay for them for months & months & months—and you don’t get a bean from the dealers until the buyers shell out.’ It had not yet registered with Jones that even when buyers did pay, Nan Kivell was disinclined to pass-on the artist’s share of the money.³⁷

Jones left the hospital on 15 May and returned to the Fort, but his legs were weak and he stayed in bed a further seven days. Then he made brief forays outside. He had been told to take a little walk each day and sit in the sun, which he did but found ‘in practice ... intolerable.’ Feeling half-alive, his belly bound in five yards of elastic bandage, wearing his winter coat, hat, and scarf, he struggled along on the crowded sunlit promenade, anomalous among sun-bathers. The exercise was ‘almost unendurable.’ He was soon forced by rising prices to move to a small room at the back of the hotel which he found ‘sweltering’. There he listened to the mowing of the cricket pitch, ‘that inimitable rattle & grass smell that England knows at this time of year & even in this year.’ Worry over the war made him unable to paint or write, though he eventually managed to finish a watercolour of the wet promenade as seen from his window.³⁸

He listened to radio reports in the lounge at the Fort. In early June, allied hopes were revived by the dismissal by General Maxime Weygand of the French commander Maurice Gamelin, whose strategy had consisted solely of manning the Maginot Line. In mid-June, Jones heard from a visitor an anecdote he subsequently enjoyed repeating: a passenger in a taxi says,

* In 1949 he would make a picture entitled *Eclogue IV*, in which an angel in Roman dress appears to three shepherds sitting in a small corral, like soldiers in a sand-bagged trench. One of the shepherds has on his knee the works of Virgil opened to ‘Eclogue IV.’, Jones said, ‘The angel is saying that’s all bloody well ok.’

‘Weygand will put things right. Weygand’s got something up his sleeve’ and the taxi-driver replies, ‘I tell you what Weygand’s got up his sleeve; he’s got his bloody arm up his sleeve.’³⁹

Jones followed the war closely in the papers, his favourite war correspondent being the one writing for *The Times*. He wrote to Grisewood, ‘he always confirms what I’ve felt—God, that sounds bleeding presumptuous—but I can’t help it. He’s always been *aware* of what was likely to happen for a very long time—before the war.... I remember months & months ago he compared the French & enemy defensive tactics in depth & also the offensive tactics—& showed clearly what flexibility the enemy theory had & how more initiative was allowed to local commanders etc.’ ‘More than ever’ Jones regretted the going of Edward VIII.⁴⁰

About the political situation, he thought Douglas Woodruff’s editorials in the *Tablet* ‘the *only reasonable* press comments’. Woodruff wrote about Germany as an international pariah bent on enslaving the continent, about the experience and trustworthiness of Churchill and the vigorous government he gathered round him, about the dangers of Communism, and in praise of Chamberlain for friendliness towards Franco’s Spain which encouraged it to preserve neutrality. He wrote that the war was now a battle for time, Britain and France enduring the Nazi onslaught in order, when the time came, to strike back. Aside from the titanic dimensions of combat, which staggered the imagination, Jones worried about the speed of the action, which might keep British amateurishness from being as effective as in former wars. In the coming months, he would value the *New English Weekly* as, apart from the *Tablet*, the only newspaper in the country to allow independent thought. Reading other newspapers, he was perturbed by ‘all the old boring, dreary hypocrisies & half-lies.’⁴¹

He had done two pictures, but the war news was now totally distracting and made his current writing ‘seem puerile.’ Like most people, he was deeply impressed by the evacuation in early June of 340,000 British troops from Dunkirk largely by small craft from along the English coast as far west as Sidmouth. ‘It really has a legendary thing about it,’ he writes. ‘The mist & the calm sea & multitude of craft all seem fabulous & suggestive of contention among the gods & fates—like Juno effecting so & so for her beloved Carthage & Venus demanding of Zeus so & so for the despairing Trojans.’ Yet it was also so ordinary, ‘the puddle-boats that saved the army in the straits’ at one with the cricket match outside his window between the Sidmouth eleven and Taunton School, which ‘is winning this game & the old men are clapping like mad & mopping their dripping foreheads.’⁴²

The first evacuees from Dunkirk began appearing in the pubs in Sidmouth on 3 June. He met some. Having crossed the channel in an open boat, they were stationed at a nearby camp. 'For the first time,' he wrote, 'I saw what a real defeat on a large scale could do to men ... and I must say I was somewhat alarmed.'

One I remember I was having a drink with kept on saying 'Christ! Jerry is hot, Jerry is hot! You never saw nothing like it in your war, mate, nothing at all.' 'Have another drink,' I said & 'What about equipment, ammuniton, rifles?' 'Dumped, mate—all bloody well dumped of course.' He said he was lucky to get away with the tunic & trousers he was then standing in, then back to 'Jerry is hot Christ Jerry is hot.' It was so untypical, not a vestige of the wry humour that usually managed to assert itself in the most grim situations.

Jones was now getting used to the prospect of an invasion, whereas, he wrote, 'the very idea of Jerry in the Channel ports would have made one's hair stand on end a month or so ago.'⁴³

On 14 June the Germans took Paris. Jones was appalled at the utter failure of the French to defend themselves. (Five years later, he would read an account of the Franco-Prussian War and be convinced that even in 1870 'the French were clearly already down the drain.') The fall of France stunned him. Only gradually could he take it in. He thought continually of the affection for 'sweet France' expressed throughout *The Song of Roland* and remembered Archbishop Turpin's words about the inevitability of sorrow. He wrote Grisewood, 'One is beginning to understand how in the great historic calamities that fell upon Empires—how until the last minute chaps "carried on" as though all were as it had been—Augustine writing *De Civitate Dei* with the Vandals a few miles off & all that—perhaps it was not "heroic virtue" but that he did not quite take it in!' His appendectomy having left him anxious and irritable, he resented 'all the blazing lunacy the human race has embarked upon' and continued to be appalled that the speeches of British politicians showed no more understanding than conversations he had in the saloon bar.⁴⁴

Rising rent forced him to move within the Fort to increasingly less expensive rooms until, in June, he occupied what had been a litter room. He may have owed rent. He would leave Sidmouth owing money to Dr. Lightwood, his physician.* He would later write to Grisewood, 'I hope they don't run after you in street & market-places saying 'Friends of Jones the debtor.'⁴⁵

* From 20 May 1936 to 6 May 1939, Jones had fifty-one medical appointments: seven with Woods, two with Charles Burns, and most of the rest with Lightwood, his doctor in Sidmouth.



2. Margaret Bailey, c. 1938

Grisewood had been courting a beautiful tall twenty-three-year-old blue-eyed blonde named Margaret Bailey. They had known each other since 1937. She was in love with him but thought he would never marry. To free herself emotionally, she went for a year-and-a-half to Montreal and Toronto, working for the cosmetic firm of Elizabeth Arden. In early 1939 she returned to England, took a small job at the BBC, and resumed her relationship with Grisewood, who proposed marriage (on his knees in a taxi) and was accepted. She had continued working for Elizabeth Arden, and, near Sidmouth on assignment in June 1940, stopped at the Fort for a night to see Jones. He wrote to Grisewood:

She turned up out of the blue one hot evening. I was delighted to see her.... What a most beautiful person she is & so terribly nice too. She is just like one of our

goddesses of Antiquity come to visit the lower zone. It was scorching hot the week-end she came & she seemed to like that & bathed a good bit. I refused to leave the hotel until sundown it was so hot—but we sat about & talked & had a drink & said how heavenly it would be if you were here too. I also went to spend part of a day with her in Exeter—my first venture forth since the operation.

Jones asked her to play the piano in the lounge, and she played for him Schubert's Impromptu in B Flat and some Chopin, which, she would remember, he liked, though she had the impression that he was not much interested in music.⁴⁶

Jones felt that since he was of no use in the war effort he ought to 'get on with' his 'own stuff—but here of course Rosy steps in.' He had been living on picture-sales from his January exhibition and £22 from the more recent sale, plus a monthly subsidy of £21, which had been organized by Tom Burns and included five guineas a month from

Helen Sutherland, who also occasionally ‘lent’ Jones money, asking for half repayment, and sent him to her dentist at her expense. It cost Jones to live on average £6 a week. But paying medical expenses meant he could not afford rent. * ‘Jesus,’ he wrote Burns, ‘this money thing, that’s what really worries me—I can’t see how I can *get any more ever!* ... It really is a jamb or will be pretty soon I must say “economics” are as important as Marx said—he merely truncated the hierarchy of Being.’ A Welsh friend, Charles Evans, wanted him to come live with him and his new bride. Helen Sutherland, invited him to stay with her at Rock. But a German invasion seemed likely. To avoid being cut off from his father, on Burn’s advice, he returned to London in July.⁴⁷ He would never return to Sidmouth, never look again at the sea.

He was now in full possession at the Glebe Place flat, Burns having gone to Spain. Shortly before war was declared, Burns was recruited into the Ministry of Information under Douglas Woodruff. In June he had gone to Madrid, expecting to return in a month and keeping the flat and the services of his maid. Postponing his return, he asked Jones to look after Ann Bowes-Lyon, now working as a V.A.D. nurse. Sad at Burns’s absence, she visited in the evening when on day duty. Soon she became a Red Cross Nurse stationed in Aldershot and then Woolwich but saw Jones when in London. When she and he were sitting together on a couch, he touched the inside of her wrist and told her, ‘This is the most beautiful part of a woman’s body.’ Except for three visits on leave, Burns would not return to London until after the war. He was soon First Secretary and Press Attaché in the embassy, assigned to promoting the continued neutrality of Spain. From Spain he sent Jones a subsidy of a quid per week.⁴⁸

Shortly after returning to Glebe Place, Jones went to a tea party at the Woodruffs, at which he began speculating aloud about how precisely Hitler would invade. Other guests were appalled, and Mia Woodruff hushed him, whispering that such talk might be considered treasonous. But he was simply interested in strategy. The German conquest of Europe was virtually complete and, he thought, might well include Britain, as it had

* In an undated letter early in the war, Helen Sutherland writes to him that she is sending ‘63 pounds a year which is 5 guineas monthly & I think together with Tom’s fund this makes 21-10-0 a month and 4-19-1 $\frac{3}{4}$ to be exact! weekly—just under 5 pounds—I think & hope that shd be a possible sum?? with perhaps occasional earnings etc behind it?’

during the Anglo-Saxon conquest. He regarded contemporary German expansionism as continuous with that earlier conquest. Again the peoples east of the Rhine were moving. Again, he thought, events might result in a Dark Age, out of which a new Europe would eventually be born, but such a Dark Age would be calamitous. He knew that the Nazis were un-Christian and anti-Catholic. German expansion would brutally end his world as previously it had that of the Romans.⁴⁹ Woodruff had expressed the same view. Both thought that eventually a new, larger Germany might become favourable to Christianity. Hitler would then have been like the great barbarian chieftains inaugurating what eventually became the Christian Middle Ages. A Diocletian (Hitler) might eventually be succeeded by a Constantine. Jones also associated the Germans with the Dorians, whose conquest of Greece initiated an ancient Dark Age that ended in flowering of Classical culture in the sixth century BC. (About the poet Pindar, he would write to Grisewood on 14 Aug 1951: 'He was a Dorian wasn't he. Heil!')

In a review of Hague's translation of *The Song of Roland* (*Tablet*, 24 December 1938), he writes, 'we are witnesses of a resurgence of the 'cult-hero' (in however ominous a form and with whatever violence of expression).' He sees in fascist devotion to 'a sacred consanguinity ... a common soil' an 'aboriginal validity' and something akin to the 'urgency that lovers know It derives too much from the bowels to be amenable to ethical or legal arguments' but may conceivably be the vehicle, as Roman brutality was, of a new Christian culture. 'It is, conceivably, for a baptized Fuhrership that we may yet have cause to pray' (*DG* 99-100). In this hope he was following Spengler, who, 'in spite of his "Germanic gloom", and his acute consciousness of the coming nemesis of the West, ... held out the hope that some new beginning might slough off our obsession, 'avid of speed and power,' and that there might be, somewhere, somehow, a new springtime.'⁵⁰

Although he dreaded a new German conquest, the possibility had for him the appeal of a clean sweep, replacing post-Renaissance civilization, which he thought decadent. At times and with close friends he would go so far as to say, 'Better a German civilization than no civilization at all.'⁵¹ Taking the long view was characteristic of him.

At Glebe Place, he drank Burns's Haig whisky and listened to Burns's records, including 'the "Air on G String" ...—it is *heavenly*, utterly complete ... What a bloke.

Good old Bach’—and read Burns’s books, including Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Master of Ballantrae*, a favourite of Prudence which he, too, liked. He bought food. Without financial help from friends, mostly Burns and Sutherland, he would have had to live with his father in Brockley. In July he saw Mike Richey, who, in deference to his father, had overcome pacifist scruples to serve in the navy, non-aggressively but dangerously, as a rating on a minesweeper. He was home on leave looking ‘like a young



3. Douglas Woodruff, c. 1940

lion with a blue anchor tattooed on his vast & hairy fore-arm.’ He hoped to avoid becoming an officer and discussed this with Jones, who told him, ‘It’s no use, Mike, they’ll force you to take a commission.’ Eventually they did, and he became a navigation officer and captain. Jones was fascinated by the craft of sailing and, when they met, talked about *Moby Dick* and Dana’s *Two Years before the Mast*. He had dinner more often with the Woodruffs and began liking Woodruff ‘more and more,’ finding him ‘so humble underneath that somewhat forbidding exterior that I used to dislike a lot.’ He did not much like Woodruff’s wife, Mia, a granddaughter of Lord Acton inclined to sarcasm. But he admired her for seeming to find the war ‘absolutely her cup of tea, ... this affair of coping, raids & Co.’ Throughout the war, he visited them for lunch and stayed for drinks through the afternoon. He saw Dawson whenever Dawson was in London, and Grisewood ‘whenever possible.’ Each evening he pulled shades to ‘do the blackout.’ He was writing ‘& quite cheerful mostly for some unaccountable reason.’⁵²

The Luftwaffe bombed London on 7 September and for every night through 2 November and occasionally thereafter. By December there would be 23,000 civilian casualties. Jones soon got used to nighttime air raids and warnings, not minding them as long as he could sleep. He enjoyed the company of Burns’s maid, Ethel, ‘a marvellous person & bloody philosophical’ about the air raids. Twice a day he went to a pub—the Six Bells in the King’s Road or, less frequently, the Eight Bells on the embankment—where he met and talked with artists. One was Charles Vyse, whose Cheyne Walk pottery studio was bombed. Another was Mervyn Peake, a Welsh draftsman and teacher at Westminster School of Art, who, in 1937, had sketched Jones in charcoal, pensive, cigarette in poised hand, handkerchief stuffed into his raised sleeve. He disliked Peake’s

drawings but thought him a 'bloody nice chap' and continued seeing him during the war years. Occasionally in the evenings and usually on Sundays, he met Grisewood at the Six Bells, sometimes with Margaret. He frequently visited them at Grisewood's mezzanine flat at 61 King's Road. To Jones, Margaret had 'something slightly American about her' because of having lived in Canada and, he said, 'she always looks as though she had come straight out of a bath & no dirt seems, under any circumstances, to fall on her clothes.'⁵³

In early August, Jones visited Prudence, who was in a hospital owing to partial paralysis attributed to war stress. He reported to Burns, 'She is bloody angry about it, which is so nice ... her spirit is of the Gods, & no mistake.' Her husband had been shot down on 11 August and was presumed dead but had turned up alive and was now flying again. On 14 August, Jones went to visit her but was turned away. Three days before, her husband had been shot down a second time, piloting a twin-engined Blenheim over the Channel during an attack on shipping. Again he was missing. 'Isn't it *too* awful—poor poor poor Prudence.' He was told not to visit 'for a few days.' Throughout August he returned several times, always to be turned away by a Welsh nurse 'with a lovely face & a lovelier voice' who said Prudence was getting 'a little better' and was hoping her husband had been rescued by an 'E' boat or had reached the French coast. Jones came down with flu, stayed in bed for ten days, then in September visited the hospital once more and was again turned away. As the Blitz worsened, he gave up trying to visit. After leaving the hospital and spending some weeks with Miriam Rothschild at Bury Manor near Pulborough, she would stay with him for a few days in October, clinging to the hope that her husband was a prisoner of war. It would be 'terrible' for Jones 'to see her distress.'⁵⁴

He visited his father in Brockley sometimes with Louis Bussell. No bombs had yet fallen there, but the gunfire was loud, the suburb being on the edge of the barrage-belt. Jones tried hard to convince his father to go to Chester, but he refused and was 'patient and happy' 'confident & content,' spending 'a certain amount of time in a neighbour's dug-out.' Jones was impressed by his father living 'interiorly & truly like old man Enoch "with God", it's amazing—I wish I knew how it was done.' One Sunday,

Grisewood and Margaret accompanied him to Brockley to Mass at St. Mary Magdalene's and afterwards to visit his father.⁵⁵

On 6 August he went to the wedding of Hugh Fraser's sister Veronica, which was 'extra grand, with naval ratings to pull the car down the street. Veronica looked heavenly,' he wrote to Burns—she 'hasn't half got nice eyes, *apart from anything else*.' Ronald Knox celebrated the Mass and Vincent McNabb officiated at the wedding. Afterwards, Jones had 'a nice wet of bubbly at Tite Street' with the Woodruffs, and lunch with Helen Asquith. Belloc, too, was there, looking much aged to Jones, who had not seen him in years.⁵⁶

Throughout August, the Blitz meant for Jones 'wailing sirens at odd times day or night' with the 'distant bumps' of bombing audible elsewhere, in the dockyards and adjacent residential areas. So far, Chelsea had received only warnings. He lay at night listening to the 'low whine & dull thud away in the distance,' sounds he had not heard since 1918 and which reminded him of his 'first shell in Xmas 1915.' 'The human race' would never, he thought, 'get adjusted to "explosions".' So far, he was reminded only of reserve billets, miles behind the line, 'where one was liable to be bombed by air-planes especially at night & where one was continually being disturbed by "warnings".' On the 15th, a weekday, he went to the Mass of the Assumption at Westminster Cathedral. In late August, he was in bed with flu and wanted above all to be able to sleep. In addition to the irritating air-raid warnings, there were fleas, brought into the flat by Burns's cat. In bed he read Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite on the *Divine Names*, which he thought 'the cat's whiskers Three cheers for Denis & the Greek mind.' On 28 August he wrote that the 'balloon barrage is very high in the sky as though the battlements of London were in heaven (as I devoutly hope they may be).'⁵⁷

After recovering from flu, he went to dinner with Grisewood and the Woodruffs. Mia fell asleep, as she usually did, while Jones, Grisewood, and Woodruff 'talked like hell.'⁵⁸ After Jones spoke at length about Wales and Arthur, Woodruff asked him to write an essay on the subject for a collection he was editing to honour Belloc. Jones worked on it intermittently through most of the next year and called it 'The Myth of Arthur'. He would rework and expand it fifteen years later. It would be one of his most important essays

(*E&A*, 212-259), rich in implication for the relationship of his poetry to the Matter of Britain and, itself, an important modern contribution to that tradition.

Whether he was inside or out walking, he paid little attention to air-raid warnings. At night he was 'sure the thing to do' was 'to accept the possibility of a stray bomb' and 'get curly in bed in the ordinary way.' 'Of course,' he wrote Burns, 'there are the sort of dug-out "fans" who sit for hours in them. Gosh, it must be *awful* to *be* with chaps who try & make one creep down in a bloody shelter when the old siren goes—merely get a bloody cold & no sleep!' He thought, however, that 'some of the shelters & protective works' looked 'jolly nice—real construction—& with purpose—hence a stripping off of all the commercial frills & horribleness.' On Sunday, 1 September, he and Grisewood went to 11 o'clock Mass at Holy Redeemer Church in Cheyne Row, but the service was postponed because of a raid, so they walked along the embankment until the all-clear. Jones was beginning to find it '*bloody* annoying when these fucking sirens go just when you want to get somewhere, or get away from somewhere! Sometimes the busses stop & sometimes they don't.'⁵⁹

In the second week of September the Blitz came to Chelsea, which ceased being like reserve billets; now it was 'reserve lineish' (a few hundred yards behind the forward trench). 3 Glebe Place remained intact, but the street immediately to the west was badly damaged. A bomb went into Holy Redeemer Church through a basement window, killing people in the crypt but doing little damage to the building. An incendiary bomb hit the 'lamentable restaurant' on the corner at the King's Road but caused little damage. Neither Jones nor Grisewood could understand the bombing strategically since it was without 'shape' or follow-up. They had thought aerial bombing would be much more effective, but few of the obvious targets were hit, and it seemed to Jones 'more a nuisance than anything else.' When kept awake at night, as he often was now, he drank whisky. When the bombing seemed 'extra lively & nearish,' he got up and walked about a bit. 'It is all very phantastical now—this curious compound of ordinary private life in the old haunts & setting & clothes & everything, mixed up with this violent stuff, I find it most odd. I mean one feels there ought to be a fire-step where the chair is & for the elegant corner cupboard a recess for hand-grenades.' What most bothered him was the sound of a German bomber flying low. 'That damned engine sound is almost the *most* nasty noise

for getting on the nerves. You always think the bugger is going to release his bomb just over you.’⁶⁰ To Helen Sutherland he wrote, ‘it is an odd experience being here in one’s own haunts with all the familiar civilian things—and yet be living in circumstances not much removed at some moments from the “Front line”.’ For him, the fixed relationship of space and time were jarred loose—an effect he had also experienced during the previous war and had expressed in Dai Great-coat’s boast in *In Parenthesis*. ‘I am beginning to feel more & more’ he writes, ‘that “time” is a jolly odd thing. Sometimes I feel that the axes at Hastings are still hewing & that Troy has yet to burn or anyway that it might as well be so.’⁶¹

He was now dividing his time between Glebe Place and Grisewood’s flat, where he occasionally spent the night. When Grisewood went to work, Jones often stayed with Margaret. He read and wrote, and they went for walks in old Chelsea Gardens. In early September, he was reading Coleridge’s letters in the Nonesuch selection. ‘God what *real* understanding,’ he writes, ‘one sees how he could write a thing as superb as *Christabel*.’ With Grisewood, he discussed Rabelais, whom he had recently read without much interest, except for that astonishing ‘Joycean “list” technique & play with words—but lacking Joyce’s sensitivity & tenderness & of course also lacking Joyce’s mythological sense & universality—but obviously Joyce did get a certain amount on the technical side from him—I’d never realized that before.’⁶²

Grisewood and Margaret were convinced that he was not cooking for himself (his supper might consist of cold ham, black coffee, and cigarettes), so when he was at Glebe Place, they put metal pots on their heads against shrapnel and carried food to him. When visiting them, he drank whisky and soda and talked over the background noise of gunfire and bomb-blasts—‘sad & bloody business,’ he subsequently commented, ‘but I must admit the rattle of gun-fire was quite a relief after the endless rattle of the voices of politicians.’ For him, as for everyone else, the Blitz was



4. David Jones, *Air-raid Warden*, c. 1940

‘real’, and therefore ‘had its points.’ As he lay awake listening to the great naval guns in Hyde Park, he found it soothing, even delightful to hear the sound once again. Grisewood later remembered Jones listening to the concussion of bombs and anti-aircraft guns and saying, ‘Really good, that’s really good.’ It was music to him. He would walk through the streets at night for a drink or to visit a friend (without a pot on his head) as shrapnel banged down around him. For this old soldier, life was, in a sense, back to normal. He was stirred by civilian heroics, pleased by air-raid wardens in uniform going their rounds, and delighted by beautiful girls wearing steel helmets at jaunty angles. He drew and painted one, in sexually revealing disarray (fig. 4). He had come to London to be near his father but now stayed because he preferred it. The city was less crowded now, and the Blitz brought a return of the comradeship of his military service, a new friendliness between strangers in which class ceased to matter. For him, war was also a holiday from neurosis. While the phony war had depressed him, real warfare relieved depression. As in the front line, life was ‘immediate’. Violence and danger were objective correlative enough for any emotion and a relief from apparently groundless private anxiety. It was as though suffering moved outside. Others, too, experienced this. Hospitals and psychiatrists poised to receive gibbering citizens waited in vain. With most people, the Blitz intensified personal loyalties and occasioned courage. During a visit with the Grays, after an air raid, as they were having hot chocolate about two in the morning, he said to Nicolette, ‘You know, Nicky, we’ll never have it as good as this again.’⁶³

One night at the Grisewood flat while he was reading aloud ‘The Hunting of the Snark’ to Margaret, a near miss blew a bus into a Sainsbury’s window in the King’s Road about fifty yards away. As Grisewood rushed out the door to see what help was needed, Jones—incapable of a neophyte’s zeal—called out, ‘Tell them they can’t bring any of the wounded in here—this dugout’s full up,’ and resumed reading. Another night, he, Grisewood and Margaret were on a bus in the Brompton Road when an air raid began. Jones praised the beauty of green and red German flares floating down in the darkness, and Grisewood and Margaret joined in, but other passengers, disinclined to distinguish between beauty and use and led by an irate army officer, furiously berated them, nearly throwing them off the bus.⁶⁴

He was now living with Harman and Margaret. While they slept on a mattress in the cellar, he slept in the dining room, refusing any concession to prudence except to keep his shoes on. Margaret found him in pyjamas one morning eating breakfast in bed wearing shoes. She asked why he was wearing them. He answered, 'If I am bombed and I am still alive, I'd have to get out on the street, and I don't want to walk on those pavements in my bare feet. There won't be any light, and I don't expect to be able to find my boots in the dark, so I keep them on, and I advise you to do the same.'⁶⁵ He had not lost the appreciation for standing orders that he had gained while searching in the dark for his boots during a furious night-time barrage in October 1917.

Grisewood thought him unperturbed by the bombing, but the truth was not so simple. Jones wrote to Clarissa Churchill, 'I don't mind the actual bombing thing so very much—but I do mind a lot the general outlook & the impossibility of knowing what to do or how to live.' About fear, he confided to Burns, he was 'completely free from it for hours & then, in identical circumstances,' was suddenly afraid and longing 'like anything' for 'some completely invulnerable hole to go to.' It was, to him, 'all a kind of resuscitation, under vastly different & weird & complicated circumstances, of the last war.'⁶⁶

He thought that class accounted for differences in reaction to the bombing. Unlike the upper classes, the lower classes seemed terrified. He felt the difference in himself—'being neither flesh, fowl, or red herring, socially—but having become by one accident or another ... attached ... to the upper classes—yet with my roots among the lower orders (of whom I have great fear & whose reactions I have) and for whom I feel a deep understanding at the same time.' He was convinced that

Rosy herself resides a lot in complex maladjustments of the social order ... there are a million gradations but some of us are caught & transfixed in a more obvious fashion between the 'ruled' and the 'rulers.' I've thought a lot about this & I am certain that it is true, & profoundly affects the whole struggle. It is absurd to say that Winston (for instance) *can* have the same reaction to the dropping of bombs as the people in Surrey Docks, & between those two extremes there are a million gradations—all mainly of an 'economic' nature at root. Death, mutilation, deprivation of every sort comes with a singular disparity on the 'rich' & 'poor'. The very nature of their fear is of a subtly other character. I see this very clearly. ... the Ritz & the Doss house, so far from being united in death, face death with utterly other emotions.'⁶⁷

Whatever the truth of this observation, it suggests an ambiguity in his own interior life.

On the night of 12 September 1940, in Grisewood's flat, in a single sitting 'between 10:30 and midnight' he wrote a wedding poem 'for G & M' and entitled 'Prothalamion'. In it he captures the chaos of the Blitz in a grammatical chaos of fragmented clauses and phrases that are, in the end, drawn into the unity of a single sentence:

At the time of the dooms
 in the third quarter of the Reaper's Moon,
 in the Island of Britain, in Troy Novaunt,
 at the approach of the hateful and evil decision
 at about the inception of the last round, toward
 the time of the ultimate uncovering—when the
 speaking is of no further consequence and naked
 mechanism decides who shall be master.

In flame-lap and split masonry,
 where the high fires leap and the merchandise
 of the merchants, under whatsoever deep
 vaulting, rocks now, knows the blast, feels the
 unpredictable violence. When the poor, in
 ramshackle habitation or flimsy bunk-hole,
 apprehend in their innocent bodies horrors
 unnamed from the foundation of the world.
 When Troy towers are a feeble analogy and
 the Harrying of the North a child's tale, when
 fear rules and bombast pretends to competence.
 Because of the detestable counsel, directly
 because of the merchants' rule. When there is
 hurrying in the streets (these dive where the
 architrave juts—or under any appearance of
 cover). At the time of the howling, in the days
 of the final desolations, at the precise moment
 of the eclipse:

Margaret (gentle as falcon, or
 hawk of the tower) with
 Harman, my sweet friend
 spread in a vault their bed of unity, to mock



5. Harman and Margaret Grisewood, c. 1941

the unmaking.
 So have I heard bird-song, beneath the
 trajectory zone, at Passchendaele, or seen
 flowers lean toward each other, under the sun
 that shined to delineate the hate and mutilation
 of the Forward Area. (*WP* 32-3).

This a remarkable example of what Jones elsewhere calls ‘form-content’, in which form and content are indivisible because shape symbolizes meaning. Preceding the colon after ‘eclipse’ in line 26 is syntactical chaos, a proliferation of twenty prepositional phrases and dependent clauses strung together in seven fragmentary periods. Going nowhere grammatically, they merely accumulate. It is ‘the inception of the last round’ as in a boxing match and with a hint of desperation at running low on ammunition. London is ‘Troy Novaunt’ (line 3), as Geoffrey of Monmouth calls it, and therefore recalls the Ur-catastrophe of western culture, though flaming ‘Troy towers are a feeble analogy’ (line 17). Less remote in time and place relative to the Blitz, ‘the Harrying of the North’ by William the Conqueror in the winter of 1069-70 is a mere ‘child’s tale’ (line 18). Political ‘bombast’ (line 19) homonymously evokes bomb blast. This is ‘the time of the howling’ (line 24), a word powerfully evocative of terror, rage, anguish, or grief, but also designating the sound of air-raid sirens. Margaret’s name evokes John Skelton’s ‘To Mistress Margaret Hussey’, quoted in lines 27–8, in which ‘tower’ is a falconry term meaning soaring vertical flight. ‘Falcon, or / hawk of the tower’ are birds of prey, red in beak and talon but ‘gentle’ because controlled within the order of falconry. The quotation of Skelton affirms traditional literary culture in the face of civilizational collapse which is physical in London of the Blitz, in contrast to the pastoral city of Spenser’s wedding poem of the same name.

The following evening, Jones, Harman, and Margaret drank two bottles of champagne, and he read to them from his ‘new book’ set ‘in the time of the Passion.’ ‘It happened to be a particularly lively night,’ he writes ‘but we barely heard the racket & afterwards slept like anything. H & M down in the cellar under this house in the damp & cold God! they do look funny tucked up on a mattress down in that vault.’⁶⁸

The next day, Saturday the 14th at 12:30, in a civil ceremony, Harman and Margaret married. Jones thought the event ‘great & momentous.’ A quarter of a century later, he would recall it as ‘the registration between the sirens.’ He and a friend of Margaret named Margie Strickland were the witnesses. From the registry office they all went for lunch and champagne to a nearly deserted Hyde Park Hotel. Afterwards, during an air-raid warning in which no bombs fell, they went to the zoo—deserted except for them and the animals, who, to Jones, ‘seemed all to sense some of the insanity of man.’ The wedding party then retired to number 61 for tea. Jones wrote to Burns about Harman, ‘He is so happy & magnificent, it is an exhilaration to behold him. She is so lovely & gentle & heavenly & loves him so much We drank a lot of Champagne & had a heavenly time.’ He gave them for a wedding present one of his best animal drawings, *Agag* (Ch. 9, fig. 2). For him, the wedding was ‘a marvellous exhilaration in the midst of this un-making. Here these two make a thing’—he uses the word ‘thing’ in the sense of the Latin *res*, a reality—‘it is good to have been present at this thing.’ As he had written two days before in his poem, he felt strongly that their marriage counteracted military destruction. Grisewood had to go to the BBC for night duty, so the wedding night belonged to Jones and the bride. For the first night in weeks, there was no raid. The R.A.F. had begun turning back the Luftwaffe, though the anti-aircraft guns would shake the windows through October. Jones spent the night and stayed through the next day and, with shrapnel bursting high above, played Grisewood’s recording of the Sistine Chapel Choir singing the ‘Reproaches.’ On 15 September, he saw, from a window of the flat, a motorcade taking the King and Queen to inspect bomb damage. That evening, after eating ham and some tomato, he played Schubert’s Quintet in C Major, with ‘gun-fire & a plane’ in the background.⁶⁹ The next night a bomb exploded 135 yards away in Smith Street.

On the night of 18 September, he wrote the first draft of a second wedding poem, entitled ‘Epithalamion,’ revising and expanding it over the next few days is basically a chronological list of beautiful women from Helen of Troy to Margaret in the present. In their beauty, they incarnate the goddess Aphrodite. They and their beauty has social contexts, a relationship often of harmony, more often of discomfort, sometimes illustrating radical difference between aesthetics and ethics, a contrast that refuses to

resolve into irony and is, in the poem, the subject of medieval debate (lines 28–44). Even in terrible circumstances beauty delights and therefore, in some sense, redeems, but without in the least diminishing immoral circumstances. That beauty is undiminished emphasizes absence of goodness and underlines the universal poignancy of life, in which loveliness and wickedness quite readily coexist. Here is a seventeenth century Aphrodite walking the quays of Bristol where felons awaiting transportation anticipate the black slave trade, of which Bristol will be a hub, and which Admiral Nelson will vocally support:

Now lavendered and hale she walks
among the spaced and numbered bales
on West-wave quays. (Bristol milk digests the
larks with leverets—but Bristol undercrofts
stifle the wail: O Lord, sever my bonds and
deliver. Who will be our witness but the
blackamoors *in novissimo die*. My Lord what a
morning, for merry England.)
(I show to you a mystery, that the second
Launcelot of our history should have been the
instrument of so large an exploitation.) (*WP* 37-8)

This is a remarkable poem, anticipating *The Anathemata* in historical sweep and allusive density. Jones intended a limited edition of ‘Prothalamion’ and ‘Epithalamion’ to be printed by Hague and distributed to relatives and friends of the Grisewoods. He prepared the final manuscripts with markings and instructions for typing. Grisewood had ‘Prothalamion’ typed, and Jones corrected the typescript. He wrote eighteen endnotes to ‘Epithalamion,’ which remained untyped. Publication was prevented probably by Hague’s having joined the air force and by paper shortage.⁷⁰ Unpublished for the next sixty-two years, these (and especially ‘Epithalamion’) are among the best poems written during the war.

On the 28th, the Grisewoods solemnised their marriage in a religious ceremony at Brompton Oratory. Jones thought the ceremony ‘pretty grim—how bloody the roman Ch can be—they’ve lost all sense of shape, & the significance of their own stuff—the whole thing will have to be started again somehow.’ Afterwards he tried and failed to telephone

his father and became worried, so the three of them went by taxi to Brockley, noticing along the way the ‘*staggering* number of churches hit.’ As he had seen on an earlier visit, Brockley itself had now been heavily bombed. Bombs had destroyed his school, smashed the sanctuary of St. Mary Magdalene’s, and demolished a house next but one to his father’s, causing his father’s ceilings to fall, though his father remained cheerful and refused to move.⁷¹ The view of ranked houses that Jones painted from the back window in *The Suburban Order* (1926) had been terribly altered.

He later remembered, ‘We had some nice times in those somewhat hectic months.’ The Grisewoods were very happy, and Margaret was ‘*heavenly*.’ She would remember Jones then as mostly reading or writing, occasionally drawing or painting, only stopping long enough to have a few drinks, and then ‘he would relax and be very funny.’ They ate together, and he helped with the washing up. She remembered, ‘he used to get a tea towel and walk round the table’ talking ‘and drying one spoon for about an hour.’ Their relationship was extremely affectionate. When Harman was at work, they sometimes went together to one of the nearby pubs and, as they drank and talked, they held hands. She ‘just loved him as a person,’ she later said. To her he seemed not sexual but merely loving and kind.⁷²

Some of their conversation was aesthetic. He liked tapered fingers, which she had. He admired her feet. They ‘are perfectly formed,’ he said. He approved of how she dressed but was critical of her makeup. ‘I know you’re a professional, but you must be careful,’ he said. ‘The current practice of applying lipstick beyond the outer line of lips is horrible. You’ve got to look at the lines of your face, and you mustn’t distort either your eyebrows or your mouth.’ Apart from admiring early medieval Italian painting, Margaret had a conventional appreciation of art, admiring that of the Italian Renaissance, which he disliked. He teased her about being fond of it. She disliked modern art, so he advised her to ‘look at the lines,’ saying that the artists she hated so much could only achieve what they do because they know how to draw well.⁷³

He worried aloud to her about the safety of his pictures, about his sister who had collapsed under the stress of bombing and was living with her eldest daughter at Bath, about whether to keep on Ethel the Glebe Place maid, about his aged father, about his remaining in dangerous Brockley. When lines were down and he could not phone his

father, he worried ‘appallingly.’ But for his father, he might have retreated to Pigotts, though now he wanted also not to leave the Grisewoods. He had long ago moved his ‘precious books and papers’ from Brockley but wished now he could get them out of town. He carried his ‘new book’ about with him ‘so that should anything befall it,’ he said, ‘I shall be with it. I should be heart-broken if 2 years work were lost, I could not bear it.’ He wanted to take his paintings from Glebe Place by van to Pigotts—‘it would be infuriating if they were destroyed.’ Some pictures were already at Pigotts, some at Michael Sadler’s, and some early ones at Brockley—so that the likelihood of all or most being lost was negligible. But he also felt ‘deprived’ and ‘jolly miserable’ about the scattering. He regarded himself ‘not as a *person* but as a producer of certain things’ and hated thinking of them destroyed—a feeling that led him to suspect himself of being ‘unduly attached to this world ... also I do love *records*—I do hate to think of it all being lost. I mind that like anything since my operation.’ Moving more pictures to Pigotts would ensure their safety but that would now be difficult, and anyhow his books would have to be left behind, and he could not bear that. The books were, he felt ‘so much part of oneself ... & it’s hard to believe that a bomb will land on one’s own special place—bloody hard—though some chaps seem to think it obviously will!—but I seldom feel like that.’ His worries convinced him that ‘any nervous trouble mostly resides in fear about “responsibilities” ... at root.’⁷⁴ He also worried about unfinished writing he was not currently working on. He entrusted his ‘Balaam’s Ass’ manuscript to Fr David Mathew, who stored it in a college.⁷⁵

Apart from these anxieties, however, and ‘whatever the racket is like,’ he was ‘quite happy’ whether alone or with ‘Harman & his sweet wife.’ Jones spent most of the time in their flat alone with her, Harman joining them after work. The intimacy between these three was an emotional comfort, since they were isolated from most other friends. People rarely wrote letters now, the post being unreliable. Telephone lines were down, and visiting was impeded by the difficulty of travelling at night. The gas was turned off. It took him nearly two hours to boil water for tea on a Beatrice stove—and then only ‘with luck.’⁷⁶ On a weekend in October, he accompanied the Grisewoods on their honeymoon, a two-day visit to Pigotts, where, as usual, he stayed with the Hagues.

For some months now at the Six Bells, he was meeting Augustus John, who had a studio nearby and whom he had known since the early '30s. Jones had then considered him ruined by the company he kept, particularly 'that crashing bore' Horace de Vere Cole, the most facetious of court jesters, who died in 1935. Although separated by seventeen years, Jones and John got on well owing to shared Welsh affinity—though Jones privately regarded him as not authentically Welsh because descended from Flemish weavers settled in Pembrokeshire by Henry II. They talked of Tenby, where John was born and raised, and Caldey Island. John had lived in North Wales before the 1914 war and had served as a war-artist, sharing with Jones a sense of the beauty of the ruins and wasted landscape. John spoke of the people he knew when first in London, including Whistler and Wilde. Jones and John both knew Will Rothenstein. Both were fond of Borrow's *Romany Rye*, John having lots of experience with Welsh gypsies, whose language he spoke.⁷⁷ They also shared a creative paralysis that each blamed on war. John held Jones in high regard as a painter and as a person and subsequently ensured that his work was included with his own in exhibitions of 'Welsh' artists.

Jones enjoyed telling a story about John, which he may have got from him: someone asked John why he kept patting children on the head in the King's Road. 'I know you like children, but these are strange children.' 'I know,' John answered, 'but one of them might be mine.' A few centuries earlier, Jones thought, John would have been a pirate. Upon learning of his death in 1961, Jones would write to *The Times* saying that Augustus John impressed him as 'a man of great magnanimity and largeness of spirit' whose "'swashbuckling"' attributes would have been a bore ... had they not gone with an innate courtesy and a total lack of affectation.' He was 'an exceedingly perceptive and humble artist, which the exterior bravura, both in himself and in his work, tended to occlude. ... John thought of his sister as the truer painter. He once remarked, in more colourful language than I here quote: 'If you want a real artist, go to Gwen.'⁷⁸

Augustus John had been deeply discouraged about his art for nearly a decade. His early lyricism had vanished, and his current paintings were as empty as they were skilful. A mutual acquaintance (possibly Osbert Sitwell) told Jones of seeing John 'in tears in front of an early work of his' because he could no longer make such works. John suffered from 'uncertainty of direction', which Jones ascribed to 'the peripheral nature of our

British tradition with regards to the visual arts’—as distinct from the ‘detached, intellectual hardness which the French have (or had) to a superb degree.’ Remembering John’s grief, Jones would think of Samuel Butler’s remark that the chief danger to an artist is increasing technical facility unmatched by ‘a growing vision.’⁷⁹ He was later similarly touched by Stanley Spencer’s disarming admission, in *The Times*, of lost inspiration. Jones himself felt that he would never again paint as he had in 1929-32, a loss all the powerfully felt since most his Sidmouth pictures are insignificant, devoid of interesting form and archetypal evocation. They resemble certain illustrations in children’s books. But he was now experiencing a return of vision (as John and Spencer would not) but one different from that of his earlier pictures. The first indication of this had been *Guinever*, painted two years before (Ch 11, fig. 3), and now he was finishing an unusual, entirely original painting.



He was working on a watercolour that he would later entitle *Aphrodite in Aulis* (fig. 6). He had begun it in early August, in the Glebe Place flat through the first weeks of September. It began nominally as ‘a picture of Phryne the hetaira [courtesan] & the sum of all beauty who showed her splendours to the Court (at least her counsel did) & so impressed them that they said she was innocent. It’s a glorious subject with all kinds of implications if one could manage it.’ In mid-August, he wrote to Helen Sutherland that he had ‘always had an affection for that story’. He drew Phryne standing on an altar. She is a

6. David Jones, *Aphrodite in Aulis*, 1941

tall buxom blonde, three-quarters naked, with a vulnerable, distressed facial expression. She bears the thigh-wound Aphrodite acquired at Troy and the stigmata of Jesus. Light shines from the diamond on her right hand (she is neither married nor engaged) and from the stigma-wound on her left, possibly emphasizing contrary victories—which are, in terms used by Jones in ‘Epithalamion,’ those of Aphrodite ‘*Urania* and *Pandemos*,’ spiritual and sexual (*WP* 36). Likewise expressing duality, the halves of her face do not match. Neither do the halves of her body, particularly the breasts and legs. The Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian columns in the colonnade behind her represent various periods of ancient Greece and Rome. These and the presence of ancient warriors and modern soldiers establish her as an archetype transcending time. Also behind her is an anti-aircraft gun and, above it, a barrage balloon. Flanking her below are a German soldier saluting and a British soldier bearing a lance recalling that of Longinus, which pierced the side of Jesus. Beside the spear-tip is a vaginal cleft on the hillside, evoking the ritual cult-object, *Agalastos Petra*, at Eleusis, the site sacred to Demeter and Persephone. The principal visual influence seems to be the *Venus de Milo*, which he had studied and drawn at Camberwell in 1909. She is also Galatea, Pygmalion’s statue come to life—see the cracks in the marble of her left shin—and a sexual slave—note the shackle on her ankle. Her stance and her hair blown across her left shoulder allude to Botticelli’s *Birth of Venus*. Around her neck is a necklace of many strands, on the outermost of which is an ornament resembling, without quite being, a cross. On the front of her altar, Jones initially intended to draw in Latin the inscription from Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, ‘From Divine beauty is everything derived.’ words inscribed by Eric Gill on a stone in Helen Sutherland’s entrance at Rock.* It is the ‘divine beauty’ at this courtesan’s source that gives metaphysical significance to erotic ‘worship’ of her by soldiers, a significance emphasized by the censoring by the priest behind the saluting German infantryman. Instead of the inscription from Pseudo-Dionysius, however, he drew on the front of the altar a relief of the ram, symbolizing Jesus, bleeding into a chalice. He ceased calling the central figure Phryne and, for a while, used the title ‘Iphigeneia in Aulis’, referring to the daughter whom Agamemnon sacrificed prior to sailing for Troy. For the next eight years

* Jones wrote the words in Latin on the reverse of the first draft of ‘Epithalamion.’ They would be the subject of an inscription in 1961 for Clarissa Eden.

the picture would be simply, 'Aphrodite,' to which he eventually added 'in Aulis.'^{*} He later wrote to Hague, 'My intention in changing Iphigeneia to Aphrodite in the title was to include *all* female cult-figures, ... the figure is all goddesses rolled into one—wounded of necessity as are all things worthy of our worship—she's mother-figure and *virgo inter virgines*—the pierced woman and mother & all her foretypes.' Within his own works, the first figure with whom this sexual slave, chained at the ankle, has marked affinity is the dancing bear he drew at the age of seven (Ch. 1, fig. 6). Conceptually, however, her foretypes include the heart-pierced Virgin Mary, thigh-pierced Aphrodite, and Helen of Troy. And because she suffers and is redemptive (by eliciting love as well as lust), though female, she is a Christ-figure, designated as such by the stigmata in left hand and right foot and by her elevation between soldiers, one a Longinus. The picture has the artificially arranged iconic quality of Surrealism but has a different look owing to the unifying tonality and the visual crowding, which corresponds to his sense of Celtic form of 'an extraordinary complexity and intricacy which would seem to some to be exorbitant, even an indulgence.'⁸⁰ Since *Guinever* of two years before, 'complexity and intricacy' would characterize most of his important paintings.



7. David Jones, *Margaret's hands*, August 1940

An inspiration and prototype for the figure of Aphrodite-et-al was Margaret Grisewood. In August he had made a small painting of her hands, which he had given to her (fig. 7). She had given Grisewood a photograph of herself taken while she was

working for Elizabeth Arden, in which she looks at the camera with her hair up and one forearm lying across the other (fig. 2).

This photograph and the drawing of her hands influenced a sketch



8. David Jones, *Aphrodite* 'for Harman', 1940

^{*} In giving it this title, he may have been influenced, perhaps unconsciously, by the title of George Moore's *Aphrodite in Aulis* (1930), which he had not read.

that Jones made in August and inscribed ‘for Harman.’ It depicts a woman with her right breast exposed (fig. 8) and was entitled (by Jones or Grisewood) *Aphrodite*. The sketch incorporates a variation on the drawing of Margaret’s hands and is influenced by the one-breast-bared *Virgin of Melun* (Ch. 9, fig 22) in Jean Fouquet’s *Melun Diptych*, who was modelled on Agnès Sorel, the mistress of Charles VII. (Jones refers to her in ‘Epithalamion’ as ‘best of all and most of all ... queen of hearts’ [*WP* 36]). He had seen this image of feminine beauty in 1932 at the French exhibition in Burlington House. He may have had a photograph of the painting—when he learned in March that Clarissa Churchill was to visit Paris, he had asked her to get him one.⁸¹ The face, hairdo, and Fouquet-breasts of this figure influence, in turn, those of the woman in Jones’s painting. In fact, the archetypal ambiguity (virgin and courtesan) of Phryne-Iphigeneia-Aphrodite may owe something to Jones’s awareness that in Fouquet’s painting, the Virgin and the King’s mistress are, in a sense, one and the same.

Aphrodite in Aulis is difficult to see: the clutter up both sides, emphasized by flattening of depth, threatens the unity, which is saved by the lightness in Aphrodite’s face, neck, bosom and thighs. Jones’s main difficulty while painting was, he said, to make her dominant, buxom, blooming, without being heavy.⁸² This was his third important painting since his nervous breakdown—the others being *Window at Rock* (1936) and *Guinever* (1938). It was made possible by his (somewhat creepy) enthusiasm for Margaret and her beauty, by his affectionate participation in Grisewood’s love affair, and by the heating-up of the war, which alleviated the depression that, waxing and waning, had now afflicted him for nine years. This painting would remain special to him and would never be offered for sale.

He was having trouble getting money from his Redfern-exhibition sales, though Nan Kivell sent him £20 in late October along with news that only £60 was now owed—though the Redfern had ‘on sale or return’ a good many pictures that might still sell. Jones was anxious about what he might do to earn some money. Maybe Eliot could get Faber to give him an advance. Maybe Kenneth Clark, who was Director of the National Gallery and Supervisor of the King’s Pictures, could find him some work. ‘No, obviously no good.’ He wondered whether he might ‘get some little job ... something to bring me in

a few pounds regularly.’ Sutherland raised her monthly contribution to six guineas. He wrote to Burns, ‘God knows what I should do without that.’⁸³

In late October 1940, he moved out of the Grisewood flat and back to 3 Glebe Place. He was able to report to Burns that the cat ‘is absolutely flourishing—his coat is full & glossy & he devours liver to such an extent I should not have thought possible. I go & buy it for him—I *do loath* butchers’ shops—I must say, makes you never want to eat any more meat.’ He enjoyed watching the cat exhaust itself by hunting beneath the throw rugs until they were ‘scrambled-up’ together and then lie in the centre of the mess he had made. Alone on his birthday, he drank his health in Haig and played the gramophone.⁸⁴

He read Eric Gill’s recently published *Autobiography*, which he thought ‘*far* too theoretic, to much a blue-print,’ too little ‘about chaps’ and failing to convey Gill as a person. Then, in the second week of November, Hague phoned to say that Gill, who was fifty-seven years old, had died of lung cancer. Jones felt the loss deeply. He owed him ‘an enormous debt’ and considered him ‘an *inimitable* man,’ ‘endearing,’ ‘& a “great” man, too.’ The late-medieval Welsh verse came to mind: ‘It was difficult for me to part with one whose like did not live.’ ‘Quite apart from the pure “pleasure” of knowing him,’ he felt it had been a privilege. He remembered Gill as ‘gay-hearted ... very sympathetic and kind out of huge patience—a born teacher—*very* ABLE indeed in exposition & in argument ... an essentially “Victorian” character”’ belonging ‘in some ways, to that world of pioneers of great integrity’. Ever since their first meeting in 1921, he regarded Gill as ‘greater as a man than as an artist’, his architectural training having diminished his artistic ability. His work also suffered, he thought, from eroticism. His ‘preoccupation with “this flesh”, somewhat diagrammatically expressed[,] did lend a sort of slickness to some of his work, more especially to his later work and pronouncedly so in his later drawings & engravings.’ While Gill thought his main achievement was in sculpture, Jones thought it was lettering and the designing of printing types. He thought his ‘Joanna’ type ‘*by far*’ his ‘best type-face ... so strong & clear and firm a form’ with ‘great freedom & dignity combined—a thing which his later works did not so often have.’ In 1954 he would see a photograph of Gill’s 1938 stone-carved *Good Samaritan*, which he had not seen before and thought ‘quite the best thing’ by Gill ‘since the early stone-carvings. It had some of

their direct feeling & great pathos & not slick as some of the middle & later ones tended to be. It is a lovely thing & ... of course improved by being bashed about a bit by old Jerry's bombs.' Gill bequeathed to him an eighteenth century silver teapot, and, although no one was ever in his room when he was out, he would tape to it a note saying, 'No one must use this pot.'⁸⁵

He was prevented from attending Gill's funeral by his father having a serious heart attack. From hospital, Jim Jones went to live in Oak Lawn Nursing Home in Sydenham, south of Brockley, where David visited daily at first, then weekly. It was a long journey, involving several changes of busses, during which he saw a good deal of the damage caused by bombing, 'curiously interesting & jolly pathetic'. While his father was in the nursing home, an incendiary bomb landed in the tiny front garden of his house, blowing in the windows so that the water pipes burst with the cold. Inspecting the damage, David went through the family books and was reminded of how 'addicted to Milton' his maternal grandfather had been. He found four or five editions of Milton and none of Shakespeare except those bought by himself or his sister.⁸⁶

In October the London Library was bombed and a lot of books burned—something, he wrote, 'I do loath'. It stalled his writing by making reference-reading difficult. The Leicester Gallery was hit, but continued to exhibit. In early November 'the Six bells' was hit. That month also a small bomb fell on a house nearly opposite 3 Glebe Place. Jones thought its broken wall looked 'rather nice.'⁸⁷

In November the Redfern was exhibiting quite a lot of his work: two 1930 animal drawings (£21 each), four signed sets of *The Ancient Mariner* (£12.12 each) and fifteen paintings, including two 1919 oil paintings, *Syphon on Silver* and *Dark Sea* (£40 each) and watercolours done between 1926 and 1931, ranging in price from £21 to £30. Of these two were eventually sold for £25 each. Bombing would destroy one, entitled *The Luxuriant Branch* (1932). Most of the others would be returned unsold.

Prudence was finally informed that her husband had been killed. She twice attempted suicide, once by walking into the traffic at Piccadilly Circus with her eyes closed, the traffic swerving around her. She then tried whisky, which likewise proved ineffectual. She grieved in seclusion, grief sometimes giving way to distress over lack of money. She had to live again with her mother at Mill House, which she hated. She visited

Jones when in London. In town in December 1940, to see doctors and settle arrangements with lawyers and the Air Ministry, she stayed with him and they both went to their beds with flu. She arranged for some of his pictures to go to the Stanmer estate agent for safekeeping, although it was not such a safe place, since buzz bombs would destroy most of the buildings along the Lewes Road and make huge craters in a woods near Mill House where Jones had liked walking. In the summer she went to a farm the family owned in Carmarthen.⁸⁸

On 6 January 1941, he made a picture of Britannia and Germania embracing and scrawled along the bottom the words of the Coventry Carol, ‘O sisters two what may we do’ (fig. 9). The upper half of the picture is a grey tangle, relieved below by the lightness of limbs and empty space, centred where the faces meet and strands of the hair of the two females intertwine. The whiteness of the limbs carries tonal evenness and statuesque calm up into this chaotic tangle. Britannia has the thigh-wound of Aphrodite at Troy. This and her iconographical source in Athena suggest that the defense of London (Troy Nouvant). On her right hand is a stigma. Germania has a stigma-like wound above her right wrist. The figures make a light centre against darker ruination. Nature is disturbed: the dogs of war are loosed and howling, birds fly. On the left a town is



9. David Jones, *Germania and Britania*, ‘Epiphany 1941’

burning, evocative of recently bombed Coventry (words of the Coventry Carol are written across the bottom) or Dresden, bombed in retaliation. Its buildings are, from left to right, modern, gothic, and classical to suggest the whole of western culture under attack. On the right, the oil-covered sea is aflame. The way to escape total calamity is for the antagonistic sisters to change the embrace of war into an embrace of love. Visually, their coming together has elements of both. The posture and placement of their right arms seem benign; the grappling with left arms clutching weapons is malign. Germania's face expresses nothing; Britannia's, only fatigue. The foliage the women wear as camouflage suggests their being essentially fertility figures. The long lines of their legs lead up into the near chaos that predominates in the upper half of the picture. Even violated, the image of sisterly love cannot be broken. It survives as a possibility, a hope, and a critique. This picture is small (9 x 12 inches), little more than a drawing—there is very little colour, some blue in the sea and sky, some red and yellow in the flames. It is not one of his more important works, yet it has occasioned a flurry of sexual interpretation by several critics for whom archetypal identification does not preclude notions of sadistic lesbianism.* One critic blames the picture for implying moral equivalence between antagonists, but the archetypal identification is of nations at a level deeper than the morality of contemporary politics: this is Germany and Britain as they have always been, not a moralistic female Cain and Abel but each at once a female Cain and Abel. Because of the Anglo-Saxon settlement, the two personified nations are, moreover, genetically related. The love that could end war may be present now as a strand in the psychologically complex experience of antagonism. Jones and other soldiers had felt it for the German infantryman in the previous war. Viewers for whom moral, political, or erotic implications eclipse archetypal identification will be blind to the meaning of this drawing, which is the tension between time (the present fight) and timeless archetypes. There are two sources of light in this picture, the lighthouse and the star of the Epiphany, images of humane care and divine love. As the star drew the Wise Men to Christ, it may transform the unwise sisters into wise ones.

* Merlin James sees this drawing as 'extreme perversity and high kitch.' Julian Bell sees it as 'an entanglement of sadistic lesbians,' *TLS* (April 5, 1996), p. 10). Miles and Shiel see the entangled females as 'depraved' with a 'desperate sexual longing' (p. 258).

In mid-January 1941, he was saddened by news of James Joyce's death. For Jones, Joyce was not only 'a vast genius' but 'representative of a time in history ... & it's not quite like just *one* man dying. Even if one never read a line of him all writing is conditioned by his having existed from now on.' Jones did not know 'whether he was an "end" or a "beginning"' but he did know that 'he wrestled like Jacob with so much that was inevitably & inescapably part of a writer's problems for us of our age—in some respects like Picasso is to painting.' Jones regretted never having heard him sing.⁸⁹

Sometime in 1939, possibly through Daphne Pollen, Jones had met Barbara Moray, the lovely Park-Avenue American wife of Francis Stuart, the eighteenth earl of Moray in Scotland. She and Jones liked each other. Neither Catholic nor an intellectual, she was forthright, genuine, 'without an ounce of affectation,' tough-minded, and 'extremely perceptive.' At the beginning of their friendship, over lunch at her house at 1 Hans Place in Kensington, he had been, she said, 'rather pro-German,' and she had goaded him about it, telling him it was 'monstrous', and he later admitted to her that he had been wrong. She liked his apparent unawareness of class distinction, and his liking Americans, a trait she found unusual in the English. He was 'a very cozy person to talk to,' she remembered, relaxed and easy, warm and friendly, especially with women. She thought him 'definitely somebody,' felt 'lifted up by being with him,' and soon regarded him as 'a great man'—a discovery she wished to share with her friends, including her best friend, the Queen. She arranged for them to meet at her house for tea in March 1941. Once or twice after that, Barbara invited them both to cocktail parties—in his pocket diary for 9 June 1943, he records 'Barbara's, drinks with the Queen.' At these, Barbara remembered, he seemed 'perfectly at ease,' not shy, 'certainly not over-awed.' The Queen found him unusual, intriguing, very attractive. Barbara remembered, 'She was rather taken with him.'⁹⁰ He and Barbara visited one another whenever she was in London.

He had one or two vivid mental pictures of each of his friends. He often half-expected to see Tom Burns striding round the next corner with the wind blowing his coat back. He thought of Burns often but seldom wrote to him now. He had an odd attitude towards distance: 'the further off a bloke is the harder it is to *write*. ... It's easy to write to a chap in Hampstead, a little more difficult if he's in Wales, harder still if in continental Europe & next to impossible if in Baghdad & out of the question if in Australia.' He

thought that his feeling had something to do with his ‘dislike of movement.’ He almost felt that ‘when a chap’s turned the corner of the street ... no message will ever reach him.’^{91*}

Burns returned to London during a leave in the spring. In Gibraltar an acquaintance had told him that Frank D’Abreu, a former classmate of Burns, was marrying Ann Bowes-Lyon. ‘Christ Almighty,’ Burns had exclaimed, ‘I thought I was.’ He was deeply upset, and Jones commiserated. As he well knew ‘these things take years & years to burn out.’ But he and Burns had a good reunion and visited the Woodruffs and then a beautiful big-blue eyed brunette named Polly Peabody. She had been working for American Intelligence when Burns had met her in Lisbon and fallen in love with her. She visited them at Glebe Place, sleeping on the couch one night when the bombing was too fierce to allow her to go home. She liked Jones and would remember that he was worried about the welfare of Tim the cat. Because of rationing, people were snatching cats to cook in stews. He seemed to her, though not homosexual, immune to falling in love with a woman. ‘We used to jabber away,’ she later remembered. ‘I was very fond of him. He was very good company. He liked me. He wasn’t a beau of mine or anything like that but he was *sympathique*.’ Hotly pursued by many young men, she lacked the leisure to visit him frequently, but he must have been very fond of her, for he gave her a watercolour of a young girl. She disliked it and would put it in a trunk, from which she retrieved and sold it long after the war for, to her astonishment, £750.⁹²

For nearly a year, Burns had kept the Glebe Place flat solely for Jones, who repeatedly urged him to continue paying rent on it. After returning to Spain, he decided to let the flat go at the end of March. Jones began desperately looking for somewhere else to live, and his friends put out the word. Ethel, the maid, put most of the contents of the flat into storage (where it would be destroyed by bombing). Having to leave was, for him, ‘a ghastly blow’—a sundering of the sort he had experienced as a soldier moving from billets or from trenches. Arthur Pollen heard from Christopher Hollis that Jones needed somewhere to live and telephoned him on the evening of 20 March 1941. An air raid was

*In 1943 he would find it difficult to write, at Mondy Howard’s request, to Francis Howard who was a prisoner of war in Germany.



10. 57 Onslow Sq, 1990

in progress, and the sound of anti-aircraft guns made conversation difficult, but they had, according to Pollen, ‘a nice talk.’ His house in South Kensington was half-shut up, he said, but Jones could have a room on the top floor as a bed-sitter. It was only a fifteen-minute walk from Glebe Place. So, at the beginning of April, he moved into 57 Onslow Square, in the centre of the north side of the square (fig. 10). A large Edwardian house—Pollen had bought the end of a lease from Smith’s Charities—it was the poshest place Jones had ever lived, with marble steps, a six-pillared porch, and inside double front doors, scagliola floors and pillars, and a ballroom on the *piano*

nobile. Daphne and children were away in the country, where Arthur planned to join them as soon as he found a house, so Jones knew he would not be staying long. Pollen had not previously known him well and knew little about him. Only now, upon looking at photographs of his pictures, did Pollen realize that ‘D.J. is a very great artist.’⁹³

Jones’s third-floor room had been the nursery. It was large and bright, in the centre of the front of the house overlooking the treed square crowded with huts for refugees. The room contained a child’s Chinese Chippendale four-poster bed, which he admired and, although it was small, insisted on sleeping in. He brought some books, the record player from Glebe Place, and his favourite records: ‘a number of plainchant recordings and Welsh folksongs together with some Palestrina and a bit of Monteverdi’ and ‘Frankie and Johnny,’ ‘Casey Jones,’ ‘Water Boy,’ ‘Ezechiel Saw the Wheel,’ ‘My Lord What a Morning,’ ‘Were You There When They Crucified my Lord’ ‘Joshua Fit the Battle of Jerico,’ and ‘The Lady-killing Cowboy,’ which he liked without quite knowing why. (It concerns a visit to a man awaiting hanging: ‘And the parson he did come, he did come, / And he looked so goddam glum, goddam glum / As he talked of kingdom come, blast his eyes!’) The house was cold and, to keep warm in bed, he pulled a rug from the floor up over himself. Eventually he managed to make the room comfortable by means of a gas fire at one end and an electric heater at the other. Because of continuing air raids,

Pollen slept in the cellar with the head of the bed in the silver vault. Invited to sleep downstairs, Jones refused, saying, 'I survived one war. I'm not going to be killed in this one.' He went to bed at two or three in the morning and got up about ten. At night he worked with a powerful unshaded bulb directly in front of him. Pollen deplored this arrangement, but Jones would not change it. He did not interrupt his work during air raids and showed no signs of nervousness. The 'fireworks', as he called them in the language of the earlier war, had to be spectacular before he would bother watching them from his high window. On the night of 16 April he looked up from drawing his bed (a study for a painting) to see a parachute slowly floating down—it was a mine falling on Chelsea Old Church, which Thomas More had built. That night they had, he said, 'a hell of a pasting from the air'—the Germans dropped 100,000 bombs on London. Another raid, on Saturday 8 May, was 'a bugger ... though not so severe ... as the last bad one.' He got to sleep, 'damn tired & angry' at 2:30 am. During one raid, shrapnel damaged the front door jamb.⁹⁴

One evening Pollen returned from work (alternating day and night shifts in the Government Censorship Office) to hear from Jones that he had been on the Chelsea Embankment in Cheyne Walk during a rare daytime raid. The bombing was heavy. He was leaning on the parapet watching the action when a man came running at full tilt from up-river pointing backwards shouting to Jones to follow him in order to escape the bombing. Jones stayed put. Ten minutes later the man reappeared, running in the opposite direction, again shouting for Jones to follow him to escape the bombing. It was, Jones said, like something out of *Alice through the Looking Glass*.⁹⁵

When they could, he and Pollen shared meals. Each found the other marvelous company. Shy, very tall, with a long handsome face, Pollen was high spirited with a wonderful sense of humour. He sang comic songs and joked about modern artists. He soon realized that Jones 'rather likes talking' and that conversing with him usually consumed at least three hours. They often talked far into the night. They talked about painters and painting and about mutual acquaintances, including Prudence, with whom Pollen had shared his studio before the war. Jones was fascinated by the Pollen family



11. Arthur Pollen, 1938

tradition of descent from an ancient Roman named Paulinus. He was interested to hear about Pollen's Pre-Raphaelite grandfather and his aunt, Anne, who, before entering a convent, posed for Burne-Jones's as the beggar maid who enchants King Capetua in a painting Jones often saw in the Tate, a beggar maid who is one of the incarnations of Aphrodite in 'Epithalamion' (*WP* 35). When Pollen was free in the daytime, they went together to galleries. As their friendship grew, Jones read his work-in-progress to him. He also confided his difficulty getting money from Rex Nan Kivell, who had, that spring, been paid in full for three of his pictures but refused to send a cheque.⁹⁶

In May they went together to an exhibition in the National Gallery by their mutual friend 'Harry' Moore, who had done, Jones writes to Ede, 'superb drawings of chaps in air-raid shelters.' He admired Moore's use of colour in them and thought them 'the *best* things he's ever done. God be praised! They are somehow "romantic" in the true sense,' he wrote to Ede. 'English artists are "Romantic" or nothing—I'm sure of that. Even old Ben [Nicholson] is really romantic in spite of the appearance of Benish "intelligence"—the old Frogs are really intelligent when they paint. We can't do it that way—What awful generalizations one goes in for—sorry. D.'⁹⁷



12. Hubert Le Sueur, *Charles I*, 1633.

Pollen worked in his large studio, formerly a billiard room, under the back garden. He made large carvings of nudes and portrait busts and many small, often religious carvings from bits of shale found on beaches. Scorning a sculptor's smock as pretentious, he wore an uncovered suit and tie as he worked (fig. 11). Jones thought him unusual as an artist in that he had great aesthetic sensibility unmatched by technical skill—an imbalance Jones preferred to its opposite, which typifies so many artists who were technically faultless but incapable of making anything of aesthetic value. He and Pollen agreed that slickness was an aesthetic fault.⁹⁸

Jones was worried about the equestrian statue of Charles I in Whitehall, south of Trafalgar Square, which he considered the one '*absolutely* first rate, unquestionably great single statue in the round' in London (fig. 12).^{*} Encased in sandbags, it was protected from flying splinters and fragments but still vulnerable to bombing. He wrote a letter to *The Times* (30 May 1941), which Pollen co-signed, in which he urges its removal to

safety for two reasons: first, ‘it is the best post-medieval statue in London—indeed, the only true sensitive public statue in the capital’ and therefore ‘irreplaceable’; and second, ‘the nobility of the form happens to correspond with something in the content—it is the effigy of a man who was liquidated because of his attachment to a complex of many ancient and some gracious things, in face of the realities and inevitable ruthlessness of a military dictatorship and the necessities of a changing order.’ Shortly after the publication of the letter, the statue was removed to safety, and he and Pollen were greatly relieved.⁹⁹ Impelled by the same urge to preserve beauty, he would write to *The Times* again on 21 March 1942 urging care in preserving the engraved illustrations of the 1860s as relics ‘of a long-dead tradition of excellence’ that had ‘potency’ to bear fruit in the work of future artists.

He continued to put finishing touches on the painting not yet called *Aphrodite in Aulis*, which Pollen called ‘his saucy classical work’ and considered either a masterpiece or indecent and blasphemous. (Jones would leave the painting at Pollen’s house through the war and for a while after, by which time Pollen and his wife concluded that it was a masterpiece.) He was also working on a new painting, entitled *The Four Queens* (fig. 10), the second in a projected series of which *Guinever* was the first. It illustrates *Morte Darthur* VI, 3, in which Morgan le Fay and three other queens contend for the love of Launcelot. Jones writes, ‘Morgan le Fay is casting an enchantment on him as he sleeps. The swan in the water by Launcelot’s head suggests Guenevere, and Morgan le Fay’s spell is countered by his dream thought of her.’ Lancelot is paralyzed, his eyes open. One foot is uncovered, a sign of vulnerability reflecting Jones’s memory of being caught sleeping shoeless during the barrage in 1917. The spikes of a loose spur insinuate a threat to his crotch, as does the sharpened base of his standard, which seems to hover in the air above him, suggesting that he (or his lust) is inimical to himself. His bare leg corresponds to that of Morgan—identifiable by her nasty facial expression—and her leg parallels the threatening standard. His head inclines so that he dreams down, as it were, toward the Guenevere-swan, which is making herself sexually available.¹⁰⁰ Lancelot’s left hand bears a stigma-wound. Rising above his head is a sequence of images with Classical and Christian associations. A crutch supports the apple tree (mentioned by Malory) of fallen

*He though some others ‘jolly good,’ especially one of the Georges west of the National Gallery.

nature, which sustains Lancelot's standard on whose banner is a cross, repeating the cross beside it on the church and the cross beneath that on the altar. Romantic love has its counterpart in Christ's love, erotic infatuation being an analogue to religion. The apple beneath the tree is Lancelot. The contesting queens evoke the contest of Classical goddesses in conventional depictions of the Judgment of Paris, though the visual model



13. David Jones, *The Four Queens*, 1941

here is Rubens' *The Three Graces*, of which Jones made a study in preparation for this picture. The church in the top right is based on the incomplete church at Capel-y-ffin. It is also a cave. It corresponds to stone-age megaliths on the left, suggesting that prehistoric religion is a counterpart to, and continuous with, Christianity. The horses of the queens are in a pavilion-stable modeled on Jones's four-poster bed. They contrast with the other, free-ranging horses—that of Lancelot and those

on the distant hills and also the two gigantic overlapping cult horses, like the white horse

he had seen eight years before at Uffington, although the hill on which they are here carved is the Twmpa at Capel-y-ffyn. Nature is on Lancelot's side: the bird on his thigh, the dog at his feet, the swan below him. He has affinity with the figure in the frontispiece of *In Parenthesis* (Ch. 10, fig. 11) although he wears a German helmet and reflects memories of the German dead in Mametz Wood.¹⁰¹ His sleep suggests death, his feet resting on a dog as in medieval tomb effigies. The intended meaning of the picture is natural male resistance to enchanting, deadly lust for the sake of displaced sexual love symbolized by the swan. Visually, the swan is inadequate to sustain its part in this meaning. So, actually, this seems a picture merely of sexual fear.

Beneath the sky and line of mountaintops, everything tends to merge. This is especially so of the queens, whose dresses make a confusing tangle. In their diaphanous gowns, distinction between them disappears—as in *Aphrodite in Aulis* where, at her waist, the goddess's wrapping erases her contour. In their dress, these figures also acquire transparency and visually merge with background. In *Four Queens*, space is flattened by uniform tone. In the middle ground this has the effect of mist, where Jones dragged his gum eraser across the area. In good light you can see faint yellows, purples, pinks, greens and blues. Form expresses meaning because the picture is nearly a mess—its precise balance on the edge of chaos capturing the precariousness of Lancelot's near-death and almost-slavery. After *Guinever* and *Aphrodite in Aulis*, this may be Jones's most difficult picture to see, but it is also wonderfully magical in its continual metamorphosis during viewing. Areas within bounding lines are often diaphanous, contributing to an opalescent radiance. This this iridescent quality together with thinness of lines makes this work metamorphic. It seems different each time you look at it.

Like *Guinever* it is illustrational and therefore returns to the primary motive of Jones's art-school drawing, but it is also, like *Guinever* and *Aphrodite in Aulis*, iconographic and conveys most of its meaning irrespective of Malorian context, which the viewer need know nothing about. The principal figures suggest meaning without help from the incidental imagery that fills the picture, imagery that merely elaborates by textualizing, making the picture a poem of juxtaposed images that may, but need not, be read in relation to one another. Viewers are free to explore the images or not. Few, if any, are obscure, but viewers unable to interpret them are allowed merely to survey what

might be considered the damage. As eclectic collections of cultural debris, these *Morte Darthur* paintings and *Aphrodite in Aulis* are 'of now' in a Spenglerean late phase of civilization. It is not only valid but important to see the meaning of the principal figures against the (for many) no-longer-signifying images, which analogously situates these figures and the viewer in the waste land of the present.¹⁰²

About the time of making his *Morte Darthur* pictures, he formulated for himself nine rules that comprise a personal manifesto and description of his technique:

- 1) Disregard local colour entirely. It is a snare.
- 2) Avoid cast shadows (as a temporary measure).
- 3) Express as much as you can by line alone.

4) Try to contain the *volume* of any object by the use of line because this will help you to register the subtle changes of direction of the so-called 'outline', which at first sight may seem a relatively simple curve in one direction whereas it is in fact composed of a very great variety of directions, being the line of division between the complex of planes (all of differing shape & angle) which form a three-dimensional solid body & the space in which that body stands. This so-called 'outline' *must never* be thought of as an end or termination, it must be thought of, on the contrary, as expressing a *continuation*, i.e.[.] it *must* express the uninterrupted continuation of the surfaces & planes from the front & side to the unseen surfaces & planes at the back. If you keep this very much in mind *as you draw* it should help at least to check this tendency of regarding the 'outline' as a kind of stopping place—which is the *last* thing it is. It is no more a stopping place than is the sea's horizon. It is really all a question of *feeling* that truth intensely enough. The method used is quite unimportant & personal. It can, & has been, done by a continuous line, a broken line, a heavy line, a slight line, a line of even weight & a line of uneven weight but no good drawing has ever lacked this quality of volume obtained by the quality & character of the line in some way or other. It constitutes the chief difference between good & bad drawing.

5) Observe all the continuity you can in the lines of the limbs & parts of the body—sometimes an almost continuous line can be made to contain the greater part of the entire figure.

6) There is, or was, a tendency in art students' drawings of allowing hands & feet to tail off, as it were. Avoid this: all the articulations are of special importance as are all termini of any sort. If you attend to them & consider their respective natures & functions it may be found that the, as it were, connecting forms (for example the fore-arm & the lower leg) will fall into place. It is clear there is great psychological interest in these terminations.

Think hard about each part of the body how this must look hard & that soft, this pliant & that resisting. This is far more important than 'knowing about' anatomy.

7) Keep in mind that one human being is all human beings & that the idiosyncrasies of any one example are *relatively* unimportant. The male-female difference is the only vital distinction, yet even there it is well to remember that a lot of both is in each & it is Mankind one is drawing.

9) Few of the foregoing observations are meant to be in any way dogmatic & all can be disregarded at times with advantage. The approaches are almost unlimited but they may suggest one or two possible ways of proceeding if one feels one needs such suggestions—anyway one can only try-out various ideas for what they are worth & discard them as nonsense if necessary.

For instance, one might find that what one was most interested in was the juxtaposition of the forms of, say, the torso & not of the body as a whole—still less hands & feet—well, that's a reasonable preference—& after all—draw what you *like* most first in the way you like—the rest will come one hopes.

At Onslow Square, Jones and Pollen shared visitors, including Clare and Sydney Sheppard and their daughter Christina. Cyril Connolly, recent co-founder (with Stephen Spender) and editor of *Horizon*, visited and wanted to borrow Jones's copy of Jessie Weston, but Jones refused, needing it for his writing. Jones got to know Pollen's brother-in-law Lord Revelstoke (Rupert Baring), whose marriage was ending contentiously and was staying at the house while in London. A close friend of Barbara Moray, Revelstoke joined Jones in visiting Barbara Moray for tea.* Pollen was now a member of the Home Guard, and on 6 May he took Jones for lunch to Gourmets for the Home-Guard field day. There Jones met old friends, Cecile, Mondy, and Francis Howard, and Clare Sheppard—all, he thought, 'nice innocent chaps.' They talked through the afternoon.¹⁰³

On 9 May, he listened to a broadcast of the Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal Hinsley talking about the war. He liked the Archbishop and thought he might have 'a good brain' but he was especially interested in their voices: 'It is interesting how *our* high up clerics have that same exceedingly interesting *intonation* (which the A. of C. did not have). Hinsley has it & Bourne had it. I believe it comes from some hieratic liturgical thing, a curious *authentic* rasp in the voice—I like it, actually.'¹⁰⁴

On the 14th, he had lunch with Clarissa Churchill. Then he met Bishop David Matthew for tea, who had been on the fringe of the Chelsea group where, because so ecclesiastical, he had never been taken very seriously. He was Welsh—Jones liked that—

* In 1960, Jones would make an inscription, *Razorbill*, for Revelstoke, who walked in on him finishing it by scraping the lettering with a blunt razor to 'break the solidity.'

with an Oxford degree in history, who had written a biography of Lord Acton. He was now Chaplain General to the army and navy. Jones also knew his brother Gervase, a Dominican. He and Matthew talked about Wales, the war, and the recent flight to Britain of Nazi leader Hess, who wanted to make peace. Since becoming a bishop, Matthew had become immensely fat, causing Jones to observe later ‘how the episcopal office tends to fatness on a *monumental* scale.’ Kindly, he supposed that the psychological cause might be a deep contentment of the sort that accounted for the rotundity of certain Buddhists. (Matthew, like Woodruff, was, he found, best encountered singly. A month later he would walk in on Matthew, Woodruff, and Christopher Hollis and recoil from the R.C. ‘jocular back-chat.’) Jones then went for supper and an evening of drinking with Aleck Dru, then went home late and talked to Arthur Pollen mostly about his picture of ‘Phryne Aphrodite Pandemos Venus Quiritis or whatever it is’ until 2 am. It was nearly finished, and Jones liked it ‘in places but not altogether.’ The day had been, for him, a hectic one.¹⁰⁵

Once when Pollen was out, Barbara Wall visited. She was in a terrible dilemma. Separated from Bernard by the war, she had fallen in love with an Oxford undergraduate named Auberon Herbert, brother-in-law of Evelyn Waugh. Auberon knew and loved Jones, so she felt that he was the one to confide in. She found that, although he hated the thought of Bernard being hurt, he was completely non-judgmental. He understood the force of romantic love and knew that marriage to Wall was difficult. (He had not regarded Wall as the marrying kind and he knew that Wall had done all he could to delay sexually consummating the marriage.*) He said to her over lunch at this time, ‘What absolute nonsense it is, this idea of having to be, you know, in the state of grace when you die or you’re not going to go to heaven. It’s just like when the mother and father come home and find that their children have made the most howling mess of the house. They’re not going to love them any less.’¹⁰⁶ In the end, passion between Barbara and the undergraduate decreased, and she remained with Wall. But as a husband he continued to

* During their honeymoon in 1935 in Spain, Wall had refused to sleep with her, and, after Hague and Tom Burns had arrived to resolve the crisis, they all went to an inn with two vacancies, a room with a double bed and a room with two beds. When Wall requested the room with two beds for himself and Barbara, Hague interrupted, ‘The hell with you. I’m not going to sleep with Tom.’

be emotionally absent, and they later lived in separate flats in the same road. Jones liked Barbara, thought she had a 'nice disposition,' and felt sorry for her.¹⁰⁷

In April 1941, the painter and engraver John Nash introduced him to John Rothenstein, the new director of the Tate Gallery. Rothenstein took Jones to tea at the Athenaeum and, as they spoke, noticed 'unusual firmness of purpose' beneath Jones's 'mildness.' When the conversation turned to Gill, Rothenstein's godfather, he suddenly remembered meeting Jones at Capel-y-ffin in the summer of 1926. He afterwards asked Gill whether that was one of his apprentices, and Gill had replied, 'That was David Jones. He's a jolly good artist: a lot will be heard of him before long.' Gill had then shown Rothenstein a large watercolour of two horses on a hillside and the window from which Jones had painted it. Upon hearing this, Jones responded with 'a look of intense melancholy,' saying that his productive life had virtually come to an end after 1932 owing to a nervous breakdown. He added that he ought not to write, since very few, and certainly not he, had sufficient energy to do two things well. Noticing the poet Walter de la Mare at a nearby table, Rothenstein introduced them, and Jones then mentioned to Rothenstein having done *Gwinever* and *Four Queens*, the first of four to six pictures in a planned Arthurian series. He invited him to see them.¹⁰⁸

On the late afternoon of 8 June, Rothenstein and an assistant keeper at the Tate, the painter Robin Ironside, visited Onslow Square. Jones told them that 'so far, alas' he had done only two of a projected series. Rothenstein expressed interest in buying these for the Tate and the entire series when it was finished. Jones said that he was unsure he would part with them. (Helen Sutherland wanted them and had sent him a tentative down payment of £10). As Rothenstein left, Jones asked, 'You don't know, do you, of a really good doctor for neurasthenia?'¹⁰⁹

Rothenstein and Ironside returned to the Tate and recommended purchase of the pictures, but the decision could not be made before September, which was a long delay for Jones, who desperately needed money. The Tate agreed to buy and asked for first option to purchase the entire series, but Jones postponed delivery of the pictures, and therefore payment, till mid-December in order to have *Four Queens* photographed. In the second week of December, he delivered them to the Tate, which paid him £60 each. In his

decision to buy the *Morte Darthur* paintings, Rothenstein had the enthusiastic backing of Kenneth Clark.¹¹⁰

Jones and Clark had been acquainted for over a decade, having met through Ede, who had got to know Clark in Paris after evaluating his father's paintings. Soon after becoming Director of the National Gallery in January 1934, Clark had begun coming to Ede teas where he and Jones got to know each other. In the late 1920s, Ede had tried in vain to interest Clark in Jones's work by taking him paintings—one at a time—and engravings. Clark 'had no feeling for them at all,' Ede said, 'but two years later,' after seeing them in galleries and possibly being influenced by his friend Lord David Balniel, an admirer of Jones, Clark was saying that Jones was 'the best watercolourist since Blake.' During one of Jones's early conversations with him, they had spoken about Turner, a subject to which they would often return.¹¹¹

They usually met at the National Gallery or the Tate Gallery and often looked together at pictures. They enjoyed the Gainsboroughs and Constables—'absolutely marvellous,' Jones thought—but agreed with Clark that Turner, then generally unappreciated, was far greater and the best of all British painters. Jones considered Turner the only English painter comparable to one of the great masters and equivalent as a creative genius to Dante or Shakespeare. Yet Turner seemed to misunderstand the value of his own work, for, Jones said, 'he insisted on hanging some of his canvases next to one by Claude Lorraine to show that he could do as well, whereas the particular genius of the two men was of a *totally* different nature—it's almost as though Joyce *insisted* on being compared with Racine!' Together he and Clark went into the cellars of the Tate to pull out and look at Turners. Jones's only criticism of Turner was that he 'has no sense of locality.' Clark was able to tell him things about Turner that he had not known, such as Turner's having worked half his long life on a long poem called 'The Fallacies of Hope', which he never completed or published and that Ruskin had counted 19,000 Turner watercolours, a number that Jones found incredible until Rothenstein confirmed it.

As a writer and lecturer, Clark increased appreciation of Turner among art specialists and the general public, and made him known internationally. Jones thought this his most important achievement and argued over Clark with Nicolette Gray, who

disparaged him as a mere publicist. ‘You know,’ he would say, ‘he’s done more than all those Courtauld boys.’ He would write in 1962,

I do think about him, a good deal. For, apart from his great kindnesses to me, I think he’s by far the most perceptive of writers on the visual arts that this country has produced in recent times. But his is the kind of civilized sensibility that is less & less appreciated, as people, on the whole, are less knowledgeable with regard to whole areas of our inherited culture.¹¹²

In 1939, in Hartrick’s autobiography he read, ‘When Ruskin praised it was safe to follow ... we could do with another Ruskin today,’ and Jones wrote in the margin, ‘We perhaps have in Kenneth Clark.’ He would never drop the ‘perhaps.’ He thought Clark’s *Landscape into Art* (1949) brilliant and ‘inspired’ but considered his *The Nude* (1956) a bad book.

Clark would acquire three paintings by Jones, a flower-picture, a view over the roofs from his window at Glebe Place entitled *Chelsea Old Church* (1930), and *Petra im Rosenhag*. Clark thought it a shame that Jones painted so little in oils, since restricting himself to watercolours diminished his contemporary reputation and, because the colour-strength cannot last, would deny him in posterity the reputation he deserved. Through the years, Clark’s appreciation for Jones would increase. In 1936 he had written that Jones was ‘in many ways, the most gifted of all the younger English painters,’ his pre-breakdown work ‘entirely original, but in the tradition of English imaginative painting,’ his best watercolours having ‘a poetical quality only surpassed by Blake.’* In the late 1960s, he thought Jones the best living British painter, ‘enormously underestimated in England, ... absolutely unique, a remarkable genius.’ He said of Jones’s paintings, ‘one had to respond to the very personal way in which he put down every line and every stroke. Not only was the whole very beautiful, probably, but the *écriture* was extremely beautiful. ... Every line he put down was a communication from himself.’ During lectures in the United States, Sweden, and Norway, he was now mentioning Jones as one of the leading English artists, only to discover usually that nobody knew whom he was talking about.^{113†}

* This judgment is, I think, mistaken. Blake is in no respect comparable to Jones as a painter.

† For a full account of Jones’s relationship with Clark and his correspondence with him, see T. Dilworth, ‘Letters from David Jones to Kenneth Clark,’ *Burlington Magazine* CXLII (April 2000), 215-25.

Encouraged by the Tate taking first option on the entire *Morte Darthur* series, Jones began working, despite eye strain, on a third Malory picture, one of Sir Gareth and



14. detail from *Gareth and Lyones*, c. 1941

Lady Lyonesse. It is a scene in which Gareth has joined the lady in her chamber to ‘abate their hot lusts,’ when a threatening knight breaks through a door, requiring Gareth to spring to their defense (VII, 22). The focus of attention is the naked lady’s marvellous breadth of pelvis, hips, and thighs. He made several beginnings. Here is Lyones in the last of them (fig. 14), a full-sized, finished drawing, with no paint added. She is monumentally present and convincing; the contesting men are not. A neurotic attack, brought on by his ‘really trying hard to work again,’ stopped work on the picture. ‘This bloody old Rosy attacked,’ he wrote Burns, ‘just in the old way:’ depression, paralysis, insomnia. He was ‘astounded.’ He had thought he was ‘rid of all that.’ For his insomnia he drank whisky, when he could get it. ‘It is so absurd to able

to withstand bombing & all the rest of it & be overcome with trying to paint a picture.... It is so embarrassing & absurd. ... It seems so *maddening* that all I want to do or care about is to paint & that that is the *one* thing that makes me really *ill*.’ Better the bombing than ‘this bloody Rosy.’ He was discouraged at the thought of consulting Woods again. This was, he thought, ‘no time for *another ten* years of “masterly inactivity”.’ On Saturday 14 June, he had lunch with the Woodruffs, ‘Mia very “tough” & preaching “toughness”’ which, he wrote, ‘bored me a lot.’ He did see Woods again, in early October, and subsequently acquired ineffectual nerve tonic from Dr. Lightwood.¹¹⁴

The war ended an era, as he began to realize at an exhibition of paintings this year. It was, he wrote,

an exhibition of British paintings of that decade and the immediately preceding decade. It included works by Augustus John, Stanley Spencer, John Nash, Paul Nash, William Roberts, Sickert, along with non-figurative and abstract works of various younger painters, all as different as chalk from cheese, as they say, yet as I left the gallery I remember turning back and glancing at the whole, or at least at the whole of one room in as far as I could see it from the exit door, and *to my astonishment* all

the works looked much of a muchness in tonality, form, feeling, etc. I'm not saying that this was any more than a momentary subjective feeling—but it interested me that it was possible to feel that of, say, a John next to a Frances Hodgkins next a Nicholson and so on could look, at a short distance, even *remotely* similar, almost as recognizeably of a period as when one glances at, say, a 12th or 13th Cent crucifix and recognizes immediately that it is not a 16th Cent crucifix or whatnot.

This was something, he wrote, 'never far from my mind: the extraordinary extent to which all artefactures of a given period bear the unmistakable *signum* of that period, no matter whether they are washing machines or great art works ... this coloured postcard or Fr Martindale's *Goddess of Ghosts*.'¹¹⁵ Such signa of periods would become the *anathemata* of his second epic-length poem.

Jones was now without a family of friends. With Burns in Spain and others in the military or departed from London, the Chelsea group had disbanded. Gwen and Olivia Plunkett-Green had gone to live on a farm in Wiltshire. Prudence was in Wales. The Grisewoods left London for a small house on the river at Twickenham near Richmond. They seemed 'contented' and Harman 'not changed ... but there is no longer the chance of lovely long heavenly discussions far into the night over old whisky & sandwiches.' He missed him '*appallingly*' and, for the rest of the war, would look back nostalgically to the period of the Blitz when he, Harman and Margaret 'were in & out of each others houses all the time & it was jolly nice.' He was, he writes Burns, 'jolly sorry for the complete breakup of all the old Chelsea thing. *I can hardly bear it.*' The Glebe Place and Wellington Square flats were vacant, and now his father gave up the house in Brockley. Jones 'loathed' this: 'I do like to feel there are one or two roofs & hideouts & dumps that one can creep into.' And in July Pollen joined the Air Force to do intelligence work and announced the closing of the house on Onslow Square.¹¹⁶

Jones half-heartedly began searching for a new place to live by mentioning at Pigotts that he needed one. Having no idea where to go, he stored his possessions in the cellar at Onslow Square. Two days before he was to leave, Mary Gill told him of a woman who owned a boarding house in Sheffield Terrace and was letting rooms. So, on September 23 1941, with Mary helping him, he moved there. Once again he sprained his ankle, first mildly and then badly, which made the move difficult. With '*infernal* pain,' he was walking again with the aid of Pollen's gold-banded walking stick, annoyed at being unable to walk at his usual quick pace, which kept him warm.¹¹⁷



15. 12 Sheffield Terrace

His new address was in 12 Sheffield Terrace, off Kensington Church Street, south of Notting Hill Gate—a tall, white-washed Georgian stone house in a row of similar buildings facing south. His room, the cheapest in the house, was in a shallow basement on the east-front of the building. Its door was just under the stairway close to the house entrance. Like every room he would henceforth live in, it was a bed-sitter. This one was ‘bloody small,’ twelve by thirteen feet, and ‘dark,’ so that he had to keep an electric light on during the day. He had a bay window consisting of three windows, but the sills were below ground level, the windows barred, and facing external stairway walls only inches away, the side windows admitted only gloom. The middle window looked across an open area to a two-and-a-half-foot-high wall on the near side of the pavement, a wall that made the room

feel even more sunken. When he stood, his eyes were at pedestrian-knee level. And what he could see were the top four floors of the red-brick Victorian houses opposite. The only good things about the room were that it was ‘quiet’ and his bed ‘comfortable’. He planned to stay no more than a few weeks but inhabit this room for four years and another in the house for three more. There was no dining room, so his meals were brought in on a tray—it was ‘rather like being a fairly respectable prisoner in the Tower.’ The food was ‘a toss up: sometimes quite good,’ sometimes terrible. His Maltese landlady, Mary A. Muscat, made the meals, seasoning the food liberally with cumin, ‘especially the soup, which,’ he wrote, ‘one either had to get used to or somehow get rid of.’ He made tea in a small saucepan on his small open coal fire. Miss Muscat was small, dumpy, cheerful, smiling. She regarded him as a comical figure but was kind, even affectionate, sometimes shopping for him, especially when he was ill. She answered the house telephone and gave him messages. He liked ‘the Muscat’, as he referred to her, but she could also be difficult and was, in fact, as much a trial as a necessity for him. When he complained about the food, she argued. To visitors wishing to see him, she was unfriendly—they had, he said, their heads ‘barked off.’¹¹⁸



16. Window of Jones's room, 12 Sheffield Terrace

Upon arriving at Sheffield Terrace, he wanted to renew his subscription to *The Times*, which he had cancelled when moving to Onslow Square since Pollen took it. After initially finding the subscription form too ‘complicated,’ he eventually completed and submitted it only to be refused owing to so recently having cancelled. Without a wireless or newspaper now, he was all the more isolated, living a ‘Pigotts-in-Campden Hill life.’ On 17 October, he heard by chance about the requirement to register for Industrial Service, which he did six days late. He was interviewed and excused from work after delivering a letter in which Dr. Woods, wrote that he suffers from ‘severe’ ‘Depressive Psychosis...marked by improvement with relapses has been unfit for consecutive work in his profession for nearly ten years’, ‘is unstable, & under stress of duty would relapse’, and is ‘quite unfit for routine service in the military or in a civil capacity.’ In a few months he was getting the *Daily Telegraph*. By 1943 he was also subscribing to the *Kentish Mercury* and *The Times*.¹¹⁹

On Sundays he went to 11 o’clock Mass at the Carmelite Church in Kensington Church Street, a four-minute walk from his room, a Pugin-gothic-revival building where, before the previous war, he had borrowed the friar’s habit for the art-student’s ball. He may have noticed in a memorial window an image of the priest who had loaned him the habit, ‘Major the Rev. S.S. Knapp OCD, D.S.O., M.C, ... who died of wounds received at Boesinghe, Flanders on August 1st, 1917.’ While not architecturally beautiful, the church had, Jones thought, a numinous feeling. Getting to Mass was always, for him, ‘a scramble’ because he habitually woke up just before noon.¹²⁰

After Mass, he walked to the nearby Catherine Wheel, his principal neighbourhood pub, which opened at noon on Sundays. In the autumn of 1941, he was there with Joan Hague when he encountered George Reavey, a Russian expert at the BBC, very short, heavy, with a little pointed beard and resembling, Jones thought, an opera singer, ‘a jolly nice chap.’ Reavey had recently seen Burns in Spain and had tried unsuccessfully to contact Jones at Glebe Place and Onslow Square. He and his wife lived across from the Carmelite Church. From now on, Jones and he regularly met at the pub. They talked together about ‘old stuff, Joyce, Eliot, the Frogs, the arts of Form—the plastics & graphics.’ Reavey had known Joyce in Paris and had one day noticed on the wall an engraving or etching of a town in a cork frame of the sort fashionable at the turn of the

century. He asked, ‘Why is that in that hideous frame?’ and Joyce replied, ‘And what should the city of Cork be in but a cork frame?’ Jones thought the reply especially funny in an Irish accent. Whenever encountering the word ‘cork,’ he remembered this story, which for decades to come gave him ‘great pleasure to think of.’¹²¹

The cleaning woman at 12 Sheffield Terrace was an Irishwoman named Mrs. Ryan whose talk he enjoyed. She would say of someone, ‘He’s a fine figure of a man,’ which stirred in Jones thoughts of how Irish feeling for men of prowess and status was ‘very *physical*.’ He supposed it came ‘straight through from the old Celtic warrior-aristocracy.’ Once she saw him in bed with flu reading what she took to be the bible, and when he confirmed that it was, she remarked, to his delight, ‘I said to the Canon below [Canon Walton at the Carmelite Church], I saw no sign of the holy book in the land of the saints & scholars.’¹²²

The darkness of his room discouraged painting, so, in the autumn of 1941, he returned to writing. The first thing he wrote, in September, was a remarkable essay entitled ‘Epoch, Church and Artist,’ which was published in the *Tablet* of 1 November.* He was ‘driven’ to write it by the pontificating of John Rothenstein and Dom Wilfred Upson on how modern artists ought to serve the Church. Jones points out that the best modern painting is ‘idiosyncratic and personal in expression, and experimental in technique, intimate and private rather than public and corporate’ and therefore not amenable to the symbolic demands of the Church. The Church does not make art, he says. She is, at most, a witness, as at weddings, where the lovers confer the sacrament and the priest merely witnesses. Made by the artist, art is also a matter of love, to which ecclesiastical constraint or good is irrelevant. Art arises ‘from breakdowns and fusions’ which generate ‘unexpected life.’ In the modern world, which is dominated by the technician, ‘no integrated, widespread, religious art’ can be looked for—nothing of the sort that produced ‘the *Dies Irae*, the Prefaces, the Christ of the central tympanum at Véselay, the Avignon *Pietà*.’ After completing this essay, he resumed his imaginative writing set in Roman Palestine—for which he was now reading Tacitus—and sent some of it to a typist in Kensington High Street.¹²³

* Republished in *E&A* under the title ‘Religion and the Muses,’ 97-106.

After rereading *The Decline of the West* eight months before, he had bought his own copy in August 1941, and was now ‘saturating’ himself in it. Whatever the validity of Spengler’s thesis, it was, he thought ‘a most amazing book for its detail—like the biggest & most packed-with-juice-&-fruit type of cake you ever got your teeth into.’ He also liked its aphoristic insights: ‘All Classical building begins from the outside, all Western from the inside’; only the modern western soul ‘drives through walls into the limitless universe of space’ (I, 224 marked); the space of Renaissance architecture was not Classical but ‘wholly and exclusively ... prescribed for it by Gothic’ (I, 235, marked); and ‘every Florentine statue feels behind it the ghost of the niche into which the Gothic sculptor had built its real ancestors’ (I, 235, marks with ‘very good’).

He continued through February 1942 to be immersed in Spengler and ‘battling’ with him. ‘He’s *so right*, &, as I think, also *so wrong*.... A lot of it one just reads as if one were reading one’s own exact thoughts for the past 20 years put down by someone who could think clearly & who has the power of expression & elucidation. One just recognizes the ‘truth’, but it is far other with other large tracks of it.’ He disagreed with Spengler’s basic assumption that ‘the history of humanity has no meaning whatever’ (II, 44). Reading Dawson helped him to see that the traditional view of ancient and modern civilizations as linked and continuous was valid, so that Spenglerian cycles were not hermetically sealed unities but instead formed a spiral. In *The Age of the Gods*, Dawson demonstrates that a conquering culture always assimilates aspects of the defeated culture. The chief example, for Jones, was the survival of Celtic myth and legend in English culture. And the influence of an Aristotle far transcends cultural and racial boundaries. What Spengler saw as a death, Jones saw as a transformation made possible by underlying continuities that are chiefly intellectual and religious. This promise of continuity inspired work, which he saw as a vehicle for *traditio* or passing on aspects of culture. His work was a Noah’s ark to sail between old and new worlds. He was a Boethius, who called himself a ‘bridge’ between past and future civilizations. The present Dark Age was a time of hope in a coming age of revitalized Christian culture.

In the early winter of 1942, he read Spengler’s *Hour of Decision* (1932), which he thought propagandistic and moralistic but ‘enormously interesting & full of true things, astonishingly acute intuitions, & undeniable facts, also damned funny—if one happens to

sympathize.’¹²⁴ He was impressed by Spengler’s insistence that to conserve western culture in a revolutionary (post-1870) age a strong ruling or administrative class was needed. Spengler believed that Fascism would disappear with Mussolini’s death and leave behind an administrative class. Jones regarded Spengler as ‘cheap & a little sixth-form’ in his “‘cant” about the nobility of “beasts of prey”” and in his lacking ‘the *humour* of true disinterestedness, ... the humour of a Cockney in a mined trench, or the humour of a Chinese Ming, Wang, Wong, Tung (or whatever it is) Waley-poem, & certainly the humour of calling the Fall, the Happy Fault!’¹²⁵

He reread *The Decline* again in 1943, with deepening respect and fascination, thinking the philosophy ‘awful’ but marvelling at the perceptions, especially on matters involving the arts. Spengler was a great synthesizer, seeing all the products of an age as indicative of its character. Spatializing time in a way that appealed to Jones’s visual imagination, he saw history as having a cyclic morphology or overall shape. From now on Jones’s thinking would be informed by Spengler’s morphology of culture-cycles, especially the parallel between the late phases of Roman and twentieth century civilizations.¹²⁶ Jones would from now on consider any cultural (or political or scientific) concern as chiefly morphological, i.e., relative to its culture-phase. Also important to Jones were Spengler’s distinction between culture and civilization and the correlative distinction between ‘truth men’ and ‘fact men’, which Jones thought we each had within. Spengler was also the first to explain the alienation of the artist in the modern world, and the inferiority of most contemporary art owing to the absence of a living tradition. And Spengler’s distinction between masculine and feminine principles contributed to the mythic feminism of Jones, who marks the passage: ‘the feminine stands closer to the Cosmic. It is rooted deeper in the earth and it is immediately involved in the grand cyclic rhythms of Nature’ (II, 327).

He regarded *The Decline of the West* as a seminal work, a conviction continually vindicated for him by its influence on Joyce, Malraux, Toynbee, and virtually all ‘subsequent culture-historians,’ many of whom disparaged him.¹²⁷ Of all modern writers, Joyce and Spengler would be, he was sure, ‘the two stars of the period’ and he would have liked to hear them having a long conversation ‘in heaven, or wherever such things

are possible.’¹²⁸ *The Anathemata* would be a response to Spengler, a continuation of Jones’s dialogue with him begun in the margins of his copy of *The Decline of the West*.

He received visitors in his room, usually singly, owing to its littleness and his preference for talking with one person at a time. Hague visited on leave from the airforce, Edward Hodgkin on leave from the army, Michael Richey on leave from the navy. Thomas and Dorothy Hodgkin visited when in town from Oxford—Thomas being excused from service owing to narcolepsy. E.Q. Meyers visited, as she had at Sidmouth, and gave him one of her paintings, of an oak leaf and a feather. Jones thought that she painted ‘*awfully* well now—a recent development.’ She was married to Ben Nicholson’s brother Kit, who was in the navy. Jones liked the names she had given her children, Jane, Luisa, and Timothy. David Kindersley visited and thought that Jones was drinking an awful lot of whisky. His second cousin Ruth Daniel visited. She had studied English at Oxford, taught school, and talked with him about Anglo-Saxon poetry, especially his favourite, ‘The Dream of the Rood.’ She translated it for him in 1942 when he visited her and her husband, Norman, in their flat in Thurloe Street. Throughout the war he visited Mary Champion, a friend of Prudence working in London for the Red Cross. Manya Harari visited when in town from Oxford, where she and her husband were working in the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office and she was doing secretarial work for Dawson. She sometimes took Jones to lunch at the University Women’s Club, in Audley Square. She and Bernard Wall had put out an English version of the *Catholic Worker* and had then edited *Collosseum*, a quarterly review that had been a belated successor of *Order*. A few times during the war, Helen Sutherland came for tea to his room, which reminded her of ‘a cabin on board ship ... just as neat & confined.’ She found these visits ‘heavenly’ because of his extraordinary conversation, and she was amused at the ceremony with which he made tea in his tiny saucepan. The most frequent guest was Louis Bussell, who lived and tutored not far away in a house at 3 Westbourne Crescent, east of Notting Hill. Shy, delicate, modest, intelligent, sardonically humorous, subtly discriminating, devoid of ambition, Bussell hated his tutoring work but continued at it. He supplied Jones with cigarettes. Jones left his room door unlocked and, going out, he would often leave a note for Bussell or, coming in, would find one from him. Diana Creagh visited in the spring of 1941 with an arm full of flowers, as she would again the

following year—‘a huge lot of country flowers’ to beautify his drab room. He was out, so she placed them in his sink after stopping and filling it.¹²⁹

Twenty-four-year-old Peter Kelly visited during leave from the navy. He was a new friend introduced earlier this year by Fr. Gervase Matthew OP, after a history lecture by his brother Bishop David Matthew, which Jones had attended. Kelly had recently interrupted his studies at Oxford. Jones invited him back to Onslow Square for talk. Kelly had to learn to talk with him. Jones would pause in his speech to think or search for a word, and Kelly would speak, with Jones looking at him as he talked and then resuming what he had been saying as though Kelly had not spoken. Later what Kelly had said during the pause might be picked up and a response woven into Jones’s monologue. Kelly found these one-sided conversations ‘marvellous.’ Jones spoke about art and the Seven and Five Society. ‘He liked telling funny stories about people.’ In the weeks after meeting, they visited often. Jones showed him his pictures, talking about the subject matter rather than the form. He put on his hat, scarves, and layers of clothing to go with Kelly to pubs and Italian restaurants to meet Kelly’s young friends, whose company he enjoyed. Occasionally they met at La Commercio, where Jones now missed seeing his favourite waitress, the beautiful Francesca.* Kelly showed him some of his own drawings and paintings, and Jones said things like, ‘Those trees must be in France.’ Worried that it was inferior work, when he entered the navy Kelly left them with Jones with instructions to burn them all. And he did. Once or twice in the early years of the war, Kelly went with him to Mass in the Carmelite Church and noticed that he was totally absorbed, concentrating or utterly distracted—‘absolutely miles away—it was extraordinary.’ (Jones’s meditation and daydreaming at Mass influence *The Anathemata*, which is a narrative of what may occur in someone’s mind at Mass.) Afterwards, at the Catherine Wheel, Kelly watched him stare at a dog on the rug with the same concentration, to the exclusion of everything else. He couldn’t take his eyes off it. ‘It was as though he was in a trance.’ After the war, Kelly attended the Courtauld Institute and taught art history for a while before taking up farming in Herfordshire. Jones thought him an ‘admirable man’.¹³⁰

* During fears of an Italian fifth column, half the population of Soho had been expelled, her family among them. She died and her family when their ship, bound for Canada, was torpedoed and sunk.

About once a month throughout the war, he sent a postcard to Fr. Richard Kehoe OP inviting him to visit for an evening. He had first noticed and became friendly with Kehoe as a young priest at Havestock Hill when he used to stay with the Edes in Hampstead, and in Oxford he had visited him at the Newman Club and Blackfriars. Kehoe would arrive in the evening with a bottle of whisky. Summer or winter, he found Jones bundled up in a greatcoat, complaining of the draught. Physically slight with a craggy face, as though carved in wood, and a lovely smile, Kehoe was learned, warm, liberal-minded. He smoked a pipe. The conversation began slowly, with Jones emerging from a state of depression or lassitude aggravated often by a cold. He spoke about the Roman Liturgy, the history and structure of the Mass, the Roman Empire, the Roman Army, von Hügel, Gill, Waugh, and other contemporaries. Kehoe chiefly spoke about scripture, literally lecturing Jones with, Jones wrote, ‘astounding knowledge & perception—never met anything quite like it.’ These talks would have ‘direct and immediate bearing’ on *The Anathemata* (A 38-9). Kehoe remembered that he never knew ‘a creative listener to compare with’ Jones, who later said that Kehoe was ‘superb ... one of the brightest chaps’ the Dominicans had. He really makes the canon of Scripture live in a quite unique way.’ He considered him essentially ‘a poet who just happens,’ accidentally, as it were, ‘to be an exegete,’ ‘the most vivifying ‘exegete of the scriptures I’ve come across.’ He ‘opened doors, as it were, unto vistas, instead of closing them.’ ‘It was ... his whole attitude, his ‘haecceity,’ if you like, that I liked.’ Jones urged him to write down and publish what he so eloquently spoke, but Kehoe said that he ‘could not write,’ and Jones later had to admit that when Kehoe did publish articles, although the content was there, ‘the particular & unique quality’ of his spoken thought ‘did not shine out.’ They corresponded, but Jones’s letters were those of a man to a priest, so Kehoe destroyed them. Kehoe later said of him, ‘He made a deeper impression of goodness on me than anyone else I have ever known—except for a few lay-sisters.’¹³¹ Wartime conversations with Kehoe, the scripture scholar Eric Burrows SJ, and Bernard Wall would contribute to *The Anathemata*.

Jones saw less of Grisewood now, though he did visit him in his office at Broadcasting House and Grisewood had him to lunch once a month at the Oriental Club, where Jones liked to go. They looked at and discussed the new writing, which he now regarded as a ‘book’-in-progress and hoped that it would be a single unified work, though

he wrote without a plan, sometimes believing he was getting somewhere, other times not. At the end of October he went home with Grisewood to Richmond for an early birthday celebration. The Grisewoods' house had been built in 1725, with garden going down to the river. Although small, it was, Jones wrote, 'a proper building that ambles & is contrived—not a damned standardized lifeless construction like our modern stuff mostly is.' It reminded him of Ede's house in Elm Row. Evenings he spoke on the phone with Harman or Margaret, expensively, for forty minutes. Margaret's mother had moved in and developed a maternal interest in Jones, whose socks and shirts she mended for him. If she answered the phone, he was content to talk with her for half an hour or more. He visited by bus about once a



17. Jones reading to Margaret, Twickenham, c. 1943

month throughout the rest of the war. A photograph was taken there of him reading to of Margaret in the garden on a sunny summer day (fig. 17), she in the sun, he in shade. In 1943 he wrote, 'It has made *all* the difference to these years of war being able to go & talk with Harman there & crack a few jokes & its such a heavenly house & situation altogether.'¹³²

Since 1928, he had frequented a little Welsh bookshop off Charing Cross Road run by Will Griffiths, 'always kind and helpful'. He was there when a seven-year-old Cockney girl 'with a howling Cockney father' entered to buy a Welsh bible. Back for a short visit after being evacuated to Wales for a few months, she spoke fluent Welsh, to the astonishment of her father, Will Griffiths, and Jones.¹⁷ It was the clearest possible indication of how easily children learn languages and stirred his own regret at not having learned Welsh.

Occasionally now on Friday nights, he attended regular meetings of half a dozen culturally and politically engaged Welshmen, to whom Griffiths had introduced him in the spring of 1937. They met for supper in a little restaurant off Charring Cross Road, 'huddling together discussing Welsh affairs—'heads together—gesticulations—rapid

speech—rapped-out disagreements—partly in English, partly in Welsh’, the Welsh immediately politely translated for him. During arguments, which were generally fierce, Jones shyly hovered on the fringe, occasionally entering with ‘self-effacing dignity and humility’ to elucidate certain points with an erudition that amazed them. His knowledge of Welsh history, one of them remembered, ‘put us to shame.’ In the winter of 1942, during a blackout, the group brought him with them to Paddington for the arrival of Aneurin Talfan Davies, a Welsh poet, broadcaster, publisher, and literary critic, with whom Jones became and remained friends—a devout Welsh Anglican, Davies was, he would say, was ‘one of the nicest persons’ he knew.¹³³ (After Wales, the chief topic of conversation between Jones and Davies was *Finnegans Wake*, which they both loved.)¹³⁴

They then all adjourned to the lounge of the Paddington Hotel—jammed with soldiers lying on the floor asleep with their kit bags in the half-light. Jones mentioned to one of his companions that he had never heard *Bryn Calfarfa* (Calvary’s Hill) sung in Welsh. The man tapped on the marble-topped table and announced this fact. Spontaneously they sang it softly in three-part harmony. Astonishingly, numenously beautiful, the hymn echoed in the opulent room. All conversation ceased, a waiter stopped in his tracks, listening, and, Jones noticed, on a sofa nearby the female companion of a naval officer seemed astonished and edged slightly away. Davies said the Welshmen felt he was ‘one of us’. It was probably through these men that he first heard of the Welsh nationalist Saunders Lewis and, in 1940, became a member of the Cymmrodorian Society.¹³⁵ *

He also attended meetings of the Aquinas Society. Thomism, the paper being delivered, and friends were the main attraction, but he also slightly fancied the secretary of the society, a woman with full, bee-stung lips.¹³⁶

He most felt the limitation of his living situation when Prudence or Joan Hague or Charles Burns came to London and he could not put them up. ‘What a bugger it is having no home of any sort,’ he wrote to Charles Burns, ‘I do loath it. I do grieve for Glebe but that couldn’t be helped.’ He wanted out-of-town friends to stay the night, otherwise they could

* There was also a regimental connection. On December 19 1951, the secretary of the Society, Sir John Cecil-Williams wrote to Jones to say that he is glad about Jones’s continuing interest in the society and mentions having been to the dinner of the resuscitated 15th RWF Association and seeing there ‘a lot of old friends such as Fitz, Trefor, Doc Day, Bell, Sgt Jack Pierce and others.’

not have a good long talk—there was usually a room vacant in the building or else in the boarding house next door. When Charles Burns took him for lunch at Gourmets on Saturday, 31 January, he stayed, as Jones begged him to, at the boarding house next door, as he did again the following month and in March so that they could have a ‘long & interesting talk’ well into the night.¹³⁷

In October 1941, Prudence came to town and stayed in his building in a large, well-furnished room, so much better than his own that they visited there. She was ‘cursing the Welshmen of her valley like anything!!!’ They were up to “all the old games”, diverting water & bargaining & pinching & all that—I think all peasants are really like that,’ he wrote to Petra, ‘only she thinks the Welsh are particularly bad at it ... they are always pretty nasty to “foreigners” that is to anyone who comes into a valley from outside.’ She ‘*looked* better,’ he thought, but was ‘not well.’ Her left side was numb and she was in pain. She told him, ‘You could stick a pin in my bum and I wouldn’t feel it.’¹³⁸ As often with women, her symptoms were considered psychological in origin.

In the winter, she was correctly diagnosed, by Dr. Worster Drought at the West End Hospital for Nervous Diseases, as having ‘Disseminated Sclerosis,’ the incurable disease now called Multiple Sclerosis. He treated her with gold injections and Vitamin B, but held out no hope of recovery or slowing the progress of the disease. In March she came to town for treatment. Jones was unable to find her a room, so she stayed with Edward Hodgkins, who was in London for some months. She was treated by a Viennese professor named Schacherl, who gave her vitamin D1, calcium and shock treatments by para-typhoid and anti-typhoid injections, which made her ill. Schacherl hoped to induce temporary remission but failed. Jones imagined that the disease was, ‘in plain ... Anglo-Saxon, a hardening of tissue of some sort cropping up over scattered areas throughout the body.’ Having researched it, she told him that she expected periods of paralysis in various parts of the body alternating with remissions but worsening steadily and ending in prolonged, undignified dying. Knowing this, she remained, he found, entirely herself, ‘superbly cheerful & brave & defiant in spite of it all.’ In mid May, they went to the zoo together, and had a ‘nice time,’ though there were few animals and the place was now not well-kept. In the summer of 1942, he often visited her in a flat she rented at 32 Dorset Square. Paralysis moved to various parts of her body, and when she was unable to walk she

depended on him to shop for her. They talked often. She was always, he found, ‘very cheerful’ ... & *tremendously* brave but it is a wretched outlook.’ In July she had to write to avoid a call-up interview but had lost the address, did not know how to spell ‘disseminated’ and was unable to walk. In the autumn, paralysis worse and causing her extreme pain, she retreated to Mill House.¹³⁹

In early January 1942, Jones went to the National Gallery for the private view of the Tate’s Wartime Acquisitions, which included four of his pictures: *The Chapel in the Park* (bought for 30 guineas), *The Terrace* (donated by the Contemporary Arts Society) *Guinever* and *The Four Queens* (£60 each). The Malory pictures were ‘badly hung,’ so he requested reframing. (This was done, and subsequently, at another exhibition, he thought they looked ‘much nicer.’) For him, the best of the new acquisitions were Moore’s shelter drawings. He saw Moore, Graham Sutherland, Kenneth Clark and others he had not seen since before the war. One of them was Kerrison Preston, a solicitor and Blake collector and scholar, whom he had long ago met through Gill and with whom he went for tea. They talked about Gill, Jones recommended Spengler. Preston came away convinced, as he told his friends Clark and Sutherland, that Jones was a painter-prophet within ‘the tradition’ of original imagination that included Blake. Possibly encouraged by Preston’s sense of him, Clark decided in July to publish a book on Jones. Robin Ironside would edit it, it would include thirty-two plates, sixteen in colour, and the fee for Jones would be £100.¹⁴⁰

Jones spent four weeks in January and February indoors with ‘an *extraordinary* cold’ and terrible sore throat, which returned ‘three times.’ The doctor gave him vitamins and tonics and said this was quite ordinary, to which Jones replied indignantly, ‘I think it is bloody extraordinary.’ Reading in bed, he was appalled at the Vichy trial at Riom of six French military leaders accused of responsibility for the fall of France. He found the speeches ‘a nightmare of cross-accusation & rhetorical farce’ in which the private inclination to blame others was magnified. He wondered whether it would ‘dawn on them that all this scapegoat tendency is pretty good balls & that actually you can’t have a world-imperium & not have a corresponding war-machine without serious trouble when

attacked—there’s no mystery—it’s more astonishing that we survive at all, when you really think about it.’¹⁴¹

Grisewood was taking books out of the London Library for him, such as, in March, John Pinkerton’s *Collection of ... Interesting Voyages and Travels*. In it, Jones especially liked material on the Scilly Isles—which he would recall when writing *The Anathemata* (100). Another was a Prussian pastor’s account of a walking tour from London to Derbyshire in 1782, in which Jones found it fascinating: 1) that Londoners bought milk from a girl with cows in St James Park; 2) that supporters of a speaker in Parliament shouted, ‘Hear him, hear him,’ and not, as now, ‘Hear, hear’; 3) that only beggars walked, so that inns were hesitant to put up a walker; 4) that the English were fascinated with electricity; and 5) that they were, as now, concerned that one not sit in a draft and catch cold. It was ‘full of heavenly stuff of that sort.’¹⁴² Grisewood lent him *The Roman Army*, which he liked reading against Seyffert’s *Dictionary of Classical Antiquities*, which he found generally disappointing. ‘These dictionaries are *always* like that, I find, they never tell you about the evoking things.’¹⁴³ At the end of May, Grisewood sent him books on the English language. In these and through Ewart’s *The French Language*, borrowed from Bussell, he discovered something that pleased him a great deal: that *landa*, one of the few Old Celtic words surviving in French became, in English, ‘laund’ and so ‘lawn.’ ‘Next time I hear a lawn-mower clicking,’ he writes, ‘I shall enjoy a wider vista than “he’s mowing the lawn” has hitherto conjured up! I wonder what Germans call *lawn* when they mow the bugger.’ He was glad that prehistoric Celtic migrations had ‘left a few words of the Neolithic culture embedded in speech of Paris.’¹⁴⁴ He would remember Celtic origins when writing in ‘The Hunt’ about Arthur recklessly riding ‘the close thicket as though it were an open launde’ (SL 67).

His writing involved continual research—not to acquire but to verify knowledge for accuracy of fact and nuance. He found ‘checking-up on the details ... always so difficult. My head goes round then, like when I try to do a bit of arithmetic & yet I do so *hanker* for precision—one can do *nothing* without it. but it is exhausting. I find things are written in such an unclear way.’ Generally he found confirmation that he was ‘right in the main.’ For example, he was glad to see that Roman centurions corresponded to modern sergeant

majors, just as he had imagined them while writing his manuscript—‘like sergeant-majors psychologically, like company commanders functionally.’¹⁴⁵ Little of what he knew went directly into his writing. What did was the tip of an iceberg, implying much not explicitly present, so that the knowledgeable reader does not feel, as with so many research-based writings, only partially engaged.

One source of information was Colin Hardie, a Classics don at Magdalen College, Oxford, whom he knew through the Walls* Jones admired his writings and valued his opinions. In letters, he asked Hardie precise questions about Classical details, usage, and expressions and received full and careful answers—in a correspondence that continued throughout the composition of *The Anathemata*. On 11 July 1945, he wrote to Hardie, ‘one does need really to know the hard facts however oblique the suggestion—if possible. Writing is jolly like painting in that. To make a small scratch of the pencil in the right place, or the smudge of paint, needs a devil of a lot of stuff digested first—in *some* way or other—however diverse the ways. Even if that particular pencil or brush mark is covered up or eliminated in the end—as so often happens! Writing seems to me just about the same.’ His procedure had for him a negative epiphany in a story he heard from Prudence. When her car was repaired during a trip to Snowdonia, she was given a bill written in verse, which was ‘jolly good’ verse, and no English motor-mechanic would have attempted it, but the amounts were inaccurate. This combination of beauty and inaccuracy was for Jones a paradigm of artistic failure. Art was a matter of truth as well as beauty. For the same reason, he thought, the otherwise marvellous soliloquy of Shakespeare’s *Henry VI* (III, 2:5) was marred by his saying he will sit down ‘on this mole hill’—something hardly likely in the fierce weather conditions during the ferocious battle of Towton. He would read of a correspondence between the seven planets and the seven-branched candle stick and think that that had been good poetry only when people thought there were only seven planets. ‘That’s the bed-rock difference I’m sure between good & bad stuff,’ he thought. If the correspondence is not true,

then the ‘magic’ ceases to work—what a vast number of poetic cargoes have been wrecked on this rock
 No skill or ‘sensitivity’ of sorts can save it when this rule is violated. I may be quite absurdly wrong,

* Other sources included his cousin Ruth Daniel (who helped him with Greek) and the A.H. Williams headmaster of the county school in Ruthin, Derbighshire

but I feel that a whole lot of Spenser fails here—it's 'unreal' in consequence. One ceases to 'believe' it or something. No felicity of words makes up for it. It's the eternal 'Thou shalt not' of poetry—'Thou shalt not bear false witness'—*just* the same in painting, you know.¹⁴⁶

A Welsh proverb that meant a lot to him ever since he first read it in 1916 in *The Welsh People* (xxv) was the motto of the University of Wales: 'The best muse is the truth.'

If truth was a matter of historical record, it was often also, for him, something personally experienced. He was writing, in his 'book', of 'the white unequal pair' pulling the plough that marks the outer, mystical boundary of ancient Rome (*SL* 12). The reference is to the sacred yoking of a bull with a heifer as described by Varro, but he was also remembering a plough drawn by an ox yoked with a much smaller animal in the south of France or in Palestine, he could not remember which.¹⁴⁷

He needed more access to books for his writing, so Helen Sutherland bought him, in December 1943, a library membership. He had difficulty at first with 'those bloody London Library indices etc.' but could soon locate and take out an allowable limit of ten books. One of these concerned the Roman procurement and shipment of animals for games. He wrote, 'the savagery of those chaps passes belief—they really did seem to gloat over the most revolting sufferings of both beasts & men—in a very big way & hardly any compunction on the part of the more sanitized minds. I think it is something we can't properly take in—not yet, at all events! I wonder if it *is* Xtianity which has made some difference.' He also read Tacitus about a centurion who used to beat his men so hard that he broke a succession of vine-rods and was always ordering more. Jones wrote, 'they called the old bastard 'Hand us another'—I was delighted—it's a real Cockney-soldier joke isn't it ... an authentic 'soldier' kind of joke. (One of Jones's fictional Romans would deny being 'a sergeant-major "Hand-us-Another" to any man.' [*SL* 52].) His dealings with the library involved a good deal of special pleading. At one time he had out eight books above the limit, renewing some of them for years because, as he wrote to the Secretary of the library, 'I am continuing to use them for a work on which I am engaged.'^{148*}

* In December 1945, he would list the books he still had out together with the dates of first taking them out. Asterisks mark those he intended to renew: E. Owen, *Welsh Folk-lore*, 2 Dec 1942*; W.D. Morrison, *Jews under Roman Rule*, 21 Jan 1943*; C.M.S. Jones, *Comp. to Roman History*, 29 Jan 1943; Tacitus, *Agricola & Germania*, 22 Feb 1943; A.D.H. Smith, *Jesus not a Myth*, 26 Feb 1943*; R.E.M. Wheeler, *Prehistoric &*

After visiting Grisewood in February 1942, he told him how his writing was progressing, ‘a certain amount gets done at great sweat & pressure & then nothing for weeks & a kind of nausea with what is done! I was *terribly pleased* that you feel it worth doing—but you know how awful all this “art” thing is, when one *does* feel it’s no use, *nothing* will convince one, for the time, that it is. But I do hope to get a new spurt soon. I walk round it, you know, ... keep guard on it, turn it over, think about it, have a peep at it—rather like a patient!’ He asked for prayers ‘for I am very troubled just now, can’t get any settlement of mind. I wish it would lift.’ At the start of June, he wrote, ‘I can’t get on with my writing & feel very unhappy about it all.’¹⁴⁹

Whenever he Miss Muscat brought his ration of soap, he recalled Joyce’s words in *Anna Livia*, ‘Throw us your hudson soap for the honour of Clane ... ah, & don’t forget the rekkits I lohaned you.’ He found it ‘astonishing’ how Joyce, once you were familiar with his writing, provided quotations ‘like *Hamlet*.’ There was no soap on 13 March, an early-closing day, and Miss Muscat was unwilling to shop just then. So he tried washing with ‘some camphorated oil first, then hot-water, tooth-past & talcum-powder—it worked quite well,’ he writes to Grisewood, ‘*hands* I mean, don’t think this camphorated oil would be good on face, or balls, for that matter.’¹⁵⁰

In May, Dawson invited him to dinner in ‘the Mausoleum’ in Queen’s Gate Terrace. Jones found him ‘a bit severe & frightening in the way deep learning is apt to be’ but ‘very funny in his own way.’ Though Dawson was not as depressed as in former years, Jones had to draw him out by chattering on various topics. They had both read John Cowper Powys’s *Owen Glendower* and ‘chuckled together about things in it.’ Jones was no fan of Powys. After spotting stacks of the novel in a bookstore in Sloane Street and being told by the shop man, that it would not sell, he felt it his ‘duty’ to buy and read this 600-page work on ‘that *truly* remarkable Welshman.’ But, he wrote, ‘after the first

Roman Wales, 9 April 1943; E.J. Bower, *Wales*, 9 April 1943*; H. Parker, *Roman Legions*, 9 April 1943; E. Schjeurer, *Hist of Jewish People* vols 1,2,3, 20, May 1943; J.E. Lloyd, *Hist of Wales* vol 1, 8 July 1943; T.P. Ellis, *Welsh Tribal Law in Mid. Ages* 2 vols, 10 July 1943; W.W. Fowler, *Virgil’s Gathering of the Clans*, 8 Nov 1943*; W.F.J. Knight, *Virgil’s Troy*, 8 Nov 1943; Papillon & Haigh, eds *Virgil*, vol 2 8 Nov 1943; Martial, *Epigrams* vol 2, 14 Dec 1945.*

few pages, I realized it had all the accustomed themes & characters of ‘the historical novel’ & nearly gave up, but the ‘content’ & the apt weaving together of things from the very beginnings of Wales with incidents, persons, sites in the novel itself constrained me to go through the “forms” I continued to find extremely trying.’* He and Dawson then went on to speak about the resurgence of ‘torture, the police-state & Co.’ and religion. Dawson said that Catholics were becoming more institutional ‘and mechanical,’ moving away from ‘the age of von Hügel, the “belief” in the Holy Ghost, in the subtlety of where truth resides’ towards ‘a belief in effecting things by organisation & formulas’—‘in short that “propaganda” is universally dominant in the Ch as outside it & once you yielded *internally* to the propagandist attitude y’re sunk.’ They discussed the Catholic condemnation of Luther’s statement that the burning of heretics is offensive to the Holy Spirit—a statement which, they agreed, was obviously true. ‘Yet rather than make this admission,’ Catholic apologists ‘go in for all kinds of beatings about the bush to justify Papal absurdity—all of which is a pity & *quite* irrelevant to the truths of the Cath. Religion.’ Jones came away grateful for having talked ‘to someone whose brain is the right *kind*—that’s what one sighs for—the disagreements don’t matter—but the *temper*—the *kind*, the *sort* of thing that a chap regards as *significant*—that’s what one wants & that is hard to come by.’ He read Dawson’s new book, *The Judgment of the Nations*, and thought it ‘very good’. He told him so the following summer when Dawson returned to London and they met again.¹⁵¹

In the *Catholic Herald* (17 November 1942) he read that ‘imagination, when rightly directed, is ... the medium of indirect revelation.’ He thought this wrong and drafted a letter saying, ‘we should consider long before predicating natural endowments’ such as imagination, with ‘supernatural privileges.’ Imagination was, he thought, a purely natural faculty, though extremely important. Greco-Roman imagination gave ‘the modes & forms & shapes & instruments by which’ Judaic revelation became available to Mediterranean people. ‘Subsequently the North & West ... translated’ that Mediterranean

* Because, as he put it, ‘I can’t resist books, good or bad, about my father’s *patria*, my beloved Cymru,’ he would later read Powys’s ‘romance of the Dark Ages,’ *Porcius* (1951), which he also disliked as bad art, full of padding and the antithesis of Joyce: ‘no padding of any sort, every word has an exact meaning, usually about 20 meanings.’

form and Judaeo content ‘into terms of a Xtian art by virtue of “imagination”. The extremely complex historical result is “our world”, a world of imagination & affection within a *pomerium* which circuits Kells, Byzantium, Hippo, Upsala.’¹⁵² The Greco-Roman-Celtic-German-Norse imagination gave the modes and constitute the medium of the Christian tradition, but they were not, he thought, necessarily superior to, or spiritually privileged over ‘other traditions & fusions of tradition with other “dear sites,” other art-forms, awarenesses, sensitivities, “imaginings”. He thought that ‘truth, and a kind of good manners, suggest that “indirect revelation” should be mentioned somewhat charily & never presumed upon, or it could become an absurd impertinence.’¹⁵³

After the extremely cold winter of 1942, Jones emerged from hibernation. The warm sunny spring made it seem ‘like the old days of “peace”, somehow’, and he met on the street many old friends: E.Q. Nicholson, Teddy Wolf, Charles Burns, Clarita Burns (sister to Charles and Tom), Vladimir Korostovetz, and ‘old Lawrence,’ who had been in charge of the life class at Westminster School of Art. This happened every spring during the war. In June 1943, he saw Walter Bayes and found him ‘just the same,’ speaking in the same way, with the same sort of joke. Jones’s social life picked up, as he had lunch with one, tea with another. Walking across a Horse Guards parade with Bernard Wall, he met Petra with her children on their way to the zoo. He had dinner with Speaight on Good Friday. There he met Dom Aelred Graham of Ampleforth, whom he liked ‘immensely.’ In May he read a book on Zen Buddhism recommended by Graham, which he ‘rather enjoyed & found very interesting’:

It’s a rum business—they are jolly different chaps from us, but I found things I liked very much in it, here & there. It’s the Chinese ‘variety’ of Buddhism & I like the Chinese type of mind I must say, & damn funny too in places. I think I should rather like to be a Chinese. It’s far more attractive than anything I’ve read about the Indians—not so highfalutin’—with a kind of understanding of the old physicals.¹⁵⁴

In the winter of 1942, a recent Clark-appointee to the staff of the National Gallery, Helmut Ruhemann embarked on radical restoration of masterpieces by chemically removing old varnish. In May 1942, Jones visited the Gallery and saw El Greco’s newly cleaned *Christ and the Money Changers*. ‘Just a yellow drab mess before’ but ‘an absolute corker now. ... talk about “super-realism”—it looked about twice as “real” as the people walking about in front of it—I’ve *never* seen anything like it—for

power & beauty—not for many years. It restores one’s belief in the human race,—for a bit.’ Jones asked Clark to keep it on display for an extra week, so he did, enabling his friend to return again and again to see this marvel. But chemical restoration removed tinted varnishes and subtle glazes designed to mute tones, and not all pictures benefited from this. One of his favourites, Gainsborough’s portrait of his daughter in a big plumed hat, was spoiled, he thought, ‘now a shadow of its former splendour.’ And the Piero della Francesca’s ‘lost in impact’ and coherence. He had recently spent an entire visit looking solely at Hogarth’s *Shrimp Girl*, a great favourite of his, which he knew, possibly from Meninsky, was also a favourite of Wyndham Lewis.¹⁵⁵ (Jones also liked Hogarth’s *Dance in a Country House*.) After its cleaning, Bussell telephoned and said, simply, ‘It’s gone’, and he knew he would never see it again. He went, and sure enough, shadow had been removed from her face, revealing garishly pink cheeks and red lips.¹⁵⁶ The despoliation was, for Jones, appalling—he would never get over it. Ruhemann’s ruthless cleaning, now universally discredited, was opposed in public only by Ernest Gombrich. Jones’s private complaints to Clark contributed to his eventually losing confidence in Ruhemann and his extreme methods.

In the second week of May, Helen Sutherland was in London and took him and Edward Hodgkin to supper in a restaurant in Charlotte Street. For the first time in his life, Jones had kid, which he found ‘jolly nice’ with ‘an awfully *genuine* taste—& very tender & special with vague aroma of “goat”.’ As he ate, he realized why Isaac in the Old Testament liked the ‘savory meat’ of the kids that ‘that bitch Rebecca prepared for him—what a lovely story that is!’¹⁵⁷

Attempting to write brought on ‘another bloody attack of Rosy—the first proper one for some time. It is a bugger—the mysterious old sod of a disease.’ To him, the spring light made everything seem ‘drab & shabby,’ including himself in ‘old rags.’ In this recurrence of lassitude and depression, he found irksome the veiled moral disapproval of friends—Nicolette Gray again, but now even Tom Burns—who blamed his inactivity on ‘a kind of inertia of the will, a kind of slackening which is, in part, reprehensible.’ Despite the relapse, he did continue writing, sometimes well, sometimes not, persevering in the face of the utter impossibility of painting, which still brought on the worst symptoms of his illness. As a painter, he felt himself ‘permanently immobilized.’ And he had no

confidence in his writing: 'I try to tell myself it's worth trying to do—but I don't know.'¹⁵⁸

Still, he felt generally better than a decade earlier and was able to see people. In early June he went to Richmond for dinner with the Grisewoods and Charles Burns, with whom he discussed his relapse. On 28 June he went out to dinner with Vladimir Korostovetz and Diana Creagh, and, the following day, with Manya Harari. The Grays had moved into a house at 9 Essex Villas, not far from Sheffield Terrace, and while Nicolette was staying in the country with her children, she sometimes visited, and then he would go for a meal. Now that the Blitz had abated, many of his pre-war connections were re-established.¹⁵⁹

On 16 June he visited Hampton Court for the first time in many years. He went to see the paintings, but most of the best were in storage. He imagined what it would mean to live in the palace: 'it's a beautiful place but how odd it must have been to live in a series of corridors, so to say—hellish hard to pay a chap a visit without going through other chaps' bed-rooms & Co.'¹⁶⁰

In late June he read for the first time *Huckleberry Finn* 'damned funny & very interesting.' His father wanted to read about America, so he hunted through bookstores and discovered Cecil Chesterton's *History of the United States*. Before giving it, he read it and found it 'most awfully good'. He thought Cecil a better writer than his famous brother, 'with more restraint ... harder headed & not so flowery.' Having been fairly ignorant of US history, he found the book a revelation. 'The American set up' is, he realized, 'a complicated thing when one goes into it.... quite unlike anything else, clearly. That southern state 'civilization' seemed to have something to it, & clearly north & south have produced *individuals* of quite remarkable "character", "principle", & *aspiration* particularly, & I see that there were elements of what you might call a "culture" (at a pinch), but always a colonial culture.' And he adds, '*all through* it seems to me that "aspirations", some admirable, some deluded, some pathetic, have dominated it.' One of his favourite bits of information in it was about someone trying to impress Thaddeus Stevens of President Andrew Johnson's good qualities by saying, 'You know, he's a self-made man,' and Stevens replying, 'I'm glad to hear it. I should be sorry to attribute such a creature to the Creator.'¹⁶¹

Earlier in the year, someone whom he identified to Grisewood as 'D,' had asked him for a picture for a publication he identified as 'that S[ong] of S[ongs] thing.' Delivering it in the summer, Jones asked 'with great reluctance and embarrassment' whether he would be paid. The reply was, 'We would be very sorry to have to pay for it because we have very little money.' Jones said, 'Okay, I only wanted to know' and, realizing that he was incapable of protesting over such a matter, immediately regretted not doing so. The recipient was pleased that Jones had drawn after so long a period of paralysis and said he liked the drawing but worried that a dalmatic sleeve (the only part of the drawing Jones liked) might make people think of a dressing gown. Explaining that the dalmatic was in the picture because a garment of joy, he found the man's hesitation over something in a drawing he was getting for free 'hellish funny'.¹⁶²

He was now living mainly on Helen Sutherland's weekly subsidy, reduced in August 1941 to £4.10, plus Tom Burns's weekly subsidy, which had increased to £2. In 1941 he had also received £2 from his father, £13 from Prudence Branch (£7 in August, £6 in November), and £40 from the Hararis (£20 in August, £20 in November). In addition, he earned £88 through the sale of pictures. But revenue from sales dwindled to £20 in 1942. For the years 1939/40 and 1940/41 he paid no income tax. In 1941/42 he paid £3.5.9. In 1942/43, he earned and received as gifts £289 and paid tax of £29.19.0. Unable to afford the amount of whisky he liked, he gave it up entirely. When Diana Creagh took him to drink with friends in the Royal Court Bar, he refused a whisky because, he said, he could not get enough of it. To save money, he was now rolling his own cigarettes. He quit smoking but, surprised by the 'strain' and the degree to which he was 'attached to it,' resumed after a fortnight. Because of rationing and poverty, he was eating poorly and began fantasizing about food. In one letter he writes, 'I would like some smoked salmon with a lot of lemon, some thin brown bread & a lot of butter & a very large whisky indeed & a *lot* of soda—these are my war aims & some new clean clothes & a reasonable amount of money.' He was regularly drinking Marmite dissolved in hot water, a yeast-extract paste generally used as a savory spread (on toast, biscuits, crackers). Recovering from flu in February 1943 and feeling 'absolutely strengthless', he felt himself yearning for 'champagne.'¹⁶³

During a recent exhibition, Michael Richey had introduced him to his seventy-four-year-old father, George, a much decorated (recommended twice for the D.S.O, once for the V.C.) big-jawed Colonel, now retired. He and his wife had moved into a house off Kensington Church Street, where Michael stayed while on leave. Discovering that they were neighbours, Jones and the Colonel began meeting for drinks and talk in a Kensington-Church-Street pub almost daily before lunch and supper.* Jones found him fascinating, a quintessential soldier. Richey had fought in the cavalry in India and South Africa. He had been in the Bechuanaland Expedition (1884-5), fought in the Matabele War (1896), the Mashona Rebellion (1897-8), the Boer War (wounded at Watervas Drift), and served as colonel during the Great War in Egypt, Palestine, and France (wounded at Ypres, 1917). He had also headed the mounted police in South Africa. A fighting colonel, he rose no higher in rank because he would resign whenever peace broke out, rejoining upon resumption of hostilities. About officers who served in peacetime he complained, 'they just don't like blood.' He also saw this defect in his sons, Michael in the navy, Paul in the airforce.¹⁶⁴

On one occasion, he told Jones of being in Africa with a half-company travelling with the regimental pay when, they found themselves in a crescent of thousands of Bantu, beating war-drums and discharging with frightening accuracy showers of assegai (spears), which made 'very nasty' wounds. (Richey showed where one had pierced his wrist.) The two points of the crescent were gradually closing. 'I don't think I very easily have the jitters,' he said, 'but by God I was scared then.' One of the two maxim guns was jammed and ammunition was low. He ordered firing to concentrate on the tips of the crescent. With ammunition running out, all looked hopeless but the Bantu suddenly withdrew. During the battle someone stole and rode off with the cash from the convoy wagon—'an officer & a gentleman,' sneered Richey, 'and there were quite a few of 'em I can tell you.' Jones associated this story with Henry Newbolt's poem, 'The Square that Broke' and thought it illustrated the discipline of certain imperial forces, pre-eminently the Romans. He would incorporate Richey's 'account of an assegai's accurate trajectory and penetrating down drive' in 'Balaam's Ass' (*SL* 98). The Colonel had a good sense of humour and told this joke: 'There were two ladies in hospital. One said to the other, 'Did you hear? A case of

* The pub has been variously identified as the Catherine Wheel, the Lord Nelson, and the Zetland.

syphilis is coming in.’ The other replied, ‘I hope it’s better than that Rybena fruit juice.’ Jones later said of him, ‘What a bloke! I loved that man, and we met with almost regularity at that pub.’¹⁶⁵

In early July 1942, Hague came through London on leave and met with Jones and Prudence. In August, he had a longer leave, and Jones went to Pigotts to see him, intending to stay two days but remaining a week. They ‘had some heavenly talks & drinks & laughter,’ and singing. It was his second visit to Pigotts since Gill’s death, and the place seemed odd without him.¹⁶⁶

Back in London later in the month, he ran into Ben Nicholson on the street for the second time that year. Serving in the Home Guard in Cornwall, he was said to have the cleanest rifle in the UK. They went together to see some of Nicholson’s recent abstracts, which Jones thought very good. Nicholson seemed more tolerant and friendly, and it was especially good to see him. They got on well again because Nicholson had modified his ideological zeal. He now believed the main issue to be not whether a work was non-representational but rather the quality of ‘architectural construction’ and ‘musical’ relationships between form, tone, and colour.¹⁶⁷ While the language was not his, this is what Jones had always thought, so they were in agreement.

In early October, he saw Evelyn Waugh at the St James Club ‘looking *very* tough & well’ and also Francis Howard, who was in the commandos, ‘also looking absurdly tough & huge ... no longer white—but walnut.’ He also saw Alex Dru, now a major, and neglecting ‘poor Kierkegaard’.¹⁶⁸

One day in 1942 on Kensington Church Street he encountered Douglas Cleverdon, whose Bristol bookstore had been bombed and who had just moved to London to work as a producer in the Features Department of the BBC. He was living in a seedy, disreputable club in Gloucester Walk just south of Sheffield Terrace. They spoke about old friends and how the war had changed their lives. Jones went home with him and met his lover, Nest Lewis, also working at the BBC. Cleverdon was forty. She was twenty-one, short, pretty, vivacious, intelligent, vividly personable, but shy at first, and Welsh. Jones liked her immensely. They discussed how to cook leeks, and talked a good deal about food, a topic then on everyone’s mind. She remembered him then as thin, pale, half-starved, looking like Mole in *The Wind in the Willows*, small, worried, abstracted,

though prone to quiet laughter. It was the start of reciprocal visits. In his tiny room, she taught him to cook leeks on his little coal fire.¹⁶⁹

Sometime this year ‘that remarkable man who was keeper of the V&A Museum,’ Sir Eric Maclagan, asked him to dinner. Maclagan’s son had been ‘very fond of *In Parenthesis*,’ and, serving in the R.A.F., had just been killed. The father wanted to talk about him and ask about the book. Reading it had reminded him of one of his enthusiasms, works in ‘hisperic’ Latin of the fifth and sixth centuries, in which Greek, Hebrew, Celtic and other word-forms were used. He thought these works might have influenced Joyce and also Jones. ‘Have you read them?’ ‘I’ve never heard of them,’ said Jones. ‘Not many people have,’ said Maclagan. Six years later, they would dine together again, and Maclagan would delight him with this story: his Anglo-Catholic vicar asked a Sunday-school child what Jesus said to his mother when she was assumed into heaven. The child immediately replied, ‘Pleased to see you.’¹⁷⁰



18. David Jones, *The Mother of the West*, 1942

Jones made only two pictures in his small dark room. One was of a pregnant girl shopping. She had passed in front of his window several times while he was trying to

write, and he drew her in order to get her out of his mind so that he could resume writing.¹⁷¹ The other was of the Roman wolf (arrow-pierced) suckling the wounded Lamb of God (fig. 18)—empire, symbolized by the wolf, nurturing Christianity. Holly round the wolf's neck and the star of Bethlehem suggest continuity between this nursing and the Christian nativity-scene, though this is the nativity of Christendom. Affinity between the animals is suggested by the wolf bending its foreleg to hold a rod in a posture reminiscent of the conventional Easter Lamb-and-flag image. The open ruin on the left is the church at Capel-y-ffin. Set during war, its chaos is centred by circularity formed by a half-moon of bodies, catapults, and a canon on the right and the curve of the wolf's back sheltering the central Lamb and chalice. On a toppled plinth in the foreground are the Latin words, 'Where charity and love are, there God is.' The picture is a plea for peace and also an invocation of Roman historical analogy to the worst conceivable outcome of the war. If there were to be a European Nazi imperium, even that might eventually feed its Christian successor. This is his first use of explicit Christian imagery since his time at Capel-y-ffin. Unlike the early religious pictures, this depicts an idea about the Church and culture. It has some affinity with his last engraving, the 1933 Christmas card of the ark navigating 'intolerable waters' (Ch. 9, fig. 28) The new picture he entitled *The Mother of the West* and sent out photographs of it for his 1942 Christmas card. It was a picture he would never sell.

By the beginning 1943, he regarded his writing set in Palestine at the time of the Passion as a failed book but was not prepared to give up on it. Since 1939, he had drafted and redrafted material that had now reached seventy-seven pages. In it, two soldiers are on watch: Crixus, a veteran of the Teutoburg campaign in AD 9, and Oenamus, a younger conscript. Crixus offers to the Great Mother a prayer that celebrates local cultures and asks her to protect them 'in the days of the central economies.' A bugle sounds, ending their watch, and a centurion named Brasso Olenius enters and details the two guards for the next day's execution. He speaks for empire and closes with a chilling speech initiating them into the depersonalization of imperialism. All the Roman poems later

published in *The Sleeping Lord* are present here in embryo.* In February 1943, he decided that much of this material had to be scrapped. The sections ‘make no continuity & are now rather pointless & boring as well’ with an ‘extraordinary “pre-war” ring ...—jokes that are no longer jokes & obscurities that even I have forgotten the meaning of!’ He was ‘very depressed about this. I thought they were better than they actually are,’ he wrote Grisewood, ‘it is only tiny bits here & there that have come off. It is a bugger. But I think all the stuff done in the last year is not so bad.’¹⁷²

In April he read part of his book aloud to Ede, whose positive response encouraged him, especially since he had thought while reading that it was ‘pretty boring’ and wondered whether ‘it is any use at all.’ Familiarity bred boredom, in response to which he continually reworked. He writes,

sometimes & very often, it seems involved & tiresome, but I nevertheless have a most persistent ‘urge’ (what a word!) to do it—but I don’t think it will ever have the clear life of I.P.—its *much* more *difficult* to do (*mostly because the ‘I.P.’ was rooted in factual experience of a highly charged kind—& this is so damned ‘idea-ish’—but anyway the Roman soldiers are really only the *same* soldiers of one’s experience & our present world is so tremendously ‘like’ the late-Roman world in so many ways that perhaps it will work out all right. I hope & pray it will.) Anyway I’m, greatly relieved that you found it had ‘something’. It’s a curious occupation at this moment in history—but it seems all I am capable of—I only hope to God it does somehow or other get done, get completed—it is a *very very* long job yet.

He wished the ‘bloody book’ were a painting: ‘the “ideas” in a painting are not so damned nailed down as in writing—words are buggers for that.’ In August he wrote that the book is ‘a very long & slow job’ but he is determined to ‘concentrate on it & make it as best I can even if it should turn out to be a bore in the end.’¹⁷³

The person he now saw the most of was Bernard Wall, who had an important influence on Jones’s current writing, which would become *The Anathemata*. By Christmas 1942, Bernard Wall was in London working with the Foreign Office Research Department, which had just returned from evacuation to Oxford. He was in charge of the Italian department, which monitored the Italian press for the War Office. Having returned

* The nature and form of the material which Jones would mine and rework for *The Anathemata* and *The Sleeping Lord* has been discovered by Tom Goldpauh and described in ‘On the Traverse of the Wall: The Lost Long Poem of David Jones,’ *Journal of Modern Literature* 19, 1, 31-53 and ‘The Labyrinthine Text of Jones Jones,’ *David Jones Journal* (Summer 1997), 79-90. He edited this material in *The Grail Mass*, co-edited with Jamie Callison (London: Bloomsbury, 2018).

without Barbara and their children, he and Jones became bachelor pals, meeting several evenings a week--Jones visited him in his room at University College in Gower Street—or, often, during the day where Wall was supposed to be working. The way into his office was labyrinthine—down halls, past checkpoints, around make-shift partitions—it reminded Jones of an elaborate maze. Thinking of the interpretation of mazes in *Cumaean Gates*, he recalled this twisting route when writing ‘The Fatigue,’ in which narrative consciousness moves mazely into the administrative heart of the Roman empire at the time of the execution of Jesus (*SL* 38-9).¹⁷⁴ Discussion with Wall encouraged him to begin writing his essay ‘Art and Democracy’ which would appear in the summer of 1947 in *The Changing World*, a journal co-edited by Wall and Manya Harari for which Jones provided a cover drawing. In this essay, he writes that art is distinctive of man and the basis of an ‘equality’ that must not be politically thwarted (*E&A* 85-96).

Wall was a free spirit. Studying philosophy at Brasenose College, Oxford, he had ignored the direction of his tutors in order to read Aquinas, Unamuno, Eugenio d’Ors, Joseph de Maistre, and Eric Gill. To continue his education, he had gone in the early ‘30s to Freiburg, where, recoiling from the fundamentalist, right-wing neo-Thomism presided over by Garigou-Legrange, he read Loisy and the Modernists whom Pious IX had expelled from the Church. In 1935, he returned to London to edit *Colosseum*, an acrimonious journal dedicated to attacking sterile, ‘rigid traditionalism’ and sexual puritanism in the Church and bourgeois capitalism, and Communism. It was an international journal, introducing to English readers European writers including Maritan, Mauriac, Valéry, Léon Bloy, and Berdyaev. At the outbreak of war, Wall went to Rome where, for seven months, he conducted a clandestine attempt to convert Germans and Italians to free and peaceful thinking by putting up posters! Having been pro-Franco during the early stages of the Spanish Civil (and having argued about it with Peter Maturin in the kitchen of the *Catholic Worker* building in Manhattan), in Rome he became bitterly anti-Fascist. At the outbreak of war, he went to Balliol College to work under Toynbee as head of the Italian Section of the Foreign Office Research Department on Italian affairs. When the Blitz let up, the research offices had moved to London.

Jones frequently visited him in at work, passing guards and checkpoints to an area partitioned into offices by plywood.¹⁷⁵ Sometimes they went together to Brompton

Oratory for Mass (LC 141). But mostly they talked in the evenings, huddled by Jones's gas-ring, on which the tea-kettle warmed. They discussed Dante as the prelude to Boccaccio, Petrarch and the Renaissance. Wall saw Dante as a materialistic with a biased imagination. They spoke of Spengler, whose determinism was, they agreed, a product of the decline he writes about, and whose view of history was otherwise so compatible with those of Dawson and Berdyaev. They spoke of mutual friends and some only Wall knew, such as Ezra Pound and Francois Mauriac. Wall was informed and humorous about Italy and Italians, and they talked about Alcide De Gasperi, who would lead post-war Italy.¹⁷⁶ They agreed on the need of respect for created things, the mystery at the base of life, a numinous, 'sacral' vision of the universe, the validity of myth and symbol. They agreed about a new Dark Age now beginning but also that a sense of the numinous would sustain art. They spoke about language in a late phase of civilization no longer being symbolic but merely functional, almost mathematical, and they discussed what was an essentially archaeological solution whereby, Wall said, Apuleius, Pater, and Proust retrieved former styles in order to transformed diminished speech into a classical language.

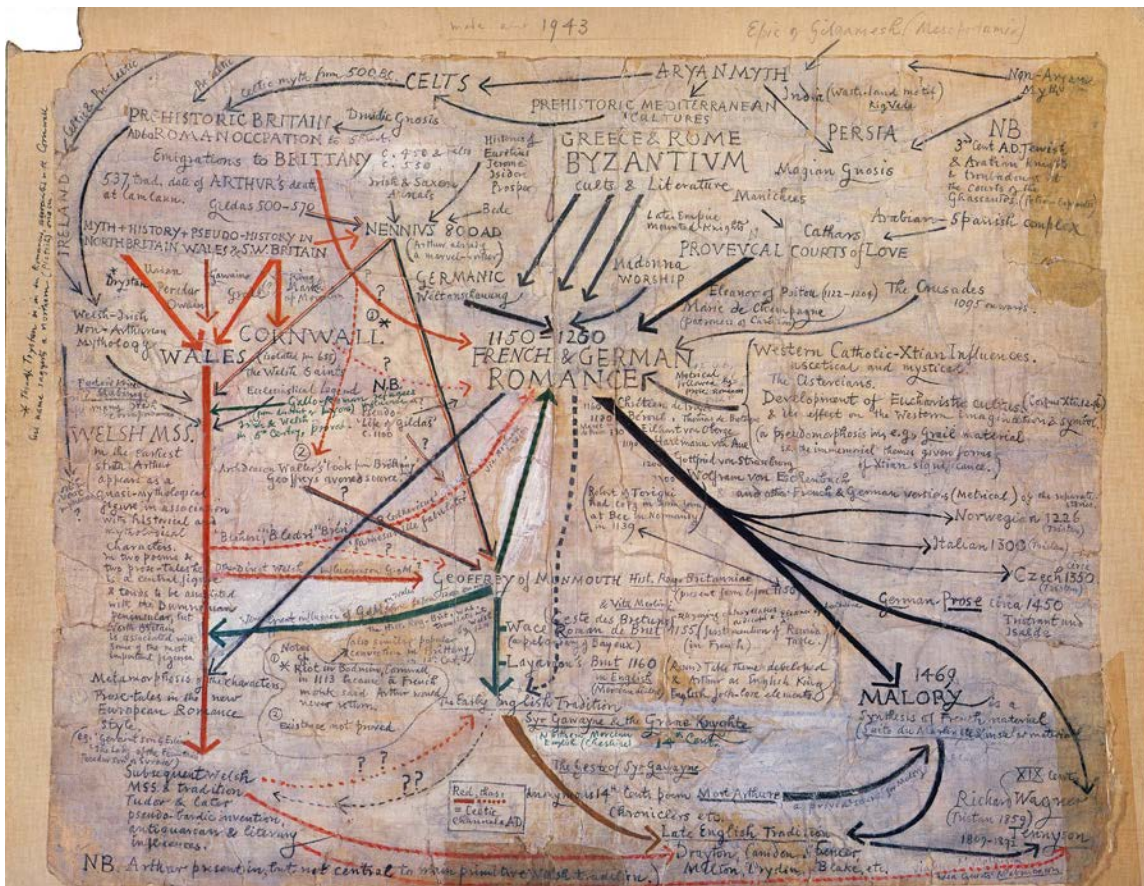
Though less the firebrand than he had been, Wall was scathing on bishops: 'bankers first and then lawyers, administrators, worldly men with nothing spiritual or sensitive about them.'¹⁷⁷ He denounced clericalism as 'institutionalism,' a confusion of means with ends. Whether it began with Pious IX or the Counter-Reformation the Catholic institutionalism was no different from the Soviet Union which had originated in the desire to free the peasants but had become the *end* to which the peasants became a *means*. There was no difference between clerical Catholics and party-line Communists. And triumphal Catholicism, which saw itself as morally superior to alternatives, was profoundly, hypocritically corrupt. One thing Wall and Jones (and Grisewood) liked about the Middle Ages was the absence of clericalism or Catholic-communal egoism. No one then considered Dante to be less a Catholic for putting popes in hell.

Seldom alone for long now, he was out with friends sometimes every other day. In addition to Wall, he regularly saw Grisewood once a fortnight and telephoned him in between meetings. For lunch he saw Conty Sitwell or Robert Speaight, who also had him home for supper. He had meals with Vladimir Korostovetz, Rupert Shepherd, Sonia Brownell (now an editorial assistant for *Horizon*), Mervyn Peake, and Manya Harari.

Manya discussed her plans to co-found with Margorie Villiers the Harvill Press, devoted to the exchange of ideas by intellectuals of various countries who had been cut off from one another by the war. She asked Jones to design the colophon, which, in the coming months, he did. He lunched with Robin Ironside to discuss the Penguin Book that Ironside was putting together, Jones being careful to hide from him his 'dread' of what he might write. He disliked critics presuming 'to tamper with the arts & to "explain" them'—he believed 'the human greatneses are showing themselves in other ways—not that way.' Yet he liked Ironside, who, with biographical help from him, wrote his Introduction to the book in 1943. When it was finally published in 1949, Jones thought it fair and positive but not quite on target.¹⁷⁸

His friendship with Barbara Moray was closer now. Her husband had just committed suicide, officially a 'hunting accident', and the new Earl blamed her for his death. Life in Darnaway Castle was now unbearable. She confided her troubles. Jones told her that the country is a bad place to be unhappy. The Earl sent her away with a small income, and she went into a sort of exile, moving with her three children to an Edinburgh boarding house where she contemplated moving to Rye to earn money working in a small pottery factory. Jones later said that despite her '*great* trials ... I've never known her display anything other than a gallant spirit and an unflinching sense of humour as well as understanding and kindness.'¹⁷⁹ He came often for lunch to her Kensington house, where she stored some of his pictures in the basement. She occasionally visited him, usually bringing champagne. She met his friends, liked Grisewood, but thought Tom Burns a hollow reed, cheerful, social, and false. Though Jones still loomed among her aristocratic friends 'like a colossus,' he also seemed to her always lonely and bereft, a sort of waif, and her affection for him was, to a degree, motherly. She addresses him in a letter as 'my dear little David' and concludes 'you are such a darling.'¹⁸⁰

He regretted not having with him the portfolios of drawings and paintings and the other possessions stored in the cellar at Onslow Square. Occasionally he went to the house and worried desperately about 'all these things moldering away.' Sometimes the Grisewoods accompanied him and heard him moan, 'Oh hell, how can I ever get all that stuff out?' He tried several times to arrange with Pollen to let him in. In March 1943, he obtained a key to the house and entered to find that water pipes had frozen and burst, damaging some of his watercolours. He took what was salvageable, put it in portfolios, and kept them under his bed in Sheffield Terrace.¹⁸¹



19. David Jones, Culture Map, c. 1943

That month he bought a large map of North Wales, which he pinned to his wall. It looked to him 'like a great beast stretched out.' He acquired ordnance survey maps of Britain in the Roman and early medieval periods, to which he 'continuously' referred when working.¹⁸² He was making a new beginning in his writing by adding to the Roman poetry material about Romans in Wales, on which he would work till 1946. Helen

Sutherland would write to him on 25 May 1944, 'It is exciting to hear your book has finished the 1st lap & is turning round on its tail to shape itself more profoundly.'

He made a culture-map (fig. 19), a large (20 by 24 inch) chart of the temporal development of western myth and romance. A family tree with black, green, and orange arrows indicating directions of influence, it depicts the historical interrelation of the great currents of western imagination. This was the broad historical-literary subject that most interested him and was informing his writing. It is a sort of brain-scan through time of what Eliot called 'the mind of Europe'. Visually, the map allowed him quickly and easily to situate complex aspects of epochal proliferations relative to one another. He pinned it to his wall beside the spatial maps he consulted. His own writing would not belong to the bottom of this chart as it descends in time. It would exist in a fourth dimension directly connected to several stages of most traditions represented here, which were available to him through scholarship in a way that simply was not possible in any earlier age, even that of Tennyson and Wagner.

On one of his visits to Grisewood, he borrowed William Whitehead Watts's textbook *Geography for Beginners* (1929). He found its subject 'most satisfactory ... uncontroversial & soothing & remote from the speculative & from the trying behaviour of "man", a nice Victorian science, which is comprehensible even to my antiquated mind. He had been writing about 'a Roman road in Wales & a river which cuts it & found I wanted to know about the behaviour of the soil etc in that part & found that I could not proceed without knowing what precisely the strata of those parts were made of.'¹⁸³ A page of this book would inform a passage in *The Anathemata*.*

Ede was back in England after touring the States and, while in London, visited often. Jones wrote to Tom Burns, 'It was a really great joy to see him & seemed to restore a kind of pre-war normality—he really is a remarkable chap.' In early May 1943, he complained to Ede of an itchy rash on his back. Ede was staying with Dr. Donald Winnicott and his family in Hampstead, so he took Jones there. Winnicott asked him to take off his shirt, which he did, to Ede's astonishment, who had never seen him so much as bare his forearms. The doctor touched his bare back and said he thought he had

* See Dilworth, 'David Jones's Use of a Geology Text for *The Anathemata*,' *English Language Notes XV* (December 1977), 115-19.

something for it. He put ointment on a cloth and, saying ‘you can’t reach it,’ rubbed and patted the skin. After Jones left, Winnicott confided to Ede that there was nothing wrong with him. ‘All he needed was to be touched.’ This surprised Ede—he had not primed Winnicott about Jones being a bachelor who was, he thought, frightened of sex. Winnicott subsequently visited Jones at Sheffield Terrace with the placebo ointment. Even Jones seems to have realized that it was touch and not the ointment that helped his condition. ‘Actually,’ he wrote Ede, ‘I *do* believe he has a magic touch (!) as no irritation since he examined it—most remarkable.’¹⁸⁴

He went several times to Winnicott’s house to see Ede and was reminded of his years visiting him at Hampstead. He met and liked Winnicott’s family and had supper with them once after Ede left. During the meal, he spoke of his life-long favourite instance of English composition, the dictation ‘Nelson *confides* that every man will do his duty.’ This was ‘good & exact English.’ He thought it interesting that England’s great men of action ‘so often speak and write naturally significant English—get the right word I mean.’ Churchill ‘sometimes does so naturally—but his is much more studied.’ Jones mourned the alteration by signalers of Nelson’s tender usage to the military ‘Nelson expects’ and the addition of ‘this day’ which lost precision and sentimentalized the signal. He also liked Admiral Collingwood’s comment when he sent the signal: ‘I wish Nelson would stop that signaling, we know well enough what to do.’ That, he thought, was ‘jolly nice.’¹⁸⁵

On 19 May he visited the Royal Academy for an exhibition of twentieth century French paintings, which he thought were terrible. * They ‘*almost* made one feel one was not such a very bad artist after all!’ The few good ones among the bad were undermined by their company. ‘Its very interesting how a lot of bad paintings kill a few good ones and not vice versa. Its very sad.’¹⁸⁶

He and T.S. Eliot were in touch by telephone and sometimes met for lunch. Jones thought him ‘the soul of kindness and helpfulness.’ He loved his laugh and thought him very

* *The Times* of 14 May 1943 reviews the Royal Society of British Artists exhibition, which includes works by Vlaninck, Utrillo, Jacque-Émile Blanche, Derain, Marquet, Segonzac, Forain, and ‘not always outstanding examples’ of Othon Friess, Bonnard, Modigliani, Ronault, and La Sidarar.

funny after a few drinks. But there was a tightness in him that sometimes irked Jones. On leaving the Garrick Club together after lunch, Jones suggested that they go together to Fabers by taxi so that they could continue their conversation. Eliot refused, insisting on going by tube and saying ‘I don’t believe in spending money needlessly.’ On another occasion, Jones proposed meeting in the evening to talk, and Eliot declined because he was on Fabers’ fire-watching team and would be on duty that night on the roof of the firm’s building. ‘So much the better,’ Jones said, ‘I don’t mind where we talk.’ Eliot said ‘No’, that he had a system whereby he could get through several manuscripts while watching and, he added, he made it a policy never to break with routine except for something extraordinary. ‘Well, this is extraordinary,’ Jones said, ‘We’ll have a good talk about poetry.’ ‘No,’ Eliot insisted. But Jones felt no important reservations about him and, after reading Eliot’s essays on culture in the spring of 1943, he wrote to Tom Burns, ‘he’s *really* a great chap I think.’¹⁸⁷

The chief concern he and Eliot had in common was the nature and condition of western culture. Jones read and liked Eliot’s *The Idea of a Christian Society*. In the third week of May 1943, Kenneth Clark had them both to dinner at his flat, and Jones expressed his appreciation for Eliot’s ‘Notes toward a Definition of Culture’, published in four installments in *The New English Weekly*. These he had enjoyed ‘enormously’ and thought them ‘the only completely good & serious & accurate statement of all that which has appeared at all since the war began.... It really says things of a fundamental nature that need very badly to be said’ and ‘is certainly about the only thing *I’ve* seen for a very long while with which I find myself in unqualified agreement.’ The main point is, in Jones’s words, ‘that *in the end* you can’t have the things the intelligentsia call “culture” unless you have a real “culture” underneath.... It is the *central* problem of our time & is a problem common to *all* the groups now struggling—it is deeper than all else I think & the least understood.’ The issue of ‘real culture’ dominated Jones’s poetry and essays written from now on. During meetings with Eliot—such as their supper together at the Oxford and Cambridge Club on 26 April 1944—they discussed Jones’s ideas about use, gratuity, and culture. These conversations influenced Eliot’s culture-criticism published at the end of the war, which warns of the increasing dominance of technology and its exclusive virtue of efficiency and advocates patience in preserving Christian faith ‘through the dark

ages before us.’* They talked about Eliot’s plan for a book, which he would entitle *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*.¹⁸⁸

Jones disclosed to Eliot that he had been working for a year on an essay about the relation of art to war (*DG* 123-66).[†] Eliot expressed interest so, in early August 1943, Jones sent it to him to read. Returning it, Eliot commented that it is a ‘considerable work and full of good things,’ too many of them, in fact, and requires transitions and should be expanded and made into a book. He hoped, however, that such writing would not interfere with ‘the greater work’ he was doing, which Eliot conceived of as carrying on the polemics of Gill. On 10 September, however, Eliot suggests that to recast the essay with closely reasoned argument or scholarly research would involve labour for which Jones was, as an artist, unsuited and suggests, instead, that he ‘consider merely *arranging* and putting them simply as separate *pensees*.’ Jones did not follow this advice. His essay was an argument, and argument requires continuity, however meandering. He continued intermittently to work on the essay through 1943, then set it aside, finishing it in 1946, giving it the title ‘Art in Relation to War and Our Present Situation.’ This forty-three-page essay is remarkable and original, a discussion of the aesthetics of war, about an ‘abstract, difficult to posit, remote and removed’ beauty, which is present (or absent) in battle irrespective of practical or moral considerations. The essay also concerns the relation of that beauty to arts other than the art of war. Readers unable to distinguish between ethics and aesthetics find this essay disconcerting. It could as easily—with much less Metaphysical daring—have been written about the aesthetics of rugby, of which the primary aim is also not aesthetic. Essentially, his argument is that all human activity is of ‘man as artist’ at play. He says fascinating things about art, such as that great painting is

* See Eliot’s ‘The Unity of European Culture,’ three talks broadcast into Germany, appended to *Notes towards a Definition of Culture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1948); and ‘The Responsibility of the Man of Letters in the Cultural Restoration of Europe,’ *Norseman* II (July, August 1944), 243-8.

† This essay was written partially in reaction to ‘War and Art,’ the lead article in *The Times* of 13 February 1943, which made him feel the ‘blight’ that was contemporary criticism: ‘even when true things are said they become just a crashing bore when ventilated in a particular way—that is why I am so terrified with all this official patronage of the arts—I would rather, a million times, that the word “art” was not known or mentioned.’

characterized by (quoting R.W. Rolfe) ‘desire and pursuit of the whole’ of experience, so that ‘it has every sort of undertone and overtone, both of form and content... *is* both peace *and* war; it must make the lion lie by the lamb *without anyone noticing*, it must hint at December snow, when summer’s heat is the text.’ Epitomizing his own artistic goal, he says, ‘we must do Cézanne’s apples again, after the nature of Julian of Norwich’s little nut, which “endureth and ever shall for God loveth it.”’¹⁸⁹

Throughout the war, A.S. Hartrick occasionally arrived unannounced for a visit, or Jones went for lunch or tea to his house in Fulham, where Jones sometimes met Tom Hennel and Vincent Lines, younger former students of Hartrick. Three years earlier, Hartrick had brought Hennel to see Jones and his pictures, which gave Hennel ‘much delight.’ They had met once briefly since, and now in the navy, Hennel was procuring paper, which was scarce, for Jones. On the evening of 1 July 1943, Jones and Hartrick went to a slide lecture by Hennel on Blake. The appearance of Blake’s illuminations magnified on the screen was a revelation to Jones. ‘I’ve always reckoned I liked Blake,’ he writes, ‘but my God!—that size & with that luminosity they fair bowl you over—absolutely terrific. A certain tightness which sometimes, to me, mars Blake all disappears & the freedom of them becomes really overwhelming. I was very glad I went.’ The lecture was good, but ‘it was those enormous great shapes’ that startled him into new awareness. He was especially impressed by the illumination of *Paradise Lost* entitled *Cain* ‘with the distraught Eve & Adam & the dead Abel—‘unbelievable in its power.’ He also liked the ‘bloody good’ illustrations to Grey’s *Odes*. He mentioned this revelatory experience to Kathleen Raine, a devotee of Blake. They exchanged several visits in the spring of 1944. As he may have told her, he thought Blake a better artist than poet and thought Blake’s illuminated poems seriously hurt by the use of ordinary script instead of lettering that suited the pictures.¹⁹⁰ Hennel would be killed in Java in 1945.

In late summer 1943, Hague returned on leave, and Jones went to Pigotts for a week to see him. Hague had left Africa and was on his way to Sicily as a squadron leader. From there he would go to India and then Burma, as a fighter-controller in charge of a radar unit. He would later look back at his time in the RAF as the happiest period of his life, a relief from the appalling drudgery and financial anxiety of work as a printer. He

would talk incessantly about the war. His military experience strengthened his bond with Jones.¹⁹¹

Joan was running the farm as well as doing housework and cooking. Jones passively observed her and Petra working like horses from morning to night. Wearing corduroy riding breeches with long woolen socks, Joan stomped around in muddied boots, smoking a pipe. (Cigarettes were now hard to get). Helping her was Walter Shewring, who visited during summer holidays from Ampleforth. A conscientious objector directed to do farmwork, he adopted the attitude of a martyr. Kevin Cribb remembered, 'I never saw anyone look so miserable' behind a horse-drawn plow. Trying to keep warm sitting inside the big inglenook fireplace, in scarves and overcoats Jones and Shewring were once so absorbed in conversation that they let the fire go out. They were not always so chummy. An army captain named Gerard Faulkner was visiting on leave, and Jones, who had no sympathy for conscientious objectors, said to Shewring, 'Why aren't you in uniform like Faulkner,' and then to Joan, 'Come on, let's get out of here and go for a pub crawl.'¹⁹²

He also visited David Kindersley and his wife in the evenings in what had formerly been the Tegetmeier cottage. Apprenticed to Gill from 1933 to '36, Kindersley was, in Jones's opinion, Gill's best student of letter cutting after Laurie Cribb. After Gill's death, the workshop suffered under the incompetent stewardship of Cribb and Denis Tegetmeier, who drank the money that should have gone into buying stone. Joan eventually prevailed upon Kindersley to give up running a pub and return to take charge of the workshop. He recalled that in the August heat, Jones wore his black overcoat buttoned up and his black hat pulled down tight. According to Kindersley, Jones did not talk much about art: 'He was a raconteur, immensely amusing. He talked endlessly about all sorts of things but usually what *he* wanted to talk about. He used to come into our house without knocking, sit down on the sofa and expect you to sit with him and talk for hours. He loved talking and he was full of funny stories.' Kindersley would remember that with René Hague, Jones was often humorously scurrilous and off-colour.¹⁹³

The Allied invasion and conquest of Sicily in July made Jones wonder whether 'man the artist' was becoming 'man the organizer.' The present war was being run in extreme contrast to the 'interminable muddles of even quite small things in the last war.'

He and Grisewood talked about this: ‘the organizing, planning, coordinating capacity of modern man (& that means so largely American man).’ Jones would later agree with Eisenhower attributing victory in Europe largely to administration.¹⁹⁴

The exception to this organizational achievement was ‘recision bombing’, which was now officially admitted to have been ineffective, so that all aerial bombing was, to some degree, indiscriminate mass destruction. When this had been officially admitted in February 1942, Jones was appalled. The only positive consequence of bombing was, he thought the churning up of relics of Roman London—a phenomenon that would influence “The Lady of the Pool” section of *The Anathemata*. He especially liked a Roman tile on which a worker had written in Latin, ‘Austalis goes off on his own for a week every day.’¹⁹⁵

Now forty-eight years old, he was noticing in the mirror that his face was ‘slipping down & getting large & loose on the bottom, a thing’ he wrote to Dorothea Travis, ‘that I particularly hate.’¹⁹⁶

In mid-September, Burns visited from Spain. He took Jones to a play, gave him and the Grisewoods a vivid account of bull fighting, and spoke of what might happen in the now unlikely event of England falling and how he ‘would “of course” shelter his friends & *then* see about the consequences.’ Jones was with him as often as possible and found it ‘heavenly’ seeing him, regretting only that there was too little time in the evening for talk. Burns departed, leaving Jones with ‘various odds & ends’ still to discuss. ‘As you know,’ he wrote to him, ‘my mind works slow & not in an orderly fashion.’¹⁹⁷

At this time, he was busy visiting hospitals. His eighty-four-year-old father was having severe attacks of angina, and his sister was hospitalized with what would turn out to be a mild case the family plague, tuberculosis. Jones was very cast down, perturbed, able to write only ‘distractedly.’ He visited his father in the Sydenham nursing home ‘twice or more a week’. He recounts announcing towards dusk that he had to leave since buses more or less ceased running at night and he didn’t want to walk. His father said, ‘Well, I’m surprised. You went right through a real war in the trenches—so surely you don’t mind a few bombs!’ ‘No, not particularly,’ he replied, ‘but it’s a question of transport.’ He was never sure his father realized how difficult it was crossing London

during an air-raid alert. Since now, during the second or lesser Blitz, the bombing was known to be bringing on heart attacks, he became anxious about his father whenever he heard the sirens. During the last three weeks of September, his father's condition worsened. He was with his him in his room on Sunday morning October 3, when he died 'peacefully & happily ... as he had lived.' He was grateful that his father's mind had remained clear. On his way home, at the Grays, who gave him tea and supper, he said, 'I never saw a man die before.' Basil Gray said, 'But David, in the war, surely you saw men die.' 'That,' Jones said, 'was different.'¹⁹⁸

The funeral on Thursday at St George's Church was packed—Jim Jones had been one of the most beloved people in south-east London. His son writes, 'He was a remarkable man & one of the few "good" men I've ever met—I mean "good" in a special kind of way, and all the time!' He was an "extremely rare" person, he writes to Burns. 'His death was really wonderful—indeed just like his life—a kind of dignity & quietness & cheerfulness that one would give a *lot* to possess I think a lot about him. It's a curious thing when one's father dies—it's a different kind of sorrow from when one's mother dies—altogether, in some way.' Mary Gill wrote, 'I have very sweet memories of the dear holy man and one cannot but be glad for him. But it will leave you with a feeling of loneliness. It is always our sorrow (Eric I know loved him). I hope the sun has been shining for you—for I am sure there has been a great reception in heaven.'¹⁹⁹

The value of his father's estate was £416/10/0, of which Jones inherited £149/0/7. He also acquired his father's wireless, his gold watch and chain, and a large black marble clock. On 22 March 1944 he would spend two hours with lawyers signing and counter-signing documents and be amused at how like priests lawyers are, solemnly saying, 'Now the Law says with regard to ...' as priests say, 'Now Holy Church has always taught ...'²⁰⁰

The burial was in his mother's grave. Not wanting Gill's inscription on the memorial stone spoiled by the work of a local mason, he would arrange after the war for Michael Royde-Smith to come from Pigotts and add the words: 'James Jones, lay reader at St George's, beloved of God and of men, July 14 1860—Oct 3 1943.' David composed and designed the inscription. In April 1946, he would visit the grave, admire the expanded inscription, and think, 'the whole stone looks genuine & good—the only real art-work in Brockley I imagine.'²⁰¹

In the autumn of 1943, he read a life of Charles James Fox, the raffish, heavy-drinking-and-gambling eighteenth century statesman, debater, and liberal. He had championed civil liberties, including those of the American colonists, and supported the French Revolution, about which he exclaimed ‘how much the greatest thing that has ever happened and how much the best.’ Jones thought him a ‘hell of a good chap.’ He also read and admired Grigson’s anthology of the Romantics and T.P. Ellis’s *Welsh Tribal Law and Customs*.²⁰²

Early in November, he went to bed with the flu for the rest of the year. For Christmas 1943, he made Petra an inscription of words from the Gloria, which he criticizes in a letter to her: ‘Damned awful lettering, I fear, but I was having a shot at doing it straight without any pencil & not going over it, to see what happened—I never can or could make the letter ‘O’. It’s ghastly.’ After painting the letters he had put it by the gas-fire to dry, where it became scorched and cracked, so he had to paste paper to the back.²⁰³

Farming in Wales had been a financial disaster for Prudence. She gave it up and moved into a flat at 14 Lupus Street, her war widow’s pension paying the rent. From there she often visited Jones unannounced, sometimes being turned away by ‘Miss Muspuzzycat’, as she called her, who was now possessive of him. He complained to Prudence about his poverty, and she gave him what money she could. Since the marriage of her brother John, her visits to Mill House were occasions for irritation and anger. She couldn’t bear his Dutch wife, who resented her, though she loved their wild, intelligent children. She could no longer invite friends there. After staying when her brother and his wife had been away, she told Jones what he thought was an ‘exceedingly funny’ story. Her brother’s wealthy Dutch father-in-law was visiting. At 6:30, Prudence said, ‘I think I could do with a drink,’ and got up to fetch some, and the Dutchman exclaimed, ‘No, no! Ring zee bell’ and vigorously pulled the bell-cord by the fireplace. Nobody came because the one servant was out, as Prudence and her mother knew, so after a while Lady Chichester said, ‘Well, Prudence, perhaps you’d better go & see what’s happening.’ Prudence left the room, put drinks on a trolley and wheeled it in, to the dismay of the Dutchman, to whom the unanswered bell was incomprehensible. Once undertaken, the pretence had to be maintained, so at supper Prudence or her mother repeatedly slipped

away surreptitiously or with excuses in order to cook and bring in food, desert, and coffee, all to the increasingly strident insistent refrain, 'But why not ring zee bell?' The thought of 'Lady Chich' engaging in so absurd a ruse made them giddy. Afterwards at appropriate moments, one would induce hysterical laughter in the other by urging 'Ring zee bell!'²⁰⁴

Prudence fell in love with a painter named Robert Buhler and moved into his flat. They did not legally marry because he had no reliable income and, with her medical expenses, they could not afford to lose her widow's pension. So she changed her surname to his by deed poll.²⁰⁵ She continued visiting Jones, now with Buhler in tow. She also brought needle and thread to reattach Jones's buttons and mend his socks while they talked. Buhler remembers Jones as 'talking well' but mostly about Wales and Roman Britain, never about artistic technique, which led Buhler to think that he was not very interested in painting as such.²⁰⁶ Reluctantly, at their bidding, he dragged pictures from under his bed. Yet 'he took a great interest in my generation of painters,' Buhler remembered, 'and was most encouraging.' Sometimes Jones visited them. He was, Buhler said, 'terrified of catching cold, always dressed up warm, his coat done up to the top button,' and afraid of drafts so that, even in summer, the windows and door stayed shut. Buhler knew and admired Jones's art but found *In Parenthesis* difficult, so Jones explained the poem to him 'easily & patiently.' Buhler knew of his love for Prudence but saw no signs of jealousy.²⁰⁷ He observed that, meeting and parting, they embraced but did not kiss.²⁰⁸

Buhler sent 'quite a number' of the younger painters he knew to see him. Among these were 'the Roberts,' Robert Colquhoun and Robert MacBryde, who liked his pictures and found in them encouragement for their own non-abstract work. Twenty-three years younger than he, they lived and worked nearby at 77 Bedford Gardens, Campden Hill, in a studio from which they would be ejected in 1947 for long, loud parties frequently involving Dylan Thomas. Colquhoun was widely considered one of the best younger painters in the UK. He and the witty MacBryde were nationalist Glasgow Scots, opposed to all things English, openly homosexual, interesting talkers, gifted storytellers, warm, and charming but usually too drunk, Jones found, to converse with properly. ' Jones subsequently saw and talked with them at exhibitions. They liked him very much. Buhler said 'They were mad about him.'²⁰⁹

Early in their friendship, Hague had been critical of the *Aeneid*, but warmed to Virgil as he aged and, in the process, projected his admiration onto Jones, later seeing influence where there was none.²¹⁰ Jones had affinities with Homer but was never the Virgilian that Hague later claimed he was. He had not read Virgil before 1939, when he enquired of Hague about a good translation.²¹¹ Aesthetics aside, Virgil was an imperialist and a sycophant, no better, Jones thought, than the later Latin poet Claudian who wrote extravagant panegyrics of the emperor, his ministers, and generals (*IN* 50).

To his surprise, he was invited ('for some unknown reason') by Woodruff to a tea party on 12 April 1943 in Brown's Hotel to discuss the formation of a Virgil Society. Eliot was supposed to attend but did not. Half a dozen were present, including Dick Owen Brown. There were no introductions. Jones found himself seated 'next to a well-groomed, largish figure' with whom he began to chat. 'Quite out of the blue and for want of something to say,' he mentioned having read *Cumaean Gates* 'by a chap called Jackson Knight.' It was, he said, 'one of the most rewarding and confirmatory books' he had read for a long time. His listener rose to his feet and declared that he was Jackson Knight and that this was 'the most genuine compliment possible.' Laughing, Jones introduced himself.²¹²

Knight wrote to him in January 1944 asking him to write a few hundred words 'as to why artists might like Virgil,' but Jones declined, saying he knew '*absolutely nothing about Virgil*' and had read 'only bits of translation of this & that.' His favourite parts of the *Aeneid* were the description of the 'white-necked golden Gauls' at night (VIII, 655-60) and the 'juxtaposition of the two Marcelluses' (one who might have been, the other who was) at the end of Book VI. Since meeting Knight, he had been working his way through May's translation with the Latin on the facing page, though he disliked translations of poetry. He writes,

I imagine the resemblance between original & trans. is about the same as that which exists between Holbein's *superb* portrait *drawings* & the Italian engraved copies. That is to say one recognizes that the 'subject' is the same, the dispositions of light & dark more or less correspond. The surface measurements & proportions are kept etc—but the inner feeling is totally lost and the real intimate beauty evaporated. ... as this exact texture & word-relationship is what so largely determines good poetry from bad, a similar thing determines good painting from bad & so through all the arts.

They continued to correspond, Jones asking about the philology of the Roman name for St David's Head, *Octapitarum*, about the kind of wood used in constructing the Roman battering ram.²¹³ They met for dinner on 16 July 1944, and Jones read him some of his work in progress. Knight subsequently read *In Parenthesis*, which he thought 'tremendous,' a 'real grand epic.'²¹⁴ He and Jones met again for supper on 30 June, retiring afterwards to Jones's room, a place he had proposed as 'restful & quiet even if small & dark.' There he plied Knight with questions, such as: was the statue of Athena inside the Parthenon sitting or standing;²¹⁵ and is there an English translation of *The Periplus of the Erytraean Sea*. They would meet again in August 1946—in the dining room of the Paddington Hotel, whose 'the neo-quasi, or plagiarized Egyptian motifs' they discussed. Afterwards they found a small room in which again Jones read to him from the material he was writing.²¹⁶

Their friendship involved great mutual respect. Knight begins his letters 'Dear and revered David' and signs off 'in homage.' In conversation they wowed each other. Jones loved his 'delightful and innate way of mingling amusing and light asides ... with deeps of imaginative and acute scholarship.' He associated Knight with Dawson as scholars who were 'singularly underrated'. He wrote to Knight in 1951,

chaps like Christopher Dawson & your most esteemed self ..., either by your books or by your conversation, have been a constant help toward some dim understanding on my part of what this inherited stuff is all about, or how it links up with other things. Often in reading things you have written I have had a sense of recognition—of being told something one had vaguely half or quarter-guessed, but which only your sort of scholarship could show forth & make sense of.

Jones would write to Knight in 1959, 'I owe you and Xristopher Dawson a very very very great deal.'²¹⁷

He would remain a subscription-paying member of the Virgil Society and often attended its lectures, where he would see, Knight, Eliot, Grisewood, Dick Owen Brown, and Helen Sutherland.

In his pocket diary for 21 June 1943, he had written, 'We bomb Rome. bugger.' As the Allies advanced on Rome, some readers of *The Times* had written abhorring the possibility of the destruction of the city. Others wrote expressing apathy. On 9 February 1944 he drafted a letter on 'The Fate of Rome,' in which he writes that more important than the city and all the inherited civilization it represents is the division between the two

types of people: those who would feel the deprivation and those who would not. The fate of Rome, he writes, ‘should depend on the shape the battle takes’ owing to ‘military necessities’, whereas the differing responses ‘go very far beyond the Fate of Rome—they cut across all our problems.’

The following month eleven members of the Royal Academy wrote to *The Times* condemning ‘modernistic art.’ On 15 March he drafted a response objecting to the implication that these eleven men ‘represent a genuine tradition’ and saying that ‘a dubious academism is the worst sort of substitute for real tradition’ because it deceives the general public. About the blanket condemnation of modern art, he writes,

There is good painting & bad painting, sensitive & insensitive painting, living form & dead form & these divisions apply to all the different tendencies operating in this very eclectic age. It is always individual sensitivity that really matters. But when we consider the various stirrings & vivifying trends of the last half century or so it would seem evident that on the whole the awareness & the vitality must be looked for outside what are known as academic circles. ... individual genius & talent can go with all kinds of confused or worse thinking—but when persons, and as a group, attack in a sweeping manner contemporary expression & when they severely criticize an organization [the C.E.M.A.] which is seeking to aid, under difficult circumstances, the arts in general, one cannot but express very great regret.

In as far as the opinions of the eleven signatories are at all and accidentally linked with the Royal Academy, that too, is to be regretted; because sections, at least, of the public venerate that body The shadow of Sir Joshua is long; and did all those who, in one way or another, stand within academism, comprehend the nature of the problems of 20th Century artistic effort as well as he did those of the 18th Century, we should have at all events less cause to complain.

He had not much minded the war until London came under attack by the first pilotless, winged V-1 bombs, nicknamed buzz bombs for the sound their motors made. He hated ‘those awful doodlebugs which seemed to come down one way and then shot off at right angles—frightening things.’ He particularly disliked the quiet between the shut-off of the motor and the explosion. For safe keeping, he had deposited some of his pictures in ‘the strong room’ of Hartrick’s house in Fulham. When that area was heavily damaged in February, Hartrick wrote to ask whether he wanted to move his pictures to a safer area. He did not, for buzz bombs were falling throughout the south of England. A buzz bomb landed in his sister’s bed, caught in the box springs—she being elsewhere at the time. One killed his Aunt Alice in Surrey. The dragging-on of the war and continuing

civilian casualties depressed him.²¹⁸

Late on Sunday evening 20 February 1944, the nearby Carmelite church was bombed and burned. He went to see 'the brick work and bits left standing.' To his surprise, the ruins gave the impression that it had been a beautiful building, which led him to surmise that the basic architecture must have been good, and the overall shape only effectively deadened and made hideous by the stone facings and other superficial ornamentation. It was 'a pathetic sight.'²¹⁹

In the winter of 1943/44, he spent a total of two months in bed with five bouts of flu. For physical illness, it had been his worst six months ever. He was nevertheless able to write 'a good bit' until March, when, exhausted, his mind began going 'round & round.'²²⁰

Later that spring he moved up in the world, from his tiny basement room at the front of the building into slightly larger (fourteen feet square) Room 3 on the ground-floor at the back. It had a fireplace with a large oak mantel and two large French doors from floor to ceiling overlooking a disheveled garden with a cherry tree. Two large trees, one close to his window, gave the room 'a somewhat dim, mid-forest light.' From noon on, it was quite dark. Although the windows in the doors let in the available light, they also let in the cold, and for that reason, he hated them. What he really could not bear 'was the bloody damp.' He kept his room warm. In summer that meant keeping the doors shut. He did, however, enjoy watching through the long windows the trees 'wrestling heavily in the wind.'²²¹

On 12 April he visited Arthur Wheen at the V.& A. and went with him afterwards for supper. Wheen had moved to a village where his friends Frank Morley (a director at Faber) and Herbert Read also lived. Wheen and his wife, a botanist, farmed a small holding, and he commuted to work in London by train. Once a week he brought in eggs and sometimes vegetables for Jones, who picked them up at his office. Occasionally Wheen visited him at Sheffield Terrace, once walking in to see him trembling and exhausted over a drawing. Although temperamentally whimsical, the cerebral Wheen was unhappy. As the translator of four German war novels, including the popular *All Quiet on the Western Front*, he felt responsible for encouraging the pre-war pacifism that had allowed Germany to rearm without opposition. He also suffered from marital problems. His wife

threw furious tantrums in which she could be extremely cruel. He was certainly in a position to sympathize when Jones explained that his artistic life could not have withstood a marriage, children, and the need to earn a living. When had lost a six-year-old daughter, a grief from which he had not recovered.²²²

In April of 1944, the Tate Gallery reopened for the first time since the outbreak of war, exhibiting its Blakes and Turners as well as works acquired during the war. Jones went to the exhibition, where he saw and chatted with, among others he knew, Henry Moore, Stanley Spencer, Graham Sutherland, and Kenneth Clark.²²³

He was benefiting from Clark's ascendancy in the English art-scene. Having become chief buyer for the Contemporary Art Society in 1939, Clark had seen that the Tate acquired David Joneses as well as Henry Moores, and he acquired Joneses as a buyer for Australian public galleries.²²⁴ As Director of the National Gallery, he included Jones in wartime exhibitions as he would later in post-war exhibitions.^{225*} While Ede remained the most enthusiastic advocate of Jones as a visual artist, Clark was now his most influential advocate.

With Clark's encouragement, in March 1944 the C.E.M.A. collected pictures by Jones for a one-man exhibition to tour Wales. He would not allow Helen Sutherland to be

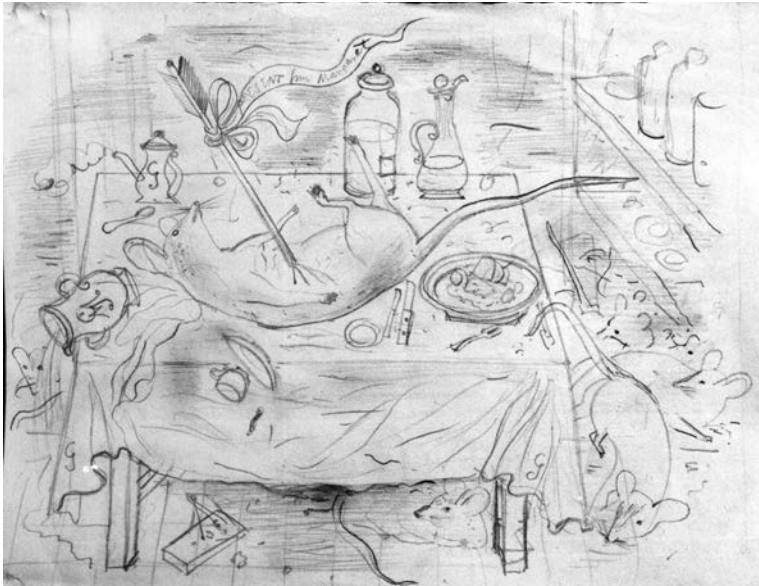
* In 1939 pictures by Jones were sent to the New York World's Fair. In 1940 he was represented in the exhibition at the National Gallery of 'British Art since Whistler.' In 1941 he had seven pictures in the exhibition at the National Gallery of 'Six Watercolour Painters of Today.' In 1942, two of his works were included in the C.E.M.A. exhibition of contemporary paintings. In 1943-44, his *Ancient Mariner* illustrations were included, with special praise, in the C.E.M.A. exhibition of 'English Book Illustration since 1800.' In 1944, the C.E.M.A. exhibited his works at the Brighton Art Gallery. In 1945, the C.E.M.A. exhibited thirty of his watercolours and engravings at Guildford House. And in the two years after the war his work were included in exhibitions organized by the British Council to tour Europe: in 1945, 'Modern British Paintings from the Tate Gallery,' and, in 1946-7, 'Fifty Years of British Art,' and 'British Contemporary Painters,' which toured cities in the US and Canada. In 1947, the British Council organized an International Exhibition of Art in Cairo and a travelling exhibition that toured Austria, France, Poland and Czechoslovakia, both containing works by Jones. Clark may not have been solely responsible for all of this—in 1943 it was Henry Moore who recommended Jones to John Thwaites for inclusion in an exhibition of English painters in New York—but Clark was largely responsible for Jones's work having prominence in the official British national scene. The exhibitions mentioned in this note are those not referred to in the following pages.

approached for pictures, which were safe with her in Cumberland and would not be safe on route to London across southern Britain. Twenty-seven paintings were nevertheless gathered plus the engravings for *The Deluge* and *The Ancient Mariner*, making this his most important exhibition yet. Much of his best work was in it, including *Roman Land*, *Manawyddan's Glass Door*, *Chapel in the Park*, *Thorn Cup*, the 1932 *Portrait of René Hague*, the frontispiece of *In Parenthesis*, *Guinever* and *The Four Queens*. He went with Grisewood to Belgrave Square where the exhibition was being assembled. He was surprised at how much like Hague his portrait was. They 'laughed a good bit at its Renéish look' and worried about his present safety in Sicily. Grisewood was amused that the pictures, all gathered together, looked so "gay" ... considering the somewhat un-gay bloke who painted them!' The exhibition opened in April in the National Museum of Wales at Cardiff, on its way to Aberystwyth, Carmarthen, Pontypridd, Bryn Mawr, Merthyr, Rhyl and Wrexham. The curator of the Gallery, Ffrancis Payne, was impressed by the *Deluge* prints in the exhibition, which the museum did not have, and wrote Jones asking for a set. Jones replied that he had none, and continued,

By a coincidence, I had, just before your letter arrived, been reading with very *great* interest your introduction to the guide to the Embroidery Section. What a good & illuminating selection you give of fragments of later medieval poetry with reference to your subject. I particularly enjoyed the thing from Hywel ap Dafydd on Jeuan ap Rhys ... This constant feeling for colour & texture & the visual image is always so good & seems very marked in much Welsh writing.²²⁶

The Grisewoods moved to Gatwick House in Essex, an eight-bedroom Georgian house surrounded by sixteen acres, four of which were garden. It was a half-hour train ride from London near the village of Billericay (the site of a Roman *Villa Erica*). From London, Jones would phone and ask to come for the weekend, as he did for Easter 1944, and sometimes stay for weeks, especially if he felt ill. Sometimes when ill in London, he would come out to be cooked for and taken care of. He had a large bedroom high-up at the front with a view over meadows to the Thames estuary. Mostly he read, in various chairs round the house. He also wrote, in his bedroom and downstairs on a small round table at the end of the dining room. He was easy to interrupt but seldom stopped for long, except for drinks. Then he would relax and be, Margaret thought, very funny. Occasionally he would call to her, 'Now come on, just let's sit down together and talk—about anything.' One thing they talked about was literature, including the novels of

Dickens and Trollope that he had read as a child. He reread *The Mabinogion* and *Malory*, which he brought with him. Otherwise he read anthropology and history. As he talked with her, he drew his fingernails across her regency table, scratching its surface while she quietly watched, boiling within. On one of his visits, she saw a mouse in the larder and



20. 'Present from Margaret', c. 1944

called excitedly for the cat, which her visiting sister-in-law refused to bring. Subsequently she courageously entered the larder, her fear of the mouse becoming a joke. Jones drew her a picture (fig. 20), in which the mouse has become a number of rats, the chief among them pierced, like a valentine heart, with an arrow bearing a banner reading, 'Love from Margaret.' During a visit in the winter of 1944-45, he experienced anxiety and depression

so severe that he had to go to bed and stay on for weeks, till he felt well enough to travel. Although they loved him, these lengthening stays put a strain on the Grisewoods.²²⁷

Back in London, Louis Bussell was now visiting often in the evenings. Before the war he had fallen in love with Monica Hunter, Hague's cousin, a lithe vivacious unstable flapper. Burns flirted with her, infuriating Bussell, who cooled towards him. After becoming pregnant, she married Bussell, but in the spring of 1944, deserted him and her young son to run off with a lover. Bussell felt 'lost,' lonely, depressed. In small crabbed script, he wrote in July 1944, 'Work is as loathsome as ever & the loneliness hard to bear' Later he wrote, 'My life is still the same, dragging somehow thro' the day, and then miserably to bed in the early evening, with very sad thoughts.' The fresh unhappiness confirmed his general pessimism. He talked with Jones at great length about the dismal state of contemporary civilization. A Catholic convert, he believed the world so awful that a Catholic artist should have nothing to do with it. He was a Job-like connoisseur of disaster.

To Cleverdon, he ‘inculcated gloom,’ and Cleverdon assumed that Bussell had a pernicious effect on Jones. Questioned years later, Burns thought this plausible; Grisewood and Michael Richey did not. According to Grisewood, Bussell’s gloom cheered Jones. They had in each other someone to sympathized with. Jones would later write that they ‘grouched away together’ quite happily. He referred to Bussell as ‘my melancholy friend.’²²⁸

Financial worries added to Bussell’s woes. He was destitute. During the new Blitz, many adolescents were evacuated from London, causing a falling off in tutoring. Jones wrote unsuccessfully to Stanley Morison to get Bussell a job at *The Times*. Though poor himself, he gave Bussell money intermittently, in varying amounts. Cancelled checks survive for one, five, and six pounds. These gifts continued through 1946. No one else knew, though Bussell later hints at the extent of his gratitude: ‘The debt I owe most to him is his continued friendship and wonderful compassion & help when needed. No one is quicker to detect human suffering and to respect human dignity. One could weep in his presence without shame and I have done so.’ Finding the littleness of Bussell’s income incredible, Inland Revenue audited and harassed him. In desperation, he appealed for help to Jones, who knew Llywelyn Wyn Griffiths, who, in addition to being the author of *Up to Mametz*, was a public relations officer for Inland Revenue. Jones contacted him, and the persecution stopped.²²⁹

Bussell fell in love with another woman, whom Jones met and liked, but because Bussell was still married in the eyes of the Church, and since the woman wanted to marry, she eventually drifted away, leaving him, for the rest of his life, alone. Petra remembered him as ‘full of integrity.’ With the withering of his second romance, he became a confirmed bachelor and, as Petra put it, ‘got devoted to David.’ Barbara Moray noticed that he ‘obviously adored’ Jones, with regard to whom he had ‘the slightly bated breath thing of the pupil about the Master.’²³⁰

On 6 June Jones went to Pigotts for a week and stayed four months. High on its hill, Pigotts seemed to him ‘curiously light’ after his ‘semi-subterranean back room’ in Sheffield Terrace. He was now seriously undernourished, and one reason for staying so long may have been the good food here. Another was that he kept getting ill with one of

his ‘usual come-overs, a mixture of ‘flu & nerves.’ It was a flu involving violent coughing and weakness, which Joan and Petra also succumbed to. Hague’s sons Michael and Richard were home from Ampleforth and, Jones thought, ‘jolly nice boys.’ Petra went to hospital to give birth and returned with her new-born daughter, Juliana, to see



21. David Jones, *Welcome home*, 1944

that Jones had painted an inscription welcoming them home (fig. 21).

Bussell came for a weekend visit, at Mary Gill’s invitation. The Grisewoods visited for a week, Harman digging continually in the kitchen garden, planting beans. Jones wrote, ‘it was a lovely time.’ He now referred to

Margaret as *Margaron*, the Greek root of her name, meaning pearl, which

would be a motif in *The Anathemata*. When the Grisewoods left, he missed Harman ‘most awfully.’ Reggie Lawson, his former housemate at Ditchling, visited and they had a happy reunion. Lawson was now a Dominican lay brother—he had chosen ‘David’ as his religious name—staying temporarily at Blackfriars in Cambridge. ‘It’s a great pleasure to us all to see him again,’ Jones wrote, ‘he’s a marvellous bloke—the real goods.’ Sometime during this visit, he read Edward Bradley’s *Mr Verdant Green, an Oxford Freshman*, part of which concerns areas of Northumberland with which Jones was familiar. He found the book ‘gloriously funny’ and ‘enjoyed it ... tremendously.’ Joan Hague was ‘a more & more solid & marvellous character’ but ‘very fed up.’ René was still in Sicily. She wanted to know if and when she could join him there. Missing him terribly, she wrote Jones a ‘hellish funny’ letter saying that the sight every evening of Walter Shewring and Michael Richey on leave ‘seated at table, appropriating the lamp, very solemn, over their books from 8 o’clock till bed-time—not saying a bloody word is “enough to drive a girl onto the streets.”’²³¹

Earlier that year, Jones began visiting Keidrych Rhys at his flat in London. Rhys was the editor of the magazine *Wales*, to which Jones subscribed. There he had met Rhys’s wife, Lynette Roberts, whom he considered ‘a jolly good poet.’ In the spring, Rhys asked

him to write an article for the magazine, and in March he began writing on ‘Wales and Visual Form.’ He worked on it for several months, then put it aside for later reconsideration, as ‘the only way of finding out if a thing has really got anything to it’. In mid September, he found that it did not but was merely a pointless lament for the dearth of visual art in Wales. He refused to publish it.²³²

While at Pigotts, he received the windfall of a cheque from Rex Nan Kivel for £41.10: for the sale of *Sea from a Window* (which had sold for £36.15.0) and *The Park* (£31.10.0) (This was Jones’s 2/3rds share minus £2 each for the cost of framing.) At the end of August a mimeographed letter from John Rothenstein arrived requesting him to ‘hand over the copyright of the pictures by you in the possession of the Tate Gallery’ in order, ostensibly, to facilitate responses to requests for reproduction. He scrawled across the top of the letter, ‘bloody cheek.’

He hoped to paint but could not without increasing neurasthenia. So he worked on his ‘book’ instead. The writing proceeded ‘very slowly & difficultly—many new problems.’ It was hard to write at Pigotts because he was separated from his books and because it was colder inside than out. Nevertheless, he writes to Knight, ‘I struggle on with my book. It gets more & more difficult—one knows just *nothing* when one goes into a matter I find, & things take so long to find out & its so exhausting tracking ‘em down.’ Just as he was progressing well, Rosey erupted, making writing ‘next to impossible.’ He later confided what this work entailed for him:

The complexities of sorting the stuff out the need to really go through everything. The fear that accompanies any quite moderate and simple sorting or deciding or ordering or checking the layers of disarray. The Penalty of not attending to things so that one complication piles on another. The muddle behind the muddles. Where to begin. The previous efforts of up-rooting and in spite of the effort—most unwise decisions and loss. So much that one cares about but because of one’s inability to organize and act. Each procrastination making a further attempt more difficult. The sheer weight and complexity of material. ... Detestation of muddle yet prone to it. Hatred of interference—only oneself can’t decide—even the simplest issue highly complex and unexplainable—crudeness of expression—a miss is as good as a mile when trying to express something.²³³

One way or another, he was unwell at Pigotts all through the summer. Feeling ‘a bit better’ in the autumn, he left for London on 6 October.²³⁴ He had stored two portfolios of paintings in the Hagues’ house.

His returned to a neighbourhood badly smashed by buzz-bombs. The front door of the house was damaged, and Church Street was being cleared of wreckage, including that of the George, one of the pubs he had frequented. Possibly through Jackson Knight, he obtained and, on 16 October 1945, read an English translation of *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, a short account of a first century mercantile voyage by a Roman through the Indian Ocean, Red Sea and Persian Gulf. He liked it so much that he recorded the title in his pocket diary for that date. He would allude to it in *The Anathemata* (155). He was also reading ‘for relaxation’ the life and letters of Millais, ‘damned interesting’ and about a world ‘so close yet very far’ from anything he had known as an artist.²³⁵

Occasionally he went out. On the evening of the 16th, he attended the inaugural lecture of the Virgil Society, delivered by Eliot, whose subject was ‘What is a Classic?’ In mid-November he met Graham Greene on the street, and they arranged to have lunch in the last week in November. Jones told him how much he enjoyed his small book *British Dramatists* (1942), which he had read the previous September. On November 22 he had dinner with the Speaights.²³⁶

In his room he was relatively inaccessible. Anyone could visit, but getting through to him on the communal telephone was chancy. It might ring and go unanswered, or someone else might be on the line, or the one who answered might come to his room to find that he was out. He answered calls for others—it was ‘all very labourous.’ When the number was changed at the end of 1945, he gave it out cautiously, because it was ‘an *awful bore* if people know one’s phone number. They ring up when unnecessary & that’s O.K. if it is a private line in one’s room but *not* when it’s just a house telephone.’ Being difficult to reach was a mixed curse. It ‘spared him interruptions.’²³⁷

He was able to resume writing in November. Tom Burns urged him to publish parts of his work, but he refused because of its ‘protracted nature’. ‘It’s a fearsome job,’ he writes, ‘may be all balls—but I don’t think it all is.’ Half jokingly, he took as a warning to himself the twenty-seven years the German poet Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock spent writing a long and, he understood, bad imitation of *Paradise Lost*. In December he was ‘trying very hard to get on with the book’ and finding it ‘an absolute bugger.’ By the end of the year, ‘struggling hard’ with it ushered in Rosey again and with a vengeance. He was unable to work for a month and, for a while, unable even to read. Charles Burns

visited and told him that his neurasthenia seemed the sort best dealt with by Dr Woods, the neurologist, and that psychoanalysis would not help. Apart from depression and insomnia, Jones's chief regret was the 'messing-up of all one's work—completely.' He had felt his nervous condition gradually improving in recent years and had begun to hope that he might really be getting better and soon be able to paint again. Now he was near despair.²³⁸

It was a hard time, the worst since his breakdown, and partly owing to the prolonged war. The buzz bombs and rationing had taken their toll on the morale of everyone. Lunch and supper were no longer served at 12 Sheffield Terrace, and he was now perpetually foraging for meals. He was poorer than he had ever been and undernourished. Reduced allowances from Helen Sutherland, Tom Burns, and the Hararis now totaled £2.50 weekly, while his weekly expenses were £6.²³⁹ He had paid into the Artist's Annuity Fund since 1931 and was continuing to pay, the half-year subscription being £3/3/6. Regularly late with payments, he had to be reminded to make them, often repeatedly, and with each reminder came a fine for late payment, which increased incrementally to a maximum of five shillings. He regularly sent the payment together with the fine it after three or four notices.

In the spring of 1944, Jim Ede visited. He had been lecturing servicemen in the U.K. on art, on the United States, and on T.E. Lawrence. Appalled at Jones's poverty and his 'constant anxiety' about it and convinced that he was 'one of the really important people in our country,' he decided to organize a fund to support him. It was not his first attempt. In 1936 he had tried to procure from the Pilgrim Trust a grant of £200 a year for him for two or three years but was told that Jones was not old enough or famous enough. He now sought to raise money from friends, who would remain anonymous to Jones. The £6 weekly that Jones needed to live amounted to £300 a year. Ede first contacted Helen Sutherland, who was willing to increase her annual support from £54 to £63 and give it anonymously through Ede's fund. 'David is,' she wrote to Ede, 'somewhat of a child in such affairs. To really help him one must really meet that fact.' At her suggestion, he wrote to Kenneth Clark, who was 'very sorry' to hear of Jones's poverty, said he 'greatly' admired his work and liked him personally, and agreed to contribute £50 a year

and to increase that amount if there was not enough to reach the £300 required. He advised Ede to set up an account into which contributors could pay. Ede wrote to Prudence, who replied that she had had 'no idea how badly off David was' and was willing, in a crisis, to borrow to contribute, but could not commit to a regular annual contribution. Instead, she offered to sell, in order to contribute, two pictures by Jones. Grisewood agreed to contribute £25 and advised that Ede go to Lord Revelstoke and Lady Moray, but, unacquainted with them, he did not. He contacted two Australians who admired Jones's work, Louie Graham and her sister Anne Benthall, each of whom contributed £10. Ede himself contributed £50, as did Tom Burns. In August, Clark increased his contribution to £100, making a grand total of £308. Clark's contribution came from a Fund for Artists and Art Students, for which he secretly provided all the money. He would tell Jones about the fund and that he promoted it, but Jones never knew the extent to which Clark was his benefactor.* Everything was ready by autumn, and Ede now gave Jones the news and asked where he did his banking. (He had two accounts, one at Brockley, the other at Sloan Square, which had been convenient to Glebe Place.) Jones was 'very pleased' about the fund but 'worried as to whether he should accept or could "justify it".' Ede reassured him, saying that 'it's really we who are in debt to artists.' Jones continued to feel 'very ungenerous & careless in the face of this generosity.'²⁴⁰ Taking into account the £25 per year from the Hararis, His annual income leapt from £125 to £333.

Ede tried to supervise contributions, but it was a difficult task since they were anonymous and Jones was an unreliable source of information. His reports to Ede contained discrepancies that he was aware of but could not account for. He explained, at the bank he 'gets curiously nervous when clerks give lists of amounts' so that he 'muddles them.'²⁴¹ In the spring of 1946, for Ede's benefit, he went through the ledger with the chief clerk of the bank, make a list of the payments to the account and put it away 'safely'. When Ede asked for it, he could not find it, despite a long and futile archaeological dig through knee-high stacks of paper.

* Clark had inherited a fortune from the inventor of the cotton spool, a fortune he had increased in collusion with Bernard Berenson by exploiting the naiveté of parish priests in order to strip Italy of Renaissance masterpieces.

In 1944 Jones and Kenneth Clark were friendly though not close. (With men, Clark was guarded and disinclined to show affection.) In January 1944, Jones met Clark at the National Gallery and they went home to Clark's for supper. There Clark showed him a watercolour he owned by Hartrick of deer in Richmond Park, which Jones thought 'superb.' They spoke about Hartrick, whom Jones arranged for Clark and his wife to meet. Clark also showed him a picture of a dead bird by Sickert, which Jones thought 'the kind of picture that knocks the bottom out of whole books of aesthetic theory—its jolly hard to see how the "poetry" shines through the material in such a picture—but it certainly does.' Long uncomfortable using one another's first names, it would be in March 1954, that Jones would address Clark as 'Kenneth,' and by 1960 as 'K.' He would then be on first-name terms with Clark's vain, unhappy, alcoholic, cocaine-addicted wife, whose company he did not enjoy. Gradually Jones was becoming one of Clark's two closest male friends—the other being Henry Moore—but Clark warmed slowly and never achieved the easy openness that friendship meant for Jones.²⁴²

Clark's beneficence strengthened his sense of connection to Jones, but the basis of friendship was always shared aesthetic sensitivity. Jones admired his ability quickly and clearly to discriminate between good and bad paintings. In conversation they moved with equal ease through the full range of European art. Jones disclosed his own views about culture, but Clark could not grasp the Spenglerian distinction between civilization and culture and did not feel deeply Jones's Dawsonian conviction of the centrality of religious cult to culture. Jones and Grisewood (friendly with Clark since Oxford days) agreed that the only serious limitation in Clark's appreciation of art was his lack of religious experience, which precluded depth of sympathy with much Renaissance and almost all medieval art.* He was not interested in religion, though that would change.† Neither was he much interested in literature and would never fully appreciate Jones's poetry, although he thought it 'very very good'.²⁴³

* Jones thought that 'no matter *how learned* or even "perceptive" people were they never get 'stuff wholly right unless they are *inly* & in some way *identified* with the *materia* with which they are dealing—for that *materia* is but the *signum*, or the subtle & complex *signa* of the whole bloody *Weltanschauung*.'

†On his deathbed, he became a Catholic.

Jones occasionally visited the Clarks at their small house on the edge of Hampstead Heath (1941-45) and subsequently at their Hampstead mansion, Upper Terrace House (1945-54). He liked Clark's being in Hampstead because he felt him 'so to say, within range'. Clark would subsequently move to the country but spend weekdays at a set in Albany, to which Jones was sometimes invited for a meal. He had reservations about Clark and would say to a friend, 'Kenneth is a funny chap, a funny chap' but then fell silent, disinclined to elaborate.²⁴⁴

In the late autumn of 1944, after Mass on his way to the Catherine Wheel, he met Roy Campbell, the South African poet and tough guy. He was big, soft-spoken, with bright blue eyes and wore a black cowboy hat.²⁴⁵ Jones liked him but not his poetry, which—ridiculously, he thought, 'kept all the rules' of prosody. They had long known of one another. Jones had illustrated Campbell's poem *The Gum Trees* (Faber, 1930). And they had met before the war through Tom Burns, who had employed Campbell briefly in Spain as an intelligence gatherer. Since then, Jones was interested to learn, Campbell had lied about his age and joined the Royal Welch Fusiliers, training in Brecon near Capel-y-ffin. He had served with the King's African Rifles in Kenya and experienced a fairly uneventful war before being hospitalized with malaria and a bad hip. After their house was bombed, he and his wife had stayed in Oxford with the Walls and had just arrived in London, where he was working with the War Damage Commission. He and his family lived nearby in Campden Grove—Jones had known his wife slightly at art school in 1919 and thought her 'a stunner'. He and Jones began meeting regularly after Mass for a drink at the Catherine Wheel—Campbell had become a Catholic in 1935. They talked about mutual acquaintances, including Augustus John and T.S. Eliot, and Campbell raged against the leftists Spender and Auden, whom he called 'the Spauden'. They traded jokes and anecdotes, Jones telling Campbell one of his then favourite stories about a conversation between a Welsh barmaid and a G.I. stationed in a Welsh village:

The American says, 'Will you go out with me?'

The barmaid says (in a Welsh accent), 'I'm too busy.'

'How about coffee in the morning?'

'I'm cleaning the pub.'

'How about after it closes?'

‘I have m’lunch.’

‘How about after it closes at night?’

‘I go home to my mum.’

‘Well, what d’you do about sex?’

‘I have m’tea.’

Campbell told him that he had gone to a meeting of an ethical society in Kensington and, in response to a remark by the speaker, had called out, ‘That’s a lie. If it’s repeated, something will have to be done about it.’ Ignoring him, the speaker continued, so Campbell walked up to the stage, picked him up, carried him out, set him down in the street, and walked away. Jones remonstrated against that sort of behaviour, and Campbell replied, ‘But what he said was against the Catholic religion!’* Jones was doubly appalled: at the behaviour and the use of Catholicism to excuse it. He felt that Campbell would have regarded him as some sort of sissy had he not fought in the Great War. After Wyndham Lewis’s return from Canada in September 1945, Campbell would tell Jones that he wanted to visit Lewis but heard he had become a Communist, and since he, Roy, was a fascist, they might come to blows. Jones said, ‘Oh go, for God’s sake. This is not Russia. It doesn’t matter what you believe here. Everyone is treated alike.’ (Campbell went; after some hesitation, Lewis opened his door and said, ‘Roy, how good to see you.’) Campbell was, Jones said, ‘a pugnacious chap but with a “heart of gold” ... generous and kindly & deeply religious but *extremely* tough & formidable and at times very difficult and unreasonable—all ready for a fight.’ Jones and Campbell were drinking companions rather than close friends. When Bernard Wall went to a recently liberated Italy in November 1944, Grisewood was, Jones writes, ‘about the only person I can talk to with any real agreement in any intimate way.’²⁴⁶

In early September the humourist and former M.P. for Oxford A.P. Herbert chastised the Pope in *The Times* for asking Londoners to forgive the Germans for bombing their city. He wrote that it might be appropriate to ask forgiveness after flying bombs had stopped falling on the city and when the Germans were repentant. Referring to the text, ‘Father forgive them for they know not what they do,’ he wrote that the Germans ‘know what

* When I asked years later, ‘Did he hit him?’ Jones replied, ‘No, which is worse, isn’t it.’

they do.’ In the course of an exchange of letters he asked what evidence there was of the pope’s having publicly criticized the Germans, evidence subsequently supplied in abundance by another correspondent. About Herbert, Jones had this to say to Grisewood:

What lousy, dreary, bloody boring, worldly-sentimental, ill-informed club-ridden, impious, unreal, stuffy conceited, nasty, pompous, unimaginative, cattish, unprofound, hopeless, irritating, muddled, contemptible, damned types of thought blokes like H. go in for. It makes you weep. And they don’t ½ think they are marvellous chaps too! (*and the bugger of it is they represent such a large percentage of educated Englishmen I fear.)²⁴⁷

Glad that the Allies were winning the war, Jones found ‘astonishingly exciting all that rapid thrusting & wheeling across France.’ ‘It’s a good job we don’t poop off victory-salvos like the Tartars for each place captured or we should have no ammunition left.’ But he thought the rhetoric of victory, especially in *The Times*, ludicrous: ‘bloody comic sometimes I must say. This lordly pompous wrapping up of this & that—it gets funnier in a way, as the style & feeling of ‘The Times leader’ deals with a world more & more removed from the world in which that style & mode of expression was developed.’²⁴⁸

After recovering from ‘a succession of damned colds,’ he began working ‘very hard’ on his book and, in February 1945, again suffered a ‘rather horrid return of neurasthenia.’ Thinking it was somehow a result of working at his writing, he made an appointment with Dr Woods but then caught the flu and stayed ‘in bed for seven weeks.’ In bed, in the papers and on his newly inherited wireless, he followed the massive German offensive later called Battle of the Bulge. It reminded him of the last great German push of March 1918, which he had also followed in bed. He admired the way the US Army ‘held on so magnificently’ in the battle.²⁴⁹

In February he disliked ‘on ... immediate, pure British policy grounds’ what was happening at the Yalta Conference. ‘I wish some news more acceptable to the spirit & conscience & dignity of man will be vouchsafed us—but I fear it is asking a lot.’ He was surprised to see good things in the *Sunday Times* by Sir Samuel Hoare and even by G.M Young, whom he generally thought awful. ‘Perhaps,’ he writes,

if things get bad enough, there will be here & there a voice raised—perhaps from expected quarters. Because these muddle-headed British liberalish sort of chaps, although they are such awful asses & can do such damage, have, underneath, a tradition of some sort of integrity. & you never know when they

may turn round & say 'no, we can't stomach that.'... I do perceive certain small symptoms of uneasiness among persons of some integrity, which may, if the immediate dangers lessen, assert itself.²⁵⁰

His hopes for protest over the delivery of so much of Eastern Europe to the Soviet Union would be disappointed, and his belief (shared with Prudence) would be vindicated that the end of the war would be disastrous for Europe because Russia had conquered so much of it, disastrous because Russia 'is as totalitarian as Germany.' Now the Russians would have a western as well as an eastern empire.²⁵¹

Unable to write, he was reading about ancient Israel in *Israel, Social & Religious Development*, which he thought 'exceedingly good' because its author, A.W.F. Blunt, 'knows the stuff inside out.' Criticized by some as a 'modernist', Blunt seemed to Jones 'the best sort of Anglican scholar.'²⁵² He was also reading William Cobbett's *Grammar of the English Language*, which he had acquired some months earlier. Cobbett had written it for his little boy '& he makes things really understandable, at least for a minute!!' Now, for the first time, Jones understood what a split infinitive was.²⁵³

Now that London was no longer a city under siege, Nicolette Gray and her children returned to Essex Villas, and, when his flu abated, he visited regularly, every Thursday, for supper. Bottles of beer were got in and lined up for him. He came in his greatcoat or, on exceptionally warm days, carrying it. He had her help him buy a pair of stockings for his sister's birthday. He liked having a friend with him when he shopped, to make up his mind for him. He also went for supper every few months with newly married Nest and Douglas Cleverdon in their basement flat in 49 Albany Street, a tall seedy Georgian house backing onto Regent's Park. Here Cleverdon hung the pictures he had bought from Jones twenty years earlier, including *Arcachon*, *The Long Meadow*, and the stunning erotic nude for which Enid Furringer had posed. Nest made him Welsh food: cawl, lamb, leeks, Welsh pancakes, and *barabryth* (griddle-cake) to take home with him. If any of the Pigotts people were staying, there would be a party and often he would come.²⁵⁴

That winter Dorothea Travis visited him and, while intending to visit briefly, 'stayed from 4 till 10' and afterwards saw him at regular intervals in the evenings after supper. She wrote, 'He is in a sad state, continually suffering from flu & colds, and from acute neurosis, so acute that he can not paint or draw without afterwards becoming physically ill.' She told him that children of Preston, where she lived, were singing a

version of the song ‘He’ll be coming round the mountain,’ which Jones identified as about the returning hero, with the refrain, ‘She’ll be wearing Woolworth garters when he comes.’ He thought this an excellent example of ‘folk’ improvisation expressing the megalopolitan civilization. Sometimes with her twenty-year old daughter, Beatrix, she took him to Gourmets for supper. To her daughter she writes that after one lunch there, he saw her to the train ‘& I had to literally push him out of the carriage when to my astonishment & that of all beholders he *kissed* me farewell on the cheek!’

Her daughter became a regular visitor. Intelligent, interesting, with a beautiful deep voice, she had graduated from Oxford and was living in Chelsea. She gave him a Tunisian mat to place over his ‘ragged & detestable carpet.’ This and a cushion given by her mother brightened his room and cheered him—he thought the mat far too beautiful to walk on, though ‘on the ground it has to be.’ To his surprise, she thought his room ‘horrid.’ He protested, ‘I actually rather like it in a curious kind of way.’ Sometimes arriving while Bernard Wall was visiting, she joined in the conversation. Wall would sit silently, become visibly exasperated, then give up in despair and depart. For her twenty-first birthday, she took Jones to lunch at the Cafe Royal, where she told him, to his delight, a new way to spell ‘birds’: böds.²⁵⁵

On Sunday, 25 February, Kathleen Raine had him to lunch for the first of several times with Sonia Brownell, who would marry George Orwell shortly before he died. She and Raine were both lapsed Catholics. Raine later said to me that Jones loved Sonia, adding, ‘I wasn’t really his kind of girl.’ Also present was Sir Francis Rose, a cultivated, cosmopolitan Catholic, an authority on Chinese poetry and art, a very ‘nineties’ figure, Jones thought. Rose subjected them to a

flood of conversation of an *anecdotal* kind—about chaps *you do not know*—all called by their Xtian names—& all about abbés, French officials, monsignors, scandals, art-works, Nice, Avignon, travel, ‘scenes’ (& scenery!)—very neurotic, but *how* different from one’s own neurosis—they seem to have the nervous energy of oxen—jolly exhausting. ‘My dear mother was dear Sarah’s dearest friend.’ Eventually ‘dear Sarah’ was revealed to be Sarah Bernhardt—whose room and circumstances Rose described in detail. Jones found the conversation—the sort, he thought, that Speaight would have enjoyed—exhausting.²⁵⁶

While empty, the house at 57 Onslow Square had been, Jones learned, burglarized. In March he went with Daphne Pollen to see all his ‘personal belongings

scattered & mauled over & any useful thing taken.’ Among his missing property were clothing (handkerchiefs, ties, shirts, a woolen waistcoat, etc), yellow china cups and saucers and tea pot, a pair of hairbrushes, a silver tray that had marked his parents’ twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, sketches and photos from the previous war, and his 1914-18 General Service Medal. He especially regretted the loss of Burns’s portable record player and ‘heavenly records’... all conveniently put together in a single container with a handle for carrying off.’ The record he most regretted losing was of Joyce reading from *Anna Livia Plurabelle*. He would continue to miss it till 1958 when ‘wonderful Dear Arthur Wheen’ would give him another (and then he would exclaim, ‘Loud & prolonged surprized & grateful cheers!’)²⁵⁷

Shortly after his discouraging discovery, he went to a musical evening held by Helen Sutherland in the principal’s house of the College of St Mark and St John in the King’s Road. The music was by the Ars Rediviva Ensemble of Paris. He also sometimes went to small supper parties that she would organize in her apartment at the University Women’s Club, to which she sometimes also invited Jackson Knight or Nicolette Gray.²⁵⁸

He saw the war, now reaching conclusion, within a long historical context. This spring was ‘appallingly cold,’ reminding him of the fourteenth century campaign of Edward III, many of whose horses and men froze to death before Paris in late April, 1360. He continued greatly to respect the German army, which he would say was ‘as good as the Roman army. But for Adolf, they would have won.’ At the bicentennial of the defeat of the Scots at Culloden, he found it ‘damn odd’ to think of how warfare had changed in the ‘only’ 200 years since ‘The ‘45.’ (‘1745 seems only such a tiny time ago.’) He felt ‘this increasing speed at which human history moves that Spengler cracks on about’ as ‘horribly impressive and actual.’²⁵⁹

The allied advance through Germany brought appalling revelations. He was distraught to learn that Dresden, ‘the best Boroque place,’ was flat, but, far worse, was the news of the concentration camps. When first reports of the mass murder of Jews became public in London in the spring of 1943, he (and most others) could not believe it, suspecting it was Allied propaganda. The German destruction of the Warsaw ghetto in the autumn of 1944 appalled him: ‘Alas, it is in keeping with the cynicism of history & Spengler’s “fact-world”—but a particularly terrifying example.’ In April 1945, the truth

about the attempted extermination of the Jews was published together with photographic evidence. He was ‘deeply shocked’—for him it had literally been incredible. Later, he said,

I just would not believe, about the Nazis, for ages ... what they were doing, for instance, to the Jews. No, I couldn't believe it ... one of the reasons I didn't ... was that in the First War our propaganda talked a lot of stuff about how Germans had crucified Canadians on haystacks and ricks. It oughtn't to be funny, but I mean it's a curious thing, if one had that sort of thing to do, haystacks aren't much good. ... endless propaganda against the Germans. And it took a frightful time until the awful truth gradually stole upon me.

He was now convinced that the Germans, more than any other people, were afflicted with a split personality: ‘it is a tragedy that so gifted, industrious, & outstandingly courageous a people should be *so ghastly* in other respects.’ The nature and scale of the atrocity ‘haunted’ him. It would from now on be implied in his saying, ‘The world is a ghastly place.’ But he knew that no nation had a monopoly on even such outrageous behaviour. He thought back to his service in Ireland and how ‘certain types of men’ behaved badly and if given official encouragement could have been as bad as the Germans.²⁶⁰ Now he knew that he ‘had got the Nazi thing wrong’, though he did not, then or later, change his view about the basic accuracy of Hitler’s critique of western cultural decadence.¹

On 9 May, after months of silence, Prudence wrote to tell him of the death of her brother John—in an accident while training as a newly commissioned officer. ‘They rang me up in the middle of the night and told me,’ she wrote. ‘I was quite alone & utterly distraught & not able to believe it. Its unthinkable even now & sometimes I don't know how to bear it or the sight of my mother's grief. All of childhood & the few strands of gayety that sometimes came—all the lightness, let-up & shared foundations seem filched utterly away—the sixpences & brightnesses & jokes & there's only indifference & more indifference & indifference. One feels like the Ancient Mariner when he saw the rotting sea.’ In addition to grief, she felt ill and neurotic. Her windpipe seemed to close. She could hardly breathe. She had a painful stomach ulcer. And she felt hunted.²⁶¹ On her way to France in search of her husband's grave, she came unannounced to see Jones one Friday night in May. Knocking to no avail, she turned away, heart-sunk, only to walk into him on his way home. They had a long visit, during which he gave her lots of genuine

sympathy, and she consumed half of his loaf of bread. (Bread was his ‘staple diet’.) She visited again on her return from France. He had broken his teapot lid. She took it away, had it repaired, and returned it, whereupon he commissioned her to search out leather that could be sewn to the elbows of one of his coats.

The end of the Second World War was, for him as for others, oddly anticlimactic and empty. Helen Sutherland had used the phrase ‘everything over and nothing done.’ For him that perfectly expressed what he was ‘in danger of feeling most of the time.’²⁶²

Notes to Chapter 12

¹ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; to C. Churchill 29/9/39; to L. Bussell 30/9/39.

² To S. Lewis St Thomas the Apostle/54; to D. Attwood 10/12/44; to S. Lewis 22/3/65.

³ to V. Wynne-Williams 26/12/64.

⁴ to V. Wynne-Williams 3/11/59.

⁵ To Helen Sutherland 14/11/39; to Alan Oldfield Davies 14/10/61

⁶ René and Joan Hague interviewed by Tony Stoneburner written record 11/6/69; Bernard Wall, *Headlong into Change*, p. 105; to Katherine Asquith 13/9/39, 21/8 1039; to L. Bussell 30/9/39; to Julian Asquith 21/9/39.

⁷ Michael Hague interviewed 10/9/89.

⁸ To K. Asquith 24/10/39; to J. Asquith 13/11/39, 4/10/39.

⁹ To H. Sutherland 28/11/39; to C. Churchill 29/9/39.

¹⁰ To H. Sutherland 28/11/39; to C. Churchill 1/12/39; P. Pelham to E. Hodgkin n.d.

¹¹ H. Read to DJ 22/10/39; to H. Sutherland 14/10/39; to C. Churchill 1/12/39.

¹² To WH Auden 24/2/54; H. Grisewood ‘Remembering David Jones,’ *Journal of Modern Literature* XIV (Spring/88), 571; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; *RQ* xxiii.

¹³. To Saunders Lewis, April 1971.

¹⁴ to G 13 April 1940.

¹⁵ H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; 5/10/87; to H. Sutherland 20/12/39.

¹⁶ To D. Attwater 10/12/44.

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- ¹⁷ To H. Sutherland 20/12/39.
- ¹⁸ H. Grisewood to author 29/7/84; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; W. Blissett, p. 138.
- ¹⁹ To H. Sutherland 3/1/39; to K. Asquith 5/1/40.
- ²⁰ P. Kelly interviewed 9/6/86; to P. Tegetmeier 27/1/40; Miles and Shiel, p. 187; Carl Winter, ms in the V&A 22/3/40.
- ²¹ To H. Sutherland 6/9/40; DJ's 1944 pocket calendar; R. Kehoe to T. Stoneburner n.d. [1972].
- ²² To H. Sutherland 6/9/40.
- ²³ to Valerie Price 7/2/60.
- ²⁴ To P. Tegetmeier 27/1/40; to R. Hague 4/5/40, 19/6/74; to P. Tegetmeier n.d.; Hodgkin, 'Some Memories of David Jones,' typescript.
- ²⁵ To H. Grisewood 13/4/40.
- ²⁶ B. Dufort, interviewed 9/6/86.
- ²⁷ To Grisewood 19/3/40.
- ²⁸ To Mrs Cobb 5/6/53.
- ²⁹ To H. Grisewood 21/5/40, 19/3/40; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; to H. Grisewood 13/4/40, 21/5/40.
- ³⁰ To H. Grisewood 13/4/40.
- ³¹ To H. Grisewood 18/6/40, 13/4/40.
- ³² To H. Grisewood 3/6/40, draft 3/6/40.
- ³³ To H. Grisewood 13/4/40, 21/5/40.
- ³⁴ To Melloney Berry 23/9/67; to H. Grisewood 21/5/40.
- ³⁵ To H. Sutherland 23/4/40, 19/4/40; to H. Grisewood 13/4/40, 16/5/40, 19/3/40.
- ³⁶ W. Blissett, p. 137; ms frag. drafted for D. Cleverdon, 1972; to H. Grisewood 21/5/40; to C. Burns 29/5/40.
- ³⁷ To H. Grisewood Candlemas/57; to C. Burns 29/5/40; DJ interviewed by P. Orr summer/72; to P. Tegetmeier 27/1/40.
- ³⁸ To H. Grisewood 16/5/40; to P. Tegetmeier 16/5/40; to C. Churchill 16/5/40; to H. Grisewood 21/5/40, 13/4/40, draft frag. 3/6/40, 16/5/40; ms frag. drafted for D. Cleverdon, 1972.
- ³⁹ R. Hague, *René Hague a Personal Memoir*, p. 23; to H. Grisewood 18/2/60.

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- ⁴⁰ To H. Grisewood 18/6/40.
- ⁴¹ To H. Grisewood 21/5/40; *Tablet* 18/5/40, 462-465; to H. Sutherland 14/11/39.
- ⁴² To C. Burns 29/5/40; to H. Grisewood draft 6/6/40.
- ⁴³ To H. Grisewood draft 6/6/40.
- ⁴⁴ To H. Grisewood draft 6/40.
- ⁴⁵ To H. Grisewood 18/6/40, 7/3/41.
- ⁴⁶ To H. Grisewood 18/6/40; M. Grisewood interviewed 21/6/97.
- ⁴⁷ To T. Burns 28/8/40; to T. Stoneburner 19/9/64.
- ⁴⁸ Ann D'Abreu interviewed 1/5/95; to T. Burns 6/8/28, 8/40; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; to T. Burns 19/11/44.
- ⁴⁹ W. Shewring interviewed 6/85; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.
- ⁵⁰ Letter to the press, draft, n.d.
- ⁵¹ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.
- ⁵² To T. Burns 28/8/40; to E. Hodgkin 17/6/42; Barbara Wall interviewed 27/6/86; to T. Burns 29/1/41; M. Richey interviewed 18/6/89; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; to T. Burns 4/9/40, 30/7/40.
- ⁵³ To H. Sutherland 6/9/40; to T. Burns 28/8/40; *The Drawings of Mervyn Peake* (London: Davis-Poynter, 1974), p.46; DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72.
- ⁵⁴ To H. Grisewood 21/5/40; to T. Burns 28/8/40, 4/9/40; to T. Burns 14/9/ny; 27/10-7/11/40, 29/1/41.
- ⁵⁵ T H. Sutherland 6/9/40; to T. Burns 28/8/40; to H. Grisewood 9/10/71.
- ⁵⁶ To T. Burns 6/8/40.
- ⁵⁷ To T. Burns 4/9/40, 6/8/40; to H. Sutherland 6/9/40; to T. Burns 28/8/40.
- ⁵⁸ To T. Burns 28/8/40.
- ⁵⁹ To T. Burns 4/9/40, 28/8/40.
- ⁶⁰ To H. Sutherland 6/9/40; to T. Burns 14/8-5/10/40, 27/10.-7/11/40.
- ⁶¹ To H. Sutherland 6/9 40.
- ⁶² M. Grisewood interviewed 24/6/89; to H. Sutherland 6/9/40, 19/8/40.
- ⁶³ M. Grisewood interviewed 24/6/89; to H. Grisewood 5/2/68; to J. Ede 29-30/8/42; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; E. Hodgkin, 'Some Memories of David Jones,' typescript; N. Gray interviewed 17/6/86.

⁶⁴ Grisewood, 'Remembering David Jones,' p. 572, *One Thing at a Time*, p. 132; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87.

⁶⁵ Grisewood, *One Thing at a Time*, p. 131, 'Remembering David Jones,' p. 572; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

⁶⁶ To C. Churchill 14/11/40; to T. Burns 14/9-5/10/40

⁶⁷ To T. Burns 14/9-5/10/40.

⁶⁸ To T. Burns 14/9/40.

⁶⁹ To H and M. Grisewood 14/12/65; to H. Sutherland 16/9/40; to T. Burns 14/8-5/10/40; to V. Wynne-Williams 9/11/61.

⁷⁰ To R. Hague 9/9/74.

⁷¹ To T. Burns 14/8-5/10/40.

⁷² To J. Ede 29-30/8/42; M. Grisewood interviewed 26/9/89, 24/6/89, 8/6/90.

⁷³ M. Grisewood interviewed 24/6/89.

⁷⁴ To H. Sutherland 6/9/40; to T. Burns 14/8-5/10/40; to H. Grisewood 6/6/40; to T. Burns 27/10-7/11/40.

⁷⁵ Barbara Wall, interviewed by Tony Stoneburner, n.d.

⁷⁶ To H. Sutherland 6/9/40, to T. Burns 14/9.-5/10/40, 27/10-7/11/40.

⁷⁷ DJ quoted by Michael Holroyd, *Augustus John* (New York: Holt Rinehart, 1974), p. 535; Sarah and Maurice Balme interviewed 17/6/90; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90; Rothenstein, *Since Fifty*, p. 280.

⁷⁸ Rothenstein, *Since Fifty*, p. 280; S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90; to *The Times* 8/2/61.

⁷⁹ DJ draft frag. n.d. [1974]; to *The Times* draft n.d. [8/2/61].

⁸⁰ DJ interviewed by P. Orr summer/72; letter to T. Burns 4/9/40, 6/8/40; W.F. J. Knight, *Cumaeen Gates*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1936), p. 58, first read by DJ in 4/40; to H. Sutherland 19/8/40; W. Blissett, p. 9; DJ quoted by R. Hague, *A Commentary on The Anathemata* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1977), p. 38; *LF* 82.

⁸¹ To C. Churchill 12/3/39.

⁸² W. Blissett, p. 9.

⁸³ To T. Burns 27/10-7/11/40, 29/1/41.

⁸⁴ To T. Burns 14/9/ny; 27/10-7/11/40; to J. Asquith 3/8/39.

⁸⁵ To T. Stoneburner 16/11/56; J. Rothenstein, *Brave Day, Hideous Night*, p. 120; *IN* 25; to P. Hagreen 12/12/40; to T. Stoneburner 16/11/56; *Manchester Guardian*, 11 Feb 1972; DJ's annotation to Attwater, *A Cell of Good Living*, p 120; to T. Stoneburner 15/5/67; to Will Carter, 16/9/65; to R. Hague 1/55; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86.

⁸⁶ To P. Hagreen 12/12/40; to T. Burns 27/10-7/11/40; to C. Churchill 14/11/40; to T. Burns 29/1/41; 1/11/41; to R. Hague 27/9/74.

⁸⁷ To J. Knight 22/6/45; to T. Burns 27/10.-7/11/40; A.S. Hartrick to DJ 4/12/40; to C. Churchill 14/11/40.

⁸⁸ Miriam Rothchild 15/12/88; to T. Burns 14/9/40, 27/10-7/11/40, 29/1/41, 21/6/41.

⁸⁹ to H. Sutherland, 27/1/41.

⁹⁰ B. Moray interviewed 6/85.

⁹¹ To T. Burns 16/5/42, 25/9/43.

⁹² T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; to T. Burns 15/4/41; P. Drysdale interviewed 16/6/88.

⁹³ Diana Smith interviewed 30/1/88; D. Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75; A. Pollen to D. Pollen 20/3/41.

⁹⁴ P. Kelly interviewed 9/6/86; to R. Hague 11/8/74; A. Pollen to D. Pollen 11/4/41; D. Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75; Lucy J. Edebb and Cecilia Hall interviewed 12/6/91; to T. Burns 15/4/41; to H. Grisewood 6/5/41; LJ to author 5/05.

⁹⁵ L. Jebb a interviewed 12/6/91; D. Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75.

⁹⁶ L. Jebb interviewed 19/6/89; to A. Pollen 26/3/65; A. Pollen to D. Pollen n.d. [Spring/41].

⁹⁷ To J. Ede 29-30/8/42.

⁹⁸ DJ to S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86; L.Jebb to author 18/5/98.

⁹⁹ To N. Sanders 12/10/70; to T. Burns 21/6/41.

¹⁰⁰ *Word and Image* 98, p. 51; Miles and Shiel, p. 254.

¹⁰¹ *Word and Image* 98, p. 51; Miles and Shiel, p. 254; D. Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75; DJ to the Tate Gallery 10/58.

¹⁰² Miles and Shiel, P. Pelham. 230, 241.

¹⁰³ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 9/6/66; N. Gray, *The Painted Inscriptions of David Jones* (London: Gordon Fraser, 1981), p. 38; to H. Grisewood 6/5/41, 9/5/41.

¹⁰⁴ To H. Grisewood 9/5/41.

¹⁰⁵ To T. Burns 1/11/41; E. Hodgkin to author 18/11/98; to H. Grisewood 15/5/41.

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- ¹⁰⁶ Barbara Wall interviewed 27/6/86.
- ¹⁰⁷ T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; B. Wall interviewed 27/6/86; to R. Hague 9/10/35; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87.
- ¹⁰⁸ J. Rothenstein, *Brave Day, Hideous Night*, p. 119-20 J. Rothenstein to DJ 10/6/41.
- ¹⁰⁹ To J. Rothenstein 12/6/41; *Brave Day, Hideous Night.*, p. 119-20; H. Sutherland to DJ n.d. [1941].
- ¹¹⁰ To J. Rothenstein 29/6/41, 8/12/41.
- ¹¹¹ J. Ede interviewed 6/85, 31/5/86, 25/6/86; K. Clark to J. Ede 28/8/36; to K. Clark 9/7/63; DJ interviewed by P. Orr, late 1960s.
- ¹¹² DJ to Paul Hills interviewed 11/6/91; DJ interviewed by P. Orr late 1960s; to P. Hagreen 12/12/40; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86; to Len Walton 10/11/ 63; to J. Stone 1962.
- ¹¹³ A.S. Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage through Fifty Years*, p. 9; S. Honeyman to K. Clark 8/9/75; K. Clark to T. Stoneburner 1/7/77; S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91; K. Clark to J. Ede 29/8/36; K. Clark to H. Grisewood 17/8/53; K. Clark quoted by J. Stone interviewed 2/10/87; K. Clark interviewed by Michael Alexander, 'David Jones' BBC 2 radio programme, 1977.
- ¹¹⁴ D. Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75; to T. Burns 21/6/41.
- ¹¹⁵ To P. Levi 10/5/66, 3/11/67.
- ¹¹⁶ To T. Burns 21/9/41; to J. Ede 15/1/45.
- ¹¹⁷ M. Grisewood interviewed 24/6/89; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88, 22/6/90; to T. Burns 21/9/41; to P. Tegetmeier 3/11/41.
- ¹¹⁸ D. Smith interviewed 30/1/88; to T. Burns 1/11/41; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; to P. Tegetmeier 3/11/41; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; to T. Burns 19/11/44; N. Cleverdon in James, *David Jones, a Map of the Artist's Mind*, p. 59; to H. Grisewood Whitsun 1946; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89, 6/91.
- ¹¹⁹ To H. Sutherland 25/11/41; J. Woods for DJ 20/11/41; to H. Grisewood 17/10/41, 21/2/42.
- ¹²⁰ Ronan Murphy OCD to author 24/12/93; *LC* 23; to H. Sutherland 1/11/46.
- ¹²¹ To T. Burns 1/11/41; to N. Sanders 7/4/66; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89.
- ¹²² To R. Hague 12/8/64, 10/10/63.
- ¹²³ To T. Burns 1/11/41; E&A 103.
- ¹²⁴ Blissett, p. 65; to T. Burns 21/9/41; to H. Grisewood 26/2/42; to Donald [Attwater] draft frag, 29/1/53; to H. Grisewood 26/2/42.
- ¹²⁵ To H. Grisewood 26/2/42.

¹²⁶ A very fine discussion of Spengler's importance for Jones appears in K. Staudt, *At the Turn of a Civilization: David Jones and Modern Poetics* (Ann Arbor: U. of Michigan, 1993), P. Pelham. 117-29.

¹²⁷ To the TLS n.d.

¹²⁸ To H. Grisewood 26/2/42.

¹²⁹ To T. Burns 1/11/41; E.Q. Nicholson interviewed 7/6/90; to T. Burns 6/5/43; D. Kindersley interviewed 9/6/90; R. Daniel to S. Wright 15/1/75; to H. Grisewood 8/8/42; to T. Burns 1/11; 15/3/41; to E. Hodgkin 14/12/45; to H. Grisewood 21/2/42; To T. Burns 16/5/42; Diana Smith interviewed 30/6/88.

¹³⁰ P. Kelly 9/6/86; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87.

¹³¹ Conrad Peplar interviewed 11/6/89; to H. Sutherland 30/10/51; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; R. Kehoe to T. Stoneburner n.d. [1972].

¹³² To T. Burns 1/11/41; to J. Ede 29-30/8/42; M. Grisewood to DJ 2/44; M. Grisewood interviewed 24/6/89; to T. Burns 25/9/43.

17. To Hague, 5/11/64.

¹³³ To A.O. Davies 20/10/61.

¹³⁴ To A T. Davies 26/7/61.

¹³⁵ *LF* 7; To V. Wynne-Williams 11/2/63; *LF* 7, 53; S. Honeyman interviewed 9/10/87.

¹³⁶ To T. Burns 6/5/43.

¹³⁷ To C. Burns 15/1/42; to T. Burns 15/3/42.

¹³⁸ Prudence Buhler to DJ 24/2/45; P. Buhler to E. Hodgkin 3/11/41; to P. Tegetmeier 3/11/41; to T. Burns 1/11/41; Blissett, p. 143.

¹³⁹ E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87; to T. Burns 15/3/42; to C. Burns 8/4/42; to J. Ede 29-30/8/42; to T. Burns 16/5/42, 2/6/42; to D. Travis 15/8/42; to E. Hodgkin 22/7/42; to T. Burns 5/10/42.

¹⁴⁰ K. Prestpm to DJ 6/4/42, 31/5/48; to J. Rothenstein draft n.d.; to J. Ede 29-30/8/42; to T. Burns 21/4/42; to H. Grisewood 8/8/42; K. Clark to DJ 27/7/42: Eunice Frost at Penguin to Jones 26/11/42

¹⁴¹ To C. Burns 18/2/42; to H. Grisewood 21/2/42.

¹⁴² To H. Grisewood 1/6/42; to T. Burns 15/3/42.

¹⁴³ To H. Grisewood 21/2/42.

¹⁴⁴ To H. Grisewood 1/6/42.

¹⁴⁵ To H. Grisewood 13 /3/42, 5/4/73.

¹⁴⁶ To H. Grisewood 5/4/73; to J. Knight 21/1/47.

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- ¹⁴⁷ To Maurice Percival frag. [67].
- ¹⁴⁸ To H. Grisewood 13/2/43; to the Secretary, London Library 29/12/45.
- ¹⁴⁹ To H. Grisewood 21/2/42, 1/6/42.
- ¹⁵⁰ To T. Burns 16/5/42; to H. Grisewood 13 Mar/42.
- ¹⁵¹ To J. Ederemy Hooker frag. n.d. 1970; to H. Grisewood 1/6/42; to T. Burns 6/5/43; to Dom Michael Hanbury 1/7/63.
- ¹⁵² Draft to *Catholic Herald*, 29 Nov 1942.
- ¹⁵³ Draft to *Catholic Herald*, 29 Nov 1942.
- ¹⁵⁴ To C. Burns 16/3/42; to Francis Wall 27/6/44; to C. Burns 25/5/42; to T. Burns 16/5/42.
- ¹⁵⁵ DJ's marginal note to A.S. Hartrick, *A Painter's Pilgrimage through Fifty Years* (Cambridge UP, 1939), p. 13.
- ¹⁵⁶ To T. Burns 16/5/42; D. Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75; W. Blissett, p. 19; to the *Observer* n.d.
- ¹⁵⁷ To T. Burns 16/5/42.
- ¹⁵⁸ To T. Burns 16/5/42; to J. Ede 29-30/8/42.
- ¹⁵⁹ To T. Burns 22/6/42.
- ¹⁶⁰ To E. Hodgkin 17/6/42.
- ¹⁶¹ To T. Burns 22/6/42.
- ¹⁶² To H. Grisewood 8/8/42.
- ¹⁶³ D. Smith to author 19/3/88; to T. Burns 21/9/41, 5/10/42; to D. Travis 25/8/nd; 20/2/43; to V. Wynne-Williams 10/6/60.
- ¹⁶⁴ M. Richey interviewed 7/6/86; M. Richey to Nicholas Scheetz 6/4/98; DJ with amused horror in conversation with author 24/8/72; W. Blissett, p. 102.
- ¹⁶⁵ M. Richey to author 23/4/86; to H. Grisewood 14/7/71; M. Richey interviewed 7/6/86; to H. Grisewood 15/8/71.
- ¹⁶⁶ To T. Burns 22/6/42, 5/10/42; to J. Ede 29-30/8/42.
- ¹⁶⁷ To J. Ede 29-30/8/42; Nicholson, 'Notes on 'Abstract Art,' p. 25.
- ¹⁶⁸ To T. Burns 5/10/42.
- ¹⁶⁹ To P. Tegetmeier 9/11/43; N. Cleverdon, in *David Jones, a Map of the Artist's Mind*, p. 59, 'A Handshake with the Past,' *David Jones Journal* (Summer 1997), 30.

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- ¹⁷⁰ To R. Hague 29/4/66; E. Maclagan to DJ 13/8/48; to H. Sutherland 23/8/48.
- ¹⁷¹ A. Giardelli, 'David Jones Remembered,' *David Jones, a Map of the Artist's mind* (London: Lund Humphries, 1995), p. 58.
- ¹⁷² To H. Grisewood 13/2/43.
- ¹⁷³ To J. Ede 15/4/43; 19/8/43.
- ¹⁷⁴ B. Wall interviewed 27/6/86; W. Blissett, p. 141.
- ¹⁷⁵ Bernard Wall, *Headlong into Change*, p. 120.
- ¹⁷⁶ Bernard Wall, *Headlong into Change*, p. 120, 111-13, 114-5.
- ¹⁷⁷ Bernard Wall in conversation with Stoneburner, written record, 4 June 1969; Bernard Wall, *Headlong into Change*, p. 148-9, 52.
- ¹⁷⁸ DJ's 1943 pocket diary; to T. Burns 6/5/43; to H. Grisewood 13/2/43; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87.
- ¹⁷⁹ H. Grisewood interviewed 5/6/86; to R. Hague 12/8/64.
- ¹⁸⁰ B. Moray interviewed 6?85; B. Moray to DJ 26 Nov 1945.
- ¹⁸¹ DJ's 1943 pocket diary; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83, 4/10/87.
- ¹⁸² To J. Ede 27/3/43; to R. Hague 18/9/74.
- ¹⁸³ To T. Burns 6/5/43.
- ¹⁸⁴ To T. Burns 6/5/43; J. Ede to R. Hague 26/9/78; J. Ede interviewed 31/5/86, 25/6/86; to J. Ede 17/5/43.
- ¹⁸⁵ To J. Ede 10/3/43.
- ¹⁸⁶ To J. Ede 19/5/43.
- ¹⁸⁷ To T. Burns 21/9/41; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72, 9/9/72, 4/6/71; to T. Burns 6/5/43.
- ¹⁸⁸ To H. Sutherland 14/11/39, 14/5/43, 2/12/48.
- ¹⁸⁹ To H. Grisewood 13/2/43; DG 140-1,142.
- ¹⁹⁰ to K. Clark 20 Jan 44; T. Hennel to David Kindersley 12/44; to J. Ede 3/7/43; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; to H. Grisewood 14/8/51.
- ¹⁹¹ M. Hague interviewed 10/8/89.
- ¹⁹² To T. Burns 6/5/43; Kevin Cribb interviewed 12/6/89; Daisy Hawkins to Edgar Hallway interviewed 19/6/88; Gerard Falkner interviewed 14/6/91.
- ¹⁹³ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; D. Kindersley interviewed 22/6/88, 9/6/90.

¹⁹⁴ To H. Grisewood 12/7/43, 6/9/44.

¹⁹⁵ To H. Grisewood 21/2/42.

¹⁹⁶ To D. Travis 25/8/43.

¹⁹⁷ Burns, p. 115; To Peter Levi 10/5/66; H. Grisewood to DJ 22/9/43; to T. Burns 25/9/43.

¹⁹⁸ To D. Travis 25/8/43; to J. Ede 3/7/43; to S. Lewis 4/71; to S. Wright 6/12/72; to J. Ede 19/5/43; to D. Travus 18/10/43; N, and B. Gray interviewed 17/6/86.

¹⁹⁹ To J. Ede 5/10/43; to T. Burns 14/2/44; M. Grisewood to DJ n.d. [Oct/43].

²⁰⁰ Last Will and Testament of James Jones 10/41; to H. Grisewood 2/3/44.

²⁰¹ To H. Grisewood 28/8/45; to R. Hague 23/4/46.

²⁰² To T. Burns 25/9/43.

²⁰³ To P. Tegetmeier 9/11, 25/12/43.

²⁰⁴ To J. Stone 12/2/63.

²⁰⁵ R. Buhler interviewed 16/6/88.

²⁰⁶ R. Buhler interviewed 16/6/88.

²⁰⁷ R. Buhler interviewed 16 June 1988.

²⁰⁸ R. Buhler interviewed 15/6/88, 6/85.

²⁰⁹ P. Kelly, interviewed 9/6/86.

²¹⁰ To Hague, 1/55.

²¹¹ To R. Hague 12/3/39.

²¹² To Melloney Berry, 23/9/67; To J. Knight 5/5/58.

²¹³ To J. Knight 1/1/46.

²¹⁴ To J. Knight 29/4/58; 16/1/44.

²¹⁵ To J. Knight, 22/6/45.

²¹⁶ To J. Knight, 21/1/47.

²¹⁷ To J. Knight 31/7/51; to Melloney Berry, 23/8/67; to J. Knight, 28/4/59.

²¹⁸ Anthony Bailley, 'The Front Line,' typescript 2/73; S. Honeyman to to DJ 4/12/40, 22/2/44; to H. Grisewood 23/3/44; E. Hodgkin 'Some Memories of David Jones' typescript.

²¹⁹ Ronan Murphy OCD to author 24/12/93; to J. Ede 13/3/44.

²²⁰ To J. Ede 13/3/44.

²²¹ To D. Travis 14/2/45; to H. Sutherland 19/6/45; P. Orr interviewed 2/6/86; to H. Sutherland 19/6/45.

²²² A. Wheen to Paul Hills interviewed 11/6/91.

²²³ J. Rothenstein, *Brave Day, Hideous Night*, p. 92.

²²⁴ K. Clark interviewed by Michael Alexander, 'David Jones' BBC 2 radio programme, 1977.

²²⁵ K. Clark interviewed by Michael Alexander, 'David Jones' BBC 2 radio programme, 1977; DJ's annotations to the chronology of the 1972 *Word and Image* Catalogue.

²²⁶ To Ffrancis Payne 28/4/44

²²⁷ To H. Sutherland 31/12/45; M. Grisewood interviewed 26/9/89; to D. Travis 14/2/45; M. Grisewood interviewed 24/6/89.

²²⁸ L. Bussell to DJ 5/7/44, n.d.; D. Cleverdon interviewed 28/6/86; Cleverdon, *The Engravings of David Jones*, p. 22; T. Burns interviewed 20/8/86; M. Richey interviewed 18/6/89, *The Engravings of David Jones*, P. Pelham. 20-1; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87, 16/6/89; to R. Hague 15/8/67; Blissett, p. 19.

²²⁹ L. Bussell to T. Stoneburner 12/8/69.

²³⁰ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; B. Moray to DJ 10/4/49.

²³¹ To Beatris Travis 20/5/45; to H. Grisewood 6/9/44; to T. Burns 19/11/44; to H. Grisewood 25/6/45; to J. Ede 9/8/44 ; to H. Grisewood 6/9/44; to H. Sutherland 3/10/45; to H. Grisewood 19/2/45.

²³² To D. Attwood 10/12/44; to K. Rhys 13/9/44; to 'RNK' 8/Wed/44.

²³³ Ms note for Dr William Stevenson, National Library of Wales, discovered by Lauren Jefferson, *A Kind of Space Between*, MA thesis, University of York, September 2000, p. 10.

²³⁴ To H. Grisewood 25/6/45; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

²³⁵ S. Honeyman to DJ 11/7/44; Mary A Muscat to DJ 3/8/44; to T. Burns 19/11/44.

²³⁶ To T. Burns 25/9/43.

²³⁷ To D. Travis 14/2/45; to C. Burns 7/1/46; to T. Burns 25/9/43.

²³⁸ To T. Burns 19/11/44; to H. Grisewood 5/12/44; to J. Ede 15/1/45.

²³⁹ H. Sutherland to DJ 1/9/45; H. Sutherland to J. Ede 7/7/44; T. Burns to J. Ede 8/8/44, 26/10/46; S. Honeyman interviewed by P. Orr n.d.

²⁴⁰ J. Ede to K. Clark 24/11/44; J. Ede to Eiluned Lewis n.d. [1936]; Tom Jones to Eiluned Lewis 12/11/36; H. Sutherland to J. Ede 7/7/44 n.d.; K. Clark to J. Ede 28/6/44, 24/7/44, 13/8/44; P. Buhler to J. Ede

4/8/44; J. Ede to K. Clark 23/7/44; J. Ede 25/6/86; J. Ede's annotations to DJ's letter to him 3/12/45; To J. Ede 10/8/45; J. Ede to K. Clark 12/10/44; to J. Ede 9/8/44.

²⁴¹ J. Ede to K. Clark 12/9/46.

²⁴² To H. Sutherland 14/5/43; DJ's pocket diaries; to A. Giardelli 13/7/66; to K. Clark 20/1/44; S. Balme interviewed 17/6/90.

²⁴³ To Bernard Wall 2/7/69; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; K. Clark to J. Stone interviewed 2/10/87.

²⁴⁴ To K. Clark 11/3/54; K. Clark to DJ 9/2/61; S. Balme interviewed 17/6/90.

²⁴⁵ Barbara Wall interviewed 27/6/86; T. Burns interviewed 2/6/86.

²⁴⁶ Barbara Wall, *René Hague a Personal Memoir*, p. 23.; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72, 4/6/71; to T. Burns 19/11/44; to V. Wynne-Williams 23/9/62.

²⁴⁷ To H. Grisewood 6/9/44.

²⁴⁸ To H. Grisewood 6/9/44.

²⁴⁹ To D. Travis 14/2/45; to C. Burns 29/12/44; to J. Knight 16/1/44; to J.H. Johnston n.d. [Jan/65].

²⁵⁰ To H. Grisewood 19/2/45.

²⁵¹ P. Buhler to DJ 28/6 [1945].

²⁵² To H. Sutherland 21/2 45

²⁵³ To H. Grisewood 25/6/45.

²⁵⁴ N. Gray interviewed 16/6/91; N. Cleverdon, 'A Handshake with the Past,' 30.

²⁵⁵ D. Travis to B. Travis n.d. 1945; to H. Grisewood 4/7/45; D. Travis to B. Travis 13/6/45; to H. Grisewood 19/2/45; Beatrix Dufort interviewed 9/6/86; to H. Grisewood 25/6/45.

²⁵⁶ K. Raine interviewed 26/6/86; to H. Grisewood 12/3/45.

²⁵⁷ To N. Sanders 27/81/71; to Mr Neal 5/4/45; To L. Bussell 14/3/45; to H. Grisewood 11/7/58.

²⁵⁸ To B. Travis 15/3/45; to H. Sutherland 21/2/45.

²⁵⁹ To B. Travis 15/3/45; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; to H. Grisewood 19/2/45, 25/6/45.

²⁶⁰ To H. Sutherland 25/11/45; P. Buhler to DJ 22/4/45; To H. Grisewood 6/9/44; H. Grisewood to author 20/9/85; to S. Honeyman 5/11/63; S. Honeyman to H. Grisewood 25/9/84; DJ interviewed by J. Silkin 1965.

1. From Stanley Honeyman to Harman Grisewood, 25 Sept 1984.

²⁶¹ P. Buhler to DJ VE Day [1945].

²⁶² To H. Sutherland 14/8/50.

Part VI Resurrections

Chapter 13 1945-52

Two exhibitions showing his work were planned for newly liberated nations. One was to be in Brussels and Amsterdam and included, at Rothenstein's insistence, the two Arthurian paintings. The other was for the British Council's gallery in the Champs Elysees and was also showing works by Henry Moore, Graham Sutherland, Paul Nash, and Frances Hodgkins. 'An acute case of coals to Newcastle,' Jones called it though glad to be seen in Paris. On 26 June he met with the organizers—Clark (now Slade Professor of the Fine Arts at Oxford), Rothenstein, and Herbert Read—at the British Council to discuss which of his pictures would go. Clark had brought in *Petra im Rosenhag*, which was an immediate and unanimous choice. From his own pictures, Jones contributed *Curtained Outlook*.¹

Bernard Wall and his family (his wife Barbara and their children, Gabriel and Bernardine) moved into the neighbourhood, close by Sheffield Terrace, and Wall's evening discussions with Jones resumed. Jones often visited the family for lunch, but mostly Bernard came round in the evening after, and sometimes for, supper.² (Wall was not much of a family man—faithful but cool and distant, with a profound immunity to marriage.) In Rome after the war, Wall had known well De Gasperi as well as his Communist counterpart, Palmiro Togliatti, and had watched De Gasperi resurrect Sturzo's Popular Party under the name of the Christian Democrats. His discussions with Jones were a continuation of those during the war. A direct product of them, Wall said, was *The Changing World* (1947-49), a review he founded and co-edited with Manya Harari, dedicated to uniting religion and culture, a purpose much deeper and less polemical than that which had raged in *Collosseum*. Wall published Gabriel Marcel, Lewis Mumford, Ungaretti, Auden, and advocated religious and political toleration as essential to European samity. Jones and Wall never lost connection, which would gradually come to depend on evening telephone calls. It would be Wall who introduced him to the writing of Simone Weil and Teilhard de Chardin.

On 30 June, Jones dined with Jackson Knight at the Paddington Hotel. They discussed a recent correspondence in *The Times* over the value of a Classical education. As he had done

earlier in a letter to Grisewood, Jones fomented against ‘those damned schoolmasters’ who thought it unnecessary to teach Latin to schoolboys.

I mean it is not a question of being able to recite to oneself bits of classical authors when one is too old to see or something which one nice old man suggested ... but that to understand not only the English language but thousands of things ... some knowledge of the classical thing is absolutely indispensable *I* only know this because I find one gets a sudden flash of clarification when one suddenly finds out by a most laborious process ... the root of some word or thing or idea—things fall into place & have meaning that before—well—one knew more or less what was intended—but the added excitement merely jolts one into a much fuller sort of thing & all kinds of continuities discover themselves. For instance (you will marvel at my ignorance) but I’ve only just found out that Parthenos means ‘the Maiden’ & *what* a difference *that* makes to the Parthenon (frieze or no)! & then that Athena’s chief office was to give the grace of Good Counsel—well there you are! Athena Parthenos O.P.N. [*ora pro nobis*, pray for us] (don’t tell the bishops).

(Affinity between maiden Athena and the Virgin Mary, ‘our Lady of Good Counsel’ in her litany, would emerge *The Anathemata* [94].) ‘It is all this,’ Jones continues,

that these old fools, knaves, are prepared to chuck away—in fact it is chucking away *our* birthright—for even if one knows, like me, ‘*No latin & less greek*’ yet while a reasonable number of chaps do know it (& it ought to be as many as possible) then that’s O.K but, as things are going, fewer & fewer people who think of themselves as educated & who sway with their opinions many innocent people will have any real sensitive understanding of this stuff & there is absolutely *no* substitute.³

Knight had expressed interest in Jones’s current writing, and so Jones brought some and read it aloud, to see, as he wrote Grisewood,

how another kind of chap from us altogether took it. He seemed to like it quite a good bit & it was amusing to notice what he liked particularly. These chaps are awfully interested in the metre thing aren’t they—& on what you contrive with vowels & consonants & all that. Things you don’t know you’ve done! except that it seemed the only way to do it to make it tolerable & to say what you meant. But chiefly I was pleased because ... he seemed amiably disposed to the classical network & seemed to think it *worked* O.K. His interpolated remarks were nice & very interesting & he’s jolly nice because he’s got a free kind of mind & although ‘a don’ most certainly jolly different from them—not that, when I come to think of it, I know much about dons. He’s so passionately interested in his subject that that alone is grand. I was pretty embarrassed about having to pronounce various Latin & Greek names & words but he was helpful about that. I expect the pronunciation was torture to his ears occasionally. Nevertheless he was pretty emphatic that I should say e.g. Demeter with all the ‘e’s very long & that I ought to say lorica (accent on i) & not lórica ... though that one *is* jolly attractive I must say said ‘correctly’.

He explained to Knight, that pronunciation of Latin in his writing could not be regularized because some of the words and phrases are Church Latin, others are technical terms in English, and still others have been Anglicized as familiar names, such as ‘Sejanus.’

He had decided to call his book *The Anathemata*, Greek for ‘things dedicated to the gods.’ His notion of such ‘significant things’ seems to originate in Spengler, who writes, in a passage Jones marked, that the manifestations of a phase of culture indicate its character. They are ‘physiognomic traits of high symbolic significance’:

Poems and battles, Isis and Cybele, festivals and Roman Catholic masses, blast furnaces and gladiatorial games, dervishes and Darwinians, railways and Roman roads, ‘Progress’ and Nirvana, newspapers, mass-slavery, money, machinery—all these are equally signs and symbols in the world-picture of the past that the soul presents to itself and would interpret.

Gill had also written that the best indicators of cultural health in a period are ‘the things which men have made,’ which ‘speak of man’s soul and ... show who are his gods.’ Jones tested his use of the term ‘anathemata’ on Knight, who liked it.* Knowing that the title would put readers off, he continued to search for an alternative, but it would ‘always come up ANATHEMATA’ (accent on the third syllable: anathEMata).⁴

Britain was in the midst of a national election that Jones thought ‘very sordid & stupid.’ To avoid ill-informed and boring conversation when asked how he was voting, he said, ‘The ballot is secret.’ He intended not to vote, but, on 4 July, Julian Asquith visited, Jones poured out to him his ‘contempt ... for *all* these bloody politicians because of the false, cheap, claptrap that has been quite unnecessarily let loose throughout the whole of the so called “campaign”, and Asquith urged him to overlook such ‘barbarism’ as meaningless and common to all elections. Jones silently surmised that the Asquiths must be ‘pretty inured to political rackets.’⁵

After Asquith’s visit, Jones left for a supper party at the house of Lilian Somerville, Deputy Director of the Fine Arts Department at the British Council. Her husband, Horace, a composer, played on the piano part of a recently finished symphony, which seemed to Jones ‘to

* It was earlier used by Heliiodorus of Athens [c. 150 BC] as the title of his fifteen books on artistic works with historical and other digressions, but Jones seems not to have known of this precedent and Knight, if he knew of it, apparently did not mention it.

have a real thing in it.' Graham Sutherland was there, and Jones found him congenial. He was also a South Londoner, eight years younger, who also had engraved and illustrated books, loved the work of Blake, Samuel Palmer, and Picasso and the landscape of South Wales. He had been a Catholic since 1926. They had a 'shorthand sort of conversation' made possible by general agreement on basic issues—agreement essential, Jones found, to real communication with a fellow artist. 'Otherwise,' he writes, 'it's hell—then one prefers conversation with Admirals or dustmen.' He would later refer to Sutherland as 'my friend'. A rare experience now, the evening reminded him of gatherings before his 1932 breakdown.⁶

His political conscience having been roused by Asquith, he went the following day to a polling station. Lacking information about the local candidates, however, he was unable to vote until a Labour supporter, thinking to persuade him of the 'iniquity' of the Conservative incumbent, spoke of his '*dreadful* record' of voting '*against* sanctions on Italy, *against* intervention in Spain & *for* Chamberlain right through.' With uncharacteristic decisiveness, Jones marched into the booth and voted for the incumbent. The only other time he had voted in national elections (for Lloyd George) was in 1918 in Ireland 'in order to get off parade for a few hours.' The incumbent won. Jones later wrote to him in considerable anger over threatened cuts to the BBC, saying, 'I am a very un-politically minded person, & in giving my vote to the conservative party I did so because of the two parties I felt your party would ... be the least materialist, & on the whole best guard the heritage of this country.' He considered himself a congenial conservative and had 'the greatest sympathy with the child who is supposed to have said only one prayer each morning, "Dear God, don't let anything happen to-day."' He did not, however, mind the victory of Attlee, whom he admired, over Churchill, whom his father had called 'that twister.'⁷ He never voted again.

Apart from a summertime visit to Pigotts, he stayed at 12 Sheffield Terrace even though it was now a 'lodging house,' obliging him to provide his own lunch and supper. He felt at home in his room. Most of his pictures, about 250 of them, were now in portfolios under his bed, though a few were up on the walls. On his worktable were heaps of books and brushes upright in pots and jars. When he was working on a picture or inscription, it was pinned to a board. His worktable was usually too crowded to work on, and he usually worked standing before his bed or, more often, half-reclining on it, the board flat on the bed. For lunch and sometimes supper he

ate bread and, when Joan Hague brought some from Pigotts, butter. Earlier in the summer she sent flowers and spring onions—‘a jolly nice thing to think of doing.’ Sometimes he cooked supper in his saucepan. On one occasion, after she brought supplies, he boiled a feast of leeks, carrots, parsnips and potatoes to eat with butter. Occasionally his godson Michael Hague visited, bringing wine. The Edes’ daughter Mary visited, bringing grapefruit and, twice in the summer of 1946, tomatoes. Now twenty-one, trying to decide between painting and the cello, she showed him her drawings. Patiently, quietly, he looked through them and said, ‘You just have to keep on working.’ On another visit she showed him a pink-luster eighteenth-century cup she had bought, which he admired at length and elaborately. To her his room was ‘a total chaos of papers, a table in the middle, and everything everywhere.’ Beatrix Travis visited, bringing him a red corduroy tie and her husband’s brown tweed demob suit. It fit except for the jacket, which he had to have altered three times, convincing him of the hopeless apathy of modern workers.⁸

He kept a pocket calendar to remind him of appointments but, as a person not regularly employed, had an indistinct sense of time. Except for Mass on Sundays and the increased availability of friends on weekends, his days were the same. Time was marked primarily by the changing seasons, but even they sometimes seemed interchangeable. In March 1946 he twice dated cheques ‘October’ and noticed that ‘people’ disliked that.⁹ His temporal sense could be looser still: in 1966 he would date a check 1066 and have it returned for restoration of the missing centuries.

Although the war was over, rationing continued and so he ate very little. He complained to Prudence that Bobby Speaight would visit and eat his food, so she sent him ‘a food cupboard’ to keep on his balcony ‘out of sight of Speaight & safe from birds.’ Petra visited once with one of her daughters. He made them tea on a gas ring. She thought him not eating properly and unable to ‘cope.’ Nicolette sometimes brought him food because she knew that he didn’t like going out to shop. He offered to do something in return, and she asked for an inscription, which he made for her in 1947.* He now went to the Grays for supper each Thursday. In addition to the food shortage there was also a shortage of cigarettes, which made him feel severely his tobacco addiction. Adding to his discomforts, sometime in 1945 he was afflicted with lice.¹⁰

* See N. Gray, *The Painted Inscriptions of David Jones*, p. 45.

Bussell's tutoring business picked up and he was no longer so available to Jones, but they sometimes met and commiserated enthusiastically about continuing cultural decline, of which evidence abounded in tawdry post-war London. Together they examined shoes Jones bought, concluding that were 'not a patch on the pre-war ones.'¹¹

On 2 October he went with Nicolette to a private view of an exhibition of Ben Nicholson's pictures. 'It was,' he wrote, 'jolly nice to see his stuff again, big & little, & over a number of years.' He could not properly look at the paintings, however, because distracted by so many acquaintances, including Nicholson himself, Barbara Hepworth, Herbert Read, Robin Ironside, and Graham Sutherland. There he met again Ben's daughter Nancy and his son Jake, whom he had last seen in his cradle at Dulwich.¹²

In the autumn of 1945, Helen Sutherland offered to finance a visit to Owen Brown, but Jones was too ill. She then offered to fund a stay in Sidmouth to escape the coming cold, but he decided to stay in London. For one thing, he was having success avoiding colds by taking Famel Syrop, 'terribly good,' which was only now available again from France, and a new medicine called Serocalcin—both of which he recommended to Bussell. And the Pollens were returning to Onslow Square, and he wanted to retrieve belongings from there. Also his small room contained his books and papers that he needed to get on with his writing.¹³

In October his landlady sold the house, and he was anxious about possibly having to move—always a trauma for him and now, in postwar London, a serious problem owing to a housing shortage. But the place remained a lodging house, the new owners, a couple named Dodson, making no important changes. His new landlady was 'very nice' and 'kind', a Texan. She amused him by relating that during the 1914-18 war a draftee from the deep South complained, 'Well, they reckon we've gotta fight for a god-damned state called France away north, never heard of it.' Not long after taking over, she suffered a nervous breakdown in response to adultery by her husband. Jones commiserated with her and, on one occasion, with her permission, called her a doctor.¹⁴

In November 1945 he began to suffer pain and stiffness in his back, which was diagnosed as lumbago and fibrositis, the latter a soreness in the joint muscles making sleep difficult and causing fatigue. It would continue to afflict him intermittently for the rest of his life. He also had problems with his teeth—he had neglected them during the war. The doctor who diagnosed his back trouble advised him to have them out. Jones refused, though amusing himself with the thought of having 'steel false

teeth' like 'the Ruskies.' Just before Christmas, he came down with 'the most crashing head cold' and went to bed for a week. Nicolette brought groceries and did some cooking for him.¹⁵

Like all his Christmasses, this one involved 'a curious nervous strain.' He liked nothing better than to be alone then, spending the holiday in bed keeping warm and reading. He also 'always dreaded' his birthday, owing to what he later called 'this neurotic' fear 'of any form of celebration'.¹⁶ It was the unease many feel, a mixture of nostalgia for familial happiness and stress over tension with loved ones. Margaret Grisewood visited, bringing a turnip, which he cooked till it had 'a golden hue like the breasts of Tegeu, Arthur's mistress.' Accomplishing little in his small room, he imagined he would 'end up like Perkin Warbeck'—the fifteenth century pretender to the crown who ended his days in the Tower of London.¹⁷

On New Year's 1946, he was delighted to read that someone had been knighted 'for services as "Controller of Potatoes & Carrots"' and was infuriated by Bernard Shaw advocating simplifying spelling and shortening the alphabet, which Jones objected to as a 'historyless':

Who the bloody hell *cares* how much time is 'wasted' writing twenty letters instead of ten. What *uncivilized* sods they are. What *irreligious* bastards & impious buggers—it makes you wonder what Shaw, as a great artist which he is, can *possibly* imagine all his form-making is about. Pushed to its conclusion it would become immoral, an offence against the common good, i.e.[,] a waste of time to say Sanctus 3 times when once conveyed the meaning. & I suppose it will come to that.¹⁸

Such economizing was a manifestation the Nominalism that he despised.

In January Tom Burns returned to London with a Spanish wife named Mabel (nee MaraZon), the daughter of an important Spanish political moderate. Jones had been expecting Robert Speaight and, when Speaight subsequently knocked on the door, he rushed her behind a curtain so that, conspicuously pregnant, she could be dramatically unveiled. Jones liked her and liked her name as pronounced in Spanish, a name he also liked in Welsh, Mabli, but not in English.¹⁹ The Burnses lived for a while out of luggage in borrowed flats and then in a rented furnished flat before moving into a house at 1 Victoria Square. Jones and Tom reverted to their former habit of talking late into the night, which peeved Mabel. For her, the last straw was when they conversed over whisky while she, in labour upstairs and distraught, having lost a child at birth the previous year, delivered a daughter. From then on Burns had to negotiate between Jones and marriage. He later recalled, 'poor Mabel had to put up with a lot from David.' When visiting, Jones tended to concentrate on Tom, ignoring her and the children.²⁰

In his ‘endless’ struggle with his current writing, in the summer of 1946 he was encouraged by rereading *In Parenthesis*, finding it better than he had remembered. Into the winter of 1945-6 he worked ‘very hard’ on his new book, giving near final shape to one section. There remained ‘masses more to do’ but finishing a part gave him confidence that the whole would someday reach completion. More than *In Parenthesis* this new writing seemed to depend for its effect on how ‘a chap reads it—it has to be “declaimed”—in parts—only not *too much* declaimed.’ The writing begun in 1943 had grown to 143 pages, subsuming the earlier Roman writing, begun in 1939. The new material concerned the Roman invasion of Britain: Roman ships, disembarkation, the movement inland bringing Roman roads and bridges to Celtic earth and water, ‘a fair amount of stuff about the Legions in Britain, especially in Wales, in an oblique but “realistic” fashion.’ He combined Roman narrative with Celtic meditation, which descended through interrogation into cultural deposits where ‘hills like insubstantial vapours float’ and ‘race sleeps on dreaming race & / under myth and overmyth / like the leaf-layered forest floor.’ One of these meditations contained material he later expanded into independent Arthurian poems entitled ‘The Hunt’ and ‘The Sleeping Lord.’ The meditative insertions moved down into the past to an important central image and then back up to the Roman present—a movement marked by corresponding Celtic images. These are reminiscent of paired images bracketing the central images in *The Deluge* and *Ancient Mariner* illustrations.* The movement into and out of temporal depths reflects Jones’s interest in geology and anthropology and in palimpsests, in which you see the past under the present and the present over the past.† It also reflects his experience with watercolours, involving under-layers and transparency, subtly implicating near with far. He repeatedly reworked this material, renumbering the pages in some instances as many as five times. He now thought of it as ‘a continuous work,’ but it would be the ground merely

* See Dilworth, *Reading David Jones*, pp. 9-19; *The Ancient Mariner*, ed. Thomas Dilworth (London: Enitharmon, 2005), pp. 94-113.

† For a full description of this manuscript and its development, see Tom Goldpauh, ‘The Labyrinthine Text of David Jones,’ *The David Jones Journal* I (Summer 1997), 78-90. As Goldpauh notes, these meditations and the subsequent analogous forms of and in *The Anathemata* anticipate the invention of hypertext, in which a point on the visible surface links to material ‘beneath it,’ which may be opened and read.

from which *The Anathemata* would grow, and he later compared this material to “sketches” or “studies” made by a painter for some proposed work.’ For now, he sought but could not find ‘the necessary connecting links’ to unify all the ‘very disparate elements.’²¹

He showed this material to Grisewood, who objected to the use of Welsh words and Welsh mythology. It is not, he said, like Latin and Greek words and myth that live in the consciousness of most educated readers and elicit immediate feeling. ‘That’s just not true about the birds of Rhiannon. Who the hell knows anything about the birds of Rhiannon?’ Jones understood and agreed. It was, nevertheless, necessary, he insisted, not because of his own interest but because these things were integral to the English tradition ‘as late as Dryden, Milton & beyond & did not ... suffer *total* eclipse until the last century historians did their Germanic thing.’ He wanted to do what Tennyson and the Pre-Raphaelites had failed to do, recover the



1. David Jones, *View from Gatwick House*, April 1946

the parson in church.’²²

In April 1946, he visited the Grisewoods at their house in Essex, Prudence joining them for a weekend. After a long time being unable to finish a picture, he managed here to do a watercolour that he liked. The painting, *View from Gatwick House* (fig. 1) anticipates the tree-paintings flower-and-chalice paintings he would soon begin making. It has a shimmering vitality but is a

Celtic link with antiquity in its historical and not merely romantic manifestation. Nevertheless, Grisewood’s objection to Welsh words and allusions, which Hague endorsed, led Jones to diminish Welsh words and mythology. He himself wondered about Welsh, as he did about Latin, whether he was not like an old lady his mother once told him about, ‘who said she felt great comfort from that “grand word *Mesopotamia*”’ when pronounced by

compositional failure, airy lightness on the left and darker tone on the right, essentially two pictures, like photographs of the same scene taken in different lights and pasted together.²³

Until the summer of 1946, he continued writing in a spontaneous, unplanning way toward an epic-length poem—hoping that some sort of unity would emerge. Now he despaired of finding that unity. The parts would not cohere. Realizing this, he ceased writing and, in September, turned away from what he had made.²⁴ All of it, the fruit of his creative life for the past seven years, seemed (and most of it was) rotten. So ended the first wave of composition that eventually resulted in the greatest long poem of the twentieth century.

In 1938, shrinkage of Helen Sutherland's fortune during the depression and rising taxes forced her to leave Rock and, drawn by love of Wordsworth, move to the Lake District. She now lived in an expanded and modernized farmhouse in the hamlet of High Row in Matterdale, above the village of Dockray. Visiting Jones in mid-summer and distressed at his undernourished state and his sadness, she invited him to return with her to Cumberland. Except for trips to Pigotts, he had not left London for five years. His agoraphobia was worse, and he now found 'moving about ... abnormally' upsetting: 'Things seem to more or less hang together if you stay put—but when you move, vests pinned to-gether with safety pins & trousers tied with string ...—all that kind of thing is a *nightmare*.' He nevertheless agreed to go. In the first week of August, he set out in a taxi with his large heavy trunk, dreading the crowds at Euston Station, which he was relieved to find uncrowded and with plenty of porters. Meeting him there, Helen silently observed that his trousers were held up at the waist by safety pins. They had a railway carriage to themselves—to his great relief—as far as Crewe. Mills met them at Penrith and drove them along Ullswater, a long lake



2. Cockley Moor, c. 1946

banked by steep mountains. He thought it looked ‘alright—but a little bit beauty-spotish’ and ‘Swiss.’ He liked the village of Dockray better, ‘with a fast beck running through it & solid stone houses & a real feeling about it.’²⁵

From there they drove a mile up a steep road between stone walls to the house, which was gray



3. View east from Cockley Moor window, 1990

stone, slate-roofed, shaped like an ‘h’ with the final downstroke elongated—essentially two long buildings joined. At 1400 feet, it was the second highest house in Britain, named for Cockley Moor behind it to the west. Sutherland had commissioned the architect Leslie Martin to enlarge and remodel it, installing wide picture windows overlooking the valley to the east. The house was on 142 acres, mostly uncultivated. The sounds were of the wind, bleating sheep, and, on the south side of the house, a trickling beck. Immediately to the east

(at the front) was a terrace sloping to a small wooden gate in a hedge. Beyond that the land dropped steeply in an immense falling-away view across Gow Barrow to Common Fell, Round How, and, beyond that, the peaks of Place Fell and, past Ullswater, High Dod. Impressed, Jones thought it a ‘wonderfully beautiful place’ with a ‘staggering view’ of ‘mountains & hills in layers’ ‘stretched out in front of your bed-room window (very different from Sheffield Terrace!).’ The landscape itself seemed ‘Wordsworthian’ but ‘without history—almost a place *never* inhabited.’ He liked what Helen had made of the house and enjoyed seeing her Nicholsons again. He liked the library for its contents: ‘wonderful as to the best recent works of many kinds—from Perenne to Eliot & wonderful collections of books on painting & the arts in general.’ His bedroom was the larger of two up a large oak stairway on the front, over the dining room. The only bad thing about the house was its distance from the nearest pub, obliging him to rely for cigarettes on Bussell posting packets from London.²⁶

During his stay, he was driven through the surrounding countryside and saw the Bewcastle Cross, which he loved. He could not help thinking that in the seventh century the Lake District was all part of the Welsh kingdom of Urien Rheged and thought it similar to parts of Wales though quite

different in feeling. He read the newspaper but in these surroundings found himself not much interested in the news. Although August, it was cold, even when sunny. Even the south wind was cold—he wondered why. There was nowhere outdoors to shelter from the wind. On one occasion Helen forced him out into a gale. He was utterly miserable, but she insisted that a walk would do him good.²⁷

Also staying were Kathleen Raine with her children, who had got to know Helen during the war, and Vera Moore. It was, for Jones, a congenial group, ‘a very nice party.’ On 22 August, Vera played Beethoven’s Opus 109 for them. ‘God! it was superb,’ he writes, ‘with recessions of sound. I do think he’s terrific—I quite forgot my dislike of the piano.’ On another evening, at Helen’s request, he read aloud a section of his recent writing, which ‘they seemed to like . . . quite a bit; but I’m afraid its damned obscure.’ One day, he was gladdened by a visit from Winifred Nicholson—‘she’s so nice’—who showed them some of her recent paintings, which he thought good. He had last seen her in January 1945 at dinner with her and her mother. On one occasion, Kathleen Raine observed him in the drawing room gazing at his painting of Petra. It had been put away; he had got it out and, having propped it against a chair, was gazing with ‘pondering sweetness’. Was he ‘communing with her’ or with the picture?²⁸ But then, for him, the picture was her.

Soon after arriving, he began painting the spectacular view from his bedroom window. He found the landscape ‘hellish difficult,’ presenting ‘new problems.’ One was that it was ‘picturesque,’ with ‘Royal Academy pictures in all directions.’ Still the view remained ‘incredibly beautiful & a new Turner sky each hour.’ He painted with, he said, ‘conspicuous [sic] unsuccess.’* On 22 August one attempt ‘went wrong,’ becoming muddy, which he tried to salvage all the next day, even though he realized it was useless and, at the end of the day, tore it up. He wished he could paint better: maybe, he thought, he was out of practice, maybe writing had hurt his ability to paint. He would ‘much rather paint than write.’²⁹

The highest, farthest mountain ridge visible from his window was usually swept with rain or obscured by mist. When the view was clear, he attempted to paint it. While painting one day, the maid entered to clean and said, ‘I see you’re making a picture of the High Street.’ He wondered what she was talking about. He then asked the name of the distant ridge, and she said, ‘That’s what I’ve just told you,

* He did not, as some assume, intentionally invent ‘conspicuous’ for ‘The Sleeping Lord’ (67); he thought it was a word.

that's the High Street.' She couldn't say why it was called that. Later, Helen explained that a Roman road ran along top of the ridge. His first thought was, 'I'm glad I wasn't on *that* fatigue-party. It must have been an appalling job.' Later he thought, 'What chaps they were, these Romans for going straight ahead whatever was in the way.'³⁰



4 David Jones, *The Hogget*, autumn 1946

Kathleen Raine remembered him as hating Helen's strict regimen. As at Rock, gongs summoned them for meals and tea, and he was required 'to be punctual.' Since the gong for breakfast went off 'rather positively,' he tried to be asleep by midnight. According to Kathleen, 'There was no sense that you could relax.' One day, while writing to a friend, he spilled a bottle of ink 'on a snow-white wall' of his bedroom. Shaken, he went to Kathleen to ask what he should do, adding, 'Helen mustn't know.' He ceased painting for an entire day in order to obliterate the damned spot by painting over it with layers of white. By late afternoon, pale and trembling (as Kathleen would remember), he managed to eradicate it—as she, summoned again, reassured him that he had.³¹ For the remainder of the visit, he wrote letters in pencil.

As he continued painting, he became suddenly prolific, producing, in all, about ten good pictures of the spectacular view. In them, earth, hills, and shapes of the cloudy sky tend to blend into each other so that the whole is a unity of greenish earth tones. In most also, the vastness of airy space between picture-plane and the distant hills is marked by near-vertical strokes that counter the horizontal hill rhythms—strokes marking slants of light. The eye is pulled up into the air, which rivals the land in importance. Used in April in *View from Gatwick House*, these vertical strokes may derive from Turner seascapes. In varying degrees, all these paintings are of weather. Looking out from within his warm bedroom, he very much liked the always-changing atmosphere here. Inside, he enjoyed even the rough days 'wild & full of storm & mist & wind'. The place itself, he writes, 'is *incredibly* beautiful sometimes, more so as one sees it more.' By the end of his visit he hoped that 'perhaps *one*' of these landscapes might be

good. One of the best he entitled *The Hogget* (fig. 4). It looks down into the near valley, where trees tangle at the bottom of the picture, and up to the irregular horizontal curves of the hills beyond, which have counterparts in the cloudy sky. He would keep for himself one he entitled *Heron-dell*. So much painting had made the time pass, for him, 'like an express train'—he had 'never known more rapid weeks & days.' It was also 'exhausting.' He had planned to go to Pigotts in the second week in September, but painting had made him feel 'unwell', so on 3 September, after a month at Cockley Moor, he returned to London.³²

Back in Sheffield Terrace, he began to suffer the extreme symptoms of his first nervous breakdown, including insomnia and nameless terror—'all the nervous *physical* sensations of fear without being frightened'—which caused him to shake so that his knees literally knocked together. He visited Dr Woods again, who prescribed a tonic consisting of equal amounts of mild stimulant and mild sedative, to be taken one tablespoon, three times daily.³³ Jones dared not try to paint but found that he could write without aggravating the symptoms. On 11 September, Beatrix Travis visited and cheered him, staying from 3:45 till 10:30, and they 'had a lovely time,' laughing a lot. They talked about a former amorous interest of hers, now living with another woman, and 'spoke of marriage, Hitler, meals in hotel bedrooms, ways of washing up, chaps 'knowing about wine,' Helen Sutherland, Stanley Spencer, Ireland—a lot, teaching art—a little.'³⁴ He described his current come-over and said he was loath to see what he called, in army slang, a 'Trickcyclist,' though he might have to if his condition worsened. After she left, he was overwhelmed again by a tide of anxiety.

Adding to his distress was the degeneration of the neighbourhood. Because of the housing shortage and under what he considered 'Communist organization,' groups of families were moving into various houses on Sheffield Terrace, the consequence being 'organized anarchies'.³⁵ It upset him so much that he considered going to a room in Eaton Terrace but did not feel up to moving.³⁶ At this time he was going to the Burns house once or twice a week and was 'writing busily.'³⁷

On 19 September he managed to attend a wedding. He appreciated 'some jolly nice singing' and thought 'the bride looked heavenly' but he especially liked the bridesmaid, her little sister 'who stood stone still in the middle of the nave, a *little*, little, little figure—jolly impressive & quiet. It makes you weak this kind of patheticness of these human terminal events—this Anglican thing preserves something—but God! how it dates—the "as by law established" comes through *whatever*

they do.’ The reception was grand and formal, with a functionary bawling out the names of guests in a fruity voice. There he met and spoke with Fr. R.H.J. Stuart SJ, for whose war-reminiscence, *March Kind Comrade* (1931), he had made a frontispiece. He had not much liked him before, but now the priest seemed ‘the real old stuff of this island ... dutiful & conscientious.’³⁸ Barbara Moray was there and gave Jones a bottle of champagne—a gift that seemed all the more remarkable to him because of post-war rationing and his poverty. It prompted him to meditate:

chaps are *hellish* kind to one & when you do a bit of this so called ‘examination of conscience’ from time to time & think what an ungrateful sod you are it’s quite frightening—I mean people are nice to one & they might with reason be bloody horrible all the time I see awfully clearly why these saintly blokes call themselves ‘the chief of sinners’ (a thing that people think so affected) because I can see that if one had any really serious conception of being even remotely Xtian one would see with continual clarity how one deserved nothing except roots up the arse.³⁹

He was lying low and waiting for his debilitating condition to pass, since he knew ‘from long experience there is little else one can do.’ Unable to face going to galleries, he missed exhibitions by Barbara Hepworth, Gwen John, and Henry Moore to which he otherwise would have gone. He did drag himself to a show of watercolours by Mark Emile Dockree, which he found ‘too “all-overish” ... you can see *something* in some of them & then it goes again—rather boring.’ On his birthday he had lunch with Petra and her two eldest daughters and dinner with Bernard Wall. He managed to get to Mass for the feast of All Saints.⁴⁰

He went to the Cleverdons’ house to hear the broadcast of Cleverdon’s adaptation of *In Parenthesis*. Originally scheduled for Armistice Day 1939, it had been cancelled owing to the outbreak of war. It had been rescheduled for 10 November 1942 but was displaced by Churchill’s ‘blood, tears, toil and sweat’ speech. In early November 1946, Jones wrote and recorded an introduction for the third scheduled broadcast. He had for years been pessimistic about Cleverdon’s decision to mix choral music with the text and dreaded the actors’ performances. Disappointed by the BBC dramatizations of literature during the war, he believed that there was always an ‘innate vulgarity’ that had to do with the age, that now good things ‘will be possible only in a hidden way, the secret excellences—the catacombs, etc.’ The production was broadcast on the evening of 19 November. Emrys Jones played John Ball, Dylan Thomas delivered Dai Greatcoat’s boast, and Richard Burton spoke the parts of four figures, including Lance Corporal Lewis. Jones was appalled. The dialogue was all right, he felt, but the narrative was ruined by exaggerated emotion, and the musical interludes were ludicrous. Adding to

his chagrin, Cleverdon said that he and the actors were very pleased with the performance. The broadcast was repeated the next evening, and he went to the Grisewood's house in Essex to endure it again without censoring his reaction. While listening he exclaimed, 'Oh, how awful! The music! The affected way of talking! The over-dramatization! Oh, no! Oh, no!' He hated the histrionics, the stressing of words that require no stress, the loss of form and feeling. He told Grisewood and later Cleverdon that he would have preferred his own reading of the poem just as he had written it and as he had read it to friends while writing it. Grisewood and Cleverdon convinced him that this would not have been allowed on radio, that the text had to be edited and produced with actors and music. Months later, Jones was able to write, 'all things considered, & knowing the difficulties that beset the job & remembering *their* intentions & the general set up, they did pretty well,' but secretly he felt only aesthetic revulsion for the production.* Grisewood and Cleverdon proposed to him that he was reacting also to hearing warfare made real in the acting and explosive sound effects, but he did not agree. Louder, actual warfare during the Blitz had not distressed him. The production had ruined what he had made, causing him to suffer deeply, worsening his condition. His emotional collapse was not, however, brought on by the production, as Grisewood thought, but earlier by explosively productive painting in Cumberland.⁴¹

He went to bed for a week, in the midst of a second complete breakdown, equal to if not worse than the crash fourteen years before. That, too, had been initiated by prolific painting. Too anxious and depressed to leave the Grisewoods, he stayed on, even though he found the Essex cold bone-chilling and the house draughty. He briefly left his bed during a visit by Helen Sutherland but felt 'rather dazed' and immediately worse. It was a month before he could return to London and his little warm room.⁴²

On 6 January 1947 a snowstorm inaugurated the worst winter in more than a century. The extreme cold seemed like the return of the Ice Age. He wrote to Pollen that he expected 'to see some Tailless Hares and Woolly Mammaths about the place soon.' This winter probably underlies the notion of an apocalyptic ice age in *The Anathemata* (68). In his pocket diary from January through early March he records: 'Cold...very cold ...very cold snow ... Intense cold snow ... more snow & colder much wind.'

*A BBC tape of a later broadcast survives and, for me at least, fully justifies Jones's negative reaction.

He stayed in. Few visitors came.

On his Dark Ages Survey map, he placed the point of his dividers in the channel at the position of a vessel, which, in his writing, had rounded Ocrinum. He made a circle that enabled him to measure the distance ‘three leagues and a quarter,’ words that would appear in *The Anathemata* (108). Then he stopped writing.

After 6 March his pocket diary is blank, stark testimony to his distress. He could not sleep, write even to record the weather, could not even read. When he spoke, it was in the weak, elderly, ‘far-off voice’ of the severely clinically depressed.⁴³

He began staying with Tom and Mabel Burns, sleeping in their third-floor back guest bedroom. Their Spanish cook and elderly English midwife, now their baby’s nurse, befriended and catered to him. Burns believed his breakdown had been brought on by living in seclusion at Sheffield Terrace and eating ‘rotten food’ and thought that he needed a home of some sort which Burns, with a family now, could not supply. The Burnses took him for a weekend to a farmhouse at Wenham in East Anglia that was without electricity and central heating. They noted that he brought with him a suitcase containing thirteen hot water bottles, which he apparently had on hand in his Sheffield Terrace room. Before bedtime, he filled all of them from the kettle and placed them in his bed. When, in March, Ede wrote several times enquiring whether contributors had paid into his fund, Jones could not reply. Burns wrote to Ede, ‘He couldn’t more than glance at yr letters, hasn’t been able to write 2 lines for days & really had been quite bad.’ He was, Burns wrote, ‘really right *down* again in every way.’ Convinced that Jones was experiencing what John of the Cross calls the Dark Night of the Soul, Burns were ‘very worried.’ So were Jones’s other friends.⁴⁴

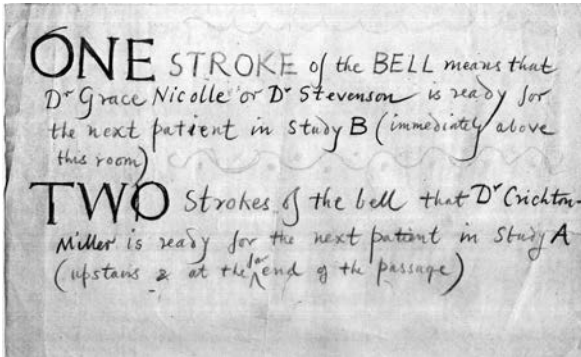
In early March, Jones saw Woods again to complain that writing now made him ill. Woods advised him to stop writing, as he had, in 1933, to stop painting. But the prospect of relinquishing all creative work was too much. Woods had again recommended a sea voyage or a nursing home, both now too expensive. Burns encouraged Jones to see a psychiatrist, something he had resisted doing since his first breakdown. Nicolette Gray took him to Yorkgate to see a psychiatrist friend of hers, a Freudian who agreed to charge no fee. After their consultation, Jones declined to return because the man was a Jew, he told her, and, while he had no objection to this, he would feel obliged in kindness to hide or dissimulate about his anti-Jewish feelings if the matter ever came up in therapy. At Burns’s urging, he then consulted their old acquaintance, the equally Jewish Eric Straus, now chief psychiatrist

at St Bartholomew's Hospital (who subsequently billed Jones £5/5/0 for the consultation). Strauss diagnosed him as schizophrenic and prescribed electric shock treatment. (This diagnosis was less surprising than it seems today since practitioners then thought the two modes of psychological disturbance were neurosis, originating in the Oedipus complex, and psychosis, virtually synonymous, owing to the work of Melanie Klein, with schizophrenia.) Burns thought the diagnosis 'balls' and was adamant: 'On no account whatever should you have shock treatment. It might go wrong,' and Burns was furious with Strauss for suggesting it.⁴⁵ Jones, too, did not want shock treatment.

After seeing these two psychiatrists, he felt better and was even 'cheerful,' though Burns could see that he was 'definitely far from well.' He summoned his brother Charles, who was now chief psychiatrist for children in Birmingham. Charles came down in the last week of March. Probably on his recommendation, Jones began at this time reading, Freud's *Totem and Taboo* but without it meaning much to him. After consulting with Strauss, Charles agreed with Tom that Jones must not be subjected to shock therapy, which would cause memory loss and might, he thought, further diminish or even cancel his creative life. Before moving to Birmingham, Charles had worked at Bowden House Clinic in Harrow. He knew and respected its psychiatrists and was a close friend to one of them, named Bill Stevenson.⁴⁶ Charles decided that, although it would be expensive—the weekly fee was a then staggering 16 guineas—Jones should undergo treatment there. Charles made the arrangements, which included writing to Helen Sutherland for financial help. She agreed to give from £30 to £50 for expenses, with Jones paying a matching sum. The Burns brothers and other friends also contributed. The robbery at Onslow Square had made Jones fearful of thieves, so before going to the clinic, he entrusted Nicolette with *Aphrodite in Aulis* and the key to his room. (She lived closer than Burns to Sheffield Terrace.)⁴⁷ After three months of blank pages in his pocket diary, he enters for 13 June 1947, two words, 'Bowden House'.

Tom Burns drove him the ten miles from central London to Bowden House Clinic in Harrow. It was a large three-story late-Victorian blond brick house, formerly that of the Headmaster of Harrow School. It occupied ten acres of quiet, park-like grounds atop Sudbury Hill adjacent to school grounds. The director and resident psychiatrist was an elderly Scot named Hugh Crichton-Miller, the founder of the Taverstock Clinic in London. The other psychiatrists were Bill Stevenson and Grace Nichol. She was a Jungian. Stevenson and Crichton-Miller were eclectic.

They met weekly to discuss the progress of their patients. Jones's first consultation was with Crichton-Miller and concluded with Jones saying, 'You're not going to make me normal, are you, because I don't want to be.'⁴⁸



5. David Jones, Reminder, Bowden House, 1947

In his first week at the clinic he was restricted to his room, on the first-floor at the front, where meals were delivered and no visitors allowed. During this week, he was encouraged to experience his own feelings with uninterrupted clarity. Diagnostic tests included a full physical examination, in case an apparent emotional problem had its origin in subliminal pain owing to hidden infection. The problem with his teeth was

noticed and a dental appointment made, but other than a slight tonsil infection, he was free of 'toxins'.⁴⁹ During this first week, Crichton-Miller intravenously administered the truth serum pentothal, just enough so he would talk freely about himself. As he rambled in response to questions, Crichton-Miller took copious notes.* He referred him for psychotherapy to Bill Stevenson, who saw him for an hour each morning and sometimes also briefly in the afternoon.

At the end of the week, Charles Burns visited and thought that Jones 'seemed happier and physically better.' He consulted with Stevenson, who impressed him as 'a very good man for David,' and Jones told him that he liked Stevenson very much. The plan was to stay another week or two, then go to Sidmouth for a holiday, then resume treatment in London.⁵⁰ It soon became apparent, however, that he needed to stay longer. He remained at the clinic for nearly half a year.

None of the Bowden-House psychiatrists believed in electric shock therapy. In particular, Stevenson was against it. Dr Glyn Davies came to demonstrate it in 1948 but, according to Davies, who succeeded Crichton-Miller as director, electric shock treatment was never otherwise

* Jones's file at Bowdwn House was among material water-damaged and burned in 1984, two years before the author began researching this biography.

administered at Bowden House. It has twice been stated in print that Jones underwent electric shock therapy; he did not.^{51*}

After the introductory week, Jones met the other patients. There were about a dozen. The maximum the clinic could accommodate was fifteen. All were volunteer admissions, none ill enough to need restraint or confinement—there were no locked doors. He took part in the daily routine of the clinic, including meals and tea with the other patients. As at Helen Sutherland's houses, they were summoned to the dining room by the sound of a gong. He was usually late. The day started with a meeting beginning with prayers and the singing of hymns led by Grace Nichol at the piano. Breakfast followed, then occupational therapy: weaving, pot-making, sculpting, and spontaneous painting. The morning schedule was relaxed, to allow patients to see psychiatrists. A bell sounded once when Nichol or Stevenson were free to see someone (in Study B, immediately above Jones's room), twice when Crichton-Miller was free (in Study A). Jones made an inscription of this in red, blue, and yellow crayon to remind himself (fig. 5). After his session with Stevenson, Jones went to a lounge for coffee and spent the rest of the morning reading in his room or walking about the grounds. They were 'beautiful ... in a naiad kind of way—nice trees & kitchen garden.' He sometimes worked in the garden and, while doing so, thought how astonished his friends would be to know that he was doing this voluntarily.⁵²

Just before lunch was compulsory throwing of the medicine ball—an exercise in group dynamics intended to reveal aggression. Formed into lines facing one other, residents hurled the large heavy (ten pounds) leather ball. Mistaking its name for its use, he wrote to Grisewood, 'I ... play ball, They call the game 'Medicine Ball'—jolly embarrassing terms.' When a patient put on a fiendish face and threw as hard as he or she could, others would observe, 'Aren't *you* being aggressive!' One of the patients was what Jones called 'a medicine ball cannon.' No one, however old, was exempt from this exercise. It may have been bad for his back: in July he had a crippling attack of fibrocitis, and was required, he wrote, to 'do a jolly odd thing (for me): lie on

* Miles and Shiel mistakenly claim that Jones received electric shock therapy (p. 263), their source being oral testimony by a young acquaintance of Jones in the 1970s, who was probably misinformed by misquotation of Jones in the *Manchester Guardian*, 11 Feb. 1972. Tom Burns and Grisewood attested to me that David Jones never received shock treatment.

a grassy bank with my back exposed naked to the sun as a part means of shifting this fibrocitis—what we are induced to do!!’ The summer of 1947 was exceptionally warm and therefore, for him, ‘wonderful’.⁵³

At one o’clock the gong sounded for lunch. After lunch was a period involving organized sports. This was his first experience of ‘badmington’ (sic). By August he liked this ‘rather nice game—something nice about *very light* rackets & projectiles combined with the violence & agility asked of the players.’ Such physical activity increases endorphins in the brain and helps to alleviate depression. After sports was a two-hour session of group therapy with all the patients together, directed by Stevenson or Nichol. Each patient was called on to discuss his or her personal problems. Jones joined in—he had no choice—and spoke candidly about his depression, his artistic block, and his sexuality. The others, including the psychiatrist, commented and made observations. Tea followed at four and then, a period of rest. Afterwards patients could see their psychiatrists again—if a worry arose from group therapy, Jones could talk to Stevenson about it. Supper was at seven. Then the patients went either to the quiet lounge to read or to the other lounge to talk or to listen to the radio or to one of their number playing the piano. Then each went to his or her room, and it was lights-out at ten to eleven when a nurse looked in to check each patient.⁵⁴

Jones liked the staff and found the other patients ‘all exceedingly nice,’ discovering that he and some of them had mutual acquaintances. He got on especially well with the housekeeper, Miss Edwards, Welsh, from Montgomeryshire, who was surprised that he spoke no Welsh. They occasionally conversed ‘on the Welsh character & the alien English,’ he providing the history, she descriptions of the contemporary scene. He liked Crichton-Miller, who invited ‘My dear DJ’ to tea at his house on 11 July—urging him to be, for a change, on time. They enjoyed one another’s sense of humour. The psychiatrist gave him a copy of his recent essay on the psychological benefits of religion.* Jones regarded him as ‘*a very great man*’ with ‘unique qualities.’ He also and especially liked Stevenson, whom he considered ‘more than ordinarily able at his job.’⁵⁵

* Hugh Crichton-Miller, ‘The Value of Illusion,’ *Mental Hygiene* 31 (January 1947) 38-49.



6. William A.H. Stevenson, c. 1965

Bill (William Archibald Henderson) Stevenson (fig. 6) was a Scot, born in Bombay and educated at Glasgow Academy and Oxford, having received his medical degree in 1939 and his training at St Bartholomew's Hospital. During the war, he had served as a psychiatrist for the air force in India and Burma. He resembled the actor Jack Hawkins. Black haired, medium height, stout, diabetic (which worried him), slow and deliberate in speech, he always dressed neatly in a white shirt and, although his eyes were brown, a light blue suit and blue tie. He usually had a pipe in his mouth, half the time unlit. Considered 'obsessional' by one colleague, he wrote continually throughout consultations in neat, precise

script. He worked long hours, took on all comers, and was persistent with them, including difficult cases considered hopeless by others. He went to see them at any hour, day or night, if there was an urgent need. He had a remarkable rapport with patients and was very successful in treating them. A devout Anglican, he was, like most perfectionists, convinced in his beliefs. Before studying medicine, he had read Philosophy, taking an MA, and had considered becoming a clergyman. He continued to be interested in theology and sometimes gave lay sermons in church. Morally uncritical in outlook, he had a good sense of humour but disliked off-colour jokes and would look steadily and unlaughing at anyone telling one. He was interesting and spontaneous in conversation and loved classical music and visual art. He was interested in Jones's art and later bought some engravings from him.⁵⁶

Although he had not undergone analysis, Stevenson had been trained as a Freudian and diagnosed Jones as suffering from an unresolved Oedipus complex, which Freud considered generally to be the nuclear complex of all neuroses. The theory is basically this: a young boy loves his mother and, fearful of punishment by his father in the form of castration, represses the erotic aspects of that love. This occurs until about the age of five and recurs at puberty. Shortly afterwards, a boy either resolves this complex in relations with other women or represses his sexuality. According to Freud, sexual repression generates anxiety, which is its conscious symptom. Anxiety can become phobic, as it had with Jones. Jones found therapeutic sessions with Stevenson 'a strain' because he had 'to *think quite hard* in order to collaborate with what the doctor is attempting to achieve.'⁵⁷ He was learning a new way of regarding human beings, including himself.

He candidly related the events of his life, which certainly correspond to Freudian theory. His mother had prolonged her physical intimacy with him by having him sleep in a cot beside her till he was five. She favoured him—‘spoiled him’, his sister said—and was probably compensating for dissatisfaction in her marriage. That ‘fat head’, her husband, was not the handsome, imposing man her father had been or her brother was, did not earn as much income, and was often not home. Having supported herself by teaching, she was dissatisfied with being merely a housewife. David’s father spanked him once that we know of and possibly on other occasions. Whether or not spanking is, as Freud says, redolent of castration, fear of castration seems a credible analogue to the terror David felt as a child with his head stuck in a chair and, he thought, about to be decapitated. Stevenson doubtless made the association. He would have seen fear of castration in the trauma of Jones’s circumcision at fourteen. It had changed the appearance of his penis, which subsequently looked, as he had confided to Hague in the 1920s, ‘unappealing,’ a sight he could not imagine a woman finding attractive. In his early forties, when deeply in love with Prudence, he had nightmares about his circumcision. He had a neurotic fear of dogs, horses, and snakes, which, according to Freud, was a displaced fear of castration. In any case, with agoraphobia, such fear expressed the anxiety arising from the Oedipus complex. In his mid-forties, his favourite recordings were ‘Frankie and Johnnie’ and ‘I’m Going There to Meet My Mother’—the former about sexual transgression resulting in death, the latter about longing for heavenly reunion with Mum—an Oedipally suggestive coincidence. After a visit with Prudence in 1941, he complained to Burns that he was, to his regret, ‘irretrievably a man of the megalopolitan culture, with only a type of brain & no body!!’ At Stevenson’s urging, he was now rereading *Totem and Taboo*, which largely concerns the Oedipus complex, and reading it ‘with much more understanding,’ he wrote, ‘than when I first had a go at it some months ago.’ He later bought a copy.⁵⁸

He now attributed his neurosis partly to ‘early family life’, a large part of which involved tension with his brother, Harold, as involving his relationship with his mother. Of the two, David was always the successful rival for her affection. In revenge, Harold called him ‘Toady’ and sat his antagonist in wet grass to catch cold, put a firecracker down his back, and played vicious April Fool jokes on him. At the age of nine, Harold was forced to share his room with this ‘little Benjamin’, whom he had every reason to resent. In return, David hated and may have feared his older, bigger, stronger brother. Unlike Oedipal feelings toward parents, sibling rivalry is seldom entirely denied or repressed. You can hate and even express hatred for a brother with some impunity. Consciously or not,

he probably wished Harold dead and, when Harold died, he doubtless felt terrible guilt. That this guilt remained with him all of his life is suggested by life-long disinclination to speak of his brother. It is implied by a Freudian slip he made in 1953, when referring to the ghost of Marley, Scroodge's dead business partner as 'the ghost of his brother.' Fraternal guilt undoubtedly informs his habit of avoiding angry confrontation. According to Freud, the more someone checks aggression towards others, the more tyrannical and aggressive will be other forms of repression in the service of the 'ego-ideal'.⁵⁹

Sibling rivalry and the death of Harold intensified fifteen-year-old David's Oedipus complex just when it otherwise would have weakened. At Harold's death, their mother turned to David with increased affection, and he responded in an intensification and prolongation of Oedipal feelings, including sexual repression—repression being the chief neurotic tactic of self-defence. He decided just then to forgo marriage for the sake of art. In two senses, his vocation involved Oedipal fidelity to his mother: he would draw to please her; he would exchange her for no other.

In addition to repression, neurosis often involves regression to prepubescent childhood, when sexual feelings are subconscious. Such regression may help explain his frequent and excessive illnesses—aggravated by exhaustion caused by repression—and the hypochondriacal importance he gave to them. When young, illness meant coddling and freedom from school. It meant having his mother to himself—brother, sister, and father being out of the house. By pampering him when ill, she predisposed him to psychosomatic illness. When unwell as an adult, he went to bed. It was a way of 'returning to the womb', which, rightly or not, Freud called the 'substitute for copulation' for a man 'who is inhibited by the threat of castration.'⁶⁰ To most readers now, Freud's terms are embarrassing overstatements, but they do convey some meaning which remains, to many of us—to males more than females, I have found—convincing and compelling.

An aspect of regression is refusal to grow up. In notes for Stevenson, Jones wrote, 'I understand far better the ramification of the sexual impulse & how the fear of assuming the "father figure" position works in the most unexpected conjunctions & I see how all my life I've avoided such a position in innumerable & subtle ways.'⁶¹ He had refused to take exams to qualify to teach art. He had declined to be commissioned as an officer. He had procrastinated about marrying Petra. Earlier he had fallen in love with Elsie Hancock and Dorothea de Halpert, both safely engaged to other men. He made advances to Diana Creagh when she was in love with Tom Burns. He wrote, 'I see how one repeats the

pattern of one's life in [a] striking way. I always had an inkling that this was so but rather regarded it as superstition, but I now see why this must be so.'

Making sexual advances to women unlikely to respond owing to prior commitments—when nearly a generation of young women had been rendered mateless by the war—was a manifestation of what he acknowledged in his notes for Stevenson as 'my fear of sex'. Stevenson explained that his indeterminate fearfulness, which had no apparent cause, is a fear of losing control of himself (of his psyche, of what Jung would call his persona) and that this fear originates in fear of sex. Jones told him, as he had Nicolette Gray, that he could look at something like the fireplace and be overwhelmed with fear. (What, for a classical Freudian, is a fireplace if not a symbolic vulva complete with vaginal chimney?) Sexual fear accounted for the barrier to physical intimacy that many women detected in him. Any difficulty in the early 1920s with unprovoked ejaculations can only have made sex more fearful. This is the psychological underside of his distrust of passion. In a pamphlet by Jackson Knight, he marks with approval the statement that 'the loyalty between Achilleus and Patroclus should have been creative, but, since it was feverish, it was destructive.'⁶²

At the age of eighty-two, Petra suggested that his lukewarmness to her during their engagement may reflect Oedipal repression. 'I think sexually he was immature in some way,' she said. 'He had a sexual appetite. Otherwise, we would never have got engaged, but he did not want sex enough to get married.' Although 'definitely not homosexual,' he was, she said, 'a rather mixed-up character because he had been spoiled, I think. His mother fussed over him as a child. That's what David's sister said. He was a bit special to his mother.'⁶³

Through physical intimacy with Petra stopping short of coitus, he came close with her to resolving his Oedipal complex, if coitus may be equated with such resolution (a big if). To twenty-nine-year-old Jones, Petra at eighteen could not have seemed very motherly. And there were non-neurotic reasons for not marrying her. Mentally she was not his equal, and marriage would have ended his way of being an artist. He told Stevenson that in addition to 'symptoms of unbalance in my own make up there is the concept of "not marriage" as a perfectly rational desire in order to pursue what appears to ... be a greater good. ... I have always felt this very strongly & question if it is wholly owing to the aforesaid & admitted escapist thing in me.' We now live during 'the breakdown of a culture' which makes people avoid marriage 'if they feel that they have some vital work to do,' and in which 'the conditions of the time make it virtually impossible for them to marry & bring up a family without

at the same time prostituting (or something like it) the work they wish to do.’⁶⁴ His friend Henry Moore had similarly decided to forgo marriage for the sake of art yet had been able to marry because, unlike Jones, he was qualified to teach art, which is how he supported himself and his wife for years. Jones might have broken the engagement with Petra earlier but may have felt bound by his formal betrothal—in any case, he was indecisive. As long as a decision was his to make, it tended to paralyze him. Once she chose Tegetmeier, he wanted her without reservation and, two years later, proposed again. Her repeated rejection may have permanently confirmed Oedipal hesitation, arresting further sexual-psychological development, for he never again braved sexual intimacy. Rejection by Petra, although she had seemed so safe, unconsciously confirmed the danger of overt sexuality driving away the object of affection. When he subsequently fell in love with Prudence, the imperative to repress sexual desire was stronger, and this may have helped—it probably did—to bring on his first breakdown.

Since someone sexually blocked in this way might seek homosexual expression, Stevenson questioned him about the warmth of his affection for Hague, Grisewood, and Richey. It became clear, as it had always been to Jones, that he was not homosexual. ‘What a frightful nuisance it is’—he said, as Grisewood remembered—‘that you can’t express an affectionate appreciation for a man or boy without this accusation being attracted to you at once.’ He added, ‘It is absolutely natural to me to appreciate and enjoy the physical charm of my men friends and to love their features and their faces and so on. This is entirely natural to me and involves no implication of homosexuality. I should have thought that’s simply part of being a sensitive and appreciative human being.’⁶⁵

As Stevenson realized, Jones’s neurosis also owed a lot to the 1914-18 war. For one thing, his years of service delayed the possibility of sexual maturity by depriving him of normal association with women during transition from adolescence to adulthood. More important, the war was a source of subsequent anxiety and fear. Stevenson explained that during a panic attack what ‘totally irrationally scares one to bits is transferred from some quite other thing or set of circumstances.’ Stevenson suggested that Jones had actually been much more frightened in the trenches than he realized and that this fear was what he later felt in phobic anxiety and panic. This insight, Jones later wrote, ‘did slowly help me to understand how the thing worked.’ War was not, however, the root cause of neurotic fear. Training under Crichton-Miller, Stevenson had learned that, according to Freud, shellshock or ‘traumatic neurosis’ is ‘due to a desire for erotic gratification, the symptoms being subjected to great

distortion.’ War worsened neurosis, Stevenson thought, by resurrecting and magnifying childhood Oedipal and sibling anxieties beyond the possibility of resolution. Infantile in origin, Jones’s fears were magnified by the horrific reality of the trenches. There his fear was met with correlative experiences passing even Freud’s imagining. At the height of his adolescent sexuality, the war justified infantile fears of sexual mutilation—he witnessed actual castration, which all soldiers fear, and its symbolic corollaries, killing and the severing of limbs and heads. Castration is an importance image in *In Parenthesis*, where it is associated with the Maimed King of the Grail legend. In therapy, Jones poured out masses of war memories. In the mid-1920s, Philip Haggren thought that being wounded in the leg had affected Jones deeply. When Jones and Stevenson drafted his application to the Artist’s Benevolence Fund in the summer of 1947, Jones wrote that his ‘long standing chronic neurosis ... is related to being in the 1914-18 war,’ and, after the word ‘being,’ Stevenson inserted ‘wounded’. Far worse than being shot, however, was enduring enemy artillery fire, so unpredictable in occurrence, duration, and intensity. Writing to Charles Burns in 1940, Jones described his neurosis as a continuous experience of ‘fear and distress’ that had to be endured like a “barrage”.’ His first breakdown was partly precipitated by working on Part VII of *In Parenthesis*, which re-presents battle. Writing released fear suppressed throughout the war, and he suffered its delayed consequences.⁶⁶

He discussed his phobias, which are symptoms of intense neurosis. In addition to fearing certain animals, he feared rough members of the working class, the contamination of restaurant food, and germs. As mentioned earlier, to avoid germs he would hold the speaking end of a public phone far from his mouth so that friends had difficulty hearing. He refused to bathe in the public tub at Sheffield Terrace and, instead, took sponge baths at his sink. His greatest fear was of crowded public places. This may explain why, during the Blitz, he refused to enter shelters. In classical psychoanalysis, agoraphobia involves regression to childhood. He could comfortably enter crowded places only if accompanied, as when a child, by a trusted companion, though he was able to go alone to familiar places like shops, church, the Tate, or the National Gallery. Being kept home by his mother during childhood illnesses may have contributed to agoraphobia. Basically, agoraphobics are afraid of losing control. In treatment, many admit to fearing that they will pass out in public and disgrace themselves or start shouting. Stevenson explained agoraphobia and the other phobias as displacements of underlying Oedipal fear of sexual passion, but, regardless of Freudian interpretation, being under fire throughout most of the 1914-18 war guaranteed that he would suffer agoraphobia. Then his response to

fear was to huddle in his dugout; now he stayed in his room, which he often called his ‘dugout’—and which, at Sheffield Terrace, was not much bigger than a large dugout. The recent war may have worsened his condition. Many who endured the Blitz, as he had, subsequently suffered from agoraphobia, to which rationing contributed by depriving people of the fats and protein that nourish the nervous system. Agoraphobia would be the one element of his neurosis that, he later said, did not improve with therapy.⁶⁷ It continued severely to curtail his ability to travel and socialize and therefore impeded the growth of his reputation as a poet. He never gave a live public reading.

If he disclosed to Stevenson his feeling of walking two feet above the ground beside Petra in the valley of the Honddu in 1926, Stevenson would have seen the experience as essentially phobic, a symptom of fear of contact or of losing control. The feeling of walking above the ground seems also a variation of feelings of unreality, absence, or depersonalization like the dissociation or clouding brought on by terror during battle. Closely analogous was the moment of terror ten years earlier above the ground on a plank bridge in Festubert. Since his sense of levitation happened while walking with Petra, it may have involved fear of sex (passionately losing control) or desire to avoid the dilemma Petra represented.

He was amenable to the Oedipal diagnosis because he was especially sensitive to design, to shape, to pattern. On 16 July in his first letter written from Bowden House, he tells Grisewood that ‘*the theory of all this psychotherapy is of the greatest interest possible but of course takes time to assimilate & make bear fruit to oneself, as it were.*’ He thought ‘*the principles of the business ... highly illuminating,*’ and, after fifteen years of not knowing why he suffered, it was ‘*something to feel that.*’ He believed that ‘*Freud really had it right, this father-mother relationship.*’⁶⁸ In notes for Stevenson, he wrote,

I have learned to see that psycho-therapy is on grounds more valid & solid than I had perhaps supposed. That in some particulars in my own case the experience was indeed like pouring acid on an etching plate—there was the pattern quite clear. I see how intimately the physical states & feelings are linked with the hidden psychological states. I see that *everything* one does is conditioned by one’s psycho-pathology. I see that unless & until unconscious & subconscious are subjugated to or in-harmony with the conscious will a conflict & the symptoms of that conflict are bound to be present.

As Spengler provided a morphology of history, Freud provided a morphology of personal history.

The Freudian pattern had left traces in ancient and modern western culture: Menelaus, Helen, and Paris and Arthur, Guinevere, and Lancelot: both adulteries approximate the Oedipal triangle. And Malory's Lancelot, as alluded to in *In Parenthesis*, implicates Jones. Rejected by Petra, Jones suffered like Lancelot, having been rejected by Guinevere, running mad 'for the queen's unreason' (*IP* 66). And he had experienced suffered similarly over Prudence.

If, as seems likely, the 1914-18 War left Jones feeling survivor's guilt, that guilt was probably a magnification of guilt over the death of his brother. Sleeping in huts, tents, and dugouts with platoon-mates was analogous with sharing a room with Harold for eleven years. His death was cruelly multiplied in theirs. Sentries in *In Parenthesis* perform 'brother-keeping' (51, 69), a phrase evocative of Cain's question, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' In the motif of Cain and Abel, every dead infantryman is an Abel, innocent but implying a guilty surviving brother. *In Parenthesis* succeeds in conveying the innocence of soldiers but not in absolving its author. The poem also alludes to Malory's double fratricide of Balin and Balan (79), who unintentionally kill each other because armour obscures their identities. Though guiltless, each dies as though in expiation for killing the other. Unconsciously, Jones felt himself a Balin or Balan to his brother. The first syllable in 'Balin' and 'Balan' is that of John Ball's surname, and, in the poem, Ball physically represents Jones. He saw the world wars of this century as fratricidal and would write, 'O Balin O Balan / how blood you both / the *Brudersee*' (*A* 115).

The death of his brother and his guilt over it may lie behind his deep and enduring fascination with *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, in which the mariner's killing of the albatross is symbolically homicidal and occasions the deaths of his two hundred crew mates. The poem is an important sub-text for *In Parenthesis*, in which Ball's first shot at the enemy follows soon after an allusion to the setting in which the Mariner fires his crossbow at the albatross (54). Part of the deep meaning underlying *In Parenthesis* is the multiplied reenactment of, and attempt to recover from, his brother's death, which was, subconsciously for Jones, fratricide. (Does the poet recover in and through the poem? That is a question yet to be addressed.)

Physically wounded in the war and psychologically hurt, Jones resembled the Maimed King, a figure alluded to in *In Parenthesis* (84, 162) and whom he now understood in Freudian terms. This victim-figure is related to the wounded saviour-figure, whose archetype is the dying god to which Jesus conforms in *In Parenthesis*. A type of the saviour is the artist. For Jones, the paradigm of art is

the Eucharist, instituted by Jesus. Jones likened Arthur to Christ, ‘the Lord of Order carrying a redemptive raid into the place of Chaos’ (*IP* 201). Like the saviour, the artist engages chaos in order to redeem it. These figures—the dying god, the maimed king, the wounded saviour, the artist—comprise a constellation of archetypes and types with which David Jones had always identified. His neurosis did not render him anomalous in this respect. It placed him imaginatively at the centre of western culture. The ‘maimed king’ who ‘at any hour ... pays a call’ (*A* 179) to pray before the cross is, he would tell me and David Blamires, on separate occasions in 1972, Oedipus.⁶⁹

The Oedipal pattern would continue to influence his writing. In *The Anathemata* he writes of Jesus: ‘he that was her son / is now her lover,’ ‘he her groom that is his mother’ (224, 235). He discloses an Oedipal underpattern when, during an erotic encounter, a stonemason admires his lover’s breasts as ‘Hills o’ the Mother’ (132), and when a clerk from Oriel College, also during sexual encounters, confuses his lover with his mother ‘that nourished him bodily’ (144). To Hague in 1970 he wrote, ‘I suppose my stuff has on the whole been centred round the Queen of Heaven & a cult-hero—son & spouse.’⁷⁰

Yet his faith in Freud included a good deal of scepticism. When consenting to the Freudian line in notes to Stevenson (quoted above), he seems to write by rote, as if obediently repeating a lesson. In a tone more natural to him, he expresses aversion to Freud’s simple-minded, reductive, ‘part-for-the-whole’ tendency:

if at times I appear reluctant to express confidence even after the very great assistance which this treatment has clearly brought me it is only because ... occasionally I have felt that the urgent & imperative demand for an answer coupled perhaps with a slight suggestion that such & such *must* be so has caused me to admit something which was only a half truth—even under narcotic I felt this. Perhaps it is all part of this same weakness in me of wanting to agree with what a person suggests, appearing to do so & worrying about it afterwards.

In later years, he would say of his Oedipal diagnosis, ‘I just can’t really believe it ... I find it difficult to understand.’ While remaining grateful to Crichton-Miller and Stevenson, he would recall some of what they said as nonsense and warn Grisewood never to fall into the hands of psychiatrists.⁷¹ In fact, Freudian theory fails to do full justice to Jones—which amounts to saying that, as most practitioners now agree, psychological problems are ‘over determined’—each one has several causes.

Certainly he had an Oedipal attachment to his mother, who had aroused his affective nature, of which sexuality was an aspect. He thought her 'beautiful'. He admired and idealized her. But is it accurate in his case to see a threat of castration as coming primarily from the father? It was his mother who wielded the tickly-toe, which hung in the scullery within easy reach for punishment of minor infractions. It was she who sang of three blind mice fleeing the wife with the knife—a rhyme (and a nursery rhyme) that has long expressed suppressed (quite understandable) anger of mothers towards progeny. She once stopped him from stealing a half-penny belonging to his father by saying, 'That way lies the gallows.' She, who could withhold affection, and not her husband, seems to have been the feared agent of reprisal, she the primarily occasion of anxiety and repression in her son. Emotionally cool, she would be inhibited in expressing affection, even to her grandchildren. She berated her son in the trenches for his poor spelling. She had a monstrously exaggerated counterpart in his abusive female mathematics teacher, who paralyzed him with dread. While he loved and admired his mother, he may also have unconsciously feared her.

An Oedipal perspective on this is elicited by a dream he had had in 1934, shortly after his first breakdown. It had involved two lovely women, E.Q. Meyers and the even more beautiful and shapely sixteen-year old Daisy Hawkins, a quasi-servant in the Big House at Pigotts. She lived with her mother, Elizabeth Hawkins, a severe woman who was (to the Gill grandchildren) cross and terrifying. They called her 'the Hawk.'⁷² Jones wrote to Hague,

I dreamed about E.Q. last night—very good in a way & most extraordinary. She came into the scullery at Brockley in black velvet & spoke in her dear full voice, 'In another moment they found themselves in each others arms,' and oddly enough the *Hawk's daughter* was frying some meat on the gas stove & stood by with an air of disapproval & then came up and shook hands—all very odd.⁷³

In the dream, E.Q. speaks of a desirable embrace, though safely expressing it in third-person narrative. Daisy was much younger than E.Q. but in the dream is motherly and possessed of the severity of her own mother, possibly to the (very great) degree that she was, in life, sexually appealing. The dominant displaced presence in the dream is, of course, Jones's mother. Like her, Daisy occupies the scullery at Brockley and is severely forbidding. He receives not an embrace from E.Q. with the 'dear full voice' but disapproval and a sexless handshake from the even more attractive young mother figure. The figure of Daisy Hawkins symbolizes a cancellation of nubile sexuality by maternal authority. What young David had feared was not castration by his father

but the disapproval of his cool, abrupt, caustic, intelligent mother. That would be withdrawal of love in all its vaguely catastrophic, indefinable awfulness, which, to a child so strongly attached to her, would be tantamount to annihilation.

Beneath Jones's inclination to idealize women lurk negative feelings traceable to ambiguity about the mother, feelings denied out of fear. Although the least misogynist of males, he commiserated in 1967 about a female proof-reader who insisted on changes in style, a practice he calls, 'insufferable—it's frequently under what that confounded Scots' Reformer called 'the monstrous regiment of woman' curiously enough—about the only sensible thing he ever said!' He may have associated John Knox's phrase with the regimen of Helen Sutherland and possibly that of his mother—though, in fairness, he went on angrily to recall the silent 'correcting' of his own syntax by 'some young man'.⁷⁴ The females in his poetry—the Queen of the Wood, and later the Lady of the Pool, and the Tutelar of place, plus the Virgin Mary and numerous goddesses who receive honourable mention—are overwhelmingly positive figures, but he could imagine their antithesis. In his war epic, when soldiers in battle meet 'Sweet Sister Death,' she is 'debauched' and makes them 'howl for their virginity' (163), and the Lady of the Pool briefly, and to make a point, imitates a seductive siren seeking the destruction of men and culture (*A* 15-6). In Frazer's *Golden Bough*, Jones had read about their prototype, the castrating goddess Cybele. In 1930 in his copy of Dawson's *Christianity and Sex*, he marked with approval ('Three cheers for the Tiger') the following passage:

No doubt the deification of womanhood through the worship of the Mother Goddess had its origin in the ancient matrilinear societies. But the primitive Mother Goddess is a barbaric and formidable deity who embodies the ruthless fecundity of nature, and her rites are usually marked by licentiousness and cruelty. It was the patriarchal culture which transformed this sinister goddess into the gracious figures of Demeter and Persephone and Aphrodite, and which created those higher types of divine virginity which we see in Athene, the giver of good counsel, and Artemis, the guardian of youth. (21)

As far as goddesses are concerned, there is considerable Jungian shadow beneath the Freudian 'ego-ideal'. When relating one of his nightmares of circumcision to Prudence, he illustrated the dream by drawing a nurse, a figure suggesting how associated with and approved by femininity the operation had been. Because his father worked, his mother took him to the surgery, where the nurse attended him. (He was unconscious when the male doctor did the cutting.) In the embarrassing presence of women, the operation may well have felt like an act of brutality perpetrated on their behalf.

Rather than diagnosing an Oedipal complex, even a version in which the mother looms much larger and more ambiguously than Freud allows, many psychologists today would ascribe Jones's neurosis simply to conditioning. The worsening of his symptoms when he went home to Brockley throughout the 1930s indicates that he had been unhappy in childhood. His brother and sister had played a part in this, but so had his mother, the dominant figure in the family and not a happy one. For her, David initially became an artist and adopted high church spirituality. But he could not make her happy, and that can only have made him feel inadequate.

Emotionally undemonstrative yet demanding or 'pushy,' as one grandchild remembered her,⁷⁵ Jones's mother left him no choice but to become a well-behaved, dutiful child. Through sarcasm, ridicule, and a disapproving tone or facial expression, she disallowed childish expressions of anger. And he spent his life guarding against the danger he associated with anger. By itself such repression is enough to explain a degree of neurosis. He had been a poor pupil in school, which is one way a gifted child retaliates against parents, especially if one had been a teacher. Any child required to be virtuous too early and forced to repress anger and resentment will later find some permissible alternative target for rage, as perhaps Jones did in his disdain for art dealers and businessmen.

The expectations and attitudes of his mother underlay his psychological guilt, of which a sure sign is neurotic fear. Sara Balme, a close friend later in his life, said, 'I think he was always worried about his worthiness, not as a writer or artist—he had no doubt about that—but as a person.' In the late 1920s a remark such as 'Heavens! have you not read *Arabia Deserta?*' made him 'feel almost a criminal.' As his parents aged, he felt guilty about being no help to them. One reason Christmas 'always' depressed him 'terribly' was because he felt guilty about not writing to people and not sending gifts. 'I'm *always* in the throws of the great Undone,' and 'at Xmas time it's awful.' When Helen Sutherland asked him to describe how the rosary is prayed and he could not recite all of the fifteen mysteries or order in correct sequence those he could remember, he commented, 'it shows how disgracefully little I use the rosary.' Dorothea Travis's involvement in charitable works made him 'feel very guilty and self-centred.' He felt 'guilty' when Cleverdon became ill during a rehearsal for a production of *In Parenthesis* in 1955. He refused to sell the manuscripts of *In Parenthesis* because embarrassed about spelling errors in them. Unanswered letters weighed on his conscience. He felt 'an awful pig' for not writing to Ede and for failing to thank Ede's daughters for letters and Christmas

cards: ‘How *bad* I am,’ ‘like a hog ... I am sorry.’ He began a letter to a Canadian professor, ‘forgive my appalling negligence in writing’ and thanked him for good wishes, ‘which I don’t deserve.’ When the aged Herbert Read fell ill, Jones felt ‘extremely guilty’ for not writing. He apologized to friends for not proof-reading letters. He redrafted letters not to friends, in one instance fourteen times. Once a confessor told him to hurry up and not be so painstaking in enumerating his faults—an admonishment that made him silently furious. Behind all his self-accusation we hear the ghost of his mother, who sharply disapproved of any lapse in manners or propriety. She may have conditioned his sensitivity to the human voice, which is what most struck him about people, so that it was their voices that, he said, ‘I *feel* & remember most.’ He said about the ‘healing’ voice of the nurse he heard when wounded that ‘it could, of course, be truly awful if turned on one in anger.’ When in the early 1960s, a visiting couple’s four-year-old misbehaved by repeatedly banging his feet about, Jones became anxious, apparently worried about the reaction of the parents.⁷⁶ His mother’s scrutinizing judgement may have influenced his own groping hesitancy of speech.

Whether he connected it to his mother or not, he discussed with Stevenson his ‘going blank when asked a direct question’ even when he had ‘detailed knowledge & a sure conviction with regard to a subject’ and his being ‘unable to counter the most erroneous statements by some one else.’ He was willing to admit that his reticence ‘is partly a result of timidity & dislike of disagreement & “lack of aggression”’, but he also thought it had to do with ‘the exact truth about *anything* & *everything*’ being ‘almost always of the greatest complexity & thence much more difficult to state than half truths.’ He realized that his mind was not capable of quickly making sharp distinctions, so he would ‘see the tangle ahead’ and wanted not to be ‘the uncomfortable witness of something less than the truth emerging in an argument.’⁷⁷

Did Catholicism make him feel guilty, especially about sex? Stevenson explored this question, putting to him Luther’s notion that Jesus had sexual relationships with women. Jones thought this ‘not possible for theological reasons’ but said the idea did not offend him, though it ‘might ... some Catholics.’ With Stevenson and Crichton-Miller he discussed masturbation. They suggested that the act was natural and acceptable. He defended Catholic prohibition:

whereas it is dealt with leniently in the confessional, as a constantly recurring & persistent weakness & frailty it is *never* regarded as anything other than, to use theological language, ‘a sin’—an offence against human dignity because it is regarded as an irrational act.... As a matter of experience it seems only to bring increase of desire, there being no end to concupiscence. ... My impression is that perhaps psychology, as such, is less concerned

than are religion & metaphysics with the *hierarchies* of perfection. What may be an allowable & salutary thing at one level may be unsatisfactory at another level. Whatever our psychic make-up we all desire perfection.

Even at the expense of great misery—this gets one into difficulties.⁷⁸

Masturbation had made him feel guilty as a child. This may owe something to his parents being Victorians and devoutly C of E, but, according to Glyn Davies, in all cultures all children who masturbate feel guilty, regardless of the expressed or implied opinions of parents or guardians.⁷⁹

Psychological and moral guilt are emotionally indistinguishable and were undoubtedly conflated by the evangelical Anglicanism of his childhood as now by his Catholicism. The *Dies Irae* was one of his two favourite hymns (the other being the *Vexilla Regis*). Sung in Latin, it is a powerful work of art, but extremely neurotic in emphasis on divine vengeance, which may be why the Church later dropped it from the liturgy. Jones's favourite stanza translates, 'When the Judge takes his seat, each hidden thing is revealed, and nothing shall remain unpunished.'^{* 80} In his letter to the *Catholic Herald* of 15 August 1941 protesting the stained glass depiction of Hitler nailing Jesus to the cross, he expresses a belief in 'the general guilt of all ... mankind' whereby it was he also (and you and I) 'who drove in the nails & who spat upon the Victim'—a pietistic view of the crucifixion which is extremely neurotic. Jones suffered little from Catholicism in that he seems untouched by puritanical Jansenism, which pervaded the Irish Catholic clergy and which O'Connor and Gill (so positive toward sexuality) had not exposed him to. Along with the rest of the Chelsea group, furthermore, he believed that Catholicism committed him to belief in the goodness of the body and sexuality.[†]

The relation of religion to psychopathology is complex. As perhaps the most fully developed form of Christianity, Catholicism involves religious levels corresponding to the mythic, intellectual, and spiritual levels of psycho-spiritual development. On the mythic level

*Jones recited this verse in Latin in 1972. To be fair, it must also be stated that his affection for this sequence was aesthetic: 'great ... in terms of real poetry' which 'expresses the precipice-like edge, the proximity of splendor & futility of being & not-being that is intricate in all we are, do, or make.' It is 'superb ... with its intermeddled majesty, pity, dread, the tender and the numinous counter-charged almost from line to line.'

† For this reason and because he had become a Catholic at twenty-six, when he was psychologically fully formed, Miles and Shiel are mistaken in repeatedly attributing his sexual reticence to Catholic prohibitions against extra-marital sex and what they call 'the forbidding nature of his adopted religion' (p. 243).

(originating in the gospel narratives) God is Father, Mary is mother, and Jesus is obedient child, each an idealization of the corresponding figure in any family. Jones's faith operated at this level, on which male devotion to the Virgin Mary is an expression of widespread Oedipal fixation. But for him, Catholicism was also the faith of Augustine (whom he disliked), Aquinas, Newman, von Hügel, Maritain, and Dawson. The intellectual level often counteracts the mythic level—as, in fiction, realism may contradict underlying myth. Jones was an intellectual Christian, believing, for example in Original Sin but not literally in the Genesis narrative or theological exposition of it. He was critical of the medieval cult of the Virgin. He disbelieved in hell fire. He did not credit the Church with the moral authority by which it appropriates near-mythic stature to itself. He disagreed with the absurd Church teachings that you can go to hell for missing Mass on Sunday or eating meat on Friday or even for fornicating. He did not believe that the Roman Catholic Church was the one true Church, outside of which is no salvation. He regarded the Eastern Orthodox Churches as equally 'true' historically and thought the souls of his Anglican parents and relatives and his non-Catholic friends in no particular jeopardy. (The only theological problem that psychoanalysis posed for him, and he expressed it to Stevenson, was why God should have left people without a means of scientifically understanding the subconscious mind until recently.) Most important to him was the spiritual level of religion, which he chiefly found in the Catholic liturgy, particularly the Eucharist, in which he intuited the presence of God. He certainly did not himself to the psychologically immature mythic level, to which Freud and his followers attempt to reduce all religion. He was intellectually free of the repressive morality that characterized a good deal of Catholicism. He argued with Stevenson that while faith and neurosis fluctuate, the charts of those fluctuations would differ from one another. Not that Stevenson attacked Christianity. For him, for Crichton-Miller too, religion was psychologically toxic only when narrowly sectarian, ideologically or ritually obsessive, crudely fundamentalist, or prudishly repressive.⁸¹ Jones's Catholicism was none of these.

Even if religion had little directly to do with the causes of repression, however, mythic Christianity lent shape and force to his neurosis. Since his childhood carrying of a cross in his father's garden, he had a devotion to the cross. He was troubled by the catechism affording crucifixes only the honour (*dulia*) due to holy pictures instead of the worship (*latria*) 'due the thing signified'. The crucifixion is an important presence in his poetry. On rare occasions, when he talked

about the crucifixion to Grisewood, he became extremely solemn. Once after lunch at the Garrick Club, he was so moved that he could barely speak. He said, 'You do understand this don't you' and slowly drew a cross as it actually looked in Roman times. He indicated how the body hung in torment and murmured, 'That's what it was like'—the suffering being, to him, literally unspeakable. In the 1960s he awoke from a dream to find that he had scratched a cross on his chest.⁸² For him, the crucifixion cannot have been psychologically liberating since mythically it enacts the quasi-Oedipal suicidal obedience of the Son to the Father. Moreover, the sacrifice of Jesus is likely to increase guilt feelings in anyone who believes it was undertaken for him or her.

If Jones were undergoing treatment today, the 1914-18 war would receive primary emphasis. He would be diagnosed as suffering from chronic Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Family history would be considered as merely a contributing factor—although those with PTSD do typically endure childhood difficulties with parents or siblings (but, then, who doesn't?). The symptoms include dissociation syndromes, and avoidance-withdrawal syndromes—so that, for him, marital commitment to Petra or anyone else might have been difficult if not impossible. More than other people, chronic sufferers of P.T.S.D endure physical illnesses. Chances of recovery from the disorder are nil.⁸³

In Jones's case, it is easy to revise the Oedipal diagnosis and possibly even to discard it, but Freud does seem to be correct about sexual repression and its consequences. In *Totem and Taboo*, Jones read that such repression takes on a life of its own so that, allowed to gain strength in one area it tends to shift into another, and any advance made by the repressed libido is answered by a fresh sharpening of prohibition. As outlets for expression of energy, painting and writing sublimate sexuality. He now understood that in the summer of 1932 a continuous explosion of artistic spontaneity, which resulted in scores of wonderful paintings and the new, open form of Part VII of *In Parenthesis*, had awakened the repression-reflex in this creative area of activity. Having grown strong repressing sexual impulses, this reflex moved next door to the analogous area of spontaneous artistic expression. Stevenson now told him that, to combat such inhibition, he had to paint and write. Jones would later say to Stevenson, 'I now see that like the imposers of the danegeld—the unconscious demands a higher & higher blackmail—less & less activity as a price so that the *only* way is to beat the unconscious in open war.' And he could understand 'that painting can even become, from being the chief occasion of fear, the chief release from tension.' So the advice of Dr Woods to stop doing what

bothered him had delayed recovery for fifteen years and was to be discarded. Since his ‘*major conflict displays itself in relation to painting ... it must be fought out in that terrain.*’⁸⁴

Armed with this Freudian insight and with the guidance of Stevenson, he began to take back his creative life. For this reason above all, he would always respect Freud, while remaining leery of much of his theory. Earlier, while discussing the differences between Freud and Jung with Charles Burns, he had said that he considered Freud ‘something of an Aristotle ... to Jung’s Plato’ and believed that ‘Siggy Freud was more “Catholic” than friend Jung, in some ways.’ He subsequently told Charles Burns that he found Jung

much more up my street, in a sense, but there seems to me to be a solidity in Freud, within his limits, that can’t be got round. A correspondence with realities at a certain level. I have the feeling that he is on surer ground & that in the end this is more ‘patient of baptism’ than the far more comprehensive sweep and more apparent ‘religiousness’ of Jung. I am reminded of something that Melanchthon wrote to Cranmer: ‘In the Church it is more proper to call a spade a spade than to throw ambiguous expressions before posterity.’

While continuing to regard Jung as more intelligent and more ‘interesting,’ Jones thought that Jung got carried away by his esoteric interests and preferred Freud as basic and better. Within two years, the writings of the psychoanalyst-anthropologist Geza Roheim would confirm for him ‘some aspects of this matter.’⁸⁵

After a month in Bowden House, he felt, as he put it ‘better in myself’ and was ‘better able to read a bit.’ He gave up seriously reading the newspaper and was reading, instead, *Pickwick Papers* and the second part of Kipling’s *Jungle Book*, *The Travels of Mungo Park*, ‘an excellent book.’ By early August he was attending Mass on Sundays, walking ‘rather a nice walk’ along the ridge of the hill through Harrow, village and school, through the yard of the old parish church, ‘the highest point in Middlesex,’ and then down across a park and through a narrow lane between back gardens to the sham gothic Catholic Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas of Canterbury. He liked its long low white-washed nave. Harrow village was, he thought, almost unspoiled, though he disliked ‘the red rash of suburbia’ beyond and below.⁸⁶

In mid-August, Bowden House was full to capacity, with patients he considered ‘all very nice.’ He especially liked a music master at Fettes School, Edinburgh, ‘a really intelligent chap’ who played Bach on the piano (‘a joy to hear’) and, having been at Magdalen College, Cambridge, knew well the

‘amazing Welsh don’, Vernon Jones, whom Jones had met in Hartland. Another patient, named Kernsey, gave him a copy of Reinhold Niebhuur’s *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, which he read. There was in the clinic something of the atmosphere of a boarding school, and he found himself becoming ‘a kind of “senior boy”,’ an improved patient who was expected to be of some assistance to new arrivals.⁸⁷



7. David Jones, Tree at Bowden House, 1947



8. David Jones, Bowden House Trees, 1947

In August, Stevenson and Crichton-Miller started him painting. He was to paint whether he felt like it or not and regardless of fears about results. Painting was facilitated by new eyeglass prescriptions for bifocals. One of his first new pictures was of a cat sitting on a rug by a chair and table. Mostly he painted trees, often from the window of his room. Because it faced south, the room was like an oven during the day, even with the window open, so he sometimes also painted out of doors, where his fellow patients watched him sketching the trunks of beech trees. Supervising the picture-making, Stevenson did not allow him to stop or tear up. As a result,

Jones managed to finish a series of watercolours of trees done in a style that is, as the trees were, wild and free. The wavery pencil lines in these pictures (basically drawings) communicates life in lines like nerve fibers, tending to separate from delineation of solid form to indulge in a quasi-accidental life of their own (figs. 7, 8). This seems especially so in the less finished tree pictures, in which drawing courageously risks incoherence. He writes to Helen Sutherland about his new style, there is ‘a new thing in it—whether good or less good or better I don’t know but a somewhat different bent.’⁸⁸ Like *Four Queens*, these pictures are not as colourful as those done before his first breakdown, in 1932. His preference for drawn form over colour might be read as symptomatic of repression (line) rather than free emotion (colour), except that line, for him, was now less containing, more wild and wandering. And, as he told Kenneth Clark, he ‘thought of “colour” & “form” as, in practice, interchangeable’ like the ‘goodness’ and ‘being’ of the Scholastic theologians (*bonum et ens convertuntur*). For him prime examples of this interchangeability were Henry Moore’s ‘war-shelter book drawings & those things of women in rocking chairs winding skeins of wool’—although Moore’s genius was sculpted form, he knew ‘exactly how to use colour.’⁸⁹

He discussed with Stevenson the judicious liberty needed to paint. Usually, as he had told Arthur Wheen, when in front of a blank sheet of paper he did not know what he was going to do, had no sense whatever of what he wanted to achieve or how to begin. Once he had an idea, however, purpose became subordinate to form. With any complicated picture, he said, ‘one tends to grab at any relatively satisfactory bit (where the forms & their juxtaposition are suggestive in some way) & exploit that direction in the hope that perhaps even if the critical conception is thereby weakened or changed, nevertheless the picture will be of some formal significance. This applies to a large extent even when one is not in difficulties—one thing suggests another as the picture proceeds & one takes advantage of happy “accident”. This is constantly occurring when one paints any scene or object.’ He had long loved the statement of the Athenian poet Agathon, quoted by Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics*: ‘Chance loves art and art loves chance.’ It was, for him, a ‘fundamental’ dictum. Another favourite was Picasso’s ‘He does not seek, he finds.’ The artist, Jones writes, ‘must constantly keep a weather-eye for whatever may loom on his horizon’ and ‘take the current as it serves.’ The nautical imagery here may suggest a Coleridgean link-up with Livingstone Lowes, who advocates unconscious free association as basic to authentic

creativity. Many chance occurrences originate, Jones wrote in 1955, in ‘the “sub-conscious” & the “unconscious” of the psychologists’ which ‘may well be comparable in bulk’—and here he surely thinks of Coleridge and Lowes—‘to the fathoms under bulk of ice in contrast to the jagged crennels of the drifting berg sighted by the look-out above the sea-fret at dawn.’ But chance and finding are not everything, since ‘the crucial *conscious* concern of the man making a work’ must always be ‘the deliberate juxtaposing of forms.’⁹⁰

Stevenson urged him to draw the women he observed at Mass and on his way to and from Mass, so he did. Stevenson also insisted that he resume writing, so he telephoned Nicolette Gray—she had already visited him here twice—asking her to bring up the manuscript on which he had been working. At Stevenson’s insistence, he introduced women into his text—before his breakdown there are none in the manuscript, apart from incidental references to the Virgin Mary. Stevenson was, therefore, initially responsible for the monologue of the Lady of the Pool, the numinous description of Gwenhwyfar, and other references to, and words spoken by, women in *The Anthemata*. So began the second spring of Jones’s creative life. A few years later he would tell a young friend that a thing is true only if broken and remade—an axiom of art derived from experience in life.⁹¹ It is certainly true of his career as an artist. But also of his career as a poet. Recovering from his second breaking, he would go on to produce half his life’s work—perhaps the most remarkable creative and psychological accomplishment in the history of Modernism.

Continuing in therapy at Bowden House, he made steady progress and, by the end of his stay, felt much better. Helen Sutherland visited and felt ‘that *something* really’ had been done for him. Nicolette thought Stevenson ‘very much the right man at last.’ Crichton-Miller told Jones, ‘It is not just the theory of psychoanalysis that cures or alleviates an illness but the art of healing. There is no universal therapy, and Stevenson was not always successful with his patients, but he was just right for you.’⁹²

Jones did not believe in National Health Service, begun in 1946, and always paid his doctor bills himself, or neglected to pay them. He stayed at Bowden House five months and one week at a cost of £380 plus approximately £60 for personal expenses. His life savings of £103.2.6 were gone. Burns had appealed to the Artist’s Benevolent Association, to which Jones had contributed since 1931. It responded with weekly instalments totalling £130. That money plus donations from friends paid nearly half his bills at the clinic. It would take him a year to

finish paying them—and then only with prodding from of Crichton-Miller, who added that he hoped the request would not disturb ‘that somewhat precarious serenity which we associate with you.’⁹³



9. View from DJ’s Bowden House window, 1990

Jones’s treatment, which continued with visits to Stephenson, would enable him to fight depression and deep melancholy with considerable success, but he would never return to the normal lightness, happiness, and vigour of his personality before his 1932 breakdown. Grisewood said, ‘he *never* returned to the David I first knew.’⁹⁴ Instead, he would endure varying degrees of inertia which became, gradually, in his last years a steady decline. In 1969 he would say that ‘one is never cured unless treated when young, but one is enabled to work.’⁹⁵ In 1962, he told Richard Wald of the *Herald Tribune* that his nervous breakdowns over the years ‘have cut my production in half.’



10. Top of cedar of Lebanon from roof of Bowden House, 1990

Near the end of his stay, after finishing eight pictures, he began drawing three adjacent trees just outside his bedroom window (fig. 9) at the front of the house: a huge cedar of Lebanon flanked by a chestnut and a tall, bedraggled pine with many of its branches gone. The central tree had an unusual configuration in its topmost branches (fig. 10). He made a number of drawings. The last of these became the finished, complicated, highly symbolic painting *Vexilla Regis* (fig. 11), which reflects the unusual configuration of its highest branches. The title is from the Good Friday hymn beginning, ‘the standards (*vexilla*) of the King (*regis*) come forth,’ in which the cross is referred to as a tree. The painting went through several moments of crisis, during which he nearly tore it up, but Stevenson had made him promise to destroy nothing without first getting his permission, which he repeatedly refused. ‘In a sense,’ Jones wrote, Stevenson was the work’s ‘co-producer’.

This is how he ‘read’ the painting to Stevenson: the trees grow in the “‘world forest” whether of nature or of cultures’, which renews itself. The foremost three trees evoke the crucifixion. The

central tree is the ‘one tree for us’ in the *Crux fidelis*. It is also symbolically multiple: the Tree of Life with a river flowing from its base and leaves ‘for the healing of the nations’ (Revelation 22); the paschal candle lit on Easter and throughout the Easter season, on which are five grains of incense in diamond formation (on the tree they are great spikes); and ‘the Yggdrasil of Northern Mythology, the great tree with its roots far in the earth and its flowering in heaven ...—for all these things are one thing in some sense.’ The leopard’s pelt and the trumpet in the left-hand bottom corner ‘are supposed to’ belong to a Roman trumpeter, part of the guard on Calvary. The historical setting is ‘the collapse of the Roman world.’ In the upper right is Stonehenge, as he had seen it from an army tent in 1915. To the right of that are ‘the Welsh hills.’ At various places are ‘remains of classical buildings’. One on a hill to the left beyond the wood is a ‘shrine of the Deae Matres (very much worshiped in Britain).’ In the wood to the left is a tiny winged Nike (goddess of victory) and



11. David Jones, *Vexilla Regis*, 1947

guardian deities of fountains and wells. One of the six flying birds is the robin whose breast was reddened in folklore by drops of Jesus's blood. The tree on the left of the central tree is 'as it were, the tree of the 'good thief.' Rooted in earth, it supports the nest of the eucharistic pelican.

The tree on the right is that of 'the other thief'. Stevenson raised psychological questions about this tree and guilt. Jones replied that 'far more pronounced in my conscious mind than 'bad thief' was 1) the imperial signum, 2) the lost standards of Varus in the Teutoburg Forest, the aquila, any pylon set up with palms etc.' It is also a branch-shorn 'conifer—bedraggled—phallus yes of course. (*Priapus-gardens. Garden of Gethsemane, roses, Romans brought roses to Britain).' It is also a 'may-pole,' cross-wrapped with ribbons like those he had seen as a child at Brockley Road School. As imperial standard and 'triumphal column', it is, he wrote, 'a power-symbol, ... not rooted in the ground but is part supported by wedges. S. Augustine's remark that "empire is great robbery" influenced me here. It is *not* meant to be *bad* in itself but in some senses proud and self sufficient. Nevertheless it is shadowed by the spreading central Tree and the dove, in fact, hovers over this tree of the truculent robber for somehow or other he is "redeemed" too!'

He introduced horses 'mainly ... to break the rigidity & immobility of the design & get a lateral flowing movement across & also to indicate a series of distances back, to give recession, which the picture sadly lacked. They also allude 'to horsemen, to cohorts—strayed & riderless horses—horses in the wild after the 'departure of the Romans' in Britain—Welsh ponies—an outpost landscape.' These are horses freed, as at the end of *Morte Darthur* where 'the riders have now finished with tournaments, display, etc and gone off to be hermits and the like.'

It is the most 'textual' of his pictures, in important respects a 'study' for the final section of *The Anathemata*, 'Sherthursdaye and Venus Day.' He regarded the picture as 'a *bit* "literary".' In its early stages he had tried to paint with no symbols and only 'a slight adjustment' of the actual view.

the roses & thorns were there in the flower bed & only had to be 'moved into position' so to say. but gradually the picture assumed a 'view of trees at sunset' feeling—*exactly* what I did *not* want—a 'realism' of a somewhat academic sort & dreaminess of technique became more & more offensive—each attempt to suggest the conceptual nature of the picture only resulted in further falsity & betrayed the inherent dilemma. The dilemma can be stated thus: Is the picture a 'view' from a fixed point, a visually observed tract of country—or is it a number of conceptions so juxtaposed as to form what is called 'a design' ...—as 'realistic' & 'visual' even as 'photographic' as you like, but always seen *sub specie aeternitatis*—that's my idea of a picture.

The finished work exemplifies this dilemma, between the purely visual and the symbolic, ‘in a rather acute manner.’ He wrote in his notes for Stevenson, ‘I get into a muddle because I am really after the felicity of forms but I tend to get bogged down with a most complex “literary” and “literal” symbolism at times.’ He wanted ‘complications and allusions but executed with the freedom and directness’ of his early paintings. ‘That’s what I want to do before I die,’ he told Stevenson. He did not achieve that in this picture. Instead, it is hieroglyphic, written in symbols, even though, he said, ‘none of this symbolism is meant to be at all rigid, but very fluid.’ He agreed with Tennyson who, when asked whether certain figures symbolized Faith, Hope, and Charity, replied, ‘they do and they don’t, and I don’t like being tied down.’ Yet much of the symbolism in this picture does seem ‘tied down.’ Jones thought that this was ‘special’ among his pictures, though not necessarily better than others or even as ‘good.’⁹⁶

This is the first of his late pictures painted as though the medium were oils. He was attempting to overcome the limitations of watercolour painting—he spoke in these terms to Grisewood—by making a thick impasto of Chinese white in order to get the density that oil allowed. He squeezed a tube onto the hot-pressed paper. ‘I can’t start, really,’ he said, ‘until I’ve got this thick white stuff all over the paper.’ He would add a detail, paint it over with Chinese White or chip it off with a knife in order to paint over. This procedure gave an impasto, an interesting texture that he liked. Earlier he had painted in oils as though with watercolours; now he was painting in watercolour as though in oils. ‘He was always impatient of the medium that he was working in,’ remembered Grisewood. ‘It was as though he wanted to transcend it, do something else. ... As a writer, too, he was always irritated by limitations of one sort or another.’⁹⁷

He was well enough to leave the clinic in the third week in November and extremely grateful for the treatment he had received. ‘It is wonderful,’ he wrote to Ede, ‘that the doctors have been able to do what good they have.’ He felt ‘fortunate’ to have been in therapy with Stevenson, ‘an awfully understanding & good man.’⁹⁸ Stevenson and Creighton-Miller had told him that returning to Sheffield Terrace would be a mistake so he went to stay for a few days with Tom Burns, who thought him ‘not really quite through & on top of the situation.’ He then stayed at Pigotts and considered going to live with Peter Kelly, but he wanted to be near Bowden House, where he would be seeing Stevenson once a week as an outpatient. So, in December, he took a

room in a boarding house fifteen-minutes walk north of the clinic along High Street at the top of Peterborough Hill Road as it begins to fall down the northeast slope of Harrow Hill. He meant to stay ‘for a month or two’. He remained for sixteen years.⁹⁹

It was, as one visitor called it, ‘a grotty old grey brick Victorian house where junior masters had squalid digs.’¹⁰⁰ Entering, Jones passed the white pillared porch (‘Northwick’ painted in black on one pillar, ‘Lodge’ on the other), through a double front door, over dark green linoleum in the hallway. He went up a wide creaking staircase that smelled of damp plaster and cooked cabbage, turned at the half landing, ascended to the first floor to his room at the back of the house. The house was built into the eastern slope of the hill so that, at the back, the basement was the ground floor and his first-floor room was actually three stories above ground-level.* A large double window (eight feet wide and six feet high, not sashed but opening out, with catches) filled his room with light. The bed was along the wall close to the window, his working table close under the window. Just outside, about twenty-five feet away, was a tall acacia, ‘the tree of heaven’. Beyond that, the view fell away dramatically, over a rambling garden through the tops of elm trees, past the Harrow playing fields, towards northern and central London, which was visible from Battersea Power Station to St Paul’s. On a very clear day he could see beyond to the Surrey Hills. At night, the nearer darkness allowed him to see the stars above with London shining below, its bright lights like a fallen constellation. It was an extraordinary view, especially good now with bare treetops.¹⁰¹ He would especially like it in the spring, when the trees were ‘green with that special fresh green that lasts only a few days.’¹⁰² After Sheffield Terrace, he found Northwick ‘awfully nice’ but, at £6 per week, ‘expensive’. Instead of cashing Helen Sutherland’s cheques, he signed them over for payment of rent.

Like Brockley in his youth and like Sidmouth, Harrow was quasi-pastoral, an island of green covered mostly with elms. Between Bowden House and Northwick Lodge, the village preserved its historic character. On the east side of the High Street was the school, centuries-old although all but one of its buildings are Victorian. To the west, the old town tumbled over the slope in labyrinthine intricacy. Through his window he liked watching workers mowing the playing fields below, the boys in coloured shirts playing rugby ‘spotting the green of the field with red & white far away.’ He

*North American readers may need to be told that in the UK floors are designated as: ground floor (North American first floor), first floor (North American second floor), etc.

resolved to paint a Rugby match, as he had once painted the cricket match at Sidmouth and made a drawing that he liked enough to initial and entitle 'Line out, Harrow,' but he was now past painting that sort of picture. Adjacent to the playing fields was the school farm, with grazing cows. In one of the fields, ponies sometimes grazed—they belonged to a riding school for children—reminding him of Welsh ponies. He loved the rural feeling of the place, and preferred the daytime view in a light mist that allowed him to see the fields but not the miles of suburban red brick beyond.¹⁰³

He walked down a lane behind the house to these fields and beyond, across the Watford Road, to a derelict golf-course. Its bunkers reminded him 'of Passcendaele & burial mounds of chieftains.' (Years later he regretted when 'they tidied it all up and called it a park.') He walked down the path across the fields, sometimes recalling the long country walks of his youth.¹⁰⁴ He looked for the flowers he liked best, wild roses (and of those, primroses), violets, wild daffodils, aconite, forget-me-nots and daisies.¹⁰⁵ There were three 'heavenly bushes' of wild roses just below the house along a path leading to Northwick Park tube station. In June he would go to look at them, but seldom tried to paint them because they die as soon as they were plucked.¹⁰⁶ To the northeast of Northwick Lodge was a ploughed field. He enjoyed its waves of golden wheat and, looking at it, sang 'John Barley Corn' to himself. Peterborough Hill Road resembled a country road lined with bushes and trees. It fell to the new, lower town, a district of commerce and heavy traffic—'the ghastly desert of red brick & 'Odeons' & seething multitudes of people & all the rest of it immediately overwhelm one.' If he could, he avoided it. What survived of old Harrow was really, he realized, only 'an illusion of real country' but he enjoyed the illusion.¹⁰⁷

Northwick Lodge belonged to the school and was run by Christopher Carlile, a retired Harrow mathematics master and former bursar with a white moustache and a semicircle of white fringe round his bald head. A socialist son of the founder of the Church Army and former classmate of G.K.Chesterton at St Paul's School, Carlile was extremely intelligent, courteous, and aristocratic in manner. He helped to give the place an atmosphere of shabby gentility. Jones thought him 'remarkable,' 'a heavenly old man,' and, though agnostic, a 'saint'. Others considered him eccentric. He would bicycle on errands wearing a morning coat (but after having just returned from a wedding). He liked to drink, and his room smelled of stale sherry. He liked Jones, appreciated him as a figure in the arts, and soon considered him his star lodger and more than that. On Hague's first visit, Carlile led him to Jones's room saying, 'A great man we think him, a very great man.'¹⁰⁸

Cooking and keeping house for the tenants were a couple named Carol, who lived in the basement. Mr Carol cleaned. He was kind, simple, prone to depression. Jones felt affection for him.¹⁰⁹ Mrs Carol cooked. She was blowsy, lethargic, argumentative, bossy, an irritant to Jones, who disliked her as did most of the other tenants. The food was greasy, though one cheerful young resident, Colin Wilcockson, thought it 'exceptionally good'.¹¹⁰ Jones was uncomplaining, ate what was acceptable, then went back to his room and drink some china tea and eat a grapefruit and boiled eggs.¹¹¹ On a small table in his room he kept a gas ring, a large jar of Nescafe, Lapsang Olang tea, Bath Olivers, Gentlemen's Relish, Oxo, and a loaf of bread.¹¹²

Because Harrow was high, it was cold, and Northwick Lodge was, Jones writes, 'the coldest house in it! Odd that I should have happened to come & live here.' Without central heating, the house was so chilly in winter that you could see your breath, and it was draughty. He heated his room with a coal fire and a gas ring, but the ceiling was high, and even on clear days, the room flooding with sunshine, it was only, to him, 'just bearable'. Mostly the large window was a curse. One Christmas the cold east wind drove 'straight through the windows as though there were no glass in them.' He kept the gas ring going with pennies, of which he kept a supply in a drawer. When one did not fit the meter, he would exclaim 'Oh bugger' and throw it across the room into a corner. In winter he wore his greatcoat in his room and during meals in the dining room, while going to the shared bathroom, and while talking on the telephone on his unheated landing. Cut off by distance from friends, he spent hours in the evening on the phone with one or two of them, although the landing was very cold. After becoming Carlile's favourite, he was allowed to use the telephone in Carlile's heated room. These long phone calls put a strain on his friends, who listened till the faint voice stopped and said, 'Well, David, jolly kind of you to ring, goodbye for now,' and he would interrupt, 'Wait, wait a minute, uhm, a, I might have something else to say.'¹¹³

The tenants changed through the years, but there were initially seven, including two or three junior masters—one a teacher of physics, the other of art. Other boarders included a little old woman, Miss Knott, upper-class and fallen on hard times, and an automobile salesman named Feakins, who tried to sell motor cars to the other lodgers, including Jones. The rest of the borders were men in their twenties finishing professional studies. He found them 'all pleasant' and joined them for meals and tea. After Sheffield Terrace, Northwick Lodge seemed lavish.

Carlile would come up to his room to ask ‘Will you have fish or some hare?’ and Jones enjoyed the luxury of choosing, ‘Fish I think.’ A bell summoned all to the communal dining room facing the back garden. If painting or writing, he could not easily break off immediately, but Carlile did not mind him being late for meals. Carlile carved the meat and presided at the head of a huge Victorian dining table. The talk was interesting, sometimes involving consultation of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, kept in the dining room for that purpose. Long after supper, Jones and others often remained at table talking. Socially, the group was very like a large family or a tiny college. He now began to enjoy again what he had liked about the army, what he had lacked since leaving Capel-y-ffin, except for visits to Pigotts: regular human fellowship. He sometimes had guests. The Cleverdons dined with him there and remembered the conversation as ‘general and jovial.’ His friends could see that he was becoming happier.¹¹⁴ It was the beginning of what Petra would remember as ‘the happiest time of his life.’¹¹⁵

In mid January 1948, he slipped on frost in the road and broke some ribs. At the time he had a severe cough, and coughing was agonizing. For three weeks he had to wear a plaster, which became extremely irritating. During this time he was reading Tsui, *A Short History of Chinese Civilization* (1942), which he thought ‘very well done ... such enormous periods to cover & a huge mass of events to give some shape to.’ Reading Chinese history was an odd experience for him since, knowing so little about it, he was unable to judge the book’s accuracy. He was also reading Eugene Vinaver’s edition of *Malory*, given him by Peter Kelly. Jones considered this a great work of scholarship but thought that Vinaver’s slavish adherence to the sequence of the Winchester manuscript and its French sources ‘bloody silly,’ preferring the order in Caxton’s edition. He was now seeing less of old friends but corresponding with them. Each morning the post was left with *The Times* on a wicker hamper outside his door.¹¹⁶

Spring in Harrow was wonderful, making the view from his window ‘jolly nice’. He loved especially the trees ‘with that special fresh green that lasts only a few days.’ And although he was not ‘a bird watcher’, as Carlile was, he loved the many birds appearing at his window. They were ‘astounding,’ ‘every conceivable bird ... from blue tits to magpies’ and ‘heavenly’ goldfinches. Sometimes they perched on the sill. On a good day he could hear ‘millions’ of them



12. David Jones, thrush, 1948

singing. In the summer with the window open, the sound filled the room.* The only ones he disliked were ‘damned starlings.’ In subsequent years he recorded remarkable sightings (and non-sightings): a thrush singing in deep fog in the unseen acacia tree, a swan ‘winging down to a field,’ a seagull flying between the acacia and his window, ‘a lovely green wood-pecker with his red head’ perching on the tree ‘a few feet away.’ In the spring of 1948 he rapidly drew a thrush singing in the tree, the ‘most rapid drawing’ he ever made, finishing before it flew off (fig. 12)¹¹⁷ Although there are now studies that claim to show this, people who live where there are lots of birds are—all things considered, including whether starlings or pigeons predominate—

happier than people who don’t.

He saw Stevenson each Tuesday at Bowden House, and, at the end of January, on the back of a bill from Stevenson (for £5.5) made an inscription to remind himself of the bell system—one ring when Stevenson was available in Study B. A surviving prescription indicates that in April Jones was taking a Dexedrine, an addictive amphetamine stimulant (now strictly controlled) but in a moderate dose, and, at night Medinal (barbital sodium) to help him sleep. His relationship with ‘Steve’ was no longer narrowly professional, Stevenson invited him to visit him at home in early January and several times visited him at Northwick Lodge. He signed notes to him ‘Steve.’ Jones showed him his pictures, in which Stevenson’s was genuinely (not merely therapeutically) interested. Looking at them together, Jones said that ‘the happiest ones seem to make themselves’ and that his ‘happiest & best’ were done prior to his 1932 breakdown. He thought the only important paintings between his two breakdowns were *Aphrodite in Aulis* (still called *Aphrodite Pandemos*) and ‘the two *Morte D’Arthur* compositions—successful & authentic in another way.’ Stevenson considered the *Aphrodite* ‘not psychologically balanced,’ but Jones insisted on seeing it aesthetically. In it, he wrote, all dilemmas are resolved because ‘in my view, & on the whole ... the balance between form & content is satisfactorily maintained—that is why I like it.’ Since painting it, he had ‘done little or nothing’ that seemed to him ‘to really *get there*.’

*Rich, mixed, continuous birdsong can be heard in the background of one of several interviews with Peter Orr made at Northwick Lodge.

Of the recent tree-paintings, he told Stevenson, ‘I like some of them quite genuinely—but *must* admit that I can’t yet see it as authentic & sure of direction or as pleasurable as the 1932 ones, ... not as much “me”.’¹¹⁸

Within a week of moving in, he was painting the trees visible from his room, primarily the towering acacia. Most of these tree-paintings are not landscapes—the trees are independent of background, dominant, not part of a larger scene. Each is unstylized, nonsymbolical, pure, wild tree. Along with the Bowden-House trees, these are the wildest and freest of his paintings, conveying an affinity between nervous energy and arboreal inscape.

In addition to ‘trees & Co’, he was drawing ‘large heads of imaginary people, mostly girls of sorts ... I do them in chalk & crayon & spit & watercolour. I don’t know really whether any of them are any good but we shall see.’ These were the women Stevenson wanted him to draw. They were stylized, anonymous, round faced, with columned necks, often kerchiefed, with little relationship to background. The best of them, done at Pentecost, is *Sunday Mass: in Homage to G.M. Hopkins, S.J.* (fig. 13) two women, the foremost in profile with bulging forehead; the one behind in three-quarter view, a beauty; both with tiny deformed hands that would detract from the picture except that they for a long time go unseen; behind them, a long portion of a crucified corpus. The picture was bought by Hilda Cochrane, an acquaintance who had operated a small gallery before the war. The



13. David Jones, *Sunday Mass*, 1948

basic division in the picture is between the frantic activity of hair, scarf, hat-lace collar–lace, dress, and glimpsed background and the monumental fleshy simplicity of the women, especially the foremost,

and their calm expressions. The contrast gives the picture an extreme vitality in which the women become, like mothers earth, the placid ground of the picture's being.

Delighted to be painting again and painting well, he now had enough pictures for an exhibition. Ever since his one-man show at the Redfern in 1940, its director, Rex Nan Kivell, had pursued him for pictures, asking repeatedly to visit and see the work in his portfolios. On 5 May, Jones took twenty-nine pictures to him. Nan Kivell selected eighteen for exhibit and gave him the option of a show immediately or in October. Jones needed money now. So he was included in an exhibition with Bryant Winter and Derek Hill scheduled to run from 27 May to 26 June. The last-minute sending of invitation cards was a trial because he could 'never find anyone's address.'¹¹⁹

He continued to paint for the show. The last picture he was able to include before the opening was *The Lord of Venedotia of the house of Cunedda Gwledig of the line of Parternus of the Red Pexa* (fig. 14). It was 'a preliminary drawing for a proposed series' and he liked it 'particularly'. Conscious of his lineage, he inscribed on it in Welsh and Latin, 'David son of James made this.' The subject is the Roman-British, probably Christian, founder of the dynasty that ruled North Wales for nine centuries. Jones gives him Roman armour, a Celtic neck ring, and a thin gold crown. Disproportionate in shape and direction of gaze, his glistening eyes are remarkably expressive of suffering and fatigue. His disproportionately small, crabbed hand at the bottom bears the stigma-wound. A flecking movement throughout—in his hair, over his face and clothing—seems a snow of ashes. His falcon is hooded, suggesting orderly civilization. A quasi-victim figure, he has affinity with Jones's *Aphrodite*. The type would appear as Arthur in Jones's poem 'The Hunt,' where his forehead is 'corrugated' with worry, 'and if his eyes ... turned to consider the men of the host (so that the eyes of the men of the host met his eyes) it would be difficult to speak of so extreme a metamorphosis'.¹²⁰



14. David Jones, *The Lord of Venedotia*, 1948

This prince lacks the vivid presence and focused interest of the impressive early portraits, but it is entirely imagined, not a portrait. He did not now attempt portraits. He had felt, decades before, that sitters interfered with the making of the art, and, if they didn't, he nevertheless anticipated interference and that equally impeded work. 'The *fear* of not interpreting the personality etc of the sitter is too much for most artists,' he wrote Ede, '& certainly too much for me!' Apart from himself, painted in a mirror, 'the only exception had been dear Petra ... because she was always part of a whole bundle of ideas & almost part of oneself.' In 1951 Jack Hamson asked him to paint his portrait for his college, and Jones declined, doubting that he could do it. During a later exhibition of his work, he would tell a friend as they looked at the portraits, 'I couldn't go through that again.'¹²¹

Just before the opening of the exhibit, Ede proposed that Jones make a design for textile. Jones replied, 'I don't believe I could design a textile at all—I have not got enough sense of the "abstract" to do that. ... I suppose I might mess around with a complicated theme & get bits of feeling into it here & there with chalk & paint & pencil & spit & rubbings-out etc—but I can't imagine myself being able to get anything with a straight clear pattern which could be interpreted in textile.'¹²²

The 1948 Redfern exhibition included thirty-three of his pictures, not all of them for sale.* He wished not to part with two of them that he saw as 'related to' his book. These were *The Lady (The Wife of the Vicar of Britain?)*, not for sale, and *Vexilla Regis*, 'a rather special work and not the kind one can do every day.' A work of its size and intricacy might sell for £100; to preclude its sale, he gave it the 'whacking price' of £500.¹²³ His pictures hung in the

* They are listed in the catalogue with the year painted but no price: in 1941 *Epiphany* (lent by T.F. Burns), in 1943 *Polyhymnia* (lent by Barbara Moray), in 1946, *Helen's Gate*, *Above the Aira Beck*, *Hill Stooks*, *The Legion's Ridge* and *View from Gatwick House, Essex, April*; in 1947 at Bowden house, *The First Tree*, *The Second Tree*, *Merlin's Tree*, 'My branches lofty', 'The dusk is growing', 'Tys Elvenland' (three titles which are quotations from the Anna Livia chapter of *Finnegans Wake*), *Arbor Alta* (lent by John Marriot), *Sunday Mass* (in homage to G.M.H., S.J.) and *Vexilla Regis*; in 1948 at Northwick Lodge, *Mr Carlile's Acacia*, *Winter afternoon looking towards the playing-fields of Harrow*, *The Laetare-Sunday Trush*, *The Storm Tree Tree Trunk & Shed*, *The Leafless Tree*, *Brief Record of Bird on Bough*, *Crayon Drawing of a Child in Coloured Scarf at Mass*, *The Hamadryad*, *Two Girls Observed at Mass*, *The Wife of the Vicar of Britain*, *Dark Girl in Red Skirt*, *Child with a Garland*, *The Lady*, *Dwynwen Deg in Livia's Frock*, and *The Lord of Venedotia of the house of Cunedda Gwledig of the line of Parternus of the Red Pexa*.

first of the three gallery rooms, which had, as a viewer attests, a remarkable quality, as though the pictures constituted a single 'magical' work of art that you inhabited. During the show, Jones went into London 'nearly every other day' to meet people at the gallery or meet again people he had met there. It was a time of reunions, and he enjoyed it. Winefred Nicholson came on the opening, fresh from France. Burns came as did the Grisewoods, Arthur Wheen, and the Pollens, who bought *The Legion's Ride*. Jones went one day with Nicolette Gray. Another day he went with Prudence, who marked the occasion of his show by sending him a copy of *Finnegans Wake*. To her he looked 'quite fat & happy' though 'piqued' by a dismissive notice in the *Spectator*. They sat together on an inflated seat in the middle of the gallery on which an immensely fat woman subsequently sat, raising their feet off the floor, which gave them 'the giggles' which, despite (or because of) attempts at suppression 'went on a long time.' Prudence loved the pictures. Kenneth Clark appeared and told him that his favourite was *The Lord of Venedotia*, which was bought by the British Council. (Prudence called it 'a nice pin-up Boy.') Clark subsequently wrote to say that he thought these paintings 'better work than before in many ways.' Petra and Denis Tegetmeier visited towards the end of the show. While she was there, Lynette Roberts, the poet and wife to Keidrych Rhys, conveyed her assumption that Petra was the model for all the forehead-bulging females—that amused him. The next day Mary Gill, Gordian, and Joan Hague came but without René, who had to stay at Pigotts for haymaking. Eric Strauss came, as did Stevenson and others from Bowden House. Helen Sutherland was unable to come, nor, to Jones's great disappointment, was T.S. Eliot.¹²⁴ The Hararis came. She had worked in Political Intelligence at the Foreign Office during the war and had, with Marjorie Villiers, established the Harvill Press.) Ralf Harari wanted to buy *Vexilla Regis*, and Jones explained that the price was so high to deter buyers, that, if it did sell, he would prefer it to go to a national gallery, but, failing that, Harari could have right of first refusal.

Press coverage was minimal and tepid. The *New Statesman* neglected to mention his pictures. *The Times* 'was all right in its way,' he thought, but allotted little space to art. There was, he knew, 'no really first rate art-critic any longer on any paper.' He thought most reviews devoid of 'proper criticism or proper understanding.' He was very depressed by Wyndham Lewis in the *Listener* dismissing his pictures as 'characteristic water-colours representing a fairy-book world.' He expected better from Lewis, for whose mind he 'always had a great respect,'

though he realized that he no longer had ‘his old vigour or understanding.’ One thing in the press that amused him was his photograph in the weekly *Sketch* beside that of the winner of the Derby—‘bloody funny.’¹²⁵

Commercially the show was a huge success, owing partly to the post-war fashion for ‘neo-Romantic’ representational art that now included work by Jones’s acquaintances Paul Nash, Graham Sutherland, John Piper, and Ceri Richards. By 2 June all the pictures for sale had sold except *Vexilla Regis*—including three added after the opening. He wrote to Helen Sutherland that, after the gallery’s share, taxes, and expenses such as framing (£2 per picture), the sale of £1000 worth of pictures earned him only £300. In fact, however, his share, before expenses and taxes, was to be £1840.4.0, so that he either misled her in order not to lose her financial support or else he was mistaken, as he often was with numbers. But he did not receive this windfall. During the rest of the year he received only £400 from Nan Kivell. For the next few years Jones pleaded repeatedly for payment. Nan Kivell occasionally sent a cheque for £100. Twelve years later, Jones would still be asking for payment and ‘a statement of whatever remains owing to me from the sales of my 1948 exhibition.’¹²⁶

In 1948 a selection of his works was chosen by Herbert Read to go to the Venice Biennale along with works by Henry Moore and a great many Turners. As a result of the publicity, Jones received an invitation from the Arts Council to contribute pictures for an exhibition in a Birmingham pub. It was to be held, according to the invitation, not in the bar but in an attached room that makes ‘a delicious gallery’ and to which ‘all the Birmingham celebrities’ would be invited, so that there would be no danger of the exhibition being confined ‘to the habitues alone.’ Jones wrote in the margin, ‘Too Good!’ and declined. That summer he agreed to draw ‘St David’ for the *Grail Magazine* to illustrate an article by David Crowley on Wales, but he disliked the result of his efforts and asked that it not be attributed to him by name. There were also invitations to visit friends, all declined so that he could stay home and work.¹²⁷ Having painted again and exhibited, he now plunged back into his long poem, which now occupied him totally.

Northwich Lodge was indeed an occasion of renewal. As a result of common meals and conversation, he acquired new friends from among the lodgers and their acquaintances. These included mostly the professional students, many of them former servicemen. After dinner, he

invited one or another to his room. He enjoyed talking to them but singly, finding two at once only barely tolerable. ‘You can’t talk to more than one person at a time,’ he explained.¹²⁸ He also met Harrow masters, who made a big difference in his life and work.

Shortly after his arrival, he met, through Carlile, a very tall Classics master named Edward Malan, who shared Carlile’s passion for bird watching. Malan was housemaster of ‘The Knoll,’ across the road and two houses up from Northwick Lodge. He had read Classics at New College, Oxford, and had served during the recent war in the artillery. Jones telephoned him with questions about Roman history and Latin, and, since he disliked going out, Malan made quick academic house calls. But he was preoccupied by his duties, and Jones became closer to his wife, Audrey. She was tall, thin, lovely—he thought her one of the most beautiful women he had seen—and more intelligent even than her husband. She dressed with Bohemian flare and resembled a young, warmer, more enthusiastic Virginia Woolf. She had, in fact, known many of the Bloomsbury luminaries. A remarkable person, she was an avid explorer who had travelled alone on the trans-Siberian railway. She drew and painted, and Jones liked some of her pictures—‘Yes,’ he would say to her, ‘that is very numinous.’ (He now believed that ‘the art of painting’ survived ‘chiefly in amateurs.’) Their mutual friends included Ivon Hitchens and Helen Sutherland. Jones considered her and her husband ‘awfully nice people’ and, he said, he thought they had ‘in their home one of the most heavenly Chinese paintings (5th-6th Cent. AD) I’ve ever seen, of a great white eagle on a rock—it’s a superb work—very big.’ On 29 June, the Malans invited him to dine with three other Harrow masters—his ‘first social contact with this ancient institution!’¹²⁹

At this dinner Malan introduced him to the senior Classics master, forty-five-year-old E.V. Colin Plumtree, nicknamed Plum, regarded by his acquaintances as a great man. A beaky-nosed bachelor, slight, frail owing to tuberculosis, which had left him with one lung, he was precise, austere, whimsical, and old-fashioned, Victorian in manner. Brilliant but without conceit, he was a wonderful scholar and teacher with a delightful sense of humour. He taught part-time and lived in central London, not as accessible to Jones as Malan. Nevertheless, Jones and Plumtree became good friends and saw each other often. ‘Plum’ had the ability to cheer him when depressed. They liked the same jokes, at which Plumtree laughed helplessly. He played cello in string quartets—Jones made half a dozen quick sketches of him playing. Jones was surprised to discover that he was ‘even more devoted’ to Dante

than to the Classical authors. He telephoned Plumptree frequently with questions about Greek and Roman antiquity.¹³⁰

One of his fellow boarders at Northwick Lodge was the Harrow art master, Maurice Percival. Ruggedly handsome with swept-back grey hair, he was lonely, passionate, melancholy, hypersensitive, and, since losing his arm long ago in an auto accident in which his fiancé was killed, celibate. He began life as an Anglican and had worked in the Bank of England. In his early thirties he became a Catholic and wanted to be a priest but was disqualified by his disability. Abandoning banking he entered the Royal College of Art, where Eric Ravilious was one of his teachers. Percival was now a dedicated and successful teacher. He told his socially privileged students that by practising art they would develop judgement which would enable them in later life to buy good pictures for their homes. Through art history, he hoped to interest some of them in Catholicism. Although not pious in manner, he was genuinely holy, if generosity is any indication. One lodger met him on the street, complimented him on his tie, and returned to his room hours later to find a new tie exactly like it on his bed. Living an almost monastic existence, Percival had few possessions and seemed a natural celibate but loved people and enjoyed their company, especially if they were pretty girls, who found him, however, rather distant and a little odd. There was something slightly off about his attempts at wit. Once he received by post an offer of life insurance at special rates and penned a reply in italic calligraphy: ‘Can you insure me against eternal damnation? If so I am interested.’ Primarily a draftsman, basically a cartoonist whose drawings were absurdly stylized, he painted with exaggerated, heavy outlines in the style of Bernard Buffet. He worked out an elaborate system of exercises to impart the ‘grammar’ of art—a system set down in fifteen loose-leaf notebooks, which he later condensed into two volumes and attempted in vain to publish. He stressed perspective and the drawing of shaded spheres, cones, and cubes. He believed that in good art nothing is accidental, that (illogically) everything is part of an ultimately divine order to be imposed by the artist.¹³¹

Despite finding Percival’s art and theory uncongenial—and it really is bad--Jones felt great affection for him, ‘a really *good* man,’ an ‘admirable and dear man.’ He wrote to mutual acquaintances, ‘it distresses me that so sweet and good a person should spend so much time in elaborating theories which, as far as I can see, are of little consequence.’ The inflexible intricacy of Percival’s system would cause Jones considerable difficulty when writing letters of recommendation for him. In them, he says that he is ‘especially impressed by his total integrity as a person, his great

capacity for work' with a 'pretty wide knowledge of the history of European painting.' He also considered Percival "'civilized" in the best meaning of that word, courteous and considerate but at the same time firm & determined in his views or principles' and, 'above all a most admirable and loveable character.'¹³²

Percival believed that, owing to the decline of Western culture, nobody since Fra Angelico had painted well, and nearly everything he advocated opposed Jones's practice, yet he greatly admired Jones's work, which he had known since the 1930s. He regarded Jones as the best living British artist and a genius. Like other of Jones's friends, he found that he 'always learned something' talking with him. They often conversed at the dining table during and after meals or in Jones's room. On two occasions Percival salvaged crumbled drawings from Jones's waste basket. One of these, of a young woman on a London street, he ironed flat and showed to Jones, who, upon reconsideration, liked it enough to sign it.¹³³

They remained housemates for seven years. Once during that time, Percival knocked and came in to find Jones in a terrible state. While painting, he had lost his pan of Chinese-white body colour. Earlier that day he had needed it but couldn't find it, had put down his drawing board and searched all over the room, but it was gone. 'To hell with it,' he thought and continued working. Ten minutes later he needed it again and searched some more. He went through the entire room, looking under and behind everything but could not find it. Helping him begin to search once more, Percival discovered the paint stuck to the bottom of the drawing board.¹³⁴

Jones also got to know Percival's assistant, a young ex-serviceman named John Ryan. For seven years Ryan lunched during the week at Northwick Lodge. He remembered that even in the summer, Jones sometimes came to the table in overcoat and scarf. Ryan visited him in his room and noticed that he always drew (on paper pinned to his drawing board) while lying on his back—he never saw him sitting or standing to draw. Not a close friend, because 'rather frightened' of his ability and intelligence, Ryan thought it a privilege to know him and always came away from him 'feeling a little bit wiser.' Later, as one of Britain's best cartoonists, he regarded Jones as one of the most remarkable people he had met.¹³⁵

Percival introduced Jones to Len Walton, the French master, who was in charge of modern languages, was a Catholic, and looked after the Catholic boys in the school. Walton impressed Jones and became his closest Harrow friend. Jovial, chatty, enormously charming, he was an exacting scholar

and wonderful teacher, argumentative and formidable in argument. He was fluent in French, German, and Russian, and knowledgeable about Russian literature. He loved Racine, spoke about his plays, and read aloud long passages of them to Jones, explaining the precision and economy of his language.¹³⁶

At this time, Walton's great enthusiasm was the Russian religious philosopher Vladimir Soloviev, a model for Alyosha in *The Brother's Karamazov*. Walton read aloud to Jones from Soloviev, whom Jones liked. Soloviev had struggled against positivist, utilitarian rationalism in the Russia of the 1860s. 'What a surprising sense of history,' Jones thought Soloviev had, 'rather as Newman had.' He sympathized with Soloviev seeking to synthesize philosophy, science, and religion with his uninstitutional Christianity—which ecumenically included the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. Jones also sympathized with his devotion to a feminine embodiment of divinity. Soloviev revered Sancta Sophia or Wisdom, of whom he experienced mystical visions, once seeing the whole of the physical world as a woman. Walton would remember that the idea of Sophia fascinated Jones. He liked Walton's long article on Soloviev in the spring issue of *Dublin Review* (1951).¹³⁷

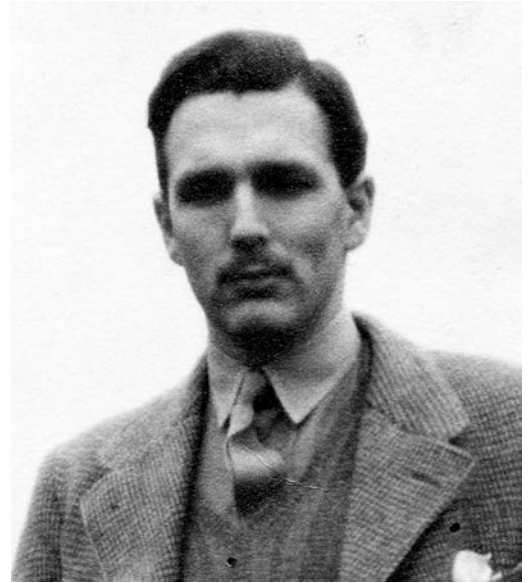
Years later Jones wrote in a letter of recommendation that he was impressed by Walton's marked ability to distinguish what is essential from what is of secondary importance in any matter. He is extremely quick in sensing latent tendencies or possibilities in persons, movements, ideas, whether in the domain of scholarship or affairs in general. He is at once orderly and scrupulously exact, yet large minded, ample of spirit, not easily perturbed & wholly lacking in fussiness. ... a man of exact but imaginative scholarship, professional in the very best sense of that word, with an instinctive dislike of what is superficial or slick. ... all this is combined with a generous breadth of outlook, a wideness of interests, and acute discernment and perceptiveness and a geniality and warmth of disposition, which make him both loved and greatly respected.¹³⁸

Walton and his wife, Peg, frequently had him to their house for supper. From now on, when not ill, he usually spent Christmas day at their house.

Jones also met Ronald Watkins, housemaster at Elmfield and teacher of English Literature. A Shakespearean, Watkins was obsessed with the Globe theatre and, with Percival's help, created a large model of it. Jones was fond of 'Ronnie', who was warm, gentle, charming, courteous, and scholarly and who occasionally visited in the late morning. They talked about Shakespeare, Jones once writing for him a long account of the mythic origins of King Lear. But they were not close. Watkins was interested in Shakespeare and Byron and, to Jones's astonishment, very little else. His wife made a cushion for one of Jones's chairs, which he was too polite to discard but complained, 'the bloody woman has no sense of colour.' Occasionally Watkins or Audrey Malan asked him to the theatre to see

Shakespeare and he declined, explaining that he could not bear to watch actor exaggerate and pretend, almost never convincingly, at feeling.¹³⁹

He found the company of older, professional students in Northwick Lodge invigorating. They were, like him, free of the obligations that come with marriage and children. One of these was Stanley Honeyman (fig 23), who arrived in the autumn of 1948. A tall, lanky, twenty-three years old Yorkshireman with quick intelligence, Honeyman, a former captain in anti-tank artillery, was working for an estate agent and studying at night to qualify as a property surveyor. One Sunday afternoon, he was in the sitting room looking at a reproduction of Seurat's *The Bathers* in a book on the Impressionists when Jones walked in, noticed, and began looking at the book with him.



15. Stanley Honeyman, c. 1948

They talked about art. They subsequently talked about military life, a subject on which they were equals. They discussed the order, discipline, and behaviour of soldiers—the question, for instance, of the incompetence of the German soldier unless under orders with a definite plan. It had been a widespread notion in the 1914-18 war, which Jones himself had held until confronted with evidence to the contrary. (Chris Carlile occasionally restated this belief, and Jones, supported by Honeyman, argued against it.) Honeyman discovered that Jones often said things that no one else he knew would have said, owing to his knowledge of history. Honeyman subsequently realized that his originality also arose from his ‘lateral thinking’. Many evenings after supper, when he should have been studying for his professional exams, Honeyman wandered into Jones’s room. He would ask what Jones thought about something. Jones would ponder for a minute and then say what, it seemed to Honeyman, only Jones could have said. On topics other than military experience Jones took the lead, opening Honeyman’s mind to the wide world of art and literature, of which he had been unaware. Their conversations were the deepest educational experience of Honeyman’s life. He remembered, ‘Being with David was very flattering. It was like playing tennis with a better player. He brought from you insights, comments, knowledge that you didn’t dream were there. He lifted you up. He always talked to the simplest person as an equal. I shouldn’t think that David knew how to talk

down to anyone. He had an original mind and a depth of mind that is rare, but always so normal—you never heard big words from him, or difficult constructions, high-falutin' approaches.' Jones would take out pictures, spread them on the floor and communicate about them largely through gestures. One evening he said about his ties hanging on the edge of the mirror on his chest of drawers, 'The only way ties ever look beautiful is when they're all hanging together', and he thought them very beautiful.¹⁴⁰ Usually about ten o'clock, Honeyman left and Jones started work—Honeyman had the impression that he worked hard long into the night.¹⁴¹

On 1 March 1949, Jones went with Honeyman to hear John Betjeman lecture in the Harrow School Speech Room on architecture. Betjeman showed slides of English architecture, including one of a church. He said, 'I'll give half-a-crown to anybody who knows where that is.' Recognizing it, Jones whispered to Honeyman, 'St. Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield,' but was too shy to speak out. Afterwards at a reception in the headmaster's house, he told Betjeman the name of the church, held out his hand, and claimed his half crown. Betjeman had praised the Speech Room, a mock gothic half-circle, in extravagant terms, and Jones commented, 'John, if you use such adjectives of this place, what is left over for the Parthenon or Chartres?'¹⁴²

Mainly through the Harrow masters he knew, he became aware of the life of the nearby school. He met and was friendly with the headmaster, Dr R.W. Moore, whom he thought 'perceptive' for an important schoolmaster.¹⁴³ The Cleverdons went with him to a Harrow School production of *Macbeth*. Lady Macbeth was played extremely well and passionately by a red-haired boy. It was a moving performance for the Cleverdons, but traumatic for Jones, who 'shook with emotion.' As they drove him home, the only thing he said was, "My God. What a bitch! What a *bloody* awful bitch! If that's what it's like give me a celibate life."¹⁴⁴

Jones became friendly with a border named Julian Hall, a tall, elegant, tubercular baronet of Scottish descent who wore a yellow tie and long hair and lived in Harrow for its fresh air. A prisoner of war in Italy, he had escaped over the Alps to Switzerland in 1943, and had ended the war a Major. In summer he slept in the back garden in a tent, which Jones included in a picture made from his window that he called *Major Hall's Bothy*. Hall had been at Eton and Oxford, had been in the O.U.D.S. with Grisewood. He aligned himself politically with the Labour Party though was awkward in trying to be one with the masses. Fluent in French and German and familiar with English literature and the history of the theatre, he was obsessed with the stage—at meals, he always 'made an

entrance’—and would become a minor drama critic for *The Times*. He was not much interested in the other arts. Through contacts, he was doing production work for the BBC but lacked talent. Sensitive, gentle, delightful, he developed a deep affection for Jones, which Jones returned. He sometimes went with Hall to dinner at the house of Hall’s friend Lady Melchett.¹⁴⁵

In his first years at Northwich Lodge, he walked down into the town to shop, always, in all seasons, wearing his greatcoat, which came down to his ankles, his pork-pie hat, and a scarf round his neck.¹⁴⁶ He bought his groceries from W.H.Cullen in Peterborough Rd.—they were delivered. One Friday he composed a shopping list that gives some indication of what he made for himself in his room:

18 large eggs, in sixes
2 N.Z. [New Zealand] butters
4 Dairylea Cheese spreads
Keelere’s Marmalade (stone)
Nescafe. Large
1 Lapsang Tea
2 Castor Sugars
1 Roses’s Lime Juice

He sent his washing out to the Hill laundry. His dentists were Parkinson, Scott, Turner & Glover, 5 St John’s Rd, Harrow. His optician was C.J.B. Maddison in Station Road. He bought books from P. Wooland Ltd (“Harrow’s Book Centre”) on Station Road. Once a month, Mr Caddy, an Irish barber, came to his room to cut his hair. He bought clothing from Grieves and Hawkes, Harrow-on-the-Hill. His laundry lists suggest that he owned three shirts, one light green, two pale blue, three pairs of trousers, and three pairs of pajamas.

Before supper he regularly went for a Guinness to the King’s Head in the High Street, a dark, quiet, comfortable pub, the kind he liked. He talked with the other patrons and one day met there a man in his thirties who worked in the chemist’s shop in Harrow and who was interested in James Joyce, about whom they subsequently talked whenever they met. Sometimes Honeyman and Hall accompanied him to the pub.¹⁴⁷

He occasionally had tea or coffee with other lodgers in the sitting room after supper, as he did one night with Carlile’s son Julian, Honeyman, and another north-country ex-serviceman with whom

he enjoyed reminiscing about army life. A rather obnoxious boarder had bought a piano and had put it in the corner of the sitting room without asking Carlile's permission. Jones hinted about how easily the piano might be moved. His younger companions picked it up and hid it in someone's room.¹⁴⁸

On one occasion in the drawing room, Jones, Honeyman, and Julian Carlile fell into conversation with an ex-serviceman, who told a joke in which three male railway passengers make patriotic statements, two in response to seeing national flags tattooed on a female passenger's thighs as she crosses and then recrosses her legs, then she opens her legs, showing pubic hair, which and the third calls 'Moses's beard'. Julian Carlile was appalled. Jones and Honeyman were torn between deference to his outrage and obligatory polite laughter. Their dilemma was excruciating and subsequently became a joke between them. For the next twenty-five years, on various occasions, Jones would murmur to Honeyman at some appropriate moment, 'Moses' beard,' and they would laugh freely.¹⁴⁹

Another refrain between them derived from Honeyman telling Jones of a soldier friend, a heavy drinker, who believed that Rose's Lime Juice mixed with gin prevented hangovers and, while pouring himself a gin, would always say, 'Thank Christ we've got some Roses.' Jones loved this story and, when forbidden alcohol some years later, would drink Roses Lime Juice instead. Pouring it into a glass, he would say, 'Thank Christ we've got some Roses.'

Yet another recurring joke-line they shared derived from a story Jones told, which he had heard from an old priest who had been in South America. He had been taken to give the last rites to a dying brigand. It was customary for the recipient to give something in return, but the brigand had only this to give, 'advice, which has stood me in good stead all my life: when you're in real trouble, keep your thumb on the blade and strike upwards.' Jones thought this wonderful advice to give a priest, and, at the right moment, he would quote the words, 'Keep your thumb on the blade and strike upwards.'¹⁵⁰

He became close friends with an eighteen-year-old Scot named Morag McLennan. In the summer of 1948 while visiting her elder sister in Harrow, she studied art under Percival's assistant Colin Brown and met Percival, who, after learning that she intended to continue studying art in Glasgow, introduced her to Jones. She was beautiful, tall, and vivacious (though he did not find her sexually attractive).¹⁵¹ Upon hearing that she came from Dunbarton, he said he was interested in meeting someone from the kingdom of Dariada—the Scots-Brythonic kingdom of which Dunbarton had been the capital. She told him that her great-great-grandfather had fought at Culloden in 1745, and

he exclaimed at 'how quickly one goes back in time', telling her that his mother was born at the outbreak of the Crimean War and had an uncle who fought at Savestapol.¹⁵² In the summer of 1949, she returned to stay with her widowed sister, May, for a year. She helped care for her sister's two small children, befriended Honeyman, swam with him and Percival, and visited Jones at least once a week. When talking about art, she tried to discuss Aubrey Beardsley, but he said, 'I'm not interested in those decadent chaps.' (He was not, then, in the mood, for he admired Beardsley and spoke about him with others, including Honeyman.) He talked to her about language and the meaning of words. But they also talked about just anything. She told her that she heard in Harrow a young woman saying to a friend of a young man who had just fallen, 'Leave him there in the ditch to die'—Jones thought that very funny.¹⁵³

She introduced him to her art-school friends, including Isabel Sharpe, of whom he became very fond and who visited him once a fortnight. She did silk screen printing. During her visits from Glasgow, she and Morag went together to see him, banging on his door at midnight or one in the morning. Glad to see them, he gave them coffee and whisky and green olives. He teased them, as always with Scots, by turning the bottle of scotch upside-down and shaking it before pouring. They would chat together till 3 am. Isabel made him a cushion and a beautiful green and red bedspread with red ribbons sewn onto it and gave him a little red record player. He seemed to Morag unaware of the degree to which he inspired affection (what seemed to her largely maternal) in females. Another friend of hers told her that it would be wonderful just to take care of him for the rest of his life. Morag also introduced him to her sister, May, who remarried in 1949 and lived in a house next to the Mallans. After the wedding, Morag moved back to Glasgow but always stopped to see him when visiting her. (He would don his overcoat and hat and they would go to the King's Head for a drink.) She sent him a map of Roman Britain. For her twenty-first birthday, in 1951, he sent her the Penguin book about his art, published in 1949. (Although he disliked the inaccurate colour reproductions, he now liked Ironside's essay, which now seemed to him 'absolutely first class & *not embarrassing*.') For her twenty-second birthday, he made her a drawing of a cat.¹⁵⁴ He continued to see Isabel. His pocket diary for 1957 indicates her visiting him on Jan 19 and again on May 13, when she brought him a record of music by Palestrina.

Feeling entirely at ease with him, Morag sought his advice about suitors. She described one she was ‘terribly fond of’, and Jones advised, ‘Drop that one,’ and, because she respected him so much, she did. (In retrospect, she thought he had ‘tremendous good sense’ about matters of the heart.) One evening in 1950, she rushed in and told him that a young man picking her up for dinner had asked her to marry him. She had said no, so he had refused to take her to dinner and let her out on the curb. Jones’s response was, ‘Have a drink.’ Eventually she became interested in Richard Owens, a Harrow Classics master whom Jones knew and sometimes consulted on Classical matters. He encouraged her to go on seeing him, and they eventually married. They lived briefly in Harrow but left in the early 1950s when he became a stockbroker.¹⁵⁵

Jones rang her up if he had a spot or a rash or any small physical ailment he was worried about, and she would dash out and buy Cuticura Talcum Powder for him. He had no compunction about her buying it and travelling thirty miles to bring it to him. After she had driven such a distance, he would ask her to go down into central London to Rymans to get him the foolscap writing paper he liked. On his behalf, she spent hours searching in stores for the right colour tie. For him she mended clothes that she thought should have been thrown out. When she agreed to buy him socks, he said, ‘I’d like them, please Morag, lioness colour.’ Those she bought were never quite the right colour. When the barber was unable to come to cut his hair, he phoned her to complain, and she brought scissors and a packed lunch (smoked salmon, lemon, pepper mill, rye bread and butter), and cut his hair for him.¹⁵⁶ She once took his clothing to be cleaned and found in every available pocket of his waistcoat and coat a folded pound note—put there, he later explained, in case of emergencies—but of an issue no longer in circulation. When she presented these to him and told him they were out of date, he was distressed and had no idea what to do. She went to the bank and exchanged them.¹⁵⁷

A younger new friend was a sixth-former at school, T.D. Michael Rees, who was a member of the headmaster’s house specializing in modern languages. Len Walton introduced them and encouraged the boy to visit. Rees had the impression that Jones was an invalid, since he kept to his room and had an unhealthily pale complexion but found him ‘cheerful and gently amused by life.’ Rees was a native of Carmarthen, raised a Welsh Anglican but now ‘convinced of the truth of the Catholic faith.’ Jones mentioned his regret at not speaking Welsh but was glad he could read it. He spoke to him at length about Wales before and after the Reformation. Rees left school in July 1949 to

study at Jesus College, Cambridge. He visited for tea on 1 October 1949. When Jones learned from his Christmas card in 1952 that he had been received into the Catholic Church, he had a Mass said for him. Rees visited a final time that year, and Jones showed him ‘with pride’ his copy of the pocket Welsh Catholic missal, in which his red-pencilled Latin crosses marked in the margins the words of the consecration.¹⁵⁸

With Rees as with many other visitors increasingly now, he recounted the history of Celtic Britain as he interpreted it. He wrote about it in his letters—going into great detail in one to Grisewood that is fifty foolscap pages long. He gave over his private imagining to it. The story began, for him, with the withdrawal of the legions, the resurgence of tribalism in a new re-Celticized, sub-Roman Britain, its defenders mounted proto-Welshmen. (‘Welsh’ is the Anglo-Saxon word for Roman.) These included the captain memorialized as Arthur. The greatest British heroes, Urien and his son Owain defended the northern Welsh kingdom of Rheged, which became divided from the southern proto-Welsh by the northward Mercian advances. Following this was the missionary and monastic work of the Celtic Saints. He had a warm spot in his heart for St Columba, who resisted ecclesiastical pressure and used his authority to save the bardic schools from closure. That saved Goidelic culture for a thousand years—long enough for its oral tradition to be written down and preserved. Jones ruminated upon the disastrous effect for the Celts of Augustine locating his seat in Jutish Canterbury, which meant that, for centuries, only Englishmen were made bishops in Wales. His mind returned often to the four centuries of defensive struggle ending in the conquest by Edward I and the killing of Llywelyn, the last Welsh prince, in 1282. This was the ending of something begun in prehistory and shaped by the conquest by Caesar. (Its prehistoric beginning was the development of the mid-European Hallstatt Culture of the first millennium BC into the ‘more subtle’ La Tène culture that later developed ‘special refinements’ in Britain and Ireland, achieving under Christian auspices ‘marvels of unprecedented beauty’ in *The Darrow Book*, *The Book of Kells*, and, indirectly, *The Lindisfarne Gospel*.) In the War of the Roses, the Welsh fought for the Tudors, who were of Welsh descent. They rejoiced in the Tudor ascent to the throne. But Henry VIII promulgated the Act of Union in 1536, making English the only official language and so effectively splitting into ‘two nations’ Welsh-speaking peasantry and gentry from those wanting to get ahead in the world. He hated the Tudors for this. But they made the political mistake of allowing the translation into Welsh of the Bible and Book of Common Prayer. In the 1730s these were used by a C. of E. parson named Griffith Jones in Carmarthenshire to teach his illiterate

parishioners to read Welsh. By 1760 there were 3500 schools throughout Wales in which the Welsh were learning to read and write their language. This teaching and learning had by then merged with what was subsequently known as the Methodist Revival, which he saw as an unconscious resurgence of Welshness and long delayed cultural rebellion against the Act of Union. By the mid-nineteenth century virtually the whole of Wales had deserted the Church of England and was praying, preaching, discussing scripture, and singing hymns in Welsh. The negative aspect of the revival was its Calvinism, which (unlike English Methodism, which is Arminian) severed the modern Welsh from their folk heritage—the old songs, harp playing, and traditions dismissed as pagan superstition and popery. Now, under the relentless pressure of technocratic civilization, the positive effects of the Revival were rapidly being undone. But things are not always what they seem. The Roman imperial order in the ancient world opposed locally rooted cultures and any true religious culture, yet that order became the midwife and nurse of Christianity. So ‘the Dying Gaul’ may not be dead yet, and Jones saw continuations and resurrections of Celticist in the Metaphysical Poets, who had Welsh antecedents, and, above all, in James Joyce. He thought of all this and related issues in great detail often and at length. When he could he spoke of it for hours, passionately—as he did of other historical events that touched him deeply: the ‘appalling’ plantation of Ulster of Protestant Scotsmen under the Stuarts; of ‘those sods of Cromwellians’ who drove the native Irish into Connaght, which ‘finished off the last coherent Celtic culture’; of ‘that terrible man Thomas Cromwell,’ who ‘had always in his pocket Machiavelli’s *Principe*’; of ‘the bloody awfulness of that dictatorial attitude of the Irish clergy to-day’ which ‘derives largely from that appalling period’ when ‘they were the only chaps who could read, write or cope in any way among the native Irish during those epochs’¹⁵⁹

In the summers, all the schoolmasters and most of the adult students at Northwick Lodge departed and an ‘entirely new set of strange lodgers,’ largely businessmen, took over their rooms for the summer. He found this ‘very odd’ and discomfoting, an annual experience of alienation, healed by autumn reunion.¹⁵²

In July 1948, he wanted to go to the Anglo-Catholic Congress in Central Hall in order to see an enactment of the third-century Mass of Hippolytus with commentary by the Anglican monk Gregory Dix. He was unable to obtain a ticket until Penelope Betjeman sent him one that her husband could not use. Jones approached the door with trepidation, since ticketholders were to

show their congress-badges, but he managed to slip in. He was disappointed by impersonators of the clergy wearing modern clothes with coloured stoles and looking, he thought, 'ridiculous ... rather like Freemasons.' But he admired Dix's spoken commentary.¹⁶⁰

He was reading a borrowed copy of Dix's *Shape of the Liturgy* 'which is full of exceedingly valuable stuff & he's such an amusing writer in a way & I like his *kind* of mind.' On 3 August he acquired his own copy. It is a monumental study tracing the liturgy from its origins and arguing against liberal Protestant attempts to locate its beginning with early Christians rather than Jesus. Jones found Dix's book intriguing and sympathetic but occasionally registered disagreement in the margins, as when Dix refers to Julian, who sought to return to paganism, as a 'sentimental reactionary' ('rather severe'). Jones objects when Dix says that in the Middle Ages the Mass became something said rather than something done, so that neither Protestants nor Catholics regarded the rite as did the early Church. 'In fact,' Jones notes, 'Catholics *do* think of the Mass a something 'done' rather than 'said.' ... I believe the Reformers *are* responsible for the other view; here it would seem the writer's Anglican background may have misled him, in spite of his *extreme* fairness & great knowledge of sources.' Jones agreed wholeheartedly with the chief emphasis of the book on the Eucharist as *anamnesis* or re-calling. During the consecration, the present becomes atemporal, so that those attending Mass are present at the Last Supper and at the crucifixion and also, in a passage Jones marks, at the Easter rising and the second coming along with all the company of heaven. Dix's emphasis on anamnesis, a notion already established for Jones by de la Taille, would be essential to the structure and meaning of *The Anathemata*. These two theological works on the liturgy and Louis Marie Duchesne's *Christian Origins; its origin and evolution: a study of the Latin liturgy up to the time of Charlemagne* (1919) had, Jones said, 'an incalculable effect' on him 'in all sorts of ways.'¹⁶¹

When Dix says that St Augustine was a more penetrating philosopher of history' than pagan Ammianus Marcellinus, Jones commented that this is unfair since Ammianus's was a 'totally different game.' He was reading Ammianus, who discloses that Roman battering rams were made of pine or mountain ash. Pine, Jones understood, but why ash? He found Ammianus fascinating on the Church, on Julian the Apostate, in whom Jones had 'always been interested'; and he liked a description of 'how the Germans, in a battle, seeing the great beauty of the morning sun shining on the eagles & vexilla, were quite overcome for a bit.' It reminded him of

reading of Nelson and his companions on one occasion being ‘moved by the great beauty of the morning sun shining on the sails of the English ships of the line.’ He found it especially touching ‘when men of action record a vivid impression of beauty.’¹⁶²

He occasionally visited the Pollens at Onslow Square. In the back studio, he noticed a small terracotta horse with a star on its belly, made by the Pollens’ daughter Lucy. He liked it and offered to swap a picture for it. Arthur said this would be all right with Lucy, and Jones directed him to let her pick one from the portfolio still at the house. (Drawings and other property of his, much of it on display, remained at the Pollen house till they moved in 1952.) Her father told her that she should not choose a very good one, so she picked a dull watercolour of an elephant. Jones said that she had better pick another as well, and she picked one of wolves. Both were 1927 zoo pictures. He placed Lucy’s horse on his mantle, where a visitor saw it and asked why it had a star on its belly. He replied sharply, ‘Because it bloody well couldn’t be on top.’ Daphne and Arthur Pollen were among his most regular visitors, coming out to Harrow every few months. He frequently telephoned them for hour-long conversations, principally with Arthur, about mutual friends, art, religion, and the news—talk punctuated by jokes and laughter. Over time he became closer to Daphne than to Arthur.¹⁶³

Nicolette Gray sometimes visited. Once she brought her tiny daughter Sophy, and he gave them lunch. Absorbed in conversation, he failed to notice Sophy innocently eating the cheese off his plate. Making a distracted attempt to eat some, he was astonished to discover it all gone, realized that Sophy was the culprit, and laughed, afterwards being wary of her omniverousness.¹⁶⁴

On Good Friday he went with the Grisewoods to the Brompton Oratory. He was, he would remember, ‘almost stunned with the total perfection of the ... breaking into Greek of Palestrina’s setting in *Agios o Theos. Agios ischyros* & the answering Latin with its massive dignity *Sanctus immortalis, miserere nostris* and a solitary celebrant at the stripped’ altar. He said, ‘I remember hearing, though we were a good distance from the altar, the fraction of the Host & then the *Crux Fidelis* & then the incomparable *Vexilla regis* & the concluding *Quod ore*. No blessing given but the immediate departure of the three ministers in silence. What more, what better, what more totally congruent with our natures could there be.’ Afterwards they went to a nearby restaurant, praising the ‘perfection’ of the day’s liturgy.¹⁶⁵

He was going into town quite a lot. By the summer of 1948, he was seeing Stevenson but in London now, at 114 Harley Street, sometimes twice a week. After a session with him, he went to the BBC to see Grisewood who was now running the newly established Third Programme, which was, as *The Anathemata* would be, the fruit of a decade of discussion about culture by the Chelsea group. In this respect, the Third Programme and *The Anathemata* would be first cousins. Jones always looked forward to meetings with Grisewood 'more than anything.' They discussed B.H. Liddell Hart's *The Other Side of the Hill*, about Hitler and the German generals and the war as seen from the German side, constructed from statements made by captured generals. He found it 'most extraordinarily interesting' and it confirmed many of his feelings about the war. He and Grisewood often went together for lunch to the Garrick Club. During one of their lunches, Grisewood said, 'Damn nice room, this,' and Jones replied, 'If you look at the lintels in the door—they are too big for the room.' Grisewood asked whether 'almighty God is offended at this', and Jones said, 'Yes, it is more important to Him than it is even to us. If God is the source of beauty and is himself beautiful, then he must disapprove of our offenses against beauty.' Here they would sometimes see Eliot, sometimes in the company of Frank Morley or Herbert Read.¹⁶⁶

Though Jones had long ago decided that he loathed the wireless, now that Grisewood was running the new Third Program, he began to listen on a borrowed set. And, he writes, 'I must say its marvelous, they've been doing the earliest secular & religious music--absolutely marvelous--some pre-Gregorian chant which was really the goods & also some heavenly Monteverdi--& a song of Dunstable's called *Rosa bella*--God! what *heavenly* things human beings have made sometimes in history.'¹⁶⁷ He would listen to talks on early Britain, programmed because of Grisewood's years of conversations with Jones. He would listen to a programme on Joyce, 'very interesting & confirming various feelings one had about him.'¹⁶⁸

In July, Jones and Eliot had lunch together at the Oxford and Cambridge Club.

In mid-August, he went the christening of Tom Burns's son, and saw Martin D'Arcy for the first time since before the war. (D'Arcy subsequently visited him in Harrow at least once.) Burns was now running Burns & Oates. With work and a growing family, he was '*wildly* busy,' and Jones saw him less than monthly. Occasionally Jones finished a day in London at the Grisewoods' flat in Tenby Mansions on Nottingham Street and, after an evening of conversation

interrupted by a newly adopted daughter, Sabina, saying goodnight, he would wrap himself in his black greatcoat, and walk to Baker Street station for a late train to Harrow.¹⁶⁹

He read Robert Graves's *White Goddess* (1948), disliking it because Graves does not 'give his references' and so it is impossible to know whether he is expounding a theory of his own or delivering a scholarly established opinion. Jones was willing to trust Graves on Classical myths but not Celtic material, about which he knew far more than Graves and could tell that, in many instances, Graves makes unfounded associations and and silly connections.¹⁷⁰

So much better was Jackson Knight's *Roman Vergil*, of which he was reading a borrowed copy. He considered it a 'wonderful book' with 'some grand things in it,' particularly Knight's psychoanalysis of Virgil. Grisewood had Jones and Knight to dinner on 13 November, and the three of them had an evening of marvellous conversation, their minds entirely in sympathy. They talked about Jones's health, about his need to paint in order to get better, about 'The Arthurian Legend' an essay he was writing for the *Tablet*,* about how he disliked writing essays, and about Knight's research 'in the pre-Homeric material of the *Iliad*' and how he 'had a lot of it taped,' which Jones thought 'grand.' He subsequently wrote to Helen Sutherland, 'J.K. is quite astonishing really. A most extraordinary penetration of all sorts. Not one little bit of the donnish thing that mostly makes Classical scholars seem to not understand the very material that is theirs to deal with. It's "All alive-O" for J.K & connected with "now".'¹⁷¹

There was nothing lively about the presidential speech of the Virgil Society he attended with Grisewood on 13 October. The lecture was by Field Marshal Lord Wavell on Virgil from the viewpoint of a soldier. The topic was of special interest to Jones but the talk 'was really pathetic—vulgar & commonplace & excessively boring ... the jokes were the worst part of it—I thought in the worst taste & blockheaded too.'¹⁷²

That autumn, he visited an exhibition of Pre-Raphaelites at the Tate. In mid-November he went to a lecture at the British Academy on the Court poets of the Welsh princes in the 12th and 13th Centuries. On Nov 26, he went to Ben Nicholson's show at the Le Fevre—his favourite in the exhibit was *Coin and Musical Instruments* (1933). There he and Nicholson talked about the

*He would finish the essay on the 26th and think it 'pretty bad & far too long' and, like most of his critical essays, 'so pompous & stogy.' It is reprinted in *E&A* 212-49.

new Lund-Humphries book on Nicholson's work and how good the reproductions were. Jones liked it more than the exhibition because it displayed his entire development. He also liked the short Penguin book on Nicholson, also with good reproductions. He mentioned having recently had a show at the Redfern. Having been in Cornwall, Nicholson had not known about it. Jones quietly supposed that anyway he probably would not have liked the pictures. He wrote to Helen Sutherland,

He is *so* much better than any other 'abstract' painter—that is abstract in the strictly 'formal' sense (*a totally different *sort* of 'abstraction' from say Graham Sutherland or Henry Moore...) They are so extraordinarily *pleasurable* to look at, I've always thought that. (*Poussin said 'the goal of painting is delight & the Thomists that beauty is 'the splendour of order.' Ben *at his best* passes both those tests, I think.)

He had noticed 'a tendency among people ... to admit that Ben is a good artist, but to rather think of him as only 'aesthetic.' ... They seem to miss the *imagination* in Ben, which is in fact his great quality in contrast to much abstract painting.' (For anyone who needs it, Jones's enthusiastic response to Nicholson and his work is confirmation of his indifference to being expelled from the Seven and Five Society.) He had wanted a copy of the 'heavenly ... glorious' Nicholson book but found it too expensive. Helen Sutherland ordered him one.¹⁷³

He heard from A.S. Hartrick of a new technological wonder: a pen that 'makes a line always of one thickness.' It was a legacy of the war, developed for pilots at high altitudes where fountain pens don't work. Initially resisting them, he was won over. He recommended them to Helen Sutherland, pens 'that have no ink' and are 'called 'Biros'—'very unpleasant but in some ways convenient.' At four pence each, they were, he thought, quite expensive and exotic, confiding to his nephew, 'you can buy them in a little stationer's shop in Bond Street.' He once dispatched Peter Kelly to this shop, where they sold what Jones thought was a very special make of biro called, he told Kelly, 'BIC.' Stevenson was now using bios with different coloured ink to take notes during interviews: green for good symptoms, red for dangerous symptoms, black for neutral comments. Jones came to rely on them exclusively for writing and began inscribing books, using one colour for a person's first name, another for the surname, and another (green in spring) for the month. He preferred the body of the biro to be transparent so he could see the ink go down. He acquired a large supply, which grew because he seldom discarded those that ceased to work. This meant that before being able to write he would pick up and try half a dozen, often to

find a working pen with ink of a different colour than the one he needed. When Joan Hague visited, her daughter Rosalind scribbled with one dry biro after another, getting the ink to run, and he later write her a multi-coloured letter thanking her for this.¹⁷⁴

Ballpoint pens joined the clutter on his table beside the scores of brushes erect in empty Dundee marmalade jars, a tin of China tea, Bath Olivers, Gentlemen's Relish, and Oxo. Gradually newspapers and books accumulated in piles reaching to the surface of the table, and new piles formed between his two chairs, between them and his easel and his book-covered small table, and close to where walls free of shelves held upright ranks of portfolios. While consisting mostly of newspapers, these piles also contained, at varying depths, manuscript drafts, books, prints, and articles of clothing. Searching for something required archaeological digs down the dated layers of newspapers.¹⁷⁵ The room was a fire hazard, and he smoked. Owing to absent-mindedness or concentration, he burned cigarette holes in letters, drawings, even paintings. That any room and he inhabited did not go up in flames is remarkable.

*****A Latere Dextro

The picture pinned to his board now was of a priest elevating the host at Mass. He called it *A Latere Dextro* (fig. 16). He had started it in the early 1940s as a light, loose watercolour on light paper. After nearly discarding it, he transferred it to heavier paper and added chalk, pencil, and bodycolour until it became, like *Vexilla Regis* an oil painting in appearance. Initially the setting was the Carmelite church in Church Street but it now included his local church in Harrow. It is small (24 ½ by 22 inches) and so detailed that it must be seen in the original from a distance of no more than five feet—beyond that the detail is lost. For months Honeyman went in every evening and saw him struggling with a part of it, any change requiring adjustments elsewhere. 'He fought it as you'd fight an animal,' Honeyman recalled. When he ceased working on it, he regarded it as important but overworked and too tight. But his basic reservation seems invalid, that it was, for him, stylistically anomalous, 'realistic in a way that I don't happen to like. I don't mean I dislike 'realism' as such, but its not quite my cup of tea.'¹⁷⁶ He stopped work on it in 1949, intending never to exhibit it. He kept it unframed in a portfolio and brought it out to show visitors. Despite his reservations, it is a wonderful work that certainly should be exhibited.

Formally this picture consists of visual *cyghanedd*, complex multiple 'rhyming' of the sort last seen less elaborately on the cover of *Order* (Ch 8, fig. 40). The vertical pillars rise into

the curved vaulting as vertical candles rise into curves of flame, which, at the centre of the picture, are extended in Pentecostal wind. The flames of the four candles of the altar boys form an oval of light in the air, rhyming with the circular shape of shadow at their shoulders and arms. These rhymes with the circular candle rack at the bottom right, with the circle of light the flames make there, with the circular tops of candle sticks, with the circular candle platforms above the altar, with the circular base of the column, with the down-turned rim of the little bell a boy rings, with the upheld rim of the chalice, with the ghosted halo far above it, with the halo above the priest's head, and with the quiet, small, focal circle of the transubstantiated host on the altar. The multiple circularity and the flames of the candles the boys hold direct the viewer's eyes, as do the gazes of the boys. The large shape of pillar, vaulting, right partition cloth and side-altar blend with shadows and light to make a great central circle of light containing the centre of the scene. The pillars and curves of arches emphasize the movement, a sweep of light conveying a sense of wind. Hair, flames, altar cloths, surplices are blown. He called this picture 'my windy Mass.' Reflecting uncomfortable personal experience of drafts in churches, its numinous theme also recalled for him his first sight of the 'gusty' candle-flames at a Catholic Mass in the forward zone near Ypres in 1917. There is more rhyming. On the right is a tangle of flowers (with pistilines erect) and thorns, and a tangle of lace against the side-altar stone, whose marble has its own tangle of veins and scratches. On the left a *pieta* contains the wattle of thorns on Jesus' head, and the tangle of hair of Mary coming alive like Galatea in stone. The lace on the bottom of the boys' albs is another tangle. Light shines from the stigmata-wounds on the priest and Jesus in the *pieta* (wounds of the shape of the candle flames) and from the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove replacing the Roman eagle atop the standard of the Twentieth Legion, whose members (the first clergymen) conducted the crucifixion. From the wound in the lamb on the right foreground side-altar comes real water, spilling to and from a chalice into a well beneath it—in homage to St Trillo's well and all sacred wells. This water is the source of the title, taken from the *Vidi aquam* of Pascaltide, 'I see water coming from the temple, from the right side,' a text echoed in *The Anathemata* (130, 139). Like water, fire, too, comes from sacrificial dying, as the votive candles burn and droop, and maybe bow or faint at the sacredness of the moment.

The back of the priest's chasuble is undefined, blending into the rest of the painting so that he wears it all: a pervasive burst of light and vitality at the height of the elevation during the



16. David Jones, *A Latere Dextro*, c. 1944-9

consecration. There are flowers everywhere, and in the priest's chasuble yellow fleur-de-lis.

More even than *Vexilla Regis*, this painting resonates with *The Anathemata*, which began to take shape when Jones ceased working on this picture in 1949. The poem is a continuation of the picture. Both 'occur' during the consecration. The circular swirl of movement around the centre of the picture gives it and the poem formal affinity, and the symbolic resonance between the consecration and things on the periphery—dove, pieta, crucifix, stigmata-flames—gives the picture and poem thematic affinity. The abundance of detail in this picture, which results from working at it for such a long time also characterizes *The Anathemata*. The result may overwhelm at first, but the picture can be viewed long and repeatedly, and the poem reread again and again, without boredom or exhausting the work. This is its pictorial corollary, its older, smaller sister.

He was very attached to this picture and would not part with it. He refused to sell it to Walter Hussey for St Matthew's Church in Northampton (which contained works by Sutherland and Moore) and later for Chichester Cathedral because, he said, he thought it ridiculous to display a picture of the Mass where Mass is celebrated.¹⁷⁷ For the same reason, he continued to refuse to sell it to the Dean of Chichester Cathedral. But that was not his only reason, for, later still, he refused to sell it to the director of the National Gallery of Scotland.

Returning from a trip to Rome, Helen Sutherland had Jones to supper. He told her about meeting with Nicolette Gray and Oliver Simons, the editor of *Signature*, to discuss the selection of pictures for an article Nicolette was writing on him. He was happy because the reproductions were 'very good ... for once' and her approach was 'refreshingly free from aesthetic theory' and 'so awfully well written.' He signed for Helen a copy of Ironside's Penguin book on art, which he had sent her. While inscribing it, he made a mistake. 'One so often messes up trying to write in books,' he wrote, 'it always seems to make one slightly nervous.' Not long after, she visited him in Harrow and saw again his painting done at Cockley Moor entitled *The Hoggot* (1946), a view beginning in a tangle of trees below and rising beyond near walls to the irregular distant hills, which have their cloudy counterparts in the sky. She bought it from him. He had it framed four times before he was willing to send it to her although it still looked 'just a bit insipid & flat or something.'¹⁷⁸

He went to several exhibitions in 1949. In the spring he saw seven of Winifred Nicholson's pictures at Thomas Agnew's Gallery. He thought them not her best work. He also

went to an Ivon Hitchens exhibition at the Leicester, where he saw ‘a nice one’ by Winifred.

About Hitchens he wrote that he

seems to me to have got nearer to expressing what he is after in this show. He is a very separate sort of artist. I admire the determined way in which he has plugged away for years & years. I never quite follow him; but he’s after a very real kind of beauty—it seems to be concerned with the “mood” of landscapes—tones & colour relationships. Very akin to some sort of music in a way. Anyway it’s pleasant to feel that he’s getting better rather than worse!¹⁷⁹

In the summer he went to the Redfern for ‘Between Monet & Bonnard.’ At the Tate for a Blake exhibit, he marvelled at visiting paintings from Vienna. He wrote to Ceri Richards that he had especially looked forward to seeing Tintoretto’s *Susanna and the Elders*. But at first sight of the actual painting, he was disappointed because the flowers and foliage in the scene were crudely done, as by a theatrical scene-painter. His own *Ancient Mariner* engravings were being exhibited by the British Council in the Jeune Gravure Exhibiton in Paris.¹⁸⁰

The previous spring, an ‘enraptured’ Helen Sutherland had praised *Vexilla Regis* and another picture to Jim Ede, saying she thought each worth £100. Shortly afterwards, Ede wrote to Jones proposing that an anonymous subscriber contribute his three yearly payments of £50 towards a ‘super pic.’ and Jones would save the dealer’s commission. The picture would probably be left, at the subscriber’s death, to Jones, so he should pick the one he would like best. Two months later, Ede admitted that the subscriber was himself and declared that the picture he wanted was *Vexilla Regis*, which he had not seen and identified by describing as Helen Sutherland had to him, ‘the one not for sale of some wood going right up & palaces.’ His choice was based solely on her judgement, and he knew that it was one that she wished to buy. Jones priced it at £500. This was too steep for Ede, but he knew that his eighty-six-year-old mother had that amount remaining from his father’s inheritance. Staying with her in Cardiff, with the aid of the Redfern-catalogue reproduction, he sold her on the picture. On 7 August 1949, he wrote to Jones that she wanted to pay the £500, that she had never bought a picture, is now too frail to leave the house, and thinks that it will ‘open new worlds’ for her in her ‘last few years or months.’ Evasively, he said that the idea to buy was hers and that she may have got it from his brother having just bought from him a Jones painting of cows for £100. Jones telephoned Ralph Harari, who had right

of refusal and who agreed to waive it. Jones still did not wish to sell, though he liked the thought of the painting passing to Ede at her death, as he was given to understand it would. So he agreed—a direct sale with no dealer’s commission. Jones took the painting to Bourlets to be packed and shipped. By mid-August Ede’s mother had it. He still hoped she might not like it, having seen only the not-very-good reproduction in the catalogue, but she loved it and, since ‘buying the picture came as a great surprise,’ began paying in instalments. When Helen Sutherland heard of the sale, she realized that Ede was merely procuring the painting for himself, and she was livid.*¹⁸¹

Ede wrote to Jones saying that his mother sat for hours each day before the picture, discovering ‘new wonders’, sometimes with tears in her eyes because ‘it is so beautiful.’ He urged him that he ‘lend her or give her’ the preliminary sketches—a suggestion typical of Ede, always hinting that Jones give him pictures. Ede’s glaring self-interest—he was always out for the main chance, for himself but also for others—may explain why Jones, while never critical of Ede, was slightly reticent about him.¹⁸²

To Jones’s delight, Ede’s mother, Mildred, really did know how to look at the painting. She wrote, ‘I like to neglect the details and see the beauty of the picture as a whole.’ He was glad that her appreciation was not merely conceptual: ‘it’s the *forms* in a painting that matter *first*,’ he wrote her, ‘it is after feeling the forms that we ask about the content (*Even though the content dictates the forms—or at least they are inextricably bound up with each other, or should be.)’ He later told Ede, ‘Your mother drove up to it in a big way.’¹⁸³ Three years later she died, and it went to Ede.

The loss of the *Vexilla Regis* strengthened Jones’s resolve to retain *Aphrodite in Aulis*, which he had an even greater affection for—because, he told Ede, ‘the forms interest me more.’ He considered using this painting, along with *Vexilla Regis*, to illustrate *The Anathemata* though ‘neither come off in reproduction.’¹⁸⁴

* At this time Ede spent five days with her and found her, he writes, ‘so imaginative & so loving in her heart but so unseeing & harsh on the surface. She hurt me twenty times a day. ... was a shade mad at anyone buying anything ... she almost resents one looking at a flower in her garden & thinks all her friends are out to do the dirty on her.’ Ede asked Jones to intercede with her on his behalf, and Jones tried but without success.

Finding change difficult, he was still paying his laundry bills with cheques made out to Bowden House, as he would until Crichton-Miller wrote in 1952 to ask him to make his payments direct so that the laundry would not have to come to Bowden House to be reimbursed. Until the summer of 1949, Jones's room at Northwick Lodge had the look of a temporary habitation—because most of his books and belongings remained in his room at Sheffield Terrace. He was unable to relinquish it, even though it imposed a financial strain. In the autumn of 1949 he owed seventeen weeks in back rent (£132.6) for that room. He was put off moving his possessions partly by the loss (theft, he thought) of the original of his frontispiece drawing for *March Kind Comrade* during the initial, partial move to Northwick Lodge.¹⁸⁵ But in mid-October he received notice that the house in Sheffield Terrace had been sold and he had to empty his room. With no choice, he moved all his belongings to Harrow, stacking the books inconveniently in towers around the room.

The chaos was intolerable until, in December, he managed to locate a carpenter to make bookshelves. The shelves cleared up a great deal of floor space. And he had brought pictures from what he called his “room in London.” Even with bookshelves, there was not enough room. This may have been when a cousin telephoned to propose visiting him, and he replied, ‘I don’t know if you’ll find a place to sit.’ Overloaded, the selves wobbled so that, for the first time since living in the trenches, he felt in danger of being buried alive. He expressed his anxiety to the carpenter who steadied the shelves by fixing wedges under them.¹⁸⁶

He stored some books and papers in a damp closet in Morag's sister's house. He replaced Carlisle's bed with his own, with a cart-wheel shaped headboard, from Brockley, along the wall away from the window. There were a few tables and chairs that had belonged to his father. There was no closet or wardrobe, but he had little clothing. What did not fit in his dresser hung from hooks on the back of the door. He placed on his shelves a mug and an eighteenth-century glass that Ede had given him and other ornaments as ‘possible inducement to “still-life” drawings.’ He arranged small objects, including, the eighteenth-century pewter teapot that had belonged to his mother, on the mantle over the fireplace. Over his washbasin he hung a small 1919-20 oil of the downs near Brighton, which he liked ‘quite a lot’, although most of his work from that period now made him almost physically ill. After hanging pictures from his portfolios, the room was

‘ship-shape’. He was doing little painting because ‘trying hard,’ he writes, ‘to get my writing nearer completion though it’s still a long way off.’¹⁸⁷

His father had taken out a life insurance policy for him as a child and had paid into it £4.3.26 per year. On 7 Jan 1949, Jones received notice from the Prudential Assurance Company that his policy had matured and asking him to complete certain forms in order to receive the amount payable. He ignored the notice, and received another on 18 August, which he also ignored. One morning that winter, two men from Prudential arrived at the house to give him the good news in person. That day at lunch, the other lodgers noticed that he was clearly upset. Someone asked what was wrong. ‘Oh nothing, nothing,’ he said. ‘Oh come on David,’ one of them asked, ‘what’s the matter?’ So he told them, ‘These two chaps arrived. I spoke to them over the banister. I wasn’t prepared to go meet them. I could see that they were money people. These buggers had come to offer me *money*. I told them to go away, and they went. They seemed quite puzzled.’¹⁸⁸ It would be about ten years before the ominous money-men made another attempt and somehow got through to him for in October 1961 he received two cheques from the Assurance company totaling £276.7.9, which was the full amount in the policy.

He was following *The Times* correspondence on Catholicism in November 1949, fascinated that such a correspondence should occur at all. There were ‘some jolly *bad* letters’, he thought, the worst being by a Catholic Bishop named Beck, ‘*awful ... misleading & inaccurate*’ in calling an Anglican bishop a layman. Not that Jones though Anglican orders valid—he nowhere expresses an opinion on the subject—but because a cleric need not be a priest. It would be equally wrong to call a Buddhist monk a ‘laymen’. In addition to ‘*absolutely frightful*’ remarks on the Lord’s Prayer, this bishop claimed that Catholics ‘hold the Immaculate Conception in *exactly* the same way as we hold the Incarnation’, whereas, Jones thought, the Immaculate Conception (of Mary) follows ‘theologically from a belief in the Incarnation.’¹⁸⁹

For the second year in succession, winter brought a renewal of fibrocitis. He wrote to Ede, ‘How I *loath* pain—one *never* gets used to it, somehow. I *do* admire people who do.’ He found the bitterly cold winter of 1949/50 ‘horrible.’ ‘I really *detest* properly cold weather,’ he said ‘It’s an enemy! I greatly envy those who do not mind it or even like it.’ He nevertheless appreciated the beauty of ‘the clear bleakness & shriveled look of the trees.’ His visitors this winter included Tom Burns, who came for

lunch on a Sunday, his first visit to Jones here, and Jones was ‘*delighted* that he should have come at last.’¹⁹⁰

Jones bought and read the new Dents translation by Gwyn and Thomas Jones of ‘my dear Welsh *Mabinogion*’—‘awfully good, a great improvement on Lady Guest’s’—and when the *Tablet* published a derogatory review of it, fired off a short letter of complaint. His enthusiasm for the translation led Grisewood to have the tales, produced by the Welsh Regional Program, rebroadcast on the Third Programme. Although Jones did not, ‘as a rule, like the wireless,’ he visited a friend to hear these. On the evening of 12 January, Arthur Phillips read ‘Branwen the Daughter of Llyr.’ Jones had never heard ‘*anything* read on the BBC so perfectly.’ Though he knew the tale well, he was deeply moved. The reading ‘brought out new beauty & an even sharper definition to the contours’ of the tale. Before retiring for the night, he wrote to thank Grisewood:

One had a glimpse of what the power of these tales must have been recounted in the native speech in the old days—how it must have fed the inner-man & how it must have taken the bitter edge off the political & economic miseries—& how vile to think that owing to one thing & another, Nonconformity etc etc etc those tales have not been familiar to the native Welsh in their native tongue for some centuries—I do hope they read them in Welsh for the Welsh BBC—they bloody well ought to. How *difficult* it all is—one feels that this stuff should have been baptized & given continuity. This leads on surely to the Xtian thing just as the Classical stuff does.

On 15 January, the story of Culhwch and Olwen was read, and he loved it. Never had he heard anything to equal these readings. They re-established his trust in radio production of literary works and were like what he now hoped for *The Anathemata*.¹⁹¹

In addition to running the newly established Third Programme, Grisewood was editing the *Dublin Review*, a journal published in London by Burns & Oates, and sending Jones books to review. Jones hated reviewing because it took what seemed an inordinate amount of time and labour, but he agreed to review Berenson’s *Aesthetics and History* (April 1950) and Patricia Hutchins’ *James Joyce’s Dublin* (December 1950). He declined to review H.R.L. Edward’s *Skelton: The Life & Times* as ‘not my cup of tea,’ more about ‘the Tudor set-up’ than the poetry, and not ‘*scholarly in spirit*.’ It was too ‘popular’ and also facetious, a weaving together of ‘information, some historical & factual, others surmised, seemingly invented, hints at the states of mind of blokes from their work—bits of our old friend the “love affair”, bits of picturesqueness etc presented in rather a knowing way.’¹⁹²

A.S. Hartrick died on 1 February 1950 at the age of eighty-five. For Jones, Hartrick had been ‘one of the “permanent” parts’ of his ‘landscape’, and his death ‘marked the end of an epoch.’ For two years, he had been intending to visit Hartrick and, when he saw the obituary in *The Times*, felt ‘pretty guilty about not going’. His old teacher had been in a nursing home. Jones had congratulated him on receiving the OBE, and Hartrick had sent him a photograph of the Eaton Bishop medieval stained glass, which Jones had up on his wall. In November 1951, Jones wrote a letter to *The Times* (unpublished) in which he says that Hartrick’s work deserves more appreciation than it has received, that he was ‘individual, sensitive, & disinterested,’ that his best work is, compared to that of Keen, ‘more tentative, with more signs of struggle, less accomplished, more surprising, with more sense of design & understanding of form.’ He recalls that Hartrick was innately humble, that being considered ‘advanced’ in his youth and ‘out-moded’ since then had mattered little to him. For him the important thing was to ‘do the work.’ More than anyone else he had known, Hartrick had been a model for him of what an artist should be as a person. In September and April he went to the Arts Council Hartrick Memorial Exhibition.¹⁹³ He marked in his copy of the catalogue the pictures he liked best: *A Cotswold Shepherd, calling his sheep home after a squall* (c. 1908), *Scotch Tinkers* (c. 1922), *Summer Storm, Trawlers running for Shelter* (c. 1927), *Apple Tree at Cleeve Hill* (c. 1929), and *Deer in Richmond Park* (c. 1931).

In the spring of 1950, he was plagued by flu and then a throat infection, ‘a most beastly one’ as acute conjunctivitis (‘pink eye’). For six weeks he did not leave the house nor, for much of that time, his bed. He did no painting but managed to work on the preface to *The Anathemata*. When well enough he went to see his doctor, Kenneth Bell, at his home-and-office at 28 College Road, a short bus ride away. (Bell had become Jones’s physician on Stevenson’s recommendation.) His weekly visits to both Bell and Stevenson were a continual financial drain, adding about ten guineas to his monthly expenses. Jones continued not to believe in the National Health Service, which had begun in 1948, and paid the fees himself. His throat infection was so severe, lasting into the summer, that Bell forbade him to smoke, which he found a strain and a continuing annoyance. He also suffered from terrible indigestion, which led Bell to suspect an ulcer. On 15 August, Jones spent the day at the hospital having ‘what is somewhat pathetically called “a complete Barium meal”—it sounds like an initiation rite’—and being X-rayed. The tests showed no ulcer. Stevenson decided, and Jones agreed, that the cause of indigestion was

psychological. Jones was feeling ‘fussed and worn’. Within the next few weeks the indigestion abated.¹⁹⁴

Bell, an Aberdeen-trained Scott, was a general practitioner, tall, bearded, corpulent (weighing twenty-one stone), hearty, with a small black beard. He was comforting, encouraging, and, though younger, for Jones almost a father figure. Besides working as an anaesthesiologist at two surgeries, he visited mostly old people confined to their homes who mainly needed comforting. Though no intellectual, he became a friend. Jones was, he said, ‘quite interesting to talk to.’ Bell seldom examined him but sought usually to cheer him up. Whenever Bell arrived, Jones was always busy writing or drawing, and if working on a painting would explain the significance of its images to Bell. The basis of their friendship was largely shared war experience, of which Bell had more even than Jones. For four years he had been a medical officer and section leader in the crack Four Thousand Brigade in France, Belgium, Dunkirk, Palestine, Syria and North Africa, Italy, and Normandy. He had worked in an Arab hospital in Ballbek, a Greco-Roman city built over a Phoenician city, with equipment from a 1917 infantry medical kit. There he had revived the dying by injecting them with salt dissolved in tap water, which was sterile because the modern plumbing had been ripped out in favour of the original Roman plumbing. (‘This was the sort of thing we talked about,’ he told me.) He saw a lot of combat, was ‘shot, shelled, and strafed a thousand times’ and, because always far in front, was several times mistakenly bombed by American and British planes. After being wounded in the Battle of Falaise Gap, he spent the rest of the war mostly at brigade headquarters and in an armoured vehicle getting situation reports. With maps, he could usually comprehend the whole of the battle. He told stories about all this. Jones responded, and the two wars combined in a dance of memories.¹⁹⁵ Bell visited him in his room monthly and then, beginning in the 1960s, fortnightly, not because of increased medical need but because of growing friendship. Bell sensed that his visits cheered him up. The bills mounted up too, but these often went unpaid, and Bell took no steps to have them paid. After Jones’s death, his niece Molly would discover a sack two-feet deep of unpaid, often even unopened doctor’s bills, which she offered to pay, but Bell said to her, ‘Forget them. We had had many wonderful conversations, and that was payment enough.’¹⁹⁶

Once Jones told him about an acquaintance, now a monsignor, who had been an intelligence officer and whenever he interrogated German prisoners arriving in England noticed

that they were terrified of being sent to the south of England for internment. He often wondered why. Bell was able to tell him. At the end of the war his brigade had discovered in northern France large nerve-gas bombs and fifty-foot-long mortars buried in the ground. These mortars and V-5 rockets had been intended to saturate the whole of the south of England with nerve gas, wiping out the entire population. Churchill came to oversee the destruction of these weapons, and the brigade was told never to mention their discovery.¹⁹⁷

Bell became indispensable, not least as a trusted poster of letters, which Jones would hand to him at the end of a house call. He was anxious about entrusting letters to others, an anxiety that increased by himself once being entrusted with an important letter to post, which he thought he had posted but discovered, weeks later, in his coat pocket.¹⁹⁸

At the suggestion of their mutual friend Barbara Moray, the Queen invited Jones to the Royal Garden Party in 1950. He told Barbara that he wanted to go but 'It's awful, I can't possibly go, I'm unwell and I can't. What shall I do?' She explained that although his presence was 'commanded', he could write to say he was unable to attend, but he was not content with that. When she agreed to go with him, he calmed down. Once he was there, he was fine. He wore a suit and tie and carried his overcoat on his arm (it was a warm sunny afternoon), incongruous among the other males dressed in formal black.¹⁹⁹ Barbara introduced him to the Queen, who had, since last seeing him, read and admired *In Parenthesis*. He later remembered that 'the Queen & special chaps' drank their tea in a little tent 'with all the great mob of other chaps looking on'—it was, he thought, 'the last fading remnant of quasi-sacred personages being watched by the tribe. When the king died in 1952, Jones wrote to the Queen expressing his sympathy, and she replied, thanking him. She invited him to subsequent Royal Garden Parties. He declined the invitation in 1952, explaining that he was ill, though he also disliked 'all this business of dressing up' and seeing others wearing 'morning clothes.'²⁰⁰ His agoraphobia was probably a deterrent, but that was allayed by a trusted companion. He went a second time, in 1952, with the Grisewoods.²⁰¹

On 28 October 1950, he went into London to see Ben Nicholson's new show at the Lefevre Gallery. Although, the rooms were 'too full to see the confounded pictures properly,' he loved several of the new paintings and also some of the drawings. After talking with a number of friends there, he went round to Bond Street to see works by Rubens, an artist he loved 'at his

best.’ He liked some of the drawings but thought the painting ‘a bit disappointing, but Rubens on top of Ben is not quite digestible, perhaps.’ He then went to a concert of polyphony by the Renaissance Singers at Marylebone Church. He thought—the ‘thank God’ unaccompanied liturgical singing composed by Christopher Tye ‘heavenly’, but the church was ‘so damned cold’ that he left before hearing the rest of the concert and went home for tea.²⁰² It had been an unusually out-going day.

On 1 November, the Pope ‘infallibly’ declared the doctrine of the Assumption (of the body of Mary into heaven at her death), a doctrine on which Jones nowhere expresses an opinion. He liked, however, Victor White’s ‘admirable & helpful’ article entitled ‘The Scandal of the Assumption’ in the July issue of the Dominican journal *The Life of the Spirit*. White’s point is that by ‘the taking up of the feminine principle into the divine Principle’ the doctrine counteracts the profanation and secularization of matter during the centuries of the Industrial Revolution. It unifies ‘Son and Mother, Father and Daughter, Spirit and Matter’ in response to a widespread need expressed ‘in countless myths and rituals ... all over the globe’ in what amounts to a ‘universal mystery,’ which is no less than the ‘remarriage of heaven and earth.’ Jones thought White ‘a proper chap ... he knows about psychology & mythology as well & theology *properly* & does not talk cliché but tries to think out what things *mean*.’ Jones also thought Graham Greene’s article on the Assumption in the January issue of the *Catholic Digest* ‘had something very good about it,’ ‘very sure & simple & untortured.’²⁰³

This new affirmation of an old doctrine may have influenced his writing, which echoes White’s article, particularly on the primary importance of Mary’s response to God and her affinity, as ship-launcher, with Helen of Troy (*A* 128, n5). Jones had long liked the twelfth-century teaching of Aelred of Rievaulx, that ‘the *Fiat* of Mary was primary to her physically bearing the Incarnate Word’ and that ‘everything depended upon’ her consent. It was a ‘perfect’ balance between story and spirituality. He saw a subtle shift from this in Master Eckhart’s teaching that ‘It is more worthy of God that he should be born spiritually in every ... good soul than that he was born physically of Mary.’ Jones comments, ‘Sounds alright, but the next step is to ‘demythologize’ the story of the historic physical Incarnation and say that what matters is that all chaps should be awfully good, which is, roughly speaking, more or less, what the present notion of the aims of Xtianity boils down to.’ His esteem for Mary was subtle. He objected to the

‘obsessive ‘Mariolatry’’ of modern Catholicism, which he thought akin to ‘the cult of relics (of the saints)’ that ‘assumed *absurd* proportions’ in the Middle Ages. He liked Spengler’s statement that by virtue of ‘a simple human destiny of such arresting and attractive force’ Mary ‘towered above all the hundred and one Virgins and Mothers of Syncretism—Isis, Tanit, Cybele, Demeter—and all the mysteries of birth and pain, and finally drew them into herself.’²⁰⁴ In his reverence for Mary, there seems, surprisingly, little Oedipal ardor.

In the summer of 1949, he had read an announcement in the press that the Tate had engaged the Ganymed press to make a print of *The Four Queens* as part of a series of works by David Jones, Henry Moore, John Piper, and Graham Sutherland. Jones wrote to Rothenstein saying he was glad but that his permission should have been asked. By the end of August 1949, colour separation negatives had been made, and three monochrome proofs printed. In January 1950, John Roberts at the press decided that the picture was not colorful enough to generate sales and substituted *Chapel in the Park*. Jones went to the Tate to protest. He told Rothenstein that *The Four Queens* is ‘a so much more interesting’ picture, ... of its kind... the best I’ve done, the other is not, of its kind, so successful. ... As to the sales thing, ... it is the best that wins in the end.’ The Ganymed process was the ‘only method capable of registering the close-together tones, subtleties, etc’ of *The Four Queens*. He said he would consent to the substitution only if the reasons appear overwhelming but thought ‘the change of choice *very much* to be regretted and a mistake.’ Royalties were to be 7 ½ % (2/-6 per print), which he thought ‘*very little*,’ but he told Rothenstein that he would accept less if *The Four Queens* was reproduced. He was placated by the vague and never kept promise that Ganymed might also reproduce *The Four Queens* and was given twenty guineas as an advance on royalties. He asked that Bill Stevenson and Ethel Watts be sent copies of *Chapel in the Park* at his expense. For more money you could get the print matted and framed, but he advised friends against it, since the mat and frame were, he thought, horrible. The reproduction was so good that he could mistake it for the original from across the room.²⁰⁵ Late in life, six people he knew had copies of the print and he doubted that there were any others in England because an American bought had up all the rest to put into motel rooms in the USA—he was, a friend said, ‘tickled pink about that.’²⁰⁶

He subscribed at this time to *The Times*, the *Sunday Times*, the *Catholic Herald* and, until 1951, the *Church Times*. He also read the *Listener* and the *Tablet*.

He sometimes felt compelled to write letters to the press, although he ‘loathed’ writing them because of the ‘awful effort’ it cost him to express himself concisely. In July 1950, a correspondent in the *Listener* attacked abstract painting as ‘a fallacy and a hoax’ and proclaimed that Victor Pasmore’s latest paintings ‘mean nothing and communicate nothing.’ Jones thought this ‘so offensive & ... *stupid*’ that he wrote—‘tamely’ because trying to ‘keep to the point’—in praise of Pasmore as a ‘an able and sincere artist.’ He went on to say that

it is an abstract *quality*, however hidden or devious, which determines the real worth of any work. This is true of Botticelli’s Primavera, of the White Horse of Uffington, of the music of Monteverdi, of *Finnegans Wake*, of the ‘Alfred jewel’, of the glass goblet I am now trying to draw, of the shape of a liturgy, of the shape of a tea-cup.

Abstraction is, moreover, characteristic of ‘most of the vital works of our time.’ After his letter was published, he received a letter of support from Herbert Read inviting him to visit him and his wife in Yorkshire. Replying to Read, he said that it seemed odd that he, of all people, should be defending abstraction and that he should be doing it in ‘1950—not 1912.’²⁰⁷

On 2 September 1950, he read in the *Tablet* the encyclical *Humani Generis*, in which Pius XII reaffirms the 1906 condemnation of modernism and attacks the theory of evolution. Jones was furious. He accepted the validity of evolutionary theory, which is a basic assumption throughout the first section of *The Anathemata*. In the margin of the encyclical, where the Pope asserts the historical character of the first eleven chapters of Genesis and stresses that ‘Original sin is the result of a sin committed, in actual historical fact, by an individual man named Adam’, Jones comments ‘Ho ho!’ He marks with an X the Pope’s assertion that the authority of scripture extends beyond theology and morality to science. Irate, he contacted Grisewood and together they went to the Jesuit house on Farm Street to see Fr Vincent Tanner, whom Jones had got to know at Campion Hall.²⁰⁸ The priest reminded them that papal authority, like scriptural authority, was limited to matters of faith and morals. Privately Jones doubted that it extended to morals.

The papal condemnation renewed memory of an outrage four years before, which still rankled. One of Gill’s last works, commissioned by Cardinal Hinsley, was an altarpiece for the chapel of the English Martyrs in the north aisle of Westminster Cathedral. Finishing it just before his death, Gill had carved Thomas More beneath the cross with a small tailless pet monkey

clinging to his coat. After the war, the relief was installed but with the monkey chiseled off. Hinsley's successor, Cardinal Bernard Griffin, had ordered the erasure because he thought a monkey would remind people of evolution. Although then in the midst of his second breakdown, Jones had written in protest to the *Catholic Herald*, remembering Gill telling him that the monkey represented 'the ape-ishness of man and, further, and more important still, ... the whole animal creation suppliant at the Tree ... to which all creation owes a kind of Latria.' Jones wrote that 'the ape-made-stone turned out to be one of the more lively' parts of the work and objected that 'there are no 'unimportant details' in a work of art.'²⁰⁹

He was irritated into writing to the *Catholic Herald* on Fouquet. In a letter published 22 August 1952, a correspondent 'appeared to think that Fouquet was "indecent" but he didn't say so straight out'. Instead, he 'introduced all that theoretic stuff about how the Gothic tradition could not be "monumental" because it was not concerned with space & mass etc etc etc, in the way that the great Italians were. I *do* dislike that sort of argument from some general *theory*. But I think it was the somewhat facetious note about Fouquet not being up to sacristy standard or indeed *Vogue* standard with regard to propriety that irritated me most.' He thought that most Catholics today 'and certainly the Hierarchy' would be 'put out by the candour of the middle ages.' Without 'tolerance for changing notions of propriety ... we should have to put the works of the Ages of Faith on the Index.'²¹⁰

In 1950 or '51, he and Honeyman went together to Keats Grove, Hampstead, to the house of a former Northwick Lodger, Dr John Hamlin and his new wife, Camilla, both of whom they liked very much, and to what they anticipated would be a gourmet dinner. But neither Honeyman nor Jones could eat what was served, which included shellfish. After the meal, Hamlin invited them to look at the pictures his wife had painted—all, in style and subject, academic. Before one after another, Jones stood, wringing his hands—he could not lie—uncomfortably muttering, 'Oh, um, ... very competent' or 'Nice background' until she realized, with good humour, 'Oh you really don't like any of them.' Driving home, Honeyman and Jones went into such hysterics that Honeyman had to pull over and stop the car. It had been such a terrible evening.²¹¹

In 1950 Honeyman left Northwick Lodge to do final studying for exams at home, then to work in the City for a firm of chartered surveyors named Richard Ellis. He left behind a mirror as a present for Jones, who, for Christmas, placed it on a bookshelf and draped holly and

mistletoe on it. He was not drawing but ‘trying to get on with’ his book.²¹² Honeyman gave him his business card, which was, he confided to Percival, ‘pretty awful,’ but, Jones stressed, Honeyman was ‘a nice person—jolly nice,’ and that was what mattered most.²¹³ He was extremely fond of Honeyman, whose attachment to Jones was so marked that it aroused jealousy in his mother.²¹⁴ Honeyman would eventually become managing director of the English Property Corporation. Throughout his sky-rocketing career, he would remain a faithful friend, visiting Jones, having him home to supper, or speaking with him on the phone once a week.

Sometime after Honeyman’s departure, the coal fire in his room was replaced by an electric heater. He told Honeyman, ‘they’ve taken away a living thing.’ He thought, with dark irony of the moving lines of an English song: ‘Neither fire-light nor candle-light / Can ease my heart’s despair.’ Making things worse was his own ineptitude with mechanical contrivances. ‘If the electric lighting or heating gadgets go wrong I’m sunk—demoralized & wholly out of my depth—and sigh for candles or paraffin lamps—...unless one knows at least how to replace a fuse or whatever the bloody thing’s called one can do nothing—absolutely nothing without the assistance of someone or other familiar with all the gadgetry.’²¹⁵ One visitor observed: “For quite a time he kept trying to make tea, trying to get the element to heat, poking, shaking, thumping, quietly but firmly swearing, then finally, after many minutes, he saw that the switch was off at the wall plug.”²¹⁶

In January 1948, he had looked over what he had written since 1937 and decided that he had to make ‘a quite new start,’ deriving the rhythms of his language from those of *Piers Plowman*.²¹⁷ He could mine the old material but wanted to establish a ‘horizon’ that was ‘much wider.’ The setting in Jerusalem at the time of the Passion would remain—he now ‘thought a great deal’ about his stay in Jerusalem—but the work now began to expand to the ‘whole “Argosy of Mankind”’ from prehistory to modern times. First of all, he needed ‘a different ‘strategy’. Instead of trying to unite the soliloquies, interior monologues, meditations and narratives into a continuous whole, he chose a fragmented, open form. In this he was influenced by *The Waste Land* and probably by Eliot’s letter advising him about the essay ‘Art in Relation to War’ to ‘make it looser instead of tighter.’ This would, Eliot writes, involve ‘separating & reshuffling; but you would find it easier to add to.’ The letter had special significance for Jones since, of all

those he received from Eliot, it is the only one he kept by itself in an envelope marked ‘Keep. *Private & Personal.*’ Separating and reshuffling, he excluded most of what he wrote at Sheffield Terrace and began writing new material.²¹⁸

He made several ‘false starts & restarts’ until he discovered, early in 1949, a seven-page poetic fragment in which a person attending Mass daydreams about the events commemorated by the Mass. Written in 1945, this material was originally intended for a poem to be entitled ‘The Mass.’ He bisected this text, dividing the elevation of the consecrated bread from the consecration of the wine. It was now a framing text, the frame to be filled with selected, rewritten, and newly written material. The text grew from seven to twenty-four pages—the first foliation (continuous growth of draft material) of the poem. His choice of a frame-setting meant that, when finished, the poem would open with the elevation of the host and close, 194 pages later, with the elevation of the chalice. Everything in between—all the meditating, daydreaming, speaking, and imaginative traveling during different historical periods—occurs instantaneously during the brief and continuous act of the consecration. The sacrament resonates symbolically with all it textually contains. This corresponds to its giving positive meaning to life in all its biological, psychological, and artistic dimensions and largely deriving its meaning from those dimensions. Jones believed that ‘the Mass *makes sense* of everything.’²¹⁹ (In the published poem, the framing Mass-text corresponds to pages 49-53 and 241-43.)

He was convinced of the difference between himself and other writers ‘who think of “poetry” as some important but rather special form of activity.’ He was, for instance, unconcerned with conventional verse forms. He confided to Grisewood,

I don’t believe I’m interested in ‘poetry’ as such. I *always* think of a painting or a writing as just another form or mode of quite ordinary & observable and *objective* events. It is ... the reason why I felt the Mass to be a rational, acceptable, coherent, re-calling of the Passion under an art-form. ... I do still feel that the Church ... commits us, irrevocably to this basic notion of ‘art’—as a thing which ‘shows-forth’ under another form existing realities. Even the old ‘Penny Catechism’ was nearer the mark as ‘art-criticism’ when it says that the Mass is a showing again in an unbloody manner what was done once and for all in a bloody manner ... I am sure that some such concept is the inner secret & nodal point of *all* the arts.²²⁰

What was true of the Consecration during Mass, which would now contain the rest of his poem, was true of all the art in the poem, including the Lascaux cave paintings and prehistoric, Greek, and medieval sculpture.

Not extrinsic form but ‘inner necessities’ determined the immediate form of the writing. Not experimenting, as he had with *In Parenthesis*, he now tried only to achieve ‘precision’ while losing ‘as little as possible of the overtones & undertones evoked by the words used.’ ‘Nearly all the time,’ he was thinking of ‘how, in certain juxtapositions, *this* word rather than *that* would best calls up the somewhat complex image required.’ His ‘method’ was ‘merely to arse around’ until the ‘shape’ and ‘image’ was right—just as in painting or drawing. An important criterion was how it sounded when he read it aloud to himself. He wrote, ‘if the words appear to me to include the various allusions (that’s my *first* requirement) and if they also have a sound that tallies with, or better still re-enforces the meanings & feelings both proximate and more remote, then I let it bide unless I can think-up a better way of saying it.’ He arranged the writing spatially on the page to enhance meaning. He rewrote many passages more than a dozen times, some over twenty times. After the model of the entry for Christmas in *The Roman Martyrology* (and influenced by parallel time-charts he had created in the endpapers of *Israel before Christ*, a short book Bussell had given him ‘sometime circa 1942-4’), he began ‘to stitch ... pieces together’, initially arranging them according to the dates of prehistoric and historic events leading up to the Passion. Out of this process, *The Anathemata* ‘began to take shape’ not as ‘a planned work’ but ‘as it went along.’ Yet it did not just happen: ‘an art-work must be a “made thing”,’ he wrote, ‘with all its parts integrated into one whole, ... it is not at all a subjective matter, but an objective one,’ and his overriding concern was that ‘form and content should be *one*.’²²¹

He rewrote, adding to the foliation within the framing text. An initial page-long meditation on prehistory grew into roughly pages 55-61 of the section entitled ‘Rite and Fore-time’ in the published text. This growth then continued into material about Christmas (the first part of the section that would be entitled ‘Mabinog’s Liturgy,’ 224-33), which then grew to include the Last Supper (the opening of ‘Sherthursdaye and Venus Day’). A good deal of expansion and in-filling followed, ending with ancient Aegean voyaging (‘Middle-Sea and Lear-Sea,’ 84-97). He would have a special liking for this section, especially its ship passages, which he thought ‘the best bits.’²²² When finished, the second foliation was 259 foolscap pages with a great deal of overlap, since a page often began with rewriting part of the previous page.

At the opening of this foliation-within-the-frame, he introduced an emphasis on geomorphology and evolutionary biology that was new to literature. He found science

‘incredibly “romantic”... & the more factual so much the more moving.’ A few years before, he had written Ede, ‘I always think it strange that old man Darwin moaned in late life that he could no longer appreciate poetry because of his long & devoted service to the facts of material science—god dam it it ought to be the reverse.’ And he adds, ‘I’ve only just tumbled to the simple scientific fact that ‘water’ is the womb of all life—& of the simplest organisms—well that thrilled me no end—no wonder baptism is by water.’²²³

Within the framing text, the poem was growing organically. He wrote a page or so in pencil, revised it in ink, then pushed forward in pencil, just as he had with *In Parenthesis*. To keep order, he numbered the worksheets, often making multiple versions of a single sheet. At every stage, he wrote new material for insertion. There was very little rearrangement. He mentions in his Preface that ‘what is now sheet 166 of my MS has at different times been sheet 75 and sheet 7,’ but this page was the last of his framing Mass-text and remained the last page of each foliation, taking on a higher number as insertions expanded the split.²²⁴ (These are its page numbers in the three initial foliations.)

The third foliation also grew from a single-page insertion. He added ancient voyaging towards Britain (the second part of ‘Middle-Sea and Lear-Sea’), then the beginning of a monologue by his maternal grandfather, Eb Bradshaw, Protestant and protesting as he refuses a Catholic’s bribe to do a quick, shoddy ship’s repair. Then came voyaging up the English coast during the Anglo-Saxon settlement, after which he completed his grandfather’s monologue, one of his ‘favourite bits.’ He then began the monologue of a late-medieval lavender-seller named Elen, who personifies London and symbolizes mother-earth in her local manifestation from pre-historic Celtic to modern times. While writing this monologue (‘The Lady of the Pool’ 124-56), he had in mind Dickensian women known in childhood, some relatives, some who had worked for his mother, and Medworth’s loquacious and entertaining Cockney grandmother. Elen is part guardian goddess like Athena, part Wife of Bath. She is part Hogarthian ‘& a bit John Gay-ish, ... of the Old Religion (in more ways than one) yet ... somewhat ‘18th Cent’ because the sea-power thing somehow clings to that century in one’s imagination.’ In giving her trans-temporality, he was helped by Queen Elizabeth I having said ‘I am Richard the Second—know you not that?’—a remark he had always thought ‘most interesting.’ Another influence was Winston Churchill, that epitome of British resolve and national defense. ‘THIS BOROUGH

WERE NEVER FORCED,' boasts Elen (163), who, because fat (like Churchill), would 'make a whale of a mere-maid' (166). Later when Jones wondered who might read the part of Elen on radio, he thought, with some amusement, 'Winston, in a certain mood, would be ideal for the job!' He wrote Elen's monologue to what is now its midpoint, which is also the midpoint of the poem, and then closed it with a catalogue of London churches. While working on her monologue, he looked at *London Past & Present* (1916), which contains drawings of many of the places she mentions as they then looked in relation to neighbouring buildings. Her long monologue—which caused him much difficulty—would be another of his favourite parts.²²⁵

Finished by December 1949, this third foliation was double the length of the second. Although the poem was far from complete, he sent it to Nest Cleverdon for typing. She attempted to reproduce the manuscript spacing and layout but 'it wasn't *quite* right.' He returned it for retyping, as he would repeatedly with additional material. Later she had an incapacitating miscarriage, and the job of typing passed to Louise MacNeice's secretary, Ruth Winaver, a lodger with the Cleverdons. When she fell ill, Morag McLennan took over. With them all, he insisted on precise line lengths and placings.²²⁶

On 2 January 1950, he sent to Grisewood for his 'severest criticism' a carbon copy of the first typescript with the comment, 'I'm not very happy about it but I think it gets slightly better if you read it two or three times.' Grisewood's reaction came ten days later: 'This is just to say Hooray for the arrival of yr MS last night which I began to gulp down like a thirsty man leaning over a brook Nothing I can say now except that it seems to be written beautifully for the voice.'²²⁷ They met on the 24th at his office, where Jones read him a section he was revising. Afterwards over lunch at the Garrick Club, Grisewood told him that the writing reminded him of Pindar, whose work is 'amazingly *allusive*' and who 'has a tremendous sense of reference to time & place' and a unique 'historical/racial/religious idea.' So Jones researched Pindar and found their writing 'astonishingly' similar—he read that Pindar achieved a 'distinct diction' rich in metaphor and simile and concentrated on mythic associations with place, often in prolonged digressions. He was predominantly a poet of praise, and devoted to the gods, especially the mother goddess, Cybele.²²⁸

The severe cold of the winter of 1949-50 kept him indoors, concentrating on writing, painting very little.²²⁹ Robert Harling, the editor of *Art and Technics*, phoned about reproducing

The Bride and the last of the *Deluge* engravings in a special number devoted to ‘English Wood-Engravings 1900-1950. Jones complained of having a cold, and Harding told him he hadn’t ‘had a cold for five years owing to taking cold baths’—a claim so astonishing to Jones that he remembered it and recorded it in the margin of a letter from Harling’s secretary six months later.

In the spring, he met with Eliot, who had just received the Nobel Prize. Jones talked about his progress with *The Anathemata*. He complained that the writing ‘never seems to get completed & the worst of taking so long is that one changes & what was all right a year or so ago won’t do now.’ He wrote four more series of drafts, completing ‘The Lady of the Pool’ in which the voyage of *The Mary* is the first of his manuscripts written in ball-point pen. At the end of this ship’s home-coming he drew a wonderful little sketch of a ship sailing into harbour backlit by low sunshine. He then went on to write about the universal world-ship, an image influenced by his memory of reading ‘bits of’ Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Clement of Alexandria in the 1920s. What most impressed him about them was their comparison of Christ to Odysseus, the Church to a ship, and the cross to the ship’s mast. Writing this was ‘infernal effort,’ getting nautical words ‘technically accurate’ while being evocative of the feeling he wanted, and ‘linking in some way the horizontal keel with the essentially horizontal “ram” as a military engine and these with the vertical pole for the garlands ... that foreshadowed the art works of the carved Rood.’ (There are twenty-three surviving early drafts of material on the ram, prior to the foliation drafts.) He then composed a numinous description of Arthur’s queen, Gwynhwyfar, at the offertory of a fifth-century Christmas midnight Mass (‘Mabinog’s Liturgy,’ 194-221)—eight drafts, with eleven drafts for her hair. The Mass she attends is a deliberate anachronism, ‘not as a 5th Cent mass would be, but as a modern mass in fact is’—with the elevation of the host and chalice [at the Offertory], which did not occur until the high middle ages’. Her numinous description is a shining moment in modern literature. A medieval Demeter (clothed, like the altar), Gwynhwyfar bows at the offering of bread, i.e., of herself:

If her gilt, unbound
(for she was consort of a *regulus*) and falling to below her
sacral bone, was pale as standing North-Humber barley-corn,
here, held back in the lunula of Doleucothi gold, it was
paler than under-stalks of barley, held in the sickle’s lunula.
So that the pale gilt where it was by nature palest, together

with the pale river-gold where it most received the pallid candle-sheen,
rimmed the crescent whiteness where it was whitest.

Or was there already silver to the gilt? (196-7)

‘Gilt’ has its homonym. North-Humberland is the site of Lancelot’s castle. The intimations of mortality apply to her culture as well as herself. Jones worried that her entire description was ‘somewhat of a “purple passage” owing to’ his ‘effort to get her full splendour’—he knew that ‘*Gwen*,’ which means ‘white,’ can also mean ‘blessed,’ or ‘holy,’ something true in her at a deeper level than adulterous misbehavior. Her description was now and would remain his favourite part of the poem. After finishing her, he adjusted geological description of the earth in ‘Rite and Fore-Time’ (61-74) so that, as earth mother, she verbally resonates with the earth in its geomorphic formation. Finally, in ‘Mabinog’s Liturgy,’ he finished a conversation between medieval Welsh witches—hard to write and the only part of the poem about which he would have serious doubts.²³⁰

As when writing *In Parenthesis*, he avoided reading contemporary literature for fear of influence, but he read a lot else. To verify and correct historical and cultural content, he researched what he had ‘perhaps half forgotten.’²³¹ While writing ‘The Lady of the Pool’ he was ‘re-reading, refreshing, re-digging things half-remembered’ mostly in Stowe’s ‘fascinating’ *Survey of London*. Until the Blitz, the sites Stowe mentions had been largely recognizable. In his preface, he lists fifty books and authors consulted. Of these, the most important source for anthropological and prehistoric details is Dawson’s *The Age of the Gods* (1928), to which he had ‘always been very attached’ as throwing ‘light on all subsequent human cultures & developments.’ He takes Dawson’s account of Neanderthal funerals as the temporal focus of his combined central themes of art and religion. Also important was Knight’s *Cumaeae Gates* (1936), which concerns prehistoric labyrinths and helped Jones ‘to continue’ in 1948 ‘the beginnings of Ana.’ Most of the books he read were borrowed from the London Library—Helen Sutherland renewed his subscription annually on his birthday. (When he lost the library copy of Knight’s *Virgil’s Troy*, Knight had Blackwell’s send him a replacement copy and one for himself.) He bought cheap post-war Penguin paperbacks such as R.H. Barrow’s *The Romans* (1949, ‘first class’) and H. Mattingly’s translation of Tacitus (1948, ‘awfully good),

‘so nice to read the classics in straightforward, unflowery, modern English—intelligible in a way for the first time.’ In 1950 he bought a copy of *Websters New International Dictionary*, with which he was delighted because, he told Honeyman, ‘It’s got Greek goddesses at the back.’²³²

He also sought help from friends. Early on, he was in torment trying to determine the circumference of the Trojan wall, when, fortunately, Bussell visited and was able to calculate its circumference as 753 marching paces, its diameter 200 yards. To ensure accuracy about Roman military rams, Jones consulted Jackson Knight. About Classical matters, he also consulted Plumtree, Richard Owens, and Edward Malan. When writing about ships and their bearings, he telephoned Mike Richey, who was working for the newly founded Institute of Navigation. (As Richey’s guest, Jones sometimes lunched, in the high room, which he loved, of the Royal Geological Society.) He consulted Richey about the precise bearing of the sun at the time of the crucifixion for a ship approaching Athens from the south-west (see *A* 95). Richey gave him a nautical dictionary, in which he was delighted to see ‘keel’ defined as ‘principal member of a ship’s construction’--the Keel of the world-ship in *The Anathemata* is the divine Logos. In using nautical terms, he wanted to avoid inaccuracy and pedanticism. Beneath the nautical research was memory of his mother’s conversation about her shipwright grandfather and the Rotherhithe of her childhood. (He believed that ‘the ‘contactual’ thing, by whatever circuitous channel, *must come first*.’) About the passages having to do with ships and navigation, Richey later commented, ‘He got the whole thing absolutely right.’ While correcting proofs Jones wrote Sir Ifor Williams to check the correctness of a Welsh expression.²³³

His ideal readers included Dawson. In the spring of 1950, Jones was reading Dawson’s *Religion & the Rise of Western Culture*, ‘one of his *best* efforts ... complete mastery of an enormously complicated & intricate mass of stuff, made comprehensible & clear without any point being missed or disregarded—its a *wonderful* achievement.’ This was like what he was doing in *The Anathemata*. (Jones he would send a copy to Dawson, who, in his thankyou letter, would say that the work used English as the sixth-century Celts used Latin and asks whether this was deliberate—it was not—confirming Jones in his belief in the historical analogy between the Dark Ages and the present modern age. This was the same macaronic language that Eric McLaggan had earlier thought influenced *In Parenthesis*—a usage that, Jones noted, received only

disparaging academic references, such as ‘the absurd bastardized obscurity of the hisperic writers.’) Other ideal readers were Grisewood and Knight. And like Dawson, they contributed to the writing. Jones told Knight that his books and conversation ‘have been a constant help toward some dim understanding on my part of what this inherited stuff is all about, or how it links up with other things. Often ... I have had a sense of recognition—of being told something one had vaguely half- or quarter-guessed, but which only your sort of scholarship could show forth & make sense of.’ He also imagined as readers Hague, Burns, Helen Sutherland, Ede, and even Desmond Chute, who he was ‘somewhat afraid’ might not like it.²³⁴ He also, especially imagined Eliot as its reader but was not showing it to him.

By the time he reached the centre-point of the ‘Lady of the Pool,’ in December 1949, he conceived of expanding the circularity of the framing Mass-text in an extraordinary spatial shape that would be new to literature. At the centre of the poem (157), he wrote a lyrical celebration of the crucifixion, so that—spatially conceived and with the understanding that the Eucharist sacramentally makes present the crucifixion—the centre and circumference of the poem are identical. Within the eucharistic frame or circumference and with the same eucharistic centre he created a chiasmic recession of eight circles defined by breakings-off and resumptions of text. For example, the first of these inner circles consists of the breaking-off of the questions dating the paschal events on p. 94 and their resumption on p. 185.* In relation to content, the overall shape symbolizes the centrality of the Eucharist as containing and being contained by the whole of life and as the meaning and fulfillment of all aspects of life. Jones never revealed this structural element, though he hinted at it when he told Jackson Knight, ‘I think ... it circles round [the] central theme’ and its “plot” is as ‘the dance round the may-pole plots itself out in patterns round the central arbor.’ His elaborate, symbolically powerful shape is unique in modern

* The other inner circles are the account of a ship’s arrival in ancient Greece (96 / 182) and, within the ‘The Lady of the Pool,’ Elen calling her wares (125 / 168), Elen warning a Mediterranean captain about winter (125 / 168), Elen cataloging London churches (127 / 161), Elen recounting a tryst with a lover (130 / 160), Elen discussing her education by sea-captains (135 / 159), and Elen recounting a Syro-Phoenician’s stories (155 / 158).

literature.* The final return of the poem to its beginning is not merely an artificial gimmick. It reflects the shape of his long conversations, as experienced by many friends, one of whom said, 'He had always a very clear root map etched on his mind because ... he would appear to wander far and wide but he wouldn't let you go until he had brought the thing back to its point of departure. It was a great circle.'²³⁵ Elaborating on circularity, the shape of the poem is a mandala, whose meaning (and achievement) is significant integration and unity. The eight circles evoke the common unicursal ring-mazes of Europe, which traditionally consist of eight rings, but it also suggests a rippling of circles that might go on forever.²³⁶

He would never have achieved this essentially spatial structure had he not, as a visual artist, already invented a similar shape in his illustrated books *The Deluge* and the *Ancient Mariner*. In both of these he had wed spatial simultaneity with literary-temporal extension in a chiasmic recession of paired images, one pair within the other. Behind this shape are various influences. Placing text within a text is like painting window views, in which still life surrounds landscape. He had seen recessions of circles on tree stumps—it was the pattern of organic growth, visible in the woodblocks he had engraved—and in the cut ends of sixty-percent wax candles used at Mass. In pubs he had seen dart boards, and, as a soldier, he had spent hours concentrating on the bull's eyes of circular targets—something he alludes to when saying how pleased he is with his comparison of Mary to Iphigenia (*A* 128), 'because one feels most of one's attempts may be "outers" & some not on the bloody target at all.' He was fascinated by the ancient protective ritual that defined the sacred *pomoerium* of a city, the magic circle of protection and site-line for the construction of the city wall. Years later, when speaking about shape with a visitor from the Sorbonne, he said that everything constituted a sort of circle—'I need to think that everything is complete somewhere'—but within that circle, which provided a feeling of security, he most wanted space and freedom.²³⁷

In the *Lady of the Pool* section and elsewhere in this poem, he also followed Stevenson's advice and consciously came to terms with the Oedipal complex, through the theme of the Earth

* The only things remotely like this kind of shape are the structural manifestation of geometric 'ring-composition' in Homeric epic and *emboitment* (interfitting) pattern in medieval literature, for example in *Gawain and the Green Knight*.

Mother as mythic magnification of his own (and everybody's) mother. Jones consciously acknowledging this psychic phenomenon that had unconsciously exercised so much influence on him, as it has on culture generally. In making art of his psychic interiority it ceased solely to be personal. Art was the means for him to gain perspective on the archetype.

He added two subtitles. One is 'fragments of an attempted writing'—not, as it may seem, an admission that *The Anathemata* is unfinished, and not a reference to the material written prior to 1947, from which he extracted fragments. He explained, 'I feel that about most of my work: It is an attempt ... and, I think (rightly or wrongly) necessarily 'fragmentary' because,' owing to the complications of our civilizational phase, 'we surely tend to fragmented works. Anyway, I did not mean to imply a lack of artistic wholeness.' The other subtitle 'Teste David cum Sibylla' is from the *Dies Irae* and sums up for him 'the whole apperception of the Aramaean & Hellenistic cultures.' They also imply that he saw his own poetic testimony as prophetic, not mystical or future-seeing but prophetic in the Thomistic sense of announcing, in words of Victor White that Jones liked, 'something present ... whose significance lies ultimately in eternity.'²³⁸

Throughout the writing of *The Anathemata* the 'paramount question' haunting him was 'are we cut off from our whole past or are we not?' If the severance was total, his writing would be pointless, but if a connection remained possible, his work might contribute to preserving something that fructifies a new age. He might be a means of linking a still-vital past to a future beyond the current Dark Age. Remembering that Alcuin and Charlemagne had restored and preserved the inheritance of Classical culture, he hoped to do something similar, though not on that scale. His basic allegiance was to 'man-the-maker', and western culture was, in all its complexity and variegation, the finest thing man had made. Once after Honeyman praised some aspect of western art, Jones had said, 'you're like me, you've got the west wind in your face.' He regarded western culture from within his own British, partly Welsh identity but also saw and subscribed to its Catholic and Protestant breadth, its Classical core, and its prehistoric roots, increasingly revealed by modern anthropology. Gregory of Tours had been nicknamed 'the bridge' for linking moribund Classical culture to nascent Christian culture. Now, Jones was building a bridge—or, to retrieve an image of twenty years earlier, an ark to ride the deluge. Out of this ark the core of western cultural tradition might tumble, safe, when the flood receded. The ark is the paradigm of the ships perilously sailing through his poem. Another analogous image

important to him was mythic sleep: that of Cronos, that of Arthur, an image of near forgetting, of underlying continuity promising eventual awakening. The dark meantime is dream-time, opportunity for art. Using military language, he referred to his vocation as ‘keeping the lines of communication open.’ He had in mind the examples of Malory, who conveyed for future ages something of the reality of medieval chivalry, and also Cecil Sharp, ‘only-just-in-time’ to save the Somersetshire folksongs in the eighteenth century.²³⁹

Jones was no mere antiquary. He assembled the past, as content, in modernist open form, which paradoxically expresses severance from the past. Re-calling of tradition is saved from nostalgia by fragmented form and colloquial usage that transforms it. As a result the old is new. On this respect, the poem is analogous to culture itself, reborn as something significantly other and yet, if only because human nature is a constant, essentially what it has always been. In his later poetry, he writes about containing defenses that sustain the spark or seed of culture for future transformation (*SL* 62-4). The unifying spatial structure of *The Anathemata* suggests the impossibility of ultimate metaphysical loss, but cultures can be lost, and if he was consoling himself for the expulsion he felt from the vital, traditional Western culture by technological civilization, an expulsion begun before he was born, he was also providing redemption from loss.

Paradise, as he and Freud knew, was maternal. Writing was compensation or consolation for separation from the mother, just as it had begun as compensation for lost ability to draw and paint, which he had inherited from her. *The Anathemata* is, after all, a poem in which earth, Church, western culture, Britain, and London are symbolically female and maternal. He knew about the Freudian return to the womb, which would inform a later poem about a Roman soldier recalling a dream of being on the lap of the earth mother (*SL* 15-23). Without reducing art merely to mother-substitution, all his writing probably involves such consolation to a degree. Jones habitually called his second epic-length poem by the nickname *Ana*. That his mother’s middle name was Ann may be merely a coincidence, but he was writing it while exploring with Stevenson the implications for him of the Oedipal complex.

The painter Ray Howard Jones and her lover Raymond Moore began visiting him. Jones had met her in 1920 when they were art students. She had returned to London, from living in Wales and, finding it nearly impossible to get exhibited, was earning a living doing medical drawing in the

operating theatre of a London teaching hospital. She and Moore were spending summers off the coast of Pembrokeshire on remote Skomer Island. She showed Jones her sketchbooks, in which he particularly liked her drawings of birds. They talked about her friend Dylan Thomas—she had arranged for him to live and work in Phyllis Bowen's boathouse in Laugharne. She and Jones



17. DJ and Ray Howard-Jones at Northwick Lodge, photo by Raymond Moore c. 1950

commiserated about ill health and difficulty painting. They agreed about remaining single because the total dedication demanded by art did not suit the responsibilities of marriage and family. They talked about current exhibitions, about Ceri Richards' work, which he considered 'real'. They agreed about the importance of symbolism despite contemporary fashion in which nearly all financially successful painting was abstract. He told her that in the '30s, when it started, he had thought abstract art was rather good

and liked it but that now he thought there was nothing much there. They complained about the lack of good draughtsmanship in so much current work. They agreed that each painter should be himself or herself and not be swept up into an ism—even though being in a clique enhances reputation because it allows for facile, general critical response. He may have thought of himself as well as her when he wrote, years later, that her work 'has an individual sensitivity and hence is not patient of being conveniently placed in the filing-boxes of the various prevailing "isms"'. This may well contribute to her having received less notice than might otherwise be the case.'²⁴⁰

Much younger than she, her companion, already one of Britain's best photographers, photographed them in conversation (fig. 17) and, at his request, photographed his pictures. He loved Jones and, throughout their visits, took a series of portraits of Jones, which are the only portrait-photographs by Moore of anyone and the most expressive of Jones ever taken.

In 1951, she and Moore brought along Arthur Giardelli, a forty-year-old London-born watercolour painter, maker of relief constructions, and, for the past three years, free-lance lecturer whom she had met on Skomer. As a visual artist, Giardelli studied at the Ruskin School

of Art in Oxford and subsequently with Cedric Morris. He had been an admirer of Jones's work since 1938, when he first saw it at Oxford in Michael Sadler's collection. As an unemployed conscientious objector during the war, he had launched the 1944 touring exhibit of Jones's work by asking the C.E.M.A. to send it to Wales. During the exhibit, he lectured on the pictures and, at the end of the tour, bought *Manawyddan's Glass Door* for £49. Jones came to the outside door of Northwick Lodge heavily clad to meet them. After bringing them into his room, he removed three overcoats. Giardelli was enthusiastic, spontaneous, intelligent, and genial. Long wishing to meet Jones, he had several times written to him without receiving a reply. In the course of conversation, he asked, 'Why didn't you answer my letters?' and Jones said, 'I didn't know you would be like this' and explained that he had thought him, with a name like Giardelli, a mid-European intellectual.²⁴¹

He and Jones became good friends. At Oxford Giardelli had studied French, Italian and art history, all of which now seemed to him preparation for meeting David Jones, whom he recognized as a painter and intellectual steeped in the European tradition. They spoke of the Arthurian myth as expressed in French literature. They talked about Dante, much admired by Giardelli, who had opened his mind to the Christian faith, which was a further area of agreement between them. When Giardelli mentioned having written a thesis on Botticelli's illustrations of Dante, Jones expressed intense admiration of them and astonishment that they were so little known and appreciated.²⁴² Giardelli told him about, and quoted in its entirety, Villon's prayer to the Blessed Virgin. It became a favourite of Jones (see *A* 209). From now on when Len Walton praised Racine, Jones said he preferred Villon.

He told Giardelli of his admiration the paintings of Julius Caesar Ibbertson, which express a great sense of Welshness, and those of Richard Wilson. The latter was, a North Welshman and an 18th-century imaginative landscape painter in the manner of Poussin and Claude. He failed financially because Reynolds considered his landscapes to be insufficiently classical. 'What a beautiful painter he was—very interesting how within the confines ... of that particular formal highly "academic" tradition he managed to get a magic quality that was his own',²⁴³

Giardelli and Jones corresponded, and whenever he came to London, Giardelli telephoned and visited. During visits he would say, 'Let's have a look at the pictures', and Jones

would take the framed pictures from where they were stacked against the wall, talk about them, then take out the portfolios, and they would look through them. Repeatedly Giardelli asked to buy a picture. Always Jones answered, 'I need these things for my work.' Giardelli lived in Pendine where he ran a guesthouse for foreign students with a sea view that included Caldey Island. He invited Jones to come stay with him and his wife. Jones said, 'Perhaps I will.' Giardelli would recall, 'I've never known a man with a wider range of facial expression. He could look utterly dejected and then he could look seraphic.'²⁴⁴

At the end of January 1951 Jones became ill with flu. After a week lying flat he was 'sitting up' but not going down for meals. He was 'reading nothing but geology & anthropology & prehistory,' getting 'one or two things a little more fixed' in his mind, but sure he would forget it all. He reread 'for the umpteenth time' Dawson's *Age of the Gods* and realized what a master he is 'of the art of driving a chariot with innumerable horses without getting his reins tangled. He also reread Spengler. 'What a bloke! He is so superbly thought-provoking *even* in those places where he is most maddening & stupid & unlovable & iron fisted & blustering.'²⁴⁵

On Good Friday 1951, he went into London to the Oratory for the 'Mass of the Presanctified.' He realized again that one of his favourite things in the world was Palestrina's setting to *Agios o Theos*. Afterwards he had lunch at the Pollens and then went to the singing of *Tenebrae* at the Oratory.' The office was 'terrific—its about the best moment in the whole year when they sing *Agios athanatos, eleison imas*.' Afterwards he joined the Pollens ('sweet chaps') for supper.²⁴⁶

On Easter monday he came down with a soar throat, which persisted and which Dr Bell diagnosed as pharyngitis, for which he gave Jones injections of penicillin that summer and in subsequent autumns. Jones spent the whole period of the inflammation in bed, having his meals delivered and foregoing the telephone. Unable to speak with friends, he wrote to them. By mid-April his throat felt better but was now suffering from conjunctivitis and an eye-infection that hurt too much to allow him to read for long.²⁴⁷ For virtually the entire first six months of the year he was ill and in bed.

On 22 February 1951, he received an offer of induction into the Royal Academy. In 1947 Robert Buhler had been elected to the Academy and had begun conspiring with Rodrigo Moynihan, Ruskin Spear, James Fetton, and Edward la Bas to force an opening of doors to better

painters. Owing to them, Robert Colquhoun, Robert MacBryde, Francis Bacon, Lucien Freud, and David Jones were nominated for associate membership leading to full membership. The six days that elapsed before Jones replied to this offer ought not to suggest indecision. He liked honours but had always detested the Royal Academy. So had Eric Gill but, when invited to become an associate member in 1937, he accepted because membership was good for sales, and Gill had a family to support. Jones had forgone marriage and a family precisely to avoid compromising his integrity as an artist. When Grisewood heard of the invitation and asked whether he would accept, Jones replied with feeling, ‘It would be an absolutely disgusting betrayal of everything I ever believed in and I could no more have anything to do with the Royal Academy than I could fly.’²⁴⁸ On 26 February, he sent the Secretary to the Royal Academy the shortest letter he ever wrote:

Thank you very much for your letter of Feb 22nd. I apologize for the delay in my reply but I had to give the matter consideration, and while I am sensible of the honour intended I have come reluctantly to the conclusion that I must decline the offer of nomination.

Nine years later, Vincent Lines would invite him to be an honorary member of the Royal Watercolour Society, and he would accept.²⁴⁹

His pictures were included in the Venice Biennale, in a Watercolour Exhibition in Brooklyn, in an exhibition of British taste for a hundred years by the Institute of Contemporary Art, and in various exhibitions during the Festival of Britain. Helen Sutherland loaned many paintings, and Ede’s mother loaned *Vexilla Regis* for the Bristol Art Gallery’s contribution to the Festival. Jones intended to see it before it closed in June but never felt well enough.

Despite all this exposure, he thought he was unappreciated as a painter. The review in *The New Statesman* said that he had been allotted too much space for ‘a genuine but rather limited artist.’ His comment on this to Helen Sutherland was a laconic ‘So there you are!’ He supposed his pictures were now ‘a bit out of fashion.’ When she told him that a young man praised one of his paintings, he told her it was ‘encouraging to hear of someone liking it.’ And he continued, ‘We are all *children* in being pleased when *anyone* likes *anything* we’ve done—it’s quite humiliating & pathetic!’²⁵⁰

In the spring of 1951 and in the midst of his multiple ailments, he was finishing his preface to *The Anathemata* and reading Ezra Pound’s letters:

He is a most astounding man. In his violent way practically always right about the arts. His letters to Lawrence Binyon are of great interest. He is also of course, apart from the rightness of his aesthetic judgments, tremendously amusing about all kinds of things. But of course *very violent indeed*. You can only take him in small doses or you get *bored* with the emphasis, the ceaseless energy, the exaggerations, the japes, the full-bloodedness, sometimes the shy-making absurdities, but by Jove! on the whole he's *most salutary &* very touching also in his whole-hearted, whole-hogging, unsparing devotion to what he conceived was the right thing in the arts. The letters to Eliot are of course enormously interesting. Unfortunately it's a badly edited book & seems very chancy as to what gets in & what does not.

By the end of May he felt well enough to go out for a walk—his first venture outside in a month.²⁵¹

He had hopes for an exhibit in 1951. When well enough, he sometimes painted and completed *La Bonne Bergere* ('the Good Sheperdess') a still-life with winding candleholder, porcelain statuette of the shepherdess, cut flowers, and living green beyond the window. It is inspired by a story told by a French girl staying at Northwick Lodge, who amused him by saying that in the summer 'we go to the mountain'. Her ancestor was a shepherdess in Napoleonic times who beat off a wolf with her crook and a wooden shoe but was deprived of speech for months—a story given extra resonance by his reading, a few days later in a Classical author that wolves have the power to deprive men of speech.²⁵²

But hopes to have enough pictures for an exhibition faded as he focused on his writing—he spent the summer of 1951 correcting four typescripts of *The Anathemata*—and found that painting was increasingly slow. He was beginning to feel a dilemma: because so few pictures were reaching completion, he needed to sell them to earn money but there being so few, he wanted not to part with any.²⁵³

In June 1945 he had seen a large glass goblet 'very big & noble' in a shop but was unable to afford the sixty pence to buy it. Not long after moving to Northwick Lodge, he purchased a chalice like it, which enabled him to return to painting still-lives. But they were different in style from those done earlier—by him or anyone else. His inspiration was the large chalice-shaped goblet, which had 'a light of its own.' He put water in it and flowers and



18. David Jones, *Chalice with Flowers*, 1949

set it, often on a white cloth, on the table before his window (fig. 18). Sometimes the landscape behind it was part of the picture. These pictures pick up where *Briar Cup* (Ch. 9, fig. 23) left off in 1932, but the real subject now is light and, by analogy, grace. The light flooding in from the window, refracted in water and glass which seem sources of light, gave a ‘fluency’ he sought. These pictures had what he liked most, ‘light and movement.’ In contrast to *Vexilla Regis*, their meaning did not outweigh visibility. Although lacking explicit mythological reference, for him, ‘the



19. David Jones, *Flora in Calix-Light*, 1950

painting of a bowl of flowers is necessarily a *signum* of Flora Dea.’²⁵⁴ But *signa* here remain mere hints, subtle in the interaction between seeing and thinking. The experience is predominantly, lyrically visual.

In July 1949 Jim and Helen Ede, still living in Tangier, had visited and seen the first of this new kind of picture. Jones called it the 'Whirling flower-piece'. He thought it unfinished but best left as is. The following spring, he had made one of the best of this new kind of picture, *Flora in Calix-Light* (fig. 19). Ede saw it, loved it, and Jones let him buy it. In it, the central chalice is flanked by empty goblets in a way redolent of the crucifixion scene that inspired *Vexilla Regis*, although here all seems feminine. White, red and blue flowers and thorny briars have their stems concentrated and crossed in water in the transparent chalice. Fronds and petals litter the table. The vessels are themselves flower-like, the central *calix* (Latin for 'chalice') homonymous with calyx, the outer whorl of pedals of a flower—and if flowers had stems, so do these chalice and goblets.²⁵⁵ There is a sense of explosion from the centre, a floral-spiritual big bang. The flanking goblets are empty as if to catch the central outpouring. Iconographically, the thorns, the crucifixion-triptych, and the chalice suggest a union of crucifixion, Eucharist, culture, and outpouring of life in the spring. The glass of the goblets especially is liquid in irregularity, emphasizing affinity between glass and water, between outside and inside. Three waves are visible on the surface of the water at the front of the chalice, suggesting that the water retains the life it has in lakes and streams and seas. If there is a breeze that vibrates the chalice and moves the flowers, then air joins water and light. On the left behind is an open window with its latch, super-real like the glass of the vessels; on the right is the other latch and a tiny distant tree, its trunk like the stem of the vessels. The ambiguous relationship between this vividly indicated background and the less distinct vessels and whorl of vegetation has the effect of turning space inside out. The mystery suggested transcends time as it does space.

Although concentrating on writing, he made at least ten glass-chalice pictures in 1951, by far the most in one year. One of the best this year was, *Y Caregl Blodeuol* ('the flowering chalice'), inspired by a cloth bordered by lace. An elderly woman boarding at Northwick Lodge was an expert at needlework. She showed him some of her work in lace, including a large coverlet. The workmanship was, he thought, superb, reminding him of the famous *opus Anglicanum* of medieval England. She said it was simply what was expected of women when she was young, and he thought to himself, 'Well, yes, ... but precious few were up to your standard.' Wanting to re-present her brilliant needlework in pencil, he asked to borrow a lacey cloth, which he put under his flower-filled glass chalice.²⁵⁶ This painting grew, in a sense, from the

needlework, and has its creative tension in the interplay between lacy intricacy and the blossoms and tendrils above. It resembles *Flora in Calix Light*, and he thought it one of the best of his 'series of flowers in glass bowls.' In 1961 Arthur When would buy it, Jones would tell him that he regretted its loss because it was helpful when working on a kind of picture to have others of the same kind to look at, and When insisted he keep it as long as he wanted. When was, Jones thought, one of the 'very few people' who 'would understand' and 'wait indefinitely' for a picture he had purchased.²⁵⁷

He painted flowers in the glass chalice throughout the 1950s. They looked as though painted with ease but were 'made "With fear & trembling" if only for the purely technical reason that if one made a mess—too much [of this] here or too little of that there—one was bloody-well sunk,' for this was not his thicker kind of painting involving Chinese white body-colour. With them 'there was always a chance of retrieving the situation if things went wrong—as they usually did.' But with these, the central goblet and flowers often came out all right while the table and other things on it would not 'cohere'. Then he would lose his 'grip' and become 'in a sort of way, bored,' and then, he said, 'they won't play.' Although they are similar, for each picture it was 'a very tricky business indeed—finding out what one is *really* trying to do.' In October 1952, one attempt resulted in 'a mess' and prompted him to comment, 'It's always as though one had never drawn before. You *can't* see how to do it and there are so many ways of doing it! When one is younger one is pleased with bits of 'skill' that one arrives at, but when one is older there is *no point* unless one really can 'say something.' One tends to repeat one's old tricks, as it were, if one is not jolly careful.' He would 'find little consolation except in getting one of these bloody works more or less right—that is, alive. For these paintings he preferred wild flowers and he excluded sweet-peas, which he 'loathed'.²⁵⁸

Flowers for these pictures came from the garden behind Northwick Lodge, and as that garden became increasingly overgrown and wild, from Audrey Malan, who had a beautiful garden, and from other visitors. The flowers Audrey remembered bringing were roses, Canterbury bells, scented stocks, snapdragons, marigolds, asters, carnations, and lilies-of-the-valley. As the chalice paintings took 'longer & longer to do,' flowers sometimes died 'four or five times' before he finished. He sympathized with Cézanne's anger over flowers fading and apples going bad while painting them. In the spring of 1950, Kathleen Raine brought him violets,

which tried to paint but they died before he ‘got the hang of it.’ Then, for St David’s day, a visitor brought him daffodils—‘they are absolute hell to do’—and he began again. Though he liked wild daffodils, he also disliked daffodils, partly because someone inevitably gave him some on St David’s day.²⁵⁹

When he stopped work on a picture, his involvement with it remained critical for a long while before he could freely enjoy it. The new flower paintings were such a challenge because they achieve a rare multiple balance between beauty and incoherence, between flatness and depth, between colour and line, between stasis and explosive movement. So diverse and precarious a balance, so dependent on colour. In early May 1950 he painted one entitled *The Gentle Bird*, which Robin Ironside bought and which he thought ‘a bit more “there”’ than some of his work.²⁶⁰

By themselves, these pictures would be all the vindication Jones’s psychotherapy needs. The best of them are easily as free and exciting as his best work of the early 1930s. Yet he felt that in them he was striving a numinous effect that he never fully achieved. After showing some of them to Kathleen Raine in the spring of 1950, he wrote to her, ‘I’m so glad you liked the flower-pictures & encouraged by what you say because one always feels one’s things are fairly moldy; mostly because they are so far from what one “saw” they ought to be, in the eye of the mind, as it were.’ He tended to see ‘the failure to arrive at the desired end.’²⁶¹ In the time since his 1932 breakdown, certainly, these came closest to that end. He was painting as well as he ever had though differently—and it was, for him, a wonderful change, although one he guarded, as if superstitiously, by continual complaint. In his final years he would like these paintings—‘those light “free” ones of bits of flowers & a view outside’—best of all his pictures. After them his favourites would include some 1928-32 seascapes and animal drawings. He regarded these flowers-in-glass chalices ‘as belonging implicitly to the same world of commemoration and anamnesis as ... *The Anathemata*.’²⁶²

He kept his large glass chalice on the windowsill. One day a cleaning woman broke it. From then on he wanted nobody disturbing his things and was determined to clean his room himself.²⁶³

On 22 September 1951, he wrote Eliot to say that *The Anathemata* was nearly finished. Eliot invited him for lunch on 8 October at the Garrick Club so that Jones could hand over the typescript personally and talk with him about it. Before their meeting, Jones went to the South Bank exhibition of Technology, spending an hour and a half there. He had a romantic interest in technology. In 1946, he had had a conversation with Kig Nicholson (Ben's brother and EQ's husband), who told him that if the glider-plane had been developed centuries earlier, aeronautic travel might have developed as did oceanic navigation by sail. Now, however, the engine-driven plane relegated developments in glider technology to sport. The idea of how glider-planes might have developed interested Jones 'very much'.²⁶⁴ (Shortly after talking to them about this, Kit Nicholson died in a glider crash.) At the South Bank exhibition, he expected something 'gay and amusing' but found it 'a great dreariness'. He thought 'the Unicorn pavilion ... pretty horrible just *whimsy*.' It was 'rather like Selfridge's or Harrods at Xmas time, but with all the shop-walkers & window dressers on the staff of the New Statesman.' All the works of art looked 'totally meaningless & at their worst' in that setting. A Graham Sutherland placed alone by the entrance to one exhibit looked better, though not one of his best. He thought the Skylon 'pathetic' and loathed, as he put it, 'the gas jets of flame mixed up with shapeless fountains of water' nearby. He really liked only two things: a big shiny black railway engine and the shape of the Dome of Discovery, whose supporting struts 'had elegance'.²⁶⁵ The overall effect was an abomination of desolation'—vile in its 'trumpery, vulgar, crude, boring, silly'. He now gave up expecting anything beautiful from modern civilization. All he could do was get on with his own work. He gave Eliot his impressions of the exhibition over lunch.

The day after their meeting, Eliot wrote that his first quick inspection of the book confirmed his expectations, and that he was sure it will be published. Afterwards he read it more carefully, and had the sense 'of being in a state of excitement sustained to the end.' This was a relief to Jones, who 'had no idea' what Eliot's reactions might be. The poem is 'difficult' in the modernist style and richly allusive—the sort of thing Eliot would be expected to appreciate. But it was not easy for him to comprehend. Eliot thought that the meaning of *The Anathemata* could be grasped only on a third reading, but he repeatedly expressed enthusiasm for the preface, which suggests that it was the one thing he was sure he fully understood.²⁶⁶ Years later Jones said, '*most of my acquaintances ... find [The Anathemata] obscure, if not incomprehensible*' and

mentioned 'notable exceptions', including Edith Sitwell but not, interestingly, T.S. Eliot, whom he must have realized appreciated the work without comprehending it.²⁶⁷ He was keen to publish it because, Peter du Soutoy thought, he thought its religious aspects were important. The others in the firm were not.²⁶⁸ Eliot may have conveyed this to Jones, who afterwards said that 'without Tom, *The Anathemata* would probably not have been accepted. Only after the considerable delay of three months was Eliot able to give him verbal acceptance, and Jones began negotiating a contract with Peter du Sautoy. Jones asked for an advance but was refused because production would be expensive and reader appeal limited. For the same reasons he was offered only 10% royalties. As with *In Parenthesis*, he specified that no edition should be published with illustrations other than his own and that no change in the writing would be made unless approved by him.²⁶⁹

From the time he submitted his typescript to Eliot till the book's publication, they had several meetings more meetings. 'He's a jolly nice bloke,' Jones wrote Grisewood, '& I like him more the more I see of him.' He found him 'a withdrawn character ... an astonishing fusion of something youthful & something immeasurably old & wise.' He was especially impressed at how 'incredibly hard' he worked at Fabers in addition to traveling to lecture and doing his creative work. 'How he manages to be the great poet he is and do all the other things he does ... passes my comprehension He must have *great* strength & balance to an unusual degree. I *think* he once said he had *some* Scots ancestry and the Scots are very *able* people. Exactly the opposite from the Welsh I feel. I've been impressed by this Scottish *ability* for a long time and during my various & prolonged contacts with these medical chaps I've had occasion to observe it. The particular trait *Ifancy* I find in them does not attract me, but I admire it, though I'm damned if I know what the cause of it is.' Now acquaintanceship became friendship. Jones had addressed Eliot in his letters as 'Tom E.' or 'T.S.E' but from 4 October 1951 it was simply 'Tom.'²⁷⁰ Eliot had addressed him as 'Davy'—which is affectionate and American, but he was not 'Davy' and politely told him so. Now Eliot called him David or, like his closest friends, Dai and began sending him copies of books recently published by Faber. If there had been any prior condescension on Eliot's part, it was now gone. They would remain friends, although meeting after 1952 only about three times a year.

When they met, Jones told Eliot war anecdotes. Eliot talked about his acquaintances Pound and Wyndham Lewis. ‘Let’s go see old Lewis,’ he once said, but Jones had met Lewis in a gallery and found him uncongenial, so he declined. They spoke about Joyce (whose writing Eliot admired, though he did not like the man), about Malory, about the metaphysical poets, whom they both admired, and about the displacement of the arts in an increasingly technological society. Other subjects they discussed and agreed on are suggested in a letter to Eliot in which Jones asks whether he heard a talk on ‘The Dying God’ by Victor White O.P. on the third programme:

It greatly rejoiced my heart that the whole business of the identity of *pattern* between our Xtian Passiontide rites & the immemorial rites of earlier cultures and the factual story as related in the Gospels and much that the findings of contemporary psychology have discovered in the individual, should at *last* have been frankly & clearly expressed & given its proper perspective. There was probably nothing new in his exhortations for you or me.

White’s talk had focused on the parallel between the gospels (and Holy Week liturgy) and the cycle of the dying and rising god, which establishes a communion between Christianity and all pagan humanity caught up in seasonal nature.

Jones and Eliot did not, however, agree about everything. Eliot admired the poetry of St John of the Cross, which Jones ‘could never get into.’ Jones suspected that Eliot liked the Spanish mystic ‘because he thought it was the thing to do.’²⁷¹

They may have talked about Eliot’s *The Cocktail Party*, but Jones would not have fully disclosed his response. At first he found it ‘a bore’ but after a fourth reading thought it ‘an astounding *technical* achievement’ with ‘layers of meaning’. He confided to Helen Sutherland, ‘there are *many levels* of meaning in poetry, & one may like a poem on one level but not what is implied on another level ... Eliot’s Cocktail party I admire ... *awfully* on some levels but *now* think it is un-Catholic at a deeper level—it’s a bit Calvinistic or something at some level.’²⁷²

He admired and felt warm affection for him, a ‘darling man, the soul of kindness and helpfulness.’ He liked Eliot’s beautiful grey eyes and his wit and noticed that ‘he was quite funny when he’d had a few drinks,’ but he had reservations. He disliked his buttoned-up manner, his inability to achieve easy cordiality, his ‘puritanical streak.’ When Jones wanted to take a taxi so they could continue their lunch-time conversation, Eliot said that he always took the tube and

‘didn’t believe in spending money needlessly’—this at a time, Jones thought, when Eliot probably didn’t even need to work at Fabers. Eliot was reserved, ‘cagey’. He sometimes cut Jones off sharply. When, during lunch at the Garrick Club, Jones introduced the topic of Browning as the first to combine colloquial language with poetry, Eliot turned to the waiter and said, ‘Bring Mr. Jones another cup of coffee.’ When he mentioned Chesterton’s poetry as stylistically ‘terrible’ but with a pointed, often profound thought in every line, Eliot responded, ‘Chesterton reminds me of a cabman beating himself to keep warm.’ This sort of dismissal irritated Jones, but he felt guilty criticizing Eliot, who was seven years his senior. In his irritation and guilt may be detected echoes of the sibling rivalry he had felt with his elder brother.²⁷³

These feelings of sibling rivalry may have extended into anxiety of influence. The last part of *In Parenthesis* is indebted to the form of *The Waste Land*. So is *The Anathemata*, which (we have seen) may also reflect Eliot’s personal advice. The critic Harold Bloom later wrote that a poet living anxiously in the shadow of a ‘strong’ precursor tends to escape anxiety by entering the other’s great poem and rewriting it from within. In a sense, Jones did this in *The Anathemata* by going into new, liberating areas of imagination. The personal nature of their relationship may have intensified the urgency of self-liberation. In this sense, much of Jones’s poetry can be seen as—to some degree, at least—a writing beyond Eliot, an aesthetic resolution of an essentially (at least psychologically) sibling tension. He never mentioned or disavowed the influence of Eliot, but he did say that he thought it wrong to attribute to Eliot’s example the widespread ‘mythological & somewhat obscure “allusion-writing”’ which is actually the consequence of ‘this groping age, with its specialist preoccupations’ in the ‘branches of science & history & idea’ which poets ‘assimilate & become part of ... & not only the *content* but the *form* of this writing must needs take on “new” aspects. It is not a “fashion” it’s an inevitable trend.’²⁷⁴ In general, he thought claims of influence by critics of literature and art reductive. While *The Anathemata* is clearly influenced by the fragmented form of *The Waste Land*, in every respect but fame, it surpasses anything Eliot had written.

From February through mid-July 1952 Jones read proofs for *The Anathemata*—James Shand of the Shenval Press had set the type—he spread them on his bed and stood over them reading. He was frequently on the telephone with David Bland, who worked on production under Richard de la Mare. He had Len Walton check the French and German words. Walton indicated

what changes were required to correct punctuation, but Jones preferred his own usage for poetic purposes. Corrections to proof were expensive, £43.2.3, almost a fifth again of the total price of the initial composition of type. Because of the unusual nature of the work, Faber gave him an extra 10% above the usual allowable margin, charging the excess (£21.2.9) against royalties.²⁷⁵ His attitude to proof-reading was eccentric in one respect: if an error was obvious, he would not correct it, since the production of a new plate to correct one error frequently produced new ones.⁵⁷

That winter Henry Moore invited him to the private view of his exhibition at the Tate, but he may not have gone because ill with flu. He wanted to go to an exhibit of paintings by the ‘visionary’ Cecil Collins, who was influenced by Blake and the surrealists. Collins invited him to his opening and later phoned to invite him to have lunch, but Jones was too ill. Once recovered, he went to the exhibit alone. Helen Sutherland had seen it and written to him disparaging the paintings. Admitting that she had a point, he nevertheless defended Collins: ‘there is, I think, an interesting individual “vision” of some sort. He’s a genuine bloke’ and ‘nearly all the *little* ones have something jolly nice about them. Lovely colour sometimes & not boring.’ He didn’t care for the larger pictures and thought him ‘best when ... least ambitious,’ when the pictures do not ‘go off into a kind of “symbolism” that does not seem quite gestant [sic] or masticated ... He’s got a poetic thing without doubt’ but it can become mere ‘whimsy at times.’²⁷⁶ Jones then developed a sore throat and was ill and largely housebound for the rest of the winter, spring, and much of the following summer.

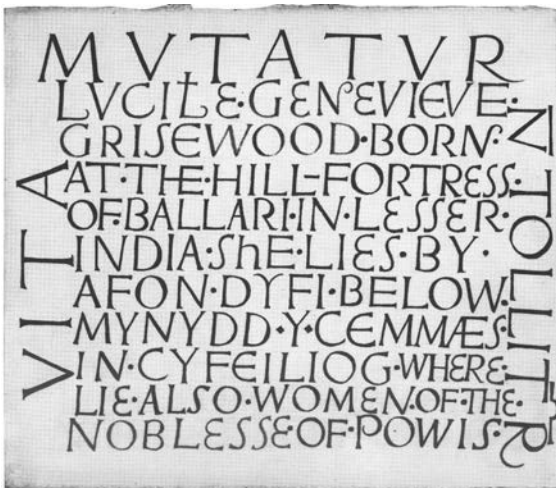
The University of Wales had offered him an honorary doctorate. He wanted to refuse but felt that would be ‘boorish’ and ‘had not the heart’ to deny Wales. He nevertheless thought it ‘inappropriate’ and asked Beatrice Dufort, ‘can you *imagine* anything less like a *Doctor in Letters* than me?’ He was to receive the degree in the spring of 1951 and bought his railway ticket, but, as time approached, became increasingly anxious. The day before departure he developed stomach trouble. It was psychosomatic, he knew, ‘but ... somatic enough!’ so he stayed home, telephoning his regrets.²⁷⁷ The university deferred conferring the degree.

Ben Nicholson invited him to the opening of his new exhibition. Jones telephoned his regrets but went in the second week of May. It was a nice break from correcting proofs. He

found the show ‘very beautiful’ and was particularly impressed by a large picture called *Cromlech*, which had

astonishing serenity & also a *depth* which all of them have not got. He’s streets ahead of any other English abstract painter, I think—a thousand times more sensitive for one thing—and never *boring* which is such a blessing. It’s all within its own particular limits of course—& within those limits it seems to me to be of a wonderful perfection.’

About Nicholson’s work, he thought that art critics were ‘pretty dim & off the point’ in mentioning movements and noting affinities and influences while missing the work’s ‘crucial & remarkable qualities’, which include ‘the serene & resolved thing that the best of his pictures give off, ... the ... ‘thisness,’—the particular quality that makes this thing different from that, however superficially similar.’ He recalled Gill’s remark about critics: ‘People seem often to go to a tennis match & criticize it for not being very good hockey.’ Even Herbert Read, ‘a person of great perception’ tended ‘to pursue the comparative method a bit too much,’ owing, he thought, to his having ‘done such an enormous amount—too much—of writing of an explanatory nature.’²⁷⁸



20. David Jones, *Vita Mutatur*, 1951

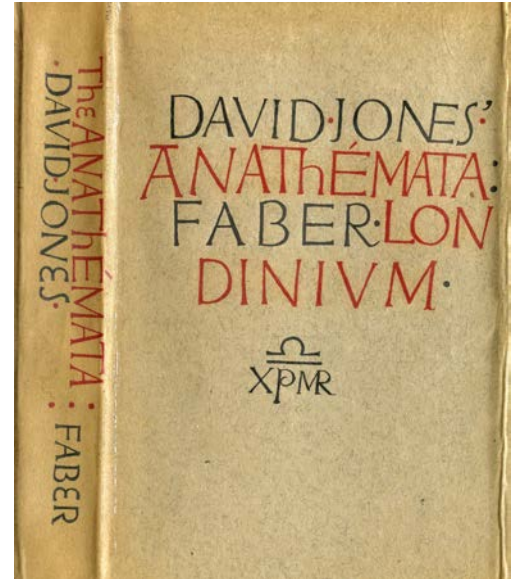
‘Dragged’ in August to Burlington House by Grisewood, he saw the visiting Ravenna Mosaics. Reproductions had led him to expect something ‘formal, very impressive in a solemn, majestic & mysterious way,’ and seeing the actual works surprised him. They had a ‘delicate & incredibly subtle & “gay” beauty.’ Some were ‘pretty rotten’ but others overwhelmed him by ‘sheer loveliness & delight and *freedom*.’ This and the recent Nicholson show were the only exhibitions in recent years that he liked very much.²⁷⁹

He stopped correcting proofs long enough to make an inscription as a memento of Grisewood’s recently dead mother, whom Jones had met only once, though Hague, he knew, had been devoted to her. Grisewood loved her deeply, and Jones wrote him that ‘I *felt* all you say about her.’ It was of course a memento also for his own mother. He sent it as soon as he thought it had ‘come off’

(fig. 20) otherwise he ‘might have messed about with it—a tendency,’ he wrote, ‘I have rather.’²⁸⁰

The summer's work correcting proofs left him tired. His sore throat came and went continually. He ‘vaguely’ considered retreating to the Fort Hotel in Sidmouth ‘to look at the sea again,’ but did not. Waiting for the publication of *The Anathemata*, he painted dying flowers in his window.²⁸¹

By 20 July, all arrangements were made for illustrations to *The Anathemata*, and he began making an inscription for the dust jacket. Originally he planned to illustrate the poem with inscriptions only, but he thought the picture of Arthur and Merlin gave ‘the right twist’ to ‘Mabinog’s Liturgy’. He discussed this with Eliot and discovered to his surprise that Eliot had an interest in Merlin. His 1931 woodcut, *He Frees the Waters*, also suited the dream darkness of ‘Mabinog’s Liturgy’. He wanted to include a drawing of Polyhymnia, which Barbara Moray owned, and *The Paschal Lamb*, made



21. David Jones, Jacket for *The Anathemata*, 1951

with enormous effort especially to illustrate the book, but neither reproduced well in black and white and colour reproduction was out of the question. Though ‘nothing compared with the originals,’ the seven inscriptions used looked so good that he hoped someday to make ‘a big-sized book of reproductions’ of them in colour, though he realized the cost would be awful and ‘it is asking for the moon.’ Faber was ecstatic with the lettered jacket he made (fig. 21). Frank Morley said, and Eliot agreed, that it was ‘the most beautiful jacket ever put out by F & F or anyone else in our times.’²⁸² They decided to exhibit it at the National Book League.

The excluded *Paschal Lamb* (fig. 22) was reproduced in the special Easter edition of *The Tablet*. In it a sacrificial lamb holds in its crooked foreleg the vexillum of the 20th legion, on top of which the winged victory is also an angel. The other fore-hoof stands in a druidic stone-circle, stepping ‘gently lest the standing stones ... be troubled.’ This is the cosmic Christ, the sun fleeing from its gaze in an intimation of the end of time. Behind is ancient Rome seen from the southeast, ‘from a point where the Via Latina once made juncture with the Via Appia’—roads

constructed for military-strategic purposes but serving to bring Christianity to Rome and from



there to the world. In the foreground is a storm-tossed sea, with ship, a thrice-pierced fish (symbolically Jesus), and swimming mermaids. Jones said, ‘The foreground of the drawing is intended to indicate the stress and drag, tempests and shipwreck of the world in general. The norm in fact as we know it.’²⁸³

During the writing of the third foliation of *The Anathemata*, he had begun annotating the poem. Notes indicating Welsh pronunciation and explaining Celtic mythology were, he thought, necessary, but he found it difficult to decide whether, for example, readers would know that, when added to the name Venus, the title *Verticordia* indicated her role as goddess of marital fidelity. He wanted the notes printed in the margins of the page, as in *The Ancient Mariner* and *Finnegans*

22. *The Paschal Lamb*, 1951

Wake pp. 260-308, but his notes were too long and too many. Bland and the printer wanted them printed at the back, but Jones insisted that they were ‘a kind of running commentary & should go with the text’ in smaller type at the foot of pages or, where too many for that, on facing pages. This determined where he put illustrations: ‘it looked so *beastly* typographically to have a whole page of notes facing a whole page of text—so I arranged the illustrations on purpose to cover ‘em up.’ To Ede he suggested that the best way to read *The Anathemata* was ‘to take no notice of the notes except in the case of *pronunciation of Welsh words*. Read it on just as you would the Book of Isaias or, for that matter, *Tit Bits* or the Nicene Creed.’ Contradicting his earlier insistence to Faber, he advised, ‘The notes are best consulted separately. They are not intended to bolster up the text. That would be artistically indefensible.’ Over the following decades, he vacillated between thinking the notes a necessary courtesy to the reader and a mistake because initially so off-putting. In the end, he would regret having added them as he now regretted even more having added notes to *In Parenthesis*. They stopped people reading, he (rightly) thought. People considered them pedantic.²⁸⁴ Joyce had not annotated *Finnegans Wake* but had left it for the reader to discover allusions and meaning. He wished he had done the same.²⁸⁵ These notes would also preempt literary scholarship and discourage the inception of an academic industry

such as that which assured Joyce's reputation. He would several times tell Honeyman, 'I wish sometimes I'd never made any notes at all' and 'I wish I'd been like Joyce and just thrown it at them and let them sort it out.'²⁸⁶

Nearly the last thing he did to the text was divide it into eight numbered sections, each with a title. Some titles he then changed. 'Keel, Ram, Stauros' was initially 'The Adzed Wood'; 'Mabinog's Liturgy' was initially 'The Gospel according to Gaynore' and then 'Merlin Goes to Mass'; 'Sherthursdaye and Venus Day' was initially 'Venus Day of the Cross.'

He thought the people at Faber—Morley, de la Mare, du Sautoy, and Bland—'jolly nice chaps to deal with,' trying to meet all his 'complicated requirements in a most civilized way.' Their genuine affection for him is evident in their correspondence. Frank Morley, a director at Faber, was by now a real friend. An American Rhodes Scholar who loved learning and chess and resembled his cousin the actor Robert Morley, he was, of all those at the firm, the greatest fan of *The Anthemata*, buying multiple copies to send to friends.²⁸⁷

As he often did, Eliot wrote the advertising blurb. First he asked Jones for a brief description of the poem, and received five closely written foolscap pages in which he says among other things that the work 'in a sort of way ... presumes to be a *kind* of epic' and that 'perhaps the bloody book is like a kind of "lucky dip" in a bran-tub in a church bazaar. Chaps will have to be satisfied with what they may happen to pull out.' (The blurb was not Jones's genre.) Writing more concisely, Eliot describes the work as 'a *testimony*, and also a kind of *testament*, an inventory of what the author has inherited, what he has acquired, and what he has to bequeath of spiritual possessions.' Jones strongly objected to 'spiritual possessions', but Eliot, in consultation with someone he calls the firm's blurb expert (probably himself), decided to retain the words to prevent the sentence going flat.²⁸⁸

The date of publication was Friday 24 October 1952. Jones thought the cost, 25 shillings, appalling. He asked that copies be sent to Auden, Read, Betjeman, Speaight, Lord David Cecil, W. Robson, Cyril Connolly, Edward Sackville-West, and Jackson Knight.²⁸⁹ He gave author's copies to Grisewood, Ede, Burns, Helen Sutherland, and the other contributors to Ede's fund. He knew it would not have the appeal of *In Parenthesis*. He hoped it would sell well enough to avoid financial failure

Initially he had had doubts about *The Anthemata*. ‘I do hope,’ he wrote to Knight, ‘that this confounded book is not just *awfully* bad, I’ve a horrible suspicion that it may be, after all.’ In time, however, he had come to believe it to be ‘a lot better than *In Parenthesis*.’ In later years, he would call it ‘far the best thing I’ve tried to make at all.’ In it he attempted, he wrote, ‘to enclose ‘*a whole*’ as far as it had come to me.’²⁹⁰ It is his *summa*, a symbolic anatomy of western culture throughout history. Its thematic focus is on the human inclination to make gratuitous artistic and ritual ‘signs’—an activity flourishing during vital cultural phases and languishing during phases such as his own, when utilitarian civilization thrives at the expense of gratuitous culture. References to imperial Rome are also, by analogy, to the Nazi and Soviet regimes of his own time. Although informed by his theory of culture, the work is not abstract or analytical. It progresses by means of compelling voices of dramatic personae, some identified, others not, belonging to various historical periods. It is as though Browning’s *Men and Women* were a stained-glass window, dropped, shattered, and stirred into a complex new configuration— allusive, digressive, in which text or monologue open to subtext or other-monologue. Without plot or hero, it is not an epic. Grisewood cannily called it ‘a displaced epic’. The displaced hero and heroine are Jesus and Mother Earth, or perhaps the hero is man-the-maker, who contains and is contained by Jesus and Mother Earth. The story of Penelope/mother-earth/mankind joins that of Jesus-Odysseus—the principle of fusion being the Incarnation and its continuation in the Eucharist. As a work of art, it is formally unified by its structural recession of circles and unified thematically and rhetorically by a prevalence of antitheses—between, for example, culture and civilization, country and city, gratuity and utility, female and male—which makes the work a complex wattle of continuous debate and, therefore, generically, a pastoral poem. Technically and stylistically Jones was now in the vanguard of modern poets. In *The Anthemata*, he united formal unity, which had retreated to the short lyric, with long modernist ‘open form’ which characterizes the poetry of Pound, Olsen, and others, and which, in their hands, falls apart. *The Anthemata* was, moreover, a poem that interpreted all of physical and psychological being. It was, and still is, the greatest modern long poem.

Notes to Chapter 13

¹ To H. Grisewood 25/6/45.

² Barbara Wall interviewed 27 June 1986.

³ To H. Grisewood 4/7/45, 25/6/45.

⁴ *The Decline of the West* I, p. 160; Gill, *Art and Nonsense*, p.76; to H. Grisewood 4/7/45; to J. Knight 15/8/52.

⁵ To H. Grisewood 4/7/45; to M. Grisewood 5/7/45.

⁶ To M. Grisewood 5/7/45; to J. Stone 16/5/60.

⁷ To M. Grisewood 5/7/45; to Mr Bishop, n.d., frag.; to V. Wynne-Williams 7/63; *LC* 121.

⁸ A. Malan interviewed 22/6/89; to H. Grisewood 25/6/45; to D. Travis 4/1/47; to J. Ede 23/7/46; M. Adams interviewed 13/6/86; B. Dufort interviewed 19/9/98; to B. Dufort 14/7/48.

⁹ To B. Travis 23/8/46.

¹⁰ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 22/6/90, 18/6/88, 9/8/92, 12/6/86; N. Gray interviewed 17/6/88; to H. Grisewood 28/8/45; P. Branch to DJ, n.d. [1945].

¹¹ To L. Bussell 28/8/46.

¹² To H. Sutherland 3/10/45.

¹³ To L. Bussell 14/3/45; to H. Sutherland 3/10/45.

¹⁴ To H. Sutherland 3/10/45; B. Moray to DJ 16/11/45; to R. Hague 21/10/63; DJ in conversation to T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69.

¹⁵ H. Sutherland to DJ 16/12/45; to J. Ede 23/8/46, 3/12/45; to H. Sutherland 3/12/45.

¹⁶ to V. Wynne-Williams 3/11/59

¹⁷ To H. Sutherland 3/12/45; to H. Grisewood 1/1/46.

¹⁸ To H. Grisewood 1/1/46.

¹⁹ to V. Wynne-Williams 5/2/61.

²⁰ T. Burns interviewed 14/6/88; 20/8/86.

²¹ To J. Ede 23/7/46, 3/12/45, 19/4/43; *RQ* 14, 18; to S. Lewis, frag. 4/71.

²² H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90; to J. Knight 31/7/51; to H. Sutherland 10/1/50.

²³ To J. Ede 23/7/46; P. Branch to DJ 23/4/46.

²⁴ H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10 87.

²⁵ To J. Ede 23/7/46; J. Ede to DJ 7/8/40; to B. Travis 23/8/46; To L. Bussell 20/8/46.

²⁶ E. Hodgkin, 'H. Sutherland,' typescript; Miles and Shiel, p. 190; to L. Bussell 20/8/46, 28/8/46; N. Sophia and Edmund Gray interviewed 6/91; to L. Bussell 20/8/46, 28/8/46.

²⁷ To N. Gray 15/1/63; to H. Sutherland 10/1 59; to A. Giardelli 4/9/64; to L. Bussell 28/8/46; K. Raine interviewed 26/6/88.

²⁸ To B. Travis 23/8/46; to J. Ede 23/8/46, 15/1/45; Raine, *The Land Unknown*, p. 132.

²⁹ To L. Bussell 20/8/46; to B. Travis 23/8/46; to J. Ede 23/8/46.

³⁰ To M. Percival 15/10 67; to M. Balme, draft 14/10/67; to L. Bussell 20/8/46.

³¹ K. Raine interviewed 26/6/86, 7/2/89; to L. Bussell 20/8 46; to B. Travis 23/8/46, 23/8/46; Raine, *The Land Unknown*, p. 131.

³² To L. Bussell 28/8/46; to J. Ede 23/8/46.

³³ My thanks to Gareth Williams and Wendy Jones, pharmacists in Aberystwyth for deciphering this and other prescriptions for me.

³⁴ B. Travis, diary, 8/9/46.

³⁵ To H. Sutherland 11/9/46.

³⁶ To J. Ede 3/12/45; to B. Travis 23/8/46.

³⁷ *DG* 131; Burns to J. Ede 8/9/46.

³⁸ To H. Grisewood 20/9/46.

³⁹ To H. Grisewood 20/9/48.

⁴⁰ To H. Sutherland 11/9/46, 1/11/46.

⁴¹ D. Cleverdon, 'David Jones and Broadcasting,' *Poetry Wales* 8 (Winter 1972), 73-4; to H. Grisewood 13/2/43; A. Malon interviewed 22/6/89; D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

⁴² To Dorothea Travis 4/1/47; to H. Sutherland 3/1/47.

⁴³ To Arthur Pollen 28/1/47; T. Burns to J. Ede 3/25/47.

⁴⁴ T. Burns interviewed 14/6/88; T. Burns to DJ 25/3/47; Dominic Mellray interviewed 26/6/89; T. Burns interviewed 13/6/88; To J. Ede 8/11/47.

⁴⁵ N. Gray to R. Hague, 24/11/78; to J. Ede 8/2/36; N. Gray interviewed 17/6/86; T. Burns interviewed 20/8/86, 14/6/88.

⁴⁶ To V. Wynne-Williams 12/6/64.

⁴⁷ T. Burns to J. Ede 25/3/47; to H. Grisewood 16/7/47; T. Burns interviewed 13/6/88; Glyn Davies interviewed 8/10/87; T. Burns to J. Ede 8/11/47; H. Sutherland to DJ n.d. [6/47].

⁴⁸ H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90.

⁴⁹ To H. Sutherland 18/7/47.

⁵⁰ C. Burns to H. Sutherland 10/7/47, 19/7/47.

⁵¹ K. Bell interviewed 12/6/86; G. Davies interviewed 19/6/90, 8/10/89.

⁵² To H. Grisewood 24/8/47, 16/7/47.

⁵³ To H. Grisewood 16/7/47; Creighton-Miller to DJ 11/7/47; to H. Grisewood 24/8/47.

⁵⁴ To H. Grisewood 24/8/47; G. Davies interviewed 8/10/87.

⁵⁵ Creighton-Miller to DJ 2/10/48; Joseph Jones to DJ 19/1/48; to H. Grisewood 24/8/47; to H. Sutherland, 10/1/59.

⁵⁶ *British Medical Journal*, 22/5/71; letter of William Knapman to author 10/3/86; G. Davies interviewed 8/10/89; Kenneth Bell, interviewed 12/6/86.

⁵⁷ DJ to C. Wilcockson interviewed 18/6/90; to H. Sutherland 18/7/47.

⁵⁸ P. Branch to DJ n.d.; to T. Burns 1/11/47; to H. Grisewood, 16/7/47.

⁵⁹ DJ, Application to the Artist's Benevolent Fund, draft, n.d. [1947]; *IN* 54; *The Ego and the Id*, pp. 79-80.

⁶⁰ *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety*, p. 65.

⁶¹ DJ, hand-written draft of notes for Bill Stevenson at Bowden House, n.d. [1947].

⁶² N. Gray interviewed 17/6/88; J. Knight, *Vergil and Homer* (London: the Virgil Society, 1950), p. 14.

⁶³ P. Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

⁶⁴ DJ, notes for W. Stevenson n.d.

⁶⁵ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

⁶⁶ Merlin James, p. 25; to H. Grisewood 31/3/72; Crichton-Miller, *Psycho-Analysis and its Derivatives* (London: Butterworth, 1933), p. 72; S. Honeyman interviewed 9/10/87; P. Hagreen to author 9/10/85; to C. Burns 29/5/40.

⁶⁷ P. Orr interviewed 2/6/86; Richard S. Hallam, *Anxiety, Psychological Perspectives on Panic and Agoraphobia* (London: Academic Press, 1985), p. 135; Freud, *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety*, p. 55; Hallam, p. 28.

⁶⁸ To H. Sutherland 18/7/47; *DG* 131.

⁶⁹ To D. Blamires 26/1/72.

⁷⁰ To R. Hague 16/4/70; for Oedipal echoes elsewhere in DJ's poetry, see T. Dilworth, *The Shape of Meaning*, pp. 198, 244, 316.

⁷¹ C. Wilcockson interviewed 22/6/88, 18/6/90; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

⁷² M. Hague interviewed 10/9/89.

⁷³ To R. Hague 18/10/34.

⁷⁴ To W.T. Noon, n.d. [1967].

⁷⁵ T. Hyne quoted by Miles and Shiel, p. 83.

⁷⁶ S. Balme interviewed 24/6/88; *LC* 41; to Richard Shirley Smith 16/12/60; to H. Sutherland 4/1/54, 25/3/49; to D. Travis 29/12/60; to D. Cleverdon 18/1/55; DJ to S. Honeyman interviewed 17/9/98; to J. Ede 3/12/45, 3/3/44, 11/4/39, 6/3/47; *LC* 31, 34, 37; to H. Read 18/11/67, unposted; Jane Dembenham interviewed 28/4/95; to J. Stone 28/1/60; *DGC* 175; S and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.

⁷⁷ DJ hand-written draft of notes for W. Stevenson at Bowden House 17/10/47.

⁷⁸ DJ hand-written drafts of notes for W. Stevenson n.d. [1948].

⁷⁹ G. Davies interviewed 8/10/87.

⁸⁰ DJ in conversation with author and Blissett 24/8/72; letter frag. n.d. [1965].

⁸¹ DJ in conversation with Diana Creaigh/Smith, interviewed 1988; DJ, hand-written draft of notes for W. Stevenson at Bowden House, n.d. [1947]; DJ, hand-written note entitled 'Questions for Stev [W. Stevenson] n.d. [1948]; Crichton-Miller, p. 136.

⁸² To *The Tablet* 23/10/46; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; J. Stone to Miles and Shiel, p. 9.

⁸³ R. Ramsey 'Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, A New Clinical Entity?' *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* 34 (1990), 358; Haim Dasberg, 'The Unfinished Story of Trauma as a Paradigm for Psychotherapists,' *Israel Journal of Psychiatry and Related Sciences* 29 (1992), 46; Richard Rahe, 'Acute versus Chronic Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder,' *Integrative Physiological and Behavioral Science* 28 (1993), 54.

⁸⁴ *Totem and Taboo* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1940), p. 30; to H. Grisewood 24/8/47.

⁸⁵ To C. Burns 26/3/53; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; to C. Burns, 20/10/52.

⁸⁶ To H. Grisewood 24/8/47.

⁸⁷ To H. Grisewood 24/8/47.

⁸⁸ To H. Grisewood 24/8/47; Michael Rogus to DJ 23/5/55; to H. Sutherland 15/7 48.

⁸⁹ To K. Clark 9/7/63.

⁹⁰ Beryl Dixon interviewed 17/6/89; DJ hand-written draft of notes for W. Stevenson, n.d. [1947]; DJ 'Life for J. Ede' typescript 5/9/35; ms draft of incomplete unpublished essay c. 1955.

⁹¹ N. Gray to R. Hague 24/11/78; Tom Goldpugh in conversation with author 9/02; DJ to Juliet Wood to Simon Brett in conversation with author 21/4/95.

⁹² H. Sutherland to DJ 31/10/47, n.d.; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 30/8/72; K. Bell interviewed 12/6/86.

⁹³ T. Burns to J. Ede 8/11/47; Artists' General Benevolent Institution to DJ 10/10/47; HC-M to DJ 2/10/48.

⁹⁴ H. Grisewood, interviewed August 1983.

⁹⁵ DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record, 19 June 1969

⁹⁶ To Mildred Ede 28/8/49; to J. Ede 31/12/71, 31/8/49; *DGC* 137-81, 82; to J. Ede 31/8/49.

⁹⁷ S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89, 6/91.

⁹⁸ To J. Ede 23/5/48.

⁹⁹ To H. Grisewood 24/8/47; T. Burns to J. Ede 8/11/47; Ruth Daniels to DJ n.d.; to T. Stoneburner 19/9/64.

¹⁰⁰ Jonathan Scott interviewed 16 June 1988.

¹⁰¹ To T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; A. Malon interviewed 22/6/89; S and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90, 24/6/88, 17/6/90.

¹⁰² To Pamela Donner 8 May 1962.

¹⁰³ To V. Wynne-Williams 9/60.

¹⁰⁴ To V. Wynne-Williams 4/6/65.

¹⁰⁵ To V. Wynne-Williams 4/3/61.

¹⁰⁶ To V. Wynne-Williams 28/8/62.

¹⁰⁷ C. Wilcockson interviewed 22/6/88; S and M. Balme 24/6/88; to T. Stoneburner 30/7/69; to H. Sutherland 9/10 50; to R. Hague 27/4/64; to J. Stone 15/3/65; to K. Raine 17/6/59; to Elwyn Evans 23/5/53; to D. Travis 26/12/48; to J. Ede 9/12/49.

¹⁰⁸ J. Ryan interviewed 6/8/87; R. Shirley Smith, 'An Outline of my contact with David Jones,' typescript ; S and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90, R. Hague to DJ 21/5/n.d.

¹⁰⁹ Christopher Skelton interviewed 22/6/88.

¹¹⁰ C. Wilcockson interviewed 22/6/88.

¹¹¹ S. Honeyman, interviewed 10/87.

¹¹² Frances Richards, *Remembering David Jones* (Privately Printed, Wellingborough: Skelton's Press, 1980), pp. 1-2.

¹¹³ To D. Travis 26/12/48; Blissett interviewed 6/6/90; to J. Ede 3/2/63; to S. Lewis 25/12/56; M. Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88; Richards, p. 4; M. Balme interviewed 28/6/88; C. Wilcockson interviewed 22/6/88; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

¹¹⁴ C. Wilcockson interviewed 22/6/88; to B. Travis 26/4/48; to H. Sutherland 19/1/48, 7/12/49; to D. Travis 26/12/48; A. Malon interviewed 22/6/89; S. Honeyman interviewed 6/91; N. Cleverdon, *David Jones, a Map of the Artist's Mind*, p. 59.

¹¹⁵ P Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88.

¹¹⁶ H. Sutherland to DJ 5/2/48; to H. Sutherland 9/2/48, 1/48; to T. Burns 17/10/71; to J. Stone 12/2/63.

¹¹⁷ To P Donner 8/4/62; A. Malon interviewed 22/6/89; to N Sanders 7/4/66; to R. Hague 2/5/70; to T. Stoneburner 22/1/74; to M. Ede 15/1/51; to J. Knight draft 26/11/48; to H. Sutherland 22/3/49, 16/2/55; to V. Watkins 14/3/56; to Alan Ross 19/3/65.

¹¹⁸ To P. Tegetmeier 29/6/48; W. Stevenson to DJ 6/1/48; DJ notes for W. Stevenson n.d. [1948].

¹¹⁹ To J. Ede 23/5/48; to B. Travis 7/48.

¹²⁰ To C. Burns 29/6 48; to A. O. Davies 8/2/53; S. Lewis, pp. 67, 68.

¹²¹ To J. Ede 15/4/43; to H. Grisewood 5/8/52; A Pollen to L. Jebb interviewed 30/4/93.

¹²² To J. Ede 23/5/48.

¹²³ DJ list 5/5/48; to C. Burns 29/6 48.

¹²⁴ Kerrison Preston to DJ 31/5/48; to C. Burns 29/6/48; to H. Sutherland 15/7/48; to E. Hodgkin 'Friday,' [1948]; to P. Tegetmeier 29/6/48; to H. Sutherland 15/7/48.

- ¹²⁵ To H. Sutherland 15/7/48, 12/6/48; to C. Burns 29/6/48.
- ¹²⁶ To H. Sutherland 15/7/48; Miles and Shiel, p. 202; to Mrs Searle (of the Redfern Gallery) 16/1/58.
- ¹²⁷ Elizabeth Davison of the Arts Council 16/9/48; to C. Burns 29/6/48.
- ¹²⁸ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; S. Honeyman interviewed 6/91.
- ¹²⁹ A. Malon interviewed 22/6/89; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; S and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88; DJ in conversation with author and Blissett, early 1970s; to C. Burns 29/6/48.
- ¹³⁰ Mrs J. Ryan interviewed 6/8/87; A. Malon interviewed 22/6/89; S and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90.
- ¹³¹ S and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88; M. Percival to D. Cleverdon 1/10/77; Ronald Watkins interviewed 9/6/87; S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87; J. Ryan interviewed 6/8/87; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86; J. and R. Shirley Smith interviewed 21/6/90.
- ¹³² To H. Grisewood 15-24/4/72; to R. and J. Shirley Smith 16/12/60; drafts, 14/9/65.
- ¹³³ M. Percival to D. Cleverdon 3/18/70, 31/9/79; J. Ryan interviewed 6/8/87; R. Shirley Smith interviewed 21/6/90; P. Kelly interviewed 9/6/86; P. Kelly to R. Hague 5/1/80.
- ¹³⁴ J. Ryan interviewed 6/8/87.
- ¹³⁵ J. Ryan interviewed 6/8/87.
- ¹³⁶ C. Wilcockson interviewed 22/6/88; A. Malon interviewed 22/6/89; To S. Lewis 18/9/70.
- ¹³⁷ L. Walton interviewed 22/6/88; to H. Grisewood 12/4/51.
- ¹³⁸ To the Secretary of the Oxford and Cambridge School Examination Board 30/4/63.
- ¹³⁹ L. Walton interviewed 9/86; M. Balme interviewed 28/6/88; M. Balme interviewed 28/6/88; A. Malon interviewed 22/6/89.
- ¹⁴⁰ S. Honeyman interviewed 9/10/87.
- ¹⁴¹ S. Honeyman interviewed 10/87; to S. Honeyman 5/11/63; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86; R. Hague's typescript of an interview by P. Orr with S. Honeyman, typescript. n.d.; S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86.
- ¹⁴² S. Honeyman interviewed 29/6/86; *The Harrovian*, 16/3/49; to H. Grisewood 20/1/72.
- ¹⁴³ To H. Sutherland, 29/9/53.
- ¹⁴⁴ N. Cleverdon, "A Handshake with the Past," 31.

¹⁴⁵ Philip Larkin to S. Honeyman 13/9/84; S. Honeyman to Philip Larkin 3/9/84, 24/9/84; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; to H. Grisewood 14/2/50.

¹⁴⁶ A. Malan interviewed 22/6/89

¹⁴⁷ Mrs J. Ryan interviewed 6/8/87; Len Walton interviewed 13/6/88.

¹⁴⁸ S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87.

¹⁴⁹ S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87.

¹⁵⁰ S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91.

¹⁵¹ S. Honeyman interviewed June 2009.

¹⁵² To J. Ede, 16/9/63.

¹⁵³ M. Balme interviewed 28/6/88; To R. Hague 27/9/63; *LC* 10.

¹⁵⁴ M. Balme interviewed 28/6/88; S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91; to S. Honeyman 14/11/71; to H. Sutherland 25/3/49.

¹⁵⁵ M. Balme interviewed 28/6/88.

¹⁵⁶ M. Balme interviewed 28/6/88.

¹⁵⁷ M. Bulbrook, interviewed 28 June 1988.

¹⁵⁸ M. Rees to author, 12/6/99; M. Rees to DJ 4/2/52.

¹⁵⁹ To R. Hague 11/8/74; to Fr Michael Hanbury 4 Sunday 1963; to R. Hague 27/9/63.

¹⁵². To H. Grisewood 5/8/52.

¹⁶⁰ To H. Sutherland 15/7/48.

¹⁶¹. To H. Sutherland 15/7/48; to S. Lewis 14/6/72; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87.

¹⁶² To J. Knight 1/11/48.

¹⁶³ To H. Sutherland 13/11/52; Antonia Pinter interviewed 5/8/87; L. Jebb interviewed 15/6/90; D. Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75; S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87.

¹⁶⁴ Sophy and Edmond Gray interviewed 6/91.

¹⁶⁵. To H. Grisewood 31/3/72.

¹⁶⁶ To D. Travis 26/12/48; to B. Travis 14/7/48; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87; to H. Sutherland 11/4/53.

¹⁶⁷ To B. Travis 26/4/ 48.

¹⁶⁸ To Kathleen Raine, 29 March 1950.

¹⁶⁹ To J. Ede 16/3/48, 9/12/49; to H. Grisewood 29/12/71.

¹⁷⁰ To T. Stoneburner 30/8/63.

¹⁷¹ To J. Knight 1/11/48; to J. Knight unfinished draft 26/11/48; to H. Sutherland 28/11/48.

¹⁷² To H. Sutherland 14/10/48.

¹⁷³ To J. Knight unfinished draft 26/11/48; to H. Sutherland 28/11/48, 2/12/48; to J. Ede 16/3/48; to H. Sutherland 2/12/48.

¹⁷⁴ S. Honeyman to DJ 2/3/48; to V. Wynne-Williams, 27/11/59; to H. Sutherland 7/12 49; T. Hyne in conversation 19/9/99; P. Orr interviewed 2/6/86; G. Davies interviewed 8/10/89; Rosalind Erangey interviewed 28/6/88.

¹⁷⁵ On 31/8/72, the author assisted in such a dig in Calvary Nursing Home.

¹⁷⁶ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 8/6/69; S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86; to J. Knight 8/8/51.

¹⁷⁷ *LC* 145.

¹⁷⁸ To H. Sutherland 22/3/49, 25/3/49, 10/5/50.

¹⁷⁹ To H. Sutherland 22/3/49.

¹⁸⁰ To Ceri Richards 25/10/64; L. Harvey to DJ 7/4/49.

¹⁸¹ N. Gray interviewed 17/6/88; J. Ede to DJ 30/8/49.

¹⁸² K. Raine interviewed 26/6/86.

¹⁸³ M. Ede to DJ 25 and 31/8/49; to M. Ede 27/9/49; J. Ede interviewed 31/5/86.

¹⁸⁴ To J. Ede 31/8/49.

¹⁸⁵ To H. Sutherland 10/1/59; *LC* 90.

¹⁸⁶ To H. Sutherland 7/25/49; M. Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975; to M. Percival 5/1/50.

¹⁸⁷ V. Wynne Williams interviewed 25/9/89; Hilary Boyers interviewed 23/6/89; *IN* 91; to J. Ede 9/12/49.

¹⁸⁸ J. Ryan interviewed 6/8/87.

¹⁸⁹ To H. Sutherland 7/12/49, 10/1/50.

¹⁹⁰ To J. Ede 9/12/49; to M. Ede 20/1/50; to H. Grisewood 14/2/50.

- ¹⁹¹. To H. Sutherland 7/12/48, 10/1/50; Elwyn Evans interviewed 20/8/86; to H. Grisewood 12/1/50.
- ¹⁹². To H. Sutherland 9/10/50; *E&A* 267-77, 303-7; to H. Grisewood 14/2/50.
- ¹⁹³ To H. Sutherland 9/9/51; to H. Grisewood 14/2/50; Hartrick to DJ 2/3/48; to P. Kelly unposted frag, 22/12/54.
- ¹⁹⁴ S and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88; to T. Stoneburner 17/2/66; to J. Ede 7/9/50; to H. Sutherland 14/8, 13/9/50.
- ¹⁹⁵. K. Bell interviewed 12/6/86.
- ¹⁹⁶ Molly Elkin interviewed 9/86
- ¹⁹⁷. K. Bell interviewed 12/5/1986.
- ¹⁹⁸ To J. Ede 21 Feb 1970
- ¹⁹⁹ B. Moray interviewed 6/85.
- ²⁰⁰ To V. Wynne-Williams 6/8/62.
- ²⁰¹ To V. Wynne-Williams 6/8/62.
- ²⁰² To H. Sutherland 28/10/50.
- ²⁰³ To H. Sutherland 7/11/50, 7/2/51; to H. Grisewood 14/2/50.
- ²⁰⁴ To R. Hague 8/6/66; to Diana Smith 27/3/62; *Decline of the West* II, p. 224.
- ²⁰⁵ To J. Rothenstein, frag.draft n.d.; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 9/6/66; John Roberts to DJ 26/2/51; to J. Rothenstein 4/2/50; J. Roberts to DJ 14/3, 26/2, 27/6/51; to J. Ede 7/5/55; to Thomas Whitaker draft 1970.
- ²⁰⁶. V. Wynne Williams interviewed 25/9/89.
- ²⁰⁷. To H. Sutherland 24/8/51; to H. Read 22/8/50; to H. Sutherland 24/8/51.
- ²⁰⁸ V. Tanner interviewed 7/9/87.
- ²⁰⁹. Letter-draft n.d.; Barbara Wall interviewed 27/6/86.
- ²¹⁰ To Iris Conlay 26/8/52.
- ²¹¹ S. Honeyman interviewed 20 June 86 & Oct 87, June 2009.
- ²¹². To Stanley Honeyman unposted, 11 Jan 1950.
- ²¹³ To M. Percival 5/1/50.
- ²¹⁴ M. Balme interviewed 28/6/88; Jacqueline Honeyman interviewed 18/6/91.

²¹⁵ Letter draft frag., n.d.

²¹⁶ *LC* 50.

²¹⁷ J. Heath-Stubbs interviewed 19 Sept 1989.

²¹⁸ To T. Stoneburner 19/9/64; to Stuart Piggott 20/11/59; to N. Gray 16/12/52.

²¹⁹ To S. Lewis 4/71.

²²⁰ To H. Grisewood 22/5/62.

²²¹ *IN* 24, 38; to H. Grisewood 22/5/62; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; to William Hayward 9-10/12/57; to Mr Davies draft 18/9/61; Peter Orr, *The Poet Speaks*, p. 99.

²²² To H. Grisewood 18/2/60.

²²³ To J. Ede 27/3/43.

²²⁴ Tom Goldpauagh in conversation with author.

²²⁵ To J. Knight 31/7/51; to H. Grisewood 16/10/52.

²²⁶ N. Cleverdon, 'A Handshake with the Past,' 31; N. Cleverdon to author 15/7/92; M. Balme interviewed 28/6/88.

²²⁷ H. Grisewood to DJ 20/1/50.

²²⁸ To H. Grisewood 14/8/51; *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed.

²²⁹ To J. Ede 31/1/50.

²³⁰ To H. Read 22/8/50; to T. Stoneburner Sat-Sun/2/67; to H. Grisewood 15-24/4/72; to H. Sutherland 26/11/63; to R. Hague 10-14/9/74; to J. Knight 31/7/51; to N. Sanders 27/8/71; to H. Sutherland 13/11/52.

²³¹ To J.H. Johnston 3/3/63.

²³² To J.H. Johnston 3/3/63; to H. Sutherland 22/3/49; to T. Stoneburner 15/5/70; to H. Sutherland 7/2/51; to J. Knight 13/11/52; to H. Sutherland 10/1/50, 7/12/49; S. Honeyman interviewed 5/93.

²³³ *A* 56 n. 3; to H. Grisewood fourth Sunday after Easter 1966; J. Knight 31/1/52; to H. Grisewood 1/9/56; Michael Richey interviewed 18/6/89; to H. Grisewood 31/3/72; to Frank Morley unposted 1/53; M. Richey interviewed 7/6/86; to Ifor Williams 19/6/52.

²³⁴ To H. Sutherland 10/5/50; to R. Hague 29/4/66; *IN* 46; to J. Knight 11/10/52; to T. Stoneburner 31/3/65.

²³⁵ Peter Orr, interviewed 2/6/86.

²³⁶ To J. Knight 13/11/52; Tom Goldpaugh, 'The Labyrinthine Text of David Jones,' *David Jones Journal* I (Summer 1997), 89.

²³⁷ To A. Giardelli 9-11/8/73; to R. Hague 11/8/74; A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86; Bim Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86. Others who noticed this pattern include R. Hague, Solange Dayras, and the author; S. Dayras interviewed 9/89.

²³⁸ To T. Stoneburner 24/2/59; Victor White, *God and the Unconscious* (1952), passage marked by DJ on pp. 131, 132.

²³⁹ Letter draft frag., n.d.; S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91; Bernard Wall to T. Stoneburner 2/8/68; to EE 14/11/53.

²⁴⁰ R. HagueJ interviewed 11/9/89; 'Ray Howard-Jones: An Introduction,' *Anglo-Welsh Review* 17 (Summer 1968), p. 53.

²⁴¹ A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86.

²⁴² A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86.

²⁴³ P. Hills interviewed; A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86; to A. Giardelli 4/9/64.

²⁴⁴ A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86.

²⁴⁵ To H. Grisewood 6/2/51.

²⁴⁶ To H. Grisewood 12/4/51.

²⁴⁷ To J. Knight 31/7/51, 13/11/52; to H. Grisewood 12/4/51.

²⁴⁸ Robert Buhler interviewed 16/6/88; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

²⁴⁹ To H. Grisewood 15/11/60.

²⁵⁰ To H. Sutherland 24/5/51; DJ's annotations to the chronology of the 1972 *Word and Image* Catalogue.

²⁵¹ To H. Sutherland 3/7/51, 24/5/51.

²⁵² DJ interviewed by P. Orr, summer 1972.

²⁵³ To H. Sutherland 24/8/51.

²⁵⁴ To H. Grisewood 25/6/45; to H. Sutherland 24/8/51; to J. Ede 15/1/52; DJ interviewed by P. Orr in early 1970s; DJ blurb for *Introduction to the Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1964).

²⁵⁵ To J. Ede 31/7/49; see Paul Hills *David Jones*, p. 119.

²⁵⁶ To A. Giardelli 4/9/64.

- ²⁵⁷ To A. Giardelli 3/9/64; to Emlyn Davies 23/8/64.
- ²⁵⁸ To J. Stone 6-7/9/60; to S. Lewis 21/12/72; to R and J Shirley Smith 11/2/61; L. Jebb to author 8/6/89; to J. Knight 6/10/52.
- ²⁵⁹ A. Malon to author 28/1/93; to HR 22/8/50; To K. Raine 29/3/50.
- ²⁶⁰ To H. Read 9/11/50; 9/2/51.
- ²⁶¹ To K. Raine 29/3/50.
- ²⁶² DJ interviewed by P. Orr summer 1972; to T. Stoneburner 28/9/67.
- ²⁶³ Morag Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88.
- ²⁶⁴ To Janet Stone 27 April 1965.
- ²⁶⁵ T. Stoneburner to DJ 26/9/51; to H. Sutherland, 12/10/51; to C. Burns Wed 9/51.
- ²⁶⁶ T.S. Eliot, advertising blurb on *The Anathemata*, Faber catalogue, 1952; to T. Stoneburner 6/11/51; T. Stoneburner to DJ 8/1/52
- ²⁶⁷ To Louis Bonnerot, draft frag., 4 Jan 1960.
- ²⁶⁸ Peter du Sautoy told me that without Eliot it definitely would not have been published, interview, 23/6/88
- ²⁶⁹ T.S. Eliot, advertising blurb on *The Anathemata*, Faber catalogue, 1952; to T. Stoneburner 6/11/51; T. Stoneburner to DJ 8/1/52; Bernard Wall, 'Sign, Symbol, Sacrament,' *TLS* (27/7 1967), 686; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; P. du Sautoy interviewed 23/6/88; to J. Knight 23/12/51; P. du Sautoy to DJ 13/12/51; to P. du Sautoy 17/12 51.
- ²⁷⁰ To H. Sutherland 11/9/52; to H. Grisewood 5/8/52; The correspondence between DJ and T. Stoneburner began in August 1943 and continued till 8 August 1961. There are twenty-one letters from Eliot, twenty-one from Jones.
- ²⁷¹ DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71; P. du Sautoy interviewed 23/6/88; to T. Stoneburner 22/11/51; White's radio talk is printed as the final chapter of his book, *God and the Unconscious* (London: Harvill, 1952).
- ²⁷² To H. Sutherland 14/8/50, 13/9/50.
- ²⁷³ DJ in conversation with author 24/8/71, 29/9/72; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87.
- ²⁷⁴ To H. Sutherland 25/11/41.
- ²⁷⁵ A. Malon interviewed 22/6/89; P. du Sautoy interviewed 23/6/88; P. du Sautoy to DJ 22/10/52.
57. DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record, 5 May 1966.

²⁷⁶ To H. Sutherland 8/12/51.

²⁷⁷ To C. Burns 4/8/54.

²⁷⁸ To H. Sutherland 15/5/52, 28/5/52.

²⁷⁹ to H. Sutherland 11/9/52.

²⁸⁰ To H. Grisewood 5/8/52, 8/52.

²⁸¹ To J. Knight 15/8/52; to J. Ede 1/10/52.

²⁸² To H. Sutherland 2/51, 20/7/52; to H. Grisewood Tues 8/52; to J. Ede 1/10/52; FM to DJ 12/1/52.

²⁸³ DJ interviewed by P. Orr summer 1972.

²⁸⁴ . To Peter Orr, *The Poet Speaks*, p. 100.

²⁸⁵ To A. Giardelli 29/9/66; to J. Knight 23/12/51, 31/7/51; David Bland to James Shand 17/12/51; to W.H. Auden 24/2/54; to J. Ede 16/11/52; R. Hague's typescript of an interview by P. Orr with S. Honeyman typescript. n.d.

²⁸⁶ Stanley Honeyman interviewed 9 October 1987.

²⁸⁷ To H. Sutherland 11/9/52; B. Dufort interviewed 17/6/89; P. du Sautoy interviewed 23/6/88.

²⁸⁸ To T. Stoneburner 5/1/52; T. Stoneburner to DJ 18/3/52.

²⁸⁹ To J. Ede 1/10/52, 16/11/52; Cissy Hyne to DJ 3/11/52; Morley Kennerley and Penelope Colt to DJ [1952]; P. Colt to DJ 14/10/52.

²⁹⁰ To J. Knight 8/8/51; to H. Grisewood 22/5/62; to H. Read 21/9/64; To Jeremy Hooker 8/5/70.

Chapter 14, 1952-60

He knew that readers would find *The Anathemata* hard going but had worked so long on it, had revised it so often, that he was unaware that many would find it impenetrable. ‘I don’t believe it’s awfully difficult,’ he wrote, ‘if you just read it as a poem straight on & then read it afterwards with such notes as you find necessary. I *know* everybody is going to say: too complicated, can’t understand it, but actually it’s pretty straight sailing. So long as you regard it as “poetry” meant to evoke & invoke various stuff by various methods.’ While waiting for reviews he was heartened by the private response of Helen Sutherland, ‘a most remarkable woman in grasping this poetic thing.’¹ Upon first reading it, she felt ‘impelled & fascinated ... *drawn* on & in.’ Rereading confirmed her sense that this was ‘a great imaginative work,’ and she several times wrote to say ‘what great good it did her to read it.

Reviews were important to him. Since 1937 he had subscribed to Durrants, a newspaper-cutting agency. Despite modest expectations for the reception of *The Anathemata*, he hoped that it would be widely reviewed. That ‘would be at least something by way of encouragement.’ In this he was disappointed. There were few reviews and, mostly, as he put it, ‘dim.’ Good reviews included one by Kathleen Raine in *The New Statesman* and those of John Bourne in *The Yorkshire Post* and Emyr Humphries in *Time and Tide*. Robert Speaight’s in *The Tablet* was good, he thought, though too focused on the work being difficult. Also good was Jackson Knight’s review in *The Listener*, ‘very superior & scholarly.’ For Knight, *The Anathemata* was the modern equivalent of an ancient great work of the sort to which he had devoted his scholarly life, ‘a great book’ that conveys ‘a philosophic view, tenable for our times, of the secret places where nature finds reconciliation with the Divine.’ The best review was, Jones thought, by Grisewood in *The Dublin Review*—‘interesting in all sorts of ways I do wish it was in a more read journal.’ Most reviews were disappointing. ‘Not that one wants praise,’ he writes, ‘but one does, I think, hope for consideration & analysis & an understanding of the nature of the work from certain kinds of people.’ The review in the *TLS* dashed his hopes for a long ‘proper analysis’ there and convinced him it was ‘foolish ... to hope for anything from these literary gents.’ He did not know that his friend Herbert Read had written the review. It was ‘quite sympathetic & complimentary, and, I think, meant well,’ he writes, ‘but the

impression conveyed was that the work, though interesting, was too involved in a specialized kind of ‘learning’ to convey much to the average reader.’ He was quite upset about this: ‘it is not “learning” that is required ... I am not “learned” ... I only root about among stuff that scholars write in order to *verify* things I’m *attached to*, to check up on this & that. Actually if it comes to “scholarship” I’m an absolute dud.’ He was astonished—‘well, I’m blown’—by a reviewer calling the work ‘an exercise in intellectual agility.’ But then Jones had little sense of how he differed in knowledge from the average reader. At lunch in Northwick Lodge, he remarked incredulously about *The Anathemata*, ‘The lady who cleans my room says she can’t understand it! It’s as plain as a pikestaff.’ He thought the work required only a sense of humour, ‘a bit of hard thought,’ and a sensitivity to ‘what we call “poetry”—i.e. language at a heightened tension—a sense of form & shape an exact & evocative use of *each* word.’ As further reviews appeared, he would come to include that in the *TLS* (19 June) among the best.²

Many reviewers ascribed influences. When one said that *The Anathemata* ‘owes much to James Joyce,’ he was, as a friend put it, ‘as near to cross as he could be.’ Joyce was not an influence on *The Anathemata*. Edwin Muir (in the *Observer*, 2 November) and other reviewers announced Jones’s clear and heavy indebtedness to Pound’s *Cantos*. Never having read them, Jones, looked at them for the first time in November 1952, thought them ‘*marvellous* stuff,’ and was able to see why reviewers had mistakenly supposed an influence. Nevertheless it irked him that they continued asserting his debt to Pound. Like art critics, he said, they ‘*will not* understand that given certain civilizational conditions, men of similar bent, being faced with the same aesthetic problems solve them, or try to solve them, in much the same way, even though they may never have so much as heard of each other. It would be odd were it otherwise. A statesman, a general, and ecclesiastic, separated not only by an area of the earth, but *by centuries of time*, use much the same techniques of statesmanship, strategy, ecclesiastical polity, given similar problems.’³

He was especially disappointed when reviewers claimed that the content was odd, personal, and peculiar to him. He drafted a response to the review in the *Western Mail* saying that his content was drawn from ‘the common tradition of the West as perceived by a native of the Island.’ He was disappointed by Eddy Sackville-West on the Third Programme emphasizing ‘obscurities’ and Welsh words and references beyond those to which any reasonably educated Englishman might be

expected to respond. He wrote to Knight, ‘I see that the technique used, the “form” etc may seem idiosyncratic, but I’m damned if I can see how the “matter” can be so regarded. For I deal wholly & entirely with our common inherited myth. It is not “odd” & “peculiar” to use as data: e.g.[,] the geological structure of the island, the Trojan legend, the impact of Rome, the mixed Celtic & Teutonic myth, the Incarnation & Passion, the seafaring & ship-making thing that constitutes about 70% of the historic English set-up. It is odd that such data, facts, common tradition should be regarded as evocative only for certain persons with specialized interests.’ But Jones suspected he would ‘have to put up with a good deal of this idea that *Ana* is a very peculiar girl.’⁴

Other reviews were worse. *The Church Times* called the poem a ‘torrent’ of unintelligible words, as undisciplined as Dylan Thomas. Astonished, Jones complained, ‘There is much one could complain of in *Ana* but where the “torrent” or the lack of “discipline” comes in I can’t see.’ Such disappointments continued over the coming months and years. He hoped for a serious critical study in *Scrutiny*, a journal he respected, but would discover in its last issue a spiteful attack on the poem by J.C.F. Littlewood, which was ‘positively abusive,’ a terrible essay full of what he rightly considered ‘old womanish sarcasm.’* He would also be appalled at Robert Speaight’s panegyric in the *TLS* of 6 August—praise for wrong reasons.† In the January 1954 issue of the *Downside Review*, John M. Todd claims that Jones turns away from valid signs such as the jet plane and the hydro-electric power station common in the civilization of Cardiff, Milan, Bombay and Johannesburg. Jones wrote four drafts of a letter in response, explaining that art and ‘religion-culture’ in all these places is threatened by precisely the technology these objects exemplify. Todd accused Jones of nostalgia, and Jones wrote that in its root sense of ‘a return home,’ nostalgia typifies all the arts—‘one cannot “recall” or “show again” or “make anamnesis” without a “nostalgia” of sorts. In all “sign-making”, therefore in all “art,” in all intuitive acts a nostalgia is the central element.’ A feeling

* In a passage Jones found ‘especially offensive,’ Littlewood writes that he hoped Jones did not imagine that because he was a Catholic he had the qualities that made Hopkins great as a poet or as a religious person.

† Speaight calls him a pedant and the poem a private ‘museum.’ Despite it being the most interrogative of poems, he says it is rare among modern books in putting no questions. In its endless affirmation, he says, it resembles ‘the inscription on a gravestone.’

of hopelessness kept him from finishing the letter. There had been such few reviews—nothing, for example, in *The Sunday Times*. He was astonished, therefore, upon learning that *The Anathemata* had been mentioned in ‘Books particularly recommended’ in *Vogue*, ‘tucked away among adverts for nylon brassieres, “Stay-Up-Top” girdles and other such feminalia.’⁵

His publisher was largely responsible for the poor response. While appreciating that those at Faber were good ‘on the production side,’ he wished they ‘would advertise at least a bit.’ When a newspaper reporter went to Faber hoping to interview Jones, Bland discouraged him, withholding Jones’s telephone number. When Jones asked that a copy be sent to Robert Lowell, Faber’s distributor in the US replied that Lowell should buy his own copy.⁶

Worst of all, Faber listed *The Anathemata* in its promotional material under the heading ‘Autobiographies and Memoirs.’ When Jones saw his book so classified in the *New Statesman* he was amused, ‘Jolly comic type of autobiography, I must say ... one would hardly call *Lear* a *Life of Shakespeare* or *The Origin of Species Darwin’s Memoirs!*’ Not till 1962 did he discover that the mistake was Faber’s (initially Eliot’s, subsequently Charles Monteith’s, who took over from Eliot as poetry editor), and then nothing was done about it. But Jones must share the blame, since when Eliot asked him to write a description of *The Anathemata* in early 1952, he delivered a meandering, (not indecisive but) multi-decisive, anti-boasting document making no claim for it as poetry, a term that probably would have embarrassed him. In any event, the mistake had serious consequences—and this applied also to *In Parenthesis*. Neither long poem was included in Faber’s list of poetry, nor was Jones listed on the dust jackets of poetry books as among the poets Faber published. Not till the summer of 1970 would these egregious errors be corrected—long after the modernist literary canon had been established, largely by American New Critics. That year Stuart Montgomery of Fulcrum Press complained to Helen Hogan at Faber that people were telephoning and writing to ask who published Jones’s books. Also in 1970, William Cookson made the same complaint to Peter du Sautoy. Even then du Sautoy had trouble convincing Monteith, who thought Jones’s work generically borderline because half of *In Parenthesis* is not verse, and he (naively) equated poetry with verse. Having blocked public access to Jones’s works when they were new, this mistake continued for decades, and helps to explain the utter failure of generations of academic critics to

regard them as poetry or include them in considerations of modern literature. About genre, Jones at least had no doubts. He said about *The Anathemata*: ‘It’s either poetry, of sorts, or *nothing at all*.’⁷

By the beginning of 1953, familiarity with disappointment tempered its sting. He supposed that so many ‘years of labour’ may have let him to expect ‘chaps to jump about more than they do.’ In the face of so much incomprehension, he valued all the more what positive private responses he did receive. He told Nicolette Gray, ‘I am more pleased than I can say’ that she liked the poem—despite its ‘hurdles & ditches & tanglewoods’ that were too much for other friends whom he had hoped would like it. Her response was consoling, ‘for one is easily cast down by the feeling that perhaps, for all one’s effort, one has not made an intelligible work.’ Jim Ede had written that he could not understand even the preface and apologized for being ‘so ignorant a friend’ but kept at it, gained understanding and appreciation, and wrote another letter a month later, to which Jones replied,

I cannot tell you how gratified I am by what you say about *The Ana*. I am most delighted that you get some stuff out of it. I know it’s hard work but I thought you would like bits of it on a second or third reading. You’ve actually got hold of all the essentials, I can see & I’m most touched by what you have said about it. ... I know it’s a bit of a bummer on the surface; but underneath it’s pretty straight forward really, compared with most modern ‘personal experience’ & ‘psychological’ kinds of poetry.

Ede’s experience is paradigmatic—for an adequate understanding, most readers probably have to read it three times.* Martin D’Arcy wrote saying that he liked the work ‘a lot,’ which was cheering, as were letters were from strangers, several from American university students. One of the most heartening and appreciative was from an Anglican priest named Harry Whiteman, to whom Jones replied and who visited him, ‘very intelligent & extremely nice.’ Another praising *The Anathemata* arrived from Stuart Piggott, a professor of prehistoric archaeology at Edinburgh. Since he was familiar with the Celtic-British sources, Jones found his approval especially encouraging. ‘I am most gratified by your appreciative remarks,’ he wrote. ‘As you can guess many people find my book incomprehensible and as often as not the complaint is not with regard to the form but with regard to the content. It would seem that by a paradoxical twist the very things that are part of the

* For help understanding *The Anathemata*, see Dilworth, *Reading David Jones*, pp. 116-82.

common inherited deposit of this Island are regarded as highly obscure & unfamiliar.’ (Jones would hereafter occasionally read articles by Piggott with interest, and listened to him speak on the radio. Eventually they would meet.). Another stranger who wrote to praise the poem was Donald Nichol, who lectured in history at the University of North Staffordshire (not yet Keele University). He soon became a visitor and friend, a deeply learned Yorkshireman who had become a Catholic as a result of his experience in infantry and Intelligence during the recent war. They talked history, military life, and medieval Welsh history and language. (Nichol told him of the publication of Rachel Bromwich's *The Welsh Triads*, which, after two months of uncertainty over its steep price, Jones bought.) Jones was impressed by his having ‘such an able brain’ and found him ‘a terribly nice, unaffected, humble, perceptive bloke into the bargain’ (*LF* 73). In January, Frank Morley at Faber wrote expressing his admiration, saying he especially liked the parts to do with the sea and ships, which were authentic in every respect—he had shipped on a whaler when young and had written a book on whaling. Jones could not recall ‘any remarks which have been of more concrete encouragement.’⁸

In late February, he received another especially encouraging letter—from Graham Greene, whose sort of book he had not thought this would be. Greene writes,

23rd February 1953

Dear David,

Being a little drunk, as perhaps one should always be when reading a really new poem, please accept my homage for *Anthemata*. For weeks now it has been lying on a chair while I waited for the courage to read it. As one grows older one grows more and more disinclined to read a really new thing. One is afraid one won't understand which hurts one's pride, (and there are great passages in your poem which I don't understand), and one is afraid of being unduly disturbed. But please will you accept from me lying on a sofa, suffering from a bad cold, a sense of excitement which makes one mark passage after passage on page after page. I have read the ending with immense excitement, but I haven't yet got to it. This is a silly letter, but anyway I shall be right out of the country before you receive it. 9 Sunday Mass, 1948

Yours,

Graham.

In his reply, Jones says how encouraging his letter is and mentions how much he respects ‘the particular economy’ of Greene’s writing particularly in *The Heart of the Matter*, ‘the exclusion,’ he writes, ‘of everything that was not integral to what you had to say.’⁹

He had to rely on such letters for reassurance. After rereading the poem, Grisewood called it ‘a really marvellous work,’ and Jones was ‘*mightily relieved* ... that is a *real* encouragement.’ He added, ‘one seems to need re-assurance over this matter, or, at least, I do, for I get weary of it being just noted & more or less written-off as a-curious-attempt-in-the-manner of and specially I get weary of its being thought or called ‘subjective’, ‘personal’—a curious work in its own twilight & so on.’¹⁰

Genuine positive responses helped reconcile him to waiting. ‘It’s the kind of book,’ he wrote, ‘that *if* it makes any impression *at all*, makes it very, very, slowly. ... no use hoping for a big bang. ... The only thing to do is to plough on whether it is a raining or windy, as best one can, & not take much notice.’ Upon learning in 1964 that Walter Ong asked whether literature can express ‘the historic awareness of leaning forward to on-coming newness,’ Jones would reply, ‘it certainly *can* and *has* done just that. But in most unexpected ways & by most unlikely agents.’ The proof for Jones was Hopkins, who made, in *The Wreck of the Deutschland* a ‘time-bomb which was not to explode until some thirty years after his death, in a world the characteristics of which were entirely hidden from him.’ Hopkins’s long poem was regarded as ‘all but totally incomprehensible’ when it was written and also in 1918 when Bridges first published it. In 1928, it was considered ‘pretty eccentric’ by all but a few.¹¹ It was not until mid-century that the poem and its author were secure within the canon of English literature. Jones hoped for something similar for himself and his poem.

At the end of December 1952, he had received a letter from Desmond Chute in Rapallo praising *The Anthemata* and asking questions about it. Jones was ‘terribly glad’ he liked it, for he held Chute ‘in the highest regard.’ A correspondence ensued. Chute sent him forty-seven postcards and two letters with questions about the poem, many on miniscule points of prosody. Jones took every question seriously and responded in a series of fifteen letters, which contain invaluable explication.* Their correspondence enabled Chute to publish a review of the poem that Jones liked so much he handed it to David Bland to read and pass on to Eliot, who liked it. Chute ordered a copy of *The Anthemata* for his friend Ezra Pound, now in St Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington D.C. Pound never read it, although it was also recommended to him by William Carlos Williams.

* These are published in *Inner Necessities*.

When William Cookson later praised *The Anthemata* to him, Pound would complain that Eliot had never mentioned it to him.¹²

Despite absence and inadequacy of response, Jones considered *The Anthemata*, ‘the most “important” ... of the things I’ve tried to do, either in painting or in writing.’ He thought that ‘on a number of grounds ... it unquestionably excels *In Parenthesis*. At the end of his life he said, ‘in my view’ it is ‘the one that matters.’¹³

The combination of silence and incomprehension that his new book met with confirmed what he had begun to sense early in the war, a broad civilizational rejection of modernism (a term he did not use). For him this rejection involved a shift from objective form to moralism and subjectivity, in which ‘the important & true & vivifying principle’ that ‘an artwork was a thing’ and not an imitation of something else or a personal (subjective) expression ‘has been prostituted or forgotten.’ What had happened in the arts in the 1920s and ‘30s had, he thought, transformed the ‘decline of the west’ into something splendid and was, on a smaller scale, what Arthurian romance made of the decline of the Celts: a ‘balls-up’ and ‘a kind of “Praise”’ (*DGC* 86). During the recently ended war, which he considered the ‘rubicon’ of the century, he saw, with acute perception, that people were losing sight of the achievements of the earlier decades. In 1940 he had written to Grisewood:

It is *such a bore* to have matters one regarded as settled, reopened—its like the bore of seeing children think & do all the bloody wearisome things one did so disastrously oneself. I know there’s no help for this ... Thank God Joyce did his stuff—*only just in time* it would seem. I wonder if it will ever be widely understood now—already it belongs to the great possibilities of what *was* ... I’m neither shocked nor surprised by this eclipse of all our world—less than most, perhaps, but I *do* want to keep my head & not forget. I already think I see signs of chaps rattling. I feel spasms of it in a subtle way myself. ... I only want to remember that if in some future agonizing situation one is tempted to say ‘Ah well, here is *real* stuff—how much better than the Cézanne-appreciating—gin-& lime & Jung & Doris-in-cellophane of the ‘twenties’—I only hope that we don’t capitulate to the moralists & deny the things perceived in those days.’¹⁴

He had read in the *TLS* of January 1941 an article contending that Eliot was not so much an innovator as a poet in the mainstream and that it was a mistake for followers to ape his idiosyncrasies—a ‘silly’ argument, Jones thought.¹⁵ But what bothered him most was the assumption that modernism had never really mattered—‘so that one & all can heave a sigh of relief, sink back, satisfied that nothing

disturbing has happened—3 cheers for the Royal Academy, Mr Eliot has said that Kipling is OK—splendid, that’s what we always thought.’ His own response to poetry ended with Eliot’s *Four Quartets* (‘very very good.’), his response to visual art with Henry Moore’s drawings of people sheltering in the underground. The new expressionism in paintings and confessionalism in poetry seemed to him largely devoid of significant form, but he was unsure. ‘It is *terribly* easy to fail in one’s apperception of some newer thing,’ he wrote. He reckoned he was ‘getting pretty old & “blimpish.”’¹⁶

He was well aware of the reaction against modernism by timid contemporary British poets, retreating to conventional, extrinsic forms, such as metrical lines, stanzas and even rhyme. He read in the *Listener* (18 June 1953), Henry Read claiming that since the 1920s it has become possible again for a poet to use a ‘formal artistic discipline *derived from the outside*—whereas this was not so three decades ago.’ What nonsense, Jones thought, and he drafted in reply, saying that if ‘external discipline’ could not solve the problems facing a poet in 1923, they cannot now

unless some radical change has indeed occurred, not in our own inclinations or wishes, but in the actual civilisational situation. But that situation, in so far as it conditions the making of works, seems not to have changed except in the sense of a considerable intensification and extension of its earlier characteristics. So that it would appear that the problems of the poet remain essentially the same, except that those problems are even more intensified and more complex.

He saw Frank Kermode as a champion of the retreat from modernism and, in 1956 wrote Grisewood: ‘no matter how they give three rousing cheers for ‘Q’ [Arthur Quiller-Couch] and Walter R. and the R.A. and the returned bowler and a sort of ‘new religiousness’ and so on and so on, they can no more restore continuity with “Milton” than ‘could the plastic tradition of Renyolds or Gainsborough be restored or for that matter the international conditions and consequent techniques of the age of Mohammed Ali or that of Tell-el-kebir, it’s only that these Kermodes are a nuisance in confusing the issue. Of course it works like anything. I’ve noticed how very delighted people are. They feel they need not bother with ‘Joyce’ at all.’¹⁷

He talked with Eliot about the growing post-war reaction against modernism. In 1948 they agreed in seeing this change as a serious falling off in the standard of literature and criticism, but, although he never hinted it to Eliot, Jones thought that Eliot was himself implicated in the general decline. He liked Eliot’s early poems best, thought *The Waste Land* ‘the best poem of all this period.’ (He could recite by heart ‘The Hollow Men.’) The only poems by Eliot that he disliked

were the ‘embarrassing’ and ‘awful poems about cats.’ He had acquired each of the four ‘Quartets’ as it came out, and exclaimed in a letter to Eliot, ‘*How good they are!*’ He kept to himself his one serious critical reservation about ‘East Coker,’ which ‘has some lovely poetry in it’ and is ‘good, very’ but marred by subjectivity. He abhorred the current adulation of ‘subjective vision’ even by his friend Herbert Read, and, he wrote to Grisewood in 1954, ‘at *bottom* it’s the trouble with Tom E. also. In fact, in one form or another, it holds the field. At base, I suppose it is this subjectivism that separates them *all* from Joyce.’¹⁸ Jones’s observation was acute, anticipating by thirty years the critical commonplace that Eliot’s poetry is suffused with subjective feeling.

He was certain that this shift in sensibility explained the poor reception of *The Anathemata*. With Eliot in mind, in 1953 he wrote to Grisewood:

It could all be so different if just one or two chaps (I will not mention names) had refused to give an inch, had stood by the guns. As it is, the lesser chaps, such as myself, can make no impression at all I feel. This may sound a subjective or silly moan. But there is a kind of thing about the arts where one has to have a kind of corporate something—some sort of response from certain kinds of chaps, or it gets very hard. Not that one doubts what one is trying to do, but it is a bit shaking when combined currents flow more & more against the kind of direction one feels to be the *only* direction that’s worth while.’

About objectivity he had written in the preface of *The Anathemata*: ‘the workman must be dead to himself while engaged upon the work, otherwise we have that sort of “self-expression” which is as undesirable in the painter or the writer as in the carpenter, the cantor, the half-back, or the cook’ (12). Acquired from Fry, confirmed by Maritain and Gill, this conviction agreed with Eliot’s statement in ‘Tradition and the Individual Talent’ that ‘the emotion of art is impersonal.’ However intensely the artist cares about the subject of his art, the finished work must not be in any degree private or subjective or merely expressive. He thought the change in ‘conception of what a work ought to be like’ was interesting as symptom of cultural change but also ‘depressing & somewhat maddening.’ In 1953, he told Grisewood that their objective and multifaceted notion of art was, he felt,

now something of a ‘lost cause.’ That’s O.K., ‘lost causes’ are almost always the right causes, but it does shake one a good bit & give one a feeling of peculiar isolation. The temptation is to feel that it is useless to proceed of course. For undoubtedly one does seem to require a measure of appreciation or understanding from at least a certain number of people. I don’t mean that one has not got this but I do feel that the Front is in a very dicky state & liable to be over-run & that capitulation is a daily occurrence in most sectors. As for the reserves, well, where are they?¹⁹

Jones remained an entrenched modernist.

If Eliot was changing with the times, he did not lose Jones's genuine appreciation nor escape the wrath of the counter revolutionaries, who had yet to entitle themselves postmodern (a term probably valid only in architecture). When they targeted Eliot in 1957, Jones commiserated with him:

I've followed with increasing perturbation, depression and dislike such things as the *Litt. Sup.* article on Joyce's letters and then the one on Wyndham L[ewis] and the correspondence that followed. It is as though the whole nature, intention & interior feeling of most of the creativity of our time is *already* entirely misunderstood, misinterpreted, or, worse, deliberately misrepresented. I think your *Waste Land*, for example, is as 'contemporary' in form & content as when it was written *only more so*

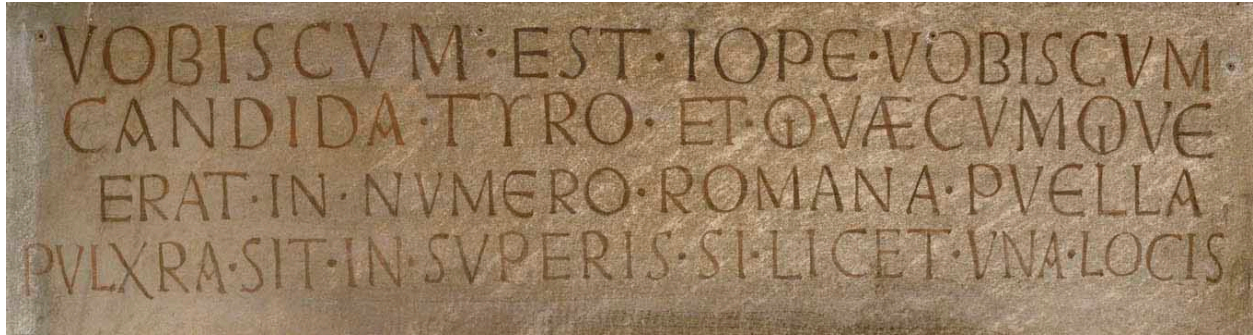
Not until he was safely dead would Eliot become an outright target. When the edition of the drafts of *The Waste Land* was published in 1971, an anonymous reviewer for the *TLS* declared that 'Eliot's poetry gives offence' and cannot cease to do so until 'Eliot the man is made to emerge from the shadows among which he concealed himself.'²⁰ Jones calls this 'appalling stuff.... apart from all sorts of beastliness there [is] the primal & central heresy that you can't assess a work of *poiesis* unless you are acquainted with the maker's mode of life.'

Now, early in 1953, he felt 'at a loss' in 'the aftermath of having finished, published etc the book'—a return of that feeling of emptiness that had followed the completion of *In Parenthesis*. He discussed this feeling with Stevenson, whom he was now seeing, still in Harrow, once a month.²¹

The week before Christmas 1952, as he was just about to send Prudence (Pelham) Buhler a copy of *The Anathemata*, he heard from her lawyers that she had died on 13 October. He had not seen her since 1949 when, because of worsening disseminated sclerosis, she had entered hospital with pleurisy, asthma, and double pneumonia. She wrote him about the pneumonia (blaming it on what she called her mother's 'p.moniam pneurosis'), then went blind and entered a nursing home of undisclosed location, where she spent most of 1952 in a coma. Jones wrote to friends, 'I can hardly take in the fact of her death. She was of unique nobility & sensitivity & courage.' 'She was of the rarest possible nobility of mind and like no one else at all.' To commemorate her, he made a Latin

inscription from Propertius on the asbestos sheet framing his fireplace (fig. 1). It is addressed to Persephone in Hades and translates,

Iope is with you and snow-white Tyro too
 And every Roman girl who was of their rank
 Let one beautiful one abide on earth, if so it may be.



1. Homage to Prudence, inscription on asbestos, 1953

This lament was his tribute to her. He painted it ‘quite quickly one evening straight away in water-colour paint.’ It just ‘happened to come off,’ which puzzled him because had he done it on paper he ‘should have messed about with it & corrected it.’ It was one of the inscriptions he had made so far that he liked best.²²

She had nine pictures by him, most bought, some given, a few on loan. Early in 1953, he saw some of these on the walls of an art dealer and learned that, to pay her heavy medical bills, Robert Buhler had sold them. Jones was upset. He wished that Buhler had asked him if he would have liked any of them back.²³ On 7 May of the following year, he received a cheque for £1000, which she had bequeathed to him.

Jones read Victor White’s collection of essays entitled *God and the Unconscious*, which he found extremely interesting but disappointing. To Charles Burns he wrote, ‘I thought he was going to really *get down to it*, whereas I don’t feel he does.... I found his analogies between Thomism & certain findings of contemporary psychology very interesting indeed. The chapter on gnostics & gnosticism I thought was of particular interest. But I still feel that the Jung-Freud-God part [is] unsatisfactory—very. I’ve a *feeling* that old godless Freud will turn out to be the “Aristotle” of the

business. ... one feels there is a sure-footedness in Freud within his own strict limits, which one does not feel with Jung So often supremely great “discoveries” are dead right within a context & damned silly outside that restricted orbit of investigation. I feel something of this sort is true of Freud.’ With reference to the thinking underlying a new Christian theology, Jones predicted, ‘Freud will be the new Aristotle.’²⁴

On 30 March 1953 at the Cleverdons in Albany Street, he met Dylan Thomas, whose first name he insisted on pronouncing in the proper Welsh way, ‘Dulan,’ even though Thomas himself used the English pronunciation. It was their third meeting, like the previous two also at the Cleverdon's house. Previously, Thomas had been too drunk to converse with. Now he was relatively sober, and they talked for hours about Welsh poetry, Jones doing most of the talking since, he found, Thomas knew very little about it. Years later, he would be interested to learn from Vernon Watkins that Thomas owed a lot to reading Hopkins. It would amuse him ‘that the Victorian English Jesuit should teach Welsh forms to the most popular modern Welsh poet.’ He liked Dylan Thomas and delighted in his antics, such as reading Keats for an hour on a radio program scheduled for a reading of Wordsworth. Jones admired him as a reader, an admiration confirmed in the summer of 1956 when Plumtree played him ‘marvellous gramophone records’ of Thomas reading poetry. He thought that in his writing Thomas, gave new life to English through an underlying sense of a Celtic language— like Joyce though not as much as Joyce. Jones confided to Grisewood, though, that he thought Thomas’s poetry lacking in form. In 1954 he would listen to the radio broadcast of Thomas’s play *Under Milkwood*, which made him ‘laugh a lot’ and seemed ‘absolutely authentic’ in its depiction of an Anglo-Welsh South Welsh valley town, but when he heard it again in 1972 he thought it had dated ‘in the wrong sort of way’ and ‘no longer seemed to work.’²⁵

Dylan Thomas regarded Jones with what the Cleverdon’s remembered as ‘great reverence’ and expressed huge admiration for him as a poet. During one of Thomas’s American recital tours, his program consisted entirely of John Donne and parts of *In Parenthesis*. He recorded the description of Gwenwhyfar in ‘Mabinog’s Liturgy’ (A 195-205)--years after Thomas’s death, when Jones learned of this, he felt ‘honoured.’ After their third and final meeting, Thomas praised Jones to Grisewood for what he called ‘his holiness’ and delicacy of mind, the lack of which he lamented in himself. About the poetry, he said, ‘I would like to have done anything as good as David Jones has done.’ When Jones heard of Thomas’s death in November 1953, he was ‘very sad.’²⁶

Vernon Watkins asked him to design an inscription for the tombstone, and he declined, explaining ‘I don’t, when I make a painted inscription, “design” it at all (in the accepted sense). I accommodate the forms of the letters as I proceed until a kind of wholeness is achieved *in that medium*’; ‘the same adjustments of form . . . almost certainly would not’ work ‘in some other medium’. ‘Such “idiosyncrasies” as I may employ are occasioned by the requirements of the actual job in the process of doing it, and so are intimately bound up with the actual doing of it.’ It ‘is in no sense a “style”, and to imitate it ‘becomes a “gimmick”’. The design must be left to the carver, and he recommended Laurie Cribb as a better carver of inscriptions even than Gill, something Gill himself had recognized. Another sculptor, who had been in school with Thomas, got the job.²⁷

In March Jones was immobilized with fibrocitis, and, in April, he contemplated returning to Sidmouth. On his behalf Margaret Grisewood wrote to enquire, and Mr Griffin replied that in 1949 they had converted the Fort Hotel to flats and could no longer accommodate him. Unwilling to consider an alternative in Sidmouth, Jones stayed put.

Cleverdon had been encouraged by the broadcasts of *In Parenthesis*, regarded by many, though not Jones, as a success. Months before publication, he proposed to produce a radio version of *The Anathemata*. Skeptical, Jones resisted, offering various objections. Grisewood reassured him, citing a recent success by John Guilgud’s reading *The Wreck of the Deutschland* over the radio. Jones said that a broadcast of *The Anathemata* could only be ‘a straight reading,’ not *necessarily* all in one go, though better so, with not a word left out.’ Grisewood and Cleverdon each told him this was impossible, and, reassured him that he would be consulted along the way, Jones grudgingly relented. Disappointed that so few had bought the book, he hoped the broadcast would sell some copies.²⁸

In early April 1953, he went for supper to Cleverdon’s house to see the proposed script, to meet Henry Washington, who would supply the music, and to discuss the musical possibilities. Cleverdon had marked selections in a copy of proofs obtained from Faber. He intended to weave these into a script, omitting passages that seemed to him obscure. The script had to fit into an hour-and-fifty minutes. Jones regretted the exclusion of, he thought, ‘the nicest things.’ He told Cleverdon that the talk of Welsh witches in ‘Mabinog’s Liturgy’ was a conversation between three witches—he named them for him: Marged, Mabli, and Sibli. Cleverdon and Washington asked him

for suggestions about music. Since music had weakened the broadcast of *In Parenthesis*, Jones took the request seriously, going through the book of selections available to the BBC, a task he found ‘*exceedingly* difficult,’ and presenting Cleverdon with a twelve-page foolscap list of sixty-five selections: forty-seven bits of liturgical chant and the rest carols, madrigals, folk songs.* In the production, Cleverdon faithfully adhered to this long list, and Jones appreciated that: ‘Douglas took immense pains to get this done. No trouble is too much for him.’ The musical selections augment the poem, adding to its rich intertextuality and serving as authorial commentary and annotation. Arranged and conducted by Washington, the liturgical chant was sung by Deller Consort and the Schola Polyphonica of Westminster Cathedral in correct Church-Latin, not as usually sung by Anglican choirs. Jones loved the singing of the Christmas Preface at the opening, his ‘favourite thing almost in the whole Latin Rite.’ The non-liturgical singing was recorded by the Looe Fishermen’s choir of Cornwall. Because Dylan Thomas was on a US reading tour, he had pre-recorded his parts, mostly from ‘Mabinog’s Liturgy’—recordings speeded up during rehearsal, raising the register of his voice.²⁹ Invited to rehearsals, Jones deliberately stayed away. After nine rehearsals, the program was recorded on 28 April. Jones declined to hear it before the broadcast because he knew he would want changes. He borrowed a radio and listened to the broadcast on the evening of 5 May.

He was ‘pretty alarmed’ but on hearing the rebroadcast two days later ‘liked it better.’ He thought the music ‘sounded most beautiful, as perfect as could be.’ He liked best the Welsh women performing in ‘Mabinog’s Liturgy.’ ‘That was said almost exactly as I intended it to be said.’ And Dylan Thomas ‘said all his bits absolutely O.K.’ They ‘preserved the poetry & you could feel the shape of the words & sentences. But in some of the earlier parts I could not stand the exaggerated shouting & stage Cockney & all the excited speed.’ Diana Maddox’s thirty-minute rendition of ‘The Lady of the Pool’ ‘was not so bad ... when she was quiet & natural but I loathed it when she got excited & when she got coy.’ He thought she ‘got *something* at ...the lavender-seller, woman-of-

* For specific selections and placement of music, see Dilworth, ‘Music for *The Anathemata*,’ *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 85 (March 1991), 27-47.

the-time etc. level, but not the profounder level, not the tutelary figure level *at all.*' He hated Norman Sherry's "'Gawd Blimey" Cockney' rendition of Eb Bradshaw's monologue in 'Redriff' 'at great speed & with gusto,' entirely misunderstanding the period and class of the man, who 'spoke with deliberation, rather slowly' and in a home county accent. He wanted this performance changed or dropped from subsequent broadcasts, but Cleverdon told him that Sherry was 'a terribly nice person who had sweated on getting the thing ... as he thought perfect, so it would have been *quite heart-breaking* to tell him it was all wrong.'³⁰ Possibly as a result of Sherry's rendition, some still mistake Bradshaw in *The Anathemata* as a Cockney.

Jones knew that they had tried their best and that Cleverdon, 'a remarkable chap,' had 'worked tremendously hard.' Jones had been unable, he realized, 'to make people understand that in poetry the words themselves & their arrangement & juxtaposition are sufficient to give the required feeling without histrionics and exaggerated emphases.' The general response to the program was positive, however, and he was amused that 'all kinds of people who regarded the book as totally unreadable lapped up this broadcast & were delighted.' The positive letters he and Cleverdon received mollified him somewhat, and after hearing subsequent broadcasts he would soften his judgment and admit that the production 'gets quite a bit across' and conveys an idea 'of the 'mingled streams'' of the poem.³¹ In later years, he was 'pretty astonished that it worked at all, & thought the skill with which it was managed remarkable. For now, however, the misinterpretation of so much by actors shook his confidence as a writer. As he put it, 'When I write the stuff and say it to myself aloud as I write it, it sounds clear enough and almost fool proof. But ... this is evidently not the case.'³² Except for rebroadcasts of Cleverdon's productions, subsequent broadcasts of Jones's poetry would consist solely of him reading it aloud.

The first to want to broadcast *The Anathemata* had first been Alan Oldfield Davies, who had wanted a Welsh-radio production. Cleverdon had objected on the grounds that he was the first to bring Jones to radio. It had been decided that, in addition to Cleverdon's production based on the whole of the poem, a dramatic reading of the complete 'Mabinog's Liturgy' would be produced by Elwyn Evans, who had produced the broadcasts of the *Mabinogion* that Jones loved so much. Jones wrote to Evans, 'my "method" of writing is of necessity in the nature of an experiment, so I think the reading of it must be regarded as largely experimental.' He was eager to hear what a second

group would make of the work. The production aired on the evening of 31 May as part of the Welsh contribution the celebrations of the coronation of Elizabeth II. Jones liked it. He thought the actors ‘kept the right pace throughout, with only a few exceptions’ read sensitively, for the most part with the right emphasis. He liked Arthur Phillips, whom he had hoped would read and, he writes Evans,

I thought Dilys Davies, Lorna Davies and Vera Meazey were about as perfect as anything could be. (* They got the intended fusion of ‘banter’ & gravity most beautifully & naturally & yet with proper artifice.) Whichever one of them did the bit ‘Now sisters, what said our pious father etc’ p. 213 seq. did it superbly. I thought the women better than the men—which is interesting because in D.C.’s production also Rachel Thomas seemed to me... the best of the whole cast. So it would appear that the women of Wales get the first prize in both productions as far as my opinion goes!

Upon hearing a rebroadcast, he liked the male readers better than he had. Because it was ‘in the nature of a straight reading,’ he far preferred this production, to Cleverdon’s ‘dramatized’ version.³³

On 16 May 1953, he contributed a letter to a correspondence in the *TLS* on Shakespeare’s ostensible allusions in *Richard III*, V, iii to the Jewish Liturgy. His letter, unpublished in his lifetime, discerns allusions to Compline, and has since become a small but valuable addition to the interpretation of the play. Jones sees liturgical echoes as identifying Richmond with traditional ecclesiastically sanctioned goodness, which subtly increase the apparent rightness of his claim to the throne.*

In the year since the publication of *The Anathemata*, Jones had been unable to settle down to painting because he kept thinking about the poem and the ‘problems of writing’ it. Now he began to paint, but it was more difficult than ever before and took longer. He was ‘less sure how to do’ pictures, and fewer attempts succeeded. About most he had reservations or felt uncertain. He longed to finish some he was sure were good. And he wanted to sell them. He told one inquirer to describe ‘vaguely the kind of water-colour you had in mind’ so that he could let her know when he had one available.³⁴

Faber was launching a new series of Ariel Poems, inaugurated by Eliot, who wanted Jones to illustrate his ‘The Cultivation of Christmas Trees.’ Jones liked the poem and was now working

* Jones’s letter is published in T. Dilworth, ‘Liturgical Echoes: David Jones on Shakespeare’s *Richard III*, V,iii,’ *English Language Notes*, XXXIII (March 1996), 6-9.

on a cover-illustration and an inscription for the tailpiece. The inscription combines Greek of an Orphic hymn to Persephone with Latin of the Mass mentioning Lucy. It was a ‘mingling of Roman letters with flouriations ... one of the trickiest things in the world to pull off.’* The drawing is of a wounded stag, modeled on a small porcelain figure in his room. It rests by a stream, facing a lit paschal candle. Behind it trees rhyme with its antlers, and among the trees is a gigantic Christmas tree, covered with lit candles. Initially it caused him some difficulty because, he wrote to Eliot, ‘I *don’t* like conifers—perhaps because of their uncompromising rigidity—and it’s difficult to get away from conifers in the case of Xmas trees!’ He tried to get the feeling of the famous carol’s ‘Holy Night.’ For him, the stag symbolizes Jesus and recalls the stags feeding on the hydromel dropping from Odin’s Yggdrasil and the deer of the psalm that desireth the water brook. Flowers spring up round the stag because his blood fertilizes the soil—like the blood of Adonis in Palestine. He lost the drawing in his room for a while but found and finished it, and liked what he had done, though he was apprehensive about whether he had, in fact, illustrated the poem. He preferred the illustration (fig 2) to the inscription. He was glad they were being



2. David Jones, Faber Christmas card, 1953

reproduced lithographically and hoped that would improve them, as nineteenth century engravers sometimes improved pen drawings they reproduced. But for both, reproduction and reduction in scale eliminated the feeling in the original. Reproduced in black and white at the end of the poem, the coloured inscription seemed to him ‘a “worried” mass of detail.’ He advised Maurice Percival, ‘I shouldn’t bother about that thing of mine on T.S.E’s Xmas poem—they *murdered* it. It really is an

* See Nicolette Gray, *The Painted Inscriptions of David Jones*, p. 68.

awful mess—comic to think what happens to things in reproduction—but this is particularly bad.’ When friends asked him to sign the illustration he refused.³⁵

Since meeting him at Paddington during the war, he had known and become friendly with Anairin Talfyn Davies, a talks producer for BBC Wales. In the spring, Davies had commissioned him to give a half-hour radio talk on ‘Wales and the Crown’ as part of the Welsh contribution to the coronation celebrations. The producer was to be Elwyn Evans, whom Jones invited to visit, and on 27 May, Evans went to see him. The room was crammed full, order bordering on chaos as in a workman’s shop. ‘Come in,’ Jones said and mumbled about the ‘bloody mess!’ They talked about Wales, about the Welsh nationalists Saunders Lewis and T.J. Williams, who was Evans’s uncle by marriage. Jones had his talk more or less written and told Evans, ‘I know I can’t manage a “live” broadcast, but I *might* manage it pre-recorded.’ All talks were then broadcast live, but Evans agreed to make an exception. He noticed that while Jones had ‘this sad, ravaged face,’ his body looked vigorous, reminding him of a Welsh cob—a work horse, half way between a pony and a cart horse—‘tough in appearance.’* Evans was ‘tremendously impressed’ by Jones but in an ensuing correspondence he thought Jones ‘obsessive,’ sending ‘by almost every post’ foolscap pages in pencil suggesting minor changes and additions. The recording was made in Jones’s room by Cleverdon, substituting for Evans, at 2.30 on 20 July 1953. Jones found the experience ‘nerve-racking’ as he tried to speak ‘slowly, deliberately & as clearly as possible’ because he thought ‘the chief thing’ was ‘to be clearly heard.’ The broadcast on the Welsh Home Service did not reach London, but, on 29 November, it was rebroadcast on the Third Programme. Hearing it was, for him, an important experience. He had considered himself ‘a very bad reader’ but, listening now, decided that he was not so bad after all and was disposed to make more prerecorded readings. He would do three more radio talks in the next two years and in the 1960s would record for broadcast four new poems. He would record enough poetry to fill two and a half long-playing records. Before his voice weakened, he read beautifully, in a rich, low, distinctive voice, gravely, with deliberation. People

* Many, including Grisewood, describe Jones at this time as frail, bent, and diminished, but in the experience of the author, who met Jones in 1971, Evans’s description is accurate.

would frequently tell him that on the radio he sounded Churchillian, which he thought ‘bloody funny’ since, as he put it, ‘I’m not exactly a Churchillian character!’³⁶

An importantly persistent force in getting him to broadcast talks especially, but also readings of his own poetry, was Anna (Nuta) Kallin—a Russian Jew and friend of Manya Harari and Isaiah Berlin—who worked with Grisewood at the BBC. She had begun inviting Jones to broadcast in January 1947. Grisewood suggested it and had interested Christopher Holme and Leonie Cohn at the Third Programme by showing them passages on the modern world from Jones’s letters in the autumn of 1952. They had approached him, but he declined, and no one thought he would ever agree, but Anna Kallin approached him, and he liked her so he agreed to do it—really, said Grisewood, to please her. Her coaxing, urging, arranging, facilitating made the broadcasts possible. Without her Jones would never have given his broadcast talks, particularly ‘the *Viae*’ on 22 November 1955 and ‘The Dying Gaul’ on 24 April 1959.³⁷

Collaboration with the BBC gave him a new circle of friends, though not close ones. Anna Kallin often contacted Jones through Grisewood. Because she had little patience for Jones’s prolonged phone calls, she used Hilary Reynolds as an intermediary. Hilary worked for Kallin in the late 1950s and would visit him to time his readings with a stopwatch, though he would also come, ‘most reluctantly’ to Broadcast House to record them. She had expected a withdrawn poet and was surprised at how friendly and humorous he was. She used to ring up, “Oh Hello Mr Jones.” and he would reply, ‘It’s not Mr Jones; it’s David’. One day he rang her up and he said, ‘This is David David.’ He gave her ‘lovely meals’ when she visited him—mainly a grapefruit and a boiled egg.³⁸

Before long, she was a friend. Jones had her to supper, showed her his painting-in-progress of ‘window and flowers’, with which he was not then happy, and lectured her on the Celts, which rekindled an interest in them that took her to the library to read what he recommended. She would later marry Ralph Beyer, an artist who had first encountered Jones’s work while learning letter-carving with Gill in 1937-38. He twice accompanied her on visits—he would be one of the important letter-cutters late in the century to be influenced by Jones’s inscriptions.³⁹

If, as Jones said, he could ‘hardly abide the wireless,’ he positively loathed television, but on 2 June 1953, he was persuaded to watch the coronation of the new Queen Elizabeth at a neighbour’s house. He was enthralled by the robing with garments deriving from late-Roman imperial usage and

the presenting of sceptres and rings: ‘the queen looked incredibly beautiful seated, holding the two sceptres, wearing St Edward’s crown & weighed down with the royal vestments—of immense dignity & *humility*, she looked a real *anathéma*.’ Three years before, he had read in Dawson’s *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture* about the English coronation rite extending back ‘with hardly any serious gaps to its Carolingian origins.’ But the over-all impression was, he thought, late Byzantine—because of her high crown, the shape of the vestments, and the coronets of the peers. For him the expression of regal splendour and the historical continuity were secondary ‘to something far deeper and more primal and quite ageless. A person *appeared* to have been made sacrificial.’ The ritual conveyed to him ‘a setting apart, a making over to divine use, a placing in the state of a victim.’ The ‘feeling of the gold-clad victim was very moving,’ reminding him of the painting of Richard II in the Wilton Diptych. And he realized that if this impression was subjective, it was nevertheless in harmony with what the same and similar rites had signified ‘to our ancestors from remote times.’ When he read in the *Tablet* that theologians would not allow the adjective ‘sacramental’ to be used of the rite, he drafted a reply saying ‘that adjective would seem to be the most exact ... by which to describe an action in which visible signs are employed ... to signify that a person has herself been made the visible sign of something, viz, of the Monarchy of Britain.’ He attended the post-coronation garden party at Buckingham Palace where, among the thousands present, he saw some friends, including the Grays with their daughter Camilla. He later watched a newsreel of the coronation at the Harrow cinema—his last visit to a cinema.⁴⁰

In August 1953 Chris Carlile decided to redecorate Jones’s room, which made Jones’s life difficult for over a month. He had, first of all, to vacate. ‘God! the *dust* & the *moths* and the *rubbish*—loads & loads of it.’ Indecisively, painfully, he sorted and threw out a good deal. He then came down with a flu in his throat and chest, and while ‘workmen repaint & generally arse around with buckets,’ he recovered in another, smaller room. In September he moved bit back in, but the painters had used a distemper on the old wallpaper that ‘set up *the* most *extraordinary* smell.’ It endured undiminished, so, after putting everything back in place, he had to move everything out again and then back, after the painters finished a second time. Maurice Percival had vacated his room so that Jones could stay there. After again inhabiting his room, he found it difficult ‘finding

anything.’⁴¹ During this time of disruption, he wrote a short letter correcting a mistake in Welsh history made by *The Times*, which, to his chagrin, was not published.

During these weeks, he was cheered only by reading Hopkins with revived interest. He read Helen Gardner’s two-volume study of the poet, which he found ‘bloody interesting’ though containing nothing he didn’t already know. On 15 August he bought John Pick’s edition of Hopkins’s prose, which he read and, through the years, would reread. ‘By God!,’ he writes, ‘he’s right enough about Tennyson & Browning ... superb about the “downright haberdasher” of Lady Clara Vere de Vere—a bull’s eye.’ The only serious lapse in Hopkins, Jones thought, was his failure to appreciate Langland.⁴²

His renewed interest in Hopkins had initially been kindled by a long ‘contemptible’ article on Robert Bridges in the 26 June *TLS*. The anonymous reviewer elevates Bridges at the expense of Hopkins, praising Bridges for criticizing Hopkins’s rhymes, claiming that Hopkins is guilty of ‘emphasis’ at the expense of the ‘euphony’ and is therefore boring. The reviewer says that the ‘Testament of Beauty’ is ‘unsurpassed’ by poetry written since *The Prelude* and adds that Bridges was ‘unusually handsome.’ Infuriated, Jones thought that the editor, Alan Price-Jones, with whom he was friendly, ‘really ought to know better’ than to publish such ‘stuff’ and writes, ‘I find people more & more puzzling over all this *poiesis* thing. If they can find *any* excuse for flopping back on to the commonplace, the boring, the second rate, the un-real, the bogus, the half-asleep, the clever, the ‘cultivatred,’ the stuff from bottles, they inevitably seem to do so. They continually remind me of dear Eric’s favourite phrase about ‘making the worse appear the better reason.’⁴³ He was saddened to learn that the author of this trash was Edmund Blunden.

In mid October, Fr Conrad Pepler and his sister Clare visited. Although he had not seen her for thirty years, Jones knew her immediately but did not recognize Conrad, whom he had not seen in twenty years. Then round and florid, he was now slender and pale. Jones found him ‘most awfully nice & also interesting,’ and, during their conversation, caught a glimpse of his father’s smile. Pepler found Jones ‘just as shy and charming as ever, in fact very little changed ... after all those years.’⁴⁴

That autumn, Jones read Christopher Sykes’ *Two Studies in Virtue*, which he thought ‘very interesting, amusing & illuminating.’ He was particularly fascinated by the account of the religious

torment of Richard W. Sibthorp, a contemporary of Newman who was in and out of the Catholic Church five times and, as a Catholic priest, died in bed reading *The Book of Common Prayer*.⁴⁵ He could not but sympathize with such indecision.

For over a year, since the publication of his book in October, illness had kept him from going up to London.⁴⁶ Now injections for his throat, which he had had for the past two autumns, began to take effect, and one day in November he ‘dragged’ himself up to London to see a Renoir exhibit and, especially, a Matthew Smith exhibition at the Tate. He thought Smith a very fine painter, undervalued since his death. In his copy of the catalogue he marked his favourites among the paintings: *Femme en Chemise* (1928), *Landscape Near Venice* (1932), *Mont Sainte Victoire* (1932), *St Paul-du-Var* (c. 1935), *Landscape Near Cagnes* (c. 1935), and especially *The Falling Model* (1926).

He had known Smith slightly in the late 1920s, a shy ex-serviceman who passionately painted still lives and nudes with outlandish colour derived from Fauvism. Like Jones, he had suffered a postwar breakdown, was devoid of social ambition, and was never entirely content with his own work. He, too, inspired friendship and did not consort much with other artists, Sickert having been an exception, as was Augustus John. ‘He was a very good painter and a charming man,’ Jones would write, ‘but his work was uneven—at his best he was very very good. Not in my opinion a very good draughtsman, but a wonderful feeling for paint & especially colour—a bit exuberant [sic], but jolly good.’ It amused him that Smith’s loudly colourful work was ‘so totally & absolutely unlike’ him. In person he looked ‘rather like a lawyer or a doctor.’ Jones considered Smith and Sickert the ‘two most “professional” painters that Britain has produced since Turner’ and in the coming years would wonder at Smith being ‘almost forgotten about.’ That Smith, Henry Moore, and Barbara Hepworth were all from Yorkshire convinced him that ‘there is very much talent in the visual arts in that hard, *very* hard country.’⁴⁷

Shortly after his day in London, he was incapacitated by fibrocitis. He did not much mind the pain, except that it precluded thinking of other things. That annoyed and worried him. When the fibrocitis eased, bronchial trouble felled him and lasted a long time, he surmised, because the ‘very severe east wind ... turns this somewhat exposed house into an ice-box.’ He forced himself to exit Northwick Lodge on 3 November to see a Classics master’s slides of Crete and Greece. ‘I don’t

very often go out,' he wrote Petra, 'but I wanted to see these slides & they were jolly impressive.' When Helen Sutherland visited two days later, he told her about them.⁴⁸

From early November through mid January, he devoted most of his time to writing an essay entitled 'Art and Sacrament', which would be his most important essay on aesthetics and culture. Through Nicolette Gray, Elizabeth Pakenham had asked him to write it for a collection she was editing entitled *Catholic Approaches*. He had agreed reluctantly and found writing it 'an awful pain in the neck.' The essay is a long, meandering, brilliant theoretical afterword to *The Anathemata*. In it he discusses the difference between utilitarian and gratuitous acts and the relation of religion and the arts to a civilization losing its sense of sacrament and symbol. 'No painting done at all, in consequence of this ridiculous essay,' he complains. Such writing took 'more time & trouble than anything else,' and he resolved to do no more 'for a long time.' The collection in which it appeared, in 1955, was the sort of 'hotch-potch' book that he regarded as 'a mistake.' This one was particularly 'lacking in unity,' falling 'between all sorts of stools,' and embarrassing in the poor quality of some contributions.^{*49}

Almost immediately, his resolve to refrain from writing essays was shaken by a request from Dent to write an introduction for the Everyman Library edition of Borrow's *Wild Wales* to be published in the centenary year. The book had been 'a lifelong companion ... & for all' its 'absurdity & ludicrous ideas' Jones had 'always had an affection for Borrow & certainly a new preface *should* be written.' To postpone giving in and because the money mattered, considering how long it took him to write such things, he wrote asking what the fee would be. He was told £20, 'a wretched sum,' he thought, 'but *just* acceptable providing they used it.' He spent late winter and spring writing this preface. The following autumn, 1956, he was 'disgruntled' to learn that Dent was not using it.⁵⁰ When it was published, in 1958, Jones would be irritated to see the date at the end of his

* Jones's 'Art and Sacrament' is republished in *Epoch and Artist*, pp. 143-79. The essays he liked in the collection are Nicolette Gray's 'Problems of Education and Upbringing,' David Matthew's 'An Approach to Africa,' and G. Temple's 'Physics and Philosophy.' He disliked D. de Grunne's 'English Catholicism seen from Abroad,' and Eric Strauss's 'The Church and Sex.'

introduction changed, making nonsense of his repeated references the book's first publication 'exactly a century ago.'

He felt colder in January and February 1954 than he remembered ever feeling. He now needed glasses to read. He was having gastric trouble and, at Bell's advice, was trying to avoid an ulcer by drinking lots of milk and, eating mild foods such as boiled fish and chicken, and avoiding alcohol and cigarettes. Not smoking he found 'pretty intolerable.' The winter was, for him, 'very sterile, fruitless, barren & stupid.'⁵¹

About this time, Audrey Malan introduced to him an eighteen-year-old student in her husband's house named Richard Shirley Smith, who was interested in art. The boy had seen Jones earlier, an oddly dressed figure in a voluminous overcoat walking up Peterborough Road. When approached by a group of hatted and tailed Harrovians, he modestly stepping into the gutter to let them pass—an unusual thing for an adult to do. Shirley Smith visited and listened to Jones talk. He introduced him to his friend Christopher Finzi, the composer's son, and to the composer's tall, handsome widow, Joy. Knowing about his drawings of animals, the boys brought a lively Burmese cat, which knocked things over as it explored the cluttered room. Jones gently advised them not to bring it again. Often Shirley Smith came alone, once at 11:30 a.m. when Jones was making his bed. While continuing to make it, he explained that since he worked till 3 a.m., he preferred visits at tea-time. During their many long talks about art, the boy became interested in wood engraving. Jones later wrote him a letter of recommendation for the Slade, where Shirley Smith studied from 1956 to 1960. At the Slade he would meet his future wife, a lovely and intelligent brunette named Juliet Wood, whom Jones thought a marvelous girl, 'such a good artist', 'an artist to her very fingertips' and 'a remarkable character' They would visit Jones several times a year. Often, just as they had to leave to catch the last bus, he would bring out his bulging portfolios. He said to her that for him a work is true only if it has been worked up, rubbed out, and redone, broken and remade. The china on his windowsill had not become itself until it had been broken and mended. Brokenness makes humanly real. She revered him but felt that he put females on pedestals—he was especially courteous and gentle to them.⁵²

He told them of going to confession recently. It had been a considerable time since he had attended Mass, which Catholics were then obliged 'under pain of mortal sin' to attend weekly. The priest pointed out that, if he had had an accident on his way here, he might well have gone to hell. Jones replied

that while no one relished a long theological discussion more than he, if it were all the same to the priest, he would prefer to postpone it since he had a taxi ticking away outside.⁵³

Jones's meagre finances were diminished. Since his 1948 Redfern sales, Ede had been suggesting ending or decreasing the fund he had organized. In January 1952, it had collapsed when Ann Benthall died and Kenneth Clark was no longer able to contribute. Jones's income after expenses for 1953 was £326, almost half of that a final gift by Clark of £125 in compensation for ending his contributions. Sutherland continued sending £5 monthly. On a visit from France, where he now lived, Ede suggested to Grisewood that, to make up for the lost fund, a Civil List Pension should be obtained—something Grisewood and Burns had tried to do years before. After speaking with Jones, who supplied a list of possible sponsors, Grisewood enlisted Hugh Fraser to operate behind the scenes and got Herbert Read, Kenneth Clark, and TS Eliot to agree to co-sign a letter of appeal. Grisewood circulated a draft stating that Jones had added works of permanent value in two distinct arts and was now being handicapped by financial anxieties. Eliot suggested that the letter be expanded to indicate that Jones's books, while highly praised, were not lucrative and that ill health limited his output and prevented him from engaging in social self-promotion. Clark suggested that the letter indicate more about Jones's 'really outstanding position as a painter.' Grisewood redrafted the letter, which they all signed, and sent it to Sir Anthony Bevir, Secretary for Appointments in the Treasury. Clark telephoned Bevir, a friend, to 'say more than an official letter can contain.' On 16 March 1954, Jones received word that he would receive from the Queen on the Prime Minister's recommendation a Civil List Pension of £150, in quarterly installments. He was proud to be receiving income from the Crown. From now on Grisewood acted as his liaison with Downing Street in this matter, giving detailed reports on his poverty and occasionally begging for an increase.⁵⁴ In 1957 the pension was raised to £250, in 1958 to £350.

Since the 1948 exhibit, Jones had become increasingly unhappy with Rex Nan Kivell, who still owed him money from sales. Long before that exhibition, Jones had kept elaborate dated lists of pictures delivered to the gallery, and, whenever he noticed that one had been sold, made inquiries of Nan Kivell, who only then might send partial payment. Nan Kivell treated all his artists this way. If they did not ask, he delayed payment indefinitely. If they did, he deferred full payment as long as



3. Rex Nan Kivell, 1953

possible, explaining that money was tied up in pictures, sometimes mentioning his sciatica to elicit sympathy. Ede and Dorothea Travis urged Nan Kivell to be more forthcoming with Jones, who, since the '48 exhibition, had written and telephoned repeatedly for payment. In 1950 alone, he sent three pleading letters, receiving in reply a cheque for £100. In late autumn 1950, the amount still owing was £1223. That year, the Tate bought Jones's *Flower-piece*. Instead of sending payment, Nan Kivell informed him that he had made arrangements for the money to be sent when asked for. On 1 April 1951, Jones wrote asking for 'a more substantial reduction of the sum owing ... as I am in need of it and in any case I feel that what is owing should be *considerably* reduced as it has been owing for rather a long time.' On 7 May 1952 he wrote again for 'a

cheque toward the payment of what is owing,' adding, 'Would you sometime also let me know if there were any further sales of the engraving (dry-point) of the wounded knight?' This was the engraving made for the abandoned *Morte D'Arthur*. Cleverdon owned the plate and had lent it to the gallery to make an edition of fifty prints to sell at £3 each for Jones's benefit. All the prints had sold, but Jones had received nothing. Nan Kivell promised to 'look into the question.' Nagging depressed Jones. He was unsure how much was owed. At one point Cleverdon stepped in and acted as his business manager, writing for payment and statements of account. When Nan Kivell sent £200 and a statement, Cleverdon replied that the dealer had not mentioned the engraving and asked for the return of the copper plate. Nan Kivell replied that it had been lost, which was a lie, since the gallery continued making and selling prints into the 1960s, when his new friend the artist Arthur Giardelli bought one and brought it to Jones to sign. (Jones signed it, though he thought it 'very under printed.') He never received payment for the prints. In January 1953, the dealer owed him £373 for the 1948 show and still occasionally sold pictures by Jones. In 1958 the amount owing was £283. All this time the dealer repeatedly asked to visit in order to wheedle pictures out of him, and Jones refused to invite him. Mayfair rents were high, and Nan Kivell was struggling to keep the gallery afloat, but he was also a thief. In later years, Jones would say that the gallery had 'lost' some of his pictures, implying sales with no payment to him. Nan Kivell stole from Ede a Kit Wood and a

number of Gaudier Brzeskas. During the war he had been jailed for stealing typewriters.⁵⁵

Sir Rex—in 1952 he received a knighthood for donating Australian art to the Australian National Gallery—was not only a thief but also a fence for thieves. In 1954, someone brought Jones, for authentication, pictures bought at the Redfern. One was by René Hague but with the initials DJ and a date in the corner. (Hague was an amateur painter, owing to Jones's encouragement, who had given him paints in 1928.) The others were by Jones, but he had never offered them for sale. He went to the gallery, saw more falsely-signed Hagues and others by himself never released for sale. He protested to Nan Kivell, who, unmoved, refused to disclose his source. But Jones recognized his own pictures as from a large portfolio he had stored at Pigotts during the war. It had contained watercolours and drawings that he wanted to keep 'as representative of various periods' and had been placed in the lumber room, behind the balcony above the stone-carving shop. He telephoned Hague, who could not locate it and was characteristically silly about his own efforts passing as Joneses: 'Splendid Dai, I've got quite a few more and there's nothing easier than to scribble 'D.J. 1934' in the bottom corner.' Jones said, '*René*, you must realize this is *serious*. It's not a joke; it's important.'⁵⁶

Initially he suspected the thief to be Gill's delinquent son, Gordian, a heavy drinker who, shortly after Eric's death, had stolen a Gill carving, was accused by the family, and sent to jail for it. Eventually, however, Jones realized that the culprit was another heavy drinker, his own godson, twenty-two year old Michael Hague. Jones felt betrayed, but thinking René and Joan would be extremely upset if they knew, he did not press charges (though he would long regret not doing so) but concocted a story for them about mistakenly leaving the portfolio in a taxi. The accidental death of their twenty-year old son Richard in February of the following year strengthened his resolve to keep the secret. Only a few knew the identity of the thief, and they kept quiet. When I asked him in 1989 what he knew about the stolen portfolio, Michael Hague responded with uncharacteristic stony silence and, recovering his characteristic volubility, described its contents. Here is his statement:

A lot of them were done at London Zoo, of tigers. There was a series of tigers stalking round their cage, and he captured different movements in each sketch, and then there was a final, definitive painting at the end of it. René had been dickered with painting, both before the war and after, and his style was very akin to David's. There were all these paintings of René's and somebody, who I do not know, a maidservant or somebody, saw them and said 'Oh they'd better go in the portfolio.' What happened to all the stuff I don't know. Nobody to this day knows. I mean it

might have been nicked by anybody.

Jones's anger was increased by Michael's clear assumption that, not having retrieved the portfolio in the nine years since the war had ended, he had forgotten it—as though he held his work in so little regard. While most of the 'lost' or stolen pictures were for sale at the Redfern, some turned up in other galleries. He had long considered some of these pictures unworthy of exhibition or sale and was angry that they were now in the public domain, hurting his reputation. One of these was a standing nude done in 1921 at Westminster School of Art, which the Tate bought from the Redfern in 1963, and which Nan Kivell claimed to have bought from Jones in 1942, but which Jones told the Tate he had not and never would have offered for sale. Angry and anguished at his loss and the frustration of being unable to take legal action, he was nevertheless amused that paintings by René—with their dry, regular brush strokes and stiff, uninteresting shapes—could be attributed to him. When he discovered in the spring of 1957 that some of these falsely attributed Hagues were for sale at Christies, he went to the director to have them withdrawn. Ten years later, one would be donated to the Fitzwilliam Museum, where a curator would question its authenticity and bring it to him to be declared a fake. Around this time another portfolio in storage disappeared. He later referred to it vaguely in correspondence: 'I 'lost' ... by equal mischance another lot about the same time from a place elsewhere.' Giardelli described a picture he had bought and given a brother. Jones said, 'That no doubt came from the stolen portfolios.' At another time he showed Jones a small drawing of barbed wire and birds, originally intended to illustrate *In Parenthesis*, which he had bought at the Redfern, and Jones said, 'I never let that out.'⁵⁷

The experience of Nan Kivell's treachery was traumatic for Jones. It ended his career as a maker of pictures for sale—even though Oliver Brown of the Leicester Gallery asked him every year for the next decade to exhibit. Jones wrote in 1962, 'the whole affair has made me keep clear of dealers as far as possible. In fact I don't any longer deal with them at all if I can help it.'⁵⁸ He became even more possessive of his pictures. In July 1954, John Rothenstein, visited him and, perhaps hoping to buy a picture, remarked that he had long wanted to buy one but had refrained from asking because he knew that Jones liked to keep his work beside him. Jones replied, 'Don't for a moment think that I haven't appreciated that.'

In the early 1960s, Nan Kivell would hear that Jones was painting again and write asking to visit in order to see the new paintings. Jones would reply that he was too ill to receive visitors. A draft of his letter survives in which crossed-out material indicates his struggle between anger and politeness. He asks for a statement of what yet remains owing from his 1948 exhibition and of sales of the wounded-knight prints, and continues

I had hoped that you would have perceived my not inconsiderable distress some few years back, when I came into the gallery to find a number of works on exhibition which I had not, myself, released for exhibition, some not mine at all. I am prepared ~~and resolved~~ to forget about that, but I must state positively that I did not & do not ~~propose to exhibit again in your gallery~~ approve of the manner in which they were exhibited & sold without any reference to myself. Their diffusion has caused me considerable embarrassment. I am a busy person with much on my mind and much to attend to and in no good health. All I ask, therefore, is a statement of my account and then we can let the matter rest, without, I hope, unnecessary ill-will.

~~I dislike, above all things, misunderstanding and quarrelling.~~ You would, as I say, have heard no more from me on these matters, but as you have written to me, I feel it necessary to explain and clarify the situation as I see it. . . . I must make it clear that I have no interest in exhibiting in commercial galleries in a later exhibition. With all good wishes. Yours sincerely, David Jones.

About the time he wrote this, he deleted the reference to his 1948 Redfern exhibition from his entry for *Who's Who*.⁵⁹

By the end of April 1954, he was used to not smoking but still had gastric trouble. He suffered a crippling attack of fibrocitis in his back, a throat infection, and had difficulty walking properly. Visits, one from John Petts, had to be refused. Invitations, one for dinner at the Cleverdons, had to be declined. In bed he read Cecil Woodham Smith's biography of Florence Nightingale. 'I don't often read biographies of that sort,' he writes, 'but I've always been interested in the Crimean War (for some unknown reason) & someone lent me this book & I have been very absorbed in it. I had not realized to what extent she was influenced all through by the Catholic thing in various ways.' On 3 June he was finally well enough to receive a visit by Petts, who was on the Welsh Committee of the Arts Council. Jones liked him, 'thoroughly sincere & genuine . . . very hard working & enthusiastic.'⁶⁰ Lamenting that Jones's pictures had not been seen in Wales since 1948, Petts proposed a major retrospective to go to Swansea, Aberystwyth, and Cardiff and then to Edinburgh and finally to London. Jones agreed to contribute. It would take place in the autumn.

On 26 June 1954, the Welsh nationalist and author Saunders Lewis visited—it was their first meeting. Jones had long known about him, having read articles by him as early as 1934. That year, too, Lewis had first seen Jones's visual art at the Welsh Artist's Exhibition in Cardiff, when Augustus John had praised its beauty, urging him to look closely at Jones's engravings. In 1936 Lewis and two friends tried to set fire to a bombing school in the Lleyn Peninsula in a vain attempt to stir the Welsh into demanding political rights. He was sentenced to year in prison. Moved by his courage, Jones wanted to send him a copy of *In Parenthesis*, and wrote to Charles Edwards at Ampleforth, who put him in touch with Lewis's wife, to whom he sent the book. (She kept it for her husband at his request until after his release since all books sent to those in prison had to stay there when they left. It was the first book Lewis read upon his release.) He and Jones then began to correspond. In 1944, Lewis spent four afternoons looking at Jones's watercolours at Aberystwyth. That year, Jones consulted him about the etymology of *Moel Ffagnallt* (A 223).⁶¹

During their first visit, Jones confessed to knowing 'no Welsh' and said that he read all the old prose and poetry he can get in translation and corresponds with Welsh scholars about the poetry, the history, and artifacts. He told Lewis of the Arts-Council retrospective exhibition of his work in the autumn. Lewis offered to write a short preface to the catalogue and invited him to stay with him and his wife if he came to the exhibit at Swansea.⁶² Before he left, Jones had him sign his copy of Lewis's *A School of Welsh Augustans*, which he had bought in 1941, and recorded on the flyleaf, 'S.L. visited me here in Harrow in July 1954 D.J.' It was, for him, a momentous event.

After this meeting, they had many other afternoon-long conversations and wrote one another. Lewis sent him a copy of a broadcast talk he had given the previous day announcing the exhibition and the catalogue preface in Welsh with his English translation. Jones was glad Lewis emphasized the painted inscriptions, because, he wrote, 'they are, in some sways, of special importance to me,' and he liked Lewis's idea of the travelling exhibition 'being a marriage between Wales & myself.' Four years later he would regard Lewis's forward as 'the best thing written about my bothersome activities.' Lewis asked for first chance at buying *Aphrodite in Aulis* if ever offered for sale.⁶³

Thin, sharp, and bright, Lewis had a large balding head, a pointy nose, and small dark piercing eyes. He spoke in a high voice with energetic enthusiasm in—Jones thought this unfortunate—the heavy accent of his native Liverpool. Two years older than Jones, he had studied modern languages at Liverpool University, and had served as an officer in France, where he was wounded, and in Greece. What they called ‘our war’ was a bond between them. (Jones showed him his trench sketches, ‘bloody awful aesthetically,’ he wrote to Lewis, but ‘of sentimental interest for blokes like ourselves who saw it all.’) By an act of will, Lewis had identified himself with Wales and, in 1926, had helped to found *Plaid Cymru*, the Welsh Nationalist Party, serving as its first president. The son, grandson, and great-grandson of Calvinist Methodist ministers, he became a Catholic in 1933. After leaving prison and being dismissed from his university post by Welshmen—a betrayal Jones thought no less appalling for being typical—Lewis meagrely supported his family for fourteen years as a journalist and playwright and by playing the stock market. In 1951, having become the greatest modern writer in Welsh and the most eminent living Welshman, he was appointed senior lecturer in Welsh at Cardiff. In him, Jones found for the first time someone who fully shared his sense of Wales. They agreed in loving most semi-tribal, aristocratic, medieval Catholic Wales (the setting of Lewis’s plays and poems). For both of them, the root culture of Wales was that of Europe and Catholic. Like Jones, he felt a common aversion to the modern, post-Methodist, Welsh *petit bourgeoisie* who knew nothing about their distant history. He and Jones were at ease with each other and became close friends. Lewis was for Jones the great exception to Welsh narrowness. ‘That remarkable Welsh patriot,’ he called him, ‘is a very remarkable & wonderful man & because he is a Catholic so very much more wide visioned than any other real Welsh Welshman that I have met. Centuries of Protestant nonconformity, *Calvinism in particular*, make most Welshmen impossible.’ (He confided to Lewis: ‘In some ways & at times *we*, in so far as I can presume to include myself under that *we*, seem the most imperceptive, damned blockheaded of nations, fobbed-off by the most shallow vulgarities.’) He liked Lewis for his small-c ‘catholicity,’ his breadth of appreciation and judgment owing to his knowledge of Latin, French, and Italian literatures. Lewis’s affinities were European. Jones loved his ‘incisive, clear, quick ... exact, ‘final’ thinking, his ‘ability of seeing like a flash through a tangle of accidents ... to *see clearly* regardless of all the misleading complexities & the various red herrings’. He envied his ‘remarkable ability to

express, usually in a few words, what he sees with equal clarity.’ He thought him intellectually comparable to Christopher Dawson. ‘In their very differing ways,’ Jones writes to Alun Jones, they had that ability of seeing like a flash through a tangle of accidents, a central core—and that ability to *see clearly* regardless of all the misleading complexities ... and his remarkable ability to express, usually in a few words, what he sees with equal clarity’—and adding about Lewis and himself, ‘in many respects it is difficult to think of two men more different.’⁶⁴ Indeed they differed, for Lewis was arrogant, vain, condescending, in his own mind the great Welshman, but none of that bothered Jones.

To his credit, when writing Lewis urged him not to bother replying or, if he needed an answer, enclosed a stamped self-addressed envelope—which Jones often lost. Whenever Lewis was in London and could, he visited. Jones was surprised by the ‘suddenness of his coming and going.’ Other visitors would say ‘I must be going now’ and he could inveigle them into staying a half-hour longer or more, but when Lewis said it he vanished. They become close friends. According to Honeyman, the only friend he respected more than Lewis was Grisewood, to whom he soon introduced him.⁶⁵

Jones and Lewis talked endlessly about the history of Wales from the sub-Roman period. Each for the other was the perfect conversationalist on the subject. One of their favourite figures was Gruffydd Robert, the master of the Ciceronian style in Welsh. He was among the humanists whom Jones admired because they wanted to conserve the language and ancient literary forms of Wales and wed them to the New Learning, thereby invigorating ‘the ancient native rich resources of the language.’ Jones may have identified with these men. Their combination of ‘things new and old’ resembled what he was achieving in his own work. Without the new, the old was mere antiquarianism. It had to be renewed, made again of the present.⁶⁶

Closer than his friendship with Eliot, his friendship with Lewis became his most intimate relationship with a writer of stature comparable to his own. They talked about the poem, painting, or inscription Jones was currently working on and the play Lewis was writing or translating. They spoke about the importance of personal experience of place in which a work is set. They commiserated with one another during periods of aridity. Lewis spoke of how he built up a play ‘painfully slowly’ and envied the facility of other playwrights, how ‘old-fashioned’ he felt, how he

feared being ‘found a fraud.’⁶⁷

They were both scholarly. Jones discussed with him why the English pronoun ‘I’ became a diphthong sometime between Malory and Shakespeare—something about which he had long wondered. They spoke about the affinities between Latin and Welsh owing to borrowings during the Roman occupation. ‘Many of these are still in use: *pysg* for fish, *saeth* for arrow (*sagitta*) are two rather surprising ones, because you’d have thought the native Celtic words would have been retained in the case of fishes & arrows. *Mur* = *murus* is to be expected as walls of stone were so very much of Roman introduction.’ The Welsh *anifail* is from the Latin *animalium* for ‘animal’. Such words were, for him and his new friend, signs of that long historical moment that was, in all history, the most special to them. They talked also about Welsh literature and its history. When Jones raised his objections to the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwylim, Lewis insisted that his greatness was accessible only to those ‘who can fully apperceive the subtlest possibilities’ of Welsh, and Jones conceded that the form might be so perfect that it ‘saves the ‘content’ from ordinariness & lack of originality of theme.’ Lewis gave him his student copy of *The White Book Mabinogion*. Despite their deeply shared love and knowledge, Lewis never made the mistake of thinking Jones a Welshman. He considered Jones ‘a profoundly English writer.’ And would soon say so in print: ‘He feeds his meditation and his imagination on the Welsh past; it is a key to his work as English poet and painter.’⁶⁸

In 1953 Jones had been elected to the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion (founded 1751 ‘for the encouragement of the Art, Literature and Science of Wales’), having been nominated by T. Charles Edwards. In the spring of 1956, Jones was elected vice president of the Cymmrodorion Society. Encouraged by this honour and his friendship with Lewis, his interest in Wales intensified over the next twenty years and became, according to Harman Grisewood, an obsession.⁶⁹ He was subscribing to three Welsh journals: *Wales*, *Transactions of the Honorable Society of Cymmrodorian* (both since 1938), and the *Anglo-Welsh Review* (since 1953). And in 1960 he would begin taking *The Welsh Historical Review*.

Because he was aware of the limited interest most readers have in Wales and its history, he would keep Welsh allusions to a minimum in his poetry, but in his conversation and private

correspondence, his enthusiasm sometimes eclipsed a sense of his audience. On 25 March 1957, he subjected Harman Grisewood to an eight-page foolscap letter on linguistic changes in Welsh from in the fifth century through the nineteenth century with passing references to history and literature. Nine years later, Jones spent most of January and February writing a fifty-four page foolscap letter to Grisewood on Llywelyn the Last and his place in Welsh history (finished 16 Feb. 1966), and there are other lengthy letters on roughly the same subject.

Jones now carefully followed the one day a year in parliament allocated for Welsh affairs. It filled him with disgust to hear them squander the time attacking their fellow countrymen and the BBC. It helped him understand the overthrowing of democracies: ‘one can quite see how it happens out of sheer nausea—the daughter of frustration.’ On 19 March 1956, a letter from him was published in *The Times* in which he bemoaned misuse of the only day in parliament allotted to Welsh affairs. ‘Poor Wales,’ he writes, ‘from the news reports of that brief occasion, the emphasis was on things imputed against her, rather than on the sympathetic presentation of her aspirations and the clarifying of her peculiar needs.’ He concludes by saying that ‘political nationalism in Wales is ... an indication of unfulfilled needs of some sort or other?’ (On any subject touching Wales, he would often begin writing a letter to the press—hundreds of fragmentary drafts of such letters survive—of those he finished and sent few were published.) In 1957 the day’s discussion convinced him that Wales, as ‘the shadow of a living tradition’, has ‘*had it*.’ The upland farming communities were doomed and there was not enough ‘urban life of a decidedly Welsh character to even begin to cope with the thousand & one alien pressures.’ He wrote to Grisewood, ‘It is in the nature of our civilizational phase ... that the thing I mean by “Wales” should become a casualty, yet one would be a lot more happy if what was at stake was *understood*.’⁷⁰

He could not listen to broadcasts about and from the National Eithsteddfod without ‘considerable embarrassment over the bogus ceremonial’ which was a late eighteenth-century invention, so different, he knew, from ‘the genuine bardic tradition which developed under the auspices of a tribal aristocracy—very like that of Oman to-day.’ Yet, he knew, this aspect of the Romantic Revival was genuinely felt and revealed ‘exploratory enthusiasm about myth & etymology and origins’ The Eithsteddfod was now a legitimate cultural expression, but in disguise. ‘You don’t half have to search for the *esse* in things now—looking for a needle in a bloody haystack

is nothing to it.’⁷¹

He attended the annual St David’s Day Mass of the Welsh Roman Catholics of London.⁷²

In his view, and Lewis agreed, the ‘Matter of Wales’—its language in decline, ‘the muddles and sectional disagreements, the insularities, the pettynesses’ and ‘the chilly, caddish, superior attitude’ of *The Times* and the government—could be traced ‘without any real break to Thomas Cromwell’s Act of Union of 1536.’ It was ‘so easily effected by the ludicrous belief that in the Tudors the Welsh had a dynasty which would conserve & favour the things of Wales. The deluded buggers would have become Moslems had the Tudors told ‘em to!’ After the misery that followed Glyn Dwr’s uprising and the chaos of the Wars of the Roses, they saw in the Tudors hope for the removal of punitive laws and the opening of appointments. These were removed but the Welsh language was forbidden in court. As a result, nearly all the Welsh ruling classes became anglicized, creating a Welsh version of Disraele’s ‘two Nations,’ the anglophile gentlemen and the Welsh-speaking lower classes. Jones saw the eighteenth-century religious revival as ‘unconsciously’ a rising of the Welsh-speakers against the Act of Union and subsequent Tudor policy in which the Church of England was complicit. The rising ‘*had* to be unconscious, it *had* to be totally concerned with religion—what other form could protest take—even had such a thing been dreamed of—in Hanovarian Wales?’ The revival had been made possible by the Tudors having allowed the Welsh translation of the Bible and Book of Common prayer—... ‘in terms of pure *Realpolitik* ... a mistake which that sod, T. Cromwell, would not (I think) have made.’ Becoming Nonconformist was, however, contrary, he thought, to the Welsh temperament, which was, in the middle ages much more like the Irish, very war-like, jocular, impatient. He thought that Nonconformity—‘Calvinism, that most hateful of religions’—might actually have altered the character of the Welsh nation. What grieved him was the nearly total severance of modern Wales from the authentic ‘Wales of the Princes,’ which was continuous with the last phase of the Roman empire. A break that had its terminal moments not only in the killing of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd and his brother David and in the Act of Union, but also in the dissolution of the monastic houses. Centuries of Anglicization followed. The eighteenth-century revival was of ‘a genuine Welshness of language & tradition,’ he admitted, but an ‘ingrown’ Welshness totally ‘cut off from any understanding of, the great heritage that the ‘Age of the Princes’ had conserved.’⁷³

Now the pressure of mass-media was eliminating the language, something, he noted, that would be happening to English did it not chance to be the language of megalopolitan technocracy. ‘the mythus, literature & tradition of the Welsh ... may quite probably be destroyed by this new situation’ but it is ‘caddish, to say the least, not to extend some sympathy to those who are making some attempt to conserve what is, after all, the oldest living tradition in Britain.’ The Welsh language was ‘the oldest living thing in this island.’⁷⁴

Faber was unable to interest an American publisher in *The Anathemata*. Harper & Brothers rejected it as brilliant but of too slight commercial appeal. Harcourt Brace nearly decided to publish it, because Robert Giroux thought it ‘fascinating,’ but did not.⁷⁵ Nor did nine other houses. Failure to find American publication effectively kept it from the attention of the American ‘New Critics’ who were then interpreting and canonizing the important works of literary modernism. Silence from the US was broken only by unembarrassed, loud applause from W.H. Auden.

Eliot had sent Auden a pre-publication copy. Two months later Auden began reading it carefully, fighting incomprehension, and becoming increasingly impressed. For ten months he read and reread it. He told Stephen Spender that he thought the book astonishing. Spender urged him to write about it in *Encounter*,⁷⁶ and in the February 1954 issue, Auden wrote that *The Anathemata* is ‘one of the most important poems of our times’ and expressed surprise at its not being generally recognized as such: ‘Where are the bells? Where are the cannon?’ Helen Sutherland alerted Jones to the review, who felt extremely grateful to Auden, whom he had never met.

The following month, he received a letter notifying him that the US National Institute of Arts and Letters had voted to confer on him the Russell Liones Memorial Fund Award of \$1000, given in recognition of valuable poetic work not generally acclaimed. As he suspected, Auden had proposed *The Anathemata*. Jones was pleased to learn that it was not an annual award but given only to especially deserving works, having been conferred only six times since its institution in 1924 and never before to a non-US citizen.* Obligated to deliver an acceptance speech, he wrote,

this sign of your recognition affords me a real and effective encouragement.... I had no reason to suppose that my

* Other recipients included Robert Frost (1931) and William Carlos Williams (1948).

work was known outside this island and I realize that, whatever the universality of the theme, my images and allusions are, in a particular way, intricately with the complex deposits of this island and that might constitute a possible difficulty for those whose background is other from this.

The artist has no choice but to use what is his to use by this or that inheritance. But in using what is his he cannot know to what extent his use of it will be significant to others.

If then in any work of mine you have found enough significance to confer on me the award I can but say that the recognition on your part is a reassurance and support to me. I again express my sincere appreciation for being granted this American award.

He found the speech difficult to write because ‘One can’t say ‘Thank you, jolly nice of you’ over & over again.’⁷⁷

Auden contacted Grisewood, who offered to arrange a meeting and conveyed to Jones a letter from Auden in which he writes, ‘Your work makes me feel very small and madly jealous.’ In reply, Jones writes that the anthology entitled *The Poet’s Tongue*, co-edited by Auden in 1946 (acquired by Jones in 1952), ‘has been one of my constant companions’ and ‘manages to have in it all the things that the school of Quiller-Couch, Walter Raleigh & Co. Ltd. manage to leave out.’ Grisewood arranged a dinner for them at the end of July 1954, in the Governor’s Dining Room at Broadcast House. Jones was, Grisewood remembers, entirely natural, and Auden was respectful to him. Jones knew that Auden was a celebrity, but that meant nothing to him. He would have been as interested, said Grisewood, in the barber or the man who came to mend the gas meter. He had read few, if any, of Auden’s poems but may have demonstrated his ability to quote the parodies by J. C. Squire and Ronald Knox from Auden’s anthology. Acting as host, Grisewood remembered them getting on well enough but not really connecting. There were ‘gulfs between them.’ Auden was fluent, refined, superficial; Jones groping, pausing, tentative, reticent. Auden was English in a conventional way that Jones had long ago reacted against. Auden’s interests were social; Jones’s not. Auden was fascinated by news and politics, Jones with the larger sweep and minute details of history. Dominating the conversation, Auden wanted to talk about Catholicism; Jones did not. And he quickly realized that they were too far apart aesthetically ever to discuss literature. Auden’s may not have sensed this—according to Grisewood, he was much less sensitive. Auden’s sympathies were strongly homosexual and he probably hoped for a queer rapport with Jones, an expectation that would have made Jones uncomfortable. In any case, Auden suggested further meetings, and Jones

said, simply, ‘Oh no, I’m afraid I can’t.’ They did meet again, however, at a supper party at the Spenders’ house in St Johns Wood in June 1955. On this occasion, Auden again dominated the conversation, directing it again, as Jones had feared, to Catholicism, asserting that ‘the Feast of the Transfiguration was of particular importance’—something Jones had never considered except to wonder why it was only a second-class liturgical feast. He noticed that when anyone else talked—the others present were Osbert Sitwell, Elizabeth Glenconner, Francis Bacon, and Sonia Orwell—Auden did not listen but was preparing what he would say next. Auden said he would lecture on *The Anathemata* as Professor of Poetry at Oxford. This surprised Jones and raised his hopes. In 1958, the final year of Auden’s professorship, Jones would urge Charles Monteith to encourage Auden to do what he had promised, but in the end, Auden did not. After the second meeting, Jones told Grisewood that while he appreciated Auden’s admiration of his work and was grateful, they were utterly different and, sadly, had nothing artistically in common.⁷⁸ They did not meet again. A literary social life would have enriched Jones professionally, but he did not want it. In years past, he could have mixed a good deal more with Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene, but he was innocent of professional ulterior motives.

An acquaintance rather than friend, Spender was bright enough to admire *In Parenthesis*, and he was kind and socially connected. The Spenders had him to supper on a few occasions. Once they invited him for a picnic but he declined—he did not eat out of doors. On a rare visit to Northwick Lodge with his wife, Spender told him that he had just bought a painting by Jones entitled *The Tiger* and a drawing by him of two women in a café. These had belonged to Prudence and had been sold by Buhler. Jones told him how upset he was that they had been sold and said that they should have been returned to him. He subsequently wrote to Spender asking for a photograph of *The Tiger*, of which he was particularly fond. Spender responded by visiting and giving him the picture on indefinite loan provided that it be returned at Jones’s death to him or his heirs. In gratitude, he gave him in 1962 a large, beautiful inscription in English and Latin, *Alma Mater* (1960). He liked Spender and was grateful for his kindnesses but realized that he was inconsiderable as a poet and thinker.⁷⁹

Closer to him than Spender was his wife, Natasha. She loved him, thought him a wonderful man because of his enthusiasm and childlike enjoyment of small things and mundane events. Once

when she began to speak of Gregorian chant and how it had influenced her, he became suddenly euphoric, saying, ‘Do you love Gregorian chant? Well just wait a minute.’ And from under his bed he brought out his little gramophone and put on a record. It was so worn and the needle so dull that she could hear little more than its rasp in the groove, but he swayed gently to the music—a ‘heavenly setting of the *Alma redemptoris mater*’ by a fifteenth century priest named Guillaume Deuay, which he repeatedly played for himself while alone in his room. Afterwards she said, and he agreed with her, that listening to music is like praying.⁸⁰

The following spring, he borrowed for a week, possibly from Plumtree, two ‘wonderful’ records ‘one of thirteenth-century French songs and dances and the other of monks singing parts of the Good Friday liturgy.’ He ‘so enjoyed having them’ and found in them ‘genuine refreshment’ in ‘in these horrible days in which we live’, which nevertheless afforded such advances in research, whether in Brittonic phonetics or early music.⁸¹

The summer of 1954 was extraordinarily stormy—he enjoyed watching the lightning at night from his darkened high room. During the day he sometimes saw rainbows arching over the green receding landscape. On 8 August he wrote, ‘a marvellous double rain-bow arcs directly in front of my window—it’s a heavenly thing. ... I like rainbows very greatly—one of the nicest of merely natural things.’ His delight in this natural beauty was diminished at this time only by worry about contracting mumps from one of his fellow lodgers.⁸²

In a letter written 31 March 1954, he was asked again to accept an honorary degree of doctor of letters from the University of Wales. It was to be conferred at Aberystwyth. On 25 May he wrote to say that he was uncertain about being able to travel to collect it. The letter was difficult to write because he realized that inability to attend convocation usually precluded one from obtaining an honorary degree. As is usual in such cases, the conferring of the degree was postponed. He could receive it later at Swansea. Again, at the last minute, he could not face the journey and cancelled. Then he was invited to receive it once more in Aberystwyth, agreed to go, but, a few days before departure, panicked and backed out a third time, about which he felt very guilty. With Oldfield Davies acting as go-between, he was invited yet again to receive it on 20 September in Cardiff. He had declined invitations to the opening ceremonies of his Arts Council exhibition at every city but

Cardiff, where he agreed to go on the condition that his appearance not be publicized. He would kill two birds with one stone and then go on to Ferryside in Carmarthen to visit Laurie Cribb. He bought his train ticket but at the last minute had a panick attack and could not go. Three weeks later, partly not to waste the price of the ticket, he managed to depart. He enjoyed 'seeing England again from the train,' finding the journey 'beautiful ... through all that Marlborough, Uffington, Savernake, Forest part. But Lord! the built-up areas extending from every small town are really alarming. And *all the same*—equally *hideous*.' He had last visited Cardiff from Capel-y-ffin in the summer of 1926. He thought it an unhistorical 'absurd travesty' that Cardiff was the capital of Wales: a capital should be 'the navel or nodal point or 'centre' ... historically, spiritually, culturally ... *None* of which is remotely true of Cardiff.' In Cardiff he stayed with Oldfield Davies, who discussed with him a number of planned broadcasts, including a radio colloquium on Jones's work the following month, in which Eliot and Saunders Lewis would take part. Jones explored Davies' library, discovering two books with maps of Wales that he wanted to acquire. Saunders Lewis and Aneurin Talfan Davies came to visit—he loved seeing them. Another visitor was T.J. Morgan, Professor of Welsh at University College, Swansea, and 'a most exceedingly nice bloke.' They had a long conversation about Welsh etymology. At the opening of the exhibition in the National Museum, he objected to some things included in the show but thought the works well hung. Lewis took him to see the display of early Celtic and Romano British artefacts. Jones paid particular attention to the casts of stones bearing memorial inscriptions and was strongly affected by 'the feeling of them.' (Later he would tell Nicolette Gray that these influenced his inscriptions.) The insignificance of the display in the medieval room reminded him of the scarcity of genuine Welsh medieval remains. Increasingly emotionally exhausted and distressed, he now found the visit harrowing. Soon after, 'a couple of days' before the conferring of the degree, he could bear the emotional strain no longer. In a panic, he mumbled apologies and fled back to London. He would be invited again to travel to receive his doctorate in July 1955 and would regretfully decline. (He asked a friend to tell Desmond Chute not to address him in his postcards as 'Dr Jones.') He would never leave London again. He longed to be with Hague and Grisewood, but neither lived in London and he refused to travel. Jones especially loved Grisewood, his closest friend, about whom he writes in 1952, 'He's an amazing persona understands *everything*. He's almost the only person I can talk to absolutely properly now, with

complete understanding.’ They were ‘in constant touch by telephone’ and Jones would visit him in town whenever Harman was free, which was not often enough for Jones (*IN* 18). In 1955, Grisewood became Assistant to the Director General at the BBC and was now extremely busy and no longer available for the long conversations that had characterized their friendship. From now on Jones suffered acutely from what he had heard Dawson and Chute complain about, the ‘isolation of the middle-aged & over from those with whom they have most in common.’⁸³

The exhibition had gone from Cardiff to Swansea for October and from there to Edinburgh for November. Referring to him (mistakenly) as a Welsh painter, the reviews in the Welsh and Scottish papers were ecstatic. Giardelli and others reported that children from schools liked the pictures. This surprised Jones, for, in his experience, children did not respond to his work—‘it’s too complex or sophisticated or something for children to get on with—so,’ he said, ‘nothing could please me better.’⁸⁴

He thought the poster Petts made for the exhibition ‘attractive,’ but had mixed feelings about the catalogue and felt he had to write to him about it. ‘It’s *almost* as difficult,’ he says, ‘as writing to Douglas C about the radio version of *Ana!*’ He was astonished by Petts’s decision to reproduce on the invitation card the ‘*beastly* little dog’ he had engraved as the tailpiece ‘to a stupid book about a lap-dog.’ It had been ‘all right in its original setting as a sort of joke and in keeping with the book it illustrates’ but was ‘in no way typical.’ ‘As a kind of ‘signature-piece,’ he writes, ‘I really *can’t* stand it.’ At his ‘special & urgent request’ and through the intercession of Grisewood, the dog did not appear on the invitation card for the London show. From Edinburgh, the exhibition moved to the Tate Gallery for the period from 17 December to 30 January. The London Arts Council insisted on the deletion of a quotation in the catalogue from *In Parenthesis* which included the expression ‘shit-house.’ Jones added pictures, bringing the total to 112—seventy-four watercolours, seventeen pencil drawings, thirty-five engravings, and five inscriptions, for which he earned a lender’s fee of £48. Since the show had been assembled on short notice, some of the best pictures—including *Vexilla Regis* and *Flowers in Calix-light*—could not be included until now. He knew the owners of every one of the pictures and inscriptions in the exhibit. Afterwards, as they began to be resold, he would lose track of them and be sad about that.⁸⁵

After three weeks of staying indoors because of illness, he managed to attend the late-

afternoon private view on 16 December because, he wrote, ‘they said I ought to if I could.’ He had never seen so many of his works together before, and was surprised at how good they looked with one another, though he thought ‘the light drained the life out of a number of them’—he would advise friends to revisit earlier in the day since the pictures ‘look so *enormously* nicer by day-light. I, personally, *can’t* see the *colour* at all by that horrible artificial light.’ (To him the Tate was ‘a somewhat unsympathetic gallery,’ though he could not decide why.) Having feared that the pictures would all look the same, he was surprised by the variety. ‘The so to say ‘stratification’ became very plain to see. I mean the way they fall into groups belonging to recognizable periods was very noticeable. Also the fluctuation between ‘tight’ & ‘loose,’ very detailed & not detailed seems to show itself within each of these strata.’ From now on he would regard his ‘paintings’ as parts of a whole.⁸⁶ He now disliked *Dwynwen Deg in Livia’s Frock* and liked especially *Miss Calypso’s Chair*.

The gallery was jammed and he was propelled about, unable to speak to anyone for long. There was barely time for ‘How do you do’ to Kathleen Raine. (She wrote to him that she preferred the landscapes or still-life without ‘all the signs and symbols.’ He replied, ‘quite right ... but *probably*, for me, it is necessary that I should do both sorts,’ and he said his own favourite of the ‘symbols present’ sort was *The Four Queens*.) He was glad to see so many old friends, including Louie Graham from the Hampstead days—he would never know of her generosity to him through the Ede fund. He managed to introduce Helen Sutherland to Barbara Moray. He saw Megan Lloyd George, with a nephew in tow. He was sitting with Martin D’Arcy when Frances Richards sat beside him and said, ‘So you have got yourself out, David,’ ‘Yes,’ he replied, ‘and very foolish I was, it has given me bronchitis.’ As the afternoon wore on, he began visibly to droop, but John Rothenstein took him down to the Tate restaurant for tea, which revived him ‘a little.’ He dreaded returning to Harrow in rush-hour, when the trains would be ‘awful,’ so at six, Arthur Pollen drove him home. The day had been ‘excruciatingly exhausting.’ Attendance during the exhibit was good, averaging 200 people per day during the week, 400 on weekends.⁸⁷

After a fortnight in his room with fibrocitis, he went to the exhibition a second time and accidentally met Kenneth Clark there. On a third visit, he met Mary Gill and Joan Hague, and ‘Harry’ Moore. On a fourth visit he met Ben Nicholson, who was going to have a Tate exhibition of

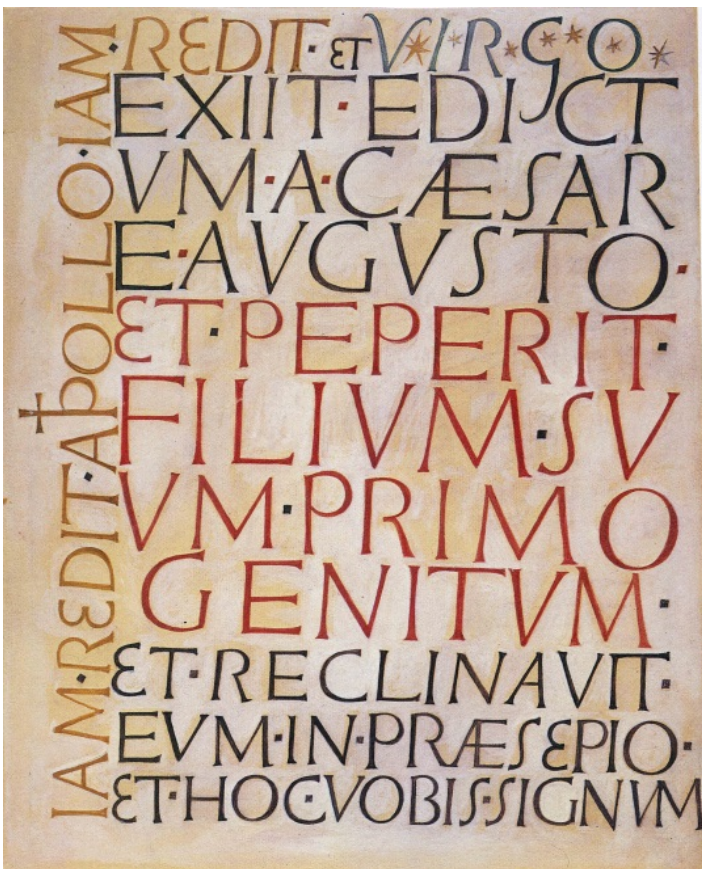
his own in June. He visited again to meet his Uncle Joe and Honeyman. Two days before the exhibit closed, at 3 p.m. on 28 January, he came a final time, to look round the show with the Queen Mother. As they walked together, they had a long conversation in which she said that she had read and admired both his long poems. They spoke about the pictures. She expressed special admiration for *Vexilla Regis*, which Jones interpreted for her. He thought her extremely intelligent with a real understanding of visual art.⁸⁸

The English press celebrated the show with only slightly less enthusiasm than the Welsh and Scottish papers. *The Times* was very positive. *Time and Tide* praised his work as enchanting and belonging to ‘no category,’ with *Guinever*, *The Four Queens* and *Aphrodite in Aulis* achieving a special eminence’ *The Times Weekly Review* declared his pictures ‘visually astonishing’ with ‘unusual beauty and originality.’ The *Liverpool Daily Post* saw his art as ‘European rather than national, recalling Bonnard in its elegance and gaiety.’ The *Manchester Guardian* noticed that certain paintings of flowers and landscapes have a tangled ‘strange, weightless, iridescent life’ that makes them ‘as uncertain and confusing in their sense of space’ as the mythological pictures are in their sense of time. In the *Listener*, Quentin Bell praised especially the animal drawings, *Four Queens*, and the inscriptions. The *Tablet* selected for special praise *The Thorn Cup*, *The Laetare-Sunday Thrush*, and *Vexilla Regis*. Even *Vogue* discussed the show, publishing a reproduction of one of his drawings. The most substantial discussion was by René Hague in *Studio* (April 1955), for which Jones was especially grateful. The honour of a one-man exhibition at the Tate and such positive press were rare for a living artist and gave him new prominence.

He was now a celebrity, and in celebration, the Malans had him to supper with, Plumtree, and the Watkinses. Having gone to the exhibition, his sister, Cissy, wrote saying she ‘felt very proud’ that he was her brother.⁸⁹

The Tate exhibition included painted inscriptions, an art form which he invented and was perfecting after decades of gestation. At Ditchling, as we have seen, he had included lettering in his wood engravings and cut lettering into the backs of boxwood sculptures. On Caldey Island, he carved in black-line relief beautiful lettering for the maps in his *Gulliver* illustrations. His inscriptions mediate

for him between carving (in wood) or incising (in copper) and handwriting. His first painted inscriptions on paper were private greetings, quickly done for feast days, saint’s days, and birthdays—and he would never lose the sense that somehow his inscriptions were ‘essentially “amateur” and “personal”’.⁹⁰ At Brockley, he painted lettered titles to glue onto books that had lost their spine-covers and, labels to replace ugly commercial originals on medicine bottles. He sometimes made uni-coloured inscriptions in letters to friends, where the contrast between blue or black handwriting and the yellow or red Roman letters is clearly the difference between a private and public media. During the war he began making inscriptions as autonomous artworks rather than personal gifts. At some point he had tried planning carefully, drawing the letters, and then painting an amateur letterer.) He includes his inscription *Roma Caput Orbis* in *The Anathemata* ‘with homage to N.G.’—because Nicolette Gray had, and shared with him, a scholarly interest in historic letter shapes. He made a number of inscriptions for her and her children. And she wrote about his inscriptions in *Signature* (1949), in *Motif* (1961), and in *Agenda* (1967).



4. David Jones, *Exiit edictum*, 1949

His first big step in making inscriptions public was the inclusion of eight of them as black-and-white illustrations in *The Anathemata*, three of them newly done for the book and the dust jacket. Seeing them reproduced increased his wish to produce a book of his inscriptions, which he mentioned to Nicolette and Ede.⁹¹ His next step in making them public was including them in his Tate retrospective. It was the first time anything like them had been exhibited.

He preferred for his inscriptions Latin, primarily, or Welsh or Greek to unlapidary English, which was, he found, ‘an awful bore’ requiring unevocative prepositions, conjunctions, and articles. Inflected languages are more economical. Moreover, reading makes words and

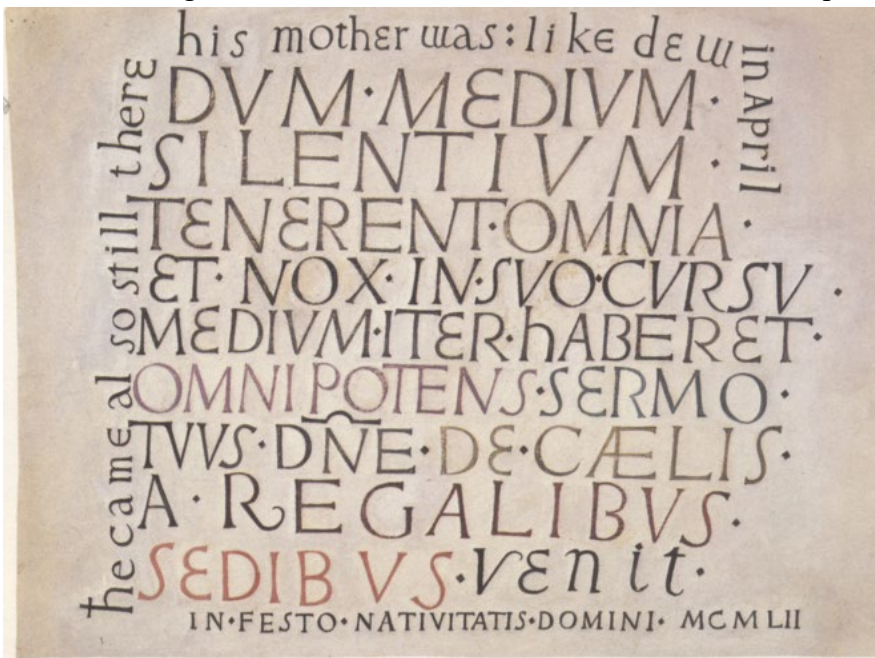
letters mentally invisible; viewers unable to read the words can see them. And a language that have no clear, easy meaning for the reader has, he realized, ‘mystery or something’. The viewer who cannot read what he sees is like a Dark-Age barbarian looking at words he only partly understands but ‘feels their power & efficacy’.⁹²

One of his most important innovations was varying letter shapes. For him the shape of a letter need not be exactly the same elsewhere in an inscription. He shaped a letter at each of its appearances according to the look of the word and line it occupied, adjacent letters, nearby lines, the entire inscription. Because not carefully predetermined, his placement of words is slightly haphazard or wonky (Hagreen’s word for Jones’s carpentry at Ditchling). Words often crowd the right margin, letters sometimes tightening to fit. His freedom in shaping letters and words would give the inscriptions ‘enormous importance’ to David Kindersley (the foremost English stone-carver in the latter half of the century), who said that Jones ‘reinvented the Roman alphabet’ so that it is ‘hardly Roman but much more primitive, and *so* beautiful.’⁹³

He also added colour-variation to lettering, thereby giving it varying temperatures. And he suited colour to meaning—a practice that was also unprecedented, though he thought it ‘an obvious thing to do, almost difficult *not* to do, if one *feels* the connotations. I mean, given the chance, it’s natural to *want* to paint the word REGALIBVS in purple.’ (Using bic pens of varying coloured inks, he varied colours when inscribing a book for someone, his or her name in red, the month, if May, in green—by the end of 1959, his collection of biros included one each of red- black- blue- and green-ink.)⁹⁴ But he also varied colour tone within a letter, which gives them and their words radiant vitality.

His Christmas inscription for 1949, *Exiit Edictum* (fig. 4), is innovative in various ways. His subject had always been a single quotation; now he begins juxtaposing two or more quotations. This was unprecedented, although he thought that ‘mixing bits of quotations ... goes with the “Late” stage of a civilization’. It made his inscriptions modernist in their aesthetic. Now they bridged between his paintings and his poetry, as Saunders Lewis, in the 1955 Tate catalogue, was the first to say—and Jones told Nicolette Gray that this was ‘quite right.’ He inscribed the second text up the left and across the top margins, so that it partially frames the central text. In doing this he discovered another direction (and spatial dimension) in which to put a text (in this instance from Virgil’s fourth

eclogue), which differs in provenance from the central text from Luke's gospel. This, too, was unprecedented except in his personal letters, where, when he runs out of space, he writes up and across the margins. From now on he frequently added text in the margins, sometimes for compositional aesthetic reasons and to add a complimentary idea. Sometimes he sponged out an entire marginal text to replace it with another. Astonishingly, the marginal lines were usually not part of the initial plan. He wrote, 'in the majority of cases where a line of lettering runs along the margin ... that line has been added after the main inscription was done.' Marginal additions



5. David Jones, *Dum Medium*, 1951

characterize a number of his great inscriptions of the late 1950s. In *Exit Edictum*, he also begins painting portions of the background with Chinese white, which, as Miles and Shiel note, allows the letters to hover in three-dimensional space.⁹⁵ The effect is of varying depth of background. This can also be seen in 'Dum medium' (fig. 5).

In 1953 he began covering the paper with Chinese white before painting any letters—this maximized

freedom by allowing him to make changes. Most changes were, he said, 'to get the unity that is essential in any art work of any sort; also a feeling of movement, for I know of no picture or other art work, if it's any good at all, that has not this feeling of not being stuck still.' After finishing the painting, he usually burnished the inscription, which did not make it shiny but tended 'to further unify the forms.' Also, sponging letters out and repainting them that left tonal background ghosts, which were visually enriching and could be worked into a more subtle, lively beauty, providing a changing, subtly coloured background to the letters, which thereby themselves acquired new tonal vitality. The effect is of the letters radiating meaning into their surrounding, no longer empty, space. Pastel tones in the background are the visual/tactile equivalent to acoustic resonance, a preverbal,



6. David Jones, *Arbor decora*, 1956

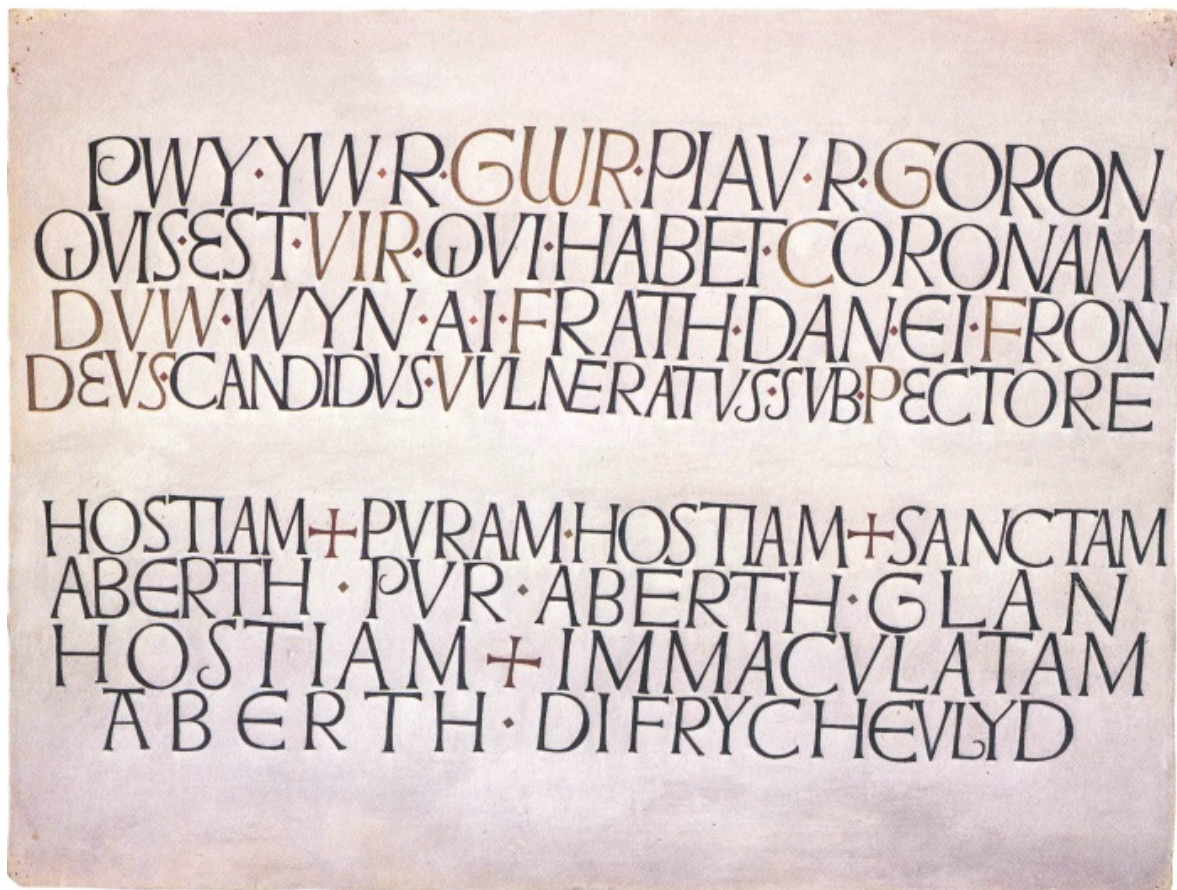
sonic precursor of linguistic associations and connotations. Bringing the surround into relationship with the lettering was something that no one had ever done before. His use of Chinese white made possible the later, great inscriptions by allowing him to achieve their extraordinarily complex unity, movement, and depth of resonance. When it ‘came off,’ an inscription had ‘an abstract quality’ that gave him immense satisfaction.⁹⁶

Recognition of his new artform resulted in commissions. On 15 May 1956, Helen Sutherland asked him to make an inscription she would give to the Cecelia and Edmond Howard for having shown her hospitality in Rome. Till now Jones had never done one ‘on purpose,’ as he put it, or for sale, nor had he ever signed an inscription. For this commission, he chose the Latin of the *Vexilla Regis* for the centre and a line of Anglo-Saxon from ‘The Dream of the Rood’ to fill the side and top margins, with Greek for ‘Holy Cross’ in the bottom margin: three languages with words in green, yellow, purple, black and reddish-brown (fig. 6). It took him over a month to make. Because he liked his inscriptions as objects to handle and look at closely, he had it framed with clips, so it could easily be taken out. It was the first inscription he signed. He charged Sutherland £20. She paid for framing and shipping.⁹⁷

Also in 1956, he was commissioned by Carmelite nuns at Presteigne in Wales to make an inscription for their chapel wall. He made what would be his largest inscription, entitled *PWY YW R GWR*, 23 by 31 inches (fig. 7). It consists of eight long lines divided horizontally by a white space that exerts a powerfully unifying force. The opening four lines ask a question in Welsh of the fourteenth century poet Gruffudd Gryg, with Latin translation (in lines that rumble bumpily): ‘Who is the man who wears the crown / The white God with this wound under his breast.’ In the next three lines. The closing Latin, with Welsh translation, answers in straighter, untroubled, open (because of fewer letters) lines: ‘a pure sacrifice, a holy sacrifice, an undefiled sacrifice’

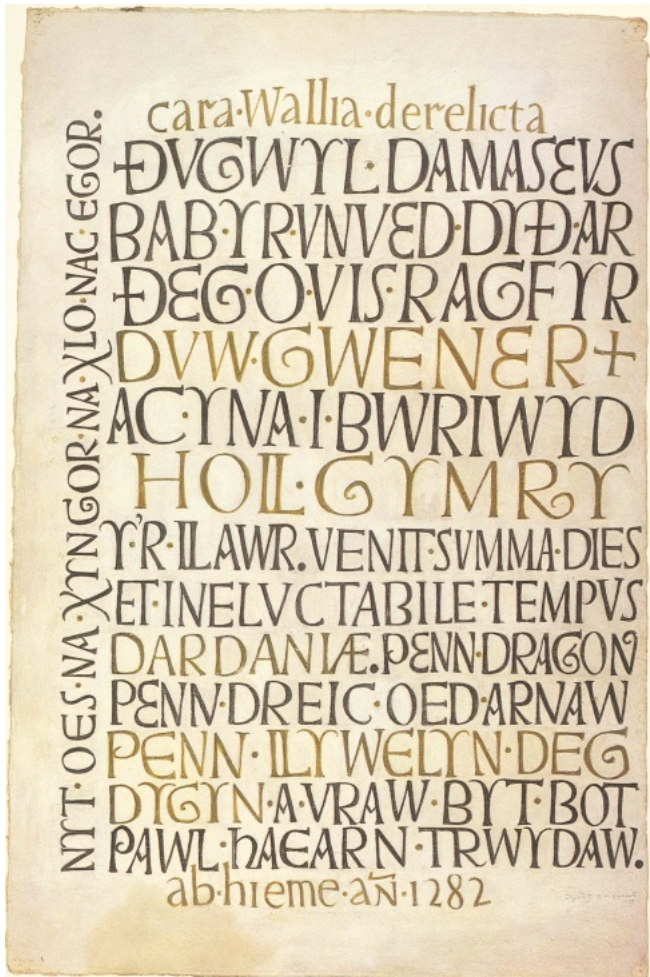
In a letter to Nicolette Gray, he records how he created it. He began with a general strategy, aimed at achieving the general feeling he wanted. First he ensured lightly in pencil that he could get

in the letters for each line. Then he covered the whole with Chinese white, which nevertheless allowed him to 'see here and there the rough pencil indications of some of the letters.' He then began to paint the top Welsh line, 'having regard to the "abstract" relationships within the space and the historic provenance of the words.' By now strategy had given way to immediate tactical decisions, out of which subsequent decisions developed. He chose to paint *GWR* (man) in Green, and so *VIR* in the Latin below also had to be green. He maintained 'a slight entasis along the top, in part for "aesthetic" reasons' and in part because he 'wanted to get a bit of "celtic" curvature into the Latin rigidity.' The space or 'as it were, *via*' dividing the first four lines from the second he tried to keep 'as straight as possible but not mechanical or ruled, so that the letters seemed a bit like soldiers maintaining a dressing on an imagined line, but not mathematically or dead true.' To counteract the imbalances owing to differences in line length and number of letters, he began to rework in order to achieve the effect of fairly even distribution over the white surface. The whole was 'endlessly re-adjusted over its whole entire surface.'⁹⁸



7. David Jones, *Pwy yw r gwr*, 1956

The nuns rejected it as too esoteric and Jones supplied, instead, a design for a chi-rho, which was painted on their wall. So he got to keep this marvellous inscription, which he hung sometimes over his mantle, sometimes on the wall behind his work table. It is a masterpiece of living stillness.



8 David Jones, *Cara Wallia derelicta*, 1954

He never made a poem or painting on the subject of the death of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd in 1282, even though it was the historic event, after the Last Supper and crucifixion, which meant the most to him. He tried making a picture of it in the 1940s or '50s on large watercolour paper—‘a try-out sketch that went wrong’—in which the prince, a torque round his neck, lies pierced with a spear as men in a grove skirmish behind him in the sort of confused fighting that had occurred in Mametz Wood.⁹⁹ He didn't attempt the subject in a poem, probably because Gruffudd had already written it in his elegy for Llywelyn. But he wondered why Llywelyn's story had not been the subject ‘for many romantic quasi-historical novels. ... There seems something indeed about the whole of Welsh history which has failed to “catch on” as material for novelists ... no less than any real comprehension of it has failed to register in the mind of historians.’ He urged Saunders Lewis to write a play about Llywelyn.¹⁰⁰ For several

years in the late 1950s, he tried to make an inscription on Llywelyn's death. He finally managed it in July 1959 in a commission for the frontispiece for *Wales through the Ages*. (fig. 8). Jones had accepted this commission as a favour to Aneurin Talfan Davies, who had been sending him the radio scripts of the talks it contains, all of which he liked, especially David Pierce ‘on the two Llywelyns’, which he thought should have been printed in the *Listener* (LF 42-3).

Through juxtaposition of texts, this inscription is a poetic modelling of time. Jones's

inspiration was the Llywelyn's great thirteenth century elegy by Gruffudd ap yr Ynad Coch. Jones saw form and content in this elegy so 'made one that line after line ... seems to fall like hammer blows.' But the chief reason that the poem 'terrible-in-its-grief still has power to rend us' is its prophetic force. Gruffudd saw the consequence for Wales of this man's death. Jones wrote, 'When he asks, 'Do you not see the world is done?' he is referring to the end a line of rulers stretching back to the Age of Theodosius—and to all that lineage meant for a millennium of Welsh culture. It was a pivotal moment, and the poem preserves the time-turning, by searching the past to illuminate the dark future, where its poignancy lies for us.'¹⁰¹ In gold and variegated purple, the inscription is contained at start and finish by Jones's Latin, which translates 'Dear Wales desolate ... since the winter of the year 1282'. Within is a Welsh equivalent of a dateline, 'the feast day of Pope Damasus the eleventh day of December a Friday' (from *Brennhinedd y Saesson*). Then come Gruffudd's words, which translate, 'and then was cast down all Wales to the ground'. Then the inscription opens to the past with Latin of the *Aeneid*, 'the end of days and ineluctable hour of Troy has come'—words providing mythic resonance which has historical value since the Britons received their legendary descent from Troy through the occupying Romans with whom they came to identify. The Trojan ur-catastrophe is more than matched by the late-medieval death of this one man. Then, more of Gruffudd's Welsh, translating: 'a leader's head, a paramount leader's head, was on him head of fair resolute Llywelyn it shocks the world that an iron stake should pierce it,' and finally 'there is no counsel, no lock, no opening.' The correspondence of Llywelyn with Jesus—both killed on a friday, both pierced with a spear—emphasizes the poignantly of the Welsh prince as failed saviour. *Cara Wallia Derelecta* is a heart-rending poem-made-visible, its lines rumbling with irregular, barely contained emotion. It is visually numinous—no reproduction captures its deep purples and shimmering golds. He sent a photograph of it to Saunders Lewis and his wife in 1960 as a Christmas gift.¹⁰²

It was Jones's favourite inscription, one of four large ones he framed and hung on the walls of his room, the others being: *Pwy yw r gwr* ('Who is the man', 1956), *Dydd Digofaint*, ('Day of Wrath', 1958), *Cloelia Cornelia* (Christmas 1959), and *Mabinogi Iesu Crist* (1960). He had sent photographs of *Cloelia Cornelia* to friends at Christmas, and Kenneth Clark had replied, 'I can't tell you how much it pleases me. I have looked at it for hours.' *Dydd Digofaint*, made with different

coloured ball-point pens, quotes from Bernard of Morlaix's poem *De contemptu mundi*: 'Hora novissima, tempora pessima sunt, vigilemus', which translates, 'It is the last hour, the worst time, let us watch.'—he read these words in Curtius' *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (1948) and again in Dawson's *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture* (1950). By the late 1960s the last word, in red, would have faded, and a visiting priest cognizant of the pessimism of the text amused him by remarking, 'Better not lose sight of the last bit.'¹⁰³

The later, large inscriptions are major works, each taking several weeks to make, but they were not as anxiety-producing and exhausting as pictures, in which nearly infinite possibilities required difficult, often irreversible decisions. Lettering exists in one dimension, and letterforms have to agree more or less with one another in size and shape and move in in one direction in relatively unbroken, relatively straight lines—anything else (as has since been attempted by others) is silly. Although he achieves a sense of varying depths, the words are all relatively close to the picture plane, and the visual and tonal ranges of possibility in the background are limited. Making inscriptions was a great relief for an artist who found decision painful. Inscriptions achieved their effects with a force that precluded doubt. They were more satisfying for him than what he regarded as the relative success of his pictures, which nearly always failed to attain the numinous effect he strove for. With an inscription, there was no nagging doubt, no second guessing, no wondering whether they were finished or would benefit from further work. When the vaster choices involved in painting pictures depressed and paralyzed him, he could still paint inscriptions. 'I've got a "thing" about them,' he told a friend: 'I like doing them in a peculiar way', and he added, 'In some ways they mean more to me than most of my stuff'.¹⁰⁴ In them, reality approximates the ideal because the ideal is always so simple, but, paradoxically, his inscriptions surpass in beauty what would seem to be the limits of the form.

They also fulfilled what had been for years now his chief ambition, to combine painting in his simple, symbols-free styles of 1929-32 with his later, literary, multi-allusive style. This had been his chief aesthetic dilemma for years. Now it was solved. In his inscriptions the form is relatively free of complication and the allusions are in the words.

The limitation of the form has a positive aesthetic effect. The basic shape of letters and words universalize their meaning, but his slightly irregular rendering of letters, words, lines, and in-

between or background spaces animates writing, restores it to the irregular life from which it originally sprang. By the mid-1950s, Jones brought to fulfilment the potential for beauty of this new art form. He would be recognized by the letter-carver for Coventry Cathedral, Ralph Beyer, as a forerunner and beacon for lettering as a contemporary art form.

The inscriptions were often rooted in, and always retained for him, physicality. He considered them ‘very much “objects”’ of texture and weight of the paper and paint. When he had ‘*Et ex Patre Natum*’ photographed for his 1953 Christmas card, he loved the result, for the photo was lit from the top so as to show the undulations in the paper – ‘you can nearly see the water-mark’. One he especially liked, *Querens me* (1958) began well because, he remembered, ‘I happened to find an extremely beautiful piece of paper to begin with and that was a great help. It has almost the feeling of parchment.’¹⁰⁵

His inscriptions were also the initial successful modern manifestation of what would be called Poetry Concrete. As the poet Michael Symmons Roberts says, these later inscriptions ‘are like nothing else ... in art or poetry. They are private and public, ancient and modern, formal and expressive.’ The apparent ‘sameness’ of so many of Jones’s lettered inscriptions and the allegations of a ‘Jones style’ to which they gave rise depressed him.¹⁰⁶ But the later, great inscriptions can be seen as the fruition of decades of development.

He went to the Malans in May 1955 to hear a talk by Ede broadcast in conjunction with the exhibition. He found it embarrassing, partly because Ede spoke so much about ‘David’ and dealt so little ‘*objectively* with the paintings.’ By the end of the summer Jones was writing an ‘Autobiographical Talk’ (*EA* 25-31) for the colloquium on his work being produced for the Welsh Home Service by Aneirin Talfan Davies. It was recorded in his room of 13 October and broadcast on the 29th along with recordings of Goronwy Rees, T.S. Eliot, Saunders Lewis, Nicolette Gray, and Gwyn Williams talking about Jones’s poetry and visual art. Jones’s contribution earned him ten guineas with a further £3.6 for permission to use extracts from his poetry.¹⁰⁷ The program, entitled “David Jones” was broadcast on 29 November 1954, and the talks were printed in *Dock Leaves* the following spring.

Interest stirred by the exhibition generated unexpected sales of *The Anathemata*, for which Faber was unprepared. The book sold out, and Faber reprinted it. Recently reprinted, *In Parenthesis* was also selling well. The exhibition and his new notoriety brought letters, which piled up, unanswered, and which he regarded with dread, guilt, and irritation: ‘I wish I could be rid of all this senseless stuff ... and get down to doing some painting.’¹⁰⁸

In January 1955, Dr Bell sent him to hospital to be x-rayed for what he feared might be prostate trouble but was only a bladder infection. Jones was greatly relieved of what was a kind of castration fear: since ‘it was not needful to have the surgeon’s art practised round about that interior area or part as, well, after all: ‘There was a young lady who went to her bed etcetera.’¹⁰⁹

The young schoolmasters in Northwick Lodge had gradually been replaced mostly by traveling salesmen and elderly retirees. Two were long term lodgers: a female peripatetic violin teacher—Jones liked her very much—and a very old lady named Miss Evans, of whom he was fond. The others did not stay long. They included at this time a sad spinster of good family from Leicestershire, who lived in fear of financial ruin; a diamond merchant from South Africa and Whitechapel; a well-groomed man named Feakins, who claimed to have been in a cavalry regiment; and a lobotomized salesman, who had to write orders down immediately, before forgetting them. This salesman told the story of his lobotomy again and again, adding, ‘people say it has effected my memory but I think it’s all right.’ There was a very old man whose daughter visited him regularly

and who had a Pikenese dog. It amused Jones that when he was angry at someone he would complain aloud to his dog. There was a woman who worked as a secretary and claimed to be engaged to the mayor of Monmouth—she kept a bottle of sherry behind the mirror on her mantelpiece. A young couple, Winifred and Raymond Durham and their children moved in for the summer. Winifred would occasionally steam whitefish for him. There were about ten borders in



9. Colin Wilcockson at entrance of Northwick Lodge, March 1955.

all, mostly odd, single, misfits. One young lodger, Colin Wilcockson, recalls, ‘There was a fair bit

of gloom, actually, and David's reaction to these people was very tender and very sympathetic.' At meals 'he would cheerfully chatter away,' beloved among the lodgers, because he was gentle and kind, because he was now a celebrity, and because he was 'very amusing.'¹¹⁰

Wilcockson had arrived in January 1955 to do the practical term for the Oxford diploma in Education, and was teaching Chaucer to Harrow fifth-formers. A young man with an infectious smile and a quick intelligence, he was generous, self-effacing, enthusiastic, extraordinarily personable, and shared Jones's love of medieval literature. They talked about the literature and history of the Middle Ages over tea or coffee (Jones took sugar, no milk) after lunch. Jones invited him to his room, sometimes after lunch, more often in the evening. Jones made a poster with beautiful lettering for a lecture Wilcockson gave on 'The Nun's Priest's Tale.' He regarded the young man as an expert in Anglo-Saxon and medieval English, which Wilcockson found 'marvellously flattering,' since Jones, although tentative and self-effacing, was, Wilcockson said, 'expertly informed.' Jones would ask acute philological questions such as, 'Why is the Anglo-Saxon definite article used here and not there?' He could make out, but not easily read, Anglo-Saxon, the structure of which fascinated him. They shared a love of *Piers Plowman*, which, after Wilcockson moved out in late April, remained a subject of correspondence and conversation during visits. Jones would return again and again to the Middle English of Langland's B text. 'It's wonderful stuff,' 'What a bloody good poem it is. Makes Chaucer, on the whole, lacking in *depth*, neither as "earthy" nor as "celestial".' Sometimes, as he offered him tea, Jones jokingly made the sign of the cross over the teapot.¹¹¹

He also talked in the evenings with another recent Oxford graduate, Geoffrey Treasure, who had read History, was mainly interested in French history, and had done post-graduate work on the Edict of Nantes. He lived in the attic directly above Jones and would often encounter him on his way downstairs at 11.15 am. Jones invited him in for tea. Conscious of Jones's stature, Treasure felt privileged. They talked about Arthur, the Middle Ages, and Treasure's busy life. He sensed that Jones was sometimes wracked by suffering caused by something in his past.¹¹²

When not seeing Percival or one of his new young friends in the early evening, having himself begun to broadcast on the radio, he became more interested in the radio. He rented a wireless in order to listen to the Third Programme, which was still in Grisewood's charge, now as

Director of the Spoken Word. On 11 January 1955, he listened to Marius Goring read Hague's translation of *The Song of Roland* and was glad they 'didn't murder it' as he had expected. The actor had avoided, he thought, 'rhetoric of style.' On 9 and 15 January, he listened to talks by Isaiah Berlin. On the 13th—'very cold indeed & heavy snow, bloody awful'—he listened to a sermon by Lancelot Andrews, 'Marvellous.' Also a short story by Joyce, 'v good.' On the 25th, he made a special point of listening to Dylan Thomas's *Under Milkwood*, which Douglas Cleverdon produced, having coaxed Thomas through writing it for seven years. On 13 March, he listened to a report on Soviet Affairs, then to Fr Frederick Copleston speaking about Existentialism. In May he listened to the broadcast of Wyndham Lewis's trilogy *The Human Age*, which he thought 'frightening but good, and funny.' His radio listening gave him new subjects for conversation with Grisewood and with Alun Oldfield Davies, who visited him on 25 May and took him to dinner on 29 June at the National Library Club. When Grisewood was promoted out of 'the Spoken Word' in 1956, Jones perceived in the Third Programme 'a falling off' in quality. In December 1956, he found listening to *The Lord of the Rings* on the Third Programme unbearable.¹¹³

In May 1955, Desmond Chute, visiting England, came into London to see him, their first meeting in nearly forty years. Jones was 'most delighted'. One thing they talked about, and agreed on, was the recent Vatican decree that on Good Friday—the only day of the year on which Mass is not celebrated—there was now to be a general distribution of communion (instead of communion only for the priest). To Jones this seemed 'insensitive to the whole shape of the mythus & altogether wrong artistically.' He thought the previous practice, by which the priest on Good Friday broke and consumed the solitary host pre-consecrated the day before, expressed the immolation on Good Friday of what had been offered on Holy Thursday. A general communion introduced, he thought, an inappropriate conviviality. In his Anglican youth, his mother had explained to him, 'You must always understand why no Communion is possible on that one day.'¹¹⁴ Now he felt 'that something had gone seriously wrong with the apperceptions of the Sacred College of Rites.' He wrote an anxious letter to the *Tablet* (7 April 1956) expressing his sense of impoverishment at the change, but with (what seems a psychologically revealing) docility before ecclesiastical authority—he urges understanding of the old practice so that we may understand the new practice. Years later he would regard the change, which the Catholic press defended, as an ominous sign, the first crack in the

collapse of the Latin liturgy.¹¹⁵

Ominous aftershocks followed. In the autumn he was shaken and appalled by the decision to drop the sixth-century hymn ‘Vexilla Regis’ from the Good Friday liturgy. It was, to him, heart-breaking that a bridge should be broken which had spanned the Dark Ages between the ancient and modern west, a hymn that continued, he thought, to be ‘axial’ in content and ‘unassailable and valid’ in beauty. He published a letter lamenting these changes (*Tablet*, 7 April 1956). He was also greatly upset by the 1956 decision to drop the Christmas Preface from the Mass of Corpus Christi. Written by Aquinas, the Preface excelled, he thought, ‘all other Prefaces in poetic splendour.’ Its use for Corpus Christi seemed to him ‘so perfect a choice theologically, mythologically, aesthetically,’ implying a parallel between the Incarnation and the Eucharist, which is one of the central, unifying themes of *The Anathemata*. The abolition of such ‘dogmatic & poetic rightness’ grieved him.¹¹⁶ What, he wondered, could be intended by these changes?

His gross income for 1954/55 was £433.10.4. The expenses listed on his tax form are £78 for rent; £26 for fuel to heat his room, 0.16.8 for bank charges; £14.1.6 for books, £10 for artists materials, £8.12.0 for subscriptions, £30 for fares; £11.10 for stationary and typing—reducing his taxable income to £229.10.2.

In 1955, the summer departure of masters included Maurice Percival, who had accepted a position at Downside. He would subsequently move to Eton, Marlborough, and finish his teaching career at Putney and, in retirement, go to live in Spain, near the sight of a purported Marian apparition. There he bought a house with a priest who would abscond with all his money. He would return to England, fail to find employment, become clinically depressed, receive shock therapy—which was, for him, torture—and kill himself.¹¹⁷

About the time of Percival’s departure from Harrow, Jones became friendlier with the Malans, especially Audrey. She ran across often and knocked at his door. He never said ‘Come in’ but would open it and stand there. His room was chaotic and seemed to her impenetrable, with copies of *The Times* piled to the height of three feet all round the room. ‘I might want to refer to them,’ he explained. She ran errands for him. Once she made him a dressing gown. But it was the wrong colour, so he would not wear it. He was particular about his clothes, about what tie he wore. She noticed that he went out only to go to Mass—he walked, she said, gently—and if he couldn’t

walk, he took a taxi. Occasionally he lunched with her and her husband.¹¹⁸

In the spring of 1955, he was able to indulge his enthusiasm for the work of the nineteenth century painter of voluptuous nudes, William Etty, an exhibition of whose works was being hosted by the Arts Council at 4 St James's Square.

In the summer of 1955, he had 'a pretty good session of trying to master a bit more of Jimmy Joyce You know,' he wrote to Hague,

Finnegan's Wake is a truly astounding work.—the more one tries & tries to drag from it some of its meanings the more that greatness becomes apparent I find. But lord! it is tough going but *when* a passage becomes illumined it is more than worth it & mostly a glorious jokko too. My impression is that there is, however, *no* part as *beautiful* as the Anna Livia section & *of* that section, the bit he recorded on the gramophone is the best. To that extent I've been disappointed, in that I have not come upon an equally beautiful bit.

He had recently been given Campbell and Robinson's *A Skeleton Key to Finnegan's Wake* which he found 'a really first rate piece of work. It is without pretensions—just two chaps settled down over a period of years to study the text of *The Wake* & see if they could elucidate its *general pattern*. The result of their work is, in my view, most enormously helpful. It is a work of true exegesis and I think *The Wake* deserves every bit of analysis & elucidation that can be brought to it.'¹¹⁹

Some months earlier, he had been surprised by a letter from Edith Sitwell in the United States expressing admiration for *The Anathemata*, 'one of the ... great poems of our time,' and asking permission to include Part I 'Rite and Foretime' in an anthology she was editing.^{120*} Her choice was perspicacious because, considered as a poem in itself, 'Rite and Foretime' would have been one of the best poems of the twentieth century. 'How truly wonderful it is,' she writes, 'and how transcendently great is the ending! It is impossible for me to express my reverence for it.' She subsequently sent him her selected poetry, not to read, she said, but as 'a tribute to a great poet.'[†] They had not met, but the sight of her had once nearly killed him. Stepping into the road to cross Sloane Square, he had seen out of the corner of his eye to his left the flash of what looked like a pillar post-box moving. He turned to look, recognizing from photographs six-foot tall Edith Sitwell

* *The Atlantic Book of British and American Poetry*, published by Little Brown in Boston in 1958.

† For the four books Sitwell sent him, see Huw Ceiriog Jones, *The Library of David Jones, a Catalogue*.

dressed in red, just as a bus crashed past within inches of his face.¹²¹ In 1931, she had chosen him to illustrate her Ariel Poem, 'June Barston,' and, at the last minute, he had backed out.* Whatever the value of her own poetry, she knew good writing when she saw it. She had discovered and published Wilfred Owen and had been the chief promoter of Dylan Thomas. Now she was making Jones the last object of her literary-missionary zeal.

Upon her return to England and fresh from performing *Façade* at the Royal Festival Hall, she telegraphed to propose lunch at the Sesame Club in Grosvenor St on 21 June. He went. The party included Kenneth Clark, Stephen Spender, Maurice Bawra, and her brother Osbert. Since the '30s, Jones had known and been fond of Osbert, an amusing, upper-class anecdotalist and one of the best-connected men in England, now suffering noticeably from Parkinson's Disease. She asked Jones about King Canute, whom she assumed was 'a kind of water deity,' and he assured her of the king's historical reality. She spoke of her cat putting dead mice in her purse, of Martin D'Arcy, who had received her that year into the Catholic Church, of America, of meeting Marilyn Monroe, who had called at her apartment in Hollywood (how well-read and intelligent Marilyn was, 'extremely serious-minded,' 'pleasantly shy,' a great comedienne). She and Marilyn had spoken mostly about the Austrian philosopher and playwright Rudolf Steiner. Jones could eat none of the food at this lunch. Edith invited him to other lunches, one on 25 September 1956 with Natasha Spender and a young poet named Quentin Stevenson, and also, in the late 1950s, to tea parties. Another of her guests found these tea parties 'petrifying' and remembered Jones as hardly speaking.¹²² But Jones found Edith Sitwell 'very down-to-earth and straight forward.'

Alone in his room, he continued teaching himself Welsh. He knew 'a longer list of substantives' than a decade before but could not master 'the ruddy grammar.' And anything he learned he now forgot within a week, such as the conjugation of the Welsh verb 'to be,' which he had just relearned. He wrote Hague, 'I do wish to god I'd been taught this stuff when I was young instead of arsing around in that bloody art school.'¹²³

* He had agreed to illustrate it and tried but was unable to, which obliged Richard de la Mare at Faber to find another artist with only days to spare. Jones had written, 'Dear Dick, I fear I have behaved *extremely* badly about these illustrations. I've *tried* to get something done but so far nothing any good has been achieved' (7 Aug 1931).

In June he acquired and read the brilliant *pencées* of Simone Weil, posthumously published as *Gravity and Grace*. He found himself in agreement with her objections to the Church. She feels revulsion at certain of its conciliar formulas, such as ‘no salvation outside the Church,’ at its anathemas, at its inclination to ecclesialotry, at the Inquisition. Although Jewish, she is most repulsed by the Church’s insistence on the Old Testament with its cruel, worldly, exclusive tribal God. Reading her, he was reminded of his enduring sympathy with the second-century heretic Marcion who believed the Church mistaken in retaining the Old Testament and regarding Jesus as the fulfilment of Jewish prophesy, since his message was entirely new. Marcion saw the God of the Old Testament as a materialist, legalistic, capricious, vindictive, tyrannical, petty egoist. Jones liked Marcion’s belief that the God of Jewish law was displaced by the saviour-God of love. He also agreed with Weil, that within the Church ‘there remains an incorruptible core of truth.’¹²⁴

His allegiance to Christianity and Catholicism was spiritual not doctrinal or ideological. In the summer of 1956, when Grisewood was suffering from painful rheumatoid arthritis in his hands and feet, Jones asked one of the parish priests in Harrow to remember his friend at Mass. The priest asked, ‘Is he a Catholic?’ Jones replied ‘in transatlantic style: “Why sure.”’ The priest remarked, ‘Ah, good.’ Jones was dismayed by the thought that a person’s religion has any bearing on whether he should be remembered at Mass. Priests, he thought, ‘what chaps they are!’¹²⁵

This year he began for the first time in his life publishing poems that were not epic-length. Soon after the publication of *The Anathemata*, he had gone through the “‘rejected” material,’ thinking it would make another book. But, discouraged at the reception of *The Anathemata*, he gave that up. Now, thanks to the Anglo-Welsh poet Vernon Watkins, he began reconsidering. He and Watkins had not met, but Jones knew of him through Eliot, and they were writing one another. In April 1955, Watkins asked him to contribute to the Dylan Thomas memorial issue of *Poetry*—the magazine that, he stressed (and this impressed Jones), had published early work by Pound and Eliot. Initially Jones declined:

it's awfully hard to take a bit out of the kind of stuff I write & publish it as a separate piece. I have got a certain amount of material which was done during the writing of *The Anathemata* & which I had once thought might be somehow, someday, perhaps, made into another volume, it would take some time to sort out & find a useable, separable bit.

It was a time of emotional doldrums, a period, he said, ‘when *nothing* creative at all seems possible to one—and I’ve had a pretty long spell of that state lately.’ Undiscouraged, Watkins persisted, and eventually received a hand-written eight-page poem entitled ‘The Wall,’ written ‘in c. 1944,’ ‘part of a long thing to do with Roman auxiliary soldiers on the wall of Jerusalem (on the night of the Last Supper).’ It had been for Jones ‘the *very devil* finding a bit that stands complete.’ He had read the poem aloud to guests, including Plumtree,’ who liked it but thought most people would miss the historical allusions. Unsure of its value, he left it to Watkins to decide whether to send it on. Watkins liked it, typed it (several times, each time incorporating Jones’s changes), sent it to Henry Rago, the editor of *Poetry*, who wrote Jones in July accepting it—which made Jones ‘very glad.’ At its publication in November, he received a fee of \$77, which he considered generous.¹²⁶

‘The Wall’ is an extraordinary poem of moral and emotional dislocation, in which a legionary on the wall of Jerusalem is perturbed about the imperialism he helps enforce. Narrative movement back and forth in time exactly repeats the labyrinthine route through Rome of a triumphal march imagined by the narrator. As far as I know, such rhyming of time with space is original in the history of literature.* It establishes a correspondence between Jerusalem and Rome and between Jesus in Jerusalem, led along the *via dolorosa* to his execution, and a captive Celt in Rome, led in triumph (along the traditional triumphal route) to his execution. For ‘The Wall,’ Jones subsequently received the Harriet Monroe Prize for the best poem published in *Poetry* this year, a prize of \$100 or £35, which he thought ‘better than nothing.’ *Poetry* had not quite got the spacing as he wanted it, so he was glad in November 1957 when Watkins republished the poem with the typography exactly as he intended for the Poetry Book Society. He wanted to read it on the BBC.¹²⁷

Motivated by her admiration for the pictures in the Tate exhibition, the Queen Mother had her secretary phone in late June to say that she wanted to buy a picture. Jones told him he hadn’t any to sell. There was a long silence. Then he said there might be one or two. A meeting with the Queen Mother was arranged at Barbara Moray’s house. Barbara asked him to bring several pictures, including one of trees that the Queen Mother was interested in. He said he might bring one but not

* See T Dilworth, *The Shape of Meaning in the Poetry of David Jones*, pp. 264-73 or *Reading David Jones*, pp. 187-9.

that one, which was what he considered ‘a key picture’ that he wanted to refer to while making other pictures. ‘But really, David,’ she said, ‘you *can’t* just take *one* to the Queen, you must give her some to choose from.’ He replied, ‘All right, I’ll bring three, but this one, though I’ll bring it, she can’t have.’ At their meeting on 4 July 1955 at 1 Hans Place, he showed his three pictures like a conjurer, repeatedly hiding the one he wanted to keep by displaying the others in front of it, so that, to his great relief, she chose an inferior one, *The Outward Walls*, for which she gave him a cheque for £30. She may not have been aware of his leading her but probably was. (Barbara certainly was and thought it improper behaviour but kept quiet.) On 2 August, the Queen Mother wrote to thank him for the picture she had bought and to ask him to come to Clarence House to advise her on where to hang it. She also asks him to lend ‘the lovely picture of trees’ which she had seen at Barbara’s house. He may have gone or pleaded illness but he did not bring the picture of trees. There is no record of his going.¹²⁸

He gave his fourth radio broadcast, ‘The Viae,’ on the Third Programme on 22 November, a review of Ivan Margary’s *Roman Roads in Britain*, for which he was paid £20. Anna Kallin produced it. She had it typed for him and had visited and listened to him read it. Over the next decade he would deal with her and feel increasing affection for her, calling her by her nickname Neuta. She was a friend of Manya Harari and was, like her, a Russian Jew, who admired Jones’s work and had an extraordinary circle of friends that included Isaiah Berlin, Vladimir Nabakov, and now David Jones. She had convinced him to come into the BBC on 10 November to record his talk. Listening to the broadcast on the 22nd, he thought it ‘sounded all right,’ better than he had feared. Two years later he would come across it (*E&A* 189-95), reread it, and find to his surprise that he positively liked it. Usually he disliked his ‘back-prose-works’ but this was an exception ‘or, perhaps, I was feeling amiable toward myself when I reread it—but it seemed to be a unity at least.’¹²⁹

He went to the big Ben Nicholson retrospective at the Tate in November 1955. It was, he thought ‘a glorious record.’ And he was glad to see that the latest paintings were as good as or, probably, better than the earlier ones. A few of the latest ones in the final, innermost room of the display seemed to him ‘really ‘new’ in the sense that, as Augustine says, beauty is ‘ever old, ever new.’ They had ‘astounding blue of great clarity’ in them. And although they expressed ‘the

“contemporary moment”,’ he found them essentially British, ‘like early English Gothic architecture, “linear”—spare, severe ... clear, washed—not ever *thick* at all—but full of recessions for all its “flatness”.’ They reminded him of Aquinas’s *splendor formae*— ‘the radiance of the *forma* shining out most delectably.’ His only regret was that there had not been more early landscapes.¹³⁰

As a result of his successful exhibit and the interest of the Queen Mother, on 9 May there came a letter notifying him that the Prime Minister wished to recommend him for an appointment as ‘Commander of the Order of the British Empire,’ an honour administered by the Central Chancery of the Orders of Knighthood. He was delighted, but as the time of the ceremony approached, he had ‘an appalling cold’ and was not sure, till the morning of the event, that he would be able to go. As he later put it, ‘it just fitted in between one unwellness & the next.’ On the morning of 8 November 1955, he went to Buckingham Palace and joined the other recipients of honours. It was, for him, ‘a rather peculiar experience.’ He was with no one he knew, felt ‘*totally* alone’ and ‘as though one had strayed by mistake into somebody else’s party’ or slightly ‘like a bloke in disguise & under an assumed name.’ He was neither frightened nor embarrassed but felt ‘a bit odd.’ Among those receiving the award were several officers from cavalry regiments looking ‘awfully *authentic* & jolly nice’ in blue uniforms with red facings and wearing tight trousers and spurs. The nineteenth-century uniforms seemed to give them ‘Crimean War faces,’ with a ghost of side whiskers and a lock falling over the forehead. He thought of Torres Vedras, the line of forts built by Wellington to protect Lisbon during the Penninsular War, and the passage of the Alma, and was reminded of ‘how the *slightest* visual thing can change the whole feeling. They seemed to him ‘twice as ‘English’’ as the civilians in mourning dress surrounding them. While waiting in anterooms, he regarded the architecture and décor, was surprised how large the rooms were, wished he could see them with all their chandeliers lit, and was confirmed in earlier observations that ‘no matter how ‘Baroque’ the motifs in English places, the whole has a decidedly prim & sedate feeling.’ At 11 o’clock, they filed through halls towards the throne-room, and he looked at the paintings. (The nineteenth-century portraits of royalty by Franz Winterhalter were ‘pretty shocking,’ a Rubens or reputed Rubens ‘not up to scratch.’) In a gallery at the back of the throne-room a military orchestra played. Beneath it and along both sides were tiers of seats for guests of the recipients. When Jones’s name was announced and he went up to receive his award, he told the Queen, ‘I write the sort of books your

mother reads.’ (There was not much to say. About Elizabeth II and paintings, he later said, ‘She has the taste of a naval officer's wife.’) She seemed to him a bit wooden, and he thought he could see in her face the beginning of Victoria’s puffy cheeks. She put the award, hanging from a ribbon, round his neck, which he thought ‘much nicer than having it pinned on your chest.’ An official took it from him, placed it in a box and returned it. Jones returned to his seat and, as he watched the rest of the proceedings, which lasted an hour-and-a-half, he was reminded of the prize-giving ceremony at Brockley school.¹³¹ Afterwards he went for lunch to Tom and Mabel Burns. As a result of receiving the CBE, he was listed in Burke’s *Peerage*. The honour meant so much to him that he ordered a copy of the book.

The medal itself, and its ribbon were, he thought ‘very pretty in a kind of way—of course of pretty cheap material—but, at a slight distance, charming.’ With familiarity his judgement grew harsher. Never, he thought, should a crown be put on the point of a fleur-de-lys. When Grisewood telephoned his congratulations, Jones said, ‘Just come and look at the damn thing. I’m not sure that I’m going to even keep it.’ When Grisewood visited, he asked what was wrong, and Jones said, as Grisewood remembered, ‘Well, it’s a bloody awful colour for one thing, just look at this ribbon, absolutely revolting, have you ever seen—and the whole thing’s sort of made of disgusting tin you know, it’s just manufactured—horrible ... this sort of thing represents the civilizational decline, it *does*, look at it, it’s utterly frightful. Hundreds of these things are turned out.’¹³² He seems eventually to have thrown it away: it would not be among his personal effects at the time of his death. Among those who wrote to congratulate him was T.S. Eliot.

Nest Cleverdon threw him a party to celebrate his sixtieth birthday, an occasion he found ‘appalling ... I can't really believe it. One seems to pass from being ‘young’ to being ‘old’ without a middle period—at least it feels like that to me, rather.’ Petra came to the party. It was their first meeting in almost a decade and, her hair cut short, he didn’t recognize her. Later in the month, he suffered from stomach flu and forewent telephoning friends. His stomach ailments had such a long history and were so frequent and severe that Bell ordered x-rays taken of what Jones called, ‘my secret cavities & inmost recesses, ducts & fountains & drainage channels.’ The experience fascinated him:

Lord, what extraordinary things these really modern x-ray photographic contraptions are. I was hours on a flat,

blanketed surface and every now and again a chap came along and said 'I'm now going to take another series of photos.' Which done, one was left for a while during which time one could ponder on the beneficent gadget-world & consider for a millionth time the world of the 'utile' and the world of 'sign' without getting any nearer a solution. I'm still utterly stuck on that problem—I can't see how it works out.

The photographs showed nothing abnormal. For that and not having to have an operation he was thankful, but he was perplexed about the mysterious causes of his symptoms.¹³³

When unoccupied or ill, he listened to the Third Programme. At the end of January 1956, he listened to Thomas Gilby O.P. speak on Aquinas, 'ostensibly a review of Coplestone's Penguin Aquinas but actually ... much more than that.' Jones then read Coplestone's book and found it unengaging, though rereading it four years later he would find it 'awfully interesting' and be surprised to read that all Aquinas's work 'was done in roughly twenty years.' He loathed speech accompanied by music, but in mid May 1956 he heard Edward Sackville-West read the spoken part of Benjamin Britten's work based on the *Odyssey* and 'for once I thought it did come off. I suppose because of the real genius of Britten as a composer and I thought Ed. S.W.'s words awfully good too. It was all of a piece & very moving in places.' The production inspired him to reread the *Odyssey*, though he had only Rieu's translation, which he disliked because full of clichés that he found comical: 'Penelope was taken aback'; Venus was 'cut to the quick.' But he found that whatever the translation, the epic, 'rather like the Mass,' retains its 'terrific shape.' Most of the spring, from the last week of April to the last week of May, he spent in bed with a soar throat, lost voice, and congestion. 'What a bore this everlasting ill-health thing is.'¹³⁴

Grisewood was urging him to collect his occasional prose writings in a book, arguing that it would provide clarification of his general outlook. But Jones was reluctant: 'old stuff is usually such a bore,' and, he said, 'it is not my real work.' Grisewood argued that people found his 'real work' difficult, that his essays are easy to understand and state his thinking clearly so that, reading them, critics would be able to discuss it. Jones remained dubious. His prose was laborious and he knew it. And such a project would take time and effort from his creative work. Realizing that he had hit the Jonesan wall, Grisewood proposed the project to Eliot, who liked the idea but wanted to see the essays. Grisewood took him a few, and they discussed the project several times in Eliot's office and at the Garrick Club. Grisewood explained Jones's disinclination, so Eliot took it upon himself to

propose the project. In early April 1956, he invited Jones to lunch at the Garrick Club and made the proposition. Jones reacted negatively because of the work involved in gathering the writings and rewriting those now out of date or not well enough written. Eliot sympathized but insisted, ‘No, it is a good idea and you *should* do it, and you’ll be glad about it after.’ When he suggested that Grisewood assemble and edit the pieces, Jones dropped his objection. So Eliot asked Grisewood to do the work, and he agreed. (Eliot recalled for Grisewood how he had done the same sort of assembling and editing for Ezra Pound.) Jones remained, however, unenthusiastic and needed reassurance that he would ‘have a look at’ what would go in.¹³⁵ Soon after, Grisewood was diagnosed as having rheumatoid arthritis and received cortisone treatments—his painful illness and other commitments delaying work on the book.

In the summer Jones resumed socializing. On 9 July 1956, he went into London to have dinner with Tom and Mabel Burns and Alan Pryce-Jones, ‘a most awfully nice bloke.’ Mostly he received visitors, including his Camberwell and Westminster classmate Weaver Hawkins, now living in Australia, who accused him of being obtuse in his writing. Another visitor he had not seen since the 1920s was Weaver’s brother Ernest, now an authority on Byzantine art. Jones gave him a copy of the new printing of *In Parenthesis*, complaining that the illustrations were badly produced. A few months later, Ernest returned with his wife, Hilda, whom Jones had met at the Goupil Gallery in 1926. He was glad to see her again. She was surprised to learn that he clearly remembered a small primitive pine Madonna that Ernest had carved when he was sixteen, thirty-four years ago.¹³⁶



10. Clarissa Eden, 1952

During the war, he had lost touch with beautiful Clarissa Churchill (fig. 10), for four years now the wife of Anthony Eden, who had become prime minister the previous year. But whenever he saw a photograph of her in the paper, he cut it out and saved it. In late March, he sent the Edens's a copy of the Ganymed print of *The Chapel in the Park* and invited Clarissa to come get advice on how to frame it and see some paintings. This



11. *Rose*, 1929/1954

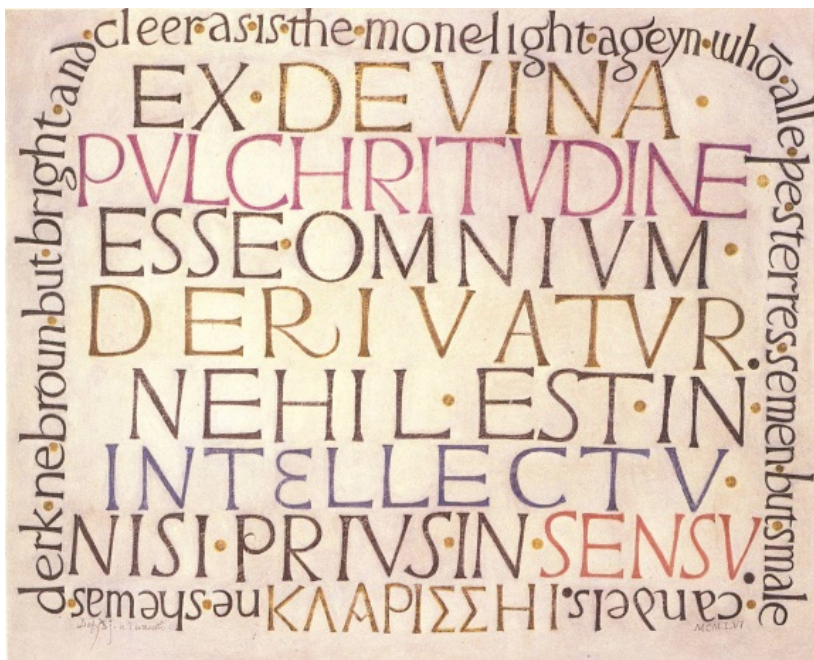
brought about a reunion. She visited him several times at Northwick Lodge, once, at least, having asked to come. He sent her a copy of *In Parenthesis*, which she gave to her husband, who read it at

night in bed. At her invitation, on 10 and 19 July Jones went to tea at 10 Downing Street, where he enjoyed seeing very fine Turners (government issue) on the walls. He gave her a tiny hand-painted (by Jones) copper-engraving of a rose (engraved 1929, printed 1954), which he also gave to other women friends he thought especially beautiful and felt attracted to (fig. 11). This engraving, the only one missing from Cleverdon's *Engravings of David Jones: A Survey* (London: Clover Hill Editions, 1981). He gave copies to two other women, so there are only three in existence.

Friendship between Jones and Clarissa grew closer this year because of the Suez crisis. On 24 July 1956, in retaliation for withdrawal of financial support for the Aswan Dam, Nasser—whose full name Jones loved (he used to repeat it, “Gamal Abdel Nasser”, good name isn't it?) nationalized the Anglo-French Suez Canal Company, putting the canal under Egyptian military control. By doing so he threatened British oil supplies and the recent Bagdad pact securing the southern flank of the Soviet Union. Haunted by Munich, Eden recoiled from ‘appeasing’ Nasser, as did the majority of the British public. His judgment probably clouded by the medication Drinamyl, a powerful combination of amphetamines and barbiturates, Eden secretly formulated a plan with French officials in which Israel would invade Egypt, allowing British and French forces to intervene to seize the canal under the pretext of stopping the fighting. The military action that ensued split Eden's Cabinet, divided the public, undermined the economy, and alienated the U.S. president. The Americans wanted the matter settled peacefully by the UN, and were furious when Britain and France vetoed the security-council resolution. About all this Jones was neutral because he lacked ‘a complete knowledge of all the factors’ and could see good will on both sides, but he was dumbfounded by Eden's failure to consult the Americans. On 15 August, the eve of a London conference on the Suez crisis, he listened to the politicians speak on the radio. He thought the Foreign Secretary's speech ‘clear and ably done,’ thought the Australian Prime Minister ‘very tedious and muscular’ like an Ulsterman, and liked better what ‘these chaps from places like Ceylon & Pakistan’ had to say—‘so much more credible, mentally engaging, and rhyming better with the contemporary world.’ By August, public opinion was changing—those who sat across from Jones at meals in Northwick Lodge were now anti-government.¹³⁷

Aware of the pressure on the Edens, in August he gave Clarissa an inscribed copy of *The Ancient Mariner* and promised her an inscription, bringing one for her to see as an example of what

he might make for her. The finished inscription arrived on 23 August: *Ex Devina Pulcritudine* (in black, gold, hot pink, and peacock blue against ghosted tones of yellow and blue and pink) (fig. 12). It combines a tribute to her ‘bright and cleer’ blond beauty (in words from Chaucer’s *Romance of the Rose*) in a theological context (Latin of Aquinas, which translates, ‘From divine beauty is all being derived.’) She was ‘enchanted by it’ and hung it in her bedroom to the right of her bed. On 27 August, he visited for tea and was glad to see the inscription well framed. It was ‘lovely seeing’ Clarissa, though the political turmoil ‘hung over one’s thoughts.’ His gifts to her were lavish and show sympathy for the pressures on her of her husband’s situation, but they also suggest that he was at least half in love with her. (Since she was married, she, or he, was a safe.). Their relationship was not close, never intimate. She thought of him as ‘just a loving friend’, but she was bad at telling whether men were in love with her. When I asked whether he was in love with her, she replied, ‘Maybe ... I mean obviously he liked me very much, yes, in a way I suppose he was in love with me, yes, in a way.’¹³⁸



12. David Jones, *Ex Devina*, 1956

He feared that hatred of Nasser would prompt a British-French invasion. On his birthday, the British began bombing Egypt, an act that appalled him. Egypt blocked the canal with sunken ships. Syria cut the oil pipeline vital to western Europe. Opposition at home grew. On 4 November an anti-Eden rally filled Trafalgar Square. Eden’s ministers began deserting him. A run on the pound began, and the Americans were forced to stop it. Through Grisewood at the BBC and Hugh Fraser, now an MP and a frequent visitor, Jones formed ‘tentative

notions about collusion’ with France and Israel and Eden’s deception of his cabinet and parliament. When the French-Israeli plot was publicly confirmed in the following year, he would characterize it

as typical of ‘all that is least likable in both parties’ and was particularly mystified because of France’s ‘very real cultural links with the Arabian peoples.’ Now opposed to Eden’s policy, he nevertheless sympathized with the Edens and loyally visited Clarissa, keeping his opinions to himself so that she had the mistaken impression that he was ‘pro Eden and pro Suez.’ The cabinet opposing him, Eden declared a cease-fire, and the UN sent a peace-keeping force. He retreated into ill health and, in January, resigned. Jones supported Clarissa and her husband in their suffering, but he realized that Eden had brought it upon himself. Jones found it ‘very hard to understand what the government imagined could be achieved by the course it took.’ By February he thought that ‘from July on ...decisions were being taken which would be seen in history books as marking the term of one period of decline—dramatically foolish—all loss & no gain.’ He thought of all this as proof that Britain was no longer a major power. Once again, he felt shock and disgust with the ‘prim crudities and ... downright rubbish’ published in *The Times*, which referred to Nassar without a title ‘like a chap up on a charge,’ so he switched his subscription to the *Manchester Guardian*. He mused on the English in general, ‘so jolly nice and reasonable in some ways and then quite infuriating’. He was appalled by news of a Holiday Camp merchant ‘refusing to allow some Jippoes to take part in a cross-channel swimming competition—it’s positively Mafeking.’ In early February 1957, he found Eden’s ‘still cracking on about Nasser being a “dictator”’ to be ‘a bore.’ In 1960 he read ‘old Anthony’s boring Memoirs’ and was ‘aghast’ at their success: ‘he just says nothing that one did not know & takes evasive action over all the points that arise in the mind ... about Suez.’¹³⁹ The debacle is generally considered to mark the end of Britain as a major power. When Eden retired and he and Clarissa left London, Jones lost touch with them, although he would send her the Dent *Wild Wales* (with his preface) in 1958 and a copy of *Epoch and Artist* in 1959.

For him and for the world, the Suez crisis paled in importance to the Hungarian uprising, occurring at the same time. ‘Was there ever bravery to equal it,’ Jones asks, ‘it’s terrific and something difficult to take in—this tremendous courage and nothing for them to hope for.’ ‘What a state our poor world is in ... I never, during my whole life, felt so unhappy and disturbed about affairs.’ He admired freedom fighters—during the Great War he had considered himself one—and they form a motif throughout his poetry, which is, of all modern poetry in English, the most pointedly opposed to totalitarianism. Later he would read a book on the Russian advance into

Hungary which recorded that the Hungarians had put burning brushwood round the tanks. ‘Very interesting,’ he told Honeyman, ‘because in the 12th century at almost the very same place they used to do that to knights in their armour knocked off horses.’¹⁴⁰

A young producer named Nan Davies from the Welsh Regional radio visited on 11 August to ask him to broadcast a talk in early September. He told her he had nothing to say and would prefer to read one of his Roman fragments, perhaps ‘The Wall,’ one of his anti-totalitarian poems, which he read aloud to her. She said that would be more suitable for the Third Programme and insisted on a talk. ‘So,’ he writes, ‘I’ve got to try & write a talk—I’ve not the least idea what about.’¹⁴¹

About this time a few American G.I.s and officers were living at Northwick Lodge. They surprised him by the gaps in their knowledge and by going to church on Sundays. He noticed that wherever they were from and

whatever sort or condition,’ they used ‘exactly the same language no matter whether the occasion was trivial or profound. ... It was always ‘Gee, I guess that’s fine.’ whether the cat had had kittens, or the electric-light had been made, at last, to function, or they were discussing some momentous world-event or were looking at one of my pictures. They might have been business-men from Utah or corporals from Florida but their speech-forms were *exactly* the same, no matter what the occasion. I should think it the most unified ‘culture’ that has ever existed. Rather like that damned boring so-called ‘Samian ware’ that everywhere, from Mesopotamia to the Clyde was on the tables of the Romans.¹⁴²

Aging rapidly, Chris Carlile chain-smoked, drank constantly, and walked in his sleep, sometimes, as he did so, refilling salt pots in the dining room. As he deteriorated, so did the house, becoming, as friends would remember, ‘a bit sordid, with stale, lodging-house smells’. In the summer of 1956, Carlile had to be hospitalized. He returned to the Lodge in August, but now seemed aged, ‘quite past things,’ and needed looking after. Once intelligent and witty, he was now seedy and sordid. He answered the front door in unclean clothing, his shirt undone at the belt, a cigarette dangling from his lip: ‘Come in, have a drink.’ He told Jones that whereas he had earlier slept in pajamas, he now slept in his clothes—‘oh, I take off my shoes’—and boasted that his was one bed that did not need changing. His deterioration precipitated a power-struggle between Carlile and the housekeeper. Jones regarded it as ‘an awful bore & all very very upsetting & unpleasant. Sometimes there were no supplies, no bread. The lodgers complained to Carlile

about the soup tasting of soap, and he replied that if some cleaning substance has been poured into the soup it could not have been very much since it had not made him ill. Once Morag was visiting Jones in his room when Carlisle, then in his eighties, knocked, came in drunk, and said, ‘Oh, you’ve got a beautiful young woman visiting you, David. Why aren’t you running your hands down her legs?’ a remark met with chilling silence. Carlisle’s becoming ‘odder’ saddened Jones—‘the term “second childhood” is truer than it sounds’, he said.’¹⁴³

The house cleaner, Mr. Carol, was no longer efficient, owing to a lobotomy intended to cure his depression. Jones decided that, ‘in the absence of any consistent charring,’ he would do all the cleaning of his room himself. He re-arranged most of the pictures and inscriptions on his walls and was determined to keep the room cleaner. ‘I bought some Goddard’s plate polish & some Vim,’ he wrote in September 1956, ‘& have dealt with the wash hand basin & taps—it looks quite nice. It’s interesting, and very significant, that once one really attends to a thing it becomes a thing—or more of a thing than before—it gets more esse by being “loved”. I suppose it’s as simple as that.’ Now he would occasionally even wax his floor, ‘a dreadful lot of work but it has to be done and you can’t get anyone to do anything these days.’ With only some exaggeration, he would say, ‘I spend most of the day trying to keep some sort of elementary order in the room.’ His cleaning was limited, however. A few years later Julia Shirley Smith would notice atop his sagging book shelves, at ceiling-level where he could not reach, a beer-foam of dust two inches thick. Keeping order consumed is first and last portions of the day. After rising at 10 am and making his bed, he moved dictionaries, books and papers from the floor onto the woven Welsh rug covering his bed; and before going to bed at about 2:30 pm, he moved the books and papers back to the floor. Incompetence in running the house would be, from now on, especially bad in winter, when the furnace would go unlit in mid-December, and the only hot water Jones had was what he boiled in kettles.¹⁴⁴

By the summer of 1956, his room was packed to overflowing, and something had to be done. Audrey Malon agreed to store in her house his surplus possessions, including books and furniture kept for the past seven years in the cellar of Morag’s sister’s house. He found ‘merely going through old stuff an infinitely wearying, nerve-racking task ... & when it’s loaded with the dust of years it’s the limit,’ and he adds, ‘of course I’m terribly lazy about physical jobs also.’ A positive effect of sorting was the recovery of a few important books. One of them was Dawson’s *Enquiries* (1933), a collection of essays that, he found, ‘still read with great freshness and

originality' and confirmed his estimation ('very great,' 'unsurpassed') of Dawson's sensitivity to the interrelationships of culture, history, religion, and society. He thought the increasing neglect of Dawson 'in this country' deplorable. Two years later he was delighted at Dawson receiving a five-year appointment at Harvard—though he regretted his leaving, for he had been intending to visit him at his country home in Devon. Another unforeseen benefit of the sorting and moving was that he found his long-lost engraving tools, which pleased him a great deal because of his attachment to them and because of their beauty. He polished the rust off their steel. After he cleaned and sorted, Audrey had men move his excess things on 13 August. Some of these went into a loft, the rest into two other rooms, to which she gave him unrestricted access. The intrusion of his chattel into the Malons' house required cleaning and sorting of their own possessions, including some flagons with glass bottoms, including one Edward's father won in a flat race in Winchester in 1887. Jones thought these 'jolly nice,' so Edward gave them to him. His next major room cleaning would occur three years later, when he spent weeks clearing out his accumulated newspapers, looking at each one first, convinced that he was throwing away many that he would later want.¹⁴⁵

When Joan and René Hague visited, he gave them supper in his room: grapefruit, cold chicken sandwiches, china tea. One evening he said that because people gave him wine, which he did not like, he had a bottle of burgundy for them. 'They say you're supposed to warm it, so I've been doing that.' He had the corked bottle beside the gas fire, the wine boiling in the bottleneck and coming through the cork. He uncorked it, and Joan and René drank the mulled wine.¹⁴⁶

Honeyman visited. With him, Jones would not speak about religion and was shy of showing piety. Walking together one day, they came to the Catholic church in Harrow, and Jones said, 'It's very beautiful, this church. Perhaps we ought to go in to see it,' but he then guided Honeyman past. Going in would have meant genuflecting, at the very least, and that would be embarrassing in the company of a non-kneeling nominal Anglican.¹⁴⁷

Honeyman was living in a bed and breakfast at 51 Onslow Gardens when, in 1956, he met and fell in love with a seventeen-year-old named Jacqueline Powell, who was beautiful and extremely intelligent. In 1957 he took her to meet Jones. They were both shy of one another, which made conversation awkward until they were about to leave, when he loosened up, became animated, and began showing her his

pictures. She was fascinated and remembered, ‘it was almost like falling in love.’¹⁴⁸ Honeyman now visited sometimes with Jacqueline, whom Jones loved, but still often alone.

The second week of August 1956, Robert Speaight visited in the evening, bringing a French Jesuit priest and poet named Jean Mambrino, an acquaintance also of Alan Price Jones and Kathleen Raine. Mambrino had discovered Jones through a Sorbonne professor of English named Louis Bonnerot, an admirer of *The Anathemata*. Mambrino was reading the poem with the intention of lecturing on it at Metz and had lots of questions. He visited again, by himself, on the 15th. ‘He’s a sweet person and *extremely* intelligent,’ Jones said, ‘but *so enthusiastic & gets so excited* in discussion that he paces the room and shouts at the top of his voice and at an incredible speed. It’s quite battering. But he’s jolly nice.’ He visited again on the 24th and they discussed *The Anathemata* from 4 pm to 8 pm. He seemed to Jones to like ‘the best bits’ and, ‘with a little complicated exegesis’ by the author, to understand the poem as a whole. During this visit, Jones complained at length about an article on ‘Religious Writing’ in the *TLS* of 7 August which nonsensically asserted that *The Anathemata* is ‘a ragged and sometimes impenetrable forest ... unassertive, subjective, a structure more like music than a theme in words ... in a twilight no-man’s-land of its own,’ its aim being ‘vividly to dramatize the Gospel. ... its author ‘turned inward’ and dreaming ‘in the dark.’ Mambrino wrote a response pointing out the gross inaccuracy of all this, published in the *TLS* of 5 October. In his reply, he says, ‘Mr Jones ... is no visionary ... Every line is ... full of concerted and precise meanings.’ Jones wrote Mambrino thanking him for the letter: ‘Very especially I liked the bit about the work not being that of a *visionnaire*, also not subjective, for it is *so tedious* to have one’s work blamed, *not* for its *many faults*, but, for qualities which are foreign to it!’ On one of his visits Mambrino read Jones one of his poems, entitled ‘*Le Coeur du Temps*’, giving a literal translation, and Jones made a finished translation (after eight drafts):

Shall I sleep at the head-waters that	
	water all worlds
My face bathed in the morning-fragrance	
My eyes the sun's ray'd disc	
	that beam-brights the way
	streaming forward?
Or, shall I plunge	
	into those waters
	which make pregnant

the shores of to-morrow	with a strange purple
from the world-brim?	dazzled of a glory streaming toward
Deep within me	
from the fount of blood	floods high a tide of gold
	where the living waters are welling without end.

Mambrino would publish it years later, but without Jones's line-breaks.¹⁴⁹

In 1956-7, one of the residents of Nothwick Lodge was a brilliant young Italian named Camillo Corvi Moro, a student in Milan University in England to improve his English. Jones considered him a person of extraordinary perception. He was eighteen years old, rich and, owing to a glandular problem, fat. His interests were in the arts and classical literature, but his family had been chemists in Piacenza in the Po Valley since the fifteenth century, and as eldest son he was obliged to take over the family pharmaceutical firm. Moro spent two years at Northwich Lodge, during which they became 'great friends' and talked 'for hours.' Jones thought him 'one of the most intelligent persons I've ever met & jolly amusing,' with a '*mind* as agile as a fish.' They had 'most interesting' conversations about the arts, antiquity, the Church, and etymology 'all conducted in a kind of hotch potch of words.' Once Moro delighted him by revealing that General Tito's name was 'simply straight Latin Titus'—the sort of nominal continuity with the past they both enjoyed. Moro explained a lot about Italy, including that many of the dialects were virtually, in many respects, different languages. When he read for Jones some Dante in Italian, Jones thought he had never 'heard anything more beautiful.'¹⁵⁰ He was 'very sorry' when Moro left. He wrote to him but found Moro 'no correspondent.'

Jones's parish priests now were Fathers Harris and Duderson. About Harris he writes 'He's been cracking on about chaps putting coppers in the ruddy plate in almost Oirish manner from the pulpit. But he's a worthy bloke. It must be a hard job.' Six years later, he would write,

Poor old Fr Harris cracks on *longer & longer* about parish activities, sweep-stakes, whist-drives, etc etc. Mercifully I'm a bit deaf! It's bloody unkind of me to say this, but, honestly, these good, hard-working, pious, well-meaning chaps, who'll go straight to heaven, can be an awful strain. I was amused the other day, because after a specially long chat about this & that he

said, well, we'll leave out the Gospel and Epistle in English, as this service is rather long, & then proceeded with his sermon. By that time I'd almost forgotten that I was at Mass!¹⁵¹

For three years he had known that Jackson Knight was translating the *Aeneid* for Penguin. He was glad Knight was 'having a shot' at it but thought it untranslatable—the Day Lewis and Rieu translations were, he thought, 'awful.' He had noticed 'that when one asks a bloke to translate a line or two *quite literally* in the order of the original words—*then* one gets a real kick—but as soon as they put it into a sort of half poetic English it goes as dead as mutton.' In the autumn of 1956, Knight's translation appeared, and Jones's was, as he expected, disappointed. He found it too terrible to read, 'very pedestrian', even though he had heard him translate lines 'with astonishing effect.' This was almost inevitable, he thought: inspiration that enlivened short works flagged in a longer effort.¹⁵² He thought it almost preferable simply to publish, instead, a list of meanings for each word so that none of the connotations would be lost.

As winter approached, he seldom went into London, but in November 1956, he attended a cocktail party for Barbara Moray's daughter Arabella and her fiancé, whose wedding luncheon he would attend on the 10 December at the Hyde Park Hotel.

On 9 November, a Friday afternoon, he first recorded poetry for radio broadcast. A technician from the BBC came to his room to record 'The Wall' and 'The Tutelar of the Place,' a newly finished 'fragment' in which a Celtic persona prays to the goddess of place to defend local culture against imperial technocracy. He thought 'the more 'exciting' of the two poems, but perhaps *The Wall* is the more completely shaped'. (But in 1965 he would say of 'The Tutelar', 'I like it, perhaps best of my separate bits.') For the recording session, Jones received ten guineas. The poems were broadcast on 18 December under the title of 'Two Fragments from a Work in Progress,' and for his reading he received £42. They were rebroadcast twice the following December earning him an additional £63. He thought the poems sounded 'not so bad & certainly quite unobscure!' He found what he called "reciting" his own poetry into a microphone "a bit of a strain" (*IN* 89). The Welsh Home Service carried the broadcast on 18 December. On the 19th, Saunders Lewis wrote that he and his wife, Margaret, had listened to Jones reading his two poems the night before 'and we were enthralled and thrilled.'¹⁵³

On 21 December 1956 he read in *The Times* 'a most remarkable letter' by an Arab in

Oxford named Walid el Khalidi, who raised ‘in a most clear & intelligent way’ the questions about the state of Israel that Jones thought had to be addressed. The questions were about the concept and mystique behind the ‘fact of Israel’ which Arabs were being asked to accept. Chief among the question was whether ‘the growth of a militant Near East Zionism with its logic and momentum’ is compatible with the long-term interests of Jews, Arabs, and world peace; and whether ‘the preponderant western help to Israel’ is ‘reconcilable with the establishment of organic links between Israel and her Asian and African neighbours.’ During one of Hugh Fraser’s now weekly visits, Jones showed him the letter, and they agreed that it was good. Jones read the ensuing correspondence, which he thought uninteresting apart from a ‘sincere-feeling one from Victor Gollanz.’¹⁵⁴

He now agreed to write an essay or review only when ‘altogether sterile’ in attempting to paint or write poetry. At the end of 1956, he reviewed Gwyn Williams’s *Burning Tree* for the *Tablet* (5 January 1957, *E&A* 56-65), a review which is largely a prolonged rhapsody on medieval Welsh poetry in its historical context. He was relieved that it was published without being cut. In it, he did not express his reservations about Williams’s ‘uninspired’ translations, which he had first read three years earlier in a copy of *An Introduction to Welsh Poetry from the Beginnings to the Sixteenth Century*. He supposed that Williams was not

really quite up to the job—efficient, painstaking, scholarly &, I suppose, accurate—but somehow the juices seem to drain away through the colander. Also from reading some passages & also elsewhere between the lines I suspect him of a kind of ‘anti-clerical’ thing. ... It would seem that one has to be a Catholic to get any of this stuff in its right perspective ... I expect the majority of these younger Welsh university scholars spring from a non-conformist & very religious background, but have long since abandoned that for a kind of enlightened ‘modernism’ liberalism & agnosticism familiar enough to us in England, with perhaps a dash of D.H. Lawrence. Now the Catholic thing is doubly & trebly removed from these Welshmen ... Interesting that though one is ‘anti-clerical’ oneself one awfully dislikes other people’s leanings of an anti-clerical nature!

He regretted that in Williams’s earlier book no fifteenth-century Welsh metaphysical poetry was included, and that there was so much Dafydd ap Gwylm and so little of the Gododdin, of the Llywarch Hên poems and of Gruffydd ap yr Ynad Coch, though the latter’s ‘wonderful lament of Llywelyn’ was present, and ‘here the translation does get somewhere.’ He thought that Williams himself had ‘some jolly good things to say & he’s right, thank God, about the bloody Tudors & their

disastrous effect upon Wales. Full marks for that. ... but I fear I don't think that the author has a deep enough mind to do the thing justice I think it's competent, but—why does one always hope for inspiration.' He liked the concluding discussion of Welsh metrical technique. His favourite verse in the book was one in which the English dead sleep 'with light in their eyes.' Williams's general failure as a translator confirmed Jones in his belief that translation of poetry is virtually impossible since it requires someone 'extraordinarily sensitive to the possibilities of both languages—& how can such a person be found?' He thought that the Welsh translations of half-a-century ago were in some ways preferable, even though so much about the language had been learned since then. 'Perhaps the salutary determination to be as literal & as accurate as possible has also a dulling effect. The problem of how to interpret the feeling is forgotten in the more scientific approaches. One gets rid of a false romanticism at the expense of a lot else.'¹⁵⁵

Early in 1957, newly married Hugh Fraser brought his bride, Antonia (née Pakenham), to Northwick Lodge to introduce her. A girlhood friend of the Pollen's daughter, Lucy, she knew his work well. They asked to buy a picture as a wedding present for themselves. Out of affection for Fraser, he allowed them to choose from a great many, and they picked *Calix and Necklace* (1954), buying it for £150. Although not one of the best chalice pictures, once it was gone it became his favourite. Though very busy as an MP and subsequently as Minister of the Air Force, Fraser liked



visiting him, always bringing whisky. Once or twice a year he would fetch him in a car and bring him for lunch to their house in Campden Hill Square. On 3 June 1957, the occasion was the christening party for their daughter Rebecca Rose, Jones's eight-month old goddaughter, for whom he had made an inscription (he would make another for her first communion seven years later). This afternoon, Antonia took his photograph (fig. 13). The ceremony followed, in the Catholic Church in Warwick Street where, the previous year, he had attended their wedding. After he went to supper with Helen Sutherland at her flat in Audley Square. On his visits to the Frasers, their children often

13. Jones at Fraser's house, 3 June 1957

presented him with drawings, which he took with appreciation and respect. He kept these and drawings by other children between the pages of his books. To children he was, Antonia remembered, charming and grave. She had the impression that he liked their simplicity. He was intrigued especially by the Fraser children because they wrote and illustrated their own little books. To Antonia herself, he was ‘always charming ... whimsical, funny.’ They shared an interest in history and sometimes talked about Roman Britain, about which he knew more than she, and King Arthur. One summer she bought a painting of the garden at Pigotts and, when he visited, showed it to him. He told her that that was where he had courted Petra Gill—the only remembered indication to anyone other than Petra, that he renewed his pursuit of Petra after she had broken their engagement.¹⁵⁶

Jones and Hugh Fraser had great affection for one another. During his weekly visits, Fraser confided his difficulties with his wife, which caused him much suffering, and Jones commiserated. But mostly they spoke of current political affairs, about which Fraser could tell him more than appeared in the papers. Jones was particularly interested in hearing about personalities, which he thought motivated political action—a subject that would inform the central section of his poem ‘The Fatigue.’ As Fraser’s political life grew hectic and his marriage more problematic, he became increasingly attached to his Oxford past, to which Jones was a link. They indulged in reminiscence about Fathers D’Arcy, Knox, and Martingdale. Or their talk became soldierly—Fraser had been a tough, very brave paratrooper in the war—or theological: they were both anti-clerical in a devoutly Catholic way. They talked a little about literature, less about art.¹⁵⁷

In February 1957, Jones was still taking, now in addition to *The Times*, the *Manchester Guardian* which was, he thought ‘a bore ... in many ways’ but did ‘show a certain candor.’ He was distressed by beatings by police in Cyprus, for which, because done under British jurisdiction, he felt he shared guilt. He was also distressed by the news of French cruelty in Algeria, not realizing the extent to which the Arab extremists were committing atrocities deliberately to provoke the French to such acts, in order to alienate the population:

I know, of course, that throughout all history, and especially when the authorities are up against great change & power-shifts etc that loathsome police practices are the rule rather than a rarity. But I suppose our humanitarian upbringing and tradition has become so much part of us that we find it hard not to shrink when we see contemporary evidence of what we know to have been a common enough historical phenomenon. And now chaps *can't* get round it

by blaming the ‘split personality of all Germans’, or the ‘natural cruelty of most East Europeans’ or, to cover other occurrences, ‘the oriental tradition of torture’, & so on & so forth—for now its the Frogs ... and, from what one hears ... ourselves also, if in a different degree. ... I do feel *very strongly* about what seems to be a breakdown in the standard—it’s a very evil and hateful thing.

Like de Gaulle, He was convinced that ‘by an historical process the French in Africa cannot be maintained—it’s like the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem—it’s only a matter of time.’ Moreover, Jones was prescient in his certainty that ‘the emergence of the new Islamic nationalism’ would be the major factor effecting foreign policy in the coming years.¹⁵⁸

To Jones’s surprise, and that of the general public, in January 1957 Eliot married his secretary. Jones used to speak with her when going to see Eliot in his office and admired her ‘beautiful hair’ and her voice. Looking at the photograph in *The Times* of the newlyweds, he thought to himself that Eliot was one of those who ‘are characteristic of themselves’ whatever they do. He wrote to wish them happiness, and, when he phoned ‘to give ‘em my love,’ Eliot asked him to lunch at the Garrick whenever he could manage it. Jones hoped that marriage would make him more accessible, and it did. On 24 October 1957, Eliot wrote saying that for weeks it has been on his mind to get Jones to come and meet his wife. Eliot invited him to lunch with them in their large ‘mansion’ Kensington flat and, in 1961, entrusted him with their home phone number. Eliot and Valerie came to the door holding hands. Being in love and married had made Eliot happy in a sugary, cloying way that, Jones was now convinced would end his creative life. ‘Finished!’ he exclaimed to Honeyman, ‘Nothing there, Nothing there.’ But he was nevertheless glad that Eliot was so happy—though he learned from Eliot, that Valerie was ‘dragging’ him to night clubs and that this exhausted him.¹⁵⁹

On 15 February, Jones was going to visit Grisewood and then have lunch with Edith Sitwell, before her departure for the United States to discuss the inclusion of the whole of ‘Rite and Foretime’ in the anthology she was editing. But he felt compelled by ‘some chill in the stomach’ to stay indoors.¹⁶⁰

At this time, he was suffering so much from eyestrain that he could not write letters. At the end of the month he got new reading glasses, which helped only a little. Two weeks later, his eyestrain was still ‘a blasted nuisance.’ He did, however, read at Kenneth Clark’s new book *The*

Nude, which he thought ‘brilliant of course’ though he had ‘reservations’ and thought it not as good as his book on landscape. He was also reading White Papers from the Stationery Office in order to get precise information on Welsh matters and the Suez crisis but could read them only a bit at a time. The report on Welsh Broadcasting, ‘enraged’ him over ‘the inanity and wearisome smallness’ of Welsh MPs Ness Edwards and David Llywelyn.¹⁶¹

Because his eyes burned, he listened more to the radio. In January he liked best of the things he heard ‘some *marvellous* recordings of Negro convicts singing a work-song cutting down heavy timber. Exceedingly good art and exceedingly moving also.’ On the evening of 14 February, he listened to a reading from Johnson’s *Rasselas*, which he found he knew although he could not remember reading it—a strange experience because his memory was ‘not all that bad.’¹⁶² In the winter and early spring of 1957, he listened to a series of readings of *Piers Plowman* by Gary Watson, for which Elizabeth Zeeman had reconstructed the original sound values. Jones loved it, and enjoyed George Kane’s lecture on it. The broadcast was for him a further revelation of the beauty he had already appreciated, though till now he had been uncertain of the pronunciation of many of the medieval words. He followed the readings in his copy of the B Text. It was ‘lovely to hear the sounds as they were intended & very moving—it’s a glorious poem and no mistake.’ To Grisewood he recounts that in her introduction Zeeman says that

it was, in her view, the best *long* poem in English & then spoilt that by saying until we come to *Paradise Lost*. Bigger that, why she has to drag in a work of totally *different goodnesses and badnesses* I don’t know *You don’t want* to be reminded of Milton *at all* when in the presence of Langland. ... I don’t feel I know the answers to *anything, anymore*, but I *do* know that you can’t really see what’s ‘right’ with Langland unless you can see what’s ‘wrong’ with Milton. And, in any case, I think there is an absolute sense in which *Piers Plowman* has more *being* than the poetry of Milton.

Appalled by a published letter ridiculing the series, he wrote letters to *The Times* and the *Listener* praising the series as the greatest single achievement of the Third Programme, ‘a glad event’ (and also praised in passing, Michael Tippett’s opera *The Midsummer Marriage* and dramatizations of two Joyce stories), but the effort was ‘bloody well wasted’ since neither letter was published. It cheered him that so important a poem should, untranslated, be widely heard. In March 1957, he heard on the Third Programme a ‘wonderful Mass by Fayrfax,’ the medieval composer.¹⁶³ The series confirmed his preference for reading, instead of dramatizing, poetry on the radio and the

value of the broadcast readings of his own poetry.

He liked the dramatizations of Joyce but he generally disliked the trained voices of actors and almost always hated their enactments of literature. 'It's incredible,' he wrote, 'what's *lost and* what's shoved in!' In the early 1960s he would hear Shakespeare read on the radio according to the phonetics of the late sixteenth century and without dramatic interpretation. The effect, he found, was astounding. 'The sounds themselves did the work.' "My God, the beauty of it ... was tremendous." The difference was like that between hearing "a Negro spiritual sung by some genuine black community in some Southern States' chapel & hearing the same "spiritual" sung to some bloody instrumental accompaniment by a "trained singer". Generally, he could not bear Shakespeare on the radio: 'almost all the chief virtue of Shakespeare, his poetry, is lost, the structure of the words & lines is obliterated by emotional emphases, mouthings & shoutings & sobbings which I find absolutely insufferable. The requisite emotion is all there in the *actual choice of words & their placing*—this one can now get only by reading the stuff to oneself. It's murdered when these actors "interpret" it. For him, words were enough owing to their evocative power. In August 1955 he 'quite jumped' upon hearing in relation to the American president the word 'Gettysburg'.¹⁶⁴

In the spring of 1957, the government decided to cut the Third Programme by one third. He was outraged. He wrote to *The Times* (16 May 1957) protesting and also criticizing the 'further trivialization' of the Light Programme—blaming these changes on 'para-philistine trends' which the Third Programme, especially, was intended to counteract. He thought his letter too mild, and realized the changes meant 'good-bye to most poetry readings & certainly to repeats.'¹⁶⁵ Twice this summer he would listen approvingly to lectures on religion by R.C. Zaehner on the Third Programme. Where else could the general public have access to such quality of thought?

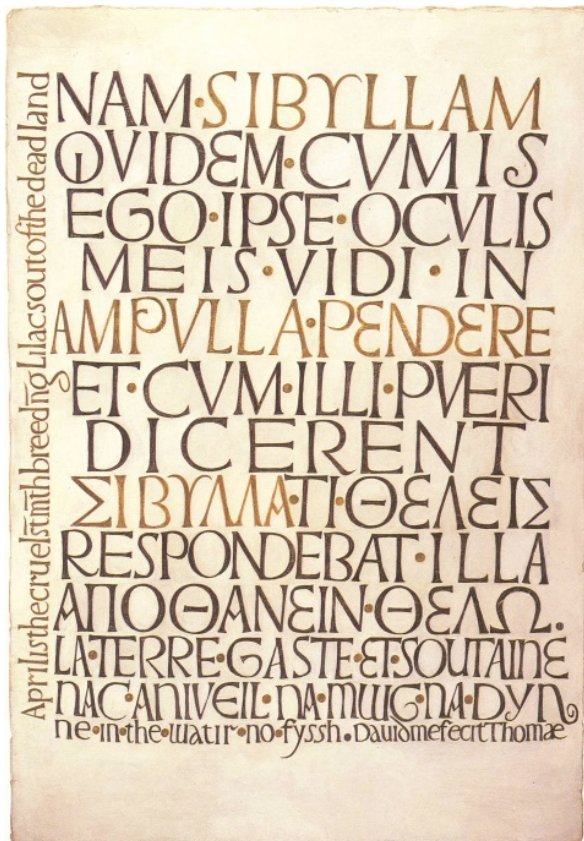
In March, he 'roused' himself 'sufficiently to get to Whitechapel' for an exhibition of the paintings of Stubbs. He was glad he went. Stubbs, he thought, was 'an "English" eccentric' with 'flashes of that "poetic" feeling for the English landscape & atmosphere & characterization of persons and he had some *jolly interesting* ways of *composing some* of his pictures.' About his technical ability, much praised in radio reviews, he had reservations. 'He has little if any feeling for the medium of paint,' Jones thought, compared to 'Constable or Turner or Gainsborough or, of

course, innumerable French artists.’ The work of Stubbs was, he thought, ‘trade-unionish in some respects—very ‘moral’ in some strange way.’¹⁶⁶

On Sunday 25 March, he visited Barbara Moray at her house, and while there hurriedly read John Rothenstein’s essay on him in *Modern Painters*. He had dreaded what it might say but found ‘it is not at all bad. He’s managed to keep it light & not pompous and, on the whole, not too embarrassing.’ He regretted, however, that *Vexilla Regis* and *Aphrodite in Aulis* were used as illustrations. ‘Those are ‘unique’ rather than ‘typical’ works ... one of them ought to have been a still life or something illustrational.’¹⁶⁷

In early spring 1957 he received a letter from Neville Braybrook soliciting a contribution to a symposium to celebrate Eliot's seventieth birthday in the following year and suggesting an essay about illustrating Eliot. On May 12, 1957, Jones drafted a response suggesting he make an inscription, although he was ‘having a lot of trouble’ with his eyes ‘over the last few months’, but he did not post it. Braybrook sent two more letters, unanswered. Finally Jones telephoned him, saying, oddly, ‘This is a chap called David Jones’ At his invitation, Braybrook went to see him. He

proposed that Jones write about illustrating Eliot. Jones counter-proposed that he write on *The Waste Land*, about which he became enthusiastic: ‘It has extraordinary authority, hasn’t it? It mirrors our civilizational phase with absolute validity.’ But another contributor was already writing on it. Jones said, ‘I’m not keen on your idea of writing about illustrating T.S.E. because illustrations should speak for themselves.’ Also, he said, he was having eye trouble. ‘I don’t want to seem discourteous but it’s exceptionally difficult for me to know what to say to your request.’ He would think about it. Despite eyestrain, he considered making an inscription. He read much of Eliot’s poetry looking for possible texts to use and was ‘more impressed *than ever* by his greatness,’ he writes Knight, ‘there is a *validity* about his



14. David Jones, *Nam Sibyllam*, 1957

poetry which continues to set him very high indeed—also a most astonishing power of compression.’ Late one morning he rang Braybrooke, saying he had started an inscription and inviting him to visit that afternoon. Braybrooke came, they drank China tea, and Jones showed him the inscription ‘beginning to take shape’: a large sheet of paper pinned to a board, down the left margin the opening words of *The Waste Land* and, filling the page to the left, the poem’s epigraph from Petronius. He wanted to focus on the waste-land theme, and had decided to include French from *Perceval*, Welsh from the Manawydan story in the *Mabinogion*, and English from Malory. He insisted that it be reproduced in two colours, as close as possible to those in the original (he wanted to check the colours in a proof), and that the original be returned to him. Owing to eye trouble, he worked slowly, finishing in mid-July 1957. He then phoned Braybrooke to say that it could be taken to the publishers but must be insured for £100 and had to be carried in a large art folder, which Jones would loan him. Braybrooke came. They had tea. The inscription ‘*Nam Sybillam*’ (fig. 14) was flat on the bed. Jones had him kneel to see it at eye-level. ‘Do you notice,’ he said proudly, ‘how the letters march across the page like columns of soldiers.’ Jones thought it should be reproduced just before an essay by Rose Macaulay on *The Waste Land*, but Braybrooke chose it for the frontispiece of the book. When he brought the contributions for the symposium to his publisher, Andre Deutsch, they wanted to cut much of its contents, including Jones’s inscription, which they dismissed as irrelevant. Against the advice of his agent, Braybrooke took the material away and submitted it to Rupert Hart-Davis, who said immediately, ‘I would buy any book blind which contained the work of David Jones.’ It was returned to Jones after printing. Though he considered it one of his best and ‘found it hard to part with,’ he then sent it to Eliot as a belated wedding present. Eliot hung in the front hall of his flat. Two years later, he would invite Jones to lunch to sign it. Jones liked the two-colour reproduction but missed having the original which was ‘naturally *much* more exciting.’¹⁶⁸

The book itself, which would stay in print and continue to sell for two decades, Jones found ‘not very exciting,’ though he liked one ‘*very good*’ essay by ‘dear Jackson Knight,’ an interesting essay by Elizabeth Sewell on Lewis Carroll and Eliot as nonsense poets, and some of what girls and boys in school had to say. But the book as a whole ‘hardly leaves the ground.’ Eliot invited him to his birthday party on September 26, 1958, but he came down with ‘some infection or chill or something’ and didn’t go. He usually didn’t mind forgoing invitations and missing appointments

because of illness, but ‘this,’ he writes, ‘I *did* mind.’ Soon after he was immobilized by fibrocitis at the base of his back, ‘like lumbago with a difference.’¹⁶⁹

His pocket diary indicates that in the summer of 1957 he received a visitor or went out to visit people at least once a week. On 5 July he went to dinner with Allison le Plat. On 14 July, Isabel Sharpe visited, and he went to dinner with Len Walton and his wife. On 22 July he dined at the Garrick with Bobby Speaight. On the evening of 6 August he ate with Grisewood. On 19 August, he went to supper at the Waltons with Percival, Mambrino, and Plumtree. On the 24th Plumtree visited and they listened to his records of ‘Dufay, etc.’ The next day Treasure visited, and was also listened to recordings of medieval music. Jones went for supper on 27 August again with the Waltons and, the next evening, to the Malons. On 1 September Plumtree visited for tea.

Jones was now also meeting Monsignor Charles Duchemin, the retired rector of St Bede’s Colege in Rome now living in Harrow, whom he had met decades before through Tom Burns. An amateur painter, Duchemin was wealthy, dapper, courteous, with wide intellectual appreciations. Jones liked his ‘unconscious courtesy, ... his total lack of pretence of any sort, his innate charm, his unassuming unobtrusive and reticent bearing.’ And he liked him for ‘never’ being ‘ecclesiastical’ while being deeply, unmistakably a priest. They showed each other their paintings, and Jones thought his showed considerable ‘sensitivity ... in a characteristically modest mode with a subdued & gentle sense of tone values, but with far more talent than many professional artists.’¹⁷⁰ He would be saddened to learn of his death in December 1957.

In 1951 the government had planned to dam the Honddu and make a reservoir of the Llanthony Valley. Appalled, Jones had written a letter of protest to *The Times*, which did not print it. Eventually the plan was dropped, but his horror at the thought now conditioned his response to all such schemes.¹⁷¹ In February he had written to *The Times* protesting the proposed destruction of the Trawsfynydd valley by flooding, and his letter had not been printed. Now he wrote protesting the proposed flooding the Tryweryn valley, a site of historical importance. He found the subject difficult: ‘almost every word seems to take on a false connotation, a phoney undertone of some sort.’

Welshness was one of several things about which he found it difficult to express himself

adequately. Another was ‘the Catholic *res*’ because its values and intended meaning ‘never seem quite to apply to the problem as presented within the contemporary context,’ so that he found himself ‘permanently embarrassed.’ This was true ‘of *all* the *few* things’ he cared about: the abstract in painting, sacrament in religion, ‘the ‘need for craftsmanship,’ folk music.’ Whenever asked about one of these, he would ‘take evasive action ... for in none of these few instances can one begin to say anything before clearing away a whole tangle of stuff & that just ain’t possible in the normal run of things and anyhow one mostly has no inclination to do so.’ Only with his closest friends could he discuss these matters, for they understood ‘the Break.’¹⁷²

About the Tryweryn valley he writes,

How many more small, deep-rooted, Welsh-speaking, rural communities can (for whatever reason) suffer disintegration or dispersal before the last of them is part of our lost history?

Though the co-existence of ‘folk’ and ‘megapolis’ is everywhere beset with increasing difficulties not everywhere are the *mores* and language of a people so much the immediate victim of this dichotomy as in the case in Wales. Hence it is not difficult to understand the anxiety which each new project engenders.

For all its links with Romanity the Welsh heritage is un-urban and its typical arts are those which were once cultivated by a tribal aristocracy. Owing to the accidents of history (and you can’t argue with Clio) the associations tend to be with the actual land itself. With this valley-way, that hill-fort, this boundary-ford, together with the names of these and of the scattered farm-sites.

It is not only that a given tract of land may, possibly, have a complex of associations not dissimilar in kind from those evoked for some of us by the name and thing ‘Westminster Abbey’, but also that it may turn out to be an enclave harbouring the remnants of a people together with other vestigial evidences, including a nomenclature, all linking us to-day with the Wales of the earliest records.

He goes on to illustrate this sense of place as a poetic text by the name Merioneth, derived from the roman name of its founder Marianus. His letter was returned and he was informed that the correspondence was closed.

In November 1957, the Russians put into orbit a Sputnik carrying on board a dog named Laika. Jones found this very moving, and for years after kept on his mantle a newspaper-photograph of the little dog.

Now back in England and undergoing religious conversion, Jim Ede considered becoming a Catholic—without Jones’s encouragement—but decided that might involve rules or disturb his

passivity, so he had himself confirmed as an Anglican. One of his principal reasons for becoming an active Christian was belief in the real presence of God in the Eucharist but also in all things—a belief that, he said, Jones had helped him towards.¹⁷³

For several years, Ede had begged Jones to sell him an inscription, any inscription. He was now creating a building in Cambridge, called Kettle's Yard, to house his art collection. It was to be a place of 'lived-in beauty,' open to the public so 'that God may enter.' He was paying for the renovations and would donate his art to the university together with his services as custodian. This was a vision borrowed from Helen Sutherland. It was now for Kettle's Yard that he pleaded to buy or borrow an inscription. In July 1955, Jones had said that he wanted to send something to him for the place, and he now gave him an inscription beginning *Quia Per Incarnati* (c. 1953).¹⁷⁴

By the spring of 1958 Jones was making definite plans for his next book of poetry. It would not 'be a continuous whole like *The Anathemata*, but rather separate pieces with nevertheless a connection of this sort or that'—in other words a sequence. To his two completed mid-length poems ('The Wall' and 'The Tutelar of the Place') he added 'The Tribune's Visitation,' the candid monologue of a Roman officer disenchanted with imperialism, to which he nevertheless remains dedicated out of despairing nihilism. This work extends the tradition of 'The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor' (with some affinity to Kreistler's *Darkness at Noon*) and alluding to *Heart of Darkness* and *Nineteen Eighty-four*. It originates in Jones's experience of hearing an officer during the Great War speaking freely to him and a few other privates of the incompetence of the General Staff. With far greater acuity than that of most subsequent literary criticism, after reading it Helen Sutherland appreciated it 'a very moving *Lament*--its irony presses far & richly home ... I must reread it to see if it speaks any word of hope of the human measure returning'. Jones recorded a reading of it in late April. It was broadcast on the Third Programme on 2 May and 28, 1958 June, earning him, for each broadcast, £28.7. To his surprise, 'The Tribune's Visitation' was published in the *Listener* (22 May). He now had in mind three other poems to complete and add to his collection.¹⁷⁵ Their titles, as he now conceived of them, were 'The Dream of Pte Crixus,' 'The Hunt,' and 'The Mass.'

At this time, Audrey Malan brought Renyolds Stone and his wife Janet, who was Audrey's cousin, to see him on their way home to Dorset after staying with Benjamin Britten. Renyolds was a well-known wood engraver, whom Jones had met at Ditchling and had known in the Society of

Wood Engravers. Jones liked his work. A few months later, Renyolds would send him a copy of his *Boxwood* (newly published by Monotype) with sixteen engravings illustrating verse by Sylvia Townsend Warner, whom Jones had known as a student at Westminster.* During their afternoon visit, Renyolds' wife, Janet, was enchanted with Jones and from then on visited him or wrote to him as often as she could.¹⁷⁶ A reclusive workaholic, Renyolds did not visit again.

Janet Stone visited Jones with her children and, more often, alone. Tall, blonde, attractive, bosomy, a former singer and the daughter and sister of C. of E. bishops, she was affectionate, flirtatious, and, in her letters, gushy. One of Stanley Morison's last Platonic attachments, she liked being the confidante of impressive men, as she now was of Kenneth Clark, who had been since 1952 her lover. Because Jones was now eminent and also because of his exceptional rapport with women, she and he became close friends. Their correspondence began on 22 May with her thanks for a visit 'sipping that delicious tea, & nibbling those divine biscuits ... in that room again, unlike any other room in the world, and very very nice to have you to myself.' In September, she thanks him again for a visit: 'I must say it's a heavenly feeling when one feels entirely happy in someone's company & sympathetic—both ways.' On a visit in August 1959, she photographed him, and sent him prints c/o Benjamin Britten, who therefore probably visited him. From now on, she often took photographs. He showed her pictures and played recordings. She brought him Cornish biscuits, bottles of whisky, tins of china tea, and sometimes ham or tongue and stayed for supper, at which they ate grapefruit. She told him that he and Clark were the two people whose company she most enjoyed. For her, Jones was a confidante, someone 'touchingly understanding and sympathetic' about her meetings with 'K' and the difficulties caused by K's alcoholic wife and by his family obligations and busy professional life. She felt 'to the core' that Jones 'would always understand' what she called her 'miseries or fusses'.¹⁷⁷ He accepted her confidences sympathetically, without moral judgment. Soon she would reciprocate.

On the evening of 27 June 1958, he listened to a broadcast of Pound reading his poetry. 'It was *most* wonderful. It's great stuff and tremendously impressive & jolly amusingly delivered. My

*He thought there was 'jolly good poetry in some of these verses' and liked 'very much' a poem about a horse (p. 26), which he thought 'pushed a *tiny* bit farther ... would ... be better still,' and one on p. 5 about a little boy and a waterfall.

God! he makes all this little nagging concert of critics seem smaller & more absurd than ever—they are bloody contemptible.’ He would listen to a series of programs on Pound in February 1960 and exclaim: ‘Lord! he is amusing & some of the bits of Cantos he read seemed to me really *grand* poetry—but I don’t altogether, or at all, like his chant-like delivering of them.’ In fact, Jones couldn’t listen to it for long. ‘It sounds artificial & seems to defeat its own end. It’s not “flat” enough & strange to say, sounds a bit Yeatsian. Whereas his *conversation* is superbly right in its hardness & inflections of feeling.’ He thought Pound was ‘damned funny’ about the theologian Niebuhr, whom he called ‘that old buzzard,’ and about Eliot.¹⁷⁸

Hilda Cochrane (who owned *Sunday Mass*, in which a young woman has a bird in her hat) had visited him with her son Malcolm. Now, at twenty and thinking Jones lonely, Malcolm continued to visit as he did certain elderly relatives, charitably. One of Jones’s personal ‘anathemata’ was a stone shaped like the handle of a Stanley knife in which he had carved the word ‘CYMRU’ along the length and a cross on its end. He loved the look and feel of it. He asked Malcolm to take it to a photographer to have a picture made of it, but it had to be back, he said, within the week. As Malcolm left the room with it, he noticed Jones looking at him searchingly, with anxiety. It was a suffering to him to be parted with this object.¹⁷⁹

At Christies, Malcolm bought for £25 Jones’s *The Jetsam Gatherer* (1936), an ink and chalk drawing of a Sidmouth beach-comber he had given to Prudence Pelham. Malcolm took it to show Jones, who was upset that it had got onto the market. He had given it with the understanding that ‘it would possibly come to me in the end.’ So Malcolm handed it over. Jones went on about it being a personal gift to a friend and should never have been sold. He spoke about a girl he once drew who, when he had finished drawing, asked to be given it—‘After all it is of me’—putting him in the awkward position of having to refuse and seem unkind. ‘How could she possibly think she could have one of my drawings. She could not possibly have realized how much goes into a drawing. That it was of her was of no importance.’ He spoke of losing the Pigotts portfolios and his experience with Rex Nan Kivell, which, he said, made him suspect people of trying to take pictures from him. At the end of the visit, however, moved by Malcolm’s generosity he returned the picture to him saying, ‘I can’t imagine anybody that I’d like to have it better than yourself. By all means take it.’¹⁸⁰

In the spring and summer, he was also several times visited by William Hayward, a twenty-

nine year old scholar writing a critical commentary on *The Anathemata*, about which he asked questions. Encouraged by the attention, Jones wrote him letters explaining the work.* In the autumn, he would write at his request and on his behalf a letter of recommendation for a job with the British Council saying Hayward was ‘extremely perceptive, combining a scholarly, with an imaginative, cast of mind.’¹⁸¹ Hayward didn’t get the job, didn’t finish the commentary.

Jones saw evidence of decline in ‘our material culture’ in the quality of the foolscap paper on which he wrote. It was ‘*now* like blotting paper ...—it used to be so good & firm but each new half-run I get seems worse than the last.’ Another bad sign, which caused him to feel ‘a great pang’ was the replacement of Malraux as Minister of Culture in France. He thought that ‘a very bad straw in the wind indeed.’¹⁸² (A few years later, he would say to a visitor that he had been influenced by Malraux.)[†]

In the summer of 1958, a correspondence in *The Times* changed his life. On 2 June he read a feature on Wales as ‘undeniably’ a nation with its own language, literature, and values. He was surprised and grateful to read in *The Times* something so sensitive on the subject. Two days later, he read a letter in response from Miss Valerie Price entitled ‘Welsh Wales,’ in which she says that England could help Wales save its language and identity by facilitating travel within, instead of out of, Wales, by building a north-south road and a north-south railway. Then the unemployed northern Welsh need not go to England for work, and the southern Welsh need not take holidays in Somerset. On June 11, Jones wrote in appreciation of the initial article and in support of Miss Price’s recommendations, quoting Eliot as writing that the disappearance of Welsh would be an impoverishment for England as well as Wales (a contention that Eliot first and repeatedly experienced from Jones in conversation), and pleading against the loss of anything archaic since it



15. Valerie Price, 1959

*David Jones, *Letters to William Hayward*, ed. Colin Wilcockson (London: Agenda, 1979).

†Jones left no record of how Malraux may have influenced him. He owned *The Voices of Silence*, given him in 1957.

may 'have fresh relevance and become newly requisite' like the medieval Welsh metrics informing Hopkins's poetry. Shortly after, he received a note from Miss Price inviting him to a party she was giving to raise money for the Welsh nationalist party, *Plaid Cymru*. He declined by phone, saying he would send a cheque and inviting her instead to visit him. She came in mid-June with her boyfriend Michael Wynne-Williams, an Anglicized Welsh law student. Jones liked them both but found her especially attractive. She was twenty-five, vivacious, dark-eyed, habitually holding her head at an angle suggesting bravado and confidence (fig. 15). Extraordinarily energetic—she had been a champion hurdler--Valerie worked in the personal department of a chemical engineering firm, went weekly to Cardiff to interview people for her own young people's radio program, occasionally conducted interviews for Granada Television, worked for the magazine *Wales*, and sometimes worked as a model and actress. And she was Welsh Welsh, raised in a south-west mining valley as a monoglot Welsh-speaker till the age of six. Jones was strongly affected by her voice and her nearly black hair, 'not raven blue-black but *warm* black & glossy & vigorous and free.' She seemed to him 'very perceptive about the visual arts—which is unusual among the Welsh.'¹⁸³ By the time she left that evening, he was infatuated.

On 14 August, he was infuriated to read a letter by the MP David Llewellyn stating that the Welsh language was dispensable. Two days later he was glad to see a response from Valerie Price quoting an old Welshman's response to Henry II who had asked him about the effects of the English invasion. The old man had said that 'no other race than this and no other tongue than this of Wales, happen what may, will answer in the Great Day of Judgment for this little corner of the earth.' She writes that if Mr Llewellyn wishes to represent Wales on the Judgment Day, he better learn the language of his nation and of the great Llewellyns of the past. On 29 August Jones wrote to *The Times* thanking her for 'historical awareness and cogency' and stating that as the 'most ancient of our island deposits' Welsh is important for modern Britain. He wrote that ordinary piety asks us at least 'to comprehend a little of its ethos, and to understand its place in history and mythus ... especially considering how very bleak is the prospect of that tradition in face of the civilizational pressures of our present-day technocracy.'

Earlier in the summer, Grisewood had presented him with the twenty-five essays and reviews he had collected for what was tentatively entitled 'The Selected Essays of David Jones.' To help make a final selection, Jones went through them, finding the process 'exhausting and tiresome.' He discovered that often what he had intended as funny was merely 'silly,' but any alteration would involve substantial rewriting. Even when not embarrassed, he found it 'a bore going over old ground.' He wanted to drop 'Beauty in Catholic Churches' and 'The Myth of Arthur,' the latter written during the Blitz without access to his books and while distracted by worry over his father's illness. Now he found it 'a bit rhetorical & over-done.' Grisewood and Eliot persuaded him to keep the essay, even if he had to revise it, so he began revising. It would be, after 'Art and Sacrament', his most important essay. He was unsure of the value of all the other essays. But Grisewood was so persistent that he felt he was working, as he later said, 'with a luger in my back'¹⁸⁴

In July 1958 Faber officially decided to publish what was provisionally called 'Selected Essays.' There would be an edition of 2000, Jones getting a royalty of 10% with an advance of £75 to be paid on publication—but Grisewood's fee for editing (£50) and all permissions and typing costs were to be subtracted from the advance. Jones found it hard to imagine that Grisewood would agree to take the lion's share of the spoils. He telephoned Monteith asking whether Grisewood knew his fee was to come out of royalties and saying he did not want to raise the issue with his 'very old friend.' If he knew, then that was fine. Monteith told him that Grisewood knew.¹⁸⁵

Eliot had Jones to lunch at the Garrick Club on 24 July 1958 to discuss the book. There, for the first time, Jones met Monteith, who had written him so encouragingly about *The Anthemata*. Jones had earlier suggested making an inscription for the dust jacket and frontispiece of the collection, and they now commissioned him to do it. Then he surprised them by saying that he had made a new version of 'The Myth of Arthur' and was revising 'The Heritage of Early Britain.' He said he wanted his letter recently published in *The Times* (11 June) included, the one supporting Valerie Price's advocacy of the Welsh language. It would be entitled 'Welsh Wales.' He also asked that in the table of contents and elsewhere the date of writing, not the date of publication, be given for each essay.¹⁸⁶ He asked to be given an advance immediately, minus Grisewood's share, and was refused.

He spent the rest of the summer and autumn immersed in rewriting. As always, spelling was

his nemesis. 'I can't spell *at all* without reference to dictionaries,' he said, 'which makes writing books & things perfectly awful.'¹⁸⁷ Motivating all his rewriting was his hope that the book would clarify for readers the thinking behind *The Anathemata* and undo the incomprehension evident in many reviews and implied by general lack of response.

Writing now had him keeping later hours. And while he liked it being 'more peaceful after midnight—a heavenly stillness', he wanted to get to bed earlier. But working where he slept made stopping work difficult. Night work was writing, but he thought he did little good writing after midnight. He found that the time 'goes like a flash' when working at night whereas time working in the morning 'is interminable.'¹⁸⁸

Grisewood sent the finished selections to Eliot in October 1957. These included the unpublished Hitler typescript—now called, by Grisewood, 'The Pursuit of Peace'—which Grisewood thought Jones 'may want to withdraw ... because it is most likely to be misunderstood.' Eliot advised omitting it and several others, including autobiographical essays, which would have to be rewritten and brought up to date. That would take 'an interminable time,' he feared, and possibly make Jones despair. At Faber, John Bodley and Charles Monteith argued about what should be included, but agreed on eliminating the Hitler essay as open to pro-Fascist misinterpretation. Monteith suggested calling the book 'Art and Sacrament and Other Writings.' Over the phone Jones vetoed this, not wanting to call such attention to the essay entitled 'Art and Sacrament.' Looking through the titles of the remaining essays, he noticed 'Epoch, Church and Artist,' deleted the word 'Church,' and came up with 'Epoch and Artist' as title of the collection. That being agreed to, Jones and Grisewood retitled the essay 'Religion and the Muses.' As he wrote the Preface, he became optimistic. Perhaps Eliot and Grisewood were right, that his conviction about the civilizational dilemma will now, at least, be stated, and that reviewers would address the issue. His enthusiasm increasing, he agreed with Grisewood that unlike his first two books, this one presented none of the difficulties that had frustrated readers. This would be read and stir discussion. Jones thought 'chaps would have to say whether, in their view, my arguments rested on a fallacy or not.'¹⁸⁹

In August 1958, he painted an inscription for the frontispiece (fig. 16). If he can be said to have written a manifesto, this is it. Quoting from the Welsh of *Y Gododdin* and the Latin of Ecclesiasticus, he writes (in translation): 'The bards of the world assess the men of valour: but upon

the judge's seat they shall not sit. Yet with the creation of eternity they collaborate. And their prayer is in the operation of their art and without these: the city is not built.' He means that poets 'assess' men and values, not to any legal purpose but by way of extending divine creation, and, whether they know it or not, they pray in their creating. We know from this inscription, and from nowhere else, that Jones consciously regarded his own art as a form of prayer. The final Dawsonian pronouncement is that without the culture artists help sustain, civilization will collapse. And there is also the statement implicit in juxtaposition of quotations: poets take from and renew the past--they carry tradition forward through the present into the future. The book went into production, and on 10 October, Jones brought in the finished inscription for the frontispiece and dust jacket.



16. David Jones, *Bierd byt barnant*, 1958

He had learned from his experience with *The Anthemata* that corrections could be costly, and he told Grisewood that he expected to have to pay for corrections over the allotted amount, though he was determined that this would not deter him from making the text as correct as he could. Within the week Grisewood wrote to Monteith asking that any charge for corrections be passed on to him since 'David is not well off at all & I would hate to think of any part of what he is to be paid being reduced.' Jones did make many corrections and changes in the proofs, and the cost of these was high, £67, but Eliot and Monteith allowed 20% freedom from costs instead of the usual 5%, so that the charge against royalties was £21, which Grisewood paid. The advance on royalties and £15/15/0 for his dust-jacket design earned Jones a total of £30/15/0.¹⁹⁰

Epoch and Artist was published on 8 May 1959.* Of all its essays, he thought that 'perhaps the key item' is 'Past & Present' because 'it puts what I feel in a nutshell.'¹⁹¹ But the most important

* Jones Asked that copies of Epoch and Artist be sent to the following poeple: Saunders Lewis, Valerie Price, Professor Thomas Jones (at Aberystwyth), Helen Sutherland, Donald Nicholl, Kathleen Raine, . Jackson Knight, Illtud Evans (at Cambridge), John Heath-Stubbs, Edith Sitwell, W.H. Auden, Alun Oldfield-Davies, Harry Whitemn, Clarissa Eden, and

essays by far are the longest, ‘Art and Sacrament,’ which is his full aesthetic manifesto, and the rewritten ‘Myth of Arthur,’ which explains the historical, legendary, and mythic core (apart from the fantasy) of the Arthurian tradition.

Grisewood proposed a celebratory supper. Jones asked him to invite Saunders Lewis, to whom he had dedicated the book. The three of them dined together the evening of 14 May. Lewis had received his copy and said how ‘proud’ he felt. He also commended on Jones on his recent broadcast. He later wrote that he had ‘read the entire book through five times—so I bloody well deserve the dedication.’¹⁹²

Ranging widely in topic, the scope of the book frustrated most reviewers, whose assessments were generally disappointing. Robert Speaight wrote fluffy praise in *Time and Tide*. Stevie Smith wrote silliness in the *Observer* under the title ‘Talking Dead’ in which she objects that ‘nervous souls’ want to hear not about Arthur but ‘about that greater king, Alfred.’ Iltud Evans wrote enthusiastically in the *Tablet* saying erroneously that the dilemma concerning Jones is between signs and materialism. G.D. Klingopulos’s in the *Spectator* was, Jones thought, ‘unkind, excessively superficial and also inaccurate & impudent.’ In *Encounter* Frank Kermode attributed to him ‘an “artist’s” antipathy to “science”’ similar to that of Yeats. Jones protested to Lewis that this was ‘*very wide of the mark*. For I think the questions I ask are just as much the concern of physicists & bankers & bar-tenders & everybody as they are of blokes who happen to write or paint. They are questions for MAN as such *otherwise* the Xtian religion, in its sacramental sense anyhow, is just balls.’¹⁹³ His antipathy was not to science, not even to technology, but exclusive or disproportionate valuation of technology. Probably no poet since the English Metaphysicals was more positive in his attitude to science, to physics, biology, and the soft sciences of anthropology and psychology, which were all it so integral to his poetic vision.

To his chagrin, none of these reviews addressed the central theme. ‘They did not,’ he writes, ‘appear to see that I was asking *real* questions about a *real* situation.’ He concluded that either his ‘somewhat involved way of putting ... questions did not register’ or ‘chaps didn’t really *feel* the dilemmas that are, to me, central.’ The distinction between the utile and the inutile or extra-utile was

to him so important and so obvious that he felt embarrassment in asserting it, even though, he now assumed, it was disregarded as meaningless by most people. And about the book's most important essay, 'Art and Sacrament', he would wonder to the end of his days how it was that people 'had not the foggiest idea' of what it was about. It was as if 'sacrament' was not an English word and that the concept had only a religious provenance. If only his essays had caused some debate. 'Then I would be talking to somebody' but instead he received, at best, politeness. He told Morag that he was considering concluding his letters: 'The not understood, D.J.'¹⁹⁴

He was happy with only two reviews. He told Kathleen Raine hers in *New Statesman* convinced him that the collection really had been worth publishing. The other he liked was by Herbert Read in *The Listener*, a review that he thought 'the most real' of them. With remarkable insight, Read says that Jones's 'philosophy proceeds from' his 'artistic experience rather than from any religious experience' and has as its basic premise 'the observation that the chief mark of man lies in his being capable of the gratuitous.' He writes that for Jones the significance of 'art for art's sake' is conditioned by God's creation being gratuitous so that human making partakes, in value, with divine creation. In this sense, all art is a kind of worship, its sign-making a sort of sacrament, as all gratuitous action must be. Read indicates the affinity between Jones's emphasis on gratuity and Huisinga's theory of play, and he singles out Jones's letter on abstract art as settling 'the problem of definition with great intelligence.'¹⁹⁵ The only reviewer to appreciate the art-theory in *Epoch and Artist*, Read would conclude his book, *A Letter to a Young Painter* (1962) with a quotation from it.

Jones was also heartened by Kenneth Clark's personal response. Janet Stone gave Clark a copy of the book for his birthday in 1959 and reported to Jones that he told her 'I am GREATLY enjoying his book which is also helping me to think more truthfully.' Janet subsequently confided that Clark has 'an enormous respect for your mind as well as your work.' Clark wrote to him, 'I don't know when I have had a book from which I have learnt as much, partly because it so often expresses my own unspoken thoughts.' He went on to say that the book 'has been an immense help to me in clearing my mind' for a lecture on art and society. He also said that he disagrees when Jones writes that animals have no form-creating instincts and do not perform acts gratuitously. 'I would love to talk these things over—but as I come up for only two or three days a week they get

very full & it is difficult to go to Harrow.’ And he concludes that if Jones comes to London he will give him a luncheon at the Albany, which is a quiet place to talk.¹⁹⁶

In February 1960, the Welsh section of the Arts Council would give him a prize of £100 for *Epoch and Artist*. Jones was surprised, delighted, and gratified at ‘it’s coming from the Cymry’, and he hoped it would encourage sales. But by the end of 1960 it had sold only a few hundred copies. He was disappointed, partly because he thought Faber was suffering a financial loss.¹⁹⁷ An American edition was proposed by the Readers Subscription Book Club, which unfortunately disbanded before the publication date, precluding immediate chance of a US edition.

He was glad, though that it was in print, because whenever a student wrote asking his views on art or some other subject—‘Easy to ask, but appalling to answer’—he could recommend that he or she read a certain essay in the book.¹⁹⁸

Valerie Price continued to visit, usually but not always with Michael, sometimes as often as once a week, often after work. She found him ‘marvellous’ to be with, enjoyed his conversation and stories, and looked forward to their visits. He was, she thought, warmly heterosexual, not like her many gay friends, who liked women but differently. She had the impression that he wanted just to speak to and be with a woman. Initially, she regarded him as simply a charming elderly man who agreed with her about things Welsh—until she mentioned him to Keidric Rees, the editor of *Wales*, who expressed surprise and told her about his poetry and painting. Jones met her and Michael at the door on Saturday, 29 November and watched her run ‘up the stairs like a deer’. On one of her visits, he boiled water for tea in his small saucepan, muttering apologetically, ‘all so difficult, shops impossible, *can’t* get out.’ She left and returned shortly with a small kettle in which he thereafter boiled water for tea. During another visit, Michael, who was C. of E. told him, ‘You know, she’s a “Bunny”.’ Jones reacted oddly, thinking he meant ‘she was just jolly nice.’ They informed him that Bunny was slang for *Annibynnwr*, or Independant Nonconformist. On another visit, she wore a small wine-coloured woollen jacket that he liked. To go with it, he thought she should have a golden collar like ‘the gentle, gold-torqued maidens’ mentioned in ‘Kulhwch ac Olwen’. That being impossible, he bought and sent her a gold chain, which fit perfectly, although he almost had it shortened because, thinking of ‘Essyllt Slenderneck’, he told the jeweller it was for ‘someone whose

neck was specially slender’—the jeweller dissuaded him. Eight months later he would spot in a jewellery shop a gold torque, buy it and keep it for weeks in his glass goblet. After giving it to her—saying, ‘Welsh princesses wore torques’—he missed seeing it.¹⁹⁹

When with her, he talked about his past and Welsh history, especially Llywelyn and Owen Glendwr. Unable to imagine how ‘Valerie’ might be translated into Welsh phonetics, he nicknamed her Elri, which is, at least, Welsh seeming. She told him about contemporary Wales, its politics and culture, with which he had previously not much concerned himself. In November at her request, he made another financial contribution to *Plaid Cymru*—it cannot have been much, since his taxable income this year was £35*—and, at her urging, subscribed to *The Welsh Nation*, a *Plaid Cymru* publication. He sometimes asked her to translate Welsh or render it colloquially for him or to check his accuracy of Welsh usage. He liked hearing her speak Welsh. Often he had her read aloud in Welsh the Welsh he was using in his writing to be sure of the sound. He loved ‘the purity of her vowels especially when she got slightly excited.’ He wrote to Hague that it was partly her ‘soft, clear-vowelled, capturing voice’ that caused him to fall in love, adding, ‘This *voice* thing is *terribly* potent ... well, of course, the sirens & co.’²⁰⁰

On his gramophone, he played for her his favourite Welsh hymns *Tydi a roddaist* and *Llef*, which he thought had much the feeling of the great Latin hymns *Vexilla Regis* and *Pange lingua*. He thought Welsh singing ‘heavenly and, of course, *terribly* moving & heart tearing’ so that he could not help weeping, as he did listening to a young girl, Olwen Williams, singing *Rodin Goch* on the radio program ‘Learning Wales’. It was such a contrast to Welsh fondness for brass bands—he thought the Welsh ‘such incomprehensible mixture of deep-felt sensitivity and *total vulgarity*’.²⁰¹

Valerie organized a television special (a talk by her) on his work to be broadcast by Granada on 21 January. On the evening of the day before, she visited and had photos taken by Philip Griffith for the special. One picture of them together, shows how happy he was in her company (fig. 17). On 20 April 1959, he took her to meet Grisewood, and the next day wrote to thank her, ‘You *did* make me feel *so* happy.’ They sometimes met by arrangement at the London Library, near Hanover

*He total income was £184 but his accountant deducted for expenses £104 for rent and heating, £25 for postage, and £20 for taxi fares.

Square, and went back together to Harrow. At the end of her visits, he did everything he could to



17. DJ and Valerie Price, January 1959

prevent her leaving. She usually had to catch the last train at eleven, and he always walked her to the station. As they had when they met, they hugged and kissed when she left.²⁰²

Her visits inspired him to clean his room, and he wrote to her accounts of his campaign. ‘I’m only about a ¼ of the way through. There are all the drawers to do & that *vile* dump in the corner behind the door full of other books, coats, old papers, moth-eaten hats, moth-eaten rugs & I dread to think

what besides.’ And, a week later, ‘In this great clean-out I’ve again changed round half the pictures on the walls of this messy room—I *do* wish I could make it look nice—if only for *your* sake when you come to visit me—you must think it a dust-hole.’²⁰³

He accompanied her on visits to her friends. Through her, he met more Welsh-speaking Welsh people than he had known since the Great War. She told me that he met ‘masses of them,’ including Gwynver Evans (the president of *Plaid Cymru*), Keidric Rees and his wife Matti, the writer Cradag Prichard and his wife Matti, whose ‘dear little’ daughter, Mari, he felt at ease with, even though most children, he said, frightened him.²⁰⁴ He told the Prichards that he liked to think of Valerie as a Romano-British maiden. She introduced him to artists and actors, including Seân Phillips and Peter O’Toole.

He visited her in her flat at 60 Pattison Road in Hampstead, which she shared with three North Welsh girls—Annwen Williams, Gretta Williams, and Sue Evans, all ardent Welsh-speaking nationalists—pinned up on one wall was a large map of Wales.²⁰⁵ It was awkward when they were also present. Sometimes Michael picked him up in his small van, brought him to visit, and took him back afterwards. After Michael returned to Wales before the end of the year, Jones came by taxi and

spent hours with Valerie, often with her friends, keeping the taxi waiting. The girls urged him to let it go—they would get him another—but he insisted, and they got used to this extravagance.

At sixty-four he was newly, erotically alive, feeling vividly, seeing with clarity. Apart from her energy, confidence, and initiative, she was not especially intelligent or sensitive, yet, for him, she had absolute charm. Every move of her head, of her body, every intonation of voice was engaging. To be with her was a humbling, delightful privilege. When she left, everything in the room was redolent of her. Being in love was a dedication, a continuing sacrament, and a release from depression. He took secret pleasure in watching her among others, as though a goddess among mortals. A moment's forgetting brought the sudden joy of remembering. He went to sleep thinking of her, awoke thinking of her. Like the elderly teacher in *The Blue Angel*, a film he had liked so much, he had fallen hard and irrevocably. He confided his feelings most of all to Bill Stevenson, who may have discerned resemblance between Valerie and Jones's equally emphatic but more intelligent mother. In Jones's obsession with Valerie, he considered altering his name by deed poll to the Welsh form Dafyd, but knew that his publishers and others would object. For the first time, he now fully understood the impact of women on history, particularly the sister of Theodosius II (401-450) who dominated his reign.²⁰⁶

About Valerie and her behaviour with him, Jones confided only to Tom Burns. But he spoke candidly about his passion for her to Hague, the Grisewoods, the Prichards, Bussell, Saunders Lewis, Bernard Wall, Leonard Wall, Honeyman, Nest Cleverdon, Janet Stone, Kathleen Raine, and even Helen Sutherland. To each he prefaced his confidences with the words, 'Now, I'll tell you something that nobody is to know, ever.' He continued doing this for the next four or five years. According to Grisewood, 'he suffered more over Valerie than he did over Prudence or anybody else. He was more deeply *physically* in love with her. It was a very serious passion.' Nest Cleverdon agreed that the attraction was strongly physical. Hague thought it almost entirely so. According to Honeyman, 'it was 90% sex', and he 'was just knocked sideways' but that 'the physical attraction he had for her she never had for him.' Jones thought a large part of it was her being Welsh.²⁰⁷ Hague said, 'He just wants to sleep with her.' When he mentioned the importance Jones placed on her being Welsh, Hague said, "If she was a Hottentot he'd want to sleep with her."

The psychosomatic rash Jones had experienced in 1943 (when in love with Prudence) returned, this time to his chest and arm. Dr Bell had no idea what caused it. Jones initially assumed it was eczema, then ‘some sort of allergic thing’ and suspected detergents. Rashes continued through 1962, when he wrote, ‘my filthy rashes aren’t much different, but quiescent. I do loath those kind of bodily blemishes—it’s a kind of conceit I suppose, one doesn’t like to feel leprous or something. I have *three* kinds of ointment I have to use.’²⁰⁸

His letters to Valerie read like love letters, and he regularly sent her flowers—anemones, lilies, and on her birthday, 10 November, for the rest of his life, roses. In June he sent her a dozen red roses and later wrote ‘*You are like a deep red rose I always think.*’²⁰⁹

On the evening of 18 May, telephoning Saunders Lewis for advice about word-order in an inscription he was making for her, he poured out his heart at great length. Lewis invented a pretext to hang up, so that Jones would not continue putting coins in the box. He wrote him the next day, ‘Of course you love Valerie. How could you not? ... And it would seem to me that you’ll have to accept that burden, and keep it *your* burden, just love her, the lovely girl, and accept the hopeless ache of it. I dare not say more. Except that I am very very concerned for your peace and for hers.’ In the spring of 1959, arranging for her and Lewis to meet, Jones writes to him, ‘she has that same “natural cultivatedness” in *all kinds of ways*. It’s a *wonderful* thing. Some rare people have it and it’s always unmistakable and there is no *ersatz* version of it. *I think Valerie has got something of what I’ve always, perhaps fondly, imagined our own tywysogesau [princes] must have had in the old days that is a kind of real Welshness with a real cultivation—a blessed thing and one which, as far as I can see, is now pretty rare.*’ Jones, Lewis, and Grisewood met in London in the first week of May and talked mostly about Valerie. Whatever they made of this infatuation, Lewis and Grisewood treated him with sympathy.²¹⁰

His sexual infatuation intensified his regret at inability to speak Welsh. More than ever, now, it felt like a sort of castration. ‘It’s, for me, like having some essential part of one’s self cut off—a deprivation at a very deep level.’ He listened with renewed devotion to the ‘Learning Welsh’ series broadcast from Cardiff. And in 1959 was studying Welsh ‘a bit more’ than in the previous year, but without hope of really succeeding, since ‘when one is old one *forgets* all one learns almost immediately (*LF* 41). He thought that only Saunders Lewis could understand the ‘deprivation’ he

felt over not having Welsh, one akin to the deprivation that, Catholic theologians say, souls in perdition suffer. 'It's, for me, like having some essential part of ones self cut off—a deprivation at a very deep level.'²¹¹ It was, in other words, a sort of castration, rendering him a Maimed King personifying the waste land. It is no accident, I think, that he speaks in imagery of castration about Wales and the language after having fallen in love with Valerie.

She was to visit him at noon on 8 May 1959, and when she did not arrive as planned he was frantic, worried about an accident, but then she came, and he was delighted to see her wearing 'the thin twined gold round' her 'nice neck'. She showed him her new cloche hat and 'off-white rough coat,' which he loved seeing. He showed her a recent drawing he had made and one by his mother. Valerie often wore black, and he gave her a brooch, which he urged her to wear over her heart on a black dress. About these gifts, he wrote, 'Thankyou for accepting them from me.' 'And it was *blissful to be* with you & I'm sorry the improvised meal was so scrappy, but I did so love having it with you. The time, alas, went like lightning.' In June 1959, the Grisewoods had him and Valerie to supper, at which she arrived wearing her golden torque. Although he had looked forward for weeks to this supper, during the meal he was a neurotic mess, feeling 'horrible & weak & peculiar & frightened'.²¹²

In mid-July 1959, Valerie organized a meeting to pressure the government to resist the lobby of the Popular Television Association for a commercial channel that might further impoverish the culture of Wales and diminish the speaking of Welsh. She arranged for Megan Lloyd-George to chair a committee to promote establishment a Welsh TV channel and invite prominent Welsh people and people of Welsh affinity, including Jones. On 28 July at 6 pm, he went to Committee Room 7 in the House of Commons. As she entered 'that Victorian sham-gothic room,' he thought Valerie 'looked especially beautiful' The meeting he thought futile. The University of Wales and mayor of Cardiff had sent representatives, but Jones regretted that so few of those invited had come to lend their names and 'individual expression of concern.' He was unable to speak, even to object to 'red herrings' being dragged across the track. The only one to speak at all to the point was Clifford Evans, an actor in films and, recently, television. One of those present was Llywelyn Wyn Griffith, the author of *Up to Mametz*, who asked Jones to supper, an invitation declined because he was dining with Valerie. He left the meeting with her and Evans. On their way out, they looked

down the ‘splendid spaciousness’ of ‘that superb real gothic great Westminster Hall.’ and he could see why it was so often flooded during the Middle Ages.²¹³ They then went to eat at a restaurant opposite the House of Commons. He and Evans got on well--Jones invited him to visit in Harrow, which he did.

Regretting not having spoken at the meeting, Jones wrote to Megan Lloyd George apologizing for being inarticulate ‘but committees are an unfamiliar world to me and in view of my almost total anglization I felt it hardly my place to say much.’²¹⁴ In an attempt to do something about the matter, he spoke to Grisewood, who, sympathizing with Wales because of his long friendship with Jones, pushed for a Welsh television channel. Jones and he were, Grisewood said, doing more for the Welsh nationalists ‘than they could possibly do for themselves.’ He later sent him a report on discussion in the House, dated 17 November, noting, ‘It rather looks as if the plan we favour may now be followed.’ It eventually was, and the original cause was David Jones’s love for Wales, intensified by love Valerie and made possible through his friendship with Grisewood.

In mid-July 1959, at the height of his passion, Valerie told him that she and Michael had become engaged to marry. His anguish was extreme, the suffering worse than that over Petra’s leaving him for Tegetmeier. Despite her being engaged, he confided to Janet Stone, ‘I wish I could marry her. If only I could pull myself together.’ Valerie was thirty years younger than he, but Eliot had recently married a woman thirty-eight years younger than himself, someone also named Valerie. (Stevenson may have suspected an aspect of sibling rivalry in Jones’s romance.) Of course, Jones realized that his own desire to marry was in various ways ‘unreal.’ He wrote to Grisewood,

I feel pretty unrestrained & ashamed for the way in which I’ve made my moan and sad complaint during these last few weeks ... I don’t think it’s going to get much better for *quite a long while*. ... I know to the last, small detail *what* those things are that, in this present situation, so distress me (though I am surprised at the *intensity* and *ubiquitousness* of the distress), but, having said that, I have no notion of (as they say) ‘what to do for the best’ ... I *know* that an involvement in ‘Welshness’ has an awful [lot] to do with my intrication with Elri. I’m paying dearly for my doctrine of *signa!* She’s the only Welsh woman I’ve ever met really and it came about through those letters to *The Times* in such a ‘fatalistic’ and un-planned manner that perhaps I may be forgiven for mistakenly thinking that it *must*, in *some* sense, be significant and not without meaning. Now I’ve got t try to accustom myself to the truth that it is, after all, perhaps, or probably, or certainly, just an accident & no more. This is what I *hate* & this is what makes me *weep*. (* For not only did I half expect her to marry this bloke, but, as you know, I’ve never wished for marriage in itself, very far from it....)

He confided to Janet Stone during a visit and later wrote to her,

It was a *huge* help to talk with you, though I felt I must have talked *far too* much about dear Elri—for I know how one does, very selfishly, burden one's friends with one's muddles but I feel always I can talk to you about it, as I can with *no one* else hardly. ... I expect I've been very stupid *about the whole thing* & expected things that cannot possibly be. Then one becomes united to the other chap (* I use the term 'chap' indifferently of both sexes ...) *in one's mind*.²¹⁵

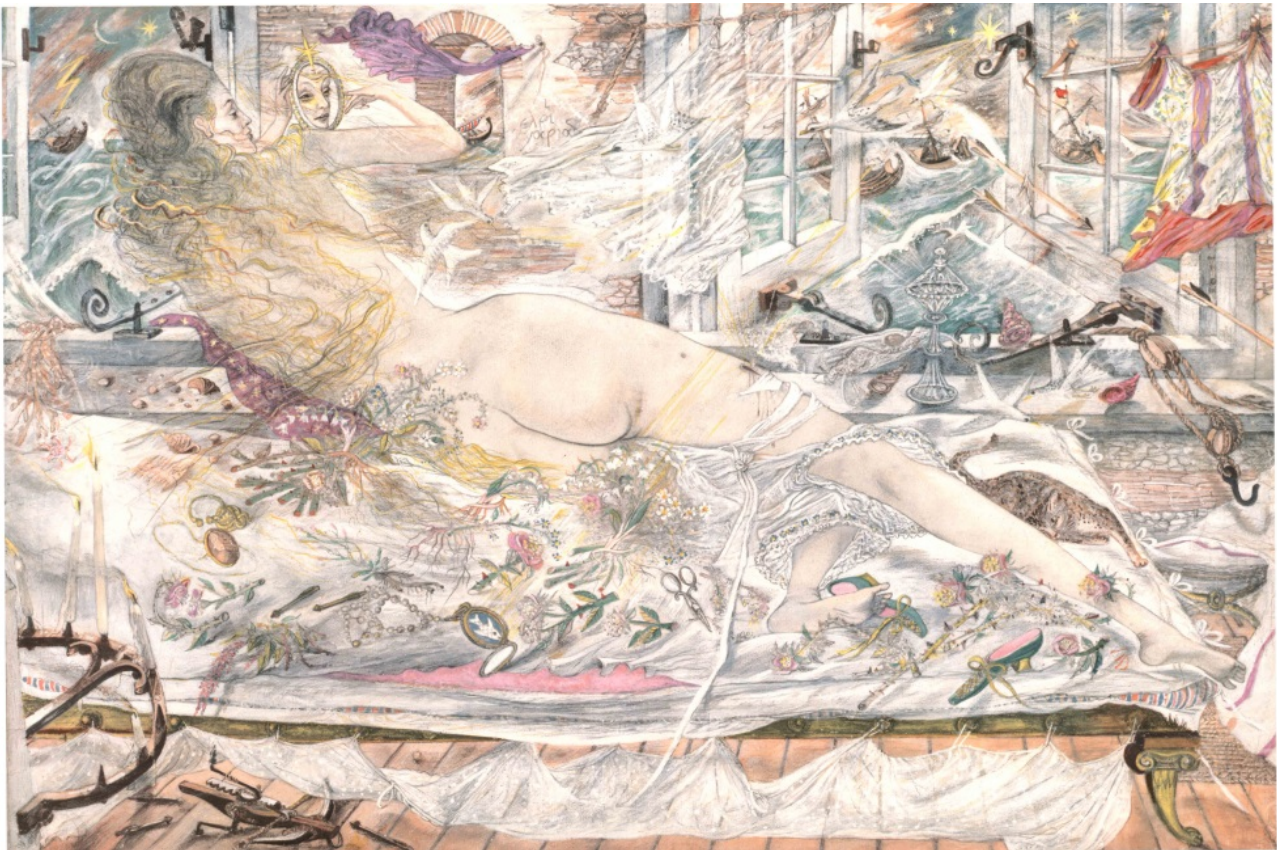
When he and Valerie met again, he broke down in tears before her, declaring his love, and grieving the prospect of separation. She seemed coldly unmoved, so he told her that he would see her no more. They nevertheless met again, and she was able to reassure him of her affection, so that he felt 'much more tranquil' and not tormented by 'that cut-off feeling.' In late July, he bravely went to her engagement party at her flat, for which he lent her 'a couple of pictures to decorate the walls.' He wrote to Kathleen Raine of her relationship with Valerie, 'I only pray that it can be preserved as a dear & lasting friendship—for it means *a huge lot to me & will* and has already born some fruit in my work.'²¹⁶ She was becoming his muse.

He had always respected romantic love, but, he wrote Grisewood, his love for Valerie is 'not really like anything I've ever before known about. I sometimes wonder if I just weave it all up [in] my own mind. I know only that it *seems* real enough, and that everything else seems *relatively* unimportant.' To escape his turmoil, he was now drinking heavily. His friends rallied round. Hague visited on 28 June, and that evening Jones went to dinner with Tom and Mabel Burns. He wrote to Grisewood, 'Damn this sex thing ... from about 13 years onwards it's a bloody nuisance one way and other.' To Peter Kelly he said, 'The older you get the worse it gets.' For about a year, he was in deep trouble, sometimes unable to sleep, sometimes unable to work.²¹⁷

Hague and others among Jones's friends thought his infatuation the foolishness of old age. They cold-shouldered Valerie as an interloper and possible predator, which she was not. Never did she ask for a picture or inscription, although, in Grisewood's opinion, he 'would certainly have given her whatever she bloody well wanted.' Over the years he would send her several inscriptions, a painting of two column-necked girls wearing head-dresses, whom he called 'the chaps,' and other watercolours, engravings, and inscriptions—in all about a dozen, including the engraving of the rose, of which he had given Clarissa Eden a copy. (One rose, with seven thorns—for the traditional seven wounds of Jesus? Certainly the engraver was now feeling thorns.) But she never, in

Grisewood's view, exploited his love for her. She was sympathetic, gentle, and honest. For Christmas 1961, she would send him a 'little silver-bladed, mother-of-pearl picket knife,' which he loved, and he wrote to Janet Stone, 'She's been much more sweet to me than I thought she once was. ... I do love her so, in a curious kind of way that I can't explain.' For a long while, he hoped that, despite his fear of travel, he would be able to visit her for only a few days.²¹⁸ He never did.

He wanted to make a portrait of her but never attempted it, owing to his difficulty getting likenesses and because, as he told her, 'you are very, very difficult to draw, because your true feeling is in a heavenly expression that's hard to do in drawing.'²¹⁹ But he was able to include her portrait in a painting.



18. *The Lee Shore*, 1959

In early August 1959, he began a painting of Aphrodite as an elongated brunette reclining like the *Rokeby Venus* by Valesquez but in reverse, head on the left, feet on the right (fig. 18) and her upper

body reclines on thin air. He wanted in this new painting ‘a fusion of the hard, clear, refined quality’ and the ‘subtle fleeting quality’ of the flower-pieces, which he liked best. And he wanted this Aphrodite to be Valerie, for him an embodiment of the goddess—a phenomenon which had been the subject of his poem ‘Epithalamion’. He began by sketching Valerie sitting fully clothed in a chair. Once during the early stages of work, Ray Howard Jones and Ray Moore visited. Jones mentioned wanting to see the full back-view of a naked woman and asked whether she would mind posing. ‘Good heavens, no,’ she said, ‘I’m used to that.’ She stripped and leaned against his low mantelpiece, and he quickly sketched her (fig. 19). He then turned the sketch on its side to match the reclining figure, though the painting would not much resemble the sketch. The face in Aphrodite’s hand-mirror would be Valerie’s. He asked for a photo of her, which she sent and he thought a ‘heavenly portrait’. He put it in a small oval frame shaped like the mirror. In it she looks either beyond the looking-glass or in it beyond the viewer/artist. Jones was glad he had started the picture when he could leave his French doors open, since, he wrote to her, ‘the *open* casement of this room is a big feature of the picture.’ She would be, in a sense, forever in his room. When a storm raged outside his window, it evoked *The Mabinogion* and *King Lear* but it was also now the storm going on at sea outside Aphrodite’s window (a storm corresponding to his own inner weather). Valerie was his inspiration. He wrote to her, ‘I do hope you like Gwener’ (Welsh for Aphrodite), as he temporarily called it, ‘because you’ve made it possible for me to do it’ As always, beginning to paint was ‘almost like starting something one had never done before—it’s rather like spelling—one seems not to get much better at it—the same struggle each time. But it proceeded quickly. Like all his ‘complicated’ paintings, it was ‘so tricky—& exhausting too’. He wrote with possibly unconscious reference to Valerie’s athletic prowess, ‘some of the main hurdles have been cleared, but there are many yet to come—but so far it’s going all right.’²²⁰ Painting it was a pleasure because, like writing a letter to her, it was prolonged meditation on her.



19. Ray Howard Jones, 1959

In the painting, Aphrodite reclines with bare back to the viewer, holding before her the mirror. Birds flying in through the window, change as they approach her from gulls to the doves that

are totemic of Aphrodite. The cat is on the couch because in Nordic myth white cats drew the chariot of Freya, the Norse Aphrodite. It ‘should be white,’ he told Valerie, but I dislike white cats and painted a nice tabby’—really, it was ‘an afterthought, an excuse to draw a cat.’ The thigh-wound she received at Troy—although he later remembered she was wounded in the hand—is loosely bandaged. The room is in Troy, overlooking the Hellespont. The setting suggests affinity with Helen of Troy and recalls that Paris won Helen because he gave the prize to Aphrodite, who fought for Troy. Reflecting the association of Aphrodite with the sea and Mars, a sea-battle rages and, as Jones puts it, ‘some ill-aimed or stray arrows from the battle ... drive in through the open casement,’ a ‘driving-in’ that seems, conceptually if not visually, sexual. Cupid’s bow and arrows have become a cross-bow—Jones had ‘a hell of a time’ drawing it—under the couch with some of its bolts above, amid the flowers’: lilies-of-the-valley, roses, and love-lies-bleeding. He wanted the bolts ‘to look pretty strong for they were very unpleasant missiles to get in the way of & I thought that Cupid’s arrows or bolts were no joke.’ Identifying her as Welsh, the high-heeled shoe is from Meirionnydd, according to Lady Llanover’s studies of Welsh costume. On the wall in Greek letters are the Welsh words, ‘meaning, ‘You lovely Elri.’ (He failed, he later thought, to make it look scratched into the plaster; instead the letters seem to float in the air before it.) Her face in the mirror emphasizes that Valerie was the intended viewer, an intention emphasized by the nominal direct address. In January 1962 he would tell her that he wanted her to have the painting as a gift or legacy.²²¹

Valerie visited in early September and told him she liked it. He wrote her, ‘I’m always *deeply delighted* when *you* like anything I’ve made.’ And her liking this picture increased it in his estimation. He writes, ‘you’ve made it possible for me to do it, dearest ferch RaXel [daughter of Rachel] for which I can hardly thank you enough or too often.’ I’m always *deeply delighted* when *you* like anything I’ve made. At this point, he writes, ‘It’s more of an ‘illustration’ than what I should call a *real picture*, but still, I may pull it round to be more exactly as I want. For some reason, unknown to me, my work is getting more ‘realistic’ or *something*—one doesn’t determine these changes, they just happen.’ Two days later, he thought it ‘rather a mess’. The paper was ‘a bit too absorbent—so that what looks bright & clear when I put it on sinks into greyness: confound it! When people say they paint for ‘pleasure’ I am dumfounded. It’s always a vast struggle for me.



20. DJ at Northwick Lodge, early 1960s with portrait of Prudence and inscribed fibreglass panel.

Perhaps I'm awfully bad at it really—but there's *nothing* else I can do *at all*, nothing.' He thought he could 'pull it round.' In October, he was ready to 'call it 'finished' and begin another picture, but he kept working on it. He 'especially hoped' to make a success of it because he had 'in mind to do one or two things in more or less the same vein' but he worried that he was 'barking up the wrong tree.' He was trying 'to do a *very* difficult thing ... to combine the free & impressionist method of my bigger drawings from nature ... with the tighter more "precise" & more "illustrational" method of, say, my engravings & certain other drawings.' He removed a hairbrush, 'which never looked right, & now the candles look

much better without it,' and he added a drooping Aramantus or 'Love-lies-bleeding.' In February 1961, 'almost in desperation' he put in a 'pink bit of underblanket' which 'suddenly vastly improved' the picture, but the following summer he continued to find it 'a bit of a bore ... not properly free.' He thought it might be 'OK about four times as large,' 'then the technique could have been more free.' It is 'a properly made thing,' he wrote Honeyman, but 'I still don't like it very much.' He thought it '*very* realistic in a funny sort of way—a bit Pre-Raphaelite' and 'it may be we've passed the moment in history when it is possible to do this sort of subject picture in my sort of way—I think it very probable.' His final, considered judgement of this painting was the same for *A Latere Dextro*—'I like them but don't feel the *technique* is mine.' In October 1959, he placed the picture in a temporary mount and frame and hung it over his mantle to see if he could 'endure it.' He found that the seashells on the mantelpiece (two given him by Valerie, one by Janet Stone) helped the picture.* Tom Burns had returned to him the portrait of Prudence Pelham, which he hung over the mantel, which was now, with the inscription on the asbestos below, a shrine to Prudence

* Also on the mantel at this time were a spotted stone, a coin of the emperor Hadrian, and a tiny third-century bronze lion from Athens.

(fig. 20). (Below the corner of the framed portrait is the small oval-framed photo of Valerie.) He moved *Gwener* over his bed, a painting by means of which he was now virtually sleeping with Valerie.²²²

The picture is disunified, despite the centrality of Aphrodite and, specifically, her bottom. And it is marred by that centrality and its realism, which seems the result of bad judgment owing to sexual desire. It repeats the characteristic error of Gill, resulting in art that is more or less pornographic. The painting belongs to the tradition of English Parnasseans of a century before, whose pictures of nude and semi-nude goddesses in mythological and legendary settings were usually, in varying degrees, exercises in eroticism.²²³ It is difficult to imagine him not realizing this. He did tell one young visitor, Jonathan Scott, that he was ashamed of this painting.²²⁴ He wanted it never to be exhibited. But his reaction may have been entirely aesthetic. In the spring of 1960 he confided to Hague, ‘In my heart of hearts I don’t like’ the painting, ‘it’s *too tight & fussed*. What I want to do is one full of all the complications & allusions executed with the freedom & directness that used to be in my still-lives & landscapes—that’s what I want to do before I die.’²²⁵ As we have seen, he was already achieving this in his inscriptions.

He took great care in naming the painting. The first working title was *Gwener, Ceidwades Calonnau* (Venus, Keeper of Hearts), which he changed, with more autobiographical truth, to ‘Love-lies-bleeding.’ The objective justification is the flower in the picture and Aphrodite’s absent, dying lover, Adonis, with whom Jones may have identified. In October 1959, when he first considered it finished, he called it *The Lee Shore*. As he explained, ‘all the ships are being driven relentlessly by the wind toward where Aphrodite is, in her white sea-chamber & the very term ‘Lee Shore’ is always a bit of terror to sailors . . . for me it *is* the title for many obvious reasons.’ In conversation with Valerie and others, he continued to call it ‘Gwener,’ however. And, possibly for that reason, this abbreviation of the working title was mistakenly given as the title in catalogues and exhibits after his death. ‘I’m very bothered about the titles of pictures,’ he said, ‘& get absolutely infuriated when these bloody galleries change them, as they constantly do.’²²⁶

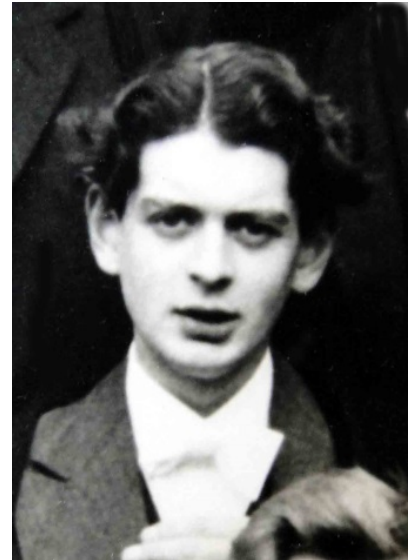
For his birthday, Valerie and Michael visited for tea and saw the painting. She gave him a Victorian glass goblet ‘with two little fighting-cocks engraved on it.’ He hated it. Out of affection for her, he tried to keep it on his mantelpiece but ‘couldn’t bear it.’ To increase their connection, he

ordered Durrant's to send her press cuttings about him.²²⁷ For her birthday on 10 November, he sent her a dozen red roses, as he would every year for the rest of his life.

Throughout 1959, Valerie and *The Lee Shore* often occupied his mind, but other aspects of his life continued. On 20 January, he wrote to ask Grisewood to telephone him since the coin-box of the hall phone was full and the key lost. He could receive, but not make, calls—a 'ludicrous & maddening situation ... & the damned mechanics or whatever they are, can't put it properly right for *ten days*. It seems to me outrageously incompetent, but there it is—the utile state in action.'²²⁸ In June he wrote a book review entitled 'The Dying Gaul,' a lyrical meditation on the Celts, 'one of the more satisfying' of his efforts, he thought (*DG* 50-8). On 9 April, he went to the BBC building to record it for broadcast on 24 April. It was published in the *Listener* (7 May).

Heartened by the success of 'The Wall', Jones decided, with the encouragement of Vernon Watkins, 'that kind good man', to send 'The Tutelar of the Place' to *Poetry*. For two years, he was unable to let it go because, as he wrote, 'it is still not quite fixed, from my point of view, in its final written form'. In the spring of 1960 Watkins typed it for him. Rago published it, and, on 17 October 1961, notified Jones that the poem had won the Levinson Prize of \$100 for a poem examining technology within a broad context. Informed of the donor of the price, Joanne (delightfully surnamed) Fortune, Jones wrote her expressing his thanks.²²⁹

Friends continued to visit, including twenty-year old William Cookson (fig. 20). Cookson had first visited in 1955, at the age of sixteen, brought by his Westminster schoolmate Edmund Gray, Nicolete's son. They had chipped in to buy Jones a little Russian radio. Now Cookson visited about once a month. He liked how Jones spoke to him as an equal and how Jones's smile lit up his face. Cookson was sensitive, gentle, appreciative, and open to modernism. His chief literary enthusiasm was Ezra Pound, whom he had visited for a week in 1958. When he told Pound about Jones, Pound complained, 'The Possum never let me know about him.' Jones told Cookson about reading some of the Cantos, including the Pisan Cantos in 1952 and, seeing the similarity with his own work and fearing influence, deciding to read no more. He loved the Usury Canto and the bit on the Great War



21. William Cookson, 1960

in 'Mauberley.' He and Cookson spoke about the whole of English literature, Jones telling him that he liked poetry in Scotts, especially the work of a poet named Tom Scott. He also said he liked Michael Alexander's translation of 'The Battle of Maldon.' But instead of reading modern poets, he reread his favourites. He felt slightly guilty about this. In May 1964, Morag would ask if he had read Effie Ruskin's letters to Millet, and he joked, 'No, I've hardly got to Lucretius yet.' There was simply too little time. He loved the story of Baudelaire keeping in his pocket a watch with paper pasted on the face, on which he had written, in French, 'It's later than you think.'²³⁰

In January 1959, with Pound's encouragement, Cookson founded the little magazine *Agenda*, purely because he loved poetry—he was teaching English to earn a living and devoted his weekends to editing the magazine. Jones thought him 'heroic' in his dedication and thought *Agenda* 'well worth supporting.'²³¹ When he offered to help, Cookson asked him to provide lettering for the title. On 28 July 1961, he sent two inscriptions, the words 'AGENDA' and 'CONTENTS', in time to appear in volume 2, number 5 as they have in every subsequent issue. Jones received no payment for this or anything else he contributed to *Agenda*. Cookson wanted to publish Jones, who let him have 'The Tutelar of the Place' in 1963. Cookson was now an important encouragement to him as a poet.

Other visitors included, in the spring, Fr Paul Grosjean SJ, the eminent, elderly historian. He and Jones discussed Wade-Evans's recently published *The Emergence of England and Wales*, which Jones liked for its 'devastating criticism of accepted views.' Stuart Piggott visited, a professor of prehistoric archaeology at Edinburgh whose writing Jones liked, 'a terribly nice chap' with 'that blessed gift of humour, which ... is not always pronounced among scholars.' They discussed the impossibility of discerning traces of the medieval court at Abberfraw, even with aerial photography, owing to the sand drifts at the estuary. William Blissett visited several times annually now. He was a sprightly English professor from the University of Saskatoon with an encyclopedic memory and an admiration for Jones's poetry. Jones loved his name, 'Bill Blissett' and thought him 'an extremely nice man'. In August, Jones mentioned to him that he intended to buy back his forty-two engraved blocks for *Gulliver's Travels* but had lent most of the money needed to an impoverished friend (probably Bussell). Blissett went the next day to Bertram Rota and bought the blocks for £150 and, on his final visit that year, gave them to Jones, who was dumbstruck. After all, they were

not old friends and the professor wasn't wealthy. This wonderful act, which seemed to Jones like something in a fairy tale, secured a transatlantic friendship which involved nearly thirty visits and dozens of letters.^{232*}

In the autumn of 1960, Jones sought out Helen Sutherland in her Albany flat to borrow £180 to buy back the blocks of his *Deluge* engravings and pay to have the plaster-of-paris filling removed. She loaned him the money (would subsequently make half of the loan a gift—three years later he would send her a check for £90 in payment for the rest.) He picked up the blocks at Bertram Rota and showed them to Valerie, who loved them. In September he met Kyffin Williams, whom he discovered knew Valerie, so they went together to Hampstead to visit and have supper with her.²³³

After not smoking for four years, he resumed 'like a fool.' He wrote, 'The worst of it is I work a lot better if I smoke, but it's an enslaving habit & very expensive, for I can't do it in much moderation.' 'I think I *must* be immoderate by nature. In 1960 he would quit and resume again, smoking for the rest of his life although, he wrote, 'it maddens me to be so stupid as to be bound by this habit.'²³⁴

In November, Iltud Evans visited on his way to Cambridge to lecture on Jones's paintings, 'a really awfully nice person' whose energy astonished him. Saunders Lewis visited for an afternoon in mid December and together they dined with the Grisewoods. For Christmas, Jones put up mistletoe, which he would not take down till Candlemass. He wrote, 'I'm awfully fond of mistletoe and have often wished I could paint a bunch of it but have never got down to trying—it presents many and great problems. Sickert could have done it in his particular way I feel especially under a glass chandelier. He could have done that extremely well with the subtle tonalities and dark-lights.'²³⁵

Another visitor was vivacious Teleri Hughs of Bogata, whom he had met at Valerie's engagement party and liked especially. She invited him to supper to meet her visiting parents. Her father, Howell Hughes, was a millionaire, a sort of gangster Lloyd George who had, in fact, killed several people in Bogata. Jones came to like him, 'a *real* bloke—tough as a 16th century buccaneer

* For Jones's letters to Blissett and an account of his visits with Jones, see Blissett's *The Long Conversation* (Oxford: OUP, 1981), a book which Len Watkins said accurately represented Jones as he knew him.

but with a heart of gold, an unbounded love of Wales, and a huge regard for' Saunders Lewis. Wanting to buy a picture by Andrew Vicari from among those being exhibited at the Prichards' house, Hughes got Jones and Valerie to go together to choose it. In September 1960 the Hughes and Teleri had him to dinner at the Savoy, where they were joined for coffee by Sir Daniel Davies, a physician, and Gwilym Lloyd-George and their wives. Jones told Lloyd-George that he last saw him in 1915 in their battalion and received the reply, 'I don't believe it, you're far too young.' Jones said, 'I feel about a hundred, whatever I look like'. About once a year from then on, Teleri would visit him in his room.²³⁶

He had two other new friends, Sarah and Maurice Balme, the latter a new Cambridge-trained Classics master who arrived in the summer of 1959, replacing Plumtree, who had taken early retirement in the spring. Sarah was a tall, thin, good looking, enthusiastically personable, extremely intelligent, a painter who had studied at the Chelsea Art School and in Paris. She was extremely shy but had decided to visit the painter of 'the magically lovely painting of the violin' in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Ch 12, fig. 1).²³⁷ On her first visit, they talked about art and she asked, in passing, 'What's the food like here?' He said, 'Bloody awful. Can I come and have a meal with you sometimes?' She said yes, and thereafter she and her husband occasionally had him to supper at 'Hillside,' a boy's house three houses up the hill, where Maurice Balme was master. The first occasion was a lovely warm June evening, with supper preceded by drinks in the garden. Jones sat with Maurice on a wooden garden seat in the centre of the lawn wearing his hat and overcoat, hunched and miserable, clutching the seat. Seeing his discomfort, Sarah called out to Maurice to bring him in, and then he relaxed.²³⁸

Jones liked them both very much—Sarah whom he thought 'terribly nice' and painted 'awfully well' when she could find time; Maurice, 'a jolly nice chap, 'not that boring sort of Classical scholar, but very interested in late Latin & I'm not afraid of asking things about, say, 5th Cent. blokes, as one was a bit with tutors, dons, masters etc, who were interested only in the Augustan Age.' Maurice was impressed by Jones's 'deep admiration for Virgil and Ennius', and, with 'Plum' gone, became Jones's resident expert on Latin and the late Roman Empire. Though an accomplished scholar, he recalled, 'David was always asking the most *obscure* questions. I was very pushed to find answers.'²³⁹ As with Lewis, Jones had long conversations with Maurice Balme about early linguist affinities between Latin and Welsh.

He more often saw Sarah. Once she arrived with flowers from her barely cultivated garden (horticultural energy being diverted to raising children) to find childless Audrey Malan having brought a sumptuous bouquet from her well-tended, extraordinarily beautiful garden. She remarked, ‘Ah, spoils from the garden, Sarah?’ and a look of agony came over Jones’s face. He sensed the friction between them, both to be thanked, but which first? He could not bear the competition for favour in his affections.²⁴⁰

He reacted negatively to few character traits, Sarah found, but pomposity brought him near to scoffing. Fascinated by Bloomsbury, she asked him about its members, many of whom he had met. He was, she found, ‘slightly scathing’ about them, considering them affected, intellectually and artistically light-weight, dilettantes.²⁴¹

He hated dishonesty. At the time, paintings were brought for authentication to Bernard Berenson, was widely regarded as the great expert in Florentine Renaissance painting. Having read him, Jones told Sarah, ‘I don’t like that chap, don’t trust him.’ He was subsequently discovered to have been in collusion with a major dealer, thereby enriching himself and certainly operating in conflict of interest—so that his attributions for that dealer have discredited if not shown to be fraudulent.²⁴²

Jones embraced and kissed Sarah arriving and departing. ‘He was tactile,’ she remembered, ‘and he liked to touch. When you began to leave, he would get up to see you to the door and rather hold on to you.’ He loved young women. ‘Skin as smooth as a peach,’ he said. To her he seemed sexually inhibited but not frustrated or repressed. Intuitively she knew he was a virgin. He was sentimental towards women, romantic, slightly idealistic. He spoke to women as equals, not condescendingly, not dismissing them as other men of his generation did. During conversation with an intelligent woman he would forget her gender and speak, she felt, as though he were talking to a man.²⁴³

Sarah remembered that in repose Jones’s face was very sad. As he talked he gently, sensually, not compulsively, touch his brushes, pencils, favourite stone (shaped like a Stanley knife), or his knife taken from his mother’s kitchen, its handle incised in Latin. Or he would handle his pencil, turning it over or drawing randomly on a scrap of paper. She would say something. He’d look slightly amused and begin speaking, become caught up in what he was saying and occasionally forget he was talking to a young woman and use Great War language, like ‘bugger’, then vaguely recollect himself and reform, temporarily.²⁴⁴

Shortly after having him to supper the first time, they invited him to a dinner party for Arthur Crook, just named editor of the *TLS*. After drinks, the guests moved into the dining room where curtains were drawn across a large bay window. In the middle of the main course, suddenly the Balmes' eight-year-old daughter and youngest son (assumed to be in bed), burst from behind the curtains wearing plastic Viking helmets and thrusting plastic swords. Jones laughed aloud. Vikings repulsed, the guests resumed their meal. The assembled luminaries knew little or nothing about Jones and were taken aback when, under the influence of alcohol, he began dropping names, referring enigmatically to 'Tom.' 'Tom who, David?' Sarah asked. 'Tom Eliot.' And 'Edith's behaviour was so strange.' 'Edith who?' 'Sitwell.' As this game continued, he became the centre of attention, the others hanging his every word.²⁴⁵

With Carlisle's deterioration, Mrs Carol's cooking became increasingly careless. It was greasy, the rice pudding sometimes burnt. Jones now took his meals in his room. Towards his fellow lodgers, whom he called 'the old men,' he remained polite and courteous, but—apart from Carlisle, with whom he still got on well—they bored him. They spent all evening watching television in the common room. (Only rarely would Jones watch the news.) He shared no interests with them. Sarah Balme was visiting when a meal was brought into his room. After politely accepting it, he confided that he found it 'disgusting' and, if eaten, would give him indigestion. Instead, he ate cheese biscuits and Bath Olivers. She jokingly asked, 'Would you like me to bring you some soup.' He said, '*Oh could you?*' And she fetched home-made soup, which he would warm up on the gas ring in his room. The house itself participated in the general decline. On 11 October 1959, he was wakened at 6:30 in the morning by twenty inches of plaster ceiling-molding falling, a small piece of it striking his head. It seemed for the moment that 'half the house had fallen.'²⁴⁶

Sarah began running errands for him, buying good-quality paper, for example, for which he made only partial reimbursement. He felt, she noticed, that monetary transactions were sordid, antithetical to friendship. He forced himself to seek in a drawer and hand over the pound note he thought would be more than enough, but which never covered the cost. She ironed for him. He saw no reason to buy new shirts, though their cuffs were frayed all round the edges. Always clean and wearing a tie, he was nevertheless now a bit shabby.²⁴⁷

He was attentive to details of women's dress that, she thought, only a woman or dressmaker would notice. He also appreciated unique juxtapositions of the slightly one-off colours that Sarah wore. He always commented, 'Where did you get that?' and would feel the material like a tailor. 'Is it linen?' 'No, but something like that.' 'Lovely colour.'²⁴⁸

Visits began with him complaining about his health, but then he would begin reminiscing, and telling amusing anecdotes. Sarah often talked with him about artists and art. Once she asked whether he would ever sell any of the pictures in his portfolios. He replied, 'No, of course not. They're my children. They're like my family to me.'²⁴⁹

Casual visits with Valerie ceased when she returned to Wales to live. On 9 January 1960,

she married Michael Wynne-Williams. Knowing that Jones would be grief stricken, the Prichards invited him to spend the day with them at home in St John's Wood. He came, was gloomy, incommunicative. They resorted to television, which was showing a western. It so intrigued him that he forgot his sorrow and became interesting. He had sent Valerie a slender gold chain and a large gold-lettered inscription, a brief river-marriage poem of his own composing in Welsh about rivers in North and South Wales joining



21. David Jones, Wedding inscription, 1960

to unite the country. Though done quickly, because time was short, it was one of his best smaller inscriptions, as he thought and Grisewood, who saw it, agreed. He wanted to put it in a white frame for her, but there was no time. He had it photographed and hung the photograph on his wall. The inscription arrived, rolled in a cardboard tube, along with the other gifts at her parents' home on the morning of the wedding and, assumed to be an empty tube, was mistakenly thrown out. Three months later she told him it had been lost, and he made her another (fig. 21), in black, green, yellow, and red, differing from the lost original. She now lived on a hundred-acre farm while her husband managed a nearby quarry. Now she was gone, he missed 'seeing her terribly.' He confided to Hague, 'Somehow it all got entwined in all my work—& all this Welsh thing And all that was again partly because of this *voice* thing—our old tag 'words have power to bind & lose material things'—Jesus! how true that is.' He looked out his high window to just left of the acacia tree, where he could see Hampstead parish church and sadly think of the flat where Valerie had lived. He

wrote to Hague, ‘Last year when I was seeing Elri ... I felt quite young again though it was only a bloody pain all the time—but now I feel uselesss & aged.’²⁵⁰

She was not much of a letter writer, and he understood that, but, regardless, wrote her many long letters, sometimes pleading for a note from her. Her replies were few and short. He kept them in a special case lined with red silk.²⁵¹ When she did not reply, he was unsure whether his letters arrived and sent her a registered letter or telephoned. It is an unequal correspondence, but even his letters are not a very interesting. She was no intellectual, not even a reader of books. She and Michael watched television.

Jones gave her a copy of *Epoch and Artist*, and asked repeatedly if anything in it appealed to her. In February-March 1961 on the Children’s Hour—‘about the best thing left on the BBC now’—he would listen to a serial production of Mary Sutcliff’s *The Lantern Bearers*, a novel for adolescents set in fifth-century Britain, ‘not *at all* in any sense a “great work” or anything approaching it—but jolly good, especially for children’* It gives ‘quite a fair idea of the kind of situation of that tremendously important but all but lost period in this island’ with ‘the sub-Roman chaps doing what they could, as best they could, caught between the *hopeless* Celtic factions & the beastly barbarians from the Elbe & Jutland & the Scots from Ireland & the Picts also.’ He ordered a copy for the Grisewoods’ fourteen-year-old daughter, Sabina, and another for Valerie, although he doubted that she would read it. Later that year, he sent Valerie ‘The Tutelar of the Place’, one of his easiest and most lyrical poems, and asked her to tell him if she liked it—‘it isn’t all that “obscure”— anyway you might get *something* of the feeling ... *Please*, and this is a positive request, let me know if it means anything to you. When she told him she loved ‘The Hunt’, a short, very lyrical poem, he was delighted.²⁵² Valerie was now his muse, and her simplicity as a reader may account in part for his later poems being his most accessible.

* In the novel, the protagonist, a Roman Britain, refusing to leave Britain for Rome with his cavalry unit, deserts and returns to his home villa, which is attacked by Saxons, his sister carried off, and he himself enslaved. Eventually he escapes, enlists under the leader of the Roman Britains, Ambrosius, and fights beside the rising cavalry leader Artos against the Saxons led by Hengest.

Inspired by his aching, hopeless infatuation, he had begun, before Christmas 1959, painting another picture. It was one he had ‘*always* wanted to paint’, Trystan and Essyllt (he preferred the Welsh spelling) immediately after drinking the fateful love potion aboard ship (Malory VIII, 24), and for which he had made a sketch in about 1948. For him, the subject had nothing to do with Wagner, whom he found ‘insufferable’—he told Giardelli that he hated what Wagner did to Tristan and Iseult’. Initially Jones wanted to paint the lovers below decks, but had no idea what that part of an early medieval ship looked like. He decided that to include the sea, the sky, the ship’s rigging and masts, so he put the lovers on deck, but then needed to know what such a ship looked like above deck. He had, he wrote, ‘great feeling *about* ships but much more than *that* is required . . . in order to get the feeling of the thing.’ For detailed information, he consulted clippings of photos of ships that he had saved over the years, looked through copies of the *Journal of the Institute of Navigation*, to which he had subscribed since 1948, and *The Mariner’s Mirror*, which he had received since 1951—the year when, through Mike Richey, he had become a member of the Society of Navigational Research. He consulted seven books he owned on old sailing ships and began consulting Richey. In preparation for a phone call to him, he listed questions to ask: about the angle of the anchor and its tackle; about the foresail and its tackle; about ‘those ‘sail bags’’—when the bundled sail is tied tight to the spar; about ‘set of sails’; about ‘possibility of ring bolts *on* gunnel.’

What are the men aloft actually doing?

How is a lantern slung on mast (Mizzen mast)?

Capstan & athwart boards under it?

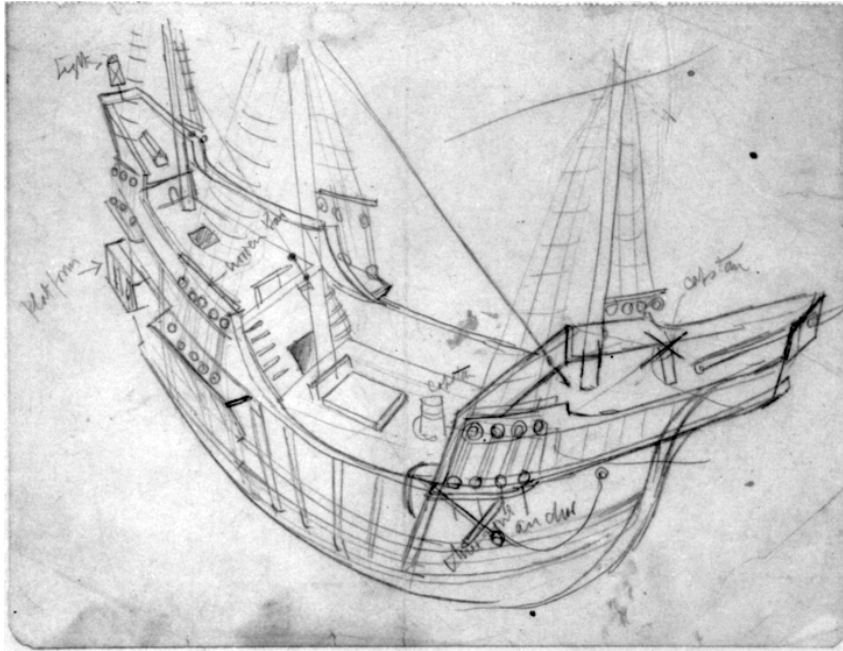
Row lock on little boat?

How do the ropes fix atop strake?

How about rigging of main mast?

Richey answered many of these questions and then referred him to George Naish at the Maritime Museum in Greenwich. Jones phoned Naish and, through him, acquired twenty photographs of a large museum model showing various aspects of a medieval ship and its rigging. He acquired a copy of William Salisbury’s treatises on shipbuilding and rigging. He drew a dozen or more studies of ships (eg. Fig. 22) and parts of ships. He ‘had an awful job over the ship’ because he needed ‘to know *exactly*’ its details, not for “‘accuracy” for its own sake, still less “‘realism”” but because, ‘to juggle with the form and content of chaps messing about with cordage, canvas, tackle etc,’ he

needed to know ‘how, in fact, these things worked?’ It was the same as with his writing:



23. David Jones, ship study, c. 1959

‘Generalizations are useless for my particular way of working.’ Richey told him that such a vessel would have been an open boat, but Jones wanted it not to resemble a Viking ship, nor a later ship of the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. He decided to be ‘noncommittal as to “period”’ of the ship, ‘early medieval *more or less*’—to accommodate the later period of the romances which transmitted the story. He took the basic shape and disposition of the ship from his 1931 frontispiece of

Claudel’s *The Satin Slipper*, showing the whole deck from inboard looking aft (Ch. 9, fig. 20). The sweep of the hull and rush of the deck would be, along with tone, the main unifying elements of the picture. Unrealistically, he decided to place the ribs on the outside of the hull as well as on the inside (visible through the open hatch). He wrote, ‘that was pure license on my part, a bit of “surrealism” if you like.’ He loved the look of them and wanted them seen, but there was also a compositional advantage. Thirteen years later he wrote, ‘I *think* I made it so to continue the sweeping line of Essyllt’s figure & gown.’²⁵³ They do that. Sarah Balme asked about Essyllt’s dress, ‘How do you know about dresses hooped up and held with little ribbons like that?’ and he told her that he had observed these details often in paintings.

On a visit, Hague objected, ‘where’s the ship steered from?’²⁵⁴ There is no wheel or rudder. But Jones did not add one. He thought, and Richey confirmed this, that the ship would be steered from between decks or simply by manipulating the sails.

In addition to ships, he researched constellations. He wanted the temporal setting of the picture to be the first of February because it was the feast of Saint Bridget, patroness of Essyllt’s

native Ireland. He copied a star chart for February printed in *The Times* of 2 February. 'I didn't want to put in stars just where I thought they'd look nice,' he said. 'That may sound rather absurd, but I must have something concrete to go by or I miss,' and he added, 'the imagination takes off ... from the flight deck of the known.' Using as primary evidence Jones's taking constellations from the newspaper star chart, Miles and Shiel criticize this painting for its 'pedanticism'.²⁵⁵ But that term can have force in art criticism only if it indicates a sacrifice of beauty for knowledge, and this picture is innocent of that. Here the stars in their constellations shimmer in the sky with exciting, wildly irregular loveliness. Imagination alone would probably have resulted in a tamer skyscape—what Jones calls 'nice', because imagination inclines to symmetry and harmony. (That is why, he did so much of his earlier, pre-agorophobic painting out of doors, to paint irregular reality rather than the harmonizations of memory and imagination.)

Sarah Balme saw him working on this and other pictures. He sat on his bed with his drawing board on his knee or perch sideways awkwardly, his board leaning against his pillow. His drawing arm out and around the picture, he held the pencil, which had to be very sharp, with the point inward like a tool, his hand hooked round. Other sharpened pencils lay ready in the tray before him. As he talked he sometimes sharpened them, holding the point, and pulling the knife-blade toward him. Once he began erasing a line with a little soft rubber, and she said, 'Oh don't rub it out.' She explained that in art school Ceri Richards, Julian Trevelyan, and others had taught that you never erased. Surprised, he said, 'The way you draw and the way you paint is up to you.' Later, while erasing something, he said, 'Don't take any notice of people who say you should never use a rubber. I know what lines I'm making, but I sometimes want to change them.' He didn't mind her watching him draw. As she remembered, he drew unselfconsciously, slowly, sensually, would rub out, brush the surface with his hands, look a while and draw again in silence.

His face changed when he was drawing. He was completely taken over by it. As he drew, his tongue would dart between his lips like a snake's or he would suck in his cheeks. Then he would put his pencil down, look up at you with the most charming smile and talk to you for a little. After drawing, he would touch the paper with his hand, moving his hand across it as though embracing it. Then he would look at the picture and see something that needed doing. You could see it was an act of love. I mean he was loving the actual act of drawing. It was to him a tremendous pleasure. He was feeling the emotions of his drawing. He was transferring himself into the picture. He was part of it. You could feel that.²⁵⁶

For the next two years, his main artistic concern was this picture. It was large, 30 by 22 inches. He nearly abandoned it twice as ‘an awful mess ... not worth the kind of effort required’ but was heartened by improvements in the ship and, at the end of January 1960, decided to ‘go on a bit longer & see if I can pull it through.’ He had bought the paper he was using more than thirty years ago in Paris. It was the kind Ben Nicholson then used, very shiny. The shine made it easier to erase, but under continued erasure the paper deteriorated. In the winter and spring of 1960 he was struggling with the picture: it ‘won’t seem to resolve’ (18 February), it ‘won’t budge an inch’ (4 March). He considered transferring it to new paper but waffled. A new friend, a young artist named Peter Campbell, commented on the poor quality of the paper. Jones said, ‘Yes, bloody awful, and they don’t have the right paper in Harrow.’ Campbell went into London to an art supplies store and asked for four-hundred-pound hot-press Spotten paper. The clerk brought the manager, who said, ‘Whom is this paper for?’ Campbell said, ‘David Jones.’ ‘Oh yes,’ said the manager, ‘you can have four sheets.’ He bought three, at about £12 per sheet. To one of these, in early March 1960, Jones transferred the picture.²⁵⁷

It was ‘a ghastly operation,’ he wrote ‘but I could not do what I wanted with it on the original paper & I did not want to lose the feeling of it by making the endless alterations & adjustments which I wish to make. ... I can now erase & re-draw a hundred times if necessary. The first one now becomes rather like the *natural scene* & the one I’m working on the actual ‘art-work’—the offering is the same, but under another mode, as it were.’ He was still unsure whether he could ‘pull it off.’ In spite (or because) of his research, he knew that ‘all the bloody ropes’ were ‘still wrong’.²⁵⁸

The first, discarded version is wild, with taut fore-castle rope cutting diagonally across the lovers’ chests, conveying frustration and the strong pull of wind, symbolic of passion. The rope was a late addition. He later told a visitor, ‘I wanted a rope across the picture here, the picture needed it, but I hadn’t any authority for putting one in. I searched for ages for some picture of a medieval ship for guidance. Then I found it. There was the rope exactly where I had wanted to put it in the picture.’²⁵⁹ In the final version, the diagonal rope is thinner and sags below the couple, visually opening up the picture and indicating that the wind has gone out of the sail—indicative, in another way, of passion, insofar as the wind has gone out of Trystan’s metaphorical sail, ‘passion’ being

related to 'passive'. A crewman to the left of Essyllt tries to tighten the just-slipped cordage, and a figure from below looks to see what has happened.

Jones kept the first version in a portfolio behind his chest of drawers. At the back of the chest a nail stuck out that caught on the portfolio, damaging several pictures, most severely this one. As he pulled it out for visitors, the portfolio caught on the nail and, irritated, he tugged at it, doing more damage. Sometimes he pushed it back, reached into the portfolio, and pulled at the drawing, which caught on the nail. As a result of many such tuggings, it was soon torn in half with a triangular piece torn out. (Bill Stevenson wanted to acquire the torn first version, but Jones would not part with it.) He rejoined the pieces, more or less, by attaching brown sticky paper at the back. In December 1965, he wanted to show them to young Malcolm Cochrane, who was horrified to see him, while complaining about the nail, irritably tugging and pushing to retrieve the sticky-papered drawing. Cochrane pressed the nail back into the wood with a finger and offered to get the picture repaired by experts at the Victoria and Albert Museum. When he brought it back restored, Jones was delighted. He liked it better pasted together than in its original, untorn condition.²⁶⁰

The transfer of the picture to newer, better paper allowed him to clarify by eliminating layers of paint. But he continued to struggle. In March, when Valerie visited, it was, he thought, 'in a wretched state' and, he wrote to her, it 'got ... worse', and he 'nearly tore it up.' Instead he 'rubbed a lot of it out and *eventually* got it a *bit* more to my liking. It's more a *unity* now but by no means complete.' In May and again in early June he interrupted work on the painting—which he turned face to the wall—to give unifying shape to what was becoming 'The Dream of Private Clitus', which he was writing to read on the Third Programme. He didn't like leaving the picture unfinished and could never have left it 'in the worst muddle' but 'sometimes it is the only thing to do for a bit.' He had 'never taken such a *monstrously long time* on a thing', he wrote to her. He had thought 'it would be finished in March or April. He wrote to Hague, 'I take *weeks* now to do what I once would do in as many *hours*—everything gets more difficult & complex—there become more & more & more things to link up & I'm beginning to feel too old to deal with the bloody problems involved.' One difficulty was agitation and depression over Valerie. In March 1960 he wrote, 'Wish I could feel more at *peace with myself*—but just now I feel like a navigator who'd lost his chart or whose ship's rudder was out of order or something &, of course, with 'shoal to lee.' In other words,

he felt like Trystan in his picture. He was ‘somewhat comforted that that bloody Trystan pic has at least been salvaged from total ruin. ... it will still be tricky bringing it properly to harbour. But it now has got part of the feeling I want.’ For long periods he kept it on display simply to look at, doing nothing to it, unable to ‘see, *with clarity*, what it needs.’ One of the problems was to suggest the early Middle Ages, keeping it from ‘looking too late.’ He told Giardelli, ‘It kept on looking like the death of Nelson.’ Kenneth Clark visited on 5 July and told him he liked it. (On this occasion Clark bought one of his flower-chalice pictures—Jones visited him at Albany for lunch on September 15th to see if it looked right framed.) By August 1960, Jones thought he might have to abandon the painting because, he wrote, ‘I like it (and I don’t usually like things I do much), and don’t want to wreck it.’⁹⁶ In early September, he told Clark that it bothered him that he found it ‘increasingly difficult to equate anything in my own work ... with the ‘actualities’ of to-day.’ In November 1960, Clark visited again and they looked together at it. Jones told him he was considering abandoning it and calling it ‘An Attempted Drawing of a Romantic Subject.’ The picture remained a great trial. He wrote in December 1960, ‘it took weeks & weeks & I never quite got round the last corner, so shall have to have another go at it. What murder it is trying to get these beastly paintings how you want them to be. It continues to astonish me when chaps say: ‘*How you must have enjoyed doing that one!*’ Little do they know.’²⁶¹ Refusing to give up, he kept looking and, occasionally, making changes.

In February 1961, he felt he was near finishing it (fig. 24). He was trying to decide what to do with ‘the passage’ between the heads of Essyllt and Trystan, and, he wrote, ‘*until I get that passage right the damn thing will look to me rather like a gull with some oil on its wings that can’t quite take wing but very nearly. Now I’m afraid of touching it in case I make it worse; because the balance of the colours and tones is so very close that one false step & I’ve had it! At least, I mean, all sorts of other passages would have to be modified.*’ He knew from experience about ‘finishing touches’, how often near the end, ‘when one has managed to get some sort of wholeness into the thing’ a change can ruin it completely. This would not have been so in oils, but he was painting in watercolours. He thought of the Spanish proverb ‘The best is the enemy of the good,’ and its English equivalent, ‘Leave well alone.’ But he could not resist making an attempt, and with Blakean ‘fear and trembling,’ he darkened the edges of the boards of the quarter-deck between the heads of

Essyllt and Trystan and just behind her head. They are vividly rendered as nowhere else in the picture. He was relieved to see that ‘actually it pulled the whole design together.’ In early 1962, he would work on the area behind the cat, which gave him trouble for months. In 1969, Jane Carter, recently married, visited with her husband, a sailor, who pointed out a mistake in the ropes at the bow. Extremely grateful, Jones soon fixed it. He never considered the picture finished, and wished on that account that it not to be exhibited.*²⁶² He would write that it was ‘the hardest thing I have tried to do.’ It is also, surely, a masterpiece, precisely what he had failed to achieve with *Lee Shore*, a combination of ‘complications and allusions’ and ‘freedom and directness.’ However much deliberation and complication was involved in its making, the effect is of freedom in the sky, in the sea, in most of the ship and the human figures except Essyllt. She has statuesque solidity.

Jones wrote, ‘I wanted it to be neither night nor day but all about one tonality.’ That is achieved by visible stars in what otherwise seems a daylight sky. It is a temporal ambiguity he had achieved in the same way in his *Satin-Slipper* frontispiece. This diurnal indeterminacy is given epochal extension by being stylistically at once medieval and modern.

The picture is medieval in abundance of highly defined, incidental detail. It conforms to medieval conventions of importance in that the lovers are central and disproportionately large, although proportional to deck-boards and gunwale. The picture is modern in the distortion and cartoonish outline of figures, especially elongated Essyllt. Modern stylistic distortion counterbalances the medieval content, suiting historical-epochal indeterminacy. The event depicted here transcends temporal specificity, implying that passion has no period. What Trystan felt in medieval legend, Jones feels at the opening of the sixth decade of the twentieth century. The size of the couple balances, only just, the chaotic movement behind and above them, a visual chaos that suggests their being caught up and lost in passion, particularly Trystan, who fades into the background. The busyness balances the centrality and size of the lovers, so that their drama is not pre-focused for the viewer. In fact, the chalice-of-the-potion, which physically unites them (since each grasps one of its side handles) may be the last thing you see.

* In 1972, Jones intended not to permit it to be hung in the Word and Image exhibition, but plans were fixed before he could intervene.



24 David Jones, *Trystan ac Essyllt*, 1962.

The lovers have been caught together unawares, each with one shoe off, as Private

Jones had been in the dugout in October 1916, although here, he said, the occasion of shoelessness is dalliance below decks. Visiting, Giardelli told him that his old teacher Eugene Vinaver regarded the wine in the goblet as a symbol of love and the impact of love was in this story at variance with the Christian tradition of marriage. Jones replied, ‘Well I suppose something like that.’ The name *Essyllt* means, he knew, ‘she who is to be gazed upon’,²⁶³ and here she attracts the eye, exulting in the passion of the moment. Blowing round to embrace *Trystan*’s head, her golden hair evokes that of the goddess in Botticelli’s *The Birth of Venus*. The mast is a cross behind her, its base continuing visually to her forefoot—its ‘step’, her step. (There is a visual pun here, since the framing support of a mast at the deck is its ‘step’.) She is his cross. This is the chief focal point of the picture, where the bright, straight sword hovers almost in contact with her foot, an image of their impending union, soft and hard, curved and straight, female and male—though *Trystan* is limp, and if anyone is strongly phallic here, she is.

About *Trystan*, Jones said, ‘He’s had it’—echoing words he had applied to himself if he made ‘one false step’ in making this picture. And, after all, this picture is autobiographical—as a whole, depicting the point of view of the smitten male, for whom she is the goddess (*Aphrodite*) and he is as nothing beside her, like a Keatsian ‘cloudy trophy hung’. On the upper right on the ship’s pennant, a bear stands upright, to match the constellation of the Bear, *Arcturus* across the sky on the left. It is a replica of the dancing bear Jones drew at the age of seven. (Ch. 1, fig 6)—suggesting, autobiographically, that *Trystan*’s fate is also that of the artist.

From the waist down, *Trystan* is an empty pencilled figure, barely there, having lost himself. (He has a good deal of affinity with the infantryman in the frontispiece to *In Parenthesis*, Ch 10, fig 7.) *Trystan* has a stigma in his right foot, and his garland evokes the crown of thorns. Despite *Trystan*’s falcon and hunting horn, Jones later felt that he failed to convey *Trystan*’s origins as a Celtic male *Artemis*. But *Trystan*-the-hunter has himself been caught. He crumbles and seems to fall back before self-assured *Essyllt*, although really he is merely stanced against the sway of the ship, while she is not. The angle of her foreleg and his sword is the difference between their vertical axes. He seems an index of realism, intuiting lost liberty and future calamity. His falcon deserts him—because, Jones wrote, ‘he is all of a heap, perceiving the consequences of having drunk the love potion.’ It is all over for him as it was for the Earl of *Essex* in ‘The Battle of Maldon’ who

deliberately gives his falcon to the air—a passage Jones had ‘always found ... one of the most moving ... in English literature.’) Trystan’s spurs are off; his sword, self-supporting. (Jones meant to attach it to his belt but never did.) Balancing the whiteness of the mast is a yellow shaft of light to the right of Trystan which pierces down to a *fleur-de-lis* on the head of the small boat on deck, suggesting by association with Mary (her flower the lily) that this is a sort of annunciation. He told Giardelli that he meant the shaft of light to signify the light of the pole star and that it shines on the *fleur-de-lis* because that marked the north on shipmen’s cards and compasses.²⁶⁴ Naively primitivist though this concept is, the effect is to emphasize directional inevitability and suggests that Essyllt (and the vertical force she embodies) is from now on Trystan’s lode star.

The cat on deck reflects his memory of a cat walking with splayed legs during rough weather en route to Cairo in 1934.²⁶⁵ It is present because of Jones’s fondness for cats and because ships usually have cats on board. It is an image of realistic, almost comical, animal indifference to human passion. Its forelegs serve (as the stance of Essyllt does not) to indicate the roll of the ship towards the viewer. This roll breaks spatial continuity in that the sea is further below the near hull’s side than it is relative to the small boat beside it—so that space shares some of time’s indeterminacy. Adding to spatial indeterminacy is that Essyllt’s axis is perpendicular to the ship while Trystan’s axis is perpendicular to the gravity of the earth. They stand together but their differing visual spaces suggest different realities. Essyllt’s axis parallels the arrow in the gunwale to her right, a reference perhaps to Cupid’s arrow. Also adding to spatial indeterminacy is the proportionality of the lovers to deck-boards and gunwale while being gigantic relative to other figures, the mast, and the rear of the ship.

While cleaning the glass of framed pictures and inscriptions in 1962, he was astonished ‘at the thick coat of brown deposit of tobacco smoke removed’ and the difference it made. He realized that by leaving his *Tristan ac Essyllt* uncovered for so long on his easel, he had damaged it, allowing it to get ‘some shades darker’ He immediately consulted Clark who sent him to have it framed by Alfred Hecht in the King’s Road, whom Jones would use from now on.²⁶⁶ He had it on his wall when the painter Ceri Richards visited on 18 October 1964, and, to Jones’s ‘delight’, said he liked it.²⁶⁷

David Jones never spoke about aesthetics when showing a painting to a visitor. He made

thematic comments, usually pointing out figures or objects in it, saying, for example, ‘I like the cat.’ Aesthetics were important to him and determined whether or not the work succeeded, but, he said, ‘the longer I live the more I see that it's pretty useless talking about’ form. ‘There *aint no* rules, and a flick of the brush will, *sometimes*, transform a “formless” work into one that has what old Roger Fry used to call, in the now discredited language of the 1920s, the “emotional significance of form”.’ As his wood engravings of the 1920s demonstrated early on, he was a master of pictorial design. And in painting, he was always conscious of the competing requirements of content and composition—a matter over which, as a painter, he had to exercise continual judgment. Of these two competing interests, composition was the most compelling, for beauty in representational art is, as he knew, essentially abstract. In a letter to the *Listener* (3 Aug. 1950), he writes:

Those of us whose work no one, I imagine, would call ‘abstract’, know, nevertheless, that it is an abstract *quality*, however hidden or devious, which determines the real worth of any work. This is true of Botticelli’s *Primavera*, of the White Horse of Uffington, of the music of Monteverdi, of *Finnegans Wake*, of the ‘Alfred Jewel’, of the glass goblet I am now trying to draw, of the shape of the liturgy, of the shape of a tea-cup. The one common factor implicit in all the arts of man resides in a certain juxtaposition of forms.²⁶⁸

Ceri Richards’ visit was a rare event. Richards now lived in Chelsea but was shy and looked upon Jones as a great man. His wife had sought Jones out and then introduced them. They were about as different in their art as they could be but liked each other and respected each other's work. Richards was nine years younger. He, too, had studied at Westminster under Meninsky and was a friend of Henry Moore, and both had exhibited at the Redfern Gallery. Jones more often saw his outgoing wife, who once met him at the London Museum and spent the rest of the day with him—he accompanied her to Paddington Station and waved until the train was out of sight. She recalled, ‘he seemed quite indifferent to time.’ She would remember his conversation as frequently interrupted by attempts to discover the roots of words and with ‘flashes of brilliant intuition spanning the centuries.’ She visited once after his birthday, his room full of flowers sent and brought by well-wishers, and, looking round, he said, ‘I don’t know whether it is a wedding or a funeral.’ When Ceri received the CBE in 1960, Jones phoned to congratulate him. He had wanted to attend Ceri’s show at the Whitechapel Art Gallery but had been unable to. Not long after, he told Saunders Lewis that while he thought him ‘an *awfully good & imaginative* artist’, Ceri Richards was diminished by the influence of Picasso, an influence he thought pervasive: ‘I think that my

friend Graham Sutherland was a more interesting, less self-conscious artist, before he became quite so influenced by Picasso. I think of Milton and of how his huge genius bugged-up English poetry for centuries.’²⁶⁹

On Holy Saturday evening, Jones went down from Harrow by taxi for the Easter Vigil service at the Brompton Oratory, which then had the best liturgical music in London. He positioned himself as far back as possible, in a sort of dugout between a gigantic pillar and the wooden-and-glass frame of the left-hand revolving doors, his back to the back wall. He sat, wrapped up in his overcoat, with a huge book of music, which he had brought to follow the chant. The Pollens noticed him as they filed into the church. Lucy invited him to come up further and he said, “No, much better sound here.”²⁷⁰ In such a crowd, he was where he could get out quickly if he suffered a panic attack.

On Saturday 28 May 1960, Stanley Honeyman and Jacqueline Powell married in St Margaret’s, Lothbury, in the City. They had invited Jones but were not sure he would feel well enough to come. He did (fig 25), with a bouquet of flowers and, as a gift, rolled up, the ninth *Deluge* print, that of the ark coming to rest on the mountain, inscribed with different coloured crayons on the back, ‘UBI CARITAS ... IBI DEUS’. He thought the church ‘jolly beautiful’. It was a very hot day, but was wearing his greatcoat, which came down to his ankles. (With considerable indignation, he had recently heard from his tailor that he would repair his ancient overcoat just once more.) Afterwords in the vestry, as the Honeymans signed the register, the vicar



25. Stanley and Jacqueline Honeyman and Jones, 1960

mentioned that ‘an Irish tramp’ had come into the church just as the service was beginning.

Honeyman asked, ‘How do you know he was Irish?’ The vicar: ‘He crossed himself—I presume he was Catholic—and he was wearing a huge long coat as tramps do.’ Honeyman: ‘I think that might be our most eminent guest’ (fig. 24). The reception was in the Livery Hall of the Guildhall, which

Jones had last seen in ruins and ‘smouldering’ during the Blitz. After the wedding, Morag and her husband drove him back to Harrow²⁷¹

Not long after he married, Honeyman gave Jones a Lee-Enfield Rifle, which he kept in his room, and brought out for the children of visitors to play with but, Honeyman sensed, did not much like. He took no pleasure in having it, which may be a late indication of his emotional discomfort with the Great War.²⁷²

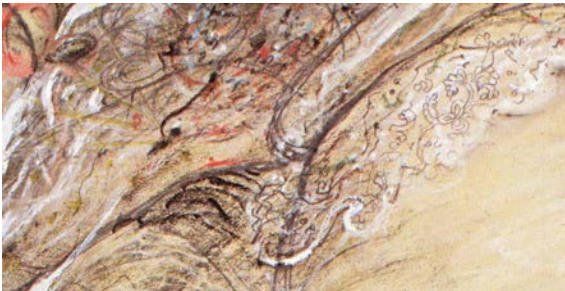
Honeyman had once taken him out to restaurants (the King’s Head, Chez Ciccio) , but no longer. Menus paralyzed him—even the waiters got impatient, and they would suggest, ‘Why don’t you start with a little smokes salmon,’ to which Jones would reply, ‘I’ve a very small appetite. Can you bring me just a sort of, a couple of inches square?’ ‘Yes sir.’ For the next course he would order ‘a tiny piece of Duck l’Orange.’ Then ‘just the smallest helping of’ pudding, and ‘about a quarter of an inch of this’ cheese. The waiters enjoyed it (‘Would you have a half-glass of wine?’) He ate morsels but at full prices, which ran up an impressive bill that he never saw.²⁷³ So Honeyman had him home for supper.

A dozen times over the years, he would drive Jones to his home in Chelsea for the sort of supper he liked, salad, fish or boiled chicken and rice, often with prunes or stewed apple for desert. Behind the Honeyman's house was a tiny triangular garden within high walls. While he declined to go into it, he admired a three-foot buttress to one wall and a beam of wood in another. ‘That's accidental beauty,’ he said. He did not like the Honeymans’ Pikenese—he was afraid of it. But he loved speeding home in Honeyman’s car in the early hours of the morning when there was no traffic: from Chelsea to Shepherd’s Bush and along the Western Avenue at eighty-five or ninety miles per hour, passing all other cars. Passing a sign saying ‘To South Wales’, he would always say, ‘Oh, let's go there’. They got to Harrow in twelve, once in eleven, minutes, Jones doing the timekeeping.²⁷⁴

But they spoke more often, Honeyman either visiting or speaking on the phone with him weekly, often going alone to see him Saturday evenings. Usually it would be Jones who telephoned, ringing at eleven o'clock at night. Jacqueline would say, ‘It's David—*please*, not more than an hour,’ and went to bed. He and Jones would spend the first five minutes on the state of Jones’s health, which was never good. Then one topic led to another, and Jones would happily have continued long into the morning, but Honeyman would finish by saying, ‘Jacqueline has gone to

bed and I'm going to bed!' Later, Honeyman wished he had recorded those conversations—'what a privilege they were.'²⁷⁵

On March 12th, Kathleen Raine visited Jones. She told him that the Humanities were in steep decline at Cambridge, where a female don in English Lit had objected to an undergraduate alluding in an essay to Classical figures on the grounds that readers cannot be expected to know about Aristotle or Plotinus. The Break, Jones thought, had grown from a crevice to "an unbridgable chasm." He was able to tell her that he had just learned from one of the Harrow masters that Chaucer was now considered too difficult for the average boy and that one educational authority thought "the line of withdrawal should not be upon the Shakespeare-Milton position, Oh no! not even upon Johnson, or even Kipling, but, if you please, on Hornblower's prose—can you bloody beat it?"²⁷⁶



26. bird, detail in *Sunday Mass*

At the 1948 Redfern exhibition, Hilda Cochrane had bought Jones's painting *Sunday Mass* (1948) (Ch 13, fig. 12). She had known him in the '30s as a visitor to 'The Wednesday Thursday Gallery', which she ran in a basement opposite Harrods, exhibiting Henry Moore, Jacob Epstein, and other artists unacceptable to traditional galleries. Over the

years, she had acquired some of his paintings. After buying *Sunday Mass*, she telephoned to renew their acquaintance and visited him in

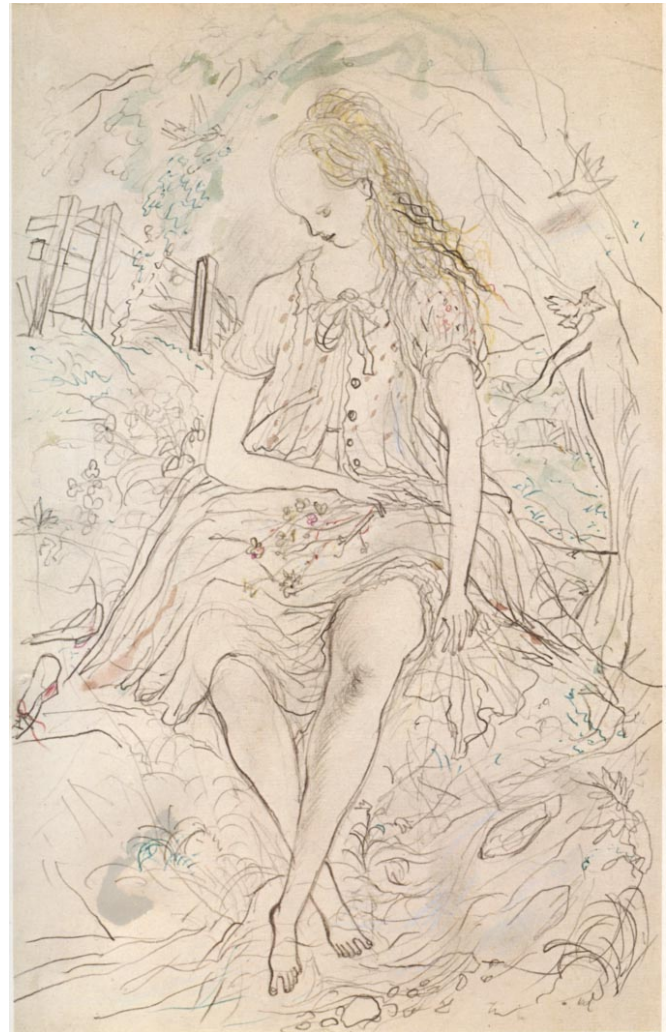
Harrow. She had married Ralph Cochrane, knighted during the war, the youngest son of a Scottish baron. 'Lady Ralph', as Jones called her, was sensitive, modest, and put on no aristocratic airs. They got on well. She knew personally all the artists he knew and she understood art. She often brought her small sons John and Malcolm, who used to watch and listen to the conversation. Malcolm remembers that, though he knew many artists, he had never seen anyone like this one. He could not make him out. He realized that the talk between quiet, delicate Hilda and quiet, sensitive David Jones was special. 'They were very gentle together.' In the spring or summer of 1960, he visited her home, Babrook House in London, to see the picture again. It hung in her bedroom. There he sat, her sons remember, at the end of the double bed and looked at it for ten minutes, finally saying, 'I think the bird (fig.26) is the bit I like best. Do you like it?'

Hilda asked, ‘What bird?’ Astonished, he said, ‘You haven’t seen the bird?’ There is a tiny bird in the far woman’s hat. It is drawn in pencil above one of the far women’s ear, looking like a decoration on her hat (as realistically it must be), but evoking the pentecostal dove inconspicuously inspiring her on Whitsun, which is the occasion of the painting. Jones was shocked that she had had the picture for so many years and had not seen the bird. He had given up expecting people to understand his poetry, but his paintings were straightforward. Hilda was mortified.²⁷⁷ They had tea.

Afterwards, she commissioned a work unlike any other by him. Her husband gave her a beautifully ornate little gilded frame with a circular opening three inches wide and wildly curving carved outer flourishes. She and her sons took it up to Harrow. ‘Will you fill this frame?’ Hilda asked. He replied, ‘You can’t put a picture in that frame. You can’t intend to.’ She said, ‘Yes I do.’ Affection for her made him agree to try, but he kept saying, ‘What shall I do? What on earth can I put in there?’ and Malcolm suggested, ‘Why don’t you put all your trademarks in.’ He asked, ‘What do you mean my trademarks?’ Malcolm said, ‘You know, your birds and your bows, the big toe split from the next toe, ponies, little shoes, and things like that.’ Jones: ‘Are those my trademarks?’ Malcolm: ‘Indeed they are, you always have something like that in every one of your pictures.’ Jones: ‘Yes, well, I suppose I do.’

The small, commissioned picture was much delayed.

Hilda would send him a card, ‘How is it going, is it ready yet?’ She and her sons would visit, and he would express great concern, ‘I must get down to it.’ When he eventually did, he spent a long time over it. He had difficulty arriving at a composition.²⁷⁸ After two false starts, he made a large (13 x 8 inches) detailed drawing of a blonde dangling a foot in a



27 David Jones, *Girl by Stream*, c. 1960

stream, overarched by a tree with a fence in the background (fig. 27). He then zeroed in on the feet. Then he thought of establishing a larger, over-all composition before zeroing in on detail. The result is a minor miracle (fig. 28). A woman has been dangling her feet in a stream. Her arms reach down into the circle, her hands tying the laces of one pink shoe. Its pinkness is also seen on the inside of her sleeves, in the other shoe, which is off, in the grass, and in the ribbon on her sleeve that floats in the breeze. The oval



28. Picture for Hilda Cochrane's frame, c. 1960

opening of the empty shoe (and also the circular shapes of its tied laces) repeat the shape of the frame. Flowers in the grass correspond to stylized *fleurs de lis* on her sleeve. The curves of grass and flowers echo the curves of the frame's outer flouriations. The line of the naked chin, ankle, and foot carries into the picture the split at the bottom of the frame, to which her big toe points. The flow of the semi-transparent dress corresponds to the flow and semi-transparency of the stream below. Over the water at the bottom dangles the bare foot, its big toe separated from the others—Jones's symbolic signature at the bottom of the painting. The bird flying down across her naked calf is the bird in or beside the hat in *Sunday Mass*. Now Hilda would see it. This little picture is a marvelous work of art—because all its parts are related to so many of the other parts. And it has a theme, the communion of nature and the human body.

In June 1960, he learned that he had received the Bollingen Prize. A year before, Kathleen Raine, a recipient of the prize, had urged him to put his name forward for it, had the foundation send him an application form, and visited to help him fill it out. He was anxious that, if he received it, he not be required to lecture. Those who wrote sponsoring his application were W.H. Auden, Kenneth Clark, Martin D'Arcy, T.S. Eliot, Christopher Dawson, Kathleen Raine, Herbert Read, Edith Sitwell, and Stephen Spender. Writing the required project-description was, for Jones, a strain. 'I never *really* want to say *anything*—I mean *about* what I'm doing—I want only to *do* it—& that I do want to do

with a consuming desire.’ Having to list his publications with publishers and dates was a task almost beyond endurance. On 12 September 1959, he had completed his application, which Valerie typed for him. In his project-description, he writes that his ‘main theme’, as apparent in *The Anathemata*, is to maintain liaison with what he regards ‘as having belonged to man *qua* man from time immemorial’, that his terms of reference include ‘anthropology, history and the religion-cultures ... because without these we cannot very well understand ourselves at all,’ that an artist’s ‘apperception must have a ‘now-ness’ about it’ but that he must still be a remember, as the ancient bards were, and that makes him ‘willy-nilly, a sort of Boethius, who has been nick-named ‘The Bridge’, because he carried forward into an altogether metamorphosed world certain of the fading oracles which had sustained Antiquity’. His job as an artist is to present that without which man is ‘a sort of sub-man.’ But it is silly to define intentions, which can change according to ‘what the Muse demands.’ The project description is an important document because it indicates his sense of bridging over the present dark age to whatever follows. In his application for the award, he writes about his recent income: ‘I am the recipient of a Civil List Pension of £350. My actual profits as artist and writer, etc. for the year 1957-8 were £35 and private income from interest £25. In the previous year my profits were £42. And for the year ending April 1959 about the same. I have no other sources of income.’ The award was \$3000 a year for three years beginning in January 1961 in quarterly payments off \$750 (£265.19.7). While receiving this, he was taken off the Civil List Pension. The Bollingen Award made a big difference to his finances. His bank deposit passbook shows that from 1944 to 1956 he had in the bank an average of £105. By 1964 he had in the bank £2075/15/11. After Jones won the Bollingen Prize, Tom Burns borrowed £1000 and was not quick to repay it. Stanley Honeyman had to put pressure on him to repay, which he did, with interest.²⁷⁹

The University of Wales persisted in offering him an honorary doctorate at the convocation of 22 July 1960, and he thought now he could travel to receive it. For one thing, he planned to stay with Valerie, and that was powerful motivation. But just before departure his anxiety became so unbearable that he consulted Stevenson, who advised strongly against his going. Jones felt a combination of frustration and relief. The University gave up on bestowing the degree in person and sent his diploma by post. It would be heart-warming to think that the university suspended its

protocol and conferred it *in absentia* because of devotion to him, but the truth is that he pulled out too late for them to find a replacement. He was asked to write a letter to be read to the graduates and their families at a dinner. He worked for a week and sent seven foolscap pages. In them he writes that he hopes that in spite of ‘the increasingly urgent claims of technological studies,’ the University of Wales will ‘conserve those studies which belong specifically to the mythos of Wales’ as ‘intricated’ with ‘our common Western deposit’ involving Greece, Rome, and Christianity, Jesus being the one ‘who gave *cynghanedd* to space itself.’

All said and done the English have been with us for about a millennium and a half, so they can be regarded as naturalized by now. But they should, I think, if only in courtesy to what is anterior, pay respect to this vestigial tradition. For this thing belongs to the *mores* of all Britain and affords a living, direct, unbroken series of links with Antiquity and so with the formative period and the foundational things of this land (as does, if in another way, the Latin of the Liturgy)... An impoverishment of the things of the Cymry (I don't mean later aberrations or things stemming from more recent times) must, in the long run, be an impoverishment for England also. For the complex heritage of what is called, in the old tales, *ynys hon*, 'this island', is very subtly meshed indeed.

After mentioning the Welsh associations of the Metaphysical Poets and Hopkins, he continues

Thus can the hidden things of Wales, under certain circumstances and given a perceptive response, vitalize the things of England.

This inheritance is an entailed inheritance, it is not ours to dissipate. Our business is rather to conserve it in whatever devious ways may chance to be open to us.

For some of us, for myself perhaps, this may mean fragmented, hidden, oblique, not easily traced ways: but no matter. Or, we may feel we can conserve it only in our hearts. But, if the Scholastic maxim is true which says that 'Doing follows Being', we may not do so badly after all. For what's in the heart will come out somewhere and after some fashion.

And he concludes, in Welsh, ‘David of the waterways pray for Wales.’ The dinner was the evening of 21 July. In honour of the absent honouree, Valerie and her husband attended the convocation next day. Later, when asked whether he felt like being a *Doctor in Litteris, Honoris Causa*, he had to admit ‘I don't feel much like it’. He thought it comic that someone ‘so uneducated and so unacademic’ should be called a ‘doctor of letters.’²⁸⁰

In 1964 St Andrews University would offer him an honorary doctorate, and he would discuss with Stevenson whether anything could be done about his fear of traveling. Stevenson said

no. Hoping that, again, he might be able to receive the degree in absentia, he wrote to say he would not be able to attend the convocation, and was informed that, in that case, he would not receive the degree. ‘Doesn't matter a bugger really, of course,’ he would say to a friend, ‘but of all places I should have liked to get it from there, because it has very deep traditions.’²⁸¹ Later still Peter Levi spoke of proposing him for an honorary doctorate from Oxford, but Maurice Bowra said he would block it because he remembered Jones at Oxford before the war speaking about the Germans and Hitler in a way that he considered treacherous.²⁸²

In late June 1960, Jones had an evening with Saunders Lewis. It began in Jones's room, where he read Lewis a new poetic monologue entitled ‘The Dream of Private Clitus’. Lewis liked it and spoke of difficulties he was having writing a play. Then they went to the Paddington Hotel restaurant, which became their accustomed place of rendezvous. Lewis treated him to supper, ordering wine, which Jones refused. He liked the taste ‘very much so’ but it upset his stomach. In any case, he preferred to drink before or after a meal, ‘barbarous though it may be.’ At one point they went on a search for the lavatory up and down the stairs of the restaurant. Jones thought this ‘extremely funny ... rather like a Charlie Chaplin film.’²⁸³ They dined again, at the Paddington Hotel, on August 14th, when Jones gave Lewis a copy of the typed speech he had sent to Bangor.

Jones was to record “Clitus” at the BBC on 6 July but cancelled because he had a pain in his stomach which Bell thought was probably a strained muscle. The ache worried Jones. He wrote, ‘I get so frightened when I'm not well—in fact I'm always frightened of something! It's a trial.’ ‘Still trying to get into a proper shape that confounded “Dream of Private Clitus”.’ He was surprised at the ‘awful number of hold-ups one has in a thing once one tries to really perfect it, as far as one can.’ He thought again of the Spanish proverb: ‘the best is the enemy of the good.’²⁸⁴ Aneurin Talfin Davies had “The Dream of Private Clitus” broadcast on BBC Welsh radio on 31 August, 1961, and Anna Kallin had it rebroadcast on the Third Program on 28 October 1961.

Jones had realized in 1959 that the material excluded from *The Anathemata* would ‘certainly not be a “second part” of *The Ana*,’ as he had proposed in a footnote to that work (*A* 15), ‘but a collection of separate (more or less) fragments.’²⁸⁵ They would be ‘what some chaps might call ‘variations on a theme’ for there is this recurring motif of the disparity between world-power and

locality' but they would now be 'more or less, separate pieces which might be read isolated form the rest.' At work on these 'fragments,' he writes, "I work *very* slowly & continuously redraft things, re-arrange, re-juxtapose this or that passage--and, as I get older, not only get *slower*, but more hesitant.'²⁸⁶

Jones attended the wedding of Juliet and Richard Shirley Smith in North London in September 1960. They felt honoured that he came, though his suit, which was crumpled, elicited rude remarks from others. There Jones saw Jane Carter, an employee at Faber and former flat-mate of Shirley Smith to whom he introduced Jones. Not conventionally pretty, she was very feminine and attractive, a professional violinist, of whom Jones became very fond. She was a gentle sensitive person with a beautiful voice who became a very fine painter—after Jones encouraged her.²⁸⁷ He thought her 'terribly nice ... most sensitive and dear,' and who would visit him throughout the early 1960s sometimes twice a month.

The Shirley Smiths subsequently went to Italy for an extended stay and returned with greetings from Reggie Lawson, Jones's housemate at Ditchling, who was now a Dominican lay brother, Shirley Smith made him some simple frames, in return for which, Jones gave him a signed 1929 Everyman print.²⁸⁸

Shirley Smith was now making wood engravings, which he brought for criticism to Jones, who emphasized cohesiveness as 'the very devil to get—I've been having a lot of trouble with it of late myself. But ... total unity is the *first* necessity and the *most hard*, usually to achieve. I find it harder and harder to achieve this unity. It isn't quite the same thing as what chaps call "design"—though of course it does result in a "good design"— ... it comes from the power of the idea incarnated in the material.' And he added, the artist should have 'a fairly strong central idea—it may be just a feeling of some movement or other and *that* one can perhaps work out alright but there are a lot of subsidiary things which aren't, properly speaking, part of one's original conception, but one gets involved in them and they never quite cohere.'²⁸⁹

In the spring of 1960, the Hagues (including children) visited. He had always admired children's art, and they showed him some sailing-vessel models that he thought 'most beautiful' and drawings of great ships under sails done with 'the innocent eye'. 'They get the entire feeling without, of course, realizing it.' When they asked him to draw a billowing sail, he 'hardly knew what to do, because,' he said, 'all I could do was to introduce a kind of academic impressionism—

and it is precisely the *absence of this quality* which made his drawing so good. (* When a child asks one to draw something one feels rather as though one were being asked, unwittingly, to teach them a really *bad* thing—it's an appallingly difficult problem...).²⁹⁰

Notes to Chapter 14

¹ To C. Burns 20/10 52; to J. Ede 16/11/52,

² To T. Hyne 19/6/74; to H. Grisewood 5/8/52; to H. Sutherland 29/9 53; to N. Gray 16/12/52; to H. Sutherland 13/12 52; to J. Ede 17/12/52; J. Ryan interviewed 6/8/87; to D. Travis 22/7/37.

3. H. Grisewood ms note 17/3/76; *IN* 23; to J.H. Johnston 3/3/63; to T. Stoneburner 30/8/63.

4. *IN* 54; to J. Knight 13/11/52.

⁵ *IN* 54; to V. Wynne-Williams 15/5/62; to H. Read 21/9/64; to H. Grisewood 8/8/54; to Bernard Wall 10/1 53

⁶ to N. Gray 16/12/52; D. Bland to DJ 14/1/53; Morley Kennerley to DJ [1952].

7. to H. Sutherland 8/10 52; H. Read to P. du Sautoy 28/10/70; P. du Sautoy to H. Read 22/7/70; C. Monteith to Mr. Crawley 16/4 70; to J. Knight 31/7/51.

8. To J. Ede 17/12/52; to N. Gray 25/12/52, 16/12/52; J. Ede to DJ 1/11/52; to J. Ede 17/12/52; to N. Gray 16/12/52; to Louis Bonnerot 2/1/60; to W.H. Auden 24/2/54; to S. Piggott 13/5/53; to A.O.Davies 20/10/61; to F. Morley unposted 1/53.

9. I am grateful to Francis Greene for permission to publish this letter ; to G. Greene 12/4/53.

10. To H. Grisewood 1/9/56.

11. To J. Ede 1/1/53; to T. Stoneburner 20/11/64; to T. Stoneburner 20/11/64.

¹² to T. Stoneburner 30/8/63, 30/7/69; to H. Grisewood 10/8 53; E. Pound to W. Cookson interviewed 14/6/88.

13. To T. Stoneburner 2/9/64; to S. Lewis 4/71; to R. Hague 9-15/7/73.

¹⁴ To H. Grisewood 14/2/51, 3/6/40.

¹⁵ To H. Sutherland 25/11/41.

16. To H. Sutherland 25/11/41; to T. Burns 6/5/43; to H. Grisewood 22/5/62.

¹⁷ To the *Listener* 2/7/53, to H. Grisewood 20/12/56

¹⁸ DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; to TS Eliot 25/11/52; to H. Grisewood 13/4/40, 10/1/54.

19. To Grisewood Tues. St. Thomas 3/53, 21/10/53.

²⁰ To TS Eliot 17/10/57; *TLS* 10/12/71; to H. Grisewood 17/12/71.

²¹ To H. Sutherland 27/1/53.

22 R. Buhler interviewed 16/6/88; to N. Gray 16/12/52; to J. Ede 17/12/52; to N. Gray 14/4/61.

²³ To D. Travis 3/8 62.

²⁴ To C. Burns 15/1/53; DJ letter frag. n.d.

²⁵ To M. Percival 15/10/67; to J. Hooker 8/5/70; to A. O. Davies 17/11/53; to J. Hooker 17/11/72; to H. Grisewood 8/8/56; to V. Watkins 5/4/62, 24/7/57; to Nancy Sanders, 9/11/72.

²⁶ D. and N. Cleverdon interviewed 28/6/86; to N. Sanders 27/8/71; D. Travis to H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; to B. DuFort 20/11/53.

²⁷ To V. Watkins 2/2/63, 2/2/63.

²⁸ D. Bland to DJ 2/1/52; to H. Grisewood 16/10/52; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; to David Bland 25/4/53.

²⁹ To Catherine Ivanier unposted 4/2/60; to H. Sutherland 11/4/53; N. Cleverdon to author 15/7/92; to T. Stoneburner 8/9/65; D. and N. Cleverdon interviewed 28/6/86.

³⁰ To D. Tegetmeier 9/5/53; to T. Stoneburner 8/9/65; *IN* 84; to T. Stoneburner 8/9/65.

³¹ *IN* 84; to H. Sutherland 26/5 53; to H. Sutherland 17/4 58

³² To T. Stoneburner 8/9/65.

³³ To N. Sanders 16-17/65; to Elwyn Evans 22/5/53. 9/6/53; to J. Ede 20/5/53.

³⁴ To H. Sutherland 29/9/53; to Mrs/ Alton frag. draft 31/3/53.

³⁵ To TS Eliot unposted 1/6/53; to D Bland 25/4 53, 12/8 53; to TS Eliot 11/3/54; to M. Percival 20/12 54; to Mr, Revel n.d. [1972]

³⁶ D Cleverdon interviewed 6/85; to E. Evans 23/5/53' E. Evans interviewed 20/8 86; DJ to E. Evans 9/7/53; to B. Dufort 25/12/54; to P. Tegetmeier 5/11/53; to B Dufort 20/11/53; to D Pollen 6/9/61.

³⁷ To A. Kallin 21/1/47; Holme to DJ 16/10/52; C. Cohn to DJ 13/10/52; H. Grisewood interviewed 4 Oct 1987, 16 June 1989.

³⁸ Hilary Boyers interviewed 23 June 1989.

³⁹ Hilary Beyer to Jones, 19 September, n.d.; H. Beyer to author 8/8/93.

⁴⁰ C. Dawson p. 92; *IN* 84; letter draft frag. n.d.; to H. Sutherland 29/9/53; to V. Wynne-Williams 27/9/73.

⁴¹ To H. Sutherland 29/9 53; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86; to P. Tegetmeier 5/11/53.

⁴² To H. Grisewood 10/8/53, 15/2/57.

⁴³ To H. Grisewood 10/8/53.

⁴⁴ To P. Tegetmeier 5/11/53; C. Pepler interviewed 11/6/89.

⁴⁵ To H. Sutherland 29/9/53.

⁴⁶ To H. Sutherland 29/9/53.

⁴⁷ To C. Ivainer 17/11/60' to K. Clark 16/11/60' Letter draft frag. n.d.

⁴⁸ To H. Sutherland 20/11/53; to D. Travis 25/12/54; to H. Sutherland 27/1/54; to P. Tegetmeier 5/11/53; to H. Sutherland 2/11/53.

⁴⁹ To Harold Rosenberg 23 draft frag. 10/64; to H. Sutherland 4/1/54; to H. Sutherland 16/2/55.

⁵⁰ To H. Sutherland 27/1/54; to H. Grisewood 26/11/55.

⁵¹ To D. Travis 3/4/54' to J. Ede 7/5/55.

⁵² Richard Shirley Smith in David Jones *Ten Letters to two young artists working in Italy* ed Derek Shiel (Agenda 1996) p. 11; Lee, 'Bookplate Designs by Richard Shirley Smith' p. 84; Richard Shirley Smith in David Jones *Ten* p. 12; Richard Shirley Smith, 'An Outline of my contact with David Jones.' Typescript; J. Shirley Smith quoted by Simon Brett 'Seeing and Showing' *David Jones Artist and Poet* pp. 74-5; to Juliet Shirley-Smith 21/5/61; to Janet Stone 20/11/63; Juliet Shirley Smith interviewed 21/6/90.

⁵³ Richard Shirley Smith in David Jones, *Ten Letters*, p. 12.

⁵⁴ To H. Grisewood 14/1/54; to J. Ede 2/4/54; T.S. Eliot to H. Grisewood 20/8/53/ K. Clark to H. Grisewood 7/8/53; K. Clark to H. Grisewood 7/8/53; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/1983.

⁵⁵ J. Ede to DJ n.d. [1936], n.d. [1944]; Nan Kivell to DJ 27/11/50, 16/6/50; D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85; A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86; D. Cleverdon in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 6/6/69; S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90; J Ede interviewed 6/85D; D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85.

⁵⁶ To R. Hague 28/7/61; to H. Read unposted 18/11/67; M. Hague interviewed 10/9/89' J. Montague interviewed 9/9/89; R. Hague's typescript of an interview by P. Orr with S. Honeyman typescript. n.d.

⁵⁷ Kevin Cribb interviewed 12/6/89; D Cleverdon interviewed 6/85; M/ Grisewood interviewed 24/6/89; N. Cleverdon interviewed 25/6/90; T. Hyne interviewed 6/90; M. Hague 10/9/89. My thanks to Michael Hague for permission to quote him; A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86; V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 25/9/89; Philip Lowrey interviewed 20/6/88; S. Honeyman to C. Monteith Kauffman 19/3/84; M Cormack to DJ 15/1/65; to Walter Shewring draft n.d.; A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86.

58. Sarah and Maurice Balme interviewed 24/6 1988; to D. Travis 3/8 62 .

59 D. Cleverdon interviewed 6/85.

⁶⁰ To C. Burns 4/6/54; to D. Cleverdon 3/6 54 to D. Travis 3/4 54 to H. Grisewood 8/8 54.

⁶¹ S. Lewis to DJ 26/6/54; to Hague 22/11/54; S. Lewis to DJ 12/9/37; C. Edwards to DJ 10/6/37; S. Lewis to DJ 12/9/37; to S. Lewis 22/7/48.

⁶² S. Lewis to DJ 3/7/54

⁶³ To S. Lewis 6/7/54, 13-14/11 1959

⁶⁴ To S. Lewis., 6 July 1960. H. Grisewood interviewed August 1983 to Catherine Ivainer 13 June 1961 to S. Lewis 2/9 1970. to R. Hague 8/6 1966 to A. T. Davies 7-8/9 1970 to Anul Jones draft. n.d.

⁶⁵ to A. T. Davies 7-8/9/70; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83' S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87/

66. To H. Grisewood 8-9/9/67.

⁶⁷ S. Lewis to DJ 25/7/60, 25/3/59.

⁶⁸ To S. Lewis 5/71; to M. Balme 11/8/64; to H. Sutherland 5/11/58; to S. Lewis 18/9/70; to T. Stoneburner 7/10/ 68; Tate Gallery Catalogue, 1955.

69. Sir John Cecil Williams to DJ 1/3 1956; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10 87.

70. To H. Grisewood 7/2 1956, 15/2 1957.

71. To H. Grisewood 12/8/57.

⁷² LF 32.

73. To S. Lewis 18/1/62; to H. Grisewood 1/1/64; to H. Grisewood 4/8/62; to S. Lewis 10/72.

⁷⁴ To H. Grisewood 1/1 1964; ms draft frag. n.d.

⁷⁵ R. Giroux to Faber 31/7 53

76. Morley Kennerley at Faber to DJ 16/1/53; S. Spender interviewed 5/12/88.

⁷⁷ To H. Sutherland 3/6/54; to B. DuFort 20/8/54.

78. To W.H. Auden 24/2 1954; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87; to H. Sutherland 27/9/56; to H. Grisewood 18/5;56; LC 139; Stephen Spender *Journals 1939-1983* (New York: Random House 1986) p. 153; to H. Grisewood 11/7/58; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87.

79. N. Spender interviewed 5/12/88; N. and S. Spender interviewed 5/12/88; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90.

80 To. H. Sutherland 17/5/57; N. Spender interviewed 5/12/88.

⁸¹ To H. Grisewood Laetare Sunday 1957.

82 To H. Grisewood Tues 8/52; to H. Grisewood 8/8/54; to H. Grisewood 8/8/54.

⁸³ To S. Lewis 6/7/54; to Anthony Steel draft 16/4/60; Tony Hyne, interviewed 2/5/93; to Dorthea Travis 25/12/54; to T. Stoneburner 15/5/67; to S. Lewis 11/12/55; to S. Lewis 22/3/65; to H. Grisewood 26/11/70' to N. Gray 4/4/61, 14/4/61; to Frances Richards 21/7/70; to Harry W. 11/1/55; D. Emrys Evans to DJ 1/2/55; to H. Grisewood 8/8/54; to H. Grisewood 6/10/72; to Tony Stoneburner 30/8/63; to R Hague 1/55.

⁸⁴ Undated letter draft to Jonah Jones.

85 to H. Grisewood 8/8/54; to. H. Sutherland 10/11 54; letter frag. to Wyn 26/7 54; to Douglas Hall, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art 27/1/68.

⁸⁶ To D. Travis 25/12/54; to K. Raine draft frag. 21/12/54; to S. Lewis 19/11/54; to D.Travis 25/12/54; to R. Hague 2/6/55.

87. To K. Raine draft frag. 21/12/54; to V. Wynne-Williams 10/8/59 Frances Richards. *Remembering David Jones* (Privately Printed Wellingborough: Skelton's Press 1980) p. 2 to. H. Sutherland 27/12 54; Elizabeth Davison to Jones 30/12.54.

⁸⁸ S. Honeyman interviewed 6/2009; T. Burns interviewed 20/8/86; Barbara Wall interviewed 27/6/1986.

⁸⁹ To M. Percival 20/12 54; Cissy Hyne to DJ n.d. [1955].

⁹⁰ Michael Symmons Roberts, 'The Writing on the Wall', *Tablet* 17/9/2005, p. 28; to N. Gray 4/4/61.

91. J. Ede to DJ n.d. 1952.

⁹² To Sutherland 10/1/50.

93. David Kindersley interviewed 9/6 1990.

⁹⁴ To T. Stoneburner 19/9/64; to V. Wynne-Williams 27/11/59.

⁹⁵ To T. Stoneburner 19/9/64; to N. Gray 14/4/61; Miles and Shiel, p. 274.

⁹⁶ DJ interviewed by Peter Orr, typescript edited by Orr, 1973; to. H. Sutherland 10/1 50

⁹⁷ To H. Sutherland 16/6 56, 14/6 56, 27/5/56, 14/7/56, 9/7/56.

⁹⁸ To N. Gray 4/4/61.

99. Displayed at the Austin/Desmond Gallery in 1990 this picture was sold to Yale entitled 'Arthur Mortally Wounded'; to S. Lewis 20/12/71.

100. To H. Grisewood 16/2/56; to S. Lewis Christmas 1956.

¹⁰¹ To Mr/ Stephens n.d. c 1970

102. To S. Lewis 19/12 1960.

¹⁰³ DJ in conversation with author.

104 To Harry W., 11 Jan 1955.

105 To Ruan McLean, draft, 1/9/61; to Saunders Lewis, St Thomas the Apostle, 1954; DJ, taped interview with Peter Orr, late 1960s.

¹⁰⁶ 'The writing on the wall', p. 28; to N. Gray 4/5/61.

107. To J. Ede 7/5/55; Simons at Faber to Jones 17/11 1954.

108 To H. Grisewood 8/8/54.

¹⁰⁹ To R. Hague 1/55.

110 Geoffrey Treasure to author 23/6/93; C. Wilcockson interviewed 22/6/88; M, Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88; C. Wilcockson to author 12/9/88.

¹¹¹ C. Wilcockson interviewed 22/6 1988; to C. Wilcockson 19/1/56, 3/1/66.

¹¹² Geoffrey Treasure to author 23/6/93.

¹¹³ to R. Hague 1/55N Cleverdon 'In Memoriam: Douglas Cleverdon' typescript. DJ in conversation with author 24/8 72 to H. Grisewood 20/12 56

¹¹⁴ H. Grisewood 31/3 1972.

¹¹⁵ To R. Hague 2/6/55; to H. Grisewood 31/3/72.

116 To H. Grisewood 23/12/65, 14/7/71.

¹¹⁷ Mrs J. Ryan interviewed 6/8/87/

¹¹⁸ A. Malan interviewed 22/6/89; M. Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88.

¹¹⁹ To R.Hague 1/55.

¹²⁰ to. H. Sutherland 16/2 55; to Hague 2/6 1955.

¹²¹ DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72.

¹²² DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72/ John Pearson *The Sitwells a Family Biography* (New York and London: Harcourt Brace 1978 p. 411; David Wright to T. Stoneburner 25/6 1975.

¹²³ To R. Hague 1/55.

¹²⁴ H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; S. Weil, *Gravity and Grace* (London: Routledge 1952) acquired/6 1955 passages marked by DJ on pp. xxviii-xxix.

125 To H. Grisewood 8/8/56.

126. To J. Ede 17/12/52; to V. Watkins 29/4/53m 29/4/55, 6/6/55/6/55; to H. Grisewood 8/8/56; 26/11/55.

127. To. H. Sutherland 17/5 57; to H. Grisewood 17/9/57; to R. Hague 1/55.

¹²⁸ B. Moray interviewed 6/85; to R. Hague 12/8/64; to R. Hague letter draft frag. n.d.; to author Private Secretary to Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, who cannot confirm' that the invitation 'came to fruition', 23/8 1999.

129. To H. Grisewood 26/11/55; to H. Grisewood Laetare Sunday 1957.

¹³⁰ To H. Sutherland 22/11/55.

¹³¹ M. Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88; to H. Grisewood 26/11/55.

¹³² To H. Sutherland 22/11/55; *LC* 26-7; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

¹³³ To Elizabeth Swan 17/1.56; P. Tegetmeier interviewed 12/6/86; to H. Grisewood 26/11/55.

134 To H. Grisewood 7/2/56, 4/3/60, 18/5/56.

¹³⁵ T.S. Eliot to H. Grisewood 19/4/56, 10/4/56; H. Grisewood to T. Stoneburner 8/12/63; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89.

136 To. H. Sutherland 28/7/56; E. and H. Hawkins interviewed 1/9/87.

137 John Ryan interviewed 6/8/87; to H. Grisewood 12/8/56, 8/8/56.

¹³⁸ To C. Eden 30/6/56; to H. Grisewood 24/8/56; 1/9/56; C. Eden interviewed 26/9/89.

139 To H. Grisewood 1/9 1956, Laetare Sunday 1957, 4/3 1960; Clarissa Eden told me DJ was 'pro-Suez'; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; to H. Grisewood 15/2/57, Candlemas 1957, 4/3/60.

¹⁴⁰ To J. Mambrino S.J. 19/11/56; *IN* 88, 89; S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86.

141 To H. Grisewood 8/8/56, 12/8/56.

142. *LC* 9; to H. Grisewood 7/3/62/

¹⁴³ S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90; to H. Grisewood 24/8/56; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner written record 7/6/69; H. Grisewood interviewed who may have improvised in giving this example of one of the problems with Northwick Lodge, 8/83; M. Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88; to V. Wynne-Williams 23/2/61.

¹⁴⁴C. Wilcockson interviewed 22/6/88; to H. Grisewood 1/9/56; to Richrd Wald *Herald Tribune* 1962; to D. Tegetmeier 3/8/62; J. Shirley Smith interviewed 21/6/90; to Richard Shirley-Smith 16/12/60.

145 To H. Sutherland 9/7/56; to J.Knight 5/5/58; DJ to L. Bonnerot, 'Down the Traversed History Paths', *Agenda* 5 (Spring-Summer 1967) 127; to H. Grisewood 12/8/56; to K. Raine 24/8/59.

¹⁴⁶ S. Honeyman interviewed by P. Orr typescript by R. Hague. n.d.; R. Hague interviewed by Blissett 8/77.

¹⁴⁷ S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86.

¹⁴⁸ J. Honeyman, interviewed 18/6/91, email to author 23/11/2009.

¹⁴⁹ To C. Ivainer 13/9/60; to H. Grisewood 12/8/56, 24/8/56; to J. Mambrino S.J. 19/11/56; '*Le Coeur du Temps*', *The Month* CCXXVI, 1211-12, July-August 1968, 45. For copyright permission to publish this translation I am grateful to Gregory Solari of Ad Solem Editions.

150 To B. DuFort 20/11/53; to C. Richards 25\10\64; to J. Stone 7/10/62; to S. Lewis 14/6/72.

¹⁵¹ To M. Percival 5/2/56, 23/5/62

¹⁵² To. H. Sutherland 11/4/53; to L. Bonnerot draft. n.d. c. 1970; to T. Stoneburner 8-9/1 1970.

¹⁵³ To H. Sutherland 17/5/57; to W. Cookson 24/1/65; to H. Grisewood 20/12/56; S. Lewis to DJ 19/12/56.

154 To H. Grisewood Candlemas/57.

155 To H. Grisewood Candlemas/57, 10/8 1953.

¹⁵⁶ V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 25/9/89; Antonia Fraser-Pinter interviewed 5/8/87.

¹⁵⁷ S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86; H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87.

158 To H. Grisewood 15/2/57, Laetare Sunday/57,4/3/60, 15/2/57.

¹⁵⁹ T. Stoneburner to DJ 2/8/61; Peter du Sautoy interviewed 23/6/88; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86; M. Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88.

160 To H. Grisewood 15/2/57.

161 To H. Grisewood Candlemas/57; 15/2/57.

162 to H. Grisewood Candlemas 1957.

163 To H. Grisewood Candlemas/57; to H. Grisewood 15/2/57; to H. Grisewood Laetare Sunday/57.

164 To Nancy Sanders 16-17/65; to Bernard Wall 17/7/67; to T. Burns 4-9/10/63; to H. Grisewood 26/11/55.

¹⁶⁵ To Sutherland 17/5/57.

166 To H. Grisewood Laetare Sunday/57.

167 To H. Grisewood 25/3/57.

¹⁶⁸ To J. Knight 20/7/57; N Braybrook 'David Jones: Painter and Poet' *Queens Quarterly* (Winter 1964) 508-9; to H. Sutherland 29/9/58, 5/11/58; Neville Braybrook to Tony Stoneburner 18/9/75.

¹⁶⁹ N. Braybrook to T. Stoneburner 18/9/75; to H. Sutherland 29/9/58, 5/11 58

¹⁷⁰ C. Duchemin to DJ 18/4/52; T. Burns interviewed 14/6/89; letter draft 12/57.

171. To Petra Tegetmeier 17/8/51; to Kathleen Raine, 27/3/61.

172 To H. Grisewood 12/8/57.

173 J. Ede to DJ n.d. c. 1955.

¹⁷⁴ J. Ede to DJ 31/1/56, 21/6/55, 10/2/56. J. Ede *A Way of Life* (Cambridge UP 1984) p. 194; J. Ede to DJ 18/7/55.

¹⁷⁵ To H. Sutherland 2/4 58; to Grisewood 14/7/71; H. Sutherland to DJ 5/58; to A Giardelli 21/5 65; to H. Sutherland 2/4/58.

¹⁷⁶ J. Stone interviewed 2/10/87; to R. Stone 23/9/58

¹⁷⁷ J. Stone interviewed 2/10/87; J. Stone to DJ 11/6/63; J. Stone to DJ 2/60.

178 To H. Grisewood 29/6/58, 18/2/60.

179. Malcolm Cochrane interviewed 20/6/88.

180. M. Cochrane interviewed 20/6/88.

¹⁸¹ To the British Council 20/9/58.

182 To H. Grisewood 11/7/58; *DGC* 177

¹⁸³ V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 22/9/95; to J. Stone 7/10/62 to V. Wynne-Williams 9/6/59.

184. To T. Stoneburner 20/11/64, 20/12/64; to H. Sutherland 26/6/58 29/9/58; quoted in M. Dorenkamp 'In the Order of Signs' p. 21.

¹⁸⁵ Rosemary Gould to P. du Sautoy 9/7/58; R. Gould to C. Monteith and C. Monteith to R. Gould 7/7 58.

¹⁸⁶ To H. Grisewood 11/7/58; C. Monteith to H. Grisewood 11/7/58, 25/7/58.

¹⁸⁷ To J. Stone 4/9/58.

¹⁸⁸ To S. Lewis 13-14/11/59; to V. Wynne-Williams 4/2/59.

¹⁸⁹. C. Monteith to T. Stoneburner 24/11/57; H. Grisewood to C. Monteith 22/7/58; to H. Rosenberg 23 draft frag. 10/64; to H. Rosenberg draft frag. n.d.

¹⁹⁰. H. Grisewood to C. Monteith 24/11/58; Simmons at Faber to Jones 20/4/59.

¹⁹¹ From lists sent to Miss Ash at Faber and dated 13/3 59 and 3/4/59; to Edward Little 29/4/60.

¹⁹². S. Lewis to DJ 3rd Sunday after Easter/59, 21/4/59

¹⁹³ To K. Raine 20/6/59; to S. Lewis 13-14/11/59.

¹⁹⁴ To H. Rosenberg 23 draft frag. 10/64; to H. Grisewood 17/5/72, 4/5/70; H. Grisewood interviewed 5/6/86; M. Bulbrook interviewed 26/6/88.

¹⁹⁵ To K. Raine 20/6/59; to H. Read 7/3/65; H. Read, *Listener* (14/5/59).

¹⁹⁶ J. Stone to DJ 26/7/59, 3/2/62; K. Clark to DJ 28/9/59.

¹⁹⁷ To H. Grisewood 18/2/60; to K. Clark 16/11/60.

¹⁹⁸ To J. Hooker 8/5/70.

¹⁹⁹ V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 22/9/95, 25/9/89; to V. Wynne-Williams 27/11/59; *DGC* 178; to T. Stoneburner 29/6/65; to V. Wynne-Williams 4/2 59, 12/9/59, 5/6/59.

200 V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 25/9/89; to H. Grisewood 4/8/62; to Hague 20/5/60.

²⁰¹ To V. Wynne-Williams 22/3/59, 9/8/59, 22/3/59.

202. To H. Grisewood 20/1/59; to V. Wynne-Williams 21/4 59; V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 25/9/89.

²⁰³ To V. Wynne-Williams 6/9/59, 11/9/59.

204. V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 25/9/89.

²⁰⁵ To V. Wynne-Williams 6/2/61.

206. To V. Wynne-Williams 9/6/59' Stanley Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91.

207. S. Honeyman 20/8 86H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90.N. Cleverdon interviewed 25/6/90to Janet Stone, 27 Nov 1961.

208. To H. Grisewood frag. n.d.; to V. Wynne-Williams 7/2/60; to J. Stone 4/10/62;to J. Stone 4/10/62.

²⁰⁹ to V. Wynne-Williams 10/5/ 59, 10/6/59.

210 S. Lewis to DJ 19/5/59; to S. Lewis 5/5/59

211 To S. Lewis Mid-Summer/61; to V. Wynne-Williams 22/3/59; to S. Lewis 18/1/62.

²¹² To V. Wynne-Williams 10/5/59, 5/6/59

213. To Griffith 12/9/64; to V. Wynne-Williams 9/8/59; letter draft frag. to M. Lloyd George 30/8/59.

214. Letter draft to M. Lloyd George 10/8/59.

215. J. Stone interviewed 2/10/87; to H. Grisewood 27/6/59;to J. Stone 13/10/59.

²¹⁶. To J. Stone 1/12/61; to J. Stone 19/7/59; to K. Raine 24/8/59.

²¹⁷. To V. Wynne-Williams frag. n.d.; to H. Grisewood 27/6/59, 9/10/61; P. Kelly interviewed 9/6/86; to K. Raine 24/8/59.

218 H. Grisewood interviewed 4/10/87; V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 25/9/89; to J. Stone 6/1/62, 3/7/61.

²¹⁹ To V. Wynne-Williams 11/9/59

²²⁰ To V. Wynne-Williams 4/9/59; V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 25/9/89; Ray Howard Jones interviewed 11/9/89; to V. Wynne-Williams 30/8 59, 4/9/59.

²²¹ V. Wynne-Williams televised interview 4/91; to V. Wynne-Williams 27/9/73; to S Honeyman 30/5/73; to V. Wynne-Williams 27/9/73; Wynne-Williams to DJ 1/2/62.

²²² To V. Wynne-Williams 4/9/59, 6/9/59; to S. Lewis 13-14/11/59; to J. Shirley Smith 4/8/61; to R. and J. Shirley Smith 11/2/61; to S Honeyman 30/5/73; to J. Stone 13/10/59, 7/10/58; to V. Wynne-Williams 10/6/60.

²²³ Painters in this tradition include Lawrence Alma-Tadema Leighton Albert Moore Edward Poynter Solomon Solomon and John Waterhouse.

²²⁴ J. Scott interviewed 16/6/88.

²²⁵ to R/ Hague 9/4/60.

²²⁶ To R. and J. Shirley Smith 11/2/61; to J. Stone 13/10/59.

²²⁷ To S. Lewis 13-14/11/59; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/8/86; to V Wynne-Williams 11/10/60

228 to H. Grisewood 20/1/59.

229. To J. Hooker 8/5/70; to V. Watlom 19/7/57; Joanne Fortune to DJ 28/11/56.

²³⁰W. Cookson to author 12/2/90; W. Cookson interviewed 14/6/88; M. Balme interviewed 28/6/88; to J.H. Johnston 16/5/64.

²³¹ To T. Stoneburner 30/8/63.

²³² To S. Lewis 23/10/64; to R. Hague 19/6/67; to N. Sanders 31/8/64; .to T. Stoneburner 15/5/67; *LC* 25; to V. Wynne-Williams 30/8/59,4/9/59.

233 To E. Hodgkin 19/1/60; to H. Sutherland 17/3/62; to H. Grisewood 8-9/9/67.

234 to S. Lewis 13-14/11/59; to V. Wynne-Williams 11/12 59; to J. Stone, 16/5/60.

²³⁵ To S. Lewis 13-14/11/59; S. Lewis to DJ 6/12/59, 30/12/59; to E. Ede 31/12/59.

236. to J. Stone 1/2/62 V. Wynne-Williams to author/8. 2005 to V. Wynne-Williams 9/60 to S. Lewis 20/11/61.

237 S. and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.

238 S. and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.

²³⁹ J. Scott interviewed 16/6/88; S. and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88, 19/6/90; to R. Hague 27/4/64 S. and M. Balme interviewed 7/5/93.

²⁴⁰ S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90.

²⁴¹ S. and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.

²⁴² S. and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.

²⁴³ S. and M. Balme interviewed 4/6/88, 19/6/90, 17/6/90, 24/6/88.

²⁴⁴ Solange Dayras interviewed 9/89; S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90.

245 S. and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88, 17/6/90.

246 S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90; to J. Stone 13/10/59.

247 S. and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.

248 S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90.

249 S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90.

²⁵⁰ To T. Stoneburner 22/9/66; to V. Wynne-Williams 7/2/60; *LC* 121; to Hague 29/2/60; to V. Wynne-Williams 10/6/60; to R. Hague 9/4/60.

²⁵¹ To V. Wynne-Williams 2/10/63.

²⁵² To V. Wynne-Williams 4/3/61, 23/2/61; to H. Grisewood 28/3/61.

²⁵³ A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86; to N. Sanders 3/8/64; to A Giardelli 9-11/8/73; to J. Stone 28/1/60; to A Giardelli 9-11/8/73; M. Richey 18/6/89; to A Giardelli 9-11/8/73.

²⁵⁴ M. Richey 18/6/89.

²⁵⁵ DJ taped interview by P. Orr summer 1972; Miles and Shiel *David Jones the Maker Unmade*.p. 225.

²⁵⁶ S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90. 24/6/88.

²⁵⁷ To J. Stone 28/1/60; to V. Wynne-Williams 7/2/60; to A Giardelli 9-11/8/73; to H. Grisewood 17/2/60, 4/3/60; P. Campbell interviewed 23/6/86.

258 To H. Grisewood 12/3/60.

²⁵⁹ N. White 'Image and Body in Painting' typescript, 2002.

²⁶⁰ To A Giardelli 9-11/8/73; K. Bell interviewed 12/6/86; M. Richey interviewed 18/6/89; M.C. to DJ 12/12/65.

²⁶¹ To V. Wynne-Williams 10/6/60; to Hague 29/2/60; to H. Grisewood 4/3/60; to Hague 20/5/60; DJ recorded by A Giardelli 1965; to S. Lewis 6/7/60; to J. Stone 6-7/9/60; to A. Pollen 31/8-1/9/60; to K. Clark 16/11 60; to D. Travis 29/12/60.

²⁶² To R. Hague 1/6/60; to R. and J. Shirley Smith 17/8/61; to A Giardelli 29/9 66; to J. Stone 8/1/62; to A Giardelli 9-11/8/73.

²⁶³ DJ interviewed by A. Giardelli 8/6/66; to A. Giardelli 8-9/3 n.d. [1970-4].

²⁶⁴ To N. Sanders 3/8/64; to A Giardelli 9-11/8 73.

²⁶⁵ To A. Giardelli 11/8/73.

²⁶⁶ To V. Wynne-Williams 6/8/62; to J. Scott 7/5/62 Before this his framer had been James Bourlet & Sons in Nassau and Wheatley Picture Frames in Litchfield St.

²⁶⁷ To C. Richards 25/10/64

²⁶⁸ To J. Scott 8/1/62; 'Abstract Art' David Jones Epoch and Artist ed. Harman Grisewood (London: Faber 1956) p. 265.

²⁶⁹ Lucy Jebb interviewed 11/6/91.

²⁷¹ Richard Shirley-Smith, 'An Outline of my contact with David Jones.' Typescript; to V. Wynn-Williamss 10/6/60; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/8/86.

²⁷² S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87.

²⁷³ S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86.

²⁷⁴ SH interviewed May S. Honeyman interviewed 10/87, 6/91,5/93,1/10/87.

²⁷⁵ S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86.

²⁷⁶ To Grisewood 12/3/60.

²⁷⁷ John Cochrane interviewed 20/6/88; M. Cochrane interviewed 20/6/88; to B. Travis 26/4/48; Hilda had invited him to see the picture at her country home, Bladon Castle, Burton-on-Trent. (Undated latter of 21 March).

²⁷⁸ M. Cochrane int. 20/6/88.

²⁷⁹To Grisewood, 12/3/60; to Kathleen Raine 20/6/59, 248/8/59; S. Honeyman interviewed 6/91.

²⁸⁰ To Grisewood 12/3/60; to K. Raine 20/6/59; to V. Wynne-Williams 6/9/59; S. Honeyman, interviewed 5/93; to H. Grisewood 21/7/60; to S. Lewis 22/7/60; to H. Sutherland, frag. [1960]; to C. Ivainer 13/9/60.

^{281.} To V. Wynne-Williams 26/12/64; to R. Hague 6/1/65.

²⁸² Peter Levi in conversation with author.

²⁸³ To S. Lewis 6/7/60.

²⁸⁴ To S. Lewis 6/7/60; to R. Hague 1/6/60.

285. to Tony Stoneburner, 24 Feb 1959.

286. To T. Stoneburner 24/6/61; to Bernard Bergonzi 3/12/65.

²⁸⁷ Juliet Shirley Smith interviewed 21/6/90.

²⁸⁸ To R. Shirley Smith 16/12/60; to J. Shirley Smith 4/8/61.

289. To R. and J. Shirley Smith 11/2/61.

²⁹⁰ To R. Hague 9/4/60.

Part VII Endings

Chapter 15 1960-74

The 1960s were a time of youth-driven cultural change in Britain involving a rejection of traditional values which indicated to Jones an accelerating cultural decline. This was strikingly noticeable in the BBC under its stewardship by Sir Hugh Greene. An early intimation of deterioration was the change in the title of the Children's Hour to 'Junior Time' and the diminishment of its content. Jones believed that 'the sophisticated, the complex, the cultivated, the sensitized and the experimental finds its nearest ally in those things that belong to the children', he wrote. 'We are (I hope), all children, but we are not all of the "junior time".' He also saw evidence of decline in the quality of journalism, especially arts reviewers, who were not as deeply and widely read as their predecessors, and who did not read carefully what they reviewed. Auberon Waugh, he thought, was a prime example, writing 'undergraduate, lightweight stuff.' The one stellar exception, he thought, was Haggart, the theatre critic for the *Financial Times*, the paper he considered 'the best on the arts of all.' He now believed that Spengler, in writing about cultural decline, 'far from being too gloomy, may alas have been too optimistic. For his vision, great as it was and extraordinarily prophetic, did not fully take in the totality and effectiveness of our Western gimmick & gadget-world. The real horror is not that the blustering dramatic and very German vision of Spenger may come true but that the far less sensitive, more wholly irreligious, totally middle-class and boring vision of [H.G.] Wells may come true'.¹

From his high window Jones had watched the city become 'a mini-Manhattan with St Paul's like a little blue blister' among the tall glass skyscrapers. He laughed about it with friends but thought it monstrous—the skyline of London being destroyed in a few years. He felt that 'the last war ... was paradise ... by comparison with now' and he was 'beginning to feel like Henry I who because of the foundering of the *White Ship* ... 'never smiled again.'²

Change for the worse was ubiquitous and visible even in Harrow. He wrote an American who was planning to visit,

I do hope ... that you won't be terribly disappointed. This country is so rapidly changing owing to modern technocracy—the vast increase in motor-cars, the mushroom springing up of new towns & scientific installations, the spoliation of miles & miles of what (only a *few* years ago) was beautiful coast-line, by ‘ribbon development’ of houses, bungalows, caravans etc. [so] that one dreads to go to places one has known, in case one should find them totally unrecognizable and one can see no solution to it—it's so small an area by modern standards. The whole ‘feel’ of site & locality disappears overnight. Even here in Harrow, ... the character of the place has vastly changed during the last few years alone, so that things one did not regard as particularly attractive, a small row of late Victorian houses & shops, let's say, one *now* regards with positive affection as at least being ‘creaturely’ with little gardens, etc. because they are fast being demolished & replaced by standardized blocks of glass & steel office-buildings, & that's happening *everywhere*. ... The very attempt (most laudable in itself & absolutely necessary) to carefully conserve important ‘ancient monuments’ makes them very often appear a bit like things in a museum—tidied up, labelled, with possibly an official ‘caretaker’ as it were to show visitors about the place—again necessary, but somehow deadening.

Westminster Abbey and Canterbury Cathedral had ‘a “museum” feeling now,’ as did Stonehenge, which had looked much as in Constable's painting of it when he first saw it, but which he had later seen with the grass cut and a keeper's hut nearby.³

In August 1960 Frederick Gibberd's design for the Catholic cathedral in Liverpool was published. The building was to resemble an inverted top with a spiky crown on it. Arthur Pollen, who hated it, telephoned, and Jones, too, was appalled—by the banality of ‘this bloody fun-fair,’ but it was part of an ubiquitous banality that he was powerless even to challenge—at least this seemed so to him since the failure of *Epoch and Artist* to stir debate. He particularly objected to the cathedral's topmost ‘crown of thorns’: ‘a crown of thorns is inevitably conditioned as to scale & size. You can't *inflate* it into a vast size under the misconceived notion of “symbolism.” ... It's rather like supposing that one could use as a motif a wild rose (let's say) and enlarge it to the size of a bloody great rhododendron and still expect it to have the fragile delicacy of a June rose trailing an English hedgerow. ... those bloody great repeated “late Gothic” Tudor roses in the chapel of Trinity College Cambridge display (in my opinion) that error of taste.’⁴

‘Part of the horror’ of current aesthetics was, he thought, the impulse to be original. ‘Take spoons,’ he told Honeyman, ‘At a certain point in its development the spoon became beautiful and could not be improved, but chaps had to go on changing the shape and getting it wrong. That applies to a lot. People really can't see that something has been taken to a

point where it should be left alone.’ And ‘they can't or won't make even a bloody egg-cup without arsing around with the perfectly reasonable and (I reckon) *unimprovable* traditional shape.’ In the summer he had gone down into Harrow to the hardware shop to buy a few ordinary cups ‘and was offered a number of hideous, mean, stupid, low, dolled up objects made of some vile material.’ After a month's search he managed to find in a junk shop some ‘ordinary, sensible egg-cup shaped egg-cups made of something more or less china or earthenware.’⁵

On the evening of 18 February 1960, he received a visit from Bernard Wall, whom he had not seen in five years, ‘a sweet bloke and an acutely perceptive and exceedingly intelligent’. Wall wanted a long article on Jones for the July 1960 issue of *Twentieth Century*, which he was editing. They discussed this and Wall subsequently enlisted Hague to write it. That summer Hague visited frequently from Pigotts to talk about Jones's work. Hague lacked discipline, and Wall had ‘to stand over him’ to get him to complete the article, entitled ‘David Jones: a Reconnaissance,’ the longest and most thorough of the articles on Jones to date, written with characteristic lucidity and emphasis. Jones thought it ‘the best thing so far written on the stuff’.⁶

Kenneth Clark visited in July 1960 and spoke of the book he had undertaken to write on Rembrandt and the Italian Renaissance. Jones told him that although Rembrandt was obviously an artist of ‘great stature he had not liked Rembrandt at all for most of his life’—his works seldom if ever moved him—but in later years he ‘felt him a bit more’. The one he liked best was *The Conspiracy of Julius Civilis: the Oath*, depicting the start of the Batavian rebellion against the Romans. He had a postcard photograph of it, and Clark promised to get him a better reproduction. It is an eerie painting, a sort of off-centre secular Last Supper, with conspirators at a table touching swords, all aglow and seen from well below the tabletop. Influenced by conversation with Jones, Clark would praise it in his book as the supreme example of Rembrandt's work in the Venetian mode, in which light becomes the means of expression. During his visit, Clark bought a chalice painting, about which Jones later wrote: ‘I think a pale gold frame *might* be O.K.—these *bloody drawings* of mine are perfect devils to mount & frame—and they look quite different in differing lights & at differing times of day.’ Willingness to sell him a picture was a sign of his esteem for Clark, who had him to his Albany flat for lunch to see it

framed. As they ate, Jones confessed, 'I'm bloody miserable about all my efforts as an artist. There's so *terribly* little that *really* comes off ... it is depressing.' His disappointment was real, but likely influenced by his emotional state, which he characterized in 1960 as 'just a dull, stupid feeling of absolute futility ... which I can't seem to throw off.'⁷

Turning sixty-five in November 1960, he felt 'a great deal older.' His lack of energy '& loss of spirit' surprised him.' He was suffering from haemorrhoids ('what a ghastly word to spell'), which reminded him of King Alfred, 'the best king the English ever had', who was so afflicted, as are 'millions of other chaps', so he supposed 'one should not complain.' (Saunders Lewis had the same ailment and recommended 'Agarol'). He was also suffering from rheumatism, neuralgia, and fibrositis in his back, which precluded his moving furniture in his room. In former years he had been, he thought, 'reasonably good' at carrying heavy things; now he was 'terrified' of it because it 'inevitably' brought on 'the blasted fibrocitis', which, once aggravated could hurt for weeks. 'Sometimes' he wrote, 'it is very ignominious, because if someone is struggling up stairs ... with a suitcase I can't very well offer to help.' (At the Harrow underground station a woman had asked him to carry her suitcase up the steps. He had said, 'No, I'm sorry I can't', and she said, 'Well, I think you're the rudest man I have ever met'.⁸) Time now seemed 'to slip by more quickly as each month passes.

His favourite food was now eggs and olives, and his favourite drink hot water and lemon with sugar. He consumed six lemons a day because he had to drink something and whisky was now 'impossible except in small quantities'. He also liked hot lemonade, which Bell told him it would prevent colds.⁹

In early October 1960, two men in suits brought forms to arrange his Old Age Pension. But there was insufficient proof that he was Walter David Jones. And when they asked how much he intended to work, he told them he works '16 hours a day'. They told him that to get a pension he could only work 12 hours a week. He could not understand the forms, which seemed to apply only to someone retiring from a paying job. 'How I loath & sicken at *anything & everything official*,' he wrote to Valerie, 'The very *sight* of a form makes me wretched & disturbed' Miss Watts, his accountant, interpreted and

completed them for him. Only in 1963, however, would Grisewood find a way to have him officially retired, owing to his earning less than £100 a year. Still he would decline to claim his pension owing to apprehension over the possible tax ramifications if he were to complete some work that sold for a substantial sum. It would not be until January 1965, when he was seventy, that he began receiving a National Insurance Retirement Pension of £262 per year. Add to that his Civil List pension of £350, interest on his bank account of about £70, and earnings of about £100; and his total annual income then was £782.¹⁰

His sixty-fifth birthday was, for him, a very busy day in town. In the morning he went to the posthumous Matthew Smith exhibition at Burlington House. In 1953 he had been ‘hugely impressed’ by Smith’s Tate exhibition, especially the big pictures owned by Epstein—and through mutual friends he had conveyed to Smith, whom he knew slightly, how impressed he was. Now he was disappointed—there were too many too close together and ‘sameness ... took the edge off the splendour’ but then ‘the galleries of the Royal Academy tend to kill whatever goes into them.’ After the exhibit he had lunch with friends, had tea with a friend, and dined with the Honeymans, Stanley driving him back to Harrow after midnight ‘in record time’. ‘Quite a gadabout day.’¹¹

On 6 December 1960 he had lunch with the Clarks and then went on with ‘K’ to see the Philip Wilson Steer show at the Tate. He ‘greatly enjoyed’ being with Clark but did not like the exhibition: ‘too limited for one thing & somehow they had not got some of the best ones. Because, although old Steer could not draw or at least drew in a very boring sort of way, he sometimes did jolly good paintings I think. Not a patch on Sickert, *of course*.’ When Steer died in 1942 he left, to Jones’s astonishment, £88,000—‘pretty good for a good artist.’ From the disappointing show, they went to look again at the Turners, for which they shared ‘a *big* enthusiasm.’ In fact they spent most of their time ‘looking at the Turners, as usual.’ And as usual Jones was confirmed in his conviction that Turner is ‘the greatest of all English painters,’ and at his best in the late paintings that were not touched up with dark tones at the insistence of exhibitors.¹²

Before Christmas 1960 he caught a cold which was ‘rather mild at first’ but developed into ‘some filthy sort of “flu”’, one of the worst he had had. Like other bouts of flu, this one brought back neurasthenic symptoms of anxiety and depression. By Christmas, he was a bit better and felt able to go to lunch with T.S. Eliot, his wife, and

mother-in-law. Jones had been surprised at the invitation since he not seen Eliot in over a year. He seemed to Jones far more aged and suffering from spending the winter in England. Jones mentioned how beautiful Hyde Park was by the Serpentine, almost like a spring day, and just one or two people about. It reminded him of London depopulated during the war. He enjoyed the visit, liked the mother-in-law, and admired Wyndham Lewis's portrait of Ezra Pound hanging on the wall. It was 'a peaceful and nice occasion.' Although unwell, Eliot was 'obviously *very happy*'. Jones came away feeling 'deeply attached to him' and convinced again that he is 'a really great man & a good one'.¹³

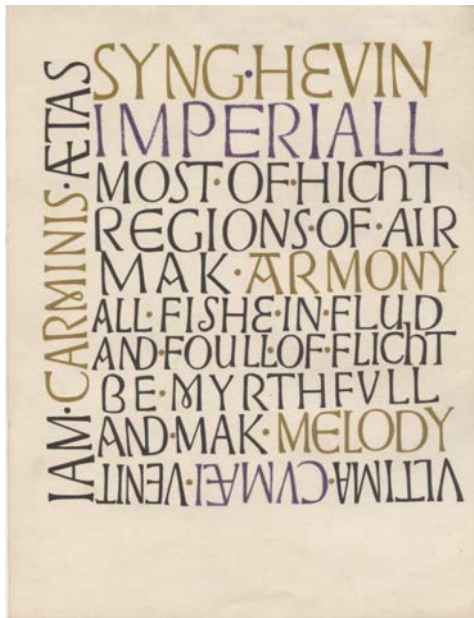
For Christmas, he had sent Saunders Lewis an inscription, about which he wrote, 'I love the procession of colours. They have a musical look, a harmony of relations, gold answering gold, date to date, round the purple Llywelyn.' In thanks, Lewis sent him a bottle of Haig whisky, which arrived on Christmas morning, 'just what I wanted.'¹⁴ (The following Christmas, it would be two bottles.)

1961 was a year of commissions. On February 1, David Bland offered him 50 guineas for to design the next Faber Christmas Card. Jones wanted not to do it but felt unable to say no. He wanted simply to make an inscription, which would reproduce well, but Faber wanted a drawing, so he did both. He made a watercolour of an angel playing a viola *da braccio*—not, he realized, his sort of subject—trying 'to keep it free & un-tight & yet fairly defined' for reproduction. By mid-March it was finished, and he wrote to Kathleen Raine, 'I seldom like what I do, but I thought, in a sort of way, that that wasn't so bad—though not *exactly* as I wanted it.' The reproduction was, for him, a happy surprise (fig.1). He told friends that, though 'greatly enfeebled', it could have



1. Faber Christmas Card, 1961

been worse, and he praised it to the people at Faber as ‘superb’. He liked very much the inscription (fig. 2), a combination of Virgil’s *Eclogue IV* and verse from ‘The Nativity of



2. David Jones, *Syng Hevin Imperiall*, 1961

Christ’ by Dunbar, ‘a too neglected poet’ who ‘at his best’ is ‘glorious, more moving than Chaucer.’ (He could recite all fifty-six lines of the poem.) In August 1961 he would examine the proofs of the Christmas card and had the angel moved slightly to avoid the ‘feeling of slipping down and of the balance being too far to left.’ He stressed that the inscription and drawing must not face one another since ‘the strength of the lettering knocks out the already fragile impression of the drawing.’ He preferred the inscription on the front cover and the drawing inside; Faber preferred otherwise. Just over three thousand copies were printed, and the original drawing was returned to him on 24

November. To friends to whom he sent the card, he recommended that they cut it along the spine and separate the visually weighty inscription from the fragile drawing.¹⁵

In the spring of the year, Eliot commissioned him to design a bookplate including an elephant’s head in profile holding an arrow in its trunk. (When Eliot met with friends in the late ‘30s, they nicknamed him ‘Elephant’, not because he never forgot—as Peter Ackroyd guesses in his biography of Eliot—but because an elephant was on the Eliot family crest and also, perhaps, because ‘Eliot’ sounds a little like ‘Elephant’.) After two months, Jones supplied a drawing, which Valerie Eliot liked, but with bristly hair on the elephant’s head that Eliot wanted removed so it would look more heraldic. Jones insisted



3. David Jones, Eliot’s Elephant, 1961

on doing the removing ‘as I can’t very well in conscience let some other chap arse around with the design.’ He had initially protested that he was no good at this sort of thing, and he was right. The drawing is silly (fig. 3). He disclosed one of the difficulties to Eliot: ‘I can’t draw a thing unless I can feel the right association—and I can’t associate you with elephants. But ‘anyway,’ he thought, ‘it’s

done and doesn't look too bad.' The Eliots admired it, and, after the bookplate was made, Valerie Eliot framed the original drawing and hung it in their front hall.¹⁶

Also in the spring, Aneurin Talfan Davies asked him to design an emblem and lettering for *Taliesin*, a journal for the 'Welsh Academy'. He had to draw a profile of 'a sort of representative "prince" of the sub-Roman period' within an oval (fig. 4). It was 'an awful job' because he had to combine 'a late-Roman medallion motif' with Celtic lettering. After finishing, he wrote to Davies, 'I had an appalling job with the head because there is absolutely no Welsh iconography to suggest anything ... Also I wanted to combine ... something of the Celtic, something of the Classical, something of the "prince", something of the "bard", something young & more or less debonair with something a bit battered & strewn & wounded. I know I've not succeeded. Also my sort of drawing is very difficult indeed to make go with lettering' (LF 55). In the end he thought it too complicated for the reduced scale, a failure though 'it might look worse.'¹⁷ For this he was paid £10.



4. David Jones, *Taliesin*, 1961

Likewise that spring, he was commissioned to make a picture, something Arthurian, by Jonathan Scott, a tall, thin, bespectacled history student at Balliol. He had begun visiting Jones in 1958 during his last term at Harrow. Having noticed Scott reading *The Mabinogion*, Malory and other Celtic and Arthurian material, Ronnie Watkins introduced him to Jones, who discussed with him the entire range of early Welsh material. There was a relationship of teacher to student. Astonishingly intelligent, Scott that year read without difficulty *In Parenthesis* and *The Anathemata* (aided by his family's military background and having studied Classics with Plumtree). He



5 David Jones, sketch for *Wife of the Count of the Saxon Shore*, 1961

continued visiting for years, sometimes accompanied by his friend Malcolm Cochrane. He discussed with Jones the possibility of choosing for his special subject of study the Roman Army, as Jones hoped he would since most of the work on that had been done by Germans and the one book by an Englishman, H.M.D Parker's *The Roman Legions*, 'is not awfully good.' For Scott's picture, Jones considered Olwen in 'Kilhwch ac Olwen' but decided on 'The Wife of the Count of the Saxon-Shore'. What seems to be a sketch for the picture when she was Olwen-like (fig. 5) demonstrates more appealing freedom and unrestrained presence than the final painting, after three attempts, of a Romano-British matron handing flowers to her daughter against a Roman background (fig. 6). Scott recognized the motifs in the drawing, and Jones liked that. He told him, 'I think at least that it has got the *matrona* feeling. Yes, I envisaged her as the wife of one of those ... 4th-5th ... Century figures in Britain, just previous to the final triumph of the new Anglo-Saxon Order—so, in a sense, 'Arthurian'. The picture included a heron, recalling those he used to see in the valley of the Honddu. He wished he liked it more: 'It's not so bad, but not really quite what I wanted it to look like. It's a bit laboured, I feel, but the

best I could manage.'¹⁸

He was working on a mid-length poem, which he finished in the spring of 1961: 'The Dream of Private Clitus'.

Originating in material he had written at Sheffield Terrace, it celebrates friendship as antithetical to empire. Clitus is a Roman legionary (an autobiographically based character), who recounts that while fighting Germans in the Teutoberg forest he dreamt of being on the lap of the Mother Goddess in the frieze of the *Ara Pacis* in Rome. Jones wrote the poem for radio broadcast and offered it to the Third Programme, where someone wanted it read by an actor. Jones said no and was then allowed to read it himself. He recorded it on the evenings of 5 and 7 May at Broadcast House. Davies liked Jones's reading, but Jones had been



6. David Jones, *Wife of the Count of the Saxon Shore*, 1962

irritated and nervous. He disliked ‘those blasted sound-proof cubicles’ and despite ‘the gagetry’ was not able to have his reading replayed in order to gauge the pitch and volume of his voice. When it was broadcast, on 30 August 1961, he was happily surprised. It ‘didn’t sound so bad after all’, and he wondered whether irritation while recording improved his reading. It was in some places over-emphatic, he thought, in others too deliberate, but generally clear.¹⁹ The poem itself is easier to understand than any he had previously written of comparable length. As with Dylan Thomas’s later poetry, his writing from now on would be more accessible owing partly to experience broadcasting to a large public.

In Sept 1963, Sonia (Brownell) Orwell, who was editing *Art & Literature*, would visit—Jones, ‘glad to see her again’—to ask him for a poem, and he would give her ‘Private Clitus’, which Spender had requested for *Encounter* but had been unable to publish. It would appear in March 1964 but, to his disappointment, without a photograph of the Tellus Mater in the *Ara Pacis*, which he wanted to face the opening page.²⁰

In the summer of 1961, he wrote to Stephen Spender asking for a photograph of *The Tiger* (1932), which Spender owned and which Jones thought one of his best animal drawings. On 4 December Spender visited, bringing the original. He said that he had enjoyed it for years and was loaning it for the rest of Jones’s life on the condition that he will it to Spender’s son. Jones went to supper with the Spenders on 11 December, and Spender visited him again on the 20th, when Jones gave him a lovely inscription, *Alma Mater. The Tiger* now hung over Jones’s fire-place.²¹

In February 1961, he read Teilhard Chardin’s *The Divine Milieu*, translated by Bernard Wall and given him by Wall’s daughter. He admired it and found it ‘exceedingly moving’, the work of ‘a great & truly religious mind’—a ‘man of tremendous qualities and transparent & evident goodness & holiness.’ In 1962 he read *The Phenomenon of Man* and was reminded of themes in the opening section of *The Anathemata*, where evolution has its purpose and fulfillment in the Incarnation. He felt ‘a compelling sympathy’ with Teilhard but was surprised at his failure to notice ‘that with the astounding advances of both “pure” and “applied” science, the notion of *signa*, or “sacrament”, becomes more and more alien to the men of our megalopolitan technocracy’

so that ‘this technological advance’ involves ‘enormous reverses and deprivations’ for ‘man-the-artist’. And he could not endorse Teilhard’s theory that man was evolving towards reunion with God. It demonstrated a naivety, he thought, congruent with Teilhard’s evident ignorance of the arts, in which there is no temporal progression in value—‘Picasso is no improvement over Lascaux.’ Remaining Spenglerian in viewing historical change as cyclic rather than progressive, Jones was unsympathetic to any faith in progress, however spiritualized. Early cult men and forgotten people were everywhere victims of superseding civilization, which cannot preserve, cannot even see, the culture it obliterates, which is often finer and better than the newer, physically or technically stronger civilization. The solution to this problem in history was, for him, no earthly new Jerusalem but the resurrection of the dead.²² The loss of mortal individuals, groups, and cultures was real and irrevocable unless restored by that greatest of Christian mysteries, about which he never directly wrote but which meant a great deal to him.

About the arts, he was now pessimistic. ‘The world of technocracy’ imposed problems ‘a great deal more difficult, more far-reaching & complex’ than those he used to discuss with Gill under the headings of industrialism and capitalism. The negative effect on ‘man-the-artist’ seemed total and irrevocable. The chief difficulty in painting and poetry was, he thought, ‘finding “valid signs” in a situation that is increasingly emptying man of the notion of “sign”’, a situation ‘causing countless numbers of people to be cut off from the whole past & its presuppositions’: this ‘strikes at the root of *all poeisis*, whatever the media.’ Unless we become ‘sub-men, we shall remain inescapably of the world of “sign”, creatures who attach significance to things and acts apart from their utile, functional’ aspects.’ He believed that ‘technological man will sooner or later be subject to the pull of this fundamental part of himself *qua* man.’ But he thought it obvious ‘that it will be hard going for a long time’²³

Like artists, priests, too, were Ishmaels, exiled for the same reasons. Both are committed to signs and significance. Non-sacramental religions, such as Quakerism and Buddhism, need not be affected, but Catholicism was in trouble since it had ‘an *art-form*,’ the Mass, as its central act. Other aspects of religion, such as morality and mystical experience, were, he thought, relatively free of negative effects.

He nevertheless admired Teilhard and was unhappy about the Vatican condemning Teilhard's ideas from 1925 till his death in 1955, a condemnation renewed in 1962. When Diana Creagh visited from Canada in March 1963 (they had last seen each other before the war) and she mentioned being invited to join the Legion of Mary, a group that attributed redemption to the Holy Spirit through Mary, he expressed sadness that the Church should encourage such movements while silencing some of its brightest minds.²⁴

In September 1961, Grisewood brought a recording of Cyril Cusack reading from "Shem the Penman." It is a bravura performance of 'that *incredibly* amusing chapter.' (LF 62), and Jones loved it, listened to it repeatedly, and marked his copy of the chapter in *Finnegans Wake* so he could easily follow the bits read. It was 'marvellous', beyond what he had thought possible. In October, listening to it was his 'chief joy', consolation for suffering for over a month with a chest cold. Cusack's reading reaffirmed his belief in the primacy of Joyce. 'I think Joyce is *so* good,' he wrote,

that he makes *all* other writers just hardly worth bothering about. The trouble is that *unless* one *hears* it interpreted by an Irishman of great sensibility, it's practically meaningless ... even the *mere sound* is unguessable from trying to read the text. ...maybe Joyce chose an impossible technique for communication, but I am convinced that it's a work of staggering genius—quite unique, not only unsurpassed but unapproached—but, alas, owing to its technique, virtually a closed book to practically all of us. ... I can do no more than worry-out one sentence in a page, but it's always worth it. Excruciatingly funny & terrifying as well.²⁵

Joyce seemed to him 'absolutely incomparable' in exemplifying 'the essence of the central thing which all artists have to do in some way or other: making significant as much as possible in as compact a space as possible. All great things are like that. I mean, you just strip off layers and you find more underneath and you strip off another and there is more underneath'. He now thought Joyce 'absolutely colossal.' In August 1963, he was especially surprised and delighted to find in the Shem chapter a reference to *Pridewin* (171), Arthur's ship, which is mentioned only in an obscure poem in Old Welsh. He believed that most writers are not broadly learned but know only what they need to for their work. Yeats was like that, inaccurate even in his Neoplatonism. Milton was an exception, thoroughly learned. So was Joyce: 'O yes, incredibly,' he told visitors. 'The way he plays around with Welsh is amazing, not to mention German, French, Italian and

all the Irish, which I can't read, and Latin, which I barely know. He gives his words so many facets! When I have a go at *Finnegans Wake*' (with the help of various dictionaries and *The Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake*, acquired in 1954), 'I spend half a day deciphering a few lines. It's never disappointing, and damn funny, and sometimes quite bawdy. Joyce is the greatest poet, word-artist, the'—he pursed his lips to say 'planet', then said—'West has produced.'²⁶

He was also reading at this time a newly purchased copy of Flann O'Brian's *At Swim Two Birds*, which Joyce had praised as a great comic novel. Jones wrote to Pollen, 'It's a joy'. And in 1962 he read extensively for the first time the poetry of Robert Burns, which he thought 'the strangest mixture of jolly good short things & bloody awful long things.'²⁷

In March 1961 he had read a good deal of the *New English Bible* which, he wrote, 'fails at every point. It's worse than Knox & worse than Rieu.' For theological reasons he objected to the substitution of 'girl' for 'virgin' in Luke's gospel. For literary reasons he objected to replacing 'the lively oracles of God' with 'the living utterances of God'—because of the historic undertones of 'oracles' and because 'lively' is colloquial. He thought that the translators failed as artists, whose job is to make 'available to the present what the past holds.' An example of misjudgement, he thought, was the replacing of 'we would see Jesus' with 'we wish to see Jesus' In words illuminating his own approach to language, he disliked the choice of words that

have least undertones & overtones of an historic nature. So that allusions & liaisons and evocations of all sorts are lost, which in turn means that the Jacks & Jills for whom this work is said to be especially intended, will be deprived of a very great deal of their rightful inheritance. Historical, mythological, etymological nuances of all sorts which should be carried forward from the past to the future are, I submit, cast aside in order, it would seem to subserve a supposedly 'contemporary' speech. Perhaps the basic mistake is rather analogous to that explained by the words 'talking down to children'.

Hearing from fellow Catholics who thought the translation admirable, he began to wonder, he wrote, 'if I'm a bit cracked or whether they are. I feel it to be rather like being given processed cheese when you have ordered Double Gloucester'.²⁸

Today, he thought, successful translation would require 'an artist of *very great stature*' and probably different writers for different books of the bible. Even so, the best

he would expect would be free renderings accompanied by an extensive apparatus of scholarly footnotes and glosses. ‘Of course,’ he wrote, ‘I’m probably quite hopeless, for, to me, even the A.V. is very smoothed out & ‘of the study’ compared with old Wycliffe.’ In 1933, he had read Wycliffe’s parable of the prodigal son in *The Oxford Book of English Prose*—‘an absolute knock out’. He had subsequently read the entire Wycliffe New Testament and find it ‘pretty terrific’ because of its ‘vigour & concreteness, lifting up of the visual image, making what is conceptual shine out through the particular, less generalization (another enemy of evocative power).’ He also disliked Ronald Knox’s translation and regretted that Martindale had been incarcerated by the Nazis in Denmark and rendered unavailable to advise him. Later he would find the *Jerusalem Bible* ‘mostly pretty bad throughout’ although ‘the Notes are usually *extremely* good, informative & don’t avoid the difficult issues.’²⁹

In 1961 Nicolette Gray and her family moved from Greenwich, where they had lived since 1955, back to London so that her husband Basil could be Keeper of Oriental Antiquities at the British Museum, the post her father had held. The Grays moved into the house, in the middle of the right-hand wing attached to the Museum, where Nicolette had lived as a girl. She was now more accessible, and Jones visited. He liked especially the view from the upper story of the Ionic capitals of the colonnade along the front of the Museum. On several occasions, he said he wanted to draw them. But his eyes were bad, his energy low. He was no longer drawing much and had not for decades carried with him his drawing board and materials. He told her how much he liked her article on his inscriptions in *Motif 7*—written ‘with great authority & perception’ and not, like most art criticism, ‘either laborious or “smart”’—but also how much he disliked the illustrations, which lacked ‘the punch ... of the originals’. This was owing, he said, to the disappearance, in photography, of the ‘the thick, *cool, very opaque, white* background in the originals’, which gives them their ‘incisiveness and lapidary feeling’. ‘The weight, tonality & texture of the paper and paint is lost.’ One day he was invited to the Gray home by one of the children, Camilla, when her mother wasn’t there. The three youngest children—Camilla, Edmond, and Sophy—were present, all now grown up and Edmond

and Sophy studying at Oxford. But Nicolete was not there, and he felt ill at ease without her. He never returned.³⁰

His pocket diary for 1961 shows that he received a steady stream of visitors: Len Walton, Kathleen Raine, her friend the American poet Ned O’Gorman, Isobel Sharpe, Dorothea Travis, Christopher Finzi (the composer’s son), Nicolete Gray, Barbara Wall, her daughter Bernardine, Mike Richey, Manya Harari (now, as a publisher, introducing Pasternak and Solzhenitsyn to the English-speaking world), Ralph Harari, Illtud Evans (now editor of *Blackfriars*), ‘dear’ Jane Carter (once a month), Arthur Wheen, Ray Howard Jones (accompanied by Raymond Moore), Morag Owens, Tom Burns, Douglas and Mia Woodruff, Alison Roberts (with whom he afterwards went to the British Museum), Mike Richey, Malcolm and Jonathan Cochrane, Stanley Honeyman, Valerie Wynne-Williams, Louis Bussell (once a month), Dr Bell and Mr Caddy the barber (on the first Friday of every month), René Hague, Clare Shepherd, Geoffrey Treasure, ‘Ken’ Timmons (and his brother David), Ken Wilkes (a former Biology Master, now a Head Master, who came ‘for a bit of a chat ... every ten days or so’³¹), and Carmen Burns (Tom’s sister). He went to dinner at Tom and Mabel’s flat, on 13 June with Martin D’Arcy, on 20 July with the Woodruffs. He also dined with the Hararis, Speaight, Ray Howard Jones, Kathleen Raine, Mick Richey (with his friend Lady Melchet), Barbara Moray, and the Honeymans. He saw Grisewood once or twice a month, often dining with him.

And he saw a good deal of a new friend, Pamela Donner, to whom he was introduced by Tom Burns about 1960. When visiting her son, a Harrow student, she often visited Jones. She was a lovely brunette, married to a much older man made a lord for success in parliament. Jones opened doors for her into aspects and areas of literature, particularly Arthurian material, recommending books she then obtained and read. Together they talked about modal and non-modal music, their mutual friend Clarissa Eden, his war experiences, his love for his parents, and his affection for Valerie, who, he said, was ‘quite incapable of writing what I call letters but as long as I can keep up some sort of liason, it’s not so bad.’ He was kind without being condescending, and Pamela remembers coming away with enormous love for him. He felt great affection for her and even let her buy pictures. He sometimes went into London to visit her with her girlfriends. She gave him Christmas presents, including a ‘lovely bright-giving rug’ from India which he enjoyed

looking at,' subtly coloured silk handkerchiefs, which he thought wonderful, and a woven green woolen tie, which he liked.³²

In about 1960 he finished 'The Tutelar of the Place', a celebration of the feminine principle-as-local-goddess in association with native place. The dominant motif is that of the multi-or uni-circular troia dance of defence, enwombing the personal and sacred against the agents of pragmatism and totalitarianism. The poem dances as a Celtic persona prays:

Sweet Mair, devise a mazy-guard
in and out and round about
double-dance defences
countermure and eschelon meanders round
the holy mound

fence within the fence
pile the dun ash for the bright seed (64)

Humanizing the encircling image, the primary speaker imagines and enacts a secondary persona praying with children. Unknowingly, his language occasionally echoes that of Hopkins and Eliot, whose poetry also prays for preservation of awareness of the sacred. This beautiful, original work would be the last Jones completed in many years while in possession of his full creative power.

Eliot was concerned about Jones because of his poverty, his lodgings, and his poor health. Eliot knew that Jones's health limited creative output and prevented him from engaging in the social activities that advance a career. Like Clark (who had been at Oxford with Cleverdon), Eliot occasionally telephoned Cleverdon to hear how Jones was. A few days before Christmas, 1961, Eliot had Jones to lunch, during which Jones expressed anxiety about his finances and his lodgings and mentioned that he was taking the drug Nembutal. This last bit of information especially troubled Eliot, who had been addicted to Nembutal. Eliot left England on 28 December but after returning expressed to Grisewood grave concern over Jones taking the drug. He urged Grisewood to speak to Jones's doctor, but Grisewood thought it proper to speak, instead, to Jones. He did, and Jones appreciated Eliot's kindness but deferred to the judgement of Stevenson as, he said, 'the only person who has ever done me any good.' From now on, Grisewood considered him drug-addicted.³³

Since 1947, Jones's treatment had been almost entirely psychoanalysis. As a result, from about 1954 to 1962 his neurosis was in abeyance, leaving him free to make the chalice paintings and the great inscriptions. During these years Stevenson prescribed only vitamins for him. But Stevenson had been unable to help him with agoraphobia, which accompanies (or is accompanied by) depression. And as Jones aged, he became more agoraphobic and more depressed.³⁴ In the spring of 1962 he suffered 'a return of the old nerve trouble'. By this time, the psychiatric world had become pharmacological owing to the development of new drugs, particularly amphetamines and barbiturates. Stevenson decided to try them on Jones. In addition to vitamins, on 27 April 1962 he prescribed: Benzadrine (a stimulant amphetamine) to take in the morning, Phenobarbitone (a mild sedative), lithium (a mood stabilizing antidepressant) four times daily; and at night Nembutal (a powerful, long-acting barbiturate that makes people sluggish), which he took, all in all, for at least three years. On the prescription note, Stevenson restricted the whisky he could drink to a third of a bottle per day.

By June 1962 he was taking a combination of 'innumerable capsules, pills, tablets, etc.' He had to make a chart colour-coordinated with a series of coloured pill boxes to remember which to take when and in what quantity.³⁵ Bell procured and dispensed them. It was 'always something to calm his nerves,' Bell later remembered, 'and in those days they were barbiturates.' But Stevenson also prescribed amphetamines—uppers or 'purple hearts' to take in the morning. Barbiturates taken at bedtime helped him sleep but left him groggy the next day. Much more dangerous than amphetamines, because addictive, barbiturates have an enduring, cumulative effect on the central nervous system, requiring increased doses. Nembutal is the worst of them because it acts longest, for six to eight hours—its use in Britain would be outlawed in 1985.

Surviving prescriptions include one for Parnate (9 July 1962), a potentially dangerous drug for moderate to severe depression. While taking it, Jones was forbidden to drink alcohol or eat cheese. He disliked it, probably because of its side effects, which include increased anxiety, insomnia, and drowsiness, and Bell thought it dangerous. So it was replaced by Drinamyl (17 July), taken in the morning, a mixture of amphetamine (stimulant) and phenobarbitone (depressant) intended to balance one another and result in evenness of disposition. Stevenson also prescribed Nardil (26 July), an antidepressant which

inhibits phobic anxiety. Tofranil replaced that in December, four, then five, then six 25mg tablets daily. This is an antidepressant with many severe adverse effects, including confusion (especially in the elderly), anxiety, and blurred vision. Jones began taking Diazepam twice daily to alleviate acute anxiety. It also reduces alertness and physical coordination, produces drowsiness, and is addictive. Much of this time he took lithium. He was subsequently prescribed the sedative Phenobarbital, a habit-forming barbiturate. Because barbiturates depress the central nervous system, they dull the mental faculties. He was now sleeping twelve hours per day. Throughout the 1960s, he complained to friends that the pills left him 'groggy and slow' until 3:30 in the afternoon, when he began to feel 'human'. On 12 February 1963, Bell visited to find him still asleep at 12:15 pm. Jones told Janet Stone that even though he now slept 'to some incredible hour', he never woke rested. Usually he felt 'tired & weary & feeble & old'. He complained to Stevenson and Bell, but they told him he was better even if he did not feel it. Jones wrote in 1964 of disliking 'the endless "drugs"' prescribed by Stevenson: 'I suppose one would be a lot worse without them. But I feel terribly tired almost all the time, and rather like a 'plane that is running on one engine instead of six!' ³⁶

Because of the drugs, he quit drinking alcohol. Many of his friends, including Grisewood and Clark, thought this unfortunate. He enjoyed whisky, which, unlike the drugs, did him no apparent harm. At one point, Bell told him he might have a single glass of whisky at night. 'That's no bloody good,' Jones told Hague, 'I might not want it for days but then I might want to drink half a bottle.' He offered visitors whisky but drank none, drinking instead lemonade, Nescafe, or Rose's Lime Juice diluted in half a glass of water—a strong tasting drink, which he also offered to visitors. ³⁷

Sometimes over the coming years, without telling Stevenson or Bell, he selectively or occasionally chose not to take the drugs. To monitor him, Bell gave only the prescribed amount for the two weeks and knew he took them by when he said he had run out. But figuring out the numbers game, Jones would deposit the medicine for each day into a large paper bag, which eventually filled up with thousands of tablets and capsules (discovered after his death). Nest Cleverdon thought the effects of his medication awful and perverse, and blamed Bell. But Bell was a medical 'nihilist', preferring not to prescribe drugs. It was Stevenson who prescribed them; Bell only obtained them and as a g.p. was in no position to

challenge a specialist. Mostly Jones took his medicine obediently. By 1965 he was taking five different kinds of pills. He once complained to Hilary Boyers about the terrible pills he had to take, and when she asked what they were, he showed her a grapefruit and laughed.³⁸

Dulling his creative faculties, drugs all but ended his creative life. It is darkly ironic that Stevenson, who did him the most good, also did him such harm. On 11 March 1962, Jones wrote to Kathleen Raine, ‘As for “creativity” *I’m* as dry as a bloody dead bone, confused and uncertain, both in drawing & in writing I do wish I could get down to some proper, consistent, integrated work.’ This was his refrain to friends for the next ten years. Together with eyestrain (if he attempted visual work), his quasi-drugged state precluded accepting an offer in April 1962 to design the covers for Oxford’s new three-volume Shakespeare. It would be difficult, however, to distinguish between the effect of drugs and depression, which also made him lethargic. His initial response to visitors was certainly that of someone suffering depression who, when asked ‘How are you,’ pauses—you can count the seconds—before responding (and you can feel the effort required), ‘Not very well.’ Now he worked slowly, and felt, sometimes, ‘like a seagull whose wings had been stuck down with oil.’ ‘Fatigue and inertia’ continued unabated, keeping him from doing ‘any proper work at all.’ The drugs precluded making visual art and only barely let him write. He was now living in and struggled through a pharmacological swamp—though to him life now felt like ‘an awful desert’—until August 1972, when he would see a doctor who told him that the combination of drugs he was taking was ‘mistaken’, change his prescription, and improve the remaining months of his life.³⁹

He received a letter from an English professor at Sheffield expressing regret that *In Parenthesis* was for so long out of print.⁴⁰ After replying that it not out of print, he wrote in distress to Faber, wondering whether they were doing any promotion at all. But he especially remained discouraged over the poor reception of *The Anathemata*, and that largely accounts for his writing so little since. Feeling that cultural change had left him behind, he told Grisewood that ‘unless *certain* things are taken for granted it’s well-nigh bloody impossible for my sort of stuff to mean anything. I don’t resent this & I see why it must be so, but it does account for my smallness of production. “The Break”, by Christ, what a break it is now!’ By 1962, he was working in despair of general appreciation. ‘We

live’, he wrote, ‘in a continued crisis of our culture, with all sorts of new and unfamiliar and distasteful elements pressing in upon us. I, personally, feel that my own kind of stuff has little meaning within this context. I don't say this in self-pity, I think it *must* be so in the nature of the case. But it is difficult to retain conviction & confidence, just as it must have been, many many times, in previous historical situations.’ He had become inured to people regarding *The Anathemata* ‘as impossibly “obscure”, “difficult” “deliberately involved”, “pedentatic” & ... “remote” as to content & decidedly “sub-school-of [Pound or Eliot]” as to form.’ He realized ‘why or how my stuff can *never* mean much to more than a *very* few people. It would be jolly nice were it otherwise, but I don't think it can be.’⁴¹

Any encouragement he did receive meant a great deal to him. He was ‘*so* glad’ in 1962 that Vernon Watkins thought *The Anathemata* a better than *In Parenthesis*, and told him, ‘I think it’s much better and have found it a bit distressing that many, or most, of my intimate friends can’t make head or tale [sic] of it. And Jones wrote Watkins that ‘even R.S. Thomas wrote to me once to say he couldn’t follow *The Anathemata* because he wasn’t learned enough, which surprised me, for I’m not learned at all—but merely use the material of traditional Xtianity & the traditional lore of Britain as best I can, though whether I can go on doing so is becoming to me now a major problem.’ Yet he never doubted the objective value of his writing. When Len Walton opined that his paintings were more important than his poetry, he mulled this over for a week and then strongly objected to this disparagement of his poetry.⁴² He told Richard Wald of the *Herald Tribune* in 1962 that he suspected his writing was better than his painting, even though he continued to regard himself as primarily a painter.

In mid-December 1959, a twenty-three-year-old French woman named Catherine Ivainer had written to him in charmingly unidiomatic English. She was a student of English Literature at the Sorbonne, studying at Egham College, University of London, and writing her thesis on *The Anathemata* at the suggestion of her director, Louis Bonnerot, the editor of *Etude Anglaise*. (When she had inquired in London whether its author was still alive, a librarian at the Tate Gallery told her that she had had dinner with him recently and gave her his address and phone number.) The day after receiving her letter, Jones telephoned to invite her to visit. He was gratified that *The Anathemata*, which

‘appears to be regarded as an oddity—and by some with something like hostility,’ should receive academic attention. Initially when visiting she asked him directly about it, but he was always too tired for questions, so they had a long conversation instead, in which she gleaned the answers she sought. She thought he regarded her as very learned. He talked about history as though she knew it, and between visits she read to catch up. She had, he thought, ‘an *astounding* grasp’ of the work, did not find it difficult, and understood and laughed (with a rich, deep laugh) at its jokes. He found this ‘very encouraging’ and supposed that ‘the Frogs must have very superior minds when it comes to concepts & the understanding of how “art-works” are contrived. Very objective—understands about form & content & sees ... the allusions—what a bloody relief—no nonsense about obscurity & “unshared background”.’ They met every Friday in February and March 1960, and subsequently every fortnight. Each visit began with a cup of tea and ginger biscuits (which she especially liked, so he kept them on hand). Often he gave her grapefruit. Once he improperly lit his gas ring, which went out, and—as with Dorothea Du Halpert forty years before (but minus the snuggling)—the two of them almost suffocated. On 20 February, he read some of *The Anathemata* (from ‘Middle-Sea and Lear-Sea’) for her to record but found that difficult because he got ‘pretty self-conscious reading to a *person*, it’s much easier reading into a microphone,’ though he liked when sections he read amused her. She sometimes brought friends, another student from France, Isabel Mantz, and two Americans, Sylvia Swarger and Nancy Strausser, whom he thought ‘sweet’, and after their return to the US he regretted being unable to see them. In January 1961 Catherine brought her father, in London for a weekend, who, to Jones’s delight, mentioned having had that morning a very ‘loud’ English breakfast. In December 1961 she returned several times and read him Villon’s *Ballade des seigneurs du temps jadis*. ‘Heavens! it *did* sound beautiful. ... Her reading of it was one of the most beautiful sounds I’ve ever heard.’ He told her he was ‘ashamed’ of his inability to speak or read French, which is ‘so largely *the language* of our common Western heritage.’⁴³ She would marry in January 1963 and visit him with her husband, Hubert Rousseau, a year later.

She always found Jones extremely affectionate—which meant a lot to her, since parental divorce had deprived her of the presence of her father early in life. She was

aware of a great sadness in Jones and felt that he needed affection terribly, but she sensed a sexual ‘limit’ in him, ‘as if,’ she said, ‘he was maimed’ somehow. ⁴⁴

She completed her dissertation with high marks and planned to expand it for a doctoral dissertation, but she failed the *agrégation* examination, which was, Walton told Jones, the most difficult in the western world—eighteen hours of written tests followed by an oral test before a jury, all in a single week, and a student needed nearly perfect marks in all sections. She failed in subsequent attempts, once owing to a difficult pregnancy, once passing all the written tests but failing the oral. Concerned for her, Jones enquired into the state of academia and became convinced that the prestige of science had adversely effected the humanities, so that a Liberal Arts program ‘often passes people of inferior comprehension, apperception and sensibility and fails people who have just those qualities. ... a kind of pseudo-scientific “efficiency” is applied to a domain where other qualities should receive full consideration, so that there is a lack of discrimination affecting the whole academic world.’ He was ‘terribly sorry’ that she had to begin reading again for the next round of exams, and appalled that she had at all ‘to wade through Fennimore Cooper & that bore Hazlitt (essays) as well as proper chaps like Milton & Dryden & Co.’ In 1963 she gave birth to a son and in 1964 again failed the oral exam. So ended her academic career, postponing for more than a quarter century any adequate published interpretation of *The Anathemata*. Her ninety-seven-page thesis, *An Introduction to The Anathemata*, was a semi-collaborative work, like that of Stuart Gilbert and Joyce. On Christmas 1960 Jones showed it to Eliot, who expressed pleasure on seeing that the work of academic appreciation had begun, but Jones attempted in vain to interest Faber in publishing it. He and she continued to exchange letters, but she was working and after having three young children, failed to reply, and the correspondence ended. ⁴⁵

In the spring of 1961, Jones learned that, at long last there would be an American edition of *In Parenthesis*, published by Chilmark Press. In October, to his amazement, he received £45 as advanced royalties. The press was the creation of fifty-six-year-old Louis G. Cowan, the extremely rich former president of CBS television who had created the quiz show ‘The 64,000 Question,’ and, though guiltless, was fired when it was found to be rigged. He wanted his first title to be *In Parenthesis*. In correspondence with Jones, he

was enthusiastic and personal, expressing appreciation with American candor. Cowan told him he also planned to publish *The Anathemata* in May of 1963 and possibly, in November, *Epoch & Artist*. Jones warned him that *In Parenthesis* would have few readers since in a quarter-century it had sold only 3000 copies in Britain. 'There is *something*, I don't know what it is quite about *In Paren* that is under suspicion or something. They don't really like it.' And *The Anathemata*, 'which I think a far better book,' would, he warned, have even fewer readers, but Cowan said he wanted to 'make them available to the American public' and would take the chance. At the suggestion of Spender, he wanted Eliot to write a preface. Assuming that Eliot would refuse, Peter du Sautoy wrote to him on holiday in Jamaica, and Eliot agreed. He later showed Jones his 'Note of Introduction,' in which he elevates Jones to the status of Pound, Joyce, and himself (Eliot) as the supreme modernist writers. He had written that Jones 'is a Welshman,' a mistake Jones had him correct to 'he is a Londoner of Welsh and English descent.' In November 1961, Cowan printed 1500 copies in the USA with three hundred extra copies for a special Faber edition. About the limited edition for Faber, which Eliot and he signed, Jones wrote (expressing considerable financial innocence) 'I never *quite* knew why it was made.'⁴⁶

Soft-spoken Cowan and his wife, Polly, now joined the long list of his visitors, first coming in November 1962, when they were given tea and shown the paintings. Jones liked them both very much and thought him 'the nicest kind of cultivated American'. They visited again in the first week of February and in May, when—and Jones liked him a lot to allow this—Cowan bought a picture as a birthday present for his daughter, Lisa. Very Jewish, Cowan was teaching in the school of journalism at Columbia, and his son Paul was working on immigration and settlement problems in Israel. They talked about the Israeli army, which Jones thought the best since the German army, and that the best since the Roman army. Jones learned that he owed American publication to Auden and Spender, both having suggested that Cowan publish *In Parenthesis* and *The Anathemata*.⁴⁷

By early August 1962, *In Parenthesis* had sold 1100 copies in the United States and was receiving ecstatic reviews. Auden wrote that, in it, Jones did 'for the British and the Germans what Homer did for the Greeks and the Trojans'. Jones especially liked the review in *Time Magazine*.⁴⁸ Most of the positive reviewers expressed dismay that the

work has taken so long to find American publication. In the *New York Times*, Spender insightfully points out that it ‘challenges the view that’ modernism ‘has to be ironical.’ In the review Jones liked best, in the *Herald Tribune*, Winfield Scott prophesied that Jones would be seen in the future ‘as one of the central, seminal writers’ and praises the impact of immediate language in this work: ‘What it does supremely is re-create’, its language surpassing ‘in its feeling of massive necessity in everything said’ even ‘the richest, most allusive passages of the *Cantos*.’

One consequence of US publication was the publication by John H. Johnston, a lecturer at Notre Dame, of the first important critical analysis of the poem, ‘David Jones, the Heroic Vision’ in the *Review of Politics* (24 Jan 1962). Johnston sent Jones an offprint, and he recognized the essay as ‘accurate’ and ‘remarkable’. After a quarter century of critical neglect, he wrote gratefully to Johnston, as he also wrote several friends, that ‘it is the *only* decent scholarly thing written’ about the poem and that Johnston ‘understood my whole intention and the way in which I tried to work it out.’ It was the only analysis that shows how all the references to history and mythology are integral to ‘the structure of the book.’ Jones had only two reservations. Johnson was wrong to see an identification between ‘the sacrifices etc of soldiers with the Sacrifice of the Cross,’ an identification that Owen and Sassoon make in their poetry but which Jones thought theologically objectionable. And Johnston failed to appreciate how his being firstly a visual artist differentiated his writing from that of other poets. Nevertheless it was ‘much the most thorough, indeed *the only*, critical analysis of *In Paren.* that’s ever appeared.’ He asked for, and received, further copies some to post to friends and others to keep as lending copies. One of the latter he showed to Len Walton, a ‘*very* severe critic,’ who agreed that it was ‘by far the most illuminating, perceptive, and accurate analysis’ of the poem. (Johnston would include his essay as a chapter in his book *English Poetry of the First World War*. After reading it there, Herbert Read would write to Johnson that his chapter on *In Parenthesis* ‘for the first time does justice to one of the greatest writers of our time.’) So encouraged, on Monday morning, 21 May 1962, Jones joined Grisewood for dinner at the Oriental Club and, telling him that he no longer cared, ‘what chaps think’—which was only partly true—he would resume writing. He brought with him the work he had set in ancient Rome (*RQ* 155-84), which Grisewood had praised decades

before. Jones had thought it ‘crude & impious’ but now thought he could make something of it. And he was rewriting material from 1940, a conversation between Judas and Caiaphas (*RQ* 140-51). These pieces seemed, he wrote, ‘more “contemporary” than when I wrote them.’ He was now determined to bring to publication ‘all the stuff *behind The Anathemata* that’ he ‘had suppressed,’ though ‘they are beastly in a way & brutal.’⁴⁹

In 1958 the sound-recording unit for the British Council wanted Jones to record his poetry for its collection, held in common with the Lamont Poetry Room of Harvard Library. On 4 August 1961, the British Council wrote to propose that he record something about twenty-five minutes long for a fee of \$50 to be paid by Harvard. To encourage him, on 28 August 1961, John Lincoln (Jack) Sweeney, curator of the Poetry Room, and his wife Moira visited him. Sweeney was a wealthy Brooklyn-born Cambridge graduate, who knew and had recorded most important living American poets and was a friend of Eliot and Herbert Read. Moira was Dublin-born, the daughter of Eoin MacNeill, co-founder of the Gaelic League, and was completing a book on the Irish mythological figure, Lugh. Jones liked them ‘very much’ and found he was in agreement with them ‘about practically everything.’ ‘They are both absolutely charming,’ he wrote, ‘those Boston chaps can be jolly nice—really civilized and quiet and understanding—at least I’ve often found it so.’ Sweeney spoke of his belief in the importance of having poetry read aloud, a belief Jones shared.⁵⁰ He agreed to record for him, and they planned to record particularly ‘The Wall,’ ‘The Tutelar’, and ‘Private Clitus’

The Sweeneys visited whenever in England. With them, he talked about Ireland, its history, and the recurrence of ‘the troubles’ (which he had never thought he would see again.) Moira’s interest in Irish myth and folklore fascinated him—he loved how she spoke of it with precision and attention to detail—and asked her to recommend books on Irish history. Often visiting alone, Jack Sweeney had an acute critical faculty, penetrating insight into poetry, and a wide-ranging and up-to-date appreciation of contemporary poetry. He also appreciated visual art and collected paintings. By 1962 he was, Jones said, ‘a great friend of mine’.⁵¹

In 1962 Cowan ordered from Faber and published 1500 copies of *The Anathemata*, paying Jones an advance of \$150. In general, the American reviews showed, Jones thought, 'a far greater sense of its nature' than the British reviews had. Reviewing it for the *Mid-Century*, Auden called it 'very probably the finest long poem written in English in this century.' By mid-September 1962 over a thousand copies of the US edition had sold, and letters began arriving from America. These he found 'very appreciative', and that a pleasant surprise. Since this most British of long poems had been regarded as obscure in Britain he had assumed the Americans would make nothing of it. Their openness and willingness 'to worry-out' his writing explained why Martin D'Arcy and Illtud Evans, whom he had expected to find America intolerable, did actually like visiting the States—because the Americans had 'an unaffected straightforward openness to ideas' lacking in the English. Those with enthusiasm 'take endless *trouble*—indicated by long letters on some points that require careful answering, for they are usually penetrating questions.' When he expressed to Clark his happy surprise at the American reception, Clark told him that when lecturing in the States he had to be 'much more "on his toes" ... than here—that people ask penetrating & to-the-point questions and are not bored or stuffy or prejudiced as is often the case with the English.' Jones received scores of letters 'mainly, but not entirely, from religious circles,' in particular from students of Fr William Noon SJ at a Jesuit seminary in Scrub Oaks, New York. 'Their remarks or questions' were 'absolutely on the spot.' In responding he was prodigal, wasting precious energy and time out of gratitude for having readers for his work. In 1967, Noon would publish in *Poetry and Prayer* what Jones thought to be 'the best analysis of what it's all about'. (He also thought Noon's *Joyce and Aquinas* 'superb' and 'illuminating', confirming much of what he had felt and sometimes asserted among friends.) The famous American Trappist, Thomas Merton, read *The Anathemata* just before his final journey to the east, thought it 'says everything' while having 'the sap and solidity of Romanesque sculpture', and, as a token of his enthusiasm, sent Jones his translation, *A Prayer of Cassiodorus*, promising a letter to follow, but he died before he could write it.⁵² The dull British reception of *The Anathemata* in 1952 had discouraged him for a decade from writing; its positive American reception now encouraged him to resume writing and publishing poetry.

In 1963, Sister Mary Immaculate, an English professor at Catholic University, included in an anthology selections from the end of *The Anathemata*.^{*} ‘She wrote a sweet letter about it,’ but he found her name ‘embarrassing’ and a ‘Counter-reformation counterpart of those extraordinary Puritan names of the 17th Century—as John Praise-God Bare-bones Smith. In replying, he addressed her, merely, as ‘Dear Sister,’ which sounded to him ‘rather like the Salvation Army.’⁵³

The epigraph of *The Anathemata* is the words of Lear’s fool ‘This prophetic Merlin shall make for I live before his time.’ Choosing it, he may have had in mind the past as content of the poem. Now his hope was that the poem itself would be such a prophecy, that it would be read, like the poetry of Blake and Hopkins, in later generations. He hoarded his paintings, like Turner, so that he might bequeath them to the nation, to the future, and now he hoped his poetry would be an ark for, or a bridge to, a later time.

Cowan would also publish *Epoch and Artist*. The uncomprehending English reviews of that book and its small sales (fourteen copies in the latter half of 1960) had disappointed Jones, and the US edition was only 500 copies, so he rightly anticipated little response. But that little was remarkable. He received a copy of *The New Yorker* (22 Aug. 1964) and wondered why until he found his book reviewed in it—he was surprised that such a glossy, popular magazine, which he had thought ‘a bit like *Punch* only more amusing’ should have bothered. He was even more surprised by the quality of the review. It was by the American art critic Harold Rosenberg, who had actually understood his essays and appreciated their original thinking and the theory of culture they express. It was, Jones thought, ‘the only proper critique of that heterogeneous collection that has ever appeared.’ Occupying nine columns of print, the review discusses the essays in detail and praises him as ‘an arch-vanguardist’ with remarkable ‘breadth of ... insights’, who has here produced ‘some of the most acutely relevant writing on contemporary form and value to have appeared in years’ and has, in fact, ‘formulated the axiomatic precondition for understanding contemporary creation.’ Grateful to Rosenberg, he drafted

^{*} *The Tree and the Master, an Anthology of Literature on the Cross of Christ*, ed. Sister Mary Immaculate, Preface by W.H. Auden (New York, Random House, 1965). pp. 7-10.

several letters to him, in which he says he felt the review ‘to be of unusual analytical clarity’ and the only one stating ‘unambiguously the main matter which has occupied my mind for many years,’ something, he would later say, that was not ‘understood by more than about three chaps.’ Rosenberg’s comprehension was a huge relief—the essays in *Epoch and Artist* were apparently capable, after all, of clearly expressing meaning.⁵⁴

Prompted by Cowan’s success, Faber decided after twenty-seven years to publish *In Parenthesis* in paperback. Jones was told that cost precluded using the illustrations. He argued for the inclusion at least of the frontispiece, which he considered ‘an integral part of the work’. Faber refused. He complained but with restraint because they were ‘such nice chaps’. In Britain *In Parenthesis* had been selling between twenty-two and fifty copies a year. Between publication of the paperback on 13 November 1963 and the end of December, sales jumped to fifty-six copies in hardback and 976 in paperback. Jones was disappointed in Faber for having printed four separate impressions since 1937 without attempting to correct the text, using the list of errors he had supplied after the first printing. He asked, ‘How is it possible that errors listed five, or even ten years ago have not been corrected until 1961?’ and was told, ‘Yes, it is odd, isn’t it,’ and thought, ‘That’s no bloody answer’. The errors had been corrected in the Chilmark edition and the new Faber paperback, but he was aghast to see them again in the US paperback, published by Viking. ‘It makes one feel bloody hopeless—all the bloody sweat to get things right chucked away.’ But the Viking paperback contained all the illustrations. It irked him that the English paperback with correct text (except for two mistakes) had no illustrations, while the American edition with all the illustrations had all the old errors. How could ‘the Yanks ... include the pictures in a paperback costing no more than the British paperback’? Faber had no idea. Grisewood urged him to go to another publisher, but he said he couldn’t do that because of his friendship with Eliot.⁵⁵

For five hours on 20 February 1962, John Glen orbited the earth three times, becoming the first American in space, and Jones listened to the live radio broadcast of it ‘all afternoon’. He wrote to Grisewood,

I found it terribly impressive—again because of this technological thing. I loved hearing his actual voice giving all kinds of unintelligible code numbers etc. to some other bloke down below. Jolly nice the way he kept on talking about the ‘beauty’ of what he saw. But what extraordinary limitations these American chaps have in expressing themselves—jolly nice in a way. I thought the exchange of words between Kennedy & Glenn at the end of the exploit was both moving and pathetic in the utter inadequacy of what they said.’

He was a bit of a news junkie. Late at night he always listened to the American Forces Network broadcasting from West Germany to hear their five-minute summary of the news. It always amused him to hear them conclude with the words ‘good-night and good-morning.’ Whatever was currently in the newspaper or on the radio informed his conversations especially with Grisewood. He would, for example, closely follow the John Profumo scandal, his main interest being Christine Keeler because she was ‘a smasher, an, absolute smasher.’⁵⁶ (And about this scandal he had information not made public, probably from Hugh Fraser.)

On 15 May 1962 he went for the first time to the Cleverdons’ newly acquired house at 27 Barnsbury Square, Cleverdon had bought in 1960 for £3000, the money he got for the manuscript of *Under Milkwood*, which Dylan Thomas had given him in gratitude for urging him to write it so the BBC could broadcast it. Jones was fascinated to hear that the site of the house was at the camp where the Roman general Suetonius stopped for the night in AD 50 before descending on the forces of Boudicca and crushing her rebellion. (In the previous year *The Times* leader article of 22 February had declared that the victory of Boudicca over Roman London had given ‘the Anglo-Saxons something to boast about at an extremely thin time in their history’, and he had written to say that Boudicca was a Briton, not an Anglo-Saxon.) Also at the Cleverdons were Elwyn and Margo Evans, both strikingly good looking and intelligent. Jones felt an immediate rapport with her. He told the story of his being demobbed, and stroked the Cleverdons’ small cat, ‘the best of animals’ he said, ‘along with deer, in my opinion.’ He drew the cat sitting on a chair. He promised to send a photograph of an inscription to the Evanses, which he did. It was, he said, ‘a jolly nice evening.’

He rang up the Evanses and invited them for tea. They came with their daughter Sarah. He greeted Margo with a kiss, ‘Come in, the place is a bloody mess.’ They invited him to come visit them at home on the other side of London, and he said he would love

to, but when the time came, he phoned to say he couldn't face the journey. Margo offered to fetch him, but he said no, he was in a pretty bad state. They never saw him again.⁵⁷

He continued coming to the Cleverdon's. They would invite him whenever the Hagues or Mary Gill or Petra were there, or John Betjamen—according to Nest, Betjamen and Jones loved each other, and both of them liked the house's association with Boadicca.⁵⁸

Most visits with Valerie were 'a bit of a strain' for him. She had planned to come to him on a Sunday in May 1960 or, failing that, Monday but had arrived with her husband on Tuesday, just when Hague arrived to discuss the article he was writing. Having been disappointed for two days, Jones was 'very irascible' and the visit sour—in his agitation he broke the lid of his teapot. The Wynne-Williamses left so he could talk with Hague, but she returned hours later with a new teapot, saying, 'Here is a peace-offering', and he 'could have *wept*' at her coming back, he wrote to Janet Stone, 'it made up for everything.' Later he was deeply moved to read in a letter from her that she thought about him throughout the day, often when cooking, cleaning or doing other chores that precluded writing just then.⁵⁹

On 22 November 1961, she lunched with him in his room. The next day she had to leave for home, so he came in to meet her for lunch at the Paddington Hotel. Both meetings were 'happy ... in all respects' and 'it was so *heavenly* to see her again.' They were, he thought, 'like two children out on a Sunday-school Treat having a bit of a lark. We did not really talk much at all—it was only just that it was easy & relaxed in a new kind of way—and the waiters, I noticed, were a jolly sight more attentive than they mostly are now-a-days—but perhaps I imagined this.' Valerie spoke for the first time of his pain and weeping when she announced her engagement two years ago. She told him that she had felt for him but that she had her own life to live. He confided to Janet Stone, 'I thought, then, that she didn't mind at all, *but she did*. ... Sometimes I've cried & cried in this 'ere room when I thought V. didn't care a damn, and then I drank too much.' 'I really believe now,' he wrote, 'that I can be still perhaps of *some* service to her—I don't know quite how, but anyway I'm not cut off from her. I feel nearer to her than ever I did before.' On 27 November he continued,

it was heavenly to be with her ... two days in succession. ... We'd never before had a meal together in

a restaurant, so that was fun and peaceful & un-strained and from this last meeting I feel that it's just as real to her [as] it has always been to me. It all seems so *totally* other from what chaps talk about when they speak of a 'passion' or of 'being in love' with someone. It doesn't seem *at all* like that. As far as I can see (of course one can deceive oneself) there is no feeling of wanting to possess anything, or of jealousy, or even of desire (although, I know, of course, it's partly physical)—it seems more like a kind of dumb *compassion*—and a *mutual* compassion between two people *wholly remote* from each other in most respects. Anyway the experience of loving her so much has helped me, in part, to understand the extraordinary & unaccountable 'attachments' that one has only before heard of second-hand or read about in histories. ... I wish I could convey how 'un-romantic,' 'passionless,' and 'ordinary' the situation is between V. & myself, and yet, underneath, the wholly unaccountable feeling that makes me weep so often.

'How extraordinary these things of the heart are,' he wrote to Helen Sutherland, 'They are so *absurd* and irrational and, in a sense, literally *comic*, but they are so *terrible* too, and take the stuffing out of one in some strange way.'⁶⁰

Aside from Valerie's beauty and energy, she was an ordinary young woman, no intellectual, not much of a reader, mostly interested in her family and in friends. In letters and telephone conversations she mentioned the eisteddfods she and her husband attend, the art exhibitions, the success of the farm, the lambs and the pigs she has raised, her children, her back trouble, her asthma, the plays in which she is acting. But she was responsive to visual art. Jones liked that. On 7 April 1961, she wrote about the reproduction of 'Chapel in the Park', which he had given her: 'how relaxing it is and how happy it can make me feel just by moving through the park. I find something new in it every day.' She also appreciated the drawings and prints he had given her, including 'my lovely little rose' (Ch. 14, fig. 10).

Whenever he had not heard from her for a while—when she neglected to write or telephone on his birthday, for example, or to thank him for a gift sent on hers, he began to worry about her, fantasizing about terrible accidents, 'all sorts of ghastly things.' (This was partly owing to her having recently had two auto accidents in a single year.) He was always '*greatly* relieved' to hear from her. It was a suffering to him that she was 'next door to impossible about answering letters'. She liked receiving them, he knew, but he confided to Grisewood, 'it's damping to get no replies to what one says. I don't really understand it.' He wrote in March 1961, 'I've not heard from her for weeks & that is a considerable misery.' Sometimes this 'paralyzed' him so that he could not write to her.

But he would not give her up, since she clearly cared for him. In August 1962, she moved and amused him by inviting him to send his washing to North Wales for her to do. (Knowing that she had a bad back, he replied that it was ‘the very last thing’ he would do.) The frustration of writing and receiving no reply drove him increasingly to telephone. Early on, he phoned in the afternoon. She urged him to phone in the evening when the rates were lower and not to telephone person to person. He spoke at great length, and, conscious of his mounting bill, she would urge him to ‘finish now.’ All in all, she would write him four postcards and 59 short letters, and whenever he received one, he was deeply touched (‘I can’t *tell* you how happy it made me to get your dear letter’). He would write her 139 letters (totaling 369 foolscap pages)—most of them before November 1965, when his letters virtually stopped, to resume in 1970 when he lost easy access to the telephone. On rare occasions she would visit unannounced, to his joyful astonishment. She would later write that she considered him ‘a great man’, recalling ‘there was so much laughter in our meetings’.⁶¹ She was the best and longest lasting ‘drug’ for his depression—he thought about her every day for much of the day. But sometimes after seeing and thinking of her, he would suffer a recurrence of his earlier symptom of sexual repression, entering in his pocket diary the single word ‘rash’.

He was conflicted with her about Wales in a way that symbolically pitted her, representing modern Welsh nationalism, against Saunders Lewis, who loved only the medieval historical culture of Wales. Jones sided with Lewis. Since 1961 he had contributed, he says, ‘all I could afford’ to the support of a private fee-paying Welsh Language school at the Church Hall of Eglwys Dewi Sant, St Mary's Terrace London, even suggesting others who might contribute, including the Welsh headmaster of Harrow, Dr. James. (In May 1962, Jones sent £15.15.0). But he was uncertain about contributing to the St David Day Fund of *Plaid Cymru* at Valerie’s urging. His dislike of political parties was sharpened by Lewis objecting to this party, which he had co-founded, as now a ‘nest of Aldermarston Anglo-Welsh socialists’ emotionally opposing the government instead of concentrating on the Welsh language. For years, she urged him to join *Plaid Cymru*; he never did. In November 1963, the London branch of the party wanted to name him president of the branch. He declined, saying he was not a member of the party, could not speak Welsh, was not in good health ‘& quite useless in political matters.’⁶² When in 1966 Valerie urged

him to congratulate Gwynfor Evans for being the first member of the party to win a seat in parliament, he struggled through fifteen drafts of a desultory letter saying he was glad 'a Welshman' was in 'the British parliament who stands for the things of Cymry.'

Until 1960, he had often gone out to meet friends: Grisewood at the Oriental Club—Jones liked its atmosphere—or the Garrick Club, Alec Dru at the St James's Club, in Piccadilly. Now he seldom went into London, and many of his friends considered him lonely. Honeyman thought he did not mind being alone: 'he had too much on his mind, too much to do.' But Jones did miss friends and was eager to see them. When they visited, he hated seeing them go, would attempt to delay their departure, offering them drinks, pulling out pictures to show, or saying, 'Wait, I wanted to say this' and continuing with an hours-earlier interrupted train of thought. He was remarkable in his openness to people, the readiness, depth, and durability of his affection. But he also relied on relationships for emotional sustenance. Grisewood, who knew him best, said:

He always wanted more from the people around him than they could possibly give. He never wanted you to leave ... he needed the continuing support and sympathy of those who were near to him. And when they left or were doing something else, though he understood and sympathized, it was nothing other than a grief to him and a deprivation. 'I haven't seen you, I haven't heard from you, did you get my letter?' You were very busy, you were tired, but he would pour out his unhappiness and his sense of deprivation all the time and this would mean with René, with Tom, with me, with half a dozen, no more perhaps. So there was all that grief in his relationships, very much an anguish in relation to the girls and women that he loved and wanted to be with in a rather special way. What he suffered from that has just to be imagined but it was certainly very great. Indeed, he was generous and open, but that doesn't mean that it was simply an experience of rejoicing, by no means. I think he had to undergo a good deal.⁶³

For Jones nearly any visit was a temporary reprieve from depression. Fortunately, there were many visitors. Two or three per week are recorded in his pocket diary. Unrecorded are those nearly every Saturday evening by Honeyman and most Sunday evenings by Bussell, and by others at other times, who would phone and then come. Always he stopped work to visit.

During the war a visit had lasted two hours; now one tended to last five or six hours, partly because he was lonelier, partly because older and slower in speech. Most visitors noticed that initially he was gloomy and took forty-five minutes of desultory talk gradually to emerge from the doldrums. Then, as Honeyman put it, 'David came back'

and spoke warmly and freely. The warm-up was briefer if the visitor was a woman and instantaneous with Valerie, unless she brought someone with her—then it took him forty-five minutes to warm up. Always he was much warmer with any woman. He rushed to open the door for her, always stood when she entered the room, rushed to help her carry something.⁶⁴ Younger women regarded such behaviour as a charming anachronism.

All but best friends needed to arrange a visit in advance. ‘Yes you come on Wednesday,’ he would say, ‘I’ve got somebody coming on Thursday.’ Many visitors wrote, and he invited them to come. They included Mary Sullivan (a former student of Kathleen Raine at Cambridge, now at Michigan), Patricia Stefan, Nicholas Jacobs, and Kate Campbell, whom he had met through Hague in 1959 and considered ‘a remarkable girl’. She and her artist-husband Peter spent their meagre funds on writing-paper he wanted.⁶⁵ Jones told her not to let her husband ‘do what I did—don’t let him keep his art under the bed. Make him show it.’ There were: Sister Mary Ursula, who had written him about her graduate work; Peter Catteral of Manchester who asked to visit; George Whalley, the Canadian Coleridgean and friend of Blissett and Janet Stone; John Petts of the Arts Council; Thomas Whitaker of the University of Iowa; Virginia Luling, a friend of Bernadine Wall; David Gommon; Frank Kacmarcic of Minnesota; Richard Flecher; Alison le Plat; and many others. In later years especially, visitors who were friends came like magi bearing gifts: cigarettes, grapefruit, and Rose’s Lime Juice or tonic and soda water. So many of them brought or sent grapefruit that at one point he asked them to desist.

In the evenings he would telephone his best friends: Wall, Grisewood, Hague, Burns, Honeyman, and Valerie, always for conversations lasting an hour or more. He would phone Grisewood and, if he wasn’t in, talk at great length with Margaret or, if she wasn’t in, to her mother. When he phoned the Cleverdons, Nest tried make him laugh, often with a quote from *Under Milk Wood*, such as “Men are brutes on the quiet.” He invited friends to visit, and, after they agreed to come, he went go on talking for three-quarters of an hour. Often immediately after a visit he would phone to continue conversation. After visiting him, Morag would drive thirty miles home, the telephone would ring, and her husband would say, ‘If it’s David, I’m going to have a drink.’ Usually it was. He had something to add to what they had been discussing and went on to talk at

length. Hague would try to end a telephone conversation, and Jones would say, ‘No, don’t hang up. I might think of something else in a minute or two.’⁶⁶

Many of his aging friends (not the younger whose hearing was good) found his phone calls difficult as well as long. One friend had to clamp the receiver to her ear in order to hear and later understood why when she saw him on a public telephone holding the speaker far from his mouth, as though it were a loathsome object. Hague would often tell him, ‘For heaven’s sake, speak into the mouthpiece,’ and he would respond, ‘I can’t hold this damn thing too close—it’s full of germs.’⁶⁷

In the winter of 1961 Grisewood and Anna Kallin asked him for a broadcast talk on the decline of the gratuitous sign in modern culture. He wanted not to since he had written about it in ‘Art and Sacrament,’ but, pressed, he gave in. The talk was ‘a bugger’ to write. It had to be cut from sixty-two foolscap draft pages to ten and, after recording, cut again. On 26 April 1962 it was broadcast under the title ‘Poetry and Religion’. In it he sees Mary Magdalene’s pouring spikenard over Jesus as the archetypally gratuitous act, which Jesus defended against those who saw the gospel merely as moral pragmatism—the crucial difference being between what Aristotle calls *poiesis* and *praxis*. As he listened to the broadcast, he was convinced that ‘it’s all so obvious as hardly to be worth saying—for if the “sacramental” (in the widest sense) is to be excluded then we are no longer “human beings”.’ Under a new and improved title, ‘Use and Sign’, the talk was published in the *Listener* (24 May 1962). He regarded it as an ‘unequivocal, emphatic defence of the extratextual, one might say a fierce defense’ but essentially already contained within ‘Art and Sacrament’ and therefore redundant. Ten years later he would be inclined to omit it from a planned second collection of his essays.⁶⁸ Yet it is the most concise, clear, and powerful of his essays, the shortest and easiest introduction to his cultural thought (*DG* 177-85).

In August 1962 he began drawing and painting or *Annunciation in a Welsh Hill Setting* (*Y Cyfarchiad I Fair*, fig. 7). In this, the last of his important paintings, Mary is a combination of the mythic Welsh mother-goddess Rhiannon and her romance type Olwen, enclosed by a wattle fence of the sort that he had helped to build to ring the garden at Capel-y-ffin. It is set near there in the Black Mountains because, he said, ‘I have to have some

physical context thing that I really know about'. It was to remain primarily 'a drawing in pencil mainly with bits of colour here & there' with 'lots of birds' because Rhiannon is associated with birds.⁶⁹ The greatest of his later pictures, its composition seems influenced by the great Leonardo cartoon, *The Virgin and Child with St. Anne*, which was a favourite of his. (The heads of his Gabriel and Virgin resemble in their positions, those of Leonardo's Virgin and St. Anne, and the range of tone is strikingly similar.) But the tilt of Mary's head mirrors that of Dürer's *Madonna with Child* in the National Gallery, of



7. David Jones, *Annunciation in a Welsh Hill Setting*, 1963

which he had torn out and saved a reproduction from an art magazine. Background and foreground are tonally undistinguished so that the lines seem inscribed (as of course they are) on the flat sheet. It is a writerly painting, hieroglyphic. The animal images almost all allude to written works, chiefly 'Kilhwch ac Olwen' in *The Mabinogion*. And when Jones showed it to visitors, he interpreted it as he might a literary text. Transition from classical to Christian time is suggested by the Mercurial look of the angel with birds at his head and heels. He bears the sword of sorrow that Simeon said would pierce Mary's heart. In the sky are the constellations of Virgo and Libra ('the scales'), together evoking the

Virgin standing beside the cross. She wears a crown and holds an apple, evocative of the *orbis* of imperium and Eden's fruit (for she is the second Eve) and Newtonian-

gravitation, punning on the fall of man (which she will help reverse) and that other fall, of worldly Rome, whose columns lie broken behind her. At her feet is the maternal wolf of early Roman legend, with which she has affinity as nurse to the new Romulus. To her left grows a small thorn tree, its branches intruding across her hand (where a thorn resembles a stigma) and into her lap—a foreshadowing of suffering matched by the angel's sword, on which is a sprig of thorn. As Olwen, the beloved, she has trefoils at her feet—in his quest for her, Kilhwch sees the animals that are depicted here with vivid realism. The Holy Spirit (evoked by flying birds) is Kilhwch to this Olwen. These two are the spiritual corollary of Tristan and Esyllt in his previous painting, with which this one has in common constellations and a beam of yellow light descending vertically from the North Star. Bright yellow lights the stars in the sky, shimmers in her hair and in the filigree of clothing. The other unifying colour is pink in the lining of garments. Light comes from behind, from a sky indeterminately day or night, and from within the land, the water, the figures. The birds give the picture life of flight, some penetrating the circular enclosure. They represent nature, suggest the manger scene, and evoke the story of Noah's Ark, for she is (homonymously) Arc of the Covenant, and this is the new and truer salvation from the flood. This, his last visual masterpiece, combines the visual simplicity of a Renaissance painting in the large figures with a plethora of rich association in the smaller details. Like his later inscriptions, it achieves freedom in a plethora of symbolism.

In the autumn of 1962, a trim Camillo Moro visited on his way to Italy after two-years study at Harvard. He had lost four stone because medicine had regulated a glandular problem. Delighted to see him, Jones thought he looked 'exactly like one of those medieval paintings of a Lombard magnate with a large powerful extremely intelligent face.' Jones began complaining about how London was changing, and Camillo told him that this was nothing to what was happening in Italy, where medieval buildings were everywhere being bulldozed to make way for soulless semi-skyscrapers. Most of their visit was spent talking about music, about which Moro knew a great deal. Jones's prime interest was 'the development from modal music of the middle-ages to the major & minor scale of modern music.' He knew 'that in order to have the piano they had to adjust the notes to get the intervals regular and lost semi-tones & quarter-tones' at the cost of

‘sensitivity & profundity.’ But even before that ‘the feeling had changed.’⁷⁰

Jones’s appreciation of music was limited but technical and had progressed throughout his life historically, beginning with plainchant, moving through folk songs, and ‘very gradually ... if at all’ reaching an appreciation of later music. First and most he loved unaccompanied plainchant for achieving ‘a kind of sublimity of feeling, with a joyfulness and an unaffectedness & a kind of naturalness’ that ‘even the greatest of the later composers never achieved’ so that ‘later music even at its very best seems *relatively* “vulgar” though that’s far too strong a word—“ostentatious” perhaps, though that won’t do either, less “angelic” or something.’ After that he liked early polyphony. ‘That seems to my ear to still preserve the tenderness & magic of the earlier modal stuff.’ (In the 1930s he had acquired a sound technical understanding of plainsong, through conversations with people who understood it, and its modal kind of music influenced his writing.) His favourite record was *The Early Renaissance*, by Promusica Antiqua, which contained Guillaume Dufay’s polyphony and plainchant including, he said, ‘an *astoundingly* beautiful conzone’ and ‘a marvellous setting to the antiphon *Alma Redemptoris Mater*’ and his favourite hymn, *Vexilla Regis*.^{*} ‘Later they did something with the scale ... to make it *regular*, which slightly falsified in some way that I don’t understand, “artificialized” the notes, whereby giving off slightly different overtones & undertones, round about Bach’s time. He felt, he said, ‘that something fundamental happened which (for me) even the greatest and obviously marvellous & stupendous compositions of the Great Masters of more recent centuries seem to lack, that something which, I confess, nearly moves me to tears, in the early stuff.’ The gulf between polyphony and later music occupied him a great deal. ‘The one seems to combine a sacred gayness with a moving tenderness and “undertones of war—the war of *mors et vita duello conflixere mirando* [‘life and death in wondrous conflict’, words from the Easter sequence]—the other, however deep & solemn & grand as in Bach, or gay & delightful as in others & superb in all sorts of ways, never to *my* ear, reaches the same felicity.’⁷¹

^{*}*The Early Renaissance*, Promusica Antiqua, conductor Safford Cape, Archive Series ATM 14019,

He liked ‘nearly all “folk songs” from almost anywhere’, but ‘raw’, not arsed about with &, so to say, “West-endized” or harmonized or accompanied.’ He liked ‘a few’ Welsh hymns, including ‘*Bryn Calfaria*’ and ‘*Dafydd y Gerrig Wen*’, ‘but only a few of ‘em’ and them, too, only ‘as long as they are not messed about with & “accompanied” by blasted organs’ and ‘sung by “special” choirs.’ One of his favourite records was *Welsh Folk Music for Voice, Harp, and Cello* (Delysé Recording Company) with David Ffrangcon, playing the cello and Ocean Ellis singing and playing the harp. He especially liked Negro spirituals and some kinds of primitive Eastern music. He liked recorded music from Bali he had heard. He confided to one visitor that he loved bagpipe music.⁷²

He loved Monteverdi.⁷³ And he liked ‘some bits of some Opera’ but disliked ‘going to the Opera’—‘I mean,’ he said, ‘I don’t like looking at the chaps doing their stuff.’ He did not enjoy concerts and positively hated organ recitals and music by bands, especially brass bands. He felt sharp and enduring irritation when a large, powerful organ was installed at great expense at the back of Westminster Cathedral. As for other instruments, he thought pianos, violins, flutes, and harps all right.⁷⁴

He loved Debussy’s string quartet (the ‘First’ in G Minor, Op 10), which he considered a great piece of music.⁷⁵ He wrote to the Honeymans, ‘Some kinds of Jazz I liked straight away and I love ‘the Blues’ & such like in small doses. And certain forms of very “modern” music I find interesting.’ Dissonant modernist music did not appeal to him: he was in complete agreement with Christopher Smart’s assertion that ‘There is no music in flats and sharps, which are not in God’s natural key (*E&A* 285). The songs he loved most were ‘Frankie and Johnny were Lovers,’ ‘Casey Jones,’ and ‘Six Dukes went a Fishing.’⁷⁶

These were among the pieces he would have picked to play if ever asked to be on Desert Island Disks. It was a radio program on which celebrities were interviewed for half an hour about their lives and interest in music, an interview punctuated by about eight selections of their favourite music. He fanaticized about being on it. He had his picked out, including ‘Casey Jones’, for which he had taken the trouble of obtaining the score and lyrics, ‘The Spaniard that Blighted my Life’, and some Palestrina’s Requiem, and Gregorian chant. ‘What’s more,’ he told a friend, ‘if they ask you, they *give* you a

gramophone!’ He badly wanted a new one—even he realized that his ancient gramophone worked badly. After his death, Honeyman would mention this to Cleverdon who said, ‘I never knew—I know the producer well, I might have arranged it.’⁷⁷ Neither had he mentioned it to Grisewood.

On 30 December 1962, he received from Stanley Morison his book *The Portraiture of Thomas More by Hans Holbeim and after*. Jones thought it a ‘wonderful’ book, a ‘most able & perfect piece of work.’ It prompted him to write to Janet Stone, ‘What a heavenly face T. More had.—it comes out best in that enlarged detail in half-tone of the Holbeim portrait—*much* better than the *coloured* one. T. More is a bit too *totally* “English” to appeal to me in some ways, but he must have been a *marvellous* man. I don’t find *The Utopia* readable—it’s not exactly my line of country, but that does not mean that I don’t enormously revere him for other reasons. What a bore his wife must have been, poor woman.’ Between More and his martyr-friend John Fisher, he preferred the latter for doing all he could to avoid execution.⁷⁸

Northwick Lodge was deteriorating fast. He found aspects of life there ‘sometimes *nearly beyond endurance*, and ... it’s just damned stupidity & inefficiency that are the cause of the trouble. Otherwise I can’t think of a place that could possibly suit my requirements so well.’ By 9 October 1962, he had decided to stay ‘for as long as possible.’ He did not want to leave Harrow, Bill Stevenson wanted him to stay put, and Jones wanted to be near Dr Bell whom he considered ‘a good doctor’ and kind. (Bell was now visiting fortnightly instead of monthly because of growing friendship.) Jones bought new mats for the floor. A new friend, Jane Carter, was replacing his old curtains. But Carlile’s mind and body were deteriorating. He now used a walking stick, which he continually put down and forgot where. In November 1963 he lost three of them, so he acquired a less losable pole but lost that too, and Jones was enlisted in the search, spending an afternoon hunting ‘all over the house’ and finding it, eventually, in a corner.⁷⁹

For years Jones had endured the winter cold in his room, heated by the electric hearth augmented by his gas ring, but he could not recall ever being so cold as in the winter of 1962-3. He was particularly irked by the absence of warm water: ‘the idiots

have, *even in this weather*, not lit the fire that warms the water’—he was surprised that the pipes hadn’t frozen. It was too cold for him to receive phone calls. Messages for him were taken but sometimes were got wrong or went undelivered. He left his gas fire on all night. Crouching over it during the day, he wondered whether the glacial winters that preceded his birth had returned. Some days, he complained, the flames of his gas fire would go no higher than three inches, and he was appalled at how ‘ravenously’ the ‘bloody metre eats up shillings.’ He had intended to make a Christmas inscription but could not, because his regimen of drugs did not ‘seem to be very effective,’ because his room was too cold to work in, and because of hiccups.⁸⁰

On the 17 December 1962 he came down with hiccups that continued uninterrupted for eight days. Bell and Stevenson thought them possibly a side-effect of one of the drugs he was taking. Bell advised him to breathe with his lower face in a cellophane bag until the oxygen was eliminated. This stopped the hiccups only for a while. During one pause he looked up ‘hiccups’ in the dictionary, but the definition did not reveal the cause. He spent most of a week with his face in the cellophane bag. Two days after Christmas they stopped, leaving him feeling ‘pretty shaken to pieces.’⁸¹

Although the cold continued to be ‘almost insufferable’ he was consoled by beauty. The tree outside looked ‘perfectly marvellous, with thick frozen snow on every *single* twig.’ On 3 January ‘two black crows rested for a while on its white-laden boughs’, cawed against the cold, then ‘winged away,’ scattering snow as they left. He ‘could almost have touched them’ and would have drawn them but it was too cold in the room. Never before had the neighbourhood crows rested in the tree close to the house.⁸²

He regretted that oil-stoves were not allowed in Northwich Lodge, but in mid January discovered that he owned an electric heater, which successfully augmented his other two heat sources. But in early February, general reduction in power, both gas and electric, reduced his heat and made the room ‘unbearable’. As always when so cold, he gained new appreciation of the verse in Psalm 147 (marked in his copy of *The Dominican Tertiary’s Daily Manual*), which translates, ‘Who shall stand against the face of His cold?’ and lies behind his image in *The Anathemata* of the world ending in an apocalyptic ice age (58). In March he was using the phone again, though only for brief calls. He wrote to Valerie, ‘I fall over very easily.’

The Arts Council was sponsoring a visit by the great modern composer Igor Stravinsky to England in the spring of 1963. Asked whether there was anything he particularly wanted to do, he said that he wanted to meet with four people: Isaiah Berlin, Kenneth Clark, Henry Moore, and, most of all, David Jones, whom he regarded as ‘a writer of genius, perhaps the greatest living’ writer in English. His secretary, Robert Craft, also admired Jones, considering him an inspiring figure, who had attained ‘a life of purity’ and not ‘pastiche.’ One afternoon at the end of May 1963, Craft telephoned, and Jones was called to the phone. ‘Hello.’

‘Is this David Jones?’

‘Yes.’

‘I’m calling on behalf of Igor Stravinsky.’

‘You can’t mean me. You must have the wrong number.’

‘Oh no, Stravinsky wants to meet you.’

Surprised and astonished, Jones said he didn’t go out much but would come into London to see him wherever he was staying. Craft said Stravinsky wanted to visit him at home and see some of his art. They arranged a date and time. Hanging up, Jones began to suspect he was being pranked by friends. But on Saturday afternoon, 1 June, a black limousine arrived carrying Stravinsky, his wife, Craft, and Stephen Spender, who introduced them. Jones was initially shy but gradually relaxed and found the Stravinskys ‘absolutely sweet, both of them, straight forward, direct, appreciative, amusing & relaxed.’ He apologized for music being so far outside his sphere, but said that plainsong and early polyphony, folk music and primitive music had all meant a great deal to him for many years. He seldom played music on his ancient record player, he said, but pulled out his favourite record, *The Early Renaissance*, to which they listened. Then Stravinsky proposed that he and Jones write an opera together, Jones supplying the libretto. Without refusing but disliking operas, Jones side-stepped the proposition by showing them his pictures beginning with the lion he drew when he was eight and including *Tristan ac Ysseult*. He mentioned that a—he couldn’t remember the word and became distressed until it occurred to him—‘wire’ had broken on one of his framed pictures. Stravinsky liked best the *Annunciation in a Welsh Hill Setting*, which he said seemed complete now and might, if worked on further, become too complex,

but Jones said that he wanted to add a bit more colour ‘if, at the same time, I can keep it a drawing. Of course, I don't much like anything I do.’ Stravinsky said, ‘I would like to buy it,’ and Jones responded, ‘I don't sell my pictures.’ Mme Stravinsky liked best the inscription over his mantle, *Pwy yw r Gwr* (Ch 14, fig 7), which, she thought would make a wonderful embroidered tapestry—a remark convincing Jones that she appreciated the feeling of it. He explained that it had been commissioned by a convent in Wales but, after a great delay was returned with the explanation, ‘No one has any use for Welsh in Wales anymore.’ And he added with a smile that slowly faded, ‘Evidently even fewer people have any use for Latin.’ Mme Stravinsky asked his astrological sign, and he closed his eyes and counted on his fingers in an effort to determine whether he was a Capricorn or a Scorpio. He offered them tea, but seeing how impossible it would be for so many in such a room, they make excuses to go. As they left, he worried aloud about having to pay taxes on the Bollingen grant. For everyone it had been a good visit. As they drove away, Stravinsky told Spender that it had seemed to him ‘like visiting a holy man in his cell.’ And, dropping Spender at his house, he told Natasha Spender, ‘I have been in the presence of a holy man.’ Jones later told Clark that he ‘liked them *tremendously* ... absolutely “real” & direct & appreciative’. It would be Stravinsky's last visit to England.⁸³

It had never occurred to most of the other residents at Northwick Lodge that Jones was an eminent person. They had considered him a dear old man, little more than a tramp, who liked drawing. The visit by Stravinsky and his entourage put them in quite a flutter. Someone important lived in their midst.⁸⁴

During his visit, Stravinsky had mentioned knowing the present pope and sharing with him a love for sixteenth-century music.’ Two days later, on 3 June, Pope John XXIII died, and Jones was ‘*deeply* upset’. He told Kenneth Clark that history receives a pope like that no more than ‘once in about 500 years’. He was, Jones wrote Ede, ‘an *incredible* man, who affected *everybody* as far as I can make out—even people who not only loathe the roman Ch but people who loath *any* kind of religion. And I liked his kind of humour—a thing which is inimitable.’ Jones had admired his ‘peasant virtues, his skill in diplomacy, his great & evident charity & holiness, his unbreakable determination’.⁸⁵ What made his admiration complete had been discovering that he had a serious knowledge of early

renaissance music, which had been the basis of friendship with Stravinsky. For a man of affairs to be holy and *also* appreciative of the arts was extremely rare.

At the end of November 1963 President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, and Jones felt a sense of loss like that expressed by Llywelyn's bard in 1283, except that it left him 'without words ... it seemed the taking away of someone absolutely necessary'. But he also saw Kennedy's death in a long perspective. Historically, those considered important and essential to life died and were scarcely missed: 'Look at all these chaps' listed in *Whos Who* and *The Book of Rome*, 'they all thought they were important and they disappeared without trace and without it mattering at all. In fifty years ninety-nine percent of the world's "important" people will have gone, and it will not have mattered a damn.'⁸⁶

In August 1963 the Hagues and Tegetmeiers were preparing to move, having sold Pigotts for a good price to a daughter of Lord Howard de Waldon who owned London's Oxford Street. Dennis Tegetmeier brought Jones the complete manuscripts draft of *In Parenthesis*, which had been left at Pigotts—to add to the two boxes of draft manuscripts of the poem already in his room. And, at his request, Hague brought his 1923 carving of St. Dominic (Ch 6, fig. 18). The Tegetmeiers moved to Shipston-on-Stour (whose Anglo-Saxon church Jones had years ago visited and thought overrated.) The Hagues moved to Shanagarry, near Cork in Ireland, into the house where William Penn had grown up. Hague's departure was a serious severance for Jones. Hague had visited often from High Wycombe and they often spoke by phone. 'Lord, I miss René being at Pigotts,' Jones wrote to Grisewood, 'in fact it seems as one grows older that gradually *everybody* one wants most to see one sees less & less or not at all.' One of his 'chief miseries' now was separation from his best friends. Of these he most missed seeing Hague and Grisewood, the latter fully occupied at the BBC and hampered in his movements by crippling rheumatoid arthritis.⁸⁷

Hague had a protégé named Philip (Rod) Lowery, a husky, black-bearded twenty-one-year-old to whom Hague had become a surrogate father. Lowery had a good knowledge of archaeology and had been taught to work in silver by his wife, Angela Pruden, daughter of the Ditchling silversmith. He was interested in engraved lettering and had been astonished when Hague had shown him Jones's inscriptions. He and his wife were now moving to Gloucester to join the Taena Community near Prinknash, but Hague

thought he needed a mentor and, having just seen Jones's *Trystan* and *Annunciation* paintings, urged him to go see them. Lowery telephoned, and Jones invited him out.

'So you're interested in bloody painting,' were Jones's first words to him. He propped up the two paintings on the side of his bed, first one, then the other. Lowery was overwhelmed. Usually garrulous, he kept quiet as Jones conducted a tour of *Annunciation in a Welsh Hill Setting* and then of *Trystan ac Essyllt*. (Jones said, 'I rather like the cat.') Lowery was able to explain to Jones that his 18th-century silver teapot, inherited from Gill, was made of eighteen different pieces of silver. (From then on it evoked for him his favourite line from Psalm 121 about Jerusalem built as a city.)

Jones began teaching him. He said, 'You have to be moved by the nature of whatever you practice.' There must be sincerity of vocation. He spoke about the subject of an artwork: 'Look at what you've got, not at what you think it should be.' He stressed that art has to be 'of now', and he advocated 'praying things into shape.' Above all in art he valued life, a sense of motion. Lowery remembers him admiring the lettering round a beaten copper dish made by Simon Verity because it was 'so full of life.'⁸⁸

Over the years when Lowery—'that *admirable* man', Jones called him—came to London for sheets of silver, he visited Jones, who was for him an opener of doors. Playing a record of Gregorian chant for Lowery, he sat with an ecstatic look on his face. (Before playing a record, he noticed, Jones first wiped it strenuously along and across the grooves with his pocket handkerchief.) As the record played, the gramophone arm wobbled on the warped record, the sound terrible, but he was still and silent, lost in what he largely imagined hearing. If Lowery spoke, Jones held up a hand for quiet so as not to miss what's coming. As he played for him his recording of Joyce reading from *Finnegans Wake*, Jones began to laugh. So did Lowery, and they laughed through most of the reading. For the young man this was a liberation: *Finnegans Wake* was simply to be enjoyed. Lowery once spoke of meeting Dom Bede Griffiths, the Benedictine founder of a Hindu-Christian ashram in India, and Jones remarked, 'Is he one of those bloody Bombay Welsh?' On Caldey,' he told Lowery, 'when they opened a bottle of whisky they threw the cork away.' Jones did the same, and after many an afternoon, Lowery made his way to the underground station 'absolutely pissed as a newt.' During one of their visits, a nephew of Eric Gill arrived—very proud and cocky, so that Jones was immediately put

off. ‘Ah David, I’m John Skelton’, he said, to which Jones replied, ‘The only John Skelton I know has been dead for centuries.’⁸⁹

Douglas Cleverdon and Louis Cowan decided to republish his illustrated *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. It was to be an expensive limited edition, three hundred copies in the States, one hundred in Britain, at £15 per copy. It would not look as good as the original edition, Jones thought, because the typeface was not as good. Gray hand-made paper was commissioned, but Jones insisted that 115 copies be printed on white hand-made paper. Cleverdon asked him to write an Introduction. He said no, but Cleverdon urged, ‘just *try* something—it doesn’t matter how short or long.’ So he began in June 1963, was engrossed by July, and (temporarily) finished at the end of August—it filled fifty-two foolscap pages. He had deliberately avoided reading Coleridge scholarship and confined himself, he said, ‘to what I felt personally about the poem when I made the engravings 35 years ago & since.’ More broad and far-reaching than any academic criticism, the meandering essay is an original interpretation, focusing on the relation of the poem to the ‘voyage of life’ and involving the notion of Jesus as Odysseus.⁹⁰ Owing to a limited supply of commissioned paper, he had to cut it to six pages, which was easy, since the first six pages formed a unit. Louis Cowan visited on 3 November, saw the complete essay, and wanted to publish it as a monograph.

The new edition of this *Ancient Mariner* would come out in 1965, the projected number of copies diminished, and the price increased: ninety copies at £25 each in Britain, 180 at £12.10 for the Chilmark Press in the US. Cleverdon, who owned the plates, received royalties of £362 and a supervision fee of £50. Jones received a fee of £100 plus £50 for his brief introduction and subsequently £112.13.11 in royalties.⁹¹

Cowan gave \$25 to Nest Cleverdon to buy Jones for his birthday a new radio, but Jones told her on the phone, ‘I don’t want a bloody *machine*’, so she asked him to choose something else, and, after a long pause, he said he would think about it. Months later, he telephoned and told her, ‘I’ve thought of something. I’d rather like a gold cup. I’ve always wondered what it was like to be King Arthur drinking out of a gold cup.’ Nest said, ‘Don’t be silly, Dai, \$25 won’t buy a gold cup.’ He was crestfallen and retreated to reconsider. Weeks later he rang up to say, ‘I used to have a marvellous Jeager dressing

gown and some bloody woman said it wanted washing, took it away, and, she said, it fell to pieces in the wash.’ So Nest telephoned Harrods, and learned that a Jaeger dressing gown cost £200. She discovered, however, that \$25 would buy enough camel-hair wool cloth to make a dressing gown. She bought it and made one, which he loved and, as she put it, ‘practically lived in’ for the next decade, although the sleeves were too short. He often asked her to lengthen them but added, ‘I can’t part with it at the moment.’ She had kept remnants of the original cloth and in 1970 would obtain the robe long enough to lengthen its sleeves.⁹²

Louis Bonnerot replaced Catherine’s Rousseau as his Gallic encourager. Bonnerot had reviewed *In Parenthesis* in *Etude Anglaise* in 1937 and, after reading Catherine’s thesis, became seriously interested in *The Anathemata*. He was convinced that Jones was a genius and his work of permanent value. Jones was leery of academics and intellectuals, but Catherine told him that when she failed the Aggregation a second time, in 1962, Bonnerot had burst into tears—so he thought he ‘must be a jolly nice human sort of bloke.’ They began writing, and Jones told him that ‘most of my acquaintances’ find the poem ‘obscure, if not incomprehensible’—the ‘notable exceptions’, he said, include Edith Sitwell (but not Eliot, whose appreciation of the work did not, Jones realized, extend to understanding it.⁹³) Jones and Bonnerot first met—Robert Speaight brought him to Harrow—on 16 July 1964. The three of them spoke mainly about ‘the *extremely* delicate problems’ that Speaight faced in writing Gill’s biography. Jones promised to answer Bonnerot’s literary questions by letter.

In letters and subsequent visits, Jones helped Bonnerot understand *The Anathemata*, and they became friends. Bonnerot visited often during a sabbatical year in London. He was energetic in speech, passionate, and demonstrative. He had an exceptional sense of poetry and a deep religious belief—both unusual, Jones realized, in an academic. He acknowledged to Bonnerot a debt to Malraux. Apropos of the rape of Ilia in *The Anathemata* (87), Bonnerot mentioned Yeats’s ‘Leda and the Swan’, which, to his surprise, Jones had not read. Before one scheduled visit, Bonnerot received a telephone call from him at three in the morning asking him to purchase and bring Agarol for piles. Another time he woke Bonnerot after midnight to ask him to bring a package of cigarettes,

and Bonnerot said yes, went back to sleep, and was wakened again by Jones phoning to say he preferred cork tips.⁹⁴

Bonnerot was more intellectually sophisticated about literature than anyone else Jones had spoken with about the poem, and he would go on to publish one of the first insightful articles on it. He was especially interested in its ‘different levels of speech’, in the quick alternation between kinds of language that were terse, elliptical, familiar, and conversational, and in the effect of alternating between familiar and recondite allusions. He realized that as a writer Jones benefited greatly from not having had a university education. He ascribed Jones’s valuation of the visual and tactile in writing to his training as a visual artist and his early experience working in wood and copper. He appreciated Jones’s poetry as ‘symphonic and stereophonic’. He saw *The Anathemata* as involving ‘interrelated series of space and time planes’ with the foreground gaining significance from background in a ‘double and triple referential organization’ possessing ‘all the rich deliberate efficiency of a fugue and unified by ‘the same spiritual forces at work beneath the surface’. He was for *The Anathemata* what Johnston had been for *In Parenthesis*—and he would be the first French translator of Jones’s poetry. In October 1971, when he was translating ‘The Wall,’ he and Jones went through parts of the translation together, and Jones thought it was like being with Dawson, who ‘used to make one feel one knew a great deal more than one did’—Bonnerot: ‘that admirable product of Gaul,’ that ‘perceptive & delightful man.’⁹⁵

The ‘delicate problems’ Speaight had discussed with Jones and Bonnerot concerning the biography of Gill that he was writing had arisen from Gill’s diaries, which disclose the full extent of his adulteries and his incest with his daughter Betty. Most of this was news to Jones, though he had suspected some of the adultery. Speaight also confided in Tom Burns and asked for advice. Burns suggested he to speak with Mary Gill, who urged him to suppress information about her husband’s promiscuity and incest.⁹⁶

The biography would be published in 1966, and Speaight would have a copy sent to Jones. Three periodicals asked him to review it, but he refused. Declining Frank Kermode’s invitation for *Encounter*, he objected in general to ‘any biography’, which necessarily fails ‘to capture contradictory, or any way, complex quiddities & haecieties of the chap.’ Another excuse was that he had boils on his bottom that made writing difficult. He may also

have thought the book insincere because censored, but his chief reason for refusing was to avoid hurting Speaight, a serial biographer who worked quickly and lacked intellectual and emotional depth. Jones liked 'our Bobbie' and thought him 'an incredible chap' because he seemed to know everyone. But a writer, he was merely a versatile hack. He told a friend, 'I don't like a person who wrote more than one biography in a lifetime. He cannot have researched the man properly.' A biographer had to take a great deal of time and actually live into his subject. He also disliked the book for being too much about ideas, too little 'about chaps.'⁹⁷

In 1964 a professor at the Sorbonne, Solange Dayras, began visiting. She was writing a book on Catholicism in Britain. He enjoyed talking with her, a woman of deep and refined sympathies, impressive intelligence, and devout faith, but on her first visit they were both shy, and he kept looking down as he talked. She asked him what Catholicism meant to him. He pulled his hair 'like a little boy' and muttered that it was difficult to say but, he said, 'it is just everything to me.' He said he thought his poetry was and would always be about the Eucharist as the real presence of Christ. 'I think all my poetry [after *In Parenthesis*] is about that.' He thought that in his later poetry he was continually saying the same thing—'I know I do'—and the difficulty was in trying to make it meaningful. His faith was simple, he said, non-intellectual. He was enthralled by the Latin Mass, its poetic language, its theology, its action. He saw it as 'the highest achievement of the human spirit.'⁹⁸ But its importance to him was now an occasion of considerable suffering.

An increase in ecumenism was the only thing he liked about the liturgical reforms preceding and following the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). The reforms had begun in 1955. Prior to that year, on Good Friday the priest alone took communion—Jones liked that as showing forth 'the real Absence' between the crucifixion and resurrection—but this was replaced by a regular Mass and general communion. Then his favourite hymn, the sixth century *Vexilla Regis*, was dropped from the Good Friday liturgy. Then, in 1961, the Christmas Preface was removed from the Mass of Corpus Christi, where, he thought, it beautifully illuminated the conceptual rhyme between the Incarnation and the Eucharist. Finally, Latin was replaced throughout the world by the vernacular, and the traditional Tridantine Mass was substantially altered. Elimination of Latin ended linguistic continuity

with Classical times and involved replacing numinously beautiful plainchant with English hymns, which are crass by contrast. Jones was angry and he was astonished that these changes were apparently effected without regret or 'a deep sense of loss'. Worse, the language of the consecration now designated it as merely a memorial—with 'Do this in remembrance of me' rather than what he would have preferred, 'Do this to make me present'.⁹⁹

As he fully realized, the changes swept away many of the 'reference points' of his own writing, but he objected to the 'renewal' as itself an aesthetic and doctrinal calamity. Underlying it was, he believed, a desacrilizing impulse motivated by utilitarian 'positivist principles'. He wrote to Grisewood: 'I can see how the tendency would be to approximate much more to the Protestant minister, to play down the *sacerdos* & ... to stress the, as it were, "non-cult" thing and emphasize the "preaching of the Word" as it is called, and to stress the ethical "sociological implications" or supposed implications & the "humanist" aspects.' But all this diminishes the cultic *poesis* 'whereby under the *signa* of bread & wine, the Eternal God is made present on the altar.' He thought that 'the "demythologizing" process' rightly belonging to biblical scholarship was unfortunately determining attitudes towards the Mass. He believed that the Mass is either 'an *anamnesis* of the Passion of the Incarnate Logos consummated on the Tree of the Cross or it is only some sort of commemoration of a good man who lived in Palestine and greatly annoyed the Jewish priestly authorities.' 'To me,' he wrote, 'it's ghastly. ... a most bewildering and distasteful thing. I loath it. I've wasted hours & hours & days & days writing & destroying letters addressed to *The Tablet* in answer to some point raised by the ardent "vernacularists".' Over a hundred drafts of beginnings of these letters survive, abandoned because he could not adequately express what he felt and because he realized 'the futility of yet another layman airing his opinions'.¹⁰⁰ The closest he came to publishing on the subject was a succinct draft of 17 November 1965 for *The Times*, in which he says it a mistake

to change the rubrics which stressed the sacral character of what is either a profound and unfathomable mystery or nothing; to transfer the emphasis from propitiatory Sacrifice to 'commemorative meal', to somehow diminish whatever most evoked the numinous; to abandon the modal Chant—that most superb of art-forms that the West has given to the world and which, incidentally, leads us back to the modal chant used in the Cenacle—as also the laticlaved tunica of the deacon, the planeta of the celebrant lead visually back to that world of Antiquity.

In the spring of 1965, he would sign an open letter to the pope asking that the Tridentine rite should be allowed to continue since the Latin text was itself magnificent and it has inspired ‘a host of priceless achievements in the arts.’ And in March 1971, he would sign a petition to the pope to preserve the Tridentine Mass.*

What was touted as renewal was really, he felt, elimination, a mindless chucking away of rich traditional heritage. When complaining, he protested to a friend, ‘I’m not a ritualist; I’m a humanist.’ He appreciated the ‘Catholic Mythos’ as ‘a complex of mysteries of incredible splendour that is consonant with man & his nature as a sign-making animal. The Roman Liturgy as it stood with the chant was a stupendous artwork loaded with the sacral, apperceived not by the understanding of this or that particular word or words but by the whole of men's faculties.’ He thought the liturgists had ‘an absolute knack for abolishing what is richest in poetry in the Mass.’ What was deleted from the Canon of the Mass left only ‘remnants of what was the edifice of a serene & balanced liturgy.’¹⁰¹

The liturgical renewal was the most painful protracted event of his later years, for him analogous to, but more important than, the linguistic and cultural depletion of Wales. What had been for nearly two millennia a continuous and sustaining tradition—his only real home for most of his life—was forfeiting much its identity.¹⁰²

A visitor in 1966 asked him if he went to Mass. He replied, ‘Oh, yes’ and added, ‘I used to look forward to going all week but no longer.’ The visitor noticed that while discussing the liturgical changes, he ‘floundered around’ for bodily equilibrium more than any other time during the afternoon.’¹⁰³ ‘One knows,’ he said, ‘that some things will disappear,’ he said, ‘but one can at least weep for them.’

His silversmith friend, Philip Lowery, earned much of his living making chalices. On one of his visits, he expressed worry over a monk ordering a chalice without gilding inside the bowl and without the round knob in the stem that helped the priest hold it while

* Other signers included: Julian Asquith, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Maurice Bowra, Kenneth Clark, Cyril Connolly, Colin Davis, Cecil Day Lewis, Robert Graves, Graham Greene, Harman Grisewood, Rupert Hart-Davies, Colin Hardie, Barbara Hepworth, F.R. Leavis, Cecil Day Lewis, Compton Mackenzie, Yehudi Menuhin, Nancy Mitford, Malcolm Muggeridge, Irish Murdoch, Sean O’Faolain, Kathleen Raine, Ralph Richardson, Joan Sutherland, Philip Toynbee, Bernard Wall, E.I. Watkin, and R.C. Zaehner.

keeping thumb and index-finger (reserved for holding the host) closed together before washing after communion. Lowery asked why the changes. The monk said, 'Oh, no particular reason—simpler to make & less expensive.' Lowery did as asked but, continuing to worry, consulted Jones, who told him that what the man wanted was not a chalice but a communion cup. Jones thought it 'bloody odd' that this 'good & devout priest' should see no significance in the matter. Understood or not, this physical change implied a change in the theology of the Eucharist. In Elizabethan and Stuart times, he explained, communion cups replaced chalices in order to signify 'a total rejection of what was signified by those wide-bowled chalices of the Mass.' Of the clerics enabling such changes, he said, 'They are so damnably dishonest or utterly imperceptive.'¹⁰⁴

Bernard Wall agreed with him that 'the most baffling mystery of the situation was the virtually *total* public assent given by all the highly placed & influential clerics.' The current liturgical changes gave Jones insight into how the Reformation was carried out. 'I am not comparing the unmitigated evil of Henry VIII's acts with the good intentions of our "maisters & doctours" to-day' he wrote, 'but it does *perhaps* help one to understand a *little* better how chaps will take the virtual destruction of a heritage if it comes from "the authorities" no matter who those authorities may be.'¹⁰⁵

When he saw Alick Dru in mid-July 1967, they would agree that 'the root trouble' with the hierarchy and clergy is that they do not appreciate the deep influence of positivism or understand the nature of our contemporary technological society, so that attempts to reform the liturgy completely miss the target—'so that there is vast wastage of ammunition (in this case part of the Church's heritage) without any effect whatever.' On precisely this subject, Jones had just torn up another of his attempted letters to the *Tablet*. When Saunders Lewis visited now, they devoted much of the time to bemoaning changes in the liturgy. Vernacularisation was doubly disastrous for Wales, said Lewis, because it meant the anglicisation of the liturgy, since there are too few Welsh-speaking Catholics to justify having liturgies in most places in Welsh.¹⁰⁶

Jones enjoyed his barber's monthly visits. Caddy's anecdotes about local Irish traditions reminded him of John O'Connor's yarns, and they often discussed the differences between the Irish and Welsh languages. They agreed about the liturgical changes destroying

a sense of the numinous, but, Jones noticed, Caddy ‘being Irish is quite unshaken—interesting how people of that remarkable race are seldom gloomy for long.’¹⁰⁷

In 1970 he would write to Grisewood, ‘People just get used to the thing & soon won’t know it’s happened.’ They are like someone who has ‘never even tasted salmon’ and says that tinned salmon ‘is exactly the same only better.’ In the new Mass, there were only two signs of the cross, whereas before there had been ‘seven or seventy’ (actually thirty). ‘You have no right whatever,’ he wrote bitterly, ‘to suppose there is some loss of sacrality, still less a change of intention’ though he would like to be able to say to those who made and approved the changes, ‘Don’t pretend to deceive yourself ... The old Punch ... drawing, in which a man puts down the telephone and turns to his wife saying, ‘Nothing darling, only darling, darling’ has every application here.’¹⁰⁸ He took grim delight in recalling the chorus in the Humpty Dumpty ballad in *Finnegans Wake*, ‘Religious reform / Hidious in form.’¹⁰⁹

Since January 1961 he had received quarterly cheques from the Bollingen Foundation. In August 1962 he was surprised to learn that the Head Office Inspector of Taxes wanted to tax the grant. This was a blow: his annual income now was only £100, and imaginatively he had come to possess the entire £3000 prize. No previous recipient had paid tax on it, but each case was decided separately by a different inspector. Ethel Watts insisted that they appeal. He wanted not to, lest an adverse judgment in his case affect previous recipients, especially Kathleen Raine, who was not well off. Kenneth Clark urged him to fight because it had been fought before and won, although the revenue inspector would have to be persuaded. And Herbert Read urged him to appeal for the sake of future recipients. Jones was pessimistic: he believed that ‘the legal intricacies affecting the collection of revenue must, of their nature, tend to one end: the collection of revenue.’ But he acquiesced, and with the help of a lawyer, T.M. Cooper, Ethel Watts launched his appeal, which came before the Special Commissions of Income Tax at Turnstile House in High Holborn on 6 June 1963. Auden had written to the tribunal supporting Jones’s case, and Read sent a long telegram. Clark wrote that the award had been given to Jones ‘primarily because he was in serious circumstances’—that with his very small income and the present rise in the cost of living, he would otherwise be unable to survive. Eliot wrote

expressing astonishment that the authorities should decide to tax the award, which is a gift and not competed for, and went on to say that Jones is, in his opinion ‘one of the most interesting artists, and one of the most distinguished writers, of my generation’ someone of ‘very high literary eminence.’ All these messages were disallowed on the objection of opposing counsel because their writers were not present for cross-examination (though the judge thought this objection harsh and rigid). Kathleen Raine and Spender were present and cross-examined. Proceedings lasted from 10:30 to 4:30 with a short break at 1:00. Most of the time was given to citations of case histories, some of which were, to Jones, ‘extremely funny in their remoteness from’ the present case. When referred to as ‘the appellant,’ he thought immediately of *Richard II* and the lines, ‘The appellant in all duty greets your highness / And craves to kiss your hand and take his leave,’ and then he remembered, ‘Think what you will, we seize into our hands / His plate, his goods, his money & his lands.’ The tug-of-war by lawyers struck him as so the ludicrous that he laughed out loud and had to be called to order. When he took the stand he tried to distinguish between initiating an application and completing an application form sent on the initiative of the granting body. His statement was ruled ‘not germane’, and the appeal was turned down. The main legal sticking point was that he did apply and had, in a sense, competed for the award. The precedent on which the case turned was a judgment over a gift by Lord Bute to a winning jockey. With the adverse decision of the tribunal, Jones had to draw £400 out of his life savings (totalling £2000) to pay tax on the award.¹¹⁰

Spender had recently got him elected to the Society of Authors, and with its encouragement and financial backing, and that of his publisher, Ethel Watts was planning a new appeal, but in November 1963, she died, and, losing heart, Jones let the matter drop.¹¹¹

Northwick Lodge was suffering from increasing neglect and dry rot—the stairs slanted and were unsafe. He had known since 1961 that it would be closed. In the early months of February 1964, Carlile became mentally incompetent and went into hospital, reminding Jones of the Classical saying, ‘Those whom the gods love die young.’ In late March Carlile died.¹¹² Jones needed to find new lodgings.

Kathleen Raine offered to rent him a two-room flat at the top of the house she had taken at 47 Poultons Square, Chelsea. He visited and liked it, and after postponing a decision for weeks, visited again. But he did not ‘*really* want to leave Harrow’ and now disliked central London. He also disliked the prospect of Kathleen as live-in landlady. She revered him, which was irritating—whenever she notified him that she was about to visit, he would moan. She was formidable, dominant, and could become possessive. Discussing his reservations with Grisewood, he said he found her ‘suffocating’. But he remained genuinely undecided and, Grisewood later remembered, ‘in a terrible state’ over her proposal. On 23 April, he sent her £100 to reserve the flat until he decided. Because of his early relation with his mother, he was, at once, vulnerable and loath to being taken over. He ‘very nearly moved’, he told friends, but ‘at the last moment, through no fault of hers or mine, the arrangement fell through.’ The deciding factor may have been continuing irresolution enabled by not yet being ejected from Northwick Lodge. Kathleen never knew why he didn’t take the flat, but no strain on their friendship ensued. He went again, for dinner at Poultons Square on 3 July. Later he wrote that he wished he had moved to Chelsea. He would then have been closer to Grisewood. But Grisewood knew that he could not bear the thought of a constant contact with her and dependency growing over time.¹¹³

Jones’s affection for Kathleen Raine rested on respect for her intelligence and accommodation of her fondness for him. About her poetry he was generally silent, though he once told Sutherland that he did like ‘very much’ some of the poems in her *The Pythoness*. He respected Kathleen’s poetic sense enough to read aloud to her whatever poetry he was then writing. She realized that he was ‘a world-class writer’ and that she ‘wasn’t in his league.’ They talked about mutual friends and often about Coleridge, whom she loved. He knew she was working on Blake’s thought, but that was Neo-Platonic and uninteresting to him. Still, he was whole-hearted in praising her work on Blake. Her essay on Blake’s newly discovered painting entitled *The Sea of Time & Space* (1957) was, he thought ‘*terribly* good ... absolutely fascinating—first class’.¹¹⁴

Northwick Lodge was condemned, shut up, and scheduled for demolition. All other residents had moved out, and he enjoyed being alone there—it was ‘gloriously peaceful’. The front door was permanently locked, and he entered and left through the

back cellar door at the back. But that door had been broken by ‘chaps of some description, either tramps or lovers.’ Hearing noises downstairs at night, he would telephone the Balmes. Sarah decided that tramps were sleeping there and had Maurice install a padlock and bolt. She brought Jones food, and he went to their house for lunch.

All his friends were looking for a new room for him. He needed one large enough for his books, he needed his meals cooked for him, and he hoped to stay in Harrow. Ede and When made definite proposals, but he would not leave London. Clare Shepherd proposed that he go into the Charterhouse Foundation for the indigent.¹¹⁵ Janet Stone proposed a permanent room in the Cavendish Hotel and found one in the maid’s quarters, large and inexpensive. He went with her to see it and he liked it but couldn’t bring himself to take it. After seeing it, he said, ‘I’ll go back to Harrow. Will you get a taxi for me. You’ll come too, won’t you.’ ‘A taxi!’ she said, ‘can’t we go by underground?’ ‘No, I’d like a taxi.’ She went with him, and when they got out he left her to pay. This was for her a shock. She was a poor artist’s wife. He was in this respect ruthlessly self-centred, she thought, but probably he was habituated to thinking of everyone as having more money than he.

Dr Bell suggested a residential hotel in lower, newer Harrow called Monksdene, which the proprietor, Peter T. Heath, had created by joining together several houses (fig.

8). A large ground-floor room occupied by Heath’s parents was coming vacant. Audrey Malon made preliminary inquiries, and Jones went with Honeyman to see it. Jones disliked this part of town, the room being on the first floor,



8. Monksdene Residential Hotel, 1990

its French doors (always draughty), and its being dark (the French doors were the only windows and faced north). Moreover, it was slightly smaller than his old room. The ceiling was fiberboard and sagged, but it would do, he thought, as a temporary place to stay.¹¹⁶ Until it was vacant, however, he would have to move for a while into a smaller room on the floor above, in the meanwhile putting much of his furniture into storage.

Helping him pack to move, Aubrey Malan discovered a dresser drawer to which he had retired socks as they developed mendable holes. She took away twenty-three pairs and, with the help of the school seamstress, repaired them. He found it ‘appallingly difficult not to get the things one immediately needs packed up with things one does not immediately need.’ Added to the burden of packing was his first cold in years. Tearing up papers to discard, he noticed in the February *Radio Times* (Welsh Home Service edition) a photograph of a woman who resembled ‘darling Valerie’ and it turned out to be of her but in makeup for a play. He read the note on her, which said that she had been a ‘champion hurdler.’ It was the first he knew of this accomplishment and even of the athletic event, not previously having been aware that ‘chaps jumped hurdles ... as a specific sport’. He could not bear simply to discard his stacks of newspapers, so Barbara Moray took some away in ‘eight or ten tea chests’ to store in her basement and Honeyman stored crate-loads of them, mixed with other unsorted papers, at his house.¹¹⁷ Dorothea Dufort’s daughter, Beatrix, visited and, receiving from Jones his future address, asked whether it was a monastery guesthouse. ‘No’, he said, ‘I wish it was.’

Honeyman arranged for movers, who arrived on Monday, 23 March, 1964. Morag came with her small daughters to help. Seeing him distressed and miserable, she got him away for lunch at the King’s Head (‘Look, David’, she said, ‘this is on me.’ ‘Oh,’ he said, ‘I never argue about things like that.’). After lunch, he said, ‘There are certain things I can’t let the removal men take.’ One was the large meat platter on which he kept his biros and brushes. That and a few things on the mantelpiece made the journey in her car. At Monksdene, his temporary room was ‘just one solid mass of packing-cases’, to him ‘a really alarming sight.’ Morag took over and had a mover take packing-cases to a closet next door, allowing him to establish a ‘bridge-head of *comparative* order in one bit of the room’. His boxes nevertheless overflowed into the corridor, obliging him to pay extra rent. She went back to Northwick Lodge and saved the inscription on asbestos over the fireplace, which she gave to the Honeymans to store for him. (Jacqueline would bring it to him two years later—he intended to have it cut into the proper shape and framed.) Before she left, he gave her a book, which he inscribed, ‘For Morag on the day of the,’ then looked up and asked, ‘How do you spell “trek”?’¹¹⁸

Ten days later, on 2 April, all his possessions were moved into the larger ground-floor room. The double move left him muddled. Before bookshelves could be built in mid May, he wandered for over a month through a maze of large packing cases full of books. The greatest curse of moving was that for months afterwards he was often unable to find whatever he looked for, such as books and working drafts.¹¹⁹

The room was six inches longer than his old one on the hill but two feet narrower and, so, more crowded. He moved everything to correspond with its placement in his room in Northwick Lodge, but where there had been a space in the middle, now was none. Hooks at the back of his door were thick with clothes, and the daytime accumulation on his bed was greater. Sometimes, when too tired to face removing the paraphernalia to the floor—he told Malcolm Cochrane it took an hour to get to bed because of having to move everything off it—he slept in his armchair. Daylight, from the French-door windows, failed to reach the opposite end of the room—he sometimes carried writing to the windows to read it—so he kept an electric light on during the day. Partly because of its darkness he would never paint a picture here and would make only a few, mostly minor inscriptions. Janet Stone would remember it as ‘the most dreadful place, very dark.’ He referred to it as his ‘cave’ or ‘dugout’ and wrote to Charles Burns that he wished he ‘could build a barrier of sand-bags half way up’ the French doors, which he soon, in fact, blocked to the doorknobs with piles of books. He liked that the room looked out to a garden, the remnants of an orchard with ‘fruit-trees & a reasonably un-tidied-up area of grass & a rather nice weathered fence of palings at the back.’ The place was quiet most weekdays, though noisy on Friday and Saturday nights, when non-residents came to the hotel to drink. It was also less quiet during weekend days ‘especially if it’s sunny,’ because ‘old gentlemen and girls & people sit about on deck chairs. There is also immediately on my starboard bow, a swing upon which children, & girls in trousers, disport themselves.’ He expected that in July the garden would be ‘like Palm Beach or Capri’.¹²⁰ Upon arriving, he wanted to draw the garden ‘before they doll it up & before there are too many leaves on the trees’ but felt too tired (owing to drugs) and preoccupied with arrangements to make and letters to write.

The room was equipped with an electric fire, a gas ring, and a lavatory basin with hot and cold water. Since moving into Sheffield Terrace he had never bathed in the

common bathrooms but only washed his body, nightly, in his room—lifting one foot up into the basin, then the other, a task that had become increasingly difficult and risky as he aged. One night he caught his toe in the drain and stubbed it badly so that he had difficulty walking for days.

The hotel had a dining room with small tables, but most residents were transient, so there was no sense of community and, instead of eating in the dining room, he was brought meals on trays. These included dinner on weekdays and lunch on the weekend. Breakfast was also provided, but he woke too late for that and so fixed his own—a boiled egg, half a grapefruit, and Earl Gray tea. He ate breakfast in bed, then read the morning *Times* and the morning post, to which he would sometimes write replies in bed, then got up, dressed, made his bed, and pile onto it papers and books that had been relegated to the floor for the night. Later in the day he would have his favourite tea, Lapsang Souchong. He also ate Bath Oliver biscuits, which he began storing in old biscuit tins sealed with scotch tape that he had to rip off to get at them. Otherwise mice, he thought, got into them. Years later, while moving boxes to clean the room for him, Jacqueline Honeyman found a dead rat, which Stanley silently disposed of.¹²¹ The room was more like a dugout that Jones realized.

Vermin had easy access, at least during his first year in residence, owing to a gap where the outside walls failed to meet, through which you could see daylight. He regarded this architectural flaw as temporary but it remained unfixed for months. This also meant that his first winter in his new room was colder than winters in his old one. Even visitors kept their overcoats on. Visiting soon after Jones's first Christmas, Honeyman found it bitterly cold. He asked how he had spent Christmas, and Jones told him that the Malans and Waltons had invited him for supper, but he had preferred to sit in his room by himself in his greatcoat with a blanket round his shoulders, 'jolly nice, like being in the trenches.' Honeyman had two brick-lined gas heaters installed, which were economical and actually heated the room. Jones nevertheless continued complaining about the cold and Joy Finzi and Barbara Moray each bought him electric heaters.¹²²

The entrance to the building was a reception area with cheap chandeliers, painted wrought iron, and a front desk where Heath greeted you eagerly, hoping you were staying the night. When you asked to see Mr. Jones, his face changed. You had come to see their

eminent resident, the pride of the establishment, whose status was established by the number and sometimes the quality of his visitors. The proprietor escorted you past the dining room and down a narrow corridor on the left with dark red flock wallpaper and purple Serasian carpeting and lit by florescent lights. Many visitors wondered how such an aesthetically refined person could live here. Upon first seeing it, Sarah Balme exclaimed, 'But, David, the wallpaper!' 'I *know*,' he said, 'it's like a bloody Turkish brothel.' He also thought it resembled an ocean liner 'with long windowless corridors, berths, bathrooms, etc.' But the building was cleaner and better run than Northwick Lodge had been, and the managers were kind—he liked the landlady, Mrs Philips. He could ignore the interior decorating. ¹²³

His new neighbourhood was 'extremely unattractive'. It combined the worst aspects of urban life (heavy traffic) and suburban sprawl. The shops he liked were further away, and it was now 'a devil of a way to church'. Walking to Mass involved crossing a busy intersection and passing along traffic-congested Graton Road, so from now on he took a taxi. He went out less, walked less, became more reclusive. Although there was a pillar box nearby, bills went unpaid. Royalty cheques and gift-cheques went uncashed. From Northwick Lodge he had walked female visitors back to the underground station; from here he did not. Whenever he did go out, he wore his ankle-length black greatcoat, 'not because of the cold but', he admitted to Grisewood, 'I feel naked without it.' ¹²⁴ It was a portable dugout.

He became more reliant on women friends to shop for him. Once, over the phone, he asked Nest to buy him underpants—he wore Aertex, longish boxer shorts. She did it, without thinking of asking for (and without receiving) payment. Sarah often shopped for him, at one time weekly—he would give her a list. (He had to have special Eucryl Toothpowder, not paste, she would remember.) When she asked what he wanted for Christmas, he said, 'Oh, I don't know. I'm always short of handkerchiefs.' 'What sort?' 'They must be Irish linen and hand rolled'—these then cost £4 each—'I only want a dozen.' She was taken aback. He had no notion of the price of things, because he had not shopped for so long. (She bought him many fewer than a dozen.) If he needed coins for the gas meter, he would telephone her, and though she now lived a mile away she would bring them. On one such occasion he took the coins but did not invite her in, because he

was involved in a complicated conversation about *The Anathemata* with a French academic named Bonnerot, who was about to lecture on it in Brussels. Jones subsequently wrote to her to apologize, and to thank her for the ‘the invaluable separate coins for this confounded metre’.¹²⁵

He continued to miss his high room on the hill and told Janet Stone that he felt ‘twice as old’ as he did when he lived there. In December 1964, Northwick Lodge was demolished, and the heap of rubble burned. Sarah, who watched the conflagration, told him she had seen its last hours. ‘What was it like?’ he asked, and as she described it she saw a look of agony on his face. He wrote to Valerie, ‘I loved that house and old CC.’ He went several times to see the spot where it had been ‘taken out like a tooth.’ He was glad to see that the acacia tree, which had stood just outside his window, remained standing. At the end of his life, he would consider Northwick Lodge the last place he ‘could paint or write with ease.’ Throughout the coming years he missed the high room, its view, the birds, the meadows below. He even missed the ill-kept, disorderly house, which seemed, in retrospect, ‘creaturely’.¹²⁶ It had been a human place, almost a person. And he missed the fellowship there, though that had decreased in later years. His exile to Sheffield Terrace had made him appreciate camaraderie at Northwick Lodge. Now, at Monksdene, it was lost to him.

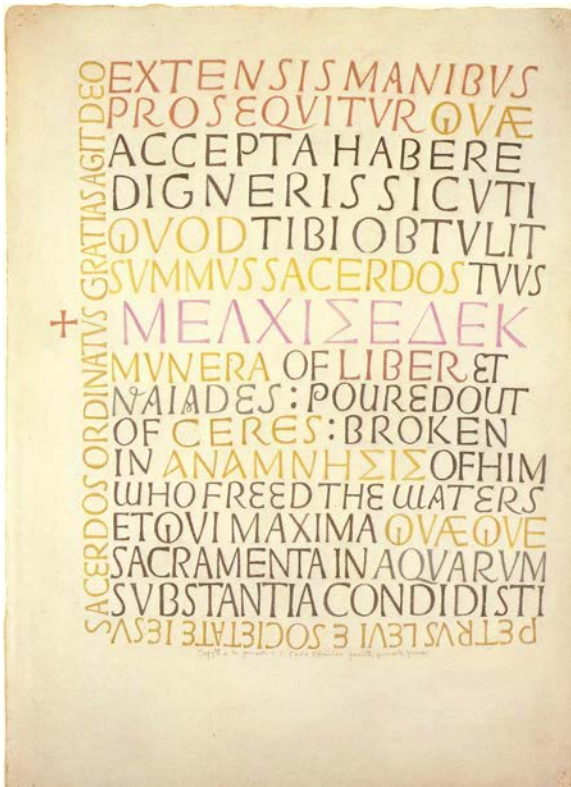
Charles Burns, who had last visited two years earlier, died on 8 June 1964 at the age of sixty-nine. Jones had loved him deeply, as many others had. He had thought about him often, as he did his other close friends. He could not imagine the world without him.¹²⁷

On Wednesday 15 July 1964, he met Siegfried Sassoon at lunch with Barbara Moray and the Queen’s private secretary, Sir Alan Lascelles, and his wife in the Old Stables (where Wren had lived and worked) of Kensington Palace. After lunch Lascelles invited them into the garden, and Jones said, ‘If you don’t mind, I’d prefer to stay in this room as I loathe sitting in gardens’, so they left him alone with Sassoon to talk. Owing to dentures, Sassoon spoke quietly, without opening his mouth much, which made him difficult to understand for Jones, who was deaf in his left ear. They spoke about Prudence Pelham, whom Sassoon had known through Miriam Rothschild, and about Blunden and Graves and the Welch Fusiliers

at Mametz and Limerick. Sassoon said that however much he tried he could not get the first war out of his system and that this was true also for Blunden. Jones said it was true for him, too, and (as Clarissa had told him) also for Anthony Eden. They agreed in thinking highly of Blunden's *Undertones of War*, which Jones 'felt to be one of the very best of those various accounts of that infantry war'. Sassoon invited him to stay with him in Wiltshire, where he knew the Asquiths. Jones thought that Sassoon '*couldn't* have been more friendly and agreeable' but he was disappointed by not being able to 'make much contact ... about *poiesis*'.¹²⁸

On 2 March 1962, David Pryce-Jones (then a journalist for the *Spectator*) and his wife Clarissa had come for a visit, bringing a thirty-year old Jesuit seminarian named Peter Levi, with whom Jones had corresponded. Levi subsequently visited on his own. He was tall, portly, shy, with a slight stammer, 'a nice bloke', learned and generous, enthusiast about art, archaeology, and people—he seemed to Jones to know 'everybody.' He soon came to think Levi a person 'of extraordinary apperception & intelligence' with 'a most lovable disposition' and also 'a jolly good poet.' (He told Cookson that he liked Levi's poem entitled 'Christmas Sermon'.) In the spring of 1964, Levi asked Jones to make a small inscription for his ordination card. Since 1961, eye-trouble—especially in his left eye, which his eye-specialist said had nothing to do with 'the actual sight'—had kept him from attempting an inscription, lettering' being, he now said, 'the most exacting of all things to the sight.' But since his eyes were no better for having stopped, he decided to try. He worked large, since lettering, he knew, reduced perfectly, starting on 7 May 1964, by covering a sheet of paper with Chinese white. Since Levi wanted it reproduced, Jones intended to use only two colours, but by the end of May he had used five. He painted the opening words, a Latin rubric, in bright red because rubrics in the missal are red, but the effect was '*ghastly*', so he repainted them in the dull red-ocre he had used, years ago, on Gill's New College war memorial—now, as then at Gill's direction, in conformity with the tradition of coloured lettering. The result for a long while seemed 'doubtful'. He could not 'get the thing to "tie up"', largely because he had varied the slope of certain letters, which always, he found, complicated the attainment of unity. Levi had asked him to include the short lines 'Petrus Levi / e Societate Iesu / sacerdos ordinatur / gratias agit

Deo', which Jones was convinced would destroy its unity, until he decided to include the words run-together along the bottom margin, upside down with entasis, and up the left margin. (He 'did not want a *straight* line of smaller letters to interfere with the severe straightness and finality of the words *substantia condidisti*.) This, he found, pulled the inscription into a unity (fig. 9). He put 'a curly bit' atop the final stroke of n in *naides* and had doubts about it but 'wanted to get the feeling of flowing, dancing water'. He 'very nearly made a howler with *Melxisedex*, combining Latin letters with the Greek X, till he decided, with the help of a classicist friend, to use all Greek letters and spell it correctly,



9. David Jones, *Extensis Manibus*, 1964

which matched the Greek of *anamnesis*. The inscription was 'a brute to get right' but by the 25th, there were no more major adjustments and uncertainties, only the 'tidying up', which included 'making the forms more firm and unified.' It's always a relief when one gets ... to that stage.' He wrote to apologize for taking so long: 'these inscriptions are like paintings or, for that matter, writings—*sometimes* they come off quickly, sometimes not—usually the latter—and in my experience the better ones are usually the ones that take longest to make.' Levi's family wanted to pay him, but he declined since this was an ordination gift. Ecstatic about it, Levi wanted it reproduced in its original size (22 ½ by 16 ¼ inches). David Price-Jones suggested the Curwen Press as the best printers, and Jones sent it there. They matched the

colour accurately, but, as always, the thick, opaque white background was lost as were variations in the letters 'so that

it's lost a good bit of its unity', but he liked the reproduction and was glad Levi liked the inscription. When asked to contribute to an exhibition of calligraphy and inscription at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1965, he asked Levi to lend it. (He also asked Sabina Grisewood to lend one he did for her confirmation in 1956.) He found this difficult—as he told a friend, 'I *loath* lending things for any purpose, especially when they don't belong to me!' ¹²⁹ In 1966, Levi would reproduce the inscription on the dust jacket and as

frontispiece of his collection of verse, *Fresh Water, Sea Water*. This inscription would be Jones's last important visual work.

When he made it, he thought that Levi might be an extraordinary poet but, shortly after, changed his mind. He thought that Levi's going to Campion Hall in 1965 to be an Oxford don was, for a poet, a serious mistake, but it was more than that.¹³⁰ He was disappointed with the man, finding him cool, self-seeking, opinionated, and not, after all, very intelligent. He never spoke ill of Levi or, for that matter, anyone else, but this was the impression friends had.

In the spring of 1961, Grisewood had given N. K. Sanders's translation of *The Epic of Gilgamesh* to Jones. It was for him a momentous discovery. He had heard of the epic from Norman Daniel and Richard Kehoe but 'had *no* idea how truly astounding it is.' He saw it as a proto epic, containing motifs that filtered into Greek and Celtic mythology. 'It's got *everything* & is as fresh as the morning. All the whole hero thing in a way. It gave me a curious feeling—like seeing what was behind ... Classical stuff, Celtic stuff (very much that) ... although it's awe-inspiring in its barbaric primitivity, yet it shows extraordinary & touching awarenesses of all sorts. A huge feeling of the tragedy of the human condition. ... The translation seems to me *in every way admirable*—perfectly straight modern English, but not losing the *poiesis*. ... I have the feeling that it's pretty literal & it's *certainly* most awfully good.'¹³¹ He added the words 'Epic of Gilgamesh (Mesopotamia)' to the top of the cultural chart he had made in 1943 (Ch 12, fig.17).

He told Levi how exciting he found *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. Through the poet John Fuller, Levi knew the translator, Nancy Sanders, and suggested to Audrey Malan in 1964 that she arrange for her and Jones to meet. Audrey had them to lunch with her sister Rhoda Cowen. During the meal he spoke, Nancy would remember, 'in a rather formal, polite way.' He knew she was an archaeologist, and talked on that subject, but had no idea that she was the translator N.K. Sanders, whom he presumed to be male. But as lunch was ending, he mentioned 'what a marvellous piece of work' the translation of *The Epic of Gilgamesh* was, and she declared herself its translator. She went back with him to Monksdene, where he relaxed and learned that she was a friend of Levi, and they talked enthusiastically together about Mesopotamia—he told her of a woman in her childhood who always found it 'so

comforting' when the preacher use the word 'Mesopotamia'—and they talked for hours about ancient myths.¹³²

She was a private scholar (having withdrawn from Oxford with eye trouble), had carried dispatches on a motorcycle during the war, went on archaeological digs in the Mid-East, and, with a research assistantship and private means, lived with her sister in the family house at Little Tew near Oxford. He found her 'a wonderful person' and felt 'greatly privileged' to know her. 'She has that rare combination of great and exact scholarship' with a strong aesthetic sensibility and 'a jolly nice sense of humour'. 'One meets only a few such in one's life.' She had the best historical mind he had encountered since Dawson. They talked about the Roman Army, the ur-homeland of the Celts around the upper Rhine and Danube, the Picts, places in Britain and elsewhere with historical associations, *The Tain*, articles in *The Journal of Celtic Studies*, and Celtic marvellousness vs the 'repellent ice-cold beastliness that seems already "Nazi"' in Teutonic and Nordic historical sources. He told her of his love for the historical drawings of Alan Sorrell, the great English historical illustrator whose work had become prominent in the 1950s. They agreed on aesthetic matters: she thought his painting *Trystan ac Essyllt* outflanked Wagner, whom they both found 'insufferable'. Jones told her, 'I expect, as you say, it is partly the *heldentenor* and all the stage setup, but, also there is, I think, an essential *vulgarity* however great the genius in Wagner.' She visited once every two or three months, and he loved her visits.¹³³

He was greatly encouraged by an American graduate student named Tony Stoneburner, who wrote his doctoral dissertation at Michigan on *The Anathemata*. Beginning in 1963, they became friends initially through exchanging letters. A Methodist minister, Stoneburner knew 'an awful lot about biblical textual criticism' and seemed to 'have read *everybody*' from Irenaeus to Teilhard de Chardin. He wrote 'most sweet letters. When these chaps across "Brendan's herring pool" get down to tackling stuff, my God, they do it thoroughly.' Stoneburner astonished him by telling him that his long poems were compulsory reading for students of Eng. Lit. at the University of Connecticut. In the winter of 1965, he convinced the University of Michigan to invite Jones to Ann Arbor, offering airfare and a \$500 stipend. Jones cabled to decline, and later wrote that, apart from health, he was not able to

read to a live audience, ‘that I can’t do—I can read it into a microphone, but that's because there's no audience.’¹³⁴

On 5 May 1966 Stoneburner and his wife Pat visited for the first time, receiving tea and gingersnaps. During their second visit, on 9 June, Jones left the door open in case they should be too warm but soon rose to shut it, saying the open door made feel ‘naked.’ The visit lasted five hours, and the Stoneburners extricating themselves with difficulty as he offered to fix them a supper of eggs and grapefruit. They would visit five more times in the coming years, and whenever they left, always too soon for him, he wished ‘that Middlesex was not so far from Michigan or from Maine,’ where they had a cottage. Jones considered him ‘an extraordinary chap ... of much perception’ with ‘astounding energy’ typical of some North Americans. Stoneburner had a mind like his, full of fascinating information. They shared such a deep sympathy that he forgot he was Methodist minister and began regarding him as a Catholic. This, they later agreed, was because they felt spiritually ‘in communion’ with one another. Stoneburner became an English professor at Dennison University and planned to write a critical biography of Jones, for which he would visit in the late 1960s to interview Jones’s friends and relatives. Jones felt ‘abashed’ that he should travel to the UK solely to work on him and felt ‘a bit *guilty*’ that he ‘should think it worth while.’ After one of their last visits, in 1969, he would walk the Stoneburners to the front door and wave goodbye four times, twice reopening the door to do so.¹³⁵

Jones thought the North American reception of his work was owing chiefly to the attention paid it by Fr. Noon, Tony Stoneburner, and also by a professor named William Blissett, the last of whom was making his ‘stuff known in Canada’ by subjecting it in his teaching to ‘line by line’ analysis.¹³⁶

On 16 April 1964 Jones received a letter from Melvyn Bragg at BBC Television about the possibility of his taking part in a ‘Writer's World’ program on BBC 2. He was now regularly declining requests for interviews—they ‘bored him to death,’ said Grisewood—and he disliked television (partly because of the enduring problem of ‘his retina’ retaining images), so he would not have agreed to participate but that Tristram Powell, Anthony’s son, was to be the producer. Tristram Powel, who had just joined the BBC, had never heard of Jones,

but Bragg had him telephone and go to Harrow for a talk. Soft-spoken and gentle, Powell visited in the second week of May 1964, and explained that the filming would be part of a series entitled 'Time out of Mind,' a celebration of the use of ancient legend and myth in certain modern writers, painters and sculptors. He found Jones extremely friendly and, he thought, vulnerable though noncommittal. Neither mentioned his famous father. Afterwards John Wain told Powell he was anxious that Jones be included in the series, so Powell visited again.¹³⁷ The concept of the series was to let the writer take a theme and develop a verbal essay. Gradually Jones was eased into agreeing. He wanted not to deliver a monologue or speech, however, but to be interviewed by Saunders Lewis.¹³⁸

Powell and the technicians arrived at Monksdene at 10.30 am. The powerful lights were oppressive, the cameras and wires and boxes crammed his already crowded room, spilling through the French doors into the garden. Jones and Lewis were filmed conversing for two hours, and Jones 'completely forgot the presence' of the half-dozen 'chaps in the room with lights, cameras, microphones, etc.' He spoke naturally, though lowering his head against the glare of the lights. He was also filmed reading from 'The Fatigue' and working on his inscription for Levi. The film crew departed at 7:30 pm, leaving him 'half dead with exhaustion' and resolved that if he had known all that was involved he would never have agreed to it—though he subsequently thought that his mild irritation had freed him to say what he thought and he had found the technical aspects of the recording instruments interesting and 'the special language that grows up round the technical gadgetry'.¹³⁹ Subsequently Powell filmed an introduction by Levi at the home of Hugh and Antonia Fraser (she was Powell's cousin).

The two-hour conversation had to be cut to twenty minutes, which Jones thought hopeless, and he was determined not to watch it. But when it was scheduled, for 15 March 1965, he phoned the Balmes and asked bashfully whether he could come over to see a television programme. Maurice said yes, and then Jones admitted that he would be in it and 'I can't bear watching it with all the old men' in Monksdene. It was a nice summer's evening. The three of them sat on a sofa, Jones in the middle. He was like a child, they would remember, sitting on the edge of the sofa with his hands on his knees, watching expectantly, moving his lips to what his televised image was saying and wringing his hands with delight. 'He simply loved it;' 'David, that was marvellous,' said Sarah.' 'Yes,' he said,

‘it did go quite well, didn't it.’ He wrote to Arthur Pollen saying that he liked the programme but it was, for him, ‘naturally damned embarrassing,’ with ‘too many close close-ups of my confounded face & not enough of Saunders Lewis.’ And he objected to Levi saying, in his introduction, that he (Jones) was ‘learned.’ But he was delighted ‘that the salient argument or theme’—about the arts being essentially sacramental—‘came across very well.’¹⁴⁰

The interview survives and is available on Youtube.* It is a treasure, showing the works Jones had on his walls at Monksdene, revealing the man as he would have been if the reader could visit him. This is how Jones looked, moved, gestured, and spoke. This is his voice in conversation, his pace of talking, the intensity of feeling informing his thought. In the interview, Jones is marvellous. The same cannot be said for Lewis, who, in Powell's opinion, was a terrible interviewer, heavy handed, domineering, condescending, and expanding his questions into miniature speeches. He gives the impression of amused conceit, in contrast to Jones's humble, natural, charmingly, tentative sincerity. It seems a meeting of pride and humility—which always get on together very well.

Mary Crozier, writing in *The Guardian* praised this ‘intensely interesting and really moving interview’ as a ‘model of how television, that can be so brash and meretricious, can on occasion give us an unspoilt view of a great man.’

David Jones ducks his head, never looks at the camera, fumbles for words and sketches clumsy gestures around him as he talks about his work. But everything comes straight from him and everything is original and all of a piece. Never had anyone less thought of popularity or less idea of compromise. Rough hewn, with conviction lighting the sensitive, ugly features he looks like something elemental staring in answer to the question of the bright-eyed mouse in the chair opposite.

Commenting on the program in the *Listener* (1 April 1965), Anthony Burgess laments the general refusal to recognize Jones's greatness despite ‘the brilliance’ of his long poems and says that from watching the interview he gained the impression ‘of a couple of disregarded giants—great coherence, towering intellectual dignity.’ Kenneth Adam, the Director of Television, wrote to Powell (who told Jones) that the interview was one of the most remarkably authentic pieces of television he had seen. Near the end of his career as a television and film director, Powell considered it to be, despite Lewis, the most successful of the programmes he ever produced. He continued to visit Jones, a half-dozen times over the

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psQkOT7eNwE>

next three years. When he went, Jones would show his pictures. Powell wanted to buy one but felt that to ask would be a breach of friendship.¹⁴¹

Jones's friend Arthur Giardelli lived in Pembroke and visited whenever in London, about three times a year. He admired Jones's art, having bought *Manawyddan's Glass Door* and another Jones picture at galleries. Initially he had written several times asking to meet received no reply. Jones he later admitted that he feared Giardelli was a European intellectual. During their first meeting, they became friends. Sixteen years younger than Jones, Giardelli was a South Londoner who had studied Italian and French literature at Oxford under Eugene Vinaver and was dismissed from teaching school during the war because a Christian pacifist. Giardelli was interested in Wales and its history and had an educated literary-critical mind. They conversed happily about Dante, Villon, medieval romances, and Malory. And Giardelli was an accomplished artist. He had studied at the Ruskin School of Art, had known many artists in Paris in the '30s, had founded the 56 Group in Wales, and was now successfully exhibiting at the Grosvenor Gallery. He painted abstracts and constructed abstract relief panels of shells, wood, and other debris gathered from the seashore. After the Welsh manner of identifying a person by profession Jones called him 'Arthur Brass-Taps' (taps being typical of the refuse he transformed into art). He was intelligent, enthusiastic, affectionate, without affectation. Jones enjoyed his visits 'enormously'.¹⁴²

In 1958 he had become a tutor at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth. (Jones asked him to say hello for him to scholars there he admired but had never met: Brynmore Thomas, the cultural anthropologist, and Alwyn Rees, a social anthropologist and author of *The Celtic Heritage*, whom Jones admired for fighting, alongside Saunders Lewis, against the Anglicization of the University.) And he was a member of the Arts Advisory Committee. In that capacity, he convinced the Welsh Arts Council to commission Jones to make an inscription commemorating the installation of Charles as Prince of Wales and, on behalf of the Council, asked him to do it. Jones said 'No' emphatically without explanation. Back in Aberystwyth, Giardelli recounted this to Alwyn Rees, who said, 'Of course he said no—the last Prince of Wales died in 1282.'¹⁴³

Early in 1965, Giardelli visited along with his wife and children on his way home from the Grosvenor Gallery with some unsold artworks. Just before leaving, he retrieved from the car three abstract-relief panels and asked him what he thought of them. Jones said, ‘I don't think much of those two but I rather like that one’—it was composed of rows of small rectangles of unvarnished wood with square, triangle, and circular shapes. Giardelli gave it to him. Jones later wrote to him saying that he continued to like it. It was wired to hang vertically, but he rewired it to hang horizontally on his wall (fig.10). He continued to like it, and said, ‘it is so hard to say why one does or does not like an abstract thing’, though he did not like the left-hand belt of squares, ‘a little like the magnified side of a file.’ Since he liked ‘the aging of wood’, the work could, he said, only grow on him. He hung a 1926 watercolour of Caldey below it



10. St. Dominic and Giardelli abstract, photo by Raymond Moore.

and an Alfred Wallis beside it ‘and strange to say they all three help each other.’ In exchange and in gratitude for their friendship, he belatedly gave Giardelli, in November 1967, a study for *Trystan ac Essyllt* (it was marked 6B, which indicates that there were at least seven preliminary sketches). Giardelli shared Jones’s fascination with the story of the legendary lovers in all of its versions, and they often talked about it. Over the years Giardelli brought to visit his wife and daughter, then Bim Butler, his girlfriend for some years and subsequently his second wife. Jones was always welcoming.¹⁴⁴

Through Giardelli, Jones lent art works to the National Eiddstedfod in the summer of 1964. One Saturday at 9 am, he was called out of bed to the telephone in the hall at Monksdene. It was Vernon Watkins phoning to announce that Jones had received an Eisteddfod gold medal. Jones said he couldn't go and collect it and asked if they could put it in the post. Watkins tried to persuade him to come. ‘Dai,’ he said, ‘we meet before the dawn beneath the dripping trees, and we wait for the sun to rise through the mists as the cool winds blow. Dai, Dai, it's like Paradise!’ and he replied, ‘To me it sounds like hell.’¹⁴⁵

In August 1961 he had written Ceri Richards to congratulate him on winning the Eisteddfod gold medal, and now Frances Richards wrote to congratulate Jones. She and

Ceri visited on Sunday, 18 October. Jones showed them the Levi inscription and *Trystan ac Essyllt* and was ‘delighted’ that Ceri liked it. The Richards asked him to make an inscription ‘round & about’ their daughter’s name, Rhiannon, and he promised to if he could, although there were already four inscriptions he had promised people which he had been unable to start because of eye strain. (Later when reminded of the inscription for their daughter, he would say, ‘If I am asked to do something I can’t do it.’) They talked about Wales and painting. As with Jones, Ceri Richard’s greatest grief was not knowing Welsh. They spoke of Tintoretto, whom they both admired. Jones searched in vain for a book containing Tintoretto’s *Susanna and the Elders* which, he said, ‘had such an effect upon me for some many years.’ He told him that he

was always enthralled by it, especially the extraordinary “abstract” powers of the undulating line continuous from the top of Suzanna’s head right round the right side (as you look at the picture) of her body to her feet, I think, & the recession of the lattice screen with the foliage intertwined in it. But when, some ten years (perhaps) back, they had the Vienna collection, or a selection from it, at the Tate, I was very disappointed at my first glimpse of the actual painting because it, especially the flowers & foliage of the screen were so *much less delicate* than I had envisaged—almost like a scene-painter’s (for a theatre) work.

Richards later sent Jones Sartre’s book on Tintoretto. They spoke of Bonnard, and Jones was glad that they agreed about him being ‘of that great period of French painting ... the top.’¹⁴⁶ On 25 October, he wrote to Ceri about their meeting, ‘it’s a long time since I’ve enjoyed anything as much.’

Cookson had asked for something for *Agenda*, and, since Jones thought the magazine ‘should be encouraged’, in 1961 he had set to work on a poem entitled ‘The Hunt’, which has for its subject Arthur and his followers chasing the land-wasting Twrch Trwyth (Great Boar) in ‘Kilhwch ac Olwen’. Jones also had in mind boars depicted in the bronze art of Roman Gauls, particularly the ‘Ghost boar’ on the Witham shield. The poem grew to five pages from a series of questions written around 1950:

What of the grouped stones by alluvial Towy?
 did they shelter the nurtured dogs of
 the trained vanators.

When the innate men of the equal
 kindreds and the men of equal privilege,
 & the men who wed the kin and feud with the stranger,
 and the torque-wearing high-men ...

(These lines would later also be the origin of his poem ‘The Sleeping Lord.’) He began with analysis of Arthur’s innately divisive followers, then developed a description of Arthur symbolically incorporating pagan gods and Jesus, added it as the second half of the poem, and added a coda. Throughout the years he worked on the poem, Valerie visited. She was born and raised near the river Twrch, which has legendary associations with the story of the hunt, and she told him the Welsh names of neighbouring farms that resonated with the story of the hog-hunt. She was his muse for this poem, as she was for all his later work, and, along with his experience broadcasting on radio, his desire that she should like it would account for it being among his most easily accessible poems. In 1964, he finished it and read it to three ‘close friends’ who ‘while liking the sound and the feel of the piece’ failed to see the correspondence between Arthur and Christ—‘it’s that sort of incomprehension’, he wrote, ‘that makes one feel sometimes that it’s useless trying.’ In 1965 he gave it to Cookson, modestly asking whether it would be all right. Then he brought out an old ordinance survey map, laid it on the bed, and indicated to him the track taken by the boar Trwyth.¹⁴⁷ He made changes in the text down to the deadline for submission. Set in the Dark Ages, the poem heralds the dawning of the Christian Middle Ages as Arthur rides, redolent of a fertility deity, tangled in vegetation evoking Celtic visual interlace, present in language evocative of medieval Welsh *cynghanedd* (intricately patterned alliterative verse):

for the thorns and flowers of the forest and the bright elm-
 shoots and the twisted tanglewood of stamen and stem clung and
 meshed him and starred him with variety
 and the green tendrils gartered him and briary-loops galoon
 him with splinter-sike and broken blossom twining his royal
 needlework (67)

Vividly visual, lyrically musical, ‘The Hunt’ is immediately appealing, one, one of the richest (in every sense) modern poems but unanthologized and therefore virtually

unknown. This and the also ‘The Tutelar of the Place’ are the most welcoming initial experiences for anyone beginning to read Jones’s poetry.

On 24 August 1965, Jones recorded a reading of it for the British Council along with four selections from *In Parenthesis* and four from *The Anathemata* for release on vinyl disk, Argo PLP 1093.¹⁴⁸ These are his best recorded readings, made while his voice was still vigorous. His recording of ‘The Hunt’ is one of the best readings of a great poem by its poet. When he listened to the record, he thought the reading sounded, he said, ‘*far* better than I feared.’ He was also glad about the record jacket, for which he had made an inscription replacing a ‘bloody awful thing’ that had been on the jacket of Argo’s ‘The Poet Speaks’ records. From now on he played the recordings for visitors. Having these readings available was important to him, because he wrote for the ear. He even considered buying a tape recorder to help him hear how his writing sounded and acquired brochures. He liked the look of a model that cost £34 but could not imagine how the machines worked.¹⁴⁹

In October 1965, Giardelli and Meirion Edwards of BBC Wales visited in order, he thought, to record an interview with him, but Giardelli asked him to read ‘The Hunt’ again. Though unprepared, he read it and beautifully. After its broadcast, Saunders Lewis phoned to say, ‘it was the best thing I’d ever read on the radio’ and later wrote to him, ‘I very seriously thought your poem and your delivery of it magnificent. It was big stuff—worthy of the Palestrina that followed it. ... the impact was tremendous, major poetry. ... There was grandeur in your performance.’ Jones was further delighted to learn from Valerie that she had heard and liked it. He had wondered while writing it what her response might be.¹⁵⁰

Since moving to Monksdene, he had neglected to arrange for delivery of *The Times* and seldom listened to the radio, partly because he could no longer receive the Welsh Home Service, but on 4 January 1965 he turned it on for the late news summary. He heard the concluding sentences in a familiar voice paying tribute to someone and then the announcer saying, ‘that was Mr. Auden speaking of Mr. Eliot who died today.’ Jones was shaken. He had just received the Eliots’ Christmas card and had been about to reply. Half the next day he spent drafting a letter of condolence to Mrs. Eliot. Two days later, he wrote to Hague, ‘I feel *utterly* in exile of late, more & more. ... completely isolated in some curious kind of way. It

was an awful blow to me to hear of the death of Tom Eliot.' He wrote to Levi, 'TSE had been a good friend to me ... I did not often see him, perhaps about only 2 or 3 times in a year. I doubt if [*The Anthemata*] would have been published had he not been at Fabers. I greatly miss the sense of his being about the place.' To Grisewood he said, 'It is the end of an era.'

He owed much to Eliot, who had been responsible for the publication of *The Anthemata* and *Epoch and Artist*. Without him, Jones's literary career would probably have been limited to *In Parenthesis*. Eliot had written letters supporting him for inclusion in the Civil List Pension and obtaining the Bollingen Prize and had publicized Jones as a writer 'of major importance'.

Although Jones had read all Eliot's poetry and drama and much of his critical writing and alludes to *Four Quartets* in 'The Tutelar of the Place', he was importantly influenced only by the *The Waste Land*. The form of that poem showed him how to make literature modern. He thought that nothing else Eliot wrote equalled it. He preferred Eliot's earlier poetry to *Four Quartets* and thought the difference in quality might be owing to his being well off later in life. He thought, too, that becoming the darling of the English establishment had hurt Eliot. (Jones was averse to the English establishment typified by politicians, the Church of England, and the Royal Academy—even American politicians, he said, 'are less boring'.) 'I have a feeling,' he wrote to Stoneburner, 'that in T.S. E's late poetry especially the 'religious' ones ... the concrete images are less—the feeling is more 'conceptual' or something. In the earlier ones culminating in *The Waste Land* concrete images are held up more than in the later ones.' The poems about 'practical cats', he thought 'awful' and 'embarrassing'. To the end of his life, he would consider himself favoured 'to have at least experienced a decade or so when a real understanding was developing' with regard to the arts, an understanding which had *The Waste Land* as its first and chief poetic manifestation.¹⁵¹ Like *The Waste Land*, most of Jones's later poetry is fragmentary and allusive and accompanied, like Eliot's poem, by explanatory notes. Nevertheless, he was no imitator of Eliot but was a formal innovator in a way complementary to Eliot's innovative fragmentation. Joyce was a greater writer, Pound a more gifted writer as well as an energetic publicist, but for Jones, as for most people old enough to remember, it really had been the era of Eliot, who had dominated the literary and critical world for over thirty-five years. In the weeks and months after learning of his death, Jones increasingly felt the

loss.

The death of Eliot stirred Herbert Read's conscience about Jones, to whom he wrote confessing that he felt he had 'done little about' his work. Jones replied, '*That you most certainly must not feel*' and thanked him again for the three reviews he had written and 'over & above any of that I have *always* felt that in you, at all events, there was someone who understood & who therefore were a continuing support these "arts" are strange things. ... one does seem to require the expressed or unexpressed appreciation of at least a few people.'¹⁵²

On 27 March 1965, less than a year since he had moved into his new room, the owner began constructing an addition and turning rooms adjacent to his into a new lounge. The work interested Jones because, he wrote to Janet Stone, 'a wooden framework with some brick-work has been erected' that 'looks rather like that shed in Piero della Francesca's "Nativity." It's rather wonderful they do it all themselves, the proprietor & his brother & other relatives. I do admire that.' But the noise of sawing and hammering was maddening. In mid-April his water was cut off, then re-attached, but the electric heater for the water would not work. He blamed 'the gadget-world' and longed for the days of his childhood when, if the kitchen stove could not heat the bathwater, they heated it in the large copper pot in the scullery, and when the 'infernal gas failed one lighted oil lamps or dozens of candles.' In May, still amid a clutter of packing cases, he retreated into the half of his room near the door 'with only a curtain & a bit of cardboard for one wall' and the ceiling light on the other side, so that it was 'dark as the inside of a cow' and 'very like a dugout, heaped up with an indescribable clutter of stuff & chaps hammering away just beyond the curtain & sounding like a couple of Laurie Cribbs, grouching about this & that.' When the noise finally became unendurable, he moved to another room (the former lounge), which involved 'almost as much chaos' as his move from Northwick Lodge. It was hardly worth unpacking. But he was writing. Alan Ross of *London Magazine* had asked him for his reminiscence of the 1930s, which he was eager to complete because Ben Nicholson and Victor Passmore were also contributing. Ross also wanted six photographs of pictures to reproduce. Jones sent sixteen, none of flowers-in-glass-chalices, which reproduced, he said, as 'a grey mess'.¹⁵³

On 9 June he returned to his own room. It was now wider at the back by the window

where there was a new alcove, giving the room a slight L-shape. The walls were newly painted light grey, and the *Trystan* and *Annunciation* paintings looked ‘rather nice’ on them. ‘One can somehow *see* them as they were *meant* to be,’ no longer on the floor or propped up on a chair but ‘flat ... & also isolated—hence concentrated’ so that you can ‘see them whole.’ He now had new upper windows, with levers to adjust ventilation, and nylon curtains that admitted light but were so nearly airtight that the room was stuffy when he woke. He enjoyed having light restored and, on sunny days, watching the sun playing on the apple-tree and on the pear-tree ‘almost within arm's reach’ of his window.¹⁵⁴

During his displacement, he had begun finishing (a process that would take six months) a fifteen-page poem called ‘The Fatigue’, which Cleverdon had arranged for him to read on the radio. It begins with two Roman legionaries relieved from night watch, during which one has left his post to visit the other, both being assigned to the party that will execute Jesus. The poem then shifts into a meditation on the crucifixion, and then into a tracing of the labyrinthine route (the password is ‘Minautor’) of orders moving to Jerusalem from the desk of Sejanus in Rome. Spatially the poem is a triptych: the two legionaries, who are friends, are ‘good thieves’ on the right side of the cross; Sejanus and Tiberius (the former about to be assassinated by the latter) are bad thieves on the left. In the poem, Sejanus exercises imperial power from behind an ‘inconspicuous door’. When Cleverdon and an associated visited to see how the poem was coming along, one of them objected that ‘inconspicuous’ is not a word and suggested ‘inconspicuous’. ‘No’, Jones said, that would be wrong poetically. ‘Inconspicuous’ combines inconspicuous, suspicious (hidden), and inauspicious. Certain that there was such a word, he had, when he wrote it, ‘thought how lucky’ that the word had ‘these various undertones’. Dictionaries were consulted, but it could not be found. Because the other man was present, his mind went blank and he was silent, later writing to Cleverdon apologizing for having ‘such a bloody silly sort of mind’ in which reasons and arguments ‘vanish when suddenly faced with a question that has to be answered more or less on the spot’ and explaining that Roman surveyors called their inauguration of a site a *conspicio* and that since the Latin *religio* and *superstitio* become English adjectives by the addition of ‘us,’ he thought he could create this new English word in the same way. He did not ‘correct’ the word. He worked on the poem until its submission for typing as a radio script—he sent Cleverdon the

only copy, a manuscript in pencil (so he could erase and rewrite), the initial parts made permanent by over-writing in ink. He recorded it for the British Council and Harvard, then for broadcast on the 3rd Program on the evening of Good Friday, 16 April 1965. He was glad it was broadcast 'on the right day' and delighted that it was followed by Palestrina's setting of the *Stabat Mater* and by his favourite liturgical hymn, *Vexilla Regis*. Giardelli told him that he liked the broadcast and (to Jones's delight) that his Irish maid also heard it and 'liked the lilt of it.'¹⁵⁵

Misremembering the month of Jones's seventieth birthday, on 1 July Graham Green sent him a telegram expressing 'EVERY GOOD WISH FOR THE NEXT DECADE'. About this time, Kathleen Raine called to her house Grisewood (too ill to come), Burns, Cleverdon, Nicolette Gray, Barbara Moray, and Eric White to consider how to use Jones's upcoming birthday to benefit him. (Jones and White, now the Literary Director of the Arts Council, had been friends in the late '20s and early '30s and had recently become reacquainted.) Cleverdon proposed that they ask Jones to choose a work they could publish in a limited edition, for which friends and admirers would subscribe. This was agreed to, and Jones chose 'The Fatigue'. Will and Sabastian Carter in Cambridge agreed to print it. Subscribers paid £3.50 each, the profit (after expenses) to go to Jones. Nicolette had second thoughts and tried to get support for having one of his inscriptions made into a tapestry or making a proper printing of *The Deluge*. But Cleverdon insisted on sticking to the agreement. He compiled a list of two hundred possible subscribers with the help of others (but not Jones, who felt he could not suggest names of contributions to a gift for himself). Eliot, Stravinsky, Clark, Auden, and the Queen Mother agreed to be patrons, and the proposal was sent out under their names. Subscribers sent money to 'The David Jones Birthday Fund'. Faber, Auden, and Cowen each contributed £50. The subscription amounted to £1100 for an edition of 225 numbered copies, fifty for Jones and seven for the national libraries. Publication was delayed till 15 November to ensure that proof-correcting and printing would not be hurried. His friends hoped to make the presentation at a party on 1 November, but, no surprise to anyone, he said that illness (severe fibrocitis in his back) would prevent him from coming. A great many mistakes were made in the last typescript, which had been sent direct to the printers without him seeing it, so correcting page proofs and galleys was 'an absolute *nightmare*' for him. He could look long at a mistake and see only what he had correctly written. He went through the pages again and

again, missing errors and tending to confuse ‘when’ and ‘where’. The correction of proofs went on from September (when he corrected three sets) through 17 November, a new friend, Peter Orr, helping with the galleys. Jones sent in the proofs on the 18th. That evening, when printing was already under way, he telephoned a correction: he had mistaken the 2nd Legion for the 20th Legion (some of whose men crucified Jesus) because both had been assigned to places in Britain called *Caerlleon*. He continued to read for mistakes, which, when he found them, he corrected by post, sending five letters in all. He was determined that the text be as nearly perfect as he could make it. (He later apologized for spelling Apollo Appolo, saying ‘when I’m in a hurry I’m capable of almost *any* error of spelling & am quite capable of writing my own name Dvaid or Jnoes ... anyway I’m the world’s worst speller.’) He was ‘bloody angry’ to find an error in the printed version, where what should be ‘that tell the hard war’ was printed ‘that till the hard war.’ He wrote letters correcting this error to Grisewood, Bonnerot, and others. It was a mistake (in the typescript) that ‘makes nonsense of a rather tricky & carefully thought-out passage meaning that the five wounds of Jesus tell of a severe conflict. It is *so* depressing. It means that chaps [i.e. typists] understand nothing.’ But he thought it printed ‘awfully nicely’ and especially liked Sebastian Carter’s addition of a concluding star. The type was Gill’s Joanna, which he was convinced was ‘*by far* the best type-face he designed ... so strong & clear and firm in form.’ The poem went out to subscribers in early December 1965.’¹⁵⁶

Earlier, on his birthday, the Cleverdons had a small party at their house, to which the following came: the Grisewoods, Polly and Louis Cowan, Hague, Petra Tegetmeier and her daughters, Prudence Dunstan and Charlotte Cook—and, despite his earlier prediction, David Jones, to whom Cleverdon presented a cheque for £800.¹⁵⁷

Together with his other mid-length pieces, he now had, he thought, about half of what he needed to make a book.¹⁵⁸ He had hoped by now to have finished a number of others ‘but they take an *appalling* time to do & I’ve had so many things interfering with settling down & also a blank & confused mind & a sense of futility & *endless* correspondence & bloody “interviews” that mean nothing (& earn one nothing either!)’.¹⁵⁹

He had recorded ‘The Fatigue’ on 15 October 1964, with Peter Orr, now Director of Recorded Sound for the British Council. It was their first meeting. Orr was Herbert Read’s

nephew, a devout Anglican, handsome, energetic, rambunctious, mentally aggressive, well-spoken and precise, a marvellous conversationalist, and quick to argue. (In many respects he resembled Hague.) Soon he visited at least once a week and became Jones's factotum as well as friend. Orr drove him to the dentist (in St John's Road), bought his cigarettes (Players), newspapers, handkerchiefs, lime juice, other supplies, and passed on to him his copy of the *TLS*.

He first drove him to the dentist on May 17 1966, where, he was astonished to see that he refused anaesthetic when having a tooth drilled. Jones explained, 'we didn't [have an anaesthetic] in the First War, you see, and then it doesn't hurt afterwards.'¹⁶⁰ He might accept an injection, he said, for a tooth extraction, although soldiers during the war received none. He was patient in the chair, Orr noticed, 'and interested in the various instruments and chemical preparations, discussing them with the dentist as one craftsman to another surrounded with the tools of his craft.

One evening Jones asked Orr whether he had 'any of those ...?' Orr began trying to supply the word: 'tissues? matches?' 'No, No, ...' Jones groaning and lapsing into silence. 'Writing-paper?' An impatient wave of the hand. 'Biros?' 'No,' his voice rising sharply. Each guess having failed, Jones said in a soft voice and rather sheepishly, 'You know, those pound-note things.' He needed £5 cash but was embarrassed to mention money. Orr gave him the cash, and Jones began writing a cheque for the amount, but paused. It seemed ungracious to write 'five pounds *only*' so he was unable to proceed until Orr suggested, to his relief, '*exactly*.'¹⁶¹ Jones seldom had cash. Cancelled checks for very small amounts survive which indicate that Louis Bussell also gave him cash for cheques or, which is equally likely, that Jones gave Bussell loans or gifts of money.

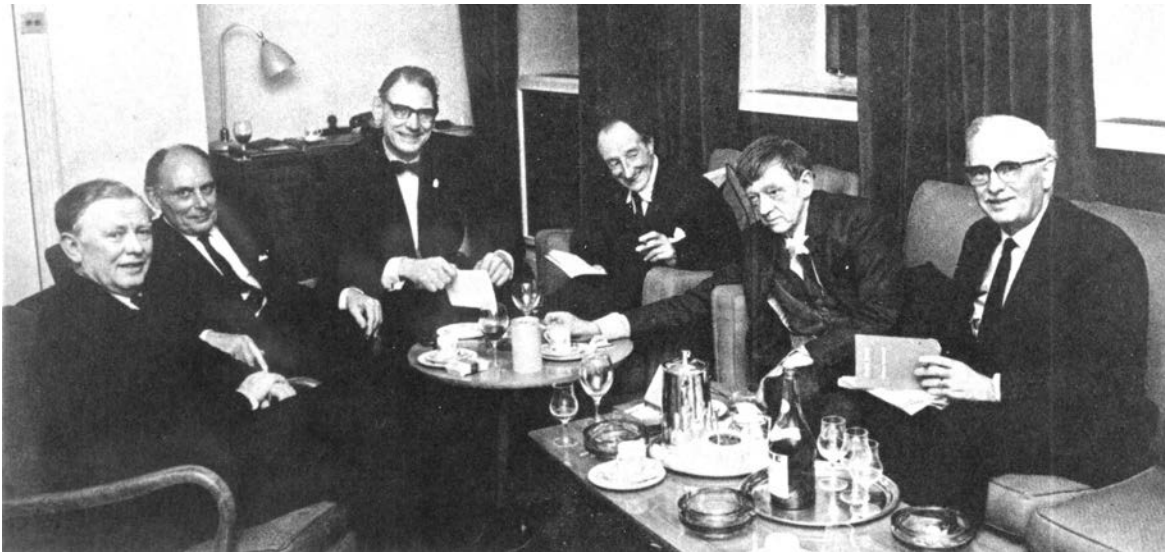
In early November the publisher Constable sent a complimentary copy of Bernard Bergonzi's *Heroes' Twilight* to Jones. The chapter on *In Parenthesis* was far less probing than that by Johnston, but it was, he thought, 'sympathetic' and the first discussion of the poem in Britain in a long time, and Bergonzi was married Bernard Wall's daughter, so he decided to write to thank him. The letter became long, and he had to leave and return to it. Upon returning he found that he had lost his train of thought, and so began a fresh draft. The letter meandered out of control, some drafts growing to twelve foolscap pages.

Deciding against such lengthy formlessness, he began again. There were twelve beginnings. Finally, he decided that his thirteenth try would have to do. In it he expresses admiration for Bergonzi's ability to discuss in so short a book such heterogeneous material, in contrast to his own tendency to get 'bogged down in a long meandering lot of stuff.' Bergonzi had quoted D.J. Enright as saying that *In Parenthesis* was 'at odds with' its subject matter. This Jones objected to, saying that he never imposed on his account of the war experience anything that was not, at least implicitly, part of it. This was especially true of states of mind and feelings, vivid to him when writing, one of these being the general feeling that by going to war they were 're-entering history.' He had had, he says, some difficulty convincing people who had not fought in the war that this feeling was widespread. He agreed with Bergonzi that 'the 'end result' turned out to be something of a 're-mythologization', though he never intended it as such.¹⁶²

He was conscientious about writing letters, and since the late 1950s correspondence had been an albatross round his neck: requests to speak (all declined), requests to donate a picture for a good cause, requests to loan picture for exhibitions, requests for donations (most declined), requests for autographs (most acquiesced to). Someone in the US who read 'The Wall' asks, 'have you any books in print?' People wrote offering to buy pictures: 'Two or three years ago I saw at an exhibition ... an etching of yours sold at, I think, about 8 guineas; and I am writing to ask whether you have any similar work at about half the price.' Can you give me 'any odd engraving you might have found and which is not important to you and could be spared?' A sixteen-year-old studying to be a shorthand typist has wished all her life to write poetry and—feeling 'worthy of writing it, and that indeed it is EVERYTHING not just a divine illusion'—asks him to mentor her. He replied urging her simply to keep writing. Someone in Buenos Aires wrote repeatedly enclosing crude lino cuts and asking to be sent a print or two in return. Five of this person's letters survive, progressing from begging to bitter complaint about 'your apparent disregard of my letter'. But most he answered, though Grisewood told him he was wasting his time. Sometimes Jones wrote at length only to tear up the letter for failing to say what he wanted—' & then, of course, I leave the enquirer without any reply at all & that, in turn, gets on my conscience.'¹⁶³ In 1966 he was answering letters about his work 'rather than getting on with work'.¹⁶⁴ He thought of buying smaller paper and writing on

only one side but never did.¹⁶⁵ He also wrote to friends—he enjoyed that—and at length. One letter to Grisewood is fifty foolscap pages. He always seemed so tired, the Balmes thought, largely because he made himself answer nearly every letter he received, always giving more than the correspondent gave.¹⁶⁶

Because of his fear of germs and because the hotel telephone was used by so many people (in late 1965 he was not even phoning Valerie because ‘the line up’ for the phone was ‘awful’ and allowed ‘only a few minutes of frustrated conversation’), in early December 1965 he had a telephone installed in his room. Now he spent evenings in telephone conversations with friends. One of the first of these conversations was a lengthy one with Grisewood, in which he delivered, for more than an hour, a disquisition on the monastic missionaries of Wales in the late fifth century. On the following day he began a letter to Grisewood, which became a sixteen-page foolscap ‘written confirmation’ of what he had said on the phone.¹⁶⁷



11. 1 March 1966: Cleverdon, Grisewood, Oldfield Davies, Lewis, Jones, Talfan Davies

Grisewood was more interested in the history of Wales than usual, because he was to give the annual St. David’s Day radio lecture in 1966. Alun Oldfield Davies, the Controller for BBC Wales, invited Jones to the studio to hear him deliver it and to dinner afterwards in Broadcasting House with other guests (*LF* 13). A photograph was taken (fig. 11) of, from left to right, Cleverdon, Grisewood, Oldfield Davies, Saunders Lewis, Jones and Aneurin Talfan Davies

In 1966 he was telephoning by Lucy Jebb asking to buy a picture for the fortieth wedding anniversary of her parents, Arthur and Daphne Pollen. He said ‘No, but come anyway.’ She brought her architect husband, Philip, who was intelligent and quick to laugh, and Jones and he ‘hit it off’. Lucy’s clay horse was on the mantel, and he worried aloud about its getting dirty. The Jebbs visited several times and kept in touch by phone. Eventually they bought at the Leicester Gallery Jones’s painting *The Legion's Ridge* (1946), which had been sold at the Redfern in 1948. They took it to him to see. On other visits he showed them his pictures and inscriptions and commented on a drawing he had done as a child, ‘that’s bloody bold and resolute.’¹⁶⁸ Once Lucy took daffodils on St David’s day, arriving as he was preparing breakfast by boiling an egg on his gas ring. But he could only do one thing at a time, and, as they talked, the pan boiled dry. He went for a second egg and dropped it on the floor. Lucy offered to leave so he could concentrate, but he urged her to stay and managed to cook and eat the third egg.

In 1968, Lucy’s father, who had been Jones’s host at Onslow Square during the war and an aesthetic confidant ever since, died. Hearing of his death, Jones said, ‘Arthur was a golden man.’¹⁶⁹

He could not survive without the Civil List Pension and gifts from friends. Sissy and her husband always sent him a check at Christmas. For his birthday in 1964, Janet Stone gave him £200—half of that from Kenneth Clark, the rest from her and ‘a lot of your friends,’ and six days later she gave him an additional £35 ‘to help keep wolves away.’ Throughout the 1950s, he had subscribed to the *Listener* but in about 1960 had become alarmed at his newsagent’s bill and dropped it, ‘a feeble & silly gesture of economy.’¹⁷⁰ It was not until 1966 that his finances ceased being precarious.

For Helen Sutherland’s eightieth birthday, in 1961, he had spent two weeks working on a large inscription for her, *Vere dignum et Iustum est*, which did not, he thought, come out right. This was partly a present from him, partly from mutual friends who paid him for it.¹⁷¹ He had also allowed Nicolette to buy a flower painting to give to her. In one of Helen’s last letters (25 Feb. 1961) she thanked him for parting with the ‘lovely lovely’ painting and the ‘noble inscription ... so sure so grand so triumphant & yet humble too in form & faith’ –‘a wonderful feast ... to come at the ending of life’. And she added that she

is ‘deeply deeply touched & I am moved, in another way perhaps, and feel a heart sweetness at the tiny secret almost invisible pencillings—my name & yours & the month’.

Since then she had moved to a nursing home in Stoke Poges, fifteen miles southwest of Harrow. Edward Hodgkin visited her there in January 1966 after seeing Jones and reporting to her that in aging he had lost none of ‘his admirable & lovable qualities’. She asked Jones to visit, suggesting that he take a taxi, she paying. He replied that he was too unwell. Audrey Malon visited him on the way to see Helen, and asked him to come along, but he refused. In April, Nicolet wrote to say that Helen was very ill and in hospital in Windsor and wished him to visit or at least write to her. He may have written but he did not visit. His friends knew of his disinclination to travel, but Nicolete, impatient with emotional troubles, was angry, and Helen—who, Kathleen Raine says, begged him to come—was hurt.¹⁷² He had her phone number and may have telephoned, but she died of stomach cancer on 29 April 1966 without seeing him again.

Apparently heartless, his refusal may have expressed buried resentment of a domineering, intelligent Victorian mother-figure but it may have been wholly agoraphobic, for he did love her. For over thirty years they had been in profound agreement and shared deeply interesting conversations, which spilled over into correspondence that includes some of his most interesting letters. After reading her obituary on 2 May and a tribute by a friend four days later, he wrote to *The Times* on 6 May to praise her as a ‘unique personality’ and ‘a truly civilised human being.’ He acknowledges ‘a debt of gratitude ... for her great generosity, continued kindness and friendship over some thirty-eight years.’ In her, he wrote, sense and sensibility were ‘confluent and one.’

Moreover whereas most of us do not improve as we grow older, she, who had in many ways a difficult temperament, succeeded, without losing her characteristic qualities, to gain rather than decrease in all that is admirable as the years went by. One thing which seemed to me salvific was an abiding sense of humour. Here, in a draft, he wrote and then deleted the words: ‘even when she was perhaps over-exacting in some matter with regard to some person’, and continues:

This, in my mind, I tend to associate with her fondness for and very considerable knowledge of the works of Shakespeare. This is probably a *purely chance* association arising from my vivid remembrance of how not infrequently she would laugh gayly in mentioning, for example, those recruits, in *Henry IV part 2*, Wart, Bullcalf or Mouldy. This, for a person whose main & deepest affection in the domain of poetry was undoubtedly Wordsworth and among modern poets, T.S. Eliot; and in the domain of theology the writings of E.L. Mascal, and in that of modern painting, Ben Nicholson, is in itself indicative of a width of apperception

granted to few.

Lux perpetua luceat ea.

He wrote but excluded from his letter 'that she had a very difficult temperament which she gradually overcame in a large degree.' He sent his letter to Edward Hodgkin, who was the assistant editor, who was unable to convince the obituaries editor to publish it. In Hodgkin's opinion, Jones was 'the person who owed most to her, and who, taking all things into consideration, gave most to her.'¹⁷³

Jones subsequently learned that she bequeathed to him her father's beautiful ship's chronometer mounted in teak, which became a prominent addition to his room, and the sum of £6000, most of which arrived by cheque in December 1966. He was no longer poor. She left her collection of pictures to Nicolette Gray and her books to Kathleen Raine. (As only such a rich person can be, she had been unaware of the discrepancy of about half a million pounds between these bequests, which caused a permanent rift between Nicolette and Kathleen.) Jones was 'hurt and disappointed' that she hadn't left him his pictures. He was further hurt when Nicolette refused to lend him one. From now on, whenever he spoke of his pictures to a friend, he would say, 'Of course, you know, Nicky's got the best.'¹⁷⁴

He hoped now to be able to live off the interest from Helen's bequest plus his Civil List Pension, which totalled £357 in 1966 in addition to fees and royalties: £725 all told. His room and board (one meal per day) that year was £546, in addition to which he had to pay for electricity, water, gas, and telephone. Still, he could now support himself, but, having spent most of his life in poverty he remained poor in imagination, an illusion sustained by his having little actual income. Moreover, Hugh Fraser instilled in him a fear of inflation and urged him to consider his paintings as a safeguard against it. As late as 1969, Jones seriously entertained the thought of supporting himself as he grew older by running a boarding house as Chris Carlile had done.¹⁷⁵

He and Sarah Balme shared high esteem for Pierre Bonnard, his favourite artist after Turner.¹⁷⁶ As he looked through a book of reproductions of Bonnard's paintings, * he caressingly touched the pictures, including that of the artist's wife standing in a bath holding a

* *Bonnard*, introduction and notes by Denys Sutton (London: P Faber, 1957).

sponge. He stroked her hand and its sponge, saying, 'Look at that.' Bonnard, he said, was 'by far the greatest of that staggering "School of Paris".' Degas seemed to him 'almost vulgar' by comparison. Bonnard 'was a bloody magician. You can't see *where*, by, or *how* the "poetry" is there but my God it's *there* alright.' He disliked the landscapes 'with blue green "decorative" ships & trees' but he loved 'the ones of tables laid for a meal' and 'the *stupendous* one of the refracted figures of a girl in bath-room bath' at the Tate. Bonnard had his off-days, and Jones was, he told Sarah, puzzled by the unmagical pale, elongated head of the *Circus Horse* (1936).¹⁷⁷

He mentioned the large Bonnard exhibition (355 works) coming to Burlington House in early January. Sarah said, 'Well, you'll have to go to that, won't you, David. I'll take you.' He said, 'Ohhh no. I don't, I honestly, Sarah, I never go out.' She said, 'It's the chance of a lifetime. They've got the absolute cream coming over from Paris—and all those bath ones that you love, the ones of Martha washing.' He was tempted and finally persuaded himself that he could, perhaps, manage it, but he delayed till the exhibition was drawing to a close and then got cold feet, saying he wasn't feeling very well and he had a doctor's appointment. Sarah asked, 'What time is the appointment?' 'Oh, six.' 'I can get you back by then.'

On the appointed day, in March, she fetched him by car. It was a warm, summery day; he wore his hat, his greatcoat extending to his ankles, and a long muffler round and round his neck. As she drove, she commented, 'That's a lovely coat, David; how long have you had it?' He answered, 'I've had it since 1939—what do you mean?—this coat isn't old, and there's nothing wrong with it.' (It was the coat Burns had given him to outlast the rigours of World War II.)¹⁷⁸ She drove into the forecourt of the Royal Academy, telling the guard that she was dropping off an elderly person who could not walk far. She walked Jones up the steps into the building, where he began unwinding the muffler, which was nearly as long as he was, and unbuttoning his overcoat. As she moved away to park the car, he exclaimed in fright, 'Where are you going, Sarah?' 'I've got to find a traffic meter and park the car, David. You'll be all right here.' 'No. No, don't leave me.' But she went. When she returned, he was in the midst of a panic attack, and as she approached, he reached out and physically clung to her. Seeing her with him, a female attendant asked her, 'Do you know anything about that tramp?' Sarah said, 'He's an artist friend of mine who has come to the exhibition. He's been waiting for me.' The attendant said, 'He won't part with his coat.' Sarah said, 'No, he won't.'

His anxiety persisted until they (Sarah, Jones, and the coat) got into the room and began seeing the pictures. Then he lost his fear and was completely transported. He marked in his copy of the catalogue his favourites: *L'Effet de Neige pres de Chambery* (c. 1910), *Fenetre ouverte a Uriage* (1918), *Siesta* (c. 1919), and *The Road to Nantes* (c. 1930). But whenever she went off to look at a picture, he called to her, 'Sarah, Sarah, where are you?' At intervals people who knew him came up, and it was 'David, darling, how *are* you,' and he would get worried again—he disliked such meetings and having to conduct introductions. To save him from that, Sarah deliberately faded, temporarily, into the background.¹⁷⁹

Returning to the car, they discovered that the meter had run out and she had received a parking ticket. As if affected by this, the car did not run well but hiccupped up Picadilly. He asked, 'What's the matter?' She assured him that it would be all right once it got going, but at each traffic light the engine stalled. When the light changed, she restarted, and it ran with a series of jerks. He clutched the dashboard and door handle. 'What's the matter?' Finally, on a little hill beside a graveyard on the way to Wembley, it juttet to a halt. He was frantic. The driver of a small lorry stopped, raised the bonnet, and repaired the motor sufficiently to allow her to drive to the next garage, where the car was repaired. Jones was late for his appointment, which was with Dr. Bell, and told Sarah he would never go out again.¹⁸⁰ But he did, on at least two more excursions.

He remained very fond of his sister, who took after their calm, sweet father, and he felt guilty about seldom seeing her. She lived at 40 Garthorne Rd, south of Brockley. Over the years, he had visited maybe twice a year, always on her birthday (never at Christmas). Now he always came the entire way from Harrow by taxi, usually for a short visit—'just to say hello' his sister said—and during his stay kept the taxi waiting with the meter running in case, he said, he couldn't get another one. (All the Harrow taxi drivers knew him. Visitors from London wanting a taxi from Harrow-on-the-Hill station to Monksdene, as earlier to Northwick Lodge, had only to say, 'Take me to David Jones'.) He had visited in 1961 for Cissy's seventieth birthday and stayed for hours—all during his stay keeping his taxi waiting for the return journey. His relatives thought this wildly extravagant and eccentric, having no inkling of his agoraphobia. His last visit was for Cissy's fiftieth wedding anniversary on 14 April 1967. He stayed an hour, a cab waiting. His grandniece, Sarah Hyne, later remembered him there, 'very

impressive in long black coat and wide-brimmed hat—‘like a bird of paradise in a colony of sparrows.’¹⁸¹

One Saturday afternoon, he took a taxi to his local parish church to go to confession, a sacrament of which he now seldom availed himself. He began according to formula, ‘Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been two and a half years since my last confession’ and mentioned having missed Mass (then, except for illness, considered a mortal sin). The young priest proceeded to admonish him, ‘What would have happened if you had slipped on a mat and hit his head and died? You might have gone straight to hell!’ Jones replied, ‘Look Father, the immortal soul is not like a watch that you drop down the lavatory and it’s gone forever. It doesn’t happen accidentally.’ The priest continued arguing, and Jones cut him off, saying, ‘I’ve got a taxi outside waiting.’¹⁸² Absolution was given with the meter running.

Sometime in the mid-1960s, the Keeper of Paintings at the National Museum of Wales came to see him, mentioned that his crucifixion mural at Capel (Ch, 7, fig 8) was deteriorating, and asked what he thought might be done about it. Jones said, ‘I don't think anything can be done about it as it was painted in ordinary oil paint onto a plaster wall & was pretty certain, especially in that dampish atmosphere, to scale off & fade.’ The Keeper said that experts consulted on the matter were doubtful if anything could be done, though further advice from specialists might be sought. Jones said, ‘I do not feel it is all that important ... it's not a Giotto or a Piero della Francesca after all... if by some quite simple method it's life could be extended, well and good, but if not it had better suffer its natural fate. After all, I did not make it with any particular thought of permanency. I just used what was to hand and as there was a bare wall-space available, used it.’ When later told about steps to conserve the mural, he said, ‘why not let it grow old gracefully, like me.’¹⁸³

Also at about this time Giardelli send him a photograph of the tabernacle door he had painted forty years before (Ch 7, fig. 9). He was surprised that it had rusted so much. In his ignorance of certain aspects of physical reality, he had thought that the silk veil continually covering the tabernacle would keep moisture from getting to it. Nevertheless, the form was clear and he would arrange to have it reproduced in a special issue of *Agenda* devoted to his work.¹⁸⁴

In the autumn of 1966, while walking bare foot in his room he bashed the big toe of his left foot ‘against some hard object.’ The accident made him furious. The intensity of his fury astonished him, and his astonishment eventually gave way to admiration of the marvellous black and blue colour of his bruised toe.¹⁸⁵

In November 1966 he began writing what would be a twenty-seven-page poem, entitled ‘The Sleeping Lord’ and be the single great ecological literary work of the twentieth century. Long a proto ecologist in sensibility, he had immediately agreed when asked, in September 1965, to contribute an extract of *The Anathemata* to an anthology, the royalties to go to The Fauna Preservation Society. Cookson had decided in the autumn of 1966 to combine three issues of *Agenda* into a special issue on Jones, who was contributing (he wasn’t paid) all the mid-length poems he had completed in the past fourteen years. (He would decide to withhold ‘The Tribune’s Visitation’.) Moved by Cookson’s decision, he had begun ‘The Sleeping Lord’ also for inclusion, if he could finish it on time—the publishing deadline was in February 1967. For five months, he worked on it exclusively, ‘to the neglect of all else’ (including accumulating correspondence), working sometimes till four in the morning.¹⁸⁶



12. DJ’s room (with a view) at Monksdene

Since the months of construction at Monksdene in the spring of 1965, he had found the place ‘quiet & peaceful’ on the whole and the back garden a definite asset—with the trees in leaf he could not see the neighbouring houses.¹⁸⁷ During the winter of 1965-6 he had enjoyed seeing mistletoe, ‘the

golden bough', growing in the branches of the apple tree just outside his window.¹⁸⁸ He feared that someone would cut it down for a Christmas decoration, but no one did. (He had twice before seen mistletoe growing, during the war in Picardy and later in the west of England.)¹⁸⁹ In the late winter of 1966, soon after he began taking delight in the small green shoots on the orchard trees, workers with bulldozers arrived and, to his horror, annihilated the garden, which had been a rolling remnant of orchard, leaving in its place a flat macadam car park.¹⁹⁰ Only the apple and pear trees immediately outside his window were spared. The change was, for him, 'ghastly' and symbolic since, he said, 'The whole of this island is becoming virtually a car-park.'¹⁹¹ In a sense, this change finished for him the transformation from country to city that he had first experienced in Brockley early in the century. The loss of this rural remnant informs the ecological grief pervading 'The Sleeping Lord'—twice he was forced to suspend work on the poem by the garden-destroyers using a loud drill. It is a loss that may account for his asking Cookson to open the special issue with his brief poem 'A, a, a, Domine Deus', a lamentation for the loss of sign-ificance in contemporary civilization.¹⁹² Now the view along the far end of his room was of parked cars (fig. 11), and he retreated from it further into the dark end of the room, where he increasingly lived and worked.

As a finished poem, 'The Sleeping Lord' is spectacular, an interrogative poem, out of whose questions grows a consideration of Arthur sleeping on the open countryside and in his hall. The structure of the poem exactly conforms to that of Arthur's hall as described in one of the notes, for this poem is now where Arthur sleeps, symbolizing cultural ending and renewal. In the modern period of decline, Arthur epitomizes human suffering. As the mythic giant reclining under the landscape, he humanizes a ravaged Wales. At the heart of the poem is Christ-symbolizing wood-fire which contrasts with the proto-industrial 'Dean-coal fire' of Norman conquerors. Behind this contrast is an association, in Jones's mind, with the Roman take-over of a shrine dedicated to the Celtic god Nodens (alias Llyr, the origin of Lear) and honoured by a perpetual flame fuelled by wood, which the Romans replaced by coal from the Forest of Dean. (He wondered whether the local Welsh felt about that Roman 'utilitarian, efficient "industrialism"' what he felt about the current replacement of votive candles in churches by electric light bulbs.)¹⁹³

This moving poem was largely new. Of its 900 lines, it incorporates about 150

adapted from material he had written over a decade earlier. It would be his last complete, substantially new poem. That he could write something so impressive at this late date is cause to be grateful that Cookson had asked him for poetry for *Agenda*. To write it, probably he surreptitiously stopped taking the drugs he had been prescribed.

Cookson and he had met to decide on artworks to reproduce in the special issue and those to ask to write on his work. Jones suggested Saunders Lewis, Nancy Sanders, Nicolette Gray, Jim Ede, Peter Levi, David Blamires, and Tony Stoneburner. Most of all, he wanted Kenneth Clark to contribute but thought he would be too busy. They both wrote to Clark, who said yes and visited twice in December to view the pictures he would write about. (Jones also asked Solange Dayras but she declined, saying she did not know his poetry well enough. He said she could take any of the manuscripts if she thought they might help, but she considered them too precious to take and declined.) He ‘insisted’ on the inclusion of ‘A Note’ by Aneurin Talfan Davies, reprinted from *Poetry Wales*, on the affinities of his poetry with *Finnegans Wake*—it was, he said, ‘just what I wanted someone to say’ (*LF* 16). In it Davies describes Joyce and Jones as ‘similar in the synthesizing quality of their work’ and says that Jones’s visual and literary work is imbued with ‘a thorough acceptance of the physical universe, redeemed by God’, which ‘means the acceptance of the sacramental principle, which means the transformation of matter into a means of grace. ... It is the core of his life as an artist.’¹⁹⁴

In late June 1967, the special issue appeared, the first book-length publication devoted to his work. It ‘turned out *far* better’ than he ‘had dared to hope’ and, knowing how hard Cookson had worked with printers, he told Cookson how grateful he was and congratulated him on the quality, especially of the reproductions, some of which had had to be redone four times. Jones had been worried that ‘The Sleeping Lord’ was ‘so “oral” or “aural” in character’ that it might not ‘come across’ to readers whose emphasis was visual.¹⁹⁵ He was greatly relieved to hear from Harman Grisewood, Kenneth Clark, Saunders Lewis, and Nancy Sanders that they especially liked this poem and that it was ‘more intelligible’ than much of his writing. He was disappointed, however, that no reviewer mentioned it.¹⁹⁶

Of the contributions to the issue by others, he thought the best were by Nancy Sanders and Stuart Piggott. Both, he thought, approached his work with rare objectivity and perception. Of these he thought Piggott’s essay ‘the best in many ways,’ ‘a relief from all this blasted “art”

& “literary” criticism’, and he admired (and envied) its ‘very clear concise English’¹⁹⁷

Piggott was a friend of Nancy Sanders, whom he had studied with at Oxford. He had been, since 1946, Abercromby Professor of Prehistoric Archaeology at Edinburgh. He had visited Jones once, in 1959, when they found their common interests ranged from Mesolithic culture to *The Mabinogion*. Piggott was an expert at reading aerial photographs and had spent the war making table-sized contour models to help bomber crews identify targets. He had visited again in 1961 and once more just before the special issue was published. He recorded in his diary (16 June) that Monksdene is ‘horrible ... suburban would-be chichi with lots of pleated & frilled lace curtains, cheap chromium’ but that Jones looked ‘very sprightly and elegant, in a well-cut grey flannel suit with good brown shoes, claret-coloured handkerchief in breast pocket, sand-coloured shirt and acid lime yellow tie.’ Piggott told him that the previous summer in Vienna he had held in his hand the Palaeolithic sculpture known as *The Venus of Willendorf* while thinking of the lines Jones had written about it (*A* 59). They talked about the on-going excavation of the Celtic hill fort of Cadbury Castle, situated near the village of Camel, near Glastonbury, and regarded as a possible site of Camelot. (This was a current interest of Jones.) The excavation would demonstrate that the hill site had been reoccupied and refortified around the year 500, possibly by Arthur or an Arthur-figure. Hearing from Jones of his newly finished poem, Piggott asked him to read it. Jones said ‘it’s no good reading a bit because it’s all linked up and what’s important are the *changes*, but it will take three-quarters of an hour—can you stand it?’ Each then had a cup of Nescafé, and he proceeded to read ‘in a slow, deliberate and slightly incantatory way, giving full value to every word, slightly stressing assonances, but in varying moods and tempi so that it had the quality of a musical performance with distinct movements. It was immensely and cumulatively impressive.’ Jones then asked how he liked the joke bit about ‘Kallistratos loves Julia’ (*SL* 81), and said about the jokes, ‘Some of these critics can’t make ‘em out—puzzles ‘em,’ adding, with a grin and half-wink, ‘I don’t mind.’ Jones inscribed to him a prepublication copy of the special issue, and Piggott left, thinking the visit had been ‘marvellous’ and had given Jones ‘a lot of pleasure.’ Jones thought Piggott ‘one of those rare birds who combines an exacting & precise professional scholarship with wide apperceptions & is also, as a person, delightfully amusing.’ He admired him as he had admired John Rhys in his youth, an exceptional academic for whom love motivates research and writing.¹⁹⁸

During this last visit, Piggott had restrained himself from declaring his discovery that a 5th-century Greek geographer had used the word ‘anathemata’ for a stone-circle in Britain, probably Stonehenge—Piggott wanted it to be a surprise when Jones read his essay.¹⁹⁹ After he read it, Jones phoned him to say how much he loved the essay, especially his mentioning the use of ‘anathemata’ by the Greek geographer.

Although intending to visit again, Piggott never did. But in November 1967, he sent a copy of his recently published *Ancient Europe: From the Beginnings of Agriculture to Classical Antiquity*, which Jones found ‘endlessly fascinating’. He wrote to Piggott that ‘Many things that in my vague & amateur way I have felt *might* be so, you confirm with solid, contactual, material evidence; and *much* that I know little or *nothing* about, you bring clearly to light.’ He found the material on the Celtic use of the wheel and vehicles ‘terribly interesting’ and revealed a purely technological contribution of which few men in streets crammed with wheeled vehicles would be aware. He admired Piggott’s work, his ability to manage so many disciplines. His writing had affinity with his own. Remembering Vivien Bickford’s phrase, ‘unity of indirect reference’, he wrote, ‘you show in such clear language how & to what extent “references” direct & indirect make for a unity or unities hitherto unknown to the majority of people.’²⁰⁰ Piggott was one of Jones’s experts, to whom he wrote for information though, like Blissett and Stonebuner, largely an acquaintance by post. Repeatedly throughout the years Piggott asked to buy a picture, and Jones said no.

The special issue was a turning point for the magazine. Previously, it had been not much noticed by the press, and Jones had regretted this for Cookson’s sake.²⁰¹ Now it was mentioned and reviewed by the *Irish Times* and the *Guardian*. One sentence in the latter greatly amused Jones: ‘This present number, running to 176 pages, is so attractively designed that sixth-form schoolgirls will want to eat it.’ It was also reviewed in the *Spectator*, the *TLS*, and the *Tablet*. These reviews brought the magazine to national attention, and the issue soon sold out. In November, Cookson ordered another thousand copies printed. This success enabled him to get a substantial Arts Council grant to help publish and, thereafter, obtain more generous subsidies.²⁰²

And the special issue brought Jones new prominence. On 27 October 1967, he received a fan letter from the American poet W.S. Merwin, who had twice reread *In Parenthesis* and, having just read *The Anathemata*, considered Jones ‘one of the greatest

twentieth century poets in English.’ A letter came from Anthony Powell, praising some of the essays in the issue, recalling their meeting in 1937 at Lyme Regis, and saying that since that day long ago he has developed an interest in his own Welsh background and in Welsh genealogy. He wrote that he had visited a museum in South Welsh and expressed interest in a stone commemorating Votecorigas (a mid-6th century king of Dyfed), and ‘after expressing some gratification, the curator said ‘We have also the cuff-links of the late Mr Dylan Thomas.’ How Welsh, Jones thought, and, though funny, ‘very touching and *fundamentally* right—in that this man of site & locality, Dylan T. was a “bard” of that locality in the 20th Cent. and Voteporix was a notorious ruler of that same locality in the 5th-6th Centuries.’ Powell also praised the ninth-century inscription on the ‘Eliseg Pillar’ in Derbighshire. In his reply, Jones said he had long loved that inscription and found it ‘extraordinarily moving.’ What he especially liked about it was its ‘*anamnesis* of the link between the baptised *romanitas* of the late imperium and that long continued stubborn struggle in the wasted border-lands so vividly made present in those 9th Cent. Llywarch Hen-Cynddlay-Heledd fragments of the refrain *ys tywell heno*’ (‘the hall is dark tonight’).²⁰³

For many of his friends, who considered him chiefly a visual artist, the five substantial, mid-length poems in the special issue were revelatory. Among them were Hugh and Antonia Fraser, who concluded that their appreciation of him had been incomplete. They were now convinced of his great importance as a poet.²⁰⁴

In the late summer of 1967, fibrocitis or rheumatism or arthritis (he wasn't sure which) in his hip had begun paining him. The doctor gave him pills, but it persisted ‘in a nagging sort of way.’ He was, he wrote, ‘damned irritable about it. I know it's *nothing* to what people suffer with patience but I'm *hopeless* about these bodily pains—and can't concentrate properly.’ He recalled the words of Browning's Bloughram: ‘And body ... holds its noise / And leaves soul free a little.’²⁰⁵

On 18 October 1967, he was asked to sign a petition supporting the rule restricting to the Welsh language the literary submissions and performances at the National Eisteddfod and urging the council *not* to allow competitions in English. Unsure about signing, he consulted Saunders Lewis, who reassured him, so he signed and added in an accompanying letter, that relaxation of the Welsh-only rule would be ‘the thin edge of the wedge’. There were thirty-

one other signators, including R.S. Thomas.²⁰⁶

In November 1968 he declined an offer of membership in The Welsh Academy, which was admitting English-writing Welsh writers. In his long letter of explanation, of which there are many drafts, he said that he did not want to contribute to or endorse the liquidation of the Welsh language. To Nancy Sanders he wrote, 'I suppose, being a Londoner, I feel outside and shy of these differing groups of Welshmen—in fact am in quite an anomalous position' and his feeling about indifference of Welsh speakers to the loss of the language 'is analogous to my feeling of incomprehension with these Catholics who are able Latinists but feel no loss at the destruction of the whole liturgy of the Latin west.' Watkins had earlier asked him to participate in a broadcast conversation on the subject of being Welsh, and he had declined. Watkins had said Welshness 'in the blood' determines form, and Jones had agreed but wrote to explain,

You, yourself, and Dylan & others—R.S. Thomas, for example, although writing in English quite obviously write as *real Welshmen*—it comes out in all kinds of ways. But I am in a very different position. I'm totally English (indeed Cockney English), in upbringing, in environment, and in all kinds of ways. That's why I said I feel an 'outsider' in this matter, and am very reluctant to express an opinion. I feel it's a kind of impertinence in me to do so.²⁰⁷

On 4 June 1968, two men in business suits came to the door of his room and presented him with a letter bearing the arms of the City of London. 'Good God', he said, 'am I for the Tower or what?' They said 'No, nothing like that.' He opened the envelope and read the mayor's words informing him that he was to receive the first City of London Midsummer Prize, valued at £1500, for a living Londoner practicing one or more of the arts who has made 'an outstanding contribution to Britain's culture'.²⁰⁸ Most awards commended specific work in a single field, but this one was comprehensive. His being first to receive it implied that no living Londoner was his equal in the arts. This would be the only award he ever received that indicated the quality as well as the breadth of his achievement. He felt 'a sense of incredulity' at being 'the choice of the committee'. He was unable to go to the Mansion House banquet to receive the award, he explained, because of his 'nervous breakdown', so on 22 June he received this award in absentia.

In November 1968, Paul Hills, a Cambridge undergraduate majoring in Art History wrote to him. He had been introduced to his work at Kettle's Yard by Jim Ede, who had

given him Jones's address. Jones telephoned him at his college and invited him to visit. Having fairly often been visited by people interested in his poetry, he was delighted that someone was coming to see him because of his visual art. Jones found himself and this 'awfully aware & sensitive young man' in sympathy. Hills visited twice and, in the 1968/69 academic year, wrote a long, externally 'assessed' essay on his art, which Jones thought 'extremely good' and which was subsequently published in the *Malahat Review*. From then on, he visited several times a year, arriving about two and trying to leave at about five, only to have Jones say. 'No, no, no. Stay,' and, for incentive, produce a bottle of whisky, saying, 'I'm not allowed it, but you have some.' With Hills, he loved reminiscing about his time at art school, about Hartrick with great affection, and about 'old Sickert.' Hills introduced names of artists he thought Jones had affinities with. One was Winifred Nicholson, whom Jones said he admired, as he did Ben Nicholson though he thought Ben a bit severe. While he admired Picasso, he loved, above all, Bonnard, who in his fidelity to detail showed more love than Picasso ever did. He also loved Blake, Bewick, Palmer. He did not like the expressionist distortions of Van Gogh, which projected the artist's inward emotional condition. He admired Cruikshank and was disappointed when the president of the Royal Academy blamed him for failing to copy reality exactly. As they conversed about the old masters, Hills was surprised by the range of his knowledge and tastes and his degree of visual literacy. Jones liked Tiepolo and associated him with Roman fresco painting. He liked early Renaissance painting but, he said, 'I have no time for Raphael' except for the V & A cartoon—'I like those birds.' He loved Rubens; Nicholas Hilliard; El Greco; Durer; Durer's predecessor, Martin Schongauer; the Maitre de Moulins; Fouquet (particularly his *Conversion of St Hubert*); Pisanello's *Vision of St Eustice*; the Wilton Diptych (which had influenced his illustration for Eliot's *The Cultivation of Christmas Trees*); Botticelli's *Primavera*; early Renaissance engraving; Bellini's *Madonna of the Meadow*; Andrea Mantegna's *Agony in the Garden* and *Dead Christ*, and Tintoretto. Hills would stay as late as eight. Sometimes during the last half hour, Jones would put on recordings of himself reading his own works. He sat on the side of his bed, leaning over, chuckling to himself and glancing up to see whether Hills, too, found it funny. He remarked that people don't realize how many jokes there are in his writing. During one visit, Hills asked whether he wanted to go to Rome, a city he had often told Grisewood he wished to visit, but he said 'No, I'm

afraid it might kill it for me.' He wrote of Hills, 'He has an apperception & a refreshing understanding, especially perhaps of the visual work in relation to the written.' 'A very nice bloke'.²⁰⁹ Hills went on to do graduate work at the Courtauld Institute. In him Jones found a scholar who, in his publications, had the intelligence and sensitivity required to illuminate his visual work.

'The Tribune's Visitation' was published as a small book by Fulcrum Press in 1968. Jones provided an inscription for the title page and dust jacket and was especially happy about the accuracy of its reproduction. In 1969 Peter Orr came to record it for the British Council, Harvard, and Argo Records. Jones had not looked at it for some months. Orr had him improvise a short introduction and then Jones read without rehearsal. Afterwards there was no time to let him hear the recording, but Orr later assured him on the phone that it was good. He then went off to North America, having ensured that his secretary, nineteen-year-old Cathie Hunt, would send his copy of the *TLS* to Jones each week. When the record came out, she brought him a copy, and he was astonished at how good the reading sounded. Cathie and became good friends, and she started bringing the *TLS* personally each Tuesday. She also brought him Roses Lime Juice, writing paper, biros, peaches, and occasionally lent him 'the odd pound'. Once there was a big, beautiful peach sitting on the table beside his eighteenth-century teapot. 'What a wonderful peach, she exclaimed, and he said, 'Yes, I love the texture of them'—and he took it and sat stroking it, as if it were a cat. Often he'd be looking for something, and much of the visit would be taken up with the search. (Many visitors experienced this.) He didn't like her helping, and she was impressed whenever he allowed her to. She noticed that in conversation 'suddenly something would come into his mind, a completely different subject which distracted him, and then much later he would come back to what he was initially talking about.' As with so many others, he always attempted to delay her leaving: 'You'd say goodbye' she remembered, 'and then he'd want to show you something or he'd offer you a drink, anything to delay your going, which was sad really. He must have been terribly lonely then.'²¹⁰

In 1969, playing recordings for visitors, he placed his ancient gramophone (the size and shape of a hatbox) on a chair seat and knelt or sat on the floor, applying with his finger just the right pressure on the head to keep the disk turning at the proper speed. Later, he

taped a two-shilling bit to the top of the head. Sarah Balme once asked, 'David, do you think it needs a new needle' and, surprised, he responded, 'It does *not* need a new needle.' But in early July 1971, he complained that his gramophone 'was so worn out & uncertain in its behaviour that it was almost useless.' Cookson took it to be repaired—the people at the shop were astonished at the sight of it and unable to fix it. Cathie lent him her gramophone, which further endeared her to him, and accepted the assignment of finding him a new one. He didn't care about cost, but it had to be simple so he could operate it. With the advice of an audiophile friend, she found one for £12, which Jones thought 'pleasantly inexpensive.' On the new machine, Joyce's reading from 'Anna Livia' sounded 'absolutely superb.' 'What a bloke,' he wrote, 'simply miles & miles ahead of *any* other artist, and Saints of Light! every word bloody funny and deeply Catholic.' The new record player revealed how badly scratched his recording of *The Tribune's Visitation* was, so she brought him a replacement. The combination of new machine and new disk made 'all the difference in the world'—it now sounded to him, 'the best thing' he 'ever tried to make.' And the poem was, he thought, 'probably the best of all the separate pieces.' 'Almost every word tells ... It's the 'whole works' in brief space.' He liked it so much 'partly because it states quite simply the situation of to-day--in one sense, anyway.'²¹¹ From now on, it was the recording he most often played for visitors.

In February 1970, he read in the *TLS* an article on Beardsley stating that Mary Magdalene had to lose her beauty for the sake of Christ—'a monstrous lie', Jones thought. He knew 'Donatello's marvellous but terrible image of Mary Maudlin as a toothless hag' and Villon's 'great poem of the aging courtesan,' but their truth is the 'common-place idea that bodily beauty comes a cropper.' It was almost blasphemous, he thought, to see as the formal cause of any loss of beauty the incarnate God 'by whom all things are.'²¹²

Only a few poets visited him before the *Agenda* special issue. Accompanied by William Haywood, the blind poet John Heath-Stubbs had first visited in 1959. Though Jackson Knight had earlier intimated it in print, Heath-Stubbs had been the first to say outright that *In Parenthesis* was Jones's *Iliad* and *The Anathemata* his *Odyssey*. On 19 October 1963, he

returned with a young artist named Noel White, who had earlier visited Jones alone. Jones played for them his recording of 'The Dream of Private Clitus', and they talked about the war poets and matters Arthurian, including the *Arthuriad* that Stubbs was writing. Asked about the poet Spenser, whom Heath-Stubbs admired, Jones said he found it difficult to forgive him for the role he played in Ireland. They talked about John Cowper Powys, and Jones said that his use of ancient Welsh material in *Porius* and *Owen Glendower* is authentic but he didn't like the form of those novels. Heath-Stubbs said he disliked Powys's sadistic preoccupation. Jones replied, 'yes, and—I don't quite know the polite word for it—a shit-thing.' Heath-Stubbs said nothing but could remember no scatological language in Powys's novels. At the end of the visit, he watched Heath-Stubbs entering the street, a tall, imposing figure wrapped in a military style great-coat and feeling his way into the foggy night with a walking stick. Jones gazed long after him, impressed with his being 'blind or virtually so' and, like so many blind people, not sorry for himself and retaining 'sweetness of disposition'. As they walked away, Heath-Stubbs told White that he felt as though he had been in the presence of William Blake. They visited again in June 1965.²¹³

In 1970 Jones wrote about Heath-Stubbs: 'I have for years now had respect for his integrity—...in conversation one felt he had *really* read this or that work ...and had formed his own opinion and was not repeating some current view—which one often feels in "literary people". ... and it was his gentleness, and firmly held personally arrived at opinions, and some little time back I heard on a record his reading of one of his own poems and I don't think I've ever heard a poet read his own verse so naturally, gently, without any feeling of strain ... for effect.'²¹⁴

The poet Elizabeth Jennings had visited in the late 1950s. She wrote her poem, 'A Visit to an Artist', about it and dedicates the poem to him (she dedicated only six poems to people, this the only one using a full name). He was grateful for what she wrote about his poetry in *Christian Poetry* (1965), where she calls him 'the supreme example of the Christian artist.'²¹⁵

Jones read the poetry of R.S. Thomas, thought him 'a real poet,' spoke approvingly of him with Saunders Lewis, and expressed a desire to meet him.²¹⁶ Although Thomas wrote a poem about visiting Jones, he never visited.

Owing largely to notoriety achieved through the *Agenda* special issue, poets were

now making their way to his door. He was not always inclined (or well enough) to receive them. When in 1968 the American poet Allen Ginsberg asked to visit, Jones declined.²¹⁷

The American poet Louis Zukofsky and his wife Celia were in England in 1969 for the publication of *A* by Jonathan Cape. He had read *The Anathema* with great interest and admiration, as the markings in his copy indicate, and asked to meet the author. On 29 May 1969, Cookson brought the Zukofskys to Monksdene. It was a good visit. Jones had not read his work, but they liked each other. Zukofsky gave him a copy of his and Celia's two-volume book *Bottom on Shakespeare*. Jones was rereading Theodora Kroeber's *Ishi in Two Worlds*, about a California Indian as the sole survivor of his tribe, which Jones praised and described, and they talked at length about the mistreatment of Indians in American. Jones had recounted that when asked whether he believed in God, Ishi had replied, 'Sure, Mike,' and when they parted, while shaking hands, he and Zukofsky simultaneously said, 'Sure, Mike.'²¹⁸

Basil Bunting, also visited, probably in the spring of 1969. No record of their meeting survives, but Bunting revered Jones, considering him 'one of the bouquet of poets who have made this century the most fruitful in English poetry since the XVIth'. Although he disliked Catholicism, he appreciated that Jones, in his poetry, had 'made the Mass a complex of symbols capable of ordering and interpreting pretty well the whole history of the world and the whole order of nature.'²¹⁹

Also in 1969 John Montague visited. The tall, quiet-spoken Irish poet lived in Cork and was a friend of the Hagues. He regarded Jones as a master and was intrigued by the 'intricate texture' of his long poems, 'by his interweaving of things.' Jones made them tea, and they talked about Ireland being unconquered by Rome and so without Roman order, in contrast to Britain. On the floor lay a book on Roman Britain, which Jones vaguely kicked as he walked past. He reminisced about his time in Ireland and remarked on Robert Graves being there at the time but unknown to him. He spoke of disliking *Goodbye to All That* and expressed reservations about *The White Goddess*: 'Imagine meeting that on a dark night or praying to her when you're cast down, she'd gobble you up, bones and everything.'²²⁰ He said that Graves forgets the suffering of wives and mothers, their never-ending tasks, the pain of childbirth. 'I see her as softer, more maternal, vulnerable, mother of Rome, mother of God, mother of us all. You know that

lovely old ballad, “In green wood she lies slain?”—sitting erect, he sang it. He then moved onto the Celtic view of love. He took out and showed *Tristan ac Yssyllt*. Montague later remembered, ‘I would throw in my bit but he would go off weaving the lines of the web of his conversation. His mind never seemed to lose its central line. He would digress and he would ramble but he would always pull it back in.’

From then on Montague visited annually, calling himself, ‘the Cork ambassador to the Court of David.’ On one visit he came with Gareth Brown, who tried in vain to get Jones to sign a recording contract. Brown was wearing lace ruffs at his wrists, which Montague could see fascinated Jones. They brought with them Paddy Maloney of ‘The Chieftains’, who played the tin whistle, beginning with slow airs and moving gradually into a jig—and Jones enjoyed listening to him play. Once at least Montague brought along his beautiful young French wife Evelyn. Jones talked about literature with him while she worked quietly on a quilt. She thought Jones looked like ‘a very elderly little boy.’ Montague noticed him taking an occasional peak at her, ‘the odd good eye-full.’ He liked her, and later wrote Hague that he thought she was gentle and a lady. In 1971, Montague mentioned to Geoffrey Hill that he was on his way to see Jones, and Hill told him that he admired David Jones above all other poets, that he owed a lot to his example, and that ‘of course, he’s the main influence on *The Mercian Hymns*.’²²¹

On one visit, Montague noticed that among the books visible in his room were *Black Elk Speaks* and *Ireland Seen from the Air*. The latter Jones may have consulted in preparation for their visit. He talked about the sights in Ireland, which he would love to come see. He spoke of early medieval travel between Ireland and Wales, the journeys of the Celtic Saints. Together he and Montague generated a fantasy airplane flight, Jones describing the places beneath them in Wales and giving their legendary associations, Montague supplying information about the ground once they were across the Irish Sea. They agreed that ideally Ireland could be included in the term ‘the British Isles’ because the British were not the English but the early Celtic *Pritani*—so that the term had pre-imperialistic validity. Together they regretted English ignorance of what ‘British’ really means and mourned the loss of the traditions common to Ireland and Britain. As for England, Jones said, ‘there was an England once, but you can no longer see it. There are few of the wild places left, on the edge of an arterial road.’²²²

In 1971 Cookson would bring the poet Anne Beresford, Michael Hamburger's wife. Jones offered them whisky from a large box of bottles of whisky given to him by a friend who had sold a picture by him for a large amount of money—he laughed in amazement at what his pictures now sold for. She periodically visited from then on, and he loved seeing her. It was the era of Laura Ashley romanticism, which he liked—the maxi was in—and he always noticed what she was wearing, said his mother had worn a coat like hers. He played his recordings, and she would recall that his own pleasure listening was 'almost childlike.' He told her he liked her poems and seemed to appreciate the four she dedicated to him. On one visit he took out the dressing gown Nest had made him, explaining that you couldn't get material like this nowadays, and showed where a button was missing, and a small tear had developed along the seam. She offered to mend it, and he explained gratefully, 'I can't thread needles easily anymore.'²²³

In March 1970, he had received a letter from Jeremy Hooker, a young poet and academic teaching English Literature at Aberystwyth since 1965. Hooker expressed admiration for his poetry and *Epoch and Artist* and said that he was about to concentrate on *The Anathemata*. The letter arrived, Jones wrote, 'just when I was feeling that all my stuff was useless.' Before replying, he read a review by Hooker which he liked very much, discussing the difficulty of designating writing as 'Anglo-Welsh'. Jones wrote him asking to meet, and in April 1972 Hooker visited. He found Jones sitting between a table and a chest of drawers on which books were stacked, and with two small tables in front of him with papers and a tray full of biros and pens. To Hooker he seemed frail and moved with difficulty and only with support. He smiled often, boyishly, sometimes losing the thread of conversation and sitting forward with his head in his hands or sitting sideways until he picked it up again or taking up another line of thought or reminiscence. Among other subjects, he spoke of his love of words and of how he might have become a philologist rather than a painter and writer if he had had the appropriate education, so that he was glad he hadn't. He said that Kenneth Jackson's new translation of *The Goddodin* takes all the magic out of the poem, and he spoke with love of *Gawain and the Green Knight* and Langland, both of which he preferred to Chaucer. He spoke of John Cowper Powys's *Owen Glendower* and *Porius* with admiration, saying there was more of 'the real thing' of ancient Welsh literature and tradition in them than in any other Anglo-Welsh writing. He said he

disliked Graves for his Teutonic attitudes and for his general unkindness, especially to Pound and Eliot. But, anxious to be fair, he spoke of how Graves had excited students as Professor of Poetry at Oxford. After nearly two hours, Hooker suggested that Jones say when he should go so as not to tire him, and he said 'Go? We haven't started yet.' Hooker mentioned that Saunders Lewis is deeply respected in Wales, and Jones said abruptly and fiercely, 'So he should be.' While he talked, he smoked or played with a cigarette, his fingers heavily stained with nicotine. After about two hours Douglas Cleverdon came, and Hooker thought it was time to leave. Jones said, 'There are so many things I want to talk to you about', insisted that Hooker come again whenever in London, and asked, 'You haven't left your wife outside, have you? You're not one of those people who comes to see me and leaves his wife outside?' 'Oh no,' said Hooker, 'she had to do some shopping.' This was true. She had gone shopping but had long ago returned and was waiting on the grounds. Shortly after their visit, Jones read and liked very much Hooker's article on 'The Poetry of David Jones' in *Poetry Wales*. It convinced him that Hooker was someone to watch. For the first time, a literary critic had understood the complex, 'inescapable necessities' dictating 'the form & content' of his writing, these necessities deriving largely from his having been born and raised in Britain. 'What a relief it is', he wrote, to read something more substantial than the critics who have praised his works for 'its "literary" merits—using such words as "charm", "mystery", even "mystic" quality.' Hooker would go on to make his name as a poet and the foremost early Jones scholar. Out of a mistaken feeling of deference, not wanting to bother him, he would not visit Jones again.²²⁴

Meic Stephens, editor of *Poetry Wales* wanted to devote a special issue to Jones and consulted him about those who might write on his work. He was glad that Saunders Lewis, Arthur Giradelli, and Paul Hills had agreed to write and urged Stephens to invite Nancy Sanders, William Blissett, Louis Bonnerot, Stuart Piggot, and Jeremy Hooker. Once the issue was published, he thought Arthur Giardelli's essay 'awfully well done' and Saunders Lewis's essay on the inscriptions 'the best in the collection.' He also particularly liked the essay by Hooker.²²⁵

In October 1969, Jones received a letter from a Colin Hughes enclosing contemporary photographs of Mametz Wood. Hughes had heard a recent broadcast of *In Parenthesis*,

bought and read the book, and on a four-day holiday in France walked into Mametz Wood with his camera. Looking at the photographs, Jones was astonished to see the place, which ‘concentrated fire’ had reduced to ‘fallen wreckage’ with ‘leafy limbs’ down and tangled ‘with the thick undergrowth ... here it was over half a century later, looking much the same as the sylvan chaos through which we had gradually “forced the groves”’. The saplings sprung from the roots of those trees now ‘*looked* to be identical’ in size to the trees he had seen during the assault. For the next two years, Hughes occasionally visited on Sunday afternoons. He was writing a history of the 38th Welsh Division during the war and was able to reveal aspects of the assault on Mametz Wood that Jones had either forgotten or never known. A visit from Hughes was for him ‘a great treat’.²²⁶ They became good friends. Jones would give him the inscription ‘The Poet Speaks’ that he made for Argo Records.

Another of his visitors now was a young medievalist named David Blamires, a lecturer at Manchester who was familiar with the Arthurian romances—his Cambridge dissertation was on Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*. He had come across a copy of *The Anathemata*, read it, and wondered why he and his acquaintances had never heard of it. He then read *In Parenthesis* and *Epoch and Artist*. In May 1966, he had written to Jones, enclosing an offprint of an essay on *The Anathemata* entitled ‘The Ordered World’ (*Review of English Literature* [VII:2, April]), which Saunders Lewis had already sent Jones. He replied saying the essay was ‘the best & most concise critique’ of the poem that had appeared. He especially liked Blamires’s contention that the centre was ‘anywhere’ in the ‘asymmetry’ of the work. Blamires asked to visit, and they met on 30 June 1966. ‘He’s such a jolly nice bloke,’ Jones told Grisewood, ‘scholarly & perceptive to a remarkable degree and takes great pains to ‘get things right’. He was also a Quaker, and Jones liked that.’²²⁷ Blamires asked if he had any objections to his writing a book about his poetry, and Jones replied, ‘By all means if you feel like it’ and agreed to supply biographical information. He enjoyed Blamires’s visits. They conversed mainly about the Arthurian romances, and he was impressed with the young man’s knowledge of the work of the great German romance-makers. They spoke about Gottfried von Strassburg, Eilhart von Oberge, and Cretien de Trois.

After it was rejected by Faber, Manchester published Blamires's book. Jones thought it a 'scholarly careful job & full of information Very few actual errors & a great number of real insights.' Now at last there was a book dealing wholly with his work, but it was merely 'introductory', and he confided to Grisewood that he found it 'a bit of a disappointment ... in that it never quite *takes wing*' as Blamires's essay, revised for the 1967 special issue of *Agenda*, does. * In addition to its failure 'to catch fire', the book, in his view, 'overdoes the Malorian "influence"—not that he's ever inaccurate, but in analysing *In Parenthesis*, sometimes what were virtually unconscious Malorian forms become too conscious or something.' But Jones thought he was perceptive on the relation between his visual work and poetry. He hated the book's visual format—the thick lettering on the dust jacket was 'hideous'—and he was appalled that it cost £3. But his chief regret was that it did not 'press home' his 'insistence that man is innately a sacrament-making animal' and that this applied to all men, not just Catholics. If 'non utile acts' are not valid for all of us, 'then not only is the Mass without any meaning but so are a vast percentage of the acts of man' including 'Casey Jones kissing his wife at the cabin door before mounting on his engine.' It pained him that anyone writing about his work should fail to appreciate the 'utterly crucial distinction' between the utile and inutile, which is 'the pivot round which all one has ever stated depends.' He now thought that 'all the bloody sweat of half of *Epoch & Artist* simply evidently had no meaning.' Yet, encouraged by Harold Rosenberg's review, he was convinced, 'the questions raised in that book remained valid'. What made the matter so important now was that 'technological man is fast losing that [gratuitous, sign-making] habit of thought at *every* level.'²²⁸

Blamires's book discouraged Tony Stoneburner from proceeding with his planned critical biography. Stoneburner told Jones that Blamires had anticipated what he had intended to write. Jones thought this unfortunate, since Stoneburner's expression and thinking were so different from those of Blamires. 'It saddens me,' Jones wrote, 'that you *feel* it raises problems for you—because I'm sure it does not in fact affect the matter. ... your

* He wrote to Stoneburner that this was 'so often the case & almost *inevitable*. I mean a chap can write of something that has suddenly roused him but in dealing with a longer far more complex affair the "inspiration" cannot be expected to be retained except in places' (8-9 Jan. 1970).

work is quite clearly of a different nature & differs in emphasis ... I was looking forward to your book ... certain of it being full of apperception and as it were “seen from the inside”—that was clear to me from your first letters years back.’²²⁹ Jones was unable to convince him to go on with his book. As my endnotes attest, Tony Stoneburner would generously lend his invaluable notes on interviews and his letters from the present website and the book distilled from it.

He had always admired strong world leaders—a recent favourite was de Gaulle, but now, among all the politicians acting on the world-stage, he had ‘great admiration for Dag Hammarskjöld—he must be a wonderful man to combine the qualities of that sort of public, immensely active, appallingly tricky work at the U.N. with his deeply civilized and scholarly qualities & his artistic understanding (at least of contemporary literature). I see he’s translated that marvellous poem of St Jean Pearce, *Anabase*, from French into Swedish. He also reads my beloved Joyce, I understand.’²³⁰

Jones now admired Enoch Powell as a Classicist, historian, and poet and thought him ‘the man to watch ... because ... the most intelligent man in public life.’ Powell had been the youngest professor in the Commonwealth and had risen from private to brigadier general during the war. He was the most eloquent speaker in parliament and a man of courageous integrity. Jones liked him ‘as a chap’. As always, Jones’s attitude was more personal than political, though he agreed with Powell’s wish to limit immigration from Asia and Africa to a number that could culturally be assimilated—a matter not of race but of preserving the cultural integrity of Britain. (Jones was no racist. One evening in September 1961, he heard Philip Curtin talk on the radio about the origins of the notion of ‘The White Man’s Burden’ in the bogus science that social Darwinists used to justify prejudice that permeated British Imperialism—Jones thought it ‘one of the most interesting and admirably stated talks’ he had heard on the radio in a long time.) Like Powell, he thought most Conservative-party politicians lacked the courage to be thoroughly to the right, and like Powell, he disliked the EEC—‘by instinct I distrust it’ as being ‘about nothing else but money.’²³¹

He also greatly admired Bernadette Devlin, the twenty-two-year-old MP for Northern Ireland who had been imprisoned for instigating a riot. He appreciated her heroism and sympathized with her cause. In 1970 he had her photograph on his table.²³² He admired other strong women throughout history, including the historical Boudicca and Joan of Arc. (He had seen Shaw's play about her in 1922). They were all, in a sense, resistance fighters—as he was, in his artistic and literary work.

So were the Palestinians. He thought the state of Israel a tragic error and was appalled at the injustice it inflicted on millions of innocent Arabs.²³³ It was the product of reverse scapegoating based on irrational guilt over what the Nazis had done to the Jews. One atrocity (however great) did not, he thought, justify another. In November 1969, Edward Hodgkin reporting from Palestine for *The Times*, disclosed Israeli injustice against Palestinians, including demolition of houses and ill-treatment of prisoners. He drew the obvious but taboo comparison between Israelis and Nazis, which elicited a barrage of protest from Jews—including Hodgkin's friend Isaiah Berlin, a keen Zionist who objected especially to the Nazi comparison. In response Hodgkin said to him, 'But, Isaiah, it was true', and Berlin replied, 'It doesn't matter, you shouldn't have said it anyway.'²³⁴ when Hodgkin related it to Jones, Berlin's response appalled him.

From mid-March 1970, he felt slightly 'off colour'. Visiting on 19 March, Morag noticed that his face wasn't quite right. Over his repeated refusals, she insisted on calling Dr. Bell, who asked him, 'Do you ever look in the mirror?' Jones's mouth was sagging in one corner, indicating that he had had a slight stroke. The next day he felt better and better still on the morning of the following day, which was Palm Sunday. He had breakfast, made his bed, and began piling onto it the usual mound of books and papers. While carrying the last load from the floor near the door, he tripped on a large rip in the carpet, and crashed to the floor. The pain was severe, and he was unable to move his left leg. He would have waited for the pain to subside but was determined to escape 'the appalling draught' from under the door and managed with his right leg to hoist himself to the edge of the bed, where he sat—the pain precipitating double-vision (which would last several days). To see whether there was an outward wound, he lowered his trousers and underwear, then, because a woman would soon arrive to sweep the room, he struggled in

agony to get them back up. He found that the pain lessened if he kept his legs aligned together. The cleaning woman arrived, and he was taken by ambulance to Harrow Hospital. While being carried to a public ward on a balcony, he was jostled, the pain exploding: 'CHRIST ALMIGHTY,' he shouted, and the matron scolded him, 'None of that language here', to which he angrily replied, 'I'll bloody well remember that in future.' X-rays showed he had broken the ball at the top of his femur. The doctor was astonished that he done so much for so long after the fall without losing consciousness. On 23 March Honeyman visited and found him 'frail and bewildered'. That day he was operated on by one of the best specialists in England, who replaced the broken ball of the femur with a metal insert. Afterwards, Jones's pain was especially bad when urinating and defecating—'I know what suffering is,' he later said, and he also knew that he was 'a coward, a bloody awful coward.' It was Passion Week, and the pain he endured gave him new insight into the suffering of Jesus on the cross, although his own was small, he thought, compared to that. He also thought of Odin 'nine nights on the windy tree'.²³⁵

He was impressed with the people in the ward and enjoyed conversations with some of them. But the place itself was 'hell' because the ward television was ten feet from his bed and was kept on, at high volume, from noon to midnight. 'It's not stupid,' he complained to visitors, 'just distracting. You can never think.' Honeyman telephoned Bell, who had not yet visited and who exclaimed, 'Ach, he's not on the balcony!' and, going there immediately, had him moved to a private room—one, according to Grisewood, that he could not afford. So Honeyman undertook to establish a fund and solicit contributions, hoping for £500 for Jones's room and medical fees.²³⁶

Jones was impressed by the generosity and patience of the Irish and Jamaican nurses. Their duties were, he thought, inexorable. He told Honeyman that he had always been an admirer of women who were 'rather grand', but these working-class nurses (white and black) were the most impressive he had ever known. He continued to be unimpressed by the English matron, however, who was not working-class. Visiting while he was being urged to attempt to walk with the aid of a steel frame, Edward Hodgkin heard them in conversation:

'Come on, Mr. Jones, you mustn't give in. Use your *will*.'

'For God's sake don't talk about will to me.'

'I can't help it, Mr. Jones, I'm a soldier's daughter. My father was a colonel in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.'

'Well, that's a very fine regiment. I was a soldier too—a private in the London Welsh.'

'A *private soldier*? How did that happen?'

'Well, things were different in those days.'²³⁷

Visitors came in droves. They included his nephew, Tony Hyne, and his wife Pamela, his niece Mollie Elkin and her husband, George, Ceri and Frances Richards, Kate Campbell, Maurice Percival, and Janet Stone, who arrived with daffodils. As she entered, he complained that everyone was bringing him daffodils, which (he now said) he hated—and before he could see them, she quickly shoved hers into her bag. Sarah Balme saw him clutching a palm leaf someone had given him, this being Passion Week. Lowery visited, and Jones had him telephone Levi with instructions to tell Nancy Sanders of his accident. He commissioned Morag to write to Tony Stoneburner saying that he was unable to write. Aneurin Talfan Davies and his wife, Mari, visited. Thomas Whitaker and his wife, Dorothy, visited. Jones told him that '*The Anathemata* is worth fifty *In Parentheses*.'²³⁸

The pain killers kept him 'weary, dull witted & half-asleep' during the day 'but, damn & blast it, awake like anything during the night.' He practiced walking down the corridor using a steel frame—'damned exhausting.' What he most disliked was 'this water-works, bed-pan stuff. It's far, far more ignominious, embarrassing etc. than I had remembered.' In the hospital he began meditating on 'all the trials, pains, and miseries of the human race' and concluded that the more mundane and ordinary required the most courage. He reflected that 'that's why one has always thought of women as more 'brave' than men.'²³⁹

The surgeon asked whether he had made arrangements to go to a nursing home. 'Good heavens,' Jones said, 'I thought I'd only just arrived.' 'Maybe,' said the doctor, 'but we require this bed for other waiting cases.' Maurice Percival proposed that he come live with him, but the matron thought this unwise since he needed a great deal of care. Kenneth Clark suggested Bethany Nursing Home in Highgate, run by Augustinian nuns, where his wife had stayed. Jones agreed to this, and Valerie and her husband, who were visiting, got him a room there. After eight days in hospital, he was brought to the nursing home, which he liked very much, partly for the 'marvellous view ... across a garden & tall trees' to London. It was 'nice to be higher up' than Monksdene or the hospital. He also

liked having a telephone on his bedside table, and phoned friends, most important among them Grisewood.²⁴⁰

Clark was absorbing much of the cost of his stay. Clark visited in the first week of April, telephoning ahead to announce his coming, and the nurses insisted that Jones change into new pyjamas (which he did) and shave (which he refused to do, announcing, 'If you think I'm shaving for Kenneth Clark, I am not!'). Clark visited again on 13 April, finding him 'a little better ... that is to say he was extremely talkative and seemed to be enjoying a stream of visitors (three others beside myself)'. Three days later Clark visited with Janet Stone to find the room full of visitors and Jones 'in amazing lively form—even shuffling around walking with a prop.'²⁴¹ He visited again on the 22nd with Edward Hodgkin.

Nancy Sanders visited, having just returned from Mesopotamia, and their conversation ranged over the history and pre-history of that area. On 3 May, she visited again, and they talked about 'the layers & layers of the *mythos* of Babylonia,' western bias against work there, and the spread of Islam owing to the Church there in the seventh century being Monophysite and, so, halfway to Muslim belief. She would visit after returning from an excursion, at one time talking of the Mesopotamian origin of Hebrew religion, Jehovah being relatively low in the Mesopotamian pantheon, beneath El, Baal and the Baals—which surprised Jones.²⁴²

He spent part of the day in bed, part sitting up in 'a kind of chair.' He felt an 'overwhelming tiredness.' He couldn't even read until mid-April, when he reread Hague's *Song of Roland*, which he thought 'many hundred times better' than the translation by Dorothy Sayers. Each afternoon he grappled with the walking-cage as a nurse took him to exercise his left leg. After two weeks, he could struggle to the end of the corridor and back. Although the nurses were kind, he felt deeply that he 'was not made to live in an institution.' He thought he would be well enough to return to his room at Monksdene in six months. His accident and incapacity meant that correspondence had accumulated. In May he was busy answering letters. His handwriting, which had shrunk over the years was now ragged, wavering, the left margin widening markedly as he progressed down the page.²⁴³

On 17 May, Barbara Moray visited and saw that he had discarded the walking-cage and was using two canes, with the help of a nurse, to walk, wobbly, with a sense of imbalance and continual weariness. John Jolliffe visited, bringing him copies of *The Times* and the *Tablet* both for 15 May so that he could read articles on religion recommended by Grisewood.²⁴⁴

Reminded by the stroke and fall of Jones's mortality, Hodgkin had sent his stock obituary for *The Times* to Grisewood for updating, and Honeyman advised Jones to make a will. For that Jones needed a lawyer. He sought advice from Valerie, who knew one named Ben Jones at Linklaters and Paines. He was chairman of the Cymmrodorion Society and knew who David Jones was. He proposed him to Honeyman, who arranged for him to visit for a consultation on 6 April. Jones-the-poet told Jones-the-lawyer that he was unsure how he wanted to dispose of his assets but wanted Grisewood as sole executor and trustee. In April, Ben Jones went on holiday and Valerie retained a young London solicitor to draw up a will, but Jones would not sign it. In May, Ben Jones returned and conferred again with David. David told him he wanted his pictures to go to the National Museum of Wales and his books and papers to the National Library of Wales—so that the written and visual work would be kept together, though separately, 'even if ... stored in a cellar.' For the pictures this was especially important, otherwise inferior work would get separated from the better work and sold or exhibited. He discussed this with Honeyman and Clark. The poorer work should be available only to serious students as indication of his development. If it got out, his reputation would suffer.²⁴⁵

He wanted to leave his money to his sister, the Welsh Language Society, and possibly to the Welsh League of Youth, the Cymmrodorion Society, and certainly the Welsh school in Paddington. For the rest, it would be a discretionary trust. The will was drawn up, but he could not bring himself to sign it—the document seemed to him unnecessarily complex. Grisewood assured him it was fine, but he could not conclusively decide about people and charities to be named as beneficiaries. Ben Jones suggested that a list of possibilities be drawn up for the discretion of Grisewood as executor. After consulting with the lawyer, Honeyman drew up a list and went to David, who could not finalize it without first consulting with Grisewood but only after consulting Saunders Lewis, who could not

visit till summer.²⁴⁶ All this delayed the engrossing of the will for so long that it seemed, to David, no longer such pressing matter.

Cleverdon estimated the pictures and manuscripts in Jones's possession to be worth between £30,000 and £40,000. If he were to die intestate an immediate sale would have to be held to raise £10,000 to cover the death tax. Honeyman urged him to sell his pictures to the National Museum with the proviso that he keep them till his death. Jones agreed to this. But the Museum offered to pay only between £2000-3000 for all existing and future pictures, manuscripts and books, exclusive of individual bequests to be stipulated now. Honeyman rightly advised against this. Then Hugh Fraser advised that he retain ownership of his pictures as a hedge against inflation. So he changed his mind about selling them.²⁴⁷

Lewis came in July, and talked about the will, but that settled nothing. He came again in December and found Jones much improved, looking stronger, his speech practically normal, and mentally clear and alert. About not signing the will, he confided to Lewis his fear of all legal documents—he hated, for example, signing income tax returns.²⁴⁸

While advising him, Lewis was negotiating behind his back with the directors of the National Library and National Museum of Wales. In December 1970, he proposed to David Jenkins of the Library that Jones's manuscripts, papers, and books be bought for £5000 to be paid now for collection after Jones's death. The price Lewis proposed was easily half their value. Jones declined, he told Lewis, because he did not 'want them to be gravely disappointed after, having paid for the stuff' and he would prefer to be in on the sorting of materials. He confided to Honeyman that his real reason for declining was that he didn't want the Library to have the *In Parenthesis* manuscript because 'it's full of spelling mistakes—really I'm ashamed of it.' In 1972 the Museum was willing to offer £20,000 now for posthumous possession of his paintings, and Lewis suggested that offer be cut in half.²⁴⁹ Jones continued to procrastinate. He would never know of Lewis's divided loyalties or (for lack of a better word) treachery,

In the spring of 1972 Jenkins of the National Library came with Thomas Parry on the evening of 10 March to offer him money now for his papers and books to be delivered after his death. Jones wished first to consult Lewis. Lewis visited and urged him to accept the offer, but the decision was his and, as Jones put it, deciding 'is a thing I've

never been able to do' except in making a painting or poem. In September Lewis came again, urging him to accept. But accepting would mean strangers coming to sort out what they wanted—and, he wrote, 'how could I let all my chaos of private stuff, going back to childhood & the lord knows what be sorted out other than by myself & I can't do that.'²⁵⁰

He liked the nursing home and did not want to move, but it was, his friends convinced him, unaffordable. Barbara Moray remembered a friend with an uncle in Calvary Nursing Home on Sudbury Hill, a mile south-east of where Northwick Lodge had stood. It was run by the sisters of the Little Company of Mary ('the Blue Nuns'). Grisewood learned that it was less expensive, and on 6 June Jones moved there. It was a sprawling Victorian red-brick house surrounded by large grounds with bushes and tall chestnut trees. The cost was £27 per week, with extra for physiotherapy. He moved into Room 1. (Turn right inside the main entrance, pass down a spotless, polished, red-tiled corridor, at the end of which is the public telephone, then turn left down a short corridor, and his room is on the right.) The room was fifteen feet long, ten feet wide, high-ceilinged, with glossy green walls (on which nothing could be hung), parquet floor, a large north-facing window (with faded chintz curtains) over-looking the grounds. Initially he hated it and called Sudbury Hill 'Sodbury' Hill. The highly polished floors were dangerous as he hobbled about with the aid of a walker. He suggested to a young nun that they put down sawdust 'like they do in pubs,' adding, 'but then I suppose you have never been in a pub.' The schedule did not suit him. He was awakened for breakfast, to his annoyance, at 5:30—it was like being called to Stand-to. Visiting hours ended at 7 pm, so friends visiting after work on weekdays could not stay long. He confided to Hodgkin, 'It's not just one thing; it's everything.' Especially bad was distance from the telephone. To take a call he had to hobble forty yards, to make one he had to do this with the right amount of six-pences for the box. Eventually, he ceased complaining. The nuns were kind, his tailor was able to come to make take measurements for new trousers for his suit, and Mr. Caddy could visit to cut his hair. Increasingly he appreciated the nuns as 'awfully kind & considerate,' and they liked him. As one of them would remember, he was 'gracious to everyone, unassuming, simple, self-effacing, one of the nicest patients.'²⁵¹ When a nun brought his food, he would stand and move forward to assist her.

His physiotherapist was a ‘jolly nice sensible chap,’ who had him back using the walking-cage and reassured him that ‘all is going well’, though Jones wished it ‘would go a bit faster so that I could go back to that chaotic dugout and do some work.’ Since his fall, he identified with Joyce’s Humpty Dumpty in *Finnegans Wake*, who ‘fell with a roll and a rumple / And curled up like Lord Olafea Crumple,’ (Oliver Cromwell, whose surname was actually, he knew, ‘Crumel’—Jones saw poetic justice in Cromwell having fallen to malaria contracted in Ireland.) He, too, felt ‘kicked about like a rotten old parsnip’ and in the ‘jail of Mountjoy.’ He felt cut off from his books and ‘objects’ that ‘were part of him.’ Not having his books was ‘a constant curse’ partly because he needed them ‘to lick into shape just one more volume.’ He also missed his paintings, but when Honeyman offered to fetch a picture to hang in his room, he declined—it would be a sign of turning temporary accommodation into permanent residence. He realized now that he might not be able to make a ‘large watercolour sequence’ he had been planning.²⁵²

Long phone calls with friends were a thing of the past. Many suggested that he have a private telephone installed in his room, and some offered to pay for it, but he refused. A telephone, too, would signify permanent residence. He kept his room at Monksdene. If the bill for its rent was late, he became anxious—he fanaticized about the owner emptying the contents of his room onto the curb—and he had Orr go there to ask whether there was a problem. He became fixated on needing to air the Monksdene bed after months of being largely covered with papers and books. And he wanted to retrieve his ‘old black 1922 Greatcoat’ and a tweed cap. He wanted Valerie to have *The Lea Shore*, so he had Jacqueline fetch it for him to give to her. He lent Valerie and Michael the key to take other things she liked, which he wanted to her to have, including a small pencil drawing of a lion, and a lettered inscription.²⁵³

Honeyman was concerned about the safety of Jones’s pictures and manuscripts and, that June, repeatedly said they should be in a bank vault and volunteered to arrange it, but made little headway until he mentioned that the real danger was not theft but fire. This had long concerned Jones in a tangible way. There are on his drawings, manuscripts, and letters (sent and received) hundreds of cigarette burns. The degree of charring in some instances indicates that there had actually been small fires that he had extinguished. Now, of course, the chief danger (himself) was out of the way. But on Honeyman’s next visit, he

handed him the key to his room, saying, 'If you'd like to go in—nobody else—and take all the pictures to the bank, I'd be pleased.' Honeyman rented a vault in the main branch of Coutts Bank, in Lombard Street, and retrieved from Monksdene all the pictures and portfolios. Jacqueline, her friend Charlotte Gere, Cookson, and Nancy Sanders wrapped them for shipment to the bank. Most of the manuscripts they put in tea chests and moved to the Honeyman's basement. By the summer of 1972 the pictures were moved, and a list drawn up for him and signed. It declares that his room had contained: four framed inscriptions, twenty-one framed watercolours, eight folios containing 123 watercolour paintings, twenty-three unframed inscriptions, and hundreds of drawings. Some he intended to burn, but from the list made he could not precisely tell which these were. As soon as they were in the bank he relaxed. He loved having them all safely locked up in an air-conditioned vault, but he still hated being parted from them. Honeyman offered to bring him any he wanted, but he said 'No, leave them all there.' Kenneth Clark offered to let him borrow *Petra im Rosenhag* to hang in his room, an offer Jones appreciated but declined. Later Nicolette asked if he would like his *Eclogue IV* to hang in the room, and he declined. Behind his vagueness was a refusal to relinquish the notion that he was only staying in this place temporarily and would go back to Monksdene and again be surrounded by his work.²⁵⁴ But the management at Monksdene wanted his room and provided him with another, in an annex, and his friends had also to manage this move.

Lowery's wife, Angela, had met him but, having young children, did not often accompany her husband to London. Hearing that he missed the things in his room, she carved for him a whale's tooth, which Lowery brought to him. It was a foot long, an inch-and-a-half in diameter at its base, carved into the shape of two women with arms stretched overhead and joining hands. He admired it, kept it on his bureau, and found he loved it more the longer he had it.²⁵⁵

During the day he sat in an armchair, on a week's newspapers that shifted up the back of the chair as he pushed against it, forcing him to slouch. On one side was a filing cabinet. On the other a table with a desk lamp and piles of books and papers. He resumed his practice of keeping back issues of *The Times*, in which he would occasionally search for articles mentioned by friends. Before him was a c-frame table on which he ate his meals, brought in on a tray, and, when working, cluttered with pencils and paper. Peter Orr once

asked one of the nuns whether he might borrow a chair to take into the room. She said yes but asked him to bring it out afterwards, otherwise he would pile books and papers on it.²⁵⁶

Ray Howard Jones later reported that he disliked the food that the nuns brought to his room, and perhaps he did initially. She remembers a nun bringing him a big lunch, beef and two vegetables, which he dumped into his copy of *The Times*, wrapped it up, and dropped into the wastepaper basket. She wanted to tell the nuns that he did not eat this kind of food, but he stopped her. His most frequent visitor, Peter Orr, said he ate whatever they brought him, which he considered his rations—it was like being back in the army, though he did tell Orr that he ‘was eating strange sorts of food that he'd never eaten before.’ Many visitors had long conversations with him over supper as he slowly consumed the meat, potatoes, and vegetables (all of it) brought to him. Daphne Pollen arranged for grapefruit to be delivered at intervals, but he issued a frantic plea through Grisewood to stop because he did not want to hurt the nuns' feelings.²⁵⁷

Honeyman knew more about money than Jones's other friends. He had been acquiring, building, and managing properties for the English Property Corporation, of which he was now, after its acquisition by the Reichmans, C.E.O. In April 1969, in collusion with Grisewood, he organized ‘the friends of David Jones’, and began soliciting funds to meet his new costs and support him in old age. After the accident, Honeyman began organizing in earnest. By August 1970, he decided that the fund should provide an annuity, for which much of the interest on capital would be tax-free. He urged this on Jones, who at first wanted nothing to do with it but eventually agreed. Honeyman and Grisewood hoped to buy one for £12,500 and appealed for donations. Valerie Eliot sent a cheque to defray a week's expenses. Louis Cowan sent \$120, Nancy Sanders £50, Faber £25, Hodgkin £25, Lady Asquith £5 and a wish to contribute more, John Rothenstein £5, Ede £30, Cleverdon £10.10. Jack Sweeney gave \$1000, asking for anonymity. Bonnerot contributed. Vera Stravinsky and John Marriott, the Major-General's son whom Jones somehow knew, contributed generously. The sums were deposited in the Mayfair Branch of Coutts Bank. But some refused to contribute on the grounds that he could always sell paintings if he needed money. Honeyman, Grisewood, and Barbara Moray separately urged him to do this to help fund the annuity, but he explained (echoing Fraser's advice) that they were a

hedge against inflation. 'He never said so,' but, Barbara thought, 'he knew he was a sort of genius and felt he was owed all these things as a special privilege.' Realizing that some argument was needed Grisewood wrote to at least one potential contributor, 'he belongs in the same category as Bonnard and the other artists who feel that they put something of their soul into each and every piece of work and after a while no new work of quality will be forthcoming unless they are surrounded by the reassuring foundations of their own effort.'²⁵⁸

Grisewood suggested that Cleverdon contact Richard Burton, who had acted in the recent radio production of *In Parenthesis* and had told Cleverdon that he considered it the finest thing he had ever acted in.* And In 1964, while playing *Hamlet* in New York, he had declaimed Dai Greatcoat's Boast (from at the centre of *In Parenthesis*) at a benefit for the American Musical and Dramatic Academy. In 1967, he had performed it again to the Oxford Union and received a long, stranding ovation. He had told Lewis Cowan that he was an avid admirer of Jones's poetry and wanted to record Dai's boast. Cleverdon passed Grisewood's suggestion to Honeyman, who knew a friend of Burton's wife, Elizabeth Taylor. Honeyman wrote to them through his friend on 15 October 1971. Four days later he received a cheque for £1000. Jones was grateful, but Honeyman could not get him to write to thank them. If Burton had been a friend, Jones would have written, but they had never met. He thought that wealthy people ought to help artists. Moreover, he thought actors destroyed texts and said of Burton, 'The bloody man *will* act.' (Jones disliked the heightened way he 'acted', instead of reading, the going-over-the-top section in the second radio production of *In Parenthesis*.) So Honeyman wrote on his behalf, giving as an excuse for Jones his poor health.²⁵⁹

* In the White Horse Tavern in Greenwich Village, the English actor Donald Houston, who was playing a lead voice in it, said that that *Under Milkwood* was the greatest work ever done on radio. Richard Burton asked Cleverdon, who had produced it, 'What was the greatest work you've done on radio?' Cleverdon replied *In Parenthesis*, and Burton said, 'The highest point in my acting career was the part of *In Parenthesis* when the men are going over the top', and they agreed that it was the greatest work ever done on radio. Houston had never heard of it.

In the end, £1500 was raised and added to Jones's life savings of £7000 (of which £6000 had been left to him by Helen Sutherland). With this, Honeyman purchased with the Eagle Star Insurance Company an annuity, to be paid in quarterly instalments of £417.25 beginning in February 1972. This plus his old age pension of £250 and a Civil List pension of £350, exceeded his current nursing home cost of £35 a week. The annuity gave him great peace of mind—for the first time in his life, his finances were on a sound footing and he had a regular income. Honeyman and Grisewood also established a back-up fund of £250, in case Jones needed an operation, which they put into an account at Coutts Bank, with Grisewood and Barbara Moray as joint trustees.²⁶⁰

In mid-June 1970, Jones had learned of Christopher Dawson's death—'after all these years of suffering,' he wrote to Hague. 'What a bloke & what a lot I owe him—*Requiescat in pace.*'²⁶¹ As with anyone who lives long enough, the familiar human dimension of his world was beginning to vanish.

On the advice of Creighton-Miller, Bill Stevenson, Jones's psychiatrist, had long ago left Bowden House to build a better career. He had taken rooms in Devonshire Place in central London, and had seen Jones there, though 'Dr. Steve' also visited him in Harrow—since his mother lived nearby—he liked combining visits with her, Bell, another doctor friend in the area, and Jones. He and Jones had often spoken about art. Jones respected his thinking on all matters and often quoted him to friends. He had sent him a copy of *Epoch and Artist*, which Stevenson had found 'absolutely excellent, as usual'. By 1962 he moved to an office in Harley St. There or in Harrow, Jones had seen him once a month. He had visited Jones in the hospital and again at the Bethany Nursing Home, saying he would come again, but he didn't. Jones assumed he was too busy. (Stevenson lectured in abnormal psychology at Bedford College, wrote papers on aviation medicine, was a consultant to the Air Ministry, and a member of the American Space Association.) But he had died on 7 May—Dr. Bell informed him. Stevenson had been a close friend, a mainstay. Stevenson's skill as a therapist had made possible, as Jones realized, his writing 'the major part of *The Anathemata* & most of the stuff in *Epoch & Artist* & the large inscriptions & the water-colours' of flowers in glass chalices done in Northwick Lodge, and the mid-length poems he was accumulating toward his third book of poetry. His death was a

cause of grief and significantly altered the landscape of Jones's world. Whenever he felt depressed or anxious, he would say, 'I wish to God he hadn't died.'²⁶²

He would also feel distress 'one way or another' at the death of George Hyne in the spring of 1972.²⁶³ Certainly he felt for his sister, but it is also true that he had never liked him, and his death may have brought back the distress he had felt at the death of his brother, his sister's first preferred male companion, sixty years before.

Starting with Fr. Noon's chapter in his book *Poetry and Prayer*, academic essays on Jones's work were beginning to appear, and Jones found this encouraging. In the spring of 1971, Cookson gave him a copy of Janet Powers Gemmill's article 'In Parenthesis: a Study of Narrative Technique' in *The Journal of Modern Literature*, which Jones found particularly heartening. He mentioned it in a letter to Stoneburner as 'mainly concerned with my varied use of the pronoun "you.".... I found it most intriguing—conceit on my part I suppose, at finding *In Parenthesis* considered worth the careful analysis of this student from Philadelphia.' 'I was interested in it because it was I thought well & thoroughly done & showed me at all events how one 'changes gear' by the various use of e.g. the personal pronoun 'you' without being in the least aware of it.'²⁶⁴ Gemmill's short essay is one of the few publications in Jones's lifetime that have any analytical value. He asked Cookson for further copies to send to Lewis and Grisewood.

In September 1970, Jones had read what he considered an 'astonishing' masters thesis on *In Parenthesis*, by me, a student of Blissett. On 4 June 1971, Blissett brought me to meet Jones, and I would share three more visits with him. I published an article in 1972 which, apart from thoroughly misreading *In Parenthesis* as an anti-war poem, Jones found 'awfully perceptive'.²⁶⁵ I was impressed by his intelligence, the sincerity and force of his feeling, and his being the most affectionate male I had met. Knowing the man deepened my trust in the work, which I continued to study.

Other visitors at this time included Nicholas Jacobson (an Oxford undergraduate who first visited in 1965), John Christian, Janet Stone's son Humphry, Vicky (Reed) Ingrams—whose had not seen him for decades because her husband, now dead, had not allowed her to have her own friends—and Louis Bussell who came on Sunday evenings.²⁶⁶

In the *Tablet* of 17 July 1971, after a sympathetic review of Blamires's book, an article appeared attacking the petition to preserve the Tridentine Mass, which Jones had signed. He was appalled that people, Catholic and not, 'involved in the heritage of the West' should 'be abused & belaboured' for petitioning the pope. 'It's a sod of a thing. It beats everything, so far.' He could hardly believe Burns, had published it (Tom Burns had become editor of the *Tablet* in 1967, replacing the conservative Douglas Woodruff and inclining the paper to ecumenism and freedom of conscience on the matter of birth control. Burns, and the paper, were enthusiastic about the liturgical changes.) He visited in early August, and Jones wrote to Grisewood, 'I greatly enjoyed seeing him—it was almost like "old times" for I was determined if possible to keep matters on the basis of a friendship of half a century standing.' Nevertheless, Jones asked about the article, 'Who wrote it?' 'Well I did,' said Burns. 'I can hardly believe it was yours!' exclaimed Jones. Unperturbed, Burns smiled and asked what he found in it to object to. 'Surely it was reasonable enough & fair.'²⁶⁷ The discussion continued but there was no meeting of minds.

Burns had always been practical Shaun to Jones's impractical Shem. Since the war, distance had grown between them owing to Burns becoming a high-powered business executive—so that Jones (and Grisewood) felt that he had failed to live up to his promise when at Sheed and Ward, publishing the best European Christian thinkers. In 1948, while a director of the *Tablet*, he had organized Burns, Oates, and Washbourne Holdings, which he chaired, in order to buy Burns & Oates (which a great uncle had founded), of which he made himself chairman. His holding company went on to acquire the *Tablet*, a number of retail shops, and eventually the popular weekly the *Universe*. In addition to drawings, he had several Jones paintings—a Hove seascape, a Brockley garden, *The Farm Door* at Pigotts, the illustrations of the Satin Slipper, and the portrait of Prudence. He considered investments and would regularly ask Jones their current commercial value. In August 1970, they argued over who owned the portrait of Prudence. Jones later told Honeyman, 'We seem to have a little difference of opinion as to who owns that picture. He thinks he does. I tend to consider it mine. However, as there is some real doubt about the thing he had better have it.' (Jones wished to exchange another picture for it.) The

argument had roused in him suspicion that Burns could be unscrupulous, and he told Honeyman that Burns was not, on any account, to be allowed into the Monksdene room where his paintings were kept or subsequently into the bank vault. Jones said, confidentially, ‘You know, the trouble with Tom is that he's really a businessman.’ Honeyman once told Jones the story of a young man he knew who went to the baker for a loaf of bread and, when told that there was none, asked about a loaf he could see on the shelf. ‘That,’ said the baker, ‘is reserved for Mrs Brown.’ Without hesitating, the young man replied, ‘Oh yes, my mother told me to pick it up,’ and he walked off with the loaf. Jones said, ‘Tom’s like that.’²⁶⁸

Jones nevertheless loved Tom Burns. After Burns had visited in 1963, when returning from Rome, he was, Jones wrote to Hague, ‘*extremely* interesting about the Council’ and about people he had met there. ‘He's a wonderful chap, dear Tom, amazing buoyancy of spirit just as he's always had. In spite of all that business world he's never lost his perception—or his cheerfulness. It's extraordinary.’²⁶⁹

Burns, who strongly supported the liturgical changes, visited when he could. Jones was, he told a friend, someone ‘who always makes me believe in truth and beauty.’⁶ In December 1971, he brought Fr. D'Arcy, who had not seen Jones for several years. He looked much older, Jones thought, and very pale, though ‘his face still lit up in the old way.’ About the current condition of the Church there was no time to speak, except for a reference to it and ‘a nod of mutual sorrow.’ In 1974, Burns would want Jones’s painting of the Mass, *A Latere Dextro*, for the pope's collection in the Vatican, but Jones wouldn't hear of it, ‘Not until he has done a bloody stiff penance.’²⁷⁰

Jones learned through a friend, who had read mention of it in the *TLS*, that his work had been selected for a Word and Image Exhibition, which would begin in London and tour Wales. Now in retirement, Cleverdon had agreed to arrange it. Jones was unenthusiastic—recently he had lent for exhibition an inscription that was never returned. Quick, efficient Cleverdon came with lists of pictures for him to check. Slow Jones could not understand ‘why there has to be this infernal rush’ but was impressed with Cleverdon, who, he wrote, ‘works with the greatest zest & enthusiasm & without any thought of sparing himself.’ Cleverdon wanted to include the 1929 nude of Oliver Lodge’s mistress, which he still

owned, but Jones said no—he didn't say why, but clearly he thought it pornographic. As he had told Kathleen Raine, he more recent pictures he liked 'best' were 'the freer ones—flowers, glass chalices.' He allowed Cleverdon to go with Jacqueline Honeyman twice to the vault to pick out pictures. Cleverdon, too, asked whether he would like some to hang in his room. Jones said no, he wanted them all safe together in the vault. He was amused to hear about the young people working at Coutes's bank—the men in Edwardian morning coats and cravats with shoulder-length hair, the women in miniskirts. (A few months before, to Angela Dorenkamp visiting from the USA, he had expressed hope that the young might counteract the dehumanizing effects of technology, saying, 'The young are called odd,' he said. 'So am I.') Cleverdon wrote the catalogue, Jones correcting and expanding entries. He was glad to see that it would be more representative of his work than the Tate show had been. When the catalogue was published, he disliked the 'horrible' egg-yolk colour on the cover, the photographs done without removing glass from pictures, and the plethora of inaccuracies, which he felt obliged laboriously to correct in several copies, including one for Cleverdon. The exhibition consisted of 170 works and took place in Albermarle Street from 7 February to 28 March. Kenneth Clark opened it.²⁷¹ Jones was not well enough to go. The *TLS* reviewer wrote that his 'polymorphous talent is one of the great original forces in art and letters of our time' (24 March), and Guy Manners in the *Investors Chronicle* praised him as 'the greatest British poet of the century and one of the finest watercolourists' (3 March). Jones laughed ruefully at the reference in the *Daily Telegraph* review (15 February 1972) to his 'small talent' and 'fey poetry'.

Motivated solely by love of Jones and Jones's work, Cleverdon earned little or no money organizing the exhibition. (Of all the writers he promoted as a publisher and BBC producer, Douglas Cleverdon was most devoted to Jones. Once in the late 1960s, at the request of the librarian at Marlborough, Douglas and Nest packed the car with David Jones pictures and drove down to give a talk in the evening to the schoolboys. While telling 'the story of David', Cleverdon became so moved he wept.) But as a businessman he thought he might make something by publishing Jones's complete *Introduction to the Ancient Mariner* to coincide with the exhibition. Jones resisted—he considered it unfinished. But it had already been four years in the making. Cleverdon wrote, phoned, and visited, urging completion, but feeling that he lacked intellectual gravitas, enlisted Grisewood, and for a

long time Jones also resisted him, until finally Grisewood drew the analogy to his practice when finishing a painting, convincing him that if he could do no more he should stop doing any more.²⁷² This convinced him.

The full 'Introduction' to Coleridge's poem resembles Livingston Lowes' *The Road to Xanadu* (bought and read in 1927 and still in his library) in wandering far from the poem into analogues. But Lowes was a realist, concerned only with historical voyages; whereas Jones was an archetypalist, opening the reader's imagination to mythic corollaries. The *Introduction* was published shortly after the exhibition left London—Jones thought that Will Carter had 'printed it beautifully'. He also especially liked Cleverdon's use of his discarded 1929 tailpiece with curvy script: 'I appear to have managed to make it look like a quite freely written thing ... how, I can't imagine.' He was disappointed in the few reviews the *Introduction* garnered. They praised it as an example of his poetic imagination, while he wanted them to address the question of whether what it asserted was 'true or ... damned nonsense.'²⁷³

He had been reluctant to publish his *Introduction* because he was writing an appendix concerning the elusive influence of classical motifs and allusions in Welsh literary tradition. He had worked on it steadily for a year and had gone back to it several times—extending it to about a thousand foolscap draft pages so that it was virtually an entire history of Wales. 'I am stupid,' he told Stoneburner, 'like cats that climb up trees and out on limbs but can't or won't back up and back down.' At the end of August 1970, after correcting proof and while the body of the text was being printed, he finally abandoned the appendix. 'It was,' he now judged, 'a foolish and temerarious thing to attempt.'²⁷⁴ Even then, he might have continued but for being separated from his books and wishing to finish his third volume of poetry.

The *Introduction* was scheduled for publication in April 1972. He was brought copies to sign. As he signed copy after copy, he underwent an experience of unreality or emptiness. So he began inscribing each book differently, dating one in Latin, another in Welsh—but that merely emphasized his feeling of insubstantiality. The experience reminded him of one of the Asquith boys at Oxford who, sitting for an exam, wrote only his name over and over again and subsequently feared for his own sanity but was fine.²⁷⁵

Giardelli had suggested reprinting *The Deluge* in the spring of 1966 and had secured funding from the Welsh Committee of the Art's Council. But Jones had waffled: 'It sounds so bloody ungrateful not to jump at the offer, but I can never make up my mind about old stuff ... *some* one likes better than later stuff, *some* one can't stand for various reasons.' Now, in 1972, Cleverdon again made the proposal, the book to be printed by Will Carter's Rampant Lions Press, which had done such a good job with *The Fatigue* and the *Introduction*. Jones agreed, and entrusted Jaqueline and Morag to fetch the ten blocks, which were in five cases on his bookshelf in Monksdene. But they could find only four cases. To avoid causing him anguish, Cleverdon kept this from him and quietly dropped the scheme. (When Jones had lent the key to his room to Valerie and Michael Wynne-Williams, Valerie had taken the blocks. Years later Cleverdon would trace them to her and, bringing to bear considerable pressure, procure them in order to reprint *The Deluge* (1977), all the blocks subsequently going to the National Museum of Wales.²⁷⁶)

In July 1972 he was mentioned in *The Times* leader along with Betjamin and MacDiarmid as a possibility for poet laureate. He was 'truly amazed'. He said, 'they were probably right about John Betjamin. I think he would be able to fulfill the task admirably and has the abilities required' and who 'cares for the things of England.'²⁷⁷

In late July 1972 he suffered an 'atrocious tooth-ache.' He complained to Dr Bell who said, 'Well, you can get a taxi and go to the dentist. It's quite simple.' Since Jones could hardly walk and was in great pain, he considered this an outrageously insensitive response—it shook his faith in Bell. One of the nuns telephoned Peter Orr, who on 31 July escaped from a meeting at the British Council and, with his wife, Kay, drove Jones to the dentist. A root-canal was performed, and the tooth saved. It was Jones's first outing in two months. He found the trip 'very odd & Harrow unrecognizable.' He was also 'astonished' at 'how feeble' he had become 'and confused. That week Orr took him to the dentist three times, always with his wife or Cathie Hunt to lead Jones in the right direction while he parked the car. They subsequently drove him to the dentist, twice in 1973 and once in 1974. Cathie would remember that on such occasions he dreaded going out and would dither over what to wear, and ask 'Do I really have to go?' though once in the car he was fine. On one of these occasions, Orr arrived before Jones had changed into street clothes. Jones paused and became quiet. Orr asked, 'Is there anything wrong, David?' and he replied, 'Well, I, I'm

shy.’ So Orr walked to the window and looked out, his back turned, while Jones dressed. One of these occasions was a tropical August day, but he dressed in his great coat, hat, scarf (over a jacket, waistcoat, and tie). As they emerged from the car he noticed people looking at him, and asked, ‘Do I look odd Cathie?’ Even he felt the warmth, for he said, ‘I must be the only man in England wearing a greatcoat today.’ After one of these excursions, he extricated himself from the car, with much groaning and gasping, holding the door and heaving himself to his feet and exclaiming triumphally ‘I made it!’—at which a nun present responded, ‘Yes, but Mr. Jones, your legs are crossed.’²⁷⁸

In 1972, the rent on the room at Monksdene was raised to £15 per week. Orr urged him to relinquishing it, but Jones refused—it would mean abandoning hope of recovery. He could not pack and move his possessions himself, and he could not bear the thought of anyone going through his things, which included ‘letters from girls and pork pies’²⁷⁹

For the past twelve years, Jones had virtually lost his creative life to the drugs prescribed by Stevenson and procured by Bell. In the summer of 1972, he told Bell that since his fall he had steadily felt better daily till several months ago. Bell told him that if you don’t recover from a stroke in three months you never will (something we now know not to be true), adding that there was nothing to worry about since he had a nice room and good care for the rest of his life. Jones thought this an irresponsible thing to say to someone who had had breakdowns and had come ‘close to the looney bin’. He related Bell’s remarks to Grisewood, who was furious with Bell and still concerned about Jones’s continued use of barbiturates. He arranged for Jones to see his friend Dr. Edward McClellan, a Harley Street consultant-surgeon and brilliant diagnostician specializing in actors and artists. Honeyman provided a car and driver, and one of the nuns accompanied him. Jones had not been into London for years. Traffic was heavy and the new ‘skyscrapers’ and highways had changed, hidden, or destroyed the city he had known—he said that he ‘recognized nothing’. He related to McClellan ‘his ups & downs since 1918’, and the doctor told him the combination of drugs was on was ‘mistaken’, gave a new prescription, and wrote to Bell, who cooperated. (Jones particularly admired the ‘pale blue colour’ of one of the new pills, ‘like one kind of egg-shell’.) On the new medication, swelling in his ankles disappeared and, his physiotherapist told him that in other ways he seemed improved. More important, he was now ‘more alert’, more ‘able to work without falling asleep.’ His positive change in

outlook was remarkable. When asked how he felt, he now said ‘Not bad’ instead of ‘Pretty mouldy’. He would return to see McClellan on 2 January 1973. Orr, who drove him, gathered that Jones was worried by a possible recurrence of nervous trouble. McClellan again changed his medication, said there were new methods for treating his psychological condition, and wanted him to return in the spring. Jones would not, for he was then, according to Orr, too much immersed in inertia.²⁸⁰

Faber published *The Anathemata* in paperback with an inscription Jones made for its cover. He liked the cover because of the colours, kaki green and the light blue of French officers’ badges during the Great War, but he was vexed with himself for a mistake in his inscription, which should read *Lundinii* (at London), not *Londinium*.²⁸¹

In the nursing home in 1972 he declined to attend the Good Friday liturgy—the liturgical changes made it too painful. Instead, he spent part of the day listening to a record of the Reproaches and other parts of the old rite, but they failed to move him, which was not surprising. ‘Listening to recordings of things I love, for some unknown cause, has a depressing effect on me. I’ve noticed that time & time again. It’s curious. A short bit is OK but not anything of great length. So I took to Dufay’s setting to Petrarch’s *Vergene Bella* and a bit of *Vexilla Regis*, alternating polyphony & the Chant & that still did something.’²⁸²

At Mass later that year, he noticed that the priest was not wearing the conventional maniple. They entered into conversation after, and Jones asked why no maniple. The priest said that a recent decree had eliminated it with no reason given. Jones said there ought to be a reason, since it had been part of the vestments for Mass since long before the fifth century. The priest replied that he had heard that it was dropped because, in the amphitheatre, spectators waved their maniples to urge that victor to finish off a contestant. Jones considered this ‘farfetched & wholly beside the point’. The priest said that the maniple was, in any case, ‘a bit encumbering’, hanging stiffly as it did from the wrist. ‘Inutile’, Jones thought. ‘Well, it’s of no real consequence, is it?’ asked the priest. ‘These fashions vary with the centuries.’ He could not see, Jones thought, ‘that *everything* “matters” & that no “change” is made without some change of attitude,’ so he changed the subject.²⁸³

Introduced by Giardelli, Désirée Hirst, a Blake scholar from University College, Swansea, had begun visiting since 1964. In 1972 she arranged to record an interview with Jones for

the BBC in order to reintroduce him to their audience. She came in the spring of 1972, ‘an awfully nice person’ who had written, ‘a good article’ on his work. She arrived in March with a technician and a tall, red-moustached BBC official in a check suit, who spoke to him briefly about Grisewood. Jones was unable to gauge him—did he know anything about art or literature? The cut of his suit suggested the turf, but so had Sickert’s ‘and that did not prevent him from being the best English painter since Turner.’ The tape recorder was turned on and Désirée began the interview, but he found it impossible to converse with her because the bureaucrat seemed to disapprove of their attempted conversation and because Désirée was continually apologizing, something he found exasperating and unnecessary, since ‘she ‘understands’ & appreciates things & is deeply read.’ He responded to her questions with mumbling, long awkward silent searchings of mind, and fragmented phrases. After twenty minutes, he muttered, ‘We don’t seem to be getting anywhere.’ After ten more minutes of Jones failing ‘to say an intelligent thing’, the bureaucrat had the recorder switched off and asked him for whom he made his writings and pictures. Jones said, ‘Well, I don’t know, but I suppose for anyone who, either now, or at some future time, chances to find the works mean something to them. Certainly I had no particular “audience” in mind.’ He meant to imply that ‘that was not the way works were made.’ But he had no feeling that his remarks registered with the enigmatic man, who finally said, ‘You think a great deal about yourself, don’t you?’ Jones thought this an odd question, and answered ‘Yes, probably,’ though he thought, ‘How should any of us know whether we think more “about ourselves” than the next bloke.’²⁸⁴

Jones shared Désirée’s interest in Blake, about whom she was ‘bloody good & really informed’, he thought, though ‘not up to the *positive genius* of Kathleen Raine.’ Before leaving, she lent him Kathleen’s two-volume *Blake and Tradition* (1968), which he read ‘with great interest, & with wonder at the perception of’ her ‘incredible scholarship.’²⁸⁵

In 1973, Honeyman pressed him again to make a will, and Ben Jones was brought in once more. Honeyman suggested a short will stating his intentions to leave everything for Grisewood to dispose of, but Ben Jones blocked this by pointing out that such a will would preclude Grisewood from inheriting anything. So Honeyman urged that David designate Grisewood as the literary executor, but Ben Jones said that the literary executor could only

carry out the will of the main trustee, and he wanted that to be Grisewood. Ben Jones pointed out every possible ramification of whatever provision they considered, so that, instead of being a help, he was a hindrance. Endlessly raising hypothetical difficulties, he drove David deeper into paralysis. The lawyer warned about who might be in charge of what society and how they might distribute the money. After one interview with him, David said to Grisewood, ‘I really can't deal with this at all. I want to leave some money to the Welsh Language Society but it's been pointed out to me that by the time I'm dead left-wingers might be in charge, and I'm not going to give any money to Communists.’²⁸⁶ Grisewood said, ‘All right, if you don't sign a will, at least appoint a literary executor, so that your papers will be in the hands of someone who will understand what you are doing’ and he told the story of Emily Bronte’s papers. ‘They suffered exactly as yours will—they will be sold all over the shop.’ ‘Well,’ Jones said, ‘that's dreadful, how awful. I still I don't know. I don't think I really want to talk about it.’ Grisewood gave up. Honeyman persisted in hoping David would establish Grisewood as his executor, but his efforts were also in vain.²⁸⁷

He produced his third volume of poetry largely thanks to Peter du Sautoy and William Cookson. Jones had long hoped to make a third volume including material that he had written mainly at Sheffield Terrace in the 1940s, material ‘more *or less* linked with *The Anathemata*’. He wanted to include the pieces published since 1952 and also ‘a dialogue between Judas & Caiaphus & a monologue by Judas arguing with himself & also a complicated longish passage about the Romans in Wales—but all requiring recasting.’ In the months after his accident Faber expressed willingness to publish a new volume, which Cookson agreed to help with. This cheered Jones considerably. It was ‘a target to aim at’, which, Grisewood thought, would keep him alive.²⁸⁸ Du Sautoy offered him a contract, but he would not sign it since he was uncertain about when he could finish writing.

To encourage him to keep working, du Sautoy had initiated the procurement of an Arts Council grant precisely to fund this writing. Eric White, the Literature Director of the Arts Council, sponsored the application. In November 1970 Jones received a grant of £1000. In 1972 he received a further grant, also sponsored by White, with Jones’s current writing as a pretext. The real purpose was to alleviate his financial circumstances, and the reason

he got it was that Stuart Hampshire had accepted the position of chairman of the literary panel of the Arts Council on the condition that they find a means of subsidizing David Jones, who seemed to him 'a model of the writer who couldn't be popular'.²⁸⁹

Du Sautoy again pressed Jones to sign a contract, and he again procrastinated. While visiting on 20 July 1971, Cookson suggested that instead of a single long poem they put together a volume consisting solely of the separately published pieces. Jones liked this idea because 'to deal with the various pieces I had hoped to deal with but which are only in embryonic form would take an *indeterminate time* and could not be hurried.' At about 100 pages, the proposed collection would serve as an introduction for readers unfamiliar with the long poems. Du Sautoy preferred this to waiting interminably for something else. But Jones would not simply publish what was at hand. The book had to have the proper shape. In 1972 he thought also to include three or four essays. Cookson thought this a mistake, and du Sautoy wanted to go ahead with a volume solely of poetry. In the early autumn of 1972 two books were planned, one of poetry, under the title *The Sleeping Lord*, and the other of four essays: an 'autobiographical fragment,' 'The Dying Gaul,' 'Use and Sign,' and 'An Introduction to the Rime of the Ancient Mariner.' In September 1972 du Sautoy received from Cookson most of the material for *The Sleeping Lord and Other Fragments*. Finally Jones was willing to sign a contract: he would receive royalties of 12 1/2% on the first 3000 copies and 15% on a limited signed edition of 150 copies, with an advance of £200 when he signed the contract.²⁹⁰

In early November 1973, writing was made more difficult by an abscess forming where his left thigh met his buttock, making it difficult to sit, which is what he mostly did. After a week of hot compresses Bell took him to Harrow Hospital, where it was x-rayed and lanced.²⁹¹ The surgeon had to cut deep, and Jones required anaesthetic.

He returned to the nursing home to find a letter from Margaret Grisewood sorrowfully informing him that Harman had left her. Uncertain of whether 'it was a distress that might mend—or of a permanent nature', Jones was afraid that anything he might write would aggravate matters, so he delayed replying. The Honeymans subsequently told him that she was receiving psychiatric treatment, so he decided to wait till after that to write. She was taking the break-up hard, and eventually he wrote telling her that 'none of us can live ... on the love of somebody else'. For the next year, he was 'terribly distressed' about and

‘continually worrying’ about her and Harman, who never discussed the matter with him. Jones could not ‘discover *at all* what *really* & so absolutely caused the break.’²⁹²

Work at the BBC had alleviated for Grisewood incompatibility in his marriage, but now he was retired. In the late 1950s he had been considered Ian Jacob’s successor as Director General but had been told by the Board of Governors in 1960 that the Corporation could not be headed by a Catholic. Instead, Sir Hugh Green had been appointed, and Grisewood had stayed on as his deputy until he could no longer bear Greene’s lowering of programme standards. He had quit in 1964. Not having been knighted—he had also been in line for a knighthood, but Wilson, who had one at his disposal, gave it to a crony—he had difficulty finding new employment. He worked briefly for *The Times* and then on government committees. In the autumn of 1971, he gave up seeking employment and went with Margaret to live in East Anglia. In 1972 he walked out on her, preferring the companionship of Leslie (Mrs. Alexander) Hope.²⁹³

In December 1973, Jones had a return of what he called ‘my old nerve thing.’ It felt like what he had suffered forty years before but that did not involve insomnia. Any work, including writing letters, was extremely difficult. His handwriting now was extremely cramped, as though pulled into itself. At this time Audrey Malan visited to find him sitting speechless, apparently deaf, entirely unresponsive to her questions, anything she said, and to the gifts she brought him. Feeling unwanted and, to him, a bore, she never returned, never realizing that his condition had nothing to do with her. It took him several months to pull out of this depression. By April he felt better.²⁹⁴

Jones wanted to include two more poems in his new book. One was a section of eleven pages from the end of ‘The Book of Balaam’s Ass’ manuscript. Tentatively entitled ‘Assault on the Mill’, it began in a conversation he remembered having in the early 1920s and consists largely of an ex-serviceman’s memory of an assault at Passcendale. This was ‘more & more a good idea & for various reasons.’ It brought the themes of the Roman and Celtic poems into the present and implicitly refuted the critical accusation of Desmond MacCarthy in 1937 (which Paul Fussell would repeat it in 1975) that by alluding to romance *In Parenthesis* glorifies war. ‘Balaam’s Ass’ is, at once, funny and poignant in its discernment of meaning in calamity. Du Sautoy thought this poem would take Jones a while to finish, and Faber’s list for 1973 was full, so publication was delayed till 1974. The other

poem Jones wanted to include was ‘The Kensington Mass’, but he thought ‘the important thing’ was ‘to get something out as soon as possible’. Before long it became apparent that he could not finishing ‘The Kensington Mass’ on time.²⁹⁵ But he did finish ‘Balaam’s Ass’, taking ‘an incredible time to get right’ a very short passage about Melchisadec. The final typescript shows substantial inclusions and evidence of thorough reworking. The effect of some of these—the change of names ‘Linus and Cletus’ to ‘Clitus’ and ‘Crixus’ and inclusion of a reference to ‘the influence of Celestial Arcturus’—generate resonance with the earlier Roman and Celtic poems chosen for the book. Clearly, he intended the collection to have unity and be ‘toward’ a sequence.

He had begun work on the autobiographical fragment for the proposed book of essays. He was trying to combine memories of childhood in Brockley with his letter in *Poetry Wales* about his Welsh affinities, but they would not come together, so he began to write an entirely new piece. In 1973 with du Sautoy’s encouragement, he expanded this project into a full autobiography. He confided to Peter Orr that he found writing prose ‘excruciatingly difficult, and Orr volunteered to tape-record his memories and have Cathie Hunt transcribe them.’ On the tapes Jones’s voice is high and thin as he struggles to remember, straining for the right word, lapsing into silence. Orr sometimes loses his temper and takes on a crisp, dictatorial tone. Jones doing his best to comply, never losing his patience but sounds feeble, devoid of energy. Before long, he set aside the autobiography, temporarily he thought, in order to work on ‘The Kensington Mass’, of which he finished the initial part in time for its inclusion in an issue of *Agenda* scheduled to coincide with the publication of *The Sleeping Lord*.

On January 12th 1974, Tim O’Fensend, a friend of the Stoneburners, visited, bringing from them a copy of Dee Brown’s *Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee*, which Stoneburner had carefully wrapped. For much of the visit Jones struggled with the wrapping. Noticing a knife on a table, the visitor asked if it might help. Jones said, ‘No, I never like to cut things’, but eventually he did resort to the knife, mentioning that he had asked a friend for a penknife for Christmas but he could not find one and gave him this instead, and adding that probably the word penknife originally designated a blade appropriate to trimming ...’ He went blank, searching for the word, which his visitor supplied, ‘a quill.’²⁹⁶

In mid-January 1974, he fell on his left hip and was bedridden, in great pain from bruised groin muscles. Unable to go to the phone, he had to sit still in bed or in his chair. At the same time his eyes began causing him difficulties, making reading and writing difficult.²⁹⁷

Orr brought him Alex Haley's essay for the *Listener* (10 January 1974) describing the events that led to his writing *Roots*, soon to be published. Haley writes of hearing from his grandmother two-hundred years of family tradition reaching back seven generations to a slave brought from Africa. Haley journeys to the village in Gambia where a bard recounts the story of his family and mentions his ancestor by name and his disappearance. Leaving the villages, Haley is greeted using that name, Kin-Tay. Jones was deeply moved and fascinated by the linkage, in Haley's experience, between the present and the distant past.²⁹⁸

On 7 February, he received word that his sister had died 'in peace & without pain'. She had spent the past eighteen months, since her husband's death, in the Sydenham nursing home where her father had spent his last days. Her death shook him—the nuns noticed that he took it quite badly.²⁹⁹

Du Sauatoy asked him for an inscription for the dust jacket for *The Sleeping Lord*, and he agreed to attempt one, if his eyes let him. He had no supplies, so Maurice Percival brought him hot-pressed paper, tubes of Chinese white, black and yellow watercolour, brushes, and drawing pins. The inscription was 'rather rough' because he made it in a hurry and his eyes were 'tiresome' and his hands 'not really firm.' It was to be his last visual artwork. Faber insured it for £20,000. He was disappointed that on the dust jacket, eight yellow diamond shapes around the title were omitted. 'They were ... meant to evoke the Pleiades and help bring together the black colour of the words & the white paper.' He wanted a half-tone reproduction of *Tyr y Blenau* (Ch. 7 fig. 6) to illustrate 'The Hunt' and 'The Sleeping Lord'—it was in the page proofs but, he was disappointment to see, deleted from the publication. In October 1973, he and William Cookson each corrected a complete set of galley proofs, and in mid-November compared corrections and compiled a final list which Cookson then brought in to Fabers. *The Sleelping Lord and other fragments* was published on 25 March 1974.³⁰⁰ 2500 copies were printed, 750 to be sold by Chilmark Press as an American edition. For his part in guiding the book to publication, William Cookson was paid £25.

The poems of *The Sleeping Lord* are, without exception, wonderful, and no doubt benefit from the decades of consideration he gave them. But many of them had not come far from their 1952 versions, when *The Anathemata* was published. It had taken him two decades to achieve what should have taken three years. The initial ten years of delay were owing to discouragement over failure of reviewers and critics (caused by the failure of his publisher) to appreciate *The Anathemata* and by lack of intelligent engagement with *Epoch and Artist*. Jones could work without a strong awareness of an audience but found it hard to go on when faced with clear evidence of disinterest and incomprehension. The encouragement of Vernon Watkins and the publication of 'The Wall' and 'The Tutelar' in *Poetry* gave him the heart to go on revising for publication. Subsequently Cookson and publication in *Agenda* encouraged him. In the most recent dozen years, he accomplished so little because of the enervating lethargy induced by unwisely prescribed barbiturates. Once his medication was changed, he began writing virtually from scratch *The Kensington Mass* which, though incomplete, shows him working at full power. Also occasionally handicapping him in these last ten years was the malaise and anxiety of his 'old nerve thing', which rendered him unable to work well for months at a time. In the circumstances, his third book of poetry is, to say the least, a remarkable accomplishment.

The *TLS* review was 'quite congratulatory but not much good'. Blamires wrote in protest.³⁰¹ Jones thought the best review 'by far' was, to his surprise, in *The Spectator* (4 May) 'by an Irishman' named Seamus Heaney, who praised him as 'an extraordinary writer' who has 'returned to the origin and brought something back, something to enrich not only the language but people's consciousness of who they have been and who they consequently are.'

With a sense of urgency about the many things he wanted to write, he pressed on with 'The Kensington Mass'. It had begun as 'The Mass' in a draft of 1945, altered in 1958 and again 1965, when, as 'the BBC Mass', it was typed and recorded for the Third Program but recorded unsatisfactorily and never broadcast—which had suited him because 'it had not the thing I wanted.' Able to locate only torn fragments of it, he wrote an entirely new work that meandered 'off into a quite different' and longer 'shape.' Writing it, he felt constantly the need for his books still at Monksdene. He especially

missed having his *Crudens Bible Concordance*. It meant 'endless futile search in the O.T. that takes hours & hours.'³⁰²

The completion of his last poem was prevented by his spending his last year in time-consuming correspondence with Hague painstakingly explicating *The Anthemata* in order to help him write a *Commentary* on the poem. In reply to extensive questions, Jones wrote hundreds of foolscap pages. Hague would quote extensively from these letters, which give his *Commentary* what value it has, but it is poor compensation for what would clearly have been a beautiful new long poem. In one of his last letters to Hague, he urges a recess in the correspondence so that he can get down to work on his poem, though he says it likely will not be finished before 'the spring of 1975'.

In mid-April 1974, Douglas Cleverdon brought Hague to London to take part in a David Jones evening at the Mermaid Theatre. Hague visited twice before the event, 'a great treat' for Jones, who was impressed by his 'youthfulness In fact,' he wrote to Valerie, 'he seemed exactly as he was when I first met him at Capel-y-ffin in 1925 [sic].' At the theatre, Cleverdon and Hague spoke publicly about Jones, and Frank Duncan and Aubrey Richards read from his poetry. On their way to the event, Petra Tegetmeier and her daughter Charlotte visited Jones. Initially, in the dim light, he did not recognize Petra, which she noticed and ignored. When she spoke he knew her, and 'it was such a surprise'. He had last seen her at his seventieth birthday party at the Cleverdons. After the event at the theatre, poorly attended, Hague and Bernard Wall visited. Many friends later reported that Hague's contribution was wonderfully informal and personal. Kathleen Raine told him that Wall, whom she had accompanied, 'was so moved that he wept.'³⁰³

In late April, Wall came for a visit with Kathleen Raine. Jones told them he refused to go to Mass in the chapel, which Kathleen thought meant he stopped going altogether. Jones was, however, continuing to attend Mass on Sundays but in Latin in a ground-floor oratory, celebrated by a resident who was a priest. The chapel was up a flight of stairs and difficult for him to reach, though afterwards he was taken there in a wheelchair.³⁰⁴

On Friday 3 May, Wall's daughter phoned to tell him that her father had died the previous day. Jones thanked her, asked after her mother, and said 'God rest him *et lux perpetua luceat ei*'. News of this death cast him into gloom for weeks, in which he

grieved deeply for ‘dear, very dear, Bernard’. They had ‘agreed about practically everything,’ their minds working ‘in the same way,’ and, for a time, had phoned one another nearly every other day. Wall had known the Italian people, intellectuals, writers, ‘peasants & the aristocrats & clergy and was *extremely* amusing about them.’ Three months later, he still could not ‘take it in’ or ‘believe’ his friend was really dead.³⁰⁵

Shortly after Wall’s death, Jones heard that Louis Bonnerot had died, ‘a remarkable Frenchman & of great perception ... so “alive”’, in the way Saunders Lewis was. Bonnerot had introduced Jones’s work to France, publishing translations of ‘The Dream of Private Clitus’, part one of *The Anathemata*, and, in 1973, ‘The Tribune’s Visitation’—a translation Jones believed ‘better than the original’. ‘He had not only a most perceptive mind & of course was a most able scholar, but was a delightful man & friend.’³⁰⁶

In 1972 Nancy Sanders had initiated the process of obtaining for him the rank of Companion of Honour, which is limited to sixty-five living people and is, after the Order of Merit, the highest British award, given only to people of great achievement. Nancy enlisted Cleverdon, Margaret Guido, Leigh Ashton, and Auden, and she got du Sautoy to contact the Arts Council. On 14 May 1974, Prime Minister Harold Wilson wrote to offer membership in the Order, and Jones replied five days later that he would be unable to attend the ceremony owing to poor health. He asked Honeyman to write to clarify this on his behalf, saying to him that, while appreciative, he was not much interested in the award—he was too old now and wanted only to get on with writing *The Kensington Mass*. ‘I have such masses of things I want to make that I fear now won’t get made.’ Within a few days the award arrived in a package from Buckingham Palace with a message of congratulation from the Queen’s Secretary—which Jones thought showed ‘great courtesy in a world of such an appalling lack of courtesy’. To his surprise, he was delighted with the award and enjoyed sending the receipt to the Central Chancery of the Order of Knighthood, St James Palace. To be incorporated into the British Order of Chivalry meant something after all to someone who had listened to stories about knights before he could read and disliked *Don Quixote* because it mocked chivalry. When the awards were announced, he was inundated with letters and telegrams, the most amusing was from Shewring, ‘HAIL THOU!

/ BY MERIT RAIS'D / TO THAT BAD EMINENCE' (quoting *Paradise Lost* II, 6). He also received a 'charming letter' from Douglas Woodruff, together with his recently published book *The Life and Times of Alfred the Great*, which contained illustrations that he thought 'magnificent'. He wished to answer these messages but the only note of congratulations he replied to was from Margaret Grisewood, because he thought it 'expressly kind as she was obviously still in much distress'. For all the others, he published a brief note of thanks in *The Times*. He showed the medal-on-its-ribbon to visitors, several of whom described his delight as childlike.³⁰⁷ He appreciated it as recognition of his achievement. It may seem inadequate recognition, but he was now David Jones C.H., C.B.E.

On 2 June 1974, Grisewood visited. It was for Jones 'a marvellous happiness'. He almost said, 'Dr Livingstone, I presume' but thought of it too late. Grisewood wanted to know the details of Wall's death, which had also brought him great sorrow. It was 'a most affectionate meeting' but there was no mention of the break' with Margaret. For Jones, it 'was heavenly' seeing him again, though the visit was brief because Grisewood was picked up by his daughter and her husband.³⁰⁸ It was their last meeting.

After giving a lecture on Jones's painting at University College Swansea, Giardelli had been approached by Margaret Aevon Thomas with the idea of a televised broadcast on Jones for BBC Wales. Giardelli arranged for her to meet him and she convinced him to cooperate. A production crew went to the nursing home to get some shots of Jones in 1974, for which he wore his especially beautiful yellow tie. The production was never completed.³⁰⁹

On 1 October, George Johnston, the Canadian poet and a friend of Blissett, visited. Jones was very tired and frail, had a cold, had fallen and hurt himself a few days before, and was in bed. Johnston was a specialist in Old Norse, and their conversation touched on Olaf Tryggvason, the Norse in general, feudalism, Aegir (a Norse sea god), and Geoffrey of Monmouth. 'The talk was not tiring him,' Johnston recalled, 'it was making him stronger' and 'what wonderful talk it was; the pace seemed to be the pace of the ages'. Jones's supper was brought in, and Johnston observed what many visitors had witnessed, a sort of culinary Tai Chi:

He began to load up his fork; it was as slow as possible ... yet in effect precise. He would get a bit of egg on & then try to think of a word & put his hand to his eyes & then apparently drift off & absent-mindedly put a bit of tomato on too & then he would think of the word & the talk would come to a focus again, but the knife and fork get laid down & he picks up the tea & brings it almost to his mouth but it didn't get there & instead got put back on the saucer again & then back to the fork: more egg, a bit of ham, tomato, it is now a heroic forkful but it will get cut down again & re-shaped before it at last gets carried to his mouth. He gave the impression of not knowing the knife and fork were there but it was all beautifully done just the same.³¹⁰

Later that month, Paul Hills visited, and they had an unexpected and entertaining discussion of rugby football in which Jones enthused over the beauty of the drop-kick and the running formation.³¹¹

Peter Orr visited on Friday 25 October and found him lively, in good humour, lying on his bed in the camel-hair dressing gown that Nest had made him. The next day, Jones received news he had been dreading, that he would be moved to a room upstairs. On Sunday morning the 27th, carried upstairs in a wheelchair, he attended Mass in the chapel. That night just before midnight, one of the nuns looked in to suggest he turn off the light, and he said, 'I will, let me work just a little longer'—he was redrafting and extending 'The Kensington Mass'. The next morning, three days before his seventy-ninth birthday, a nun looked in at 6:15 am and found that he had died in bed. The cause of death, it would be determined, was not a stroke but degenerative heart failure—his heart had merely stopped. The nun who found him phoned her superior and announced, 'Mr. Jones is gone.'³¹²

The funeral was on 5 November, a bitterly cold day. The Mass (arranged by Louis Bussell) was at St Mary Magdeline's Church on Howson Road in Brockley, three-hundred yards from the house where he was born. Present were about a dozen mourners, including his nieces and nephew and their spouses, Bussell, the Honeymans, Morag Owen and her husband, Burns, Grisewood (looking much distressed) leaning on the arm of Leslie Hope, Cookson with Anne Beresford, Lowery, Peter Kelly and his wife, Maurice Percival, Cecil Gill (looking eerily like his brother Eric), and Valerie Wynne-Williams. It was a Latin low Mass, with no music, but a choir nearby was rehearsing a particularly lovely hymn. The priest, who had not known Jones, spoke gently of how those present, through the merits of Christ, were helping 'our brother David' to be received in paradise. He recited the *Dies Irae*. They drove in a line of cars to the south-west quadrant of Ladywell and Brockley Cemetery,

where, within sight of the Hilly Fields, the body was buried in the grave of his parents and sister. Jacqueline Honeyman placed anemones on the grave. The Kellys placed holly.³¹³ Valerie quietly wept.

Tom Burns arranged a memorial service on 13 December in Westminster Cathedral. To the surprise of most present, the enormous nave was full—largely with Jones’s friends and acquaintances, most unknown to one another because he had preferred to see them singly. The Introit, Offertory verse, and Communion antiphon were Gregorian chant, the *Dies Irae* was sung. As earlier, at the funeral Mass, the words *teste David cum Sibylla* resonated especially. Other sung parts were to music by the sixteenth-century composer John Shepherd, except for the motet at the Communion, which was *Alma Redemptoris Mater* by Palestrina. Fr. Peter Levi delivered the sermon-and-eulogy. A reception followed for Jones’s forty-two closest or most famous friends at the Goring Hotel. There a woman unrecognized by his closest friends announced to them all that nobody had been closer to him than she.³¹⁴ (This was undoubtedly Ray Howard Jones, evidently unaware of how close others had been to him.)*

The conversation among those leaving the cathedral and those at the hotel may be imagined from what some of them later said. Grisewood said that Jones was ‘a holy person’ whose ‘outstanding characteristic’ was humility. Burns doubted ‘if any other mortal soul has been such a counsellor, such a kind comrade.’ Michael Richey called him ‘a saintly man’; Malcolm Cochrane, ‘the most saintly man I ever met.’ Tristram Powell said he was ‘one of the most remarkable people I have met.’ Philip Jebb said his visits with him were ‘the privilege of a lifetime’. Peter du Sautoy said, ‘He was a sweet, dear man. I was very fond of him.’ Cathie Hunt said he was ‘so sweet and gentle. You just couldn’t help loving him.’ Barbara Moray said, ‘He repaid friendship a thousand-fold. He was a

* Others at the hotel included Burns, Cookson and his wife, Barbara Moray, Morag and Richard Owens, Levi, Nancy Saunders, the Honeymans, the Stones, Hugh Fraser, René Hague, Hodgkin, Richey, Grisewood, Petra and Denis Tegetmeier, the Cleverdons, the Grays, Peter Orr, Barbara Wall, Pamela Donner, Valerie Wynn-Williams, Canon Bartlet, Peter du Sautoy, Christopher Clark, Maurice Percival, Louis Bussell, Cecil Gill, and Daphne Pollen.

great giver in his own way.’ Peter Orr said, ‘He did more for me than I ever did for him.’ Stanley Honeyman said, ‘People have it wrong. The debt isn’t from him to me, it is from me to him.’ Peter Levi remembered him as ‘just a most adorable man, an example of genius being a survival of childhood.’ Kenneth Clark said he was a ‘really outstanding ... painter’ but would always be ‘a minority artist’ since his works ‘need to be looked at carefully and for a long time.’ Henry Moore felt he (Moore) responded to Jones’s pictures and considered him ‘a great poet.’ Philip Haggren said, ‘How blessed we are in having known him! He was as unlike other men of his generation as Blake was in his day.’³¹⁵

The insurance company providing his annuity got most of Jones’s life savings. His nieces and nephew inherited his property, but not his Cartier watch, which disappeared from his room in the nursing home.³¹⁶ They sold his books and manuscripts to the National Library of Wales and many of his paintings and drawings to the National Museum of Wales.

Probably the foremost native British figure in the arts in the Twentieth Century, David Jones is one of the great modernists. He made so much intelligent beauty during so many decades of psychological distress that his creative life is one of the most impressive existential achievements of international modernism. US-born T.S. Eliot aside, he and Virginia Woolf are, in Britain, the preeminent literary figures of their time. He is the most important native-British poet of the century, having written two of the best epic-length poems in the English. He is, moreover, the author of an original and convincing theory of culture. And he is a visual artist of major importance. No one since Blake—and arguably ever—has accomplished so much in both arts.

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Notes to Chapter 15

¹ To R. Hague 7/11/63; DJ interviewed by P. Orr 1960s through the early 1970s' Letter draft to the press, n.d.

2. S. and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88; to H. Grisewood, fourth Sunday after Easter/66, V Kal. 8/67.

3. to T. Stoneburner, 29/6/65.

4 To A.Pollen, 31/8-1/9/60.

⁵ S, Honeyman interviewed 10/87.

⁶ To Dorthea Travis 29/12/60; Bernard Wall in conversation with Stoneburner, written record 4/6/69; to H. Sutherland, frag. [1960].

⁷ To K. Clark 3/8/60.

⁸ To S. Lewis, 20/11/61, 23/12/61; to J. Stone 4/10/62; P. Orr, 'Mr Jones, Your Legs are crossed', *Agenda* 15:2-3, 110.

⁹ To R. Hague 9/4/60; to V. Wynne-Williams 7/2/60.

¹⁰. To V. Wynne-Williams 11/10/60; to S. Honeyman, frag. [1960]; to H. Grisewood letter draft 26/5/64; to Miss Selby 26/1/67; J. F. Hewitt to Jones 17/2/64.

¹¹ To C. Ivainer 17/11/60.

¹² To D. Travis 29/12/60, 15/8/42; to R. Shirley-Smith 16/12/60.

¹³ To P. Donner 9/1/61; to D. Travis 29/12/60; to V. Wynne-Williams 9/1/61.

¹⁴ Reproduced by N. Gray in *The Painted Inscriptions of David Jones*, p. 80; S. Lewis to DJ, 18 Dec 1960; to S. Lewis, 27 Dec 1960.

15. To R. and J. Shirley-Smith 11/2/61; to K. Raine 27/3/61; to C. Ivainer 13/3/61; to R. and J. Shirley-Smith 17/8/61; to Richard & Mary Ann, unposted 28/12/63; to H. Sutherland 22/8/61; to P du Sautoy 18/8/61; D. Bland to Jones 27/4/61.

16 Eliot to DJ 2/8/61; See Ackroyd, *T.S. Eliot*, p. 235; to H. Grisewood 26/7/61; to Eliot 7/5/61; to S. Lewis, Mid-Summer 1961; Eliot to DJ 6/1/60.

17. To S. Lewis 6/5/61; to K. Raine 23/4/61; to S. Lewis 20/11/61.

¹⁸J. Scott interviewed 16/6/88; to H. Grisewood 28/3/61; to J. Stone 15/11/61; to J. Scott 7/5/62.

¹⁹ To T. Stoneburner 24/6/61; to J. Stone 6-7/9/60; to S. Lewis 6/5/61; to S. Lewis Mid-Summer/61; to S. Lewis 18/9/61, 20/11/61; to Pollen 6/9/61.

20. To R. Hague 16/9/63, *LC* 35.

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- ²¹ Diana Smith interviewed 30/6/88; Jones in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record 5/5/66; *LC* 31; to H. Grisewood, 9/10/61.
- ²² To C. Ivanier 6/2/61 unposted; to T. Stoneburner 20/11/64; to William Noon SJ 5/12/65, quoted by Noon, *Poetry and Prayer*, p. 342-3; DJ in conversation with author 9/9/72; Bernard Wall to Stoneburner 2/8/68; *LC* 67.
- ²³ *IN* 25; to J. H. Johnston 16 /5/64; S. Honeyman interviewed 6/86.
- ²⁴ Diana Smith to author, 1 Aug 1986.
- ²⁵ To H. Grisewood, 26/7/61; *LF* 62; to H. Grisewood 9/10/61; to A. Pollen 6/9/61.
- ²⁶ P. Orr, *The Poet Speaks*, p. 103; DJ interviewed by John Silkin, 1965, typescript; to H. Grisewood 29/8/63; Jones in conversation with author 24/8/72.
- ²⁷ To A. Pollen 6/9/61; to R. Hague 27/9/63
- ²⁸ To Kathleen Raine 27/3/61; ms n.d.; letter. draft. frag. n.d.; to H. Grisewood 28/3/61.
- ²⁹ To Stoneburner 20/12/64;20/6/74.
- ³⁰ Edmond Gray and N. Gray interviewed 16/6/91; to H. Sutherland 22/8/61; to Ruan McLean draft 1/9/61; letter draft frag.; to Ruan McLean, n.d.
- ³¹ To V. Wynne-Williams 28/8/62.
- ³² To P. Donner 8/4/62, 16/6/61, 19/12/63; P. Donner interviewed 21/6/88.
- ³³ Eliot to H. Grisewood 20/8/53; N. Cleverdon to author 14/3/94; to V. Wynne-Williams 15/5/62; H Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; Eliot to H. Grisewood 29/3/61; Grisewood ms note.
- ³⁴ Dr Glyn Davies interviewed 8/10/87.
- ³⁵ To Dorthea Travis 3 Aug 62
- ³⁶ To E. Hodgkin 29/11/65; DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record 26/5/69; to J. Stone 12/2/63, 4/4/63; to William Cookson 20/3/63; to Llewelyn Wynn Griffith 12/9/64.
- ³⁷ J. Stone interviewed 2/10/87; R Hague interviewed by P. Orr 15/2/77; to V. Wynne-Williams 6/8/62; Daphne Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75.
- ³⁸ Interview with Dr Bell 12/6/86. The bag full of pills was found after his death. Molly Elkin interviewed 1985; Dr K. Bell interviewed 12/6/86; Hilary Boyers interviewed 23/6/89.
- ³⁹ Anthony West to Jones 16/4/62; to H. Sutherland 8/12/62; to V. Wynne-Williams 4/3/61; to H. Grisewood 7/3/62; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record 30/8/72.

⁴⁰ Francis Berry to Jones 16/1161.

⁴¹ To H. Grisewood 22/5/62; to J. Stone 1/2/62; to D. Blamires, 30/5/66; to H. Read 7/3/65.

⁴² To V. Watkins 15/5/62; Len Walton interviewed 13/6/88.

⁴³ To Louis Bonnerot draft frag. 4/1/60; to J. Stone 28/1/60; to R. Hague 29/2/60; to C. Ivanier 6/2/61 unposted; to H. Grisewood 18/2/60; to C. Ivanier 13/6/61; to H. Grisewood 11/1/62; to C. Rousseau 26/1/63.

⁴⁴ C. Rousseau interviewed 2/10/89.

⁴⁵ To J. Stone 6/1/62; to C. Rousseau 6/9/62; to H. Grisewood Xmas/60; C. Rousseau interviewed 2/10/89.

⁴⁶ To H. Grisewood 9/10/61; to Herbert Read 3/10/61; to Richard Wald *Herald Tribune*, 1962; to Bernard Wall 17/7/67; *LF* 72; to H. Grisewood 26/7/61; to Geoffrey Elborn 10/5/70

⁴⁷ To Sutherland 8/12/62; to P. Donner 19/12/62; to J. Ede 3/2/63.

⁴⁸ W. H. Auden, "The Geste Says this and the Man who was on the Field," *Mid-Century Review* 39 (March 1962), 12, 13

⁴⁹ To H. Grisewood 7/3/62; to J. H. Johnson 23/3/62, 3/3/63; to Miss Carver, 29-30/6/72; to K. Raine 28/3/62; to J. H. Johnson 16/5/62; H. Read to J. H. Johnson 25/4/64; to H. Grisewood 28/5/62.

⁵⁰ Ruth Simon to DJ 8/12/58; to H. Grisewood 26/7/61; to H. Sutherland 29/8/61; P. Orr interviewed 2/6/86.

⁵¹ For information about Jack Sweeney I am indebted to Stratis Haviaris, the Greek poet and curator of the Poetry Reading Room; to Donald Nichol 18/10/62

⁵² L. Cowan to P. duSautoy 4/4/62; to Bernard Bergonzi 3/12/65; to A. T. Davies 21/5/64; to M. Percival 10/67; to Noon, draft frag, n.d. 1967; Thomas Merton, *Letters Tom: A Selection of Letters from Father Thomas Merton, Monk of Gethsemani, to W. H. Ferry, 1961-1968*; ed W. H. Ferry (Scarsdale, New York: Fort Hill Press, 1984), 63; DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record 26/5/69.

⁵³ To R. Shirley Smith 4/11/63 to S. Lewis, 22/3/65

⁵⁴ To Emyln Davies 23/8/64; to A. Giardelli 3/9/64; to Mr Rosenberg 25/9/64; to H. Grisewood 29/12/72; to Herbert Read 21/9/64.

⁵⁵ To V. Wynne-Williams 24/11/62; to J. Stone 20/11/63, to R. Hague 13/12/63, 7/11/63; Grisewood, interviewed 6/91.

⁵⁶ To H. Grisewood 7/3/62; to V. Wynne-Williams 23/9/62; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86.

⁵⁷ E. Evans interviewed 20/8/86.

⁵⁸ N. Cleverdon interviewed 25/6/90.

⁵⁹ To J. Stone 16/5/60; V. Wynne-Williams to DJ 8/11/61.

⁶⁰ To J. Stone 25/11/61, 1/12/61; to H. Sutherland 29/8/61.

⁶¹ To R. Hague 7/11/63; to J. Stone 20/11/63; to H. Grisewood 28/3/61; to K. Raine 27/3/61; to J. Stone 1/2/63, 26/8/62; V. Wynne-Williams to DJ 16/4/60; V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 25/8/89; to V. Wynne-Williams 25/3/60; to R. Hague 1/1/73 letter frag; to H. Grisewood 29/10/74.

⁶² Welsh Language School to DJ 31.5.62; to S. Lewis 23/12/61, 24/4/62, 23/11/63.

⁶³ S. Honeyman interviewed 9/10/87; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89.

⁶⁴ H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; S. Honeyman interviewed 9/10/87; N. Cleverdon interviewed 25/6/90; V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 25/8/89; S. and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.

⁶⁵ J. Stone interviewed 2/10/87; K. Campbell interviewed 23/6/86; to R. Hague 14/12/73.

⁶⁶ Bernard Wall to T. Stoneburner 5/5/66; M. Grisewood interviewed 24/6/89; Nest Cleverdon, "A Handshake with the Past," 32; L. and P. Jebb interviewed 15/5/90; M. Bulbrook interviewed 28/5/88; S. Honeyman interviewed by P. Orr, typescript. n.d.

⁶⁷ N. Sanders interviewed 6/85; S. Honeyman interviewed by P. Orr, typescript. n.d.

⁶⁸ To W. Cookson 31/7/72, 1/6/71; to M. Percival 23/5/62; *The Listener*, 24 May 1962, the longer version appears in *The Dying Gaul*.

⁶⁹ To H. Grisewood 4/8/62; DJ interviewed by Giardelli 1965; to V. Wynne-Williams 6/8/62.

⁷⁰ To J. Stone 4/10/62.

⁷¹ To Bernard Wall 30/1/43; to P. Donner 5/9/62; to J. Ede 16/9/63; to J. & S. Honeyman 29/6/62; to J. H. Johnston n.d. [mid 11/63].

⁷² To N. Sanders 27/8/71; to J. Stone 20/11/63; S. and J. Honeyman interviewed 6/91 to J. and S. Honeyman 29/7/62; to S. Honeyman, 30/5/73; C. Collins interviewed 25/6/89.

⁷³....

⁷⁴ N. Sanders interviewed 6/85; to J. and S. Honeyman, 29/6/62; to S. Honeyman 30/5/73.

⁷⁵ H. Grisewood interviewed 5 Oct 87.

⁷⁶ to J. and S. Honeyman, 29 July 1962; to S. Honeyman, 30 May 1973.

⁷⁷ S. Honeyman interviewed 9/10/87; 6/91; 10/87.

⁷⁸ To J. Stone 6/1/62; DJ in conversation with author 4/6/71.

⁷⁹ To H. Grisewood 11/1/62, 9/10/61, 22/5/62; to H. Sutherland 8/12/62.

⁸⁰ To J. Stone 1/2//63; to H. Grisewood 1/1/1963, 10/6/64; to S. Lewis 3/1/63.

⁸¹ To J. Stone, 1/2/63; to P. Donner 19/12/62; to N. Gray 15/1/63.

⁸² To S. Lewis 4/1/62, 18/1/62.

⁸³ R. Craft, *Stravinsky, Chronicle of a Friendship* (Nashville and London: Vanderbilt University Press), pp. 227-8; C. Skelton, interviewed 21/6/86; A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86; to J. Ede 16/9/63; N. Cleverdon, interviewed 25/6/90; F. Richards, *Remembering David Jones* (Privately Printed, Wellingborough: Skelton's Press, 1980), p. 4; R. Craft, pp. 361-2; A. Giardelli, *David Jones, the Map of the Artist's Mind*, p. 58; M. Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88; DJ in conversation with T. and Pat Stoneburner, written record, 5/5/66; R. Craft, pp. 227-8; S. Spender, 'David Jones', *David Jones Man and Poet*, ed John Matthias (Orono, Maine: National Poetry Foundation, 1989), p. 53; N. Spender to E.C. Hodgkin 17/3/94 (letter to author 21/3/94); to K. Clark 9/6/63.

⁸⁴ S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90.

⁸⁵ To Fr. Michael Hanbury 30/3/63; to K. Clark 9/6/63, to J. Ede 16/9/63.

⁸⁶ To H. Sutherland 26/11/63; S. Honeyman int. 9/10/87.

⁸⁷ M. Hague interviewed 10/9/89; to D Tegetmeier 30/9/63; DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record /5/566; to H. Grisewood 29/8/63; to S. Lewis 2/7/73, 2/9/70.

⁸⁸ P. Lowery interviewed 20/6/88; to R. Lowery n.d. [c. 1966].

⁸⁹ To P. Tegetmeier 7/9/70; P Lowery interviewed 20/6/88.

⁹⁰ To C. Rousseau 21 July 63 to H. Grisewood, 29 Aug 1963.

⁹¹ Cleverdon's typescript list of costs.

⁹² D. and N. Cleverdon interviewed 28/6/86; N. Cleverdon interviewed 6, 25/6/90, 18/5/93, N. Cleverdon, in *David Jones, a Map of the Artist's Mind*, p. 60.

⁹³ C. Rousseau interviewed 2/10/89; to J. Stone 4/10/62; to L. Bonnerot 4/1/60 draft frag.

⁹⁴ S. Honeyman interviewed 29/6/86; to Andrew Mylett 9/10/65; Luce Bonnerot interviewed 9/89; Lee, "Bookplate Designs by Richard Shirley Smith," p. 84.

95. Bonnerot, 'David Jones, down the traversed history-paths', *Agenda* 5:1-3 (Summer-Spring 1967), 124-34; C. Rousseau interviewed 2/10/89; to H. Grisewood 15/8/71, 9/10/71, 29/12/71.

⁹⁶ T. Burns interviewed 24/6/89; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89.

97. To D. Blamires 6/11/66; to F. Kermodé 12/6/66; to T. Stoneburner 18/6/75; J. Rothenstein, *Brave Day, Hideous Night*, p. 120.

98. S. Dayras interviewed 9/89; T. Burns, "David Jones," *Tablet*, 2 Nov 1974.

99. To Fr M. Hanbury 30/3/63; to H. Grisewood 7/2/1956; to E. Hodgkin 29/11/1965; Dominic Mellray interviewed 26/6/1989.

¹⁰⁰ To H. Grisewood 15-24/4/72, 15-17/1/68; to Theodore Bailly 2/65 letter draft.

¹⁰¹ DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record 30/8/72; to R. Hague 3/12/72; DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record 5/5/66; to S. Lewis, 14 June 1972.

102. DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record 5/5/66.

103. DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record 5/5/66.

104 To H. Grisewood 8/2/68; 9/10/71.

105. To H. Grisewood 5/2/68; 29/12/65.

¹⁰⁶ To Bernard Wall 17/7/67; to M. Grisewood 12/10/67.

¹⁰⁷ To L. Walton 8/5/67.

108. to H. Grisewood, 9 Aug 1970.

109. To H. Grisewood 9/8/70; John Montague, interviewed 9/9/89.

¹¹⁰ To S. Spender 6/5/63; to Miss Barber, unposted draft 4/9/64; to *K. Raine* 12/5/63; LC 60; to K. Clark 9/7/63; H. Grisewood to J.F. Hewitt 16/12/63.

¹¹¹ H. Grisewood to J.F. Hewitt 14/12/63.

¹¹² To R. Hague 6/3/64; to V. Wynne-Williams 16/3/64.

113. To K. Raine 13/1/61; to V. Wynne-Williams 9/1/61; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83, 19/6/90, 5/10/87; to Kathleen Raine 23/4/61; to Dorthea Travis 3/8/62; to C. Ivainer 17/10/61; to H. Grisewood 9/10/61, 11/1/62, 22/5/62.

¹¹⁴ To H. Sutherland 7/12/49, 5/11/58.

¹¹⁵ H. Grisewood interviewed 6 May 1993.

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- ¹¹⁶. To V. Wynne-Williams 16/9/64; to R. Hague 6/3/64.
- ¹¹⁷. Barbara Moray interviewed 6/85, to R. Hague 6/3/64.
- ¹¹⁸ To M. Balme 14/4/64; J. Scott interviewed 16/6/88; to A. Giardelli 29/9/66; M. Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88.
- ¹¹⁹ To T. Bailly, letter draft, 2/65.
- ¹²⁰ *LC* 34; S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90; to C. Burns 17/4/64; to M. Balme 14/4/64.
- ¹²¹ To A. Pollen, 6 Sept 1961; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86.
- ¹²² S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86; J. Finzi to DJ 1/1/65.
- ¹²³. M. Cochrane interviewed 20/6/88; *LC* 55; S. Balme interviewed 17/6/90.
- ¹²⁴. To V. Wynne-Williams 4/6/65; to R. Hague 27/4/64; M. Elkin found a great number of cheques and unpaid bills in his Monksdene room after his death, interviewed 6/86; to H. Grisewood 31/12/71.
- ¹²⁵ N. Cleverdon interviewed 25/5/90; to S. Balme 12/8/62.
- ¹²⁶ To J. Stone 7/3/65; S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90; to V. Wynne-Williams 26/12/64; to R. Hague 2/4/74, 2/5/74; to E. Hodgkin 29/11/65
- ¹²⁷S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87.
- ¹²⁸ To H. Grisewood 17/6/64.
- ¹²⁹. To H. Grisewood 7/3/62; to K. Raine 28/3/62; P. Lowery 20/6/88; to A. Pollen 26/3/65; to R. Hague 12/8/64; to S. Lewis 22/3/65; W. Cookson interviewed 13/6/88' to T. Stoneburner 30/8/63; to Sutherland 22/6/64; to P. Levi 24/4/64, 15/6/64; to R. and J. Shirley-Smith 11/2/61; to P. Levi 24/5/64, 15/6/64, 25/5/64, 27/8/64; DJ interviewed by Peter Orr, typescript 1973; to P. Levi, 5/6/65; to N. Sanders, 16-17/65.
- ¹³¹ S. Honeyman interviewed 1 September 1987.
- ¹³¹ To H. Grisewood 28/3/61; 17/6/64.
- ¹³². N. Sanders interviewed 6/85; to P. Levi 27/8/64.
- ¹³³ Stuart Piggot, interviewed by Stoneburner, written record 17/8/75; to R. Hague 19/6/67; to P. Levi 27/8/64' to S. Honeyman 14/11/71; to N. Sanders, 3 Aug 1964
- ¹³⁴. To H. Grisewood 29/8/63; to R. Hague 6/1/965; to T. Stoneburner 6/3/65.

¹³⁵ They visited on 9 and 22 June 1966, 26 May and 7 June 1969, 19 June 1969, 20 June and 30 Aug 1972; to T. Stoneburner 30/6/69/ to P. Hagreen 19/10/72; to T. Stoneburner, 20/11/64; Bernard Wall to Stoneburner 14/5/69; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record 8/6/69.

¹³⁶ To R. Hague 9-15/6/73.

137 T. Powell to Jones 15/5/64.

138 H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83.

¹³⁹ To S. Lewis 22/3/65; to H. Sutherland 22/6/64.

140. S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90; to A. Pollen 26/3/65; to R. Hague 8/6/66.

¹⁴¹ T. Powell interviewed 30/4/93.

¹⁴² to A. Giardelli 29/9/66.

¹⁴³ A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86.

¹⁴⁴ To A. Giardelli 21/5/65; DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record 26/5/69; to C. Richards 25/10/64; A. Giardelli to author 15/22/93; A. Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86.

¹⁴⁵ S. Honeyman, interviewed 20/6/86.

¹⁴⁶ To F. Richards 6/9/64; Frances Richards, *Remembering David Jones* (Privately Printed, Wellingborough: Skelton's Press, 1980), p.4; to C. Richards 25/10/64.

¹⁴⁷ To V. Watkins 13/8/60; V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 25/8/89; to T. Stoneburner 8/8/65; to D. Cleverdon. n.d. [1965]; W. Cookson interviewed 14/6/88/ W. Cookson interviewed 14/6/88.

¹⁴⁸ Other recording sessions with Orr were: on 8 Feb 1967 to record 'The Dream of Private Clitus'; on 5 March 1968 to record 'The Sleeping Lord'; on 1 Aug 1969 to record 'The Tribune's Visitation'; on 4 Oct 1971 to record 'A,a,a, Domine Deus' and 'The Wall. These recordings and 'The Tribune's Visitation' were issued on disk (Argo PLP 1180). On January 28 1972 Peter Orr recorded David reading 'The Tutelar of the Place.'

¹⁴⁹ To H. Grisewood 29/12/65; S. and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88, 17/6/90; to N. Sanders 7/4/66, to K. Clark letter draft frag. 3/4/67; to P. Orr 25/8/65.

¹⁵⁰ S. Lewis to DJ, Saturday before Easter, 1965; to V. Wynne-Williams 5/11/65.

¹⁵¹ To R. Hague 6/1/65; to P. Levi 29/1/65; to H. Grisewood 12/8/56; to T. Stoneburner 12-16/8/68; DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72; to H. Grisewood 20/12/56.

¹⁵² To Herbert Read 7/3/65.

¹⁵³ To Alan Ross 27/3/65; to J. Stone 30/3/65, 18/4/65; to R. Hague 18/5/65; to T. Stoneburner 29/6.65.

¹⁵⁴. To A Giardelli 21/5/65; to V. Wynne-Williams 4/6/65; to J. Stone 7/8/65; DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record, 26/5/69.

¹⁵⁵ To D. Cleverdon, frag. n.d. [1965]; to A Giardelli 10/4/65, 21/5/6.

¹⁵⁶. N. Gray to K. Clark 14/8/65; D. Cleverdon to P du Sautoy 4/8/65; P du Sautoy to D. Cleverdon 5/8/65; W. Cookson to D. Cleverdon 9/8/65; D. Cleverdon to P du Sautoy 6/8/65; to C. Rousseau 17/12/65; D Cleverdon to L. Cowan 28/10/65; Notice sent out by Cleverdon and Cowan; to P. Orr 25/9/65; to Sabastian Carter 2/9/65, 26/9/65; D. Cleverdon to W. & S. Carter 18/9/65. P. Orr, 'Mr Jones, Your Legs are Crossed,' p. 115; to W. Carter 16/9/65; to H. Grisewood 29/12//65; to W. Carter 16/9/65; to T. Stoneburner 16/12/65.

¹⁵⁷. The Cleverdon's visitors book.

¹⁵⁸. To R. Hague 6/1/65.

¹⁵⁹. to R. Hague, 6 Jan 1965.

160. To P. Levi 10/5/66; S. Honeyman and Peter Orr in conversation, transcript.

161. 'Mr. Jones, Your Legs are Crossed,' p. 117.

¹⁶². To B. Bergonzi 11/11/65.

¹⁶³ frag. n.d. [late 1060s]

¹⁶⁴ to Sutherland, 28 Jan 66

165. to R. Hague, 19 June 1967.

166 S. and M. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.

¹⁶⁷. To J. Stone 30/3/65; to C. Rousseau 17/12/65; to H. Grisewood 23/12/65.

¹⁶⁸ L. Jebb to author 8/6/89.

¹⁶⁹. D. Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75.

170. 'One of David's neices' to P Tegetmeier interviewed 18/6/88; to H. Grisewood 9/10/61.

¹⁷¹ to V. Wynne-Williams 5/2/61

172. E. Hodgkin to Sutherland 28/1/66; to R. Hague 29/4/66; K. Raine interviewed 7/2/89; N. Gray interviewed 17/6/88.

¹⁷³. To D. Blamires 26/12/970; E. Hodgkin, 'Helen Sutherland,' typescript.

¹⁷⁴ Cleverdon in conversation with T Stoneburner, written record /6/69; R. Shirley-Smith interviewed 21/6/90;

S. Honeyman, interviewed 20/6/86.

175. S. Honeyman interviewed by P. Orr, typescript. n.d; DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record 7/6/69.

176. S. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.

177. S. Balme interviewed 24/6/88; to J. Stone 18/4/65.

178. S. Balme interviewed 7/5/93.

179 S. Balme interviewed 17/6/90.

180. S. Balme interviewed 24/6/88.

¹⁸¹ L. Walton interviewed 5/6/86; Cissy Hyne to Maurice Bradshaw interviewed by T. Stoneburner 1975; T. Hyne interviewed 6/85; S. Wright interviewed 26/6/86; T. Hyne interviewed 24/6/86; Sarah Williams to author 13/2/2009.

¹⁸² DJ to R. Shirley-Smith interviewed 21/6/90.

¹⁸³ To Winifrede Wilson, 30 April 1966: S. Honeyman interviewed.

¹⁸⁴ To A Giardelli 29/9/66.

¹⁸⁵ To A Giardelli 29/9/66.

¹⁸⁶. To P. Orr 25/9/65; W. Cookson interviewed 13/6/1988, to W. Cookson 20/3/67; to T. Stoneburner Sat-Sun 2/67.

¹⁸⁷ to Sutherland, 22 June 64

¹⁸⁸ to C. Rousseau, 17 Dec 1965

¹⁸⁹. to H. Grisewood, 29 Dec 1965.

¹⁹⁰. P. Orr, interviewed 2 June 1986.

191. to T. Stoneburner, 15 Marcy 1968.

¹⁹²to Bernard Wall 1 July 67

¹⁹³ *SL* 95; to M. Percival 15/10/67.

¹⁹⁴ To K. Clark, letter draft frag, 9/10/66; To W. Cookson 8/12/66; S. Dayras interviewed 9/89; *LF* 98; Aneirin Talfan Davies, 'A Note', *Agenda* 5: 1-2 (Spring Summer 1967) 172.

¹⁹⁵ to T. Stoneburner 15/5/67, 25/6/67; 20/8/67.

¹⁹⁶to T. Stoneburner, 28 Sept 1967 to R. Hague, 15 Aug 1967.

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- ¹⁹⁷. To Bernard Wall 1/6/67; to R. Hague 19/6/67; to A. Powell 10-11/6/67.
- ¹⁹⁸. S. Piggott interviewed by Stoneburner, written record 17/8/75; to S. Piggott 20/11/64; S Piggott, 'David Jones and the Past of Man' *Agenda* 5 (Spring-Summer, 1967), 76; S. Piggott diary 16/6/67; to T. Stoneburner, 25/6/67.
- ¹⁹⁹. DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record 26/5/69.
- ²⁰⁰ To S. Piggott 20/11/59.
- ²⁰¹to Bernard Wall 17 July 67
- ²⁰². To R. Hague 15/8/67; DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record 26/5/69; to Herbert Read 18/11/67 unposted.
203. T. Powell to author 17/1/90; to H. Grisewood V Kal. 8/66; to A. Powell, 10-11 7/67.
- ²⁰⁴.A. Fraser-Pinter interviewed 5/8/87.
- 205 to H. Grisewood, V Kal. 8/66.
- 206 S. Lewis to DJ 17/11/67.
- ²⁰⁷ To N. Sanders 7/11/70; to Watkins 17/4/62.
- ²⁰⁸ Undated ms draft, c. 1970; to Ede 21/2/70.
- ²⁰⁹ To S. Lewis 10/72; Paul Hills, 'The Romantic Tradition in David Jones,' Masters Thesis, typescript; Jones in conversation with author 4/6/71; P. Hills interviewed 6/91; to Meic Stephens 5/5/72; to M. Percival 5/4/72.
- 210 To J. Ede 21/2/70; to H. Grisewood 15/8/71; C. Collins interviewed 25/6/89.
211. DJ in conversation with Stoneburner, written record 8/6/69; C. Collins interviewed 25/6/89; to H. Grisewood 15/8/71; to H. Grisewood 14/7/71; P. Orr, "Mr. Jones, Your Legs are Crossed," p. 119..
212. To H. Grisewood 1/2/71.
213. Daughters of Memory,' *Nine* IV (Winter 1953-4), p. 46; J. Heath-Stubbs to author 28/6/86; to T. Stoneburner 17/2/66; E. White to Jones 10/6/65.
214. To N. Sanders, 7 Nov 1970.
- ²¹⁵ To Mr Revell, unposted, n.d.
216. To E. White 15/1/62.
- ²¹⁷ Miles and Shiel, p. 9.
- ²¹⁸ Guy Davenport to author 10/2/92; W. Cookson interviewed 14/6/88.

²¹⁹ B. Bunting to author 18/4/79.

²²⁰ J. Montague interviewed 9/9/89.

221 John and Evelyn Montague interviewed 9/9/89.

222 John Montague interviewed 9/9/89.

223. A Beresford, 'A Friendship with Jones Jones--a personal account,' typescript. n.d.

224. To Jeremy Hooker 8/5/70; 17/11/72; Jeremy Hooker interviewed 20/5/89: *Welsh Journal*; (Seren, 2001) , pp. 59-60' unposted letter frag. c. 1972.

²²⁵ To M. Stephens 13 May 72; to S. Lewis, 21 Dec 1972.

²²⁶ To R. Hague 14/6/70; to Clifford Simons 18/22/72; to R. Hague 27/9/74.

227. To D. Blamires 28/6/66; to H. Grisewood 7/7/71; 4/8/71; to T. Stoneburner 8-9/1/70.

228. Letter draft frag.; to S. Honeyman 7/6/71; to T. Burns 2/7/71; to H. Grisewood 7/7/71; 4/8/71.

229. To T. Stoneburner 8-9/1/70.

²³⁰ To D. Travis 2/12/60.

231 A. Malan interviewed 22/6/89; S. Honeyman interviewed 16/6/88; to H. Grisewood 9/10/61; H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; Anthony Bailley, "The Front Line," typescript, Feb. 1973.

232. E. Hodgkin interviewed 5/8/87.

²³³ S. Honeyman interviewed 20 June 86

234. S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/88.

²³⁵ M. Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88; to H. Grisewood 6/10/72; To Colin Hughes, quoted by Hague to Blissett, 24/11/79; to S. Wright John Montague 9 Sept 1988 26/2/73; S. Honeyman to H. Grisewood 23/7/70; J. Montague interviewed 9 /9/89.

²³⁶ J. Montague interviewed 9 /9/89; E. Hodgkin to Mrs H. 5/4/70.

²³⁷ S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87; E. Hodgkin to Mrs H. 5/4/70.

238. N.Cleverdon interviewed 25/6/90; S. Balme interviewed 24/6/88; T Stoneburner written record 1972; M. Bulbrook interviewed 28/8/88: LF 11; T. Whitaker in conversation with author.

239. to R. Hague 16/4/70.

²⁴⁰ To T. Hyne 25/5/71; K. Clark to H. Grisewood 13/4/70; to V. Wynne-Williams 27/8/70; to Mr/ Elborn 10/4/70; to A. T. Davies 17/9/70.

²⁴¹ S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86; M. Bullbrook interviewed 28/6/88; K. Clark to H. Grisewood 13/4/70; 7/4/70.

242. To H. Grisewood 4/5/70; to William Cookson 7/7/71.

243. To R. Hague 16/4/70; 2/5/70; to H. Grisewood 4/5/70; Dorenkamp, 'In the Order of Signs,' p. 26; to H. Grisewood 18/5/70..

244 To H. Grisewood 18/5/70.

²⁴⁵ V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 25/9/89; Ben Jones to H. Grisewood 7/5/70; S. Honeyman to H. Grisewood 13/4/70; to H. Grisewood 4/5/70; S. Honeyman interviewed by P. Orr, typescript. n.d.; S. Honeyman to Ben Jones, n.d.

246. To S. Lewis 6/7/70; B. Jones to H. Grisewood 13/5/70, 21/5/70; S. Honeyman to B. Jones 1/6/70.

²⁴⁷ D. Cleverdon to H. Grisewood 26/4/70; S. Honeyman to DJ 7/12/70; S. Honeyman interviewed 10/87.

248. Lewis to H. Grisewood 6/12/70.

²⁴⁹ S. Lewis to Jones 20/12/70; to S. Lewis 10/5/71; S. Honeyman interviewed 9/10/87; G.O. Jones to A. O. Davies 10/3/72.

²⁵⁰ To V. Wynne-Williams 6/3/72; to H. Grisewood 15-24/4/72, 6/10/72.

²⁵¹ To T. Stoneburner 14/6/70; S. Honeyman to Sister Hugh 4/6/70; A. Beresford, 'A Friendship with Jones Jones--a personal account,' typescript n.d. H. Grisewood interviewed 5/10/87; D. Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75; A. Bailey, 'The Front Line,' typescript, 2/73; to H. Grisewood 9/9/70; to R. Hague 14/12/73; Sr. Frances Rattigan interviewed 25/6/88.

252. To H. Grisewood 9/8/70, to N. Sanders 12/10/970; to S. Honeyman 26/6/71; to A. Lowery 21/8/70; to A. Giardelli 9-11/8/73.

253. L. Jebb to author 8/6/89; S. Honeyman interviewed 1/8/87; R. Hague interviewed by Peter Orr 15/2/77. to H. Grisewood 9/8/70; to R. Hague 2/5/1970; S. Honeyman to H. Grisewood 12/5/79; V. Wynne-Williams to author 2/2/2009.

²⁵⁴. N. Sanders interviewed 685; S. Honeyman interviewed 10/87. The contents of Jones's room is listed in considerable but not complete detail in his *Valuation for Probate* (1975); to S. Honeyman 16/7/71; S, Honeyman, interviewed 6/86; S. Honeyman to C.M. Kauffman 19/3/84; K. Clark to H. Grisewood 23/7/70; to N. Gray 8/12/71.

²⁵⁵. A Lowery to author 2/7/93; to N. Sanders 7/11/70.

256. To H. Grisewood 18/5/70; P. Orr interviewed 2/6/86.

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257. R. H. Jones interviewed 11/9/89; P. Orr interviewed 2/6/86; D. Pollen to T. Stoneburner 21/10/75.
- ²⁵⁸ S. Honeyman interviewed 1/9/87; D. Cleverdon to H. Grisewood 26/4/70; S. Honeyman to H. Grisewood, 21/4/70; S. Honeyman to H. Grisewood 19/4/70; H. Grisewood interviewed 7/5/93; H. Grisewood interviewed 19/6/90; S. Honeyman interviewed by Peter Orr, typescript. n.d; H Grisewood to Colonal Crawshay 30 /11/71.
259. Bragg, pp. 55, 297; L. Cowan to P du Sautoy 16/7/64; S. Honeyman interviewed 20/6/86; S. Honeyman interviewed by Peter Orr, typescript n.d.; D. Cleverdon interviewed 28/6/86, 6/1985. S. Honeyman interviewed by P. Orr, typescript. n.d.
260. S. Honeyman, interviewed by Peter Orr, typescript. n.d.; H. Grisewood interviewed 4 Oct 1987.
- 261 To R. Hague 14/6/70.
- ²⁶² W. Stevenson to Jones 23/3/61; Dr Bell interviewed 12/6/86; *British Medical Journal* 22/5/71; to V. Wynne-Williams frag. 70; *British Medical Journal*, 22 May 1971; to H. Grisewood 6/10/72; Orr, 'Mr Jones, your Legs are Crossed', 123.
- ²⁶³ To H. Grisewood 15-24/4/72.
- ²⁶⁴ To T. Stoneburner 7/7/71; to W. Cookson, 23/7/71.
- ²⁶⁵ *LC 61*; to R. Hague, 9-15/7/73.
- ²⁶⁶ To Bernard Wall 1/6/72.
267. To H. Grisewood 14/7/71; 15/8/71.
268. L. Walton interviewed 22/6/88; T. Burns, *The Use of Memory*, p. 31, 116, 126; S. Honeyman to H. Grisewood 23/8/70; R. Hague interviewed by Blissett 8/77; S. Honeyman, interviewed by Peter Orr, typescript. n.d; S. Honeyman interviewed 14/6/91.
- ²⁶⁹ To R. Hague 13/12/63.
6. T. Burns to D. Smith, October 1974.
- 270 Yo H. Grisewood 31/12/71: *LC* 145.
- ²⁷¹ To K. Raine, n.d. [1972]; D. and N. Cleverdon interviewed 28/6/86, summer/85; A. Dorenkamp to author 20/6/93; Dorenkamp, 'In the Order of Signs,' pp. 24, 26, 27; to H. Grisewood, 22/3/72; to N. Gray 8/12/71.
272. N. Cleverdon interviewed 25/6/90; H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89.
- ²⁷³ To H. Grisewood 22/3/72; to R. Hague 1/1/73; to H. Grisewood 5/4/73.
274. DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record 26/5/69; to H. Grisewood 24/8/70.

²⁷⁵ DJ in conversation with T. and P. Stoneburner, written record 20/6/72.

²⁷⁶ To A Giardelli 29/9/66; N. Cleverdon interviewed 26/4/95.

²⁷⁷ To N. Sanders 11/6/72.

²⁷⁸ To W. Cookson 31/7/72; P. Orr to H. Grisewood 1/8/72. 8/8/72; C. Collins interviewed 25/6/89; P. Orr interviewed 2/6/86.

²⁷⁹ P. Orr to H. Grisewood 20/6/72.

²⁸⁰ P. Orr to H. Grisewood 20/6/72; DJ in conversation with T. Stoneburner, written record 30/8/72; to V. Wynne-Williams 21/1/73; to H. Grisewood 11/9/72, 6/10/72; .P. Orr to H. Grisewood 4/1/73, 19/12/73.

²⁸¹ DJ in conversation with author 24/8/72.

²⁸² To H. Grisewood 31/3/72.

²⁸³ To H. Grisewood 15-24/4/72.

²⁸⁴ To H. Grisewood 22/3/72.

²⁸⁵ To Sutherland 6/12/57.

286. H. Grisewood interviewed 16 June 1989.

287. H. Grisewood interviewed 16/6/89; S. Honeyman to Ben Jones 13/9/73.

288 To H. Grisewood 9/9/71; 24/8/70.

²⁸⁹ P. du Sautoy to Eric White 10/9/70; Charles Osborne to C Monteith 18/9/72, Stuart Hampshire interviewed 22/1/89.

²⁹⁰ W. Cookson to DJ 29/9/71; P du Sautoy to DJ 27/7/71; P du Sautoy to W. Cookson 27/7/71; P. du Sautoy to DJ 17/11/72; P du Sautoy to DJ 27/9/72.

²⁹¹ To R. Hague 14/12/73.

²⁹². To H. Grisewood 12/1/74; to R. Hague 2/5/74; V. Wynne-Williams interviewed 25/9/89; to R. Hague 11/8/74.

²⁹³. M. Grisewood interviewed 24/6/89; H. Grisewood interviewed 883; M Grisewood interviewed 24/6/89; to S. Lewis 12 Oct 1971.

294. To H. Grisewood 29/12/72; A. Malan to author 29/7/89; to W. Cookson 24/7/72 LC 131.

²⁹⁵ to W. Cookson 31/7/72; to P du Sautoy 22/7/72; 'Fragments of an Attempted Autobiographical Writing,' 96.

296 T. Stoneburner, written account.

²⁹⁷ To V. Wynne-Williams 27/1/74; to T. Stoneburner 22/1/74.

²⁹⁸ P. Orr interviewed 2/6/86.

²⁹⁹ To R. Hague 26/2/74; M. Elkin interviewed summer/85; S. Wright interviewed 27/6/86.

³⁰⁰ P. Orr interviewed 2/6/86; to W. Cookson 24/3/74; to R. Hague 26/2/74.

³⁰¹ To T. Hyne 19/6/74; to V. Wynne-Williams 7/7/74.

³⁰² S. and M. Balme interviewed 17/6/90; to R. Hague 27/9/74, 3/8/74, 9-15/6/73, 27/9/74.

³⁰³ To V. Wynne-Williams 2/7/74; to R. Hague 19/6/74, 26/2/74, 2/5/74, 18/5/74, 24/6/74.

304. To R. Hague 2/5/74; Sr. M. Philippa to author 14/5/86; P. Kelly interviewed 9/6/86.

³⁰⁵ P. Orr, 'Mr Jones, Your Legs are Crossed', 123; to R. Hague 2/5/74; to V. Wynne-Williams 7/2/74; to R. Hague 9-11/6/74; to R. Hague 9-11/6/74.

³⁰⁶ To V. Wynne-Williams 7/2/74; Bernard Wall in conversation with Stoneburner, written record 4/6/69; to S. Lewis 27/4/74.

³⁰⁷ N. Sanders to P du Sautoy 2/12/72; to S. Honeyman 4/6/74; to R. Hague 19/6/74, 3/8/74; to V. Wynne-Williams 7/7/74; S. Dayras interviewed 9/89.

³⁰⁸ To S. Honeyman 4/6/74; to R. Hague 3/8/74, 11/8/74.

³⁰⁹ A. Giardelli to author 15/2/93; A Giardelli interviewed 8/6/86/

³¹⁰ *LC* pp. 147, 146.

311. P. Hills, 'The Romantic Tradition in Jones Jones,' MAstors Thesis, typescript.

³¹² T. Burns, 'David Jones', *Tablet*, 2 Nov. 1974; S. Wright interviewed 27/6/86.

³¹³ A. Beresford, "A Friendship with David Jones--a personal account," typescript n.d.; H. Grisewood interviewed 6/5/93; M. Richey to R. Hague 5/11/74; M. Bulbrook interviewed 28/6/88.

³¹⁴ M. Elkin interviewed summer/85.

315. H. Grisewood interviewed 8/83; T. Burns, *The Use of Memory*, p. 167; M. Richey interviewed 18/6/89; M. Cochrane interviewed 20/6/88; T. Powell interviewed 30/4/93; P. du Sautoy interviewed 23/6/88; Cathie Collins interviewed 25/6/89; B. Moray interviewed 6/85; P. Levi interviewed 17/2/91; K. Clark to H. Grisewood 7/8/53, 2/6/75; Henry Moore to Paul Hills 21/4/80; P. Hagreen to T. Stoneburner, 6/11/74.

³¹⁶ S. Honeyman, interviewed by Peter Orr, typescript. n.d.; S. Honeyman interviewed 1/5/95.

Abbreviations for works by David Jones

- A *The Anathemata*. London: Faber and Faber, 1972.
- IP *In Parenthesis*. London: Faber and Faber 1978.
- DG *The Dying Gaul*, ed. Harman Grisewood. London: Faber and Faber, 1978.
- DGC *Dai Greatcoat*, ed. René Hague. London: Faber and Faber, 1980.
- EA *Epoch and Artist*, ed. Harman Grisewood. London: Faber and Faber, 1959.
- IN *Inner Necessities*, ed. Thomas Dilworth. Toronto: Anson-Cartwright, 1984.
- LF *Letters to a Friend*, ed. Aneirin Talfan Davies. Swansea: Christopher Davies, 1980.
- LVW *Letters to Vernon Watkins* ed. Ruth Pryor. Cardiff: University of Wales, 1976.
- RQ *The Roman Quarry*, ed. Harman Grisewood and René Hague. London: Agenda Editions, 1981.
- SL *The Sleeping Lord*. London: Faber and Faber, 1974.
- WP *Wedding Poems*, ed. Thomas Dilworth. London: Enitharmon, 2002.

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Chute, T. S. Eliot, Philip Haggren, Stanley Honeyman, Stuart Pigott, Kathleen Raine, Nancy Sanders, Richard Shirley-Smith, and Tony Stoneburner are in the National Library of Wales—though when I read or copied them, they were in private hands.

The most important published biographical sources are René Hague's *Dai Greatcoat* (1980) and William Blissett's *The Long Conversation* (1981). Information from Blissett's visits to Jones that I shared comes, unless otherwise specified, from my memory of them, which sometimes differs slightly from his.

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Illustrations

The illustrations in this on-line biography that are also included in the Cape text are listed there with sources and attributions. Listed below are only the illustrations new to this expanded, online text. Abbreviations: D.C., Douglas Cleverdon, *Engravings of David Jones* (Clover Hill, 1981), Cleverdon estate; TG, Tate Gallery; TEDJ, Trustees of the Estate of David Jones; NLW, National Library of Wales; NMW, National Museum of Wales; NPG, National Portrait Gallery; TA, Tate Archive.

Cover: David Jones 1926 by G. Methven Brownlee

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9. David Jones, *Lion*, 1903-4, NLW.
11. David Jones, Christmas Card, 1908, NLW.
13. Brockley Road School, c. 1900, Lewisham Library.

14. David Jones, *Cantata in Aid of Sports Fund*, Christmas 1905, NLW.
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7. B Company, 15th Battalion (London Welsh) Royal Welch Fusiliers (23rd Foot), 1915, NLW.
8. 'Just before going to France, 1915', NLW.
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14. Happy Valley, early July 1916. NLW.
15. Mametz Village with roller in lower left corner, *Illustrated London News*, 22 July 1916
16. Mametz Wood in the distance, early July 1916, NLW.
17. Battlefied, 10 July 1916, field survey map adapted by T. Dilworth.

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4. Jones on leave, October 1916, NLW.
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6. David Jones, 'the mill at Neuve Eglise which we used as an OP for spotting gun flashes etc.—the building in the foreground is the estaminet, TEDJ.
7. David Jones, Theodolite, 1917, TEDJ.
8. David Jones, 'Is there peace?' NLW.
9. David Jones, 'Germany and Peace,' the *Graphic*, January 1917.
10. David Jones, Salvage map, March 1917, NLW.
11. David Jones, 'Nov. 1916 rats shot during the pulling down of an old dug out in Ploegsteert Wood D.J.', NLW.
12. David Jones, Self-portrait, 1917, TEDJ.
13. David Jones, 'The [Ypres] Salient Harry Cook asleep 1917', TEDJ.
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15. Home on leave, 1917, NLW.
16. David Jones, 'N.W. of Ypres. (*probably* Elverdinghe church) Flanders 1917, TEDJ.
17. David Jones, 'The Wrack of War,' The *Graphic*, December 1917.
18. Eileen Gregg, Limerick, 1918, NLW.
19. David Jones, 'Francis Salkeld Salkeld, *Limerick Aug 1918*, TEDJ.
20. Eileen Gregg, Limerick, 1918, NLW.
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22. David Jones, SIC SEMPER TYRANNIS, 1918, NLW.

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4. David Jones *The Reclaimers*, 1919. Robin Ironside, ed., *David Jones* (Penguin, 1948), original lost.
10. Wroxeter Inscription, AD 129-30,
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16. Sts Joseph and Dominic, 1921, D.C..
18. Greenwich, '1921, David Michael J', TA.

19. 'Fr Bernardine at Brockley', TA.

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4. David Jones, *S Gregory who sent S. Augustine to England*, 1922. Robin Ironside, ed., *David Jones*.

5. David Jones, *The Garden Path*, 1922. Paul Hills, *David Jones* (London; Tate, 1981)

6. David Jones, Ditchling door latches. 1922. Ditchling Museum.

7. David Jones, Puppets, 1922, Bethnel Green Museum of Childhood.

8. David Jones, *Honour thy Father*, 1922. D.C

10. David Jones, *Candlemas*, 1923. D.C.

12. C.C. Martindale SJ, 1927, NPG.

15. David Jones, *Mater Inviolata*, 1923, private collection.

16. David Jones, Landscape, 1923. D. C.

17. *Girl's Head* (Petra Gill), 1923, private collection.

18. *St. Dominic*, 1923, TEDJ.

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24. David Jones, *The Crucifixion*, 1924. D.C.

26. David Jones *Petra Helen*, Feast of St. Thomas, 1924, private collection.

27. David Jones, *Octavia*, 1924, D.C.

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5. David Jones, Inscription in *Religio Poetae*, 1924, NLW.

7. David Jones, *Sanctus Chritus de Capel-Y-Ffin*, 1925, private collection.

8. David Jones, Mural, Capyl-y-ffin, 1925, photo NLW

9. David Jones, Tabernacle door, 1925 photo 1970s, Agenda (Spring-Summer 1967).

10. David Jones, *Y Tympa*, 1925, D.C.

11. David Jones. *The Lancers*, 1925, D.C.

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13. David Jones, *Tenby from Caldey Island*, 1925, private collection.

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19. David Jones, *Helena*, front, 1925, private collection.
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22. David Jones, *'He frees the waters,'* Christmas, 1925, private collection.
23. David Jones, *Honddu River Fach*, private collection.
24. David Jones, *Waterfall, Afon Honddu Fach*, 1926. Whitworth Gallery, U. of Manchester.
26. David Jones, *The Maid at No. 37*, 1926, NMW.
27. Dog on the Sofa, 1926, NMW.
34. David Jones, Vignette for *Llyfr y Pregeth-wr*, 1927, D.C.
36. David Jones, *Deluge 2*, 1927. Rept. Clover Hill Editions, 1977.
37. David Jones, *Deluge 9*, 1927. Rept. Clover Hill Editions, 1977.
38. David Jones, *Mr. Gill's Hay Harvest*, 1926, T.L. Taylor.
40. *The Artist*, 1927, D.C.
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42. David Joes, *Cabbages and Trees*, 1926, private collection.

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8. Villa des Palmiers, Fiona MacCarthy.
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12. Challet St. Vincent, Lourdes, author.
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19. *Dum medium silentium*, Christmas 1928, D.C.

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35. René Hague at work, c. 1931, NLW.
36. David Jones, *René Hague's Press*, 1930, private collection.
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38. Christopher Dawson, c. 1935, NLW.
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9. Ty Gwyn, 1996, author.
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5. David Jones, Study for Lancelot in *Guinever*, 1938, NLW.
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