



**V3** AN ATONEMENT



# V3/AN ATONEMENT

EDITED  
WITH A FOREWORD BY

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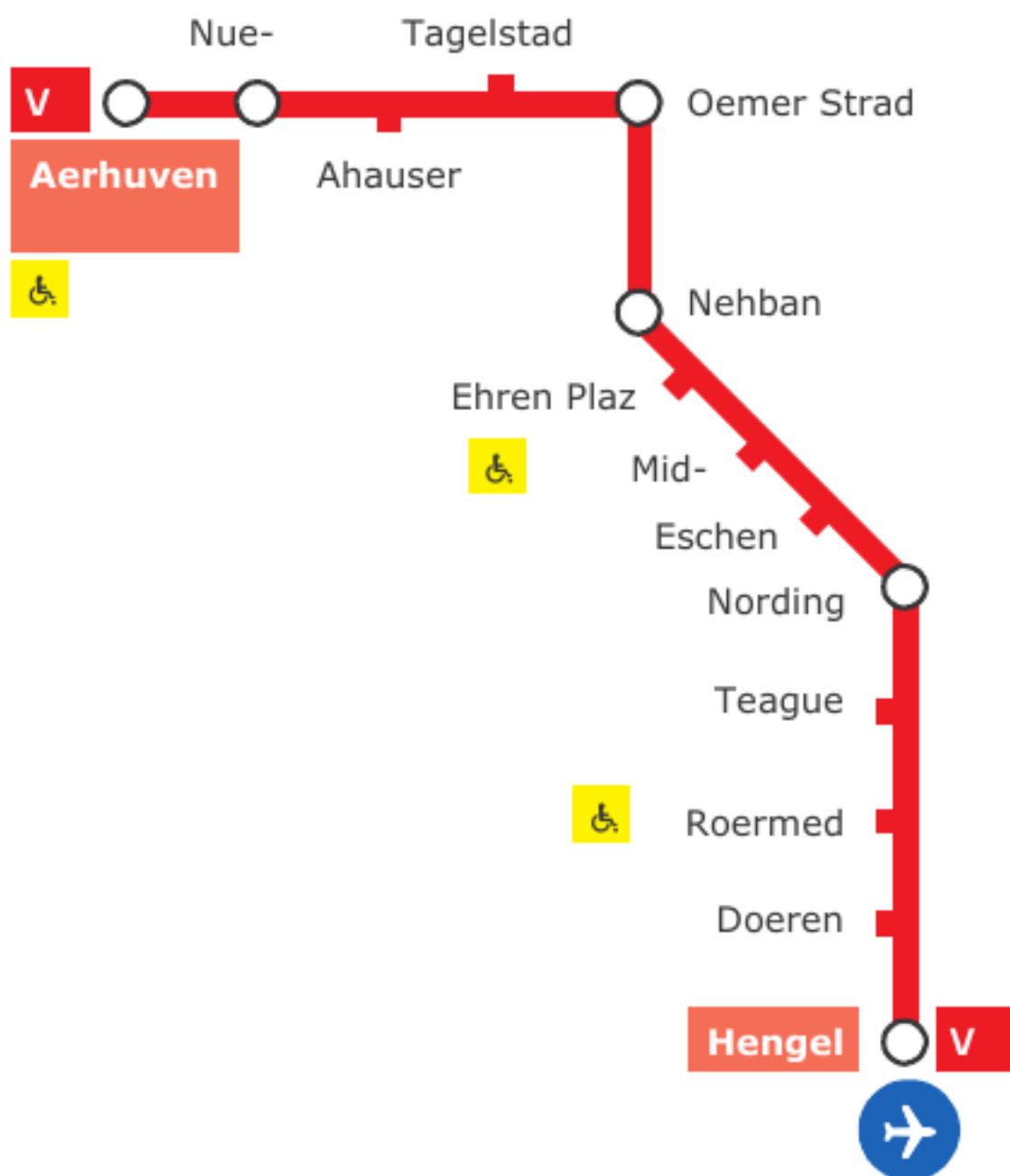
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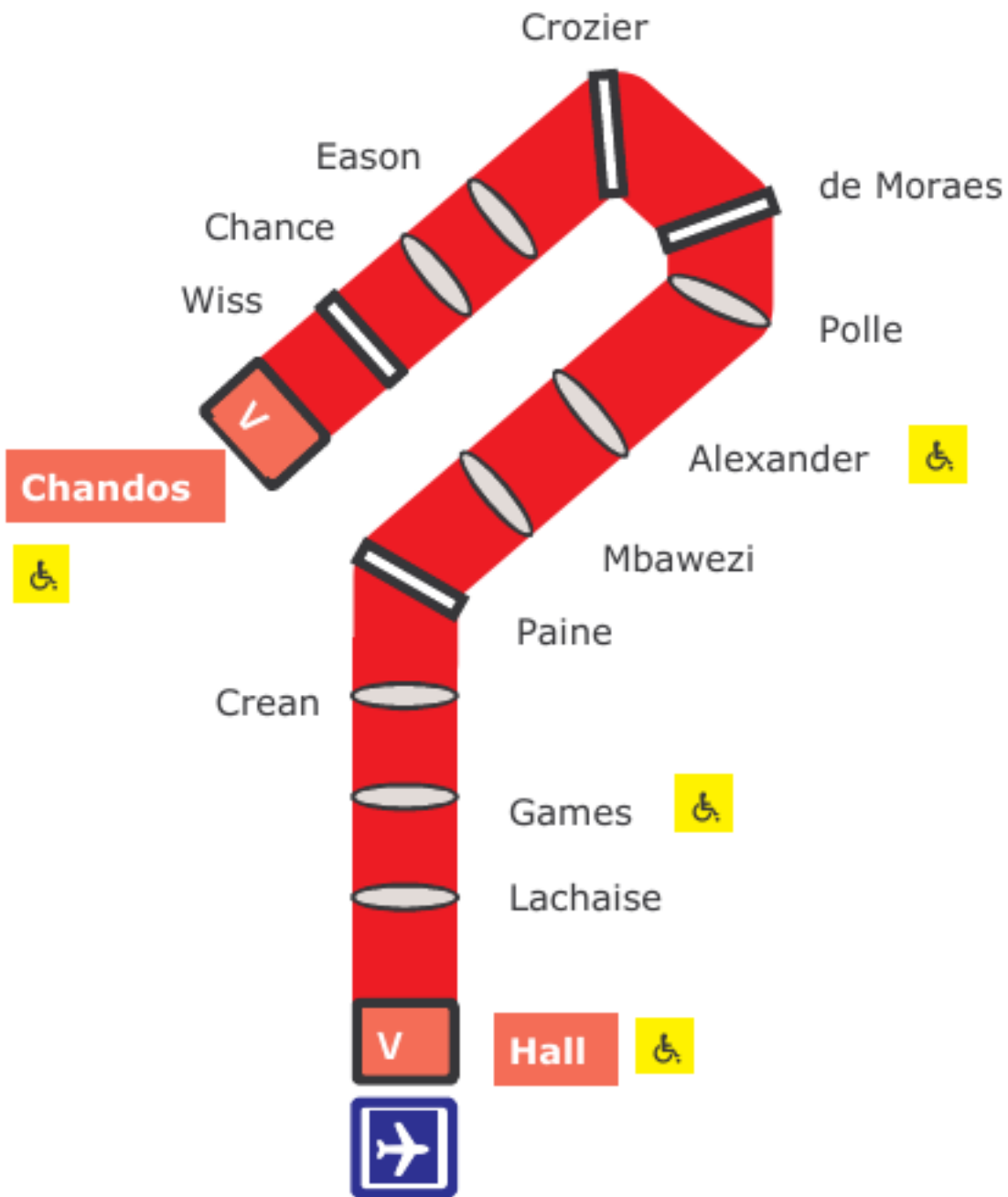


# Aerhuven Strad - Hengel



Anselm Koler's original map of the V3 underground line.  
First published in 1905. Updated 1963 and 1985. © AVB 1904.

# Chandos - Hall



Revised map of the V3 underground line.  
First published by AVB in 1999. © DSGC, 1999.

Chance

Wiss

Chandos

Foreword



The V3 underground line running along regular planes from Aerhuven Strad in the east to Hengel in the south is a figment of our city's imagination. In the same way that we live in a world in which all true circles and all straight lines can latch on nothing but our vivid conviction that they are everywhere around us, the solid geometry of Anselm Koler's map of the V3 is nowhere to be found beneath the streets of Ardis except perhaps in the placid minds of its passengers.

For although we may fondly imagine ourselves travelling from one terminus to the other along perfectly executed terraces we are in fact following strange, wayward courses that lie coiled in an altogether more compelling figure. The dark tunnels and buried stations of the V3 form a subterranean question mark almost the size of Ardis itself.

With the cinders of the last war still warm it may seem appropriate to some that the charred monuments of our city should conceal

a silent expression of doubt, an invisible monument to a nation that may perhaps never shake off the burden of its terrible past.

But the construction of the V3 was not some mysterious expression of remorse on the part of post-war engineers, rather it was one of the earliest products of an era of prosperity and optimism that is likely to remain unique in our history. Work on the line was begun in the same year as the first Ardis World Fair and completed only seven years later. The V3 was officially opened by King Victor III in 1904 and was followed four years later by the E2 and B4 in 1910 and 1912 respectively.

It is only with catastrophe already upon us that we can wipe away the ashes of our destroyed city to reveal the stark premonition of national disaster, innocently offered up by our fathers one hundred years ago and immediately concealed from view by the ideal lines of a young cartographer. But it would be strange logic indeed to imagine that had Anselm Koler plotted the true course of the V3

line instead of deciding on a feat of disingenuous geometry that the path to defeat and occupation might have been avoided. The destiny of nations is determined not by the wishful thinking of its maps but by ideology and religion which, in our own case, conspired to create a deadly insanity.

Yet it is hard not to consider the new revision of Anselm Koler's map of the Ardis underground as an act of atonement at least in part. Whatever influenced Koler's decision to conceal the true shape of the V3 line, whether the pure considerations of line and form or perhaps something deeper in the prevailing attitude of our nation in its blind advance towards catastrophe, the resurrection of Ardis' submerged question mark surely betokens a new phase in our relationship with our difficult past: a past of which generations to come will ask many difficult questions and one which will always stand in an attitude of distrust over our future endeavours as a nation.

As we have learned to our cost a culture



that uses answers to conceal questions instead of lifting them closer to the light proceeds blithely to its doom in the absolute and unshakeable certainty that it will prevail. Perhaps with all questions, even symbolic ones, dragged from their place of hiding future generations will not be so quick to blunder in the footsteps of their fathers.

It is the sin of concealment therefore, whether committed by Koler in good faith or in the full knowledge of what he was doing, that this collection commemorates. It may even be considered a *festchrift* in the young cartographer's honour. Although their subjects will no doubt be unfamiliar to the reader, many of the authors who have contributed will not. He will however find them utterly changed in their present company. The crisp, bitten cadences of Gerhard Chase for example, or the deliberately lurid post-war style of Charles Rofe lie buried from view in their contributions, 'Aerhuven Strad' and 'Oemer Strad'. In the same way that Anselm

Koler allowed the truth to be concealed by the demands of convention, all our writers have consented to submerge themselves in a spare, regular form stipulated by the editors. For in order to commemorate Anselm Koler we have assembled the obituaries of thirteen men and one woman who may in some sense be considered his peers, when taken together with whom he may even be understood as part of a movement in the world at large. Each member of this 'school of concealment' has been accorded a station of the V3. It is planned, not long after the publication of this book, to rename the stations of the line in their honour.

Glancing through this collection the reader will note that none of our authors have chosen to celebrate their countrymen, instead their subjects are drawn almost exclusively from the nations of our city's occupiers. No doubt this will trouble some of our more patriotic readers, who must now contemplate a public utility composed of sta-

tions name entirely after foreign citizens. But there is something altogether more troubling in this accidental feature of our collection of obituaries. In the last war we attempted to burst our charnel houses with the dead of every nation we defeated. In the peace that has followed perhaps we can still only conceive of them as *ais andren Lig*, 'from another place'.



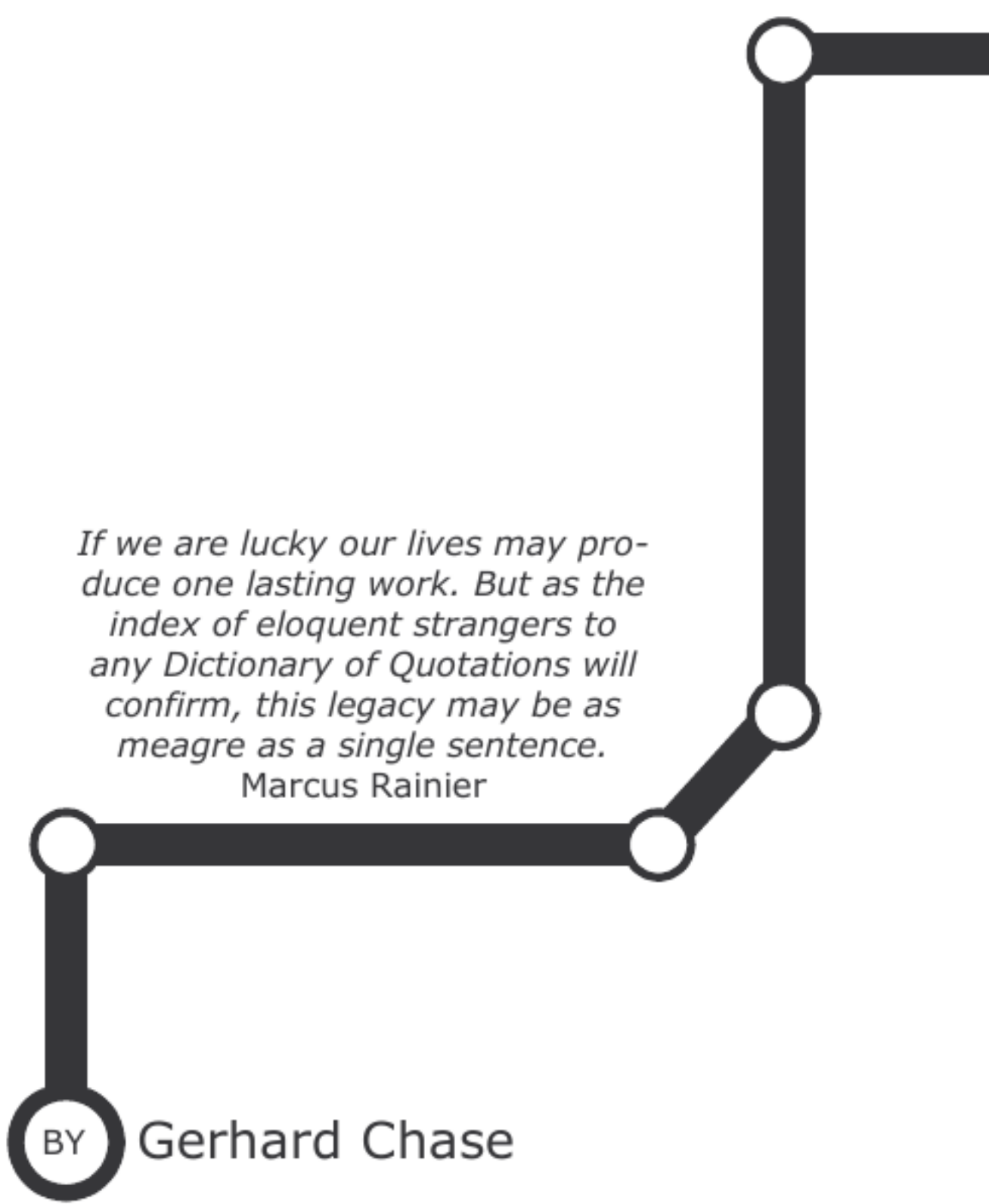


An Atonement





Maurice Chandos  
1934 - 1989



*If we are lucky our lives may produce one lasting work. But as the index of eloquent strangers to any Dictionary of Quotations will confirm, this legacy may be as meagre as a single sentence.*

Marcus Rainier

BY

Gerhard Chase

The passing of Maurice Chandos was not widely remarked upon. Notices of his death appeared in *Die Zeit* and the *Cairo Daily News*. His funeral service was conducted in the chapel of his estate and home in Gersthofen near Augsburg and he was buried in a modest plot near the north-western shore of the artificial lake created by his great-grandfather, Heinrich Chandos. His mourners consisted only of his staff of domestic servants and the potential legatees of his estate. It could be said of him that his life did not add to the wealth of his ancestors nor did it diminish it. Mr. Chandos departed on equal terms with both posterity and past; the world has lost and gained nothing by his passing.

Yet these public terms of honour are profoundly inadequate to the task of recording the life of Maurice Chandos and the manner of its living. The writer is not familiar with any historical person of any recorded civilisation who came to terms with

his life in the manner achieved by Mr. Chandos. Nor is he familiar with anyone in the world at large who is aware of the absolute singularity of this life and the rigour of its accomplishment. The purpose of this short obituary is to record, in brief but exact detail, the terms of this life and its methods.

The youth of Maurice Chandos was divided between his family's seat in Gersthofen and their vast cotton plantations in Egypt. His father managed to combine the responsibilities of running an industrial-scale textile operation spanning Cairo and Manchester with a consuming passion for lawn tennis, at which he excelled and for which he is now chiefly remembered. He was victorious at Wimbledon in the 1925 and 1927 championships and competed at a professional and international level until well into his fifties. Maurice Chandos was raised in Bavarian and North African homes boasting no less than fifty tennis courts between them. His father insisted that all his staff, both in Gersthofen

and in the family's plantations on the Nile delta, learn and play tennis as part of their salaried duties.

The eccentricity and innocent enthusiasms of Mr. Chandos' father were balanced in almost every respect by the quiet and loving solemnity of his mother, a society beauty who retired from the *beau monde* of her native country immediately upon meeting her husband. It is no secret that their marriage was untroubled by even the vaguest cloud of discontent. Maurice, their only son and child, was born after nearly twenty years of marriage and the three lived in a shared ecstasy until the death of Simon Chandos and his wife in the sinking of the ocean liner *Ada* during the Korean war in 1958. Maurice was 25 and it is said that he heard the news while tending to the birth of a mule in the family's new plantation at Al-Aqr. He returned immediately to Gersthofen and buried his parents alone, in accordance with the terms of their will.

Throughout his life Mr. Chandos received



no formal education. On his parents' death he could read and write with only slight proficiency and had little or no arithmetic. The responsibility of managing the family's huge estates and massive textile business was now thrown upon him with terrible force. His entire time was devoted to the study of letters and numbers and a gruelling itinerary of meetings with the boards of the mills in Manchester and Cairo and the stewards of the plantations and estates at home and in Egypt. Within two years Mr. Chandos had successfully devolved the running of the family's interests onto a single committee of trusted directors comprising captains of industry and the stewards of the estates. He himself was chairman, though it soon became clear that this did not oblige him to appear at board meetings. His direction of affairs was conducted entirely by correspondence, which he did without the assistance of a secretary. This novel method of management, though it has never been imitated, was extremely



successful and continued until his death though the committee's interests and personnel have now diversified considerably.

From 1962 onwards, four years after his parents death, Mr. Chandos did not leave the estate in Gersthofen. News from Egypt and Manchester was conveyed solely by means of quarterly albums of photographs and weekly bulletins detailing every minutia of current business. It was around this time that I entered his service, an appointment that I believe he intended to assist with the second stage of his retreat, though at first this was never unequivocally stated between us whether in person or in correspondence. As senior butler, I was entering a position of some responsibility and I am sure that my youth was the subject of many whispers. At the age of thirty I was barely older than my master and this unusual circumstance was, at the outset, the occasion of some professional discomfort. The matter was soon settled in my mind, however, when the exact nature of my

duties became clear.

After several months at Gersthofen I appeared before Mr. Chandos for my weekly report. He expressed satisfaction with the alterations I had made in the running of the house and felt he could now entrust me with the task for which he had appointed me. 'It may surprise you to learn that this will be our last meeting, Mr. Chase. The terms of your employ will not change though they will now enter what you might consider an unusual stage. From now on our communications will be conducted entirely by means of letter. To initiate this correspondence I have drawn up the exact details of your instructions which I shall now leave you to examine. I look forward to many years of excellent service.' At this, he invited me to a toast of cherry brandy, shook my hand and left.

The folio volume which he handed me contained the key to this extremely mysterious conversation. The life Mr. Chandos was to lead over the next fifty years was contained

almost *in toto* on these very pages. My duty was simply to ensure that he did not speak to or see any of the staff or any visitor to the estate for as long as I was so instructed. His only point of contact with the world was to be through me and even this was to be conducted via written communications deposited in the library of the west wing. For my part, these communications were to consist of the bulletins from Manchester and Cairo, reports from the estates at home and abroad, and any matters I wished to raise for his consideration. For his own part, any instructions he wished to convey, on any matter, were to be conveyed on the Sunday of every week through the pages of a folio volume similar to the one I was now examining.

The complexity of the task entrusted to me quickly became apparent and the first year was not without its failures. As with every great seat, the domestic staff are conveyed through the house by means of concealed passageways and for the most part the privacy

of the master is easy to ensure. The difficulty exists in maintaining the house in which the master dwells without coming to his notice. At the same time, many of my master's stipulations required a finesse of execution which only trial and error can supply. He required, for instance, that upon arising each morning his bath should be already drawn and awaiting him and that, upon returning to his bedroom, his clothes should be laid out upon his bed. Likewise, since his meals were to consist of several courses, a sophisticated choreography was required, in which he retired to the blue room, an adjunct of the dining room, while the service of each course was replaced and taken away in his absence. Naturally there were blunders; on several occasions Mr. Chandos encountered a member of the domestic staff in the performance of his or her duties. They were unanimously met with a stern kindness, no words were exchanged, and Mr. Chandos allowed them to complete their duties though not without indi-



cating a solemn displeasure. These incidents were never mentioned to me in his correspondence. I assume he accepted them as an inevitable consequence of instituting a new and complex order and trusted that such snags in the new machinery would quickly cease. Indeed, I am glad to say that after 1965 Mr. Chandos was not seen by me nor any human eye nor did he meet another human soul for the rest of his natural life.

The twenty five years of Mr. Chandos's solitude on his estate at Gersthofen are shrouded in mystery even from those who might be expected to have some knowledge of them. For my own part, I can only state that his weekly instructions indicated an interest in the welfare of his businesses and estates and in his later years displayed a growing attention to the upkeep and arrangement of the winter garden and the cultivation of its various flora. The traces of his movements within the house and the estate were often difficult to ascertain. Perhaps only

once a year one would notice that an item of furniture had been moved from its usual position or that the gravel along some sheltered path by the lake had been disturbed by his footprints. On one occasion I overheard a newly appointed member of the staff speculating that Mr. Chandos was a figment of our imagination, a proposition that gained no headway with his interlocutors who had seen the fragmentary evidence of his presence for themselves and one which required the unfortunate employee's dismissal. In truth, it often seemed that the years passed as if Mr. Chandos did not exist, as if his unmade bed and his finished meals were merely the effect of some disembodied agency.

On the fifth of May 1999 I discovered the mortal remains of Mr. Chandos laid out upon a couch in the library. He had aged since our last meeting fifty years previously but the character of his features was unchanged. His face was filled with an expression of calm

disapproval. His eyes, which I had the honour to close with my own hand, were possessed of a quiet light. In the grate lay a considerable amount of ashes, which I immediately recognised as the remains of a great number of incinerated papers. Before calling the staff to announce the death of their master, I decided to remove them so that they should not be a subject for future conversation. During the performance of this duty I regret to say that one of a number of surviving fragments happened to catch my eye.


I consider it my final obligation to a dear master to record the mutilated content of this incompletely destroyed document. In capitalised letters, written in a hand that suggested forceful deliberation, it read simply: 'To no purpose.'







Joseph Wiss  
1905 - 1984



*Every great novel conceals the  
world of another as yet  
unwritten.*  
Michael Roome

BY Tomas Mitra

Joseph Wiss, the little-known author of *Anna Karenina - Brighton Rock*, has died in Lisbon at the age of seventy three. A graduate of the Kunstler Hochschule, Wiss left Denmark in 1923 when still only eighteen years old and spent the rest of his life in exile. Inspired by youthful reading of Tullier's Barbary coast romances his early years were divided among three North African cities: Oujda, Tunis, and Alexandria. His migrations between each were seasonal and corresponded to the principal episodes of Tullier's *The Masts of Al-Wahir*: winter in Alexandria, spring in Tunis, summer and autumn in Oujda. He maintained this regimen until the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1935, at which point his annual stipend was finally withheld by his father's estate and he turned to a brief career of military adventure for subsistence. Enlisting with the Nationalists in Melilla, he fought the duration of the civil war with Franco's Moorish Battalion and participated in the sacking of Barcelona. With

Franco in power, he travelled to Lisbon and moved into an apartment on the Avenida de Cora. It was here that he began the series of books that was to constitute his life's work.

His first attempt at the novel form was abandoned in 1940, though he later published the remains of this apprentice piece in 1974 under the title *The Mayor of Casterbridge – The Man Who Was Thursday*. The character and method of Wiss's literary vision is already apparent in these early fragments where the Edwardian London of Chesterton's novel is submerged beneath the Georgian Casterbridge of Michael and Elizabeth Henchard - a narrative relationship that was to persist in his two later novels: *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy – The Murders in the Rue Morgue* and his masterpiece, *Anna Karenina – Brighton Rock*. Like *Karenina* and *Shandy*, Henchard is the only character in the work who has not been split between the 'master' and the 'slave' novel. The lesser characters of both component novels are woven to-

gether inextricably, but with the same unequal emphasis of the narrative. In this early work for instance, Henchard's daughter Elizabeth is suffused with the Marquis de St Eustache (Wednesday), while Farfrae is in part a rendering of the President of the Supreme Anarchist Council (Sunday) and also of Gabriel Syme, the protagonist of Chesterton's novel. For the first and only time in his career Wiss seems to have attempted a perfect fusion of both novels, an ambition that no doubt led to the work's abandonment. But in spite of its overall failure there are still many fine passages.

Chastened by his difficulties with Hardy-Chesterton, Wiss set about revising the scale of his literary method. *Tristram Shandy – The Murders in the Rue Morgue* solves the problems encountered in *The Mayor of Casterbridge – The Man Who Was Thursday* by changing the scale but not the relationship between master and slave novel. Poe's story is small enough to be buried whole in the

rambling acres of *Tristram Shandy*, while at the same time prominent enough in style and execution to transfigure Sterne's novel beyond recognition. The fusion of Uncle Toby and M. Dupin, Parson Yorick and the 'Ourang-Outang' is not subtle, and the novel suffers for it, but Wiss's transformation of the atmosphere of the Shandy household into the 'time-eaten and grotesque mansion, long deserted through superstitions in to which we did not inquire, and tottering to its fall in a retired and desolate portion of the Faubourg St. Germain' of Poe's tale is all the more remarkable for the fact that it is achieved without explicit alteration to Sterne's descriptive passages, merely by the infusion of the one work into the other. The novel was Wiss's first success, but its publication (under private imprint) was greeted with strained silence. The artistic miracle, his first complete work, was a commercial fiasco and he was forced to spend a year in poverty, making his living by



driving taxis.

Any survey of the life and works of Joseph Wiss must arrive at the same conclusion: it is *Anna Karenina – Brighton Rock* that is his true achievement. The work took ten years to complete and at one point occasioned a nervous breakdown in the author. In this, Wiss's last novel, the coalescence of post-war Brighton and Napoleonic St. Petersburg far exceeds in depth and detail anything achieved in *Tristram Shandy – The Murders in the Rue Morgue*. This time it is not in the seamless conjunction of the cities' dissonant details but in the creation of an atmosphere that describes both eras yet is peculiar to neither that Wiss triumphs. Although the 'master'-'slave' relationship between the novels is detectable upon close reading, it is nearly absent to the casual glance. The structure of *Anna Karenina* would have permitted Wiss to interpose the story of Pinky into the plot like a subsidiary Levin but his solution is far more daring. The final days

of Greene's protagonist are interwoven with the heroine's own, in Brighton-Petersburg Pinky and Karenina circle in rapid unison towards the same doom. This binary relationship, in which neither is submerged in the other, is only resolved with their deaths, when they become one and the same character and it is both that die beneath the wheels of a locomotive in the Finland Station. The denouement confirms *Anna Karenina* as the 'master' element, but it is certain that *Brighton Rock* cannot be considered a 'slave' in the same sense as *The Man Who Was Thursday* or *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*.

The labour of creating *Anna Karenina* – *Brighton Rock* exhausted Wiss and he suffered from nervous illness for the rest of his life. The novel sold only ten copies and was not reviewed in a single newspaper or journal. In his *Journals*, which have recently been published by Yale University Press, he recorded his intention on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 1958 to renounce writing for good.



Regrettably, he was true to his word. Even the revival of his work by critics such as Jules Clofort and Heinrich Selwyn in the early 70s could not encourage him to return to his pen. In 1982 he was awarded an honorary stipend by the Portuguese government.

He is survived by his wife, Clara.

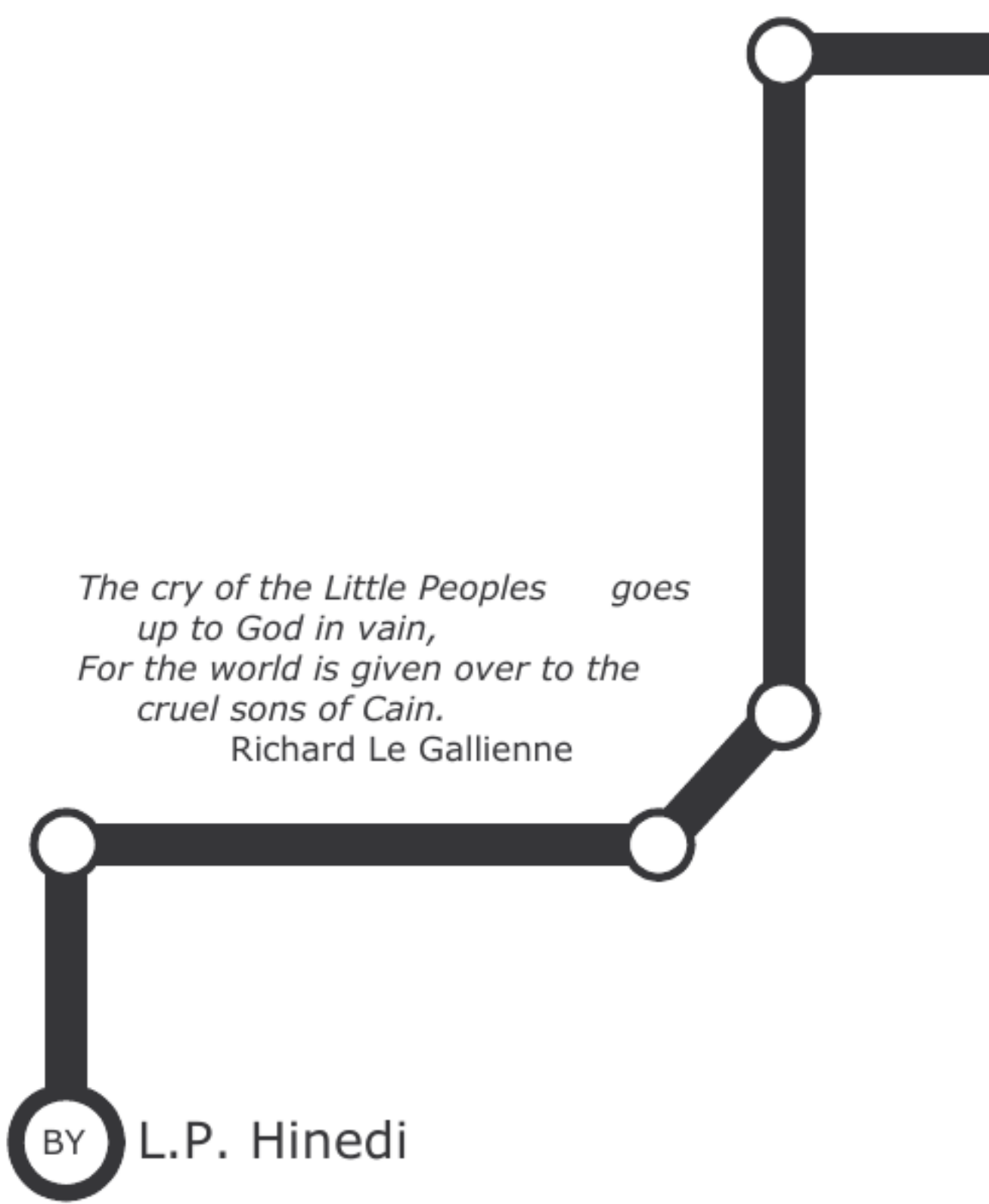


Ahaser



Keir Chance

1914 - 1980



*The cry of the Little Peoples goes  
up to God in vain,  
For the world is given over to the  
cruel sons of Cain.*

Richard Le Gallienne

BY

L.P. Hinedi

The death in Los Angeles at the age of 74 of Keir Chance brings to a close the career of Hollywood's most colourful and most important proponent of what is now politely referred to as the 'secondary character'. Chance himself had little time for the euphemism and in 1982 pointedly titled his autobiography *A Face in the Crowd-Scenes: Memoirs of a Film Extra*.

Born in Lukow in 1914 as Konrad Smíczye, Chance emigrated from Poland when still a teenager and arrived in Hollywood in the heyday of the B-movie spectacular. By the mid-1930s a typical working day in the Global Artists lot would find him wearing a toga before lunch, spurs in the afternoon and touting a fedora and tommy gun as the sun set. In his first six months alone, Chance appeared in no less than thirty eight features, including Joseph H. Lewis' *Shoot Down The Sun* and Henry Leibmann's chain-gang classic *Heels of Iron*. Over the ten years that followed Lewis was to be his most frequent

collaborator. In the 1948 release *The Angel of Rio Negro* Chance appears as a cowhand, undertaker, gunslinger and locomotive engineer. It is his voice out of frame that rises over the bustle of the lynch mob gathered outside Sheriff Dixon's jailhouse to cry '*Bob Thraxton is ours, Sheriff! Hand him over!*' In a career spanning thirty years this was Chance's only speaking role. He consistently refused Lewis' offers of walk-on parts and when Lewis assumed he was being bargained with found himself turning down the lead in the director's influential 1952 heist caper *Billions in Bullion*. Instead, Chance secured the roles of *Clerk #3* and *Man in Diner*.

The movie is generally regarded as his groundbreaking work. During the bungled heist the petrified clerk can be seen attempting to conceal his precious violin case from Branson and his gang. The pomaded moustache and arched, quivering eyebrows perfectly suggest the clerical dandy and

towards the end of the raid he can be seen stealthily completing some paperwork before the staff are herded into the empty vaults. The *Man in Diner* seen over Branson's shoulder as he attempts to blackmail Senator Redgrave's wife is an achievement of a different order. In the course of shooting, Chance ate almost fifteen steak dinners in a performance of furious, apparently unappeasable relish. According to Lewis, the display of appetite was such that the crew immediately broke for lunch when the scene was wrapped, although it was still only 11.30 and they were already two days behind schedule.

The fifteen movies that followed *Billions in Bullion* (released in Europe as *Branson's Billions*), seven of them with Lewis, form the core of Chance's reputation as a secondary actor. His *Shell-Shocked Lieutenant* in Walter Smith's *Ten Days in Paschendale* showcased his extraordinary physical gift, something he later drew on in Lewis' romantic comedy *On the Way to Arizona* where the misadventures



of the romantic leads repeatedly visit excruciating pratfalls on the hapless, bespectacled old gentleman sharing their hotel. His impressive repertoire of 'little folk' in *Shoot Down the Sun* and *The Angel of Rio Negro* meant that Chance was always in demand for Westerns, though he increasingly preferred to devote himself to one role per feature. The haggard sexton in Charles Macy's *Railroaders* and the silent, glowering preacher in Lewis' *Ten Dead Men in Santa Fe* are among the memorable creations that justified this change in method.

The decline of the studio system and the eventual bankruptcy of Global Artists in 1962 ushered Chance's career into a period of abeyance. The death two years later of Lewis and his wife, Marion, in a yachting accident off Monterey left him bereft of a close friend and collaborator while the discovery that Lewis had secretly signed a four picture deal with Concordal and accepted a number of conditions that would have effectively ended

his long association with Chance led to his disillusioned retirement from acting. Now forty seven, Chance established what he referred to with characteristic candour as an 'agency for bummed-out, broke-down B-movie actors like me'. Throughout the sixties and seventies he supplied cast members for networked television serials such as *The Burbank Bunch*, *Weston, Rancheros*, *Clancy and MacFadden* as well as supernumeraries for A-list and B-list feature films (the four hundred troopers storming Monte Casino in Bellini's *We Rise at Dawn* are drawn entirely from Chance's well-drilled ranks).

Along with many others of his generation, Chance's career enjoyed a late and brief renaissance when his work was rediscovered by the new wave of directors and critics that flourished in the early seventies. In 1975 he accepted the role of Robert Julius in Claude Zwelliger's unusual *hommage*, *The Extra*. Chance plays a spy who has mysteriously disappeared while on assignment in the city of

Darlis, a jumbled inversion of pre-War Ardis. The film's circuitous and highly enigmatic plot is resolved by an agent (James Aintree) who discovers clues concealed in the films Julius appeared in while working under the cover of a film extra. Seated at a terrace café, at the ringside of a boxing match, admonishing a young girl in the Ehren Plaz, Julius can be discerned mouthing the identity of the unknown defector, the double-agent who recruited him and a date and place which turn out to be the scene of an assassination attempt the agent endeavours but fails to foil. In keeping with the stand he made against Lewis in the 1950s, Chance's voice is not heard once in the entire film. The character of Julius (assumed dead for the greater part of the action) looms large throughout but exists almost entirely out of frame.

At Zweeleger's suggestion, and in honour of the multiple roles in his work with Lewis, Chance also plays Julius' *katopter*, a near 'double' sent by Julius' handlers to confound

his supposed abductors or murderers. Such was the perfect dexterity of this performance as an imperfect likeness of the original spy that one hoodwinked critic lamented that the versatile Chance had not played the *katopter* himself. Zweeleger's final touch in *The Extra* is elegiac. In the last scene, Julius is glimpsed boarding an express train. Behind him is Zweeleger buried in a serge greatcoat and black trilby and carrying beneath his arm a black violin case: a reverential nod from the last important moment in Chance's film career to his first.

Chance was not a man given to pretension or as he might have phrased it himself: 'ideas above his station.' The attention of young critics and filmmakers did not lure him back to a career he had abandoned nor did it deceive him into overestimating the quality or importance of his work. A devout reader of Gogol and Henry Green since his youth, Chance found the closest equivalent of his life's work in paragraphs such as the following



from *Dead Souls* (quoted in his autobiography):

Soon after this everything quieted down and deep slumber enveloped the hostelry; one light alone remained burning and that was in the small window of a certain lieutenant who had arrived from Ryazan and who was apparently a keen amateur of boots inasmuch as he had already acquired four pairs and was trying on a fifth one. Every now and again he would go up to his bed as though he intended to take them off and lie down; but he simply could not; in truth those boots were well made; and for a long while still he kept on revolving his foot and inspecting the dashing cut of an admirably finished heel.

Chance notes: 'The lieutenant appears midway through one sentence and has vanished forever by the end of the next. But as someone once remarked: "Thus the chapter ends – and that lieutenant is still trying on his immortal jackboot, and the leather glistens,

and the candle burns straight and bright in the only lighted window of a dead town in the depth of a star-dusted night." Perhaps in the distant future some unsuspecting soul will see my *Man in the Diner* and one day when he returns home will glance down at his supper and recall with a laugh the eccentric, infectious delight the anonymous gourmand found in a simple plate of steak and potatoes.'

His wife Susan predeceased him in 1978. He is survived by his sons Sean and Matthew.



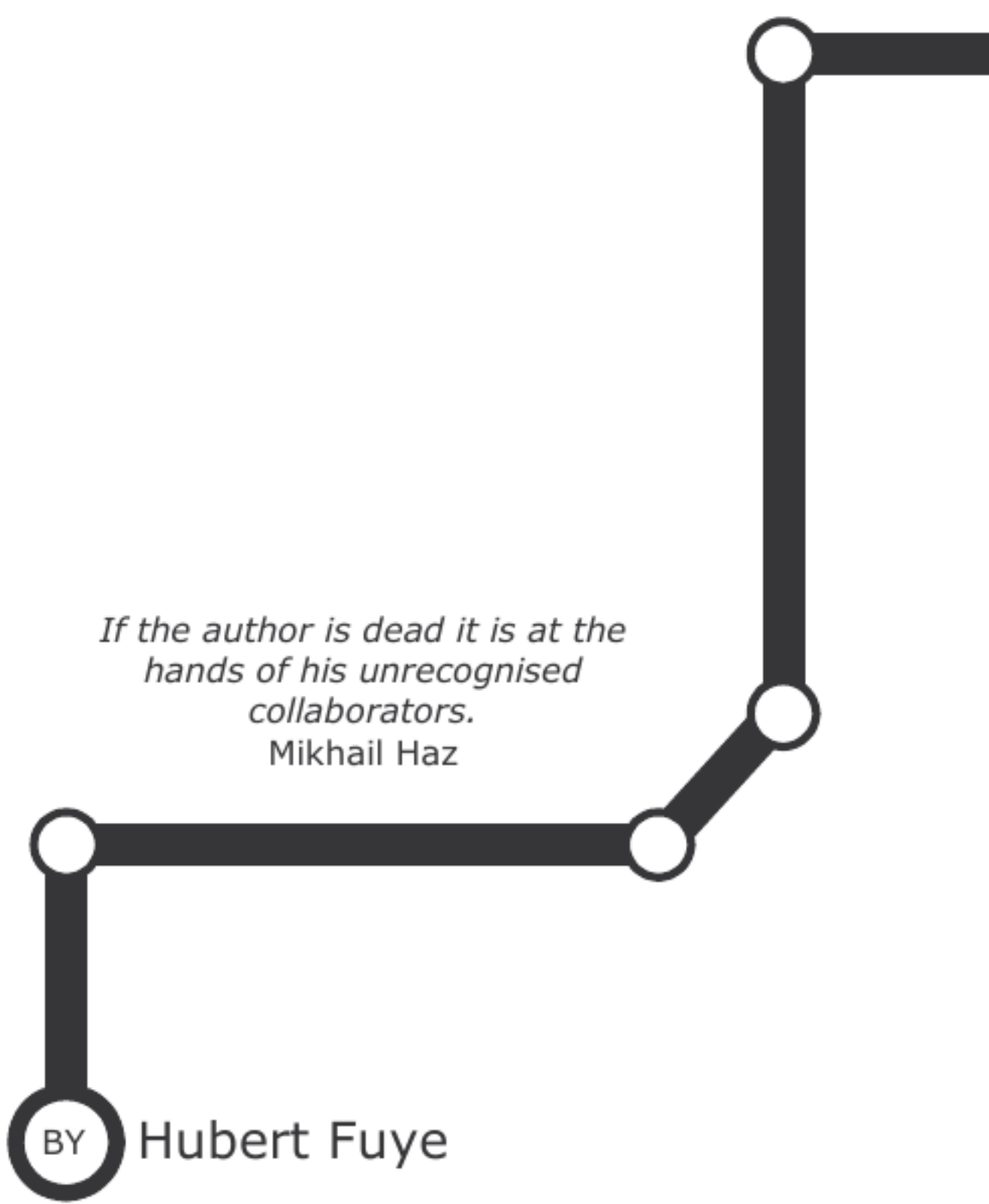


Tagelstad



William Eason

1896 - 1987



*If the author is dead it is at the  
hands of his unrecognised  
collaborators.*  
Mikhail Haz

BY

Hubert Fuye

In the spring of 1904 the poet and author George Moore received a number of unsolicited visits at his home in Coole from a most unusual eight-year old boy. Clad in shorts, a long-sleeved shirt and topped with a somewhat oversized flat cap the child would arrive at Moore's doorstep punctually at five o'clock every evening and, upon being greeted by whoever happened to open the door, commence a steady discourse on topics relating to the welfare of coalminers in a thick, though high-pitched Lancastrian brogue.

Oblivious to interjections from the household staff and even Moore himself, the boy would continue his disquisition on the working conditions enjoyed by his father, the legendary temper of the pit owner Mr Williams, and the tribulations of his brother's rugby club until, when his homily had spent itself, he finally turned to the adults looming around him as if opening the matter for questions from the floor. These enigmatic, almost oracular visits were repeated every

day for almost two weeks and it was not until the boy's parents, owners of the nearby Maugharish estate, were informed of their son's newly acquired pastime that they finally came to an abrupt, though welcome, halt.

In the calm that followed, Moore devoted his evenings to a novel whose researches and execution he had found particularly demanding. In late 1903 the modest result, *The Black Valley*, was finally published to mediocre acclaim and massive revenues. In the thick of this unmemorable work, woven around the fortunes of a working class family tied by tradition and necessity to the collieries of Davedfod, lies the portrait of a garrulous, irrepressible miner's son, inordinately fond of wearing his father's cap and the source of much of the innocent commentary that is the only redeeming feature of the book.

William Eason, who has died aged 98, absorbed the glory of his first literary venture at the age of nine in the involuntary exile of

Clongowes College, Dublin. He went on to repeat this success an astonishing nineteen times, in a seventy year career that spanned the fiction of authors as diverse as Raymond Roussel and John Steinbeck. As he remarked in an interview with Georges Perec in *Paris-Soir*: "Before reaching double figures I was in the happy position of knowing, with a certainty I had never thought possible in the chaotic business of the mind, the calling and future course of my life. I had not discovered my field of endeavour, I had invented it at a stroke." By the time he had finished his education in Clongowes, Eason had formulated the principles that were to govern his artistic life:

- (i) never to publish a single word committed to paper by my own hand or at my dictation;
- (ii) to change my personal circumstances, profession and appearance every three years;
- (iii) never to divulge the nature of my artistic undertaking to anyone but my parents, and should it be divulged by them to anyone in

any capacity, to retire immediately from life outside Coole estate.\*

When he graduated from Trinity College in German and French the force of the first article was expanded: he now vowed never to put pen to paper again (an ivory signet ring replaced his signature, his blank postcards were addressed with a stamp of Indian rubber). True to his second, equipped with Spengler's *Decline of the West* and a threadbare dinner suit, Eason took the postal boat to Cherbourg and travelled by train to the intellectual ferment of Vienna. As for the third, he admitted in later interviews that his parents blew the news of his wild enterprise all through Coole in the hope of calling their son's bluff but fell short of stopping his allowance. For a great part of his life he subsisted, when necessary, on the income of his family's estate.

The years that followed Eason's departure from Rosslare are astonishing in their diversity of location and artistic rigour. In Vienna he

\*From the foreword to *Persona Memoirs* (New York 1985).



spent two years living among the city's criminal demi-monde entirely in the character of a hunch-backed petty criminal by the name of Joachim 'Joch' Fischer. At one point he became pimp to his landlady, an impoverished seamstress from the Berghof ditrict, and was later stabbed by her aggrieved son. Since the young man had concentrated his energies on Fischer's hump, Eason's injuries were not serious but he was nevertheless forced to leave the city. He travelled to Paris and with the help of forged credentials acquired in the Viennese underworld established himself as Dr. Gustav Klein, physician and neurologist. Within a year his clientele included the Duchess of Gueron and the composer, Marcel Musset. Until 1916 Dr. Klein was a regular, though not conspicuous, fixture at the salons of the Marquise de Vel and even the Baron de Goncourt; his sudden disappearance in the summer of that year was noticed but not generally remarked upon. There were whis-

pers of a scandalous pregnancy of one of his young patients. In fact Dr. Klein had reached the end of his term in Paris: it was time for his creator to move on.

The three long years in Harare that followed Eason spent as the companion and valet of the eccentric millionaire Raymond Roussel. Their travels through the Horn of Africa and among the tribes of the Mendobo mountains resulted in both of them contracting polio. Although he made a full recovery, Eason's hair turned a shocking white and remained so for the rest of his life while Roussel descended further into the madness already richly cultivated by so much idleness and money. Towards the end of 1930, service with Roussel had become indistinguishable from slavery and after contriving a false suicide he took a boat through the Suez canal and travelled to London.

Weakened by illness and prolonged exposure to the dark continent and with ten years of apparently thankless endeavour

behind him, Eason now returned to his family's home in Coole. The whole of 1920 passed in despair and inertia. Eason rarely ventured beyond the bounds of the estate and considered abandoning his artistic career altogether. It was at this low point that a number of articles appeared in regional newspapers reporting the activities of an itinerant Presbyterian vicar by the name of Harold Williams. Claiming to be the son of an Egyptian merchant who had settled in Manchester, Williams had attempted to hold revivalist gatherings in a number of towns throughout Tipperary and Waterford with little or no success. His sermons attacked the gospels of St. John and Matthew and championed the case of Judas Iscariot, he provoked outrage by declaring cricket the only sport worthy of true Christians and at one gathering expressed his contempt for the epistles of St. Paul by propelling bibles into the assembled crowd with a cricket bat. The antics of the wayward vicar allowed Eason to

reacquaint himself with the satisfaction of publishing his work. Although an acknowledged nadir in his career, the burlesque of Williams still afforded him pleasure in his later years and he insisted on its inclusion in his *Collected Works* of 1972. The decision to travel to America in January of 1935 was partly due to the discovery of his imposture by the *Dungarvan Leader* but by this time, his confidence fully restored, he had already begun work on *Jay Gatsby*, the creation some regard as his greatest achievement.

The extremes to which Eason went in his realisation of the character and in his courtship of Fitzgerald as an impresario to bring it to the attention of the world mark out a terrain never explored before or since in his artistic process. The death of his parents in 1922 and the subsequent sale of the Coole estate not only provided him with an enormous windfall with which to see through his greatest work but also provided him with



the sense of rootlessness and loss that give the character of Gatsby its resonance. The courtship of Fitzgerald was deliberate; the profligate speculation of his years in Vienna and Paris led Eason to believe that his work there had come to nothing (he was only to learn of *Auto da Fé* and *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* in the late 1940's), so from Gatsby onwards his creations were directed at specific, though still unwitting, collaborators. His tenure in Long Island was brief and its end coincided with the departure of Fitzgerald and his wife, Zelda, for Paris. Their acquaintance had lasted six months and in this time they only spoke on four occasions. For two financially ruinous years Eason had created a world around Fitzgerald and his coterie of industrialists, financiers and drunkards that they alone were privy to. William Gatt, the scion of a family of mysterious but munificent wealth whom he utterly renounced and refused to discuss, resided in Long Island and from total obscurity

became known as one of the most lavish and also most reclusive hosts in Manhattan. He only appeared briefly at his own parties, there was talk about a failed love affair, his identity and the source of his wealth was questioned furiously in his absence but never queried to his face. With the departure of Fitzgerald, Gatt disappeared along with the clique that both had created and one would immortalise. Eason had received massive credit from English and Irish banks and was now bankrupt many times over. In an interview with Carl Jeunet in 1984 he claimed that the creation of *Gatsby* cost him half a million dollars, a ghastly sum in 1920s values.

As Gabriel Garcia Marquez once put it the thirty years of strenuous and diverse labour that Eason now embarked upon in the United States "seem to gather around his *Gatsby* like an illustrious but impoverished entourage". His Preacher Casey in *The Grapes of Wrath*, Johnson in *The Naked and the Dead*, and Falconer in *The Empire of Winds* all reflect



the straitened circumstances in which he was now made to forge his characters. In 1947 he broke from his work and lectured in the French department of Wellesley College as Martin Botekin. The imposture was discovered after only a year and Eason was forced to leave for Nevada when the Committee for Appointments threatened to inform the police. Though he repeatedly refused any claim to the substance of the character, it is hard to resist the justice of Michael Wood's observation that he must have provided at least partial inspiration for *Pale Fire's* grotesque impostor Charles Kinbote. In the fifties and sixties, Eason's work included Mersey in *The Cracked Bell* and Joe Bell in *Chronicles of Disappointed Men* but the relentless vigour and the appetite for dislocation and deceit that had fuelled his previous triumphs had begun to wane. With Gatsby and Fischerle in Elias Canetti's *Auto da Fé*, Eason felt that he had reached the limit of his powers and in 1972 he brought his career to an end with the

publication of the *Collected Works*, edited with a commentary by Thomas Portland. The controversy aroused at what was first thought to be an hoax was quickly extinguished when the Library of Congress took possession of Eason's immense archive. Running to twenty thousand documents, this contained a record of every identity assumed by Eason and legal and financial papers detailing his every transaction over the last forty years. In effect, the archive was Eason's life work since it linked him inextricably with the finished product of his creations.

Although he emigrated to Brazil in the spring of 1973 and lived there until his death, the rest of Eason's life was spent in the shadow cast by extradition hearings and copyright litigation north of the equator and on the other side of the Atlantic. The jealous estates of Steinbeck, Fitzgerald and Roussell attempted to prosecute Eason and the publisher of his *Collected Works* for infringement of copyright (in particular their

trustees' right to be identified as the sole author of their work). Meanwhile, a syndicate of Irish, British and European banks almost succeeded in returning him to the United States to face criminal charges but were eventually forced to settle for every penny and cent legally attributable to him and the entire proceeds of his published work. When the case brought on behalf of the literary estates of Eason's 'unwitting collaborators' was thrown out by a Federal court in Massachusetts, Deutsche Bank filed against each of them for unpaid royalties. After a number of appeals, the action eventually failed, and Eason had occasion to reflect in conversation with Emile Dorfheim that if he had known his creditors were to spend so much money on hounding him he would have lived as Gatsby all his life instead of just playing him for six months.

Although not penurious, Eason's circumstances in Sao Paulo were certainly humble. He lived alone in a small

apartment off Rua Soares and in his first few years relied on a small endowment from the Quevedo Foundation. But as the notoriety created by litigation gave way to respect for the achievement it had brought to light, visitors to 23 Rua Soares became more numerous and illustrious in equal measure. One apocryphal anecdote has Henry Lowell picking up a newspaper in Eason's apartment only to find it covered in doodles by Jasper Johns. In 1978 Norman Mailer and Saul Bloom travelled across the Andes to meet the collaborator they had not known and the former even helped raise a secret annuity fund.

The seventieth anniversary of Eason's birth, November 1985, saw the publication of a *estschrift* in his honour (*Persona Memoirs*) and the discovery of a previously unknown work: Henry Casey in *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Given the impossibility of foreseeing that the ten year old Joyce would go on to write the book Eason admitted that Cecil Thunder in the *Portrait of the Artist*



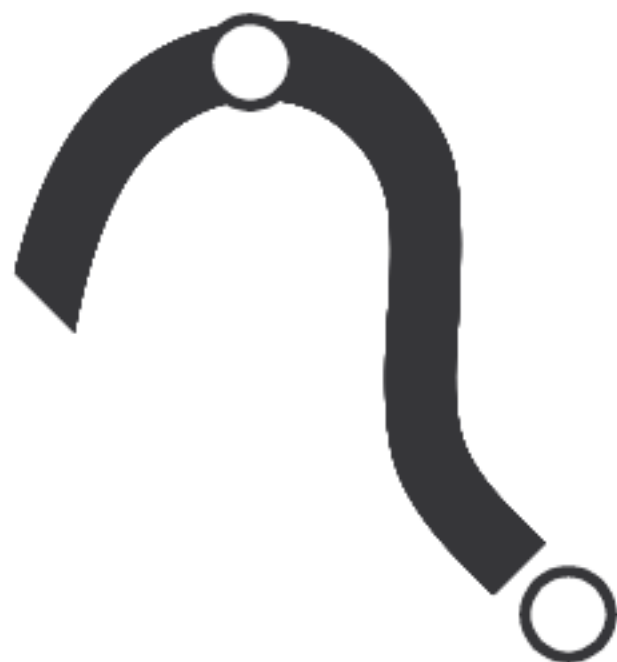
was his only truly naïve work, nearer to autobiography than fiction, an inadvertent self-portrait. Fittingly, the introduction to this newly unearthed piece was written by Elias Canetti, the last of Eason's 'victims' to register public approval and with whom he shared the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1981 for the creation of Fischerle in *Auto da Fé*.

He is survived by his partner Luis de Moraes.



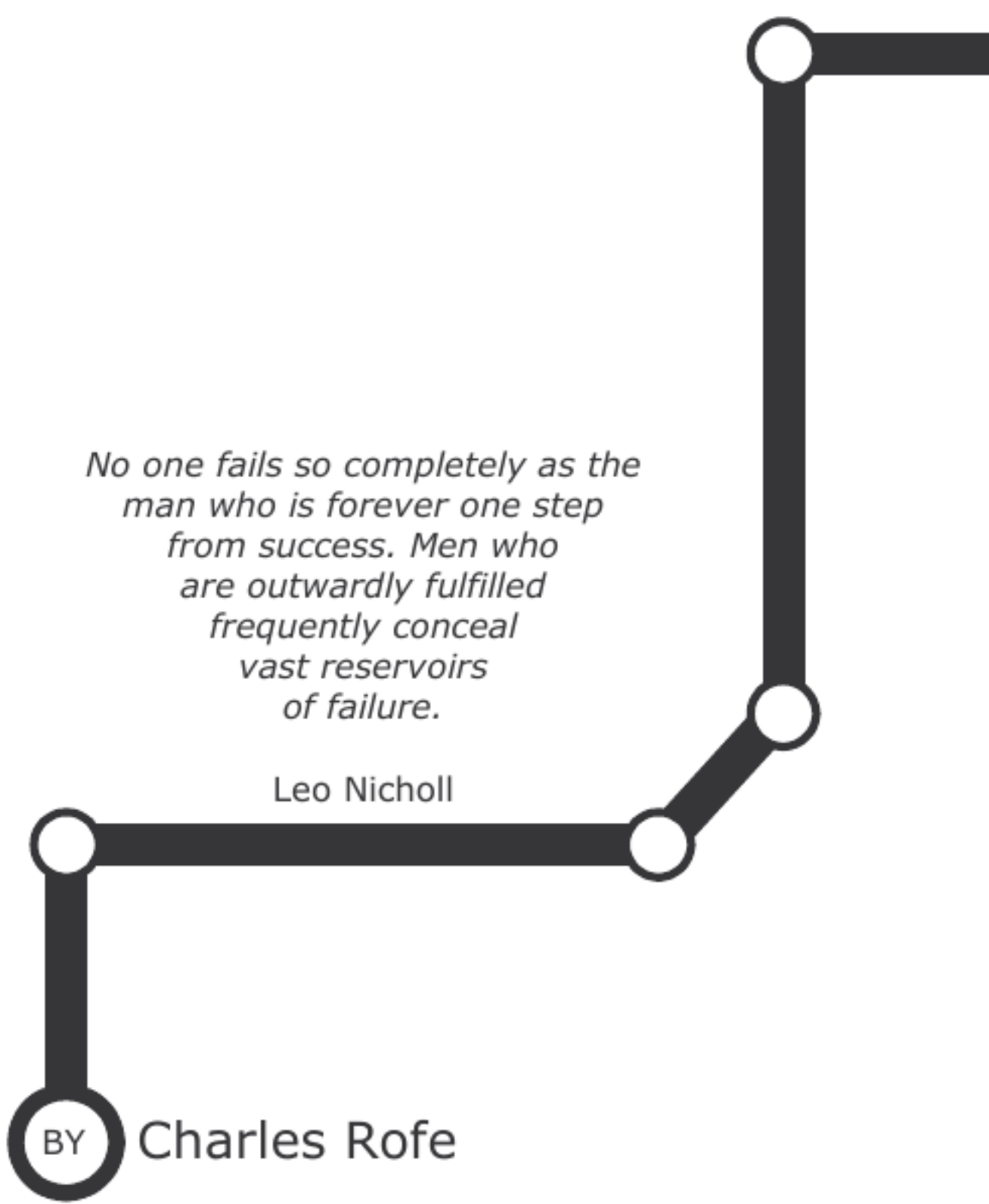


Oemer Strad



Laurence Crozier

1911 - 2000



*No one fails so completely as the  
man who is forever one step  
from success. Men who  
are outwardly fulfilled  
frequently conceal  
vast reservoirs  
of failure.*

Leo Nicholl

BY

Charles Rofe

Laurence Crozier, who has died aged 89, was one of the last surviving climbers to attempt Mount Everest before the Second World War. A capable skier and sailor, he was also a distinguished soldier, novelist, diplomat and boxer. In 1983, aged 72, he came heartbreakingly close in an attempt to circumnavigate the world when his yacht, the *Imperishable*, ran aground off Kinsale harbour.

Crozier was born in Uruguay, and educated at Uppingham School, Rutland. An avid rugby player, he was a member of the only Uppingham senior cup team to be beaten in a county final. After the Royal Military Academy and a commission in the Royal Engineers, he read English at Newnham College in Cambridge and took up climbing with the university mountaineering club in the Bernese Oberland. Crozier soon distinguished himself in several tough ascents of the north col at Chamonix and Aiguilles des Drus, all of which were thwarted by snowstorms, and in 1935 he was asked to join Hugh Ruttledge's Everest

expedition. Before departing for Tibet, Crozier competed in the Intervarsity Middleweight Boxing championship and was unlucky to be eliminated when Ben Stevens, later World Light Heavyweight Champion in 1938, was saved from being counted out by an early bell in the fourth and final round. Although Crozier had no Tibetan experience he proved a valuable member of the expedition and helped Ruttledge open the route to the east face and the modern-day final camp of the Everest ascent. The arrival of the monsoon prevented an early attempt on the summit so the expedition returned to Lhasa to sit out the rains. During the descent, Crozier's team encountered a moateng bear forced into the open by landslides. While Crozier clambered to safety up a nearby crag, his climbing partners, caught in exposed scree, were badly mauled and the expedition was forced to travel home one year early.

In 1940 Crozier resigned his commission in

the Royal Engineers and joined a Tartar Guards skiing battalion. The plan, codenamed Operation Winter Sauna, was to infiltrate and support Finland – then at war with the Soviet Union – via neutral Sweden. The day their advance units embarked at Malmo, however, Finland negotiated articles of surrender and was occupied by the Red Army. Postings to Tunis and Cairo followed. In 1941 Crozier was preparing to parachute into Northern Italy with a unit of the SOE when he was unexpectedly transferred to Montgomery's headquarters near El Alamein. Later that same year he was transferred again, this time to Singapore to open a commando training centre and launch a sabotage campaign in Malaya against the advancing Japanese. Little was accomplished and as Singapore fell in early 1942 he found himself marooned when, delayed by rioting crowds outside the British Embassy in Jangol Square, the last RAF plane departed without him. Although he did not learn it until six months later, the DC-11 aircraft was shot



down over the Bay of Bengal, taking with it Barbara Murray who, although she had refused to marry him, Crozier had passed as his wife so that she could be guaranteed safe passage. Detained in the notorious Qinjai POW camp until the end of the war, Crozier was put to work on the railroads and took part in the abandoned cutting of the Mihai hills, celebrated in the 1958 feature film *The Railroad Men*. Among the ranking soldiers depicted, he was the only officer whose name was lost in the adaptation for the screen; his personality and achievements are incorporated in the composite character, Major Dawson, who was in fact an invalid in the prison hospital for much of the events depicted and died of typhus before the Japanese surrender.

After the war Crozier returned to live in Dorset and after holding several senior posts with the Royal Engineers became a staff officer at the joint services mission in London. In 1954 he stood as a candidate for the



Conservative Party in the Cheltenham by-election. Although traditionally a Tory safe seat, Crozier's campaign was a victim of public distaste at the party's disastrous stand on capital punishment and he lost by a margin of only 703 votes. Disappointment was tempered by adventure when in the spring of 1955 he was appointed military attaché to the British embassy in Lima, a posting that inspired the first of his comic novels, *Trite Tropics* published under the pseudonym Marion Bentley. The *Tristram in the Tropics* series that followed brought some fortune but little fame. In fact Crozier was so little known that he was even the victim of an unscrupulous impersonator who married the London society heiress Julienne Chance in the guise of the popular novelist and was later imprisoned for defaulting on three thousand pounds worth of debts at Claridge's.

In 1970, after postings to Buenos Aires and San Salvador, Crozier retired early to Dorset where he acquired a passion for sailing and

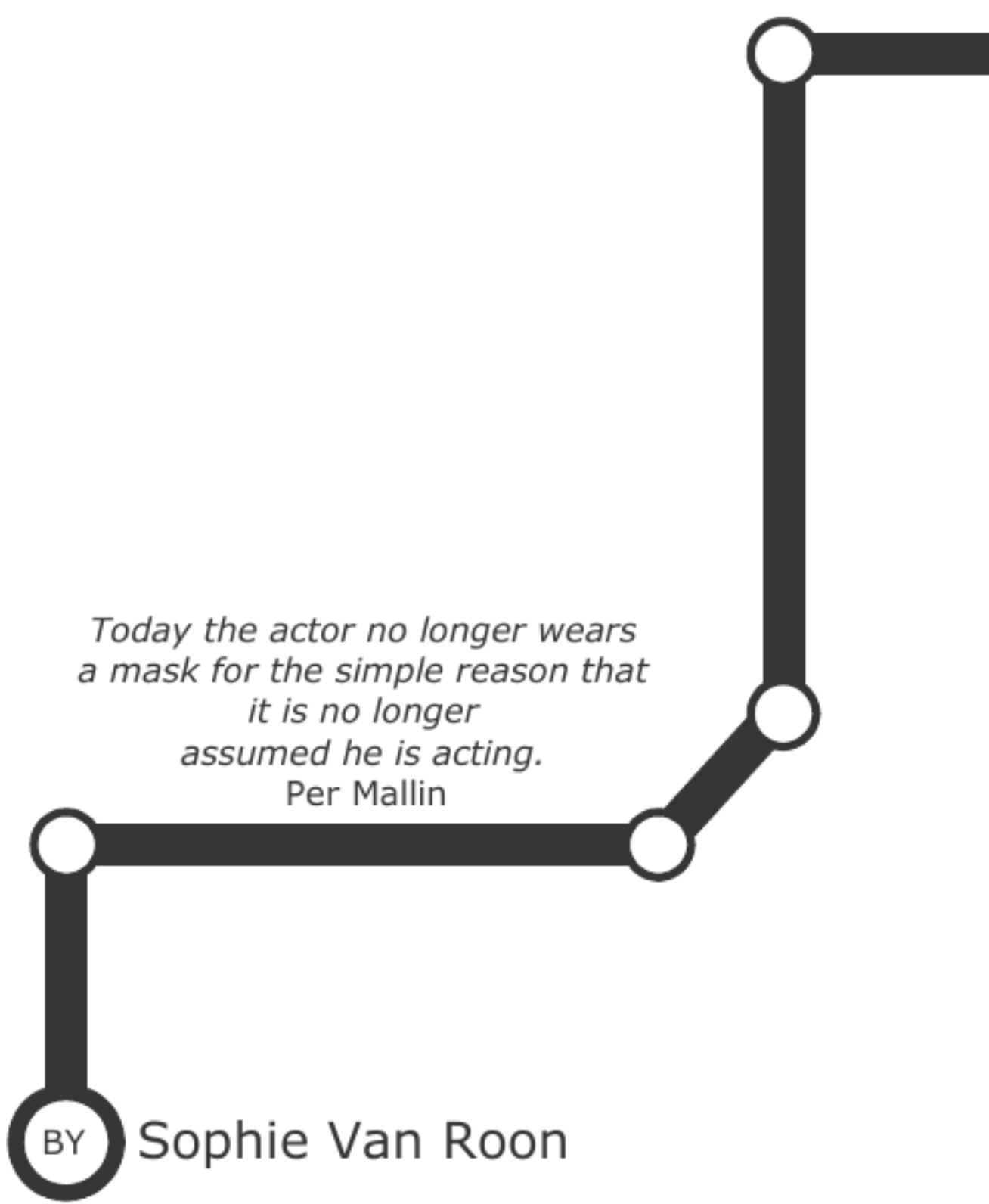
began work on a new cycle of *Tristram* novels. During this time he also wrote *Passion's December*, based on his relationship with Maria Tracy. Their engagement ten years previously in Argentina had been cut short when she returned to her former husband several weeks before they were due to marry. Indefatigable to the end, Crozier spent two years planning a circumnavigation attempt with his friend and fellow Milhai veteran, Lieutenant-Colonel John Chavers. Tragically, Chavers lost his life when their yacht capsized off the Cork coast and Crozier himself only survived because he was below decks at the time of the accident fetching their life jackets.

He is survived by his brother, William.

Nehban



Beatriz de Moraes  
1952 - 1986



*Today the actor no longer wears  
a mask for the simple reason that  
it is no longer  
assumed he is acting.*  
Per Mallin

BY

Sophie Van Roon

The Argentinian actress Beatriz de Moraes, who has died aged 34, devoted almost all of her short career to a single role: Juanita de Moraes, the 'angel of the *favellas*' in South America's longest-running and most successful soap opera, *The Stars Must Shine*. Although she never received formal training, de Moraes possessed an extraordinary natural gift; she could weep, sweat and even show convincing clinical symptoms of illness at a moment's notice. On one occasion Juanita, jilted by her lover Ricardo, took an overdose of sleeping pills and passed out in her apartment. When yellow lather began streaming from her mouth and she was seized by convulsions, shooting was abruptly halted and the crew ran to her assistance. Outraged that her performance had been interrupted, de Moraes stormed off to her dressing room and refused to emerge until the director, Luis Casfares, was fired from the set.

The daughter of a bartender from Tres Arroyos, de Moraes ran away to Buenos Aires

at the age of 15 and worked as a waitress and then a beautician before meeting Raul Borges in his night-club, *Coca Maracan*. They fell in love and, against the wishes of Raul's parents, were married the following June by Juanita's brother, Father Vasco de Moraes, in her home town. The early years of their marriage were blighted by the Borges' hostility to their new daughter-in-law. Raul was disowned by his father, a wealthy industrialist who made his fortune from Seviznaz skincare products, and without his support was soon forced to close the *Coca Maracan*. The couple quickly fell on hard times and he was forced into a series of menial jobs to support his wife and young daughter. By their second anniversary the young family had abandoned their apartment on the fashionable strip of Rio Clement and moved to Barrio Caron, a *favella* on the northern outskirts of Buenos Aires. De Moraes found work as a manicurist and as Raul resorted increasingly to alcohol for solace, her meagre income soon became the



family's mainstay. Had it not been for her captivating natural beauty and a chance encounter with one of her clients, the film producer Carla Bornita, de Moraes' story might have ended among the shanties of Barrio Caron. One afternoon, however, Bornita arrived at the *Westchester Salon* to find de Moraes being taken to task by a wealthy customer dissatisfied with her cuticles. De Moraes quickly dissolved in tears and the woman, shocked at the effect of her words, immediately relented, tipped her ten escudos and left in a hurry. The readiness with which de Moraes' tears dried up once her accuser had departed convinced Bornita that she had before her the makings of a star.

Not for the last time in her short life, de Moraes' world was to be turned upside down by a sudden change in fortunes. A stunning debut in Bornita's production *The Sky May Fall* earned enough to move the family out of Barrio Caron but de Moraes' fame exerted an

unsustainable pressure on her marriage to Raul, who was now working as a taxi driver. She sought refuge from his often violent temper and bouts of alcoholic despair in the arms of Francisco Guever, her fellow lead in the hugely successful feature *Forgiveness*. Their brief relationship ended when Bornita, who was also having an affair with Guever, discovered them together during a party hosted by Toledo Guazal and de Moraes found herself with a new enemy determined to undermine her career at all costs.

A romance with Guazal, who fathered Carlo, her second child, protected her from the worst of Bornita's machinations but his death after a heroic battle with cancer in the season of 1986 threw de Moraes back upon her own resources. Tragedy struck again the following autumn when Perdita, who was now 13, was taken hostage along with her uncle on a bus hijacked by a gang fleeing the scene of a bank robbery. Wounded in the

crossfire during the police's bungled attempt to storm the bus, Perdita died in hospital after a long period in a coma. As de Moraes was to later confide to her mother-in-law, she would not have made it through this heart-breaking time in her life had it not been for the reappearance of Raul. After she had left him, carrying Perdita in her arms, Raul had vanished without trace. Every year, however, Perdita had received a birthday card from her father bearing a Bolivian postmark. Reunited at their daughter's funeral, Raul now revealed to de Moraes that he had stopped drinking the day she had left him. Wild with despair, he had run away to Sao Paulo and joined a Franciscan monastery. Encouraged by the abbot however, he had soon found the strength to return to the world and went to make his fortune in Bolivia. After many years of hard, honest work he had established his own taxi company and he now owned property in Lima and Bala. De Moraes instantly fell in love again

with her reformed husband and Raul took to Carlo as if he was his own son. They settled together in their old apartment in Rio Clemente and while Raul set about establishing a real estate business in Buenos Aires, de Moraes became pregnant with their second child. But their happiness, as always in *The Stars must Shine*, was short-lived. Juanita, after twelve hours of painful labour, died in Raul's arms while giving birth to their second child. The audience of twenty five million viewers was the largest in the show's history.

Beatriz de Moraes, the youngest daughter of the photographer Lucio de Moraes, began her acting career while still attending the Carter International School in Buenos Aires. Evenings and weekends were spent on the set of *Each Day and Every Night* playing Rebecca Maluz, the troubled twelve year old daughter of Senator Juan Maluz (Jorge Caspares). A demure and withdrawn young woman off camera, de Moraes was required to play the



senator's daughter as a precocious and manipulative coquette. The ease with which she carried off the role caught the attention of the show's producers and after just two seasons of *Each Day and Every Night* de Moraes was signed up to play Juanita de Moraes in *The Stars Must Shine*, a soap-opera following the interwoven tribulations of three wealthy Buenos Airean families. The turbulent career of her glamorous *favellita* was rich in contrasts with the modest, often isolated life she pursued in the quiet suburb of Parlana and as *The Stars Must Shine* grew in popularity, and was syndicated in North America and Europe, de Moraes soon became an object of fascination throughout the Spanish-speaking world. But despite her ease in front of the camera, she was uncomfortable with public appearances and had tremendous difficulty with the fame that prevented her passing unnoticed along the streets of Buenos Aires on shopping trips with her mother. On one occasion she found herself surrounded by a

crush of admirers dispensing frantic advice on what Juanita should do with the errant Raul. Concerned for her mother, who had a fear of crowds, de Moraes dispersed her well-wishers with a stream of bossy abuse that shocked the elder Mrs de Moraes. Her daughter had to explain that this uncharacteristic volley was in fact borrowed from an upcoming episode of *The Stars Must Shine* in which Juanita finally confronted Raul's parents over their renunciation of Perdita.

As life away from the Gattopard studios became increasingly limited, de Moraes grew more and more absorbed in her work and gave performances of a conviction and subtlety that frequently put the arched eyebrows and cherry-lipped pouting of her less talented colleagues to shame. She now took full control of the character of Juanita and as well as contributing the greater part of her dialogue assumed full responsibility for her wardrobe and make-up. By the show's ninth season, de Moraes was arriving and leaving in costume

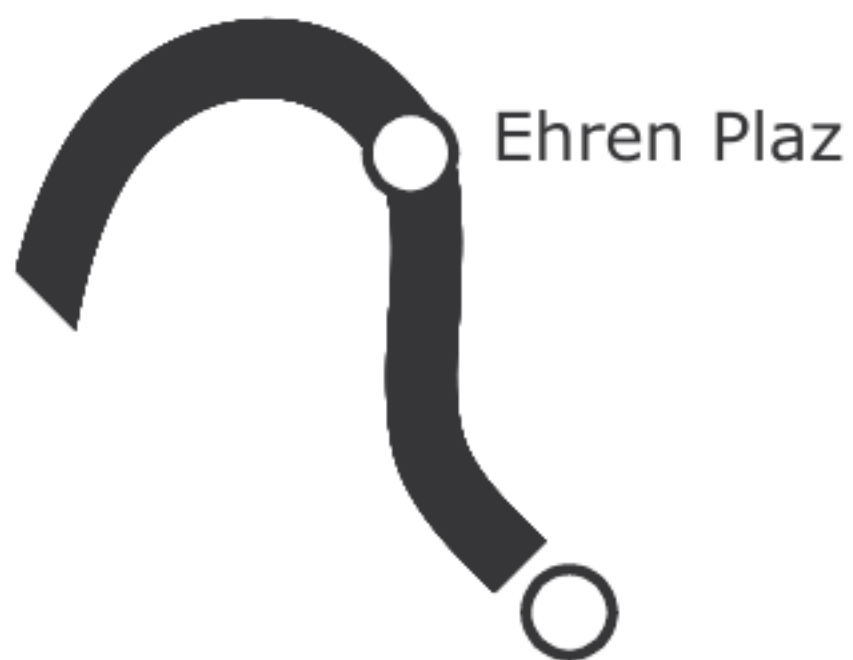


and refusing contact with her fellow actors except while in character. In 1983, after shooting *The Stars Must Shine's* 900<sup>th</sup> episode, she was rushed to San Remo hospital after collapsing in her dressing room. She had suffered catastrophic liver failure and remained in intensive care for three weeks, much of it spent in a coma. Her dependency on barbiturates, in particular the prescription sedatives Glacomin and Euphenol, was de Moraes' best kept secret and when, during the furore that greeted her long and unexplained absence from *The Stars Must Shine*, the details of her addiction were scooped by *La Tempa Argentina's* most enigmatic recluse quickly became its most beloved tragic icon.

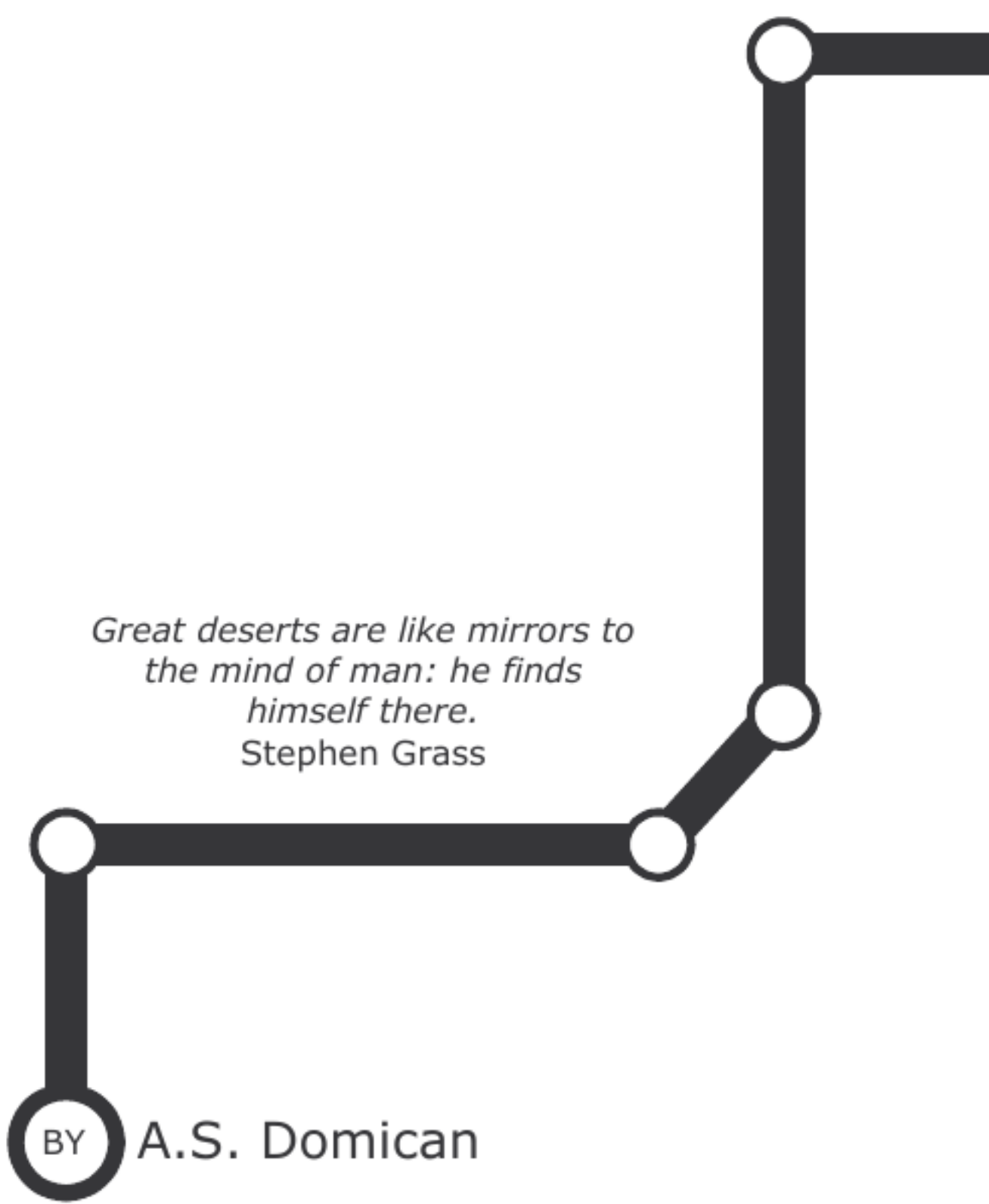
The audience that greeted her return in the summer of 1983 was the highest in the history of Argentinian television but, crushed by the shame of her public exposure as a drug addict, de Moraes had already decided that her career in *The Stars Must Shine* was at an end. After seeing out her contract until the end of the

show's 14<sup>th</sup> year, de Moraes appeared in her final episode on the 20<sup>th</sup> November 1986. The death of Juanita de Moraes during childbirth elicited an outpouring of public grief that was superseded only by the discovery of Beatriz de Moraes' body in her apartment three weeks later. She had died of a massive overdose five days before. According to newspaper reports a note was found on her dressing table but was destroyed at the request of her mother. In the face of fierce opposition from her family, de Moraes was accorded a state funeral with full public honours. The ceremony drew a television and radio audience of thirty four million, the largest for any broadcast in South American history.

She never married.



Henrik Polle  
1878 - 1990



*Great deserts are like mirrors to  
the mind of man: he finds  
himself there.*  
Stephen Grass

BY

A.S. Domican

As the longest-living surviving member of Edmund Soresen's 1913 polar expedition Henry Polle was one of the last representatives of the heroic age of Antarctic exploration. In common with many of his fellows, however, he never reached the South pole and it is instead the miraculous circumstances of his survival in the frozen Weddell sea, where he drifted alone for four months, that accounts for his modern-day stature and reputation.

Polle, who died aged 112, sailed from Malmo with the crew of the *Barner* in 1912 in his capacity as ship's surgeon. He had known Soresen since childhood and had required little persuasion to join his friend on the most ambitious polar expedition ever undertaken at the time. Soresen's plan was to traverse the Antarctic continent along the fifty fourth parallel, starting at the Luitpold Coast and meeting the *Barner* in Wuhsel bay three weeks later. An intrepid mountaineer and a veteran of the 1908 attempt on K2 in Nepal, Polle was eager to be part of the

sledging party but competition from Jensen and Horel, both of whom had extensive Arctic experience, meant that he had to settle for a place as a standby in the event that one of the three fell sick *en route*.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 1913 the *Barner* weighed anchor and set sail on an easterly course from South Georgia Island, 800 nautical miles north of Antarctica. The expedition encountered its first pack ice not fifty miles from Cumberland Bay and the journey to the Sandwich Islands and then westwards to the Luhsen coast was bedevilled by an unseasonable abundance of ice floes swelling and packing in the heavy seas. A voyage that might have taken two weeks in more temperate waters took the *Barner* four months. Charts of the ship's zigzagging course bear witness to Soresen's overriding caution at this early stage of the expedition, for although the *Barner* was built as an ice-breaker he correctly forecast that all her strength would be required when they neared land.



Within fifty miles of the Luitpold Coast, and after four weeks of terrible pressure, the *Barner* began shipping water on its port side. In fifteen minute shifts the thirty man crew operated the pumps for two days and nights until finally, when the ice smashed through the starboard aft destroying the rudder and engine, Soresen reluctantly gave the order to abandon ship. Within a month, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May 1914, the *Barner* sank beneath the melting ice pack and the expedition found itself seven hundred miles from the nearest human habitation and adrift on the perilous ice floes of the Weddell sea.

Ice Camp, which was to be the expedition's base for the next seven months, lay on a floe about a mile and a half in length and eight hundred yards in breadth. Stores salvaged from the *Barner* were reckoned to last them about a year and as the ice drifted northwards, sometimes at the rate of four miles a day, Soresen made the decision to keep to the floe as long as it should hold up. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of

December, with supplies of meat non-existent, Polle and Henrik Magnusson set out with four days' sledging rations and a Weston hunting rifle in search of seal and penguin. About five miles from camp they were attacked by a sea-leopard and when his rifle-lock jammed Magnusson was heavily gored. Grabbing a pistol from the sledge Polle managed to kill the beast but, despite an improvised operation on his companion's trachea, was unable to save Magnusson. With their compass mislaid in the panic, Polle now attempted to navigate his way back to Ice Camp. On the seventh day of his journey blizzards forced him to pitch camp and when he emerged from his tent the following morning he found that he was now adrift on a narrow floe about sixty by a hundred yards wide.

In all it took Polle six weeks to make his way back to the site of the *Barner's* last position. Southerly winds had compressed the ice sufficiently to make the floes passable and he had relied in his final days on raw dog meat

and cold hoosh for survival. To his despair, however, he found that the opening of the ice that had marooned him four weeks previously had provided Sorensen with the opportunity to lead his expedition back onto the open sea and make a break for Elephant Island. Although Polle and Magnusson had been given up for dead, Sorensen had insisted on lashing down surplus rations and equipment in the unlikely event that they had survived more than a month on four days' worth of seal hoosh. Polle found a note from Sorensen explaining their decision and giving Ice Camp's last known position. According to their sightings of two weeks previously and after steady southerly winds lasting over a month, Polle correctly surmised he was now only twenty five miles from Paulet Island.

The three months of solitude that followed are vividly recorded by Polle in his diaries and, as Dr. Murnes first suggested, 'portray a man who has lost his mind with total objective clarity'. His entry for the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 1915

reads: 'Awoke this morning with the realisation that I was no longer alone here. Did not feel disturbed, but comforted. Received a can of hot tea from my new companion, for which I was very grateful as my legs have become very stiff and immobile.' The following day Polle writes: 'Saw my companion for the first time today, though his face was concealed beneath the parka he borrowed from me. Again a can of hot tea was waiting when I awoke. Legs still very bad but managed to follow for most of the day. Realised this evening that he will do most things for me without having to ask. The only thing that troubles me is his silence and his strange habit of repeating what I say.' The 4<sup>th</sup> of April: 'Dark. Legs are now almost as bad as mine. Face black and frost-bitten. Must break camp soon or we will both perish.'

When he was rescued off the Larsen Ice Shelf by a whaling boat four months after his return to Ice Camp, Polle was still deeply in the grip of his delusion. The Norwegian crew of



the *Solmsted*, knowing that two men had been reported lost by Sorensen, at first assumed that both Polle and Magnusson survived but as the deranged state of their countryman became increasingly evident they realised his talk of a companion was unfounded. Back at the whaling station in Paulet Island he was reunited with Sorensen and the twenty other surviving members of the expedition and treated for severe frostbite. As his physical condition improved, Polle's senses returned and by early June he was fit to travel with the *Mordinger* on the return voyage to Stockholm. By the time they docked at Malmo Quay on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February 1916 Sorensen's expedition had lasted two and a half years.

Inevitably, in the storm of attention that greeted their return it was Polle's extraordinary tale of lone endurance that excited the imagination of the public. At first the details of his mental breakdown while adrift in the Weddell sea were kept a closely guarded secret. Public nicety forbade



weakness in its pioneers, especially the sort which could be construed as temporary madness. Polle's memoir of his adventure, published two years after his return, mentions only 'feverish spells, not unlike vertigo' and it was not until the publication of his diaries in 1948 that scholars, more sympathetic to the strain imposed by extreme conditions after two world wars, finally learned the true structure of Polle's 'vertigo'.

As Dr. Johann Neroy remarked in his definitive 1956 paper on Polle's stressful isolation in the frozen Weddell sea 'the remarkable experience of observing oneself as another person over a prolonged period of time is unique in the annals of psychiatric medicine.' He described Polle's condition as *paralleleia*, a state of dualised selfhood in which 'memories of one's previous actions are recalled as if they are being played out before one's eyes in the present.' In other words, when Polle saw his companion fetch him something to eat he was

merely remembering his own activity of some minutes or hours previously and then 'observing' it from his present point of view.

Polle himself was less than convinced by Neroy's diagnosis. Even in old age he remembered the experience so vividly and could recall his saviour with such clarity that he refused to admit the possibility he might have been 'seeing things'. When the full story was made public by the Norwegian press in 1957 he toured the country recounting his own version of events to religious gatherings. The phrase 'Polle's Angel' soon entered everyday speech and is defined in the current edition of *Lessing's* as a 'saviour of unknown, possibly miraculous, provenance'.

Polle entered the whaling industry after his return from Antarctica and was on the board of directors for Magnusson and Strom by the time of his retirement in 1950. He campaigned vigorously against the international anti-whaling treaties introduced in the late sixties

Ehren Plaz

Midwelde

Eschen

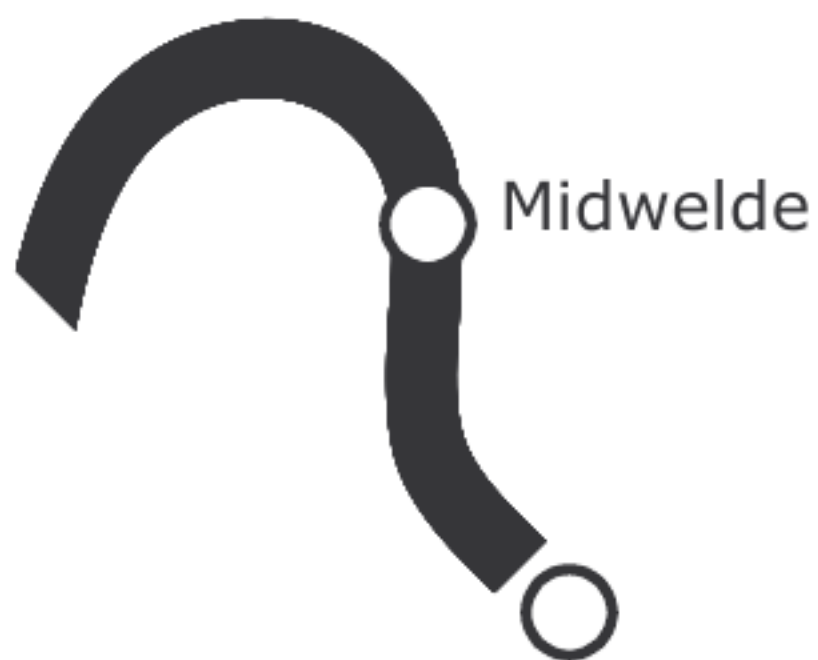
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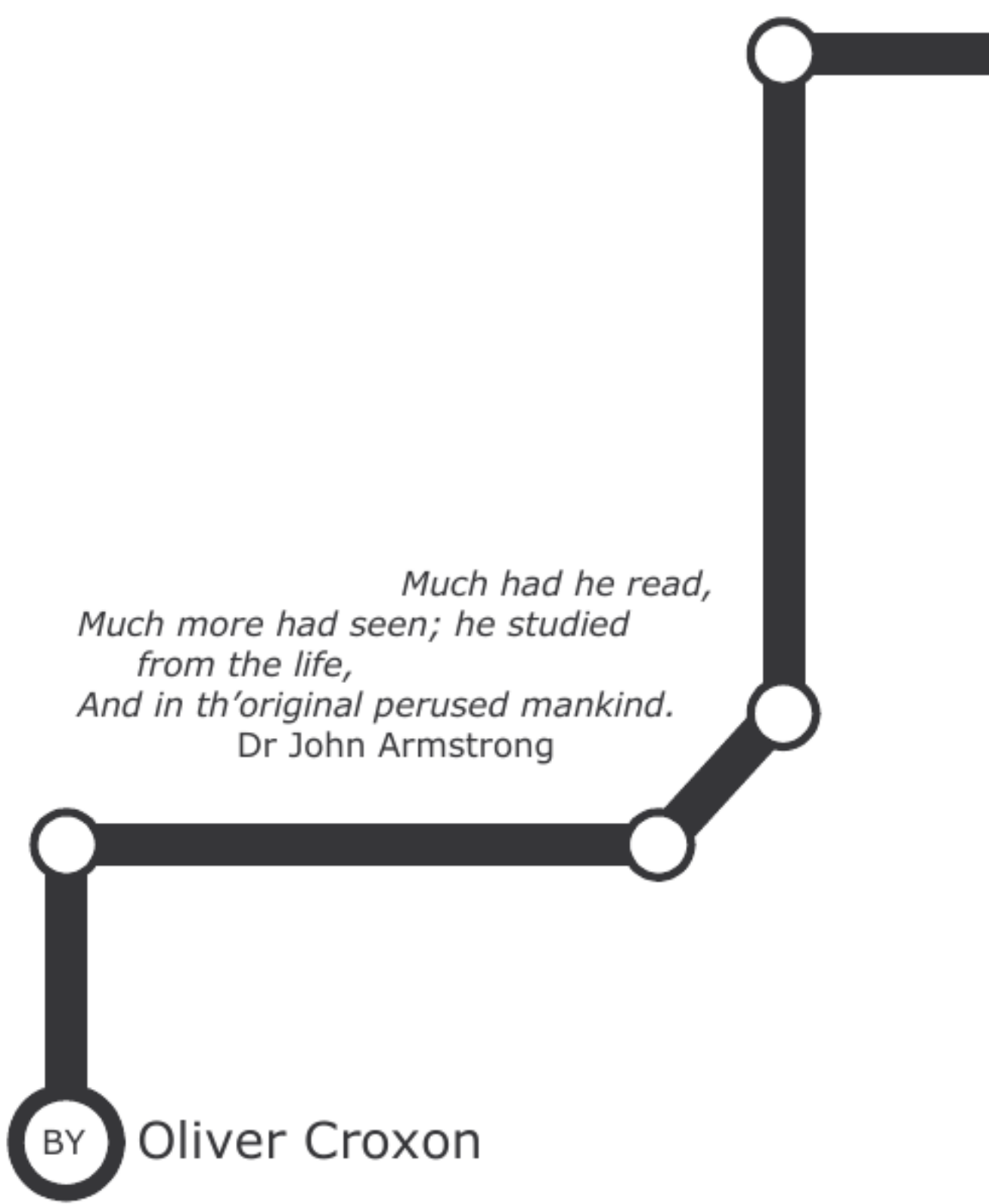


and was co-founder of Scandinavia's most influential whaling lobby, *Open Seas*.

His is survived by his daughter, Elois.



Werner Alexander  
1930 - 1988



*Much had he read,  
Much more had seen; he studied  
from the life,  
And in th'original perused mankind.*  
Dr John Armstrong

BY

Oliver Croxon



Werner Alexander, the creator of the *Rijkstadt Project* who was once dismissed by Emile Dorfheim as 'the author of our most important work on curtains', began his career as a high-wire artist with the Ziemovsky Circus in Amsterdam and went on to become one of the world's most controversial sociologists. His life's work, which was the subject of a notorious civil action in 1976, led to his ostracism by men and women he considered to be his colleagues and the financial ruin that saw him spend the last fifteen years of his life in the care of charitable foundation established by his philanthropic grandfather.

The son of William Alexander, founder of Apeldoorn's Getwell Bakeries, Werner was sent to school in Rotterdam where he excelled in Mathematics and French. In 1950 he travelled to Leiden to take up a scholarship in Anthropology under Dr. Jan Kamerbeek. A deft scrum-half in his school-days (he won the Dutch Schools Cup with St. Jener's Junior team in 1943), Alexander developed an inter-

est in gymnastics and a visit to the touring Firelli Circus in his first Michaelmas term left him fascinated with the art and the danger of the high-wire. By the summer of his final exams, four years of arduous (and often ridiculed) dedication bore fruit when, in a display that almost cost him his degree, he crossed the quadrangle on a cable suspended eighty feet above the heads of his fellow students. Although he won the Glanjoef Award to finance his doctoral studies, Alexander also secured a position with the Ziemovsky Circus during its summer tours of Spain and France. During one performance in Rheims he was struck by a bottle thrown from the audience and plunged sixty feet to the ground.

In 1954, disillusioned with the constraints imposed by his doctoral work, Alexander moved to the Rijkstadt district of Rotterdam and rented an apartment on the fifteenth floor of Cruyf Gardens, one of four tower blocks constructed the previous year on

reclaimed land. With the assistance of his endowment from Leiden and his earnings as a circus artist, Alexander invested 3000 guilders in listening equipment and three stop-motion 8mm cameras. Although his technical expertise was limited he nevertheless managed, over the course of a single week, to install an array of concealed microphones in flat no 746 of Rembrandt Glades, the half-completed tower directly facing his own. Over the next twenty years, with no funding and in carefully guarded secrecy, Alexander lived and worked in Cruyf Gardens observing and recording the lives of a randomly-selected family from Antwerp by the name of Hjarald. This project was to consume the next twenty three years of his life.

Apart from an archive of magnetic tape, film and forty thousand pages of typescript (now under court seal in the Funen library in Amsterdam) the *Rijkstadt Project* was to produce four book-length academic studies, all published following its

abandonment in 1977. *The Curtain Culture: Performance and Privacy* (1978), arguably the Rijkstadt Project's most enduring achievement, was the first exploration of private and public behaviour in the domestic context. Its emphasis throughout on the role of curtains in regulating a family's behaviour in the home, as well as determining their awareness of domestic life as an activity requiring decisions on display or concealment, perhaps merited Dorfheim's celebrated sneer but Alexander makes a cogent case for their importance. Like other families in the tower block the Hjaralds do not draw their curtains as a matter of course and Alexander demonstrates a clear disparity between what they regard as 'observable' and 'non-observable' behaviour. They are content to eat together with the curtains open but show a preference for watching television in concealed privacy. Following the death of their infant son, Harald, the curtains of the Hjarald's home remain



drawn for two weeks. In the two years that follow they are drawn regularly every evening at sunset and this new regimen is not eased until the birth of their daughter Alois in 1961.

Published as a companion piece, *The New Silence* (1978) chronicles the arrival of the first television in the Hjarald's home and the transformation of effects in their marriage and the upbringing of their children. Alexander provides the first statistical account of the *temple effect* in a domestic situation. Comparing his findings with data collated by Brumhoff in public spaces such as churches and art galleries, he shows that although conversation is displaced from the 'sacred' space of the television room, its quantity and density rises correspondingly in the secular 'vestibule' space of the kitchen and eating area. *The Denial of Neighbourhood* (1979) is an analysis of the Hjaralds' relationships with their immediately adjoining neighbours, none of whom they come to know personally. The even-handedness of

Alexander's critique is remarkable. When the Hjaralds suspect the death of their neighbour Mrs. Fjocroft (Alexander notes that they do not appear to know her name), they do not report their suspicions to police until the smell of her remains becomes detectable through the ventilation duct in their living room.

The years that followed the death of Stella Hjarald in 1974 provided Alexander with the material for his final and most troubling volume, *A Quiet End* (1979). This records the decline of Jan Hjarald and his growing isolation from Alois and Ulrik, who had moved out two years previously. Alexander publishes readings of the apartment's gas and electric meters (obtained clandestinely from the public utilities' archives) to demonstrate Jan's pattern of self-neglect while a statistical analysis of the apartment's telephone bills over a three year period depicts a steady falling off in his attempts to maintain contact with his children. The change in diet



revealed by recovered grocery receipts, the persistent background noise of the television in all of Alexander's recordings, an appendix tabulating Jan's occasional outbursts of expletives or recriminations against himself or others build a picture of gathering decline that ended in 1977 with his death from accidental gas poisoning. Alexander reports that his body, like Mrs Fjocroft's twenty years earlier, was not discovered for several weeks.

In spite of its immense value to sociologists the controversial origins of the *Rijkstadt Project*, along with Alexander's prosecution by the Dutch authorities in 1980, have condemned the enterprise to the margins of the academic mainstream. While *The Curtain Culture* was reviewed in a number of scholarly periodicals and even received some attention in the national and international press, it was largely with the intention of expressing outrage at the methods of the *Rijkstadt Project* and in the case of the *Tageslich Bilt* of

calling for Alexander's immediate eviction from Cruyf Gardens and his summary arrest. Abandoned by Leiden University Press, Alexander published the *New Silence*, *The Death of Neighbourhood* and *A Quiet End* under private imprint and while co-operating with a dispiriting and highly intrusive police investigation. The ensuing court case was dismissed on the grounds of judicial prejudice but the judge refused to lift the court seal on the *Rijkstadt Project's* archive, a contentious judgement currently in the process of appeal. To make matters worse, in tandem with the state prosecution Professor Erik Borne and Dr Julius Scheel (the former once Alexander's supervisor) headed a campaign to have his four books withdrawn from university libraries with the result that to this day none of the key works of the *Rijkstadt Project* are available to students in the holdings of any of the major European or American universities.

In 1985 Alexander fled to Dublin where he

nursed his mother through the final stages of emphysema. On her death, he entrusted the running of the family business to its board and retired, with failing health, to a cottage outside Lusk in Co. Meath. In the years before his death he had commenced work on a fifth volume drawn from the *Rijkstadt Project*. This was to be a study of the function of doors in family relationships but progress on the book was hampered considerably by lack of access to his primary material in Amsterdam. Alexander's final act on Dutch soil was one of typical defiance. Turned away at Schipol airport as a *persona non grata*, Alexander simply paused, slapped the contemptuous immigration official across the face and blithely turned about to reboard his plane.

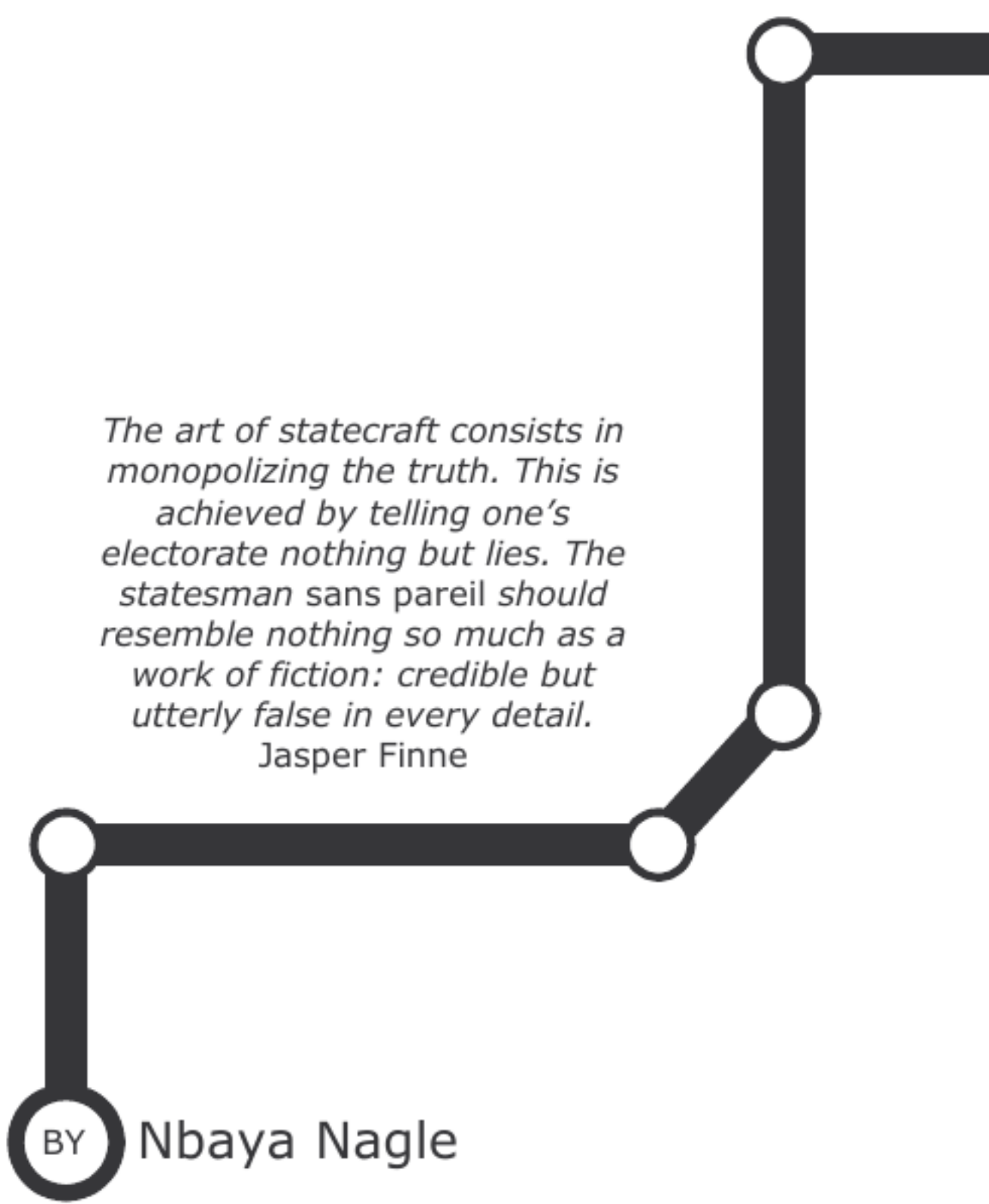
He is survived by his sister Isolde.





Henri Mbawezi  
1938 - 1996





*The art of statecraft consists in monopolizing the truth. This is achieved by telling one's electorate nothing but lies. The statesman sans pareil should resemble nothing so much as a work of fiction: credible but utterly false in every detail.*  
Jasper Finne

BY

Nbaya Nagle

Henri 'Peanuts' Mbawezi, who has died aged 48 in Orly Airport, began life as the son of an impoverished shoe salesman and rose to become President and Grand Marshal of Ishmaelia in the coup that toppled Robert Smith in 1958. During his reign Ishmaelia underwent numerous changes of name and endured a series of costly wars in a bid to expand its borders. Until the end Mbawezi was never less than a remorseless and guileful politician though he displayed an exuberant taste for the bizarre and a delight in spectacle that often tended to overshadow both the criminality and political dexterity of his regime.

Mbawezi learned the art of African politics while still a child on the streets of Coopersville. As a member of President Cooper's so-called 'baby militia' he helped police the activities of classmates and neighbours related to dissenting politicians and at the age of 12 organised the assassination of Koko Barini, granddaughter of 'Mercedes'

Barini, leader of Ishmaelia's Sovereignty Party. The following year he joined the newly formed *Coopersville Jubilant Youth* and distinguished himself in the local elections of 1952, helping to break up opposition rallies and smuggling prepared ballot papers into polling stations under the noses of election monitors. At 16, although he had not attended lessons for two years, he graduated from Coopersville High School with special honours and enlisted in the army. The civil war that followed the elections was short-lived and as a corporal in the regime's fledgling tank corps Mbawezi found himself in the bloodiest of the fighting. He was soon promoted to captain and by the time Ngaway's forces had been driven over the Kipara mountains Mbawezi had been decorated with the Cooper Cross four times over and earned the *nomme de guerre* that would cling to him throughout his political life.

The stories behind Mbawezi's most tenacious appellation vary. According to some

he had the habit, throughout his life, of addressing people whose names he had forgotten as 'Charlie Brown' (the prime minister of Iceland, Joran Mikikylijk, says he was one such victim), while exiles from his regime claim Mbawezi displayed an irrational preference during the civil war for attacking and destroying large peanut plantations, usually the legacy of Belgian colonists. It was always a source of considerable irritation to him that certain Western newspapers insisted on referring to President 'Peanuts' Mbawezi when reporting his many official visits to Europe.

When Ngaway surrendered in 1956, Mbawezi, now a lieutenant-colonel, returned to Coopersville at the head of a tank column to find the city in revolt. The army, which had not been paid for several months, refused to demobilise. Seizing the moment, Mbawezi surrounded the Presidential palace and bombarded it for two hours. When President Cooper and his cabinet emerged under a white

flag he had them arrested and declared the imposition of military law over the state radio network.

Nominally the generals were now in control but it was Mbawezi who stood in the uncontested elections the following winter and in December 1958, at the age of 20, was elected President. Any illusions Ishmaelia's neighbours might have had that 'Peanuts' was a front for the military chiefs were soon dispelled when, after a remarkable trial staged in the national football stadium (steel bands and acrobats performed during adjournments), they were hanged for treason and their families forced into exile. Soon afterwards Mbawezi performed a clearout of the judicial system and filled a 'consultative' parliament with 500 relatives and cronies. The official portrait of the deputies was once described by Enoch Powell as 'the largest family photograph in political history'.

But behind the throne and away from the



photographers' flashbulbs Mbawezi had already set in train the regimen he was convinced would keep him in power. He began living on a strict starch-based diet and refused personal audiences to anyone but his immediate family. In the spring of 1959 posters and murals depicting the president appeared throughout the newly renamed state of *Lohar*, but the stern, pudgy visage was not Mbawezi's. This mock-president, together with tribal regalia of staff and *capu*, delivered speeches on state television and radio and travelled the country soaking up popular adulation for 'Mbawasan' while his master stayed at home eating nothing but breadfruit and chicken.

Despite huge oil revenues, in 1962 stern economic measures were announced to stem rising inflation and there was serious unrest in Bira province as well as Coopersville itself. After several weeks of rioting Mbawezi, reluctant to call out the army, sacrificed his proxy. 'Mbawezi' was usurped and a second

'Mbawezi' installed in his place. The sacrifice was accepted and, although the anti-inflationary measures remained in force, the protesters returned home to their villages.

Mbawezi was to resort to this practice - an ingenious transference of the Butan ritual of installing a false king and then murdering him to appease the gods - again and again in times of national difficulty, eventually sending a total of seven 'Mbawezis' into comfortable exile after elaborate showtrials in which they were 'hanged' and the names of the country and its capital were changed. On each occasion not a few Western observers expressed amazement that the populace of Lohar could be hoodwinked by such bare-faced stagecraft, apparently unaware that they were not deceived at all but accepted the blood sacrifice within the framework of long-established Butan custom.

In 1973 Mbawezi faced his first real border crisis. Neighbouring Ndjogu, unable to service its loans when interest rates hit twelve

percent, began incursions over the Kipara mountains and eventually captured the Banudu oil fields in early November. After bilateral talks chaired by Namibia and OPEC they withdrew to the 1972 borders but the negotiations were a loss of face for Mbawezi, who attended them in person, and they exposed the military unreadiness of the recently-renamed *Miwawa*. Tensions flared again in 1974 and Mbawezi led his army to a series of catastrophic defeats at the Gbala gorges and, in early 1975, in the Latarve National Park. It was not until the following June that a committee of military advisors, headed by Sir Richard Eves, turned the course of the war and saved Coopersville from almost certain capture. With characteristic *chutzpah*, Mbawezi trumpeted near disaster as unqualified triumph. The 'Mbawezi' of that year (Ngoray Mahabatu, currently residing in Lausanne, Switzerland) paraded through Coopersville and announced that the army would continue to Lake Victoria and launch an

amphibious assault on Angola. The war that followed was in fact a completely unilateral manoeuvre. State television showed Mbawezi's troops landing in assault cruisers on their own beaches and within a matter of weeks it was reported that they had captured a range of Angolan gas fields. These were in fact thirty miles within their own borders and had proven too shallow to exploit.

Real war resumed in 1977 over silver mines straddling Mwawa and Rwanda but by this time Mbawezi's regime was in the sort of peril that could not be averted by another show-trial. In the course of a nation-wide census he had attempted to introduce *ngoyabism*. The state was to be renamed *Ngoya* after the first letter in the Ishmal alphabet and each of its cities, beginning with Coopersville and in descending order of population, was to be renamed in alphabetical order. For the purposes of 'administrative convenience', inhabitants of each city were to assume new surnames with the letter of their nearest city as the initial.



These were to be assigned by the visiting censors who would also extract a census tax from each citizen towards the tuition of *ngoyaba*, which was to be the new official language. The unprecedented ire this scheme aroused among the nation's tribes was not assuaged by deposing the ruling 'Mbawezi' nor his immediate successor, who had abolished it. Discontent at two decades of misrule and heavy losses in the war against Rwanda had finally found expression. Advised of an impending coup by his chiefs of staff, Mbawezi flew to Nairobi and sought asylum from the government of Nbutu Kabilezi. At the age of 50 his political career was over but the long search for sanctuary that was to consume his final years had just begun.

This last period of Mbawezi's life stands as an indictment of the misguided extremes and double-dealing to which the international community so often resorts in its treatment of deposed African leaders. Although his regime had a mixed human rights record and was a

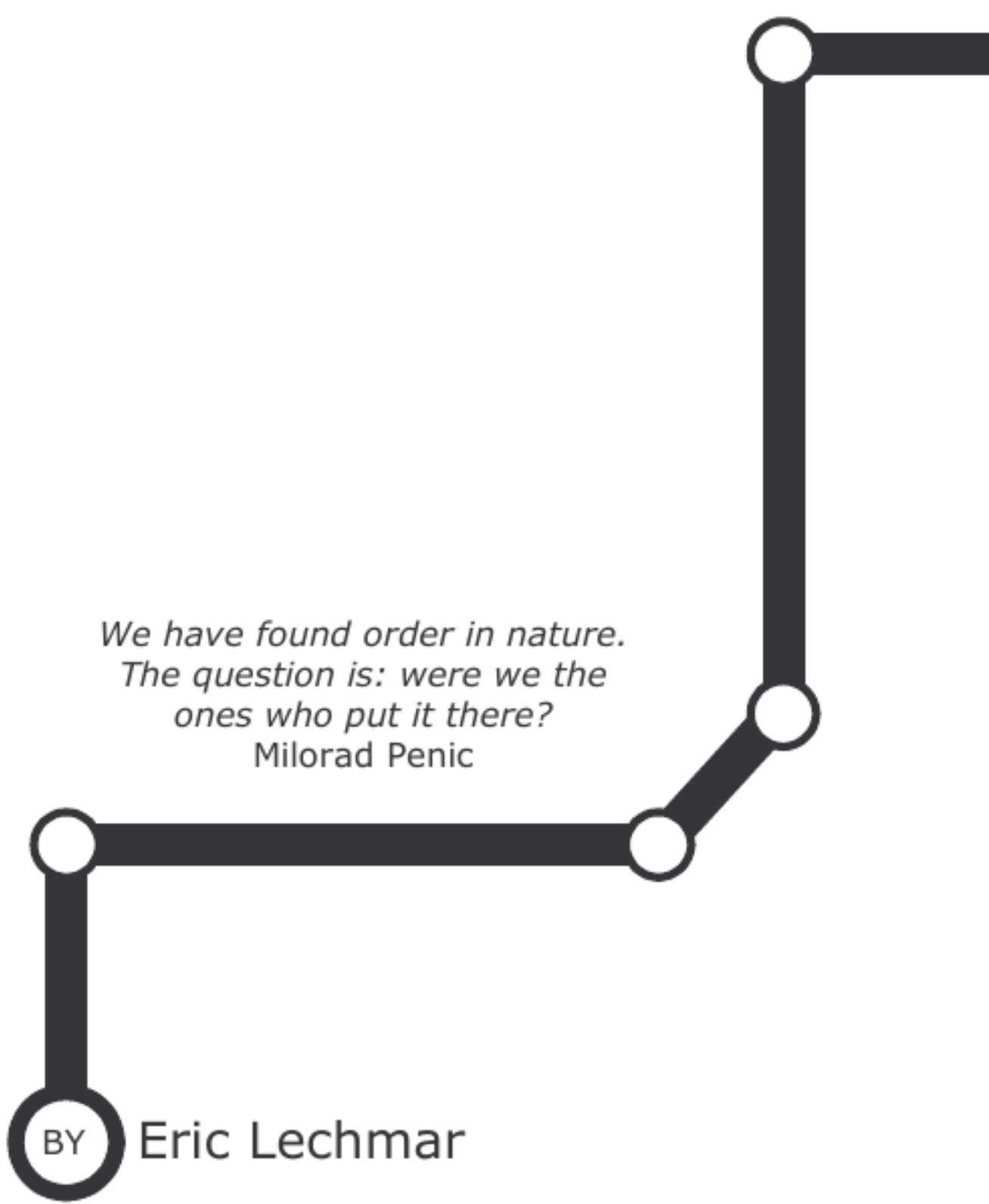


tyranny in everything but name, Mbawezi was by far the most benevolent dictator of his generation, particularly in his treatment of political opponents. Although reported as 'executed' in the national media, Mbawezi in fact preferred to send his enemies into exile. It was these dissident voices, when they had gained the ears of the Western governments who gave them refuge, that campaigned successfully for the status of *persona non grata* accorded to Mbawezi and led directly to his long decade of wandering between the airports of his former allies. The strain of these *wanderjahre* greatly impacted Mbawezi's health and in 1985 he was diagnosed with prostate cancer in the casualty infirmary at La Guardia airport in New York. By the time of his death he had lived to see the suicide of his two sons, Mnang and Keri and the outbreak of the civil war in Ishmaelia that continues to this day.

He is survived by his three wives and fourteen children.



Albert Baum  
1917 - 1976



*We have found order in nature.  
The question is: were we the  
ones who put it there?*  
Milorad Penic

BY

Eric Lechmar

By the time of his death Albert Baum had amassed the largest collection of antique and modern ephemera in private hands. His work as a curator had involved him in exhibitions all over the world and, when he fell ill with a stroke in June 1976, he had just seen his celebrated show at the New York Guggenheim *London 13<sup>th</sup> August 9.03am* close after record attendances. Although he devoted his life to celebrating the transient, he built a lasting reputation in the field he helped to found; the twenty five volumes of catalogues he compiled for his own museum in Baden are likely to remain a gold standard of ephemerist scholarship for generations to come.

Like all great collectors, Baum's origins were not modest. His father Hans patented the 'Baum Counting Machine' in 1918 and laid the cornerstone for the family's stupendous wealth. Albert, in common with his brothers, attended Wedekind College and went on to take a Law degree in Cambridge. Although an able scholar, his retiring temperament

disinclined him from approaching the bar and when he returned to Vienna after graduating decided to travel to Berlin.

What would later become a vocation was still modestly regarded as a hobby. As a child Baum had expressed an interest in philately and for a short time was a keen lepidopterist. While studying at Magdalen he had read and collected avidly. His interest in late Victorian literature was reflected in his library and in his fourth year he surprised the Bodleian with a generous donation of five thousand volumes. As the exhibition he curated to accompany the endowment made clear, the gift comprised every book published in London in 1879, the year of his father's birth.

Baum's arrival in Weimar Germany marked a watershed in his hitherto conventional collecting habits. A short spell working as a junior editor for Fischer Verlag involved him in a daily round journey of about an hour on the city's trams. His archivist's instinct was soon aroused by the discarded tickets he found



littering the floor and lodged between the covers of the seats, so much so that by the early autumn of 1934, twelve months into his stay, he had established a collection of some fifteen thousand. The preface to the archive's catalogue *Round Trips* records the taxonomical problems he encountered when attempting to impose some order on the collection. Although he eventually settled on ordering the tickets chronologically, accounting for every minute in a full 24 hour cycle, he stresses the importance of destination, point of purchase, date of issue and company name of issuer (there were several in Berlin at the time) as subsidiary motifs in the collection with discernible patterns of their own in the overall arrangement. For example, a round journey ticket to Mistow appears in the catalogue at regular two hour intervals while there is never more than two days between the issue date of each ticket at any point in the sequence.

The publication of *Rundreisen* in 1934 won

praise from Germany's most prestigious collectors, including William von Stael, but earned Baum some unwelcome attention from the nation's new regime. Invited to curate the recently confiscated Rosenberg horde, he emigrated to New York and embarked on the itinerant lifestyle that was to become the hallmark of his career. His work with Joseph Cornell of the Hurst Foundation in Manhattan built on the revolutionary methods developed in Berlin and culminated in the 1943 publication of *American Grocery Receipts 1850 -1900*, a survey culled from Cornell's archive of seventy five thousand exhibits. Although the collaboration was fruitful it was an unhappy one for Baum who preferred to build and collate his own archives. In 1946 he resigned from the Hurst Foundation and moved to Los Angeles where he began work on what would become his largest single collection. Regrettably *At the Movies in Pasadena* was never brought to completion. Three years into his research Baum became

disenchanted with his own working methods and the project's taxonomical similarity to his work in Berlin. Towards the end of 1951 his health failed dramatically and he returned to Vienna bringing an incredible four tons of material with him.

The fifties proved to be a difficult decade for Baum, bringing one crisis after another. Following several gruelling operations to rebuild the top of his spine with cow bones his physical condition improved but he was left confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. Tragedy struck when his parents and two of his brothers were lost in the sinking of the ocean liner *Ada* in 1958 and as his father's financial situation unravelled at the hands of a board of inquiry he was forced to part with the family estate and move permanently to their townhouse in Heinrichsgasse. These material struggles coincided with a long and disillusioned wilderness in his curatorial work and at one point Baum ceased collecting altogether. By 1959, however, rumours of a

new exhibition abounded and it soon became clear that Baum was close to achieving a second revolution in archival technique just as startling as his first.

Confirmation came in 1962 with the opening of *A Short History of Discarded Cinema* at the Odeon gallery in Paris. Running to four hours and with a cast of thousands, Baum's film was quarried from close to fifteen thousand hours of celluloid gathered from cutting floors in Los Angeles between 1946 and 1951. Classification notes and annotations on taxonomical principle are woven into the reels on single frames while the structure of the archive is arranged along a single linear narrative. Ingeniously, a central *dramatis personae* is carved out on the one hand from actors who appeared again and again in the raw archive but also from stereotypical roles, such as world-weary private eyes, played by a number of different actors. As Baum emphasises in his catalogue, the material is arranged along a chronological



timeline which the 'plot' of the narrative conceals. The exhibit as a whole is also arranged into four sequential 'movements' of celluloid: monochrome panavision, monochrome dromovision, technicolour panavision, dromocolour univision. In short, while the spectator experiences the exhibit as a conventional feature film it is really a survey of editing techniques in the first five years of mainstream Hollywood post-war cinema.

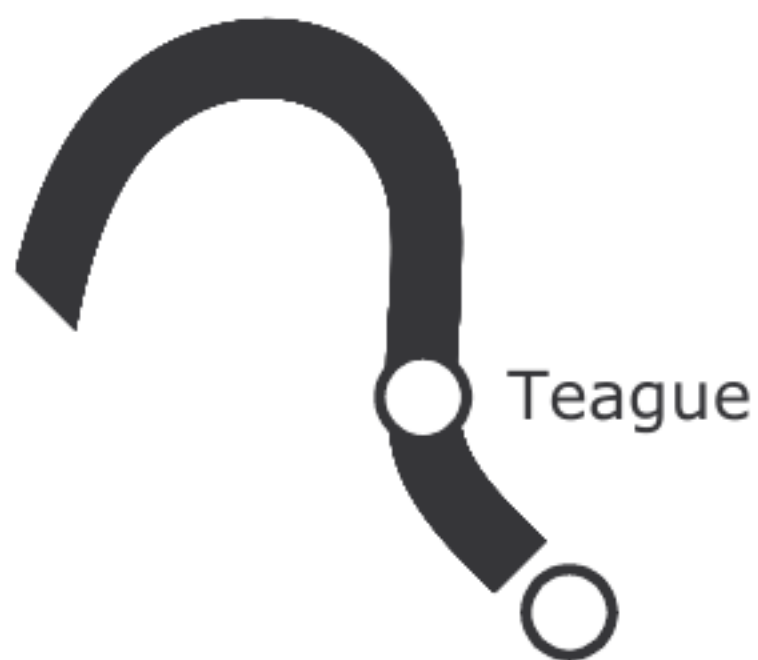
By common consent *A Short History of Discarded Cinema* was Baum's last truly important work. It earned him numerous awards and even received a general release in his Austria and Sweden. Thanks to a number of endowments and the recovery of the family's business affairs under the stewardship of his brother Joseph the financial worries that had hounded him throughout the 1950s were now at an end. With the latter's assistance he devoted the last ten years of his life to the setting up of his



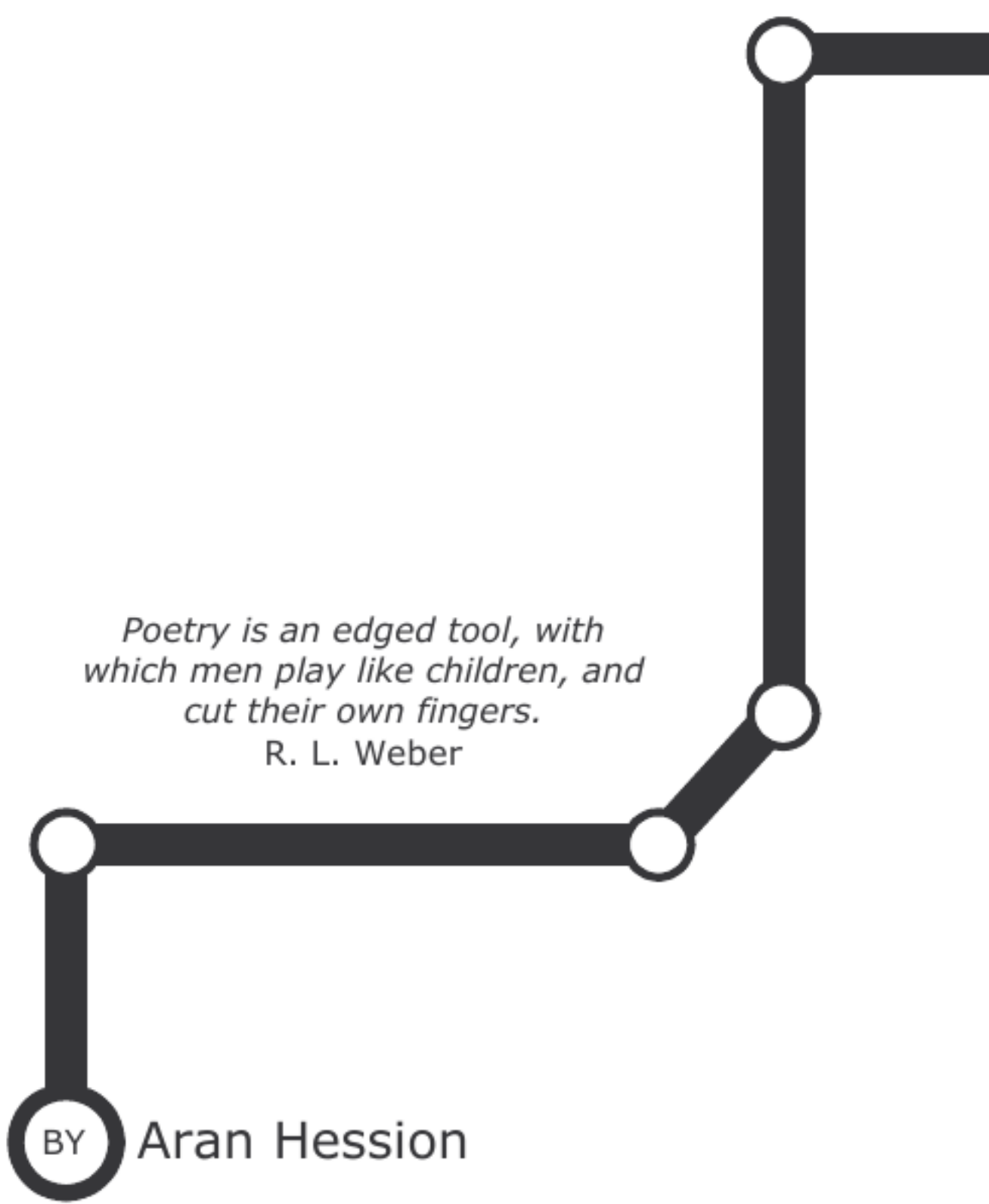
Museum of Ephemera at Baden and the painstaking, though taxonomically conventional, exhibition *London 13<sup>th</sup> August 9.03am*, a hoard of material documenting sixty seconds in the history of a two thousand year old city.

These final years were marred only by his deteriorating health. In 1968 he underwent a series of operations to relieve the pressure imposed by paralysis on his liver and kidneys. Two years later he suffered his first stroke. The personal heroism required to mount *9.03am* would have daunted lesser men but Baum, even when in considerable pain, refused to shirk his duties and oversaw the final hang with the help of a respirator. He lived to see William Paine's dismissal of *9.03am* as an 'outrageous monument to bus-tickets and betting slips' rebuffed by the largest attendances ever recorded for a Guggenheim exhibition.

He is survived by his brother, Joseph.



Thomas Crean  
1892 - 1916



*Poetry is an edged tool, with  
which men play like children, and  
cut their own fingers.*

R. L. Weber

BY

Aran Hession

The poet and Corporal in the Royal Irish Fusiliers Thomas Crean, whose death was reported in despatches from Bern-sur-Main on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April 1916, had published only a slight volume, *The Valley of Milk*, and a number of uncollected poems in Munster newspapers before leaving for the front at the age of 23. After the elapse of some forty years the difference in character between his collected and uncollected work is a source of wonder to the modern reader. The lyricism of *The Valley of the Milk* is replaced by a prosody and tone that is less easy to categorise, but is now the basis of his posthumous reputation. With only three, perhaps four, poems regarded as worthy of attention (all composed in the months before his conscription) Crean will only ever be a minor poet, yet verses such as the following – published in the *Waterford Monitor* on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 1915 – breathe the sort of fatal mystique that ensure if a man is not remembered for his work alone, blended with course of his life it takes deep

root in the imagination:

The sun burst in on my dream,  
The night full of rainbows,  
What is it that I have not seen?  
Let me desire it.

What is it that I have not seen?  
How strange the way the windows open.  
Let me desire it again, let me desire it -  
My back feels broken.

You and I, Soul, You and I -  
We have long tired of looking.  
Could it be we have forgotten something?  
What have we seen Soul, You and I?

*'We have seen nothing.'*

The poem, printed without a title, is lacking in the craftsmanship of Crean's earlier work though it has retained some of its less fortunate lyrical elements ("You and I, Soul, You and I"). One could justifiably say that such verse marks a deterioration in his talent. Yet it is this very poem that is today included in the syllabus for matriculation to our universities and has, together with the other published



with this article, prompted belated research into the final, mysterious weeks of Crean's life and led to the discovery of some previously unknown fragments.

Examined by a medical orderly in the field on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April 1916, Crean was pronounced dead from shrapnel wounds sustained to the head and chest and was transported by cart to the field hospital near Luca farm the following evening. He was buried in the Aix-en-terre cemetery along with eight hundred others of his regiment who fell later that same day. His personal effects, those found on his body and in his bunk along the Fourth Battalion's communications trench, were entrusted to Captain Oliver O'Brien who returned to Kanturk on furlough the following June and returned them to his mother. Captain O'Brien is one of four survivors of the Great War who knew Crean in the trenches and is still alive today. In an interview published by Dr. Leo Joyce of U.C.D. last spring, he gave an account of Crean:

Crean was under my command for about a total of fifteen weeks. He was a country lad, like a lot of the fellahs in our company. He was a bit quieter than most but good-humoured all the same. I don't believe anyone suspected he was a poet, he didn't have the reputation for it and he certainly never mentioned it to anyone. He was quiet and did his duty and looked after a lot of the younger lads... In truth, I wouldn't remember him today were it not for the fact that I was told to visit his home on my next leave. I was used to censoring all the letters so I didn't have any qualms about looking through the scrapbook they found on him. There were lots of bits and pieces of poetry and there was one couplet which I still remember today, I suppose it must have been his own, though I didn't suspect it at the time. It went:

*Perhaps I am sleeping,  
Or is it the dark and dead day creeping?*

Although the only source for this lost fragment (the scrapbook he mentions was lost in a fire at the Creans' cottage during the Civil War),

Captain O'Brien has no recollection of events described by the three other known survivors, all of whom I interviewed earlier this spring and from one of whom I obtained what may have been Crean's last complete poem.

According to these three, Crean's manner in the weeks before his death became noticeably altered and one particular aspect of his behaviour attracted the attention of a number of officers. Discreetly, without any other outward change in his physical disposition, Crean now kept his left hand clenched into a fist both day and night, as if he was holding something there. Whatever the task assigned to him he stubbornly maintained this grip even if it multiplied his workload or made his work detail difficult beyond endurance. Rather than holding the shaft of his carbine he would rest it on his forearm. When distributing the rum every morning he kept the billy-can under the crook of his arm rather than taking it by the handle. He ceased writing letters.

Sergeant Plunkett recalls that at first it was

assumed Crean was suffering from a suppressed form of shell-shock and his eccentric conduct was remarked upon but warily disregarded. Crean himself seemed untroubled, he never mentioned the matter to his fellow officers - to the point that his reticence and his discretion became conspicuous. In fact it is clear from the account of Private Kelly that as the weeks of trench routine wore on Crean's blithe, silent serenity eventually gave rise to other suspicions, especially among the lower ranks. A number of privates began putting it about that Crean was concealing something of value. Kelly recalls that the speculation of the bored recruits spanned everything from a diamond wrested from the teeth of a German officer to a silver bullet he was reserving for some special, unknown purpose. It did not occur to any of the rumour-mongers nor their audience to wonder why he did not conceal such contraband less obviously. The sheer oddity of his behaviour and the boredom and



paranoia of the trenches seems to have prevented it.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of April Crean's company was moved to the front. Their position overlooked the bombed-out village of Bern-sur-Main where the German front was concealed among woods to the east, about eight hundred yards from the Allied lines. Sergeant Plunkett recalls the hours that followed:

When we had dug in Captain Johns requested volunteers for a night-reconnaissance of the village. Crean and two others, Hurley and Watson, blacked up, took a couple of Mills bombs each and headed out shortly after midnight. They were gone about an hour when the sky was lit up with tracer-flares. Suddenly, it was as bright as mid-afternoon. Our guns traversed the woods a few times but without response. Every few minutes, though, there was a crack from one of the German snipers. An hour passed and Hurley and Watson dropped over the top of the trench. They were dragging Crean behind them. We called out the orderlies but he was already dead.



When they had covered him up, a couple of the sentries could no longer restrain themselves. Crean's hand was already open. They looked at his palm and said it was covered in a zigzag of gashes as if he had been struggling with barbed wire. They searched around the body but found nothing and went off to question Hurley and Watson. Finding myself alone, I lit a match and held it to Crean's palm. The cuts were fresh but not recent and they certainly didn't look as if they had been caused by wire. It was more as if the lines in his palm had bled open. When you looked closer you could make out some letters. I called over Captain Johns and showed him the cuts. We agreed that there were four letters we could make out for certain: *O*, *L*, *D* and *H*. There was also what looked like a lower-case *R* but it didn't look as deliberate as the others. Captain Johns suggested that Crean must have cut them himself, maybe he had kept his hand shut so they wouldn't heal. He hadn't suspected the poor man had gone mad. We agreed to keep the thing to ourselves, anything else would be bad for morale.

Crean's mental collapse in the face of the horrors of trench warfare is a new but not surprising fact in the record of his life. Monotony, physical exhaustion, terror; the daily bread of the soldier are all palpable in the distressed prism of his final poem, obtained by Private Kelly from among the effects in Crean's bunk locker. The subscribed date (11<sup>th</sup> April 1916) is contemporaneous with the period of breakdown described by his comrades, perhaps his hands were already scarred with the themes of his madness when he came to write it. The motifs of industrial warfare ('oil and earth'), the wintry chromatics of the battlefield ('grey and orange'), the repeated insistence that innocence has been lost or cashiered ('What is not sold?') make this Crean's only surviving war poem and our sole testament to the new disordered vision that had arisen in his mind's eye:

In the city spread with streets  
I would mingle with pillars,  
Or give up my family,  
For one gold letter.

Grey and orange,  
*The old hour is gone.*

From oil and earth,  
(Do not ask me my reasons)  
For my purpose I shall create two seasons,

Grey and orange,  
*The old hour is gone.*

As the old hour grows older,  
What has been sold?  
Spring and summer.  
The pillars grow grey and give up their  
colour

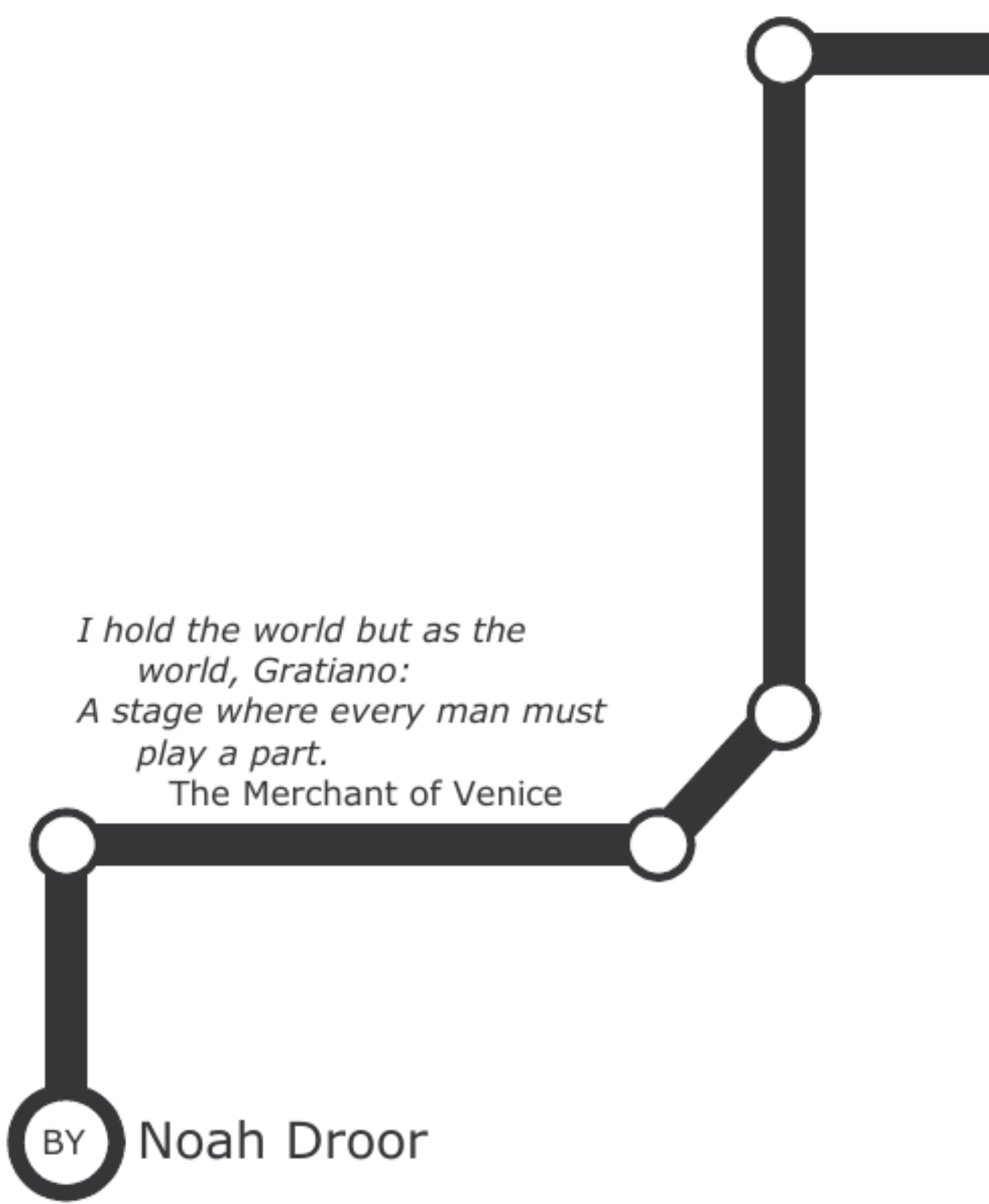
For gold. The dawn,  
Grey and orange.  
*The old hour is gone.*



Roermed

Paul Games

1939 - 1996



*I hold the world but as the  
world, Gratiano:  
A stage where every man must  
play a part.*

The Merchant of Venice

BY

Noah Droor





An accomplished balloonist and prolific writer for television Paul Games, who has died aged 57, dreamed up his most ambitious project while crossing over Poland in the long distance Gordon Bennett race of 1975. Games and his companion, David Scoob, were over Lvov when two of their three hydrogen cylinders failed and they began losing altitude. As they descended onto the Polish countryside, Scoob manoeuvred the balloon towards a small village. In the final moments of their descent Games peered over the edge of the gondola at the scene below: "Directly below us I spotted a young priest talking heatedly to one of his parishioners. A young woman was running out of her house to join them while in the back garden her husband appeared to be covering something over with a spade. Unbeknownst to him his next door neighbour was peering through a gap in the fence accompanied by a young woman who seemed just as interested in her neighbour's activity as her husband. Meanwhile I also caught sight of

two young boys, who must have been their sons, running in their front door pursued by an elderly man wearing a shopkeeper's apron. In the heat of the chase he began gesturing to a local constable arriving on the scene on his bicycle. This also attracted the attention of the priest..." By the time they had anchored their balloon to the goalposts of the village's football pitch this panoramic sequence of events had made a deep impression on Games and on the return flight to New York he began the notes for what would eventually become his most celebrated work *Woking 15<sup>th</sup> June 1978*.

Games was born and brought up on the Upper East side of Manhattan, the son of Latvian emigrants. His father, who had Americanised the family name by transposing the last two letters of the Latvian *Gamse*, was a sports journalist for the now-defunct *New York Chronicle* and his mother worked as a dental nurse. When they divorced in 1946 the seven year old Games found himself spending

less time in school and more and more time on the road in the company of his father and the New York Mets. By his own account, the first few years of this adventure were the happiest of his life. On first name terms with the idols of every kid west of the Hudson, Games soon became the team's unofficial mascot and at the team's request, and not entirely against his own will, spent every match day in the press box with his father. Alcohol had always been a problem for Peter Gamse and as his drinking worsened along with the quality and timeliness of his copy he was taken off the sports desk and sent around the mid-west in search of 'colour features'. It was during one such assignment, on the 1952 Charles Boyes Coast-to-Coaster, that the young Games developed his lifelong fascination with ballooning. This was also the first occasion on which he found himself supplementing and rewriting his father's unfinished copy. By 1955 Games' health had declined to vanishing point and the following year he was hospitalised in

Newark with cirrhosis of the liver. Paul was sent to live with his aunt in New Jersey and resume a semblance of normal life.

Although he had not attended a complete school day in over four years Games found that his ballpark math and sportswriter's vocabulary served him more than adequately at Lincoln High and in 1958 he enrolled in journalism and creative writing at Queen's Tech in Brooklyn. A determined and talented writer, when he was not bussing tables or attending classes Games spent his evenings in a coldwater flat writing speculative episodes of the detective series *Clancy and MacFadden*. Since his ear for New York patois was flawless and his years on the road as a child had provided him with a repertoire of engaging minor characters it was only a matter of time before his work was brought to the attention of the show's producers. Games was commissioned to write ten episodes and when the series was pulled by BNC in 1960 Jim Deloy hired him to write for *Branded!*, then in its



seventh run. In the sixties and seventies, the heyday of the long-running television serial, Games went on to write for shows as diverse as *The Canyoneros* and the Jerry Morris vehicle *Who's dat?*. In all he is credited with a staggering 200 episodes of *Branded!*, followed closely by 170 of *MacFadden of 82<sup>nd</sup> Street* and 50 of *The Canyoneros*. By 1973 he was chief script consultant and commissioning editor for BNC, a post that not only afforded him some job security but also the leisure to pursue his passion for ballooning. Games had purchased his first balloon in 1967 with the proceeds from the hit series *Who's dat?* and had competed in the Coast-to-Coaster every year since. The range of his balloon, which he christened *Short-Stop*, permitted him to compete in the Trans-European Davy Crockett race and in 1975 he finally had the opportunity to participate in a field of four hundred competitors. Although his voyage with David Scoob lasted less than a full day their crash landing on a Polish village, while



embarrassing for Games the balloonist, proved to be a watershed for Games the writer.

Running to over 6000 typescript pages and with 412 speaking parts *Woking 15<sup>th</sup> June 1978* dramatises in full a single 24 hour period in the fictitious New Hampshire village of Woking, population 382. As Games had admitted himself, it is a day in which very little happens. Indeed, the script is hardly a drama in any recognisable sense of the word. From a very early point in its development, Games resisted appeals by his team of assistants to build the village's day around an 'event' such as a natural disaster or a murder. As he pointed out to Joshua Perle, a former colleague from *The Canyoneros*, "When you don't have an audience, why cater for one?" Games was referring to the fact that the drama would not be observable by anyone except its participants, indeed the script required a five mile *cordon sanitaire* around the village to ensure the actors would

encounter no-one who was not also a member of the *dramatis personae*. For Games this was the single most important achievement of *Woking 15<sup>th</sup> June 1978* and even its *raison d'être*: to create a drama so complete that that actors and audience would become indistinguishable.

After three years of intensive preparation and with the help of a team of twenty young writers (among them Carl Johnson and James Deloy) *Woking 15<sup>th</sup> June 1978* went into rehearsal in the village of Ulysses in New England in 1982. In these first weeks the production almost collapsed. Teamster agitation soon saw every man, woman and child in Ulysses carrying a union card and demanding written contracts. Games brought in Bill Huxby, a hard-nosed BNC executive, to negotiate. The fee eventually offered to cast members seemed remarkably generous but as the cheques sent out five weeks after *Woking's* first and only performance revealed, Huxby had defrayed almost forty per cent of it by

ticketing the actors as paying audience members at one hundred dollars a head.

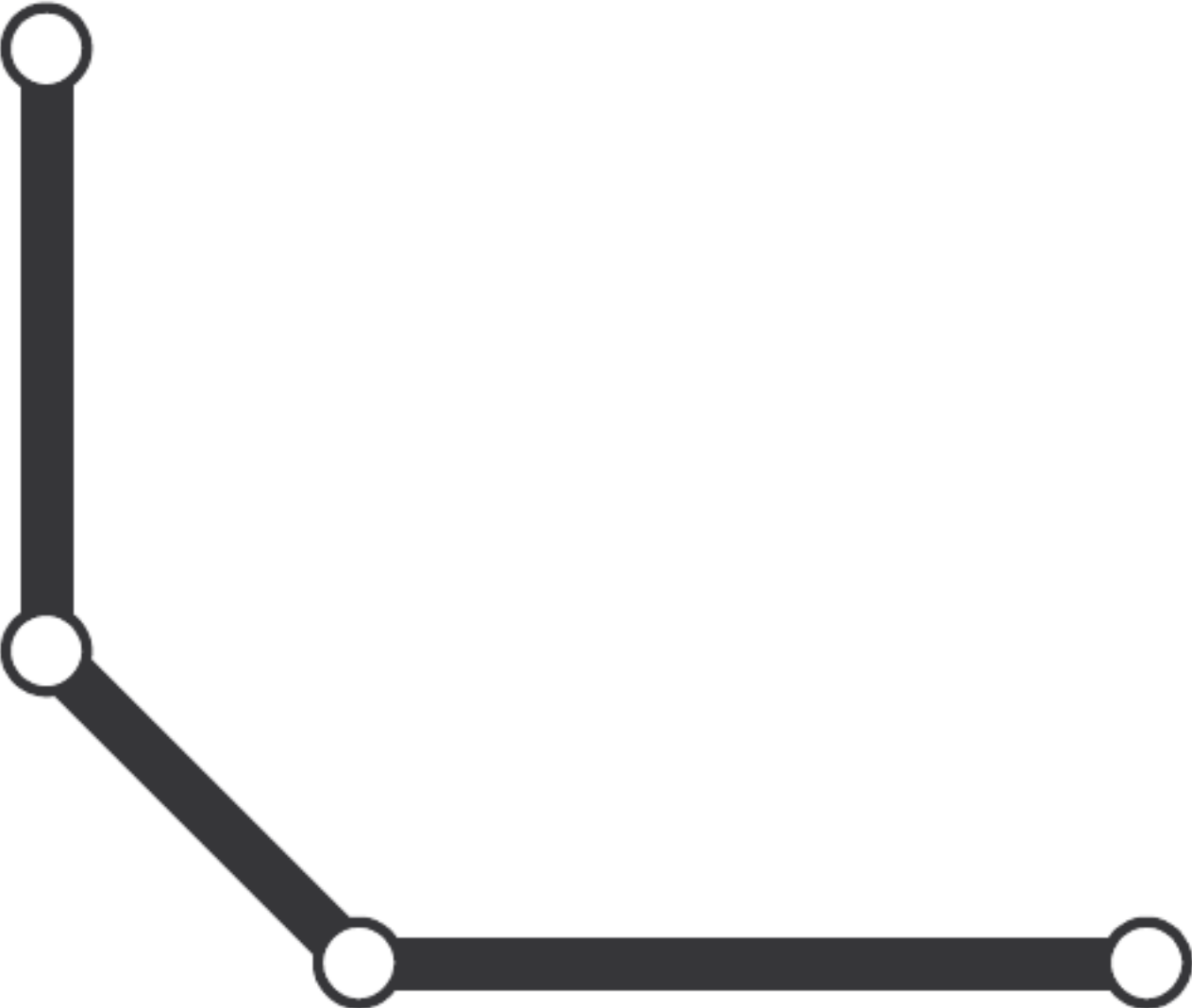
Simply by virtue of the fact that it was produced at all, *Woking 15<sup>th</sup> June 1978* might be regarded as a success, though Games himself professed disappointment with the work in later years. Cast members had emerged from the set on the morning of the 16th with reports of technical failures (cars and washing machines had broken down unscripted) and in some cases exchanging accusations of fluffed lines and missed cues. Minor delays in the first hours of the performance had resulted in a baseball match scripted for three o'clock in the afternoon starting and ending with the rail workers' team at only quarter strength. Games noted in *The Making of Woking*: "They still won: a *coup de theatre* you might say."

The day was not without its minor triumphs however. Convicted racketeer, Jim Selby, presided over an emotional wedding Mass at

St Audoen's Church; classes at Woking High School were given by an assortment of clerks, garage attendants and a member of the Ulysses Chamber of Commerce; an uproarious, and skilfully executed, meeting of the town council was chaired and dismissed by Dina Lavell on the occasion, by her own account, of her first sober day in four years.

It is already well known that Games did not witness the only performance of *Woking*. Union delegates ensured that the play's cast consisted exclusively of Ulysses' inhabitants and Games, at Huxby's urging, was forced to remove the part of passing balloonist he had reserved for himself. The irony of this late change was not lost on some of Ulysses' younger citizens. When Games flew over the town on the morning of the 16th a number of them had assembled a farewell message in poster paper for him on the High School's football field. It read: 'THE END'.

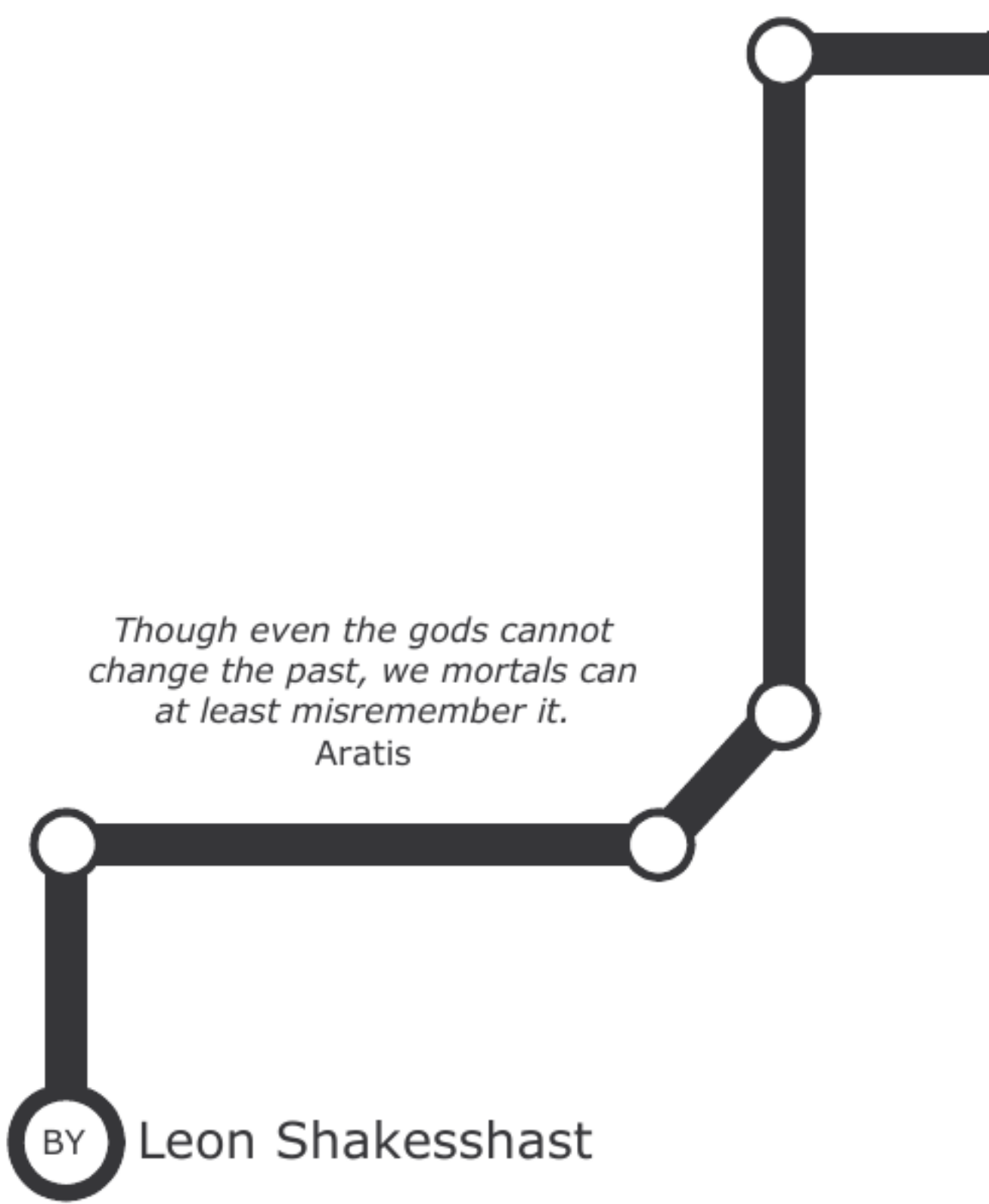
He is survived by his wife, Dora.







Jean Lachaise  
1918 - 1991



*Though even the gods cannot  
change the past, we mortals can  
at least misremember it.*

Aratis

BY

Leon Shakeshast

Jean Lachaise, accidental inventor of the board game *Perissoi* while a prisoner of war in occupied Poland, has died aged 83. As chief designer of NB until 1982 Lachaise went on to invent a number of popular games but none has achieved the lasting popularity of *Perissoi*, which he admitted himself was the 'happy result of having a terrible memory'.

Lachaise, who was born and brought up in Toronto, had flown fourteen missions as a navigator with the RCAF when he was shot down in a night raid over Munich in 1943. After two weeks on the run he was eventually captured when, forced out of hiding by starvation, he attempted to buy food in the market-town of Markenu. He had so much difficulty making himself understood that the stallholder called over some soldiers to interpret. Lachaise always claimed that the patriotic market-farmer, on realising that his customer was a fugitive Allied officer, attempted to bargain him upwards as he was being taken away.

Detained first in a transit camp outside Munich where he linke up with the only other surviving member of his crew, Lachaise was transported to Monowitz-Buna and imprisoned there until its liberation in the summer of 1945. The mood among the officers at M-B IV was one of despair and recrimination. Lachaise recalled in an interview with the producers of *The Monowitz Story* that he did not meet the commanding officer, Brigadier Matthew Clivesden, until a full two months after his arrival. There were suspicions among some officers that the Brigadier, nicknamed 'General Pushbike' after his remarkable handle-bar moustache, had provided information of escape plans in return for privileges from the camp commandant. In his memoirs *The Horrors of War*, Clivesden confirmed that this was in fact the case, though he claimed it was in exchange for sparing the lives of his men: orders from Berlin had stipulated since early 1943 that all escape attempts by prisoners of war be pun-

ished with death and 'retaliation' among ranking officers.

Without hope of mounting a successful escape in view of their commander's resistance, the greatest enemy faced by Lachaise and his fellow officers was day-to-day boredom. Many invented projects with which to pass the interminable weeks and some, like Lachaise, carried their successes back with them to civilian life. Henry Jebb, a lieutenant in the Yorkshire Artillery, began a commentary on *Aratus' Phaenomena* which was published in 1948 by Cambridge University Press. Corporal David Simpson, meanwhile, successfully cross-bred carrot-phyla and by 1950 had made a fortune on the patent. For the vast majority of officers, as well as unranked soldiers, however, the only recreations were sport and table-games. By 1944 Lachaise found that the stimulation provided by chess and draughts had palled considerably and saw his apathy reflected in the desultory attitude of his fellow officers and in their desperate,



thankless search for a game of cards they had not already played innumerable times before. One evening, Lachaise found himself seated at his makeshift draughts board recalling a board-game he had heard of as a school boy. After several hours of trial-and-error he had reconstructed *Perissoi*, a complicated type of draughts played by Achilles and Patroclus in the *Iliad* and, as he remembered his master at Meritz College explaining, a game popular even in the time of Nero and Marcus Aurelius.

Lachaise's discovery was an overnight success. While *Perissoi* was easy to learn, it proved fiendishly difficult to master. Players had to rely on a good memory and a sure instinct for tactical sacrifice. The inmates of M-B IV soon discovered that an opponent with just one piece remaining, although heavily outnumbered, could still walk away victorious. Lachaise was soon called upon to publish a codified set of rules for the game and copies of these can be viewed today in the NB Design Museum, along with several of the boards

used in the world's first *Perissoi* tournament at H-B IV in July of 1944.

With the end of the war and the liberation of Monowitz-Buna by the Red Army (*Perissoi* was quickly adopted by the bored Soviet units occupying H-B IV, a fact humorously used by Delager the American champion to explain Soviet dominance in the game in the 1960s), Lachaise initially travelled to London where he was demobilised the following December. At a loose end one evening in Cambridge he responded to an invitation to tea from Henry Jebb who had taken up a fellowship in Magdalen College. To his astonishment, Jebb informed him that he had been wrong in almost every detail of his recollection of *Perissoi*, even in its name, which was in fact *Pessoi*. Keen that Lachaise should not be defrauded, Jebb had patented *Perissoi* on his behalf and had forwarded the design to his cousin Harold Wordsley, a director of the novelty manufacturers NB in Gloucester. Within a month of returning from Europe and

without lifting a finger, Lachaise had entered into a fortune that would support him and a number of charitable foundations for the rest of his life.

As a designer and consultant at NB until his retirement at 67 Lachaise oversaw the development of many board games, including *Final Twist* and the highly successful *Brainstorm*. One of his last innovations was the influential *Crazy Maze*, in which the object was to pass a black marble through a shifting three dimensional maze encased in a transparent plastic cube. Although developed for the 8 to 14 year old market, the game inspired a brief craze among adults baffled by its difficulty and was recently celebrated by Daion Morley in his installation *The Good Things of Day Begin to Drowse*, a twenty by thirty feet magnification of the *Crazy Maze* cube using a bowling ball instead of a marble.

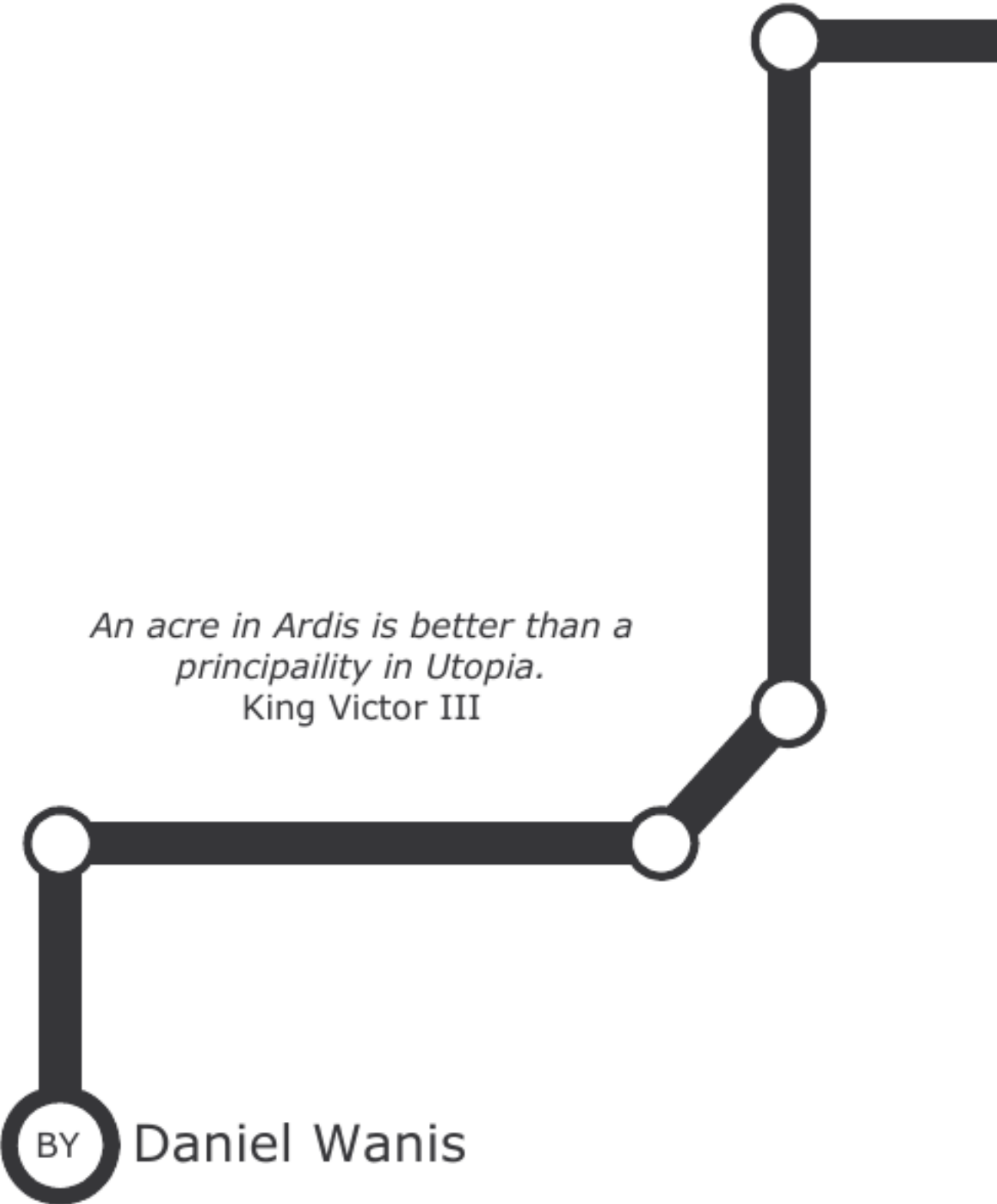
In 1984 Lachaise retired to Toronto with his wife Noreen where he nursed her through terminal lung cancer.



Hengel

Frederick Hall

1910 - 1988



*An acre in Ardis is better than a  
principality in Utopia.*  
King Victor III

BY

Daniel Wanis



With the publication of *Charity's Ghost* in 1953 Frederick Hall, who died aged 78, launched a career in romantic fiction that was to produce no fewer than 53 novels. The *Charity* series alone ran to twenty four instalments and Hall even found time to write seven volumes of poetry and a *Romantic's Guide to the Collieries of Yorkshire*, now in its eighth edition.

Hall's birthplace and the setting for his unhappy childhood was Arkington-Stevens, an industrial dormitory town whose cotton factories and steelworks were already in eclipse when his family arrived there from Calcutta in the 1890s. His father had been a sergeant in the 4<sup>th</sup> Indian regiment but was cashiered because of his involvement in a gambling syndicate. Life was hard in Arkington-Stevens and the family struggled to make ends meet. Both of Hall's sisters left school early to work as seamstresses and it was only his scholarship to Thorpe Grammar that saved Hall himself from fifteen hour shifts in the gasworks with his father. Jimmy, the

heroine's frail, stammering brother in *Charity Starts at Home* seems to be a portrait of Hall during these gruelling, traumatic years: forced to help his sisters meet their quotas in the evenings as well as complete his studies, he now found himself unwelcome among his childhood friends and his well-to-do classmates alike. As much as the company of his sisters and their friends became a necessary solace, they would later emerge as his chief source of inspiration and he developed a lifelong preference for the society of women; even in the later, reclusive years of his life in Midlothian a female interviewer could always be guaranteed an audience whereas male journalists were invariably offered elaborate but firm refusals.

After taking his degree in medicine at Imperial College, London, Hall spent ten years in the newly-constructed Longfield Hospital where he specialised as an osteopath. Apart from providing background and material for the seven novels of his *Midway General* series,

it was here that Hall met Lesley Boane, a staff nurse and later the hospital's administrator, whom he married in 1938. Two years later Hall and Lesley enlisted with the African Medical Corps and served in Tunisia and Italy. Hall was present at the fall of Monte Casino: the horrors he witnessed there are recalled in his autobiography *A Charitable Endeavour*. His 1953 novel *The Flowery Crater* is dedicated to the monks of Monte Casino whom Hall was the first to discover, executed at vespers by a retreating platoon of the *Waffen SS*. Despite the end of the war, 1945 was a tragic year for Hall: Lesley was killed when she stepped out under a bus during the last days of the London black-out, seven weeks later his sisters Rosemary and Margaret died within days of each other from tuberculosis. Bereft of his closest companions and drowned in grief, Hall threw himself into the composition of his first novel *The Rains of Perugia*, a loosely fictionalised memoir of the love-triangle in which he, Lesley and a Tuscan

doctor had become embroiled in the final months of the Allied campaign in Italy. Although not published until eleven years later, Hall felt he had saved something of Lesley from the oblivion of her early death. He had also discovered the unerring, feminine sensibility that was to become the cornerstone of his success as a writer.

Encouraged by the publisher, Alfred Rose, Hall began a new novel, *Charity's Ghost*, based on the lives of his sisters and its publication the following year was an enormous commercial success, extending to five print runs. *For the Love of Charity* and *Charity's Sake* quickly followed, as well as the first of the *Medway General* series, *Love and Healing*, based on Hall's courtship of Lesley. Unfailingly prolific, Hall never produced less than two novels a year and soon gained a huge, lucrative readership hungry for the escapism of a lavender-toned world untouched by the ration books and disillusioned uncertainty of post-war England. Although grittily



drawn and surrounded by hardship, the characters populating Hall's world are never less than morally impeccable. Even his villains are only such by a combination of circumstance and never commit a truly discreditable act. *The Flowery Crater* must be one of the few war novels in the genre where none of the protagonists are called upon to kill the enemy and as Hall's editor Michael Davis remarked, "even your Nazis seem like misguided cub scouts, Frederick". His keen sense of propriety in this regard arose from a growing distaste at the cynicism with which his contemporaries manipulated their fictional worlds. "A murder committed on paper is still a murder, in purpose and intent if not in fact," he wrote in the preface to his collected essays *The Tyranny of Dr. Moreau*, "One cannot help feeling that many of our modern writers attribute vices to their characters purely so that they can indulge themselves by proxy and then, their appetites sated and conscience swollen, blithely destroy



these deformed monsters for a secret frisson of delight more proper to cold-blooded killers than self-professed men of letters. Too often the writer of today behaves like an insane deity; his botched, miserable creatures drag themselves through a landscape of unremitting evil and debauchery and at the expiry of 250 pages are finally tossed to the furnace, the damned but guiltless victims of their creators lust for blood, wrath and prolific coitus." These are easily the strongest words ever to have dropped from Hall's pen. In the benign habitat of Hallia, harsh sentiments are rarely felt and never expressed, least of all in the engaging narrative voice that follows the travails of Charity Stevenson and her perennially consumptive sister Gwen and later the doctors and nurses of Medway hospital. As he remarked in interview, "It is not that I regard these people as my children, it is just that I regard them as people. It is out of respect and, what is more, a distaste for exploitation of the vulnerable. No one is more vulnera-

ble than a fictional character.”

In the 1960s Hall’s huge popularity led the BBC to commission him as presenter for a series of television travelogues in Africa and the Far East. His infectious warmth and sure eye for the uplifting and even eccentric traits of exotic nations made him a natural on the small screen. It was while filming in Thailand that he met his second wife, Laura Perskin, on a visit to a dental mission in the Cheon delta. They lived happily together in Lanarkshire, she working as a district nurse, he writing as tirelessly as ever, until her death in 1979. The following year Hall moved to a crofter’s cottage in Midlothian where he continued to work in growing seclusion.

It is little known that as well as a competent doctor and successful novelist Hall was also an accomplished seamster. He regularly contributed to *Woman’s World* under the pseudonym of Marian Bentley and his column of cheerful, inexpensive designs was widely syndicated. The year before his

death he confided to this writer that the proudest moment of his life was turning on the 1973 Eurovision Song contest to find the Danish entry for that year, a school choir singing *Mi Nijad Pera* ('Playground Love') clad entirely in designs garnered from his column.

He is survived by his son Jonathan.



An Atonement



Ardis Velks Behn

would like to thank



Solmsen Brothers MbU.



Ardis Transport Commission

DSGC



Terminates