

Recent additions to the D.H.Lawrence Collection at Nottingham University

Dorothy B. Johnston

The D.H.Lawrence Collection at Nottingham University Library has recently been in the news, in connection with an important new accession. A group of some twenty-seven items has been purchased, including ten different literary titles which show Lawrence at work as a poet, novelist, playwright, critic and translator. The collection, which had lain in the offices of the London solicitor who handled Frieda Lawrence's affairs after her husband's death, came to light in the spring of 1990. The papers represent a substantial literary find, which will enable some old puzzles to be cleared up and will certainly present a few new ones. The University was assisted in making the purchase by generous grants from the Friends of the National Libraries, the Victoria and Albert Museum Purchase Fund and the National Heritage Memorial Fund.

'Death-Paeon of a Mother' is an apparently unrecorded poem of 68 lines, with a six line stanza deleted. Its title was altered from 'Elegy of the Mother'. The collection includes both a manuscript and a slightly revised typescript copy. Other items in the purchase are mainly variants of known works. Manuscripts which bear evidence of textual changes made by the author have a particular significance and there is therefore a special interest in the heavily revised typescript of 'Wintry Peacock', one of the short stories subsequently published in *England, My England*. Lawrence as a dramatist is revealed in the manuscript text of his play, *Touch and Go*, which is present with its preface and related papers. Typescripts of 'Dana' and 'Melville' provide early unrecorded drafts of the essays which were published in *Studies in Classic American Literature* and Lawrence's own manuscript copy of *The Gentleman from San Francisco* by Ivan Bunin throws new light on his role as translator in collaboration with S.S.Koteliansky. The first proofs of 'Italian Days', subsequently published as *Twilight in Italy* (Duckworth, 1916), contain extensive alteration of some passages, particularly in the chapter entitled 'The Lemon Gardens'. Alongside these purely literary papers, the collection includes a number of associated legal or financial documents, in particular a series of publishing agreements. Also included is a used cheque book, with stubs recording twenty-six transactions by Lawrence from December 1918 to August 1919.

This new material builds on very considerable strengths in the Library's Lawrence Collection, which has been gradually established over the last forty years. Some items within the new accession relate very closely to the existing holdings. The Department already held, for instance, a holograph copy of the short story 'Goose Fair', which had survived among the papers of Louie Burrows, purchased in 1965. This can now be compared with a fair copy in the hand of Louie Burrows herself. The manuscript, in an amateur binding of gray boards with an illustration of a girl with geese on the upper cover, bears D.H.Lawrence's autograph on the first folio.

The page proofs of *Amores* (1916) and *New Poems* (1918) can also be studied alongside earlier versions of some of the same texts, preserved in the Nottingham University College notebook which Lawrence used in drafting his early poems. That Lawrence worked and reworked his early verse is of course well known, but the corrected page proofs help us to identify the point at which some of the revisions were made. We find here, for instance, the alteration of 'Spring Sunshine' to 'Autumn Sunshine' (*New Poems*) with textual changes reflecting the different mood. Even more intriguing are the substantial revisions to the early pages of *Amores*, as only a few of these were adopted in the Duckworth edition.

The acquisition of these papers coincided with the announcement by the University of its intention to establish a D.H.Lawrence International Centre to provide support for those who come to Nottingham to work on the collection and to encourage associated research and teaching programmes. It is hoped that the Library's rich base will in this context continue to be developed, not only through the addition of new material but through automated cataloguing and database provision, allowing distant access to the collection's finding aids.

Congregationalism in the Early Life of D.H.Lawrence: Ministers at the Eastwood Chapel

David Newmarch

An intriguing memoir of the young D.H.Lawrence is the passage in Ford Madox Ford's *Return to Yesterday* in which he reports a visit he says he once made to Lawrence's home - in 'Nottingham', as he puts it, though it turns out to be a veritable Athens. 'Never anywhere,' he says, had he 'found so educated a society.' There is a Saturday evening of talk with the 'young people ... about Nietzsche and Wagner and Leopardi and Flaubert and Karl Marx and Darwin .. the French Impressionists and the primitive Italians', with interjections from the Lawrence father and pauses for 'Chopin or Debussy on the piano', and then the next day Ford accompanies the family to Chapel.

I went with them on the Sunday to a Nonconformist place of worship. It was the only time I was ever in one except that I once heard the Rev. Stopford Brooke who was a Unitarian preach a sermon on Tennyson. The Nottingham Chapel - it was I think Wesleyan - made me of course feel uncomfortable at first. But the sermon renewed my astonishment. It was almost entirely about - Nietzsche, Wagner, Leopardi, Karl Marx, Darwin, the French Impressionists and the primitive Italians. I asked one of Lawrence's friends if that was not an unusual sort of sermon. He looked at me with a sort of grim incredulity.

'What do you suppose?' he said. 'Do you think we would sit under that fellow if he could not preach like that for fifty-two Sundays a year? He would lose his job.'¹

Ford's 'usual "impressionism"', Frank Kermode calls it.² Edward Nehls, who gives this passage in his *Composite Biography* of Lawrence, was not able to find anyone to corroborate Ford's claim that he made any such visit.³ But the emphatic Ford is not easy to ignore and if this is myth-making it may at least serve us here as a provocation to establish something of the truer colours of that chapel milieu. More particularly, if the ministers of the Lawrence's Congregational Chapel in Eastwood were not quite like this, what sort of men were they?

Part of the question is resolved by John Beer in a useful *Times Literary Supplement* article: 'Ford's Impression of the Lawrences'.⁴ He makes out the case for not wholly dismissing Ford's account, citing the preface to Ford's book where Ford concedes that his accounts are not always strictly true, but goes on:

Where it has seemed expedient to me I have altered episodes that I have witnessed but I have been careful never to distort the character of the episode. The accuracies I deal in are the accuracies of my impressions.⁵

Taking this into account, Beer suggests, it is reasonable to suspect that, while Ford had not himself been to Nottingham (let alone Eastwood), he is nevertheless