FROM

The Diary of Virginia Woolf

ments serve to remind us that the diary was a secret, interior book. Across its pages, exhilaration and despair alternate. In every scene and in every season, however, we never forget that we are in the company of a powerful writer and an extraordinary woman.

Monday 25 January 1915

My birthday—& let me count up all the things I had. L[eonard]. had sworn he would give me nothing, & like a good wife, I believed him. But he crept into my bed, with a little parcel, which was a beautiful green purse. And he brought up breakfast, with a paper which announced a naval victory (we have sunk a German battle ship[1]) & a square brown parcel, with The Abbot in it—a lovely first edition—[2] So I had a very merry & pleasing morning—which indeed was only surpassed by the afternoon. I was then taken up to town, free of charge, & given a treat, first at a Picture Palace, & then at Buszards.[3] I don't think I've had a birthday treat for 10 years; & it felt like one too—being a fine frosty day, everything brisk & cheerful, as it should be, but never is. The Picture Palace was a little disappointing—as we never got to the War pictures, after waiting 1 hour & a half. But to make up, we exactly caught a non-stop train, & I have been very happy reading father on Pope, which is very witty & bright—without a single dead sentence in it.[4] In fact I dont know when I have enjoyed a birthday so much—not since I was a child anyhow. Sitting at tea we decided three things: in the first place to take Hogarth, if we can get it; in the second, to buy a Printing press; in the third to buy a Bull dog, probably called John. I am very much excited at the idea of all three—particularly the press. I was also given a packet of sweets to bring home.

Sunday 31 January 1915

O dear! We quarrelled almost all the morning! & it was a lovely morning, & now gone to Hades for ever, branded with the

marks of our ill humour. Which began it? Which carried it on? God knows. This I will say: I explode: & L. smoulders. However, quite suddenly we made it up, (but the morning was wasted) & we walked after lunch in the Park, & came home by way of Hogarth, & tried to say that we shan't be much disappointed if we don't get it. Anyhow, it hasn't got the Green in front of it. After tea, as no one came (we've hardly seen anyone this week) I started reading The Wise Virgins, & I read it straight on till bedtime, when I finished it.[5] My opinion is that its a remarkable book; very bad in parts; first rate in others. A writer's book, I think, because only a writer perhaps can see why the good parts are so very good, & why the very bad parts aren't very bad. It seems to me to have the stuff of 20 Duke Jones' in it, although there are howlers which wd. make Miss Sidgwick turn grey.[6] I was made very happy by reading this: I like the poetic side of L. & it gets a little smothered in Blue-books, & organisations.

Wednesday 7 August 1918

Asheham diary drains off my meticulous observations of flowers, clouds, beetles & the price of eggs; &, being alone, there is no other event to record.[7] Our tragedy has been the squashing of a caterpillar; our excitement the return of the servants from Lewes last night, laden with all L.'s war books & the English review for me, with Brailsford upon a League of Nations, & Katherine Mansfield on Bliss. I threw down Bliss with the exclamation, "She's done for!" Indeed I dont see how much faith in her as woman or writer can survive that sort of story. I shall have to accept the fact, I'm afraid, that her mind is a very thin soil, laid an inch or two deep upon very barren rock. For Bliss is long enough to give her a chance of going deeper. Instead she is content with superficial smartness; & the whole conception is poor, cheap, not the vision, however imperfect, of an interesting mind. She writes badly too. And the effect was as I say, to give me an impression of her callousness & hardness as a human being. I shall read it again; but I dont suppose I shall change. She'll go on doing this sort of thing, perfectly to her & [John

Middleton] Murry's satisfaction.[8] I'm relieved now that they didn't come. Or is it absurd to read all this criticism of her personally into a story?

Friday 15 November 1918

I was interrupted somewhere on this page by the arrival of Mr [T. S.] Eliot. Mr Eliot is well expressed by his name—a polished, cultivated, elaborate young American, talking so slow, that each word seems to have special finish allotted it. But beneath the surface, it is fairly evident that he is very intellectual, intolerant, with strong views of his own, & a poetic creed. I'm sorry to say that this sets up Ezra Pound & Wyndham Lewis as great poets, or in the current phrase "very interesting" writers. He admires Mr Joyce immensely.[9] He produced 3 or 4 poems for us to look at—the fruit of two years, since he works all day in a Bank, & in his reasonable way thinks regular work good for people of nervous constitutions. I became more or less conscious of a very intricate & highly organised framework of poetic belief; owing to his caution, & his excessive care in the use of language we did not discover much about it. I think he believes in "living phrases" & their difference from dead ones; in writing with extreme care, in observing all syntax & grammar; & so making this new poetry flower on the stem of the oldest.

As an illustration of Eliot's views I may add what Desmond [MacCarthy] has just (Thursday 21st Nov.) told me; D. asked him how on earth he came to add that remark at the end of a poem on his Aunt & the Boston Evening Transcript that phrase about an infinitely long street, & "I like La Rochefoucauld saying good bye" (or words to that effect). Eliot replied that they were a recollection of Dante's Purgatorio![10]

Sunday (Easter) 20 April 1919

In the idleness which succeeds any long article, & Defoe is the 2nd leader this month, I got out this diary, & read as one always does read one's own writing, with a kind of guilty intensity. I confess that the rough & random style of it, often so ungrammatical, & crying for a word altered, afflicted me somewhat. I am trying to tell whichever self it is that reads this hereafter that I can write very much better; & take no time over this; & forbid her to let the eye of man behold it. And now I may add my little compliment to the effect that it has a slapdash & vigour, & sometimes hits an unexpected bulls eye. But what is more to the point is my belief that the habit of writing thus for my own eye only is good practise. It loosens the ligaments. Never mind the misses & the stumbles. Going at such a pace as I do I must make the most direct & instant shots at my object, & thus have to lay hands on words, choose them, & shoot them with no more pause than is needed to put my pen in the ink. I believe that during the past year I can trace some increase of ease in my professional writing which I attribute to my casual half hours after tea. Moreover there looms ahead of me the shadow of some kind of form which a diary might attain to. I might in the course of time learn what it is that one can make of this loose, drifting material of life; finding another use for it than the use I put it to, so much more consciously & scrupulously, in fiction. What sort of diary should I like mine to be? Something loose knit, & yet not slovenly, so elastic that it will embrace any thing, solemn, slight or beautiful that comes into my mind. I should like it to resemble some deep old desk, or capacious hold-all, in which one flings a mass of odds & ends without looking them through. I should like to come back, after a year or two, & find that the collection had sorted itself & refined itself & coalesced, as such deposits so mysteriously do, into a mould, transparent enough to reflect the light of our life, & yet steady, tranquil composed with the aloofness of a work of art. The main requisite, I think on re-reading my old volumes, is not to play the part of censor, but to write as the mood comes or of anything whatever; since I was curious to find how I went for things put in haphazard, & found the significance to lie where I never saw it at the time. But looseness quickly becomes slovenly. A little effort is needed to face a character or an incident which needs to be recorded.

Thursday 3 July 1919

. . . We own Monks House (this is almost the first time I've written a name which I hope to write many thousands of times before I've done with it) for ever. It happened thus. As we walked up the steep road from the station last Thursday on our way to inspect the Round House, we both read out a placard stuck on the auctioneers wall. Lot 1. Monks House, Rodmell. An old fashioned house standing in three quarters of an acre of land to be sold with possession. The sale we noted was on Tuesday; to take place at the White Hart.[11] "That would have suited us exactly" L. said as we passed, & I, loyal to the Round House, murmured something about the drawbacks of Rodmell, but suggested anyhow a visit to the place; & so we went on. I think a slight shade of anti-climax had succeeded my rather excessive optimism; at any rate the Round House no longer seemed so radiant & unattainable when we examined it as owners. I thought L. a little disappointed, though just & polite even to its merits. The day lacked sun. The bedrooms were very small. The garden not a country garden. Anyhow it seemed well to plan a visit to Rodmell on the following day. I bicycled over against a strong cold wind. This time I flatter myself that I kept my optimism in check. "These rooms are small, I said to myself; you must discount the value of that old chimney piece & the niches for holy water. Monks are nothing out of the way. The kitchen is distinctly bad. Theres an oil stove, & no grate. Nor is there hot water, nor a bath, & as for the E.C. I was never shown it." These prudent objections kept excitement at bay; yet even they were forced to yield place to a profound pleasure at the size & shape & fertility & wildness of the garden. There seemed an infinity of fruitbearing trees; the plums crow[d]ed so as to weigh the tip of the branch down; unexpected flowers sprouted among cabbages. There were well kept rows of peas, artichokes, potatoes; raspberry bushes had pale little pyramids of fruit; & I could fancy a very pleasant walk in the orchard under the apple trees, with the grey extinguisher of the church steeple pointing my boundary. On the other hand there is little view—O but I've forgotten the

lawn smoothly rolled, & rising in a bank, sheltered from winds too, a refuge in cold & storm; & a large earthen pot holds sway where the path strikes off, crowned with a tuft of purple samphire. *One* pot; not two. There is little ceremony or precision at Monks House. It is an unpretending house, long & low, a house of many doors; on one side fronting the street of Rodmell, & wood boarded on that side, though the street of Rodmell is at our end little more than a cart track running out on to the flat of the water meadows. There are, if memory serves me, no less than three large outhouses of different kinds, & a stable; & a hen house—& the machinery of a granary, & one shed full of beams of ancient oak; & another stored with pea props; but our fruit & vegetables are said to flow over each summer into these receptacles, & to need selling; though so obliging in its prolific way as to flourish under the care of a single old man whose heart is of gold, & who, for 40 years I think, has spent his spare time in tending these trees for the late Mr Jacob Verrall[12]— All this made a happy kind of jumble in my brain, together with the store of old fashioned chairs & tables, glass & furniture with which every inch of room space is crowded; I came back & told my story as quietly as I could, & next day L. & I went together & made a thorough inspection. He was pleased beyond his expectation. The truth is he has the making of a fanatical lover of that garden. It suits me very well, too, to ramble off among the Telscombe downs, when fine; or tread out my paces up the path & across the lawn when dark or wind blown. In short, we decided walking home to buy if we could, & sell Round House, as we conjecture we can. Eight hundred we made our limit, which, according to Wycherley, gave us a good chance of possession. The sale was on Tuesday. I don't suppose many spaces of five minutes in the course of my life have been so close packed with sensation. Was I somehow waiting to hear the result, while I watched the process, of an operation? The room at the White Hart was crowded. I looked at every face, & in particular at every coat & skirt, for signs of opulence, & was cheered to discover none. But then, I thought, getting L. into line, does *he* look

as if he had £800 in his pocket? Some of the substantial farmers might well have their rolls of notes stuffed inside their stockings. Bidding began. Someone offered £300. "Not an offer", said the auctioneer, who was immediately opposed to us as a smiling courteous antagonist, "a beginning." The next bid was £400. Then they rose by fifties. Wycherley standing by us, silent & unmoved, added his advance. Six hundred was reached too quick for me. Little hesitations interposed themselves, but went down rather dismally fast. The auctioneer egged us on. I daresay there were six voices speaking, though after £600, 4 of them dropped out, & left only a Mr Tattersall competing with Mr Wycherley. We were allowed to bid in twenties; then tens; then fives; & still short of £700, so that our eventual victory seemed certain. Seven hundred reached, there was a pause; the auctioneer raised his hammer, very slowly; held it up a considerable time; urged & exhorted all the while it slowly sank towards the table. "Now Mr Tattershall, another bid from you—no more bidding once I've struck the table—ten pounds? five pounds?—no more? for the last time then—*dump*!" & down it came on the table, to our thanksgiving—I purple in the cheeks, & L. trembling like a reed —"sold to Mr Wycherley." We stayed no longer.

Monday 31 May 1920

I had my interview with K[atherine]. M[ansfield]. on Friday. A steady discomposing formality & coldness at first. Enquiries about house & so on. No pleasure or excitement at seeing me. It struck me that she is of the cat kind: alien, composed, always solitary & observant. And then we talked about solitude, & I found her expressing my feelings, as I never heard them expressed. Whereupon we fell into step, & as usual, talked as easily as though 8 months were minutes—till Murry came in. . . . But Murry going at length, K. & I once more got upon literature. Question of her stories. This last one, Man without a T., is her first in the new manner. She says she's mastered something—is beginning to do what she wants. Prelude a coloured post card. Her reviews mere scribbling without a serious thought in them.

And Sullivan's praise in the A[*thenaeum*]. detestable to her.[13] A queer effect she produces of someone apart, entirely self-centred; altogether concentrated upon her 'art': almost fierce to me about it, I pretending I couldn't write. "What else is there to do? We have got to do it. Life—" then how she tells herself stories at night about all the lives in a town. "Its a spring night. I go down to the docks—I hear the travellers say—" acting it in her usual way, & improvising. Then asked me to write stories for the A. "But I don't know that I can write stories" I said, honestly enough, thinking that in her view, after her review of me, anyhow, those were her secret sentiments. Whereupon she turned on me, & said no one else could write stories except me—Kew [Gardens] the right 'gesture'; a turning point— Well but Night & Day? I said, though I hadn't meant to speak of it.

'An amazing achievement' she said. Why, we've not had such a thing since I don't know when—,

But I thought you didn't like it?[14]

Then she said she could pass an examination in it. Would I come & talk about it—lunch—so I'm going to lunch; but what does her reviewing mean then?—or is she emotional with me? Anyhow, once more as keenly as ever I feel a common certain understanding between us—a queer sense of being 'like'—not only about literature—& I think it's independent of gratified vanity. I can talk straight out to her.

Monday 25 October (first day of winter time) *1920*

Why is life so tragic; so like a little strip of pavement over an abyss. I look down; I feel giddy; I wonder how I am ever to walk to the end. But why do I feel this? Now that I say it I don't feel it. The fire burns; we are going to hear the Beggars Opera.[15] Only it lies about me; I can't keep my eyes shut. It's a feeling of impotence: of cutting no ice. Here I sit at Richmond, & like a lantern stood in the middle of a field my light goes up in darkness. Melancholy diminishes as I write. Why then don't I write it down oftener? Well, one's vanity forbids. I want to appear a success even to myself. Yet I dont get to the bottom of it. Its

having no children, living away from friends, failing to write well, spending too much on food, growing old— I think too much of whys & wherefores: too much of myself. I dont like time to flap round me. Well then, work. Yes, but I so soon tire of work—can't read more than a little, an hour's writing is enough for me. Out here no one comes in to waste time pleasantly. If they do, I'm cross. The labour of going to London is too great. Nessa's children grow up, & I cant have them in to tea, or go to the Zoo. Pocket money doesn't allow of much. Yet I'm persuaded that these are trivial things: its life itself, I think sometimes, for us in our generation so tragic—no newspaper placard without its shriek of agony from some one.

Monday 12 September 1921

I have finished the Wings of the Dove, & make this comment. His [Henry James's] manipulations become so elaborate towards the end that instead of feeling the artist you merely feel the man who is posing the subject. And then I think he loses the power to feel the crisis. He becomes merely excessively ingenious. This, you seem to hear him saying, is the way to do it. Now just when you expect a crisis, the true artist evades it. Never do the thing, & it will be all the more impressive. Finally, after all this juggling & arranging of silk pocket handkerchiefs, one ceases to have any feeling for the figure behind. Milly thus manipulated, disappears. He overreaches himself. And then one can never read it again. The mental grasp & stret[c]h are magnificent. Not a flabby or slack sentence, but much emasculated by this timidity or consciousness or whatever it is. Very highly American, I conjecture, in the determination to be highly bred, & the slight obtuseness as to what high breeding is.

Wednesday 16 August 1922

I should be reading Ulysses, & fabricating my case for & against. I have read 200 pages so far—not a third; & have been amused, stimulated, charmed interested by the first 2 or 3 chapters—to the end of the Cemetery scene; & then puzzled, bored,

irritated, & disillusioned as by a queasy undergraduate scratching his pimples. And Tom [T. S. Eliot], great Tom, thinks this on a par with War & Peace! An illiterate, underbred book it seems to me: the book of a self taught working man, & we all know how distressing they are, how egotistic, insistent, raw, striking, & ultimately nauseating. When one can have the cooked flesh, why have the raw? But I think if you are anaemic, as Tom is, there is a glory in blood. Being fairly normal myself I am soon ready for the classics again. I may revise this later. I do not compromise my critical sagacity. I plant a stick in the ground to mark page 200.

Wednesday 6 September 1922

I finished Ulysses, & think it a mis-fire. Genius it has I think; but of the inferior water. The book is diffuse. It is brackish. It is pretentious. It is underbred, not only in the obvious sense, but in the literary sense. A first rate writer, I mean, respects writing too much to be tricky; startling; doing stunts. I'm reminded all the time of some callow board school boy, say like Henry Lamb, full of wits & powers, but so self-conscious & egotistical that he loses his head, becomes extravagant, mannered, uproarious, ill at ease, makes kindly people feel sorry for him, & stern ones merely annoyed; & one hopes he'll grow out of it; but as Joyce is 40 this scarcely seems likely. I have not read it carefully; & only once; & it is very obscure; so no doubt I have scamped the virtue of it more than is fair. I feel that myriads of tiny bullets pepper one & spatter one; but one does not get one deadly wound straight in the face—as from Tolstoy, for instance; but it is entirely absurd to compare him with Tolstoy.

Thursday 7 September 1922

Having written this, L. put into my hands a very intelligent review of Ulysses, in the American Nation;[16] which, for the first time, analyses the meaning; & certainly makes it very much more impressive than I judged. Still I think there is virtue & some lasting truth in first impressions; so I don't cancell mine. I must read some of the chapters again. Probably the final beauty of

writing is never felt by contemporaries; but they ought, I think, to be bowled over; & this I was not. Then again, I had my back up on purpose; then again I was over stimulated by Tom's praises.

Tuesday 16 January 1923

Katherine has been dead a week, & how far am I obeying her "do not quite forget Katherine" which I read in one of her old letters?[17] Am I already forgetting her? It is strange to trace the progress of one's feelings. Nelly said in her sensational way at breakfast on Friday "Mrs Murry's dead! It says so in the paper!" At that one feels—what? A shock of relief?—a rival the less? Then confusion at feeling so little—then, gradually, blankness & disappointment; then a depression which I could not rouse myself from all that day. When I began to write, it seemed to me there was no point in writing. Katherine wont read it. Katherine's my rival no longer. More generously I felt, But though I can do this better than she could, where is she, who could do what I can't! Then, as usual with me, visual impressions kept coming & coming before me—always of Katherine putting on a white wreath, & leaving us, called away; made dignified, chosen. And then one pitied her. And one felt her reluctant to wear that wreath, which was an ice cold one. And she was only 33. And I could see her before me so exactly, & the room at Portland Villas. I go up. She gets up, very slowly, from her writing table. A glass of milk & a medicine bottle stood there. There were also piles of novels. Everything was very tidy, bright, & somehow like a dolls house. At once, or almost, we got out of shyness. She (it was summer) half lay on the sofa by the window. She had her look of a Japanese doll, with the fringe combed quite straight across her forehead. Sometimes we looked very steadfastly at each other, as though we had reached some durable relationship, independent of the changes of the body, through the eyes. Hers were beautiful eyes—rather doglike, brown, very wide apart, with a steady slow rather faithful & sad expression. Her nose was sharp, & a little vulgar. Her lips thin & hard. She wore short

skirts & liked "to have a line round her" she said. She looked very ill—very drawn, & moved languidly, drawing herself across the room, like some suffering animal. I suppose I have written down some of the things we said. Most days I think we reached that kind of certainty, in talk about books, or rather about our writings, which I thought had something durable about it. And then she was inscrutable. Did she care for me? Sometimes she would say so—would kiss me—would look at me as if (is this sentiment?) her eyes would like always to be faithful. She would promise never never to forget. That was what we said at the end of our last talk. She said she would send me her diary to read, & would write always. For our friendship was a real thing we said, looking at each other quite straight. It would always go on whatever happened. What happened was, I suppose, faultfindings & perhaps gossip. She never answered my letter.[18] Yet I still feel, somehow that friendship persists. Still there are things about writing I think of & want to tell Katherine. If I had been in Paris & gone to her, she would have got up & in three minutes, we should have been talking again. Only I could not take the step. The surroundings—Murry & so on—& the small lies & treacheries, the perpetual playing & teasing, or whatever it was, cut away much of the substance of friendship. One was too uncertain. And so one let it all go. Yet I certainly expected that we should meet again next summer, & start fresh. And I was jealous of her writing—the only writing I have ever been jealous of. This made it harder to write to her; & I saw in it, perhaps from jealousy, all the qualities I disliked in her.

Wednesday 9 January 1924

At this very moment, or fifteen minutes ago, to be precise, I bought the ten years lease of 52 Tavistock Sqre London W.C.1 —I like writing Tavistock. Subject of course to the lease, & to Providence, & to the unforeseen vagaries on the part of old Mrs Simons, the house is ours: & the basement, & the billiard room, with the rock garden on top, & the view of the square in front & the desolated buildings behind, & Southampton Row, & the

whole of London—London thou art a jewel of jewels, & jasper of jocunditie[19]—music, talk, friendship, city views, books, publishing, something central & inexplicable, all this is now within my reach, as it hasn't been since August 1913, when we left Cliffords Inn, for a series of catastrophes which very nearly ended my life, & would, I'm vain enough to think, have ruined Leonard's.[20] So I ought to be grateful to Richmond & Hogarth, & indeed, whether its my invincible optimism or not, I am grateful. Nothing could have suited better all through those years when I was creeping about, like a rat struck on the head, & the aeroplanes were over London at night, & the streets dark, & no penny buns in the window. Moreover, nowhere else could we have started the Hogarth Press, whose very awkward beginning had rise in this very room, on this very green carpet. Here that strange offspring grew & throve; it ousted us from the dining room, which is now a dusty coffin; & crept all over the house.

Monday 5 May 1924

This is the 29th anniversary of mothers death. I think it happened early on a Sunday morning, & I looked out of the nursery window & saw old Dr Seton walking away with his hands behind his back, as if to say It is finished, & then the doves descending, to peck in the road, I suppose, with a fall & descent of infinite peace. I was 13, & could fill a whole page & more with my impressions of that day, many of them ill received by me, & hidden from the grown ups, but very memorable on that account: how I laughed, for instance, behind the hand which was meant to hide my tears; & through the fingers saw the nurses sobbing.[21]

Saturday 5 July 1924

Just back, not from the 1917 Club; but from Knole, where indeed I was invited to lunch alone with his Lordship.[22] His lordship lives in the kernel of a vast nut. You perambulate miles of galleries; skip endless treasures—chairs that Shakespeare might have sat on—tapestries, pictures, floors made of the halves of oaks; & penetrate at length to a round shiny table with a cover laid for one. A dozen glasses form a circle each with a red rose in it. What can one human being do to decorate itself in such a setting? One feels that one ought to be an elephant able to consume flocks & be hung about with whole blossoming trees—whereas one solitary peer sits lunching by himself in the centre, with his napkin folded into the shape of a lotus flower. Obviously, I did not keep my human values & my aesthetic values distinct. Knole is a conglomeration of buildings half as big as Cambridge I daresay; if you stuck Trinity Clare & King's together you might approximate. But the extremities & indeed the inward parts are gone dead. Ropes fence off half the rooms; the chairs & the pictures look preserved; life has left them. Not for a hundred years have the retainers sat down to dinner in the great hall. Then there is Mary Stuart's altar, where she prayed before execution. "An ancestor of ours took her the death warrant" said Vita.[23]

Monday 15 September 1924

Here I am waiting for L. to come back from London, & at this hour, having been wounded last year when he was late, I always feel the old wound twingeing. He has been seeing Nancy Cunard, so I expect a fair gossip. Vita was here for Sunday, gliding down the village in her large new blue Austin car, which she manages consummately. She was dressed in ringed yellow jersey, & large hat, & had a dressing case all full of silver & night gowns wrapped in tissue. Nelly said "If only she weren't an honourable!" & couldn't take her hot water. But I like her being honourable, & she is it; a perfect lady, with all the dash & courage of the aristocracy, & less of its childishness than I expected. She left with us a story which really interests me rather.[24] I see my own face in it, its true. But she has shed the old verbiage, & come to terms with some sort of glimmer of art; so I think; & indeed, I rather marvel at her skill, & sensibility; for is she not mother, wife, great lady, hostess, as well as scribbling? How little I do of

all that: my brain would never let me milk it to the tune of 20,000 words in a fortnight, & so I must lack some central vigour, I imagine. Here I am, peering across Vita at my blessed Mrs Dalloway; & can't stop, of a night, thinking of the next scene, & how I'm to wind up. Vita, to attempt a return, is like an over ripe grape in features, moustached, pouting, will be a little heavy; meanwhile, she strides on fine legs, in a well cut skirt, & though embarrassing at breakfast, has a manly good sense & simplicity about her which both L. & I find satisfactory. Oh yes, I like her; could tack her on to my equipage for all time; & suppose if life allowed, this might be a friendship of a sort.

Friday 17 October 1924

It is disgraceful. I did run up stairs thinking I'd make time to enter that astounding fact—the last words of the last page of Mrs Dalloway; but was interrupted. Anyhow I did them a week ago yesterday. "For there she was." & I felt glad to be quit of it, for it has been a strain the last weeks, yet fresher in the head; with less I mean of the usual feeling that I've shaved through, & just kept my feet on the tight rope. I feel indeed rather more fully relieved of my meaning than usual—whether this will stand when I re-read is doubtful. But in some ways this book is a feat; finished without break from illness, wh. is an exception; & written really, in one year. . . .

The thought of Katherine Mansfield comes to me—as usual rather reprehensibly—first wishing she could see Southampton Row, thinking of the dulness of her death, lying there at Fontainebleau—an end where there was no end, & then thinking yes, if she'd lived, she'd have written on, & people would have seen that I was the more gifted—that wd. only have become more & more apparent. Indeed, so I suppose it would. I think of her in this way off & on—that strange ghost, with the eyes far apart, & the drawn mouth, dragging herself across her room. And Murry married again to a woman who spends an hour in the W.C. & so the Anreps have turned them out.[25] Murry whines publicly for a flat in the Adelphi. That's a sordid page of my life by the way,

Murry. But I stick to it; K. & I had our relationship; & never again shall I have one like it.

Wednesday 8 April 1925

Since I wrote, which is these last months, Jacques Raverat has died; after longing to die; & he sent me a letter about Mrs Dalloway which gave me one of the happiest days of my life.[26] I wonder if this time I have achieved something? . . . Jacques died, as I say; & at once the siege of emotions began. I got the news with a party here. . . . Nevertheless, I do not any longer feel inclined to doff the cap to death. I like to go out of the room talking, with an unfinished casual sentence on my lips. That is the effect it had on me—no leavetakings, no submission—but someone stepping out into the darkness. For her [Gwen Raverat] though the nightmare was terrific. All I can do now is to keep natural with her, which is I believe a matter of considerable importance. More & more do I repeat my own version of Montaigne "Its life that matters".[27]

Thursday 14 May 1925

. . . I'm now all on the strain with desire to stop journalism & get on to *To the Lighthouse*. This is going to be fairly short: to have father's character done complete in it; & mothers; & St Ives; & childhood; & all the usual things I try to put in—life, death &c. But the centre is father's character, sitting in a boat, reciting We perished, each alone, while he crushes a dying mackerel—However, I must refrain.[28] I must write a few little stories first, & let the Lighthouse simmer, adding to it between tea & dinner till it is complete for writing out.

Monday 20 July 1925

I should consider my work list now. I think a little story, perhaps a review, this fortnight; having a superstitious wish to begin To the Lighthouse the first day at Monks House. I now think I shall finish it in the two months there. The word 'sentimental' sticks in my gizzard (I'll write it out of me in a story—

Ann Watkins of New York is coming on Wednesday to enquire about my stories).[29] But this theme may be sentimental; father & mother & child in the garden: the death; the sail to the lighthouse. I think, though, that when I begin it I shall enrich it in all sorts of ways; thicken it; give it branches & roots which I do not perceive now. It might contain all characters boiled down; & childhood; & then this impersonal thing, which I'm dared to do by my friends, the flight of time, & the consequent break of unity in my design. That passage (I conceive the book in 3 parts: 1. at the drawing room window; 2. seven years passed; 3. the voyage:) interests me very much. A new problem like that breaks fresh ground in ones mind; prevents the regular ruts.

What shall I read at Rodmell? I have so many books at the back of my mind. I want to read voraciously & gather material for the Lives of the Obscure—which is to tell the whole history of England in one obscure life after another. Proust I should like to finish. Stendhal, & then to skirmish about hither & thither. These 8 weeks at Rodmell always seem capable of holding an infinite amount.

Monday 21 December 1925

But no Vita! But Vita for 3 days at Long Barn, from which L. & I returned yesterday.[30] These Sapphists *love* women; friendship is never untinged with amorosity. In short, my fears & refrainings, my 'impertinence' my usual self-consciousness in intercourse with people who mayn't want me & so on—were all, as L. said, sheer fudge; &, partly thanks to him (he made me write) I wound up this wounded & stricken year in great style. I like her & being with her, & the splendour—she shines in the grocers shop in Sevenoaks with a candle lit radiance, stalking on legs like beech trees, pink glowing, grape clustered, pearl hung. That is the secret of her glamour, I suppose. Anyhow she found me incredibly dowdy, no woman cared less for personal appearance—no one put on things in the way I did. Yet so beautiful, &c. What is the effect of all this on me? Very mixed. There is her maturity & full breastedness: her being so much in full sail

on the high tides, where I am coasting down backwaters; her capacity I mean to take the floor in any company, to represent her country, to visit Chatsworth, to control silver, servants, chow dogs; her motherhood (but she is a little cold & offhand with her boys[31]) her being in short (what I have never been) a real woman. Then there is some voluptuousness about her; the grapes are ripe; & not reflective. No. In brain & insight she is not as highly organised as I am. But then she is aware of this, & so lavishes on me the maternal protection which, for some reason, is what I have always most wished from everyone. What L. gives me, & Nessa gives me, & Vita, in her more clumsy external way, tries to give me. For of course, mingled with all this glamour, grape clusters & pearl necklaces, there is something loose fitting. How much, for example, shall I really miss her when she is motoring across the desert? I will make a note on that next year. Anyhow, I am very glad that she is coming to tea today, & I shall ask her, whether she minds my dressing so badly? I think she does. I read her poem; which is more compact, better seen & felt than anything yet of hers.[32]

Saturday 20 March 1926

But what is to become of all these diaries, I asked myself yesterday. If I died, what would Leo make of them? He would be disinclined to burn them; he could not publish them. Well, he should make up a book from them, I think; & then burn the body. I daresay there is a little book in them: if the scraps & scratches were straightened out a little. God knows.

This is dictated by a slight melancholia, which comes upon me sometimes now, & makes me think I am old: I am ugly. I am repeating things. Yet, as far as I know, as a writer I am only now writing out my mind.

Sunday 18 April 1926

Yesterday I finished the first part of To the Lighthouse, & today began the second. I cannot make it out—here is the most difficult abstract piece of writing—I have to give an empty

house, no people's characters, the passage of time, all eyeless & featureless with nothing to cling to: well, I rush at it, & at once scatter out two pages. Is it nonsense, is it brilliance? Why am I so flown with words, & apparently free to do exactly what I like? When I read a bit it seems spirited too; needs compressing, but not much else. Compare this dashing fluency with the excruciating hard wrung battles I had with Mrs Dalloway (save the end). This is not made up: it is the literal fact. Yes, & I am rather famous.

Tuesday 23 November 1926

. . . Fame grows. Chances of meeting this person, doing that thing, accumulate. Life is as I've said since I was 10, awfully interesting—if anything, quicker, keener at 44 than 24—more desperate I suppose, as the river shoots to Niagara—my new vision of death; active, positive, like all the rest, exciting; & of great importance—as an experience.

'The one experience I shall never describe' I said to Vita yesterday. She was sitting on the floor in her velvet jacket & red striped silk shirt, I knotting her pearls into heaps of great lustrous eggs. She had come up to see me—so we go on—a spirited, creditable affair, I think, innocent (spiritually) & all gain, I think; rather a bore for Leonard, but not enough to worry him. The truth is one has room for a good many relationships.

Wednesday 10 August 1927

. . . Various little improvements in the house keep me on the thrill with hope & despair. Shall I lavish £5 that will be mine on a new spare bed?—alas, I fear I must; then the great & distasteful operations of furnishing will be over, & next year I shall add ornament & comfort. Perhaps if I make an extra sum we might build a bed sitting room for me in the attic, enlarge L.'s study, & so have a desirable, roomy, light house. For if we had £300 every year to spend, it is difficult to think of anything, except this, travel, & pocket money, to spend it on. Here at the age of 45 are Nessa & I growing little wings again after our lean years.

She may rake in another £500; perhaps more.[33] Already she has bought a roll of linoleum & a cupboard. But my state is precarious. With The Lighthouse I may just have climbed to the top of my hill; or again we may wobble back; my journalism may pall on the Americans: no rich father in law will endow me; but Heavens knows, I have not much anxiety. We are flexible, adventurous still I hope.

Wednesday 5 October 1927

If my pen allowed, I should now try to make out a work table, having done my last article for the Tribune, & now being free again. And instantly the usual exciting devices enter my mind: a biography beginning in the year 1500 & continuing to the present day, called Orlando: Vita; only with a change about from one sex to another. I think, for a treat, I shall let myself dash this in for a week. . . .

Saturday 22 October 1927

"I shall let myself dash this in for a week"—I have done nothing, nothing, nothing else for a fortnight; & am launched somewhat furtively but with all the more passion upon Orlando: A Biography. It is to be a small book, & written by Christmas. I thought I could combine it with *Fiction*, but once the mind gets hot it cant stop; I walk making up phrases; sit, contriving scenes; am in short in the thick of the greatest rapture known to me; from which I have kept myself since last February, or earlier. Talk of planning a book, or waiting for an idea! . . . I had very little idea what the story was to be about. But the relief of turning my mind that way about was such that I felt happier than for months; as if put in the sun, or laid on cushions; & after two days entirely gave up my time chart & abandoned myself to the pure delight of this farce: which I enjoy as much as I've ever enjoyed anything; & have written myself into half a headache & had to come to a halt, like a tired horse, & take a little sleeping draught last night: which made our breakfast fiery. I did not finish my egg. I am writing Orlando half in a mock style very

clear & plain, so that people will understand every word. But the balance between truth & fantasy must be careful. It is based on Vita, Violet Trefusis, Lord Lascelles, Knole &c.[34]

Tuesday 20 December 1927

This flashed to my mind at Nessa's children's party last night. The little creatures acting moved my infinitely sentimental throat. Angelica so mature, & composed; all grey & silver; such an epitome of all womanliness; & such an unopened bud of sense & sensibility; wearing a grey wig & a sea coloured dress. And yet oddly enough I scarcely want children of my own now. This insatiable desire to write something before I die, this ravaging sense of the shortness & feverishness of life, make me cling, like a man on a rock, to my one anchor. I don't like the physicalness of having children of one's own. This occurred to me at Rodmell; but I never wrote it down. I can dramatise myself as parent, it is true. And perhaps I have killed the feeling instinctively; as perhaps nature does.

Friday 4 May 1928

The prize was an affair of dull stupid horror: a function; not alarming; stupefying. Hugh Walpole saying how much he disliked my books; rather, how much he feared for his own. Little Miss Robins, like a red breast, creeping out.[35] I remember your mother—the most beautiful Madonna & at the same time the most complete woman of the world. Used to come & see me in my flat (I see this as a summer visit on a hot day). She never confided. She would suddenly say something so unexpected, from that Madonna face, one thought it *vicious*. This I enjoyed: nothing else made much impression. Afterwards there was the horror of having looked ugly in cheap black clothes. I cannot control this complex. I wake at dawn with a start. Also the 'fame' is becoming vulgar & a nuisance. It means nothing; & yet takes one's time.

Friday 31 August 1928

Morgan [E. M. Forster] was here for the week end; timid, touchy, infinitely charming. One night we got drunk, & talked of sodomy, & sapphism, with emotion—so much so that next day he said he had been drunk. This was started by Radclyffe Hall & her meritorious dull book. They wrote articles for Hubert all day, & got up petitions; & then Morgan saw her & she screamed like a herring gull, mad with egotism & vanity. Unless they say her book is good, she wont let them complain of the laws. Morgan said that Dr Head can convert the sodomites.[36] "Would you like to be converted?" Leonard asked. "No" said Morgan, quite definitely. He said he thought Sapphism disgusting: partly from convention, partly because he disliked that women should be independent of men.

Wednesday 28 November 1928

Father's birthday. He would have been $\begin{array}{r} 1928 \\ 1832 \\ \hline 96 \end{array}$ 96, yes, today; & could have been 96, like other people one has known; but mercifully was not. His life would have entirely ended mine. What would have happened? No writing, no books;—inconceivable. I used to think of him & mother daily; but writing The Lighthouse, laid them in my mind. And now he comes back sometimes, but differently. (I believe this to be true—that I was obsessed by them both, unhealthily; & writing of them was a necessary act.) He comes back now more as a contemporary. I must read him some day. I wonder if I can feel again, I hear his voice, I know this by heart?

Tuesday 18 December 1928

L. has just been in to consult about a 3rd edition of Orlando. This has been ordered; we have sold over 6000 copies; & sales are still amazingly brisk—150 today for instance; most days between 50 & 60; always to my surprise. Will they stop or go on? Anyhow my room is secure. For the first time since I married

1912—1928—16 years—I have been spending money. The spending muscle does not work naturally yet. I feel guilty; put off buying, when I know that I should buy; & yet have an agreeable luxurious sense of coins in my pocket beyond my weekly 13/- which was always running out, or being encroached upon. Yesterday I spent 15/- on a steel brooch. I spent £3 on a mother of pearl necklace—& I haven't bought a jewel for 20 years perhaps! I have carpeted the dining room—& so on. I think one's soul is the better for this lubrication; & I am going to spend freely, & then write, & so keep my brain on the boil. All this money making originated in a spasm of black despair one night at Rodmell 2 years ago. I was tossing up & down on those awful waves: when I said that I could find a way out. (For part of my misery was the perpetual limitation of everything; no chairs, or beds, no comfort, no beauty; & no freedom to move: all of which I determined there & then to win). And so came, with some argument, even tears one night (& how seldom I have ever cried!) to an agreement with Leonard about sharing money after a certain sum; & then opened a bank account; & now, at the lowest shall have £200 to put there on Jan. 1st. The important thing is to spend freely, without fuss or anxiety; & to trust to one's power of making more— Indeed, I cannot at this moment very seriously doubt that I shall earn more, this next 5 years, than ever before.

Wednesday 25 September 1929

But what interests me is of course my oil stove.[37] We found it here last night on coming back from Worthing. At this moment it is cooking my dinner in the glass dishes perfectly I hope, without smell, waste, or confusion: one turns handles, there is a thermometer. And so I see myself freer, more independent—& all one's life is a struggle for freedom—able to come down here with a chop in a bag & live on my own. I go over the dishes I shall cook—the rich stews, the sauces. The adventurous strange dishes with dashes of wine in them. Of course Leonard puts a drag on, & I must be very cautious, like a child, not to make too much noise playing. Nelly goes on Friday & so I shall [have] a whole week to experiment in—to become free in.

Friday 11 October 1929

And I snatch at the idea of writing here in order not to write Waves or Moths or whatever it is to be called. One thinks one has learnt to write quickly; & one hasn't. And what is odd, I'm not writing with gusto or pleasure: because of the concentration. I am not reeling it off; but sticking it down. Also, never, in my life, did I attack such a vague yet elaborate design; whenever I make a mark I have to think of its relation to a dozen others. And though I could go on ahead easily enough, I am always stopping to consider the whole effect. In particular is there some radical fault in my scheme? I am not quite satisfied with this method of picking out things in the room & being reminded by them of other things. Yet I cant at the moment devise anything which keeps so close to the original design & admits of movement.

Hence, perhaps, these October days are to me a little strained & surrounded with silence. What I mean by this last word I dont quite know, since I have never stopped 'seeing' people. . . . No; its not physical silence; its some inner loneliness—interesting to analyse if one could. To give an example—I was walking up Bedford Place is it—the straight street with all the boarding houses this afternoon, & I said to myself spontaneously, something like this. How I suffer, & no one knows how I suffer, walking up this street, engaged with my anguish, as I was after Thoby died—alone; fighting something alone. But then I had the devil to fight, & now nothing. And when I come indoors, it is all so silent—I am not carrying a great rush of wheels in my head—Yet I am writing—oh & we are very successful—& there is—what I most love—change ahead. Yes, that last evening at Rodmell when Leonard came down against his will to fetch me, the Keynes's came over. And Maynard is giving up the Nation, & so is Hubert, & so no doubt shall we.[38] And it is autumn; & the lights are going up; & Nessa is in Fitzroy Street—in a great misty

room, with flaring gas & unsorted plates & glasses on the floor,—& the Press is booming—& this celebrity business is quite chronic—& I am richer than I have ever been—& bought a pair of earrings today—& for all this, there is vacancy & silence somewhere in the machine. On the whole, I do not much mind; because, what I like is to flash & dash from side to side, goaded on by what I call reality. If I never felt these extraordinarily pervasive strains—of unrest, or rest, or happiness, or discomfort —I should float down into acquiescence. Here is something to fight: & when I wake early I say to myself, Fight, fight. If I could catch the feeling, I would: the feeling of the singing of the real world, as one is driven by loneliness & silence from the habitable world; the sense that comes to me of being bound on an adventure; of being strangely free now, with money & so on, to do anything.

Saturday 7 February 1931

Here in the few minutes that remain, I must record, heaven be praised, the end of The Waves. I wrote the words O Death fifteen minutes ago, having reeled across the last ten pages with some moments of such intensity & intoxication that I seemed only to stumble after my own voice, or almost, after some sort of speaker (as when I was mad). I was almost afraid, remembering the voices that used to fly ahead. Anyhow it is done; & I have been sitting these 15 minutes in a state of glory, & calm, & some tears, thinking of Thoby & if I could write Julian Thoby Stephen 1881–1906 on the first page. I suppose not. How physical the sense of triumph & relief is! Whether good or bad, its done; & as I certainly felt at the end, not merely finished, but rounded off, completed, the thing stated—how hastily, how fragmentarily I know; but I mean that I have netted that fin in the waste of waters which appeared to me over the marshes out of my window at Rodmell when I was coming to an end of To the Lighthouse.[39]

Friday 14 February 1931

Janet Case yesterday, shrivelled, narrowed, dimmed, aged, & very poverty struck. I noted her cheap shoes & dirty old velvet hat. I suppose over 70 now; & yet I always think of her as 45. She clings to youth. "But we never see any young people" & so reads Tom Eliot &c: has her wits about her: but oh dear, the pathos when our teachers become our learners. She has had I suppose a far harder life than I knew—illness, poverty, & all the narrowness of living; alone with Emphie; without any luxury, & the thought—I dont know about this—of leaving E. or being left. She was staying with an old man of 91. A curious clutching anxious sense such old age gives one: her face has become pointed, whitened; shrunk; her eyes remain. How I used to wait for her lesson: & then the arguments, the excitements. I was 17 she said when she came. She felt unsuccessful.[40]

Monday 5 October 1931

A note, to say I am all trembling with pleasure—cant go on with my Letter [to a Young Poet]—because Harold Nicolson has rung up to say The Waves is a masterpiece. Ah hah—so it wasn't all wasted then. I mean this vision I had here has some force upon other minds. Now for a cigarette, & then a return to sober composition.

Sunday 17 October 1931

. . . The unknown provincial reviewers say with almost one accord, here is Mrs. Woolf doing her best work; it cant be popular; but we respect her for so doing; & find The Waves positively exciting. I am in danger, indeed, of becoming our leading novelist, & not with the highbrows only.

Friday 22 January 1932

Much better was much weaker. Lytton[41] died yesterday morning.

I see him coming along the street, muffled up with his beard resting on his tie: how we should stop: his eyes glow. Now I am

too numb with all the emotion yesterday to do more than think thoughts like this. Well, as I know, the pain will soon begin. One toys about with this & that. How queer it was last night at the party, the tightness round everyone's lips—ours I mean. Duncan Nessa[42] & I sobbing together in the studio—the man looking out of the mews window—a sense of something spent, gone: that is to me so intolerable: the impoverishment: then the sudden vividness.

Sunday 31 January 1932

. . . I want to use these pages for dialogue for a time. Let me race down the subdued & dulled interview with my mother in law.[43] Oh the heat in that rose pink bed sitting room, with 3 fierce lights on, the tables crowded with flowers; & with cakes, a fire blazing. Mrs W. sitting upright with her feet on a stool on a high straight backed chair: more pink silk cushions behind her: pearl necklaces swinging. I came in late; she was talking about—I forget: had been talking about the girl whom Cecil might have loved: the daughter of a solicitor at Colchester: Oh yes: she had had influenza & gone to a house kept up by funds left by Mr Andrews. And she was reluctant at first—a home you know. But when she got there what was her amazement? All gentlewomen: flowers everywhere; a cupboard with tonics & sweets to take after them; & Georgian silver on the dinner table; & a garden; & a saloon car to take them out; & grounds; & hot milk at eleven, or chocolate; & the wireless, & a page boy coming for orders; & gardeners. Everything you could wish & not a penny to pay for it! Thats so rare—charity that is really thoughtful; charity for educated women with nice feelings who have fallen on bad times. Well Virginia—& whats your news? Oh & there's Captain Steel: every Christmas he has a card from the Duke of Gloucester: & he now sells Hoovers for £2.10 a week. But what can one do, in these days? One must do what one can. And what is your news, Virginia? Exodus? Dont you know Exodus? I sometimes scold myself that I haven't read the Bible lately. Deuteronomy? Oh yes—thats about the building of the Temple. I dont say its all

true; but what stories to tell children! I shall never forget telling Bella. Of course a first child is always a wonder child. She used to have her dinner with me when she was 2. And she said what a pity it was summer when Eve stole the apple. If it had been winter, there wouldn't have been an apple. And she said too: I know where gold comes from—that's in the ground: but where do picture frames come from? We had large gilt picture frames with family portraits in the dining room. (V.) Well why dont you write about your children? Oh no: I couldn't say all I think about them. And you're going so soon? But you haven't hardly come. And you'll dine with me next week? She came down to the hall, & was I think going into the lounge to talk to some flushed women playing cards.

Monday 29 February 1932

And this morning I opened a letter; & it was from 'yours very sincerely J. J. Thompson'—the Master of Trinity; & it was to say that the council have decided to ask me to deliver the <Ford> Clark Lectures next year. Six of them.[44] This, I suppose, is the first time a woman has been asked; & so it is a great honour—think of me, the uneducated child reading books in my room at 22 H.P.G.—now advanced to this glory. But I shall refuse: because how could I write 6 lectures, to be delivered in full term, without giving up a year to criticism; without becoming a functionary; without sealing my lips when it comes to tilting at Universities; without putting off my Knock at the Door; without perhaps shelving another novel. But I am rather inclined to smile as I lunch with Miss Dodge today, & she gives me a book with Donne's autograph; as I buy a pair of shoes at Babers;[45] as I sit down dutifully to correct an article for the Common Reader. Yes; all that reading, I say, has borne this odd fruit. And I am pleased; & still more pleased that I wont do it; & like to think that father would have blushed with pleasure could I have told him 30 years ago, that his daughter—my poor little Ginny—was to be asked to succeed him: the sort of compliment he would have liked.

Wednesday 2 November 1932

. . . And I have entirely remodelled my 'Essay'. Its to be an Essay-Novel, called the Pargiters—& its to take in everything, sex, education, life &c; & come, with the most powerful & agile leaps, like a chamois across precipices from 1880 to here & now—Thats the notion anyhow, & I have been in such a haze & dream & intoxication, declaiming phrases, seeing scenes, as I walk up Southampton Row that I can hardly say I have been alive at all, since the 10th Oct. Everything is running of its own accord into the stream, as with Orlando. What has happened of course is that after abstaining from the novel of fact all these years—since 1919—& N[ight]. & D[ay]. indeed, I find myself infinitely delighting in facts for a change, & in possession of quantities beyond counting: though I feel now & then the tug to vision, but resist it. This is the true line, I am sure, after The Waves—The Pargiters—this is what leads naturally on to the next stage—the essay-novel.

Saturday 2 September 1933

I am reading with extreme greed a book by Vera Britain, called The Testament of Youth.[46] Not that I much like her. A stringy metallic mind, with I suppose, the sort of taste I should dislike in real life. But her story, told in detail, without reserve, of the war, & how she lost lover & brother, & dabbled her hands in entrails, & was forever seeing the dead, & eating scraps, & sitting five on one WC, runs rapidly, vividly across my eyes. A very good book of its sort. The new sort, the hard anguished sort, that the young write; that I could never write. Nor has anyone written that kind of book before. Why now? What urgency is there on them to stand bare in public? She feels that these facts must be made known, in order to help—what? herself partly I suppose. And she has the social conscience. I have still to read how she married the infinitely dreary Catlin & found beauty & triumph in poor, gaping Holtby. But I give her credit for having lit up a long passage to me at least.

Wednesday 12 September 1934

Roger died on Sunday.[47] I was walking with Clive on the terrace when Nessa came out. We sat on the seat there for a time. On Monday we went up with Nessa. Ha came. Nessa saw Helen [Anrep]. Tomorrow we go up, following some instinct, to the funeral. I feel dazed: very wooden. Women cry, L. says: but I dont know why I cry—mostly with Nessa. And I'm too stupid to write anything. My head all stiff. I think the poverty of life now is what comes to me. a thin blackish veil over everything. Hot weather. A wind blowing. The substance gone out of everything. I dont think this is exaggerated. It'll come back I suppose. Indeed I feel a great wish, now & then, to live more all over the place, to see people, to create, only for the time one cant make the effort.

Thursday 11 October 1934

Well: do I think I shall be among the English novelists after my death? I hardly ever think about it. Why then do I shrink from reading W[yndham]. L[ewis].? Why am I sensitive? I think vanity. I dislike the thought of being laughed at. of the glow of satisfaction that A B & C will get from hearing V.W. demolished: also it will strengthen further attacks. Perhaps I feel uncertain of my own gifts: but then, I know more about them than W.L.: & anyhow I intend to go on writing. What I shall do is craftily to gather the nature of the indictment from talk & reviews: &, in a year perhaps, when my book is out, I shall read it. Already I am feeling the calm that always comes to me with abuse: my back is against the wall: I am writing for the sake of writing: &c. & then there is the queer disreputable pleasure in being abused—in being a figure, in being a martyr. & so on.

Monday 11 March 1935

. . . My friendship with Vita is over. Not with a quarrel, not with a bang, but as ripe fruit falls. No I shant be coming to London before I go to Greece, she said. And then I got into the car. But her voice saying "Virginia?" outside the tower room

was as enchanting as ever. Only then nothing happened. And she has grown very fat, very much the indolent county lady, run to seed, incurious now about books; has written no poetry; only kindles about dogs, flowers, & new buildings. S[issinghurs]t is to have a new wing; a new garden; a new wall. Well, its like cutting off a picture: there she hangs, in the fishmongers at Sevenoaks, all pink jersey & pearls; & thats an end of it.[48] And there is no bitterness, & no disillusion, only a certain emptiness.

Tuesday 9 April 1935

I met Morgan in the London Library yesterday & flew into a passion.

"Virginia, my dear" he said. I was pleased by that little affectionate familiar tag.

"Being a good boy & getting books on Bloomsbury?" I said.

"Yes. You listen. Is my book down?" he asked Mr Mannering.

"We were just posting it" said Mr M.

"And Virginia, you know I'm on the Co[mmi]ttee here" said Morgan. "And we've been discussing whether to allow ladies—

It came over me that they were going to put me on: & I was then to refuse: Oh but they do—I said. There was Mrs Green . . .

"Yes yes—there was Mrs Green. And Sir Leslie Stephen said, never again. She was so troublesome. And I said, havent ladies improved? But they were all quite determined. No no no, ladies are quite impossible. They wouldnt hear of it."[49]

See how my hand trembles. I was so angry (also very tired) standing. And I saw the whole slate smeared. I thought how perhaps M. had mentioned my name, & they had said no no no: ladies are impossible. And so I quieted down & said nothing & this morning in my bath I made up a phrase in my book on Being Despised which is to run—a friend of mine, who was offered. . . . . one of those prizes—for her sake the great exception was to be made—who was in short to be given an honour—I forget what— . . She said, And they actually thought I would take it. They were, on my honour, surprised, even at my very

modified & humble rejection. You didnt tell them what you thought of them for daring to suggest that you should rub your nose in that pail of offal? I remarked. Not for a hundred years, she observed. And I will bring in M. Pattison:[50] & I will say sympathy uses the same force required to lay 700 bricks. And I will show how you cant sit on Ctees if you also pour out tea—that by the way Sir L.S. spent his evenings with widow Green; yes, these flares up are very good for my book: for they simmer & become transparent: & I see how I can transmute them into beautiful clear reasonable ironical prose. God damn Morgan for thinking I'd have taken that . . .

Saturday 20 February 1937

I turn my eyes away from the Press as I go upstairs, because there are all the Review Copies of The Years packed & packing. They go out next week: this is my last week end of comparative peace. What do I anticipate with such clammy coldness? I think chiefly that my friends wont mention it, will turn the conversation rather awkwardly. I think I anticipate considerable lukewarmness among the friendly reviewers—I suppose what I expect is that they'll say now Mrs W. has written a long book all about nothing—respectful tepidity; & a whoop of red Indian delight from the Grigs, who will joyfully & loudly announce that this is the long drawn twaddle of a prim prudist bourgeois mind, & say that now no one can take Mrs W. seriously again. But violence I shant so much mind. What I think I shall mind most is the awkwardness when I go, say to Tilton or Charleston, & they dont know what to say. And since we shant get away till June I must expect a very full exposure to this damp firework atmosphere. They will say its a tired book; a last effort . . . Well, now that I've written that down I feel that even so I can exist in that shadow. That is if I keep hard at work. And there's no lack of that. . . . L. wants if possible to have 3 Gs. for the autumn: & I have my Gibbon, my broadcast, & a possible leader on Biography to fill in chinks.[51] I plan to keep out of literary circles till the mild boom is over. And this, waiting, under consideration

is after all the worst. This time next month I shall feel more at ease. And its only now & then I mind now . .

Friday 2 April 1937

How I interest myself! Quite set up & perky today with a mind brimming, *because* I was so damnably depressed & smacked on the cheek by Edwin Muir in The Listener & by Scott James in the Life & Letters on Friday. They both gave me a smart snubbing: EM says The Years is dead & disappointing—so in effect did S. James. All the lights sank; my reed bent to the ground. Dead & disappointing—so I'm found out & that odious rice pudding of a book is what I thought it—a dank failure. No life in it. Much inferior to the bitter truth & intense originality of Miss Compton Burnett.[52] Now this pain woke me at 4 am. & I suffered acutely. All day driving to Janet & back I was under the cloud. But about 7 it lifted. There was a good review, of 4 lines, in The Empire review [*not traced*]. The best of my books: did that help? I dont think very much. But the delight of being exploded is quite real. One feels braced for some reason; amused; roused; combative; more than by praise. Of course I was pleased when L. said none of our friends read The Listener. Anyhow, my spirits rose, calm & steady; & I feel once more immune, set on my own feet, a fighter.

Friday 6 August 1937

Well but one must make a beginning. Its odd that I can hardly bring myself, with all my verbosity—the expression mania which is inborn in me—to say anything about Julian's death—I mean about that last 10 days in London. But one must get into the current again. That was a complete break; almost a blank; like a blow on the head: a shrivelling up. Going round to 8 [Fitzroy Street, Vanessa's studio] that night; & then all the other times, & sitting there. When Roger died I noticed; & blamed myself; yet it was a great relief I think. Here there was no relief. An incredible suffering—to watch it—an accident, & someone bleeding. Then I thought the death of a child is childbirth again; sitting there listening.

No no, I will not go back to those days. The only thing was a kind of comfort in being there with Nessa Duncan, Quentin & Angelica, & losing completely the isolation, the spectator's attitude in being wanted; & spontaneous. Then we came down here last Thursday; & the pressure being removed, one lived; but without much of a future. Thats one of the specific qualities of this death—how it brings close the immense vacancy, & our short little run into inanity. Now this is what I intend to combat. How? how make good what I protest, that I will not yield an inch or a fraction of an inch to nothingness, so long as something remains? Work of course. I plunged on Monday into Congreve, & have about done him this morning. And undoubtedly that sets the wheels running. Directly I am not working, or see the end in sight, then nothingness begins. I have to go over though every other day to Charleston. We sit in the studio door. It is very hot, happily. A hot bank holiday—a child killed at the top; aeroplanes droning. The thought of Julian changing so queerly, no so usually; now distant, now close; now of him there, in the flesh; now some physical encounter—kissing him surreptitiously; & so on. And then I had some relief when Tom rejected his essays, for I felt then I had not been merely spiteful, merely jealous.[53] But how it curtails the future: how it reduces ones vision to ones own life—save for Q. & Angelica. A curiously physical sense; as if one had been living in another body, which is removed, & all that living is ended. As usual, the remedy is to enter other lives, I suppose; & the old friction of the brain. . . .

Sunday 29 January 1939

Yes, Barcelona has fallen: Hitler speaks tomorrow; the next dress rehearsal begins: I have seen Marie Stopes, Princesse de Polignac, Philip & Pippin, & Dr Freud in the last 3 days. also had Tom to dinner & to the Stephens' party.[54]

Dr Freud gave me a narcissus. Was sitting in a great library with little statues at a large scrupulously tidy shiny table. We like patients on chairs. A screwed up shrunk very old man: with a monkeys light eyes, paralysed spasmodic movements, inarticulate: but alert. On Hitler. Generations before the poison will be

worked out. About his books. Fame? I was infamous rather than famous. didnt make £50 by his first book. Difficult talk. An interview. Daughter & Martin helped. Immense potential, I mean an old fire now flickering. When we left he took up the stand. What are *you* going to do? The English—war.

Wednesday 15 May 1940

An appeal last night for home defence—against parachutists. L. says he'll join.[55] An acid conversation. Our nerves are harassed—mine at least: L. evidently relieved by the chance of doing something. Gun & uniform to me slightly ridiculous. Behind that the strain: this morning we discussed suicide if Hitler lands. Jews beaten up. What point in waiting? Better shut the garage doors. This a sensible, rather matter of fact talk. . . . A thunderous hot day. Dutch laid down arms last night. The great battle now raging. Ten days, we say, will settle it. I guess we hold: then dig in; about Novr. the USA comes in as arbitrator. On the other hand—

Mabel just come. She says theyre building wooden bridges beside the others on the Thames. Pop-pop-pop, as we play bowls. Probably a raider over Eastbourne way. Now thunder rain sets in. . . . No, I dont want the garage to see the end of me. I've a wish for 10 years more, & to write my book wh. as usual darts into my brain. L. finished his yesterday.[56] So we've cleared up our book accounts—tho' its doubtful if we shall publish this June. Why am I optimistic? Or rather not either way? because its all bombast, this war. One old lady pinning on her cap has more reality. So if one dies, it'll be a common sense, dull end—not comparable to a days walk, & then an evening reading over the fire. Hospital trains go by. A hot day to be wounded. Anyhow, it cant last, this intensity—so we think—more than 10 days. A fateful book this. Still some blank pages—& what shall I write on the next 10?

This idea struck me: the army is the body: I am the brain. Thinking is my fighting.

Friday 16 August 1940

They came very close. We lay down under the tree. The sound was like someone sawing in the air just above us. We lay flat on our faces, hands behind head. Dont close yr teeth said L. They seemed to be sawing at something stationary. Bombs shook the windows of my lodge. Will it drop I asked? If so, we shall be broken together. I thought, I think, of nothingness—flatness, my mood being flat. Some fear I suppose. Shd we take Mabel to garage. Too risky to cross the garden L. said. Then another came from Newhaven. Hum & saw & buzz all round us. A horse neighed on the marsh. Very sultry. Is it thunder? I said. No guns, said L. from Ringmer, from Charleston way. Then slowly the sound lessened. Mabel in kitchen said the windows shook. Air raid still on, distant planes. Leslie playing bowls I well beaten.

My books only gave me pain, Ch Brontë said. Today I agree. Very heavy dull & damp. This must at once be cured. The all clear. 5 to 7. 144 down last night.[57]

Saturday 31 August 1940

Now we are in the war. England is being attacked. I got this feeling for the first time completely yesterday. The feeling of pressure, danger horror. Vita rang up at 6 to say she cdn't come. She was sitting at S[issinghurs]t. the bombs were falling round the house. Theyd been fighting all day. I'm too jaded to give the feeling—of talking to someone who might be killed any moment. Can you hear that? she said. No, I cdnt. Thats another. That's another. She repeated the same thing—about staying in order to drive the ambulance—time after time, like a person who cant think. She'd heard that Christopher Hobhouse was killed by a bomb: that Cynthia North—so lovely like a young colt she was killed by a bomb she trod on.[58] It was very difficult talking. She said it was a comfort to talk. She broke off—Oh how I do mind this, & put the telephone down. I went & played bowls. A perfect quiet hot evening. Later the planes began zooming. Explosions. . . . A great raid on London last night. Today quiet here. When I

rang up St. after dinner, someone cut in with a call to Maldon. "Restricted service. Things very bad there just now." The feeling is that a battle is going on—a fierce battle. May last 4 weeks. Am I afraid? Intermittently. The worst of it ones mind wont work with a spring next morning. Of course this may be the beginning of invasion. A sense of pressure. Endless local stories. No—its no good trying to capture the feeling of England being in a battle.

Saturday 8 March 1941

Just back from L.'s speech at Brighton.[59] Like a foreign town: the first spring day. Women sitting on seats. A pretty hat in a teashop—how fashion revives the eye! And the shell encrusted old women, rouged, decked, cad[a]verous at the tea shop. The waitress in checked cotton.

No: I intend no introspection. I mark Henry James's sentence: Observe perpetually. Observe the oncome of age. Observe greed. Observe my own despondency. By that means it becomes serviceable. Or so I hope.[60] I insist upon spending this time to the best advantage. I will go down with my colours flying. This I see verges on introspection; but doesn't quite fall in. Suppose, I bought a ticket at the Museum; biked in daily & read history. Suppose I selected one dominant figure in every age & wrote round & about. Occupation is essential. And now with some pleasure I find that its seven; & must cook dinner. Haddock & sausage meat. I think it is true that one gains a certain hold on sausage & haddock by writing them down.

NOTES

1. The German armoured cruiser *Blücher* was sunk, and their battle cruiser *Seydlitz* seriously damaged, at the Battle of the Dogger Bank on 14 January 1915; the British flagship *Lion* was damaged.
2. Sir Walter Scott's novel, published in three volumes in Edinburgh in 1820; inscribed 'V.W. from L.W. 25th Jan. 1915'.
3. Buszard's Tea Rooms, 197–201 Oxford Street.

4. Leslie Stephen wrote a biography of Pope (1880) for the 'English Men of Letters' series; and an essay, 'Pope as a Moralist' was included in his *Hours in a Library* (new edition, 1892).
5. LW's second novel, *The Wise Virgins, A Story of Words, Opinions, and a Few Emotions.* Completed in 1913, the book was not published until October 1914 owing to objections to certain passages by his publisher Edward Arnold. The book contains generally unsympathetic portraits based on LW himself, VW, and their families and friends; it was perhaps for this reason together with the state of her health that VW had not hitherto read the book.
6. Ethel Sidgwick, author of *Duke Jones, A Sequel to A Lady of Leisure*, 1914.
7. There are daily entries in the Asheham Diary from 31 July to 6 October inclusive, with the exception of four days, 9–12 September. They are written in the laconic style of those of the previous summer and deal of the matters VW here mentions.
8. The August number of the literary monthly *English Review* (edited by Austin Harrison) contained the first publication of Katherine Mansfield's *Bliss*, and the League of Nations' Prize Essay *Foundations of Internationalism* by H. N. Brailsford. Katherine Mansfield married John Middleton Murry, literary critic, editor, and author, in 1918.
9. Ezra Loomis Pound (1885–1972), the American-born but Europe-based poet, a supporter, both critically and materially, of the *avant-garde*, which included at this period Eliot himself, James Joyce, and Percy Wyndham Lewis (1882–1957), the writer and artist. Lewis's first novel *Tarr* had been published in July by The Egoist, Ltd., the firm started by Miss Harriet Weaver as an offshoot of her periodical *The Egoist* (of which Eliot was still assistant editor).
10. 'When evening quickens faintly in the street,
    Wakening the appetites of life in some
    And to others bringing the *Boston Evening Transcript*,
    I mount the steps and ring the bell, turning
    Wearily, as one would turn to nod good-bye to Rochefoucauld,
    If the street were time and he at the end of the street,
    And I say, "Cousin Harriet, here is the *Boston Evening Transcript*."'
    From *Prufrock and other Observations*, 1917. Faber, London, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York.
11. The White Hart Hotel in High Street is a large inn facing the Law Courts in the centre of Lewes.
12. For the history of Monks House and its previous owners see LW's *Beginning Again*, Hogarth Press, 1964, pp. 61–64, and LW's *Downhill All the Way*, Hogarth Press, 1967, pp. 12–15.
13. Katherine Mansfield's *Prelude* had been hand-printed by the Woolfs and published in July 1918. Her story 'Je ne parle pas Français' was reviewed in the *Athenaeum* of 2 April 1920 by J. W. N. Sullivan under the heading 'The Story-Writing Genius', and compared to Chekhov and Dostoievsky.

14. Katherine Mansfield had reviewed *Night and Day* in the *Athenaeum* of 26 November 1919 (see *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, ed. by Anne Olivier Bell, Hogarth Press, V. I, 1977, 28 November 1919). She had written of it to Murry (10 November 1919): 'I don't like it. My private opinion is that it is a lie in the soul.'
15. A musical play by John Gay, first produced in 1728 and revived with great success at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, in 1920 by Giles Playfair.
16. The review by Gilbert Seldes appeared in the New York *Nation* of 30 August 1922. See *James Joyce, 1907–27* in the Critical Heritage Series, edited by Robert H. Deming, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970.
17. Katherine Mansfield died quickly on the night of 9 January 1923 following a haemorrhage; Murry was visiting her at the Gurdjieff Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man at Fontainebleau where she had been living since October. Copies of 30 of her letters to VW are in MHP: *Monks House Papers*, University of Sussex Library Catalogue, July 1972; the final sentence, omitted by Murry in his edition of his wife's letters (1928, vol. I, p 75), of one written in July 1917 reads: 'Do let us meet in the nearest future darling Virginia, and don't quite forget.'
18. See *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, ed. by Nigel Nicolson, Hogarth Press, V. II, 1976, footnote to no. 1156, referring to a letter to Katherine Mansfield dated 13 February 1921 'not yet available for publication'. This would appear to be the letter also referred to by VW in writing to Dorothy Brett on 2 March 1923 (*VW Letters*, V. III, 1977, no. 1365): 'I must have written to her sometime in March 1921. . . . perhaps she never did get my letter. . . . Murry . . . said she was lonely and asked me to write. . . . It hurt me that she never answered.' As VW sat next to Murry at his 'farewell dinner' on 11 February 1921, her letter was probably the one dated 13 February, and she was mistaken in thinking she had written in March.
19. 'London, thou art the flour of cities all.
    Gemme of all joy, jaspre of jocunditie,
    Most myghty carbuncle of vertue and valour;'
    In Honour of the City of London by William Dunbar (1465?–1530?)
20. VW refers to her breakdown and madness of the late summer, autumn and winter of 1913 in the course of which, on the evening of 9 September, she had tried to kill herself. See *II QB* [Quentin Bell, *Mrs Woolf*, V. II of *Virginia Woolf. A Biography*, Hogarth Press, 1972], pp 11–19. The Woolfs had taken rooms in Clifford's Inn, off the Strand, shortly after returning to London in October 1912 from their honeymoon.
21. Cf 'A Sketch of the Past' written fifteen years later (see *Moments of Being*, p 84). Dr David Elphinstone Seton (*c.* 1827–1917) MD Edin 1856, of Emperor's Gate, South Kensington, was the Stephens' family doctor until the death of Sir Leslie.
22. Vita Sackville-West (1892–1962) was a novelist and poet, thirteen of whose books were published by the Hogarth Press. Lionel Edward Sackville-West, 3rd Baron Sackville (1867–1926), Vita's father, lived at Knole, one of the largest and finest baronial houses in England. Begun in 1456, it was greatly extended in the early seventeenth century by Thomas Sackville, 1st Earl of Dorset, to whom it was presented by his kinswoman, Queen Elizabeth. Vita's mother, the volatile half-Spanish Lady Sackville, had left Knole and her husband in 1919.

23. It had fallen to Thomas Sackville to deliver the death-warrant to Mary Queen of Scots on the eve of her execution at Fotheringay in 1586; in recognition of the delicacy with which he performed this painful duty, Mary presented him with a carved wooden triptych of saints and the procession to Calvary, which is still preserved in the chapel at Knole.
24. This was *Seducers in Ecuador* which the Hogarth Press published in November 1924.
25. Murry had been living in rooms in Boris Anrep's house in Pond Street, Hampstead. In the summer of 1924 after his second marriage he bought an old coastguard station in Dorset, but needed a London *pied-à-terre*—which he acquired in Chelsea.
26. Jacques Pierre Raverat (1885–1925), a Frenchman who had studied mathematics at Cambridge and was one of the group of friends called by VW the 'neo-Pagans', another of whom, the wood-engraver Gwendolen Mary Darwin (1885–1957), he married in 1911. They lived at Vence in the Alpes-Maritimes, and he became a painter. He had suffered for some years from a form of disseminated sclerosis, a paralysing disease, and his letters were dictated to his wife. About a month before his death on 7 March 1925, VW had sent him advance proofs of *Mrs Dalloway*, and he responded: 'Almost it's enough to make me want to live a little longer, to continue to receive such letters and such books . . . I am flattered & you know how important an element that is in one's sensations, and proud & pleased . . .' The correspondence between VW and Jacques and Gwen Raverat is preserved in MHP, Sussex.
27. See 'Montaigne' in *The Common Reader*, p 95: 'But enough of death; it is life that matters.' *The Common Reader* was published by the Hogarth Press on 23 April 1925 in an edition of 1250 copies.
28. From the last verse of William Cowper's poem, 'The Castaway':
    'No voice divine the storm allay'd,
    No light propitious shone,
    When, snatch'd from all effectual aid,
    We perish'd, each alone:
    But I beneath a rougher sea,
    And whelm'd in deeper gulfs than he.'
29. J. F. Holms wrote in the *Calendar of Modern Letters*, July 1925, that 'despite its pure and brilliant impressionism' *Mrs Dalloway* is 'sentimental in conception and texture, and is accordingly aesthetically worthless'. Ann Watkins was a New York literary agent.
30. VW went to stay with V. Sackville-West at Long Barn on 17 December; it was, according to Nigel Nicolson (*III VW Letters*, p 223), 'the be-

ginning of their love affair'. LW joined them on the afternoon of 19 December, and Vita motored them to London next day.

31. Vita's sons were (Lionel) Benedict (1914–1978) and Nigel (b. 1917) Nicolson.
32. V. Sackville-West's journey from Cairo to Persia in March 1926 is described in her *Passenger to Teheran*, published by the Hogarth Press in 1926 (*A Checklist of the Hogarth Press*, compiled by J. Howard Woolmer, 107); the final four days' travel, over high mountain passes and desert plains, was by Trans-Desert Mail car. Her poem was probably 'On the Lake' which appeared in the *Nation & Athenaeum* on 26 December 1925.
33. i.e. as a result of her father-in-law's death.
34. Violet Trefusis, *née* Keppel (1894–1972), with whom Vita, often disguised as a man, had had a passionate and dramatic love affair between 1918–21 (see Nigel Nicolson, *Portrait of a Marriage*, 1973). Henry, Viscount Lascelles (1882–1974), who married the Princess Royal in 1922 and was to succeed his father as 6th Earl of Harewood in 1929, had courted Vita before she engaged herself to Harold Nicolson in 1913. Sasha the Russian Princess and the Archduchess Harriet in *Orlando* were based upon what VW learned of these two from Vita.
35. The Femina-Vie Heureuse Prize (£40) was presented to VW at the Institut Français in South Kensington on 2 May by the popular novelist Hugh (Seymour) Walpole (1884–1941), whom she had once met at luncheon with Lady Colefax (see *VW Diary*, V. II, 1978, 16 November 1923); their picture appeared on the back page of the *Times* on 3 May. Elizabeth Robins (1862–1952), actress, author, and feminist, born in Louisville, Kentucky. In 1888 she had settled in London where, in the 'nineties, she pioneered and acted in productions of Ibsen's plays, financed by a subscription fund of which Gerald Duckworth had been treasurer (her *Ibsen and the Actress* (*HP Checklist* 174) was published in the Hogarth Essays series in October 1928). She gave up acting in 1902, but wrote a play *Votes for Women!* (1907), and was a prolific novelist.
36. *The Well of Loneliness*, a novel of Lesbian love by Radclyffe Hall (1886–1943), had been published in July by Jonathan Cape, who had withdrawn it in the face of outraged objections in the popular press and from the Home Secretary. E. M. Forster and LW were united in their opposition, on principle, to such suppression, and organised protests, which included a joint letter from Forster and VW published in the *N & A*, 8 September 1928. (See also P. N. Furbank, *E. M. Forster: A Life*, V. II (1978), pp 153–5.) Sir Henry Head (1861–1940; knighted 1927), FRS, neurologist. Roger Fry, who had a high opinion of him, had recommended that the Woolfs should consult him when VW was in a suicidal condition in 1913; and they did.
37. Cooking at Monks House had hitherto been done on a solid fuel range.
38. Since April 1923, when Maynard Keynes and his associates had acquired control of it, Hubert Henderson had edited the *N & A*; he was now leaving at the end of the year to take up an appointment as joint secretary to the newly-formed Economic Advisory Council. Keynes, as chairman of the *N & A* board, was seeking an amalgamation with the *New Statesman*—which was eventually effected in 1931.

39. See *VW Diary*, V. III, 1980, 30 September 1926: 'Ones sees a fin passing far out. What image can I reach to convey what I mean? . . . All I mean to make is a note of a curious state of mind. I hazard the guess that it may be the impulse behind another book.'
40. Janet Elizabeth Case (1862–1937), Classical scholar, had taught VW Greek at the beginning of the century. She and her sister Euphemia ('Emphie') now lived in retirement at Minstead in the New Forest.
41. Lytton Strachey (1880–1932) was a critic and biographer, and a good friend of the Woolfs.
42. Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell (VW's sister), both painters, lived and worked together until Vanessa's death in 1961. Their daughter, Angelica, was born in 1918.
43. The Woolfs went to tea with LW's mother on 30 January; her next-youngest son Cecil (1887–1917), who was killed at the Battle of Cambrai, had been stationed at Colchester early in the war. Bella (1877–1960), now Mrs Thomas Southorn, was the eldest of her eight surviving children.
44. Sir J. J. Thomson (1856–1940), OM, FRS, had been Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, since 1918. VW's father Leslie Stephen gave the first Clark lectures in 1883, taking 18th century literature as his subject.
45. Mary Dodge's present to VW was John Donne's copy, with his signature and notes, of the first edition (1605) of *Regales Disputationes Tres* by Alberico Gentilis; see lot 143 of Sotheby's sale of books, 27 July 1970. Charles H. Baber of Upper Regent Street were specialists in foot fitting.
46. *Testament of Youth* by Vera Brittain (1894–1970) was published in August 1933. In 1925 she married George Catlin (1879–1979), from 1924–35 Professor of Politics at Cornell University; he had been an Exhibitioner at New College, Oxford, and VW possibly met him there when staying with her cousin the Warden, H. A. L. Fisher. Until her marriage Vera Brittain shared a flat with Winifred Holtby, whom she had met on returning to Oxford after war service as a nurse, and about whom she wrote in *Testament of Friendship* (1940).
47. Roger Fry (1866–1934), art critic, painter, and close friend, died of heart failure on Sunday 9 September at the Royal Free Hospital, following a fall two days earlier at his home in Bernard Street.
48. Cf *III VW Diary*, 21 December 1925: '—she shines in the grocers shop in Sevenoaks with a candle lit radiance, stalking on legs like beech trees, pink glowing, grape clustered, pearl hung.'
49. George Ernest Manwaring (1882–1939) was Assistant Librarian at the London Library (and a naval historian). Alice Stopford Green (1847–1929), wife and collaborator of the historian J. R. Green, author of *A Short History of the English People* (1874). Leslie Stephen succeeded Tennyson as President of the London Library in 1892; 'Widow Green' served on the library committee for many years; by 1900, when he

agreed to her request to edit her husband's letters, Leslie Stephen wrote: 'I have come to think better of her.' (*Mausoleum Book*, p. 108).

50. Mark Pattison (1813–1884), Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford: 'For many years he was a member of the committee of the London Library, and regularly attended its meetings. But he was singularly inefficient on a board or committee. . . .' (*DNB*).
51. VW had been asked to give a talk for the B.B.C. in April in a series called "Words Fail Me."
52. Edwin Muir reviewed *The Years* in *The Listener*, 31 March 1937; and R. A. Scott James in the April issue of *The London Mercury* (of which he was editor): "Mrs Woolf has not removed from the picture the sense of dreariness and fatuity, however brightly coloured the strands with which the pattern is woven. . . ." Ivy Compton-Burnett (1892–1969) had recently published her seventh novel, *Daughters and Sons*.
53. Before his departure for Spain, Julian Bell, VW's nephew, had assembled three long polemical essays—including the "Letter to A." rejected by the Woolfs—which, he wrote to his brother, were "meant to cause pain to intellectuals, thought if possible, but pain anyway." and asked his mother, Vanessa, to send them to T. S. Eliot in the hope that his firm, Faber and Faber, would publish them as a book. After his death, Eliot wrote to VW to tell her, and through her Vanessa, that although he himself found them very interesting, they could not do so. In the event they were published by the Hogarth Press in *Julian Bell: Essays, Poems and Letters* in 1938.
54. The writer and sex-educationist Dr Marie Stopes (1880–1958) saw VW on 25 January, probably to secure her support for an appeal to the Royal Literary Fund on behalf of the indigent Lord Alfred Douglas. The Princesse de Polignac had tea with VW on 27 January. Philip Woolf and a daughter lunched on 28 January; that afternoon VW and LW went to visit Freud in Hampstead; and after dinner went with T. S. Eliot to Adrian Stephen's fancy-dress party at York Terrace, Regent's Park.
55. The Local Defence Volunteers—soon to be re-named the "Home Guard." LW did not join, but undertook Fire Watching and Air Raid Precautions duties in the village.
56. LW's book was *The War for Peace*, a short book written for the Labour Book Club and published by Routledge in September 1940.
57. In the Battle of Britain—the prelude to the intended invasion—the Luftwaffe suffered its heaviest reverses in the week ending 17 August, when the RAF claimed 496 German aircraft were brought down. The air assault, particularly on Kent, Sussex, and Greater London, was maintained but, having failed to achieve mastery of the air over England, on 17 September Hitler decided to postpone, and later to call off, his plans to invade in 1940, and to concentrate on the destruction of London and other cities by night bombing.
58. Christopher Hobhouse (1910–1940), barrister and author and a close friend of Harold Nicolson, was killed in a bombing attack on Portsmouth on 26 August. Lady Cynthia Williams (1908–1940), daughter of the Earl of Guilford, and her brother Lord North were both killed on 15 August by the explosion of a landmine on the South-East coast.
59. LW lectured to the WEA on "Common Sense in History."
60. Cf "Henry James" in Desmond MacCarthy's *Portraits* (1931), p. 155: "He had been describing to me the spiral of depression which a recent nervous illness had compelled him . . . to descend. . . . 'But it has been good . . . for my genius.' Then he added, 'Never cease to watch whatever happens to you.' "

THE VIRGINIA WOOLF READER

Edited by
MITCHELL A. LEASKA

HARCOURT BRACE JOVANOVICH
SAN DIEGO NEW YORK LONDON