

Orts: The George MacDonald Society Newsletter

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The George MacDonald Society

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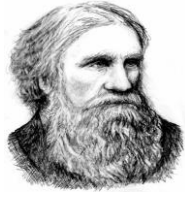
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Orts

The George MacDonald Society Newsletter No. 59, Spring 2001

The George MacDonald Society

The Society was founded in 1980, seventy-five years after MacDonald's death in 1905. It exists to celebrate and promote the works of George MacDonald and provide a forum for the exchange of views and information about his life and work.

Members of the Society receive the quarterly newsletter *Orts* (meaning 'scraps') and the annual journal, *North Wind*. There are annual one-day conferences for members in varying locations throughout Britain.

Visit: www.george-macdonald.com

You can go to our home-page: www.gmsociety.org.uk which links to the above website. Mike Partridge looks after this site and can be contacted via e-mail at webmaster@george-macdonald.com

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Back issues of the Society's publications can be ordered from any of the above.

Forthcoming Events 2001

The George MacDonald Society Annual Conference

Saturday 8th September

Locations: Hastings and St. Leonards, East Sussex, England

George MacDonald spent two important periods of his life in Hastings.

- ❖ This is where the first meeting with Lewis Carroll took place
- ❖ This is where MacDonald's prose writing career began with the writing of *Phantastes*. The family moved to Hastings in 1857—renaming their first house 'Huntly Cottage' which had thirteen good-sized rooms.
- ❖ Three houses occupied by the MacDonald family still survive
- ❖ Many other writers and famous people have stayed in the town

There will be a coach tour of the local area including the MacDonald houses.

Local historian, **Edward Preston**, has produced a brochure for the Hastings Tourist Information Centre (a copy of which will be sent to each Society member with the next issue of *Orts*). This includes a section on George MacDonald.

Further information and booking details will appear in the next issue of *Orts*.

Membership

The subscriptions for 2001 are now due. The cost has risen slightly.

Individual membership	£10.00
Joint membership	£13.00
Students and Senior Citizens	£7.00
Overseas membership	£11.00
U.S.A./Canada individual	\$18.00
U.S.A./Canada joint	\$22.00

Please contact **Vivienne Forrest**, Membership Secretary.

The Third New England Adela Cathcart Workshop

'THE WATER OF LIFE'

Friday May 18th (evening) to Sunday May 20th (lunch time)

The proposed venue is easily reached by suburban transport from Boston.

Full details from: Nancy Mellon, 82 Gage Ridge, Wilton, NH 03086-5806 U.S.A.

Tel. & Fax. (001) 603 654 2982 **E-mail:** nancymellon@tellink.net

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The workshop will focus upon *Gutta Percha Willie*, where the practical and spiritual aspects of life are more closely integrated than in almost any other of MacDonald's books. It is written as much for parents as for children.

Adela Workshops give MacDonald enthusiasts the opportunity to work together to come to a deeper understanding of the immediate practical value of his writings in everyday life. There are no formal presentations by MacDonald scholars. Experts are present as facilitators and can point out illuminating details such as, for example the meanings behind the names of people and places in MacDonald's stories. The best way of coming to understand the relevance of these meanings is when a group of people find that they can relate them to their own life-experiences.

The next workshop is being planned for the West Coast of America—probably in Spring 2002.

Note from the Editor

- ❖ Any member who wishes to have *Orts* in a large print version please let the Editor know.
- ❖ The Editor is currently seeking copies of back issues of *Orts* nos. 1, 27, 28. Decent photocopies would suffice.

Locating the Victorians Science Museum, London

12 - 15 July 2001

Locating the Victorians

The year 2001 marks the sesquicentenary of the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the centenary of the death of Queen Victoria. Coinciding with the dawn of a new millennium, these anniversaries provide the opportunity to review our interpretation of the culture of the Victorian period. The Science Museum, the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Natural History Museum in London's South Kensington, a cultural quarter itself funded from the profits of the Great Exhibition, is therefore hosting a great Victorian festival with major exhibitions and an international conference which will interpret the 19th century for the benefit of the 21st.

The meeting is being structured so as to be interdisciplinary, wide-ranging and summative. It is intended to foster communication between students of all branches of Victorian culture.

The conference has been organised into **21 strands** in seven parallel sessions over the **three days 13-15 July** with plenary meetings in the evenings of 12- 15 July.

Strands:

Art and Consumption
Colony and Metropole
Death's Dominions
The Great Exhibition
Men and Women

Civilising and Educating

Evolution, Progress and Degeneration
Liberty and Authority
Milestones

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Mirror Images
Pain and Pleasure
Religion and Culture
The Spectacular Society
Victoria Herself
The Victorians since 1901

Organisation of Knowledge
Power and Motion
Shock of the City
Underworld, Overworld, or One World?
Victorian Communications
Victorians and Working Class Culture

Thursday 12 July: Opening reception.

Friday 13 July: Plenary session to be held at Victoria & Albert Museum Saturday 14 July: Plenary session to be held in the Imax Theatre and followed by a banquet at the Science Museum.

Sunday 15 July

Plenary session to be held at the Royal College of Music followed by a closing Conference concert.

Venue: The Conference will take place at:

Imperial College, Prince's Gardens, London SW7 2BU United Kingdom

For further information or booking:

Locating the Victorians

c/o The Event Organisation Company
5 Maidstone Buildings Mews Bankside
London SE 1 1GN United Kingdom
Tel: + 44 (0)20 7940 5555
Fax: +44 (0)20 7940 5577
Email: reg@event-org.com
<http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/researchers/victorians/>

Dr. Gisbert Kranz

Dr. Gisbert Kranz, the founder of the German Inklings-Society, celebrated his 80th birthday on 9th of February 2001. He was president of the Society from 1983 to 1993 and has been honorary president since then. His collection of books, magazines and manuscripts concerning the Inklings is unique in Europe. Especially for Chesterton and George MacDonald he often had to search in second-hand bookshops. He still belongs to the editors of the *Inklings-Jahrbuch* and there he is specialist for reviews. Reading, writing and bicycling, are his passions. In 1951 he read C.S. Lewis for the first time and from Lewis he came to George MacDonald. He likes MacDonald's Scottish novels very much and of course his fairy tales. Kranz' essay *George MacDonald in Germany (North Wind No. 8 - 1989)* was once published by William Raeper. When Kranz heard of the sudden death of William Raeper on 31 July 1992, he was very sad. He really would have liked to meet this intelligent and qualified young man.

Irene Oberdoerfer, secretary of the Inklings-Gesellschaft

News from the Marion E. Wade Center

In 1999, the Marion E. Wade Center of Wheaton, IL announced plans to construct a new facility on the campus of Wheaton College. After almost two years of planning and preparation, the anticipated building is taking form. As of December 2000, the structure is completely enclosed, enabling builders to continue their work throughout the winter. If progress continues as planned, the Wade Center anticipates moving into its new home by summer of 2001.

From the staff's perspective, the new building will provide additional shelving and storage space for materials. Full-time staff will enjoy more organizational space in their immediate work areas, and a new seminar room will be available for smaller gatherings such as staff or business meetings.

There are pleasant changes in store for those who visit the Center as well. A larger museum area will greet visitors as they first enter the building. This space will hopefully provide an opportunity to display rarer items on a rotating basis. The wardrobe and Pauline Baynes' Narnia map will probably stand in a small "children's corner" which will highlight the contributions of the Wade Center authors to children's literature.

A separate classroom will be appreciated by the many school groups that visit each year. The Wade Center offers these groups a slide show on the life of C.S. Lewis followed by a brief tour of the museum.

Finally, the reading room will also be expanded. Three research tables will be available to provide ample elbowroom to scholars (currently the Center has only one table). Additional shelving will also make more books readily accessible. The intimate atmosphere of the current reading room will be preserved with glass-fronted bookcases, a fireplace and bay window overlooking an English garden.

An alcove in the back of the reading room will provide file space for the ever-increasing article file, and dissertations on the authors will also be stored there. A small audio/visual room will be accessible through the alcove.

This improved facility will offer new discoveries for long-time scholars as well as those who are just beginning their journey with these remarkable authors.

For further information, please contact:

Alicia Pearson, The Marion E. Wade Center, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL 60187 USA

Phone: 001 (630) 752-5908 **Fax:** 001 (630) 752-5855 **E-mail:** wade@wheaton.edu

Visit: <http://www.wheaton.edu/learnres/wade/>

A.J. Scott (1805 - 1866)

At the George Macdonald Society Annual General Meeting on 20 October 2000 **the Revd Dr John Pridmore** gave a paper on *MacDonald's Mentors*. The focus was on two key figures—F.D. Maurice and A.J. Scott.

Here is an extract from the paper relating to A.J. Scott who greatly influenced the life of MacDonald. There is a brief biographical summary of A.J. Scott at the end.

A.J. Scott was the first principal of Owens College in Manchester. Owens College in the mid-19th century was the only university college in Britain, apart from University College London, which did not apply religious tests. Scott is such a forgotten figure that a brief outline of his career is perhaps helpful—and for that I'd refer you to the handout I hope you have. From that summary I'd simply highlight the fact that, like MacDonald twenty years later, Scott was condemned for teaching heresy, condemned by the Church of Scotland for denying the Westminster Catechism's doctrine of 'limited atonement'. And I remind you that MacDonald first met Scott at an early and formative stage in his life while he was still a student at Highbury College. And then it is to Scott that MacDonald as it were turns for refuge when, driven from his Arundel pastorate, he moves to Manchester. MacDonald was one of many who crowded into Scott's home in Halliwell Lane who went on to become leaders of liberal non-conformity.

What did Scott stand for? Scott believed in the primacy of what he called the 'spiritual conscience', the God-given faculty every person has for determining what is of God. He stressed the reality of Christ's humanity, that Jesus was indeed one of us. He preached the universal love of God, rejecting the doctrine that Christ had died only for the elect. He taught that God was immanent in all creation and in all humanity. This conviction fuelled his passionate concern for social justice and his opposition to the notion that the world about us is just there to be used as we think fit. Scott had a high doctrine of the freedom of the spirit of God. The spirit is always breaking through the systems and structures legalists love. Already we can see how such a vision must have appealed to MacDonald.

MacDonald writes to his father. 'Is it not a great thing to me to have the man whose intellect and wisdom I most respect in the world for my friend?' MacDonald writes in similar vein to his wife, How delightful it is to hear Mr. Scott talk, so gently, so strangely—confirming so purely whatever I said—and making it stronger with things I had not thought of—And he told me of his own trials ...(he) was most brotherly and simple and human to me—and therefore divine. (ALS Yale, 4th / 5th July, 1853.)

MacDonald writes in one of the *Unspoken Sermons* of the ages-long process from the moment when what was to be the earth split off from the sun 'to the time when Alexander John Scott worshipped (God) from its face'. A. J. Scott, it seems, represents for MacDonald the apex of evolutionary development. MacDonald's novel *Robert Falconer* is dedicated to Scott in similarly fulsome terms:

To the memory of the man who stands highest in the oratory of my memory, Alexander John Scott, I, daring, presume to dedicate this book.

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The first of the MacDonald children, Lilia Scott MacDonald, was named after him. The dedicatory poem to MacDonald's *Organ Songs* honours Scott as 'Truth's herald' amid a bedlam of raucous and discordant voices:

Thy voice, Truth's herald, walking the untuned roar, Calm and distinct, powerful and sweet and fine:

I loved and listened, listened and loved more. (*Poetical Works*, Vol. I, p. 272)

Later in the same volume he pays tribute to Scott's intellectual and moral authority in similarly glowing terms:

I see thee far before me on thy way

Up the great peaks, and striding stronger still

Thy intellect unrivalled in its sway (*Poetical Works*, Vol. I, p. 280)

For MacDonald, Scott was simply the greatest man he had ever known.

We need to pause on A. J. Scott. Scott's influence on MacDonald exceeded that of any other individual.

Central to Scott's thought, as to Maurice's, is the notion that all reality is one and that there is an essential underlying affinity between the human spirit and all there is. 'There is an inward correspondence between humanity as God means it and the entire reality of things' (Scott, 1848, p. 19).

This leads me to the two passages, one from Scott, one from MacDonald, which I have quoted on the handout - a key passage even if it is an example of MacDonald at his most convoluted!

Be assured there is a harmony in all truth, a mutual dependence. All its lines converge.

There is a point, in which meeting, they lean upon one another; and he that will try to do without any of them will find that the rest must suffer (Scott, 1841, p. 336).

Where have we heard words like that before? I refer you to what I regard as an absolutely key passage in *Phantastes*

I was trying to find the root of a manifestation, the spiritual truth whence a material vision sprang; or to combine two propositions, both apparently true, either at once or in different remembered moods and to find the point in which their invisibly converging lines would unite in one, revealing a truth higher than either and differing from both; though so far from being opposed to either that it was that whence each derived its life and power (i. pp. 178, 179).

Truth is found beyond our reach at the point where at last 'the lines converge'. What lines? The lines we read in fairy stories, for example, and the lines we hear in sermons. It's not the case, it's not the case, that the lines we read in *Phantastes*, say, lead us to the truth which is more clearly told in the sermons. The lines of the fairy tales and the lines of sermons (or for that matter the lines of our creeds) lead beyond themselves. They do not capture truth and hold it fast. Neither fantasy nor sermons nor creeds do that. Their lines finally converge in 'a truth higher than either

and differing from both; though so far from being opposed to either that it was that whence each derived its life and power'

This is the nearest we have in the whole of MacDonald's work to a statement of the relationship between what we might call the two 'discourses' of his writing, the fantastic and the realistic—the texts which explore our spiritual development in explicit Christian terms, texts which talk about God, and those which use a different language, a language which avoids God-talk and instead uses the language of fairy land.

Neither way of putting things is privileged. Neither is primary. Neither the 'God-talk' of sermons (ours or MacDonald's) nor the language of fairy tales. They are complementary discourses. And their lines converge and meet in a truth beyond them both.

Now the importance of what this passage from *Phantastes* is saying has been recognised and pointed out both by Stephen Prickett and Roderick McGillis. I simply want to point out how this image of the converging lines is there in Scott and to suggest to you that the principle the image illustrates is something which MacDonald learned from Scott—the principle that there are more ways than one of talking about the truth that is beyond words.

What is the truth to which both the theistic discourse of *The Unspoken Sermons* and the non-theistic discourse of *Phantastes* speak? It is that truth which is higher than both but which is the truth which authenticates them both. Truth is found where the lines drawn in the sermons—or in the preachy bits in the novels—and the lines drawn in fairy-tales converge.

This it seems to me is MacDonald's great insight and the heart of his vision. That the truth we tell in the familiar Christian terms and the truth we tell in fairy tales is the truth that is beyond them both, as it is beyond our present apprehension, the truth which lies where their invisibly converging lines meet. It is not lessen the importance or value of this vision to claim that it was A. J. Scott who opened MacDonald's eyes to it. This vision we too must strive to see. As Scott memorably puts it 'till at length all things wherever they are found, all events, whether of history or experience, of mind or matter, shall at once conspire to form one stupendous miracle, and cease to be such' (1842, p. 42).

Why do we fail to see how all hangs together? The barriers to our apprehension of this foundational coherence are moral. Our refusal to obey the truth we know means that the truth we do not know remains beyond us. That principle that the spiritual can never be uncoupled from the moral is of axiomatic in MacDonald's own thought and it was Scott who taught it to him. There is this text from John's gospel inscribed on Scott's grave (in Switzerland). 'He who is willing to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine' –words which you will recognise as a constant refrain in MacDonald's writing. That fundamental principle, that there is no path to the truth that by-passes the next thing to be done, MacDonald learns from Scott.

At last we shall understand that all is one stupendous miracle. Such a vision of the nature of things cannot be imparted as information. It can only be 'caught' from those who already have themselves reached such an understanding. Those who are in touch with how things in truth are, they are the true teachers. 'The existence of such men is communicative,' says Scott (1851, p.

233). 'The moral character is greatly formed, no doubt, by what others have taught; but far more by what they have been' (1849, p. 4). Learning depends on 'the living contact of spirit with spirit' (1849, pp. 6 - 7). As we have seen, Scott affirmed the authority of the individual 'spiritual conscience' and taught that, while conscience was not an infallible guide, any attempt to elevate the authority of Church, sacraments, priest or Bible above that of conscience was idolatrous. As too he emphasised the humanity and the universal fatherhood of God, the sacredness of creation, the dynamic spontaneity and unpredictability of the Spirit.

These themes are taken up by MacDonald over and over again and become central strands of his own vision of things. It seems to me that we cannot overestimate the extent to which A. J. Scott moulds the whole cast of MacDonald's mind. If MacDonald exercised the freedom to question, even to question the necessity of any received religious discourse for articulating the spiritual—as I would argue is the implication of MacDonald's recourse to fantasy—then it was above all this 'thin, black - complexioned, vehement man', as Carlyle described him, who granted him this freedom.

Alexander John Scott was licensed as a minister of the Church of Scotland in 1827. Very soon his preaching began to reflect his growing doubts about such central Calvinist tenets as the doctrine of 'limited atonement'. In 1828 he accepted Edward Irving's invitation to become his assistant in his ministry in London. Scott came to believe that the gifts of speaking in tongues and prophesying had been restored to the church and his preaching on this theme was instrumental in an eruption of charismatic activity amongst a number of Clydeside people. Irving embraced this movement with enthusiasm but Scott later drew back, rejecting as delusory the manifestations, which at the outset he had done so much to encourage. In London Scott developed what was to become a lifelong passionate concern, a burden for the plight of the poor. He spent the winter months preaching and teaching in the slums of Westminster. Later, together with Maurice, Kingsley and Ludlow, Scott became one of the founders of the Christian Socialist Movement. In 1828 Scott became pastor of the Scottish Church in Woolwich but his refusal to sign the Westminster Confession of Faith, on the grounds that it failed to affirm the universal love of God, led to condemnation for heresy. Despite this judgement Scott continued to minister at the Woolwich Church until 1846. In 1848 Scott was appointed to the Chair of English Language and Literature at University College, London. In 1849 he was appointed joint professor of Literature and Philosophy at Bedford College where his lectures were more heavily subscribed than those of any other member of the teaching body. At this period MacDonald, a student at Highbury College, attended lectures Scott was giving in privately rented rooms. During these London years Scott developed close friendships with a range of Scottish and English theological reformers, including F.D. Maurice. In 1851 Scott became the first principal of the recently established Owens College in Manchester. Scott's home in Halliwell Lane soon became a centre for seekers after a more comprehensive spirituality, as had been his London home. It was to Manchester that in 1853 MacDonald moved, first on his own but soon to be joined by his young family. Before long he was one of Scott's circle. Scott lacked the administrative ability, as indeed the health, to build up Owens College and he resigned the post of principal in 1858. He died on 12 January 1866.

Meet David Neuhouser

About 35 years ago, I was searching in used bookstores for anything by George MacDonald. At that time, most of his books were out of print. I was looking for his writings because C. S. Lewis kept praising him. Lewis had been helpful to me in resolving my doubts about Christianity and I thought that if MacDonald had helped Lewis he would be beneficial to me. Eventually, I was able to find most of MacDonald's books.

It took me a little while to realize that I had read *At the Back of the North Wind* as a boy. At that time I didn't pay any attention to authors. I am not sure which novel I read first as an adult. It may have been *Mary Marston*. In any case, I soon found out why Lewis praised MacDonald so profusely. Lewis had helped me with my doubts. Now MacDonald helped me in many ways. His portrayal of God as a loving Father and his emphasis on obedience has been especially important. In fact, MacDonald is now my favorite author.

It is hard for me to pick a favorite MacDonald novel, because I like so many of them. However, my favorite fairy tale is *The Wise Woman*. *The Wise Woman* shows us many of the characteristics of God. My favorite quotation, which appears in some form or other in many of his books, is "God is easy to please, but hard to satisfy." It reminds us that God is pleased with any small step we make towards Christlikeness, but will not be satisfied until we are perfect.

David L. Neuhouser is a professor of mathematics at Taylor University. He has the responsibility to supervise activities related to the Edwin W. Brown Collection (www.tayloru.edu/cslewis). This collection contains materials related to Lewis, MacDonald, Sayers, Barfield, and Williams. Dr. Neuhouser is the book reviewer for "Wingfold," a George MacDonald quarterly and has compiled an anthology, *George MacDonald: Selections from his Greatest Works*.

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Meet a new member

My name is Chris Hunt. Born in Manchester, but moved to Huntly, the birthplace of MacDonald, in 1978. I have always been interested in writing—running a small free paper for a time in Huntly after I left school.

Around my final year at school, Bill Raeper came to give a talk in Huntly on MacDonald. I attended and bought Bill's biography on MacDonald and *The Animals of a Quiet Neighbourhood*. It was MacDonald's life which first fascinated me, and then over time I began to read some of his work, and although not enjoying it all—found a great deal of it inspirational.

My favourite piece of anyone's work is often the one I find myself reading at the time—at present I am reading *At the Back of the North Wind*. A story simple yet deep. A sermon, yet not overbearing. Seemingly a story for children, but obviously written on many levels to be interpreted by all age groups.

It is the classic theme, of modern fiction and movies—good and evil are clearly seen in characters, with good the victors. With the judge and jury of North wind to preside over matters. Religious messages are conveyed without harming the sensitivities of people who consider themselves without religion—such as myself. Rather one feels morally uplifted by actions seen to be the right thing to do.

I am but a novice on MacDonald, and have many works to read ahead of me, but look forward to the journey. I feel the continued pride that such a man was born and derived so much inspiration from the small town of Huntly, and hope to push for local people to recognise his genius.

Chris Hunt lives in Aberdeen and joined the Society in 2000. If you wish to write to him please do so through the editor of *Orts*.

New Members:

Chris Hunt Esq., Aberdeen, Scotland

Professor U.C. Knoepfelmacher

Department of English, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544, U.S.A.

The Rev. Canon Donald Macnaughton, North Berwick, Scotland.

The Rev. Canon Donald Macnaughton

(related to the Powell family)

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Extract from his letter dated:

North Berwick
15 October 2000

Dear George MacDonald Society

I am writing for information regarding the George MacDonald Society. My wife and I visited Huntly in September when on our way up to Wester Ross. It was our first visit and we were disappointed to find that we had just missed a George MacDonald exhibition at the (Brander) library.

I am interested as I have a family connection with George MacDonald.

My great grandfather Joshua Sing married Florentia Powell a younger (and favourite) sister of Louisa Powell—who of course was George's wife.

I enclose copies from one of my family albums—which may be of interest to you. [The editor of *Orts* has these copies]

Phoebe is George's mother-in-law. I have included Phoebe's parents' portraits not because they are relevant, but because they are amusing!

It is a great pity that George MacDonald's works are so little known in the U.K. nowadays—especially in Scotland. People still read them in my childhood.

I should like to join the Society—to be kept informed on what is going on and will try to interest our sons and grandchildren in some of MacDonald's works. I have read William Raeper's biography, which is very thorough and also Elizabeth Saintsbury's short life, which is very well written.

My older sister was called Florentia—presumably after Florentia Powell.

I often wondered why my grandmother had a donkey called Phoebe—which my brothers and I adored in our childhood days!

Yours sincerely,

Donald Macnaughton

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Inklings-Gesellschaft

Founded in 1983, this international society publishes a book-length yearbook in German and English (*Inklings-Jahrbuch*) and a bulletin (*Inklings Rundbrief*). Articles in the yearbook cover the Inklings, MacDonald, Chesterton, Sayers and other literary figures.

There is a library of books and material on the Inklings and related authors available to researchers.

Annual membership costs 50.00 DM. (Students pay only 25.00 DM). Jahrbuch 2000 is available. Jahrbuch 2001 will be available in November 2001.

Back issues of the Jahrbuch available are:

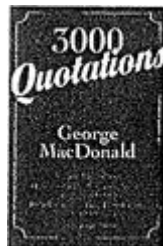
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Irene Oberdoerfer, Inklings-Gesellschaft, Hardt 36, 47877 Willich, Germany

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E-mail: inklings@gmx.de

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Originally published in 1996 by *Baker Book House* and *Solway* at £9.99. The entire stock is now with *Rosley Books*.

Harry Verploegh, Compiler. Royal octavo, pp.359. *3000 Quotations from the Writings of George MacDonald* is available for a limited time at GBP£3.00. Postage is extra (and can be posted U.K. and overseas).

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Book extract

Draco aut serpens qui caudam devoravit:

A Critical Study of George MacDonald's *At the Back of the North Wind*.

Together with a Translation of the Book into French

In spite of being its author's best-seller, George MacDonald's *At the Back of the North Wind* has never been fully understood: under the cover of the Victorian children's book lies, undisclosed, unsuspected even, an erudite work of esoteric purport. The figure of North Wind, in particular, is the subject of a most clever and efficient occultation considering that, some 130 years after its creation, it has never been penetrated.

Once perceived, however, the character's real identity opens up several paths of research such as the Greek death myths, the Metamorphoses of the Ancient, as well as Alchemy, Mystic, and analytical psychology, all of them exciting, if somewhat awe-inspiring subjects.

Neither has the final word been said concerning the characteristic structure of the book, its double vein, and the numerous texts within the text: often considered as padding, when they are not completely ignored, the so-called sub-texts, which we show to be on the contrary **pneumatic super-texts**, have never been deciphered, the very endeavour being something of a wager. The systematic study we make of them (to the exception of *Little Daylight*, which we intend to deal with elsewhere) has enabled us to show the subtle link uniting the texts to the main narrative. (and vice-versa) the meaning of such a relationship being very much the same actually, as that of **the relation between Little Diamond** and his wonderful friend **North Wind**.

This vital exchange between texts and text is perfectly illustrated by the **ouroboros** of the Ancient, which confirms our impression that such is indeed the cipher of MacDonald's masterpiece; picturesque and seemingly naive as it is, like the so-called book for children, this self-devouring snake crystallises all the features of it: its esoteric character, the uniting of the material and the spiritual, the reference to ancient traditional lore, the facing about of conversion, and the "travelling back" Home, so that the whole of *At the Back of the North Wind* matter and manner, can be said to be contained in what is also, and possibly most importantly, the emblematic icon of the alchemical Great Work.

With no other goal, at the outset, but to understand the book and account for it in its entirety, we saw its 'global meaning slowly emerge as we pondered and deciphered one after the other of its various pieces, and, were pleased finally to see our reading confirmed by the perfect fitting of the "jigsaw puzzle".

Catherine Persyn completed her thesis in December 2000, University of Toulouse le Mirail.

George MacDonald Quotes

Imagination

We must begin with a definition of the word *imagination*, or rather some description of the faculty to which we give the name. The word itself means an *imaging* or a making of likenesses. The imagination is that faculty which gives form to thought—not necessarily uttered form, but form capable of being uttered in shape or in sound, or in any mode upon which the senses can lay hold. It is, therefore, that faculty in man which is likeliest to the prime operation of the power of God, and has, therefore, been called the *creative* faculty, and its exercise *creation*. *Poet* means *maker*.

A Dish of Orts

Spring Song

Days of old,
Ye are not dead, though gone from me;
Ye are not cold,
But like the summer-birds fled o'er some sea.
The sun brings back the swallows fast
O'er the sea;
When he cometh at the last,
The days of old come back to me.

Poetical Works

Chosen by the Editor

Editorial Note: *Any member who wishes to choose a quote or favourite passage by George MacDonald may do so. Also anyone may write a brief 'piece' on why the quote they have chosen is important to them. These will be used as space allows.*

Editorial Policy

The George MacDonald Society's Newsletter - *Orts* and annual journal *North Wind* have two functions. Firstly, to publish material about the life and work of George MacDonald. Secondly, to publish details of the activities of the Society.

Contributions to *Orts* and *North Wind* are welcome through their respective editors. If you wish to submit a contribution please take note of the following:

- ❖ Submissions should be sent to the Editor.
- ❖ Submissions over 300 words should be made on floppy disc or by e-mail.
- ❖ Submissions under 300 words can be hand-written.
- ❖ Submissions on paper should be one-sided and double-spaced.
- ❖ All quotations should be clearly referenced, and a list of sources included.

- ❖ The Editor reserves the right to decide whether to publish a submission

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SEVEN

An Anglo-American Literary Review Volume 17

The Lion at 50

by Colin Manlove

The year 2000 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Colin Manlove examines the book's provenance, literary history and significance, particularly within the genre of fantasy.

Tolkien and Esperanto

by Arden R. Smith and Patrick Wynne

Arden Smith and Patrick Wynne discuss the relationship between language and legend in Tolkien's work, focusing on his interest in the international language Esperanto and its influence on his own invented languages.

"Dear Jim ..." The Reconstruction of A Friendship

by Barbara Reynolds

Dorothy L. Sayers dedicated several books to Muriel Jaegar, nicknamed "Jim" by her close mends at Oxford. Dr. Reynolds provides biographical information on Jaegar and takes a look at her long friendship with Sayers.

2nd Lieutenant Lewis

by K. James Gilchrist

"Close scrutiny of C.S. Lewis's service in World War I has been scant." writes K. James Gilchrist, in an article which outlines Lewis's role as a soldier and his unique way of coping with the trauma of the war through literature.

Dante and His Daughter: Dorothy L. Sayers's Response to Maud Bodkin

by Dominic Manganiello

Orts: 59 (2001)

Dominic Manganiello writes on Sayers's unpublished novel *Dante and His Daughter*, which is a Christian response to Bodkin's Freudian reading of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The article poses the novel's integral father-daughter relationship as parallel to Dante's use of human love as an illustration of divine love.

Also includes:

- **A Remembrance of Mary McDermott Shideler**
- **A Remembrance of Michael Stansby Williams**
- **News and Events**
- **Book Reviews and Notes**

Available in January, 2001. The price is the same as last year: Overseas: GBP£11.00 or \$17.50 per volume for surface post, GBP£14.00 or \$22.50 per volume for Airmail. In the US, the price is \$12.50 plus \$2.00 shipping per volume. We can accept British pound cheques or credit card. Cheques or money orders payable to the Marion E. Wade Center.

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