

# Orts: The George MacDonald Society Newsletter

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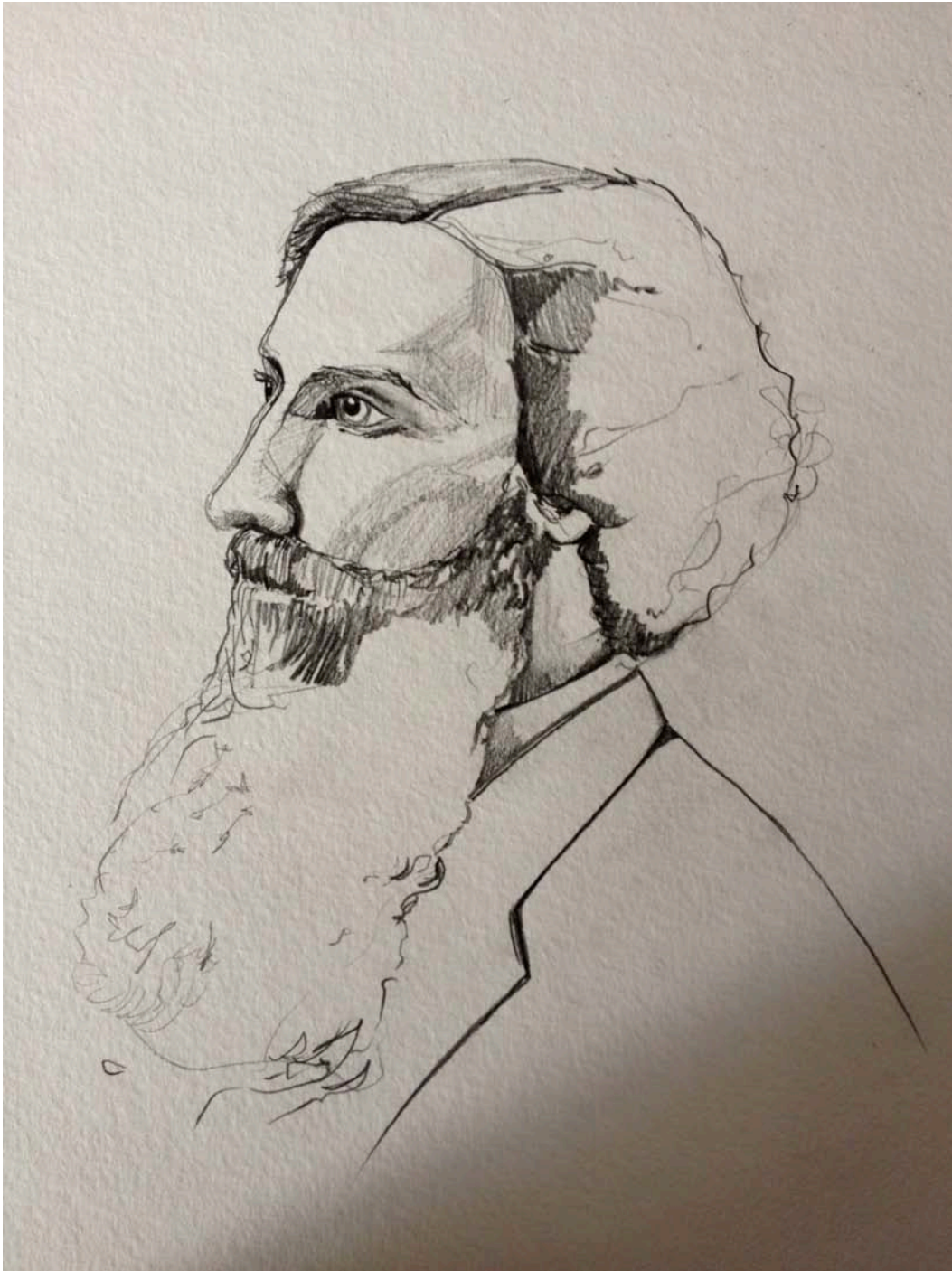
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# ORTS

THE GEORGE MACDONALD SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NO. 75, WINTER 2015

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**GEORGE MACDONALD, BY ELIZABETH PORRITT CARRINGTON**

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**GEORGE MACDONALD AND THE  
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**COVER:** The portrait of MacDonald is a pencil sketch by Elizabeth Porritt Carrington, an artist based in Ashville, North Carolina. Her work, which seeks to uncover the creative process of inspiration, often takes its cues from MacDonald's work and life. More can be found at her website, [www.elizabethcarringtonart.com](http://www.elizabethcarringtonart.com)

**TALES BEYOND BORDERS: UPCOMING UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS CONFERENCE  
by Christine Chettle, University of Leeds**

Over the past year, I and a couple of other postgraduate/early career researchers who share my interest in fantasy studies have launched an initiative called *Reading the Fantastic* ([www.reading-the-fantastic.tumblr.com](http://www.reading-the-fantastic.tumblr.com)) at the University of Leeds (UK); our focus is the exploration of fantasy, fairy tale and folk tale texts as spaces of multi-cultural and intercultural connection. Initially involving a guest speaker talk and regular reading group sessions collecting fantasy and fairy tale texts from a wide range of cultures, our activities have expanded (thanks to various funding grants). In addition to adding a regular seminar series to our reading group sessions, we are organizing a conference at the University of Leeds, *Tales Beyond Borders*, and a postgraduate/early career researcher workshop.

The *Tales Beyond Borders* conference aims to bring together those working in various aspects of fantasy studies to enhance and expand existing discussions and work. Responsive to the wide-ranging interpretations of the term, 'fantastic', *Tales Beyond Borders* engages in this emerging field of research from a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary perspective. It offers a broad approach to the investigation of fantasy texts, reaching into spheres such as theatre, comics, film, art history, and the storytelling classroom, in addition to literary

texts. We hope to contribute to the field by gathering connections among multiple fantasy traditions, ranging from the complexities of classical mythology to long nineteenth-century fairy tale collections, the cognitive literary analysis of folk traditions to issues in translation of fantastic texts, and beyond. By doing so, this multi-dimensional event will investigate how examining borders and boundary crossing might clarify, enhance and expand the role of fairy tales, folk tales, and fantasy texts as spaces of multicultural invention and intervention. Conference keynote sessions from both academic and creative experts will include a talk on connections between George MacDonald's *Phantastes* (1858) and Felix Mendelssohn's music of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1826).

The *Tales Beyond Borders* postgraduate/early career workshop will explore the use of fantasy as a point of engagement and impact, aiming to provide practical skills as well as increased knowledge of current and past projects. Participants will pursue in-depth investigations of fantasy and digital engagement, fantasy and community impact, and fantasy and teaching in both the classroom and the public sphere. Workshops will include presentations of current projects, discussion of strategies, and training in

problem-solving around issues arising within the use of fantasy as a point of engagement and impact.

Conference activities will also include an art exhibition and talk on Romany fairy and folk tales at the Stanley and Audrey Burton Gallery.

Fees are £5 for the workshop (free for conference attendees), day fees of £25 (students/unwaged) and £35 (academic/employed), and two-day fees of £40 (students/unwaged) and £60 (academic/employed). More information can be found on our conference website [www.readingthefantastic.wordpress.com](http://www.readingthefantastic.wordpress.com).



Conference attendees at Magdalen.

**INFORMING THE INKLINGS: A REPORT FROM THE GEORGE MACDONALD SOCIETY  
CONFERENCE, MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD, 13-15 AUGUST 2014  
By Rebecca Langworthy, University of Aberdeen  
Photos by Mike Partridge**

It was with great anticipation that I, and many others, arrived at C.S. Lewis's college of Magdalen on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August, 2014. Walking in the footsteps of the Inklings, a large and international group of MacDonald scholars met for a three-day conference of the George MacDonald Society, entitled **"Informing the Inklings: George MacDonald and the Victorian Roots of Modern Fantasy."** The conference was opened by Stephen Prickett, whose paper "Informing the Inklings: Lewis's Debt to MacDonald" demonstrated the extent to which the Inklings were inspired both by MacDonald and by the same literary sources that inspired MacDonald. Prickett situated MacDonald at a crossroads within fantasy literature, leading back to the Romantic

Movement and onwards to the Inklings' writings. We then broke up for the first of three split panel sessions where Ginger Stelle, Kirsten Norrie, Jennifer Koopman, Sharin Schroeder, and Franziska Kohlt all presented thought-provoking and informative papers. At the end of the first day, the delegates headed off to enjoy the serene grounds of Magdalen College, including walks around the college deer park in the sunshine.

Well rested and full of enthusiasm, the second day began with Kirstin Jeffery Johnston's plenary paper, "'Rooted Deep': Relational Inklings of a Mythopoeic Maker," in which the scale of MacDonald's secondary reading and intertextual references was discussed. Jeffery Johnston examined MacDonald's literary identity, as a

lecture of English Literature for over forty years, alongside that of the Inklings to develop the relationship both MacDonald and the Inklings had with the authors of the past when developing a conversation between texts in their writings. This was followed by the second session of split panels where papers were delivered by Franziska Burstyn, István Szabadi, and Maxim Medovarov; and Bethany Bear, Rebekah Lamb, and Trevor Hart. The morning session was drawn to a close by Jean Webb's plenary paper, "Fantasy, Fear and Reality: tracing pathways between Charles Kingsley, Lewis Carroll and George MacDonald leading to the Inklings." Webb traced the literary shifts that allowed fantasy writers in the late Victorian period to address social fears within their works. Webb also suggested that the Inklings are "Retro-Victorians" who seek to revive this literary style after the First World War.

In typical British fashion, the heavens opened just in time for the Inklings of Oxford Fantastist walking tour, guided by Tolkien scholar and author Colin Duriez. However wet, the tour was packed with information and thoroughly enjoyed by all, and, naturally, included a quick stop at the Eagle and Child, the pub where the Inklings met. The afternoon session consisted of two plenary speakers. Malcolm Guite's paper, "Needles of Eternal Light': How Coleridge roused MacDonald and Lewis," displayed the continuation of Coleridgean Romanticism in both men's work, and the similarities in their view of the imagination's ability to open imaginative eyes. This was followed by a fascinating paper from Stephan Logan entitled "Lewis and Modernism," which sought to explore why C.S. Lewis was so anti-Modernist. This was linked to a psychoanalytical reading of his early letters, leading to a conclusion that

Lewis used his intellectualism to de-personalize and repress himself.

That evening was the social highlight of the conference. A drinks reception was held in the college bar before we made our way upstairs for a candle lit, three-course conference dinner in the medieval-style Buttery. In these beautiful surroundings, Malcolm Guite's post-dinner candlelit poetry recital was truly atmospheric, and brought a wonderful end to the evening's festivities.



Malcolm Guite reciting.

On the third and final day of the conference, we began with Monika Hilder's plenary paper, "St. George & Jack the Giant-Killer: As 'Wise as Women Are?'," which examined the role of gender within MacDonald and Lewis' exploration of scientific pursuits. Hilder's examination focused mainly upon MacDonald's *Thomas Wingfold, Curate*, and Lewis' *That Hideous Strength*. The third and final set of split panels was then held with papers from Deborah Fox, Charles Bressler, Nathan Hillikert, and Joshua Withrow; and Giesla Kreglinger, Rebecca Langworthy and Kirstin Mills. The final speaker of the conference was Danny Gableman, whose paper, entitled "Organised Innocence: MacDonald, Lewis and Fantasy 'For the Childlike'," provided a thorough overview of children's

literature from the eighteenth century onward before demonstrating how this was reflected in MacDonald and Lewis' approach to the child reader.

Stephen Prickett chaired a final discussion at the close of proceedings, in which we discussed the themes which appeared throughout the three days, including fairyland, biographical re-readings of MacDonald and Lewis, the influence (both forward and back) of the literary tradition, and the conversation between literary generations embodied in the texts. Perhaps most excitingly of all, there was considerable interest within the room for a further conference to be held in two years' time. Potential themes for this were also discussed, with possibilities including Art and MacDonald, George MacDonald's

Scotland, and the Literary Sources of George MacDonald.

As I reach the end of this Report, I must mention some of the activities that were ongoing throughout the three-day event. All of our meals were eaten in Magdalen's Medieval Hall, adding a great deal of gravitas to many of our informal discussions over lunch and breakfasts. I must also note that artists Louise McVey and Elizabeth Porritt Carrington presented a mixed-media art display which was inspired by MacDonald's work—their enthusiasm throughout the conference was infectious. As a final note, I would like to thank the committee of the George MacDonald Society—particularly Mike and Liz Partridge, Stephen Prickett, Kirstin Jeffrey Johnson, and Richard Lines—as well as the staff at Magdalen College for organizing such a successful event.



*The Conference banquet in Magdalen Buttery.*

### GMS Welcomes New Committee Member

We are pleased to welcome Malcolm Guite as a new officer of the George MacDonald Society, where he joins Kirstin Jeffrey-Johnson and Edward Preston as a Committee Member. A supervisor of English and Theology at Girton College, Cambridge, Rev. Guite studies the

relationship between theology and the Arts. An accomplished musician and poet, he also performs with RipRap Poetry Collective, as well as his rock band, Mystery Train. His insight and creative work are a source of inspiration for us, and we look forward to his continued involvement with the Society.

### *Shadowlands*, C. S. Lewis, and George MacDonald

by Richard Lines

*Author's note.* This essay was originally written in 1994.

Many readers will have seen (or at least read about) Richard Attenborough's film *Shadowlands* starring Anthony Hopkins and Debra Winger. Set in the Oxford of the 1950s, the film (adapted from a play originally written for television by William Nicholson) tells the romantic story of the marriage of the middle-aged don, Christian apologist and children's story-writer to a much younger woman, Joy Gresham, an American writer and divorcée, already gravely stricken by the cancer that was to kill her. The film is not historically accurate in all its details. By the time of his marriage to Joy in 1956 C. S. Lewis (or Jack as he was always known to family and friends) was no longer a fellow of Magdalen College (which forms a beautiful backdrop to the film), but had moved to Cambridge where he had been appointed Professor of Medieval and Renaissance Literature in 1954, although he spent most weekends and vacations at his house *The Kilns* just outside Oxford. Yet it is perhaps appropriate that Magdalen, where Lewis taught English Literature for twenty-nine years and where he wrote most of the books for which he is best known, should be the setting for the film.

The title *Shadowlands* is taken from the *Last Battle*, the final story in *The Chronicles of Narnia* where Aslan the Lion (who is a

representation of Our Lord) uses this expression to describe this world, and England in particular. Lewis took the name, I think, from Plato's "Myth of the Cave" (in Book VII of *The Republic*) where prisoners chained in a cave can see only the shadows of objects cast by a fire which is burning behind them and assume that these shadows are the only reality. There may also be echoes from George MacDonald (one of Lewis's favourite authors), as I mention below. I wonder if Nicholson, a Cambridge man who had never visited Magdalen when he wrote his television play, had in mind also "the valley of the shadow of death" from Psalm 23?

I am sure that the film will move many people to read or re-read C. S. Lewis's books. His religious and literary works, as well as his outstanding children's stories, are rarely out of print thirty years after his death. I was first recommended to read his 'popular' religious books such as *The Screwtape Letters* and *The Problem of Pain* as a teenager in the late 1950s. I have just read the latter which I still have in a two-shilling paperback! Not long after this I went up to Magdalen as an undergraduate where I was taught Law by men who had been Lewis's colleagues, in the "New Building," an elegant, colonnaded eighteenth-century structure overlooking the deer park, in rooms almost identical to those in which

Lewis had taught and written. For many years C. S. Lewis was of no great interest to me, but I fell under his spell again when I began to read *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and the other Narnia stories to my own children in the early 1980s. I read A. N. Wilson's biography when it was published in 1990 and this book not only gave me a further picture of the man, but inspired me to read more of his works.

I recently read an article in which the author quoted at some length from Marilyn Ferguson's book *The Aquarian Conspiracy* in which Lewis is mentioned, along with Carl Jung and Aldous Huxley (the latter having died on the same day as Lewis), as a source for the "New Age." I was puzzled by this at first. Lewis, a conforming member of the Church of England and an 'old-fashioned' educated Englishman steeped in the Greek and Latin classics and in English Literature, looks a most unlikely New Age figure. Yet, reading the extract from Marilyn Ferguson more carefully, it seems to me that a case can be made for seeing Lewis as one of those far-sighted individuals who "moved beyond the dominant ideas of their day" and acted like "history's radar." One of Lewis's most remarkable books is *The Abolition of Man*, deceptively sub-titled "Reflections on education with special reference to the teaching of English in the Upper Forms of schools," which was published in 1943. It is a powerful argument in favour of the existence of objective truth, of a system of values that is discernible in almost all human societies from the beginning of literature up to the mid-twentieth century. In order to emphasise his point, Lewis adopts the ancient Chinese expression the *Tao* or *Way* to describe the morality or natural law that has undergirded all the great civilisations. *The Abolition of Man* is a mighty weapon

against the relativism and subjectivism that befog our world.

The influence of George MacDonald, the nineteenth-century novelist, poet, "myth-maker" and theologian, on Lewis can hardly be exaggerated. In February 1916 the 17 year-old Lewis bought an Everyman's Library copy of MacDonald's *Phantastes: a Faerie Romance for Men and Women* from a station bookstall and was immediately transformed. As he wrote later, this book "baptised" his imagination. Although it was many years before Lewis came to share MacDonald's Christian faith, he was moved by a sense of another world, of "a sort of cool, morning innocence" and "a certain quality of death, good death." Thirty years later when he came to write an introduction to a selection of MacDonald's works Lewis wrote:

I have never concealed the fact that I regard him as my master; indeed, I fancy I have never written a book in which I did not quote from him.

George MacDonald (1824-1905) was born in north-east Scotland and educated at the University of Aberdeen. It is said that one vacation he took a job cataloguing the library in some great mansion or castle in the far north of Scotland and it was here that he discovered the books that were to inspire his own writing. They included the German Romantic writers, especially ETA Hoffmann and Friedrich von Hardenberg ("Novalis") and very probably the writings of the early seventeenth-century German mystic Jacob Boehme and also of the eighteenth-century Swedish scientist and seer Emanuel Swedenborg. MacDonald was also deeply influenced by William Blake, a reader of both Boehme and Swedenborg.

After graduating, MacDonald travelled south to London where he took a position as tutor to the daughters of a prosperous Nonconformist family, the Powells, while studying to be a minister of the



Congregational Church. He later married the youngest daughter Louisa who bore him eleven children. After a brief period as a minister in Arundel and then in Manchester, he gave up the ministry and supported his family thereafter by teaching and writing. Although he later became a lay member of the Church of England, influenced by his friend Frederick Denison Maurice, he was a Christian of the broadest sympathies with views far removed from the narrow sectarianism which characterised Victorian religion. He believed that God condemned no one and that all could be saved if they chose.

Dogged all his life by ill-health (although he lived to be eighty), he felt, like so many Victorians, the constant presence of death. Four of his children pre-deceased him and Louisa, the last of them being their eldest daughter Lilia who died when she was thirty-nine. But to MacDonald death was only the gateway to a fuller life hereafter. In his first published novel *David Elginrod* he wrote:

I think of death as the first pulse of the new strength shaking itself free from the mouldy remnants of earth-garments, that it may begin in freedom the new life that grows out of the old. The caterpillar dies into the butterfly...

Of all Lewis's books the one that seems to me to reflect MacDonald's influence most strongly is *The Great Divorce* (1945). The "divorce" is that between heaven and hell. We must choose one or the other. We cannot have both. In his spiritual fable the narrator (Lewis himself) makes a journey, like Dante, from hell to heaven, not on foot but in a celestial omnibus. When he reaches the "Bright Land" he meets his Virgil, George MacDonald. The latter explains that the land at the end of the bus journey is not Deep Heaven. It is more the Valley of the Shadow of Life and to those who stay there

it will have been heaven from the first. Some, however, will choose hell and for them that will be right for at least they have been true to themselves. Hell, says MacDonald to Lewis, is a state of mind:

And every state of mind, left to itself, every shutting up of the creature within the dungeon of its own mind-is, in the end, hell. But heaven is not a state of mind. Heaven is reality itself. All that is fully real is heavenly.

In one beautiful passage Lewis describes a woman in the spiritual world:

I cannot now remember whether she was naked or clothed. If she were naked, then it must have been the almost visible penumbra of her courtesy and joy which produces in my memory the illusion of a great and shining train that followed her across the happy grass. If she were clothed, then the illusion of nakedness is doubtless due to the clarity with which her inmost spirit shone through her clothes. For clothes in that country are not a disguise: the spiritual body lives along each thread and turns them into living organs. A robe or a crown is there as much one of the wearer's features as a lip or an eye.

Here Lewis *may* be echoing not only Dante, but also Swedenborg and his doctrine of "correspondences." In his work *Heaven and Hell* (1758) Swedenborg records his vision of the angels of the 'inmost heaven' who appeared to him to be naked. Lewis does make a reference to Swedenborg at the end of his book where MacDonald tells Lewis that all he has experienced has been a dream:

I'll have no Swedenborgs or Vale Owens among my children.

It is possible that Lewis is here covering his tracks, linking Swedenborg's name with that of the spiritualist Anglican clergyman the Rev. G. Vale Owen whose five-volume account of descriptions of the next world allegedly received through automatic writing had much appealed to the early twentieth-century press baron Lord Northcliffe who had serialised them in one of his newspapers. But the real George MacDonald, unlike Lewis's fictional re-

creation of him, had read Swedenborg and seems to have been influenced by him, as a number of scholars, including Rolland Hein and Richard Reis, have pointed out. Lewis himself, in his preface to *The Great Divorce*, mentions William Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, a work which makes much reference to Swedenborg and may in a sense be regarded as a satire on him.

It is interesting to note that Lewis's popular summary of the main Christian doctrines, *Mere Christianity* (1943) was criticised by a Catholic (Dom Bede Griffiths) for not dealing adequately with the Atonement and by a Methodist minister for not really mentioning Justification by Faith. A. N. Wilson comments that Lewis came to Christianity by what he calls the sense of another world, which he got from MacDonald, Plato and Christian Neo-Platonic writers. He was also influenced by his life-long friend Owen Barfield (a disciple of Rudolf Steiner) and by his fellow-author JRR Tolkien, who taught him that truth is best discerned through myth. Another contemporary Christian writer who became a friend of Lewis was Charles Williams, whose "supernatural" novel *The Place of the Lion* had a great effect on Lewis. It is based on the Platonic theory of the other world in which the archetypes of all earthly qualities exist. The "lion of strength" appears and that sucks the strength out of everything in this world. Charles Williams really did believe, as Owen Barfield put it, that the spiritual world is not simply a reality parallel to that of the material world, but is its source and its abiding structure. Williams's "Lion" was almost certainly the inspiration for Aslan, the great lion in the Narnia stories, who clearly represents the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jack Lewis's years of marriage to Joy, although brief, were among the happiest of

his life. When she died in July 1960 his grief shook, but did not ultimately destroy, his faith. *A Grief Observed*, the short book he wrote after her death, has become a classic. Jack himself, suffering increasing ill-health, continued to work and to write. In his last book, *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer* he speculated on the life to come:

What the soul cries out for is the resurrection of the senses. Even in this life matter would be nothing if it were not a source of sensations...

Giving the manuscript of this book to his secretary and future biographer Walter Hooper, he told him to point anyone who thought he had lost his faith in Christ's promises to what he had written at the end of *The Last Battle*. The children's lives in this world and their adventures in Narnia had only been "the cover and the title page":

[Now] they were beginning Chapter 1 of the Great Story which no one on earth has read...which goes on forever...in which every chapter is better than the one before.

But let me leave the last word to George MacDonald. In his symbolic tale *The Golden Key* (much loved by Lewis) a boy and a girl, Mossy and Tangle, are given a golden key and are sent on a journey through enchanted forests, precipices and tunnels to find the keyhole. The story symbolises the life of a married couple. Tangle dies first and goes to the spiritual world where, transformed into a beautiful young woman, she awaits the arrival of Mossy. Finally they meet again:

They told each other their adventures, and were so happy as man and woman could be. For they were younger and better, and stronger and wiser, than they had ever been before.

...They climb together, then Mossy takes the key and opens the door.

...They were in the rainbow. Far abroad, over ocean and land, they could see through its transparent falls the earth beneath their feet. Stairs beside stairs wound up together, and beautiful beings of all ages climbed along with them.

...They knew they were going up to the country  
whence the shadows fall.

And by this time I think they must have got there.

## Membership Secretary's Report

by Mike Partridge

The major event for the Society in 2014 was our conference at Magdalen College, Oxford in August (see report below), which was deemed by everyone involved to be a great success. It is hoped that a number of the papers presented will be published in due course.

The Society Facebook group (which now has 1800+ members, there is a link on our web site) has continued to grow as a lively, informal forum, complementing the Society's other activities.

Membership of the Society currently stands at 170 individuals and 7 institutions.

The geographical spread of our members is as follows:

- \* North America: 51%
- \* Europe: 44%
- \* Elsewhere: 5%

The greatest area of growth is North America, where interest in George MacDonald continues to be particularly strong.

Plans are at an early stage for our next Conference which will be at Trinity Hall College, Cambridge, 20th-22nd July 2016. The Call for Papers will be sent out in due course, and full details of the conference will be made available later in the year. But

if you would like to provisionally book your place or be kept informed of developments, please do let us know and we can add you to the mailing list.

### Membership Subscriptions

The annual membership subscriptions for 2015 are now due. We have been able to maintain this at £12.50, which will include a copy of our journal *North Wind* when it is next published.

Details of how to renew your membership can be found on our web site: [www.george-macdonald.com/macdonaldsociety/membership.html](http://www.george-macdonald.com/macdonaldsociety/membership.html)

You may also renew your subscription by PayPal irrespective of your geographical location, which avoids any complications around currency conversion.

If you have joined the Society (or renewed) recently and did not receive the last issue of *North Wind* your membership will be carried forward into 2015 and no action is required. If you are unsure about your current membership status, then please email me ([macdonaldsociety@gmail.com](mailto:macdonaldsociety@gmail.com)) and I will confirm for you.

### Contact Details

The Society keeps a record of your email and postal addresses, which are used to send you our *Orts* newsletter and the *North Wind* journal. Over time these can change and, if we are not advised, there is the danger that we will lose touch with you. In the last *North Wind* mailing, several were returned "not known at this address," which highlights the problem. This is particularly the case where the subscription is via PayPal, as we will use the details shown there unless told to the contrary. So a gentle reminder, let us know if either change.

[www.george-macdonald.com/macdonaldsociety/membership.html](http://www.george-macdonald.com/macdonaldsociety/membership.html)

## Membership Secretary's Report, cont'd.

### Oxford Conference

In August 2014 the George MacDonald Society hosted a three day conference, "Informing the Inklings: George MacDonald and the Victorian Roots of Modern Fantasy," at Magdalen College, Oxford. The location was particularly appropriate in view of the long standing connection between C.S. Lewis (himself a great admirer of MacDonald) and the historic college. Our Keynote speakers were the Society's President Stephen Prickett, Malcolm Guite, Monika Hilder, Kirstin Jeffrey-Johnson, Stephen Logan and Jean Webb. In addition, shorter papers were presented by a further 17 MacDonald students and scholars covering a wide variety of topics. It is hoped that a number of these talks will be published, for a wider readership, in due course. The sixty delegates who participated in the conference came from the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States, Germany, Hungary, Russia, Australia, China, Japan and Taiwan. A truly international gathering of MacDonald scholars and enthusiasts, both established and emerging, providing further evidence of the growing interest about George MacDonald in a number of countries worldwide. We were also delighted to be

joined by the artists Louise McVey and Elizabeth Carrington-Porritt whose presence (and display) added a further dimension to our proceedings. They are currently working on creating material and ideas for their exhibition about George MacDonald planned for Glasgow in 2016. The conference dinner on the Thursday evening was held in the impressive surroundings of the historic Hall at Magdalen and afterwards we were entertained with a candlelit poetry reading by Malcolm Guite. There was also an optional Inklings tour of Oxford on the Thursday afternoon led by Colin Duriez, the noted Tolkien scholar. Organising a conference of this scale was very much a step of faith for the MacDonald Society and we have been greatly encouraged by both the response and the quality of the papers presented. A number of the delegates commented that this was one of the friendliest and most enjoyable academic conferences they have had the pleasure of attending. There was also a strong desire that a follow up conference be organised in two years time, which we are now able to reveal will be at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, in July 2016.



## Advance Notice for your Diary!

# George MacDonald and the Cambridge Apostles

*Literature, Theology, the Arts and Social Reform in Victorian England*

Trinity Hall, Cambridge  
20-22nd July 2016

Fascinating connections exist between 19th century author George MacDonald and the first generations of the Cambridge Apostles – scholars who met to discuss and debate philosophy, theology, ethics, and reform. Early Apostle F. D. Maurice was MacDonald's friend and minister, and proved a link to other members and their associates, such as Lord Tennyson, Julius Hare, John Sterling, & Charles Kingsley. This conference will explore this network of scholars and MacDonald's engagement with them: in particular their active socialism, diverse writings, and fascination with S. T. Coleridge.

Trinity Hall (founded 1350) was F. D. Maurice's own College and so is particularly appropriate as a setting for our conference. If you would like to book your place provisionally or receive details when they become available later in the year please email Mike Partridge at the address shown at the back of this Orts and we will put you on the mailing list.

*"If I were called upon to mention the prettiest corner of the world, I should draw a thoughtful sigh and point the way to the gardens of Trinity Hall." Henry James*

### ABOUT ORTS

The word **orts** means scraps, or fragments of food left after a meal. The newsletter *Orts* depends upon contributions from its readers, so please send your morsels this way. *Orts* welcomes submissions: if you wish to share artwork, an article, notice, news, or comments pertaining to MacDonald, or if you'd like to be featured in an article or interview, please contact our Orts editor, **Jennifer Koopman**, at [ortseditor@gmail.com](mailto:ortseditor@gmail.com), membership secretary, **Mike Partridge**, at [macdonaldsociety@gmail.com](mailto:macdonaldsociety@gmail.com) or the GMS chairman, **Richard Lines**, at **38 South Vale, Upper Norwood, London, SE19 3BA**, [r.lines878@btinternet.com](mailto:r.lines878@btinternet.com).

[www.george-macdonald.com](http://www.george-macdonald.com).

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