

GRAVES MANUSCRIPTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA - ADDENDUM

by Christopher G. Petter

It has been four years since Howard Gerwing last reported to Focus on Robert Graves on the Graves acquisitions of the University of Victoria Special Collections (No. 3, December, 1973, 45-46). Since that time a number of significant manuscripts and photographs have been added to this collection. Among these, Lots 14 through 18 were reported in The Malahat Review, No. 35, (July, 1975) 180-185, but since I have made a few corrections and additions to these descriptions I decided to include them again here.

Lot 14 contains 39 holograph letters to the journalist and editor, Andrew Mylett, on a total of 54 pages. The letters are personal and friendly and they contain a great deal of the life and thought of Robert Graves from the years 1961-1970. The letters are supplemented with: My Best Christmas, a 4-page heavily worked autograph manuscript; Everywhere is Here and The Hidden Garden, 2 poems, carbon typescripts, 1 page each; A Shift of Scene, 1 page of an autograph poem by Mylett with several corrections by Graves; 1/2 page of heavily revised typescript of the concluding sentences of one of Graves' Oxford lectures.

Lot 15 will be used as a catch-all to list single letters, small collections of letters, single pages and small collections of manuscript, which might be acquired from friends, acquaintances, associates, or dealers. Of course, these single items found in the dealers' catalogues are usually priced beyond their limited research value, and although they would have some use in a large collection beyond mere autograph collecting, they will not be purchased unless they fit in with manuscript or correspondence we already possess. The Lot contains a Graves letter to Vernon Watkins (15 July, 1973), holograph, 1 leaf; a fragment of a letter to Mr. Christian re Charterhouse School, 1 leaf, with a carbon Tss. of a poem, Repair Shop, 1 leaf, (both found in a copy of Poems 1926-30); and 6 letters (9 leaves, xerox): 3 to admirers (1961-67) outlining influences, talking about Mallorca, and accepting a speaking engagement; 3 to half-brother Richard, warm letters discussing family affairs.

Lot 16 contains 165 pages of corrected typescript of The Anger of Achilles, Books 1 to 10; a translation of Homer's Iliad, first published by Doubleday, New York, 1959, with illustrations by Ronald Searle. The Tss. contains a pen-and-ink sketch by Searle, captions for two illustrations on the verso and a final note on the last page. There are also 9 autograph letters (13 pages) from Graves to Searle dated from June 1958 to March 1959.

Lot 17 contains 222 pages of typescript and carbon typescript of J. M. Cohen's critical study published in 1960, entitled Robert Graves. This manuscript was sent to Graves for comment, and it was returned with marginalia on some 30 pages and a covering holograph letter dated April 19, 1960, that is both critical and informative. The marginalia are wide ranging; touching on influences on Graves' poetry, dating some poems, defining love poetry and even

commenting on his relationship with Laura Riding.

Lot 18 contains 134 pages of holograph of the work King Jesus (Chapters 7 [i.e. Bk. 1, Chapt. 5], Chapter 9, [i.e. Bk. 1, Chapt. 7], Chapter 10 [i.e. Bk. 1, Chapt. 8] and two fragments from Bk. 1, Chapt. 4); the versos of which contain 2 pages of a draft of a letter to the B.B.C.; 27 pages carbon typescript, and fragments of "Hyginus and the Ogham Croabh", relating to Chapters 10 and 13 of The White Goddess. There follows 3 pages of a draft of autograph manuscript (Chapter 15) of The Islands of Unwisdom and 283 pages of holograph and typescripts of Greek Gods and Heroes, (Myths of Ancient Greece Retold for Children is the English title). The versos of these bear a further 36 pages of fragmentary material about "the Etruscans". Louis Ginsberg's Legends of the Bible, (?) "George Sand in Majorca", "Symbolization and Value" by Dorothy Lee, Winter in Majorca, and further revised chapters of Greek Gods and Heroes. There are also 343 pages of typescripts and carbon typescripts of two drafts of a translation of Ramon Sender's novel La Luna de los Perros (see Lot 11 in earlier list). Included on the versos of the first draft are two almost complete, unpublished (?), Oxford lectures entitled Experiences of Poetry I and Experiences of Poetry II (circa 1965). The second draft of the translation bears Graves' autograph note; "Around 1960? it could not find a publisher."

Lot 19 is an interesting series of autograph letters to four members of Graves' family: to his brother Charles 1968-70, 12 letters on activities and personalities, also filling in some biographical background on Graves' first marriage and his early struggle to become a poet; to his sister-in-law Vivienne 1967-71, 4 letters, commenting widely on family matters, mythology and religion; to his niece Diana, 14 letters, 1958-74, an affectionate series of letters filled with diverting news to cheer Diana who is suffering ill health and anxieties about her son Simon Gough; to his half-brother Richard, 8 letters, 1950-60, written with particular warmth and filled with news of current projects. There are 60 pages in all.

Lot 20 consists of the unpublished children's story An Ancient Castle, written in five chapters and reflecting Graves' experience in World War I. There are 52 pages of carbon typescript, 49 apparently revised by Laura Riding, lending credence to a composition date in the 30's. Three pages are later revised by Graves and a note on page one of this revise [apparently Rota's cataloguer] comments "unpublished - R. G. rejected the story after reading it and beginning to correct".

Lot 21 is an interesting series of five autograph letters (15 pages) to Arnold Snodgrass, 1943-44, expressing his views on English poetry with particular reference to Milton's synthetic method, which he deplores, and to the strength of Laura Riding's poetry from which he states Auden took a lot; there is also a more generalized discussion of the aspects of poetry and of mythic interpretation of the hammer-and-sickle, and star emblems. Arnold Snodgrass was the brother of Graves' doctor in Devon. This correspondence arose because Graves learned through him of Arnold Snodgrass' interest in literature and admiration for Auden, who was his personal friend.

Lot 22 is a large important series of autograph letters to Mr. and Mrs. Redvers Taylor with letters from Beryl Graves and four fascinating letters from Laura Riding and Hans Rothe. There are twenty-three letters to the Taylors, 1948-1960, keeping them up to date on goings on in Mallorca and on Graves' artistic activities. There is one Beryl Graves letter (Aug. 1944). There are two Riding letters addressed to Mrs. Addis, c. 1934, one of which makes clear Laura Riding's conception of her relationship with Robert Graves. The two Hans Rothe letters (Dec. 1934 and May 1935) describe Rothe's life and work since leaving Deyá and reflect back on his unhappy collaboration, as German translator of the Claudius books, with Graves. There are 54 pages in this lot.

Lot 23 is a typescript with holograph annotations of "The Personal

Muse" first published in Oxford Addresses on Poetry (1962). There are 22 pages, the first page of which has a carbon Ts. page from The Anger of Achilles on the verso.

Lot 24 has been designated for photographs of Graves. It presently consists of two purchases; the first from Elaine Kerrigan (in 1975) contains 97 photographs, some of which appear in The Malahat Review ("A Gathering in Celebration of the Eightieth Birthday of Robert Graves," Vol. 35, July 1975). These, for the most part, are recent photos of Graves in various locations (1971-74) i.e. Deyá, Budapest, Krakow, Bukovina, etc. and show Graves in company of various friends. About a third date from earlier periods of his life (1900-68). The second purchase of 125 photographs was from William Thomas, (Assistant Editor of The Malahat Review, and co-editor of their Graves issue) and were taken at Graves' 80th birthday party, July 1975. They include pictures of him with a number of his family (including his wife Beryl, and sister Rosaleen) as well as a number of his friends; Martin Tallents, Robin Skelton, Klara, director of the State Opera in Hungary, and others. Application for prints from either series must be handled through the photographers themselves.

Interest is continuing to grow in our Graves collection both locally (because of The Malahat Review) and internationally with research requests reaching us from Britain and the United States. We are gradually filling in our holdings of the books including what we believe to be the only copy in North America of Graves first appearance in print (Green Chartreuse. July 1913). To compliment the Graves manuscripts we purchased in 1975, a small collection of Riding's manuscripts (276 pages) of essays and non-fiction. It is hoped that this addendum will provide sufficient information to the interested researcher, but should clarification be necessary a more detailed inventory is available on request.

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