

An Addendum to the Higginson Bibliography: Robert Graves, the Two Lawrences, and the FBI

John Woodrow Presley

B74.1 MINORITIES [1972]

T. E. Lawrence | MINORITIES | Good Poems by Small Poets | and Small Poems by Good Poets | EDITED BY J. M. Wilson | PREFACE by C. DAY LEWIS | Doubleday & Company, Inc. | Garden City, New York | 1972.

p.[1] MINORITIES; p.[2] black and white photograph, captioned AIRCRAFTMAN T. E. SHAW IN INDIA; p.[3] title page; p.[4] list of works by T. E. Lawrence, permissions, acknowledgments, copyright and edition notices; p. [5] contents; p.[6] blank; pp. 7-9 Acknowledgments; p. 10 blank; pp. 11-12 Abbreviations; pp. 13-16 Preface; pp. 17-50 Introduction; p. 51 blank; p. 52 Note on Contents; pp. 53-64 List of Poems; p.[65] MINORITIES; p.[66] blank; pp. 67-240 text; p. [241] NOTES AND | INDEXES; p.[242] blank; pp. 243-254 Notes; p. [266] blank; pp. 267-268 Index of Authors; pp. 269-272 Index of First Lines.

20.7 x 14 cm. Bulk: 1.8/2.3 cm. White wove paper; all edges trimmed. Imperial blue endpapers. Bound in light green cloth; front and back blank; spine stamped in blue: T. E. Lawrence: MINORITIES | [device: line of conjoined diamonds] EDITED BY J. M. WILSON | DOUBLEDAY.

Published in 1972 with white dust jacket printed in grey, black, green and black.

Note: Graves' contribution is on p. 201 [Lawrence's page numbered "86"], the poem "A Forced Music." The text is that of *Whipperginny* (1923), of which T. E. Lawrence owned a presentation copy, signed by Graves 17.iii.1923.

* * * * *

Minorities is an edition, with scholarly apparatus, of T. E. Lawrence's personal anthology, not intended for publication. Lawrence copied by hand 112 of his favorite poems into a small red leather-bound notebook, beginning in 1919. Interestingly, Lawrence never let Robert Graves see *Minorities*, though he warned Graves "you'll be astonished at my sweet tooth, if ever you see that discreditable collection" (an April 1923 letter to Graves, quoted on p. 19 of *Minorities*). In his pref-

ace to *Minorities*, C. Day Lewis says of Lawrence, "He foxed Robert Graves and Laura Riding by assuming the mask of a low-brow" (16).

Interestingly, *Minorities* is one of the few "books" that ever held the work of both Robert Graves and D. H. Lawrence. The second of T. E. Lawrence's chosen poems is D. H. Lawrence's "Ballad of a Wilful Woman," a surprising choice that the editors of *Minorities* are at some pains to explain. Both poets were, of course, published in *Georgian Poetry*, but D. H. Lawrence in *Georgian Poetry 1911-1912*, and Robert Graves in *Georgian Poetry 1918-1919*.

It will surprise no one that Robert Graves was not a partisan of D. H. Lawrence's work—far from it. In *A Survey of Modernist Poetry*, Graves implied that Lawrence "could be a poet if he gave up his obsession with sex" (Seymour-Smith, 147). In letters to Liddell Hart, Graves called Lawrence "a bum poet" and "a bum person" (*Collected Letters*, 262-263). In his Clark lectures, Graves referred to "sick, muddle-headed, sex-mad D. H. Lawrence who wrote sketches for poems, but nothing more" (*The Crowning Privilege*, 157). And in his final public remarks on T. E. Lawrence, Graves used D. H. Lawrence for contrast; "The chief difference between the two Lawrences was that T. E. had a healthy mind and body and deliberately fell short of the best from a proud Irish scruple against perfection; D. H. was not only unhealthy but spiritually blind and tried to overawe the best in others by vulgar menace" (*The Long Week-End*, 219).

Brenda Maddox, in *D. H. Lawrence: The Story of a Marriage* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994) revealed a connection—at least a connection in the files of the Federal Bureau of Investigation—between Robert Graves and D. H. Lawrence during World War II.

The FBI's dossier on Frieda [Lawrence] was reminiscent of that in England in the First World War. It contained allegations that she might be a German spy and listed her name as 'Frieda Lawrence, with alias Freiin Van Richtofen.' The files further suggested that a book called *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence 1905-1915*, by Robert Graves' might possibly be a code book. (503)

This was in 1944, and only one volume of D. H. Lawrence letters had appeared by then, a volume edited in 1932 by Aldous Huxley. D. H. Lawrence's letters to Bertrand Russell did not appear until 1948 and the *Collected Letters* did not appear until 1962 (both edited by Harry T. Moore).

So, what could the FBI have in mind here? Of course, Graves had edited *T. E. Lawrence to his Biographer Robert Graves* (1938), had written *Lawrence and the Arabs* (1927), and had contributed to *T. E. Lawrence by His Friends* (1937). Liddell Hart also wrote a biography, and edited a collection of T. E. Lawrence's letters to him, eventually published with T. E. Lawrence's letters to Graves as *T. E. Lawrence to his Biographers*, but much later, in 1963. David Garnett *planned* to edit the collected correspondence, and by 1944 had managed to publish one volume, *Letters of T. E. Lawrence* (London: Cape, 1938).

Had the FBI confused T. E. Lawrence and D. H. Lawrence? That's an easy assumption from which to proceed, but it leads to a blind alley: there's no volume of letters about either Lawrence with so specific a date as "1905-1915." A further possible source of the confusion exists, brought to my attention by William Graves, who owns a copy of *The Secrets of the German War Office* by Armgaard Karl Graves, "Late Spy to the German Government." "It was this book," he says "which made Robert suspect of spying in WWI by his fellow officers."

Thus, in addition to the sophomoric mistake of confusing T. E. And D. H. Lawrence, the FBI may also have confused Robert Graves and Armgaard Karl Graves, the admitted spy. I've been unable to discover a probable source for the garbled title of the volume of letters (and it's probably silly, anyway, to expect the FBI to be quite that systematic in their errors).

But in the search for connections between Robert Graves and D. H. Lawrence, I discovered *Minorities*, which led to the bibliographic note above. As far as I can determine, *Minorities* is/was the earliest appearance of a Lawrence poem and a Graves poem together—and except for school and trade anthologies, the only instance until 1967, when Leonard Clark edited the *D. H. Lawrence and Robert Graves* volume in the Longman's Poetry Library Series.