THE LAWRENCE DURRELL SOCIETY

HERALD

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Edited & Produced by:

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Susan S. MacNiven
Lawrence W. Markert

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James R. Nichols
THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Another biennial celebration rolls around, and Durrell conferences seem to get better and better. Certainly if the efficiency and ease with which Michael Begnal directed the 11-12 January planning session at State College is any indication, then the Pennsylvania State meeting--On Miracle Ground IV: The Fourth International Lawrence Durrell Conference--is going to be first rate. For two days, Michael, Ian and Susan MacNiven, Carol Peirce, and I discussed papers (more this year than at any previous conference) and the over-all program. There will be two formal presentations by Lawrence Durrell: one by him alone on Friday afternoon, and one by Durrell and John Hawkes on Saturday afternoon.

The planning committee had lunch Saturday at the Cafe 210 West, and we were so delighted with the ambience (inexpensive, good food and drink, and a clean, casual elegance--who could ask for more?) that we chose it for the traditional Thursday night, pre-conference, informal dinner meeting. The Saturday night banquet will be held elsewhere, in larger, more capacious, and more heraldic digs. State College offers too many possibilities to investigate in one week end, so the planning committee left the final decision to Michael.

For you runners, I should also note that directly across from the Nittany Lion Inn (at which many of you will stay--an appropriately continental-looking place) is a golf course with a five-mile running path around it. Early on Sunday morning, Begnal set a good pace, and MacNiven and I limped after him. I intend to be on the trail the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday mornings of the conference (or at least two of the three mornings), but only with suitably slow companions.

Finally, there will be the customary Society business meeting at the Begnals' Sunday morning, and I have picked up in Washington, D. C., at a ridiculously cheap price, the traditional champagne for an heraldic brunch. The nominating committee has been appointed and has accepted its charge. Susan MacNiven (chair), Michael Cartwright, Lyn Goldman, and Wayne Markert will be after you for suggestions elsewhere in this newsletter.

Let's see, what haven't I covered? It's been a good two years, folks, and I'm eternally grateful to Greg Dickson for his professionalism as Secretary/Treasurer, the working center of the Society. But let's save the tearful testimonials for the bar. I've a great editor and she's death on sentimentality.

Bottoms up! Is that "Heraldic" or not? Depends.

Nancy Lewis
FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Greetings, Durrellians:

From my vantage point here in England (Department of Humanities, Bristol Polytechnic) as a faculty exchange person, I can well imagine how the adrenaline is surging in anticipation of On Miracle Ground IV. I wish I could report that I will be coming over for it, but, alas, such is not the case. So I want to extend my warmest greetings to everyone who will be there and to offer, in absentia, a toast to Lawrence Durrell whose powerful imagination and spirit have drawn so many of us to his works, which offer such riches. Bravo, and thank you, Lawrence Durrell.
Gregory Dickson
SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

Spring is almost here, and, although we all have the April conference at Pennsylvania State University on our minds, I am concerned with something else—membership renewal. Since the last issue of the Herald, only one-half of our 1984-85 members have mailed in the renewal form. If we had trouble receiving recognition from the Modern Language Association with sixty members, consider our chances with only thirty. And think of the good-will the Herald, Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Quarterly, conference Proceedings, and conference announcements—you will miss if you are not a Society member. Our offer:

One year membership (through August 1986)
Single membership $7.50
Couple 10.00

Two year membership (through August 1987)
Single membership $15.00
Couple 20.00

Make your check payable to The Lawrence Durrell Society and mail it to:
Greg Dickson
Department of English
New Mexico Highlands University
Las Vegas, New Mexico 87701

The Society has three new members to whom we extend a hearty welcome:
Professor Virginia Carruthers
Department of English
University of Baltimore
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Professor R. Dorset Graves
Division of Language and Literature
Chadron State College
Chadron, Nebraska 69337

Mr. Simon Miles

I hope to see everyone in Pennsylvania at On Miracle Ground IV.

SOCIETY NOTICES

On Miracle Ground IV: Conference Update

The last few pieces are quickly falling into place, and soon Michael Begnal will be opening the Fourth International Lawrence Durrell Conference at Pennsylvania State University. The schedule of the conference and related festivities is as follows.

*Thursday, 10 April:
From 8:00 P.M., the traditional pre-conference gathering for drinks and dinner at Cafe 210 West (210 West College Avenue), Greg Dickson and Wayne Markert will be there early to greet Durrellians, new and old. Come when you can; this is an informal meeting.

*Friday, 11 April:
8:30 to 9:30 A.M., pick up conference materials outside Room 112 of the Kern Graduate Center, where all the conference sessions will be held.
9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., lectures, panel discussions, and address by Lawrence Durrell.
5:00 P.M., Lawrence Durrell will attend a book signing/wine-and-cheese party at Svoboda's Books (129 West Beaver Avenue).
Lunches and Friday dinner are at the place of your choice. There are many restaurants and bars close to the campus.

*Saturday, 12 April:
9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., lectures, panel discussions, and a dialogue between Lawrence Durrell and John Hawkes.
5:30 P.M., the cocktail hour, to be followed by the Lawrence Durrell Society Banquet at 6:30. The meeting place will be announced at the conference.

*Sunday, 13 April:
9:30 A.M., the Lawrence Durrell Society gathering for a champagne breakfast and business meeting at Cynthia and Michael Begnal's home (100 West Hamilton).

*Transportation:
If driving, the closest east-west highway is U.S. Route 80; State College is some 12 miles to the south of Exit 24. The Greyhound and Trailways bus lines stop at State College. AMTRAK goes to Lewistown, about 30 miles away, and there is bus service from the train stop to State College. Pittsburgh (try U.S. Air for getting to Pittsburgh) is the main connection for flights to the University Park Airport, which is five miles from the center of town; there is van service between the airport and town.

*Lodging:
The latest word is that Hall's Motel, Imperial 400 Motor Inn, Sheraton Penn State, and the Nittany Lion Inn are booked. Try the Happy Valley Motel Inn (1425 South Atherton Street; 814-238-8461) or Autoport Motel (1405 South Atherton; 814-237-7666).

*Registration fee:
There is a conference registration fee of $15 for all participants except students, who will be admitted free. You may register Friday morning outside Room 112, Kern, or send a check made out to Michael Begnal (Department of English, Pennsylvania State University, 117 Burrowes Building, University Park, Pennsylvania 16802).

*Help!
If you are having trouble finding accommodations or need any other information, call Michael Begnal at or
Election of Society Officers

Elections for President, Vice-President, and Secretary/Treasurer will be held at the Society meeting on 13 April. The Nominations Committee--Michael Cartwright, Lyn Goldman, Susan MacNiven, and Wayne Markert--are in the process of drawing up a slate of candidates. If you wish to suggest a candidate or would like to be one, contact Susan (address below). Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the time of the elections.

U. S. Tax Tips

Don Bixler has kindly forwarded news of court decisions concerning income tax deductions for home office expenses; one case involves a philosophy professor. U. S. Society members will receive a copy of this with the newsletter. If any non-U. S. members are interested in taxes American style, we will be glad to send a copy of the information on request. Our thanks to Don for keeping us informed.

Herald Number 7

We plan to bring out a post-conference Herald in late May or early June with news of On Miracle Ground IV and the Society meeting, so that those who were unable to attend may participate belatedly and vicariously. From those who did attend, we would welcome comments, criticisms, suggestions for the next conference (tentatively scheduled for April 1988 at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale). Also, we would like to hear about your current projects and summer plans. Please send information to Susan MacNiven (14 Magnolia Place, Silver Beach Gardens, Bronx, New York 10465; 212-792-2726).

Membership Renewal

If you have, we thank you! But if you have not renewed your membership in the Lawrence Durrell Society, please do so at once! See Greg's column for details.

The Lawrence Durrell Society

ON MIRACLE GROUND:

LAURENCE DURRELL CONFERENCES IN AMERICA

Tread softly, for here you stand
On miracle ground, boy.
A breath would cloud this water of glass,
Honey, bush, berry and swallow.

--Durrell, "In Arcadia" (1937)

A long way from the miracle ground of Lawrence Durrell's Corfu, a group of scholars gathered in December 1978 at the Modern Language Association Convention in New York to discuss "Some Aspects of Lawrence Durrell's Fiction," under the chairmanship of Ian S. MacNiven. The event was an exciting one for Durrellians; this was the first time that an MLA special session had been devoted to Durrell. The meeting went well. If anything, the sub-freezing chill of the New York streets merely whetted our appetites for more of the vicarious Mediterranean. Carol Peirce, who had been a panelist on the program, asked, "Why don't we hold an entire conference on Durrell?" Peirce and MacNiven decided upon a joint coordination, and soon the announcements were going out for a conference to be held 25 April 1980 at the State University of New York Maritime College.

The organizers waited with some trepidation for the responses; however, it quickly became evident that not only would there be enough participants for the meeting to take place, but that the results promised to be gratifyingly distinguished. John Untecker, author of the first critical monograph on Durrell, announced that he would come from the University of Hawaii. James R. Morrison of Carleton University in Ottawa proposed a paper with a formidable title, "Justine as the Schopenhauerian Woman." James R. Nichols, novelist and professor of English at Muskingum College in Ohio, offered to speak on Darley, the embryonic novelist in The Alexandria Quartet. Early in the twenty-four proposals accepted came from people who had either published recently on Durrell or were seeing work through the presses. Jane Lagoudis Pinchin's highly praised Alexandria Still, treating Cavafy, Durrell, and Forster, had just appeared. James A. Brigham's edition of the Collect ed Poems, 1931-1974 was at the printer, as was the MacNiven and Harry T. Moore Literary Lifelines: The Correspondence of Richard Aldington and Lawrence Durrell.

All conference organizers live for months with visions of disaster, but those gods or spirits who watch over Durrellians were awake. True, Untecker found himself, the night before the gathering, locked out of his dormitory room; and when Security finally located a key and let him in, he discovered that a student rock music group was practicing directly underneath. After the program had been printed, two participants had to cancel due to illness. Gremlins invaded the recording system. But the magnolias and forsythia along the road to the college opened on schedule, and the sun shone over Long Island Sound, a few yards from the meeting rooms in historic Fort Schuyler. The Bronx could almost have been the Mediterranean!

The conference opened with an address by Rear Admiral Sheldon H. Kinney, USN (Ret.), President of Maritime College. There followed papers on the women in the Quartet, on Durrell's handling of spirit of place, on his poetry and three plays, on the later fiction. Buffie Johnson, friend of Lawrence and Nancy Durrell, antagonistic toward Henry Miller, reminisced ably about their shared experience of Paris in the late 1930s. A panel of educators conducted a "Durrell in the Classroom" seminar. Several studies probed influence--Cavafy, Wyndham Lewis, Spengler, and Einstein on Durrell--while others investigated literary parallels--the handling of place in D. H. Lawrence and
Faulkner. There were arguments, gratifying to the audience, among the participants, but no fist-fights. Heated discussions continued among the book exhibitors.

An evening banquet of shish kebab moistened with potations of Pinot Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon from southern Europe helped maintain a transoceanic Durrellian deus loci. The conference was scheduled for 9:00 A.M. through 10:00 P.M., but we ran a bit overtime, and the momentum carried a strong-winded remnant to the nearby home of one of the participants, where Harry Stoneback, a Faulkner scholar who had shifted territory for the conference, regaled us with stories that extended from France to tobacco farming in West Virginia.

Those involved in planning the conference had been sure beforehand that it would be a significant event in literary scholarship. What they were not prepared for was just how much fun it would be. As letters and telephone calls, laced with superlatives, started coming in from the participants, we realized that we had hit upon a mix that worked: treat a variety of genres—easy to do with an author like Durrell, who has made important contributions to drama, fiction, poetry, and travel literature; incorporate changes of pace in the presentations: single featured speakers, formal papers grouped around a specific topic, informal memoirs, panel discussions. At subsequent conferences we were to include slide shows of biographical and literary interest; studies in astrology and holography; production of a Durrell play; even a musical interlude featuring a country-and-western hit tune which mention Durrell prominently, Jerry Jeff Walker's "Stoney."

With the memories of On Miracle Ground I still vivid, we planned the next conference for 24 April 1982 at the University of Baltimore, with Peirce and MacNiven as coordinators again. The scheduling by the MLA in December 1980 of two special sessions on Durrell and his circle provided further impetus. So we met in the Christmas wasteland of downtown Houston, office buildings and even most restaurants closed, the hotels and parking lots half-empty. Twelve Durrellians decided it was time to form the Lawrence Durrell Society. No Mediterranean wines or eastern dishes this time; rather, cold steaks and tepid California rose, yet the enthusiasm of the group turned gastronomic disaster into mirth. A set of by-laws was drawn up, Carol Peirce elected President, Michael Cartwright of the University of California at Bakersfield named Vice-President, James Nichols Secretary/Treasurer. The conference organizers now had a society to rely upon for aid and advice.

On Miracle Ground II meant a considerable advance over the first conference. For one thing, we had the resources of a larger institution more readily at hand; for another, we were more practiced in arranging scholarly meetings. Downtown Baltimore, with its pleasant small hotels and bookstores (including Peabody's, once Mencken's favorite bookstore/speakeasy, still a bookshop with a bar and honky-tonk piano in the back room, accessible through a hidden passage), with nearby Harbor Town tastefully restored, provided a congenial setting. William Kinser, the superb artist, graphics designer, and Durrell fan who had donated his services for the OMG I announcement and program, came up with a new and equally appropriate set of illustrations and lay-outs.

The conference itself was most stimulating. One traveller reported on Alexandria and another gave an illustrated lecture on Provence, location of many of the happenings in The Avignon Quintet. We heard examinations of Durrell's philosophic background, in Christianity and paganism, in Otto Rank. We discussed Shakespeare's and Wordsworth's influence on Durrell, and Durrell's on Henry Miller. We re-examined Durrell's major novels and turned to some of the less-known, including The Dark Labrador and the work he calls his "juvenile," White Eagles Over Serbia. We considered his play Sappho. William D. Buchan, Hermeticist of the Church of Light, presented three readings of Durrell's horse-scope. Susan MacNiven gave an illustrated lecture on Durrell's career as the painter "Oscar Epfs," and Ian MacNiven reported on his authorized biography-in-progress.

Michael Cartwright, editor of the Proceedings of the first conference (published as a special issue of Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Quarterly), distributed the handsome red-bound volumes.

After evaluating the first two conferences, we decided to depart from the one-day format: it was simply too crowded. The next conference, which Nichols was to direct and host at Muskingum College, would run for two whole days. With the extra time, we were able to present J. Newton White's full-dress production of Durrell's An Irish Faustus. The play had been staged only once before in the United States. Ted Hislam, a professional actor based in San Francisco, took the title role, while all the other characters were represented by means of larger-than-life cutouts mounted on plywood. The two-dimensional mannequins set on casters, were moved by concealed stage hands. Speeches for the mannequin-characters were pre-recorded. The effect was magical, as if the entire action were a juggling of Faust's over-sensitive imagination and subconscious. When informed of the production, Durrell said, "Out of course! I should have thought of that! It's perfect!"

The papers read and topics discussed at OMG III reflected our increasingly detailed and sophisticated researches into Durrell's work. His references to the Tarot and to alchemy in the Quartet formed the subject of two presentations. We continued to examine Durrell's relationship with other writers: Gordon K. Thomas of Brigham Young University spoke on Frankenstein and Charlock (Durrell's character who in his Tung/Nunquam novel pair), while Nancy M. Lewis of the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater compared Nunquam and
Peter Baldwin

VIEWS FROM PUDDING ISLAND

The death of G. S. Fraser in 1980 deprived the literary world of one of the most intelligent and enthusiastic critics of Durrell's work. His Lawrence Durrell: A Study (Faber, 1968; Dutton, entitled Lawrence Durrell: A Critical Study, 1968; revised edition 1973) was for many years the major full-length analysis of Durrell's writing. His careful and quiet critical style must have helped establish Durrell's reputation after the first flush of the popular success of the Quartet. Indeed, Fraser in his autobiography, A Stranger and Afraid (Manchester: Carcanet New Press, 1983), admirably sums up Durrell's philosophical relationship to many of his contemporaries: "Everything that Durrell wrote had a strong natural vitality... and though Durrell was by no means unaffected by the melancholy of our time, that did not express itself in him, as it does in so many of us, as saud and hesitation" (page 124). The deletion of Fraser's study from the Faber catalogue leaves, quite astonishingly, no major critical work on Durrell readily available in the U. K. Quixotically, and in this context, the only critical work on Durrell which the casual buyer may find is Fraser's own introductory study for the British Council's Writers & their Work series (Lawrence Durrell, Longman Group, 1970). The problem is that this work also predates The Avignon Quintet.

However, we can now look forward to the issuing by the same publisher of a paperback concentrating on Durrell's prose works. The author is Keith Brown, who I believe is a professor of English currently on secondment to the University of Oslo, Norway. Judging by Brown's review of Quinx in the Times Literary Supplement of 31 March 1985, he promises to be an eminent successor to Fraser. Referring to Durrell's "international celebrity" and "the persistent scepticism of the London literary world" to his work, Brown reminds us of the epigraph to Quinx: "...must itself create the taste by which it is to be judged."

After commenting on the contents of Quinx and the difficulty in reviewing it in isolation, Brown draws his argument together by referring to the fact that "we... have steadily required of new English novels... that tightly 'organic' or crystalline quality that the New Criticism loved."

Durrell's refusal to fall in with any known literary school is described by Keith Brown as Durrell's "blowing[ing] up the Examination Halls": "Is it, then, possible to write a 'Tibetan' novel—that is to say, a new, more fluid, open-ended kind of fiction, still recognizable to novel-readers though largely shedding the usual assumptions of the genre? Now let Durrell speak for himself: in a 29 May 1985 radio interview (with John Dunn on British Radio 2), he referred to the contrasting philosophies of the East and West. Durrell said that "the two philosophies are coming together in a head-on collision; the basic thing which differentiates them is determinism and materialism in the West and precisely this pentagram formation about human personality in the East. They say...
that psychology instead of being divided into male and female, conscious and unconscious, is divided into five groups—skandhas—so it is a sort of pentagram I envisaged instead of a Freudian square."

I think we can see here the very different approach to the novel being voiced by Durrell. At the climax of his review, Brown suggests that "Durrell's attempt...to open our minds to the possibility of a fiction based on a radically different metaphysic" (my emphasis). I must leave an authoritative critical comparison between this metaphysic and the conventional occidental novel and its philosophy to those more qualified in literary criticism than I. Given the common critical assumption that our literature must be based on a Western metaphysic however much that metaphysic has developed over the years since the inception of literature as art, then such a shift in viewpoint must, without question, be seen as a radical change to the extent of being the most radical change ever faced by Western literature. For that we have Durrell to thank, and it remains to be seen whether the establishment has the courage to follow his lead.

At the risk of overburdening the patient reader may I quote some useful source material which may be seen as elementary to the accomplished Eastern philosopher, but which should help a novice to understand this different metaphysic:

1. "The Indians had always said that the notion of matter was an illusion" (Durrell, "From the Elephant's Back," Poetry London/Apple Magazine, Vol. 1, No. 2 [1982], p. 6).

2. "Long ago the Indians had told us that the notion of the discrete and separate ego was also an illusion" (ibid.).

3. The five skandhas themselves:
   a. Rupa: form or body including the sense organs.
   b. Vedana: feelings or sensations, pleasant, unpleasant or neutral.
   c. Sāñā: perception or recognition, sensuous or mental.
   d. Sankharas: tendencies mental and physical, elements and factors in consciousness, the mental processes of discrimination and comparison between ideas so brought about.
   e. Vijnana: the continually fluid consciousness, mind and mental processes including mental, moral and physical predispositions. The true centre of focus of conscious existence. Always in a state of flux and change.

(From What Is Buddhism?, published by the Buddhist Society.)

Birmingham, England 4th March 1986

THEATRE NOTE

In February, Anaïs Nin: The Paris Years, adapted for the stage and performed by Lee Kessler, appeared at the Actors' Playhouse in Manhattan. In the show, Anaïs Nin/Lee Kessler reads a March 1937 letter from Lawrence Durrell, reprinted in The Diary of Anaïs Nin, Volume 2, page 183, which praises Nin's writing. Lee Kessler mispronounced Durrell's name, and a message was sent backstage suggesting that she rhyme "Durrell" with "squirrel."

PEOPLE, PLACES AND PUBLICATIONS

* On 10 January, LAWRENCE DURRELL gave an informal lecture at The October Gallery in London. At present he is again in London, working on a book about Provence.

** FRIDAY JANUARY 10 **

** AN INTIMATE EVENING WITH **

** LAWRENCE DURRELL **

at The October Gallery 24 Old Gloucester Street WCI

at 8.00 p.m.

Tickets £3.00 & £2.50

Advance bookings: 242 7367

* CORINNE ALEXANDRE-GARNER's book, Le QUATUOR D'ALEXANDRIE: fragmentations et écritures [see Herald, Number 5], was mentioned very nicely and wittily by Lawrence Durrell during his appearance on Apostrophes last 14 June. On 19 June, Corinne held a debate with Jacques Hassoun, author of Alexandries, at the librairie "La Terrasse de Gutenberg" in Paris. At "Incest," a colloquium organized by the psychoanalytical magazine Patio which took place 12-13 October in Paris, Corinne participated in a round-table discussion of incest, in which she focused on incest in The Alexandria Quartet and The Avignon Quintet.
* KATHY and PETER BALDWIN welcomed their first daughter and third child, REBECCA KATE, on 3 February. Rebecca weighed in at 9 lb. 3 oz. — "Someone to keep the boys in order!" Peter predicted. FERÖZA and REED DASENBROCK have a first son and child, HORMUZDIYAR ["Beloved of God"] HENRY. Heraldic Congratulations to the new arrivals and their parents!

* Two Society members read papers at the Modern Language Association Convention in Chicago last December. At the special session "Paul Nizan (1905-40): Socialist Realism and the Roman à Thèse," PETER CHRISTENSEN spoke on "Jean-Luc Godard's La chinoise and the Novels of Nizan." REED DASENBROCK lectured on "Yeats and Post-impressionist Art Theory" for the "Visual Art and Literary Modernism" special session.

* LYN GOLDMAN spent last July through December in Cortona, Tuscany, where she wrote her first novel. She returned home to a new job; Lyn is now the Coordinator of the Certificate Program for Adults at the University of Regina (Saskatchewan).

* NANCY LEWIS finds teaching at the Bristol Polytechnic immensely enjoyable. She reports that her students there "seem to have come through a system which encourages much more in the way of independent reading and thinking" than the typical American school experience. The only bad point of her teaching exchange in England is that Nancy will not be able to get to Pennsylvania in April. It would have been an extra special visit for Nancy since her grandmother, Bess Glenn, was from State College and was one of the three women in the 1905 graduating class at Penn State. Nancy will be at the Joyce Symposium in Copenhagen 16-22 June and hopes she will find other Durrellians there.

* With a group from Syracuse, New York, BROOKE PEIRCE visited Russia for ten days in February. She saw Moscow and Leningrad and a couple of small, "almost medieval" towns in between. "Flat, snow-covered land with lots of birch trees" was Brooke's major impression of the Russian countryside, and one of the high points of the trip was touring the Hermitage Museum. Brooke noted that everyone in Russia has a job and a place to live—there are no "street people." The absence of advertisements was noteworthy; the only public notices were those for the Communist Party welcoming the Twenty-Seventh Congress participants. Brooke found the seemingly endless and ubiquitous lines rather shocking—a tremendous waste of time and no doubt patience. The group had first-class accommodations at hotels built by the French, Yugoslavs, and Finns; their rooms were quite modern and comfortable, and best of all, warm.

* There are new or revised addresses for the following Society members:

Michael Cartwright
Division of Language & Literature
Chadron State College
Chadron, Nebraska 69337-2690

George Cleyet
Frank Kerenskowski
Department of English, Box 172
Trinity University
715 Stadium Drive
San Antonio, Texas 78284

Anna Lillios
Gordon Thomas
Department of English
Brigham Young University
3114 Jesse Knight Humanities Bldg.
Provo, Utah 84602

Susan S. MacNiven
RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY OR CONCERNING LAWRENCE DURRELL

* All of Durrell's Antrobus stories are included in Antrobus Complete which was issued by Faber & Faber last October at $8.95. It is illustrated by Marc with drawings commissioned specifically for this edition.

* The Durrell work included in Great Spy Stories from Fiction [see Herald, Number 5] is "I.A." (pages 191-198) from Montolive. This book, edited by Allen Dullus, was published by Robson Books (London) in 1985.

* There is at least one sentence by Durrell in Quote... Unquote 3 by Nigel Rees (Unwin, £1.75). Ron Roland ("Last Minute Ideas," Doncaster Star, 23 December 1985) calls the Rees book "an entertaining collection of marvellous quotes like as [sic] Laurence [sic] Durrell's on the Mona Lisa: 'The smile of a woman who has just dined off her husband.'"


* The "Spotlight" section of a late [?]
1985 number of Vogue (London) has an interview with Durrell, "The Mellowing of Lawrence Durrell" by Helen Simpson. Helen, Ingrid ("a Vogue style-sleuth"), Penelope (Durrell's older daughter), and Durrell conducted this dialogue over dinner in a London restaurant last May. While this is not a major interview, the reader comes away with the renewed realization that Durrell is unable to open his mouth without saying something at once significant and startling. What makes this piece outstanding are the marvellous photographs of Durrell—including two full-page portraits—by Lord Snowdon.

Lee Lemon's Portraits of the Artist in Contemporary Fiction, published in the fall of 1985 by the University of Nebraska Press ($20.95), has individual chapters on Lawrence Durrell, John Fowles, Doris Lesning, John Barth, and Patrick White. About his book Lee Lemon writes: 'The closest I can come to a single unifying statement about the book is this: 'Despite rumors to the contrary, there are still some very good novels being written. And of some of those are written by artists who still believe that one cannot be more than human— as artist or anything else— without being at least human.' Much of the fun of the book then is the exploration of the ramifications of what it means for an artist to be human as shown in the fictions of the writers.'

REVIEWS OF ANTROBUS COMPLETE

"Antobus Complete, Lawrence Durrell," Middlesbrough Evening Gazette (Teesside), 1 December 1985. This paragraph concludes that the Antobus stories "amount to a scintillatingly crafted illumination of this curious, frightfully exclusive, segment of our national presence in foreign places."

Philip Howard in "Fictional Little Can Be Beautiful, Long Boring" (The Times, 24 October 1985: a review of four books) states that the Antobus stories give an "old-fashioned view of the [diplomatic] service... None of this modernist muck and poor man's Froust that you find in the Alexandria Quartet. Just clever, rather camp, tales with a twist to entertain."

In the very brief "Spiced" (Oldham Evening Chronicle, 18 December 1985), J. K. welcomes the "marvellous Lawrence Durrell's 'Antobus Complete'" and finds the British Foreign Office "a fitting target for Durrell's inimitable humour."

Sir Anthony Parsons (in "30 Years on—and Still Full of Laughter," Western Morning News, 3 November 1985): a former British Ambassador in the Middle East who was "convulsed with laughter" when he first read Antobus tales nearly thirty years ago, discovered upon reading Antobus Complete that time had not "dulled the hilarious absurdity of Antobus's reminiscences." Parsons' 20-year-old daughter, to whom he lent the book to "test whether this particular vein of humour appealed only to ageing ex-diplomats like myself," also "found it irresistible."

Another review praising Antobus Complete is Peter Roberts' "More Stiff Upper Lip" in the Eastern Daily Press of 14 November 1985. Roberts calls the stories "a wholesome delight of rich humour, impeccable English and an intimate knowledge of the workings of the Foreign Office and its diplomatic service."

"In these very funny 'sketches from diplomatic life,'" E. S. Turner writes, Durrell "is-like an air traffic controller who relaxes from juggling with jumbos by tossing round the light stuff, which can be even dodgier to handle." In "From the Embassy" (Times Literary Supplement, 20 December 1985), Turner reviews the history of the Antobus tales in book form: they "first came out in enneads, to use a word airily thrown up by a Faber blurb-writer; that is, in sets of nine. In 1974 the three slender volumes... were ransacked to produce the still slender Best of Antobus; and now we have Antobus Complete, by no means a damned thick book, though one enned ahead of the Best." Turner mentions that Durrell's style in these stories has been likened to that of Sir Harold Nicolson, Wodehouse, and Peter Fleming, and continues: "If the plots are wild, the manner is disciplined and the wit elegant." After complimenting Marc's illustrations, Turner adds: "Bald-headed Comrade Bukov is given a fine head of hair but when did illustrators ever read the text?"

CONCERNING QUINX

Virginia Allen, in "Quinx or The Ripper's Tale" (Chicago magazine, February 1985, p. 89), assigns Quinx the central position in Durrell's London: "the best belongs in the center; Quinx holds the cluster in place and suggests, by a collection of familiar characters at its start, that it will tell us what we need to know to make sense of the whole."

Comparing the Quartet with the Quinx, Allen judges that the latter is "more subtle, more complex, and more outrageous." Allen states that Durrell "appears to strive toward the creation of a new art by the demolition of the rules of the old, not so much for effect but to break through effect," and believes it is the Quintet on which Durrell's reputation will be based in the next century: "A hundred years from now... Durrell's reputation will stand on the Avignon books. It's too soon to tell whether he succeeds with his broken barriers, his blasted frameworks, in creating the 21st-century novel. What is established in this series is a mature work investigating human love in a mature way," even though "it is replete with enough confusion to put to flight any attempt to encapsulate intellectually the open-ended journey on which he is intent."

"Prohibition Poverty Street" (Middlesbrough Evening Gazette [Teesside], 17 De-
cember 1985) includes a very brief announcement of Quinx and four other novels. This places the Quintet on the same plane as the Quartet: [Durrell] could have died and counted himself lucky to have completed a sequence so powerful as the Alexandria Quartet, but he'll be equally remembered for the Avignon Quintet."

* In "Novels and Stories at Full Flood" (Financial Times, 28 December 1985), Gay Firth summarizes the best fictional offerings of last year. Durrell is mentioned about half-way through the article: "Other travellers on the road to excellence this year were Lawrence Durrell, completing his ambitious 'Avignon Quintet' with Quinx'; in this paragraph Firth also refers to Brian Moore (Black Rope), Anita Brookner (Family and Friends), and Jane Gardam (Crusoe's Daughter).

* An alphabetical listing of ten novels--"The Literary Editor's selection of the year's fiction" ("Books--Novels," The Times, 31 December 1985)--places Quinx with Black Rope, Brian Moore, Bunter (David Hughes), Gentlemen in England (A.N. Wilson), Hiroshima Joe (Martin Booth), Light Years (Maggie Gee), Paradise Postponed (John Mortimer), Stormy Siren (Barry Unsworth), The Italian Lesson (James Elliot), and The Swimming Pool Season (Rose Tremaín).

MISCELLANEOUS DURRELLIANA

* In "Foreseeing Death and Greatness" (The Spectator, 7 September 1985), a review of Keith Douglas: A Poet Wishes to Live by Desmond Graham (Carnacet, £3.95), Peter Levi concludes his article with a reference to Durrell: "I have long supposed [Douglas] was one of the poets in Durrell's Alexandria Quartet but that would be a younger and weaker Douglas than the one we need know. His late poetry has both historical importance and a kind of greatness." Levi states that Douglas's Alamein to Zem Zem "has very few rivals as the best written prose record by a soldier to come out of either of the two world wars"; Durrell wrote a Preface to the 1966 Faber edition.

* Reviewing D. J. Enright's Academic Year that was issued as a paperback last year (see Herald, Number 5), Blake Morrison ("He Likes It There," Times Literary Supplement, 29 November 1985) makes a comparison between Enright's protagonist and Durrell: "Packet may not luxuriate like Laurence [sic] Durrell, but the presence of a third expatriate emphasizes his wary openness to Abroad."

* In a discussion of the Booker Prize for last year, "Stardust Prophecies" in the "Bent's Notes" column of The Bookseller of 21 September 1985, Durrell's Quinx is referred to as a possibility: "They [the judges] seem to be a conservative lot this year and might well go for a writer with a truck record like Lessing or Durrell (Quinx, Faber)."

* Writing about Charlotte Rampling, a British actress asked to be one of the guest editors of Elle (Paris), Anne-Elisabeth Moutet reports in "Acting Editor" (Sunday Times, 29 September 1985) that Rampling "commissioned profiles on British writers living in France--Anthony Burgess, Graham Greene, Lawrence Durrell and Dirk Bogarde."

"The paperback edition of Durrell's Collected Poems, 1931-1974 [see Herald, Number 5] is mentioned by Olivia Puffmore in an article--"Advance Guard" (The Bookseller, 5 October 1985)--about the Faber & Faber New Books list for last autumn.

* Desmond Clarke, marketing director of Faber & Faber, in "How to Push Poetry" (Sunday Times, 27 October 1985) labels the "product" he is selling "one of the most distinguished publishing lists in the world, which starts with T S Eliot and continues with W H Auden, James Joyce, Philip Larkin, Lawrence Durrell, Ted Hughes, Seamus Heaney, and William Golding."

* In "Sunday Times/Gollancz SF Story Competition" (Sunday Times, 15 December 1985) J. G. Ballard explains what science fiction is and gives the rules for the competition that will award £500 to the best science fiction story of up to 3,000 words submitted by 31 January 1986. Taking exception to the idea that "SF is often thought of as a quintessentially American form," Ballard notes "there has always been a strong British tradition of SF writing," and he states that "today, many of our leading novelist--Anghus Wilson, Anthony Burgess, Kingsley Amis, Angela Carter, Lawrence Durrell, Doris Lessing, William Golding and many others--have recognized the possibilities of SF, and use SF ideas in their work."

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BIBLIOPHILES' SHELF

Lawrence Durrell at The October Gallery, 10 January 1986.

Photograph by Peter Baldwin.