

The SINCLAIR LEWIS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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SPRING 2005

JOHN-PAUL SINCLAIR LEWIS TO BE KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT LEWIS CONFERENCE

John-Paul Sinclair Lewis, the grandson of Sinclair Lewis and Dorothy Thompson, and a published novelist as well, will be the keynote speaker for the Sinclair Lewis Conference in Sauk Centre this summer. He is tentatively scheduled to speak on Wednesday evening and will be talking about writing and his family. He last visited Sauk Centre when he was 8, in the company of his grandmother Dorothy Thompson. Mr. Lewis's most well known novel is *Buffalo Gordon: The Extraordinary Life and Times of Buffalo Gordon: from Louisiana Slave to Buffalo Soldier* (Forge, 2001).

CONFERENCE TO CELEBRATE SINCLAIR LEWIS RECEIVING THE NOBEL PRIZE IN LITERATURE

The Sinclair Lewis Society will hold a conference July 13-15, 2005 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Sinclair Lewis winning the Nobel Prize in Literature, the first American ever to be so honored. The conference will be held in Sauk Centre, Minnesota, Lewis's hometown, to coincide with Sinclair Lewis Days. Planned events include academic panels on various aspects of Lewis's writing from both American and international scholars, a visit to the Boyhood Home, showing of some films based on Lewis's novels including *Dodsworth* and *Main Street*, a dramatic reading of the play version of *It Can't Happen Here*, and a recording of *It Can't Happen Here*, read by Lewis's son Michael.

Conference continued on page 5

THE GREAT AMERICAN JEWISH NIGHTMARE

Ralph Goldstein

More than 5,000 words into his review of *The Plot against America*, Paul Berman finally gets to the nub of the matter: Philip Roth has written a novel about deep-seated Jewish fears, what we might call "The Great American Jewish Nightmare." As he begins, Berman salutes Roth's precursors Sinclair Lewis and Nathanael West for sharing with Roth a fear of a fascist takeover. While it is also an indictment against organized anti-Semitism, *It Can't Happen Here* has other targets. Lewis, along with his occasionally Jew-baiting pal Mencken, took pleasure in tweaking the pretensions of Main Street rubes, middle-class social climbers, and ignoramuses who wound up with political power. No Jewish writer at the time—not even West (born Nathan Weinstein)—had Lewis's standing and privilege to be savagely satirical. But Lewis could never know deep in his bones the primal fear of extinction passed down the generations to West and Roth.

Among other critics, Berman notices within Roth's narrative a reflection on contemporary political reality. Roth relates the consequences for his family after the physically attractive, plain-talking Charles Lindbergh defeats the intellectually superior Franklin Roosevelt in the 1940 presidential election. I believe many, maybe even most of the 58 million who voted for Bush in November would have voted for Lindbergh had they been of age in 1940. Other than that, my understanding of history prevents me from accepting Roth's premise. Although it no longer exists, there was during Roosevelt's time a stronger sense of the commonweal. Labor unions were not marginalized, public education not in shambles, College Republicans not so numerous, welfare not so dirty a word. The privatization of public space and suburban separat-

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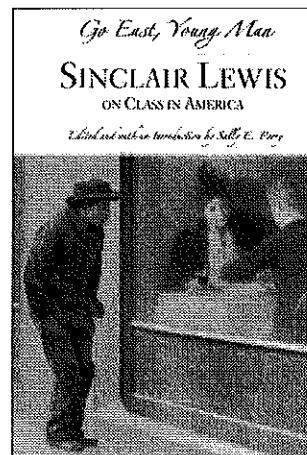
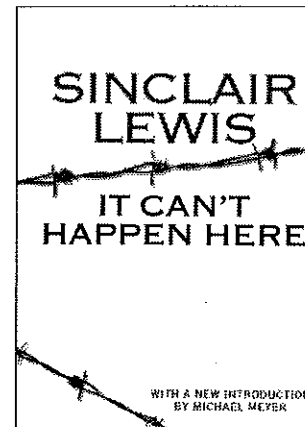
The editor of the Sinclair Lewis Society Newsletter would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue by writing articles or sending in notes.

These people include Frederick Betz, Dana Cook, Ralph Goldstein, Rob Hardy, Jacqueline Koenig, Richard Lingeman, Ana Maria Marques da Costa Pereira Lopes, Paul Vincent McInnes, Robert L. McLaughlin, Thomas P. Raynor, Ann Regan, and Dave Rowe.

NEW PUBLICATIONS BY SINCLAIR LEWIS

In March 2005 *It Can't Happen Here* was reprinted by Signet Classics, after being unavailable for several years. The new introduction is by Michael Meyer. The back cover states, "*It Can't Happen Here* is the only one of Sinclair Lewis's later novels to match the power of *Main Street*, *Babbitt*, and *Arrowsmith*. A cautionary tale about the fragility of democracy, it is an alarming, eerily timeless look at how fascism could take hold in America. Written during the Great Depression when the country was largely oblivious to Hitler's aggression, it juxtaposes sharp political satire with the chillingly realistic rise of a president who becomes a dictator to save the nation from welfare cheats, sex, crime, and a liberal press. Called 'a message to thinking Americans' by the *Springfield Republican* (MA) when it was published in 1935, *It Can't Happen Here* is a shockingly prescient novel that remains as fresh and contemporary as today's news."

Also in March Signet Classics released *Go East, Young Man: Sinclair Lewis*



—New Publications by Sinclair Lewis continued on page 7

**SINCLAIR LEWIS
AND BRET EASTON ELLIS
“HE-MAN” TO “IT-BOY”:
A STUDY OF COMMODITY
CULTURE THROUGH GENERATIONS**

*Paul Vincent McInnes
University of Glasgow, Scotland*

It was only recently, after studying some contemporary New York authors such as Jay McInerney and Bret Easton Ellis, that I sensed a real connection between them and Sinclair Lewis. Lewis wrote of a changing material society and was savage in his satire of a world that was immersing itself in commodity and triviality. We can see many modern New York writers as progressing on Lewis's themes and visualizing a contemporary world lost in a postmodern urban complexity. The city or expanding town was of great interest to Lewis, and in his novels of the 1920s we see a protean society being devoured by an excess of capital and greed. From the boosters of *Main Street* (1920) to the industrial magnates of *Dodsworth* (1929) Lewis captures the transition of American society from pre-war simplicity to post-war urbanism and commodification.

It is in *Babbitt* (1922) that Lewis truly commences his study of the commodification of America. An important and often overlooked theme in this novel is the manner in which Lewis depicts a society so ingrained in the rituals of commodifying culture. He begins by portraying Babbitt and his colleagues' fascination with the new art form of Advertisement-as-Poem. In Babbitt's sphere poetry and advertisements are indistinguishable and the beauty of an ad can not only touch people's minds but also their wallets. Babbitt's friend Chum Frink not only personifies the quasi-god ad-poet but becomes Lewis's mouth-piece in his realization of the mutual benefits of culture and capital.

“Culture has become as necessary an adornment and advertisement for a city to-day as pavements or bank-clearances. It's Culture, in theatres and art-galleries and so on, that brings thousands of visitors to New York every year.” (Lewis 252)

Implied in the “he-men” of Zenith and other booster towns is not only the commodification of culture but of speech and body. Babbitt's jargon-infected language reads as an advertisement or brochure and it is in this that we see Babbitt as a true antecedent of Bret Easton Ellis's characters such as Patrick Bateman in *American Psycho* (1991) or Victor Ward in *Glamorama* (1998). There appears to be a direct correlation between the “he-man” of Lewis and

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IF GEORGE BABBITT WERE A WOMAN

Sally E. Parry

Illinois State University

What if Sinclair Lewis had written about George Babbitt, but made the character a woman instead? If he had, that character might have been Emma McChesney. I recently found a collection of stories by Edna Ferber entitled *Roast Beef, Medium*, following the adventures of this "woman drummer." She's certainly more self-aware than George Babbitt and may be a fictional counterpart to Una Golden of *The Job*. Ferber wrote the series of stories over five years, starting in 1911. The title refers to comfort food that seasoned commercial travelers eat, rather than the exotic and sometimes sickening food that newcomers often choose. There are three collected volumes: *Roast Beef, Medium* (1913), *Personality Plus* (1914), and *Emma McChesney & Co.* (1915). All three titles have been reprinted by the University of Illinois Press in paperback.

Emma McChesney has been divorced for ten years in the opening story and represents T. A. Buck's Featherloom Petticoat Company. Although in some of the stories she is tempted to move to other jobs or give up the traveling life to get married, she realizes that she is good at what she does and prefers to remain independent. The stories are both funny and full of social commentary as she moves about the "man's world" of the traveling salesman. Ferber summarized the response of her target audience when she noted, "She knows that Emma McChesney could mix a devil's food cake and ice it just as successfully as she could approach a grouchy customer in Dubuque, Iowa, or carry on a conversation that has to do with books and music and philosophy." Although her readers were primarily women, Lawrence R. Rodgers, in his introduction to *Roast Beef, Medium*, remarks that Theodore Roosevelt enjoyed Emma's adventures as well. These collections are well worth picking up.

The Great American Jewish Nightmare *continued from page 1*

ism were far off. Advertising executives had much less influence on election outcomes. Kinder and gentler, Americans were still willing to fight abroad, which leads to another difficulty with Roth's hypothesis: Lindbergh's victory stems from antiwar sentiment. Now as then, there seems to be no ultimate opposition to war. The decision to send troops to Korea, Vietnam, and now Iraq has come in part from the advocates of war superimposing Hitler's face onto leaders like Ho Chi Minh and Hussein. In Roth's nightmare, Jewish adults are forced out of jobs and youngsters sent to assimilation experiences in the hinterland. Reality is different. On top of Dr. Rice's contention that the American obligation to aid the oppressed runs on a line from '50s Birmingham to modern Baghdad is the sobering fact that some of the chief architects of Bush's foreign policy are Jews.

Nevertheless, there are some intriguing parts to Roth's book. What stands out most to me is the character of Lionel Benglesdorf, a genteel, smooth-talking

rabbi in Roth's New Jersey town who catapults to prominence as Lindbergh's apologist. Formerly from the South, the rabbi conjures in my mind the slaveholding Judah Benjamin, who held high office in Jefferson Davis's Confederacy, and Hilton Grafman, the Alabama rabbi addressed by Martin Luther King in his letter from the Birmingham jail.

In contrast to Benglesdorf is Lewis's Rabbi de Verez, who dies in *It Can't Happen Here* at the hands of Secretary of Education Macgoblin, a devilish inquisitor indeed. A righteous Jew, de Verez (translated from Spanish, it means "the real truth") stands like Max Gottlieb in *Arrowsmith* for the forces of decency against ignorance. And isn't this conflict playing out in front of us now, particularly as some federal officials exhibit hostility toward scientific research in favor of "faith-based" solutions? As civil liberties diminish under the Patriot Act, as the military and the corporations become more enmeshed in the workings of government, isn't Lewis's vision startlingly current? *es*

“A WARRIOR OF THE SPIRIT” DOROTHY THOMPSON, 1893-1961

Thomas P. Raynor

When Hitler, in one of his tantrums, decided to expel her from Germany, it made Dorothy a heroine within 24 hours and propelled her into that national and international celebrity—not as [the wife of Sinclair Lewis] but as herself—which was to be her native climate thereafter.

—Vincent Sheean, *Dorothy and Red*

In the frenzied decades between the two world wars, Dorothy Thompson was the first woman to crack the elite circle of foreign correspondents who prowled Europe, vying for exclusives. In the early twenties, at the very outset of her career, she gained widespread recognition on both sides of the Atlantic for her frequent and audacious scoops. But in 1934 she awoke one morning in Berlin to find herself world famous, marked for a unique role in the struggle to save Western democracy.

Causes were nothing new to Thompson, who grew up as the daughter of a widowed Methodist minister in Lackawanna, New York. She became a suffragist while a student at Syracuse University, where she earned a

bachelor's degree in 1914. After graduation she joined the staff of the New York State Woman Suffrage Party as an organizer, managing public relations and propaganda—or, as she put it, “haranguing the populace.” As she stumped for the movement across western New York, she chronicled its final, triumphant phase in articles published in the *New York Times* and the *New York Herald Tribune*.

The stunning success of the suffrage campaign, formalized by the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, reinforced Thompson's idealism and kindled her passion for politics. Now she became focused on a new cause—the peacemaking process following World War I, and President Woodrow Wilson's crusade “to make the world safe for democracy.” Convinced that the Treaty of Versailles amounted to a betrayal of Wilsonian idealism, she was eager to observe and document for herself the treaty's practical impact on Eastern Europe. With no credentials or assignments, she sailed for England in 1921, intent on making her living as a freelance journalist.

Ever supportive, the Reverend Peter Thompson trav-

————— “A Warrior of the Spirit” *continued on page 8*

Conference *continued from page 5*

Among the scholars who plan to present papers are James Hutchisson, author of *Sinclair Lewis: New Essays in Criticism* and *The Rise of Sinclair Lewis, 1920-1930*; George Killough, editor of *Sinclair Lewis's “A Minnesota Diary,”* Martin Bucco, editor of *Critical Essays on Sinclair Lewis* and author of *Sinclair Lewis as Reader and Critic* and *Main Street: The Revolt of Carol Kennicott*, and Sally E. Parry, editor of *The Minnesota Stories of Sinclair Lewis* and *Go East, Young Man: Sinclair Lewis on Class*.

Two versions of *Dodsworth* will be shown. The more well-known 1936 version stars Walter Huston recreating his Broadway role and is an excellent movie directed by William Wyler and also starring Ruth Chatterton, Paul Lukas, and David Niven. The other is an interesting little-known 1950 television film with character actor Walter Abel in the title role. In addition, we'll be screening the

1936 film *I Married a Doctor*, a little-seen version of *Main Street* with Josephine Hutchinson as Carol and Pat O'Brien as Doc Kennicott.

The call for papers for the conference continues until May 15. Papers will be considered on a variety of topics related to Lewis. Proposals for panel discussions, abstracts of papers, and suggestions for activities are due May 15, 2005, but are welcomed much earlier. Please send them to Sally Parry, Executive Director, Sinclair Lewis Society, Dept. of English, Box 4240, Illinois State University 61790-4240 or e-mail her at separry@ilstu.edu. You may also send them to Frederick Betz, President, Sinclair Lewis Society, Dept. of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901 or e-mail him at fbetz@siu.edu. We look forward to seeing you there. ✉

Sinclair Lewis and Bret Easton Ellis *continued from page 3*

the "it-boy" of Ellis. Language-as-ad is an important theme in *Babbitt*, and the businessmen talk of "boosting," "pep," "punch," and of their personal commodities and accessories. Their discussions sound like ads as much as Patrick Bateman's language is infected with commerce and capital. James Annesley, in a study of primarily 1980s fiction, writes of Bateman as being as commercialized as his possessions, "The tone he uses mimics the register of a commercial brochure...his desire to catalogue is so overpowering that it infects his whole personality and inspires...tedious, itemized lists of his property" (13-14).

The cataloguing or amassing of physical detail in both Ellis's and Lewis's work appears to have been mistaken for some kind of ultra-realism; however, it is this listing that is the satire. In Lewis's and Ellis's work realism and satire are indistinguishable. Babbitt's proud inventory of his house in the opening of *Babbitt* and Bateman's itemization of fashion brands and possessions is actually the satire. Compare *Babbitt*:

an altogether royal bathroom of porcelain and glazed tile and metal sleek as silver. The towel-rack was a rod of clear glass set in nickel. The tub was long enough for a Prussian Guard, and above the set bowl was a sensational exhibit of tooth-brush holder, shaving-brush holder, soap-dish, sponge-dish, and medicine-cabinet, so glittering and so ingenious that they resembled an electrical instrument-board. (Lewis 14)

And American Psycho:

I stand in front of a chrome and acrylic Washmobile bathroom sink—with soap dish, cup holder, and railings that serve as towel bars, which I bought at Hastings Tile to use while the marble sinks I ordered from Finland are being sanded—and stare at the reflection with the ice pack still on. (Ellis 25)

Both satirize the amassment of objects and possessions as a cultural norm. The connection between Lewis and Ellis seems at first unlikely; however, comparisons between the two are pivotal to our understanding of American satire. Comparing Patrick Bateman and George Babbitt would appear tenuous to some critics, but if we view Bateman as an advanced/extreme late twentieth-century Babbitt then the mild-mannered, mediocre and uniformed businessman can easily become the solipsistic psychopath that Ellis describes.

Both Lewis's "he-man" and Ellis's "it-boy" are cen-

tral to our understanding of the individual against society and the individual's relationship with commodity. Lewis was conscious of the threat of commodity as culture and its implications on society; however, Ellis takes this to extremes with an insight into a contemporary society in which culture and people are commodities. Bateman's modern sociopath confuses the two, and his search for the ideal business card, bespoke suit, or restaurant merges with his search and acquisition of women. James Annesley claims, "Bateman seems unaware of the difference between commodities and human life...The violent treatment of his predominantly female victims is thus tied to his vision of a world in which everything has been commodified" (13-14).

Babbitt's search for a materialistic zenith is fully realized in the brand-as-human concept of Bateman. Furthermore, the standardized and brand goods that decorate Babbitt's house become the designer-decorated showroom of Bateman's Manhattan apartment. Babbitt's desire for quality accessories matures into Bateman's catwalk style, and the advertising/boosting jargon of Babbitt develops into the cataloguing/fashion magazine-speak of Bateman. What Lewis intimates and Ellis exclaims is that modern man and woman have become mobile advertisements and hence our bodies have become commodified. Ellis is claiming that Bateman has become the apotheosis of human advertising and by extension appears to be mocking modern advertising strategies. Naomi Klein states, "Now buses, streetcars and taxis...have become the ads on wheels, shepherding passengers around in giant chocolate bars and gum wrappers, just as Hilfiger and Polo turned clothing into wearable brand billboards" (37).

Indeed Lewis's satire of early twentieth-century America, with its emergence of brands, standardization of goods, language and thought, is fully evolved in Ellis's contemporary satire. It is of course ironic that both Lewis and Ellis, who could be seen as great critics of commodity culture and the bastardization of art forms, are also subsequently charged with their promotion. Much has been made of Lewis's interest in advertising and the promotion of his own texts as a kind of brand. Ellis is also accused of such hypocrisy, and it is a possible criticism that the works of Lewis and Ellis participate in a process

— Sinclair Lewis and Bret Easton Ellis *continued on page 11*

ONE VIEW OF *THE GOD-SEEKER*

Dave Rowe

Imagine, if you will, an all-powerful nation where the leader is a self-proclaimed “Man of God,” an Evangelical Baptist turned Methodist who claims to base all his decisions on divine inspiration. One action of his is the waging of an unneeded holy war against a much weaker, relatively harmless state, with purposes such as greed, self-aggrandizement, revenge, and a re-election campaign possibly lurking below the surface.

The plot of a newly discovered Sinclair Lewis novel? Unfortunately not—instead, Lewis late in his career left us with *The God-Seeker*, which concluded its jabs at organized religion with what seems to be a sincere outpouring of Populist—if not Socialist—sentiment.

Near the end of the 1949 novel, Aaron Gadd, *The God-Seeker*'s spiritually tormented protagonist, finds himself organizing labor unions, aiding and abetting runaway slaves, and encouraging his spouse to speak out in favor of woman's suffrage, a far cry from his early days of at-

tempting to save the souls the souls of reluctant Native Americans on the Minnesota prairie.

Compared to the near-constant satirical jesting found in *Elmer Gantry* and other earlier Lewis works, the trademark cynical humor in *The God-Seeker* is sparse, but is there nonetheless. Take, for instance, the character of Black Wolf, who—with pencil borrowed from Aaron—composes a chilling manifesto calling ultimately for the annihilation of the white race. No, Aaron finds himself saying, he doesn't think he'd be able to help Black Wolf get the work published.

Earlier, on his deathbed, Aaron's grandfather Heraz is seen running down a list of denominations he does NOT want to preside over him at his funeral. Finally, he exhausts all possibilities—“The Universalists,” he notes, “know there aint no fiery Hell, but they're suspicious at the smell of smoke.”

The God-Seeker, which appeared in 1949, was the final Lewis book to be published in his lifetime—perhaps he by then knew that it was time to reinforce his true colors, with tongue planted less-firmly in cheek.

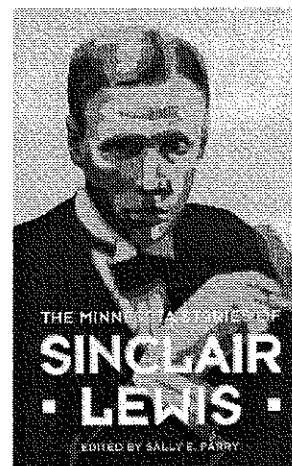
New Publications by Sinclair Lewis *continued from page 2*

on Class in America, edited by Sally E. Parry. Its back cover reads, “Renowned for his realistic depictions of American life in the first half of the twentieth century with such novels as *Main Street*, *Arrowsmith*, and *Babbitt*, Sinclair Lewis was also a prolific short story writer. It was with these tales that he first shocked both the reading public and the literary establishment with his scathing criticisms of the culture of materialism, the blind-sheep mentality of those who followed it, and class issues between the wealthy and the destitute.” Included in this collection are a number of short stories from his 1937 *Selected Short Stories* such as “The Willow Walk,” “A Letter from the Queen,” “Young Man Axelbrod,” “Speed,” and “Land,” as well as a self portrait from 1927 and an unpublished introduction to *Babbitt*.

In June the Minnesota Historical Society Press will be bringing out *The Minnesota Stories of Sinclair*

Lewis, edited by Sally E. Parry. Six of these stories have not been reprinted since they first appeared. This volume brings together four pieces that Lewis set in Gopher Prairie including the stories “A Rose for Little Eva” and “A Woman by Candlelight,” as well as “Main Street's Been Paved!” and “Main Street Goes to War,” a radio script

by Lewis that has never been published. The stories range from the very early “A Theory of Values” (1906) to “All Wives Are Angels” and “Nobody to Write About” (both 1943). Look for a display at the Sinclair Lewis Conference in Sauk Centre. ✍



“A Warrior of the Spirit” *continued from page 5*

eled to New York City to see his daughter off and to offer worldly advice she would never forget: “Since you are obliged to earn your own living,” he told her, “it will not always be possible for you to remain a lady. I pray you, Dorothy—please promise me that you will always remain a gentleman.”

FAVORED BY FORTUNE

Beginning then and there, aboard the *S.S. Finland*, Thompson’s career seemed favored by fortune and chance. During the twelve-day transatlantic voyage, she made friends with a group of Zionists—rabbis, writers, lawyers, and propagandists on their way to London for a conference on Palestine. Her many hours of shipboard conversations on “the Palestine Question” were reflected in the knowledgeable articles she wrote for the Jewish Correspondence Bureau, which offered her a job as a staff reporter. But by then she had scored her first scoop, which altered her prospects dramatically.

While trying to track down distant relatives in Ireland, Thompson seized an unexpected opportunity to interview the leaders of the Sinn Fein rebellion—among them Terence MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork, who was jailed for sedition by the British barely an hour after she had left his office. Her interviews were front-page copy in newspapers across the United States. As a result, she was able to convince the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* to hire her as a special correspondent in Vienna, an assignment that took her to her desired destination of Eastern Europe sooner than she could ever have foreseen.

She arrived in Vienna in time to witness the last pathetic gasp of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the once-mighty Hapsburg dynasty. In October 1918 an attempted coup by the deposed emperor, Karl, had failed, and he was held prisoner in a royal castle in Budapest. Dressed in the uniform of a Red Cross nurse, Thompson managed to pass through two military cordons to reach the castle, where the former emperor granted her an exclusive interview. She was the only journalist present as he renounced all claims to the throne and learned the conditions of his exile.

In 1925 Thompson became the *Ledger’s chef de bureau* in Berlin—the first of several assignments in the city regarded as the most important newspaper beat in the world. Becoming the first woman to head a major

news bureau was news in itself, but before long she had emerged as the standout among her peers for her penetrating coverage of the decline of the Weimar Republic. Mastery of the language, good connections, and a strong familiarity with German history and culture gave her a feel for German politics and the German psyche that few of her colleagues possessed.

Most of Thompson’s subjects were the larger-than-life figures whose actions were reshaping the political landscape of Europe—among them, Kemal Atatürk, the father of modern Turkey; Edvard Benes and Tomáš Masaryk, the founders of Czechoslovakia; Leon Trotsky, Stalin’s archrival and the leader of the world communist movement; and virtually all of the prime ministers and foreign ministers of Europe. Beyond politics, her circle of friends and acquaintances included artists and intellectuals who were shattering the conventions of the nineteenth century and forging a new consciousness. In Vienna she formed a fast friendship with Sigmund Freud.

Thompson interviewed Hitler in 1931, two years before he became chancellor. Her request for an interview was viewed by the Nazis as a sign that they had “arrived.” But far from advancing the soon-to-be Führer’s image, her story was a black eye for the Nazi Party. Her description of Nazism as “an irrational force,” her dismissal of Hitler as “a drummer boy risen too high,” and her condemnation of anti-Semitism earned her Hitler’s intense enmity. When she visited Berlin in August 1934, she was informed by the Gestapo that “for reasons of national self-respect” Germany was unable to offer her “further hospitality.” She was given 24 hours to leave the Reich. Thompson was not the first victim of Hitler’s rage and vindictiveness, but outside Germany, she was the best known. And for many, she came to personify the anti-Nazi cause.

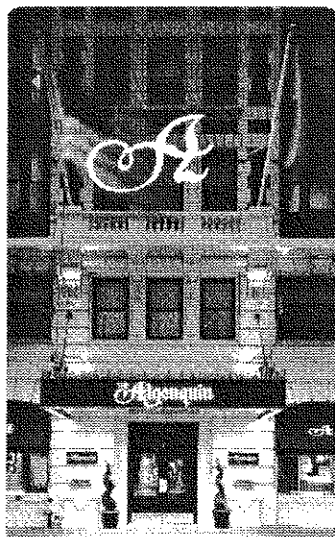
AN AMERICAN ORACLE

Waiting at the pier to greet Thompson when she returned to the United States the following month were her husband, Nobel laureate Sinclair Lewis, and a boisterous throng of reporters and photographers. For the first time since their marriage, in 1928, it was Thompson, not Lewis, who commanded the attention of the press. In a shipboard

“A Warrior of the Spirit” *continued on page 10*

THE ALGONQUIN: HOTEL FOR ARTISTS AND WRITERS

The Algonquin Hotel in New York City has a long history as a place for artists and writers. It opened on November 22, 1902, in one of New York's most fashionable areas, 59 W. 44th Street, near Broadway.



The room key for the Algonquin

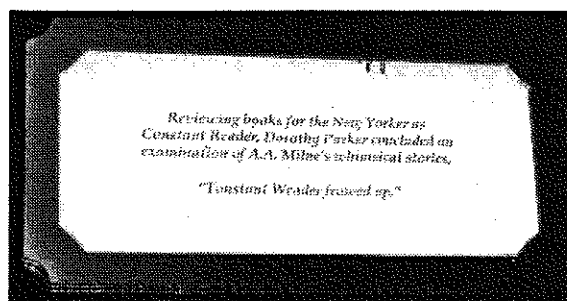
Nearby were two of the most famous restaurants of the time, Sherry's and Delmonico's, as well as the Yale Club, the Harvard Club, the Bar Association, the New York Yacht Club, and the Century Club. In the following decade, the Hippodrome, home to the Ziegfeld Follies, opened across the street.

Frank Case starting managing the Algonquin in 1907, and twenty years later became its owner. He

enjoyed the company of actors and writers and was instrumental in positioning the hotel at the center of New York's literary and theatrical life. Mr. Case attracted personalities like Booth Tarkington, Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., John Barrymore and H.L. Mencken, who called the Algonquin "the most comfortable hotel in America." The hotel also welcomed female guests from the beginning, among them Gertrude Stein, Marian Anderson, Simone de Beauvoir, Eudora Welty and Helen Hayes.

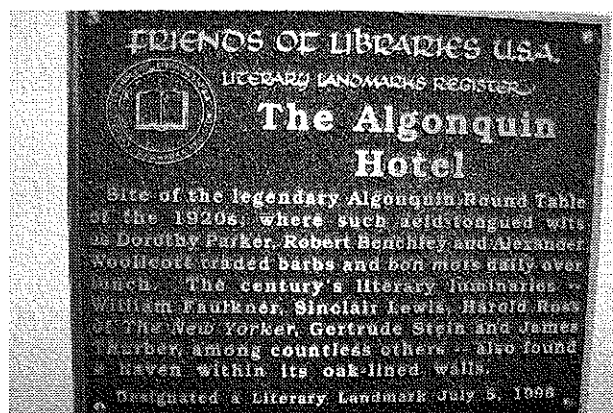
Three Nobel laureates visited the hotel on a regular basis including Sinclair Lewis who offered to buy the hotel. William Faulkner drafted his Nobel Prize acceptance speech here in 1950, and more recently Derek Walcott made the Algonquin his home while in New York.

The Algonquin Round Table set the standard for literary style and wit in its era. For one glorious decade beginning in 1919, the Round Table was the scene of scintillating daily lunch meetings by a group of literary legions, which included Dorothy Parker, George S. Kaufman and Robert Benchley.

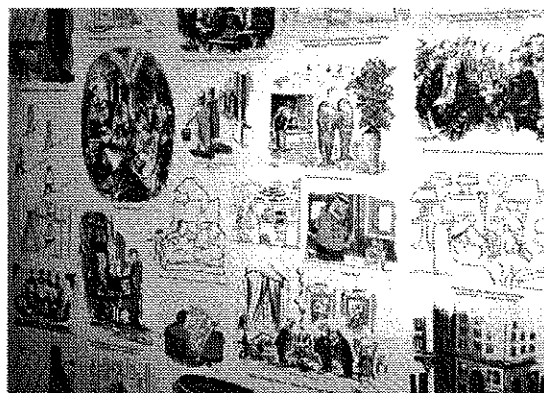


Quips from members of the Algonquin Round Table are on every door

Frank Case died in 1946, but more recent owners have preserved the character of the hotel, even to the extent of keeping a hotel cat that has the run of the place. Next time you're in New York with a little money to spend, check out the Algonquin for its atmosphere and comfort. [Much of the historical information is from the Algonquin's website, www.thealgonquin.net.]



Landmark plaque for the Algonquin



New Yorker cartoons adorn the wallpaper at the Algonquin

“A Warrior of the Spirit” *continued from page 8*

interview, she told the crowd hanging on her every word that the boiling kettle had exploded: “Germany has gone to war already and the rest of the world does not believe it.”

Americans, most certainly, did not believe it, nor were they particularly concerned. The vast majority was firmly committed to isolationism, whose highly influential supporters included the authentic American hero Charles Lindbergh, who professed an “aviator’s admiration” for the “efficiency” of the Nazi regime; the American ambassador to Britain, Joseph P. Kennedy, who believed that Hitler could not be stopped; and Father Charles Coughlin, the inflammatory radio priest, who shared Hitler’s anti-Semitic sentiments. Opposing the isolationists were the interventionists, a small minority by far, who believed that Hitler *must* be stopped before Europe was lost to fascism.

Within weeks of her return to the United States, Thompson set out on a thirty-city lecture tour, the first of three such tours that would take her into every corner of the country over the next eighteen months. She held audiences spellbound with the tale of her personal encounter with Hitler. She scorned the argument that Hitler was a reasonable man with whom we could “do business.” Nazism, she asserted, “is a repudiation of the whole past of Western Man...a complete break with Reason, with Humanism...” The future of American democracy, she argued, was irrevocably linked with the survival of democracy in Europe.

Thompson had a gift for communicating with men and women in all walks of life—an easy rapport that went back to her days as a suffragist. On the cover of *Time* magazine, her portrait was captioned, “She rides in the smoking car.” And it was true. As she moved by train from town to town, she chatted with fellow passengers, often well into the night, documenting her conversations in a diary. She could empathize with their fears, voice their concerns, and influence their thinking. As she began packing in two and three thousand people a night at her lectures, she moved beyond her accustomed circle of “women and gardenias” into major forums of public debate. In New York City she addressed the Foreign Policy Association and the American Society of Newspaper Editors.

In the course of her travels, which exposed her to virtually all segments of American society, Thompson

developed a keen, intuitive talent for gauging the state of American public opinion. And very soon, with the lecture tours behind her, her ability to *shape* opinion would become even more potent. In 1936 she accepted an offer from the *New York Herald Tribune* to produce a thrice-weekly syndicated column, “On the Record,” which ultimately reached as many as ten million readers around the world. In 1937 she began her weekly radio broadcasts for NBC, adding millions more to her audience. Until the end of World War II, she was never far from a microphone, which, in the view of her colleague Vincent Sheean, was “the instrument that did more than anything else to speed her rise as an American oracle, one of those very few people who have the corporate, general permission to tell people what to think.” Very soon, her judgment and counsel would become a highly-prized commodity to President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

A FRIEND OF BRITAIN

Thompson was lionized as few journalists before or since have been. In one week in 1937, she declined more than 700 requests for speaking engagements. In the same year, she received honorary degrees from six major colleges and universities. Her career was the model for the glamorous foreign correspondent and columnist played by Katharine Hepburn in the 1942 film *Woman of the Year*. Typically, she was identified as the second-most influential and admired woman in the United States, after First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Now, on the eve of World War II, she emerged as the most outspoken and influential advocate of interventionism.

But despite the best efforts of Thompson and interventionists, the movement of American opinion was glacial. As late as June 1940, with France defeated and Britain on the ropes, fewer than three percent of Americans favored intervention. In the same month, Thompson made a speech in Montreal that was broadcast directly to London, where her colleagues Edward R. Murrow, Eric Severeid, William L. Shirer, and others were reporting nightly on the Battle of Britain. “If democracy perishes in Britain,” she proclaimed, “it will not be because the British people did not fight Hitler with all they had; it will be because they were defeated in an unequal battle,

————— “A Warrior of the Spirit” *continued on page 12*

MEETING SINCLAIR LEWIS: FIRST ENCOUNTERS AND INITIAL IMPRESSIONS, PART II

Compiled by Dana Cook

Samuel Putnam, journalist

Ignored

...Conspicuously seated at the Dôme is a gaunt-looking chap with a shock of reddish hair. He is obviously expecting that he will be noticed....the visitor is none other than Sinclair, or "Red," Lewis. At the same time, through a seemingly tacit and simultaneous understanding, all those at the Dôme appear to be agreed that no notice whatsoever is to be taken of Mr. Lewis's presence.

It is the slap direct from the Joyce and Stein brigade to the literature that is being produced in their native land; it is their retort to *Main Street* and *Babbitt* and, as they see it, the stenographic, Pullman-smoker school of writing, which they do not consider writing at all. It would be hard to say how much, if any, of this Mr. Lewis gets; but, in any event, he very soon makes his exit, and as he does so his face is about the color of his hair. There is an unuttered snort as he stamps out, and a giggle, becoming a laugh, runs around the tables and spreads down the street to the Coupole and across the way to the Select. It is sufficient amusement for the next couple of hours, something to tell the latecomers about. (Paris, mid-1920s)

Source: Putnam, Samuel. *Paris Was Our Mistress: Memoirs of the Lost and Found Generation*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois P, 1947.

Joseph Wood Krutch, literary critic **"That woman!"**

...Frances Newman, a librarian from Atlanta, Georgia, who had come on to New York to enjoy the sudden celebrity which was hers just after publishing a novel, more or less naughty in the accepted manner of the Twen-

ties called *The Hard-Boiled Virgin*. Naturally she was the center of attention [at a literary soirée] and Lewis, unable to endure the fact, soon disappeared. When I happened a little later to go out into a hallway, I found him pacing back and forth in an agony. "That woman! That woman!" he was muttering to himself. Then, when he saw me: "Joe, if I was on a desert island with that woman for a year, she would be a whole lot less hard boiled at the end of it...." (1926)

Source: Krutch, Joseph Wood. *More Lives Than One*. New York: Sloane Associates, 1962.

Claude Cockburn, journalist

Makeshift belt

German friends begged me to take them to a party to meet this present Voice of America. Their earnest intention was to spend an hour or so happily cross-questioning Mr. Lewis on such matters as Americanism, Babbitry, and the Philosophy of Main Street. Lewis, however, was tired and turned up rather drunk. From beneath his jacket hung the ends of two towels clearly marked with the name of his hotel. He had them knotted round his waist to keep his trousers up. Some German at once thought this significant of something or other—the American revolt against convention, perhaps. But when he mentioned it to Lewis, the novelist looked at the knotted towels with an air of surprise as if he had only just noticed them and merely said he supposed his belt must have got broken or lost. (Vienna, 1927)

Source: Cockburn, Claud. *Cockburn Sums Up: An Autobiography*. London: Quartet, 1981.

Meeting Sinclair Lewis continued on page 13

Sinclair Lewis and Bret Easton Ellis continued from page 6

of commercialization that is the focal point of what they intended to satirize and denounce. Lewis's detail of accessories and standardized commodities and Ellis's itemization and brand obsession can actually be seen as an act of promotion or participation in the ideology of commerce.

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"A Warrior of the Spirit" *continued from page 10*

and because the world's greatest democracy and brother free nation allowed them to perish without adequate aid."

In the presidential race of 1940, in which Roosevelt ran for a third term against Republican Wendell Willkie, both candidates courted Thompson avidly. Long opposed to FDR's New Deal, she supported her friend Willkie until early October, when she saw that his campaign had become a rallying point for the isolationists. In a column scheduled for publication on October 14, she announced her support for FDR, claiming that "the Axis desires the defeat of President Roosevelt." But the ardently pro-Willkie *Tribune* refused to print the column, and when Thompson's contract expired five months later, it was not renewed. Instead, she signed with the liberal *New York Post*, which offered less prestige than the *Tribune*, but even broader syndication.

In July 1941 Thompson flew to England, on a tour to "reconnoiter." She had become so prominent as a "friend of Britain" that her daily schedule was published in the Court Circular of Buckingham Palace. She broadcast speeches over the BBC, addressed the House of Commons, and traveled to Chequers for a weekend luncheon with Churchill. When she asked him how, fighting alone, he expected to win the war, he replied: "That question has not yet crossed my mind. I am presently concerned only with how *not* to lose it. And we shall lose it, you know, unless you come in—and with all you have." Britain's prospects could not have been more desperate.

Returning to the United States, Thompson was galvanized into action, blurring any distinction that remained between her public and private selves. "This is my story," she wrote to a friend, "this is my song, and this is the only thing in the world that I care about in this moment." She committed herself to a series of lectures and appearances at Aid-to-Britain rallies in which she excoriated isolationism and "the scourge of 'Lindberghism.'" Even in mid-sized cities, her appearances attracted audiences as large as 10,000. Her friend and fellow writer Dorothy Canfield Fisher wrote: "Day by day, with a clang like that of a powerfully swung hammer, she beat upon [the] general confusion of mind till the will to defend democracy was forged."

With the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the U.S. declaration of war on the Axis powers, the great issue of the day was finally decided. Thompson was bitterly disappointed that the United States had been brought into the war for "the usual nationalistic reasons," and not

because it perceived the conflict as a struggle for freedom and democracy. But she had made a mighty contribution to the building of an interventionist consensus among the American people—and to the unity of will and purpose that were essential to victory. Six months before Pearl Harbor, Churchill sensed the palpable movement of American opinion, and in a tribute to Thompson he wrote, "She has shown what one valiant woman can do with the power of a pen. Freedom and humanity are her grateful debtors."

A WARRIOR OF THE SPIRIT

During the war Thompson was one of a handful of journalists who brought the plight of German Jews to public attention, and she fought for the relaxation of U.S. immigration restrictions—efforts for which she has been commended by the Simon Wiesenthal Center. In the spring of 1942 she took the lead in an anti-Nazi propaganda campaign commissioned by CBS president and chairman, William S. Paley, and she began broadcasting directly into Germany. And, even before the war ended, she had begun to address the unprecedented issues that victory would bring.

Peace and its consequences required a critical and difficult transition for the American people. New lessons had to be learned, and new emotional attitudes acquired. Thompson argued that the United States had to take the lead in dealing with unprecedented challenges—the rebuilding of Europe and Japan, the fate of millions of displaced persons, the building of international organizations, the containment of Stalinism, the threat of nuclear weapons, and more. She had the skill required to place complex and vexing issues such as these in a lucid context, enlightening her audience and raising their awareness of the urgent need for action. Doing so, she helped convince millions of Americans that the United States could return to its isolationist past only at its own peril.

In 1950 she traveled to the Middle East at the request of the U.S. Department of State, which had asked her, "unofficially," to investigate political developments in the Arab world. She was fascinated by the spectacle of the Middle East, visiting Cairo, Jidda, Damascus, Tehran, Baghdad, Beirut, Karachi, and Khartoum. "What I have tried to do," she wrote on her return, "has been to explain

—————"A Warrior of the Spirit" *continued on page 14*

LEWIS SCHOLARSHIP

Rob Hardy has published an essay, "Sinclair Lewis's Work of Art," in the "Revaluations" section of *New England Review* 25.3 (2004): 161-71. The essay is about gaps: gaps between what we read and what we understand, gaps between idea and execution, gaps between ideology and practice. He discusses, among other things, Lewis's indebtedness to Harold Frederic (*The Damnation of Theron Ware*) and Thoreau.

Jim Hutchisson's review-essay, "Sinclair Lewis: A Rebel Reclaimed," was published in *Review* (Virginia)

25 (2003): 45-59. This is an expanded version of the paper that he gave at the American Literature Association conference in May 2003.

Roger Forseth has written the introduction to Martin Bucco's new book, *Sinclair Lewis as Reader and Critic* (Mellen, 2004).

Frederick Betz has written the entry on *Elmer Gantry* for the *Facts on File Companion to the American Novel*. Sally E. Parry has written the entry on *Arrowsmith* for the same collection.

Meeting Sinclair Lewis *continued from page 11*

Vincent Sheean, journalist *Parodies of poets*

Sinclair Lewis was in Berlin, too, and his response to my obsession [the glories of the Soviet Union] was an incomparable one; I still laugh sometimes when I think of it. Dorothy Thompson, who became Mrs. Lewis soon afterwards, asked me to dinner one night with some assorted German countesses and her prospective husband. Lewis—"Red," we called him—was in fine form, and at his best he was one of the funniest people in the world. I had been particularly tiresome about Moscow that evening, for I was leaving the next day to see the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. I kept on telling everybody, including the surprised German countesses, that they ought to go to Moscow for the seventh of November, for the spectacle alone, if for nothing else.

Catching, for about the five hundredth time, the sound of my voice informing some hapless German lady that she had to go to Moscow, Red suddenly burst forth.

"Oh, you must come to Moscow for the seventh of November," he chanted, giving the sentence the obvious contour of a line by Vachel Lindsay. He went on without a pause, and in five minutes he had recited a whole poem by Vachel Lindsay—all about what was going to happen in Moscow on the momentous day (with a boom, boom, boom!) and how it was imperatively necessary for everybody to go there to see it. When we had recovered from this he went on and did the same

thing in three other styles: Longfellow, Swinburne, Tennyson. The rhymes and metres were perfect, the parodies so keen that even the Germans did not need to be told what they were....

Source: Sheean, Vincent. *Personal History*. New York: Garden City, 1937.

Salka Viertel, actor and playwright
Enormously likeable

...introduced...to Dorothy Thompson, the American columnist, who was about to marry Sinclair Lewis...[she] invited us to dinner....

...Sinclair Lewis, tall, gaunt, and in spite of his blotched face, enormously likeable, had no idea who we were. After each martini we smiled at each other.

"You will love America," Dorothy was saying, "it's such a wide, great country and the people are very hospitable, you will see." Sinclair Lewis got up abruptly and left the room. Dorothy went on talking about America and what an exciting time we would have because of the election year, which was a unique experience. Sinclair Lewis returned wearing a black wig and a thin black mustache plastered to his upper lip. He sat down and began to talk with a loud, nasal drawl. Dorothy laughed and explained that he was showing us a Southern gentleman and how they talked in Mississippi. He left again and came back with a short white

————— Meeting Sinclair Lewis *continued on page 16*

"A Warrior of the Spirit" continued from page 12

why the Arabs think and feel as they do.... I have written and said what I believe to be the limpid truth, and with malice toward none." But her efforts to articulate an even-handed position on the American role in the Middle East became a source of intense controversy, costing her the support of many friends, and the loyalty of many readers. "The test of the truth, in this question as in all others," she wrote, "will be made by the developments of history."

During the fifties, Thompson no longer commanded astronomical lecture fees and was to be found, more and more, as a guest speaker on college campuses. But this development reflected a broader trend—the decline of print journalism and the waning influence of the great journalists and commentators of her generation. One cause was television—"indescribable inanity," as she described it. As the new medium tightened its grip on the American mind, she believed, it would "kill the last shred of intellect in people." In the future, she predicted, American politics would function only on the most superficial level.

Thompson was tired, troubled, and disillusioned. The death of her third husband, Maxim Kopf, in July 1958, marked the end of a happy 15-year marriage and drained her, physically and emotionally. At the end of August she gave up her newspaper column, a labor of love for the past 22 years. She told a friend, "I want to digest the experiences of my life and write a personal biography not just of myself but of this extraordinary century.... It will take me probably the rest of my working life to finish—I am sure a minimum of two years. And it will either be very important or I shall not publish it at all." She died in 1961, while on a Christmas visit to her grandchildren in Lisbon, without having finished her final work.

NECROLOGIA

FALLECIMIENTOS

Dorothy Thompson

Faleceu ontem a escritora e jornalista norte-americana Dorothy Thompson, que há meses se encontrava em Lisboa com seus filhos e neta. Dorothy Thompson, que foi casada com o falecido escritor norte-americano Lincoln Steffens, nasceu em 1894 em Chicago, Illinois, e viveu em vários países, incluindo o Brasil, onde trabalhou para a imprensa e a literatura.

Dorothy Thompson

D. Maria Tereza Mourão

Faleceu a sr. D. Maria Tereza Mourão, de 85 anos, natural de Lamego, residente em Lisboa, faleceu ontem às 11 horas, de uma doença prolongada, na casa de sua filha, a sr. D. Maria Tereza Mourão, residente em Lisboa.

Milobrande Jorge Santos

Faleceu o senhor Milobrande Jorge Santos, de 77 anos, natural de Lisboa, residente em Lisboa, faleceu ontem às 11 horas, de uma doença prolongada, na casa de sua filha, a sr. D. Maria Tereza Mourão, residente em Lisboa.

Manuel Abel Barreira

Faleceu o sr. Manuel Abel Barreira, de 75 anos, natural de Lisboa, residente em Lisboa, faleceu ontem às 11 horas, de uma doença prolongada, na casa de sua filha, a sr. D. Maria Tereza Mourão, residente em Lisboa.

D. Declina de Jesus Gabriel

Faleceu na residência, travessa do Cristal, a sr. D. Declina de Jesus Gabriel, de 75 anos, natural de Lisboa, residente em Lisboa, faleceu ontem às 11 horas, de uma doença prolongada, na casa de sua filha, a sr. D. Maria Tereza Mourão, residente em Lisboa.

Francisco Rodrigues Teles

Faleceu o sr. Francisco Rodrigues Teles, de 75 anos, natural de Lisboa, residente em Lisboa, faleceu ontem às 11 horas, de uma doença prolongada, na casa de sua filha, a sr. D. Maria Tereza Mourão, residente em Lisboa.

D. Carolina Antunes Gonçalves

Faleceu a sr. D. Carolina Antunes Gonçalves, de 75 anos, natural de Lisboa, residente em Lisboa, faleceu ontem às 11 horas, de uma doença prolongada, na casa de sua filha, a sr. D. Maria Tereza Mourão, residente em Lisboa.

O sr. João de Sousa, de 72 anos, natural de Coimbra (Alentejo), residente em Lisboa, faleceu ontem às 11 horas, de uma doença prolongada, na casa de sua filha, a sr. D. Maria Tereza Mourão, residente em Lisboa.

O sr. João Sebastião Gonçalves, de 77 anos, natural de Coimbra (Alentejo), residente em Lisboa, faleceu ontem às 11 horas, de uma doença prolongada, na casa de sua filha, a sr. D. Maria Tereza Mourão, residente em Lisboa.

O sr. João de Sousa, de 72 anos, natural de Coimbra (Alentejo), residente em Lisboa, faleceu ontem às 11 horas, de uma doença prolongada, na casa de sua filha, a sr. D. Maria Tereza Mourão, residente em Lisboa.

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Dorothy Thompson's obituary in Portugal

Dorothy Thompson was an original, forged in that crucible of unyielding idealism, the woman suffrage movement. She played countless roles successively and simultaneously—journalist, opinion maker, champion of democracy, and voice of American interventionism. She was a warrior, never more exhilarated than when she confronted seemingly hopeless odds. And it was this role that she cherished most highly.

"What then should we be?" she asked, not long before her death. "That question each will answer for himself. But for myself and to myself I say: Though stripped of every armor, be a warrior—a warrior of the spirit, for what the spirit knows." ☞

FOR FURTHER READING

Two major, equally rewarding biographies of Thompson are *American Cassandra: The Life of Dorothy Thompson*, by Peter Kurth (Little, Brown and Company, 1990); and *Dorothy Thompson: A Legend in Her Time*, by Marion K. Sanders (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973).

Vincent Shean's *Dorothy and Red* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1963) is a dual biography of Thompson and Lewis by a colleague of Thompson's, who also met Lewis in Berlin. He and his wife remained their close friends during and after their marriage.

All three works draw heavily on the rich collection of correspondence, transcripts of columns and broadcasts, and unpublished autobiographical writings of Thompson included in the Dorothy Thompson Papers, in the Special Collections Research Center of Syracuse University Library.

For an insider's view of Thompson's influence on FDR, see Robert E. Sherwood's *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (Harper & Brothers, 1948). For an

For Further Reading continued on page 15

LOVE ON THE RUN: BALANCING MARRIAGE AND WORK

Thomas P. Raynor

In any account of Dorothy Thompson's private life, Sinclair Lewis occupies stage center. Their fourteen-year marriage, from 1928 till 1942, was an emotional roller coaster, plunging from euphoria to despair. More often than not, it was front-page copy that mirrored the turbulence of the times. In a jocular mood, Lewis once remarked, "If I ever divorce Dorothy, I'll name Adolf Hitler as correspondent."

The demands of Thompson's professional life were staggering. "I know that I have neglected my friends," she wrote to one of them; "I have neglected many things that matter to me very much. I really live beyond my means in the work I am doing." Yet, for much of her life, she found herself striving against all odds to balance her all-consuming professional life with complex emotional relationships.

Before Sinclair Lewis there was another husband, Joseph Bard; and after Lewis, there was a third, Maxim Kopf. In even the most casual analysis of her three marriages, two generalizations stand out: each began with a love-at-first-sight experience, and each took place despite her own misgivings or those of friends. Her impulsive, headstrong behavior in matters of the heart—so uncharacteristic in her professional life—is, in part, at least, a reflection of her highly ambivalent attitude toward marriage.

She wrote to a friend: "Sometimes I want love and protection—yes, *protection*; not of the practical kind, but the protection of love itself... [A]t other times, I know if I marry I'll never take risks again in the same way. I'll never start off across the world with nothing in my pocket and be

able to say, 'Well, it's my *own* life, isn't it?'" This was surely her frame of mind in the spring of 1921, when she met Joseph Bard, an occasional correspondent for Reuters, in the lobby of the Ritz Hotel in Budapest. He was the man she had been waiting for, she wrote, "the flame Aladdin struck from out his lamp."

Yet her budding career came first, and it was two years before Thompson married Bard, in Budapest, in 1923. Friends had told her of his reputation as a womanizer, but she was oblivious to them, explaining, "Delirious with love I was, delirious with youth and love together..." But soon the marriage became an elaborate ritual of mutual recriminations and reconciliations, conducted mostly by letter. Briefly, in early 1927, she underwent therapy with Theodore Reik, a student of Freud's. She recognized Bard as "a pathological Don Juan," but declared openly that she was reluctant to admit failure. Failure, in fact, was unknown to her. Finally, she filed for divorce in Berlin, in January 1927.

Six months later, at a tea given by the German foreign minister, she met Sinclair Lewis, the distinguished author of *Main Street*, *Babbitt*, and *Arrowsmith*. The two talked amicably and Lewis accepted Thompson's invitation to dinner on the following evening, understanding that the meeting would be grist for a story she intended to file. But the two met again on the day of their first meeting—at a dinner given in Lewis's honor by his German publisher. When offered the opportunity to address a few remarks to the guests, Lewis rose to his feet and said, "Dorothy, will you marry me?" Then he sat down, saying not another word.

Love on the Run continued on page 18

For Further Reading continued from page 14

insider's view of Thompson's importance to Churchill, his cabinet, and his general staff (as well as a concise summary of what she was telling them), see Harold Nicolson's *The War Years, 1939-1945* (Atheneum, 1967). For a fascinating account of the impact of Thompson's shortwave broadcasts to Germany in 1942, see William L. Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* (Simon and Schuster, 1960).

Two Web sites hold special interest: The Simon Wiesenthal Center site (<http://motlc.wiesenthal.com/pages/t077/t07766.html>), for its citation of Thompson's support as "one of the few journalists" who espoused refugee causes during World War II, and the Freedom Forum's Newseum (<http://www.newseum.org/>), for its ranking of Thompson's coverage of the rise of Hitler among the century's 100 top stories. ✍

Meeting Sinclair Lewis *continued from page 13*

beard, transformed into a Yankee from Maine or Massachusetts, I don't remember which and would not have known the difference anyway. He changed twice more, appearing with red whiskers and then with a nice soft, droopy, blond mustache—while his food got cold. (Berlin, 1928)

Source: Viertel, Salka. *The Kindness of Strangers*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969.

Morley Callaghan, novelist

Clowning away loneliness

...Lewis had a house in the Village. My wife and I were apprehensive as we knocked on the door. Lewis...had just written *Dodsworth* and was at the height of his fame...

...Lewis...looked almost frighteningly like a picture I had seen of him. A gaunt thin sandy man, with staring protuberant blue eyes, many freckles on his flushed face; the forehead broad, the face tapering sharply—skin over a skull. This strange excited wild face lit up as he came to me with his arms out. "Well, well, well," he cried, pushing me back a little. "Let me get a good look at you." And then, laughingly, he looked at my wife. "You're charming," he said to her. "Just right for him." He sent the grinning Lou [his secretary] scurrying for drinks. All the time we were there Lou kept on grinning. "Do you know, Morley," Lewis said earnestly, "Flaubert would have loved your work. Yes, old Flaubert."

...I remember I wondered with some pain, since I liked and admired him, why he used all this frantic energy in cultivating unreality? Why was he so bent on protecting himself that people might have no chance of judging his worth as a human being? I think he was really a shy man being afraid of his own shyness, his own natural warmth and generosity; he clowned his way out of his loneliness. (New York, 1929)

Source: Callaghan, Morley. *That Summer in Paris*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1963.

Laura Z. Hobson, novelist

Reeling off imaginary dialogue

...He was in young middle age then, just forty-five, and had been married for a couple of years to the famous foreign correspondent, Dorothy Thompson, his second wife.

...we were invited up for a weekend at their summer place, Twin Farms, in Barnard, Vermont, a huge spread

of hills and valleys...I was a little nervous about meeting the brilliant political expert, Dorothy Thompson, and really intimidated as to the world-famous Sinclair Lewis.

He was on the hard-liquor wagon then, drinking only wine, though he drank a great deal of that, certainly a couple of bottles a day, at luncheon, dinner and much of the rest of the time as well. "Red" Lewis was a great talker, but so was Dorothy, and sometimes, even as early as that in their marriage, a rivalry would show openly about who was to have the floor. At times I, the youngest one there, would feel discomfort and even acute embarrassment.

.....

Red...talked mainly of people, either real people or the characters in books, of publishers and agents, of movie stars and matinee idols, of pretentious characters in American public life. He was a wonderful mimic who could reel off yards of imaginary dialogue as if he were reading aloud from one of his manuscripts: he had an uncanny ability to improvise plots on the spot, for stories, plays, novels, as if he were snatching them out live from behind a magician's chiffon handkerchief, ears wiggling or wings fluttering. (1930)

Source: Hobson, Laura Z. *Laura Z.: A Life*. New York: Arbor House, 1983.

Brendan Gill, journalist and film critic

Advice for writers

By the time I was elected editor of the *Lit* [at Yale University], late in junior year, we were making plans for a grand centennial issue. It happened that a very well-known group of men had been members of the board of the *Lit*, including Sinclair Lewis... At the time, Sinclair Lewis was by far the most important of them....

Lewis was also, I soon discovered, the most restless and elusive of men. He was a great roaring and raging and boring drunk, with a vile temper, a generous disposition, immense energy, and a notable—and often tiresome—gift for mimicry....

Lewis wrote an essay for the *Lit*, which he rightly described as "rambling." Its burden was that writers were not going to be able to make much money out of books in future, thanks to the powerful competition of movies and radio, and that all beginning writers would do well to choose a second skill to fall back on—one that ideally

Meeting Sinclair Lewis *continued on page 17*

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR STEINBECK AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES CONFERENCE

The *New Steinbeck Society of America* and the Editorial Board of *The Steinbeck Review* present Steinbeck and His Contemporaries, March 22-25, 2006, Sun Valley Resort, Sun Valley, Idaho 83353.

This first conference of The *New Steinbeck Society of America* (NSSA) invites Steinbeck critics, members of other author societies, and American and world literature scholars in general to offer a critical view on John Steinbeck in relation to any of his contemporaries—Hemingway, Faulkner, Fitzgerald, Cather, Anderson, Wright, Dos Passos, Miller, Stegner, Hurston, Bellow, Pound, Hughes, O'Connor, Lewis, London, and others. Comparative studies are also invited on select authors who have had a direct literary influence on Steinbeck—Mallory, Shakespeare, Twain—as well as on contemporary writers who share common thematic and stylistic elements—Ray Carver, Barry Lopez, Charles Johnson, Terry Tempest Williams, and others. The conference's aim is for a better appreciation of all authors as well as of Steinbeck's particular standing among his literary peers today, with a range of comparative perspectives—aes-

thetic, philosophical, biographical, etc.—invited.

Conference highlights include the following:

*Keynote address on Steinbeck and Richard Wright by Charles Johnson, 1990 National Book Award Winner for *Middle Passage*, with a book signing to follow the banquet.

*Addresses by John Ditsky, President of the NSSA, and Stephen Tanner, Ralph A. Britsch Humanities Professor of English at Brigham Young University.

*Saturday tours of Ernest Hemingway and Ezra Pound landmarks and historical sites.

*Art galleries, entertainment, dining, and skiing at the nation's premier vacation resort.

Please send a letter of intent, one-page abstract (in triplicate), and vita by September 1, 2005 to:

Dr. Stephen K. George
English Department
Brigham Young University-Idaho
Rexburg, ID 83460-0820
Fax: (208) 496-1944
Please direct inquiries to GeorgeS@byui.edu.

Meeting Sinclair Lewis *continued from page 16*

would have no connection with writing or with teaching literature. He suggested that it would be sensible on the part of a serious writer to learn how to run a gas station.... (New Haven, CT, early 1930s)

Source: Gill, Brendan. *Here at the New Yorker*. New York: Random House, 1975.

William L. Shirer, journalist and historian *Loneliness*

I remember him the year he spent with Dorothy [Thompson] in Vienna...1932 it must have been. Already one felt his loneliness. For months at a time, as I recall, he holed up in a villa on the Semmering. It was winter, the snow deep, and he rarely went out.

I remember spending a day with him there. He was drinking heavily...(from depression over the imminent breakup of his marriage to Dorothy, who was away most

of the time in their apartment in Vienna) and he seemed at loose ends. To pass away his time, he said, he had bought the entire set of English novels published by Tauchnitz [which printed paperback English-language books sold on the Continent] and was already well through them.

He talked too that day of his great ambition, which unhappily never came to fruition: to write a novel which would be sort of a history of the U.S.A. and of the American people from the first days...He was the one writer who could have done a masterpiece on this subject—even if his style, his photographic approach, was temporarily outdated in American writing.

Source: Shirer, William L. *A Native's Return 1945-1988: A Memoir of a Life and the Times*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1990. ⚡

Love on the Run *continued from page 15*

"Mr. Lewis, I don't even know you," Thompson replied at the end of that eventful summer's day.

Three days later, Thompson wrote to her ex-husband, Joseph Bard: "The divorce came on my birthday: a strange gift—and on the same day a man came into my life, who seems, and quite inevitably, about to be the chief factor in my destiny for a while to come. For how long I do not know. He is a very curious and demonic person, hard-drinking, blasphemous, possessed, I often think, of a devil.... he is getting a divorce and wants to marry me, but I am very doubtful. But it is opening new vistas in my life, and giving it new significance...." To a friend she wrote, "My instantaneous reaction was, God what a lonely, unhappy, helpless man! Somebody *must* love and take care of him! And, of course, I was fascinated."

One week after their first meeting, Thompson accepted Lewis's proposal during a flight from Berlin to Vienna. Later, she wrote, "Altogether there is a wind in this love, which pleases me, a ripple of mocking laughter, a thumbing of the nose at the world." Despite the warning of a close mutual friend that Lewis was a full-blown alcoholic whose table-smashing benders were known in literary circles across the United States and Europe, Thompson proceeded with arrangements for the wedding, which took place in London, in May 1928.

The event was headlined around the world, in stories in which Thompson became "Mrs. Lewis." They returned to the United States in August, determined to find privacy in the New England countryside, near Woodstock, Vermont, where they bought a country estate that included two houses. There, at "Twin Farms," as they called it, they experienced a degree of happiness and productivity. For Thompson, it was the base for freelance assignments; for Lewis it provided the tranquillity he needed to complete *Dodsworth*, which he dedicated to her.

In 1930, when he became the first American to win the Nobel Prize for literature, Lewis wrote in an autobiography requested by the Nobel Foundation: "Nowadays, at forty-six, with my first authentic home—a farm in the pastoral state of Vermont—and a baby, born in June 1930, I am settled down to what I hope to be the beginning of a novelist's career. I hope the awkward apprenticeship with all its errors is nearly done."

But their marriage became a nightmare concocted of Lewis's alcoholic binges, Thompson's prolonged absences, the decline of his reputation, and the eclipse of his celeb-

rity by hers. "He had a horror of being known as 'Mr. Dorothy Thompson,'" their mutual friend Vincent Sheean explained, "and in one way or another, this phobia was made known to all of his friends." At the very beginning of their relationship, Thompson, who never pretended to be blameless, had recognized alcohol as Lewis's "demon." Now she wrote of his "illness...rooted in psychic complications too deeply embedded ever to be eradicated." Their marriage ended in divorce in 1942.

She never expected to fall in love again and told a friend she had said to herself many times, "*Wie schön ist ein Leben ohne Liebe*"—"How lovely is a life without love." "But it was so untrue," she wrote to the "beautiful stranger" who drifted into Twin Farms and her life in 1942—never to leave until his death. Maxim Kopf, the artist and sculptor who was to become her third husband, was a friend of Dorothy's primary research assistant. He had fled his native Czechoslovakia for unoccupied France, only to be held in a concentration camp for a year as a Free French sympathizer. He made his way to New York City, where he achieved recognition for his talents as a painter and sculptor. And it was as an artist that he had arrived at Twin Farms, commissioned to paint Thompson's portrait.

Some of Thompson's acquaintances regarded Kopf as a gigolo, but no one who really knew him thought so. Not since she first saw Joseph Bard in Budapest had she been so smitten with a man. "It is true that he reminds me of my first love," she wrote. "Perhaps there is some nostalgia in it.... but isn't one always looking again for that first love, with all its purity, isn't one always hoping for another chance for that first love?" Their wedding took place in June 1943, in Barnard, Vermont. Her friend and fellow journalist, Rebecca West, wrote that Thompson had "prepared for love by marshaling abstract nouns," but with Maxim Kopf, she was "totally real," and "rooted to the ground..."

Thompson and Kopf's fifteen years together brought serenity that she had never known. She admitted to "a silly sort of feeling...as though this were all a reward for something not really deserved, and not to be taken for granted." She felt an "emotional dependence" on Kopf, and told her friends that it was the greatest relief she had ever known. Her marriage to "the man I should have married in the first place" ended with Kopf's death in 1958. ✍

SINCLAIR LEWIS NOTES

From the Letters to the Editor, Nov. 9, 2004 *New York Times*:

To the Editor:

David Brooks seems to believe that the regional divide between the most urban and the most rural-suburban states on the electoral map has been overstated, and that a larger issue was safety from terrorism. If that is true, then why did the people in the nation's largest cities and Washington, who live daily with the very real threat of terrorism, vote overwhelmingly for John Kerry, while people in the most remote areas, least likely to be attacked, vote overwhelmingly for George W. Bush?

The electoral evidence clearly indicates that there is a major, meaningful urban-rural divide in this country. We must face this fact squarely to understand it and to forge a road to national unity. I, for one, shall begin by reading the novels of Sinclair Lewis.

Larry Deblinger

Nyack, NY, Nov. 6, 2004

SLSN

A reference connecting *The Plot against America* to Lewis is in Alan Cheuse's review in the *Chicago Tribune* (Oct. 3, 2004:14:1, 4). "An excursion into alternative history, it is in conception as daring as any of the best of such creations: *Greener Than You Think*, Ward Moore's depiction of an America after a Confederate victory in the Civil War; Sinclair Lewis's *It Can't Happen Here*; and Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*, which gives us America under Axis rule after Hitler wins World War II.

SLSN

In a *New York Times* review of Kitty Kelley's *The Family: The Real Story of the Bush Dynasty*, written by Ted Widmer, he notes that the paterfamilias of the Bush family, Prescott Bush, "owned a company in Columbus, Ohio, called Buckeye Steel Castings, a name Sinclair Lewis would have savored" (*New York Times Book Review* Oct. 1, 2004: 38).

SLSN

The *Funny Times* (Nov. 2004) reprinted Garrison Keillor's "Don't Think You're Special," from *Homegrown Democrat* (Viking, 2004). He recalls what made him think Minnesotans were special. "I attended the University of Minnesota and remember how the marching band came blazing down University Avenue, flags snapping in the wind, ...and when they stood and sang *firm and strong, united are we*, you could feel that union in your shoes as thousands of gold balloons rose in the October air and you felt blessed to be one of this hardy northern tribe, honest and true, camped along the Mississippi River and the world's largest freshwater lake, the state that produced Fitzgerald and the Mayo Clinic and Lindbergh, and Sinclair Lewis and Hubert Humphrey." He later notes that he recites the 87 counties of Minnesota in order to fall asleep at night, quite the opposite of Judge Cass Timberlane who did that in order to stay awake!

SLSN

John Logan, the screenwriter for *The Aviator*, the Oscar-nominated movie about Howard Hughes, collects first editions by a number of American authors, including Thomas Wolfe and Sinclair Lewis, named as two of his favorites. In the article, "John Logan's Epic Journey to Hollywood," by Sid Smith, in the Dec. 12, 2004 issue of the *Chicago Tribune* (1, 16), Smith notes that Logan is both well read and connected to theater as well as film. Logan gained success with his play *Never the Sinner* (1985) about the Leopold and Loeb murder trial. He has since gone on to contribute to such films as *Any Given Sunday*, *Gladiator*, *The Last Samurai*, and *The Time Machine*.

SLSN

Another mention of Lewis is in a review of Marilynne Robinson's new novel *Gilead* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004). In "Final Accounting" by Art Winslow (*Chicago Tribune* Nov. 28, 2004: 14: 1, 4) he discusses the "confounding figure" of the preacher in American literature.

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“Consider Rev. Arthur Dimmesdale in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*, or Sinclair Lewis’s charlatan in *Elmer Gantry*, or Flannery O’Connor’s Hazel Motes of *Wise Blood*, who founded his own bizarre church and ‘saw Jesus move from tree to tree in the back of his mind, a wild ragged figure motioning him to turn around and come off into the dark where he was not sure of his footing.’”

— SLSN —

MGM released the DVD of *Arrowsmith* on March 8, 2005. *Classic Images*, a journal for classic film buffs, described the film in their January 2005 issue: “Ronald Colman as a dedicated doctor who moves his practice to the West Indies” (27).

— SLSN —

A silent film version of Lewis’s *Mantrap* was released in 1926 and starred Clara Bow, Ernest Torrence, Percy Marmont, and Eugene Palette. Bow considered it one of her three favorite films, according to Raymond

Valinoti, Jr. in “Clara Bow’s Last Hurrah: The Fox Talkies” (*Films of the Golden Age Summer 2003*: 32-36). A reviewer on *imdb.com* notes: “What a delightful film—at its best when it’s comedy, a little weaker in the dramatic bits. Clara Bow is amazing—funny, sexy, completely liberated—she is a free spirit, having sex with whoever she wants to. Her two choices are a little dull though—country bumpkin Ernest Torrence or city lawyer Percy Marmont—both a little old for her, but hell, Hollywood has always put beautiful young women with stodgy older men (studio executive fantasy perhaps?).”

“It’s a well directed film—Victor Fleming went on to direct *Gone with the Wind* and *The Wizard of Oz*, and photographed mostly on location by James Wong Howe—so it looks great. But it’s Clara that holds it all together—and what an ending! Incidentally she isn’t the mantrap—it’s the name of the town in Canada where most of the action takes place.”

The other two films Valinoti mentions are “*It*,” based on the popular novel by Elinor Glyn, and *Call Her Savage*, an early talkie in which Bow discovers that her father was an Native American and decides that this means she can marry one herself.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the new members of the Sinclair Lewis Society since the fall 2004 newsletter.

Sherry Bush, Ph.D.
Bronxville, New York

Lawrence Clayton, Ph.D.
Piedmont, Oklahoma

Laura Elizabeth Klein
Wichita, Kansas

Quentin Martin
Greenwood Village, Colorado

Jens Stephen Schellhammer
Ithaca, New York

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separry/sinclairlewis](http://www.english.ilstu.edu/separry/sinclairlewis)



LEWIS AND THE WEB

There have been over 32,000 visits to the new Sinclair Lewis Society website in only two years. It certainly shows that there is a significant amount of interest in Lewis, some of it sparked by Philip Roth's new novel, *The Plot against America*. More of the e-mails connected with the website lately have had some kind of political question attached. Hope you enjoy this issue's questions.

SLSN

I just read *It Can't Happen Here*, and wondered why, in our current political climate, this book hasn't been mentioned by anybody yet. It seems to me that especially liberals could use this book as a stark warning of the consequences of letting oneself believe that the president is one's "friend," even if he does everything to prove the opposite. I was astonished how relevant and still true this novel from the 30s is for the U.S. of today! What insight into the gullible, unreflective minds of so many Americans!

SLSN

Just thought you might enjoy some feedback. I am a native of Champaign, IL, but these days I am a congregational rabbi in Livingston, NJ. Lewis has been my favorite author since I was a teenager, and I have had fun incorporating him into my book club at our synagogue. We read *It Can't Happen Here* before Roth's *The Plot against America* and are now going to read *Kingsblood Royal*, having read *The Human Stain* not long ago. I continue to find Lewis thought-provoking, significant, and fun to read, as rare a combination now as it was when he was writing. I am glad someone is out there promoting his work.

In my all too distant retirement one of my aims is to write a scholarly paper on "Sinclair Lewis and the Jews." I once catalogued just about every reference to things Jewish in his works and was left with the clear impression that he was very positively disposed. In fact,

the only Jews he seems to be critical of are those who hide or try to flee their Jewishness. I think it would be interesting to explore these characterizations against the backdrop of some of his ongoing, broader themes. But this effort will have to wait a few years. [Ed.: I recommended Barry Gross's wonderful essay, "'Yours Sincerely, Sinclair Levy': Lewis and the Jews."]

He responded: Thanks for writing. Our book group discussion about Roth agrees with you 100%. A great, great book with a terrible ending, especially compared with *Happen*. I wonder if Roth let the book fizzle out because he wanted the emphasis on the beginning, i.e. how it happened. A weak explanation, I know, but the best we could come up with.

Yesterday, in preparation for a discussion tomorrow night, I read *Kingsblood Royal* in one sitting. I was quite taken with the book in many ways, and its ideas and presentation of same are marvelous. At the same time, and you're the pro here, I could not help but think that, as a piece of literature, it has many flaws. About a year ago I read *Bethel Merriday* and had some of the same thoughts: fun prose to read, excellent and stimulating ideas, compelling to read...but many characters who just don't seem to come to life.

Needless to say, with regard to *KR*, many of the issues he raises are frighteningly current. We live in the fringes of Newark, and many if not most of our members are part of the Newark Diaspora so that makes these issues especially timely.

SLSN

Can you tell me about Mr. Lewis's Welsh roots? I understand that he comes by his Welsh surname honestly, but I have no details.

Great Plains Welsh Heritage Project [Ed.: I know that Mr. Lewis was Welsh, but his family emigrated probably in the early 1800s. His great-grandfather, Lemuel Lewis, was born in Binghamton, New York. According to an autobiographical account Lewis put together in 1932 (and not in print) Lewis's ancestors were Welsh

miners and Yorkshiremen about six-seven generations back. This is from the 1961 biography of Lewis by Mark Schorer. Supposedly Dr. Lewis, Sinclair's father, didn't want to talk about his ancestors before his father and told his son some day he'd tell him why, but I can't find any evidence he ever did.]

SLSN

I am teaching a Midwestern Literature class this spring semester and one of the novels we will be studying is *Main Street*. I have been searching and searching for some type of ancillary source (video or DVD) which I could show to the students during the course of the study. A documentary would be good. Even a documentary which might give them an idea of small town life at that moment in history, or at that place in our nation would be helpful as well. I have just about exhausted my possibilities and wondered if you might have a suggestion. It is, of course, not a necessity that I find such a resource. But I have found that younger students seem to almost "need" some type of "techno help" in addition to reading the words on the printed page. If you have any suggestions I would be so happy to hear about them! Thanks for your time.

SLSN

I came across some excerpts about my grandfather in the book by George Killough entitled *Minnesota Diary*. I am wondering if there are any other notes by Sinclair Lewis that may talk about his visit with my grandfather. How or where might I find this information if it exists? My grandfather's name was Rudolph Illgen. He was a resort owner on the North Shore near Silver Bay. I would greatly appreciate any information you could give me. [Ed.: I recommended that she contact George Killough.]

SLSN

I was just wondering if you could direct me to somewhere to find out about a couple of 14 cent Sinclair Lewis stamps I have. I was interested in finding out their print date, why he got a stamp with him on it, and a value for the stamp if there is one. [Ed.: The Sinclair

Lewis stamp was issued on February 1985 to celebrate the centennial of Sinclair Lewis's birth. The reason he has a stamp was that he was the first American to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. The stamp is really only worth about face value.]

SLSN

We are trying to remember in which book did Sinclair Lewis write "oil rules the world"? Can you help us? [Ed.: It was probably Upton Sinclair's *Oil!*]

I am currently a student at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, Tennessee, majoring in the study of history. I am writing you today to request assistance in some research I am undertaking regarding the Federal Theatre Project's dramatic version of Sinclair Lewis's novel *It Can't Happen Here*. I have already visited your website's "Scholarly Works" page, but specifically I am having trouble locating critical reviews of the FTP's drama, performed by twenty-four groups from October 27, 1936 onward. My paper is meant to include such reviews and other information demonstrating how well the play mirrored the time period in which it was written. Any and all assistance you could render would be greatly appreciated. In the meantime, I will continue my search for information.

SLSN

I got the tail end of (I think) an NPR report. It mentioned that Lewis had written a novel that had some civil rights issues in it. Eeeeeegods, that's all I recall. Can you be of help? [*Kingsblood Royal* of course.]

SLSN

I have a letter written and signed by a Sinclair Lewis from Twin Farms, Barnard, VT on June 20, 1933. I am wondering if this is the author or someone else. Would you have any information about where he was at that time? Could you copy his signature and send it to me for comparison with this letter?

[Ed.: I wrote back with a website which showed

Lewis's signature. This is her response.] Indeed this letter is from Sinclair Lewis. I attached it for you to see as I think it is so amusing and typical of him.

My grandfather, John Willy, was the editor and publisher of *The Hotel Monthly*, a magazine devoted to the hotel industry. Felix Willy was his brother who was in charge of orders and handling books published by The Hotel Monthly Press. They both came to the United States from Ilminster, Somerset, England. [The letter reads in part, "I don't know why you should complain about receiving my check without a signature. I know a most intelligent young man who by using this interesting new method has gotten along without work for a number of years. However since you are so prejudiced to want autographs on your checks I am returning it with said autograph."]

SLSN

Ma'am I was channel checking this weekend, and the guy mentioned as intro to a film that the great Lewis was best of friends with soul brother Walter White of NAACP!! It was astounding that you never hear of interracial friendships (Paul Lawrence Dunbar and the Wright brothers, Lena Horne and one of Hepburn's sisters were in a leather store business together!! Honest Abe would say "my good friend Frederick Douglass"... We need more authors like Lewis... Baldwin, Puzo, Ayn Rand, Chester Himes...yes yes yes.

SLSN

I'm working on a book about the Presidents and am interested in any of Sinclair Lewis's opinions of Harding. Can you direct me? [Ed.: I can't find any reference to Harding in any of the major biographies of Lewis. Lewis did write *The Man Who Knew Coolidge* about a man who spends his time on the train going to and from Washington and what he'll tell his "friend" Coolidge when he sees him (he never does). This is Lewis's major reference to presidents in the 1920s.]

SLSN

I have a boat that I'm restoring (for myself) that once belonged to Gene McDonald, the Chairman of the

Zenith Radio Corp. in Chicago. He named the boat "Endion." He also had a large yacht which he named "Mizpah" in 1929 (he had a subsequent, smaller cruiser he named "Mizpah" in 1942).

I am looking for clues as to the reason he named the boat I have "Endion" (it was built in 1950), and I've noted the "Mizpah Seminary" and "Zenith" in *Elmer Gantry*. The repeated names "Zenith" and "Mizpah" got my attention. Do you know of any connection between these two men? Or did Sinclair Lewis use the name "Endion" anywhere else in his writing?

I appreciate any time you might have to help me with some clues. The boat I have was a custom-built runabout and is almost completely derelict. I will be spending the next few years restoring it in my spare time, and I'm enjoying the search for its history.

SLSN

I'll end with this e-mail joke that reminded me of Lewis's research for *Elmer Gantry*.

GOD IS BUSY

A college professor, an avowed Atheist, was teaching his class. He shocked several of his students when he flatly stated he was going to prove there was no God. Addressing the ceiling he shouted: "God, if you are real, then I want you to knock me off this platform. I'll give you 15 minutes!"

The lecture room fell silent. You could have heard a pin fall. Ten minutes went by. Again he taunted God, saying, "Here I am, God. I'm still waiting." His countdown got down to the last couple of minutes when a Marine just released from active duty and newly registered in the class walked up to the professor, hit him full force in the face, and sent him tumbling from his lofty platform. The professor was out cold! At first, the students were shocked and babbled in confusion. The young Marine took a seat in the front row and sat silent. The class fell silent...waiting.

Eventually, the professor came to, shaken. He looked at the young Marine in the front row. When the professor regained his senses and could speak he asked: "What's the matter with you? Why did you do that?"

"God was busy. He sent me."

INTERESTING LEWIS WEBSITES

A sizeable number of texts, including *Main Street* and *Babbitt*, can be accessed from this site on American literary classics: <http://www.americanliterature.com/MAIN.HTML>

Some of the novels include *McTeague*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *O Pioneers!*, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, *Walden*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Turn of the Screw*, and *Winesburg, Ohio*.

————— SLSN —————

Ralph Goldstein has sent a link to a site created by two of his high school juniors, Nathan Pulver and Kevin Grant. It shows some of the books that George Babbitt's daughter Verona has in her room. This site helps to illustrate how Lewis often defined his characters in terms of their literary taste.

www.veronasbooks.revlup.net

————— SLSN —————

The National Council of Teachers of English has a site which evaluates author websites, including Sinclair

Lewis. Of the Sinclair Lewis Society's website they note:

Site Ratings

1 = Poor 2 = Fair 3 = Good 4 = Excellent

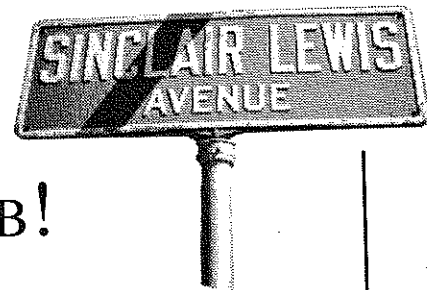
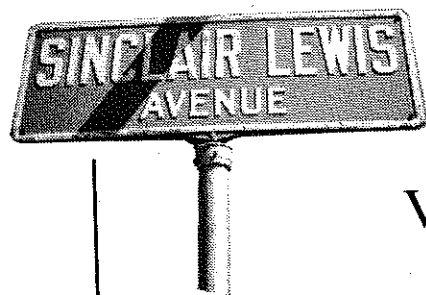
The Sinclair Lewis Homepage

<http://www.ilstu.edu/~separry/lewis.html>

This well-organized source of information on Sinclair Lewis has much to recommend it. The home page invites readers to browse through twelve categories, including a biography, a time line, a list of works by Lewis, an extensive bibliography and a list of films made from his works. The biography is "brief, but excellent" and provides access to Lewis's Nobel Prize acceptance speech and the autobiography he wrote for the Nobel Foundation. The time line features a photo and biography of his first wife, his refusal letter for the Pulitzer Prize, and classification information on some of his novels. Other links lead to summaries and excerpts from Lewis's more popular books. "A wonderful resource."

Overall Rating: 4

Go to http://www.ncteamericancollection.org/awg_lewis_sinclair.htm to see an evaluation of more Lewis sites.



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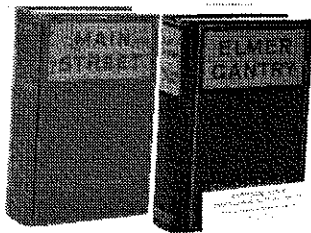
—Collector's Corner features catalog listings from book dealers as a sampling of what publications by Lewis are selling for currently. [Thanks to Jacqueline Koenig for her contribution to this section.]

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CATALOG 112



63. Lewis, Sinclair. *Main Street: The Story of Carol Kennicott*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920. \$2500.

First edition. An unusually fine and bright copy, lacking the rare dustwrapper. Basis

for a 1923 film directed by Harry Beaumont and featuring Florence Vidor and Monte Blue. Remade as the 1936 Archie Mayo-directed film *I Married a Doctor*, which not surprisingly invented a happy ending for Dr. and Mrs. Kennicott (played by Pat O'Brien and Josephine Hutchinson). An exceptionally bright copy, at a small fraction of the cost of a jacketed copy.

64. —. *Elmer Gantry*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927. \$850.

First edition, first issue with "Gantry" spelled "Cantry" on the spine. An exceptionally fine and bright copy, lacking the dustwrapper. Advance Review Copy with slip laid in. A notable novel about a corrupt evangelist, memorably filmed in 1960 with Burt Lancaster and Shirley Jones, who both won Oscars, as did the screenplay of director Richard Brooks.

65. —. *Arrowsmith*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, nd-1931. \$75.

Photoplay edition. Bookplate and owner name, a trifle worn, else about fine in an attractive, about very

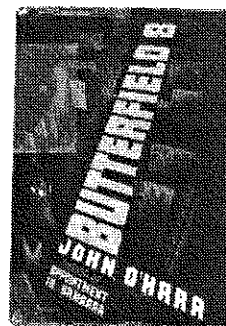


good dustwrapper with some erosion to the paper along the bottom of the front flap fold, and a couple of other very small nicks and tears. A Pulitzer Prize-winning novel illustrated with photos and jacket art from the 1931 John Ford film, scripted by Sidney Howard and featuring Ronald Colman and Helen Hayes. The film was a hit with critics, audiences, and even Lewis himself, who pronounced it a fine interpretation of his novel.

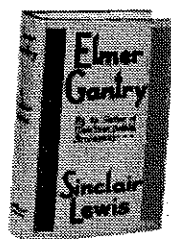
113TH CATALOG-A-THON

191. O'Hara, John. *Butterfield 8*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1935. \$2500.

First edition. Fine in an attractive, lightly worn, very good plus dustwrapper with tiny nicks at the extremities, and a little modest rubbing. The author's third book and second novel, and by all accounts one of his best. O'Hara's laconic journalistic style was particularly effective in illuminating the life of the middle-class American, a mantle he seems to have inherited from Sinclair Lewis. Filmed in 1960 with Oscar-winner Elizabeth Taylor, Laurence Harvey, Eddie Fisher and Dina Merrill. A nice copy of one of the author's best known novels.



330. Lewis, Sinclair. *Elmer Gantry*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927. \$5750.



First edition, first issue with "Gantry" spelled "Cantry" on the spine. Fine in very near fine dustwrapper with slight edgewear along the top edge of the front panel. A lovely copy of a notable novel.

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SEPTEMBER MISCELLANY 2004

111. Lewis, Sinclair. *Babbitt*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922. \$2750.

First Edition. First issue with "Purdy" for "Lyte" on page 49. A fine copy in an unusually bright, clean dust jacket, completely unfaded, with some restoration at flap folds and base of spine (not affecting lettering). Particularly attractive copy of this highspot.

THANKSGIVING MISCELLANY 2004

131. Lewis, Sinclair. *The Job*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1926. \$750.

First English Edition. Some very faint spotting to page edges, but otherwise a fine copy, with blue cloth particularly bright and fresh, in the scarce dust jacket which is minutely worn at corners with a few tiny stains (small spots) to spine panel. Very scarce in jacket.

132. —. *Elmer Gantry*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927. \$1750.

First Edition. First issue binding with "G" resembling a "C" on spine. A fine clean copy in a bright unfaded dust jacket with a few minor closed tears and a small triangular chip at bottom edge of rear panel.

133. —. *Selected Short Stories*. Garden City: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1935. \$375.

First Edition. Fine copy in a near fine dust jacket with some very minor chipping. The first collection of Lewis's short stories. Uncommon.

NEW YEAR'S MISCELLANY 2005

117. Lewis, Sinclair. *The Trail of the Hawk. A Comedy of the Seriousness of Life*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1923. \$850.

First English Edition. Rubber-stamped "Colonial Edition" on half-title page and bottom of front jacket flap. Some mottling to blue cloth as well as some limited fading at edges. Prior owner

signature partially bleached out on flyleaf. A very good copy in a dust jacket missing a few small chips but still 90% complete. This is the earliest British edition of Lewis that we have seen in jacket (British editions of *Main Street* and *Babbitt* were published in 1921 and 1922 respectively).

118. —. *Bethel Merriday*. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1940. \$650.

First Edition. One of an unknown number of copies signed by Lewis on tipped-in leaf. A fine copy in a fine dust jacket with only some light rubbing at edges, but bright and crisp. This signed issue is scarce.

119. —. *Dodsworth*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1929. \$500.

First Edition. *One of 500 copies bound up in orange cloth*, stamped in black on spine, with front and rear covers blank, top edges stained black, and with printed statement on flyleaf: "This is a special edition presented to the trade in advance of publication and is not for sale." A clean, near fine copy. Probably not issued in printed jacket.

120. —. *Kingsblood Royal*. New York: Random House, 1947. \$500.

First Edition. *One of an unknown number of copies signed by Lewis on a specially printed bookplate issued by Kroch's Bookstores in Chicago*. A fine copy in a fine dust jacket (a few tiny nicks). Highly uncommon.

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2004, 1:00 PM

FINE MODERN LITERATURE

THE LIBRARY OF ARTHUR W. STONE (WITH ADDITIONS)

191. Lewis, Sinclair. *Arrowsmith*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1925. \$100/\$150.

First Trade Edition. Blue cloth stamped in orange. Lewis's classic medical novel. States: "Second printing [first trade edition], January, 1925" on copyright page. The true first edition was

limited to 500 signed copies on handmade paper. Spine a bit faded, rubbing, joints splitting, shelf wear; front hinge glue repaired, rear hinge starting to crack, pages toned; else good to very good.

192. — . *Elmer Gantry*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927. \$100/\$150.

First Edition, second binding state. Blue cloth lettered and stamped in orange, jacket, housed in a custom clear plexiglass slipcase. Second binding, with the "G" in "Gantry" on the spine resembling more like a "C" than in the first binding state. Light shelf wear and soiling; front hinge cracking at title page; generally very good.

193. — . *The God-Seeker*. New York: Random House, 1949. \$150/\$250.

First Edition. Blue-green cloth, lettered in gilt, color pictorial jacket. Author's Minnesota frontier novel. Jacket spine a bit sunned, short tears and tiny chips to edges, mild rubbing, price clipped; slight fading to cloth edges; a clean copy, else very good and sturdy in a very good and bright jacket—seldom seen in better condition.

194. — . *The Man Who Knew Coolidge; Being the Soul of Lowell Schmaltz, Constructive and Nordic Citizen*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1928. \$150/\$250.

First Edition, Advanced Review Copy. Blue cloth stamped in orange. Publisher's "Advance Copy" review slip with dated rubberstamped "Apr 5, 1928," laid in. Spine somewhat faded, tiny and thin white stain to foot, shelf wear, rubbing, faint circular stain on front cover; else very good.

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CATALOGUE 139

141. Lewis, Sinclair. Original Poster Advertising the May 1935 Issue of *Good Housekeeping Magazine* 50th Anniversary Issue 1885-1935. \$185.

Printed on stiff board, 8 1/2" x 13" with a deep royal blue background and yellow-orange accents. "50th Anniversary

Number 1935-45 stories-Features-Serials-*Good Housekeeping-Every Woman's Magazine*" and lists as contributors Sinclair Lewis, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Ursula Parrott, Edith Barnard Delano, Grace Coolidge and Violette Kimball Dunn as being in the special issue. About fine. Scarce and striking poster.

142. — . Archive of Material Relating to the Film Production of Sinclair Lewis's Novel, *Dodsworth*. Included is a Typed Contract for the Film, *Dodsworth*, Signed by Sinclair Lewis and Sidney Howard; Original Film Script; and a Photoplay Edition of the Novel; a *Dodsworth* Movie Handbill, Plus a DVD Video of the *Dodsworth* Motion Picture. New York & Los Angeles, 1936. \$1650.

An excellent archive of material relating to the film production of *Dodsworth* which was directed by William Wyler, starring Walter Huston, Ruth Chatterton, Paul Lukas, and Mary Astor. Present in the collection is an original typed carbon manuscript dated March 14, 1936, hand signed in ink by Sinclair Lewis, Sidney Howard, and Max Gordon. The original novel of *Dodsworth* was published by Sinclair Lewis in 1929. In 1934, Sidney Howard adapted it into a successful Broadway play produced by Max Gordon. Film producer Samuel Goldwyn purchased the film rights, hired Sidney Howard to adapt his play into a screenplay and the resulting highly successful film was directed by William Wyler and stars Walter Huston. This contract allows Samuel Goldwyn to release the *Dodsworth* film in the summer of 1936 instead of in the fall as they had all originally agreed. This probably indicates that the Broadway play version had by then closed and that it was okay to release the film earlier. Accompanying is an original 197 page carbon typescript screenplay prepared toward the end of production as the film was being put into final form, showing all the changes in dialogue and the editing. Also accompanying is a copy of the movie tie-in edition of the *Dodsworth* novel issued by Grosset & Dunlap in 1936 to coincide with the release of the film and has a dust jacket which shows a photograph of Walter Huston and Ruth Chatterton. Additionally, laid in is an illustrated handbill from a Los Angeles theater featuring a first run showing of *Dodsworth*. Finally, included is a DVD video of this film classic.

143. — . *Dodsworth*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1936. \$250.

Photoplay edition issued to coincide with the release of the William Wyler directed film starring Walter Huston, Ruth Chatterton, Mary Astor, David Niven, and Paul Lukas. This is a spectacular lovely very fine copy in a very fine fresh dust jacket. The front panel of the dust jacket is a picture of Huston and Chatterton surrounded by striking lettering and a bold colorful design.

144. — . Original Printed Calling Card of Sinclair Lewis Hand-Inscribed and Signed With His Initials. (circa 1920s). \$650.

This engraved printed calling card reads "MR. SINCLAIR LEWIS" and Lewis has written on both sides of the card as well as having drawn a map. Lewis writes: "Dear S.P.B. Gee wot a dirty card—last in my wallet. We're camped, with caravan, in a field of Mr. Upton, just to the left of the Ship Inn. SL, Fri evening, June 15, 7:45 PM." Followed by a hand drawn map showing and labeling the Ship Inn, the green near it, nearby barns, and where "you" and "us" are located. Lewis's calling card is very scarce and this one is delightfully inscribed.

145. Lewis, Sinclair & Albert Payson Terhune. *Dad*. By Albert Payson Terhune. New York: W.J. Watt, 1914. \$5000.

First Edition. In this 307 page Terhune Civil War novel, Sinclair Lewis anonymously wrote chapters 21 through 23 for his friend Terhune who was facing a deadline. See Mark Schorer's classic biography of Sinclair Lewis for details. Fine tight copy in a bright dust jacket with a small bit of restoration at head of spine. The front panel of the dust jacket is a striking full color painting by W.D. Goldbeck of a Civil War officer and his horse before the steps of his house where his petticoated wife is standing (the image is used inside the book as the black and white frontispiece). A scarce book in decent condition, it is so very rare in dust jacket that it is lacking from almost all Sinclair Lewis collections.

146. Lewis, Sinclair & Irvin S. Cobb. *Irvin Cobb. His Book*. New York: Privately Printed, 1915. \$250.

First Edition. Signed presentation copy from writer Irvin S. Cobb, inscribed: "For Mrs. Grace Hawley, with a tremendous amount of the most respectful admiration. Irvin S. Cobb. April 25, 1915." A collection of "Friendly Tributes Upon the Occasion of a Dinner Tendered to Irvin Shrewsbury Cobb at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, April Twenty-Fifth, MCMXV." With a substantial essay by Sinclair Lewis entitled "C-O-B-B," which in part reads: "...Irvin S. Cobb, who is three big things: a big reporter, a big writer, and a big man." A work of tribute created as a souvenir of a dinner given in Cobb's honor at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City. Includes pieces by Robert W. Chambers, Julian Street, George A. Birmingham, Grantland Rice, George Horace Lorimer, James S. Metcalfe, Walter Trumbull, John T. McCutcheon, J. A. Mitchell, Arnold Bennett, J. E. Hodder Williams, Walter Hale, Wallace Irwin, "F. P. A.", George Barr McCutcheon, Wm. Travers Jerome, C. E. Van Loan, Harry Leon Wilson, Rupert Hughes, and William Johnston. With illustrations by Charles Dana Gibson, James Montgomery Flagg, Orson Lowell, Briggs, Harrison Fisher, Frederick Dorr Steele, Cesare, John T. McCutcheon, William H. Walker, Howard Chandler Christie, R. L. Goldberg, Arthur William Brown, and Alfred Frueh. Original 3/4 parchment and

boards, pictorial paper cover label [Cobb's bookplate]. Very good lightly used copy with a 1/4" chip at bottom of the spine and some minor dust soiling with very slight rubbing to the corners. Lacking slipcase. Scarce.

147. Lewis, Sinclair & Sidney Howard. *Sinclair Lewis's Dodsworth—Dramatized by Sidney Howard*. With comments by Sidney Howard and Sinclair Lewis on the Art of Dramatization. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1934. \$4000.

First Edition. Special presentation edition signed by Sinclair Lewis and Sidney Howard. This issue was made in a tiny quantity specifically for members of the original Broadway production with a special printed page which reads: "To Jo Mielziner for helping to turn 'Dodsworth' from a manuscript into a play with gratitude of [hand signed in ink] Sinclair Lewis and [hand signed in ink] Sidney Howard. New York—September 1934." Illustrated with photographs from the production. Fine bright copy in a fine dust jacket. An important presentation copy to Jo Mielziner who designed the sets for the original production. Sidney Howard discusses Mielziner's contribution in his essay on adapting the novel into play on pages xvi-xvii. Howard was a very successful Broadway playwright in the 1930s and wrote screenplays for *Gone With the Wind* and both film adaptations of Lewis's *Dodsworth* and *Arrowsmith*. Jo Mielziner is arguably the most distinguished set designer in Broadway history, creating the staging for such classics as the original productions of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *South Pacific*, *Carousel*, *Mister Roberts*, *Key Largo*, *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*, *Pal Joey*, *The King and I*, *Guys and Dolls*, etc. An excellent association copy of a highly successful Broadway play.

148-150. — . *Sinclair Lewis's Dodsworth—Dramatized by Sidney Howard*. With Comments by Sidney Howard and Sinclair Lewis on the Art of Dramatization. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1934. \$225, \$175, \$100.

All First Editions. Illustrated. 148 is a near fine copy with dust jacket, 149 is a very good copy with dust jacket, and 150 is a near fine copy without dust jacket.

151. Lewis, Sinclair & Walt Disney. *Walt Disney's Bongo*. Adapted from the characters and backgrounds created for the Walt Disney Motion Picture *Fun and Fancy Free*. Based on an adaptation of the original story "Bongo" by Sinclair Lewis. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1947. \$125.

First Edition. A "Big Golden Book," 8 1/4" x 13 1/4", hard-cover. Very good plus lightly used copy with some slight lifting to the laminated boards, mostly at the hinges, and some minor rubbing to the corners and the top and bottom of the spine without

dust jacket as issued. A much better than usual copy. Laid in is a 2 page article from a magazine, illustrated with eight colorful stills, reviewing the film: "By far the likeliest candidate to succeed an aging Mickey Mouse, who was 20 last month, is a small, frustrated bear named Bongo...Most moviegoers will welcome Disney's return to 'basic Disney,' i.e. straight cartoon fun, but may wonder briefly at Bongo's unlikely genesis: a short story by Sinclair Lewis." The story of Bongo, an adorable and precocious circus bear who longs for a life of freedom, but when his dream comes true, he finds himself ill-prepared for survival in the wild. Beautifully illustrated throughout with vivid color drawings of Bongo's adventures, with a great pictorial endpaper design of the circus in full swing, showing a long line of people entering the big tent, lots of animals, the midway, and the circus train, with a city silhouette in the background under a starry sky. The front board is illustrated with Bongo happily riding a unicycle on a highwire and on the rear board we see Bongo's sweet smiling face in the center of a large golden star. A charming book with a heart-warming message.

152. Lewis, Sinclair, P.G. Wodehouse, Pearl S. Buck, A.J. Cronin, Peter B. Kyne, Noel Pierce, Bess Streeter Aldrich. Original Poster Advertising the June Issue of Hearst's *Cosmopolitan Magazine*. 1935. \$185.

A striking art moderne design in a rich red, dark grey, and black & white, 8 1/2" x 13" printed on stiff board. "*Cosmopolitan* For June—Just Out—3 new novels, 22 Star Writers" and lists the issue's contributors which are Sinclair Lewis, Peter B. Kyne, A. J. Cronin, Pearl S. Buck, P.G. Wodehouse, Bess Streeter Aldrich, and Noel Pierce. About fine. Handsome and scarce poster.

153. [Lewis, Sinclair]. Drake, William A. (Ed.). *American Criticism, 1926*. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1926. \$50.

First Edition. Ownership signature. Very good copy with some slight edge wear and minor darkening to the paper labels at the spine and front board in a heavily chipped and torn lightly dust soiled dust jacket with a striking art deco design on the front panel. A collection of literary criticism chosen from periodicals and newspapers which appeared between June 1925 and June 1926. With Sinclair Lewis's "Self-Conscious America" from the *American Mercury*. Includes works by Henry Seidel Canby, "Anon is Dead"; Joseph Wood Krutch, "Vagabonds"; Archibald MacLeish, "Santayana, the Poet"; H. L. Mencken, "The Last New Englander"; Gilbert Seldes, "The Singular—Although dual—Eminence of Ring Lardner"; Carl Van Doren, "Lucifer from Nantucket"; Edmund Wilson, "The All-Star Literary Vaudeville"; and more.

154. [Lewis, Sinclair]. Morley, Christopher (Intr). *The Panorama of Modern Literature*. Contributed by Thirty-One Great Modern Writers. Garden City: Doubleday Doran, 1934. \$25.

First Edition. Very good copy with minor edge wear, some slight dampstaining to the exterior, and a bit of rippling to the

cloth at the rear board in a lightly used and dust soiled dust jacket with some chips and small tears. A collection of short works, including the first book appearance of Sinclair Lewis's "Dollar Chasers," as well as pieces by Aldous Huxley, Edna Ferber, H. G. Wells, A. Conan Doyle, Pearl S. Buck, E. B. White, P. G. Wodehouse, Noel Coward, James Thurber, Edgar Wallace, Arnold Bennett, Don Marquis, Dorothy Parker, and more.

155. [Lewis, Sinclair]. Schorer, Mark. *Sinclair Lewis: An American Life*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961. \$50.

First Edition. Signed presentation copy from Mark Schorer, inscribed: "For Susan and Norman, affectionately, Mark Schorer. 9/28/61." Illustrated. Massive (867 pages) biography of the great American writer Sinclair Lewis. With a comprehensive bibliography. One corner very slightly bumped, else a fine sound copy in a very good dust jacket with some small chips and tiny tears and a hint of dust soiling to the rear panel.

CATALOGUE 140

127. [Hemingway, Ernest, Sinclair Lewis, Thomas Wolfe, W. Somerset Maugham, Albert Einstein, Thomas Mann, Ford Maddox Ford]. Schreiber, George. *Portraits and Self-Portraits*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1936. \$125.

First Edition. Fine in a very good lightly used dust jacket with some sunning at spine. An interesting volume of George Schreiber's drawn portraits of authors with each of the images containing a self-portrait essay in words by the specific authors depicted.

153. Lewis, Sinclair. *Main Street*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920. \$750.

First Edition, mixed state. Signed by Sinclair Lewis. Bound in three-quarter blue morocco leather. Spine gilt-stamped and tooled with raised bands. Top edge gilt. A handsome copy.

154. —. *Mantrap*. Berlin: Ernst Rowohlt Verlag, 1928. \$95.

First German Edition. A little rubbing and fading at spine, else a very good copy in a very good dust jacket with an interesting expressionist drawing of people on a canoe trip. Very scarce in dust jacket.

155. —. *Babbitt*. Translated into French by Maurice Remon. Preface by Paul Morand. Paris: La Nouvelle Societe d'Edition, 1930. \$55.

First French Edition. Paperbound. Fine bright copy in printed wrappers. 452 pages.

156. — . *Notre Sieur Wrenn. (Our Mr. Wrenn)*. Translated into French by Maurice Remon. Paris: La Nouvelle Societe d'Edition, 1931. \$95.

First French Edition. Signed and inscribed by the book's translator, Maurice Remon, to French novelist, Paul Morand, with a warm inscription. Morand was an admirer of Lewis and wrote the preface to the first French Edition of *Babbitt*. Paperbound. Very good in printed wrappers. 267 pages.

157. — . *Sam Dodsworth (Dodsworth)*. Translated into French by Jeannine Antoine Goldet. Paris: Librarie Plon, 1931. \$95.

First French Edition. Paperbound. Signed and inscribed by the book's translator, Jeannine Antoine Goldet, to French novelist, Paul Morand, with a warm inscription. Very good in printed wrappers. 436 pages.

158. — . *Coup de Pompe Gratis (Free Air)*. Translated into French by Maurice Remon. Paris: Albin Michel, 1932. \$95.

First French Edition. Signed and inscribed by the book's translator, Maurice Remon, to French novelist, Paul Morand, with a warm inscription. Paperbound. Very good in printed wrappers. 346 pages.

159. Lewis, Sinclair and Fay Wray. Original Deluxe Souvenir Program for the Play, *Angela Is Twenty-Two*, Written by Sinclair Lewis and Fay Wray. New York: John Wilderberg, 1938. \$450.

First Edition. Excellent deluxe souvenir program for the play written by Sinclair Lewis and Fay Wray in which Lewis, himself, played a role on stage. The program has much material about Lewis including a preface by Lewis and photographs, with much information about the production. Large format (9" x 12"). Paperbound. Near fine and very scarce.

195. [Photoplay Editions] — . *Main Street*. Illustrated With Scenes from the Motion Picture. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1923. \$50.

Photoplay edition issued to coincide with the release of the silent film starring Florence Vidor, Monte Blue, Harry Myers, Alan Hale, and Louise Fazenda. Ownership inscription. Fine in a near fine dust jacket with a few small tears. The front panel of the jacket reproduces the artwork of the first edition (almost impossible to obtain in a first issue dust jacket).

CATALOGUE 141

141. Lewis, Sinclair. *Arrowsmith*. Translated into French

by Gabriel des Hons. Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1931. \$225.

First French Edition. Copy number 3 of 100 large paper copies printed on Alpha paper. Bound in gilt-stamped three-quarter leather with marbled boards with the large paper margins very wide and untrimmed. Near fine handsome volume.

142. Lewis, Sinclair, Robert Nathan and Peggy Bacon. *Off With Their Heads!* By Peggy Bacon. New York: Robert M. McBride & Company, 1934. \$2000.

First Edition. A collection of caricatures of notables of the period drawn by Peggy Bacon, each accompanied by a portrait in words. Included are Sinclair Lewis and Robert Nathan. This is a remarkable book, the personal copy of novelist Robert Nathan (best remembered for his novels, *A Portrait of Jennie* and *The Bishop's Wife*) which has been humorously and sometimes caustically annotated by his friend, Sinclair Lewis. On the half-title, Nathan has signed the book and has written in ink: "Robert Nathan's copy — with notes by Sinclair Lewis." At a number of points in the book Lewis has written in bold pencil, in his distinctive hand, his comments on the book. On the printed dedication page which reads: "Dedicated to The Faces I Love," Lewis has underlined the word "Love," added a question mark, then has written: "whom she loveth she raiseth hell with. Good Book. II Corinthians IV: 23." At the two pages containing Bacon's portraits of Sinclair Lewis he has written: "OK, Sinclair Lewis." One of the two portraits of Lewis shows him composing at his typewriter, and this excellent image is the one Bacon chose to reproduce on the front of the dust jacket. At the two images of Robert Nathan, Lewis apparently had the notion that Bacon made Nathan look like former President Calvin Coolidge. Nathan has written in ink: "Sinclair Lewis wrote these indignant denials." At the heading which reads "Robert Nathan" Lewis has crossed it out and written instead: "C. Coolidge (Ex.-Hon. Esq.-L.L.D. Hon Beloit)." Next to the large Nathan portrait, Lewis has written as dialogue coming from the portrait: "I do not c—" which is a take off on Coolidge's famous line about again seeking the Presidency: "I do not care to run." At the place where Bacon describes her caricature she in one line states that Nathan: "Suggests the cadaverous spirituality of an apostle by Greco." Lewis has crossed out the word "Greco" and has in written in replacement "Will Hays," the name of the censorship czar of the motion picture industry. At the ending two-page spread showing the two self-portrait caricatures of Peggy Bacon, he has crossed out her self-portrait in words and has written "See next page." On the following leaf, Lewis has written a full new word portrait and initialed it: "Peggy Bacon—Demure, innocent in seeming only—licking the cream of celebrity, gulped like mackerel, from her lips—electric of whiskers. A dangerously accurate female—except in draughtsmanship. SL." Among the other celebrities depicted in the book are Dorothy Parker, Dorothy Thompson (Lewis's wife), Childe Hassam, George Gershwin, Carl Sandburg, Lillian Gish, Alfred Stieglitz, Georgia O'Keefe, Diego Rivera, Bill Robinson, Djuana Barnes, Edmund Wilson, etc. A very good copy in a very good dust jacket with some chipping.

143. [Literary Caricatures]. Posselt, Erich (Ed.) [Conrad Aiken, Maxwell Anderson, Sherwood Anderson, Van Wyck Brooks, Witter Bynner, John Dos Passos, Theodore Dreiser, George S. Kaufman, Sinclair Lewis, Eugene O'Neill, Upton Sinclair, Thornton Wilder, William Carlos Williams, etc. *On Parade*. Caricatures by Eva Herrmann. Contributions by Prominent Authors. New York: Coward-McCann, 1929. \$50.

First Edition. Illustrated. Very good plus bright copy with some minor edge wear in a very good dust jacket with a hint of dust soiling, a few tiny chips, and some faint damp staining to the spine. A collection of brief writings by many well-known authors accompanied by a caricature sketch portrait by Eva Herrmann.

CATALOGUE 142

Bongo, #151 from catalog 139, reduced to \$85.

180. Lewis, Sinclair. *Sinclair Lewis on The Valley of the Moon*. N.p: Privately Printed at the Harvard Press for Harvey Taylor, 1932. \$250.

First Edition. One of 100 numbered copies signed by the publisher, Harvey Taylor. A French folded leaflet. The first separate edition of Lewis's review of Jack London's *The Valley of the Moon*. Fine copy.

181. Lewis, Sinclair and Fay Wray. Original Deluxe Souvenir Program for the Play, *Angela is Twenty-Two*, Written by Sinclair Lewis and Fay Wray. Cleveland, Ohio: Hanna Theatre, 1939. \$125.

First Edition. Program for the play written by Sinclair Lewis and Fay Wray in which Lewis, himself, played a role on stage. Paperbound. Near fine copy.

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Sotheby's, New York April 13, 2004.

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149. Lewis, Sinclair. *Babbitt*. New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922. \$2000-3000.

First Edition, First State. Inscribed by the author on the front endpaper to a truly unforgettable bookseller: "To S.R. Shapiro / Sinclair Lewis / N.Y. / 5.30.38" *Babbitt*, a satirical portrayal of an average American businessman, was the second of Lewis's important novels of the Twenties that established his reputation, leading to his becoming the first American to win the Nobel Prize for literature (in 1930). Original blue and orange cloth; light dampstain at lower portion of covers. Dust jacket; slightly chipped at ends of spine, two closed tears in front panel.

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CATALOG 50

44. Lewis, Sinclair. *Elmer Gantry*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927. \$2250.

First edition, first binding. The basis for the acclaimed big screen film that starred Burt Lancaster. No restoration to the first state dust jacket (or the book). Fine copy in a nearly fine jacket that has slight loss (tiny) at both top corners.

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