

The Journal of the Sylvia Townsend Warner Society

Editorial

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Editorial

Peter Swaab

This issue of the *Sylvia Townsend Warner Journal* includes several previously unpublished or uncollected pieces by Warner and has a particular focus on her writings from the 1920s.

The first four pieces relate more or less directly to *Lolly Willows*: first, extracts from the corrected manuscript of the novel now housed in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library; second, a brief introductory paragraph about the novel, probably from 1977 or 1978, outlining the reading from her childhood and later years that influenced Warner's interest in witchcraft; third, five letters mainly about *Lolly Willows* from 1925 and 1926, written to her publisher Charles Prentice at Chatto & Windus; and fourth, a sceptical 1926 review for *Time and Tide* of Montague Summers's *History of Witchcraft and Demonology*.

The other three pieces by Warner in the issue are a commissioned essay on tendencies in contemporary literature, also written for *Time and Tide* in 1926; the draft of a preface to *The True Heart*, probably dating from the mid-1960s, rather longer than the preface to the 1978 Virago reprint and with further details about the biographical circumstances that shaped the book; and a 1938 article about the harsh economic conditions and social restrictions in women's lives in rural Spain. This was written in the context of the Spanish Civil War for the American magazine *The Fight*, the publication of the American League for Peace and Democracy. We can also hear some of Warner's own comments in Percy Stone's 1929 interview-feature on the occasion of her arrival in the USA to work for a month as a guest contributor to the *New York Herald Tribune*.

As promised in the previous issue of the *Journal*, we also include a tribute to the late Lynn Mutti, a loyal and much-valued member of the Warner Society and for many years its Secretary.

Four reviews of notable recent books bring the issue to a close. Maud Ellmann's review of the Handheld Press volume *Of Cats and Elfins*

gives one of the most sustained readings we have of Warner's *Cat's Cradle-Book*. Peter Swaab reviews Rebecca Hahn's stimulating monograph on Warner's short stories. Peter Robinson discusses Judith Stinton's vivid book on the history, geography and culture of *Chesil Beach*. And Maud Ellmann also contributes a review of Frances Bingham's important and widely discussed biography of Valentine Ackland.