

## EDITORIAL

*Helen Sutherland*

It is good to report that Warner studies are thriving. As far as the *Journal* concerned, this has given us scholarly articles on a wider range of Warner's work than we have enjoyed in the past.

In the opening article, 'Trees and Dreams', Mary Jacobs identifies Warner's anti-pastoral use of pastoral as a form of 'fantastic ruralism', relating this on the one hand to ballad and folklore which Warner herself considered to be the 'oldest nurse of all', and on the other hand to contemporary interest in pastoral as a literary mode.

From literature to music: it is a real pleasure to offer two articles on Warner's musical activities, the first being 'The Ambivalent Composer and the Carnegie Competition: From Music to Literature' by Lynn Mutti who explores Warner's participation in the Carnegie Trust composition competition, and argues that her failure to appear among the prize-winners was a pivotal point in her life, prompting a permanent shift in her creative focus from music to literature.

The Carnegie Trust also features heavily in Richard Searle's article, 'Sylvia Townsend Warner and *Tudor Church Music*', this time as the sponsor of the Tudor Church Music project, which opened up this music to a much wider audience than it had hitherto enjoyed. What comes through Searle's article so clearly is the extent of Warner's technical knowledge of early musical notation,

and the centrality and importance of her position as an editor.

Georgia Johnston also sets out on a slightly less well-trodden pathway in her article on 'Narratives of Ethnography in *The Cats' Cradle-Book*', for not only does she approach the text from an ethnological point of view, but *The Cats' Cradle-Book* itself has had little critical attention paid to it in the past. Although this is not, perhaps, one of Warner's most successful works, Johnston's approach is an illuminating one, showing how deftly Warner uses the parody of cats telling stories to human children to question the accepted social configurations.

I am also pleased to offer Claire Harman's thoughts on what was probably Warner's earliest appearance in print. Harman first pointed to an anonymous essay on romance as a likely contender for this honour in her 1989 biography of Warner but she is here able to put forward the supporting arguments which space constraints originally precluded.

Sylvia Townsend Warner is represented by two works, the first being a scathing review of government guidelines to nutrition which is almost Swiftian in its anger and reminds us of her deep-seated political convictions, and the other being one of the letters to Rachel Monckton-How which was not included in *Cousin and Friend*.

There is also good news for Kindle enthusiasts: *Summer Will Show; A Stranger with a Bag; Selected Stories; Mr Fortune's Maggot; The True Heart; After the Death of Don Juan; The Flint Anchor* and *Scenes of Childhood* are now all available in this format through Amazon.

Finally, I am pleased to draw to your attention a one-day international symposium, *Re-Visiting Sylvia Townsend Warner* to be held in Dorchester on 29 June 2012. Full details can be found on page 50 (below). I hope to publish a selection of the papers given at the symposium in the next issue of the *Journal*, but other, unrelated articles will also be welcome, and should be submitted by 10 September 2012.