

CHRISTIAN HISTORY

Jack at Home

C. S. Lewis and those
who knew him best



"Friendship is unnecessary, like philosophy, like art, like the universe itself... It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things which give value to survival." — C.S. Lewis



A YOUNG SEEKER Lewis had just been discharged from the army in this portrait.

NO PRUNES FOR ME

In his essay "On Three Ways of Writing for Children," Lewis recalled announcing "I loathe prunes" very loudly in the dining room of a hotel. A little boy nearby announced just as loudly, "So do I." Lewis evidenced similar empathy in writing to children—speaking about their daily lives, critiquing the writings they sent him, and discussing God. In a letter written the day before he died, he noted to one boy, "All the children who have written to me see at once who Aslan is, and grownups *never* do!"

THE BLUE COW ON THE PIANO

Eric Routley (1917–1982), later a famous church musician and composer, was an undergraduate at Oxford during World War II and attended a Socratic Club meeting Lewis was chairing. There, Routley said, "students crowded into a room and sat on the floor or under the piano." When one of the students asked during the discussion how one could prove anything, including whether there was a blue cow on the piano, Lewis responded, "Well, in what sense *blue*?"

THE ORIGINAL MEDIA FAST

Derek Brewer (1923–2008), a Chaucer scholar, studied under Lewis in the mid-1940s. Lewis once told Brewer he "lack[ed] pep," but supported his later scholarship, serving as general editor for one of Brewer's Chaucer editions. Brewer recalled that Lewis never read newspapers because, Lewis said, "Someone will always tell you if anything has happened."

"STEINER SAYS"

Daphne Olivier Harwood (1889–1950), first wife of Lewis's friend Cecil Harwood (1898–1975), was actor Laurence Olivier's (1907–1989) cousin. An Anthroposophist, she introduced both Harwood and Lewis's friend Owen Barfield to this complex mystical philosophy founded by Rudolph Steiner (1861–1925).

Lewis once exclaimed in reaction to her criticism that he was making Christianity too authoritarian, "When you have heard half as many sentences beginning 'Christianity teaches' from me as I have heard ones beginning 'Steiner says' from you & Cecil & Owen & [another friend]—why then we'll start talking about authoritarianism!" But he greatly admired them both, describing Harwood as "the sole Horatio known to me in this age of Hamlets."

WHEN THE BOMBS FELL Many of Lewis's writings responded directly or indirectly to horrors of war.

Did you know?

ENCOUNTERS WITH C. S. LEWIS
AROUND THE HEARTH AND ALONG
THE BYWAYS



THE POG AND THE FOX

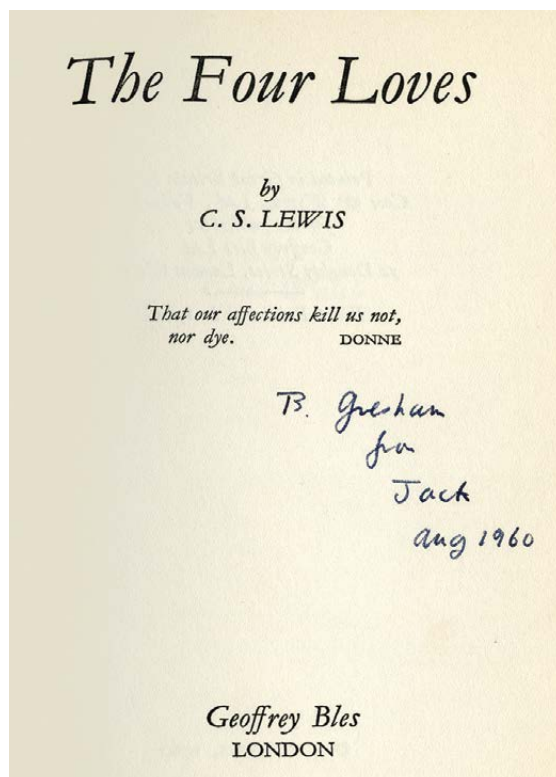
Lewis often visited Inklings George Sayer (1914–2005) and his wife, Moira (1913–1977), although he generally forgot to tell them what train he was coming on. Lewis and Sayer enjoyed hiking the countryside. Once they met a tired fox trying to escape a fox hunt, and Lewis sent the hunt the other way. Another time they encountered some pigs, and Lewis dubbed the most intelligent one “not a pig but the first pog. . . . *The Pig and the Pog*. That’s not a bad title. I wonder if I can write the story to go with it.”

TALKING AT BREAKFAST

James Dundas-Grant (1896–1985) first met Lewis at Magdalen College in 1944, when Dundas-Grant was newly in charge of the University Naval Division. At breakfast he noticed “a baldish head” behind the magazine *Punch*:

There was a rustle of *Punch*, and I found a pair of merry, friendly eyes looking at me. “I say,” then in a

SHARED LOVE Lewis presented this copy (below) of *The Four Loves* to William Gresham, Joy Lewis’s first husband, after her death.



CUPID’S ARROW Lewis’s *Till We Have Faces* retells the myth of Cupid, or Eros (in a 1st-c. Greek statue at left), and Psyche.

whisper, “do you talk at breakfast?” “By training, no; by nature, yes,” I replied. Down went *Punch*. “Oh, good,” he said. “I’m Lewis.” “Not *Screwtape*?” I blurted out. “I’m afraid so; yes.”

Lewis and Dundas-Grant became friends. Dundas-Grant attended Inklings meetings. He recalled, “I found how much one learned just sitting and listening.”

BLESSED PEDESTRIANS?

Clifford Morris (1914–?) saw Lewis from a unique perspective—as his chauffeur. Because Lewis couldn’t drive, he frequently used the car-hire firm Morris



LION AT REST This doorknob (above) graces the rectory of the church served by Lewis’s grandfather, John Hamilton.

worked for, and they shared picnics, walks, and stops at inns with each other. Morris picked Lewis up from the hospital the night his wife, Joy, died.

One day someone crossed the road in front of them; Morris exclaimed in frustration, “Blessed pedestrians.” Lewis immediately began to question Morris’s theology: “You certainly didn’t hope that they were exceedingly happy now and that presently they will enjoy the bliss of the celestial realms!” Morris described Lewis as never talking religion, “except in the sense that a true Christian never talks anything else.” ☞

Many of these anecdotes can be found in *C. S. Lewis at the Breakfast Table*, edited by James Como.

MAGISTERIAL WORKS

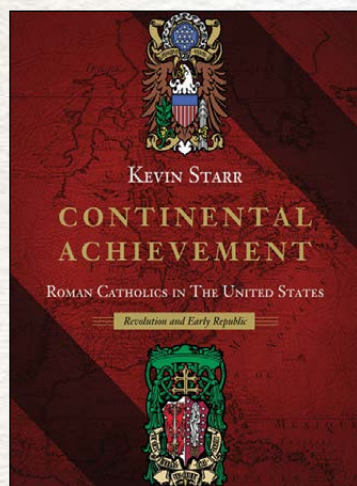
ON THE FOUNDING OF AMERICA

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Emeritus, Georgetown University



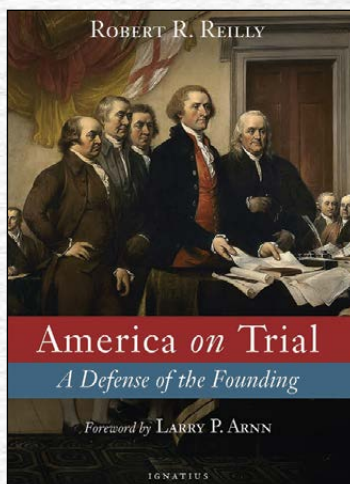
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Kevin Starr

The sequel to *Continental Ambitions*, Starr's magisterial work on Catholics who explored, evangelized, and settled the North American continent. This work focuses on the participation of Catholics, alongside their Protestant and Jewish fellow citizens, in the Revolutionary War and the creation and development of the early Republic.

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Robert Reilly

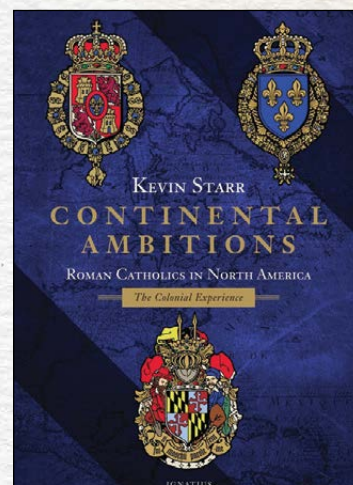
The Founding of America is on trial. Critics say it was a poison pill with a time-release formula, and that its principles are responsible for the country's moral disintegration.

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"Reilly's argument is unanswerable, the documentation massive, and the issue prophetic in import."

— Peter Kreeft, Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy
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*“A Romantic theologian does not mean one who is romantic about theology,
but one who is theological about romance, one who considers all the theological implications
of those experiences which are called romantic.” ~ C. S. Lewis

Letters to the editor

Readers respond to *Christian History*

A SAINTLY CAMEO

The cover art for CH 137 is identified as *The Cloth Market in 's-Hertogenbosch*. Clearly, the subject of the painting is not the market, but the actions of a saint (indicated by the halo behind his head). We first see him buying bolts of wool (in the center stall) and then distributing them to the poor. . . . His attire indicates that he is wealthy; his facial expression communicates concern and compassion. I am wondering whether the artist had a particular saint in mind, perhaps Saint Francis while he was still a wealthy young man, before he took a vow of poverty and gave away all of his worldly goods.



Please let me know if my interpretation of the painting is correct.—Harold Schnedler, Mineral Point, WI

Our image researcher, Max Pointner, writes: “Thank you for your astute observations of our cover image! You are indeed correct, the saint depicted is St. Francis. The scene in the foreground not only captures a busy marketplace in the center of Christendom, but also describes our economic responsibility as Christians. St. Francis actually appears twice: once in front, but also in the background in the second market stall from the right (you can see his halo). There Francis is just one of the many customers patronizing the busy cloth market, a cog in the free market. An outsider might say his activity, like all the interactions here, is driven by the ‘Invisible Hand’ of the free market. But when we look at Francis up close, we see that he is guided by something much deeper: the Holy Spirit, transforming the saint into a Christ-like self-giver.”

THE B-I-B-L-E ON V-I-D-E-O

I like how you started out your first paragraph [in the editor’s note of #138] “I grew up singing . . . ‘The B-I-B-L-E, yes that’s the book for me’ . . .”

I did not grow up singing that song. . . . I heard this from the rock group Bash-N-The Code in the 1980s from their *Big Mouth* cassette and later CD. Their video for the song was shown on the show *Real Videos* when it aired on TBN. I also remember Kirk Franklin did his version of the song, thus showing this song is able to cross different genres of music.—Michael Otto, Hutchinson, MN

What a fun memory!

MULTIPLYING MINISTRY

We just received issue #138 yesterday. Although we had seen what [our] ad would look like, its actual placement in the CH magazine was to us both stunning and breathtaking. Special thanks to all of you who were involved with it! . . . Your ministries have been a large part of the practice of our own ministry. There is no way we can possibly express the awe we feel whenever we receive each new issue of *Christian History* magazine, and especially this issue.—S. G. Preston, Prayer Foundation

Thank you! We love hearing how much we mean to readers.

AMERICA AND THE BIBLE

Another outstanding issue, #138. I especially appreciated your sensitivity to all Americans! Looking forward to the second issue in this series.—Tom Edmunds, Washington, NJ

We received our first issue of *Christian History* [#138], and when I saw the title I was extremely excited to get into it! But what a disappointment! The first article neglected to mention that the official seal of the Massachusetts Bay Company was a native calling, “Come over here and help us,” a quote from Acts. Outreach was a foundational part of the founding of New England! And although they didn’t actually “quote” the Bible in the Declaration or Constitution, yet the Declaration begins with an affirmation of our Creator and ends with an appeal to his Providence. Also, their personal and professional letters included THOUSANDS of references to Deuteronomy. . . . America is not perfect, and neither were her Founders. But to gloss over their praise of and reliance on Jesus Christ as their Savior and King—the motto of the Revolution was “no king but King Jesus” for goodness’ sake.—Jeff Tyberg, Nekoosa, WI

CHI has long been motivated by two things: our desire to write about history for the church (avoiding the unfair critique of Christian motives so often found in academia) and our desire to do this while avoiding any particular political or theological agenda, other than our stated belief as an organization in the Apostles’ Creed. This motivation guided our approach to issue #138 as it has every other issue—leading us to tell the story of how the Bible was used to inspire faith and civic reform, and also how it was regretfully misused. Along the way, we did hope to make clear how thoroughly many early founders equated the life of the new nation to the life of ancient Israel.

TOP MARKS FOR EDUCATION ISSUE

It looks [like] a really good issue, great credit to the editorial team. You have done a terrific job.—G. R. Evans, author in #139

DOING GOD'S WORK

To all of you at Christian History Institute, your work has been a great blessing in my life. Every morning I look forward to reading your Daily Story online. Your magazine is beautifully done. May the Grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's holy people (Rev 22:21).—Faith Simms, Nampa, ID

Thank you for every excellent issue that you publish—what a rich blessing to read! Enclosed is a gift to further your work. I trust this year has not been too difficult for you. Praise God that in good season or bad, He is still working out His good purposes.—Mardell Ayres, Middleton, WI

If you, too, want to donate to the work of Christian History Institute, use the form in the center of the magazine or go online to christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/donate.

MORE IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE

I am a subscriber to *Christian History* and very much enjoy the magazine. A suggestion for a future issue is the German Church struggle (*kirchenkampf*) of 1933–1945 in Nazi Germany. I don't think you have done that theme yet. It has both a fascinating and instructive Protestant and Catholic component as you will know. I think the subject is very relevant to our own times and the present and future struggles of our churches.—Warren L. Smith, Monroeville, PA

We've covered this topic in a few *Christian History* issues—#9 on the *Heritage of Freedom*, #32 on *Bonhoeffer*, #94 on *Building the City of God in a Crumbling World*, and #121 on *Christianity in the World Wars*, but we've never devoted a whole issue to the topic. Another one for the list!

LUTHER AND THE JEWS

In 1543, Martin Luther published a pamphlet entitled, "The Jews and their Lies." . . . Luther expounds on his notion of a "Jewish problem" and his so-called remedies are horrific. This pamphlet is very anti-Jewish and unfortunately, feeds into what would later be Nazi ideology. My question is: Why did Martin Luther write such a horrific pamphlet? Are there any Christian historical or theological sources that can shed light on this?—James Ortiz, digital subscriber

Luther's views on the Jews have been written about at some length. For starters, take a look at our issues #39 (on Luther's later life) and #133 (*Christianity and Judaism*) to put his writings in the context of his own life and theology, as well as medieval anti-Semitism. Three good books to take your study further are Martin Luther, the Bible, and the Jewish People by Brooks Schramm and Kirs Stjerna (2012), *Demonizing the Jews* by Christopher Probst (2012), and *Luther's Jews* by Thomas Kaufmann (2017).

RIGHT GUY, WRONG CITY

On p. 26 of issue #139, Jakob Spener is identified as being provost of Halle's Nicholas Church. He was actually provost of the Nicholas Church in Berlin. CH regrets the error.

MEET THE STAFF: AUBRYNN WHITTED

What is your role at CHI?

I am an intern at CHI doing work in writing, editing, and marketing. Some of my tasks include copyediting magazine articles, writing blog posts for CH and Torchlighters, and crafting social media posts. I am learning a lot from observing the process of putting together an issue, and I appreciate the opportunity to put into practice some of what I've studied the last four years.



Why did you want to join CHI for your internship?

When I discovered CHI during my internship search, I was immediately drawn to its mission to share Christian history and provide resources for lay Christians. I was searching for an internship either in publishing or at a nonprofit, so this seemed like the perfect fit.

What are you studying and where?

This spring I finished my final semester of classes at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, where I studied professional writing and English literature.

What are your plans for the future?

I hope to continue working in writing and editing, whether that is in freelancing or with a publishing company, a nonprofit organization, or a magazine.

Any hobbies? What do you do in your spare time?

I enjoy writing poetry, reading, baking, playing classical piano, and spending time with family, especially my seven adorable nieces and nephews. CH

Editor's note

CHRISTIAN HISTORY has done two issues solely on C. S. Lewis over the years—#7 (1985) and #88 (2005). Lewis also played a role in our Seven Literary Sages issue (#113, 2015) and our recent Advent devotional *The Grand Miracle*, and was part of the inspiration for our issue about George MacDonald (#86, 2005). Yet when we ask folks what topics they'd like to see an issue on, he continues to poll high on the list.

Why such a continued fascination with Lewis? Certainly he is one of the most famous fantasy authors of the twentieth century; he was also an accomplished scholar of English literature, his books remain best-sellers, movies have been based on his life and works, and he was a prominent Christian. Yet all of that also describes his friend and colleague J. R. R. Tolkien, and while our issue on Tolkien (#78, 2003) was well received, we haven't heard nearly as much demand for a follow-up issue on Tolkien, or on some other great Christian writers of the mid-twentieth century whom Lewis counted as friends. (Many appear in the Seven Sages issue.)

SMART AND A CHRISTIAN

Some of our fascination may have to do with how many of us encountered Lewis's works as small children. Even very young children can follow the story of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and both of mine could read it on their own by the time they were seven. I can't remember a time when I didn't know Narnia existed.

Others of us fell in love with Lewis through his theological and apologetic works. In Lewis's own lifetime, it was probably *The Screwtape Letters* that put him on the map (and on the cover of *TIME*); but perhaps the book many would cite as a favorite is *Mere Christianity*. It was certainly the book that first made me fall in love with Lewis. "Look!" I thought. "You can be smart and still be a Christian!"

But sometimes Lewis's fame gets in the way of our seeing him as a person. (For example my husband and his best friend used to argue in the middle

of their college quad by yelling "C. S. Lewis said..." at each other.) So when we opted, once again, to do an issue on Lewis, we decided to see him not just as apologist and fantasy author and scholar, but as son, brother, friend, mentor, student, teacher, husband, and stepfather. And we decided to introduce you to his fascinating ancestors and family and more of his friends.

If you've never met C. S. Lewis, we hope this issue makes you fall in love with him. If you've loved him all

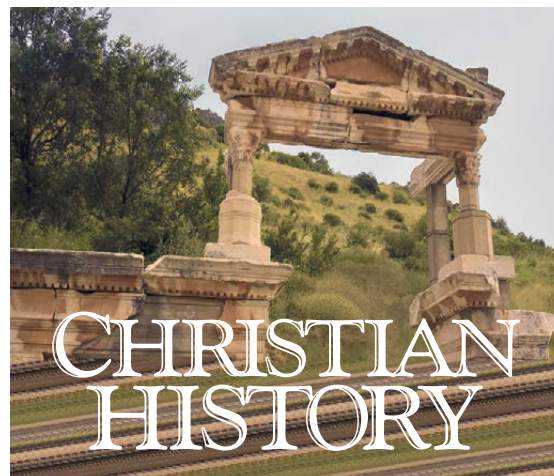


your life, we hope this issue helps you see him in a new light.

"Further up and further in." **CH**

Jennifer Woodruff Tait
Managing editor

CH thanks the staff of the Wade Center for their extensive help in the preparation of this issue. P. S. Throughout this issue, there are ten article titles taken from books by or about Lewis. Can you spot them? (Answers p. 53)



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CHRISTIAN HISTORY



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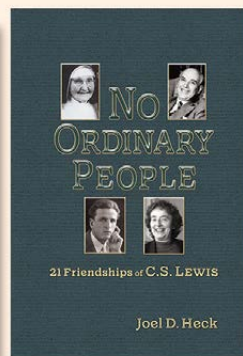
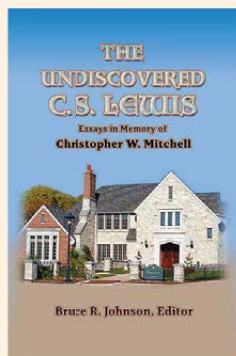
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THE UNDISCOVERED C. S. LEWIS

Essays in Memory of Christopher W. Mitchell
Bruce R. Johnson, Editor

Christopher Mitchell, former director of the Marion E. Wade Center, delivered a lecture titled "The Undiscovered C. S. Lewis" suggesting the path forward for future Lewis studies. In this collection, 18 leading scholars honor his vision and legacy with a wide range of essays.



NO ORDINARY PEOPLE

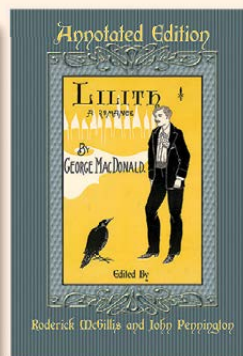
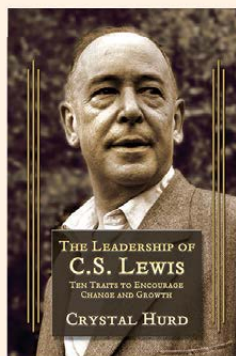
21 Friendships of C. S. Lewis
Joel D. Heck

The creator of the website Chronologically Lewis explores 21 friendships, some close and others casual, providing a look into the private life of one of the twentieth century's most engaging and effective writers. The book title comes from his famous sermon "The Weight of Glory".

THE LEADERSHIP OF C. S. LEWIS

Ten Traits to Encourage Change and Growth
Crystal Hurd

This book is for readers interested in developing leadership traits by examining how C. S. Lewis became such an influential spiritual leader for our times. The chapters include Humility, Morality, Vision, Courage, Intellect, Compassion, Duty, Inspiration, Resilience, and Creativity.



LILITH BY GEORGE MACDONALD

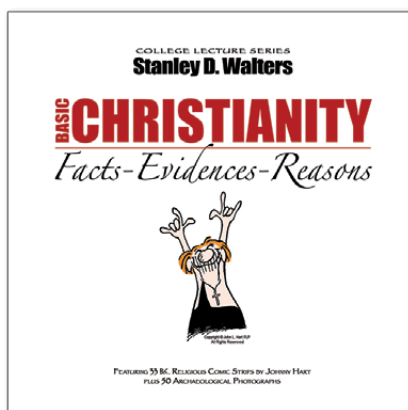
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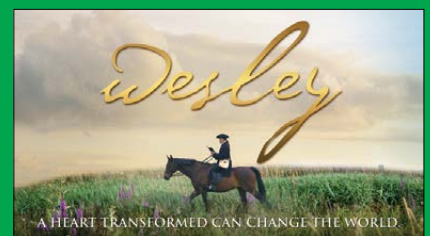
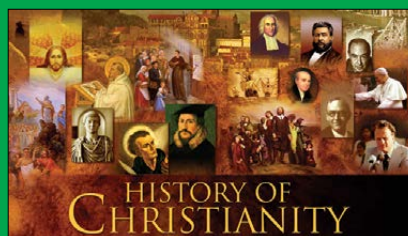
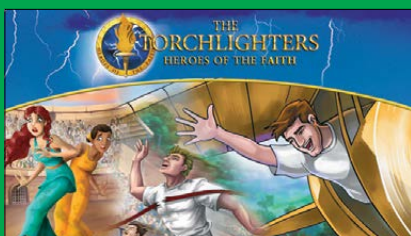
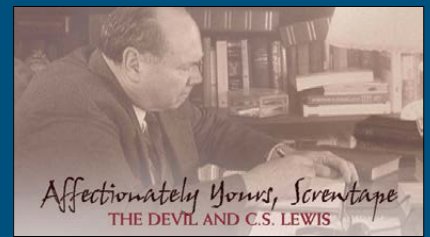
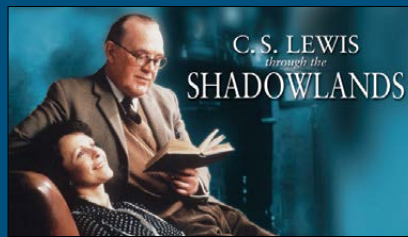
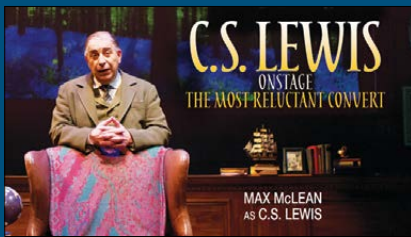
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C.S. Lewis sought joy and found Christ

THE SURPRISING STORY OF A MASTER STORYTELLER

Harry Lee Poe

C. S. Lewis (1898–1963) was a man of mystery and paradox. He gained renown as the most effective Christian apologist of the twentieth century, but never studied theology. While popularly identified with England, he was an Irishman, born in Belfast during the reign of Queen Victoria. He enjoyed a prolific and varied writing career, yet without flamboyance to accompany fame. His 65 years were filled to the brim with family life and joyous friendships but also physical and financial difficulties and the travail of two world wars.

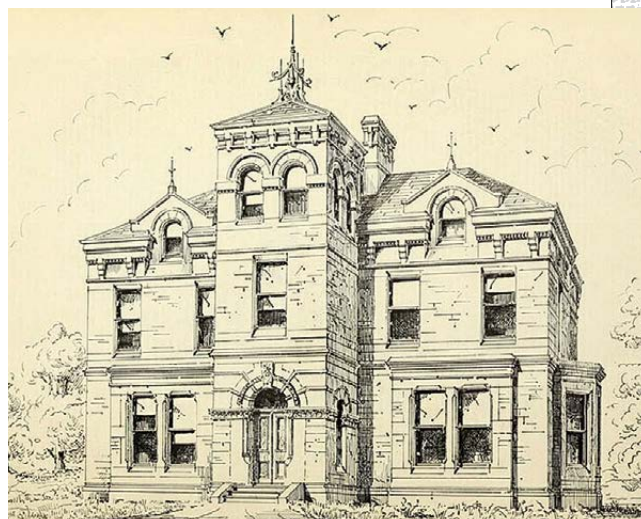
Flora and Albert Lewis (see pp. 20–23) named their second son Clive Staples, but young Lewis changed his name to “Jacks” (later “Jack”) as a small child. His loving parents provided him with a comfortable home supported by servants in the suburban hills of Holywood overlooking Belfast. He and his older brother, Warnie, (see pp. 30–34), played together and created imaginary worlds, which they wrote about and illustrated with drawings—until Warnie went away to boarding school in England in 1905.

BYGONE AGE Downtown Belfast, near Lewis’s childhood home, bustles with traffic around the time of his birth.

Beginning in his early childhood, Lewis had a recurring sensation—spiritual, mystical, and emotional—that touched him deeply. He first experienced it when Warnie made a miniature garden in the top of a tin cookie box with twigs and moss. When he looked back as an adult, he called the experience Joy (always capitalizing the term).

JOY TURNED TO SORROW

In 1908 Flora died of cancer, and Albert decided it was time for Jack to join Warnie at Wynyard School in Watford, north of London. At school English boys discriminated against the Lewis brothers because they had noticeable Irish accents. An English court ruled the headmaster insane, but he carried on as supervisor of boys whom he beat severely. When Warnie went to public school (what Americans would call a private



VANISHED CHILDHOOD Lewis (left in 1910) was born at Dundela (above), but moved to his beloved home Little Lea (see pp. 20–23) as a small child.

preparatory school) at Malvern College in 1909, Jack was left alone and friendless. In 1910 declining enrollment forced Wynyard to close. Albert Lewis brought Jack back to Belfast briefly, then sent him to Cherbourg Preparatory School in Malvern close to Warnie.

Warnie left Malvern College in July 1913, and Jack began in September. His experience was dreadful. He could not play sports with any success due to a congenital deformity of his thumbs, making it difficult to throw or catch a ball and contributing to his general sense of clumsiness. Other boys treated him cruelly; Jack withdrew into himself, preferring long solitary walks.

Fearing permanent psychological damage, Albert Lewis withdrew Jack in 1914 and sent him to live and study with W. T. Kirkpatrick (see p. 27), Albert's former headmaster. Now a private tutor, Kirkpatrick had recently prepared Warnie for the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. Just before leaving to study with Kirkpatrick, 16-year-old Jack made his first real friend, Arthur Greeves (1895–1966, see pp. 24–26), a sickly boy of 19 who lived nearby.

THE GREAT QUEST

Lewis thrived academically under Kirkpatrick but confirmed his atheism. He had wondered how God could allow his mother to die. Studying Greek and Roman mythologies at school, he had learned that ancient people made up stories to explain nature and elevated heroic figures to divine status. He reasoned that the Bible was no different. He had also discovered Norse mythologies, which awakened in him the same sensation he had

experienced when Warnie made his toy garden. Joy continued to surprise him—but he did not yet know its source.

Kirkpatrick trained Lewis in logic and Greek, inspiring him to pursue a career as a philosopher. In the evenings Lewis pored over literature from the epics of Homer to the novels of Jane Austen. Often he encountered a medieval story type that renewed his experience of Joy: a tale of a journey to the end of the world in which a hero sacrifices everything to pursue a great prize and is changed in the course of the quest. This form underlies stories by William Morris (1834–1896), Thomas Malory (c. 1415–1471), and Edmund Spenser (1552–1599); and, not least, George MacDonald's (1824–1905) *Phantastes* (1858).

In spring 1917 Lewis left Kirkpatrick to begin his studies at Oxford in the midst of war. He enrolled in the Officer Training Corps at Oxford, rooming with Paddy Moore (1898–1918). Paddy's mother, Janie King Moore (see p. 35), took all of Paddy's friends under her wing, and Lewis was enchanted by her mothering. By the fall of 1917, Lewis and Paddy Moore were sent to the trenches of France as newly minted junior officers. Before their departure they made a pact in keeping with the stories of chivalry that Lewis had been reading. If one should die in the war, the other would care for his remaining parent. Lewis was severely wounded in May 1918 and spent the rest of the war convalescing; Moore was killed. During his recovery Lewis published his first book, a collection of poems, *Spirits in Bondage* (1919).

In 1919 Lewis returned to Oxford to complete his education with a full scholarship; Janie Moore and her daughter, Maureen, returned with him. Lewis set up a household with them, an arrangement that would last until 1951. Completing his undergraduate degree in



“THIS IS FAIRY GOLD” Many influences formed Lewis’s imagination—from Greek myths (*above*) to *Phantastes* (his copy is *above right*) to stories of Norse gods (*right*).

ancient Greek language, literature, and philosophy in 1922, Lewis could not find a job teaching philosophy, so he stayed at Oxford another year at Albert Lewis’s expense to complete a second degree in English literature.

SMART CHRISTIANS?

During his year in the English School, Lewis made a number of new friends. One, Nevill Coghill (1899–1980), was a brilliant student whose Christian faith shocked Lewis, who did not think intelligent people could be Christians. Coghill encouraged Lewis in his writing and helped him publish his second book, a long poem in celebration of atheism called *Dymer* (1926).

Lewis’s other new friends were Owen Barfield (1898–1997; see pp. 45–48) and Cecil Harwood, both of whom embraced anthroposophy (see p. 1). Stories of chivalry had convinced Lewis that values of right and wrong exist and cannot be explained by the natural world. His discussions with Barfield persuaded Lewis that some sort of mind lies behind the universe.

Lewis received a one-year appointment to teach philosophy in 1924. While trying to explain to his students how values of right and wrong could arise within



the natural order, he instead convinced himself that these values could only arise from *outside* the physical world. In his lectures he began using the word “god” but without meaning the personal deity of the Bible.

In 1925 he took a regular teaching post in English literature at Magdalen College and became friends with the new professor of Anglo-Saxon, J. R. R. Tolkien (1892–1973; see pp. 45–48), a Christian who would influence the final phase of Lewis’s spiritual quest—believing in the God of the Bible who became incarnate as Jesus.

NEW QUESTS Lewis's friendship with Paddy Moore (right with mustache—Lewis is on the left) led him to his lifelong connection to Janie Moore; his friendships with Tolkien and Dyson (below, l-r) led to his conversion.



Lewis and Tolkien shared a love of Norse mythology, and Lewis soon became part of a reading group Tolkien had started (and Coghill attended) to learn Old Icelandic. This led to Lewis and Tolkien meeting to talk about mythology. Eventually Tolkien showed Lewis a book he was writing about Middle-earth. Out of these beginnings, Tolkien would eventually tell the stories of *The Hobbit* (1937) and *The Lord of the Rings* (1954–1955).

A FATEFUL RIDE

Though Lewis finally accepted the existence of God, he could not see why such a God would take on flesh and go to the cross. One night in September 1931, Tolkien and English professor Hugo Dyson (1896–1975) joined Lewis for dinner. After dinner as they walked the grounds of Magdalen College, Lewis told them that he liked the dying-and-rising-god myth everywhere except in the Gospels. The story of Jesus seemed to him just the same old myth. His friends helped him see that it *is* the same old story with one exception—it is the *one* myth that actually happened. This insight had a powerful effect on him, and a few days later while riding to the zoo in Warnie's motorcycle sidecar, he realized that he did believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

After Barfield moved to London to join his father's law practice, Tolkien, Dyson, Coghill, and Warnie Lewis became Lewis's most important friends in Oxford; they played a major role in his writing and formed a writing club called the Inklings. During the



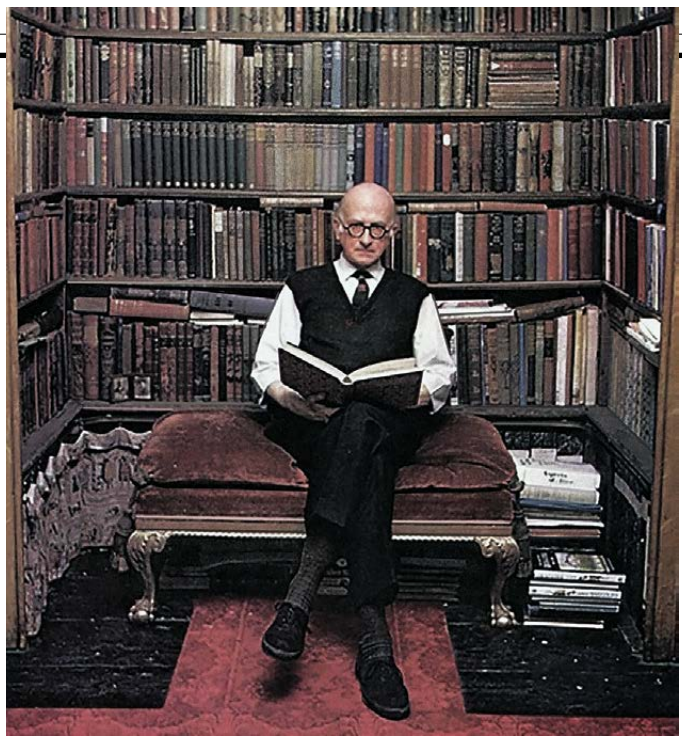
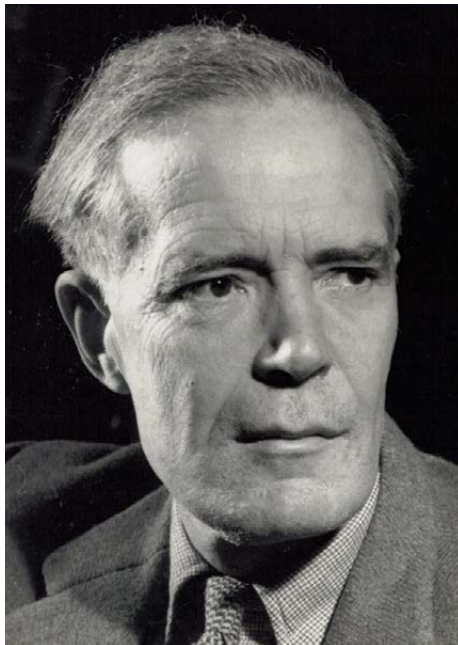
1930s and 1940s, the Inklings heard the first readings of Lewis's *Out of the Silent Planet* (1938) and *The Problem of Pain* (1940). Lewis wrote quickly, but Tolkien struggled with his writing, depending on Lewis to help him get through the dry periods and finish *The Lord of the Rings*.

When World War II began, Warnie Lewis was called up to active service after seven years of retirement. Jack thought he would be called up for active duty as well as he was not yet 40, but he was not. Instead he remained at Magdalen and devoted himself to what he called his "war work." Most of his writing and speaking during the war came at the request of other people.

He wrote *The Problem of Pain* at the request of the publisher who wanted to help the public deal with the war. He gave radio broadcast talks, later edited and published as *Mere Christianity* (1952), at the request of a BBC director. He spent many weekends speaking at Royal Air Force bases. The University of North Wales invited him for a series of guest lectures, which became *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (1942), and the University of Durham asked him to give the Riddell Lectures, published as *The Abolition of Man* (1943). Cambridge University invited him to deliver the Clark Lectures, which enabled him to begin a major critical work for Oxford University Press—*English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (1954).

The war also brought new friends. In 1939 Charles Williams (1886–1945; see pp. 45–48) moved to Oxford as one of the staff of Oxford University Press. Williams earned his living as an editor, but was as prolific a writer as Lewis. Lewis loved Williams's seven novels, which he called "theological shockers," but found Williams's poetry and plays difficult and obscure, as did most readers. Williams soon joined the Inklings.

During the war Lewis's imaginative fiction included *The Screwtape Letters* (1942) and *The Great Divorce* (1945), both beginning as weekly installments in a Church of England newspaper. He also wrote his second and third science fiction novels, *Perelandra* (1943) and *That Hideous Strength* (1945).



Williams died suddenly on May 15, 1945, just after the end of World War II. The Inklings were never the same. The writing club still met on Thursday evenings until 1949, when one night no one turned up. The friends continued assembling on Tuesday mornings at the Eagle and Child pub until 1954 when Lewis accepted a position as professor of medieval and renaissance literature at Cambridge University. Then they moved their meeting to Monday morning to accommodate Lewis's weekly commute to Cambridge, as he continued to live with Warnie at The Kilns, their home in Headington.

FAWNS AND FATHER CHRISTMAS

Soon after Williams's death, Lewis struck up a friendship with Roger Lancelyn Green (1918–1987), a recent Oxford graduate. Green was interested in the same kinds of stories as Lewis, and he was writing a children's story. Ready for something different, Lewis, too, began writing a children's story, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950). Tolkien did not like the tale because it mixed too many elements from different cultures, such as fawns and Father Christmas. Tolkien and Lewis gradually drifted apart and rarely saw one another after Lewis began teaching in Cambridge.

Janie Moore died in 1951. In 1950 Lewis had begun corresponding with Joy Davidman Gresham, an ethnically Jewish American who had been an active member of the Communist Party before her conversion to Christianity (see pp. 36–39). She was a poet and novelist in a strained marriage; her husband Bill Gresham (1909–1962), also a writer and an ex-Communist, was an alcoholic and a serial adulterer. During Joy's first trip to England, Bill began an affair with Joy's cousin Renée. Joy and Bill divorced, and Joy moved to England permanently with her two sons, David and Douglas.

OTHER INKLINGS At different times Nevill Coghill (left) and Roger Lancelyn Green (above) befriended and encouraged Jack Lewis.

Lewis liked Davidman's lively intellect, and she loved Lewis. When her visa expired in 1956, Lewis offered to extend citizenship to her through a civil marriage as a secret formality so she could remain in England. They lived in separate homes until Davidman developed cancer later that year. At what they thought was her hospital deathbed in 1957, they were married a second time in a Christian service by the Rev. Peter Bide (1912–2003) who prayed for her healing. The cancer went into remission, and Davidman moved to The Kilns.

During their marriage Lewis wrote several academic books as well as a story he had been attempting for decades, a retelling of the Cupid and Psyche myth. With Joy encouraging his writing as Greeves, Barfield, Tolkien, Williams, and Green had once done, Lewis finished *Till We Have Faces* (1956), a novel many consider his finest work of fiction.

Lewis recorded the depth of his grief following Davidman's death in 1960 in a private diary published under a pseudonym as *A Grief Observed* (1961). His own health had been poor since an episode sent him to the hospital in 1948, and it now declined rapidly. He died at The Kilns on November 22, 1963, the same day President John Kennedy was assassinated. He is buried at nearby Holy Trinity Church, where he and his brother share a common tombstone. ☒

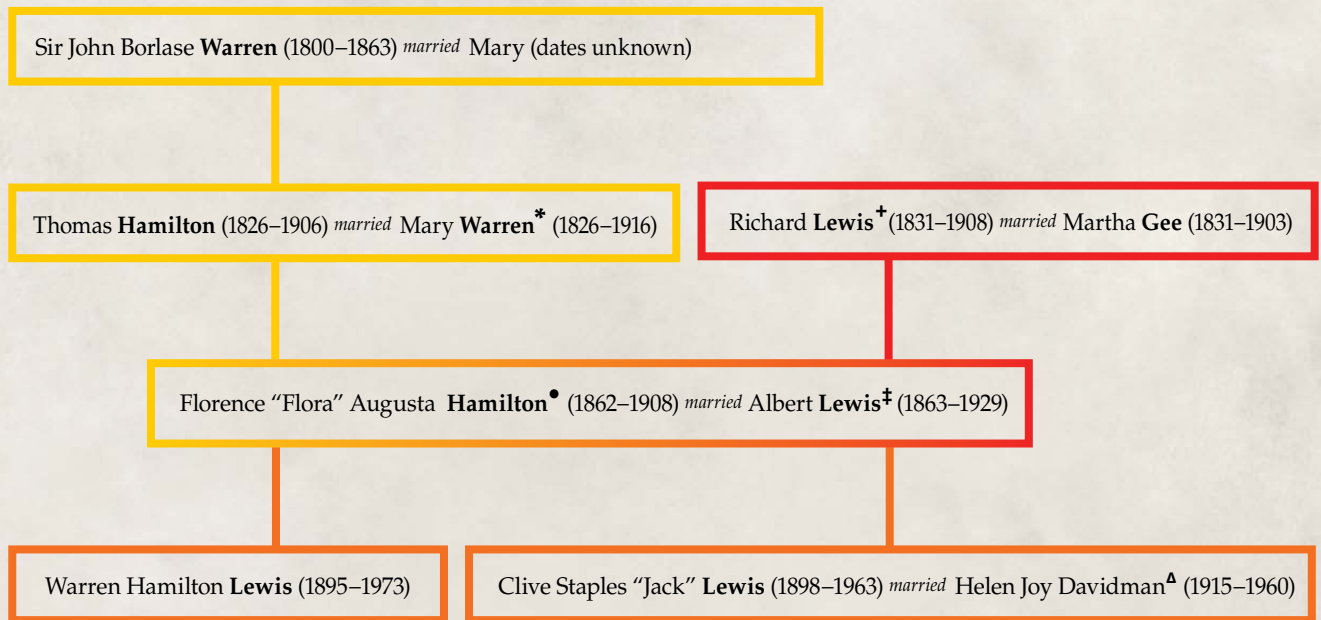
Harry Lee Poe is Charles Colson Professor of Faith and Culture at Union University in Jackson, Tennessee. He is the founder of the Inklings Fellowship and has published 17 books including Becoming C. S. Lewis and The Making of C. S. Lewis.



“Two very different strains”

SOME OF LEWIS’S FAMILY MEMBERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE MENTIONED IN HIS LETTERS AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

LOOK AT THE **BIRDIE** Albert (*top left*), Warnie (*top right*), and Jack (*below Warnie*) pose for a family picture with Mary Warren Hamilton (*grandmother, bottom left*), Anne Sargent Harley Hamilton (*aunt, bottom right*), and young Hamilton cousins.



Δ *divorced* William Lindsay **Gresham**

* Mary Warren’s sister Charlotte (1824–1886) married Robert Heard; their daughter Mary Warren Heard (1850–1939), Flora Hamilton’s cousin, married baronet Sir William Quartus Ewart (1844–1919). Lewis often spoke of time spent with his Ewart relatives.

• Siblings: Lillian “Aunt Lily,” Hugh, Augustus “Gussie”

† Lived with Flora and Albert

‡ Siblings: Martha, Sarah Jane, Joseph, William “Limpopo,” Richard. William (1859–1946) and Richard (1861–?) are the Scottish uncles Lewis often refers to in his letters. Joseph’s son Joey became a doctor and attended Albert Lewis on his deathbed.

Spending a pleasant hour with C. S. Lewis



WORDS OF LIFE Lewis, a voracious reader, looks at a book in the common room at The Kilns.

The question of category always proves thorny with Lewis; for example, where do you place *The Screwtape Letters*? Speculative fiction, books of letters, imaginative theology? Lewis certainly challenged the limits of genre. What follows represents my attempt to draw some broadly helpful boundaries. If you want to read more deeply and widely in Lewis's writings, I suggest you start as follows.

LETTERS, DIARIES, AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

One of the greatest treasures for those who want to understand Lewis comes in the form of his extensive correspondence, more than 3,800 pages of published letters. Walter Hooper (see pp. 45–48) estimated that Lewis answered some 50,000 letters in his lifetime. Lewis's letters are terse, humble, funny, and helpful and offer unmatched insight into his daily life (and extensive reading!).

The three-volume *Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis* (2000, 2005) contains Lewis's correspondence throughout his

life. This exhaustive collection gathers every letter, including those found in other collections (*Letters to Children*, etc). But beware—open a volume anywhere and an entirely pleasant hour might slip by before you notice.

Lewis kept a diary between 1922 and 1927; *All My Road Before Me* (1992) reveals much about his Oxford home life, university studies, and early teaching.

It seems as though Lewis was trying to write his spiritual autobiography for most of his life. Beginning with the long-unknown *Early Prose Joy* (2013) manuscript, Lewis tried several times to tell the story of his conversion. *The Pilgrim's Regress* (1933) remains obscure to many; Lewis later admitted he wrote it before he learned how to make things easier for readers. Written

A GUIDE TO LEWIS'S WRITINGS FOR THE NEW READER

Andrew Lazo

Often when I speak about C. S. Lewis, the same questions arise over and over: "I've never read C. S. Lewis—where should I start?" or "What book by Lewis should I read next?"

The sheer breadth and depth of Lewis's writings (more than 50 books, scores of essays, dozens of poems, and more than 3,800 pages of published letters) make these questions nearly impossible to answer. Usually I pivot the question by asking folks what they like to read, citing Lewis's statement, "I never read more than a page and a half of a book I didn't enjoy." Then I suggest titles by Lewis that correspond to their tastes. Here I attempt briefly to describe the different categories of Lewis's writings, adding key recommendations about where to begin.

NOT A TAME LION Many readers have found their way into Lewis's works through the Narnia stories.

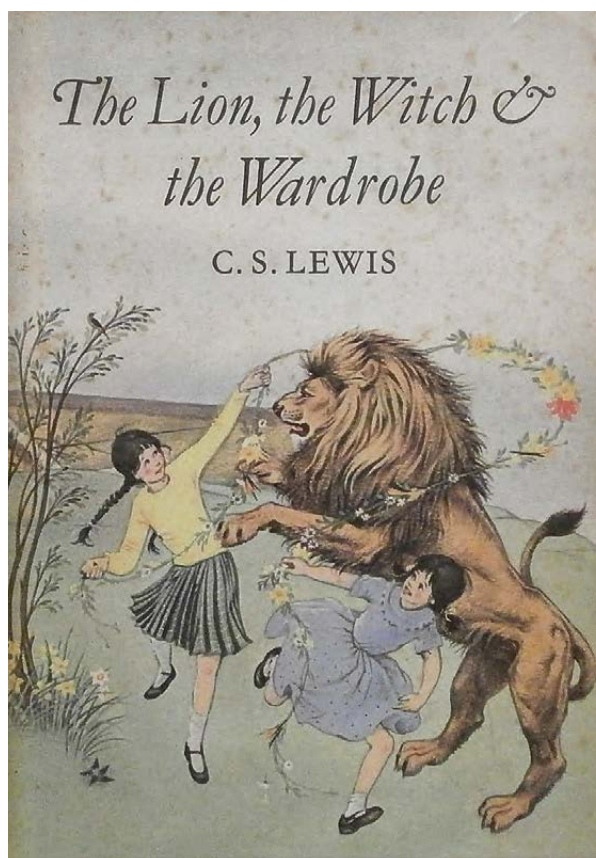
during the same period that he penned the Chronicles of Narnia (1948–1953), *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* (1955) remains his most accessible attempt. We can also consider as autobiographical *A Grief Observed* (1961), which journals Lewis's loss of his wife, Joy Davidman, to cancer.

Start Here: The shorter, one-volume *Letters of C. S. Lewis* (1966, 1988), originally collected by Lewis's brother, Warren, and later revised, expanded, and edited by Walter Hooper, will get you well on your way into his letters. *Surprised by Joy* traces Lewis's spiritual journey.

FICTION AND POETRY

Lewis is perhaps best known for the Chronicles of Narnia and rightly so. But his first published fiction, variously known as the "Cosmic," or "Space," or "Ransom" Trilogy (1938, 1943, 1945) was Lewis's foray into science fiction, a genre he loved. Two classics, *The Screwtape Letters* (1942) and *The Great Divorce* (1945), offer excellent examples of speculative fiction.

Although Lewis considered his last novel *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold* (1956), "far and away my best book," this psychological novel retelling the Cupid and Psyche myth remains challenging to many readers. He also wrote a number of short stories of varying quality, many of which later appeared in *The Dark Tower: And Other Stories* (1977). Finally, *Boxen* (1985), a book of stories Lewis and his brother, Warnie, wrote and illustrated as boys, offers an interesting though uninspired glimpse of the future author.



As a young man, Lewis held a grand (though ultimately failed) ambition to make a name for himself as a poet. He published two poorly received books of poetry, including *Spirits in Bondage* (1919) just after his service in World War I and the book-length narrative poem *Dymer* (1926). Don W. King's *The Collected Poems of C. S. Lewis: A Critical Edition* (2015), assembles the rest of Lewis's poetry, some of which previously

How to read Lewis: some suggestions

A few key principles will likely increase and sustain your enjoyment

- C. S. Lewis scholar Jerry Root rightly recommends Lewis as a lifelong author and one who repays careful reading and rereading. So settle in for years of wisdom and delight!

- Only read what you enjoy. If you like it, continue; if not, try something else—after all, Lewis himself read like this!

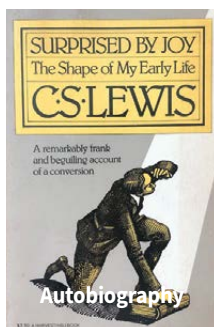
- Read deliberately. Lewis mentions how crucial it is to define

and describe, so make sure to look up unfamiliar words, pay attention to punctuation, and trace how he develops arguments from one thought to another.

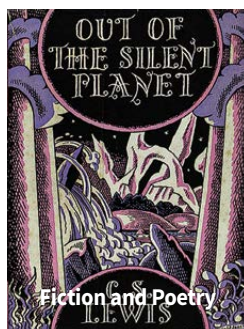
- Lewis wrote for the ear as well as the eye; it might surprise you to see how much more sense some of his denser passages make when read aloud, especially with someone else. And, stop along the way, unpacking

a sentence or thought until it comes through clearly.

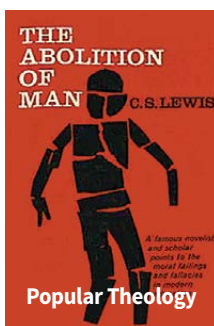
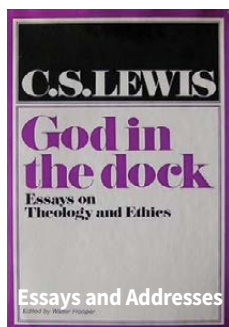
- Context and chronology are key. The meaning and import of any particular passage often reflects what Lewis was thinking and experiencing when he wrote. Usually the same or similar thoughts echo throughout a book, a poem, some letters, and an essay composed around the same time.



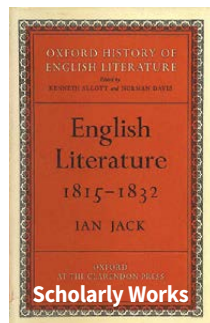
Autobiography



Fiction and Poetry



Popular Theology



Scholarly Works

appeared pseudonymously in various periodicals and some of which remained unpublished in his lifetime.

Start Here: *The Screwtape Letters* rightly made Lewis famous all over the world and remains humorously and incisively invigorating. Read the *Chronicles of Narnia* in their originally published order, beginning with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950); try the Full-Color Collector's Edition (2000). As for the poetry, the shorter paperback collection *Poems* (1964) will get most readers started on Lewis's verse.

POPULAR THEOLOGY

In the 1940s Lewis devoted much time and ink to defending traditional Christian faith, producing such apologetic works as *The Problem of Pain* (1940), *Miracles* (1947), and a series of broadcast talks on the BBC during WWII that he would later gather into the landmark *Mere Christianity* (1952).

Other popular theological books include *The Abolition of Man* (1943), *George MacDonald: An Anthology* (1946), *Reflections on the Psalms* (1958), and *Letters to Malcolm, Chiefly on Prayer* (1964).

Start Here: *Mere Christianity* continues to challenge and inspire some 80 years after its writing with no signs of abating. Its effective arguments and charming analogies continue to delight thoughtful readers.

ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES

Lewis wrote scores of essays and addresses, and his style, wit, and piercing wisdom show up to great advantage in them, making these shorter works an excellent way to discover Lewis. They cover a broad range of topics, especially literature, theology, and contemporary issues.

AN EMBARRASSMENT OF RICHES Lewis's books (examples at left) span genres and immerse the reader in absorbing fictional worlds and new realizations.

Start Here: For sermons, speeches, and talks, begin with *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses* (1949), especially the title sermon and "Learning in War-Time." *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics* (1970) provides a wide array of key essays.

SCHOLARLY WORKS

While somewhat specialized, this category contains excellent examples of Lewis's muscular style and astounding grasp of literature, demonstrating the greatness that first brought him academic acclaim. Beginning with *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (1936), Lewis solidified his place as one of the preeminent English literature scholars of the twentieth century.

The extensively researched *Oxford History of English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama* (1954) still demands scholarly attention. *Selected Literary Essays* (1969) assembles some of Lewis's most important literary analyses. And the complex yet compact *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (1964) offers an intriguing entry into this period that so captivated Lewis (and Tolkien) in their professional careers.

Start Here: The short collection *On Stories: And Other Essays about Literature* (1982) contains some of Lewis's most important thoughts on the writing of Narnia, as well as key essays about friends such as Charles Williams, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Dorothy L. Sayers. In *An Experiment in Criticism* (1961), Lewis invitingly offers a crucial new way to think about literature and the reading process.

QUOTATIONS AND SELECTIONS

You can find excerpted selections of Lewis's readings and compiled quotations in books such as *A Year with C. S. Lewis* (2009) and *A Year with Aslan* (2010), as well as *The Joyful Christian* (1977) and *The Business of Heaven* (1984). Regarding quotations, the magisterial *The Quotable Lewis* (1990) will likely fill most of your needs while keeping you engaged for hours.

Start Here: The two best books in this category remain Clyde Kilby's excellent *A Mind Awake: An Anthology of C. S. Lewis* (1968) and Walter Hooper's caringly edited *Readings for Meditation and Reflection* (1996).

Happy reading! ☞

Andrew Lazo is an internationally known teacher, speaker, and writer specializing in C. S. Lewis and the Inklings. He is the coeditor of Mere Christians: Inspiring Encounters with C. S. Lewis, from which this is adapted.

“To love at all is to be vulnerable”

An American bishop, a Swedish theologian, and a powerful book

By the 1950s C. S. Lewis's fame as an author, inspired theologian, and articulate communicator had caught the attention of Caroline Rakestraw (1912–1993), founder of the Episcopal Radio-TV Foundation. Rakestraw asked ERTVF board member Bishop Henry Louttit (1903–1984) to invite Lewis to deliver a set of radio talks for the *Episcopal Radio Hour*. Rakestraw and Louttit left the subject matter to Lewis's choosing. “My dear Lord Bishop,” Lewis responded on May 1, 1958, “I think I can undertake what you suggest.”

The subject close to his mind at that moment, he noted, was “the four Loves—*Storge*, *Philia*, *Eros*, and *Agape*. This seems to bring in nearly the whole of Christian ethics.” Lewis had actually been mulling over thoughts on the subject for decades, having read the first part of Swedish theologian Anders Nygren's (1890–1978) *Agape and Eros* (1930) in the mid-1930s; at the time, he wrote to a colleague about the book, “I must tackle [Nygren] again. He has shaken me up extremely.” References to his thoughts on Nygren and on love continue to resurface in his letters; in a letter only a few months after Lewis recorded the talks, he noted to an American professor of English, Corbin Scott Carnell (1929–2017), that Nygren's book was among the relatively few modern ones that had influenced him. (He also made clear to Carnell that he did not agree with much of it.)

TEN TALKS BECOME FOUR LOVES

Lewis met Rakestraw in London and recorded “The Four Loves” in a single day on August 19, 1958. The 10 short talks were broadcast in the United States in 1959; that might have been the end of it, except that Lewis decided to turn them into a book. Though the book he wrote did not mention Nygren by name, Lewis implicitly critiqued Nygren's approach of sharply differentiating what Lewis represented as “need-love” and “gift-love.” Of course, Lewis argued, the gift-love God has toward us is the highest form of love, but it is our need-love for God that drives us to him; “the highest cannot stand without the lowest,” as Lewis quoted from the *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis (1380–1471).

Rather than Nygren's twofold opposition of *eros* against *agape*, Lewis developed an outline of three natural loves: Affection (*storge*), Friendship (*philia*), and *Eros* (“that kind of love which lovers are ‘in,’”), and one divine love (*agape* or charity). When defining the three natural loves, he was careful to note how each reflects both need-love and gift-love, and how each could both

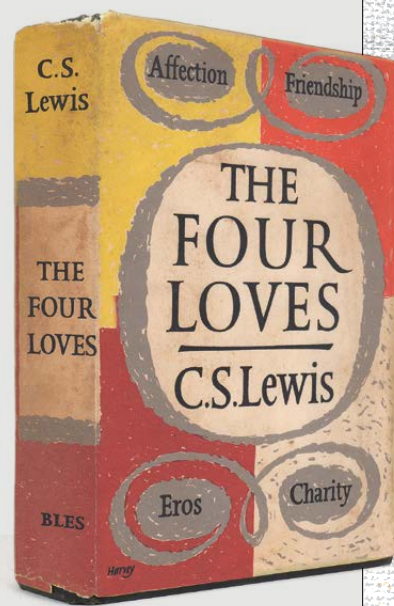
LOVE AND BROADCASTING *The Four Loves* was one of several books that Lewis based on lectures or radio talks (see p. 13).

serve as a means of approach to the divine—but if abused and wrongly indulged in, usurp worship and authority that belongs to God alone. “Love ceases to be a demon when he ceases to be a god,” Lewis quoted from the Swiss author Denis de Rougemont (1906–1985): adding that this could be “restated in the form ‘begins to be a demon the moment he begins to be a god.’”

One of the many fascinating things about the book is spotting the loves of Lewis's own life as examples. Mrs. Fidget who “lives for her family” (whether they want her to or not) in Affection may be one of the many portraits of Janie Moore (p. 33) in Lewis's works. Ronald and Charles, who show up in the Friendship chapter, are of course J. R. R. Tolkien and Charles Williams (see pp. 45–48)—and Lewis briefly, but touchingly, laments never again seeing Tolkien react to one of Williams's jokes. While Lewis does not mention Joy Davidman by name in the chapter on *Eros*, he wrote after her death to American correspondent Donovan Aylard (1933–2019): “My married life was very short; it surpassed in happiness all the rest of my life. You'll find anything I have to say about marriage in my *The Four Loves*.”

Lewis's ultimate goal, of course, was to root our experience of these natural loves in our experience of divine *agape*. There, and only there, he argued, do they find their proper place and their ultimate fulfillment. In heaven, he concludes, we will not abandon all our “earthly Beloveds,” but will find them in Christ: “By loving Him more than them we shall love them more than we do now.”

Yet one of the book's most penetrating passages speaks not of *agape*'s ultimate fulfillment, but of what we may endure on the way: “To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly be broken.” Only by that vulnerability, only by that death and breaking that leads to life, can we learn to love as Christ loves, and to love Christ by loving our earthly beloveds well. —Jennifer Woodruff Tait, managing editor, Christian History





“A long line of bookish people”

LEWIS'S PARENTS AND EXTENDED FAMILY SHAPED HIS INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC PURSUITS

Crystal Hurd

In his autobiography C. S. Lewis wrote that he was the product of “good parents, good food, and a garden.” His parents—police court solicitor Albert James Lewis (1863–1929) and mathematician-turned-housewife Florence (Flora) Hamilton Lewis (1862–1908)—were two intriguing individuals in their own right. Lewis mentions the “endless books” stacked some two-deep on shelves throughout their home, Little Lea, reflecting Albert and Flora’s shared love of reading and writing. Their artistic and spiritual influences, as well as those of their extended family, played a significant role in the development of both Jack and his brother, Warren (Warnie).

A WOODEN WARDROBE

Lewis described his parents as “bookish or ‘clever’ people” but added that “two very different strains had gone to our making.” His father’s family hailed from Welsh stock; Lewis characterized them as “sentimental, passionate, and rhetorical, easily moved both to anger and to tenderness.” His father originated from a line of boilermakers. His grandfather Richard,

JOYS OF CHILDHOOD Flora Lewis (at back, right) plays with children outside Little Lea, including Jack (front center).

originally working class, migrated to Belfast to establish the firm MacIlwaine and Lewis: Boiler-makers, Engineers, and Iron Ship Builders. Richard carved the family’s wooden wardrobe in Lewis’s childhood home that provided the inspiration for the wardrobe into Narnia.

Richard Lewis was an intelligent man, writing and presenting religious essays to Cork Steamship Company’s Workmen’s Library. Warnie called him part of the “working class intelligentsia in the forefront of that artisan renaissance which gave birth to the trades union and Co-operative movements.” Richard and his wife, Martha, had seven children: Martha (1854–1860), Sarah Jane (c. 1856–1901), Joseph (1856–1908), William “Limpopo” (1859–1946), Richard (1861–?), and Albert James (1863–1929). William and the younger Richard, the “Scottish uncles,” crop up often in C. S. Lewis’s *Collected Letters*; like their enterprising father, they



moved to Glasgow and opened a business—W. & R. Lewis, Rope and Twine Manufacturers.

Jack and Warnie had a bevy of cousins and were close to many as children. Their cousin Joseph Lewis (1898–1969), affectionately “Ted” to family, was the physician who tended to Albert Lewis in his final weeks. Dr. Lewis had a generally eventful career; he spent time as house physician at the Royal Hospital, served abroad as a doctor, and was taken prisoner in Benghazi after the fall of Tobruk. After his release he served as a medic at Normandy and was one of the first British physicians to enter Belsen Concentration Camp after its liberation.

“THE CLEVEREST”

Albert James Lewis, the youngest of Richard’s sons, seemed cut from a different cloth than his entrepreneurial brothers. Recognized as the “cleverest and least commercially minded,” Albert was cut out for further education. He began attending Lurgan College at the age of 14 (in his final months, he told his family that this was due to constant conflicts with his brothers). At the time Lurgan was under the leadership of W. T. Kirkpatrick (see p. 27). Albert soon found a passion for public speaking and fostered political ambitions.

In February of 1885, Albert took his solicitor’s exams and “qualified with distinction.” He had apprenticed with Jasper Boyle of McLean, Boyle, and McLean since August of 1880 and was swiftly rising into a promising career in Belfast politics as a conservative candidate. His speeches drew enthusiastic crowds, though some were a bit critical of his exuberance, a criticism echoed by his son Jack. However, Albert abandoned those plans and accepted a post as police court solicitor, a position he maintained for nearly 30 years.

OPPOSITES ATTRACTED Flora (*left*) was not interested in Albert (*below*, in his study) at first, but they eventually bonded over their shared love of books and writing.



Albert *also* had early aspirations to be a writer. Unfortunately, aside from his brief time at Lurgan, he had neither the financial means nor the opportunity to attend public schools (private schools in the American sense)—deficits he hoped to correct for his own sons.

Nevertheless, through speeches about Irish Home Rule (self-government for Ireland), Albert became a popular and well-respected rhetorician whose articles appeared in local publications. His parents were pleased; his father’s partner John MacIlwaine told him, “I think with practice and experience, you should make a really good writer, and I hope you will stick with it.” Albert eventually wrote several short stories and poems, including “The Story of a Half Sovereign,” recently published in *Sehnsucht: The C. S. Lewis Journal*.

Readers of *Surprised by Joy* will recall C. S. Lewis’s disdain for his father’s more irritating habits: being loud and emphatic, talking incessantly of local politics, demanding to have his dinner at 2:30 in the afternoon, and insisting that the windows at Little Lea remained closed despite the weather. Warren characterized him in the Lewis Family Papers as having “a vivid imagination and a love of rhetoric” and “an almost Chinese sense of drama. . . he saw life in terms of a stage play—sometimes a melodrama—in which it behooved him to give of his best in whatever role chance or his own inclinations had temporarily cast him.”



SMILE AT THE CAMERA Family members gather in 1899 (left) including Albert, Flora, and Jack (far right), and Warnie (in the front row).

OUT FOR A STROLL Albert and his brother Joseph walk on the beach in 1903 (below).



liberal stance for such a conservative woman.

Lewis biographers Robert Lancelyn Green and Walter Hooper called Mary “infinitely [her husband’s] superior in energy and intelligence.” She was a “clever and aristocratic woman,” a “typical daughter of a Southern Irish [lord] of the mid-nineteenth century, and the Rectory at Dundela reflected her tastes.”

Warnie wrote that his grandmother’s home smelled of cats and was punctuated by dirty rooms. Her bejeweled hands also revealed evidence of her enthusiastic involvement in poultry farming. At dinner she gave visitors a chair bearing “three sound legs” while eating perfectly cooked salmon “off of a chipped kitchen dish.”

Thomas and Mary had four children: Lillian (1860–1934), Florence Augusta (1862–1908), Hugh Cecil Waldgrave (1864–1900),

and Augustus Warren (1866–1945). “Aunt Lily” had no children of her own and was quite fond of her nephew Jack, calling him “Cleeve.” Aunt Lily had a prodigious intellect, and she waxed philosophical on varied subjects. Her nephew characterized her as “a clever but eccentric woman” who, like her mother, Mary, was often surrounded by cats; her conversation was “like an old drawer, full of both rubbish and valuable things, but all thrown together in great disorder.” She read early drafts of *Dymer*, Lewis’s first narrative poem, and provided feedback.

Jack and Warnie’s uncle Hugh Hamilton moved to Queensland and became a sheep farmer, serving in the South African War (1899–1902) as captain of the Queensland Artillery. Uncle Augustus, or “Gussie,” was—like his sister Flora—a brilliant mathematician. However, Mary Hamilton did not allow him to attend university for unknown reasons, so he founded the firm of Hamilton and McMaster, marine boilermakers and engineers. Gussie was one of his brother-in-law Albert’s best friends.

Flora was not the most adored of her siblings, but when she attended university in her twenties, she revealed her true talents as a scholar. On college mathematics examinations in 1881, she achieved a “First Plus”

The Lewis brothers would later regret disparaging their father. Jack wrote to Warren during the selection of Albert’s casket that his uncles and father were characteristic of many “big Victorian families” whose social universe was almost exclusively focused on family relationships. Later Jack met a friend’s father and mournfully admitted in a letter that it made him remember “how abominably I had treated my father.”

“A COOLER RACE”

In contrast to the working-class Welsh farmers prominent in the Lewis clan, Lewis’s mother’s family, the Hamiltons, came from a long line of educated Anglican clergymen and attorneys. They even had connections to Robert the Bruce, famed medieval king of Scotland. Lewis called his mother’s family a “cooler race” who “went straight for [happiness] as experienced travellers go for the best seat in a train.”

His grandfather Reverend Thomas Hamilton (1826–1905), educated at Trinity College in Dublin, spent time as a naval chaplain. Hamilton later served as rector at St. Mark’s Dundela in Belfast (where he baptized his grandsons) and vocally opposed the Catholic Church. His wife, Mary (1826–1916), was an outspoken advocate for Irish Home Rule, a decidedly

MEETING OF MINDS? Lewis is about 20 in this picture with Albert (*right*).

A GOODLY HERITAGE Both Jack and Warnie were baptized by their grandfather Hamilton at St. Mark's Dundela (*below*).

(mid-range of First Class Honours, the highest possible rank) in geometry, a First Plus Three (near the top of First Class Honours) in algebra, Second Class Honour in logic, and Lower Pass Division in theory of music. Despite this stellar achievement, she could not, as a woman, "in fairness be considered as [a competitor] for Senior prizes."

Warren wrote that his mother,

like her brother Augustus, was a brilliant mathematician, and had her youth been lived in the period of female emancipation, [she] would almost certainly have [graduated with] a good degree. She retained her interest in mathematics to the end of her life.

Flora's early academic success may have catalyzed two different attempts to allow women to take courses at Queen's College—attempts met with substantial opposition. Despite this Flora remained at Queen's and its successor, the Royal University. With the support of the college president, the college council agreed to allow women to attend art lectures in 1882. Male "practical jokers" burned cayenne-pepper pods in a physics class in the presence of women to express their angst. Undeterred, Flora earned a passing score on the Examination in Arts with First Class Honours in logic and Second Class Honours in mathematics, finally earning a BA in 1886 at age 24.

WITH FONDEST LOVE


Albert and Flora began their courtship after she had already refused him on multiple occasions; it was their shared love of the written word that ultimately brought her around. Flora sent her now-extinct short story, "The Princess Rosetta," published in *The Household Journal*, for Albert's assessment. He praised the story as a work of great talent, and they bonded over shared appreciation for the writings of John Ruskin.

The two married in 1894. Unlike conventional Victorian parents of the day, they collaborated on responding to their sons' academic aspirations. The boys were allowed unlimited access to Albert's extensive library; he was a great lover of poetry (especially Tennyson), as well as of Shakespeare, Dickens, and Anthony Trollope.

Flora had little interest in poetry; she preferred George Meredith and Leo Tolstoy. She took her boys to the Irish and French coasts and allowed them to explore. Flora also taught her sons how to play chess, instructed them in Latin and French, and tutored



Warnie in mathematics. She modeled a strong and resilient faith in the midst of her last illness. Her final gift to each son was a Bible purchased shortly before her death, inscribed "from Mammy with fondest love."

Too often we admire the beauty of one great bloom and fail to see the magnificence of the garden surrounding it: the soil that nurtures it, the textured greenery that complements it. The Lewis and Hamilton families made substantial contributions to the artistic and spiritual development of Jack and Warnie Lewis. Flora and Albert created a family climate that engaged their sons' imaginations, valued their intellect, and nurtured their faith, inspiring them to be industrious and studious, ambitious and clever. Ultimately the Lewises and the Hamiltons helped to shape the heart and mind of one of the greatest intellectuals and apologists of the twentieth century. 

Crystal Hurd is an educator and researcher from Virginia and the author of 30 Days with C. S. Lewis and The Leadership of C. S. Lewis: Ten Traits to Encourage Change and Growth, releasing in the fall of 2021.



“Like raindrops on a window”

C. S. LEWIS AND HIS “FIRST FRIEND” ARTHUR GREEVES

Diana Pavlac Glycer

C. S. Lewis had a gift of friendship. Over and over in his fiction and nonfiction and in his daily habits—the frequent letter writing, the gathering with colleagues in community—Lewis communicated that we are diminished when we are alone; we are somehow greater when we gather together. That is because friends call forth different aspects of ourselves.

Community enriches our lives, and it also shapes our personalities. When we make time to gather together, to connect with different people from various places, to share those things we love, admire, and appreciate, our friendships do more than enrich our experiences; they change who we are.

SURPRISED BY GREEVES

Lewis’s own friendships illustrate this transformation—and none more than his lifelong friendship with

A SPOT OF TENNIS? Greeves (*back row, far left*) and Lewis (*back row, far right*) participate in a tennis party at the Greeves family home in 1910.

artist and fellow Northern Irishman Arthur Greeves (1895–1966). In *The Four Loves*, a famous passage on the distinction between First and Second Friends turns on Lewis’s very different experiences of friendship with Greeves and with another of Lewis’s lifelong friends, solicitor Owen Barfield (see pp. 45–48). Lewis describes Greeves under the name of the “First Friend,” which he defines as

an alter ego, the man who first reveals to you that you are not alone in the world by turning out . . . to share all your most secret delights. There is nothing to be overcome in making him your friend; he and you join like raindrops on a window.



FAN CLUB Greeves and Lewis bonded over the edition of *Siegfried & The Twilight of the Gods* (1911) that contains this illustration (above) by Arthur Rackham.

Barfield, the “Second Friend,” was to Lewis the kind of person

who disagrees with you about everything. He is not so much the alter ego as the antiself. Of course he shares your interests; otherwise he would not become your friend at all. But he has approached them all at a different angle. He has read all the right books but has got the wrong thing out of every one.

Both friendships would remain important to Lewis throughout his life. Describing his meeting with Greeves in *Surprised by Joy*, Lewis called him “after my brother, my oldest and most intimate friend”; in their meeting, Lewis was surprised by friendship. Joseph Arthur Greeves lived directly across the street from the Lewises in Belfast. His family owned a flax spinning company, J. & T. M. Greeves & Co., and belonged to the Plymouth Brethren (see CH 128 for more on the Brethren).

Arthur was the youngest of Joseph Malcomson Greeves and Mary Gribbon Greeves’s five children. He spent much of his time convalescing with a congenital heart ailment and had long hoped to make friends with the Lewis brothers across the street. His hopes finally came to fruition one day in 1914, when Lewis heard that Greeves was ill and would welcome a visit. Lewis

A SPOT OF TEA The Lewises and the Greeves share a tea party c. 1913 (below).



decided to stop by. As Lewis told it, when he arrived at the house, he found Arthur sitting up in bed, and on the table beside him was a book of Norse mythology. Lewis noticed the book immediately:

“Do you like that?” said I.

“Do you like that?” said he. Next moment the book was in our hands, our heads were very close together, we were pointing, quoting, talking—soon almost shouting—discovering in a torrent of questions that we liked not only the same thing, but the same parts of it and in the same way.

Although Jack Lewis was very close to his brother, Warren (see pp. 30–34), the two had different temperaments and interests. While they attended many of the same boarding schools, Warren generally liked them while Jack compared them to concentration camps. In Greeves Lewis found someone much like himself: “I had been so far from thinking [that] such a friend was possible that I had never even longed for one; no more than I longed to be King of England.” Lewis had at last found someone who liked the same books, shared the same views, and in many ways spoke the same language.

DEALING IN SOLIDS

Greeves’s heart ailment prevented him from holding steady employment. Independently wealthy from his family inheritance, he never needed it. He studied at Campbell College in Belfast from 1906 to 1912 and earned a certificate from the Slade School of Art in London, which he attended from 1921 to 1923. Many critics considered him a good painter, and his landscape paintings were exhibited in 1936. Although he also wrote, Greeves never published. Lewis sent Greeves some of his manuscripts for critique.

*Jack - sentiment of watching busch
- the 'unhappy' -
- miss P.*

MAGDALEN COLLEGE,
OXFORD.

May 19th 1929

My dear Arthur

I enclose a letter wh. I
have been waiting to send you for ages. Of
course I am delighted to hear of your com-
-ing to Oxford to-morrow, but hope that you
will stay in College with me. You will remember
that last time you found the hardships of
College life worse in anticipation than
in experience. If you insist on going to a
Hotel try the Eastgate which is cheap & quiet
& just beside Magdalen. Let me have a
line or wire at once. I am looking forward
tremendously to meeting again
yrs
Jack.

Greeves could not travel much, aside from his studies, because of his bad heart. He stayed close to home in Northern Ireland, painting the countryside, and he kept up a sizable correspondence with Lewis. They remained good friends and wrote to each other regularly for 50 years, from Lewis's first trip away to boarding school in 1914 until Lewis's death in 1963. Over 300 letters from Lewis to Greeves have survived, as well as a few of Greeves's letters to Lewis. Lewis articulated clearly what he learned from Greeves:

He was not a clever boy, he was even a dull boy; I was a scholar. He had no "ideas." I bubbled over with them. It might seem that I had much to give him, and that he had nothing to give me. But this is not the truth. I could give concepts, logic, facts, arguments, but he had feelings to offer, feelings which most mysteriously—for he was always very inarticulate—he taught me to share. Hence, in our commerce, I dealt in superficialities, but he in solids. I learned charity from him and failed, for all my efforts, to teach him arrogance in return.

BEAUTY IN THE ORDINARY

In his letters to Greeves, Lewis wrote candidly, opening up and sharing all his thoughts and dreams. These

PEN PALS Lewis and Greeves wrote to each other frequently, at length, and for many years.

letters ran the gamut of human experience: anger, pity, glory, rage, spite, sin, guilt, repentance, forgiveness, joy, exaltation, worry, and fear. It seemed there was nothing these two didn't discuss, companioning one another through adolescence, their first jobs, their relationships, the death of their parents, and the losses of old age.

Greeves's belief in God exerted a strong influence on Lewis, who described him as "(always) a Christian" during the first days of their relationship and resistant to any of Lewis's attempts to win him over to atheism; it was to Greeves that Lewis first wrote of his conversion to theism (see pp. 10–14).

Greeves's own religious journey was more complicated, though. As an adult he rejected the Plymouth Brethren and attended worship at the Church of Ireland as well as Bahá'í services, finally ending up in Quaker gatherings (his ancestors had originally been Quakers before they converted to the Brethren).

After Greeves's mother, Mary, died in 1959, Greeves bought a cottage in Crawfordsburn. He hosted Lewis there on several trips—and eventually hosted Joy Davidman Lewis as well when Jack and Joy journeyed to Ireland after their marriage. Lewis later said that the

most important thing that he learned from Greeves was to appreciate the everyday beauty of ordinary things:

a gray cat squeezing its way under the barn door
... a bent old woman with a wrinkled, motherly
face ... a pool of water in the moonrise.

Greeves did occasionally travel to visit Lewis, and their last in-person meeting was at The Kilns in 1961. Right up until the heart attack in late 1963 that turned out to presage Lewis's final decline, he was planning to visit Greeves one final time in Ireland. He wrote in September 1963 to cancel the trip, and his concluding line of longing rings down through the decades: "Oh, Arthur, never to see you again!"

We are diminished when we are alone; we are somehow greater when we gather together. **CH**

Diana Pavlac Glycer is a professor of English in the Honors College of Azusa Pacific University and the author of numerous books on the Inklings including The Company They Keep and Bandersnatch. Portions of this article were adapted from CH issue #7 and from "C. S. Lewis and the Algebra of Friendship" in The Undiscovered C. S. Lewis (edited by Bruce R. Johnson, Winged Lion Press, 2021), reproduced by permission.

The “Great Knock”

C. S. LEWIS AND HIS TUTOR W. T. KIRKPATRICK

Lewis’s private tutor from 1914 to 1917, the brilliant W. T. Kirkpatrick (1848–1921), wasted no time in setting the pretentious schoolboy straight: “Do you not see, then, that your remark was meaningless?” Despite Kirkpatrick’s view “that [for] human beings [to] exercise their vocal organs for any purpose except that of communicating or discovering truth . . . was preposterous,” Lewis did not flee to a less critical environment. Rather he later reported that these two and a half years with Kirkpatrick were among the happiest and most formative of his life.

On September 18, 1914, shortly after the outbreak of World War I, 15-year-old C. S. Lewis left his Belfast home to begin private tutoring at Great Bookham, Surrey, with the formidable Kirkpatrick. Kirkpatrick (also known to the Lewises as “The Great Knock” and “Kirk”) had been the teacher both of Lewis’s father, Albert Lewis—who served as Kirkpatrick’s lawyer later in life—and Lewis’s older brother, Warnie. Warnie had blossomed under Kirkpatrick’s tutelage: “When I went to Bookham I had what would now be called ‘an inferiority complex,’” he wrote. But,

a few weeks of Kirk’s sparing praise of my efforts, and of his pungent criticisms of the [masters at Warnie’s previous school] restored my long-lost self confidence: I saw that whilst I was not brilliant or even clever, I had in the past been unsuccessful because I was lazy and not lazy because I was unsuccessful.

Given Jack Lewis’s spectacularly unfortunate experiences at English public schools, the Lewises were only too happy to accept the now-retired Kirkpatrick’s offer to prepare Jack Lewis for Oxford privately. Kirkpatrick was an imposing figure, even at nearly 70: “He was over six feet tall . . . lean as a rake and immensely muscular.” Another former student of Kirkpatrick wrote that “he was . . . a man of unusual mental power and grasp, of an overmastering influence on the mind.”

APPLY ONE DOSE OF SOCRATIC METHOD

Jack Lewis, like his brother, thrived under Kirkpatrick’s relentless Socratic method. He later wrote, “If ever a man came near to being a purely logical entity, that man was Kirk.” Lewis did not resent Kirk’s pedagogy because it “dawned on me that he really wanted to know. . . . Here was a man who thought not about you but about what you said.” In the end Lewis came to give as good as he got in arguments with Kirk.

Kirkpatrick’s force-feed approach to language was equally daunting, but to a person with Lewis’s photographic memory it opened a vast world of learning. After

IMPOSING TO THE END Louisa and W. T. Kirkpatrick stand by their door in 1920.



a cursory glance at grammar, Kirk would read several lines of text, translate them to show his pupil how it was done, hand him a lexicon and the text, and then leave the room. Lewis not only learned Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and German by this method, but also became thoroughly acquainted with the great works of Western literature. By the end of Jack’s first year at Great Bookham, Kirkpatrick wrote to Albert Lewis that the now 16-year-old was “the most brilliant translator of Greek plays I have ever met.”

Lewis exulted in his typical day at Great Bookham: “If I could please myself I would always live as I lived there”—though he also noted that it was “almost entirely selfish.” He later outlined his day: breakfast at 8, at work by 9 to read and write until precisely 1, when lunch was served. At 2, free time to read, write, or take a walk in the beauties of Surrey until 4:15 when tea was served. At 5, back to work until 7, then supper followed by voracious light reading, conversation, listening to music, and writing until 11.

Besides reason, language, and a strong work ethic, Lewis—already en route to losing his faith—picked up Kirkpatrick’s atheism. Kirkpatrick had once aspired to the ministry but by his fifties had become a staunch rationalist and emphatic atheist. Though at 16 Lewis had been confirmed in the Church of Ireland, this was a charade (for which Lewis was later deeply ashamed) only done to avoid upsetting his devout father. By 1916 Lewis wrote that he believed in no religion.

That year Lewis received a scholarship to University College, Oxford, embarking on the brilliant academic career Kirkpatrick had prepared him for (and which he told Lewis’s father was his only real career option). On March 22, 1917, having completed his studies with Kirkpatrick, Lewis left the idyllic setting of Great Bookham and returned to Belfast. But he wasn’t done with his tutor: Kirk would form the basis for the feisty atheist character MacPhee in *That Hideous Strength* and some elements of Professor Kirke in the *Chronicles of Narnia*. Many years later Lewis concluded, “My debt to him is very great, my reverence to this day undiminished.”

—Paul E. Michelson, distinguished professor of history emeritus, Huntington University

JACK'S JOURNEY



**Flora Hamilton Lewis,
c. 1896-1898**

1894 Florence "Flora" Hamilton and Albert Lewis marry.

1895 Warren "Warnie" Hamilton Lewis is born.

1898 Clive Staples "Jack" Lewis is born.

1905 The Lewises move to Little Lea, a house in Belfast, which Jack will remember fondly.



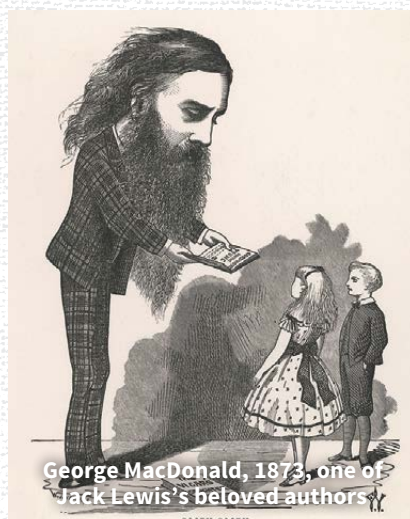
**Jack, Warnie, Arthur, and
a friend, 1910**

1908 Flora Lewis dies of cancer. Jack joins Warnie at Wynyard School.

1911-1913 Lewis goes to Malvern College prep school and then the college. He first rejects Christianity.

1914 Lewis first meets Arthur Greeves and W. T. Kirkpatrick.

1916 Lewis reads George MacDonald's *Phantastes*.



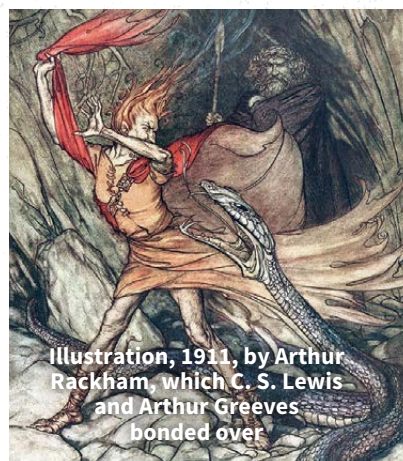
**George MacDonald, 1873, one of
Jack Lewis's beloved authors**

1917 Lewis begins study at Oxford but then enlists in the British Army, where he meets Paddy Moore, as well as Paddy's mother, Janie, and sister, Maureen.

1918 Lewis is injured in World War I and sent home to recuperate. Paddy Moore is killed in action.

1919 Lewis resumes his studies at Oxford, where he meets Owen Barfield. Lewis publishes his first book of poetry, *Spirits in Bondage*.

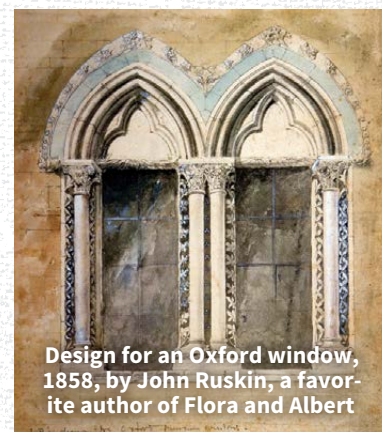
1921 Lewis moves in with the Moores.



**Illustration, 1911, by Arthur
Rackham, which C. S. Lewis
and Arthur Greeves
bonded over**

1924 Lewis graduates from Oxford and tutors philosophy.

1925 Lewis becomes a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford.



**Design for an Oxford window,
1858, by John Ruskin, a favor-
ite author of Flora and Albert**

1926 Lewis meets J. R. R. Tolkien at a faculty meeting.

1929 Lewis accepts the existence of God, influenced in part by Tolkien and another friend, Hugo Dyson. Albert Lewis dies.

1930 Janie Moore and the Lewis brothers buy The Kilns.

1931 Lewis accepts Jesus as Son of God.

1932 Warnie Lewis retires from the army and moves into The Kilns.

1933 The Inklings begin meeting. Lewis publishes *The Pilgrim's Regress*. Laurence Harwood is born, the son of Lewis's friends Cecil and Daphne; Lewis will become his godfather.

1937 Tolkien publishes *The Hobbit*.

1938 Joy Davidman wins the Yale Younger Poets award. Lewis publishes *Out of the Silent Planet*. Sarah Neylan,

PORTRAIT OF FLORA LEWIS, C. 1896-1898. USED BY PERMISSION OF THE MARION E. WADE CENTER, WHEATON COLLEGE, WHEATON, IL.
 CARTOON DEPICTION OF GEORGE MACDONALD (1824-1905), DATE: 1873—CHRONICLE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO
 DESIGN FOR A WINDOW, OXFORD MUSEUM, PENCIL, WATERCOLOUR AND BODYCOLOUR, 1858—JOHN RUSKIN / (PUBLIC DOMAIN) WIKIMEDIA
 C. S. LEWIS, WARREN, ALBERT, AND A NEIGHBOR, 1910. CSL / P-10. USED BY PERMISSION OF THE MARION E. WADE CENTER, WHEATON COLLEGE, WHEATON, IL.
 SIEGFRIED AND THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS, P. 50, BY WILLIAM HEINEMANN, ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR RACKHAM, 1911—ARTHUR RACKHAM / (PUBLIC DOMAIN) WIKIMEDIA

Major events in the life of Jack Lewis and his family and friends—and some of his most famous works

Adapted in part from the C. S. Lewis Foundation timeline at www.cslewis.org/resource/chronocsl/

daughter of former Lewis student Mary Neylan, is born; Lewis becomes her godfather.

1939 Charles Williams moves to Oxford and joins the Inklings. The Lewis brothers and the Moores welcome wartime evacuee children to The Kilns. Among the 11 girls they host will be June "Jill" Flewett (later Freud).

1941 *The Guardian* serializes *The Screwtape Letters*; Lewis begins broadcasts that become *Mere Christianity*.

1942 The first meeting of the Socratic Club convenes. Joy Davidman marries Bill Gresham. Dorothy L. Sayers first corresponds with Lewis. Excluded from the all-male Inklings, she will be active in the Socratic Club.



Maureen Moore, Jack Lewis, and Janie Moore on a beach in Cornwall, 1927

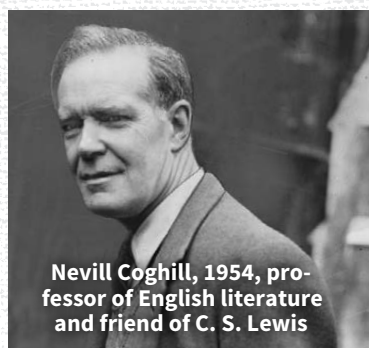
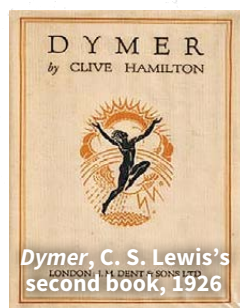
1943 Lewis publishes *The Abolition of Man*.

1945 Charles Williams dies suddenly.

1947 Lewis publishes *Miracles*.

1949 The Inklings cease meeting as a critique group, though they continue to gather at the Eagle and Child.

1950 Lewis publishes *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.



Nevill Coghill, 1954, professor of English literature and friend of C. S. Lewis

1951 Janie King Moore dies.

1952 Lewis first meets Joy Davidman Gresham after corresponding with her (and, briefly, with Bill).

1953 Clyde Kilby meets Lewis.

1954 Lewis becomes chair of medieval and Renaissance literature at Magdalen College, Cambridge. Davidman and Gresham divorce. Davidman dedicates *Smoke on the Mountain* to Lewis. Tolkien publishes part of *The Lord of the Rings*. Lewis publishes *The Horse and His Boy*, dedicated to David and Douglas Gresham.

1955 Lewis publishes his "spiritual autobiography," *Surprised by Joy*.

1956 Lewis marries Davidman in a civil ceremony to extend her visa. Eight months later, after her cancer diagnosis, they marry with the church's rite. Davidman's cancer goes into remission. Lewis publishes *Till We Have Faces* and the final Narnia book, *The Last Battle*.

1957 Sayers dies.

1958 Lewis and Davidman visit Ireland, staying with Greeves.



Hunter College, 1915, alma mater of Joy Davidman

1960 Davidman's cancer returns. She dies soon after she and Lewis visit Greece with Roger and June Green.

1961 Lewis publishes *A Grief Observed*.

1963 Walter Hooper meets Lewis. On November 22, Lewis dies.

1964 Hooper moves to England as a literary executor for Lewis's estate.

1965 Clyde Kilby begins "The C. S. Lewis Collection" (later the Marion E. Wade Center) at Wheaton College.

1966 Arthur Greeves dies.

1973 Warnie Lewis and Tolkien die.

1997 Owen Barfield dies.

2017 Sarah Neylan Tisdall dies.

2020 Walter Hooper and Laurence Harwood die.



C. S. Lewis's bedroom at The Kilns



Friends and brothers

C. S. LEWIS'S LIFELONG ALLY WAS HIS BROTHER, W. H. LEWIS

Paul E. Michelson

Jack Lewis's lifelong friend and compatriot was his brother, Warren Hamilton (Warnie) Lewis (1895–1973). Warnie wrote, “I first remember him, dimly, as a vociferous disturber of my domestic peace and a rival claimant to my mother’s attention.” However, Warnie and Jack soon “laid the foundations of an intimate friendship that was the greatest happiness of my life and lasted unbroken until his death.” Warnie also had his own career as a military man and author. Their life together spanned two distinct periods: the Belfast or Little Lea era in childhood, 1898–1914, and the Oxford or Kilns period from 1932 to Jack’s death in 1963.

A PIECE OF PARADISE

The Lewis brothers grew up in Northern Ireland, the only children of Albert J. Lewis, a Belfast solicitor, and Flora Hamilton Lewis, daughter of their parish priest, whose BA in mathematics and logic from Queen’s University, Belfast, was distinctly unusual for the times (see pp. 17–20). Jack mischaracterized Albert and Flora Lewis in *Surprised by Joy*, giving the impression that they were perfunctorily religious when in fact the Lewis parents read the Bible together daily and were deeply pious, active Christians.

BEAUTY IN THE CITY From the top of Cave Hill, Belfast—shown in this 1905 photograph—the Lewis brothers could see the beckoning Antrim Mountains, the Holywood Hills, and the Mountains of Mourne.

The Lewises lived from 1894 to 1905 in Dundela Villas, Belfast, where both sons were born. Belfast was very rainy, and medical wisdom of the day deemed damp weather harmful, so the Lewis brothers spent a good deal of time indoors reading and eventually writing. They soon created their own imaginary countries, India and Animal-Land. However, their stories about these countries were surprisingly prosaic—containing not “the least hint of wonder,” Jack said later—and were nothing like the later Narnia.

Warnie and Jack also shared several deep aesthetic experiences, including one related to a toy garden Warnie created (which gave the boys a vivid “imagination of Paradise”) and another of looking at the Castlereagh Hills (the Green Hills) which were visible from their bedroom windows, “not very far off, but . . . quite unattainable.” Lewis later characterized this feeling of longing as “Joy.”

In 1905 the family moved to “the New House” or Little Lea, a home that Albert built for Flora. In an oft-quoted



DYNAMIC DUO Warnie and Jack ride bikes together in 1908 (above) and pose for a formal portrait with Arthur in 1910 (right), after the death of their mother.

passage from *Surprised by Joy*, Lewis described the New House as “almost a major character in my story . . . long corridors, empty sunlit rooms, upstairs indoor silences, attics explored in solitude . . . [and] endless books.” No wonder the Lewis brothers were bookish all their lives; lists of books Warnie and Jack were reading frequently appear in the Lewis Family Papers. Little Lea also had a splendid view of the Belfast Lough, the Antrim Mountains, the Holywood Hills, and a north-western prospect of “interminable summer sunsets behind blue ridges,” all of which further contributed to the boys’ imaginative development.

Warnie Lewis went to an English boarding school in 1905, though his absence apparently made no difference to the bond the two boys shared. For Warnie and Jack, this schooling was merely an inconvenient separation between golden days of summer. Their earlier countries were now merged into Animal-Land, lifted out of the real world into an imaginary universe, complete with an intricate political history, historiography, and geography with detailed maps (they shared this interest in imaginative cartography with Tolkien). They later called this fictional world “Boxen.”

THE GREAT CONTINENT SUNK

Change soon came; the untimely death of Flora Lewis in 1908 at the age of 46 shattered this idyll. Her death had a traumatic impact on her 13- and 9-year-old sons. Jack later wrote: “With my mother’s death all settled happiness, all that was tranquil and reliable, disappeared . . . the great continent had sunk like Atlantis.” The equally devastated Albert Lewis was left to single-parent adolescent boys, a trying task in the best of

A GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND James Moore’s watercolor *Belfast from Newtownbreda* (below) shows the beauty that inspired the Lewis brothers.



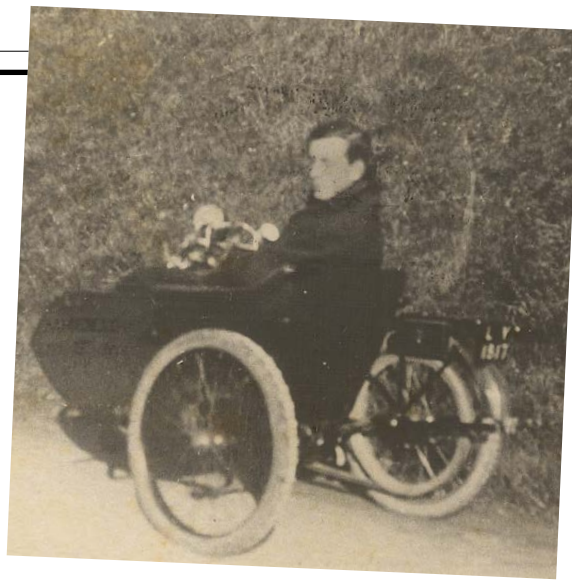
circumstances, and one made more difficult by Albert’s approach to life.

Soon alienated from their father, the two boys took to making fun of Albert behind his back, as *Surprised by Joy* abundantly illustrates. Jack wrote later:

By a peculiar cruelty of fate, during those months the unfortunate man, had he but known it, was really losing his sons as well as his wife. We were coming, my brother and I, to rely more and more exclusively on each other for all that made life bearable; to have confidence only in each other.

Albert worked from nine to six daily, and his absence from the home further estranged him and his sons. When the brothers were at home, they developed “a life that had no connection with our father,” including their imaginary world in which he had no place.

In 1908 the brothers reunited at Warnie’s English school, Wynyard, a place so bad Jack later called it Belsen (after the Nazi concentration camp). The headmaster was later certified insane, and the school was closed in 1910.



MOMENTOUS JOURNEY Here Jack Lewis sits c. 1920 in his brother Warnie's motorcycle sidecar (*left*); in this sidecar, on September 28, 1931, he began to believe in the divinity of Christ.



HOME SWEET HOME Their childhood home Little Lea (*above*) featured strongly in the Lewis boys' memories.



DORM SWEET DORM Warnie's military training occurred at the Royal Military College in Sandhurst (*left*).

In 1909 Warnie moved on to Malvern College. There, in contrast to his brother, the gregarious Warnie thrived, made many friends, and even developed an academic sideline—writing papers for his classmates. He also seems to have lost whatever childhood faith he had. The brothers reunited again when Jack joined him in 1911 at a boarding school in the same town.

After finishing at Malvern in the fall of 1913, Warnie embarked on a cram course with his father's teacher, W. T. Kirkpatrick (see p. 27). The unexpected result was his election to a prize cadetship at Sandhurst (the British West Point) in 1914. After this training he served in France during World War I as part of the Royal Army Service Corps. The brothers' childhood together was officially over. Though they occasionally met on vacations, Warnie's career separated him from Jack for most of the next two decades, taking him to Sierra Leone, China, and various home postings.

In 1929 Albert Lewis passed away shortly after retiring. The next year Warnie and Jack, now a professor at Oxford, visited Little Lea for the last time. They buried their Boxen toys in the garden and packed up the (extensive) family papers. The income from the sale

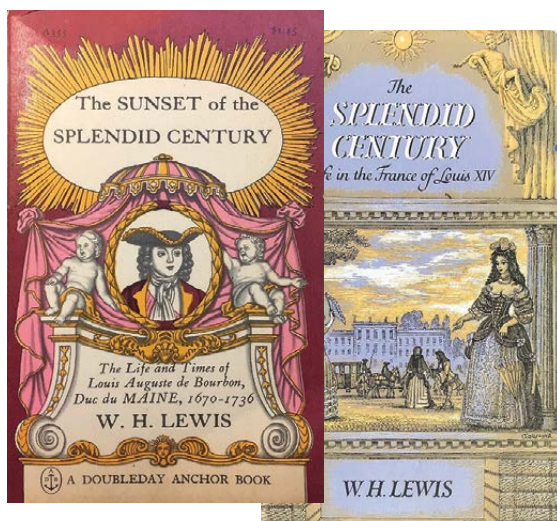
of Little Lea provided the means to buy a new home for the Lewis brothers, as well as for Mrs. Janie King (Minto) Moore and her daughter, Maureen (whom Jack had supported since World War I; see p. 35).

In July 1930 the expanded Lewis family first saw what was to become their new residence, The Kilns, in Headington Quarry, Oxford. Warnie noted in his diary that the spacious grounds of The Kilns (which included a large pond and was adjacent to an extensive woods) were "such stuff as dreams are made of," and Jack wrote "I never hoped for the like." Ten days later their offer to buy The Kilns was accepted, and in October Warnie helped Jack and the Moores move in.

WALKING AND EDITING

In 1931, while in Asia, Warnie Lewis returned to the Christian faith at about the same time as Jack was completing his pilgrimage from atheism to theism to Christianity. With Warnie's retirement from the military and move to The Kilns in 1932, the Lewis brothers began the second major phase of their life together, which lasted until Jack's death.

The new arrangement had mixed effects. On the one hand, Warnie's diary is full of accounts of cultural activities, including going to concerts and plays and listening to recorded classical music. On the other hand, life with Mrs. Moore grew increasingly disagreeable as time passed and the family became increasingly dysfunctional. She demanded more and more of Jack Lewis's time as her personality deteriorated (she was 26 years older than Jack), became progressively more self-centered, and, as an



SPLENDID BOOKS Warnie published a number of carefully researched histories (the most famous two are *above*) of 17th-c. France. He especially studied the reign of Louis XIV (on a 17th-c. tapestry *at right*).

outspoken atheist, was not at all pleased with the Lewis brothers' turn to religion.

However, Warnie had other outlets that provided respite from the quarrelsome atmosphere of the Moore-dominated life at The Kilns. He was occupied with his editing of the Lewis Family Papers; he also continued research into the French *Grand Siècle* (the reigns of Louis XIII and Louis XIV) and split his time between his study at The Kilns, his brother's rooms at Magdalen College, and the resources of the Bodleian Library. He took numerous walking tours with his brother and with some of the Inklings. And he acquired a motorboat, *The Bosphorus*, which he had built for cruising on Great Britain's extensive inland rivers and canals.

"EVASIVE AS MR. BADGER"

Warnie and Jack Lewis's major social activity was the weekly gathering of the Inklings, who began meeting Thursday evenings in Lewis's rooms at Magdalen College sometime in the 1930s. They drank and socialized, engaged in academic banter and exchanged literary subtleties, and listened to one another read works in progress. The group also met by a warm coal fire on Tuesday mornings for more of the same in a back parlor called the Rabbit Room at Oxford's Eagle and Child pub—which they called "the Bird and Baby."

Though Jack Lewis and Tolkien generally dominated the discussions, the irenic Warnie, modestly hovering in the background—"evasive as Mr. Badger"—provided the invisible social glue that held the group together. John Wain (1925–1994)—an English poet Jack had tutored—described Warnie as far from being a silent cypher; instead, he was "a delightful man with a very well-stocked mind,



tolerant, generous, imaginative, with a great sensibility ... deeply read, very gifted in verbal expression."

The Second World War brought additional adjustments for the Lewis household. On September 2, 1939, the first set of evacuee children from London came to stay at The Kilns (see pp. 41–43). Maureen Moore married Leonard Blake (d. 1989) in 1940 and left. Warnie was briefly recalled to active service and was among those evacuated from Dunkirk. He returned to Oxford for what would be the most fruitful and productive era in the history of the Inklings, as Charles Williams (1886–1945) became a major influence on the group.

Warnie also began to function as his brother's secretary, necessitated by the deluge of correspondence that C. S. Lewis was now receiving as a result of his BBC lectures and the publication of *The Screwtape Letters* (1942).

The end of the war in 1945 was supposed to be a celebratory moment for the Lewis brothers and the Inklings, but things turned out otherwise. Less than a week after VE Day, Williams unexpectedly died, and some of the air went out of the group. They continued to meet for



“DIED IN THIS PARISH” Warnie (*far left, c. 1950*) is buried in the same grave as his brother at Holy Trinity Church (*near left*).

several years, listening primarily to Tolkien’s reading of drafts of *The Lord of the Rings*, but the Thursday evening meetings came to an end in 1949.

The problems of the Lewis household were also multiplying; Jack’s letters and Warnie’s diaries were increasingly full of negatives about the tenor of family life at The Kilns. Warnie had always consumed too much alcohol, but he now slipped into chronic alcoholism, including frequent binge drinking. An episode in the summer of 1947 left him hospitalized for over a month.

By 1947 Moore was so ill she could not leave home; she moved to a rest home in 1950, where Jack, although himself unwell, visited her every day until her death in early 1951.

“MANY MERRY DAYS”

With the Moores gone, life at The Kilns shifted from stressful to peaceful, quite in keeping with the Lewis brothers’ professed love of sameness and monotony. However, in 1952 something new intruded into Jack and Warnie’s Acadian bachelorhood. An American correspondent and avid reader of Jack’s writing, Joy Gresham (see pp. 36–39), visited Oxford. Warnie wrote that her “intentions were obvious from the outset.” Her relationship with Jack gradually grew from friendship to romance and culminated in their marriage in 1957, even as she was dying of cancer.

Warnie first met Joy in 1952 and “was some little time in making up my mind about her,” but soon “a rapid friendship developed; she liked walking, and she liked beer, and we had many merry days together.”

Later he wrote that Joy was rarely “equalled as a conversationalist” and that her “company was a never-ending source of enjoyment.” They also shared an

interest in French history. Jack, for his part, said in a letter, “Warnie is my dearest and closest friend, and I can never be sufficiently thankful for the way in which he accepted my marriage.”

When Joy received a cancer diagnosis, Warnie was devastated for both her and his brother. He found the situation “heartrending . . . though to feel pity for any one so magnificently brave as Joy is almost an insult . . . why, one asks, should [Jack] have had the life which has been his . . . and then the prospect of ‘peace at eventide’ so cruelly snatched away.” When Joy died in

1960, Warnie wrote: “God rest her soul, I miss her to a degree which I would not have imagined possible.”

The literary community owes Warnie a debt of gratitude for his prolific writing. His research and writing on France culminated in his first book, *The Splendid Century*, in 1953; he added six others between 1954 and 1962. He also kept his diary until his death in 1973; along with the Lewis Family Papers that he compiled and a 1966 memoir essay about Jack, the diary constitutes one of our most important sources on C. S. Lewis and the Inklings. He later regretted that he had not “Boswellized” his brother and the Inklings more deliberately (as eighteenth-century author James Boswell had tracked the life of his friend Samuel Johnson).

On November 22, 1963, just shy of his sixty-fourth birthday, Jack Lewis passed away from multiple organ failures. Warnie wrote:

In their way, these last weeks were not unhappy. Joy had left us, and once again—as in the earliest days—we could turn for comfort only to each other. The wheel had come full circle: once again we were together in the little end room at home, shutting out from our talk the ever-present knowledge that the holidays were ending, that a new term fraught with unknown possibilities awaited us both.

They were “brothers and friends” to the end. On the tombstone of their joint grave site in Headington, Warnie had engraved the words from Shakespeare’s *King Lear* that had appeared on the Lewis family calendar on the date Flora Lewis died: “Men must endure their going hence.” On April 9, 1973, Warnie too went hence and was buried with his brother. **CH**

Paul E. Michelson is distinguished professor of history emeritus at Huntington University.

“One huge and complex episode”

JACK AND MRS. MOORE

In his memoir *Surprised by Joy* (1955), C. S. Lewis informs readers that he is omitting “one huge and complex episode” in which his “earlier hostility to the emotions was very fully and variously avenged.” Those few cryptic words cover Lewis’s relationship with Janie King Moore (1872–1951), the woman with whom he shared a home for more than three decades.

Moore seemed to serve as an emotional replacement for Lewis’s biological mother, Flora Lewis (see pp. 20–23). She may have also provided inspiration for female characters in several of Lewis’s books.

After only a few weeks at University College, Oxford, in 1917, Lewis was summoned to join the Officers Training Corps and was billeted (lodged) at nearby Keble College. There he befriended his roommate, E. F. C. “Paddy” Moore (1898–1918), who introduced the 18-year-old Lewis to his mother, Janie, then 45, and his sister, Maureen (1906–1997), aged 11. (Many years later, through a complex set of inheritances, Maureen would become Dame Maureen Dunbar, only the fourth baronetess in English history.)

Lewis quickly developed a sense of belonging with the Moore family, including a youthful infatuation with Mrs. Moore, a gracious hostess to her son’s friends. Lewis and Paddy Moore made a pact that if one of them was killed on the battlefields of France, the other would look after the single parent left behind. Paddy Moore was reported missing in March 1918 and was later confirmed dead. Lewis himself was wounded by shrapnel the following month, and Mrs. Moore visited him often in the hospital (in contrast to Lewis’s own father, Albert, in Belfast, who kept finding excuses not to cross the Irish Sea to visit his ailing and homesick son).

WALKING THE DOG

After leaving the army in 1919, Lewis spent a great deal of time at the Moore family lodgings and eventually moved in with them. This ad hoc family was short of means, and they moved nine times during the 1920s before pooling their resources and buying The Kilns near Oxford. As Lewis got to know Moore better, he began to realize that her public persona, the gracious



LONG ASSOCIATION Janie King Moore poses formally c. 1915 (left) and sits with Jack, Warnie, and their dogs Pat and Papworth at The Kilns in 1930 (right).

hostess, obscured her other self: a demanding and controlling personality who often interrupted Lewis’s writing to have him chop wood, do kitchen chores, walk the dog, or run errands.

When Warren Lewis came to live at The Kilns, he developed an intense dislike for Moore and felt she wasted Jack’s time, which could have been better used on his writing projects. But some Lewis critics are not so sure. They wonder if Moore may have been a model for several female characters in Jack Lewis’s books, especially “the sharp-tongued old lady” called Mother in *The Screwtape Letters* (1942) and the embittered mother, Pam, in *The Great Divorce* (1945).

Jack Lewis’s letters and Warren’s diary make frequent references to domestic disputes at The Kilns, and Jack Lewis admitted to a certain relief when Moore passed away in 1951 at the age of 78. Though she seemed to have a difficult personality, especially as she aged, Janie Moore also did seem to provide a stable domestic environment for a man who had been seeking a home ever since the death of his own mother in his childhood.

—David C. Downing, codirector of the Wade Center and author of a number of scholarly books on Lewis as well as the novel *Looking for the King*



“Romantic and realistic”

THE EVENTFUL LIFE, MARRIAGE, AND DEATH OF JOY DAVIDMAN LEWIS

Abigail Santamaria

*Helen Joy Davidman (1915–1960) is best known today as the feisty but wounded American-born “Wife of C. S. Lewis” of *Shadowlands* fame. But the real Joy was a successful writer in her own right—and far more accomplished, brilliant, manipulative, and complicated than history remembers.*

A POETIC TEMPERAMENT

Born on the Lower East Side of Manhattan to Eastern European Jewish immigrants, Davidman was raised in a comfortable middle-class Bronx neighborhood by parents who had toiled to escape the poverty-riddled tenements of their youth. Her mother, Jeannette, was a college-educated kindergarten teacher; her father, Joseph, earned a PhD and became a New York City public school principal.

Desperate to assimilate, the Davidmans held Joy and her younger brother, Howard, to exacting standards. Joseph demanded academic perfection, while Jeannette emphasized outward appearances, grooming her daughter meticulously and criticizing her harshly for gaining weight in adolescence. Though IQ tests proved her brilliance, Davidman’s teenage rebellion took the

A COMPANION Joy and Jack walk in the yard of The Kilns.

form of neglecting disliked schoolwork and wearing dowdy, clashing clothes, to her mother’s dismay.

A sickly child, unpopular at school and unhappy at home, she escaped into voracious reading. She had a passion for fantasies, especially George MacDonald’s; the three-dimensional world “bored” her. Despite what she later recognized as a “cocksure” persona, her poetic temperament sensed spiritual reality. But coming of age in depression-ravaged America and disillusioned by World War I, she did not believe in God.

Davidman graduated from high school at age 14 and enrolled at Hunter College, part of the then-tuition-free City University of New York, where she had the freedom and guidance to nurture her love of writing poetry and prose. She paid little attention to politics and had no direct experiences with financial hardship until trauma occurred on Hunter’s campus in her final semester, spring 1934. She witnessed a classmate from an adjacent building leap several stories to her death; the girl was a starving orphan, her family devastated by the



A COMRADE A Communist Party bookstore in 1942 (above) would have sold books like Joy's (above right).

A POET As a young woman, Joy (right) chose communism and wrote poetry.

Great Depression. This set Davidman on a path of disillusionment with capitalism and preoccupation with communism, particularly the Spanish anti-Fascist cause. Her poetry evolved into political activism. In 1938 she became a card-carrying member of the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA).

By then she had earned a master's degree in literature from Columbia and taught high school English, a job she despised. Her parents insisted it was the sensible professional path; she had other ambitions. Prestigious national journals including *Poetry* and the Marxist *New Masses* published her poems. Her first book, *Letter to a Comrade* (1938), was honored with a Yale Younger Poets prize (see p. 40).

CIRCLE OF COMRADES

By age 25 Davidman had published a novel, *Anyia* (1940), done a Hollywood stint in MGM's Young Screen Writers program, and joined the editorial staff of *New Masses*. Remaining loyal to the CPUSA despite a mass exodus following a nonaggression pact between Hitler's Germany and the Soviet Union, she taught poetry at the Jefferson School, a Marxist CPUSA adult education institute, and participated in panels, symposia, and ceremonies with American cultural figures.

Her circle of comrades included dapper, folk-singing pulp fiction writer William (Bill) Lindsay Gresham

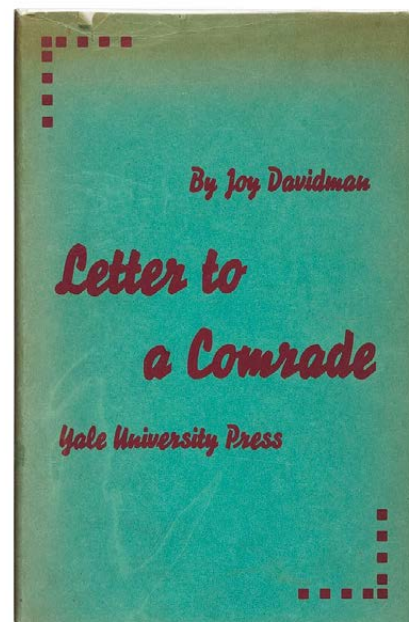


(1909–1962), an American veteran of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, a band of volunteers who fought Franco in the Spanish Civil War. Gresham nursed deep psychological battle wounds: anxiety, paranoia, nightmares, alcoholism, and a history of suicide attempts. Yet Davidman was drawn to his charm, intelligence, humor, and politics. They married in 1942 and moved to the suburbs shortly after David Lindsay Gresham (1944–2014) was born. Douglas Howard (b. 1945) soon followed. Consumed by motherhood and isolated, Davidman drifted from the Party.

In the suburbs she desperately missed New York City's intellectual, creative stimulation and felt confined to homemaking. In this disorienting milieu of war, loneliness, and identity crisis, books served as a mechanism of self-preservation. She escaped into fantasy, particularly by newly popular British author C. S. Lewis; it "stirred an unused part of my brain to momentary sluggish life," she later wrote. "Of course, I thought, atheism was true, but I hadn't given quite enough attention to developing the proof of it."

Under the strain of fatherhood, Gresham's drinking and depression accelerated. Financial troubles followed. One day he disappeared. Terrified he might have taken his life, Davidman fell to her knees in prayer. "All my defenses—the walls of arrogance and cocksureness and self-love behind which I had hid from God—went down momentarily," she wrote. "And God came in."

When Gresham returned safely two days later, she was no longer an atheist and not even agnostic: she knew God existed, though what that meant she didn't





A COMPLEX WOMAN Versions of *Shadowlands* (a scene from the movie with Anthony Hopkins and Debra Winger is *above*), as well as some Lewis fans who wish he'd had a less problematic wife, have painted a glossy portrait of Joy.

By the end of the next day, Lewis had written the first chapter; Davidman critiqued it and those that followed. The resulting tale blends themes and imagery from their parallel spiritual journeys (see pp. 49–52). George Sayer, in *Jack*, said she could “almost be called its joint author” and that she “stimulated and helped [Lewis] to such an extent that he began to feel that he could hardly write without her”—a “preparation for a complete and successful marriage.” Lewis dedicated the book to her.

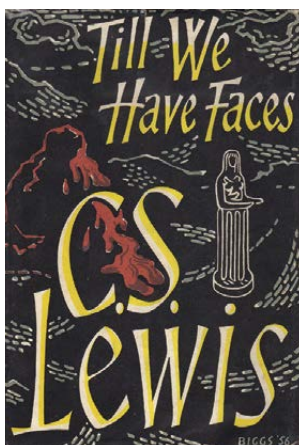
FEASTING ON LOVE

When Davidman told Lewis the Home Office might not renew her papers, Lewis, unable to bear the thought of her leaving England, agreed to a civil union in April 1956. But it took a diagnosis of her terminal cancer a few months later for him to recognize that *philia* had given way to *eros*. After doctors predicted months to live, they had a Christian marriage in her hospital room.

A miraculous remission gave them three blissful years from 1957 to 1960; they walked, talked, read, and even traveled to Ireland and Greece. Lewis wrote in *A Grief Observed* that they

feasted on love; every mode of it—solemn and merry, romantic and realistic, sometimes as dramatic as a thunderstorm, sometimes as comfortable and unemphatic as putting on your soft slippers. No cranny of heart or body remained unsatisfied.

Humbled by cancer, transformed by love and compassion from Lewis and others, Davidman softened into a better version of herself.



Remember
HELEN JOY
DAVIDMAN
D. July 1960
Loved wife of
C. S. LEWIS


Here the whole world (stars, water, air,
And field, and forest, as they were
Reflected in a single mind)
Like cast off clothes was left behind
In ashes, yet with hope that she,
Re-born from holy poverty,
In lenten lands, hereafter may
Resume them on her Easter Day

A “LOVED WIFE” Joy is memorialized by a plaque (*above*) and in books she helped Jack with (*left*).

Joy Davidman Gresham Lewis died in Oxford in July 1960, at the age of 45; her ashes were installed in the Oxford Crematorium. But her story didn’t end there. In life Lewis’s British colleagues had received Davidman with mixed reviews; Warnie Lewis adored her, as did close friends June and

Roger Lancelyn Green, among a handful of others, but many found her intolerable.

Anti-Semitism, anti-Americanism, and the 1950s stigma attached to divorce may have contributed. Reserved Brits didn’t warm to a brash New Yorker. Others were disgusted by behavior that was often rude, selfish, and manipulative. Some scholarly and fictional depictions have downplayed or omitted less endearing chapters of Davidman’s life—her immersion into Dianetics after converting to Christianity, or leaving David and Douglas, ages eight and six at the time, with her unstable husband for five months while she pursued Lewis in England.

But neither extreme does justice to the nuanced complexity of Davidman’s human condition. The “softening” she exhibited in her final years was sanctification, a process impossible to fully recognize without embracing the multiplicity of details—black, white, and shades of gray—that came before. 

Abigail Santamaria is the author of Joy: Poet, Seeker, & the Woman Who Captivated C. S. Lewis and the cofounder of Biography by Design. She is currently writing a biography of Madeline L’Engle.

Songs, battle cries, and sonnets

Joy Davidman as an author

Joy Davidman's literary career, like her life, was regrettably short but astonishingly full. Early poems and stories appeared in the *Hunter College Echo*, her school's literary magazine on which she served as coassociate editor, followed by periodicals including *Poetry* and *New Masses*, a magazine tied to the Communist Party.

If Davidman is remembered today for anything other than her marriage to Lewis, it is typically for

her Spanish Civil War poetry, the best of which launched her into the red-hot spotlight of New York City's literary left. In 1938 she submitted a manuscript of primarily political verse—*Letter to a Comrade*—to the prestigious Yale Younger Poets competition; Pulitzer Prize-winner Stephen Vincent Benét named her that year's recipient. The award came with publication by Dial Press and a glowing foreword by Benét hailing Davidman as the voice of a generation.

Shortly thereafter, supported by her talent, drive, and new credentials, Davidman began working for *New Masses* as an editor, book reviewer, and film critic. She bolstered her film critic role with experience from an unsuccessful

six-month stint in Hollywood in 1939 as a junior screenwriter for MGM.

The following year Davidman published her first novel, *Anya* (1940), a Russian peasant story based in part on tales of the old country passed down by her mother. It features a young and sensual protagonist who bears a striking resemblance to *Anya's* author. Critics received the book favorably. However, they panned her second novel, *Weeping Bay* (1950), about life on the Gaspé Peninsula, citing the rambling and disorganized prose and the many underdeveloped characters.

A WORLD AT WAR

As a critic writing essays, Davidman was truly at her best: brilliant, widely read, incisive, witty. Her name appeared on the *New Masses* masthead through April of 1946, though she contributed infrequently and

SAIL AWAY TO THE GASPÉ Davidman's second novel, *Weeping Bay*, did not win the critical acclaim of her first.

rarely attended staff meetings following the birth of her first child, David, in March of 1944. Before David's arrival Davidman had spearheaded and edited an anti-Fascist anthology called *War Poems of the United Nations: The Songs and Battle Cries of a World at War* (1943), selecting and translating verse from 150 poets representing some 20 countries. (When she didn't receive enough submissions from countries crucial to represent, like England, she wrote contributions herself under pseudonyms, accompanied by fictitious bios.)

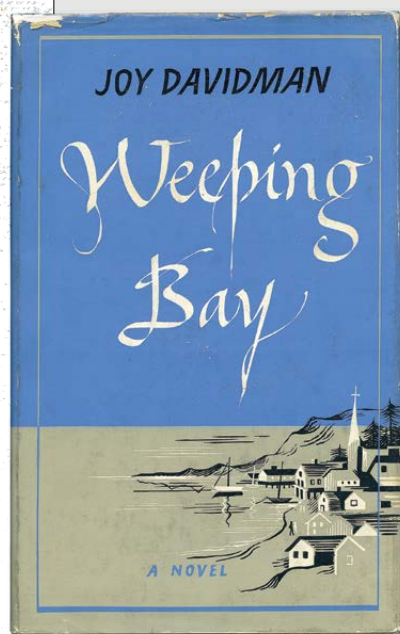
After leaving the Communist Party-USA and converting to Christianity, Davidman wrote much but published little. Her love sonnets to Lewis were published decades after her death as *A Naked Tree: Love Sonnets to C. S. Lewis and Other Poems* (2015), edited by Don W. King, who also compiled a collection of her letters, *Out of My Bone: The Letters of Joy Davidman* (2009).

Other letters remain unpublished, including many Davidman wrote to her younger brother, Howard (these remain in a private family collection), and a crucial series written to Bill Gresham in 1952 and early 1953, chronicling her momentous first trip to England and her evolving relationship with Dianetics. The Wade Center has archived those letters along with numerous unpublished poems, short stories, and novellas.

The last book Davidman saw to print in her lifetime was *Smoke on the Mountain: An Interpretation of the Ten Commandments*, a Lewis-inspired theological book (in fact, he helped her hone some of her ideas). *Smoke on the Mountain* grew out of a series of articles published in *Presbyterian Life* magazine in 1953 that Davidman wrote about the Decalogue from her perspective as a Jewish convert to Christianity.

"In a sense the converted Jew is the only normal human being in the world," Lewis wrote in his foreword to the British edition of *Smoke on the Mountain*: "... we christened gentiles, are after all the graft, the wild vine, possessing 'joys not promised to our birth'." In Davidman's writing he saw that "the Jewish fierceness, being here also modern and feminine, can be very quiet; the paw looked as if it were velvet, till we felt the scratch."

—Abigail Santamaria



“At our level”

LEWIS WAS A LOVING CORRESPONDENT, GODFATHER, AND FRIEND TO THE CHILDREN IN HIS LIFE

Joe Ricke

Many people experienced C. S. Lewis as intimidating, even downright scary. Just think of speakers who dared argue with Lewis at Socratic Club meetings in Oxford on cold winter's nights in the 1940s. Or an Australian tutorial student with the gall to admit he did not like Matthew Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum* (1853), at which Lewis announced, "The sword must settle it!," forcing the student to fence with him until Lewis drew blood. Or another student whom Lewis chased out of a tutorial, yelling after him down the staircase, "If you think that way about Keats, you needn't come back here again!"

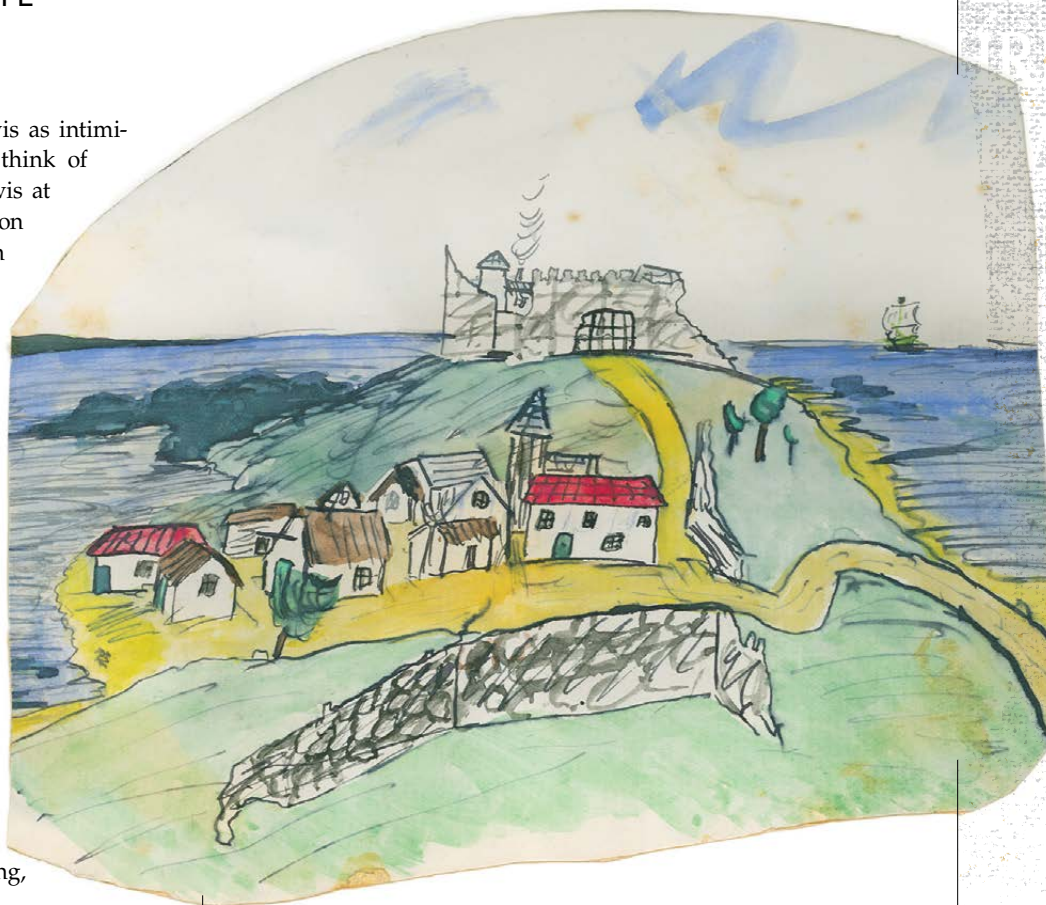
LIKE A HIPPO

Yet, surprisingly, Lewis's relationships with children were friendly, jovial, and even tender. One of Lewis's four godchildren, Sarah Neylan Tisdall (1938–2017), remembered him as thoughtful, loving, and supportive.

Lewis attended her baptism, remembered her at Christmas, birthdays, and her confirmation, and related to her in childlike and whimsical ways. As a child Tisdall sent Lewis pictures of animals she had drawn. He sent back thoughtful comments on her drawings, his own fanciful animal drawings, and an illustrated true story (and poem) about his local rabbit friend. Tisdall eventually studied art at the prestigious Slade School in London and became an accomplished painter and muralist.

As Tisdall grew older, Lewis paid for her ballet lessons and prayed for her daily. Their lively correspondence covered the novels of Jane Austen and Rider Haggard, Tisdall's pony, school, foreign languages, and the curious fact that Lewis liked to submerge in his tub like a hippo with only his nostrils above water! It was high praise indeed when he wrote to Tisdall's parents, his former student Mary Neylan and her husband, Daniel, assuring them that Sarah was "old enough to talk to."

Lewis also attended the baptism of another godchild, Laurence Harwood (1933–2020), son of Daphne and



A WHOLE NEW WORLD As a child Lewis created his own fantasy worlds, including (with Warnie) Boxen (above).

Cecil Harwood (see p. 1); he later wrote the parents that he hoped the baby's laughing throughout was not a sign of trouble ahead. Harwood would characterize Lewis as a "regular and jovial" houseguest: "I remember still the excitement of his arrival, his presence, the laughter, and the bonhomie it created. Starting first thing in the morning with him emerging from our only bathroom, saying in his booming voice, BATHROOM FREE!"

Harwood rejected outright Lewis's self-description as "not good with children." In fact it was not unusual for Lewis to get on the floor with the five Harwood children and play "at our level, not in the patronizing way . . ." Throughout their relationship, "[Lewis] was able to pitch it at my level, whatever level I was." While writing *That Hideous Strength* in 1944, Lewis wrote to the young Harwood: "I'm writing a story with a Bear in it and at present the Bear is going to get married in



HAPPY MAY Lewis welcomed evacuees to The Kilns (left) and also took them to the top of Magdalen Tower (below) for May Day.



the last chapter. There are also Angels in it." He also drew pictures—Magdalen College, corduroy pants, his rabbit friend (again!), and a self-portrait (eating venison). Later he sent puzzles, questions, and runes for Laurence to decode, discussed "the best kind of smells" (books and new shoes), and asked Harwood whether Lewis should read *Oliver Twist* or not.

When Daphne Harwood died of cancer, Lewis gave solace to both father and son. When failure at Oxford devastated his godson, Lewis not only comforted and advised him (Harwood said he "redeemed my belief in myself"), but acted on his behalf. Later, once Harwood had found his vocation, Lewis paid for three years of Royal Agricultural College. In a lovely irony, after Lewis had become a stepfather (see pp. 49–52), Harwood helped his stepson, Douglas Gresham, find a placement. In a touching final letter to his charge, Lewis wrote, "You're more like a godfather (fairy type) than a godson."

ESCAPING THE BLITZ FOR THE KILNS

During World War II, Lewis became a houseparent at

the The Kilns, where girls evacuated from London could escape the Blitz. The first three arrived on September 2, 1939, as part of the initial wave in which over a million city dwellers were relocated. Over the course of the war, 11 young girls came to The Kilns.

As the appeal to take them in had been made primarily to mothers, the original idea was that Mrs. Moore and Maureen (see p. 35) would oversee the evacuees. But Maureen married in 1940, and Mrs. Moore often seemed uninterested. Lewis, by all accounts, threw himself into making the

girls' lives more bearable, showing genuine concern for them and providing opportunities for both learning and fun. They later testified that he built up their intellectual ability, helped them with their schoolwork, and introduced them to the larger Oxford world.

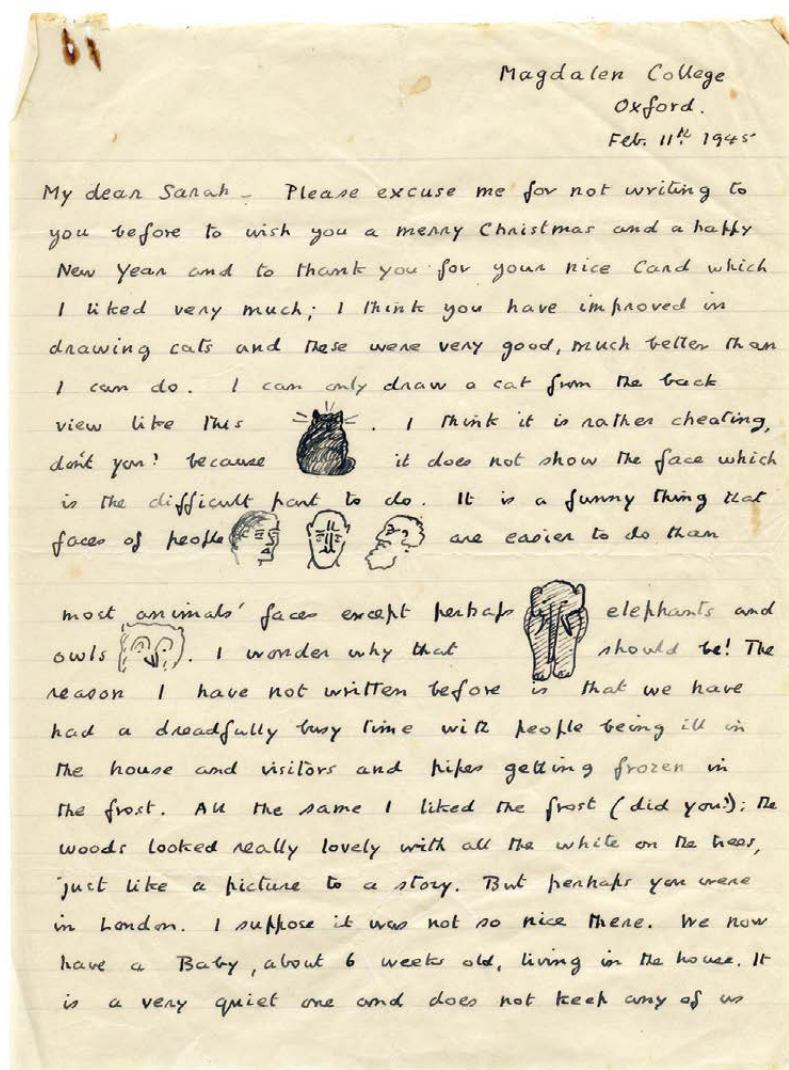
Lewis arranged to have male students from Oxford visit The Kilns on weekends to play tennis and swim, inviting the girls to join in. He took the girls on walks, smuggled them extra food at night, helped them raid the kitchen or listen to records in his study, and took them to the local pub for fish and chips. As many were Catholic, Lewis sometimes attended Mass with them.

The most lasting of these relationships was the friendship that developed between the Lewis brothers and June Flewett (b. 1927), a pretty, talented, and energetic girl who came to interview in 1942, and to stay in 1943, and all but refused to leave until January 1945.

Unlike the other evacuees, Flewett already knew of Lewis because she had read *The Screwtape Letters* (just published in 1942). Ironically she had no idea at first that her pipe-smoking host was the famous author. After making the connection, she felt terribly uncomfortable, worried that all her shortcomings must have been obvious to the insightful moralist. Lewis lampooned himself in a whimsical note, mock-chastising her heathen habit of throwing salt over her shoulder.

In fact, though, Flewett said later, "Lewis was the first person who made me believe I was an intelligent human being. The whole time I was there he built up my confidence in myself and my ability to think." Lewis inscribed a copy of *Screwtape* to her with this poetic riddle: "Beauty and brains and virtue never dwell / Together in one place, the critics say. / Yet we have known a case / You must not ask her name / But seek it 'twixt July and May."

In 1945 Flewett left to attend the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, paid for by Lewis. She was at first hesitant, feeling she should stay to help with housekeeping



at The Kilns (Moore was now elderly). Lewis wrote Flewett's mother saying he was tempted to allow her to stay, but "I think she ought to go. From the point of view of her career she is wasting time by staying." After she left he wrote, "I have never really felt anything like her unselfishness and patience and kindness and shall feel deeply in her debt as long as I live."


"FIRST GAINED A FRIEND"

The Lewis brothers remained in touch with Flewett and saw her perform on multiple occasions. She became a successful actress under the stage name of Jill Raymond, married broadcasting personality Clement Freud (1924–2009, grandson of Sigmund Freud), and became Lady Freud. She continued to visit The Kilns and had, in fact, been planning to visit the day Lewis died.

Not good with children? Hardly. As a child Lewis had been rather lonely in terms of friendships. He had Warnie, books, and, eventually, Arthur Greeves (see pp. 24–26). Perhaps playing games "at our level" was part of the same impulse Lewis revealed in the Narnia

WARTIME AND WONDER Douglas Gresham suggested to June "Jill" Flewett Freud (top, at right) that she may have been the model for Lucy Pevensie, another wartime evacuee who went to live with an old professor in the country.

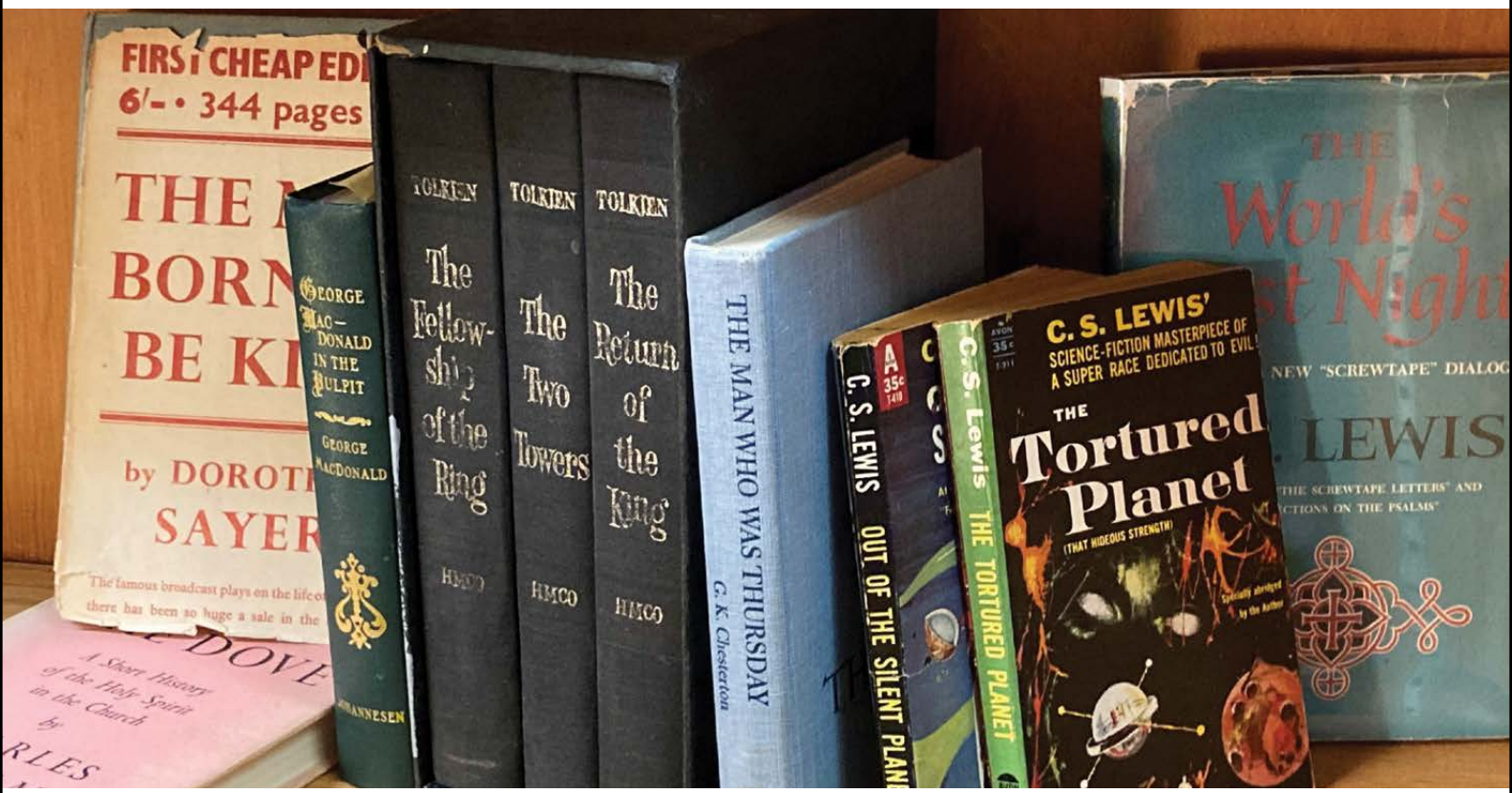
VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE Lewis was serious about being a godfather to both Harwood (above) and Neylan (a letter to her is at left).

books, in his delightful letters to children, and in sensitive essays like "How Not to Write for Children." His incredible capacity for communicating with children reveals a deep desire, as Laurence Harwood remembered, "just to feel what it was like to be our age and to enjoy the things that we were enjoying." Perhaps the beauty of one of Douglas Gresham's oft-repeated sentences is more than rhetorical. Coming to The Kilns, uprooted and uncertain, Gresham testified that in Lewis he "first gained a friend and later a much-loved stepfather." 

Joe Ricke is the director of the InklingFolk Fellowship.



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“Something profound had touched my mind and heart”

SOME OF LEWIS'S SCHOLARLY COLLEAGUES AND THOSE WHO CARRIED ON HIS LEGACY

Jennifer A. Boardman

Lewis's more academic friends and colleagues often loom large in works about him; while we've devoted this issue to featuring others, we didn't want to forget them. In addition we introduce you here to two of many scholars who have helped promote Lewis's work.

CHARLES WILLIAMS

(September 20, 1886–May 15, 1945)

C. S. Lewis read and loved Charles Williams's novel *Place of the Lion* in 1936 and wrote a letter to the author:

I never know about writing to an author. If you are older than I, I don't want to seem impertinent; if you are younger, I don't want to seem patronizing, but I feel I must risk it.

Just as Williams received the letter, he was writing Lewis after reading his *The Allegory of Love*. A deep friendship began.

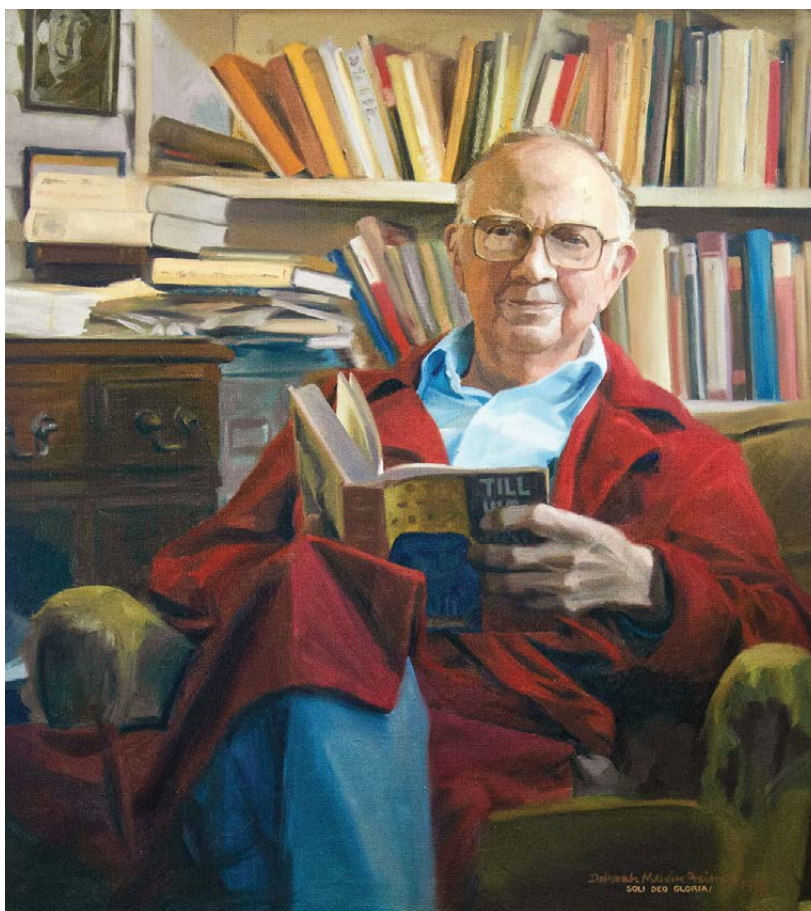
Charles Williams (*photo, next page*) was born in London and attended St. Albans School, after which he went to University College London. Unable to pay the tuition there, Williams left the university and began work as a proofreading assistant at Oxford University Press, eventually climbing the ranks to editor. In addition to his successful editing career, Williams was also a wide-ranging author of novels, poetry, literary criticism, theology, drama, and history.

When Oxford University Press moved its offices from London to Oxford at the start of World War II, Williams became a regular at Inklings meetings. He was there to hear early drafts of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, and the Inklings helped workshop Williams's final novel, *All Hallows' Eve*.

Lewis was fascinated by Williams's theological assumption that experiencing romantic love helped people better relate to and love God:

While writing about Courtly Love I have been so long a student of your province that I think, in a humble way, I am nearly naturalised.

Oxford scholar Nevill Coghill, who introduced Williams's work to Lewis, recalled that Williams



DEAN OF LEWIS STUDIES Clyde Kilby (see p. 47) introduced Lewis's works to generations of American Christians at Wheaton.

and Lewis “quickly became fast friends: they seemed to live in the same spiritual world.” Their intellectual and spiritual friendship continued until Williams's passing in 1945 as a result of an emergency operation a few short months before the end of World War II.

J. R. R. TOLKIEN

(January 3, 1892–September 2, 1973)

Born in 1892 in what today is South Africa, John Ronald Reuel Tolkien moved to England with his



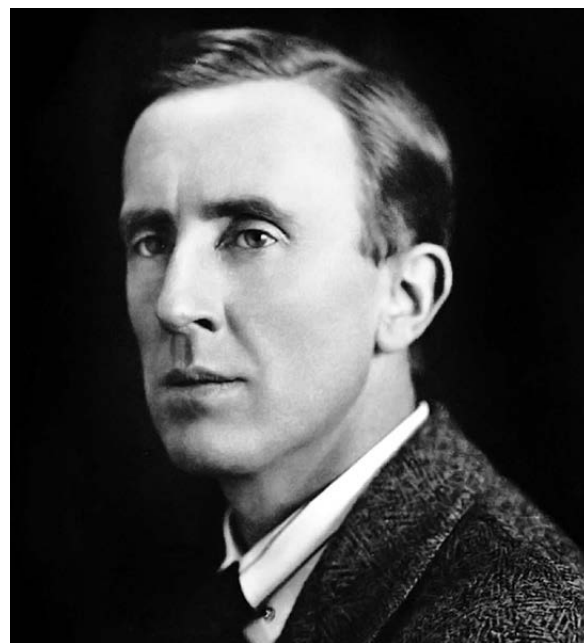
mother and brother at the age of three after his father died of rheumatic fever. He was raised in a village near Birmingham. Tolkien's mother died when he was 12, leaving him and his brother under the care of Father Francis Xavier Morgan, about whom Tolkien later recalled, "I first learned charity and forgiveness from him." He graduated from Exeter College, Oxford, in 1915, married Edith Bratt in 1916, and went on to fight in World War I.

By 1926 Tolkien was a professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford, where he met Lewis. They soon became friends, largely based on their mutual love of language, myth, and literature—and also, perhaps, because of their similar pasts: losing parents when young and fighting in World War I. Tolkien and Lewis shared their literary works with one another, often as part of Inklings meetings. Tolkien later said that Lewis "was for long my only audience."

When they first met, while Tolkien was devoted to his Roman Catholic faith, Lewis was an avowed atheist. But on September 20, 1931, in the early morning, Lewis, Tolkien, and fellow professor Hugo Dyson walked on the grounds of Magdalen College. Lewis later wrote:

Now what Dyson and Tolkien showed me was this: that if I met the idea of sacrifice in a Pagan story . . . I liked it very much and was mysteriously moved by it . . . provided I met it anywhere except in the Gospels. . . . Now [I see] the story of Christ is simply a true myth: a myth working on us in the same way as the others, but with this tremendous difference that it really happened.

Tolkien and Lewis used their mutual love for literary myth and legend—as well as their academic



IT GOT BETTER LATER After their first meeting, Lewis described Tolkien (above, in 1938) in his diary as "a smooth, pale fluent little chap."

FAN MAIL Lewis's first letter to Williams (above left) invited him to meet with the Inklings, stating that the only requirements were "a tendency to write, and Christianity."

understanding that for generations people had used myths to articulate existential realities—to create their own worlds, most famously Narnia and Middle-earth. Their 40-year friendship spanned literature, creativity, critique, and life-changing faith.

DOROTHY L. SAYERS

(June 13, 1893–December 17, 1957)

Dorothy L. Sayers and C. S. Lewis began their friendship through letters, and they found in one another intellectual equals and joyful sparring partners. Lewis considered Sayers his first fan "of importance" and called her "a high wind" for her ability to debate and her knowledge of both literature and theology.

Sayers (whom we also met in *CH* issue #139) was born in Oxford, the daughter of a clergyman, and won a scholarship to Somerville College, Oxford. She graduated in 1915 with First-Class Honours in modern languages and medieval literature.

Following her time at Oxford, Sayers wrote poetry and worked as a teacher and advertisement copywriter. In the early 1920s, she began work on her first of 12 Lord Peter Wimsey detective novels, popular in both the United Kingdom and the United States.

Sayers was most proud of her translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, "a great Christian allegory,"

LOVERS OF LANGUAGE Lewis once said he liked Sayers (seen at *right* feeding porcupines at the London Zoo) for the “extraordinary zest and edge of her conversation.”

“PART OF THE FURNITURE” Barfield (*below*) lived for nearly 40 years after Lewis died, and helped introduce his friend’s writings to a new generation.

and she also became famous for her apologetic works, including *The Mind of the Maker* (1941), *Creed or Chaos?* (1947), and her play cycle on the life of Christ, *The Man Born to Be King* (1943).

Though Lewis was a somewhat more willing apologist than Sayers, they were able to walk together as Christian advocates in a world often antagonistic to their work (even Tolkien was not a huge fan of Lewis’s apologetics). When Sayers believed her apologetics work was taking her away from her other literary interests, Lewis encouraged her to continue, believing her to be talented and her work invaluable.

In 1943 Lewis read Sayers’s 12-part play cycle and wrote to her,

I’ve finished *The Man Born to Be King* and think it a complete success. . . . I shed real tears (hot ones) in places. . . . I expect to read it times without number again.

Indeed he read it every Holy Week thereafter. Their friendship, marked by support and friendly debate, continued until her death in 1957.

OWEN BARFIELD

(November 9, 1898–December 14, 1997)

Though Owen Barfield was by nature introverted, J. R. R. Tolkien once called him “the only man who can tackle C. S. L.” in an intellectual tussle. Born 20 days before Lewis in 1898, Owen Barfield first met his friend when they were students at Oxford.

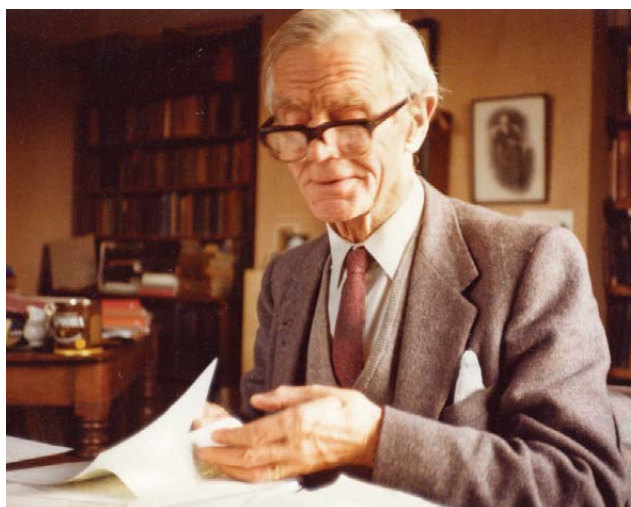
Barfield pursued a literary career following graduation from Wadham College in 1923, but fearing he would be unable to fully support his family, he joined his father’s law firm and practiced law in London, retiring in 1959.

Both during his law career and after, Barfield published many books, including his philosophical magnum opus, *Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry* (1957).

Throughout their twenties, Barfield and Lewis fought a philosophical “Great War”—in-depth discussions of mythology, atheism, and religion—which concluded when Lewis moved toward the theism Barfield already professed.

In *Surprised by Joy*, Lewis described himself as a fox (atheist) in a field being chased by hounds (theists):

And nearly everyone was now (one way or another) in the pack; Plato, Dante, MacDonald,

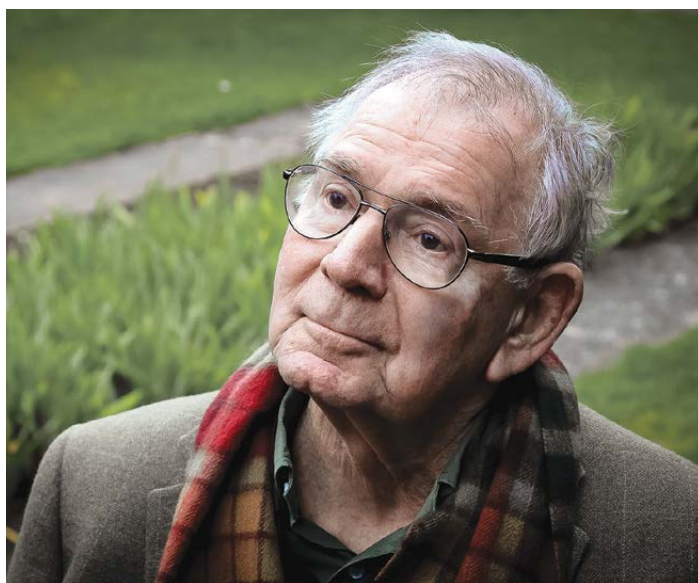


Herbert, Barfield, Tolkien, Dyson, Joy itself. . . . Enough had been thought, and said, and felt, and imagined. It was about time that something be done.

Lewis became a theist in 1929 and a Christian two years later.

Lewis and Barfield continued their close friendship until Lewis’s death in 1963; Barfield would sometimes journey to Oxford to take part in Inklings meetings. He once said of Lewis,

Now, whatever he was—and as you know, he was a great many things—C. S. Lewis was for me, first and foremost, the absolutely unforgettable friend, the friend with whom I was in close touch for over forty years, the friend you might come to regard hardly as another human being, but almost as a part of the furniture of my existence.



CLYDE S. KILBY
(September 26, 1902–October 18, 1986)

Born the youngest of eight children in the hill country of Tennessee, Clyde Kilby was the first in his family to attend college. Following his graduation from the University of Arkansas, he received his master's degree from the University of Minnesota before moving on to teach English at Wheaton College. He earned his PhD through correspondence courses at New York University.

Kilby first read C. S. Lewis's *The Case for Christianity* (later the first part of *Mere Christianity*) in 1943. Taken in by Lewis's words, Kilby read all of his work and immediately went to design a course for students on both Lewis's and Tolkien's mythical-Christian writings.

Kilby also began a years-long correspondence with Lewis, culminating in a collection of letters he later housed at the Marion E. Wade Center, which he created in 1965 as the "C. S. Lewis Collection," at Wheaton College (we were introduced to the Wade Center briefly in *CH* issue #139 as well).

In addition to Lewis's letters, the Wade Center went on to collect papers, letters, books, and manuscripts of six other British authors affiliated with Lewis either through fandom or friendship: Owen Barfield, G. K. Chesterton, George MacDonald, Dorothy L. Sayers, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams.

In the 20 years that Kilby knew Lewis (from the first time he read *The Case for Christianity* until Lewis's death in 1963), Kilby saw the importance of Lewis's apologetic work and dedicated his career to collecting and cataloging the author's words at the Wade Center. Recalling his first moments reading Lewis, he once said,

I bought the book and read it right through feeling almost from the first sentence that

"I REALLY LOVE THIS MAN" Hooper (left) began writing to Lewis in 1954, met his hero in person only six months before Lewis died, and devoted the next 57 years to advancing Lewis's legacy.

something profound had touched my mind and heart.

WALTER HOOPER
(March 27, 1931–December 7, 2020)


Born in North Carolina, Walter Hooper studied English at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. At a campus ministry meeting, a football player described the story of *The Screwtape Letters*—a senior demon instructing a junior demon how to tempt humans—leaving Hooper enthralled. Unable to find any Lewis books in the university bookstore, he did find an introduction C. S. Lewis wrote to a translation of the Epistles: "I'd never met anybody who believed that way. I was determined to have more words by this man."

Following service in the Korean War, Hooper taught English at the University of Kentucky, while working on a book about Lewis. Hooper was able to visit Lewis in England in 1963, where they had three pots of tea followed by a pint with the Inklings. Hooper later recalled, "As he and I walked on towards the pub where I would get the bus back, I didn't know whether I'd ever see him again. But I thought, I really love this man."

Hooper served as Lewis's private secretary in his last months of life, and, following Lewis's death (and, eventually, Warnie Lewis's death in 1973), he managed the author's literary estate. He moved to England and made it his life's work to promote Lewis's works and keep them in print.

In addition to editing and collecting a number of Lewis's unfinished works—including *The Dark Tower* (1977), *The World's Last Night* (1960), and *Selected Literary Essays* (1969)—Hooper also wrote his own Lewis companion, the 940-page *C. S. Lewis: A Companion and Guide* (1996). A *Christianity Today* review notes:

This readable volume seems to reflect a lifetime of meditating on everything written by Lewis and about him, of talking to those who knew Lewis, and of ruminating upon his own conversations with Lewis during their brief acquaintance.

Having served as a deacon and priest in the Church of England, Hooper converted to Roman Catholicism in 1988, something he believed Lewis would have eventually done (Hooper said, "Anglicanism seemed a mess"). He died of COVID-19 in 2020. 

Jennifer A. Boardman is a freelance writer and editor. She holds a master of theological studies from Bethel Seminary with a concentration in Christian history.

“Jack took care of me”

DOUGLAS GRESHAM AND MARJORIE LAMP MEAD

Marjorie Lamp Mead, associate director of the Marion E. Wade Center, has been friends with Doug Gresham since they first met in 1982. She spoke with him on behalf of Christian History.

Marjorie Lamp Mead: You have described the first time that you met C. S. Lewis often (both in books and in talks), but many have still not heard this story. Could you please share your memories of meeting Jack for the first time? What had your mother told you and David before you met him?

Douglas Gresham: When I first arrived in England, I found it to be a grubby, sooty, and smoky place and was not particularly impressed. We lived in a small offset house which was part of a cheap hotel. I listened intently as Mommy read more of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, because the next day she was going to take us up to Oxford to meet her friend, and we were to stay for a while in the freezing cold of Oxfordshire in winter.

I first met him as “Jack,” not C. S. Lewis, as Jack was his chosen nickname. He took it for himself when he was about four years old from a little dog that he was fond of in the village close to where his family lived. The little dog, “Jacksie,” was accidentally killed one day so Jack took his name to himself and it lasted all his life.

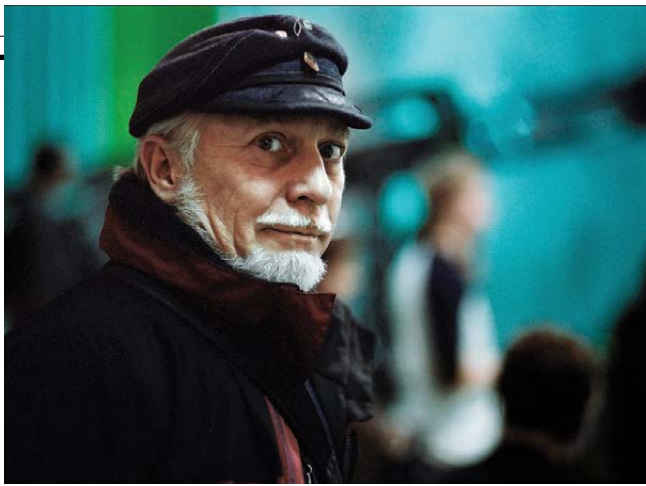
I was eight years old when Jack invited my mother (with his brother Warnie’s happy consent) to bring her boys and spend a few days at his home, “The Kilns.” I had heard quite a lot about this amazing man, whom I had seen in my mind to be tall, handsome, strong, and probably wearing silver armor. My brother and I arrived at The Kilns, and my mother ushered us in through the back door and into the kitchen. There, standing in the doorway that would lead to the middle of that lovely house, was the strangest looking man I had ever seen! Remember that I was a little American boy who had



STARTING OVER Douglas (left) and David Gresham (right) pose with their stepfather and dog in 1957. David eventually became an Orthodox Jew and left England.

never seen anyone who was dressed as shabbily as Jack was dressed that day. His baggy gray trousers were scattered with cigarette ash; his shoes (though one could hardly have called them that) were slide-on slippers, the heels of which were crushed; and his jacket was in total shambles, torn holes in the elbows and other tears here and there. His shirt, though, was clean, and the collar of it spread out over the lapels of the jacket.

Initially I was taken aback and beginning to worry about what our Mommy had gotten us into. And then Jack started to talk. His whole face became a smile and he said “Hello, hello, hello! Welcome, welcome!” His



A STEWARD Today Gresham (left) promotes his stepfather's work and helps oversee the Lewis estate.

A LIVING MUSEUM The Kilns (below left) has been restored to appear as it did at the end of Jack Lewis's life, and hosts scholars and other programs.

speech, and his eyes glowing with joy, suddenly changed him from a shabby scarecrow into a vibrant and friendly man glowing with wisdom and happiness. Warnie was a bit behind Jack, and equally, he too immediately made me smile. I very soon learned to like Jack and later on to love him dearly. Now I miss him all the time.

MLM: How did your sense of Jack change over time—or did it?

DG: My sense of who and what Jack was never really changed much at all, but it grew steadily over the days and then the weeks and then the months as we started getting to know him; first, while we lived in London, then later when we moved to Headington (just about 30 miles east of the middle of Oxford). My brother and I eventually moved to The Kilns as Mother was dying. I had seen much more of Jack when we moved to Headington than I had when we lived in London, and he and Warnie together made me greatly welcome at The Kilns. I could ride my bike from Headington to The Kilns and then play in the woods and lake near The Kilns, and also in the air raid shelter that the gardener, Fred Paxford, and Jack had built during World War



“I will never laugh at parents again”

In December 1953 Joy Davidman Gresham and her two sons, David and Douglas, were invited by the Lewis brothers to their home, The Kilns, for a four-day visit. In various letters, C. S. Lewis described this time with the Gresham boys. To his friend British poet Ruth Pitter, Lewis wrote,

Warnie . . . and I are dazed: we have had an American lady staying in the house with her two sons aged 9½ and 8. I never knew what we celibates are shielded from. I will never laugh at parents again.

Not that the boys weren't a delight: but a delight like surf-bathing which leaves one breathless and aching. The energy, the tempo, is what kills. I have now perceived (what I always

suspected from memories of our childhood) that the way to a child's heart is quite simple: treat them with seriousness & ordinary civility—and they ask no more. What they can't stand (quite rightly) is the common adult assumption that everything they say shd. be twisted into a kind of jocular-ity. (*Collected Letters*, volume 3, Dec. 21, 1953)

Lewis shared the following observations with a longtime American correspondent, Vera Gebbert. The letter was typed by Warnie, so it may well have reflected his impressions also:

. . . last week we entertained a lady from New York for four days, with her

boys. . . . Can you imagine two crusted old bachelors in such a situation? It however went swimmingly, though it was very, very exhausting; the energy of the American small boy is astonishing.

This pair thought nothing of a four mile hike across broken country as an incident in a day of ceaseless activity, and when we took them up Magdalen tower, they said as soon as they got back to the ground, “Let's do it again.” Without being in the least priggish they struck one as being amazingly adult by our standards and one could talk to them as one would to “grown-ups”—though the next moment they would be wrestling like puppies on the sitting room floor. (*Collected Letters*, volume 3, Dec. 23, 1953)

STEPPING BACK IN TIME Today, if you journey to Oxford, you can still ramble (with a guide) on the grounds of Magdalen College (right).

FRIENDS OF JACK A number of the Inklings signed this thank-you letter (below right) to an American benefactor.



II, long before I got there. This air raid shelter became my personal place to haunt and play in.

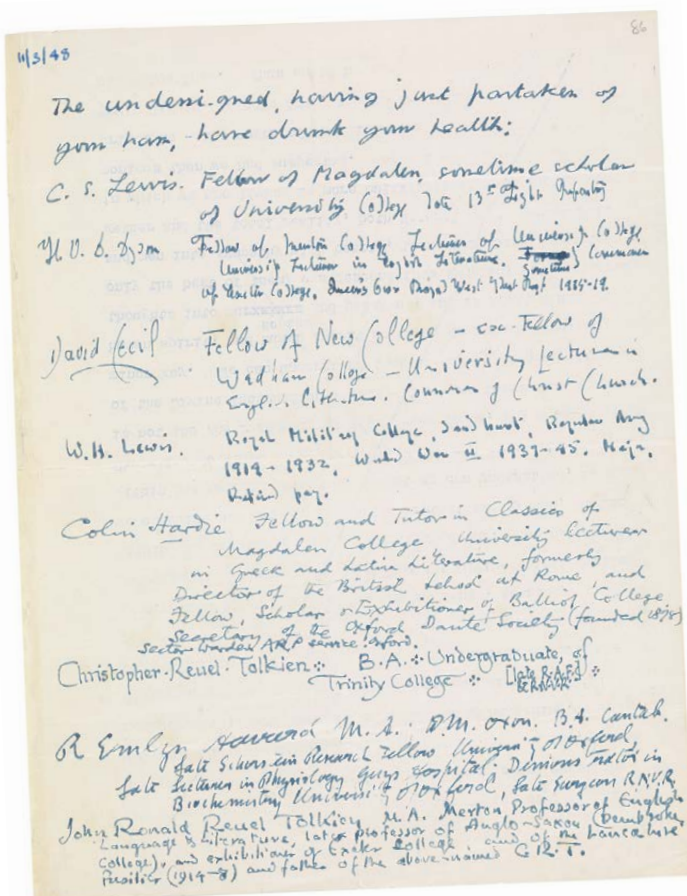
Jack didn't really change much at all as far as I was concerned, he just became steadily more and more of himself. But Jack was changing in one important way, though not to me directly. He slowly but steadily grew emotionally closer to my mother than he had been. And indeed they were married when she was thought to be dying. I, in the meanwhile, grew closer to Jack and to a lesser degree to Warnie as well. Jack was a pure man, a kind, gentle, and loving man, and all of those qualities were increasingly evident as I grew to know him better.

MLM: What are the most important things that you learned from your stepfather? In other words, how has he influenced you?

DG: First and foremost I learned to love, which perhaps was the most important lesson of all. I learned the almost unbelievable power and joy attached to reading good books. As a result I am what I am today all these years later, still living under the warm glow of Jack's love and gentle instruction. When Mother died he and I wept together for a long time at first and then in lesser times later. I learned also, contrary to what English schools tried to teach me, that there is no shame in weeping for loved ones. From Jack I learned the great value to be found in helping others, that helping other people not only rewards those being helped but even more, helps the person doing the helping. I learned from Jack as well as my mother, and some from Warnie, though it took me a good while to realize it; without what they left in me, I would be a much lesser person than I am.

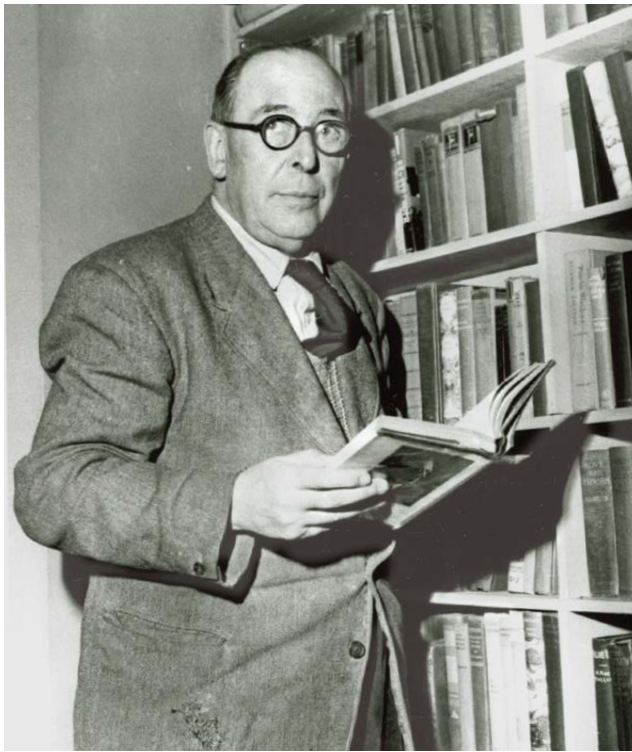
MLM: What would you like people to understand most about your stepfather?

DG: To stop trying to pretend that he was less than he really was, to stop issuing false sayings and claiming them to be from Jack. I want people to say nothing about Jack till they take the trouble to find out what kind of a man he really was. We have had numerous bad biographies of Jack's life and a very few really good ones. Ditch the ones that are trying to show off the authors themselves, and instead read the ones that show Jack for what he was. Preferably those by authors who knew Jack very well, such as one of the



first and still the best one available—Jack (1988), written by one of Jack's best friends, George Sayer, and yet pulling no punches even though he wrote about his friend.

MLM: How did your mother change Jack? How did Jack change your mother?



DG: Both of them changed each other and for the better. You see these were two very remarkable people, both of them carrying huge intellects, and when you put the two together, wondrous and amazing things happened. Perhaps the best illustration of this would be *Till We Have Faces*, a book carefully written by both Jack and Joy together—Jack actually wanted to have it published under both their names, but Mother said he was not to do so and he relented—and written so that the female characters emerge as very real women (both good and bad). I may well be the only person left in the world who watched them and heard them working out that very powerful tale together.

Mother changed Jack in other ways as well, and Jack likewise changed Mother too, and all of these changes were for the good. Examples are simple, such as Mother insisting on renovating The Kilns. That house was not-so-slowly falling apart till she had it all repaired and repainted. It was a very much better home to live in afterward.

Jack changed my mother by the simple fact of loving her. Loving her when she was strong and agile and continuing to love her (if not loving her even more) when she was physically being eaten alive by her cancers. Jack would work harder than ever before to find time to be with her as often as he could, and she likewise would do whatever she could to help Jack in his work. The two of them changed each other and thank God, they also changed me.

LONG LEGACY Lewis (pictured at left at The Kilns c. 1960) touched millions with the stories of Narnia, including through the movie Gresham coproduced (above).

MLM: *Almost since your very first visit to the Wade Center in 1982, you have dedicated your working life to preserving your stepfather's legacy. What helped you decide to do this? What has it meant to you to be able to be a steward of Jack's legacy? What have you enjoyed the most about this?*

DG: The answer to that is simple. Jack took care of me so I will as best I can, take care of him—even if he is dead. What helps me to do that work is that he deserved the very best that I can do for him. Jack sat at my mother's bedside and his love for her was evident; well, I loved her too and grew to love him.

One of the best parts about looking after Jack's works, as best I can, is that many people attend C. S. Lewis symposia and such, and they make me very welcome. People ask me about Jack, and I am always happy to tell them. As for Jack's legacy, I am the only person still living who lived with both Jack and Warnie, and the only one still alive who is able to tell folks about them. Much better to let others know what kind of wonderful people they both were. Warnie was a fine man till his alcoholism took him. Jack's death left Warnie alone, and he simply could not stand that loneliness. I still grieve now and then for both of them. Why should I want to hide all their goodness away inside myself? **CH**

Questions for reflection: Jack at home

These questions are meant to help you think more deeply about this issue and apply it to your own life and setting. Ponder them on your own, or discuss them in Sunday school or in a study group.

1) If you were familiar with the life and works of C. S. Lewis, how did this issue give you a new perspective on him? If you were unfamiliar, what would you like to learn more about?

2) How is the story of Lewis's life and conversion (pp. 10–14) similar to your own story? How is it different?

3) If you have read any of Lewis's works (pp. 16–18), which ones are your favorites? Why?

4) Were you familiar with Lewis's concept of the "four loves" (p. 19)? Where have you seen instances of each of these loves in your own life? How have they enriched your relationships with others and with Christ?

5) How did Lewis's parents and other relatives influence his life (pp. 20–23)? What spiritual influences do you see in your own life from your ancestors and relatives?

6) How does Lewis distinguish "First" and "Second" Friends (pp. 24–26)? Have you experienced these kinds of friendships? What influences have they had on your life?

7) What kind of influence did W. T. Kirkpatrick (p. 27) have on the young Lewis? Has a teacher or professor had a similar influence on you?

8) How did Warnie Lewis's life and conversion story resemble his brother's, and how was it different (pp. 30–34)? How did the relationship between the two shape their writings? Have you had a similar relationship with a sibling or other relative?

LONG-DISTANCE FRIENDS Letters to Clyde Kilby (p. 48) attest to his lively correspondence with C. S. Lewis (below right), J. R. R. Tolkien (below left), and Warnie Lewis.

9) Have you ever experienced any kind of "found family" as Lewis did with the Moores (p. 35)? How did this change and shape you?

10) What surprised you about the love story between Lewis and Joy Davidman (pp. 36–39)? How did this relationship shape his later writings, and hers?

Have you ever experienced anything similar?

11) Read Matthew 19:14. Why and how did Lewis welcome and appreciate children (pp. 41–43)? Have you read any of Lewis's works with a child? If so, how did the child's perspective surprise you?

12) What interests did Lewis share with his friends from academic and professional worlds (pp. 45–48)? How have you benefited from groups of friends who share your interests?

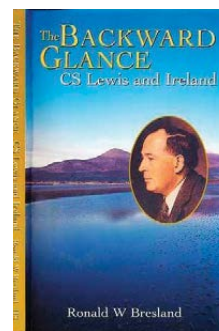
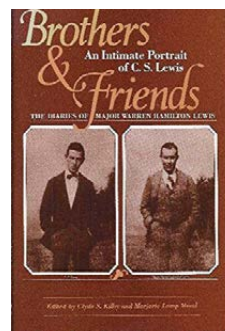
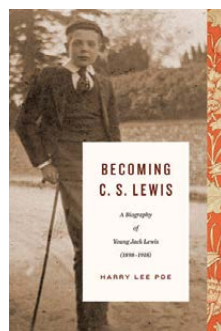
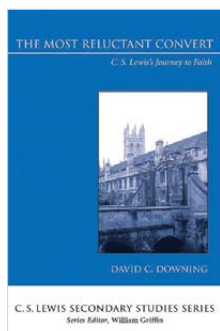
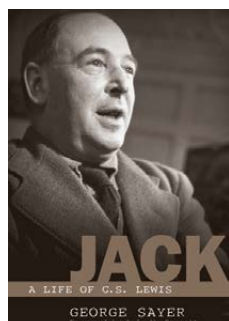
13) **BONUS QUESTION:** Ten of our article titles were taken from books by or about Lewis. Were you able to identify them? (Answers at bottom.)



Answers to bonus question: *Surprised by Joy* (five articles), *A Grief Observed*, *The Four Loves*, *the Collected Letters, C. S. Lewis: My Godfather* by Laurence Harwood, and *Brothers and Friends* by Warren Lewis (ed. Clyde Kilby and Marjorie Lamp Mead)

Recommended resources

WITH SCORES OF BOOKS BY AND ABOUT C. S. LEWIS—WHERE TO BEGIN? HERE ARE SUGGESTIONS COMPILED BY OUR EDITORS, CONTRIBUTORS, AND THE WADE CENTER.



BOOKS

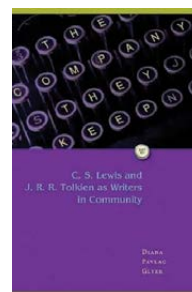
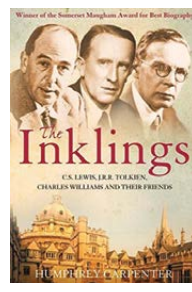
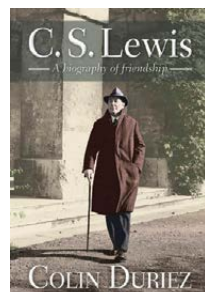
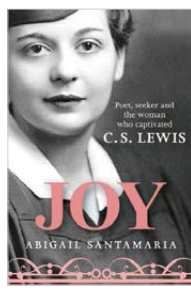
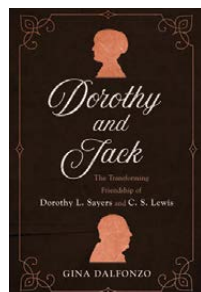
For **Lewis's own works**, consult "Spending a pleasant hour with C. S. Lewis," pp. 16–18. Some **good biographies of Lewis** include George Sayer, *Jack* (1988); Roger Lancelyn Green and Walter Hooper, *C. S. Lewis* (2003); Alan Jacobs, *The Narnian* (2008); Douglas Gresham, *Jack's Life* (2005); Devin Brown, *A Life Observed* (2013); and Alister McGrath, *C. S. Lewis—A Life* (2013). Recollections of Lewis by his friends are gathered into *Remembering C. S. Lewis* (2005), edited by James Como—also known as C. S. Lewis at the Breakfast Table (1979, 1992)—and Lewis's friends themselves are the subject of Colin Duriez, *C. S. Lewis: A Biography of Friendship* (2013). It may be hard to get your hands on the three-volume *Collected Letters of Lewis* (2004–2007) edited by Walter Hooper, but the search is worth the reward! See **images** of the places Lewis knew in Walter Hooper, *Through Joy and Beyond* (1982) and Douglas Gilbert and Clyde Kilby, *C. S. Lewis: Images of His World* (2005).

Guides to **reading** Lewis include Walter Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: A Complete Guide to His Life & Works* (1998) and Joel Heck, *The C. S. Lewis Reader's Encyclopedia* (1998). **Academic companions** to his work include Bruce Edwards's four-volume *C. S. Lewis: Life, Works, and*

Legacy (2007) and Robert MacSwain and Michael Ward, editors, *Cambridge Companion to C. S. Lewis* (2010).

Jack Lewis's **childhood** is covered in Ronald Bresland, *The Backward Glance: C. S. Lewis and Ireland* (1999); Sandy Smith, *C. S. Lewis and the Island of His Birth* (2013); and Harry Poe, *Becoming C. S. Lewis* (2019); read the Boxen stories Jack and Warnie wrote together in *Boxen: Childhood Chronicles Before Narnia* (1985). For Jack Lewis's friendship with **Arthur Greeves**, consult the *Collected Letters* or *They Stand Together* (1979), Hooper's first compilation of Lewis's letters to Greeves. Read more on Lewis's **journey from atheism to fame** as an apologist in David Downing, *The Most Reluctant Convert* (2002) and Harry Poe, *The Making of C. S. Lewis* (2021).

For details of **Warren Lewis's** life, look at *Brothers and Friends* (1982), edited by Clyde Kilby and Marjorie Lamp Mead. Warnie wrote seven books on seventeenth-century France, of which the most famous is *The Splendid Century* (1953). Two biographies of **Joy Davidman** are *And God Came In* (1983) by Lyle Dorsett and *Joy* (2015) by Abigail Santamaria; Davidman's story was also novelized in *Becoming Mrs. Lewis* (2018)

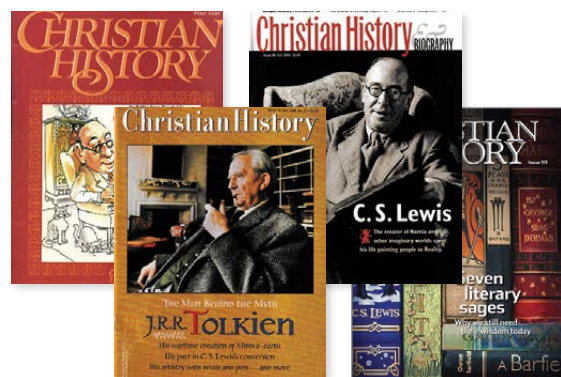


by Patti Callahan. (For Davidman's writings, see p. 40). **Douglas Gresham** wrote of his own life, including his childhood with Joy and Jack, in *Lenten Lands* (1988).

Many books set Lewis explicitly in the context of his friendships with **the Inklings and other colleagues**. Among them are Humphrey Carpenter, *The Inklings* (1978); Owen Barfield on C. S. Lewis (1989), edited by G. B. Tennyson; Colin Duriez and David Porter, *The Inklings Handbook* (2001); Colin Duriez, *Tolkien and C. S. Lewis: The Gift of Friendship* (2003); Diana Pavlac Glyer, *The Company They Keep* (2007) and *Bandersnatch* (2015); Harry Poe, *The Inklings of Oxford* (2009); Philip and Carol Zaleski, *The Fellowship* (2015); and Gina Dalfonzo, *Dorothy and Jack* (2020).

Finally, hundreds of books cover aspects of Lewis's life and thought from a literary or theological perspective. See the Internet links below for help in navigating the landscape.

CHRISTIAN HISTORY ISSUES



Read past issues on our website—some are still available for purchase:

- 7: C. S. Lewis
- 75: G. K. Chesterton
- 78: J. R. R. Tolkien
- 86: George MacDonald
- 88: C. S. Lewis II
- 113: *Seven Literary Sages*
- 116: *25 Writings*

Our Advent devotional, *The Grand Miracle*, features readings from Lewis, Tolkien, Williams, Sayers, Barfield, Chesterton, MacDonald, and Davidman. Order some for this Advent!

VIDEOS FROM VISION VIDEO

Videos on the theme of this issue include *Affectionately Yours*, *Screwtape*; *Christian Catalyst Collection*: Douglas Gresham; C. S. Lewis Onstage: *The Most Reluctant Convert*; *The Fantasy Makers*; *The Life and Faith of C. S. Lewis*;



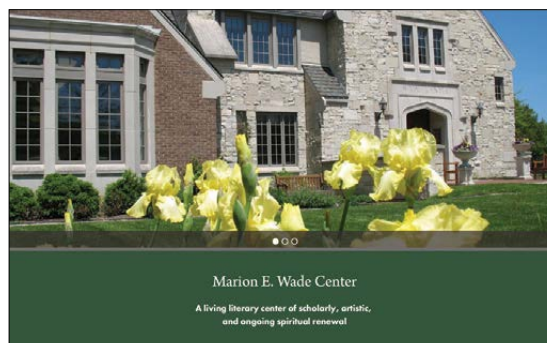
Points of Light; *Shadowlands* (the BBC version); *The Shortest Way Home*; and *Through a Lens Darkly*.

WEBSITES

Sites aplenty are devoted to Lewis—study centers, local Lewis societies, individual scholars, and fan sites galore. Here is a small fraction of them.

The Marion E. Wade Center played a special role in this issue's production; its resources can be browsed on the Wheaton College website. Taylor University also has a prominent center devoted to the study of "Lewis and Friends." You can find a trove of information at the C. S. Lewis Institute. The official website of Harper Collins's editions of Lewis's books is cslewis.com (with a companion site devoted to Narnia at Narnia.com). The C. S. Lewis Foundation, which maintains The Kilns as a study center, is at cslewis.org. (Consult its [featured links section](#) as a guide to other resources.) See short descriptions and covers of all of Lewis's books at *The Disordered Image*. Some journals and newsletters devoted to the study of Lewis include *Seven*, *Sehnsucht*, and the *Bulletin of the New York C. S. Lewis Society*. *Mythlore* publishes articles on Tolkien, Lewis, and Williams.

Some scholars' sites may particularly help those first exploring the world of Lewis studies. Diana Pavlac Glyer maintains a bibliography of book-length studies of Lewis at dianaglyer.com. Joel Heck has a detailed chronology (more than 1,300 pages!) of Lewis's life at joelheck.com. Andrew Lazo has some guides to Lewis available at mythoflove.net. Brenton Dickieson blogs about the Inklings at *A Pilgrim in Narnia*. **CH**

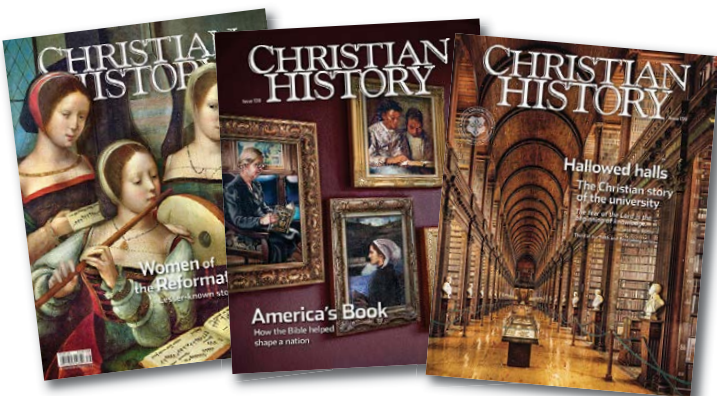




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1. *The Lost Lewis Tapes*, Vols. 1–3
2. *Into Narnia*, Vols. 1–7
3. *In Jack's Footsteps with Dr. Jerry Root*
4. "Becoming Mrs. Lewis" by Patti Callahan
5. "Planet Narnia" with Dr. Michael Ward
6. *The Romantic C. S. Lewis with Dr. Malcolm Guite*
7. *Douglas Gresham Reminiscences about C. S. Lewis, Parts 1–3*
8. *Adorning the Dark with Andrew Peterson*
9. *Surprised by George: The Father of Fantasy*
10. *Murder at the Wade: The Detective Fiction of G. K. Chesterton and Dorothy L. Sayers*

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As the foremost archive in the world for published and unpublished works by and about C. S. Lewis and his important influencers, the Marion E. Wade Center at Wheaton College (Wheaton, IL) provides a unique opportunity to learn from these Christians by

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