

EVELYN WAUGH STUDIES

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Jasmine Adams

NEWS

A Call for All Times: Waugh's Testimony in *Helena*¹

Jasmine Adams

“It is all I have ever asked, all my life, a straight answer to a straight question; and I never get one” (*Helena* 114). This line, spoken by the eponymous saint soon before her baptism into the Catholic church, might resonate with a reader of Waugh, whose delight in chaos, absurdity, and irony can leave readers simultaneously laughing behind their hands and pondering existential dread. Undeniably a product of his age, with a brilliant satirical wit, Waugh was also a devoted Catholic—like his protagonist, drawn to the sheer intelligibility of the faith. After his conversion, Waugh began to consider writing as a vocation, not just a profession, and sought to unite his faith with his work. Writing *Helena* allowed Waugh to explore the idea of vocation itself, through the story of a fellow convert to the Church who became a saint by achieving the one great act to which she believed God was calling her. St. Helena was the mother of Emperor Constantine and best known for embarking in her old age on a quest to uncover the wooden cross upon which Jesus Christ was crucified. When Waugh embarked on a quest of his own, a novel purporting to rescue this ancient saint's reputation from modern impugment, critics were baffled. The bizarre mix of styles, the creative liberties taken, and the downplaying of key moments of apologetic significance all seemed to undermine Waugh's defense of the truth of both St. Helena's discovery and Christianity itself. On the contrary, these elements serve his message by invoking the power of style, which effectively demonstrates both the constitutive elements of compelling testimony and the transcendent nature of truth; moreover, Waugh acts out the ideas of vocation central to the novel by using his own particular style.

The “Preface” of *Helena* initially seems to make the novel's intentions clear: to defend the truth of St. Helena's story against skeptics. However, Waugh then openly admits that certain aspects of the novel are “freely invented” (x). The author may seem to undermine his own efforts to salvage Helena's story from defamation, but to understand Waugh's stylistic choices and blatant fictionalizations, one must consider what he ultimately wishes to emphasize: not the historical accuracy of Helena's life, but the deeper truth to which she is a witness. Waugh's

¹ Winner of the John H. Wilson Jr. Evelyn Waugh Undergraduate Essay Contest, 2020.

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boldness in including these seemingly contradictory elements is significant, as it raises questions about truth as distinct from fact, especially when it comes to telling stories. This distinction is further demonstrated by the understatement of seemingly significant events, such as the disconcerting moment when a passing comment informs us that “Helena had been baptized” (118). Declining to focus on this moment, Waugh implicitly reminds us that the novel is a hagiography; Helena will end up as a saint, so it need not be a dramatic moment when she becomes a Christian.

More important is the way this conversion comes about and what follows. She does not go directly from skeptic to saint, yet it is her insistence on evidence -- “*where* did this happen? ... And *when* did this happen?” (83) -- that propels her towards conversion. This pragmatic desire for truth continues to lead Helena, culminating in her fierce determination to achieve the singular goal of finding the True Cross. Surrounded by people “chattering” (175) about the Council of Nicaea and its complex theological debates, she goes off in search of “a solid chunk of wood waiting for them to have their silly heads knocked against” (175). Yet when it comes to the episode of finding the Cross, Jonathan Kanary points out that “[e]verything about the episode seems deliberately constructed to allow doubts about its result” (270). The staunch empiricist completes her quest only after all streams of evidence have dried up; her final breakthrough comes through an opium-induced dream while she is in a physically ill, weakened state (205). Waugh seems to be weighing the importance of facts, acknowledging that they can help lead to the truth, yet insisting that they cannot replace it. Helena pursues the Cross not out of doubt but out of faith, and Waugh emphasizes this by showing that her quest could not be completed on scientific reasoning alone. Her faith exists independent of her discovery, which is why even when she thinks her search has reached a dead end, she fasts and observes Lenten practices beyond the requirements. Kanary argues against those who judge *Helena* as an attempt to “prove” Christianity: in the same way that relics cannot provide empirical proof for Christianity itself, Helena on her own cannot offer more than a testimony, one which requires a certain amount of faith to accept (272). Waugh not only accepts it but also uses it as inspiration to present his own testimony, one which he hopes will resonate with those in his time to point them towards the truth.

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Waugh's desire to provide a modern testimony to Christianity leads him to embrace, rather than limit, the use of a distinctive style in *Helena*; though it may seem like a paradoxical choice, this artfulness allows him to tell her story in a much more powerful way than would relying on pure facts and historical evidence. Waugh writes in his essay "Literary Style in England and America" that the elements of style "form a preservative which ensures the nearest approximation to permanence in the fugitive art of letters" (107). His portrayal of the young Helena, enraptured by the story of Helen of Troy, reflects the power of narrative style. He also suggests in *Helena* its more somber implications through Lactantius, who is ironically "left, with all his unrivaled powers of expression, rather vague about what to express" due to his lack of a library (102). Style, he says, "has the Egyptian secret of the embalmers. It is not to be despised" (102). The shift from *preservative* to *embalmers*, with its connotations of death, reinforces Lactantius' warning that "a false historian, with the mind of Cicero or Tacitus and the soul of an animal" (102), could effectively encase a false narrative with a beautiful and entertaining style that would give it popularity and longevity, burying the truth. Here Waugh famously jabs at Edward Gibbon, who expressed doubts about the historicity of St. Helena's discovery of the True Cross (104). Waugh implies that one ought properly to respect the power of style by using it to tell stories that convey truth in a memorable and entertaining way.

Yet Waugh in his writings on style addressed the dangers of going too far in the other direction—focusing so much on style that the meaning is obscured. He discusses the importance of lucidity, using the example of James Joyce, whose "later work lost almost all faculty of communication, so intimate, allusive and idiosyncratic did it become, so obsessed by euphony and nuance" ("Literary Style" 107). Waugh believed that a writer uses style successfully when his reader can both understand his ideas and enjoy the task. This provides some insight into Waugh's integration of elements from children's literature into *Helena*, from the classic fairytale opening to the allusions to Old King Cole (18); they allow him to capture his audience's imagination and achieve lucidity through styles that are recognizable to them. Similarly, his characters' use of modern English, complete with frequent use of slang words like "Bosh," invites his readers to enter into the world he envisions so that he has the chance to challenge them in the first place. Sacrificing total historical accuracy for this comforting familiarity, Waugh gains common ground with his reader, as Andrew Moran notes in his contrast of Waugh and Joyce: "Not through abstruse word games nor from a flight from traditional human

connections, including the one between an author and a readership outside academia and the avant-garde, but through these commitments—to clear language, to one’s place in the world, and to truths beyond the self—does a writer, Waugh implies, ‘bloom’” (290-91). Waugh’s deft use of style in *Helena* demonstrates the effectiveness of these commitments, as it allows him to transport his readers to fourth-century Rome and Jerusalem while keeping their feet firmly planted on the streets of twentieth-century England, implicitly arguing for the relevance of the story to their modern lives.

Anachronisms, which include more than just the modernized speech, are perhaps one of the most prominent stylistic features of the novel and serve multiple functions. True to his character as a humorist, Waugh relishes the opportunity to give pleasure; anachronisms simply make *Helena* funnier. When an emerald-wigged Emperor Constantine, frustrated with his modernist architects’ ugly work, demands that they “go and pull the carvings off Trajan’s arch and stick them on mine” (145), the modern reader laughs at both the recognition of the stereotype and at its misplacement. Anachronisms also serve a more serious purpose in the novel. D. Marcel DeCoste argues that their “obtrusiveness [...] make[s] readerly recognition of the writer’s aesthetic choices unavoidable” (74). Waugh is obviously not trying to tell a story in which every element is literally true; he unabashedly presents his novel as a work of art, and modern art at that. Yet these elements do not make *Helena* less realistic but more tangible to our modern understanding. Ann Pasternak Slater illustrates one advantage in Waugh’s choice not to “concretize” his novel: “He didn’t specify the tepidarium, sudatorium, and laconicum in Fausta’s Roman baths. He simply described her ‘hot, dry room,’ and we recognize a sauna” (150). Rather than weigh down the narrative with clunky terminology, he achieves the same effect with greater clarity, using simple language that the reader can easily understand. Moreover, this keeps the story running at a smooth pace, allowing Waugh to engage in his own myth-making in a way that serves his testimony. It does not matter whether the reader has a perfect image of the royal bath, or instead imagines a modern sauna. The flexible descriptions, without distracting from or compromising the main points Waugh wishes to convey, allow the story to take on its own life in the mind of the reader and lend itself to easy retelling, ultimately aiding his attempt to share Helena’s story with a contemporary audience.

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The anachronistic personalities of the characters also make them more recognizable as real human beings, establishing an emotional connection more easily between them and the reader. Waugh uses anachronisms not as a “mere decorative rhetorical device,” Slater argues: “Reality is itself anachronistic” (151). Just as the coastline where Helena lived was still there for Waugh to see on his visit to the Holy Land in 1935, human nature remains the same. The characters who show the nastier side of human nature bring the novel startlingly to life in the twentieth century. Our outrage is evoked when Constantius coldly divorces Helena and separates her from her young son (86-87); the injustice of Crispus’ murder by the schemes of power-hungry Empress Fausta becomes ironically unnecessary when she is soon assassinated on the orders of Constantine (162). Especially from a post-war perspective, the portrayal of the human capacity for cruelty to the point of absurdity reflects reality all too well. The difficult task laid before those who do value truth and want to live a good life is reflected in the delicate balance that Waugh strikes between various styles and genres. Because Helena’s “life unfolds along a confusing spectrum of aesthetic possibilities and existential, not to mention spiritual, realities” (Tomko 322), she becomes recognizable as more than just a character; she emerges as a human being who must determine which of the storylines she will take up as her own. One witnesses this process as she embraces and later sheds the narrative of Helen of Troy. Helena Tomko suggests that Helena’s navigation of the diversity of cultures and beliefs of her time to eventually reach sainthood shows that she becomes “a good ‘reader’ of life” (323). The reader of the novel, who must dig through the conflicting voices of his or her own time, might relish the hope that, like the shrewd protagonist, he or she will find truth that will give meaningful direction to his or her life. By showing these universal struggles unfolding, Waugh portrays the timeless humanity of his characters convincingly, which facilitates the transformation of the ancient legend into modern terms. Enabling this human connection to take place challenges the reader to interact more closely with the text, which drives home the lasting importance of Helena’s story and makes Waugh’s account more compelling itself.

Waugh also involves the reader in lighter ways by packing the novel full of jokes and allusions, both literary and historical. From the chapter titles to the Wandering Jew to the “Donation of Constantine,” Tomko points out that the references are so thickly layered that all but the most attentive readers are sure to miss some (322). Undoubtedly aware of this, Waugh plays something of a “meta-joke” on his unwitting audience in the “Preface,” demurely nudging

the reader towards these “echoes and reflections . . . scattered about” (xii)—even poking fun at himself by saying “it would be tedious to point them out” (xii). He intentionally leaves it up to his reader to discover these hidden gems: “They are to be found by anyone whom they amuse” (xii); one ought to read the novel, Waugh suggests, with the delight of an adult watching an old childhood film and recognizing the stereotypes and allusions that go unnoticed by a child.

Tomko condenses well what Waugh is up to: “This reflection is itself a literary riddle, proposing that the novel is as much a quest to find its jokes as to find the True Cross” (322). Thus, various types of humor join the crowd of other dualisms—past and present, fact and fiction, history and legend—that Waugh overcomes in this novel.

By bridging these gaps, Waugh creates a living connection between the reader, the character Helena, and the historical saint and her time. He openly acknowledges that his venture is neither pure history nor pure myth in the “Preface,” in which “the modest final sentence” (Slater 150) cleverly condenses the crux of the novel’s paradoxical nature as “‘in *fact* a *legend*’” (*ibid.* 150). Some of the most bizarre details of the novel turn out to be historical facts: Divine Valerian really was stuffed; the absurd description of the Labarum is taken from the record by the Arian court historian Eusebius; Constantine’s arch actually has pieces from Trajan’s; and one of the nails of the True Cross was even made into a bridle for his horse, and another placed in a crown on a statue of himself (*ibid.* 151-2). In a metanarrative moment, Pope Sylvester remarks on the nonsense that “people believe here and now while the Emperor and I are alive and going about in front of their faces. What will they believe in a thousand years’ time?” (174). Waugh indulges this opportunity for mixing fact and fiction for the sake of entertainment; more importantly, it reflects the great paradox of the miraculous and the mundane at the heart of his heroine’s story. Helena’s discovery of the Cross goes beyond mere investigation to involve the supernatural, yet it happens in a specific time and place—and in this Waugh mirrors the historicity and mystery both present in what Christianity proclaims. The miracle of redemption transcends human knowledge and understanding, yet it occurred—prosaically—from Helena’s vantage point “two hundred and seventy-eight years ago in the town now called Aelia Capitolina in Palestine” (110-11). By taking the reader beyond normal bounds of time and space through the novel, Waugh both makes the story of a saint of ancient times more accessible to readers and reflects the transcendent, supernatural truth which Christianity professes.

So far, this paper has been concerned with Waugh's attention to style, and the surprising ways in which the author uses literary devices to convey a truth he considers far superior to mere facts. It will now turn to another idea that is central to Christianity and to the story of Helena, and of great personal importance to Waugh: vocation. I will attempt to show the important link between style and vocation in *Helena*, which Waugh as a Christian writer treasured as his best work.

Waugh presents Helena's conversion as a quiet yet transformative event, after which the journey to Rome and her experiences there bring her closer to finding and carrying out what she sees as her one calling in life. Helena's conversion is one of submission to and cooperation with divine grace (Tomko 327); she views her life as wholly dedicated to the will of God and as a result is relentless in her task of discovering the True Cross: "She wanted one thing only" (191). Yet this highlights the paradoxical nature of the Christian idea of vocation, as conversion does not flatten Helena nor make her unrecognizable as a character; just the opposite happens. The humor of the novel seems tied to Helena's spiritual life: during the seventy-odd pages in which she is married to Constantius, the allusions cease and the playfulness fades out. One might argue that this simply reflects Helena's maturation from an imaginative adolescent to a grown woman with a child on the way, but later chapters reveal that Helena's sense of humor returns and even flourishes as she grows more confident in her independent lifestyle—and develops in her spiritual life. After Constantius divorces her, the narrative picks up thirteen years later with Helena living alone in Dalmatia (89). Not only has she been thriving economically and socially, but humor has also crept back into the narrative in typical Wavian style: Helena wonders if the Christians might think of Rome as "a holy city," despite Constantine's insistence that they call it "The Mother of Harlots" (97-98); we catch a first glimpse of the novel's notorious gibbon, rattling a gold chain and eating a plum (99). At the Gnostic meeting led by Marcias, Helena bursts into uncontrollable giggles, followed by the exchange with Lactantius in which she finally gets "a straight answer" (111) to a religious question; her curiosity apparently satisfied, she is a Christian just a few pages later (118). Helena as saint remains the same Helena; if anything, her characteristic pragmatism and cheerfulness shine through ever more clearly as the novel progresses towards her climactic "invention."

In addition to bolstering Helena's defining characteristics, faith allows her to see the good within the world rather than retreat away from it. Her attraction to the tangible and mundane is transformed into something higher: her youthful insistence that people ought to "dig" to find what's left of ancient Troy is later echoed by the Wandering Jew when he points out where she ought to dig for the True Cross (7, 211). The way she views other people also changes. Upon her arrival in Rome, she feels sympathetic towards the impoverished throngs of people filling the city, as well as a sense of spiritual kinship with the motley crowd of other Christians at Mass (123-24). Yet we certainly do not see Helena melting with unequivocal tenderness in all of her interactions with others; she reserves particular scorn for those who are dishonest in their claims to adhere to the Christian faith. DeCoste characterizes Waugh's Rome as "given over to the cult of human dominion" (79), and he credits Helena for her "enduring capacity to discern" the truth in this environment (82); she is undeceived and unimpressed by the attempts of those such as Fausta, Eusebius, and Constantine to use religion as a game piece to advance their own political ambitions. In Jerusalem, she curtly dismisses the ostensibly pious yet palpably absurd theories expounded by Christian scholars, for instance that "the cross was compounded of every species of wood so that all the vegetable world could participate in the act of redemption," as "Bosh" (193). Faith, combined with her unwavering commitment to truth, allows Helena to believe in the supernatural without mistaking it for the same thing as the fantastic. Towards the end of the novel, her earthly life seems to unite with divine grace in everything she does; Slater points this out even in Helena's actions after successfully completing her mission: "The miraculous becomes prosaic" (150) as she briskly makes arrangements about the crosses. The structure of the novel itself points towards this elevation of Helena's character in even its most mundane aspects; the final image recalls her youthful identity as a horsewoman (Slater 150). The teenage "ostler" princess is able, through grace, to become a saint powerful enough to guide hearts and minds across centuries.

Waugh's interest in the historical St. Helena certainly has much to do with the idea of vocation, especially the possibility of spiritual life as an artist. In DeCoste's critical work *The Vocation of Evelyn Waugh*, he discusses Waugh's career post-conversion as focused on uniting his Christian beliefs and artistic talents. He asserts that *Helena* is the book in which Waugh strikes this balance most self-consciously, as "a narrative that seeks in the debates it depicts and the devices it employs to affirm the real, if subordinate, value of his call to literary creation"

(74). The “debates” taken up in the novel become self-referential: Helena seeks to discover a narrative of truth within her own life, distinct from the romantic ideals of poetry and the cutthroat self-idolization of the Roman elite, much like Waugh seeking a form of art that conveys truth yet acknowledges its own proper place and role in service to that truth rather than an inflated sense of self-importance. In *Helena*, “obsessed with the moral status of art and with its own artistry” (DeCoste 74), theology and style are inextricable. Tomko takes up the torch from DeCoste as she explores the specific role of humor in Waugh’s search for his vocation. She argues that *Helena* represents Waugh’s maturation in terms of learning to reconcile his aptitude for writing darker satires like *A Handful of Dust* with a desire to express his Catholic beliefs through his work (313). Undoubtedly, Waugh uses a type of humor in *Helena* distinct from any of his other novels. Witty and playful, it avoids the sharpness of his earlier works without slipping into sentimentality or the aesthetic flamboyance of his first Catholic novel, *Brideshead Revisited*. Tomko argues that *Helena* tends towards a more traditional form of satire, one which not only points out the chaos and absurdities of the world but also suggests a solution, bringing “wit and morality” together in “a salutary combination of ‘laughter and a vision of reform’” (314). Through humor, through style, and through the construction of the novel itself, Waugh honors his call both as an artist and as Christian.

Intensely aware of the particular challenges of pursuing a spiritual life in the modern world, Waugh himself discussed the topic directly in his non-fiction writing as well, both public and private. Many of his letters include his thoughts on how to live out one’s faith, such as the following to John Betjeman:

Saints are simply souls in heaven. Some few people have been so sensationally holy in life that we know they went straight to heaven and so put them in the calendar. We all have to become saints before we get to heaven. That is what purgatory is for. And each individual has his own peculiar form of sanctity which he must achieve or perish. It is no good my saying: “I wish I were like Joan of Arc or St John of the Cross.” I can only be St Evelyn Waugh—after God knows what experiences in purgatory. (339)

Waugh recognized that sanctity was inseparable from individuality, that to become a saint one must respond to the call presented to him in his own life and time. He echoed these same ideas in his essay “St. Helena Empress,” in which he offered insight into not only the

reason for his great admiration for St. Helena but also his choice of her as the central figure of his novel, which had been published two years previously. Her life as empress was radically different from that of most Christians of her time. Neither martyr nor hermit, she not only accepted this “state of life full of dangers to the soul in which many foundered,” but also accepted and embraced in her old age the particular act of service to which she was called (“Empress” 182). Skeptical of Constantine’s reputation as a saving figure of the Church (as the novel reflects), Waugh asserts that it was Helena’s act which saved the Church at a crucial moment. A profession of faith and a reminder of the central dogma of the Church amidst shifting power dynamics and rampant heresy, it turned “the eyes of the world back to the planks of wood on which their salvation hung” (*ibid.* 183). This is the “Hope” which Waugh asserts in the final lines of *Helena* and which reflects his purpose in writing the novel he ultimately considered his best work.

Just as faith makes Helena more herself, heightening the characteristics that define her personality and giving her a clear sense of purpose to which she can devote herself, it elevates Waugh’s talents as a writer in pursuit of a higher goal. Seeking a form of art that conveys truth without being limited to the realm of factual proof, Waugh simultaneously explores and demonstrates what makes a story compelling, even centuries after it is first told. He discovers how to craft a testimonial that only he can offer, infusing artistry into a message he believes to be of the utmost importance. Telling Helena’s story, Waugh is able to model himself after her witness to what he also professed as truth. DeCoste and Tomko are right to present the novel as a significant moment in Waugh’s development. As if affirmed in his calling as a Catholic writer, Waugh finished his career by writing a modern Catholic epic: the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. These books take up the idea of vocation from *Helena* and consider it in the light of the modern world, which Waugh portrays as a bleak place for the human soul. The main character, possibly named after the patron saint of protection from mad dogs, first appears wandering aimlessly amid the chaos of total war, like one of Helena’s hounds “hunting wild” (*Helena* 222). Her “blunt assertion” rings clear through “all the babble of her age and ours” (*ibid.* 222), as Guy Crouchback, whose experiences often mirror those of Waugh himself, comes to realize he too has a specific vocation to follow. Waugh recognizes that the path to sainthood seems incongruous, even impossible, in a world wracked by world wars, genocide, and the growing threat of Communism—a world which not only considers itself post-Christian but is also losing

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its faith in the existence of truth at all. For Waugh, the nature of this challenge makes rising to it all the more necessary; considering writing to be the particular act through which he could best respond, he chooses to portray a heroine who recognized the crisis facing the Church in her own time and responded with unflinching witness to the truth.

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NEWS

John H. Wilson Jr. Evelyn Waugh Undergraduate Essay Contest

Submissions are welcome for the John H. Wilson Jr. Evelyn Waugh Undergraduate Essay Contest. Essays (normally limited to 20 pages or 5000 words) are invited on any aspect of Waugh's life or work and will be judged by the *Evelyn Waugh Studies* editorial board. The winning essay will be published in the journal, and the author will receive a prize of \$500. Deadline: 31 December 2021. Email submissions to jpitcher@bennington.edu and yuexi.liu@xjtlu.edu.cn.

Jeffrey Meyers on Waugh and Robert Byron in *The Article*

In his outburst Waugh insisted that Byron did not have a degree (like Waugh, he took a Third) and maintained that his passion for Byzantine art was a merely a bogus perversion and fad: 'He hadn't done his work and was sent down without a degree so he turned against the classics, and proclaimed post-classical Greek art as the ideal. He was so embarrassingly ignorant that he thought he'd discovered it. Imagine [St Sophia] a small building and it's nothing, whereas a small Baroque church can have all the beauty of the Gesù [1568] in Rome and more. [St Sophia is] impressive because it's big, like a great big toad.'

<https://www.thearticle.com/fierce-friends-bitter-rivals-evelyn-waugh-and-robert-byron>

***Bridgerton* Filmed at Castle Howard**

<https://www.darlingtonandstocktontimes.co.uk/news/18968163.christmas-day-netflix-drama-bridgerton-filmed-castle-howard/>

“Staff Declined to Leave”

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/castle-howard-staff-declined-to-leave-during-filming-of-bridgerton-sex-scenes-cs3dpcfmk>

Upper-Class Escapism

‘Mr. Wodehouse’s idyllic world can never stale.’

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/jan/11/why-does-british-comfort-culture-still-revolve-around-the-ruling-class>

The Unquiet Englishman: A Life of Graham Greene

Referencing a section from *Brideshead Revisted*, Greene says he once admired it as ‘the best part of the book,’ but when he went back to reread it, he saw that it was only three pages. ‘This, I’m inclined to think, is genius.’

<https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/our-man-in-the-stacks/>

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-unquiet-englishman-review-many-shades-of-greene-11608825997>

https://www.petoskeynews.com/gaylord/news/community/greene-biography-examines-the-chaos-and-creativity-where-faith-confronts-desire/article_906db852-3db7-53bc-9dce-f90ab7ac3bad.html

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/03/22/graham-greenes-dark-heart>

Tove Ditlevsen's *The Copenhagen Trilogy*

<https://wamu.org/story/21/02/03/new-translation-shares-the-voice-of-a-poet-who-wrote-as-intensely-as-she-lived/>

Mr. Saturday's FW21 "Both Directions at Once" Collection

<https://hypebeast.com/2021/2/mr-saturday-fw21-both-directions-at-once-collection-release-info>

75th Anniversary Came and Went

<https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/heritage-and-retro/heritage/brideshead-revisited-why-festival-devoted-to-evelyn-waugh-masterpiece-may-never-go-ahead-3164491>

Waugh the Traveler

Waugh was one of the first English writers to describe the astonishing work in Barcelona of Antoni Gaudí, who was knocked over and killed by a tramcar in 1926. But Waugh has conservative tastes and fails to respond to his achievement in art and architecture. To Waugh, Gaudí's creations 'apotheosised all the writhing, bubbling, convoluting, convulsing soul of the Art Nouveau . . . The effect was that of a clumsily iced cake . . . [The walls] were made to look like caves . . . all wildly and irrelevantly curved, as if drawn by a faltering hand . . . He is a great example of what art-for-art's-sake can become when it is wholly untempered by considerations of tradition or good taste.'

<https://www.thearticle.com/evelyn-waugh-traveller-observer-hater>

Evelyn Waugh Society

The Waugh Society has 190 members. To join, please go to <http://evelynwaughsociety.org/>.

The Evelyn Waugh Discussion List has 78 members. To join, please visit

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Evelyn_Waugh.

The Evelyn Waugh Society is also on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/evelynwaughsoc>.

The Waugh Society is providing an RSS feed: <http://evelynwaughsociety.org/feed>.

And the Waugh Society's web site has opportunities for threaded discussions:

<http://evelynwaughsociety.org/forums/>.

Submission Guidelines

Essays as well as notes and news about Waugh and his work may be submitted to *Evelyn Waugh Studies* by mail or email to jpitcher@bennington.edu and yuexi.liu@xjtlu.edu.cn. Submissions should follow MLA style and be no more than 5000 words in length. Since most readers will be familiar with Waugh's work, authors should minimize unnecessary quotations and explanatory references. All submitted essays are first screened by the Editors and if deemed acceptable for publication are then sent to Associate Editors for further review. Authors should expect to be notified of the editor's final decision within twelve weeks of submission.

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