

THE BRITISH LIBRARY
writers' lives

弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫

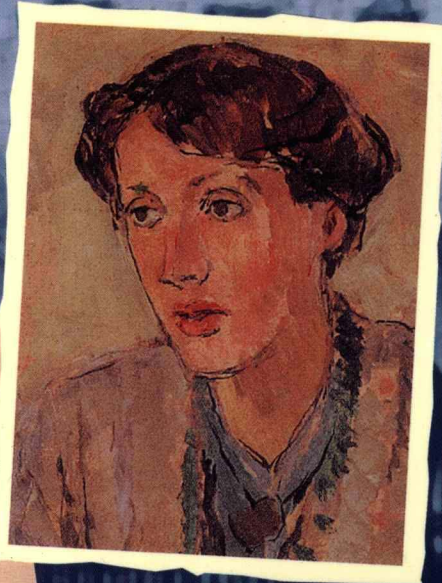
RUTH WEBB

[illegible]

Kurva

in the next minutes
hand

country lane, he visited that the web or
he, which, very properly, he changed for the
domestic service. The motor car was grey also.
This Mrs. Bradshaw was a tall, thin, middle-aged
woman, grey hair, grey hair, a average way in which
that her great colour predominated over to her 40 years,
to keep her warm while the water can how or more,
under thinking sometimes of the patient in his, must have
generally too, of the cold made a sort of which was
morning before he had been a poverty, & all right -
inter, my agitation, until the first wind fell over calm
again, where only these wind blew; on the top of the
tree; perhaps, seemed, and, with scarcely any
know still left to with for, with her husband at the top of
his tree, large dense parties very pretty, properly; but
an occasional began some to be heard, her husband's
on short, too little time alone with her husband more
at home; a little boy at school; whilst the last, they
children; always the last however, in perfect truth -
architecture, a plan, when there was a chance of
building of interest in the neighbourhood, made a
point of making it a town a village, and a
house, thinking it was a very good idea, made a
while the water.



英国作家生平丛书
THE BRITISH LIBRARY
writers' lives

Virginia Woolf
弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫

RUTH WEBB

Virginia Woolf.

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫 / 韦伯 (Webb, R.) 编著.

—上海: 上海外语教育出版社, 2009

(英国作家生平丛书)

ISBN 978-7-5446-1045-2

I. 弗… II. 韦… III. ①英语—语言读物 ②伍尔夫, V. (1882~1941) 一生平事迹

IV. H319.4: K

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2008) 第138313号

图字: 09-2007-522号

Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press in association with the British Library.

Licensed for sale in the People's Republic of China.

本书由大英图书馆出版社授权上海外语教育出版社出版。

仅供在中华人民共和国境内销售。

出版发行: **上海外语教育出版社**

(上海外国语大学内) 邮编: 200083

电 话: 021-65425300 (总机)

电子邮箱: bookinfo@sflep.com.cn

网 址: <http://www.sflep.com.cn> <http://www.sflep.com>

责任编辑: 徐 喆



印 刷: 上海锦佳装璜印刷发展公司

经 销: 新华书店上海发行所

开 本: 787×965 1/16 印张 8.25 字数 144千字

版 次: 2009年3月第1版 2009年3月第1次印刷

印 数: 5 000 册

书 号: ISBN 978-7-5446-1045-2 / K · 0020

定 价: 24.00 元

本版图书如有印装质量问题, 可向本社调换

总 序

普通中国读者，包括英语专业的学生，对于英国文学的了解一般只限于个别经典作品，而对作家其人其事及其整个文学创作情况所知甚少。其中部分的原因是文学史家们编写的英国文学史往往注重介绍作品的情节内容，对作家的生活经历、作品的具体创作过程着墨不多。上海外语教育出版社从英国大英图书馆出版社(The British Library)引进出版“英国作家生平丛书”，弥补了这方面的缺憾。该丛书以图文并茂的形式讲述莎士比亚等 14 位英国著名作家的生平故事，同时穿插介绍他们的作品，有助于充实读者对英国文学的认识。

英国文学源远流长，经历了长期复杂的发展演变过程。在这个过程中，文学本体以外的各种现实的、历史的、政治的、文化的力量对文学发生着影响，而作家个体的独特生活遭遇也是造就文学杰作的一个重要因素。“英国作家生平丛书”对 14 位名家的传记式介绍，充分展示了这一点。戏剧方面，莎士比亚是英国文艺复兴时期最杰出的剧作家，他当过演员，其作品思想内容深刻、艺术表现手法精湛，历经几个世纪长演不衰。诗歌方面，浪漫主义诗人华兹华斯、柯勒律治、拜伦、济慈的不同身世对他们的诗歌创作及艺术风格产生深刻影响；维多利亚时代诗人伊丽莎白·巴雷特和罗伯特·布朗宁的爱情故事是英国文坛的一段佳话。小说方面，狄更斯是 19 世纪英国最伟大的小说家，他的许多小说以孤儿为主人公，这与作家童年时代的一段不幸经历有关；康拉德来自波兰，将自己奇特的身世背景和航海经历交融在字里行间；女作家奥斯丁、玛丽·雪莱、勃朗特姐妹、伍尔夫以女性特有的视角和敏锐的观察描摹人性与社会，思考妇女的生存状况，她们的小说无论在思想主题、题材表现方面，还是在叙述手法上，都有创新，对推动英国文学的发展作出了突出贡献。

“英国作家生平丛书”原版由大英图书馆出版社出版，体现出图书馆出版物的特点。书中配有大量的插图，有些是珍贵的手稿，有些是罕见的照片，有些是博物馆或美术馆珍藏的油画和素描，让读者有幸一睹作家的风采，产生直观的感觉。这些插图带有不同时代的印记，营造出浓厚的历史感。丛书的作者均为专业领域里有着较深造诣的学者，对史料的掌握系统全面，他们用生动的语言娓娓讲述作家生平事迹，点评具体文学作品，书末还附有供读者进一步阅读的书单，推荐了有代表性的文献，对英语专业学生撰写课程论文或毕业论文很有帮助。

“英国作家生平丛书”内容有趣，插图精美，文字简洁，兼顾普及性和专业性，是学习和了解英国文学的良师益友。

王守仁
南京大学

导 读



弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫 (Virginia Woolf, 1882-1941) 是一个颇受争议的英国女作家。不过, 批评界多将其誉为 20 世纪最伟大的小说家之一、现代主义文学的先驱、意识流小说的重要倡导者、女性主义文学的主要代言人。

弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫原名弗吉尼亚·斯蒂芬。弗吉尼亚的家庭较为复杂, 其父母在婚前都曾结过婚。母亲朱丽亚来自于一个艺术家的家庭, 已经是三个孩子的母亲; 父亲莱斯里·斯蒂芬是一位学者、哲学家、传记作家和出版家。他的第一位妻子是作家威廉·萨克雷的女儿米尼, 两人育有一个女儿。米尼出生后, 萨克雷的妻子精神失常, 长期住在私人疗养院中, 对女儿米尼造成了不小的影响。莱斯里与米尼的婚姻也因此受到影响。伍尔夫的父母再婚后又生育了四个孩子, 伍尔夫在家里排行第七。

父亲因担心与前妻所生育的女儿劳拉受到其祖母的遗传, 遂将其送到乡下单独抚养。实际上, 与伍尔夫一起度过童年的只有其他六个孩子。六个孩子中, 跟她关系最近的是比她年长两岁的瓦尼撒。

伍尔夫出生后不久, 父亲即从事新版《国家传记辞典》的编辑工作。出生于维多利亚时代中上层社会的母亲则将自己的大部分时间用来做善事, 但却反对女性的权利, 包括国家和地方的选举权。日后, 伍尔夫向瓦尼撒表示她更喜欢父亲, 不能说与此事一点不相干。这一点在她的小说《到灯塔去》中有所披露。在这样一个充满书香和艺术气息但却不乏男权思想的家庭的熏陶下, 伍尔夫自幼不仅博览群书, 为她日后的创作奠定了良好的基础, 而且还开始了对人生的思考, 特别是对自己女性身份的思考, 对她日后成为女性主义文学的主要代言人起到了很大的作用。

伍尔夫在1905年开始职业写作生涯,刚开始是为《泰晤士报文学副刊》撰稿。她的第一部小说《远航》(*The Voyage Out*)在1915年出版,1923年出版的《达洛维夫人》(*Mrs. Dalloway*)为她赢得了很高的声誉,随后出版的《到灯塔去》(*To the Lighthouse*, 1927)、《海浪》(*The Waves*, 1931)等小说确立了她作为现代主义小说家的重要地位。除了上面提到的作品外,她的其他作品还有:《夜与日》(*Night and Day*, 1919)、《雅各的房间》(*Jacob's Room*, 1922)、《奥兰多》(*Orlando*, 1928)、《岁月》(*The Years*, 1937)、《幕间》(*Between the Acts*, 1941),以及女性主义的宣言《一间自己的房间》(*A Room of One's Own*, 1929),等等。伍尔夫不仅是一位多产的作家,而且也是一位追求艺术完美的文学理论家,她提出的对小说创作“内在真实”的追求、对小说本质的重新界定以及对女性生存空间的关注,特别是她提出的“双性同体”的设想,对英国文学创作和批评产生了重大的影响。遗憾的是,伍尔夫自幼体弱多病,精神病多次发作,尤其在最后十年,她的病情不断恶化。终于,她不堪病魔折磨,于1941年3月28日投河自尽。

伍尔夫不仅为丰富英国文学创作作出了杰出的贡献,她还和几位朋友一起创立文学团体(Bloomsbury Group)和出版社(The Hogarth Press),对当时的英国文学及其批评界产生了很大的影响。许多著名作家,如T.S.艾略特和凯瑟琳·曼斯菲尔德等,都受到了她的关心,并且她为他们的发展提供了适时的帮助。

这部介绍英国著名作家弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫的传记按照时间顺序,较为详细地介绍了她的生平和创作。除此之外,该书的作者还在书中配有许多具有史料价值的图片,为我们深入研究有关伍尔夫的个人生活、作品手稿、出版情况、风土人情、社会风貌等提供宝贵的视觉资料。

乔国强

上海外国语大学



Preface

For she had a great variety of selves to call upon, far more than we have been able to find room for; since a biography is considered complete if it merely accounts for six or seven selves, whereas a person may well have as many thousand.

Virginia Woolf, *Orlando*

Virginia Woolf attracts some of the most diverse responses of any twentieth-century writer. At one end of the spectrum are those who vilify her as a snob and eugenicist; at the other are an adoring group who have sanctified her, seeing her suicide as a sacrifice or martyrdom. At times her detractors and acolytes alike seem uninterested in reading attentively what she wrote. Some critics have mistaken the outrageous comments of characters she created as her own views. Some enthusiasts ignore her novels and journalism, content with a fragmentary knowledge of the members of her family and her circle of friends collectively known as The Bloomsbury Group.

Much of the response to Virginia Woolf is a reaction against what she and those close to her appear to represent. The English class structure and its associated antipathies have some bearing on how she is perceived. Virginia was born into a privileged background and had a number of wealthy and titled friends. The man she married came from a different background. Leonard Woolf was a Jew who had left-wing political views, upon which he acted. Virginia supported him but was not wholly committed to some of the causes to which he gave his time and energy. She wrote articles and reviews for both left- and right-wing newspapers but, in order to be free to publish what she wished, she set up her own printing press with her husband. In addition to novels, she wrote biography, autobiographical sketches, short stories, essays and drama, as well as thousands of letters and volumes of diaries. In her diaries, she wrote frankly about her own life and the lives of her family and friends. She recognized that she occasionally contradicted herself, and she consciously gave this tendency to characters in her novels. She also used her diaries to comment on her work-in-progress, and to record her immediate responses to criticisms of her published work.

Virginia Woolf was born in Victorian England, and from an early age was aware of the unequal treatment of the sexes. She was a feminist who lived to see women win the right to vote, and her feminism became more radical as she grew older. During her lifetime, she witnessed two world wars, observing the rise of right-wing dictatorships in the 1930s. In her writing, she sought to connect the political with the personal. She declined all honours that were offered to her. When she died, more than two hundred people, from a great variety of backgrounds, wrote to her husband. In these letters, when writing of her many qualities, 'kind' was the word most often used.

This biography draws many of its sources and illustrations from the outstanding collections of Woolf manuscripts and possessions in the British Library, the Tate Gallery Archive and Chatto and Windus at Random House in London; the National Trust property that was once her home, Monk's House at Rodmell in Sussex; and the Berg Collection of the New York Public Library. Its purpose is not to present the many views of her expressed by critics, nor to assess the quality or value of her writing. Rather, it is intended to give a clear account of her life and works, to show who and what influenced her thought, and to introduce a writer whose works still have the power to touch the hearts and stimulate the minds of readers.

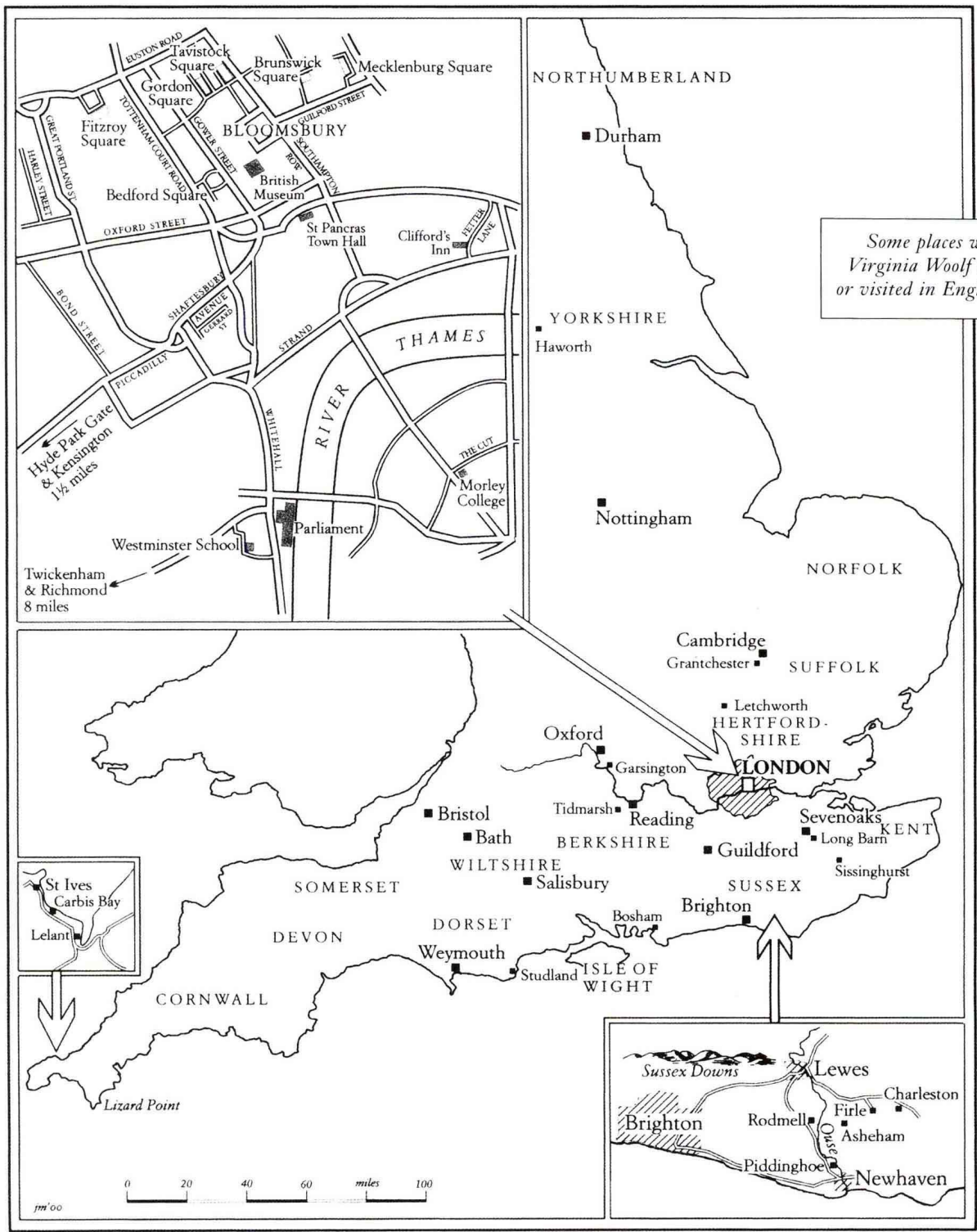
Acknowledgements

My greatest thanks go to Sally Brown, Senior Curator of Modern Literary Manuscripts at the British Library, whose support of my work on the manuscripts of Virginia Woolf has been invaluable. This book owes its existence to her. I should also like to thank the staffs of the Berg Collection, New York Public Library, the Tate Gallery Archive, the National Portrait Gallery Archive, the National Trust Photographic Library, Shortlands Library, and the Lilly Library, Indiana University. Finally, my thanks go to Anne Young, my editor at the British Library, for her unfailing good humour and support.


This book is dedicated to Rosemary Sumner, a great - and patient - teacher.

Ruth Webb March 2000

Virginia Woolf

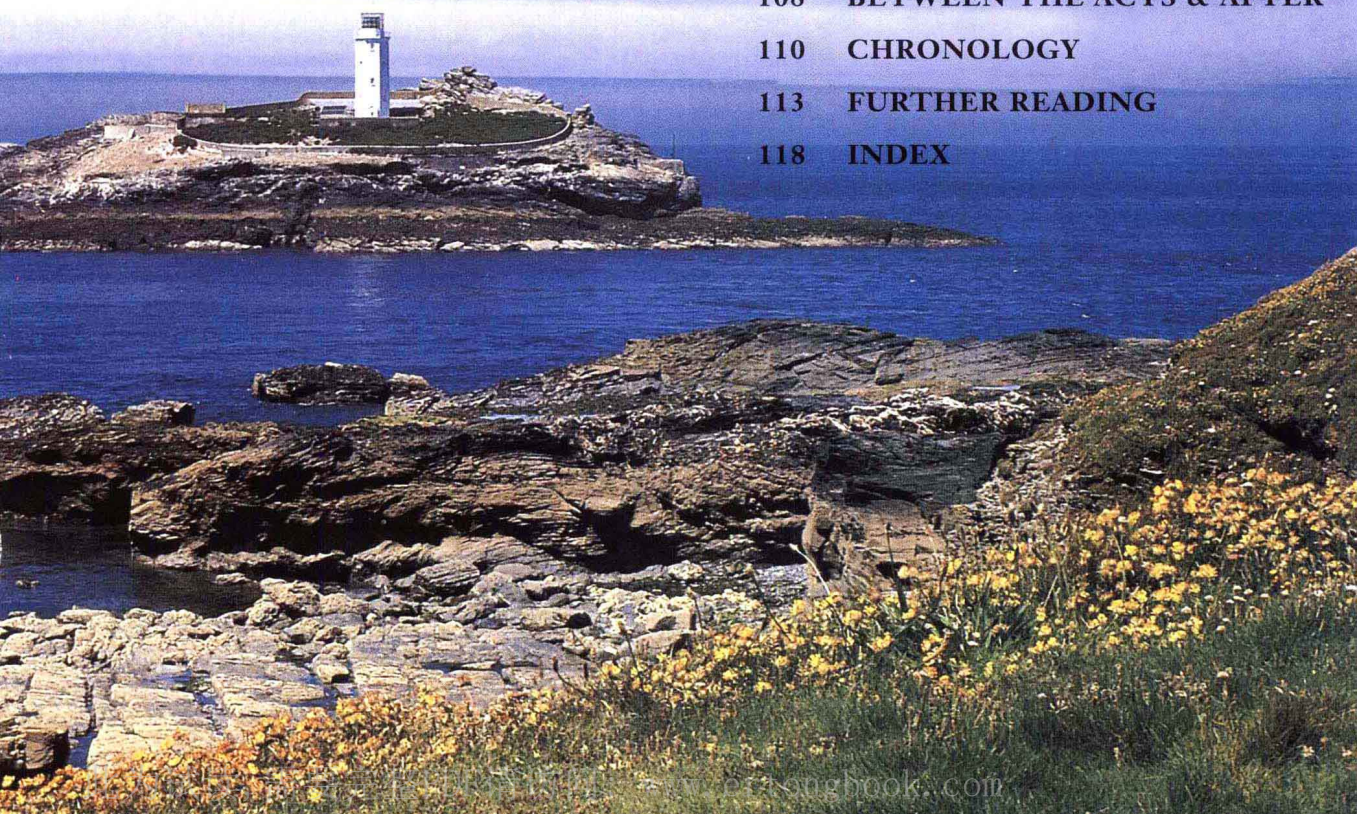


Some places where Virginia Woolf lived or visited in England.



Contents

i	PREFACE
ii	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
1	CHILDHOOD
6	A SERIES OF BLOWS
14	BLOOMSBURY GROUPS
29	NEW FRIENDS
38	VOYAGES OUT
46	RECOVERY
59	ESTABLISHED WRITER
72	FEMININE IDENTITIES
84	FRIENDS DEPART
95	WAR & DEATH
108	BETWEEN THE ACTS & AFTER
110	CHRONOLOGY
113	FURTHER READING
118	INDEX



Childhood

Who was I then? Adeline Virginia Stephen, the second daughter of Leslie and Julia Prinsep Stephen, born on 25th January 1882, descended from a great many people, some famous, others obscure; born into a large connection, born not of rich parents, but of well-to-do parents, born into a very communicative, literate, letter writing, visiting, articulate, late nineteenth century world.

The ‘large connection’ to which Virginia Woolf refers in the above extract from her memoir, *A Sketch of the Past*, included her large and complex immediate family. Each of her parents had been married before and widowed. Her mother, Julia, came from an artistic family. Her first husband had been a barrister named Herbert Duckworth, and Julia had three Duckworth children when she married her second husband, Leslie Stephen. He had one daughter, Laura, from his first marriage. Together, Julia and Leslie Stephen had four more children. When the last was born in 1883, the children to whom Leslie Stephen was father or step-father were George Duckworth, aged 15; Stella Duckworth, aged 14; Gerald Duckworth, aged 13; Laura Stephen, aged 13; Vanessa Stephen, aged 4; Thoby Stephen, aged 3; Virginia Stephen, almost 2; and Adrian just born.

The Stephen family lived at 22 Hyde Park Gate, London. It was a large house on several floors, with basement and attic rooms, and was located just south of Kensington Gardens, one of the Royal Parks. The family employed servants, including those whose special duty it was to look after the children. Laura Stephen lived separately from the others. Her mother, Leslie’s first wife, was a daughter of the writer William Thackeray. Her name was Minny, and she had been born in 1840. Immediately after Minny’s birth, Thackeray’s wife had become mentally unbalanced, and spent the rest of her life in nursing homes. During her lifetime, the term used for Mrs Thackeray’s

The birthplace of Virginia Woolf, 22 Hyde Park Gate, today.

Author’s photograph



condition was 'madness'. When Laura Stephen failed to develop as quickly as other children, Leslie worried that she had inherited her grandmother's madness, as well as the mental instability of some male members of his own family. Her behaviour and speech were unpredictable and she had limited powers of concentration. A woman was employed to look after her, as her personal nanny or 'nurse'. As the children of Julia and Leslie Stephen - Vanessa, Thoby, Virginia and Adrian - had a separate nursery, Laura was both part and not part of the household. When Virginia was five, Laura moved away from the family home to be cared for in the country.

It is as well that the subject of 'madness' in Leslie Stephen's family is mentioned early in a biographical account of his daughter. Many people who have never read Virginia Woolf's novels will know two things about her: that she was 'mad' and that she drowned herself. That her family and friends referred to her periods of mental instability as 'madness' and that she committed suicide at the age of 59 are both facts. But they are by no means the most interesting facts about her. Nevertheless, interest in them persists. A number of seemingly related elements are often noted regarding

her 'madness': the odd, uncontrolled behaviour of her half-sister Laura; the mental illness of Laura's grandmother (no blood relation of Virginia's); the erratic behaviour, following a blow to the head, of one of Leslie Stephen's cousins; and the melancholy turn of Leslie's mind. These all pre-dated the life of Virginia, and the reader must decide to what extent heredity, childhood and adult experiences contributed to her periods of mental instability, and whether the proportionally greater part of her life and its achievements prove to be of more interest.

It was Vanessa, of all her siblings, to whom Virginia was closest throughout her life. She described their relationship as 'a close conspiracy'. When Virginia decided to kill herself, she wrote suicide notes to two people: to her husband, Leonard, and to Vanessa. In an interview recorded fifteen years after Virginia's death, Vanessa recalled that, when she and Virginia were small, Virginia asked her which of their parents Vanessa preferred. Vanessa, though greatly shocked by the

*Virginia in 1884, held
by her mother, Julia.*

Random House, London





Virginia and her father, Leslie Stephen.

Random House, London

question, thought for a moment and then replied that, if she must make a choice, she would choose their mother. Virginia, however, ‘on the whole, preferred my father,’ said Vanessa. In the year that Virginia was born, Leslie Stephen took on the editorship of the new *Dictionary of National Biography*, generally referred to as the *DNB*. He spent ten years on this work, only in the last year being assisted by the man who succeeded him as editor. Highly respected as a scholar and writer, Virginia’s father nevertheless agonized about his work on the *DNB* - as he did about much else - and was the dominant figure in the family.

Julia Stephen was considered very beautiful, although her children - perhaps Virginia more than Vanessa or their brothers - were not conscious of this. Somehow, for Virginia, Julia’s beauty was inextricably linked with her motherhood. It was, Virginia wrote, a ‘natural quality that a mother - she seemed typical, universal, yet our own in particular - had by virtue of being our mother’. And ‘she was central’, a fundamental element of childhood’s happiness. As a late-Victorian woman of the upper-middle classes, Julia Stephen spent much of her time in helping those less fortunate than herself, and in writing letters. She was opposed to women’s rights, including the right to vote in local or national government elections. Vanessa expressed the view that a lasting portrait of both their parents was to be found in Virginia’s novel, *To the Lighthouse*, written long after their deaths.

Virginia was confident in the love of both her parents, but especially that of her father, for whom she was a favourite. Each summer from 1882 to 1894 the Stephen children spent two to three months by the sea in Cornwall. Leslie Stephen, on a walking tour there in 1881, had decided to take the lease on a large villa named Talland House. He described its position above the bay of St Ives as a 'pocket paradise'. Although the journey from London each summer was arduous, with children, servants and luggage, Julia agreed with her husband that the house, its garden and the proximity of the sea provided a delightful summer home for the children. A local resident remembered Leslie Stephen's enjoyment of playing in the sea with his children, and Virginia's memories of those summers seem bathed in a golden light:



It had, when we came there, a perfect view - right across the Bay to Godrevy Lighthouse. It had running down the hill, little lawns, surrounded by thick escallonia bushes, whose leaves one picked and pressed and smelt: it had so many corners and lawns that each was named: the coffee garden; the fountain; the cricket ground; the love corner...the strawberry bed; the kitchen garden; the pond; and the big tree.

A Sketch of the Past

Virginia, 'the demon bowler', playing wicket-keeper to her younger brother and batsman, Adrian, in the garden of Talland House, St Ives.

The cricket ground mentioned above was the site of many of Virginia's sporting triumphs, and she was named by the family 'the demon bowler'. During her childhood, life in St Ives was 'ecstasy' - or so it seemed to her in her late fifties, when she wrote of the most important of all her memories:

bearing the waves breaking, one, two, one, two, and sending a splash of water over the beach; and then breaking, one, two, one, two, behind a yellow blind. It is of hearing the blind draw its little acorn across the floor as the wind blew

Tate Gallery Archive

the blind out. It is of lying and hearing this plash and seeing this light, and feeling, it is almost impossible that I should be here; of feeling the purest ecstasy I can conceive.

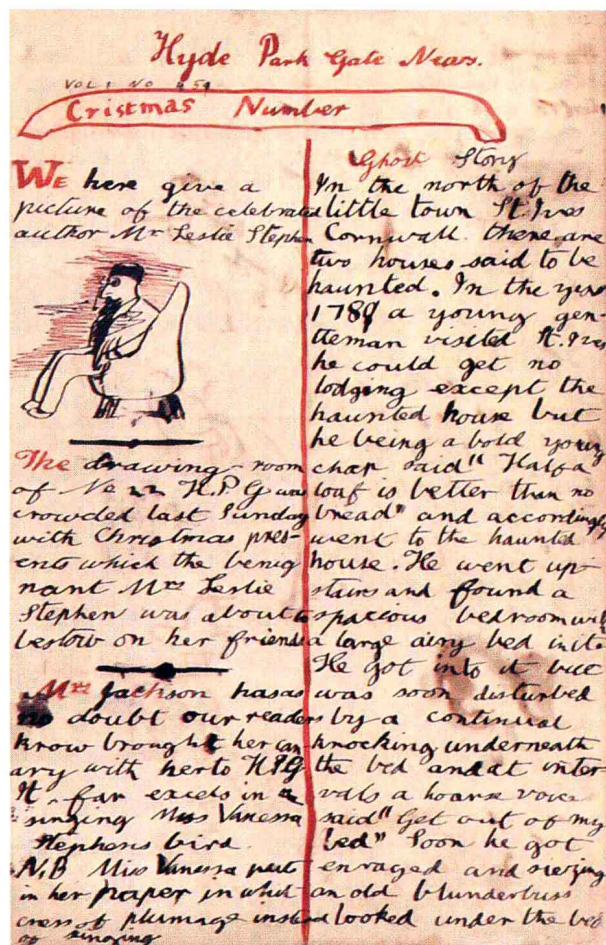
A Sketch of the Past

Many guests stayed at Talland House, both family and friends. Amongst the latter was James Russell Lowell, the poet and essayist whom Leslie Stephen had met in America during the Civil War in 1863, and who later became the American ambassador in London. Although none of the children of Leslie and Julia were baptised, they had the secular equivalents of godparents and Virginia's was Lowell. Another expatriate American friend of their father's, the novelist Henry James, features in the family photograph albums.

Both in St Ives and at home in London, from 1891 to 1895, the children produced weekly issues of the family journal, the *Hyde Park Gate News*. Vanessa recalled, when interviewed, that Virginia watched and waited in excitement to hear her parents' opinion of it. Her mother's verdict on one edition, as she handed it to her husband, was that it was 'rather clever, I think'. The cleverness often resided in the children's use of irony and humour at each other's expense - and at the expense of their parents and other adults. Two serial stories ran through several editions; even at this early stage in Virginia's writing career, she was not content with short pieces of journalism alone. And Leslie Stephen considered that, even as a child, Virginia showed sufficient talent to 'be an author in time'.

The front page of an early edition of Hyde Park Gate News, produced by the Stephen children.

British Library, Additional MS 70725, folio 13



A Series of Blows

Opposite page top:

Virginia with her half-sister and half-brother, Stella and George Duckworth, 1896.

Tate Gallery Archive

Virginia's childhood in the 1880s and 1890s had not only its joys, but also its miseries and disappointments. Nevertheless, as a member of a large and relatively prosperous family, she was essentially happy and secure until the first great tragedy of her life. It occurred when she was 13 years old. In the *Hyde Park Gate News* of 4 March 1895 there appears a report that for two weeks 'Mrs Leslie Stephen has been in bed with the influenza'. Although Julia apparently recovered, within less than two months she became dangerously ill with rheumatic fever. The Duckworth children, by then in their mid-to-late twenties, decided to return home from their European holiday in the last week of April. Stella was particularly concerned to be with her mother. But Julia lived only a week or so longer, dying on 5 May 1895, aged forty-nine.

Opposite page bottom:

Vanessa Stephen, painting her first portrait commission, of Lady Robert Cecil, at Hatfield House, 1905.

Tate Gallery Archive

In the face of death, Virginia was disturbed to observe that she - like Septimus Warren Smith in *Mrs Dalloway*, a character she was to create almost thirty years later - felt 'nothing whatever'. She was unsettled by her reactions; for example, when she kissed the face of her dead mother, she recoiled at its coldness - 'it was like kissing cold iron'. It was these physical responses rather than her emotional condition that she wrote of in later life. It is clear from her family's comments at the time that she was deeply distressed by the loss of her mother, and suffered a prolonged period of emotional disturbance, usually referred to as her first 'breakdown'. Although, near the end of her life, Virginia Woolf wrote in *A Sketch of the Past* about her feelings following her mother's death, she wrote nothing at the time that it happened. Her father's letters and her half-sister Stella's diary entries suggest that it took more than a year for her deeply unsettled condition to pass.

In addition to concerning herself with Virginia's ill-health, and dealing with her own grief, Stella Duckworth found that she had also to bear the brunt of her stepfather's mourning. Leslie felt in despair that he had not loved Julia as he ought, and endlessly sought Stella's reassurance that he had not been a bad husband to her mother. Other emotional demands were being made of Stella at this time which were more pleasing than those of her stepfather. During her mother's lifetime, Stella had refused Jack Hills as a possible husband but in the summer of 1896 she accepted his