

Notes on *Pilgrimage*:  
Dorothy Richardson Annotated

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GEORGE H. THOMSON

 *ELT Press*

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Dorothy Richardson  
By Janet Oliver 1998

*For Dorothy*

## INTRODUCTION

This book is subtitled *Dorothy Richardson Annotated* because the fictional life of Miriam Henderson and the actual life of Dorothy Richardson so frequently intersect that the annotations are as much about the author as about the fiction. This fictional world, grounded in historical time now one hundred years past, makes severe demands on a reader's understanding. Miriam Henderson's senses, emotions, and intellect respond in intimate detail to the world of her experience, opening it to us without prelude or explanation. In these circumstances, my aim has been to identify those persons, events, writings and ideas that constitute the immediate historical background to this fictional world. In doing so I have been guided by no rigid definition of what should or should not be included but rather by what could be helpful to a reader of *Pilgrimage*, especially a North American reader unfamiliar with nineteenth-century England.

Since Gloria Fromm's ground-breaking biography of the author in 1977, little attention has been given to biographical issues. For this reason I have not hesitated to introduce new information about Richardson and her circle when it parallels elements of the fiction. Whenever the evidence points the opposite way, however, I have explained how the narrative diverges from the facts of Richardson's life. In making these judgments, time is often a decisive element. All such determinations, including the summaries of time at the beginning of the annotations for each book, are based on the chronology of the novel set out in *A Reader's Guide to Dorothy Richardson's 'Pilgrimage'* (ELT Press, 1996).

The principles I have followed are these. An historical event, such as the Wilde scandal, can be used to establish the date of events in the narrative so long as no evidence within the text points more compellingly to another date. When there is no obvious historical event and no evidence within the text for dating the narrated event, the time can be assumed to be the same as that of the parallel event in Richardson's life. (Richardson's own comments, like that cited at 4:536.18, usually confirm such an assumption.) Finally, when Richardson's narrative entails disparities between historical time and fictional time, these are specified.

From the first Richardson thought of her new narrative enterprise as within the bounds of realism, enriching and extending its domain along a new pathway. However different the result, her object was the same as Bennett's, to represent what life is. For this reason Miriam's psychology must be probable, her actions

and those of others must be believable and events from historical time when introduced into the narrative must be accurately represented. Of course in constructing her autobiographical narrative Richardson is free to alter details of her own life: Miriam Henderson can go to Hanover in 1893 whereas Richardson went in 1891. But when Miriam tells us that the Epsom Derby was run on Friday when in fact the Derby is *always* run on Wednesday, that is simply a violation of the elementary code of realism. Richardson usually lives up to that code.

Realism and its near relative naturalism dominated the development of the novel during the last years of the nineteenth and the first years of the twentieth century. Richardson, in her 1938 Foreword to *Pilgrimage*, placed realism front and center. Initiated in France by Balzac's vast gallery of social types, highlighted in England by Bennett's faithful portrayal of inconspicuous people, it then proceeds to entanglement in doctrinaire social realism. Richardson, choosing the contemporary pattern of the "current masculine realism" for her proposed novel, soon grows dissatisfied, but persevering she after a time finds herself participating in a new adventure, a journey of and through the consciousness of a single individual: herself as she once was, experiencing her own life as it once was. Before long she finds that Woolf and Joyce and Proust are on the same pathway, and further back at the beginning is Henry James. From James she learns about style. Internalized psychological realism calls for a literary style that can catch in its subtle net the rich complexity of an actively contemplative mind and can involve the reader as participant in a sustained suspense of prolonged attention. Richardson found in James a model for this collaborative style that could fully engage the reader, a style sufficient to scale any internal mountain and take the reader along on the expedition. In Volume I of *Pilgrimage* such a complex style was not needed to recover the experience of the youthful Miriam Henderson. But Richardson knew from the beginning that she had in the collaborative style an instrument for taking psychological realism to new levels of complexity and control.

Is *Pilgrimage* autobiographical *fiction* or fictionalized *autobiography*? *Pilgrimage* will not answer that question. Nor will Dorothy Richardson. She will neither be confined nor defined by these conventional literary categories. However, the act of annotating the many references whereby *Pilgrimage* is tied to the world of late Victorian and of Edwardian England tends inevitably to foreground the autobiographical dimension of the work. Once that factual grounding has been put in place, readers should find themselves returned to the freedom of the text, the freedom to choose in collaboration with Richardson the most appropriate access to her created world.

Carrying out an enterprise of this range and complexity has brought a humbling realization of my indebtedness, ignorance and proneness to error. I recognize too that, as with the *Reader's Guide* before it, some readers will object that by interposing so much precise detail and labored documentation I have, so to speak, pinned down the delicate flight and dammed up the ongoing flow of the *Pilgrimage* text. If I have done so, it is in the belief that once the facts and the backgrounds have been absorbed the reader may experience an enhanced freedom and appreciation in moving through Miriam Henderson's world.



## SOURCES & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

One of the great challenges of a work like *Pilgrimage* is locating unidentified quotations. In this pursuit, one must recognize that Richardson was sometimes less than accurate in recalling sayings, that in at least one case she gave to Miriam a convincing quotation artfully constructed from various details (1:228.8-16), that in another she used quotation marks in the midst of a general reflection to indicate words which assumed a precise formula in Miriam's mind (1:141.25-28), and that in yet another she used them for the thoughts which immediately followed from Miriam's speech (1:223.15-17). It may be, therefore, that certain unidentified quotations are in fact not quotations at all. Others I have failed to find. Notwithstanding that *Pilgrimage* offers a consoling model for the incomplete opus, I would welcome contributions towards making these annotations more complete and accurate. (Please send information to my address found in the annual PMLA Directory.)

I am grateful to the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, for their assistance and for permission to quote from the following items from the Richardson Papers: the MS of *Pointed Roofs*, unpublished letters from Dorothy Richardson to Peggy Kirkaldy (31 May 1936, 20 April 1949), Rose Odle (19 July 1950), and an undated postcard circa 1936-37 from Veronica Grad to Dorothy Richardson; and from the Bryher Papers, unpublished letters to Bryher [Wednesday [1924], 25 September 1937, 15 February 1938, [October 1938], 15 January 1940, [April 1941]]; to the British Library (Manuscript Division), London, for permission to quote from an unpublished letter to S. S. Koteliensky (30 July 1944); to the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations for permission to quote from an unpublished letter to P. B. (Owen) Wadsworth (11 October 1943); to The Pennsylvania State University Libraries for permission to quote from an unpublished letter to Henry Savage ([Fall 1950]); to The Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin for permission to quote from the MS of *Dimple Hill*; to The McFarlin Library, University of Tulsa, Special Collections, for permission to quote from the MS of *Dawn's Left Hand*; to Sheena Odle, the former executor of the Richardson Estate, for a copy of the Estate MS of *March Moonlight*; and to Mrs Elizabeth Howell, the current executor, for permission to

quote from it, also for permission to quote from the unpublished materials noted above.

I am also indebted to the Beinecke for the photograph of John Henry Badcock, to the Wells Archive, Rare Book and Special Collections Library, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign for the photograph of H. G. Wells, and to George W. Bacon and Guildhall Library Publications for the 1888 map of London.

Several libraries were generous in their services: University of Ottawa, particularly the Interlibrary Loan department; Carleton University; National Library of Canada; National Gallery of Canada; and University of Toronto. I am also indebted to the Chadwyck-Healey databases of English Poetry, Poetic Drama, and American Poetry and Poetic Drama; to ARTFL French database at University of Chicago; to the editorial staff of the Oxford English Dictionary (OED); and to the staff of Deutsches Volksliedarchiv, Freiburg.

My deepest debt is to my wife, Dorothy Frances Thomson, who has acted as assistant editor throughout this enterprise. My very special thanks go to Harold Fromm and the late Gloria Fromm who gave me access to a wealth of background material. I am most grateful to Kristin Bluemel for her critical and informed reading of the MS, to Jill P. Martyn for her careful editorial review of the MS, and to Robert Langenfeld who has fostered, edited and designed the book.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES ON ANNOTATED PASSAGES

**Text:** The 1938 English and American collected editions of *Pilgrimage* were reprinted in 1967, with the addition of *March Moonlight*. The 1967 editions, 4 volumes (London: Dent and New York: Knopf), as well as later reprints by Popular Library (1976), Virago (1979), and University of Illinois Press (vol. 1, 1989) are textually identical except for their title pages and introductory matter. I have used the 1967 edition. Each passage to be annotated is introduced by its inclusive page and line numbers from this edition.

**Foreign words:** These are always translated unless they are accurately rendered into English within Richardson's text.

**Cross references:** Page and line numbers in **bold** within an annotation refer the reader to related annotations; those page and line numbers not in bold refer to the text of *Pilgrimage*.

**Punctuation marks:** Since the reader, it is assumed, has the full context available, the selected text normally omits surrounding punctuation marks, including quotation marks, unless they have some special significance for the annotation or unless they are needed to distinguish between quoted and unquoted material within the selected text.

## **ABBREVIATIONS & SYMBOLS**

BL–Music	<i>Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library to 1980.</i>
CE; CE 1993	<i>Columbia Encyclopedia</i> , 1950; 1993.
EB	<i>Encyclopaedia Britannica</i> , 11th ed.
Grove	<i>New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians</i> , 1980.
Kelly's	<i>Kelly's Post Office London Directory</i> , 1892 to 1920.
LC	Library of Congress. <i>National Union Catalog, Pre-1956 Imprints.</i>
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> , 1971.
Partridge	<i>A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English</i> , 8th ed.
Paterson's	<i>Paterson's Guide Book to the United Kingdom</i> , 1885.
Windows	<i>Windows on Modernism. The Selected Letters of Dorothy Richardson</i> , 1995.
Wearing	<i>The London Stage, 1890–1899</i> , 2 vols., 1976; and <i>1900–1909</i> , 2 vols., 1981
Weinreb	<i>The London Encyclopaedia</i> , ed. Weinreb and Hibbert, 1983.
Wheatley	<i>London Past and Present</i> , 3 vols., 1891; repr. 1968.

## **NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH CURRENCY**

1g	One guinea = 1 pound, 1 shilling
1£	One pound = 20 shillings
1s	One shilling = 12 pence (plural of penny)
1d	One penny = 2 halfpenny [d is from Denarius, a small Roman coin]

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