

THE FICTION OF JOHN BUCHAN  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE RICHARD HANNAY NOVELS

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In this thesis I intend to show that although by the outbreak of the First World War John Buchan had been a successful writer for twenty years, his career underwent a vital change after 1915 and the success of his best-selling thriller The Thirty-Nine Steps.

Chapter one analyses in detail the publishing history of The Thirty-Nine Steps, and the best-seller status of the early thrillers of John Buchan. Under four sub-headings, I examine the content of the sales figures and the readership of Buchan's best-sellers, using primary source material from the publishers' archives and from unpublished letters and memoirs from the First World War. I go on to discuss the reasons for the lasting popularity of The Thirty-Nine Steps, Buchan's new elements in that novel, and examine his role in the development of the thriller.

In chapter two I look at two of Buchan's protagonists, contrasting his new hero of The Thirty-Nine Steps, Richard Hannay, with Sir Quixote of the Moors (1895) and the idea of the stranger in the familiar land. In chapter three, I examine Buchan's construction of narrative, developing new narratological types to define Buchan's growing complexities of narration in the Hannay novels.

Chapter four explores Buchan's use of characters, the different social worlds he developed for his three principal protagonists - Hannay, Leithen and Dickson McCunn - and the effect of



recurrence in background characters. Buchan's identity as a Scottish writer is discussed in chapter five, dealing with the Scottish Renaissance, vernacular poetry, Kailyard and Buchan's role as a public Scot. His fiction is examined with particular reference to the Scottish elements of language, history and religion. In chapter six I look at Buchan's portrayal of the women characters in his fiction, particularly their roles as redeemers, spurs, and voices, counterpointing the Buchan heroes.

In the conclusion, I reiterate the importance of the 1915 change in Buchan's writing, and how his novels were redirected towards the thriller. I show how the advent of his new thriller hero, Hannay, was seminal in shaping the new genre. I conclude this thesis with fourteen appendices, including a close look at Buchan's supposed anti-Semitism. I give a new chronological bibliography of all Buchan's fiction, incorporating several rediscovered Buchan short stories. My bibliographies cover fiction, non-fiction, and manuscript sources, with separate lists for the Buchan material.

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CHAPTER ONE

JOHN BUCHAN AS A BEST-SELLER:  
AN EXAMINATION OF THE SUCCESS AND LASTING  
INFLUENCE OF THE THIRTY-NINE STEPS

## JOHN BUCHAN AS A BEST-SELLER

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the important change in John Buchan's fiction which occurred in 1915, which manifested itself most particularly in the immense success of his eighth novel, The Thirty-Nine Steps (1915). As I shall go on to show, many elements in Buchan's writing exhibit this break in or around 1915. One of the most important is the sudden change from Buchan being primarily a writer of short stories to his becoming a popular novelist. Occurring first at this date was his depiction of a new kind of adventure hero. The powerful effect of the First World War on his writing and in the development of his characters also coincides. Not all the factors in Buchan's work display evidence of this change - for example, his portrayal of women characters - and I will be examining these exceptions.

In this first chapter I will be looking at the different contexts of the success of The Thirty-Nine Steps in 1915. Contemporary sales figures for other writers, and their relationship with the sales of Buchan's first best-sellers, The Thirty-Nine Steps (1915) and Greenmantle (1916), show that Buchan's novels sold consistently in large numbers and against a well-established competition, proving their worth in terms of market forces. My examination of contemporary letters, memoirs and autobiographies from this period (1913-1919) shows that Buchan was read as an absorbing escape from the realities of war, and that part of this success was due to

Buchan's creation of plots with which soldiers could identify. The success of The Thirty-Nine Steps in particular was due to a number of new aspects in Buchan's construction of the story, and in his creation of a completely new kind of hero/narrator, which I will examine, known as the Buchan hero by generations of successive thriller writers. In the last section of this chapter I analyse the development of the thriller genre, and discuss what elements of the thriller Buchan had used from previous writers, and how his influence, particularly that of The Thirty-Nine Steps and Richard Hannay, shaped the growth of the thriller in subsequent decades.

(1) The context of the sales figures

The Thirty-Nine Steps was published in book form in September 1915, after it had been serialised in the New York All-Story Weekly in June and July 1915, and in the Edinburgh Blackwood's Magazine in the July, August and September issues of the same year. On its appearance as a book, selling at one shilling, The Thirty-Nine Steps sold 33,000 copies in three months, and a further 25,000 copies in the following year (1). A year later, in May 1916, Blackwood's published another Buchan story in book form, also at a shilling, The Power-House. This had been serialised in Blackwood's in December 1913, and also in Living Age from January 17 to February 7, 1914. The initial sales of The Power-House were almost as high as those of its predecessor - 24,000 copies in five months, undoubtedly influenced by the earlier novel's popularity (2). In little over a year Buchan had sprung from being quite well-known to



being a writer with a household name.

\* \* \* \* \*

His first novel, Sir Quixote of the Moors, had been published in 1895, although he had edited the Essays and Apothegms of Francis Bacon for the London publishers Walter Scott as an undergraduate in 1894. The Thirty-Nine Steps was his eighth novel and twenty-seventh book. Buchan had been a published author with Blackwood's for twenty years, but The Thirty-Nine Steps was the biggest success he had had with them. According to his biographer, Janet Adam Smith, by 1915 the sales for all his Blackwood's fiction had not exceeded 2,000 copies (3). There are no figures available for the sales of Nelson's Prester John (1910) in book form, although its previous serialisation in The Captain under the title of 'The Black General' in April to September 1910 would have undoubtedly influenced future sales of the story in book form (4). It is reasonable to assume that Prester John had been Buchan's biggest fiction seller before the arrival of The Thirty-Nine Steps. With that, he was not only a published author of experience, but had become a best-selling one. In 1916 he changed publishers and moved to Hodder & Stoughton.

Buchan's 'war' novels with Hodder & Stoughton came out immediately after The Thirty-Nine Steps. Greenmantle (1916) made its first appearance in book form with Hodder, as did Mr Standfast (1919), and Hodder went on to reissue The Thirty-Nine Steps and The Half-

Hearted on the strength of the success of the 'war' novels. The  
Thirty-Nine Steps' initial sales in this Hodder reprint were very  
disappointing, only 2,100 in two years (5), compared to its sales  
with Blackwood's. By contrast, Hodder's 1919 reissue of The Half-  
Hearted was a great success. That title had not sold at all well  
on its debut in 1900 with Blackwood's, but went on to sell over  
24,000 copies in its first year with Hodder (6), probably  
benefiting from the publicity as an early and little-known novel by  
the author of the by then best-selling The Thirty-Nine Steps. Some  
of Buchan's Hodder novels were produced in tandem with a serialised  
version in various magazines (7), which was a common practice with  
many authors, as was the simultaneous publication of two or three  
differently priced editions of one title, as a mechanism to spread  
sales and to keep these sales high.

The sales of Buchan's first best-selling books need to be put in  
context: with the times in which he was publishing and the very  
important circumstance of the First World War, and with what other  
novels were being bought in similar quantities in the same period.  
The readership also needs to be considered, with who was buying and  
reading these books, and finally with the new genre of the thriller  
or 'shocker' that Buchan had entered and was to influence, with the  
publication of The Thirty-Nine Steps. I feel that the answers and  
conclusions to these questions should throw some light on the  
reasons for the contemporary success of Buchan's first best-  
sellers, and perhaps indicate exactly what it was that made The

Thirty-Nine Steps such an important new departure in stories of light, escapist adventure. To this end, I will begin by examining the sales of Buchan's first best-sellers in comparison with others from the same publishing house.

Other best-sellers

Hodder & Stoughton's writers in the years leading up to the First World War included most of the cheap popular authors of the day, and during the war the firm secured many new writers of the same selling power. While the output of the Hodder imprint in 1913-1919 makes a representative sample of the writers with whom Buchan was competing as a fair comparison, it is important to note that Buchan was not challenging writers of the stature of H.G. Wells or Henry James. On his own self-deprecating and probably ironic admission he was trying to emulate the writers of highly-charged novels about European conspiracies of political intrigue - '[I am] writing a real shocker - a tribute at the shrine of my master in fiction - E. Phillips Oppenheim' (8). Buchan's novels were also frequently compared to those of 'Sapper', a writer of popular thuggish fantasies, despite their fundamental dissimilarities (9).

Among the many writers emulating Oppenheim in this period were O. Henry, Charles Garvice and Ruby M. Ayres, all Hodder writers specialising in romantic popular escapist fiction, and they too were selling in best-selling quantities. It is a curious point that although these writers took Oppenheim as their model, they sold far more books than he did in this period, while Oppenheim did

not reach his peak in terms of sales until the 1920s and '30s. Buchan's earlier fiction with Blackwood's and Nelson's had been romances in an intellectual vein, with their Latin tags and classical allusions, but still in the tradition of Scott and Stevenson in the creation of classic fiction. The Thirty-Nine Steps, though still with Latin tags and classical allusions, had been a departure from the Blackwood's standards, and in its relative shortness and breezy capability of narrative had rather more in common with the boys' adventure story model than Prester John (1910) and Salute To Adventurers (1915) both followed (10). These two were the immediate predecessors, as full-length novels in print, of The Thirty-Nine Steps, and were Buchan's last novels with Nelson's. His departure to Hodder & Stoughton with Greenmantle (1916), would seem to have been a calculated move not only to have gone into a working relationship with his new friend Ernest Hodder-Williams, whom he met in 1916, but also to reach a different sort of readership with the Hodder & Stoughton market.

#### Analysis of the sales figures

The period I propose to examine here is covered by the years 1913 to 1919. 1919 was very different from 1913, in terms of the public's new experience of war and of the 'loss of innocence' of the period. These two non-war years may be taken to give an indication of 'normal' sales tendencies, compared with the probable abnormal consumption of the four war years (see Appendix 1).

The most immediate feature that I find in these sales figures is

that sales of books increased during the war and afterwards. More Hodder novels sold over 20,000 copies in 1916, 1917, and 1918, than in 1913, 1914, and 1915. The reason for this was the sudden publication by Hodder in 1916 of large numbers of novels by O. Henry, eleven of which sold over 20,000 copies in that year, 44% of the 'best-sellers' of that year. O. Henry (the pseudonym of William Sidney Porter, who died in 1912) was an American writer who was already being published in Britain by Doubleday, amongst others. By republishing so many of his novels at once, Hodder & Stoughton effectively flooded the market and caused a great increase in book-buying. Somewhat surprisingly, this was not to the detriment of other writers, as their sales figures do not seem to be affected by the influx of O. Henry novels into the market. In 1915, the leading Hodder writers were: Baroness Orczy with four novels, 'Sapper' with two titles, and J.J. Bell, Ian Hay, Rex Beach, Charles Garvice, H. Rider Haggard and Joseph Hocking with one novel each. In 1916, the leaders were these same authors and titles, with the exception of H. Rider Haggard whose sales for She slipped below the 20,000 mark, and the inclusion of eleven O. Henry novels, another from 'Sapper', and one title each from John Buchan, Ralph Connor and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

#### Best-selling fiction during the First World War

Conan Doyle had been a very large seller before the war, and in 1918 came back to beat Buchan's Greenmantle to first place in the best-seller lists with The Return of Sherlock Holmes (11). Ralph

Connor, (the pseudonym of Charles Gordon) and Rex Beach wrote Canadian and American westerns and were steady but minor best-sellers. The novels of Joseph Hocking and J.J. Bell were purely sentimental, of the Kailyard kind, and by using the war as a setting ensured large sales. H. Rider Haggard had been a best-seller with his African adventures since the last years of the previous century, and the phenomenal sales of Baroness Orczy, and of The Scarlet Pimpernel in particular, had been steady since 1905. She was consistently selling over 40,000 copies a year of individual titles throughout this period, and never had fewer than three titles in the best-seller lists during the war.

The success of 'Sapper' and Ian Hay was a result of the war, which accounts for the extraordinary sales of Hay's A Knight on Wheels, almost double the sales of the next best-selling novel of that year, 'Sapper''s The Lieutenant and Others. A Knight on Wheels was an earlier novel of Hay's and was in its second edition with Hodder in 1914. Its enormous sales were undoubtedly influenced by the publication of his The First Hundred Thousand, a sanitised version of trench anecdotes for the Home readers and a roaring success, which had been serialised in Blackwoods in 1915 and published in book form in the same year. 'Sapper''s The Lieutenant and Others is again about trench life, written in the hearty 'Sapper' style but with a certain amount of truthful reality. Its companion best seller, Sergeant Michael Cassidy (1916), is a series of war-time episodes in the style of Kipling's Soldiers Three (1888). 'Sapper'

was the only new writer in the lists, but Buchan was a new writer in the sense that his novels had never sold in such large quantities before, for all his having been a published author for twenty years.

I found that the pattern of the sales for books reissued or newly published by Hodder & Stoughton was of diminution. In 1913, 80% of the novels selling over 20,000 copies were 'new' Hodder books. In 1918 those 'new' titles selling over 20,000 copies had reduced to 26% of the market, with O. Henry and Baroness Orczy as the probable cause of this, since their books stayed in the best-selling lists throughout the war. The book-buying public were just not buying new books in large enough quantities to make any impression on the sales figures for 'new' titles. It wasn't even as if Hodder were not producing any 'new' novels, and were relying on sales of their tested and reliable current stock - the new books were there, but they were swamped by the ubiquitous O. Henry and Orczy. Ruby M. Ayres, one of the great romantic novelists of this period, and E. Phillips Oppenheim, whose sales didn't really peak until the 1920s and '30s, were producing a small amount of novels with Hodder, but they weren't selling in comparable amounts.

#### Different editions and sales

Once the war had started, the book trade was understandably in some trepidation about its future, as all assumed that the buying of books would be regarded as an expendable luxury. By October 1915 the situation had certainly changed, but not in a way that the

publishers and booksellers had anticipated. George Tyler of W.H. Smith & Son was quoted in an article in The Bookman.

The natural tendency nowadays is to buy fewer expensive books; but this is more than atoned for by the greatly increased quantity of cheaper books that are selling. Sevenpenny and shilling volumes are being purchased in immense numbers, partly with a view to economy, and partly because in size they are admirably suited for sending out to our soldiers and sailors.

(12)

This tendency, like Tyler's reasons of economy and size, probably persisted throughout the duration of the war. Another very important factor in the sales of Orczy, Henry and other big Hodder sellers which has important implications in examining the success of Buchan's Greenmantle as well as The Thirty-Nine Steps, was the device of different editions of the same titles being available simultaneously. In 1917 most of the big sellers were produced in three editions, one at 1/-, one at 1/3 and one at 1/6. This directed the titles to different segments of the book-buying public. It was also a failsafe as if, for some reason, one edition sold well it could offset the more expensive edition which perhaps failed to 'take'. Rex Beach's novel The Net (1912) was produced in a 6/- and a 1/- edition, and the six shilling edition sold very badly. In 1915 its entry in the Hodder archives shows that only 126 copies were sold, compared to nearly 29,000 copies in the cheaper edition. This pattern continued in 1916 and 1917, and by 1918 the six shilling edition had been withdrawn. An extreme example of the importance of selling books at a price at which the public would wish to buy them is J.M. Barrie's The Admirable



Crichton (1914) which for some reason was produced in a 15/- and a 42/- edition, enormously expensive compared to the usual prices of 1/6, or at most 3/6. In six years Hodder had only managed to sell 3,117 copies of both editions, including sales from abroad.

Buchan's first Hodder novel, Greenmantle (1916), was produced initially in a six shilling edition. After the triumphant first year, sales dwindled in 1917 to 14% of the 1916 sales, 4,864 compared to 34,426 in 1916. In 1918 a 2/6 edition was brought out and the sales of both editions in that year totalled just over 50,000 copies. If Conan Doyle hadn't brought out The Return of Sherlock Holmes in 1918, Greenmantle would have been the best-selling Hodder & Stoughton novel of that year. As it was, there were only 3,095 copies in it, Buchan selling 50,409 copies, and Doyle managing 53,504. The 2/6 edition of Greenmantle was very successful, selling nearly 85,000 copies in three years, and its successor Mr Standfast did comparatively well, selling 56,000 copies in two years.

Buchan's best-sellers in the context of their sales

These sales apart, the real significance of the success of Greenmantle and of Mr Standfast lies in the fact that not only were they particularly good novels, they were also the most expensive best-sellers of their period. At six shillings, Greenmantle was six times as expensive as most of the other best-sellers of 1916, and was the eighth (out of twenty-five) best-selling Hodder & Stoughton novel of that year. All sales of books were affected

by price increases, up to 2/- at a time for the Hodder titles, but Greenmantle still sold 50,000 copies at the 2/6 price which made up 96% of its total sales for that year. Even The Scarlet Pimpernel had not done so well, since its largest annual sale in this period, at 66,000 copies, was in the 1/6 edition. It was not an unprecedented success, as Ralph Connor's Corporal Cameron had done much the same thing in 1912, by being the fourth best-seller of that year at 6/- and 2/-, when the other big titles from the Hodder stable were selling at 6d or 4½d. The sudden catapulting of Buchan's first thrillers into the best-seller lists in 1915 and 1916 can be seen as a reflection of their strength as novels in terms of the current market forces. Most of the other best-sellers of this period have vanished out of print and into obscurity, a sure indication of their inferior quality as novels, and also of public taste - see Appendix 1. Greenmantle is still regarded as a good novel, and as a sequel to the still popular The Thirty-Nine Steps it would have carried a large proportion of the readership of that novel in its own sales when it first appeared.

(ii) The readership of Buchan's best-selling thrillers

In this section I discuss my findings from contemporary letters and memoirs of the First World War, as well as from studies of popular reading from that period.

The soldiers who read

Buchan's biographer, Janet Adam Smith, is one of the few critics

to examine the probable readership of Buchan's thrillers.

Buchan was entertaining a public far wider than he originally aimed at. A.J. Balfour, whose liking for Phillips Oppenheim had first started him [Buchan] on his thrillers, was a great admirer of The Thirty Nine Steps, but it was also enjoyed by thousands of plainer readers. Buchan particularly liked hearing of its success with soldiers: friends were constantly reporting how much in demand it was in the trenches, clearing stations, and hospitals. So one of his motives in embarking on Greenmantle was simply to entertain the troops.

(13)

The British troops of the First World War were unlike any previous British fighting force in that the literacy of the non-commissioned officers and other ranks was much higher than ever before. The 1902 Education Act had created local education authorities and set rates for education purposes, and the numbers of grant-aided schools were able to increase. The 1907 Act followed this up by providing grants for secondary schools, so that by August 1914 children were receiving compulsory state-funded education until they were thirteen. The generations who rushed to join up at the outbreak of war and who were gradually conscripted from 1916, could read and wanted to read. Their degree of literacy was not sophisticated, but they had the basic skills and an understanding which had been predominantly absent in their predecessors of the Boer War. An indication of what the expectations of the troops were, and at what level they required literary stimulation is given by the writer Stephen Graham (1884-1975) in 1919.

What the men do read is Florence Warden and Charles Garvice, and books with such titles as The Temptress, Red Rube's Revenge, and The Lost Diamonds - gaudy adventure stories

which can be torn for cigarette lights later on. All prefer, however, to look at pictures rather than read. Some even seem a little troubled when they receive long letters from their wives or sweethearts. They read such papers as London Mail, London Opinion and Ideas, and voraciously devour John Bull, which has the art or the knack to express grousing in print. Many newspapers are provided for them free, and I used to find it rather strange in reading rooms at Little Sparta and in London, that the Express and the Sketch and the Mirror got dirty and torn each day, whereas the Times and the Morning Post remained comparatively untouched.

(14)

This was, however, not the whole picture. Paul Fussell maintains that adult education in the form of the National Home Reading Union and literature classes at Workmen's Institutes gave extra impetus to the old Victorian exhortation of self-help:

On the one hand, the belief in the educative powers of classical and English literature was still extremely strong. On the other, the appeal of popular education and 'self-improvement' was at its peak, and such education was still conceived largely in humanistic terms. It was imagined that the study of literature... would actively assist those of modest origins to rise in the class system. The volumes of the World's Classics and Everyman's Library were to be the 'texts'. The intersection of these two forces, one 'aristocratic', the other 'democratic', established an atmosphere of public respect for literature unique in modern times.

(15)

A memoir by Philip Gosse supports this view with evidence that 'proper' books were being read as well as '6d novelettes by Elinor Glyn, Charles Garvice, and the like' (16).

My mother kept me well supplied with books, most of them cheap reprints of standard works, such as the 'Everyman' edition. When I had read these they were passed on to others, often men in the ranks who liked reading something other than occasional newspapers or cheap magazines, which was all that ever came their way. Those 'Everyman' volumes of my mother's probably circulated up and down the line,

from Ypres to Arras, until they were torn to shreds.

(17)

Paul Fussell remarks that 'H.G. Wells was popular, especially once the men discovered that Mr Britling Sees It Through described the Army as "stupidly led"' (18). In Mr Britling, Mr Britling's son Hugh is in Flanders as a private in one of the Essex regiments, and writes to his father.

We read, of course. But there never could be a library here big enough to keep us going. We can do with all sorts of books, but I don't think the ordinary sensational novel is quite the catch it was for a lot of them in peacetime. Some break towards serious reading in the oddest fashion. Old Park, for example, says he wants books he can chew on; he is reading a cheap edition of The Origin of Species. He used to regard Florence Warden and William Le Queux as the supreme delights of print. I wish you could send him Metchinoff's Nature of Man or Pearson's Ethic of Freethought. I feel I am building up his tender mind.

(19)

Stephen Graham also tried Mr Britling as a gauge, but it was not successful with the soldiers he knew.

I was at pains to find out who had read Mr Britling Sees It Through. Not one could I find, and though that clever novel was so astonishingly popular it was not so because the working man was reading it. It was not providing the working man with a voice about war and life. Hall Caine is read, and I once heard a superior recruit speak of his writing as good healthy literature. But even Hall Caine is too intellectual at times. Our ardent writers such as Masfield, Chesterton, Conrad and Bennett find their readers among...the bourgeois, but not among the rank and file. I canvassed a room one day and found that only three in it had heard of H.G. Wells, and one thought he wrote for John Bull and had a 'flashy style'. The name of Bernard Shaw was better known because of the greater number of newspaper remarks concerning him.

(20)

The picture is mixed, and generalisations cannot be made to the effect that all privates and other ranks were addicted to

Charles Garvice or that they were all determined to read 'above their station'.

Evidence of soldiers reading Buchan

Graham's point about a book needing to provide the working man with a voice has some relevance in considering the reasons for the success of Buchan's war novels. The Thirty-Nine Steps was not strictly a war book, being set in the months leading up to war and written with hindsight, but it was written and published when its readers were engaged in a war. In this and in its sequels, Greenmantle and Mr Standfast, the hero represented the readers, a character with whom soldiers, in particular, could easily identify. His feelings about the war were as important for the realism of these novels as was Buchan's first-hand knowledge of fighting and living conditions at the Front.

Nonetheless, Buchan's novels and Buchan himself are hardly mentioned in the memoirs and war letters of serving soldiers. I examined thirty-two books dealing with personal recollections of the First World War - nineteen memoirs, eight collections of letters, two autobiographical novels, and three critical studies (see Appendix 2). In Appendix 3 I have extracted from these sources a great many titles of books and newspapers cited as being read by soldiers. There are only three mentions of Buchan, and in only one of these is he a writer.

The poet Ivor Gurney quotes Buchan as an authority on the

duration of the war (21) and Buchan's friend F.S. Oliver mentions him in the context of the Department of Information (22). The single reference to Buchan's novels comes from a privately printed collection of letters written by a young subaltern, Christian Creswell Carver, from his arrival in France in 1915 to his death in early 1918, just after his twentieth birthday. The extract in question is from a letter to his younger brother in July 1917.

I have been enjoying some of John Buchan's books. I recommend Salute to Adventurers, The Thirty-Nine Steps and Greenmantle, if you have not read them. I have just read The Riddle of the Sands again too.

(23)

Carver could be said to be representative of a certain type of the officer class in the British Army - the young man enlisted straight from public school and put in charge of a platoon or more, with little military experience other than the school cadet corps. What has been called *Homo Newboltiensis* (from the credo immortalised in 'Vital Lampada' by Buchan's friend Sir Henry Newbolt - 'Play up! play up! and play the game!') abounded in large numbers among the First World War subaltern class.

#### Christian Creswell Carver and the schoolboy officers

Among the readers in the officer class, then, there appeared to be three basic types. On the one hand, there were the non-readers amongst the officers, who read the newspapers and the magazines for their only literary relaxation; on the other there were the literary men. The third, Carver's type, the educated

boys from school who read for pleasure and for escape rather than for intellectual stimulation, were the readers more likely to have formed Buchan's audience. H.G. Wells' Hugh Britling wrote to his father from the trenches:

What I want is literary opium...I used to imagine reading was meant to be a stimulant. Out here it has to be an anodyne.

(23)

This sort of reader had grown up on Henty and Ballantyne and Haggard, on Conan Doyle and the Boy's Own Paper. They were the readers for whom Buchan had written Prester John in 1910 and Salute To Adventurers in 1915, and for them The Thirty-Nine Steps and Greenmantle were more from the same stable.

Carver, unfortunately, cannot be regarded as representative as a correspondent, and is too helpful in listing the titles and authors of every book he had read or wanted sent from Home - 76 titles from him alone, compared to the 51 titles to total listed by all the other subjects examined. Censorship of letters from the Front precluded discussion of the one major topic of the day, the war and how it was going, consequently preventing the soldiers from describing what they did with the bulk of their time.

Although Carver is a fairly good representative of a type, his astonishing output of letters and capacity for new books and old favourites is distinctly atypical, certainly in the experience of the other writers of letters and memoirs in the



sample. It is a rather extraordinary circumstance that Buchan the best-seller was mentioned only once in a quite large sample of readership: that single occurrence was in the singular garrulity and meticulous listings of Carver. This could possibly be explained by the very nature of Carver's letters: they are exhaustive; everything he reads is mentioned, and a good many of the letters consist of lists of titles for his family to send to him.

Probable reading patterns in the army

After working on these memoirs and letters for a considerable amount of time, I formed the strong impression that soldiers writing about their experiences in the First World War would be unlikely to mention specific titles, or recollections of reading at all, unless they were naturally interested in books. Of those that did admit to reading, their choice of titles was distinctly 'high-brow' and based on the classics. The books mentioned by Carver are much more 'popular' and 'low-brow', a separate class of literature entirely, and the sole mention of Buchan appears in this class (see Appendix 3). It is entirely possible that Buchan's novels, along with those of Charles Garvice and O. Henry, Florence Warden and Ruby M. Ayres, were ubiquitous and so common in trench libraries and in personal possessions that they were not regarded as of any particular notice: not 'real' literature, 'only' a John Buchan.

I have already established that the soldiers who enlisted and

who were eventually conscripted into the ranks would have been literate to an unprecedented degree, but that their literacy would be distinctive if it manifested itself in a desire for anything more advanced than a tabloid-type newspaper or a sensational cheap novel. The habit or practice of reading to pass the time was distinct from reading for pleasure, and reading to pass the time required books which were absorbing and fast-moving, but not too intellectually demanding; 'literary opium...an anodyne'. The '6d novelettes' came into this category, the huge sales of O. Henry and Ruby M. Ayres came about because of this need, and on the 'adventure' side, as opposed to the romantic story, H. Rider Haggard, 'Sapper', Ralph Connor's westerns and Conan Doyle flourished as well. Also selling well on the popular escapist front were R. Austin Freeman's Dr Thorndyke detective stories and Conan Doyle's The Return of Sherlock Holmes. The success of one of Buchan's discoveries for Nelson's, E.C. Bentley's Trent's Last Case (1913), supported, in terms of sales at least, the view that detection, crime and espionage were a good popular mix, and E. Phillips Oppenheim created a further combination by including generous helpings of love story elements in the adventure/spy story.

#### The readership of The Thirty-Nine Steps

In writing The Thirty-Nine Steps when he did, Buchan was following an established trend. The Thirty-Nine Steps is simple

to read, instantly absorbing, and the complete escape from wartime reality in the trenches, since it happens in pre-War Britain and has much of its action in quiet settings. As it sold so hugely in 1915 and 1916, and as Janet Adam Smith's biography states that it was in demand from serving soldiers (25), the natural assumption must be that large quantities of the books were bought by or for soldiers. Reviews which might help to indicate where the sales went are scarce - Blackwood's Magazine contains a high proportion of war-related material in 1915 and 1916, including the original serialisation of 'The Thirty Nine Steps' by 'H. de V.' (Buchan's only use of a pseudonym), but no mention of how well that story was doing in book form under the Blackwood's imprint. The Contemporary Review for 1915 and 1916 also has reviews of war-related fiction and non-fiction, including an address given by Buchan for the 'Fight For Right' movement (26), but nothing on his best-selling novels. The London Mail, the Tatler, John Bull, the Boy's Own Paper, The Daily Mail and the Cornhill Magazine are silent on the matter of any novels John Buchan may or may not have had published, but The Bookman, 'a monthly journal for book-readers, book-buyers and booksellers', carries what appears to be almost the only contemporary intimation of the existence of The Thirty-Nine Steps, as a listing in a Blackwood's advertisement. The 'blurb' reads - 'as a real thrill - a tale of such breathless excitement as even to supersede the newspaper - The Thirty-Nine Steps can have few rivals' (27). Earlier in 1915, a less well-

known Buchan novel, Salute To Adventurers, had been published by Nelson's in July, and received a full-length review in The Bookman. The reviewer, C.E. Lawrence, went straight to the point.

It is Mr Buchan's purpose to provide for his readers relief from the anxieties of these fighting times with the entertainment of - more fighting. The book serves its writer's end. Reading it relieves the mental stress, the nervous strain we all must endure...it is good telling well told, and such helpful, hearty stuff that it makes excellent mind-fare for soldiers and sailors resting from duty.

(28)

A year later, in The Bookman of November 1916, a review of Greenmantle makes the same point.

It is a story in the manner of The Thirty-Nine Steps and The Powerhouse so - apart from distinguished craftsmanship - has little in common with Sir Quixote and Prester John, and the author himself appears to admit that his object in writing it will have been achieved if he succeeds in giving entertainment for an hour or so...a book to be read as an antidote and complement to the graver volumes about the dire hostilities.

(29)

From these scant mentions, I find that The Thirty-Nine Steps appears to have had little attention on its first appearance in print, unlike its immediate predecessor Salute To Adventurers, but a year later is cited as a byword, at least a book well enough known to be used as an example of a particular style of novel. In viewing John Buchan as a best-seller, I find it clear from sales statistics and from the few contemporary reviews that his books which first sold in very large quantities were popular because they appeared to fit the needs of the time. The absence of reviews does not necessarily indicate popularity or sales,

since in our own period, the novels of Catherine Cookson and Barbara Taylor Bradford are rarely reviewed, yet are never off the bookstand shelves.

(iii) Why The Thirty-Nine Steps was a best-seller

Components of the best-seller

The publication of Salute To Adventurers (1915) in the right style for the times could be seen as an accident. It was a novel which Buchan had written in the early months of 1914, at once an indulgence of his interest in the United States and a harking back to his 'historical' novels, which medium he had abandoned in 1900 with The Half-Hearted. It does not have the lengthy passages of these historical novels, particularly in John Burnet of Burns (1898) and is a more coherent entity than either A Lost Lady of Old Years (1899) or The Half-Hearted (1900). It is also a genuine adventure, which the plot of Sir Quixote (1895) is not. Buchan's ninth novel, Greenmantle (1916), is also an adventure, wholly embedded in the War and war events, but it depends on its predecessor, The Thirty-Nine Steps, both for the initial introduction of the hero and his exotic South African background: its initial success depended on the impetus the sales of The Thirty-Nine Steps must have provided. In a recent article, Christopher Harvie defines the reasons for the success of The Thirty-Nine Steps as:

...its pace and setting, as well as the topicality of its plot...its laconic, self-deprecating hero, the 'calculating coward' Richard Hannay was a change after the public-school

paragons of earlier spy-thrillers; so too was the political understatement after their hysterical anti-Germanism.

(30)

Speed and brevity were all-important for the reading of those who had little time to spare but who wanted to get completely lost in a book while they could (31). The historical fantasies and romances of Baroness Orczy included lavish descriptions of the lives of the rich, something which Ruby M. Ayres, Charles Garvice and E. Phillips Oppenheim specialised in - sentimental love stories with aristocratic characters in their natural habitat. (Oppenheim wrote endlessly about love and romance as well as international conspiracies). If the prevailing taste for cheap, popular fiction was exoticism in clothes, setting or characters, how did Buchan create a best-seller without these elements?

#### The components of The Thirty-Nine Steps

The nearest Hannay gets to London society life is his solitary roaming in London before the story begins, and his first words are of how boring he finds that sort of amusement (32). The Thirty-Nine Steps has no women characters, so how can there be the lavish descriptions of clothes and jewels which would seem to be *de rigueur* in best-selling novels of this time? The all-male gathering at the Home Office at Queen Anne's Gate wear nothing more visually exciting than black and white evening dress. This in itself would give the effect of assured and relaxed privilege, but that element is not so important as the feminine luxury in dress and lifestyle that made best-sellers of the novels of Ruby M. Ayres and O. Henry. If the success of The Thirty-Nine Steps was not

dependent upon qualities in common with the more usual sort of best-seller, the obvious alternative avenue for exploration is the qualities which made it unusual and different. To use Christopher Harvie's definition as a base for discussion, he lists two contrasts - the change of hero and the absence of anti-Germanism - and three distinct characteristics - topicality, pace and setting - which he considers to be among the reasons for the success of The Thirty-Nine Steps. All showed new developments in popular writing of the time.

#### Pace

The pace of The Thirty-Nine Steps was revolutionary in popular fiction. Few other best-selling novels rushed along at such a plausible speed. Even Oppenheim's stories, as fast-moving as anything produced in the Edwardian period, were still undeniably stodgy. Buchan, particularly in The Thirty-Nine Steps, was not stodgy. The story was fast, slowing only for psychological breathing spaces on the part of the reader and of Hannay, and it was short, a quick read which helped it gain popularity, but not too long for the pace to become implausible. No man could cover ground like Hannay; the several attempts (33) to work out exactly where Buchan intended his hero to travel in this book have produced routes which would take a professionally fit man, as Hannay was, almost twice the length of time to achieve as Hannay did in the book. Buchan discusses this uneasy alliance between effect and detail in his essay 'Literature and Topography' in Homilies and

Recreations (1926), using an example from R.L. Stevenson's Catriona as an illustration.

Now a dull writer, in order to get the effect of speed, would have loaded his pages with irrelevant topography and a minute time-schedule. Stevenson was wiser; this, he felt, was no case for a map, and swiftness must be got by some other means. So he is economical with his detail. David is set on shore at Clackmannan Pool on the Saturday afternoon at 2; an hour later he is at Stirling; at 6pm he is somewhere about Uam Var, and at 11 reaches the house of Duncan Dhu. He leaves straightway on foot and reaches Inverary before the end of the sermon on the Sunday morning. It is all we want; we feel that David is indeed a moss-trooper, as the Lord Advocate said. Now that journey is to my mind incredible, for no man, I think, could start on his two legs about 11pm from somewhere on the east side of Balquhiddy, after having ridden from Clackmannan, and be in Inverary before noon on the next day. The feat is as impossible in the time as the journey of Telemachus in the Odyssey from Pylos to Sparta... But artistically it is wholly right; Stevenson has not already elaborated this piece of country, so the reader's credulity is not strained, while the few selected details are all that is needed to quicken the fancy.

(34)

The Thirty-Nine Steps gives the readers the correct balance of pace, in the events in the plot and in the movement in the story, within the bounds of plausibility and 'a willing suspension of disbelief'. Lord Rosebery has described The Thirty-Nine Steps as 'one of the most absurd and extravagant of works' (35), and published in a time of national stress and disruption as it was, these qualities in the novel undoubtedly helped its success. It is likely that the absurdity of the novel, particularly with its pace, helped to ensure the plausibility of this story.

### Setting

The setting of The Thirty-Nine Steps was a curious one, considering the nature of the events that put Hannay on the run in the first



place. In the article quoted above, Christopher Harvie remarks that indeed the most sensible place for a man to hide when unjustly accused of murder would be in the largest and most bustling mass of people that he could find. Instead of taking the nearest and most obvious refuge of the whole of London, Hannay claims that he would feel 'like a trapped rat' (36) and chooses one of the most open and underpopulated areas in Britain, an area where every stranger or visitor would normally be immediately remarked upon and discussed. The excuse of possibly being able to use his veldcraft is some justification for Hannay's reasons in choosing Scotland, but in the event Buchan made more use of poacher's tactics and judicious changes of identity than of Hannay's more conventional hunting skills. His ability to pass as Scottish is a good excuse for the fine collection of Border characters that Buchan had in his memory, but the story only uses Hannay's disguises as a device to get him out of tricky situations, not as the main point of the plot, as his disguises stop and are regarded as unnecessary long before the story ends.

Lars Ole Sauerberg quotes an interesting interpretation of the bolthole to which Hannay runs.

It is an important function of...sensationalism...to help divide the genre's fictional world into two: one which is the reader's own, another to which he looks with interest, curiosity, sometimes even fear. The distinction between the known and the unknown is implied by Jens Peter Becker in his explanation of the choice of Scotland as the hiding place of Buchan's hero, Richard Hannay "because the Scottish landscape is one of the few parts of Britain the average reader still feels as exotic".

As a thematic signpost showing that Hannay is now going into the unknown, an area which is unknown to him as an outsider but known to the reader, albeit as a fairly outlandish and underpopulated part of 'North Britain', the implications of the Scottish setting are developed in chapter two below.

Buchan's reasons, however, for choosing the Borders as the scene of Hannay's chase would be because the area was not exotic to him at all. It was his own territory known from his holidays throughout his schooldays and early years as a student. But there had to be something more, a more logical and climactic reason for Hannay to be drawn to that part of Scotland, and without any guidance from Scudder and his book. It was another of Buchan's coincidences, later to be notorious, that Hannay accidentally came across the headquarters of the very nest of enemy agents he was running from. Once Hannay is in the hands of the spies, he recognises them for his particular enemies from Scudder's descriptions. On escaping, he manages to observe their reasons for staying in that spot - the secret airfield, from which they were able to have a good look at British naval activities. This was, of course, in keeping with their later theft of the secret plans for the British and French naval dispositions. But why so far north?

The point of the plot of The Thirty-Nine Steps may well have been originally, as Christopher Harvie suggests in his article quoted above, for Hannay to discover a German plot in Scotland, and that the secret airfield was originally designed to be a base from which

the spies could observe the new naval base at Rosyth on the north side of the Firth of Forth, approximately twenty miles away from the village of Lamancha, Harvie's choice for the site of Buchan's airfield. Buchan's friend Charles Masterman was in charge of the new Department of Propaganda at this point in the war, and Harvie suggests that it is likely that Masterman may have pointed out to Buchan that using a fairly new naval installation as the object of spying in a thriller written in wartime was perhaps not in the best interests of the war effort. In the story, after the discovery of the airfield, the plot takes Hannay back to England and to the hunt on the Kentish coast, leaving the Scottish events as an episode packed with chases and disguise and much suspenseful entertainment, but with little ostensible point in the overall plot. Perhaps this is of no matter - the fact remains that it is in the Scottish episodes that the story is most successful.

I believe that what Harvie means in citing the setting of The Thirty-Nine Steps as a crucial element in its success is that the scenes of chase and daring disguise in the Galloway hills are hugely entertaining, and it is for entertainment that the story was written and succeeds. The position of the enemy airfield in the Borders might well have come about because of a unintended change of plot on Buchan's part. However accidental the reason, the result of the Galloway setting for The Thirty-Nine Steps was the most memorable part of the novel, intensely evocative as well as a thrilling chase, and surely a major contribution to the book's

success.

### Topicality

The most significant original contribution that Buchan made in this novel, and in so doing to the eventual genre of the thriller, was the creation of his hero, Richard Hannay. I shall go on to discuss this new Buchan hero, possibly the clearest indication of the important post-1915 change in Buchan's writing and in the genre of the thriller, but I feel it is important to examine first the context of the hero, which was rooted in the topicality of 1914.

Also important to the lasting success of The Thirty-Nine Steps was Buchan's treatment of the context in which the book was written, in discussing anti-Germanism and the peculiar historical circumstances of the outbreak of war, translated into a fictional setting with a sensitivity and a dextrous manipulation of fact and reasonable assumption. This produced a highly believable but yet fictional state of events and political atmosphere in which Hannay found his adventure.

Topicality was by definition a short-lived basis for writing, but the war was an unusually long-lasting topical subject. In this period the war was naturally used as a setting for novels at its outset (38), but once two or three years had gone by and war was still continuing, its role changed to being the subject of stories, not merely the background. Greenmantle (1916) is a spy story set in wartime and uses the events of war to support the decisive

events of the story, but Mr Standfast (1919, written 1917-18), although still obviously using the war as a setting, was more concerned with life at war, and Buchan examines, for example, the question of conscientious objection and the different arguments against war. The subject of the topicality had changed from being a passing phenomenon to being a way of life.

The Thirty-Nine Steps, written and published during a period of war and set a few months before the war began, is at once a novel written with hindsight, and one using past 'real-life' and topical events to ensure a special sort of realism and tension in the story. The war to come is described as having been arranged for two years, with the assassination of a Balkan leader as the signal for the beginning of political hostilities leading to armed conflict. All this, neatly mirroring what had actually happened, is reduced to the status of a sub-plot by Buchan's invention of secret naval plans which, if acquired by Britain's enemies, would make the approaching war a lot worse for Britain. The whole of the plot of The Thirty-Nine Steps is geared towards the chase and capture of the enemy agents, against the topical setting of the threat of war. Buchan used what was real as background detail, concentrating the reader's attention on the fiction of the story. In this way, the topical elements make the story seem highly plausible, taking into account that, to the readers, the gap of time between the publication of the book and the date of both the real and fictional events preceding the war in the story, was only

fifteen months.

Hannay and anti-Germanism

Anti-Germanism was a reaction against anything and everything German which although part of the national outlook from the turn of the century, broke out in a particularly virulent and public fashion when war began in 1914. This was manifested in ways which did not reflect creditably on the common sense of the British public - the stoning of dachshunds is a widely cited example of this irrational hysteria. It was a natural extension of the 'spy-fever' craze which had been prevalent in literature and popular journalism for many years (39). When Buchan was writing The Thirty-Nine Steps Britain had been at war with Germany for several months - there was no question of a surprise invasion anymore. Buchan replaced the 'hysterical anti-Germanism' with a different sort of antipathy towards enemy agents; Hannay ends the story hating them as individuals and as enemies of Britain, not because of their German-ness.

At the beginning of The Thirty-Nine Steps Hannay doesn't have any feelings in particular towards Britain, other than that it was the 'Old Country' and that it 'was a sort of Arabian nights' to him (40). When the book begins he has had enough, and is seriously considering going back to where he feels he belongs, to South Africa. After Scudder's murder, when Hannay has the police on his trail as well as the mysterious spies, he feels no racial animosity towards his enemies, only a natural resentment at his

position and a distaste at the murder. The deciphering of the little black book and his discovery of the secret airfield begin to make Hannay feel fiercely nationalistic. He speaks of 'my country' and 'my country's enemies' at this point, and the natural conclusion to these new feelings at the end of the story was his immediate entry into the British army at the outbreak of war, thoroughly at one with the British cause because of his own experiences and with what he has gone through in the story. Buchan does not allow Hannay to hate the Germans without adequate reason experienced personally. He may fear them, as did Scudder, but for Hannay hate does not come until he has good reason. Eventually, in Greenmantle (1916) and Mr Standfast (1919), Hannay's views are allowed to develop and modify.

The new kind of hero - Hannay's immediate predecessors

Christopher Harvie's last contrast is in itself topical. The 'public-school paragon', perpetuated in Edwardian boys' magazines like The Captain as the youthful hero of daring adventures, later grew up to be the perfect ex-Eton diplomat or young man about town, or the scion of a noble house honourably employed in the army. A.E.W. Mason's The Four Feathers (1902) and the early Oppenheim novels displayed this wonder of tradition and perfection to full advantage. Raffles (1899) mocked the conventions and The Riddle of the Sands (1903) began to break them down.

E.M. Hornung's Raffles is a public-school product, as is Bunny, the narrator and side-kick, but there are elements in the Raffles

stories which had not previously touched the world of the Boy's Own hero. Where an Oppenheim gentleman-adventurer might steal for the game or for excitement, Raffles is impecunious and steals for money. The incipient sadism of the stories foreshadows the unpleasantness of 'Sapper' and Bulldog Drummond, and Raffles's acts of occupational violence are on a par with the habitual brutalities of Drummond and his entourage towards their enemies. Raffles sails very near the wind in subverting the conventions of what is acceptable in a hero, but where this errs in the question of good taste, Erskine Childers's hero, Carruthers, questions the use of 'civilised' values themselves.

Carruthers is introduced as a dapper diplomat, but a bored and irritated one, and his situation is plainly comic. This erstwhile paragon descends rapidly to another plane of existence by going sailing with his old school friend Davies, in a boat which is not a yacht and where mud and dampness are the normal conditions of living. Here idle social banter and Playing The Game are exchanged for graphic hard graft in the freezing North Sea. Davies is not poised in the ways of society, but his manners and morals are pure public school, despite his unfashionable obsession with sailing in uncivilised conditions. Erskine Childers took less-than-perfect public-school products and produced heroes. He himself went to Haileybury, a lesser public school, and while critics have accepted that the character of Davies was most like Childers himself, the character of Carruthers is less easy to identify. Childers's



biographer, Andrew Boyle, believes that Carruthers can be seen as the *alter ego* of Childers, compatible with Davies but expressing actions and ideas that Childers himself could not (41). As heroes of an ostensible boys' adventure story, they are gently subversive, showing the way to different interpretations of an old role.

#### Buchan's new hero

Although Richard Hannay later became indistinguishable from his gentleman-adventurer friends, he is still not a product of England at the time of The Thirty-Nine Steps. He can wear evening dress comfortably and find his way about London society, but he is still a colonial, not a man of education, tradition or breeding. He has exotic accomplishments and experience behind him - 'the old Mashona trick' (42) - and is knowledgeable about malaria and the principles of disguise. His qualifications in the role of hero are unusual; in the tradition of the public-school man, the hero would quite often have had a kind of second-in-command or aide-de-camp who was an ex-soldier or adventurer, experienced in life, but wholly unused to public-school values or behaviour. In The Thirty-Nine Steps this adventurer, though colonial, is the hero; the tradition has been reversed to incorporate the rough diamond into establishment society as a hero.

Buchan's first colonial adventure, in the sense of a man sent to the colonies to sort adventure out, is The Half-Hearted (1900): Lewis Haystoun is in India, guarding the Border marches and sacrificing himself there for the good of the Empire. David

Crawford is sent to South Africa in 1910 in Prester John, and (almost) singlehandedly defeats a black uprising against the white colonies. All this is in the approved tradition, but it is in Prester John that Richard Hannay's predecessor can be found. Captain Jim Arcoll, the policeman with the widest beat in history, plays trusty helper to David Crawford. He dispenses wisdom, displays an astonishing ability at disguise, provides David with all possible back-up and support-troops, but is powerless in the actual crisis, since it is David who hears the password, infiltrates the secret gathering, steals the jewels, traps Laputa, and finds the buried treasure, in addition to defeating the uprising. Arcoll is older, wiser, more experienced and possessed of more authority than David, but it is David, as hero, who saves the day.

Buchan's experiences in South Africa in 1901-3 gave him the raw material for Prester John. Richard Hannay also comes from there; although his factual origins are mixed (43), his fictional antecedents are chiefly focused on Jim Arcoll. They are similar characters, have similar expertise with disguise, tracking and hunting, and although Arcoll is not a mining engineer, Hannay would have been an extremely good veldt policeman. So far Buchan has been consistent with accepted tradition; it is in placing Hannay the rough diamond and self-confessed colonial in a role more usually carried out by public-school dilettante adventurers that the mould is broken and a new tradition of heroes is instigated.

In The Thirty-Nine Steps Hannay acts alone; that is, in fact, the point of the story, that he is alone and friendless in a strange country. But such help as he receives comes either from 'above' or 'below', in terms of class origins, taking Hannay's class as being at this point indeterminate, being 'between' roles, so to speak, and thus in the middle. The road-mender and the various crofters who give him shelter are 'below' - they are working-class and the sort of support any hero might receive in any adventure, but it is perhaps significant that Hannay is in disguise, and temporarily 'below', when he receives the help of others 'below'. Sir Harry, the inn-keeper and Sir Walter Bullivant are 'above' - they are upper-class and of the type of character who would in traditional adventures have been the heroes and done the adventuring themselves. This reversal of roles by Buchan is inspired, neatly challenging the conventional structuring of the adventure story and the expectations of the readers, and opening up a whole new area for exploration. This may owe something to Stevenson's Kidnapped (1886) where the ostensible swashbuckling hero Alan Breck is flawed and almost a caricature, whereas the innocent and unheroically naive David Balfour is shown to have the real heroic qualities.

Buchan has limited the duration of this 'new' hero's career by this reversal; in accepting help from 'above', and in being accepted by them, Hannay has allied himself with that class of people, and the fortuitous circumstance of the outbreak of war just at the end of the story gives Buchan the chance to get Hannay through a necessary

levelling process which will leave him completely at ease with the products of Eton and the other public schools. By the beginning of Greenmantle Hannay has gone through the experience of a hero in his first appearance, and soon he acquires his own second-in-command, an older and more lawless version of Jim Arcoll, the genuine adventurer Peter Pienaar.

The traditional pattern has been disrupted by the incursion of Hannay, but even as he conforms and moves inexorably towards his final incarnation of country squire and Major-General, cosily tucked up in Establishment England, the dust does not settle in entirely the same position as before. Hannay is still exotic, he still uses Afrikaans in moments of excitement or for illustrative purposes. He remains different, as he must, by virtue of his early days with non-traditional experiences, and it is this difference in him which produces a new kind of adventure hero which was to be called the Buchan hero - upper-class public-school values combined with extraordinary talents.

Hannay was an entirely new sort of protagonist and one immediately popular with the readership of swiftly moving adventures. He broke the mould, and unlike E.C. Bentley's Trent, who was to become a direct influence on the later Dorothy L. Sayers' Lord Peter Wimsey, and Margery Allingham's Albert Campion in a different genre, Hannay was not to be the prototype of any one particular imitative fictional hero, but the model for many of the ex-Army secret service agents acting

for or against the government, voluntarily or against their will, with private missions sometimes included, who thronged the thrillers of the inter-war years, the influence reaching as far as James Bond in the 1950s.

Using Christopher Harvie's five elements as a starter for discussion, I have found that of these five - pace, setting, topicality, political understatement, and the hero - Buchan's development of an entirely new hero was probably most important in the success and future influence of The Thirty-Nine Steps. That influence, which helped to develop the rapidly growing new genre of the adventure thriller, must be seen in context, by examining the writers of light but vigorous escapist adventure fiction and in the work they produced.

(iv) Buchan's role in the development of the thriller

These new qualities in The Thirty-Nine Steps were among the most obvious in determining its subsequent success, which was not only as a best-selling popular novel. In writing The Thirty-Nine Steps Buchan had initiated a new development in popular literature of adventure and romance, and although his preferred name for this was the 'shocker', it very soon became known as the thriller (44). In his preface to The Thirty-Nine Steps, Buchan defines the thriller as:

...that elementary type of tale which Americans call the "dime novel" and which we know as the "shocker" - the romance where the incidents defy the probabilities, and march just inside the borders of the possible. (45)

Buchan was not the first writer of thrillers, nor was Hannay the first thriller hero - both had appeared suddenly in a burgeoning genre that was firmly rooted in the popular novel with origins far back in the 1880s. Buchan galvanised the genre into the twentieth century, which in terms of the thriller can be said to have started from 1903 (the publication date of The Riddle of the Sands) to 1914, when the first modern war broke out.

#### Traditions in the thriller

Lars Ole Sauerberg (46) identifies two distinct traditions in popular writing at this time which form the basis of the majority of important thrillers. He says that the 'realistic' tradition properly began with Erskine Childers' The Riddle of the Sands (1903), and was continued with Joseph Conrad's The Secret Agent (1907) and Under Western Eyes (1911), Somerset Maugham's Ashenden (1928), and the influence of Eric Ambler and Graham Greene in the 1930s. The 'sensational' tradition has a much earlier provenance, usually accepted as beginning with Edgar Allen Poe's The Murders in the Rue Morgue (1841), Eugene Sue's Les Mystères de Paris (1842-3), Wilkie Collins with The Woman in White (1860) and The Moonstone (1867). The phrases 'penny dreadful' (1884), 'shilling dreadful' (1885) and 'shilling shocker' (1886) are recorded in the Oxford English Dictionary as making their appearances shortly after the arrival of the new 'sensational' fiction, and 'thriller' is first recorded in 1889 (47). Ian Ousby describes this fiction as

taking 'mystery and crime as its subject and suspense as its narrative method' (48). The Edwardian 'sensationalists' were William Le Queux and E. Phillips Oppenheim, their example transmuted by John Buchan and continued during the war by Valentine Williams, a Buchan imitator whose Clubfoot thrillers had wide popularity. Among the inter-war thriller kings were Edgar Wallace, Sax Rohmer (the pseudonym of Arthur Sarsfield Ware), Geoffrey Household, and (much later) Ian Fleming with James Bond and Peter O'Donnell with Modesty Blaise. The connection and influence of John Buchan with these writers and works and with the two traditions as defined by Sauerberg, can be examined by considering the actual content of the thriller format, what it was that kept this genre separate from associated genres such as the spy story, the detective novel, the suspense story, or the psychological thriller (49). All these can be regarded as near cousins of the basic thriller, containing distinct differences in their central premisses, but with a common connection.

The name of Edgar Wallace was a by-word for the thriller in the post-war years, borne out by the publisher's blurb for his The Lone House Mystery (1929), which describes it as 'a thriller which gives us all we have learnt to expect of Edgar Wallace - Murder, Mystery, Detection, Excitement, and a little Love' (50). This model for a short but sensational read was by the late 1920s Edgar Wallace's formula for successful sales, and his

name had been for some time a synonym for the thriller. The books that he was writing, however, were cheap, in the sense that they lacked originality of any kind, were mass-produced, and were usually violent detective stories with an obligatory and perfunctory romance between the hero and the heroine.

#### Detective stories and the thriller

It is symptomatic of the grip which the detective story had on British popular writing during the inter-war years that an element of detection entered almost every form of popular writing. The thriller was by the 1920s a generic name for popular sensational writing, but still retained a separate existence as one of the sub-genres under that all-embracing category.

The term 'thriller' was once applied only to the more sensational kinds of suspense fiction, but in recent years critics and readers have specifically used it to describe detective, mystery and spy novels. Though these novels may range from the cerebral whodunit to the action-filled spy story, they are all concerned with violence, crime, murder, mystery and suspense; they are all thrillers. The term is handy, practical and comprehensive.

(51)

The detective story and what Valentine Williams called his 'romantic novels' (52) were most often combined and confused with each other, despite their inherent differences, which were later pointed out by subsequent critics. Willard Huntingdon Wright (the writer S.S. Van Dine), says that:

The detective story is not really fiction - it is a puzzle in extended form. The thriller is basically about action.

(53)



W.H. Auden's opinion is that:

The whodunit is distinct from thrillers...when the identification of the criminal is subordinate to the defeat of his criminal designs.

(54)

The thriller-writer Cyril Hare (pseudonym of Alfred Alexander Gordon Clark), says:

The business of the thriller is to excite, and it does this by a series of tense episodes, well or ill-strung together on the thread of some sort of plot. It makes no demand on the intellect of the reader. But any detective story makes some such demand.

(55)

These distinctions between the two genres dealing with content, direction and purpose, reflect on the thriller's reputation (in its early days) as low-brow and 'popular'; somehow a more inferior form of fiction than the detective story. The critic LeRoy Panek considers the writers:

Before the War, popular fiction, the thriller, had come largely from lower-class writers who had had only casual educations and, but for the vogue for their books, would have continued doing hack journalism, selling shoes or clerking in banks. The popular thriller-writers were also all men. This changed. After 1920 new groups of writers began writing the detective novel. First there were the women...then there were the academics.

(56)

He goes on to discuss the popular image of the thriller:

When considered by sensitive, intelligent or even educated people, the thriller is bad art, bad morality, bad education, bad everything; its hero is a lout, its villain a Guy Fawkes dummy, and its plot a rhapsody of nonsense hidden under the pretense of presenting important social- or character-moulding points. After World War I people wanted to forget about international horrors and characters acting as if Victorian imperial standards were still valued. Since the new generation of detective writers came from or wished to appeal to this group, it was not surprising to find that one of the first targets of the new detective novel was the

thriller. A basic premise of the new fiction was 'this is a detective novel and not a thriller. It is not like Wallace, Oppenheim, Buchan or Le Queux.

(57)

Even in fiction, it can be seen that the thriller was condemned by the thinking masses, no matter how much enjoyed in a surreptitious manner.

"Just because I happen to be a Buchanite - "  
"What's that you're saying?" said Amabelle; "I never thought an old highbrow like you would admit to such a thing. I read them in trains myself when there's nobody looking."  
"I was not," said Paul with dignity, "referring to the novels of John Buchan, if that is what you mean. Of course I don't read them."

(58)

As an immediate response to the opinions held in the quotation above, it would be true to say that Wallace, Oppenheim and Le Queux were writers with little education and with luck in the conjunction of their speciality in writing and the taste of the times. But Buchan is included with this group mistakenly. If anything, he was an early example of those highly educated and intellectual writers, like Dorothy L. Sayers and Cecil Day Lewis, who wrote detective stories for their own amusement and relaxation, as well as for income, in the 1920s and '30s.

#### Thrillers in different media

These different sorts of popular sensational adventure novels clearly did not all come together at the same time to produce the archetypal thriller at one single moment. The different areas were being explored separately and in different media. Valentine Williams mentions in his autobiography that several

plays to which he was taken in his youth at the turn of the century greatly influenced him when he began writing his romantic spy novels in 1917.

I had always been impressed with the romantic possibilities of the spy in fiction. One of the first plays my father took me to as a schoolboy was William Gillette's London production of that stirring melodrama of the American Civil War, Secret Service, with Gillette, the dashing, the fascinating, in the thrilling role of the Federal secret agent in the Southern household.

(59)

Buchan must have been aware of the possibilities of his thrillers for dramatic representation, as there exists a copy of a contract between Buchan and the impresario Leon M. Leon to produce Greenmantle for the stage. It was drawn up in 1918, but cancelled by mutual consent four years later (60).

In general, since the output was aimed at the less educated general public the medium for the thriller had to be one this section of the population could afford to indulge in.

Newspapers and magazines encouraged the trend, since carrying thrillers would increase their sales, and in 1905 the Daily Mail featured a 'puzzle' story of this type with a prize for the reader who could deduce the solution. The story, The Four Just Men, was written by Edgar Wallace, and was a sensation, effectively beginning his career as the king of thriller-writers.

The great success of The Four Just Men, from the point of view of sales - 38,000 copies in 1905, 'bought, or otherwise

acquired' (61) - must indicate some important new developments in this popular sensational novel which attracted readers far more than anything of its like in the past. The writer Jack Adrian points out in his introduction to the Dent Classics edition of The Four Just Men one aspect which might indicate this development: the format of Wallace's story.

A remarkable feature of the book is that although on the surface it seems to be straightforward and seamless narrative it is no such thing. It is in fact a series of smoothly-linked short stories. Not every chapter comprises a self-contained tale but certainly 'The Faithful Commons', 'The Outrage at the Megaphone', 'The Messenger of the Four', and even the 'inquest' chapter at the end have a beginning, a middle and a natural conclusion, and each is so constructed that either a problem is devised and then solved, or a shock or twist is contained in the climax. It was a style of story-telling - a series of minor mysteries solved in sequence throughout the book while the major mystery was only revealed at the end - that was to be refined over the years until it was recognisably the Wallacean method, to be cheerfully pinched by an entire generation of thriller writers.

(62)

#### Developing the twentieth-century thriller

The most important observation by Jack Adrian considering how the thriller evolved was that The Four Just Men was 'thumpingly twentieth-century'.

There is not a chapter, not a paragraph, not a sentence that bears even the slightest whiff of that late nineteenth century mustiness that characterises even the best of its contemporaries.

(63)

William Le Queux and E. Phillips Oppenheim were oppressively Edwardian in the assumptions, values and standards reflected in their novels. Even Buchan's immediate imitator, Valentine Williams, had this characteristic, writing firmly in the inter-

War years. But while Buchan escaped the Edwardian atmosphere, Williams, like Oppenheim and Le Queux, looked fondly back to a period which made possible an aristocratic lifestyle dabbling in diplomatic intrigue, first popularised in Antony Hope's The Prisoner of Zenda (1894), following the original pseudo-European setting in Robert Louis Stevenson's Prince Otto (1885). Even when there was no foreign setting, the mention of a foreign name or title in a romantic adventure novel made the atmosphere instantly redolent of Ruritania, and with that, of Edwardian protocol and imperial beliefs. Le Queux's Her Majesty's Minister (1901), Oppenheim's The Great Awakening (1902) and The Black Watcher (1912), are particularly good examples of the tradition of Anthony Hope.

Buchan himself did not escape Ruritania entirely. Greenmantle is set in a Europe of castles and foreign grandees, and his female villain, Hilda von Einem, is a classic Ruritanian-type *femme fatale* (see chapter six below). The setting recurred in The House of the Four Winds (1934), after the politicians and aristocracy of Evallonia visit Scotland in Castle Gay (1930).

The important point about the lack of Edwardian attitudes and the associated expectations of Ruritanian intrigue in Buchan's first thrillers is that they are a product of the great change in his writing which had occurred in 1915 with The Thirty-Nine Steps. At this stage in his work Buchan was exhibiting a clearly new direction. The only other writer of popular

escapist fiction of this kind who was also firmly in the twentieth century, rather than in the Victorian/Edwardian hangover of Oppenheim, Le Queux, and so on, was Edgar Wallace. Buchan preceded him by at least ten years in consistently producing 'modern' thrillers from 1915 onwards. Wallace's The Four Just Men of 1905 was an accident which he was unable to capitalise on until after the First World War, since after failing to produce a sequel of equal quality to The Four Just Men, Wallace turned to his very successful colonial Sanders of the River stories, from his experiences in the Belgian Congo. But what Wallace had done in The Four Just Men was not without value. He had concentrated on the environments of the poor, the working class and of the professionals, like journalists and the police - spheres of existence not normally described without sentimentalisation in the Oppenheim kind of adventure. By avoiding the emotive and focusing on the matter-of-fact and the practical, as had Conan Doyle before him, Wallace introduced a hitherto unused set of values and descriptions in this sort of fiction. This practice of looking at the other side of life, of the side potential readers were actually familiar with, rather than the parts they would have liked to have been familiar with, was not new with Wallace, although he had used it a new way.

#### The Riddle of the Sands and Buchan

The idea had first been used in Erskine Childers's The Riddle of the Sands (1903), a novel of the invasion genre, probably

the only novel of any merit to come out of that peculiar manifestation of 'a public wave of xenophobia disguised as invasion neurosis' (64). It is a classic novel of sailing, of espionage and of the dangers of a German invasion, and is also written in a completely unaffected, straightforward and above all, a natural tone. It is narrated with ease and assurance in handling the mechanics of telling the story and in maintaining the reader's attention. That this book should have been written so early on in the twentieth century and be so completely modern as to remain scarcely dated over 85 years later, is a small literary miracle. Its style, content and construction all make it an important step in the development of the thriller.

In chapter three below I go on to indicate the similarities between The Riddle of the Sands and The Thirty-Nine Steps in points of content and narratorial style. But it is more than the technicalities of writing which link these two novels. Realism is what marked The Riddle of the Sands out from its initial publication as the quality which made it different from the rest of the popular fiction of the time. Where Le Queux or Oppenheim would have treated such a plot with cheap melodrama, the tone of Childers's narrator, Carruthers, is self-mocking and unashamedly comic in its gradual breaking-down of the portrayal of the smug and stuffy Edwardian civil servant into a rather likeable man of action and amateur spy. There is nothing melodramatic in Childers's plot except where the (two) women

characters were involved (65); the practical details about bacon and eggs and stale bread are part of the charm of the story, giving it realism unheard of in Le Queux and in Oppenheim. The 'fantastic' nature of the story is in the theory behind the plot. No matter that Childers's research in sailing the routes in his novel proved to himself that Britain's eastern coasts were hopelessly under-protected from a German invasion: to the public the theory was a fantastic one, despite the grains of truth in its basic premiss. What made Childers's novel memorable and highly effective was the way his realism combined with his fantasy to produce an uncomfortable, or reassuring, air of verisimilitude to the novel.

The Thirty-Nine Steps uses exactly this technique in providing Hannay's narration, and it is one of that book's strengths which must have contributed greatly to its success, that the narration by Hannay is so natural, and gives the subsequent events of the plot their important quality of near-probability. Reading The Thirty-Nine Steps is hugely enjoyable because of the preposterous coincidences and constant lucky escapes which, when examined dispassionately, are little more than fantasies, but taken as a whole and under the influence of the persuasive, matter-of-fact, entirely normal narrative style that Buchan gives Hannay, are accepted, believed (if only for the duration of time it takes to read the book) and appreciated by the reader as a manifestation of a peculiarly effective form of narrative



art. Buchan proved himself to be a master at presenting the abnormal or ridiculously impossible masquerading as the ordinary and the normal in this one novel, his first in a series of light-hearted 'aids to cheerfulness' (66).

It would be an exaggeration to say that The Thirty-Nine Steps contains every influence of every development in popular literature in English. Nevertheless I think it quite clear that Buchan used the examples of his predecessors' work to create his own interpretation of the genre's requirements. Both the fact of the enormous sales of The Thirty-Nine Steps and its subsequent undiminished popularity, and an examination of the traits and techniques pioneered by his predecessors in the writing of the thriller-type, presented with important effect in The Thirty-Nine Steps, prove that Buchan knew the genre and extracted what he considered to be the most important requisites for a thriller by writing his own novel around them.

#### The writing of The Thirty-Nine Steps

It has been well documented that the reason why Buchan produced The Thirty-Nine Steps when he 'settled down to write a book' (67) - it was his twenty-seventh book and his eighth novel - was his enforced rest during convalescence after illness and subsequent boredom. He was also frustrated, by the bad news from the War and by the inferior and unsatisfying standards of the thrillers and detective novels that he was getting through while lying in bed. Writing 'shockers', he was to assure

Valentine Williams, was his 'favourite form of relaxation' (68) and he was dissatisfied with what was being produced in the way of light reading.

The immediate result of this was The Power-House, the third of Buchan's eight novels which could be grouped together as his 'espionage' stories (69), but this, Buchan's second attempt at a shocker, drew more heavily on Oppenheim, and on other antecedents as well. LeRoy Panek in The Special Branch has pointed out a link between Oppenheim's The Mysterious Mr Sabin and The Thirty-Nine Steps in that Oppenheim's novel has England's safety depending on the work of Lord Deringham who is preparing naval plans which will be 'the definitive study of Britain's naval preparedness and defence' (70). The main plot line of The Thirty-Nine Steps also depends on the theft of vital naval plans, upon which Britain's safety is dependent in a time of war. My own research has established that certain aspects of Oppenheim's The Secret (1907) also share a similarity with The Thirty-Nine Steps as well, particularly the first meeting of the heroes Courage and Hannay with the spies Guest, in The Secret, and Scudder in The Thirty-Nine Steps (71). Buchan's appreciation of Oppenheim's romances had perhaps sunk in further than he realised in his consideration as to how he would write a thriller following previous models.

Buchan once said to his wife, after reading some detective novels;

'I should like to write a story of this sort and take real pains with it. Most detective story-writers don't take half enough trouble with their characters, and no one cares what becomes of either corpse or murderer'

(72)

In his dedicatory note to The Thirty-Nine Steps to Tommy Nelson, Buchan gives his 'public' version of how and why he came to write the book.

You and I have long cherished an affection for that elementary type of tale which the Americans call the 'dime novel' and which we know as the 'shocker' - the romance where the incidents defy the probabilities, and march just inside the borders of the possible. During an illness last winter I exhausted my store of these aids to cheerfulness, and was driven to write one for myself.

(73)

Critics have recently begun to recognise what Buchan had done with the material available to him from earlier writers, and how his work transcended theirs. LeRoy Panek discussed this in 1981.

Buchan saw his own writing...combining adventure and realism and hitting readers who had a taste for fiction which was neither rarified and consumptive nor brutish and inane.

(74)

Janet Adam Smith maintains that Buchan's respect for the intellect of his friends who enjoyed 'shockers', despite these novels' inferior literary merit and basic lack of intelligence, led him to 'try his hand at a similar kind of "shocker", but with the difference that the characters should be the sort of people in whom a reader like Balfour could be interested ' (75). Michael Denning has a clear understanding of what Buchan had done to the old thriller format.

(Buchan), like Childers, left behind many of the cloak-and-

dagger conventions and wrested the thriller of espionage away from tales of diplomacy and high society by wedding it to the tale of imperial adventure. His basic plot was the hunt, a contest between hero and villain.

(76)

LeRoy Panek comes to the same conclusion but analyses the exact substance of what it was in Buchan's plots that made them a signature.

He took the spy novel out of the overfilled and plodding world of Wallace, Oppenheim and le Queux and made it a spare, entertaining form. I have already suggested that part of this was due to his combining of comedy with the fictitious high matter of spy adventure, but Buchan also knew how to orchestrate techniques of suspense. Pursuit and escape form the skeleton of almost every book.

(77)

#### New directions in The Thirty-Nine Steps

There is no doubt that Buchan's novels are examples of fine writing by an artist at once a scholar, a journalist and a publisher, with an eye for what was acceptable and successful for aesthetic as well as commercial reasons. An early critical appreciation of his work (in 1916) from David Hodge in The Bookman cited versatility as 'the outstanding power of Buchan'.

The man can write in any style. He can do a Stevenson novel in the best Stevensonian style, he can equal Kipling when Kipling is almost - but not quite - at his best, and he can out-Crockett Crockett. Also, he can do the dime sensational line with the best of them - witness his new books The Power-House and The Thirty-Nine Steps... If you are writing about Buchan be careful to make clear that there are no limits to him, and that one never knows the metier in which he will next be found acquiring distinction and success.

(78)

Buchan used his wide reading and his experience of many different sorts of writing when he wrote The Power-House in 1913

and The Thirty-Nine Steps in 1914, and this breadth of knowledge behind the writing of these early thrillers, a genre not naturally associated, either then or in later years, with any level of education at all, in the author or in the readership, would have been contributory in forming this most decisive new development in the genre.

An illustration of this can be found in the narrative language of The Thirty-Nine Steps, surely the lightest, shortest and most swiftly dashed-off novel in the Buchan canon, but still reflecting a great richness in its language. A survey of a number of randomly chosen chapters produces instances of many different uses of language, ranging from the Bunyanesque and the Biblical - 'wait on fortune' (79), 'I trusted to the strength of my legs' (80) - to anglicised Scots dialect - 'the woman had cried on the police' (81) - and Afrikaans - 'my veldcraft' (82): the beggar's whine of 'Ned Ainslie' (83), the formalese of official reports (84), the pathetic fallacy (85), bathos (86), precise English archaisms from the eighteenth century (87), a quotation from Paradise Lost (88), a Latin tag (89), references to literature (90), deliberate ponderousness counterpointed with rough realistic tones, the old gentleman's speech of stilted English with foreign inflexions - the examples mount up. The extraordinary diversity of influences evident in this brief selection indicate clearly the range of Buchan's reading and learning. The Thirty-Nine Steps absorbed effortlessly this

evidence of scholarship which Buchan had used in his more erudite works, for example in The Marquis of Montrose (1913), and which he was to apply more explicitly in later novels, particularly in Witch Wood (1927) and Sick Heart River (1940). The richness of the language was not the only new departure from what had been the norm, but I believe that this gave The Thirty-Nine Steps a depth and solidity in its narrative which enabled it to outlast most of its contemporaries.

#### The influence of Buchan

Probably the first Buchan imitator was Valentine Williams, whose The Man With The Clubfoot appeared in 1918 under the pseudonym Douglas Valentine (91), and had been written shortly after the appearance of Buchan's Greenmantle in 1916. Its plot has some immediate similarities with Buchan's thrillers - in chapter 2, Williams' hero receives a mysterious cipher in three parts which is the clue to the mystery, as does Hannay in Greenmantle, and the greater part of The Man With The Clubfoot is spent by the hero travelling through Germany in different disguises to escape from a large and terrifying German secret service official, as Hannay had done escaping from Stumm in Greenmantle. Williams owes Buchan a debt for the highly effective and hugely enjoyable sense of rushing adventure and suspense which characterises all eleven of the Valentine Williams spy stories.

This excitement in the pace of the narrative was of course not exclusive to Buchan's novels, but he had made it peculiarly his

own, enhanced with scholarship and written with a journalist's eye for prose to be absorbed fast with full effect. While Williams was the first post-War thriller writer to draw from Buchan, who had himself been drawing on earlier models, the Hannay novels were the prototypes for many subsequent 'masters' of the thriller. Despite this, Buchan's name was accepted as a byword for thriller standards, and, more damagingly, the moral attitudes of the 'standard' thriller of 'Sapper' and Yates were universally accepted to be those of the Buchan thriller, which they were not. It is usually forgotten, if not known at all, that Buchan's thrillers were a small part of his literary output; he never intended The Thirty-Nine Steps to be anything other than an exercise in relaxation, and although he was described as a writer of thrillers, he was more interested in what he called his 'serious books', as he wrote in his autobiography, Memory Hold-The-Door (1940).

The books had a wide sale...and I always felt a little ashamed that profit should accrue from what had given me so much amusement. I had no purpose in writing except to please myself...Besides these forthright tales of adventure I was busy with a very different kind of romance...over which I took a great deal of pains, and which seems to me the most successful of my attempts at imaginative creation. Being equally sensitive to the spells of time and of space, to a tract of years and a tract of landscape, I tried to discover the historical moment which best interpreted the ethos of a particular countryside...These were serious books and they must have puzzled many of the readers who were eager to follow the doings of Richard Hannay and Dickson McCunn.

(92)

Seeing Buchan's thrillers in the context of his other fiction, and with due attention to his biographies, his histories and his

scholarly classicism, has to be borne in mind when examining even the most frivolous of the 'shockers' by which he first made his name. The great change in 1915, the eruption of The Thirty-Nine Steps onto the wartime readership, and Buchan's subsequent influence on the development of the thriller, have great retrospective importance when examined from the perspective of, say, his historical masterpiece Witch Wood (1927), or from the last of the Hannay novels, The Island of Sheep (1936).

This chapter has examined the 1915 change only in its first manifestation of The Thirty-Nine Steps, and the effect that that novel had on the genre of the thriller. In later chapters I shall go on to examine other aspects of The Thirty-Nine Steps, of Buchan's writing, his narration and use of characters, his identity as a Scottish writer and his approach to the portrayal of women. All these aspects have a bearing on the changes in Buchan's fiction after 1915, and I will be returning to this theme throughout this thesis.

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(1) Figures from Robert Blanchard, The First Editions of John Buchan: A Collector's Bibliography (Hamden, Connecticut, 1981), and from the National Library of Scotland, Blackwoods MSS, Acc. 5643, F11. See also Appendix (1).

(2) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan (London 1965, 1985 Oxford University Press), p.294, and from Blanchard, The First Editions of John Buchan, op.cit.

(3) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, op.cit., p.293.

(4) Buchan's 1910 novel Prester John first appeared in the boys' magazine The Captain in the April to September issues of that year, but it was presented by the magazine as a subtly different kind of story. As David Daniell has pointed out in his essay 'Buchan and the popular literature of Imperialism' (Literature and Imperialism, Roehampton 1983, edited by Gilbert Bart-Moore, pp.113-34), the story:

which owes a great deal not only to Buchan's African journeys but also to his understanding of seventeenth-century religious affairs in the Civil War in Britain, and all the material he was collecting as scholar and historian as background to his books on Montrose and Cromwell, and the novel Witch Wood...

(p.131)

was clearly altered by the editorial slant of The Captain. The emphasis in the original title was changed from the mystical elements of 'Prester John' to the more militaristic 'The Black General', with a wholly new subtitle - 'A Tale of Adventure in the Transvaal'. The Stevensonian echoes in Buchan's hero are reduced to the single-levelled description of 'a sturdy young Scotsman' (The Captain, vol 23, no.134, p.106), clearly focusing on the heroic elements suitable for an unsophisticated readership expectant of jingoism in their entertainment. The fault for this change of emphasis partly lies in the synopses at the beginning of each of the five instalments, where the most obvious alterations take place. Here, Laputa is described as a 'Kaffir missionary' (he is a minister), David's bonds are severed by 'a friendly native' (actually one of Arcoll's officers), and while the illustrations (by George Soper) are relatively inoffensive, the black Laputa is portrayed as a kind of dark Caucasian, remarkably similar to the later Clinton Pettee illustrations of Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan Of The Apes, to be published in the All-Story Weekly in October 1912. The other black characters portrayed are standard negroes of the period, pointing up the implication that since Laputa is a sympathetic character, he cannot be allowed to be drawn as a 'real' negro.

(5) Guildhall Library, Hodder & Stoughton MSS, no. 16,317, vol. 7.

(6) *ibid.*

(7) Greenmantle (1916) was serialised in Land and Water from July 6 to November 9, 1916 (Blanchard, The First Editions of John Buchan op.cit., p.34); Mr Standfast (1919) appeared in The Popular Magazine on January 7 & 20, and February 7 & 20, 1919 (*ibid.*, p.42); and The Path of the King (1921) appeared in Outward Bound from October 1920 to October 1921 (*ibid.*, pp.45-6).

(8) John Buchan, quoted in Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, op.cit., pp.177-8. E. Phillips Oppenheim (1866-1946) was a prolific writer of glamorous romances in the first half of this century, an extremely popular author whose blend of extravagant plots and 'high society' intrigue attracted the devotion of the masses in the enormous sales of his books. By his seventieth year, Oppenheim had published 105 novels and 35 volumes of short stories and articles. In his lifetime he published approximately 13 million words, and translations of his novels exist in 13 different languages. His novels were sold as serials to American and British magazines and periodicals, and he sold the rights to many foreign publishing houses. Read today, the books are redolent of class distinction and have ludicrous plots. The quality of writing is very uneven, ranging from the mediocre to the downright formulaic, but the books still have a certain attraction. One of the most successful of Oppenheim's best-sellers, The Mysterious Mr Sabin (1898) is an example of the 'spy-fever' novel that existed during the period 1890-1914, the most respectable example of this sub-genre, from a literary point of view, being Erskine Childers' The Riddle of the Sands (1903).

Buchan was a great admirer of Oppenheim's 'shockers', and despite the contempt which was held by 'serious' literature enthusiasts for the kind of mass-produced romance which Oppenheim specialised in, Buchan felt that Oppenheim's lurid and far-fetched romances were the true popular novels of their day, and that Oppenheim's example was one from which to profit.

(9) Three recent and influential writers on the thriller have expressed this view, either tacitly or explicitly. Colin Watson, in Snobbery With Violence (London 1971) uses comparison by association.

Yet there was poor old 'Sapper' for one, sending forth his fantasy alter ego to smash that conspiracy of foreigners and Jews that so obviously haunted his imagination; while John Buchan, afflicted by the notion that the world's secret rulers were epitomized [sic] by "a little white-faced Jew in a bathchair with an eye like a rattlesnake..."

(p.43)

Julian Symons, in Bloody Murder: From the Detective Story to the Crime Novel (London 1972), discusses the role of the spy.

For Buchan, Oppenheim, 'Sapper' - in fact for all spy

writers before Maugham and Ambler - the moral problem involved in spying was thus easily solved.

(p.217)

Michael Denning, in Cover Stories: Narrative and Ideology in the British Spy Thriller (London 1987), elides Buchan and 'Sapper' three times.

For just as the "man who could hood his eyes like a hawk" lies behind the myriad villains of Buchan, and as Carl Peterson, master-criminal, lies behind the many sparring partners of Bull-dog Drummond in the tales of Sapper [sic]

(p.73)

The figure of the Great Game for spying and international intrigue comes in a heroic version in the early thrillers of Buchan and Sapper [sic]...

(p.97)

...in striking contrast to the clubland thrillers of Buchan, Sapper [sic], Dornford Yates and Leslie Charteris...

(p.103)

(10) "Prester John was written as a boy's book; Salute To Adventurers might be called a grown-up boy's book", Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, p.270.

(11) The Return of Sherlock Holmes was a collection of short Sherlock Holmes stories including 'The Empty House', in which Conan Doyle had brought Holmes back from the dead - he had been killed off in 'The Final Problem', published in the Strand Magazine and Colliers Magazine in 1893. The Return Of Sherlock Holmes was originally published in 1905 by George Newnes and reprinted in 1913 as part of a cheap series.

(12) 'Onlooker', 'Books and the War', The Bookman, vol 50, no.289 (October 1915), pp.2-4 (p.13).

(13) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, op.cit., pp. 206-7.

(14) Stephen Graham, A Private in the Guards (London 1919).

(15) Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory (London 1975), p.157.

(16) Denis Winter, Death's Men: Soldiers of the Great War, (London 1978), p.101.

(17) Philip Gosse, Memoirs of a Camp Follower (London 1934), p.51.

(18) Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory, op.cit., p.164.

(19) H.G. Wells, Mr Britling Sees It Through, (London 1916, 1936

Odhams Press), p.236.

(20) Stephen Graham, A Private in the Guards, op.cit., p.195.

(21) Ivor Gurney - War Letters, edited by R.R.R. Thornton (London 1980), p.30.

(22) The Anvil of War: Letters between F.S. Oliver and his brother, edited by Stephen Gwynn (London 1936), p.182.

(23) Christian Creswell Carver, privately printed (London 1920), p.339.

(24) H.G. Wells, Mr Britling Sees It Through, op.cit., pp.236-7.

(25) see footnote (12).

(26) John Buchan, 'The Purpose of the War', cited as a new book in The Contemporary Review, vol 110, (August 1916), p.272.

(27) The Bookman Christmas Supplement, vol 49, no.291 (December 1915), p.73.

(28) C.E. Lawrence, 'Buchan and Buccaneers', The Bookman, vol 49, no.288 (September 1915), pp.173-4 (p.174).

(29) David Hodge, 'Greenmantle', The Bookman, vol 51, no.302 (November 1916), p.51.

(30) Christopher Harvie, 'War Fever on the High Road', Times Higher Education Supplement, 5 August 1988, p.11.

(31) Such a definition obviously applies to the fighting soldiers, but it could apply to any war worker, or person involved in demanding work in conditions which they wanted to forget in their infrequent off-hours. The memoirs and semi-autobiographical novels of the First World War give convincing detail of the exhaustion of a munitions worker or an off-duty nurse, and of the tension of the middle-aged and elderly citizens unable to be directly involved in the war effort. Everyday life during the war was a dragging existence, constantly waiting for news, bad and good, and at the same time a frenzied rush, for work, time off, amusement, relief from pressure, food, rest, and all the normal components of everyday life, speeded up and made hideous with worry and tension. It is not surprising that the need for escape was so intense, and popular novels provided this to some extent at the cheaper end of the literary market.

(32) John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps (London 1915, 1956 Penguin), p.13.

(33) J.A. Paterson & W.M. Russell Paterson, 'The Thirty Nine Steps: Thoughts and suggestions on Richard Hannay's travels through Southern Scotland', The John Buchan Journal, no.7 (Winter 1987), pp.14-19; and Christopher Harvie, 'War Fever on the High Road', *op.cit.*

(34) John Buchan, 'Literature and Topography', Homilies and Recreations, (London 1926), pp.181-206 (pp.204-5).

(35) private letter from Lord Rosebery to Susan Buchan, 10 May 1926, held in the NLS, Blackwood's MSS, Acc. 6975 (13).

(36) John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps, *op.cit.*, p.29.

(37) Lars Ole Sauerberg, Secret Agents In Fiction (London 1984), p.26, quoting and translating from Jens Peter Becker, *Der englische Spionageroman; Historische Entwicklung, Thematik literarische, Form* (Munchen 1973), p.55.

(38) 'The first novel about the war - if there has been another I have not come across it - is Joseph Keating's Tipperary Tommy, a stirring, vigorously written romance with an attractive ne'er-do-well hero who answers his country's call, and plays the man in gallant fashion during the great retreat from Mons. A capital tale of love and hard fighting'; in 'About Books', The Bookman, 48, no.283 (April 1915), p.15.

(39) The basic premiss of 'spy-fever' was that England (and by implication Scotland, Ireland and Wales) was liable to invasion at any time by hostile forces (most often from Germany), and, more importantly, was completely unprepared for this. Erskine Childers' The Riddle of the Sands (1903) was one of the most famous examples of this craze, and apparently had some real effect in the War Office - see Geoffrey Household's 1978 Foreword to the Penguin The Riddle of the Sands. Other popular writers, notably the prolific William Le Queux and E. Phillips Oppenheim, churned out invasion literature to a formula, sometimes with surprisingly advanced technical analyses of the invasion question, in books such as Le Queux's The Great War in England (1894) and Oppenheim's The Mysterious Mr Eabin (1898). Edgar Wallace used the fad for pure melodramatic romance in Private Selby (1912), and P.G. Wodehouse satirised the genre in The Swoop! or, How Clarence Saved England. A Tale of the Great Invasion (1909), which featured a plucky Boy Scout defeating the simultaneous invasion of Britain by nine enemy nations. It has been calculated that between the end of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, and the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, 'over 60 invasion narratives dealing with a fictitious future war were published as pamphlets or books' - see Cecil Eby, The Road To Armageddon: The Martial Spirit in English Popular Literature 1870-1914 (London 1987), p.11. In these 60, Germany starred as the enemy nation in question 41 times. See also

Christopher Andrew, Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community (London 1985), pp.1-85.

(40) John Buchan, The Thirty Nine Steps, op.cit., p.13.

(41) Andrew Boyle, The Riddle of Erskine Childers, (London 1977), p.110.

(42) *ibid*, p.56.

(43) Kate Macdonald, 'Who was Richard Hannay: A Search For the Source', in The John Buchan Journal, no.7 (1985), pp.9-14.

(44) The word 'thriller' is first recorded by the Oxford English Dictionary in 1889, with 'shocker' preceding it by a few years in 1886. For twentieth-century usage it is generally accepted that the first recorded appearances of words can be assumed to be 20 years later than their actual first appearance.

(45) John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps, op.cit., p.7.

(46) Lars Ole Sauerberg, Secret Agents in Fiction, op.cit., pp.9-10.

(47) Oxford English Dictionary, second edition (Oxford 1989).

(48) The Cambridge Guide to Literature in English, edited by Ian Ousby (London 1988), p.887.

(49) Lars Ole Sauerberg, Secret Agents in Fiction, op. cit., p.243.

(50) Edgar Wallace, The Lone House Mystery (London 1929), outer back cover 'blurb'.

(51) George Grella, 'James Bond: Culture Hero', The New Republic, vol 150, no.22 (30 May 1964), pp.17-20 (p.111).

(52) Valentine Williams, The World Of Action (London 1938), p.456.

(53) Willard Huntingdon Wright, 'The Great Detective Stories' (1927), in The Art of the Mystery Story, edited by Howard Haycraft (New York 1947), pp.33-70 (p.35).

(54) W.H. Auden, 'The Guilty Vicarage', The Dyer's Hand and Other Essays (London 1948), pp.146-158 (p.147).

(55) Cyril Hare, 'The Classic Form', Crime In Good Company, edited by M. Gilbert (London 1959), pp.55-84 (pp.57-8).

(56) LeRoy Panek, Watteau's Shepherds: The Detective Novel In Britain 1914-1940 (Bowling Green, Ohio, 1979), p.11.

(57) *ibid*, p.12.

(58) Nancy Mitford, Christmas Pudding (1932), in Pudding and Pie: An Anthology (London 1986), pp.175-357 (p.193).

(59) Valentine Williams, The World of Action, *op.cit.*, p.330.

(60) National Library of Scotland, Acc.9758, no.60.

(61) Frank Swinnerton, The Georgian Literary Scene (London 1935, 1938 J.M. Dent & Sons), p.317.

(62) Jack Adrian, Introduction to Edgar Wallace, The Four Just Men (London 1905, 1985 J.M. Dent & Sons), pp. vii-xvi (p.xv).

(63) *ibid*, p.xiv.

(64) Cecil Eby, The Road to Armageddon, *op.cit.*, p.11.

(65) It is noticeable that women characters only received an equality of treatment in the thriller once the detective novel had evolved after the end of the First World War. Then it was possible for the mental detective powers of male or female characters to be equally weak or strong, as was appropriate in this more intellectually demanding sub-genre, for the characters and their authors, if not for all the readership. Women detectives were rather thicker on the ground than the exact female equivalent of the thriller hero, since in the thriller the women were generally either victims or unnecessary 'emotional baggage' (Ian Fleming, Casino Royale, (London 1955) p.33. See also Patricia Craig and Mary Cadogan, The Lady Investigates: Women Detectives and spies in fiction (London 1981, 1986 Oxford University Press).

(66) dedication to Thomas Arthur Nelson in John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps, *op.cit.*, p.7.

(67) William Buchan, John Buchan: A Memoir (London 1982, 1985 Harrap Ltd), p.137.

(68) Valentine Williams, The World of Action, *op.cit.*, p.5.

(69) The others were The Half-Hearted (1900), Prester John (1910), The Thirty-Nine Steps (1915), Greenmantle (1916), Mr Standfast (1919), The Courts of the Morning (1929), and A Prince of the Captivity (1933). Castle Gay (1930) and The House of the Four Winds (1935) contain espionage elements, but these episodes do not take place in a time of war or for war-related reasons.

(70) LeRoy Panek, The Special Branch: The British Spy Novel 1890-1980 (Bowling Green, Ohio, 1981), p.20.

(71) Oppenheim's The Secret is a fairly standard offering in the manner of Oppenheim's 'spy-fever' novels, with the usual Oppenheim touches - a 'fascinating' love interest, the gentleman hero, the international settings, and the shadowy network of evil geniuses against whom the hero pits his heroism and desperate determination - not his wits; the triumph of Oppenheim's heroes depended upon supremely stupid villains rather than their own intelligence. The Secret (1907) also shares several important elements with the opening episode in The Thirty-Nine Steps; a key passage with The Three Hostages (1924); a significant plot premiss with Greenmantle (1916); and a heroine whose actions and justification are not dissimilar to those of Mary Lamington in Mr Standfast (1919).

For The Thirty-Nine Steps and The Secret, both heroes spend a similar evening alone at a music-hall after dinner, and then return to their rooms/hotel. Both are approached by spies in immediate danger of assassination, and are later to take on the burden of the spies' work upon themselves, drawing the fire of the enemy agents and the British authorities. In The Thirty-Nine Steps, this plot development is most important, since it precipitates later events which form the rest of the story.

With The Secret and The Three Hostages, Buchan makes use of the same, admittedly fairly universal, images as did Oppenheim, seventeen years earlier, when the heroes realise that their lives are on the brink of change. Both stand in the grounds of their country houses and meditate upon their previous settled lives, and the uncertain disruption of their immediate future.

As a comparison with the later Greenmantle, Oppenheim's spy Guest uses the same disguise of a South African Boer while making his way through wartime Germany, as Hannay was to do in 1916. The heroines of these two writers, Oppenheim's Adele van Hoyt in The Secret and Buchan's Mary Lamington, first appearing in Mr Standfast, are both dazzlingly beautiful, startlingly young, and improbably senior in their countries' secret services. They are both also the heroes' prizes, acting at once as love interest and colleague.

(72) Susan Tweedsmuir and others, John Buchan by his wife and friends (London 1947), p.73.

(73) dedication to Thomas Arthur Nelson, in John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps, op.cit., p.7.

(74) LeRoy Panek, The Special Branch, op.cit., p.42. There is a reference to one of these extremes in Buchan's Mr Standfast (1919) where the 'aesthetic' novel Leprous Souls (possibly a sly reference to Gogol's Dead Souls (1842) which had been reprinted in 1915 by T.F. Unwin) is compared to Hannay's predilection for the English classics.



(75) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, op.cit., p.192. Arthur Balfour, the leading Conservative politician, was a great friend of Buchan's, and shared his taste for Oppenheim's stories.

(76) Michael Denning, Cover Stories: Narrative and Ideology in the British Spy Thriller (London 1987), p.44.

(77) LeRoy Panek, The Special Branch, op.cit., p.65.

(78) David Hodge, 'John Buchan', The Bookman, vol 51, no.301 (October 1916), 7-10 (p.8).

(79) John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps, op.cit., p.28.

(80) *ibid*, p.70.

(81) *ibid*, p.75.

(82) *ibid*, p.28.

(83) *ibid*, p.74.

(84) *ibid*, p.29.

(85) *ibid*, p.30.

(86) *ibid*.

(87) *ibid*, p.68.

(88) John Milton, Paradise Lost (1667, Oxford University Press 1966), Book II, lines 943-5; in John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps, op.cit., p.40.

(89) John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps, op.cit., p.18.

(90) *ibid*, p.41.

(91) The Man With the Clubfoot was published under Valentine Williams' pen-name of Douglas Valentine, an amalgamation of his first name and his brother's. As he was still a serving officer on the book's publication in 1918, the Army required him to adopt a pseudonym as an author (Valentine Williams, The World of Action op.cit., p.341).

(92) John Buchan, Memory Hold-The-Door (London 1940), pp.196-7.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STRANGER IN THE FAMILIAR LAND:

SIR QUIXOTE OF THE MOORS

AND THE THIRTY-NINE STEPS

## THE STRANGER IN THE FAMILIAR LAND

I have already discussed Buchan's creation of a new kind of hero in The Thirty-Nine Steps in chapter one above - here I will examine the role of this hero in The Thirty-Nine Steps and contrast it with Buchan's use of the character of the hero in his first novel, Sir Quixote of the Moors (1895), published twenty years before his first best-seller. Both hero characters, the Sieur de Rohaine in Sir Quixote and Richard Hannay in The Thirty-Nine Steps, play a structural role in the action of their respective stories, focusing and directing the movement of the plot. Where de Rohaine is a hero/protagonist whose feelings and personality change the plot in Sir Quixote, Hannay's actions and his experiences determine the plot in The Thirty-Nine Steps.

Where these two very different protagonists are similar, however, is in Buchan's inversion of the theme of the stranger in the strange land. The reader is introduced to a foreign country, but it is his own, seen through the eyes of these outsider heroes, come to Scotland and fallen into adventure. Some of Buchan's other pre-1915 fiction holds elements of the theme of the stranger - The Half-Hearted (1900) and Prester John (1910) have Buchan heroes going out into strange lands - but only in Sir Quixote and The Thirty-Nine Steps is there a pivotal crisis, brought about by the hero's own actions, and which determines the ending of the story.

Sir Quixote of the Moors

Buchan's first novel, Sir Quixote of the Moors (1895), is a little-known book, a very early work, and one which Buchan himself never wanted reprinted (1). The story is of the journey of a seventeenth-century French gentleman through Scotland, an example of 'that type of man whose life is guided by the conception of honour' (2), and who has his honour tested in both friendship and love, overcoming both hazards. The central role, that of a foreigner come to Scotland and viewing it with a stranger's eyes, recurs in The Thirty-Nine Steps (1915), which also shares a strong dominance in the structure of the plot in the actions of the hero/protagonist/narrator. Sir Quixote is set in the 1680s, distancing the readers from the atmosphere of the story and the issues it addresses, whereas The Thirty-Nine Steps confronts the reader with a man being chased, as if in a foreign country, in twentieth-century Scotland. In The Thirty-Nine Steps Buchan has planned the actions of his hero/narrator so tightly that they and their consequences reach forward to the plot's eventual resolution from the beginning of the narrative. The cohesive quality of Buchan's forward planning, is strongly indicative of the complete control Buchan had over the construction of his narratives.

In Sir Quixote, the central premiss that the hero/narrator, the Sieur de Rohaine, is a foreigner, an outsider and a stranger, is vital to the plot. His essential foreign-ness is compounded

by his Roman Catholicism, in a Scotland undergoing a violent revolution between rival Protestant factions, and by the central force of his character, his status as a gentleman and his adherence to the concept of a gentleman's honour.

The stranger in the familiar land

This theme, used commonly in novels of adventure or journeying, is a vehicle to describe a foreign country through the eyes and experiences of a narrator from the reader's own situation, as a character to which the reader can relate. Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1719) and Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels (1726) had also used the formula of adventure on strange islands (as old as Homer, after all), and later on, the nineteenth-century adventure novels The Swiss Family Robinson (1814) by Johann Wyss, and The Coral Island (1857) and The Gorilla Hunters (1861), by R.M. Ballantyne, used the same premiss. These victims of shipwreck (or in the case of The Gorilla Hunters, an African safari) had adventures and explored their exotic new habitat, the stuff of the story being the adventures and the descriptions of the islands of shipwreck.

The particular vein which Buchan modified was that in which a narrator gets caught up in events in a country not his own, and his objectivity (as a foreigner) towards the events of the plot has a direct bearing on the turnings of that plot. Buchan inverted this, first in the plot of Sir Quixote of the Moors (1895) and then, many years later, in The Thirty-Nine Steps.

Scottish religious politics

Sir Quixote is set in the 'Killing Time' of late seventeenth-century Scotland, when the Covenanters were demanding a Protestant state and a Presbyterian rule as an alternative to the Catholic monarch, James II, brother of Charles II. The dragoons of the government hunted down recalcitrant Protestants throughout Scotland, where the dissent was most widespread, and also in areas of England, reserving especial persecution for the field preachers, the clergy who adhered to the strict doctrine of Calvinism and rejected any form of state control or authority over the church, arguing rather that it should be the church which had a controlling say in the doings of the state. Banned from their usual pulpits, these preachers began taking their sermons and services to the fields and open spaces where the people could follow them. Once widespread persecution had begun, large communities of these preachers and their followers collected together as outlaws; villages and towns were emptied of their male population, either through flight, or by being taken by the government forces. It was a most violent and tragically unjust period in Scottish history, and both sides shared in the brutality (3).

Buchan's historical approach

By focusing on this internally controversial aspect of Scottish history, Buchan is inviting comment. His hero is expected to provide observations and explain to the reader the different

points of view which make up the situation, social, political and otherwise. This particular kind of historical novel is also expected to be an illustration of the period in which it is set. Buchan illustrates the torment of the Covenantee years by using as narrator a man unwilling to get involved in 'normal' activities. This was not just from his hero's distaste at the prospect of slaughtering peasants, which a gentleman in his position might be expected to view as a not unusual activity, but from ordinary disinterest, an unwillingness to get involved in the affairs of Scotland, since his only acquaintance in the country had turned out to hold views incompatible with his own. Precisely why de Rohaine is turned aside from this initial intent is because of his otherness, and his views so un-natural to this alien environment.

The manner in which Buchan illustrates the period is subtle and by default. That is to say another, more conventional, historical account of this period might have had the hero riding cheerfully with his host to harry the recusants and then proceed to Edinburgh, always following the heart of the crisis and focusing on typical actions and events of the times. Buchan used this approach in his third novel, A Lost Lady of Old Years (1899), where his hero is made to cling tightly to the fortunes of the remnant of the Jacobite cause after Culloden, thus taking the reader along with him, so to speak, at the tail of great events in history. Instead of using this

straightforward approach to the illustration of history in Sir Quixote, Buchan makes use of the particular qualities of his alien hero to direct him into different aspects and turns of the plot, propelled by the consequences of his actions.

#### Setting the scene

De Rohaine arrives in Scotland on a visit to Quentin Kennedy, an old acquaintance, partly for friendship and a desire to visit his friend's home, but also as a retrenching exercise as a result of recent extravagance. Buchan hints that the Sieur is rather disdainful and perhaps doubtful that the trip to Scotland will be in any way enjoyable; it is certainly implied as a second-best option. At first the prospect is favourable.

'Twas in midsummer when I landed, and the place looked not so bare as I had feared, as I rode along between green meadows to my destination.

(4)

The company at Quentin Kennedy's house was not so much to the taste of the narrator, and his eyes were opened as to the nature of the Scots gentlemen staying there.

Yet there was that I liked not among the fellows who came thither, - nay, even in my friend himself. We have a proverb in France that the devil when he spoils a German in the making turns him into a Scot, and for certain there was much boorishness among them, which to my mind sits ill on gentlemen. They would jest at one another till I thought that in a twinkling swords would be out, and lo! I soon found that 'twas but done for sport, and with no evil intent. They were clownish in their understanding, little recking of the feelings of a man of honour, but quick to grow fierce on some tittle of provocation which another would scarce notice. Indeed, 'tis my belief that one of this nation is best in his youth, for Kennedy, whom I well remembered as a man of courage and breeding, had grown grosser and more sottish with his years, till I was fain to



ask where was my friend of the past.

(5)

The essential point here is that Buchan is using the standpoint of a civilised, if rather finicky, European gentleman to convey the relative brutality and clumsiness of the Scots gentry of the period (6). If a Scotsman had been the narrator, there would not have been the sense of disdain and puzzled incomprehension that is conveyed with Buchan's use of the words 'clownish' and 'some tittle of provocation'. As a Frenchman, de Rohaine's own culture provides a superior model against which the manners and the behaviour of the Scots contrast unfavourably. As I shall go on to show, Buchan's other alien hero, Hannay, is contrasted as a rough, 'natural' man of action, most favourably against the socialite townsman Marmaduke Jopley: the alien foreigner coming off better (in the eyes of the reader) than the native Briton, indeed, Englishman.

This contrasting distinction is continued in the incident of 'redding the marches' (7), where Kennedy provides sport for his guests in flushing out a group of Covenanters. From initial pleasure, 'overjoyed that the hard drinking and idleness were at an end, and that the rigours of warfare lay before me', de Rohaine's feelings turn from 'glad and hopeful' to 'disappointment', he grows 'sick of the work' and arrives at the rendezvous 'sullenly and hot at heart'. The mood increases to 'a great fit of loathing' when the work is fighting against 'women and children and unarmed yokels', while his companions

'butchered like Cossacks more than Christians'. The murder of a shepherd in front of his wife and children while their cottage was burning, 'speaking naught to them but foul-mouthed reproaches and jabber about some creed which was strange to me' (8) was the final straw, and de Rohaine leaves Kennedy's company there and then, after a sharp disagreement with his host.

#### Initial results of conflict

Here Buchan has introduced the theme of religious strife, but from an unusual angle. De Rohaine is an unwilling participant in what he had assumed was a skirmish against outlaws or thieves, but which was in reality a small part of the political and religious division which afflicted Scotland at this period. The religious element is of paramount importance to those concerned with that struggle - it was the single issue over which factions were fighting, yet de Rohaine's only experience of it is in the soldiers' abuse of their victims. It has not yet assumed the significance it reaches later in the story.

This incident, and the implications from what the reader has already seen of de Rohaine's character induce him into going off into the wilds and trying to make his way back to France. The only reason given for de Rohaine's revulsion was that these activities were not, as he saw it, compatible with the conduct of a gentleman, and thence the rift occurred. Here the significance of de Rohaine's earlier comments about the

boorishness of his companions assumes retrospective importance; Buchan had prepared the way for this rift and de Rohaine's ensuing departure by emphasising the different nature of Scots' and European manners in using de Rohaine's European standards as a measure of the acceptable.

De Rohaine's decision to leave Kennedy's party precipitates the rest of the story, and Kennedy's part in it is nearly over. The value of this experience is made clear later on, as an extra assurance of de Rohaine's worth in the eyes of the recusant Ephraim Lambert, but as yet de Rohaine's own religion and the irony of his situation in the light of it has not been put to any use. Buchan is reserving this as added piquancy for a later purpose.

Miserable impressions confirmed

Once de Rohaine leaves Kennedy and goes his own way, getting lost in the wilds of the western Borders, the story returns to its original chronology, since it was at this point that the book began, introducing the Kennedy episode only as a flashback. Towards the end of this first chapter, de Rohaine's situation as a foreigner in Scotland leads him to make comparisons with Scotland and his own country, with, once again, Scotland coming off the worse, despite his initial, favourable impressions.

My race is a hardy stock, used to much hardships and rough fare, but in this inclement land my heart failed me wholly and I grew sick and giddy, what with the famishing and the cold rain. For, though 'twas late August, the month of harvest and fruit-time in my own fair land, it seemed more

like winter...A pretty change, thought I, from the gardens of Versailles and the trim streets of Paris to this surly land; and sad it was to see my cloak, meant for no rougher breeze than the gentle South, tossed and scattered by a grim wind.

(9)

This episode of misery ends with the almost miraculous discovery of an inn, but not a safe haven, since in the midst of the customary hospitality and shelter de Rohaine barely escapes attempted murder and robbery, saved only by the better feelings of the man standing sentry outside, '...a man of birth...own cousin to the Maxwells o' Drurie' (10). This extra burden of disappointment and outrage is so placed in the narrative and the progress of the plot as to give yet one more bad Scottish experience for de Rohaine to base his feelings of malediction on. The episode of the inn is also the first instance of de Rohaine experiencing first-hand the Calvinist fanaticism that was splitting the country (11). His immediate reaction is that the speaker is a madman but at the same time he has a slightly uneasy recollection of the more familiar (to him) persecuted French Protestants and of their 'wild deeds' (12). The incident is only a foretaste, and the ranting of Scriptural precedent from the innkeeper has the primary purpose only of establishing the speaker as untrustworthy and unbalanced, potentially dangerous and a reinforcement of the initial impressions of the hero.

### Religion

This episode also fulfills the same role as the earlier incident

in chapter 1 of the novel, where de Rohaine recognises boorishness in Kennedy's companions, and prepares the reader for the eventual cruelty and ungentlemanly conduct of Kennedy's party. The inn-keeper's Biblical recital is a forerunner of the talk of Ephraim Lambert and Henry Semple at Lindean, and the episode of de Rohaine's departure from Kennedy's party acts as an assurance of his worth to the two Covenanters; the minister Lambert declares him to be 'of the upright in heart' and Semple calls him 'a gentleman and a man of feeling' (13). De Rohaine's own religion is examined, and here another facet of his alien character, foreign to Scotland, is explored.

De Rohaine's Catholicism is of no real importance to him, certainly by no means as integral a part of his life as their Protestantism is to Lambert and Semple. Buchan has used the incident of Kennedy's persecution, indeed planted it expressly for this purpose, to reinforce the minister's natural obligations of hospitality into a genuine fellow feeling. The irony that de Rohaine is of the same religion as the enemies of the minister, in a situation where a man's religion was all that mattered when decisions for taking sides were concerned, is tempered by de Rohaine being a lukewarm Catholic, at once ripe for conversion in the eyes of the minister; '... but I yearn to see you of a better way of thinking. Mayhap I may yet show you your errors?' (14); and for being genuinely not interested in making strife for the sake of religion. Undoubtedly there were

men in Scotland at this period who were also unconcerned with the strength of their spiritual beliefs, but so far in the story Buchan has only depicted men as victims of religious war, or whole-heartedly at one with one side or the other for the sake of their religion, or interested in fighting for its own sake, with the religious elements as an excuse. De Rohaine's voice is the first in the narrative to represent a point of view without war or religion as its first subject.

The beginning of the idyll

De Rohaine's arrival at Lindean marks the second half of the book, an uneven half, with six out of ten chapters still to go. The setting is deliberately idyllic. Buchan is producing a picture of peace, comfort and domestic harmony to make a dramatic contrast both with de Rohaine's own recent troubles and with the dissension and strife in the outside world. The troubles and dissension both return, however, in the shape of the household's native Calvinism, expressed strongly and with fanatical devotion by the minister and Henry Semple, but conspicuously unexpressed by Anne, the daughter of the house. Buchan presents her as a dutiful daughter and obedient girl, doing her father's will with no apparent volition of her own.

By this omission it can be deduced that Anne is untainted by the Presbyterian excesses of belief or action in the way that the men of the house were. In this she resembles de Rohaine in a lukewarm approach to inherited religious beliefs. As I will go

on to show in chapter six below, 'Women in the fiction of John Buchan', Anne is a cipher, a personality wholly dominated by what her menfolk wish her to be or do. Yet when she and de Rohaine are left in the house together, after the escape of Lambert and Semple to the hills, she is free to express herself without her habitual restraint. It is perhaps significant that she still seems to have little desire of her own: 'she played no chess...reading she cared little for, and but for her embroidery work I know not what she would have set her hand to.' (15). She does not speak of her fiance at all; Buchan's implications are that she is modest and that she is beginning to fall in love with de Rohaine, forgetting Semple completely (chapter 6). The only natural feelings or direction that Anne has, appear to be domestic, under the influence of her father and with no horizon further than their own home. Once de Rohaine, the alien element and foreign body, is introduced to this enclosed environment, Anne begins to change under the outside influence and the main course of the plot is set in motion.

#### Anne's transformation

Precisely because de Rohaine is alien, any new thing he introduces to the house - stories, songs or music - will affect Anne profoundly, as a thing so far completely outside her experience. Her quality of being easily dominated and influenced, habitual or inherited, manifests itself in her response to the new things de Rohaine shows her. He sings to

her, and she immediately realises enjoyment and pleasure in music.

She had been bred among moorland solitudes and her sole companions had been solemn praying folk; yet to my wonder I found in her a nature loving gaiety and mirth, songs and bright colours - a grace which her grave deportment did but the more set off.

(16)

This reaction in Anne is the obvious response of one who has led an unnaturally repressed existence on being introduced to the normal pleasures of an ordinary life, yet I feel it is significant that it is de Rohaine's character, personality and background which dictate the exact dilemma that he and Anne are gradually drawn into. In introducing Anne, an almost completely inexperienced and therefore unprejudiced personality, to things in which he finds pleasure, de Rohaine is educating her in his own preferences. 'From this hour I may date the beginning of the better understanding - I might almost call it friendship - between the two of us' (17). Like draws to like, and as Anne is introduced to more facets of a cheerful and civilised European life, the more like de Rohaine she becomes, and the more dependent on him and more focused on him she becomes. The obvious outcome is that they will fall in love and wish only to be together, and this is where the pivotal crisis is seen to be attached to the first crisis of the story; both are dependent on de Rohaine's own character for their initiation and inescapable conclusion.



The effects of de Rohaine

Because de Rohaine was a European gentleman, he abandoned the low standards of Kennedy's party, preferring rather to wander on the moors. Because he had shown this revulsion at the ungentlemanly persecution of innocent peasants by anti-Covenant forces, he was doubly welcome in the house of Ephraim Lambert. Because of all de Rohaine had suffered and endured which was barbaric and miserable by his own standards of civilisation on coming to Scotland, he was more than happy to remain in shelter at Lindean. The string of consequences continues. While the Calvinism of his hosts irks him, it also ensures that the men of the house must leave to hide from the soldiers in the hills, and because de Rohaine has accepted their hospitality and also because it is the chivalric thing to do, he agrees to remain at the house to act as Anne's protector. Anne is agreeable to him not only because of her beauty, but for the relative lack of Calvinist cant in her actions which in the minister and her suitor were a source of annoyance and evidence of hypocrisy to de Rohaine.

"...they say that many of the godly find shelter there."

"Many of the godly!"

I turned round sharply, though what there was in the phrase to cause wonder I cannot see. She spoke but as she had heard the men of her house speak; yet the words fell strangely on my ears, for by a curious process of thinking I had already begun to separate the girl from the rest of the folk in the place, and look on her as something nearer in sympathy to myself...to look upon her as a countrywoman of mine.

The crisis

The two draw closer together, and on realising (in chapter 7) that Anne is in love with him, and (in chapter 8) that he is in love with her, de Rohaine is fully aware of his position. At this point, another incident of underlining occurs, when Henry Semple returns to the house from the hills, in a state of madness and with the news that Anne's father is dying from exposure. De Rohaine's disgust at the inhumanity of leaving Anne to her affianced husband is brought to the forefront of the action, and the temptation to complete the process he has begun and remove with Anne to France, since she is now (conventionally) free and unprotected, appears in his mind as a natural conclusion. Balanced against this is the word 'honour', the honour of the gentleman he is, and of which his actions and behaviour are to be nothing less.

Could I ever leave my love for some tawdry honour? *Mille tonnerres*, the thing was not to be dreamed of. I blamed myself for having once admitted the thought. My decision was taken.

(19)

After this firmness of resolution, de Rohaine 'cast myself down upon the bed without undressing, and fell into a profound sleep.' (20) The dream that follows has something of a Biblical, Bunyanesque or Spenserian flavour; full of the images of romance and of Gothic horror. In it, de Rohaine sees his life before him, but a life which corresponds with what his honour sees as the true consequences of his decision to take Anne. His early life is represented with its finest aspects all

at once.

I was an experienced man of the world, versed in warfare and love, taverns and brawls, and yet not one whit jaded, but fresh and hopeful and boylike. 'Twas a very pleasing feeling. I was master of myself. I had all my self-respect. I was a man of unblemished honour, undoubted valour. Then by an odd trick of memory all kinds of associations became linked with it. The old sights and sounds of Rohaine; cocks crowing in the morning; the smell of hay and almond blossom, roses and summer lilies, the sight of green leaves, of fish leaping in the river; the plash of the boat's oars among the water-weeds - all the sensations of childhood came back with extraordinary clarity.

(21)

Memories of his family accompany this, especially his father's injunction to 'go to the devil if we pleased, but go like gentlemen' (22). Honour is associated with the fineness and perfections of life, and this prepares the reader for the dream becoming a foretaste of the results of the action de Rohaine wanted to take, a sub-conscious attack of conscience.

Still dreaming, I was aware that I had deceived a lover and stolen his mistress and made her my bride. I have never felt such acute anguish as I did in that sleep when the thought came upon me. I felt nothing more of pride. All things had left me. All my self-respect was gone like a ragged cloak. All the old dear life was shut out from me by a huge barrier.

(23)

After this dream, a vision of a saint appears, in a passage straight from Romance, where de Rohaine sees again a dead lost love, 'the face of a lady, young, noble, with eyes like the Blessed Mother' (24). The vision itself does not directly address him, but his memories of when he felt constrained from doing what he knew to be wrong, 'fearing the reproof of those grave eyes' (25), are in themselves a reminder that (within the

dream) he had lost all hope of redemption, both from sin and from the consequences of his actions, by his decision to take Anne away.

#### The meaning of honour

In creating this dream, Buchan has used the mode of the Awful Warning, or a motif from classic morality tales where a sinner planning a deed he knows to be wrong is shown the consequences of this in a vision, a set of events so horrible and disastrous that he is instantly deterred and repents, vowing to lead a good life for ever onwards (26). The honour of de Rohaine was discarded for his 'earthy passion' in his original decision, but returns in the dream to show itself as a fine thing, a standard bequeathed by his father by which de Rohaine had attempted to live his past life, shown in its proper context. The dream is a pivotal construct to bring de Rohaine to his senses, to shake him out of his delusions and onto the correct path. It is an added irony that Anne is herself innocent of any designs towards entrapping de Rohaine in this way and besmirching his honour.

At this point in the tale in a classic Romance, she would now be revealed as a witch attempting to enchant the hero from the path of virtue and honour (27). Instead, it is de Rohaine alone who has initiated the sequence of events that brought him and Anne together, and through these actions he leaves Lindean angry and torn, against inclination and desire but stubbornly holding onto the one thing he values more than any other, his honour (28).

Anne is left wounded and vulnerable, through no fault of her own, and her attacker is her chivalric protector. She is abandoned and the story ends on a tragic note, with de Rohaine setting out into the wilds with no hope before him.

Buchan's stranger

Buchan's conception of Sir Quixote was 'a tale which should be a study of temptation and victory set against the grim background of the moor' (29). The plot is tightly dependent on de Rohaine's personality and his beliefs in a gentleman's conduct for its resolution, and has the atmosphere of Greek tragedy, where the climax is inexorable and inescapable, forecast as events happen, looming clearer and more inevitable as possibilities are discounted, one by one. [The vital, if unpalatable, ending was destroyed in the American edition, which altered the closing paragraph, 'making the hero turn back at the end to the girl he was so nobly leaving' (30)1. No incident is wasted or without purpose, and this sparseness of plot material adds to the single-mindedness of the narrative's direction.

Buchan's handling of the inverted theme of this stranger in a familiar land is also carefully efficient, leaving nothing unfinished and with no extraneous material to impede the smoothness of the story. This aspect is underplayed; the delicate irony of the French Catholic protecting the Protestant daughter of a Covenanting recusant from the Government dragoons

is not directly alluded to in the narrative, and even the contrasts of the French eyes seeing Scottish life are merely implicit.

### The Thirty-Nine Steps

In The Thirty-Nine Steps it is the experiences, rather than the beliefs and personality of the hero/narrator, which give impetus and direction to the plot. The narrator, Richard Hannay, has little in his character that can readily be identifiable as a personality - his actions appear to be dictated by what he is rather than who. He certainly has no driving motivation in his life as has de Rohaine.

Hannay's actions are naturally directly contributory to the movement of the plot of The Thirty-Nine Steps, but two of Hannay's actions which are wholly impulsive, unplanned and without forethought, are vital in the plot's eventual resolution, as I shall show, and both concern his meeting with the loathsome socialite, Marmaduke Jopley. Linked to this is the structuring of Buchan's forward planning, of planting elements or actions in the text of the narrative which link the plot together. This enables the momentum to be maintained, and the plot remains firmly coherent, inherently connected from end to end. Overlying all this is Hannay's identity as the stranger in the familiar London, Galloway, and Berkshire of 1914. He is a Colonial in pre-War Britain, looking at the country and people with an outsider's eyes. This particular input can be

identified in the freshness and exuberance of the plot, the sense of a completely new angle on a familiar sight, coming about when Hannay is a hunted man and sheltering in the readers' own territory, in the familiarity of Britain.

### Disillusionment

The story of The Thirty-Nine Steps begins by placing Hannay firmly in a situation in which he is unhappy, wishing that he had not come 'home' to England after all, echoing the feelings of the Sieur de Rohaine at the beginning of Sir Quixote. Instead of enduring a foul Border storm, Hannay is bored, and painfully aware that he does not fit in with or suit London society.

The weather made me liverish, the talk of the ordinary Englishman made me sick, I couldn't get enough exercise, and the amusements of London seemed as flat as soda-water that has been standing in the sun.

(31)

This final metaphor is a fitting one to apply to a man come to London from the Colonies, eager for the legendary delights of civilisation, only to find them less than wonderful and rather stale after a brief acquaintance. The mood of disillusionment common to the beginnings of Sir Quixote and The Thirty-Nine Steps is important in that both protagonists are dissatisfied, and their dissatisfaction leads directly to the first important development in the plot. In Hannay's case, his identity as a Colonial has some bearing on his decision to take Scudder in, as this rather reckless step would be less likely to

have been taken by a conventional Englishman - it needed the unconventionality of a non-English gentleman coupled with the extreme boredom he felt for London and for English life. The fact that Hannay believes Scudder and accepts his story is also directly attributable to his being a Colonial with all his varied past experience, and being rather more used to the type of life Scudder describes than the average Englishman.

By this time I was pretty well convinced that he was going straight with me. It was the wildest sort of narrative, but I had heard in my time many steep tales which had turned out to be true, and I had made a practice of judging the man rather than the story.

(32)

Hannay remains cautious, asking questions to check details, locking Scudder in his room at night, and so on, but these measures for self-protection are already useless. By sheltering Scudder for the four days before his death, Hannay has already implicated himself in the minds of the police for his murder, and in the minds of the enemy for knowing Scudder's secrets. As a direct consequence of being a Colonial Hannay has embroiled himself in the whole predicament by his own actions.

Echoing Sir Quixote, Buchan has reused the idea of a hero's own actions which make his dilemma. Whereas in Sir Quixote the nature of the hero's character was more important in the mechanisms of the plot (which Buchan used again with the character of Lewis in The Half-Hearted), here in The Thirty-Nine Steps Hannay's actions are specifically the reason for the plot. David Crawford in Prester John too was an action-led Buchan



hero, but in Hannay Buchan had gone right back to Sir Quixote for the essential point of self-implication.

The flight north

The next stage of the plot, the series of chases and Hannay's various bolt-holes and disguises, depend upon different aspects of Hannay's character - the experiences from his past. When he realises that he must hide to escape the police and enemy, his first thought is of practicality.

My notion was to get off to some wild district, where my veldcraft would be of some use to me, for I would be like a trapped rat in a city. I considered that Scotland would be best, for my people were Scotch and I could pass anywhere as an ordinary Scotsman...I calculated that it would be less conspicuous to be a Scot, and less in a line with what the police might know of my past.

(33)

Both these elements - his veldcraft and the fact that his family were Scots (also referred to previously in the novel's second paragraph) are directly responsible for Hannay's intention of journeying north, and both come from his past life experience. There are no outside influences in this decision - these only come into the plot in a secondary fashion, such as the milkman, the loafers watching Hannay's flat, the chase to the train, and other descriptive elements. They merely pad out the essential journey from decision A to decision B, from the Portland Place flat to the train heading to Scotland (34).

Once Hannay reaches Scotland and begins the journeying around Dumfries & Galloway, he wanders until the enemy begins to

track him down. Their use of a plane makes him look for shelter, which leads him to the inn in chapter 3. At this stage in the story Buchan is again careful not to relinquish realism. Hannay needs to consider Scudder's book in security, hidden from the enemy, and in obtaining the inn-keeper as an ally, Hannay dazzles him with stories from his past, combined to make a fictitious account of his present situation, and achieves the security of the inn's shelter and the eager help of his host. Once he has decoded Scudder's book Hannay needs to escape from the approaching enemy. A brief spur-of-the-moment decision of recklessness leads him to steal their car, which has two effects. One is to alert his pursuers to his presence in the area, and the other is to bring him, accidentally but completely through his actions in trying to escape from the enemy plane by driving too fast, to Sir Harry.

#### Forward planning

A very important part of the structure of the plot of The Thirty-Nine Steps is its forward planning. The bare bones of the plot are a tight-knit construct of events leading on to others, and provide for yet more in a later part of the story. Hence, at the beginning of the book in chapter 1 when Hannay announces his boredom, and relates to the reader his disgust at the condescension shown him by different parts of London society because of his taint of the Colonies, he is at once preparing the way for the unconventional act of taking Scudder in and

believing his exceptional circumstances, and for a future part of the story, in having some experience of London society where he can have met Jopley. Buchan uses this forward planning to account for many small details; for example, in chapter 2, when Hannay is deciding what sort of disguise to adopt in Scotland, he considers being a German tourist as he is fluent in that language. This is the background information necessary to back up the moment in chapter 6 when the old gentleman speaks in German to one of his followers, and Hannay is able to understand him.

More significantly, in the main part of the plot, Hannay's encounter with Sir Harry and his decision to trust him is important because Buchan needs to arrange a credible safe haven for Hannay in London, where the crisis of the final plot unravelling will take place. Sir Harry leads to Bullivant, who will be Hannay's protector and ally in the final stages of the story, representing the weight and approval of Authority. Connected with this foregrounding linkage is Hannay's previous encounter with the enemy, enabling him to recognise and be recognised by them. His numerous close brushes with the enemy are good storytelling but have a more vital structural purpose, as when Hannay appears in Bullivant's town house and accidentally encounters the false First Sea Lord in the hall, the vital fact which precipitates the final climax and the running to ground of the enemy is not only that Hannay must be

able to recognise the enemy in Trafalgar Lodge, but that they must recognise him.

I had never seen the great man before, and he had never seen me. But in that fraction of time something sprang into his eyes, and that something was recognition. You can't mistake it. It is a flicker, a spark of light, a minute shade of difference which means one thing and one thing only. It came voluntarily, for in a moment it died, and he passed on.

(35)

### Still running

Once he leaves the protection of Sir Harry, Hannay is essentially in the same situation as before, on the run from the enemy and tied to the roads with borrowed transport. The purpose of the Sir Harry episode is to arrange the Bullivant bolt-hole for the future, and as a psychological rest, when Hannay is briefly in complete safety and sharing his burden with a safe listener (36). For the third time in the novel, Hannay is on the run in a narrowing trap, but with very little to hide in.

If you are hemmed in on all sides on a patch of land there is only one chance of escape. You must stay in the patch, and let your enemies search it and not find you. That was good sense, but how on earth was I to escape notice in that table-cloth of a place? I would have buried myself to the neck in mud or lain below water or climbed the tallest tree. But there was not a stick of wood, the bog-holes were little puddles, the stream was a slender trickle. There was nothing but short heather, and bare hill bent, and the white highway.

(37)

Again Hannay puts his experiences to use and finds a way to hide in disguise. This episode, although a tremendous piece of description and delicious suspense while Hannay is the roadman confronting his pursuers, is only a small diversion in the plot

of the whole. Its real purpose is again two-fold: to allow the enemy to see Hannay close up and to be able to recognise him for a future part of the story (forward planning again), and also to allow Hannay to be on the right road to hijack Marmaduke Jopley.

The suspense at this point in The Thirty-Nine Steps is only just beginning, leading towards the climax of the discovery of the secret airfield, again a pivotal climax as was de Rohaine's dream in Sir Quixote.

Hannay's recklessness in hijacking Jopley's car in chapter 5 when it so miraculously appeared on the road, was done on the spur of the moment, as an escape out of the trap his enemies had closed around him. But by revealing himself to Jopley, Hannay gave the police a definite link between the murder and his own disappearance, and the chase resulting from this forced him (quite coincidentally) into the headquarters of the enemy. This is Hannay's first positive identification of the enemy by independent evidence, apart from Scudder's word, and it was brought about by his original recklessness in letting Jopley know who he was.

#### The discovery of the airfield

The next, and most important, occasion where Hannay's experiences and past life are directly concerned with the development of the plot occurs shortly after this encounter, when Hannay is imprisoned in the enemy's house locked in a

cupboard of explosives. He has already said that he has been a mining engineer, so the reader will accept that he can blow his way out of that prison, and Buchan introduces the right amount of verisimilitude by making Hannay unsure about the proportions in which the lentonite should be used. Once escaped, he finds sanctuary on the roof of a dovecot, and while his enemies are searching for him, the pivotal climax of the novel is reached - Hannay discovers the secret airfield, the enemy's reason for being in that part of Scotland and the source of the persistent spotter planes that had shadowed him so relentlessly.

If Hannay had not been an engineer he would not have escaped from the locked store-cupboard, and if he had not been accustomed to thinking logically about the best place to hide in a time of stress, he would not have chosen the dove-cot, the only place from which he could have seen the airstrip. Now that this pivot in the progression of the story has been reached, roles begin to be reversed. Hannay is no longer the hunted, and once he reaches Bullivant he will become the hunter.

#### Approaching the crisis

Having realised that it was now time that he made use of the Bullivant bolt-hole, Hannay proceeds back to the roadman's cottage to retrieve his clothes and the black notebook, and falls ill with malaria for ten days. This apparent waste of time and what might be seen as an inexplicable lull in an otherwise suspenseful narrative can be explained from the point

of view of the plot's structure.

Throughout the story, Buchan has laid great stress on the date June 15, when the visiting Greek premier Karolides was to be assassinated in London by the gang. Hannay left for Scotland with the vague idea of keeping out of the way of his enemies until 'the end of the second week in June. Then I must somehow find a way to get in touch with the Government people and tell them what Scudder had told me' (38). The Sir Harry episode was the organising of a contact with the 'Government people'. By the time Buchan had brought Hannay to the enemy's headquarters and the discovery of the airfield, he had brought the reader to the climax in the story's successive discoveries, and from then on the roles are reversed, with Hannay returning to London and the Establishment, becoming the hunter rather than the hunted.

This was on the eleventh day after Hannay had met Scudder (see Appendix 4), and by the timescale in the book, only June 1 or 2. By putting Hannay to bed with malaria for ten days, as a natural result of poisoning from chemical fumes after the explosion, a day dehydrating in the sun unable to move from the dovecot roof, and some nights in the open afterwards, Buchan is telescoping the action to a manageable level. In accounting for the delay he sticks to his original date of June 15th, and Hannay's past exposure to and propensity for fever is used as the real reason for his collapse, an entirely reasonable one in the circumstances. Despite this apparent hiatus, the suspense and

the speed of the book are maintained, with Hannay journeying down to Artinswell and Bullivant on the 22nd day. There is a full programme of events ahead of him, beginning with Karolides' assassination the very evening Hannay arrives in the heart of the Establishment.

By bringing forward the killing to June 13th, 2 days earlier than the ostensible date for this crisis, June 15th, Buchan is emphasising the increased tension between the two opposing sides, now that Hannay, with his vital discoveries, has joined forces with the government and police.

When Bullivant is reading Scudder's notebook, he is dubious about many of his conclusions, putting them down to Scudder's own obsessions (39), including the important information about the gang of the Black Stone. The death of Karolides is a confirmation and a justification of the activities of both Scudder and Hannay - Bullivant believes them both fully. Hannay's contribution is to be consistently on the spot, brought by the effects of his own experiences on the action of the plot.

#### The hunters hunted

Because Bullivant believes Hannay, he feels free to go about London, and in this way accidentally bumps into Jopley again, the result of the forward planning in chapter 5. On his way back to Bullivant's house in Queen Anne's Gate under the impulse of 'an abominable restlessness' (40), Hannay meets Jopley again,



accidentally in the street, and in his continuing irritation with him and his anxiety at the state of the crisis, he hits him to try and get away (41). Once again the police chase him as the murderer, and Hannay takes sanctuary in Bullivant's house, at the right time and place to recognise the false First Sea Lord. This is the beginning of the third stage in the story and of the real hunting of the enemy.

From this point on, Hannay is in full control, having justified to everyone in command the truth of his allegations with indisputable proofs. The last two movements of the plot are again dependent on his experiences, only rather more recent ones, once more from Buchan's forward planning. As Hannay had studied Scudder's book thoroughly, he was able to connect his assumption that the gang would attempt to leave Britain by sea, and the phrase 'the thirty nine steps'. Once this has been acted on, it needs only Hannay's recognition of the men in Trafalgar Lodge to make him positive that they are his enemy.

#### De Rohaine and Hannay as the stranger

The importance of Hannay as a stranger in The Thirty-Nine Steps cannot be overestimated. In Sir Quixote, where the hero/protagonist is a visitor, his personality, with qualities already inherent within, precipitated the actions and produced the plot of that novel. In The Thirty-Nine Steps, as I have already shown, Hannay's character is constructed of facts, not emotions, and it is what Hannay has been and done, rather than

the *who* of a personality, which moves the plot of The Thirty-Nine Steps so steadily forward. The most important *what* in that plot is the fact that Hannay is a stranger to London and to Scotland, bringing with him the accoutrements - mental, habitual and physical - of a life in South Africa, a life not spent in the Britain of the story. The extra parallel of pivotal points in the story, Hannay's discovery of the airfield and de Rohaine's dream, serve to emphasise the similar theme and construction of these two Buchan novels.

Buchan's inversion of the idea of the stranger in a strange land into the motif of the stranger in the familiar land of the reader, was a critical new step in the progression of the genre of the spy thriller. The spy/adventure story of chasing an enemy within Britain had been written many times, by E. Phillips Oppenheim, to take one example, in The Mysterious Mr Gabin (1898), and was a relatively standard plot-line. Taking the chase into the enemy's own territory, as Erskine Childers did with The Riddle of the Sands in 1903, also proved successful, and became a staple plot-line as well, for example, with the novels of Valentine Williams. Buchan's extra step of returning the enemy to the reader's familiar territory, and returning the hero there also, but as a stranger, was probably unprecedented in the genre. A reuse of an earlier theme in Sic Quikata, excepting the spy story/adventure thriller at that time, it was a wholly new departure, and psychologically very important.

In showing the reader a familiar sight through a fresh viewpoint, Buchan opened up a whole new area for exploration.

The Thirty-Nine Steps is a steady progression from the actions of his alien hero, a device more reliant on the structure of his plot than with his earlier hero de Rohaine, in Sir Quixote, whose feelings precipitated action, which then produced plot. Both heroes also move towards a pivot in the plot, brought about by their actions, and once this pivot or climax in discoveries has been made, the story changes. De Rohaine loses his happiness and destroys Anne's as the price of preserving his sense of honour. Hannay changes from hunted to hunter and solves the riddle of the Black Stone. The two strangers are unique in the Buchan canon for being aliens in the readers' own land. Some pre-1915 fiction of Buchan also contains aspects of character and plot from Sir Quixote and The Thirty-Nine Steps, particularly The Half-Hearted and Prester John, but Sir Quixote and The Thirty-Nine Steps contain the theme of the stranger worked to its fullest conclusion.

\* \* \* \* \*

(1) John Buchan, letter to George Brown (January 7, 1918), in the John Buchan letters, the Nelson's Archives, Edinburgh University Library, Gen 1728, B/8/4.

"On no account think of bringing out a cheap edition of Sir Quixote. It is a very short book and was written at the age of seventeen. I don't ever want it republished."

(2) John Buchan, in Good Reading About Many Books (1895), quoted in Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan (London 1965, 1985 Oxford University Press), p.90.

(3) See John Prebble, The Lion in the North (London 1971), pp. 270-272.

(4) John Buchan, Sir Quixote of the Moors (London 1895), p.14.

(5) *ibid*, pp.16-17.

(6) See John Buchan's Montrose (1913) for his personal views of the perfect seventeenth-century Scottish knight. In Sir Quixote Buchan was presumably describing the average, not his idea of the best.

(7) John Buchan, Sir Quixote of the Moors, *op.cit.*, p.18.

(8) *ibid*, pp.18-19.

(9) *ibid*, p.22.

(10) *ibid*, p.52.

(11) I use here the terms 'Protestant' and 'Calvinist' to define separate states of belief. 'Protestantism' I define as the statutory reformed Christian belief of Scotland in the seventeenth century, the time of Sir Quixote, the common religion of the land, held to be the religion of the majority, excluding the remnant of Catholicism which still held out against the Reformation. That particular aspect of Protestantism which was 'Calvinism' was the narrow, violent and bigoted strain which would allow no tolerance of alternative interpretations to its own beliefs, in religion, public behaviour, the education of children or political action, in fact in all aspects of life. Buchan's later novel Witch Wood (1927) explores Calvinist doctrine more completely; in Sir Quixote the Covenanters are of the more extreme kind of Calvinists, with little humility or charity.

(12) John Buchan, Sir Quixote of the Moors, *op.cit.*, p.38.

(13) *ibid*, pp.77-78.

(14) *ibid*, p.81.

(15) *ibid*, p.117.

(16) *ibid*, p.129.

(17) *ibid*.

(18) *ibid*, pp.124-5.

(19) *ibid*, p.175.

(20) *ibid*.

(21) *ibid*, pp.176-7.

(22) *ibid*, p.177.

(23) *ibid*, p.178.

(24) *ibid*, p.179.

(25) *ibid*, p.180.

(26) See Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol, and the Ghost of Christmas Future; and J.R.R. Tolkien, The Lord of the Rings, Book 6, where Sam is tempted by the Great Ring.

(27) See Spenser's The Faerie Queene, Book I, Canto II, verse 38, where Duessa reveals herself to Fradubio.

(28) Here there are echoes of Christian's renunciation of Christina and their children in Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress, when he journeys to the Heavenly City, abandoning all that he held dear for the sake of his soul, leaving his dependents unprotected and unprovided for. This is ostensibly a selfish act, but in the protection of a man's soul Bunyan deemed all else expendable as mere earthly trappings (John Bunyan, The Pilgrim's Progress (1678, Penguin Classics 1965), p.53). Buchan makes the same parallel in this story with a man's honour.

(29) John Buchan, in Good Reading About Many Books, *op.cit*.

(30) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, *op.cit*.

(31) John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps (London 1915, 1956 Penguin), p.13.

(32) *ibid*, p.21.

(33) *ibid*, pp.28-30.

(34) I have already discussed the authorial motivation for Hannay's flight north (see chapter one above): in this context I am discussing the position entirely from Hannay's point of view.

(35) John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps, op.cit., pp.101-2.

(36) See chapter three below for further discussion of the psychological realism of the narration of The Thirty-Nine Steps.

(37) John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps, op.cit., p.60.

(38) *ibid*, p.27.

(39) Bullivant also refutes Scudder's anti-Semitism as another of his obsessions - see Appendix 7 below.

(40) John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps, op.cit., p.98.

(41) Hannay had also been drinking that afternoon, which would also account for any recklessness he displayed under the circumstances.

\* \* \* \* \*

CHAPTER THREE

THE NARRATION OF THE RICHARD HANNAY NOVELS

## THE NARRATION OF THE RICHARD HANNAY NOVELS

Having looked at the originality of The Thirty-Nine Steps, and in particular Buchan's new device of the stranger, we must now consider the broader mechanisms of the narration. In this chapter I will be examining the operation of narrative and narration in the Richard Hannay novels of John Buchan, with reference to the work of Gerard Genette on focalisation and perspective. I found that Genette's discussion of his work on La Recherche du Temps Perdu was a useful parallel from a wider context in highlighting the different kinds of narration that I had found in Buchan's Hannay novels. Later on, I will be looking at a number of novels which are either thrillers, or books with a close relationship with that genre, written before 1945, some pre- and some post-The Thirty-Nine Steps, with an eye to how Buchan's work relates to this, in terms of the role of narrative. I will also discuss the construction of narrative patterns in different thrillers, taking the 'Buchan thriller' as a model, particularly the Richard Hannay novels, which produce a connected series of narratives, sharing the same hero/narrator with a stronger continuity in the narrative patterns than is found elsewhere in Buchan.

As the Hannay books increased in number, and evolved new adventures and characters to populate them, the levels of interpretation of these new plots got progressively more complex. This development in Buchan's writing can be dated from



the success of The Thirty-Nine Steps, and is another instance of the great change of 1915. As a further indicator of Buchan's pioneering work in this area, I have not been able to find any evidence that other popular fiction of the period exhibited the same degree of narrative patterning. It is in any case clear that only after 1915 did Buchan begin to produce novels in such close succession with their attendant complex narrative structures.

(1) Classification of narrative types

Structuralism and popular fiction

In his 1980 Foreword to Gerard Genette's Narrative Discourse (1), Jonathan Culler states that Genette's work is '...the most thorough attempt we have to identify, name and illustrate the basic constituents and techniques of narrative...' (2). The study of narrative types is part of the wider study of the classification of story, examined in Stith Thompson's Motif-Index of Folk Literature (3). Culler goes on to describe Genette's work as a model broadly applicable to all literatures.

Narrative Discourse is the culmination of structuralist work on narrative...a broadly based theoretical study. It is also a remarkable study of Proust's A la recherche du temps perdu. It is as though Genette had determined to give the lie to the skeptics who maintained that the structural analysis of narrative was suited only to the simplest narratives, like folk tales, and...had chosen as his object one of the most complex, subtle and involuted of narratives.

(4)

Genette also uses examples from more populist forms of

literature, citing Conan Doyle, Dashiell Hammett and Agatha Christie as well as the adventure novel and the novel of intrigue (5). In this he follows the example of Lars Ole Sauerberg who, three years earlier in The Novel of Espionage, had used the James Bond novels of Ian Fleming as a medium for his discussion on the use of 'point of view' (6). Apart from these two works, I have been unable to discover any evidence that the classification of narrative patterns has been applied to 'popular' fiction, that is, the detective novel, the spy story, the adventure novel or the thriller.

The fiction of John Buchan in particular is an ideal subject for this kind of examination, since relatively little work has been done on the Buchan canon compared to that of, say, Ian Fleming or Eric Ambler. The authorised biography by Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan (1965), and David Daniell's critical study, The Interpreter's House (1975), are the best of the few full-length Buchan studies extant, and while the various unpublished doctoral theses on Buchan range from bibliography (7) to Imperialism (8), there has been little sustained discussion of Buchan's narrative technique in his fiction.

#### Different focalisations in narrative

Genette's section on Mood (chapter 4) in Narrative Discourse discusses the concepts of focalisation and perspective. He judges earlier work on this subject as 'mainly classifications' which:

suffer a regrettable confusion between what I call here mood and voice, a confusion between the question 'who is the character whose point of view orients the narrative perspective?' and the very different question 'who is the narrator?' - or, more simply, the question 'who sees?' and the question 'who speaks?'

(9)

Following this, Genette determines that there are five kinds of narrative which involve, or do not involve, focalisation, his term for the overlapping concepts of vision, point of view, or forms of narration. His first demarcation is nonfocalised narrative, narrative with an omniscient narrator, where the narrator knows and/or says more than any of the characters knows. The second kind is narrative with internal focalisation, with three sub-divisions - fixed internal focalisation, variable and multiple.

Fixed internal focalisation occurs where there is one focus character and the narrator is that person, so that all the events of the story are seen through the eyes of the first-person 'I' narrator. Variable internal focalisation uses more than one focus character, so that events are seen through the eyes of more than one character, and, rarely, more than one narrator. Multiple internal focalisation is most commonly used in the epistolary novel, where a single event is described by a number of characters.

Genette's last demarcation is external focalisation, which is common in novels of adventure or mystery, where the narrator imparts to the reader less than the characters know. Genette

multiplies the effect of these five types of focalisation with the idea of alteration, where one 'base' type of focalisation is exchanged for or overlaid by a short passage of a different type.

#### Narratorial types in Buchan

It quickly became apparent to me that the Genette focalisation classifications were inadequate for the specific kind of narration devised by Buchan for his Hannay thrillers. These five novels - The Thirty-Nine Steps (1915), Greenmantle (1916), Mr Standfast (1919), The Three Hostages (1924) and The Island of Sheep (1936) - are narrated by Hannay in an extended conversational style, speaking directly to the reader. I have identified six distinct narratorial types which Buchan developed in defining the function of Hannay as a first-person narrator, naming them types A, B, AB, C, D, and E, and although two of these correspond with two of Genette's demarcations - type E with Genette's nonfocalised narrative, and type A with fixed internal focalisation - the rest are specialised aspects of the narration of the Hannay novels. Once these narratorial types have been established, I will go on to examine how Buchan directed the narration of the Richard Hannay novels, and these types will illustrate most clearly the pattern of effects in narration which Buchan achieved, in themselves demonstrative of the change in his writing after 1915.

This is a summary of the types I developed from analysis of the narrative structure of the Hannay novels.

Type A - (this corresponds with Genette's fixed internal focalisation) first person narration, by an 'I' character. This constitutes, for example, 95% of the narration of The Thirty-Nine Steps.

Type B - where in type A Hannay (as the narrator) was recording the movement of the plot in his own actions, type B is where he records the actions of other characters who are of primary importance in the plot's development.

Type C - when Hannay records the dialogue of other characters, rather than just reportage of their actions, and acts as the middleman between them and the reader.

Type AB - in the above three types, Hannay has been an active participant in the action by being present. With type AB he is absent, but remains the narrator, describing the actions and dialogue of characters who are then carrying the plot's movement.

Type D - again, where Hannay is absent from the scene, but where he does not play an overt part in the narration, allowing other characters to narrate it in their own type A narration. Since these types are named from Hannay's point of view, this type is a separate category from type A.

Type E - authorial, omniscient narration, where Hannay is seen as a third person character by the reader, and has no special advantage of narration over other characters.

#### Type A and Type C narration

All the Hannay books have at least a third of their chapters composed entirely of type A - straight, first person narration.

As I watched Blenkiron a grey shadow of hopelessness seemed to settle on his face. His big body drooped in his chair, his eyes fell, and his left hand shuffled limply among his Patience cards. I could not get my mind to work, but I puzzled miserably over his amazing blunders. He had walked blindly into the pit his enemies had dugged for him. Peter must have failed to get my message to him, and he knew nothing of last night's work or my mad journey to Italy.

Another example of type A illustrates the difference between A and C narration.

The smell of peat smoke and of some savoury roast floated to me from the house.

'Is that place an inn?' I asked.

'At your service,' he said politely. 'I am the landlord, sir, and I hope you will stay the night, for to tell you the truth I have had no company for a week.'

I pulled myself up on the parapet of the bridge and filled my pipe. I began to detect an ally.

'You're young to be an innkeeper,' I said.

'My father died a year ago, and left me the business. I live there with my grandmother. It's a slow job for a young man, and it wasn't my choice of a profession.'

'Which was?'

He actually blushed. 'I want to write books,' he said.

(11)

'But my friends haven't played their last card by a long sight. They've gotten the ace up their sleeves, and unless I can keep alive for a month they are going to play it and win.'

'But I thought you were dead,' I put in.

'*Mors janua vitae*,' he smiled. (I recognised the quotation: it was about all the Latin I knew.) 'I'm coming to that, but I've got to put you wise about a lot of things first.'

(12)

The difference between the second example of type A, and type C narration which is also in the form of reported dialogue, is that type C is specifically about events of importance and of the first significance to the plot. The type A example above was an extract from a conversation which Hannay used to gain an eager ally and a resting place. It is interesting that in both cases, the quotations have a literary context - Paradise Lost in the first, and an Ovidian Latin tag in the second.

This typical example of type C is a question-and-answer sequence, Hannay requesting information and the informant giving

him this. A second point of distinction between a type A and a type C piece of reported speech is that type A direct speech from a character other than Hannay will not be of particular importance to the main plot line, and consequently Hannay may or may not know the information contained in that dialogue already; it is not important to the immediate plot. Type C speech will always be of importance to the plot. The reason that it will be in direct speech from another character, usually (but not always) a secondary protagonist or another important character, is that Hannay has to ask for the information because he does not know it already and needs it for the next step in the story. The context of the examples is obviously very important.

In a wider sphere, the context of Buchan's novels as a whole shows that this complexity of narrative patterns in such a short and seemingly inconsequential novel was so far unprecedented. As a further indication of the change in Buchan's writing after 1915, these patterns are of great importance.

#### Type B narration

Type B narration frequently occurs with type C, usually immediately before it in the text, but it can also occur immediately afterwards, in a sequence of B, C, B, C, etc (see Appendix 6). This is where Hannay is the narrator of the recounted actions of another character, again, where these actions are directly relevant to the main plot line. This type

can often be identified by the prefacing phrases 'He told me that...' or 'what I understood from him was this...'.  
Then he started to tell about what had happened to him when his division was last back in rest billets. He had a staff job and put up with the divisional command at an old French chateau...one night, he said, he woke with a mighty thirst.

(13)

This example in its entirety is full of third person statements - 'he couldn't find it', 'he admitted he might have', 'anyway he landed in a passage', and so on, phrases which repeatedly remind the reader that these are not Hannay's words, but only him passing on, or recording, what another character had said, and in this case recording what was important to the plot.

#### Type AB narration

A variation on type B occurs with type AB, a form of third person narration from Hannay, but dealing with events he was not involved with, and the details of which only came to him after the event from one of the participants. Chapters 13 and 14 of The Island of Sheep are composed entirely of type AB, barred from being type A by the absence of Hannay from the events, and from type E, the omniscient anonymous narrator, by the inclusion of Hannay's comments in the first person; 'from what I learned later I can reconstruct the scene as if I had been listening outside the door' (14). This device is also used to good effect in The Three Hostages, in chapters 15 and 17, to mark the presence of AB narration, rather than type E, where Hannay recounts the solo adventures of Turpin and of Mary, and in



chapters 18 and 19 where he briefly mentions how the gang is being rounded up in other parts of the world before describing the finale to his own part; 'what Mary and Sandy were doing at that precise moment I do not know, but I can now unfold certain contemporary happenings which were then hid from me' (15), and further on, 'other things, which I did not know about, were happening that evening' (16). The effect is to produce the impression of Hannay telling a story to the reader as something he had been a part of, not as an omniscient narrator.

#### Type D narration

What I call type D narration can be seen as a variation of type AB - it is the narration of an episode in which Hannay is not involved, in the direct speech of the character most directly involved, essentially directed at the reader, but technically through the medium of Hannay, who has deliberately left that part of the narrative in the original form, narrated by the character who was involved. This type, which has affiliations with Romance narrative (as in Stevenson), can be recognised by the same sorts of phrases prefacing the actual text as used by Buchan in type AB; 'I paraphrase him, for he was not grammatical' (17), and 'then he told his story, which I give in his own words' (18). This type only occurs twice in the Hannay novels, and the first example, from Mr Standfast, is rather indeterminate, since Peter's 'own words' are a letter he wrote to Hannay and which Hannay paraphrases for the reader. The

contents, 'remarks of Peter's upon courage', give Hannay important strength of will for the next round in the struggle, and as such qualify for exemption from the otherwise all-embracing type A narration. The second example, from The Island of Sheep, on Lombard's escape with Anna, is given in direct speech because it is such a long episode, 15 pages in all, and works far better as a piece of dramatic writing in being narrated by a participating character than at a remove by the ubiquitous Hannay.

#### Omniscient narration

Type E, of the omniscient narrator, only occurs once in the Hannay novels, in part of chapter 15 of Mr Standfast, as the rather coy use of a literary device. This extract describes Hannay as he gradually assumes a disguise, but is narrated in the third person, giving the effect of extreme distance from the rest of the book, which is in Hannay's first person narration. It is of course possible that the omniscient narrator is, in fact, Hannay, but there is no indication of this to the reader, and the passage comes across most naturally as nonfocalised narration. As a distancing device, seeing Hannay from the outside and not from his own perspective, it is particularly apt in this instance, observing the acquisition of a disguise meant to fool the outside observer, from the outside observer's point of view.

The porter Joseph Zimmer had had a long and roundabout journey. A fortnight before he had worn the uniform of a

British major-general. As such he had been the inmate of an expensive Paris hotel, till one morning, in grey tweed clothes and with a limp, he had taken the Paris-Mediterranean Express with a ticket for an officers' convalescent home at Cannes. Thereafter he had declined in the social scale. At Dijon he had still been an Englishman, but at Pontarlier he had become an American bagman of Swiss parentage, returning to wind up his father's estate. At Berne he limped excessively, and at Zurich, at a little back street hotel, he became frankly the peasant. For he met a friend there from whom he acquired clothes with that odd rank smell, far stronger than Harris tweed, which marks the raiment of most Swiss guides and all Swiss porters. He also acquired a new name and an old aunt, who a little later received him with open arms and explained to her friends that he was her brother's son from Arosa.

(19)

These six narratorial types are inter-related as well as being distinct forms of narration, and their patterns of use in the novels produce information about the relationship between different types. Whereas before 1915 Buchan had not produced novels in such close succession, being known as a writer of short stories and as a journalist, after 1915 and The Thirty-Nine Steps Buchan began publishing novels and creating more complex narrative structures.

(11) Narration in practice

In looking at the Hannay novels we are really looking at two narrative processes - Buchan the author telling the reader a story, through Hannay, his narrator. Buchan created a distinctly fictional character to narrate the Hannay books, one which was not an extension of his own personality, although pieces and episodes from Buchan's own life and from the experiences of his friends were put into his novels (20).

Hannay was created for a purpose: to be a credible narrator for the rough and scrambling adventure of The Thirty-Nine Steps. His supposed background in colonial engineering implies a level of physical fitness which was not often encountered in the heroes of public-school adventure stories, where cricket is played but mountaineering is not on the curriculum. Buchan needed a hero who could be believed to be able to cope with the rushing chases and tests of stamina and endurance that were necessary for the book's new sense of pace and momentum (see chapter one above). Hannay does not have the intellectual interests nor the philosophical, classical or historical scholarship of his creator, but Buchan had given his own philosophy some literary exercise in A Lodge in the Wilderness (1906) and in 'Space' (1911), and his classicism had emerged in 'The Kings of Orion' (1906) and in 'The Lemnian' (1911).

In other Buchan heroes there are outlets for the classical gentleman's accomplishments, particularly with Leithen and the specialists he calls in for Greek or Latin erudition. In philosophy, Professor Moe of The Gap in the Curtain (1932) is as scholarly a character as Buchan ever created, but even with this ostensibly academic lead, adventure and exploration remain the themes of the story.

Buchan's historical interests had given him scope for his first three novels, several short stories and biographies; what was needed in 1914, when he began to write The Thirty-Nine Steps was a

brisk adventure to distract himself, from his illness and from the pressures of war, and to provide amusement, not enlightenment. Hannay was first the man of action, later to appreciate the value of the attainments of learning, but in his initial appearance he is an adventurer, not concerned with exploration of the mind.

#### Buchan's narrators

Hannay was not Buchan's first first-person narrator. The *Sieur de Rohaine* of Sir Quixote (1895) was a mannered and stylised figure as if from The Three Musketeers, and John Burnet and David Crawford, from John Burnet of Barns (1898) and Prester John (1910) respectively, were two-dimensional and derivative, with no voice of their own save the echoes of Stevenson's David Balfour. Leithen, of 'Space' and The Power-House, is more interesting, a character with direct parallels to Buchan's own life and, in The Power-House, in an adventure which was perfectly credible for someone in Buchan's situation, set in urban London and in the West End surroundings Buchan was most familiar with. But with Hannay, Buchan drew a wholly new kind of character, drawn from the African wilds Buchan had had a taste of in 1901-3, but operating in Buchan's own territory of London, the Border hills and the seaside towns of Kent (see chapter two above). As the Hannay books increased and evolved new adventures and successive characters emerged after 1915, the levels of interpretation in these thrillers got progressively more complex. This can be seen by looking at the instances of the six different types of narration

in each of the five Hannay novels (see Appendix 6).

### Narrative devices

Buchan controls the way that Hannay narrates, and produces a skilful illusion of narrative by a participating character without recourse to the standard devices often used in this context - for example, the personal diary in Wilkie Collins' The Moonstone (1868); the account of an episode written down at the request of others, as in R.L. Stevenson's Treasure Island (1883); or the edited version of events produced for public information. Erskine Childers and Geoffrey Household both used this last, very complicated, device for the narration of The Riddle of the Sands and Rogue Male to get over the practical difficulties of first person narration. The ostensible authorial voice and editor of Carruthers' diary in The Riddle of the Sands is just as much a construct as the characters of Carruthers and Davies, and the device of changing names to 'protect' the innocent is merely verisimilitude. In Rogue Male (1939), Household's narrator killed two men in the course of his narrative, and consequently 'the facts must be placed on record in case the police ever got hold of the wrong man' (21). Hannay the narrator never makes it clear for whom he is recording the stories of the Hannay novels, or indeed why he is writing them at all, although the few references to this are in retrospect, as passing remarks in later chapters or books. When he is in the act of narration, his asides or comments to the reader are made from a position of hindsight and after the events narrated

in the story are over.

This chapter is the tale that Peter told me, long after, sitting beside a stove in the hotel at Bergen, where we were waiting for our boat.

(22)

During the action of the stories, Hannay's narratorial style is conversational, yet the tone is not anecdotal but more involved. It can be difficult to reconcile dialogue with first person narration, and the strength of a good novelist can be seen in how long the reader's suspension of disbelief can be maintained. Buchan as the creator of his narrator, Hannay, achieves this almost immediately by plunging the reader straight into quite complex situations where a lot needs to be absorbed by the reader before the story can be 'got into'. Given the fact that the readers will be ready and willing to suspend all disbelief, as long as certain conventions are observed, the battle is nearly won merely by producing the old 'hooks' of a gripping beginning and a persuasive follow-up sequence of episodes which draw the reader in and on to the rest of the story. Buchan's approach with The Thirty-Nine Steps works with the reader being treated as a confidant by Hannay from the very beginning, and is told a story almost without realising it. The Thirty-Nine Steps is a simple book to narrate because, apart from in the dialogue-filled first chapter, Hannay is the only character who matters as an individual, and so it is straight-forward 'I' narration (type A) from chapter 2 onwards.

The Thirty-Nine Steps and growing complexity

To stay with The Thirty-Nine Steps, chapter 1 is the most

important, since it contains all the clues to the ensuing chase and the riddle of the Black Stone, establishes the characters of Hannay and the short-lived Scudder, and, perhaps more importantly, induces a strong impression of the gravity of this fictional situation on the reader. All this information and preparation for the rest of the book is packed into the three segments of B-C-B narration in eight pages (see Appendix 6). The carefully modulated effect of the information that Scudder is giving Hannay is balanced between type B narration, where Hannay is recording and reporting Scudder's dialogue and the information therein, and the long outburst of direct dialogue from Scudder, type C narration, when his story really begins to make an effect - see Appendix 7.

With the complexities of later Hannay novels came new depths of feeling, to the writing and to Hannay as a character. Greenmantle (1916) has far more instances of narrative types B and C, and the narrative richness of Mr Standfast (1919), compared to the relatively simple and single-levelled Thirty-Nine Steps of only four years earlier, suggests an increased amount of attention from Buchan on this particular character and these books. Greenmantle also brings in three more hero/protagonists to join Hannay, and the narration consequently relies more on types B and C to ensure that the separated adventures of the divided characters are relayed to the reader. Mr Standfast, the longest and most complex of all the Hannay novels in its development of character and plot, has a correspondingly complex narrative system, compared to the two



previous books, developing types D, AB and E as the narrative needs them. The extension of the narrative types into chapter length, rather than the duration of a few passages, occurs in Mr Standfast, where type AB is used for one complete chapter (see Appendix 6) and for two complete chapters in the next Hannay novel, The Three Hostages. Type B is the narrative medium for two complete chapters in The Island of Sheep.

Buchan's development of the possibilities of narrative are not confined to the Hannay books - indeed, these were written at intervals, in between which his other novels, both historical and contemporary, were produced (see Appendix 8). The process of learning the craft of writing began for Buchan twenty years before the publication of The Thirty-Nine Steps, so the first Hannay novel was produced by a seasoned and very experienced writer.

Nevertheless, the Hannay novels are the only sequential novels by Buchan to be narrated in the first person, apart from Leithen (see below). Indeed, each time Hannay is involved in a story, he is narrating it in the first person singular. Apart from the brief introductory portrait to his contribution to The Runagates Club (1928), and a few reminiscences from other characters about him in The Courts of the Morning (1929) and in Sick Heart River (1941), Hannay is only perceived by the reader in the first person, as an 'I' character, having a more direct contact with the reader than any other Buchan character.

Other narration in Buchan

Buchan has one other important 'I' character, the lawyer Edward Leithen. In The Power-House (1916) and The Dancing Floor (1926), he narrates these in the first person, as the main character, but in John Macnab (1925) and Sick Heart River (1941) Leithen has become the subject of an anonymous third person narrator, removed from the reader and giving a more balanced picture of himself by being the narrated subject. His frequent appearances in the many contemporary Buchan short stories make him the Buchan narrator the readership has most information about (see chapter four below).

Out of the 24 books that Buchan wrote (see Appendix 8) which can be fairly defined as novels, 11 are narrated in the first person, and of these, 5 are narrated by Hannay. (I include The Courts of the Morning with the non-Hannay books.) The remaining six first-person novels can be divided into three 'historical' novels and three 'contemporary'. Of the historical novels, Sir Quixote of the Moors and John Burnet of Parna are Buchan's earliest novels, published in 1895 and 1898 respectively, and are narrated by historical characters, one of whom, the Sieur de Rohaine of Sir Quixote, appears briefly in the third person in John Burnet. The third historical, first-person-narrated novel, Salute to Adventurers, was published in 1915 (although finished in May 1914 [231]), in between Greenmantle and The Thirty-Nine Steps, and like John Burnet is narrated by another of Buchan's one-off historical characters.

Occasionally Buchan attempted a narrational experiment in his fiction, and in A Prince of the Captivity (1933), he does this with a monologue from Camilla, Adam's wife, on the forging of the cheque (24). This is written in the first person, thus qualifying as nonfocalised narration, or type E, being narrated by an objective anonymous third person narrator, but also fixed, or, in that context, variable, internal focalisation, by being solely the thoughts and point of view of one character. Adam's 'point of view' is used in the narration preceding and following the Camilla passage, and the brief slip into her focalisation is important in the reader's understanding of Adam's character, an enigma in itself, and the moving force of that novel.

#### Narration in other, non-Buchan, thrillers

What is the role of narration and of the narrator, if any, in a thriller? In some cases, narration is virtually absent by its invisibility and the characters speak for themselves, their actions and the actions of the plot described through their own eyes. In Graham Greene's A Gun For Sale (1936) the narrator is anonymous and completely unnoticeable: the characters are given complex personalities, and the main protagonists - Raven, Mather and Anne - carry the narration in their actions. Where the act of narrating is absent, either wholly or by virtue of its extreme anonymity and/or invisibility, it is upon the plot and the actions of the characters that the movement of the story must depend, and the characters of A Gun For Sale are correspondingly more important to

that novel as a whole than the characters are, say, in a 'Sapper' novel.

In 'Sapper''s Bulldog Drummond (1920) variable and fixed internal focalisation are also maintained, but the role of narrator is a definite presence, separate from that of the characters. Where Buchan uses different kinds of narration in one character, 'Sapper' intrudes an authorial presence, in the guise of a narrator, to achieve the same effect, to maintain a consistent narrative voice in telling the story. Buchan's method is more efficient than that of 'Sapper''s, in that the character of Richard Hannay plays a multiple role, in relating the story and holding the action together by means of the narratorial types in which his character does not always participate, but which he controls.

Some aspects of other pre-Second World War thrillers may cast light on Buchan's methods. Eric Ambler is most widely cited as the writer who contributed most to the ending of what Graham Greene called the 'Buchan world' (25), and used the Buchan thriller in a new and entirely modern way. The beefiness and overt fascist thuggery of 'Sapper' were very different from Buchan, yet the two are often cited in the same sentence as leading exponents of the thriller in the 1920's and '30's. Dornford Yates's stories were more about houses, cars and upholding the lifestyle of wealthy gentlemen than the portents of spiritual and moral evil against which Buchan's heroes fought. The exponents of the 'new' thriller type, for example, Ambler, Greene and Household, were, again,

different from Buchan, writing in the years leading up to the Second World War in the modernity of the 1930's.

Robert Louis Stevenson is included in this survey because he was a master storyteller, and his influence on Buchan is well documented in Janet Adam Smith's biography John Buchan (1965) and in David Daniell's critical study The Interpreter's House (1975). I felt that the narrative structure of Treasure Island would be a useful comparison with the narration of Buchan's first thrillers. The Riddle of the Sands (1903) was the only novel by Erskine Childers, but shares many important ideas with several of Buchan's books written after its publication - Prester John (1910), The Power-House (written in 1913, published 1916), and The Thirty Nine Steps (1915). The examination of the narrative structure of these disparate but significant works in the thriller genre will, I hope, show Buchan's influence and the importance of the new direction in the construction of his narration that was taking place after 1915.

#### Stevenson

Treasure Island (1883) was Robert Louis Stevenson's first full-length novel, and was written half in a burst of enthusiasm with the help of his father and stepson, and half when he realised that the first instalments were being published in Young Folks and the story was not yet finished. 'In a second tide of delighted industry and again at the rate of a chapter a day, I finished it' (26). This 'delighted industry' created one of the most popular juvenile adventure stories in the language, and Stevenson's fiction

is generally accepted as a forerunner of the classic adventure thriller (27).

Stevenson's hero, Jim Hawkins, lays out very firmly at the start of his narrative exactly why and for whom he is telling the story of the adventure. The rest of the narrative has occasional comments made in hindsight, after the adventure is over and at the time of writing, to indicate a successful ending. For three chapters in the middle of the book, however, the narrative is taken on by another character, Dr Livesey, to cover the action in the stockade whilst Jim is absent on his own adventure meeting Ben Gunn.

Stevenson's blunt duplication of narrators is less sophisticated than Buchan's use of what I have called types D and AB narration, and does not give the reader a steady point of reference in a single narrator. The type D and AB method used by Buchan provides one narrator on which to base plots at any level of complexity, as is seen in the progression of the Hannay novels, where the narrative line gets more complex, but is still narrated by one character.

#### Erskine Childers

The author's preface in The Riddle of the Sands gives an 'explanation' of the origins of the book, of how the events were true and how he had agreed to edit the story from the personal diaries of one of the participants. Thus the book is in the first person, 'narrated' by Carruthers, the diarist, but the narration of the book is constructed so that it follows a single line of plot

development, a one-character path or series of actions, but with two characters actually participating and playing the single protagonist's role.

The obvious advantage of this role-sharing is of variety for the reader, with Carruthers and Davies playing the protagonist jointly, with the narrator character active and the 'unused' character passive. In the novel it can be seen that Carruthers always narrates the 'real time' episodes, and Davies does the flashbacks, all containing material necessary to the plot, but presented with more variety by two different characters. It is also noticeable that at no time are both characters taking part in actions necessary to the plot simultaneously, furthering the idea that they are written as one, joint, protagonist, not two. When Carruthers is investigating Memmert and wandering around Germany in disguise (chapters 22, and 25, 26 and 27) Davies is doing nothing towards the furtherance of the plot except waiting for him to come back. On the other hand, when Davies is fetching Clara Dollman (chapter 19), despite his taking the 'active' part at this point, it is Carruthers' actions which are reported, inconsequential as they are, because it is also necessary to the plot that the meeting of Davies and Clara be unobserved.

At a further remove from the narration, the practical question arises of why the narrative is in the first person at all, and not in the third person/omniscient narrator type. In the 1978 Penguin edition, Geoffrey Household's Foreword comments on Childers'

preface explaining the 'background' to the story and the reasons for the adoption of first person narration with the name of 'Carruthers'.

At once we have the illusion of reality - to which Carruthers adds a lovely touch as an excuse for disguising real names: 'remember that the persons are living in the midst of us'. That immediately solves one main difficulty of telling a story in the first person. Novelists, and good ones, have thought it unnecessary to invent any reason why the narrator should confess his follies, illegalities and love affairs, with the result that the reader's suspension of disbelief is not so willing as it might be, since the hero or anti-hero appears to display a total lack of discretion which does not fit his character.

(28)

This explanation works very well, and the practical solution worked out by Childers to add verisimilitude to his story of potential invasion also works extremely well from the point of view of the purist for style in narration.

### 'Sapper'

There are marked differences between the narrative structure of the novels of 'Sapper' (Cyril Herman McNeile), Dornford Yates (William Mercer) and Buchan. Bulldog Drummond (1920) is narrated in type E, with an omniscient but not anonymous author. The distinct characteristics and prejudices overwhelmingly present in the narrator of Bulldog Drummond, let alone the actual characters, make it impossible for the reader to treat the narrator as a disinterested informant. The use of focus characters, as in Buchan's The Courts of the Morning (1929), allows different perspectives and also lets the reader 'into the head' of different characters, providing access to information which could have been



given in narration, but which has more variety for the reader when it is given in the form of character monologue or in a character's thoughts.

In Bulldog Drummond, there are five characters in the Prologue to give the reader five different (in varying degrees) perspectives on the Count, alias the villain Peterson. In the remainder of the book, Hugh Drummond is the focus; events being seen through his eyes and the reader being told about them in terms of how the actions of the plot affect the hero. The pattern of narration is predominantly narrator - Drummond - narrator, and the effect that this switching about of perspective gives the reader is the impression of having a much fuller view and understanding of the action than he would if the narration were just anonymous third person narration. Thus Peterson and one or two other occasional focus characters give the reader different impressions of the action, and more importantly, of Drummond, the hero. The reader also supplements the basic narratorial information on these other characters with Drummond's own point of view.

The anonymity of the 'Sapper' narrator is made impossible by the presence of evident personal opinion, creating another character in the narrator. Much third person narration is anonymous, without personality or identity, the work of a storyteller whose only function is to tell the story and not let a personality intrude on that process. The effect of 'Sapper''s narration intruding on the story as it does is to make the reader assume that since the

narrator so obviously has an identity, it must therefore be the author himself who is narrating, under an assumed name (the name 'Sapper' itself is already an alias).

This blurring of the boundaries only binds the author closer to his work - 'Sapper' is inescapably linked with Bulldog Drummond in the reader's mind, whereas Buchan 'was' not only Hannay, but also Leithen and Archie, Sandy and Jaikie. All were important characters in Buchan's fiction, but were kept at an equal distance from their creator.

The narrative patterns A to E which I identified in Buchan's war novels have not so far been matched by a corresponding complexity of narration in the work of two of Buchan's predecessors in the thriller/adventure novel, Stevenson and Childers, nor in the novels of 'Sapper', an immediate follower in newly initiated 'Buchanesque' adventure (29). I have shown that these writers had different ways of addressing problems in their narration, but without Buchan's range in narrative expression.

#### Dornford Yates

Dornford Yates wrote 34 novels, 18 of which were the 'Berry' books and the 'Chandos' thrillers, with two narrators; Boy Pleydell to narrate the 'Berry' stories, and William Chandos to narrate the adventures of Jonah Mansell. According to Richard Usborne in Clubland Heroes (1953), Boy Pleydell was merely another name for 'Dornford Yates', and both were characters created by Mercer,

one to narrate the books and one to write them, their (fictional) name being common to both, with a good deal of their background being drawn from the life of Mercer (30). In the last 'Berry' book, As Berry and I were saying (1952), Boy finally states that when he was writing his novels (the character took to writing novels for a while) he wrote them under the name Dornford Yates. It is a confusing round of fact and fantasy, the real world mixing with Mercer/Yates' imaginary world of the houses of the Berry clan. Mercer (or Yates) does not intrude in the obtrusive sense that 'Sapper' does, but his own preoccupations and interests spill over into the books, and this trait is intensified with the 'doubling up' of the real and fictional narrators.

#### Geoffrey Household

In Geoffrey Household's Rogue Male (1939) the main character is the narrator, nameless and narrating the story in the first person, ostensibly writing the events down in a notebook every now and then, catching up with the recording of the episodes. Thus the story and character development unfold naturally. The reader is in the dark as to why the chase/hunt began in the first place, and is not given much of the usual information to piece the plot together. The reader has to go along with the plot, picking up the pieces of necessary information as they are left by the narrator. This is a striking demonstration of how vital a role the narrator has in presenting important plot details to the reader in order that the story may make sense.

Household's narrator tells the reader that the reason he was attempting to assassinate the head of state (presumed to be Hitler) was to see if it would be possible, a kind of sporting exercise. Three quarters of the way through the book, on page 148, we learn that he had intended to shoot, and on page 153 we learn that his motive was revenge for the execution of the woman he had loved.

In the traditional, Buchan, thriller, the reader would have been given the reason for the motive at the beginning of the narrative, and the only element of mystery for the remainder of the book would be how and when the revenge would be carried out. Household turns this convention on its head, and in doing so produces side effects which add to the story's depth. The reasons come after the actions, and are given out in the course of the story as if by accident, as they are unfolding in the mind of the narrator - they are not already known to him, making this thriller also a study of a man's changing awareness of self.

The information about the woman is introduced very subtly, at first as the reason why the narrator knew of the hiding-place in Dorset (31), and then that she was dead, and it is implied that political exigencies were the cause of this (32). The real reason for her existence in the story, that the narrator is revenging her death, comes very late in the book. Thus her presence is given two reasons, one a red herring, and the second far more significant.

First person narration

Household also includes present-tense passages of narration in the past-tense narration which constitute the bulk of the book.

Suspension of disbelief on the part of the reader is the aim of every writer using first person narration, and it is very difficult to achieve this successfully. Obviously, readers will be aware that the narrative is a constructed narrative and written for their entertainment. The point the writer wishes his work to achieve is when the reader tacitly accepts that the story is being told by an individual in a conversational or diarist's tone, where all the information necessary for the smooth functioning of the plot is included, and all the details needed for the fleshing out of characters are put in where appropriate. At the same time, this stranger-narrator will be telling the reader his thoughts, feelings, intimate, embarrassing or crucially personal moments because they are necessary to the plot, and also because the reader would not read on without these added human interest inducements, deepening the character of the narrator, and making him more interesting to the reader.

Why do authors choose the first person narratorial style? Geoffrey Household has given his reasons.

I have always had a strong preference for throwing a story into the first person. Through entering the mind of too many characters clarity is diffused, and the novelist finds himself commenting and explaining when he should be recording...The use of the first person...substitutes two other troubles. The first is the reason why the narrator should tell his story at all. I am sure it is unnecessary to answer this question, and I tell myself that I am not going to bother with it, yet every

time I feel a lack of urgent reality until I have bothered with it. The second trouble is style. The narrator may - indeed must - use basic Geoffrey Household, but upon that he may only embroider within the limitations of his character and his probable powers of self-expression. The limit of realism is quickly reached.

(33)

In the case of Rogue Male, the pretence that Household invents to explain why the narrative is in the first person is that it is a published diary/narrative/record of events, rather like the rationale behind The Riddle of the Sands. At the end of Rogue Male there is an explanatory note from the 'narrator' to another character, asking him to publish the 'enclosed' documents. This gets round the essentially private nature of the story, since the narrator was writing for no-one in particular *at the time of writing in the story*. This aspect of the narration is also enhanced authorially by the shifting tenses, from past to present, and by the narrator's changing realisation and understanding of the situation and of his own motives. Household's protagonist is writing the journal at short intervals, while it is all happening, and not in one long burst of hindsight, as Hannay does in the Buchan novels.

The tacit acceptance the reader has reached with the pretence in Rogue Male makes it possible to appreciate that this particular story of the lone hunted man must be told in the first person, since the reader will identify more readily with the hunted man if he is alone with no confidant, unlike Hannay in The Thirty-Nine Steps. Household's story is a very intense and inward-looking

experience, a private battle rather than the chase with international consequences that Buchan developed so much, and could only be effectively narrated in the first person. Also, in practical terms, the intensity of the experience would be greatly reduced if, for example, a type E omniscient narrator were telling the hunted man's story for him. Any degree of removal by the narrator's presence from the centre of this story would lessen the important effect of introversion.

#### Eric Ambler

Eric Ambler wrote Epitaph For A Spy in 1938 and in so doing changed the nature of the spy story again by making the protagonists ordinary people, not the Hannay type of Secret Service agents and amateur gentleman detectives. This downbeat approach had much to do with exploring the potential for realism in the spy thriller, reducing the artificial glamour and focusing on the concerns of everyday life, as Edgar Wallace had done thirty years earlier in The Four Just Men (1905). Vadassy, in Epitaph For A Spy, is the first person narrator, an almost passive character who does very little but has situations and personalities thrust upon him. His role in the book is to listen and do what he is told, under duress, and in this way Ambler enables the story to develop and the plot to unfold. Even in the denouement chase, when the identity of the spy is finally revealed, Vadassy is taken along by the police 'for identification purposes' (34), despite the fact that they already knew who the spy was, and had done since the story began. Even

when Vadassy was expected to identify the camera it was presented to him crushed beyond recognition.

I shook my head. 'I'll take your word for it, Monsieur Beghin.'  
He nodded. 'There's no point in your staying any longer...'

(35)

Ambler has created the passive recording narrator, allowed to have a few independent actions of his own, but primarily in existence as a viewfinder for the reader. Events happen to Vadassy, as to Hannay, and he is a victim of them, but unlike Hannay he is singularly inept at resolving the situations.

### Conclusion

In the adventure thrillers of Buchan, 'Sapper', Valentine Williams, Dornford Yates, Edgar Wallace, and so on, the reader is looking for a vicarious experience, and the thriller's purpose is to provide adventure for the reader by the medium of the narration. Ambler reset this process, creating a thriller which was more like what the reader could expect if such events really happened, but which would still provide the adventure and danger, the genuine *frisson* of the classic romance. This was a wholly new step in the thriller genre, and one which marked out Ambler and his contemporary Graham Greene as at a new stage in the thriller's development, with which Buchan had little to do.

Yet Buchan had pioneered the thriller; from 1915 his novels had influenced subsequent developments in popular fiction, and in Richard Hannay he had created the new kind of thriller hero. Once Hannay was established, Buchan was able to produce plots of more



complexity and greater length for this new thriller hero to star in and narrate. In keeping Hannay as almost the sole narrator in the five Hannay novels, Buchan was able to base his increasingly multi-levelled thrillers on a solid and unchanging foundation. Although Hannay's experiences increased, he remained essentially the same character, from a structural perspective, as a single first-person narrator.

Buchan incorporated the new levels of plot in the successive Hannay thrillers in new kinds of narration, controlled by his single narrator. As can be seen in Appendix 6, the six different kinds of narration which Buchan evolved through the novels developed with a corresponding change in Buchan's thrillers. This was set in motion by the 1915 change in Buchan's writing, a direct result of his creation of the new adventure hero. In the next chapter I will be examining Buchan's development of this, and other characters, and how the change of 1915 affected the protagonists of his thrillers.

\* \* \* \* \*

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- (3) Stith Thompson, Motif-Index of Folk Literature: A classification of narrative elements in folk-tales, ballads, myths, etc., Indiana University Studies no. 96, 97, 100, 101, 105, 106, 108-112, 6 vols (Bloomington, Indiana, 1932-36).
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- (11) John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps (London 1915, 1956 Penguin) p.40.
- (12) *ibid.*, p.17.
- (13) John Buchan, Mr Standfast, op.cit., p.138.
- (14) John Buchan, The Island of Sheep (London 1936, 1956 Penguin), p.195.
- (15) John Buchan, The Three Hostages (London 1924, 1956 Penguin), p.224.
- (16) *ibid.*, p.226.
- (17) John Buchan, Mr Standfast, op.cit., p.167.
- (18) John Buchan, The Island of Sheep, op.cit., p.128.

(19) John Buchan, Mr Standfast, op.cit., p.232.

(20) Kate Macdonald, 'Who was Richard Hannay: A Search For The Source', The John Buchan Journal, no.7 (Winter 1987), pp.10-14.

(21) Geoffrey Household, Rogue Male (London 1939, 1949 Penguin), p.191.

(22) John Buchan, Greenmantle (London 1916, 1956 Penguin), p.230.

(23) Letter from John Buchan to Thomas Nelson on May 29th 1914, enclosing the MS of 'New Lands in the Sunset' [sic] which was to be published in book form as Salute To Adventurers.

(24) John Buchan, A Prince of the Captivity (London 1933, 1960 Hodder & Stoughton), pp.20-22.

(25) Graham Greene, Preface to A Gun For Sale (London 1936), pp.v-vii (p.vi).

(26) Robert Louis Stevenson, 'My First Book', The Idler, vol 7 (August 1894), pp.3-11 (p.8).

(27) Julian Symons in Bloody Murder (London 1972) writes:

It seems surprising in retrospect that Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-94) made no serious attempt to write a detective story ... he was interested in the borderland where adventure turned to crime...and there are elements of mystery in stories as disparate as Treasure Island and The Dynamiters.

(p.62)

Michael Denning corroborates this in his Cover Stories (London 1987).

By the first decades of the twentieth century, the imperial adventure tales of...Robert Louis Stevenson, which were often aimed at schoolboys, were being supplanted by the first thrillers...which were aimed at an adult male audience.

(p.18)

(28) Geoffrey Household, 'Foreword' to Erskine Childers, The Riddle of the Sands (London 1903, 1952 Penguin, 1978), pp.7-15 (p.9).

(29) John Gardner in his 'The Espionage Novel' (in Whodunit, edited by H.R.F. Keating, London 1982), writes:

'Buchanesque' has become a standard reviewer's adjective to describe the adventure story that is unhesitating, real owing to the decent depth of its characters, totally plausible and finally having about it some hint of powerful forces affecting a society.

(p.73)

(30) Richard Usborne, Clubland Heroes: A nostalgic study of some recurrent characters in the romantic fiction of Dornford Yates, John Buchan and 'Sapper', 3rd edition (London 1953, 1983, Hutchinson), pp.59-60.

(30) Geoffrey Household, Rogue Male, op.cit., p.80.

(31) *ibid*, pp.88-9.

(32) Geoffrey Household, Against The Wind (London 1958), pp.234-6.

(33) Eric Ambler, Epitaph For A Spy (London 1938, revised edition 1966), p.227.

(34) *ibid*, p.243.

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CHAPTER FOUR

CHARACTERS IN THE FICTION OF JOHN BUCHAN

## CHARACTERS IN THE FICTION OF JOHN BUCHAN

In this thesis so far, I have tried to establish that John Buchan's most important novel was The Thirty-Nine Steps (1915), in that through its success he achieved best-seller status, and from it a new phase in the history of the thriller-genre was developed. In this chapter I will be examining how the process of developing the character of Richard Hannay changed and matured Buchan as a novelist, and how this can be seen most clearly in his use of background characters. Buchan's first fictional writing was in the form of essays, developing into short stories and the early historical novels, but by 1915 this pattern in his writing had begun to change (see Appendix 10). In earlier chapters I concentrated mainly on the pivotal year of 1915 and the developments in Buchan's work which related directly to The Thirty-Nine Steps. In this chapter I examine in closer detail the entire Buchan corpus of fiction, most particularly for evidence of patterns in his use of character.

From short stories to novels

From October 1894, when his first short story 'Sentimental Travelling' was published in Macmillan's Magazine when he was nineteen (1), to June 1915 when The Thirty-Nine Steps first appeared in weekly instalments in the New York magazine the All-Story Weekly (2), Buchan had published thirty-five short stories and seven novels. From The Thirty-Nine Steps to the last, posthumous, Buchan novel in 1941, he published twelve short

stories and twenty-two novels. From being primarily a short-story writer in the first part of his writing career (1894-1915), producing only the occasional novel, Buchan changed tack around 1915 and began producing novels in a regular flow.

There were some short-story interruptions to the constant stream of novels in this period (1915-1941): two single stories published in 1918 and 1920; Buchan's novel of linked short stories, The Path of the King in 1921; the sequence of stories in 1927-8 later published as The Runagates Club (1928); and the last Buchan short story, the obscure and only recently rediscovered 'Ho! The Merry Masons' (1933), a Leithen tale of the supernatural (3). Despite this, Buchan's fiction from 1915 was primarily in the novel form, and led off from The Thirty-Nine Steps and the creation of Richard Hannay to an extrapolation outwards, to what I have called the Hannay world.

#### Buchan's three worlds

Buchan wrote thirteen contemporary novels after The Thirty-Nine Steps, and in these he developed three separate but interlocking groups of characters, which formed the basis for his thrillers and modern adventure fiction. The Hannay world was the largest group, and constituted the characters who peopled the five Hannay novels, the stories of The Runagates Club, and one or two separate but related novels and short stories. The Leithen world was a sub-section of the Hannay world, overlapping and sharing its characters, but within the Leithen stories -

properly The Dancing Floor (1926), 'Sing a Song of Sixpence' (1928), and The Gap in the Curtain (1932) (4) - there were a group of characters who formed Leithen's surrogate family, amongst whom his solo adventures were enacted. Characters from the Hannay world frequently made guest appearances in the Leithen milieu, but no Leithen character ever moved out of that circle to the wider, Hannay world.

The third group of characters populate the world of Dickson McCunn, portrayed in the three McCunn novels - Huntingtower (1922), Castle Gay (1930), and The House of the Four Winds (1935). Again, Hannay characters intrude into this little grouping, but they do so less than in the Leithen world.

In the McCunn world, as well as geographical settings there are class boundaries to be traversed, and by and large the McCunn characters remain isolated from the rest of the Buchan contemporary characters.

Naturally these groupings and divisions are not exhaustive, but I feel that they reflect three different directions in which Buchan's fiction matured after The Thirty-Nine Steps. Although Hannay has probably achieved the highest degree of synonymity with Buchan's own name (5), Leithen and McCunn are also considered as distinctly representative of Buchan's fiction. As an example of this, when Penguin reissued ten Buchan novels in paperback in the 1950's, they were published simultaneously, 'a compliment first paid to G.B. Shaw and H.G. Wells, and earlier



this year to C.S. Forester' (6). The three McCunn titles appeared with the five Hannay novels, one Leithen story, and Buchan's first successful novel, Prester John (1910).

#### Different eras

A division in the Buchan fiction also occurred in the tone and feeling for background in the stories, which moved from an atmosphere drawn from the late Victorian, Edwardian and Georgian periods, to post-Great War realism, expressed again in the attitudes, dialogue and depiction of the characters. The protagonists of The Half-Hearted (1900), for example, and the world that they inhabit are at a vast remove in experience and time, both on their own part and on that of their writer, from the characters of A Prince of the Captivity (1933). Both these novels are concerned with the state of equilibrium in the civilised world. Both heroes are drawn as sacrificial victims, going willingly to their deaths in isolated mountain passes, secure in the love of a good but unattainable woman, and dying to save the hopes of civilisation. Where Lewis Haystoun's mission in The Half-Hearted is to save the Empire, Adam Melfort of A Prince of the Captivity sees his task as preserving the delicate post-War political fabric of Europe.

This is a facet of Buchan's abiding theme of the precarious nature of civilisation, expressed more fully in The Power-House (1913) and The Three Hostages (1924). The division which separates the two worlds of these novels can be seen in the

portrayal of the characters of the stories, and by looking at when this division began in Buchan's fiction.

While Buchan's historical fiction is not sequential - see Appendix 9 - it is still connected with Buchan's other non-fictional writing, particularly in the connection between Witch Wood (1927) and Buchan's two biographies of Montrose, in 1913 and 1928. The continuity of the recurring background characters in Buchan's contemporary fiction is perhaps more apparent, where the linked sequences of novels and stories naturally give rise to a common background society, a kind of atmospheric social wallpaper against which the action of the contemporary fiction is played out. Some family names recur, and in this the historical fiction is involved, since, for example, Manowater and Carteron occur as character names in early and later Buchan fiction in both the contemporary and historical brackets. The development of this recurring background society is a relatively unexamined facet of Buchan's writing, compared with the more widely studied development of Buchan's heroes.

The following analyses of the patterns prevalent in the divisions between contemporary and historical fiction, before and after 1915 and between the three 'worlds' of Buchan's characters - Hannay, Leithen and McCunn - should show more clearly how Buchan set out to write his fiction, and how he utilised earlier work in later writing in a manner both economical and enriching. The processes which matured his

writing as a whole, I feel, are most evident in the depiction of his characters, and I will begin this discussion with Buchan's earliest fiction.

The short stories (See Appendices 10 - 12)

In his study of crime fiction, Julian Symons comments on the general changeover in this genre from short stories to novels.

The decline of the short story's popularity, which became sharply noticeable after the First World War, corresponded to the novel's rise, and both of these were linked with social, technical and economic changes. The emancipation of women which took place during the War played a large part in the creation of a new structure in domestic life, particularly in Europe, through which women had more leisure, and many of them used it to read books...At the same time, changes in the style of urban living and in the nature of travel greatly affected magazine sales. More and more people travelled by car and read nothing at all on the journey. Railway journeys became shorter, and men no longer queued at railway bookstalls to buy the latest issue of the Strand or any other magazine. They were more likely to be reading a newspaper on their way home from city to suburb, or a book from the circulating library on a journey from town to town.

(7)

Taking 'crime fiction' to be synonymous with the light escapist fiction of the period, Symons' view holds good for Buchan's output of adventures and romances which had characterised his fiction up until 1915. Being a publisher as well as a writer and an enthusiastic consumer of new fiction, Buchan must have been well aware of the trend towards the novel and away from the dominance of the short story in light reading.

Early Buchan

His own novels before 1915 had been at first in the style of

Neil Munro, Scott and Stevenson, Scottish historical romance dealing with Scottish history, particularly the covenanting years of the 1680s and the 1745 Jacobite uprising. Buchan's short story 'The Earlier Affection' (1899) is similar in certain aspects to Sir Walter Scott's Waverley (1814), and Buchan's John Burnet of Barns (1898) and Stevenson's Catriona (1893) share a Dutch episode in Leyden. Buchan's A Lost Lady of Old Years (1899), with its chases and sea journeys over and around Scotland in the aftermath of Culloden, has some echoes of Stevenson's Kidnapped (1886), and also Neil Munro's John Splendid (1898), in the descriptions of Gaelic settlements and Highland society. The early short stories of Buchan are less obviously derivative, and begin as story-essays, excursions into fiction from the pure essays which make up the bulk of his first collection of short pieces, Scholar Gypsies (1896).

The stories 'Sentimental Travelling' (1894) and 'Night on the Heather' (1895) are essays with some characters, dialogue and the bare outline of a plot, and as such can be regarded as stories, clearly distinct from Buchan essays like 'Gentlemen of Leisure' (1894) or 'The Man of the Uplands' (1895). 'On Cademuir Hill' (1894) was Buchan's first real story with the first Buchan characters, the nameless gamekeeper and the poacher. This, with 'Afternoon' (1896) and 'An Individualist' (1896), also without names, make up the fictional element in the largely non-fictional Scholar Gypsies. Grey Weather (1899),

Buchan's first real short-story collection, is fully stories and poems, in the manner of Kipling's The Jungle Book (1894), and here for the first time Buchan produces characters with names.

Here, in 'Politics and the Mayfly' (1896), the two protagonists are the farmer of Clachlands and William Laverhope the ploughman. This story is 'contemporary': since the men are to vote in an election, it must be set after 1867 and the Derby-Disraeli Reform Act which introduced household suffrage.

Nonetheless, these early stories seem hardly contemporary at all, set as they are in an almost timeless Borders countryside. However, Buchan's arrival at Oxford in 1895 was to change his fiction. He immersed himself into a completely new set of values and a whole new society. He was first exposed to English upper-class society in the country-house parties of the families of his new Oxford friends, and it was in this quintessential Edwardian setting that Buchan's first portrayal of the gentry appeared.

#### Buchan and the aristocracy

'A Reputation' (1898) is the earliest of his stories to use the country-house setting, as does 'Summer Weather' (1899), but the real beginning of this new direction in Buchan's fiction is with 'Comedy in the Full Moon' (1899). This is an arch tale of six people converging on a moonlit hill under various misapprehensions; the country-house party members are burdened with excruciating dialogue. The story is redeemed only

by the wholesome directness of the Scottish peasantry, among them Jock Rorison, Buchan's first recurring character, who had already appeared in 'Streams of Water in the South' (1899). Miss Phyllis and the Earl had also appeared before, in 'Summer Weather' and 'A Reputation' respectively, but only in this story do they come to life. Buchan's touch is initially heavyhanded on the gentry, especially when dealing with women, and in struggling with the Arcadian image of the Sentimentalist: but these were early attempts. He was to improve dramatically in ease of presentation and in his handling of dialogue, in both his portrayal of the country-house party characters and his native Scots.

The gentry began to outnumber the peasantry as Buchan grew more accustomed to Oxford and the new society he found himself in. Buchan was an astonishingly industrious undergraduate. He was a reader for John Lane, a reviewer for the Academy, he won the Stanhope History Essay Prize, he had had one novel published (Sir Quixote) on his arrival at Oxford and was already a contributor to The Yellow Book. In spite of this he left Oxford with a First in Greats. The stories that Buchan wrote in this period, later published in The Watcher By The Threshold (1902), are uniformly good, despite certain lapses of touch in the more emotional moments of 'The Far Islands' (1899). The Half-Hearted (1900) was Buchan's next publication and his fourth novel. It was also his first attempt at a full-length country-house party

narrative. The hero of this novel is a clear indication of the direction Buchan was now experimenting with in his delineation of heroic characters in a modern setting, and one which foreshadows Hannay and the post-1915 change.

### The Half-Hearted

Lewis Haystoun, the sacrificial hero of this novel and a man torn between two ideals, is an uneven creation, although a much happier piece of work than his friends Winterham, Mordaunt and Wratislaw, all of whom had made appearances before, in 'A Reputation' (1898) and in 'The Herd of Standlan' (1899). David Daniell has discussed The Half-Hearted quite comprehensively in his study of Buchan's fiction, The Interpreter's House (8), and rightly calls the dialogue between these pale imitations of the young men of Edwardian clubland 'the feeblest thing Buchan wrote' (9). The country-house party dialogue is no better, although the conversation between characters appears to improve when the open air surrounds them, rather than in a drawing-room setting and with drawing-room expectations of 'Willean wit' (10).

Although Buchan had never been to India, and his brother Willie was only posted there in 1903, the Indian section in The Half-Hearted - particularly the descriptions of life in the hill-stations and of the native tribes - gives a solid impression of truth. Undoubtedly the short stories of Kipling were the basis for these details; a good example of this is the dialogue of

Fazir Khan, remarkably Kiplingesque.

"What would ye be without us?" said the chief in sudden temper. "What do ye know of the Nazri gates or the hill country? What is this talk of duty, when ye cannot stir a foot without our aid?"

(11)

Compare the extract above with this from Kipling's 'The King's Ankus' (1895), with its parallel rhetorically formulaic local speech.

"There is no city. Look up. Yonder are roots of the great trees tearing the stones apart. Trees and men do not grow together," Kaa insisted.

"Twice and thrice have men found their way here," the White Cobra answered savagely, "but they never spoke till I came upon them groping in the dark, and then they cried only a little time. But ye come with lies, Man and Snake both, and would have me believe the city is not, and that my wardship ends."

(12)

Lewis' character grows stronger and is much more assured in the later sections of the book, but he is a fore-doomed character, with no possibility of redeeming his fatal quality of half-heartedness which is the driving force of the plot. Had he been fully motivated to pull himself out of the syndrome of fatalistic acceptance of loss, Lewis might well have achieved a less spectacular but more cost-efficient way of saving the Empire and of blocking the Nazri Pass, returning to Alice a hero, fully redeemed of his earlier failure to save her from the Pool of Ness. But Lewis is not like this. The fact that Alice 'had known him in his weakness, but she would never think of him in his strength...pleased him' (13), merely complements Lewis's view that death is 'the glory of the utter loss' (14); this is



not a character who wants to survive and win, only one who 'had ceased to struggle with an inborn weakness' (15).

The other characters in The Half-Hearted are strictly background. While the ostensible heroine, Alice Wishart, is only Miss Phyllis from 'Comedy in the Full Moon' under a different name, she has more independence in her thoughts and actions. Jock Rorison reappears, although not by name, as 'the herd of the Redwireshead' and is discernible by a familiar dryness of tone (16). Bertha Afflint is the final appearance of the Afflint family in their role as social background; a Lady Afflint had appeared in 'A Reputation' - as 'the hidden reef on which so many a brilliant talker shipwrecks' (17) - and in 'The Far Islands'. Here too is the first appearance of a Merkland, later to be the family name of Lord Lamancha - 'the Merklands were not a dressy family' (18). All this is development in Buchan's handling of the gentry and of their world, in which he was to set much of his post-1915 fiction.

#### Recurrence of characters and names

The importance of recurrence among the background characters of Buchan's fiction cannot be overestimated. Appreciated fully only after many readings, the subtle and understated appearances and reappearances of a character or a name produce a sub-conscious reaction of familiarity with all Buchan's contemporary fiction. Even where a character name may have been given no personality, the name remains in the memory;

appearing first, say, in the talk of the characters of A Lodge In The Wilderness (1906), and surfacing some years later as a guest or hostess in a story of London political society. The effect is of continuity, a reiteration of a certain grouping within the Buchan society, and where a Buchan name appears in both historical and contemporary settings, the effect increases to include longevity in the continuity. This strengthens the cumulative effect of Buchan's characters, their role in the fiction creating the social fabric of that world, and is indicative of his gradual construction of what was to become the Hannay world.

One such name is that of the Manorwater family, first used by Buchan in A Lost Lady of Old Years (1899), where Lord and Lady Manorwater are the Catholic cousins of Margaret Murray and give her shelter after Culloden. In 'The Far Islands' (1899) the Manorwaters are background, as they are in The Half-Hearted, and both stories are set in contemporary times and arguably use the same characters. A Lord Manorwater had figured in 'At the Rising of the Waters' (1897) as the drowned man, and in 'Politics and the Mayfly' (1899) as the old lord; no doubt these were different generations and people from the Jock and Egeria Manorwater of The Half-Hearted. A Lady Manorwater appears in Mr Standfast (1919) running a hospital in Douvecourt where Mary Lamington is a VAD, and Kore Arabin's grandmother is a Manorwater in The Dancing Floor (1926). The last Manorwater

appearance is in 1929, escorting Barbara Dasent on a visit to Laverlaw in The Courts of the Morning. The Manor Water runs into Tweed, as does the Leithen: these were familiar names from boyhood to Buchan, evocative and comforting, no doubt with their own special nuances and meaning.

The Half-Hearted was published in the midst of a series of short stories which were later collected into The Watcher by the Threshold (1902). 'The Far Islands' (1899), has a fine collection of recurring characters mingled with 'one-off' appearances whose names were rehashed for different characters later on. The Durwards of 'The Far Islands' may have had a connection with Henry Durward of 'Fountainblue' (1901), and Clara Etheridge is the beauty of the year in both stories. She also foreshadows Agatha Raden of John Macnab (1925) in her retelling of a Highland folktale, and is a later echo of Miss Phyllis and Alice Wishart in her role in 'Fountainblue'. She is an early version of the thinking Buchan heroine, later to be expressed most clearly in Mary Lamington and Janet Raden (see chapter six below). Indeterminate couples recur after 'The Far Islands' - the Marshams appear later in the same role as social background in The Half-Hearted, and the Shandwicks wait 20 years to reappear in Mr Standfast (1919), still hosting social events. The Logans share their name with a tramp in 'Streams of Water in the South' (1899), and the Douglas-Ernots are the family of Vernon Milburne's mother in 'Basilissa' (1914) and The Dancing

Floor (1926).

There is a lot of Buchan's Oxford in 'The Far Islands', particularly the descriptions of Colin's reception by his fellow Scots, and the importance of Buchan's own Oxford background can be seen in its appearance with almost every male character in the Hannay and Leithen worlds. Jaikie, of the McCunn world, goes to Cambridge, while Dougal goes straight to a job: Oxford is for the aristocracy and the gentry, a natural progression in the lives of Hannay's friends.

The Leithen prototype

'The Far Islands' was also notable for the first incarnation of the recurring figure of the scholar and lawyer happily ensconced in chambers and reading for the Bar, as Buchan did himself. One of Buchan's leading heroes, Edward Leithen, was to be the most fully portrayed example of this, which first occurred in 'The Far Islands' with Colin's friend Medway. The title story of The Watcher by the Threshold, published one year later in 1900, continues the idea.

The narrator, Henry Grey, is a lawyer, a sportsman (fishing, shooting, and stalking), and something of a scholar. 'The Watcher By The Threshold' is overlaid with a depression and a grim fatalism rarely seen in Buchan, but is highly appropriate to the Gothic narrative of possession by a demon. The overlying gloom is most apparent in the narration, and although Grey

admits that he is in a bad temper at the beginning of the story, the mood does not lift, and is clearly of the story rather than of the narrator. The character of the narrator could be seen as a grumpy forerunner of Leithen, even down to the detail of having once been in love with another man's wife. Sybil Ladlaw might well be a model for Ethel Pitt-Heron of The Power-House, the mood is distinctly Victorian; with none of the freshness, excitement or inherent optimism in The Power-House. Yet Buchan was on his way: scholarship and a country-house setting combined with supernatural adventure was to be a recurring theme in some of Buchan's fiction - see 'The Wind in the Portico' (1928) and 'Ho! The Merry Masons' (1933) - and at this stage (1900) in his career Buchan had clearly progressed quite significantly from his early writing (19).

#### The Hannay prototype

A minor character in Buchan's 1906 novel, A Lodge in the Wilderness, spans the two periods of Buchan's fiction, and is an early intimation of Buchan's new adventure hero, Hannay. A.W. Thirlstone first appears as the narrator to the narrator of 'The Kings of Orion' (1906), and has a much more delineated personality than has been usual so far for a minor character, almost as if he were an unfledged or unused protagonist. This quality about Thirlstone is used very experimentally.

'The Kings of Orion' is a curious story, with two unfinished anecdotal episodes - of Wiston's disgrace, and of the Victorian

Whig who was also Emperor of Byzantium - to introduce Thirlstone's narrative of Tommy Lacelles. Here Thirlstone is a hunter, explorer, secret agent and soldier, the archetype of the hero whom Buchan was to perfect with Hannay and Sandy ten years later. In A Lodge, printed ten months after 'The Kings of Orion', Thirlstone has been brought down by a peerage, responsibility, and an American wife 'with a figure and fine eyes, but neither complexion nor heart' (20).

Buchan's approval here is clearly with the earlier Thirlstone:

...an unmistakable figure in any landscape. The long haggard brown face, with the skin drawn tightly over the cheekbones, the keen blue eyes finely wrinkled round the corners with staring at many suns, the scar which gave his mouth a humorous droop...I had last seen him on the quay at Funchal...Before that we had met at an embassy ball in Vienna, and earlier still at a hill-station in Persia...Also I had been at school with him...He was a soldier of note, who had taken part in two little wars and one big one; had himself conducted a political mission through a hard country with some success, and was habitually chosen by his superiors to keep his eyes open as a foreign attache in our neighbours' wars. But his fame as a hunter had gone abroad into places where even the name of the British army is unknown.

(21)

In its way, this lengthy extract is vintage Buchan, and one of the earliest examples of what was to be known as the Buchan hero. Lewis Haystoun of The Half-Hearted (1900) received the same kind of descriptive hyperbole, a list of excellences in multiple fields, but Thirlstone is not a Scots laird with an amateur interest in politics and strategy, (as Sandy was to be) but a professional, a soldier and a hunter. Buchan rather overdoes the hero-worship; the too-picturesque details of the

scar and the blue eyes; but the vignettes of the quay at Funchal, the wars and the embassy ball are classic Buchan, glimpses of the romantic life of adventure made more alluring and potent because they are concentrated, extracts of unattainable romance.

Nearly thirty years later, in A Prince of the Captivity (1933), Thirlstone makes his last appearance in Buchan at a political dinner, and it appears that his essential roving qualities have survived his gilt cage and clipped wings (22), since Adam sees him still with 'a rugged individuality...who looked a backwoodsman however he was dressed' (23). This noble scruffiness denoted independence of spirit and a disregard for outward appearance, essentially a description of approval in Buchan. In A Lodge in the Wilderness Buchan's disapproval is for those ex-free spirits who have got themselves caught up in the machine of society and who won't admit their loss of freedom. Here Thirlstone is described again.

'Well, he settled down and married, and got into the ordinary rut, and there he was, still brown in the face but rather tired about the eyes...All his roughness and shyness were gone, and he had the same kind of manner as the other monkeys, only he looked more wholesome...I put it straight to him, if he liked his new life. He said he did, talked a lot of rot about his duty in the sphere into which it had pleased God to call him, and about the fun at being at the centre of things; but there was not much conviction in his tone. So I began to tell him what had been happening to me, mentioned some places we had been together in and friends we had known...He dropped all his long words and fell into the honest slang of the backwoods.

(24)

Here, Buchan might well be describing Hannay or Sandy from the

point of view of an old adventurer who had elected not to join society and conform, as both Hannay and Sandy did when respectability overtook them. Thirlstone, it can be seen, was the beginning of a solidification of Buchan's ideas about a hero. Lewis Haystoun was an early attempt, but in 1901-3 Buchan's work in South Africa gave him the experience he needed to supersede the India culled from literary sources alone which had been his only exotic fictional setting to date.

A Lodge in the Wilderness marks the end of what could be described as Buchan's experimental period, since the fiction that follows this, starting with 'The Company of the Marjolaine' (1909), shows great assurance in the delineation of plot and character. This new assurance may well account for the sudden drop in recurring character names at this stage in Buchan's writing, stories told by and with fewer characters, with a correspondingly greater degree of concentration on those fewer characters.

#### The end of the Edwardian period

One year later, in 'A Lucid Interval' (1910), Tommy Deloraine makes his first, background, appearance, and in 'Space' (1911), Edward Leithen is introduced, one of Buchan's most frequently appearing characters (see Appendix 13). These two characters are the last of Buchan's 'Edwardian' characters, and move through the 1915 change in his writing to reappear, particularly Leithen, in much post-War Buchan fiction, adapting well to the



new style and tone. They also enhance the continuity of this 'new' Buchan writing as evidence of the changes that Buchan had undergone as a writer and as a creator of character. They do not foreshadow the 1915 change, but Leithen especially is important in illustrating Buchan's capacity to adapt and extend from what he had already established in his fiction.

In 1913, 'The Power-House', Buchan's last Edwardian novel, was printed in Blackwoods' Magazine, and was later published as a novel in 1916. The narrator is Leithen, now a junior lawyer and a keen young Member of Parliament, with two other recurring characters - Tommy Deloraine, and the first appearance of McGillivray of Scotland Yard. Leithen's dealings with McGillivray are exactly the same as those Hannay was to employ a few years later - the hero asking single leading questions of vital import, and then refusing to say any more until he has all the information. (McGillivray changed very little in his career as a link with official law and order for the Buchan heroes.) Tommy Deloraine, described as having 'the misfortune to be a marquis, and a very rich one' (26), and engaged to Claudia Barriton in 'A Lucid Interval' (1910), is in The Power-House only an M.P., and the story is set in the days before he succeeded to his title. This places the story firmly before the Edwardian Free Trade rows of 'A Lucid Interval', and although the pre-War atmosphere is very strong in The Power-House, the mood is buoyant and full of life.

Leithen's gravity and placidity is given a nice counterpoint in Chapman the Labour M.P., and in Tommy Deloraine (27), an early version of the light-hearted young-man-about-town, later perfected in Archie Roylance, and in the Duke of Burminster of The Runagates Club (1928). Chapman's less rarified sensibilities do Leithen a world of good, cutting down his cigarettes and drinking, and getting him fit. This narrative is also the only Leithen story which shows him laughing - 'He made me ache with laughter' (28) - and the humour in the story spills out into genuinely funny jokes which are as effective today as they were over 75 years ago. Tommy and Chapman are comic figures, buffoons to lessen tension and give relief to both narrator and reader, and although much of Buchan's future fiction was still to be joyous and optimistic, the naturalness of the humour in The Power-House gives it a unique position in the novels (29).

Buchan had proved himself to be a successful and skilful writer, with 35 short stories published in short-story collections as well as in the magazines of the day. His six novels were shortly to be joined by an seventh, initially called 'New Lands in the Sunset' (30), which he had sent Tommy Nelson in May 1914 on approval. It was accepted by Nelson's and eventually published in July 1915 as Salute to Adventurers.

Buchan was already beginning to think more in terms of novels than stories, especially the new type of novel which he had

found he could write with The Power-House. In July 1914 he sent George Brown of Nelson's a copy of The Power-House, 'the shocker which I spoke of' (31), indicating a likelihood that Buchan had been considering it as a possible Nelson's title. Salute To Adventurers had taken him a year to write (32), but his next novel, his second shocker, only took him a few months. The Thirty-Nine Steps was begun in August 1914, laid aside to allow Buchan to concentrate on the first part of the Nelson's History of the War, and was finished in December of that year (33). It was published by Blackwood's in October 1915, having had already seen the light of day in a New York magazine, The All-Story Weekly in the issues of June 5 and 12, and in Blackwood's Magazine from July to September (34), and, as has already been discussed, was an instant success.

#### The change of 1915

It was at this point that the pattern in Buchan's writing changed. The Power-House had been the experimental ground for the Oppenheim-influenced 'shocker': The Thirty-Nine Steps was partly the result of the successful repetition of that formula. As well as formulating the boundaries for his three 'worlds' of characters, that of Hannay, Leithen and Dickson McCunn, which I shall go on to discuss, Buchan began to re-use narrators, and Leithen was his first recurring narrator, in 'Space' (1911) and in The Power-House. As such he was more significant and memorable than just another repeated character.

In The Thirty-Nine Steps, the only character to recur from a previous story is McGillivray, playing the same role as he did in The Power-House, and both he and Bullivant of the Foreign Office would return in future Hannay and Leithen novels. Even the villain of The Thirty-Nine Steps is finally defeated by Hannay in Mr Standfast (1919). Hannay himself is a first-person narrator six more times (35).

These three new developments which manifested themselves first in Buchan's writing with The Thirty-Nine Steps, and may be fairly said to have begun with that novel; the new format of the successful 'shocker', the development of a specific hero, and the new possibilities in novel length are enhanced by a fourth development which had less to do with Buchan than with history and the response of writers of fiction. The outbreak of war in 1914 changed every aspect of life irrevocably, and with the passing of the combined values of Victorian and Edwardian society, the fiction of the day moved towards what was later to be known as a post-War realism. This change was unavoidable, and although books written before the War were still popular, they were read as anodynes (see chapter one above). The Power-House, written in 1912-13 and finally published as a novel in 1916, had a dedication written after the outbreak of war by Buchan, on its publication as a novel, to Major-General Sir Francis Lloyd, acknowledging its quality as escapism.

...this story, written in the smooth days before the war...may enable an honest man here and there to forget for

an hour the too urgent realities.

(36)

Buchan's fiction changed quite comprehensively under these new pressures of war: changing habits of reading, and changing patterns in popular taste and in reasons for the consumption of fiction.

#### The War fiction

Taken by itself, The Thirty-Nine Steps is not a novel with anything very valuable in the way of recurring Buchan characters. But the beginnings of later, greater things are there - Bullivant the archetypal omnipotent authority, a father-figure to Hannay, dispensing wisdom and powers unavailable to ordinary citizens (37). Sir Harry is not quite the silly ass that Tommy Deloraine was (38), but the two can be seen as forerunners of Archie Roylance, in Mr Standfast (1919). Hannay himself is an excellent creation for a first appearance, with plenty of loose ends of past history to construct more stories from, and with much potential for future use as a hero, building on previous fictional experiences.

In Greenmantle (1916), the change in the pattern of Buchan's writing really begins to become apparent. This novel is set eighteen months after The Thirty-Nine Steps, and Hannay has metamorphosed into 'an obscure Major of the New Army' (39), and Bullivant has been given a son who died a hero. Sandy Arbuthnot is introduced, a most fascinating creation said to have been

modelled on Aubrey Herbert, and 'is one of the best documented, as well as one of the least probable of Buchan's creations' (40). Peter Pienaar, quoted a number of times in The Thirty-Nine Steps, appears as a protagonist for the first time, as does John Scantlebury Blenkiron, a large American determined 'to be the nootralist kind of nootral till Kaiser will be sorry he didn't declare war on America at the beginning' (41). These three new characters recur as important protagonists many times, Sandy rather more than the rest (see Appendix 13). What is important here is that Buchan now had the opportunity to develop and extend characters, since Greenmantle was a sequel to a success in a new genre. In Greenmantle are details of Hannay's and Peter's past life together in South Africa. The introduction of Sandy is accompanied by an exhaustive and highly impressive list of his exploits and accomplishments (42). Bullivant has a dossier on Blenkiron; Sandy is already a character of repute in the Buchan world, and both characters make that world wider in its horizons by their arrival.

Despite the status of Peter Pienaar as a protagonist in both Greenmantle and Mr Standfast (1919), he remains shadowy, a hero past the days of his prime and his greatest exploits. Hannay's growing ascendancy as the leader, chief hero, and the vigorous younger man that Peter once was, accentuates this decline. There is no thematic conflict between the old king and the young king, but rather a natural succession. Peter's role in Hannay's

life is as a mentor for greatness, but although Hannay has learnt from him and become great in Peter's skills, the world he now moves in is not one which Peter has knowledge of, and Hannay must adapt: being young, he is able to do this. Peter cannot, and is clearly out of place. It is also clear that Peter, most truly of 'the old life' (43), will inevitably be left behind once Hannay begins his new life with Mary, no matter what arrangements Peter and Mary had come to between themselves.

"I go back to England," he whispered. "Your little mysie is going to take care of me till I am settled. We spoke of it yesterday at my cottage. I will find a lodging and be patient till the war is over."

(44)

This resolution is far too resigned and demure for the Peter the reader has been led to expect from Greenmantle and The Thirty-Nine Steps, and true to form, Peter slips back into the RFC with a crippled leg and dies preventing crucial information from reaching the enemy. His death is fated, and Peter is aware of it. Archie says:

'One of the reasons why he won't budge is because he says God has some work for him to do. He's quite serious about it, and ever since he got the notion he has perked up amazin'.

(45)

Peter's conversation with Mary was a tying of loose ends and a clearing of the ground before the next phase in Hannay's life, and Peter's death is a neat tidying away of a finished phase (see chapter six below).

Secondary War fiction characters

Mr Standfast, the third Hannay novel, also introduces two important protagonists, and two protagonistic helpers. The character of Mary Lamington will be discussed in chapter six below; suffice to say here that as a recurring character she does not develop a great deal beyond the facts and impressions of her first appearance in Mr Standfast, which is her most important role. Here she is professionally senior to Hannay, a constant surprise in Buchan's portrayal of her role and, more importantly (unfortunately), plays the love interest, that magnetic quality which attracts a reader's attention far more than any other aspect of a story's substance. In Mr Standfast, however, Mary's existence as the object of both Hannay's and Ivery's desire, is vital to Ivery's capture, and Buchan allows Mary to offer herself up as the sacrifice, of her own volition, and in a plan of her own devising.

Archie Roylance makes his first appearance in Mr Standfast initially as an apparent silly ass, but this is belied by his ability in flying, appropriate given that he is an ornithologist. His buffoonery masks the now-expected mixture of competence and modesty in his chosen field, which is a manifestation of all the Buchan heroes. He remains young in the Buchan world, the eternal subaltern, but shows a rapid maturity in moments of real crisis. 'It was a new Archie, with a hard voice, a lean face, and very old eyes' (46). Archie has a high



appearance count in the contemporary fiction - nine times in total - but is nearly always a secondary protagonist, only achieving full hero status when accompanied by Janet, whom he marries after John Macnab (1925), and goes travelling with in The Courts of the Morning (1929) and in The House of the Four Winds (1935). He also appears, immediately after the War, in Huntingtower (1922), an instance of two separate Buchan worlds combining - the McCunn and the Hannay - to which latter Archie really belongs. Archie is wholly attractive and consistently joyful, an affirmation of optimistic post-War hope. Although he cannot be truly a post-War product, since he is old enough to fight in the War, Archie is an example of a character who was really only made possible by the outbreak of war and the shaking of deep-rooted foundations. He is a product of war, the epitome of a youth experienced but not yet hardened.

Buchan returned to the Scots peasantry for two characters in Mr Standfast who recurred in future novels probably because they were just too good not to re-use. Andrew Amos, elderly and 'a pillar of a service so secret that the name of no one of its members and no one of its reports had ever appeared on paper' (47), plays the flute and appears unexpectedly as a courier on Skye and as Mary's chauffeur and chaperon in France. His other appearance, in A Prince of the Captivity (1933) is described with affection and a generous insight from Buchan the Tory M.P. who yet knew his Scottish politics (48).

Amos was as inflexible in his politics as he had been in his patriotism; he was a Radical of the old rock and no Socialist, but his class loyalty was...vigorous...He had a conception of the rights of the wage-earner which he held as stoutly as he held his own creed of militant atheism, and he would never deviate one jot from it as long as he had breath in his body. Eighty years earlier he would have been a Chartist leader.

(59)

In both novels Amos introduces the hero to Trade Unionism and is a gauge for the feelings of the workers; he is also the driver and chaperon to both heroines, Mary and Jacqueline Armine. In Mr Standfast his membership of the secret service makes it appropriate for him to accentuate Mary's cover by acting as her driver, but there is little explanation for his presence in A Prince of the Captivity, other than that he works for Adam in another, later branch of that service, and that Jacqueline 'found out that the dream of his life was to see Italy, so I brought him with me as my courier' (50). Amos is a useful and a colourful 'helper' character, a small study which is lovingly detailed and impressively succinct, not wasted in his few appearances but also not over-used so as to diminish the effect that he has.

Geordie Hamilton is of the same kind, also of the Scots peasantry, but a good deal younger and 'a broad, thickset fellow, of the adorable bandy-legged stocky type that I had seen go through the Railway Triangle at Arras as though it were blotting paper' (51). After Mr Standfast, where he first assaults Hannay and then ends up as his batman, Geordie migrates

to South America as a Communist, working for Sandy Arbuthnot in The Courts of the Morning (1929), and is still in Sandy's service in The Island of Sheep (1936) (see chapter five below).

These characters, cropping up as invaluable senior servants in the most unlikely places and in relatively unrelated parts of the Buchan world, impart a lively kind of continuity to these novels, at once a reminder of the past and an assurance of dependability for the present.

#### The War in Buchan's fiction

Buchan was to use the War setting again for three short stories and for part of a third novel, A Prince of the Captivity (1933). Two of the short stories, 'The Loathly Opposite' (1927) and 'Dr Lartius' (1928), deal with the decoding of ciphers and with the secret service. They are written with hindsight, and their characters have some connections with the Hannay world. The third story, the almost unknown 'The King of Ypres', was published once only in the American edition of The Watcher By The Threshold in 1918. It touches on an isolated limb of the Hannay world, naming no other Buchan characters, but the hero, Private Peter Galbraith, is from 'C' Company, 3rd Lennox Highlanders, part of the battalion in which Hannay and Archie were serving in Greenmantle and Mr Standfast. The story is narrated in the third person, in a terminology appropriate as Galbraith's own, although with rather an over-use of his terms of reference - the forge at Motherwell, the Gallowgate on a

Saturday night, and so on - and has a startlingly blunt savagery about it. This is expressed in terms which seem much stronger than those used by Hannay in the two previous war books, and this story was probably written just after America declared war on Germany in April 1917, as a boost to the fervency of the American war effort.

Buchan had been in charge of the British propaganda machine in the War through his work as Director of the new Department of Information, set up in February 1917. Janet Adam Smith says:

Buchan kept firmly to the line already followed by Masterman in his original propaganda section: that it meant the dissemination of true facts wherever they would do good, and not the manufacture of stories which, however flattering to the Allies, however derogatory to the enemy, had no firm basis in fact.

(52)

'The King of Ypres' has no German or enemy characters at all - the battle Galbraith fights is against civil anarchy and for the preservation of order. This carefully composed story casts the light of heroism on the soldier maintaining the values of civilisation (another reiteration of Buchan's 'fragility of civilisation' theme), which for a war story seems remarkably restrained, clearly in line with Buchan's approach to propaganda as cited above.

Private Galbraith has a very different status to that of Brigadier-General Hannay, the associate of officers and gentlemen.

He had not been dry for a fortnight, his puttees had rotted

away, his greatcoat had disappeared in a mud-hole, and he had had no stomach for what food could be got. He had seen half his battalion die before his eyes...The worst of it was that he had never come to grips with the Boches, which he had long decided was the one pleasure left to him in life. He had got far beyond cursing, though he had once had a talent that way. His mind was as sodden as his body, and his thoughts had been focussed on the penetrating power of a bayonet when directed against a plump Teutonic chest. There had been a German barber in Motherwell called Schultz, and he imagined the enemy as a million Schultzes - large, round men who talked with the back of their throat.

(53)

Galbraith comes across as a fairly thuggish sort of character in peacetime - he had had a talent for cursing, and 'his relations with the police had often been strained' (54) - but he rises to appreciate civilised values in a town of anarchy and chaos after the departure of the British. This is a story of redemption, as was Buchan's later story 'Ship To Tarshish' (1927), and through it the soldier discovers many new things about himself.

For the first time he knew responsibility, and the toil which brings honour with it...he, whose aim in life had been to scrape through with the minimum of exertion, now found himself the inspirer of the maximum in others.

(55)

For his action of deserting by being left behind by his battalion when they left Ypres, and for taking the law into his own hands by, amongst other things, holding an irregular court of justice and ordering the death of three spies, Private Galbraith is court-martialled. True to the form of the Buchan hero, 'the story he gave was so bare as to be unintelligible. He asked for no mercy and gave no explanations' (56), but the

town dignitaries put his story into perspective for him.

...the Court, taking into consideration the exceptional circumstances in which Private Galbraith had been placed, inflicted no penalty and summarily discharged the prisoner. Privately, his Commanding Officer and the still more exalted personages shook hands with him and told him that he was a devilish good fellow and a credit to the British Army.

(57)

### The post-War characters

The changing times had given Buchan the scope to create and develop the post-War characters. This signalled a change in the atmosphere of his stories; the stunned post-War peace of the world, and of the Hannay world, is nonetheless stirred by changes - social, political, cultural - and these can be seen in the characters of the post-War Buchan fiction.

After Mr Standfast (1919), Buchan wrote a Leithen story, 'Fullcircle', which was published in Blackwood's Magazine in early 1920, and afterwards appeared in The Runagates Club (1928). His first peacetime story, it is a paean to country living and country pursuits, and contains a satiric portrait of Bloomsbury intellectuals. Buchan had moved to Oxfordshire with his family by this time, and no doubt the blessings of a country house were much on his mind. The recurrence of characters continues: Leithen, the narrator (the story was later given to Martin Peckwether in The Runagates Club), has a country house, Borrowby in the Cotswolds, in the vicinity of Fullcircle. (The name of a previous owner of Fullcircle is shared with the Applebys of 'Basilissa' and of Vernon's guardian in The Dancing

Floor [1926] ) Fullcircle itself was built by a Lord Carteron, perhaps a forebear of Lady Molly Carteron of 'The Company of the Marjolaine' (1909), and the Giffens who inhabit it at the time of the story are earnest doers-of-good, gradually changing into conventional country house dwellers as the house works its magic.

Apart from a hint of causticity with Leithen's hurried avoidance of Dr Swope and Percy Blaker, the Bloomsbury set are let down lightly. Buchan's opinion of their preoccupations is dismissed only in the metamorphosis of the Giffens into a state clearly considered better and more appropriate to their new country surroundings, but the narrator is disconcerted by this metamorphosis. The most telling change of all, the Giffens' breezy but earnest atheism changed to a contented conversion to Roman Catholicism, is positively terrifying, symbolising the complete control that the house has over its owners.

For the Giffens - though I scarcely dared to admit it - had deteriorated. They were far pleasanter people. I liked them infinitely better. I hoped to see them often again. I detested the type they used to represent, and shunned it like the plague. They were wise now, and mellow, and most agreeable human beings. But some virtue had gone out of them. An uncomfortable virtue, no doubt, but virtue, something generous and adventurous. Before their faces had had a sort of wistful kindness. Now they had geniality - which is not the same thing.

(58)

As a response to the restless and rootless searching for new thoughts and solutions that could be said to characterise the immediate post-War period, Buchan's approach is muted but yet

clearly defined. He deals with this phenomenon again in his next contemporary novel, Huntingtower (1922), in the character of the poet John Heritage and his fundamental disagreement with the old romantic Dickson McCunn. Heritage too sees the error of his thoughts, not by any magical or supernatural process but by the example of real life and the experience of falling in love. This is also the first appearance of the new 'McCunn' world, an alternative to the Hannay world which Buchan had been developing for seven years.

#### The McCunn world

Huntingtower is a delightful story; it produces the Gorbals Die-Hards, the antithesis of Kaillyard waifs, (see chapter five below), and the bourgeois placidity of Dickson McCunn. These characters explode into the Buchan world, making a strong contrast with the so far wholly aristocratic or peasantry-originated characters, providing a bridge between the two, and also acknowledging the realities of trade and poverty. Although Dickson changes upon retirement to a town imitation of the country dweller, his wife still dotes on hydropathics, and Dickson's own ideas of what is aristocratic are gently implied to be rather vulgar. But no matter - this is leaven in the correct and automatic conformity of attitude and behaviour which most of Buchan's contemporary characters exhibit.

In introducing an alternative to the aristocracy, the McCunn world also provides a refreshing alternative viewpoint, backed



up by what may have been Buchan's own experiences as a Scot among the aristocratic English. Dougal in particular demonstrates the great divide, and although in Huntingtower he is merely an opinionated urchin, in Castle Gay his class-consciousness is explored more fully. When he feels uncomfortable in Harriet Westwater's drawing-room in Castle Gay 1930), it is the breaching of defences, begun eight years earlier in Huntingtower.

Dougal...had not enjoyed his luncheon...He was acutely aware of being in an unfamiliar environment, to which he should have been hostile, but which as a matter of plain fact he enjoyed with trepidation. Unlike Jaikie he bristled with class-consciousness. Mrs Brisbane-Brown's kindly arrogance, the long-descended air of her possessions, the atmosphere of privilege so secure that it need not conceal itself - he was aware of it with a half-guilty joy. The consequence was that he was adrift from his moorings, and not well at ease. He had not spoken at table except in answer to questions, and he now stood in the drawing-room like a colt in a flower garden, not very certain what to do with his legs.

(59)

The peasantry would not be invited into the drawing-room, and would certainly not be asked to luncheon; the aristocracy and the gentry would take this as a matter of course. For a child from a Glasgow slum such experiences would be out of reach, but for a rising professional journalist as Dougal was, the territory is open but unexplored. Jaikie, significantly, does not have such a problem, and it is he who is conforming more to the anglicised gentry with his university education and his aspirations to a daughter of the aristocracy. Dickson McCunn has no problems with exalted surroundings or people either, his common sense is proof against all entrenched privileges.

The McCunn world has more reality about it than the Hannay world, since it admits more classes than the upper and lower, and exhibits more experience in a life than Eton, Oxford, the army, the law or Parliament, the traditional territory of the ruling classes. But it is still a closed world, with its own heroes, villains and adventures, and only two visitors from the outside, Hannay world - Archie and Janet Roylance. Archie appears in the different Buchan worlds with a generally undetected frequency, and he plays his part in the McCunn books, Huntingtower and The House of the Four Winds (1935), with the same insouciance that he displays in all his other appearances, undeterred by the change of colleagues or society. 'Levyng a private war and breaking every law of the land' (60) is all the same to Archie as infiltrating a seedy nightclub and flying Hannay home from Norway was to be in The Three Hostages (1924), Buchan's next contemporary novel.

#### Post-War Hannay

From seeing Hannay change from a reckless adventurer, to a daring secret service agent, to the experienced soldier, in The Three Hostages we now see Hannay the family man and country landowner. As the appeals for his help in the case of the three hostages multiply, he buries himself in self-delusion and sticks his head in the sand, determined not to be hauled back to the grind of disguise and detective work. This section, chapter 2 of The Three Hostages, is written in Hannay's own terminology

and wholly from his point of view, (as are all the Hannay books), with an ironic and rueful consciousness that his actions in trying to evade the inevitable are transparent, that Mary's expectation that he will do his duty will drive him to it, and that the quest is a foregone conclusion. In the course of this novel we see a great deal more of the relationship between Mary and Hannay (see chapter six below), only just begun in their previous appearance in Mr Standfast, and with their son Peter John they make a contented family.

The Three Hostages has plenty of recurring characters, old and new. Lady Amysfort and the Wymondham aunts reappear as social background, as do the butlers Paddock and Barnard. Gaudian, an old adversary of Hannay's from Greenmantle, is conveniently at hand in Norway to help with the rescue and rehabilitation of the first hostage. Macgillivray and Bullivant perform their usual roles of official back-up and fatherly advice, and Archie adds life and ignorant juvenile gaiety to a fairly tense situation. Sir Arthur Warcliff reappears in considerable distress, a widower, and the rather improbable elderly father of a small boy. The real return to form is Sandy Arbuthnot, last seen leading the charge into Erzerum in Greenmantle dressed as an Islamic war leader and prophet. In The Three Hostages he stays with the mystic East, impersonating Kharama, Medina's guru, and appears to do a great deal of behind-the-scenes work building up knowledge about Medina's plotting. It is very enjoyable to

read the partnership of Hannay and Sandy in action again, and they are a finely contrasted pair: Hannay all instinctive force and brawn, Sandy the scholar of 'recondite subjects' (61), both with considerable abilities at disguise and detective work, backed up with consummate adventuring.

The Hannay world and the Runagates Club

It is at this point in Buchan's writing that the reader, if working through the Buchan fiction in strict chronological order, becomes aware that the pool of characters which I have called collectively the Hannay world, are recurrences and part of an invisible fictional social group. Hannay and Sandy are the two most prominent characters in this group, but their partnership is not fixed. Hannay has many other partners in his adventures, as does Sandy: they all come from the common pool of characters moving in and out of each other's various adventures in varying degrees of importance. By 1928 Buchan had created so many of these incidental heroes that he was able to combine them in a collection of short stories, The Runagates Club, which is composed of the ten stories written for the London Pall Mall Magazine in 1927-8; 'Fullcircle' (1920); and a rewriting of "'Divus" Johnston' (1913), which had also appeared in the 1918 New York edition of The Watcher By The Threshold. Most of the characters who ostensibly narrate these stories are introduced at a dinner of the Thursday Club in The Three Hostages (62), where it is noted as only having twenty members (63). The Club

is mentioned by Leithen briefly in The Dancing Floor (1926), and in The Runagates Club itself, a preface is appended to explain the history and circumstances of the Club and its membership. Here, its later, more decorous incarnation is known as the Thursday Club, and the earlier version is rather different.

Founded just after the close of the War by a few people who had been leading queer lives and wanted to keep together, it was a gathering of youngish men who met only for reminiscences and relaxation. It was officially limited to fifteen members.

(64)

The membership of the Club is also debatable. In The Three Hostages the following seven members are noted by Hannay to join Sandy and Medina, who are explicitly stated to be members in that book: Ralph Collat the Q-Boat hero, sailor and bill-broker, later the narrator of 'Ship to Tarshish' (1927); Oliver Pugh of the secret service and the India Office, narrator of 'The Loathly Opposite' (1927); the Duke of Burminster, a rollicking oaf and general good fellow, participant in and narrator of 'The Frying-pan and the Fire' (1928); John Palliser-Yeates, financial authority and narrator of 'Dr Lartius' (1928), and later to be a protagonist in John Macnab (1925); and Fulleylove the Arabian traveller, who does not appear in The Runagates Club. Added to these are Henry Nightingale, the narrator of 'The Wind in the Portico' (1928), the scholar 'who had gone back to his Greek manuscripts and his Cambridge fellowship after captaining a Bedouin tribe' (65), who may well be an echo of Buchan's friend F.E. Lawrence; and Leithen himself, by this time in Buchan's

fictional chronology the Attorney-General and the narrator of 'Sing a Song of Sixpence' (1928).

By the time of The Runagates Club in 1928, Medina has naturally vanished from the Club membership, since he died at the end of The Three Hostages, and as Howard Swiggett suggests in his 1941 Introduction to Mountain Meadow, 'one of these [stories] is Sir Richard Hannay's and we may assume that he was elected in Medina's place' (66). The total still stands at nine members, and with the narrators of the remaining five stories - Anthony Hurrell the ornithologist and narrator of 'Skule Skerry' (1928); Sir Arthur Warcliff in his third appearance in Buchan and the narrator of 'Tendebant Manus' (1927); Francis Martendale the journalist and narrator of 'The Last Crusade' (1928); Martin Peckwether the historian and narrator of the second version of 'Fulloircle' (1928); and Lord Lamancha the politician and narrator to a revised '"Divus" Johnston' (1928) - the Club membership is brought up to fourteen.

In 'Ho! The Merry Masons', the 1933 Leithen story which I recently rediscovered from references in Robert Blanchard's The First Editions of John Buchan (67), Buchan has continued the idea of the Runagates Club, and elaborates on more of its details.

The Thursday Club - the successor of the old Runagates Club of which I have compiled a few chronicles - is not quite the same home of wild tales as its progenitor. Its newer members are too preoccupied with the cares of life, and are apt to engage in grave discussions of current

politics.

(68)

The political climate of the 1930s was certainly giving more cause for concern - economic decline, the Depression and unemployment - than politics and the state of the nation had done in the 1920s. Although the Thursday Club was already stated to be staid and less frivolous than its earlier self, Buchan's continuation of this idea coincides very realistically with the graver mood of the '30s; the ageing of the characters in the Club only backs up this continuity.

John Macnab

Continuity is an important aspect in Buchan's next book, John Macnab (1925), which is often wrongly categorised as a Leithen story (69). The milieu is Hannay's, and while Leithen is a protagonist and the story is told partially through his eyes, it is also the story of Archie, Lamancha, Palliser-Yeates, Fish Benjie and Janet, since their points of view are used by the narrator as well. For Palliser-Yeates and Lamancha these are their first roles as leading characters. Palliser-Yeates is mainly a background character in the rest of his appearances in Buchan, and although this was Lamancha's first appearance in the Buchan fiction out of 12 separate stories, he has only one more significant part to play, in A Prince of the Captivity (1933). In that novel he has a minor role, rather more than background but not yet important enough for protagonistic status.

In John Macnab these two characters are well-executed human beings, and Lamancha's performance at the political rally at Muirtown is presumably drawn from Buchan's own experience as a prospective M.P. in 1911. In this novel Lamancha is Secretary of State for the Dominions and a member of the Cabinet (Buchan's political character roles are more fully explored in 'A Lucid Interval', 1910). A contrast to the established ruling order, which is represented by Lamancha and Palliser-Yeates, are the Claybodys, the brassiest of Archie's brazen vessels (70). These are the nouveau-riche, last seen in The Three Hostages, 'a certain middle-aged manufacturer, Lord Claybody, who had won an easy fortune and an easier peerage during the War' (71). Despite this unpromising introduction, Archie is quite enthusiastic about his neighbours.

...he exclaimed delightedly. 'I know old Claybody. Rather a good old fellow in his way, and uncommon freehanded. Rum old bird, too! He once introduced his son to me as "The Honourable Johnson Claybody". Fairly wallows in his peerage. You know he wanted to take the title Lord Oxford, because he had a boy goin' up to Magdalen, but even the Herald's College jibbed at that.

(72)

In John Macnab the Claybodys get a further examination. Their po-faced reply to the Macnab challenge is through a lawyer's letter, whereas the reply of the Radens, mainly from Janet, is magnificently robust, and that of the American Bandicotts, cautious but keen. The Claybody peerage is aggressively new, and Lady Claybody at least is not entirely at home in her position, still hoping for the friendship of the native



aristocracy. Janet's dealings with Lady Claybody are well-mannered, with due deference to the elder woman, but Lady Claybody lacks her invisible assurance of inherited position, exacerbated by new-rich aspirations and affectations. In A Prince of the Captivity the Clutterbucks 'who have just bought the Ribstones' place and are setting up as gentry' also make the transition from the struggling working class, as do two other couples of 'Birkpool grandees; Sir Thomas and Lady, Sir Josiah and Lady - war knights, you know' (73).

#### The Courts of the Morning

Here Buchan's characters again reflect the changing times of the outside world, and the Hannay world can be seen to be growing progressively more complex. In The Courts of the Morning (1929) Hannay narrates the Prologue as an explanation of the events preceding the main plot; possibly also as a sop to those members of the public who wanted Hannay stories by Buchan above all else. Apart from this incursion, the narration is third-person, but seen mostly from Janet's viewpoint. This allows the characters of the Hannay world to be seen through non-Hannay eyes, and to be described from a non-Hannay viewpoint. Particularly for Sandy, this is the first time this has happened, as Archie has already appeared in the non-Hannay Huntingtower. Archie carries the narration, in Janet's absence, with Barbara Dasent. When Janet is abducted by the Conquistadores, a time of crisis, Archie's reaction is again a

sudden gravity and seriousness; less marked in this novel than in Mr Standfast, since he is ten years older and has rather less frivolity as contrast.

He looked suddenly much older, and Barbara noticed that his limp had grown heavier. He was very quiet, so quiet that it seemed impossible for anyone to express sympathy. In a level, almost toneless voice he asked questions.

(74)

When Barbara Dasant is given the narratorial stance, the action is also interpreted through her eyes. Her presence in this adventure is the reason for the odd change in Sandy noted by Janet and Hannay in the Prologue: he is peculiarly self-conscious, formal, and nervous, while Barbara's behaviour is retiring to the point of invisibility (see chapter six below).

Sandy and Elenkiron both benefit from this altered non-Hannay viewpoint, as in this venture they are the two initiators and leaders of the revolution, and consequently their actions need to be explained by a narrator far more than when Hannay was both leader and narrator in their previous adventures. Sandy benefits the most from this, having much more potential in his character than in Elenkiron's, and the final and most delightful revelation of Sandy's personality comes after the revolution. Sandy has been offered 'the governorship of the Gran Seco, with apparently the reversion of a kingdom' (75), but all he wants is Barbara. It takes Janet to find this out and manoeuvre the two of them together. Sandy is at last revealed to be human, not just the seemingly unstoppable strategic genius, world statesman

and legendary adventurer that Buchan had created as a reputation for him in the Hannay world, but an ordinary man wanting a wife.

Marriage and retirement: a logical conclusion

Marriage and the fatherhood that follows in the Hannay world appears to be a natural development in Buchan's heroes. However, the responsibility of a wife and family did not stop Hannay careering off on more adventures - his wife, Mary, positively encouraged him to do so - and Archie took Janet with him, since she would never have allowed him to leave her behind. Sandy's wife Barbara is less defined than Mary or Janet, and in The Island of Sheep (1936), the last Hannay adventure, she barely appears, has no dialogue and is the invisible hostess with a baby daughter, apparently with no involvement in the adventure and certainly with no say in her husband's actions. Mary, it is true, has much less involvement as a protagonist in this novel than in her previous appearances, but throughout Hannay's narration it is plain that she is still a force to be reckoned with, and takes at least one independent action of her own, of sending Peter John to join his father.

The Island of Sheep is the final appearance as a protagonist for most of Buchan's characters, and is a story which is at once a last fling and a completion of a sequence. Peter Pienaar is brought back for a last anecdotal episode, and the heroes are beginning to show signs of age. The new generation are introduced - Peter John Hannay, Sandy and Barbara's infant

daughter, David Warcliff [who has 'gone to France to cram for the Diplomatic' (76)], and Anna Haraldsen - the children of heroes all. Life in the Hannay world looks set to continue without benefit of fictional interpretation.

#### The Leithen world

Throughout this time, the post-War years in which the McCunn and Hannay worlds had been thoroughly developed, Buchan had constructed a parallel world centred around Sir Edward Leithen. Its components played no part in the other Buchan worlds, possessing an internal society which mirrored that of the Hannay world, yet never moving out into it. The works which comprise the Leithen world are two novels - The Dancing Floor (1926) and The Gap in the Curtain (1932) - and one short story - 'Sing a Song of Sixpence' (1928) (77). Leithen himself has the highest appearance count in the Buchan novels and short stories (see Appendix 13), but most of the characters of his sub-world are strictly confined to it, and do not appear in any other Buchan fiction. Characters from the Hannay world may percolate into the Leithen world on occasion, but only on single occasions, providing links with other Buchan social circles. A further novel, A Prince of the Captivity (1933), centres on a social milieu which combines both the Hannay and Leithen characters, and it is how the lives of these characters are perceived which contrasts most strongly the Hannay world with the Leithen world.

The characters of Leithen's enclosed sub-world can be identified

first by their non-percolatory patterns of recurrence. Mollie and Tom, Lord and Lady Nantley, are distant relations and a surrogate family to Leithen, and live at Wirlesdon, the hosts of the social gatherings where Leithen meets his friends and from where the Leithen world adventures begin. Koré Arabin stays with them in The Dancing Floor, and in 'Sing a Song of Sixpence' the Nantleys feature as a young married couple in the London of Leithen's youth. In The Gap in the Curtain they are anxious parents, concerned for the behaviour of their daughter, Leithen's god-daughter Lady Pamela Brune. She and her sister Dollie are the feminine youth of the Leithen world, a combination of Alison Westwater and Mary Hannay, but with Janet Raden's more exuberant spirit. They, like their parents, are an important part of the enclosed society of this world.

This limited recurrence within the Leithen world has a subliminal effect on the reader, giving an impression of a certain separateness from the rest of Buchan's 'contemporary' fiction. The Leithen characters are treated differently, as Leithen's narrative voice is very different to Hannay's. He is a more introspective personality: the suspicion of heartiness in Hannay's country lifestyle is missing in the scholarly Leithen, and his approach to other characters is also rather different to Hannay's. Buchan, in creating an alternative to the tweediness of the Hannay world, has also created an outlet for another side of himself.

As Hannay can be correlated with Buchan's country lifestyle at Elsfield, and Jaikie (of the McCunn world) with Buchan's experiences as a young Scot amongst the English aristocracy, Leithen can be seen as an extension of Buchan the lawyer and classicist. Perhaps in the Leithen world Buchan was indulging in an alternative future for himself; what might have happened had he remained a barrister, with the kind of person he might have become and a new set of characters for the society he would have moved in. That Leithen is one of Buchan's oldest and longest-lasting protagonists, certainly the one he used most often, in leading and background roles, could give some credence to this view. Hannay's success was a happy accident for Buchan, and he capitalised upon it with great skill. Leithen, however, may have been a more conscious creation, a deliberate channelling of Buchan's legal training and classics scholarship into his fiction in the form of a more true *alter ego* character than Hannay, by far the more well-known, was ever to be.

Leithen was shown to be part of the political world in Buchan's fiction as early as The Power-House, and it is only in the Leithen world that Buchan continued to explore his fictional politics. In The Gap in the Curtain and A Prince of the Captivity Buchan produces a Tory leader, Geraldine, and a Labour Prime Minister, Sir Derrick Trant, whose parties battle it out in the stories of David Mayot (The Gap in the Curtain) and Joe Utlaw (A Prince of the Captivity). The Cambridge professor

Tombs, a weak political animal in Mr Standfast (the Hannay world) and a background figure in Castle Gay (McCunn territory), makes his final appearance in A Prince of the Captivity, successfully circumnavigating all three different Buchan worlds.

Politics and scholarship mingle in the supporting characters of the Leithen world. Folliot the useful but boring social historian is a good, solid character, serving his purpose in providing Leithen (and the reader) with essential background information. The Lamingtons, (with no apparent relationship with Mary Hannay), are a dreadful English county couple, Buchan indulging himself in satire. George Lamington is merely a bore and a caricature of the countryman forced into politics, but Mrs Lamington is discussed with dispassionate irony.

...she was eloquent on the immense importance of certain impending Imperial appointments, especially on the need for selecting men with the right kind of wives, the inference being that George Lamington's obvious deficiencies might be atoned for by the merits of his lady.

(78)

The other family of the Leithen world are the Flambards, Lord Evelyn and his horses, and the American Lady Sally, like Mollie Nantley 'a very innocent lion-hunter' (79), and the hostess of Professor Moe in The Gap in the Curtain and of Warren Creevey and Mrs Pomfrey in A Prince of the Captivity. Mildred, Countess of Lamancha and the wife of Charles, is also a Buchan hostess, appearing in The Gap in the Curtain, and in A Prince of the Captivity where she is the hostess of Loeffler, the German Chancellor. Mildred is one the first percolatory characters,

moving in the joint Hannay-Leithen circles of A Prince of the Captivity in the wake of her husband, who dips in and out of the Leithen and Hannay worlds almost as much as Leithen himself.

The percolatory phenomenon can be observed in many Hannay characters who appear in the Leithen world - Lady Amysfort, Anthony Hurrell and Burminster - and some who touch on the fringes of the Leithen world by cropping up in A Prince of the Captivity - Andrew Amos, Thirlstone and Christopher Stannix. As for Leithen himself, he is a unifying figure, providing stability in a shifting population of characters.

#### Working characters

As in McCunn's world, the Hannay world and the Leithen world also have characters which reflect the nature of their particular societies and of the world in which Buchan was writing. Although it is plain that both these worlds have the same social milieu and to a certain degree are populated by similar types, one difference between them which may be significant in Buchan's own perception of their role in his fiction is in how these characters exist in between adventures, so to speak. Hannay's associates - Sandy, Archie and Blenkiron, and so on - are of the sporting and adventurous persuasion. The lives of these characters are spent pursuing private quests or investigations, and the origins of their income, the means of their living, is not a concern, since it is taken as read that they are all of landed families with hereditary income and a



corresponding social position. In Leithen's world, the main characters, even though they may only appear once in the fiction as a whole, are seen in the context of a profession, and work for a living or as an occupation.

Hannay is seen to do very little in the way of agriculture for all his role as a farmer: he is an adventurer just as Sandy and Archie are, and while the Hannay characters all have ostensible 'real' work - politics or the management of their land - these occupations are not seen as the main focus of their lives, but only as the background. Leithen, on the other hand, is always at work, or on a brief snatched holiday before returning to work, and the other protagonists in the Leithen world stories are seen as workers at their particular professions.

In The Dancing Floor, Leithen is a professional, a lawyer and a soldier, and after the War his nephew Charles is 'endeavouring, without much success, to earn a living in the City' (80).

Vernon Milburne, the other protagonist in this novel, does not appear to have a profession, other than that of a secret service agent in the War - by this instance he is more of the Hannay world than of Leithen's - but his whole consciousness is wrapped up in waiting for the fulfilment of his mysterious dream, after which his life will be his own again. Charles Ottery continues at the firm of merchant bankers of which he was a partner throughout his ordeal in The Gap in the Curtain. The fulfilment of Reggie Daker's journey to Yucatan comes about through his

book-dealing business. Also in The Gap in the Curtain, Mayot the politician, Tavanger the city magnate, and Goodeve the rising parliamentarian are all perceived in the contexts of their work, and their respective adventures take place within that context.

This fixing of the Leithen characters in the commercial sector, and in the Hannay world as of the landed gentry, may be indicative of how Buchan perceived his writing mirroring his own life and that of his friends. Buchan's legal training is expressed in Leithen, his feelings about being a country gentleman in Hannay, and his early manhood as a student on holiday, in Scotland and abroad, comes across in Jaikie's adventures. The change in Buchan's writing in 1915 enabled him to diversify his characters, and so gave expression to these different aspects of his own life and character. Where the progression of Buchan's writing can be seen most fully is in the increasing complexity of these different worlds, and in the background history and personalities of the populating characters. This process, particularly with Hannay, matured Buchan as a novelist. In working on his established and new characters, protagonists and background figures alike, in the three distinct milieux of society which developed from the change of 1915, personified by Hannay, Leithen, and McCunn, Buchan was able to change his writing and his interpretation in fiction.

\* \* \* \* \*

(1) John Buchan, 'Sentimental Travelling', Macmillan's Magazine, vol 70, no.420 (Oct 1894), pp.445-451.

(2) John Buchan, 'The Thirty Nine Steps', The All-Story Weekly, vol 45, no. 52, pp.597-632; vol 46, no.1, pp.94-118, (New York, 1915).

(3) Although 'Ho! The Merry Masons' is listed in Robert Blanchard's The First Editions of John Buchan, it is wrongly catalogued under 'Contributions To Books' (pp.155-6, C.83), instead of the more appropriate 'Books and Pamphlets', and consequently has not been included in any of the recent reprints of the out-of-print Buchan short stories. I located 'Ho! The Merry Masons' in the 'Help Yourself' Annual of 1933, published by the Stock Exchange Theatrical and Operatic Society, one of the City of London's more obscure benevolent societies, which is held in the British Library under the even more obscure listing London (III) Miscellaneous, under 'Stock Exchange'. This discovery was in addition to my securing a copy of Buchan's 1918 short story 'The King of Ypres', published in the American edition of The Watcher By The Threshold (1918), and never subsequently reprinted, consequently making it unavailable in the UK.

(4) Buchan's 1925 novel John Macnab is normally described by publishers and booksellers as a 'Leithen' book. This is a false appellation, for while Leithen is clearly a main protagonist in the action, the story is not of his adventures alone, but of a group of people whose lives and actions interlock during a frivolous autumn episode in the Highlands. Charles Lamanha and John Palliser-Yeates, with Leithen, are the hunters, and Archie and Janet Roylance fall in love. These characters are all protagonists, and all five have the narrative directed through their point of view at some time in the story - if anything, Archie Roylance is the main protagonist since his fortunes are followed more than any of the others; certainly more than Leithen's.

(5) See, for example, Dennis Johnson, 'On the Trail of Buchan', The Guardian, Monday April 11 1988, p.4; David McVey, 'Treading a Fine Line', Third Way, vol 13, no.2 (March 1990), pp.6-7.; and Erlend Clouston, 'Official apathy dogs Buchan hero's steps', The Guardian, Tuesday March 13 1990, p.5.

(6) Advertisement feature in John Buchan, Huntingtower (London 1922, 1956 Penguin), p.233.

(7) Julian Symons, Bloody Murder: From the Detective Story to the Crime Novel (London 1972, 1985 Penguin), pp.86-87.

(8) David Daniell, The Interpreter's House (London 1975),

pp.71-89.

(9) *ibid*, p.79.

(10) *ibid*.

(11) John Buchan, The Half-Hearted (London 1900, 1921 Hodder & Stoughton), p.209.

(12) Rudyard Kipling, 'The King's Ankus', in The Second Jungle Book (1895, 1975 Pan Books Ltd), pp.107-125 (p.113).

(13) *ibid*, p.310.

(14) *ibid*, p.311.

(15) *ibid*, p.310.

(16) *ibid*, p.117.

(17) John Buchan, 'A Reputation', Macmillan's Magazine, vol 77, no.460 (Feb 1898), pp.294-300 (p.297).

(18) John Buchan, John Macnab (London 1925, 1956 Penguin), p.151.

(19) The last story in The Watcher by the Threshold, 'Fountainblue' (1901) has a high percentage of recurring character names. The Etheridges, Clara's parents, act as hosts and social background, and a Lady Claudia Etheridge is the correspondent to whom Henry Durward relates the news of Maitland's defeat. Sir Hugh Clanroyden, husband of Mabel Clanroyden in The Half-Hearted and 'A Reputation', narrates the end of the story: the two surprises of this story are Layden and Despenser. Layden, known as Arnold in 'A Reputation' (1898), was a potentially great man in politics who changed into a preacher of woolly neo-theological philosophy. Three years later, in 'Fountainblue', he is again invisible social background, disliked by Durward and Maitland, and described as 'a dissipated dove' [John Buchan, 'Fountainblue' (1901), in The Watcher by the Threshold (London 1902, 1915), pp.267-334 (p.273)]. In Buchan's next novel, A Lodge in the Wilderness (1906), Marjorie Haystoun receives her surname from The Half-Hearted, Lady Flora Brune bequeathes hers, over 20 years later, to Pamela, Hugo and Dollie Brune of The Dancing Floor (1926). Mrs Barbara Deloraine, a society lady, has her name recur with the much more frequently utilised Tommy Deloraine, who first crops up in 1910. Mrs Wilbrahim gives her name to Tim Wilbrahim of Mr Standfast (1919), and Sir Edward Considine gives his to Adam Melfort's wife, Camilla Considine, in A Prince of the Captivity in 1933.

(20) John Buchan, A Lodge in the Wilderness, second edition (London 1906, 1916), p.103.

(21) John Buchan, 'The Kings of Orion' (1906), in The Moon Endurath (London 1912, 1923), pp.253-286 (pp.253-4).

(22) John Buchan, A Lodge in the Wilderness, op.cit., p.103.

(23) John Buchan, A Prince of the Captivity (London 1933, 1960 Hodder & Stoughton), p.209.

(24) John Buchan, A Lodge in the Wilderness, op.cit., pp.102-3.

(25) The story of the Victorian Whig in Byzantium crops up three times in Buchan, in 'The Kings of Orion' (1906), and lastly in 'Tendebant Manus' (1927), but the link between these stories is with A Lodge in the Wilderness (1906). In this novel Mrs Yorke tells the story of the Whig of 'The Kings of Orion', Sir Charles Weston, as a true story under a pseudonym, in chapter 10 (John Buchan, A Lodge in the Wilderness, op.cit., pp.183-190). Lady Warcliff, as the wife of Sir Arthur Warcliff, is the means of introducing one of Buchan's senior figures in the Hannay world, to appear later as the father as one of the hostages in The Three Hostages (1923), the narrator of 'Tendebant Manus' (1927) and as a background figure in The Island of Sheep (1936). In 'Tendebant Manus' Sir Arthur is described as 'the oldest member of the Club, and by far the most distinguished' [John Buchan, 'Tendebant Manus', in The Runagate Club (London 1928, 1930 Nelson), pp.253-272 (p.254)], and, like Thirlstone, appears as a figure suggesting a continuity of depth in the Buchan world. In these characters it is suggested that one has unused potential and that the other has spent that potential in ways unnarrated in the stories, giving an impression of action going on before, after and during the narration of the Hannay stories and novels. 'Tendebant Manus' has the same theme as that of the story of the Victorian Whig, of a double existence in a real and imagined world.

There is a story of a Victorian statesman who in his leisure moments played as being the Emperor of Byzantium. The old Whig kept the two things strictly separate - he was a pious humanitarian in his English life, though he was a ruthless conqueror in the other. But in George's case the two were mingling...

John Buchan, 'Tendebant Manus', op.cit., p.270.

(26) John Buchan, 'A Lucid Interval', in The Moon Endureth (London 1912, 1923 Nelson), pp.57-97 (p.62).

(27) There are some interesting textual differences between the original 1913 publication of 'The Power-House' in Blackwood's

Magazine, and a 1930's reprint of the novel version, which was originally published in 1916. Most apparent is the alteration to the Preface. The text reproduced here in italics is the later, post-1916 version.

Then Hoppy Bynge, who was killed next year on the Bramaputra, told us some queer things about his doings in New Guinea, where he tried to climb Carstenz, and lived for six months in mud. *Jim said that he couldn't abide mud - anything was better than a country where your boots rotted. (He was to get enough of it last winter in the Ypres Salient).*

John Buchan, The Power-House, (London 1916, 1930), p.viii.

More significant perhaps, especially with its relation to the initial characterisation of Leithen and Tommy Deloraine, is the exchange of dialogue in the early part of the narrative between Tommy and Leithen.

The contrast between the frowsy place and the cheerful world outside would have impressed even the soul of a Government Chief Whip.

*Tommy sniffed the spring breeze like a supercilious stag. "This about finishes me," he groaned. "What a juggins I am to be mouldering here! Juggleberry is the celestial limit, what they call in happier lands the pink penultimate. And the frowst on those back benches! Was there ever such a moth-eaten old museum?"*

*"It is the Mother of Parliaments," I observed.*

*"Damned monkey-house," said Tommy. "I must get off for a bit or I'll bonnet Juggleberry or get up and propose a national monument to Guy Fawkes or something silly."*

John Buchan, The Power-House, op.cit., pp.2-3.

The slang in Tommy's additional dialogue is highly individual. 'Juggins' is a 20th century word for a fool, whereas 'bonnet' is an obsolete 19th century verb, commonly used by Dickens, meaning to crush a man's hat over his eyes. Thus the balance between the Victorian-Edwardian period and the 20th century freshness is neatly maintained. 'Celestial limit' and 'pink penultimate' are more idiosyncratic and probably belong to that brand of slang, probably American, which only lasts for a couple of years and is never used commonly enough to be listed in dictionaries of slang.

The four phrases discussed above make their first appearance in the 1916 Blackwoods edition of The Power-House in book form, and are retained for four successive editions - 1935 Hodder & Stoughton, 1936 Blackwoods, 1964 Pan, and 1984 Dent Classic

Thrillers. In the Longman's Simplified English series of 1954, 'juggins' is the only phrase of the four above to be retained, and it is simplified to 'fool'. In the dual edition by Nelsons of The Thirty-Nine Steps and The Power-House of 1922, 'pink penultimate' is omitted.

The inclusion of such singular slang in the book version of The Power-House in 1916 was probably an effort to 'fix' the period of the narrative as pre-War and solidly Victorian, as the Preface by the Editor had already been updated from the original magazine version (1913) to a Wartime narration.

(28) John Buchan, The Power-House, op.cit., p.127.

(29) Although The Power-House is technically the first of a new sequence in Buchan's fiction, the contemporary novels (see Appendix 9), there was one interruption by a short story to break this up - the little-known 'Basilissa', printed in Blackwoods Magazine in April 1914, and Buchan's last pre-War publication. The substance of the story, Vernon's dream as an Andromeda-and-Perseus tale, much influenced by the visit to the Greek islands which the Buchans had made in 1910 (Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan (London 1965, 1985 Oxford University Press), pp.264-5), reappears as The Dancing Floor in 1926. The story in its full-length form was first published as 'The Goddess From the Shades' in The Popular Magazine - see Appendix 12. Details are changed in the novel form: in 'Basilissa', Vernon's grandmother is a Greek and a Karolides (the only other instance of Buchan using this name, only months before he wrote The Thirty-Nine Steps). Perhaps the most striking difference between these two versions of the story is with Koré, the heroine. In 'Basilissa' she is not a heroine at all, merely a victim, and a particularly two-dimensional one at that. The story ends weakly in melodrama, and is a clumsy effort at working out an idea with mythic qualities, which was later to be transformed into a powerful and stirring novel.

(30) letter from John Buchan to Tommy Nelson, 29 May 1914, the Buchan letters in the Nelson Archives, held at Edinburgh University Library, B/5/29.

(31) letter from John Buchan to George Brown, 25 July 1914, the Buchan letters in the Nelson Archives, op.cit., B/5/67.

(32) letter from John Buchan to Tommy Nelson, 29 May 1914, op.cit.

(33) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, op.cit., pp.192-4.

(34) John Buchan, 'The Thirty-Nine Steps' in The All-Story Weekly, op.cit., and in Blackwood's Magazine, vol 198, nos.1197-

1199 (Aug-Sept 1915).

(35) In Greenmantle (1916), Mr Standfast (1919), The Three Hostages (1924), 'The Green Wildebeeste' (1927), The Courts of the Morning (1929), and The Island of Sheep (1936).

(36) John Buchan, The Power-House, op.cit., p.v.

(37) Although Bullivant is not the first father-figure to a Buchan hero, his role as Establishment representative is possibly as important as his relationship with Hannay, for example, in his practical support and guidance. Earlier such figures - Nicol Plenderleith in John Burnet of Burns (1898), Jim Arcoll of Prester John (1910), and Ringan in Salute to Adventurers (1915) - are wild cards, representative of rebellion and freedom; even though Arcoll is a veldt policeman, he has a dramatic capacity for freedom and adventure in his disguises. Hannay's pursuit by the Black Stone and the police is reversed when he joins the Establishment and the police are under his orders, Bullivant making this possible. It is a significant change in Hannay's fortunes when he abandons full-time adventuring to join the Establishment of British society.

(38) Buchan's silly ass characters and footloose young-men-about-town were in one respect very different from the contemporary Wodehousian model - they had muscle, and were undisputably junior heroes, getting more hero-like as they grew older. The same process occurred with Albert Campion (by Margery Allingham) and Lord Peter Wimsey (by Dorothy L. Sayers), who both displayed the same veneer of burbling idiocy as camouflage in their early days, but later discarded this professional foolishness to display in detective terms the qualities of Buchan's heroes.

(39) John Buchan, Greenmantle (London 1916, 1956 Penguin), p.13.

(40) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, op.cit., p.256.

(41) John Buchan, Greenmantle, op.cit., p.26.

(42) *ibid*, p.22 and pp.28-29.

(43) John Buchan, Mr Standfast (London 1919, 1956 Penguin), p.237.

(44) *ibid*, p.301.

(45) *ibid*, p.339.

(46) *ibid*, p.343.



(47) John Buchan, A Prince of the Captivity, op.cit, pp.154-5. Buchan used secret societies and the Secret Service rather frequently in his fiction. Lewis Haystoun and David Crawford were not officially spies, but played a spy's role. The Naked Men of Midwinter (1923), the Free Fishers of The Free Fishers (1934), the secret spies of Mr Standfast (1919), even the witches' coven in Witch Wood (1927), are all connected with the overt spying of Hannay and Sandy, the cipher work of 'The Loathly Opposite' (1927) and 'Dr Lartius' (1928).

(48) Buchan had been elected as a Tory M.P. for the Scottish Universities in 1927, but he had nursed the Scottish constituency of Peebles from 1911-14, and was well aware of the state and breadth of Scottish politics (Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, op.cit., p.186).

(49) *ibid*, p.15.

(50) *ibid*, p.332.

(51) John Buchan, Mr Standfast, op.cit., p.75.

(52) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, op.cit., p.210.

(53) John Buchan, 'The King of Ypres', in The Watcher by the Threshold (New York 1918), pp.301-319 (pp.301-2).

(54) *ibid*, p.305.

(55) *ibid*, p.313.

(56) *ibid*, p.318.

(57) *ibid*, pp.318-9.

(58) John Buchan, 'Fullcircle' in The Runagates Club, op.cit., pp.315-6.

(59) John Buchan, Castle Gay (London 1930, 1956 Penguin), p.87.

(60) John Buchan, Huntingtower (London 1922, 1956 Penguin), p.159.

(61) John Buchan, The Three Hostages (London 1924, 1956 Penguin), p.128.

(62) *ibid*, pp.58-64, and pp.323-332.

(63) *ibid*, p.57.

(64) John Buchan, The Runagates Club, op.cit., p.vii.

(65) John Buchan, The Three Hostages, op.cit., p.58.

(66) Howard Swiggett, 'Introduction' in Mountain Meadow (New York 1941), pp.v - xlix (p.xxix).

(67) See footnote (3).

(68) John Buchan, 'Ho! The Merry Masons' in the 'Help Yourself' Annual (London 1933), the Stock Exchange Theatrical and Operatic Society, pp.19-26 (p.19).

(69) See footnote (4).

(70) John Buchan, John Macnab (London 1925, 1956 Penguin), p.19.

(71) John Buchan, The Three Hostages, op.cit., p.257.

(72) *ibid*, pp.258-9.

(73) John Buchan, A Prince of the Captivity, op.cit., pp.199-200. See also the character of Mrs Jackson of Rutherford in The Proper Place (London 1926), by O. Douglas, Buchan's sister Anna, as a portrait of the Scottish nouveau-riche.

(74) John Buchan, The Courts of the Morning (London 1929, 1982 Three Rivers Books), p.230.

(75) *ibid*, p.402.

(76) John Buchan, The Island of Sheep (London 1936, 1956 Penguin), p.25.

(77) Sick Heart River does not belong in what I have defined as the Leithen world, since only Leithen, with brief appearances from Sandy, Blenkiron and Acton Croke, is a character in the story. He remembers old friends from the Hannay world, but the Nantleys, Flambards and other friends from the Leithen world do not appear at all.

(78) John Buchan, The Dancing Floor (London 1926, 1982 Three Rivers Books), p.81.

(79) John Buchan, 'Sing a Song of Sixpence' in The Runagates Club, op.cit, pp.181-199 (p.182); and John Buchan, The Gap in the Curtain, op.cit., p.13.

(80) John Buchan, The Dancing Floor, op.cit., p.70.

CHAPTER FIVE

JOHN BUCHAN AS A SCOTTISH WRITER

In examining Buchan as a Scottish writer, and the effect the change of 1915 had on the Scottish aspects of his fiction, I will be looking at Buchan the critic and sponsor, his Scottish poetry, his attacks on Kailyard, and at his specifically Scottish fiction. The change of 1915 can be detected in his poetry - Buchan stopped any attempts at becoming a serious Scottish poet after 1915 - and in his role as a patron of Scottish writing. Buchan was a great deal more successful, for himself and for Scottish writing, as an influential critic, again after 1915, than as a novelist in the Scottish Renaissance tradition. Buchan consolidated his distaste for Kailyard most clearly in his 'Scottish' Dickson McCunn novels, after 1915.

However, neither his use of Scottish dialect nor his treatment of Scottish religious or historical themes appear to be affected by the 1915 change. Buchan's use of these continued, but after 1915 this fiction was written amongst and in between that fiction which was a by-product of 1915, the thrillers. To examine Buchan as a Scottish writer more fully, it is necessary to look at the context of Scottish writing at the time.

#### The Scottish Renaissance

In the 1920s and '30s there was an upsurge of new life among the poets, writers, artists and political activists in Scotland, which was perpetuated and developed by their followers in successive decades. This new movement was christened the Scottish Renaissance by the French critic Denis Seurat and the

name was popularised by Hugh MacDiarmid (1). This Renaissance is generally held to have begun around the time when MacDiarmid published his anthology of modern Scottish poetry, Northern Numbers: the first series in 1920 included Scots poems by John Buchan and Neil Munro. By the third series, however, in 1922, both Buchan and Munro had been dropped, and MacDiarmid had 'adopted a radical tone, at once nationalist and revolutionary' (2), 'when the younger school of Scots poets he encouraged, including himself, began to rise in prominence' (3). Buchan and Munro were Scottish writers at what has come to be seen as a transitional stage in the history of the development of Scottish literature, and although in 1920 they were regarded by the less well-known and the younger writers of their country as representative of Scottish writing at its best, by 1922 they were firmly seen, by MacDiarmid at least, as of the old school, holding the stale and discredited values of an earlier generation. Later, in 1925, MacDiarmid referred to Buchan as the 'Dean of the Faculty of Contemporary Scottish Letters' (4).

In surveys of Scottish literature and Scottish literary history, Buchan, along with Munro and Compton Mackenzie, is discussed alongside the writers of the Scottish Renaissance, but a clear distinction is made between him and that movement. Aspects of his writing or his career as a whole are cited as examples of the work of a well-known and highly regarded Scottish writer of the twentieth century, but his work is never discussed

comparatively with that of Lewis Grassie Gibbon or MacDiarmid, the two most frequently discussed Scottish Renaissance writers. Buchan's writing stems from an older tradition, from the nineteenth century, and as part of what Christopher Harvie calls the 'older literati' (5) of Scottish writing, Buchan has been seen to prefigure the Scottish Renaissance and to exist alongside it, but with no relationship between the two.

#### Scottish and English in Buchan

The most obvious point about Buchan's fiction in this context is that it reflects a strong dichotomy of the Scottish and the English, and it is this aspect of Buchan's work which, to the critic Gavin Wallace, marks him as being not a true Scottish writer.

However separate in terms of background, creative personality and fictional priorities, Buchan, [Compton] Mackenzie and [Eric] Linklater are connected in that they remain prominent Scottish writers whose genuine affiliation to a national culture remains questionable, while their claims to be engaged with authentically Scottish preoccupations and themes can often appear dangerously spurious...the creative character of all three is marked by a tendency to indulge in an interplay between English and Scottish personae, a willingness to participate in the cultural, creative and political issues surrounding the Renaissance while indulging in the identifiably English mannerisms and overtones, in narrative style and lifestyle, against which so many Scottish writers of the time were reacting.

(6)

Counter to this point of view runs the opinion of Beth Dickson, who argues that Scotland was inescapably part of the larger whole of the British Empire, and that balancing the two allegiances in Buchan's work showed his strong grasp of the

essentials in all aspects of his life.

The success of Scotland as part of the Empire provided for many Scots a powerful culture to which Scottishness gave an added piquancy; John Buchan supremely exhibits this untroubled dual identity, writing about Richard Hannay as well as Dickson McCunn, researching Montrose as well as Cromwell, being appointed Governor-General of Canada and thus achieving the summit of his imperialist ambitions while still acknowledging his Scottish background by choosing the title Baron Tweedsmuir when being raised to the peerage.

(7)

The English in Buchan's work was unavoidable - once his introduction to the English way of life had been begun at Oxford in 1895, the new influences flooded into his work. In chapter four above I discussed the emergence of the English-influenced country-house elements in Buchan's fiction; in this chapter I will be examining the wider aspects, including the issue of dual identity, of Buchan as a Scottish writer - his support for the vernacular poetry, his use of Scots dialect and other Scottish elements in his fiction, and his Scottish novels and short stories. Overall, I will be examining Kailyard and its existence, if at all, in Buchan's work.

#### Buchan and vernacular Scots poetry

Buchan's poetry is much less well-known than his fiction; it was part of his early writing, belonging most properly to the pre-1915 part of his career. His only collection of poetry, Poems, Scots and English, was published in 1917; thereafter he confined himself to the occasional illustrative or dedicatory verse to accompany his fiction. But it was as a critic of poetry that

Buchan was most truly part of the Scottish Renaissance, more so than for his fiction.

Critical opinion of Buchan as a Scots poet and as a supporter of the vernacular movement is less generous than that given to him as a writer of fiction. In one of the most recent critical surveys of Scottish literature, Colin Milton sees his importance elsewhere than in his poetry.

Buchan's main significance, however, was as a publicist for vernacular interests; he was an active campaigner on Scottish cultural issues, using his position as a well-known writer and political figure to try and advance them.

(8)

Maurice Lindsay is one of the many critics to dismiss Neil Munro and Buchan for their fiction, which was seen as old-fashioned, and for their poetry; 'neither of whom achieved anything noteworthy in the poetic department' (9). Hugh MacDiarmid, early in his career, dedicated his Annals of the Five Senses (1923) to Buchan, 'for the encouragement and help he has given to a young and unknown writer' (10), but in his later essay 'John Buchan', he gives his erstwhile benefactor a decidedly mixed modicum of praise.

That he is one of the three or four most accomplished versifiers of contemporary Scotland proves nothing but our country's singular poverty of poets - and the fact that I personally prefer his work...to almost the whole body of "Georgian Poetry" is irrelevant.

(11)

"Georgian Poetry" is 'a portmanteau term which embraces poets who would hardly be considered together had they not all met between the hard covers of Marsh's anthologies' (12), and Edward



Marsh's five volumes of Georgian Poetry (1911 - 1922) were a new departure from the 'dead, dying or doting' Victorians (13) of the turn of the century. But this was a short-lived period, and by the early 1920s, when MacDiarmid was active, 'the Georgian breath of fresh air was ... nothing but a nineteenth-century hangover' (14). 'Most of the poets labelled Georgian are still writing in the manner and from the point of view which has prevailed since Wordsworth' (15), and although it is a compliment from MacDiarmid to Buchan in ranking him higher in his estimation than Siegfried Sassoon, Edmund Blunden, W.H. Davies or J.C. Squire, in MacDiarmid's terms the Georgian poets had little significance for Scottish poetry, and Buchan still fell a long way short of the standards in writing which MacDiarmid felt should be in place.

#### Buchan as critic

Where Buchan is more widely acclaimed for his services to Scottish vernacular poetry, it is for his 1924 anthology, The Northern Muse. Arranged in eighteen sections, the poems of Dunbar, Henryson, Burns, Violet Jacob, Lady Nairne, Charles Murray and Robert Louis Stevenson, amongst many others, were contrasted by their treatment of the eighteen different subjects, rather than by their chronological position. Colin Milton describes this anthology as 'excellent' (16), while MacDiarmid regarded this work of Buchan's as:

a very notable service...The Northern Muse...stands in relation to Scots poetry as Palgrave's Golden Treasury in

English...It was, indeed, compiled in the renaissance spirit - literary merit being the criterion for selection. It was not too rigorously applied, perhaps, but Buchan thus quietly, but decisively, aligned himself with the younger men who were clamouring for the erection of literary standards in Scotland comparable to those obtaining elsewhere. It will probably be unique among his works in its effect. His influence otherwise has been almost wholly social, only very obliquely, if at all, cultural, and never literary.

(17)

In 1925 Buchan also received practical as well as critical commendation for this contribution to the cause of Scots vernacular poetry, from the Scottish Area Council of the British Federation of Musical Competition Festivals, asking about the possibility of a cheap reissue of The Northern Muse for use as a textbook in the study and recital of Scottish poetry (18).

As for Buchan's own poetry, some was published in his early collections of short stories and essays, Gray Weather (1899) and The Moon Endureth (1912), and in 1917 he published his only collection, Poems, Scots and English. Colin Milton describes Buchan's Scottish verse as being 'more influenced by literary Scots' (19), and he appears to demur at Buchan's own opinion - 'he insists on the authenticity of his dialect and its mother-tongue status' (20). At this point Buchan, perhaps now realising that he had more influence as a Scot who was known more for his political role and his journalism and thrillers than for his poetry, turned his activities in promoting the vernacular poetry from the role of a practitioner to that of a patron and sponsor.

By 1917, Buchan was also well on the way to becoming an established best-selling writer of thrillers. The 1915 change in his fiction had already occurred, and he had chosen his new direction in writing. It may be that in concentrating on popular fiction Buchan chose deliberately not to attempt to continue his vernacular poetry as a serious interest. If this was so, the cessation of his published poetry can bear this out, stopping as it did with Poems, Scots and English in 1917.

Buchan the public Scot

He was a member of the London Robert Burns Club, and in 1918 he proposed and in 1919 he answered the toasts at the Club's Annual Birthday Celebration. In 1920 the Club 'formed a Vernacular Circle to devise a method for preserving from entire destruction the language in which the mentality of the Lowland Scot can best be expressed' (21), and this became, in Colin Milton's view, 'in the years immediately following the Great War...the main vehicle for promoting the vernacular' (22). In 1921 Buchan gave a lecture to the Vernacular Circle, 'Some Scottish Characteristics', which was a direct contrast to the philological and linguistic discussions which accompanied his contribution in W.A. Craigie's collection of this series of lectures, The Scottish Tongue (1924). With this lecture, Buchan's role in promoting the vernacular poetry of Scotland can be defined.

Buchan was not a linguistic scholar, nor was he the promoter of the essence of twentieth-century Scots in a new Scottish literature, as MacDiarmid was. I see Buchan's role in this movement as the public figure with the strong literary reputation, the Establishment figure for whom the Scots vernacular was a private and long-standing native enthusiasm which surfaced in his fiction and in his public adherence to the cause of Scots vernacular poetry. For practical purposes, Buchan could do a great deal more for this aspect of the Scottish Renaissance in using his position as the successful and respected writer who was a Scot, supporting the growth of literature in a language his by right of birth than he could as an admittedly minor Scottish poet, soon to be supplanted by a younger generation.

As I shall go on to show, at this period Buchan had been a published writer for over twenty years, and his writings in Scots dialect and those using Scottish elements constituted a substantial proportion of his published work. Buchan's first writing was in Scots, and all his early work shows a clear adherence to the culture and language which was his own; the later anglicisation of his characters and dialogue was a natural development, and a conscious one, but it is clear from examination of the Buchan canon that his Scottish heritage was never abandoned nor treated cursorily; it remained a significant element in his fiction throughout his writing career.

In acting as the public figure rather than as the minor poet, Buchan was able to lend the vernacular Scots poetry movement a solidity of foundation as well as access to wider public attention. His lecture to the Vernacular Circle demonstrates this: clearly representing the popular, the non-scholarly, and with an avoidance of academic stuffiness, Buchan's tone is light, yet he is well grounded in the history of Scotland and the legacy of its literature, old and new.

Then we have little Scottish vernacular literature left.  
Who is there today who can write Scotch verse as Fergusson  
and Hogg, and even as Stevenson wrote it? Few indeed!

(23)

He fills his talk with stories, re-telling his own '"Divus" Johnston' (1913) as an example of the power of Scots in narrative terms, and the impression from the lecture is that of a combination of the popular and the learned, making the connection with a cause which is rooted in history and tradition, but which has everything to do with modern life and the survival of a Scottish identity.

#### Journalism and reviews

From very early on in his career as a journalist, Buchan had the cause of Scottish writing firmly in mind. (I shall be discussing his editorship of The Scottish Review below: p.231.) His frequent 'Recent Verse' columns in The Spectator repeatedly included Scottish poetry for the public's attention: in 1900 he discussed 'Fiona Macleod' (the anthologist William Sharp) (24), and in 1904 he reviewed a life of Lady John Scott and discussed

her poetry (25). In 1909 he reviewed Will Ogilvie's Whaup o' the Rede (1909), and in 1913 Ogilvie's The Overlander, and other verses (1913), and in 1910 he gave Charles Murray's Hamewith (1909) a very enthusiastic review (26). Although Buchan's reviews of Scottish poetry were not always laudatory - his review of J.J. Bell's Clyde Songs and other verses (1911), is that 'he never comes within hail of poetry' (27) - Buchan's comments on Violet Jacob's Songs of Angus (1915) repeat his admiration for her work which he had already expressed in his preface to that book.

There are not more than half a dozen living writers who can write good Scots verse, and of these not more than two write it naturally, because it is the best medium of expression, and not as a literary exercise. Mrs Jacob must rank with Mr Charles Murray as a true 'makar', to whom Scots is a living speech.

(28)

After the war, Buchan turned his efforts in promoting Scottish poetry away from his journalism towards a more personal commendation. He began to put his name to prefaces and introductions to collections of Scots vernacular verse, at once a mark of approval on the part of the writers, MacDiarmid included, of Buchan's standing as a representative of Scots literature within the Establishment, and on his part as an acceptance of this role as an ambassador between the new movement and the reading public. The volumes of verse which he sanctioned with his name varied greatly in style and quality. He had already written a preface for Violet Jacob's collection Songs of Angus (1915), and for the comic verses of Geo. Hope

Tait, Rab and his Maister (1918), but Buchan had been an enthusiast for Violet Jacob's writing for some years, and the Tait collection is in some sense an outburst of patriotism during the last months of the War, as well as poetry using the Border dialects of Buchan's youth. In 1925 Buchan was asked by Hugh MacDiarmid to write the preface for Sangschaw, and the resulting piece by Buchan reflects very strongly his feelings about the dual identity in Scotland and Scottish literature. Buchan sees the dichotomy of this identity in MacDiarmid's aims, 'at once reactionary and revolutionary' (29), and more importantly within the language of his poetry.

He would treat Scots as a living language and apply to it matters which have been foreign to it since the sixteenth century. Since there is no canon of the vernacular, he makes his own, as Burns did, and borrows words and idioms from the old masters. He confines himself to no one dialect, but selects where he pleases between Aberdeen and the Cheviots. This audacity may make some of the pieces difficult for the reader, and it may be that he does not always succeed, for a man with a new weapon rarely hits the mark at the first shot. But I welcome the honest hope and faith which inspire the experiment. It is a proof that a new spirit is today abroad in the North, which, as I have said, is both conservative and radical - a determination to keep Scotland in the main march of the world's interest, and at the same time to forego no part of her ancient heritage.

(30)

In 1926 a presentation was made to the Aberdeenshire poet Charles Murray, and Buchan gave the speech at that occasion, acting both as a representative of the Establishment and as a Scottish literary man. A 1926 edition of the Complete Poems of Burns carried an Introduction by Buchan, and in 1930 he gave the toast at the Robert Louis Stevenson Club dinner, echoing one

which he gave at the Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club dinner in 1924. In 1931 Buchan wrote the preface to The Poetry of Neil Munro, which he had also edited, and in 1938 he was asked to provide a preface to an edition of the poems of James Graham, the Marquis of Montrose, of whom Buchan had written two biographies. Even during the busy last years of his life when he was Governor-General of Canada, Buchan continued to write introductions, prefaces and forewords to many different collections of Scots poetry, continuing his enthusiasm.

To the end of his life, then, Buchan remained in the role he had chosen after the 1915 change in his fiction, that of patron and sponsor to the Scottish vernacular movement, and a connection between the public and the writers, rather than being a writer himself. Gavin Wallace's criticism, of 'a willingness to participate in the cultural, creative and political issues surrounding the Renaissance while indulging in the identifiably English mannerisms and overtones, in narrative style and lifestyle' (31), would seem to be a criticism of the wrong kind. Where Buchan can be criticised is not over whether his commitment was of the right sort, but whether he did enough within his power to aid the vernacular movement within the Scottish Renaissance.

The fact remains that he was wise enough to see what his powers actually were, and to work with them, rather than straining less usefully in a direction more ideologically sound but with less



real effect. Gavin Wallace's view, that all activists and supporters of the Scottish Renaissance should have rejected completely all non-Scottish influences, is in my opinion an unnecessarily purist one, and one which is less concerned with practical benefits than with theoretical principles. Both aspects have their place in any new endeavour, but expediency is sometimes a necessary evil if that endeavour is to survive and expand. Buchan's role in the Scottish Renaissance with the promotion of Scots vernacular verse has never been completely approved of by those who hold the purist view above, but I maintain that Buchan's work was of great practical benefit, and the fact that it has been acknowledged as such by Hugh MacDiarmid must denote some measure of approval from the Renaissance establishment for Buchan's writing and work.

#### Buchan and Kailyard

The existence of Kailyard in Buchan's fiction has in the past been taken for granted, since his Scots country characters were similar to those made famous and/or notorious by J.M. Barrie's A Window in Thrums (1889), by the works of Ian Maclaren (the Rev. John Watson) and Annie S. Swan, and by the stories and plays of J.J. Bell and the phenomenon of Sir Harry Lauder. George Blake defines 'the bulk of Scottish fiction during the 19th century' (32) as either romantic, or domestic.

The Scots storyteller either followed Scott and Stevenson through the heather with a claymore at his belt, or he lingered round the bonnie brier bush, telling sweet, amusing little stories of bucolic intrigue as seen through the

windows of the Presbyterian manse...we should note that even the avowed Romantics could return on occasion from the moors and corries to the safer territory around the parish pump.

(33)

Blake connects Buchan with this tendency to combine the two, denigrating what he called Buchan's lapses 'to the pawky simplicities of village life as seen from his father's Free Kirk manse' (34). Twenty years earlier, Lewis Grassie Gibbon (James Leslie Mitchell) had attacked Buchan for what he saw as Buchan's failure to avoid Kailyard influence in his fiction.

...when his characters talk Scots they do it in suitable inverted commas: and such characters as do talk Scots are always the simple, the proletarian, or the slightly ludicrous.

(35)

Gibbon's criticism is ill-judged, and inappropriate in the context of Buchan's writing as a whole. It is true that Buchan's Scottish characters, (the ones which were most likely to exhibit Kailyard characteristics), were from the working classes or the peasantry, but they were not all simple, proletarian, or ludicrous - in fact, hardly any could be described as such. Gibbon's own predilection for the raw and dour qualities of character, as found in his trilogy A Scots Quair (1932-4), his short story 'Smeddum' (1934), and so on, were very different from Buchan's taste for and appreciation of romance. While Dickson McCunn would never appear in a Grassie Gibbon story, he was perfectly suited to Buchan's particular interpretation of the Scottish merchant classes. Gibbon did not share Buchan's more romantic tastes, but that did not automatically categorise

Buchan as part of what Christopher Harvie has called the 'ethnic aquarium...awash with sentiment' (36) which was Kailyard.

Buchan's own views about the Kailyard writers were unambiguous. While at Oxford, he had proposed a motion at the Union condemning the Kailyard novelists (37) with two other Scots, leaving an Englishman to support what was then the Scottish national literature. In 1895 he had written an article for the Glasgow Herald on 'Nonconformity in Literature', where he decried the tendencies of the 'gentlemen of the press, whose interest it is to puff such books' (38) for claiming for the Kailyard writers an inappropriate level of importance.

We are told that the 'deep, serious heart of the country' is to be found in them; that the clatter of hen-wives and clash of a country street are things of paramount importance.'

(39)

Buchan's argument here is that the Kailyard had its own merits, but these merits were insignificant compared to the real literature.

Mr Crockett hates the sickly and the grimy with a perfect hatred. He is all for the wind and the sunshine, hills and heather, lilac and adventure, kisses and fresh-churned butter...He is clamorous over their beauties; he is all for the great common things of the world - faith and love, heroism and patience. But it seems to us that in this also there is a danger; mere talking about fine things does not make fine literature.'

(40)

In his later Introduction for his The Northern Muse (1924), Buchan returned to the attack with greater vigour.

...writers painfully at ease in Zion, who gloat over domestic sentiment till the charm has gone, who harp on

obvious pathos till the last trace of the pathetic vanishes, who make so crude a frontal attack upon the emotions that emotions are left inviolate. Whether it be children, or lost love, or death, or any other of the high matters of poetry, there is the same gross pawing which rubs off the bloom...a perpetual saccharine sweetness which quickly cloyes.

(41)

Here Buchan was writing as an established author and a professional who knew what it took to produce good writing. He was later to say that the only positive thing to come out of Kailyard was George Douglas Brown's The House With The Green Shutters (1901), a novel which was the antithesis of all that Kailyard endorsed, but which he also recognised as merely the reverse side of the coin.

"Without qualification, I have no use for it [the Kailyard School]. The only utilitarian function the people you [the interviewer] speak of accomplished was to precipitate a very striking rejoinder to their own mawkish misinterpretation of life. Yes, I do mean The House With The Green Shutters. A terrible book, certainly. The swing of the pendulum. For that reason, also untrue. But not so untrue as the other stuff, and not like that, invertebrate."

(42)

Hugh MacDiarmid agreed with Buchan's assessment of this negative and inward development of Kailyard, calling it 'the same thing disguised as its opposite' (43). The House With The Green Shutters was a badly needed tonic at the time of its initial publication in 1901, but the real antidote to Kailyard was a complete break, not a reversal of polarity, and this was to be expressed in the literature of the Scottish Renaissance.

#### Kailyard in journalism

In 1907-8, Buchan was the editor of The Scottish Review, a new

title transformed from a Nelson's acquisition called The Christian Leader. Nelson's changed the religious emphasis to a literary and Scottish-centred tone, and the intention was 'to produce a distinctive Scottish weekly' (44). Under Buchan's editorship the paper eschewed the traditional Kailyard-esque concerns of theological party politics and ecclesiastical gossip, leaning firmly in the direction of quality literature and political comment.

Buchan's effect on the paper was...culturally magnificent and financially disastrous. His own articles ranged widely: they also ranged at too high a level for the readers of a penny paper chiefly interested in Scottish news, and Church news at that. His own chief concern was not even with domestic British affairs; it was with Imperial affairs and foreign policy, topics altogether outside the sphere of interests of most of his readers. He had really lost all rapport with Scottish opinion.

(45)

In attempting to produce a non-Kailyard journal, Buchan had miscalculated the willingness of the readership to abandon the iniquities of Kailyard, and they were not willing: '...his attempt to cut down the amount of space devoted to Church matters was a flouting of the core of the paper's readership' (46). It was also the core of Kailyard support, and the movement away from Kailyard values to an as yet unspecified alternative was not, at this point, strong enough to take on the Kailyard heartland.

Buchan's strongest attack on Kailyard came after the War, after the 1915 change in his fiction, when he was established as a Scottish writer, writing a regular supply of novels for the

holiday market. He transferred his contempt for Kailyard into his fiction, most specifically in Castle Gay (1930), where a publicity-shy newspaper magnate, Mr Thomas Carlyle Craw, is rudely forced to see life while hiding from Ewallonian agitators. The Ewallonians descend from Stevenson's Prince Otto (1885) and Anthony Hope's The Prisoner of Zenda (1894), but Mr Craw is a mischievous and eventually affectionate portrait of William Robertson Nicoll, the Victorian creator of a Scottish newspaper empire and the commercial force behind Kailyard. Robertson Nicoll had died in 1923, after receiving a knighthood which his more strong-minded fictional counterpart had refused, and although the careers of Thomas Craw and Robertson Nicoll do not mirror each other exactly, their similar creation of new, popular and cheap weekly and daily papers is enough to connect them and allow Buchan to satirise the Kailyard machine.

(Mr Craw) found a niche in a popular religious weekly, where, under the signature of 'Simon the Tanner', he commented upon books and movements and personalities...His columns became the most popular feature of that popular journal.

(47)

Looking about him, he detected that there was room for a weekly journal at a popular price, which would make its appeal to the huge class of the aspiring half-baked, then being turned out by free education. They were not ardent politicians; they were not scholars; they were homely, simple folk, who wanted a little politics, a little science, a little religion. So he broke with his employers, and, greatly daring, started his own penny weekly.

(48)

Robertson Nicoll was asked by Hodder & Stoughton to edit their popular theological monthly, The Expositor, in the 1880s, and in

1886 he began The British Weekly, in 1891 The Bookman, and in 1893 The Woman At Home. Mr Craw emulated his career - 'But above all it [The View] was a paper for the home, and the female sex became its faithful votaries' (49). The British Weekly contained sermons or theological essays, reviews of ecclesiastical works, news of persons or movements in the Free Church of Scotland (Nicoll was a Free Kirk minister), and a long, bookish essay by Nicoll as 'Claudius Clear' or 'A Man of Kent' which dealt with reviews, politics and current events. In 1893 Nicoll discovered and encouraged another Free Kirk minister, the Rev. John Watson, to collect his stories of parish life into a series of sketches called 'Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush' under the name of 'Ian Maclaren', and published them in The British Weekly. Kailyard was born.

And Thomas [Carlyle Craw] was an adroit editor...he discovered three new poets - poetry was for the moment in fashion - and two new and now completely forgotten humorists, and he made each reader share in the discovery and feel that he too was playing the part of a modern Maecenas.

(50)

After indulging his feelings about the chief perpetrator of Kailyard, Buchan eventually let the gentle castigation give way to the demands of the story, and Mr Craw is allowed to repent and prove himself a proper man by learning to enjoy a walk in wet weather in the hills.

#### Buchan's avoidance of Kailyard

Like his change from Scottish Renaissance poet to a supporter,

critic and patron of the Scottish Renaissance, Buchan's criticism of Kailyard was consolidated after the 1915 change in his fiction. It was most effective in his Dickson McCunn novels Huntingtower (1922) and Castle Gay (1930).

They were both modern Scottish adventure stories, portraits of Scottish life and humanity, with neither sentimentality nor recourse to stereotypes - even the love scenes are restrained and implicit, rather than the emotional excesses which filled Kailyard romances like S.R. Crockett's The Lilac Sunbonnet (1894). In an early review in The Bookman in 1916, Buchan's versatility was linked to the Kailyard machine - 'The man can write in any style...he can out-Crockett Crockett' (51), and later on he was accused of reverting to Kailyard with his creation of the Gorbals Die-Hards in Huntingtower (52): 'when invention flagged...he would return again to the pawky simplicities of his father's manse' (53). If the Die-Hards were truly Kailyard, they would have been lisping children's hymns and an evangelical Christianity, not the Socialist chants which Jaikie and Dougal recite with gusto.

To Dickson's surprise Dougal seemed to be in good spirits. He began to sing to a hymn tune a strange ditty.

"Class-conscious we are, and class-conscious wull be  
Till our fit's on the neck o' the Boorjoyzee."

"What on earth are you singing?" Dickson enquired. Dougal grinned.

"Wee Jaikie went to a Socialist Sunday School last winter because he heard they were for fechtin' battles. Ay', and they telled him he was to jine a thing called an International, and Jaikie thought it was a fitba' club. But when he fund out there was no magic lantern or swaree at Christmas he gie'd it the chuck. They learned him a heap o'



queer songs. That's one."  
"What does the last word mean?"  
"I don't ken. Jaikie thought it was some kind of a draigon."

(54)

Buchan's street urchins are neither brilliant schoolboys dying of tuberculosis - see George Howe in Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush - nor are they bed-ridden saints in a Glasgow slum - see The Setons (1917), by O. Douglas (Anna Buchan). They have a realism about them which averts the potential pathos of their situation to reinforce the attractive elements of self-contained independence.

...a kind of unauthorised and unofficial Boy Scouts, who, without a uniform or badge or any kind of paraphernalia, followed the banner of Sir Robert Baden-Powell and subjected themselves to a rude discipline. They were far too poor to join an orthodox troop, but they faithfully copied what they believed to be the practices of more fortunate boys.

(55)

This description might well have degenerated into a sanctimonious homily on the virtues of the material poor, but Buchan was well aware of the reality of poverty in Glasgow, having taught in his father's church in the Gorbals in the 1890s, and he employed no sentimentality.

The Chieftain viewed his scarred following with a grim content. "That's a tough lot for ye, Mr McCunn. Used a' their days wi' sleepin' in coal-rees and dunnies and dodgin' the polis. Ye'll no beat the Gorbals Die-Hards."

(56)

Buchan avoids completely the manipulative pathos which characterises the Kailyard fiction, a grip in the writing which wrenches induced sympathy from the reader entirely against their will. The Gorbals Die-Hards reject sentimentality, they are

entirely self-sufficient, and there is no pathetic reminder of what they could or would have been. When McCunn announces his intentions of adopting them and providing for their future (a cue for Kailyard excesses if ever there was one) the news is taken calmly.

Dougal listens gravely and again salutes.  
"I've brought ye a message," he says, "We've just had a meetin' and I've to report that ye've been unanimously eleckit Chief Die-Hard. We're a' hopin' ye'll accept."

(57)

The news of a life free from want and with decent prospects is less important to the boys' own acceptance of McCunn as one of themselves. Their sense of self-worth is strong enough to see that they can offer McCunn what he does not have, and compared to this their own material lack is negligible. Once again this is Kailyard territory, but Buchan does not succumb, handling the episode with dignity and humour, and with no emotional manipulation. Where Buchan differed from the Kailyard writers was in his sense of proportion, his lack of narrowmindedness, and in what he intended his fiction to do. Kailyard writers wanted a cosy, recognisable universe where all was safe and predictable and controlled by a paternalistic morality. Buchan wrote about change and possibilities, rejecting the banal for good quality and writing fiction that has endured beyond anything that the Kailyard writers produced.

#### The Scottish fiction

Buchan's Scottish fiction can be divided into the historical,

and the novels which were set in contemporary Scotland. The latter tended to have a certain amount of anglicised input in their characters, whereas the historical novels centred on great events in Scottish history, and were wholly concerned with an essential Scottishness which did not seem to be present in the contemporary fiction.

To readers today, Buchan's fiction is all historical, particularly the early novels and short stories which were set in an 1890s Tweeddale. These themselves were far removed from the intensely twentieth century experiences in his later writing, of the First World War and the politics, slang and preoccupations of the inter-war years. Perhaps because of this distancing in time, the early fiction appears to be Buchan's most intensely Scottish, in theme, character and setting, since his experiences at that point were wholly based in Scotland. His move to England, in physical terms and in terms of his literary development, occurred in 1895, and 'A Captain of Salvation' (1896) is Buchan's first fictional work to be non-Scottish. He continued to write 'purely' Scottish fiction, but this came to be more and more interspersed with the anglicised writing which characterised his thrillers. Buchan's interest in Scottish history was always a powerful force in his writing, and his novels and short stories incorporating the 1745 Jacobite uprising or the Covenanting years of the earlier century, to take his two most common Scottish themes, were highly absorbing

and minutely detailed Scottish novels.

For a discussion of Buchan's Scottish writing it is necessary to look at his use of the Scots language in his fiction. Buchan was brought up speaking Border Scots, and the Scots language remained a constant element in his fiction throughout his career. Where a novel may not have involved Scotland as a setting or its history as a theme, a Scottish character like Geordie Hamilton in The Courts of the Morning (1929) or Andrew Amos in A Prince of the Captivity (1933), infuses a distinct flavour of Buchan's homeland and ensures that his roots were not disregarded.

The dialect of these two characters was of course Glaswegian, which Buchan would have been accustomed to from his schooldays at Hutchesons' Grammar School and his time at Glasgow University in the early 1890s. The characters of his early fiction, however, spoke a Tweeddale dialect which was native to Buchan from his childhood. He was aware of its possibilities as a medium of storytelling and anecdote, but also wary of overdoing it, knowing that an intensity of richness in language was not always the most effective means of expression.

It is to be noted that in some of the greatest masterpieces of our tongue...the dialect is never emphasised; only a word here and there provides a Northern tone.

(58)

As Janet Adam Smith has documented in her biography of Buchan, at a very early stage in his career as a writer Buchan was

collecting instances of his native Border dialect that was to him representative of true Scots.

'We have been having magnificent weather here. One old shepherd told me "that there was nae doot but that the millenium had come, and Auld Nick was lockit up". One man saw me reading Browning and told me that "I should only read every second line and I wad make as much sense oot o' it". Another (and this is one of the best things I ever heard) was talking about politics with me. "Ay," he said, "there used to be an awfu' lot o' Tories round aboot here; but oor Makker was merciful to us Liberals and took a lot o' them to himsel'". I found afterwards that the speaker's brother had been one of the Tories.'

(59)

The succinctness, the dry wit, and the clarity of expression are all unforgettable, and Buchan successfully transplanted these elements of the Scots dialect into the dialogue of his Scottish characters without degeneration into the Kailyard-esque.

About four o'clock Dougal presented himself in the back kitchen. He was an even wilder figure than usual, for his bare legs were mud to the knees, his kilt and shirt clung sopping to his body, and, having lost his hat, his wet hair was plastered over his eyes. Mrs Morran said, not unkindly, that he looked "like a wull-cat glowerin' through a whin buss."

"How are you, Dougal?" Dickson asked genially. "Is the peace of nature smoothing out the creases in your poor little soul?"

"What's that ye say?"

"Oh, just something I heard a man say in Glasgow. How have you got on?"

(60)

The poacher of 'On Cademuir Hill' (1894), Buchan's first real short story, has the first direct, fictional dialogue in Buchan. A Kailyard version of this episode would be laden with theological earnestness in an effort to transform the suffering: but Buchan's story is without sweetener, and the feelings of relief and remorse conveyed in the dialogue are all the stronger

for being expressed without religious cladding. In 'Politics and the Mayfly' (1896), the farmer and the ploughman of Clachlands have vigour in their dialogue which brings the events of the story sharply into relief. Shortly after the story begins comes this lyrical passage.

The farmer of Clachlands called a meeting of his labourers in the great dusty barn, which had been the scene of many similar gatherings. His speech on the occasion was vigorous and to the point. 'Ye' are a' my men,' he said, 'an' I'll see that ye vote richt. Y're uneddicated folk, and ken naething about the matter, sae ye just tak my word for't, that the Tories are in the richt and vote accordingly. I've been a guid maister to ye, and it's shurely better to pleasure me, than a wheen leein' scoondrels whae tramp the country wi' leather bags and printit trash.'

Then arose from the back, the ploughman, strong in his convictions. 'Listen to me, you men,' says he; 'just vote as ye think best. The maister's a guid maister, as he says, but he's nocht to dae wi' your votin'. It's what they ca' inteemedation to interfere wi' onybody in this matter. So mind that, an' vote for the workin'-man an' his richts.'

Then ensued a war of violent words.

'Is this a meetin' in my barn, or a pennywaddin'?'

'Ca't what ye please. I canna let ye mislead the men.'

'Whae talks about misleadin'? Is't misleadin' to lead them richt?'

'The question,' said the ploughman solemnly, 'is what you ca' richt.'

(61)

With this interchange, the characters of the story are established, as are the local circumstances of the imminent election, and the politics of the countryside, and the impeccable Border dialect has nothing to do with the 'unlimited capacity for whimsy' (62) which was characteristic of Kailyard dialogue. This excerpt might at first glance be prime Kailyard material, but Buchan has left it alone, whereas a Kailyard writer might have exaggerated the tone of the narrator into

being patronising, and elaborated the brief exchanges, pungent here with derision, into a contorted stereotype of the canny Scot. Buchan's ability to pare down to essentials has resulted in a delightful example of good Scots dialogue, with the flavour untainted and with a balanced and rhythmic arrangement of intonations.

Buchan's next short story to incorporate Scots, 'At the Rising of the Waters' (1897), employs a Scottish narrative voice in parts and the now familiar Scottish dialect. The accent is thicker and the tone more Biblically grim than in 'Politics and the Mayfly', but the images of Scottish farming life are fully developed by the mode of narration and the farmer's own words. The contrast between Linklater and the minister who enquired anxiously for his religious condition after the ordeal of the flood is nicely illustrated by their dialogue; the minister, 'a well-intentioned, phrasing man' in his English-Edinburgh modulations, is overshadowed by the 'racy, careless' tones of the farmer, who had told the full story to the narrator, but would not divulge any more than bare facts and throwaway lines to his neighbours and his spiritual adviser (63). In Kailyard this passage would have been the climax of the story, and there would have been lengthy passages of spiritual torment in the midst of Linklater's ordeal, instead of the virtual avoidance of the religious aspect in Buchan's story.

Powerful Scots dialect is a major feature of seven further

Buchan short stories - 'The Moor-Song' (1897), 'Streams of Water in the South' (1899), 'The Earlier Affection' (1899), 'The Herd of Standlan' (1899), 'No-Man's Land' (1899), 'The Outgoing of the Tide' (1902), and 'The Riding of Ninemileburn' (1912) - and a distinct element in an eighth, the anglicised Runagates story 'The Frying-pan and the Fire' (1928). Here, the 1915 change is less apparent, since Buchan had stopped using exclusively Scottish themes and dialect by the turn of the century.

The first seven are all early fiction, most written and published before 1900, and are mostly set around the lives of the Border shepherds and farmers. 'The Moor-Song' (also known as 'The Song of the Moor') is a curious departure from stories like 'The Herd of Standlan' and 'At the Rising of the Waters', in that it has the format of a fairy-tale but contains satire aimed at adults and more than a tincture of the Arcadian ideals of gypsying, later expressed in Buchan's poem 'The Gypsy's Song to the Lady Cassilis' (1898), and in Kenneth Grahame's The Wind in the Willows (1908), particularly the chapter 'Wayfarers All'. The Respectable Whaup of Buchan's story is a remarkable anthropomorphic creation, and through it Buchan mocks the Kailyard Kirk.

"What are these things to you, if ye have not first heard the Moor-Song, which is the beginning and end o' all things?"

"I have heard no songs," said the man, "save the sacred psalms o' God's Kirk."

"Bonny songs," said the bird. "Once I flew by the hinder end o' the Kirk and I keekit in. A wheen auld wives w' mutes



and a wheen auld men wi' hoasts! Be sure the Moor-Song is  
no like yon."

(64)

Here the Kirk is an oppressive and unctuous body, bound by  
letter and habit, and the Great Godly Man's escape from this  
restriction into the wide world is seen as a release.

### Scottish novels

Buchan had already used the religious domination of Scotland as  
a theme for his first novel, Sir Quixote of the Moors (1895),  
and was to examine it again in John Burnet of Barns (1898) and  
in his masterpiece Witch Wood (1927). His use of Scots dialect  
never quite ended, nor is there a particular date or pattern of  
use which would correlate to the change in 1915. The only  
effect which this change had on the use of Scots in Buchan's  
fiction was to increase the non-Scottish, more popular escapist  
element of the thrillers. But even these had strong Scots  
characters and dialogue: the difference was that English  
dialogue was more prevalent than before.

Sir Quixote, John Burnet and Witch Wood were three of the  
thirteen Buchan novels which can fairly be classed as Scottish  
(see Appendix 14). In some of these novels the language was  
merely the vehicle for the narration and dialogue, a story told  
in Scots rather than a Scottish story. Of these, The Thirty-  
Nine Steps (1915), Mr Standfast (1919), John Macnab (1924) and  
The Island of Sheep (1936) employ Scottish episodes and have  
some Scottish characters, but these are only part of the main

plot, which brings the action to Scotland from the more important source, England. Prester John (1910), Salute to Adventurers (1915) and The Free Fishers (1934) have Scottish heroes, and instead of the plot bringing the protagonists to Scotland, with these the heroes begin their adventures in Scotland and go out into the world to continue them, to South Africa, to Virginia, and to England, in a sense taking Scotland with them. The remaining six novels - Sir Quixote of the Moors (1895), John Burnet of Barns (1898), A Lost Lady of Old Years (1899), Huntingtower (1922), Witch Wood (1927), and Castle Gay (1930) - are not necessarily 'more' or 'better' Scottish novels, but they have a greater immersion in Scottish history and culture, and remain focused on this element, while the other Scottish novels have the extra elements of foreign, non-Scottish culture and events to detract from the full Scottish experience.

Huntingtower and Castle Gay are the only contemporary novels of these six, fine Scottish romances with less theological input than in the historical novels, but conveying a sense of Scotland's society and politics during the inter-war years.

Huntingtower is immediately post-war, its plot defined by the Russian *émigres* and Bolsheviks, and with Archie Roylance to connect the story with the Richard Hannay war novels. In this novel Buchan was writing a romance - the elements of the captive princess, the lost prince, the duenna, the helpful, dwarfish Die-Hards, and a ruined castle by the sea, are all transformed

into the stuff of romance by the Scottish setting and the Scottish characters. Castle Gay is a continuation of the romance theme with local politics and more foreign revolutionaries, and, for good measure, Dickson McCunn's dream of Jacobite escapes coming true, to bring the novel back into romance territory.

#### History and religion

Jacobitism was one of Buchan's early enthusiasms in Scottish history - his short story 'The Earlier Affection' (1899), his third novel A Lost Lady of Old Years published six months later, 'The Company of the Marjolaine' (1909) and Midwinter (1923) having as their thematic setting the 1745 uprising. A Lost Lady has a fuller treatment of the theme, as the action leads towards the battle of Culloden and ends with the execution of Lord Lovat, and is a very evocative novel. The redemption of the hero and his relationship with Mrs Murray are the ostensible main plot elements, but the powerful settings of Edinburgh's Auld Toun and the Highland settlements convey a great deal more about the condition of Scotland.

The use of history and of historical events in the writing of fiction was an issue Buchan was later to discuss as a critic as well as a writer.

The historical novel demands a scrupulous gift of selection. It also requires an austere conscience...this view may be the pedantry of a historian, but I have always felt that consciously to pervert the past is more heinous than to

pervert the present, for the crime is harder to detect.

(65)

In his Scottish historical novels Buchan immerses himself in a particular period, most often in the late seventeenth century, also reflected in the research he had done for his two biographies of Montrose, in 1913 and 1928: the setting for Sir Quixote of the Moors (1895), John Burnet of Barns (1898), and for Witch Wood (1927). All three novels have strong associations with seventeenth-century Scottish history which was dominated by religious strife. In these novels religious history is political and national history, and the plots are defined by the struggle of the Covenanters and the effects of the Civil War. The religious figures in Buchan's seventeenth-century fiction of this period include the elders and parishioners as well as the ordained ministry, and are very different, more fervent, grim and driven by their faith than some of the other religious figures in Buchan's fiction.

The minister of 'The Watcher by the Threshold' (1900) is an insensitive clod, as are the priest and parson of 'The Wife of Flanders' (1921). Buchan uses evangelical Christianity in 'A Captain of Salvation' (1896), and in the flawed saint Frank Alban in A Prince of the Captivity (1933). Paganism, witchcraft and superstition are the moving forces in many Buchan stories and novels, opposed to traditional Christianity and invariably defeated by it, as in 'The Outgoing of the Tide' (1902), 'The

Grove of Ashtaroath' (1912), and in The Dancing Floor (1926). In 'Fullcircle' (1920) and in The Blanket of the Dark (1931) Buchan uses Roman Catholicism as an image of a central point of strength, an axis which controls events and which is a solid foundation amidst change - the son of the Presbyterian manse had a wide and generous imagination. The Scottish minister Nanty Lammas of The Free Fishers (1934) is more a Stevensonian hero in his role as narratorial focus, and has little to do with the grim Calvinists of Witch Wood.

Buchan's first novel was in the territory he later explored more fully in Witch Wood, and Sir Quixote of the Moors (1895), which I have discussed more fully in chapter two above, has Buchan's first historical religious characters; not ordained ministers but the Scottish people on opposing sides in the war of the Covenant. The stranger to the country, the Sieur de Rohaine, has his first encounter with Scotland's religious divide with the opponents of the Covenant, in the company of Quentin Kennedy, and although the violence and dishonourable conduct of Kennedy's band is distasteful to him, he does not feel any greater warmth for the upholders of the Covenant when he falls in with the menfolk of Anne Lambert, both as bigoted and as repressive as their enemies. Buchan's portrayal of the more positive aspects of the Covenanters is reserved for his later John Burnet of Barns (1898), but even these descriptions are couched in divisive terms, appointing finer feelings for the

aristocracy and brute violence for the lower classes.

And this I have ever found it, that the better sort of the Covenanters were the very cream of the Scots gentlefolk, and that 'twas only in the *canaille* that the gloomy passion of fanatics was to be found.

(66)

The predicament of the hero of John Burnet is dictated by the religious wars - accused of being a malignant by his enemy as a way of getting him out of the way, he is outlawed, and only on the accession of the Protestant Kings William and Mary to the British throne in 1689 does his outlawry cease. Buchan's treatment of religion and history in binding it into the fabric of the story as a plot device is indicative of how crucial this phase of Scotland's history was to ordinary life - nobody could avoid or escape the religious element, and to take sides and declare an adherence to the Crown or to the Covenant was in effect declaring war.

Another illustration of this interdependency of history as the cause of an effect is the hero's display of the family portraits to his new bride on the day that she joined the family. The ancestors are defined in terms of the Burnet contribution to Scottish historical events and by their place in history.

"That was my father's brother who stood last at Philiphaugh, when the great Marquis was overthrown...And beyond still is...the one with the pale, grave face, and solemn eyes. He died next his king at the rout of Flodden."

(67)

#### Witch Wood

Although the force of religious conflict in Scotland's history

is conveyed by religious fanatics in Sir Quixote and in John Burnet, Buchan does not examine the actual theological divide in his fiction until Witch Wood in 1927. The ostensible conflict between Kirk and State, between theological supremacy and secular domination is localised in the witch-ridden parish of Woodilee, and in the casting out by the Kirk of Montrose the malignant who dared to oppose the forces of the Covenant. The corruption of the theocrats is expressed in the evil of Ephraim Caird, elder and King-Deil, and the supposedly corrupt and evil Montrose is a sympathetic and noble figure: his discourse with David upon the difference between the demands of the Kirk and Covenant and the needs of God's people, express the crux of the novel.

There are many oppositions in Witch Wood, and all express the battle of good and evil, of light and dark, of knowledge and ignorance. The corrupted nature of the Covenanted Kirk twists itself around to be devoured by evil, illustrated by Ephraim Caird. His supreme confidence in his assured high standing in the ranks of the Calvinist Elect sanctions all possible evils that he may commit as the leader of the Woodilee coven: the greater the sin, the greater his (assured) redemption and the greater the glory of God. Such contorted reasoning is reflected in many issues in the novel - Katrine nursing the dying during the plague, and being condemned by the Kirk Session as a devilish spirit; the witch-pricker destroying an innocent woman

as a witch for the satisfaction of the parish elders, his employers. The three ministers, Muirhead, Proudfoot and Fordyce, reflect different frailties and failings within the Scottish church - pride, arrogance and weakness of spirit - and with these analogies Buchan's intent with the novel is clear.

At this moment in history the essential conflict within Scotland was wholly spiritual, expressed in the Kirk and State divide and in the internal divisions of Scottish Presbyterian Christianity. The contortions present in issues arising from this divide twisted facts and acts about until that which was evil had the face of good, and the good that was done was miscalled evil. Nothing is what it seems, all is confusion, and by using classic mythic material, such as the motif of a necessary sacrifice before the return of peace - Katrine's death echoes that of Peter Pienaar in Mr Standfast (1919) - Buchan has elevated this exposition of a major Scottish historical crisis and examination into the condition of the nation into a great Scottish novel.

The emotional energy contained in the writing of Witch Wood is quite extraordinary; the essential right and wrong of the manifold expressions of the issues are unambiguous, yet never commonplace or banal. The richness of the language - the most recent edition by Canongate Classics includes a glossary of 250 of the more difficult Scots words - intensifies the novel into a powerful reading experience. And the theology never palls: not many historical novels could make intricate theological debate a



necessary element in the narration, and in Witch Wood Buchan has simplified the details into clear-cut issues, illustrated them simply and with great emotional effect, allowing the reader to be aware of the essential ideas throughout the novel.

Buchan's role as a Scottish writer was both as writer and patron. The most important concerns in Scottish writing at this period were those of the Scottish Renaissance, and more particularly the vernacular language, and I have shown that Buchan's performance in these areas was as sponsor rather than practitioner, his acceptance of this role coming after the 1915 change in his writing. The negative side of Scottish culture, the nineteenth-century blight of Kailyard, was also a concern of Buchan's, and he dealt with it by example, showing how Scottish fiction which was not of the extremes of Lewis Grassie Gibbon and George Douglas Brown was also not necessarily of the Kailyard school. His Scottish romances were free of sentimentality and manipulation, but yet retained a strong Scottish identity which Kailyard had cluttered up in other mainstream Scottish fiction with its domination of pathos. Buchan's most powerful fiction was wholly Scottish, and in Witch Wood in particular he dealt with the three abiding features of Scottish writing - the language, the history, and the religion - with a firm understanding of their importance in Scottish culture. The change of 1915 was not comprehensive in the

Scottish aspects of Buchan's fiction, but its effects can be seen.

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(1) Christopher Harvie, No Gods and Precious Few Heroes: Scotland 1914-1980 (London 1981), p.130.

[NB: The pen-name of Christopher Murray Grieve varied from Hugh M'Diarmid to Hugh MacDiarmid, and in view of the fact that his reputation and role in the Scottish Renaissance is signified by the latter name, I propose to refer to him as Hugh MacDiarmid throughout this chapter.]

(2) Christopher Harvie, No Gods and Precious Few Heroes, op.cit., pp.129-30.

(3) Alan Bold, Modern Scottish Literature (London 1983), p.27.

(4) Hugh MacDiarmid, 'John Buchan', in Contemporary Scottish Studies: essays from the Scottish Educational Journal (Edinburgh 1976); 19 June 1925, pp.1-2 (p.1).

(5) Christopher Harvie, No Gods and Precious Few Heroes, op.cit., pp.129-30.

(6) Gavin Wallace, 'Compton Mackenzie and the Scottish Popular Novel', in The History of Scottish Literature, 4 vols, ed. Cairns Craig (Aberdeen 1987); vol 4, pp.243-259 (p.246).

(7) Beth Dickson, 'Foundations of the Modern Scottish novel', in The History of Scottish Literature, op.cit.; vol 4, pp.49-60 (p.50).

(8) Colin Milton, 'Modern Poetry in Scots before MacDiarmid' in The History of Scottish Literature, op.cit.; vol 4, pp.11-36 (p.26).

(9) Maurice Lindsay, History of Scottish Literature (London 1977), p.108.

(10) C.M. Grieve (also known as Hugh MacDiarmid), Annals of the Five Senses (Edinburgh 1923), dedicatory note.

(11) Hugh MacDiarmid, 'John Buchan', op.cit., p.1.

(12) Victoria Glendinning, Edith Sitwell: A Unicorn Among Lions (London 1981, 1983 Oxford University Press), pp.46-7.

(13) *ibid.*, p.46.

(14) *ibid.*, p.47.

(15) Edith Sitwell, Poetry and Criticism (1925), quoted in Victoria Glendinning, Edith Sitwell, op.cit., p.48.

- (16) Colin Milton, 'Modern Poetry in Scots before MacDiarmid', op.cit., p.26.
- (17) Hugh MacDiarmid, 'John Buchan', op.cit., p.2.
- (18) Edinburgh University Library; the John Buchan letters in the archives of Thomas Nelson & Co., B/12/218-220.
- (19) Colin Milton, 'Modern Poetry in Scots before MacDiarmid', op.cit., p.29.
- (20) *ibid*, p.26.
- (21) William Will, 'Foreword', in The Scottish Tongue: A Series of Lectures on the vernacular language of Lowland Scotland edited by W.A. Craigie (London 1924), pp.ix-xii (p.x).
- (22) Colin Milton, 'Modern Poetry in Scots before MacDiarmid', op.cit., p.26.
- (23) John Buchan, 'Some Scottish Characteristics', in The Scottish Tongue, ed. W.A. Craigie, op.cit.; lecture delivered 7 February 1921, pp.49-88 (p.50).
- (24) John Buchan, 'The Celtic Spirit in Literature', in The Spectator, no.3761, (July 28 1900), pp.113-114.
- (25) John Buchan, 'A Scottish Lady of the Old School', in The Spectator, no. 3961, (May 28 1904), pp.846-7.
- (26) John Buchan, 'A New Scottish Poet', in The Spectator Literary Supplement, no.4257, (Jan 29 1910), pp.157.
- (27) John Buchan, 'Recent Verse', in The Spectator, no.4327, (June 3 1911), pp.850-851 (p.851).
- (28) John Buchan, 'Recent Verse', in The Spectator, no.4526, (March 27 1915), pp.444-446 (p.445).
- (29) John Buchan, 'Preface' in Hugh MacDiarmid's Sangschaw (Edinburgh 1925), pp.ix-x (p.x).
- (30) *ibid*.
- (31) Gavin Wallace, 'Compton Mackenzie and the Scottish popular novel', op.cit., p.246.
- (32) George Blake, Barrie and the Kailyard School (London 1951), p.12.
- (33) *ibid*, pp.12-13.

(34) *ibid*, p.14.

(35) Lewis Grassie Gibbon, 'Literary Lights', in Scottish Scene, edited by Lewis Grassie Gibbon & Hugh MacDiarmid, (Edinburgh 1934), pp.194-207 (p.201).

(36) Christopher Harvie, 'Behind the Bonnie Brier Bush' in Proteus no. 3, (June 1978), pp.55-70 (p.58).

(37) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan (London 1965, 1985 Oxford University Press), p.87.

(38) John Buchan, 'Nonconformity in Literature', The Glasgow Herald, no.263, (2 Nov 1895), p.4.

(39) *ibid*.

(40) *ibid*.

(41) John Buchan, 'Introduction' to his The Northern Muse, (London 1924), pp.xix-xxxi (p.xxix).

(42) 'Interviews with Famous Authors: John Buchan', The Book Window: A Guide to Book Buying and Reading, vol 1, no.3, (Christmas 1927), pp.95-97 (p.96).

(43) Hugh MacDiarmid, 'Newer Scottish Fiction (1)', in Contemporary Studies, op.cit., (25 June 1926), pp. 108-9 (p.108).

(44) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, op.cit., p.171.

(45) Arthur C. Turner, 'John Buchan', unpublished PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1952, pp.132-3.

(46) *ibid*, p.133.

(47) John Buchan, Castle Gay (London 1930, 1983 Dent), p.17.

(48) *ibid*, pp.17-18.

(49) *ibid*, p.19.

(50) *ibid*, p.18.

(51) David Hodge, 'John Buchan', The Bookman, vol 51, no.301 (October 1916), pp.7-10 (p.8).

(52) George Blake, Barrie and the Kailyard School, op.cit., pp.84-85.

(53) *ibid*, p.14.

(54) John Buchan, Huntingtower (London 1922, 1956 Penguin), p.146.

(55) *ibid*, pp.23-24.

(56) *ibid*, pp.114-115.

(57) *ibid*, p.229.

(58) John Buchan, 'Introduction' to his The Northern Muse, *op.cit.*, p.xvii.

(59) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, *op.cit.*, p.39.

(60) John Buchan, Huntingtower, *op.cit.*, p.122.

(61) John Buchan, 'Politics and the Mayfly' (1896), in The Best Short Stories of John Buchan, 2 vols, edited by David Daniell (London 1980, 1984 Panther Books), vol 1, pp.169-177 (p.171).

(62) Maurice Lindsay, The Lowlands of Scotland: Glasgow and the North (London 1953), p.216.

(63) John Buchan, 'At the Rising of the Waters' (1897), in The Best Short Stories of John Buchan, *op.cit.*, vol 1, pp.86-96 (p.96).

(64) John Buchan, 'The Moor-Song' (1897), in The Best Short Stories of John Buchan, *op.cit.*, vol 2, pp.92-101 (p.96).

(65) John Buchan, 'The Most Difficult Form of Fiction', The Listener, vol 1, no.1, (Jan 16 1929), pp.21-22 (p.21).

(66) John Buchan, John Burnet of Barns (London 1898, 1922 Nelson), p.252.

(67) *ibid*, p.435.

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CHAPTER SIX

WOMEN IN THE FICTION OF JOHN BUCHAN

Women in the early thriller

The portrayal of women in the thriller genre, particularly in the 1920s and '30s, has long been decried by critics, although recently several studies have been produced which examine the subject more closely (1). All too often, the women characters in the early thrillers and detective novels were passive, ineffectual, routine stereotypes, with no active role and with little of interest in their personalities to attract the reader. In a particularly masculine genre, this tendency is not altogether unexpected, and although latter-day feminist critics of the thriller may condemn the whole genre as sexist and derogatory to women (in the terms of the 1980s), the fact remains that the thriller, as popular literature, reflected the thoughts and feelings of the time as accurately as did its counterpart in factual literature, the newspapers and magazines. In their novels, 'Sapper' and Edgar Wallace were persistent offenders, and their lead was followed by the host of derivative thriller writers of the 1920s and '30s. But was this the whole picture? Were there exceptions to this apparent rule, and how did the originators of the thriller perceive their women characters?

In this chapter I shall show that the diversity of Buchan's women characters places him in a position of strength when his fiction is examined for the ineffectual women characters and unequal treatment prevalent in the genre of the thriller. More particularly, I shall show that the 1915 change in his fiction



manifested itself strongly in his portrayal of women. While those women characters written before 1915 can be regarded as a chance of redemption to their corresponding heroes, those who appeared after 1915 are of a new kind in Buchan, a spur to his new kind of heroes, and individuals worthy of respect as well as of desire.

#### Types of Buchan women

I found that the women characters of Buchan's novels fell naturally into certain groupings. 'Steadfast heroines' examines Mary Lamington, Janet Raden and Alison Westwater, contrasted with Beryl Lombard from The Island of Sheep. Of the 'Sub-heroines' in the contemporary fiction, I look at Agatha Raden and Barbara Dasent, and their historical counterparts Elspeth Blair, of Salute to Adventurers, and Kirsty Evandale, of The Free Fishers. Buchan's use of 'Structural roles' for the women in his novels is examined in The Thirty-Nine Steps, also Ethel Pitt-Heron, of The Power-House, and Claudia Norreys of Midwinter. For his 'Innocent and passive victims' Buchan created Anne Lambert in Sir Quixote of the Moors, Sybil Ladlaw of 'The Watcher By The Threshold', Ailie Sempill of 'The Outgoing of the Tide', and Virginia Dasent of 'The Green Glen' - all early heroines drawn in the shorter format of the novelette or short story.

Buchan's 'Tragic married heroines' comprises Margaret Murray, of A Lost Lady of Old Years, and Gabriel Cranmer, of The Free Fishers, and from this section I move on to Buchan's depiction of 'Exotica'. Hilda von Einem of Greenmantle is probably Buchan's most well-known

female character, and she is echoed several years later, in The House of the Four Winds, by Araminta Troyos. The 'Foreign princesses' are Saskia of Huntingtower, Koré Arabin of The Dancing Floor, and Anna Haraldsen of The Island of Sheep. They are connected to 'The ballad tradition' which includes Katrine Yester of Witch Wood and Sabine Beauforest of The Blanket of the Dark. The last section of this chapter deals with 'Old women - witches, chaperones and peasants', and covers the diverse elderly duennas, Buchan's supernatural characters, and the extraordinary strength of Buchan's Scottish peasant women.

#### Novels without women

This wide selection from Buchan's female characters is indicative of the range of his interpretation of the female role in his fiction. In all, he wrote twenty-five novels, and very nearly all have at least one strong female character. The exceptions - Prester John (1910), and The Thirty-Nine Steps (1915) - are significant. Prester John was 'written as a boys' story' (2) and is intensely Stevensonian, drawing on elements from Treasure Island (1883). In a letter written to W.E. Henley in 1881, Stevenson mentions that there are '...no women in the story, Lloyd's orders, and who so blithe to obey?' (3).

In writing Prester John for boys, Buchan followed the pattern set by the stories in boys' magazines of the period, which were exclusively male with boy heroes. The boys' magazine fiction featured women very rarely; a juvenile audience did not demand the

conventional romantic love story combined with adventure, so there was no need for a heroine. In the main, the women in boys' fiction tended to be mothers and sisters, representative of the safe home life from which a boy came to find adventure. Prester John certainly fits this pattern, but the absence of women from The Thirty-Nine Steps, which was not specifically aimed at boys, and was also a novel of a genre where one might expect to find an evil female villain or at least a passive female victim, needs a little more examination.

The Thirty-Nine Steps is a spying story, and in Kipling's Kim (1901), the most well-known spy story of that period, the hero is in no doubt of the inappropriateness of women in the spying game. 'How can a man follow the Way or the Great Game when he is so- always pestered by women?' (4). In Patrick Williams' 'Kipling and Orientalism' (1989), he finds that women are perceived as a debilitating element in the male occupation of espionage (5). Buchan's solution to the apparently insoluble problem of the inclusion of women in The Thirty-Nine Steps, a novel where the genre demanded a heroine/victim, but where the logistics of the plot and the background rationale proscribed it, is discussed further on (see 'Structural roles' below, p.282).

In his short stories, Buchan uses women as part of the background fabric of society (see chapter four above) and creates female characters of any stature or solidity in only a few stories. Some of these women characters, in the full-length novels as well

as the short stories, reappear many times, some exist in single episodes only, and some have less role as a character than as a structural motif. What is certain (and consistent) is that Buchan was experimenting with the female characters in his fiction, just as he was with the male roles that he created, and that he was not content to rely on stereotypes as the feminine presence in his fiction.

Steadfast heroines - Mary Lamington

Mary Lamington is one of the fullest female characters that Buchan created. She appears in two books as a protagonist, Mr Standfast (1919) and The Three Hostages (1924), and in The Island of Sheep (1936) as a helper to the protagonists, gradually giving this position over to her son Peter John as Hannay's helper as the story progresses. Had there been a further Hannay book, Peter John might well have replaced Mary as his father's companion in adventure, and Mary would have diminished to the role of an onlooker, gently dissuaded by both son and husband from involving herself in danger or trouble. Buchan gave her character such self-determination that in such a case she might well have ignored them both, proved herself to be indispensable and saved the enterprise. This independence in Mary's personality is established from her first appearance in Mr Standfast, where she is a significant protagonist and by virtue of her sex is able to draw the enemy into a trap. Women had been for too long mere victims and admiring spectators in the popular adventure story - now Buchan was experimenting with a

character of strength and individuality who was a leading protagonist first, and a woman second. It is significant that she appears for the first time, after the 1915 change in Buchan's writing, as a counterpart and partner for Hannay.

Mr Standfast

In Greenmantle (1916) Buchan had already had Blenkiron admit that the current image of women was erroneous.

We've exalted our womenfolk into little tin gods, and at the same time left them out of the real business of life. Consequently, when we strike one playing the biggest kind of man's game we can't place her. We aren't used to regarding them as anything except angels and children.

(6)

In Mr Standfast, Mary protests at Hannay's inappropriate protectiveness.

Why, women aren't the brittle things men used to think them. They never were, and the war has made them like whipcord... we're the tougher sex now. We've had to wait and endure, and we've been so beaten on the anvil of patience that we've lost all our megrims... I'm nineteen years of age next August. Before the war I should have only just put my hair up. I should have been the kind of shivering debutante who blushes when she's spoken to, and oh! I should have thought such silly, silly things about life... Well, in the last two years I've been close to it, and to death. I've nursed the dying. I've seen souls in agony and in triumph. England has allowed me to serve her as she allows her sons. Oh, I'm a robust young woman now, and indeed I think women were always robuster than men.

(7)

Mary's role in Mr Standfast is as the intelligence agent coordinating Hannay's undercover work, and also as the decoy for the enemy agent, a role she deliberately created for herself as the best possible solution to the problem of Ivery. She and Hannay work together, fall in love, go through danger, and triumph in the

end. Hannay continually looks up to her, and it is made clear that he respects and admires her courage and control of the situation.

I only had to think of Mary to know just what Joan of Arc was. No man ever born could have done that kind of thing. It wasn't recklessness. It was sheer calculating courage.

(8)

Mary is (apparently) orphaned and lives with two eccentric maiden aunts whom she regards with affection and amused tolerance. She is thoroughly in charge of her own life, and her nominal war work as a VAD in England and in France is a cover for her Intelligence work. It may seem odd and improbable that a girl of eighteen could be of such importance and have such influence in the intelligence service of the British government during the war, but this is a question the reader somehow does not feel greatly impelled to ask. Buchan has created this character with assurance and professionalism, and his work in the Intelligence Department in the War Office gave him access to the real facts of the British espionage force. Mary plays a dual role neatly entwined; that of the intelligence agent and decoy for the enemy, and the woman with whom Hannay is in love. Her actions are of great importance to the plot, and like Peter in Greenmantle, she has a chapter to herself at a crisis point in the story, where Ivery attempts to kidnap her and escape to Germany (chapter 18).

Hannay's relationship with her is a bemused and adoring one. He refers to her as a child, a reasonable distinction to make since he is at least twenty years older than her, and so her bravery humbles him. His continually intense modesty and self-denigration provoke

more respect; he knows he isn't anything like good enough for her, and suddenly he has more to lose than ever he had before. When the German army begins to push into Amiens, he is aware of a heightened sense of danger because Mary is in the town. The relationship between Hannay and Mary is more than a perfunctory romance to pad out the plot. Hannay's life and thoughts are strongly affected by Mary's arrival in his life, and she becomes his focus, changing the emphasis in Mr Standfast from being just a thriller to being a novel about Hannay's changing perception of his life, brought about by the catalyst of the heroine. The broader change in Buchan's writing, after 1915, initiated this exploration of Hannay's personality.

When Hannay meets his old friend, Peter Pienaar again, their relationship is counterpointed by the existence of Mary. Peter was crippled and in pain and desperately sad, a shadow of the former self that Hannay remembered him as in his prime, and Hannay's love for his friend drove out any other thoughts or ties.

As I looked at him the remembrance of all that we had been through together flooded back upon me, and I could have cried with joy at being beside him...Even Mary only understood a bit of it. I had just won her love, which was the greatest thing that had ever come my way, but if she had entered at that moment I would scarcely have turned my head. I was back again in the old life and was not thinking of the new.

(9)

Throughout Mr Standfast, there is a sense of fullness and richness in the descriptions and in the tone of the novel that was not present in the two previous Hannay books. Mary's existence and her influence help to create this, and also to crystallise Hannay's

increased awareness of what he wants and feels about the developments in his life. It is during the course of this novel that Hannay realises that England, or specifically Britain, is his home, and that South Africa is his past. Mary gives him the reason that he did not have in The Thirty-Nine Steps or in Greenmantle to settle down and become part of his country, and a Hannay in love is a Hannay with greatly heightened and enhanced sensibilities - it is through Mary that this novel achieves levels of interpretation and understanding that the previous two Hannay thrillers had not. It is in these new levels of interpretation that we see the 1915 change in Buchan's writing developing beyond Hannay to Mary.

#### The Three Hostages

In The Three Hostages (1924), the Hannays have their new life well established, with a household and a son of their own. Forced out of a comfortable country existence to find three hidden hostages and to foil a villain, Hannay and Mary are joined by a third protagonist, Sandy Arbuthnot of Greenmantle. Mary's role in this story is slow to start.

In Mr Standfast Mary was the emotional catalyst allowing the release of new depths of feeling in the hero, which enabled Buchan to write a more complex and many-levelled thriller than had hitherto been attempted. In The Three Hostages, the aspect of the heroine as a spiritual as well as an emotional centre is portrayed in terms of instinct and premonition, placing the heroine more firmly at the centre of the plot's movement. With Mary, Buchan had



progressed very far from the idea of the heroine as the passive victim in the thriller, but he does not discard this sort of role entirely from his interpretation of the thriller (see 'Innocent and passive victims' below). The Three Hostages has two heroines, Mary and Adela Victor, as well as two significant female villains (see 'Old women' below), and while Adela Victor is ostensibly placed in the traditional role of the victim, the kidnapped child, David Warcliff, is disguised and perceived as a little girl for most of the story. This extends the role of the passive female, incapacitated by youth and (apparent) gender, as well as by the hypnosis of Madame Breda.

It is established from the beginning of their relationship that Mary is wiser and more spiritually attuned than Hannay, who is only dimly aware of the superstitious aspects of quests and the need for some kind of atavistic propitiation. Mary understands the sacrificial nature of fate; she knew one of the friends would have to die before the end could be reached in Mr Standfast - 'it's a long road to the Delectable Mountains, and Faithful, you know, has to die first...There is a price to be paid' (10). At the beginning of The Three Hostages when Mary and Hannay are happily surveying their domain, she has the same sort of premonition.

I felt a little shiver run along her arm.  
'It's too good and beloved to last,' she whispered, 'Sometimes I am afraid.'  
...I knew very well of course that Mary couldn't be afraid of anything.  
She laughed too. 'All the same, I've got what the Greeks call *aidos*...It means that you feel you must walk humbly and delicately to propitiate the Fates. I wish I knew how.' (11)

And the disruption comes. Once Hannay has established himself in the enemy camp and is busy in the thick of things, it is Sandy who rescues Mary from her undoubted boredom and anxiety, and asks for her help.

(Sandy) told me a good many things, and one was that he couldn't succeed and you couldn't succeed unless I helped. He thought that if a woman was lost only a woman could find her.

(12)

The woman who was lost was the heiress Adela Victor, a fainting damsel. Mary is forced to attend to Adela while the men fight it out at her rescue, but Buchan gives her enough personality to avoid stereotype. Mary's other significance in this novel is that she can be seen as a mother-replacement to all the hostages, as none of them have mothers living. David Warcliff is said to have lost his mother almost at birth, and Adela Victor must be assumed to be motherless since there is no mention of one in a situation where a mother should be most in evidence, among the preparations for the wedding of an only daughter in Paris. The third hostage, Lord Mercot, son of the Duke of Alcester, is not described as being the son of the Duchess.

Mary's own son, Peter John, is used continually as a cipher for David Warcliff, also a little boy; in terms of imagination which drive both Hannay and Mary on to find him, being parents themselves; and in speech when Mary acts the part of a foolish distraught mother in front of Medina, the enemy. She discovers David Warcliff in a house full of women, recognising him when

Hannay had not. Adela Victor is found when Mary submerges herself into London society, and, once again, recognises the girl when Hannay did not. This success is a question of environment as well as ability: Hannay finds and rescues Lord Mercot in the Norwegian wilds, an environment he is very much at home in, while Mary, although not strictly at home in seedy London nightclubs, is more able to act a part in them than Hannay could.

Mary's final and most important role in the novel is that of a hunter. She defeats Medina by acting and strength of will, where Hannay and Sandy have failed with brute force and diplomacy. Mary is aware that the mystical side of Medina is more vulnerable to her, and she threatens him with unimaginable horrors, which she intuitively perceives exist only in his imagination. Her abilities at disguise and acting when searching for David Warliff are seen to be as good as Hannay's, and, as well as hunting for the hostages with Hannay, Mary participates in the final rounding-up of the criminals and their prisoners, being present at the rescues of Adela Victor and David Warcliff. Mary completes her work in this Hannay adventure, by now as much her own adventure as Hannay's own, by forcing Medina to relinquish his hold on the little boy's mind.

### The Island of Sheep

Mary does not appear again for twelve years, in the last Hannay novel, The Island of Sheep (1936). In this, she remains an onlooker, her son Peter John taking her active role of helping Hannay, and she remains a mother and wife, rather than the

companion of old. Buchan's focus in this novel is on the father-son relationship between Hannay and Peter John, and on the surrogate fathers Sandy, Archie, Lombard and Haraldsen. Mary does not participate in this, but there is one last flash of spirit and independent thought. Despite Hannay's determination to leave his son behind for his own safety, Mary sends Peter John after her husband.

That was Mary all over. Another woman would have clutched at her boy to keep at least one of her belongings out of danger. Mary, knowing that a job had to be done, was ready to stake everything to have it well done.

(13)

This is Mary's last appearance in the Buchan fiction as a character of any substance. Her role is primarily as a catalyst to allow the hitherto inarticulate emotions of Hannay to be expressed. In an essay written in 1941, Howard Swiggett expresses interest in 'how frequently the women of the books put into words the unexpressed creeds of their hardbitten men' (14). Mary puts Hannay's creed into words by giving him the emotional confidence to do so, but she is more than a supporting character, being a significant protagonist and an enacter of roles in her own right. Her emergence after 1915 makes her the first of the modern Buchan heroines, post-War in spirit rather than the Victorian/Edwardian females who appeared in Buchan's early fiction. In this modern setting Mary is soon joined by another steadfast heroine, Janet Raden, the partner of Archie, another Buchan hero.

Janet and Alison

Janet Roylance, née Raden, first met Archie in John Macnab (1925), and continued to adventure with him in The Courts of the Morning (1929), their second honeymoon, and in The House of the Four Winds (1935). She is Mary's physical type, the golden-haired and blue-eyed slim girl, equally at home in wet weather as in a drawing-room. 'Her bright hair, dabbled with raindrops, was battened down under an ancient felt hat. She looked, thought Archie, like an adorable boy' (15). Janet, too, is a mouthpiece, for the inarticulacy of Archie, and lectures him sternly on his role in life.

'I challenge you...I won't have you idling away your life... it's not good enough for you, and I won't have it.' Sir Archie had been preached at occasionally in his life, but never quite in this way. He was preposterously pleased and also a little solemnised.

(16)

Like Mary, Janet is a leader; her father considers her to have the best brains in the family, and it is her planning and forethought which save the honour of the Radens in the poaching of the stag in John Macnab. In The Courts of the Morning and in The House of the Four Winds she plays an active part in the stories, but always as the wife and companion of Archie, never again as the independent participant that she was in John Macnab. Buchan also created Alison Westwater in Castle Gay (1930), who became the companion and eventual wife of Jaikie in The House of the Four Winds. She is a relative of Janet's, and like Mary has the slim golden colouring with blue eyes and the out-of-doors feel. These three women are

all significant in the new Buchan role of women as spurs and inspiration to their menfolk, which I shall go on to develop.

#### Physical types

This physical type, of the archetypal Buchan heroine, appears again and again in the Buchan canon. Particularly noticeable is Buchan's insistence in describing these slim goddesses as children or boylike. Mary's first appearance is in 1919, and before her, Ethel in The Power-House (1916), Alice Wishart in The Half-Hearted (1900) and Marjory Veitch in John Burnet of Barns (1895), are all described as children or with epithets applicable to boys.

The Edwardian preference in female physical types had been for the mature woman with a definite female presence and figure, but by the death of Edward VII, in 1910, fashions were changing from 'the fashionable "pouter pigeon" silhouette...to a slim, high-waisted look' (17). The exigencies of the war changed women's fashions still further, and by the 1920s the cult of the boyish and the androgynous was in full swing. The apparent predilection on the part of Buchan's heroes for the look of the 'adorable boy' was nothing more sinister than a healthy appreciation of contemporary fashions. The cult of nymphs and goddesses of the hills was also a part of this.

For swelling bosoms and pouting lips and soft curves and languishing eyes Archie had only the most distant regard. He saluted them respectfully and passed by the other side of the road - they did not belong to his world. But that slender figure splashing in the tawny eddies made a different appeal. Most women in such a posture would have looked tousled and flimsy, creatures ill at ease, with their careful allure beaten

out of them by weather. But this girl was an authentic creature of the hills and winds - her young slimness bent tensely against the current, her exquisite head and figure made more delicate and fine by the conflict.

(18)

The women's fashions of the 1920s and 30s were a reflection of the cult of the outdoors, and the look was boyish, slim, with cropped hair and trousers. Buchan was not only up-to-date in his descriptions of his women characters, he was describing faithfully the look of the county women of his day. One of the many inaccurate criticisms by Gertrude Himmelfarb in her article 'John Buchan: An Untimely Appreciation' (19), is that Buchan's heroes have a suspect predilection for 'heroines [who] have more than a little of the young boy in them' (20). Himmelfarb has clearly ignored the context of the period in which Buchan was writing, as well as in which his contemporary fiction was set. The evidence is clear in illustrated magazines and newspapers of the period that the women of the 1920s and '30s were deliberately cultivating the boyish, the sporting and the outdoors look, for ease of movement, comfort and convenience, as well as for their fashionable image.

One interesting exception among Buchan's host of variants on this slender, outdoor girl is Beryl Lombard of The Island of Sheep (1936), 'a woman like a full-blown peony' (21).

She was dressed, I remember, in white and purple, and she had a wonderful cluster of orchids at her breast. As a girl she must have been lovely, and she was still a handsome woman of the heavy Madonna type - a slightly over-coloured Madonna. Being accustomed to slim people like Mary and Barbara Clanroyden and Janet Raden, I thought her a little too 'fair of flesh'.

(22)

Beryl's husband, Lombard, is met again by Hannay after an adventure in Africa thirty years before, and he has changed a great deal. The image of his wife is used as a measure of how different a man Lombard has become from his former self and from the sort of man that Hannay has become. This is also mirrored in his profession (city banker, not a landowner), and in where he lives (suburbia, not a country house). Beryl is the antithesis of Mary, and the life of the Lombards is very different from the Hannays'.

She was a warm-hearted woman, without much brains, but with certain very definite tastes, and she dominated her environment. She was deeply in love with her husband, and he with her, and, since they had no children, each had grown into the other's ways.

(Note that both the Hannays and the Clanroydens have begun their families and are growing units, not stagnantly comfortable ones like the Lombards.)

He had been swallowed up in the featherbed of her vast comfortableness, but she in turn had caught a spark from him, for she had a queer passion for romance, which I don't think she could have been born with. She amazed me with the range and variety of her not very intelligent reading, she had odd sensitive strains in her, and she sat in her suburban paradise expectant of marvels.

(23)

The culminating point of difference comes a few sentences later when both Hannay and Sandy reach the same conclusion about Beryl Lombard.

I could see that he was asking himself the same question that I had asked, what part she played in her husband's life ... She was not going to make any difficulties.

(43)

Janet, Mary and Alison certainly would make difficulties if their husbands wished to go off on dangerous adventures without taking



them along, or involving them in some way. The personalities that Buchan had created for these steadfast heroines were too strong to be put in the traditional role of staying at home. 'Sapper''s Phyllis, the wife of Bulldog Drummond, exists only to be kidnapped and rescued. Buchan's heroines are, it is true, kidnapped occasionally - Janet in The Courts of the Morning, and both she and Alison in The House of the Four Winds (but then, so is Archie) - but they do a great deal more than this in the Buchan fiction. By comparison, Phyllis, and the faceless and stereotypical women of the Dornford Yates novels, are weak and unresourceful. Daphne Pleydell is a gracious doll, Jill Mansell is a perpetual child, and the numerous paramours of Boy Pleydell have such an excessive amount of chivalry showered upon them by the author that any personality is smothered in platitudes. Buchan's steadfast heroines are protagonists in their own right, representing the psychological manifestation of the heroes, as well as providing a significant force in the plot.

#### Sub-heroines - Agatha and Barbara

Buchan's fictional supporting actresses have a relatively active part in the plot, but do not narrate any part of it, nor is the reader given their point of view. They are characters, rather than protagonists, and although they may feature strongly in the development of the story, have little to do with its actual execution.

One of Buchan's main heroines, Janet Raden, is paired with two

of these supporting heroines - her sister Agatha, in John Macnab (1925), and with Barbara Dasant in The Courts of the Morning (1929). Agatha is a typical Buchan sub-heroine; from the point of view of the story and of its development, she is negligible. Her role is restricted to being a sedate foil for the active Janet. 'Agatha was sad and sympathetic, Janet amused and covertly joyful' (25). Her engagement to Junius Bandicott is a composed and conventional affair; Janet and Archie carry out their romance in equally idyllic Highland surroundings, but with a freshness and delightful joyousness which immediately endears them to the reader. Agatha's role as the placid elder sister makes her a little bloodless and uninteresting, and Buchan parodies the conventional image of the upper-class heroine in her meeting Leithen in his guise as a tramp. She recognises the Eton shield on his watch chain, and so 'she could not give away one of her own class' (26). The details of Agatha's reaction to Leithen's shameless hard-luck story make her character live, momentarily, and her portrayal is a gentle parody of the heroine with too much sensibility.

"Yes," he murmured shamefacedly. "Long ago I was at Eton."  
The girl flushed with embarrassed sympathy.  
"What - what brought you to this?" she murmured.  
"Folly," said Leithen, recovering himself, "Drink and such-like. I have had a lot of bad luck but I've mostly myself to blame."  
"You're only a tramp now?" Angels might have envied the melting sadness of her voice.  
"At present. Sometimes I get a job, but I can't hold it down." Leithen was warming to his work, and his tones were a subtle study in dilapidated gentility.

"Can't anything be done?" Agatha asked, twining her pretty hands.

(26)

As a result of this gullibility one might expect Agatha to look foolish at the inevitable discovery of the truth, but looking foolish is not what Agatha is for: she might look 'adorably confused' or 'delightfully puzzled', any one of a number of phrases habitually attached to the heroine whose function is solely decorative. She laments and is agitated (28), and thereafter vanishes from the action, presumably whisked away by the devoted Junius, and Janet's affairs take the greater part in the action.

In The Courts of the Morning, Janet's co-heroine, Barbara Dasent, is slipped into the action without being introduced, although her brief appearances accumulate enough of her presence for her character to warrant a full introduction and description (29). This description is fully in the style of the first appearance of a heroine or leading female protagonist, and she and Janet are placed as if they were to occupy positions of equal importance in the plot. But where Janet's thoughts, motives, actions and impressions are central to the movement of the story - her character's 'point of view' is the main focus of the story (see chapter three above) - Barbara is perpetually in the background, 'very quiet in the shadow' (30). Her presence is muted, but deliberately so, an inverted highlighting which indicates clearly to the reader that her character is of

importance and will have a significant role to play in the story. This careful treatment by Buchan is far more interesting than what Barbara actually does in the plot, more evidence of the emphasis Buchan placed on the characterisation of his heroines, so much more generous than that of his contemporaries. The progress of Barbara's romance with Sandy is delicately hinted at throughout the story in this inverted way. 'Only Barbara was a little silent. Her eyes were always turning to the door' (31). This treatment is hardly new, but it is new in the context of the thriller, where Buchan was treating his stories as serious novels, with something to say and characters, both male and female, to say this, despite being written in the mode of the adventure romance.

Barbara's characteristics of reticence and being quiet, cool and dependable are truly English, despite her nominal American status as the niece of Blenkiron. It is this quality which matches her most equally to Sandy, as an almost ridiculous inarticulacy in the face of deep emotion on his part is portrayed as a dignified reserve on hers. It is perhaps inevitable that Janet has to stage-manage their moment of crisis, and in this process Sandy is transformed: an entirely new facet of his personality has been revealed by the advent of Barbara, and it is this that is Barbara's most important function. She supports Sandy as a character, as well as being a secondary female presence for Janet, and Buchan's treatment of

her various appearances in the story reflect this.

Barbara's next and last appearance in The Island of Sheep (1936) is as a non-participating character, with no dialogue or active part in the plot, as the mother of Sandy's daughter and a friend of Mary. Her brief incursion into the active role of a heroine in The Courts of the Morning, albeit a subordinate one, is not negligible, in the sense that her impression is a strong one, and her brief characterisation is made permanent by the skill and eye for detail with which it was written.

#### Historical sub-heroines - Kirsty and Elspeth

Two of Buchan's historical heroines can be defined as sub-heroines despite their roles as the sole female presence in their respective novels. Instead of being cast as the heroine by default, Kirsty Evandale, in The Free Fishers (1934), and Elspeth Blair, in Salute To Adventurers (1915), are essentially supporting characters to the main protagonists of the stories. Salute to Adventurers immediately preceded The Thirty-Nine Steps, and the change of 1915, but even so, Buchan was beginning to develop new directions in his historical characters.

The heroes of Salute To Adventurers are various, but Andrew Garvald is the central one, and it is between him and Elspeth that the connection of romance is made. It is a distinguishing feature of most of Buchan's supporting heroines that they are rarely involved in significant action in the plot, but exist

mainly as a romantic interest. The main heroines have their romantic entanglements as well, but these are subordinate to the action of the plot and their involvement in it. Elspeth has little active participation in the plot of Salute to Adventurers except towards the end where she is one of the besieged party in the stockade and is found calming the terrified horses during the Indian attack. She differs in this action from the women characters in the category of 'Innocent and passive victims' (see below) because in this last episode at least, she is active, not completely passive and merely a character to whom things happen. Again, as with Barbara, her role is as an emotional spur to Andrew and the object of his desires.

In The Free Fishers Kirsty Evandale is the object of desire for three of the story's protagonists, and although her affections are not as highly sought after as Mrs Cranmer's (see 'Tragic married heroines' below), to Jock Kinloch at least she is the only important one. Her favours and the seeking to be worthy of them change Jock from a wild student to the beginnings of a man.

Jock was again the chosen cavalier, for the events of the past days seemed to have changed the modish young woman back to the country girl ... Jock, too, had altered, and out of the hobble-de-hoy was emerging the man, a stiff-jawed, mirthful, masterful being...'

(32)

These roles of love-interest and the object of desire for the hero are commonplace enough for the heroine in most romantic adventures. Where Buchan is superior to other British thriller-writers is that he makes even the most insignificant characters

live, and in these supporting heroines, the memorable details are what make them live. Elspeth is a fine horsewoman, is brave and dauntless and has a haughtiness as attractive as it is infuriating. Kirsty Evandale, despite being 'well-kenned for the bonniest and best-tochered young leddy in the kingdom of Fife' (33), has a Dutch grandfather and is likely to grow fat with age. 'Even now there was just a hint of over-ripeness' (34). Such defects make the characters more interesting, the more so for being, in Kirsty's case at least, not usually admitted in the description of a heroine in a novel of romantic adventure.

What Buchan has done with these four supporting heroines - Agatha, Barbara, Elspeth and Kirsty - is to give them personalities and attributes more suited to a full leading heroine, but scaled down to the level of a subordinate character. This gives a richness of detail to the less important parts of the story than is normally associated with the thriller. In this can be seen Buchan's dual purpose in writing a novel of good quality with no aspect neglected, as well as fulfilling the requirements of the adventure novel.

#### Structural roles - The Thirty-Nine Steps

Buchan's most famous novel, The Thirty-Nine Steps (1915), is without a female character of any duration. Women are mentioned in the story - the patronising Imperialist ladies, the women at the political meeting at Brattleburn, the motorcars full of fat

women visiting the inn, and several women occupy roles in Hannay's journey - the stout woman in the train, the herd's wife in Galloway, and the herd's wife who sheltered Hannay after his escape from the enemy's house. These characters are necessary, but are not central or even named. There is one woman's name in The Thirty-Nine Steps which Hannay and Scudder both regard as vital to the whole business of the Black Stone, the key to the cipher: Julia Czechenyi.

Initially, Julia was understood by Hannay to be 'the decoy...to get Karolides out of the care of his guards' (35). Eventually, Scudder's melodramatic story turns out to be a fabrication covering the truth of the matter, and Hannay only stumbles upon this information by recalling that the name of Julia Czechenyi was significant to the Karolides plot, not the woman herself, and that the name was the key to the business: 'it occurred to me to try it on his cipher' (36). In both occurrences of the 'Julia Czechenyi' in the text, the reader, like Hannay, assumes automatically that, despite the precise wording 'the name of a woman - Julia Czechenyi' (37), a real woman is being referred to. This assumption indicates an expectation on the part of the reader for there to be a woman in the plot, either because it was apparent that such an element was lacking, or because the reader was accustomed to the presence of a love interest in a story of adventure.

What Buchan seems to have done is not only created a thriller



without a female character, without even the need for one, and has also used the normal assumption of the reader for the presence of a thriller heroine, to accentuate the sense of discovery that Hannay feels upon finding the cipher. The sequence of events in the reader's mind - the mention of a woman's name; the reader assumes that this is the mention of a character, despite the careful wording, and the subsequent revelation that it is the name, the arrangement of letters, that is vitally significant to the plot, rather than a character by that name - is an expert manipulation of the expectations of the readership. Buchan may have been pointing out, in an understated way, that the introduction of a female character into the plot for the sake of it was unnecessary, and indeed showed this to be so by the immense success of the novel, which worked so well without a female presence.

The first film version of The Thirty-Nine Steps, by Alfred Hitchcock (1935), shows that a heroine is so pointless in this story that her existence has to be justified by making it impossible for her to go away. Madeleine Carroll is handcuffed to Robert Donat for the bulk of the film - her sole purpose is to increase the drama by making the progress of the hero more difficult and for audience titillation. In Buchan's novel the progress of Hannay is made difficult enough by the enemy's activities, his pursuit by the police, and the puzzle of the Black Stone. The episodes of bluff and disguise which work so

perfectly in the novel are untranslatable to the screen - half the pleasure in reading 'The Adventure of the Bespectacled Roadman' comes from knowing that Hannay is not an actor and that his efforts at disguise are strictly amateur. To see an actor do the same on screen would not be entertaining nor have any suspense. The drama in the novel is largely of this kind, the amateur attempting to be the professional: it is inappropriate for cinema, hence, in part, Hitchcock's rearrangement of the plot and his inclusion of a heroine.

#### Ethel and The Power-House

This is not to say, however, that there is no place for a heroine in the thriller. Buchan only experimented with a structural role played by what would have otherwise been a female character in his early thrillers. Two years before The Thirty-Nine Steps, Buchan's first thriller, The Power-House (1913), made use of the traditional role of the wife left at home, anxiously waiting (always passive) for her husband's return from adventure. Buchan does not dwell on Ethel Pitt-Heron's passive status as Oppenheim or Le Queux would have done, but turned the story around, so that while the ostensible adventure is going on in Russian Asia, with Tommy and Pitt-Heron being chased by the villains, Leithen's adventure is solving the whole problem, safe in London, and Ethel's role is reinterpreted to fit the necessary structural motif.

In spite of being rather a pathetic character, Ethel has an

important role. She represents her husband, Charles Pitt-Heron, who is the focus, albeit absent, of the story. His disappearance, his safety, his whereabouts and the mystery in which he is involved are what precipitate the action of the plot, yet he never once appears in person, having fled to Russia at the beginning of the story, and having only just returned by the end. He is constantly spoken of, referred to and thought of, but he is entirely absent. It is not on his behalf that Leithen exerts himself to solve the mystery; his friendship with Tommy and his dim feelings of an old affection for Ethel precipitate this.

Ethel is a wife representing her husband, as is conventional, and also a character standing in for and representing another; a device made necessary when the plot requires that a character be absent and on the run, and yet still be in evidence in the area of the action. Leithen is working to rescue Pitt-Heron from his enemies, as well as to foil the progress of the Power-House organisation, and he is working for the safety and well-being of the exile as personified by his wife. Her sufferings are noted, commented on and felt for by Leithen, and any feelings he has for Pitt-Heron are centred on the ordeal of his wife.

If Pitt-Heron had not had a wife to represent him in the forefront of the action, much of the force behind the *raison d'être* of the plot - the safety of an absentee character who, from the point of view of the reader, is not a character at all

- would seem unjustified. Just as Julius Victor, Arthur Warcliff and Turpin represented the sufferings of their loved ones in Buchan's later novel, The Three Hostages (1924), by suffering themselves and in so doing repeatedly reminding the reader of the important but absent kidnapped children, Ethel Pitt-Heron fills this position in The Power-House, important structurally rather than as a character in her own right.

#### Midwinter and Claudia

Buchan goes on to use that structural device in a historical context. Again, he uses a character who would have had a negligible role in the traditional romantic adventure, thus making much more of what had come to be a cipher role. Claudia, Lady Norreys, is the leading female character of Midwinter (1923); she cannot be said to be the heroine, as she remains largely ignorant of most of the plot. She fills the same kind of structural role as Ethel and Julia, in being the (technical) centre of the story and the focus of the events, although somehow this is never really felt about her by the reader. She is a very young woman, a naïve adherent to the Jacobite cause - 'There was no welcome at Chastlecote unless a man wore the white rose' (38) - and she is the lady, in the chivalric and romantic sense, of the two young men on opposing sides. Sir John Norreys, her husband, is a weak supporter of the Cause and a tool in the hands of the traitor Kyd. Alastair Maclean, a clansman and a gentleman, is infatuated enough with Claudia to

drop his efforts for the Cause at a crisis point in order to foil her husband's treachery and to ensure that her happiness will not be ruined. Most of the actions taken by these protagonists are for Claudia's sake, and the Jacobite cause to which she is so blindly devoted, of which her admirers are supposed to be staunch supporters, becomes secondary, precisely because of her devotion.

Buchan has created, for him, a curiously insubstantial heroine in Claudia: the reaction from the reader is guided by his descriptions, couched in terms of the 'feminine', colours of rose, peach, pink and white, her physical presence conveyed in terms of littleness - diminutive, small, delicate and tiny. These adjectives certainly give the desired impression of femininity and youth, a youth of innocence and the need to be protected, but as a character Claudia's personality is not strong enough to be a true heroine, nor even a supporting heroine, and it is only as a focus figure for the other characters and for the pattern of events that her character has any effective function. The structural roles of these Buchan heroines supplement the more usual heroine's part in both the thriller and the historical adventure. This duplication of roles strengthens the female characters and makes them more important to the plot.

#### Innocent and passive victims

The word 'victim' is here used mainly in the sense of a

character to whom things happen, without any action on their part to bring this about, but the more usual definition, that of a person who suffers harm, also applies to the early female characters of John Buchan. In his first novel, Sir Quixote of the Moors (1895), Buchan's heroine is Anne Lambert of Lindean. The Sieur de Rohaine meets her, stays in her house, they fall in love, and then he abandons her to save his honour. Making all allowances for the fact that Buchan published this novel when he was only twenty, and that his attention was concentrated on the Sieur de Rohaine, the portrait of Anne is a remarkably good one of a victim of circumstance, a character to whom everything happens, and one with no volition of her own.

I have already examined the plot construction of Sir Quixote in chapter two above. Here, Anne is a cipher, a personality wholly dominated by what her menfolk wish her to be or do, and even when she is free to express herself, she still seems to have little desire of her own; 'she played no chess...reading she cared little for' (39). The only natural feelings she has appear to be domestic, and it is clear that as a personality she is flattened and neutral. Buchan has drawn her as a plain two-dimensional surface waiting to take any pattern or impress, and after the departure of her father, her natural reaction is still to be what the man of the house wishes her to be, in this case, the Sieur. When she falls in love with him, and he with her, the Sieur's honour intervenes and makes Anne the victim,

abandoned by the initiator of all that has happened between them. Anne is necessary to the plot as a crux, a point around which the dream of de Rohaine pivots and an essential stage in his progression, but the plot does not depend upon her, for example, as it does with Claudia Norreys in Midwinter.

In Buchan's short stories where religion, superstition or some kind of demonic possession are the driving forces are behind the plots, the heroine, if any, is invariably passive and with little personality. In 'The Watcher by the Threshold' (1900), Sybil Ladlaw is colourless and uninteresting compared to the mystery of her husband's possession and the eventual exorcism. In 'The Outgoing of the Tide' (1899), the character of Ailie Sempill is buried beneath the Biblical cadences of the prose, and any concern the reader has for her predicament is diminished by her inhuman otherworldliness. She is a bloodless heroine in a Victorian pattern, despite the early 18th-century setting, and it is satisfying in terms of the aesthetic completion of the story that, when she is found drowned, (discovered, naturally, by her lover), it is accepted that she has nonetheless escaped the Devil, and that it is a better fate for her to be dead and in Heaven than alive and in danger of corruption. The same motif of heroine-as-victim is used in 'The Green Glen' (1911) where Virginia Dasent is too perfect, too kind to her admirers, and only awoken by the supernatural qualities of the Green Dod. Naturally, she too dies, in her lover's arms, as if such

heroines were too good for the ordinary world.

Buchan's connection of innocent victims with supernatural forces is a traditional depiction of such heroines as passive foils to the witches and demons that afflict them. They accentuate the all-powerful forces of evil, and a female is a far more emotive victim than a male. None of the female characters discussed above appear in thrillers, but they are present in Buchan's interpretation of the romantic adventure novel, and are closely related to the women characters in the thrillers whom Buchan used as structural motifs. What is common between the heroines of these two categories is that they are significantly less motivated than any other of Buchan's women characters: they are truly passive, acting as symbols. In this they perhaps have a stronger role than many so-called heroines in the Wallace thrillers of the 1930s, for example; they are certainly far more memorable in these roles.

#### Tragic married heroines - A Lost Lady

In two of his historical novels Buchan used the motif of the tragic married heroine to counterpoint the growth to maturity of the young and untried hero. In A Lost Lady of Old Years (1899), Margaret, the wife of Mr Secretary Murray, is a devoted adherent to the cause of her husband's master, the Chevalier Prince Charles, and is the reason for Francis Birkenshaw's redemption. In The Free Fishers (1934), Gabriel Cranmer is the tool of her husband in a plot to kill the Prime Minister and discredit her



own name, and is the subject of conflicting emotions on the part of two of the story's protagonists.

In A Lost Lady, Mrs Murray is an attractive character and a good influence on the tiresome Francis Birkenshaw. Her historical reputation, however, indicates that she was apparently 'really a very bad lot and her life does not bear inspection' (40). She was a very minor character in the Rebellion, mentioned in general histories only as an Edinburgh beauty and as making a dramatic appearance at the scaffold of a Highland leader. As such, Buchan altered her to suit his story, for the needs of the plot of A Lost Lady demanded a heroine at once in the confidence of Prince Charles's advisers, unattainable by her marriage to an unworthy husband (Mr Secretary Murray deserted the Cause after Culloden), and the object of desire to a hero in need of reformation.

Francis Birkenshaw is the flawed son of a noble house, and a petty thief of his acquaintance laughs at the suggestion that Francis might be a Jacobite, 'Ye were aye ower fond of a saft seat and a bielly corner' (41). In this mixed state of gentility and degradation, the blood and instincts of the Birkenshaws pulling away from the lout that Francis had grown into, he encounters Mrs Murray.

...in every Edinburgh tavern he had heard the toast of the beautiful Mrs Murray given with drunken leers and unedifying tales. If all the stories were true, she was a lady of uncommon parts and spirit and not too nice a conscience.

With this picture and assumption in his mind he goes to rob the Murrays' house in Broughton for the Jacobite gold rumoured to be stored there, and is surprised there by the lady herself.

...at the doorway stood a woman holding a lamp above her and looking full from its canopy of light into the half darkness...standing alert and stately with a great air of queenship... Something in her eyes, in the haughty carriage of the little head, in the life and grace which lay in every curve and motion, took suddenly from Francis the power of thought. He looked in silent amazement at this goddess from the void.

(43)

This shows the full force of Mrs Murray's first appearance, with Buchan using classical images of the woman as the keeper of the hearth and as a goddess to emphasise the importance of this encounter to Francis. His previous acquaintance with women had been of little value, as his mother, sisters and neighbours were gossips, and the women of his acquaintance in the town were prostitutes. For the first time, he meets a lady of birth and breeding, and his own birth and breeding are pulled momentarily to the fore, like reacting to like.

For a moment he was the blacksmith's grandson, with the thought to rush forward, wrest the whip from her hands and discomfit this proud woman with his superior strength. But some tincture of the Birkenshaw blood held him back. In that instant he knew the feebleness of his renunciation of virtue. Some power not himself forbade the extremes of disgrace - some bequest from more gallant forbears, some lingering wisp of honour.

(44)

Margaret's acceptance of Francis's repentance and the gift of her trust make him a proper man, and her role in the story - already seen as more distinct by its effect on Francis's character than for any part of her own - changes from the remote

mistress to a woman in need of Francis's help. The inevitable development of this into a love story seems a separate and less important part of the story. What is most important about the character of Margaret is that she is seen as the object of Francis's desire, and by that desire he raises himself and saves his soul. Any other aspect of her character, except where it touches Francis's redemption, is secondary to the needs of the plot, and Buchan has drawn a strong portrait, albeit at second-hand through Francis's eyes alone, of self-determination focusing on one individual.

This quality of a chance of redemption in the early Buchan heroine - in Alice Wishart of The Half-Hearted also - is transmuted after the change of 1915, to the heroines of Buchan's thrillers being a spur and an object of desire and respect to their heroes. Modern heroes are not in need of redemption, but their need for the heroines is just as strong. Where the 1915 change altered Buchan's perception of his heroes, it also changed the heroines.

#### Gabriel of The Free Fishers

It is part of the initial distance between Margaret and Francis that she is married. This distance is gradually reduced, but the barrier between them is turned ironically into a means of temptation when Murray of Broughton turns traitor. The tie of marriage and the absolute impossibility of adultery symbolise the testing ground of honour in this novel, and in The Free

Fishers (1934). There Mrs Cranmer, too, is married to a husband she believes in but who is betraying her and her reputation. She too has a host of young admirers who are reputed to be her lovers, but in reality,

This pale woman was not evil. He had pictured to himself meretricious graces, the allure of one skilled in the arts of sex, and he saw instead an heroic, bewildered child.

(45)

Gabriel Cranmer does not have a Francis Birkenshaw under her wing, but a Lord Belses, openly devoted to her, and, secretly, the St Andrews professor and minister Nanty Lammas. Lord Belses is a weak boy and an insubstantial character, but the apparent imbalance between him and Gabriel does not appear to matter.

The first sight of Gabriel and Belses together had shown him the truth. Compared with her strength, Harry was only a windlestraw, and set against her spiritual fineness no more than a clod...She would shape him into something worthy, for she had the fire in her to fuse the coarsest ore and draw out the gold.

(46)

For that particular admirer, he had achieved his heart's desire, and it remained only for him to be changed by the woman. The real hero of The Free Fishers is Nanty Lammas, and in falling in love with Mrs Cranmer he changes himself.

...he had also his comforting reflection that he had proved the manhood of which he had not before been wholly certain, and recovered that youth which in a poet must never be suffered to die.

(47)

Nanty's actions in this story are not the actions of an ordained minister and a professor of logic. His love for Gabriel as well as the need to overcome her husband's plots are the force behind

his actions, and in so doing he proves to himself that the youth set aside to attain the dignity of a preceptor was not lost forever.

The tragedy of Margaret Murray was the defeat of the Prince's cause; her own personal tragedy of the iniquities of her husband are merely a consequence of this. Mrs Cranmer's tragedy is an entirely personal one, in marrying a man who was not what he seemed to be; and the greater consequences, of the twisting of her reputation and her probable arraignment for treason, seem insignificant to her before the destruction of her trust and belief in her husband. In both cases, the subsequent discovery of a new love seems doubly secondary. Margaret rejects hers, or at least Francis rejects himself for her, but Gabriel acquires a new love to replace the old; a suitable reparation since the loss of her belief in her husband was for her a greater tragedy than any affair of state.

The idea of a woman as one 'above' the hero, a heroine in the tradition of chivalry, has here been used by Buchan to mould the plots of the stories and the development of the respective heroes in the novels. Katrine Yester of Witch Wood, who might also be examined in this context, is discussed below in 'The ballad tradition'. Margaret and Gabriel have lesser roles as characters than as shaping influences, but are stronger for that in the structural sense, since the influence they have is the most important force of movement in their stories.

Exotica - Hilda von Einem

The exotic elements of foreign heroines and villains are a mainstay of the exaggerated romances and thrillers of William le Queux, E. Phillips Oppenheim, and Elinor Glyn. In Buchan they are a rarity, but when they do occur, they are quite different to any other Buchan women. Buchan's first female villain, Hilda von Einem of Greenmantle (1916), and the later Countess Araminta Troyos, of The House of the Four Winds (1934), are two of a kind, an indulgence in melodrama, drawing on the myth of Mata Hari and the romantic stereotype of the glamorous spy. Both characters happen to have occurred in Buchan's fiction after 1915, but their roots are far older, with little to link them to this change in Buchan's fiction other than a greater emancipation than Le Queux's women.

In Greenmantle, Hilda von Einem was a German leader in the East during the First World War, and was the mind behind the instigation of an Islamic uprising against the Allies, ostensibly under the leadership of the prophet Greenmantle. Buchan describes and introduces the reader to Hilda through the responses of her three adversaries, Hannay, Blenkiron and Sandy. Hannay sees her as a siren and a great enemy, describing her in terms of softness, muted colours, exquisiteness and delicacy. Blenkiron is afraid of her and describes her as 'mad and bad, but principally bad' (48). Sandy, in his guise as leader of a group of Turkish gypsies, is her chosen acolyte, hating and

fearing her with equal strength. This is particularly strong in him, as his nature can be affected by Hilda's influence in a way that the solidity of Hannay and Blenkiron cannot. All three are alike in agreeing on her formidable qualities as an enemy and as danger.

What Buchan was doing in creating Hilda was harking back to the old idea of the *femme fatale*, as personified, for example, by Princess Leonie in William Le Queux's Her Majesty's Minister (1901). When Hannay tries to imagine what Hilda might look like, he experiments with some stereotypes.

Sometimes I thought of her as a fat old German crone, sometimes as a harsh-featured woman like a schoolmistress with thin lips and eyeglasses. But I had to fit the East into the picture, so I made her young and gave her a touch of the languid houri in a veil.

(49)

It is what Hilda is expected to be and how she is anticipated that determines her as a character long before she actually appears. The fantasies that Hannay projects on to her pay lip-service to her qualities as his enemy, but concentrate more on the visual; what she looks like is more important to him than any of her other aspects.

Blenkiron, having already met Hilda, is scared, awed and fascinated. He calls her a lovely lady, but is more concerned about her dangerousness and her brain than her looks. He is also confused and doesn't know how to 'fit her in as an antagonist' (50). He admits that the view of women as 'little

tin gods' or 'angels and children' (51), has spoilt him for any confrontation with a woman; she is something wholly new to his experience and he is debilitated by it. Here the emphasis has changed from Hannay's viewpoint, and for Blenkiron it is the mind and the actions of this female adversary that are significant, not just her appearance.

In the conventions of the period, 'female spies...were synonymous with seduction, ruthlessness and betrayal' (52), and their counterpart *femme fatale* characters in novels and plays were as a rule exceptionally beautiful. Patricia Graig and Mary Cadogan are of the opinion that:

For decades the myth and tarnished glamour of Mata Hari continued to set the pattern for fictional women spies ... whatever the facts of her career, Mata Hari became a symbol of vampish betrayal.

(53)

'Hilda von Einem represented Buchan's image of a female destroyer in the Mata Hari mould' (54); she is beautiful, seductive, fascinating and deadly, and uses her beauty for her own ends. She is the villain who plans and executes and who is the chief danger to Hannay's mission.

Suddenly the game I was playing became invested with tremendous solemnity. My old antagonists, Stumm and Rasta and the whole German Empire seemed to shrink into the background, leaving only the slim woman with her inscrutable smile and devouring eyes.

(55)

Once Buchan has established her strength as a character by the reactions of the protagonists to her, he is free to concentrate on her peculiar fascination and on the power she wields in



achieving her own ends. Hannay's response after his initial exposure to her now shows respect as well as awe.

"Mad and bad, but principally bad". I did not think they were the proper terms, for they belonged to the narrow world of our common experience. This was something beyond and above it, as a cyclone or an earthquake is outside the decent routine of nature. Mad and bad she might be, but she was also great.

(56)

Hannay's reactions to Hilda are obviously based on what he has read and by popular conceptions than by any experiences of his own. He sees her as beautiful and as a desirable object, and he is infuriated that she is not visibly impressed by him.

Every man has in his bones a consciousness of sex. I was shy and perturbed, but horribly fascinated. This slim woman...had the glamour of a wild dream. I hated her instinctively, hated her intensely, but I longed to arouse her interest. To be valued coldly by those eyes was an offence to my manhood, and I felt antagonism rising within me.

(57)

She attempts to hypnotise him, but Hannay, usefully, 'is about as good a mesmeric subject as Table Mountain' (58), and the attempt fails. At last he is gratified, but only slightly. 'For a second her eyes dropped. I seemed to read in them failure, and yet a kind of satisfaction too, as if they had found in me more than they expected' (59). Hannay soon learns to fear and respect Hilda, but when she learns that he too has been fooling her, she threatens to hang him. 'Never in my life had I been so pleased. I had got my revenge at last. This woman had singled me out above the others as the object of her wrath, and I almost loved her for it' (60).

Sandy, however, is horrified, revolted and utterly against everything that Hilda stands for, but he is the one she has chosen, ignorant of his real identity, to be the replacement for the prophet and to be her future lover. This prospect catches at Sandy's highly-strung imagination, momentarily, until he remembers his better instincts and becomes desperate in guilt and revulsion at even considering such a prospect, as feasible as it was appallingly alluring.

During the whole of his association with her Sandy had been a spy in Hilda's household, playing a part other than what he was, a passive but impotent antagonist. When he is fully involved in action against her, Sandy is able to withstand all her pleadings and threats, and he is on the offensive at last, attacking her most effectively by revealing his identity.

That was beyond doubt a clean staggering stroke. What she had thought of his origin, God knows, but she had never dreamed of this. Her eyes grew larger and more lustrous, her lips parted as if to speak, but her voice failed her. Then by an effort she recovered herself, and out of that strange face went all the glow of youth and ardour. It was again the unholy mask I had first known.

(61)

This peculiarly medieval transformation comes straight from the tradition of witches, from Spenser's Duessa in The Faerie Queene (62), and from Malory's various false ladies and witch queens. Overcome by the truth, Hilda abandons her deceit, and is at last openly the enemy.

As a female character in an otherwise male book, Hilda von Einem

is strong. She has individuality, albeit portrayed exclusively through the eyes of her male antagonists, rather than from a neutral and/or omniscient authorial narrative voice, and she is credible in the highly-charged adventure-romance atmosphere of the story. Her function is to draw out different reactions and emotions from her three antagonists, thus revealing new aspects of their characters in conjunction with this most melodramatic male interpretation of female power.

Araminta and The House of the Four Winds

In looking at dramatic or melodramatic portrayals of women in Buchan, the Countess Araminta Troyos is a late creation, written nearly twenty years after Hilda, and a recurrence of the terrifying female leader with power and glamour in equal quantities. Her role is again as a spur, this time to a nation rather than an individual, in keeping with her larger-than-life personality. Rather unusually for a female character in Buchan, she makes her first appearance in another woman's words.

His wife laughed. "Shall I ever forget her? You never saw such a girl, Allie. A skin like clear amber, and eyes like topazes, and the most wonderful dark hair. She dressed always in bright scarlet and somehow carried it off."

(63)

Araminta is built up into a formidable figure, regarded with respect and trepidation by even her equals in power.

"I've known her all my life," Ashie went on, "and we have been more or less friends, though I never professed to understand her. Beautiful? Oh yes, amazingly, if you admire the sable and amber type. And brains! She could run round Muresco and his lot, and even Mastrovin has a healthy respect for her."

..."What does she want? To be Queen?"

"Not she, though she would make a dashed good one. She's old-fashioned in some ways, and doesn't believe much in her own sex. Good sane anti-feminist. She wants a man on the throne of Evallonia, but she's going to make jolly well sure that it's she who puts him there."

"I see...Are you in love with her?"

"Ye gods, no! She's not my kind. I'd as soon marry a werewolf as Cousin Mintha."

"Is she in love with you?"

"No. I'm positive no. She could never be in love with anybody in the ordinary way. She runs for higher stakes. But she mesmerises me, and that's the solemn truth. When she orates to me I can feel all the pith going out of my bones. I simply can't stand up to her. I'm terrified of her."

(64)

It is this daunting prospect that Jaikie must appeal to for help, and, as in Greenmantle, the hero is to face the unknown female dragon with an uncomfortable awareness that he is without any experience of women.

"But what can I do?" he asked. "I don't know the first thing about women - I've hardly met any in my life - I'm no match for your cousin."

(65)

But in the ensuing interview, Jaikie is startled by the extent to which his preconceptions had misled him.

His first thought was that she was extraordinarily pretty. What had Alison meant by drawing the picture of a harpy?

(66)

The most important preconception is dissipated a few pages later.

He was no judge of femininity, but there was not much femininity here as he understood it...But there was something else which he did understand. Her eyes, the way she held her head, the tones of her voice had just that slightly insecure arrogance, that sullen but puzzled self-confidence, which belonged to a certain kind of public-school boy. He had studied the type, for it was not his

own, and he had had a good deal to do with the handling of it. One had to be cautious with it, for it was easy to rouse obstinate, half-comprehended scruples, but it was sound stuff if you managed it wisely.

(67)

Jaikie is probably the Buchan hero closest to the writer's own early experience - a Scot from a humble background but with the social aspects of an Oxbridge education to tackle - as well as being physically similar. 'One did not think of Jaikie as short, but as slight' (68), and he is also faced with the necessity of making his own way in the world after the probationary period of university. Buchan, too, had had a great deal to do with the English public-school products. In Castle Gay (1930) Jaikie's closest friend accuses him of abandoning his roots - 'You live in a different kind of world from me, and every year you're getting less and less of a Scotsman' (69).

It is likely that this reproach may well have been levelled at Buchan from his first years at Oxford and in the English world, since from that time he was beginning to associate with fascinating and congenial people in a whole new world, the like of which he must have been aware of, but would never have been part of before. His sister Anna 'realised that the centre of his life was no longer in Glasgow' (70), and the same was thought by an old friend.

Katie Cameron was speaking for a number of Buchan's old acquaintances when she said, "We thought he had become rather Oxfordy."

(71)

A Scot encountering the English upper and middle classes for the

first time finds them a most disconcerting group of people, and their way of speech and their values are a particularly new experience. In recognising Araminta as an example of this type, all Jaikie's uneasiness vanishes and he adopts the same approach to her as he would have, and as Buchan had had to in real life, to that strange species of English, the public-school type. By giving Araminta this humanised aspect, Buchan successfully dissipates the powerfully suggestive build-up of a terrifying leader to becoming just another supporting heroine. By the end of the book she has been successfully transformed, 'and she was no more the Praefectus, but a most emotional young woman' (72). She is not altogether tamed, but she will not voice her suspicions publicly.

"True public-school," thought Jaikie. "She would like to make a scene, but she won't."

(73)

Araminta is a fine example of the female character who might well have turned out to be an opponent rather than an ally, and she can be seen as a measure of the hero's capacities and abilities.

The melodramatic touches are a gentle parody of conventional expectations, but at the same time they are rooted in real life, since the political movement of which Araminta is a leader, the Evallonian Juventus, is suggested to be just one of a number of revolutionary movements of the period in Middle Europe, of which one is the Hitler Youth. Their badge is an open eye, 'like

Hitler's swastika' (74), but it is firmly declared that Juventus are 'Nationalist, not Fascist' (75). Juventus is recognised as being a cause for good in Evallonia, and Araminta looks set to become the eventual Queen Consort, which in the Buchan world of acceptably happy endings, is a sign that all is well. She and Hilda have a lot in common, but where Hilda is a test for the heroes and an exaggerated collection of stereotypes dear to writers of romances, Araminta is an arbiter of power and an indication of good or evil.

#### Foreign princesses

Foreign aristocracy was present in three other Buchan heroines - in Princess Saskia of Huntingtower (1922), who was a refugee from the Russian revolution; in Kore Arabin of The Dancing Floor (1926), who, although not strictly a foreign princess, has the possessions and autocracy of one; and in Anna Haraldsen of The Island of Sheep (1936), who was the grand-daughter of the great Marius Haraldsen who believed his line would furnish a new race of kings for the north. All three are aided in the resolution of their problems and the revival of their fortunes by elderly men. Dickson McCunn and Edward Leithen have a stronger personal feeling for their respective princesses, than do Hannay, Sandy and Lombard for the child Anna, but the Buchan heroes share a determination to see their jobs through and save their princesses. These women are a part of the post-1915 Buchan world, a direct consequence of that change in Buchan's writing.

The Russian princess

Huntingtower is a paean to Romance, matching the incongruous reality of urchins from the city slums and a retired Glasgow grocer, with Russian revolutionaries, a real princess, and stolen jewels. As the representative of fable, the Princess in the Dark Tower, Saskia is also rooted in the real world. The Prologue shows her at her coming-out ball in 1916, feeling too secure in her aristocratic surroundings, and wishing to be let out into the real world. She reappears, six years later, firstly in Dougal's inspired description, 'She's pure as the lully in the dell!... She looked feared, and yet kind o' determined' (76), and then in person through the eyes of Dickson McCunn.

The eyes were of a colour which he could never decide on; afterwards he used to allege obscurely that they were the colour of everything in spring. There was a delicate pallor in the cheeks, and the face bore signs of suffering and care, possibly even of hunger; but for all that there was youth there, eternal and triumphant!...youth with all history behind it, youth with centuries of command in its blood and the world's treasures of beauty and pride in its ancestry.

(77)

Here Saskia's function is delineated. Her beauty and her rank command allegiance, and her sufferings give her the right to ask for support, since she has experienced already what others may have to endure for her sake. She personifies the outside world with her experience of the Russian Revolution, Lenin, and of being a Czarist agent, and although of her new allies, Heritage, Sir Archie and the absent Quentin Kennedy (a name from the much



earlier Sir Quixote [1895]) have also participated in the First World War, the tumultuous events of the outside world are not part of Dickson McCunn's experience. Although the Gorbals Die-Hards chant garbled versions of Socialist Sunday School hymns, they have no real knowledge of the reality of socialism, and neither does Heritage, who professes it as a creed. Dickson and the Die-Hards are the city, their values and experience at once confined to urban necessities and applicable to universal situations. The enjoyment of the story is in seeing these urban creatures take on the outside world, their tactical expertise and practicality as powerful a defence against the forces of chaos as the war-time experience of the old soldiers in their company.

Saskia makes this possible; she is the magnet drawing aid and attack towards herself, and in doing so she brings out Dickson McCunn from his rut of placid middle age, and allows the Die-Hards to prove their astonishing worth. Her depiction as the princess of romance echoes this, a modern-day fairy story with attendant modern evils threatening the princess. The analogy can be carried further: Dougal is described as a gnome, (78), Mrs Morran plays the wise-woman, and the lost prince appears in the nick of time to save his princess. Heritage is the Poet, suffering a mild form of unrequited love, also abandoning his wayward 'modern' views on life and poetry, and returning gladly to the fold of romance and a proper appreciation of Tennyson.

These elements of fairy story, already touched on in chapter five above, are fully in keeping with Huntingtower's feeling of fantasy and dreams.

The romantic roles do not stop at Dickson. The princess kisses him in gratitude, and:

The light touch of her lips on his forehead was like the pressing of an electric button which explodes some powerful charge and alters the face of a countryside. He blushed scarlet; then he wanted to cry; then he wanted to sing. An immense exhilaration seized him, and I am certain that if at that moment the serried ranks of Bolshevvy had appeared in the doorway, Dickson would have hurled himself upon them with a joyful shout.

(79)

His devotion to the princess had previously been fatherly, as Saskia has the look of his dead daughter, but this benediction from the princess makes him a powerful force against evil. Saskia's function here is as a crux and also the means for releasing hitherto unguessed-at forces upon the world, both for evil and for good.

#### The princess in Greece

Koré Arabin of The Dancing Floor (1926) is a curious creation and an entirely successful one. In her Buchan portrays his distaste at certain elements of youth after the war, something he had already done to a lesser extent with John Heritage in Huntingtower, but Koré's behaviour is redeemed by the revelation of her troubles. As a deliberate correlation to the results of war on English youth, Koré is wholly a part of the post-1915 change in Buchan's writing. She does not come across

immediately in the post-1915 role of the female character as spur to the hero, but it is apparent from her first appearance that she excites strong emotion, something which Buchan's contemporary heroines are not generally read as doing. This again is part of the flapper image of the 1920s which Buchan was portraying, with all the attendant loss of decorum and 'lady-like' behaviour.

Her story involves the fulfilling of two separate destinies in the one incident: the resolution of Vernon Milburne's strange dream, and the restitution for the evil done by Koré's father on Plakos. The story is narrated by Edward Leithen, and pieces of the plot fall inevitably into place, from both Vernon's and Koré's personal histories, with a deliberate feel as if the story were a regulated pattern following an older model. As Leithen is the narrator, the story is told from a tangent, since his role in the story is necessarily as a very minor protagonist. As he is the confidant of both principals and has the full facts of the story, his initial involvement as a participant and as a protagonist is spurred by his personal feelings for these principals. At best Leithen is an ineffectual back-up support on Plakos, and in England a worried friend to both Vernon and Koré, but with an incomplete understanding of the true nature of the situation. It is to Koré and to Vernon that the story belongs and whom it properly concerns, and Buchan has drawn Koré as a central participant in the ensuing drama, but one seen from a distance.

Leithen is a transparent narrator, and the effect of Koré's various

appearances change with his opinion of her. At one moment she is 'oddly ill-bred and brazen...This masterful girl had no shadow of doubt as to her behaviour. She seemed to claim the right to domineer, like a barbaric princess accustomed to an obsequious court' (80). Greater knowledge gives Leithen clarity and admiration.

Even her bad manners soon ceased to annoy me, for in my eyes they had lost all vulgarity. They were the harshnesses of a creature staving off tragedy. Indeed, it was her very extravagances that allured, for they made me see her as a solitary little figure set in a patch of light in a great stage among shadows, defying of her own choice the terrors of the unknown.

(81)

Vernon begins his relationship with Koré with disgust, 'that tawdry girl' (81), then learns to understand:

...the quality of one whom aforesaid he had disliked both as individual and type. This pale girl...was facing terror with a stiff lip. There was nothing raffish or second-rate about her now. She might make light of her danger in her words, but her eyes betrayed her.

(83)

As their destinies become peculiarly conjoined, their feelings for each other develop, and quite naturally Koré and Vernon understand that once their shared ordeal is over, they will be free to start their lives again, and they will be together, ordered by Fate or Providence or any one of the many names of destined fortune that Buchan employs.

Koré is part of a pattern, not as a protagonist or as a focus-point, but one of a number of roles which play out the end of the Arabins' presence on Plakos. Koré the woman plays the role of the

Kore, the Maiden of the Plakos ritual, and Buchan has constructed the story so firmly towards a definite end that the two identities merge through one playing the part of the other. And as Kore cannot be made separate in the actions on Plakos from her ritual role, so neither can she be separated from Vernon and his parallel role.

Drawing the heroine as part of a pattern, but not so removed from the action of the story that she becomes a structural motif, gives Buchan an extra force in his plots. Both Saskia and Kore have a central effect on their plots' movements; their personalities push that movement on, and their respective roles as magnet and preordained ritual presence are emphasised by their foreign personae.

#### Anna and The Island of Sheep

Anna Haraldsen, the third princess, is a thirteen-year old schoolgirl, successfully rescued by Lombard in The Island of Sheep (1936).

The girl Anna appeared in a pleated blue skirt and a white blouse...she was a tall child for her years, and ridiculously blonde, almost bleached. She had a crop of fair hair, which looked white in certain lights, a pale face, and features almost too mature, for the full curve of her chin was that of a woman rather than that of a girl. There was no colour about her except in her eyes, and I thought that Haraldsen deserved something better than this plain drab child. I had whispered that to Mary...and she had laughed at me. 'You're a blind donkey, Dick,' she had said. 'Someday she will be a raging beauty, with that ivory skin and those sea-blue eyes.'

(84)

Mary's perception is for later; for the present, Anna is a

determined and adventurous tomboy who fits into the story well as an active participant. Her youth makes it possible for her to be less of a female and more of the sort of active young person that Peter John is, composed of qualities and attributes devoid of any possibility of romantic entanglements. Hannay becomes more appreciative of her appearance and her behaviour when she is back on her home on the island.

She seemed to have shed the English schoolgirl, and with that all the tricks of speech and manner which had annoyed my son. Hitherto, as I have said, she had treated him cavalierly and driven him to a moody silence. Now she was a hostess in her own house, and she had the manner of a princess welcoming a friend to her kingdom. Amazingly handsome she looked, with her brilliant hair and eyes, and her ivory skin coloured by the seawinds and lit by the sun.

(85)

Although Buchan was sixty when he wrote The Island of Sheep, and he had based the character of Peter John Hannay on his own son Johnnie, the figure of Anna as childhood companion and loyal comrade does seem to echo his own childhood memories of his sister Anna, 'My princess of the shining eyes' (86). Buchan treats Anna Haraldsen with a good deal more attention than he does the other female characters in the novel; Mary and Barbara are, as already discussed, only shadowy background figures by this time in the Buchan world, and Beryl Lombard is examined intensively for only three pages. Miss Margesson and Lydia Ludlow are given cursory glances; Anna is the sole heroine and is treated accordingly. As a schoolgirl she is pleasantly natural; as the island mistress she takes on leadership and is a companion of equality for Peter John. As Anna appears at the very end of Buchan's fiction, it would be

inaccurate to place her in the tradition of new heroes and heroines which emerged after 1915. Rather, she is of a successive generation.

The ballad tradition - Katrine of Witch Wood

Buchan was steeped in the literary tradition of Scotland, particularly in the ideas of Romance found in the works of Sir Walter Scott, and had a fine appreciation for the old ballads and legends of Scotland, as history as well as poetry. Such elements which appear in his own writing have a discernable provenance, and in the depiction of at least two of his heroines, Katrine Yester of Witch Wood (1927), and Sabine Beauforest of The Blanket of the Dark (1931), the influence of the Border ballads and their corresponding universal myths are most apparent.

Janet Adam Smith considers Katrine Yester to be;

...one of Buchan's more successful women because there is no attempt at realism: she is more like a character in a ballad, particularised by her green gown, her voice like a bird, her black hair.

(87)

Christopher Harvie complains that for him, Katrine is too ethereal and two-dimensional; she 'is so completely the fairy princess that she seems to have no quality in common with what the Woodilee folk get up to' (88). This depiction must be deliberate. Katrine's role in the story is as the object of desire and hope for David Sempill, the young minister struggling at once with pagan festivities, unnatural covens, the fundamental extremes of his Elders and fellow ministers, and the Covenanting politics of the

time. Once again, Buchan has introduced a hero with no experience of women - 'he had scarcely spoken two words in his life to a woman outside his own kin, and this bright apparition loosened his knees with nervousness' (89). This was at his first meeting with Katrine, when she is the daughter of a great house greeting guests. He next encounters her in the magic wood Melanudragill.

There was the gleam again and the rustle. He thought that at the far end of the glade behind the red bracken he saw a figure. In two steps he was certain. A green gown fluttered and at his third step broke cover. He saw the form of a girl - nymph, fairy, or mortal, he knew not which. He was no more the minister of Woodilee, but eternal wandering youth, and he gave chase...He stopped short in a deep embarrassment. He had been pursuing a fairy and had found a mortal.

(90)

There are two worlds in Witch Wood: one is Katrine's, which is the daylight outside world and the Tower of Calidon, and the other is Woodilee, which is the village, the daily concerns of the parish, and the night transformation of the wood Melanudragill into the Black Wood. Katrine's place in the wood is called Paradise; when she is seen by the village, either with David on the moors or in the houses helping during the plague, they don't see her as anything but the 'Queen of Elfhome' (91). She is not meant to be a part of the Woodilee world; she enters it because of her love for David and for the work to be done in saving the village from plague, but she pays the price of this forbidden cross-over by catching the disease and dying herself.

Katrine is part of the pattern of the story, which is of the struggle between good and evil. Where evil can be found in that



which is outwardly good, and where the so-called backsliders of the parish are the strongest supporters of the minister, Katrine's role is to serve the cause of good and be maligned and miscalled for this by the promulgators of evil who oppose the minister. Fought on several levels, this struggle is portrayed by a complex and vigorous narrative. It is Buchan's strongest and most powerful novel, and Katrine's role is among his most well-executed of all his female characters. Janet Adam Smith's remark that Katrine's character is not an attempt at realism, is apposite for this story, where realism in her role would be out of place. Katrine is a symbol, 'she represents an ideal of love - "Agape" more than "Eros"' (92), Christian love rather than the erotic lust and life-instinct which pervade the world of Woodilee.

#### Sabine and The Blanket of the Dark

Sabine Beauforest of The Blanket of the Dark is temptation, manipulation, and the desire for power, and offers herself as a reward for risk and daring. She first appears, however, as something quite different, as Janet Adam Smith describes.

The girl...is a creature of ballad or myth. For Peter, this Sabine Beauforest merges into the goddess of the Painted Floor ... and even - in a vision which comes to him when he is exhausted in the snow - with the Queen of Heaven.

(93)

Sabine has the capacity to be regarded as a symbol, as with Katrine, and her role in the story is as another piece in the political game. The difference between her and the hero, Peter Pentecost, is that where he is manipulated, she is in full

knowledge of what she is doing, and offers herself voluntarily. Her initial appearances as 'the white girl' who danced on the Roman floor and who offered Peter her allegiance in Stowood, have a virginal air of purity about them. Peter, another Buchanan hero who 'had never since his childhood looked a woman in the face' (94), is now aware that this woman might be the composite figure of the women of Greek tales and legends of which he had grown up imagining, and a woman worthy to be queen. 'For a queen she was born to be; nothing less would content him, or be worthy of her magnificence' (95). Sabine is of the same opinion, but warns him that he himself must be worth this attempt.

I am willing to be a queen...I am willing to risk all hazards by your side, and if you fall then to fall with you like a true wife...But I must be certain that that is indeed your purpose, my lord. I will not link my fortunes to one who is half-hearted, for in this cause it must be venture all.

(96)

Her development continues from this initial realisation of Peter's to a further temptation when she attempts to seduce him, first by implicit music, and then by her presence.

Peter was in a tremor, in which there was as much fear as delight. Dimly he perceived that this woman was his for the taking, that she was part of the appurtenances of one who was Bohun and might be King of England. But he had not bargained for such a goddess. He had thought of her as a difficult Artemis, and now, behold, she was Aphrodite. Something monastic and virginal in him was repelled...And gradually into her eyes, which had been so full of lure and challenge, crept something different - was it disappointment, anger?

(97)

This is the temptation of a witch. But Sabine is not evil, just

wrong, or at least Peter is wrong for the part she and his sponsors wish him to play. His austerity makes it impossible for him to yield to Sabine's lures or to condone the spoliation of the Church to reward the army who will put him in power. His 'clerkly scruples' (98) manifest themselves in other areas, when he is thinking longingly of Sabine and absently remembers a Latin tag.

"Illic et Venus et leves Amores  
Atque ipso in media sedet Voluptas"  
He tried to turn the couplet into his own tongue.  
"For there dwells Venus, and the tiny Loves,  
And in their midst Delight."  
The word *Voluptas* offended him. It should have been  
*Desiderium*.

(99)

These promptings of austerity, a common characteristic of many of Buchan's heroes, a shared preference for Artemis over Aphrodite, are what make Peter unfit to be a king in this time of Tudor sensuality. Sabine appears to choose the less scrupulous path by marrying the turncoat Sir Gabriel who is to flourish under Henry and Mary, and under Elizabeth 'trimmed his faith opportunely, and died in full possession of the wealth he had won' (100). Peter's last word on Sabine's choice is 'that she has found a fitting mate' (101), while Brother Thomas pronounced a lament upon her.

There was a true woman of that name, who was beloved by two noble youths, but where that woman was gone, said he, was known only to God. What survived was but a phantom, a hollow thing with much beauty and cunning, who was mated to another hollow thing, and shone resplendently in a hollow world. The real Sabine was no doubt laid up in Heaven.

(102)

The real Sabine was the white goddess of the painted floor; like Katrine in Witch Wood, her real self was associated with the spirit of place, but on the chance of power, Sabine changed into or revealed herself as the manipulative woman. She is not a negative nor even an evil character, she is a contrast to the choice of Peter, and while her choice makes her less worthy, her reality is always as the white goddess.

These two examples of Buchan's use of the ballad tradition in his heroines appear to be steeped in the essential forces of life and death, and the opposing forces of love and lust. The women themselves are opposites; Katrine all purity and truth, unfit to live in a corrupt world, and Sabine the willing sacrifice, of another kind, settling for the world and its glories rather than the austere values of loyalty and faith. Despite this disparity, their essential purpose in these novels is the same; again as a spur to the heroes inexperienced with women, consequently precipitating the actions of the plot. As with other heroines who are objects of desire to their heroes, Katrine and Sabine are part of the 1915 change which developed the new Buchan hero. This new hero needed a correspondingly new heroine, no longer a passive victim (Marjory of John Burnet) nor a redeemer (Margaret of A Lost Lady) but an active participant to fulfill the needs of the hero.

#### Old Women - witches, chaperones, peasants

The elements of the supernatural in Buchan cover the entire

length of his writing career. 'On Cademuir Hill' in Scholar Gypsies (1896) is the earliest example, and in 'At the Article of Death' in Grey Weather (1899), the ghost story element returns again. The novella 'No-Man's Land' in The Watcher by the Threshold (1902) is a truly terrifying story of a surviving settlement of Picts in the Scarts of the Muneraw. Most of Buchan's supernatural horror elements appear in the short stories - for example in 'The Grove of Ashtaroth' (1910), 'The Wind in the Portico' (1928) and in 'The Green Wildebeeste' (1928). Horror embodied in characters rather than in a *temenos* is more unusual, and where it does occur, these characters are often depicted as witches, and always as old women.

Alison Semple of 'The Outgoing of the Tide' (1899) and the witches of Witch Wood (1927) are overtly of the black art; the 'two grey women of Brightwell' (103), in Midwinter (1923), are witches by nature and appearance, if not by actual deed. They are presumably the daughters of Sir John Norreys' bedridden uncle, since they call him cousin, but they are essentially two old hags, one tall, 'lean and hawkbeaked, the other of a dropsical fatness' (104). They are described with revulsion - old grey cats, with 'wolfish eyes', 'the witches, obscene, malevolent, furtive' (105). They are a metaphor for treachery, perhaps less characters than devices, and only function as symbols in the story, as horrific elements in the very centre of a web of deceit and betrayal, a striking contrast to the

innocence and freshness of their antithesis, Claudia.

The chaperones of Buchan's novels and short stories are a vital and invigorating group of characters. They do not play leading roles in the action - if Kitty Queensberry of Midwinter can be counted as old, 'the Duchess had passed her fortieth year' (106), in her role as a mature female friend for Claudia and the grave judge at Mr Kyd's trial, she is an exception to this tendency - but they are unforgettable. The role of duenna is played by a number of these women characters - Mary's aunts, Doria and Claire Wymondham in Mr Standfast and The Three Hostages, are eccentric, foolish and negligible, but surprisingly they remain firmly in the memory whilst appearing only momentarily in the stories. The three redoubtable Scots aunts, Aunt Grizel of Witch Wood, Aunt Harriet of Castle Gay, and Aunt Georgie of The Free Fishers, stand over and protect their respective charges, Katrine, Alison and Kirsty, with a resourcefulness which is admirable, and a joint command over the Scots language which is nothing less than masterly.

This facility of language is greatly contributory to the unforgettable Scotswomen of advanced years who in the Buchan world adorn the peasantry. The delightful Highland postmistress of Mr Standfast (1919) was the first, followed by Mrs Morran and 'Mrs brookie tea and Coffee' of Huntingtower (1922). Isobel Veitch of Witch Wood and Mrs Catterick of Castle Gay are effortlessly better creations than their rather tame English

counterparts, Mother Sweetbread and Madge Littlemouse of The Blanket of the Dark, although for 'period' old women, the Wife of 'The Wife of Flanders' in The Path of the King (1921), is one of the most succinctly drawn of Buchan's characters, of either sex. The old Scotswomen have poetry in their dialect and the prose rhythms of their speech are to be read and re-read in a completely convinced delight. Buchan was writing from the heart and with enormous affection for his subject when he drew these extraordinary portraits from his Tweeddale childhood.

The obvious interpretation of these Scotswomen, especially the nameless crofters' wives who figure in the early Hannay novels, is that they are mother figures, occurring at the right psychological point in the story and serving only to give succour. Occasionally they take some part in the action of the plot - the aristocratic duennas especially, since they are of an equal rank to the hero and in a position to do some part of his work for him - but in the main the old women exist to provide food, beds and shelter, to loan out clothes and miscellaneous equipment, to give local information, spy out the land, to scold ruthlessly and occasionally hurl abuse, and above all to be there when needed. Mrs Morran becomes Dickson McCunn's Auntie Phemie for the duration, and shelters escaped princesses without a murmur. The minister's housekeeper of The Free Fishers (1934), Babbie, whose continual burning of the porridge is almost her only function, is also strength and

security personified, the symbol of home and normality when Nanty Lammas returns from adventure. As a parallel from the same novel, Marget, the minister's housekeeper in Yonderdale, is a brief yet vivid portrayal. She too is solidity and security, competent and vigorous in a crisis.

I have chosen these nine divisions as important aspects of the female characters in Buchan's fiction. When the female roles are examined intensively in this way, rather more is made apparent about the male characters in the novels than might have been expected. A large number of Buchan's heroes are ignorant of women, socially and as a gender, before they encounter their respective heroines, and almost all the heroes have a preference for Artemis and an instinctive withdrawal from the femininity of Aphrodite. The adorable boy, the woodland nymph, the athletic huntress, and the woman of honour and courage are all facets of the Buchan heroine; not men made women, but the animus expressed in a feminine way. This implies a purity of line and aspect in the Buchan women, a simplicity and a virginal quality which naturally associates itself with the virginal male.

The Buchan heroines are companions, foils, objects of desire, and catalysts, their functions frequently related directly to the depiction of the heroes, delineated with an exactness and complexity of detail.

With these heroines, the fiction of John Buchan is made



complete. The change of 1915 altered Buchan's ideas about his heroines, just as it had done with his heroes. While not all his post-1915 female characters show direct evidence of this - some, indeed, are clearly of an older provenance than any 20th-century change of thinking - the women in the Hannay novels at least, are part of the great change that redirected Buchan's fiction into a new genre and a greater success than he had hitherto achieved.

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(1) See particularly: Colin Watson, Snobbery With Violence (1971); Julian Symons, Bloody Murder (1972); Patricia Craig & Mary Cadogan, The Lady Investigates (1981); and Gwen Williams, 'Fear's Keen Knife: Suspense and the Female Detective', in Twentieth-Century Suspense: the Thriller comes of age, edited by Clive Bloom (London 1990), pp.37-48.

(2) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan (London 1965, 1985 Oxford University Press), p.141.

(3) letter from Robert Louis Stevenson to W.E. Henley, August 1881, in The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, edited by Sidney Colvin, two volumes (London 1899), vol 1, p.221.

(4) Rudyard Kipling, Kim (London 1901, 1978 Pan Books), p.348.

(5) Patrick Williams, 'Kipling and Orientalism' in Kipling Considered, edited by Philip Mallett (London 1989), pp.33-55 (p.45-48).

(6) John Buchan, Greenmantle (London 1916, 1956 Penguin), p.190.

(7) John Buchan, Mr Standfast (London 1919, 1956 Penguin), p.230.

(8) John Buchan, Mr Standfast, op.cit., p.216.

(9) *ibid*, p.237.

The conflict between male comradeship and heterosexual love, expressed here in this typically English, stiff-upper-lip, repressed emotions style, harks back to medieval and Renaissance chivalric tradition. The classic exposition of male chivalric love is in Chaucer's The Knight's Tale, and is also illustrated by The Merchant of Venice, Act 2, scene 3, with Salarino and Salanio discussing Antonio's love for Bassanio. In The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act 1, scene 1, with Valentine and Proteus an accepted form of deep friendship between men is depicted, but with no overtones of homosexual love. This sort of relationship is not portrayed as conflicting with the love of men for women, but merely different; not higher nor lower, complementary. The courtly love the knights had for their ladies in Malory's Morte d'Arthur was an artificial construct, but one based on adulterous emotion, however distant the convention grew from the original.

The male counterpart of courtly love was the uninhibited expression of male comradeship and affection, and although Hannay and Peter are too repressed in their emotions to manage this, as was the convention at the time, they are both aware that their friendship is one of the strongest possible bonds,

despite Hannay's new-found love for Mary. Hannay's old life is portrayed as a neat package, separate from his new life, which was soon to begin with Mary, and the two were not destined to combine. All seemed set for a happy domestic post-war existence for the three of them, when Peter's death at the end of Mr Standfast released Hannay to begin the completely new life with Mary.

(10) *ibid*, p.211.

(11) John Buchan, The Three Hostages, (London 1924, 1953 Penguin), p.8.

(12) *ibid*, p.18.

(13) John Buchan, The Island of Sheep (London 1936, 1956 Penguin), p.172.

(14) Howard Swiggett, 'Introduction' to John Buchan, Mountain Meadow (Boston, Massachusetts, 1941), i-xlix (p.xxxii).

(15) John Buchan, John Macnab (London 1925, 1956 Penguin), p.192.

(16) *ibid*, p.136.

(17) Meredith Etherington-Smith and Jeremy Pilcher, The It Girls: Lucy, Lady Duff Gordon, the Contourière 'Lucile', and Elinor Glyn, Romantic Novelist (London 1986, 1988), p.129.

(18) John Buchan, John Macnab, *op.cit.*, pp.194-5.

(19) Gertrude Himmelfarb, 'John Buchan: An Untimely Appreciation', Encounter, vol 15 (Sept 1960), pp.46-53.

(20) *ibid*, p.46.

(21) John Buchan, The Island of Sheep, *op.cit.*, p.19.

(22) *ibid*, pp.101-2.

(23) *ibid*, p.102.

(24) *ibid*, p.103.

(25) John Buchan, John Macnab, *op.cit.*, p.130.

(26) *ibid*, p.126.

(27) *ibid*, p.125.

(28) *ibid*, p.131.

(29) John Buchan, The Courts of the Morning (London 1929, 1982 Three Rivers Books), p.102.

(30) *ibid*, p.105.

(31) *ibid*, p.161.

(32) John Buchan, The Free Fishers (London 1934), pp.316-7.

(33) *ibid*, p.48.

(34) *ibid*, p.70.

(35) John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps (London 1915, 1956 Penguin), p.24.

(36) *ibid*, p.43.

(37) *ibid*, p.24.

(38) John Buchan, Midwinter (London 1923, 1925 second edition), p.321.

(39) John Buchan, Sir Quixote of the Moors (London 1895), p.117.

(40) letter from John Buchan to C.H. Dick, 4 February 1897, quoted in Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, op.cit., p.97.

(41) John Buchan, A Lost Lady of Old Years (London 1899, 1919 The Bodley Head), p.27.

(42) *ibid*, p.61.

(43) *ibid*, p.69.

(44) *ibid*, p.85.

(45) John Buchan, The Free Fishers, op.cit., p.157.

(46) *ibid*, p.317.

(47) *ibid*, pp.319-320.

(48) John Buchan, Greenmantle, op.cit., p.163.

(49) *ibid*, p.159.

(50) *ibid*, p.190.

(51) *ibid.*

(52) Patricia Craig and Mary Cadogan, The Lady Investigates: Women Detectives and Spies in Fiction (London 1981, 1986 Oxford University Press), p.52.

(53) *ibid.*, p.53.

(54) *ibid.*, p.65.

(55) John Buchan, Greenmantle, *op.cit.* p.174.

(56) *ibid.*, p.174.

(57) *ibid.*

(58) *ibid.*, p.173.

(59) *ibid.*

(60) *ibid.*, p.256.

(61) *ibid.*, p.256.

(62) See Spenser's The Faerie Queene, Book IV, Canto 5, verse 11.

(63) John Buchan, The House of the Four Winds (London 1935), p.81.

(64) *ibid.*, pp.109-110.

(65) *ibid.*, p.110.

(66) *ibid.*, p.243.

(67) *ibid.*, pp.245-246.

(68) John Buchan, Castle Gay (London 1930, 1956 Penguin), p.23.

(69) *ibid.*, p.44.

(70) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, *op.cit.*, p.69.

(71) *ibid.*, p.70.

(72) John Buchan, The House of the Four Winds, *op.cit.*, p.273.

(73) *ibid.*, p.312.

(74) *ibid.*, p.95.

- (75) *ibid*, p.82.
- (76) John Buchan, Huntingtower (London 1922, 1956 Penguin), p.61.
- (77) *ibid*, p.77.
- (78) *ibid*, p.76.
- (79) *ibid*, p.132.
- (80) John Buchan, The Dancing Floor (London 1926, 1982 Three Rivers Books), p.78.
- (81) *ibid*, p.127.
- (82) *ibid*, p.133.
- (83) *ibid*, p.259.
- (84) John Buchan, The Island of Sheep, *op.cit.*, pp. 127-128.
- (85) *ibid*, p.174.
- (86) quoted in Anna Buchan, Unforgettable, Unforgotten (London 1945), p.31. I am indebted to the Rev. J.C.G. Greig for this suggestion.
- (87) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, *op.cit.*, p.275.
- (88) Christopher Harvie, 'Introduction' to John Buchan, Witch Wood (London 1927, 1988 Canongate Publishing), vii-xii (p.xi).
- (89) John Buchan, Witch Wood, *op.cit.*, p.44.
- (90) *ibid*, p.67.
- (91) *ibid*, p.174.
- (92) Christopher Harvie, 'Introduction', *op.cit.*, p.xi.
- (93) Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan, *op.cit.*, p.278.
- (94) John Buchan, The Blanket of the Dark (London 1931, second edition 1934), p.82.
- (95) *ibid*, p.83.
- (96) *ibid*, p.255.
- (97) *ibid*, p.139.

(98) *ibid*, p.356.

(99) *ibid*, p.222.

(100) *ibid*, p.372.

(101) *ibid*, p.363.

(102) *ibid*, p.374.

(103) John Buchan, Midwinter, op.cit., p.274.

(104) *ibid*. The motif of one fat and one thin witch, both of a physical extreme, is very common in myth, used more recently in Roald Dahl's book for children, James and the Giant Peach (London 1961, 1980 Penguin).

(105) John Buchan, Midwinter, op.cit., p.275.

(106) *ibid*, p.44.

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CONCLUSION

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CONCLUSION



In this thesis I have shown how the change of 1915 redirected the course of Buchan's fiction, and as a consequence brought about an important new impetus in the genre of the thriller. As a concluding indicator of the change in Buchan's fiction, I will show how his perception of evil and the villain were strongly affected by the 1914-1918 war. The move towards Buchan's fictional representation of evil as the villain can be seen as a result of the war, and is again a manifestation of the 1915 shift in his fiction.

The portrayal of evil in Buchan's fiction begins with the atmospheric evocation of the temenos, develops into a depiction of demonic possession, and is most fully delineated in the Buchan villain; a figure who is at once a part of the hero and his dearest enemy. The progression from the impersonal to a personal manifestation of evil also touches on Buchan's depiction of the corruption and bigotry in human nature which produces evil, but this is not a predominant part of the development of the villain in Buchan's fiction.

#### Atmosphere and the temenos

In Buchan's early fiction, an intimation of evil is strongly present in the atmosphere and setting of some of his short stories. In 'On Cademuir Hill' (1894) the gamekeeper experiences an unnatural terror while waiting (as he thought) for death on the hill. 'At the Article of Death' (1897) uses

the same motif of the unknown or the supernatural in the hours before death, and Buchan heightens this idea of a supernatural presence most powerfully in 'No-Man's Land' (1899). He evokes the terror of panic in isolated mountains in an unsettling and genuinely frightening story, compounding the presence of evil denoted by atmosphere with the narrator's discovery of cannibalistic Picts who personify the survival of primitive forces.

The idea of the temenos, the spirit of place which is unnatural and alien, is brought out most forcibly in the early stories in 'The Oasis in the Snow' (1899). The traveller in the hills finds an unnaturally green valley in the midst of snowy mountains, and fears the place as uncanny and evil. Buchan used the motif of the uncanny temenos many times in his fiction, and it is particularly apparent in 'The Green Glen' (1912), 'Skule Skerry' (1928), and in 'Ho! The Merry Masons' (1933). The evil place which had always existed, rather than people or things, was also an important element in Buchan's tales of the supernatural, producing fear and an awareness of the presence of evil.

#### Demonic possession

Buchan's use of the uncanny temenos can also be seen in his 'Fulloirole' (1920), where the 'little wicked house of stone' (1) almost acquires a personality as its influence on the unnatural change of its inhabitants is perceived. This belongs

to the development of the idea of demonic possession in Buchan's fiction, a stage further from where the unnatural forces are resident in the land, to where they possess a host.

'The Watcher by the Threshold' (1900) is the earliest instance of Buchan describing demonic possession as an instrument of evil, where Ladlaw is inhabited by the demon who persecuted the Emperor Justinian. I have already shown how this story stood out from Buchan's other short stories of the period in its particular gloom and depression (p.167 above). I feel that this is a direct consequence of the subject matter, since in the three other stories in Buchan's work where demonic possession is the opposing force - 'The Grove of Ashtaroth' (1912), 'The Green Wildebeest' (1927) and 'The Wind in the Portico' (1928) - the narrators of each make particular mention of a heaviness in the atmosphere, a powerful and unnatural force working on their emotions and spirits. This indication of a supernatural presence goes back to the temenos idea, as the three sacred places in these stories are the homes of gods.

It is not strange that Buchan the Christian portrayed pagan gods as embodiments of evil against his narrators, but in this respect his Christianity was not militant. Ashtaroth's insidious power is destroyed, but the narrator feels pathos and shame at his work. The animist god of 'The Green Wildebeest' is driven out into the world by Hannay's companion, but Hannay feels shame that the sacred pool has been violated. Only in

'The Wind in the Portico' does Buchan show no mercy to the god, Vaunus, since its demands of destruction and sacrifice are utterly evil, as opposed to merely pagan, and its place is duly destroyed.

Here the possessing demon or god is a stronger alien presence than that embodied in the temenos, and the presence of evil is correspondingly less intangible. The narrators of 'The Oasis in the Snow' and 'The Green Glen' did not know what they were running from, but they knew it was terrible. The narrators of 'The Grove of Ashtaroth', 'The Green Wildebeest' and 'The Wind in the Portico' knew that they were dealing with a definite presence, but they could only feel it.

#### The beginnings of the Buchan villain

So far I have discussed the intangible manifestations of evil in Buchan's fiction and their clear line of development from the short stories. The presence of the villain in Buchan has a more gradual evolution.

The villain is first glimpsed in Gilbert of John Burnet of Burns (1898). In common with the later, fully developed Buchan villain (Ivery and Medina), Gilbert is an opposite to the hero, his cousin John. He is John's enemy and they fight over the heroine, Marjory, but Gilbert is not especially evil. Had he been in a different kind of novel, he would have been the hero and John his dull but worthy friend. To John's David Balfour,

Gilbert is a flawed Alan Breck: more malicious and devious, but still honourable and with great spirit.

After Gilbert, Marka of The Half-Hearted (1900) is the next character in Buchan who could be identified as a villain, but he, too, is from an earlier source, with little changed. He is the stereotyped foreign spy in British Empire territory, and descends from Ruritanian models to the diplomatic spies of William Le Queux.

Buchan's next novel, Prester John (1910), contains two characters who, again, could be construed as villains, but Laputa is never villainous. In his opposition to David he is a noble enemy, and the reader feels that the prosaic shop-keeper is not worthy to bring this man down. Henriques is a classic loathsome traitor with a very unpleasant character. He is not worthy of the hero's attention, and remains ignoble and worthless.

The last manifestation of Buchan's proto-villains is Andrew Lumley of The Power-House (1913, published 1916), but again he is not a new idea. The shadowy group of international anarchists whom Lumley fronts are borrowed from Conrad and Wallace, and are, as Philip Ray has pointed out, part of that tendency in popular fiction of the period to describe villains as part of the anonymous but nonetheless terrifying forces of anarchy. Buchan's treatment of this theme is cursory; his real

interest is in producing a suitably scattered but united force of villains to surround and trap Leithen in the crowded confines of London's West End.

But the beginnings are there. Buchan at this stage has produced his first super-villain, the embodiment of evil in one individual. The impersonal, universal and eternal qualities of the temenos and the atmosphere of evil had moved towards the personal and individual through demonic possession and the exorcising of gods. By the eve of the First World War Buchan had established that progression and had arrived at a point where his hero was opposing evil in human form.

#### The Thirty-Nine Steps

The bald archaeologist of The Thirty-Nine Steps and the plump man who could disguise himself so undetectably are more advanced stages in the development of the Buchan villain, but they are glimpses only. They appear briefly as if as a hint from Buchan's sub-conscious of the future villains he was to produce. The plump man is, of course, Ivery of Mr Standfast (1919) and Hannay's arch-enemy, but in The Thirty-Nine Steps he appears only as a henchman with a useful ability at daring disguise. The old gentleman is the real focus of villainy in this novel, appearing so innocuously at the window after the reader has been warned that this is the man whom Scudder feared most upon earth. This initial appearance of harmless old age is suddenly changed to malevolent and steely cunning at the interview with 'Ned

Ainslie', but it is in his last appearance that the old man is most formidable. The scene at the bridge-table in Bradgate is excruciatingly embarrassing, but also terrifying in its apparently seamless disguise. For the enemy to take refuge behind the facade of middle-class suburbia is a situation the outdoors-man Hannay finds very hard to deal with, and he very nearly fails to pin his enemy down.

The most horrible aspect of this last confrontation for Hannay is the discovery that the old man 'in his foul way...was a patriot' (2). Hannay and his enemy are both fighting for their own countries, but on opposing sides, and this is the motif which Buchan carries forward to his creation, or re-creation, of Ivery in Mr Standfast: that the hero and his enemy are opposing sides, but the same character. Hannay can see himself in Ivery and they have many parallels. But before Buchan worked this new development of his villain through, he produced an aberration in his line of villainy, the caricatures Colonel von Stumm and Hilda von Einem.

### Greenmantle

Greenmantle was a rapidly-produced sequel to The Thirty-Nine Steps and Buchan's largest-selling novel to date. It was a straightforward spy novel set in wartime, as I have discussed above, and had, for that time, straightforward stereotyped villains. Colonel von Stumm is, as Buchan deliberately points out (3), a caricature, crushed under his own troops after a

series of bullying episodes which give him Hannay's reluctant admiration (4). Hilda von Einem, as I have shown above in chapter six, is also stereotypical, the Euro-vamp in the Mata Hari mould, and it is interesting that she too is disposed of, as if Buchan intended that their appearances should be single ones only.

One explanation of this apparent dead-end in the Buchan canon of villains is that Buchan did not know what to do with them.

Valentine Williams, in his Clubfoot novels, carried on where Buchan had left off to create a large and hulking German villain who recurred in several novels as a cartoon embodiment of evil. Clubfoot was clearly based on Stumm, and was just as obviously intended for no more than a single-levelled thriller - all that the character was capable of. Given the range and depth of the Hannay novels, alone of Buchan's fiction after Greenmantle, it would be unsurprising if Buchan had not deliberately dropped Stumm from his panoply of characters as an aberration, probably an indulgent one, in his development of the villain.

Hilda's fate is possibly more complex. She was not ridiculous as was Stumm, but neither was she credible as a villain in the Hannay world the way that Ivery and Medina were to be. Her role as witch-queen temptress was suited only to the escapist qualities of Greenmantle, but she was, of course, Buchan's first female villain and his strongest female character to date. Her strong points were not lost, reappearing, as I have shown above



in chapter six, in Araminta von Troyos of The House of the Four Winds (1935).

Mr Standfast and Ivery

After a gap of three years Buchan produced Mr Standfast (1919), again a war novel, but the most evocative Hannay novel to date and a contender for inclusion in Buchan's most personal novels. The villain is Ivery, and at last Buchan has reached his apogee of super-villains. Hannay and Ivery are parallels and opposites, and Ivery is a doppelganger to Hannay. This idea, most famously expressed in Hogg's Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner (1824), was not new, but Buchan was interpreting it in a new way. In Hogg, the doppelganger is merely a personification of evil and the Devil. In Stevenson's Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde (1886), Jekyll is Mr Hyde. Ivery and Hannay are aware that they are each other's dearest enemy, the bond being made all the stronger by their previous encounter in The Thirty-Nine Steps. (That glance from the false First Sea Lord was the prelude to the conflict of Mr Standfast.) The personal struggle between the enemies is echoed by the corresponding armies in the trenches of France, and the levels of conflict reach from the emotional (Mary) and physical (the trap in the Pink Lodge), to the intellectual (Goethe) and spiritual (Hannay's realisation that he is fighting for England, his home).

Once Hannay has overcome and the battle between the enemies is

over, Ivery dwindles. The report of his death is not so much expected as foreordained by the final glimpse Hannay has of him in custody. As an epic struggle it is Buchan's finest - the next super-villain who Hannay will encounter is not so much an enemy, an absolute opposite, as a manifestation of chaos, an instrument of despair.

#### Medina and The Three Hostages

The effects of the war on Buchan's fiction cannot be underestimated. It was a shattering experience, and I believe that it changed more than the political and social environment of the Buchan novels and short stories. As I have shown above in chapter four, the characters in Buchan's fiction underwent an obvious but nonetheless dramatic change after the war, reflecting the social and cultural changes of British and European society. In Huntingtower (1922), Buchan portrays an outbreak of pure evil in a post-war world in Prince Paul, but even this character can be related to the fairytale elements of that novel (see chapters four and six above), in the role of the evil king.

In The Three Hostages (1924), Buchan describes the results of war in Dr Greenslade's discourse by the fire in Fosse. The idea of a broken and shattered national psyche producing maverick behaviour, returning to Buchan's old theme of the thin wall of glass between civilisation and chaos, is reflected in the development of Buchan's villains. The change from the

impersonal universal opposition to man to a personal, human opposition, projected in the figure of the villain, directly correlates with the effects of war. The demarcation of human nature into we and thee, the hero against his enemy, as opposed to the earlier man against nature, can be seen in the first real super-villain of the bald archaeologist, and the resultant development of Ivery. In The Three Hostages Buchan takes the idea of the villain as the hero's doppelganger a stage further.

Medina is again Hannay's other half and a super-villain, but this time their conflict is the solving of a riddle. The time when Hannay would grapple physically with his enemy is past - even in Mr Standfast his physical feats were against himself rather than Ivery. Hannay and Medina's battle is in the mind, with Medina's weapons of emotional warfare, against the parents of the hostages, and hypnotism to control his slaves. He is deceived by disguise, but only Mary can completely defeat him by using the threat of his own imagination against him.

The final encounter, a wholly physical one of the hunt in the hills of Machray, is significant. Hannay is wounded by Medina, but by that act of physical violence Medina defeats himself, as Hannay is thus too weak to save him from falling down the scree, even when he would. That Hannay tried to rescue his enemy is an indication of how far Buchan had progressed in identifying the hero with his enemy, the doppelganger dying but the hero nearly dying too.

The final development

In The Courts of the Morning (1929) and The Island of Sheep (1936) Buchan created his last villain proper, the pilot and evil genius D'Ingraville. He is really Sandy's villain, and never quite makes the impression that Ivery and Medina do, partly because he is never a part of Hannay's own private struggles (see chapter three above). As an embodiment of evil D'Ingraville serves his purpose, but no more: there is no fundamental struggle going on at deeper levels the way there is with Ivery and Hannay, and his role in The Island of Sheep feels perfunctory, like a substandard sequel. Where Buchan was really giving his attention in his progression of the treatment of evil was in his 1933 novel A Prince of the Captivity.

Adam Melfort is one of Buchan's most spiritually attuned heroes, and has a machine-like quality of unstoppable physical endurance to complement the quest-like nature of his work. His mission is to nurture potential leaders in the muddled and broken post-war world. Joe Utlaw, Frank Alban and Lord Armine are his failures, caused by an insidious diverting of energies and will, directed by Mrs Pomfrey. She is an underrated and largely unnoticed Buchan villain, her presence subliminal and her role so subtly drawn that the reader is barely aware of her in the novel. Yet she draws the priest away from honest good work in a poor parish to a more public and shallow existence; Lord Armine gives up completely to revert to ancestral county values; and Joe Utlaw

not only forsakes his union but eventually his Party, a twist of purpose orchestrated by Mrs Pomfrey. Adam's work is wasted in these hopes for the future, and his efforts are tangled and expended in fighting against other enemies, the vague anarchist groups of Europe conspiring to prevent coherence and stability in European affairs.

Here Buchan is merging the opposing poles of good and evil, previously demarcated clearly in heroes and villains, or, further back, in men and nature, more into the other. Evil is no longer black: it is a presence of grey and not easily discernible. Mrs Pomfrey's shadowy nature reflects this, and Buchan's final demonstration of evil in human form is in the character whose potential for evil is emphasised so strongly: Warren Creevey. This 'villain' is an intellectual, 'a misdirected genius...not in essence malevolent...his fault is an arrogance of intellect' (5), whose capricious handling of the affairs of Europe is setting the world on the path to chaos. Adam reverts to dramatic measures, of isolating him in the Alps to persuade him to reason, but the shadowy anarchists get involved, and Adam saves Creevey by sacrificing himself. This time the hero has died and the 'enemy' has lived, but Creevey is no longer the enemy. In dying, Adam passes on his ideals and negates the evil influences, and Creevey becomes, in some part, his saviour.

Full circle

By exchanging places with the enemy and negating evil through self-sacrifice, Buchan was invoking one of the oldest images of the triumph of good over evil. Before Christianity there were the Greek myths: Buchan's prolonged development of the figure of the villain was assured and sustained, drawing from the classic elements of belief systems of the world. It began with the universal struggle of man against nature, and the supernatural fear which this struggle engendered: in Sick Heart River (1941), his posthumous novel, Buchan returns to nature as the embodiment or manifestation of opposition to man, and Leithen learns to make his peace with that force. The strangely-criticised (6) scenes of overweening human achievement at the beginning of that novel are there as a deliberate counterpoint to the essential focus of the story: that the works of man are in essence finite and short-lived, compared to the hugeness and power of the natural world. Buchan had returned to where he had begun, having worked through the progression of the impersonal and universal opposition to man, to the personalised human opposition within mankind, and back again.

My personal appraisal

Throughout this thesis I have shown my belief that the change of 1915 was of great importance in the development of the Buchan thriller, specifically the Hannay novels. Of the many aspects of that shift in emphasis, there are four in particular

which seem to me to have the most significance in the context of Buchan's fiction as a whole.

The overwhelming evidence of the publishers' files, statistics of the sales of the hundreds of unmemorable and memorable novels published by Hodder & Stoughton during the war years, seem to me to have the weight of history in their proof of just how significant a best-seller Buchan was. That his second Hannay novel, Greenmantle, was the eighth best-selling novel of 1916, at six times the price of the other best-sellers of that year, is surely indicative of the huge popularity of the character of Richard Hannay and of the Hannay adventures. The evidence of these sales figures proves beyond assumption that Buchan was a best-seller in the context of his times, a point which has not so far been backed up with hard facts.

It is clear from examining the chronology of Buchan's fiction that he was able to capitalise on the success of The Thirty Nine Steps with further Hannay novels, and that Hannay was the main factor in the success of these novels. Buchan's creation of Hannay, as I have shown, was a conscious experiment with the role of the adventure hero combined with the burgeoning genre of the thriller. Buchan took the model of the boys' adventure story hero to further stages of development, making the hero's assistant the hero, and the English hero in foreign parts the foreign hero in England, Buchan introduced new twists and possibilities to the model of the thriller. The character of

Richard Hannay was a powerful influence on subsequent thriller writers, the secret service agent who was at once a gentleman, or a travelling sportsman, or a diplomatic spy, or an undercover soldier, or all these roles combined into one. Hannay was the dominant factor in the change of 1915, and his character made the sequels possible and provided the scope for the background characters.

The change in Buchan's characters is particularly useful in recognising the change of 1915. I have shown that Buchan's women characters and heroines changed their roles after 1915, their heroes becoming aware that the Buchan women were indispensable in the execution and resolution of their adventures. From being merely objects of desire and reward, after 1915 the women became protagonists in their own right. Another facet of Buchan's characterisation, the background figures who acted as atmospheric social wallpaper, can also be seen as indicative of the shift in 1915. The effects on society of the 1914-1918 war were reflected in their development, and as a barometer of social change the Buchan background characters, constituting the three Buchan 'worlds', were particularly effective. Buchan developed this seemingly incidental aspect of his fiction with care and consistency, demonstrating that the 1915 change extended to many different levels of interpretation in his writing.

My final point of significance is the evidence of the Scottish



aspects of Buchan's fiction. This demonstrates that the 1915 change did not affect every facet of Buchan's work. The single instance in Buchan's Scottish writing where the change of 1915 can be discerned to have an effect is in his poetry - Buchan ceased the publication of his Scots poetry after 1917 - his appearance in Hugh MacDiarmid's Northern Numbers in 1920 was very much in the nature of a 'guest' writer. While not part of his fictional work, on which this thesis focuses to the exclusion of the large amount of Buchan's other published writing, Buchan's poetry is an important aspect of his role as a Scottish writer, and I have examined it from that viewpoint alone. Where Buchan did not respond to the 1915 shift in his fiction is perhaps more significant.

His attacks on Kailyard continued from his earliest reviews in the Glasgow Herald in 1895, his anti-Kailyard debate at the Oxford Union, and his rejection of the verses of J.J. Bell as poetry, to the more sophisticated exploration of non-Kailyard Scottish characters in his fiction in the 1920s and 1930s. His passion for Scottish history and literature found expression continuously in his historical novels of the last years of the nineteenth century to the late 1930s, the flow interrupted by the incursion of Hannay, but never dropped and never weakened. Buchan's Scots dialect remained coherent and classic in the mouths of his characters, intelligible yet authentic, and unchanging throughout the years of his career. This was not a

lack of response to the otherwise all-embracing change of 1915, but an affirmation of Buchan's essential inclination to his roots and identity.

These four important aspects of Buchan's fiction, together with the more technical appraisal of Buchan's narrative technique which I examined in chapter three above, seem to me to show the significance of the effects of the shift of 1915. The patterns of his writing career changed irrevocably after this date, affecting Buchan's capacity and influence as a writer of fiction.

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- (1) John Buchan, 'Fullcircle' (1920), in The Runagates Club (London 1928), pp.297-320 (p.297)
- (2) John Buchan, The Thirty-Nine Steps (London 1915, 1956 Penguin), p.126
- (3) John Buchan, Greenmantle (London 1916, 1956 Penguin), p.54
- (4) *ibid*, p.268
- (5) John Buchan, A Prince of the Captivity (London 1933, 1960 Hodder & Stoughton), p320.
- (6) Many critics have found the scenes at the American dinner party at the beginning of Sick Heart River too full of the exemplars of excellence, where all the characters present seem to be superb at nearly everything, and have interpreted this as a sign that Buchan was at heart an elitist snob. This is a misreading of the passage, as I show.

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APPENDICES

These figures are taken from the Hodder & Stoughton archives held in the Guildhall Library, London, and represent sales of some Hodder & Stoughton titles in the period 1913 - 1919. The criteria for inclusion are that the sales are inclusive of all editions of one title published by Hodder in any one year, and that the sales reach over 20,000 copies in that year. The codes on the right-hand column refer to the following criteria:

(A) the first appearance of this title in book form with any publisher.

(B) the first appearance of this title with Hodder & Stoughton.

(C) the second or any subsequent year of this title's publication by Hodder & Stoughton.

(D) the reissue of this title by Hodder at a different price from a previous Hodder edition.

The Blackwood's sales figures for Buchan's The Thirty-Nine Steps are italicised for comparative purposes.

AMOUNT	AUTHOR	TITLE	PRICE(S)	CODES
<u>sales over 20,000 in 1913</u>				
65935	Baroness Orczy	<u>The Scarlet Pimpernel</u>	1/-, 6d	C
44433	E. Phillips Oppenheim	<u>Hayat</u>	6d, 7d	C
40614	H. Rider Haggard	<u>She</u>	7d	C
37642	Baroness Orczy	<u>Beau Brocade</u>	1/-, 6½d, 6d	B
34070	Charles Garvice	<u>In Cupid's Chains</u>	6d, 7d	C
31501	Charles Garvice	<u>Nance</u>	6d, 7d	C
27259	H. Rider Haggard	<u>Cleopatra</u>	7d	B
23176	Rex Beach	<u>The Iron Trail</u>	6/-	B
22822	Henry Seton Merriman	<u>Slave of the Lamp</u>	7d	C
21872	H. Rider Haggard	<u>Allan Quatermain</u>	7d	B
20580	Baroness Orczy	<u>I Will Repay</u>	1/-, 6½d	B

AMOUNT	AUTHOR	TITLE	PRICE(S)	CODES
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sales over 20,000 in 1914

50482	Conan Doyle	<u>To Arms!</u> (non fiction)	.7d	B
45592	Baroness Orczy	<u>Eldorado</u>	1/-	D
39251	Baroness Orczy	<u>The Scarlet Pimpernel</u>	1/-, 6d	C
25868	Conan Doyle	<u>The Green Flag</u>	1d	B
24623	Baroness Orczy	<u>The Old Man In The Corner</u>	6d	D
23986	Ralph Connor	<u>The Sky Pilot</u>	1/-, 6d	C
22925	Conan Doyle	<u>Captain of the Polestar</u>	7d	D
32476	Henry Seton Merriman	<u>Flotsam</u>	7d	C
20553	E. Phillips Oppenheim	<u>Havoc</u>	7d, 6d	C

sales over 20,000 in 1915

70084	Ian Hay	<u>A Knight on Wheels</u>	1/-, 6½d, 6d	C
57572	Baroness Orczy	<u>Eldorado</u>	1/-	C
52865	'Sapper'	<u>The Lieutenant and Others</u>	1/-	A
50445	'Sapper'	<u>Sergeant Michael Cassidy</u>	1/6, 1/-	A
45101	Baroness Orczy	<u>The Scarlet Pimpernel</u>	1/-, 6d	C
35262	Baroness Orczy	<u>Unto Caesar</u>	1/-	C
33802	John Buchan	<u>The Thirty-Nine Steps</u>	10d, 6½d	----
30818	J. J. Bell	<u>Wee Macgregor Enlists</u>	1/-	B
29101	Rex Beach	<u>The Net</u>	6/-, 1/-	C
24625	Charles Garvice	<u>Nance</u>	6d, 7d	C
23182	H. Rider Haggard	<u>She</u>	7d	C
32922	Baroness Orczy	<u>Beau Brummage</u>	1/-, 6d	C
21131	Joseph Hocking	<u>Tommy</u>	1/-	B

AMOUNT	AUTHOR	TITLE	PRICE(S)	CODES
<u>sales over 20,000 in 1916</u>				
119322	Ian Hay	<u>A Knight on Wheels</u>	1/-	C
58983	'Sapper'	<u>The Lieutenant and Others</u>	1/-	C
57707	'Sapper'	<u>Sergeant Michael Cassidy</u>	1/6, 1/-	C
55602	Baroness Orczy	<u>The Scarlet Pimpernel</u>	1/-, 6d	C
37254	O. Henry	<u>Heart of the West</u>	1/-	B
35360	Joseph Hooking	<u>Tommy</u>	1/-, 6d	C
35253	Baroness Orczy	<u>The Bronze Eagle</u>	1/-	D
34426	John Buchan	<u>Greenmantle</u>	6/-	A
34421	Baroness Orczy	<u>Eldorado</u>	1/-	C
32446	O. Henry	<u>Cabbages and Kings</u>	1/-	B
31449	O. Henry	<u>Whirligigs</u>	1/-	B
29412	O. Henry	<u>The Four Million</u>	1/-	B
28612	Baroness Orczy	<u>Beau Brocade</u>	1/-, 6d	C
28044	O. Henry	<u>Roads of Destiny</u>	1/-	B
27443	'Sapper'	<u>Men, Women and Guns</u>	5/-	A
26803	O. Henry	<u>Gentle Gaffer</u>	1/-	B
26021	O. Henry	<u>The Trimmed Lamp</u>	1/-	C
25623	John Buchan	<u>The Thirty-Nine Steps</u>	1/6, 8d	----
25482	O. Henry	<u>Strictly Business</u>	1/-	B
25252	O. Henry	<u>Sixes and Sevens</u>	1/-	C
22183	Rex Beach	<u>The Net</u>	6/-, 1/-	C
21818	Ralph Connor	<u>Glengarry Days</u>	1/-, 6d	C
21464	Conan Doyle	<u>The Lost World</u>	1/-	B

AMOUNT	AUTHOR	TITLE	PRICES(S)	CODES
20159	O. Henry	<u>Options</u>	1/-	B
20234	J.J. Bell	<u>Wee Macgreegor Enlists</u>	1/-	C
20052	O. Henry	<u>Rolling Stones</u>	1/-	B

sales over 20,000 in 1917

85895	'Sapper'	<u>Men, Women and Guns</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
49670	Baroness Orczy	<u>The Scarlet Pimpernel</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-, 6d	C
45549	Joseph Hocking	<u>Tommy &amp; the Maid of Athens</u>	1/6, 1/3	B
40747	Baroness Orczy	<u>Beau Brocade</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
40470	Joseph Hocking	<u>Tommy</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-, 6d	C
39596	O. Henry	<u>Rolling Stones</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
38021	O. Henry	<u>Cabbages and Kings</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
36447	Ralph Connor	<u>The Patrol of the Sun Dance Trail</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
33612	O. Henry	<u>Gentle Gaffer</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
32951	O. Henry	<u>Roads of Destiny</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
31849	O. Henry	<u>The Trimmed Lamp</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
31657	O. Henry	<u>Options</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
31614	'Sapper'	<u>No-Man's Land</u>	3/6	A
30640	O. Henry	<u>Heart of the West</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
30112	Baroness Orczy	<u>The Bronze Eagle</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
29745	O. Henry	<u>The Four Million</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
29583	Ralph Connor	<u>Corporal Cameron</u>	1/3, 1/-	C
29187	Baroness Orczy	<u>I Will Repay</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
28817	O. Henry	<u>Strictly Business</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
28762	Ruby M. Ayres	<u>The Uphill Road</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C



AMOUNT	AUTHOR	TITLE	PRICE(S)	CODES
27756	O. Henry	<u>Sixes and Sevens</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
27421	'Sapper'	<u>Sergeant Michael Cassidy</u>	1/6, 1/-	C
27194	'Sapper'	<u>The Lieutenant and Others</u>	1/-	C
26149	Ruby M. Ayres	<u>Paper Roses</u>	1/6	C
25033	Henry Seton Merriman	<u>Slave of the Lamp</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	D
24058	Ruby M. Ayres	<u>Richard Chatterton</u>	1/-	C
23439	O. Henry	<u>Whirligigs</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-	C
20304	Jacques Futrelle	<u>My Lady's Garter</u>	6d	C

sales over 20,000 in 1913

53504	Conan Doyle	<u>The Return of Sherlock Holmes</u>	2/-, 1/6	B
50409	John Buchan	<u>Greenmantle</u>	6/-, 2/6	C
45360	Baroness Orczy	<u>The Scarlet Pimpernel</u>	1/6, 1/3, 1/-, 6d	C
45031	Ruby M. Ayres	<u>The Second Honeymoon</u>	2/-, 1/6	B
29717	Ruby M. Ayres	<u>The Winds of the World</u>	2/-, 1/6	B
23372	O. Henry	<u>Sixes and Sevens</u>	3/6, 2/-, 1/6	C
23273	O. Henry	<u>Options</u>	2/-, 1/6	C
26948	Ian Hay	<u>A Knight on Wheels</u>	1/6	C
26076	Ralph Connor	<u>Corporal Cameron</u>	2/-, 1/6	C
24387	Bartimaeus	<u>The Navy Eternal</u>	----	A
24310	R. Austin Freeman	<u>John Thorndyke's Cases</u>	1/6	C
24433	Baroness Orczy	<u>The Bronze Eagle</u>	1/-	C
24353	R. Austin Freeman	<u>The Red Thumbmark</u>	1/6	D
23528	Charles Garvice	<u>Nance</u>	1/6	C
21619	O. Henry	<u>Roads of Destiny</u>	2/-, 1/6	C

## APPENDIX 1

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AMOUNT	AUTHOR	TITLE	PRICE(S)	CODES
21097	'Sapper'	<u>Men. Women and Guns</u>	2/-, 1/6	C
21000	O. Henry	<u>The Trimmed Lamp</u>	3/6, 2/-, 1/6	C

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Papers used to determine officers' reading material in the First World War.

Memoirs

Bernard Adams, Nothing Of Importance (London 1917).

Alexander Aitken, From Gallipoli to the Somme: Recollections of a New Zealand Infantryman (Oxford 1963).

Bruce Bairnsfather, Bullets and Billets (London 1916).

Edmund Blunden, Undertones of War (London 1965).

Geoffrey Brooke, Brotherhood of Arms (London 1941).

Patrick Butler, A Galloper At Ypres (London 1920).

P.B. Clayton, Plain Tales From Flanders (London 1929).

F.M. Crum, With Riflemen, Scouts and Snipers: from 1914 - 1919, (privately printed, Oxford 1921).

Harold Dearden, Medicine and Duty (London 1938).

Philip Gosse, Memoirs of a Camp Follower (London 1934).

Stephen Graham, A Private in the Guards (London 1919).

Robert Graves, Goodbye To All That (London 1929)

Graham Greenwell, An Infant In Arms (London 1935).

K.E. Luard, Unknown Warriors (London 1930).

Herbert Read, The Contrary Experience (London 1963).

a Rifleman, Four Years On The Western Front (London 1922).

A Temporary Gentleman In France: Home Letters from an officer in the New Army (London 1916).

Julian Tyndale-Biscoe, Gunner Subaltern 1914 -1918 (London 1971).

Denis Winter, Death's Men (London 1978).

Collected Letters

Gordon Callender Snr & Gordon Callender Jnr (eds), War in an open cockpit: the wartime letters of Captain Alvin Andrew Callender RAF (West Roxbury, Massachusetts, 1978).

Chapters From a Soldier's Life: the letters of Major F.C.G. Campbell M.C. (privately printed, 1941).

Christian Creswell Carver (privately printed, Birmingham 1920).

Stephen Gwynn (ed), The Anvil of War: Letters between F.S. Oliver and his brother 1914-18 (London 1936).

C.B. Purdom (ed), Everyman At War (London 1930).

Shaw & Sons, Pro Patria Mori: Records and Extracts from Correspondence of our employees serving their King and Country in the Great European War (London 1915).

Guy Slater (ed), My Warrior Sons: The Borton Family Diary 1914 - 1918 (London 1973).

R.R.R. Thornton (ed), Ivor Gurney: War Letters (London 1984).

Novels/ autobiography

Irene Rathbone, We That Were Young (London 1932)

Siegfried Sassoon, Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man (London 1928).

Critical studies

Cyril Falls, War Books: A Critical Guide (London 1930).

Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory (London 1975).

George Parfitt, Fiction of the First World War (London 1988).

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The books listed below are titles mentioned in the memoirs and letters listed above, which can be identified in the text as books read by officers. Those mentioned by Christian Creswell Carver are listed separately. The names and titles are transcribed verbatim.

#### OFFICERS' READING MATERIAL (newspapers)

La Vie Parisienne  
The Gypsy  
The Times Literary Review  
Punch  
The 5th Gloster Magazine (a trench paper)  
The Somewhere In France Gazette (produced by Ivor Gurney)  
Public Opinion  
Daily Mail  
The Times  
Poetry Review  
Blackwood's Magazine  
Bystander  
The Sketch  
London News  
Nash's Magazine  
The Windsor Magazine  
Strand  
Cornhill Magazine  
The Birmingham Daily Post  
Tatler  
Daily Graphic  
Pearson's Magazine  
The Weekly Times  
The Wipers Times (a trench paper)

#### OFFICERS' READING MATERIAL (books)

<u>authors</u> (if cited)	<u>titles</u> (if cited)
John Clare	
Masefield	<u>Good Friday</u>
	<u>By A Bierside</u>
Young	<u>Night Thoughts</u> (poems)
O. Henry	
	<u>Spoon River</u>
Lamartine	
de Vigny	
Hugo	
Leconte de Lisle	
R.E. Prothero	<u>The Pleasant Land of France</u>
	<u>Erewhon</u>

Dickens	<u>Brewhon Revisited</u>
Dickens	<u>Crime and Punishment</u>
Mary Kingsley	<u>Nicholas Nickleby</u>
	<u>The Pickwick Papers</u>
	<u>West Africa</u>
	<u>Essays of Lionel Johnston</u>
Keats	
Blake	<u>Evangeline</u>
Longfellow	poems
Nietzsche	<u>The Georgian Poetry Book</u>
Kipling	
Sudermann	<u>The Undying Past</u>
Masefield	<u>Philip the King</u>
Shakespeare	the History Plays
Neil Drinkwater	
Neil Munro	<u>John Silence</u>
Neil Munro	<u>Doom Castle</u>
Belloc	<u>Land &amp; Water</u>
Holbrook Jackson	<u>Southward Ho!</u>
J.E. Patterson	<u>Love Like The Sea</u>
Thomas Hardy	<u>The Changed Man</u>
D.F. Lawrence [sic]	<u>The White Peacock</u>
Chekov	
Carlyle	
Wordsworth	<u>The Prelude</u>
Sir Walter Scott	<u>Redgauntlet</u>
G.K. Chesterton	
Milton	
Tolstoy	<u>War &amp; Peace</u>
Rupert Brooke	
Tennyson	
Morris	
	<u>The White Devil</u>
	<u>The Alchemist</u>
Walt Whitman	
Plutarch	
St Matthew	
Henry James	
Cobbett	<u>Rural Rides</u>
Edward Thomas	
Omar Khayam	
Burns	
Wilde	
Binyon	
Robert Bridges	<u>Spirit of Man</u>
Morley Roberts	
Lascelles Abercrombie	
Shelley	
Browning	
	<u>Supplement to the Golden Treasury</u>

Marcel Claudel  
 Noyes  
 Borrow  
 A.E. Houseman  
 Yeats  
 Synge  
 Wilfred Gibson  
 Villon  
 Tomlinson

Wild Vales  
A Shropshire Lad

Herrick  
 George Butterworth  
 Thackeray  
 W.H. Davies  
 R.L. Stevenson

Esmond  
Travels With A Donkey

Alan Seeger  
 Ralph Hodgson  
 Sorley  
 Katherine Tynan  
 Nicholson  
 Siegfried Sassoon  
 John Freeman  
 F.W. Harvey  
 Conan Doyle  
 Walpole  
 G.A. Birmingham  
 Snaith  
 Vachell

Robinson Crusoe

Maud Dyer

Maradick at Forty  
The Bad Times  
Fortune  
Quinneys  
Villette  
Judgement of the Sword  
Under the Greenwood Tree  
Jude the Obscure  
The Return of the Native

#### READING MATERIAL OF CHRISTIAN CRESWELL CARVER (books)

Barry Pain  
 Vachell  
  
 Ole Lukoie  
 G.A. Birmingham  
  
 Somerville & Ross

The One Before  
The Other Side  
The New Arabian Nights  
The Great Tab Dope  
Gossamer  
Something Fresh  
Minnie's Bishop  
In Mr Knox's Country  
Home Life In France  
J'Accuse  
Book of France  
Some Experiences of an Irish R.M.  
Slipper's ABC of Fox-Hunting

C.G.D. Roberts	<u>Tommy &amp; Co.</u>
Bartimeus	<u>Salt of the Sea</u>
Bartimeus	<u>Feet of the Furtive</u>
	<u>A Tall Ship</u>
	<u>Naval Occasions</u>
	<u>Quinneys</u>
	<u>Hoof and Claw</u>
C.G.D. Roberts	<u>Neighbours Unknown</u>
W. Pett Ridge	<u>Daddy Longlegs</u>
	<u>Freckles</u>
	<u>Prophets, Priests and Kings</u>
Edgar Jepson	<u>Pollyooly</u>
	<u>In Brief Authority</u>
Kipling	<u>Puck of Pook's Hill</u>
Kipling	<u>Captains Courageous</u>
Kipling	<u>The Light That Failed</u>
Kipling	<u>Wee Willie Winkie</u>
	<u>Dear Enemy</u>
	<u>Clementina Wing</u>
Ian Hay	<u>A Man's Man</u>
Ian Hay	<u>Happy Go Lucky</u>
	<u>Because of Jane</u>
Kipling	<u>From Sea To Sea</u>
Farnoll	<u>Chronicles of the Imp</u>
	<u>Money Moon</u>
O. Henry	<u>Whirligigs</u>
O. Henry	<u>The Four Million</u>
O. Henry	<u>Heart of the West</u>
F.H. Burnett	<u>T. Tembaron</u>
R.L. Stevenson	<u>New Arabian Nights</u>
	<u>Sentimental Bloke</u>
Jack London	<u>The Nightborn</u>
H. de Vere Stacpoole	<u>The Night of Stars</u>
H. de Vere Stacpoole	<u>The Pool of Silence</u>
H. de Vere Stacpoole	<u>The Blue Lagoon</u>
Matthew Arnold	
Browning	
	<u>The School For Saints</u>
	<u>John Verney</u>
	<u>The Hill</u>
Kipling	<u>Rewards and Fairies</u>
	<u>Bishop Blougram's Apology</u>
	<u>Miss Esperance and Miss Wycherly</u>
	<u>Mr Britling Sees It Through</u>
Wells	<u>Kipps</u>
Wells	<u>Manalive</u>
G.K. Chesterton	<u>The Research Magnificent</u>
Wells	<u>Raffles</u>
Edgar Allan Poe	<u>The Bells</u>
Kipling	<u>Kim</u>
(school magazine)	<u>Naish Notes</u>



	<u>A Silent Witness</u>
	<u>Europe Unbound</u>
	<u>A Lame Dog's Diary</u>
	<u>The Rocks of Valpre</u>
Kipling	<u>A Diversity of Creatures</u>
	<u>The Expensive Miss Ducane</u>
Scott	<u>Quentin Durward</u>
	<u>Peter and Jane</u>
Shakespeare	
Scott	<u>Ivanhoe</u>
	<u>The Duchess of Wrexhe</u>
G.K. Chesterton	<u>All Things Considered</u>
	<u>The Student in Arms</u>
John Buchan	<u>Salute To Adventurers</u>
John Buchan	<u>The Thirty-Nine Steps</u>
John Buchan	<u>Greenmantle</u>
Erskine Childers	<u>The Riddle of the Sands</u>
Oscar Wilde	<u>De Profundis</u>
Maurice Hewlett	
G.F.	<u>For This I Had Borne Him</u>

\* \* \* \* \*

Timescale of The Thirty-Nine Steps

<u>Days</u>	<u>Events</u>	<u>Chapters</u>
(1)	City - flat - Café Royal - music hall - flat - meets Scudder & takes him in.	(1)
(2)	flat - City - flat - 'murder' room (Scudder day 2)	
(3)	inquest (Scudder day 3)	
(4)	Scudder restless (Scudder day 4)	
(5)	dinner with mining engineer - death of Scudder (Scudder day 5)	
<hr/>		
(6)	makes plans - finds notebook - milkman - St Pancras	(2)
<hr/>		
	Galloway - herd's cottage	(3)
(7)	east-bound train - escape from train - aeroplane - inn-keeper	
(8)	deciphers code & reads Scudder's book - two men in car	
<hr/>		
(9)	escapes from inn - drives through telegram village - crashes car - Sir Harry's house - Masonic Hall - house	(4)
(10)	leaves house on bicycle	
<hr/>		
	aeroplane chases again - roadman disguise - three men in car - Jopley hijacking	(5)
<hr/>		
(11)	slept on hillside - beaters closing in - old gentleman in house - explodes cupboard - on dovecot - sees airfield - escape from house	(6)

<u>Days</u>	<u>Events</u>	<u>Chapters</u>
-------------	---------------	-----------------

(12)	herd's cottage - slept under rock	(7)
------	-----------------------------------	-----

(13)	roadman's cottage - ill 'for better part of ten days' (p.86) - leaves on June 12 (p.87)	
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(21)	Hislop - Moffat station	
------	-------------------------	--

(22)	train to Artinswell - Bullivant - death of Karolides (on June 13, as Bullivant cites June 15 as being 'the day after tomorrow', p.94)	
------	---	--

(23)	drove to London - met Macgillivray - Jopley - Queen Anne's Gate - false First Sea Lord	(8)
------	--	-----

	searching for the thirty nine steps (night)	(9)
--	---	-----

(24)	inspector of coastguards - driving to Kent - Griffin Hotel	
------	--	--

(25)	observing Trafalgar Lodge - fishing - the Ariadne - tennis match - game of bridge - capture of the enemy	(10)
------	--	------

\* \* \* \* \*

## NARRATIVE TYPES

Gerard Genette's focalisations

non-focalised narrative: an omniscient narrator, who knows and/or says more than any of the characters know or say.

fixed internal focalisation: first person narrator, one focus character who is the narrator, one point of view.

variable internal focalisation: one narrator, but more than one focus character, events being seen through the eyes of more than one character.

multiple internal focalisation: most commonly used in the epistolary novel, where one event is seen from many viewpoints.

external focalisation: where the narrator tells the reader less than what the characters know, where the reader is unclear about what is going on.

When these different focalisations are used in sequence in a narrative, Genette called this alteration, the overlaying of focalisations over a 'base' type.

Narratorial types

I developed these types from a prolonged analysis of the narrative structure of John Buchan's Richard Hannay novels.

type A: (this corresponds with Genette's fixed internal focalisation) first person narration, by an 'I' character, and, for example, constitutes 95% of The thirty Nine Steps.

type B: where in type A Hannay (as the narrator) was recording the movement of the plot in his own actions, type B is where he records the actions of other characters, who are of primary importance in the plot's development.

type C: when Hannay records the dialogue of other characters, rather than just reportage of their actions, and acts as the middleman between them and the reader.

type AB: in the above three types, Hannay has been an active participant in the action; i.e., he is present. With type AB he is absent, but remains the narrator, describing the actions and dialogue of characters who are then carrying the plot's movement.

type D: again, where Hannay is absent from the scene, but where he does not play an overt part in the narration, allowing other characters to narrate it in their own type A narration. Since these types are named from Hannay's point of view of the process of narration, this type is a separate category from the original type A.

type E: authorial, omniscient narration, where Hannay is seen as a third person character by the reader, and has no special advantage of narration over other characters.

\* \* \* \* \*

## SUMMARY

The Thirty-Nine Steps - 10 chapters

type A - chapters 2 - 10, and the remainder of the book except;  
type B - 2 passages  
type C - 2 passages

Greenmantle - 22 chapters

type A - chapters 4,5,7,10,11,14,16,17,18,21 and 22, and the  
remainder of the book, except;  
type B - chapter 20  
5 passages  
type C - 12 passages

Mr Standfast - 22 chapters

type A - chapters 1,2,5,6,7,8,9,10,19 and 22, and the  
remainder of the book except;  
type B - 7 passages  
type C - 14 passages  
type AB - chapter 18  
type D - 1 passage  
type E - 1 passage

The Three Hostages - 21 chapters

type A - chapters 5,6,8,9,13,16,20 and 21, and the remainder  
of the book, except;  
type B - 6 passages  
type C - 13 passages  
type AB - chapters 15 and 17  
2 passages

The Island of Sheep - 16 chapters

type A - chapters 1,2,4,10,12 and 16, and the remainder of  
the book, except;  
type B - 5 passages  
type C - 13 passages  
type AB - chapters 13 and 14  
type D - 1 passage

The Thirty-Nine Steps (London 1915, 1956 Penguin)

## Chapter (1)

All type A, apart from; p.16, para 2 - p.17, para 1	(type B)
p.17, para 2 - p.22, para 1	(type C)
p.24, paras 2 - 3	(type B)

Chapters (2) - (10) inclusive	(type A)
-------------------------------	----------

Greenmantle (London 1916, 1956 Penguin)

## Chapter (1)

All type A, apart from; p.17, para 1	(type B)
p.17, para 2 - p.18, para 1	(type C)
p.19, para 3	(type C)
p.21, para 2	(type C)

## Chapter (2)

All type A, apart from; p.22, para 1 - p.23, para 1	(type B)
p.24, para 2 - p.26, para 1	(type C)

## Chapter (3)

All type A, apart from; p.37, para 3 - p.38, para 1	(type B)
p.42, para 2 - p.43, para 1	(type C)

## Chapter (4)

All type A

## Chapter (5)

All type A

## Chapter (6)

All type A, apart from; p.74, paras 1 - 2	(type B)
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## Chapter (7)

All type A

## Chapter (8)

All type A, apart from; p.101, para 5 - p.107, para 1	(type B)
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Chapter (9)

All type A, apart from; p.114, para 3 - p.119, para 1 (type C)

Chapter (10)

All type A

Chapter (11)

All type A

Chapter (12)

All type A, apart from; p.144, para 3 - p.145, para 2 (type C)  
p.145, para 4 - p.149, para 1 (type C)

Chapter (13)

All type A, apart from; p.154, para 4 - p.159, para 2 (type C)

Chapter (14)

All type A

Chapter (15)

All type A, apart from; p.182, para 5 - p.183, para 2 (type B)  
p.183, para 3 - p.186, para 1 (type C)

Chapter (16)

All type A

Chapter (17)

All type A

Chapter (18)

All type A

Chapter (19)

All type A, apart from; p.223, para 4 - p.225, para 2 (type B)  
p.225, para 3 (type C)

Chapter (20)

All type B



APPENDIX 6

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Chapter (21)

All type A

Chapter (22)

All type A

Mr Standfast (London 1919, 1956 Penguin)

Chapter (1)

All type A

Chapter (2)

All type A

Chapter (3)

All type A, apart from; p.50, para 3 - p.51, para 3	(type C)
p.51, para 4 - p.52, para 2	(type B)
p.52, para 3 - p.55, para 2	(type C)
p.55, para 3	(type B)
p.57, para 1 - p.58, para 2	(type C)

Chapter (4)

All type A, apart from; p.62, para 1	(type B)
p.62, para 1 - p.64, para 2	(type C)

Chapter (5)

All type A

Chapter (6)

All type A

Chapter (7)

All type A

Chapter (8)

All type A

Chapter (9)

All type A

## Chapter (10)

All type A

## Chapter (11)

All type A, apart from; p.167, para 2 (type B)  
p.167, para 3 (type D)

## Chapter (12)

All type A, apart from; p.186, para 3 (type B)  
p.186, para 3 - p.189, para 1 (type B)  
p.189, paras 2 - 3 (type C)

## Chapter (13)

All type A, apart from; p.201, para 3 - p.203, para 2 (type B)

## Chapter (14)

All type A, apart from; p.213, para 2 - p.214, para 2 (type C)  
p.214, para 3 - p.216, para 2 (type B)  
p.216, para 3 - p.219, para 2 (type C)  
p.225, para 2 - p.227, para 2 (type C)

## Chapter (15)

All type A, apart from; p.232, para 1 - p.233, para 2 (type E)  
p.247, para 3 (type C)

## Chapter (16)

All type A, apart from; p.252, para 2 - p.256, para 3 (type C)

## Chapter (17)

All type A, apart from; p.268, para 2 (type C)

## Chapter (18)

All type AB

## Chapter (19)

All type A

## Chapter (20)

All type A, apart from; p.310, para 1 - p.311, para 2 (type C)

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Chapter (21)

All type A, apart from; p.232, para 2 (type C)  
p.235, paras 2 - 4 (type C)

Chapter (22)

All type A

The Three Hostages (London 1923, 1956 Penguin)

Chapter (1)

All type A, apart from; p.12, para 1 - p.15, para 1 (type C)

Chapter (2)

All type A, apart from; p.18, para 1 - p.20, para 2 (type C)  
p.23, para 1 (type B)  
p.23, para 2 (type C)  
p.23, para 3 - p.24, para 1 (type B)  
p.24, para 2 - p.28, para 1 (type C)

Chapter (3)

All type A, apart from; p.37, para 2 - p.38, para 1 (type C)

Chapter (4)

All type A, apart from; p.45, para 4 - p.47, para 2 (type B)  
p.47, para 2 - p.49, para 1 (type C)  
p.54, para 3 - p.55, para 3 (type C)

Chapter (5)

All type A

Chapter (6)

All type A

Chapter (7)

All type A, apart from; p.87, para 4 - p.88, para 1 (type B)

Chapter (8)

All type A

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Chapter (9)

All type A

Chapter (10)

All type A, apart from; p.127, para 1 - p.130, para 3 (type C)  
p.133, para 3 - p.135, para 3 (type C)

Chapter (11)

All type A, apart from; p.142, para 2 - p.143, para 3 (type B)  
p.144, para 1 (type C)

Chapter (12)

All type A, apart from; p.152, para 1 - p.153, para 1 (type B)

Chapter (13)

All type A

Chapter (14)

All type A, apart from; p.181, para 2 - p.183, para 1 (type C)  
p.187, para 2 - p.189, para 2 (type C)

Chapter (15)

All type AB

Chapter (16)

All type A

Chapter (17)

All type AB

Chapter (18)

All type A, apart from; p.224, para 5 - p.227 (type AB)

Chapter (19)

All type A, apart from; p.236, para 1 - p.237, para 1 (type AB)  
p.251, para 2 (type C)

Chapter (20)

All type A

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Chapter (21)

All type A

The Island of Sheep (London 1936, 1956 Penguin)

Chapter (1)

All type A

Chapter (2)

All type A

Chapter (3)

All type A, apart from; p.37, para 1 - p.47, para 3 (type C)

Chapter (4)

All type A

Chapter (5)

All type A, apart from; p.68, para 2 - p.70, para 3 (type C)  
p.74, para 1 - p.75, para 1 (type B)  
p.76, para 1 - p.79, para 1 (type B)  
p.79, para 3 (type C)

Chapter (6)

All type A, apart from; p.84, para 1 - p.87, para 2 (type C)  
p.91, para 2 (type B)  
p.91, para 3 (type C)  
p.92, para 1 - p.93, para 2 (type C)  
p.94, para 4 - p.95, para 1 (type C)  
p.95, para 3 - p.98, para 1 (type C)

Chapter (7)

All type A, apart from; p.104, para 2 - p.107, para 2 (type C)

Chapter (8)

All type A, apart from; p.119, para 2 (type B)  
p.119, para 3 - p.121, para 4 (type C)  
p.122, para 1 - p.123, para 2 (type B)

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Chapter (9)

All type A, apart from; p.128, para 3 - to end chapter (type D)

Chapter (10)

All type A

Chapter (11)

All type A, apart from; p.155, para 3 - p.164, para 1 (type C)  
p.166, para 4 - p.167, para 3 (type C)

Chapter (12)

All type A

Chapter (13)

All type AB

Chapter (14)

All type AB

Chapter (15)

All type A, apart from; p.229, para 5 - p.230, para 1 (type C)

Chapter (16)

All type A

\* \* \* \* \*

Buchan and anti-Semitism in The Thirty-Nine Steps

(All quotations are from the 1956 Penguin edition of The Thirty-Nine Steps, unless otherwise indicated.)

The vital passage of Scudder's dialogue in chapter 1 of The Thirty-Nine Steps, giving the clues to his personality to supplement the impressions garnered from his colourful language, must be one of the most memorable in Buchan's fiction, placed as it is in the initial chapter of Buchan's most famous and probably most widely read novel. It is also the most notorious passage in Buchan's fiction, from which the myth of Buchan's anti-Semitism has sprung. This fallacy, apart from being refuted by evidence from Buchan's personal life, his friendships with Jews, his support for the Zionist movement for a special Jewish homeland, and the Jewish peoples' own acceptance and approval in their inscription of his name in the Golden Book of Israel (see Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan [London 1965, OUP 1985], p.317) can be comprehensively examined and dismissed by a close reading of the offending passage and its narrative patterns.

Buchan created Scudder in The Thirty-Nine Steps as an over-excited and rather frightened American spy, who had bitten off rather more than he could chew in international intrigue. To attribute the now notorious anti-Semitic references made by Scudder to Hannay (in a state of panic and self-important exaggeration), as opinions held by the author, is merely proof

of not reading this passage properly. The statements made by Scudder, especially the well-reported phrase 'a little white-faced Jew in a bathchair with an eye like a rattlesnake' (p.17) are in type C narration (see Appendix 5); that is, they are in Scudder's direct speech. This precludes the possibility of, for example, Hannay adding or substituting his own opinions on the subject of Jews by his reporting Scudder's comments to the reader in type B narration.

Hannay is also represented as the level-headed man in this passage, rather sceptical of Scudder's theories; 'I could not help saying that his Jew-anarchists seemed to have got left behind a little' (p.17), by which means Buchan reduces Scudder and his opinions to the level of a less than sympathetic character. Should the reader find it completely impossible not to identify Buchan with his created narrator Hannay, Scudder is deliberately created even further away, employing several distinct separating devices.

Hannay's reportage of Scudder's story is littered with phrases like 'I am giving you what he told me' (p.16), 'I gathered that' (p.16), 'He told me some queer things' (p.16), 'It was the wildest sort of narrative' (p.21), and so on, which must make it plain, to even the fastest-skimming reader that this is someone else's story and words, and that they are not Hannay's. Three chapters later, Hannay has discovered that Scudder's story was in fact a complete fabrication.



The little man had told me a pack of lies. All his yarns about the Balkans and the Jew-Anarchists and the Foreign Office conference were eye-wash.

(p. 46)

In chapter 7, the final judgement on Scudder's story is made by the Permanent Secretary at the Foreign Office.

...it reads like some wild melodrama. If only I had more confidence in Scudder's judgement. The trouble about him was that he was too romantic. He had the artistic temperament, and wanted a story to be better than God meant it to be. He had a lot of odd biases, too. Jews, for example, made him see red. Jews and the high finance.

(p. 94)

For Buchan to have an authoritative character refer to anti-Semitism as an 'odd bias' in the atmosphere of 1915 was either remarkable restraint in the face of prevailing popular opinion, which encouraged the embroidering of myths that were popular, or a firm statement of his own beliefs, regardless of possible unpopularity or recrimination. The narrative patterns of The Thirty-Nine Steps preclude Scudder's words and Scudder's 'odd biases' from being taken as a statement of Buchan's own beliefs, and the narration is written most carefully to make this clear.

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This is a summary of Buchan's novels by the criteria of whether the works are narrated in the first or third person, and if in the first person, by which narrator; and by whether a historical or a contemporary period is the setting.

DATE	TITLE	NARRATION	NARRATOR	PERIOD
1895	<u>Sir Quixote of the Moors</u>	First	de Rohaine	Hist
1898	<u>John Burnet of Barns</u>	First	John Burnet	Hist
1899	<u>A Lost Lady of Old Years</u>	Third	-	Hist
1900	<u>The Half-Hearted</u>	Third	-	Contemp
1910	<u>Prester John</u>	First	Crawfurd	Contemp
1916 (1913)	<u>The Power-House</u>	First	Leithen	Contemp
1915 (1914)	<u>The Thirty-Nine Steps</u>	First	Hannay	Contemp
1915	<u>Salute to Adventurers</u>	First	Andrew Garvald	Hist
1916	<u>Greenmantle</u>	First	Hannay	Contemp
1919	<u>Mr Standfast</u>	First	Hannay	Contemp
1922	<u>Huntingtower</u>	Third	-	Contemp
1923	<u>Midwinter</u>	Third	-	Hist
1924	<u>The Three Hostages</u>	First	Hannay	Contemp
1925	<u>John Macnab</u>	Third	-	Contemp
1926	<u>The Dancing Floor</u>	First	Leithen	Contemp
1927	<u>Witch Wood</u>	Third	-	Hist
1929	<u>The Courts of the Morning</u>	Third	-	Contemp
1930	<u>Castle Gay</u>	Third	-	Contemp
1931	<u>The Blanket of the Dark</u>	Third	-	Hist
1933	<u>A Prince of the Captivity</u>	Third	-	Contemp
1934	<u>The Free Fishers</u>	Third	-	Hist
1935	<u>The House of the Four Winds</u>	Third	-	Contemp

1936	<u>The Island of Sheep</u>	First	Hannay	Contemp
1941	<u>Sick Heart River</u>	Third	-	Contemp

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Here the fiction of John Buchan is divided up into the stories and novels set in recognisably historical times, and that fiction which is set in a time contemporary to Buchan at the time of writing.

#### HISTORICAL

Sir Quixote of the Moors (1895) - 1688-9

'At the Rising of the Waters' (1897) - 1880

'The Moor Song' (1897) - 1800s

John Burnet of Barns (1898) - 1688-9

'The Earlier Affection' (1899) - 1745

A Lost Lady of Old Years (1899) - 1745

'The Outgoing of the Tide' (1902) - 1670s

'The Company of the Marjolaine' (1909) - 1785

Prester John (1910) - 1900s

'The Lemnian' (1911) - 480 BC

'The Riding of Ninemileburn' (1912) - 1500s

Salute to Adventurers (1915) - 1750s

The Path of the King (1921) - 800-1860s

Midwinter (1923) - 1745

Witch Wood (1927) - 1640s

The Blanket of the Dark (1931) - 1500s

'The Strange Adventure of Mr Andrew Hawthorne' (1932) - 1750s

The Free Fishers (1934) - the Regency

#### CONTEMPORARY

'Sentimental Travelling' (1894)

'On Cademuir Hill' (1894)

'Night on the Heather' (1895)

'A Captain of Salvation' (1896)

'A Journey of Little Profit' (1896)

'Politics and the Mayfly' (1896)

'Afternoon' (1896)

'An Individualist' (1896)

'At the Article of Death' (1897)

'Prester John' (1897)

'A Reputation' (1898) -----

'No-Man's Land' (1899)

'The Black Fishers' (1899)

'Summer Weather' (1899) -----

(These two stories are the first examples of Buchan's country house party fiction, which manifests itself as a recognisably new phase in Buchan's work with 'Comedy in the Full Moon' below.)

'The Oasis in the Snow' (1899)

'The Herd of Standlan' (1899)

'Streams of Water in the South' (1899)

-----  
'Comedy in the Full Moon' (1899)

'The Far Islands' (1899)

The Half-Hearted (1900)

'The Watcher by the Threshold' (1900)

'Fountainblue' (1901)

'The Kings of Orion' (1906)

A Lodge in the Wilderness (1906)

'A Lucid Interval' (1910)

'Space' (1911)

'The Green Glen' (1912)

'The Grove of Ashtaroth' (1912)

The Power-House (1913)

'Basilissa' (1914)

The Thirty-Nine Steps (1915)

Greenmantle (1916)

'The King of Ypres' (1918)

Mr Standfast (1919)

'Fullcircle' (1920)

Huntingtower (1922)

The Three Hostages (1924)

John Macnab (1925)

The Dancing Floor (1926)

'The Green Wildebeeste' (1927)

'The Loathly Opposite' (1927)

'Ship to Tarshish' (1927)

'Tendebant Manus' (1927)

'The Magic Walking Stick' (1927) (a children's story)

'The Last Crusade' (1928)

'Sing a Song of Sixpence' (1928)

'The Wind in the Portico' (1928)

'The Frying-pan and the Fire' (1928)

'Skule Skerry' (1928)

'Dr Lartius' (1928)

The Courts of the Morning (1929)

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Castle Gay (1930)

The Gap in the Curtain (1932)

'Ho! The Merry Masons' (1933)

A Prince of the Captivity (1933)

The Magic Walking Stick (1934) (a children's novel)

The House of the Four Winds (1935)

The Island of Sheep (1936)

Sick Heart River (1941)

The Long Traverse (1941) (a children's novel)

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I have constructed this comprehensive listing of the fiction of John Buchan - novels and short stories - arranged by the date of their first publication in the UK, whether in magazine or book form. Previous lists of Buchan's publications have proved inadequate for my purposes, and in using the very reliable Blanchard bibliography, The First Editions of John Buchan (1981), I was able to research and check the publishing details for each piece of fiction that Buchan published.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Publisher</u>
Oct 1894	'Sentimental Travelling'	<u>Macmillan's Magazine</u>
Dec 1894	'On Cademuir Hill'	<u>Glasgow University Magazine</u>
Sept 1895	'Night On The Heather'	<u>Macmillan's Magazine</u>
Oct 1895	<u>Sir Quixote of the Moors</u>	T. Fisher Unwin
Jan 1896	'A Captain of Salvation'	<u>The Yellow Book</u>
Apr 1896	'A Journey of Little Profit'	<u>The Yellow Book</u>
May 1896	'Politics and The Mayfly'	<u>Chambers' Journal</u>
Sept 1896	'Afternoon'	<u>Scholar Gypsies</u>
Sept 1896	'An Individualist'	<u>Scholar Gypsies</u>
Jan 1897	'At The Article of Death'	<u>The Yellow Book</u>
Mar 1897	'At The Rising of the Waters'	<u>Chambers' Journal</u>
June 1897	'Prester John'	<u>Chambers' Journal</u>
July 1897	'The Song of the Moor'	<u>Macmillan's Magazine</u>
Feb 1898	'A Reputation'	<u>Macmillan's Magazine</u>
June 1898	<u>John Burnet of Barns</u>	John Lane
Jan 1899	'No-Man's Land'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
Mar 1899	'The Earlier Affection'	<u>Grey Weather</u>
Mar 1899	'The Black Fishers'	<u>Grey Weather</u>
Mar 1899	'Summer Weather'	<u>Grey Weather</u>
Mar 1899	'The Oasis In The Snow'	<u>Grey Weather</u>



Mar 1899	'The Herd of Standlan'	<u>Grey Weather</u>
Mar 1899	'Streams of Water in the South'	<u>Grey Weather</u>
Mar 1899	'Comedy in the Full Moon'	<u>Grey Weather</u>
Sept 1899	<u>A Lost Lady Of Old Years</u>	John Lane
Nov 1899	'The Far Islands'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
Sept 1900	<u>The Half-Hearted</u>	Isbister
Dec 1900	'The Watcher By The Threshold'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
Aug 1901	'Fountainblue'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
Jan 1902	'The Outgoing of the Tide'	<u>The Atlantic Monthly</u>
Jan 1906	'The Kings of Orion'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
Nov 1906	<u>A Lodge in the Wilderness</u>	Blackwood & Sons
Feb 1909	'The Company of the Marjolaine'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
Feb 1910	'A Lucid Interval'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
Aug 1910	<u>Prestor John</u>	Nelson's
Jan 1911	'The Lemnian'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
May 1911	'Space'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
Jan 1912	'The Green Glen'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
Apr 1912	'The Riding of Ninemileburn'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
Apr 1912	'The Grove of Ashtaroth'	<u>The Moon Endureth</u>
Dec 1913	'Divus Johnston'	<u>The Golden Hynde</u>
Dec 1913	<u>The Power-House</u>	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
Apr 1914	'Basilissa'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
June-July 1915	<u>The Thirty-Nine Steps</u>	<u>The All-Story Weekly</u>
July 1915	<u>Salute to Adventurers</u>	Nelson's
July-Nov 1916	<u>Greenmantle</u>	<u>Land and Water</u>
Sept 1918	'The King of Ypres' <u>The Watcher By The Threshold</u>	(US)

Jan-Feb 1919	<u>Mr Standfast</u>	<u>The Popular Magazine</u>
Jan 1920	'Fullcircle'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
Oct 1920-1921	<u>The Path of the King</u>	<u>Outward Bound</u>
Aug-Sept 1921	<u>Huntingtower</u>	<u>The Popular Magazine</u>
Aug 1923	<u>Midwinter</u>	Hodder & Stoughton
Apr 1924	<u>The Three Hostages</u>	<u>The London Graphic</u>
Dec 1924-July 1925	<u>John Macnab</u>	<u>Chambers' Journal</u>
May-June 1926	<u>The Dancing Floor</u>	<u>The Popular Magazine</u>
Jan-July 1927	<u>Witch Wood</u>	<u>The British Weekly</u>
Sept 1927	'The Green Wildebeeste'	<u>London Pall Mall Magazine</u>
Sept 1927	'The Magic Walking Stick'	<u>Sails of Gold</u>
Oct 1927	'The Loathly Opposite'	<u>London Pall Mall Magazine</u>
Nov 1927	'Ship To Tarshish'	<u>London Pall Mall Magazine</u>
Dec 1927	'Tendebant Manus'	<u>London Pall Mall Magazine</u>
Jan 1928	'The Last Crusade'	<u>London Pall Mall Magazine</u>
Feb 1928	'Sing a Song of Sixpence'	<u>London Pall Mall Magazine</u>
Mar 1928	'The Wind in the Portico'	<u>London Pall Mall Magazine</u>
Apr 1928	'The Frying-Pan & the Fire'	<u>London Pall Mall Magazine</u>
May 1928	'Skule Skerry'	<u>London Pall Mall Magazine</u>
July 1928	'Dr Lartius'	<u>The Runagates Club</u>
Sept 1929	<u>The Courts of the Morning</u>	Hodder & Stoughton
July 1930	<u>Castle Gay</u>	Hodder & Stoughton
July 1931	<u>The Blanket of the Dark</u>	Hodder & Stoughton
July 1932	<u>The Gap in the Curtain</u>	Hodder & Stoughton
Oct 1932	<u>The Magic Walking-Stick</u>	Hodder & Stoughton

Nov	1932	'The Strange Adventure of Mr Andrew Hawthorne'	<u>The Silver Ship</u>
July	1933	<u>A Prince of the Captivity</u>	Hodder & Stoughton
	1933	'Ho! The Merry Masons'	<u>'Help Yourself' Annual</u>
June	1934	<u>The Free Fishers</u>	Hodder & Stoughton
July	1935	<u>The House of the Four Winds</u>	Hodder & Stoughton
July	1936	<u>The Island of Sheep</u>	Hodder & Stoughton
Apr	1941	<u>Sick Heart River</u>	Hodder & Stoughton
Nov	1941	<u>The Long Traverse</u>	Hodder & Stoughton

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This is a comprehensive list of the short stories of John Buchan arranged in order of their first publication in the UK, whether in magazine or book form. Where a story makes its first appearance in a collection, the title of that collection is listed under publisher. Again, this is compiled from my original work from The First Editions of John Buchan (1981), by Robert Blanchard.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Publisher</u>
Oct 1894	'Sentimental Travelling'	<u>Macmillan's Magazine</u> vol 70, no.420, pp.445-451 <u>Scholar Gypsies</u> (London 1896), pp.77-97
Dec 1894	'On Cademuir Hill'	<u>Glasgow University Magazine</u> vol 7, no.7, pp.122-124 <u>Scholar Gypsies</u> (London 1896), pp.145-155
Sept 1895	'Night On The Heather'	<u>Macmillan's Magazine</u> vol 72, no.431, pp.356-361 <u>Scholar Gypsies</u> (London 1896), pp.129-144
Jan 1896	'A Captain of Salvation'	<u>The Yellow Book</u> vol 8, pp.143-158.
Apr 1896	'A Journey of Little Profit'	<u>The Yellow Book</u> vol 9, pp.189-201 <u>Grey Weather</u> (London 1899), pp.77-97
May 1896	'Politics and the Mayfly'	<u>Chambers' Journal</u> vol 13, no.645, pp.301-304 <u>Grey Weather</u> (London 1899), pp.39-52
Sept 1896	'Afternoon'	<u>Scholar Gypsies</u> (London 1896), pp.113-127
Sept 1896	'An Individualist'	<u>Scholar Gypsies</u> (London 1896), pp.157-169
Jan 1897	'At The Article of Death'	<u>The Yellow Book</u> vol 12, pp.273-280 <u>Grey Weather</u> (London 1899), pp.25-36

- Mar 1897 'At The Rising of the Waters' Chambers' Journal  
vol 14, no.689, pp.173-176  
Grey Weather  
(London 1899), pp.101-118
- June 1897 'Prester John' Chambers' Journal  
vol 14, no.701, pp.362-365  
Grey Weather  
(London 1899), pp.3-21
- July 1897 'The Song of the Moor'  
'The Moor Song' Macmillan's Magazine  
vol 76, no.453, pp.215-220  
Grey Weather  
(London 1899), pp.246-264
- Feb 1898 'A Reputation' Macmillan's Magazine  
vol 77, no.460, pp.294-300  
Grey Weather  
(London 1899), pp.55-74
- Jan 1899 'No-Man's Land' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 165, no.999, pp.1-36  
The Watcher By The Threshold  
(London 1902, 1915 Blackwood), pp.3-101
- Mar 1899 'The Earlier Affection' Grey Weather  
(London 1899), pp.121-145
- Mar 1899 'The Black Fishers' Grey Weather  
(London 1899), pp.149-156
- Mar 1899 'Summer Weather' Grey Weather  
(London 1899), pp.159-163
- Mar 1899 'The Oasis In The Snow' Grey Weather  
(London 1899), pp.177-190
- Mar 1899 'The Herd of Standlan' Grey Weather  
(London 1899), pp.193-216
- Mar 1899 'Streams of Water in the South' Grey Weather  
(London 1899), pp.219-244
- Mar 1899 'Comedy in the Full Moon' Grey Weather  
(London 1899), pp.267-297
- Nov 1899 'The Far Islands' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 166, no.1009, pp.604-619  
The Watcher By The Threshold  
(London 1902, 1915 Blackwood), pp.104-145

- Dec 1900 'The Watcher By The Threshold' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 168, no.1022, pp.817-845  
The Watcher By The Threshold  
(London 1902, 1915 Blackwood), pp.149-223
- Aug 1901 'Fountainblue' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 170, no.1030, pp.218-242  
The Watcher By The Threshold  
(London 1902, 1915 Blackwood), pp.267-329
- Jan 1902 'The Outgoing of the Tide' The Atlantic Monthly  
vol 89, no.801, pp.17-27  
The Watcher By The Threshold  
(London 1902, 1915 Blackwood), pp.227-264
- Jan 1906 'The Kings of Orion' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 179, no.1083, pp.101-117  
The Moon Endureth  
(London 1912, 1923 Nelson), pp.253-286
- Feb 1909 'The Company of the Marjolaine' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 185, no.1120, pp.151-170  
The Moon Endureth  
(London 1912, 1923 Nelson), pp.15-51
- Feb 1910 'A Lucid Interval' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 187, no.1133, pp.165-186  
The Moon Endureth  
(London 1912, 1923 Nelson), pp.57-97
- Jan 1911 'The Lemmian' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 189, no.1143, pp.1-13  
The Moon Endureth  
(London 1912, 1923 Nelson), pp.103-126
- May 1911 'Space' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 189, no.1147, pp.600-613  
The Moon Endureth  
(London 1912, 1923 Nelson), pp.133-159
- Jan 1912 'The Green Glen' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 191, no.1155, pp.39-56  
The Moon Endureth  
(London 1912, 1923 Nelson), pp.293-327
- Apr 1912 'The Riding of Ninemileburn' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 191, no.1158, pp.486-494  
The Moon Endureth  
(London 1912, 1923 Nelson), pp.229-245

- Apr 1912 'The Grove of Ashtaroth' The Moon Endureth  
(London 1912, 1923 Nelson), pp.189-224
- Dec 1913 'Divus Johnston' The Golden Hynde  
no. 1, pp.3-11  
The Runagates Club  
(London 1928, 1930 Nelson), pp.143-155
- Apr 1914 'Basilissa' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 195, no.1182, pp.477-490
- Sept 1918 'The King of Ypres' The Watcher By The Threshold  
(New York 1918) pp.301-319.
- Jan 1920 'Fullcircle' Blackwood's Magazine  
vol 207, no.1251, pp.70-82  
The Runagates Club  
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- 1933 'Ho! The Merry Masons' 'Help Yourself' Annual  
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This is a list of the novels of John Buchan: in order of their first publication in the UK, in magazine and book form, again taken from my original research on the publication details of Buchan's fiction. (The Path of the King (1921) is here considered to be a novel, rather than a collection of short stories, as the stories are thematically linked and were never published separately.)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Publisher</u>
Oct 1895	<u>Sir Quixote of the Moors</u>	T. Fisher Unwin
June 1896	<u>John Burnet of Barns</u>	John Lane
Sept 20 1899	<u>A Lost Lady of Old Years</u>	John Lane
Sept 1900	<u>The Half-Hearted</u>	Isbister
Nov 1906	<u>A Lodge in the Wilderness</u>	Blackwood & Sons
Apr-Sept 1910	'The Black General'	<u>The Captain</u> vol 23, nos.133-37 <u>Prester John</u> (London, Aug 1910), Nelson's
Dec 1913	'The Power-House'	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u> vol 194, no.1178, pp.715-60 <u>The Power-House</u> (London, May 1916), Hodder & Stoughton
June-July 1915	'The Thirty-Nine Steps'	<u>The All-Story Weekly</u> vol 45, no.52, vol 46, no.1 <u>Blackwood's Magazine</u> July-Sept 1915, vol 198, nos.1197-1199 <u>The Thirty-Nine Steps</u> (London, Oct 1915), Hodder & Stoughton
July 1915	<u>Salute to Adventurers</u>	Nelson's
July-Nov 1916	'Greenmantle'	<u>Land and Water</u> vol 62, no.2826 - vol 68, no.2844 <u>Greenmantle</u> (London, Oct 1916), Hodder & Stoughton
Jan-Feb 1919	'Mr Standfast'	<u>The Popular Magazine</u> vol 51, nos.2-5 <u>Mr Standfast</u> (London, May 1919), Hodder & Stoughton
Oct 1920-1921	'The Path of A King'	<u>Outward Bound</u> vol 1, nos.1-12, vol 2, no.1

		<u>The Path of the King</u> (London, March 1921), Hodder & Stoughton	
Aug-Sept 1921	'Huntingtower'	<u>The Popular Magazine</u> vol 61, nos.3-4 <u>Huntingtower</u> (London, Aug 1922), Hodder & Stoughton	
Aug 29 1923	<u>Midwinter</u>	Hodder & Stoughton	
Apr 1924	'The Three Hostages'	<u>The London Graphic</u> vol 109, no.2836 - vol 110, no.2854 <u>The Three Hostages</u> (London, Aug 1924), Hodder & Stoughton	
Dec 1924-July 1925	'John Macnab'	<u>Chambers' Journal</u> vol 15, nos.733-763 <u>John Macnab</u> (London, July 1925), Hodder & Stoughton	
May-Jun 1926	'The Goddess From the Shades'	<u>The Popular Magazine</u> vol 80; nos.2-5 <u>The Dancing Floor</u> (London, July 1926), Hodder & Stoughton	
Jan-July 1927	'Witch Wood'	<u>The British Weekly</u> vol 81, no.2099 - vol 82, no.2125 <u>Witch Wood</u> (London, July 1927), Hodder & Stoughton	
Sept 12 1929	<u>The Courts of the Morning</u>	Hodder & Stoughton	
July 10 1930	<u>Castle Gay</u>	Hodder & Stoughton	
July 21 1931	<u>The Blanket of the Dark</u>	Hodder & Stoughton	
July 7 1932	<u>The Gap in the Curtain</u>	Hodder & Stoughton	
Oct 24 1934	<u>The Magic Walking Stick</u>	Hodder & Stoughton	
July 6 1933	<u>A Prince of the Captivity</u>	Hodder & Stoughton	
June 1934	<u>The Free Fishers</u>	Hodder & Stoughton	
July 25 1935	<u>The House of the Four Winds</u>	Hodder & Stoughton	
July 25 1936	<u>The Island of Sheep</u>	Hodder & Stoughton	
Apr 7 1941	<u>Sick Heart River</u>	Hodder & Stoughton	
Nov 10 1941	<u>The Long Traverse</u>	Hodder & Stoughton	

This is a list of the recurring characters in the contemporary fiction of John Buchan, listed by their categories or functions in the fiction. Within these categories the characters are listed in order of their appearance-counts, and where two or more characters have the same number of appearances, they are then listed in order of their appearance in the fiction. Characters who appear only once are not listed.

The dates following the names are the first appearances of those characters, and where a number of characters make their first appearance at the same time, the title of that story or novel is given.

## MAIN PROTAGONISTS

Leithen (13)	(1911)	- 'Space'
Sandy (13)	(1916)	- <u>Greenmantle</u>
Hannay (9)	(1915)	- <u>The Thirty-Nine Steps</u>
Archie (9)	(1919)	- <u>Mr Standfast</u>
Blenkiron (4)	(1916)	- <u>Greenmantle</u>
Peter (4)	(1916)	- <u>Greenmantle</u>
Dickson (3)	(1922)	- <u>Huntingtower</u>
Jaikie (3)	(1922)	- <u>Huntingtower</u>

## SECONDARY HEROES/HELPERS

Lamancha (12)	(1925)	- <u>John Macnab</u>
Palliser-Yeates (6)	(1924)	- <u>The Three Hostages</u>
McGillivray (5)	(1913)	- <u>The Power-House</u>
Bullivant (5)	(1915)	- <u>The Thirty-Nine Steps</u>
Mary (4)	(1919)	- <u>Mr Standfast</u>
Geordie Hamilton (3)	(1919)	- <u>Mr Standfast</u>
Dougal (3)	(1922)	- <u>Huntingtower</u>
Peter John (3)	(1924)	- <u>The Three Hostages</u>
Janet (3)	(1925)	- <u>John Macnab</u>
Barbara (3)	(1929)	- <u>The Courts of the Morning</u>
Andrew Amos (2)	(1919)	- <u>Mr Standfast</u>
Alison (2)	(1930)	- <u>Castle Gay</u>

## VILLAINS

Ivery (2)	(1915)	- <u>The Thirty-Nine Steps</u>
Mastrovin (2)	(1922)	- <u>Huntingtower</u>
D'Ingraville (2)	(1929)	- <u>The Courts of the Morning</u>
Carreras (2)	(1929)	- <u>The Courts of the Morning</u>
Martel (2)	(1929)	- <u>The Courts of the Morning</u>

## FOREIGN CHARACTERS

Jim Arcoll (2)	(1910)	- <u>Prester John</u>
Gaudian (2)	(1916)	- <u>Greenmantle</u>
Casimir Muresco (2)	(1922)	- <u>Huntingtower</u>
Prince Odalchini (2)	(1922)	- <u>Huntingtower</u>
Bronson Jane (2)	(1932)	- <u>The Gap in the Curtain</u>

## BACKGROUND CONTINUITY - UPPER-CLASS &amp; PEASANTRY

Lady Amysfort (4)	(1906)	- <u>A Lodge in the Wilderness</u>
Sir Arthur Warcliff (4)	(1906)	- <u>A Lodge in the Wilderness</u>
Mabel Clanroyden (3)	(1898)	- 'A Reputation'
Jock Rorison (3)	(1899)	- 'Streams of Water'
A.W. Thirlstone (3)	(1906)	- <u>A Lodge in the Wilderness</u>
Tommy Deloraine (3)	(1910)	- 'A Lucid Interval'
Colonel Appleby (3)	(1914)	- 'Basilissa'
Paddock (3)	(1915)	- <u>The Thirty-Nine Steps</u>
Tombs (3)	(1919)	- <u>Mr Standfast</u>
Mrs McCunn (3)	(1922)	- <u>Huntingtower</u>
Oliver Pugh (3)	(1924)	- <u>The Three Hostages</u>
Acton Croke (3)	(1925)	- <u>John Macnab</u>
Countess of Lamancha (3)	(1925)	- <u>John Macnab</u>
Charles Leithen (3)	(1926)	- <u>The Dancing Floor</u>
Martin Peckwether (3)	(1928)	- 'Tendebant Manus'
Anthony Hurrell (3)	(1928)	- 'Skule Skerry'
Lady Afflint (2)	(1898)	- 'A Reputation'
Charlie Erskine (2)	(1898)	- 'A Reputation'
Arthur Mordaunt (2)	(1899)	- 'The Herd of Standlan'
Lady Balcrynie (2)	(1899)	- 'The Far Islands'
the Drapiers (2)	(1899)	- 'The Far Islands'
Clara Etheridge (2)	(1899)	- 'The Far Islands'
the Marshams (2)	(1899)	- 'The Far Islands'
the Shandwicks (2)	(1899)	- 'The Far Islands'
Tommy Wratishlaw (2)	(1900)	- <u>The Half-Hearted</u>
Despencer (2)	(1901)	- 'Fountainblue'
Barnard (2)	(1919)	- <u>Mr Standfast</u>
the Wymondhams (2)	(1919)	- <u>Mr Standfast</u>
Julius Victor (2)	(1924)	- <u>The Three Hostages</u>

David Warcliff (2)	(1924)	- <u>The Three Hostages</u>
Johnson Claybody (2)	(1924)	- <u>The Three Hostages</u>
Lord Claybody (2)	(1924)	- <u>The Three Hostages</u>
Ralph Collatt (2)	(1924)	- <u>The Three Hostages</u>
Henry Nightingale (2)	(1924)	- <u>The Three Hostages</u>
Lady Altrincham (2)	(1926)	- <u>The Dancing Floor</u>
Dolly Brune (2)	(1926)	- <u>The Dancing Floor</u>
Lady Pamela Brune (2)	(1926)	- <u>The Dancing Floor</u>
Folliot (2)	(1926)	- <u>The Dancing Floor</u>
the Lamingtons (2)	(1926)	- <u>The Dancing Floor</u>
Francis Martendale (2)	(1928)	- 'The Last Crusade'
Mollie, Lady Samplar (2)	(1928)	- 'Sing a Song of Sixpence'
Lord Rhynns (2)	(1930)	- <u>Castle Gay</u>
Harriet Westwater (2)	(1930)	- <u>Castle Gay</u>
the Flambarbs (2)	(1932)	- <u>The Gap in the Curtain</u>
Sir Derrick Trant (2)	(1932)	- <u>The Gap in the Curtain</u>
Geraldine (2)	(1932)	- <u>The Gap in the Curtain</u>
Christopher Stannix (2)	(1933)	- <u>A Prince of the Captivity</u>

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I have found there to be eleven short stories and thirteen novels of John Buchan which seem to me to be truly Scottish in their content, theme, character or setting. I have divided the novels into different categories, depending on the degree of Scottish involvement in their plots.

short stories

'On Cademuir Hill'	1894
'Politics and the Mayfly'	1896
'At the Rising of the Waters'	1897
'The Moor-Song'	1897
'No-Man's Land'	1899
'The Earlier Affection'	1899
'The Herd of Standlan'	1899
'Streams of Water in the South'	1899
'The Outgoing of the Tide'	1902
'The Riding of Minemileburn'	1912
'The Frying-pan and the Fire'	1928

Novels

(Heroes come to Scotland)	(Heroes leave Scotland)
<u>The Thirty-Nine Steps</u> (1915)	<u>Prestar John</u> (1910)
<u>Mr Standfast</u> (1919)	<u>Salute to Adventurers</u> (1915)
<u>John Macnab</u> (1924)	<u>The Free Fishers</u> (1934)
<u>The Island of Sheep</u> (1936)	

(wholly Scottish)

<u>Sir Quixote of the Moors</u> (1895)	<u>John Burnet of Barns</u> (1898)
<u>A Lost Lady of Old Years</u> (1899)	<u>Huntingtower</u> (1922)
<u>Witch Wood</u> (1927)	<u>Castle Gay</u> (1930)

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The Island of Sheep (London 1936)

Sick Heart River (London 1941)

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