

Ned Warren's 'Jack in the Pulpit': New College MS 380 and Textual Transmission

In special collections librarianship, one acquisition can be the catalyst for a second related one, with the 1005700495 adding to considerable staff Early Palaeography (e) to 532 84192. This has been the case with our most recent acquisition—MS 380—to the library's very significant collection of manuscripts. Researchers expect and appreciate that an academic library will hold together important manuscripts and copies of books relating to its alumni authors. New College Library has over the past couple of years made progress towards this aim for the American anglophile, art collector and writer Edward 'Ned' Perry Warren (1860–1928), who read Classics at New College from 1883 to 1888. On the 24th of 2018, issue 312, No. 20, <http://journals.newcollege.edu/2018/03/24/issue312no20/> March 2022 from a UK antiquarian dealer our can attractive, fr calligraphic manuscript of an unpublished poem 'The Appeal of Eros to Apollo—By Arthur Lyon Raile', that is, a poem by our alumnus Ned Warren. On 7 August, 2022, was our special offer for the TTEC 0000008578879059532 84192 of

Ned Warren's 'Jack in the Pulpit'

MS 380— so recently shipped from Warren's native United States to make its final home here in Oxford to which Warren relocated in 1883—is thus a significant literary manuscript for New College, from the hand of a writer much more famed for his expert collecting of Greco-Roman art and antiquities (which his colossal wealth enabled him to carry out) than for his poetry and other writing. And it is a literary manuscript which very nicely complements our MS 379, now its immediate neighbour in our manuscripts sequence, and which was acquired by the library only a few months earlier via an unrelated source.



'The Appeal of Eros to Apollo' [from the second version in the notebook]
New College Library, Oxford, MS 380, f. 24v

The fourteen poems in Ned Warren's hand— each carrying a date of composition— appear in the following order within the notebook: 'Closing the House in Spring', 'The Suspicion', 'The Survival', 'The Study', 'The Study' again, ' ' (subsequently published as 'An Edward'),⁸ 'Some there are who know', 'The Meditation of mankind' (which appears not to have been published), 'The Ring', 'The Isolated Pillar', 'The Wind', 'The Appeal of Eros to Apollo', 'Confession. A Fragment', and finally 'The Appeal of Eros to Apollo' again (also unpublished, though reproduced in the manuscript calligraphically transcribed by T. G. Angell, which is now our visually appealing New College MS 379).

⁸ Arthur Lyon Raile, *The Wild Rose: A Volume of Poems* (London: Duckworth, 1928), p. 146; we hold a copy at our shelfmark New College Library, Oxford, NC/WAR.

If the poems not included in the Wild Rose increase and multiply so as to become num-

Someone who understood and appreciated literary manuscripts far more than most poets and most librarians do was the poet and librarian Philip Larkin, who in 1979 remarked:

All literary manuscripts have two kinds of value: what might be called the magical value and the meaningful value. The magical value is the older and more universal: this is the paper he wrote on, these are the words as he wrote them, emerging for the first time in this particular miraculous combination. The meaningful value is of much more recent origin, and is the degree to which a manuscript helps to enlarge our knowledge and understanding of a writer's life and work.¹³

And increasingly, it is the unique and distinctive material a library holds—such as literary manuscripts—that sets one library apart from other libraries (and the internet), and makes of it an indispensable research resource. MS 380 is useful for us because it shows Warren's creative process, his stylistic and other changes, what he decided to leave in (and what to remove) from his drafts. Most crucially it (along with MS 379) provides us with materials that never made it to publication, penned by a man skilled and powerful in negotiating (his collecting of antiquities is testament to this) and hugely rich, who could readily afford to have privately printed any works of his he deemed should make it into print.

Warren's notes in MS 380 are so interesting because they directly point to how his published book of poetry—because in some ways there is really only one—also evolved over time through its different published iterations. *Itamos: A Volume of Poems* (1903) by Arthur Lyon Raile, whose publication pre-dates the composition of all the poems in MS 380, is expanded with the addition of forty-four new poems (and the removal of two) to become the *Wild Rose* of 1909. Though a *Jack in 98* #2

Harry mattered very much to Warren. Two loose sheets of paper are enclosed, one with Warren's notes about one protégé, the second with notes about the other. The notes on Harry Thomas characterise him as cheerful, good-tempered, healthy, and '[f]acile princeps in sports and games'—indeed Warren makes him sound something of an Adonis, which is doubtless how he saw him. (The other young man whose case Warren pleads is (Bostonian) Harold Woodbury Parsons (1882–1967), termed very seriously minded, mature, witty, and 'rather like an Englishman'; he would remain in Warren's circle, and became an antiques dealer.)

The MS 380 'Jack in the Pulpit' notebook opens with what is clearly meant to resemble a title-page, and all the poems written in it came after Warren had met and fallen for Thoma0; temp b

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Warren's junior, who went on to become p

you can reach your helper, if you have permission to go over the road and ring a bell. It is another, if his rooms are connected with yours by an open passage.³⁷

It is Thomas, then, not Travis, who inherits Lewes House and its contents—as well as Warren's townhouse next door, School Hill House, and his Lewes High Street mansion, The Shelleys, where Thomas was already resident. Thomas quickly sells off Warren's Egyptian, Greek, and Roman antiquities, and other effects including his books, in October 1929.³⁸ Charles Murray West (1903–1947), Warren's secretary in the United States at the time of Warren's death, inherits Warren's home in Westbrook, Maine. Charles was a son of *another* of Warren's very close New College friends, Arthur George Bainbridge West (1864–1952)—the man whom Warren had first wanted as his partner, before he began wooing Marshall. Charles, too, within a couple of years sells off Warren's valuable effects there (including some antiquities), and the home itself not long thereafter.³⁹ Trust funds stipulated by Warren provided not unhandsomely for his adopted son, but did not prevent Travis Warren's eventually dying—in 1978—in much reduced financial circumstances.

What, then, should we make of the titles of Warren's poetry collections?

Itamos (ἴταμος) means 'headlong', 'hasty', 'eager', 'bold', 'reckless'. Was Warren those things in his desire for Thomas? But there is also the *Itamos* tree (yew tree), which can live for many hundreds of years, and is poisonous. Did he himself feel blighted? Of *The Wild Rose*, we read from his biographers Burdett and Goddard:

Since the garden rose, Warren said, signified married love in Christendom, the wild rose was the symbol of the love of friends in Pagan Greece. He would add, with a smile, that the wild rose also had another common name, the canker.⁴⁰

Indeed, Warren mentions the wild rose/canker association in our 'Jack in the Pulpit' MS 380. A wild rose, it would seem, was his symbol for the comrade-love of Ancient Greece—something beautiful but also, perhaps in Warren's own assessment, in some way destructive?

But what of that putative title itself, 'Jack in the Pulpit'? Let us return to the note he wrote on 9 May 1910 at the front of the maroon leather notebook:

The Wild Rose [often called the canker] is an exact title. Jack in the Pulpit only implies that the poet moralises, but does not name his subject.⁴¹

And 'Arthur Lyon Raile' enabled Ned Warren—the poet who dare not name his subject (or himself)—nevertheless to publish his poetry of desire. Jack in the pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) is a common woodland wild flower found in Warren's native eastern North America; it is poisonous,

³⁷ Letter from Edward Perry Warren, from Naples,

and it has the intriguing ability to change its sex from one season to the next. What might we make of all those associations and meanings?

Today, Warren is scarcely known as a poet, and when his writings are known at all, it is the three-volume *Defence of Uranian Love* (1928–30) that is recalled, often with a mixture of disquiet, discomfiture, and disgust. It is for his collecting of art works and antiquities that he is best remembered and admired, indeed, famous. It is as a prodigious collector that he excelled, and he is now associated with two pieces in particular. One is the so-named 'Warren Cup' in the British Museum, a Roman silver stemmed goblet (skyphos) of 15 BC–15 AD, showing two explicit scenes: both of them male-male sexual couplings.⁴² Warren purchased the drinking vessel in Rome for £2,000 in 1911, and it was subsequently acquired by the museum in 1999, for what was at that time the largest sum ever paid for a single item in its collections, £1.8m.

The Warren Cup (skyphos) (15BC–AD15)
Made (probably) in The Levant
Found at Bittir,

'Vous me paraissez le premier depuis Michel Ange'.⁴⁴ But, partly due to public sensibilities, the sculpture would languish for years in the coach house stables of Warren's Lewes House in Sussex. On inheriting it along with the house after Warren's death, Thomas attempted to sell the sculpture in October 1929—indeed, it is listed in a newspaper advertisement as the principal highlight of a sale by auctioneers Rowland Goringe of the contents of Lewes House, 'By Order of H. Asa Thomas, Esq. . . . as collected by the late E. P. Warren, M.A. . . . RODIN'S FAMOUS MARBLE GROUP "LE BAISER"'.⁴⁵ But it failed to reach its reserve price, following a £5,500 bid on behalf of the French government, and was withdrawn.⁴⁶ Eventually in 1953, it was purchased for the nation from Mrs Pamela Tremlett (1912–1995)—none other than Thomas's own daughter—and sold to the Tate for the very low price of £7,500. 'The Kiss' currently still resides in Tate Modern in London, where it is today one of the museum's and our nation's most celebrated pieces.⁴⁷

Finally—to return to our MS 380—I transcribe from the notebook 185.32 841.92 reW* nrS2 841.92 reW*

