

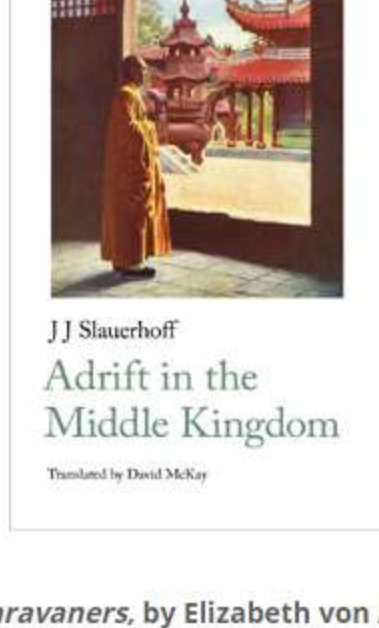
## The Handheld Newsletter

August 2019

### Out now: *Adrift in the Middle Kingdom*

Jan Jacob Slauerhoff is finally in print in English, in our edition of *Het leven op aarde, Adrift in the Middle Kingdom*, and the [reviews so far have been very nice](#). We're particularly happy that the Dutch Embassy has been tweeting about the book.

It's a glorious novel, with gritty social realism and extraordinary travelogue adventure crossing the Chinese continent in a caravan of misfits, heading beyond the Great Wall. Translator David McKay has recorded [a video and an audio reading](#) if you want to have a taste.



### Out in September: *The Caravaners*, by Elizabeth von Arnim

Chosen by the [London Review of Books](#) [bookshop](#) for their Summer Picks list, our new edition of *The Caravaners* is causing a bit of excitement among fans of von Arnim, and fans of novels about Kent. This is such a funny novel, and so cleverly and beautifully written you almost feel sorry for the monstrous Baron Otto von Ottringel, who simply doesn't realise what an oaf he is, enforcing his Prussian ways on his hapless English fellow caravaners. We definitely feel sorry for his wife Edelgard: the scene where he reacts to her newly shortened skirts is simply devastating, for her, and for him, though he doesn't realise it. It's also a novel for caravaners. Despite the rain, dreadful cooking, terrible campsites and recalcitrant horses, von Arnim does seem to still like caravaning as a holiday activity. [It'll be published on 16 September](#).

Kate gave the keynote paper at the conference of the International Elizabeth von Arnim Society in Toulon in July, and put the cat among the pigeons by asserting that von Arnim was not so much a feminist novelist as a conservative novelist. All but one of von Arnim's books involves marriage as the right thing for a woman to do, and that single exception is her autobiography (she married twice). The most memorable conference paper was a stunning musicologist's analysis by Sally Horowitz, on how von Arnim composed new music for her children's nursery rhymes, showing the sophistication of her talent. Hardly any of her readers now recall that von Arnim trained at the Royal College of Music, and that her first husband was a student of Liszt.



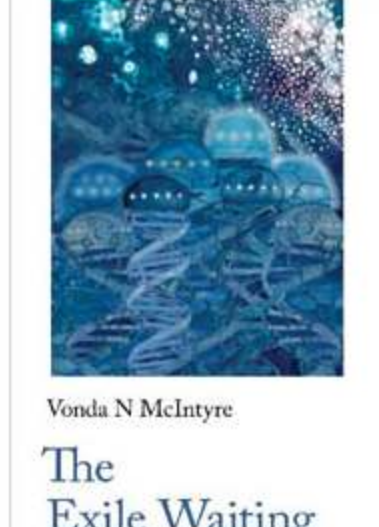
### Summer reading photos

The top Handheld book read during your holidays was Rose Macaulay's *What Not*, and I hope you all had or are having as nice a time on your holidays as it did in these very pleasant looking places. Thanks to Theresa Stoker, Anne O'Brien and John Robertson.



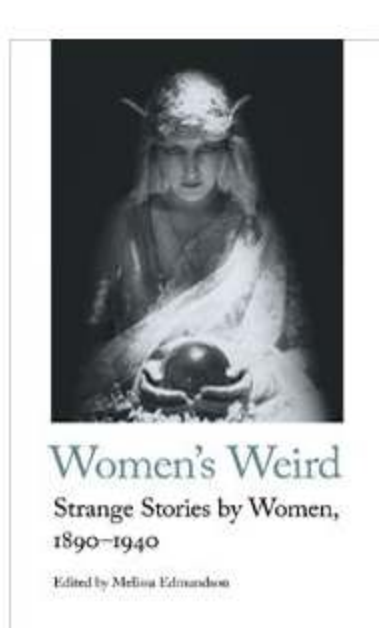
### Off to print we go

This week we sent both *The Exile Waiting* and *Women's Weird* to print. It's an interesting business hurling different iterations of two sets of covers, proofs and queries back and forth by email at the same time. But so far we don't think we've put the wrong cover on either book, and we are so looking forward to seeing these very special books in print. They're on sale now for preorder, and are doing very well already.



### *Women's Weird* launch at The Second Shelf on 30 October

We're delighted to announce that for a third time this year we'll be launching one of our books at The Second Shelf, the feminist antiquarian bookshop in London. The launch of *Women's Weird* will be on 30 October. Melissa Edmundson, the curator of this new anthology of classic women's Weird fiction, will be coming to London to answer questions and talk about the stories and why she chose them. Tickets will be available soon at [The Second Shelf's website](#).



### Our covers for 2020!

We've got all our covers sorted out now for the next year of publishing, and here they are.

- Sylvia Townsend Warner, *Of Cats and Elfin's*, a companion to her very popular *Kingdoms of Elfin*. 20 January 2020.
- Jane Oliver and Ann Stafford, *Business as Usual*, a delightful epistolary comic novel about working in Selfridges in 1930. 23 March 2020.
- *A Quaker Conscientious Objector, Wilfrid Littleboy's Prison Letters, 1917-1919*, edited by Rebecca Wynter and Ben Pink Dandelion. The prison experiences of a prominent British Quaker and CO revealed in his letters to his family. 18 May 2020.
- Rose Macaulay, *Non-Combatants and Others*. Writings Against War. Her great WW1 pacifist novel from 1916, *Non-Combatants and Others*; her anti-fascist and wartime journalism from 1936 to 45; and her Blitz short story 'Miss Anstruther's Letters'. 24 August 2020.
- Rose Macaulay, *Potterism*, her 1920 satire on the newspaper industry and women's opportunities in work and life. 24 August 2020.
- *British Weird*, edited by James Machin. An authoritative collection of the best classic British Weird short fiction, 1893-1937. 31 October 2020.



### Bird News

In bird news from the past two months we saw a lot of puffins in Shetland (squeee!), and a sparrowhawk in our own back garden. We do live on the edge of a wood, and we have a lot of small garden birds scrabbling around on the feeding tubes, so it's our fault that predators are attracted. But my word, sparrowhawks are FAST.

Kate & David

Handheld Press