

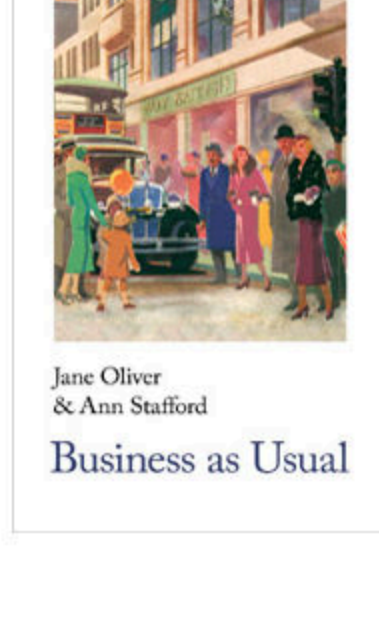
## The Handheld Newsletter

March 2020

### Necessary measures

Due to the coronavirus public health emergency we have decided to postpone our 24 March book launch at Hatchards Piccadilly for *Business as Usual*. Once life is back to normal (and we realise that it may be months) we'll find a good time to have a celebration of the book. [Meanwhile you can still buy it from us](#), and when its second reprinting is delivered to the bookshops you'll be able to order your copy there too.

Most, if not all, of our planned outings to book fairs up to the summer are expected to be cancelled. You can find the up to date information about where we'll be on our [Book launches page](#).



### Bath in May

Hoping fervently that public gatherings will be possible again in May, we bring you the news that Kate will be moderating a panel at the Bath Festival on 21 May, on lost stories. She'll be interviewing the biographer and former Woman's Press editor Sarah LeFanu, the poet and black history researcher Louisa Adjoa Parker, and literary journalist Lucy Scholes. [Tickets are available here](#).



### Handheld in the *Words To That Effect* podcast

*Words To That Effect* is an Irish literary podcast with fortnightly episodes on aspects of popular culture. Its host Conor Reid had a long conversation interview with Kate by Skype some weeks ago, which has resulted in [this podcast about lost books](#). Kate sounds a little bit like a robot, as she was speaking to a screen, but otherwise it's good.

### Our panel on Women in Fantasy and Science Fiction is a podcast!

You'll remember that we've been mentioning our panel at the Bristol Festival of Ideas on women in fantasy and science fiction. It was really good, and was also recorded by the Cosmic Shed podcast ('one of The Guardian's Favourite Podcasts of 2018') which is run by a lecturer in science communication from the University of the West of England. [You can listen to it here](#).



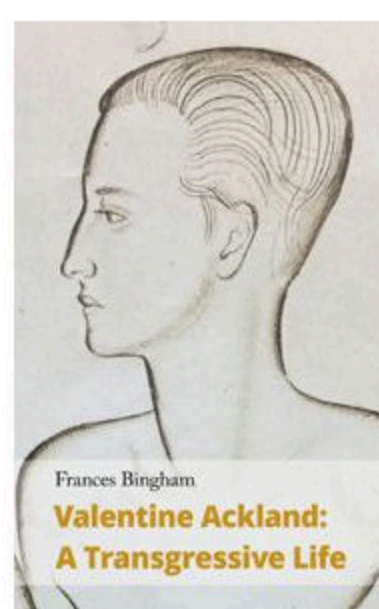
### New covers!

We've been sorting out our remaining book covers for 2021, and while we get on with uploading all their metadata to the worldwide book network (this is fiddly, and takes time), please feast your eyes. Preordering via our website should be possible by 20 March.

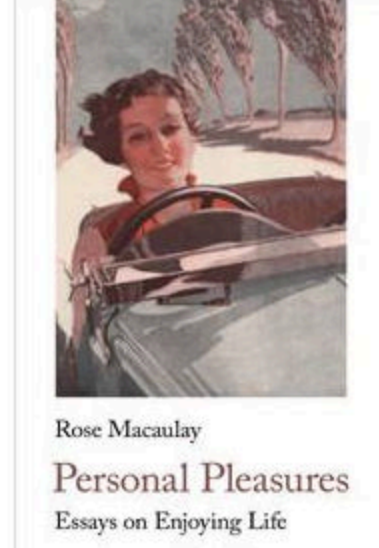
To remind you, we're publishing Inez Holden's *There's No Story There* and Margaret Kennedy's *Where Stands a Winged Sentry* in January and March 2021: both are from the Second World War.



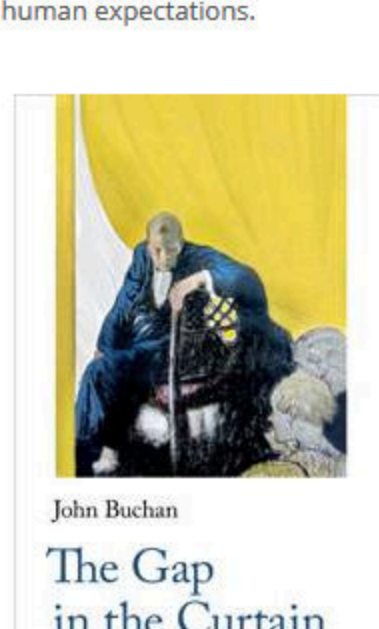
In May we'll be publishing our first commissioned biography, *Valentine Ackland: A Transgressive Life*. Frances Bingham is now writing this, the first biography to be written of Valentine Ackland, a poet, Communist and social justice activist, and the lifetime companion of Sylvia Townsend Warner. This will include newly available material from wartime archives, which, among many other interesting tidbits, tells us that Ackland was steered away from any meaningful wartime work in the war due to her Communist activism. One of her tasks was to type 'important war documents' which she assumed were in code, but someone more familiar with the craft than she was explained that they were knitting patterns. The portrait of Ackland that we're using on the cover is by Eric Gill.



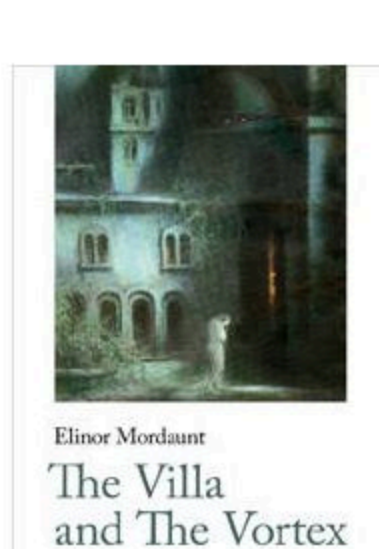
In late summer 2021 we'll be publishing our fourth Rose Macaulay title, her 1935 book of essays *Personal Pleasures*. We've given this the subtitle 'Essays on Enjoying Life' just to be sure that anyone coming new to Macaulay knows that this is not a novel. Macaulay was a passionate enjoyer of life, and this collection of eighty pieces will delight, amuse, intrigue, enchant, please and satisfy you. Her subjects range from 'Armchair' to 'Canoeing' to 'Driving a Car' to 'Hot Bath' to 'Listening In' [to the radio] to 'Shopping Abroad' to 'Taking Umbrage'. The cover image is from a 1934 petrol advert, and we chose it for its mood of calm satisfaction and female independence.



As is now traditional, we will be publishing two slightly spooky titles in October 2021. One is John Buchan's novel *The Gap in the Curtain* from 1932, the Weirdest of his books, which is a collection of five longish short stories linked by an opening narrative, in which the dying Professor Moe trains five guests at a country-house party to visualise the front cover of *The Times* one year in the future. The strangest part comes in the ensuing year when we find out how each person responded to their glimpse into the future, and how the future has a way of confounding all human expectations.



Our second October title is a collection of supernatural short fiction from 1914 to 1934 by Elinor Mordaunt, the pen-name of the English writer Evelyn Clowe. We've already published one of her stories of ghosts, *apparitions Weirdest*: here inexplicable events. We crowdsourced the choice of cover image, because we couldn't decide which of the five options would work best. (What we like is not necessarily what will sell best.) After sending the selection to everyone who responded to our callout on Twitter, plus the people we work with most, the clear winner was this evocative 1907 German painting of a ghost, originally made to illustrate *Parsifal*. It also illustrates at least two of Mordaunt's stories in this collection.



### News from the garden

We now have badgers visiting every night, so many that the camera videos are getting a bit dull. (We're hoping for fawns, or badger, or badger.) One of the deer is eating the day lilies (which were given an unwelcome haircut this week, and the camellia has had to be protected by a nice scented salvia, as deer don't like that. But, miraculously, they still haven't eaten the tulips and daffodils that Kate planted in (hacked into) the lawn two years ago and which got devoured last spring. The first bumblebees are out, settling into the forsythia flowers, the lupins are sprouting and the miniature cyclamen from our friends' garden across the valley are very happy in their shade bed under the hedge. Susan brought another load over this week, as they are colonising her lawn rather too much, so we will put them in the empty ground under the ceanothus at the front, to work as ground cover if nothing else.

A Happy Easter to you, and keep yourselves healthy as well as others.

Kate & David

Handheld Press

The Handheld newsletter is only sent to readers who have expressed an interest in receiving news from us. Our aim is to be informative and useful, and to keep you in the picture about what we're up to, offers and promotions.

Please rest assured that your details will never be passed on to any third parties nor used for any other purpose.

Should you wish to not receive any further email newsletters from us then we'll be disappointed, but we'll understand.