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It was usual, according to Lawrence, for each of his novels to pass through at least two preliminary drafts in the evolutionary progress towards a final version that was submitted for publication (and was itself often subject to extensive revision at the galley-proof stage). But only in the case of the *Lady Chatterley* novels are we fortunate enough to have every one of those versions extant. This substantial new edition of the first two versions, following Michael Squires' fine edition of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1993), completes the Chatterley trio for the C.U.P. series; and we thus now have authoritative texts, with full critical apparatus, for the study of the creative process from beginning to end. Here, the first and second versions are published, appropriately, with numerical headings, as, simply, *Version 1* and *Version 2*, replacing the former titles of printings of those versions, which were published, after Lawrence’s death, as *The First Lady Chatterley* and *John Thomas and Lady Jane*. As such, they were accorded by publishers and editors a kind of spurious status as independent works.

This admirable edition of the first drafts consists of an introduction to both which clearly and succinctly sketches the history of their writing, their subsequent publication and critical reception, and concludes with a description of the manuscripts. Then follow the two texts, and after them an appendix which sets out the real geography of Eastwood and of the Derbyshire-Nottinghamshire area and explains the complex conflations, transpositions and re-namings that created the fictional world of Wragby Hall and its environs.
out of these underlying realities. This appendix is, in turn, followed by a full set of explanatory notes to each text and then by the textual apparatus, which lists the readings of each manuscript before correction and revision by Lawrence and also gives the readings of subsequent printed editions of each version.

The edition is an admirably scholarly work on the part of Mehl and Jansohn, with few flaws of any substance. The proofs have been carefully checked for error, but one unfortunate mistake has been allowed to stand which gives an impression of unfamiliarity with the final version of the novel. In the first drafts the gamekeeper’s name is Parkin, but in the final version he becomes Mellors – not ‘Mellor’, as is indicated by the misplaced apostrophe in the possessive ‘Mellor’s’, which occurs no less than three times on p. xxxix.

The notes to the texts are very full, with few significant omissions, such as occur in the failure to note the meaning and proverbial status of ‘Handsome is as handsome does’ (77:1, Version 1) or in the lack of annotation to ‘a bit of a socialist, like the Countess of Warwick used to be’ (171:16, Version 1) – a reference to Frances, Lady Warwick, a well-known figure in the socialist movement and the Labour Party of the time. Of considerably less importance, socially and historically, but of some relevance to the genesis of the novel and the contribution of the Sitwell family to its making, is the manifest portrait (unacknowledged in the notes) of the Sitwells’ butler, Henry Moat, as Collingwood, manservant to Lady Eva Rolleston (correctly identified as Lady Ida Sitwell). Moat, in fact, is not without celebrity in the world of literature, by virtue of his unforgettable role in Osbert Sitwell’s autobiography, Left Hand, Right Hand!

Parkin’s dialect vocabulary is carefully and accurately glossed, though difficult dialect forms of standard English words, like ‘whoam’ (‘home’) or ‘gen’ (‘given’) pass without comment, presumably on the grounds that the context identifies them sufficiently well. Generally, the editors show a fine sensitivity to language and proverbial lore, and the fact that the editors are not native speakers of English is apparent only in the arguably redundant and misleading gloss (more revealing of a lack of ornithological knowledge than of imperfect linguistic competence on the part of the editors) to ‘kittiwake’ (127:36, Version 1) as ‘a diving bird that catches its prey underwater’, where, if a gloss were necessary, ‘small member of the Gull family’ would have been more accurate and appropriate; and, continuing the theme of natural history, ‘wind-flowers’ (301:14, Version 2) needed to be glossed as a non-standard term for wood anemones.

There are one or two points where it is possible to identify place-names which are said in the notes to be unidentifiable. Thus, ‘Stanswell Road’ and ‘King Alfred’ (159:23, Version 1) and the ‘Victoria’ (204:33, Version 1) derive, respectively, from St Ann’s Well Road, King Edward Street and the Victoria Hotel in Nottingham, which masquerades as ‘Sheffield’ in this part of Version 1. However, the ability to solve such puzzles is plainly of no great consequence in regard to the editors’ duty to explicate the text. Generally speaking, the annotation of the two texts, like other aspects of the edition, is of a high standard of scholarship.