

## PREFACE

In 1996 Wolfgang Görtschacher and I put together a substantial anthology of poetry and prose, *Summoning the Sea*, to mark Professor James Hogg's retirement from a distinguished teaching career at the University of Salzburg, and in recognition of the contribution he had made to British poetry by his work as a publisher. Shortly before travelling to Salzburg, to attend a conference on contemporary poetry, and to present the dedicatee with his (unexpected) book, I happened to be in conversation with a historian at my home university in Wales. Telling him that I was going to Salzburg a few days later, I explained why, talking of Professor Hogg's work as publisher of many volumes of poetry and, indeed, of a great many volumes of literary criticism and scholarship. "Strange", said my historian friend, "that there should be two people called James Hogg based in Salzburg – did you know that there's another one who has produced many volumes of a series called *Analecta Carthusiana*, a series devoted to the history of the Carthusian Order?" I explained that there was – in several senses of the phrase – only one James Hogg; *my* James Hogg was also the man behind *Analecta Carthusiana*. The historian marvelled at what energy, commitment and stamina must have been involved in such an achievement. There *is* only one James Hogg – he is splendidly unique. At that conference, incidentally, Professor Hogg was presented with two tribute volumes, *Summoning the Sea* and another of academic essays written in his honour. There was also a third, honouring his work in Carthusian studies. To receive one Festschrift says something about the respect in which a man is held, but to receive *three* ...

And now here is a fourth, timed for the recipient's eightieth birthday, a gift from the poetic community for whom he has done so much over the years. As the founding Director of the University of Salzburg Press from 1970 to 1998 and co-editor of *The Poet's Voice* from 1994 to 2000, James Hogg oversaw the publication of a large number of books by a diverse list of poets, books which made available to English readers (and to European students and readers of English poetry) a body of work largely overlooked, or available only in somewhat fugitive editions, back in Britain. One strand of the publishing programme was devoted to the (re)publication of work by poets whose early UK reputations had faded somewhat and who had later been neglected by the metropolitan publishers. Two poets who benefitted greatly from this strategy – both now dead – were Peter Russell and James Kirkup. Some sixteen books by

Kirkup were produced by James Hogg between 1995 and 1998; they were a mixture of reprints and new work, of original work and translations, of prose, poetry, and drama. James Hogg himself also edited *Diversions: A Celebration for James Kirkup on his Eightieth Birthday*, a substantial collection of tribute and critical discussion. Beginning in 1981 with *Malice Aforethought or the Tumour in the Brain*, a collection of epigrams, another important sequence of publications was made up of volumes by another poetic ‘exile’ from the London literary world, Peter Russell. These included *Paysages Légendaires*, *Venice Poems 1965*, *More for the Wolves*, *My Wild Heart*, and *The Apocalypse of Quintilius*. Again James Hogg himself edited a substantial volume of critical writing on Russell – *The Road to Parnassus: Homage to Peter Russell on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday* – and in his role as a publisher he made possible the appearance of such volumes as *The Salzburg Peter Russell Seminar* (which he also edited), Helga Denkmayr’s *The Theme of Music in Peter Russell’s Work*, Wolfgang Reisinger’s *Ancient Myth and Philosophy in the Poetry of Peter Russell*, and Anthony L. Johnson’s “*Life is a celebration not a search for success*”: *Studies in the Poetry of Peter Russell*. Where both Kirkup and Russell are concerned, James Hogg’s work was of incalculable value to the poets in the later phases of their lives and will be indispensable to all future consideration of their achievements as a poet. Some of Peter Russell’s earliest appearances under the Salzburg imprint were as part of a notional poetic group referred to as the ‘Vitalists’ – made up of Russell, William Oxley, and Anthony Johnson. This led, in turn, to the publication of such volumes as Johnson’s striking collection *Marigolds, Stilts, Solitudes* and a series of books by Oxley, both collections of poetry (notably his *Collected Longer Poems*) and a valuable series of studies in poetic theory. It would extend these introductory remarks inappropriately were one to enumerate anything like all the other individual poets published by James Hogg – though a few significant names demand mention, such as Richard O’Connell, Desmond O’Grady (notably *Trawling Tradition: Translations 1954-1994*), David Miller, Edward Lowbury, Fred Beake, Ian Caws, John Gurney and Donald Ward (the list is necessarily partial and subjective).

James Hogg saw his work as building on developments afoot in Salzburg. Writing in 1986 in the preface to one of the many volumes he edited (*Vitalism and Celebration*) he noted that

One of the main research interests at the Institute for English and American Literature over recent years has centred on the theory of poetry. A visit from Sir Stephen Spender in the early seventies was followed up by a lecture tour of the Austrian universities by Ronald Duncan, on whom a Salzburg student,

the American professor William Buddington Wahl, compiled a two volume dissertation ... In more recent years, three Vitalist poets, William Oxley, Anthony Johnson, and Peter Russell have all been invited, and their work has been actively investigated by Salzburg students in seminars ... The founder of the department, Erwin A. Stürzl, has devoted much of his time to the study of Robert Graves, and a former student, Mariela Eisl, produced a two volume thesis on the South African poet, Roy Campbell, a Vitalist poet before the category was invented.

But if James Hogg owed something to his predecessors and contemporaries, his own energy, diligence and commitment ensured that he bequeathed a far more substantial legacy to *his* successors. His work made the name of the University of Salzburg familiar to (and respected in the eyes of) all serious readers of contemporary English poetry. Closer to home, his encouragement made possible the achievements of younger scholars such as Sabine Coelsch-Foisner (as in her pioneering study *Revolution in Poetic Consciousness: An Existential Reading of Mid-Twentieth-Century British Women's Poetry*) and Wolfgang Görtschacher (notably his *Little Magazine Profiles* and *Contemporary Views on the Little Magazine Scene*). Görtschacher was assistant to James in the later years of his work as a publisher and has since continued that work, as proprietor of a press, *Poetry Salzburg* which, while it has found room to pay respect to some of those previously published by James Hogg (such as Oxley and O'Grady) has also been – as James Hogg would have wished – innovative and independent and in its tastes, and as editor of *Poetry Salzburg Review*. Görtschacher has, in his turn, benefitted from the assistance of his co-editor Andreas Schachermayr. Given the centrality of scholars such as Coelsch-Foisner, Görtschacher and Derek de Silva, to the reputation and achievements of the department in Salzburg, James Hogg can be seen to have played an important role in establishing a vitally active tradition.

Some of the poets represented in the present anthology were acquainted with and/or published by James Hogg during the years of his editorship of the University of Salzburg Press; others have appeared in the pages of *Poetry Salzburg Review* in the years since his retirement; a third group have simply been happy to offer poems in tribute to James Hogg and his work.

Those fortunate enough to have known James Hogg in person have additional reasons for respecting and wanting to pay tribute to him, reasons which go beyond even the considerable achievements hinted at above. James's generosity, in spirit and in kind, is unflamboyant but

profound; his modesty of manner and complete lack of conceit are wonderfully refreshing in a world where all too many who have achieved far less noisily trumpet their own stature. Along with his wife Inge – without whose support, he would be the first to acknowledge, he would have been unable to bring to fruition the multifarious projects in which he has been involved – are warm and richly welcoming hosts at their house in the hills outside Salzburg. Indeed, their hospitality is not extended only to their fellow human beings: their house is shared with a fine collection of parrots (most notable amongst whom is Paula, who has given a whole new meaning to the phrase “secretary bird” – a denomination she merits far more than that bird of prey *Sagittarius serpentarius* ever did).

Naturally, the various areas of James’s richly diverse life sometimes interconnect in unexpected ways. On one occasion when staying with the Hoggs for a few days my wife and I were struck with the abundance of fine red wine on offer to guests at one dinner after another, a red wine of real quality which was contained in a seemingly endless sequence of unlabelled bottles. A polite enquiry as to the source of this “bottled poetry” (as Robert Louis Stevenson put it) elicited the explanation that while on a recent research tour of the Carthusian houses of Spain one particular house had wanted to subscribe to a complete set of the *Analecta Carthusiana* but didn’t have the financial means to do so; they had therefore paid in cases of the wine they produced, which James and his driver had loaded into the boot and back seat of the car and brought back to Austria! James, who very rarely drank any of the wine himself, proceeded to give it to his guests with his usual generosity. His connections with poets have naturally involved a few ‘adventures’ which, when in the right mood, James can be persuaded to recount in his characteristically understated fashion. How, for example, when he had helpfully taken charge of Sir Stephen Spender’s luggage, he was graciously given a tip of sixpence! How on one of Peter Russell’s earliest stays with the Hoggs, the poet asked, after a first sociable evening, whether James happened to have any whisky in the house; assuming that Peter simply wanted a nightcap, James gave him an almost full bottle to take to his bedroom. Peter returned it empty next morning and intimated that he would appreciate a similar arrangement on the subsequent nights of his stay. By the end of the visit even a man as famously generous as James was searching out the cheapest available whisky to be bought in Salzburg in order to fulfil his guest’s desires! On the occasion of a visit to

Salzburg by another unnamed poet, James was contacted in the early hours of the morning by the proprietor of a Salzburg brothel. The poet had taken advantage of the establishment's facilities but was quite unable to pay the bill for his pleasures and had asked that James be telephoned. James made his way to the brothel, ransomed the poet by paying the bill for him, gave him breakfast and took him to the university where, according to James, he proceeded to give a very good lecture!

As scholar and publisher, but above all as a man, James *is* unique. It is with the deepest affection and respect that the editors offer him this volume, with their very best wishes on his birthday.

Glyn Pursglove