

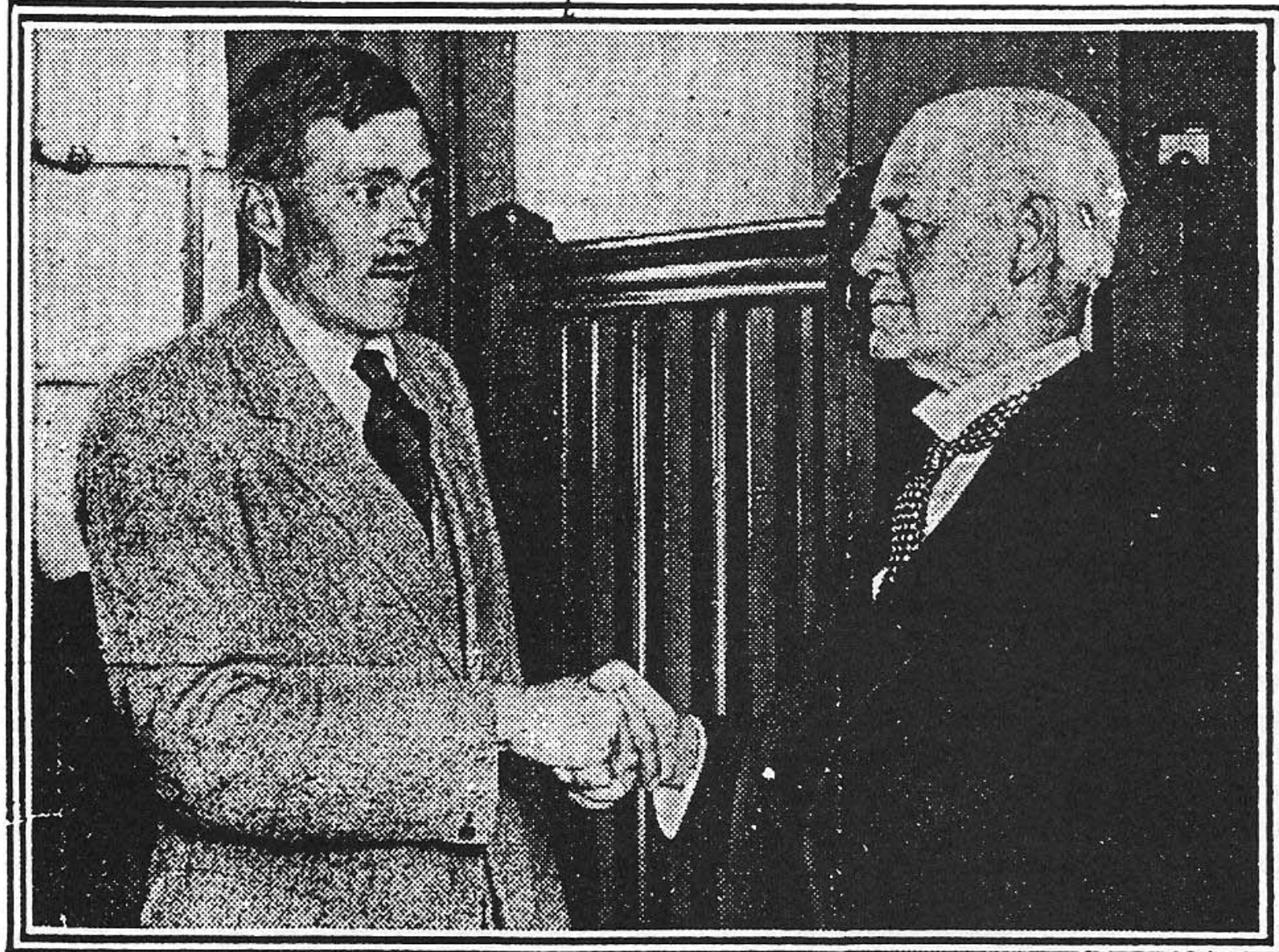
Some Leaves from HW's Own Scrapbook

The following pages, put together from leaves from HW's own scrapbook of review cuttings, give us a contemporary view of the momentous event in his life when he won the Hawthornden Prize for 1927 for his novel, *Tarka the Otter*.

We are grateful for permission to reproduce material from *The Observer* and *The Telegraph* — most of the other longer pieces come from publications that are no longer in existence — and also to *Knights of Barnstaple* for permission to reproduce the photograph of Henry and Mrs Williamson.

AUTHOR OF "TARKA THE OTTER"

daily sketch



Mr. Henry Williamson (left), the winner of the 1928 Hawthornden prize of £100 for his book "Tarka the Otter," is here seen being congratulated by Mr. John Galsworthy. Mr. Williamson, who is 31 and lives in North Devon, followed the otter hounds to get local colour.

skipped "TARKA, THE OTTER."

Telegraph — An almost petulant demand for "good stories" that leave the higher faculties undisturbed has long been turning the attention of promising novelists, who might put their capabilities to other uses, to the mere contrivance of a sensational plot. The public demands excitement and incident in its novels, and the public gets what it wants. Occasionally it will accept the work of a moralist or a critic of the age, like Galsworthy; or it may admit a commentary on the inner life of thought or emotion if the outward signs of them, as expressed in action, are entertaining enough. But it usually discourages imaginative work and it generally rejects all interpretations of the drama of any aspect of life with which it is not familiar. The public, however, allows itself to be educated out of this attitude occasionally; if it hears that a truly remarkable creation has been produced, it is prompted by curiosity to study it. Its curiosity, for example, may be stirred by the award of the Hawthornden Prize for Literature for 1927 to Mr. Henry Williamson for his book, "Tarka, the Otter," which is a life history of an otter in and about the rivers of Devonshire. It will not do the novel-reading public any harm to interest itself, for a change, in the world of Nature and to consider the importance of animals in the scheme of things. It probably spends a good deal too much time in contemplating the importance of its own affairs, which frequently lack any sort of majesty when a popular novelist has presented them.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE

Linda Mercury
THE ninth award of the Hawthornden Prize was announced on the 12th June at the Aeolian Hall, when Mr. John Galsworthy, in a speech admirable alike in matter and manner, announced that the Committee had decided to give this year's prize to Mr. Henry Williamson, for his book *Tarka the Otter*. Our readers will be familiar with some of his work, as several of his stories and essays have appeared in our pages. The award was particularly interesting and gratifying, as Mr. Williamson has done a great deal of very charming work in his studies of nature and animal life, and has been unduly neglected. His other books include *Lone Swallows* and *The Old Stag*. There was a large audience, and the donor of the prize, Miss Alice Warrender, made a delightful little speech. It will be remembered that the Hawthornden Prize was founded in 1919, and is given annually to the author of what, in the opinion of the Committee, is the best piece of imaginative work in prose or verse published during the preceding twelve months by a British author under forty-one years of age. The prize consists of £100, and the previous winners were Edward Shanks: *The Queen of China* (1919); John Freeman: *Poems New and Old* (1920); Romer Wilson: *The Death of Society* (1921); Edmund Blunden: *The Shepherd* (1922); David Garnett: *Lady into Fox* (1923); R. H. Mottram: *The Spanish Farm* (1924); Sean O'Casey: *Juno and the Paycock* (1925); and Victoria Sackville-West: *The Land* (1926).

Devon Exeter Gazette

Devonians in general and those residing in the northern part of the county in particular, will be interested to learn that the book—"Tarka, the Otter"—which has won the Hawthornden prize for literature for 1927 for Mr. Henry Williamson, has association with the Taw (not Tor, as I see the river has been spelt in one contemporary) and Torridge. The prize, instituted in 1919 by Miss Alice Warrender, is awarded annually for a work of imagination by a British author whose age does not exceed 41, and is valued at £100. Mr. Williamson, who is just over 30 years of age, told a newspaper reporter how he left London in 1921 with no money or prospects. "I rented a cottage in a Devon village at £5 a year," he said, "and lived there for five years writing and hoping. I slept out at nights studying the habits of the animals. For most of the time I ranged up and down between the two rivers Taw and Torridge." Speaking of "Tarka, the Otter," Mr. Williamson said he had rewritten the book seventeen times, and in its final form every stick, stone, and tree in the book could actually be traced in the Devon country.

DEVON AUTHOR'S SUCCESS



THE NORTH DEVON AUTHOR Mr. Henry Williamson (seen with his wife) has leapt into fame by winning the 1928 Hawthornden prize of £100 with "Tarka the Otter," a story with the Rivers Taw and Torridge as its setting.

Photo: Knight, Barnstaple.

HAWTHORNDEN PRIZE AWARD.

The Hawthornden Prize for Literature for 1927 has been awarded to Mr. Henry Williamson for his book, "Tarka, the Otter."

The prize, instituted in 1919 by Miss Alice Warrender, is awarded annually for a work of imagination by a British author whose age does not exceed 41. Its value is £100.

In conversation with a representative of THE DAILY TELEGRAPH yesterday Mr. Williamson, who is just over 30 years of age, told how he left London in 1921 with no money or prospects. "I rented a cottage in a Devon village at £5 a year," he said, "and lived there for five years writing and hoping. I slept out at nights studying the habits of the animals. For most of the time I ranged up and down between the two rivers Tor and Torridge."

Speaking of "Tarka, the Otter," Mr. Williamson said he had re-written the book seventeen times, and in its final form every stick, stone, and tree in the book could actually be traced in the Devon country. His first book, "Beautiful Years," was published in 1921. "It was one of the world's worst sellers," he humorously commented. Since then he has written "Sun Brothers," "The Old Stag," both animal studies, and later "Pathway," the story of a soldier injured in the war who revolts against the whole set of ideals which he holds caused the great upheaval.

"My great ambition," he added, "is to write the story of the war from the human point of view, which will be the story of every man who was in the war."

Mr. John Galsworthy, in presenting the prize at the Æolian Hall, New Bond-street, yesterday afternoon, described "Tarka, the Otter," as a truly remarkable creation. It was the result of stupendous imaginative concentration, fortified by endlessly patient and loving observation of Nature. Henry Williamson had received as yet infinitely less credit as a writer than he deserved. He was the finest and most intimate living interpreter of the drama of wild life, and he was, at his best, a beautiful writer.

THE COMPLACENCY OF MAN.

"I always think," continued Mr. Galsworthy, "that the human being has got an altogether too complacent notion of his position in the scheme of things; that man first, second, and third, beast, bird, and fish left at the post, does not adequately describe the scheme of creation. And I welcome with very heartfelt gratitude the existence of any talent which will make any sort of hole in our urban, not to say suburban, satisfaction with human superiority."

"If you think of it, when we are interested in beasts and birds and their natural surroundings, it's almost always not for themselves and their good, but for ourselves and our good. We're interested in them commercially; we like to make money out of their feathers or their skins; or aesthetically; we like to wear them in our hats or round our necks; or as sportsmen we're terribly fond of some creatures in order to do other creatures in; or as collectors we love to look upon their stuffed, or pinned, or bottled beauty; or as cooks we dote on their flavours, and do our best to destroy them with sauces; or as musicians, we like to hear them singing on the Radio; or as racegoers, we like them to win at 33 to 1—when we've backed them; or as scientists and valetudinarians, we appreciate them as animals with extremely healthy glands which we can appropriate to ourselves."

"Not many of us, I think, delight in them as creatures with a love of life as strong as or perhaps stronger than our own; certainly in the mass more beautiful than ourselves—I went to the Derby the other day—and still living in a world of ungarnished Nature which goes back to a time when Man was not. When a man or woman succeeds in watching wild life just for the pleasure of watching it, and without any thought of the benefit it may bring, he or she has gone far towards that forgetfulness of self which many people regard as a sign of mania, but which is really the keystone of happiness. That being so, when a writer can bring to us some true and thrilling sense of the strange, vivid, and separate importance of beasts, birds, and plants, shall we not be grateful and do him honour?"

VILLAGE AUTHOR HONoured

Seven years ago Mr. Henry Williamson—out of work, penniless, and hungry—walked into a newspaper office in London and sold his first sketch on animal life, "A House of No Morals." On Tuesday the literati of London gathered in the Æolian Hall to see him receive the Hawthornden Prize for the finest piece of imaginative writing by a British author during 1927 who was under 41 years of age.

The Hawthornden Prize is an annual award worth £100, and it was given to Mr. Williamson for his story of wild animal life, "Tarka, the Otter." Mr. John Galsworthy made the presentation.

The announcement is the climax to one of the most romantic developments in British literature since the war.

Mr. Williamson's first series on wild life in Devon began in 1921 when he slept among his weird pets, kept three dogs in his own bed, and had nothing for covering but "sacks, old newspapers, and sheepskin."

He wrote that he ate hedgehog for breakfast. He continued to make contributions and wrote stories for American magazines. He received more than £100 for many of them.

Mr. Williamson married, in 1925, Miss Ida Lestitia Hibbert, a cousin of Lady Ashcombe, and took his bride home to the cottage where they live to-day. He is 34 years of age.

The Hawthornden Prize certainly has its uses as an advertisement. Three of yesterday morning's papers—the "Telegraph," the "Mail" and the "Express"—published articles by Henry Williamson, the author of "Tarka." *Kramer*

True to Life. *Daily Chronicle*
MR. GALSWORTHY has complained that there is too much about food

in Mr. Henry Williamson's Hawthornden prize work, "Tarka the Otter."

It is always difficult for an author to know when to stop with the eats. Myself, I am writing a nature book about two guinea pigs and a cow. I want to describe them pretty well, but if I cut out the food, where am I?

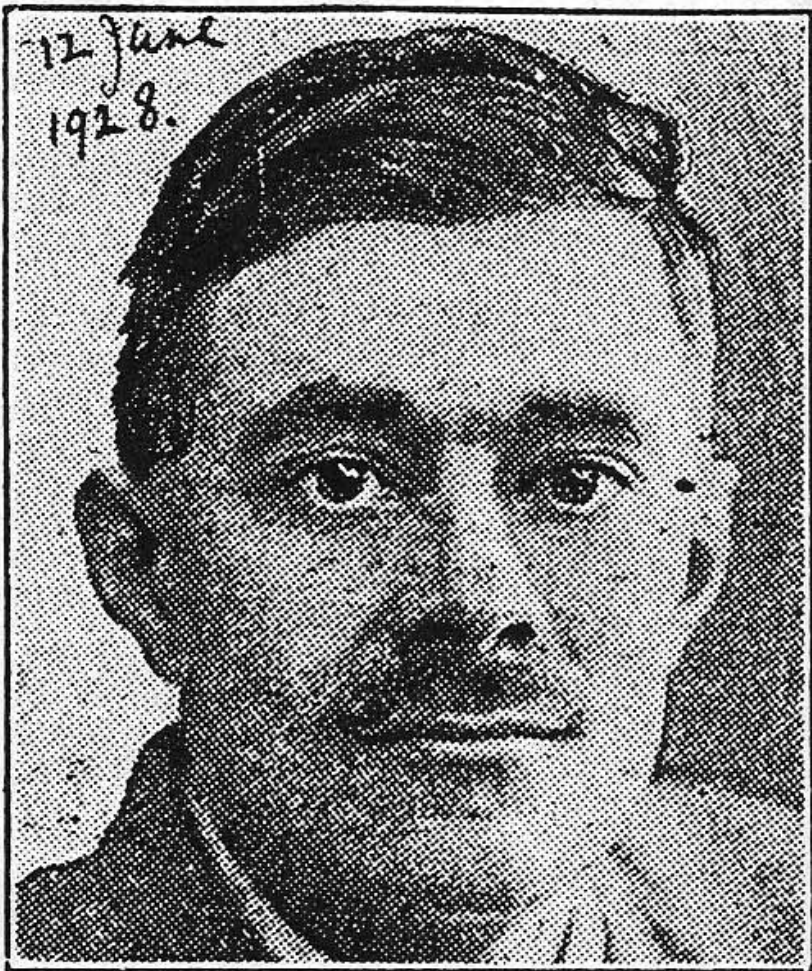
THE AIR PAGEANT.

To-morrow's issue of the Daily Telegraph will contain a personal impression of the Hendon Air Pageant from the pen of Mr. Henry Williamson, who has just been awarded the Hawthornden Prize for Literature.

AWARD FOR WRITER OF ANIMAL STORIES.

The Hawthornden Prize for Mr. Henry Williamson.

The "Evening Standard" understands that the winner of the Hawthornden Prize for Literature this year is Mr. Henry Williamson, a young



MR. HENRY WILLIAMSON.

British writer, whose books on animals are well known.

The prize-winning book is "Tarka, the Otter." The prize will be presented by Mr. John Galsworthy at the Aeolian Hall this evening.

The Hawthornden Prize has been awarded annually since the war for a work of imagination by an author whose age does not exceed 41.

The prize is £100. It was instituted in 1919 by Miss Alice Warrender, sister of the late Admiral Sir George Warrender.

"TARKA THE OTTER."

THE HAWTHORNDEN PRIZE.

MR. WILLIAMSON AND HIS WORK.

Observer
(?) J.C. Squire

(From a Special Correspondent.)

On Tuesday last the ninth award of the Hawthornden Prize was announced by Mr. John Galsworthy at the Aeolian Hall. The prize, founded in 1919 by Miss Alice Warrender is awarded annually to a work of imaginative literature by an author under forty-one years of age—forty-one (the "military age" in 1914) being considered to be an officially-determined frontier between youth and age. The Committee from the beginning has consisted of the donor, Mr. Laurence Binyon, Mr. Robert Lynd, Mr. Edward Marsh and Mr. J. C. Squire; previous winners of the prize have been Edward Shanks, Romer Wilson, John Freeman, Edmund Blunden, David Garnett, Sean O'Casey, R. H. Mottram, and V. Sackville-West.

This year's award was especially interesting, because the author (previous to the award) was probably less well known to the general public than any of his predecessors. He has had applause enough from his colleagues in literature. Mr. Galsworthy's eulogy at the Aeolian Hall was as whole-hearted as it was eloquent; Sir John Fortescue wrote an introduction to Mr. Williamson's last book; and others who are known to cherish an admiration for him include Mr. Edward Garnett, Mr. H. M. Tomlinson, and Colonel T. E. Lawrence—whose Oriental seclusion does not prevent him from taking an eager interest in current literature. With a consensus of this character behind him Mr. Williamson was bound some time to win through; but it must be admitted that up to the present the general public has shown as little inclination to admire, or even to look at, the books of Mr. Henry Williamson, as, at an earlier date, it showed with regard to those of Mr. W. H. Hudson. "Tarka" has had some success; its predecessors, "Lone Swallows" and "The Old Stag," had virtually none.

Hudson is the right name to mention. No two men of genius are precisely the same as each other; for that matter no two leaves on a tree are exactly alike. But there are oak-leaves and beech-leaves; and Mr. Williamson is in the family and succession of Hudson and Jefferies. He is a nature writer who is more poet than zoologist, although a very close and exact observer. He has shaken the dust of towns off his feet, lives in a remote countryside, and has contrived an equal familiarity with beasts and those who chase them, rural landscapes and those who live in them. Differences might easily be established between Mr. Williamson and his predecessors; he has more sense of humour than Hudson, he is less neurotic than Jefferies, he is probably more at home in a village public-house than either of them would have been. Yet, since a man must be roughly described for the benefit of those whom one is per-

suading to know him, he must certainly be admitted to be sealed of the tribe of those men. Nobody who likes their work could dislike his.

"Tarka the Otter" is the life-story of an otter. It has obvious defects that anyone could point out. Mr. Williamson is young and has settled in Devonshire: his gambols in dialect must bewilder the natives: he welcomes recondite words from any source. His book has also the disadvantage (but what a rare and welcome disadvantage!) of being too tightly packed. All the water has been squeezed out of it, there is something in every sentence, and the reader is allowed no relief. Somebody remarked at the Hawthornden gathering that there was too much eating in it. That cannot be helped; what else could an otter do? Beyond these criticisms few could be made.

As Mr. Galsworthy said, the book is full of fine, vivid phrases of description, and the author gets inside the skin of an animal as few authors have done. The quality of the book, however, may be best illustrated by a quotation from an ordinary rather than a particularly notable, page. Here is a chapter-opening:—

Yellow from ash and elm and willow, buff from oak, rusty brown from the chestnut, scarlet from bramble—the waters bore away the first-coloured leaves of the year. . . . the reeds sighed in the songless days, the flags curled as they withered, and their brittle tops were broken by the rains. Eels began to pass down to the sea. They were the females, travelling from ponds and lakes, from dykes and ditches and drains, from the hill streams of Dartmoor, where the Two Rivers had their ancient source. The eyes of the eels grew larger as they were swept down in the turbid waters, as they writhed over wet grass, along cart ruts and drains. These eels were urged seawards by a common desire—to meet the smaller males in the estuary, where each female would attract four; and after the meeting the female would swallow her four and begin a journey to where the shallow bed of the ocean broke off and dropped deep to its grave. Here among hulks rotting in seaweed, where strange fish, carrying lights, moved in the heaviest darkness, the eels of the world laid their eggs, and here they died, far under the floating bed of the Sargasso Sea, whence as transparent, flat, ribbon-shaped creatures, they had set out for the inland waters. After journeying for three years the elvers had reached the mouths of rivers and passed up to ponds and ditches, where those that were not killed by man, otter, heron, gull, waterfowl, cormorant, kingfisher, dwarf owl and pike, lived and grew until desire and instinct moved them to seek the eels' birthplace in the grave of the Atlantic.

A series of statements without comment; but organised into something approaching poetry by an underlying passion and wonder. As for the otter, there is no propaganda and no sentimentality; but such truth and force that one reader at least has acquired a completely novel distaste for otter-hunting.

MUSIC IN THE PARKS.

Bands will play in the parks to-day as follows:—

Green Park: Grenadier Guards, 6 to 8 p.m.

Hyde Park: Welsh Guards, 8 to 10.

Hyde Park: Royal Parks, conducted by Mr. Charles Godfrey, 3 to 5, and daily 3 to 5 and 7 to 10.

Greenwich Park: London Fire Brigade, 6.30 to 9.

Regent's Park: Wood Green Excelsior, 6.30 to 9.

Richmond Park: Feltham Prize, 6.30 to 8.30.

Kensington Gardens: Kensington Vols., 3 to 5 and 6.45 to 8.45.

Bands will also play in the parks and open spaces over which the L.C.C. and N.S. League have control from 7 to 9 o'clock.

To the Cabinet.
* * *
To Tarka the Otter.
Sir, we congratulate you upon your achievement of celebrity. We understand that the *Daily Express* is arranging for special rights of article by you. Lady Oxford might be photographed with a pet otter for "Good Housekeeping." Messrs. Swears and Wells are arranging for a special sale of Otter Skin Wraps and Coney Otter coats for the late Summer Season. We understand that the quarrel over your biographical rights between Mr. Lytton Strachey and Herr Emil Ludwig has not yet been settled. We do not know whether Mr. Beverley Nichols has invited you to play tennis with Mr. Noel Coward yet, nor whether Miss Sitwell has given you a Select Poetry Reading, but we expect that these little attentions will shortly follow. We offer you our heartiest good wishes.
* * *

AUTHOR'S LEAP TO FAME.

Chronicle
3 June 1928
HAWTHORNDEN PRIZE
FOR NATURE BOOK.

TARKA, THE OTTER.

The Hawthornden Prize for Literature for 1928 has been awarded to Mr. Henry Williamson, a young British author, for his book "Tarka the Otter."

In 1921 Henry Williamson left London and rented, in a village in Devonshire, a cottage at £5 a year, where he settled down to write.

His privations were many, but he went on with his work because he loved it.

Yesterday afternoon he had his reward, for Mr. John Galsworthy presented him with the Hawthornden prize at the Æolian Hall, and paid one of the most remarkable tributes to his work ever given to a living writer.

"A WORST SELLER"?

Mr. Williamson's work has always been admired by a few discriminating lovers of nature, but his public is small. "In America," Mr. Williamson told a "Daily Chronicle" representative yesterday, "I must be a worst seller."

Very soon he is likely to be a best seller, and after Mr. Galsworthy's tribute yesterday some who were present at the prize-giving decided to secure first editions of "Tarka the Otter" before they rise in price.

Mr. Williamson sat in the last seat in the Æolian Hall and listened with deep happiness to Mr. Galsworthy's praise.

"Mr. Williamson," said Mr. Galsworthy, is the finest living interpreter of the drama of wild life, and is at his best a beautiful writer."

To an audience which included such well-known writers as Lawrence Binyon, J. C. Squire, Hugh Walpole, Rebecca West and Robert Lynd, Mr. Galsworthy read extracts from the prize-winner's works. Miss Alice Warrender, the giver of the prize, also expressed her delight in the book.

Mr. Williamson told "The Daily Chronicle" representative that he re-wrote "Tarka the Otter" 17 times. His next book, which may be published this year, is called "The Pathway," and is a story of the war.

Mr. Williamson has written, also, "The Old Stag" and a book on village life in Devon.

AN OTTER AND £100

Mr. Henry Williamson
and His Prize *Children's Newspaper*

A GOOD BOOK AND ITS REWARD

With all our hearts we congratulate Mr. Henry Williamson on winning the Hawthornden Prize for his book Tarka the Otter.

The value of the prize is £100. It was founded nine years ago by Miss Alice Warrender and is given annually to the author of the best piece of imaginative literature produced during the year. The prize-winner must not be over forty.

We are delighted about Mr. Williamson's success for two reasons: the book and himself. He is a man who, for the sake of the faith that was in him, forsook London and tramped the roads down into Devon. He managed to get a tiny cottage on Exmoor at a rental of 25s. a quarter.

Life at Scarecrow Cottage

There in 1921 he settled down. He collected a number of friends of the kind the C.N. loves: dogs, little wild animals, and birds, including a carrion crow, and brought them to Scarecrow Cottage to live. There are not too many comforts in these labourers' cottages, and Mr. Williamson had not too much money. He and the birds and the animals roughed it together, and got what they could to eat.

All the time the man's mind and sympathies were at work. He was learning, watching. He knew that if he lived a hundred years he would not learn what he wanted to learn of the ways of wild creatures. He settled down to think of little but the moorland life. When he was dull at night he talked to the men in the tiny village where the cottage was. Once he had a story accepted by a London paper and a cheque came for it. No one in the little out-of-the-way village had ever seen a cheque before. They have seen a few since.

A Master of Lovely Prose

In the meantime Mr. Williamson was working on a book which lay very near his heart. It concerned the creatures he loved, and told of visions of his own. It was called Tarka the Otter: His Joyful Water Life and Death in the Country of the Two Rivers. It was with this book that he won the Hawthornden Prize, and it is a book of a rare and lovely kind.

Mr. Williamson almost turned himself into an otter before he knew enough of Tarka to write about him. And he is so sensitive to the beauty of the English language and so unsatisfied with his work that Tarka was endlessly revised, being practically rewritten seventeen times.

In the first pages of the book we see that Mr. Williamson is a master of lovely prose, and we are held by its powerful writing all through. The book takes us all over Exmoor, amid the wind on the high land and the salt of the sea.

Hawthornden Prize Award

Author Of "Tarka The Otter"

The Hawthornden Prize for literature for 1928 has been awarded to Mr. Henry Williamson, a young British author, for his book "Tarka the Otter." In 1921 Henry Williamson left London with no money, and rented in Devonshire a cottage at £5 a year, where he settled down to write.

Mr. Williamson's works has always been admired by a few discriminating lovers of nature, but his public is small. "In America," Mr. Williamson told a "Daily Post" representative, yesterday, "I must be a worst seller." After Mr. Galsworthy's tribute, yesterday, when he presented the prize at the Æolian Hall, some who were present decided to secure first editions of "Tarka the Otter" before they rise in price. Mr. Williamson sat in the last seat in the Æolian Hall, and listened with deep happiness to Mr. Galsworthy's praise.

"Mr. Williamson," said Mr. Galsworthy, "is the finest living interpreter of the drama of wild life, and is at his best a beautiful writer." To an audience, which included such well-known writers as Laurence Binyon, J. C. Squire, Hugh Walpole, Rebecca West and Robert Lynd, Mr. Galsworthy read extracts from the prize-winner's works. Miss Alice Warrender, the giver of the prize, also expressed her delight in the book.

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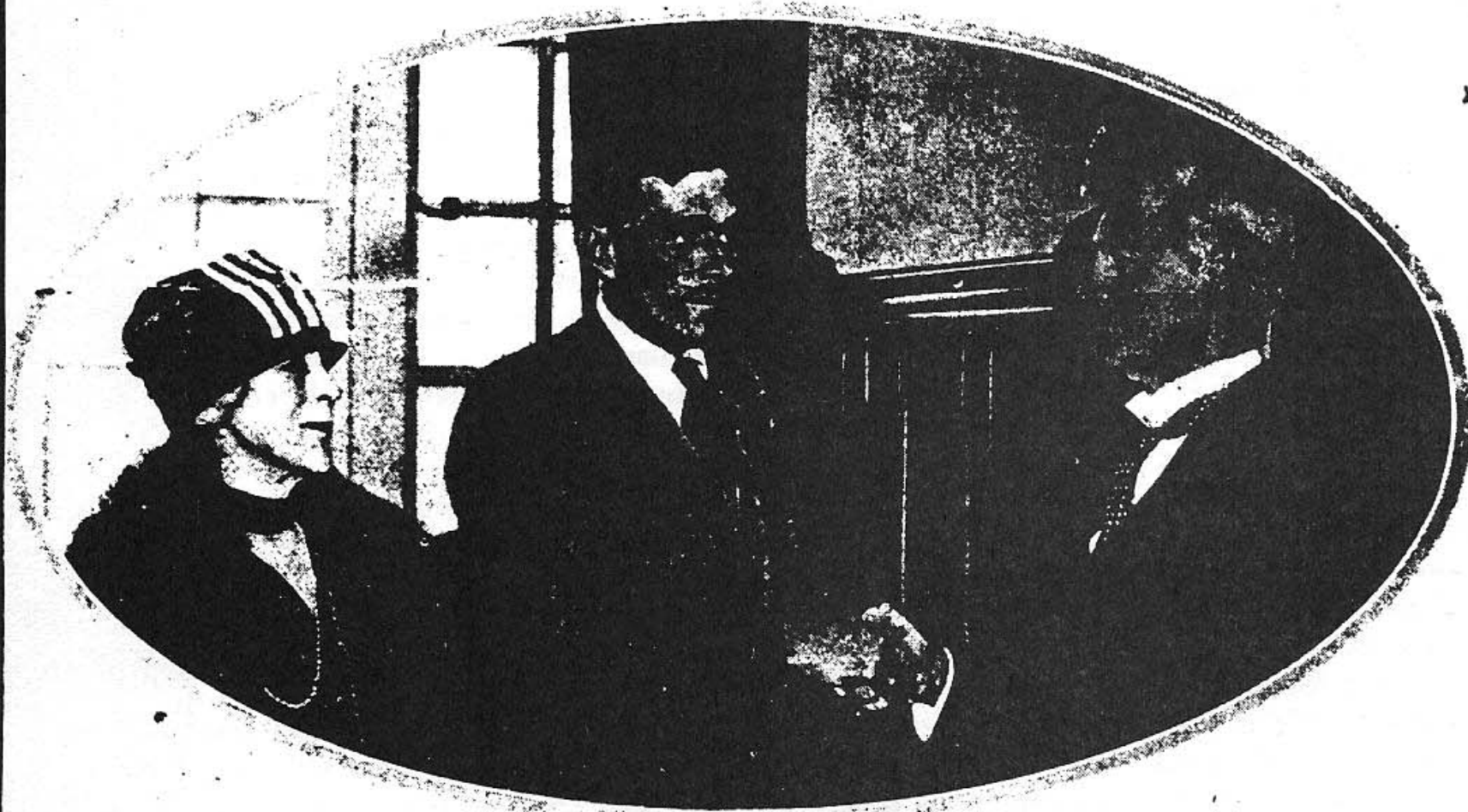
Instituted by Miss Alice Warrender in 1919, the prize has been awarded annually for a work of imagination by an author whose age does not exceed forty-one.



MR. HENRY WILLIAMSON.
FOR WRITING A BOOK SEVENTEEN TIMES AND
PLACING EVERY TWIG CORRECTLY.

Mr. Henry Williamson, who was awarded the 1928 Hawthornden Prize of £100 for his book, "Tarka the Otter," stated that his first book brought him in about £10. He then wrote "Tarka the Otter," which was rejected by a publisher. It was re-written seventeen times, and every twig is accurately placed.

THE TROPHIES, BY HENRY WILLIAMSON.



THE HAWTHORNDEN PRIZE-WINNER: MR. JOHN GALSWORTHY MAKING THE PRESENTATION TO MR. HENRY WILLIAMSON, THE WRITER OF THE ARTICLE ON THIS PAGE.

Mr. Henry Williamson, the author of the otter hunting article on this page, has been awarded the 1928 Hawthornden prize of £100 for his book, "Tarka, the Otter." This prize, instituted in 1919 by Miss Alice Warrender, who is shown in our picture, is for the author of a work of imagination, the writer of which must not be over 41 years of age. Mr. John Galsworthy is here seen presenting the prize to Mr. Williamson when describing him as "the finest and most intimate living interpreter of the drama of wild life."

WHEN the dog-otter had been worried for about two minutes, the huntsman and the whips pushed their way into the mass of hounds. The huntsman seized the long tapered otter-rudder, while the whips gently but firmly punched muzzles, and tapped with whip handles those heads of those hounds still tugging at the brown body. Render snarled. Coraline licked the gloved hand that shoved her muzzle away. One by one they were detached from the worry, some to attach themselves again and to be pushed aside by pole and gloved fist. The whips cried, "Go'r'n leave it! Captain! Dewdrop! Go'r'n leave it!"

The huntsman lifted the limp brown body above his head and set it sagging on a five-foot ash pole, so that head and rudder hung down. He fixed the hook of a spring-balance in the loose skin, and the spring drew out to the weight of twenty-four pounds. The words "twenty-four pounds" were passed on many lips. A big dog! A polygon of poles held against breeched and skirted thighs was formed around the master, the whips, and the two hunt servants, while the huntsman, unhooking a hunting knife from the swivel on his belt, knelt on one knee to take the trophies.

Pate and rudder and pads were cut and twisted off. While he was working, the hounds were baying outside the human polygon and trying to thrust their heads past knees and shins. Dewdrop nipped a calf, tearing the dark blue stocking where the red cotton of the laundry mark was threaded into the blue wool. The skin of the trunk was slit from neck to rudder. The huntsman arose, and dabbled bloody fingers on the brow of a nervous and proud little boy—telling him not to wash off the stains until after sunset. The boy was pleased that he had been "blooded." It meant something to him; while water touching his brow, in infancy, meant Nothing.

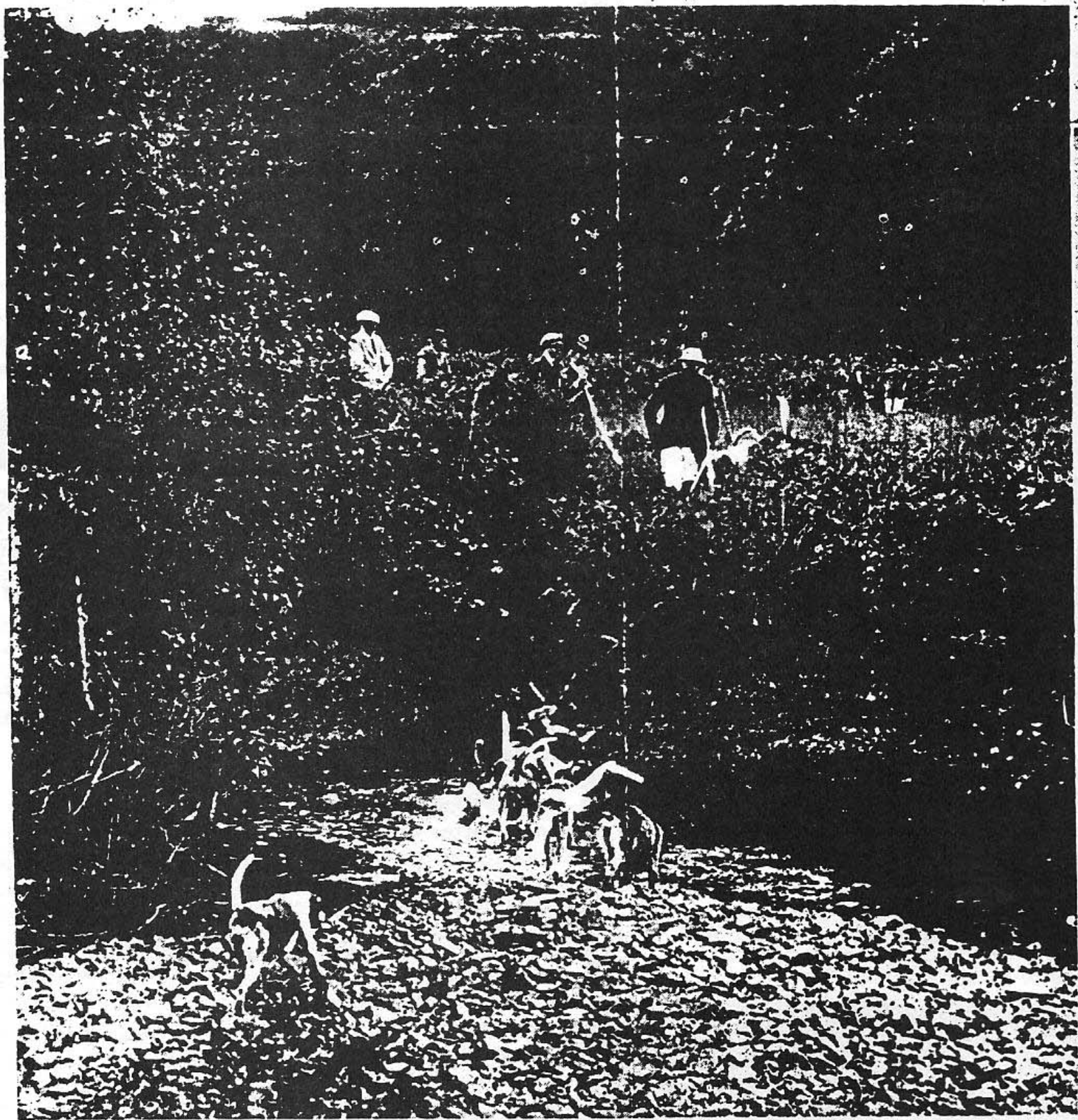
Quickly the huntsman picked up the carcase; then, in a chant:

"Tally-ho — tally-ho — tally-ho — tear'm, tear'm, tear'm, and eat'm."

And the trunk was flung into the air, to thump down, and be seized, tugged, pulled and torn

asunder, to the rattle of horns, and the cries of "Whoo, Whoop!" Hungry hounds growled and snarled, cracked bones, swallowed muscles, chewed sinews. Render rushed at Barbrook, who had a mouthful of ribs, and barked sharply to make him drop it. Barbrook swung round, still chewing. Young Dabster licked a blood-stain on the grass, but without enthusiasm; he preferred scald-milk. The huntsman seized the ragged pelt being tugged by Playboy and Hurricane, tapped their muzzles until it was free, folded it and put it in an inside pocket. The master, after a casual but intent glance around the human faces, walked to a lady visitor in a red and blue uniform, and gave her the otter's pate. She smiled with pleasure and thanked him. He gave the rudder to another lady; the pads—one with two white toes—to the farmers. Sandwiches, biscuits, and chocolates were taken out of tweed pockets. Hounds began to cadge for food. The whips rated them, got them together in a pack and started to take them across the meadow to a shed by the riverside, where motor-cars with luncheon baskets awaited most of the uniformed sportsmen.

There they drank whisky-and-soda, and were stimulated to talk about the long hunt of the otter—the otter that had possessed in proportion to its size fifty times the agility and grace of any one of them.



OTTER HUNTING IN NORTH DEVON: THE CHERITON PACK WORKING THE BED OF THE TORRIDGE AT BLACK TORRINGTON, THE DISTRICT DEALT WITH IN MR. HENRY WILLIAMSON'S PRIZE-WINNING BOOK, "TARKA, THE OTTER."