



# Helen Waddell and Maude Clarke

## IRISHWOMEN, FRIENDS AND SCHOLARS



Jennifer FitzGerald

Peter Lang

As women's university participation expanded rapidly in the first decade of the twentieth century, two close friends at Queen's University Belfast nursed scholarly ambitions. Helen Waddell, budding feminist literary critic, and Maude Clarke, future Irish historian, were to become famous medievalists. Waddell's progress was stymied by her stepmother's insistence on family duty and by academic misogyny; Clarke's father, in contrast, helped to clear her way. This joint biography intertwines the story of their friendship with their modern education, their shifting research interests and the obstacles and opportunities that faced them as women seeking academic careers. It traces Waddell's evolution into an independent scholar, creative writer and translator of medieval Latin, and Clarke's career as an influential Oxford don, training a generation of high-achieving women academics. The book also reproduces the surviving chapters of Helen Waddell's *Woman in the Drama before Shakespeare* (1912–1919), an example of early feminist literary criticism, and Maude Clarke's searching, self-reflective 'Historiographical Notes' (c.1930).

Jennifer FitzGerald was educated at University College Dublin and received her PhD in English from the University of Cambridge. She taught at the School of English, Queen's University Belfast from 1975 to 1999. She has been Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Women's Studies, San Diego State University, California since 2002.



Helen Waddell and Maude Clarke



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Irishwomen, Friends and Scholars

with Helen Waddell's *Woman in the Drama*  
*before Shakespeare* (1912–1919) and Maude Clarke's  
'Historiographical Notes' (c.1930)

JENNIFER FITZGERALD



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*For Steve Day and Gianna Pomata*



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## Abbreviations

CFP	Clarke Family Papers
CP	Clarke Papers, Somerville College, Oxford
ES	Enid Starkie
FMP	F. M. Powicke
GPT	George Pritchard Taylor
GS	George Saintsbury
HW	Helen Waddell
KMEM	Katherine Maude Elisabeth Murray
KMM	Kate Maitland Murray
LMH	Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford
LMH WP	Waddell Papers, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford
LSS	Lucy Stuart Sutherland
MM	Margaret Martin, née Waddell
MP	Murray Papers, West Sussex Public Record Office
MVC	Maude Violet Clarke
PRONI	Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
QUL MS 18	Queen's University Belfast Library Papers of Helen Waddell
QUL uncatalogued	Queen's University Belfast Library Papers of Helen Waddell, uncatalogued
RJC	Richard J. Clarke
SCC	Somerville College Council, Oxford
SP	Sutherland Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford
StP	Starkie Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford
WP	Helen Waddell Papers, held at Kilmacrew House, Co. Down, Northern Ireland



Helen Waddell, *c.* 1920, when she left Belfast for Oxford. Her hair had by then gone white.



Maude Clarke in 1925, probably in the Somerville College library.

## Introduction

‘Her best friend is Helen Waddell,’ wrote Professor F. M. Powicke in 1919, while recommending his former student, Maude Clarke, for the post of History Tutor at Somerville College, Oxford.<sup>1</sup> It was unusual for an academic reference to proffer personal information, but Powicke’s letter was unsolicited, addressed to Somerville’s English Tutor, who might have known Helen Waddell’s poems, *Lyrics from the Chinese*. Helen and Maude were bound not only by the ties of friendship but also by a shared ambition to become scholars. They enrolled at the Queen’s University Belfast in the first decade of the twentieth century when the proportion of women attending university was rapidly increasing but an academic career was still a very long shot for a woman. The obstacles could be personal – Helen was stymied by her stepmother, who prevented her obtaining the research training required for a university post – but they were also professional. Queen’s University’s 1908 Charter might declare that ‘women shall be eligible equally with men ... to hold any office or enjoy any advantages of the university’ but in practice sexism prevailed.<sup>2</sup> There were no sanctions and indeed no pressure to encourage professors accustomed to indulging their ‘half-monastic ways’ to employ women as long as there was an available man.<sup>3</sup>

Recent publications on the history of women’s university education in the United Kingdom and Ireland have elucidated a fascinating story of personal courage and institutional change. The pages of, among others, Judith Harford’s *The Opening of University Education to Women in Ireland* and Jane Robinson’s *Bluestockings: The Remarkable Story of the First Women*

1 FMP to Helen [Darbishire], 13 Feb. 1919, CP, Testimonials file.

2 T. W. Moody and J. C. Beckett, *Queen’s Belfast, 1845–1949: The History of a University* (London, 1959), ii, 802 (hereafter referred to as *Queen’s Belfast*).

3 HW to MM [1930], WP, box 11. Square brackets indicate dates derived from internal evidence.

to *Fight for an Education* offer glimpses of the challenge and anxiety – and sometimes also the fun – experienced by young women embarking on higher education.<sup>4</sup> This joint biography focuses more closely on the specific journey to scholarly prominence undertaken by two Irishwomen. It examines the up-to-date education they received as undergraduates in their respective disciplines, English Literature and Modern History, at Queen's University Belfast, details their postgraduate studies, discusses their specialized research and follows their endeavours to realize their ambitions. Historians of women's achievement will find it particularly valuable to compare the similar background and training, leading to diverging career outcomes, of two turn-of-the-century would-be women scholars.

Helen Waddell's academic career began late; she was thirty-one when Mrs Waddell died and she was able to leave Belfast to enroll for a DPhil at Oxford. Although she had begun research years before, the constant demands of her alcoholic stepmother slowed her progress, as did several changes of focus. Supported by an Oxford fellowship, she spent fifteen months in Paris working on the *scholares vagantes*, medieval university students whose Latin songs reflect not only a dissolute lifestyle but also their romantic appreciation of love and beauty. Foregoing the doctorate, she published *The Wandering Scholars* in 1927 to great acclaim. But her age and lack of teaching experience prevented her from obtaining a university appointment. Instead she became an independent scholar, combining her studies with part-time employment as expert adviser to the publisher Constable & Co. Her translations of the vagantes' songs, *Medieval Latin Lyrics*, and her historical novel, *Peter Abelard*, attracted even greater accolades.<sup>5</sup> Helen's work fell between the stools of scholarship and literature; the academy remained ambivalent about her popular success. She conveyed the medieval world to the reader with a vividness usually unknown in

4 Judith Harford, *The Opening of University Education to Women in Ireland* (Dublin, 2008) and Jane Robinson, *Bluestockings: The Remarkable Story of the First Women to Fight for an Education* (London, 2009).

5 HW, *The Wandering Scholars* (London, 1927), hereafter referred to as *WS*; *Medieval Latin Lyrics* (London, 1929), hereafter referred to as *MLL*; *Peter Abelard: A Novel* (London, 1933), hereafter referred to as *PA*.

purely academic publications, but meticulous scholars found her wanting in intellectual rigour.<sup>6</sup> Recent re-assessment of her idiosyncratic hybrid genre has begun the recovery of her work and reputation.<sup>7</sup>

Maude Clarke, three years' Helen's junior, followed a more conventional path, supplementing her history degree from Queen's with undergraduate training at Oxford. She returned to Queen's as Deputy Professor during World War I, at the end of which she was appointed History Tutor at Somerville College, Oxford. She took some time to begin publishing but, as her productivity accelerated, she began to make her mark. Her work gave promise that she would become one of the leading medievalists of her time, a prediction unfulfilled due to her death at the age of forty-three.<sup>8</sup> Although her research has been absorbed into the mainstream of fourteenth-century historiography, Maude's academic achievement has not been comprehensively assessed.<sup>9</sup>

The scholarly biographies of these two women are intertwined with the story of their friendship. They had met when Helen was a final-year undergraduate and Maude a fresher at Queen's; a First Class Honours degree, several scholarships and the successful completion of a Master's thesis gave Helen the edge. But Maude soon caught up. When her friend returned to teach at Queen's, Helen felt they could no longer consider themselves equals. Immured in Belfast with her stepmother, she had 'gone down many

6 Peter Dronke, review of HW, *More Latin Lyrics, from Virgil To Milton*, ed. Felicitas Corrigan, *Times Literary Supplement* (17 June 1977).

7 Jennifer FitzGerald, 'Helen Waddell (1889–1965): The Scholar-Poet', *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, ed. Jane Chance (Madison, WI, 2005), 323–38; John Scattergood, 'Introduction', Helen Waddell, *Medieval Latin Lyrics*, 1929 (Dublin, 2008), v–xxxviii.

8 V. H. Galbraith, quoted in Norman Cantor, *Inventing the Middle Ages: The Lives, Works, and Ideas of the Great Medievalists of the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1991), 389.

9 V. H. Galbraith, 'Clarke, Maude Violet (1892–1935)', rev. K. D. Reynolds, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32432>>, accessed 28 April 2011; see Jennifer FitzGerald, "'Persephone Come Back from the Dead": Maude Violet Clarke (1892–1935)', *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, 381–98.

rungs of the ladder'.<sup>10</sup> At times the friends' lives went in parallel; at others, one's success was foil to the other's disappointment. Their achievements, too, were both in sync and in contrast, Helen's popular success balancing Maude's growing reputation among medieval historians as a scrupulous and original researcher. But their friendship is also significant in the history of women's higher education as an example of the support, both personal and intellectual, that women scholars offered each other. During the 'years that were wasted', Helen could rely on the occasional 'Egyptian night' with Maude, sitting in front of the fire and talking far into the night.<sup>11</sup> Such conversations were essential for honing Helen's ideas, acting as a catalyst to her thinking.<sup>12</sup> For Maude, too, interaction with research colleagues or college companions made daily life satisfying and stimulating. Many women who won academic prominence began their scholarly apprenticeship as Maude's students, forming a network of reciprocal support in both practical and intellectual matters.<sup>13</sup>

*The Wandering Scholars* is the anomalous product of Helen's initial research into 'Woman in the Drama before Shakespeare', containing early examples of subtle and penetrating feminist literary criticism.<sup>14</sup> The twists and turns of its metamorphosis into a study of medieval Latin lyric and of twelfth-century humanism are charted below. Helen and Maude were both products of the nineteenth-century movement for women's higher education which paralleled, and sometimes merged with, the struggle for women's suffrage. In 1915 they co-authored a novel, 'Discipline', an example of the Edwardian marriage-problem genre addressing the dilemma of many middle-class women faced with the patriarchal expectations of traditional marriage.<sup>15</sup> The heroine, Elizabeth, based on Helen herself, rebels against

10 HM to GPT, 13 Oct. 1918, WP, box 16.

11 HW to MM [15 May 1926], WP, box 11; HW to GPT, 9 Oct. 1916, WP, box 16.

12 HW to GPT, 6 Apr. 1919, WP, box 17; HW to MM [Dec. 1925], WP, box 11.

13 See MVC's correspondence with LSS, *passim*, SP, box 3.

14 Jennifer FitzGerald, "Jazzing the Middle Ages": The Feminist Genesis of Helen Waddell's *The Wandering Scholars*, *Irish Studies Review* 8/1 (2000), 5–22.

15 WP, box 5. The present writer is preparing an edition of 'Discipline' for publication.

her husband, an anti-feminist scholar modeled on the Professor of English at Queen's. Maude provided the template for Anne, Elizabeth's cool-headed scholarly friend. Although Elizabeth's attacks upon her husband put her in the wrong and led to her 'disciplining', the novel brings to the surface the confusion experienced by many women handicapped by the imbalanced power dynamics of contemporary marriage.

Helen had often clashed 'in the matter of feminism in the University' with her academic adviser, Professor Gregory Smith, who agreed that she had 'a good many of the qualifications' required for tackling 'Woman in the Drama'.<sup>16</sup> While the participation of women in literature – as authors or characters – was gaining popular attention, the academy assumed that the 'universal' values espoused by art superseded specificities such as gender. Scholarly objectivity also eschewed personal investments; women scholars wishing to prove their academic credibility were even more likely than male colleagues to enforce critical impartiality. Nevertheless, Helen was not alone in choosing to study women in literature; there is evidence that a small minority of Master's dissertations submitted in the United Kingdom at the time were in this area.<sup>17</sup>

The two surviving chapters of 'Woman in the Drama' are published in Appendix 1. Helen's literary history is constructed intertextually; she assumes the reader will recognize the quotations with which she weaves her argument. One chapter explores diverging ideological attitudes to women and their impact on literary representation; the second analyses the dilemma of Elizabethan dramatists confronting a sexual politics which exceeds their masculine courage. Within its larger argument, the study offers a feminist literary critique well ahead of its time. But Helen did not complete the book; her examination of medieval misogyny introduced her to Neo-Platonism and eventually to twelfth-century humanism. No longer was woman identified as 'temptation manifest in the flesh, incarnate

16 HW to GPT [July–Aug. 1915], WP, box 17; HW to MM [Aug.–Sept. 1912], WP, box 11.

17 *Retrospective Index to Theses of Great Britain and Ireland, 1716–1950*, ed. Roger R. Biboul and Francis L. Kent, i: *Social Science and Humanities* (Oxford, 1975).

Sex' but merely as a human being, one whose dignity lay in body as well as soul, in heart as well as mind.<sup>18</sup> The belief in a common, all-encompassing humanity was in tune with Helen's feminism; it became the subject which would make her famous.

Maude's research, on the other hand, did not focus on women, even though her discipline had taken larger strides in this direction than had the study of literature. She specialized instead in medieval constitutional history, a field which rendered women almost completely invisible since by definition public affairs in the Middle Ages excluded the vast majority of women.<sup>19</sup> Maude certainly harboured sufficient feminist sensibilities to co-author 'Discipline', but it would have been hard for her to consider committing herself to anything less than the most academically rigorous branch (according to contemporary thinking) of her discipline. The fact that this was also the most prestigious field was probably secondary, although success as a constitutional historian would put her among the most celebrated male historians. But if Maude did not highlight her own gender, she certainly identified as Irish. Her earliest research projects were in Irish history; even as she made a name for herself in English constitutional history, it was newly recovered Irish evidence that often clinched the argument. Working in a field held in high esteem by her colleagues could be considered a safe strategy but, at least in private, she confronted trickier questions such as the role of imagination, and even emotion, in historiography. The notes she drafted on 'Methods of Thinking about Historical Problems' and 'Stages of Mental Development Necessary for Historical Study' and related topics are published in Appendix 2.

The book's chronology has been determined by the life span of the authors' friendship. Hence Helen's early, unpublished scholarship is investigated in depth; Maude's contribution to medieval history, often mentioned in passing by medievalists but rarely detailed, is comprehensively appraised.

18 'The Thyng Herself', Appendix 1, 194.

19 Anthony Brundage and Richard A. Cosgrove, *The Great Tradition: Constitutional History and National Identity in Britain and the United States, 1870–1960* (Stanford, CA, 2007), 184.

This joint biography has grown out of primary sources, mainly letters and documents preserved in various archives. I have been fortunate to have had access to the large corpus of Helen Waddell's letters, of which the greater number are addressed to her sister, Margaret Martin, and, for the years 1914–20, to the Reverend George Pritchard Taylor, a missionary in India whose financial support permitted her to continue researching while living with her stepmother in Belfast. While a certain number of Maude's letters are archived among the papers of her correspondents, mostly those of her academic colleagues, there is a grievous imbalance in the material which illuminates Helen's life and that which illuminates Maude's. Furthermore, although early in their friendship Helen had jokingly fantasized that her letters to Maude would be published in her memoirs, this whole rich correspondence has all but disappeared. Only three letters from Maude to Helen (plus a fragment), written in 1913–15, survive.<sup>20</sup> Maude was a very private person: she no doubt destroyed her personal papers, including Helen's letters, when she knew she was dying. Fortunately Helen provides a good deal of information about Maude in her own letters to others.

The biographer faces the dilemma that she can only build her account on the evidence to hand. The availability of her extensive personal correspondence throws a light on Helen's inner life; a much more limited corpus of letters – mostly focused on academic matters – denies us intimate insight into Maude. Helen speaks for herself, and occasionally for Maude; our knowledge of Maude is more likely to emanate from second or third parties. In addition, while documentary evidence has undeniable credibility, it is a poor substitute for direct knowledge of the individual: as a friend said of Maude's personality, it is perhaps impossible 'to put into words the quality of something so alive and varied, so full of shifting light and subtle changes.'<sup>21</sup>

The more that Helen's and Maude's life stories reveal a pattern of analogies and contrasts, the more one suspects that their real lives were a good

20 HW to MM [Christmas 1911], WP, box 11; MVC to HW [1913–15], WP, box 2.

21 Helen Darbishire, 'In Memoriam M. V. Clarke', *Somerville College Chapel Addresses and Other Papers* (Oxford, 1962), 8.

deal messier and more complicated. Nevertheless, within the limitations of the existing resources, it has seemed worthwhile to assemble a narrative of two young women who at the turn of the twentieth century were able to avail of university education and to pursue their academic ambitions. Their success as scholars, within and without the academy, justifies the attempt to fill in the story of their friendship and their achievements.

## Queen's Undergraduates

### College Friends

'I went to college, and was suddenly and amazingly happy.'<sup>1</sup> Helen Waddell's experience at Queen's University Belfast in the first decade of the twentieth century parallels that of many university students: freedom from supervision, socializing with peers, intellectual stimulus – and the headiness of possible romance. Sitting and laughing in the 'little fenced in paradise', the garden Queen's had dedicated to the use of women students, feeling 'very wicked and very gay', Helen suddenly realized that her companion was going to fall in love with her. 'It is a sensation at any time – but when one is just nineteen ...'<sup>2</sup>

There were other triumphs; in a letter to her sister she described the Professor of English Literature returning essays in class:

Well, he read out the 17 in alphabetical order – my miserable self coming last. The only First Class at all was Ella Fisher – A minus, – 'a good essay – gracefully written' says [Professor] Gregory [Smith] approvingly. Internal curses from me – being like the Turk too fond to rule alone – Then a weary waste of B, B minus, B minus minus minus. Then, 'Miss Waddell.' Pause. 'An exceptional piece of work ... an original treatment ... in fact, one of the best essays I have ever read ... and I have judged it worthy of the highest mark to be given – A plus.' Somebody said afterwards that if she had been in my shoes she would have had hysterics. As it was, I sat and looked as if I was

1 HW to GPT, 13 July 1919, WP, box 17.

2 HW to GPT, 23 May 1916, WP, box 16. The incident occurred at the end of her First Arts year, just before her twentieth birthday.

thanking the goodness and the grace that on my birth had smiled. [...] If they were not nice girls they would poison me – I know I would in their shoes.<sup>3</sup>

Maude Clarke too, from a family Helen dubbed intellectual, seems to have enjoyed university life.

Helen Waddell and Maude Clarke were to number among Queen's University Belfast's most distinguished graduates. They met as students, Maude a first-year undergraduate, two years behind final-year Helen. Helen had brown hair, a round face, a distinct chin and merry eyes – the colour, her young nephew would say, of 'thatch when moss grows on it'; she wore glasses from childhood.<sup>4</sup> She was sensitive and compassionate, warm and lively; she was also well-trained in self-sacrifice, although her letters reveal that a certain amount of resentment and anger underpinned her compliance.<sup>5</sup> Maude was dark and slight, with an oval face, 'her eyes much the biggest thing about her'.<sup>6</sup> Her hair was long, worn up all her life in the old-fashioned way, hanging in two plaits over her shoulders when she was in bed.<sup>7</sup> She was very shy and quiet with strangers but with friends she revealed a freakish sense of fun, 'always ready for anything, provided it was not boring'.<sup>8</sup> Friends described her 'grave beauty lit up by flashes of humour and kindly malice or softened by quick sympathy'.<sup>9</sup> She had a sharp and critical mind. The friends shared a background as protestant

- 3 HW to MM [May 1911], WP, box 11. HW's reports of third-party direct speech are not necessarily verbatim and may reflect her subjective bias.
- 4 HW to GPT, 4 Nov. 1917, WP, box 16.
- 5 HW to MM [June 1912], [Feb. 1911] WP, box 11, HW to GPT [Nov. 1915], [late 1916], WP, box 16, 30 Mar. 1919, 30 Dec. 1919, WP, box 17.
- 6 HW to GPT, 9 Jan. 1916, WP, box 16.
- 7 Mary Lascelles, *A Memoir* (n.p., 1989), 47.
- 8 HW to GPT, 24 Oct. 1916, WP, box 16, FMP to [Darbishire], 13 Feb. 1919, CP, Testimonials file; J. L. 'An impression', CP, Obituary file. J. L. is almost certainly Jane Levett, MVC's fellow-student at LMH, sister of A. Elizabeth Levett, MVC's History Tutor. Jane Levett became a lecturer in Logic at the University of Glasgow; she is best known for her translation of Plato's *Theaetetus* (Glasgow, 1928).
- 9 E. M. Jamison, 'In Memoriam Maude Violet Clarke', *The Brown Book: the Lady Margaret Hall Chronicle* (Dec. 1935), 84.

clergy daughters: Maude's father was a Church of Ireland rector in nearby Carnmoney, Co. Antrim, while Helen's had been a Presbyterian missionary in Japan.

Helen Jane Waddell was born in Tokyo on 31 May 1889, the tenth and last child of the Reverend Hugh Waddell (1840–1901) and his wife Jane Martin (1850–92), originally from Co. Down. When Helen was two years old, her ailing mother returned to Belfast with the children, only to die of typhoid a few months later. Reverend Waddell came home on compassionate leave; in order to provide his children with a mother before he returned to Japan he married his forty-eight-year-old cousin, Martha Waddell. The new Mrs Waddell and the four youngest children joined him in Tokyo in 1896 when Helen was seven years old. The following four years gave her an enchanted childhood: 'the richest thing in my life has been Japan – outside books', she wrote.<sup>10</sup>

The family returned to Belfast in 1900; within months, Helen's father was dead. The loss hit her hard, causing her to retreat into herself. The twelve-year-old was by now a day-pupil at Victoria College, Belfast, one of the most academically oriented secondary schools for girls in Ireland. Founded by Margaret Byers, a pioneer in the cause of women's higher education, it consistently scored first in Ireland in preparing middle-class pupils for public examinations, with a separate department functioning as a women's university college.<sup>11</sup> On the death of their father, Helen's elder brothers financed her education and that of her siblings. Her ability must have been recognized early because, according to the family, Mrs Byers put her hand on Helen's shoulder saying, 'This one I will educate for nothing'.<sup>12</sup> Of Helen's three best friends at Victoria, two would attend Queen's with

10 HW to GPT [1917?], WP, box 17.

11 Harford, *The Opening of University Education to Women in Ireland*, 13; HW to GPT, 3 Dec. 1916, WP, box 16.

12 Alison Jordan, *Margaret Byers: Pioneer of Women's Education and Founder of Victoria College, Belfast* (Belfast, n.d.), 46.

her: Meta (Margaret) Fleming and Helen Ritchie Forbes. The third was Cathleen Nesbitt, later a famous actress.<sup>13</sup>

The younger Waddell children lived with their stepmother in 19 Cedar Avenue, a tall, thin, rented terraced house with no garden off the Antrim Road. The liberal atmosphere of their Japanese childhood was replaced by the penurious Presbyterian respectability enforced by Mrs Waddell. University education prepared the boys for professional careers; the girls, too, would have to support themselves. Helen's only sister Margaret, six years her senior, studied for her degree at Victoria College's University House.<sup>14</sup> In 1906 Meg married her own mother's first cousin, J. D. Martin, a generation older than she, a farmer and Presbyterian minister of Magherally, Co. Down. Meg moved to Kilmacrew House near Banbridge, and Helen was left, aged seventeen, at home alone with her stepmother.

Maude Violet Clarke was born in Belfast on 7 May 1892, the second child and only daughter of the Reverend Richard James Clarke (1856–1953) and Anne Jessop (1867–1942); she had one older and two younger brothers. Shortly after her birth her father was appointed rector of Trinity Church near Carlisle Circle, Belfast. The family lived in Belfast until 1903, when the Reverend Clarke accepted the living of Carnmoney in Co. Antrim and moved to Coole Glebe, the vicarage outside Belfast which would be the family home for the rest of Maude's life. The house, dating from 1810, was a long, plain two-storey building, 'full of echoing, uncarpeted passages, and great low-ceiled [*sic*] rooms'; rich in its multitude of books and in its location 'on a sort of terrace on the hills that rise steeply from Belfast Lough, and looking south over the water to the hills of County Down.'<sup>15</sup> Cut off

13 HW to GPT, 14 Jan. 1917, WP, box 16, Cathleen Nesbitt, *A Little Love & Good Company*, rev. edn (Ownings Mills, MD, 1977), 14. Nesbitt was a member of the Abbey Theatre Players during their 1911 New York tour and acted in Granville-Barker's Shakespeare productions. Her West End, Broadway and Hollywood career continued until 1980.

14 *Royal University of Ireland Supplemental Calendar*, 1909, 109; HW to GPT, 3 Dec. [1916], WP, box 16.

15 HW, quoted in E. L. Woodward, 'Memoir: M. V. Clarke', in MVC, *Fourteenth Century Studies*, ed. LSS and M. McKisack (Oxford, 1937), xx (hereafter referred to as *FS*); MVC to Mrs Gretton, 24 Aug. 1929, CP, Obituary file.

by the shoulder of another hill to the west from Belfast and well off the main roads, it was, in Maude's words, 'as peaceful and fair a corner – that is what "Coole" means – as you could imagine.' But its solitary location was a disadvantage for the young Maude, who felt desperately lonely.<sup>16</sup> She had the company of her brothers and of animals: when she was young they kept a pet ram, who knocked people down but allowed the children to lead him about by the horn; there were also dogs and a peacock called Shah.<sup>17</sup> Craving adventure, she set off hand-in-hand with her youngest brother to a nearby gypsy encampment but the gypsies did not play their expected part and hold the children up for ransom.<sup>18</sup> The Clarke children courted danger through their fascination with fire; Maude had herself set fire to the house twice by the age of ten.<sup>19</sup> In later years Helen was to call Coole Glebe 'the only house I know where one really *talks* at meals.'<sup>20</sup> She described the Clarkes as 'desperately untidy, desperately bookish, and uncommonly cheerful' – but they also carried their own particular pain. Maude's girlhood was shadowed by her mother's mental illness, according to Helen, 'a strange egotistical sort of insanity.'<sup>21</sup>

Maude attended Belfast Royal Academy on the Cliftonville Road, additionally tutored in Latin and Greek by her father, and was sent at the age of thirteen as a boarder to Alexandra College and School in Dublin.<sup>22</sup> Like Victoria College in Belfast, Alexandra had been founded to provide girls with a rigorous education at both secondary and tertiary level.<sup>23</sup> In October 1910 Maude enrolled at Queen's University Belfast.

16 MVC to Mrs Gretton, 24 Aug. 1929, CP, Obituary file.

17 RJC to ES, 20 Nov. 1935, StP, box 2; MVC to RJC [Mar. 1916], CFP; HW, quoted in Woodward, 'Memoir', xx.

18 Woodward, 'Memoir', x.

19 KMEM to KMM, 17 May 1931, MP, box 17; 20 Oct. 1929, MP, box 18.

20 HW to GPT, 5 Jan. 1919, WP, box 17.

21 HW to MM [July 1911], WP, box 11; HW to GPT, 9 Oct. 1916, WP, box 16; 2 Feb. 1919, WP, box 17.

22 Richard Clarke [email to present author], (17 Jan. 2011); Woodward, 'Memoir', x.

23 Harford, *The Opening of University Education*, 11–46.