

‘Only for yr. eyes’: The Publication of [Ursula Bethell](#)’s ‘Six Memorials’

Samantha Lentle-Keenan

In 1944 , [Ursula Bethell](#) began preparations for a final volume of poetry. Although she had initially planned only to reprint [Time and Place](#) (1936) and [Day and Night](#) (1939), Bethell was persuaded by [Allen Curnow](#) to undertake an edition of collected poems, a work Curnow wrote of as ‘so obvious & necessary that I am almost ashamed it hasn’t been thought of before’. ¹ This project was pursued with a sense of urgency on Bethell’s part, for she had been diagnosed with inoperable cancer in May of 1944. Those who collaborated with Bethell were similarly mindful of the need for promptness to ensure the project’s timely completion. [Helen Simpson](#) wrote in a note of 10th August 1944:

In rude haste, I send you these more or less fair copies of the extra poems for Miss Bethell’s volume, together with the verse for [The Long Harbour](#) that Denis apparently cut out in TIME & PLACE. Just off to see U.B., and want to tell her this job is done. ²

However, if Helen Simpson was here referring to the completion of the collected poems as a whole, her words were hopeful: the Caxton edition of Bethell’s [Collected Poems](#) did not appear until 1950, five years after the poet’s death in 1945, and debates about the final form and content of the publication continued well into 1946. As late as August 1946 [Charles Brasch](#) , while accepting the idea of a ‘collected poems’, proposed that ‘several inferior pieces’ from [Day and Night](#) and other ‘doubtful’ examples of Bethell’s work be cut from the edition altogether since, as he remarked, the collected edition ‘is not primarily a book of relics & a work of piety’. ³

In spite of Brasch’s suggestion, Caxton’s [Collected Poems](#) as it appeared in 1950 included Bethell’s three published collections of poetry, [From a Garden in the Antipodes](#), [Time and Place](#) and [Day and Night](#) ‘reprinted without alteration, in their original groups, and under those titles’ (11). Together with these published collections, the volume also featured ‘poems hitherto unpublished’ arranged in three small groups. These included: ‘14th August, 1930’, ‘In a Hospital’, ‘[Evening Walk in Winter](#)’, ‘[Looking Down on Mesopotamia](#)’ and ‘[Kaikoura. Winter, 1941](#)’ gathered under the title ‘Other Poems’, six numbered

poems under the title '[By the River Ashley](#)', and six poems under the title '[Six Memorials](#)' entitled 'October, 1935', 'November, 1936', 'November, 1937', 'For November, 1938', 'November, 1939' and 'Spring, 1940'. ⁴

Caxton's representation of these previously unpublished works has inevitably been extremely influential. The presentation of the poems printed under the titles 'Other Poems' and '[Six Memorials](#)' remains largely unchanged in the only two reprintings of these poetic groups (1985 and 1997), and yet the posthumous selection and editing of Bethell's [Collected Poems](#) inevitably means that the Caxton edition as a whole cannot be assumed to represent the author's intentions: Bethell was unaware of the work's final form and was unable to approve the volume's finished state. This in itself would seem to be no great departure from Bethell's previous collections. [Vincent O'Sullivan](#) points out in his two editions of Bethell's poems how 'unproprietary' she is about her work, citing her deferral to her publishers, Sidgwick and Jackson, and to her friend, [Arthur Mayhew](#), on issues of punctuation and proof correction in [From a Garden in the Antipodes](#), and to [Denis Glover](#) in [Time and Place](#), despite the proximity of poet and publisher (102). However, the case of the [Collected Poems](#) differs from those previous collections as the posthumous decisions made about the content and presentation of the volume extend beyond issues of proof correction and punctuation, changes which in the cases of [From a Garden in the Antipodes](#) and [Time and Place](#) were (to some degree) approved by the author retrospectively. ⁵ In Caxton's [Collected Poems](#) there exist a number of undisclosed editorial changes and inaccuracies relating to the poems 'hitherto unpublished' and, in particular, the '[Six Memorials](#)'.

Firstly, Helen Simpson's opening note contains a relatively minor error of fact. The poems of the volume's final three groups were not all previously unpublished. 'In a Hospital' from the 'Other Poems' section of the [Collected Poems](#) had been published in *The Press* on 1 September 1934 (15). More significant, however, is the representation of the '[By the River Ashley](#)' and '[Six Memorials](#)' groups in the volume. There is nothing in the [Collected Poems](#) to indicate that the six poems featured in the '[By the River Ashley](#)' series are excerpts from a considerably longer sequence of twenty-one poems. The sections included are sequentially numbered from 1 to 6 when they should in fact be 1, 4, 19, 7, 18 and 21. Since Bethell grouped and numbered these poems herself, the deliberate selection and (perhaps inadvertent) reordering, misrepresents the sequential movement of the series. ⁶

The typographical representation of the titles 'Other Poems', '[By the River Ashley](#)' and '[Six Memorials](#)' is similarly misleading. These titles appear on the pages preceding their respective poems in a format that is visually identical to [From a Garden in the Antipodes](#), [Time and Place](#) and [Day and Night](#). This, in addition to the italicizing of the '[Six Memorials](#)' and '[By the River Ashley](#)' titles in Helen Simpson's introductory note, suggests these groups were seen as having comparable status to the published collections (the titles of which are also italicized) and further implies that their identity as groups was authored and/ or approved by the poet. It is true that the title '[By the River Ashley](#)' is authorial, and that Bethell conceived of those poems as a sequence, but it is not so for the group as it appears in the 1950 edition.

However, the implication of an authorially-conferred title and grouping is most seriously misleading in the case of the poems printed under the heading '[Six Memorials](#)'. No evidence exists to suggest that the '[Six Memorials](#)' title is anything other than editorial. The first and only appearance of this title in the documentation relating to Caxton's edition of Bethell's [Collected Poems](#) in the Macmillan Brown archive is in a typed note (with handwritten additions) on Caxton Press letterhead which can be dated post 1946.⁷ Bethell refers to them merely as 'the sad poems' in her letter to Lawrence Baigent of 1944 (Whiteford, 341). Similarly, the appearance of the manuscript sent by Bethell to [Lawrence Baigent](#) in 1944 (Bethell's only apparent 'grouping' of the poems) does not suggest that Bethell conceived of the poems as a group or sequence.⁸ Bethell typically sent the poems to correspondents as single works,⁹ and the physical properties of the copies sent to Baigent confirm that she did not make fair copies of them as a group. While the Caxton grouping of the memorial poems may be defended in view of the poems' obvious congruity in subject matter and their chronological dating, the editors' presentation of the works arguably proposes a reading of the six poems that Bethell herself did not encourage. Bethell's dating of the poems seems to imply that they are a sequence, but it should be noted that Bethell frequently dated her poems without any corresponding suggestion.

While all this certainly casts into doubt the authority of the appearance of the '[Six Memorials](#)' in the [Collected Poems](#), the most significant change imposed by the Caxton editors on the memorial poems was in the act of publication itself. In her correspondence Bethell writes of the memorials as anomalous texts in her oeuvre and continually draws attention to their unsuitability for publication of any kind.¹⁰ She writes to [Rodney Kennedy](#) regarding 'October 1935': 'Yes, those

last October lines are “intimate” – I couldn’t show them to more than one or two – & not to anyone who hasn’t been hurt’ (Whiteford, 122), and regarding ‘November 1936’: ‘I am writing out the lines for you. They’re personal, remember – I do not want you to bother about criticism. I don’t send the verse as literary product, but part of what one is thinking’ (Whiteford, 130). Bethell also writes at length to Lawrence Baigent:

Enclose also the sad poems – only for yr. eyes (& I feel shy almost sending them to you!) I was right in thinking them unsuitable – unless the Akaroa one with 1st & last stanzas omitted. You wd. be right if you said that I should have learnt to “transcend” that grief – but I allowed myself to give way once a year, thoroughly. (Whiteford, 341)

In these passages Bethell expresses a concern with two kinds of privacy or ‘privateness’: the restriction of access (in the sense of private communication ‘[i]ntended only for or confined to the person or persons directly concerned’) and the sense of the close proximity of personal and poetic voice.

The revealing quality of the memorials (in the later sense of ‘privateness’) is clearly a concern in Bethell’s words to both Baigent and Kennedy. In her letter to Baigent Bethell writes of the memorials as linguistic records of her literal ‘giv[ing] way’ and links their ‘unsuitab[ility]’ for publication to what they reveal about the author: namely Bethell’s inability to “transcend” that grief’. In this way Bethell reveals an absolute equivalence between the poetic voice of the memorial poems and that of her letters. The apparent suitability (for publication) of ‘November 1939’ with the removal of the first and last stanzas emphasizes Bethell’s linking of the poems’ privacy to her anxiety over their potential for self revelation. The omission of the demonstrative as well as the intimacy of the address ‘my darling’ and ‘darling’, and of the speaker’s ‘desolat[ion]’ and suspect assurances in the final stanza of ‘November 1939’, suggests that the privacy of the work (and, by extension, the rest of the memorials) is a result of the poem’s references to the literal circumstances of the author’s life, that is its ability to function autobiographically. It is the obscuring of this dimension of the poem that makes ‘November 1939’ suitable for publication.

Bethell expresses similar concerns in her letters to Kennedy. She explains that she is sending ‘November 1936’ not ‘as literary product, but part of what one is thinking’ (Whiteford, 130) emphasizing the poem’s communicative capacity rather than any aesthetic dimension. Bethell suggests that the poem is

something like a letter or a diary entry in that it communicates the author's literal state of mind.

In these letters Bethell also voices a concern with the 'privacy' of the memorials in the sense of restricted access. Bethell writes directly to Baigent about the poems' 'unsuitab[ility]' for publication and includes the instruction 'only for yr. eyes'. Likewise, in her words to Kennedy, Bethell expresses her deliberate restriction of the audience for the memorial poems writing that she 'couldn't show them to more than one or two – and not to anyone who hasn't been hurt'.

These two senses of privacy that Bethell locates in the memorial poems would seem to be confounded by their appearance in print. Manuscript circulation (Bethell's preferred means of disseminating these texts) allowed her to control the poems' audience, their accessibility, and (to some extent) their interpretation. This control meant that Bethell could emphasize the poems' autobiographical dimension, their reference to Bethell herself and her personal situation following the death of [Effie Pollen](#). Publication, it may be argued, does not typically allow such an emphasis. Through publication literary texts are recontextualized and preserved for readerships beyond their initial audiences (Marotti, 52). This recontextualization has several consequences. Not only does the detachment from any original context (and, consequently, from any material which may qualify the text) allow the reader (or editor for that matter) to interpret (or reinterpret) the work as he or she wishes, but this separation from textual origin also places an emphasis on the text's aesthetic dimension (Marotti, 52). Implicit in the act of publication is the suggestion of aesthetic value (the apparent reason for the literary text's appearance in print). Consequently, the status of the poems as records of a literal state of mind ('part of what one is thinking'), in the case of the published literary text, is no longer a primary (nor indeed an accessible) meaning. Paradoxically then, the act of publication would seem to reduce the private text's capacity for authorial disclosure. Caxton's publication of Bethell's memorial poems does just this: through publication and the detachment of the texts from their biographical circumstances, the poems' speaker is relegated to the status of literary persona.

The 'public' quality conferred upon the memorials through their publication is obviously a by-product of their appearance in print and indeed, by this logic, we could argue that all private texts are misrepresented once published. However, Caxton's representation of the memorial poems as 'public' extends beyond the mere fact of publication. The collective title, '[Six Memorials](#)', also implies a

public dimension to the poems, the word 'memorial' typically having associations with publicness, durability, monumentality and communal remembrance. The suggestions of this posthumously added title are in contrast to the understated connotations of 'souvenir', the word Bethell inscribed on the envelope containing 'For November 1938' that she sent to [E. H. McCormick](#).¹¹ 'Souvenir' certainly suggests a much more private and ephemeral remembrance.

Similarly, the 'public' nature of the memorial poems is suggested in Helen Simpson's introductory note to the Caxton edition. Simpson writes: 'The [Six Memorials](#) were written in the six years from 1935 to 1940 for the succeeding anniversaries of Miss Pollen's death. They speak for themselves' (12). The final comment suggests that the poems contain an obvious meaning, allowing for a wide readership antithetical to the oblique references and restricted access commonly associated with the 'private' text.¹²

And yet, there is nothing to suggest that Bethell revised her estimation of the memorials' private nature and their 'unsuitab[ility]' for publication. It is true that she sent all six poems to Lawrence Baigent in 1944 in the context of preparations for the [Collected Poems](#), but in the letter sent with the poems Bethell still refers to the memorials as 'unsuitable' for publication. It seems highly unlikely that Bethell would have sent poems that she considered 'unsuitable' for public consumption during the preparatory period of the [Collected Poems](#) (and ones so consistently emphasized as 'personal') without prior solicitation.

The appearance of the manuscripts sent by Bethell in 1940 also does not suggest any public aspirations for these poems on Bethell's part as these papers contain numerous corrections. The manuscript of 'November 1936' even includes notes that Bethell has transcribed from two texts, the content of these transcriptions apparently unrelated to the memorial poem.¹³ Because of the presence of these rough notes and numerous corrections it does not appear that Bethell was consciously assembling fair copies for publication.

Typescripts of the six memorial poems are also preserved at the Macmillan Brown Library. These do have the appearance of clean and final versions of the poems but it seems unlikely that these were prepared in Bethell's lifetime. When Charles Brasch requested copies of the poems in 1946, he was sent manuscripts and commented on the quality of the handwriting in an undated note.¹⁴ While Brasch had a definite interest in handwritten examples of

Bethell's work, given the plan to reproduce 'a sheet of M. U. B.'s very beautiful & distinguished handwriting in the collected edition', ¹⁵ his role as advisor in the preparations for this collection means that sending him the most 'final' (and legible) version of the poems would have been most logical. Had Bethell organized the typescripts, no doubt these would have been considered the more 'complete' versions of the memorial poems. That Brasch was sent manuscripts of the poems for purposes of both aesthetic and critical judgment, suggests that the typescripts were completed after Bethell's death.

The fact of the memorials' 'privacy', as suggested by the evidence above, surely raises the question of why the memorials were published in the Caxton edition at all, let alone in a manner that seems so directly to contradict the author's own presentation of the works. When Charles Brasch asserted that the volume should not be a 'book of relics & a work of piety' he clearly preferred an editorial approach that favoured reputation and, by extension, aesthetic merit. Where Brasch detects something 'inferior' or 'unfinished' in Bethell's work, he suggests either correction or omission, the inclusion of such of verse in its original state being, as he writes, 'no kindness to M. U. B.'s reputation'. ¹⁶ While not all Brasch's suggestions were followed in the Caxton edition (for example Brasch's revisions of 'November 1939' were not adhered to) the volume as a whole clearly follows Brasch's general principle in attempting to present the 'best', rather than the most complete or accurate representation of Bethell's work. The fact that the memorials were generally considered to be Bethell's best work ¹⁷ obviously meant that they would have been seen to have a part to play in Ursula Bethell's posthumous reputation.

However, by creating a completeness beyond that which the poet authorized, the editors of the Caxton edition also reveal a specific understanding of poetry. By divorcing the poems from the context of their production, and by grouping them under the title '[Six Memorials](#)', they have attempted to create a sequence apparently (but artificially) self-sufficient and self-contained and, as a consequence, lacking in any overtly autobiographical import. The editors clearly manipulate Bethell's memorials in an attempt to make them 'speak for themselves', despite Bethell's continued insistence on her own life as a necessary subtext for their interpretation. There is, perhaps, some sense that such self-referentiality has not been entirely achieved, however, for despite declaring that the poems 'speak for themselves', in her introduction Helen Simpson nevertheless situates the poems within Bethell's own life narrative, clarifying the terms of their reference to the extent of naming 'Miss

Pollen' (12). Though the editors' presentation of Bethell's work is clearly underpinned by a New Critical practice where self-containment and self-reference reign supreme, Simpson's words nevertheless imply, if only in a limited way, that the meaning of the poems cannot be wholly explained in reference to internal relations, or a simply poetic world.

The presentation of the memorials in the Caxton volume has had far reaching consequences in that the fragmentary or non-sequential nature of the poems, as well as their private status, have long been overlooked. In both of Vincent O'Sullivan's editions of Bethell's [Collected Poems](#), the six poems appear in chronological order and remain grouped under the heading '[Six Memorials](#)' (although the choice of italic type here perhaps implies that the collective title of the poems differs somewhat from the names of Bethell's volumes). The integrity of the '[Six Memorials](#)' as a group and as a sequence is also preserved in selections of New Zealand poems. Only relatively recently has a major collection published any of the memorials individually. ¹⁸

The public and sequential understanding of the '[Six Memorials](#)' suggested in the Caxton volume is similarly reiterated in the (admittedly minimal) criticism that exists on the poems. While both [M. H. Holcroft](#) in his monograph, and [Margaret Hillock](#) in her thesis, locate 'public' and 'private' elements in the memorials, these competing tensions are sublimated within a narrative understanding of the poems. Holcroft writes of the poems as 'remarkably revealing for a woman as reticent as Ursula' and as 'obviously written without thought of publication', yet goes on to imply a progression over the course of the memorials in such a way as to polarize the personal and poetic. Holcroft writes: '[t]hey were personal documents, celebrating a private grief, and shown only to a few close friends; but gradually, although grief remained, it was given wider associations, and was sometimes transformed and softened' (47 – 48). Holcroft thus suggests a therapeutic movement over the course of the memorials, the dimming of personal grief being revealed through the poems' growing allusiveness, their 'wider associations'.

Margaret Hillock identifies a more emphatic narrative over the course the memorials. Comparing the representation of the speaker's 'vision of green' in the first stanza of 'October 1935' and the second stanza of 'Spring 1940', Hillock observes that the image in the second is 'more 'poetic' and less personal' (72). Here the 'poetic' quality of the verse, its literary allusiveness, what Hillock perceives to be the writer's 'preoccup[ation] with the accepted forms of devotional poetry' (72) is characterized as in opposition to 'personal' utterance

or authentic self expression. The memorial series is thus seen by Hillock to document a movement from private and genuine utterance to public and impersonal exercises in poetic expression.

Caxton's recontextualisation of the memorial poems undoubtedly encourages such interpretations and their concentration on narrative and the 'publicness' of the memorials. Without an account of the circumstances surrounding the memorials' composition the 'I' of the poem becomes simply a poetic persona and the literal capability of the poems is overlooked. The memorials become 'public' works principally by virtue of their status as literature, that is, works presented as produced and to be understood in aesthetic rather than personal and referential terms.

And yet Bethell's framing of the poems in her lifetime reveals a writer keenly aware of the potential for poetry to act as more than simply 'literary product'. The poems comprise Bethell's own ongoing struggle to integrate the meaning of a catastrophic event within her own life story. This is no simple literary sequence marking a journey from grief to consolation and was, arguably, never meant to be understood in such over-arching terms. Instead each poem acts as a separate attempt to explain the event of Pollen's death in a series of discrete presents by 'the person who then was' (Whiteford, 136). If the poems have any narrative thread it is only the barest parataxis, the 'now and now and now' of ongoing existence. Caxton's representation suppresses such meaning and conceals both the fragmentary nature of the texts and their autobiographical capability. It is only by being attentive to the poems' original context that we can gather something of Bethell's own perspective and the principally autobiographical meaning of her 'sad poems'.

Manuscript Collections

Bethell, Ursula. MS 38, Bethell Papers, Macmillan Brown Library, Christchurch.

Bethell, Ursula. MS 741, Kennedy Papers, Hocken Library, Dunedin.

Bethell, Ursula. fMS 018, Schroder Papers, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

Bethell, Ursula. MS 3381, McCormick Papers, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

Bethell, Ursula. Duggan Papers, Archdiocesan Catholic Archives, Wellington.

Other Sources

Bethell, Ursula. [Collected Poems](#). Christchurch: The Caxton Press, 1950.

Bethell, Ursula. [Collected Poems](#). Edited by Vincent O'Sullivan. Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Bethell, Ursula. [Collected Poems](#). Edited by Vincent O'Sullivan. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1997.

Bethell, Ursula. [Day and Night: Poems 1924–1934](#). The Caxton Press, 1939.

Bethell, Ursula. [From a Garden in the Antipodes](#). London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1929.

Bethell, Ursula. [Time and Place: Poems](#). Christchurch: The Caxton Press, 1936.

Hillock, Margaret. '[The Poetry of the Numinous: A Study of the Imagery in the Poetry of Ursula Bethell](#)'. MA Thesis, University of Canterbury, 1981.

Holcroft, Monte. [Mary Ursula Bethell](#). Wellington: Oxford University Press, 1975.

[Marotti, Arthur F](#) . 'Manuscript, print and the social history of the lyric' in *The Cambridge Companion to English Poetry: Donne to Marvell*, edited by Thomas Corns. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

[Vibrant with Words: the letters of Ursula Bethell](#). Edited by [Peter Whiteford](#) . Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2005.

Endnotes

¹ Allen Curnow, letter to Ursula Bethell, 29 May 1944, MS 38B: 4, Macmillan Brown Library (MBL), Christchurch.

² Helen Simpson, letter to an unidentified correspondent (presumably Lawrence Baigent), MS 38B: 4, MBL.

³ Charles Brasch, letter to Lawrence Baigent, 27 August 1946, MS 38B: 4, MBL.

⁴ The punctuation in these titles is as it appears in the Caxton 1950 edition of Bethell's [Collected Poems](#). Elsewhere these poems will be referred to as 'October 1935', 'November 1936', 'November 1937', 'For November 1938', 'November 1939' and 'Spring 1940', the titles under which they appear in Vincent O'Sullivan's two editions of Bethell's [Collected Poems](#).

⁵ Bethell writes to J. H. E. Schroder in a letter of 27 May 1937: 'I have only found one of the mistakes in the "Garden" – Page 47 – & have now forgotten what the others were – I haven't looked into the book for many months & confess that it's hard to do so . . . It seems to me, now, pretty good, as far as it goes, & I am glad that the person who then was put it down while there was time. . . . The mistakes I have found in Time & Place are P. 11 Elixir. P. 26. accomplished. p. 27. Mien. p.33 lights (not?) there may be others. They are misprints, I could not see proofs, being away at Mt Harper at the time – so D. Glover deserves much praise for turning it out so well' (Whiteford, 136–137).

⁶ This of course has been rectified with the appearance of Vincent O'Sullivan's two editions of Bethell's [Collected Poems](#) both of which reproduce the sequence entire.

⁷ The note is from Denis Glover to Helen Simpson and outlines the final three groups of poems to be included in the edition. While this note is undated the fact that it includes the final selection of sections from '[By the River Ashley](#)' means that it must have been written after Bethell's death, for Charles Brasch's letter to Lawrence Baigent outlining possible sections for inclusion in the [Collected Poems](#) is dated 27 August 1946. Glover's note includes handwritten additions in pencil confirming the final selection of poems, these additional notes presumably being written by Baigent. See MS 38B: 4, MBL.

⁸ The manuscripts that survive in the Macmillan Brown Library are almost certainly those sent by Bethell to Baigent in 1944. The '[Six Memorials](#)' as they appear in these manuscripts are virtually identical to the poems as they are printed in the Caxton edition. See MS 38B: 4, MBL.

⁹ Bethell sent copies of 'October 1935' to both Rodney Kennedy (28 October 1936, MS 741, Hocken Library, Dunedin) and Helen Simpson (4 June 1936, MS 38B: 2, MBL). Later Bethell sent 'November 1936' to Rodney Kennedy without 'October 1935' and without suggesting it as necessary to the meaning and interpretation of 'November 1936' (3 February 1937, MS 741, Hocken Library). Though Bethell did send both 'October 1935' and 'November 1936' together to [Blanche Baughan](#) (mentioned in a letter from Blanche Baughan to Ursula Bethell, April 1937, MS 38A: 1, MBL) and possibly to [Eileen Duggan](#) (23 June 1937, Archdiocesan Catholic Archives, Wellington), this was presumably because neither correspondent had seen either poem. Certainly, in her letter to Eileen Duggan, Bethell does not propose any definitive literary connection between the two, referring to them merely as 'the only two pieces of verse (other than the Envoy) I have been moved to write since the shock' (Whiteford, 139). Bethell also sends the memorial poems singly to E. H. McCormick (see undated manuscripts of 'For November 1938' and 'Spring 1940', MS 3381, ATL) and Blanche Baughan (15 March 1939, MS 38A: 1, MBL).

¹⁰ Bethell's comments on the memorials' privacy are different from similar claims she made in relation to the Garden poems. While Bethell admitted that she wrote the Garden poems without 'the ghost of a thought' of publication (Whiteford, 50) she never suggests that the works are indiscreet in what they reveal about the author in the same way she does with the memorial poems. It is also significant that, despite her claims as to the Garden poems' privacy, it was Bethell who pursued their publication after encouragement from friends.

¹¹ MS 3381, ATL.

¹² Interestingly Simpson elsewhere suggests one of the memorials as equivalent in its 'privateness' to other poems in [Day and Night](#). On receiving a copy of 'October 1935' Simpson suggests its suitability for inclusion in that volume. She writes: 'I think the October 1935 should go in. They are all private really, certainly that more so, but still . . .' See letter to Ursula Bethell, 6 April 1936, MS 38B: 2, MBL.

¹³ These notes are indicated as being from [Perfume from Provence](#) and [The Flying Inn](#) (MS 38B: 6, Bethell Papers, MBL).

¹⁴ An unsigned, undated and unaddressed note written in Charles Brasch's handwriting comments (following a discussion of 'November 1939') that 'the piece chosen for reproduction should be one written with a fine pen; in these the

hand seems more elegant and expressive. The best example here is probably the second piece ('November 1936') but you'd have to omit the first two verses and reproduce only the last 4. – Yes, looking through these pieces again this seems to me by far the finest example of MUB's writing'. See MS 38B: 4, MBL.

¹⁵ Charles Brasch, letter to Lawrence Baigent, 27 August 1946, MS 38B: 4, MBL.

¹⁶ Charles Brasch, letter to Helen Simpson, 27 August 1946, MS 38B: 4, MBL.

¹⁷ Charles Brasch to Lawrence Baigent on 27 August 1946, noting that Baigent did not give him copies of the 'Elegies' in his last correspondence, poems which both he and Denis [Glover] had 'referred to as M. U. B.'s best work'. See MS 38B: 4, MBL.

¹⁸ 'October 1935' appeared in [Lauris Edmond](#)'s *New Zealand Love Poems* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 215.