



## *Living the Legacy of C.S. Lewis*

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"A man can no more diminish God's glory by refusing to worship Him than a lunatic can put out the sun by scribbling the word, 'darkness' on the walls of his cell." -- C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*

## The Life of C.S. Lewis Timeline



<http://i0.wp.com/www.cslewis.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Lewis-history.jpg>

## **1898**

Clive Staples Lewis was born on November 29 in Belfast, Northern Ireland, to Albert J. Lewis (1863-1929) and Florence Augusta Hamilton Lewis (1862-1908). His brother Warren Hamilton Lewis had been born on June 16, 1895.

## **1905**

The Lewis family moved to their new home, "Little Lea," on the outskirts of Belfast.

## **1908**

Flora Hamilton Lewis died of cancer on August 23, Albert Lewis' (her husband's) birthday. During this year Albert Lewis' father and brother also died. In September Lewis was enrolled at Wynyard School, Watford, Hertfordshire referred to by C.S. Lewis as "Oldie's School" or "Belsen". His brother, Warren, had been enrolled there in May 1905.

## 1910

Lewis left "Belsen" in June and, in September, was enrolled as a boarding student at Campbell College, Belfast, one mile from "Little Lea," where he remained until November, when he was withdrawn upon developing serious respiratory difficulties.

## 1911

Lewis was sent to Malvern, England, which was famous as a health resort, especially for those with lung problems. Lewis was enrolled as a student at Cherbourg House (which he referred to as "Chartres"), a prep school close by Malvern College where Warnie was enrolled as a student. Jack remained there until June 1913. It was during this time that he abandoned his childhood Christian faith. He entered Malvern College itself (which he dubbed "Wyvern") in September 1913 and stayed until the following June.

## 1914

In April, Lewis met Arthur Greeves (1895-1966), of whom he said, in 1933, "After my brother, my oldest and most intimate friend." On September 19, Lewis commenced private study with W.T. Kirkpatrick, "The Great Knock," in Great Bookham Surrey, with whom he was to remain until April 1917. William T. Kirkpatrick (1848-1921) was former Headmaster of Lurgan College, County Armagh, Northern Ireland, from 1874-99. Albert Lewis had attended Lurgan from 1877-79 and later was Kirkpatrick's solicitor. After Kirkpatrick retired from Lurgan in 1899, he began taking private students and had already successfully prepared Lewis' brother, Warnie, for admission to the Royal Military College at Sandhurst.

## 1916

In February, Lewis first read George MacDonald's, Phantastes, which powerfully "baptized his imagination" and impressed him with a deep sense of the holy. He made his first trip to Oxford in December to take a scholarship examination.

## 1917

From April 26 until September, Lewis was a student at University College, Oxford. Three years after the outbreak of WWI in Britain, he enlisted in the British army and was billeted in Keble College, Oxford, for officer's training. His roommate was Edward Courtney Francis "Paddy" Moore (1898-1918). Jack was commissioned an officer in the 3rd Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry, on September 25 and reached the front line in the Somme Valley in France on his 19th birthday.



<http://i0.wp.com/www.cslewis.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/arras.jpg>1918

On April 15 Lewis was wounded on Mount Berenchon during the Battle of Arras. He recuperated and was returned to duty in October, being assigned to Ludgerhall, Andover, England. He was discharged in December 1919. His former roommate and friend, Paddy Moore, was killed in battle and buried in the field just south of Peronne, France.

## 1919

The February issue of *Reveille* contained "Death in Battle," Lewis' first publication in other than school magazines. The issue had poems by Robert Bridges, Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, and Hilaire Belloc. From January 1919 until June 1924, he resumed his studies at University College, Oxford, where he received a First in Honour Moderations (Greek and Latin Literature) in 1920, a First in Greats (Philosophy and Ancient History) in 1922, and a First in English in 1923. His tutors during this time included A.B. Poynton for Honour Mods, E.F. Carritt for Philosophy, F.P. Wilson and George Gordon in the English School, and E.E. Wardale for Old English.

## 1920

During the summer, Paddy Moore's mother, Mrs. Janie King Moore (1873-1951) and her daughter, Maureen, moved to Oxford, renting a house in Headington Quarry. Lewis lived with the Moores from June 1921 onward. In August 1930, they moved to "Hillsboro," Western Road, Headington. In October 1930, Mrs. Moore, Jack, and Major Lewis purchased "The Kilns" jointly, with title to the property being taken solely in the name of Mrs. Moore with the two brothers holding rights of life tenancy. Major Lewis retired from the military and joined them at "The Kilns" in 1932.

## 1921

W.T. Kirkpatrick died in March. Lewis' essay "Optimism" won the Chancellor's English Essay Prize in May. (No copy of "Optimism" has been found as of this date.)

## 1924

From October 1924 until May 1925, Lewis served as philosophy tutor at

University College during E.F. Carritt's absence on study leave for the year in America.

[http://i0.wp.com/www.cslewis.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/O-Magdalene-College-IMG\\_0274ABAH-Crop2.jpg](http://i0.wp.com/www.cslewis.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/O-Magdalene-College-IMG_0274ABAH-Crop2.jpg)1925

On May 20, Lewis was elected a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, where he served as tutor in English Language and Literature for 29 years until leaving for Magdalene College, Cambridge, in 1954.

## 1929

Lewis became a theist: "In the Trinity Term of 1929 I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed...." Albert Lewis died on September 24.



## 1931

Lewis became a Christian: One evening in September, Lewis had a long talk on Christianity with J.R.R. Tolkien (a devout Roman Catholic) and Hugo Dyson. (The summary of that discussion is recounted for Arthur Greeves in *They Stand Together*.) That evening's discussion was important in bringing about the following day's event that Lewis recorded in *Surprised by Joy*: "When we [Warnie and Jack] set out [by motorcycle to the Whipsnade Zoo] I did not believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and when we reached the zoo I did."

## 1933

The fall term marked the beginning of Lewis' convening of a circle of friends dubbed "The Inklings." For the next 16 years, on through 1949, they continued to meet in Jack's rooms at Magdalen College on Thursday evenings and, just before lunch on Mondays or Fridays, in a back room at "The Eagle and Child," a pub known to locals as "The Bird and Baby." Members included J.R.R. Tolkien, Warnie, Hugo Dyson, Charles Williams, Dr. Robert Havard, Owen Barfield, Weville Coghill and others. (See Humphry Carpenters The Inklings for a full account of this special group.)

### **1935**

At the suggestion of Prof. F.P. Wilson, Lewis agreed to write the volume on 16th Century English Literature for the Oxford History of English Literature series. Published in 1954, it became a classic.

### **1937**

Lewis received the Gollancz Memorial Prize for Literature in recognition of *The Allegory of Love* (a study in medieval tradition).

### **1939**

At the outbreak of World War II in September, Charles Williams moved from London to Oxford with the Oxford University Press to escape the threat of German bombardment. He was thereafter a regular member of "The Inklings."

### **1941**

From May 2 until November 28, The Guardian published 31 "Screwtape Letters" in weekly installments. Lewis was paid 2 pounds sterling for each letter and gave the money to charity. In August, he gave four live radio

talks over the BBC on Wednesday evenings from 7:45 to 8:00. An additional 15-minute session, answering questions received in the mail, was broadcast on September 6. These talks were known as "Right and Wrong."

## **1942**

The first meeting of the "Socratic Club" was held in Oxford on January 26. In January and February, Lewis gave five live radio talks on Sunday evenings from 4:45 to 5:00, on the subject "What Christians Believe." On eight consecutive Sundays, from September 20 to November 8 at 2:50 to 3:05 p.m., Lewis gave a series of live radio talks known as "Christian Behavior."

## **1943**

In February, at the University of Durham, Lewis delivered the Riddell Memorial Lectures (Fifteenth Series), a series of three lectures subsequently published as *The Abolition of Man*.

## **1944**

On seven consecutive Tuesdays, from February 22 to April 4 at 10:15 to 10:30 p.m., Lewis gave the pre-recorded talks known as "Beyond Personality." Taken together, all of Lewis' BBC radio broadcast talks were eventually published under the title *Mere Christianity*. From November 10, 1944 to April 14, 1945, *The Great Divorce* was published in weekly installments in *The Guardian*. (*The Guardian* was a religious newspaper that ceased publication in 1951; it had no connection with the *Manchester Guardian*.)

## **1945**

Charles Williams, one of Lewis' very closest of friends, died on May 15.



**1946**

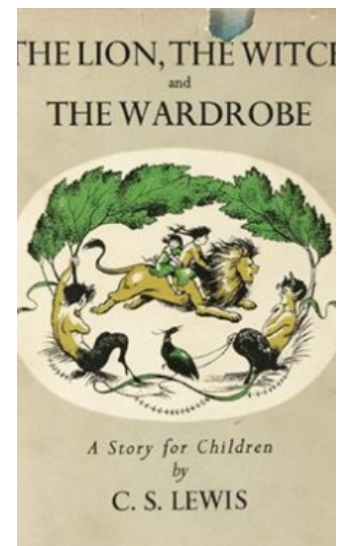
Lewis awarded honorary Doctor of Divinity by the University of St. Andrews.

**1948**

On February 2, Elizabeth Anscombe, later Professor of Philosophy at Cambridge, read her "Reply to Mr. C.S. Lewis' Argument that 'Naturalism is Self-refuting'" to the Socratic Club; Anscombe's argument caused Lewis to revise Chapter 3 of *Miracles* when it was reprinted by Fontana in 1960. Later in the year, Lewis was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

**1950**

The first book in the Chronicles of Narnia series, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, is released. The series became extremely popular and *Wardrobe* is one of Lewis's most enduring and beloved books.



**1951**

Mrs. Moore died on January 12. Since the previous April, she had been confined to a nursing home in Oxford. She is buried in the yard of Holy Trinity Church in Headington Quarry, Oxford. Lewis lost the election for the position of Professor of Poetry at Oxford to C. Day Lewis. In December, he declined election to the Order of the British Empire.

**1952**

Lewis was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters by Laval University, Quebec. In September, he met Joy Davidman Gresham, fifteen years his junior (b. April 18, 1915 – d. July 13, 1960), for the first time.

## **1954**

In June, Lewis accepted the Chair of Medieval and Renaissance Literature at Cambridge. He gave his Inaugural Lecture, "De Description Temporum," on his 56th birthday and gave his last tutorial at Oxford on December 3. His review of Tolkien's Fellowship of the Ring appeared in Time and Tide in August.

## **1955**

Lewis assumed his duties at Cambridge in January. During his years at Cambridge, he lived at Magdalene College, Cambridge, during the week in term and at The Kilns in Oxford on weekends and during vacations. Lewis was elected an Honorary Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and was also elected a Fellow of the British Academy.

## **1956**

Lewis received the Carnegie Medal in recognition of *The Last Battle*. On April 23, he entered into a civil marriage with Joy Davidman at the Oxford Registry Office for the purpose of conferring upon her the status of British citizenship in order to prevent her threatened deportation by British migration authorities. In December, a bedside marriage was performed in accordance with the rites of the Church of England in Wingfield Hospital. Joy's death was thought to be imminent.

## **1958**

Throughout 1957, Joy had experienced an extraordinary recovery from her near terminal bout with cancer. In July of 1958, Jack and Joy went to Ireland for a 10-day holiday. On August 19 and 20, he made tapes of ten talks on The Four Loves in London. Lewis was elected an Honorary Fellow of University College, Oxford.

## 1959

Lewis was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature by the University of Manchester.

## 1960

Subsequent to learning of the return of Joy's cancer, Jack and Joy, together with Roger Lancelyn Green and his wife, Joy, went to Greece from April 3 to April 14, visiting Athens, Mycenae, Rhodes, Herakleon, and Knossos. There was a one-day stop in Pisa on the return. Joy died on July 13 at the age of 45, not long after their return from Greece.

## 1963

Lewis died at 5:30 p.m. at The Kilns, one week before his 65th birthday on Friday, November 22; the same day on which President Kennedy was assassinated and Aldous Huxley died. He had resigned his position at Cambridge during the summer and was then elected an Honorary Fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge. His grave is in the yard of Holy Trinity Church in Headington Quarry, Oxford. Warren Lewis died on Monday, April 9, 1973. Their names are on a single stone bearing the inscription "Men must endure their going hence." Warnie had written, "...there was a Shakespearean calendar hanging on the wall of the room where she [our mother] died, and my father preserved for the rest of his life the leaf for that day, with its quotation: 'Men must endure their going hence'." -W.H.

Lewis, "Memoir," in Letters of C.S. Lewis.

## Search

## Testimonials

"Building a network of Christian scholars across the disciplines is a work of vital importance for the next phase of dialogue between Christians and other colleagues in the university world."

*– David Lyle Jeffrey,  
Distinguished Professor of  
Literature, Baylor University*

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