

CANON POWER WAS ALSO KIND ENOUGH TO ENCLOSE A PHOTOSTAT OF A LETTER FROM THE PROFESSOR HIMSELF, WRITTEN IN HIS CHARACTERISTIC AND BEAUTIFUL HANDWRITING. ANY PERSONAL LIGHT ON OUR 'PRESIDENT' IS OF INTEREST, SO WE QUOTE IT IN FULL HERE :

Merton College
Oxford OX1 4JD.

July 8th, 1973

Dear Canon Power,

I am very pleased to send a signature on adhesive paper (which can, if desired, be inserted in a book) for Mrs. Ellwood. (What a delightful name; fit for a 'Galadriel' if one could be found in our age).

But if I may say so, I could wish that Oliver Road could be, as far as I am concerned, forgotten. It was a very brief time of great misery for me and my brother and our widowed mother. We lived there at No. 26 on the Southside of Oliver Road; the lefthand as you look (or looked) up it past Ladywood Road, from which direction it was the 14th house. But I believe it has all been demolished. But our stay was brief: from autumn 1902 to beginning of 1904, when my mother was removed to hospital. She died in November of that year in Rednal, leaving us penniless and orphans. From which plight we were rescued by Fr. Francis Morgan of the Oratory. Eventually, we moved to Edgbaston/Ladywood to live under care in houses selected by him, during the remainder of our school days.

One of these addresses is of supreme importance in my personal history: 1, Duchess Road (I think: at any rate, the first house on the left across descended a slope into a rather gloomy road from Beaufort Road). If you would be so kind as to tell me whether that house has been demolished (as I expect) or not, I should be greatly obliged.

In the meantime... I send you a copy of IL Essays by Divus Houd, No XXIX issued by the Royal Society of Literature. It is a spare copy and I would be pleased if you would accept it. It contains an interesting account of J. H. Shorthouse and John Inglesant his book. JHS being a resident of 6 Beaufort Road and People's Warden of your Church.

With best wishes
Yours very sincerely,
John Tolkien.

Excuse the scrawl
I am in haste, packing to go to Scotland - but shall be back here July 23rd.

NOTE BY BELLADONNA

I can remember having read 'John Inglesant', probably between 1910 and 1914, but I can't recall anything of it except that it was impressive, mystical and probably rather too pietistic for the present age. But if I can find a copy of it, I will certainly re-read it and report on any significant influences I can find in it, in a future issue of 'Mallorn'.