

## Benson . . .

*JUNIOR MISS.* By Sally Benson. New York: Random House. 1941. 214 pp. \$2.

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM BATES

THE one unsatisfactory thing about this series of stories concerning young Judy Graves (you remember her from *The New Yorker*) is that there are not enough of them. Judy is a terror and a delight and she is habit forming for the reader. She gets hold of your emotions and won't let go, and she very certainly divides your personality because you suffer with her, as you read, the nostalgic misery of having your every young motive misunderstood by a practically moronic adult world, and you suffer with her elders the sense of fury and frustration at the optimistic but only occasionally controlled energy of youth so damaging to the smugger middle years. You will be amused almost continuously through these adventures with Judy but you will be harrowed, too, for Sally Benson's humor is based on the inherent conflicts between the ego and its environment, and not on any superficial "quaintness" of children.

Judy is almost always somebody else and the slowness with which the family recognizes the dramatic personalities of the moment accounts for many of the hilarious situations which form the background of the stories. There is the time Judy went to the movies with Fluffy Adams and saw the film about the "almost hysterical devotion of a curly-haired little girl for her father, a whimsical Englishman who had been lost in the shuffle during the Boer War and found again through the untiring efforts of his little daughter and the dignified acquiescence of Queen Victoria." Judy's unlikeness to the little heroine and her father's total dissimilarity from the Englishman did not prevent her from driving her parent almost mad with her sentimental attentions. When she coyly shook her curls at him he, being unable to detect the curls on Judy's straight-haired little head, asks her woundingly if she has something in her ear. But there is little use trying to give the charm of the stories by telling what they are about, for Sally Benson has made her incisive, word-clipped style an integral part of them. She has an uncanny accuracy in catching the exact detail of description which will bring a whole personality to mind with the sharpest effect and in touching upon the one incident which will recreate the whole of a childish tragedy. If you put these tales aside as children's stories simply



Sally Benson

you will miss some extremely shrewd comment on human nature in general and our own day in particular.

Whether Judy is trying to lead her mother to the more sophisticated in winter coats for the Junior Miss (with her sister Lois pointing out that she will look as if she is going to "you know what" with the bow tied over her plump stomach); or printing out the head piece for Pink Beauty, "Trained Mouse. Died June 7, 1940 A.D." which, as a matter of fact, she had come upon for the first time just as it was drawing its last and certainly untrained breath; or spending her entire week's lunch money to buy a bank in which to save half of the said sum, whatever she is doing, she is doing it the hard way.

Judy is nobody to be taken or left at will. You should know her. It will do your adult complacency considerable and shocking good. Her fierce and dramatic attitude towards life will wear you down as it moves ruthlessly upon its way towards its own unfathomable ends, but it will give you a salutary reminder that life begins practically at birth.



Stuart David Engstrand

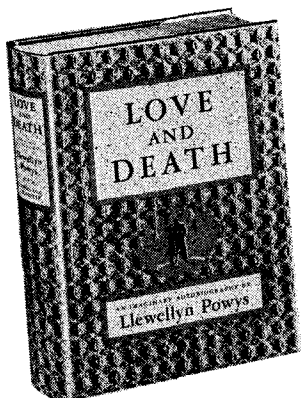
## Engstrand . . .

*SPRING 1940.* By Stuart David Engstrand. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1941. 357 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by KLAUS LAMBRECHT

WHAT strikes the reader most about Mr. Engstrand's book is a sense of unreality that prevails throughout despite the author's efforts to write realistically. It is not just a matter of details, such as German soldiers inevitably dying with a "Heil Hitler" on their lips, or anti-Nazis who, in the face of death, seem to be calmly reciting newspaper editorials on the subject of non-violence. These details are just part of the pattern which writers of anti-Nazi novels have worked out, routine descriptions, so to speak, that are bound to fit in automatically. It is the story as a whole which in itself carries the quality of the unreal. The young Norwegian who after years of living and training in Germany returns to his native country as a heel-clicking soldier, spouting about the ideological blurb he has been fed, is still the most likely character in the book. Being one of Hitler's "tourists" he betrays his family, causing the death of one of his two brothers and the mutilation of the other. He also betrays the girl he loves who, to make things worse, happens to be his step-sister, and when the Germans come he fights, along with the local Quislings, on their side against his own people until nothing is left of the village but his family's home, heroically defended by his father. His mother, a woman of supernatural moral strength, as it seems, kills her own son when he comes up to demand their surrender, then takes her other children up to the safety of the mountains, looks on as her husband is blown to pieces by a bomb that hits the house and, after some discussion among the rescued as to whom the honor of self-sacrifice should be granted, she takes a rifle and calmly marches down the mountain to finish the chief Quisling who amidst the ruins of the village is still alive.

The sentimental effect of tragedy is always relative to the range of human experience and imagination. Here tragedy has been carried almost beyond conception or belief. This does not necessarily imply that a similar story might not actually have happened, but merely that Mr. Engstrand has failed to bring it within human reaches. His story, for all its early psychological build-up, is raw and unmodelled, and a structure without casing.



**"An England of green valleys and deliciously empty skies"**

**T**HIS novel, largely autobiographical, is the last book written by Llewellyn Powys before his death. It has been greeted as a literary masterpiece and a great love story. Some of the first reviews follow:

"'Love and Death' is at one and the same time beautiful in wisdom, sincerity, truth, humanity, drama, and pathos. It achieves moving and elevating poetry throughout."

—THEODORE DREISER

"This book is beyond classification, a baffling and at times bewitching incursion into the heart's lore of a man who is soon to die. It is not for every reader, but there should be many to cherish it, for its gaiety, its poetry, its delicate sensuality and for the classic simplicity of romance and betrayal. It is healing reading now, as it gives us an England of green valleys and deliciously empty skies." —NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE BOOKS

"As a hymn of natural awareness, free-roving beauty, delight without greed, it strikes into the English past, can join with the vast and capaciously satisfying variety of English literature." —NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW

# LOVE AND DEATH

*A novel by Llewellyn Powys*

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## Typologia

CARL PURINGTON ROLLINS

**F**REDERIC W. GOUDY was once asked how he designed a type face. He replied that it was his custom to think of a letter and then draw a line around it! He has been doing this for a good many years, and any census of type designers, past and present, would place his name near the top, even if his more than five-score type faces are not a record output for any one man. Mr. Goudy has also written and spoken much on the subject of type design, one of his well-known contributions being "The Alphabet," published in 1918. His latest contribution of text and type-design is "Typologia," recently published by the University of California Press to signalize the acquisition by that press of a new type face made by Mr. Goudy for its exclusive use.

Like almost all of Mr. Goudy's type designs, the "University of California Old Style" type displays the distinguishing Goudy touch, a tendency (sometimes in spite of his own best efforts) to roundness and soft curves. In an old style type these features of design are allowable, and help to establish the validity of the class name. The type is easy to read because of its good drawing and good weight of line, and it ought to prove a very satisfactory book face. Samuel T. Farquhar, Manager of the Press, has been most successful in what is sometimes a dubious venture—the acquisition of a "private font" of type. In view of the efforts of the university presses to forswear their academic allegiance, it is heartening to find one of them maintaining its integrity in this fashion.

Mr. Goudy's discourse, which makes a hundred and sixty page book, is a pleasant account of the history of printing and of printing types which becomes pointed and valuable in telling the story of his own theory and practice in type making. He is one of the few modern type designers to convert his designs into the matrices required for casting the metal letters, and one of the still fewer craftsmen working alone who has himself manipulated the intricate machinery used in the modern type foundry. These power-driven tools require a knowledge and skill such as seldom accompanies the designer's talents. The details of the work, as carefully explained here, with personal reminiscence and human touches, makes this book an important document in the history of American type design.

The book has been produced under Mr. Goudy's direction by the University of California Press and is a first-class piece of book making. Many illustrations of the various processes, of numerous type designs, and of the author at work at his bench or machine, add much to the documentary value as well as the attractiveness of the volume. The frontispiece portrait of the author, from a bust by Jo Davidson, does him rather less than justice as a likeness, however. In addition to the trade edition there is a limited autographed issue of three hundred copies on hand made paper bound in leather and vellum.

**O**F all American designers of the present day, none is more imaginative, ingenious and whimsical than William A. Dwiggins. His extraordinary facility in cutting minute stencils in celluloid and then combining his geometric units in abstract patterns was dealt with at length in the *Fleur-on* for 1928; his lovely and cleverly contrived marionettes have excited much interest; but lettering has always been his major preoccupation. A nervous, sprightly quality has distinguished his handling of the alphabet, and something of this quality—as much as possible under the rigid rules of type-fitting—has been preserved in his recent essays in type design.

Always as much philosopher as draftsman, Mr. Dwiggins has been unusually felicitous in combining the shapes of letters with what they say; only recently his little known but provocative book, "Towards a Reform of the Paper Currency," has stirred the sluggish self-satisfaction of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing into enlisting outside help in the designing of postage stamps. His writing has not been voluminous, but it has been to the point. The latest brochure from his hand—for he both wrote and lettered it—is a letter to Mr. Rudolph Ruzicka, himself a distinguished American designer, on the subject of type design. There is little that is novel in the letter, but it makes good reading, for Mr. Dwiggins is never dull. The field for new type designs is a limited one, but it begins to look as if we should have working in it a few really competent designers instead of imitators and mechanical copyists. Mr. Goudy has done notable work, and Mr. Dwiggins and Mr. Ruzicka are competent to do good work. Eventually, if