

Warren Hamilton Lewis:
His Brother's Brother
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He was Tonto to his younger brother's Lone Ranger, Watson to Jack's Sherlock Holmes, and Ed McMahon to his brother's Johnny Carson, but few people are aware of the impact of this older brother on the younger. Warren Hamilton Lewis was born in Dundela Villas, on the outskirts of Belfast, Ireland, on Sunday, June 16, 1895, the son of Albert James Lewis and Flora Augusta Hamilton. He died at the age of seventy-seven on Monday, April 9, 1973, nearly ten years after the death of his more famous younger brother, C. S. Lewis. While far more attention has been paid to Clive, better known as Jack, than to Warren, this brotherhood provided not only social support for both brothers, but it laid the foundation for their success as writers.

Childhood

Albert and Flora valued education highly and passed this emphasis on education to their sons. During the early years, Flora taught the boys at home, as did a governess, and one of the major things she taught them was reading. Reading became a major key to the success of both boys. Flora, who taught Jack Latin, French, and math, must also have done the same with Warren, since he became quite fluent in reading French, which helped his later writing on late seventeenth and early eighteenth century France.¹ His grandfather, Rev. Thomas Hamilton, baptized and confirmed both Warren and his brother.

The childhood of both brothers included their writing of stories, which prepared them for a lifetime of writing. While Jack wrote about Animal-Land, Warren's stories were about India, both of them imaginary lands, later combined into the land of Boxen. These stories of talking animals were illustrated with occasional drawings, and their history was invented by the Lewis brothers. Talking animals and history would be prominent in their later writing.

Not all of his education took place at home; Warren was sent across the Irish Sea to attend Wynyard School, a boarding school in Watford, Hertfordshire, northwest of London. Flora took him to Wynyard School on May 10, 1905, where he would survive the unusually ineffective supervision of Headmaster Robert Capron. Later, Warren would record, "I cannot remember one single piece of instruction that was imparted to me at Wynyard."²

During this period, while Warren was home on holiday, his mother died on his father's birthday, August 23, 1908. Warren was just thirteen years old. After four years at Wynyard, in September 1909 Warren began classes at Malvern College in Malvern, Worcestershire. He enjoyed his years there, far more than did his younger brother, rising to prefect in May 1913.³ He completed four years at Malvern College in July 1913.

At the age of sixteen and as a third-year student at Malvern College, Warren started his first diary, a small Collin's Pearl Diary whose final entry is March 13, 1912. Five years later, Warren resumed his efforts, and continued his somewhat sporadic diary-making for the rest of his life. Those diaries, comprising the years 1919–1972, are the primary source of the biographical information that appears below.

Sandhurst

The records of the Royal Military College (RMC), Sandhurst, contain very little information about Warren. However, by reading histories of the College we learn something about Warren. In addition, we learn that military service was an honorable and acceptable

activity in the Lewis family, both from Warren's military service, his brother Jack's service in World War One, and from Jack's writings.⁴

The idea of educating officers for the British Army was conceived by Colonel John Gaspard Le Marchant in late 1798.⁵ The plans took time to germinate, but his persistence resulted in the establishing of the Royal Military College by Royal Warrant on June 24, 1800 and the founding of the school by the end of 1802, with one part opening earlier on May 4, 1799. It is located on five hundred acres on the north side of the London-Southampton coach road, southwest of London and near the village Blackwater and the hamlet Sandhurst, ten miles southeast of Reading.⁶ RMC was to become "the premier school of military education in Britain."⁷



(Photo, left, of Sandhurst gun carriage and cadets, 1915; below, Sandhurst cadets of that time with their bicycles; photos used with permission of the Royal Military Academy)

Throughout its history, the RMC had a mixture of military subjects (rifle-shooting, riding, fencing, military surveying, topography, etc.) and general subjects (mathematics, history, Latin, French, German, etc.), with wartime sometimes resulting in the elimination of the non-military subjects. "At times of war, or during war scares," writes author Hugh Thomas in 1961, "the course has been very short indeed—as it was at the time of Crimea. But in all essentials the Royal Military College has been the same since 1874."⁸ This would explain why, in 1914, Warren's course of study was less than the two- or three-year program that has existed at various times in its history. In 1918, some cadets were hurried through in as little as two months.⁹

Sandhurst graduates have distinguished themselves on the field of battle and elsewhere, including Field-Marshal Viscount Bernard Montgomery, to whom the German High Command surrendered their forces at the end of World War Two; Sir George Grey, later the first Prime Minister of New Zealand; Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson; Field-Marshal Viscount Allenby (later High Commissioner of Egypt); Field-Marshal Earl Haig; Sir Douglas Haig, commander-in-chief of British Armies in France; Field-Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, one of the greatest commanders of World War Two; King Hussein of Jordan; and Sir Winston Churchill, who came in 1893, graduated in 1895, and later served as the Prime Minister of Great Britain during the Second World War.

The College has received many royal visitors over the years, from Queen Charlotte in 1813 and Queen Victoria in 1855 and 1858 to King George V and Queen Mary four years in a row in the early twenties and Queen Elizabeth II in 1957.¹⁰ After World War Two, the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, was combined with the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, to become the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst.¹¹

Warren may have been influenced in his decision for a military career by the example of George Harding, who married



Warren's cousin Hope Ewart in 1911 and had been a member of the Army Service Corps since 1901, retiring in 1928 with the rank of Colonel. Warren and Jack were close to their cousins, and the proximity of the Ewart and Lewis homes aided that closeness. Warren would have met George Harding and known of his military career.

Warren decided on an Army career on May 24, 1913. He left Malvern College on July 29, 1913 with an eye on the Royal Military College.¹² His father then made arrangements for him to study with W. T. Kirkpatrick, the man who would later tutor his younger brother.¹³ Warren's four months of private study with W. T. Kirkpatrick during the autumn of 1913 successfully prepared him for Sandhurst.¹⁴ Most of those who took the army examination studied with crammers before taking it. Warren wrote positively of his time with Kirkpatrick:

When I went to Bookham I had what would now be called "an inferiority complex," partly the result of Wynyard, partly of my own idleness, and partly of the laissez faire methods of Malvern. A few weeks of Kirk's generous but sparing praise of my efforts, and of his pungent criticisms of the Malvern masters restored my long lost self-confidence: I saw that whilst I was not brilliant or even clever, I had in the past been unsuccessful because I was lazy, and not lazy because I was unsuccessful.¹⁵

Warren took the entrance exam that November, received a green light on his health in the Report of the Medical Board¹⁶ on Jan 17, and on February 4, 1914, he entered the Royal Military College, having placed twenty-first out of 201 candidates on the entrance exam.¹⁷ He was a Prize Cadet, one of the top twenty-five scores on the exam, which meant that he had successfully won a scholarship, or bursary, to the RMC. This entitled him to enter at a lower rate of contribution (£80 instead of the usual £150). After a nine-month period of training,¹⁸ shortened from eighteen months because of the war, Warren was commissioned to the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) as a 2nd Lieutenant on September 29, 1914, and he left the RMC on October 1. A comment later in life about enjoying the *Odyssey* because in it there were no battles may indicate one reason why he chose the Service Corps rather than the Infantry or the Artillery.¹⁹ The war had begun on Aug. 4, 1914.

The Army

Warren was sent to France on November 4, 1914, to serve with the 4th Company, 7th Divisional Train British Expeditionary Force in the supply and transport side of the Army. This involved supplying transportation, food and water, clothing and furniture, fire service, staff clerks, administration of barracks, and similar items, but not ammunition or military equipment.²⁰ In September 1915, Warren was transferred to 3rd Company 7th Divisional Train, France. On September 24, 1916, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant, and on October 1 of the same year he was promoted to the rank of temporary captain. On Nov. 13, 1916, he was appointed officer commanding 4th Company 7th Divisional Train in France, and eight days later was transferred to the 32nd Divisional Train. On Nov. 29, 1917, Warren was promoted to the rank of captain, and on Dec. 23 he was sent to the Mechanical Transport School of Instruction in France. On March 4, 1918, Warren graduated from the Mechanical Transport School of Instruction first in his class. Other training courses included six months at the London School of Economics and a War Course in 1931.²¹

In mid-April, Jack was wounded in battle during a German offensive, so Warren visited him on April 24 in Liverpool Merchant's Mobile Hospital, Etaples, France, riding his motorcycle both ways to see him. George Sayer comments, "To cycle one hundred miles in one day was a great achievement for Warren, who was neither athletic nor energetic," and he notes that this incident ended an estrangement between the brothers, caused by differing opinions of Malvern College.²² In May 1918, Warren began serving with the 31st Divisional Mechanical Transport Company in France. On Nov. 10, 1918, the war ended, and the next day the Armistice was signed.

After the war, he also served briefly in Belgium (beginning April 11, 1919, for the 6th Pontoon Park, Namur, Belgium) until reassigned to England. On November 18, 1919, Warren was reassigned to service in England, posting to Aldershot, about forty miles southeast of Oxford, the military headquarters in England, for the 2nd Regular Officer's Course. Warren also served in the following places:

- 487 Company, Southern Command (June 1920 to January 1921)
- Sierra Leone, West Africa (March 9, 1921 to March 23, 1922; he arrived home on April 7, 1922 and then enjoyed a six-month leave)
- Colchester, England as the Officer in charge of Supplies (Oct. 4, 1922 to December 1925)
- Woolwich, England (Dec. 30, 1925 to March 1927)
- Shanghai, China (April 11, 1927 to April 1930)²³
- Bulford, England (May 1930 to October 1931)
- Shanghai, China (October 9, 1931 to December 14, 1932).²⁴

Warren later called the three years at Colchester "the happiest three years of my Army life."²⁵ One of the minor features of that happiness was a visit from Jack in July, 1924, after which they traveled together to Oxford on Warren's motorcycle.²⁶

During his first tour of duty in Shanghai, Warren received a telegram from Jack on Sept. 27, 1929, stating that their father had died two days earlier. A leave allowed him to return home to settle their father's affairs. The leave was taken at the end of this tour in Shanghai, from Feb. 25, 1930 to April 15, 1930. Warren arrived back in Liverpool on April 16, 1930. Later that month, he and Jack visited Little Lea, did some packing, and left behind their childhood home. On May 13, 1930, he was assigned to Bulford, about forty miles southwest from Oxford, which allowed him to spend weekend leaves with his brother in Oxford. At this time, he began the task of editing *The Lewis Papers*.²⁷

One sees a major difference between the brothers in the area of travel. Jack hardly traveled outside of the UK, but Warren's military career taught him to appreciate other parts of the world, which he saw firsthand. Another aspect of this difference is Warren's interest in the architecture of the big city, especially in the United States. He was impressed by the tall buildings of Los Angeles and New York, writing, "I like the sheer soaring sweep of them,"²⁸ and he called the skyscrapers of New York "an illustration of Avalon perhaps, in a modern edition."²⁹ And he liked Boston, for its English flavor: "Boston, superficially at any rate, is simply a very pleasant English city which has had the misfortune to be dumped down on the Eastern American seaboard."³⁰

Warren left for his last tour of duty in China on Oct. 9, 1931, arriving in Shanghai on Nov. 17. This tour was completed when he applied for a leave, which was added to the end of his

service, running from Oct. 21 to Dec. 20, 1932. He sailed home on the *Automedon*,³¹ retiring from the Royal Army Service Corps on December 21, 1932 with the rank of Captain, after eighteen years, two months, and twenty days of service.

Warren was recalled to active service during World War Two on September 4, 1939, posted on Oct. 25, 1939 to Le Havre, France, and then evacuated from Dunkirk in May, 1940. During this time, he attained the rank of Major.³² He was transferred to the Reserves on August 16, 1940 and joined the 6th Oxon (Oxford City) Home Guard Battalion as a private soldier, sometimes serving on his boat, the *Bosphorus*, especially during the summer of 1941.³³ On August 5, 1944, he was awarded medals for his service,³⁴ and he was no longer in the Reserves as of March 29, 1947.

Reconversion and Faith

Like his brother, and perhaps in reaction against his father's religion, Warren ceased to become a practicing Christian at some unknown point in his youth. Toward the end of his military service, he began to reconsider the truths of the Christian faith. Even earlier, during his time in Sierra Leone, he had planned to read the entire Bible and must have been successful or at least come close, having resolved to read five pages per day and having gotten past Leviticus, which is the major stumbling block for those who want to read the Bible from cover to cover.³⁵

In December 1922, Jack's diary notes a comment from Warren, who had stated that day that reality never came up to our dreams. Here Warren was actually expressing what Jack later described as Joy, a longing for another world. During his Army service, while on his way home to settle his father's estate, Warren stood in front of the Great Buddha of Kamakura, Japan,³⁶ and as a result became more deeply convinced of the truth of the Christian religion. Then, while on his first ever walking tour in January 1931, he commented to Jack that he was beginning to think that the religious view was true. On Christmas Day, 1931, Warren took Communion at the Bubbling Well chapel in Shanghai, the first time he had communed in many years and the same day that his brother communed for the first time since childhood.³⁷ Less than a month later, he received a letter from Jack, which indicated that Jack had begun communing again. Jack traced his conversion to Christianity to September 28, 1931, about a week before Warren left for his last tour of duty in China. Thus, the two brothers returned to the Lord's Table at the same time.

In subsequent years, Warren would write about the great peace that descended on him when he merely sat in a church sanctuary and about his intent to pray for Minto.³⁸ Later, he wrote of the miraculous elements in the Bible: "As a Christian, the mentality of the Believer who picks and chooses the miracles in which he will believe is to me at any rate baffling. If you believe that sundry dead people were brought to life in the same flesh which they were going to be buried in, why should not Balaam's ass have spoken, or the sun stood still for Joshua?"³⁹ He later wrote in his diary about Chesterton's *Everlasting Man*, which he read in March 1930, reflecting his conservative views by relishing Chesterton's "trouncing of the Evolutionists which is really admirable."⁴⁰ Like his brother, Warren's tastes in worship practice were decidedly Low Church. He once stated that he "should like no hymns at all."⁴¹

He and his brother Jack became active in their local parish in Oxford, Holy Trinity, Headington Quarry. Warren served for several years as a vestryman of Holy Trinity,⁴² and the two brothers were regular worshippers for the rest of their lives.

The Kilns and Walking Tours

In July 1930, while Warren was still on leave from the Army, the combined funds of Warren, Jack, and Mrs. Moore purchased the Kilns in Headington Quarry, just east of Oxford. Two months earlier, Warren had considered the advantages and disadvantages of living with Jack and Mrs. Moore. Finally, he concluded that “a closer intimacy with J and a correspondingly fuller intellectual life: a healthier life too, by the cutting out of those hours spent in social and ceremonial drinking” favored the decision.

Warren and Jack went on eight annual walking tours, beginning January 1–4, 1931, with a 54-mile tour of the Wye Valley of Wales near the English border. On these tours the brothers would walk cross country for several days, enjoying nature, staying in local inns, and eating in pubs. This was the first walking tour that Warren ever took, and he enjoyed it, mostly because he had his brother’s full and sole attention. Jack must have known that Warren would enjoy walking tours, because he wrote to Warren in detail about a walking tour that he took with Owen Barfield, Walter Field, and Cecil Harwood on April 19–24, 1927. No walking tour occurred in 1932, due to Warren’s military service in China. The second took place in January of 1933 in the same Wye Valley, and the third occurred January 1–6, 1934, also in the Wye Valley. The fourth took place January 3–5, 1935 in the Chiltern Hills near Oxford, while the fifth took place January 13–16, 1936 in Derbyshire, north of Oxford. On January 5–9, 1937, Jack and Warren took their sixth annual walking tour in Dulverton, Somerset, and their seventh annual walking tour occurred on January 10–14, 1938 in Wiltshire, a total of 51½ miles. Their eighth and last walking tour took place on January 2–6, 1939. Jack and Warren walked 42 miles in the Welsh marshes, visiting Malvern along the way. Later, after his brother’s death, he would write in his diary that those walking tours were the most satisfying remembrance of life with Jack.⁴³ When, in 1940, Warren was involved in the war effort, Jack wrote to him stating that it seemed “almost brutal to describe a January walk taken without you,”⁴⁴ and prayed in that same letter that God might bring the two brothers together again soon.

One year into the experiment of living at the Kilns, Warren reviewed in his diary the success of the past year. He pronounced it “the happiest of my life,”⁴⁵ in spite of some reservations about Minto. In that same diary entry, Warren also described his daily routine, which offers insight into Warren’s post-military life. He offered his typical daily schedule: 7:45 tea, 8:10 got up, shaved, bathed, dressed, took dog for walk, had breakfast, walked to London Rd., caught the 9:30 bus to Rose Lane, worked on *The Lewis Papers* in College, came with Jack by car to the Kilns for lunch, worked on the grounds of the Kilns or walked until tea time at 4, piano practice under Maureen’s tutelage until six, 7:00 supper, took dog for walk, read and wrote until 11:00, made fires, made the dogs’ beds, said prayers, read two evening lessons in bed, read poetry for about 20 minutes until midnight, then to sleep. In the summer Jack and Warren walked for an hour, longer than in term time, and Warren worked longer at College and less at home.

Mrs. Moore

One would expect that someone like Warren, living in the same house as Jack and Mrs. Moore, would have been able to sort out the nature of the relationship. But it is not so. On one occasion, Warren brought up the subject to his brother and was so firmly put down that he never brought it up again. The only position that can be assumed with any certainty is the standard explanation, that Jack promised Paddy that if he survived the war and Paddy didn’t, he would take care of his mother.

Mrs. Moore should receive her due, however, for without her support, Warren would never have been allowed to live with his brother. And surely she must take some credit for the

summary statement that Warren wrote in 1933: “I can say with no reservations whatsoever, that the past twelve months has [*sic*] been incomparably the happiest of my life.”⁴⁶

Eventually, however, Warren became exasperated by the way in which his brother was constantly at the beck and call of Mrs. Moore, so much so that he called the last three or four years of her life “very nearly unbearable.”⁴⁷ When Mrs. Moore died on January 12, 1951, Warren wrote in his diary, “And so ends the mysterious self imposed slavery in which J has lived for at least thirty years.”⁴⁸ He went on to marvel that his brother was able to accomplish so much “in the intervals of washing her dishes, hunting for her spectacles, taking the dog for a run, and performing the unending futile drudgery of a house which was an excruciating mixture of those of Mrs. Price and Mrs. Jellaby.”⁴⁹ She was the one that made Warren always seem like a boarder at the Kilns.¹

His Brother’s Brother

During Warren’s time with the RASC, the correspondence between the two brothers demonstrated the camaraderie they had had for many years, including the terms APB and SPB, Archpigiebotham and Smallpigiebotham, terms of endearment relatively well known to readers of Lewis’s letters and autobiography and also an indication of their sense of humor. Jack even wrote in his letters to Warren about “the true nature of PBism,” i.e. Pigiebothamism, “pure, unadulterated, orthodox, high flying Pigiebothamism,” and “Pigiebotham moments.”⁵⁰ That friendship between brothers, which the younger Lewis explained further in *The Four Loves*, made possible the living arrangements at the Kilns and the nature of this lifelong friendship.

After retirement from the RASC, Warren took to editing *The Lewis Papers*. He and his brother Jack enjoyed much time together, including the annual walking tour, meetings with the Inklings, attendance at many social events, and travel to Magdalen College on many days to read in Jack’s rooms. As a member of the Inklings, Warren spent time with both his brother and his brother’s friends. He was well read and would use the literary knowledge gained by his reading to make comments, as he had done in his letters to Jack from abroad.⁵¹ Later he would exaggerate the difference between the two brothers by writing in his diary, “He and I, born of the same parents, he so brilliant, I so much the reverse. How and why?”⁵²

During his time at the Kilns, Warren began to help his brother with his growing correspondence, especially after the release of *The Screwtape Letters* (1942) and after Jack’s appearance on the BBC in 1941 and 1942. The letter typing began in 1943.⁵³ Warren once estimated that he typed 12,000 letters for his brother.⁵⁴

One of the characteristics of the Lewis family was a lack of shyness about tobacco and alcohol. For Warren, the latter proved to be a serious drawback that caused him much difficulty throughout his life. The irony is that Warren, the alcoholic, outlived his younger brother by almost a decade. His years in the Army turned his moderate use of alcohol into a more and more frequent practice, eventually serving as a remedy to bouts of depression or as a method of dealing with setbacks, and later his abuse of alcohol caused Jack to cancel at least one Irish holiday.⁵⁵ He especially turned to drink in 1963 after the death of his brother.

Author and Inkling

Many of those who read eventually become writers, especially those who read extensively. Extensive reading allows the reader to see what aspects of a particular branch of

¹ *Brothers & Friends*, 237: In his diary, Warren remarked after her death, “The Kilns always seemed to me to be a billet...”

literature have gaps. This happened with Warren and explains why he was one of the original Inklings, that group of Oxford intellectuals who met weekly, beginning in 1933, to discuss wide-ranging ideas and to read works they were writing. Their influence can be seen in the frequent mentions in his diary about their meetings, those who attended, and the topics they discussed or manuscripts they read. While his tastes varied somewhat from his brother, they shared a lot in common, including a love of poetry and an appreciation of authors such as Wordsworth, Chesterton, Farrer, Law,² Virgil, and Homer. He once wrote, “A book, a good chair, my pipe and a good bed to go to when night falls, and I’m about as happy as one can be in this very trying world.”⁵⁶

Warren’s writing benefited from his brother’s proximity in a number of ways, not least by way of encouragement. On June 6, 1931, Warren gave Jack an essay he had written on the Duke of Marlborough. The result was that Jack encouraged Warren to try his hand at writing.⁵⁷ As they read books together in their sitting room, they would often read interesting passages to one another as they met them.⁵⁸

Much of Warren’s writing style was developed by his childhood training and early attempts at writing, by what he read, by the regular diary entries, and by many other influences. This passage about Salisbury Cathedral and the surrounding area illustrates his flowing prose, his attention to detail, and his ability to visualize what he had seen: “After this I walked for a long time in the Close which was gloriously still and restful, and a wonderful blend of colour—the old grey houses, the green of the trees, a lot of lilac, and splendid flaming beds of tulips in many of the gardens: at the bottom of the Close were some magnificent horse chestnuts in bloom. The Cathedral was all I remembered it and more: it is wonderful the way its perfect symmetry leads the eye upwards by front and roof and flying buttress to that soaring spire.”⁵⁹ Warren once wrote about his appreciation of beauty, stating that in earlier life he had formed the habit of deliberately fixing in his mind various bits of scenery.⁶⁰ Those that he committed to memory stayed with him and undoubtedly improved his writing ability. In addition, the work he did in completing the editing of *The Lewis Papers* between 1933 and 1935 must have enabled him to grow as a writer.

Although his brother was one of the most famous authors of the twentieth century, Warren himself was an author in his own right. His specialty was seventeenth century French history, and he wrote seven books in that field of study, besides the unpublished *Lewis Papers* and the published *Letters of C. S. Lewis*. That French period became an interest of his in 1919, when he read the diaries of St. Simon.⁶¹ He wrote in his diary, “I saw in a shop window an abridgement of St. Simon’s Memoirs, bought it as a change from French novels, and became a life-addict to the period.”⁶² Richard West also speculates that the origin of Warren’s interest in seventeenth century French history came from the reading of Alexandre Dumas’s *The Three Musketeers*, a book that his younger brother did not like, criticizing it for lacking atmosphere. West further speculates that the reading of Dumas may have led him to a military career.⁶³

A portion of Warren’s first book appeared as his first published work in 1947, six years before the book itself was published. Edited by his brother, *Essays Presented to Charles Williams* included J.R.R. Tolkien’s seminal essay, “On Fairy-Stories,” C. S. Lewis’s “On Stories,” essays by Owen Barfield, Dorothy Sayers, and Gervase Mathew, as well as Warren’s essay, “The Galleys of France.” In this essay, Warren wrote engagingly, using both colorful detail and sweeping but accurate generalizations. He painted such a graphic literary picture that you almost feel as though you are there. What a surprise to learn that along with the criminals, deserters, purchased slaves, and smugglers, the French sent the Huguenots, after 1685, to the

² William Law, author of *Holy Life*.

oars of its galleys and the whip of the petty officer, there to row until they died. One can imagine Warren asking his talented writer brother to read and comment on his work. The critique of the Inklings would further shape his writing.

His first book, *The Splendid Century: Some Aspects of French Life in the Reign of Louis XIV*, was published in 1953,⁶⁴ and Warren included words of thanks to Jack and Gervase Mathew “for their patience in listening to several chapters of it in manuscript.”⁶⁵ It came out on March 17, 1954 in New York and was reviewed well in the *New York Times*. Warren was delighted.⁶⁶ Like so many other works, it was read to the Inklings. Tolkien remarked about Warren’s reading to the Inklings, “Writing a book: it’s catching.”⁶⁷ Humphrey Carpenter wrote that his “readability, wit and good sense almost equaled his brother’s work.”⁶⁸ Diana Glycer calls this book “a standard text in its field.”⁶⁹ The last of the seven books on French history was published in 1963. In the years after his brother’s death, he edited the *Letters of C. S. Lewis*, published in 1966. One of the most powerful pieces of writing, however, was the portion of his diary in which he described the last days together with his brother and the day of Jack’s death.⁷⁰

Warren’s research style showed affinities to that of his brother, who preferred primary sources over secondary ones and who was meticulous and exhaustive in much of his research. According to Richard West, “Warren’s lengthy bibliographies indicate that he read every relevant work available to him in the extensive resources of the Bodleian, so he was well-grounded in the scholarship on his chosen period. His footnotes, however, show a distinct partiality for citing primary sources.”⁷¹

The Personality of Warren Lewis

Warren Lewis was an educated gentleman, a polite man with wit and joviality.⁷² He was both a gentle man and a gentleman, impeccable in his manners, talented as a thinker and a writer, and a scholar in his own right. The obituary that ran in *The Times* one week after his death described him as “deeply humble and a warm and delightful companion.” His brother called him “the most perfect gentleman anyone could hope to meet,” and John Wain said of him that he was “a man who stays in my memory as the most courteous I have ever met.”⁷³ Jack also called him “the politest of men.”⁷⁴ Such courtesy and gentlemanliness resulted in what Diana Glycer calls his “generous hospitality.”⁷⁵ Once, on a trip with Jack, Mrs. Moore, and Maureen, Mrs. Moore, who was being rather irritable, said to Maureen, “What is he so politely and cleverly saying now?”⁷⁶ Apparently Warren could be a gentleman even in trying circumstances, and the following quotation from Warren’s diary shows his gentlemanliness after a competitive sporting loss. “After I had finished my diary I played a single of croquet with J. I was off my game and he was playing really well: he beat me by six hoops and thoroughly deserved his win.”⁷⁷

Warren was also generous in praise, stating after the death of Charles Williams: “And so vanishes one of the best and nicest men it has ever been my good fortune to meet,”⁷⁸ and of Paul Benecke, “the absolute best man I have ever known in my life.”⁷⁹ Stating of Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*, “...how near he is to real magic” and “The inexhaustible fertility of the man’s imagination amazes me.”⁸⁰ Jack frequently ended his letters with a statement to the effect that Warren joined him in extending good wishes, showing more of the gentlemanliness of his brother.

He hadn’t always been the consummate gentleman. Earlier in life, Warren responded sharply to his father’s criticism of army life with a comment that Jack described as rude. Warren said, “It’s all very well for you, living in the study and spending £1400 a year on yourself.”⁸¹ The

strained relationship between father and sons explains, but does not excuse, this behavior. A few months later, Jack expressed unhappiness with Warren's cynicism, his rejection of that which is warm and generous, and his general dissatisfaction with the human condition.⁸² Becoming a Christian changed everything for Warren, however, and the gentlemanliness of his character began to flow from his faith.

Built into the psyche of Warren were both an inveterate optimism and a certain humility. On one occasion, caused by a solitary walk he took in 1934, Warren wrote, "A great wave of happiness suddenly swept over me, and I realized, I hope with gratitude, how very good life is."⁸³ Later that same year, he wrote about his occasional negative comments against Minto, who must truly have been exasperating if his comments are anything near the truth, "I must be at least as exasperating to others as they are to me."⁸⁴ That optimism also translated into a good sense of humor, which any frequent reader of Lewis knows to be an important characteristic of both brothers. Jack wrote to Arthur Greeves on Dec. 7, 1935, about an unwelcome visitor, stating that while the New Testament tells us to visit widows, he and Warren agree that nowhere does it tell us to let *them* visit *us*.⁸⁵ Warren's gentlemanliness and humility made him the better person to get along with children. Jack once described himself as shy with children, but Warren as able to get on better with a child.⁸⁶ Both brothers welcomed the evacuees from London during World War Two, and one wonders, in the light of Jack's comment, if he would ever have written the *Chronicles of Narnia* without Warren.

Warren often deferred to his strong-willed and brilliant brother, but he was more stable than Jack. Jack once wrote, "...he is in so many ways better than I am. I keep on crawling up to the heights & slipping back to the depths: he seems to do neither."⁸⁷ Depression and alcohol were his besetting problems, both of them started, according to Warren himself, by insomnia.⁸⁸ But in spite of these challenges, Warren Lewis excelled as a military officer, a writer, a companion, and a gentleman.

After Jack

The death of his beloved brother deeply saddened Warren. Nearly a year later he wrote, "I seem to miss my dear SPB more rather than less as time goes on."⁸⁹ But it was not all sadness, for he also wrote of his pleasant memories: "Oddly enough as time goes on the vision of J as he was in his later years grows fainter, that of him in earlier days more and more vivid. It is the J of the attic and the little end room, the J of Daudelspiels and walks and jaunts, the J of the early and middle years whom I miss so cruelly."⁹⁰ One of his regrets later in life was the lack of detail in his diaries. Writing about his brother, Warren stated more than once, "Oh if only I could have known in time that he was to die first, how I would have Boswellised him!"⁹¹

Warren and the Millers, Len and Mollie, spent more time together; Mollie was the housekeeper at the Kilns for many years. Warren continued writing, producing *Letters of C. S. Lewis*, which included a biography of his brother. Eventually his health began to fail, he developed circulation problems, he had a pacemaker installed, and he died at the Kilns reading a book, on April 9, 1973, at the age of seventy-seven. He is buried in the cemetery of Holy Trinity, Headington Quarry, in the same grave where his brother was buried a decade earlier.

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¹ Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, 4. Years later, Jack recalled one of the cute stories about Warren in a letter to Vera Mathews, stating that Warren had misunderstood the Lord’s Prayer to say, “Hallow would be thy name.” *Collected Letters*, II, 957, a letter dated July 11, 1949.

² Marjorie Lamp Mead, 2, citing, *Lewis Family Papers*, Vol. III, 40.

³ Walter Hooper, “Warren Hamilton (Warnie) Lewis,” 1011.

⁴ Jack once wrote to Mrs. Johnson, in a letter dated Nov. 8, 1952, “When Our Lord Himself praised the Centurion He never hinted that the military profession was in itself sinful. This has been the general view of Christendom. Pacifism is a v. recent & local variation.” *Collected Letters*, III, 247. See also Jack’s essay, “Why I Am Not a Pacifist” in *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1980.

⁵ Hugh Thomas, *The Story of Sandhurst*, 15f.

⁶ Thomas, *The Story of Sandhurst*, 28, 33, 35.

⁷ Thomas, *The Story of Sandhurst*, 82.

⁸ Thomas, *The Story of Sandhurst*, 126.

⁹ During World War One, 5,131 cadets passed through Sandhurst with an average length of course at six months. Since Warren was there for nine months and cadets at the end of the war were there for two months, this indicates that the length of stay gradually shorted during the war. Thomas, *The Story of Sandhurst*, 178, 180.

¹⁰ Thomas, *The Story of Sandhurst*, 114, 175, 199, 227.

¹¹ Thomas, *The Story of Sandhurst*, 223.

¹² Examination for Admission to the Royal Military Academy, or the Royal Military College. Army Personnel Centre.

¹³ *Brothers & Friends*, xiii.

¹⁴ Warren started with Kirkpatrick on September 10, 1913. During the years between 1878 and 1899, more than two-thirds of the annual average of 330 new cadets had studied with a crammer before taking the army examination for entrance to Sandhurst. Thomas, *The Story of Sandhurst*, 151f.

¹⁵ *The Lewis Papers*, Vol. IV, page 62, cited in Hooper, Volume 1, 1012.

¹⁶ Report of Medical Board, Register No. 100/L/4050, Jan. 17, 1914.

¹⁷ By comparison, Churchill studied with a crammer and failed to enter Sandhurst three times before he was finally successful. He graduated 8th out of 150 in 1895. Thomas, *The Story of Sandhurst*, pp. 154, 157. Field-Marshal Montgomery entered Sandhurst 72nd out of 170 candidates and left 36th of 238. Smyth, *Sandhurst*, 139.

¹⁸ The course of study seems to have been three terms and approximately eighteen months at the time that Warren was there, since author John Smyth entered Sandhurst in January 1911 and left in summer 1912, Smyth, *Sandhurst*, 141–147. More than five thousand cadets passed through Sandhurst during World War One with an average length of study at six months. Hugh Thomas, *The Story of Sandhurst*, 178.

¹⁹ *Brothers & Friends*, July 13, 1966, 262.

²⁰ “Royal Army Service Corps,” *Wikipedia*, accessed June 13, 2008.

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- ²¹ The course at the School of Economics took place from Oct. 4, 1926 to March 23, 1927. Army Form B.199A. Army Personnel Centre.
- ²² George Sayer, *Jack*, 131.
- ²³ This China tour was quite dangerous because of hostilities in the area, and this caused much distress to both his father and his brother. *Collected Letters II*, 698.
- ²⁴ J. E. Treble letter, November 1979. Army Personnel Centre.
- ²⁵ *Brothers & Friends*, Feb. 6, 1967, 269. In his diary, Jack reports that Warren gave a favorable report of Colchester, confirming this impression. *All My Road Before Me*, 157, an entry dated Dec. 23, 1922.
- ²⁶ A visit on July 3 and 4, 1924. *All My Road Before Me*, 341.
- ²⁷ *The Lewis Papers* are the unpublished memoirs of the Lewis family from 1850-1930.
- ²⁸ *Brothers & Friends*, March 20, 1930, 26.
- ²⁹ *Brothers & Friends*, April 4, 1930, 30.
- ³⁰ *Brothers & Friends*, April 6, 1930, 31.
- ³¹ Army Form B.174. Leave of Absence. Automedon was the name of Achilles' charioteer in Homer's *Iliad*. The SS *Automedon*, a British passenger and cargo steamer, was sunk on Nov. 11, 1940 by a German ship, the *Atlantis*, during World War Two.
- ³² The exact date of this promotion is Jan. 27, 1940. Army Form B.199A. Army Personnel Centre.
- ³³ *Collected Letters*, II, 486, 504.
- ³⁴ Army Form B.199A. Army Personnel Centre.
- ³⁵ *Brothers & Friends*, March 8, 1921, 8.
- ³⁶ This event in Kamakura took place on March 4, 1930. Warren visited Japan and the United States, particularly San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, and Boston on this trip. *Brothers & Friends*, March and April, 1930, 22–32.
- ³⁷ Carpenter, *The Inklings*, 46. *Brothers & Friends*, 92.
- ³⁸ *Brothers & Friends*, Aug. 14, 1933, 114; Sept. 14, 1933, 120. Minto was the nickname assigned to Mrs. Janie Moore.
- ³⁹ *Brothers & Friends*, Nov. 7, 1933, 123.
- ⁴⁰ *Brothers & Friends*, March 20, 1934, 144.
- ⁴¹ *Brothers & Friends*, Aug. 15, 1946, 193.
- ⁴² A letter of Jan. 26, 1953, *Collected Letters*, III, 286.
- ⁴³ *Brothers & Friends*, April 8, 1966, 256.
- ⁴⁴ *Collected Letters*, II, 316, Jan. 9, 1940.
- ⁴⁵ *Brothers & Friends*, Dec. 11, 1933, 129.
- ⁴⁶ *Brothers & Friends*, Dec. 11, 1933, 129.
- ⁴⁷ *Brothers & Friends*, Feb. 6, 1967, 270.
- ⁴⁸ *Brothers & Friends*, Jan. 17, 1951, 236.
- ⁴⁹ Mrs. Price and Mrs. Jellaby are characters from Charles Dickens's novel *Nicholas Nickleby*. *Brothers & Friends*, 236f.
- ⁵⁰ *Collected Letters*, Vol. I, Aug. 2, 1928, 775, Jan. 12, 1930, 870.
- ⁵¹ For example, *Collected Letters*, Vol. 1, 790, n. 17.
- ⁵² *Brothers & Friends*, July 4, 1967, 275.
- ⁵³ West, 76.
- ⁵⁴ *Brothers & Friends*, Sept. 9, 1967, 279.
- ⁵⁵ Summer 1949, see *Collected Letters*, II, 952f.
- ⁵⁶ Glycer, 250.
- ⁵⁷ *Brothers & Friends*, June 6, 1931, 81.
- ⁵⁸ *Collected Letters*, II, 337.
- ⁵⁹ *Brothers & Friends*, May 24, 1930, 51.
- ⁶⁰ *Brothers & Friends*, Feb. 26, 1934, 143. See also *All My Road Before Me*, 162, where Jack notes Warren's comment that nearly everyone is insensible toward beauty.
- ⁶¹ *Brothers & Friends*, 2, n. 2. This note mentions a letter to his father, dated March 3, 1919.
- ⁶² *Collected Letters*, I, 1012.
- ⁶³ West, 79.
- ⁶⁴ For a brief synopsis of each of these books on French history, see the article by Richard C. West in the Bibliography.
- ⁶⁵ Page x, cited in Glycer, 127.

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- ⁶⁶ *They Stand Together: The Letters of C. S. Lewis to Arthur Greeves*, a letter dated April 2, 1954, 530. See also Glycer, 250, for the opinion of other reviewers.
- ⁶⁷ Tolkien, 71.
- ⁶⁸ Carpenter, 243.
- ⁶⁹ Glycer, 17.
- ⁷⁰ *Collected Letters*, III, 1484f. See also “Memoir of C. S. Lewis,” in *Letters of C. S. Lewis*, 45f.
- ⁷¹ West, 80.
- ⁷² Mead, 4.
- ⁷³ Wain, cited in *Collected Letters*, I, 1013.
- ⁷⁴ *Collected Letters*, III, 1462.
- ⁷⁵ Glycer, 33.
- ⁷⁶ *Brothers & Friends*, Aug. 7, 1934, 152.
- ⁷⁷ *Brothers & Friends*, Aug. 23, 1922, 12.
- ⁷⁸ *Brothers & Friends*, May 15, 1945, 183.
- ⁷⁹ *Brothers & Friends*, Sept. 28, 1944, 179.
- ⁸⁰ *Brothers & Friends*, Oct. 10, 1946, 195; Nov. 12, 1949, 231.
- ⁸¹ *All My Road Before Me*, an entry dated Dec. 30, 1922, 164.
- ⁸² *All My Road Before Me*, an entry dated March 30, 1923, 226.
- ⁸³ *Brothers & Friends*, Nov. 24, 1934, 163.
- ⁸⁴ *Brothers & Friends*, Dec. 9, 1934, 166.
- ⁸⁵ *Collected Letters*: II, 160.
- ⁸⁶ *Collected Letters*: II, 171. A letter dated Dec. 7, 1935.
- ⁸⁷ *Collected Letters*: I, Jan. 10, 1931, 949.
- ⁸⁸ *Brothers & Friends*, March 4, 1949, 225.
- ⁸⁹ *Brothers & Friends*, Sept. 1, 1964, 254.
- ⁹⁰ *Brothers & Friends*, Feb. 22, 1965, 255. A Daudelspiel was a motorcycle.
- ⁹¹ *Brothers & Friends*, April 8, 1966, 256.