**DRAFT Donations: guidelines for TARS members**

Any member may be confronted at some point by the offer of material of one kind or another, so here are some pointers about how to respond. These notes are not meant to be prescriptive, merely things to bear in mind.

This could be as a result of

* a death
* moving house
* de-cluttering

Sensitivity is key. You may not know the circumstances or, if after a death, know the connection the potential donor has with the person who died. You may be dealing with a relative or executor having to clear a house, or honour someone’s wishes. You also don’t know if the person you’re dealing with has much idea about Arthur Ransome and his significance, so you need to probe carefully while showing some interest. He/she might wonder if there is monetary value involved so establish early on that TARS is unable to provide valuation. Also, be clear about the position, i. e. that items are being offered as gifts to TARS, not for purchase. Above all, be sympathetic, while politely explaining what TARS may be interested in, and what TARS can and cannot undertake.

You may be approached in person, or by phone or email or letter. Obviously if you are able to speak face to face that makes things much easier, but otherwise you may have to ask the person to explain quite a bit more in writing.

Here are some suggestions about the kind of details you need to establish:

**Nature of the material**: donations may come in a variety of forms, such as books, letters, and other documents but also objects (artefacts). What is the connection with AR? Are these items by AR or about him (or Evgenia)? Are they more peripheral, perhaps concerning other writers known to AR? What period does the material cover? If books, are these hardbacks, paperbacks, first or later editions?Is there any correspondence included?

**Quantity** (rough estimate by no. of shelves or boxes, or size in the case of an artefact)

**Condition**: With books, it could be very helpful to have some idea whether these are in pristine condition or well-used, with or without signatures, signed dedications, text annotations, illustrated (by whom?), etc., in other words, all the kind of things that add interest.

Explain that there is a well-established **TARS library** for members and a mass of archive material so anything that enriches these resources might be very welcome…

BUT

… there are categories of material which either duplicate what the Society already has or which simply would be outside its field of interest. Someone’s old copies of *Mixed Moss*, *Signals* or *The Outlaw* is not going to find a home with TARS, realistically.

**Obtain a list** if possible, which someone, e. g. our TARS librarian Winifred Wilson, can check.

**Valuation.** TARS cannot undertake valuation. Second hand/antiquarian book dealers may be able to help.

**TARS Stall/ regional events:** The stall may be willing to take certain items to sell but not without consulting Christine Rae, please. Your region may host a book box sale at intervals. This can be a good way of picking up items to fill gaps in your own collection or to use as gifts and is potentially a useful source for new members.

**Disposal.**  Seek agreement from the person you are dealing with that anything over and above what TARS might accept can be disposed of appropriately by the Society, i. e. for internal sale to members, taken to charity shops or, as a last resort, simply thrown away.

Finally, if possible, avoid accepting unsorted bulk material which has to be transported up and down the country, only to have to be disposed of by TARS.

Ann Farr, TARS Literary and Resources Committee

30 September 2021