



I

Inglewood

*Give way, you fiends, and give that man some happiness
Who knelt in Wesleyan prayer to beget a fiend;
Builder of a gabled house with daffodils...
– from ‘Prayer’, 1936*

For the rest, as I say, I’m still waiting to hear further word from England. My brothers are selling the family estate and the old homestead [...] I must say that it had occurred to me that if one couldn’t keep up the house no one could stop me putting up a shack on the grounds, but Margie persuaded me this was impractical.

– letter to Albert Erskine, 20 March 1951: Letters, II, p. 339

Malcolm Lowry and his father, Arthur, near ‘Inglewood’, circa 1914.

Image courtesy of the Bluecoat and the Lowry family.



Caldy Golf Course

From the sandy road as they passed the iron bridge with its rusted builder's plate "Cheshire Lines, 1840" they could see the low mist scurrying over the finger-high grass between the deserted fairways of the first and ninth holes. [...] The wind shirred over the course, through the reeds, chased over the pools, the ponds and the grasses and natural hazards and patches of snow; it was like a care that passed, frowning the face of the waters. Trailing a solitary snow-backed carriage, an old engine, with her fireman standing wide-legged on the tender, meandered along a single line edging the course, towards Thurstaston.

– In Ballast to the White Sea, pp. 124, 127

Lowry brothers Wilfred, Russell and Malcolm, Caldy Golf Club, circa 1916.

Image courtesy of the Bluecoat and the Lowry family.



III

Caldy Shore

Dark clouds were blowing up from the sea, from the Point of Ayr: beyond, on the other side of the river in Flintshire, the Welsh mountains loomed leaden-grey [...] The tide was going out, leaving the sands strangely printed, the channel sunk in the centre flowed fully, and fishing boats were slanting outward, always outward, from Neston and Parkgate.

– In Ballast to the White Sea, p. 127

Caldy Shore. Photograph by Helen Tookey.



IV

West Kirby

... although the season was drawing to a close and the grey hydropathic hotels along the promenades were emptying, the golf course was packed all day with Liverpool brokers playing foursomes. [...] Then it was a pleasure to go out with Geoffrey into the town, which was still full of laughing pretty girls, and walk through the sunlit windy streets or to look at one of the comical Pierrot shows on the beach. Or best of all they would sail on the marine lake in a borrowed twelve-foot yacht managed expertly by Geoffrey.

– Under the Volcano, pp. 23–24

Rusell and Malcolm Lowry on board fishing boat 'The Florence', Isle of Man, 1920.

Image courtesy of the Bluecoat and the Lowry family.





V

Wibberlee Wobberlee Walk

Jacques and he walked along the promenade singing:

*Oh we allll WALK ze wibberlee wobberlee WALK
And we all TALK ze wibberlee wobberlee TALK
And we all WEAR wibberlee wobberlee TIES
And-look-at-all-ze-pretty-girls-with-wibberlee-wobberlee-eyes. [...]*

Then the ritual was to shout 'Hi' and walk after some girl whose admiration you imagined, if she happened to turn round, you had aroused. If you really had and it was after sunset you took her walking on the golf course...
– Under the Volcano, p. 26

Malcolm Lowry, aged 15, on holiday at Budleigh Salterton, 1924.

Image courtesy of the Bluecoat and the Lowry family.



Club House

Yes, I was pretty good at golf once, I broke the boys under 15 record, and also later under 18 held for fifty odd years by Johnny Ball (later open champ) in 1924: I did the first 8 at the Royal Liverpool (Hoylake) in 28 once in the annual boys' show there when I was 14½ [...] But later I took to socketing and even beer perhaps and dreadful nervous twitchings on the green. When I began to think I was really good I became lousy. But should you care to – er – look you will still find my record inscribed on the wall in the Royal Liverpool to this day.

– Letter to Albert Erskine, 24 June 1947 (Letters, II, pp. 71–72)

Malcolm Lowry in the garden at 'Inglewood', circa 1915.

Image courtesy of the Bluecoat and the Lowry family.

PLAN
REFERRED TO

ALBION STREET.

ROAD

MOUNT

GATE

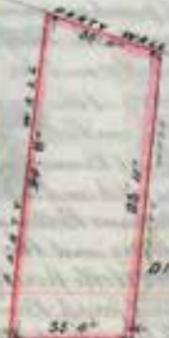
126' 5"

BELLIS

78' 2"

N O R T H

D R I V E



DICKINSON, LOWMYER, OGDEN,

North Drive

Mr and Mrs Lowry, starting in New Brighton close to the Methodist church, moved in 1906 to a relatively modest but substantial villa, where Malcolm was born. It stands on the very highest point of the red sandstone ridge overlooking fifteen golf courses, four light-houses, the sand-dunes and market gardens of the Wirral Peninsula.

– Muriel Bradbrook, *Malcolm Lowry: His Art and Early Life – A Study in Transformation* (Cambridge UP, 1974), p. 29

Plan of Malcolm Lowry's New Brighton birthplace, from the deeds of the house, 1906.

Thanks to Denis Moran.



MALCOLM LOWRY
Author of
Under the Volcano
Writer of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*
and *The Heat of the Day*

Source

Grass grew too from the downfallen crosstrees and in the dead winches wildflowers had taken root – wildflowers, spring beauties and death camass with its creamy blooms. And on the stern, seeming to comment on my own source, for I too had been born in that terrible city whose main street is the ocean, could still be almost made out the ghost of the words: Eridanus, Liverpool.

– ‘The Forest Path to the Spring’, in Hear Us O Lord from Heaven Thy Dwelling Place, p. 225

Unveiling the Lowry blue plaque by the Mayor of Wirral, Councillor Tony Smith, New Brighton promenade, 2019.

Photo courtesy of the Bluecoat