More scholars and friends have contributed to these essays than I can acknowledge, but I particularly want to thank those who made my year in Paris such a pleasure, notably Richard Wilson, François Laroque, Ann and Jean-Jacques Lecercle, Catherine Bernard and Daniel Ferrer; my many friends across the Atlantic, and in particular Mark Hussey, Jane Marcus, Vara Neverow, Merry Pawlowski and Ted Bishop; my former students Kathy Laing and Alice Staveley, my current students Marion Dell and Deborah Gerrard, and my colleagues at De Montfort University. David Stocker has talked, listened and encouraged, Hans Gabler has been characteristically generous with his thoughts and ideas, and Stuart Clarke has helped me greatly at every stage, with patience, kindness and his extraordinary knowledge of Woolf’s work. I have enjoyed working with my copy-editor Sarah Hall, and my editor, Jackie Jones.

* * *

The occasions of these essays are listed below. I am grateful to all those who invited me to speak or write for them, and for their permissions to reprint.


Essay 2 was read at a conference on literary biography organised by the English Institute, and later published in The Art of Literary Biography, ed. John Batchelor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

Essay 3 was written as the introduction to my edition of Night and Day (London: Penguin, 1992).
An early version of essay 4 was read as the Byron Lecture at Nottingham, 1994.


An early version of essay 6 was read at the 14th International Woolf Conference held in London, 2004.

An earlier version of essay 7 was read at the ‘Text and Border’ Colloquium at Innsbruck to celebrate the work of Hans Walter Gabler, January 2003, and has been published in Variants 4 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005).

Essay 8 was read to the Virginia Woolf Society of Great Britain as their second Annual Birthday Lecture, January 2001, and published by the Society in a limited edition.

An early version of essay 9 was read at the ‘Vortex’ colloquium on ‘L’empreinte des choses’, organised by André Topia at Paris III, October 2003.

Essay 10 was read at the ‘Virginia Woolf Across Cultures’ symposium held in Moscow, June 2003, and published in Woolf Across Cultures, ed. Natalya Reinhold (New York: Pace University Press, 2004).


Essay 13 was read at the Graduate School, CUNY, and subsequently at the Smithsonian Institute, Washington in September 2000, and will be published in Inroads and Outposts: British Women in the Thirties, ed.
Robin Hackett, Jane Marcus and Gay Wachman (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2006).


The author and publishers would like to thank the Society of Authors as the literacy representative of the Estate of Virginia Woolf for permission to quote from Woolf’s manuscript drafts and their transcriptions; and to the executors of the Estate of Virginia Woolf and the Random House Group Limited for permission to quote from Woolf’s diaries, letters, journals and unpublished shorter fiction; to the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection in the New York Public Library for permission to quote from The Years notebooks; to Hope Mirrlees’s executors and the University of Sussex Library for permission to quote from Mirrlees’s letters to Woolf and from her poem Paris; and finally to Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, Pace University Press, Penguin Books and Palgrave for permissions to reprint essays first published by them.