

McNally Editions Catalog

Spring 2024



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Ladies of the Rachmaninoff Eyes

Henry Van Dyke

Foreword by Erik Wood

Rights: World, Audio, Film / TV

- World rights sold to Faber Editions
- Audio rights sold to Tantor Media

Operation Heartbreak

Duff Cooper

Afterword by Michael Hofmann

Rights: North America, Audio

Reminiscences of a Student's Life

Jane Ellen Harrison

Foreword by Daniel Mendelsohn

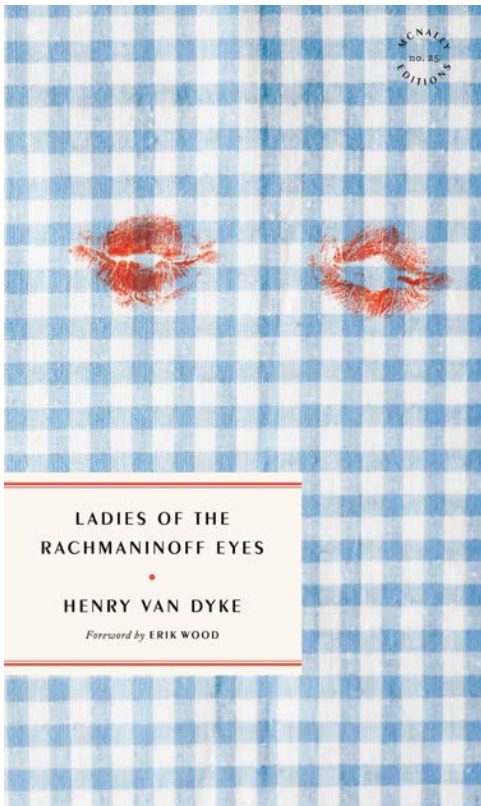
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Free Love: The Story of a Great American Scandal

Robert Shaplen

Foreword by Louis Menand

Rights: World, Audio



Ladies of the Rachmaninoff Eyes

By Henry Van Dyke

Foreword by Erik Wood

Paperback ISBN: 9781946022882 • Pub: Jan 30, 2024 • 5" x 8.5" • 176 pages • \$18.00 • Fiction – Black / Comic / LGBTQ+ • Rights: World (sold), Audio (sold) • eBook ISBN: 9781946022899 • UK Price: £15.99

A lost midcentury classic—the farcical misadventures of a queer Black teen sharing a house with two adoptive mothers, a lascivious cook, and a reticent ghost.

“One of the most unusual, most hopeful, and funniest novels to come out of the Civil Rights era . . . an effervescent, epigrammatic farce.”

—**Erik Wood, from the Foreword**

In a small Michigan town in the late 1950s, the wealthy Jewish widow Etta Klein has for more than thirty years relied for aid, comfort, and companionship on her Black housekeeper Harriet Gibbs. Between “Aunt Harry” and Etta, a relationship has developed that is closer than a friendship, yet not quite a marriage. They are inseparable, absurdly unequal yet comically codependent.

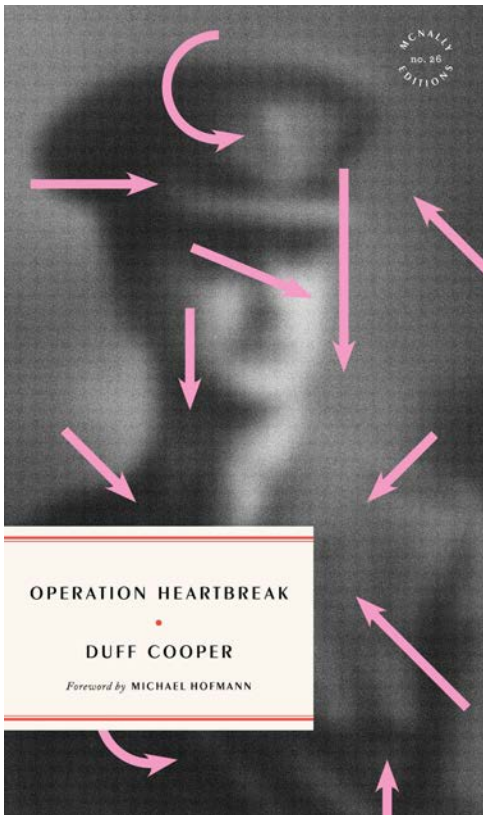
Forever mourning her dead son Sargent, Etta has all but adopted Aunt Harry’s nephew, the precocious, gay, seventeen-year-old Oliver. Oliver is facing down his departure to college—and fending off the advances of Etta’s cook, Nella Mae—when the household is disrupted by the arrival of a self-proclaimed “warlock,” one Maurice LeFleur, who has convinced Etta and Harry that he might be able to contact Sargent in the afterlife.

Ladies of the Rachmaninoff Eyes was the 1965 debut of the extraordinary Henry Van Dyke, whose witty and outrageous novels were ahead of their time. There is nothing else quite like them in American fiction.

Henry Van Dyke (1928 - 2011) was born in Allegan, Michigan, and grew up in Montgomery, Alabama. He served in the Army in occupied Germany, playing flute in the 427th Marching Band. Henry taught creative writing part-time at Kent State University from 1969 until his retirement in 1993, and was the author of four novels, including *Blood of Strawberries*, a sequel to *Ladies of the Rachmaninoff Eyes*.

An architect and designer, **Erik Wood** is Henry Van Dyke's nephew and literary executor.





Operation Heartbreak

By Duff Cooper

Afterword by Michael Hofmann

Paperback ISBN: 9781961341029 • Feb 13, 2024 • 5" x 8.5" • 176 pages • \$18.00
• Fiction – British / World War II • Rights: North America, Audio • eBook
ISBN: 9781961341036 • UK Price: £15.99

A perfectly told tale of defeat and glory inspired by a real secret mission in World War II—and perhaps the only great novel written by a politician.

“A story of why men go to war . . . heart-wrenching love story; a wonderful novel by a masterly writer that should be on everyone's bookshelf.” —**Nina Bawden**

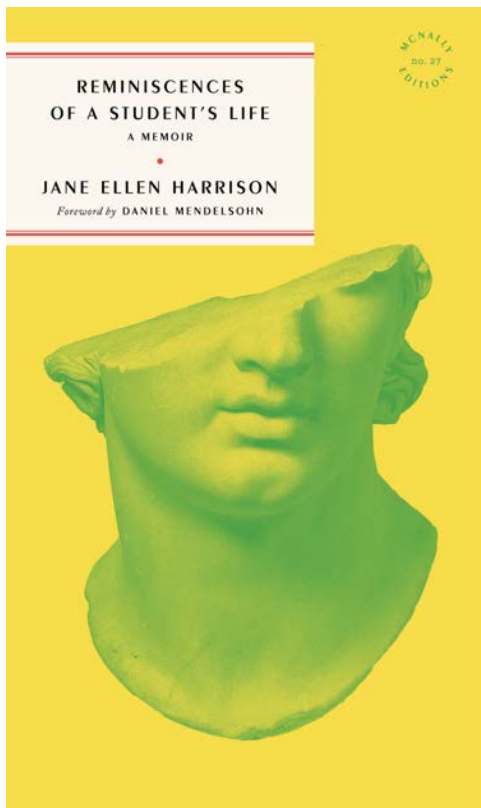
Orphaned in the first months of World War I when his father is killed in action, Willie Maryington dreams only of joining the same cavalry regiment and going to the front. The Armistice dashes seventeen-year-old Willie's plans, but not his dreams of glory, and he makes the regiment the center of his adult existence. As the years go by, Willie falls increasingly out of step with the modern machinery of war. When hostilities break out again, Willie has become a relic. No one could guess that he would be chosen for a mission whose outcome might well decide the course of the Second World War.

Inspired by a real-life triumph of British counterintelligence (codenamed “Operation Mincemeat”), and based on classified sources that Duff Cooper was privy to as a member of Churchill's war cabinet, *Operation Heartbreak* was suppressed by the British government until 1950. It is a study in nostalgia and bewildered idealism to place beside the novels of Joseph Roth and Ford Madox Ford.

A decorated officer during World War I, **Alfred Duff Cooper** (1890–1954) was a statesman, diplomat, and historian. In 1938 he resigned from Parliament in protest of Britain's appeasement policy toward Nazi Germany. Called back by Winston Churchill in 1940, he became Ambassador to France and 1st Viscount Norwich. He was married to famed society debutant, actress, and writer Lady Diana Cooper. *Operation Heartbreak* is his only novel.

Michael Hofmann is an award-winning, German-born poet, translator, and essayist.





Reminiscences of a Student's Life

By Jane Ellen Harrison

Foreword by Daniel Mendelsohn

Paperback ISBN: 9781961341999 • Mar 12, 2024 • 5" x 8.5" • 128 pages • \$18.00 • Memoir—Classics / History / Victorian / LGBTQ+ • Rights: Public / Intro: World • eBook ISBN: 9781961341982 • UK Price: £15.99

The arch, witty, outspoken memoirs of the pioneering archaeologist and scholar.

“Jane Ellen Harrison changed the way we think about ancient Greek culture—peeling back that calm, white marble exterior to reveal something much more violent, messy and ecstatic underneath. She made it possible for me to do what I do.” —**Mary Beard**

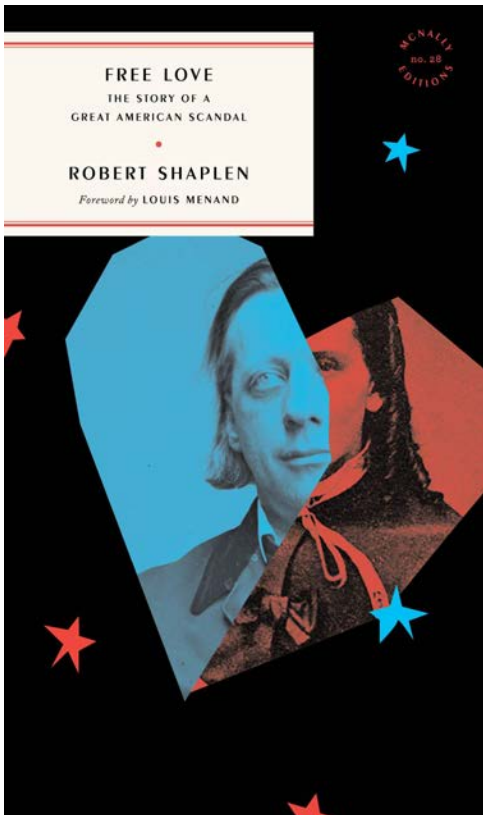
First published by Virginia and Leonard Woolf in 1925, Jane Ellen Harrison’s *Reminiscences* are the irreverent memoirs of a student who declared Victorian education “ingeniously useless,” who blazed a trail for female scholars, and who changed the way we see the ancient world. Growing up in the Yorkshire countryside, Harrison showed an early aptitude for languages: by the age of seventeen, she had learned Greek, Latin, German, and some Hebrew. She went on to become the most influential Classicist of her generation. Drawing on the insights of Nietzsche, Bergson, and Freud, and on archaeological research, she helped to revolutionize the study of Greek myth. “The great Mother,” she wrote, “is prior to male divinities.”

Unconventional in her private life, she spent her later years with the poet and novelist Hope Mirrlees, thirty-seven years her junior. Harrison’s zest for life is everywhere in these pages. Sprightly, amused, and amusing, her *Reminiscences* form an unforgettable sketch of a woman ahead of her time.

Jane Ellen Harrison (1850–1928) was born and raised in Yorkshire, England and in 1874 enrolled in the newly established Newnham College for women at Cambridge University, where she later taught. Her works including *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (1903) and *Themis* (1912) helped revolutionize the study of ancient Greek civilization. Harrison spent her last years in Paris with her “spiritual daughter,” the poet Hope Mirrlees.



Daniel Mendelsohn is an award-winning author, essayist, critic, and translator.



Free Love: The Story of a Great American Scandal

By Robert Shaplen

Foreword by Louis Menand

Paperback ISBN: 9781946022912 • Apr 16, 2024 • 5" x 8.5" • 288 pages • \$18.00 • Nonfiction – Reportage / Civil War Era United States / Political Scandal • Rights: World, Audio • eBook ISBN: 9781961341005 • UK Price: £15.99

An illuminating, hugely entertaining account of “one of the most sensational trials in American history” (*New York Times*).

“Remarkably level-headed and absorbing . . . Shaplen does not render a verdict, but he gives us the facts we need to reach our own.”

—Louis Menand, from the Foreword

On the night of July 3, 1870, Elizabeth Tilton confessed to her husband that she’d had an affair with their pastor, Henry Ward Beecher. This secret would soon transfix America, for Beecher was the most famous preacher of the day, a presidential hopeful, a hero of Abolition, and a supporter of women’s suffrage. When Beecher tried to silence the Tiltons, it was a whisper network of suffragists, notably Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who spread news of the affair, and the radical Victoria Woodhull—an outspoken proponent of “free love”—seized on it as political dynamite. Her public accusations led to even more public trials, which shocked the country and divided the most progressive thinkers of the era.

In 1953, the journalist Robert Shaplen revisited the Tilton-Beecher affair in a series of articles for the *New Yorker*, relying on 3,000 pages of contemporary accounts—court transcripts, love-letters, newspaper reports and illustrations, even political cartoons—to reanimate a scandal that shook the American reform movement and to expose a strand of America’s cultural DNA that remains recognizable today.

Robert Shaplen was a *New Yorker* staff writer the magazine’s Far East correspondent from 1962 to 1978. Of his ten published books, *Free Love* (originally titled *Free Love and Heavenly Sinners*) was his only foray into nineteenth century American history.

Louis Menand is an award-winning essayist, critic, author, professor, and historian, best known for his Pulitzer-winning book *The Metaphysical Club*.

