

where I now am. I was told by everyone in Wellington to whom I confided my plan that of course I must see Guy Morris. I was referred to an article by him on the subject I was proposing to make my own. I found it dull. I learned that he was a retired magistrate and that he had been collecting everything he could that related to Katherine Mansfield—reviews of her books, periodicals in which her stories first appeared, rare editions, translations into a dozen languages, unpublished photographs, books on related subjects, and so on. I formed a picture in my mind of a sort of elevated stamp-collector, cherishing immaculate bindings and uncut pages, pricing rather than valuing this assemblage of volumes and documents; and so with some misgiving I wrote him a long letter saying what I had in mind, asking whether he proposed to write a book himself, defining the scope of mine, and (rather daringly, as I thought) asking if I might come and see his collection. His reply was to the effect that I was being unduly diffident in approaching him, that I was 'entitled' to his help, and that I could have access to anything that was in his collection ('there is a typewriter here'). In short, he invited me to use his study as a sort of public library.

A few months later, I spent some weeks in Auckland, and something like twenty evenings in the little room that housed his collection. Hot summer evenings they were (the room faced west) and now I recollect this great tall man, big boned, very brown from the sun, with his shirt-sleeves rolled up beyond his elbows, sitting in a curiously small low chair (though I may be wrong about that; he would make any chair look small). He was slightly stooped, not by any means from age (he was still very youthful) but rather, I should imagine, from going through doorways, or so it appeared. His movements were lumbering, and his voice was rough. You felt safe in his presence at once because you knew he hid nothing. There was no polish or refinement in his manner, and on the other hand there were no exaggerated assertions to cover the defects of a disappointed self. He had nothing to be afraid of or to be disappointed about. There was certainly something in his exterior which was absurdly incongruous with the exquisite, refined, very feminine personality who was the cause of our meeting—something she would undoubtedly have laughed at at once. I remember that he began one remark, 'Well, psychologically, I reckon K.M.