

## THE PURCHASE OF KATHERINE MANSFIELD MANUSCRIPTS

By C. R. H. T.

Some part of this story takes its beginning several years ago. Not long before his death, Sir Harold Beauchamp, who had earlier provided a fund of £200 to develop the Katherine Mansfield Collection in the Library, brought to me a group of typed manuscripts of letters written to him by his daughter Kathleen. The originals, he said, had been sent on to his other daughter Mrs. McIntosh Bell, in Canada, but had gone astray in the post.

Mr. P. A. Lawlor, long a student of and writer on Katherine Mansfield, about 1948 mentioned these letters to John Middleton Murry, who enquired if copies could be obtained. Mr. Lawlor referred this to the Library, and I accordingly wrote to Mr. Murry saying we would be agreeable to letting him have copies. At the same time I enquired as to his plans for the ultimate disposition of MSS. in his possession, suggesting that he might care to consider the Turnbull Library. The ensuing correspondence really makes another story, but Mr. Murry appeared to favour the suggestion.

When he died in March 1957, his will provided that Katherine Mansfield's notebooks, journals, etc., be sold at auction, and that her letters be offered at £1,000 first to the British Museum and if not accepted, to the Turnbull Library.

The auction was conducted by Messrs. Sothebys in London on 26 November 1957. The several lots were described as follows:

299 MANSFIELD (KATHERINE) The Autograph Manuscript of an unfinished story entitled *Three 20th Century Girls*. 7¼ pp., including title page, signed and dated on title "June 4th 1901, by K. Beauchamp," unbound, 4to.

\*.\* One of the writer's earliest attempts at fiction, written when she was twelve years old.

300 MANSFIELD (KATHERINE) AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT NOTEBOOKS AND JOURNALS from 1904 to 1922, circa 1,370 ll., written in 46 exercise books and on loose sheets, various bindings and sizes ranging from large 4to to small 8vo.

\*.\* These voluminous diaries, which begin when Katherine Mansfield was fifteen years old and extend to