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## Visiting Eastwood-Some Memorandums for Lawrence Studies

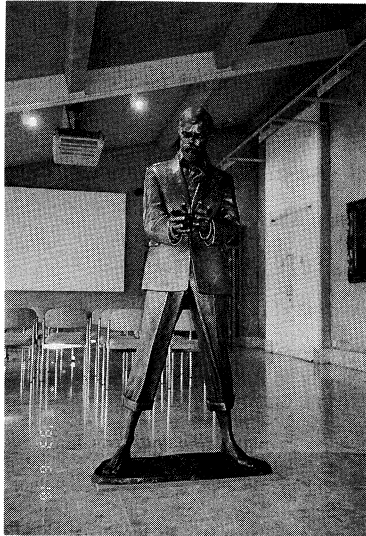
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## Visiting Eastwood-Some Memorandums for Lawrence Studies—

Akio Terada

### Abstract

I had several opportunities of visiting the Eastwood district, D. H. Lawrence's birthplace, during my stay in England in 1992-93. As is well known, Lawrence frequently used the Nottingham area as the setting of his novels. To have knowledge about the writer's backgrounds will be of much help in understanding his fiction and sometimes be critically important. Lawrence was so much affected by both social backgrounds and natural surroundings in his formative years that visiting Eastwood would be essential to Lawrence study. Of course, from the viewpoint of literary criticism, it must be kept in mind that there is little meaning in comparison between fact and fiction. This paper consists of collected materials and quotations from various literary writings and letters. Therefore at present moment this remains to be used as some memorandums for further studies.



Akio Terada

Nottingham's New University

In Nottingham, that dismal town  
where I went to school and college,  
they've built a new university  
for a new dispensation of knowledge.

Built it most grand and cakeily  
Out of the noble loot  
derived from shrewd cash-chemistry  
by good Sir Jesse Boot.

Little I thought, when I was a lad  
and turned my modest penny  
over on Boot's Cash Chemist's counter,  
that Jesse, by turning many

millions of similar honest pence  
over, would make a pile  
that would rise at last and blossom out  
in grand and cakey style

into a university  
where smart men would dispense  
doses of smart cash-chemistry  
in language of common-sense!

That future Nottingham lads would be

cash—chemically B. Sc.  
that Nottingham lights would rise and say :  
—By Boots I am M. A.

From this I learn, though I knew it before  
that culture has her roots  
in the deep dung of cash, and lore  
is a last offshoot of Boots<sup>1)</sup>.

## I . Lawrence and The University of Nottingham

The above quoted poem, “Nottingham’s New University” must have been written in 1928. The poem refers to the Trent Building of the University which was opened on 10 July 1928. It housed the University College of Nottingham where Lawrence had studied from September 1906 to June 1908. In this parodic verse Lawrence mocked the building as ‘grand and cakey style’, and made fun of Jesse Boot who presented the new University.

Ironically enough, the University of Nottingham, more than sixty years after his death, is now proud of Lawrence’s being the most famous alumnus. And Nottinghamshire County Council announced that 1993 would be Literary Heritage Year. In June 1993, a new life-size statue of Lawrence appeared in the Arts Centre of the University. Anyway Lawrence as well as Robin Hood is a good business in Nottinghamshire.

In *The Rainbow* Ursula remembers the time when she entered the University College of Nottingham.

The big college built of stone, standing in the quiet street, with  
a rim of grass and lime-trees all so peaceful : she felt it remote, a

magic-land. . . . She liked the hall, with its big stone chimney-piece and its Gothic arches supporting the balcony above. To be sure the arches were ugly, the chimney-piece of cardboard-like carved stone, with its armorial decoration, looked silly just opposite the bicycle stand and the radiator, whilst the great notice-board with its fluttering papers seemed to slam away all sense of retreat and mystery from the far wall. . . . It was a joy to hear the theory of education, there was such freedom and pleasure in ranging over the very stuff of knowledge, and seeing how it moved and lived and had its being<sup>2</sup>).

Though the quotation is about Ursula's reminiscence, it is almost identical with Lawrence's. His description of the University College was a favourable and nostalgic evocation of the institution which he attended for a teaching certificate. But the relationship between Lawrence and the University was not always happy one and when he eloped with the wife of a prominent academic, Ernest Weekley, the bitterness and resentment felt by members of the College was damaging to the author's local reputation.

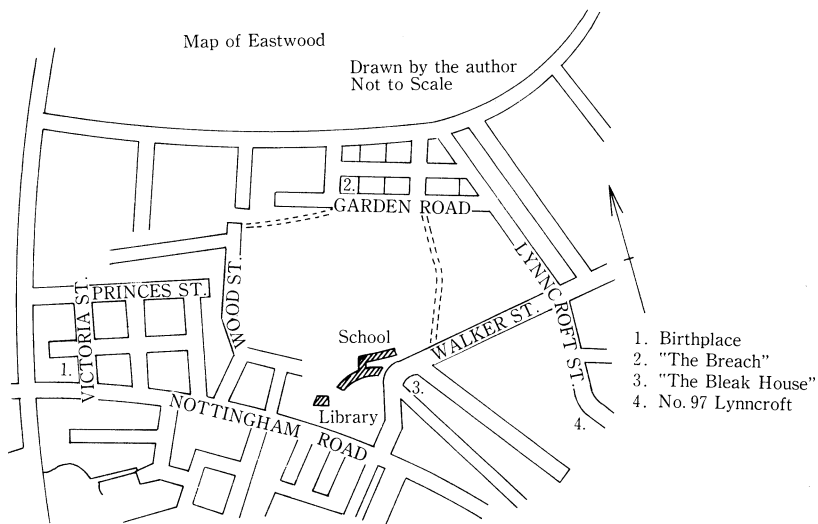
The D. H. Lawrence Centre, one of the important units of the University of Nottingham, was established in 1991. The University Manuscripts Department possesses the formidable Lawrence Collection in the University Library. Today, few would dispute the University's claim to be a natural centre for Lawrence studies.

## II. Visiting Eastwood

I was born nearly forty-four years ago, in Eastwood, a mining village of some three thousand souls about eight miles from Nottingham and one mile from the small stream, the Erewash,

which divides Nottinghamshire from Derbyshire. It is hilly country, looking west to Crich and towards Matlock, sixteen miles away, and east and north-east towards Mansfield and the Sherwood Forest district. To me it seemed, and still seems, an extremely beautiful countryside, just between the red sandstone and the oak-trees of Nottingham, and the cold limestone, the ash trees, the stone fences of Derbyshire. To me, as a child and a young man, it was still old England of the forest and agricultural past, there were no motor cars, the mines were, in a sense, an accident in the landscape, and Robin Hood and his merry men were not very far away<sup>3</sup>).

So wrote Lawrence in 1929, a year before his death and ten years after leaving England for virtually the last time, apart from a few brief visits. He spent more than half his life in Eastwood. Much of his writing is autobiographical and in his novels and short stories he repeatedly returned to this small mining town for their backgrounds.



I visited Eastwood ('Bestwood' of *Sons and Lovers*) for the first time in February 1993. I got off the coach from Nottingham at a bus stop in front of the Eastwood Library. It is only ten minutes' walk to the birthplace of Lawrence at 8a Victoria Street. The house is now Lawrence Birthplace Museum and is lovingly restored to the condition of a typical collier's home of the late 19th century.



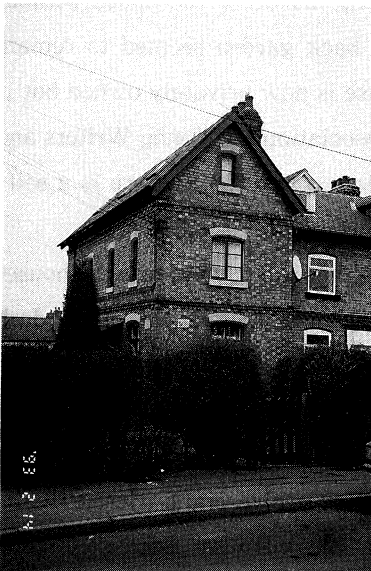
Here is a faintly ridiculous gossip. It was a coincidence that I happened to read a story in *The Daily Telegraph* in July 1993. It reported that pilgrims to the Lawrence birthplace in Eastwood

might well not be the right house at all. A descendant of the mid-wife who delivered Lawrence claimed the true birthplace was on the other side of the street. Family heirlooms possessed by the descendant included the pair of scissors used to snip Lawrence's umbilical cord.

But to return. Lawrence was born in this house on September 11, 1885. You see a large shop type window of the front room. It means that Lawrence's mother ran a small shop to supplement her husband's income from the pit, or he may not have been working as a miner at this time. Lawrence himself never described the house in his writings, probably because the family moved to a new place soon after his birth. In *Sons and Lovers* Paul Morel[Lawrence] is born in the house at "The Bottoms" which I will mention below. Lawrence's younger sister, Ada wrote of these days,

“I remember nothing of the house where my brother and I were born, for we left when I was only a few months old and Bert [Lawrence] was about two years.”<sup>4)</sup>

I left the birthplace and continued to walk along Princes Street to get to Wood Street. I turned left then right into Garden Road. Here I found the blocks of houses which are still known as “The Breach” (“The Bottoms” of *Sons and Lovers*). This is the second Lawrence home at 28 Garden Road and is at the end of a row, with a garden on three sides. Lawrence wrote in the chapter I of *Sons and Lovers* as follows :



The Bottoms consisted of six blocks of miners’ dwellings, two rows of three, like the dots on a blank-six domino, and twelve houses in a block. This double row of dwellings sat at the foot of the rather sharp slope from Bestwood, and looked out, from the attic windows at least, on the slow climb of the valley towards Selby.

The houses themselves were substantial and very decent. One could walk all around, seeing little front gardens with auriculas and saxifrage

in the shadow of the bottom block, sweet williams and pinks, in the sunny top-block ; seeing neat front windows, little porches, little privet hedges, and dormer windows for the attics. But that was outside ; that was the view onto the uninhabited parlours of all the



colliers' wives. The dwelling room, the kitchen, was at the back of the house, facing inward between the blocks, looking at a scrubby backgarden, and then at the ash-pits. And between the rows, between the long lines of ash-pits, went the alley, where the children played and the women gossiped and the men smoked. So, the actual conditions of living in the Bottoms, that was so well built, and that looked so nice, were quite unsavoury, because people must live in the kitchen, and the kitchens opened onto that nasty alley of ash-pits<sup>5)</sup>.

To my disappointment I could not see the inside of the house without appointment. But both side gardens and back garden seemed to remain much as they were in the 1890s. The house is now privately owned but is run as a literary centre on behalf of the Association for Young Writers and an International Students' Society. On the top two floors there is a self-contained studio apartment which may be rented for short periods.

Ada wrote, "My mother never liked being there, partly because the houses were in a hollow, principally because the backs looked out on to drab patches of garden with ashpits at the bottom."<sup>6)</sup> The family moved again in 1891 to 8 Walker Street. Almost opposite the Breach a footpath leads uphill beside the school grounds to Walker Street. It is less than ten minutes' walk. The Lawrences lived there for twelve years. Jessie Chambers recalled that Lawrence nick-named it "Bleak House", because it stood open to the winds. She added that "they had a wide view over the houses in the valley to the meadows beyond, and to where High Park Woods began. Lawrence has told me how he used to watch the cloud shadows stalking across the fields."<sup>7)</sup> This third home is not open to the visitors, being used privately. But the view from the house is more significant to the

Lawrentians. In a letter sent from Italy in 1926, Lawrence himself advised Rolf Gardiner, one of his later friends, to look over the valley from Walker Street.

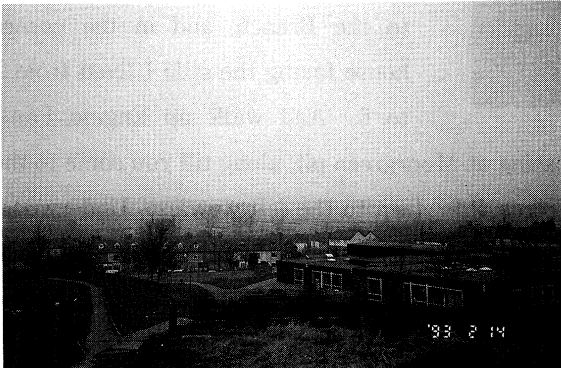


If you're in those parts again, go to Eastwood, where I was born, and lived for my first 21 years. Go to Walker St—and stand in front of the third house—and look across at Crich on the left, Underwood in front—High Park Woods and Annesley on the right: I lived in that house from the age of 6 to 18, and I know that view better than any in the world.—Then walk down the fields to the Breach, and in the corner house facing the stile I lived from 1 to 6.—And walk up Engine Lane,

over the level crossing at Moorgreen pit, along till you come to the highway (the Alfreton Rd)—turn to the left, towards Underwood, and go till you come to the lodge gate by the reservoir—go through the gate, and up the drive to the next gate, and continue on the footpath just below the drive on the left—on through the wood to Felley Mill. When you've crossed the brook, turn to the right (the *White Peacock* farm) through Felley Mill gate, and go up the footpath to Annesley. Or better still, turn to the right, uphill, *before* you descend to the brook, and go on uphill, up the rough deserted pasture—on past Annesley kennels—long empty—on to

Annesley again.—That’s the country of my heart.—From the hills, if you look across at Underwood wood, you’ll see a tiny red farm on the edge of the wood—That was Miriam’s farm—where I got my first incentive to write.—I’ll go with you some day<sup>8)</sup>.

Lawrence called the Eastwood area “the country of my heart”. It is not difficult to imagine the effect that the view from the house had on the writer during his formative years. Of course many of the present houses probably did not exist in Lawrence’s time and the appearance of the streets must have changed much since then. But the natural surroundings seem to have remained unchanged. View from Walker Street presents still now an extremely beautiful countryside. Chapter 4 of *Sons and Lovers* describes this view as follows :



When William was growing up, the family moved from the Bottoms to a house on the brow of the hill, commanding a view of the valley, which spread out like a convex cockle-shell, or a clamp-

shell, before it. In front of the house was a huge old ash-tree. The west wind, sweeping from Derbyshire, caught the houses with full force, and the trees shrieked again<sup>9)</sup>.

In 1904 the Lawrences moved again to a house in Lynncroft Road. If you walk east along Walker Street and turn right at Lynncroft Street, you will find a semi-detached house at number 97. This was the Lawrence family home until 1911, the year after his mother's death. The fact that they passed from a terraced house to a semi-detached one meant yet another move upward socially, for "we who lived on Lynncroft never, as a rule, mixed with the children of the Breach."<sup>10</sup> Jessie Chambers remarked that Lawrence was proud of his new home "which had a little entrance hall, with the stairs and the doors to the other rooms opening out from it. There was a cooking range in the scullery as well as in the living-room, a china closet in addition to the pantry, a cupboard under the side window where the school books were kept, and from the big window of the living-room was the view over the roofs of Eastwood to the square church tower standing high above."<sup>11</sup> Ada wrote of this house; "A few years after the death of Ernest we went to live in Lynncroft, to a house owned by friends. The street was not so pleasant as the one we had left, but there was a lovely



garden with a field at the end of it. Mother was happy here amongst the flowers. She knew every one."<sup>12</sup> In *Sone and Lovers* there is a beautiful scene describing this garden and the conversation between Paul and his happy Mother.

There was a long garden that ran to a field. It was a grey, cold day with

a sharp wind blowing out of Derbyshire. Two fields away Bestwood began, with a jumble of roofs and red house-ends, out of which rose the church tower and the spire of the congregational chapel. And beyond went woods and hills, right away to the pale grey heights of the Pennine Chain.

Paul looked down the garden for his mother. Her head appeared among the young currant bushes.

“Come here!” she cried.

“What for?” he answered.

“Come and see.”

She had been looking at the buds on the currant trees. Paul went up.

“To think,” she said, “that here I might never have seen them!”

Her son went to her side. Under the fence, in a little bed, was a ravel of poor grassy leaves, such as come from very immature bulbs, and three scillas in bloom<sup>13)</sup>.

In considering the four Lawrence homes, I see the real roots of the writer’s connection with Eastwood. These houses were a part of his life and he used them also in his writings. He was much more involved in his childhood locality than ordinary writers. It was the essence of his early life and contributed towards the greatness of his fiction.

Lawrence escaped England in 1919 and never returned except short visits. He paid his last visit to Eastwood in September 1926. It was the time when the mining workers were on general strike that was the biggest social issue between the two World Wars. In a letter he told that “This strike had done a lot of damage-and there is a lot of misery-families living on bread and margarine and potatoes-nothing more. The women have turned into fierce

communists—you would hardly believe your eyes. It feels a different place : not pleasant at all.”<sup>14</sup>) And also in an essay titled “Return to Bestwood”, written in the month, he described Eastwood ; “It always depresses me to come to my native district. Now I am turned forty, and have been more or less a wanderer for nearly twenty years. I feel more alien, perhaps, in my home place than anywhere else in the world.”<sup>15</sup>)

Between 1919 and his death in 1930, he spent altogether less than six weeks in Nottinghamshire. Yet he went on writing about it in, for example, *The Lost Girl*, *Aaron’s Rod*, *Mr Noon*, *The Virgin and the Gypsy* and *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. Of his eleven novels, large parts of eight ones are located in Nottinghamshire. The families and landscapes there were by far the most important source all his life. He actually deserted his birthplace and England but the memories of his early life remained vividly alive in his mind all the time.

### III. *New Sons and Lovers*

The new Cambridge University Press edition of *Sons and Lovers* was published in 1992 as a volume of *The Works of D. H. Lawrence*. It offered for the first time the full text in the form that Lawrence himself wanted it. In 1913, at the time of its first publication, Lawrence reluctantly agreed to the removal of no fewer than eighty passages, which until now have never been restored. The Cambridge text allows us to read the novel with those cuts restored, in a text about one tenth longer than the incomplete and expurgated version that has hitherto been available.

During my stay at the University of Nottingham, the D. H. Lawrence Centre which I mentioned earlier in this paper held a one-day conference on 14 November 1992. The Centre invited to this *Sons and Lovers* Conference two special speakers, Helen Baron and Carl Baron who were both editors

of the new *Sons and Lovers*. Helen read a paper, "Editing *Sons and Lovers*", and Carl, "Annotating *Sons and Lovers*" respectively. Therefore the conference offered an opportunity to hear the editors talk about the edition and discuss with them the reasons for their editorial decisions and the implications for Lawrence studies of the newly restored text.

Here I would like to summarize their opinions and discussions along with my own comments as helpful materials to be investigated in the future study.

The newly-published Cambridge edition of the novel reincorporates the deleted passages and adds to the complete manuscript text the proof revisions which Lawrence made a few months later to passages not altered by Edward Garnett on manuscript or proof. The two editors concluded that Lawrence did not desire to have his MS modified by Garnett. Lawrence expressed "sadness and grief"<sup>16)</sup> at the ultimatum from Garnett. He was unable to visit Garnett and negotiate the matter, because he had been in Italy to try to live by his pen. He now had his wife Frieda Weekley to support and there was very little money left from the royalties he had received on his first few publications. He was relying on *Sons and Lovers* to solve his financial difficulties and was impatient for it to be published as soon as possible.

Why did Garnett remove the passages then? He was primarily motivated by the economics of the fiction market of 1913 which dictated a length of about four hundred pages. Lawrence's manuscript would come out at almost five hundred. It is doubtful whether he would have cut Lawrence's novel on this ground alone, if the commercial constraints had not existed. There was a clash on the question of literary form between Lawrence and Garnett. In a letter of 1912, Lawrence defended himself against it vigorously, saying, "I want to defend it quick. I wrote it again,

pruning it and shaping it and filling it in. I tell you it has got form-*form*.”<sup>17)</sup> The commercial restraints of 1913 no longer exist and it is reasonable to give Lawrence the benefit of doubt as to the novel’s length and shape. This is their editorial decision. But some critics do not put a high value on this Cambridge edition because the form of *Sons and Lovers* is in any case and of its nature repetitive. Helen Baron argues that some of the passages Garnett cut out cannot be dismissed as merely repeating the same things. For instance, in chapter IX, ‘Defeat of Miriam’, the narrator claims that “One Sunday evening they [Paul and Miriam] attained to their old, rare harmony.”<sup>18)</sup> But in the Garnett version of *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence had not shown any ‘rare harmony’ earlier in the book. However, the complete manuscript reveals that in chapter VII, ‘Lad-and-Girl Love’, Lawrence had substantiated the claim in a four-page episode the whole of which was cut by Garnett. It is a description of their weekly meeting at the local lending library. They discuss their beliefs very intimate. Baron insists that it is of the same kind as that ‘attained’ in chapter IX, where Paul and Miriam return from chapel discussing the sermon.

They rejoiced in the darkness. They were excitedly happy. Paul had a great black mackintosh, under the cape of which he carried the books. They walked side by side down Mansfield road, in the rainy darkness, under the dripping trees.

The conversation started quick and vigorous, and immediately it was a discussion of a book. He held forth passionately, she listened and her soul expanded. From the book, they inevitably came to a discussion of beliefs, very intimate<sup>19)</sup>.

Lawrence greatly increased the presence of William, Paul’s older brother,



when he rewrote the novel and changed the title from *Paul Morel* into *Sons and Lovers*. Lawrence intended that William would become a role-model and a precedent for Paul in many ways. But Garnett removed a large proportion of William's early life. On the same page quoted above, there is a strange comment by Paul on the death of his brother.

“And people matter. But one isn't so very important. Look at William.”

“Yes,” she pondered.

“I call it only wasted,” he said. “Waste, no more.”

“Yes,” she said very low.

It was her belief that the more people there were, the less they mattered. But to hear him talk was like life to her : like starting the breathing in a new-born baby.

“Yet,” he said, “I reckon we've got a proper way to go-and if we got it, we're all right-and if we go near it. But if we go wrong, we die. I'm sure our William went wrong somewhere.”<sup>20)</sup>

Baron points out that Paul's word 'waste' came from an article in *The Hibbert Journal* which was written by the former prime minister Arthur J. Balfour on Henri Bergson's *L'Evolution Créatrice* (1907). Paul is trying to rationalise the early death of William in terms of the survival of the spiritually fittest. This is connected with Herbert Spencer's theory, social evolution. And later in the novel Paul has a quarrel with his mother, Mrs. Morel. When he is accused by Mrs. Morel of preferring Miriam's company to her own, Paul protests ; “But you don't care about Herbert Spencer.”<sup>21)</sup> To a reader of Garnett version, Spencer's name seems to appear here suddenly. But in the twenty lines of conversation which Garnett had cut,

Paul had discussed a theory of Spencer's, immediately preceding his quarrel with his mother.

He began the old attempt to justify himself. Struggling, he tried to expound to her the theory that the force of gravitation is the great shaper, and that if it had all its own way, it would have a rose in correct geometrical line and proportion—and so on<sup>22</sup>).

“The force of gravitation is the great shaper” was a theory enunciated by Spencer in his *First Principle* (1868). He developed his theory that space, time, matter, motion, and indeed mental and emotional activity are the product of forces. Garnett seems to have disliked Lawrence's intellectual side, or perhaps he objected to overt expressions of ideas within the novel.

As I mentioned earlier, Garnett removed the majority of the passages about William, which undermined the plural of *Sons* of Lawrence's title. In his oft-quoted letter, Lawrence expounded to Garnett the plot of the novel, telling, “It's the tragedy of thousands of young men in England. . .”<sup>23</sup>) Lawrence obviously intended to write an impersonal novel instead of a personal one. In this respect the mistake Garnett made in cutting out most of William's early life was tremendous. The Cambridge editors claims that the novel which Lawrence laboured so intensely to create was different in many ways from the work with which the reading public has been familiar during the past eighty years, and that novel deserves to receive publication at last.

#### Notes

- 1) Vivian de Sola Pinto and F. Warren Roberts, eds., *The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence* (New York : The Viking Press, 1971), pp. 488-9.
- 2) D. H. Lawrence, *The Rainbow* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp.

- 398-400.
- 3) Edward D. McDonald, ed., *Phoenix : The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence* (London : Heinemann, 1961), p. 133.
  - 4) Ada Lawrence and G. Stuart Gelder, *Young Lorenzo—Early Life of D. H. Lawrence* (Florence : Lungarno Delle Grazie, 1931), p. 17.
  - 5) D. H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 10.
  - 6) *Young Lorenzo*, p. 17.
  - 7) E. T. (Jessie Chambers), *D. H. Lawrence : A Personal Record* (London : Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1965), p. 35.
  - 8) James T. Boulton and Lindeth Vasey, eds., *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence. Vol. V* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 592.
  - 9) *Sons and Lovers*, p. 84.
  - 10) Edward Nehls, *D. H. Lawrence : A Composite Biography. Vol. I* (Madison : The University of Wisconsin Press, 1957), p. 30.
  - 11) *D. H. Lawrence : A Personal Record*, pp. 54-5.
  - 12) *Young Lorenzo*, pp. 43-4.
  - 13) *Sons and Lovers*, p. 199.
  - 14) *The Letters. Vol. V*, p. 536.
  - 15) Warren Roberts and Harry T. Moore, eds., *Phoenix II : Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Works by D. H. Lawrence* (London : Heinemann, 1968).
  - 16) James T. Boulton, ed., *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence. Vol. I* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 481.
  - 17) *The Letters. Vol. I*, p. 476.
  - 18) *Sons and Lovers*, p. 267.
  - 19) *Sons and Lovers*, p. 193.
  - 20) *Sons and Lovers*, p. 193.
  - 21) *Sons and Lovers*, p. 251.
  - 22) *Sons and Lovers*, p. 240.
  - 23) *The Letters. Vol. I*, p. 477.