

## Copyediting Exercise 1: Nancy Cunard and the Hours Press

The following passage is an excerpt from a popular history that surveys the work of women writers and publishers in the early twentieth century. Copyedit it as you see fit, using correct markup symbols.

### **Nancy Cunard and the Hours Press**

Even today heiress, author, and socialite, Nancy Cunard, is probably better known for her personal life than her creative work. Readers in the early 21st century receive her as more of a legend than anything else, a reception enhanced by the numerous visual images of Nancy that survive alongside the reminiscences of her many friends, lovers and admirers. As a poet of some note, an occasional literary critic, an avid collector of African jewellery and artifacts, and an early champion of black rights, Nancy Cunard comes to us wearing many guises. But perhaps the most problematic is Nancy's role as publisher as founder and owner of The Hours Press.

Nancy Cunard was born in 1896, one of the youngest of the so called Modernists. Her

## Copyediting Exercise 1: Nancy Cunard and the Hours Press

paternal grandfather, Samuel Cunard, had founded the Cunard lines, and while the family no longer profited from the company by the end of the nineteenth century, Nancy's father was sufficiently well-off to provide a mansion for Nancy's childhood residence. Nancy's mother Maud Alice Burke, later Lady Emerald Cunard, actually owned the serious wealth of the family; her fortune being derived from her American father's industry. Nancy's childhood was typically of English rural upper-class, and from her earliest days she would retain a love of finely-made, beautiful things. This appreciation would later inform Nancy's press-work.

Nancy's late teens and early twenties were turbulent. She was enormously popular with both women and men although her apparently scathing personality might have put some people off. She is always remembered, in countless memoirs, as extremely attractive

## Copyediting Exercise 1: Nancy Cunard and the Hours Press

and slim with especially memorable eyes.

She had numerous sexual liaisons, such that she quickly developed a wild reputation.

Michael Arlen would eventually portray Nancy as Iris March, the out of control heroine of his novel *The Green Hat*. Her sexuality was an important aspect of her personality and greatly affected her working relationships, although her memoir of the Press, *These Were the Hours*, defied this assessment with its detached, highly-professional reminiscing.

From a very young age Nancy was actively engaged in literature, first as a voracious reader, then as a developing poet and eventually as a published writer. Ironically it was her mother's connections and influence made getting published much easier for Nancy than it was for most writers. *Parallax*, originally published for Nancy by the Woolfs' Hogarth press in 1925, is generally considered Nancy's best creative work and its

## Copyediting Exercise 1: Nancy Cunard and the Hours Press

publication is presumably the reason Nancy developed an interest in book publishing, which led her to purchase a press and learn as much as possible about the process of printing. The Woolfs are famous for their potentially discouraging remark “Your hands will always be dirty”, at which Nancy simply laughs. Cunard was certainly aware of the numerous small presses then flourishing in England, France and elsewhere in Europe. She lists the atmosphere into which she launched her venture, noting such operations as Ovid Press, Black Sun Press, Black Manikin, and Seizin Press (about which she remarked, “their books were nicely designed”). It was in 1928 that Nancy established the Hours Press in Reanville, France with something of a fellow-feeling.

---

525 words

Time required for you to work through your first pass: \_\_\_\_\_