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**The memory of Goronwy
Rees**

From Andrew Boyle

For the benefit of readers who may have been misled by Richard Winkler's snide criticism of my conversations with the late Goronwy Rees on his death-bed (NS 1 February), a few background facts would not be out of order. First, the articles were intended by Rees for publication. They duly appeared in the *Observer*. Second, they drew partly on material in Rees's own memoir *A Chapter of Accidents* and in their original form the necessary 'quotes within quotes' were given. Rees and I consulted the book together. He had a copy by him. Third, Rees was well enough to read and approve, with minor amendments, the completed text of the first and rough draft of the second article. Fourth, as might have been expected of conversations lasting many hours, spread over several evenings, much more was said than was published. Fifth, it was also Rees's intention, had he lived longer, to revise *A Chapter of Accidents*, and to include in the revised version those very passages in my articles to which your correspondent takes exception as looking suspiciously like Boylesque inventions.

I wonder why Richard Winkler failed to acknowledge, incidentally, his own debt to Anthony Blunt. Perhaps he failed to notice that it was Blunt, a stickler for such bogus textual purity, who first pointed out the one important time-discrepancy in *A Chapter of Accidents* on which your correspondent lays undue emphasis. On p. 209 Rees certainly did write that his interview with MI5 took place 'next day', i.e. on the day following Blunt's unsuccessful attempt to dissuade him from going (28 May, not Winkler's 29 May). Had Blunt or even Winkler troubled to read on (p. 211), they would have found that this interview with MI5 could not have occurred until 7 June at the earliest. For, on emerging from MI5 headquarters, Rees 'saw the headlines in the evening papers announcing that two British diplomats had vanished into thin air'. Is it surprising that Mr Winkler has tumbled into the trap he laid for me?

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