

A word from our sponsor!

Copied to: Dr J.C. Beal

JRGW:amp
9.1.97

Dame Catherine Cookson D.B.E., D. Litt., M.A.,

*White Lodge,
23 Glastonbury Grove,
Jesmond,
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE2 2TB*

8/01/97.

Mr. J. R. Wright,
Vice-Chancellor,
University of Newcastle,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE1 7RU.

Dear Mr. Wright.

I am sorry to say that Dame Catherine and Mr. Cookson had to spend Christmas and New Year in hospital as they were both seriously ill. They returned home on Saturday and Catherine is still in a very low state.

However she was so pleased to know that Dr. Beal's Project was such a success. She was greatly touched by the tape which she listened to yesterday and her own words were, "It saddened me to the heart; the humility of that woman was something rarely found these days and her acceptance of her life was amazing. Yet, in spite of pitying her, I could envy her for the happiness she gained from her children - the bairns, a tidy house and a full cupboard. Perhaps she had been born placed for she was aware that her husband had been a drunk and a hardman."

She went on to say, "The tape made me ponder; I thought I knew everything about the working class but that poor woman was in a class below anything I myself had witnessed. Then there was the interpreter, he did a marvellous job because he made the questioning almost appear like a friendly chat.

I cannot believe the woman was only forty six, because, in this day and age she surely would have been taught to read and write at school. Although the main teaching in a Catholic school was religion, as I only know too well, one was taught to read and write."

When she finished the tape she said to me, "Why do I say poor creature, she is happy; for what does thinking and probing bring you in the end - certainly not acceptance of life that inhabited that dear woman."

Dame Catherine asks if you would thank Dr. Beal for giving her an insight into a way of life that, with all her knowledge of the poor, she could not believe still existed in this day and age.

Yours sincerely,

Ann Marshall.