FAMILY INCIDENTS IN VIRGINIA WOOLF’S
MAJOR NOVELS

Virginia Woolf was a great autobiographical novelist who advanced the frontiers of the English novels by adopting a revolutionary technique for the expression of her vision of life and human nature. She used the ‘stream of consciousness’ technique to get close to the mind of her characters, and expressed exactly the impact of life on their personality. Her skill in the use of this technique was learnt from James Joyce. Proust inspired in the young novelists an awareness of what was already upon them (Kumar 11). A diary entry of 1925 clearly indicates the impact of Proust on Virginia Woolf.

Virginia Woolf happened to be the daughter of an eminent famous Literarian, Sir Leslie Stephen (1832-1904). He had London schooling as well as the advantages of Cambridge University and had been the editor of Alpine Journal, in “The Playground of Europe.” His accounts of Alpine Journal were collected and it was popular. In his “Hours” in a library, his miscellaneous writings had been stored which were published by him here and there in some noted journals. His skeptical thoughts were stored in his “Free Thinking and Plain Speaking.” He had become an agonistic and his “Agonistics Apology” in the Fortnightly was noteworthy. He was an
established scholar and ex-fellow of ‘Trinity Hall,’ who were fifty at the time of Virginia Woolf’s birth, and the editor of *Corn Hill Magazine* (Arora 2).

Virginia Woolf’s father Leslie Stephen was the author of critical, biographical, philosophical essays and the friend of scholars and men of letters during a brilliant period of English literature. Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, George Eliot, Henry James, and Thomas Hardy (who contributed the *Corn Hill* and witnessed the deed whereby Leslie Stephen renounced Holy Orders (Sharma 17) were the frequent guests of the Stephen’s family, when his children were young. His friendship with the literarians helped Virginia Woolf to become an eminent writer.

She was impressed by what she knew of her father’s public and professional life, and was probably somewhat influenced to become a writer because writing had been one of his major public activities (Love, *Sources* 24).

If family is the main channel of transmission of culture for a person of normal circumstances in life, for Virginia Woolf, her unusual family was the whole ocean until she transferred herself to the world of her brother’s friends in universities and in London.
Family was an important influence in her life, and its connections, significant opportunities for her career (Sharma 16).

It had been said that all Virginia Woolf’s literary works were a product of her memories, her acute sense of the past and her ties with her Victorian childhood. It was taken for granted almost from the very beginning that Virginia Woolf would be a writer. When Virginia Woolf was nine, she started a family news bulletin, in the name of *The Hyde Park Gate News* (1891 - 1895). The paper contained mostly family news, gossip and also “some first efforts at fiction” (Holroyd 407).

Virginia Woolf travelled with her sister Vanessa to France in 1896. She travelled widely with her friends Violet Dickinson and her sister Vanessa in 1904, to Italy. In 1905, Virginia travelled to Spain and Portugal. Next year to Greece Virginia Woolf travelled and with her sister Vanessa to France in 1908, she visited Italy with Bells. In 1909, she travelled to Florence and also to Turkey and Berlin so that the title of the work indicated the novelist, Virginia Woolf’s *The Voyage Out*, her excursion into the realm of creative writing. At that time, she was busy collecting her impressions and expressing them in a proper form. These travel experiences helped her a lot to complete this novel.
Virginia Woolf was so closely connected with the recollections of her family members in her autobiographical novels. She used to go for a walk with her father, “she recalled, how he would take his hat and stick; called for his dog and his daughter, he would go out for a walk into Kensington Gardens” (Gupta and Gupta 50). This habit of walking through the parks and squares of London remained one of the most persistent of Virginia Woolf’s occupations, fruitful ideas for her work, of background for her novels and the subject was one of her most charming essays, “Street Haunting: A London Adventure” (Varshini 1). She loved walking to know what was going around her and made use of her experiences in her novels. In the view of Leonard Woolf “Virginia had a great enjoyment of ordinary things of eating, walking, desultory talking, shopping, playing bowls, and reading” (Woolf, Beginning 28). Again he said that, “If you (Virginia) walk in the streets of London or any other European city, you...ridicule (28). In the view of Leonard Woolf, about his wife: She was while sitting in a chair in front of the winter fire or going for her daily walk along the bank of the Sussex” (33). This walking habit depicts by Virginia Woolf in all her major works.

*The Voyage Out* was Virginia Woolf’s first traditional novel (1915) in which she never used “Stream of Consciousness Technique” but a new feature of its techniques were noticeable. “The distance in technique
between *The Voyage Out* and *The Waves* was almost as great as that between the novels: *Dubliners (1914)* and *Finnegan’s Wake* of James Joyce (www.literaturepage.com). However, the two writers travelled, formally in the same general direction, they were driven by very different sensibilities working on very different experiences. Virginia Woolf’s metaphorical (symbolic) mode was correspondingly different from Joyce’s. The novel *The Voyage Out* was much more mature than many writers’ first books. This novel indicated some of this – the multiple viewpoints and emphasis placed on characters, inner lives were both the key aspects of this work. Virginia mastery of the English language; her ability was to write both the “big events” and the “every days” of life in a new and exciting way that skirts the melodrama of some of the earlier Victorian novelists were in full flower.

Virginia Woolf went for a walk with her father to know about things happening in the world. This was shown in her respective novels. In *The Voyage Out*, Virginia Woolf depicted her own personality on Rachel Vinrace; who was twenty-four years old young girl, went on a voyage with her father, Willoughby, which gave her more experiences to explore the world. Rachel Vinrace said to Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway that, “I like walking in the park alone; but not – with the dogs,” she finished. Again the replied to Clarissa, “I shall enjoy walking with a man – is that
what do you mean?” (VO 55-56) said Rachel “as for Rachel, she had scarcely walked through a poor street, and always under the escort of father, maid, or aunts” (61). Virginia Woolf brought her personal influences on Rachel to explore the true life of the world. “While Rachel travelled in her father’s ship, within the few months that she spent a little port where there was a queer English colony, which helped Rachel to understand the practical meaning of life (Woolf, *Times* 110). As Virginia Woolf, when Rachel Vinrace was in the ship, she gained knowledge about the society. The people among whom she passed were brilliantly drawn by the novelist; particularly the aunt, Helen (Willoughby’s sister) who was so real and so baffling – the manners were so amusingly satirized.

Virginia’s mother Julia Princep Stephen (born Jackson) was born in India to Dr. John and Maria Pattile Jackson and later moved to England with her mother, where she served as a model for pre-Raphaelite painters searches Edward Burne-Jones. She was equally well connected in the novel that descended from an attendant of Marie Antoinette; she came from a family of renowned beauties who left their mark on Victorian society as models for pre-Raphaelite (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” vii) artists and early photographers. In the *Mausoleum Book* Sir Leslie Stephen praised Julia’s beauty chiefly by saying it was expressive
of the qualities of her character, which he avowed had been absolutely without flaw (Love, Sources 35).

In the words of Aileen Pipitt Julia Stephen had aristocratic connections through Duckworth. She belonged to upper middle class family background. Julia Stephen, a strikingly beautiful girl courted and admired by eminent artists...was chosen by Burne – Jones as the model for his painting of the “Annunciation” (26).

Virginia Woolf’s intimate female friend: Madge Vaugh who was the daughter of J.A. Symonds and wife of Virginia Woolf’s cousin was the inspiration for the character of Mrs. Dalloway (www.literaturepage.com). Mrs. Dalloway was the best known and the most popular of the novels of Virginia Woolf. She brought the beauty of Julia Stephen Helen Ambrose on Mrs. Dalloway and on Mrs. Ramsay. Its popularity was brought out by the fact that it had been translated into a number of languages (For example French, Danish, German, Hungarian, Italian and Spanish). In the opinion of Leonard Woolf about his wife it was easy for Virginia to show others the love she felt for them and she spoke freely to them about her feelings and she liked nice surroundings. She (Virginia Woolf) liked and get on well with all kinds of everyday people, as soon as they got to know her well and she them. She had a
curious shyness with strangers which often made them uncomfortably shy (Woolf, *Beginning* 28).

“Nothing exists outside us except a state of mind” (Mrs. D 63). Virginia Woolf influenced her own personality of walking on Mrs. Dalloway. Mrs. Dalloway said to Hugh Whitbread (both of them were friends from their childhood) to go by walk in Bond Street and her she said that, “I love walking in London, Really, it’s better than walking in the country” (9). Mrs. Dalloway remembered how at Burton she went out for a walk on the mornings when the air came, “like the flap of a wave; the kiss of a wave; chill and sharp” (7). Clarissa had an immense zest for life and enjoyed practically everything like Virginia Woolf. She walked at Hyde Park and said “It was a bed of tulips, now a child in a perambulator, now some absorbed little drama she made upon the spur upon the moment” (86). She walked just to show her palm and luxury and to read the minds of her old friends. Like Virginia, Clarissa liked to visit people to lunch with them, to meet them and invited them. She loved to bring people together, and loved to hear them talking. Clarissa herself had, “divine vitality,” and she loved it in others as well: “To dance, to ride, she had adored all that” (11).
To the Lighthouse was Virginia Woolf’s autobiographical novel. The Stephen family in their London house at Hyde Park Gate must have resembled the Ramsays in the Lighthouse, with the older and younger boys and girls. It is more directly autobiographical than most of her fiction, as she herself made plain in her comments on it in both letters and diaries. To the Lighthouse is indeed an elegy – for both her parents, though interestingly, it is her father that she mentioned first; the centre is father’s character, sitting in a boat reciting. Much had been written about her relationship with both her parents, but nobody had disputed that she lived again with her parents, although some had thought the portrait of her father unfairly harsh (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” xii).

In To the Lighthouse, the first section, “The Window,” described a house party on the Island of Skye. Professor Ramsay and his wife were on a holiday with their children and some friends. They had promised to take their youngest son James (6 years old) to see a lighthouse. The father predicted unsuitable weather conditions and the journey postponed. In the second section, “Time Passes,” is about – breakup, described how during the long years of war the house was left to dust, silence and loneliness. Death and re-birth of the house are portraits. In the third part, “To the Lighthouse – Re-integration,” described the visit to the lighthouse after
the passing of the years. Indeed, Mrs. Ramsay was the centre which holds the novel together. If she was withdrawn, the novel would fall into pieces.

Virginia was happy at St. Ives, and continued all her life to love Cornwall. These childhood holidays were for her, as her nephew and biographer Quentin Bell has said, a taste of Earthly Paradise. The entire family would take the train there for the summer, which they spent at Talland House, on the hillside behind the station, overlooking the bay, with a clear view of Godrevy, lighthouse. There they would be joined by “cousins, uncles, nephews and nieces, guests and visitors in great quantities” (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction” xiv). The same was brought in *To the Lighthouse* by the author. The scene is laid in the Island of Skye in the Herbrides, near the West coast of Scotland (Varshini 52).

Virginia echoed the same walking habit in *To the Lighthouse*; she said that “the young people went off to the beach to have a walk, Mr. and Mrs. Ramay read. Charles Tansley felt proud to walk in the company of a beautiful woman. Mrs. Charles Tansley had the habit of walking up and down with Mrs. Ramsay and conversed on subjects like Latin poetry, Mathematics and Philosophy. Mr. Ramsay with his offspring, walked down to the beach with a paper parcel to be delivered as a present from them to the keeper of the Lighthouse. “They walked up to the street, Mrs.
Ramsay holding her parasol,” (LH 16) very erect and walking as if she expected to meet someone round the corner, while for the first time in Charles Tansley’s life; he walked with a woman. He felt an extraordinary pride:

A man digging in a drain stopped digging, and looked at her, let his arm fall down and looked at her, Charles Tansley felt an extraordinary pride; felt the wind and the cyclamen and the violets, for he was walking with a beautiful woman for the first time in his life. He had hold of her bag (22).

Mr. Ramsay walked up and down in the terrace, to think about the subject of Philosophy and sent Mr. Tansley to work on his dissertation. Tansley was sharing Mr. Ramsay’s evening walk up and down again up and down in the terrace discussed about the landing at the Lighthouse (10). Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay went out for stroll in the garden and she was worried about Jasper’s habit of shooting birds, but he consoled her that Jasper (adopted son) would soon get over the habit. Virginia Woolf impressed her own personality on many occasions in this novel—as she walked throughout her life time in search of the cause of life and death. Virginia Woolf brought her walking habit in all her major three novels. Virginia Woolf stressed that the woman Mrs. Ramsay dominated the man
because of her beauty. Virginia faithfully portrayed her mother Julia Stephen on Mrs. Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse*.

Virginia depicted her father through the character of Mr. Ramsay. This was not made up – it was the literal fact, “Virginia wrote in praise of her father to Vanessa, while she was engaged on the novel. When Vanessa read it in 1927, she wrote to her sister,” which was found in Virginia’s diary on 16th May. For that Vanessa replied as follows:

...of the portrait of her father, the original central character, Vanessa says merely: You have given father too I think as clearly but perhaps, I may be wrong, that isn’t quite so difficult, Virginia makes no reference to this response (Drabble ed. 13).

Virginia Woolf admitted her sister, Vanessa as her guardian after the death of Juliast. In the words of Clive Bell, Virginia Woolf recognized Vanessa as Helen Ambrose in *The Voyage Out* and wrote to Virginia Woolf, “I suppose you will make Vanessa believe in herself” (Moore 83). The author depicted her personal way of life on her heroine Rachel Vinrace. After her mother’s (Theresa Willoughby) death, Rachel was under the care of Helen Ambrose who was the sister of Willoughby. Virginia Woolf echoed the same in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Elizabeth was the only daughter of Mrs. and Mr. Richard Dalloway. The heroine Mrs.
Dalloway was busy with the party. So she appointed a Tutor by name Miss Doris Kilman; then onwards Elizabeth came under care of the Tutor. Virginia Woolf influenced the same in *To the Lighthouse*. The eight children of Mrs. Ramsay were always under the care of Lily Briscoe who is a painter in the novel.

In the opinion of Quentin Bell, the years between the ages of thirteen and fifteen were more critical for Virginia Woolf’s sexual development, which would have been experienced by most of the people. From all reports, including her own, she reached the age of thirteen relatively ignorant about sex. Both Virginia Woolf and her sister were trained to preserve a condition of ignorant purity in sexual matters; or at least a social façade reflecting purity. The nature of Virginia Woolf’s sexuality was far less certain than was true for most persons of her age. Until the death of Sir Leslie Stephen, Virginia Woolf was inside the house and spent her time in her father’s library. Virginia Woolf’s ignorance and innocence was, after all, past puberty and thus biologically matures, even if socially and personally quite immature, especially in sexual matters. Thus her needs, motives, and expectations of women had become more complicated than when she was a child. Virginia Woolf was more attached to Vanessa for long years and later she acknowledged erotic attachment to Vanessa. Both Virginia and Vanessa had to devote their
afternoons and evenings to what were considered to be suitable tasks for women, made her feel that “this was an injury inflicted on her by reason of her sex” (Bell, *Virginia Stephen* 70). Virginia Woolf’s innocence is revealed through an event of violation or rape, where a number of critics had linked to the intrusive sexual explorations of the young Virginia Stephen, who underwent, at the hands of her half-brother, Gerald Duckworth, which she described in *A Sketch of the Past*, published for the first time in 1985 (Marcus 236). Virginia Woolf had an intimate relationship with some other persons in the Bloomsbury Group.

The author has depicted her personal way of life in her heroine Rachel who was also innocent and ignorant till she went on a voyage. After the death Theresa Rachael came under Helen Ambrose and maid; for example: Helen said, “She had been kept entirely ignorant as to the relations of men with women” (VO 77). She was shocked at Rachel’s ignorance of the facts of life and the nature of the Piccadilly woman (strumpet). Helen said about Rachel, “This girl, though twenty-four had never heard that men desired women, and until I explained it, did not know how children were born” (93). Helen was Rachel’s first monitor in the school of sexuality.
Virginia Woolf used to give parties to her friends and she loved the society and its functions.

The idea of a party always excited her, and in practice she was very sensitive to the actual mental and physical excitement of the party itself, the rise of temperature of mind and body, the ferment and fountain of noise (McNichol ed., *Mrs. Dalloway’s Party* 11).

This was echoed by the author, in her novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*. She (Mrs. Dalloway) was occupied by the preparations for a party, she rejected her lover, Peter Walsh, who came unexpectedly and called upon her. The party brought together several other friends from her younger days; and the party came out successfully. Mrs. Dalloway gave parties to bring people together, and tried to please them and gain their goodwill. Peter Walsh thought “Elizabeth was a queer-looking girl” (Mrs. D 62).

Mrs. Dalloway’s own daughter Elizabeth was innocent and adolescent like Virginia and Rachael. Her father, Richard Dalloway, mother Clarissa were very affectionate to Elizabeth. Above all tutor Miss Doris Kilman, who would like to possess her love completely to herself, even excluding the parents. Like Virginia Woolf, Rachel, and Elizabeth were also ignorant of the world. When Mrs. Dalloway was preparing for the evening party; Elizabeth was not cared for it, instead “Elizabeth really cared for her dog most of all” (15). Elizabeth cared little for fashion and
prepared to spend time with her dog. She was very much worried about her dog and told her to check on it. Elizabeth was a clay doll and she was interested in pet animals. The author depicted another character by name James Ramsay, who was disappointed to go to the Lighthouse by his father; saying that the weather was not suitable. James wanted to kill his father.

“Women are the backbone of any society.” Virginia said that “a woman is never just a wife, or a mother, or a hostess; human beings could not be defined in one word.” It is only when women are ignorant, or lazy, or angry that women are labelled as ignorant. “In the field of sexuality, Virginia and Rachael were ignorant. In the words of Virginia Woolf, Elizabeth was also ignorant as Virginia was thirteen. So she portrayed a character of her own in *Mrs. Dalloway*. She depicts a character Elizabeth who was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dalloway, a young girl of seventeen. She was at an impressionable age, beautiful, healthy, attractive, and full of life. Her reverie was interrupted by the arrival of Elizabeth, dark, had Chinese eyes in a pale face; an oriental mystery; was gentle, considerate, still. “As a child she had, had a perfect sense of humor, but now at seventeen she had become very serious, like a hyacinth (sweet – smelling flower) sheathed in glossy green” (132). She had come to tell her mother that she was going out with Miss. Kilman (History Tutor) who
stood outside the door in the mackintosh in London (16). In short Elizabeth came under the care of Miss Doris Kilman (96).

In the novel *The Voyage Out*, Virginia depicts the mother’s affection towards their children.

Having freed Helen’s arm from her husband, Ridley Ambrose, she wept for their children’s absent before becoming conscious of ‘the world which she lived in.’ She noticed the people passing by the workers, the rich, and poor, who were haze tattered old men and women were nodding off to sleep upon the seats (www.literaturepage.com).

Virginia Woolf beautifully described the opening scene in her first novel.

In *Mrs. Dalloway* “Virginia gave a clear description about the close relationship between Clarissa Dalloway and her daughter Elizabeth. When she introduced Elizabeth to her ex-lover, Peter Walsh, ‘Here is my Elizabeth’” (Mrs. D 53). These words show the possessiveness of her daughter. Virginia has brought the same situation in *To the Lighthouse*. When Mr. Ramsay said that if the weather suited, we would go to the lighthouse, otherwise ‘No going to the Lighthouse.’ (LH 22) immediately James got angry; so Mrs. Ramsay, said compassionately, smoothing the little boy’s hair, and consoled her son James (22). Again in the same
novel Virginia expressed the same incident as “Why, she (Mrs. Ramsay) asked, pressing her chin on James’s head, should they grow up so far? Why should they go to school? She would have liked always to have had a baby” (80). From the above said statements, the readers could understand the affection of the mother towards their children.

Sir Leslie Stephen always supported his daughter Virginia to come up in her life. After the death of her mother, she had depended on her dominating father. In the words of Sir Leslie Stephen, Virginia Woolf was a voracious reader, “Gracious child, how you gobble,” again he mumbled to himself: “Ginia (Virginia) is devouring books, almost faster than I like” (Woolf ed. Writer’s 151-152). Sir Leslie Stephen admired his daughter and guided her to become an eminent writer. Like that Virginia Woolf brought her father’s personality on Willoughby. In her novel The Voyage Out Rachel’s father Willoughby wished to offer all his success to Theresa’s (sister of Ridley Ambrose) feet. “He laid his success at her feet; and was always thinking how to educate his daughter (Rachel Vinrace) so that Theresa might be glad.” (27) He was a very ambitious man; and although he had not been particularly kind to his wife while she lived, now he realized and thought his wife. Helen thought he now believed that she watched him from Heaven, and inspired what was good in him.” He thought that “Rachel is the only thing that is left to me.” Willoughby
sighed. Again, he stressed that “I want to bring her up as her mother would have wished. I don’t hold with these modern views...”(84).

Richard Dalloway himself was a man of dignity if not much depth. He had made a good and considerate husband and a good father, proud of his daughter Elizabeth. The young girl herself was much attached to the father, more to him than to her mother. In the words of Sally Seton, they were devoted to each other. Richard Dalloway a doctor wanted to make Elizabeth was Dorie Kilman.

She liked people who were ill. And every profession is open to the women of your generation; said Miss Kilman’s ambition was that Elizabeth might be a doctor, or a farmer. Animals are often ill. She might own thousand acres and have people under her. She would go and see them in their cottages (Mrs. D 146).

In *To the Lighthouse*, Mr. Ramsay the head of a large family considered that his judgement of men and things were accurate, since he was a philosopher so he never changed an unpleasant word to please others. This sort of attitude was resented by the children. As a father, he wanted to make the children to be aware of the worldly sufferings. He wanted that his children should have full of grasp of the realities of life and they should face facts; he did not want them to harp any kind of
illusions and delusions, and lived in them. Life is factual abounds in realities, and it has to be approached only in this and in no other way. He tried to impress upon the children that life is full of hazards and it needed courage truth and power to endure it. Mrs. Ramsay’s approach to life on the other hand was full of commonsense and realism. Mr. Ramsay “Wants them to know that life is difficult, and to face it, needs courage, truth and power to endure.” “He wished Andrew could be induced to work harder. He would lose every chance of a scholarship if he didn’t. He should be very proud of Andrew if he got a scholarship” (LH 92). Both Mr. Lesli and Mr. Ramsay were rude to their children and wives; both were tyrants and well-known philosophers (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” xii).

Sir Leslie Stephen, the head of the family, along with his eight children, and friends went to spend their summer in St. Ives in Cornwall. Each summer until 1894 the whole family went on holiday to Cornwall. Virginia Woolf personally influenced the same scene in her novel, The Light House too. The scene was laid in the Island of Skye in the Hebrides, near the West coast of Scotland. The Ramsays had their summer house there and they came to it with their eight children and number of six guests. Like Sir Leslie Stephen,
Mr. Ramsay was the head of the family with eight children. The Ramsays were not rich, and it was a wonder how they managed to contrive it all. To feed eight children on philosophy (LH 32).

The autobiographical dimensions of her novels, *To the Lighthouse* in particular, contribute to the blurring of boundaries between biography, autobiography and fiction in discussions of her life and work. Both Leslie Stephen and Ramsay were tall and gaunt, both were walkers. Both could write logical, matters and both loved poetry; both could be charming at times, but both could be rude. Both disliked money matters, both were workaholics. Both feared and kind reviewers and leaned on women for support (www.literaturepage.com). This novel has a great autobiographical significance, for the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay are drawn to a great extent after the novelist’s parents, and she had put much of herself and sister Vanessa Bell in the character of Lily Briscoe, the painter. Both Vannesa and Lily Briscoe were the excellent painters. When the conversation was going on between Mr. Carmichael and Lily Briscoe; about her painting she said that, “Lily repeated turning back, reluctantly again, to her canvas. Heaven be praised for it, the...butterfly’s wing” (LH 231).
Virginia Woolf’s adulterous relationship was with her brother-in-law Clive Bell led her to think in other way. After the marriage of Vanessa with Clive Bell, Virginia Woolf travelled with the Bells to Rye, St. Ives, Bath, Paris and Florence. Once she wrote to Clive Bell as follows:

When I am with you, I realize my limitations distinctly. Vanessa had all that I should like to have, and you, besides your own charms and exquisite fine sweetness (which I always appreciate somehow) have her. Thus ‘I seem often to be only an erratic external force, capable of shocks, but without any lodging in your lives (Nicolson ed. 334).

When Woolf wrote to Clive,

Kiss Dolphin’s nose – if it isn’t too wet-and tap pony smartly on the snout, whisper into your wife’s ear that I love her. I expect she will scold you for tickling her” (Virginia Woolf’s Letter 1: 362).

Clive Bell replied that,

I dreamt last night that you were come, and that you had read me a volume of short stories; then, waking, I knew that Walter Lamb slept below.... Downstairs the beautiful grey manuscript was awaiting me, but not, alas! The authoress by whom we are forsaken (Moore 83).

Clive Bell and Virginia Woolf loved each other, and their friendship continued forever. Virginia influenced the same on Rachel, in The
*Voyage Out.* The relationship between Richard and Rachael was like Clive Bell and Virginia Richard Dalloway, an older married man, gave Rachel a kiss. Helen saw that Rachel was terrified and she tried to put the experience into perspective: Helen said that “It’s the most natural thing in the world...” (64).

Vanessa got married with Clive Bell and she went with him. Virginia left alone. She spoke of her father as follows: Sir Leslie Stephen’s dominating presence and rational temperament stood out as a foil to Virginia Woolf’s hatred of men; “She could never forgive her father for being rude to her” (Pippett *Moth* 26).

Sir Leslie Stephen was a difficult man, more so after his second wife’s death (Julia Stephen). Virginia Woolf wrote in her diary, years later: ‘If he had lived longer his life would have entirely ended mine’ (Woolf ed. *Writer’s* 138). What would have happened? No writing, no books; inconceivable. Elsewhere: ‘that Old Wretch, my father. “But he was an adorable man, and somehow, tremendous. As a child condemning, as a woman of fifty-eight understanding-I should say tolerating. Both views true?”’ (www.literaturepage.com). Virginia Woolf placed the concept of hatred between daughter-father relationships as follows: Rachel hated her father and said, “I didn’t get on well with my father” (VO 64). While writing
the novels; Virginia Woolf always thought of her family members. So Virginia depicted, Rachel to hate her father Willoughby. Rachael said that her father as usual, loved his business and built his empire, so she would be considerably bored. And this led Rachael to distress her marriage. Virginia Woolf’s personal concern influenced on Rachel Mrs. Chailey said about the marriage of Rachel “If ever Miss. Rachel marries, Chailey, pray that she may marry a man who does not know his ABC” (25). Mrs. Chailey said the above statement to show Rachel’s innocence and ignorance. In *To the Lighthouse*, Virginia echoed the same attitude over Andrew Ramsay and James Ramsay who hated their father, Mr. Ramsay. They hated him for coming up to them, for stopping and looking down on them; he hated him for interrupting them: he hated him for the exaltation and sublimity of his gestures; ...and egotism (51).

Richard Dalloway, an older married man, gave Rachel a kiss, Helen saw that Rachel was terrified and she tried to put the experience into perspective. Helen said that,

> It’s the most natural thing in the world. Men will want to kiss you, just as they’ll want to marry you.” The pity was to get things out of proportion. It was like noticing the noise people make when they eat or men spitting; or in short, any small thing that got on one’s nerves (78).
Rachael was so repulsed by his passionate kiss that she was kept awake all night by terrible nightmares. He was completely taken with the Dalloway’s and embraced by Helen’s remarks to them. Richard shared his wives opinion of the other passengers. Mrs. Dalloway believed Richard was “morally her superior” (47-48) and felt toward him as her mother. It was unnecessary for Richard to shake Rachel by the hand. ‘Well, that’s over’, said Ridley, after a long silence, we shall never see them again. Helen did not like boring them. Rachel followed Helen indifferently. Her mind was absorbed by Richard. ‘I like him’ said Rachel. I dreamt ‘I could not sleep’, said Rachel which showed that Rachel had falling love in Richard. He kissed me. ‘I don’t know why?’ (63). She asked Helen. Helen said it was the ‘most natural thing in the world.’ ‘I did like him’, Rachel mused, and ‘Richard was lovable’ Rachel concluded. Richard talked about his childhood and ideals. Rachel was cheated by Richard in *The Voyage Out*. She denied the persuasion of Richard Dalloway. She also disliked men as Virginia Woolf. “I shall never marry” (45), Rachel determined. In the words of Rachel, “Men are brutes! I hate men”... (64).

Mrs. Dalloway’s daughter Elizabeth, a beautiful young girl too hated men as she said, the young men were silly, said Elizabeth like Virginia Woolf and Rachel Virginia Woolf introduced the characters by name Elizabeth and Lily Briscoe. “I never go to parties,” said by Miss.
Doris Kilman, just to keep Elizabeth from going (Mrs. D 142). And she did not want Elizabeth to love these things (52). Virginia’s Heroine Lily Briscoe in *To the Lighthouse* who was like Mrs. Ramsay tried to discover reality. Lily Briscoe is a complex figure. She had a father and a home but she liked to remain aloof from everything and every body and kept strictly to herself. She had sexual awareness, but she felt that inadequate in the fulfillment of the sexual appetite.

In Virginia’s first novel, she described vividly about the love between Rachael and Richard. Rachel was bewildered and frustrated by Richard’s conversation. She finally concluded that “I know nothing” (VO 50). Richard replied, “It’s far better that you should know nothing” (50). Helen noticed that Rachel looked queer and flushed. There were two storms in the voyage. During the storm, Richard ran into a body that turned out to be Rachel. As if swept in by the wind, he followed her into her room. When he inquired about her ‘interests and occupations’ she replied that, she was a woman. He told her that she had an inestimable power—for good or for evil. The ship lurched and Rachel fell slightly forward. Richard “took her in his arms and kissed her...passionately, so that she felt the hardness of his body and the roughness of his cheek printed upon hers” (59). Although Richard initiated and controlled his situation, he grabbed his forehead and said that she tempted him. Surely,
Rachel’s behaviour could not be characterized as that of a temptress. Rachael’s conversation with Helen over Richard Dalloway unequivocally evokes her obsession with the primordial; I felt weak you see said Rachel. The Dallowy’s left the ship.

Virginia Woolf’s health did not permit conventional schooling, and was educated at home by her father and grew up at the family home at Hyde Park Gate (www.literaturepage.com). Sir Leslie Stephen was an interesting story-teller; he was also a bedtime story teller. He could recite poetry and read stories to the children so that the best lessons were probably given out of school hours. Both the parents had strong family associations with literature (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” vii). Virginia Woolf, who had little formal schooling and who believed that “the world (would) go on providing me with excitement whether I can use it or not” (Sharma 16). In the middle, she described this period in a letter to Vita Sackville – West (best friend of Virginia): Think how I was brought up! No school; mourning alone among my father’s books; never any chance to pick up all that goes on in schools-throwing balls, ragging; slang; vulgarities; scenes; jealousies! Vanessa and Virginia were educated at home. The former developed the art of writing and the latter Vanessa became a famous painter. Vanessa also studied Latin, Italian, art and architecture at King’s Ladies’ Department. On the other hand,
Stephen’s children were used to this atmosphere; they were free from conventional education. Leslie Stephen and his wife, Julia Duckworth Stephen, had decided to educate their children themselves although there were governesses at home. As Quentin Bell (nephew of Virginia or son of Vanessa) informed the readers before Virginia Woolf was seven, “Julia was trying to teach her Latin, History and French, while Leslie took the children in Mathematics” (Bell, *Virginia Stephen* 26-29) but neither of them was a good teacher.

Virginia Woolf learnt among other things: Greek with a teacher, Janet Case. She could read Greek and French (Bennett ed. 152). Virginia heard the birds singing in Greek, a language in which she had acquired some competence she continued her education, partly by reading of her own choice, and partly under the tuition of Dr. Warr of King’s College and Clara Pater, who taught her Greek and Latin respectively. She learned history at the Ladies’ Department of King’s College, London between 1897 and 1901, and this brought Virginia into contact with some of the early reformers of women’s higher education (en.wikipedia.org). She became increasingly interested in literature and music (Virginia Woolf: Letters 8-41). Virginia’s education influenced personally on Rachel’s education in this novel as follows: The way Rachel had been educated, as Virginia, joined to a fine natural indolence, was of course
partly the reason of it, for she had been educated as the majority of well-to-
do girls in the last part of the nineteenth century. “Kindly doctors and
gentle old professors had taught her the rudiments of about ten different
branches of knowledge” (VO 27-28). The education of a motherless
daughter who rigidly distressed marriage was also Woolf’s personal
concern. For Virginia Woolf had never exercised for obsessive love-hate
feelings for her mother (Moore 82). But this system of education had one
great advantage. It did not teach anything to her except the music in
which she was more interested “she became a fanatic about music.”
Rachel’s education left her abundant time for thinking.

Virginia and Vanessa learnt many things with the help of Tutors so
Virginia brought the same incident in this novel. Like that Mrs. Dalloway
appointed a history tutor (Doris Kilman) for her daughter Elizabeth, as
Virginia Woolf was educated under a Greek tutor Janet Case. Doris
Kilman, who was a German by birth, was in the Dalloway’s house to look
after Elizabeth. In the view of Richard Dalloway: “Doris Kilman had her
degree, who was a woman made her way in the world. Her knowledge of
modern history was more than respectable. Doris Kilman was a friend,
guide (in religion) well-wisher and philosopher of Elizabeth. Richard said
that “She was very able, had a really historical mind” (Mrs. D 15). Mrs.
Dalloway did not like her daughter to be so much closeted with Kilman
for the lesson in history – anything more nauseating. She could not conceive. Miss Kilman took her to some church in Kensington and they had tea with a clergyman. She helped her to learn many matters. “She had lent her books – law, medicine, politics, all professions were open to women of your generation, said Miss Kilman” (140). “Seeds of knowledge need a sound academic soil for germination” (Proverb). So Elizabeth was admitted in a high school, where she played Hockey (86). Virginia liked to watch Hockey so she portrayed the character Elizabeth to play Hockey in this novel. Like Virginia, Elizabeth was educated in all subjects.

In *To the Lighthouse*, Andrew Ramsay did not like a serious man like Charles Tansley. He was fond of dissecting crabs and he went after them. Virginia’s elder brother Thoby (great uncle’s name) who liked Mathematics well. Virginia personally influenced Thoby’s love for Mathematics upon Andrew Ramsay. He possessed an extraordinary gift for Mathematics. “Ramsay preferred the clever son like, Andrew who was good at mathematics and neglected the less brilliant.” Even Clarissa’s husband admitted that Andrew’s gift for Mathematics was extraordinary (LH 80). Virginia brought the same interest in Mathematics through the character on Andrew Ramsay. “Mr. Ramsay wished Andrew could be induced to work harder.” He was adventurous by nature. His father had
very high hopes on him. Mr. Ramsay said that rarely worked harder and if he did not do so, there was every chance of scholarship if he did not, said Mr. Ramsay (92). His father would feel very proud of him, if he was to receive a scholarship.

Virginia Woolf gave equal importance and interest to music and dance. Virginia Woolf confessed to Lytton Strachey, that Virginia had adored a soft music at evening. So Virginia depicted Helen as follows: Helen danced according to the tune in the hotel very beautifully and that was appreciated by all in the voyage. “After a moment’s hesitation first one couple, then another, leapt into mid-stream, and went round and round in the eddies. The rhythmic swish off the dancers sounded like a swirling pool” (VO 51). The novel thus composed would have the “power of music, the stimulus of sight, the effect on us of the shape of trees or the play of colour, the emotions bred in us by crowds” and it would have “the delight of movement, the intoxication of wine” (Hungerford 229).

 Virginia Woolf brought out this passion and atmosphere through the character of Rachel Vinrace in this novel, *The Voyage Out*. The first voyage from London to South America, Rachel travelled with her aunt Helen and uncle Ridley Ambrose along with her father Willoughby Vinrace in the ship ‘Euphrosyne.’ “Rachel was sitting in her room, doing
absolutely nothing.” She was only preoccupied with her ‘Piano’ and music during her spare hours – “Her mind was in the state of an intelligent man’s in the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. She would believe practically anything she was told, invent reasons for anything she said...” (VO 28). Like Virginia Woolf, Rachel was also interested in music. By virtue of the piano and a mess of books on the floor, “Rachel considered it her room, and here she would sit for hours playing very difficult music, reading a little German or a little English when the mood took her,...(27). Virginia Woolf loved and she was very much interested in music. She brought the same musical sense on Rachel. Rachel played a Beethoven Sonata while Terence Hewet wrote and talked: “...I can’t play a note because of you in the room interrupting me every other second” (296). Again Virginia mentioned about Piano in her novel To the Lighthouse; Virginia wrote as:

It was a splendid mind. For if thought is like the keyboard of a Piano, divided into so many notes, or like the alphabet is ranged in twenty-six letters all in order, then his (Ramsay’s) splendid mind had no sort of difficulty in running over those letters one by one, firmly and accurately, until it had reached (47).

Virginia Woolf in her Memoir stressed that her father created the atmosphere of freedom in Virginia Woolf’s family life – while Sir Leslie
Stephen’s library introduced Virginia Woolf to a choice reading, his tutelage gave her confidence in her responses. For, as she wrote later, Leslie encouraged children to “read what one liked because one liked, it never to pretend to admire what one did not” (Sharma 18). A part of Sir Leslie Stephen’s liberal education to his children was to let them think independently. Virginia Woolf candidly noted that if freedom meant the right to think one’s own thoughts and to follow one’s own pursuits, “then no one respected and indeed insisted upon freedom more completely than he did” (18) and chose one’s own profession. She advised in her common reader “to follow your own instincts, to use your own reason, to come to your own conclusions” (Woolf ed. Writer’s 47). Sir Leslie Stephen did not like to see women smoke but the freedom given to his daughters was worth thousands of cigarettes (Varshini, “Biography” 1). Thus he was a strict moralist. Leslie’s strictness was brought by Virginia on William Pepper in The Voyage Out.

In Virginia Woolf’s novels, The Voyage Out (Rachel Vinrace), Mrs. Dalloway (Elizabeth Dalloway), Night and Day (Katherine Hilbery) and Jacob’s Room (Jacob Flanders), she chose the above said characters as her protagonist’s young impressionable minds reality. Though the characters were young they were given full freedom by the autobiographical novelist since the customs were in practice then. Virginia
Woolf received restricted freedom from her parents. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, she gave Elizabeth only the restricted freedom. So when Elizabeth and Doris Kilman were going for shopping, Elizabeth stepped forward into the omnibus in front of everybody. She took a set on top. She was very much interested in horse-riding. Elizabeth Dalloway was very much attached towards Doris Kilman than her parents; that showed she had been away from her sophisticated feeling of maternal possessiveness. Neither Richard nor Clarissa had ever possessed Elizabeth but to Clarissa, it seemed that Miss Kilman was devouring Elizabeth. Mrs. Dalloway didn’t like her daughter to be with Doris Kilman. But Elizabeth spent more time with Kilman, alone shut up in a room upstairs: Richard said that,

And there was Elizabeth closeted all this time with Doris Kilman.

Prayer at this hour with that woman…something fumbling, something scratching at the door, they shut themselves up.

‘I suppose they’re praying’ said Mr. Richard (Mrs. D 127).

Doris Kilman thought that Clarissa “came from the most worthless of all classes – the rich, with a smattering of culture” (133). Virginia remembered the same situation of *To the Lighthouse* Minta Doyle was under the care of Mrs. Ramsay. She went for a walk with Paul Rayley. So Mrs. Ramsay said that “a woman had once accused her of ‘robbing her of her daughters’ “affections” (LH 79).
Virginia Woolf was given the impetus to free thinking. Later on it emboldened Virginia Woolf to assert: “I write what I like writing and there’s an end on it.” This freedom for herself implied freedom for others to make judgement: “I’m to write what I like; and they are to say what they like” (Woolf ed. Writer’s 44-45). Virginia Woolf admired much about her father’s frankness Virginia acknowledged that her father gave restricted freedom. The highest services of this kind, “her believed, are rendered by persons condemned, or should I say privileged, to live in obscurity” (Stephen 245-246). In this way, Virginia Woolf gave the same freedom to Rachel in The Voyage Out. Rachel could write whatever she thought. Terence Hewet loved Rachel for she had full freedom. Terence decided that what he loved; above Rachel what Terence like was her ‘extraordinary’ freedom. “He wanted to keep her free so that they could be free together”(355). Even today the parents would doubt the wisdom of allowing a girl of fifteen, who would like to have the free run of large library. But Virginia said that her father allowed her and gave full freedom in the field of education.

Virginia depicted her heroine Rachel also as a vast reader. “Rachel chose modern books, and she read what she chose. Rachel was freed to read all the literary late nineteenth century works of New Woman literature written by men. Willoughby who helped Rachel to explore
True Life of the World”; while Rachel travelled in his father’s ship within the few months that she spent a little port where there was a queer English colony, which helped her to understand the practical meaning of life (Majumdar and McLaurin ed. 50).

Here, Virginia’s personal influence is very well obviously shown. In particular, Rachel’s aunt Helen (Bohemian lady) gave her, George Meredith’s novel, Diana of the Crossways and Henrik Ibsen’s play, The Dolls House. Rachel’s identification with their heroines is total, creating in her “some sort of change,” yet Rachel later found that the experiences of love they delineate had little connection with her own (Marcus 215).

Virginia Woolf had the habit of writing the diaries and letters. Quentin Bell, in his introduction to the Mature Diaries, describes that Virginia Woolf’s diaries and letters were the “masterpiece” (Sellers 109). She kept the daily diary throughout her life and wrote many thousands of letters. When Woolf was fourteen, the habit of writing diary started and the diaries continue with interpretation, until her suicide in 1941 (109). Virginia Woolf made her heroine, Rachel Vinrace, in this novel to the habit of writing diary daily and letters to others (example) Rachel herself said that, “...I own, than I should be of writing Keats and Shelley into the bargain!” (VO 61) While she was writing she asked herself: “Would there ever be a time when the world was one and indivisible?” (300). In To the
Virginia influenced her habit of writing letters on Mrs. Ramsay (LH 216). Virginia’s diaries gave an unparalleled insight into Woolf’s development and methods as a writer. We are given plans for her various novels, her thoughts as she worked at them, the compositional problems she encountered and her reactions to them once they are finished. She described the rapture of inspiration and the torture of revision (Sellers 110). One of Woolf’s purposes in keeping a diary was a training ground for her art (111). Virginia Woolf’s diaries are in shorthand script (112). Virginia Woolf did not intend her diaries or correspondence for full-scale publication it can also be argued that her portrayals are the products of frustration rather than an unwarranted annihilation of the other. In To the Lighthouse, Mrs. Ramsay sat and wrote letters by a rock. He wrote and wrote she was sitting under the rock, with a pad on her knee writing letters and wrote innumerable letters, and sometimes the wind took them and she Charles Tanslay just saved the pages from the sea (LH 216-217).

In Virginia’s family, her parents used to call their children with surnames: Nessa alias Vanessa. Leslie Stephen called his daughter Virginia with nick name, ‘Ginia.’ The girl’s name ‘Ginia’ is Virginia, Virgo (Latin), and the meaning of ‘Ginia’ is maiden. There was a magnificent and monumental simplicity in Thoby which earned him his
nick name as ‘The Goth.’ Virginia remembered in her novel, she personally called the character Rachel as ‘Cynthis.’ Virginia wrote a letter to Vanessa Bell on 04.08.1908:

I can get on with my writings, and I sit in an upper room and look into glass case of Black Theology; and Cynthia (the character who became Rachel Vinrace in *The Voyage Out*) will not speak and my ship is likely sink (Nicolson 340)

In *The Voyage Out*, Rachel began her fictional life as Cynthia, only after four months and several letters were received by Clive Bell and Vanessa Bell, so Virginia changed the name ‘Cynthia’ as ‘Rachel.’ Likewise Virginia first introduced her characters with their surnames and suddenly referring to them by their Christian names (for example: Dalloway alias Clarissa Dalloway). The character Clarissa Dalloway would be mentioned in the coming chapter “Mrs. Dalloway.” In *To the Lighthouse*, Ramsay’s children were called by William Bankes (who was a Botanist) after the kings and queens of England, Cam was addressed as the wicked, James the Ruthless, Andrew the just, pure the fair. Whereas Mr. Ramsay thought that Andrew was the master brain (LH 32).

Virginia used repeated words in all her major novels. Because after the death of Julia Stephen, the girls heard Sir Leslie Stephen passing their room, talking to himself: “I wish I were dead – I wish I were dead, I
wish my whiskers would grow” (www.literaturepage.com). Virginia was influenced by the same words through the characters in all of her selected novels. In The Voyage Out, Terence Hewet said to Rachel Vinrace,

‘God, Rachel, you do read trash!’ he exclaimed. ‘And you’re behind the times too my dear. No one dreams of reading this kind of thing now-antiquated problem plays, harrowing descriptions of life in the east end—oh, no, we’ve exploded all that. Read poetry, Rachel, poetry, poetry, poetry!’ (297).

In Mrs. Dalloway, Virginia echoed the same repeated words. Mrs. Dalloway introduced Richard to everybody as Wick ham (68). At last he said “My name is Dalloway!” – That was his first view of Richard – a fair young man rather awkward, sitting on a deck–chair, and blurting out “My name is Dalloway!”; “Sally got hold of it; always after that she called him” and “My name is Dalloway!” (68). Mr. Ramsay recited aloud to himself the lines of Tennyson, “Someone had blundered, someone had blundered” (LH 43) who had the mania of shouting aloud like Sir Leslie Stephen (116).

In Virginia Woolf’s words, Sir Leslie Stephen was interested in reading books; she influenced the same on Mr. Ridley Ambrose who was also a vast reader and a philosopher (VO 71). He sat hour after hour among white-leaved books, alone like an idol in an empty church, still
except for the passage of his hand from one side of the sheet to another, silent save for an occasional choke, which drove him to extend his pipe a moment in the air.

As he worked his way further and further into the heart of the poet, his chair became more and more deeply encircled by books, which lay open on the floor, and could only by crossed by a careful process of stepping, so delicate that his visitors generally stopped and addressed him from the outskirts (171).

Virginia depicted her father on Mr. William Pepper in *The Voyage Out*, like her father Mr. Pepper also knew about many things – about Mathematics, History, Greek, Zoology, Economics and the Icelandic Sagas. Like Leslie Stephen; Mr. Ridley, Ambrose and Mr. Ramsay were also vast readers, Philosophers and thinkers. Mr. Ramsay always had a book in a pocket (LH 228). He was reading a little shiny book with covers mottled like a plover’s egg (247).

Sir James used his felicity for words in law and public administration (Love, *Sources* 25). Sir James Fitzjames (Virginia’s uncle) was a great lawyer and the writer of laws (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” vii). Virginia remembered his uncle in *Mrs. Dalloway* through the character of Sir James Buckhurst Missers. Hooper (Mrs. D 21) and Grateley, Lawyers and Solicitors (52). Peter Walsh had
come after a long interval, which was in love with Daisy, the wife of an
Indian Army Major and he had come to arrange for her divorce (51). Peter Walsh was Clarissa’s ex-lover who returned from India after five years break to consult the above said lawyers.

Many of these small incidents that made up the texture of the novel also found their counter parts in real life: the birthplace of cricket is England. The game of cricket on lawn, Virginia Woolf was known as ‘the demon bowler’ (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” xv). She and her sister Vanessa used to play the game cricket in their garden. Virginia Woolf loved playing cricket, so she echoed this game in the major novels. For example in Mrs. Dalloway, in words of Rezia, Look, “she implored him, pointing at a little troop of boys carrying cricket stumps, and one shuffled, spun round on his heel and shuffled, as if he were acting a clown at the music hall” (30). Again Virginia wrote about cricket in Mrs. Dalloway as follows: While she was walking in the London street, she heard the beating of bat’s noise, a stirring of galloping ponies, tapping of cricket bats and so on. Virginia Woolf created Peter Walsh to involve in cricket in the novel and he said that “But cricket was no mere game. Cricket was important. He could never help reading about cricket” (174). Virginia Woolf introduced Mr. Charles Tanslay in To the Lighthouse, as an atheist in the hands of Mr. Ramsay’s children. Tansley heard the sound
of the children playing cricket. He made James full of disappointments. So he regarded Tanslay as a miserable specimen. “He couldn’t play cricket; he pocked; he shuffled. He was a sarcastic brute, Andrew said.” He would watch the children playing cricket (LH 12, 54, 267). The atheist, “they called him; the little atheist.” Rose mocked him; Prue mocked him; Andrew, Jasper, Roger mocked him (10). Mrs. Ramsay extended sympathy to Mr. Ramsay: he should put implicit, faith in Mrs. Ramsay and everything would be alright and nothing would harm him. Mr. Ramsay was satisfied with what she said and went out to watch the children who play the game of cricket. Virginia Woolf was rambunctious and a little rowdy at times, and she enjoyed sharing this kind of energy with her friends. Making noise, cheering at a football game or even getting into a friendly fight all seemed like a good time to her. In fact, Virginia Woolf needed to do these things or otherwise she gets short-tempered.
Sir James Stephen held a professorship at Cambridge for a time (Love, Sources 25). Virginia Woolf’s Grandfather, Clive Bell (Vanessa’s husband) and her son Quinton Bell were the eminent professors in various subjects in Virginia’s family. Virginia personally portrayed her family incidents through the characters of her novels. Mr. Ridley Ambrose and St. John Hirst were the professors in The Voyage Out. Mr. Ramsay and Charles Tansley were also the professors in philosophy in To the Lighthouse. Mr. Ramsay with his male ambitions longed to survive as a great philosopher, as an impressive entry in the Dictionary of National Biography.

Virginia Woolf’s father, Sir Leslie Stephen (1832–1904), was like Mr. Ramsay a well-known philosopher not of the first rank, but unlike Mr. Ramsay Leslie Stephen was also a literary critic and biographer (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” xii). Mr. Ridley Ambrose, was a philosopher (VO 71). Mr. Grice, St. John Hirst (156) and Mr. William Pepper were also philosophers in the novel (20). In the view of Virginia about her father, she was probably influenced to become a writer because writing had been one of his major public activities. Likewise Virginia personally influenced her father’s personality on Mr. Ramsay that he was an eminent intellectual, a reputed scholar, philosopher who had earned reputation as a thinker and a writer. “Ramsay is one of those men who do
their best work before they are forty” (LH 34). Mr. Ramsay had a book in his pocket (228). He had made a definite contribution to philosophy in one little book when he was only five and twenty; what came after was more or less amplification, repetition. Ramsay’s student Charles Tansley was also a ‘little atheist’ apprentice philosopher (32-34). 

Virginia Woolf’s grandfather was Sir James Stephen, who was a historian and a professor of Cambridge University (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” vii). Sir Leslie Stephen was also a historian of ideas wrote History of the English Thought in the eighteenth century (vii). In the same way, Virginia portrayed Mr. Ramsay in Mrs. Dalloway, Richard planned to write the history of the Great British military family, the Burtons who were already part of the past. Richard planned to write a history of Lady Bruton’s family, and she told him that the papers were all in order to write the history of the Labour Party which would came into power later (120). Richard reminded Lady Burton about Clarissa’s party. Lady Burton invited Whitbread Hugh as well as Richard Dalloway to lunch (35), because to help her to draft a letter to The Times. Lady Burton preferred Richard because he possessed much finer material (112). 

Sir Leslie Stephen J.K. Stephen (Virginia cousin), Virginia Woolf, Julian Bell (Nephew of Virginia) were the poets in Virginia’s family.
Julian Bell was a writer and poet; who was also became interested in left wing politics. J.K. Stephen had early success with his poems, Lapsus Calami – Slips of the pen are his famous poems in literature. In the opinion of Leonard Woolf, Virginia was a great poetess. For example Rupert Brooke and Leonard were friends. Once Rupert began to write a poem, his method being to put the last word of each line of rhyming quatrains down the sheet of paper and then complete the lines and the poem. At one moment he said: “Virginia, What is the brightest thing you can think of?” “A leaf with the light on it,” was Virginia’s instant reply, and it completed the poem (Woolf, *Beginning* 19). Virginia loved poetry, quoted it constantly, was acutely sensitive to its music and emulous of the poet’s command of words, and she uses the word poetry to define certain effects in prose fiction that transcend the particular character or scene (Bennett ed. 153). Her own personal influence put on Mr. Grice as a poet in *The Voyage Out*. Mr. Grice was a philosopher and poet. While Willoughby and Mrs. Dalloway were taking in the ship; she asked “I’ve had the most interesting talk of my life!” She exclaimed, taking her seat beside Willoughby. “Do you realize that one of your men is a philosopher and a poet?” (VO 50). Mr. Ridley Ambrose was shut up in his room with his books as he had “...worked his way further and further into the heart of the poet,”... (171). In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Septimus Warren Smith was a poet. He read Shakespeare’s plays wrote romantic poetry, and hopelessly in
love with Miss. Isabel Pole. Mr. Ramsay and Augustus Carmichael (mathematician) were the poets in *To the Lighthouse*. When the First World War broke out Mr. Carmichael brought out a volume of poems which had an unexpected success. The war had revived people’s interest in poetry. People said that his poetry was so beautiful. They went and published things he had written forty years ago. There was a famous man now called Carmichael (LH 262). Virginia Woolf brought her family talents in the characters of her major novels.

Julian Bell, the elder son of Clive and Vanessa Bell, was not only a writer, poet, but also interested in left wing politics. Likewise, Virginia brought Ridley Ambrose in *The Voyage Out* as an egocentric politician (ex-parliamentarian). He discussed more of politics to Rachel so that she got bored very much. Virginia introduced Mr. Richard Dalloway, as a politician in *Mrs. Dalloway*, who was the husband of Clarissa Dalloway. He was a parliamentarian and his first duty was to work for his country and belonged to labour government (120). Mr. Dalloway “never gave Clarissa present, except a bracelet two or three years ago. He was a good husband to his wife and presented rose bouquets when he returned from the lunch” (123, 127).
Leonard’s sister was Bella, who had married R.H. Lock, The Assistant Director of the Peradeniya Botanical Gardens (Woolf, *Beginning* 15). Virginia echoed the same job in her novel *To the Lighthouse*, a character by name Mr. William Bankes who was a widower, a botanist, smells of soap (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” xv). William Bankes was a bit of faddist, who had in him the qualities of sincerity and kind-heartedness. He holds Lily Briscoe in high esteem for her devotion to work, her commonsense and poverty. Mrs. Ramsay, a match maker, thought that they would be tide in a wedlock (Gupta and Gupta 145). Virginia rejected Lytton Strachey like that her heroin Lily Briscoe was also rejected, the proposal of William Bankes.

Even though Virginia married a writer Leonard Woolf in 1912 (www.en.wikipedia.org). She had close contact with other women like Vanessa Bell, Violet Dickinson, Vita Sackville-West and Ethel Smyth. In 1922, Virginia Woolf met and fell in love with Vita Sackville-West. After a tentative start they began an affair that lasted through most of the 1920’s. In 1928, Woolf presented Sackville-West with Orlando, a fantastical biography in which the eponymous hero’s life spans three centuries and both genders. It had been edited by Nigel Nicholson, Vita Sackville-West’s son, “the longest and most charming love-letter in literature.” After their affair ended, the two women remained friends until
Woolf’s death in 1941. Virginia also remained close to her surviving siblings, Ethel Smyth and Vita Sackville-West’s were given a character in *The Voyage Out* by Virginia Woolf.

A recent collection of essays were focused on the “lesbian aspects” of Woolf’s fictions. Critics had also examined Virginia Woolf in tandem with a female other: Vanessa and Virginia Woolf, Vita and Virginia Woolf. In the opinion of Laura Marcus, Virginia Woolf’s lesbian was an open secret (Marcus 234). Vanessa’s and Virginia Woolf’s lesbian was the crucial relationship (235). Ethel Smyth, suffrage activist, writer and composer to whom Woolf became close later in her life. Virginia Woolf brought her own personality on *Mrs. Dalloway*. When Clarissa was young, she was much attached to Sally Seton, who almost made love to her, leaving it opens for a charge of Lesbian love. Virginia Woolf depicted a character by name Sally Seton in *Mrs. Dalloway*. As a girl, Sally Seton was gifted with extraordinary charm; so much so that *Mrs. Dalloway* could not take away her eyes off her face when she first came home, at Burton. She had, “an extraordinary beauty of the kind; she (Clarissa) most admired, Sally’s “dark, large-eyed with that quality which, since she had not got it herself” (Mrs. D 38). She always evinced, sort abandonment, as if she could say anything, a quality much commoner in foreigners than in English men. Recalling her own precious moments of
love for Sally, Clarissa refuses to interfere with her daughter Elizabeth’s “failing in love” with Miss Kilman: “It proves she has a heart” (Henke, “Mrs. Dalloway: the Communion of Saints” 136).

Mrs. Dalloway could not help liking Sally Seton. One day there came the most exquisite moment of her life; passing a stone urn with flowers in it, Sally stopped; picked a flower; presented it to her and kissed her on the lips. The whole world might have turned upside and down (Mrs. D 40-41). Clarissa loved Sally Seton with the same intensity and passion as a man loved a woman. Her girlish friendship was for she had almost homo-sexual. Often she would stand in her bedroom at the top of the house and say to herself, Virginia spoke about Sally with Marie Antoinette since her other Julia Stephen had close association Marie Antoinette. Sally Seton always said she had French blood in her veins; an ancestor had been with Marie Antoinette. “She (Sally) is beneath this roof...she is beneath this roof” (38-39). Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway was a lesbian, so she doubted that Elizabeth had a lesbian relationship with Doris Kilman in this novel.

Lytton Strachey (1879–1932) was a historian, essayist, and biographer a close friend of Virginia Woolf and central figure in the Bloomsbury. In 1918, Lytton Strachey achieved overnight success with
the publication of a collection of satirical, biographical essays called *Eminent Victorians*. In a letter to Virginia Woolf about this novel, *The Voyage Out* Lytton Strachey said, “the handling of the detail always seemed to me divine,” at the end, “I felt cut short by the death of Rachel.” Clive Bell twice proposed his love to Vanessa, she rejected it. Virginia Woolf did the same with Leonard and finally married him. In the same way, “Lytton Strachey who once, proposed marriage to Virginia but she refused his proposal” (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” viii), because she was cautious and serious about love and really desired deep, genuine, lashing relationship. Virginia Woolf brought the same incident in *The Voyage Out* through the character of Mr. William Pepper (19) and she brought in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Peter Walsh proposed his love to Mrs. Dalloway but she rejected it and married Richard Dalloway.

Virginia Woolf wanted to share her philosophy and ideals with her love partners like Lytton, and Clive Bell. In a letter to Lytton in 1922, she admitted: “Of course you put your infallible finger upon the spot—romanticism.” Virginia Woolf continued her friendship with Sir Lytton Strachey till her death. “If a writer would enter the heart of an event, or assimilate the full value of an experience, he must respond to it with the whole of his mind. But to get a complete hold of the human mind is not an ordinary feat; for it is an “odd thing...so capricious, faithless, and
infinitely shying at shadows” (Woolf ed. *Writer’s 29*). Polygamy, Androgamy, Homosexual, Lesbian, and Heterosexual – all prevailed in the English society. So Virginia depicted all the above said relations in her major novels.

Virginia Woolf
- Lytton Strachey (Proposed)
- Leonard Woolf (Married)

Rachel Vinrace
- Richard Dalloway (he loved)
- Terence Hewet (both loved each other)

Clarissa Dalloway
- Peter Walsh (Proposed)
- Richard Dalloway (Married)

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries men could marry any woman; in the same way women could marry any man. From this, readers come to know how the people followed the androgamy and polygamy customs. So, Virginia Woolf brought her characters throughout her novels. Now-a-days, abroad, people in particular most of girls follow the Indian traditional marriage. If girls wish to live with one man throughout their life, it is admissible. For example at present the ruling Queen Elizabeth II is living with her husband Duke of Edinborough from the beginning till today. Whereas Future Prince Charles divorced Diana and married a lady called Camilla and as the statement goes like this: “Your children and my children are playing with our children.” For
example Sir Leslie Stephen’s family consisted of three marriages. ‘Androgamy’ means “custom of having more than one husband at the same time.” ‘Polygamy’ means “custom of having more than one wife at the same time.” The term ‘androgyne’ is a derivation of two Greek words andro and gyn meaning male and female respectively.

The story of the novel, Mrs. Dalloway is quite simple and could be told in a few words. Like Virginia Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway, rejected the proposal of Peter Walsh who lived in the town of Burton. The rejection was because Peter was too possessive and not allowed to live independently, whereas Richard gave her the full freedom – the spiritual privacy that attic room which craved for. Richard loved her and married her. Mrs. Dalloway had the capacity to enjoy the life which was a significant aspect of a character. She found beauty in everything in the world. The love of Peter Walsh was a part and parcel of her life. Virginia Woolf’s novel Mrs. Dalloway (1925), presented a day mid June (1923) in the life of Clarissa Dalloway an upper class English middle aged woman over fifty. She was the central figure in the novel, wife of Richard Dalloway, who was a conservative member of parliament. Mr. Richard loved his daughter Elizabeth immensely and said, “If he’d had a boy he’d have said, Work. But he had his Elizabeth: he adored his Elizabeth” (Mrs. D 123). Elizabeth was ‘Daddy’s girl’, she had been
influenced by her mother more than she realized. And it is she who will carry on the tradition of sorority and compassion handed down from mother to daughter (Henke, “Mrs. Dalloway: the Communion of Saints” 138).

Leonard Woolf proposed Virginia many times. He said as follows:

On December 4, I went into residence and from that moment began to see Virginia continually. We often lunched or dined together, we went together to Gordon Square to see Vanessa or have a meal there, we walked in the country, and we went to the theatre or to the Russian Ballet (Woolf, Beginning 52).

The novelist Virginia Woolf and Leonard Woolf talked about their engagement. Virginia Stephen married the writer Leonard Woolf in 1912. Despite his low material status (Virginia referring to Leonard during their engagement as a “penniless Jew”) the couple shared a close bond. Indeed, in 1937, Woolf wrote in her diary: “Love-making – after twenty-five years can’t bear to be separate...you see it is enormous pleasure being wanted: a wife. And our marriage so completed.” After their marriage both Leonard and Virginia Woolf sailed on a boat and discussed their future. Leonard Woolf asked Virginia about their marriage, and said that

I wired to Virginia asking whether I could see her next day. Next day I went up to London and asked her to marry me. She said she
did not know and must have time – indefinite time – to see more of me before she could make up her mind (53).

Leonard Woolf remembered the past and said that,
On May 29 I had lunch with Virginia in her room and we sat talking afterwards, when suddenly Virginia told me that she loved me and would marry me. It was a wonderful summer afternoon and we felt that we must get away from London for a time. We took the train to Maidenhead and I hired a boat and rowed up the river to Marlow and then we came back and dined at the riverside restaurant in Maidenhead.

Virginia and I were married on Saturday, August 10, 1912, at St. Pancras Register Officer in a room which, in those days, looked down into a cemetery (69).

But in *The Voyage Out*, Virginia made her heroin Rachel to die in the middle of her age twenty-four.

Virginia echoed the same incident on Terence Hewet. The biographical reference between Clive Bell and Terence Hewet are numerous and exact. First, simply in terms of appearance, photographs show Clive Bell as overweight and blond. Virgina introduced Terence Hewet as being clean shaven with a ‘complexion rosy,’ and then described
him as the young man who was inclined to be stout (Moore 84). Rachel and Terence discussed their engagement like Virginia Woolf and Leonard Woolf. Terence Hewet wrote a letter to Helen, inviting Rachel and Helen for the magnificent place, Terence arranged for a picnic. In that letter Hewet said, it would give me a great pleasure if you and Miss. Vinrace would concern to be of the party. Terence and Rachel went for a walk. Helen told to St. John Hirst about Terence that Terence would be a ‘great man.’ “You’ll be a great man, I’m certain” (VO 209). Rachel appreciated the Helen’s statement. Terence and Rachel discussed what their lives would be like as married couple. Terence was writing a book titled ‘Silence.’ He knew it would not be the same story after they got married. Terence was serious about his writing a novel and had ideas about the novel, author which reflected Virginia Woolf’s own ideas about novel:

All you read a novel for is to see what sort of person the writer is, and, if you know him, which of his friends he’s put in. As for the novel itself, the whole conception, the way one’s seen the thing, felt about it, made it stand in relation to other things, felt about it, made it stand in relation to other things, not one in a million cares for that. And yet I sometimes wonder whether there’s anything else in the whole world worth doing (220-221).
Though he was a male writer who has expressed such an idea about writing it was fairly certain Mrs. Woolf must have felt in a similar vein, despite Terence here being a male, presenting his androgynous view.

Virginia used to portray her personal opinions on her characters in her novels. Virginia Woolf visited almost all the European countries along with her family members and friends. So she had close contact with the people, habits, customs, and society and so on. She brought the same incidents through the characters in her major novels. Leonard Woolf (husband of Virginia) went to Colombo (India) to take up a post in the civil service in 1904, when he was a young man. Leonard said that the climate of India gave a quite different colour to the face of Tamil. My life in Ceylon in Jaffna, Kandy and Hambantota suddenly vanished into unreality (Woolf, *Beginning* 16). After their marriage (1912), they came up to Ceylon. In her novel, *The Voyage Out* she influenced her past thought through the character of Mr. Pepper. He said that, with his arms encircling his knees, he looked like the image of Budha. Buddhism was born in India. When Leonard went for lunch he met a peculiar man by name Riginald Farrer. “I was much amused to meet him again in such very different circumstances. For the last time I had seen him when he appeared as an English Buddhist in Kandy” (73). Mr. Pepper was not married for the sufficient reason that he had never met a woman who
commanded his respect. Condemned to pass the susceptible years of youth in a railway station in Bombay, he had seen only coloured women, military women, official women and his ideal were a woman who could read Greek. Virginia Woolf’s own nephew, Julian Bell, made a trip to China in 1935. While he was there, Virginia was in constant correspondence with him. So Virginia describes China in *The Voyage Out*.

Leonard Woolf went to India to work in civil service post. Both of them visited up of Jaffna after their marriage. His life in India was depicted by Virginia Woolf in *Mrs. Dalloway* – a character by name Peter Walsh who occupied an important place in this novel. He was a middle aged man of over fifty and returned from India after an absence of five years; after five years. A whole French family could live on what an English cook throws always. She liked any old timer lady of India felt strongly against coffee which the English consume in good quantities. When Clarissa heard that, Peter Walsh had impulsively married a woman going on a boat towards India which was not liked by Clarissa. Peter Walsh himself mentioned that he was in love with a girl in India by name Daisy. Peter Walsh was speaking dryly to Clarissa Dalloway; in love with a girl in India. In a huff, feeling his rejection by Clarissa going in the boat towards India, he fell for a lady in the ship and married her. He had
married a woman when he met on the boat going to India. In a similar way after her death, he had just fallen into a second affair, with wife of an Indian Army Major, Daisy a young woman of twenty-four with two children. In the novel, *To the Lighthouse*, Virginia brought back the Indian memory once again. Jasper (adopted son) presented an Opal necklace to Rose. The gold necklace, “which uncle James had brought her from India” (109-110).

Sir James Stephen insisted his religious faith upon others. He was a member of the Claphan Sect., a middle class, hard working but belonged to prosperous group. He remained within the “Anglican church.” The Claphan became known for their Evangelism. Leslie did not accept his father’s religious policy. Sir Leslie Stephen followed the policy of “Broad church,” middle of the road, Anglican variety. He believed that, whatever pleasure and satisfactions God may have intended for him (Love, *Sources* 28). Although the Stephen’s children were not baptized, they had ‘sponsors,’ of whom James Russell Lowell, the poet and critic and American Minister in London 1880-1885 was Virginia’s honorary god father (Letter to James Russell Lowell from Sir Leslie Stephen and Virginia Stephen on 20.8.1888). Julia and Sir Leslie Stephen educated their children in the field of religion. Sir Leslie Stephen was a Puritan: Virginia Woolf too followed the Puritanism. It was a tribute for Virginia
Woolf, since she was aware of other divisions of Christianity. It is obviously shown that Virginia Woolf had religious toleration. So, *The Voyage Out* described about religion as,

> The transition from Catholic to Protestant worship had been bridged by a time of disuse, when there were no services, and the place was used for storing jars of oil, liquor, and deck-chairs; the hotel flourishing, some religious body had taken place in hand, and it was now fitted out with a number of glazed yellow benches, claret-coloured footstools; it had a small pulpit, and a brass eagle carrying the Bible on its back (230).

In the view of Sir Leslie Stephen’s powerful and aesthetic personality, one was inclined to agree with Michael Holroyd that the Stephen’s children did suffer “grievously under the meanness and dogmatic Puritanism of his household” (Holroyd 401). In contrary, Virginia Woolf gave full freedom to her character Rachel to follow Christianity in this novel. Here was an example, Rachel attended a mass in Santa Marina and participated in the choir. In many occasions, Virginia spoke of “Roman Catholicism” in the novel, *The Voyage Out*.

The researcher feels that all Virginia Woolf’s dislike for religion was poured into the mould of Doris Kilman also with pity. Virginia was a
caricature a satire portrait of a religious style. In *Mrs. Dalloway* Virginia was criticized through Miss. Doris Kilman of all too common religious type: to which, she believed, not only frustrated women like Doris Kilman belonged, but also a good number of clergy men. Mrs. Dalloway laughed at Doris Kilman for her physical appearance. When Doris Kilman walked down in Victoria Street the laugh of Mrs. Dalloway gave her much pain. She prayed to God. She could not afford to buy pretty clothes (Mrs. D 138). Doris Kilman thought that it was a wonderful opportunity, to get hold of Elizabeth’s soul (her face body were so beautiful) and brought it to God. Miss. Kilman did not want Elizabeth to love parties. “I never go to parties,” said Miss. Kilman. Just to keep Elizabeth from going (142). She wanted to capture her for God and kept her with her in the cage, she had constructed. Being an agnostic like her father Virginia Woolf was not concerned with religious reforms. In the words of Mr. Richard, Elizabeth, his own daughter and Doris Kilman were inseparable; always sitting in a stuffy bedroom with prayer book and went to communion. Her, “Life was tissue of vanity deceit. Yet Doris Kilman had been overcome” (138)

Virginia expressed her own religious view in *The Voyage Out* that the Sunday for the English man was no more than “the mute block ghost or penitent spirit of the busy weak day” (VO 229). Church-going for the English men was a ritual without any moral or spiritual significance. One
day’s worship of God against six days worship Mammon meant only the wearing of the best clothes so that no lady could sit-down without bending a clean starched petticoat, and no gentleman could breathe without a sudden crackle from a stiff shirt-front (230). Through Doris Kilman, Virginia Woolf had poured all her indignation at corrupt religiosity and possessive love. Doris symbolized all that was worst in religion, the evils of religious fanaticism, intolerance and bigotry.

Virginia Woolf autobiographically brings Rachel in *The Voyage Out*. Richard suddenly states in a jocular (humour) tone of voice, “I’m sure Miss Vinrace, and now has secret leanings towards Catholicism” (52). Rachel attended the church at the hotel. As the congregation entered the chapel, the sound of harmonium spreads through the chapel as the rings of water spread from a fallen stone. Rachel and the Spanish maid attended the Sunday mass. Rachel became disillusioned with church as she realized that the people around her were pretending to feel. The chapel was the old chapel of monks.

The transition from Catholic to protestant worship had been bridged by a time of disuse, when there were no services, and the place was used for storing jars of oil, fitted out with a number of glazed yellow benches, claret-coloured footstools; it had small pulpit, and a brass eagle carrying the Bible on its back, while the
piety of different women had supplied ugly squares of carpet, and
long strips embroidery heavily wrought with monograms in gold
(230).

Rachel said, they believe in God she meant that the people in the crowd
believed in Him; for she remembered the crosses with bleeding plaster
figures that stood where foot-paths joined, and the inexplicable mystery of
a service in a Roman Catholic Church. Grice, the steward, said that “I’m
not exactly a protestant, and I’m not a Catholic, but I could almost pray
for the days of popper to come again-because of the fasts” (49).

Leonard Woolf said that Leslie, his brother Sir James Fitzjames
and two sisters whom I knew personally. Virginia wrote a letter to Thoby
on 14.5.1897. In which she informed him that,

I must tell you that our respected Aunt Miss. Stephen the Quaker
was the Principal at Cambridge, and Emily Caroline Stephen, who
was a nun (www.literaturepage.com).

Virginia Woolf depicted her aunt’s character on Mrs. Dalloway. When
she returned from the flower shop; Mrs. Dalloway felt as a ‘Nun’ returned
to her attic room. She felt

Like a Nun withdrawing, or a child exploring a tower. She went
upstairs, paused at the window, and came to the bathroom. There
was emptiness about the heart of life: an attic room (Mrs. D 34, 36).

She thought back to her old best friend Sally Seton, the Nun – like isolation of Clarissa’s attic room, emblematic of Virginia Woolf solitude. Clarissa was both Virgin and mother.

Virginia Woolf’s love of London stemmed from her traditional association with it, being born bred up in the great world metropolis. Her father Leslie Stephen had his residence in Bloomsbury Square, and she herself continued to reside in that genteel suburb. In her brilliant essay, “Street Haunting,” she describes the city of London as follows: how beautiful a London street is with its Islands of light, and its long groves of darkness...of a train in the valley. Dorothy Brewster in her small but interesting study: Virginia Woolf’s London (Allen and Unwin: 1959) brings this common love of London of these two great artists of the modern novel into proper focus with this remark:

But however one defines the special charm London held for each of these artists, they both, in James’s words, plucked from her streets ‘the ripe round fruit of perambulation,’ and heard the deep notes thrown out from ‘their vast vague murmur’ (Woolf, CR I 183).
Virginia Woolf was a Londoner born and bred and so London was seldom absent from her novels. Dorothy Brewster had analyzed with enough evidence. Mrs. Woolf’s use of London was the locale of almost all her novels. *The Voyage Out*, her first novel was partially concerned with London. Ridley and Helen Ambrose walked along the river, “Thames in London.” Terence and Rachel’s return to the hotel signals the anomalies of their coming marriage. For Terence now saw Rachel with the eyes of the Londoner, rather than through the romantic lens of the traveller playing primitive. “God, Rachel, you do read trash!” (VO 297).

Virginia described about London in *The Voyage Out* as follows:

There were the lights of the great theatres, the lights of the long streets, lights that indicated huge squares of domestic comfort, lights that hung high in air. No darkness would ever settle upon those lamps, as no darkness has settled upon them for hundreds of years. It seemed dreadful that the town should blaze for ever in the same spot; dreadful at least to people going away to adventure upon the sea, and beholding it as a circumscribed mound, eternally burnt, eternally scarred. From the deck of the ship the great city appeared a crouched and cowardly figure, a sedentary miser (12).

If one novel was more completely the London book than any other it was *The Years*, which came late in the series. All her last published writings,
except posthumously brought out, *Between the Acts* were concerned with life in London seen from different points of view. Therefore, London became the crowded universe of Virginia Woolf and in her novels. Life and in the busy city so far as a common weather individual it was Clarissa Dalloway, Katherine Hilbery were concerned, particularly the impressions he or she carried, was the theme. Virginia Woolf loved her country ‘London’ very much so she made Elizabeth to say that she too loved the country (London).

Virginia Woolf belonged to an educated and cultured family. She dedicated her life for literature. London was a collection of noises, colours, smells, and people and Clarissa could walk amidst them, could savor them, and yet not had to merge with them, even though Clarissa loved London life. Virginia Woolf mentioned almost all the important places in London for example Waterloo Trafalgar all the important streets, peaks, square in Westminster since she was a Londoner. While Clarissa walked in the morning she observed many things happened along the streets. This reflection revealed in an unobtrusive way the type of life in London soon after the war. Mrs. Woolf managed to give so much information about environment in which the fifty year old, well married and comfortably settled Clarissa Dalloway lived in London, not through the description from outside her personality, but through her own
reflections from within the consciousness. Septimus returned to London after the war with his young wife Italian Lucrezia and got a good lift in his office. Mrs. Dalloway purchased Mulberry flowers in a flower shop in London for her party.

The characters in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Clarissa Dalloway, Richard Dalloway, Peter Walsh, Septimus Warren Smith and Rezia Smith and others, walked the same main thorough fares that were the hub of London’s political economic and residential life were vividly described by the novelist. All familiar names (Corner, Bond Street, Harley Street and son on) even to those who had not visited the British metropolis so far could see it clearly. Mrs. Dalloway sliced like a knife though everything; at the same time was outside, looking on as mentioned in the novel itself. Richard Dalloway returned outer from his lunch at Lady Bruton’s, crossed the busy Piccadilly Square and found it difficult to cross the unceasing movement the vehicular traffic scenes from Streets of London were numerous in her writings. If the main theme in her writings was concerned with the consciousness of the character, then the partial axis was provided by the streets, parks and houses in London. Peter Walsh in *Mrs. Dalloway* newly arrived in London after the interval of five years stayed at the hotel in Bloomsbury. London seemed to be more important than the streaming
of impressions with the consciousness of individuals in the last novel published during her life time.

The autobiographical novelist loved and married Leonard Woolf. “I’ve got a confession to make; I’m going to marry Leonard Woolf. Who was aged thirty one, and spent seven years in London (A Letter to Violet Dickens on 4.6.1912). But before their issues Virginia Woolf passed away. In the same way, in To the Lighthouse Mrs. Ramsay wished that Minta Doyle would marry the young man Paul Rayley who was not so brilliant. Mrs. Ramsay found Paul and Minta in each other’s arms and kissing behind a rock. It meant they were engaged and married. For the first time that Paul had used the word “we” for Minta and himself. Mrs. Ramsay felt happy. She did a good job of matchmaking. But before Minta and Paul’s issues Minta passed away like Virginia Woolf. Virginia Woolf personally portrayed her half – Sister Stella Duckworth on Prue Ramsay in the novel To The Lighthouse. Virginia Woolf’s half – Sister Stella Duckworth married Jack Hills on 10th April 1897. In To the Lighthouse Prue a perfect angel with the others, at night especially, she took once breath away with her beauty. Prue Ramsay leaning on her father’s arm was given in marriage that May. What, people said, could have been more fitting? And, they added, how beautiful she looked! (LH 179) Stella Hills died in London on 19th July when she was expecting a
baby (A Letter by Virginia Woolf to Thoby dated Monday 27th September 1897). Likewise Prue Ramsay died that summer in some illness connected with childbirth, which was indeed a tragedy, people said. They said nobody deserved happiness more (180).

After Leonard Woolf and Virginia Woolf’s marriage within few months, Leonard said that,

I became more and more uneasy about one thing. Both of them wanted to have children, but the more I saw the dangerous effect of any strain or stress upon her, the more I began to doubt whether she would be able to stand the strain and stress of childbearing. I went and consulted Sir George Savage; he brushed my doubts aside (Woolf, Beginning 82).

Doctor advised Leonard, not to have a child, because Virginia Woolf was going mad. Virginia Woolf remembered the same situation in the characters of Septimus and Rezia in Mrs. Dalloway. When the young Rezia approached the doctor (Holmes) to have a male child, the doctor replied: (Septimus was going mad). But, Rezia said, she must have children. They had been married five years she must have a son like Septimus she said

...one cannot bring children into world like this. One cannot perpetuate suffering, or increase the breed of these lustful animals,
who have no lasting emotions, but only whims and vanities, eddying them now this way, now that (Mrs. D 97).

One could have felt as though this statement was coming from Mrs. Woolf herself. Only Virginia had put this feeling and conviction through a man, in spite of her professed feminine view. Septimus Warren Smith used to read Shakespeare again and again. In the view of Septimus how Shakespeare loathed humanity — “the putting on of clothes, the getting of children, the sordidly of the mouth and belly.” Septimus refused to have children, though they had now been married for five years and Rezia wanted a son. In the closed circuit represented by this diagram:

The following three-fold problem leads to a state of nihilistic despair, and this leads back into, and reinforces, the second stage of the problem, the conviction that the world is really meaningless and hostile (Poole, *unknown* 188).

Nihilism (from the Latin nothing) is the philosophical doctrine suggesting the negation of one or more meaningful aspects of life. Most commonly, nihilism is presented in the form of existential nihilism which
argues that life is without objective meaning, purpose, or intrinsic value. For more details refer this (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/nihilism).

In *The Voyage Out* Woolf brought out the beauty of Julia Stephen on Helen Ambrose, in the following

Tall, large-eyed, draped in purple shawls, Mrs. Ambrose was romantic and beautiful; not perhaps sympathetic, for her eyes looked straight and considered what they saw her face was much warmer than a Greek face; on the other hand it was much bolder than the face of the usual pretty Englishwoman (VO 8).

Again, Virginia Woolf portrayed Julia Stephen on Helen Ambrose as: “Helen lifting her eyes in distress to ‘the arches of Waterloo Edge and the carts moving across them, like the line of animals in a shooting gallery.’” Virginia Woolf compared her mother’s beauty in Mrs. Dalloway. Though Mrs. Dalloway was over fifty, she had not lost the capacity to enjoy the life. She enjoyed the beauty of morning and still charming having “A touch of the bird about her, of the jay, blue, green, light, vivacious” (Mrs. D 8).

Hugh Whitbread assured that, “she might be a girl of eighteen” (10). She had a divine vitality which she loved. “To dance, to ride, she had adored all that” (11). Virginia idolized her mother Julia represented
for her everything that was beautiful, life-giving, spontaneous, intuitive, loving and natural. She watched her father impose upon her mother again and again, smiting mercilessly down at her with his ‘beak of brass,’ the arid scimitar of the male. Like Julia, Mrs. Ramsay was a woman of great physical charms. There were references to her beauty throughout the novel. She was also paid compliments for her physical charms, as for example, “the happiest Helen for our times.” All her guests admired her beauty and even women were attracted towards her. In the same way Prue regarded her mother to be the most beautiful woman in the world. There was none to compete with her, so incomparable she was. She felt proud of her when she saw her descending down the stairs. She felt that all worlds should take a look at her and admire her, she reflected. Lily Briscoe admired Mrs. Ramsay’s beauty as follows: Fifty pairs of eyes were not enough to get round that one woman with, she thought (LH 266).

There was no doubt that Julia, herself a famous pre-Raphaelite beauty, was the model for the generous, hospitable and kind-hearted Virginia portrayed the same on Mrs. Ramsay (whose Christian name is never divulged) (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” xiii). Virginia’s older sister Vanessa Bell at once acknowledged this, in a letter dated 11 may 1927, in which she wrote:
you have given a portrait of mother which was more like her to me than anything. I could ever have conceived of as possible. It was almost painful to have her so raised from the dead. You have made one feel the extraordinary beauty of her character.... It was like meeting her again with oneself grown up and on equal terms.

Professor Blackstone said there was no more living character in fiction than Mrs. Ramsay. Mrs. Ramsay’s heart flowed with the milk of human kindness and she was considerate to the poor and the unfortunate. In her consideration for the poor boy of the lighthouse – keeper she established complete sense of kinship between him and her son James. She had the greatest consideration even for small children.

Julia Stephen played a sincere role to his husband as a good wife whenever he approached her she consoled him. She played a good mother and a teacher towards her children. The whole family responsibilities fell on Julia’s shoulder till her death. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Virginia depicted Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway as a good mother to Elizabeth for she controlled her daughter’s wrong doing. Mrs. Dalloway introduced proudly Elizabeth to Peter Walsh: ‘Here is my Elizabeth,’ said Clarissa, emotionally, historically, perhaps (Mrs. D 53). In the same way, Mrs. Ramsay was kind to her eight children and sincere to her husband. She was like the Hindu Ideal of a mother in the family. Mrs. Ramsay felt that her children
should not grow, they should eternally be children with all their mischief and she would be delighted to be always holding up a child in her arms: “Why she asked, pressing her chin on James’s head, should they grow up so fast? Why should they go to school? She would have liked always to have had a baby” (LH 80) from this the readers could understand how the mothers were affectionate to their children.

Mrs. Ramsay was middle-aged lady and a mother of eight children. In the same way Julia was a kind mother to eight children and a sincere wife to her husband. Leslie had little feeling for the visual arts, but Julia came from a family with many artistic connections, had modeled for Burne – Jones, and had received proposals of marriage from Holman Hunt and sculptor Thomas Woolner; like Mrs. Ramsay, she watched with a semi-professional interests as Sunday painters set their easels for views of the harbour and the bay. An informal artists club was founded in 1888 and no doubt the fictitious and trend-setting Mr. Paunceforte (who worried Lily by seeing everything as ‘pale, elegant, semi-transparent’) would have been an associate member (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” xvi).

Virginia unresolved fear about her mother’s love is also an important biographical referent in the novel In Moments of Being. Woolf
repeatedly discussed her mother’s preference for male children in the family. For the others, she was a more general and distant presence: all her devotion was given to George Duckworth who was like his father; and her care was for Gerald Duckworth who was very delicate. She was hard on Stella Duckworth because she felt Stella, “part of herself” (Moore 85). For Woolf had never exercised her obsessive love-hate feelings for her mother. Nor had she ever truly grieved for her. Throughout her life she tried to reincarnate her in Vanessa, in Violet Dickinson, Vita-Sackville-West – even her doctor Octavia Wilberforce. But, Vanessa had actually assumed the maternal duties after Julia Stephen’s death. Woolf’s affection for her never disappeared. Once in a letter to Vanessa, Virginia cried out, “Why did you bring me into this world?”(82). Virginia was always uncertain about her mother’s affection, this was echoed in the earliest version of *The Voyage Out* this fear was apparent in Virginia Woolf’s fictional depiction of the absent Theresa (84). Theresa was ill for eight years (84).

In the earliest extent version, Virginia Woolf emphasized Rachel’s memory of her mother, like Virginia for it was her mother’s presence which hovers over the voyage (Earliest extant version of *The Voyage Out*: p.15, Berks Collection, New York Public Library) and seemed to be the mysterious force which Rachel would decipher as she journeyed out into
maturity and simultaneously attempts an inner voyage home. Rachel was an only child and had spent a curious life, like some restless amphibious creature. Rachel’s mother, a great voluptuous woman, the daughter of a parson in the North Country, had wished of course to breed sons, whom she figured as bold defenders and besiegers, rough stalwart men, who were to express for her by their excessive vigour and scorn of feminity her own spite against the restrictions of her sex (Moore 84-85), still Mrs. Theresa Vinrace, who was the sister of Ridley Ambrose. She was too generous a nature to stint her affections voluntarily; and in time she had as passionate a feeling for her daughter, but it was more jealous, more easily on the defensive, as any that she might have had for her sons. But she died; and left as legacy to her child a number of speculations which as her mother would never answer them, might be considered with the utmost of candour from very different points of view.

Julia Duckworth’s daughter, Stella Duckworth was always present in Leslie Stephen’s family. Julia couldn’t be away from her daughter Stella. (Virginia’s parents had each been married previously and been widowed). Virginia portrayed on Helen’s alienation of her children which shows the motherly affection towards her children. When Helen received the news of her children’s return, she felt very happy. “The children are well,” Helen exclaimed, in the novel (VO 86). Virginia Woolf was
thirteen, at the time of Julia Stephen’s death, have wiped Virginia Woolf’s young world of grace, loveliness, fineness, and warmth (Sharma 18). From then onwards she had to depend on her dominating father, or on her own resources. Virginia Woolf said that her father was mainly responsible for the early death of Julia Stephen and by the eleven years of her father’s widowhood affected Virginia deeply (20). After her parent’s death, Virginia Woolf was brought up by her half-sister Stella and Vanessa. Virginia Woolf depicted her personal influence on her heroine, Rachel, in the same way after the death of her mother (Theresa). Rachel came under the guidance of maiden and her aunt Helen, when she was eleven. Virginia Woolf loved her mother so much after Julia’s death; her life was an offering to her parents, especially to her mother, Virginia Woolf brought the same in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Clarissa longed to bring both parents back from the death. Her unique allusion to her dead mother heightens the symbolic importance of the memory. After the loss of her mother, Clarissa felt it incumbent (present) on her to recreate the beatific (innocent) communion shattered by Mrs. Parris death. Mrs. Dalloway offered a scathing indictment of the British class system and a strong critique of patriarchy (Henke, “*Mrs. Dalloway*: the Communion of Saints” 125-126).
According to Leonard Woolf,

Vanessa was, I think, usually more beautiful than Virginia. Like Virginia and Vanessa, Lily Briscoe was also a beautiful woman. She had a puckered face with Chinese eyes. She wore good shoes. Mrs. Ramsay said cheerfully, “Ah, but what beautiful boots you wear!” (LH 207-208).

“Lily’s eyes, an august shape, the shape of a dome” – this was what the novelist said about her physical features. Francis Spalding’s excellent biography, recorded the liberated life at 46 Gordon Square, Bloomsbury. Virginia portrayed a character in To the Lighthouse by name Lily Briscoe as a painter like Vanessa. Through out the novel, the novelist pictures out the possibility of marriage between Lily Briscoe and William Bankes, but it does not actually take place.

Vanessa Bell (1879-1961) was an artist and best known as the sister of Virginia Woolf. She was a talented artist in her own right (Virginia Woolf’s Letters 1-7). Though, they were educated at home, both were encouraged to develop their individual talents. Vanessa started drawing lessons, and in 1899 she entered into the Royal Academy. Following her mother’s death, Vanessa took on the role of house keeper for the family. Her father was a dominating character due to which Vanessa struggled to balance the domestic role to develop her artistic
interests. Her father died, so she was liberated from the responsibilities. In the painting field like Vanessa, Lily Briscoe was a middle aged (thirty five years old) painter, who was exclusively and sincerely dedicated to art like Vanessa. She had been painting her picture for the last ten years. Lily Briscoe thought that marriage and love would be a hindrance to her object as an artist.

Virginia portrays a character – Lily Briscoe as herself. She did this in the figure of Lily, who to some extent must reflect her own character and whose vision at the end of the book embraced both Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay. After the death of Virginia’s mother her main function in the Stephen’s household was to pacify the violent self-distress and self disappointment of Sir Leslie Stephen. He was a self pitying personality who depended on his wife throughout his life. In *The Voyage Out*, Mr. William Pepper said “A man without wife is painful.” The same family incidents occurred in *To the Lighthouse*. Mrs. Ramsay was one of those characters of Virginia Woolf who could create harmony between people and break down their isolation. Mrs. Ramsay was an example of the proverb: “An action of love can destroy a Galaxy of sins.” She was a woman who by the exercise of love for people in general, endeavours to make life happy and comfortable for them; for the poor by her exercise of philanthropy, for the children by fostering their talents, for her husband by
sympathy and reassurance. “He (Mr. Ramsey) wanted sympathy. He was a failure and he said that Mrs. Ramsay flashed here needles” (LH 52). The single observation by Lily Briscoe of Mrs. Ramsay sorting out, arranging, directing her dinner table of fractious male children in the Lighthouse. She was independent by nature and she played the role of an onlooker. Mr. Tanslay whispered in her ear that, “Women cannot paint, women cannot write...” (67). The image of Mr. Ramsay in Lily Briscoe’s mind was like a scrubbed kitchen table, lodged at the movement in the fork of a pear tree (33). Like Virginia after Mrs. Ramsay’s death Lily Briscoe was in charge of the whole household duty. Virginia adored her mother, who was the center of the family, its soother and refresher. Lily Briscoe, at the end of *To the Lighthouse*, cried out to the departed spirit of Mrs. Ramsay, gave the kind of level at which the mother Julia was missed after she died.

William Bankes was undoubtedly attracted towards Lily Briscoe because he appreciated her artistic activity. He liked her and could talk openly to her and came under the spell of her pair of eyes. Mrs. Ramsay admired Lily’s beauty and said: she said, thinking that Lily’s charm was her Chinese eyes, aslant in her white, puckered little face (37). She too had some kind of love for him “then when she turned to William Bankes, smiling it was, as if the ship had turned and the sun had struck its sails
again. Her resolved to live again was done through the pitying William Bankes.” Like Vanessa and Virginia, she did not long for marriage. But till the end she never married. Lily Briscoe’s idea of Professor Ramsay’s work was rather ironical:

He had made a definite contribution to philosophy in one little book when he was only five and twenty; what came after was more or less amplification, repetition (34).

Through the voice of Lily Briscoe, a painter in *To the Lighthouse*, Virginia Woolf brings out the male egotism: James said that “He (Ramsay) is intolerably egotistical. Worst of all he is a tyrant” (256). Lily Briscoe watched the marital drama of the Ramsay’s, felt the tug of Mr. Ramsay’s and Tansley’s male egotism and their need for help and sympathy, and struggled against Tansley’s mocking verdict that “women could not do anything in the field of Literature” (67). Mr. Ramsay was angry or harsh towards his children after the death of Mrs. Ramsay. The children shouted which was not liked by Mr. Ramsay. Cam was not ready and James was not ready and Nancy had forgotten to order the sandwiches and Mr. Ramsay had lost his temper and banged out of the room.

What’s the use of going now? ‘He had stormed.’ Sitting in the boat he bowed, he crouched himself, acting instantly his part – the part of a desolate man, widowed, bereft; and so called up before him in
hosts people sympathizing with him; staged for himself as he sat in the boat, a little drama; which required of him decrepitude and exhaustion (224-225).

The passage at the end of this novel gives the impression of the man exactly at Virginia had experienced it in 1903-1904 “when Virginia’s father lay dying at Hyde Park Gate so that the mournful words were heard quite clearly by the children.” In the same way Virginia maid cam, the little girl to feel and said that cam half started on her seat. “It shocked her it outraged her.” “But I beneath a rougher sea was whelmed in deeper gulfs than he” (Mr. Ramsay murmured) (225). Woolf’s mournful words were heard quite clearly by them all.

Virginia and others believed that Sir Leslie was more narrow and rigid in bringing up his own children, then his father had been with him (Love, Sources 27) He was a tryant. According to Laura Marcus that Leslie Stephen believed that a father’s duty was to control his children’s lives, by planning their future and dominating their present, with little regard for their talents, predilections, and interests. Latin was Leslie’s was most favourite subject and he studied it (33). But his son Thoby, who liked mathematics, should definitely not study that subject at Cambridge; but Leslie compelled Thoby to study some other subjects. Like that Virginia, who had an almost endlessly creative imagination and who had
problems with empirical thought should write history, whereas she wanted to become a famous writer. Thus Leslie compelled his wishes upon the children. He was occasionally tyrannical, short-tempered, and unpredictable grew impatient with guests and groaned with boredom at the dinner table, precise and hated the female habit of exaggeration; he longed for praise and admiration. Leslie was a deaf man, and melancholic with excessive emotionalism. Virginia influenced the same quality on Mr. Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse*.

Virginia Woolf remembered her father’s harsh treatment towards her mother Julia Stephen. Once Leslie Stephen reached Julia’s death bed, she put out her hand to him. He rejected it and hurried on. The scene was imprinted on Virginia’s memory forever. “But in her mind’s eye, she could still see the tyrannical old Lear who had run her mother into an early grave” (Poole, *unknown* 17). It was especially so in case of Virginia Woolf who could never forgive her father for being rude to her mother (Pippett, *Moth* 26). Virginia was writing the novel *The Voyage Out*, she thought of her father Leslie’s attitude towards the family members. She made Helen as the mouthpiece of Virginia Woolf. When Theresa with Willoughby – he was harsh towards his wife “Theresa was perhaps one woman Helen called friend” (VO 19). When Theresa was alive Willoughby was harsh towards his wife. Helen wondered, “Why Theresa
had married Willoughby?” Willoughby was also a dominating character and harsh towards his wife. “Helen suspected him of nameless atrocities with regard to his wife, as indeed she had always suspected him of bullying his wife” (19). Virginia characterized Mr. Ramsay as follows. He was a ruthless realist, a hard intellectualist, egoist and a tyrant. The children, particularly James complained that his father was a tyrant (LH 35). Leslie wanted “a great deal on one subject,” and wanted it in “regular order.” Latin was his favourite subject because he thought it more boyish than other subjects. Likewise, Mr. Ramsay knew that he himself was not of the first rank. His philosophic studies saw a large scrubbed kitchen table said Lily Briscoe. This was because Andrew Ramsay had thus described Mr. Ramsay’s work to her: his books Andrew had told Lily were about subject and object and the nature of reality, and he had tried to explain this to Lily (33). Mr. Ramsay had written a number of books some of which were quite popular. His chief vocation was reading, writing and philosophy, more than any other subject was his chief object of pursuit.

Sir Leslie Stephen was the distinguished Victorian. He had been portrayed by his own daughter. Virginia Woolf influenced the same on the character of Mr. Ridley Ambrose, who was a scholar in The Voyage Out. Virginia depicted her father’s view on Mr. Ridley as conservative. Sir
Leslie Stephen was a short-tempered personality, in the same way Mr. Ridley Ambrose was also a short-tempered man, in this novel. For example Helen could not bear the alienation of their children (girl, ten years and boy, six years old), so she started weeping on the banks of the Thames River holding the railings, before boarding on the ship. Virginia Woolf depicted him in this novel as follows:

Mr. Ambrose attempted consolation; he patted her shoulder; but she showed no signs of admitting him and feeling it awkward to stand beside a grief that was greater than his, he crossed his arms behind him and took a turn along the pavement (VO 4).

Leslie Stephen’s household contained the children of three marriages. They had seven servants for the whole family. One among them was Sophie (The Letters of Virginia Woolf 1-7). Another servant, The Swiss maid Pauline at Hyde Park Gate (Letter Number 4 to Thoby Stephen) Adrian, Virginia, Mayanard Keynes and Duncan Grant took a large four storied house in Brunswick Square. Virginia occupied the third floor. They had a wonderful old family cook inherited from the nineteenth century, Sophie. The letter from Sophie to Virginia, written in 1936, showed in an interesting way the curious psychology of these devoted female servants to the families for whom they worked.
Virginia, she portrayed the same servants in her novels. Like Virginia, the central character Rachel had servants and she quoted thus about her servants:

The way servants treat flowers!” She drew a green vase with a crinkled lip towards her, and began pulling out the tight little chrysanthemums which she laid on the table-cloth, arranging them fastidiously side-by-side (VO 9)

Mrs. Ambrose said, “I have had servants,” concentrating her gaze.

At this moment I have a nurse. She’s a good woman as they go, but she’s determined to make my children pray. So far, owing to great care, on my part, they think of God as a kind of walrus; but now that my back’s turned – Ridley, she demanded, swinging round upon her husband, “what shall we do if we do find them saying the Lord’s Prayer when we get home gain? (21).

Rachel had another servant by name Mrs. Chailey. Helen Ambrose and Rachel were given equal importance in this novel as a comparison to her niece Angelica in her own internal voyage.

Virginia remembered her servants in her novels. Mrs. Dalloway alone went to the flower shop for the purchase of flowers. As the maid servant Lucy was very busy with the arrangements of a party. When Mrs.
Dalloway returned from the flower shop she saw the hall of the house was cool as a vault.

Mrs. Dalloway raised her hand to her eyes, and, as the maid shut the door to, she heard the swish of Lucy’s skirts, she felt like a nun who has left the world and felt fold round her the familiar veils and response to old devotions (Mrs. D 34).

Lucy informed her that Richard would lunch out that day with Lady Burton. Mrs. Dalloway supervised the party arrangements and said “she knew that all her servants liked her, loved and wanted to be helpful” (44). This was so because she herself was gentle, generous and large-hearted, always ready extend a helping hand to those in trouble like Virginia how she helped Sophie by sending cheque – which incident was brought by Virginia on her novel *Mrs. Dalloway.*

Mrs. Virginia Woolf tried to live up to the standards of her own expectations and followed her own practice in her works. She had provided in her novels the very sensation of living, the experience of life as it was lived. In *To the Lighthouse*, Virginia introduced some servants for Mrs. Ramsay. The books in the library got mildewed (musty). The wall papers in the summer-house came loose from the walls. A cup in the kitchen occasionally trembled and broken into pieces by Mrs. Mc Nab, who periodically visited the house for cleaning and repairing it. Her gaze
fell on a warm clock in a closet and she wished that it belonged to her. The war eventually ended and Mrs. Mc. Nab (Scottish name) received a telegram asking her to put the house in order. She, with the help of two other cleaning women namely Mildred and Mrs. Bast, worked hard for several days, and on arrival of the Ramsay, after a lapse of ten years, the cottage was in order once again. Jasper was a servant Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay (VO 189, 191). The house contained rooms for visitors, who could come and stay with them. The doors were closed at night and windows were to be kept open, but none else kept the windows of her room open except Marie, the Swiss maid. This led Mrs. Ramsay to think over maid’s father, to save whom from death nothing could be done. The words of the maid,

“there was no hope, no hope” ring through Mrs. Ramsay’s ears.

Marie, the Swiss girl regarded the mountains as beautiful, “so beautiful.” She spoke of this weeping as her father was suffering from ailments (39).

In the same novel she has pictured out the character Septimus Warren Smith who was a poet. He is a young man, aged about thirty, pale-faced wearing shabby overcoat came from Italy, who did his job as a clerk. He fell in love with Miss. Isabel Pole lecturing in the waterloo road about “Shakespeare.” In order to escape his loneliness, he married the
beautiful Lucrezia alias Rezia, the daughter of a hat-maker of Milan (Italy). The anxiety and agonizing loneliness of life in a big city are all brought out by novels like *Mrs. Dalloway*. Into the veins of Mrs. Ramsay flowed the blood of an Italian family. She was full of wit and always cheerful and gain. Another character Doris Kilman was the history tutor for Elizabeth who was a German (Mrs. D 132-135)

Clive Bell said that, the Stephen family at that time was on the rise, it was upwardly mobile moving from lower middle to upper middle class (Love, *Sources* 26). They had a large number of children who required penny for feeding and educating them properly, since he belonged to middle class-family. Virginia Woolf depicted her father on Mr. Ramsay. He wrote books on philosophy, but his writings could not be a source of great income to him. Virginia Woolf’s range, no doubt, was limited in various other ways also. For example, she could paint only upper middle class life, and only certain types of characters. Virginia Woolf, like all other novelists could communicate the experiences of her own influences to a limited number of human types. For central characters, she limited herself to one large social class – those who had large income or earn salaries. Her chief characters were all drawn from the upper – middle class. She herself belonged to this class and so had intimate, first hand knowledge of it. Virginia’s work was criticized for epitomizing the
narrow world of the upper middle class English intelligentsia people with
delicate, but ultimately trivial, self-entered, and overly introspective
individuals. For example, Mrs. Dalloway centered on Clarissa Dalloway,
a middle aged society women’s efforts to organize a party even as her life
was equated with Septimus Warren Smith, a soldier who had returned
from the First World War bearing Psychological Scars. The Dalloway and
their circle all belonged to this class. Virginia Woolf also rose from the
middle class to upper-middle class. Sir Leslie Stephen was a writer;
through his writings he maintained the family. Virginia Woolf resumed
periodical writing, partly, for financial reasons; between 1916 and 1922,
151 reviews and essays published in *Times Library Supplement*, twenty
five in *Athenaeum* and *New Statesmen*. Most of these are uncollected;
after 1922 she wrote less for periodicals, and most of her essays have been
collected in *The Common Reader First Series* and *Second Series* and in
the four volumes edited since her death by Leonard Woolf. After the
death of Sir Leslie Stephen the life wrought a change because of the move
from the middle class domesticity to highbrow Bohemianism change of
life influenced Virginia to bring out the differences between upper-middle
class and middle class in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Woolf also strived to illustrate
the vain artificiality of Clarissa’s life and her involvement in it. The detail
given and though provoked in one day of a woman’s preparation for a
party, a simple social event, exposed the flimsy life style of England’s upper classes at the time of the novel.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, writers and criticized the very basic of the existing social, economic and moral system. When Sir Leslie Stephen died, the children broken away from the society in which they were born, that society consisted of the upper levels of the professional middle class and country families, interpenetrated to a certain extent by the aristocracy (Woolf, *Beginning* 74). Virginia and her family members were affected by the class division so Virginia echoed on the character of Mrs. Dalloway who belonged to the upper middle class society. Clarissa Dalloway was more interested in giving parties to aristocratic friends and highly placed persons and influenced acquaintance. She did not care to invite even her cousin, because she was a little absorbed in appearance and not so high placed in life. Here the novelist criticized the upper middle class through the character of Mrs. Dalloway.

Virginia Woolf found similarly her personal influence upon Rachel in *The Voyage Out*. Thoby (brother of Virginia Woolf) studied in the Cambridge and became the friend of Leonard. So Virginia Woolf brought upon the same incidents in her novel, Terence Hewet and his brilliant
friend St. John Hirst were from the Cambridge University. They too travelled in Euphrosyne. The ship was described as a ‘lonely little island.’ The group arrived in Santa Marina. Clive Bell and Vanessa Bell were the models for Terence Hewet and Helen Ambrose. Clive Bell, in fact, recognized Vanessa as Helen Ambrose and wrote to Virginia Woolf, “I suppose you will make Vanessa believe in herself” (Bell, *Virginia Stephen* 200). In Virginia Woolf’s opinion, Clive Bell was sincere to his family. Here Virginia Woolf has depicted Clive Bell’s character on Terence Hewet as the latter lived with sincerity after Rachel’s death. Evelyn went on saying “Why should these things happen? Why should people suffer? I honestly believe” she went on, lowering her voice slightly, “that Rachel’s in Heaven, but Terence...” (VO 360).

Sir Leslie Stephen was a tyrannical man. Sir Leslie Stephen’s disregard of conventional values was not, however, carried into his belief about women’s social position. Theoretically, he granted women their rights, yet family life was of great importance to him, and for a family to be well-knit and smoothly operative, women had to stay at home. “The highest services of this kind,” he believed, “are rendered by persons condemned, or should I say privileged, to live in obscurity” (Stephen, 245-246). In the same way Virginia portrayed Mr. Ramsay was also a
self-dramatizing domestic tyrant. He was a detached and lonely philosopher. Like Leslie he was also a tyrant (LH 34-35).

Leslie Stephen longed for the contact of his wife and children.

No doubt our strongest idea of him derived from the character of Mr. Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse*; for a less impressionistic portrait which conveyed a strong sense of his centrality in the intellectual life of the time, one could consult Noel Annan’s Leslie Stephen (Drabble ed. “With an Introduction Notes” vii).

One of the Virginia Woolf’s biographers has told the readers that they could build up a picture of close knit of Stephen’s family. No wonder that she recollected and reproduced that her childhood memories in her novels forever (Guardian 97). She continued to be closely associated with the Bloomsbury Group (thirteen members) among whose popular members were Lytton Strachey, who had been Thoby’s friend at Cambridge, Roger Fry, and G.E. Moore and so on. Virginia Woolf was probably somewhat influenced to become a writer because writing had been one of her major public activities. “The publication of Virginia Woolf’s diary and her letters has brought her intentions, objectives and methods as a writer into a clearer perspective” (Pippett *Moth* 26).