



AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2023



From a watercolour by N.A. Bernard, 1891, adorning the end plates of the 1908 Chatto and Windus edition of Jefferies' *The Life of the Fields*.



‘The Old Shepherd’ illustrates ‘Country Literature’
From watercolours by Maud Umfreville Clarke used to illustrate the 1908
Chatto and Windus edition of Jefferies’ *The Life of the Fields*.



‘Hedges of England’ illustrates ‘Notes on Landscape Painting’

CONTENTS

Page

- 2 Dates for your Diary, 2023–4
- 3 From the Vice Chair

News

- 4 News in Brief
- 7 Grave News
- 8 Malcolm Porteous Legacy
- 9 Wildlife Walk
- 10 Citings of Jefferies

Articles

- 14 Joseph William Comyns Carr
- 15 'The Downs', Crowborough
- 17 *Finding W.H. Hudson*
- 18 Liddington Hill Seat
- 20 Maud Umfreville Clarke
- 21 Richard Jefferies' Father
- 25 The Essence of Richard Jefferies
- 26 To Richard Jefferies (poem)
- 27 The War Cry
- 30 'Twas Richard Jefferies'

Books

- 32 Richard Jefferies Award
- 34 Books & Poems by Members
- 39 Book Review: *A Peculiarly English Genius*, Vol.III
- 43 Review of *Elevating Wiltshire*

Cover images from *The Life of the Fields* (Chatto & Windus, 1908).

Front Cover: Coloured pictorial endpapers from a watercolour of a wetland landscape, signed N.A. Bernard, 1891.

Other images from watercolours by Maud Umfreville Clarke (see p.20):

Inside Front: 'The Old Shepherd' and 'Hedges of England'

Inside back: 'The Mowing Machine' and 'Poppies'

Back Cover: 'The Old House by the Silent Road' and 'People in Villages
See a Bill Stuck'.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2023–2024

2023

Tues 31 Oct & Thurs 2 Nov. Minibus tour of Jefferies' homes. Dates to be confirmed. See p.11. Organised by the Richard Jefferies Museum Trust.

Mon 13 November 2023, 7.30–9.00pm by Zoom. BIRTHDAY LECTURE
Lee Schofield will talk about his prize-winning book *Wild Fell* and his work at the RSPB nature reserve, Haweswater, in the Lake District. See pp.32–33.

Mon 11 December 2023, 7.30–9.00pm by Zoom.

'Come All Ye'—an informal get together for Members to reminisce about how they discovered Richard Jefferies' writing. To be hosted by Jean Saunders.

2024

Mon 8 January 2024, 7.30–9.00pm by Zoom. Share readings from *Amaryllis at the Fair* along with discussions about the novel (what you like or dislike). To be hosted by Colin Corkerton.

Sat 27 April 2024, 11.00am–4pm Annual General Meeting (morning) and Spring Lecture at 2pm. Matthew Oates will talk about what butterflies mean to us. The Meaning of Butterflies... science, aesthetics, spirituality, poetics, relationship with place etc.. Richard Jefferies Museum. More information in Spring 2024 newsletter.

Mon 11 November 2024, 7.30–9.00pm by Zoom.

BIRTHDAY LECTURE: Further information in the next newsletter.

Mon 9 Dec 2024, 7.30–9.00pm by Zoom. Share readings. Further information in the next newsletter.

MEMBERS WHO HAVE REGISTERED THEIR EMAIL ADDRESS WILL RECEIVE NOTICES AND LINKS TO ZOOM MEETINGS NEARER THE TIME AUTOMATICALLY.

NEWSLETTER: edited by Jean Saunders and Peter Robins who are also the authors of the unsigned articles. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Society. The deadline to submit material for the Spring 2024 Newsletter is **1 March 2024**. Please send your contributions, preferably by email, to the Hon. Secretary as below. The newsletter is also available on the Society's website as a free download. Every effort has been made to trace all copyright holders and to obtain their permission for the use of copyright material.

CONTACT: Jean Saunders (Hon. Sec.),
The Old Mill, Mill Drive, Foulsham, Norfolk NR20 5RB.
☎ 01362 683210. Email: richardjefferiessociety@btinternet.com
Website: <http://www.richardjefferiessociety.org>

FROM THE VICE CHAIR

Colin Corkerton



Welcome to the autumn newsletter. I always look forward to the arrival of each newsletter, and journal, and this issue, as usual, has an interesting and enjoyable selection of articles both about Jefferies and on those who have an association with either him or his writings.

However, firstly I should introduce myself as I will not be known to some members. I have been a member of the society for many years but it has only been in the last few years I have become more active and I was appointed vice chair last year. At this year's AGM in April, Barry Sloan our chair for the last five years stepped down and on behalf of all members I wish to say a big thank you for all that he has done for the society. The good news is Barry will continue as a member of the Executive Council and as chair of the Richard Jefferies Award for nature writing. This means I am temporarily covering the role of chair (more on this later).

As you will read in the newsletter the Richard Jefferies Award for 2022 went to Lee Schofield for his book *Wild Fell: Fighting for Nature on a Lake District Hill Farm*. I am delighted to say that Lee will be talking about his book for this year's Birthday Lecture via Zoom on Monday 13th November. I would highly recommend joining this meeting to hear about all the work Lee and his colleagues are carrying out, the successes and the challenges they face. Full details are in the 'Dates for Your Diary' section together with details of our two other online meetings over the winter. Please join us for those, even if it is just to listen, there is no obligation to contribute if you don't wish to. These meetings are an important way we can reach our members who are scattered around the country and overseas. I'm sure you will enjoy them.

Later in the newsletter you will see the Executive Council agreed to use the legacy from Malcolm Porteous towards the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre fully cataloguing the Society's Samuel Looker Archive. This is valuable work on this important archive.

Also, there is more information about the Richard Jefferies Museum Trust's wildlife walk covering the route between Jefferies' grave in Worthing, via the main places where he lived, ending at his birthplace (the Museum) on the anniversary of his 175th birthday. The museum's website has a growing number of contributors who have walked various parts of the route and these are well worth a read.

As indicated above, we are looking for someone to come forward to become our chair and to lead us forward over the next few years which will see some significant changes. As you will know we are looking for one or more volunteers to take on the many roles of our secretary Jean Saunders who, as advised in the Spring newsletter, will be standing down in 2026. I ask all members to consider whether they can volunteer for these roles. Full support will be given by the Executive Council.

Finally, as I write these notes autumn is approaching and I look to Jefferies to anticipate the change of season, especially in the light. In 'Nuttty Autumn' from *Nature Near London* he writes:

'The dewdrops of the morning, preserved by the mist, which the sun does not disperse for some hours, linger on late in shaded corners, as under trees, on drooping blades of grass, and on the petals of flowers.'

'The sunshine of the autumn afternoons is faintly tawny, and the long grass by the wayside takes from it a tawny undertone.'

'An immaterial mist across the fields looks like a cloud of light hovering on the stubble: the light itself made visible.'

I hope you enjoy the newsletter.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Eric Jones spotted an article about the Honeybones. See the *RJS Spring Newsletter* 2023, pp.59–60. Evidently Richard Honeybone, who started a clock-making business in Fairford, came from a family of clockmakers in Wanborough. Both his father and grandfather were clockmakers and Richard was baptised in Wanborough on 6 August 1775. It is more than likely that the Honeybones and Jefferies families knew one another.

The Alliance of Literary Societies' Annual General Meeting and weekend takes place from 17–19 May 2024 in Bowness. It will be hosted by the Arthur Ransome Society and it is advised that you book accommodation early as 'it's one of the most beautiful places in the world'.

Andrew Dawes has been re-editing a 2017 edition of the Radio 4 series 'Natural Histories', detailing the social significance of a natural history subject. This edition—'Grass'—Radio 4 was aired on Sunday 3 September and included a brief cultural reference to haymaking by Jefferies from 'Field-faring Women', *The Toilers of the Field*: 'The Arcadian innocence of the hayfield, sung by the poets, is the most barefaced fiction.'

Lucy Winter, the Fundraising and Communications Manager for Earlsdon Carnegie Community Library, got in touch with the Society in March this year regarding the national news story about the return to the library of Jefferies' *Red Deer* that was 84 years late (see *Spring Newsletter 2023*, p.24). The item generated so much interest that Lucy put together a display of the book, the news story and the fine in old money and information from our website so that library users could find out more about the author. We also supplied leaflets, booklets, postcards, books and other information for their exhibition.



We are indebted to Roy Cartwright (picture right) who has managed to find homes for all the surplus Richard Jefferies Society publications that have been stored in John Price's garage for the last ten years. Roy has been distributing books and pamphlets (400 books and about 300 *RJS Journals*) in Swindon and, hopefully, a few more Swindonians will learn more about Richard Jefferies. He said that the Swindon Library took 150 for distribution around its libraries and connecting groups and there was a kind letter from Darryl Moody at the library who conveyed sincere thanks. Volunteers at the Museum took 50 books and the Swindon Society members took a further 100 copies, plus the Mechanics' Institute, the Baker's Cafe, the Rodbourne History Group, and the Swindon Civic Voice all had their share. The rest were distributed at the Museum.



Following on from the story of the Richard Jefferies sculpture, that featured on the cover of the *RJS Spring Newsletter 2023*, Darren Scott wrote in June 2023: 'After repairing the bird that was broken by a vandal, and it lasting less than a week before someone did it again, I thought I'd try something different.'

I've put a small hook on Richard Jefferies' finger and attached a Butterfly that's glued to a small peg. Hopefully anytime a local visitor sees a vandal has removed the Butterfly maybe they or local children could create another, glue it to a peg and clip it on his finger.'



The Wiltshire Museum exhibition of Anna Dillon's beautiful artwork and Hedley Thorne's aerial photography of the area, that includes 'Jefferies Land', is coming to an end on 15 October 2023 at the Devizes museum. But a catalogue is available, written by Society member Patrick Dillon, *Elevating Wiltshire* and can be purchased from the Museum for £15 plus postage, ISBN: 9780907603030. John Price has reviewed the exhibition and the catalogue. See p.43.

The RJS Trustees agreed that the £1,000 legacy from Rev. Rhodes should be used towards paying for the full cost of 3D scanning and modelling work of the Richard Jefferies Harrogate Bust (see *RJS Spring Newsletter 2023*, p.9) undertaken by Wessex Archaeology. The company has produced this beautifully detailed 6-inch model of the original at the Richard Jefferies Museum and we are considering whether this might be used as a 'Richard' for future winners of the Richard Jefferies Award!



GRAVE NEWS

Undeterred by the mice which keep eating all the spring-flowering bulbs that Jennie Carpenter and Bryan Jones had planted on Jessie Jefferies' grave at St. Piran's churchyard, Perranzabuloe, they were there again in early June planting lupins, marigolds, petunias, geraniums and lavender in the hope that the wild life allows them to thrive. The ox-eye daisies smothering the churchyard were a glorious picture in themselves.



Jessie Jefferies' grave (forefront—right), 10 June 2023.

Regrettably the situation was little better by July when Jennie reported that slugs and snails had munched their way through most of the June plantings. Jennie and Bryan will try again.

Full marks to them for such perseverance and many thanks.

On another note, the Society now has access to the 1921 census taken on 19 June and we can confirm that Jessie was living in Penlue, Perranporth by then. The record shows that it was a six-roomed house and her daughter Phyllis along with her newly-wedded husband, Alfred Hargrave, were visitors at that time.

MALCOLM PORTEOUS LEGACY UPDATE

At the Executive Council meeting of the Richard Jefferies Society, held on 7 June 2023, it was agreed unanimously that the Malcolm Porteous legacy of £5,000 (see *RJS Spring Newsletter*, 2023, p.6) should be awarded to the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre as a contribution towards the cost of fully cataloguing the Society's Samuel Looker Archive that we purchased from the widow of Samuel Looker's grandson in November 2011.

Ally McConnell, the Principal Archivist, at the History Centre had been approached by the Society to inform her about former positive discussions about the project between Steve Hobbs and our Vice President, John Price, before Mr. Hobbs retired.

Ms. McConnell was equally enthusiastic about the proposal and emphasised that the work would be completed regardless of any contribution from the Society as she felt it was a very important collection for Wiltshire.

After a meeting at the History Centre attended by Ally and Naomi Oakley (who will be the officer in charge of the project) with John Price and Andrew Dawes (RJS trustee), held on 26 July 2023, it was agreed that all three catalogues in our archive collection will be combined before focusing on the Looker papers.

Some of the in-depth listing and enhancing of letters and other items will be carried out by volunteers. Hopefully the catalogue restructuring will be complete before early November, but more work is likely to be needed once the detailed lists are available.

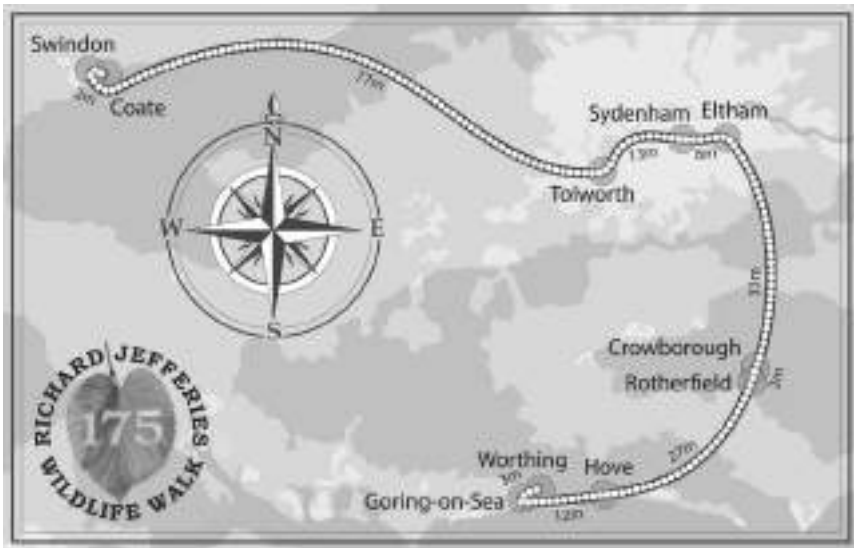
Some of the documents will require repackaging and there is money from within the fund to contribute to the relevant conservation materials.

There is also the possibility of using the exhibition space in the reception area of the History Centre dedicated to a display of some of the Jefferies' material from the archive as well as items on loan to the Coate museum or other sources from 30 October to at least December. The Society's Executive Council will be discussing this proposal at their next meeting.

The Porteous legacy of £5,000 was transferred to Wiltshire Council in July and we look forward to seeing the completion of a project that has needed attention for over a decade.

Malcolm Porteous would have been delighted that his legacy will live on by adding so much value to the Society's archives at the History Centre.

WILDLIFE WALK



Map launched on Earth Day, 22 April 2023

The Richard Jefferies Museum Trust has embarked on a massive undertaking with the help of the community to cover the 175-mile route between Jefferies' grave in Worthing, via the main places where he lived in his short life, ending up back at his birthplace (the Museum) on his 175th birthday. He was born at Coate Farm on 6 November 1848 but the final celebration will take place at the Museum on Sunday 5 November 2023.

There is still time for you to take part. The idea is to enjoy the countryside and to inform the Trust about what you see of the natural world, sharing any photographs, writing, drawings, poetry etc., relating to the nature and wildlife you encounter on your journey. It is hoped to create a book with people's experiences on the walk.

Progress can be followed at <https://www.richardjefferies.org/wildlife-walk> that contains much useful information about the places where Jefferies lived.

The Society is contributing towards the cost of hiring a minibus for two trips from Coate. The first (Tues. 31 October) to Brighton (cemetery at Worthing, houses at Goring and Hove) via Crowborough (two houses). The second (Thu. 2 November) will visit Jefferies' three homes in London. If you want to book, please go to the Trust's website or telephone: 01793 979224, email: mike@richardjefferies.org or speak to Mike Pringle on 07768 917466.

CITINGS OF RICHARD JEFFERIES

Peter Robins came across an announcement on the front page of *Notes And Queries* (No.284) dated Saturday 8 November 1884:

‘GODDARD.— A few copies only remain of this Memoir of the Goddard Family, which will soon be out of print—Address J. JEFFERIES, 14, Victoria Road, Eltham, Kent.’.

Were the family just clearing their surplus or was Jefferies in need of funds? He had another serious bout of illness around this time whilst a letter from Chatto and Windus dated 4 November 1844 had turned down making an offer for *After London* in view of ‘the present very depressed state of the market for works of fiction.’ It seems that Jessie’s name was against the sale.

Writing the ‘Nature Notes’ for *The Times* on 2 March 2023 Jonathan Tulloch marvelled at the sight of a ‘brown trout in crystal-clear waters’ that are seldom seen these days because of pollution in the water. But recalled that Richard Jefferies had a ‘favourite London trout’ that he visited regularly and watched from a bridge but not for too long as he did not wish to bring anglers attention to it.

Last October Robert Walker gave a talk about Henry Williamson’s *The Lone Swallows* (1922), his second book that is a collection of short stories written in London and Devon. The lecture was part of the Henry Williamson Society’s AGM weekend and the text of the talk was reproduced in their Spring Newsletter. Robert mentioned that the first edition of the book included Jefferies’ quote: ‘the beautiful swallows, be tender to them, for they symbol all that is best in nature and all that is best in our hearts’ on the title page, which inspired Williamson’s own essays and revealed his devotion to Richard Jefferies. Williamson’s state of mind at that time was very focused on the common sights and sounds of the English countryside.

Colin Corkerton came across a recommendation for *After London* in Simon Ings’ column in the *New Scientist* 25 March 2023, p.36 and quoted the *Edinburgh University Press* edition that ‘London sank back into the swamp long ago in this superb scientific and political fantasy by nature writer Richard Jefferies’.

The 2023 *Journal of the Friends of the Dymock Poets* contained an article by Seán Street titled ‘Recording the Essence: Natural Sound into Text in Jefferies and Edward Thomas’. It is a fascinating read that examines the manner in which Thomas and Jefferies uses words to describe sounds. Mr. Street has

agreed to write on a similar theme for the *Richard Jefferies Society Journal* 2024 that will have more to say about W.H. Hudson as well.

Radio 3's 'Words and Music' programme celebrated May Day by including Frank Bridge's *Two Poems for Orchestra* that was written in 1915 drawing inspiration from the writings of Richard Jefferies on the life of the English countryside. Radio 3 have often broadcast the pieces. The first is scored for woodwind, horns, timpani, harp and strings, and has a superscription from 'Saint Guido' (*The Open Air*): 'Those thoughts and feelings which are not sharply defined, but have a haze of distance and beauty about them, are always dearest.' The second poem includes brass and varied percussion in a lighter-hearted movement taking an extract from *The Story of My Heart*: 'How beautiful a delight to make the world joyous! The song should never be silent, the dance never still, the laugh should sound like water which runs for ever.'

Reading Patrick Barkham's *The Swimmer: The Wild Life of Roger Deakin* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2023), an experimental biography written as a first-person narrative, interspersed with comments by friends and family, Gideon Perret was not surprised to find a reference to Richard Jefferies in chapter 3, 'The Schoolboy'. As a botany and zoology sixth-former, Deakin went on a field trip with his biology teacher during the Easter holidays in 1959. The trip took them to Beaulieu Road in the New Forest: 'Just as in *Swallows and Amazons*, Richard Jefferies's *Bevis* or any explorer's journal, we enthusiastically set about naming all the topographical features of our three miles by two of wild haunts at Beaulieu Road on a handmade map.' (p.49).

Colin Corkerton, citing the book, liked a Deakin review of a Jefferies' book that a friend (Annette Kobak) felt 'could have been a manifesto for Roger'. Deakin wrote: 'Never simply viewing the land through a study window, but always placing himself and his reader, foursquare in the open air, writing with intense intimacy, proving his observations on the pulse, as Keats put it. Jefferies "takes part on the existence of things" very much as Keats did. Jefferies is hopelessly in love with what he calls the divine chaos of nature. For in its absence of design he sees limitless hope and possibilities.' (p.339).

Colin Corkerton reports that Jefferies appears in a collection of Ronald Blythe's writings in *Next to Nature. A Lifetime in the English Countryside* (2022). The articles are collected in monthly sections. Under 'March', on p.94, is an article titled *Doctor Nature*, Blythe writes 'A green sequence of natural, rather than supernatural, meditations preoccupies my early Lent, each following the next in the way dreamings do, and stimulated by exquisite days.' The first of these is Richard Mabey's *Nature Cure*, the second is *House of Quiet* by A.C. Benson (1904) and the third is Richard Jefferies. Blythe continues:

My third nature cure seeker has to be Richard Jefferies who is young but consumptive, and far from depressive. He died whilst aged thirty-nine in 1887 (*sic*), a Wiltshire farmer's son who, whilst not a Christian, possessed a vision of nature—which included his own body—which the poet Elizabeth Jennings believed matched that of Thomas Traherne. Richard Jefferies' *The Story of My Heart* is an exultant, unhidden paean to nature and one which accepts the naturalness of death. It is a hymn to joy and a dismissal of Time. Christ taught the disciples to live in the Now, to step out without a penny, to be alive—really alive. As does Richard Jefferies.

In the section for 'December', pp.436–7, in *Brickwork* and includes a quote from near the start of chapter five, Village Architecture, from *Wild Life in a Southern County*: 'Such old-fashioned cottages are practically built around the chimney; the chimney is the firm nucleus of solid masonry or brickwork, about which the low walls of rubble are clustered. When such a cottage is burned down, the chimney is nearly always the only thing that remains, and against the chimney it is built up again'. Blythe relates an incident in his own life when the old house where he was born burnt down after the family moved out. But this house was never rebuilt.

In *After They're Gone. Extinctions Past, Present and Future* by Peter Marren (2022), p.280 he would expect to find a significant drop in biodiversity if he was able to compare the wild life in his parish now with a century ago and continues: 'The landscape described by the English nature writer Richard Jefferies in *Wood Magic* and *Bevis* lie close by, but Jefferies would have a hard time recognising them now.'

John Price spotted that the June 2023 edition of *British Wildlife* included a most welcome article about Jefferies by Richard Mabey, one time President of the Society. Mabey was picking up on the current discussion about rewilding and pointed out that Jefferies was writing about this in 1885 in *After London*. He briefly discusses Jefferies' roots, life and writings and his 'almost pantheistic belief in nature with a vaguely socialist ideology'. He quotes from 'Hours of Spring' (1886): 'High up against the grey cloud I hear the lark through the window singing, and each note falls into my heart like a knife... The earth is all in all to me, but I am nothing to the earth'. Mabey ends on a note that we must not exploit nature for our own ends and find a solution that does not rely on spiritual escapism.

Colin Corkerton came across a review of Sir William Beach Thomas's *The Way of a Countryman* (Michael Joseph, 1944) that was written by George Orwell. The review was published on p.2 of the *Manchester Evening News* on Thursday 23 March 1944 where Orwell discusses Sir William's 'sentimental' passion for nature in a somewhat patronising manner. He writes:

The most characteristic ‘nature writers’ of all are W.H. Hudson and Richard Jefferies. One may guess that it is on Jefferies that Sir William Beach Thomas has modelled himself. But Jefferies, for all his charm and his detailed observation, is curiously inhuman. His daydream expressed in a whole book was of an England from which the human being had vanished and only wild creatures remained.

This confirms that Orwell had read *After London*. He goes on to criticise Hudson for ‘his rapturous essay on the spectacle of a field ruined by dandelions’. He acknowledges that a love of nature was becoming more widespread across all ages and classes but it was the mystical element that Orwell felt unhealthy. Orwell appears to share the more ‘normal view’ expressed by George Crabbe (a true countryman in Orwell’s opinion) that wild flowers are simply weeds.

George Miller reminded us that Orwell made clear his dislike of ‘nature books’ in *A Patriot After All: 1940–1* (Secker, 1999). He describes Rupert Brooke’s *Grantchester* as ‘an enormous gust of “country sentiment”, a sort of accumulated vomit from a stomach stuffed with place names... as a poem it is worthless’, and he explains it as a product of ‘the great age of the “Nature poet”, the heyday of Richard Jefferies and W.H. Hudson.’ Elsewhere, however (*A Kind of Compulsion: 1903–1936*, (Secker, 1999) asked to name the best books ever written, he came up with a list of 38 titles, which included *The Amateur Poacher*.

Michael Sherwood found a dismissive and unfair comment about Jefferies in *Footnotes: A Journey Round Britain in the Company of Great Writers* by Peter Fiennes (Oneworld Publications, 2019) who discusses the writers Edith Somerville and Violet Martin (Ross) (who were the authors of *Some Experiences of an Irish RM*) and writes:

They are such evocative nature writers—present, watchful, joyous—but wary of overflowing into vapid effusiveness. Edith was no fan of sub-Romantic gushings and had no time at all for the then (and now) fashionable nature-mystic Richard Jefferies: all that ‘rot about Nature’ she snaps in a letter to Martin in 1891. (p.161)

Andrew Rossabi presented ‘Richard Jefferies, Nature Writer and Mystic’, as part of the School of Philosophy’s Summer Lectures on 24 August 2023. The text and slide show are available as downloads in the ‘RJS Talks and Articles’ series, No. 157 (a) and (b) on the Society’s website: richardjefferiessociety.org.

JOSEPH WILLIAM COMYNS CARR (1849–1916)



J. Comyns Carr (pictured left in 1910) was art critic to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, co-founder of the Grosvenor Gallery, and editor of the *English Illustrated Magazine*. He commissioned Jefferies to write an article about Somerset illustrated by J.W. North, which led to his visit in June 1883 and to his writing *Red Deer* and several articles, including 'Summer in Somerset', 'The Water-Colley', and 'By the Exe'. Andrew Rossabi found the following reminiscence about Jefferies in J. Comyns Carr's *Some Eminent Victorians, Personal Recollections in the World of*

Art and Letters (London: Duckworth & Co., 1908), pp.163–4.

It is pleasant ... to reflect that an editor's duties yield many happier experiences, and bring him into contact with men and women whom otherwise it might not be his good fortune to know. It was in this way that I made the acquaintance of poor Richard Jefferies, whose delightful articles, under the heading of 'The Game-keeper at Home,' had already been published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Jefferies's appearance, even at our first meeting, gave me the unhappy impression that he was not destined for a long life. But despite his nervous temperament that was evidently in a large measure dependent upon the frailty of his physical constitution, he was a man of great simplicity and charm of manner.

The love that he had for the things of outward nature was clearly a passionate possession that absorbed his life. One of the teeming life of the country, from the waving ears of corn down to the minutest flower or the smallest insect that inhabited the shadowed world at their feet, he was a loving and constant observer whose eyes never wearied in their task. With Jefferies the enjoyment begotten of this watchful brooding over the things of the country was, I think, all-sufficing. He seemed never desirous to link it in association with any more directly human impulse or emotion, and in this way his writings, as it seems to me, make a separate claim, distinct from that of any other author, whether in poetry or prose, who have confessed a like passion for the beauty of the outward world.

I was fortunate in securing several very beautiful contributions from his pen, some of which gained an added interest from the delightful illustrations of Mr. Alfred Parsons, who found himself in full sympathy with Jefferies's purposes and design. At a later date Jefferies was associated in the same way with my friend Mr. North, whose delicate drawings showed a quick sympathy with the mood of the writer; and I now that Jefferies highly appreciated the gentle hospitality which Mr. North afforded him on the later days of his declining health.

‘THE DOWNS’, CROWBOROUGH

The following extract and photograph appears in *A Prospect of Tunbridge Wells, and adjacent Countryside* by Edgar Yoxall Jones (Lambarde Press, 1964).

~~~~

### CROWBOROUGH

During the long winter of 1885–6, Richard Jefferies, then a very sick man, lived at ‘The Downs’, on the London Road. Boys Fermin, who wrote the first Crowborough Guide, recalled five years later, how ‘on a bright day in the winter or spring, he might be seen taking exercise under the lee of the hedge which bordered the road just outside of the gate of his cottage’.

Poor Jefferies, that mystic with the eye of a camera, died the following year at Goring-on-Sea, before his 39<sup>th</sup> birthday. His last essays, written in the little front room at ‘The Downs’ (still in appearance much as he would have known it), were collected by his widow and published under the title *Field and Hedgerow*.

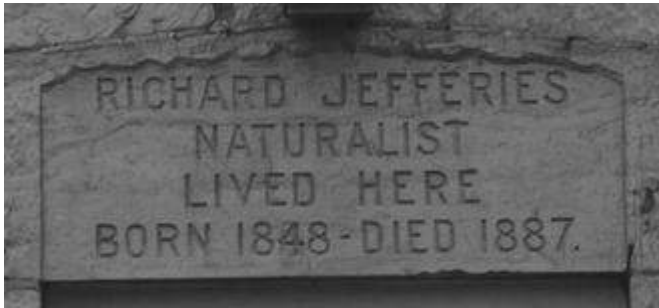


The Misses Field-Buss [Arica and Delcy) standing in the doorway of ‘The Downs’.

The window at the left is of the room where Richard Jefferies wrote.

In July 1976 Cyril Wright (1909–1995) former Society secretary and his wife called on Miss Delcy Field-Buss. She was 76 at that time and Cyril described her as ‘a gentle, lively and courteous lady with a fund of memories from a less-hurried age’ and ‘the last survivor of the family whose grandfather built the house, which is one that both inside and out holds very nostalgically a sense of

continuity with a not all that distant past.’ (see *RJS Annual Report 1975-76*, p.9). Miss Field-Buss asked that a picture of her house be placed in the Museum at Coate, so Cyril set to work. The picture hangs in the Richard Jefferies Museum.



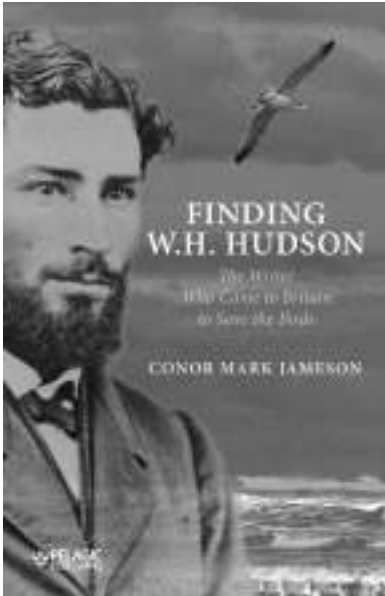
Engraved stone over the front door of 'The Downs'.



'The Downs' with Miss Field-Buss, oil painting (370x275mm) by Cyril Wright, 1976.

## FINDING W.H. HUDSON

Conor Mark Jameson's biography of Hudson was published by Pelagic on 1 August 2023 as a 368pp. paperback, £21.99, ISBN 9781784273286. Pelagic are offering Society members a discount of 25% when purchased through their website. Quote: PELAGICVIP. Blake Lee-Harwood is writing a review for next year's *RJS Journal*. The publisher's information reads:



An imposing, life-size oil painting dominates the main meeting room at the RSPB's base in the heart of England: 'the man above the fireplace'—always present, rarely mentioned. Curious about the person in the portrait, the author began a quest to rediscover William Henry Hudson (1841–1922). It became a mission of restoration: stitching back together the faded tapestry of Hudson's life, re-colouring it in places and adding new threads from the testaments of his closest friends.

This book traces the unassuming field naturalist's path through a dramatic and turbulent era: from Hudson's journey to Britain from Argentina in 1874 to the unveiling by the prime minister of a monument and bird sanctuary in his honour 50 years later, in the heart of Hyde Park—a place where the young immigrant had, for a time, slept rough. At its core, this extraordinary story reveals Hudson's deep influence on the creation of his beloved Bird Society by its founding women, and the rise of the conservation movement. It reveals the strange magnetism of this mysterious man from the Pampas—unschooled, battle-scarred and once penniless—that made his achievements possible, and left such a profound impression on those who knew him.

By the end of his life, Hudson had Hollywood studios bidding for his work. He was a household name through his luminous and seminal nature writing, and the Bird Society had at last reached the climax of a 30-year campaign, working to create the first global alliance of bird protectionists. A century after Hudson's death, this is a long-overdue tribute to perhaps our most significant—and most neglected—writer-naturalist and wildlife campaigner.

## LIDDINGTON HILL SEAT

It is a great credit to volunteers that the Society is nearly 74 years old. Founded in April 1950, it had a very strong presence in Swindon but is now international. After ten years of pushing the Society persuaded Swindon Council (who owned Coate Farm) to set up a small museum in one room of the farmhouse. One of their earliest achievements was to place a memorial bench on Liddington Hill. The following article is from the Society's *Annual Report* for 1952. At that time Samuel J. Looker was President, Mrs. Frances Gay—Chair, Harold Adams—Hon. Secretary and Jefferies' second cousin Kathleen Sewell was on the Executive Council. There were no pictures in the piece, but two have been added from the archives. The Society's *Annual Report* for 1961 announced that the bench was to be moved to Coate Farm as a result of 'malicious damage'. The Society placed another bench on Liddington Hill many years later but this was soon destroyed by vandals too.

### Jefferies Memorial Seat

As briefly mentioned in last year's report, the members of the Society decided to raise funds to purchase an oak seat to be erected on Liddington Hill as a Festival of Britain Tribute to Jefferies. At the Day House Meeting Mrs. Gay launched the appeal for funds and letters were sent to members and friends in all parts of the country. The local papers also published the appeal. The response was gratifying, subscriptions, large and small, being soon forthcoming, members of the Executive also assisting in the effort. The total raised was £80.4.2, of which £68.2.0 was paid for the seat and expenses, the balance being retained for maintenance, etc.

The Society is grateful for the support and encouragement received from the relatives of Jefferies—Mrs. Phyllis Hargrave, daughter; Mrs. Dorothy Herbert and the Misses Helen and Christine Billing, nieces; and Miss K.M. Sewell, Miss M. Jefferies Hall, Miss A.M. Abbey and Capt. H.J. Abbey, all second cousins. A contribution was also received from Mrs. Jefferies-Weaver, U.S.A., eldest daughter of Henry Jefferies, brother of Richard, who went to America at the age of 32, and her daughter Mrs. Martha Weaver Michael.

The Seat was made by Mr. H. Gardiner, a Swindon craftsman and member of the Rural Industries Bureau.

The ceremony of handing over the seat took place on Saturday afternoon 10<sup>th</sup> November 1951, when about 50 people were present on the Hill and Mr. A.E. Merricks, Chairman of the Highworth Rural District Council, introduced by Mr. W.S.G. Mills, Clerk to the Council expressed the pleasure of his Authority in supporting this tribute. Mrs. Dorothy Herbert performed the ceremony of unveiling and Mrs. Gay read a poem by Charles Sorley.



10 November 1951. Frances Gay, Dorothy Herbert, ?, ?, Kathleen Sewell and Harold Adams



## MAUD UMFREVILLE CLARKE

The *Pall Mall Gazette*, 18 December 1907, p.2. col.3. records the following:

A collection of Richard Jefferies' essays, under the title of *The Life of the Fields* (5s. net), and including the famous one, 'The Pageant of Summer,' and the pretty thing on the British Museum pigeons which first appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, has been added to the St. Martins Illustrated Library of Standard Authors, now issuing from the firm of Messrs. Chatto and Windus. The book is illustrated with twelve pictures in colour by Maud U. Clarke, which are charming, reminding us somewhat of Mrs. Allingham's work.

Maud Umfreville Clarke was born in Stoke Damerel, Devon in September 1863 to Alfred (a bank manager) and Harriet Clarke. The family were living in Cornwall in 1871 but moved back to Dursley in Gloucestershire by 1881 which was where Ida, her older sister, was born in 1862. The family were based at the National Provincial Bank in Long Street. Maud not only illustrated the 1908 edition of *The Life of the Fields*, she was a true Jefferies' fan. She wrote and illustrated a book titled *Nature's Own Garden* in 1907 and quotes from *The Story of My Heart* and 'Wild Flowers'. At some stage she moved to Ashton Keynes, Cricklade, Wiltshire and was there at the time of the 1921 census. Maud never married and died in Brentford in 1935. See below and cover images for some of her illustrations from *The Life of the Fields*.



'Moorhens'  
'The Pageant of Summer'



'The Bole of a Beech Tree'  
'Nature Near Brighton'

## RICHARD JEFFERIES' FATHER

*Prof. W.J. Keith*

This signed article about James Luckett Jefferies (1816–1896) was completed in November, 1966.

Readers of *Richard Jefferies: Man of the Fields* by Samuel J. Looker and Crichton Porteous (London: John Baker, 1965) and my *Richard Jefferies: A Critical Study* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965) may be struck by the opposing impressions of Jefferies' father, James Luckett Jefferies, which emerge from the two books. It is unlikely that any new material will now appear that will help us towards a fuller understanding of the man, but a reconsideration of the available evidence can, I believe, make some progress towards clarifying what seems at first sight to be two contradictory assessments.



In my own book I followed the traditional view, accepting the character of Iden in *Amaryllis at the Fair* as a portrait of the father,<sup>1</sup> and quoting an account by Miss F.C. Hall, cousin of Richard Jefferies, bearing witness to the father's extreme affection for Coate Farm ('a little Naboth's vineyard')<sup>2</sup> I might also have quoted the account by a relative, possibly Richard's younger brother Henry, which Walter Besant reproduces in his *Eulogy of Richard Jefferies*;



The garden, the orchard, the hedges of the fields were always his chief delight; he had planted many a tree round and about his farm. Not a single bird that flew but he knew, and could tell its history; if you walked with him, as Dick often did, and as I have occasionally done, through the fields, and heard him expatiate—quietly enough—on the trees and flowers, you would not be surprised at the turn taken by his son's genius.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Edward Thomas, in his *Richard Jefferies; His Life and Work* (London: Hutchinson, 1909), claims that this tradition was corroborated by 'local memory' (p.29).

<sup>2</sup> See 'Jefferies Luckett' [F.C. Hall], 'The Forbears of Richard Jefferies', *Country Life*, XXIII. March 14, 1908, p.375.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Walter Besant, *The Eulogy of Richard Jefferies* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1888), p.26.

Further support for this interpretation of the father's character can be gained from an interview with another brother, Charles, recorded in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (22 Sept. 1891):

My father always manifested a love of reading, which he early instilled into us as boys. His favourite volumes were the Bible and Shakespeare, and alternately he regularly read to us from their pages, explaining and elucidating as he went on. Richard early in life emulated my father's pleasure in reading.<sup>4</sup>

Jefferies himself offered a similar assessment—not, it may be noted, in print but in a private letter to the publisher George Bentley, where he is significantly defending the consistency of *Iden* by reference to his own father. James Lockett was, he claimed, 'a scholar, a great reader with a considerable library of the best authors, and above all the keenest observation of nature and of natural phenomena'.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, the Looker-Porteous biography, published while my own book was in the press, takes a very different view. This is based almost entirely upon three hitherto unpublished letters written by the father, and the following passages, extracted from them, certainly suggest a character totally unlike the traditional figure. In one he insists: 'I did not see Richard's writings or take any delight in them. . . . How he could think of describing Coate as such a pleasant place and deceive so I could not imagine.' In another he writes: 'Of all places in Old England Coate was the most despicable when I was a boy and spoke of [as] such by all.' In other passages he criticises Coate Farm ('we were all so glad to get away') and demonstrates an attitude to his son's literary success that varies from deliberate unconcern to decidedly grudging admiration.<sup>6</sup>

These letters cast doubt on the traditional view in at least two ways. Not only is the father's yeoman-like devotion to the land which he owned and farmed seriously questioned (of Coate Farm he comments that 'it was not worthy of the name of Farm'), but the ungrammatical constructions, illogical statements and generally ill-tempered tone contrast oddly with the impression that Jefferies himself seemed anxious to offer of a well-educated, sensitive and kindly if impractical farmer. Are we to see Jefferies' own statements, and those of his relatives, as loyal and understandable yet misguided attempts to initiate a family myth in the face of embarrassingly curious biographers? Does the James

---

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in H.S. Salt, *Richard Jefferies: His Life and Ideals* (London: Fifeild, 1905), p.7.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Jefferies, *Field and Farm* (London: Phoenix House, 1957), p.41. It may be significant that in a photograph reproduced in Thomas, facing p.86, James Lockett Jefferies is seated with an impressively thick book at his elbow [see photograph above].

<sup>6</sup> See Samuel J. Looker and Crichton Porteous, *Richard Jefferies. Man of the Fields* (London: John Baker, 1965), pp.3–6.

Luckett Jefferies of these letters reveal a reality which it seemed necessary or desirable to obscure?

The following facts need to be taken into consideration. First, when Walter Besant's volume was published, when the interview in the *Pall Mall Gazette* first appeared, James Luckett Jefferies was still alive. It is regrettable that neither Besant nor H.S. Salt made any attempt to interview the father at this time, though they knew perfectly well that he was still alive. Mrs. Jefferies and the brothers were possibly uncooperative concerning his whereabouts, but it seems unlikely that an attempt would have been made to offer a woefully inaccurate account of the writer's relations with his father when the possibility existed that such an account could be shattered by direct inquiry.<sup>7</sup> The other fact that needs emphasis is that the three letters in question were written by James Luckett at the age of eighty, only a few weeks before his own death in 1896. At this time Richard had been dead for nine years, the mother had recently died, and the 'old house at Coate' had been sold for some eighteen years. The letters are rambling, and contain a number of obvious contradictions of fact and errors of logic that might well be explained by incipient senility. The grammatical errors and lack of punctuation may also be indicative of failing powers, and it would be unfair to assume that these letters are trustworthy evidence applicable to the mature man. Moreover, the failure of the small-holding at Coate may well have caused a general bitterness that has coloured and distorted the impressions of earlier days.

But our speculations can go further. Miss F.C. Hall wrote her later article, 'The Forbears of Richard Jefferies', with the deliberate aim 'to give Richard's father his due' and to refute 'such things as were hurtful or misleading' in Besant's biography.<sup>8</sup> Now Besant's account would not strike the average reader as being in any way critical; indeed, James Luckett emerges as an impressive and sympathetic figure. Miss Hall seems unduly sensitive on this subject, but her attitude ironically draws attention to other traits which may well be of significance.

At one point, in referring to James Luckett, she alludes to 'the family trait of obstinacy' and this can be traced in her account through four generations from Richard's great-grandfather to himself. It was particularly noticeable in the father. She admits that he rebelled against the 'repression' of the home, that he 'never got on well with his father' (the Grandfather Iden of *Amaryllis*), and that his going to America in 1837 was an attempt to escape from the life at home.

---

<sup>7</sup> Again, Jefferies' own description was in a private letter which his relatives (his wife excepted) were not in a position to have seen. The fact that this agrees with the other accounts seems to me a strong argument in favour of the traditional view.

<sup>8</sup> See 'Jefferies Luckett', p.375.

This bitterness is echoed in that memorable scene in *Amaryllis at the Fair*, where Iden obstinately refuses to visit the grandfather on his birthday. Indeed, once we begin to look more closely, we notice a number of incidents in Jefferies' last work of fiction which suggest a by no means idealised portrait, and these too may have biographical origins. Thus the first contribution Iden makes to the novel is 'a sound like a growl' (Everyman Edition, p.203), and the whole opening conversation displays elements of gruff bitterness as well as keen sensitivity (the bitterness is, indeed, specifically linked to the sensitivity, his failure being a result of his artistic but unpractical nature). Of Amaryllis' flowers he comments: 'Trumpery rubbish—mean to dig 'em all up—would if I had the time . . . Have 'em carted out and drowed away—do for ashes to drow on the fields' (p.204). Later, when one of her drawings has been returned by an editor, he seriously wounds Amaryllis' feelings by exclaiming: 'Better drow that there fool stuff in the vire', and Jefferies sums up his attitude as 'growl, mutter, growl' (p.302). At such moments Iden is not all that far removed from the ill-tempered writer of the letters.

To isolate these incidents is, of course, to distort Jefferies' artistic effect, but it is curious how easily they are forgotten by readers familiar with the more sympathetic scenes in which he dozes in the armchair after dinner, paddles in the meadow, or watches the construction of his 'splendid gate'(p.341). I would suggest that Jefferies derived both aspects of Iden from his father, that his relatives have, understandably, emphasised the more endearing side, and that the letters reproduced by Looker and Porteous bear witness to the more crotchety aspects of his character which may well have intensified as he grew older.

Thus I believe that the truth lies, as one might expect, somewhere between the two extremes. It is worth remembering that Edward Thomas described the father as 'a funny-tempered man, full of unexpected likes and dislikes'. This seems fair. The newly published evidence suggests that the traditional view must be somewhat modified, but I cannot agree with the Looker-Porteous biography that the most detailed of the three letters 'better than anything else indicates the type of man James Luckett Jefferies was'. This seriously neglects the other side to the question. I have tried to show that it is possible, at least to some extent, to reconcile the two assessments, and the result is that James Luckett Jefferies emerges, paradoxically, as a more complex and interesting figure. This is as it should be, since he owes the fact of his remembrance to the achievements of his even more complex and interesting son.

## THE ESSENCE OF RICHARD JEFFERIES

*Richard Stewart*

Several of the essays in *RJS Journal* 38 (2023) tried to analyse exactly why the author considered Richard Jefferies to be such an outstanding and enduring writer. Many included a wide variety of passages to emphasise their comments but I have instead selected just two essays and summarised the opinions of the writers. The first is 'Idyllists of the Country Side' by George H. Ellwanger pages 66-86:

'The summer passes with its blaze of beauty, and the average person recalls, perchance, a turmoil of sunset dyes; while to Jefferies' heightened sense new hues were perceptible in the speedwell with every passing hour'.

'There can be no second *Life of the Fields*, other idylls may instruct and please, but in a different degree. A finer literarian may arise to hymn the paean of the open-air; but the combinative qualities that speak from Jefferies' later work must remain to him alone'.

'To recall his name is to recall the myriad beauties of Nature in all her tenses of the seasons, in a thousand conditions of light and sky and atmosphere; in countless phases of growth and blossoming. To know him is to approach nearer the heart of the flower, the mystic concave of the sky, and the elusive verge of the horizon'.

'He derived an unceasing pleasure from everything lovely, together with that rare felicity of discerning it in the most commonplace of things'.

'Even the very heart of London—Trafalgar Square—he has invested with a halo of poetry'.

'We can never cease to marvel at his phenomenal insight of Nature, his deep feeling, his poetic gift of expression, and his wonderful knowledge of every phase and mood of rural life'.

'Richard Jefferies, the Nature Mystic of the Wiltshire Downs' by Fred J. Lazell pages 98-107:

'Today we know that much of the writing of Richard Jefferies will live as long as the English language itself endures. But it will not be read by the multitude. It will be greatly prized by those who have looked upon the world and found it lovely and who have felt within their own lives some stirring of a spirit responsive to that which is nature'.

'He brought to his observation of earth and sky the imagination of a poet, the passion of a lover and the spiritual discernment of a mystic. It was the possession of this latter quality which made him one of the greatest of nature writers'.

‘He was to go through long years of training before he could recreate in words the colour and the song of the yellowhammer and put all the glamour of that scene into a single sentence’.

‘After this came a series of noble essays, gathered into two books called *The Life of the Fields* and *The Open Air*. Undoubtedly many of these are the very highest of Jefferies’ work, especially ‘The Pageant of Summer’. They are filled with harmonies of language, thought and feeling, and a sweetness of thought which is perhaps attained by no other nature writer’.

‘He shows us a world all sparkling with dew and shimmering with loveliness, as if it had just been created; that being done he straightaway proceeds to get at its spiritual essence and beauty’.

‘To him Nature yielded thoughts so sweet that for many he is and will ever be the sweetest, the most persuasive, the most winning voice, that has ever spoken of nature’.

### ‘TO RICHARD JEFFERIES’

This previously unknown anonymous tribute poem to Richard Jefferies was published in *Fun* on 24 Aug 1887, ten days after Jefferies’ death. *Fun* was published by W. Lay and a rival weekly to *Punch*. Peter Robins discovered the poem. It was also printed in the *Paisley and Renfrewshire Gazette* of 27 August 1887.

### To Richard Jefferies (Author of *The Gamekeeper at Home*)

GONE, gentle spirit, that so sweetly wrote  
Of sunny meadows gay and skylark’s note;  
Whose ev’ry phrase a posie of sweet speech,  
Found in a fragrant grove of lime or beech.  
On life’s hard footpath, rest upon the stile,  
And muse on Richard Jefferies for a while;  
Come, strive to see, as he ne’er chanced to fail,  
Joy in the sunlight, and sweetness in the gale.

All ye who love the balmy summer hours,  
All ye who love the hedge-row’s modest flowers,  
The song of birds, the ripple of the wave,  
The rush and lily that the brooklet’s lave,  
The meadows pleasant, and the sunlit sky,  
Think on who’s gone, and think, perchance and sigh.  
Tho’ sad his life, a fitful, painful dream,  
His spirit sweet and gentle as his theme.

## THE WAR CRY

In the *Spring Newsletter 2023* we published 'Infidel Jefferies' recording the claims that followed Jefferies' alleged reversion to the Christian faith. The historian of freethinking, John M. Robertson, was cited quoting from the Salvationist *War Cry* which, along with *The Spectator* and the *Christian*, he accused of burying Besant's admission of error.

We have since traced the issue of the *War Cry*, 27 May 1905, and republish below comment from Bramwell Booth<sup>1</sup> (pictured below) on the controversy in which he makes clear that sources of statements from infidel sources are often 'infected with the tainted waters of inaccuracy.'



### NOTES AND COMMENTS

#### INFIDELITY AND INACCURACY

Infidelity is not really helped forward by falsehood. A bad Cause may sometimes gain for the moment by the use of bad weapons, but in the end lies make a bad crew for any craft. They always scuttle the ship, and generally sink her. A

---

<sup>1</sup> Son of William Booth, founder, and was Chief of Staff at the time of writing, succeeding his father as General of The Salvation Army in 1912.

certain writer, anxious to score against Christianity,<sup>2</sup> has been making out that the celebrated naturalist, Richard Jefferies, whose scepticism for some years of his life was a great sorrow to all who knew him, died in his unbelief. But it is as necessary now as when Brewin Grant<sup>3</sup> first said so, to carefully check every statement which proceeds from infidel sources. These sources are often infected with the tainted waters of inaccuracy. Announcements proceeding from them often sound very specious and plausible, but on close examination it will usually be found that the taint is there. It is clearly so in this case.

### RICHARD JEFFERIES

For what are the facts? Richard Jefferies was for years undoubtedly a sceptic. He made rather a boast of it, and left in the story of his life the most melancholy confessions of the nothingness he professed and the emptiness it brought him. Here are some things he wrote which I take as an example of many others from his autobiography :-

For grief there is no consolation. It is useless to fill our hearts with bubbles. A loved one gone is gone, and as to the future—even if there be a future—it is unknown....There is no consolation: there is no relief; there is no hope certain; *the whole system* [of religious faith] *is a mere illusion*. But let us turning away from the illusion of a directing intelligence, look earnestly for something better than a God, seek for something higher than prayer....In human affairs everything happens by chance...and without any direction of an intelligence. [He means a God].

Now, however it has come to light that on his deathbed Richard Jefferies found that all this, as he himself said, was 'hollow'. In short, that, as so often happens in the presence of death, the swagger and pride of Unbelief was brought low, and the men who in health and prosperity deny the God who made them, are quick to cry for His mercy when they have to go to meet Him.

### INFIDELITY HELPLESS

All doubt about poor Jefferies' abandonment of his infidel nonsense when he came to die is set at rest by the publication (in *The Spectator*) of letters from those who were with him during the last months of his life, including his wife. I quote from two.

Mrs. Jefferies writes:—

He used to pray so earnestly for me and the children. Three weeks before he was taken he was laid on the sofa in the dining-room, and asked me to read the 6<sup>th</sup> Chapter of St Luke from the 20<sup>th</sup> verse. When I had finished he said, "Those are the

---

<sup>2</sup> H.S. Salt.

<sup>3</sup> Author and lecturer on Christianity and secularism.

words of Jesus; *they are true and all philosophy is hollow.*" Another time he said, "Oh God, I have done wrong, and thought wrong; it was my intellectual vanity. Listen to the prayer of my dearest girl." Almost his last conscious words were, "I have given myself unto God and Christ. You pray for me. Dear, merciful God—merciful Father"...

His friend, Mr. North, says almost his last intelligible words were:—

"Yes, yes, that is so. Help, Lord, for Jesus' sake. Darling, good-bye! God bless you and the children, and save you all from such great pain."

### INFIDELITY AND DISHONESTY

What are we to think of so-called Literary men who, in the face of such testimony as this, go on writing and publishing statements to the effect that this man died as he lived, that he withdrew no syllable of his writings against the Christian faith, and made no acceptance of any sort of dogma? Is not such conduct the basest form of chicanery and falsehood? And what is to be thought of so-called philosophy that has to resort to such methods of propagation? What a pack of lies it must be to need strutting up with such supports as this! Depend upon it there is a deeper meaning than appears at first sight in the words of the old Book: 'The FOOL hath said in his heart there is no God!'

### HIS LIFE STORY

Is not something due to the public who buy Richard Jefferies' life story? Would it not be in harmony with the high character of the great firm which publishes that book if they caused something like the following notice to be added to the title page in future editions:—

*Every pretence in this book which calls in question the truths of the Christian faith was recanted by the author on his death-bed. He then sought, and declared that he had found, mercy at the hands of God he had here denied.*

BRAMWELL BOOTH

## “TWAS RICHARD JEFFERIES’

*Peter Robins*

**T**wenty-five years after Jefferies’ death a New York literary weekly called for a collected edition of his works. In his front-page ‘Topics of the Week’ column published on 22 March 1902, the editor of *The New York Times Saturday Review of Books and Art* praised Jefferies’ books, including the novels, concluding:

We believe that this author has considerable ‘staying’ powers, but an examination of English catalogues shows that no publisher over there has yet seen fit to bring out a collected edition of his works. Richard Jefferies seems to us to be an author who is, in every way, worthy to be preserved in durable and appropriate form.

The paragraph prompted a letter to the weekly from C. St. John, published on 29 March 1902, in which he claimed he had met Jefferies several times ‘on down and weald’:

### **Another Word for Richard Jefferies**

*The New York Times Saturday Review of Books:*

Here’s from my heart, because you have—even if it is too late—called attention to Richard Jefferies.

I have often wondered and for long how it came that he who wrote of all things living and growing so lovingly, so tenderly, so gracefully, so understandingly, and without a trace of tediousness—how he came to be overlooked when those who love a graceful style and a panorama of Nature almost photographic in accuracy, have been restricted in a rather narrow field of, say, half a dozen writers of “Nature Books.” True, he has his readers in America, but so pitifully few!

It was when I had scarce attained to years of discretion and certainty and had not yet acquired a nice taste in reading, that I—then and for many years before, a dweller in the sunny shires south of the Thames—often in aimless wanderings met a weary, ailing man. On down and weald our paths daily, and often several times a day, crossed and more than once have we taken bread and cheese from pocket and lying on the grass among the whins in an English July or August, there and then eaten and talked and chummed.

’Twas Richard Jefferies. Delicate of health, the “life of the open air” was to be an elixir.

The acquaintance was all too short; it was terminated by his untimely death. That acquaintance turned my attention to his writings, as I hope your paragraph to their pleasure may turn many.

I think Messrs. Scribner's Sons sell a half dozen of his books, from the catalogue of Chatto & Windus of London.

I must not fail to take this opportunity—the first time I have written to you to say how much pleasure I get from your SATURDAY REVIEW OF BOOKS. It has the true bookish flavour.

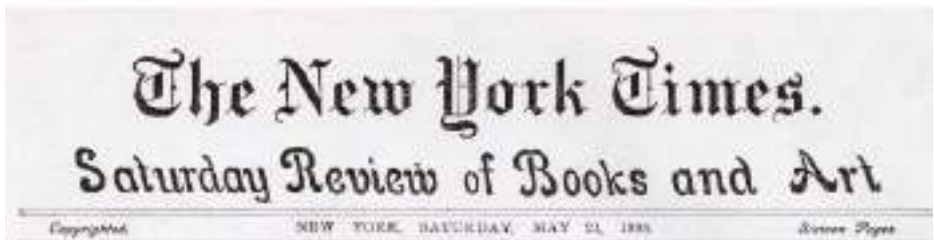
C. ST. JOHN.

New York City, March 22, 1902.

The few clues in the letter, together with evaluation of public records in the UK and US, have not been enough to identify C. St. John. His mentions of 'down and weald' and that his acquaintance with Jefferies 'was terminated by his untimely death' suggest they met in the vicinity of Crowborough. St. John's recollection disproves the notion that Jefferies was by choice a solitary rambler as he clearly took pleasure in discourse with others.

~ ~ ~

*The New York Times* published a book review section on Saturdays from 10 October 1896, announcing 'We begin today the publication of a Supplement which contains reviews of new books ... and other interesting matter with news of the day.' In 1911 the supplement moved to Sundays when it was thought, readers would have more leisure.



## THE RICHARD JEFFERIES AWARD 2022



Lee Schofield, winner of 2022 Richard Jefferies Award for nature writing



Barry Sloan, Lee Schofield, Angus Maclellan and John Price

On 22 May 2023 Lee Schofield was announced as the winner of the latest Richard Jefferies Award for *Wild Fell: Fighting for Nature on a Lake District Hill Farm* (Penguin). Barry Sloan, in his role as Chair of the judging panel described the book as a vivid and detailed account of Lee's work as site manager at RSPB Haweswater, where the aim is to discover 'how to rebalance farming and nature' and 'to develop a way to look after our land that occupies the middle ground between hill farming and conservation, restoring nature, respecting traditions,

producing food, and supporting the local economy'. This might sound like an almost impossible agenda, and Schofield does not duck the challenges he has faced in mediating between the interests of a variety of key stakeholders in a highly sensitive landscape. But although *Wild Fell* engages fully with the political, social, economic, cultural and financial contexts that affect Haweswater, it is above all an optimistic and uplifting record of projects that are advancing conservation, producing positive changes and enriching the biodiversity of the environment. These initiatives include altering land usage, especially by scaling back the number of sheep, extensive new planting of trees and wild flowers, restoring a river to its natural course, soil improvement, and developing eco-tourism to benefit the local economy. Success depends on having plans that interact and reinforce each other, and which accommodate both compromises and co-operation with the local community, and the book is a convincing illustration of what can be achieved when a conservation organisation works with a community to effect change.

Much of the appeal of *Wild Fell* stems from the fluency with which Lee Schofield conveys the intimate knowledge and deep feeling he has developed for the Haweswater landscape, his own personal commitment to enriching and developing it, and the unabashed delight he takes from each sign of progressive change. It is a highly personal story as well as a thoroughly documented account of a complex and ongoing conservation project, a combination which should earn it the wide readership it deserves.

Lee Schofield was delighted and commented:

As a first time author, and as someone who never imagined I'd have a book published, winning the Richard Jefferies Award is genuinely beyond my wildest dreams. There really would be no story to tell at Haweswater if it weren't for my wonderful RSPB colleagues past and present, and the inspiration and energy I've gained from the Lake District's growing band of conservationists and nature-friendly farmers. This award is really for all of them.

A presentation event took place at the White Horse Book Shop on Saturday 22 July 2023, attended by 35 people. Lee had previously received his cheque for £1000, a framed certificate, a year's subscription to the Society and two Jefferies books. John Price presented a third book: the Ruth Dollman illustrated edition of *Nature Near London*.

**Lee will be giving this year's Richard Jefferies Society Birthday Lecture on Monday 13 November at 7.30pm by Zoom and talking about the work going on at Haweswater.**

Many thanks to the judges: Barry Sloan (Chair), Rebecca Welshman, John Price, Debby Guest (White Horse Book Shop), Roger Ebbatson, Patrick Dillon and Colin Corkerton. Special thanks go to Rebecca and John who had the lengthy task of sifting through all the initial nominations. There were nearly 50 nominations for 2022 publications.

Nominations for this year's publications should be sent to the Hon. Secretary well before 1 December 2023. Nominations from the public and members are far more likely to lead to the finding of a gem of a book compared to those that the publishers nominate!

### BOOKS AND POEMS BY MEMBERS

*Four Quarters & more: poetry from around the year* (Greenwood Press, 1 May 2023) is Bob Woodroofe's latest collection and includes a wide selection of shorter pieces in various formats centred on the ever turning wheel of the year. They cover the changing seasons, the beauty of nature and the elements together with life and love, things that inspire and those that give enjoyment. The 72-page paperback book, containing 60 poems (see examples below) priced at only £5. and available from:  
[www.greenwoodpress.co.uk](http://www.greenwoodpress.co.uk) or email [bob.woodroofe@outlook.com](mailto:bob.woodroofe@outlook.com) or telephone 01386 446477.



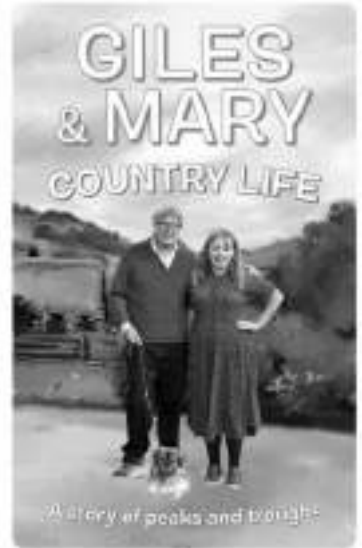
#### Helix

Hogweed skeletons rattle  
white in the wind with snails  
banded brown and cream  
each distinct from the other  
they clasp the hollow stems  
climb belly-footed to the light  
creep up six - seven - eight feet  
exposed no sustenance here  
a sitting target clustered together  
the brittle stalks festooned  
with their circular patterns  
with brown lips or white lips  
Cepea nemoralis or hortensis  
such spiral adornment that  
clings that flings love darts.

#### Seige

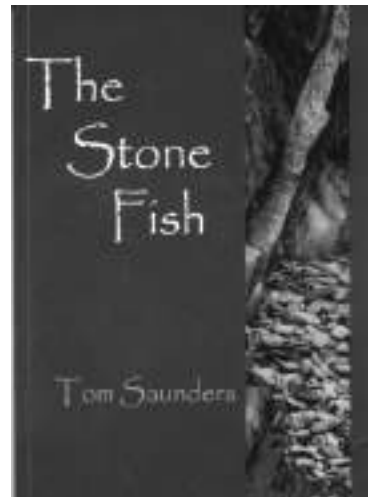
gold and green the plovers mix  
lapwing black on white in between  
the other's golden twist and flicker  
moorhens forage along the margins  
pick and dip amongst the grass  
then scutter back to safety  
crows mob a passing buzzard  
jackdaws loud in the treetops  
In the field squat and hunched  
amongst green spears of corn  
seven herons stand sentinel

*Country Life: The peaks and troughs* by Giles Wood and Mary Killen was published by Ebury in April 2023 (ISBN 978-1529900156). Giles described their second book as ‘a dogs dinner as usual but in the middle, good testimonials from local indigenae about local changes in the last 50 years. . . There’s a lot about Jefferies.’ Former townies Giles and Mary have embraced country life for over thirty years, each in their own different way. Mary is more inclined to engage in the social opportunities offered by the local community. While Giles’s pre-occupations include his organic no-dig veg patch and regenerative agriculture as ‘the only method that could save the ecosystem from imminent disaster’. Together they sift through the unhelpful dreamy myths and offer their own, two-handed pragmatic reality, obtainable for all. In robust back-and-forth exchange, they de-mystify every aspect of life in rural outposts, celebrating the peaks and navigating the troughs, from planning wars and ghost hunting to dog walking and bargain hunting.



*The Stone Fish* by Tom Saunders (Reuben Books, 2023), ISBN 978-1-99-931727-0, tells the tale of Jack McClegg who lives on an isolated Scottish island. His life changes when film director Edmund Byfleet and his two grown-up children, Dania and Rebob, enter his world. Through them he learns about a wider world, a wider world that is sometimes beyond his understanding and his control. This is also the story of Jack’s family, Jack’s best friend Connell O’Dowd and Jack’s uncle Bram, fisherman, great drinker and storyteller, and what can be seen and not seen, what you need and what you can do without, and what it takes to finally know who you are and what you really want.

Contact Jean Saunders for orders (£10. UK postage incl.).



**A** *History of Livestock and Wildlife: Animal Wealth and Human Usage* by Eric Jones was published on 3 August 2023 by Cambridge Scholars Publishing (ISBN: 978-1-5275-2542-9, 258pp.)

The use of wildlife products, together with advances in livestock feeding, were essential in propelling Western economic growth.

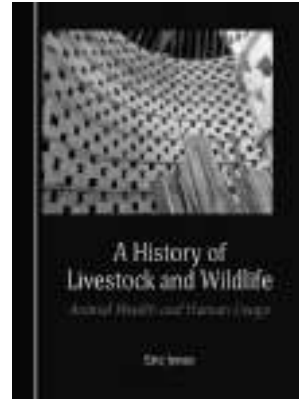
Extraordinarily, these early modern and early industrial features are side-lined relative to the role of manufacturing. This book restores the balance, detailing how many species were relocated around the world and how late the use of natural products has persisted.

The text describes how animals were driven immense distances to market and harnessed for transportation and to power machines. How the plundering of the animal kingdom and the development of livestock farming jointly created the Smithian Growth that ushered in the Industrial Revolution is also described. Even after industrialisation, animals are employed for innumerable purposes, besides being co-opted as pets.

Original insights include the changed proportion of farmed and wild animals; the global re-sorting of animal distributions; extent of late preindustrial technological advances; centrality of animal products and improved fodder supplies for early economic growth, with studies of two ignored crops; relationship of animal power to early industrialisation; long-distance droving of geese, turkeys and especially pigs; farming of semi-wild species; continued use of natural products in the age of synthetics; negative externalities of pet-keeping; and the modern recovery of some wildlife species in densely settled areas.

**G**iles Watson's *On the Chalk: Poems for the Ridgeway* was published in November 2021 by Lulu.com (ISBN: 9781471795541, 153pp).

It includes a poem, that the author has kindly allowed us to reproduce, which was inspired by the first two chapters of *Wild Life in a Southern County* and accompanied by a photograph of the Jefferies—Alfred Williams memorial stone on Burderop Down.



## RICHARD JEFFERIES COUNTRY

*Giles Watson*

Between this stone and Liddington  
Richard Jefferies roamed  
Wondering who built the Forts  
Or how the coombes were formed  
He stooped for hours to watch the ants  
Wear to dust their trails  
He watched the kestrel quarter ground  
He marvelled how she falls  
He tasted water from a pool  
His mouth was drawn with chalk  
And heard the paws of boxing hares  
Slapping. On he'd walk  
And question why on soil so parched  
His forebears built so high  
Envisaged woodlands on the downs  
To cool his sun-scoured way  
His eye looked deeper far than most  
And farther in he went  
But most of all he watched the larks  
How rapid their descent  
And saw them coloured like the dust  
Hiding by the road  
In days when larks were everywhere  
And hills so close to God



On 14 August 2023 Robin Stapleford was sitting in his summer-house, looking at the arbour and the sky, and wanted to honour the anniversary of Jefferies' death whilst reflecting on his own first coming across Jefferies' writings in 2018:

### FIVE YEARS WITH JEFFERIES

*Robin Stapleford*

Following the Sun-Meister: Purple-patch hunter  
Of his 'delicious' memoirs, his exquisite flights of fancy  
When freedom gives reign to his wildest, most poetic, imagination  
Imbued through the prose of love's quest, stream of consciousness

By the throbbing mass of Universe's revelatory *Inflatus*

Known only to the diligent contemplative Listener  
The *Fool on the Hill*, the classic wanderer of the Wilderness  
The Nature Dreamer, head in the clouds,  
Feet off the ground, to walk higher there, climb  
That hill of gazing, holy mountain of the Lord—

The Soul of mirth and unbridled love  
For the spirit-seekers, the ether-dwellers  
The visionaries like you, *Loony Dick*  
Share thy Scriptures with us, who feel the vibe of eternity's  
Longing for itself, as did you

Your yesterday is our today  
This eternity we share if we notice the now  
And the timeless quiet, in your footsteps we follow  
In your verses we think and reflect, too, bathed in the blue  
The whisper of your meditations

Still carried on the mystery of the breezes  
That go where they will, and in my thankfulness might I vow -  
They found me, too.  
Seeds scattered 140 years ago, yet coming through  
Bearing fruit in seasons due.

## FOUND POEMS IN JEFFERIES' WORKS

*Colin Blundell*

of eight thousand miles  
to the sky beneath  
thence a hollow to the stars  
mysterious nameless hollow—  
I am the mystery itself  
equal to the entire cosmos

no thought I have ever had  
has satisfied my soul

## BOOK REVIEW

### *A PECULIARLY ENGLISH GENIUS: OR A WILTSHIRE TAOIST. A BIOGRAPHY OF RICHARD JEFFERIES, VOL III, BY ANDREW ROSSABI*

*Richard Emeny*

Looking at the three volumes as an entity before returning to Volume III, one can see a pattern: where a specific title or piece of writing is the subject matter, there is a discussion of its publishing history and the struggle that sometimes led to the publication, the sort of book, novel, country life etc, the content, an analysis of plot and character and how it fits with the whole oeuvre. What is apparent is that what some of us regard as Jefferies' strengths as a writer, others regard as weakness.

Jefferies was the first writer of modern times to write about the country as a farmer's son. Clare and Blomfield fit that bill, even working the land themselves, but were poets and did not write with the same detail or approach as Jefferies. In fact, nobody much since Virgil and a few medieval writers with technical knowledge had done the same for the well recognised reason that there was no point in doing so, when everyone, or nearly everyone, was part of that rural life, its traditions, and way of work. The industrial revolution, agricultural depression, social changes therefrom, more urban work and the mass movement to cities put an end to that way of life and produced the circumstances for 'country writers' to appear. Of these, Jefferies was unconventional. Not only was he almost alone in his farming background and his experiences, but his work did not always match the expectations of some of the critical elements in the trading public, at least as to character and plot in his novels. Even today this causes bewilderment. I once lent a highly literate colleague a copy of *Amaryllis at the Fair*; he enjoyed it moderately, especially the first forty or so pages describing Old Iden's lunch and subsequent snooze, but pronounced that the book was not a novel. Rossabi points out surely correctly, that the weaknesses in plot and character that Jefferies often shows, simply demonstrated that Jefferies was following the traditions of Victorian melodrama, so was attempting something different to what a part of the readership was expecting.

A further problem that some people find is the embedding of detailed rural and agricultural matters in his fiction, but most readers divorced by a generation from their rural roots, found this interesting and delightful, I guess in much the same way that they found the works of Hardy appealed to them.

The rural non-fiction works were admired for all the details, accuracy and observation. W.H. Hudson is perhaps the only writer who comes close to Jefferies in this respect, when he is writing about his life on the pampas of Argentina. Jefferies has the edge over Edward Thomas and other writers in this with his near forensic knowledge of his subject matter. This is the case even though as Rossabi points out the country he wrote most about, apart from essays about London and Sussex, is contained in a couple of square miles. What a memory the man must have had, and how much his heart returned to Coate and North Wiltshire when he was living in the Surrey suburbs or in Sussex. Perhaps it was absence from these beloved places that impelled him to write his major works in towns such as Crowborough in such a short period of time. As Rossabi says, without the ability to be still and silent, no amount of detailed memory would have made such wonderful books, and, as a youthful shot he needed such stillness and silence to track down and not scare his prey. All these things came to a head when he moved permanently to London and the South-East, a long way from Coate. The decay and sale of the family farm no doubt also caused the intensity of his memory as an exile from where his heart lay.

I guess Volume III was the most difficult of the three to write; in a sense it is the most difficult to read. This not a reflection on the quality of writing or content, but simply recognises that it covers the years in which Jefferies' best known books were being published. Rossabi is walking over familiar ground. He subtitles the book 'The Years of Success 1876-1883'. The books published in this period, extraordinary in their number, which is reminiscent of Edward Thomas's literary output, as well as being a lot more successful, were received with acclaim, making him famous and financially secure. *The Gamekeeper at Home*, *Round About a Great Estate*, *Greene Ferne Farm* and others which are similarly familiar, became standard reading. Familiarity with those books does not make those titles easier to write about and it is good to see Rossabi bringing out the weaknesses as well as the strengths. He emphasises that despite the individual popularity of each title, Jefferies' work should be seen as an organic whole from his early career as a journalist for a Tory-leaning newspaper, which coloured his views, at least when they appeared in print, to the more philosophical or spiritual soul that he became. Financial success gave him space and time to develop his own trains of thought, much as the First World War did for Edward Thomas. Rossabi quotes a long passage from Thomas's biography of Jefferies, which perceptively illuminates this. From writing about farmers and life in Cirencester, Malmesbury or suchlike market towns, he moves to 'time is eternal' and how to him linear time does not exist, a tough journey. Whether coming from personal experience, either in the matter of fact world of markets and local politics, or contemplation on the summit of Liddington Hill, where so

many generations had trod before him, and whose Bronze Age shepherds cared for their flocks much as contemporary ones were doing in his time, his progress was linear, even if he believed time was not.

Like George Bourne and Edward Thomas, Jefferies recorded the passing of the old ways of rural life and agriculture, as he saw its destruction by the profit motive, by industrialisation, education and the associated social changes, but insofar as the changes led to a better life, and a more prosperous one, for the peasantry, they could not regret its passing, or could fail to welcome many of the changes. There is a juxtaposition of nostalgia with economic and social reality. There was a profound change in society, just as Jefferies' life changed with the success of *The Gamekeeper at Home*.

In Volume III, Rossabi identifies a change in Jefferies' writing and in his stance towards its contents. I am sure that he is correct in this: there is more minute detail, less ebullience and his viewpoint is more of a static one. Was this change caused by the advance of his fatal illness which killed him not long afterward? Perhaps, but he was also running out of memories of Coate and North Wiltshire. Rossabi points out that the influence of London and living in its suburbs might have been crucial. Like his admirer, Edward Thomas, he came to dislike the city as *After London* shows, although prior to that he had come to admire such features as for instance sunshine breaking through mist along the Thames, as had Monet and Pissarro at about the same time. The proximity of what might have appeared as new advanced thinking on social and economic matters could have changed his attitude to the labouring classes, although his deepest thoughts and most philosophical and spiritual, the beginnings of which can be seen in *Greene Ferne Farm* took over his writing.

It is perhaps too easy to read much into these developments: like any serious writer, Jefferies developed his ideas and his writing as he matured. This is reflected in all his books, but it was only after the success of *The Gamekeeper at Home* that he had sufficient freedom to write more or less what he wanted; until then the constraints of being a journalist as well as financial need had limited his independence. There is probably truth in all of this: there was certainly something of a sea change in the man, his style and his thoughts, which resulted finally in *The Story of My Heart* and that will be explored in Volume IV.

It is difficult to do justice to this and the earlier volumes; they are so packed with facts, opinions, not just Rossabi's own, and copious often fascinating notes that must have been the results of a life's scholarly work, research and study. To make the work so readable enhances the achievement.

All three volumes of the biography can be purchased from the Richard Jefferies Society (see *RJS Spring Newsletter*, 2023 for prices). Signed copies of Vol. III are available from the author. Contact the Hon. Sec. (see p.2) for more information or order online at:

<https://www.richardjefferiessociety.org/p/publications.html>

**A Peculiarly English Genius**  
**or, A Wiltshire Taoist**  
*A Biography of Richard Jefferies*



**Volume III: The Years of Success, 1876–1883**



ANDREW ROSSABI

REVIEW  
*ELEVATING WILTSHIRE: CONTEMPORARY ART AND AERIAL  
PHOTOGRAPHY* BY PATRICK DILLON

*John Price*

*Elevating Wiltshire* and can be purchased from the Wiltshire Museum, (41 Long Street, Devizes, SN10 1NS) for £15 plus £3.50 postage, ISBN: 9780907603030. Buy online at: <https://www.wiltshiremuseum.org.uk/product/elevating-wiltshire-exhibition-catalogue/>



This 87-page book is nominally a catalogue of an exhibition held at The Wiltshire Museum, Devizes from July 7<sup>th</sup> to October 15<sup>th</sup> 2023 of work by Anna Dillon and Hedley Thorne. It is, however, much more than that, and describes with some detailed care the journeys undertaken by the three contributors to arrive at the genesis of the exhibition.

Patrick (a long-time member of the RJS and a past Council Member), provides the embedding text, and Anna and Hedley each contribute illuminating sections of indented writing.

Patrick is a Cultural Ecologist, which means he operates in the three dimensions of most ecologists, plus the fourth dimension of time, and this is

becoming much more significant today as we need to understand more about the evolution of our landscapes and where we may be heading in future.

Anna is an artist whose work is much admired and has exhibited widely in Wiltshire and Oxfordshire.

Hedley has mastered the art of low-level drone photography to a remarkable degree, and he and Anna combine in this exhibition to provide stimulating and sometimes contrasting images of the same scenes, mainly of ancient earthworks. The catalogue pairs on opposite pages, their respective views of Avebury; Tan Hill; Old Sarum; Hackpen White Horse; Westbury White Horse; and the Wansdyke. Each representation demands study and admiration.

This book explains the background each of the contributors brings to the current exhibition.

Patrick outlines his career development, and, more importantly, his involvement with the Devizes Museum and WANHS. His memories of people like Dick Sandell, Marion Browne, John Leech, and John Peddie remind one of how important these ‘amateur’ volunteers were in shaping the current state of knowledge about many aspects of the County.

Anna pays tribute to the many artists who inspired and/or influenced her such as Peter Lanyon, Paul Nash, and Eric Ravilious. Particularly influential were her early years, memories when she lived near, and attended school at Avebury, where Patrick was teaching at the time.

Hedley was born in Berkshire but has Wiltshire ancestry from Ludgershall. His adoption of, and mastery of the latest drone technology is remarkable, and although always operating below the legal 400ft. ceiling, he often finds that lower altitudes, early or late in the day, provide the best images. He describes in sufficient, but not excessive details, the operation of this latest generation of camera drones.

In addition to Anna’s representational paintings, she is exhibiting some of her recent exploration of monoprint collages. These are certainly not as immediately ‘readable’ as her previous work, but she claims to have been inspired by earlier work by John Piper and John Nash. Her ‘Winter Landscape at Silbury’ is perhaps the most accessible to the untutored viewer like myself, and it reminded me of some Aboriginal paintings that interpret the landscape in a visionary way as seen from on high.

The exhibition is certainly well-worth visiting, and is accompanied by a collation of artefacts, books, and memorabilia put together by Patrick, which adds a further depth of understanding to the journeys of the contributors. If you do not, or cannot get to Devizes, however, the book is a remarkable free-standing ‘cultural ecology’ of the contributors; and has some very beautiful images included; 34 of them in total—in full colour.



‘The Mowing Machine’ illustrates ‘Notes on Landscape Painting’  
 From watercolours by Maud Umfreville Clarke used to illustrate the 1908  
 Chatto and Windus edition of Jefferies’ *The Life of the Fields*.



‘Poppies’ illustrates ‘The Pageant of Summer’



‘The Old House by the Silent Road’ (‘Meadow Thoughts’)



‘People in Villages See a Bill Stuck’ (‘Country Literature’)

From watercolours by Maud Umfreville Clarke used to illustrate the 1908  
Chatto and Windus edition of Jefferies’ *The Life of the Fields*.