

THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY SPRING NEWSLETTER 2005

REGISTERED CHARITY No. 1042838

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01865 735678 (Best before 7.00 pm or Saturdays)

FROM THE CHAIR

In sitting down to write my first Chairman's introduction to the Society's Newsletter, I have to confess to a fear of personal inadequacy in tackling the two major challenges facing me.

The first challenge is to pay adequate tribute to Len Grugeon, the Society's Chairman for the past 15 years., who died suddenly at the end of last summer after a, fortunately., fairly short period of serious ill health. The second is to help lead the Society in its fight against Swindon's proposed development of the remainder of "Jefferies' Land" around Coate. About this, I am writing elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Len Grugeon's enthusiasm for Richard Jefferies was evident to all members of the Society who knew, and worked with him. Despite advancing years and many other interests and commitments, he made great efforts to travel from Surrey to Swindon to chair Council meetings, the AGM, and Study Days. Council meetings he chaired were held first in John and Sheila Povey's front room, and more recently in the Conservative Club - a venue that must have caused him some intellectual and ideological discomfort. Indeed, I suspect that had it been a large portrait of Margaret Thatcher, rather than one of Winston Churchill, that was prominently stored along one wall of our meeting room, Len would have insisted on another room!

Whenever I receive the latest Society Newsletter, I have always turned first to "From the Chair". Len's self-taught literary skills were remarkable, and he seemed to bring a disciplined editorial facility to bear on his essays, that was not always apparent in oral discourse! His last two "From the Chair" musings were some of his finest, and the exposition of the parallels between *Wood Magic* and the US/Iraq situation, produced some stimulating reading. Similarly, his final reflections on the symbolic link between Gertrude Jekyll and Richard Jefferies struck a poignant note to those of us who attended Len's funeral, and had time to visit Godalming and see the Jekyll Museum, another organisation supported by Len and Lisl. Our Society was well represented at Len's funeral in a packed Guildford Crematorium. His son-in-law, Alasdair Buchan, delivered an amusing and affectionate address, (a shortened version of which is reproduced below), and a service sheet listed over 40 organisations which Len actively supported. His passion for Duke Ellington was acknowledged in the choice of "Take the A-Train" for the Dismissal music. The atmosphere at the funeral was one of thanksgiving and celebration of a full and active life, rather than simply an occasion for mourning, and, I think, reflected well Len's "joie de vivre". We were delighted to welcome Lisl to our AGM at Liddington, and I hope we can remain in contact with

her, and that she will be able to join the Society's activities from time to time in the future.

Finally, I should like to say how delighted I am that Hugoe Matthews has agreed to be our President. His knowledge, experience, and wisdom will be a great help to us all over the coming years.

John Price

Address given at Len Grugeon's funeral by Alasdair Buchan

Len was a passionate man - and there were many passions. Lisl first, of course. But it has to be said, she and the family learned to share with: jazz, photography, cricket, the Liberal Party, steam trains, Richard Jefferies, gardening, theatre, Wiltshire, classical music, walking, Shalford, politics, education, fine art. All were tackled with passion, enthusiasm and energy. Particularly if there was an underdog to be defended or an injustice pointed out.

But nothing aroused his passion more than words - discovering them, reading them, writing them, using them.

In a lifetime, he must have written more than a million of them, in letters, cards, short stories, plays, lecture notes, programme notes and, of course, newsletters.

If you only saw the Grugeon Christmas Newsletter you don't know the half of it. He produced them for Shalford Parish Council, Guildford Camera Club, the WEA, The Richard Jefferies Society.

But then there was his correspondence. Over nearly 70 years he wrote constantly and to everyone and on every topic under the sun.

To The Director of the British Museum:

'Dear Sir (and then there are some nice words about a Korean exhibition.) He finishes: Although I had only an hour available, I believe I correctly spotted two small errors in need of correction. One is the description of the Korean province of Paekche as in the 'south-east' of the country; whereas it should be shown in the south-west. The other matter is really quite minor but might cause some confusion - that is, if I am right. I came to the conclusion that the numbering of exhibits 183 and 184 had been reversed in the display cabinet.

I write in no carping sense but so that, if these are errors, they may be corrected before someone more important spots them.'

(Notice how he leaves the Director of the British Museum uncertain whether he might mean someone more important than him!)

However, the fattest of his letters files is the running correspondence, over more than 30 years, between him and Barclays Bank on the subject of reducing his overdraft. From the bank most letters began: 'Dear Mr Grugeon: I am sorry to hear about.' That's because most of his letters involved long, very detailed explanations of why his hoped-for return to the black couldn't happen for the moment. Broken lawn mowers, blocked drains, plans to emigrate to Austria, missing postal orders. Every event in his life was utilised. An accident involving Lisl was heaven-sent. It happened in 1968 and, as late as 1971, Len was still using it in mitigation to Barclays Bank.

The bank's letters are signed by a succession of managers, each presumably leaving the field, cowed and beaten, to enjoy a much-needed retirement.

Of course, Freud could tell you why Len gave the bank so much heartache. It was his revenge for the decades he had worked unhappily in the Midland Bank. Like H G Wells's delightful hero, Mr Polly in the draper's shop, he dreamed of the day he could escape. And like Mr Polly he eventually did. Through self education

and the Open University, where he was one of the first to graduate, he gained me degrees that allowed him to leave banking for a career as a college lecturer. How he must have enjoyed entering a world where ideas and words, not ledgers, came first.

Humour was his delight. He was rarely without a smile. He made us smile too whenever we saw him. He enriched all our lives. So - because he delighted in words with multiple meanings - I will end with the words of P T Barnum, when he was told the Human Cannonball had overshot the net and been killed. 'Oh dear,' said the great showman, 'Where are we ever going to get another man of that calibre?'

In the case of Len Grugeon, where indeed?

COUNCIL MEMBERS 2005

President: Hugoe Matthews (elected 2004 for 5 years)
Treasurer: Geoffrey Hirst (elected 2004 for 5 years)
Secretary: Phyllis Treitel (re-elected 2000 for 5 years)
Vice President: Brian Fullagar (Robert McCloy has resigned)
Members of Council:

John Price, Chairman (elected 2004 for 3 years) (with duties)
Margaret Evans, Membership Secretary (re-elected 2003 for 3 years) 23
Ray Morse, Meetings Secretary (re-elected 2003 for 3 years)
John Webb, Librarian (re-elected 2002 for 3 years) (Tel. 01793 853171)
Helen Newman (re-elected 2004 for 3 years)
Richard Stewart (re-elected 2004 for 3 years)
John Savage (elected 2002 for 3 years)
Eric Jones (elected 2003 for 2 years)

Co-opted: A.S. Hickerton

Error; Please amend your copy.

Page 19 of the Annual Report for 2004 should be amended as follows: Under the heading 'Treasurer', line 1, delete '2004' and insert 2000. The Hon. Sec. regrets this mistake.

GIFT AID

This scheme has proved so profitable for the Society that I have asked for forms to be sent to any members whose circumstances might have changed and who may like to sign up. Please ignore the form if it is not applicable to you.

Geoff Hirst, Treasurer

HELPERS WANTED

Examiner of Accounts

For the last 2 years our Examiner has been Mr Michael Steel of Godalming, the friend of our late Chairman, Len Grugeon. We now need to find another Examiner, though deeply grateful for Mr Steel's work on our behalf.

If any of our members know of someone who is able and willing to be our Examiner, would they please get in touch with the Hon. Sec., or with our Treasurer. Geoff Hirst (01993 703958). The Examiner should not be a member of the Society nor someone related to a member.

AGM REPORT LIDDEVGTON 2 OCTOBER 2004

Liddington Village Hall is always rewarding: the hall itself is almost luxurious, the church and churchyard are part of the scene, and just beyond is - the Hill. Although Friday and Sunday were wet and stormy, Saturday was delightful, though not quite warm enough for us to sit outside.

There were 26 of us at the AGM. including Lisl Grugeon. Not Len, alas, though many felt his spirit hovering near. Before the business part of the meeting began, John Price, who took the Chair, read out the address, given by Alasdair Buchan at Len's funeral on 13 September.

We elected Hugoe Matthews as our new President; Geoff Hirst, to our great relief, takes on a new 5 year stint as Treasurer; Helen Newman and Richard Stewart are to be Council members for another 3 years.

There was a long and useful discussion on the campaign to prevent developers from building on the green fields at Coate, and wanting to come right up to the boundary of Coate Water Country Park. It was reported to the *Swindon Evening Advertiser* that one of our famed members, John Fowles, had kindly sent in his petition form, and some members felt that we might build on this. Members of Council are grateful for any new ideas.

During the lunch break we were able to visit All Saints' Church, Liddington, specially opened for us by the verger Mr Archer; the building dates from the early years of the 13th century. Meanwhile, in the Hall were books and papers to inspect, books to buy at John Price's stall, and copies of Richard Stewart's new book of poetry *Green Man*. Most of us picnicked. Most came by car but 3 or 4 used public transport and shanks's pony (details on application). More members, and visitors joined us for the Birthday Lecture.

BIRTHDAY LECTURE; THE LAND THAT RICHARD JEFFERIES INHERITED

This lecture, which we were privileged to hear on the day of the AGM, is briefly summarised here; it will be published in the *Journal Rural History*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 2005.

In June 1993, Professor Jones gave a lecture to the Society at Ashbury: *The Gamekeeper Away from Home*.^{*} It was about gamekeepers, Professor Jones's ancestors having worked as gamekeepers in the Swindon area. His research into rural history is therefore wide and deep, making use of Jefferies' writing but also illuminating it for us.

In place of the Merry England legend, Professor Jones described for us the challenges that the agricultural poor had to face in the middle years of the 19th century, the reasons for the bad management of the land, and the fundamental changes taking place.

As Jefferies himself observed, more than once, much of the land was held in large estates, run for the benefit of the owner, much of it given over to hunting and game. The Napoleonic wars had led to food shortages and high prices. The repeal of the Corn Laws brought relief but, hardly had they begun to have effect, than improved transport (see Jefferies' articles in the *Livestock Journal*) enabled cheap foreign imports to flood in. Wage earners got cheap bread, but fanners and their employees ceased to prosper. Emigration, also noticed by Jefferies, followed. Professor Jones's thesis is that unequal ownership of land, and the use of it by rich owners for sporting purposes, made England almost unique, and not an

example to be followed. [*See Annual Report and Autumn Newsletter 1992-3 p. 11.]

COATE MUSEUM - OPENING DATES

The Museum will be open on the following dates (mostly Sundays) in 2005: 1 May, 15 May, 5 June, 19 June, 3 July, 17 July, 30 July (Saturday Study Day) 7 August, 21 August, 4 September, 11 September (Heritage Day), 18 September

The following members will, in turn, be there to show visitors round and sell souvenirs, leaflets and books: Sheila and John Povey, Ray Morse, Mark Daniel, John Price, John Webb, Jean Bone, Chris and Liz Bowles, Pam Smith, and Phyllis Treitel.

The house (part) and garden are open from 2.00 to 5.00 (no charge). The *Jefferies Land* video can also be played. There is parking in Coate Water Country Park (close by) and meals at the Sun Inn (next door).

In 2003 Sheila and John opened the Museum specially for the Swindon Antiques Collectors Club; this year they will welcome the Local History Society on 1 May. Last year, on Heritage Day, there were a record 27 visitors.

As the list of dates above indicates, there will be an extra opening for Study Day. Members of the public are not excluded on this occasion but it will not form part of the official openings rota.

Precise times cannot be given, this far ahead, but we hope to be there with the keys from 1.30 onwards. The garden is not locked.

THE WEA PLAQUE AT COATE

The Coate Museum Report (page 7 of the Annual Report) carried a description of a plaque to mark the planting of a tree at Coate by the WEA of 1921. Four officers were named on the plaque, one of whom was H Whiting. Our member, A J Clarke of Tetbury, Glos., has written to say that Mr Whiting was his grandfather.

Mr Clarke recalls 'childhood visits to Swindon where I first learned about both Jefferies and Williams. Neither were "thrust down my throat" but, cleverly, simply mentioned in passing as the nature writer of the book *Bevis* and the 'Hammerman Poet'. These seeds, carefully planted, thankfully fell on fertile ground and a few years later, as a teenager I discovered the true worth of both writers: I have ever since remained an ardent follower.'

THE SAVE COATE CAMPAIGN

The last Autumn Newsletter reported on the situation as it stood then with regard to the proposals to develop the whole area between Coate Country Park, the M4, and the A419, with houses, an industrial estate, an extension of the Great Western Hospital and a new campus for Bath University.

The outcome of these proposals depended in part on the report of the Inspector, following the Examination in Public of the Wiltshire and Swindon Structure Plan. Now read on:

1. Examination in Public

The report of the Inspector, published in October 2004, unfortunately came down in favour of the development at Coate. Unbelievably, he concluded that Coate should be included in what is known as the "Principal Urban Area" of Swindon - whilst not including in the designation, areas to the east of the A419 where mere

are already developments such as Sainsbury's superstore. The Inspector's recommendations are as follows:

'At the Swindon PUA development at Coate will be supported and should be defined in detail within the appropriate Local Plan. Proposals at this location should:

- i) provide for a university campus and associated facilities of approximately 60ha;
- ii) provide for a strategic employment allocation with linkages to the university development (scale to be determined by the Strategic Planning Authority); and
- iii) provide for 1800 dwellings.

Criteria should be included in the policy which:

- i) protect and enhance the existing environment and its biodiversity and include an appropriate sized buffer zone to the SSSI;
- ii) ensure the provision of a detailed strategic archaeological survey to be provided to inform the master planning of the site;
- iii) provide for strategic landscaping, recognising that the site is visible from the AONB to the south.'

Early in the report the Inspector said, 'At the EIP we heard the concerns of the Richard Jefferies Society and others, about the impact of development on the landscape and its historic links with the Victorian author... important nature conservation and landscape matters need to be protected as part of any development.'

One of the infuriating aspects of the EIP recommendations is that they were made on the basis of what has subsequently turned out to be incorrect information. At the hearing last July, the Inspector was informed that there was not sufficient space in Swindon town centre for the University's requirements. It is now apparent that there are adequate available brownfield development areas that could be used beneficially in this way.

2. Swindon Local Plan Enquiry

Having lost round one of the contest (as reported above) we are now in the middle of round two. The Swindon Local Plan Inquiry started in January, and will conclude in April. The proposals for Coate form one of the most controversial components of the Inquiry, and will be addressed specifically during the week beginning 18 April. Some aspects have already been considered, however, and I spoke at the sessions in January on general environmental aspects of the plan. I shall submit the Society's formal written objection in full by 25 February, and shall then participate in the round table session on Coate in April.

3. Topic Paper on Coate

Swindon Borough Council has issued a Topic Paper on mixed development at Coate. In its 15 pages it professes to include "all the relevant objections to the Local Plan allocation at Coate." Richard Jefferies, and his connections with the area are not mentioned once. In reply to my letter querying this omission, the Planning Officer wrote: 'Whilst objections have been raised to the impact on the landscape from which Jefferies took inspiration, it is very difficult to link these objections to planning designations dealt with by the Topic Paper. The most important aspects of the landscape at Coate are covered by Scheduled Ancient Monuments (sic), an adjacent SSSI (Coate Water), and a local nature reserve. These are recognised planning designations and are protected by the policies of the Local Plan.'

In other words, literary landscapes have no value and are not protected by any planning policies.

4. Other Objectors

It is good to report that we are not alone in our objections to the development. The Friends of the Earth; CPRE; Liddington, Cbiseldon, and Wanborough Parish Councils; and the Swindon Civic Trust, are all vehemently against this proposal; and I have been corresponding with other literary societies through the good auspices of the Alliance of Literary Societies, which are also facing threats to buildings or landscapes associated with particular authors.

Candida Lycett Green (John Betjeman's daughter), wrote an article in the issue of *Country Life* on January 20, headed "Will Bam be a Shower?". She expresses her concerns at the proposed developments, and refers back to her father's role, 30 years ago, in helping to save the farm buildings around the museum.

The www.savecoate.org.uk website is an excellent one (run by Jean Saunders of the Friends of the Earth) for both keeping up to date, contributing to the debate, and signing the "Save Coate" petition.

Please do everything within your power to help stop the ugly spread of Swindon engulfing the land that is so special to Richard Jefferies' admirers.

John Price

STUDY DAY; SATURDAY 30 JULY 2005 RICHARD JEFFERIES' COATE

This year we shall devote ourselves to Coate (which includes Coate Water but excludes Hodson and Burderop). Those members who visit often, are familiar with the places and objects to which Jefferies refers in his essays and books. This Study Day is to enable those who live at a distance to familiarise themselves with the territory, to see Jefferies' horizons, to walk his walks.

We shall gather, in the morning, at the Lawn Community Centre, Guildford Avenue, which is about halfway between Swindon Old Town where Jefferies went to school and where he visited his grandfather, and Coate (or Snodshill as James Luckett Jefferies preferred to call it) where he lived. Each of us will come with a Jefferies quotation related to a specific place or object in Coate: the milestone, a pub, a lane, Day House Farm, the house, the gate, a tree, a wall, a chapel, a shop ... Each of us will have 5 minutes.

After lunch we shall gather at Coate Farm, now a Museum, transport being provided for those who have no car and do not wish to walk. With the help of members with local knowledge we shall visit each spot identified during the morning session. The Museum will be open and the video in operation. If the weather is bad, we shall shelter.

There will be tea and discussion back at the Lawn Centre. Maps and leaflets and Roy Burton's photographs will be displayed. Bring your favourites.

Enquiries to Hon. Sec. or Ray Morse 01793 520 520. See Annual Report 2002, p.29, for map, or apply to Hon. Sec.

PROGRAMME

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 10.30 | Refreshments |
| 11.00 | Introduction to Richard Jefferies' Coate by Chairman, John Price.
Followed by individual contributions. |
| 12.30 | Summing up. Instructions for afternoon session. |
| Lunch: | Picnic at the Centre, tea/coffee provided. There are several eating places in Old Town.
The Sun Inn at Coate (next to Museum) serves meals. There is a shop opposite the Centre. |
| 2.00 | (or thereabouts) we meet again outside Coate Museum. Cars can be parked at
Coate Water - no charge. |
| 3.30 | Return to Centre; discussion. Tea.
Books, cards etc. will be on sale. Non-members welcome. |
| 4.30 | Disperse. |

Public Transport Catch bus number 10 or 11 in Fleming Way, opposite Debenhams. Book to Windsor Road. Runs 4 times per hour. Thames Transport tel. 01793 428428 Swindon Information Centre tel. 01793 530328

BIRDS IN BRIGHTON

Kemp Town Enclosures, in Brighton, is fortunate not only in possessing the finest gardens, but also, probably, the greatest variety of wild birds on any piece of land along the south coast. The two do not often go together, many gardens being almost devoid of wild life. For this we must thank the present management in allowing space and refuge for the birds, and in leaving ivy untrimmed until the berries have been taken - but also the devotion of those who, over the years, have acknowledged the value of birds in people's enjoyment of the gardens.

Left to fend entirely for themselves, birds would find even the garden's seven acres a pretty hard environment, with relatively few surviving winter and unkind springs. Of course, if every young bird survived, the whole earth would be carpeted with birds, only something like a 15 per cent survival rate being needed to maintain a population, so local cats (quite delightful, some of them) need not feel too guilty. Feeding and clean water helps to ensure the 15 per cent.

There has been controversy over whether birds should be fed at all during the nesting season, lest the young be given unsuitable food, but the RSPB recommend that where regular feeding has been practised it should not be stopped. It does seem that the birds know best, because bird-feed consumption actually drops in the early summer when insects are more abundant.

The species I have seen in or over the gardens during the past year were, in approximate order of frequency:

blackbird	carrion crow
herring gull	greenfinch
jackdaw	goldfinch
collared dove	chiffchaff
starling	willow warbler
wood pigeon (ringdove)	great tit
magpie	jay
feral pigeon	wren
robin	swift
dunnock (hedge sparrow)	blackheaded gull
blue tit	house sparrow
chaffinch	kestrel
rook	tern (variety uncertain)

I have paired rooks with carrion crows because, in the distance, it is difficult to tell them apart, also willow warblers and chiffchaffs. When the chiffchaff is "chiffchaffing," of course, its identification is easy.

I have not seen a thrush here during the last year, perhaps others have been more fortunate, and all the "swallow-like" birds flying over seem to have been swifts, though I may be wrong. We had a nuthatch about three years ago - it might be back. Incidentally, although not birds, it was interesting to see bats over the gardens last autumn.

Mark Daniel

Ed: This item was originally written for Mark's local residents' association. It allows comparison with Jefferies' accounts of birds in Brighton in the 1880s.

FIND THE STAINED-GLASS WINDOW

Carolyn Clarke has been helping Richard Wright prepare the CDs of scarce Jefferies works. The following passage in Chapter XVI of *Restless Human Hearts* intrigues her. There is not much to help the reader to identify the 'famous stained-glass window in St. Gudule' but quite a lot to identify the window that Jefferies (Claudius) preferred. The only hint is that it is in an 'obscure Gloucestershire village' *a wretched little town, or rather village, out of the track of tourists'. It might be Cotswold, even Fairford.

Carolyn would like to know if anyone can identify the church with the window illuminating hellfire. She has enjoyed reading *Restless Human Hearts* and recommends it. Members can apply to borrow the Society's CD (See page 11 or down-load the searchable version from http://homepages.inug.com.au/~richwrig/RestiessHH_3 vols_12.txt Richard would be pleased to hear from you.

RESTLESS HUMAN HEARTS CHAP XVI

Claudius did not admire the famous stained-glass window in St. Gudule. There was an exquisite finish, a delicate colouring, a noble proportion about it; but it lacked the one essential feature. Gaze at it as long as you might, you never saw the mind of the artist rise up before you. It was a picture - nothing more - not a thought. He had a memory of another window far away, on the edge of an English county, buried in the obscurity of a wretched little town, or rather village, out of the track of tourists or seekers after art. This window fell flat on the eye at first. Taught to expect a sudden surprise by the gossip of the country-side, as the traveller approaches it the eye wanders over it disappointed, dulled, and deadened. But by and by, with silence and with steady gazing on this window, the grotesque legends grow into a grim life, and the figures move and shriek and writhe in agony in that horrible hell. A vast mass of colour in purple, blue and yellow - the great daubs of blue resolve themselves into demons thus represented of the most intense flame. For the hottest fire is blue - look at a candle, look at the jet of gas, there is a blue spot, an azure circle; therefore has the artist made his demons purplish and blue, whose very approach shrivels up the damned. And where is he - the dweller in the pit? See, he is at the bottom, as if supporting the whole diabolical scene upon his shoulders, the Atlas of Hades. Here is an awful toad; here and there grow flowers - yes, absolutely yellow and blue flowers - the lilies of the valley of the shadow of death. Gaze at it, and gradually the rudeness, the utter want of cohesion in the picture, the contempt of all perspective, fade away out of sight, and it becomes a breathing reality, breathing fire and torture and misery indescribable. The mind of the artist, his ideas, stand out before you, fasten on and fascinate you, and form a picture on your mind which time cannot efface. To Claudius this was genius; and the window at St. Gudule, with all its delicate proportion, its exquisite colour, was tame and flat - a mere drawing-room sketch in copybook handwriting, like the flourishes on the first page of the ciphering-book - clever penmanship, but meaning nothing. The unknown artist who wrote his signature in these marvellous pictures upon the windows in the obscure Gloucestershire village had a meaning, and has left it plain to all who choose to see it. He was the Dore of those days; and in our time what would be Dante to us with Dore to give form and shape to the ideas of the poet?

CITING OF RJ - RICHARD JEFFERIES AND FRANK BRIDGE

Michael Kennedy's review of classical CDs in the *Sunday Telegraph* of 22 August 2004 included a review of: Frank Bridge - *Enter Spring, The Sea, Summer, Two Poems*. New Zealand s.o/Judd. (Naxos 8.557167, £4.99). He wrote: 'James Judd conducts splendid and finely recorded performances of Bridge's orchestral works. Of special interest are the *Two Poems* of 1915, inspired by the writings on nature by Richard Jefferies (does anyone read him today? They should.). These are refutations in themselves of the sneers about the English pastoral tradition, the first meditative and mysterious, the second joyful and dance-like

BOOKS

Any old Boohs? Those of us who supervise the Museum in the summer like to have a few low-priced Jefferies titles to sell to the public. Just now, there aren't any. We should be grateful for offers of - I won't say unwanted, since no book by Jefferies is ever unwanted - spare books to put on sale. The money paid for them would go into our funds. Scruffiness is no object. Hand in, or send, to any member of Council, or to Hon. Sec.

Bookdealers who stock Jefferies Your first port of call is John Price, telephone 01672 515150 (address - page 3) or George Miller, telephone 01691 658330, 10 Upper Church Street, Oswestry, Shropshire SY113AE.

Two book dealers spotted at a recent fair are:

Church Green Books, 46 Market Square, Witney, Oxon. OX8 6AL

Tel. 01993 700822

Chantry Books, 24 Cobnar Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S8 8QB

Tel. 01142748958 They will be sent copies of this Newsletter and some of our leaflets.

Jefferies* Books - Previous Owners

Nick Baker, South Darenth, Kent writes: 'One of my most valued advantages of having access to the Internet is its use as a market place, particularly when it comes to obtaining long-lost books. This year I turned my attention to seeing what I could find in the line of RJ. Usually I find that a site such as www.abebooks.com finds something. I was surprised at how many copies of RJ's out of print books are offered from the USA. Usually I have to reject them because of problems of payment but, this year, there have been a lot of offers from booksellers in the UK. The first that I found was *Jefferies Countryside* edited by S J Looker (1944) - some very fine b/w photographs. I found the chapter 'Sea, Sky and Down' a joy. There is a signature in the front of the book - name appears to be Peter le Riei - a member from the past perhaps?

In 1923 someone by the name of Lloris (?) Pelhybridge owned *A Pageant of Summer* (this edition printed in 1914). It is a wonderful pen portrait of that season of the year.

In 1941 Mr Looker edited *The Nature Diaries and Notebooks of Richard Jefferies*. As a lifelong observer of the weather, I was interested in RJ's observations of the same - especially the way he links it with the landscape - something the modern meteorologist does not seem able to do.

My copy of the *Jefferies Companion* was printed as a 'Country Book Club edition' in 1952 and contained a number of pamphlets about the CBC - heavily supported by one, who was a voice from my childhood, A G Street. This volume contains some fine engravings by Charles Whympers.

I was looking at the book selection in a local Oxfam shop in January when I saw a copy of *Field and Farm* - this contains some notes on 'The Genesis of The Story of My Heart', plus several appendices including the gathering at RJ's grave on 6 November 1948 - the centenary of his birth.

The Country Book Club also published *Chronicles of the Hedges* - another RJ treasure trove. This appears to have been owned (in 1950) by Claire M Bream. I am always intrigued at the history of a book's previous ownership.

So, I am getting well supplied in RJ's writings. I'm afraid I feel at a disadvantage at being at a distance from the activities of the Society and from Jefferies Country. I am a pensioner now but I must get to some of your meetings sometime.'

RICHARD MABEY

Members may like to know of Richard Mabey's new book *Nature Cure*, Chatto & Windus £15.99. Richard was briefly our President but stepped down because of illness. We are delighted that he has recovered and is back to his old form. An extract from the new book appeared in *The Times* Saturday 22 January 2005.

OTHER SOCIETIES

The Henry Williamson Society. Their *Journal*, No. 40, while not wholly devoted to Henry Williamson's time farming in Norfolk, has many pages of great interest about it, including extracts from contemporary newspapers, photographs of the making of the film 'The Vanishing Hedgerows' for BBC TV (August 1972) and comments on a book about Kenneth Allsop.

Alliance of Literary Societies. Their latest Newsletter gives details of events organised by our sister societies - see www.sndc.demon.co.uk. On 21 and 22 May The Charles Lamb Society are hosts for an Alliance weekend, in London. Bookings need to be in by 31 March but latecomers can participate. The Hon. Sec. has a programme. It looks fascinating.

Wilts Archaeological & Natural History Society. The Hon. Sec. has the 2005 ticket. If any member wishes to visit the Museum in Devizes they should apply to her. She also has the Society's new programme of talks, lectures, dinners, outings, and, for about £650, a week in Rome (12-19 October).

Edward Thomas Fellowship. Newsletter (No. 53) arrived just in time for mention. There is much in it to interest this Society too: what is thought to be an early article by Thomas (1895) entitled 'Birds in March'; an article by Kedrun Laurie on 'The Schooling of Helen Noble'; a list of current reprints of Thomas's works; and a charming recent photograph of Myfanwy Thomas. The Autumn Walk (Eastbury) will be on 25 September 2005.

RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE AND LOAN

If you would like any of the following, please write to Mrs. Norma Goodwin, Wildings, 3a Momford Road, Oliver's Battery, Winchester SO22 4LE.

Postcards:	now 25p or any 3 for	65p
Watercolour of Liddington Hill & quotation	Wild flowers & quotation Portrait of Richard Jefferies	
Richard Jefferies & Old Town (guided walk)		25p
Richard Jefferies in Eltham		25p
Richard Jefferies in Surbiton		50p
Richard Jefferies & Coate Water (guided walk)		50p
A Jefferies Land itinerary		20p
Back numbers of the Journal		f 1 .00
<i>The Story of My Heart</i> (paperback)		£2.00
Richard Jefferies in Sussex (New)		25p

Postage Add 20p for orders up to f 1, 40p for orders up to £2 and 60p for orders £2 and over. Very small orders can be paid in postage stamps.

Scarce Jefferies Works on CD

These may also now be obtained on loan from Mrs. Goodwin:

CD-01 *The Scarlet Shawl*

CD-02 *Jefferies Land*

CD-03 *Greene Ferne Farm*

CD-04 *Restless Human Hearts*

A fee of £1 is charged for the loan of each CD. See page 6 of Spring Newsletter 2004 for details. Cheques to the Richard Jefferies Society.

Other Publications. There are still some copies of *The Forward Life of Richard Jefferies: A Chronological Study*, by Hugoe Matthews and Phyllis Treitel. It is a great help to anyone researching Jefferies' daily life and work. A copy can be obtained from Phyllis for a special price of £10 including postage. Cheques to 'The Richard Jefferies Society' to whom all proceeds will go.

Also *The Jefferies Canon*, by our ex-President W J Keith. This is a 40-page booklet listing and summarising 74 of Jefferies' essays with a view to their authenticity. Price £3.

Copies of the video, *Jefferies Land*, may still be obtained, price £10, from John Webb, Padbrook, Bincknoll Lane, Wootton Bassett, Wills. SN4 8QR.

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2005

Monday* 7 March

Members' Evening. Joint Meeting with Friends of Alfred Williams.

Monday* 4 April Mark Daniel:

'Richard Jefferies' Use of Dialect'.

Monday* 9 May Jon Cannon:

'Along Chalk: On Walking the Downs in the spirit of Richard Jefferies'.

*Meetings begin at 7.30 in the Arts Centre, Devizes Road, Swindon. Visitors welcome - no charge.

Saturday 30 July

Study Day. 'Richard Jefferies and Coate'.

Lawn Community Centre, Swindon; walks to Coate Museum and environs. For details, see page 7. Apply to Hon. Sec. for map.

Saturday 8 October Annual General Meeting at Church Hall, Chiseldon. Details in next Newsletter. Birthday Lecture. Speaker - Hugoe Matthews: 'Richard Jefferies: An Independent Mind'.

Monday* 5 December

Ray Morse: Slides from the Society's Collection.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

Members' names and addresses are held on a computer data base. We are required by the Data Protection Act 1984 to inform members that they have the right to object to information being held in this way.

The Newsletter has been compiled and edited by Phyllis Treitel. Helen Newman has done the typing. Printing and despatch by Margaret Evans and Phyllis Treitel.