

THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY

**AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2016
& ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16**



From a watercolour painting by Geoff Moss
The driveway into Coate Farm
from the Marlborough Road (see p.28)

THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY (Registered Charity No 1042838) was founded in 1950 to promote appreciation and study of the writings of Richard Jefferies (1848-1887).

Annual Membership runs from 1st July and is open to all on payment of the current subscription of £12 single or £14 couple (£8 students). Overseas Members incur additional postal charges of £5.

Members receive spring and autumn newsletters, an annual report and summer and winter *Journals*. The Society has a library of books by and about Richard Jefferies that is held at Duncan Pepper's home. The Society's archives are placed in the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre, Chippenham, or are on display at the Richard Jefferies Museum. Activities include a spring meeting, study day, special outings, a Birthday Lecture and an Annual General Meeting.

TRUSTEES AND COUNCIL MEMBERS 2015-16

Peter Bainbridge (Treasurer), Simon Coleman, Patrick Dillon, Roger Ebbatson, Margaret Hunt (Swindon Secretary), Eric Jones (Vice Chairman), Ray Morse (Vice President), Duncan Pepper, Sheila Povey (Vice President), John Price (Chairman), Andrew Rossabi (President), Jean Saunders (Secretary), Richard Stewart, Phyllis Treitel (Vice President), and Rebecca Welshman.

Hon. Sec. Jean Saunders
The Old Mill, Mill Drive, Foulsham,
Norfolk NR20 5RB
☎ 01362 683210
Email: info@richardjefferiessociety.co.uk

Website: <http://richardjefferiessociety.co.uk>



NEWSLETTER: edited by Jean Saunders; proof-read by Peter Robins. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Society. The deadline to submit material for the Spring 2017 Newsletter is **1st March 2017**. Please send your contributions, preferably by email, to the Hon. Secretary as above.

CONTENTS

Page	
4	From the Chair
6	From the Secretary
Reports of meetings 2016	
6	Joint meeting with the Friends of Alfred Williams
8	Summer Outing: The John Moore Countryside Museum
11	Alliance of Literary Societies' weekend
News	
17	The Richard Jefferies Society Writers' Prize
18	Jefferies' Spoken Word on CD
18	Round About a Great Estate
19	Grade II listing
20	Last Photograph of Richard Jefferies?
22	The Jefferies Land Fund
22	Citings of Richard Jefferies
28	Those who have departed: Geoff Moss
29	Richard Jefferies Museum Trust Report
Books	
30	Books by members
	– <i>Scattered Light</i> 'Salisbury Cathedral: the bust of Richard Jefferies'
31	– <i>Middle Ridgeway</i>
31	– <i>Landscapes of Eternal Return</i>
32	– <i>Karma Road</i> and <i>Kate Won't Wait</i>
32	Books for sale
32	Mail Order Books
AGM and Birthday Lecture	
33	Programme for AGM and Birthday Lecture
34	Directions to Liddington Village Hall
35	Map
36	Agenda for AGM
37	- Minutes of 2015 AGM
41	- Treasurer's Annual Report
43	Events and Meetings 2016-17
44	Poster for Birthday Lecture

DATA PROTECTION ACT

Members' names and addresses are held on a computer database. We are required by the Data Protection Act 1998 to inform members that they have the right to object to information being held in this way.

FROM THE CHAIR



Sir John Lister-Kaye (left) congratulated by John Price

The highlight of the past six months for me was the presentation of the first Richard Jefferies Society Writers' Prize to Sir John Lister-Kaye, which went off very well. Canongate the publishers of *Gods of the Morning*, agreed to a reception at their Edinburgh HQ, and accordingly I went up for the presentation at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, March 15th. Sir John and his wife, daughter, and daughter-in-law came down from Aiglas, and Canongate laid on some fizz and nibbles. John's editor spoke first; then I spoke about the Society; John Webb; and the Prize, and finally Sir John spoke about his writing career. He said he had always wanted to be a writer, but had no encouragement from his parents, and until he met Gavin Maxwell (who later, as he was dying), asked John to 'finish the story of the otters', no-one had given him any encouragement. Since then, as his wife told me afterwards, he has written something every day. Maxwell's advice was: 'All you need is a pencil and paper to get started; there are no other set-up costs whatever'. (Read more about the award on p.17)

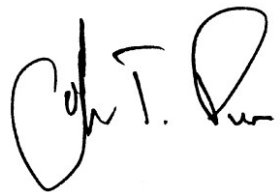
John's wife told me how thrilled he was to win the Prize – the first literary award he had ever achieved – and how delighted he had been to receive the notification in a proper letter! Very much a sign of the times. She also told me that he was on a real 'high' when he spoke at the Lakes Literary Festival in Keswick earlier in the month at the launch of the paperback edition of the book.

I was conscious as I made the presentation, that it consisted solely of a cheque; there was no cup or other permanent material sign of the award. Since then, however, I am delighted to say that Sir John has written to me, offering to fund a graphic artist to design a certificate/citation to be given to each prize-winner, that we could use in subsequent years.

There has since been an interesting development with regard to the Prize. Whilst discussing another matter with the proprietor of our local independent bookshop, the White Horse Bookshop (Marlborough); I mentioned the Writers' Prize, and to whom it had recently been awarded. Angus MacLennan, the Manager, immediately came up with an offer to add £500 to the prize money – thus doubling the total to £1,000, and that the award should be renamed the RJS and White Horse Bookshop Literary Prize. As an experienced bookshop manager (he managed the branch of Waterstones in Chelsea), Angus has contacts with all the publishing world, and undertook to provide all the publicity for the award, and arrange for publishers to submit free copies of possible titles to us. To me, this seemed to be a wonderful offer, which would immediately raise the profile of the Society and the Prize. It would also save us from much hard work and expense in drumming up the necessary public profile for the award. I therefore, with the full support of the Executive Council, accepted the offer.

Since then, nominated books have been arriving, but we still welcome suggestions from members as to suitable contenders; the important criterion being that they are published in the current calendar year.

Finally, I have just been shown a copy of the recent Aiglas Field Centre Brochure for 2017, and it contains a photograph of the presentation with a reference to the RJS Award. I am delighted that this use of John Webb's generous legacy has been so appropriate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Price', with a large, stylized initial 'J' and 'P'.

John Price
29th August 2016

FROM THE SECRETARY

Jean Saunders

A warm welcome is extended to new members who have joined the Society since September 2015:

Helen Dixon - London

Carlos Hood - Kent

Terence Sackett - Somerset

Kody Taylor – Canada

Bernard White – Oxfordshire

The total membership during the 2015-16 subscription year, that ended on 30th June 2016, numbered 226 – this includes 54 joint members and four organisations. Life membership applies to 34 members. Although the majority live in the United Kingdom, others live in Europe or English-speaking countries. Regrettably, in common with virtually all organisations, membership numbers are in slow decline. I have analysed figures back to 1965. Membership peaked at 414 in 1991 but it is now down to what it was in 1975. However growth in access to the Internet has opened up a new and younger audience to Richard Jefferies. Annual subscriptions were due on 1st July – thank you to those members who paid promptly. There are memory joggers enclosed for the handful left!

JOINT MEETING: Richard Jefferies Society and Friends of Alfred Williams,
Richard Jefferies Museum, Saturday 5th March 2016.

Margaret Hunt

The annual meeting of the two organisations, who came together to share readings by or about Alfred Williams and Richard Jefferies, was hosted by the Friends this year and attended by fourteen members of one or both of the societies. Roy Burton took the chair. It was agreed that future joint meetings will be held on the first Saturday in April rather than March, avoiding Easter should it fall then.

The meeting began with an announcement by John Price of a recent planning application in respect of the housing development adjacent to the Museum. He also drew attention to the fact that Swindon Borough Council was introducing car parking charges at Coate Water – a change that could have an influence on Museum visitor numbers. Reference was made to Eric Jones' excellent 'Introduction' to the recently-published *The Farmer's World* (featured on the back cover of the Spring 2016 RJS Newsletter). John Price handed to Roy Burton six Alfred Williams' books that had been in storage in the RJS Library: *Nature and Other Poems* by A. W. (1912); *Life in a Railway Factory*; *Round About the Upper Thames, collected and edited by A.W.* (1923); *Alfred Williams – his Life and Work* by Leonard Clark (1945); *Alfred Williams – Ploughboy, Hammerman. Poet & Author* by H. Byett (1933) (with a signed dedication by the author). These were gratefully accepted, and would be added to the FoAW collection of artefacts that were held on its behalf by the Alfred Williams Heritage Society.

READINGS

Graeme Franklin gave the first reading, which was taken from Alfred Williams' *Life in a Railway Factory*. The persistent bullying of a very conscientious worker was the theme.

Following, was Phyllis Treitel's choice of an aptly seasonal contribution from the chapter entitled 'In the Field: March', from *Chronicles of the Hedges* by Richard Jefferies.

'Out of Doors in February', from Jefferies' *The Open Air*, was Peter Bainbridge's choice. This indicated the author's pleasure at being out of the house in rainy winter weather.

The reading by Ray Morse came from *The Life of the Fields*, giving Jefferies' description of 'Nature Near Brighton'.

Eric Jones read from an article by Richard Jefferies that had originally been published in *The Live Stock Journal* on 16th March 1877. This was entitled 'Minor Sources of Income', and chided farmers for ignoring ways of making a living, other than that of grain-growing.

Margaret Hunt had found her contribution while volunteering at the Richard Jefferies Museum. Entitled *Essay on Instinct*, passages chosen concentrated upon dog behaviour observed by Jefferies as evidence of canine reasoning and other capabilities.

A reading by Gillian Bromhead came next. This was 'Three Pictures' from Jefferies' *Field and Farm*, which had given the reader a very clear view of the author's life and times.

John Price's selected reading came from *Hodge and his Masters*. It consisted of a detailed account of the way in which a farmer's daughter, brought up in impoverished circumstances, had been introduced into, and influenced by, affluent society.

Roy Burton then handed out copies of a letter from FoAW member John Payne, dated 4th November 2015, which had been written in response to hearing the sad news of Kaye Franklin's death. John had also very kindly sent three complimentary copies of his book *The West Country: a cultural history* (2009). A free raffle, organised by Roy, led to the lucky winners being Ray Morse, Phyllis Treitel and Peter Bainbridge. Included in the book were two quotations from *Life in a Railway Factory*, both read to the meeting by Roy; these described (1) the early morning journey to the Railway Works and (2) the night shift.

Kathleen Wyatt and Roy Burton brought the contributions to a close by giving a shared reading of the Alfred Williams poem 'Rustic Song', copies of which were handed round. Also distributed was an appreciation of this poem written in 2004 by June Webb, a former member of FoAW.

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm, after which tea / coffee and cake were served.

STUDY DAY: Richard Jefferies' Networks, Saturday 14th May 2016.

Regrettably there were many apologies from members who were unable to attend; only three made it! As such, the study day was postponed.

SUMMER OUTING: The John Moore Countryside Museum in Tewkesbury

Valerie Haworth

On Thursday 14th July nine of us, some of whom had travelled considerable distances, met at the Museum which is part of a lovingly restored row of 15th Century timber-framed buildings built by the Monks of Tewkesbury Abbey. All have been continuously lived in or otherwise used (some are now offices) and the Museum and adjacent Merchant's House (of which more shortly) have been returned as closely to their original forms as modern construction regulations and practice will allow. We were greeted by Curator Simon Lawton and his assistant, Gemma, and gathered in the delightful walled garden to the rear. Julia Tolley, from Brighton, had brought for our interest a brochure, several decades old, of the Tudor House Hotel, where John Moore had lived as a boy, and a guidebook to Tewkesbury, published in about 1931, which Simon found particularly interesting.

After a welcome 'cuppa' we adjourned inside. The Museum, which opened in 1980, is owned by the Abbey Lawn Trust and honours the writing of John, who was a prophetic conservationist and a committed campaigner, in particular, against the use of poisonous chemicals on the land. Its Natural History collection covers three floors and contains preserved animals and birds against a recreated woodland background, and some on a 'touching table' where they can be handled; there are displays of agricultural implements, information on farming and conservation, and board-displays of information about John and his work.



John Moore Museum garden

Gemma showed us the little Merchant's House, at one stage the home of a family of six. The single ground-floor room – both living hall and workshop – had an earth floor; at its centre was the fire, from which the smoke rose to escape through a

smoke-void in the high sloping ceiling, and over the flames would have been a spit; the poor could not afford meat, but by law in Tudor times fish had to be eaten three times a week – and as ‘fish’ was defined as anything which lived in water this provided scope for a varied diet. The front part of the ground floor was the little shop, which opened onto the street by way of a large shutter, from which the Merchant sold his wares. Upstairs in the single bedroom was a four-poster bed with a pull-out truckle below it for the children (and we think of this as a modern invention!); the exhortation ‘sleep tight’ referred to the tightening of the ropes across the truckle-frame which supported the mattress. We learned that the contents of the ‘his and her’ night-pots below the bed were not without value; when transferred to the privy the ‘night-soil’ was collected by a man with a cart and shovel to become fertiliser, for which the donors were paid a small sum, and urine was important in fabric manufacture as its application improved the retention of coloured dye.

The Old Baptist Chapel, thought to be the oldest of its kind in the country, is down a side-alley just across the main road; originally a private house, its location reduced the risk of discovery once it became used by the clandestinely established Baptist cause. Simon explained the dangers involved as nonconformists were persecuted during much of the 17th Century. The actual Baptistry was created, by excavation to a depth of a few feet below ground level, in 1662; access was down four stone steps, enabling total immersion; for safety it is now covered by removable boarding – and none of us cared to go down. Following restoration, in 1976, to its 1720 appearance, the interior of the building is light and airy and has a strangely ‘modern feel’.

Six of us lunched in the ‘Touching Souls’ tearoom adjacent to the Abbey Parish Room where soups, sandwiches and a variety of ‘specials’ and delicious cakes can be had on most days. Suitably sustained, we rejoined Simon in the Chapel where he delivered a short talk about John Moore before we set out on a walk. John had not enjoyed school, became easily bored, and was delighted to be sent off on rambles on his own; these instilled the love of nature which became the basis of his best writing. He became a broadcaster and developed a weekly ‘Country Column’ in the *Birmingham Mail* which soon had a regular and enthusiastic following; he founded the Cheltenham Literary Festival to which he was able to attract ‘big names’, many of whom were already his friends, who would come for very little money.

Among John’s best known works are the ‘Brensham Trilogy’ – *Portrait of Elmbury* (based largely on a fictionalised Tewkesbury), *Brensham Village* and *The Blue Field* – which look back on life, lively, poignant and often riotous, in the town and surrounding villages between the wars. Crossing the main road from the Chapel Simon led us to the Abbey, to the rear of which is the stone marking the family grave where John is buried, and thence on a walk on which we saw many of the sites described in John’s books. He showed us the Abbey Mill (immortalised as ‘Abel Fletcher’s Mill’ in *John Halifax, Gentleman* by Mrs. Craik) where he treated us to a reading before we crossed the weir on the canalised section of the River Avon

and joined a path beside 'The Ham', the open expanse of grassland between the Avon and Severn where John observed wildlife and joined in cricket matches. We followed the footpath, noting many gaily decked-out narrow boats at their moorings and large flocks of sparrows enjoying dust-baths, then crossed over a bridge by Healings Mill, near the Avon Locks, which is sadly unoccupied, and headed back to the main thoroughfare. We stopped outside the Tudor House Hotel (on the front of which is a blue plaque referring to John) where Simon read passages from *Portrait* describing the views he saw, as a child, of the slum dwellings across the road and their disreputable occupants (the view is now of some ugly, unimaginative modern shops). Further appropriate readings came at the sites of John's favourite pub 'The Swan' (now a 'Store 21') and the offices of 'Moore's Auctioneers' the family firm where he worked (not for very long or very successfully) which is now a branch of 'Subway'. Happily, the upper facades of many of the buildings have changed little and would still be recognisable to John, who died in July 1967.

At the end of the walk, most of the group headed back to their cars, saying how much they had enjoyed their outing. I returned, with Simon, to the Museum where we shared another 'brew' in the garden before he went indoors to join the staff and close the Museum for the day.



It was a lovely occasion. Thank you to Peter Bainbridge for all his work in organising the event, to Simon Lawton for being a kind host and guide, to Gemma for educating us in the Merchant's House and to Carol and Haydon, the Museum volunteers for their friendly welcome and company.

The photographs were taken by Valerie Haworth.

(For further information see the Museum's website johnmooremuseum.org)

THE ALLIANCE OF LITERARY SOCIETIES AGM

21-22 May 2016 - Hosted by the Brontë Society in Haworth, celebrating the 200th anniversary of Charlotte Brontë's birth.

Helen D. Newman

Haworth has long been a second home to me, since I made my first visit back in 1974; and my love of the Brontës and the wonderful landscape that nurtured their genius has not diminished throughout those long years. It was therefore doubly exciting that the ALS were invited by the Brontë Society to hold their AGM in Haworth to coincide with the bi-centenary of Charlotte Brontë's birth, just the first of the four bi-centenaries planned to celebrate this remarkable family.

Members of the ALS were given the privilege of visiting the Brontë Parsonage early on Saturday morning prior to the start of a very full weekend of events. Haworth Baptist church was the venue for most of the day, and John Thirlwell, Chairman of the Brontë Society gave a warm welcome to representatives from over 26 literary societies. He then introduced our first speaker, Juliet Barker, historian and biographer, whose book *The Brontës* is undoubtedly the Brontë bible for enthusiasts and academics alike. The title of Juliet's lecture was 'Re-writing Writers' Lives – Mrs. Gaskell and *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*'.

Elizabeth Gaskell and Charlotte Brontë first met in 1850 at Briery Close, Windermere, the home of Sir James Kay Shuttleworth and his wife Janet. The Shuttleworths were already known to Charlotte who had been entertained by them at their family home, Gawthorpe Hall, nr. Burnley. Sir James had started out in life as a doctor, later becoming distinguished as a social reformer and a supporter of education for the masses and was eager to entertain Charlotte Brontë the novelist. For her part Charlotte found him a little over-bearing, although on the whole she enjoyed her visits to Gawthorpe, and got on well with his wife. Sir James must have been a little on tenterhooks having arranged this initial meeting between the two novelists, but he need not have worried, the two women forming an almost instant liking for one another. Mrs. Gaskell saw in Charlotte a woman scarred by circumstance, it only being a year or so since she had lost her brother and sisters, leaving Charlotte the sole survivor of her father's six children. For the remaining five years of Charlotte's life the bond between the two women was to grow ever closer, Mrs. Gaskell being invited to stay at the Parsonage and Charlotte in turn going to stay at Plymouth Grove, the Gaskells' home in Manchester. Following Charlotte's death in 1855, speculation about the authoress and her life at the Parsonage became increasingly colourful, e.g. in 1855 *Sharpe's London Magazine* featured an article entitled 'A few words about Jane Eyre', which was filled with the kind of ridiculous inaccuracies which outraged Charlotte's friend Ellen Nussey, and reduced the Rev. Brontë to laughter. Laughter apart, Patrick Brontë thought it time to put the record straight and asked Mrs. Gaskell if she would, as a valued friend of Charlotte, write a true account of her life. But as Juliet pointed out, the great irony in this was that

most of the scurrilous material appearing in the magazine had been supplied by Mrs. Gaskell herself who had gleaned it from Janet Shuttleworth, a bit of a gossip, and a disaffected nurse who had looked after Patrick Brontë's wife in her final illness. And what tales she told: Patrick Brontë ripping up his wife's dresses, throwing his children's shoes in the fire and depriving them of meat. This nurse also mentioned the unnatural quietness of the six children who she said were confined to the 'study', her name for the nursery, but as Juliet pointed out the children would not be exactly buoyant given the circumstances. Why then did Mrs. Gaskell attach such significance to these stories? Having never attempted a biography before, she was only too conscious of the difficulty of the task, firstly because Charlotte had become one of her closest friends and, secondly, because many of the people who had known her were still alive, including her father and husband. Understandably, she felt loath to encroach on the grief of the Rev. Brontë or Charlotte's husband. Arthur Bell Nicholls; Arthur Bell Nicholls was particularly sensitive and would have preferred nothing to be written about his wife. Also, the fact that she was a writer of fiction put her at a distinct disadvantage. As a biographer and historian herself, Juliet emphasised that the first duty of a biographer is to be factual, the primary flaw in Mrs. Gaskell's life of Charlotte being that it was neither objective nor impartial.

The novelist in Mrs. Gaskell is only too apparent, especially in the first two chapters which paint a grim and bleak picture of Haworth, its isolation and remoteness seemingly having influenced the entire writings of the Brontës who were brought up in its alien and uncivilised environment. How, in other words, could it be otherwise given their strange background? As Juliet explained, rarely does a biographer commence with a long description of the area in which their subject was raised unless with some hidden purpose. And that purpose, according to Juliet, was a deliberate act of vindication on Mrs. Gaskell's part to explain why Charlotte and her sisters were compelled to write as they did. All the coarser aspects of their novels were not so much the fault of the sisters as the fault of Haworth and its environs. With a novelist's evocation of a remote and uncivilised village dropped in a bleak and savage landscape, the opening chapters are wonderfully descriptive of what promises to be a riveting read.

Latching on to the bleak and uncivilised, as Juliet emphasised, Mrs. Gaskell conveniently skirts over the fact that Keighley is only four miles away, that it has a thriving Mechanics Institute, that the likes of Paganini, Strauss and Liszt have played at concerts in Halifax, not to mention the accessibility of books from various circulating libraries. She does not omit to mention, however, that the Rev. William Grimshaw (1708-1763), a well known predecessor of Patrick Brontë's, was obliged to whip a reluctant congregation into Haworth church, more evidence, as if it were needed, of Haworth's lack of refinement.

What Haworth did lack was a sewage system and a clean water supply, resulting in all the illnesses associated therewith, including regular outbreaks of cholera and typhoid. High mortality rates were inevitable, especially amongst infants. In fact, Haworth, for its size, was recorded as having one of the highest mortality rates in

the country. The Rev. Brontë along with local surgeons campaigned tirelessly to effect improvements and in 1850 an inspector from the Board of Health came to see the problems for himself, following which sewers were installed and pipes for fresh water.

Haworth also had its own Mechanics Institute and was much more industrial than it is today, mills and quarries employing a large section of the populace; and there were many more farms in the Brontës' time than there are now. Haworth had its own philharmonic orchestra and choral society, and the Rev. Brontë bought a new organ for the church. Thomas Parker, a well-known singer, also gave recitals at Haworth. Not so much a backwater as a thriving village adjacent to sizeable towns like Keighley and Halifax.

But Mrs. Gaskell's account is all very selective and deliberately so. For instance, she does quote the titles of some of the tiny books Charlotte wrote in her younger years, though she is careful to omit reference to the highly questionable characters therein. She cites the cut-off date of this purple prose as 1831 when Charlotte would be a mere 15, although it is well known that Charlotte continued in this fervid style well into her teens and beyond.

She certainly damns the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge which features as Lowood School in *Jane Eyre*, and is quite within her rights to do so, the school resulting in the deaths of Charlotte's two elder sisters at eleven and ten respectively. Even so, she was libelled by the Rev. Carus Wilson, proprietor of the school, as she was by Mrs. Robinson in recounting a somewhat biased account of her affair with Branwell Brontë.

Then there is her reference to Charlotte as a teacher. As Juliet pointed out, it is well known that Charlotte hated teaching. She says so in the journal she kept at Roe Head, when longing to write and being constantly interrupted, she refers to her pupils as asinine and stupid, yet Mrs. Gaskell makes no reference to the journal, though she does make reference to Charlotte's time as a governess with the Sidgwick family, when, according to Charlotte, little John Sidgwick was heard to remark at dinner 'I love ou' Miss Brontë' whereupon his mother replies 'Love the governess, my dear.'

Ellen Nussey had kept nearly all of the letters Charlotte had written to her during their long friendship, and she did lend some of them to Mrs. Gaskell who carefully edited them to appear in her biography. She wisely omitted all of Charlotte's passionate letters to her married Belgian professor, Constantin Heger, although she included paragraphs from her essays which contain his written comments; incidentally, the letters did not make their appearance until 1913. By way of interest, the Brontë Society has recently acquired one of these heart-rending letters to Constantin Heger, which he consigned to the wastepaper basket. Yet it was Madame Heger who retrieved them, carefully gathering up the fragments and sewing them back together, her stitching incredibly neat. An intuitive woman, she probably recognised their potential significance in the event of Miss Brontë becoming a person of note. Both Charlotte and Emily had been two of the most exceptional

pupils the Hegers had taught. Mrs. Gaskell tactfully explains Charlotte's reason for leaving her Belgian school as being problems at home and differences in religion.

As to Arthur Bell Nicholls, he must have been mortified to have Charlotte's account of his trembling proposal of marriage, as described in a letter to Ellen Nussey, published in full.

When Mrs. Gaskell approached George Smith, Charlotte's publisher, she found him somewhat reluctant to give her any information regarding his relationship with Charlotte apart from his business dealings. At one time Smith and Charlotte became very close indeed, the rather handsome publisher being eight years her junior, and escorting her to various places of interest, including two days in Edinburgh. Mrs. Gaskell skewed the facts a little by making his mother central to Charlotte's visits, as if she was in need of such womanly protection. All credit to Mrs. Gaskell in distancing Charlotte from her publisher, and thus obviating any sense of impropriety.

Despite these inaccuracies, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* by Elizabeth C. Gaskell, first published in 1857, is an undeniable achievement and paved the way for subsequent biographies of the Brontës. Mrs. Gaskell had vindicated Charlotte as both a woman and a writer and it would be many years before this somewhat saintly image would be regarded more objectively. As Juliet acknowledged, it is a biography of considerable merit, whatever its faults. Patrick Brontë graciously accepted it as such, despite his own less than flattering portrait; his one telling comment being 'Well, she is a novelist you know.'

An excellent lecture, Juliet received lots of questions from a very engaged and enquiring audience.

After a buffet lunch and raffle, the AGM was opened by Linda Curry, Chairman of the ALS. It was heartening to see so many societies represented, including a new Society dedicated to Norman Nicholson. I must admit I had never heard of Norman Nicholson (1914-1987), a relatively modern poet who wrote about his home town of Millom on the edge of the Lake District.

Due to personal reasons Anita Fernandez Young has now stood down as secretary, Marty Smith having been elected to take her place. Jenny Uglow has also stood down as President, and we were delighted to announce the appointment of Claire Harman as President elect. Claire's new life of Charlotte Brontë has been widely acclaimed.

The website is in the process of being redesigned and Jody Robson is responsible for all upcoming ALS events, etc. on Facebook.

The subject for next year's edition of *ALSo*, the ALS journal, is to be 'Lost, Found or Faked' which provides plenty of scope for some interesting entries. Linda Curry asked that you keep the ALS up-to-date with all contacts, re emails, etc. *ALSo* is now accessed via the website, but printed copies are still available from the editor; it is recognised that not everyone has access to the web.

Only one item for AOB: Robin Healy's suggestion of a parody competition, namely to write in the style of a favourite author.

Next year's AGM will be hosted by the Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen Societies at Napier University, Edinburgh (Craiglockhart campus) from 2-4 June 2017.

Following the AGM, our second speaker was Ian Dewhirst, retired librarian and well-known historian on West Yorkshire and Keighley in particular. I knew we were in for a treat, as I've heard Ian before, and his talks, though highly informative, are always laced with the kind of humour that has his audience in fits of laughter, and this one was no different. Ian, a true Yorkshire man with a true Yorkshire man's dialect, wears his learning lightly. So well regarded is he that he has not only been awarded an MBE but has had a train named after him. Leading on from Juliet's talk, he soon dispelled the myth of Haworth as a cultural desert, where the Brontë girls ran across those 'bleak, bleak moors'; the emphasis on 'bleak' had everyone reeling, as did the image of the three sisters running over the windswept moors. How had they managed to create such works of genius given their dismal surroundings? This was the crux of Ian's talk which he called 'The Druggist and the Relieving Officer, and other Writers in Haworth'. Other writers in pre-Brontë Haworth? Ian soon proved it to be only too true. In fact, Haworth appeared to be teeming with poetic inspiration. The druggist of his title was Joseph Hardacre (1790-1840), where Branwell Brontë obtained his regular supply of opium. Hardacre wrote three books of poetry, one of which Ian thought had inspired the last paragraph of Emily's *Wuthering Heights* which it has to be admitted did bear many similarities. The relieving officer in question was Abraham Wildman (1803-1870), who served as Overseer of Keighley Poor Union. A man of social conscience, Wildman was not only a poet but a politician who sought to improve working conditions for the poor, his 'Commonplace Book - Clever Things' being mainly aimed at the poor and uneducated. His political agitation eventually got him the sack, and by then destitute and blind he spent the remaining years of his life in one of Titus Salt's almshouses.

Another poet, known as the Bard of Airedale, was John Nicholson (1790-1843) whose poem on the 'Crow Hill Bog Eruption' rivals that of Patrick Brontë's on the same subject. Of especial interest to Brontë lovers is the fact that the young children of Mr. Brontë were out on the moors with their nurse when the bog erupted, resulting in a kind of mini-earthquake. Then there was John Milligan (1812-1876), Poor Law Medical Officer, who amassed a huge collection of books and was a noted botanist, not to mention the Methodist minister who, for some reason known only to himself, devoted several volumes to the history of Buddhism. There were broadsheets and pamphlets aplenty, as well as newspapers like the *Leeds Intelligencer*, known to be read by the Brontës. Of course, the poetry varied, some of it being more doggerel than poetic. In 1863, however, Charles F. Forshaw thought the poetic impulse of the area sufficiently of interest to write *Poets of Keighley, Bingley, Haworth and District*.

Ian could have spoken all night, and apologised for running slightly over time, but no one could have proved more conclusively that the area, far from being a

cultural desert, was noted for its writers and poets, many achieving recognition well before the Brontës. It was a delightful lecture, given in Ian's usual inimitable way.

In the evening we gathered for dinner at the White Lion, following which there were readings from some of the authors represented. It had been an immensely full day, but very enjoyable.

On Sunday, there was a choice of things to do. Some went to see the Brontë birthplace in Thornton which is now a popular café, and then on to Ponden Hall, thought to be the setting of Thrushcross Grange in *Wuthering Heights*, and one time home of the Heaton family from whom Emily borrowed books. I led a group on a walk to the Brontë Waterfall, a much loved spot of the sisters; we went via the Country Park, primarily to see the replica parsonage which had been built for the filming of a new play on the Brontës by Sally Wainwright. It looks very realistic, but is due to be dismantled after filming has finished.

I think everyone would agree that it had been a very rewarding weekend for all lovers of books and literature. We thank everyone involved in taking part, but particularly we thank Angela Crow-Woods for her meticulous planning of the event, despite numerous setbacks along the way. Thank you Angela.



The Brontë Parsonage c.1860

THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY WRITERS' PRIZE

As outlined by the Society's Chairman on pp.4-5 the 2016 competition will be promoted in collaboration with Angus MacLennan, proprietor of the White Horse Book Shop in Marlborough, who has doubled the prize money to £1,000.00. 'The Richard Jefferies Society and White Horse Book Shop Literary Prize' will be awarded to the author of the publication considered by the judging panel to be the most outstanding nature writing published in a given calendar year. The winning work will reflect the heritage and spirit of Jefferies' countryside books. So far, the long list of nominations for 2016 under consideration is:

The Outrun by Amy Liptrot
Landskipping by Anna Pavord
The Running Hare by John Lewis-Stempel
Wild Kingdom by Stephen Moss.
A Sky Full of Birds by Matt Merritt
Rivers Run by Kevin Parr
The Art of Falconry by Patrick Morel
The Tree Climber's Guide by Jack Cooke
Nightingales in November by Mike Dilger

Please send Richard Stewart your choice as soon as possible and no later than 31st December (to allow for Christmas releases): 112, Westerfield Road, Ipswich, IP4 2XW or email rgsvalezina@hotmail.co.uk.

As announced in the Spring 2016 newsletter, John Lister-Kaye's, *Gods of the Morning* was the 2015 winner. The Society's judging panel felt that the book was lyrically written, with a true naturalist's eye for the changing seasons and times of day; the hardships experienced by man and beast in the harshest winters; and his own personal encounters with a wide range of wildlife from ravens to young spiders. The extensive studies of rooks – (from the bathroom of Lister-Kaye's house!) – reminded the judges of Richard Jefferies' observations on the same species; observations brought together into one book by an enterprising publisher. *Gods of the Morning* is a book by a man who is as familiar with his local Scottish wildlife and countryside as Richard Jefferies had been with his Wiltshire local environment; and both authors also had the ability to describe some of the local human population in deft terms. The book was deemed an outstanding first winner of the award; the author conveyed the joy of nature in an uncomplicated and eloquent fashion.

Sir John Lister-Kaye commented: 'I am delighted to receive this award, particularly since I have been an enthusiast for Richard Jefferies' nature writing for many years. His contribution to the genre and to the general appreciation of our wildlife and countryside is immense, so I am very proud to be the inaugural winner of this important prize.'

See John Price's comments about the presentation of the award on pp.4-5. The event generated considerable publicity in the book-trade press.

JEFFERIES' SPOKEN WORD ON CD

The Society owns audio cassette recordings from BBC radio of readings from Jefferies' works. Recently some of these programmes were transferred professionally to CD. The contents are as follows:

A Drift of Time: - play with Robert Stephens as Richard Jefferies. BBC Radio 4, 31st July 1987, compiled by Seán Street. Approx 55 mins.

A Song of Summer with Paul Scofield reading 'Nature and Eternity' (*Hills and the Vale*). BBC Radio. First broadcast in Nov 1976. Compiled by Roger Frith; incidental music by David Cain; producer - Keith Slade. Approx 55 mins.

The Man on the Hill with Paul Scofield. BBC Radio. First broadcast on 10th Dec 1974. Compiled by Roger Frith; incidental music by David Cain; producer - Keith Slade. Approx 55 mins.

The Story of My Heart with Paul Scofield. BBC Radio 22nd July 1982. Compiled by Roger Frith; incidental music by David Cain; producer - Keith Slade. Approx 55 mins.

After London - a Book at Bedtime, BBC Radio, in 5 episodes (of approx 15 mins) with Paul Scofield.

Bevis - a Book at Bedtime, BBC Radio, in 12 episodes (of approx 15 mins - 3 CDs in all) with Michael Williams. Last few seconds missing from episode 12.

As the programmes are subject to copyright, we can only place the discs on loan to members for their private education and enjoyment subject to postage costs being borne by the recipient. If you are interested in borrowing any of the recordings, please contact the Hon. Sec. (see p.2) or the Chairman (John Price, ☎ 01672 515150 or email jtp@waitrose.com).

ROUND ABOUT A GREAT ESTATE

City & Country acquired Grade II* listed Burderop Park in February 2015 with ideas to develop the site. The manor house (once home to the Calley family) is situated within 31 acres of grounds on the edge of the Marlborough Downs. The site includes walled gardens, a granary, Tudor wing, stable blocks and Burderop lodge and cottage. Jefferies knew the area so well and immortalised it in *Round About a Great Estate*. The development company held its first consultation event in February 2016 that the Society was unable to attend. A second consultation took place on 12th July 2016 which our Vice Chairman, Eric Jones, attended. Here follows Prof. Jones's thoughts on the event:

Presentations and discussion related to converting Burderop House into apartments and demolishing adjacent office buildings in order to build houses. The physical quality of the development is likely to be high. The team hired by City and Country had made some effort to examine local vernacular architectural styles with a view to echoing this in the houses. There was some mention of public access to the grounds

but all plans are fluid at this stage.

Little was of direct concern to the Richard Jefferies Society - the developers had barely heard of Jefferies and had never heard of Alfred Williams or Kate Tryon, all of them highly relevant to the Burderop area. This has now been corrected!

Eric Jones



From an oil-painting of Burderop House by Kate Tryon c. 1912

GRADE II LISTING

A building is listed when it is of special architectural or historic interest considered to be of national importance and worth protecting. As the term implies, a listed building is actually added to a list: the National Heritage List for England. The lowest grade of listing is Grade II, followed by II* and, the highest Grade I. Members might be interested to know that several buildings associated with Richard Jefferies have Grade II listing that offers some protection in planning law. These include Jefferies' first and last homes: Coate Farm has been listed since 1951 and 'Sea View', Goring since 1976. The milestone at Coate, described in 'Meadow Thoughts', and Jefferies' gravestone at Broadwater Cemetery were listed in 1979. The tomb of Richard Jefferies' great grandfather (also named Richard) at Holyrood, Swindon is also Grade II listed.

THE LAST PHOTOGRAPH OF RICHARD JEFFERIES?

Jean Saunders

The archivist at the Central Library, Swindon, was approached by Peter Sheldon, a local book dealer, who had come across an unidentified carte-de-visite (reproduced right) that he had found tucked inside a copy of *Richard Jefferies: A Spirit Illumined* (RJS, 1987). Along with the photograph there was a letter dated 1st September 1987 addressed to 'Pamela' along with a dedication in the booklet to her from Christopher Robin Milne who had contributed an article to the booklet. The photograph wasn't mentioned in the letter.

The photograph was produced by the London Stereoscopic Company and the label on the back included the Prince of Wales feathers & crown that was used circa 1880-1885. The last known photograph of Jefferies was taken in 1882 – also by the London Stereoscopic Company – that Jefferies tore in half as he disliked it so much (see *RJS Journal* 27: 'Jefferies à la Carte' by Peter Robins), presumably because it revealed his emaciated body.

The Society was consulted about the latest find but no-one had seen this new image before. If this was an even later photograph of Richard Jefferies, why would he have subjected himself to another picture that revealed his gaunt and wasted look? T. Hanson Lewis described Jefferies when at Eltham (1884-5) as having '... the air of an invalid ... a waxen complexion, wan cheeks, sunken eyes, and was generally full of languor.' George Miller and Peter Robins suggested that the picture might have been taken as a result of pressure from his publishers – perhaps Cassell wanted a new photograph around the time of publishing *After London* (1885). If so, it is most likely that Jefferies did not make the photograph known to friends and family – it must have been a source of great distress for him to see his wasted physique.

But how did the carte-de-visite end up in a copy of *Richard Jefferies: A Spirit*



Illumined? Who was Pamela?

I was looking at Ann Thwaite's biography of A. A. Milne. She discusses where Winnie the Pooh might have got his name. One suggestion is that E. V. Lucas (who was a member of the Zoological Society and had access to privileges from the keepers at London Zoo) arranged for the children of Laurence Irving and A. A. Milne to go to the zoo in 1926 or 1927 when Christopher Robin Milne would have been about seven and Pamela Irving about a year younger. They visited the brown bear there called Winnie (that Christopher loved) and Pamela was supposed to have said 'pooh' as she had a keen sense of smell! So, could this be the Pamela to whom Christopher kept in touch and could it have been E V Lucas's influence* as well that made *Bevis* such a firm favourite of Christopher Robin?† Could Lucas have had access to a publisher's copy of the Jefferies' photograph or, perhaps, even A. A. Milne? It is unlikely that Christopher would have parted with the photograph if it had come into his possession, but what if Lucas found a copy and gave it to Irving who passed it on to his daughter?

Did Christopher and Pamela remain friends? Unfortunately both are deceased but I tried to make contact with Pamela (Irving) Ingle-Finch's sons without success.

I learnt from Peter Sheldon that he acquired the book from a dealer in the West Country who obtained it in a house-clearance (whereabouts unknown). Pamela's last address was Tenterden, Kent and it is possible that her book collection ended up with a dealer.

The story will remain a mystery but I'm pleased to report that Swindon Libraries purchased the book, letter and photograph for their archives and have kindly given their permission for the Society to reproduce the photograph.

As an aside, during my research I came across a carte-de-visite of Queen Victoria's son, Alfred (pictured right). There are striking facial similarities with Richard Jefferies; in particular, the eyes. Born 6th August 1844, he was just 4 years older than Richard and born in the same month.



* E.V. Lucas wrote an introduction to the 1904 edition of *Bevis* published by Duckworth.

† *Bevis* was Christopher Robin's choice of book as a castaway for BBC radio's 'Desert Island Discs'.

THE JEFFERIES LAND FUND

At the Society's AGM last year it was suggested that the Society should set up awards to support various publishing initiatives and educational projects that promote Richard Jefferies, to be financed from the Jefferies Land Fund. There was general support for the idea from members.

The printing cost of *The Farmer's World* (£763) was covered by the Jefferies Land Fund (albeit that there has been some return through sales) in order to make free copies of the book available to universities, libraries, agricultural colleges and the farming press. The production of the audio-CDs (£92) was undertaken to make these available on loan to members whilst a loan was made towards producing *Middle Ridgeway*; these two items will appear in the Society's 2016-17 accounts.

Work is in hand to set up a bursary to help support an accredited research student working on a project connected with Richard Jefferies.

CITINGS OF JEFFERIES

Tim Bowly reported that on the Breakfast programme (BBC Radio 3), presented by Clemency Burton-Hill on 29th February, Frank Bridges' **Two Poems for Orchestra No. 2: The Story of My Heart** was played at the beginning of the programme.

According to Nick Thomas, a 'beautiful' extract from *The Story of my Heart* was also featured in a Radio 3 broadcast last November in a whimsical programme entitled '**White Rabbits in Sussex**' about the late 1960's psychedelic music and Ditchling Beacon.

Andrew Rossabi has been dipping into Peter Newbolt's, **William Tinsley (1831-1902), 'Speculative Publisher', A Commentary** (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), which has a chapter on Besant and Jefferies. Tinsley published Richard Jefferies' early fiction: *The Scarlet Shawl*, *Restless Human Hearts* and *World's End*. Newbolt cites both Miller and Matthews' *Richard Jefferies: a bibliographical study* and Matthews and Treitel's *The Forward Life of Richard Jefferies*. Newbolt completely ignores the later post-Tinsley fiction and accepts Besant's derogatory remarks about Jefferies' ability as a novelist.

Margaret Hunt wrote in March that she was aware that the Chief Executive of the Avon Wildlife Trust carried the forename **Bevis**, but never had an opportunity to find out more. His imminent move to a new job at Triodos bank gave her the opportunity to telephone him when it was revealed that Bevis Watts' father read *Bevis* whilst at university, and was so much attracted by all aspects of it that he was inspired to pass on the name.

A letter in appreciation of **Bevis and Coate Water** was published in the *Swindon Advertiser* in April 2016 along with a photograph of the 'Council Oak'. Roy Cartwright recounted reading *Bevis* that was compulsory reading when he was at school in Swindon in the 1950s. He had recently read it again with great pleasure.

Janice Lingley's cites Jefferies' 'good old English rat' (*World's End*) in her article "'Below the Mill Dam": Black and Brown Rats' for *The Kipling Journal* for March 2016, Vol 90, No 363.

Janice Lingley provided a photocopy of an article by Tim Copeland entitled 'William Cobbett, Richard Jefferies and Edward Thomas: Landscape Archaeologists?' published in the *Journal of the Friends of the Dymock Poets*, No 15, 2016, pp.69-82. From the same edition of the *Journal of the Friends of the Dymock Poets*, pp.83-95, John Monks writes about 'The true story of how Edward Thomas became a poet: A re-examination of his prose'. The article refers to the Thomas' biography of Jefferies and discusses Jefferies' work as an inspiration for his poetry. It begins with Thomas's teenage dedication to the art of writing: 'I had begun to write accounts of my walks in an approach as near as possible to the style of Jefferies.'

Jean Saunders came across the original article that fired the correspondence between **Samuel Looker and John Moore** (see the Society's Autumn Newsletter 2013, p.20 and Spring Newsletter 2016 pp.30-31). The *Countrygoer* published a 'Richard Jefferies Centenary' edition in the winter of 1948 that included 'impressions of Richard Jefferies by some present-day authors' such as Moore, Betjeman, Grigson, and Massingham along with an article by Looker. John Moore claimed to have read all of Jefferies' books but was 'unable to make up [his] mind' about Jefferies. He found *The Story of my Heart* 'a painful and embarrassing book'; his nature books weren't 'objective' and more to do with the 'natural history of Richard Jefferies'; but he could always read *Bevis* and found *Hodge and his Masters* 'good reportage'.

The saga continued when Valerie Haworth came across a letter to **John Moore from Denys Watkins-Pitchford** (BB) dated 6th January 1960. On behalf of the John Moore Society, Valerie sought permission from BB's estate to publish the letter and for the Richard Jefferies Society to quote the relevant extract, which runs as follows:

At the moment I'm reading with considerable interest your *Life of Edward Thomas*, whose work I admire a good deal. But I was shocked to hear you say that Jefferies was 'not a good writer'. I know he is not in the same category as Hudson or Thomas, but nobody, surely, has ever written with such truth about the inner charms of the real deep countryside. He's a miniature painter perhaps, but a damned good one, and he has opened the eyes of so many (including myself) and above all, whatever he writes about has the ring of truth.

Richard Jefferies is cited in Anne Wroe's book *Six Facets of Light* (Jonathan Cape, April 2016) and in various newspaper reviews including *The Times* (26th March 2016) and *The Big Issue* (3rd March 2016). In the latter review, Richard Jefferies is cited as the most 'passionate lie-down-in-grass ... who ... strode over the Southern Downs deliberately in order to embrace them. Stretched out on his side, lanky in his rough-spun clothes, he would scratch up tiny grains of sand and chalk from the grass-roots in which, like Blake, he saw whole histories and universes. He would pick up tiny snail shells, calling them "receptacles of ancient sunlight". Turning over to feel the present sun on his face, he would wish that he could be a grass blade himself, living

unselfconsciously, gradually filling with light and higher life, until all his human limitations fell away. Jefferies may have been an extreme case but this heady, vertiginous journey from the tiniest sand grain to infinite space is one that we can all attempt. Just banish distractions, put away the phone, lie down in the grass, look at the clouds, listen to the wind – and see what happens.’

Andrew Rossabi wrote: Ann Wroe, senior editor of *The Economist*, is a prize-winning author who lives in Brighton and London. The publishers call her new book ‘a series of meditations on this most elusive and alluring feature of human life ... set mostly on the Downs and coastline of East Sussex, the most luminous part of England, it interweaves a walker’s experience of light in Nature with the observations, jottings and thoughts of a dozen writers and painters—and some scientists—who have wrestled in their different ways to define and understand light.’ The sources include Hermes Trismegistus, Dante Alighieri, John Milton, Thomas Traherne, Jakob Böhme, George Herbert, Isaac Newton, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, John Clare, J.M.W. Turner, Samuel Palmer, William Blake, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William and Dorothy Wordsworth, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, Henry David Thoreau, Rainer Maria Rilke, Vincent Van Gogh, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Richard Jefferies, Eric Ravilious, W. H. Hudson, Edward Thomas, and Seamus Heaney. Among such illustrious company Ms. Wroe cites Jefferies perhaps more often than any other author, with excerpts from *Bevis*, *The Story of my Heart* and *The Old House at Coate*, as well as the essays ‘Sunny Brighton’, ‘The Pageant of Summer’, ‘Wild Flowers’, ‘Saint Guido’, ‘The Pine Wood’, ‘January in the Sussex Woods’, ‘Out of Doors in February’, ‘Hours of Spring’, ‘Winds of Heaven’, ‘Nature and Books’, ‘The July Grass’, and ‘The Sun and the Brook’.

This unusual and interesting work does Jefferies proud, bringing out his mystical response to nature, his joy and sensuous delight in the beauties of creation. Wroe makes clear that Jefferies was indeed ‘a spirit illumined’.

Kate Tryon featured in an article by Barry Leighton entitled ‘An American in Wiltshire’ in the *Swindon Advertiser* on 13th April 2016. Sheila Povey was interviewed and gave background information about this remarkable artist who was so passionate about Jefferies’ writing that she made several trips to the area in the 1910s to paint in the footsteps of Richard Jefferies. Her oil-painting of Burderop House is reproduced on p.19.

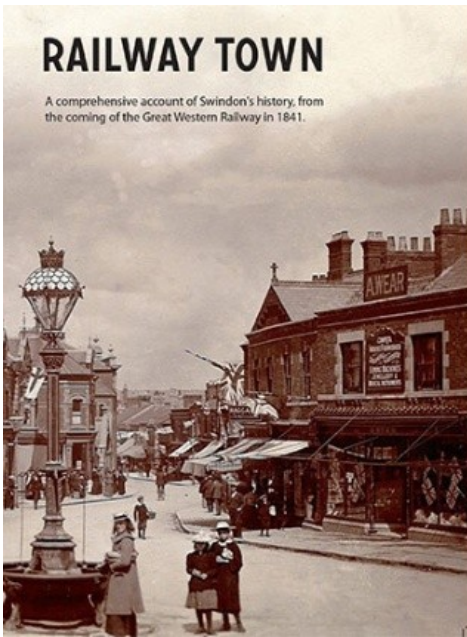
Tom Saunders came across a reference to Jefferies in Douglas Botting’s *Gerald Durrell: the Authorised Biography* (1999). In discussing Durrell’s self-education as a young man Jefferies is included: ‘His reading in works of natural history was even more voracious and wide-ranging, with a broad base of classics – Charles Darwin, Alfred Wallace, Henry Bates, Henri Fabre, Gilbert White, Richard Jefferies, W H Hudson . . .’

Richard Jefferies was mentioned in an article, along with a photograph of him, relating to ‘Hodson Valley’ in the May edition of *Wiltshire Life*.

With Jefferies in mind and his passion for Liddington Hill (and trains), Geoff Hirst

found an interesting connection in his **railway** reading. The largest but not the most powerful class of express steam locomotives of the Great Western Railway was the 'Castle' class, which was still being introduced in the early 1950s. Most but not all were named after castles of various vintages from prehistoric barrows to fortified manor houses and virtually all within the geographic area covered by the GWR. The last three 7035-7037 were to be called Liddington Castle, Ogmore Castle and Taunton Castle. However as 7037 was the last ever of the class it was decided to call it 'Swindon' as a lasting memorial for all the locomotives produced there. Liddington Castle was the name set aside, the other two castles moved back one and Swindon slotted in at the end.

'**Railway Town,**' the story of New Swindon was premiered on 25th April 2016 at the



Wyvern Theatre. The ninety minute film covers a comprehensive history of Swindon from the coming of the Great Western Railway in 1841 and charts the story of Brunel and Gooch's decision to site a railway factory in open fields below what was a tiny market settlement that turned Swindon into the fastest growing town in Europe. It follows how the scheme almost failed at the outset and the initiative of the people who saved it. Historian John Chandler, a member of the Richard Jefferies Society, is one of the experts to provide information whilst Martin Parry, the film-maker provides footage, much of it never seen before. The film opens with a quote from Richard Jefferies: 'In the Eastern tales of magicians one reads of a town being found one day where there was nothing

but sand the day before. Here the fable is fact, and the potent magician is Steam.' ('The Story of Swindon,' *Hills and the Vale*, 1909) and John Chandler quotes a further passage from the article. The film is available as a DVD and a copy was supplied to the Society by John Macclay for the archives, to whom we are most grateful.

The Society was contacted by Doubleband Films in May who were in the process of making a documentary for Channel 4 with Sir Tony Robinson on **Ancient Tracks** and their literary and artistic associations. One of the 'tracks' they have chosen to explore is the Ridgeway, and Jefferies' spiritual connection with it. Look out for the broadcast. Rebecca Welshman was interviewed for the programme in July.

The sensory garden proposed by the Adur and Worthing Council for the **Jefferies-**

Hudson Memorial Garden at Broadwater Cemetery turned out to be very low key, unless more is planned for later. Michael Parrott informed us that a wildflower seed sowing day took place on 27th May 2016 and that was all.

Writing about an old copy of '**The Borough Guide to Swindon** containing 16 Photographic Views of the Principal Places of Interest of The Town and Neighbourhood,' price one penny, and published about 100 years ago, Barry Leighton observes: 'Nearby Richard Jefferies House is another rural bygone rendered almost unrecognisable now by modern-day traffic' (*Swindon Advertiser*, 29th June 2016). How true!

John Price came across a reference to Jefferies in *The Times* of 2nd July 2016 in a column written by Jim Dixon. He appears to head a firm of Environmental Consultants, called Jim Dixon Associates. Headed 'Hidden Gem' Dixon is delighted to have come across the 'prize' of a first edition (1879) of *Wild Life in a Southern County* found in a saleroom box of old 'encyclopaedias and Dick Francis novels'. He writes: 'Jefferies sits alongside Gilbert White, Thomas Hardy and W. H. Hudson as one of our great countryside writers... the beauty of his books is that they are grounded in a deep understanding of all aspects of the land'.

Margaret Hunt has been scouring through old copies of *The Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* and has recorded citings of Jefferies not listed before, as follows:

December 1912: in a review of *A Wiltshire Village*, by Alfred Williams – '...Naturally the book will be compared with much of the writings of Richard Jefferies; it deals with much the same subjects, though the human element here is more to the front than in the majority of Jefferies' books. The country and the people are practically the same; for South Marston ... is no more than four or five miles ... from Coate, the home of Richard Jefferies, and both writers deal with things which actually surrounded their own early home life.'

June 1941: in a review of Henry Williamson's *Richard Jefferies: Selections of his Work* it states: 'This book is the occasion of an article in *The Guardian*, January 24th 1941, entitled "The Countryside in Prose", by Eric Parker. The writer divides the work of Jefferies into two types, those of *Wild Life in a Southern County* and the *Story of my Heart*. The [unnamed] reviewer thinks there is a third and best, represented by *Field and Hedgerow* ... It is the Richard Jefferies which lives and will live'. There is a full review of the Williamson book in the December 1941 edition of the WANHS magazine.

December 1941: In *The Metes and Bounds of Savernake Forest* by H. C. Brentnall, F.S.A., reference is made, in the section subtitled The Verme, to the 'Forest of Marlborough', the term used prior to the adoption of 'the name of Savernake' in 1155. Brentnall then observes that 'Only, I think, in the usage of Swindon, and in the books of the Swindonian Richard Jefferies, does "Marlborough Forest" survive'.

Don't forget that the Society is a member of **The Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Society**. As such, you can borrow the free ticket (admits only one)

for the Devizes or the Salisbury Museums. Please apply to John Price. ☎ 01672 515150.

There are many quotes from Richard Jefferies in *The Running Hare* by John Lewis-Stempel (Transworld Publishers, 2016). A passage from 'Walks in the Wheat-fields' is used as the introduction to Ch 3: 'If you will look at a grain of wheat you will see that it seems folded up: it has crossed its arms and rolled itself up in a cloak, a fold of which forms a groove, and so gone to sleep.' The author quotes extensively from *Wild Life in a Southern County* and *The Story of my Heart* along with an exposition on why Jefferies shouldn't be considered merely as a 'nature writer'.

Peter Robins came across a six-page article in the *Audubon Magazine* (Nov-Dec 1948) intended for an American audience of nature lovers who would have been familiar with Thoreau and Burroughs but might not have read Jefferies. Written by Alice Clarke Mullen, she is responsible for the illustrations too. It doesn't tell us anything new about Jefferies but it is a good to see that the centenary of Jefferies' birth was honoured and celebrated in the USA too. There is a link to the article on the Society's website on the 'Lectures' tab where the article can be downloaded.

Jean Saunders came across an online bookstore advertising *Round About a Great Escape* by Richard Jefferies (White Press, 2015). She didn't know whether to laugh or cry. The print-on-demand market has taken advantage of works out of copyright but you would think that if publishers are going to the trouble of reproducing a book that they would get the title correct! The latest blunder has conjured up images of Colditz rides again! Eric Jones discovered that 'Read Books' had also published the work in 2013 with the same mistake. A complaint has been lodged.

The Richard Jefferies Society Journal: There is a major backlog of articles awaiting publication in the *Journal*; the winter 2016, summer and winter 2017 editions are virtually complete. Please keep articles coming even though it might be some time before they can be published. Short articles (up to 1000 words) in particular would be most welcome. The winter 2016 edition has a London theme, whilst the summer 2017 edition contains more new discoveries and the winter 2017 – reminiscences of Jefferies that are largely unknown to readers.

According to a little book entitled *Roadways: History of Swindon's Street Names* by Peter Sheldon and Roger Tomkins (Picton Publishing, Nov. 1979), **Jefferies Avenue** was built in 1937 in memory of Richard Jefferies to mark the 50th anniversary of his death in 1887. Jefferies Avenue is a tree-lined street of mainly semi-detached houses located in the northern half of the town. The majority of streets with a Jefferies' connection, such as Bevisland, Okebourne Park and Tryon Close, are in the Eldene development; farmland associated with Coate that includes fields farmed by the Jefferies' family at Snodshill.

THOSE WHO HAVE DEPARTED: GEOFF MOSS



The Society is most sorry to learn that Geoff Moss died on 25th July 2016, exactly one month after his ninety-sixth birthday.

Geoff (pictured above in December 2015) and Eve (his wife who died in 2003) joined the Society in 1999. He was an art teacher, a hiker and a lover of the countryside.

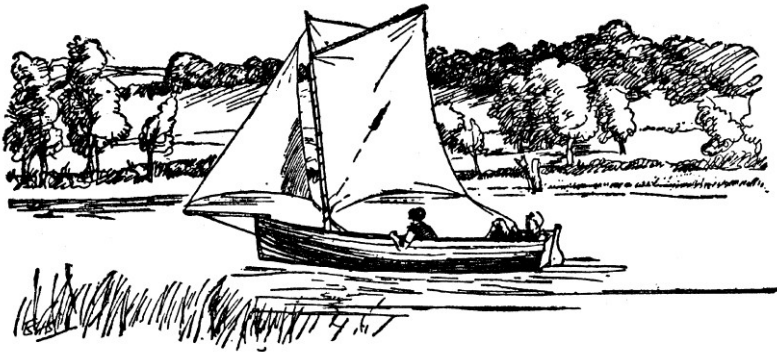
Around 1990 he visited Coate, from his home in Derbyshire, and painted five small watercolours in situ: three of the old farmhouse at Coate Farm (showing the veranda and side-view of the old cottage from the garden and from the gates on the Marlborough Road as illustrated on the front cover) and two of Coate Water. One of his Coate Water paintings was used as the much-admired cover illustration for *Richard Jefferies: An Anthology* by Hugoe Matthews and Rebecca Welshman (Petton Books, 2010). Geoff donated these paintings to the Richard Jefferies Society in July 2007. The watercolours were framed and hung on the walls of the Richard Jefferies Museum the following month and the images were also reproduced in greeting cards.

At his funeral service held at the local church – All Saints, Wingerworth, Chesterfield – readings were taken from *Richard Jefferies: An Anthology*. Geoff's daughter confirmed how privileged and honoured he was that one of his paintings had been used to adorn such a magnificent book. In a letter to the Hon. Sec. dated 14th Nov. 2010 Geoff added that he carried a copy of Hyatt's *Pocket Richard Jefferies* (1906) with him at home and abroad during World War II and that one of his favourite quotes was 'the sunshine settles itself in the valley by the brook, and abides there whether we come or not.' ('Meadow Thoughts,' *The Life of the Fields*.)

RICHARD JEFFERIES MUSEUM TRUST REPORT

The following information is taken from the Trust's Facebook page.[‡] Life has been busy at Coate Farm – particularly in the garden where attractive features have been added that include a beautiful Amaryliss screen of laser cut steel and a bridge/walkway by the pond.

Earlier in the year, a red sailing boat was acquired. This was painted blue and named Pinta II in honour of Bevis and Mark's boat. A pale blue sail was fitted bearing the Trust's logo. On its first trip on Coate Water in June, an illustration from *Bevis* by E. H. Shepard was recreated and photographed by Jennifer Berry.



VOYAGE TO THE UNKNOWN ISLAND

And on the day (23rd August) that the Trust finally signed a lease to formally take over the museum from Swindon Borough Council, it was announced that the organisation had been shortlisted for the national Historic England Angels Awards, in the Best Community Action Project category. This news generated considerable publicity in the media. Congratulations to all involved.

[‡] <https://www.facebook.com/jefferiesmuseum>.

BOOKS BY MEMBERS

Jeremy Hooker has kindly given us permission to reproduce his poem on pp. 88-90 from *Scattered Light* (London: Enitharmon Press, 2015). There will be a review of this book of poetry in the next *Society Journal* – No.31, Winter 2016. Also look out for *Diary of a Stroke*, that will be published soon, as well as *Ancestral Lines* towards the end of the year – more information in the next newsletter.

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: THE BUST OF RICHARD JEFFERIES -

'I look at the sunshine and feel that there is no contracted order: there is divine chaos, and, in it, limitless hope and possibilities.'

RICHARD JEFFERIES

What is this man -

sad-eyed, with a beard
birds could nest in if it weren't marble?

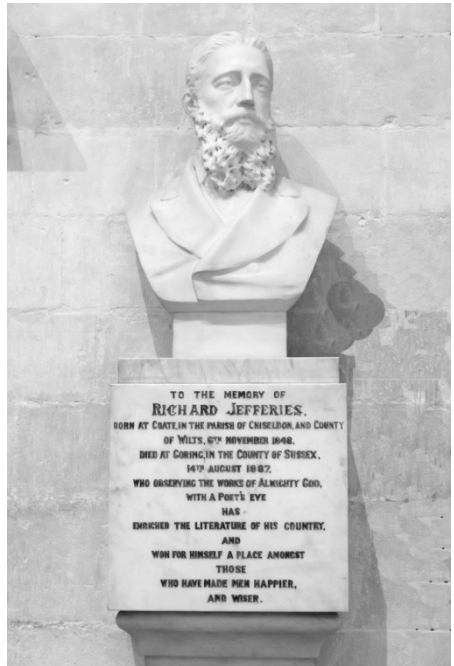
They brought him in
out of the wild,
refashioned him:
a Victorian worthy,
with a niche in the habitat
of bishops, burghers, and knights -
this man who disliked churches,
who found spires poking up
from cornland and downs
an offence,
who wished ruin on temples.

Would he seek refuge here today?

On Liddington Hill
he would hear the M4
and smell the fumes.
At Coate Water, estates move in.

Or say Wild England lives
where he knew it, in ditch
and field corner, where
I have seen it with his eyes?

If there has to be a statue
let it be one a bird can shit on,
something one can imagine feeling the wind -
as I felt the wind blowing
through his words,
breaking images,



leaving knowledge
a heap of ruins, driving me
back from the known.

There are words
that scatter dead languages,
words that break
statues and statutes
that hide what is real.

This man walked out
of the life prepared for him,
smashed the marble forms.

He opened himself to chaos.
He lived by the quickest word.

It will not be petrified
by this absurdity.

Listen to the wind rising
among the monuments,
preparing to scatter them
like pieces of eggshell and leaves.

M*iddle Ridgeway* by Eric Jones and Patrick Dillon, with stunning illustrations by Anna Dillon, is due to be published by Wessex Books on 8th September 2016. Those of you who attended the 2014 Birthday Lecture will recall Prof. Dillon's illustrated account of the changes that have taken place on the Ridgeway between Avebury to Streatley – a landscape loved by Richard Jefferies (see report RJS Spring Newsletter 2015 pp.7-10). The lecture was drawn from the book. There is a special offer at £12.00 per copy (including p&p for UK only) available to members until the AGM on 5th November 2016 when copies can be purchased on the day. Members can order the book by writing to Patrick Dillon and enclosing a cheque for payment (payable to P. Dillon) at Lower Cooks, Woodbury Salterton, Exeter, EX5 1PR.

L*andscapes of Eternal Return: Tennyson to Hardy* by Roger Ebbatson will be published by Palgrave Macmillan on 4th November 2016 (ISBN: 978-13319328379, 231pp, hardback). The book is about the resonance and implications of the idea of 'eternal recurrence', as expounded notably by Nietzsche, in relation to a range of nineteenth-century literature. It opens up the issue of repetition and cyclical time as a key feature of both poetic and prose texts in the Victorian/Edwardian period. The emphasis is upon the resonance of landscape as a vehicle of meaning, and upon the philosophical and aesthetic implications of the doctrine of 'recurrence' for the authors whose work is examined here, ranging from

Tennyson and Hallam to Swinburne and Hardy. The book offers radically new light on a range of central nineteenth-century texts. There are two chapters devoted to Richard Jefferies.

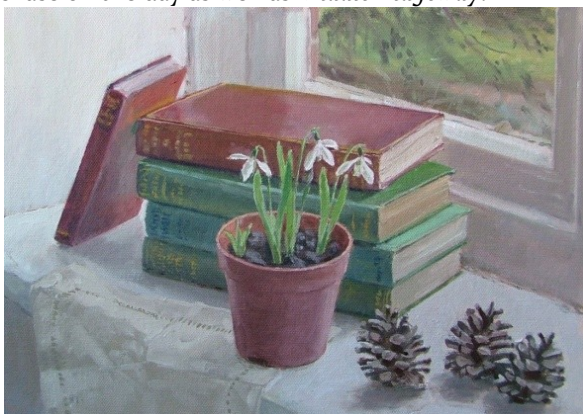
Freda M Chaney, based in the USA, had *Karma Road: Walking Through Time with George Eliot* published last year and has now written a children's book this year entitled *Kate Won't Wait*.

BOOK SALE

There will be an opportunity to buy books by or about Jefferies, at a fixed low price, that were once part of the Society's extensive library. The Society is retaining a collection of first and special editions that are now held at Duncan Pepper's home, but the surplus will be available to purchase at Liddington Village Hall on 5th November at the AGM. Any stock remaining after the AGM will be advertised in the Spring 2017 newsletter. John Price has offered to manage sales.

There is now an added bonus for those of you planning to attend this year's AGM and Birthday Lecture. Don't forget to bring your wallets and cheque books!

2016 publications – *Ben Tubbs Adventures* and *The Farmer's World* – will be available to purchase on the day as well as *Middle Ridgeway*.



From an oil-painting by Jane Milner Barry (Richard Jefferies Museum)

MAIL ORDER BOOKS

Postal sales are dealt with by the Hon. Secretary (see p.2 for contact details) and most can also be purchased from the Society's website. Stocks are at extinction levels for some of our own publications: paperback copies of *Restless Human Hearts* (2 copies left), and *World's End* (6) and hardback copies of *The Rise of Maximin* (4). If you are looking for a particular book, please ask.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & BIRTHDAY LECTURE
SATURDAY 5th November 2016
VILLAGE HALL, CHURCH ROAD, LIDDINGTON, SN4 0HB

PROGRAMME

10.30	Doors open and refreshments.
11.00	AGM (Members only) – see Agenda page 36
1.00	Lunch break. Bring a packed lunch. Local pub serves food. The hall is next to Liddington Church with views across to Liddington Hill. Opportunity to buy books from the Society's library (see p. 32)
2.30	The Birthday Lecture Speaker: Simon Coleman Subject: Richard Jefferies in Sussex
4.00	Tea
4.30	Depart

Birthday Lecture In 1882 Richard Jefferies moved to Brighton and lived mainly in Sussex until his death in 1887. Ill health had led him to move near the sea and the Downs — he set great store by nature's cures. Many of Jefferies' essays have a Sussex setting. These include: 'To Brighton', 'The Southdown Shepherd', 'The Breeze on Beachy Head', 'A February Day in Stanmer Park', 'On the Downs', 'Nature Near Brighton', 'Clematis Lane', 'Sea, Sky and Down', 'January in the Sussex Woods', 'Sunny Brighton', 'The Bathing Season', 'Buckhurst Park', 'The Country Sunday', and 'The Country-side: Sussex Winds of Heaven'. In his illustrated talk, Simon Coleman will explore Jefferies' Sussex.

Simon Coleman (pictured right) is an archivist living in Sussex who formerly worked on the British Library archive for Richard Jefferies and became a member of the Richard Jefferies Society in 1999. He has given three previous talks to the Society and is a contributor to the 'Richard Jefferies Visionary Naturalist Blog' (<https://richardjefferies.wordpress.com/>).



DIRECTIONS TO LIDDINGTON VILLAGE HALL SN4 0HB

(See map on next page)

Liddington Village Hall is located next to Liddington Church, Church Road, just off the main B4192 road from Commonhead Roundabout, at Swindon, via the Aldbourne road. There is ample parking space at the hall. The Village Inn (that serves food from 12am to 2pm – ☎ 01793 790314) is a short walk away.

Liddington can be approached by road from the A419 trunk road and M4 motorway Junction 15. From the J15 roundabout, take the first exit north on the A419 next to the Great Western Hospital and turn right at Commonhead Roundabout taking the B4192 to Liddington. Proceed up the hill and, half-way up, there is a staggered cross-roads at Liddington. Church Road is a few yards further up the hill on the right hand side. The main village of Liddington is on the left at the cross-roads along with the Village Inn and the bus stop.

Buses (Routes 46 to Hungerford & 48 to Marlborough) run between Swindon Bus station (the bus should leave from **Bay 9**, but watch out for changes) and through Liddington village.

There are two possibilities available for use on Saturday morning: one that arrives early and the other just on time. **The 46 leaves Swindon Bus Station at 10.40am and arrives at Liddington at 10.57am.** The earlier bus (48) leaves at 9.36 and arrives at 9.53. Regular and frequent buses run from Fleming Way in Swindon town centre to the Great Western Hospital (including numbers 11 and 16). For the brave and fit, there is a stiff 2km walk from the hospital up the hill to Liddington.

Return buses from Liddington to Swindon Bus Station:

Bus Service	48	46
Departs Liddington (Spinney Close)	16.21	17.19
Arrives Swindon Bus Station	16.39	17.36

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

AGENDA

- 1 Chairman's introductory remarks.
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Minutes of the last AGM, 7th Nov 2015 (see pp.37-40)
- 4 Matters Arising
 - Richard Jefferies Society & White Horse Bookshop
 - Literary Prize
 - Jefferies Land Fund: educational projects
 - Richard Jefferies House & Museum at Coate
 - Broadwater Cemetery
- 5 Annual Report
- 6 Treasurer's Report (see pp.41-42)
- 7 Election of Examiner of Accounts: Rob Brailsford.
- 8 Elections to Executive Council. The following Members are due to retire: Simon Coleman, Roger Ebbatson and Rebecca Welshman. All three are prepared to stand again for a further three-year period. The Executive Council also propose that Barry Sloan should stand as a full Council member.
- 9 Motions:

The Executive Council proposes the following addition to Clause 8 of the Constitution to permit the election of Honorary Vice Presidents without them incurring the responsibilities of a Society Trustee:

In recognition of their expertise and long-term service, the Society may elect up to four Honorary Vice Presidents who shall hold office for life but not act as Trustees.
- 10 Any Other Business

A copy of the minutes of the 2015 AGM should be brought to the AGM.

Any motions or resolutions for debate should be sent to the Hon. Sec. before the 25th October 2016, as should nominations for Executive Council members. Both should be proposed and seconded.

MINUTES of the Annual General Meeting of the Richard Jefferies Society held at the Village Hall, Liddington on Saturday 7th November 2015 at 11am.

PRESENT: Peter Bainbridge, Margaret Bathe, Gillian Bromhead, Roy Burton, Marie & David Chesham, Roger Ebbatson, Margaret Hunt, Enid Lewis, Brian Morris, Sylvia & Ray Morse, Michael Parrott, Duncan Pepper, John Price, Andrew Rossabi (part only), Jean Saunders, and Phyllis Treitel.

1. THE CHAIR

John Price welcomed Members to the Annual General Meeting and expressed regret at the very sad and recent loss of Kaye Franklin and Jean Bone.

2. APOLOGIES

Simon Coleman, Patrick Dillon, Peter Faulkner, Norma Goodwin, Eric Jones, George Miller, Helen Newman, Sheila Povey, Peter Robins, Tom Saunders and Richard Stewart sent their apologies.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting held on 25th October 2014 were accepted as a true record of proceedings. Proposed by Michael Parrott; seconded by Phyllis Treitel and carried by Members.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Storage and archives: John Price explained the background history for the loss of storage facilities for our library, book stores and ephemera which he had moved to his home on 8th October. Mr. Price expressed gratitude to John Chandler who has offered the Society storage space at his facility at Sutton Veny near Warminster for Society publications and to Duncan Pepper who is storing our library of books at his home. The Society's Executive Council had met recently and discussed the library of books and agreed that alternative arrangements might be made for those volumes that are not of special interest or of historic value. The matter was discussed again by Members at the AGM and it was agreed that they might be offered to Members in the first instance. John Price will prepare a catalogue. Our special archives remain secure at the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre, Chippenham which makes them accessible to the general public. The microfiches of images from Jefferies' notebooks held at the British Library have just been added to these archives.

4.2 Richard Jefferies House & Museum: Swindon Borough Council has a new Museum Officer, Stefanie Vincent, who informed the Society, relatively recently, that Swindon Council is still responsible for the collection at the Richard Jefferies Museum and, as the new Museum Trust had yet to obtain its formal Agreement and Contract with them, the current Society loan agreement with the Council has been extended to 31st January 2016. However the daguerreotype of Richard Jefferies' mother as a young lady was excluded from the current agreement as there was disagreement over how it should be stored. John Price is seeking expert advice from

the National Trust at Lacock regarding the best storage conditions for daguerreotypes.

There was confusion as to whether the Museum is open to the public on Wednesdays in winter months; no representatives of the Trust were present to enlighten.

4.3 Richard Jefferies Society Writers' Prize: The full list of nominations had been published in the Annual Report. Since then the Society's Executive Council, on Richard Stewart's advice, has shortlisted *Gods of the Morning* by John Lister-Kaye, *Common Ground* by Rob Cowen and *The Moth Snowstorm* by Michael McCarthy. The cut-off point for entry to the competition is 31st December 2015, so further candidates are anticipated with the release of publications at Christmas. The Executive Council will be informed of any additions to the short-list and John Price tabled, and started the circulation amongst Council Members, of the current three nominations. The Executive Council plan to select the prizewinner of £500 at their February 2016 meeting.

4.4 RJS Publications: John Price updated Members regarding publications in the pipeline. Eric Jones will be writing the introduction to the articles by Jefferies that were published in *The Live Stock Journal*. A draft book has been printed entitled *The Farmer's World: Richard Jefferies' Agricultural Journalism in the late 1870s* and it has been decided to reproduce the majority of the articles that Looker identified by Jefferies and not to edit them. The book will be of greatest interest to those interested in agricultural and social history. As such, it is proposed that the majority of the final publication, that should be produced next year, will be circulated to relevant universities, colleges, farming magazines and other outlets as educational tools. Jean Saunders proposed that a budget might be set from the Jefferies' Land Fund to this end. Brian Morris mentioned a charity that provided grants for the 'Propagation of Useful Knowledge' and it was suggested that we might set up our own PUK – to be discussed by the Executive Council.

Ben Tubbs Adventures will be published next year too. Andrew Rossabi has now corrected the text of the first five chapters against Jefferies' manuscript at the British Library.

Jefferies' notebooks: Jean Saunders has completed the scanning of all the images from the pages of Jefferies' notebooks held at the British Library using the microfiches in the Society's archives. It was hoped that these might be made available from our website but, as there are 3000 images, access might be reviewed. The interpretation of Jefferies' shorthand in the notebooks is an ongoing issue and an appeal is going out to establish whether any Member is conversant with Victorian shorthand. The thought was mooted: who taught Richard Jefferies shorthand? Perhaps he attended a course at the Mechanics Institute?

4.5 Broadwater Cemetery: Michael Parrott reported that the Friends of Broadwater Cemetery were still hoping that the Council might put the Memorial Chapel to better use as a pubic museum/educational resource. Evidently there is a large store of axe-heads hidden away and there is a splendid stained-glass window.

The other main focus was to create a sensory garden in the Jefferies/Hudson Memorial Garden. Mr. Parrott has trimmed back a yew that was overhanging the Jefferies' mulberry tree. The Friends hold their AGM at the end of November when future plans will be discussed. Mr. Parrott reported that the cemetery had remained vandal-free apart from a minor incident of graffiti which the Council cleaned off promptly. Mr. Parrott was thanked for the work he continues to undertake at the cemetery.

5. ANNUAL REPORT

The content of the annual report was accepted as a true record of the Society's activities. Proposed by Roger Ebbatson; seconded by Duncan Pepper and carried by Members.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

Peter Bainbridge reported that the final balance in the Society's accounts at 30th June 2015 should read £59,635.96. Only the balance for the financial year accounts had been recorded. Mr Bainbridge was meeting with the new Examiner of Accounts shortly but no significant matters had been raised by Rob Brailsford. Michael Parrott proposed acceptance of the accounts with the correction; seconded by Ray Morse and carried by Members.

7. ELECTION OF EXAMINER OF ACCOUNTS

Rob Brailsford, who is an accountant based in Swindon, is willing to continue to offer his services. His re-election for 2015-16 was proposed by Peter Bainbridge; seconded by John Price and carried by members.

8. ELECTIONS TO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The following Members were due to retire: John Price (Chairman), Andrew Rossabi (President), Jean Saunders (Secretary) and Richard Stewart. All four were prepared to stand again and in their current roles – the President and Secretary are appointed for a five year term of office; other councillors are in post for three years. The Secretary had received no further nominations apart from those nominated by the Executive Council: Margaret Hunt and Patrick Dillon. They were elected by Council to fill vacancies for the last year – Margaret Hunt was particularly thanked for taking on secretarial duties in Swindon.

John Price proposed and Ray Morse seconded that Patrick Dillon, Margaret Hunt, and Richard Stewart should be elected to Council from 2015-2018. This was carried by Members.

Peter Bainbridge took over the Chair when it was proposed by Enid Lewis and seconded by Duncan Pepper that John Price should be re-elected to Council and continue as Chairman from 2015-18. This was carried by Members who were disappointed to learn from Mr. Price that this is likely to be his last period as Chairman.

John Price proposed; seconded by Ray Morse that Andrew Rossabi and Jean Saunders should be re-elected as President and Hon. Secretary respectively from 2015-2020. The re-appointment was carried by Members.

9. MOTIONS – None had been received. Mr. Price gave notice of a minor amendment to the Constitution to be discussed by Executive Council for next year's AGM. An additional clause is required that will clarify that the appointment of Honorary Vice Presidents, who are elected for life, do not have to act as Trustees for the Society. This amendment is required to honour the good service of Members who have contributed greatly to the Society, but who should not be required to take on responsibilities.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Peter Bainbridge has offered to drive a minibus and organise an outing to Tewkesbury next year to visit the John Moore Museum and the Abbey. The Royal Hop Pole inn was also suggested which features in *Pickwick Papers*. The curator at the Museum has also offered to give a talk about John Moore. Further information will be supplied in the Society's Spring newsletter, 2016.

10.2 Simon Coleman has been invited to give next year's Birthday Lecture address on Jefferies' Sussex. This event is pencilled in for 5th November 2016 at Liddington Village Hall.

10.3 John Price gave notice of a possible BBC 'Countryfile' programme that should feature Richard Jefferies' Wiltshire at the end of November albeit that the broadcast hasn't been filmed yet.

10.4 To complement Barry Sloan's Birthday Lecture, copies of *The Times* were on display to show Jefferies' letters that brought him to the public eye.

10.5 No more had been heard of a Memorial Service planned for Mark Daniel. Ray Morse read out extracts from a eulogy to Jean Bone that took place at her Memorial Service held at St Mary's Church, Bishopstone on 20th August 2015.

The business part of the AGM ended at 12.45pm.

Jean Saunders

Hon. Sec.

9th November 2015

TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT: 2015-6

Financial Statements for the year ending 30th June 2016

Receipts	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2016	Total 2015
<u>Subscriptions</u>	2020.32			2020.32	2315.10
<u>Donations:</u> <i>General</i>	752.40			752.40	539.50
<u>Book Sales:</u> <i>Museum</i>	650.00			650.00	0.00
<i>Others</i>	722.35			722.35	1084.22
<u>John Webb Legacy</u>				0.00	25000.00
<u>Gift Aid Reclaim</u>	590.41			590.41	875.79
<u>Interest received</u>	101.22			101.22	83.03
Total receipts	4836.70	0.00	0.00	4836.70	29897.64
<u>Expenditure</u>					
<u>Publications</u>	1019.58			1019.58	837.94
<u>Rent/Room Hire</u>	120.00			120.00	60.00
<u>Subscriptions paid</u>	62.50			62.50	62.50
<u>Lecture fees</u>	18.80			18.80	50.00
<u>Administration</u>	1585.41			1585.41	1370.70
<u>Books/ Archive</u>					
<u>Purchases</u>	20.00			20.00	48.72
<u>Insurance</u>	90.10			90.10	190.80
<u>Equipment etc</u>	182.81			182.81	692.40
<u>Webb Prize</u>		537.98		537.98	
<u>Jefferies Land Fund</u>			824.00	824.00	
<u>Gifts</u>					141.60
<u>Refunds</u>					27.29
<u>Merchandise</u>					50.07
Total payments	3099.20	537.98	824.00	4461.18	3532.02

Excess of receipts over payments **375.52** 26365.62

Bank/B.Soc/Paypal/P.Cash

as at 30 June 2016 60011.48

as at 1 July 2015 59635.96

Restricted and Designated funds

Statement of Assets

Cash funds:-	Bank	19016.27	Biography	5470.00
	Paypal	407.58	General	3500.00
	B/Society	40,587.63	JLF	20885.00
		60011.48	Webb	24530.00
				54185.00
			Reserves	5626.48
				60111.48

Notes to the accounts

1. The Jefferies Land Fund is 'restricted' to ensure any disposal is for educational use.
2. There are assets of about £2000 in publications that do not appear in the accounts.
3. The John Webb legacy is 'designated' for the annual RJS Writers' Prize.
4. Interest accrued for the last two years has been apportioned between the restricted and designated funds.

There is nothing remarkable to comment on this year. The interest rate for the Coventry Building Society remains low but the interest accrued over the last two financial years has now been distributed as follows: £32.40 to the Biography fund; £84 to the Jefferies Land Fund and £67.88 to the Webb Writer's Prize.

There was a one-off payment of £650 made to the Society by the Richard Jefferies Museum Trust towards the stock of books left for sale at the Museum once the Trust took over management.

The Gift-Aid reclaim from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs is a welcome addition each year. The Society is very grateful to income tax paying members who are able to add value to any donations or subscriptions paid by signing a Gift-Aid declaration.

The only item of equipment purchased was a new scanner to replace the Hon. Secretary's personal machine that had 'expired' as a result of scanning thousands upon thousands of pages of texts and images of Jefferies' works.

I apologise that the report from the Examiner of Accounts has been delayed, yet again, this year. Family matters took priority over the accounts that have only just been sent to Rob Brailsford. He will be checking the accounts shortly and I will provide a verbal report of his findings at the AGM.

Peter Bainbridge
Hon. Treasurer
6th September 2016

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2016-2017

2016

Sat 5th Nov AGM and Birthday Lecture at Liddington Village Hall.
Birthday Lecture: 'Richard Jefferies in Sussex'.
Speaker: Simon Coleman.

Further information is detailed on pp. 33-42.

2017

Sat 1st April Joint meeting with the Friends of Alfred Williams. Venue:
Richard Jefferies Museum, Marlborough Road, Coate, Swindon
SN3 6AA.
Time: 2.00-4.30pm

This year it is the Society's turn to host the gathering. Select a short extract to read to others by or about Richard Jefferies or Alfred Williams or just come along to listen.

Sat 24th June A Study Day.
Venue: Richard Jefferies Museum
Time: 10.30am-4.30pm.
Theme: to be announced.
More information in the Spring 2017 newsletter.

Sat 4th Nov AGM and Birthday Lecture.
Venue: Liddington Village Hall
Time: 10.30am-4.30pm
Birthday Lecture: Speaker – Roger Ebbatson.
More information in the Autumn 2017 newsletter

Meetings are open to the public and free to attend.

The Alliance of Literary Societies' Literary Weekend will take place at Napier University, Edinburgh, from 2nd to 4th June 2017. This is being organised and hosted by the Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen Societies; a weekend of talks, tours and conversation about books and writers.

The Winter *Journal* will be despatched in December 2016; the Spring newsletter in March 2017 and the Summer *Journal* in June 2017.

The Society's Executive Council will be meeting on 4th February, 3rd June and 30th September 2017 to discuss business matters.

**RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY
BIRTHDAY LECTURE**

**Liddington Village Hall
Church Road SN4 0HB
Saturday 5th November 2016
2.30-4.00pm**

Richard Jefferies in Sussex

**by
Simon Coleman**

By 1882 Richard Jefferies lived mainly in Sussex until his death in 1887. Ill health led him to move near the sea and the Downs — he set great store by nature's cures. Many of Jefferies' essays have a Sussex setting. These include: 'To Brighton', 'The Southdown Shepherd', 'The Breeze on Beachy Head', 'A February Day in Stanmer Park', 'On the Downs', 'Nature Near Brighton', 'Clematis Lane', 'Sea, Sky and Down', 'January in the Sussex Woods', 'Sunny Brighton', 'The Bathing Season', 'Buckhurst Park', 'The Country Sunday', and 'The Countryside: Sussex Winds of Heaven'. Simon Coleman will explore this period of Jefferies' life and works.

All welcome. Admission free.