

THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2017



Richard Jefferies' Grave, July 2016.
Photograph by Michael Parrott. See pp.11-16.



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).

The annual subscription runs from 1 July and costs £12 for individuals (UK students: £8) and £14 for a couple. The latter receive one copy of the Society's publications. In view of the prohibitive postal charges overseas (approximately £4 per post) overseas members should add £5.00 towards additional postal costs. There is a facility to join online using the Society's Paypal account that accepts credit/debit cards at richardjefferiessociety.co.uk. There is an additional £1 supplement to cover Paypal charges incurred.

Members receive spring and autumn newsletters, an annual report plus summer and winter *Journals*. Activities include a spring meeting, a study day, special outings, a Birthday Lecture and an Annual General Meeting.

NEWSLETTER

The deadline for submitting material for the autumn 2017 Newsletter is **September 1st 2017**. Please send your contributions to the Hon. Secretary, preferably by e-mail (see contact details on p.3), and in good time to be sure of publication. The newsletter is edited by Jean Saunders and proof-read by Peter Robins.

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.

JOURNAL Summer 2017 edition

To mark the 130th anniversary of Richard Jefferies' death and the centenary of the death of Edward Thomas there is a special extended edition of the summer *Journal* No.32 in paperback book format, 200pp. It includes some excellent articles that are too long to place in the normal format. The book will be despatched with the Spring mailing this year.

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FROM THE CHAIR

John Price

To what extent was Richard Jefferies a Conservationist – as we would understand the word today?

I was reflecting on the matter having read the draft of this Newsletter, and particularly Jean Saunders' article on the history of the Broadwater Grave, illustrated by Michael Parrott's photographs on the cover. The display of wild flowers and grasses would surely delight anyone who had an empathy with Jefferies' response to the downland flora; and I wondered if any of the plants shown were survivors from the bold action of a now deceased member of the Society, who, when a young man, cut a square of downland turf from Liddington Hill, walked all the way to Sussex; sleeping under hedgerows as he went, and planted the turf on the grave.

We know that as a boy and young man, Richard took shooting very seriously. Whether with a bow and arrow, or later with a shot-gun; he adopted the ways of his contemporaries. Some of his shooting was to destroy species considered as vermin; some was to bring down birds for a closer look and therefore identification; and some was for shooting game, especially rabbits. We also know, however, that later on, he ceased to shoot at all, and was very content to observe. 'The pleasure of watching, not catching.'

I would claim that this is no different to many people of my generation, and those somewhat older and younger, who started off their interest in natural history by catching and collecting wild flowers, butterflies – even birds' eggs. Indeed, it could be argued that it is because young people do not collect (and are in fact dissuaded from doing so), that there is such a profound ignorance amongst the otherwise well-educated young about natural history matters: one only has to watch an episode of University Challenge to confirm that what would have been common knowledge to our ancestors with probably no formal education, is completely alien to these team members with an enormous range of information about many other fields.

Despite eschewing the shot-gun himself in maturity, Jefferies accepted the need for gamekeepers in particular to control vermin species, and for the landowners to pursue their 'sport' for pleasure – and for the food provided. He shows a certain ambivalence about 'the uneatable', however, as whilst not criticising fox-hunting in itself, he does condemn the unfairness of importing foxes from another area, as they have no knowledge of local earths, and therefore are too easily hunted down. He also hints at sympathy for the fox when he states that it 'meets its fate in the jaws of clamouring hounds or is assassinated with the aid of villainous saltpetre'.

Richard Jefferies saves his main disdain for immigrants – of the botanical variety. In *Nature Near London* he rails against ‘acacias, sumachs, cedar deodaras, araucarias, laurels, planes, beds of rhododendrons.....various other foreign shrubs and trees whose names have not become familiar.’ ‘There are no fragments of English History clinging...as there are to the oak. There is not one foreign shrub that presents us with so beautiful a spectacle as the bloom of the common old English hawthorn in May.’

These objections seem to be on historic or aesthetic grounds, and it is surprising perhaps, that Jefferies had not noted the dependence of so many species on the native British flora, and had not used this as a more fundamental objection to the introduced ornamental plants. He does, however, make a plea for the preservation of hollow oak trees because of the diversity of life-forms that they support; and elsewhere defends Farmer Iden from his neighbours’ criticism about the planting of horse chestnut trees – without realising that the horse chestnut is also an introduced plant – albeit in the 16th Century.

To my mind, however, the most passionate plea for conservation comes in *After London*. The titles of the two parts: ‘The Relapse into Barbarism’ and ‘Wild England’ suggest an almost unconscious desire to reset the clock. Not only has London been destroyed by some apocalyptic event, but the carefully managed fields and orchards have reverted to nature, and human society has gone back to a much simpler mode of existence. Jefferies’ understanding and description of ecological succession is demonstrated by the following passage:

The wheat, after it had ripened, there being no one to reap it, remained standing, and was eaten by clouds of sparrows, rooks, and pigeons, which flocked to it and were undisturbed, feasting at their pleasure.

Year by year the original crops of wheat, barley, oats, and beans asserted their presence by shooting up, but in gradually diminished force, as nettles and coarser plants, such as the wild parsnip, spread out into the fields from the ditches and choked them.

Meanwhile the brambles, which grew very fast, had pushed forward their prickly runners farther and farther from the hedges ... and in the course of twenty years met in the centre of the largest fields.

Hawthorn bushes sprang up amongst them, and, protected by the briars and thorns from grazing animals, the suckers of elm trees rose and flourished. Sapling ashes, oaks, sycamores, and horse-chestnuts, lifted their heads.

Finally, in an extraordinary passage in *The Story of My Heart*, Jefferies writes:

All nature, all the universe that we can see, is absolutely indifferent to us, and except to us human life is of no more value than grass. If the entire human race perished at this hour, what difference would it make to the earth? What would the earth care? As much as for the extinct dodo, or for the fate of the elephant now going....

Was the elephant seriously thought of as under threat in the 19th century?

FROM THE SECRETARY

Jean Saunders

Please note that, where appropriate, membership renewal forms for 2017-2018 have been included with this spring mailing as there will be no summer post. As subscriptions aren't due until 1 July 2017, any cheques received early will not be banked until then. Those of you who paid your 2017-18 membership in advance or who have arranged to pay by standing/bankers order (on 1 July) will find a [p] or [s] after your name on the envelope address label.

Members who have signed a Gift-Aid declaration bring a much appreciated bonus to the Society's funds at no extra cost to them. For every pound donated or given as a subscription, the Society can reclaim 25p from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs and this can be back-dated for four years. Hence, a subscription of £12 adds an additional £3 to the Society's income. The only stipulation is that the donor must be a UK tax payer who has paid the equivalent in tax (e.g. £3 in this example). It will be much appreciated if other members might consider signing and returning the Gift-Aid declaration form enclosed with this mailing where included.

If you would like to receive occasional news by email, please let me know. For example, the Alliance of Literary Societies sends me their newsletter and journal by email that can be forwarded. And don't forget to look at the Society's website and Facebook page – full of interesting items, news and articles – as well as links to the Richard Jefferies Museum Trust's pages.

HOW DID YOU DISCOVER RICHARD JEFFERIES?

Bernard White came late to discovering Richard Jefferies and the Society. He moved from London to Oxford twenty-five years ago and ran the Oxford branch of The School of Economic Science for some time. Most of their courses take place in London. He writes: 'Every term of our School we have material to work with as close as possible with the events as they are unfolding, and last term there were very telling excerpts from *The Story of My Heart*. This was my first meeting with Richard Jefferies, but I gather that we did have a touch of his writings some years back which I never had sight of. I see that one of our lunch-time readings this term [autumn 2016] is from Jefferies. ... Being in Oxford, at my age [nearly ninety], makes going to London a bit tiring and one has to accept not going to many London events. The sheer delight to meet the depth of Jefferies' spiritual experiences, sent me to Coate. At least, I sat in his chair looking out of his window.'

BIRTHDAY LECTURE 2016

‘Richard Jefferies in Sussex and Kent’ by Simon Coleman.
5 November 2016, Liddington Village Hall.

An audience of thirty people listened to Simon Coleman outline Jefferies’ associations with Sussex and Kent. The talk was to be split into four sections:

1. The county of Sussex and Jefferies’ early associations
2. The South Downs and coast
3. The Weald
4. Sun Life: Sussex

Regrettably only the first two parts of the programme were covered and it was agreed that Simon should present the second half of his talk at a later date.

It was a most interesting and beautifully illustrated presentation with quotes from Jefferies’ writing that described the southern counties that brought Jefferies so much pleasure. Despite his fondness for London, Jefferies complained of ‘the dust that chokes the spirit’ whilst ‘there is always hope in the hills.’

Mr. Coleman referred to the early years when Jefferies first visited Lewes with Aunt Ellen where her young nephews, the Baxters, lived. Jefferies recalls in his letters to her playing on the Lewes downs with the children. As a young man he spent some days in Hastings before travelling to Brussels for a holiday. It was here that Jefferies saw and wrote to the Prince Imperial (Napoleon III’s son) and created problems for the servants of Empress Eugénie.



Beachy Head – photographed by Simon Coleman, 2016.

Mr. Coleman described the places where Jefferies lived as well as the countryside on the Sussex Downs and the coast. Jefferies was always drawn to the sea – even on the hills, where he imagined the grasses and wheat wafting in the wind as waves of the sea. Jefferies could never understand why visitors, promenading on the pier at Brighton, did not appear to enjoy gazing at the sea or the sea-shore as much as him.

Some examples follow of Jefferies' quotes that illustrate the scenery:

The little rules and little experiences, all the petty ways of narrow life, are shut off behind by the ponderous and impassable cliff; as if we had dwelt in the dim light of a cave, but coming out at last to look at the sun, a great stone had fallen and closed the entrance, so that there was no return to the shadow.

On returning homewards towards Eastbourne stay awhile by the tumulus on the slope. There are others hidden among the furze; butterflies flutter over them, and the bees hum round by day...

How many times has the morning star shone yonder in the East? All the mystery of the sun and of the stars centres around these lowly mounds.

But if the sun rises clear, the rays light up the yellow sand of the quarries inland, the dark brown ploughed fields, and the black copses where many a bud is sleeping and waiting for the spring. A haze lies about the Downs and softens their smooth outline as in summer, if you can but face the bleak wind which never rests up there. The outline starts on the left hand fairly distinguished against the sky. As it sweeps round, it sinks, and is lost in the bluish haze; gradually it rises again, and is visible on the right, where the woods stand leafless on the ridge. Or the vapour settles down thicker, and the vast expanse becomes gloomy in broad day. The formless hills loom round about, the roads and marks of civilisation seem blotted out, it may be some absolute desert for aught that appears.

The thin, chalky soil of Sussex is singularly favourable to poppies and charlock – the one scarlet, the other a sharp yellow; they cover acres. Wild pansies flowered on the hillside fallows, high up among the wind, where the notes of the cuckoo came faint from the wood in the Weald beneath. The wind threw back the ringing notes, but every now and then, as the breeze ebbed, they came, having travelled a full mile against the current of air.

In reconstructing Brighton station, one thing was omitted – a balcony from which to view the arrival and departure of the trains in summer and autumn. The scene is as lively and interesting as the stage when a good play is proceeding. So many happy expectant faces, often very beautiful; such a mingling of colours, and succession of different figures; now a brunette, now golden hair: it is a stage, only it is real. The bustle, which is not the careworn anxious haste of business; the rushing to and fro; the greetings of friends; the smiles; the shifting of the groups, some coming, and some going – plump and rosy, – it is really charming.

We look forward to hearing Mr. Coleman talk about the Weald and Jefferies' 'Sun life' at a future date.

STUDY DAY

SATURDAY 24 June 2017

Connections and Inspirations: the Influence of Richard Jefferies on Writers and Poets

At the Richard Jefferies Museum, Coate

PROGRAMME

The 1890s gave rise to a number of successful books written in the same vein as Jefferies' works – a trend recognised in 1896 by the *Critic*, which stated that 'there really seems to be no question that books of the Richard Jefferies school are more popular just now than they ever have been before'. Jefferies' influence in literature has been present ever since, and writers and poets such as Henry Williamson, John Fowles, and Edward Thomas have expressed their debt to Jefferies. New connections between Jefferies' works and other writers are frequently unfolding, and this Study Day seeks to celebrate known connections with other literary figures and perhaps even discover new ones. We welcome contributions in the form of readings from writer's works that suggest Jefferies' influence, or short summaries of research. Contributions might also discuss what writers have said about Jefferies, and consider writers who have led them to Jefferies.

Writers and poets might include John Betjeman, Mary Butts, John Cowper-Powys, Enid Blyton, Ronald Blythe, Rachel Carson, W.H. Auden, W.H. Hudson, E.M. Forster, John Fowles, Thomas Hardy, James Joyce, D.H. Lawrence, Richard Mabey, Robert MacFarlane, Arthur Ransom, Henry Stephens Salt, Edward Thomas, Mary Webb, and Henry Williamson. Contributions which identify new connections with lesser known writers and poets are also welcome. Please ensure that contributions are approximately five minutes long, so that as many people can participate as possible.

10.30 Doors open and refreshments.

11.00 Welcome.

Dr. Rebecca Welshman will give an overview of the subject followed by contributions from the floor.

1.00-2.30 Lunch break. Bring a packed lunch.

2.30 Readings continue and discussion.

3.45 Refreshments.

4.15 Depart.

For those who are unable to attend but would like to make a written contribution for the Chairman to read out, please send it to John Price.

RICHARD JEFFERIES' GRAVE

Jean Saunders



Henry Williamson visiting Jefferies' grave, August 1936.

Richard Jefferies wrote:

Could I have my own way after death I would be burned on a pyre of pine-wood, open to the air, and placed on the summit of the hills. Then let my ashes be scattered abroad – not collected in an urn – freely sown wide and broadcast. That is the natural interment of man – of man whose Thought at least has been among the immortals; interment in the elements. Burial is not enough, it does not give sufficient solution into the elements speedily; a furnace is confined. The high open air of the topmost hill, there let the tawny flame lick up the fragment called the body; there cast the ashes into the space it longed for while living. Such a luxury of interment is only for the wealthy; I fear I shall not be able to afford it. Else the smoke of my resolution into the elements should certainly arise in time on the hill-top.

The Story of My Heart (Ch. 3)

But Jefferies did not get his own way and on Saturday, 20 August 1887 he was buried at Broadwater Cemetery in Worthing.¹ According to W.H. Hudson, in a

¹ Broadwater Cemetery was opened in 1863. The *Sussex Advertiser*, 17 Jan. 1854, reports that the Secretary of State issued orders to 'discontinue interments in the old ground belonging to the parish church of Broadwater, the fulness of which, has long been known to require such interference. The order contains

letter to Morley Roberts, Jefferies' grave was in the 'loveliest spot with the old stone pines and a wealth of flowers and wild plants.'² Jefferies' son, Harold, recounted that his 'father very much disliked' the sombre St. Mary's church in Goring³ with its equally gloomy churchyard. So Jefferies chose his spot in the middle of Broadwater cemetery and had a Christian burial, perhaps, as a mark of thanks to his wife, Jessie, who would have wanted nothing less.

Here follows some information gathered about Jefferies' grave taken from old newspaper cuttings and Society newsletters. Too many pilgrimages were reported to include them all.



Kathleen Sewell (daughter of Jefferies' cousin) laying the wreath;
Frances Gay (Chair of the RJS 1950-71) reading, circa 1960.

The earliest newspaper report about the grave appeared in the *Edinburgh Evening News*, Friday, 23 September 1887, when a Mr. W.D. Wright, of Upper Norwood (William Wright was a divinity student around that time, born in 1867 in Damascus) wrote: 'A few days ago I was in Broadwater Cemetery. I was shown a little stoneless mound, with a faded flower wreath, and a few ferns at head and foot. The curate of Broadwater kindly told me it was the grave of Richard Jefferies.'

regulations for future interments in the enlarged ground at Broadwater.'

² Hudson wanted to be buried next to Jefferies in a grave of similar design. Unfortunately, the plot was not available. In August 1922 Hudson was buried about 50 yards away (see photograph on p. 16).

³ 'Memories of Richard Jefferies,' by Harold Jefferies, *Richard Jefferies: My Father*, The Worthing Cavalcade (Worthing Art Development Scheme, 1944), p.24.

There are no reports about the laying of the marble memorial stones but by September 1895, Herbert Sturmer reported that 'the large marble cross [was] no longer white and staring' and 'a great overgrown shrub' was next to the grave.⁴

On 21 March 1903, a letter to the editor of the *Spectator* reveals that Jefferies' grave had been neglected. Rev. J.G. Cornish of Lockinge, near Wantage, described the appearance and appealed for help to get it restored:

The tombstone is a simple and well-proportioned white marble cross, at the foot of which are the words: 'In loving memory of John Richard Jefferies, who died at Goring, August 14, 1887, aged 38. Also in memory of Richard Oliver Launcelot, his beloved youngest child, who died March 16, 1885, aged 1 year and 8 months, and was interred at Eltham.' On the side of the cross are the words: 'W. Hide, Goring.' The sexton said that the tombstone had been put up by Mr. Hide, at whose house Jefferies was lodging when his fatal illness seized him. The marble is in need of cleaning, the grave mound ought to be returfed, and the cross a little raised so that the lower part of the inscription may be more visible. 'About six years ago a gentleman, he had long hair and looked very delicate ... said he could not bear to see it like that, so he paid to have the stone cleaned and the grave done up; but no one has troubled about it since.'

Hence we learn that, at that time, there was no kerb, nor was it common knowledge that a local builder, known to Jefferies, was responsible for making the cross.⁵ Hide's inscription is no longer to be found.

Rev. Cornish's appeal, prompted more letters to the *Spectator* including one dated 4 April 1903 from Charles C. Osborne of 16 St. Edmund's Terrace, Regent's Park. Osborne wrote: 'As a lover of Jefferies's works, and the honorary secretary of the Wiltshire fund which was raised at his death for the benefit of his family, I shall be glad to contribute my share to the fund.' He went further and suggested: 'Has not the time come when we should found a national "In Memoriam" Society for the reverent care of the graves of our great men?'

It is clear that action was taken and an article about Jefferies published in *The Burnley News* on 8 Aug. 1917 by 'The Lone Tramp' of Burnley recounts a visit made to Jefferies' grave some years previously (no date is mentioned). However, by that time the marble kerb-stones had been added along with the 'prose-poet' inscription. The Lone Tramp wrote:

⁴ Herbert Sturmer's visit was reported in the *Westminster Gazette* and the article was reproduced in the *Swindon Advertiser*, 28 Sep. 1895.

⁵ William Hide was a builder/carpenter (b.1829) as was his father. The Jefferies' family lodged at William and Elizabeth's home – Peacock Hall, Goring which is now the site of 'The Mulberry' pub – before moving to their newly-built home at 'Sea View'. William and Elizabeth's son, also William, used to play with young Harold Jefferies, whilst Elizabeth Hide was present at the time of Jefferies' death. Ref: 'Jefferies at Goring', anonymous, *Richard Jefferies: A Tribute by Various Writers*, The Worthing Cavalcade (Worthing Art Development Scheme, 1946), pp.143-4.

There was some little difficulty, I remember, in finding the grave, for it lay apart across the cemetery from the entrance, by the edge of a side walk and beneath a bush of bay trees. The cool, green grasses lay about, and the solemn yew trees, a place after his own choice. Indeed, he did choose the spot instead of the bleaker graveyard nearer the sea. A small white marble cross, quite devoid of monumental effort, just name and date upon the base, and a thin, railless edgestone marking out its length and breadth, and this inscribed with the words: 'To the honoured memory of the prose-poet of England's fields and woodlands'.

It has not always had this tidiness of appearance, I was told. The year before, some admirer from London had set about reducing things to order, and that by adding stone-work and planting shrubs. That admirer deserves well of all those who treasure the memory of Richard Jefferies. I lifted my cap too, when I thought of the solitary two or three close friends who knew and who stood alone by his open grave thirty years ago. Jefferies was little known then, and much less understood. Now his books are widely and lovingly read, and scores, no doubt, have paid their pilgrimage to that spot since drawn, as I was, by the debt they owed to Richard Jefferies.

It is more than likely that Osborne was the 'admirer from London' responsible for the restoration work and for adding the kerbs. Many people have made pilgrimages to the grave, including Henry Williamson in 1936, Frances Gay and Kathleen Sewell (grand-daughter of Jefferies' Aunt Martha Hall).

Inscriptions were added to the plinth on the death of Jessie and their children, presumably at the request of family members. On the north side of the plinth it reads: ALSO OF JESSIE/ HIS BELOVED WIFE/ WHO PASSED AWAY JULY 12TH 1926/ BURIED AT PERRANPORTH, CORNWALL. On the south side: ALSO OF RICHARD HAROLD/THEIR ELDEST SON WHO PASSED AWAY NOV. 3RD 1942/ BURIED AT LACHINE, CANADA. On the west side: ALSO OF THEIR DAUGHTER/ JESSIE PHYLLIS HARGRAVE/ DIED NOV. 28TH 1958/ BURIED AT SEAFORD.

In 1979, the grave was Grade II listed.

The Richard Jefferies Society will be eternally grateful to Mark Daniel (sadly deceased) who moved to Brighton and took it upon himself to look after Jefferies' grave. In March 1984 Mark planted a Portland Rose within the kerb – the variety dated back to 1809 and bore large scarlet flowers throughout the summer and autumn. He regularly cleaned the marble and sheared up the kerbing when it was out of alignment. It must have been a tearful moment when Mark visited the grave in May 1994, after news that vandals had knocked the cross off its plinth and smashed it into three pieces. Many graves had been similarly attacked. Worthing Cemeteries Department and the Society shared the cost of restoring the cross.

Vandalism continued to be a major head-ache for the authorities and in August 2000, the cross was pushed off the plinth a second time. Worthing

Council wanted to remove the cross completely but this proposal was discussed at the Society's AGM in October 2000, and rejected by members. Subject to agreement by the Jefferies' family and the authorities, it was proposed that the cross should be repaired but laid flat on the turf within the marble kerb. Once again, the Society shared the cost of the repair with Worthing Council. At the same time a marble cap was added to the 'wedding cake' plinth by Mr. Daniel along with the inscription 'RICHARD JEFFERIES 1848-1887.' The rose bush was removed. The grave had always been difficult to find, and without the standing cross, it was even more so.

Vandalism continued to be a problem for several years until Worthing Council stepped up security measures and locked the cemetery at night. Fortunately, Jefferies' grave was spared further attacks.

Despite his best efforts, by 2009, Mark Daniel remarked that the grave needed a complete overhaul – the lead from the lettering had worn away and some of the wording was unreadable. The stone had perished and was beyond cleaning by conventional means. This time the Richard Jefferies Society organised the restoration employing Paul Binstead, a local stone mason, who made the marble look like new. He refaced and cleaned the stone-work, incised the inscriptions, added lead to all lettering and repaired the cross. The bill came to £1350 but half the cost was borne by individual members of the Society (Mark alone gave £450) and the Eltham Society donated £200.



Mark Daniel inspects the damage to the cross, May 1994.



Second attack in Aug 2000.

By this time, Michael Parrott, another of our members who lives in Sussex, offered to help look after the grave and still does so today. At the Society's visit to Broadwater in May 2010, to inspect the restoration work, we admired the handiwork of Mr. Binstead. Mr. Parrott has kept up a magnificent display of wild flowers and spring bulbs, particularly daffodils – Amarylly's favourite – see cover photographs. He does his best to persuade the managers of the cemetery to let the grasses and wild flowers grow. Jefferies would have taken delight to

know that he was lying in the mowing grass. At one time, Michael remarked that often the only place in the grave-yard where bees, butterflies and insects could be found was at Jefferies' grave.



May 2010 – the Richard Jefferies Society visit the grave. Left to right: Michael Parrott, Jean Saunders, Gillian Bromhead, John and Angela Price, Duncan Pepper, John Webb, Phyllis Treitel, Rebecca Welshman, Mark Daniel, Andrew Rossabi, Stan Hickerton and Simon Coleman. Photograph taken by Don Bromhead.

We are grateful to Mr. Parrott and the Friends of Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery for their part in looking after and promoting the cemetery to visitors. Perhaps the W.H. Hudson grave might be similarly adopted for restoration and care some time. His epitaph reads: 'HE LOVED BIRDS AND GREEN PLACES AND THE WIND ON THE HEATH, AND SAW BRIGHTNESS OF THE SKIRTS OF GOD' and is written on a broken foot-stone. Perhaps the Richard Jefferies Society might contribute towards the work?



Grave of W.H. Hudson, May 2010.

BEVIS AND THE SECRET ISLAND

Andrew Rossabi

Has any member pointed out *Bevis* as a likely influence on Enid Blyton's first full-length adventure novel *The Secret Island*, published by Basil Blackwell in 1938?

The *Glasgow Herald* described the book, which features the characters of Jack, Mike, Peggy and Nora, as a 'Robinson Crusoe-style adventure on an island in an English lake'.

I've not read the book but there is an excellent detailed account of the story and characters on the Enid Blyton Society website. This makes plain the strong influence of Jefferies, seen especially in the character of the farmer's son Jack, who knows how to survive on the island, how to snare rabbits, and is an expert on the flora and fauna – in short, a great field naturalist. He is sunburnt and has clear blue eyes. There is a passage cited where Blyton describes the island as seeming magically to float on the water which echoes Jefferies' description of the island floating in a sea of light in Chapter XXXII 'New Formosa—Morning in the Tropics'.

Sheila Ray in *The Blyton Phenomenon* (André Deutsch, 1982) was, I believe, the first to mention *Bevis* as a possible influence.

Blyton, it should be said, was keen on the outdoors and natural history, about which she was extremely knowledgeable. She edited a condensed one-volume version of T.A. Coward's *Birds of the British Isles*, published by Frederick Warne, and her *Enid Blyton's Book of the Year* encouraged children to observe the monthly changes in nature, was rich in odds and sods of country lore, weather rhymes and so forth, and explained such things as how to grow cress on blotting paper and keep tadpoles and newts.

To this day I remember one of the pieces, which was to the effect that however overcast and gloomy the sky, if you could see enough blue to sew a patch on a pair of sailor's bell-bottomed trousers, there was bound to be fine weather before long. The book helped foster my interest in natural history.

Of course Blyton came under increasingly heavy attack for political incorrectness from the late 1950s onwards. Her books were banned from libraries and for years the BBC refused to broadcast any of her stories. But children remained impervious to the criticisms, if they were ever aware of them, and continued to read the books, which sold in their millions in countries across the globe, including China and India.

REFLECTIONS

Richard Jefferies

Amongst Samuel Looker's archives there is a typed transcript of some Jefferies' unpublished pages. Looker adds the following information: '3 leaves, four pages entitled "Reflections" in Jefferies Holograph. Middle period?' It reads as follows:

As I was starting out it came on to spot raining and being susceptible to moisture (not as a drinking but a rheumatic way) I had to go back and put on my coat. When my boy came to me with a pitiful story of an injury to his tricycle and might he take it to the blacksmiths and get it repaired? At the foot of the steps I met the postman with a letter that had to be answered and while I was scrawling it a friend arrived.

After we had been in this twelvemonth we found that it was too much exposed, the wind came round the corner furiously: the upper rooms were uninhabitable from cold; basement cold; just when I wanted money most in order to move, the oldest firm in the trade stopped payment, there were assets but it would require 12 months to realise. A tremendous jerk of the elephant. A capital appointment was offered to me but, as I could not move I could not take it.

Nothing runs like the express – that is the least part of the journey – the real travelling is in the starting and the end: eternal worries to start, all directions, and the one thing forgotten. At the end the cob, dirty, enters the wrong road, refuses to go further, bribery, got a man to show the way, find a box dropped off half a mile back, weary, rheumatic twinges and shaken.

oooOOOooo

This brief fragment opened up many questions. Where was Jefferies living at the time, what was the story about the tricycle, why did he write it, who 'stopped payment' and how did Looker get hold of it? Some notes follow that suggest answers to these questions.⁶

The cold home pointed to 'The Downs' in Crowborough, where the family lived from about July 1885 to November 1886. However, there was no basement and no steps up. Otherwise the house fits Jefferies' description very well. He wrote about the ferocity of the wind there in both 'Hours of Spring' and 'Winds of Heaven'. The only home that fits the description of a basement with steps is

⁶ Compiled by the editor with guidance and information from Andrew Rossabi, George Miller and Peter Robins and *The Forward Life of Richard Jefferies* by Hugoe Matthews and Phyllis Treitel (Petton Books, 1994) and *Richard Jefferies: a Bibliographical Study* by George Miller and Hugoe Matthews (Scolar Press, 1993).

‘Savernake’ in Lorna Road, Brighton where the Jefferies family lived from approximately July 1882 to June 1884. Unlike ‘The Downs’, which was set in countryside and ‘exposed’, ‘Savernake’ was a town house that conjures up visions of suburbanisation. Audrey Smith cleared up the mystery with her description of ‘Savernake’ (see illustration left by Stan Hickerton). She wrote:⁷

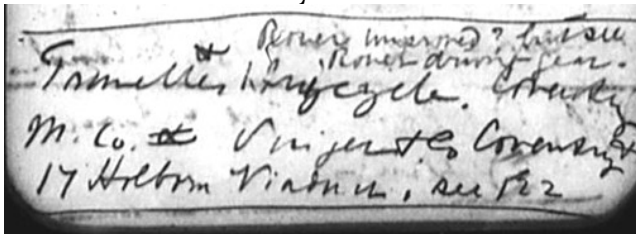


The house to which they went, in Lorna Road, West Brighton, was a new one – perhaps they themselves were responsible, in a fit of nostalgia, for naming it Savernake. The actual site was not in itself very attractive. It lay far out from the centre of the town, just behind the County Cricket Club Ground. When Richard and Jessie moved in, only six houses of the development were completed. ... [B]ehind Savernake at the end of the small garden ran the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway. Beyond the railway line, the terrain was flat and rather uninteresting, rising only gradually to Ditchling Beacon and Pycombe.

Thus, in Jefferies’ time, the house in Lorna Road was ‘exposed’ and not at all situated as we would

find it today.

The tricycle: Jefferies’ ‘boy,’ Harold, was born on 3 May 1875 and would have been nine in 1884. In Jefferies’ notebook (No. XII) dated April 1884 (folios 121-123) he lists bicycle/tricycle manufacturers. The names ‘Rover’ and ‘Sterling’ are mentioned. Whilst not easy to read, the relevant sections in the notebook follow along with advertisements for cycles mentioned:



extract from folio 121.

Rover’s improved? best all

Rover - driving - gear.

Traveller & tricycle. Coventry

M. Co.⁸ & Singer & Co. Coventry at

⁷ *The Interpreter: A Biography of Richard Jefferies* by Audrey Smith (Swindon: Blue Gate Books, April 2008), pp.135-136.

⁸ The Coventry Machinists’ Company Ltd. was established in 1869. Under the guidance of James Starley, the firm worked on the “bone shaker” imported from France. Ultimately Coventry became ‘The Cycle Capital of the World’ and firms set up businesses elsewhere.

17 Holborn Viaduct, see 122

The Rover (Traveller style)
Starley & Sutton "Meteor"
works. West Orchard, Coventry

South London Machinist Co.
At-sep: Tower Chambers,
Moorgate St opposite station.

extract from folio 122.

The Rover (Traveller style)
Starley & Sutton "Meteor"
works. West Orchard, Coventry

South London Machinist Co.
City [sepr]: Tower Chambers,
Moorgate St (opposite station)

Sterling Tricycle. John Browning
April 4 A Burdess, Holyhead
Road, Coventry.

extract from folio 123.

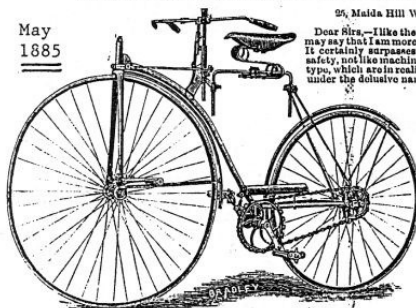
Sterling Tricycle. John [Browning]
April 4 A Burdess, Holyhead
Road, Coventry.⁹

⁹ Adam Burdess (1824-92) was a watchmaker at this address but expanded into bicycle manufacture in 1880. He patented the 'Sterling' tricycle in 1882.

THE "ROVER" SAFETY BICYCLE

Is as safe as any Tricycle, and a better Hill-climber than any Bicycle or Tricycle yet made.

May
1885



25, Maida Hill West, Maida Vale, London, W.,
April 18th, 1885.
Dear Sirs,—I like the "Rover" Safety Bicycle much. I
may say that I am more than satisfied with the machine.
It certainly surpasses my expectations, and is a real
safety, not like machines of the Hudge (so-called safety)
type, which are in reality only small geared-up bicycles
under the delusive name of safeties. For rough roads
and steep hills it would be difficult to find a rival.
Believe me, dear Sirs,
Yours faithfully,
(Signed) FRED W. COTTON

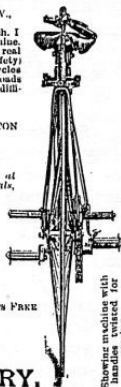
PRICE,

With Ball Bearings to all
Wheels, Cranks and Pedals,
30in. Front Wheel,
20in. Rear Wheel,
Geared to 24in.,

£22.

Crates for above, 3s.
Not Returnable.

ILLUSTRATED PRICE LIST FURNISHED
ON APPLICATION.



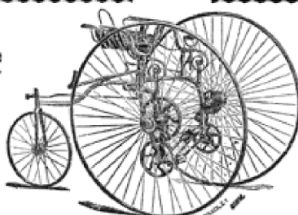
Showing machine with
handles raised for
starting.

STARLEY & SUTTON,
"METEOR" WORKS, WEST ORCHARD, COVENTRY.

Advertisement that appeared in the Cyclist Touring Club's magazine in May 1885.¹⁰

SEND FOR PRICE LIST OF THE NEW SPEED AND POWER BURDESS "Sterling" Tricycle,

Containing Five
recent Patents
for Improve-



ments in the
most essential
parts.

It is acknowledged to be the easiest, best, safest, most comfortable and
nearest perfection of any Tricycle in the Market.

INVENTOR AND SOLE MANUFACTURER:
ADAM BURDESS, HOLYHEAD ROAD, COVENTRY.

¹⁰ This advertisement included a glowing letter of approval for the 'Rover' dated 18 April 1885 from Fred W. Cotton who ends 'For rough roads and steep hills it would be difficult to find a rival.'



But in the end, Jefferies' opted for a tricycle for his son and, with money being tight, he might have purchased something more basic (as pictured left) – a child's tricycle. Harold mentions the tricycle in his reminiscences of Brighton¹¹: 'Father bought me a tricycle whilst we lived at Brighton, and I had great fun until, turning too sharply, I capsized, broke the backbone of the machine, and badly bruised my arm from shoulder to wrist. It was some time before I could persuade him to have the thing repaired.'

This confirms that the fragment was written about their 'Savernake,' Brighton home.

Harold still owned his tricycle in Goring. He writes: 'I understand that Goring is now part of Worthing, but in my time there was a good stretch of country road between them, along which I pedalled to school daily on my tricycle, a loving gift from my father.'¹²

Stopped payment: Longman, the publisher, was 'the oldest firm in the trade', founded in 1724. C.J. Longman's letter of 19 May 1884 to Jefferies mentions that royalties for the sale of *The Story of My Heart* will be exceedingly small (£4.5s). Sales of the book had ceased by then although there were still 281 copies available. The final Royalty payment for the autobiography was paid in May 1885 (2s.6d) – sales had continued to be non-existent. This ties in with Jefferies' claim that 'there were assets but it would require 12 months to realise'. Unfortunately these assets were never realised. The timing of the payment in 1884 also suggests that 'Reflections' was written after 19 May 1884 but before or just after the family moved on to Eltham around June/July 1884.

The 'capital appointment' is ambiguous. 'Capital' could mean either a Lord Emsworthian 'splendid', 'first-class', or 'in London', more probably the former. Perhaps it is a reference to a journalistic post; an appointment to a London newspaper or periodical, but lack of funds enabling him to move had prevented him from taking it.

The final paragraph of 'Reflections' expresses how random life can be. In the notebook that Jefferies was writing leading up to that time (No. XII), there are references to ideas for a new semi-autobiographical novel that are indicated by

¹¹ *Concerning Richard Jefferies* by Various Writers. (The Worthing Cavalcade, 1944). 'Memories of Richard Jefferies' by his son Richard Harold Jefferies, p. 23.

¹² *ibid*, p. 24.

'RM' whilst he is also writing notes for *Amaryllis*. Folio 50 includes a tentative title: 'The Raffle of Life: everything a raffle'. The book never came into fruition and Looker left out these passages from *The Notebooks of Richard Jefferies* which he edited (Grey Walls Press, 1948). It is possible that Jefferies' daughter might have shown Looker the 'Reflections' pages when she parted with her father's notebooks. Perhaps she kept the pages and they were lost in the due course of time. Jefferies had not discarded them so, no doubt, he had plans to include his 'Reflections' somewhere.

The Jefferies' family had much to cope with around May 1884: baby Oliver (b. 18 July 1883) was just ten months old, Phyllis (b. 6 December 1880) only three, a shortage of money, a cold house, Richard's own poor health and a need to move. However the last paragraph suggests that the move to Eltham is underway: 'At the end the cob, dirty, enters the wrong road, refuses to go further, bribery, got a man to show the way, find a box dropped off half a mile back, weary, rheumatic twinges and shaken.' The family moved about 62 miles away to 14 Victoria Road, Eltham in June or July 1884. Presumably the family used the good railway service to move whilst their possessions arrived by horse and cart.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Development of Burderop House and Park

City and Country held their third consultation event regarding their proposed development. This was attended by Eric Jones, on 11 Oct. 2016, who provided the following report:

Plans have moved on since the July consultation although it was stressed they have not yet been presented to Swindon Borough Council. The intention is to build 54 houses in the park, besides converting the House into a small number of flats. Much attention has been given to aesthetics, including opening vistas of the house and choosing to build in an echo of the local vernacular style and in local materials. Plainly, nostalgia will not come cheap.

Members of the Richard Jefferies Society will be most interested in the aim of preserving the woodland screen, keeping the former deer park an open space, using the walled garden for allotments and planting some wildflower meadow. Even greater interest attaches to the fact that this will not be a gated community. There will be public access for pedestrians (peripheral footpaths exist and the roads will be open). Visitor parking, meaning for residents' visitors, is required by the planning authority at a rate of 20 per cent of the spaces provided for residents; these (scattered) spaces will also be available to non-resident visitors.

An announcement was made on 2 March 2017 that a planning application has been lodged with Swindon Council but there were no further details at the time of going to print.

Broadwater Cemetery, Worthing

Michael Parrott provided the following information at the AGM. He has been tackling the staining and calcium deposits on the cross and kerb stones of Jefferies' grave. He was instructed to use bleach to clean the stones and the glitter is now returning to the marble.

The memorial garden has posed a few problems. The mulberry tree has borne a good crop of fruit but the ground was very dry that year. Mr. Parrott attempted to break up the soil below the tree and apply a mulch. The Council's wild flower display was disappointing with only poppies blooming in the main. It is hoped that something might be done to improve the Jefferies/Hudson memorial and make the water trough functional; it is invariably without water.

There have been a few incidents of graffiti at the cemetery but the Council is very successful in cleaning away all traces of it.

The Friends of Broadwater are still keen to make the two chapels accessible. Even the Chairman, who is a councillor, has been unable to arrange access to the chapel that holds the Sussex Regiment stained glass window. In the South Chapel they can, at least, make a cup of tea.

The cemetery is well-visited and Mr. Parrott tabled a list of events that had taken place in 2016 along with a 'Cemetery Trail' leaflet and guide that had been published using lottery funding.

Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM and Birthday Lecture will take place on the first Saturday in November, but it is more than likely that future events will take place a week earlier to take advantage of British summer-time hours and give members an extra hour of daylight on their homeward-bound journeys.

The Agricultural Museum, Coate

The splendid collection of mainly Victorian farming equipment was once proudly displayed in a purpose-built wooden barn in Brook Field. This Agricultural Museum was closed by Swindon Council in the 1980s, not long after it withdrew support for the Richard Jefferies Museum. Unlike the latter, that remained alive thanks to volunteers from the Society, the agricultural museum has been neglected. A fire broke out, thought to be electrical in origin, early in the morning of New Year's Eve. The fire brigade was quick to respond but the structure of the building was mostly destroyed. According to Mike Pringle, who was at the scene, some of the exhibits can be saved. Let's hope that Swindon Council makes good and opens the Museum to the public once more.



Inside the Agricultural Museum, Coate, 1984. Photographer: Richard Wintle ©.



After the fire, 31 December 2016. Photographer: Mike Pringle.

Talks

Andrew Rossabi gave a talk on 'Richard Jefferies, Nature Mystic' on 11 October 2016 at the School of Economic Science's 'Lunchtime Escapes' lectures.

John Price will be giving a talk entitled Richard Jefferies: Man of Nature at the Crowborough Community Festival to be held between 1-27 May. The date for his talk is 11 May but the venue and time are to be announced. More information at:

<http://www.crowboroughcommunityfestival.org/>.

New Biography of Richard Jefferies

Andrew Rossabi has been at pains to write the ultimate biography of Richard Jefferies, given all the new information that has come to light in recent years. He has been working on the opus for ten years and has completed about 1,300 pages so far towards a three-volume set with the title, *A Peculiarly English*

Genius or A Wiltshire Taoist: A Biography of Richard Jefferies. Mr. Rossabi informs us:

One of the most memorable descriptions of Jefferies was given by a squatter in the former Cambodian Embassy in Maida Vale in the 1970s. I had loaned him Thomas's biography, the best anthology of Jefferies as well as the best critical work. He came back, thanked me for introducing him to such a wonderful book as Thomas's and such a remarkable writer as Jefferies, whom he declared was 'a Wiltshire Taoist'.

Mr. Rossabi is in the process of editing Volume I that covers Jefferies' early years, 1848-1866. The 800-page book will require the work of a professional indexer before it is ready for proof-reading and printing. Volumes II and III are likely to be completed in about four or five years time.

In an act of extreme generosity, Mr. Rossabi has donated all his commission funding (£5470) towards the publication of the biography. The Society has agreed that any additional future publication expenses will be met from the Jefferies Land Fund. We look forward to seeing the first volume in print.

Gift

The Society has made a gift of £2250 to the Richard Jefferies Museum Trust to be used for the purchase of a computer for displays in the Museum library and to improve the facilities in the library.

Jefferies Land Fund

Eric Jones and Patrick Dillon are pleased to report that 700 copies of *Middle Ridgeway* have been sold. In February they presented the Society with a cheque for £2000 in full repayment of the start-up loan from the Jefferies Land Fund towards printing the book. For those of you who haven't bought a copy yet (and you should!), the book is beautifully illustrated by Anna Dillon and covers the landscape of the downs that Jefferies knew so well. Janice Lingley has reviewed *Middle Ridgeway* for the *Summer Journal* 2017 and copies of the book can still be purchased through Patrick Dillon (see p.4) or via <http://middle-ridgeway.co.uk>.

The Fund also paid for the printing and distribution of seventy free copies of *The Farmer's World* to agricultural colleges, university libraries and to agricultural magazines. The remaining stocks are being sold and the returns will cover the initial printing costs.

Richard Jefferies Society Bursary

The Society will reserve £2000 per year from the Jefferies Land Fund to help publish work concerning Jefferies or related themes and topics. The aim of the bursary is to encourage research on and awareness of Jefferies and his world. The emphasis will be on the production of new knowledge.

The Executive Council has set up a sub-group to manage future applications for funding.

THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY AND WHITE HORSE BOOKSHOP LITERARY PRIZE 2016

Sixteen books were nominated last year. The final shortlist for the 2016 prize will be announced at the end of March and put up on the Society's website.

The winner will be agreed at the Society's Executive Council meeting to be held on Saturday 13 May.

Angus MacLennan, of the White Horse Bookshop, Marlborough, plans to invite the winner of the award to a special event on 3 June (see below) at the bookshop.

Marlborough Literary Festival special event – Nature Writing Day

On Saturday 3 June LitFest is bringing the best of nature writing to the White Horse Bookshop in Marlborough for one day in June. This is outside the usual festival time, but it will celebrate the wealth and variety of nature writing on offer at present. Speakers might include the winner of the Richard Jefferies Society Writers' Prize for outstanding nature writing, and the garden designer, Rosie Hardy.

For more information: <https://www.whitehorsebooks.co.uk/>

The 2017 prize

Please send any nominations for the 2017 award to Richard Stewart (see p.4). Any length or format of writing on themes or topics broadly consistent with the work of Richard Jefferies can be suggested but must be published for the first time in 2017. E-books are excluded from the competition. Nominations may be made by anyone. Society Members are eligible for the award (excluding Members of the Executive Council). Decisions about the annual prize will be made by the Society's Executive Council and will be final. Nominations must be proposed before 31 December 2017. Please give as much notice as possible should you find a suitable candidate. Do not assume that someone else has nominated the work.

RICHARD JEFFERIES MUSEUM TRUST

Once again, at the time of going to press, the report from the Richard Jefferies Museum Trust hadn't arrived. The Trust organises events for children and adults at the Museum. The public open days remain as the second Wednesday of the month (10.30am-4pm) and from May to September, Sundays from 1.30-5pm. Go to the Trust's website for more information – <http://richardjefferies.org>



Laser-cut steel screen (2016) inspired by the F.D. Bedford illustration for the cover of *Amaryllis at the Fair*, (Duckworth, 1906).

BOOK SALE: SURPLUS STOCK FROM THE RJS LIBRARY

Since John Webb's death, we have had no permanent home for the Society's Library; though Duncan Pepper is very kindly housing the core collection of publications. Apart from these important volumes, there are several duplicates, cheaper later editions, and readily available more recent publications. The Society's Executive Council has taken the decision to dispose of these by first offering them to Society Members at prices that could not normally be matched when purchasing online, or from established booksellers.

It has to be borne in mind that nearly all of these books have library stamps, stickers, or other marking in them, and that some have the bookplate of previous owners. Details of these are not always included in the descriptions below. It is to be hoped, however, that Members may be pleased to have the opportunity of purchasing and owning a little of the Society's history.

The reference numbers given are to the Miller and Matthews Bibliography.

Requests for the books, at the prices stated, should be sent to:

John Price, Granham West, Granham Hill, Marlborough, Wilts. SN8 4DN
or emailed to: jtp@waitrose.com

Each letter/message expressing an interest should include the Titles and Reference numbers of the books desired. It will help fair distribution, if in the first instance, members limit their request to no more than three titles.

Successful applicants will be notified and, on receipt of a cheque made out to The Richard Jefferies Society for the book(s) plus postage, the relevant volume(s) will be posted. Please do not send money with your requests.

1. *After London*. 1929. Duckworth. New Readers Library. M and M B22.9. Good, with faded spine and mark on front cover. £10.00
2. *After London*. 1980. OUP. Introduction by John Fowles. Very Good. B22.14. Pbk. £3.00
3. *Amaryllis at the Fair*. Sampson Low. No date, but 1896. Reissue of Second Impression M and M B24.4 – variant (a). Spine slightly scuffed and hinges weakening. Good. £30.00
4. *Amaryllis at the Fair*. 1992. Alan Sutton. Intro by David Buxton. Very Good. £3.00
5. *The Amateur Poacher*. Nelson. 1879. No date, but 1911. M and M B10.13. Good. £5.00
6. *Bevis*. Dent. 1981 Everyman Edition, with introduction by Henry Williamson. Pbk. Good. £4.00

7. *Bevis and Mark*. Dent. 1937. 1st thus. Edited by Guy N. Pocock. B15.22 Spine faded. £8.00
8. *Bevis and Mark*. Dent. 1946. Top corner of Introduction page torn out. Ex-school library copy. B15.31. Covers worn. £4.00
9. *The Dewy Morn*. Wildwood House. 1982. Good. Intro by Laurence Lerner. B21.4. £2.50
10. *The Dewy Morn*. Wildwood House. 1982. Very Good. Intro. By Laurence Lerner. B21.4. (Not ex-RJS Library.) £3.00
11. *The Eulogy of Richard Jefferies*. By Walter Besant. Chatto and Windus. 1888. 1st Edition. Spine very worn, but contents clean and tight. E2.1. £8.00
12. *Field and Farm*. Phoenix House. 1957. 1st Edition. Jacket not clipped. Very Good. B38.1 £5.00
13. *Field and Farm*. Country Book Club. 1958. No jacket. Very Good. B38.2. £4.00
14. *Field and Hedgerow*. Longmans Green, and Co. 1889. 1st Edition; 1st Impression. B26.1. Covers somewhat battered. Cloth split between spine and back cover over top half. Contents reasonably clean. £6.00
15. *The Gamekeeper at Home*. Smith Elder and Co. 1878. Third Impression of First Edition. B8.3. A very good copy. £12.00
16. *The Gamekeeper at Home*. Tideline Books. 1973. B8.40. No Jacket. Very Good. £5.00
17. *The Gamekeeper at Home & The Amateur Poacher*. OUP. 1978. Pbk. B8.41. Introduction by Richard Fitter. Very Good. £4.00
18. *The Gamekeeper at Home & The Amateur Poacher*. OUP. 1978. Pbk. B8.41. Introduction by Richard Fitter. Very Good. £4.00
19. *Greene Ferne Farm*. William Foster. 1947. 2nd Edition. B11.2. No dustjacket. Good. £10.00
20. *Greene Ferne Farm*. Grafton Books.. 1986. Pbk. B11.3. Introduction by Andrew Rossabi. Good. £3.00
21. *Hodge and His Masters*. Methuen and Co. 1937. B12.3. The Edition heavily edited by Henry Williamson. Clipped worn jacket with a few nicks and loss at top of spine. £10.00
22. *Hodge and His Masters*. Smith, Elder and Co. 1880. 1st Edition. B12.1. 2 Volumes. Contents clean and binding tight. Spine of Vol. 1 is splitting and has loss at top. £30.00

23. *Hodge and His Masters*. Smith, Elder and Co. 1880. 1st Edition. B12.1. 2 Volumes. Vol. 2 very good, but Vol. 1 has splitting spine and worn boards. Contents sound. £20.00
24. *The Jefferies Companion*. The Country Book Club. 1952. C23.2. Selection by Samuel Looker. Chipped jacket. Contents very good. £4.00
25. *Jefferies England*. Constable. 1947. C13.6 Jacket not clipped, but chipped on spine. Contents clean and good. £4.00
26. *Jefferies Land*. A History of Swindon and its Environs. Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent and Co. 1896. First Edition. Edited by Grace Toplis. Contents clean and tight. All illustrations and folding map present. Map has one tear. B29. £50.00
27. *The Life of the Fields*. Chatto and Windus. 1893. B20.6. Very good copy. £6.00
28. *The Life of the Fields*. OUP. 1983. Pbk. B20.26. Good. £2.00
29. *Natural History of Selborne*. By Gilbert White. Walter Scott. No date – but between 1887 and 1900. Preface by Jefferies. Good only. B25.? £8.00
30. *Nature Near London*. Chatto and Windus. 1893. 1st Edition, 2nd Impression. B17.2. Covers good, but spine darkening. Contents clean, but splitting at pp. 80 to 81. £10.00
31. *Nature Near London*. Chatto and Windus. 1893. Hand Made Paper Edition. B17.6. £10.00
32. *The Old House at Coate*. Lutterworth Press. 1948. B36.1. Very good with very good jacket. Edited by Samuel Looker. Agnes Miller Parker illustrations. £7.00
33. *The Old House at Coate*. Ex Libris Press. 1985. B36.4. Pbk. Very good. £3.00
34. *The Open Air*. Chatto and Windus. 1885. 1st Edition. 23.1. Spine badly torn at top and chipped at bottom. Contents clean and tight. £15.00
35. *The Open Air*. Lutterworth Press. 1948. B23.27. No jacket. Good/very good. £4.00
36. *The Open Air*. Wildwood House. 1981. B23.28. Pbk. Richard Mabey Introduction. £2.00
37. *The Pocket Richard Jefferies*. Chatto and Windus. 1911. 3rd Impression. C7.3. Selection by Alfred H. Hyatt. £8.00
38. *Readings from Richard Jefferies*. Macmillan and Co. 1948. C14.2. 2nd Impression. Chosen and Edited by Ronald Hook. £5.00
39. *Red Deer*. Longmans, Green and Co. 1884. B.19.2. 1st Edition. Contents tight and very good, but boards bumped and marked, and spine faded and torn at top. £12.00

40. *Red Deer*. Longmans, Green and Co. 1892. 2nd (Illustrated) Edition. B19.3. Very good internally. Boards bright, but rubbed at spine extremities. £10.00
41. *Richard Jefferies*. By Reginald Arkell. Rich and Cowan Ltd. 1933. 1st Edition, E47.1. Very good copy. £10.00
42. *Richard Jefferies: His Life and His Ideals*. Salt, Henry S.. Arthur C Fifield.. 1905. E 8.1. Hard-back. Very Good but with some rubbing of board edges. £8.00
43. *Richard Jefferies. His Life and Work*. Thomas, Edward. Hutchinson and Co. 1911. Pocket Edition. No published date given. Good condition. £10.00
44. *Richard Jefferies' London*. Lutterworth Press. 1944. 1st Edition. Good condition. Edited by Samuel Looker. C17. No dustjacket. Good. £3.00
45. *Richard Jefferies' London*. Lutterworth Press. 1944. 2nd Impression. Good condition. Edited by Samuel Looker. C17. No dustjacket. Good. £3.00
46. *Round About a Great Estate*. Ex Libris Press. 1987. B13.10. John Fowles Introduction. Graham Arnold illustrations. Pbk. Very Good. £4.00
47. *Round About a Great Estate*. Ex Libris Press. 1987. B13.10. John Fowles Introduction. Graham Arnold illustrations. Pbk. Very Good. £4.00
48. *The Spring of the Year*. Lutterworth Press. 1946. 2nd Impression. Edited by Samuel Looker. C19.1. No dust jacket. £3.00
49. *The Story of My Heart*. Longmans, Green, and Co. 1891. 2nd Impression of 2nd Edition. B18.4 Spine chipped at extremities. Good. £35.00
50. *The Story of My Heart*. Longmans, Green, and Co. 1917. Pocket Edition. B18.34 £5.00
51. *The Story of My Heart*. Quartet Books. 1979. Introduction by Andrew Rossabi. Pbk. £3.00
52. *The Toilers of the Field*. Longmans, Green, and Co. 1892. 1st Edition, 2nd Impression. B27.2. Label on spine slightly torn. £10.00
53. *The Toilers of the Field*. Longmans ,Green, and Co. 1894. B27.6. Spine worn at extremities. Tissue guarding frontispiece is torn. £7.00
54. *The Toilers of the Field*. Macdonald Futura Publishers. 1981. B27.11. Pbk. Introduction by Victor E. Neuberg. £3.00
55. *The Toilers of the Field*. As Number 54. £3.00
56. *Wood Magic*. Rex Collings. 1969. B14.24. Very good with very good jacket. (Not from the RJS Library.) £7.00
57. *Wild Life in a Southern County*. Smith, Elder and Co. 1879. 1st Edition, 2nd Impression. B9.3. Binding variant (b). No inscriptions. Covers quite bright, with some rubbing at spine extremities. The binding has split between pages 272 and

273. Otherwise a good copy. Not from RJS library, but from John Webb legacy.
£8.00

MAIL ORDER BOOKS & AUDIO CDS

Postal sales of the Society's publications are managed by the Hon. Secretary (see p.3 for contact details). All prices quoted below offer free postage in the UK. Cheques should be made payable to The Richard Jefferies Society and orders sent to the Hon. Sec.

<i>Richard Jefferies: A Spirit Illumined</i> . Various writers, 1987 (pamphlet)	£2.00
<i>The Jefferies Canon</i> – W.J. Keith, 1995 (pamphlet)	£2.00
“Essay on Instinct” – Richard Jefferies, 2012 (pamphlet)	£2.50
“A Natural System of National Defence” – Richard Jefferies, 2014 (pamphlet)	£3.00
<i>Richard Jefferies' Letters to Aunt Ellen</i> , 2009 (softback)	£ 4.50
<i>Amaryllis at the Fair</i> – Richard Jefferies, 2009. Introduction by Carolyn Clarke (softback)	£ 6.00
<i>Ben Tubbs Adventures</i> – Richard Jefferies, 2016. Introduction by Andrew Rossabi (softback)	£10.00
<i>Greene Ferne Farm</i> – Richard Jefferies, 2009 Introduction by George Miller (softback)	£ 5.00
<i>The Interpreter: A Biography of Richard Jefferies</i> – Audrey Smith, 2008. Introduction by Eric Jones (softback)	£ 5.00
<i>The Scarlet Shawl</i> – Richard Jefferies, 2009. Introduction by Andrew Rossabi (softback)	£ 5.99
<i>The Dewy Morn</i> – Richard Jefferies, 2009. Introduction by Rebecca Welshman (softback)	£ 7.00
<i>The Farmer's World: Richard Jefferies' Agricultural Journalism in the late 1870s</i> , 2016. Introduction by Eric Jones (softback)	£12.00
<i>Adventures in the Vale of the White Horse: Jefferies Land</i> – Kate Tryon, 2010 (limited edition softback) + pamphlet	£12.00
<i>Restless Human Hearts</i> – Richard Jefferies, 2008. Introduction by Andrew Rossabi, 2008 (hardback; £20) (Softback version £8)	£20.00 ----- £ 8.00
<i>Richard Jefferies: An Index</i> – Matthews & Treitel, 2008 (hardback)	£15.00
<i>The Forward Life of Richard Jefferies</i> – Matthews & Treitel, 1994 (hardback)	£12.00
<i>World's End</i> – Richard Jefferies, 2008. Introduction by Andrew	£ 7.99

Rossabi (softback)	
<i>Richard Jefferies: An Anthology</i> – Matthews & Welshman, 2010 (hardback)	£20.00
<i>The Rise of Maximin</i> – Richard Jefferies, 2012. Introduction by Rebecca Welshman (hardback – limited edition of 60 copies)	£20.00

The following audio CDs are available @ £1.50 each unless otherwise stated:

A Song of Summer. Paul Scofield reads 'Nature and Eternity' (*Hills and the Vale*).

The Man on the Hill with Paul Scofield.

The Story of My Heart. Extracts read by Paul Scofield.

After London. Extracts read by Paul Scofield.

Bevis. Extracts read by Michael Williams in 12 episodes (3 CDs). £4.50.

A Drift of Time. A play with Robert Stephens as Richard Jefferies.

A VISIT TO PETERSFIELD AND THE EDWARD THOMAS EXHIBITION

To mark the centenary of the death of Edward Thomas, the Richard Jefferies Society is planning to attend the 'Edward Thomas, Wayfarer' Exhibition along with other places of interest in the area. Details were not finalised at the time of going to press, but it will occur on a weekday between 2 May to 17 June.

Transport from Coate is proposed, but members can make their own way there. Please keep an eye out for more information on the Society's website or contact the Hon. Sec.

'Edward Thomas, Wayfarer' Exhibition.

The exhibition will take up the theme of the road or path that influenced Thomas's literature and his life.

It will showcase published items from the significant collection of Tim Wilton-Steer, currently housed in the new Edward Thomas Study Centre at Petersfield Museum, as well as original examples of Thomas's writing.

This exhibition will be on display at Petersfield Museum, The Old Courthouse, Petersfield GU32 3HX from 4 April – 17 June 2017.

The Museum is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 4pm. An entry fee applies to adults; children under 16 years are free.

CITINGS OF RICHARD JEFFERIES

Peter Robins came across an article entitled 'Richard Jefferies' by S.A. Jones published in *The Inlander*, March 1893, Vol III, No. 6, pp.250-255. It is quirky, with amusing literary allusions, and is reverential. Jones, an American, was a correspondent of Henry Salt and both wrote about Thoreau and Jefferies. Prof. Samuel A. Jones was a homeopathic physician and editor of *American Homeopathic Observer*. He believed that any physician would forecast an early death for Jefferies just by looking at his 1879 photograph! This was two years before his illness took a hold. Jones ends his article: 'I have before me a primrose that grew on his grave at Broadwater, and it will be very dear to me until I too pass on into the shadow of the night.' No details are provided how he acquired the flower, and there is no evidence that Jones visited the grave or England. Perhaps Salt sent him a pressed flower. Mr. Robins asks: 'Was Jefferies interested in homeopathic remedies?' The article will be published in a future edition of the Society's *Journal* that will be dedicated to Americans who have written about Jefferies.

Ray (Badger) Walker found several mentions of Jefferies in *Walking Through Spring: an English Journey* by Graham Hoyland (Collins, 2016); now a book on the Society's 2016 long-list for the Literary Prize. Hoyland has created a new national trail, walking from the south coast in March up to the border with Scotland, which he reaches on the longest day: the twenty-first of June. He writes in the introduction that he was given *Bevis* 'by one of our finest nature writers' and enjoyed the unsentimental view of characters and nature.

The Farmer's World was reviewed in the *Times Literary Supplement* of 21 September 2016 by Richard Smythe in an article entitled 'More about Butter'. It is an excellent review, and is most praise-worthy of Eric Jones' introduction to the book. Smythe writes: 'Faced with difficulty [making a living from writing], Jefferies diversified; given a job to do, he did it good and hard. The poise and confidence in these pieces is striking.' The review has generated many extra sales of the book.

This was followed by another excellent critique of the book and Prof. Jones' introduction to it in the *Agricultural History Review* (Vol. 64 pt ii (2016), pp.266-267). Sarah Holland of the University of Nottingham writes that Jones' 'commentary is critical, examining and questioning the approach taken by Jefferies in order that the reader not only fully recognizes the importance of the works reprinted here but also the influences behind their existence.'

If you haven't bought your copy yet, please do so before stocks run out.

Steve Milton was watching Julien Temple's documentary film, 'London: The Modern Babylon' (2012) described as his 'love letter' to London. Whilst Michael

Gambon narrated over footage of an Edwardian street scene, Mr. Milton recognised quotes from *The Story of My Heart* (Chapter VI). Sure enough, Jefferies received credit at the end of the programme along with Yeats, Eliot, Blake and others. The relevant passage quoted from *The Story* relates to the busy street scene and traffic in front of the Royal Exchange: ‘Like the spokes of a wheel converging streams of human life flow into this agitated pool. Horses and carriages, carts, vans, omnibuses, cabs, every kind of conveyance cross each other’s course in every possible direction. Twisting in and out by the wheels and under the horses’ heads, working a devious way, men and women of all conditions wind a path over. ...Now the streams slacken, and now they rush again, ...all London converges into this focus.’ Temple inserts the phrase ‘London is a modern Babylon’ before ‘the vortex and whirlpool, the centre of human life today on the earth’ in the final sentence.

Maureen Iles, who writes a monthly article in her blog about streets in Swindon, accompanied by photographs, chose Okebourne Park for her October 2016 selection. She mentioned that the street was named to honour Richard Jefferies’ ‘Okebourne Chase’, the name he used for Burderop Park in *Round About a Great Estate*.

Channel 4’s TV broadcast ‘Britain’s Ancient Tracks’, featuring the Ridgeway, was shown on 22 October 2016. It was somewhat light in content particularly so given the extensive information provided to the researchers about the ‘Middle Ridgeway’ and Richard Jefferies. Tony Robinson began his walk in Avebury and visited the Richard Jefferies Museum *en route* to Wayland Smithy, the Uffington White Horse and the Goring gap. He read an extract from *Wild Life in a Southern County* describing the Ridgeway whilst walking along. There was a brief interview with Rebecca Welshman in the Coate Farm garden, and then Robinson read from the opening passage of *The Story of My Heart* whilst seated in the attic. He ended the Jefferies’ piece with the comment, ‘beautiful writing’.

W.H. Auden: A Biography by Humphrey Carpenter (Faber & Faber, 2010), mentions on p.38 that Auden wrote a poem addressed to Jefferies, whose adventure story *Bevis* was, he declared, ‘the only tolerable book about boyhood.’ Carpenter was referring to a line in a poem that Auden sent to Lord Byron as part of an amusing fan-letter. This was published in *Letters from Iceland* (Faber and Faber, 1937). In 1936 Auden took a holiday in Iceland; a trip into the wild and wrote:

I can’t read Jefferies on the Wiltshire Downs,
Nor browse on limericks in a smoking room;
Who would try Trollope in cathedral towns,
Or Marie Stopes inside his mother’s womb?

which suggests that Iceland was the place to read Jefferies.

Roger Ebbatson has been reading a book on Victorian geology which cites *After London* as an example of 'post-Darwinian concerns about degeneration': Virginia Zimmerman, *Excavating Victorians* (State University of New York Press, 2008).

Neil Underwood spotted that a photograph in the November issue of *Saga Magazine* (p.36), that accompanied an article on Gogglebox (Channel 4 TV programme), showed a couple watching the television seated in front of a bookcase. With the aid of a magnifying glass Mr. Underwood spotted about 20 Jefferies' books plus works by Henry Williamson, Edward Thomas and others. It turns out that these latest critics of TV programmes (the theme of Gogglebox) are Giles Wood and his wife Mary Killen. Giles, a former member of the Society, is an artist and writes for *The Oldie*. Mr. Wood has been known to mention Jefferies on several occasions in his column.

Andrew Rossabi drew attention to a volume entitled *Nature and the Victorian Imagination*, edited by U.C. Knoepfelmacher and G.B. Tennyson (University of California Press, 1977). He writes that 'It is a most interesting collection of academic essays, in which, given its subject, one might have anticipated several references to our author. Not a bit of it. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Cobbett, Ruskin, Darwin, Arnold, George Eliot, Dickens, Mrs. Gaskell, George Sand, 'Mark Rutherford', Tennyson, Browning, William Morris, Hardy, Hopkins, D.H. Lawrence, T.S. Eliot, W.H. Hudson, they and others are cited, and given their due, and some have chapters devoted to them. But Jefferies rates a mere two minor citations: the first in a footnote where his reference in *Hodge and His Masters* (Vol.II, p.151) to the foul smell ('peculiarly offensive odour' as he puts it) emanating from the farm labourers' cottages is quoted; the second a passing reference to his 'Nature appreciations' retaining a measure of their popularity in the post-Great War period.

The twenty-five contributors to *Nature and the Victorian Imagination* were all former students and colleagues of E.D.H. Johnson, Professor Emeritus at Princeton and a leading authority on life and manners in Victorian England, to whom the volume is dedicated.

Johnson compiled an anthology of English Nature Writings, *The Poetry of Earth*, published by Gollancz in 1966. In addition to extracts from Coleridge, John Clare, Thomas Gray, Dorothy Wordsworth (*Journals*), William Cobbett (*Rural Rides*), Philip Henry Gosse (on the sea shore), Charles Kingsley (on the Fens), Gerard Manley Hopkins (*Journals*) and others, the volume includes excerpts from *The Gamekeeper at Home* (Chapter VI), *Wild Life in a Southern County* (Chapter X), and *The Amateur Poacher* (Chapter VII). Johnson's preface to the chapters from Jefferies is that curious mixture of praise and disparagement often found in assessments of our author.

Both Peter Robins and John Price supplied an article from *The Times* (24 December 2016) that appears in Jim Dixon's 'Nature Notebooks' where he regularly champions Jefferies. On this occasion Dixon describes him as 'a romantic who inspired the countryside conservation movement'. In an article entitled 'Winter is the best time to read the landscape', Dixon adds that he had just learnt from a new Henry Wessells' book (that he doesn't name) that Jefferies and W.H. Hudson were also 'important pioneers of science fiction'. It seems that Mr. Wessells has launched an exhibition to accompany his book, but, again, no details are given.

The *Swindon Advertiser* reproduces snippets of old news. This is from 13 February 1951: 'It was decided that the memorial to Richard Jefferies should be erected at the site of his favourite haunts at the foot of Liddington Hill. The Richard Jefferies Society was unanimous in its decision where it should be placed, after its executive committee had refused the suggestion of placing the memorial at Regent Circus.' Presumably the memorial was never erected.

This from 17 January 1961: 'Mrs. F.J. Gay, secretary and chairwoman of the Richard Jefferies Society, for Swindon, has received a photograph of four-year-old Richard Jefferies of California, USA, who is the great great nephew of the Swindon-born writer and nature lover. Young Richard is one of the youngest members of the Richard Jefferies Society in America.' Unfortunately the Society has lost touch with American relations. Richard's brother Harry (1852-1920) emigrated there and married Carrie Secrest (an American) in Texas in 1884. They raised their family in Texas.

Andrew Rossabi noted that *A Mighty Mass of Brick and Smoke, Victorian and Edwardian Representations of London*, edited by Lawrence Phillips (Amsterdam-New York: Editions Rodopi, 2007) is a collection of essays that includes one by David Skilton entitled 'When Dreams Are Coming: Wordsworth, Jefferies and Visions of the London Crowd,' (pp.85-106). Skilton says on p.98: 'Richard Jefferies is one of the great recorders of the London crowd, both from within and from without, and he produced one of the best sketches ever written on transport in London, "A Wet Night in London".'

Jean Saunders found three quotations by Richard Jefferies in *The Birdwatcher's Companion* by Malcolm Tait and Olive Taylor (London: Robson Books, 2005). The book contains fascinating information about bird-life and is illustrated with quotes about birds from fine nature writers over the centuries ranging from Gilbert White to John Lister-Kaye. There are two quotes from *Wild Life in a Southern County* that cover nightingales, starlings and finches along with a description of the yellowhammer and blackbird from *The Life of the Fields*.

Andrew Rossabi reports that hard on the heels of the Paul Nash exhibition at Tate Britain comes a major exhibition 'Places of the mind: British watercolour landscapes 1850-1950' at the British Museum (Room 90). The title is taken from Geoffrey Grigson's collection of essays published in 1949.

The exhibition, curated by Kim Sloan, is free, and lasts from 23 February until 27 August. It celebrates the work of British landscape artists in the 100 years following the death of J.M.W. Turner. *Pace* the title it shows work in a variety of media, chalk, pen and ink, pastel, gouache etc.

Among the artists represented are Francis Towne, Philip Wilson Steer, Alfred William Hunt, Burne-Jones, John Brett, Helen Allingham, Whistler, John Singer Sargent, Muirhead Bone, Paul Nash, John Minton, Russell Flint, Ben Nicholson, Peter Lanyon, Henry Moore and Graham Sutherland.

The works displayed include pictures by J.W. North (*An Old Bowling Green (Halsway Manor, Somerset)*) and Frederick Walker, artists who have associations with Jefferies.

Jefferies is mentioned in the catalogue of the English landscape watercolours exhibition at the British Museum. The citing comes on p.94, Chapter 3, "South Country" and other imagined places' by Anna Gruetzner Robins. The context is the increased popularity of nature and the countryside during the Victorian era.

The writings of the naturalist Richard Jefferies urged his largely urban, middle-class readers to look at the minutiae of the natural world, and were a soothing salve for the armchair Rambler and a more stimulating model for the more adventurous.

Also, here is the caption for the North picture:

John William North (1841-1924)/ 'The Old Bowling Green', Halsway Court, Somerset, 1865./ Watercolour, with body colour

North was one of the 'Idyllists', a group of painters and illustrators who combined social realism and idealism in their depictions of the English countryside. He discovered Halsway Court, a 15th-century manor house (now a National Centre for Folk Arts), on a walking tour and returned frequently to capture the patina of age in its stone and thatch. The gentle sport of lawn bowls dates back to the 1300s, reinforcing the sense of England's idyllic rural past in what is one of North's finest works.

The Fred Walker is entitled "The Amateur", or Coachman and cabbage'. It shows a man standing on the left among cabbages and opening a penknife, with a Dalmatian dog sitting by the gatepost on the right. Dated 1870; watercolour with body colour.

BOOKS BY MEMBERS

Jeremy Hooker had two books published in October 2016 that were briefly mentioned in the autumn 2016 newsletter.

The *Diary of a Stroke* (Bristol: Shearsman Books, October 2016), paperback, 190pp., £12.95 ISBN: 9781848615090 is a poet's journal. After suffering a stroke in July 1999, Jeremy Hooker (a former President of the Richard Jefferies Society from 1999-2004) kept a diary of his experience in hospital and of the subsequent period of recuperation at home, which ended with his return to work shortly after January 1, 2000. It was *Jefferies' England* that he read aged twelve that had shown him how to observe life differently and to reflect on matters in a Jefferies' manner. A closeness to death made Hooker think about questions of ultimate meaning a special urgency. His memories of how Jefferies dealt in such a matter-of-fact way with his own demise were a consolation. The diary grew into a memoir of Hooker's early years. There is a review of the book in the Society's Summer *Journal* 2017 by Roger Ebbatson.

Ancestral Lines (Bristol: Shearsman Books, October 2016), paperback, 80pp., £8.95 ISBN: 9781848615083 is a sequence of poems about 'the river of desire' that flows through the lives of a family. In these poems Jeremy Hooker recalls his parents and grandparents, and an elusive great grandfather. He both honours the mystery of personal identity, and celebrates the oneness of life through the 'lines' of generations. Hooker describes his poetry as 'lyric of being', which he defines in the essay accompanying the poems as: 'the quick of experience, whether felt or glimpsed: the living moment which, in an image, may intimate the whole life it is part of'. The figures that appear in the poems are not ghosts; the poet evokes them as real, loved and loving people.

Helen Newman has written a most interesting book about a little known Pre-Raphaelite painter, James Collinson. Collinson deserves better recognition for his work, albeit that he left the Brotherhood partly as a result of his strong religious beliefs. The book (published by Reuben Books, October 2016. ISBN: 9780956282880) *James Collinson: aka "The Dormouse"* is sub-titled to reflect his ability to fall asleep at the most inappropriate occasions – Helen believes that he might have suffered from narcolepsy. Collinson appears to be best known for having been engaged to Christina Rossetti.

Collinson struggled to sell his paintings and caused confusion by attempting to sell them under various titles. He painted mostly in oil, and there are many excellent indoor scenes of family life; his portrayal of children is particularly good. He married and had one child who became a priest – his son was buried, by coincidence, in Broadwater Cemetery.

The book is available as a 200pp. paperback and includes ten colour plates

and many monochrome illustrations. It can be purchased from Helen for £10 plus postage. Order from Helen at 67 Higgins Lane, Quinton, Birmingham B32 1LJ or on Amazon.

The Corner of Moon Street is Tom Saunders' third collection of short stories, published in October 2016 by Reuben Books. As usual, Tom's characters are complex, real, flawed, and people you can either relate to, or feel you know. And if you don't, you will know them by the end of the tale.

Mary McCluskey, reviewing the book, wrote "These are beautifully written, well-crafted stories, enigmatic, and diverse. There is none of the 'sameness' found in collections by less accomplished writers. There is humour here, and tragedy, desire and loneliness: people in all their hapless, hopeful humanity. Compare the imaginative brilliance of 'Experiment in Time' with the delicious humour in 'Memo Home' and the heartfelt poignancy of 'Goodbye old Friend.' Three other stories also stand out for me: the lead story, 'After Doris Day,' the titular story, 'The Corner of Moon Street' and the final story, 'Had We Not Loved so Kindly.' You will have your own favourites! Tom Saunders is one of the UK's very best short-story writers and *The Corner of Moon Street* is his third collection. Like the stories in previous collections – *Brother What Strange Place is This?* and *Roof Whirl Away* – every one of these new tales is a gem. The quality of the writing will keep any reader turning pages but the characters, so quirky and real and recognisable, will linger in the mind long after the book has been closed. A highly recommended collection."

Paperback, ISBN: 9780956282873, 192pp., £10 including postage. Available from the Hon. Sec. or <http://reubenbooks.co.uk//moonstreet.html>.

Tom Wareham's ***The Green Man of Horam: The Life and Work of Walter J C Murray*** was published by Createspace on 19 Jan 2017. (Paperback, ISBN:978-1541031739, 123 pp., £12.99.) Walter John Campbell Murray (1900-1985), was the author of four books and co-author of three others. The two most important being *Copsford* – which recounted the year he spent living in a derelict and isolated cottage in the Sussex Weald just after the First World War; the second was *Nature's Undiscovered Kingdom* which consisted of a series of reflective essays on nature, and which brought comparisons with Richard Jefferies. He appeared regularly on the radio, most prominently in a programme called *Nature Parliament*, and was also highly regarded as a nature photographer. Despite being the head teacher of a small private school, Murray was an elusive figure, and his writing reveals a very deep connectivity with nature. In the book Tom Wareham explores Murray's main works and discusses how, despite his apparently conventional Anglican background, he had a deep mystical view of

Nature.

Rob Cowen (who was on the short-list for the Society's 2015 Literary Prize award for *Common Ground*) reviewed the book and wrote: "An illuminating and important investigation into the 'lost' work and life of Walter Murray, landscape mystic, writer, broadcaster and pioneering 'nature writer' – if ever there was one. In this considered and thoroughly researched portrait, Wareham pieces together his writing and biography with a commendable passion, uncovering – in this time of schism – the thoughts and feelings of a man who saw '... the brotherhood of life in all living things'."

The book is available on Amazon in both kindle and paperback format.

NEWS FROM OTHER SOCIETIES

Devizes and Salisbury Museums

The Richard Jefferies Society is a long-standing member of the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society. We have a free ticket that will admit just one member to the Wiltshire Heritage Museum, 41 Long Street, Devizes. The ticket is also valid at Salisbury Museum. Please contact our Chairman should you wish to borrow it (see p.4).

Henry Williamson Society

The Henry Williamson Society will be organising a tour of Jefferies Land in Wiltshire in the Spring of 2018.

The Alliance of Literary Societies

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.

Edward Thomas Fellowship

2017 marks the centenary of the death of Edward Thomas (9 April 1917). Various events are planned by the Fellowship, by the Friends of the Dymock Poets and other organisations, albeit some of these are taking place in March before this newsletter goes to press. For those of you with access to the Internet, keep an eye out for centenary events. For example The Edward Thomas Fellowship is planning a Study Day in conjunction with the Petersfield Museum on 10 June, but there are no details as yet.

See p. 34 for information about a Society event to Petersfield.

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2017

- Sat 1 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.
- 2 May- 17 June Date to be agreed. Visit to Petersfield and the 'Edward Thomas, Wayfarer' Exhibition. See p.34 for more information.
- Sat 24 June A Study Day.
Venue: Richard Jefferies Museum.
Time: 10.30am-4.30pm
Theme: Connections and Inspirations: the Influence of
Richard Jefferies on Writers and Poets.
Key lecture by Dr. Rebecca Welshman.
See p.10 for more information.
- Sat 4 Nov AGM and Birthday Lecture.
Venue: Liddington Village Hall.
Time: 10.30am-4.30pm
Birthday Lecture: Speaker – Roger Ebbatson.
Provisional title: 'Seeking the Beyond: Materiality/Spirituality in Jefferies & Hardy'.
More information in the Autumn 2017 newsletter

Meetings are open to the public and free to attend.

The Society's Executive Council will be meeting on 4 February, 13 May and 7 October to discuss business matters.



Richard Jefferies' Grave, March 2014.
Photograph by Michael Parrott.