

THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2018 & ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18



It is with deep sadness we announce the death of William J. Keith. See pp.17-18.

Photograph taken by Hiroko Keith, circa July 1978.

Left to right: George Miller, Hugoe Matthews & Bill Keith ('the triumvirate' as Bill called them) by Coate Water – Liddington Hill and Day House Farm, in the background.

With his binoculars, Bill had identified a distant speck as a great northern diver.

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 1 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 along with a *Journal*. The annual report is included in the autumn newsletter. The Society has a library of books by and about Richard Jefferies stored at Michael Sherwood'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, a study day in summer, special outings, a Birthday Lecture and an Annual General Meeting. The Society awards a yearly prize for excellence in nature writing and a bursary for projects that promote a new understanding of the writings of Jefferies.

TRUSTEES AND COUNCIL MEMBERS 2017-18

Peter Bainbridge, Simon Coleman, Patrick Dillon, Roger Ebbatson, Margaret Hunt (Swindon Secretary), Eric Jones (Vice Chairman), Ray Morse (Hon. Vice President), John Price (Chairman), Mike Pringle, Andrew Rossabi (President), Jean Saunders (Hon. Secretary), Tom Saunders (Hon. Treasurer), Barry Sloan, Richard Stewart, Phyllis Treitel (Vice President), and Rebecca Welshman.

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GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION

The Richard Jefferies Society is required by law to obtain permission from members to hold their contact details on a database. That information will be used for communication purposes (e.g. sending out newsletters etc.) and will not be divulged to a third party. On termination of membership, information held will be removed from the database.

FROM THE CHAIR

I was extremely sad to hear of the death of Professor Bill Keith, (Obituary pp. 17-18), who played such an important role in bringing Richard Jefferies to the attention of a wider academic and general readership by publishing the two books resulting from his PhD thesis, namely: *Richard Jefferies: A Critical Study*, and *The Rural Tradition*. I only met Bill once, when he came over for the weekend devoted to celebrating the centenary of Jefferies death in 1987. Our meeting was somewhat surreal, as, before the events had started, I had decided to visit the second-hand bookshop that used to exist in Wood Street in Swindon. There was another couple in the shop at the time, and after a few minutes, the man turned to me and said “Are you a member of the Richard Jefferies Society, because with your beard you look rather like him?” It was Bill, and having had several opportunities to talk together over the weekend, we said our goodbyes. Two days later, we were entertaining some Canadian friends, and showing them the sights of southern Britain. On that day we visited Blenheim, and there – also visiting were Bill and Hiroko. It was an extraordinary coincidence, including the Canadian connection.

Bill approved of our use of John Webb’s legacy to fund a literary award, and I have just presented the third cheque and certificate to our 2017 winner. This



was Adam Nicolson for *The Seabird’s Cry*, a study of the lives of the main seabirds found (albeit in ever decreasing numbers) around Britain’s coasts. The White Horse Bookshop, our partners in the Award, had invited Adam (pictured left, signing books) to Marlborough to give a talk on 4th August, and so the presentation was made on the same occasion. About 40 people came to the talk; a number that might have been much higher, had the

announcement that had only been made that morning, been public knowledge much earlier. This news was that Adam had also won, for the same book, The Wainwright Prize, a much more valuable and high-profile award. This other presentation had been made two days earlier by Michael Gove, at (coincidentally), Blenheim. Adam was, however, charming, and claimed that our award meant more to him, and that I was a much preferable host to Gove!

I think it is interesting that our choice this year was also the Wainwright panel’s first choice, and they also included in their shortlist this year, our first Winner, John Lister-Kaye, and last year’s runner-up, John Lewis-Stempel.

In May, I had the pleasure of speaking to the Henry Williamson Society, which held its annual gathering in Swindon. Members had visited the Museum, where they were hosted by Mike Pringle and helpers; as well as Coate Water and other local sites associated with Richard Jefferies. Although my slot was the after-dinner session on Saturday evening, the members were alert and interested. We are grateful for the contribution to our Society's funds made by the HWS.

This year concludes my 14th as Chairman of our Society, and I gave good notice three years ago that I would be standing down from that role this year. My reasoning at the time was that I felt it was time for someone younger to take over the reins, but this has been underlined by the fact that I have to go in to the John Radcliffe at Oxford for major heart surgery at the beginning of September, and therefore I shall not be able to take this year's AGM or the earlier Executive Council Meeting. I am very grateful to Eric Jones, my Vice Chairman, who will take the chair at both these events. Eric, however, has also indicated his desire to resign from the VC post with effect from this year's AGM, and we are in the position of having to fill two major posts, but with no, as yet, identified candidates.

The past 14 years have been challenging, but interesting. My term coincided with the original application by Bath University to build a campus adjacent to Coate Water – with the necessary associated housing development. Over the next 10 years, we dealt with Examinations in Public, Planning Proposals, and Appeals against the Planning Proposals. We sadly failed in all these attempts to protect “Jefferies Land”, and the whole procedure demonstrated how inadequately areas of Literary Importance are protected in our planning system.

The one very positive outcome of the whole process was finding Jean Saunders! I remember very clearly sitting beside her at the first hearings, persuading her to join our Society; and then her volunteering, quite unexpectedly, to take on the role of Society Secretary from Phyllis Treitel. Since then, of course, her indefatigable energy and drive has kept the Society buoyant and very much in the public eye. Her research into the Jefferies family, and her editorship of the Newsletters and *Journals* mean that she has become the lynch pin of the Richard Jefferies Society, and the first person to whom members and non-members turn when they require information. My job as Chairman, would have been much harder without Jean's efficiency and nudging.

I certainly hope to continue to support the Society as a Council member, and am confident that the RJS will continue to flourish, even if the format of events may have to change.

John Price
August 2018

MEMBERSHIP

A warm welcome is extended to members who joined the Society in the 2017-2018 subscription year:

Mark Andrew – Norfolk

Adam Robbins – Berkshire

Peter Brown – Cumbria

David Schwartz – Hertfordshire

Lucy Furlong – Surrey

Hector Weldon – Kent

Sebastian Prentis – Oxon

The total membership, at the end of June 2018, numbered 226 – this includes 54 joint members and three organisations. Life membership applies to 32 members. Although the majority live in the United Kingdom, others live in Europe or English-speaking countries.

JOINT MEETING: Richard Jefferies Society and Friends of Alfred Williams

Margaret Hunt

This was held at the Richard Jefferies Museum on Saturday 7 April 2018, starting at 2.00 pm, and hosted by the Friends of Alfred Williams, led by Roy Burton.

A total of 14 persons were present at the meeting that included two visitors. Mike Pringle, representing the Museum Trust, was responsible for opening the museum and for setting-up the meeting.

FoAW readings were provided by Roy Burton and Caroline Ockwell, who handed them out to attendees who had not brought material of their own. These were read alternately with those contributed by Richard Jefferies Society members, these tending to concentrate upon spring countryside issues – flowers and birds being particularly prominent. Discussion took place between readings.

The first extract was entitled ‘Some Spirit Land’ and was taken from the ‘Hours of Spring’ chapter of Jefferies’ *Field and Hedgerow*. Then came a joint reading of verses from Williams’ reminiscences of India that feature in the ‘Ranikhet’ poem. A FoAW recital of a poem from Williams’ *Wiltshire*, titled ‘Music in Salisbury Cathedral’, followed. A reading from Williams’ ‘The Earth Lover’, taken from *Songs in Wiltshire* (dedicated to Richard Jefferies), was then given. A joint FoAW recitation from Williams’ *Poems of Wiltshire* came next, then an extract about the road mender’s cottage, taken from the ‘The Story of Swindon’ chapter in Jefferies’ *The Hills and the Vale*. After a rendering of Williams’ fanciful descriptions of the use of rail wagons in his *Life in a Railway Factory*, a reading from Jefferies’ ‘Birds of Spring’ [*The Hills and the Vale*] was given by John Price, who also took the opportunity to mention the tribute to Sheila Povey that had appeared in the RJS Spring 2018 Newsletter.

When those present had signed the Richard Jefferies Museum Visitor’s Book,

the Joint Meeting continued with Roy Burton's item relating to the inscription on the Memorial Stone to Richard Jefferies that stands on Barbury / Burderop Down. The 18 words taken from *The Story of My Heart* were elaborated upon. Williams' *The Testament* was also referred to. The final contribution came from 'If She Be Near' from Williams' *Selected Poems* (1925).

The formal part of the meeting was followed by tea, cake, and general conversation, which was enjoyed by all.

STUDY DAY: Samuel Looker and Richard Jefferies

Margaret Hunt

This annual event, held at the Richard Jefferies Museum on Saturday 23 June, 2018, was attended by 9 members, including the presenter, John Price. It began at 11.00 am, after service of coffee/tea and biscuits. Setting-up had been arranged in advance by Mike Pringle.

John began his talk by giving information about Looker's life, the outline being as follows.

Samuel Joseph Looker was born in February 1888, in Hornsey, North London. His maternal grandparents lived in a rural area near Danbury in Essex, and visits to them in his childhood years gave the grandson an opportunity to become closely associated with countryside interests. His marriage in 1910 to Caroline Finney produced two daughters and a son – Joan, Peggy and Basil. Looker became a Conscientious Objector in 1916, also joining the North London Herald League and the No-Conscription Fellowship. Instead of military participation, he offered to undertake forestry work of national importance. This necessitated a move to West Hartlepool. Between 1941 and 1957, the couple moved to Billericay, to Cheadle, to the Brighton area and to Leicester (where Looker died on 11th January 1965).

John then gave information from a variety of books and unpublished information that he had brought with his talk. He also cited Looker's publications and notes that were of relevance to Richard Jefferies, a total of 21 of these having been produced between 1916 and 1961. 24 Looker non-Jefferies books were also available for perusal at the Study Day. Looker wrote for a number of periodicals, and provided the 'English Fiction, Nineteenth Century' contribution to Volume 3, *Cambridge Biography of English Literature*. Two published sources of information about Looker were: 'Samuel J. Looker... A Tribute', published by the RJS in November 1980, which contained material written by Harold Adams, Cyril Wright, Frances Gay, Bill Keith and Crichton Porteous – and was a tribute to him as the first President of the Richard Jefferies Society; and the contribution from John Rudge to the 2018 RJS Spring Newsletter – from which John Price read an extract. A further unpublished CV

of Looker (written by himself) was also read out, and had been intended as an introduction to a series of publications to be produced by Ian Hodgson in the early 60s. In the event, none of these publications appeared, although *Beatrice and the Centaur* was published in the 2014 *Society Journal*. An influential person in Looker's life, but not mentioned by Looker in any of his writings, was Dr. J. Lionel Tayler, a medical professional, teacher, minister and author.

John concluded his address by referring to the material he had collected over the years, and the large archive purchased from Looker's grandson's widow – now stored in the main Looker collection in Chippenham. This contains much correspondence. The poet W.H. Davies had been a friend, as had Fred Bason, a cockney bookseller and author. Looker's own Richard Jefferies manuscript collection is now housed in the British Library.

A lively discussion brought the morning session to a close at 12.35 pm.

After the lunch break, as an accompaniment to which Gillian Bromhead had provided homemade cakes, the meeting reconvened. Passages were read from relevant publications by Gillian, Roy Burton, David Chesham, Ben Hughes and John Price. Further comments were made and opinions offered.

The Study Day came to a conclusion at 3.25 pm.

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There is no report for the Henry Williamson Society event in celebration of Jefferies, held in the Coate area from 11-13 May 2018, but by all accounts it was extremely successful and much enjoyed by those who attended.

TALKS

Andrew Rossabi is booked to give two talks on Richard Jefferies and the Surbiton years to both the Esher and District Local History Society at Holy Trinity Church Hall, Claygate on Saturday, 15 September 2018, at 2.30pm, and at Surbiton Library, Ewell Road, Surbiton KT6 6AG on Wednesday, 26 September 2018, at 2pm.

The library event on 26 September will be followed by a walk to the Richard Jefferies Bird Sanctuary where an elm tree sapling will be planted in Jefferies' memory; organised by Alison Fure and Lucy Furlong with the full support of the Society. Members of the Society are most welcome to attend both the library event and the tree-planting walk. See Lucy Furlong's report below of a guided walk in the footsteps of Richard Jefferies' Tolworth held on 7 May 2018.

Andrew Rossabi and Rebecca Welshman discussed Richard Jefferies' life and work in a panel event at the Lambeth Garden Museum Literary Festival on 7 July 2018.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JEFFERIES' TOLWORTH

Lucy Furlong

This year myself and Alison Fure, a local ecologist and bat expert, have been taking people on walks combined with writing activities, in and around Tolworth and its environs, under the moniker Tolworth Treasure and the Hogsmill Hum.

Tolworth is facing a period of significant development, and we are keen to show local residents the wildlife and beautiful, historic landscape they have on their doorsteps, before it disappears – which is a serious possibility in the very near future.

Tolworth is of course where Richard Jefferies lived from 1877-1882 and wrote *Nature Near London*, and on the first May Bank Holiday this year, 7 May, we took about 40 people on a walk in his footsteps. The walk began outside his house, 296 Ewell Road, now an estate agent. After an introduction to Jefferies for people who weren't familiar with his life and work, and a glimpse into the past to discover what Jefferies would have seen as he stepped out of his front door, we spied the man himself, dressed in gentlemanly attire, complete with top hat and cane, at the end of the next road!

Our walkers had no idea that we had asked a friend to dress as Jefferies and he bore a striking resemblance to him, so were treated to the joyous sight of Jefferies strolling the length of Tolworth Broadway – a tangible way of bringing him to life and making people see how much the area has changed since Victorian times. But also, and more importantly, once we had walked past Tolworth railway station, they could see how the local greenbelt land has retained its identity and distinctiveness.

We walked to the where the A240 crosses over the Hogsmill River, and along to where, at the edge of Tolworth Court Farm Fields, Jefferies watched his beloved trout for several summers. Tolworth Court Farm Fields is currently a local nature reserve, full of wild flowers and rare butterflies, and has been fields since Domesday but faces being developed into a park. Our walkers were amazed to see these stunning fields, which Jefferies wrote about and knew so well.

The walk was also recorded for broadcast as part of a Radio 4 programme on walking women artists to be broadcast this Autumn.

Our next walk, on Sunday 12 August is devoted to walking the ancient drove road in the fields, where we will again be reading from Jefferies' work and enjoying this bucolic green space in the midst of our increasingly urban suburbs. We will also be walking to the Richard Jefferies Bird Sanctuary and planting an elm tree in his memory after Andrew Rossabi's talk at Surbiton Library on 26 September (see previous page).

WILD LIFE AT COATE

Richard Stewart

On the day of the Richard Jefferies Society Council meeting at Coate farmhouse, ^{2nd} June, I just managed to catch an earlier train than expected from Paddington. This meant, after eating my packed lunch on a seat looking down Coate Water, I had half an hour to wander and this took me up to the Council Oak, now with a refurbished notice, and a few hundred yards beyond. I was looking mainly for butterflies but instead quickly became preoccupied by an incredible hatching of damselflies, thousands of them leaving the water in their final stage of development and with dozens flying up at almost every step I took. I calculated well over a thousand and of course there may have been many more further along, close to the water. These were blue males and green females, plus others so newly emerged as to yet get their full colour. I have never seen such numbers before and my only regret was that my identification skills for damselflies don't match those I have for British butterflies. They were either azure or common blue and anyway I was in good company as Jefferies himself is often somewhat vague in species identification. Even in the superb 'Pageant of Summer' he refers to 'the sweet blue butterfly'.

More was to come as part of the actual Council meeting when Mike Pringle reported the demise of one of the six chickens now loose close to the farmhouse. Appropriately named Amaryllis, the chicken was caught by a fox lurking by a large hedge in the corner of the lower garden at the end of the ha-ha. There is a pathway leading out of it where the long grass has been repeatedly trodden by an animal and Mike has previously found bones there. Mike then, with commendable curiosity, went to Jefferies and discovered the deed was carried out almost exactly at the same spot as described in *Wild Life in a Southern County*:

From the traces in the grass it appears as if the fox had ventured there more than once, and, as there were many chickens about, his object in lying here was evident. The great hedge being so near, and the narrow space between full of tall mowing grass – the edge of the ha-ha wall too, clothed with stonecrop and grasses growing in the interstices of the loose stones, and further sheltered by a low box-hedge – it was a place almost made for Reynard's cunning ambush. He is as bold or even bolder than he is cunning.

My thanks to Mike for providing this information. More was still to come because, as I headed back to central Swindon after the meeting there were small white particles floating through the air, a sudden snow-like happening, presumably carried on the breeze from one or more poplars and, by the time I passed by, already thick on the edges of the pavement outside Coate farmhouse.

JEFFERIES' *HISTORY* of MALMESBURY and 'THE IDOVERS'

Janice Lingley

This article sequels 'Jefferies' History of Malmesbury and 'Overboro' which appeared in the *RJS Spring Newsletter* 2018, pp.22-25.

In *Round About a Great Estate*, 'The Idovers' refers to a farm in Draycot Foliat, not far from Jefferies' birthplace at Coate in north-east Wiltshire, which was worked by the author's paternal ancestors for several generations.¹

But, though out of sight, there was a farmhouse behind a small copse and clump of elms full of rooks' nests, a short way from the foot of the Down. This was The Idovers, once the residence of old Jonathan; it was the last farm before reaching the hill district proper, and from the slope here all the fields of which it consisted were visible.²

Immediately preceding the passage in *A Great Estate* concerning the antiquarian book on Overboro's history is a conversation with the yeoman farmer Hilary Luckett about field-names. Such nomenclature, the narrator observes, is 'often very curious'. After giving numerous examples, he adds:

... scores of still more singular names might be collected in every parish. It is the meadows and pastures which usually bear these designations; the ploughed fields are often only known by their acreage, as the Ten Acre Piece, or the Twelve Acres. Some of them are undoubtedly the personal names of former owners. But in others ancient customs, allusions to traditions, fragments of history, or of languages now extinct, may survive.³

At the time of the Norman Conquest, Malmesbury Abbey held vast estates both within the Malmesbury hundred and beyond. The fourteenth chapter of Jefferies' *History of Malmesbury*,⁴ titled 'Estates of the Abbey – William the Conqueror' explores the *Domesday Book* evidence. Documented as having come into the Abbey's possession in 850,⁵ one of the estates that Jefferies refers to is Dauntsey, now a parish of scattered hamlets and farmsteads about five miles south-east of Malmesbury, located in the flood plain of the upper Bristol Avon, which flows past the village of Dauntsey on its western side.

¹ King William's 1694 census records Jefferies' great-great-great-grandfather William Jefferies, described as a 'husbandman'. His son Richard, Jefferies' great-grandfather, after whom the author was named, was born at Draycot in 1738; Andrew Rossabi, *A Peculiarly English Genius, A Biography of Richard Jefferies. Volume I: The Early Years 1848-1867* (Foulsham: Petton Books, 2017), p.97. The section on Draycot, pp.84-103, provides a fascinating account of this aspect of Jefferies' family history.

² Richard Jefferies *Round About a Great Estate* (1880), introduction by John Fowles, illustrated by Graham Arnold (Bradford on Avon: Ex Libris Press, 1987), p.71.

³ Jefferies, *Round About a Great Estate*, *op. cit.*, p.102.

⁴ Published in the *North Wilts Herald* 1867-1868; twenty-one chapters in total.

⁵ M. Winterbottom, *William of Malmesbury, Gesta Pontificum Anglorum, Volume I: Text and Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), pp.583-585.

Dauntsey Vale is bounded to the north by the Brinkworth Brook, named after the village located about a mile or so to the north of Dauntsey. *Brinkworth* is of Anglo-Saxon derivation.⁶ The river's former name, however, was *Idover*. Up to at least the early nineteenth century Somerford Bridge, which carries the road to Little Somerford over the Brook, was known as *Idover Bridge*, and is so named on the Ordnance Survey map of 1816.⁷ *Idover* derives from the ancient Welsh word *hydrfer*, 'water, flow of water, current'.⁸ Thus *Idover*, or *Idovers*, occurs as a field-name at locations which are near to flowing water or its source. Moreover, the toponym is unique to north-west Wiltshire, and is found most frequently within a radius of about ten miles to the north, east and south of Malmesbury.⁹

At Brinkworth, there are fields known as *Great* and *Little Idover*. At Charlton, near Malmesbury, a field by a stream feeding Braydon Pond is called *Idovers*. To the north of the town, near Chedglow, are fields named *Idover* and *Grass Idover*. Further occurrences of *Idover* field-names are to be found at Hankerton and Grittleton Park, and, a little more distant, at Cricklade, Broad Town, and Littleton Drew. Two farmsteads on the Little Somerford Road in Dauntsey remember the historic British name to this day: *Home Idover Farmhouse*, and *Idover Demesne Farmhouse*.¹⁰ The land known as *Idover*, to the north of the medieval estate, was held with Dauntsey Manor from the twelfth century.¹¹ At Cricklade, where a field called *Idover* lies by a stream which flows north-west to join Braydon Brook, the twelfth-century church is dedicated to the fifth-century British saint, Sampson of Dol, one of the seven founder saints of Brittany. The *Vita Sancti Samsonis*, 'Life of St. Samson', dating between 610 and 820, and drawing upon earlier sources, details the contacts in those ancient times between ecclesiastics in Britain, Ireland and Brittany.¹²

⁶ Interpreted to mean 'Brynca's enclosure', a combination of a personal name and OE *worth*; Patrick Hanks, Flavia Hodges, A. D. Mills, Adrian Room, *The Oxford Names Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.959.

⁷ J. E. B. Gover, Allen Mawer and F. M. Stenton., *The Place-Names of Wiltshire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), pp.2-3.

⁸ Andrew Breeze, 'Idover and the Britons', in *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine*, Vol. 101 (2008), pp.253-4: 'The word is well attested in early Welsh poetry . . . *Hydrfer* also accounts for the name of the Hydfer, a mountain stream flowing north-eastwards from the Brecon Beacons to the Usk . . . It seems the Idover or Brinkworth Brook is the Hydfer's Wiltshire namesake.' (p. 254).

⁹ Malmesbury Abbey held lands in five of the nine parishes in which the field-name *Idover* occurs: Braydon, Brinkworth, Crudwell, Dauntsey, and Hankerton. The place-name *Braydon* is also of Celtic origin and takes its name from the forest which once covered about one third of the county.

¹⁰ The documented references to the demesne farm date back to the fourteenth century; Gover, Mawer and Stenton, *op. cit.*, p.69. The existing buildings date from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

¹¹ *British History Online*; the entry for Dauntsey Manor.

¹² Source; Wikipedia.

According to the historical ecologist Oliver Rackham: ‘The Romans, invading Britain in AD43, came to a land with a fully-developed agriculture. Wildwood had vanished forever from river gravels, flood-plains and chalkland.’¹³ So it would seem likely that the Iron-Age hill-fort at Malmesbury¹⁴ presided over an area of extensive British settlement based on a farming economy. A comment by John Ruskin (1819-1900), may not be out of place here: ‘The unloving separation between town and country life is a modern barbarism: in classic times, cities never were, or will be, separate in interest from the countries they rule; but are their heart and sanctifying force.’¹⁵ Thus, as a toponym, *The Idovers* may be held to complement the ‘figment of genius’ that is *Overboro*,¹⁶ and develop the notion of ‘a Great Estate’ beyond Burderop, Coate and Draycott, locating its origins far back in time, and endowing the narrative with depth as well as extent.

In their introduction to *The Place-Names of Wiltshire*, Gover, Mawer and Stenton observe: ‘On the whole, the number of undoubted British names which have survived is sufficiently large to support the view that the Saxon occupation of Wiltshire did not begin until the first and most devastating phase of the English invasion was over.’¹⁷ In the opening chapter of the *Malmesbury History*, Jefferies, by way – ostensibly – of giving merely an example of the brevity and paucity of the early entries in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, quotes the annal for the year 577.¹⁸ This tersely records the battle – on what was then Wiltshire soil – which claimed the lives of the British kings of Glevum (Gloucester), Aquae Sulis (Bath) and Corinium (Cirencester), drove a wedge between the Britons of Wales and Dumnonia (Cornwall and Devon), and thus decisively broke the power of the Britons in the west. Nothing is known about the three kings, Coinmail,

¹³ Oliver Rackham, *Trees and Woodland in the British Landscape* (London: J.M. Dent, 1976), p.40.

¹⁴ Excavations carried out at Malmesbury along the eastern line of the historic town wall by the Bristol & Region Archaeological Service in 1998-2000 revealed ‘the ramparts, ditches and stonework relating to various phases of a multivallate hillfort, representing an extended period of occupation in the Iron Age’. A detailed report of the 1998-2000 investigations is published in the 2006 edition of the *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine*, Vol. 99, pp. 104-164.

¹⁵ John Ruskin’s preface to *The Economy of Xenophon*, translated by Alexander D.O. Wedderburn and W. Gershon Collingwood (London: Ellis & White, 1876), p.xii.

¹⁶ Janice Lingley, ‘Jefferies’ *History of Malmesbury* and ‘Overboro’, *RJS Spring Newsletter* 2018, p.25.

¹⁷ Gover, Mawer and Stenton, *op. cit.*, p.xvi.

¹⁸ Jefferies quotes Æthelweard (d. 998?), an ealdorman of south-west England and the author of a Latin version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*; in his preface, he claims descent from King Æthelred I, the elder brother of King Alfred. In his essay ‘Three Centuries at Home’ (1877), Jefferies carries out his own locally based investigation into the processes of historiography. Posing the questions – ‘How was history first written? What part did the collection of oral tradition from the lips of illiterate people play in its shaping?’ – he says, ‘I would have my material gathered in large part from illiterate persons, and thus I would write my new Saxon Chronicle.’; collected in *The Old House at Coate*, edited and annotated by Samuel J. Looker, with wood engravings by Agnes Miller Parker (Bradford on Avon: Ex Libris Press, 1948) p.122.

Condidan and Farinmail, whose names are given in the annal. The historian Frank Stenton comments: 'their names are represented in archaic forms, which certainly come from a written source older than the Alfredian chronicle.'¹⁹ This is a reminder, if any were needed, of how much of the historiography of this crucial period has been lost, something of which Jefferies seems to have been acutely aware. He speaks with some exasperation of the narrow view of the ecclesiastical historians: 'Whenever they do condescend to mention secular affairs it is with such a noble disregard of detail or coherence that the student is often in despair, and feels inclined to doubt even the very existence of anything but monks and miracles in those days.'²⁰

Jefferies early interest in the antiquities of his surroundings, and the ancient past generally, seems to have been formative, inspiring him with the realisation that he too was witness to a period of radical change. He had been born into a traditional rural society at a time when agrarian work was becoming increasingly mechanised, railways were creating new national markets, and formal education was having a profound cultural impact.²¹ As Jefferies observes in his Preface to *Round About a Great Estate*:

Until recent years the population dwelling in villages and hamlets, and even in little rural towns, saw indeed the sun by day and the moon by night, and learned the traditions and customs of their forefathers, such as had been handed down for generations. But now a new illumination has fallen upon these far-away places. The cottager is no longer ignorant, and his child is well-grounded in rudimentary education, reads and writes with facility, and is not without knowledge of the higher sort. Thus there is now another moon with the figures of education all round it. In this book some notes have been made of the former state of things before it passes away entirely.

The narrator ends his summary of the local history discovered in Overboro's railway inn with these comments:

But he had totally omitted his own times. These quotations, these lists and charters, the extracts from Domesday, read dry and formal – curious, and yet not uninteresting. Had he described the squires and yeomen, the townspeople of his own day, their lives and manner of thinking, how invaluable and pleasing his work would have been!²²

The concluding remark might be understood as a description of *Hodge and His Masters*, and the achievement it represents. *Hodge* was serialised in the

¹⁹ The Battle of Deorham, or Dyrham; Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971; first published 1949), p.29. Dyrham is now part of South Gloucestershire.

²⁰ Chapter I of the *History of Malmesbury*.

²¹ Rossabi, *op. cit.*, p.37.

²² Jefferies, *Round About a Great Estate*, *op. cit.*, p.104.

Standard in 1879,²³ the year before *Round About a Great Estate* was published, and it appears that Jefferies considered these two works to be in some sense complimentary.

It was not unusual for Jefferies to give the etymology bearing upon the interpretation of place-names in his *Malmesbury, Swindon and Cirencester Histories*. He appears to have had some knowledge of Welsh: he suggests, for example, that *Coate* as a toponym can be identified with the language of the ancient Britons on the basis of its local pronunciation.²⁴ It is also known that his early enthusiasm for antiquarian research not only took the form of the scrutiny of historical documents and correspondence with reputable antiquarians; he also visited relevant localities'.²⁵ In the *Great Estate*, it is a process integrated with Jefferies' observation of the natural world:

After a while in walking along the footpaths of the meadows and by the woods, a feeling grew upon me that it would be pleasant to know something of their history. It was in inquiring about the age of the rookery that this thought took shape. . . .

This inquiry led to further reflections about the past of the woods and the meadows. Besides the birds, the flowers, and animals that had been there for so many, many centuries, there were the folk in the scattered homesteads, whose ancestors might have left some record . . .²⁶

Apart from its historicity, can the contextual significance that Jefferies ascribes to the toponym *Idover* be referred to his creative output as a whole? The brief description of the farmstead in *A Great Estate* is almost entirely retrospective.²⁷ It is also rather particular as to the information conveyed:

The house was small, for in those days farmers did not look to live in villas, and till within the last few years even the parlour floor was of stone flags. Rushes used to be strewn in the halls of palaces in ancient times, and seventy years ago old Jonathan grew his own carpets.²⁸

Old Jonathan Lockett pragmatically uses bean straw, but the plant traditionally used was Sweet Flag, *Acorus calamus*, or, to give it its vernacular name, Sweet Rush, which grows in water at the side of rivers, lakes, ponds and streams.

²³ Published in book form by Smith, Elder & Co., London, in March 1880. This company published *Round About a Great Estate* in the following August.

²⁴ Grace Toplis, *Jefferies' Land, A History of Swindon and Its Environs* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., 1896), pp. 132-135.

²⁵ *Richard Jefferies' Letters to Aunt Ellen* (Faringdon: Petton Books, 2009), p.32, the letter dated 21 July 1867, referring to research for the *Swindon History*. 'I visit every place I have to refer to, copy inscriptions, listen to legends, examine antiquities, measure this, estimate that; and a thousand other employments essential to a correct account take up my time . . .'

²⁶ Jefferies, *Round About a Great Estate*, *op. cit.*, p.101.

²⁷ The Jefferies' family's long association with the farm at Draycott Foliat came finally to an end in 1847; Rossabi, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-99.

²⁸ Jefferies, *Round About a Great Estate*, *op. cit.*, p.71.

In 'Saint Guido', contact with the rushes of the streamlet provides initiation into communication with the natural world and its secrets. Guido hears all the stories the Wheat-ear – whose memories go back a thousand years or more – has to tell. One of these tales concerns a wounded iron-helmed warrior, native to the land, it seems, who once passed through the wheat seeking the stream – 'for he knew it was there' – to drink, but weakened by loss of blood, he dies before reaching it.²⁹ Perhaps it is not too fanciful to think of the story of the battle in which this putative warrior fought being rehearsed in lay to the sound of the harp in some ancient king's hall.³⁰ In 'My Old Village', Jefferies is poignantly aware of things passing and leaving no trace, as if they had never been, and his thoughts centre particularly on the little River Cole: 'No one else seems to have seen the sparkle on the brook, or heard the music at the hatch, or to have felt back through the centuries . . .'³¹

In 'A Little Stream', a wild flower, birds, and a stepping-stone, with fish delightfully in attendance, combine in a meaningful relationship to which the flow of the Coate brook plays providential host.³² The calm beauty of the scene shines through the wholly attentive and lucidly precise web of words. As George Miller observes:

In one way or another this brook is present in every phase of his work. Its life and lore are richly chronicled in the country books. In *Wood Magic* and *Bevis* it is the background to childhood dreams and adventures, and in *The Story of My Heart* its waters have a mystical purity, flowing through a sublime landscape. In his last essays, when long after leaving Coate, Jefferies wrote that 'every curve, and shore, and shallow is as familiar now as when I followed the winding stream so often.'³³

²⁹ Jefferies' short story is collected in *The Open Air* (1885), with an introduction by Samuel J. Looker and wood engravings by Agnes Miller Parker, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1948), pp. 23-45.

³⁰ Jefferies takes a romantic view of ancient British kings in his *History of Cirencester*, Chapter I, 'The Britons': 'Immediately then before the Roman invasion Cair Ceri, or Cirencester, as the capital of the nation of the Dobuni, situated in the rear of a chain of forts, at the junction of the four great roads, presented a lively picture of British life. Here dwelt the Prince distinguished by his golden torque, or twisted wreath of gold, and surrounded by his warriors who were ready to defend the mounds of the city with their spears and bows, or mounting their chariots to charge the enemy, mowing them in pieces with the scythes attached to the wheels. . . . Here came the bard with his traditions of the heroes of old whose graves – huge mounds of earth – stood beside the highways, or on the slopes of the hills . . .'

³¹ Collected in *Field and Hedgerow, Last Essays* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1889), p.328.

³² Published in *RJSJ*, No. 28, Summer 2015, pp.3-4.

³³ 'By the Brook', edited and introduced by George Miller (London: Eric & Joan Stevens, 1981), p.6. The quotation is from 'Roman Brook', Part III of 'Bits of Oak Bark', in *The Life of the Fields* (1884) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), p.52. In this essay, the discovery of the skeleton of a warrior by the brook invites comparison with 'St. Guido', and perhaps suggests a Romano-British identity for the warrior in the story. George Miller is thanked for permission to use the quote.

TO THOSE DEPARTED
PROF. WILLIAM JOHN KEITH (1934-2018)

Hiroko Keith informed the Society that her husband ‘passed away quietly in his sleep on Saturday, July 14 at the Toronto Western Hospital. His funeral was held at my church, Holy Rosary Catholic Church, although he was Anglican, because he was not a regular church-goer. I thank you all the members of the Society for your friendship.’

Bill, born on 9 May 1934 in north London, was educated at Brentwood School, Essex, and entered Jesus College, Cambridge, in 1955 after completing National Service with the Royal Army Educational Corps. On graduation in English in 1958, he won a ‘Non-Resident Fellowship’ offered by the Canada Council to undertake graduate studies at the University of Toronto, where he obtained his MA in 1959 and his PhD on Richard Jefferies in 1961 – his thesis was published in 1965: *Richard Jefferies, A Critical Study* (University of Toronto Press) and this followed up with an excellent chapter about Jefferies in *The Rural Tradition: a study of the non-fiction prose writers of the English countryside* (1974).

In 1965, he married Hiroko Sato, an elementary school teacher born in Japan. In 1966, after five years teaching at McMaster University, he was invited back to the University of Toronto, where he taught until retiring in 1995. He edited the *University of Toronto Quarterly* for nine years, and published widely on 19th and 20th-century British Literature and later on Canadian Literature. He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1979. Bill and Hiroko lived in Ontario but travelled widely for bird-watching trips on all seven continents as well as for cultural tours and cruises.

Bill Keith was President of the Richard Jefferies Society from 1974-1991 and our longest-serving President. The Society is indebted to him for his support and encouragement. He contributed articles to the *Journal*, newsletter, to *Richard Jefferies: A Spirit Illumined* (1987) and wrote *The Jefferies Canon: notes on essays attributed to Richard Jefferies without full documentary evidence* (Petton Books, 1995). Our thoughts are with Hiroko who remains a life member of the Society. There is ‘A Tribute to Bill Keith’ by Andrew Rossabi in the RJS *Journal* No. 2 (1993), pp.22-24 along with a list of his books and pamphlets on p.29.

Prof. Roger Ebbatson commented: ‘it was Bill Keith’s first-rate study, along with some of Looker’s selections which first got me interested in Richard Jefferies, many years ago – we can ill afford such a loss.’

Andrew Rossabi said: ‘We briefly met on one of Bill’s visits to England, when he gave a talk on Jefferies and Birds [15 August 1998]. I cannot praise his

contribution to the study of Richard Jefferies too highly. With regard to the Society, he turned its work in a more professional direction, as shown by the contributions to the *Journal*. Bill was remarkably erudite about rural literature but carried his knowledge lightly; was personally very approachable and not the least bit stuffy; and wrote a beautifully lucid prose. We shall greatly miss him.'



Bill & Hiroko Keith (left), Andrew Rossabi & Lucille (Jefferies) Kelleher (right)
15 August, 1998, outside Coate Farm

George Miller added: 'Bill Keith's critical study of Jefferies was the strongest contribution to our understanding of Jefferies' work to appear after Edward Thomas's biography. As well as his academic work on the writings he wrote a memorable book of poems which show a moving insight into Jefferies the man. He encouraged Hugoe Matthews and myself in our researches for the Bibliography [*Richard Jefferies: A Bibliographical Study* by George Miller and Hugoe Matthews, Scholar Press, 1993] and wrote a foreword giving it his stamp of approval.

I have fond memories of Bill and Hiroko's visits to Shropshire when we explored Mary Webb country together. The extent of his interests in the English rural tradition and Canadian literature and of his knowledge of birds and flora made him a fascinating companion. (Hiroko's interest in the culinary properties of English plants resulted in some delightful dishes.) In retirement the couple travelled widely and shared their adventures and discoveries in correspondence. On a visit to Toronto we saw the wonderful archive of their peregrinations created by Hiroko in photographs and paintings.

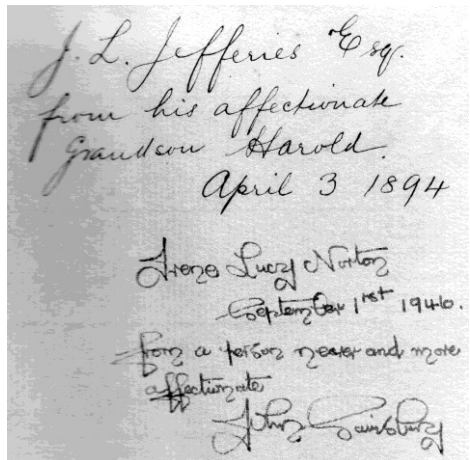
I am very happy to have known Bill Keith, as a great scholar and a friend.'

FOR THE LIBRARY

The Society is exceedingly grateful to receive a limited edition copy of *The Toilers of the Field* (copy 101 of 105, published by Longmans Green & Co in 1892) that includes a dedication on the fly sheet from Harold Jefferies (Richard's son) to his grandfather, James Luckett, dated 3 April 1894. Jessie Jefferies was given eight copies of the book by the publishers and this is likely to be one of them. Harold was a midshipman in 1894 but his home-base would have been with his mother and sister Phyllis at that time. This book is the first of Jefferies' works known to be inscribed by Harold.

James Luckett died in 1896 and was living in Bath. Betsy, his wife, had died the previous year. He had few possessions, left no will, and it is not known how his goods were dispersed – perhaps his son Charles might have taken the bulk and we suspect that this book might have been sold after Charles died in 1934.

The book was donated to the Society by David Johnson of New South Wales. It had belonged to his stepmother, Irene Lucy (née Norton) Johnson (1924-2013) and she brought it to Australia when his father and Irene emigrated in the late 1980s. David said that Irene 'must have been quite a lady as she was granted a divorce from her first husband and under-took two degrees by correspondence – she was very well thought of in Water Sciences work in the Birmingham area.' The connection between Irene and Sainsbury may have been whilst Irene was doing an external degree through the University of London. The book clearly meant a great deal to Irene to have kept it for nearly 70 years and to have taken the trouble to take it to Australia with her. Included with the book there was a clipping from the *North Wilts Herald*, dated 27 Sep 1895, of a report of Herbert H Sturmer's (1860-1923) visit to Jefferies' grave, first published in the *Westminster Gazette*.



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**U**n Athée: Contribution à la réforme d'une certaine idée de Dieu  
 (An Atheist: Contribution to the reform of a certain idea of God).

George Miller discovered a French publication that discusses Jefferies' religious beliefs based on *The Story of My Heart* which is extensively quoted from in translation. The booklet reproduces a study presented at the St. Croix

Student Conference, September 1904, by Wilfred Monod, and was published by the Association Chrétienne Suisse d'Etudiants. It is the only known attempt to translate *The Story* in French.

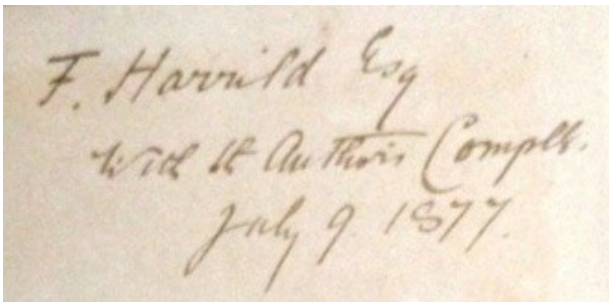
George Miller has kindly donated a copy of the book to the Society's library.

A rough translation of the book has been placed on the Society's website at: <http://richardjefferiessociety.blogspot.com/p/articles.html> (article No. 121).

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Another book of interest was brought to our attention by Robin Harrild. He was mentioned in the article on George Baxter (RJS *Journal* No. 32, p.131) as the owner of his great grandfather's three-decker copy of *World's End* inscribed by Jefferies. Robin was keen to ensure that the publication would be cherished in the future. In photographs the cloth covers appeared to have a slightly unusual colour that aroused interest. However George Miller, who acquired the volumes, reports that they were 'the standard colour, a pinkish grey which tends to go brown with wear and exposure. ... Also typographically it is identical, but this all helps my theory that despite a cheaper edition being announced there were no variants, suggesting that copies sold well enough'.

The inscription is as follows:



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Wilts and Glos Standard

Further to the news (see RJS *Spring Newsletter* 2018, p.30) that the *Standard* had vacated its former premises in Cirencester and that the Cirencester Civic Society were doing their utmost to protect the plaque to Richard Jefferies, Cotswold District Council has served a special notice that ensures changes cannot be made to the building without planning permission. An article that appeared in the *Standard* on 3 May 2018 announced the newspaper's support of the notice and described the 'building as distinctive and beautiful and specially built for them in 1906'. Thanks to Eric Jones for his input and for keeping us informed.

### Jessie Jefferies' Grave

Richard Jefferies' wife Jessie ended her days in Cornwall. She lived near her daughter Phyllis and son-in-law Alfred Hargrave. Aware that Jessie was buried in St Piran's churchyard, Perranzabuloe, in 1926, her grave could not be found when Peter Robins searched for it in the 1980s. However, Mr. Robins recently came across a memorial record of Jessie's grave held by the Cornish Family History Society. The charity offers a service to photograph a grave for £25. We paid the fee and awaited the results. Evidently Jessie's memorial consists of a tall stone cross that is recorded by CFHS as reading: 'In loving memory of Jessie Jefferies widow of Michael Jefferies who passed away July 12th 1926'. Obviously the lettering for 'Richard' had worn badly. A volunteer from CFHS set off to photograph the grave only to find a thicket at least ten foot high and just as wide. He couldn't be certain that Jessie's cross was there but we have sought permission from the Church Warden to gain access to the grave later in the year (the County Council only have a budget for grass-cutting). Perhaps 'Michael' could be re-inscribed to read 'Richard' if the stone is good. We are extremely grateful to Bryan Jones, a Society member who lives in Redruth, for his help in managing affairs.

We have set up a Grave Fund for the maintenance of Richard and Jessie's grave. There are donations already in place courtesy of Janice Lingley and Andrew Pitt. Anyone who would like to contribute, please contact the Hon. Sec.

Incidentally, Alfred Hargrave (who died 5 February 1933) is buried in the same churchyard. Only recently we discovered a local newspaper report of Alfred and Phyllis's wedding at St. Piran's church on 24 April 1916. Evidently Jessie was already living in Cornwall by then – a new discovery.

### RJS Journal 22 – correction.

Those of you with good memories might remember the collection of Jefferies' memorabilia that the Society acquired from Claudine Bulpitt in November 2011. Amongst the collection were two handwritten letters from Richard Jefferies to his aunt. The assumption was made that these were addressed to Aunt Ellen Harrild and the text was reproduced in the Society's *Journal* 22, pp.28-30. Further research on a torn envelope that accompanied one of the letters has revealed recently that the letter, dated 8 November 1870, was addressed to Aunt Maria Gyde and the Sarah referred to in the letter was not Richard's sister but Maria's daughter (Richard's cousin). Please would you note the error.

### Field Names

Janice Lingley has been researching the background and origins of some curious field names that Jefferies mentions in *Round About a Great Estate*. Field names are a remarkable toponymic group – linguistically, historically, economically

and culturally – and Jefferies had the acumen to perceive this. It was a pioneering initiative for which he should have due credit. Janice’s findings have been written up in an article (no. 114) that can be read and downloaded at <http://richardjefferiessociety.blogspot.com/p/articles.html>.

### JMB

Having previously dismissed the notion that the JMB, who wrote the poem dedicated to Richard Jefferies (see *RJS Journal* 2018, p.132-33), was J.M. Barrie (1860-1937), Cally Phillips of the J.M. Barrie Society was not so sure and thought the hand similar to that of the writer in his early years.

Barrie was aware of Jefferies. In July 1889, he published an article in the *Contemporary Review* titled ‘Thomas Hardy: The Historian of Wessex’. He noted that Hardy ‘knows the common as well as Mr. Jefferies knew it; but he knows the inhabitants, as well as the common’. Both writers were nurtured by Frederick Greenwood. In *Blackwood's Magazine* Jan 1910 (p.154) there is an anonymous tribute to Greenwood who had recently died in which it says, ‘We all know the debt of timely aid and generous appreciation which Richard Jefferies owed him. Mr. Barrie has himself confessed in generous terms what Greenwood did for him. “He invented me,” said Mr. Barrie. “I owe almost everything to him”.’

Members of the Barrie Society are investigating the poem and the handwriting further but the feedback isn’t promising so far.

## BOOKS BY MEMBERS

Eric Jones’ latest book, titled *Landed Estates and Rural Inequality in English History: From the Mid-Seventeenth Century to the Present* (Palgrave Studies in Economic History, ISBN: 978-3-319-74868-9), contains a chapter on Wiltshire including reference to Jefferies, and another on Gloucestershire and Herefordshire. The book examines the history of the landed estate system in England since the mid-seventeenth century. Over recent centuries England was increasingly occupied by landed estates run by locally dominant and nationally influential owners. Historically, newcomers adopted the behaviour of existing landowners, all of whom presided over a relatively impoverished mass of rural inhabitants. Preferences for privacy and fine views led landowners to demolish or remove some whole villages. Rights-of-way were often privatised. Social and environmental implications of the landed system as a whole are discussed and particular attention is paid to the nineteenth-century investment of industrial profits in estates. Why was the system so attractive and how was it perpetuated? Matters of poverty and inequality have always been of perennial interest to scholars of many persuasions and to the educated public; with this important book surveying environmental concerns in addition.

## THE RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY & WHITE HORSE BOOKSHOP LITERARY PRIZE

The judging panel met on 2 June 2018 and agreed that Adam Nicolson's *The Seabird's Cry* should be awarded the 2017 prize. The book is subtitled: 'The Lives and Loves of Puffins, Gannets and other Ocean Voyagers' – but it is much more than a simple scientific account of the seabirds of Britain. It introduces an approach to bird-watching which is not merely factual but visionary, and encourages empathy with and speculation about the individual perceptions of the world held by different seabirds – what Nicolson calls an ecozoic perspective on life. The writer is intrigued by the unique relationship of seabirds with water, air, and land, and their relationships with each – indeed the book could be said to be about the mystery of life itself. The individual chapters focus on specific seabirds and are packed with detailed information, accounts of scientific observations and experiments with birds, and legendary and literary references, all underpinned by the writer's own uninhibited wonder and humility in the face of the extraordinary lives of the birds he discusses. While this is a book about seabirds – their lives, loves, habits, journeys, ways of life, characteristics, individuality, and their differences from, and similarities to humans; it is also about cultural history, evolution, pollution, the impact of humans on the natural world, population collapse, and extinction.

John Price said: 'It is ambitious, topical and original, and written throughout in an engaging and appealing style. It was easily the most readable, moving and sophisticated of all the short-listed books.'

Adam Nicolson: 'I have been a Richard Jefferies man (arriving through Edward Thomas) for 40 years and so I am deeply, deeply chuffed.'

The certificate and prize of £1000 were presented to Mr. Nicolson at an event at the White Horse Bookshop held on 4 August 2018 (see p.4 of the Chairman's report).



The dust-jacket of John Lister-Kaye's *The Dun Cow Rib* carries as its final sentence: 'His book *Gods of the Morning* won the inaugural Richard Jefferies Prize.' Runners-up are also mentioning the award. For example, the *Manchester Gazette* (23 August 2018) reported that Rob Cowen's *Common Ground* was shortlisted for the Portico Literary Prize, Richard Jefferies Society Prize and the 2016 Wainwright Prize, as well as being selected as a 'Book of the Year' in The Times, Independent, Sunday Express and featuring in the Guardian's Top Ten Readers' Choice.



Please send Richard Stewart your nominations for the 2018 award as soon as possible to 112, Westerfield Road, Ipswich, IP4 2XW.

## RICHARD JEFFERIES MUSEUM TRUST REPORT

*Mike Pringle*

Life at the museum has changed this year, with just as much activity as last year, but of a different nature. Where we had been busy with a practically non-stop schedule of public events, we have slowed things down a bit in order to re-establish ourselves as an organisation. Of course, we still have lots of events and general activity, but we have also been putting more time into improving processes, increasing volunteer numbers, and more placing emphasis on building a sustainable future for the museum. To this end, we have been reviewing all our documentation, including our action plan and the strategic aims and objectives which govern it. In other words we have been looking at what we do, and why we do it. With new trustees and small teams of volunteers dedicated to different elements of the museum's work, it feels as though we are growing up a little – taking our enthusiasm and creating a more solid framework around it so that we can run the museum with the same vigour and in the knowledge that its future will be more secure.

We now have six established teams of volunteers working regularly: the management team, which keeps the place ticking over, sets the programme and looks after all elements of the museum; the admin team, consisting of people (mainly trustees) with knowledge and expertise in governance, IT, marketing, health & safety, and fundraising; the events team, who set and deliver the programme, arrange courses and events, organise exhibitions etc; the gardening team, who manage the extensive gardens, including the planting, growing, tending and clearing of anything green; the heritage team, who have expertise in history, museums and research, and who have been working tirelessly on putting together the cabinet room (which will be completed soon and for which there will be a launch event); and the cleaning team, who look after the state of the house and cottage, making sure everything looks and smells lovely! On top of this, we also have a number of other volunteers, including some who are restoring a number of agricultural items which we adopted after Swindon Borough Council offered the contents of the former agricultural museum up for disposal. Obviously, with space limitations, there were only so many things we could take, but we do now have a rather splendid chaff cutter (see photograph on the following page) and a lovely yellow milk float cart as well as a number of other items which will eventually go on show in the stable.

The key to the museum's future is, inevitably, its finances and this year we have the luxury of still benefiting from the grants we got last year, from Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund. On top of this, we also now make a reasonable amount of income from events (entry fees, café etc.). We are also developing the idea of our teams being 'cost centres' with their own budgets.



Obviously the heritage team and its work in the cabinet room is a good example of this, but we have also just secured a £2,500 grant from South Swindon Parish Council to do work in the gardens. This will create a budget for the gardening team, enabling them to buy the equipment and plants they need to do their work. At a Trust, management and admin level, obviously the emphasis will be more solid fundraising efforts to secure our future. However, with improved ways of doing things, and the bigger (skilled and enthusiastic) team, we are feeling positive about the museum and look forward to more and more varied events and activities, building on the life of Jefferies as well as the subjects that portray everything about him: arts, heritage, agriculture and nature.

Just as a footnote, we are also pleased to announce that Swindon Borough Council are going to have the cottage re-thatched this year, and are currently seeking a contractor to do the work.



Chaff cutter at Coate Farm

## CITINGS OF JEFFERIES

Janice Lingley

Please note that Janice Lingley is compiling the citings pages. Please send your contributions to [citings@richardjefferiessociety.co.uk](mailto:citings@richardjefferiessociety.co.uk).

In an article titled 'Excavating the Future – Richard Jefferies and Edward Thomas: a Spiritual Affinity in Prose and Poetry' published in the *Times Literary Supplement* on June 15 (No. 6011), the poet, writer, archaeologist, and academic Jem Poster explores the profound influence Jefferies had on Edward Thomas' development as a writer. The article, occupying almost two pages, prominently features portraits of the two authors in empathetic juxtaposition.

Referring initially to the evidence of Thomas' memoir *The Childhood of Edward Thomas* (1938), and an early essay 'In the Footprints of Richard Jefferies', modelled on Jefferies, the article goes on to link passages from Jefferies with the expression of Thomas's poems, 'The Penny Whistle', 'Tears', 'The Sun Used to Shine', and 'Health'. Concerning the two writers' perceptions of the countryside, Professor Poster observes: 'both men display a multi-dimensional awareness of the world they describe – a consciousness of its sharply observed details as representative of larger patterns, social, historical, geographical and geological.' Commenting that 'Thomas archaeologies, like those of Jefferies had a dimension beyond the historical', Jefferies' contemplation of the warrior buried in the tumulus in *The Story of My Heart* (Ch. 3) is discussed and quoted, as is the essay 'Nature and Eternity'. Jefferies' 'fluid and complex understanding of time' is understood to inform the poem 'February Afternoon'. The article concludes with illuminating comment on the two writers as 'prose-poets', alluding to Thomas' friendship with Robert Frost.

Thanks to Professor Roger Ebbatson for notice of this article.

The English poet and academic Peter Abbs also writes significantly on Jefferies' influence on Thomas in an article 'Uphill after Rain', in the July/August 2018 issue of the magazine *Resurgence & Ecologist*. Referring to Thomas' biography of Jefferies, Peter Abbs comments on its relevance to Thomas himself:

... in many ways it reads like an unconscious self-portrait of the author. What Thomas admires in Jefferies is what also marks his own writing. He talks of envisaging Nature as "a great flow of physical and spiritual sanity". When he proclaims that in Jefferies you encounter a linguistic purity with a spirit of abundance "where the sensuous and the spiritual run in a single flow fortifying the impulse to live", he also seems to be describing the best of his own work.

The title of the article is an extract from a note scrawled on a piece of paper found on Thomas' body: 'Roads shining like river uphill after rain'. This, one of

the last lines written by the poet, is sensitively discussed by Professor Abbs.

Thanks to Andrew Rossabi for this citation.

John Lewis-Stempel provides another fascinating chronicle of the farming year and the natural world in his recently published *The Wood: The Life and Times of Cockshutt Wood*. As in the case of his previous titles, *Meadowland: The Private Life of an English Field* (2014) and *The Running Hare: The Secret Life of Farmland* (2016), Jefferies is one of the authors cited.

In describing his preparation of a Christmas treat of holly, woven into a greenery fence, for his livestock, Mr. Lewis-Stempel discusses the importance of the evergreen (before the days of hay and turnip) as a nourishing winter feed. He quotes from the essay 'Buckhurst Park' (*Field and Hedgerow*), in which, referring to the deer of Exmoor, Jefferies observes: 'Wire fencing has been put round many of the hollies to protect them.' On the art of stepping quietly through Cockshutt Wood in November, with a view to dining on pheasant, the authority of *The Amateur Poacher* (Ch.3) is invoked: 'The way to walk noiselessly is to feel with the foot before letting your weight press on it; then the dead stick or fallen hemlock is discovered and avoided. A dead stick cracks; the dry hollow hemlock gives a splintering sound when crushed.'

Cockshutt Wood is in western Herefordshire, and in the conclusion to his book, Mr. Lewis-Stempel refers to his departure to the other side of the county, near Ledbury to farm hops. So intimately engaged has he been with the life of the wood that he wonders how it will all get along without him; a sentiment which has an affinity with Jefferies writing in 'Hours of Spring' (*Field and Hedgerow*) –

A thousand thousand buds and leaves and flowers and blades of grass, things to note day by day, increasing so rapidly that no pencil can put them down and no book hold them, not even to number them – and how to write the thoughts they give? All these without me – how can they manage without me?

The twenty-first-century author concludes that his sense of possession of the wood was illusionary, realising that during the time he has been admitted into the company of the woodland folk, its fauna and flora, he has experienced a sense of belonging.

In the authoritative historical survey by Eric Jones and Patrick Dillon of the landscape, agrarian practice, and ecology of *Middle Ridgeway* and its environs (illustrated by the paintings of Anna Dillon, published in 2016 and reviewed in *RJS Journal* No. 32, 2017), Jefferies is both quoted and invoked for his contributions to our understanding of the rural past: his 'best writing captures the essence of rural life in late Victorian England' (p. 18).

Of the economic recession of the late nineteenth century, Jones and Dillon record that Jefferies, writing in 1881, observed 'that there was little obvious

change in Wiltshire, only a few places having fallen out of cultivation. He was speaking of land close to the Middle Ridgeway a few miles west of Ashbury.’ (p. 64); the reference is to ‘The State of Farming’ in the collection *Field and Farm*. Referring to Jefferies as ‘that supreme rural writer’, the authors draw upon the anecdotal evidence of the chapter titled ‘A Farmer of the Olden Times’ in *Round About a Great Estate*, to convey the formerly basic way of life of the landfolk (p. 72). On the subject of the newly planted hedgerows which were a feature of the enclosure process, Jones and Dillon observe that ‘Richard Jefferies captured the spirit of the new enclosure landscape in its heyday, both biologically and historically’. The passage in Ch. 9 of *Wild Life in a Southern County*, which details the underwood which formed the hedgerow and describes it as routeway much favoured by birds and wild creatures, is then quoted (pp. 83-84).

Jefferies’ *After London* is mentioned in an article by the writer and academic Philip Hoare, titled ‘Darkness, Death and Decay: the Eerie Appeal of the Ghost Town’, which appeared in the Business section of the *Guardian* on 12 June 2018.

Ghost towns in America, products of the vagaries of economics, have become real estate and are now being sold as potential tourist attractions, Professor Hoare reports: ‘From video games to horror movies and dystopian film and fiction, the ghost town comes wreathed with decrepit appeal. Its abandoned state leaves it ready to be filled by our imagination. Time has stopped; nature has started to overtake. The result is both a memento mori and a salutary lesson in our overweening presumption that our world is always progressing.’

The photographs illustrating the article feature an old gold-rush town in



Tyneham, Dorset

California, but the ruins of Tyneham, in Dorset, are also pictured. Situated in a beautiful coastal area near Lulworth, the village fell victim to the need to establish a military shooting range for tanks when WW2 threatened. Patrick Wright’s scrupulously researched, and very readable, *The Village That Died for England*’ (1996) is cited.

Peter Robins has unearthed a reference to Jefferies in a letter written by W.H. Hudson, dated 5 November 1887, and listed in the Autumn 1927 sales catalogue of Maggs Bros. Ltd., the well-known antiquarian bookseller, founded in London in 1853. In the letter, Hudson thanks his unidentified correspondent for a favourable review in the *Glasgow Herald* of his then newly published novel *A Crystal Age*, referring particularly to the reviewer’s comparison of his Nature writings with Jefferies:

One thing in your notice specially pleased my wife, I mean your mention of Richard Jefferies at the end; for she had always maintained that I resembled him when writing about nature, & in Natural History articles & your words proved to her at once that she 'was right,' which was a great satisfaction as up to then she had not found anyone to agree with her. Poor Jefferies!

*A Crystal Age* was published anonymously by T. Fisher Unwin in 1887, followed by a second edition in 1906, which identified the author and included a preface by Hudson. The romantic novel reflects Hudson's vision of Utopia bringing in the scientific spirit of the Victorian age as well as his own perceptions of the future. The relevant part of the review reads as follows:

The book is immensely clever; better than that it is full of poetic fervour and spiritual vision. Like all romances it returns to the prosaic facts of existence, and so the end is inevitably dissatisfying. But the dissatisfaction is something to be thankful for. It is a sign that if we can't belong to the Crystal Age, we are not so debased by our own but that we can appreciate a dream of it. Who is the author? There is much in the volume that reminds us of Mr. Jefferies at his best and dreamiest. If, however, this be the writer's first adventure, we are glad to welcome a newcomer from whose genius we may expect great and beautiful gifts.

George Miller and Peter Robins believe the author of the review, and the correspondent of Hudson, was the Scottish poet, novelist, and playwright John Davidson (1857-1909).

In an entertaining article 'I Just Want Daffodils to Flower When They Should', for the April issue of *The Oldie*, Giles Wood says the 'one beacon of constancy' he asks for in an uncertain world – 'Brexity, gender uncertainty and anthropocentric climate change' – is that 'daffodils will not flower earlier than March'. He comments on the appearance of the daffodil in the opening chapter of Jefferies' *Amaryllis at the Fair*, quoting the following:

There had been daffodils in that spot at least a century, opening every March to the dry winds that shrivel up the brown dead leaves of winter, and carry them out from the bushes under the trees, sending them across the meadow – fleeing like a routed army before the bayonets of the East. Every spring for a century at least the daffodils had bloomed there.

With humorous asperity, he goes on to draw a fine distinction between 'the golden wild daffodil' which the 'genius Jefferies' describes, Wordsworth's sprightly dancing host in 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud', and the devitalised, artificially cultured, garden centre product.

John Price, who sent the article, comments: 'As to whether the Coate daffodils are native or not; it is most likely that the flower was introduced by the Romans to the UK – though a few botanists dispute this. Certainly the different species (all from western Europe) were not recognised until the Nineteenth Century – so it is almost certain that the one hundred-year-old plants in the

Coate garden were ‘native’ in one sense – though they may have been the Roman introductions.’

Members will recall that, in *Amaryllis*, the daffodils at Coombe Oaks (Coate) are stated by Iden to have come from ‘Luckett’s’ (Draycot Foliat).

Peter Robins spotted a mention of Jefferies in the *Surrey Mirror* of 24 April 1908. In a tribute to Edmund Seyfang Taylor who had died a week earlier, Lawrence W. Chubb wrote, ‘he had taught that much pleasure was to be derived

from rambling for rambling’s sake, as opposed to walking for the purpose of covering a maximum number of miles in a minimum period. Mr. Taylor allowed his natural bent to follow the example of Richard Jefferies, the apostle of the open air, of whom he was always a great admirer.’

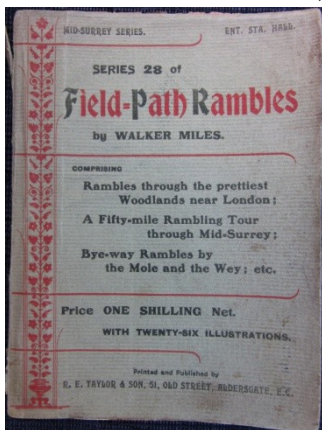
Taylor published thirty-seven *Field-Path Rambles* using the pseudonym ‘Walker Miles’, with the aim of opening up the countryside to city dwellers and preserving public footpaths. The rambles were invariably linked to railway stations with details of cheap excursions provided. In 1908, Taylor moved from Camberwell, south London, to Godstone, Surrey, but died suddenly on 19 April at

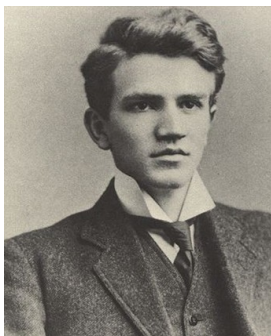
the age of 54. A sarsen memorial stone marks his grave in the churchyard.

Thanks to Nick Thomson for a citation of *The Story of My Heart in The Journal of a Disappointed Man* (1919) by W. N. P. Barbellion, the pen-name of naturalist Bruce Frederick Cummings (1889-1919).

Cummings was born and grew up in Barnstaple, Devon, and from an early age developed a genius for natural history, as well as an enthusiasm for reading widely in the canon of English literature, and beyond. His remarkable diary begins at the age of 13. His knowledge of Jefferies’ autobiography dates at least from May 1911, when the diarist, now aged 21, humorously comments on a conversation with a local boy, fishing with a bent pin in hopes of a fine salmon: ‘Richard Jefferies said, “If there be no immortality still we shall have had the glory of that thought.”’ This, in light-hearted mood, adapts a passage from Ch.3 of the autobiography when the author is resting by the tumulus of the unknown warrior:

That there is no knowing, in the sense of written reasons, whether the soul lives on or not, I am fully aware. I do not hope or fear. At least while I am living I have enjoyed the idea of immortality, and the idea of my own soul. If then, after death, I am resolved without exception into earth, air and water, and the spirit goes out like a flame, still I shall have had the glory of that thought.





Like Jefferies, Cummings (pictured left) possessed an immense capacity for life, a profound interest in the natural world, and a literary potential curtailed by illness and premature death. He also worked as a journalist for a local newspaper. He had been forced by circumstances to turn down the offer of a position as a naturalist in a Plymouth laboratory. Cummings referred to his journalistic indentures, with unconscious prescience, as his 'death warrant', unaware that he already had the symptoms, at an exceptionally early age, of multiple sclerosis.

Self-taught, and knowledgeable beyond most of his peers in natural history, Cummings eventually obtained a post at the British Museum in London, but the *Journal* intimates that had he lived he would have become a writer.

The final years of the journal are a testimony to the young man's courage, as he contended with the distressing progress of his illness, and to the devotion of his wife. Cummings experienced at intervals some relief from his sufferings. An entry for 5 May 1916, when he was living with his family in a cottage in rural Gerrards Cross, reads:

Hulloa, old friend: how are you? I mean my Diary. I haven't written to you for ever so long, and my silence as usual indicates happiness. I have been passing thro' an unbroken succession of calm happy days, walking in the woods with my darling, or doing a little gentle gardening on coming home in the evening – and the War has been centuries away. Later on towards bedtime, E – [Cummings' wife] reads Richard Jefferies, I play Patience and Mrs – makes garments for Priscilla [his baby daughter].

Andrew Rossabi advised of a doctoral thesis titled 'The English Peasantry in Contemporary Novels 1815-1900' (University of Wisconsin, 1953) by William James Hyde, and comments: 'Hyde's thesis contains numerous laudatory references to Jefferies from a wide range of his writings, including the early novels.' Andrew Rossabi also drew attention to an article by Hyde titled 'Richard Jefferies and the Naturalistic Peasant', published in the journal *Nineteenth Century Fiction* (1956), which is cited in the bibliography of W.J. Keith's book, *Richard Jefferies, A Critical Study* (1965), and also in George Miller and Hugoe Matthews' *Richard Jefferies: A Bibliographical Study* (1993) [E70.1, p. 767].

The Hyde thesis is available on microfilm at the British Library (Shelfmark MFR/1254\*1\*).



Jefferies' *Wood Magic* is quoted in an article on Edward Thomas titled 'Paths to Glory' by Heather Cobby, published in the 2018 edition of the *Journal of the Friends of the Dymock Poets* (No. 17, pp. 43-49).

The article cites Thomas' poem 'The Glory', on the theme of the loveliness of the early morning, in which, says Cobby, the speaker 'is impelled onwards by his urge to be at one with the beauty' of the natural world. Describing Thomas as 'a writer who was always on the road', the article links the poem with an interesting and thoughtful discussion of Thomas' travel books, *The South Country* (1909), *In Pursuit of Spring* (1914), and *The Icknield Way* (1916).

Referring to Richard Jefferies as 'his early mentor', Cobby comments that Thomas' walks at times took the form of a deliberately aimless wandering, and that in the biography he identifies Jefferies' habit of rambling and exploring with the grasshopper's response to Little Sir Bevis' question, 'Why don't you hop straight'; 'How very stupid you are! . . . If you go straight, of course you can only see just what is under your feet; but if you go first this way and then that, then you see everything.' (Ch. 4. of *Wood Magic*; Ch. 11 of the biography).

Richard J. Moore-Colyer's article 'Grain and Chaff: Threshing in Wiltshire in Earlier Times', in the 2018 edition of *The Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society's Magazine* (Vol. 111, pp. 288-300), refers to and quotes Jefferies' essay 'Notes on Landscape Painting' [*The Life of the Fields*], concerning the machinery which became a common presence on farms as the nineteenth century drew to a close: 'the ancient earth covers them with her own hoar antiquity and their newness disappears.' The article reviews the technology of threshing from hand-flail to combine harvester, surveys the social unrest caused by the introduction of machinery, and summarises the critical views expressed by writers such as Thomas Hardy, H.J. Massingham, and the poet Alice Meynell.

An article titled 'Halcyon Days' by Nicola Chester, appearing in the Spring Issue of *Nature Notes*, a quarterly magazine for RSPB members, includes a quotation from *The Story of My Heart* (Ch. 3). Geoff Hirst writes that 'after discoursing on being outdoors with her children', the final paragraph reads:

Our own childhood outdoors may come back into view. We get the chance to relive the freedom, joy and wonder, to have a second (or third) childhood. Or we can have one we never had – and we can share it. We can be more child: be more wild. As the nature writer Richard Jefferies put it: 'It is eternity now. I am in the midst of it. It is about me in the sunshine.'

The article includes a photograph of a child in a meadow holding an illustration of butterflies. The author lives with her family on the North Wessex Downs.



Richard Stewart wrote to advise: 'I added details of the annual writing prize [the Society's Literary Award for nature writing] to a letter in the BBC *Wildlife* magazine, responding to Mark Cocker's article about our rich tradition in nature writing (November 2017 issue). I expanded this theme in an article titled 'The Current Popularity of Nature Writing' in the Suffolk Naturalists' Society's *White Admiral*, edition 99, Spring 2018. This outlined Jefferies and his work and also included details of the award plus a brief summary of the five short-listed books from 2017. In the article, Jefferies is 'acknowledged to be our greatest writer about wild life, being given top place in a *Guardian* poll some years ago'.

Mr. Stewart is a member of the Executive Council of The Richard Jefferies Society, with the specific task of producing a shortlist for the prize. Members will recall that Chairman John Price reported on some very positive developments with regard to the Society's Literary Award in the *Spring Newsletter*.

The *Swindon Advertiser* runs an 'On This Day' column, and the 1 June 2018 edition notes for the year 1952: 'Memories of a grand old country wedding feast held in a barn at Day House Farm, Swindon, more than 70 years ago were recalled by Mr. S.A. Streetly of Swindon when he spoke on *Greene Ferne Farm* by Richard Jefferies to a gathering of members of the Swindon Branch WEA and the Richard Jefferies Society.' Quoted here is the delightful description of the barn, 'a lofty piece of ancient workmanship', decorated for the marriage feast in the conclusion to Jefferies' 1880 novel:

Against the door-posts inside, and at intervals around the walls, rose columns of corn; whole sheaves of wheat, stacked in piles, for a less quantity would scarcely have been seen in so great a space. Nor was the white and drooping barley forgotten; and these, the wealth of the cornfields, were strewn in profusion with the flowers that were yet in bloom. Scarlet poppies, blue harebells, the yellow corn marigolds, the mauve mallows, the 'butter and eggs,' and woodbine – all were there, gathered by willing hands. Ferns, some already yellow and some green, tall reeds with beautiful waving heads, and rushes, were placed at the side of the wheat, relieving the bright flowers and the dry-looking corn with their green; branches of oak, upon whose twigs the young acorns were showing; branches of hazel with the nuts and of hawthorn with the haws, were hung between the sheaves.

Jefferies' marriage to Jessie Baden of Day House Farm took place in July 1874, at Holy Cross Church, Chiseldon. *Greene Ferne Farm* was dedicated to Jessie, so it is possible that the description of the fictional marriage feast was based on a celebration held at Day House Farm.

Thanks to Valerie Haworth for advising of a citation of Jefferies' *Hodge and His Masters* in a murder-mystery novel *Death at Gallows Green* (1995) by Robin Paige, the pen-name of American co-authors Bill and Susan Wittig Albert. The citation, which provides the epigraph to Ch. 28 of the Paige novel, is from 'The Low 'Public', but is not very accurately reproduced. Here is Jefferies' text:

To do the bulk of the labourers bare justice it must be stated that there is a certain bluff honesty and frankness among them, a rude candour, which entitles them to considerable respect as a body. There are also men here and there whose strength of character would certainly have obtained favourable acknowledgement had their lot been cast in a higher rank of life. But, at the same time, the labourer is not always so innocent and free from guile – so lamblike as it suits the purpose of some to proclaim, in order that his rural simplicity may secure sympathy. There are very queer black sheep in the flock, and it rather unfortunately happens that these, in more ways than one, force themselves, sometimes most unpleasantly, upon the notice of the tenant-farmer and the landlord.

Paige's 'black sheep' turn out to be Russell Tod, a bailiff, and Tommy Brock, his hired man, named after the anthropomorphic characters in Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Mr. Tod* (1912). Beatrix Potter herself appears, rather unconvincingly, as a character in the narrative. The novel is set in Essex and Suffolk.

*Acknowledgements and an apology: Thanks are due to Peter Abbs, Philip Hoare, and Jem Poster for permission to quote from their articles. Sincere apologies to Giles Wood for referring to him as John Giles in the RJS Spring 2018 newsletter, p.36.*

## NOTICE

**Edward Thomas' biographies.** *Richard Jefferies: His Life and Work* (1909) and *George Borrow, the Man and His Books* (1912) appear in a new annotated edition by Jem Poster, published by the Oxford University Press. *Edward Thomas: Prose Writings, A Selected Edition, Vol. III Biographies: Jefferies and Borrow* (ISBN 9780199588114; price £125) forms part of a six-volume series devoted to Thomas' prose. Professor Poster's detailed introduction to Thomas' biography of Jefferies discusses correspondences in the lives of the two writers, Jefferies' influence on Thomas' writings, Thomas' doubts on the quality of the biography, and the worthy reputation it has acquired since it was first published.

The book will be reviewed in the 2019 edition of the Society's *Journal* along with Andrew Rossabi's *A Peculiarly English Genius: A Biography of Richard Jefferies* (Volume I) published by the Society (available from the Hon. Secretary for £40 including UK postage). We are grateful to the Edward Thomas Fellowship for publishing a favourable and constructive review of the biography in their summer newsletter by Richard Emeny.

## BOOK REVIEW

Richard Jefferies: *Sport in the Fields and Woods*, an anthology compiled by Rebecca Welshman (Ludlow: Merlin Unwin Books, 2017). ISBN: 978-1-910723-4-1. £15.99.

Barry Sloan

In her introduction to this collection of over sixty extracts from a wide range of Richard Jefferies' writings, Rebecca Welshman points out that although field sports are a recurrent theme and persistent source of interest in the author's work, her anthology is the first to focus directly on the subject. The selection not only draws upon well-known books such as *Wild Life in a Southern County*, *Hodge and His Masters* and *The Gamekeeper at Home* published in Jefferies' lifetime, and from posthumously issued collections (e.g. *Chronicles of the Hedges*, *Field and Farm* and *The Farmer's World*), but also includes ten articles which have not previously been republished since their first appearance in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, *St James's Gazette*, the *Graphic*, and *The Times* in the 1870s and 1880s.

Jefferies was, of course, steeped in country life and regarded hunting, whether legally or illegally pursued, as an integral part of it, and even as an expression of ethnic identity. Unless a man has engaged in field sports, he 'does not thoroughly comprehend the meaning of his own country', declares Jefferies in 'A Defence of Sport': 'it makes a man feel himself an Englishman in the full sense of the word, and ... it counteracts the narrowing spirit of commerce alone.' This unease with the corrosive impact of modernity is also reflected in Jefferies' almost perverse preference for the old style of individually-crafted gun which required much greater skill to use accurately, over the more reliable and easier mass-produced weapons which were increasingly available ('Choosing a Gun'). Likewise, his admiration for the skills involved in the pursuit and killing of rabbits, hares, snipe, wild-fowl and deer – even by poachers – is in marked contrast to his contempt for the 'scum of manufacturing towns' who make violent raids on estates, 'relying on their numbers, arms, and known desperation of character to protect them from arrest' ('Poaching as a Profession').

Many modern readers will balk at Jefferies' closely detailed descriptions of how to set various kinds of trap, and his uncomplicated pleasure at returning from the field with a full game-bag. It is therefore particularly interesting that in an article republished here for the first time since 1874 ('Snow Shooting'), Jefferies denounces the 'wanton destruction' of 'birds indigenous to this country' which 'the increase of population and clearance of woods and marshes have made scarce among us.' Paradoxically, however, he goes on to justify shooting rare birds such as 'the spotted crake and the solitary snipe' on the basis

that the opportunities of doing so are so infrequent that it will have a negligible effect upon their numbers, and he dismisses protests against killing non-native birds as 'absurd' because they 'would never become permanent members of our fauna'. Such observations give us an insight into the era which saw the Society for the Protection of Birds in 1889.

The tension between Jefferies' zest for field sports and his delight in the lives of some of the hunted animals is well illustrated in two passages about hares. In 'Hare Coursing', extracted from *The Amateur Poacher*, Jefferies wonders whether there is 'any moment so joyful in life as when the chase begins', and he recounts the thrill of watching hounds pursuing, cornering and killing a luckless hare. However, in 'Hares Boxing', Jefferies' attention is focused on the hares themselves and on his delight in watching their strange antics: 'Round and round they go like a couple waltzing; now one giving ground and then the other, the forelegs striking all the while with marvellous rapidity. Presently they pause – it is to recover breath only; and "time" being up, to work they go again with renewed energy, dancing round and round, till the observer cannot choose but smile.' A passage like this reminds the reader just how good an observer of nature and of natural life Jefferies was.

It is a rather unexpected feature of the anthology that in spite of its title it includes quite a number of extracts which are not specifically about 'sport in the fields and woods', some of which show Jefferies' strengths as a nature writer. The newly republished 'Iron-Bound in December', for example, a highly atmospheric evocation of the impact of winter on wildlife, includes a wonderful description of moles driven to the surface of frozen ground in a desperate search for earth soft enough to dig for food. Likewise, in *Round About a Great Estate* Jefferies noted: 'One might begin to write a book about a hedgerow when a boy and find it incomplete in old age', and his meticulously observed account of the minute disturbances of earth at the base of a hedge caused by the activity of field mice would certainly deserve its place in such a book. From such small events Jefferies extrapolates a view of the endlessly changing natural world: 'As one [mouse] chancing to step on a rootlet sent down a shower of crumbling particles, so all the year round their tiny feet (and teeth) are boring though or wearing away the solid mound. These, the least of creatures, represent in living shape the yet slower, and unseen, but ceaseless attrition of non-animate forces.'

Although it might perhaps have been helpful if the book had a clearer organisational structure (e.g. chronological or seasonal), it is very welcome for the fresh focus it gives to Jefferies' work, and for the new material it makes available to readers.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & BIRTHDAY LECTURE  
SATURDAY 27 October 2018  
VILLAGE HALL, CHURCH ROAD, LIDDINGTON, SN4 0HB

PROGRAMME

- 11.30            Doors open and refreshments.  
11.45            AGM – see Agenda p.39.  
1.30             Lunch-break. Please bring a packed lunch.  
                    Tea and coffee available.  
2.30             The Birthday Lecture (open to the public)  
                    Speaker: Richard Fortey  
                    Title: A Walkabout in My Wood  
4.30             Depart

**Please note that the main hall cannot be accessed until 11.30am. A yoga class meets regularly before-hand and finishes at 11.15. Should you arrive early, expect to find more cars in the carpark. Respect that the yoga class needs peace – please wait silently in the lobby. Lunch-time has been reduced to an hour.**

Birthday Lecture

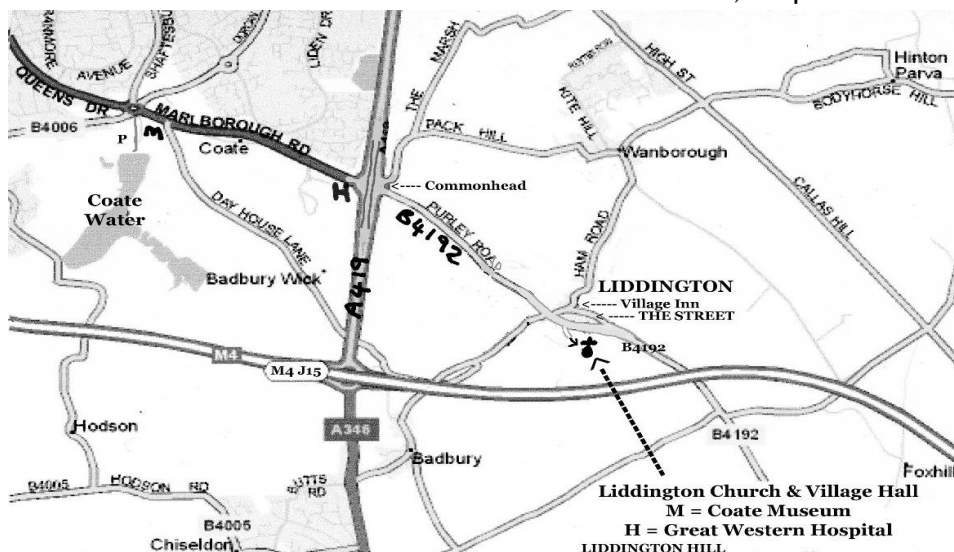


Richard Fortey (pictured left) was the winner of the 2016 Richard Jefferies Society and White Horse Bookshop Literary Prize for his book *The Wood for the Trees: The Long View of Nature from a Small Wood* (see RJS *Autumn Newsletter* 2017 pp.21-22). He wrote in it: 'After a working life spent in a great museum, the time had come for me to escape into the open air. I spent years handling fossils of extinct animals; now, the inner naturalist needed to touch living animals and plants.'

In 2011, after retiring from his role as senior palaeontologist at the Natural History Museum, and with the proceeds of presenting a TV series, he purchased four acres of prime beech and bluebell wood in the Chiltern Hills, Oxfordshire called Grim's Dyke Wood – part of Lambridge Wood.

The Society is delighted to welcome Richard Fortey to deliver this year's Birthday Lecture.

## DIRECTIONS TO LIDDINGTON VILLAGE HALL, SN4 0HB



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 will be ample parking space at the hall once the yoga group leave by 11.30.

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 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. On Saturday mornings the **46 leaves Swindon Bus Station at 10.40 and arrives at Liddington at 10.57**. 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. **The return bus (no. 48) leaves from Spinney Close, Liddington at 16.21 and arrives at Swindon Bus Station at 16.39.**

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### AGENDA

- 1 Vice Chairman's introductory remarks
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Minutes of the last AGM, 4 Nov 2017 (see pp.40-43)
- 4 Matters Arising
  - Richard Jefferies Society & White Horse Bookshop
  - Literary Prize
  - Publications and books
  - Richard Jefferies Museum
  - Broadwater Cemetery & St Piran's Churchyard
  - Bursary Award
- 5 Annual Report
- 6 Treasurer's Report (see pp.44-46)
- 7 Election of Examiner of Accounts: Rob Brailsford.
- 8 Elections to Executive Council.

Patrick Dillon, Margaret Hunt, John Price, and Richard Stewart are due to retire but they are all prepared to stand again for a further three-year period. Sadly John Price is unable to be re-elected as Chairman – his dedication and good offices will be hard to follow. We regret also that Eric Jones is standing down as Vice Chairman but will continue in his role as an Executive Council member.
- 9 Motions, if any
- 10 Any Other Business

A copy of the minutes of the 2017 AGM should be brought to the AGM.

Any motions or resolutions for debate should be sent to the Hon. Sec. before 20 October 2018, as should nominations for Executive Council members. Both should be proposed and seconded.

The Society is most anxious to find Council members prepared to take on the roles of Chairperson and Vice Chair, even for an interim period. Please contact the Hon. Sec. for more information.

MINUTES for the Annual General Meeting of the Richard Jefferies Society held at the Village Hall, Liddington on Saturday 4 November 2017 at 11am

**PRESENT:** Gillian Bromhead, R.I.P. Bulkeley, Patrick Dillon, Roger Ebbatson, Norma Goodwin, Margaret Hunt, Eric Jones, Andrew Lewis, Jenny Lewis (guest), Sylvia & Ray Morse, Michael Parrott, John Price, Andrew Rossabi, John Sanders, Jean Saunders, Michael Sherwood, Barry Sloan, Phyllis Treitel, Jonathan Wood, and Ted Wood.

**1. THE CHAIR**

John Price welcomed some new faces to the meeting and apologised for the delay gaining access to the village hall.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Pete Bainbridge, Marie & David Chesham, Peter Faulkner, Valerie Haworth, George Miller, Brian Morris, Helen Newman, Michael Ponting, Mike Pringle, Peter Robins, Tom Saunders, Richard Stewart, Gillian Webb, Rebecca Welshman, and Bernard White sent their apologies.

**3. MINUTES**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 5 November 2016 were accepted as a true record of proceedings and signed by the Chairman. Proposed acceptance: Raymond Morse, seconded by Michael Parrott and carried by Members.

**4. MATTERS ARISING**

**4.1 RJS & White Horse Bookshop Literary Prize 2017**

The Chairman read out the list of 13 book titles nominated so far, mainly submitted by publishers. Publishers were asked to supply two copies of their books and it was suggested that more copies might be obtained once the short-list is drawn up in February 2018. The judges will announce the winner by the end of June 2018. Discussion revolved around opportunities for more publicity (e.g. informing the Alliance of Literary Societies about winners) and whether the Society was best exploiting winning authors (e.g. potential to present future Birthday Lectures). It was noted that there appears to be an explosion in the market of nature-writing books at present whilst publishers are only too keen to enter their titles for literary prizes even when the price of entry to the competition would appear prohibitively high in some awards (£800 entry fee was quoted by Patrick Dillon for one competition).

**4.2 Jefferies Land Fund: educational projects**

Roger Ebbatson and Barry Sloan have worked on a list of requirements to applicants who might be considered for the Bursary Award that has been agreed at up to £2000 per. annum. The details will be published in the Spring



newsletter, on the Society's website, through academic websites, and educational journals.

#### 4.3 The Rossabi biography of Richard Jefferies

The Chairman was delighted to announce that Volume I of *A Peculiarly English Genius* had been printed by Antony Rowe in time for the AGM. The official publication date is set at Jefferies' birthday on 6 November. John Price reminded members about the evolution of the new biography that was first discussed some twelve years ago in Liddington Village Hall car park! Andrew Rossabi was congratulated for producing such a comprehensive volume. Mr. Rossabi welcomed the opportunity to draw together the many fragments of information that have been discovered over the years since Edward Thomas wrote his own biography of Richard Jefferies.

#### 4.4 Richard Jefferies House & Museum at Coate

The Chairman reported that there was a considerable amount of activity at the Museum and he was impressed with the dedication of volunteers. Mike Pringle was involved in the construction of a new path that morning. Andrew Lewis was somewhat concerned that, at a recent visit to the Museum on an official Sunday open day, the main Gothic blue door entrance from the main road was locked. However once he found his way inside, he found the guide very helpful.

#### 4.5 Broadwater Cemetery

Michael Parrott reported that the Friends of Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery's summer-themed tours, have been very popular again this year with between 50 and 90 visitors each month. Wild flowers are still blooming in the memorial garden dedicated to Richard Jefferies and W.H. Hudson and the seat therein still looks smart – a worthwhile purchase by the Richard Jefferies Society. Unfortunately the mulberry tree's leaves were very dry and mottled during the summer months, although the tree bore plenty of fruit. Permission is being sought from Worthing Council to plant shrubs or trees in the memorial garden. The planting might not take place until spring and the money generously donated by Janice Lingley will be used. Michael's wife, Pat, has given the Jefferies' grave stones a scrub with soap and water. Pat and Michael were thanked by the Chairman.

### **5. ANNUAL REPORT**

The content of the annual report was accepted as a true record of the Society's activities. Proposed by Michael Parrott; seconded by Ray Morse and carried by Members.

### **6. TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Chairman drew attention to the published accounts that had been signed off by Rob Brailsford, the Examiner of Accounts, on 15 August 2017. Mr. Price

thanked the Hon. Sec for taking on treasurer's duties when Peter Bainbridge was unable to continue in the role as a result of family commitments, work and illness in the family. It was noted that Ray Morse, John Price and Jean Saunders are signatories to both the Coventry and Lloyds accounts. No other matters were raised.

Michael Parrott proposed acceptance of the accounts, seconded by R.I.P Bulkeley and carried by Members. The Chairman signed acceptance of the Published Accounts for the Examiner of Accounts.

## **7. ELECTION OF EXAMINER OF ACCOUNTS**

Rob Brailsford is willing to continue to offer his services. Jean Saunders proposed his re-election, seconded by Norma Goodwin and carried by members along with our grateful thanks.

## **8. ELECTIONS TO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.**

Eric Jones was due to stand down as a trustee but was prepared to serve another three-year term of office. Roger Ebbatson proposed, seconded by Norma Goodwin, that Eric Jones should be re-elected to Council from 2017-2020. This was carried.

John Price proposed and Norma Goodwin seconded that Tom Saunders be elected to Council as Honorary Treasurer from 2017-2022. This was carried. John Price reminded members that he would not be standing for a further three-year term as Chairman next year.

## **9. MOTIONS**

No motions had been proposed.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **10.1 Storage of RJS files and stock**

Due to changed circumstances, the Society needs to find a new storage facility for its book stocks and publications as well as other material (25 boxes). Some is archive material that might be added to our store at the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre in Chippenham. Other boxes contain old news clippings related to Jefferies that the History Centre may or may not accept. Michael Sherwood has kindly agreed to store more of our library books. Excess stock is likely to be distributed to schools or libraries. Eric Jones advised that there was an urgent need to catalogue our archives held at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre – a good use of Bursary funds.

### **10.2 Programme for 2018**

The AGM has been booked for Liddington Village Hall but will start an hour later. The hall is now used for yoga sessions on Saturday mornings until 11.15am. The lunch-break will be an hour shorter; members will be advised to bring a packed lunch in order that the afternoon programme can continue as normal. It

was agreed that John Price would approach Richard Fortey, the winner of the 2016 literary prize, to present the Birthday Lecture.

10.3 The Henry Williamson Society is holding a weekend at Coate in May 2018. John Price will be giving a talk to the HWS about Jefferies and there are plans to visit the Museum and local places associated with Jefferies and other literary figures.

10.4 Media Cuttings and Citations

Ray Morse has kindly agreed to take over the maintenance of the press cuttings file. Janice Lingley is now compiling the citations pages for the newsletter. The Chairman thanked them for their help.

10.5 Coate Agricultural Museum

Mike Pringle has reported that since the fire, Swindon Council has removed the remaining contents of the Coate Agricultural Museum. The Trust hopes to acquire some appropriate agricultural machinery for the Richard Jefferies Museum.

10.6 Council Oak plaque

Evidently the Council Oak plaque at Coate Water is missing. Ray Morse agreed to approach the Coate Water Rangers to see if they had removed it.

10.7 Nominate favourite UK nature book.

The Arts & Humanities Research Council in Swindon was asking the public to nominate their favourite nature book. A short-list will be drawn up and the books put to a public vote. It was hoped that Jefferies would feature.

10.8 Three new books were mentioned: *The Lost Words* (a book of poetry for children) by Robert Macfarlane and beautifully illustrated by Jackie Morris; *Coloured Counties* by Anthony Gibson and *Sport in the Fields and Woods* by Richard Jefferies and collected by Rebecca Welshman. There will be reviews of the last two books in RJS 2018 newsletters.

The business part of the AGM ended at 12.45pm.

Jean Saunders  
Hon. Secretary  
9 November 2017

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial Statement for the year ending 30 June 2018

| <u>Receipts</u>                | Unrestricted<br>Funds | Designated<br>Funds | Restricted<br>Funds | Total 2018      | Total<br>2017  |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <u>Subscriptions</u>           | 1996.56               |                     |                     | 1996.56         | 2286.81        |
| <u>Donations: General Book</u> | 1318.58               | 500.00              |                     | 1818.58         | 4164.50        |
| <u>Sales:</u>                  | 901.59                |                     | 1771.36             | 2672.95         | 694.34         |
| <u>Gift Aid Reclaim</u>        | 1460.42               |                     |                     | 1460.42         | 627.31         |
| <u>Interest received</u>       | 135.44                |                     |                     | 135.44          | 101.47         |
| <b>Total receipts</b>          | <b>5812.59</b>        | <b>500.00</b>       | <b>1771.36</b>      | <b>£8083.95</b> | <b>7874.43</b> |

### Expenditure

|                                  |                |                |               |                 |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <u>Publications</u>              | 968.71         |                |               | 968.71          | 1242.56        |
| <u>Rent/Room Hire</u>            | 50.00          |                |               | 50.00           | 60.00          |
| <u>Subscriptions paid</u>        | 64.50          |                |               | 64.50           | 64.50          |
| <u>Lecture fees</u>              |                |                |               |                 | 104.40         |
| <u>Administration</u>            | 1547.14        |                |               | 1547.14         | 1961.41        |
| <u>Insurance</u>                 | 95.20          |                |               | 95.20           | 93.08          |
| <u>Webb Lit. Prize</u>           |                | 1072.98        |               | 1072.98         | 1005.50        |
| <u>Jefferies Land Fund (JLF)</u> |                |                | 148.70        | 148.70          | 2187.29        |
| <u>Gifts: JMT</u>                |                |                |               |                 | 2250.00        |
| <u>Biography</u>                 |                | 3608.99        |               | 3608.99         |                |
| <b>Total payments</b>            | <b>2725.55</b> | <b>4681.97</b> | <b>148.70</b> | <b>£7556.22</b> | <b>8968.74</b> |

**Excess of receipts over payments** **£527.73**    -£1094.31

Bank/B.Soc/Paypal/P.Cash

as at 30 June 2018 **£59,444.90**

as at 1 July 2017 £58,917.17

### Statement of Assets

|           |                   |  |          |                   |                 |
|-----------|-------------------|--|----------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Cash      |                   |  |          |                   |                 |
| funds:-   |                   |  |          |                   |                 |
| Bank      | 17,672.89         |  | JLF      | 11195.07          | 9423.71         |
| Paypal    | 947.47            |  | Bursary  | 2000.00           | 2000.00         |
| B/Society | 40,824.54         |  |          | <b>£47,757.60</b> | 50168.21        |
|           | <b>£59,444.90</b> |  | General  | 3500.00           | 3500.00         |
|           |                   |  | Reserves | 8187.30           | 5248.96         |
|           |                   |  |          | <b>£59,444.90</b> | <b>58917.17</b> |

Restricted and Designated funds

Biography 10861.01 14470.00  
 Webb Lit. 23451.52 24024.50  
 Journal 250.00 250.00

## Notes to the accounts

1. The JLF reserve is 'restricted' to ensure that any disposal is for educational use.

\* An annual allocation of up to £250 is allowed for research for the *RJS Journal*.

\* An annual allocation of up to £2000 is allowed for the Bursary.

\* Income from the Biography is added to the JLF reserve.

2. There is a stock of publications worth around £2000 that are an asset of the Society but which do not appear in the Society's receipts and expenditure accounts.

3. The John Webb legacy is 'designated' for the annual RJS Literary Prize award. £500 is donated by the White Horse Bookshop towards the £1000 literary prize.

4. General funds cover the essential running costs of the Society.

5. Reserves are available for unexpected expenses, gifts etc.

There were no applications from students for projects related to the Bursary Fund.

Administration costs remain low thanks to the generosity of Trustees who not only give their time freely to manage the Society, but also cover their personal expenses and even donate their travel expenses back to the Society as part of the Gift Aid facility. Thanks also to other members who have contributed their time freely on behalf of the Society and to those who have made generous donations in appreciation of our work. The Society couldn't function without your generosity. The Society's main admin. expense is postage.

Ray Morse, John Price and Jean Saunders are signatories to both the Coventry and Lloyds accounts.

The Society's Trustees provisionally approved the financial statement at their meeting dated 2 June 2018 subject to any minor adjustments resulting from transactions that took place after the meeting and by the end of June.

Rob Brailsford (Institute of Chartered Accountants England and Wales), Examiner of Accounts, has checked the accounts, confirmed that the accounts are correct and signed his report to that effect on 30 July 2018 (see next page). We are most grateful for his good service and advice. Mr. Brailsford is another person to be thanked for providing his help free of charge.

*Tom Saunders*  
Hon. Treasurer  
1 August 2018



# CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A

### Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

The Richard Jefferies Society

On accounts for the year  
ended

30 June 2018

Charity no  
(if any)

1042838

Set out on pages

Respective  
responsibilities of  
trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Act and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent  
examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below

Independent  
examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

*Robert Brailsford*

Date:

30 July 2018

Name:

Robert Brailsford

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body

Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

Address:

19 Prospect Place, Swindon, SN1 3LQ

## PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2018-2019

2018

Wed 26 Sep Richard Jefferies and Surbiton talk by Andrew Rossabi followed by a tree-planting at the Richard Jefferies Bird Sanctuary, Surbiton. See pp.8-9 for more information.

Sat 27 Oct AGM and Birthday Lecture.  
Venue: Liddington Village Hall  
Time: 11.30am-4.30pm  
Birthday Lecture: Speaker – Richard Fortey.  
Title: A Walkabout in my Wood.  
Further information is detailed on p. 37ff.

2019

Sat 6 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 22 June A Study Day – to be confirmed.  
More information in the Spring 2019 newsletter.

Sat 26 Oct AGM and Birthday Lecture.  
More information in the Autumn 2019 newsletter

Meetings are open to the public and free to attend. See p.38 for map.

The Spring 2019 newsletter will be despatched in April; the *Journal* in June; the Autumn Newsletter and Annual Report in September. The Society's Executive Council will be meeting next on 22 September 2018 and 23 February, 1 June and 21 September 2019 at the Richard Jefferies Museum to discuss business matters.

The Alliance of Literary Societies will be holding their next weekend of events on 18/19 May 2019. It will be hosted by the George Eliot Fellowship who will be celebrating the bicentenary of their author's birth in Nuneaton.

# **RICHARD JEFFERIES SOCIETY BIRTHDAY LECTURE**



**Liddington Village Hall  
Church Road SN4 0HB  
Saturday 27 October 2018  
2.30pm (refreshments 2.15)**

## **A Walkabout in My Wood**

**Richard Fortey**



Autumn at Lambridge Wood, 2009. (Image courtesy of Don Cload, Wikimedia Commons)